

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS –jUNE 13,

TAMIL NADU

- **Chief Minister M K Stalin - opened the sluice gates of the Stanley Reservoir at Mettur in Salem district on June 12 and released water for irrigation**
- ✓ Initially, 3,000 cubic feet per second (cusecs) water was released to irrigate the kuruvai crops in the delta districts.
- ✓ The quantity of water being released was later increased to 10,000 cusecs in the evening and is likely to be maintained at the same level for the next few days.



- ✓ According to the CM, close to 5.2 lakh acres of fertile land across 16 districts would benefit from the water release.
- ✓ This is the 18th time that the water was being released from the dam on the traditional date of June 12.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu will need 125 tmc water from the period between June 12 to September 15th for Kuruvai crop cultivation
- ✓ Of this, 99.74 tmc water is usually released from Mettur reservoir and the remaining 25.26 tmc water will be provided by seasonal rains and ground water

- ✓ Similarly, the state requires 205.60 tmc water to irrigate 12 lakh ten thousand acre for Samba crop cultivation from the period between September 15 to January 28.
- ✓ For this, the state releases 108.50 tmc water from Mettur and the remaining 97.10 tmc water is balanced by seasonal rains and replenishment of ground water.
- **The state Hindu religious and charitable endowments (HR&CE) department - has planned to offer archakar (priest) course to all Hindus, including women**
- ✓ This was announced by the HR&CE minister P K Sekar Babu said on June 12 after chairing a review meeting
- ✓ The state plans to offer training to women who are interested in becoming priests in temples managed by the department
- ✓ According to the Minister, trained non-brahmin priests would be appointed in temples managed by the department by following due processes before the completion of the DMK government's first 100 days in power.
- ✓ Regarding the priesthood training for women, a dalit woman was appointed priest in a temple at Mangaluru in Karnataka a few years ago.
- ✓ There are some temples across the country, where women alone are permitted to do poojas as per traditional norms.
- ✓ Earlier, the state government under former CM M Karunanidhi has launched one-year junior archakar's course in 2007-2008
- ✓ A total of 206 people passed the course, which was held at six temples in Tiruvannamalai, Tiruchendur, Palani, Madurai, Srirangam and Triplicane.
- ✓ Among them, two were appointed as priests in Madurai and Pudukottai districts
- **The state government - has set up a technical committee to resolve issues pertaining to the granting of single-window clearance to projects**
- ✓ It comprises officials from guidance Tamil Nadu and various other departments
- ✓ The new committee is expected to improve ease of doing business in the state
- ✓ The committee is headed by the Managing Director of Guidance Tamil Nadu, while the executive director in the same wing is the member secretary.
- ✓ The project manager, system integrator of the single window portal and the nodal officers of the government departments would be members
- ✓ The government has also put in place an operating mechanism for effective functioning of the single window portal for granting the clearances.

NATIONAL

- **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman - chaired the 44th GST Council meeting held through video conference on June 12, 2021**
- ✓ The meeting was convened exclusively to discuss providing tax relief on Covid-19 related individual items based on the report of the Group of Ministers

- ✓ It was attended by Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur alongwith finance ministers of states and Union territories and senior officers from Union government and states
- ✓ During the meeting, the GST Council decided to reduce the tax rate to 5% for 14 major pandemic essential items
- ✓ The GoM had recommended reducing the GST rates on a number of Covid-related relief items including medical oxygen, cylinders, ventilators, concentrators, BiPAP machines, high flow nasal cannula (HFNC) devices, Covid testing kits, pulse oximeters and life-saving drugs like Remdesivir, Heparin etc., which may be domestically produced or commercially imported

REVISED RATE CARD

GST rate in %	Current	New
Amphotericin B, Amphotericin B	5	Nil
Remdesivir, anti-coagulants like Heparin	12	5
Any drug recommended by health ministry, pharma dept for Covid treatment	Applicable rate	5
Medical grade oxygen, concentrators, ventilators, Bi-pap etc; Covid & specified inflammatory testing kits, pulse oximeter	12	5
Hand sanitizer; temp check equipment; gas/electric/other fumaces for crematorium, including installation, etc	18	5
Ambulances	28	12

- ✓ Any other drug recommended by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) and Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP) for Covid treatment will be taxed at 5%
- ✓ Ambulances, which are currently taxed at the highest slab of 28%, will attract a GST levy of 12%
- ✓ These reduced rates will remain in effect atleast till September 30, 2021
- ✓ Further, the GST Council decided to waive the tax levied on two critical drugs against Covid-19 and mucormycosis — tocilizumab and amphotericin B - respectively
- ✓ The 5% GST levied on vaccines was left unchanged, despite strong demands for the reduction
- ✓ The group of ministers (GoM) committee was constituted, as discussed in the earlier GST council meeting on May 28, under Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma on June 6
- **The government – has restructured the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid) and Electric Vehicles II (FAME II) scheme by announcing various incentives on June 11, 2021**
- ✓ According to the new revisions, the incentive on Electric Two Wheelers is being increased from Rs 10,000 per kWh to Rs. 15,000 per kWh

