

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – NOVEMBER 20,2021

TAMIL NADU

- **On November 19, the Tamil Nadu government - formed a FinTech governing council comprising members from the government and the industry**
- ✓ It has been formed based on the recommendation of the Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission
- ✓ The council will be headed by minister for industries, Thangam Thennarasu as the chairman
- ✓ Chief secretary will be the vice chairman of the council and it will comprise secretaries to the government for industries, finance, IT and MSME and representatives from STPI and Guidance Tamil Nadu
- ✓ There are three members chosen from the industry – Balaji Nuthalapadi, MD & Head of Operations & Technology, Citi South Asia, Sundar Kannan, director at a leading Wall Street investment banking corporation and Ramkumar Ramamoorthy, former CMD, Cognizant India and past chairman, MCCI
- ✓ The Fin-Tech governing council will monitor the progress and implementation of initiatives in the areas of Fin-Tech and related sectors.
- ✓ The council will form sub-committees to address various aspects in the upcoming Fin-Tech Policy such as marketing and branding, business development and outreach, partnerships, education, venture capital and regulation.
- ✓ The state-owned Tidco has started preliminary works towards establishing a FinTech City at Nandhambakkam in Chennai, as already announced in the state budget.
- ✓ It will be a landmark venue for FinTech, as Tidel Park served for IT industry.
- ✓ Chief Minister M K Stalin is likely to unveil a new FinTech Policy for Tamil Nadu soon.

- **The government – to print the helpline number ‘14417’ in all the school textbooks to create awareness about child abuse and harassment among the student community as well the general public**

- ✓ This was announced by the school education minister Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi on November 19.
 - ✓ The helpline number, 14417, was created specifically for school students, teachers, and parents to extend counselling
 - ✓ Further, dedicated staff has been posted at the DPI campus in Chennai to attend calls received on the number 14417.
 - ✓ Like Childline number 1098, this number would also be popularized among the general public
 - ✓ The teachers who are in charge of training would remain as nodal officer and they would conduct classes at their schools.
 - ✓ World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse was observed by the state government on November 19
- **Vidya Mahambare, professor of Economics and Program Director, PGDM, at Great Lakes Institute of Management, Chennai - has been appointed on the expert committee of the Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission.**



- ✓ The appointment has been made for the commission's preparation of the state's draft policy on 'Employability and Skilling for a Transitioning Economy'.
- ✓ Mahambare has extensive experience in economic research and forecasting and specialises in macroeconomics.
- ✓ She has conceptualised and developed reports on critical economic issues such as growth constraints, labour skill mismatch, employment, and inflation, in addition to assessing and forecasting the impact of shocks on the key economic parameters
- ✓ She has also written extensively on employment-related issues in the last few years
- ✓ The professor's research papers on topics related to economy, strategy, and analytics have also been published by top rated journals and publications.
- ✓ After completing her doctorate from Lancaster Management School in the UK, Mahambare went to Cardiff Business School, where she taught courses related to

international economics, microeconomics, modern business enterprise, and econometrics between 2001 and 2005.

- ✓ During this period, she was also a research associate at Liverpool Research Group in Macroeconomics, UK.
- ✓ Prior to joining Great Lakes, she was a Director and Principal Economist at rating agency CRISIL.
- ✓ She has also been an Independent Director on the Board of SMERA Rating Agency and a member of the Economic Affairs Committee, ASSOCHAM, Tamil Nadu
- ✓ The state planning commission was established by former Chief Minister, M Karunanidhi on May 25, 1971 to assist the state in implementing developmental schemes and policies by utilising its resources effectively and efficiently within and outside the state.
- ✓ It was renamed as State Development Policy Council (SDPC) by the earlier AIADMK government on April 23, 2020
- ✓ On August 25 2021, the Tamil Nadu government renamed the State Development Policy Council as the State Planning Commission
- ✓ The Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission has Chief Minister as the de facto Chairman alongwith a Vice Chairman, a full-time member and eight part-time members
- ✓ Dr Jayaranjan has been appointed as the Vice Chairman of the council and Professor Rama Srinivasan has been appointed as the full time member.
- ✓ Professor M Vijayabaskar, Professor Sultan Ahmed Ismail, retired IAS officer M Deenabandhu, Mannargudi MLA TRB Rajaa, Malliga Srinivasan, president of TAFE groups, Dr J Amalorpavanathan and Siddha Doctor K Srinivasan have been appointed as part-time members.
- ✓ For the first time, a transperson Bharathanatayam artist Narthagi Nataraj, has also been appointed as part of the council.
- ✓ During the previous tenure of DMK, from 2006 to 2011 Professor M Naganathan served as the Vice Chairman of the State Planning Commission
- ✓ Dr. Jayaranjan, who has completed his economic research from Madras Institute of Social Studies and has been a prominent economist in the state for over 35 years, has been appointed as Vice Chairman in the current Planning Commission.

