



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

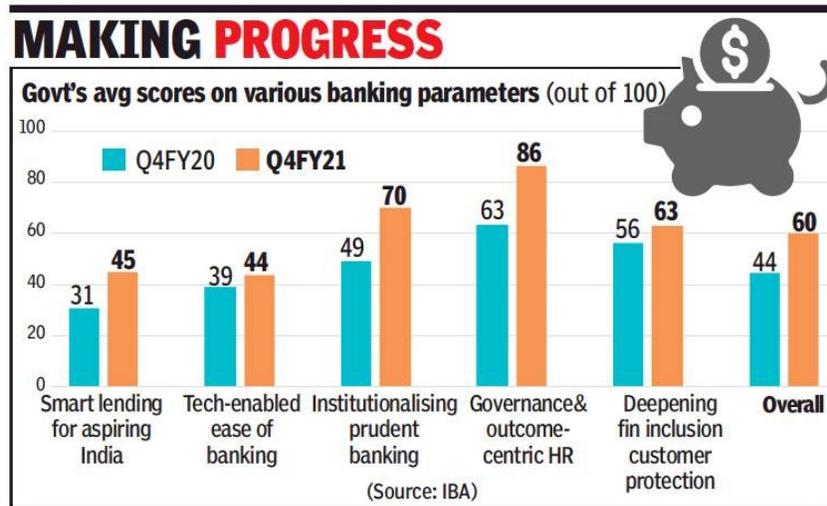
30% OF LAST PAY

- 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.

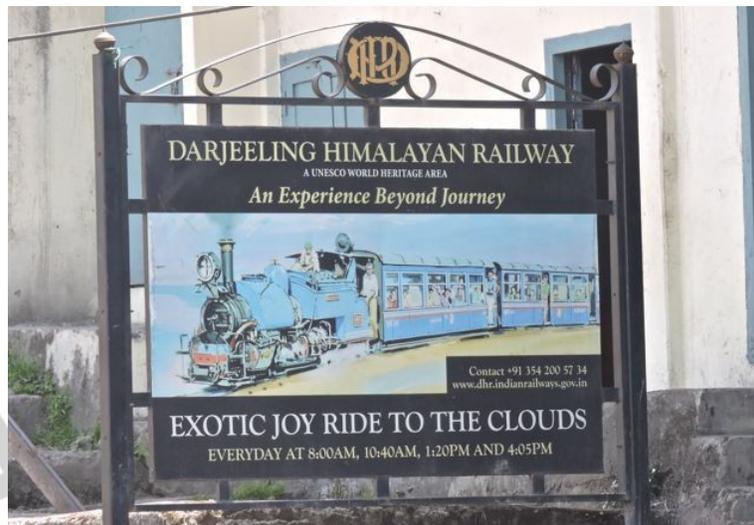
HIGH COURT VERDICT

- **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