- ✓ Further, the Department of Heavy Industries (DHI) increased the limit on the incentives for an e-two-wheeler, which is now capped at 40% of its price, from the earlier limit of 20%
- ✓ Accordingly, any Electric two-wheeler with a 1kWh battery will be eligible for a discount of Rs 15,000, ones with a 2kWh battery will be eligible for a subsidy of Rs. 30,000.
- ✓ The newly announced incentives are expected to bring down prices of electric two-wheelers by anywhere between ₹7,000-₹15,000.
- ✓ According to the Society of Manufacturers of Electric Vehicles, electric two-wheeler sales declined by 6% in FY21 to 143,837 units from 152,000 units in FY20.
- ✓ The Fame-II scheme was launched in April 2019 under the National Mission for Clean Mobility to generate demand for hybrid and electric vehicles and will be in place till 2022
- ✓ The Rs. 10,000-crore scheme aims to support the manufacturing of 7000 e-Buses, 5 lakh e-3-wheelers, 55000 e-4-wheeler passenger cars (including strong hybrid) and 10 lakh e-2-wheelers

INTERNATIONAL

- **US President Joe Biden and the G7 - announced a new plan, called “Build Back Better for the World”, on June 12 at the G7- Summit held under the chairmanship of the United Kingdom**



- ✓ The new plan is a US-inspired global infrastructure initiative, announced as a rival plan to China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)
- ✓ It offers an alternative option to low- and middle-income countries, including India, to finance their infrastructure needs

- ✓ The G7 plan is likely to benefit India, which is concerned about BRI initiatives in its neighbourhood, including in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh and other small South and Southeast Asian countries.
- ✓ India considers the BRI as a way for China to expand its economic and political influence.
- ✓ India has refused to join the Chinese initiatives and objects to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, part of the BRI, as it passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.
- ✓ Led by major democracies, the infrastructure initiative will cater to the over \$40 trillion infrastructure need in the developing world
- ✓ Through the scheme, the G7 and other “like-minded partners” will coordinate in mobilising private-sector capital in four areas of focus — climate, health & health security, digital technology, and gender equity & equality — with investments from their respective development finance institutions.
- ✓ The investments will be made in a manner consistent with achieving the goals of the Paris climate agreement.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi – addressed the G-7 summit at the first outreach session on health on June 12, 2021**



- ✓ The session, titled ‘Building Back Stronger - Health’, focused on global recovery from the coronavirus pandemic
- ✓ During the meeting, the PM sought the G-7’s support for the proposal moved at the WTO by India and South Africa for a TRIPS waiver on Covid-related technologies
- ✓ PM Modi said there is need for a message of “One World One Health” to be delivered from the meeting
- ✓ Further, the PM’s emphasis on keeping open supply chains for vaccine raw materials and components to help ramp up vaccine production in countries like India received widespread support.
- ✓ The PM also expressed appreciation for the support and assistance extended to India during the recent second wave of Covid surge.

- ✓ On June 13, PM Modi is expected to speak at two other outreach sessions.

AWARDS

- **Megha Rajagopalan of BuzzFeed News, an Indian-origin journalist along with two other colleagues, Alison Killing and Christo Buschek — won the US' top journalism award 'Pulitzer Prize' in the International reporting category**



- ✓ Megha was awarded for innovative investigative reports exposing China's Uyghur Muslims detention camps using satellite images
- ✓ This was the first Pulitzer for BuzzFeed News, a digital news publication founded in 2014
- ✓ Megha interviewed about two dozen former prisoners to identify a vast infrastructure of prisons and mass internment camps secretly built by China for the mass detention of Muslims in Xinjiang region since 2017.
- ✓ In 2017, Megha, who was reporting from China, was the first to visit an internment camp at a time when China denied about the existence of such places.
- ✓ Following this, Megha was asked to leave from China and the Chinese government refused to renew her visa
- ✓ Then, Megha travelled to neighbouring Kazakhstan to interview former detainees who had fled there
- ✓ She identified 260 detention camps, after building a voluminous database of about 50,000 possible sites, where 1 million Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and other Muslim minorities being detained
- ✓ For this work, Megha was conferred the Human Rights Press Award in 2018.
- ✓ She also won a Mirror Award in 2019 for an investigation uncovering the links between Facebook and religious violence in Sri Lanka.
- ✓ She was selected as an Asia 21 Young Leader in 2019
- ✓ Megha, born to parents from India, was raised in Maryland near Washington DC and went to the University of Maryland.
- ✓ **Neil Bedi, the other Indian-origin journalist, along with colleague Kathleen McGrory at Tampa Bay Times won the Local Reporting Prize, as announced by the Pulitzer board on June 11**

