

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – APRIL 29, 2021

TAMIL NADU

- **Former Tamil Nadu chief secretary Girija Vaidyanathan – declines to take up the post of expert member at the National Green Tribunal’s Southern Zone in Chennai**
- ✓ This decision was communicated by her to the Union ministry for environment, forest and climate change



- ✓ As a result, K Satyagopal has been asked to join the NGT SZ as an expert member with immediate effect, according to NGT principal bench's order dated April 27
- ✓ In the first week of April, the Union ministry appointed Girija Vaidyanathan an expert member
- ✓ But a section of environmentalists opposed this claiming she didn't have sufficient experience in dealing with environment-related issues.
- ✓ Poovulagin Nanbargal, an environmental advocacy group, approached the Madras high court, which refused later to stay the appointment.

STATES

- **Maharashtra – to adopt the ICMR- approved dry swab technology for RT-PCR tests in all the laboratories.**
- ✓ This method will enable the Covid-19 test reports be available in four hours

- ✓ In the dry swab method, the nasal and throat swabs are collected and transported in a dry state without the expensive liquid viral transport medium
- ✓ This method has an advantage over the traditional method of RT-PCT tests, as the handling of samples becomes easy and less prone to spillage and spread of infection.
- ✓ The testing excludes the RNA isolation step from the sample, thereby reducing the time needed to process the results from 12 hours to just four hours.
- ✓ The CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) has developed this technology.
- ✓ The routine RT-PCR test results often takes 12 to 13 hours as against just four hours for some 500 samples with the new technology
- ✓ Maharashtra increased daily testing from 1,20,000 per day to 2,50,000 in the first two weeks of April.

DEFENCE

- **On April 28, the DRDO – test-fired successfully the Israeli short-range weapon Python-5 air-to-air missile from the indigenous Tejas light combat aircraft at Goa**



- ✓ The fifth-generation infra-red guided Python-5 missiles, which have a range of around 20km, will add to the air-to-air combat capability of Tejas.
- ✓ The Israeli Derby beyond visual range missiles, with a 50km range, had earlier been integrated with the fighter.
- ✓ The test-firing of the two missiles completed a series of trials to validate their performance under extremely challenging scenarios.
- ✓ The Derby missile achieved a direct hit on a high-speed manoeuvring aerial target.
- ✓ The Python missiles also achieved 100% hits, thereby validating their complete capability.
- ✓ Prior to the actual testfirings, extensive missile carriage flight tests were conducted at Bengaluru to assess the integration of the Python-5 with aircraft systems on board the Tejas

- ✓ The tests ranges from avionics and fire-control radars to missile weapon delivery and flight control systems.
- ✓ After successful separation trials at Goa, the live launch of the Python on a Banshee target was carried out.
- ✓ In all the live firings, the missile hit the aerial targets.

APPOINTMENTS

- **Expenditure secretary T V Somanathan - has been designated as the finance secretary, following the approval of the appointments committee of the Cabinet**



- ✓ This was announced by a personnel ministry order issued on April 28
- ✓ He is a 1987-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the Tamil Nadu cadre.
- ✓ The senior-most officer among all the 5 secretaries — Revenue, Economic Affairs, Financial Services, Expenditure and DIPAM — in the finance ministry is designated as the finance secretary.
- ✓ His main role is coordination in the Ministry besides playing a key role in the budget making.
- ✓ Somanathan's batchmate Debasish Panda is appointed as secretary, Department of financial services.
- ✓ Tuhin Kanta Pandey and Ajay Seth are appointed as secretaries, Department of investment and public asset management (DIPAM) and Department of economic affairs, respectively.
- ✓ Tarun Bajaj, a 1988-batch IAS officer of the Haryana cadre, is announced as the new revenue secretary.

OBITUARY

- **90-year old Michael Collins, who piloted the Apollo 11 spacecraft 'Columbia' - died of cancer on April 28**
- ✓ Michael piloted the spacecraft in orbit 97km above the moon while his crewmates, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin, became the first men to walk on the lunar surface

- ✓ Michael is often described as the “forgotten” third astronaut on the historic mission
- ✓ He remained alone in the command module for over 21 hours until his two fellow astronauts returned.



- ✓ When the lunar module Eagle, descending from Columbia, touched down on the moon on July 20, 1969, Collins lost contact with his crewmates and with Nasa
- ✓ That was because his line of communication got blocked as he passed over the moon’s far side.
- ✓ After 48 minutes cut off from any human voice, he emerged from moon’s far side.
- ✓ He contacted Nasa and learned that the lunar module had touched down safely, with Armstrong famously mentioning over radio “...The Eagle has landed.”
- ✓ Collins had carried a packet around his neck containing 18 contingency plans for rescuing his crewmates.
- ✓ His 1974 memoir was titled as “Carrying the Fire.”

