

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-APRIL 23,2022

TAMIL NADU

- On April 22, the Tamil Nadu government – made several announcements on various new incentives for rural local bodies in the state



- ✓ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin announced setting up 'Village Secretariats' for effective implementation of various government schemes at grassroots level
 - ✓ The CM said that 600 such secretariats would come up this year in the first phase.
 - ✓ Making a statement in the assembly, the Chief Minister announced that these 'Grama Seyalagangal' will be established with an objective of ensuring good governance in local bodies and they would coordinate and integrate several government schemes for effective implementation
 - ✓ The various state-run schemes include those under the departments of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj, Revenue, Agriculture and Social Welfare.
 - ✓ The village secretariats would have a chamber for the village panchayat president, a conference hall, offices for the village administrative officer and village panchayat secretary with internet facilities

- ✓ These village secretariats would be constructed at an estimated Rs 40 lakh each
- ✓ The best performing village panchayats would be conferred the 'Uthamar Gandhi Award' based on the performance across 10 parameters from this year
 - ✓ Under this, one village panchayat from every district shall get a cash prize of Rs 10 lakh each.
 - ✓ The award was introduced in 2006 under the DMK government, but was discontinued by the AIADMK government.
 - ✓ The Chief Minister's statement was on new initiatives in respect of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department, considering the National Panchayati Raj Day on April 24.
 - ✓ It has to be recalled that the YSR Congress government in Andhra Pradesh launched the village secretariat (Grama Sachivalayam) initiative in 2019
- ✓ Further, the CM announced an enhancement of five to ten times in the sitting fee of local representatives in official meetings
 - ✓ Members of the rural local body were receiving a sitting fee following an order issued by the erstwhile DMK government under CM M Karunanidhi and it had not been revised for years
 - ✓ For village panchayat president and village panchayat members the hike shall be five times.
 - ✓ As regards district panchayat and panchayat union representatives, the increase would be ten times
 - ✓ The measure would benefit over 1.19 lakh elected representatives in the rural local bodies, including 12,525 presidents and 99,327 members of the village panchayats, 388 presidents and 6,471 members of the panchayat unions, 36 presidents and 655 members of the district panchayats.
- ✓ Further, the CM said November 1 shall be observed as 'Local Governance Day', to create awareness on government schemes, ensure transparency and encourage people's participation
 - ✓ Though November 1 had been observed as Local Governance Day (Ulatchi Dhinam) by the DMK government since 2007, the practice was discontinued when the AIADMK came to power.
 - ✓ Further, the CM said the number of meetings annually held by the Gram Sabhas would be increased to 6 from 4.
 - ✓ Such meetings were held on Republic Day, May Day, Independence Day and on Gandhi Jayanthi.
 - ✓ From now on, it shall also be on World Water Day (March 22) and on Local Governance Day (November 1).
- ✓ The chief minister also announced that new vehicles would be purchased for chairpersons of all Panchayat Union Councils for effective monitoring of state schemes at the local level.

- ✓ In 2008, the then Chief Minister, M. Karunanidhi, had granted permissions for vehicles for the chairpersons of 385 panchayat unions, which is yet to be implemented
- **Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Thomar - will be inaugurating the nationwide awareness campaign for coconut farmers of the country on April 26.**
- ✓ Coconut Development Board (CDB) is organizing the programme which will run between April 26 and May 1
- ✓ A Centre of Excellence in coconut set up in the Demonstration-cum-Seed Production (DSP) Farm of the Board at Dhali, Coimbatore, will be inaugurated at the event.

STATE

- **Maharashtra environment minister Aaditya Thackeray - inaugurated Mumbai's first completely digital bus recently on April 20**
- ✓ The digital bus is run on the Gateway of India to Churchgate route by the Brihanmumbai Electricity Supply and Transport (BEST).



- ✓ According to BEST, this is the first-ever 100% digital bus service in the country, aimed at increasing the digitisation of the bus ticketing system
- ✓ The bus has a unique tap-in tap-out feature, wherein passengers can 'tap in' using their smart card or via the 'chalo' app installed on their smartphones
- ✓ The traveller gets a receipt on their mobile phone at the completion of the journey when they 'tap out' using the app
- ✓ The journey has become more convenient as it is fully contactless, and there is no interaction with the ticket checker

NATIONAL

- **The University Grants Commission (UGC) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) – said in a joint statement on April 22 that**

students pursuing higher education in Pakistan will not be eligible for employment or further studies in India thereafter.