- ✓ Neil has been awarded for the series exposing a Sheriff's Office initiative that used computer modelling to identify people believed to be future crime suspects.
- ✓ About 1,000 people were monitored under the programme, including children.
- ✓ Teenaged non-journalist Darnella Frazier was awarded a Pulitzer Special Citation for her courage in filming the killing of George Floyd, the African-American who died in police custody in Minneapolis last year.
- ✓ This is the 105th year of the Pulitzer Prizes awarded by a board at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism in New York recognising the outstanding work in the field of journalism.
- ✓ Pulitzer prizes are awarded every year in twenty-one categories.
- ✓ In twenty of these categories, each winner receives a certificate and a \$15,000 cash award.
- ✓ The winner in the public service category is awarded a gold medal.

SPORTS

- **The 25-year-old World No. 33 Barbora Krejčíková of Czech republic – won the Women's singles title at the French Open in Paris on June 12**



- ✓ In the final, Krejčíková, defeated the injured Russian World No. 32 Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 6-1, 3-6, 6-4 to clinch her first major singles crown
- ✓ She was fittingly presented with the Coupe Suzanne-Lenglen by Czech-born American Martina Navratilova.
- ✓ Krejčíková is the first Czech woman after Hana Mandlíková in 1981 (playing for the former Czechoslovakia) to win the French Open.
- ✓ She also became the first player to win both the women's singles and doubles title in Paris since Mary Pierce completed the feat in 2000.
- ✓ On June 13, Krejčíková won the women's doubles trophy with compatriot Katerina Siniakova, beating Iga Świątek and Bethanie Mattek-Sands in straight sets
- ✓ This is her second doubles trophy at the French Open after winning the doubles event in 2018
- ✓ The pair Krejčíková and Siniakova also won the 2019 Wimbledon doubles title
- ✓ The 25-year-old Krejčíková will climb to 15th in singles following her maiden Grand Slam singles title

- ✓ She will also return as the world number one doubles player when the rankings are to be updated on June 14
- **On June 12, the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) - confirmed that Mirabai Chanu (49kg) has qualified for the Tokyo Olympics.**



- ✓ Chanu had secured her Olympic berth by winning a bronze in the Asian Championship in April.
 - ✓ She has qualified on the basis of her second place on IWF's Absolute Ranking list.
 - ✓ Chanu was earlier ranked fourth but North Korea's withdrawal from Olympics lifted her to second place.
 - ✓ The 26-year-old Chanu became the one and only Indian weightlifter to qualify for this year's Tokyo Olympics in 49kg category
 - ✓ Hailing from the northeastern state of Manipur, Mirabai Chanu first bagged the silver medal in women's 48kg at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.
 - ✓ This will be the second Olympics for Chanu, after the 2016 Rio Games where she failed to lift any of the weights in clean and jerk events in Brazil.
 - ✓ Chanu lifted 86kg in snatch and a world record of 119kg in clean and jerk for a total of 205kg to set a new world record in clean and jerk while also bettering her own national record in the process.
 - ✓ The first and last time India won an Olympic medal in the sport of Weightlifting was back in the year 2000 when Karnam Malleswari clinched the bronze medal in women's 69kg weight division at the Sydney Games
- **David Alexander Robertson, coach of Kashmir's famous football club Real Kashmir FC - has been honoured with British Empire Medal (BEM) for his services to the community in the valley and strengthening UK-India relations**
- ✓ The awards were announced on June 12 by the British government to mark the occasion of Queen Elizabeth II's official birthday
 - ✓ The award recognises Robertson's outstanding contribution to the sport and the community as head coach of RKFC since January 2017.



- ✓ Robertson's achievement included guiding the RKFC football team into the I-League – the first time the team has competed at this level
- ✓ The club, which came into existence in 2016, shot to limelight by winning the second division I-league in May 2018.
- ✓ In the three seasons since, they have finished third (2018-19), fourth (2019-20) and fifth (2020-21).
- ✓ They also stood third in the main I-league in their maiden season.
- ✓ Popularly known as 'Snow leopards', the team won last year's IFA Shield tournament, the club's first major victory since its inception.
- ✓ The club has received attention the world over and BBC Scotland made a documentary named "Return to Real Kashmir FC" that followed the team and their Scottish manager Robertson.
- ✓ The documentary won the 'Single Documentary' category award at the British Academy Film and Television Arts (BAFTA).
- ✓ The BEM is a British and Commonwealth award for meritorious civil or military service worthy of recognition by the Crown.

