

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-MARCH 29, 2022

TAMIL NADU

- The UAE-based LuLu Group - signed a memorandum of understanding with Tamil Nadu government to invest ₹3,500 crore in the state to set up shopping malls, hypermarkets and a food processing and logistics centre.
- ✓ Totally, the chief minister-led delegation signed various MoUs with investors to attract ₹6,100 crore investments during the five-day visit to the UAE.
- ✓ The MoU was signed by Pooja Kulkarni, Managing Director and CEO of Tamil Nadu Industrial Guidance & Export Promotion Bureau and Ashraf Ali MA, Executive Director of Lulu Group in the presence of chief minister M K Stalin and LuLu Group chairman MA Yusuff Ali in Abu Dhabi on March 28



- ✓ As per the agreement with LuLu group, the first shopping mall will come up in Chennai by 2024 while the first hypermarket is expected to open by this year-end in Coimbatore at Laxmi Mills compound.
- ✓ A \$7.4 billion retail conglomerate, LuLu Group will also set up a food processing and logistics centre for exports to the Middle East.

- ✓ A high-level delegation from the company will soon visit the state to finalise locations and complete other investment formalities.
 - ✓ The aim is to provide more than 15,000 direct and indirect job opportunities to youth in the next three years
 - ✓ In India, the LuLu group has three shopping malls -in Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram and Bengaluru.
 - ✓ Its fourth mall is expected to be opened in Lucknow by the end of May this year.
 - ✓ Earlier, CM Stalin met Abdullah Mohamed Al Mazrouei, the elected chairman of the Federation of UAE Chambers of Commerce and Industry
 - ✓ During the meeting, the CM invited UAE companies to set up food processing units, food parks and cold chains and logistics facilities in Tamil Nadu to export food products to UAE, the Middle East and North African countries.
- **The Greater Chennai Corporation - has rolled out the Tamil Nadu Urban Employment Scheme (TNUES), a minimum wage programme that would provide job opportunities for people living below the poverty line.**
- ✓ This scheme is similar to the MGNREGA scheme, which provides job opportunities in rural areas, while the TNUES will provide jobs in Chennai city.
 - ✓ The civic body has rolled the scheme at a cost of ₹10 crore in two zones - Tondiarpet and Thiruvika Nagar - in the first phase
 - ✓ The scheme will be expanded later to other zones as well, based on the demand.
 - ✓ The daily wage for the scheme would be ₹382 and those aged between 18 and 60 can apply.
 - ✓ The scheme is implemented in the ward level and the locals will get a suitable job in their wards itself.
 - ✓ The works that come under the ambit of this scheme are restoration of ponds, desilting ponds, kulams and channels, sapling plantation in avenues and roadsides, flood control measures such as deepening waterbodies, desilting storm water drains, and formation of link-drains and drainages.
 - ✓ The work also includes operation and maintenance of micro pits, compost centres and resource recovery centres where garbage segregation happens.
 - ✓ Formation of traffic islands and foot paths too are included.
 - ✓ So far, 50-100 people have enrolled in each of the zones, and the corporation has planned to increase the enrollment number to 500 people.
 - ✓ The State government has allotted a total of ₹85 crore for the scheme across the State.

STATES

- **Pramod Sawant - took oath of office as Goa's 14th chief minister at a grand swearing-in ceremony on March 28 in the presence of PM Narendra Modi and several other central and state leaders.**

- ✓ For Sawant, who has served as chief minister since 2019, this is his second consecutive term.
- ✓ While during his last tenure, he had two deputy CMs, Sawant said that this time, there will be none.



- ✓ At the ceremony, eight other BJP MLAs were also sworn in as cabinet ministers.
 - ✓ This is BJP's third consecutive term in office.
 - ✓ Sawant and the ministers were administered their oath of office and secrecy by governor P S Sreedharan Pillai at the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee stadium.
 - ✓ Apart from Modi, the ceremony was attended by Union minister Nitin Gadkari, BJP national president J P Nadda, chief ministers of BJP-ruled states, BJP state president Sadanand Shet Tanavade, Goa BJP election in-charge Devendra Fadnavis, and others.
 - ✓ This is only the second time the swearing-in ceremony has not taken place at Raj Bhavan.
 - ✓ In 2012, when the Manohar Parrikar-led BJP secured 21 seats in the 40-member house, the ceremony was held at Campal grounds.
- **The archipelago of Lakshadweep - will get its first fuel station at capital Kavaratti on March 30**
- ✓ The islanders of the Union territory faced fuel scarcity for long as petrol and diesel used to be transported in 200-litre barrels on barges to the atolls off the coast of Kerala.
 - ✓ Till now, petrol was sold through cooperative societies and the residents have to buy it in plastic cans for their vehicles.
 - ✓ The fuel was rationed and a vehicle was given only 5-10 litres each month.
 - ✓ Further, fuel was expensive (around ₹650 for 5 litres) because residents had to pay the transportation cost as well.
 - ✓ During monsoon, fuel rationing was even tighter as the weather affected the movement of barges.

