

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JANUARY 7, 2023

TAMIL NADU

- **On January 6, Governor R N Ravi - appointed new vice-chancellors for Tamil Nadu Open University (Chennai) and Mother Teresa Women's University (Kodaikanal).**



- ✓ Professor S Arumugam from Bharathidasan University has been appointed vice-chancellor of Tamil Nadu Open University
- ✓ K Kala from the Kongu College of Arts and Science in Karur has been appointed vice-chancellor of Mother Teresa Women's University.
- ✓ They will serve for a period of three years with effect from the date of assumption of office.
- ✓ Arumugam, who has more than 25 years of experience in teaching and research, is currently serving as director of Centre for High Pressure Research, department of physics, in Bharathidasan University.
- ✓ He has also held several administrative positions, including the director of the Centre for Distance Education.
- ✓ Kala, having more than 34 years of teaching experience, is serving as the visiting professor in Kongu College of Arts and Science.

- ✓ She held various positions including regional joint director, Trichy, and principal of NKR Government Arts College of Women, Namakkal, and Government Arts College, Karur.
- **The state government - has amended Chennai Metropolitan Drinking Water Supply and Sewerage (Amendment) Act to stop illegal discharge of sewage and waste in open spaces or water bodies by tankers.**
- ✓ As per the amended Act, owners of waste and sewage disposal vehicles will be issued a vehicle licence valid for two years within 30 days of application raised at a cost of Rs.2,000.
- ✓ Further, it shall be contrary to this Act for any person other than a licensee to engage in conveyance and removal of garbage from buildings.
- ✓ The Act stipulates that licence holders shall dispose of waste properly at specified places.
- ✓ Further, any violations of the Act are punishable with fine up to Rs.25,000 for first offence, while subsequent offences attract fine of Rs.50,000.

STATES

- **The Bihar government – to start the caste-based census across the state on January 7**
- ✓ The general administration department is the nodal authority for the survey.
- ✓ The project will cost Rs 500 crore and will be conducted in two phases
- ✓ In the first phase, which is likely to be over by January 21, the number of all households in the state will be counted by 5.24 lakh surveyors.
 - ✓ The survey is expected to cover an estimated population of 12.70 crore in Bihar.
- ✓ In the second phase, which spans from April 1 to April 30, data pertaining to people of all castes, sub-castes and religions will be collected.
- ✓ Enumerators will also record information about the financial status of all people
- ✓ The data will be collected digitally through a mobile application as part of the eight-level survey, from the panchayat level to the district level.
- ✓ The app will have questions about place, caste, the number of people in a family, their profession, and annual income.
- ✓ Census workers include teachers, Anganwadi, MGNREGA or Jeevika workers.
- ✓ The state government, which earlier extended the deadline to complete its caste census by three months, to May 2023, will use the survey data to formulate welfare policies.
- ✓ The census report will allow for more effective implementation of welfare schemes for socially and economically disadvantaged caste groups
- ✓ The decision to conduct a caste-based survey in Bihar was approved by the state cabinet on June 2, 2022 and was later passed unanimously by the Bihar legislative assembly

- ✓ The state government was compelled to conduct the exercise on its own after the Centre rejected its demand for a caste-based census.
 - ✓ Since Independence, the Centre has so far conducted seven censuses and published data related to only SCs and STs.
 - ✓ In the 1931 census, the population of OBCs was estimated to be 52%.
 - ✓ The Congress-led UPA government at the Centre had conducted a socio-economic and caste census in 2011, but caste data was not released.
 - ✓ In India, quotas for Scheduled Castes (SCs) are at 15% and the Scheduled Tribes (STs) at 7.5%, and are based on caste and tribal identities.
 - ✓ The highest reservation mandate for the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) at 27% and was formulated as per the BP Mandal Commission
 - ✓ On 16 November 1992, the Supreme Court upheld the Mandal Commission's 27% quota for backward classes
- **Trinamool Congress (TMC) chief and West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee - launched two initiatives – 'Didir Suraksha Kawach' and 'Didir Doot' — in Kolkata on January 2, ahead of the West Bengal panchayat elections coming up this year**



