



EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—FEBRUARY 1, 2021

TAMIL NADU

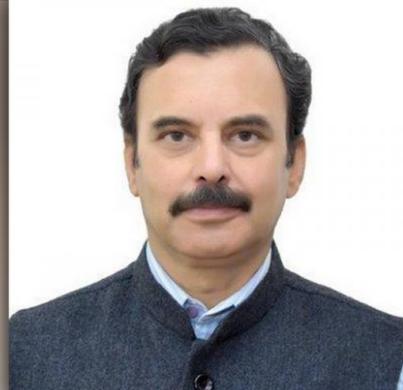
- On January 31, the state government - allowed colleges to reopen and conduct classes for all undergraduate and postgraduate students on February 8.
- ✓ The regular classroom teaching for Classes IX and XI in schools is also allowed to start from the same date
- ✓ This was announced in a statement issued by Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami as part of fresh relaxations of the Covid-induced restrictions
- ✓ The state has also allowed hostels in educational institutions to function
- ✓ Earlier, the government had allowed reopening of colleges for final year students from December 7, 2020, and schools for Classes X and XII from January 19, 2021
- ✓ Movie theatres, including multiplexes and screens in malls, will be allowed to operate at 100% seating capacity from February 1
- ✓ Earlier, the movie halls were permitted to open with 50% seating capacity in November 2020

100% OCCUPANCY IN THEATRES

- In-person classes allowed for all college students and Classes IX & XI
- Swimming pools, exhibition halls can reopen
- Petrol bunks open round-the-clock
- Spectators allowed at all sporting events with 50% seating capacity
- Indoor meetings, including religious gatherings, allowed with 50% seating capacity or maximum of 600 people
- No change in ban on int'l travel



- ✓ Swimming pools and exhibition halls can be opened by adhering to standard operating procedures
 - ✓ Petrol pumps, which had earlier been allowed to remain open till 10 p.m., will be allowed to function 24 hours from February 1.
 - ✓ Public grievances redressal meetings can also be held.
 - ✓ The state has also allowed indoor meetings, including religious gatherings, cultural events, college festivals and entertainment events at either 50% capacity or up to a maximum of 600 people.
 - ✓ Devotees will be allowed to take holy dip at Rameswaram temple.
 - ✓ The ban on international flights, except for those allowed by the Union home ministry, will continue.
 - ✓ Tamil Nadu has recorded less than 550 fresh cases per day in the past 10 days.
- **The Tamil Nadu government - named Senior IAS officer Rajeev Ranjan as the new Chief Secretary on February 1, 2021**



- ✓ The 1985-batch officer was the Union secretary for fisheries, animal husbandry and dairy development in New Delhi.
- ✓ He will attain superannuation on September 30, 2021.
- ✓ Ranjan replaces the incumbent Chief Secretary, K Shanmugham
- ✓ Last week, the Centre approved Ranjan's repatriation to his parent cadre based on the request of the State government
- ✓ Ranjan has held various positions in his over three decades of service.
- ✓ He began his career as Sub-Collector in Tiruvannamalai (1987-89) and became Tiruchi Collector in April 1995, a post he held until August 1997.
- ✓ He served as Director and Joint Secretary in the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion of the Union Ministry of Industries and Commerce from April 2000 to June 2007
- ✓ During this period, he was involved in revamping intellectual property laws and in the preparation of a national manufacturing strategy and a national manufacturing competitiveness programme.
- ✓ Returning to the State cadre, he held different posts, including Principal Secretary (Industries) and Chairman and Managing Director of the Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation.

- ✓ His stint as Principal Secretary and then as Additional Chief Secretary (Highways) between 2013 and 2018 is cited as the major reason for his elevation as the Chief Secretary.
 - ✓ He had worked directly under Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami, who has been handling the portfolio of Highways since May 2011.
 - ✓ Incumbent Chief Secretary K Shanmugham, who retired on January 31, was appointed advisor to the state government for a period of one year from February 1, 2021
- **Chennai's first Miyawaki forest – to complete its first year of inauguration this week**
- ✓ The first Miyawaki forest was created in Kotturpuram near the MRTS station after clearing 1,600 tonnes of debris one year ago.
 - ✓ Over 2,210 saplings were planted in the dense forest, with the compost derived from household waste.
 - ✓ After one year, the Miyawaki forest has produced banana fruits, hibiscus flowers, papaya and drumstick pods, with 70 jackfruit trees, 40 tamarind trees and 50 neem trees



