

## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JUNE 6, 2021

### TAMIL NADU

- **On June 5, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister – announced cancellation of Class XII state board exams, considering the Covid-19 pandemic situation in the state**
  - ✓ The CM said that a committee headed by school education secretary will decide on the evaluation criteria to award marks to Class XII students
  - ✓ The committee will also include higher education secretary, Madras University vice-chancellor, and school headmasters.
  - ✓ Based on the committee's report, marks would be awarded and admissions to higher educational institutions would be based on these marks
  - ✓ The decision comes three days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi cancelled CBSE Class XII board exams.
  - ✓ The CM also wrote a letter to the PM urging him to cancel national-level entrance exams such as NEET considering the Covid-19 situation.
  - ✓ The state government held discussions with parents, teachers, educationists, health experts and political parties over the past three days on conducting Class XII exams.
  - ✓ During the legislature parties meeting held on June 5, except five parties including the BJP, the PMK, the CPI and the CPM, other parties wanted board exams to be held.
  
- **On June 5, the Tamil Nadu government – announced relaxations in the curbs, while extending the lockdown in the state by a week till June 14**
  - ✓ The government has allowed the reopening of shops selling essential commodities, vegetables and groceries between 6am to 5pm from June 7
  - ✓ Tasmac outlets, tea shops, standalone shops other than those selling groceries, vegetables and fruits, commercial malls, textile and jewellery showrooms and cinema theatres will remain closed.
  - ✓ No activity will be permitted in containment zones across the state.

## TRAVEL TO TOURIST SPOTS PROHIBITED

WHAT IS ALLOWED?	WHAT IS NOT PERMITTED?
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Grocery, veg, meat &amp; fish shops between 6am and 5pm</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Tasmac outlets; tea shops; standalone shops</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Government offices with 30% workforce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Malls; cinema theatres; pvt establishments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Veg, fruits &amp; flowers sales on footpaths between 6am and 5pm</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Textile &amp; jewellery showrooms; dine-in in hotels &amp; restaurants</li> </ul> 
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Sub-registrar offices with 50% tokens a day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Salons, spas, beauty parlours</li> <li>&gt; Public and private bus transport, metro rail</li> </ul>

- ✓ Curbs on public and private bus transport and metro rail will continue.
- ✓ Takeaway services will continue to be permitted in restaurants, hotels, bakeries and mess from 6am to 10am, noon to 3pm and from 6pm to 9pm.
- ✓ People employed in private organisations and IT/ITES companies must work from home.
- ✓ All government offices can function with 30% workforce across the state and sub-registrar offices can issue 50% tokens a day for registrations
- ✓ Passengers with e-registration shall be permitted in rental vehicles, taxis and autos.
- ✓ Taxis will be permitted with three passengers apart from driver, and autos will be permitted with two passengers
- ✓ Travelling to The Nilgiris, Kodaikanal, Yercaud, Yelagiri and Courtallam for emergency reasons will be permitted after getting e-pass from the respective district collectors.
- ✓ Inter-state and inter-district travel in case of individuals allowed for medical emergencies/funeral/last rites with e-registration, while intra-district travel for the same reasons is allowed without e-registration.
- ✓ Continuous process industries and industries manufacturing essential commodities can continue to operate
- ✓ Export units that have export commitments or orders and their vendor units can function with 10% workforce for export related work and to send samples
- **The Tamil Nadu government's global tender for getting Covid-19 vaccine – fails to attract bidders as on June 5, the last day for tender submission.**
- ✓ The winning bidder was to supply the vaccine that can be stored in 2°C–8°C within 180 days, progressively from the date of the purchase order.
- ✓ The state government, along with Tamil Nadu Medical Service Corporation, will decide on further course of action.
- ✓ With no bidders, the state must wait for central supply or buy directly from manufacturers — Serum Institute of India and Bharat Biotech.

