

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MARCH 6, 2022

TAMIL NADU

- **Chief Minister M K Stalin - will chair the district collectors, district police officers and district forest officers meeting from March 10 to 12.**
- ✓ Ministers and senior officials from various government departments will take part in the meeting to be held at the Government secretariat in Chennai
- ✓ The state level meeting by the CM is usually conducted only for the district collectors and the heads of the city and district police units
- ✓ This is the first time the CM is holding the meeting for the district forest officers also in order to have focussed discussions on the implementation of forest related schemes.
- ✓ The key objective of the meeting, according to a government statement, is to know the status of the various schemes mentioned in the announcements and the extent to which the schemes were implemented in the state.
- ✓ During the meeting, the CM will review the status of GOs issued for 80% of the 1,704 announcements made by the government since it came to power in May 2021
- ✓ The announcements include those made during the Governor's address and under rule 110 of the State Assembly by the Chief Minister and the cabinet ministers during the budget debate
- ✓ During the meeting, the Chief Minister will have an open discussion with the officials to know about the ground-level implementation of the schemes.
- ✓ Among the other key aspects of the conferences is the maintenance of law and order at the macro level.

NATIONAL

- **On March 4, the University Grants Commission (UGC) – released the new draft 'Guidelines for Transforming Higher Education Institutions into Multidisciplinary Institutions'**

- ✓ The Commission is seeking suggestions from different stakeholders for the next two weeks before its committee finalises the regulations by April-May 2022
- ✓ As per the draft guidelines, the centre plans to allow all its affiliated colleges to become 'degree-awarding multidisciplinary autonomous institutions' by 2035.
- ✓ Further, students would also be allowed to simultaneously pursue dual degrees from two institutions, earn 40% of credits from outside the parent university/college, and allow colleges to form clusters or even a larger university to offer multidisciplinary degrees.

PLAN FOR HIGHER EDU INSTITUTES

HIGHLIGHTS

TYPES OF INSTITUTES ENVISAGED

- Multidisciplinary research-intensive universities (RUs)
- Multidisciplinary teaching-intensive universities (TUs)
- Degree-awarding multidisciplinary autonomous colleges (smaller than a university)



OBJECTIVES

| | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Convert single-stream institutions into multidisciplinary large universities or autonomous degree-awarding HEIs ➤ Strengthening of institutions by adding departments such as languages, literature, music, philosophy, indology, art, dance, theatre, education, mathematics, statistics, pure and applied sciences, sociol- | <p>ogy, economics, sports, translation and interpretation, among others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ By 2035 all affiliated colleges should become degree-awarding multidisciplinary autonomous institutions ➤ Merger of single-stream institutions with other multidisciplinary institutions under the same or different managements |
|--|---|

- ✓ The policy also proposed institutional collaboration whereby an undergraduate student, upon completion of his/her degree course, need not have to take another entrance test but would get direct entry in a master's programme of a partner institution.
- ✓ The policy proposes a three-pronged strategy for the higher educational institutions
- ✓ The first strategy is to establish additional departments, which have not been the core areas thus far of existing higher educational institutes.
- ✓ The second proposal is to bring together smaller institutions working on focussed areas under one umbrella and convert them into larger universities, while retaining their autonomy with their own management.
- ✓ The third plan is to bring autonomous colleges as a cluster with their own board of directors and their own academic council, so that students from colleges within the cluster can access each other's courses and earn credit.

- **The road transport ministry - has proposed a lower rate of third party (TP) premium for electric and hybrid electric vehicles for the next financial year**
- ✓ In addition, the ministry has proposed marginal increase in the premium for all other categories of vehicles.
- ✓ The only exception is for the multi-axle trailers where the premium may increase by nearly 6%.
- ✓ After two years' moratorium due to Covid-19 pandemic, the revised TP insurance premium will come into effect from April 1.
- ✓ This is also for the first time that the road transport ministry will notify the TP rates in consultation with the insurance regulator IRDA.
- ✓ Earlier, this was done by the regulator itself.
- ✓ The ministry has invited suggestions and objections from all stakeholders by March 14 before notifying the final rates.
- ✓ The draft notification has proposed a 15% discount for all types of electric vehicles in its bid to incentivise the penetration of environment friendly vehicles.
- ✓ Electric private cars will attract a premium of ₹1,780 to ₹6,712 depending on their capacity.
- ✓ Similarly, it has proposed a 7.5% discount on TP for hybrid electric vehicles.