- ✓ Under the Didir Suraksha Kawach, 3.5 lakh leaders of the TMC party will reach every block of the state and cover 2 crore families in 60 days
- ✓ They will reach out to people about the TMC government's flagship programmes and also to understand the problems of people
- ✓ The programme will focus on 15 state government schemes – Khadya Sathi, Banglar Awas Yojana, Nijo Griha Nijo Bhumi, Swasthya Sathi, Kanyashree, Sikshashree, Aikyashree, Student Credit Card, Lakshmir Bhandar, Krishak Bandhu, Samajik Suraksha Yojana, Manabik Pension, Jai Bangla Pension Scheme, Bidhaba Bhata and Yuvashree
- ✓ An app, 'Didir Doot', has also been launched to enable people register their problems.
- ✓ This initiative follows Banerjee's 'Didi ke Balo' programme in 2019, which aimed to reach out to common people and was successful.

NATIONAL

- On January 6, Union minister Anurag Thakur - launched the themes of Y20 summit, logo and website at the Y20 Summit India's curtain raiser event in New Delhi.



- ✓ India is hosting the Y20 summit for the first time.
 - ✓ In Youth 20 Engagement Group, India's key focus is to bring young leaders from all across the globe together and discuss ideas for a better future and draft an agenda for action.
 - ✓ The activities to be undertaken by Y20 during India's presidency will focus on global youth leadership and partnership
 - ✓ For the next eight months, there will be Pre summits on the five Y20 themes along with various discussions and seminars at different Universities across the country in a run up to the final Youth-20 Summit.
 - ✓ The G20 Summit in India will bring together 43 Heads of Delegations – the largest ever in G20 who will be participating in the final Summit in New Delhi in September this year.
 - ✓ The G20 consists of two parallel tracks - the Finance Track and the Sherpa Track.
 - ✓ The Sherpa Track oversees inputs from 13 Working Groups, 2 Initiatives – Research Innovation Initiative Gathering (RIIG) and G20 Empower, and various Engagement Groups.
 - ✓ The Youth 20 or Y20 is a part of these Engagement Groups, which seeks to bring together civil societies, parliamentarians, think tanks, women, youth, labour, businesses, and researchers of the G20 countries
- **State-owned power giant NTPC - has started India's first green hydrogen blending operation in the PNG (piped natural gas) network of its township in Kawas, Surat**



- ✓ The project is a joint effort of NTPC and Gujarat Gas Limited (GGL).
- ✓ NTPC and GGL have worked towards achieving this milestone in record time after the foundation stone laying by the Prime Minister on July 30, 2022.
- ✓ This set-up is designed to supply H₂- NG (natural gas) to households of Kawas township at Adityanagar, Surat.
- ✓ Green hydrogen in Kawas is made by electrolysis of water using power from an already installed 1 MW floating solar project
- ✓ Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB), the regulatory body, has approved 5% vol/vol blending of green hydrogen with PNG to start with, and the blending level would be scaled up phase-wise to reach 20%
- ✓ Green hydrogen when blended with natural gas reduces CO₂ emissions keeping the net heating content the same
- ✓ This system of blending is achieved only by a few select countries like the UK, Germany and Australia etc.
- **The Centre - has recently mandated the digital capturing of the attendance of workers employed under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) from January 1, 2023.**
- ✓ This is done to ensure greater transparency, accountability, efficiency, and monitoring as well as to weed out corruption reported in the process of implementation.
- ✓ The Union Ministry of Rural Development's recent order mandates it for all work sites, regardless of the number of employees
- ✓ The MGNREGS is a demand-driven wage employment programme that provides rural households with 100 days of unskilled employment each year during the agriculturally depressing season
- ✓ Prior to this, on May 21, 2021, a pilot project was launched to track employee attendance at work sites using a mobile application called the National Mobile Monitoring System (NMMS) with two time-stamped and geo-tagged photos of the employees.
- ✓ Later, it was agreed to eliminate manual attendance on May 1, 2022 for all worksites where muster rolls were issued for 20 or more beneficiaries