- ✓ The Centre allots the quantity of vaccines a state can buy from the domestic vaccine makers.
  - ✓ The state was earlier allotted nearly 1.1 crore doses of the vaccine.
  - ✓ After giving administering 96.74 lakh (and excluding wastage), the state was left with the 1.52 lakh doses, as on date.
  - ✓ On May 15, the state issued a global tender to source 3.5 crore units of Covid-19 vaccine to inoculate people in the 18-44 years age group free of cost.
  - ✓ The state has 3.65 crore people in the age group.
  - ✓ The aim is to cover 70% of these demographic — around 2.5 crore people — with 5 crore doses of the vaccine.
  - ✓ Many states including Kerala, Telangana and Haryana have also reported that they were no bidders when they called for tenders.
- **The state government – has announced to provide dry ration including rice, dhal, and eggs to 33 lakh students in Classes I to VIII enrolled under the noon meal programme for the vacation period from May 2021.**
    - ✓ Under the scheme, students enrolled in Classes I to V will receive 3.1kg rice, 1.2 kg dhal and 10 eggs a month.
    - ✓ Students in Classes VI to VIII will receive 4.6kg rice and 1.2kg dhal and 10 eggs a month
    - ✓ The scheme aims to provide dry ration along with eggs to primary and upper primary students under the National Food Securities Act
    - ✓ This would cost the government ₹45 crore and is included in the annual work plan and budget for 2021-22.
    - ✓ The beneficiaries of the MGR Nutritious Meal Programme will receive two months' ration by June-end.
  - **On June 5, Chief minister M K Stalin - formed a committee headed by retired HC judge Justice A K Rajan to study the impact of NEET on medical admissions.**
    - ✓ In its election manifesto, the DMK promised to abolish the NEET entrance exam.

### **'TO ENSURE SOCIAL JUSTICE'**

➤ NEET scores-based MBBS admission was **introduced in TN in 2017**

➤ One of the main criticisms of the **common entrance test** is that it **enables repeaters to grab more MBBS seats**. Only **12% repeaters** got MBBS seats in **2016** (before NEET), but the rate jumped to **38% in 2017**, **50% in 2018** and **70% in 2019**

➤ After attempts of providing NEET coaching to govt school students did not yield results, **TN introduced a 7.5% special quota** for these students in 2020. Around **400 students from govt colleges** got admission to medical colleges last year

➤ As a **poll promise**, DMK said it would **abolish NEET**

- ✓ The committee will study whether the common medical entrance test has affected socially backward students in the past few years.
  - ✓ If it has, then the committee will suggest alternative admission methods for the benefit of all students and possible legal remedies for implementing these admission methods.
  - ✓ Educationists and officials also will be part of this high level committee
  - ✓ The previous AIADMK government introduced 7.5% special reservation for government school students in medical admissions, as those students could not join medical colleges after the introduction of NEET in 2017.
- **The Hindu religious and charitable endowments (HR&CE) department – has tied up with ELCOT to digitize and store property documents of temples under its control**
- ✓ About four crore pages of property documents are being digitised and stored using blockchain technology
  - ✓ Blockchain technology is being used to ensure that none of the documents are hacked and tampered-with in future
  - ✓ The initiative aims to safeguard the documents from tampering and preventing fraudulent property registrations
  - ✓ The digital imprints would be stored in three different locations in the country.
  - ✓ The HR&CE is doing the work with the help of Tamil Nadu e-Governance Agency.
  - ✓ The digitised documents would be stored in the Elcot facility at Perungudi in Chennai, Tamil Nadu Disaster Recovery Centre in Trichy and National Informatics Centre in Pune.
  - ✓ Commissioner and other senior officials would be given a digital key to access the data directly.
  - ✓ The department launched the task of scanning the documents in association with ELCOT on June 4.
  - ✓ The work was started by HR&CE minister P K Sekar Babu.
  - ✓ Documents from 1900 to 1921 have been taken up for scanning now.
  - ✓ ELCOT is using a software to capture even faded text to convert into readable format.
  - ✓ The project is aimed at achieving transparency and preserving the documents of more than 44,000 temples and their properties such as land and buildings.
  - ✓ The temples have 4.75 lakh acres of land and more than 55,000 buildings, including marriage halls and shops across the state.
  - ✓ The department is planning to complete the process, estimated to cost Rs. 4 crore, within the next six months.

## STATES

- **Chief Minister of Assam, Himanta Biswa Sarma – appointed 13 “Guardian Ministers” for 34 districts of the state**