STATES

- **On November 19, Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan - ordered a 'tax plan' for cow welfare in the state.**
- ✓ Accordingly, a cess will be levied to mobilise funds for cow fodder, construction of 2,200 gaushalas, development of a model cow sanctuary and cow tourism
- ✓ The modalities will be worked out at a meeting of the 'gau cabinet', which was set up exactly a year ago

- ✓ The CM also ordered that 'cow-phenyl' (made from cow urine) be used in government offices.
- ✓ Around a week ago, the CM had remarked that cows, along with cow dung and urine, can help strengthen the country's economy if the right system were in place.
- ✓ The CM also said public participation should be encouraged in cow welfare, and ordered that social service organizations be given the responsibility of running gaushalas.

NATIONAL

- **On November 19, PM Modi – announced that the new farm laws will be withdrawn in the upcoming winter session of Parliament at the end of this month, after unprecedented protests by farmers for over a year**
- ✓ The PM offered an apology for being unable to convince a section of farmers about the benefits of the new farm laws.
- ✓ PM Modi's address to the nation was made on Gurburab, the birth anniversary of Sikhism founder, Guru Nanak

June 5, 2020: Centre promulgates 3 farm Bills

Sept 17 & 20: Cleared by Lok Sabha & Rajya Sabha

Sept 24: Agri stir begins in Punjab with rail roko, spreads to other states

Nov 26: Farmers march to Delhi, camp on its borders

Dec-Jan '21: Centre-farmer talks begin, but remain deadlocked after 7 rounds

Jan 12, '21: SC puts the three laws on hold, forms panel to make recommendations on them

Jan 26: Thousands of protesters clash with Delhi cops during tractor rally, storm Red Fort

Feb 5: Police register FIR for 'sedition', 'criminal conspiracy' & 'promoting hatred' against creators of a 'toolkit' on agri protests

Oct 3: 8 die as violence engulfs protesting farmers at UP's Lakhimpur Kheri

Oct 22: SC says protesters can't block public roads indefinitely. Police remove barricades from stir sites

- ✓ The announcement came soon after the reopening of Kartarpur Sahib pilgrimage corridor
- ✓ These laws are -- The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, and The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act.
- ✓ On June 5, 2020, the President of India promulgated three ordinances that were the precursors to these Acts
- ✓ These three ordinances were replaced by the aforementioned Acts that were passed by Parliament in September 2020.
- ✓ The implementation of these laws was stayed by the Supreme Court on January 12, 2021
- ✓ The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act provides for setting up a mechanism allowing the farmers to sell their farm produces outside the Agriculture Produce Market Committees (APMCs).
- ✓ The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act allows farmers to do contract farming and market their produces freely.
- ✓ The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act is an amendment to the existing Essential Commodities Act, which frees items such as foodgrains, pulses, edible oils and onion for trade except in extraordinary and crisis situations.
- **The Centre - has asked Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Odisha to expedite notification and implementation of the rules of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act 1996 (PESA)**
- ✓ These four states account for a significant part of India's tribal population
- ✓ The provisions of the PESA Act seek to empower local self governments in the Schedule V areas of the country to help safeguard and preserve the traditions and customs of the tribal communities.
- ✓ The draft model PESA Rules had been circulated by Ministry of Panchayati Raj in 2009 to the 10 PESA states.
- ✓ Six states — Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Telangana — have notified their state PESA Rules.
- ✓ The remaining four informed the ministries of panchayati raj and tribal affairs that they are in the process of considering these rules of implementation.
- **IndiGo - has emerged as the tenth largest airline globally and the largest in Asia Pacific by seat volume, according to UK-based air consultancy firm OAG.**
- ✓ The low-cost carrier has 280 aircraft currently in its fleet and operates over 1,400 daily flights.
- ✓ In pre-pandemic times, the airline had about 1,600 daily flights of which 400 to 450 were international.

