

## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAY 25, 2022

### TAMIL NADU

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - will visit Hyderabad and Chennai for inauguration of various projects and take part in a few events on May 26.**
- ✓ The Prime Minister will participate in the celebration of the completion of 20 years of ISB Hyderabad and address the graduation ceremony of the Post Graduate Programme (PGP) Class of 2022.
  - ✓ ISB was inaugurated on December 2, 2001, by former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
  - ✓ It is considered as one of the top B-schools in the country
  - ✓ ISB also collaborates with several ministries and departments of the government to provide training and capacity building.
- ✓ On the same day, PM Modi will dedicate to the nation and lay the foundation stone of 11 projects worth over Rs. 31,400 crore at JLN Indoor Stadium in Chennai.
- ✓ In Chennai, the Prime Minister will dedicate to the nation five projects worth over Rs. 2,900 crore.
- ✓ The 75-km long Madurai-Theni (Railway Gauge Conversion Project), built at a project cost of over Rs. 500 crore, will facilitate access and give a boost to tourism in the region.
- ✓ The 30km-long third railway line between Tambaram-Chengalpattu, built at a cost of over Rs. 590 crore, will facilitate the running of more suburban services
- ✓ The 115-km-long Ennore-Chengalpattu section and 271-km-long Thiruvallur-Bengaluru section of ETBPNMT natural gas pipeline is also proposed to be inaugurated on the same day
  - ✓ These sections were built at Rs. 850 crore and Rs. 910 crore respectively
  - ✓ They will facilitate the supply of natural gas to consumers as well industries in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

- **Madurai city corporation - has decided to find scientific solutions for the dust pollution and roped in Indian Institute of Technology, Madras for the purpose**
- ✓ For a tier-II city, Madurai doesn't have any major polluting industry emitting toxic gases into the air.
- ✓ However, the city has the unique problem of fine dust causing air pollution.
- ✓ The IIT team has set up respirable dust sampler machines at six spots in the city, namely Periyar bus stand, Thiruparankundram police station, Goripalayam, Ismailpuram, Mattuthavani bus terminal and Arapalayam for this purpose.
- ✓ The team has already completed a winter study and the summer study is underway.
- ✓ Based on the outcome of the study, air pollution mitigation measures would be drawn for the city.
- ✓ Besides adding to air pollution, the fine dust accumulating on roadsides is a manoeuvring hazard for vehicles.
- ✓ Construction works and vehicular movement are major reasons for dust accumulation.

## **NATIONAL**

- **On May 24, the government - capped the export of sugar and allowed duty free import of 20 lakh tonnes each of crude soyabean oil and crude sunflower oil per annum during the current and next financial years to check rising prices.**
- ✓ The cap on the quantity of sugar exports would ensure that India has enough stock till the end of current sugar season.
- ✓ Earlier, the government had removed the basic customs duty on crude edible oil till September 30, 2022.
- ✓ The fresh reduction in import duty and agriculture development cess will further reduce the prices.
- ✓ The steps announced by the government now are the latest in a series of measures announced over the past 10 days in the wake of inflation reaching the highest level since the BJP government came to power eight years ago.
- ✓ Retail inflation is at an eight-year high of 7.8%, while wholesale price inflation has soared to more than 15%, the highest in nine years.
- ✓ During the past year, the average retail price of soyabean oil and sunflower oil has increased by 11.6% each to Rs.171 and Rs.192 a litre, respectively.
- ✓ In the case of palm oil and vanaspati, the average prices have increased by 19% and 28% respectively during this period.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

- **On May 24, UAE – reported the country's first case of the monkeypox in a woman who travelled from West Africa.**

- ✓ It is the first known infection in the Gulf and second in West Asia after Israel reported a case of the virus last week.
- ✓ The Czech Republic, Austria and Slovenia too registered their first cases of monkeypox on the day.
- ✓ According to the WHO, there have been 131 confirmed monkeypox cases and 106 further suspected cases since the first was reported on May 7 outside West and Central African countries where it usually spreads.
- ✓ So far, Britain, Spain, Portugal, Italy, the US, Sweden and Canada have reported infections, mostly in young men who hadn't previously travelled to Africa.
- ✓ France, Germany, Belgium and Australia have also identified cases.
- ✓ Meanwhile, Moderna Inc is testing potential vaccines against monkeypox in pre-clinical trials as the disease spreads across the world

## INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **India - will be joining as an associate member of the 34-nation Combined Military Forces (CMF) at Bahrain**
- ✓ It was agreed upon following a meeting between PM Narendra Modi and US President Joe Biden in Tokyo on May 24 on the sidelines of the second in-person summit of the Quad — comprising India, the US, Japan and Australia.
- ✓ India and the US committed to deepen their 'Major Defence Partnership' by expanding cooperation in new domains, including space and cyber, and launching a dialogue on Artificial Intelligence this year.
- ✓ Both sides announced the launch of a US-India Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET) which plans to join six of India's technology innovation hubs to support at least 25 joint research projects this year, starting with the areas of AI and data science

### IMPORTANT TAKEAWAYS

Photo: AFP

➤ **\$50 billion** of infrastructure assistance and investment in the Indo-Pacific over five years

➤ Launch of '**Quad Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Package (Q-CHAMP)**' for tangible climate action

