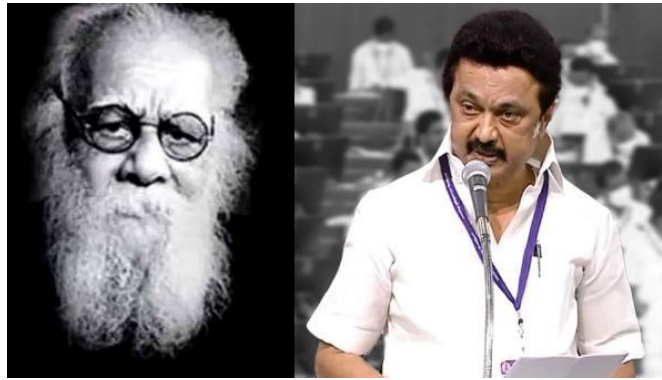


## **EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-MARCH 31, 2023**

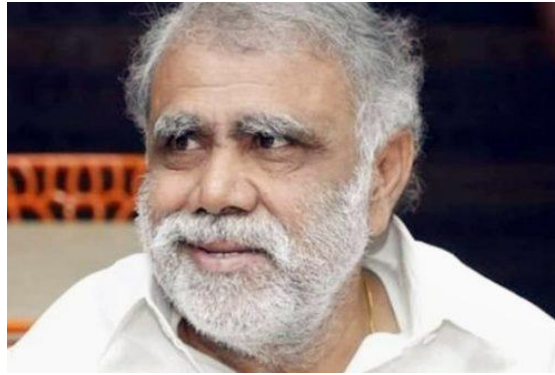
### **TAMIL NADU**

- On March 30, Chief Minister MK Stalin - announced year-long celebrations to commemorate the centenary of the Vaikom Satyagraha



- ✓ Vaikom Satyagraha is the historical struggle against untouchability in which social reformer and DK founder Periyar EV Ramasamy played a vital role and got imprisoned for spearheading the protests.
- ✓ To commemorate the event, various initiatives would be taken up by the government for the public and students to know the history, purpose and victory of the struggle.
- ✓ Making a statement under Rule 110 of State Assembly, the CM said that the government of Tamil Nadu would commence the centenary celebrations of Vaikom protest from March 30, the day the protest began in 1924
- ✓ Further, the CM said he would join the Kerala government's Vaikom Satyagraha centenary celebrations on April 1, at Vaikom in Kerala as a special invitee and will pay respects to the commemorative pillar installed by the Tamil Nadu government in Vaikom
- ✓ During the event, the Malayalam translation of scholar and writer Pazha Adhiyaman's popular 'Vaikom Struggle' book would be released, while its Telugu, Kannada and English versions would be released soon.

- ✓ It is the joint initiative of Tamil Nadu Textbook and Educational Services Corporation (TNTESS) and a Kerala publishing house.
  - ✓ On November 29, the Tamil Nadu government will organise a grand function to commemorate the satyagraha in which personalities from various places and CMs of Tamil Nadu and Kerala would take part.
  - ✓ The CM said Vaikom Award would be presented on September 17, Social Justice Day, every year to personalities or organisations working for the welfare of oppressed sections of society in other states.
  - ✓ The CM also announced that the Periyar memorial in Vaikom in Kerala would be renovated for Rs 8.14 crore and a new memorial will be built in Aruvikutti, where Periyar was imprisoned initially.
  - ✓ A special commemorative stamp would be released and programmes relating to Vaikom struggle would be held at educational institutions, besides competitions for students.
  - ✓ A 64-page book and audio in Tamil and English would be released for students, while TAMILARASU, the state entity, would release a souvenir.
  - ✓ Giving a detailed account of the Vaikom Satyagraha, the CM said the non-violent satyagraha began on March 30, 1924, lasted for one and half years and ended on November 23, 1925 in the erstwhile Kingdom of Travancore.
  - ✓ The struggle was launched by TK Mahadevan against a ban that prohibited people from oppressed classes from walking on streets around the Mahadeva temple in Vaikom.
  - ✓ Periyar, the then president of the TNCC, reached there and led the struggle to ensure temple entry of people from oppressed classes for 67 days.
  - ✓ He was arrested twice - first underwent one-month imprisonment in Aruvikutty village at the police station and later underwent four months of rigorous imprisonment in Thiruvananthapuram prison
  - ✓ The movement got the support of Mahatma Gandhi, who sent his disciple Vinoba Bhave to Vaikom in 1924 to help the agitation and in 1925, Gandhiji himself came to Vaikom to participate in the satyagraha
  - ✓ Dr. BR Ambedkar described the satyagraha as a significant movement for the untouchables
  - ✓ Later, a victory ceremony was held on November 29, 1925, chaired by Periyar.
  - ✓ Tamil scholar Thiru Vi Kalyanasundaranar described Periyar as Vaikom Veerar and late leader Rajaji hailed Periyar for his role in the struggle.
- **On March 30, Minister for rural development I Periyasamy – announced that daily wages under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) had been hiked from Rs.273 per day to Rs.294 per day with effect from April 1, this year.**
- ✓ While replying to the demand for grants for his department, the Minister added that the number of clusters would be increased to 30,000 from 20,000, and work would be given to people within a two km radius.