- ✓ The system finally went into effect on May 16, 2022.
 - ✓ The ministry has now decided to make it universal by ensuring that attendance is captured by NMMS beginning on January 1, 2023 for all projects aside from Individual Beneficiary Scheme.
 - ✓ Under MGNREGS, there are around 15 crore active employees across the country
- **Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw – has launched the ‘Stay Safe Online’ campaign and the Digital Innovation Alliance (DIA) program during last week of December as part of India’s G20 presidency**



- ✓ The “Stay Safe Online” campaign aims to highlight the importance of staying safe in the online world and about the various cyber risks and ways to address them.
 - ✓ The year-long campaign will especially focus on children, women, students and senior citizens, differently-abled people, teachers, and government officials.
 - ✓ The G20 Digital Innovation Alliance (G20-DIA) aims to identify, recognize and promote the innovative and impactful digital technologies developed by the startups from the G20 countries and the non-member states that were invited.
 - ✓ These technologies are required to address the needs of society across 6 broad themes – agriculture, health, education, finance, secured digital infrastructure and circular economy.
- **Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah - launched the Border Security Force (BSF) mobile app ‘Prahari’ and revised version of 13 manuals of Border Security Force in New Delhi during the last week of December**
- ✓ The Prahari App is designed to be used by the jawans of the Border Security Force (BSF) to get information about the accommodation facilities, Ayushman-CAPF and leave details.

- ✓ It also provides information about grievance redressal on the “Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CP-GRAMS), and information related to various welfare schemes for the BSF personnel.



- ✓ The BSF manuals are revised to ensure better understanding of the administration, training and operations of the organization among its personnel.

INTERNATIONAL

- **Five countries -- Ecuador, Japan, Malta, Mozambique and Switzerland -- have begun their tenure as non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.**
- ✓ The five countries replaced India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico and Norway.
- ✓ Their two-year term officially started on January 1, but the first business day of the Security Council for 2023 after the New Year holiday break is January 3.
- ✓ In a tradition started by Kazakhstan in 2018, a flag installation ceremony was held on January 3 to mark the start of their responsibilities.
- ✓ The 15-member Security Council has five permanent members -- the USA, the UK, France, Russia and China, and 10 non-permanent members elected for two-year terms by the UN General Assembly.
- ✓ Five non-permanent members are replaced every year.
- ✓ Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana and the United Arab Emirates are in the middle of their two-year term as non-permanent members.

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **On January 6, the Indian Army - has deployed its largest ever contingent of women soldiers in Sudan's Abyei region as part of the Indian Battalion in the United Nations Interim Security Force (UNISFA).**
- ✓ This was India's largest single unit of women Peacekeepers in a UN Mission since it deployed the first-ever all-women contingent in Liberia in 2007.

- ✓ The team, comprising two officers and 25 of other ranks, will provide relief and assistance to women and children in one of the highly operational and challenging terrain conditions under the UN flag
 - ✓ In 2007, India became the first country to deploy an all-women contingent to a UN peacekeeping mission.
 - ✓ The Formed Police Unit in Liberia provided 24-hour guard duty, conducted night patrols in the capital Monrovia, and helped to build the capacity of the Liberian police.
 - ✓ The Security Council, by its resolution 1990 dated 27 June 2011, responded to the urgent situation in Sudan`s Abyei region by establishing the UNISFA.
 - ✓ Dr Kiran Bedi, UN`s first Police Adviser, Major Suman Gawani, and Shakti Devi have made a mark for themselves in UN Peacekeeping.
 - ✓ In Eritrea, Indian engineers helped to rehabilitate roads as part of the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE).
 - ✓ More than 200,000 Indians have served in 49 of the 71 UN peacekeeping missions established around the world since 1948
- **India – took over the chairmanship of the plenary of the Wassenaar Arrangement for one year from January 1, 2023**



