

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAY 13, 2021

TAMIL NADU

- **On May 12, DMK's M Appavu – won the election for the post of Speaker of Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly at the historic Fort St George in Chennai.**



- ✓ The veteran schoolteacher-turned-politician was elected from Radhapuram constituency for the fourth time in the just concluded assembly election
- ✓ Former DMK Minister K. Pitchandi, elected from Keezhpennathur constituency, was elected for the post of Deputy Speaker.
- ✓ The ornate chair of the speaker was presented by Lord Willingdon, the governor of Madras Presidency to the President of Madras Legislative Council as a personal gift in March 1922.
- ✓ It has a strong resemblance to the chair in the House of Commons in the United Kingdom.
- ✓ Earlier, on May 10, K Pitchandi was administered oath of office as pro-tem Speaker by Governor Banwarilal Purohit at the Raj Bhavan.
- ✓ K Pitchandi administered the oath to 223 newly elected legislators on May 11
- ✓ Incidentally, Appavu is the fifth assembly speaker from Tirunelveli district.
- ✓ The 18th speaker in the assembly, Appavu was elected thrice from Radhapuram as a candidate of G K Moopanar's TMC, an Independent and as a DMK candidate.

- ✓ The name of Appavu, who is always dressed in khadi, for the post of Speaker was proposed by Chief Minister M K Stalin
- **Tamil Nadu government - will float global tenders soon for buying Covid-19 vaccines to inoculate more than 3.65 crore people in the 18-45 age group in the state**
 - ✓ This was announced by chief minister M K Stalin after a review meeting with senior ministers and officials on May 12.
 - ✓ Nearly 45% of the state's population belongs to this age group.
 - ✓ The Centre allowed states to start vaccination for adults below 44 years from May 1 but said supply of shots must come from the states' side.
 - ✓ On May 1, Tamil Nadu did not start the drive as it did not have adequate vaccine stock.
 - ✓ However, with increasing number of cases and deaths among healthy people below 40 years, the state has decided to vaccinate people for free from this age group on "high priority".
 - ✓ Many states, including Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka, are also floating global tenders, making way for Pfizer and Moderna to supply their vaccines in the country.
 - ✓ Since January, vaccines purchased by the Union government at ₹150 per vial have been used for vaccinating people above 45 years of age.
 - ✓ In Chennai, two hospitals – Apollo Hospitals and Gleneagles Global – offer vaccines for adults.
 - ✓ Industries minister Thangam Thennarasu, medical and public health minister Ma Subramanian, and finance and human resources management minister Palanivel Thiagarajan were among those present in the meeting.
- **The bi-annual exercise to collect data on animals and their prey – has begun in the Anaimalai tiger reserve**
 - ✓ The eight-day pre-monsoon drive is part of the annual tiger census conducted in the tiger reserve
 - ✓ The exercise will give an indication about the prey base in wooded areas, pollution and human-related pressure on the habitat, degradation of forests, the predator base and its density.
 - ✓ Foot soldiers - rangers, foresters, guards, watchers and anti-poaching watchers - will trek through designated lines and record sightings of wildlife in a data sheet.
 - ✓ Beat-wise monitoring of signs and encounters of animals, vegetation, habitat disturbances are part of the Phase-I protocols and will cover the entire tiger reserve.
 - ✓ Data on tiger/carnivore signs, encounter rates, habitat status, human presence and pellet/dung counts will help prepare beat level maps indicating the spatial presence of prey/predator species.

- ✓ The Anamalai Tiger Reserve is spread over 958.6 sq km plus a buffer area of 150.5 sq km
- ✓ It has 32 beats in Pollachi division, 21 in Tirupur and 13 in buffer areas.
- ✓ Apart from prey density, 575 sample plots have been set aside for data on vegetation such as tree density, canopy cover, shrub and weed abundance and ground cover.
- ✓ A similar exercise at Mudumalai is expected to begin on May 15
- ✓ The reserves in Sathyamangalam, Kalakkad-Mundanthurai and Srivilliputhur Megamalai are yet to decide on the date for the exercise

NATIONAL

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - will release the eighth instalment under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi, or PM-Kisan scheme on May 14**