- ✓ The 'Guardian Ministers' will ensure balanced, speedy and sustainable developments in all the districts.
  - ✓ They will be responsible to implement and resolve issues related to government's policy decisions, administrative reforms, infrastructure projects and welfare schemes
  - ✓ The 'Guardian Ministers' can also suggest policy decisions for the welfare and development of district to the government.
  - ✓ Further, they can recommend awards for best practices in districts and prepare a 'Vision Document' in consultation with district administration.
  - ✓ These Ministers will be responsible for administration in the districts under their charge, without directly getting involved with people from those districts
  - ✓ Out of the 13 ministers, eight ministers were allocated three districts each and five ministers were allocated two districts each.
  - ✓ The guardian ministers will be assigned with a secretary each and both will have to visit their districts at least once a month.
  - ✓ They will also have to visit the districts during emergency situations and conduct extensive tours during natural disasters like floods, cyclones etc.
- **Kerala – to introduce a 'Smart Kitchen Project' to modernise kitchens and ease the difficulty faced by homemakers in household chores**
- ✓ The Kerala government's revised budget for the current fiscal has allocated an amount of Rs 5 crore for the initial phase of the scheme
  - ✓ The project would be implemented through the Kerala State Financial Enterprises (KSFE), a state-run chit fund and lending firm.
  - ✓ Chief Minister of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan announced a secretary level committee to formulate guidelines and recommendations on implementation of the project
  - ✓ Under the scheme, KSFE would give soft loans to women for purchasing household gadgets or equipment
  - ✓ The cost of household equipment can be repaid as instalments within a particular period.
  - ✓ The interest of the loan/cost would be equally shared among the beneficiary, local self-government body and the state government.
  - ✓ Members of Kudumbashree, which is Kerala's women empowerment and poverty alleviation scheme, would get preference in purchasing kitchen gadgets under smart kitchen scheme

## **NATIONAL**

- **India - has advanced the target date for achieving 20% ethanol-blending in petrol by five years to 2025 from 2030**
- ✓ This was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 5, after the release of 'ethanol blending road map 2020-25' on the occasion of World Environment Day

- ✓ The decision of India aims to cut carbon emissions and reduce reliance on foreign oil.
  - ✓ Ethanol extracted from sugarcane as well as damaged food grains such as wheat and broken rice and agriculture waste is less polluting and its use also provides farmers with an alternate source of income.
  - ✓ Last year, the government had set a target of reaching 10% ethanol blending in petrol (10% of ethanol mixed with 90% of petrol) by 2022 and 20% blending by 2030.
  - ✓ Currently, about 8.5% ethanol is mixed with petrol as against 1-1.5% in 2014
  - ✓ Higher blending has led to ethanol procurement jumping from 38 crore litres to 320 crore litres.
  - ✓ Last year, oil companies spent ₹21,000 crore on ethanol procurement.
  - ✓ Earlier this week, the oil ministry had issued a gazette notification mandating the commencement of up to 20% blending of ethanol in petrol from April 1, 2023.
  - ✓ India is the world's third-biggest oil importer, relying on foreign suppliers to meet over 85% of its demand.
- **The income tax department - will launch its new e-filing portal on June 7 aimed at providing convenience to taxpayers and faster processing of returns.**
- ✓ All interactions and uploads or pending actions will be displayed on a single dashboard for follow-up action by taxpayer on the portal [www.incometax.gov.in](http://www.incometax.gov.in).
  - ✓ Free of cost ITR preparation software would be available with interactive questions to help taxpayers for ITRs 1, 4 (online and offline) and ITR 2 (offline) initially.
  - ✓ The facility for preparation of ITRs 3, 5, 6, 7 will be made available shortly
  - ✓ Taxpayers would be able to proactively update their profile to provide certain details of income, including salary, house property, business/profession, which will be used in pre-filing their ITR.
  - ✓ Detailed enablement of pre-filing with salary income, interest, dividend and capital gains will be available after TDS and SFT statements are uploaded (due date is June 30).
  - ✓ The new tax payment system will be launched on June 18, after the advance tax instalment date to avoid any taxpayer inconvenience.
  - ✓ The mobile app will also be released subsequent to the initial launch of the portal, to enable taxpayers to get familiar with the various features.
- **Union minister of state (independent charge) for Ayush, Kiren Rijiju - launched the Ayush Clinical Case Repository (ACCR) portal, and the third version of Ayush Sanjivani mobile app in a virtual event recently**
- ✓ The Ayush Clinical Repository (ACCR) portal (<https://accr.ayush.gov.in/>) will serve as a platform to support both Ayush practitioners and general public.



- ✓ It aims to disseminate information about clinical outcomes, research and analysis achieved by Ayush practitioners on a large scale.
  - ✓ It will also portray the strengths of Ayush systems for treatment of various disease conditions
  - ✓ The Ayush Sanjivani app facilitates a significant study and documentation regarding the efficacy of selected Ayush interventions such as Ayush-64 and Kabasura Kudineer medicines in managing asymptomatic and mild to moderate patients of COVID-19.
  - ✓ It was developed by Ministry of AYUSH and Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MEITY).
  - ✓ The app generates data on usage of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa and Homoeopathy) among the general public
- **Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh - has launched 'Services e-Health Assistance & Tele-consultation (SeHAT) OPD Portal' recently**



- ✓ The portal provides tele-medicine services to the serving armed forces personnel, veterans and their families

