

## **EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAY 20, 2023**

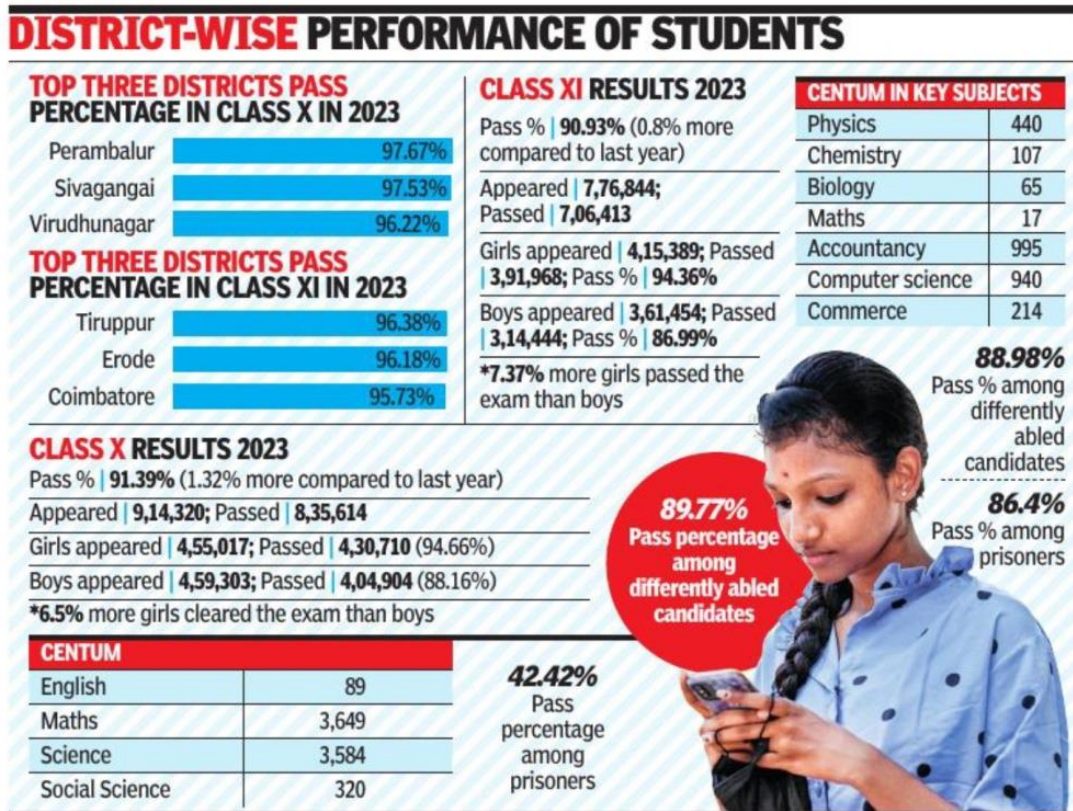
### **TAMIL NADU**

- On May 19, Tamil Nadu CM MK Stalin - laid the foundation stone through video conference for the formation of mini Tidel Parks at a cost of Rs.92.50 crore in the districts of Tuticorin, Thanjavur and Salem.



- ✓ The TN government, in the state budget in March, announced plans to set up seven mini Tidel Parks (also called neo-Tidel parks) in tier 2/3 locations for inclusive development of the IT sector across the state.
- ✓ Under the announcement, the mini Tidel Parks at Thanjavur, Salem and Tuticorin are the first to be launched.
- ✓ These parks are structured in a way to offer customisable space at affordable cost for service sector, especially IT companies and startups.
- ✓ The Electronics Corporation of Tamil Nadu Limited (ELCOT) has set up IT SEZs in Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai, Tiruchirappalli, Salem, Tirunelveli and Hosur
- ✓ Minister for municipal administration K N Nehru, Minister for Industries TRB Rajaa, Minister for school education Anbil Mahesh and Tuticorin DMK MP K Kanimozhi, besides officials, were present in the secretariat for the launch.