- ✓ The 42-member Wassenaar Arrangement is a voluntary export control regime that monitors transfers of conventional weapons and dual-use goods through regular exchanges of information among its members..
- ✓ Ireland`s ambassador Eoin O`Leary handed over the chairmanship to India`s ambassador Jaideep Mazumdar, who is the permanent representative to the UN and international organisations.
- ✓ The handing over event took place at the 26th annual plenary of the Wassenaar Arrangement held in Vienna earlier.
- ✓ India joined the Wassenaar Arrangement in December 2017 as its 42nd participating state.
- ✓ The Wassenaar Arrangement was established in 1996 to succeed the Cold War-era Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls
- ✓ It is named after Wassenaar, a suburb of The Hague where the agreement to start such multilateral cooperation was reached in 1995.

- ✓ The plenary of the Wassenaar Arrangement is the main decision-making body that operates on consensus

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **India - will host a special virtual Summit next week called 'Voice of Global South Summit'.**
- ✓ More than 120 countries are being invited for the summit which will be held on January 12-13 under the theme “Unity of Voice, Unity of Purpose”.
- ✓ The “new and unique” initiative was inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of ‘Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas’, and India’s philosophy of ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’.
- ✓ The summit will witness the participation of close to 20 world leaders, including Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina, Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe and several ASEAN and African leaders.
- ✓ The summit will have ten sessions, four sessions on January 12 and six sessions on January 13.
 - ✓ Each session is expected to witness the participation of leaders or ministers from 10-20 countries.
- ✓ The summit will have two sessions for heads of State and government to be chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
 - ✓ The inaugural session for heads of state and government will have the theme “voice of Global South for human-centric development”, and the closing session for leaders will have the theme “Unity of voice, unity of purpose”.
- ✓ The remaining sessions will be for ministers and will focus on issues such as foreign policy, finance, energy, trade, health, education and environment.
- ✓ The summit seeks to bring together countries of the Global South to share their perspectives and priorities on a common platform.
 - ✓ Global South refers to the developing and the less-developed countries of the world
- ✓ Apart from climate, energy and food shortages, another significant issue that the summit will look to address is mounting debt in developing countries, due to opaque and irresponsible lending practices which China is often accused of.
- **President Droupadi Murmu - inaugurated the 18th National Scout and Guide Jamboree, at Rohat in the Pali district of Rajasthan on January 4, 2023**
- ✓ Over 35,000 scouts and guides from all over the country will participate in this mega-event scheduled to be held from the January 4-10, 2023
- ✓ Rajasthan is hosting the event after a gap of 66 years.
- ✓ The main attraction of the event will be the display of the Indian Air force Surya Kiran Aerobatics Team.



- ✓ Besides this, there will also be a demonstration by the BSF Camel Squad.
- ✓ National Jamboree will give young scouts a platform to share their customs, food habits, handicrafts, and religious practices with one another.

BUSINESS/ECONOMY

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) – has recently modified its rules governing bank lockers, effective from January 1, 2023**
 - ✓ One of the major changes is the requirement of a locker agreement on stamp paper, which needs to be submitted to the bank concerned, while another change is related to the higher rental for lockers.
 - ✓ Locker owners must now display their eligibility for a new locker arrangement and sign a renewal agreement prior to January 1, 2023.
 - ✓ As per the recent notification, it is the responsibility of banks to take all steps for the safety and security of the premises in which the safe deposit vaults are housed
 - ✓ Accordingly, the banks are required to install CCTV camera at entry and exit points of the strong room and the common areas of operation.
 - ✓ The depositors can get up to 100 times the bank charges if the valuables stored in the vaults are ransacked or lost due to fire or building collapse
 - ✓ The new guidelines allow banks to accept term deposits during the allocation of a locker that can be collected as a rent for 3 years.
- **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) – has recently migrated its payments fraud reporting module to ‘Daksh’ from January 1, 2023.**
 - ✓ The decision has been taken in order to streamline reporting, improve efficiency, and automate the payments fraud management process
 - ✓ On August 07, 2019, the RBI had operationalised the Central Payments Fraud Information Registry (CPFIR) in March 2020 with reporting of payment frauds by scheduled commercial banks and non-bank Prepaid Payment Instrument (PPI) issuers

