

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS - AUGUST 3, 2021

TAMIL NADU

- President Ram Nath Kovind - unveiled a life-sized portrait of former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Late Dr Kalaingar M Karunanidhi in the state Legislative Assembly on August 2



- ✓ Tamil Nadu Governor Banwarilal Purohit, Chief Minister M K Stalin, Assembly Speaker M Appavu, Tamil Manila Congress President G K Vasan, PMK President G K Mani, and Congress state President K S Alagiri were also present during the occasion
- ✓ President Kovind also inaugurated the centenary celebrations of the legislative assembly, formerly known as Madras Legislative Council, in Chennai
- ✓ President Kovind is on a five-day visit to Tamil Nadu from August 2 to 6
- ✓ He is scheduled to visit the Defence Services Staff College at Wellington on August 4, 2021 and address the Student Officers of the 77th Staff Course
- ✓ Five-time Chief Minister, Kalaingar M Karunanidhi was first elected to the state Assembly in 1957 from Kulithalai in Tiruchirappalli

- ✓ The DMK veteran was elected to the House for a total of 13 times till 2016 and never suffered an electoral defeat.
- ✓ This is the first time in four decades that a portrait of an eminent figure of the State is getting unveiled by the President.
- ✓ In August 1977, then President N. Sanjeeva Reddi had unveiled the portrait of former Chief Minister K. Kamaraj.
- ✓ Kalaignar M Karunanidhi died on August 7, 2018.
- ✓ The Madras Legislative Council, the biggest body of its kind in India, was constituted with 127 members, including 98 elected representatives, for a fixed term of three years in January 1921
- ✓ It was inaugurated by Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught, and uncle of George V, Emperor of England, on January 12, 1921
- ✓ As women were not part of the electorate, the Council, in its first session in April 1921, resolved to provide voting rights to women
- ✓ In early 1927, Muthulakshmi Reddy, the well-known medical practitioner and social activist, became the first woman member of the Council and subsequently became the Deputy President of the Council.
- ✓ During July 1937, bi-cameral legislature was formed with the Legislative Assembly having 215 members and the Legislative Council having 56 members.
- ✓ Between April 20 to May 9, 1957, the Assembly and the Council met on only one occasion outside Chennai at Aranmore Palace, Udthagamandalam
- ✓ When Kamaraj was the CM, Finance Minister C. Subramaniam was the first to make a budget speech in Tamil in 1957-58.
- ✓ Si.Pa. Aditanar, as Speaker during March 1967-August 1968, introduced the practice of commencing the House's proceedings with the recital of a verse from Thirukkural.
- ✓ In March 1967, the assembly's strength went up to 234, which remains the same even now
- ✓ During the two-year rule of the DMK founder C.N. Annadurai, the Assembly, in July 1967, adopted a motion renaming Madras State as Tamil Nadu, which later got the approval of Parliament too
- ✓ In November 1986, Legislative council was abolished
- ✓ During Jayalalithaa's first innings as Chief Minister, "Tamil Thai Vazhthu" was rendered in July 1991 for the first time at the beginning of the Governor's address.
- ✓ The legislature has passed several landmark laws for the welfare of women, such as Devadasi abolition, equal rights to women in property and constitution of the State Commission for Women.

STATES

- **The Meghalaya state cabinet, held under the chairmanship of chief minister Conrad K Sangma - approved the Meghalaya Youth Policy, 2021 recently**

- ✓ It seeks to create pathways for Meghalaya's youth in achieving their fullest potential and becoming engaged, skilled, creative, responsible and empowered members
 - ✓ The policy was drafted by the sports and youth affairs department of the state government
 - ✓ It is in sync with the government's vision for the state to transform Meghalaya to be amongst the top 10 states in 10 years in GSDP per capita and SDG ranking.
 - ✓ The policy includes planned interventions through various plans and policies like Early Childhood Education Mission, Meghalaya School Improvement Plan, health programs like FIT India etc.,
 - ✓ The structure of this policy is based on result-oriented approach that will be driven by various departments and will be evaluated in a time-bound manner quarterly, biannually and annually.
 - ✓ As per the latest estimates, Meghalaya has a population of around 38.29 lakh people, of which over 74% percent are under the age of 35 years.
- **The Government of Kerala - has removed the upper age limit for transgender students seeking enrolment in various courses at state universities and related arts and science colleges.**
- ✓ The decision to drop the upper age limit is expected to encourage transgender states in the country to attend various undergraduate and graduate courses.
 - ✓ In 2018, the government sanctioned two seats exclusively for transpersons in all courses run by universities and associated art and science faculties in the country to empower the transgender community.
 - ✓ Kerala was the first country in the country to announce a transgender policy in 2015

NATIONAL

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - launched the e-Rupi mode of digital payment system on August 2 via video conferencing.**



Launch of Digital Payment Solution - eRUPI



A person and purpose specific digital payment solution launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi

Salient Features:

-  e-RUPI is a cashless and contactless instrument for digital payment
-  It is a QR code or SMS string-based e-Voucher, which is delivered to the mobile of the beneficiaries
-  It has been developed by NPCI on its UPI platform, in collaboration with the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and National Health Authority.



