

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAY 18, 2023

TAMIL NADU

- **On May 17, the Tamil Nadu government - increased the dearness allowance (DA) for its employees, including teachers, pensioners and family pensioners, from 38% to 42%.**
 - ✓ The hike would be applicable with retrospective effect from April 1.
 - ✓ The move, which will benefit 16 lakh government staff, would involve an annual additional expenditure of Rs.2,367 crore.
- **The Greater Chennai Corporation – has decided to coordinate with the Australian government on knowledge sharing in major subjects like education, health, environment and gender issues.**



- ✓ In this regard, Australian Consul General for South India Sarah Kirlew met Chennai mayor R Priya on May 17 at Ripon Buildings regarding the common platforms where they could work together.
- ✓ The Australian team was interested in the city corporation's gender lab.
- ✓ GCC's gender lab was launched in 2022 and had appointed women specialists who would study the city and help the corporation frame projects that are women-friendly.

- ✓ They also coordinate with Chennai Corporation schools and conduct gender-inclusive classes and train teachers in the regard.
- ✓ GCC in the past had signed sister pacts with Denver, San Antonio, Frankfurt and Volgograd, among others.
- **Namakkal district - has been ranked second in the conservation and management of water resources in the country for the year 2022.**
- ✓ The ranking was announced by the Union Jal Sakthi ministry on May 17.
- ✓ The state government had implemented measures to conserve and manage water resources in the five municipalities, 19 town panchayats and 322 village panchayats in the Namakkal district last year.
- ✓ Further, it has undertaken desilting of water bodies across the district and planted 10 lakh tree saplings along their bunds under 'Namma Namakkal, Pasumai Namakkal' project
- ✓ Odisha's Ganjam district was ranked first in the Best District category of the 4th National Water Awards 2022 announced by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation.
- ✓ Madhya Pradesh has been selected by the Ministry for the first place in the best state category in the National Water Awards, 2022
- ✓ The National Water Awards (NWAs) were introduced in 2018 to recognize and encourage exemplary work and efforts made by States, Districts, individuals, organizations, etc. across the country in accomplishing the government's vision 'Jal Samridh Bharat'.
- ✓ It aims to sensitize the public about the importance of water and motivates them to adopt the best water usage practices.

STATES

- **On May 17, the Kerala cabinet - approved an ordinance for ensuring more protection to healthcare personnel**
- ✓ Accordingly, the state government has amended the Kerala Healthcare Service Persons and Healthcare Service Institutions (Prevention of Violence and Damage to Property) Act, 2012,.
- ✓ The amendment has been brought following the murder of house surgeon Dr Vandana Das at Kottarakara taluk hospital by a man brought there for treatment by police on May 10.
- ✓ The ordinance ensures protection for all registered (both permanent and temporary) medical practitioners, registered nurses, medical students, nursing students, para-medical staff and students, security guards, managerial staff, ambulance drivers and helpers in healthcare centres.
- ✓ Those attacking healthcare institutions, damaging properties or equipment and those who instigate such violence will invite imprisonment of six months to a

maximum of five years and a fine from Rs.50,000 to a maximum of Rs.2 lakh under the new law.

- ✓ It provides for a maximum punishment of up to seven years' imprisonment and a fine up to Rs.5 lakh for attacks on healthcare workers.
- ✓ The cases registered under this Act will be probed by a police officer of circle inspector rank or above.
- ✓ The investigation should be completed within 60 days of registering the FIR. A special court will be designated in each district for the trial, which should also be completed in less than a year.
- ✓ Any harassment of healthcare workers through the social media and by any other means like word of mouth will also invite punishment.

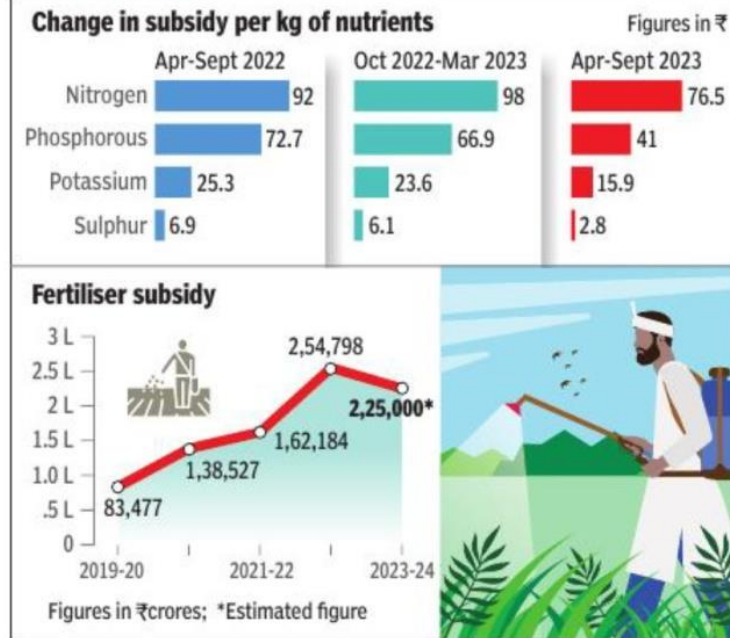
NATIONAL

➤ **On May 17, the Union Cabinet - approved a Rs.17,000 crore incentive scheme for manufacturing laptops and servers in India**

