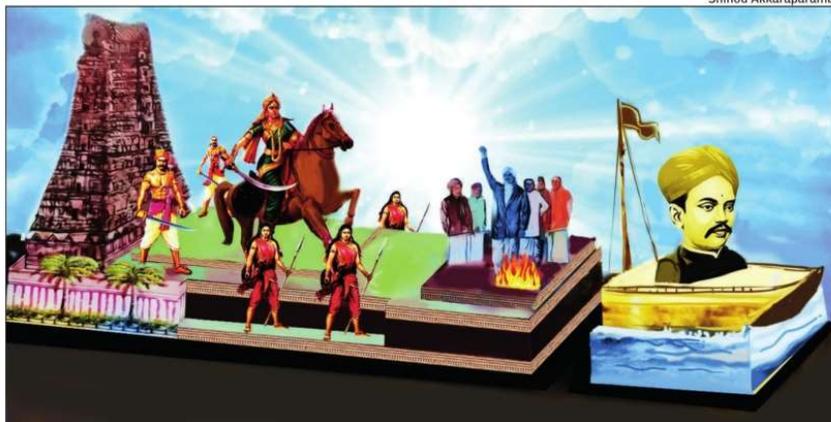


## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—JANUARY 20, 2022

### TAMIL NADU

- **The Republic Day celebrations of the Tamil Nadu government – will not include any tableaux of government departments this year, due to surge in Covid cases in Chennai**
- ✓ Further, there would not be any customary cultural programs to be performed this year during the parade
- ✓ Instead, the state's Republic Day tableaux rejected by the Centre will roll out on Kamarajar Salai in Chennai, complete with Subramaniya Bharathiyar, V O Chidambaram, Velu Nachiyar and Maruthu Pandiyar brothers.



- ✓ The elements will appear with modifications in two tableaux, accompanied by a third tableau with the freedom fighters of Tamil Nadu summing up the theme 'Tamil Nadu in Freedom Struggle'.
- ✓ Earlier, the expert committee of the Union government rejected the state's seven sketches after three rounds of suggestions and modifications
- ✓ On January 18, chief minister M K Stalin announced that the tableau will be part of the Republic Day celebrations in Chennai.
- ✓ Freedom fighters VOC and Subramaniya Bharathiar, whose 150th and 138th birth anniversaries are celebrated this year, would find prominent place in the tableau.

- ✓ The design approved by the committee in the third round had the bust of VOC on a ship model, but the state government's latest design has the leader, imprisoned by the British, pulling the oil press in jail, beside the ship model.
- ✓ The second tableau will have queen Velu Nachiyar, the first queen to have fought the British, riding a horse with a sword with women soldiers holding spears.
- ✓ Kalaiyar temple and the hanging of freedom fighters Maruthu Pandiyar brothers in public would be part of the tableau
- ✓ The tableaux will be taken to all important cities in the state after the Republic Day event in Chennai.

## NATIONAL

- **On January 19, the subject expert committee (SEC) of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) - recommended regular market approval for Covaxin and Covishield**
  - ✓ However, the vaccines will continue to be available and administered only at the centres that are registered under the government's CoWin platform
  - ✓ A full market authorisation is granted when a vaccine is deemed safe and effective for most people who are inoculated with it.
  - ✓ Such an approval is given after submission and review of full data from phase 1, 2 and 3 trials of the jab.
  - ✓ Once a full approval is given, the manufacturers are not required to file safety and adverse events data every 15 days and instead do so only once in six months
  - ✓ Since January 3 last year, Covishield and Covaxin have been available under Emergency Use Authorisation (EUA) from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI).
  - ✓ An emergency use authorisation (EUA) is given after studying data from phase 1 and 2, when regulators conclude that the vaccine has more benefits than risks
  - ✓ Bharat Biotech's Covaxin is India's first indigenous vaccine against Covid-19, while Serum Institute locally manufactures Britain's AstraZeneca-Oxford jab as 'Covishield.'
  - ✓ On August 23, 2021, the US FDA gave the first full regulatory approval for a Covid-19 vaccine to Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine (Comirnaty) for individuals 16 years and older.
- **On January 19, The Union Cabinet - approved an additional ₹974 crore for payment of interest for the six-month Covid loan moratorium period, taking the total support to nearly ₹6,500 crore.**
  - ✓ For several categories of loans of up ₹2 crore — given to MSMEs or as housing, education, personal or auto loans — the government had provided ₹5,500 crore in the budget for the current financial year.
  - ✓ But overall claims now add up to ₹6,474 crore, requiring an additional provision in the budget, which was cleared by the Union Cabinet

- ✓ Further, the Union Cabinet also cleared equity infusion of ₹1,500 crore into IREDA (Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency) to boost its lending capacity
  - ✓ The equity infusion will enhance IREDA's net worth, boosting the agency's lending capacity to ₹12,000 crore.
  - ✓ This amount will be helpful for financing up to 4,000 MW of additional renewable capacity.
  - ✓ This will lead to a reduction in carbon emission of more than 7 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> per year.
  - ✓ The government targets setting up of 450 GW green energy capacity as part of fulfilling its COP26 net-zero promise.
- **Air India – cancels most of its flights on the India-US routes over safety concerns pertaining to the 5G communications rollout in the US and its possible hazardous effect on aircraft navigation systems.**
- ✓ Further, several airlines in the Middle East, a popular transit hub, have started cancelling flights to many US cities.
  - ✓ Emirates, the largest user of Boeing's mini-jumbo is set to suspend nine US routes.
  - ✓ British Airways, Singapore Airlines, Lufthansa and Korean Air Lines have switched planes on select routes.
  - ✓ Earlier, the US aviation giant Boeing cautioned 5G signals might interfere with the radio altimeter – device that determines a plane's altitude - of its 777 flights
  - ✓ The so-called C-band frequencies used by 5G are closer to the portion of airwaves used by the altimeters than the frequencies used by earlier generations of cellular service.
  - ✓ The issue appeared to particularly impact the Boeing 777, aircraft used by carriers worldwide.
- **On January 19, Defence PSU Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) - has signed a contract with the Government of Mauritius for exporting one Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH Mk III) for the Mauritius Police Force in Bengaluru**



- ✓ According to HAL, the deal was in line with the Centre's vision to boost defence exports to friendly foreign countries
- ✓ Mauritius already operates HAL-built ALH and Do-228 aircraft.
- ✓ The ALH Mk III is a multirole, multi-mission versatile helicopter in the 5.5-tonne category.
- ✓ As per HAL, the helicopter has proven its mettle in various utility roles, including numerous lifesaving missions during natural calamities in India and abroad.
- ✓ More than 335 ALHs have been produced to date logging around 3,40,000 cumulative flying hours.
- ✓ The PSU, however, did not specify the value of the deal.
- ✓ The Indian military has been using the helicopters and last year the Indian navy commissioned its first squadron.

## HIGH COURT VERDICT

- **The Madras high court - has confirmed Tamil Nadu's decision to reserve 50% PG medical seats to in-service candidates working in rural areas in the state-quota and additional 30 marks as an incentive.**
- ✓ Justice M Dhandapani passed the order while dismissing a batch of pleas moved by candidates from private medical colleges challenging the decision.
- ✓ Accordingly, the in-service candidates can compete in both the 50% reserved seats and the open category in future
- ✓ The judge also rejected the objections for providing the weightage marks for service in hilly/difficult/rural areas to be considered along with NEET score for admission
- ✓ The judge held the view that entry 25 List III of the Constitution is entirely the State's domain.