- ✓ This was announced by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare
 - ✓ The DBT assistance will transfer more than Rs. 19,000 crore to more than 9.5 crore beneficiary farmer families
 - ✓ Under the Scheme, the centre transfers Rs 6,000 to the bank account of small and marginal farmers in three equal instalments every four months.
 - ✓ The first tranche of direct income transfer of ₹2,000 was released from Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh in 2018 to help farmers pay for cultivation costs and reducing debts.
 - ✓ The first instalment of Rs 2,000 is usually made between April and June, while the second instalment is made between August and November.
 - ✓ The third instalment is made between December and March.
 - ✓ The scheme provides financial support to farmers who hold land ownership up to two hectares.
 - ✓ Since its inception, the government has transferred Rs 75,000 crore to the bank accounts of over 125 million farmers.
- **The International Energy Agency (IEA) – has submitted its latest ‘Renewable energy market outlook’ for the year 2021**

- ✓ According to the report, India is expected to add three times more renewable energy capacity this year than it did last year and set new records by 2022
- ✓ However, China will remain the global centre of demand and supply, according to the report.
- ✓ India's capacity additions had declined by almost 50% to a little over 5 GW (gigawatts) last year compared with 2019



- ✓ The Indian government awarded 27 GW of PV (solar photovoltaic projects) in the central and state auctions in 2020, which is the primary driver of PV growth this year and the next, as per the report.
- ✓ The installed solar generation capacity in India as of 30th April was 40.5 gigawatts and the capacity under installation was 36.48 gigawatts.
- ✓ The capacity under bid is 24.42 gigawatts, adding up the total to 101.39 gigawatts
- ✓ Globally, the report said, renewable will continue to grow rapidly in the next two years and China will account for 45% of new capacity this year (150GW to 230GW) and 58% in 2022.
- ✓ The agency has increased its forecast for the global growth of solar energy and wind energy by 25% in the year 2021
- ✓ A total of 280 GW of the renewable energy was installed in 2020, which was around 45% increase as compared to that of 2019.
- ✓ During 2020, the wind power increased by 90%, the solar power (Photo Voltaic) increased by 50%, while the biofuel production dropped by 8% in volume
- ✓ The demand of biofuel is to rebound by 7% in 2021 to the levels of 2019

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **On May 12, Bharat Biotech's Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin - was recommended by an expert panel for phase II/III clinical trial on those aged between 2 to 18 years**

- ✓ The trials will be conducted on 525 kids at multiple sites, including Delhi, Patna and Nagpur
- ✓ Earlier, Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine has become the first vaccine globally to get approval from US drug regulator for use on children aged 12-15 years
- ✓ The nod from the subject expert committee (SEC) has been granted for conducting trials to evaluate the safety, reactogenicity and immunogenicity of Covaxin on kids.
- ✓ The firm will have to submit interim safety data of the proposed phase II trial on children before it will be allowed to proceed to the phase III leg of the study.
- ✓ Further, the recommendations of the Data & Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB) to the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) will also have to be submitted.
- ✓ In fact, Covaxin was the first Covid-19 vaccine globally to begin testing on children as young as 12 years in September 2020.
- ✓ The phase II trials of Covaxin, which was a double-blinded study on 380 volunteers, included participants in the 12 to 65 years age bracket.
- ✓ Covaxin was indigenously developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)-NIV, Pune

OBITUARY


- **Former national Table Tennis champion and acclaimed coach, Venugopal Chandrasekhar (63 years) – passes away in Chennai due to Covid-19 complications**



- ✓ Chandra, as he was fondly called, was one of the most popular paddlers of his time who won three national championships.
- ✓ The Chennai-born player, who had reached the semifinals of the Commonwealth Games in 1982, was also a successful coach and Arjuna award winner
- ✓ In 1970, Chandra became the Tamil Nadu sub-junior champion and went on to become the state junior champion in 1973
- ✓ His playing career was cut short in 1984 following a botched knee surgery at Apollo hospital in Chennai which led to him losing mobility, speech and vision.