- ✓ A similar project has been completed in Minicoy and it will be inaugurated in the first week of April

NATIONAL

- **India - has crossed a milestone of 50 thousand open defecation-free (ODF) Plus villages.**
 - ✓ The top-performing states include Telangana with 13,960 ODF Plus villages, Tamil Nadu 11,477, Madhya Pradesh 3,849, Odisha 2,991, Uttar Pradesh 2,605, Uttarakhand 2,603, Himachal Pradesh 2,573, Karnataka 2,021 and Chhattisgarh 1,936
 - ✓ An ODF plus village is one that sustains its open-defecation-free status, ensures solid and liquid waste management and is visually clean.
 - ✓ This includes ensuring all households as well as the primary school, panchayat building and Anganwadi centre, have access to toilets.
 - ✓ The mission towards becoming ODF Plus has several components including biodegradable waste management including the GOBARdhan Scheme, Grey water management, Plastic waste management and faecal sludge management.
 - ✓ ODF Plus villages have been divided into three categories, Aspiring, Rising, and Model, to showcase their progress.
 - ✓ Aspiring villages are those which have arrangements to manage either solid or liquid waste.
 - ✓ Rising villages have arrangements to manage both, and a Model village is the one that not only manages its waste but is also visually clean.
 - ✓ Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen Phase-II was launched in February 2020 with the aim to ensure that all villages in the country can declare themselves as ODF Plus by the end of 2024.
 - ✓ This programme is being implemented from 2020-21 to 2024-25 and has a financial outlay of Rs. 1,40,881 crore
- **On March 27, the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) - organised “Yamunotsav” in association with a group of NGOs at Asita East River Front, ITO Bridge, New Delhi**



- ✓ The grand festival was inaugurated with the lightening of lamps by the dignitaries present on the occasion
- ✓ It was followed by lectures and discussions by the dignitaries, officials and other persons participating in the Yamunotsav 2022.
- ✓ As part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations, the event seeks celebrate the glory of Yamuna with a “pledge to keep it clean” by 2025
- ✓ NMCG is funding the construction of sewerage infrastructure for the river, which is the most important tributary of the river Ganga, to the tune of around Rs 2300 crore
- ✓ More than 1000 people gathered at the Yamuna ghat to celebrate Yamunotsav which witnessed live paintings, street plays, classical performances, spiritual performances, music and dance events, and more
- ✓ Deserving persons and NGOs working in the field of water rejuvenation and cleaning Yamuna River were felicitated with awards and recognition like Yamuna Nav Rakshak, Yamuna Yodha, Yamuna Saviour.

HIGH COURT VERDICT

- **On March 28, the Kerala high court - barred the government employees from participating in the ongoing two-day nationwide strike organised by the National Convention of Workers against the policies of Centre**
- ✓ It declared that the participation of government servants in the ongoing two-day strike is 'illegal'.
- ✓ The Court also asked the state government to declare *dies non* (not qualifying for any remuneration) on both days.
- ✓ Further, the Court directed the state government to immediately issue an order preventing its employees from taking part in strikes and initiate stringent action if they do.
- ✓ The court also asked the government to ensure transport for the workers to reach work on days when a strike enforced by any organisation affects their travel
- ✓ A Division Bench of Chief Justice S. Manikumar and Justice Shaji P Chaly held that no government servant shall participate in the strike as it was against Rule 86 of the Kerala Government Servants' Conduct Rules, 1960
- ✓ The Rule 86 of the Kerala Government Servants' Conduct Rules, 1960 states that no government employee shall engage in any strike or similar activities

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **The fourth Conference of Parties (COP4) to the Minamata Convention on Mercury – was held in Indonesia from March 21 to 25, 2022**
- ✓ COP4, which was held in Nusa Dua, Bali, was the first such conference held outside of Geneva, Switzerland.
- ✓ It was preceded by online sessions conducted in November last year.

- ✓ This convention aims to protect the environment and human health from the release of mercury, and anthropogenic emissions.