- ✓ At the moment, it has about 1,400 daily flights of which nearly 80 are international
 - ✓ On November 19, OAG released a report on “essential metrics on the world’s major airlines”
 - ✓ The report compared the capacity of airlines in summer of 2019 (March 31, 2019 to October 26, 2019) with this summer.
- **Around 300 Demoiselle Cranes (*Grus virgo*) - have been reported dead in the latest bout of avian flu in Rajasthan’s Jodhpur and Udaipur**



- ✓ This was revealed in a report by the Wildlife Trust of India.
- ✓ With the number of deaths still on the rise, the whole state is on a high alert.
- ✓ The first report came from Kaparda wetlands on November 6 with 56 cranes found dead and several others showing signs of sickness.
- ✓ According to the report, the virus has affected only Demoiselle cranes, locally called “kuranja”.
- ✓ Meanwhile, efforts are being made to prevent an outbreak similar to the one that occurred in Sambhar two years ago when thousands of migratory birds died.
- ✓ The symptoms were head drooping, gasping, increased rectal temperature followed by hypothermia, unilateral or bilateral wing drooping, haemorrhage in the eye, dehydration, diarrhoea and immobility.

INTERNATIONAL

- **US vice president, Kamala Harris – became the first woman to get US presidential powers, though briefly, on November 19**
- ✓ Harris held presidential powers for a total of one hour and 25 minutes, when President Joe Biden went under anaesthesia for a colonoscopy procedure.
 - ✓ The US' first female, first Black and first South Asian vice president Harris broke another barrier as she became the first woman to hold presidential powers in the country.
 - ✓ In the US, it is usual for a vice president to assume presidential powers whenever the president requires anaesthesia



- ✓ Biden, who turns 79 on November 20, arrived at Walter Reed Medical Center to undergo his first routine annual physical since taking office
- ✓ Biden is the oldest first-term president in US history,

SPORTS

- **Arjun Erigaisi – wins the rapid title of the Kolkata rapid and blitz chess meet**



- ✓ Telangana's Arjun claimed the title with 6.5 points from 9 games at Kolkata on November 19
- ✓ The youngster from Warangal overcame stiff challenge from world number four Levon Aronian in the final round to come out on the top of the rapid event of the chess meet
- ✓ R Praggnanandhaa finished third, while Vidit Gujrathi and Murali Karthikeyan took the remaining places in top-five
- ✓ Meanwhile, the 18-year-old Arjun has been named as replacement for GM Adhiban in the blitz section of the event
- ✓ GM Adhiban withdrew from the blitz section of the event due to ill health
- ✓ Adhiban ended ninth among the 10 contestants with two points.

ALL ABOUT THE 3 FARM LAWS – A REPORT

WHAT THE YEAR-LONG ROW BETWEEN GOVT AND FARMERS WAS ALL ABOUT

File photos

The three farm laws that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has promised to repeal in the upcoming Parliament session later this month were passed last year with the promise of giving farmers the freedom to decide where and to whom they want to sell their produce



1 FARMERS' PRODUCE TRADE AND COMMERCE (PROMOTION AND FACILITATION) ACT, 2020

- This law allowed farmers to sell their produce anywhere in India, rather than their designated 'mandi' (agri market). They could sell at the farm gate or to a cold storage, warehouse or processing unit, even those in other states. Until then, farmers were required to sell their crop through licensed 'commission agents' ('arhatiyas') at the mandi
- The government said farmers were at the mercy of commission agents in the old system. After the period of government buying ended, cartels rigged crop prices, forcing them to sell below the minimum support price (MSP). However, farmers opposed the new system, saying it would end MSP support

2 FARMERS (EMPOWERMENT AND PROTECTION) AGREEMENT OF PRICE ASSURANCE AND FARM SERVICES ACT, 2020

- This law provided a framework for contract farming. Farmers could sign sale contracts with processors, aggregators, wholesalers, large retailers and exporters at mutually-agreed rates. The government said this would serve as a minimum price guarantee before sowing, enabling farmers to plan ahead and invest in better implements, seeds and other inputs. But farmers opposed the law saying big buyers – mostly corporate houses – would have the upper hand in fixing prices and resolving disputes in courts. Also, the law would not benefit the multitude of small farmers as businesses would find it difficult to deal with them
- To this, the government replied farmers would have an equal say in setting the sale price of their produce, and they would have to be paid within three days of signing the contract. It also said 10,000 farmer-producer organisations (FPOs) would be set up across the country to enable small farmers to deal with corporates