- ✓ The canopy has 400 trees on top, a second layer of another 410 trees, a sub-layer of 410 trees and 800 shrubs at the bottom.
- ✓ The land was readied for plantation by utilising 80 tonnes of compost, 18 tonnes of coir pith, 12 tonnes of cow dung and two tonnes of straw.
- ✓ Residents of the area have not been permitted to visit the Miyawaki forest.
- ✓ After seven years, the Miyawaki forest in Kotturpuram is expected to absorb 43 tonnes of carbon dioxide and release 200 tonnes of oxygen
- ✓ The Greater Chennai Corporation already raised such Miyawaki forests in about 20 locations in the last one year in Chennai
- ✓ It plans to raise 1,000 such plantations in the city in the near future

- **Southern Railway - has facilitated the purchase of tickets through the Unreserved Ticketing System (UTS) app from February 1 in Chennai.**
- ✓ The tickets for suburban train services can be booked through the UTS mobile app only in the sections of Chennai Suburban Terminus-Tiruvallur, Royapuram-Gummidipoondi, Beach-Chengalpattu and Beach-Velachery (MRTS).
- ✓ The mobile ticketing facility will not be available from 6.30 a.m. to 9.30 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- ✓ Season tickets and platform tickets will not be issued through the app for the time being.
- ✓ The journey should commence within one hour of booking the ticket through the app
- ✓ Exclusive counters for app recharge will be opened at suburban counters in Dr.M.G.R. Chennai Central, Chennai Egmore, Chennai Beach, Mambalam, Tambaram, Perambur, Avadi, Tiruvottiyur and at Chennai Park Town and Velachery (MRTS) during non-peak hours.
- ✓ The app provides multiple e-payment options for topping up of rail wallet (R-Wallet).
- ✓ Recharge of R-Wallet can be done online through the IRCTC website (www.irctc.co.in), as well as at station ticket counters.
- ✓ A 5% cash bonus is offered for recharge on the UTS app.

NATIONAL

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi – addressed the nation through the 73rd episode of ‘Mann Ki Baat’ on January 31, 2021**



- ✓ This is the first episode of his monthly radio programme in the year 2021
- ✓ The programme was broadcast live on All India Radio, Doordarshan and Narendra Modi mobile app at 11am.
- ✓ It came a day before finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to release the union budget 2021.
- ✓ At the outset, the PM congratulated Padma award winners, Indian Cricket team and four Indian women pilots handling direct flight from San Fransisco in US to Bengaluru for their achievements

- ✓ During his speech, the PM mentioned that India is running the world's biggest Covid-19 vaccination programme and is the fastest country to inoculate 3 million people within just 15 days, as against 18 days in US and 36 days in UK
- ✓ He cited Brazil President's tweet quoting Ramayana and calling the vaccines 'Sanjeevni Booti'
- ✓ The PM mentioned that India to celebrate Amrut Mahotsav as the country enters 75th year of freedom.
- ✓ He appreciated Haryana gram panchayat for filtering contaminated water and reusing it for irrigation purposes.
- ✓ Further, the PM talked about MomShubu organic paper that is created without cutting trees and without using any chemicals in North East
- ✓ The people working towards furthering Pattachitra art of Odisha also found a mention in PM's address
- ✓ Chile's parliament has announced November 4 as National Yoga Day as first Yogic centre of the country was established on the same day in 1962, the PM mentioned
- ✓ He called upon the manufacturers and industries to work with the ethos of 'Zero Effect, Zero Defect'
- ✓ The story of women empowerment in the case of a group of tribal women who formed 'self help group' and set-up their own rice mill using the loan obtained under 'Ajjivika' mission in Chichgaon in Jabalpur, MP was also shared by the PM Modi
- ✓ The PM also reiterated that the government is committed to modernising agriculture and is taking many steps in that direction.
- ✓ Speaking about environment friendly initiatives, the PM cited the example of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Agriculture Market in Bowenpally of Hyderabad
- ✓ The local market is generating 500 units of electricity and 30 kilos of bio-fuel (green manure) daily by using nearly 10-tonnes of left-over waste collected each day.
- ✓ The CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT) has designed and patented the high rate bio-methanation technology-based Anaerobic Gas lift Reactor (AGR) for this ₹3 crore project
- ✓ The project is funded by the Department of Biotechnology and the Telengana government's Agriculture Marketing Department.
- ✓ He also spoke of an elderly person with disability, N S Rajappan from Kottayam in Kerala, who is deeply committed to cleanliness
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi mentioned a miracle in Bundelkhand, where strawberries are being grown in the parched, arid region using technology and terrace gardening
- ✓ A month-long strawberry festival was recently organized in Jhansi
- ✓ Strawberries are usually grown in hills
- ✓ He particularly referred to a Jhansi-based woman law student, Gurleen Chawla, who grew the fruit on her terrace, before taking it to the farm.