- The Directorate of Government Examinations, Tamil Nadu - declared the Class 10 results on May 19



- ✓ A total of 9,14,320 students wrote exams in which 4,55, 017 girls and 4,59,303 boys appeared for the exam.
- ✓ Out of these, 8,35,614 students cleared the exam which is 91.39% of the total number of students who appeared in exams, an improvement from the previous year's 90.07%.
- ✓ A total of 4,30,710 girls (94.66%) and 4,04,904 boys (88.16%) cleared the exams.
- ✓ The highest pass percentage was recorded in English subject (98.93%), while all the other subjects registered a pass percentage of around 95%.
- ✓ A total of 89 students in English, 320 students from Social Studies, 3584 students from Science and 3649 students from Mathematics secured 100% marks, while no student scored 100 out of 100 in Tamil language
- ✓ Greater Chennai Corporation Schools have recorded a pass percentage of 79.6% in Class X which is an improvement of 3.5% compared to last year.
- ✓ Perambalur and Tirupur topped the list with the highest pass percentage in the Class X and XI exams.
- ✓ Chennai stood at No. 18 in the Class IX exam, with 91. 64% pass, while it was in the bottom pile in Class X results, with 89. 14% pass.
- ✓ Trichy and Madurai districts too did not feature among the top five districts.
- ✓ The Tamil Nadu SSLC exams were conducted from April 6 to April 20 in over 3,986 examination centres across the state

- **On May 19, State Health Minister Ma Subramanian - inaugurated the TB Eradication Summit under the National Tuberculosis Eradication Programme in Chennai**



- ✓ During the event, the Minister also released the 2.0 State TB Eradication Comprehensive Plan document for the elimination of tuberculosis by 2025
- ✓ The state launched a programme to offer free short-course therapy for the prevention of tuberculosis among close contacts of patients with the bacterial infection.
- ✓ The two drugs - Isoniazid and Rifapentine (300mg each) - must be taken once a week for three month to reduce the risk of disease
- ✓ Tamil Nadu is the first state to procure drugs under the central programme and distribute them.
- ✓ The drugs were purchased by the Tamil Nadu Medical Services Corporation.
- ✓ The infectious disease, TB, that most often affects the lungs is caused by a type of bacteria.
- ✓ It spreads through the air when infected people cough, sneeze or spit.
- ✓ To achieve TB Free status by 2025, Tamil Nadu must bring down the incidence of the infection to 40/one lakh population in high-burden cities such as Chennai and to 10/one lakh population in low-burden districts such as the Nilgiris by 2025.
- ✓ So far, the state offered a drug that a patient relative must have every day for six months.

## STATES

- **On May 19, the Centre - issued an ordinance to once again take control of the services department of the Delhi government.**
- ✓ The Government of NCT of Delhi (Amendment) Ordinance, 2023, has created a 'National Capital Civil Service Authority' to deal with service conditions, transfers and postings of officers, vigilance and other related matters



- ✓ This Authority comprises of Delhi CM, Chief Secretary and Home Secretary of Delhi government, who will now decide on the transfer and posting of Group 'A' officers and DANICS officers serving in the Delhi government.
  - ✓ According to the ordinance, the Authority can make recommendations regarding transfers and tenures of bureaucrats to the Lieutenant Governor. (LG)
  - ✓ Further, the Ordinance gives power to the LG to make a final decision in case there is a difference of opinion between the authority and the LG.
  - ✓ The ordinance has been brought in as an amendment to the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991
  - ✓ The Centre has defended the ordinance by citing the "special status" of Delhi and the fact that it has a dual-control.
  - ✓ The ordinance further states that the Supreme Court passed the judgment in the absence of any parliamentary legislation and hence this ordinance was being promulgated
  - ✓ Earlier, on May 11, the apex court had ruled that the Delhi government has legislative and executive powers over the administration of all services, except for public order, police and land.
- **Punjab's Patiala district - has become the first district in the country to adopt a 'Right to Walk' policy**



- ✓ The "ground-breaking initiative" was launched to prioritise the safety and convenience of pedestrians and cyclists" in urban areas, and also to highlight the commitment towards preservation of local heritage and cultural legacy.
- ✓ The 'Right to Walk' was an integral part of the right to a healthy life under Article 21 of the Constitution.

## NATIONAL

- **On May 19, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) - announced the withdrawal of the Rs.2,000 banknote from circulation, in accordance with the RBI's 'Clean note policy'**

- ✓ The public being “encouraged” to deposit or exchange the notes at banks until September 30, 2023.

