

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JANUARY 1, 2022

TAMIL NADU

- **On December 31, Tamil Nadu government – extended lockdown in the state till January 10, 2022 imposing new restrictions, following the rise in Covid-19 cases**
- ✓ As per the new restrictions, classes 1 to 8 will go back to online mode and nursery schools and playschools will shut.
- ✓ However, in-person classes for students of classes 9 to 12, colleges, and Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) will be allowed with standard operating procedures
- ✓ Malls, theatres, showrooms, amusement parks, gyms, textiles, beauty parlours and restaurants are allowed to function at half capacity.
- ✓ This also applies to dining in at hostels, lodges and bakeries.
- ✓ The existing curbs will continue for places of worship, social, cultural and political gatherings.
- ✓ Participants in weddings should be restricted to 100, and only 50 people will be allowed to take part in funerals
- ✓ Buses should run with passengers seated and metro rail at 50% capacity to maintain social distance.
- ✓ The restrictions were announced after chief minister M K Stalin held a review meeting.

NATIONAL

- **On December 31, the Union home ministry - extended the validity of the registrations of NGOs under Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) expiring between September 29, 2020 and March 31, 2022 till the end of March 2022**
- ✓ The extension of the licences has been given until March 31, 2022 or till the disposal of their application, whichever is earlier.

- ✓ However, the FCRA licences of NGOs whose renewal plea has already been rejected shall not be eligible for the extension.
 - ✓ This essentially means that the Missionaries of Charity became ineligible for receiving any fresh foreign contributions or utilising foreign funds received by it
 - ✓ On December 25, the Ministry of Home Affairs refused to approve the renewal application of Missionaries of Charity, an NGO founded by late Nobel laureate Mother Teresa, due to “adverse inputs”.
 - ✓ Following the refusal from the Ministry, the Missionaries of Charity instructed all its centres not to operate foreign contribution bank accounts of the NGO.
 - ✓ All NGOs are required to apply for renewal of their FCRA registration before expiry of the five-year validity of their respective FCRA licences, in accordance with Rule 12 of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Rules, 2011.
 - ✓ Earlier, an extension of FCRA registration license was granted only till December 31 this year.
 - ✓ While applying online for renewal, the NGOs are required to furnish the details of their FCRA account in SBI’s New Delhi branch and affidavits of office bearers furnishing details like their Aadhaar number, besides paying a ₹5,000 renewal fee.
 - ✓ The FCRA regulates foreign donations and ensures that such contributions do not adversely affect the country’s internal security.
 - ✓ The Centre had amended the FCRA last year, introducing a new regime
 - ✓ Following the amendment in rules, the Ministry of Home Affairs issued a notification in November 2021, stating that NGOs must have existed for at least three years and spent Rs 15 lakh in voluntary activities to be eligible to receive money from abroad
- **The 46th meeting of the GST Council - decided to defer the increase in the rate for textiles to 12% from 5% on December 31, 2021**



- ✓ The meeting had only one agenda - revision of rates in the textiles sector - and was convened after the request of the finance minister of Gujarat for reconsideration of the September 2021 decision taken in the GST council

- ✓ After deliberations, it has been decided at the meeting to maintain the status quo and not to increase the tax rate of textiles to 12% from 5%
- ✓ The issue of rates in textiles has now been referred to a panel of ministers headed by Karnataka chief minister Basavaraj Bommai, which is reviewing overall rate rationalisation.
- ✓ At present, tax rate on manmade fibre, yarn and fabrics is 18%, 12% and 5%, respectively.
- ✓ The 45th meeting of the GST council in Lucknow in September had decided to correct the inverted duty structure in the footwear and textile sectors and the rate rationalisation was scheduled to take place from January 1, 2022.
 - ✓ The inverted duty structure refers to a situation where a finished product comes under a lower tax slab compared to raw materials used as inputs.
- ✓ In November, the Finance Ministry notified a uniform 12% rate for manmade fibre, yarn, fabrics and apparels, along with a 12% uniform rate for footwear.
- ✓ According to the FM, the panel will submit its report by February and it will be circulated to all ministers and the council will discuss it either in February end or sometime in March.
- ✓ The FM said she had received several representations from industry associations on the issue.
- ✓ Several states had demanded roll-back of the proposed rate increase on natural fibres, fabrics and garments.
- ✓ Several state finance ministers had also raised the issue of rolling back the duty hike at their pre-Budget meeting with the Finance Minister on December 30.
- ✓ The GST Council has been working on correcting the inverted duty structure on at least 10 items.

