

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS–AUGUST 24,2021

TAMIL NADU

- **Six airports in the state including Chennai, 491 km of national highway and the Nilgiri Mountain Railway (NMR) - are among the infrastructure assets identified by the Centre under the National Monetisation Plan.**
- ✓ Solar power capacities of NLC India, gas pipelines in the Cauvery basin, some port assets of VOC Port in Tuticorin, railway stations of Puducherry and Chennai, Hotel Ashok in Puducherry are among the chosen assets to witness joint leasing by the Union government
- ✓ Trichy airport has been identified for monetisation through brownfield PPP models in FY22.
- ✓ This will be followed by Madurai and Coimbatore airports in FY23, and Chennai airport in FY24
- ✓ The national highway stretches identified for monetization over FY 2022-2025 in the State include Ulundurpet–Padalur (94 km), Ulundurpet–Tindivanam (73 km), Trichy–Padalur (38 km), Krishnagiri–Thopurghat (63), six laning of Hosur–Krishnagiri (60 km), Tambaram–Tindivanam (46.5) and Trichy–Karaikudi including Trichy bypass (117 km).

- **On August 23, the government - launched 24x7 centres in medical colleges and government hospitals across the state to increase the pace of vaccination against Covid-19.**
- ✓ Health minister Ma Subramanian inaugurated a facility at Omandurar Government Hospital in Chennai
- ✓ As per the health minister, this is the first such attempt in the country towards vaccinating the maximum population
- ✓ The centres will benefit those who frequently travel for occupational reason.
- ✓ The first of these centres, set up in 55 places across the state, was opened by chief minister M K Stalin at the DMS complex in Chennai on August 21.

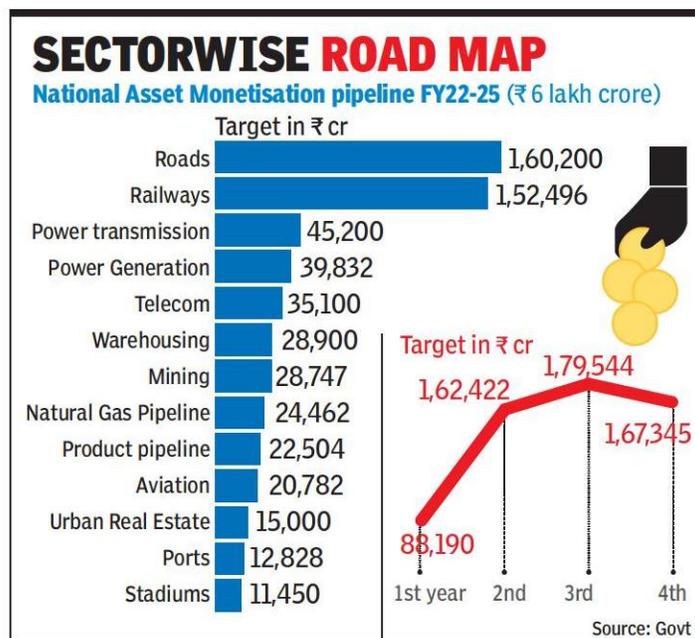
- ✓ Besides 36 government medical college hospitals, district headquarter hospitals have also been integrated under the special drive.
- ✓ In Coimbatore, such centres have been opened in 10 places including Coimbatore Medical College and Hospital (CMCH) and ESI hospital.
- ✓ In Trichy, the centre was inaugurated in Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Government hospital
- ✓ In Madurai, the Government Rajaji Hospital Covid-19 vaccination centre was made functional at a nearby school.
- ✓ It is among the largest Covid-19 vaccination centres in the state and also has vaccinated the highest number of beneficiaries in a single centre in the state.