<b>CURRENCY STORY</b>				
Denomination	Value (Rs cr)	% Change	Volume lakh	% Change
2 and 5	4,284	-0.1	1,11,261	-8.5
10	27,805	-0.9	2,78,046	-21.3
20	22,026	-0.7	1,10,129	-8.4
50	43,571	-1.4	87,141	-6.7
100	1,81,421	-5.8	1,81,420	-13.9
200	1,20,881	-3.9	60,441	-4.6
500	22,77,340	-73.3	4,55,468	-34.9
2000	4,28,394	-13.8	21,420	-1.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,05,721</b>		<b>13,05,326</b>	

- ✓ At the same time, the central bank maintained that these notes will enjoy legal tender status even beyond the September 30 deadline.
  - ✓ The move comes more than six years after Rs. 2,000 notes were brought into the system along with the demonetisation of Rs.1,000 and the old Rs. 500 notes in November 2016 to meet the urgent requirement at the time.
  - ✓ The RBI cited lack of use and that the banknotes were nearing the end of their four-five year lifecycle as the reason for withdrawal.
  - ✓ Those holding Rs.2,000 notes can deposit them into bank accounts, following the usual procedures and subject to applicable rules.
  - ✓ Those wanting to exchange them can only do so up to a limit of Rs.20,000 at a time, starting from May 23, 2023, at any bank branch.
  - ✓ At the end of March, there were Rs.3.6 lakh crore of Rs.2,000 banknotes, constituting 10.8% of the notes in circulation.
  - ✓ This is a significant drop from the Rs.6.7 lakh crore printed after demonetisation (representing 37.3% of the total notes in circulation).
  - ✓ In January 2014, RBI announced the withdrawal of all banknotes printed before 2005 and announced a three-month window.
  - ✓ The deadline was later extended to January 1, 2015, then to June 30, 2016.
  - ✓ This extension was possible as the notes continued to be legal tender and were only withdrawn from circulation.
  - ✓ The printing of Rs.2000 note was stopped in 2018-19
- **On May 19, the government - announced that credit and debit card spending up to Rs.7 lakh in a financial year would not attract the prescribed tax collected at source (TCS)**
- ✓ The government had earlier this week brought overseas credit card spending under Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS).

- ✓ This meant that any spending using credit cards overseas would attract a 20% tax from July 1.
- ✓ With the latest announcement, the finance ministry said that expenditure up to Rs.7 lakh will be excluded from the \$250,000 per annum Liberalised Remittance Scheme limits.
- ✓ This relaxation does not extend to international transactions charged to institutional or corporate credit cards.
- ✓ Currently, overseas medical treatment and education expenses up to Rs 7 lakh a year is exempt from TCS, which will still continue.

## **CONFERENCES & SUMMITS**

- **China's President Xi Jinping – hosted his first-ever summit with the leaders of five Central Asian nations on May 18 and 19 in Xi'an in northwest China's Shaanxi Province**



- ✓ The two-day event brings together the leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan whose countries are crucial to China's trillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative.
  - ✓ This is the first major diplomatic event hosted by China this year and is the first ever in-person summit between the leaders of China and five Central Asian countries since the establishment of diplomatic relations 31 years ago
  - ✓ The summit concluded with the signing of the Xi'an Declaration outlining a plan for the longer term growth of relations between China and Central Asia
- **The two-day 32nd Arab League Summit - concluded in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia on May 20, with the adoption of the Jeddah Declaration, which calls for Arab unity to solve regional issues**
  - ✓ The declaration welcomed Syria's readmission to the Arab League, vowing to intensify pan-Arab efforts to help Syria tackle its crisis



- ✓ Syrian President Bashar al-Assad attended the summit for the first time since his country was suspended from the Arab League after the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011.



- ✓ Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky made a surprise visit to the summit to rally support against Russia
- ✓ In the summit, Algerian Prime Minister Ayman Benabderrahmane handed over the rotating presidency of the Arab League to Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud.

## SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- On May 19, Nasa – has selected Jeff Bezos' 'Blue Origin' to build a spacecraft that will send astronauts to and from the moon's surface



- ✓ As per the contract, a team led by Jeff Bezos' space company Blue Origin will develop a human landing system for the agency's Artemis V mission to the Moon.

- ✓ Earlier, Nasa has awarded Elon Musk's SpaceX \$3 billion in 2021 to land astronauts on the moon under the Artemis III mission for the first time since the final Apollo mission in 1972.
- ✓ Those initial missions using SpaceX's Starship system are slated for later this decade.
- ✓ The Blue Origin contract is valued roughly \$3.4 billion, with Blue Origin privately contributing much more of that amount
- ✓ Blue Origin plans to build its 52-foot tall Blue Moon lander in partnership with Lockheed Martin, Boeing, spacecraft software firm Draper, and robotics firm Astrobotic.
- ✓ The Blue Moon landing, planned for 2029, is expected to carry two astronauts to the moon's surface.
- ✓ Artemis astronauts will take off aboard NASA's Orion capsule, propelled to the Moon by the agency's new SLS mega-rocket
- ✓ Through Artemis, NASA will explore more of the Moon than ever before, uncovering more scientific discoveries, and preparing for future astronaut missions to Mars.