INTERNATIONAL

- **Shanghai - has opened two new driverless metro lines - Phase one of Line 18 and Line 14 - on December 30, 2021**



- ✓ This takes the total length of the city's metro network to 831 kilometres, the longest metro network anywhere in the world

- ✓ Shanghai's Line 14, which operates for 38 km, is the first fully automatic metro line for eight-car trains in the city
- ✓ The two new driverless metro lines take the total number of automatic lines in the city to five.
- ✓ Currently, Shanghai operates 167 km of fully automatic metro lines, making it the first in the world.
- ✓ Shanghai now boasts of 508 metro stations in total.
- ✓ After Shanghai, Beijing and New Delhi take the second and third spot on the list of cities with the largest metro networks.
- ✓ Beijing's metro extends to about 780 km, having 450 stations, with about 53km of lines constructed in 2021
- ✓ Delhi Metro's Phase IV track, which totals 103.93 km, is expected to begin functioning in 2024, taking the city's metro network to 453 km.
- ✓ Delhi is followed by London at 402km.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **The 97th edition of the World Sangeet Tansen Festival - concluded in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh on December 30, 2021**



- ✓ The stage of the 5-day program, which started on December 25, has been constructed on the theme of Siddhanath temple situated in Omkareshwar.
- ✓ It has been prepared next to the mausoleum of Sangeet Samrat Tansen located at Hazira in Gwalior
- ✓ Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan inaugurated the festival in the presence of Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia
- ✓ National Kalidas Awards were presented in the inauguration ceremony.
- ✓ Before the beginning of the fest, various rituals were performed at the Tansen mausoleum spot.
- ✓ In the music festival, many artists took part from India as well as from abroad.
- ✓ Tansen, also known as Miyan Tan Sen or Ramtanu Pande, was a famous musician in Hindustani classical music.

- ✓ His reputation gained the attention of Mughal Emperor Akbar, who requested Tansen to join the musicians at Mughal court.
- ✓ In 1562, Tansen joined the Akbar's court.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **China - launched a new Earth observation satellite named 'Ziyuan-1 02E' into space on December 27, 2021**



- ✓ "Ziyuan-1 02E" or "Five Meter 02 Optical Satellite" is a new satellite having a camera capable of taking photos of the ground with a resolution of five meters
- ✓ It was launched into space by a Long March-4C rocket from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in Beijing Province
- ✓ This is the 39th launch of the Long March-4C rocket and the 403rd launch of the entire Long March series
- ✓ The Ziyuan-1 02E weighs approximately 2.5 kilograms and is equipped with infrared, near-infrared and hyperspectral cameras to help survey China's geological environment and search for minerals
- ✓ The new satellite can be used for surveying Earth resources, disaster management, and ecological and land use monitoring
- ✓ Also aboard was a small amateur cube satellite, Xiwang 3, with a radio payload built by the Chinese Amateur Satellite Group (CAMSAT)
- ✓ Beijing's 101 Middle School was involved in this satellite project, which is also part of a China-Africa cooperation science outreach project called "Xiwang" (meaning Hope), that is targeted at young minds
- ✓ The first Ziyuan satellite, Ziyuan-1 01, was launched in 1999 in a partnership between China and the Brazilian national space agency, INPE
- ✓ Of the nine Ziyuan satellites launched to date, six have been part of the China-Brazil Earth Resources Satellite (CBERS) program, while the other three – including Ziyuan-1 02E – were solely Chinese-operated.
- ✓ China's fifty-three launches in 2021 overtake the country's previous record of 39 – tied between 2018 and 2020.

DEFENCE

- **The Indian Army, with support from the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) - has recently established the Quantum Lab at Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE) in Mhow in Madhya Pradesh**



- ✓ The decision to set up the Quantum Lab is intended to undertake research and training in the emerging field of Quantum technology
- ✓ The Lab will focus on research in key thrust areas of quantum key distribution, quantum communication and quantum computing, among others.
- ✓ Indian Army has also established an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Centre at the same institution with over 140 deployments in forward areas and active support of industry and academia
- ✓ Chief of Army Staff General MM Naravane visited the facility during his recent visit to Mhow.

