



## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MARCH 1, 2021

### TAMIL NADU

- **The Tamil Nadu Government - has extended the statewide lockdown till March 31.**
- ✓ However, the Government has not announced any new stricter rules this time, but has listed out the advisories issued by the Centre.
- ✓ As per the order, the district administration should strictly enforce measures to prevent and manage Covid-19 and can use provisions of Section 144 if necessary.
- ✓ The district administration will take steps to promote Covid-19 appropriate behaviour and ensure wearing of masks, hand hygiene and social distancing, demarcating containment zones and adherence to SOPs.
- ✓ Further, national directives for Covid-19 management like use of face covering and social distancing must be enforced and spitting in public should be penalised.
- ✓ The earlier announced lockdown norms were in force till February 28.
  
- **On February 26, Tamil Nadu governor Banwarilal Purohit - gave his assent to a Bill to provide 10.5% internal quota for vanniyakula kshatriya community within the 20% quota for Most Backward Classes (MBC) and Denotified Communities (DC).**
- ✓ Earlier, the State government introduced the Bill in the assembly just before the Election Commission announced the date of poll for the state and the model code of conduct came into effect
- ✓ On February 27, the state government has notified the Tamil Nadu Special Reservation of Seats in Educational Institutions Including Private Educational Institutions and of Appointments of Posts in Services under the State within the Reservation for the MBC and DC, Act, 2021 in an extraordinary gazette.
- ✓ Vanniyakula kshatriya includes vanniyar, vanniya, vannia gounder, gounder, padayachi, palli and agnikula kshatriya.

- ✓ The law provides internal reservation for three categories – 10.5% quota for MBC (vanniyakula kshatriyas), 7% for DC and the MBC Communities having similarity with DC and 2.5% for the other MBC not included in the above category.
  - ✓ This follows the recommendation of the Chairman of the TN Backward Classes Commission, based on the demand made by various communities to provide internal quota.
  - ✓ The PMK, a key ally of the AIADMK, had held a series of protests since December, demanding exclusive quota for vanniyar community.
- **Greater Chennai Corporation – became the first local body in the country to launch a dedicated WhatsApp number for communicating grievances**
- ✓ The civic body has officially launched a dedicated WhatsApp communication system — +91-9499933644 for the general public
  - ✓ People can use this number to avail services, raise queries, grievances and track them in realtime.
  - ✓ Anyone can send a ‘Hi’ and avail an array of services just by typing from the options.
  - ✓ The new system will facilitate communication between the administration and public

## NATIONAL

- **On February 28, Isro’s PSLV-C51 – launched Amazonia-1, an optical earth observation satellite from Brazil and 18 other satellites into orbit**
- ✓ It was Isro’s first launch mission in 2021 and the first dedicated mission for its commercial arm NewSpace India Limited.
  - ✓ Lasting nearly two hours, Isro’s workhorse Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C51) successfully placed these satellites into orbit
  - ✓ Around 17 minutes after the lift-off from Sriharikota’s first launch pad, the rocket injected 637kg Amazonia-1 into a 755km sun synchronous polar orbit.
  - ✓ In the next one hour 38 minutes, PSLV injected the remaining 18 satellites after it reached a lower orbit following restart of the rocket’s PS4 or upper stage engine twice.
  - ✓ It was PSLV’s 53rd flight and third flight with ‘DL’ variant carrying two strap-on boosters.
  - ✓ Amazonia-1 is an optical earth observation satellite designed, integrated, tested and operated by National Institute for Space Research, Brazil
  - ✓ It will provide remote sensing data to users for monitoring deforestation in the Amazon region and analysis of diversified agriculture across the Brazilian territory.
  - ✓ The 18 other satellites includes Satish Dhawan SAT (SDSAT) built by Space Kidz India and UNITYsat, a combination of three satellites

- ✓ The UNITYsat is designed and built by three colleges -- Sri Shakthi Institute of Engineering and Technology in Coimbatore, Jeppiar Institute of Technology in Sriperumbudur and GH Raison College of Engineering in Nagpur

### Blazing a trail

ISRO's first launch of 2021 in numbers

19

satellites, including Brazil's earth observation satellite Amazonia-1, were carried by the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, PSLV-C51

13

satellites were from the U.S.