- ✓ DAKSH offers additional functionalities such as a maker-checker, online screen-based reporting, the option to request additional information, the ability to issue alerts / advisories, the generation of dashboards and reports, and so on.
- **The Centre and Asian Development Bank (ADB) – had recently signed a \$ 125 million loan to improve urban services in Tamil Nadu**
 - ✓ The financing is the third and last tranche of the \$ 500 million multi-tranche financing facility (MFF) for the Tamil Nadu Urban Flagship Investment Program approved by ADB in 2018
 - ✓ The program aims to build priority water supply, sewerage, and drainage infrastructure in strategic industrial corridors across 10 cities in the state.
 - ✓ The tranche 3 loan covers Coimbatore, Madurai, and Thoothukudi.
 - ✓ The ADB financing would help ensure universal access to basic water and sanitation services and improve resilience against floods in the project target areas
 - ✓ The financing would support the development of two sewage treatment plants in Coimbatore
 - ✓ In Thoothukudi, climate-resilient stormwater drainage system will be developed
 - ✓ In Madurai, the project will support the commissioning of 813 km of new water supply distribution pipelines
 - ✓ Further, in Coimbatore and Madurai, two all-female self-help groups will be trained on the benefits of household connection to sewage collection system, water conservation, sanitation, and health and hygiene.
- **State Bank of India (SBI), HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank - continue to be domestic systematically important banks (D-SIBs), according to the Reserve Bank of India**



- ✓ Systemically important banks are regarded as too big to fail, creating an expectation of government support for these lenders in times of distress
- ✓ The RBI had issued the framework for D-SIBs on July 22, 2014.

- ✓ Accordingly, the central bank will disclose the names of banks designated as systematically important starting from 2015 and place them in appropriate buckets depending on their systemic importance scores.
 - ✓ In order to be listed as a D-SIB, a bank needs to have assets that exceed 2% of the national gross domestic product.
 - ✓ The RBI had announced SBI and ICICI Bank as D-SIBs in 2015 and 2016.
 - ✓ Later, HDFC Bank was classified as a D-SIB, based on data as on March 31, 2017,
 - ✓ The current update is based on data as on March 31, 2022.
- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) - launched its Medium-term Strategy Framework for 2023-2025 titled 'Utkarsh 2.0'.**
- ✓ It is a document guiding the central bank's progress toward the realisation of chosen milestones.
 - ✓ In July 2015, the RBI launched a strategic management program to provide a framework for all its future policies and frameworks.
 - ✓ Under this framework, the first strategy framework titled 'Utkarsh 2022' was launched, covering the period from 2019-2022.
 - ✓ It was a three-year medium-term roadmap to improve regulation and supervision by the central bank
 - ✓ Utkarsh 2.0 is a medium-term strategy of RBI to recalibrate itself basis on the outcome of Utkarsh 2022, from 2023 to 2025

APPOINTMENTS

- **Anil Kumar Lahoti - has recently taken charge as the new Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), of the Railway Board.**



- ✓ The appointments committee of the Cabinet approved the appointment.
- ✓ Prior to this, Lahoti worked as a Member (Infrastructure) of the Railway Board.
- ✓ Anil Lahoti belongs to Indian Railway Service of Engineers, 1984 batch and has been empanelled in the first panel of Indian Railways Management Service

- ✓ During his more than 36 years of career in railways, he has worked in various capacities over Central, Northern, North Central, Western and West Central Railways and in Railway Board.
- ✓ Anil Lahoti has earlier worked as General Manager, Central Railway and also looked after the charge of GM, Western Railway for several months
- ✓ His tenure as General Manager is credited with achieving the highest ever freight and parcel traffic in terms of tonnage carried and revenue earned including running the highest number of Kissan Rails.
- ✓ The Anand Vihar Terminal in Delhi and the iconic Ajmeri Gate side station building of New Delhi station were planned and constructed by him
- ✓ He was also closely associated with planning for the redevelopment of New Delhi station as a World Class station including commercial development of land and air space.