NATIONAL

- **On August 23, Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman - launched a four-year road map for a Rs.6-lakh-crore asset monetisation plan.**



- ✓ The National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) lists out the government's infrastructure assets to be sold over the next four years
- ✓ The plan includes mostly brownfield assets of central ministries and public sector entities across roads, railways and power.
- ✓ It also includes infrastructure assets, including national highways, passenger trains, railway stations, airports, roads, stadiums and power grid pipelines
- ✓ According to the Finance Minister, the plan only involves brownfield projects and not land
- ✓ The Minister also promised to give incentives to states for undertaking disinvestment and asset monetization and outlined a three-point plan.
- ✓ The FM, in the 2021-22 Budget speech, had announced the launch of asset monetisation programme as a funding mechanism for greater infrastructure spending.
- ✓ The government has already announced a Rs 100-lakh-crore national infrastructure pipeline.
- ✓ The national asset monetisation pipeline has been developed by NITI Aayog, in consultation with infrastructure ministries.



- ✓ The assets include roads and highways, pipelines, power transmission lines, telecom towers, railways station re-development, private trains, tracks, goods sheds, dedicated freight corridor, 15 railways stadiums, 25 airports, 31 projects in nine major ports, 160 projects in coal mining, 761 mineral mining blocks, two national stadia, re-development of colonies and hospitality assets
- ✓ There are over 20 asset classes across 12 ministries, which have been identified for the pipeline and these are brownfield de-risked assets, which will be offered for private investment.
- ✓ Railway is the second biggest sector, after road, identified in the ambitious national monetisation plan
- ✓ A total of 400 stations, 90 passenger trains, railway stadiums and colonies, and the famed Konkan and hill railways are among the assets identified by the government for monetisation
- ✓ Railway assets would contribute 26% of the Rs 6 lakh crore National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP).
- ✓ The government has announced plans to monetise the iconic Jawaharlal Nehru (JLN) Stadium in the national capital along with another national stadium and two regional centres
- ✓ States, which raise money through disinvestment of state PSUs or give up control, will be given an equal amount by the Centre.
- ✓ The states will be incentivised to monetise public sector assets, with 30 to 100% interest-free loan assistance, depending on the monetisation mode.

DEFENCE

- **The Indian Navy's Talwar-class frigate, INS Tabar - took part in exercises with the British Royal Navy recently in the English Channel**



- ✓ The annual bilateral exercise Konkan 2021 was conducted with the Royal Navy's Type 23 frigate HMS Westminister off Portsmouth.
- ✓ The exercise included the participation of integral helicopters of the two ships and the Falcon Electronic Warfare aircraft.
- ✓ This exercise provides a platform for the Navies to periodically conduct exercise at sea and in harbour in order to build interoperability and share best practices.
- ✓ A wide range of exercises including co-ordinated anti-submarine procedures, firing drills, combined maritime picture compilation, combat formation manoeuvring and replenishment at sea were conducted.
- ✓ On entering the harbour, the Final Planning Conference for Exercise Konkan 2021 was held in non-contact form between the Ops Teams of Tabar and Westminister.
- ✓ The INS Tabar warship is part of the Western Fleet of the Indian Navy
- ✓ It set sail from Mumbai in early June and has conducted exercises in Russia and Italy en route to the UK and is expected back in India by next month.
- ✓ The bilateral Konkan exercise started in 2004.

APPOINTMENTS

- **Senior bureaucrat Apurva Chandra - took charge as information and broadcasting secretary on August 23.**



- ✓ Chandra, a 1988-batch IAS officer of the Maharashtra cadre, also served as secretary in the Union labour and employment ministry

- ✓ Chandra has overseen the framing of rules of the four labour codes that are part of the long-pending labour reforms ushered in by the government.
- ✓ Chandra has also worked as director general (acquisition) in the defence ministry and was mandated with strengthening the Indian armed forces by expediting the acquisition process.
- ✓ He chaired the committee to draft the new Defence Acquisition Procedure
- ✓ Chandra has worked for over four years between 2013 and 2017 as Principal Secretary (Industries) in the Government of Maharashtra
- ✓ The first smart industrial township under the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) has been operationalised at Aurangabad in Maharashtra under the leadership of Chandra
- ✓ Chandra has spent more than seven years in the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas in the Government of India
- ✓ He has been involved in framing policies with regard to fuel supplies to industries, supply logistics, transportation, storage and distribution of fuel products, etc.