53

rd flight of India's workhorse launch vehicle PSLV

5

satellites, including the Satish Dhawan Satellite from the Chennai-based Space Kidz India, were built by students

78

th mission from Sriharikota

- ISRO has till date launched 342 foreign satellites from 34 countries
- Amazonia-1, with a mission life of four years, will monitor deforestation in the Amazon region
- The SDSAT has an engraving of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the top panel to show solidarity and gratitude for the *aatmanirbhar* initiative and space privatisation



**Deep impact:** PSLV-C51 lifting off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, on Sunday. • PTI

- ✓ They were launched through IN-SPACe, an independent nodal agency under the department of space to facilitate and regulate space activities.
- ✓ The other 14 satellites - including SindhuNetra, an Indian technology demonstration satellite, SAI-1 NanoConnect-2, a technology demonstration satellite from the US, and 12 SpaceBEEs satellites also from the US for two-way satellite communications and data relay - were launched through NSIL.
- ✓ A picture of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and a copy of Bhagavad Gita in SD card format are part of the nanosatellite Satish Dhawan SAT (SDSAT) built by Space Kidz India
- ✓ It is a Chennai-based organisation working towards promoting space science among students.
- ✓ The PM's photo and name appear on the panel of the spacecraft.
- ✓ The names of 25,000 individuals, including 1,000 people from outside India, are etched on the panels.
- ✓ SDSAT is carrying three scientific payloads -- to study space radiation, study magnetosphere and to demonstrate a low-power wide-area communication network.

- **The government - will begin the auction of mobile telecom airwaves for the first time in five years from March 1**
- ✓ Around 2,250MHz of spectrum — worth nearly ₹ 4 lakh crore at just the reserve price — will be sold across various bands during this auction
- ✓ The designated 5G sale is not scheduled now and will happen later.
- ✓ The auctions will enable companies such as Airtel, Vodafone Idea and market leader Reliance Jio to further boost their telecom holdings.
- ✓ They will also buy back replacement spectrum for certain airwaves, the term of which is ending soon.
- ✓ The Union Cabinet had given an approval to the much awaited sale in December last year
- ✓ Airtel has already showcased a limited 5G launch on existing airwaves in Hyderabad in late January and said it is awaiting a nod by the telecom department to launch it commercially.
- ✓ Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea have submitted a total earnest money deposit (EMD) of ₹13,475 crore for the auctions, the telecom ministry said earlier this month.
- **On February 28, Prime Minister Narendra Modi – addressed the nation in his monthly radio programme ‘Mann ki Baat’**



- ✓ During his speech, the PM invited parents and teachers to give suggestions for ‘Pariksha pe Charcha’
- ✓ He said due to pressures of traditional thinking, the youth were often not able to do what they really liked
- ✓ The PM underlined that Aatmanirbhar Bharat was not just a government policy but a national spirit, and said the mantra of self-reliant India was reaching the villages.
- ✓ He called for a 100-day campaign to clean all water bodies and prepare them for rainwater harvesting before the monsoon started.
- ✓ Stressing the importance of collective responsibility towards water conservation, the PM said the Jal Shakti ministry would soon initiate a ‘Catch the Rain’ campaign with its main theme being “catch the rain where it falls, when it falls”.
- ✓ Conveying greetings on National Science Day, the PM pointed out that this day was dedicated to the discovery of ‘Raman Effect’ by Dr C V Raman.
- ✓ The PM rued not being able to make enough efforts to learn Tamil.