- ✓ e-Rupi is a digital payments platform which was developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) in collaboration with the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and National Health Authority.
- ✓ It is a person-and-purpose-specific digital payment solution – means that if any person or any organisation wants to donate money, e-Rupi will ensure that the amount of money donated is being used for that purpose itself
- ✓ e-Rupi is a cashless and contactless instrument for digital payment.
- ✓ It is a QR code or a SMS-string based e-voucher which is delivered directly to the phone of the beneficiary.
- ✓ The users will be able to redeem the voucher without a card, digital payments app or internet banking access at the service provider.
- ✓ The mechanism connects services with the beneficiaries and service providers in a digital manner without any physical interaction.
- ✓ It can also be used for delivering services under schemes meant for providing drugs and nutritional support under Mother and Child welfare schemes, TB eradication programmes, drugs and diagnostics under schemes like Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, fertiliser subsidies etc.
- ✓ These digital vouchers can also be used by the private sector for its employee welfare and corporate social responsibility programmes
- **On August 2, Lok Sabha – passed the General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2021, which allows the government to privatize state-run general insurance companies.**
- ✓ The Bill will amend the General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Act, 1972.

- ✓ The amendments are in line with the budget announcement of Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to privatize two Public Sector Banks and one General Insurance company in the year 2021-22
 - ✓ The bill, which was tabled in the Lok Sabha on July 30, seeks to bring in more private capital in the general insurance business
 - ✓ The key feature of the bill is to drop the section that capped the central government's share to less than 51% of the equity capital of an insurer.
 - ✓ It also provides for cessation of application of the existing general insurance law to those insurers in which the government ceases to have control.
 - ✓ The amendments also increases the liability of a director, who may not be a whole-time director, in case the insurance firm of commits certain acts of omission which he was aware of or party to.
 - ✓ Presently, there are four general insurance companies in the public sector - Oriental Insurance Company, National Insurance Company, United India Insurance Company and New India Assurance Company
 - ✓ The government has set a Rs.1.75 trillion disinvestment target for this fiscal
- **The Union Cabinet - approved Production-linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Specialty Steel recently, with incentives worth Rs.6,322 crore to be provided over five years**
- ✓ The scheme is expected to bring in investment of approximately Ra 40,000 crore and capacity addition of 25 Metric Tonnes.
 - ✓ It proposes to incentivize eligible manufacturers by paying between 4% to 12% incentive on incremental production.
 - ✓ The scheme will cover coated/plated steel products, high strength/wear resistant steel, specialty rails, alloy steel products, steel wires and electrical steel
 - ✓ Any company registered in India, engaged in manufacturing of the identified 'specialty steel' grades eligible to participate
 - ✓ The PLI scheme for steel sector is expected to enhance exports and generate potential employment for about 5.25 lakh people
- **Union Minister of Education, Dharmendra Pradhan – announced recently in Lok Sabha that the government is proposing to set up a National Research Foundation (NRF) to strengthen the research ecosystem in the country.**
- ✓ NRF is being proposed as an umbrella structure that will improve linkages between R&D, academia and industry.
 - ✓ The total planned outlay of National Research Foundation is Rs 50,000 crore over a period of five years.
 - ✓ One of the main objectives of NRF is to seed, grow and facilitate research at academic institutions, particularly at universities and colleges
 - ✓ It will also fund and support high-impact, large-scale, multi-investigator, multi-institution and, in some cases, interdisciplinary or multi-nation projects in

collaboration with relevant Ministries, Departments, and other Governmental and non-Governmental entities, especially industry.

INTERNATIONAL

- **World's first ever 3D-printed steel bridge - was opened for public use in Amsterdam, the Netherlands**



- ✓ The 12-metre-long 3D-printed pedestrian bridge was made from 4500 kilograms of stainless steel by Dutch robotics company, MX3D
- ✓ The opening ceremony of this bridge was attended by the Queen of the Netherlands, Máxima.
- ✓ It was built by four commercially available industrial robots and took six months to print using a 3D printing technique called 'wire and arc additive manufacturing' that combines robotics with welding.
- ✓ More than a dozen sensors were attached to the 6-ton bridge after the 3-D printing was completed
- ✓ They will monitor strain, movement, vibration and temperature across the structure as people pass over it alongwith the weather changes in real time
- ✓ The bridge has been designed by the Joris Laarman Lab and was first unveiled during the Dutch Design Week in the year 2018.
- ✓ It will remain in place for minimum of two years while the previous footbridge which was spread over the canal undergoes renovation
- ✓ During this period, performance of the bridge will be analyzed and monitored in real time by researchers from the Alan Turing Institute's Data-Centric Engineering Programme, Imperial College London and the University of Cambridge.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