- ✓ The conference called on participating nations to tackle illegal trade of mercury and expand the list of 8 mercury-added products to be phased out, which includes products like cold cathode fluorescent lamps, compact fluorescent lamps, paper, photograph film, and propellant for satellites
- ✓ Mercury is a global pollutant that affects the health of humans and the ecosystem, leading to irreversible toxic effects
- ✓ It is considered by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as one of the top ten chemicals or groups of chemicals of major public health concern.
- ✓ Mercury emitted into the air eventually settles into water or onto land where it can be washed into water.
- ✓ Once deposited, certain microorganisms can change it into methyl mercury, a highly toxic form that builds up in fish, shellfish and animals that eat fish
- ✓ The “Bali Declaration on Combatting Global Illegal Trade of Mercury” was also presented by Indonesia, the host nation.
- ✓ This political declaration of non-binding nature aims to enhance international cooperation to share and monitor information, practices, and experiences to combat the illegal mercury trade.

DEFENCE

- **Western Naval Command – conducted an offshore security exercise, ‘Prasthan’ in the Offshore Development Area (ODA) off Mumbai on March 23, 2022**
- ✓ Conducted every six months, this exercise aims to ensure offshore security and integrate efforts of all maritime stakeholders involved in offshore defence.
- ✓ Led by the Indian Navy, the exercise witnessed participation from the Indian Air Force, Coast Guard, ONGC, Mumbai Port Trust, Jawahar Lal Nehru Port Trust, Customs, state fisheries department, Mercantile Marine Department and the Marine Police.



- ✓ The day-long exercise focused on refining standard operating procedures (SOPs) and response-actions to a number of contingencies in the Offshore Defence Area off Mumbai.
- **The third edition of the joint training exercise between India's and Uzbekistan's armies - EX-DUSTLIK – is currently underway in Uzbekistan's Yangiariq**



- ✓ The exercise, which commenced on March 22, will continue till April 3, 2022
- ✓ The Indian contingent comprises the platoon strength of the Grenadiers Regiment while the Uzbek Army contingent is represented by troops of the North Western Military District
- ✓ The joint exercise will focus on Counter Terrorism operations in semi-urban terrain under a United Nations Mandate.
- ✓ The training schedule will concentrate on sharing tactical-level drills and learning the best practices from one another
- ✓ It will culminate in a 24-hour-long validation exercise - a test bed for the soldiers of both countries as they would undergo the challenges of simulated operations.
- ✓ The last edition of DUSTLIK was held in Uttarakhand's Ranikhet last March.

- ✓ The Grenadiers battalion is one of the highly decorated battalions of the Indian Army and has the unique distinction of participating in almost all operations before and after independence
- ✓ The unit has been awarded eight Pre-Independence Battle Honours.
- ✓ Post Independence, it has earned the theatre honour 'RAJASTHAN' in the 1965 war and the battle honour 'JARPAL' in the 1971 war.

AWARDS

- **Indian-American producer Joseph Patel – won an Oscar in the Best Documentary Feature category at the 94th Academy Awards held at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles on March 27, 2022**



- ✓ Patel along with co-producers David Dinerstein and Robert Fyvolent and director Ahmir 'Questlove' Thompson won the Oscar for 'Summer of Soul (...Or, When the Revolution Could Not Be Televised).'
- ✓ The documentary feature has swept the award season in 2021-22 with wins at Sundance Film Festival, Critics' Choice Documentary Awards, National Board of Review, British Academy Film Awards, and Producers Guild of America Awards to name a few.
- ✓ The documentary is an exploration of the 1969 Harlem Cultural Festival, which was held at Mount Morris Park in Harlem.
- ✓ The festival was a celebration of African-American music and culture and promoted Black pride and unity.
- ✓ Patel began his career as a music journalist and went on to produce and direct television and digital content for MTV News and Docs, Vice Media, The Fader, and Vevo
- ✓ Meanwhile, India's sole representation in the Academy Awards, the documentary 'Writing With Fire,' directed by the filmmaker duo of Rintu Thomas and Sushmit Ghosh failed to win the award in the same category
- ✓ It was a debut feature documentary about a newspaper 'Khabar Lahariya' started as a social experiment by an NGO

- ✓ 'Khabar Lahariya' is India's only rural newspaper run by Dalit women since 2002, from Chitrakoot in the Bundelkhand region
- ✓ It was the first Indian documentary made by an all-India independent production to bag an Oscar nomination in this category
- ✓ Among other films, CODA was the big winner after bagging three big awards of the night - Best Film, Best Supporting Actor for the hearing-impaired Troy Kotsur and Best Adapted Screenplay.
- ✓ Troy Kotsur became the second deaf actor to win an Academy Award after his CODA co-star Marlee Matlin.
- ✓ Dune won six awards out of its ten nominations – Best original score, Best cinematography, Best visual effects, Best film editing, Best sound and Best production design.
- ✓ The Power of the Dog, which had 12 nominations in its name, won only one award for its Director, Jane Campion
- ✓ Will Smith won the first Oscar of his career for his performance in King Richard.
- ✓ Jessica Chastain won Best Actress for The Eyes of Tammy Faye.