## DEFENCE

- **The value of India's domestic defence production - crossed the Rs.1 lakh crore mark for the first time in 2022-23**
  - ✓ This is 12% higher than the preceding financial year, according to the defence ministry.
  - ✓ The value of defence production now stands at Rs.1,06,800 crore for the 2022-23 fiscal.
  - ✓ India's export of arms and defence technologies also reached an all-time high of Rs.15,920 crore in the 2022-23 financial year, which represents a ten-fold increase since 2016-17.
  - ✓ The government has set a target of a domestic turnover of Rs.1,75,000 crore in the defence and aerospace sector, including exports of Rs.35,000 crore, by 2024-25.
  - ✓ India continues to be the world's largest arms importer, accounting for 11% of the total global imports in 2018-2022.
- **The sixth and the last Scorpene submarine Vaghsheer - has now begun its sea trials, ahead of its delivery to the Navy in early-2024**
  - ✓ The submarine is being manufactured as part of the over Rs.23,000 crore 'Project-75' inked with French companies way back in 2005.
  - ✓ The submarine will undergo intense trials of all its systems at sea, including propulsion systems, weapons and sensors, before being commissioned as INS Vaghsheer early next year.



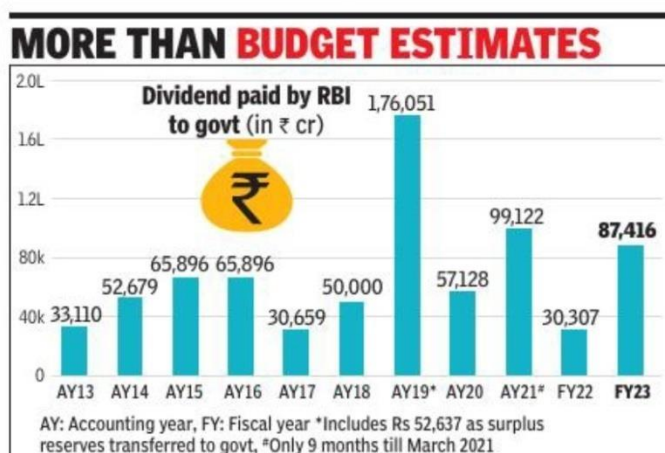


- ✓ The earlier commissioned Scorpene submarines are INS Kalvari, INS Khanderi, INS Karanj, INS Vela and INS Vagir.
  - ✓ These diesel-electric submarines are equipped with long-range guided torpedoes and tube-launched anti-ship missiles as well as advanced sonars and sensor suites.
  - ✓ 'Project-75' is currently underway at Mazagon Docks (MDL) in collaboration with M/s Naval Group, France.
  - ✓ The delay in this project causes further delay in the follow-on programme under the "strategic partnership" model to build six more advanced diesel-electric submarines under 'Project-75-India'.
- **The top-notch Malabar naval exercise – will be held between India, the US, Australia and Japan off the Australian coast in August**
- ✓ The exercise aims to further boost military interoperability and counter any coercion in the crucial Indo-Pacific region by China.
  - ✓ The exercise will be hosted by Australia for the first time from August 11 to 21
  - ✓ India will be dispatching a Kolkata-class guided missile destroyer, a Shivalik class multi-mission stealth frigate and P-8I long-range maritime patrol aircraft for the Malabar combat manoeuvres
  - ✓ The Malabar began as a bilateral endeavour between India and the US in the 1990s and then formally included Japan as a regular participant in 2015 and finally Australia in 2020 to complete the Quad.

## ECONOMY

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) - has declared a dividend of Rs 87,416 crore to the government.**
- ✓ This is nearly three times the Rs 30,307 crore dividend the central bank paid out in the previous financial year.
  - ✓ It is also much higher than the Rs 48,000 crore dividend from banks estimated in the Budget.

- ✓ The higher dividend was a result of the volatility in the foreign exchange market, which enabled the RBI to book huge profits through the sale of dollars.



- ✓ A higher dividend income will enable the government meet the fiscal deficit target of 5.9% of GDP.
- ✓ The RBI's central board convened its 602nd meeting on May 19 under the chairmanship of governor Shaktikanta Das.
- ✓ The meeting focused on evaluating the global and domestic economic landscape, taking into account associated challenges and potential impact of current geopolitical developments.
- ✓ During the session, the board decided to maintain the contingency risk buffer at 6%.
- ✓ This is a reserve fund to absorb any unexpected losses or shocks arising in the future.