



## **FIVE** RYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-AUGUST

### **NATIONAL**

- **On August 25, Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman - announced changes in the pension scheme for state-run bank employees**
- ✓ The pension payout to bank staff was hiked by 30% of last drawn salary, as per the new announcements

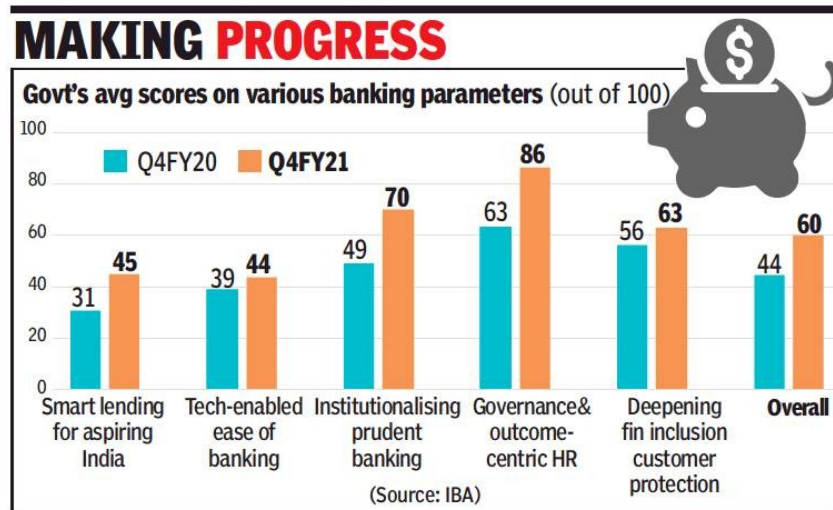
#### **30% OF LAST PAY**

- Family members of deceased employees will be eligible to draw **up to 30% of last salary drawn**
- For present employees under NPS, **banks will contribute 14% of the salary**, up from 10% earlier
- Family pension scheme will come without any ceiling
- The **additional burden will be borne by banks**



- ✓ Accordingly, Pension payouts to bank employees could increase to Rs 30,000- Rs 35,000 from the earlier cap of Rs 9,284.
- ✓ Also, PSBs' contribution for employee pensions under the National Pension System was hiked to 14% from 10% earlier.
- ✓ Uniform pension is now kept at flat 30% for the pensioners' families as well.
- ✓ The changes are in continuation of the 11th bipartite settlement signed by banks with unions on wage revision last year.
- ✓ The announcement was made during the launch of EASE 4.0 in Mumbai by Finance Minister
- ✓ The EASE (Enhanced Access and Service Excellence) is a common reform agenda for Public Sector Banks aimed at institutionalising clean and smart banking.

- ✓ The salient features of EASE 4.0 are data-enabled agricultural credit, collaboration amongst financial ecosystem players
- ✓ The first edition EASE 1.0 was launched in January 2018, while the last edition EASE 3.0 launched in February 2020 was instrumental in enabling digital lending to customers
- ✓ The Ease 4.0 (Enhanced Access and Service Excellence 4.0) event is organised by the Indian Banks Association (IBA).



- ✓ During her speech, Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman has asked bankers to start a programme to promote one product for export from each district.
- ✓ She also asked bankers to begin a credit outreach programme from October.
- ✓ The finance minister referred to the 2019 'loan melas' undertaken by banks across 400 districts to promote credit in retail, agriculture & MSME (referred to as RAM).
- ✓ Before the pandemic, the government had announced the merger of 10 public sector banks into four, which has since been completed.

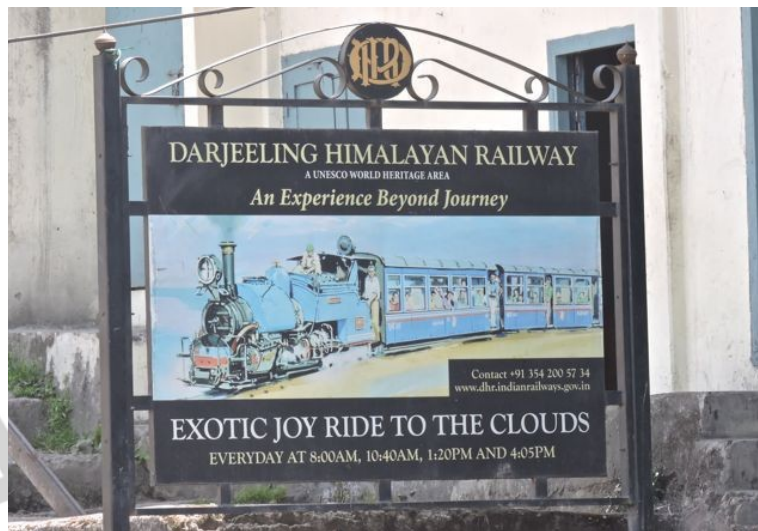
## HIGH COURT VERDICT

- **On August 24, the Madras high court - disallowed 10% quota for economically weaker sections (EWS) among forward castes in MBBS admissions under All India Quota (AIQ)**
- ✓ The Court held that the 10% quota would take the total reservation beyond the Supreme Court-mandated cap of 50%.
- ✓ The first bench of Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice P D Audikesavalu said that the additional reservation provided for EWS in the notification of July 29 cannot be permitted except with the approval of the Supreme Court
- ✓ It also held that OBC quota for AIQ seats will be 27% as notified by the Union government, and not 50% as demanded by the DMK.