AWARDS

- **The Indian government - has selected 27 Indians living overseas for the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards (PBSA), the highest honour for overseas Indians.**
- ✓ The PBSA is conferred by the President as part of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention on non-resident Indians (NRIs), persons of Indian origin (PIOs) or organisations established and run by NRIs or PIOs in recognition of their outstanding achievements in India and abroad.
- ✓ The 17th edition of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention will be held at Indore in Madhya Pradesh during January 8-10, 2023.
- ✓ The awards will be conferred by the President during the valedictory session of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebrations.
- ✓ The recipients were chosen by a jury-cum-awards committee chaired by the vice-president.
- ✓ External affairs minister S Jaishankar is the vice-chair of the panel, whose other members are drawn from various walks of life.
- ✓ Guyana's President Mohamed Irfaan Ali, US-based businessman Darshan Singh Dhaliwal, and DBS Bank CEO Piyush Gupta are among the recipients of the coveted awards
- ✓ Irfaan Ali, 42, who was sworn in as the ninth President of Guyana in August 2020, belongs to an Indo-Guyanese Muslim family.
- ✓ He will also be the chief guest at the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention.
- ✓ Among other recipients are FedEx Corporation CEO Rajesh Subramaniam; Indian-Australian economist Chennupati Jagadish; and Kannam Ambalam, associate professor in Ethiopia-based Wolega University who is credited with building water springs and small bridges in the African nation.

- ✓ Reena Vinod Pushkarna, an Israel-based chef who was part of the team that prepared dishes for Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit to the country in 2017 is among the recipients.

SPORTS

- **India's star weightlifter and two-time Commonwealth Games (CWG) gold medallist, Khumukcham Sanjita Chanu - has failed the dope test for an anabolic steroid drostanolone**



- ✓ She has been provisionally suspended from the date of her sample collection by the National Anti-Doping Agency (Nada).
 - ✓ Manipur's Sanjita was tested in-competition by Nada's dope control officers (DCOs) at the Gujarat National Games held in September-October last year.
 - ✓ The weightlifting competitions at the National Games were held in Gandhinagar from September 28 to October 5.
 - ✓ Sanjita had secured a silver medal in the women's 49kg category event held on September 30.
 - ✓ Tokyo Olympics silver medallist, Mirabai Chanu, had topped the podium in the same weight division.
 - ✓ Sanjita's case will now be heard by Nada's anti-doping disciplinary panel (ADDP) and, if found guilty, she will be banned for four years.
- **Tamil Nadu's M. Pranesh - became India's 79th Chess Grandmaster by winning the Rilton Cup held in Stockholm, Sweden.**



- ✓ The 22nd-seeded Indian won eight games in nine rounds in the event and finished a full point ahead of IM Kan Kukuksaari (Sweden) and GM Nikita Meshkovs (Latvia)
- ✓ Pranesh topped the tournament, which featured 136 players representing 29 national federations.
- ✓ Pranesh beat GM Frode Olav Olsen Urkedal of Norway to achieve the final norm needed to gain a GM title
- ✓ 16-year-old Pranesh crossed the 2500 rating threshold and became a GM after fulfilling his three criteria before the Rilton Cup.
- ✓ To become a GM, a player must secure all three GM criteria and cross a live rating of 2,500 Elo points
- ✓ Pranesh won his first norm at the 18th Delhi GM Open in January 2020, followed by the second at the Sunway Sitges International Chess Festival in Spain in December 2021.
- ✓ He won the third norm at the Asian Continental Chess Championship in November last year, and finally crossed the required ELO mark to become the first Indian to become a Grandmaster in 2023.
- ✓ Pranesh is also the 28th GM to emerge from Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ He is coached by GM RB Ramesh in Chess Gurukul in Chennai
- ✓ Nineteen-year-old Kaustav Chatterjee recently became the country's 78th Grandmaster during the National Senior Chess Championship.