- ✓ He fought back to recover and served the game as a coach.
 - ✓ He was a gold medallist in BA (Economics) and Law from Madras University at the time of the career-ending injury.
 - ✓ Chandra was the president of Tamizhaga Table Tennis Association and Director and head coach of the SDAT-Medimix TT Academy in Chennai
 - ✓ Current Indian paddler G Sathiyan and former national champion S Raman were among his trainees.
 - ✓ Players such as Chetan Baboor, M S Mythili, N R Indu and Preyesh Suresh Raj are some of the prominent names who have benefitted from Chandra's expertise.
- **K Ragothaman (76 years), a former CBI officer who was part of the investigation into former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's assassination - died of Covid-19 in Chennai on May 12**
- ✓ Ragothaman joined the CBI in 1968 as a sub-inspector in Delhi and had a 37-year service.
 - ✓ He was part of the Special Investigation Team that probed the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.
 - ✓ During his stint in Delhi, he was part of the various probe teams
 - ✓ He was involved in the investigation of UGC grants scam by various educational institutions in Delhi, the murder abetment case against former Karnataka home minister R L Jalappa and the case against former BCCI president A C Muthiah, accused of defrauding Syndicate Bank of ₹102.8 crore.

REMEMBERING CBI'S SUPER COP TOI

<p>➤ K Ragothaman joined CBI as sub-inspector of police in 1968</p> <p>➤ He was part of the CBI squad that arrested former PM Indira Gandhi, handled UGC grants scam case, former PM Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, Jalappa case in K'taka</p> <p>HE AUTHORED BOOKS Conspiracy to Kill Rajiv Gandhi Third Degree Crime Investigation Management</p>	
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- ✓ Ragothaman was the recipient of the Police Medal in 1988 and President Medal in 1994
- ✓ He retired in 2005 as CBI's Special Unit Superintendent of Police
- ✓ Later, he produced a documentary, "Human Bomb" and published "Conspiracy to Kill Rajiv Gandhi" in English and Tamil as well as "Third Degree Crime Investigation Management."
- ✓ His latest book titled 'Rarest of rare case - Murder of an advocate' was published recently

VACCINES IN VARIOUS STATES – A REPORT

STATE OF VACCINES

Some vaccines are being sent to states by the Centre, some are sourced by states themselves while some are being procured and administered by private hospitals. **TOI** finds out where they are free and where they are available at a price ...

VACCINES FOR FREE

Available at govt hospitals (sent to states by Centre or procured by states themselves)

For 18-44 & 45+ years

Assam | Andhra Pradesh | Bihar | Chandigarh | Chhattisgarh | Delhi | Goa | Gujarat | Haryana | Himachal Pradesh | Jammu & Kashmir | Jharkhand | Karnataka | Kerala | Madhya Pradesh | Maharashtra | Odisha (For 18-44 yrs only in Bhubaneswar) | Punjab | Rajasthan | Uttarakhand | Uttar Pradesh | West Bengal

For 45+ years only

Tamil Nadu | Telangana



VACCINES AT A COST

Pvt hospitals procuring & administering vaccines, at a cost**

- > Andhra Pradesh (Covaxin at Rs 1,250) 900/dose
- > Delhi (Rs 900-1,250/dose)
- > Goa (Covaxin at Rs 1,350/dose)
- > Gujarat (Covishield at Rs 850/dose)
- > Karnataka (Covaxin at Rs 1,350/dose & Covishield at Rs 850/dose)
- > Kerala (Covaxin at Rs 1,250/dose)
- > Maharashtra (Covaxin at Rs 1,250/dose & Covishield at Rs 700-900/dose)
- > Rajasthan (Covaxin at Rs 1,250/dose & Covishield at Rs 600)
- > Tamil Nadu (Covaxin at Rs 1,250-1,500/dose & Covishield at Rs 850/dose)
- > Telangana (Covaxin at Rs 1,200/dose & Covishield at Rs 850/dose when vaccination restarts)
- > West Bengal (Covaxin at Rs 1,500/dose & Covishield at Rs 850/dose)



** In some states, only a select few private hospitals are administering vaccines

STATES WHERE NO VACCINATION HAPPENING IN PRIVATE HOSPITALS



Assam | Bihar | Chandigarh UT | Chhattisgarh | Haryana | Himachal Pradesh | Jharkhand | Madhya Pradesh | Odisha | Uttar Pradesh (Only 3 private hospitals in Noida are providing for Rs 850/900 for Covishield, Rs 1,250 for Covaxin) | Uttarakhand

Note: #In some states, private hospitals are providing vaccines - from the central quota - for 45+ age group at Rs 250 per dose, subject to availability. But in many states, the hospitals have returned the unused vaccines

#Many states are not vaccinating at present due to lack of vaccine stocks