- **On February 27, the Government – disbursed highly subsidised loans of ₹10,000 each to nearly 29,000 beneficiaries under the PM Street vendors Atmanirbhar (PM SVAnidhi) scheme**
- ✓ The number of beneficiaries was the highest ever for a single day under the scheme
- ✓ The government launched a special drive to hold special weekly camps across districts and municipal areas to provide loans to 30 lakh beneficiaries under the scheme by March end.
- ✓ Two more such camps will be held in March to sanction and disburse all pending applications.
- ✓ Till February 28, 38.18 lakh street vendors had submitted their applications for the PM SVAnidhi scheme and loans for 21.77 lakh applicants were sanctioned.

## **CONFERENCES & SUMMITS**

- **On May 8, India, led by PM Narendra Modi - will hold a summit meeting with all 27 heads of government of the European Union in the Portuguese city of Porto.**
- ✓ The summit will be followed by a bilateral meeting between PM Modi and Portuguese PM Antonio Costa, as well as a business round-table between Indian and European industry.
- ✓ The five priority areas between India and EU are green transition, digital transition, social transition, resilience and “openness”
- ✓ Portugal took over the presidency of the EU in January 2021
- ✓ Interestingly, the first India-EU summit in 2000 was also under a Portuguese presidency.
- ✓ Europe has to approve its own climate law, with the aim of becoming the first carbon-neutral continent by 2050.
- ✓ From the Indian perspective, the summit will give it an opportunity to showcase its commitment to climate, connectivity and trade and investment.
- ✓ The Indo-Pacific is expected to be a focus topic of conversation between the two sides.

## **SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT**

- **On February 27, the US FDA - authorised Johnson & Johnson’s single-shot Covid-19 vaccine for emergency use**
- ✓ This begins the rollout of a third effective vaccine after the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines
- ✓ Starting from next week, Johnson & Johnson has pledged to provide the Americans with 100 million doses by the end of June.
- ✓ This is apart from the 600 million doses from the two-shot vaccines developed by Pfizer-Bio-NTech and Moderna, which are scheduled to arrive by the end of July
- ✓ This cost-effective vaccine can be stored in the refrigerator rather than a freezer

- ✓ The new vaccine's 72% efficacy rate in US clinical trial site falls short of the roughly 95% rate found in studies testing the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines.
  - ✓ Across all trial sites, the Johnson & Johnson vaccine also showed 85% efficacy against severe forms of Covid-19 and 100% efficacy against hospitalisation and death.
  - ✓ The countries including United Kingdom (UK), European Union (EU) and Canada have already ordered the vaccine doses.
  - ✓ Further, 500 million doses have been ordered in accordance with the COVAX scheme so as to supply the vaccines to poorer countries.
  - ✓ The COVAX scheme, consisting of 165 countries till now, was launched to provide equitable access to the COVID-19 vaccines
  - ✓ It is led by Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), World Health Organization (WHO) and Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI).
  - ✓ The scheme is one among the three pillars of "Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator" (ACT Accelerator)
  - ✓ This is an initiative launched in April 2020 by World Health Organization, European Commission, and government of France to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - ✓ This initiative, launched by G20 countries, was announced by Saudi Arabia's Minister of Finance, Mohammed al-Jadaan in April 2020.
- **The Computer maker HP - has developed its first ever consumer PC using the plastic wastes from the ocean.**
- ✓ The company has manufactured the Pavilion 13, Pavilion 14, and Pavilion 15 Laptops using the ocean-bound plastics.
  - ✓ According to HP, using plastics in such electronic devices will result into moving around 92,000 plastic bottles from the oceans and landfills.
  - ✓ Outer boxes and fibre cushion that were used to pack the laptops are also made with the 100% recyclable material.
  - ✓ As per the HP, these Pavilion PCs are having Wi-Fi 6 that will provide up to four times faster Wi-Fi speeds.
  - ✓ Further, they will also be providing 75% lower latency.
  - ✓ Plastics pollutants are categorized into three different sizes namely, micro debris, meso debris and macro debris on the basis of their size.
  - ✓ As per an estimate, 1.1 to 8.8 million tonnes plastic waste enter into the ocean from coastal communities per year.