➤ Quad Fellowship that will bring **100 students from the 4 countries** to the US each year to pursue graduate degrees in STEM fields



➤ Launch of **Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA)** for combating illegal fishing

➤ Quad partnership on **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)** in the Indo-Pacific

- ✓ Further, the Investment Incentive Agreement (IIA) was signed to enable the US development institution Development Finance Corporation (DFC) investing in Indian private sector-led projects in critical areas such as renewable energy, agriculture, health, and SME financing
  - ✓ IIA supersedes another similar pact signed between India and the USA in 1997.
- ✓ The next is another agreement signed to expand collaboration in antimicrobial resistance, as well as diseases such as diabetes and cancer.
- ✓ The two countries are also renewing the Indo-US Vaccine Action Programme, which since its establishment led to the manufacture of India's first indigenous and low-cost vaccines
- ✓ Also, the crucial Indo-Pacific partnership for maritime domain awareness has been established to combat illegal fishing by the Chinese
  - ✓ The Indian Navy operates Information Management and Analysis Centre that combines real-time imagery from several locations to provide a picture to commanders at sea of any approaching threats.
- ✓ Combined Military Forces is tasked with keeping an eye on the shipping lanes through the Red Sea and the Suez Canal that connects Europe with Asia
  - ✓ India has been patrolling these seas independently since 2008.
  - ✓ Operating since 1991, the rechristened CMF-Bahrain (formerly Combined Task Force 150 (CTF-150)) has intercepted illegal shipments of drugs, firearms and pirate ships.
  - ✓ The US and its allies, besides several Asian countries like Pakistan, are part of the Bahrain-based forces
  - ✓ India becomes the 35th member of the maritime partnership that also includes Australia, Bahrain, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, the Netherlands and New Zealand.
  - ✓ As an associate member, India will not have the rotating command nor get a front seat in some of the deliberations associated with operations
  - ✓ The development comes a month after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh announced that India would join the CMF-B coalition, following the India-US 2+2.
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi had bilateral meetings with his Japanese and Australian counterparts, Fumio Kishida and Anthony Albanese, on the sidelines of the Quad summit in Tokyo
  - ✓ PM Modi and Kishida agreed to further enhance bilateral security and defence cooperation, including in the area of defence manufacturing.
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted several items to the world leaders during his two-day visit to Tokyo for the Quad Summit.
- ✓ PM Modi gifted Sanjhi panel to the US President, Joe Biden
  - ✓ An art form of Mathura, legendary birthplace of Lord Krishna, Sanjhi involves free-hand stencilling and paper cutting

- ✓ Sanjhi, the art of hand-cutting designs on paper, is largely devoted to Krishna's mythology

### PM GIFTS BIDEN MATHURA ARTWORK

Modi gifted Biden this Sanjhi panel (right). An art form of Mathura, **legendary birthplace of Lord Krishna**, Sanjhi involves stencilling & paper cutting, & is largely devoted to Krishna's mythology. **UP CM Adityanath thanked the PM** for 'catapulting the art form on to the int'l stage'



During a closed Quad session, Biden praised Modi's handling of Covid & contrasted it with China's failure, according to a senior official. Biden reportedly added that Modi's success has **shown that 'democracies can deliver'** & busted the myth that autocracies like China & Russia handle a rapidly changing world better

- ✓ PM Modi also gifted Pattamadai silk mats to former Japanese PMs
  - ✓ Pattamadai, a small village in Tamil Nadu's Tirunelveli district, is home to a unique tradition of superfine silk mat weaving from 'korai' grass grown on the banks of river Thamirabarani.
- ✓ PM Modi gifted Gond art painting to his Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese.
  - ✓ Gond paintings are one of the most admired tribal art forms.
  - ✓ The word 'Gond' comes from the expression 'Kond' which means 'green mountain'.
- ✓ The PM's gift to his Japanese counterpart Fumio Kishida was a wooden handcarved box with Rogan painting.
  - ✓ Rogan painting is an art of cloth printing practised in the Kutch district of Gujarat.
  - ✓ In this craft, paint made from boiled oil and vegetable dyes is laid down on fabric using either a metal block (printing) or a stylus (painting).
  - ✓ The craft nearly died out in the late 20th century, with Rogan painting being practised by only one family.

## APPOINTMENTS

- **On May 24, India's health secretary Rajesh Bhushan - was appointed the chairperson of Committee B at the 75th World Health Assembly**
- ✓ The assembly functions through two types of committees— committee A and committee B.
- ✓ Committee A is meant to discuss technical and health matters, whereas committee B debates financial and administrative issues of the World Health Organisation.



- ✓ Among the critical issues that will be taken up by the committee this year are innovation and intellectual property-related matters as well as audit report of WHO.
- **WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus - was reappointed to a second five-year term by the UN health agency's member countries on May 24.**



- ✓ No other candidate challenged Tedros for the post amid the ongoing difficulties of responding to the devastating coronavirus pandemic.
- ✓ Tedros, a former government minister from Ethiopia, has directed WHO throughout its management of the global response to Covid-19.
- ✓ He is the first African to lead the agency and the only director-general not qualified as a medical doctor.
- ✓ He is also the first WHO leader not to be supported by home country