- ✓ However, this will not be applicable to migrants who have been granted Indian citizenship.
- ✓ The latest advisory comes less than a month after the regulatory authorities warned Indian students against studying in China.
- **India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) – announced the launch of a joint new initiative named ‘Fincluvation’**
- ✓ Under the initiative, IPPB will collaborate with Fintech Startup community to co-create and innovate solutions for financial inclusion



- ✓ The initiative is part of the 75th anniversary of Indian Independence and ongoing Azadi ka Amrit Mahotasav.
- ✓ The first-of-its-kind industry initiative, Fincluvation would create a powerful platform to mobilize the start-up community towards building meaningful financial products aimed at financial inclusion
- ✓ Union Communications Minister, Ashwini Vaishnaw, launched the initiative on April 21
- ✓ Fincluvation will engage startups to participate, ideate, develop and market intuitive and tailored products and services for the customers.
- ✓ IPPB and DoP collectively serve close to 430 million customers through various post offices.
- ✓ Further, it is one of the largest and trusted postal networks in the world with over 400,000 post office employees and Gramin Dak Sevaks.
- ✓ India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) was launched on September 1, 2018 under the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communication with 100% equity owned by Government of India

ECONOMY

- **Business tycoon Gautam Adani - is set to acquire the country's largest marine services company Ocean Sparkle for Rs 1,530 crore.**

- ✓ He will purchase Ocean Sparkle from a group of marine technocrats (who own 35%) and financial investors (65%) through Adani Harbour Services, a fully owned arm of his publicly listed Adani Ports.
- ✓ Established in July 1995, Ocean Sparkle carries out towage, pilotage and dredging services across all ports and LNG terminals in India.
- ✓ The acquisition will make Adani Harbour the leader in India's marine services market.
- ✓ Ocean Sparkle, owning 94 vessels, also operates in Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Yemen and Qatar.
- ✓ The company achieved total revenue of Rs 622 crore in FY21 and employs around 1,800 personnel in the country.
- ✓ Around 92% of its revenue was contributed by towage and pilotage, while the remaining 8% was from dredging.
- ✓ It is expected to record a profit of Rs. 135 crore in FY22.
- ✓ Ocean Sparkle has a robust business model as it has long term take or pay contracts with customers that range from 5 to 10 years.
- ✓ Around 80% of revenue and 85% of operating profit is from take or pay contracts.
- ✓ The company's marine services business — Adani Harbour Services and Ocean Sparkle — is expected to have a revenue of Rs 5,000 crore by FY27.


APPOINTMENTS

- **Niti Aayog vice-chairman Rajiv Kumar - has stepped down from his post and will be replaced by economist Dr Suman K Bery.**
- ✓ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet accepted the resignation of Kumar with effect from April 30.
- ✓ According to the G.O. issued, the appointment of Dr Suman K Bery initially as full time member, Niti Aayog, comes into effect immediately and up to April 30, 2022 on the same terms and conditions as applicable to full time members of Niti Aayog.


DEPARTURE AFTER 5 YEARS

➤ Move to replace Rajiv Kumar has been sudden. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet accepted the resignation of Kumar with effect from April 30

➤ Kumar took over as vice-chairman of Niti



RAJIV KUMAR



SUMAN BERY

Aayog in August 2017

➤ Suman Bery served as director-general of National Council of Applied Economic Research

➤ He has also been a member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, Statistical Commission and technical committee of RBI

- ✓ Bery has been appointed vice chairman of Niti Aayog with effect from April 1, 2022 on the same terms that were applicable to the previous vice chairman.
- ✓ Kumar had the rank of a cabinet minister as vice chairman of the government think tank.
- ✓ He took over as vice-chairman of the government think tank in August 2017 after Arvind Panagariya decided to return to his teaching assignment at Columbia University.
- ✓ The tenure of the vice chairman has traditionally been co-terminus with the term of the government.
- ✓ The Prime Minister serves as the chairman of the government think tank, which took shape after the erstwhile Planning Commission was shut down.
- ✓ Suman Bery is a well known economist and served as the director-general of the economic think tank National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER).
- ✓ He has also been a member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, the Statistical Commission and the technical committee of RBI.
- ✓ He has also worked for the World Bank during the country's economic reforms, worked as a special consultant to RBI and was on leave from the World Bank.
- ✓ Kumar has extensive experience of having worked in academia, government, industry as well as in multilateral institutions.
- ✓ After completing his DPhil at Oxford, Kumar started his academic career in the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER)
- ✓ He has also worked with the Asian Development Bank, UNIDO, UNCTAD and the World Bank.
- ✓ Kumar also worked in the private sector, serving as chief economist with industry lobby group CII and secretary general of Ficci.