- ✓ This is the final version of the SeHAT OPD portal with advanced safety features, as the trial version was made functional in August 2020.
  - ✓ The services can be availed by registering on the website <https://sehatopd.in/>
  - ✓ More than 6,500 medical consultations have already been carried on the beta version by service doctors
  - ✓ Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat, Army Chief Gen MM Naravane and Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh also attended the event.
  - ✓ During the event, the defence minister also talked about the anti-Covid oral drug 2-deoxy-D-glucose (2-DG) developed by the Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences (INMAS), a leading laboratory of the DRDO, in collaboration with Dr Reddy's Laboratories (DRL), Hyderabad.
- **The Centre - has recently constituted a panel of state ministers to examine valuation of services by online gaming portals to levy GST.**
- ✓ They will also examine services by casinos and race courses.
  - ✓ The panel comprises of seven-members with Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel being the convener
  - ✓ Other members include- Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, Arunachal Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein, West Bengal Finance Minister Amit Mitra, Tamil Nadu Finance Minister PTR Palanivel Thiagarajan, Goa Transport Minister Mauvin Godinho, and Karnataka Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai.
  - ✓ The panel will submit its report in six months to GST Council headed by Union Finance Minister and comprising state Finance Ministers.
  - ✓ At present, 18% GST is levied on services like casinos, horse racing and online gaming.

## INTERNATIONAL

- **On June 5, the Group of Seven (G7) countries – reached a landmark deal to levy higher global taxation on multinationals such as Google, Facebook, Apple and Amazon.**
- ✓ Companies that make billions of dollars often pay negligible tax by utilising legal and accounting loopholes to the fullest.
  - ✓ They usually shift profits and tax revenues to low-tax countries regardless of where their sales are made, thereby avoiding to pay higher taxes in their traditional home countries.
  - ✓ The finance ministers of G7 advanced economies agreed to levy a minimum global corporate tax rate of at least 15% on multinationals on a country by country basis.
  - ✓ Companies will also have to pay more tax in the countries where they make sales.
  - ✓ The meeting was hosted at the 19th-century mansion near Buckingham Palace in central London

- ✓ It was the first time finance ministers have met face-to-face since the start of the pandemic.
  - ✓ The 15% is above the level in countries such as Ireland but below the lowest level in the G7.
  - ✓ The G7, comprising Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States, said it hoped to reach a final tax agreement at the July gathering of the expanded G20 finance ministers group in Venice.
  - ✓ Amazon and Google welcomed the agreement and Facebook said it would likely pay more tax.
  - ✓ In September 2019, India had slashed corporate taxes for domestic companies to 22 per cent and to 15 per cent for new domestic manufacturing units.
  - ✓ The OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) has been coordinating tax negotiations among 140 countries for taxing cross-border digital services and curbing tax base erosion, including a global corporate minimum tax.
- **The second Follow-Up Report on Mutual Evaluation of Pakistan, released by the Asia Pacific Group of FATF – has announced the downgrade of Pakistan on one criteria**
- ✓ The regional affiliate of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has retained Pakistan on the “enhanced follow-up” status for outstanding requirements
  - ✓ It had asked the country to strengthen its implementation of antimoney laundering and combating terror financing measures
  - ✓ As per the report, Pakistan was re-rated to ‘compliant’ status on five counts and on 15 others to ‘largely compliant’.
  - ✓ Overall, Pakistan is fully ‘compliant’ with seven recommendations and ‘largely compliant’ with 24 others.
  - ✓ The country is ‘non-compliant’ with two out of a total 40 recommendations.

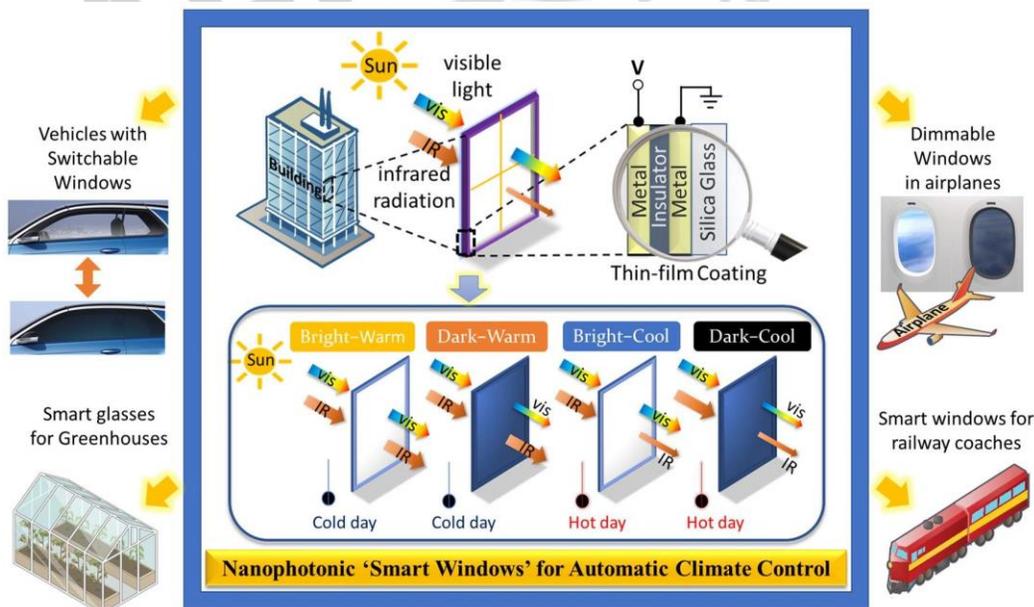
## **INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES**