- ✓ Speaking about the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), the minister said that the ratio of fund-sharing between the union and state governments in Tamil Nadu under the scheme is 38:62
  - ✓ As per the Minister, the state government offered Rs 1.72 lakh whereas the union government's share is Rs 1.04 lakh
  - ✓ Across the country, the fund-sharing ratio between the union and state governments under this scheme is 60:40
- ✓ During his speech, the Minister announced projects worth more than Rs.2,500 crore for developing infrastructure in rural areas
  - ✓ This includes an allocation of Rs.1,500 crore for developing basic amenities such as roads, drainage, street lights and drinking water facility in places where marginalised sections reside
- ✓ Similarly, water supply will be given to 10 lakh houses in rural areas at a budget of Rs 1,000 crore, which is expected to be provided by the Jal Jeevan Mission
- ✓ Further, the Minister announced that the monthly salary of sanitary workers engaged in collecting segregated solid waste door-to-door from households in rural areas is to be hiked to Rs 5,000 from Rs 3,600
- ✓ In order to carry forward the Green Tamil Nadu Mission launched by the State government, the rural development department will plant 70 lakh trees on government lands, road sides and other places at Rs 275 crore.

## **NATIONAL**

- **The government - has exempted basic customs duty on all drugs as well as food items prescribed for special medical purposes, which are imported for treatment of rare diseases.**
  - ✓ It has also exempted Pembrolizumab (Keytruda), used in treatment of various cancers, from basic customs duty.
  - ✓ According to ministry of finance, the exemptions will come into effect from April 1.
  - ✓ Drugs/ medicines generally attract basic customs duty of 10%, while some categories of life-saving drugs/vaccines attract a concessional rate of 5% or nil.
  - ✓ Food for 'special medical purposes' is a formulation intended to provide nutritional support to persons who suffer a specific disease, disorder or a medical condition, as a part of their dietary management.

- ✓ In order to avail this exemption, the individual importer has to produce a certificate from the central or state director of health services or the district medical officer/civil surgeon.

## DEFENCE

- **On March 30, the Ministry of Defence - signed four contracts worth more than Rs 32,000 crore which includes missiles for the Army, and Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessels and Missile Vessels for the Navy.**



- ✓ The signed contracts include 11 Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessels (NGOPV) and six Next Generation Missile Vessels (NGMV), to be constructed by Indian shipyards at an overall cost of approximately Rs 19,600 crore.
  - ✓ Three different Indian shipyards have been engaged to manufacture Indian Naval Ships.
  - ✓ The contract for acquisition of 11 NGOPVs was signed with Goa Shipyard Ltd (GSL) and Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata at a total cost of Rs 9,781 crore.
  - ✓ The contract has been signed under Buy {Indian-(Indigenously Developed Designed and manufactured) IDDM} category
  - ✓ Of the 11 ships, seven will be indigenously designed, developed & manufactured by GSL and four by GRSE.
  - ✓ The delivery of the ships is scheduled to commence from September 2026.
  - ✓ The contract for acquisition of six NGMVs was signed with Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) at a cost of Rs 9,805 crore.
  - ✓ The delivery of ships is scheduled to commence from March 2027.
- ✓ Another contract worth Rs 9,100 crore has been finalised for procurement of improved Akash Weapon System (AWS) and 12 Weapon Locating Radars (WLR), WLR Swathi (Plains) for the Indian Army.
  - ✓ The AWS is a Short Range Surface to Air Missile (SRSAM) Air Defence System, indigenously designed and developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

- ✓ The project has overall indigenous content of 82% which will be increased to 93% by 2026-27.
- ✓ WLR Swathi is an indigenously designed WLR which is capable of locating guns, mortars and rockets firing own troops, thereby facilitating their destruction through Counter Bombardment by own firepower resources.
- ✓ A contract has also been signed with BrahMos Aerospace Private Limited for Next Generation Maritime Mobile Coastal Batteries (Long Range) and BrahMos Missiles worth Rs 1,700 crore.
- ✓ Further, 13 Fire Control Systems (Lynx-U2) are to be supplied to the Indian Navy by the Defence PSU Bharat Electronics Limited at a total cost of over Rs 1,700 crore.
  - ✓ The Lynx-U2 System is a Naval Gun Fire Control System designed and developed indigenously.
  - ✓ It is capable of accurately tracking and engaging targets amidst sea clutter as well as air/surface targets.