SPORTS

- **Defending champion Anshu Malik - settled for silver after losing the final of the women's freestyle 57kg category at the Asian Wrestling Championships in Mongolia's Ulaanbaatar on April 22.**
- ✓ The girl from Nidani in Haryana's Jind district lost the final to reigning world champion, Japan's Tsugumi Sakurai (55 kg category)



- ✓ This was Anshu's first international competition since her Worlds silver in October last year.
- ✓ Joining Anshu on the podium were Radhika who clinched a silver medal in the 65kg category, and Manisha who clinched bronze in the 62kg division.
- ✓ Manisha defeated last edition's bronze medallist, South Korea's Hanbit Lee, to claim the bronze.
- ✓ Indian women wrestlers concluded their campaign with five medals, none managing to secure a gold medal finish.
- ✓ A day earlier, another defending champion, Sarita Mor (59kg), and Sushma (55kg), had settled for a bronze each.

INTERNATIONAL DAY

➤ World Earth Day – April 22



- ✓ The day is observed every year to raise awareness about the increase in pollution levels, deforestation, global warming and other activities which directly or indirectly harm the environment and result in the degradation of the planet.
- ✓ The US Senator Gaylord Nelson proposed to hold nationwide environmental enlightenment to promote ecology and raise awareness about various issues surrounding the earth on April 22, 1970, which was later renamed as the 'Earth Day'
- ✓ It was first observed in the United States, when 20 million Americans across cities protested against the 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill, which killed thousands of sea birds, dolphins, seals, and sea lions
- ✓ Theme 2022 - 'Invest in our Planet.'
- ✓ The United Nations celebrates the day as International Mother Earth Day since 2009
- ✓ It will mark the day with the theme - "Harmony with Nature".

- ✓ The UN links the designation of April 22 with a series of previous global climate actions that started with the UN Conference on the Human Environment 1972 in Stockholm and the establishment that year of World Environment Day on June 5.
- ✓ In 1992, Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development was adopted at the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit.
- ✓ During the first Earth Day, Americans protested against the impacts of 150 years of industrial development causing human health issues
- ✓ The first Earth Day launched a wave of action, including the passage of landmark environmental laws in the United States.
- ✓ The Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Acts were created in response to the first Earth Day, as well as the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- ✓ In 2016, the United Nations chose Earth Day as the day when the historic Paris Agreement on climate change was signed into force.
- ✓ The first Earth Day is credited with launching the modern environmental movement and is now recognized as the planet's largest civic event.
- ✓ Notably, the World Earth Day was earlier decided to be celebrated on March 21, 1970 as the day one of spring in the Northern Hemisphere
- ✓ The World Earth Day's celebration on April 22 is important because it is spring in the Northern Hemisphere and autumn in the Southern Hemisphere around this time

➤ **World Heritage Day – April 18**



- ✓ The day aims to raise awareness about the diversity of the world's heritage sites and the efforts essential in protecting and conserving them
- ✓ It is also called as International Day for Monuments and Sites
- ✓ The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), based in Paris, is the driving force behind this worldwide event.
- ✓ The ICOMOS organization was established on the principles mentioned in the Venice Charter, also known as the 1964 International Charter on the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites
- ✓ During a seminar in Tunisia, the International Council of Monuments and Sites suggested celebrating World Heritage Day on April 18, 1982.

- ✓ The day was first observed in 1983 by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) after getting the approval in its 22nd General Conference in the same year
- ✓ The theme for World Heritage Day 2022 is "Heritage and Climate".
- ✓ The UNESCO has designated total of 1155 monuments in 167 countries as UNESCO world heritage sites
- ✓ There are 3691 protected monuments and sites in our country
- ✓ Of these 40 are designated as UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including places like the Taj Mahal, Ajanta Caves and Ellora Caves.
- ✓ World Heritage Sites also include natural sites like the Kaziranga National Park in Assam.
- ✓ The largest number of protected sites comes under Uttar Pradesh (745), whereas Karnataka (506) ranks second.

CASTE-WISE LIFE EXPECTANCY IN INDIA – A COMPARISON