ECONOMY

- **Chinese mobile phone companies Xiaomi and Oppo – could face the prospect of being fined more than ₹1,000 crore for violating tax norms**
- ✓ The fine may be levied for not complying with the regulatory mandate prescribed under the Income-tax Act for disclosure of transactions with associated enterprises.
- ✓ The two companies didn't comply with certain rules under the Income-tax Act, 1961 and also may have understated taxable profit by over ₹1,400 crore.
- ✓ On December 21, the I-T department conducted countrywide search and seizure operations on certain foreign-controlled mobile communication and mobile handset manufacturing companies and people linked to them.
- ✓ Several premises in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Assam, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Bihar, Rajasthan, Delhi and NCR were covered in the operation.

- ✓ The search action has revealed that two major companies have made remittance in the nature of royalty, to and on behalf of its group companies located abroad, which aggregates to more than ₹5,500 crore.
- ✓ It has to be noted that the I-T department hasn't named the Chinese mobile manufacturers, Xiaomi and Oppo, in any of their statements, though industry sources maintain the two companies are Xiaomi and Oppo.

APPOINTMENTS

- **The government - has appointed Vinay Kumar Tripathi as the new chairman and CEO of the Railway Board.**



- ✓ The appointments committee of the cabinet (ACC) has approved a six-month extension to Tripathi's tenure that will now end on December 31, 2022.
- ✓ Tripathi has been appointed in place of outgoing Chairman and CEO Suneet Sharma, who retired on December 31, 2021
- ✓ Tripathi, who will take charge on January 1, was working as general manager of North-Eastern Railway, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh till the present appointment as the Chairman of the Board.
- ✓ Tripathi did his B Tech (electrical engineering) from Roorkee and joined railways through the Indian Railway Service of Electrical Engineers (IRSEE) batch of 1983.
- ✓ His first posting was as assistant electrical engineer in the Northern Railway.
- ✓ He also held the posts of electrical department in Northern, Central and Western Railways
- ✓ Tripathi also served key posts of divisional railway manager (DRM) of North Central Railway, Allahabad, chief electrical locomotive engineer, additional general manager of Western Railway and additional member (traction) in the Railway Board.
- ✓ He has attended higher Management training programmes in Switzerland & USA.
- ✓ Tripathi had played a key role in commissioning of state-of-art three-phase locomotives and their indigenization

AWARDS

- **Surat's noted industrialist Viral Desai, popularly known as 'Greenman' for his passion for the environment - has been awarded the prestigious Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award.**



- ✓ Viral Desai and the other winners were felicitated at Dubai with the 'Bharat Gaurav Samman' by Sanskruti Yuva Sansthan
- ✓ Twenty-eight prominent personalities from 11 countries, including the UK, the US, New Zealand, France, and Malaysia, were felicitated with the prestigious awards on the occasion
- ✓ Viral Desai was the only one from India to have won the honour for climate action.
- ✓ Some of the other awardees include motivational speaker Padma Shri Gaur Gopaldas, polo player Ashvini Kumar Sharma, Akshaya Patra Foundation's chairman Padma Shri Madhu Pandit Dasa, instrumentalist Padma Bhushan Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Padma Shri Ramkishore Chhipa, Nirbhaya's mother Asha Devi, investor banker Saket Mishra
- ✓ Viral Desai accepted the award while proudly wearing the traditional Gandhi cap and Indian attire
- ✓ Viral Desai has adopted and transformed Surat's Udhna Railway Station into the number one green railway station in the country.
- ✓ Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award was established by "Harvard Medical School Centre for Health and Global Environment".
- ✓ It is conferred annually to an individual who is working to restore and protect global environment

SPORTS

- **India – defeated Sri Lanka by nine wickets to win the U-19 Asia Cup at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on December 31, 2021**



- ✓ In eight editions of the U-19 Asia Cup, India had won eight times, which includes a shared trophy in 2012
- ✓ Indian side also owns the record of never losing a final
- ✓ Further, this is the third consecutive title victory for India
- ✓ India and Sri Lanka had last met in the final of the U-19 Asia Cup back in 2018
- ✓ India's only loss in the competition came against arch-rivals Pakistan, who lost to Sri Lanka in the semifinals.
- ✓ Earlier, India entered finals after defeating Bangladesh U-19 team in the semifinals
- ✓ The tournament provided valuable practice for the Yash Dhull-led Indian side ahead of the U-19 World Cup, beginning in the West Indies from January 14, 2022.