INTERNATIONAL

- **On March 5, China – announced an increase in its annual defence budget by 7.1% to \$230 billion from last year's \$209 billion, which is three times that of India's military spending.**
- ✓ The Chinese government proposed the defence budget for the fiscal year 2022 at 1.45 trillion yuan
- ✓ Last year, China's defence spending had for the first time crossed \$200 billion.
- ✓ In 2021, the defence budget grew by 6.8% to \$209 billion.
- ✓ China's defence budget is over three times that of India's defence budget of Rs 5.25 lakh crore (about \$70 billion) for 2022.
- ✓ Besides the defence budget, China has a separate internal security budget that often surpasses the defence spending.
- ✓ China continues to be the largest standing army despite downsizing its troops to 2 million from the earlier 2.3 million in 2017
- ✓ China is the second-biggest spender on defence after the United States, whose defence budget is over \$600 billion.
- ✓ Further, China cut its GDP target to 5.5% to focus on slower growth to stabilise its economic fundamentals this year
- ✓ This was announced by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang in his annual work report submitted to the opening session of the National People's Congress
- ✓ The lowering of the GDP target from 6% to 5.5% is against the backdrop of uncertain global recovery due to Covid-19 and the Ukraine turmoil as well as a slump in China's vast property sector

INDIA AND NEIGHBOURS

- **India - will send 50,000 tonnes of high quality wheat worth ₹125 crore to Afghanistan in batches of 2,000 tonnes each**
- ✓ The government has already prepared a schedule to ship out 10,000 tonnes by March 20.
- ✓ The wheat sent to Afghanistan is from the Food Corporation of India's central pool
- ✓ The consignments "meet all parameters" and have been tested by reputed private labs
- ✓ India is providing wheat to Afghanistan at an "economic cost" of ₹24,996 per tonne.

DEFENCE

- **The naval variant of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile - was successfully tested from destroyer INS Chennai on March 5.**



- ✓ The land-attack supersonic cruise missile hit its intended target with pinpoint accuracy after traversing an extended range trajectory and performing complex manoeuvres
- ✓ Both the Brahmos missiles and INS Chennai are indigenously-built
- ✓ BrahMos is a deadly conventional (non-nuclear) weapon jointly developed with Russia that flies almost three times the speed of sound at Mach 2.8
- ✓ The range of BrahMos has been extended from the original 290-km to 350-400-km now, while a 800-km variant is also in the works.
- ✓ The Army's BrahMos missile batteries have been deployed in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh, along with tanks, howitzers, surface-to-air missiles and other weapons, as part of the overall military readiness posture against China.
- ✓ BrahMos has emerged as the "prime strike weapon" for armed forces over the years, with contracts worth over ₹36,000 crore already inked till now.

NATIONAL DAY

- **National Safety Day – March 4**



- ✓ The observance of this Day aims to create awareness about the importance of following safety regulations and measures related to workplaces, roads, environment, and health
- ✓ The objective of this day is to help the general public and employees to work carefully by adhering to all safety norms.
- ✓ The day was first announced at the Ministry of Labour and Employment's inaugural industrial safety conference in India, which recognised the necessity for national and state-level safety councils.
- ✓ The National Safety Day (NSD) is marked every year by the National Safety Council of India.
- ✓ The National Safety Council is a non-profit and self-financing organization running at the national level.
- ✓ Theme 2022 - 'Nurture young minds - Develop a safety culture'
- ✓ In 1972, National Safety Day was celebrated for the first time on the foundation day of National Safety Council
- ✓ On March 4, 1966, the Ministry of Labour and Employment established the National Safety council to develop and implement a voluntary routine in the areas of safety, health, and the environment.
- ✓ Last year, the 50th annual National Safety Day was observed with the theme of Sadak Suraksha (Road safety)