- **India and Pakistan – arrived at an agreement to approve all pending assignment visas for diplomats and other staff members.**
- ✓ As per the understanding, both countries will approve the pending visas at the same time on the same day, June 16
  - ✓ India had last month pulled out a few officials from its mission in Islamabad without waiting for Pakistan to approve visas for their replacements.
  - ✓ Similarly, Pakistan too has been waiting for India to approve visas for diplomats and other staff members.
  - ✓ The assignment visas are the visas meant for diplomats and foreign government officials
  - ✓ Timely clearance of assignment visas allow them to carry out their duties on behalf of their national governments and it is essential for smooth functioning of foreign missions.

- ✓ India and Pakistan have already halved the strength of their respective missions after India's decision to downgrade ties last year.
- ✓ Even before that, Pakistan had recalled its high commissioner after India's decision to revoke the special status of Jammu & Kashmir, forcing India to the same.
- **Brazil's health regulator Anvisa (Agência Nacional de Vigilância Sanitária) - has given its approval to "exceptional import" of Bharat Biotech's Covid-19 vaccine 'Covaxin'.**
- ✓ The approval has been granted initially for "distribution and use under controlled conditions" four million doses of Covaxin, which can be used only under specific conditions
- ✓ After using the 4 million authorised doses, the agency will analyse the data for monitoring the use of the vaccine in order to assess the next quantities to be imported
- ✓ Brazil's health ministry had placed an order for 20 million doses.

## SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Researchers from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati - have developed a 'smart window' material that can automatically control climate of buildings.**



- ✓ The 'smart window' material can control the amount of heat and light passing through it when voltage is applied to it, thereby ensuring effective 'automatic' climate control
- ✓ The researchers have designed smart window 'glasses' using noble metals as well as their relatively inexpensive alternatives

- ✓ These metals can dynamically control the intensity of transmitted solar radiation, depending upon the weather/climate conditions.
- ✓ They initially considered gold and silver as the metal layers, but later tested their model with cheaper alternatives such as copper, and transparent semiconductor such as indium tin oxide.
- ✓ Conventional window designs are static and designed for specific climatic conditions.
- ✓ The newly developed 'smart window' can dynamically adjust amount of light and heat radiation entering through it, thereby helping in conserving the energy of building.

## REPORT

- **Global Burden of Disease collaboration, led by the US-based Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation - has published data on number of smokers worldwide, on the eve of 'World No Tobacco Day'**
- ✓ As per the study, the number of smokers worldwide has increased to 1.1 billion in 2019, with tobacco smoking causing 7.7 million deaths – including 1 in 5 deaths in males worldwide.
- ✓ The ten countries with the largest number of tobacco smokers in 2019 are China, India, Indonesia, the USA, Russia, Bangladesh, Japan, Turkey, Vietnam, and the Philippines with one in three current tobacco smokers (341 million) live in China.
- ✓ These 10 countries together comprise of nearly two-thirds of the global tobacco smoking population
- ✓ In 2019, there were an estimated 155 million smokers aged between 15 and 24 years – equivalent to 20.1% of young men and 5.0% of young women, globally.
- ✓ As per the study conducted in 204 countries in men and women aged 15 and over, 89% of new smokers become addicted by age 25
- ✓ Globally, smoking prevalence among young people decreased between 1990 and 2019 among both young men (-32.9%) and young women (-37.6%)
- ✓ India, Egypt, and Indonesia had the largest absolute increases in number of young male smokers.
- ✓ Turkey, Jordan, and Zambia had the largest increases in number of young female smokers.
- ✓ India had about 2 crore smokers aged 15-24 in 2019, which is the second highest number of tobacco smokers worldwide