- ✓ Prime Minister said India's proactive stance during the Covid-19 pandemic was an example of Swami Vivekananda's approach of not feeling helpless in a crisis.
 - ✓ The PM addressed the 125th anniversary celebrations of 'Prabuddha Bharata', a monthly journal of the Ramakrishna order started by Swami Vivekananda on January 31
 - ✓ He also mentioned about the celebration of Subhas Chandra Bose's birth anniversary as 'Parakram Diwas' and the Republic Day parade at Rajpath that showcased the participation of two women IAF pilots.
 - ✓ The radio programme of the prime minister is broadcasted on last Sunday of every month.
- **India – sends one lakh Covid vaccine shots to Oman, a close partner in the Gulf, after the initial supply of vaccines to the immediate neighbours.**
- ✓ Later this week, India is scheduled to send more than five lakh doses to Afghanistan.
 - ✓ India will also send two lakh doses to Nicaragua, one lakh to Barbados, 70,000 to Dominica and 1.5 lakh to Mongolia at a later date
 - ✓ Meanwhile, around seven million made-in-India doses of AstraZeneca's Covishield vaccine will reach Pakistan under the global Covax alliance, which has announced free vaccines for 20% of Pakistan's population
 - ✓ It is part of the total committed 17 million doses of Covishield, which would reach the country by March
 - ✓ Pakistan has also contracted with China to receive the first batch of Sinopharm Covid-19 vaccine
 - ✓ Egypt, Algeria, UAE and Kuwait have all purchased vaccines and are on the commercial export list.

Country And Date	Grant	Comm. Export	Country And Date	Grant	Comm. Export
Maldives, Jan 20	1L		Brazil, Jan 22	20L	
Bhutan, Jan 20	1.5L		Morocco, Jan 22	20L	
Nepal, Jan 21	10L	20L*	Mongolia	1.5L*	10L*
Bangladesh, January 21-25	20L	50L	Saudi Arabia		30L*
Myanmar	15L	20L*	Egypt		50,000
Mauritius, Jan 22	1L		Algeria		50,000
Sri Lanka, Jan 28	5L		Kuwait		20L
Seychelles, Jan 22	50,000		Nicaragua	2L	3L*
Bahrain, Jan 28	1L		Barbados	1L*	
Oman, Jan 30	1L		Dominica	70,000*	
UAE		20L	COVAX (Africa)	100L*	
			Afghanistan	5L*	*In Feb

- ✓ Apart from the initial gift consignment, Mongolia (10 lakh) Nicaragua (3 lakh), Saudi Arabia (30 lakh), Myanmar and Bangladesh are among those who have contracted to purchase vaccines from India.
 - ✓ The UN Covax initiative will see India selling about 100 lakh doses of vaccines.
 - ✓ In addition, the UN will be buying about 4 lakh doses for its own workers all over the world.
- **The country's first Inter-Modal Station (IMS) integrating road, rail and metro terminals - will come up by the end of 2023 at Nagpur.**
 - ✓ The first phase of the project will come up on 44.5 acres in the city having the capacity to handle over three lakh passengers per day.
 - ✓ The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has invited bids for the project
 - ✓ This first-of-its kind project in India will set an example for transformation of urban transport infrastructure in India
 - ✓ The project has been designed on the lines of Salaris Transit Center in Moscow, Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center in the United States and Jiaxing Train Station in China.
 - ✓ The agency will have to complete the project in 30 months from the date of start of construction and it will be responsible for maintenance for 10 years
 - ✓ The second phase of the project will focus on commercial development to make the project financially sustainable.
 - **The Centre - is planning to push the 2021 Census to 2022 on account of the massive vaccination measures taken to deal with Covid-19 pandemic**
 - ✓ The Census exercise was to be conducted in two phases — House Listing and Housing Census from April to September 2020 and Population Enumeration from February 9 to February 28, 2021.
 - ✓ The first phase of the Census and the updating of the National Population Register (NPR) were initially to be rolled out in some States on April 1, 2020
 - ✓ However, it was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **Union Textiles Minister, Smriti Irani - inaugurated the 8th India International Silk Fair on the Virtual Portal on January 31, 2021**
 - ✓ The biggest silk fair of India is being held under one roof on the virtual platform of the Indian Silk Export Promotion Council.
 - ✓ The five day event will witness more than 200 overseas buyers and more than 100 renowned, big Indian companies who are engaged in manufacturing and trading the silk and silk blended products.
 - ✓ Around 97% of the raw mulberry silk is produced in five states namely, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Gujarat.