- ✓ The 27% reservation for OBC is in tune with the central legislation which applies to central institutions all over the country.
- ✓ **Meanwhile, in another development, the Madras HC in an interim order refused to stay the law providing 10.5% reservation for vanniars**
- ✓ Further, the Court said admissions to educational institutions and appointments in state services made under the quota would be subject to final ruling on the constitutional validity of the law.

## INDIA AND OTHERS

- **The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) - released a stamp on the heritage Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR) that was declared a UNESCO heritage site in 1999.**



- ✓ The stamp shows the Toy Train hauled by the century-old steam engine at Ghoom station that also houses the DHR museum.
- ✓ The steam engine joyride between Darjeeling and Ghoom is extremely popular among tourists and is one of the prime attractions of visiting Darjeeling.
- ✓ India Post had released two stamps on DHR in the past, one on the occasion of its centenary in 1982 and another in 1993, when a series on Indian mountain locomotives — DHR, Neral-Matheran, Nilgiri Mountain Railway and Kalka-Shimla — were released.

## SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Bharat Biotech's chikungunya vaccine candidate (BBV87) - has commenced a multi-country phase II and III clinical trials**
- ✓ The first participant of the trial received a jab in Costa Rica.

- ✓ The study is being conducted to evaluate the safety and immunogenicity of a two-dose regimen of BBV87 in healthy adults at 9 clinical trial sites across 5 countries with endemic chikungunya.
- ✓ Bharat Biotech has joined hands with the International Vaccine Institute (IVI), which is leading the Global Chikungunya vaccine Clinical Development Programme (GCCDP), for BBV87.
- ✓ The study is being funded by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) with support from the Ind-CEPI mission of the Department of Biotechnology (DBT).
- ✓ Apart from Clinica San Agustin in Costa Rica, trials are slated to begin in Panama and Colombia by September 2021 and in Thailand and Guatemala soon after.
- ✓ The inactivated whole virion vaccine, based on a strain derived from an East, Central, South African (ECSA) genotype, has completed standard pre-clinical studies
- ✓ It has elicited an optimum immune response in phase-I clinical trials in India.

## APPOINTMENTS

- **Tamil Nadu cadre IPS officer Sanjay Arora, presently serving as Director General, CRPF - has been appointed Director General of Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP).**
- ✓ He will be replacing S S Deswal, who will be retiring on August 31.



- ✓ The appointments committee of the Cabinet has also approved the appointment of Pankaj Kumar Singh of Rajasthan cadre as Director General of Border Security Force
- ✓ Pankaj Kumar Singh is a 1988-batch IPS officer from Rajasthan cadre
- ✓ He is the son of retired IPS officer Prakash Singh who had also headed BSF several years ago and is currently serving as Special DG in the same force.
- ✓ The BSF was under additional charge of ITBP DG S S Deswal since its last full-time DG, Rakesh Asthana, was appointed as Delhi police commissioner in July end.
- ✓ In another order, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet appointed Balaji Srivastav as the DG of Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D), a central police organisation.



- ✓ Srivastav, a 1988 batch IPS officer belonging to AGMUT cadre, will hold the post from the date of his joining till he superannuates on March 31, 2024, or till further orders.

## SPORTS

- **Ace Table Tennis player, G Sathiyam – won the ITTF Czech International Table Tennis Open Tournament on August 25**
- ✓ Sathiyam, ranked 39 in the world, defeated Ukraine's Yevhen Pryshchepa 4-0 to win his third singles ITTF title.



- ✓ Four days ago, Sathiyam won the WTT Contender mixed doubles crown along with Manika Batra in Budapest
  - ✓ Sathiyam has won an ITTF title after a gap of almost 4 years with his last ITTF title coming in November 2017 in Spain
  - ✓ The mixed doubles pair of Sathiyam and Manika Batra have risen to No. 20 as per the latest ITTF world rankings.
- **Paige Greco, an Australian cyclist - had the honour of winning the first gold of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics on August 25**



- ✓ Greco was in outstanding form as she beat China's Wang Xiaomei in the gold medal race in C1-C3 class 3,000 metre individual pursuit at the Izu Velodrome.

- ✓ She smashed her own world record by nearly eight seconds in the heats and lowered it by another second and a half in the final.
- ✓ British cyclist Sarah Storey moved a step closer to becoming Britain's greatest Paralympian on the day
- ✓ She shattered her own world record in the heats before powering to victory in the C5 3,000 metres individual pursuit final for her 15th Paralympic gold.
- ✓ The 43-year-old took the title in her fourth consecutive Games