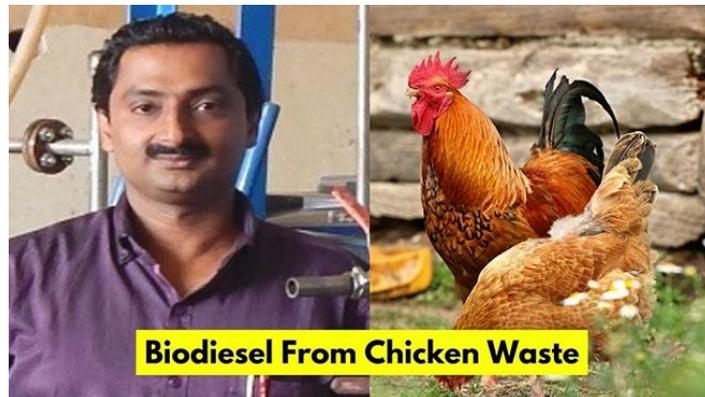
- **Minister of State for Culture, Meenakshi Lekhi - participated in the G20 Culture Ministers' Meeting on 30 July, 2021 held in Rome, Italy through video conference**
- ✓ The Minister of State for Culture addressed participants of the meeting and presented India's perspective on the topic 'Culture and Creative Sectors as drivers for growth'



- ✓ Lekhi highlighted the various measures taken by India to develop the culture and creative sectors like the One District One Product scheme of Government of Uttar Pradesh, Tourism circuits, promotion of Yoga and Ayurveda etc
- ✓ At the end of the discussions, the G20 Ministers of Culture adopted the G20 Culture Working Group Terms of Reference
- ✓ The Ministers of Culture of the G20 adopted the Ministerial Declaration for submission to the G20 Leaders' 2021 Summit to advocate the introduction of Culture in the G20 work stream
- ✓ The culture ministers of the 20 largest economies in the world and 40 high-level cultural delegations attended the meeting.
- ✓ The meeting was attended by the Italian Prime Minister, Mario Draghi, the Minister of Culture, Dario Franceschini, and the Director General of UNESCO, Audrey Azoulay.
- ✓ Italy assumed the rotating presidency of the G20 2021 in December last year and will host the G20 Leaders' Summit in Rome in October 30 and 31.

PERSONALITIES

- **Kerala-based Professor John Abraham – gets patent for producing biodiesel from the waste of slaughtered chicken**



- ✓ The biodiesel will offer a mileage of over 38 km a litre at around 40% of the current price of diesel and lowers pollution by half.

- ✓ As per the findings, 1 liter of biodiesel can be produced from 100 kg of chicken waste.
- ✓ After seven-and-a-half years, the Indian Patent Office finally granted the patent recently to John Abraham, an associate professor at the veterinary college under the Kerala Veterinary & Animal Sciences University.
- ✓ During 2009-12, Abraham conducted research on producing biodiesel from chicken waste and dead poultry birds at the Namakkal Veterinary College under the Tamil Nadu Veterinary & Animal Sciences University
- ✓ His mentor, late Prof Ramesh Saravanakumar, filed for the patent in 2014 on behalf of the university
- ✓ After his research, Abraham also received a quality certificate from Bharat Petroleum's Kochi Refinery in April 2015 for inventing biodiesel from chicken waste.
- ✓ On the commercial production of biodiesel, the 2019 biofuel policy removes licenses for producing and selling such fuels.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **United States (US) based pharmaceutical major, Johnson & Johnson - has withdrawn its application seeking permission to conduct clinical trials in India for its single-shot Covid-19 vaccine called 'Janssen'**
- ✓ However, J&J said that it was still in talks with the Indian government over its anti-covid vaccine
- ✓ The US Food and Drug Administration has already approved Johnson & Johnson's Covid-19 vaccine that works with just one dose for emergency use in February.
- ✓ But, Johnson & Johnson is yet to request a full approval for its shot with the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- ✓ In April, J&J was reported to be in discussions with the Indian government to begin a clinical trial of its single-dose Covid-19 vaccine in the country.
- ✓ According to J&J, their vaccine generates a strong and persistent response activity against Delta and other prevalent strains of coronavirus
- ✓ J&J's vaccine was found to be 85% effective and could also help prevent hospitalisation and death.
- ✓ The neutralising antibodies last at least eight months, as per the company.
- ✓ India has so far approved four vaccines - AstraZeneca's Covishield, Bharat Biotech's Covaxin, Russian Gamaleya Institute's Sputnik V and Moderna's vaccine.