3 ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES (AMENDMENT) ACT

- This law took cereals, pulses, oilseeds, edible oils, onions and potatoes out of the list of essential commodities, thus removing the stock-holding limits on these items except under "extraordinary circumstances", such as war and natural calamities

- The government said the amendment was necessary to attract corporate and foreign investment in the food supply chain – cold storage, warehouses, etc – by addressing fears of excessive regulatory interference. It said big investments in the supply chain would bring price stability – prices won't crash after a bumper crop, nor spiral up if a crop failed



- However, farmers said the price limits set for extraordinary circumstances were so high that they were unlikely to be triggered. And once the big buyers had the freedom to hoard food commodities, they would be able to beat down crop prices, hurting farmers

TROUBLED JOURNEY OF THE FARM LAWS

File photos

June 2020: Centre introduces three farm bills. Farmers' groups express their disapproval, saying laws would pave way for removal of minimum support price (MSP) and favour large corporations

September: Bills passed by Lok Sabha & Rajya Sabha. Farmer unions begin nationwide protests, including 3-day 'rail roko' in Punjab

October: Supreme Court hears petition by opposition parties questioning constitutional validity of new laws

November: Farmer unions in Punjab and Haryana call for a 'Dilli Chalo' march. Protesters dispersed with water cannons and tear gas outside the capital before being allowed to protest peacefully in northwest Delhi. Farmers reject offer of talks from home minister Amit Shah, demand permission to shift protest to Jantar Mantar

December: Farmers call for Bharat Bandh after talks with government fail. They demand a full repeal, instead of amendments. Bharatiya Kisan Union moves SC against laws. In sixth round of talks, Centre agrees to exempt farmers from stubble burning penalty and drop changes in Electricity Amendment Bill, 2020, but gives no assurance on MSP



TIME AND MONEY LOST

359 days

of protest, starting from Nov 25, 2020



11

rounds of talks with no resolution



183

protesters arrested by Delhi Police

₹7,000 crore

economic loss in Q3 due to agitation



₹1.8 crore

daily loss for public-funded toll plazas



January 2021: SC criticises government for its handling of protests and stays implementation of the three laws. It also creates a four-member committee to listen to all stakeholders and issue recommendations. **On Republic Day, farmers' tractor parade to Red Fort ends in clashes with police. At least one protester killed**

February: Amid nationwide road and rail blockades, **Delhi Police lodge FIR against 18-year-old Disha Ravi in connection with a 'toolkit' on the protests, which was shared by**



environment activist Greta Thunberg. Ravi is arrested and later granted bail. Police also book actor-activist Deep Sidhu over Republic Day violence

March: Punjab assembly passes resolution calling for full repeal of laws and assurance on MSP. On March 6, farmers complete 100 days of protest

May: Farmers observe 'black day', pledging to continue protests until the laws are withdrawn

June: 'Sampoorna Kranti Divas' (total revolution day) marks one year since the laws were introduced

July: Farmers begin 'Kisan Sansad' (farmers' parliament) near Parliament House while monsoon session is on

August: Leaders of 14 opposition parties meet Kisan Sansad and support demand for repeal of laws

September: Farmers surround mini-secretariat in Karnal, Haryana, after a police lathi charge leaves several protesters injured

October: Union minister Ajay Mishra's convoy reportedly runs over protesting farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri, UP, killing eight and injuring several others. UP Police arrests 10, including Mishra's son, who faces murder charge. Later in the month, Delhi Police starts removing barricades at Delhi borders



➤ A Dalit labourer is lynched at a protest site near the Delhi border, allegedly by members of the Nihang Sikh sect. Farm unions condemn the killing and distance themselves from the Nihangs

November: Farmers' groups call for continuing protests, including a peaceful tractor parade during Parliament's winter session and mahapanchayat gatherings in all state capitals later this month. **On November 19, PM Narendra Modi announces full repeal of all three laws**