- ✓ The second phase of the Production Linked Incentive or PLI scheme 2.0 will cover information and technology hardware
- ✓ The scheme will cover laptops, tablets, all-in-one personal computers, servers and ultra-small form factor devices
- ✓ It will create incremental investment of Rs 2,430 crore and additional direct employment for 75,000 people
- ✓ The tenure of this scheme is six years and it is expected to generate an incremental production of Rs 3.35 lakh crore.
- ✓ Under the new scheme, companies will get an incentive of up to 5% and an optional incentive of 4% if they use domestically-produced components compared to just 2% incentive offered under the old scheme
- ✓ The programme is expected to benefit global and Indian companies such as Dell, Wistron Corp, Dixon, and Foxconn.
- ✓ In February 2021, the government approved the PLI scheme for IT hardware, covering the production of laptops, tablets, All-in-One PCs and servers with an outlay of Rs.7,350 crore.
- ✓ Under the scheme, domestic players investing Rs 20 crore and registering sales of Rs 50 crore in the first year, Rs 100 crore in the second, Rs 200 crore in the third, and Rs 300 crore in the final year, would get incentives of 1-4% on incremental sales over 2019-20, the base financial year.
- ✓ The first version of the scheme did not make major impact with only two companies – Dell and Bhagwati – managing to meet first year's (FY22) targets
- ✓ The PLI scheme, first announced in October 2020, focused exclusively on improving manufacturing of smartphones in India for a period of five years.

➤ **On May 17, the government - approved fertiliser subsidy of around Rs.1.1 lakh crore for the current kharif season (April-September) 2023-24.**

AGRI AID



- ✓ According to Mansukh Mandaviya, minister for fertiliser, the government has approved a subsidy of Rs 70,000 crore for urea and Rs 38,000 crore for Di-ammonium Phosphate (DAP) and other fertilisers.
- ✓ The Minister added there will no change in the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) of fertilisers.
- ✓ The subsidy is likely to benefit about 12 crore farmers.
- ✓ Currently, the price of urea is Rs 276 per bag and the price of DAP is Rs 1,350 per bag.
- ✓ The country imports about half of its annual requirement of DAP, while around 15% of NPK fertiliser requirements are met through imports.

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **The Quad Leaders Summit scheduled for May 24 in Sydney - has been cancelled following the US President Joe Biden's decision to postpone a planned visit to Australia due to crucial debt-ceiling talks in Washington**
- ✓ This was announced by Australian PM Anthony Albanese on May 17
- ✓ Instead, the Quad leaders will now meet on the sidelines of G7 summit in Japan's Hiroshima.
- ✓ Albanese also said a planned bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Australia might still go ahead.
- ✓ The White House announced that Biden will return to the US after the completion of the G7 Summit in Japan on May 20, instead of travelling to Papua New Guinea and Australia as earlier planned.
- ✓ As per earlier plan, PM Modi would embark on a visit to Japan, Papua New Guinea and Australia on May 19 to participate in outreach sessions of the G7

Summit on May 20, the Summit of the Forum for India–Pacific Islands Cooperation on May 22, and the Quad Leaders Summit on May 24.

- **The Government of Israel - is partnering with India through Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT-M) to establish an India-Israel Center of Water Technology (CoWT) in water resources management and water technologies.**



- ✓ The ministry of housing and urban affairs (MoHUA) will collaborate with Mashav, Israel's agency for international development cooperation to establish the centre, which will be located in IIT Madras.
- ✓ In this regard, a letter of intent was signed in New Delhi earlier this month on May 9.
- ✓ The key objective of this new centre is to ensure the implementation of best technologies of Israel for the Indian requirements and work on sustainable management solution for Indian water sector
- ✓ Israel is a leader in integrated water resources management
- ✓ The CoWT will also work towards the mutual exchange of technology, scientific information, literature, and hold discussions and consultations on various issues in the area with experts from both the countries to address problems in drinking water and sewerage management and to develop new areas of intervention.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **The first Ministerial meeting of the India-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC) - was held in Brussels on May 16.**
- ✓ Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal is one of the co-chairs along with External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar and Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) Rajeev Chandrasekhar
- ✓ The EU side is co-chaired by Executive Vice Presidents (EVPs) Dombrovskis and Vestager.
- ✓ The Council discussed ways to increase cooperation in strategic technologies, digital connectivity, clean energy, trade and investments



- ✓ The three Working Groups under the mechanism presented roadmaps for future cooperation between the two sides– Working Group on Strategic Technologies; Digital Governance and Digital Connectivity; Working Group on Green and Clean Energy Technologies; and Working Group on Trade, Investment and Resilient Value Chains.
- ✓ The formation of the TTC was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission in New Delhi, in April 2022 during Leyen's visit to India

PERSONALITIES

- **A Nepali Sherpa, Kami Rita - scaled Mount Everest for a record 27th time, beating his own record**



- ✓ Kami Rita Sherpa, 53, scaled the 8,849 metre (29,032-foot) mountain on May 17 along the traditional southeast ridge route, guiding a foreign climber
- ✓ On a related development, British climber Kenton Cool, 49, made his 17th ascent of the mountain, the most by any foreign climber.
- ✓ Kami Rita scaled Everest for the first time in 1994 and has climbed it almost every year since, except in 2014, 2015 and 2020, when climbing was halted for various reasons.