- ✓ Mysore and North Bangalore have proposed to come up with a US\$20 million Silk City.
- ✓ In Tamil Nadu, mulberry silk cultivation is concentrated in Salem, Erode and Dharmapuri districts.
- ✓ India is the 2nd largest producer of Silk after China and the largest consumer in the world
- ✓ India is also the only country across the world that produces all the four major varieties of silk – Mulberry, Eri, Tassar, and Muga.

DEFENCE

- **India and the US - are all set to kick off a major combat exercise 'Yudh Abhyas' in Rajasthan next week**
- ✓ This will be the first such bilateral war game after the Biden administration took charge in Washington
- ✓ The new administration had reiterated India's role as a key partner in the Indo-Pacific as well as the need to strengthen the "Quad".
- ✓ The 'Yudh Abhyas' exercise will be held at the Mahajan Field Firing ranges from February 8 to 21
- ✓ The US contingent for Yudh Abhyas will include a brigade headquarters and a battalion group of around 250 soldiers from a Stryker Brigade Combat Team.
- ✓ India will also field an infantry brigade headquarters and a battalion group from the Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry for the exercise.
- ✓ The aim of the exercise is to further enhance interoperability in counter-terrorist operations in a semi-urban, semi-desert terrain, along with attack helicopters and infantry combat vehicles.
- ✓ Earlier, India conducted the 24th edition of the topnotch 'Malabar' naval exercise with the other Quad countries (US, Japan and Australia) in November 2020
- ✓ The 'Yudh Abhyas' will be followed by the 'Vajra Prahar' land combat exercise in March.
- ✓ India, incidentally, also deployed a long-range Poseidon-8I maritime patrol aircraft and other personnel for the 'Sea Dragon' anti-submarine warfare exercise with the US, Japan, Australia and Canada from January 14 to 27 in Guam.

- ✓ The aim, interestingly, was to strengthen interoperability among partner nations for “regional contingencies”.
- ✓ India has signed four “foundational military pacts” with the US, with the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geospatial Cooperation (BECA) being concluded last year.
- **Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL) - has manufactured the last two of the 272 Su-30MKIs aircraft on contract from Russia**
- ✓ The PSU is all set to deliver them to the Indian Air Force, after the acceptance of the delivery formalities
- ✓ Out of the two aircrafts, one is certified and inducted for BrahMos modification, while another aircraft has been produced and planned to be certified by February-end
- ✓ India had got the contract for the Su-30s from Russia in batches
- ✓ Of them, 222 were assembled by HAL at its Nashik plant under transfer of technology (ToT) since 2004.
- ✓ Of the total 272 fighters, 40 are being modified to carry the air-launched version of the supersonic cruise missile BrahMos.
- ✓ The IAF has started receiving the aircraft and has deployed some at the Thanjavur airbase last year.
- ✓ The HAL has completed manufacturing the British Hawk advanced jet trainers.
- ✓ For the Dornier aircraft, the full design and manufacturing licence is with India.
- ✓ Last July, the Defence Acquisition Council approved the procurement of 12 Su-30MKI aircraft from Russia to be licence-produced by HAL at an estimated ₹10,730 crore.
- ✓ These are meant to replace the Sukhois that had crashed over the years.
- ✓ The aircraft overhaul division at Nashik would continue the repair and overhaul of the MiG and Su-30 aircraft.
- ✓ HAL is currently in the process of ramping up capacity to overhaul the Su-30s from 15 a year to 25.
- ✓ While manufacturing of Su-30s comes to an end, HAL is now gearing up for the order of 83 indigenous light combat aircraft (LCA) Tejas-MK-1A
- ✓ The deal for the LCA Tejas is expected to be signed at the Aero India show later this week at an estimated ₹47,000 crore.

SPORTS

- **Dinesh Karthik-led Tamil Nadu – clinched their second Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 crown at the Motera Stadium in Ahmedabad**
- ✓ It had defeated Baroda by seven wickets in the final match played on January 31
- ✓ Tamil Nadu finished its campaign with a clinical win, chasing down Baroda’s total of 120 with two overs to spare.



- ✓ For Tamil Nadu, left-arm spinner M. Siddharth, playing his first match of the tournament, proved to be the matchwinner after bagging four wickets in the final
- ✓ Siddharth last played a T20 game in the previous edition of the tournament against Karnataka
- ✓ He failed to get a game for Kolkata Knight Riders in the previous edition of the IPL and wasn't even retained by them for the upcoming season.
- ✓ The state had won its first title in the inaugural edition of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy in 2006-07 under the leadership of Dinesh Karthik
- ✓ More than 14 years later, Karthik continues to be the undisputed leader of the state team now also
- ✓ The team had won seven matches on the row to clinch the title
- ✓ Last year, Tamil Nadu lost the title match to Karnataka by a single run

