

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-MARCH 17, 2022

TAMIL NADU

- Chief Minister M K Stalin – released the first ever illustrated book on marine species, ‘The Molluscs of Gulf of Mannar, India and Adjacent Waters’ at the Secretariat on March 16



- ✓ The book has descriptions of 70% of the molluscs found in the region
 - ✓ It is a combined effort of the Suganthi Devadason Marine Research Institute, Tuticorin and department of aquatic biology and fisheries, University of Kerala.
 - ✓ As many as 1,041 molluscs including 722 species of conches and 287 species of shells have been detailed in the book.
 - ✓ The book was authored by three marine experts from Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Gujarat.
 - ✓ Though the biodiversity of Gulf of Mannar has been researched for more than 200 years, this is the first ever book on its documentation
- Minister for archaeology Thangam Thennarsu – launched the first phase of excavation at Vembakottai on the banks of Vaipar river near Sivakasi on March 16



- ✓ Vembakottai is expected to be one of the most revealing archaeological sites in the region
 - ✓ The site at Vembakottai was on the right of Vaipar river where many pieces of shell bangles from the Sangam era, terracotta earrings and ring wells had been discovered earlier.
 - ✓ A budget of ₹5 crore had been allocated for the excavation.
 - ✓ Recently, chief minister M K Stalin had inaugurated excavations at seven places.
- **On March 16, the state-run power utility, Tangedco - signed power purchase agreements with Neyveli Lignite Corporation, Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited and Power Trading Corporation of India Limited for purchase of 2,900MW.**



- ✓ The deal was signed in the presence of chief minister M K Stalin.
- ✓ The NLC has planned a 3x800MW coal-based project at Talabira in Odisha, which is expected to commence operations in 2026-27
- ✓ From this plant, the Union ministry of power has allocated 1,500MW to Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ The NLC has proposed a tariff of ₹3.06 per unit.

- ✓ The average power demand of the state is around 15,000MW and the peak demand during summer is around 17,000MW.
 - ✓ The power purchase agreement with the Union government's Solar Energy Corporation of India for 1,000MW has been signed under the manufacturing-linked inter-state transmission scheme (ISTS).
 - ✓ The cost of power is ₹2.61 per unit and it is intended to meet Tangedco's renewable power purchase obligation.
 - ✓ The solar power from SECI is expected to be available for Tamil Nadu from the end of next fiscal.
 - ✓ The medium-term agreement with Power Trading Corporation for 400MW is at ₹3.26 per unit for three years.
- **The expert committee for the revival of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) - submitted its report to chief minister M K Stalin on March 16**
- ✓ Minister for MSME, T M Anbarasan, chief secretary V Irai Anbu, MSME secretary V Arun Roy and industries commissioner Sigy Thomas Vaidhyan were present during the occasion



- ✓ The report contains short-term, medium-term and long-term recommendations.
 - ✓ The committee had suggested cluster-based development for MSMEs and identified a few sectors in the manufacturing and services industries that required the state government's special focus.
 - ✓ It has proposed ease of doing business, ways to improve the single-window system and recommendations on implementing the credit-guarantee scheme.
 - ✓ The committee, headed by retired IAS officer Dr N Sundaradevan, was set up towards the end of July last year
 - ✓ It had held more than 60 meetings with 16 associations related to industries and MSMEs, government officials of 33 departments, bank officials, finance companies and experts related to startups
- **On March 16, the government - signed an MoU with Credit Guarantee Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE) for developing a portal for the Tamil Nadu Credit Guarantee Scheme (TNCGS) that seeks to provide credit for MSMEs**



- ✓ The agreement was signed in the presence of Chief Minister M.K. Stalin at the Secretariat on March 16
- ✓ Tamil Nadu Credit Guarantee Scheme (TNCGS) has been designed to provide loan amount of Rs 40 lakh to MSMEs against 90% guarantee and loan up to Rs 2 crore against 80% guarantee.
- ✓ The scheme will be jointly implemented by the state MSME department in association with CGTMSE in six months and the state government has allotted Rs 100 crore for the scheme.
- ✓ The state government has planned to make the scheme completely 'online' and hence a website with all the required links and security will be developed by the government in association with CGTMSE.
- ✓ During the event, the Chief Minister also inaugurated coconut coir cluster in Budalur in Thanjavur district, which was set up at a budget of ₹3.42 crore, that seeks to provide direct employment for over 100 people
- ✓ The Chief Minister also virtually inaugurated the LED testing lab at Central Electrical Testing Laboratory (CETL) at Kakkalur in Tiruvallur district, established at a budget of ₹6.95 crore.

STATES

- **Aam Aadmi Party's Bhagwant Mann - took oath as Punjab 18th chief minister at a ceremony on March 16 in Khatkar Kalan, the native village of freedom fighter Bhagat Singh.**



- ✓ Punjab governor Banwarilal Purohit administered the oath of office and secrecy to Mann, who addressed in Punjabi throughout.

- ✓ The event was attended by Delhi CM and AAP national convenor Arvind Kejriwal along with members of his Cabinet
- ✓ The 48-year-old comedian-turned-politician has become the first non-Congress and non-Akali leader to make it to the chief minister's office in Punjab since 1966, when its map was last redrawn.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu chief minister and DMK president M K Stalin extended greetings to Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Bhagwant Mann
- ✓ The AAP won 92 seats in the 117-member Punjab assembly, overpowering the Congress and the SAD-BSP combine
- ✓ Mann was a comedian and an actor before entering politics.
- ✓ He got noticed for the first time due to his sense of humour in 2008 when he competed in the Great Indian Laughter Challenge on Star Plus.
- ✓ Mann has also acted in National Award-winning Film 'Main Maa Punjab Dee' directed by Balwant Dullat.

NATIONAL

- **On March 15, India - restored all currently valid tourist visas, including electronic ones held by the nationals of 156 eligible countries**
- ✓ These visas are originally issued to foreign tourists for five years and, in respect of US and Japanese citizens for 10 years
- ✓ They were suspended in March 2020 due to outbreak of the pandemic.
- ✓ The home ministry also cleared the resumption of issuance of fresh e-tourist visas (to nationals of 156 countries allowed e-visa facility) and all types of paper tourist visas
- ✓ The conditions specified in the 2019 visa manual will apply in case of e-tourist visas issued for five years.
- ✓ The foreign nationals on tourist or e-tourist visas may enter India only via designated immigration points upon arrival by sea route or via the airport immigration checkpoints.
- ✓ The flights, for now, shall be ones operated under Vande Bharat Mission or 'air bubble' arrangement with select countries.
- ✓ The scheduled commercial passenger flights are set to resume by March 27, 2022
- ✓ As per the latest MHA order, foreigners are not allowed yet to cross over to India through land borders or riverine routes.

SUPREME COURT VERDICT

- **On March 16, the Supreme Court - allowed the State of Tamil Nadu to implement 50% reservation for NEET-qualified in-service doctors in superspeciality courses in government medical colleges**
- ✓ A bench comprising Justice L Nageswara Rao and BR Gavai vacated the interim order which was passed in 2020 to stop the implementation of reservation in superspeciality courses

SHOT IN THE ARM FOR MED ADMISSIONS



➤ In 2020, Tamil Nadu government issued an order for 50% quota in super-specialty seats for in-service candidates in government medical colleges

➤ In November that year, Supreme Court said counselling for admission to super-speciality

courses for 2020-21 shall be held without reservation for in-service doctors; government decision not implemented

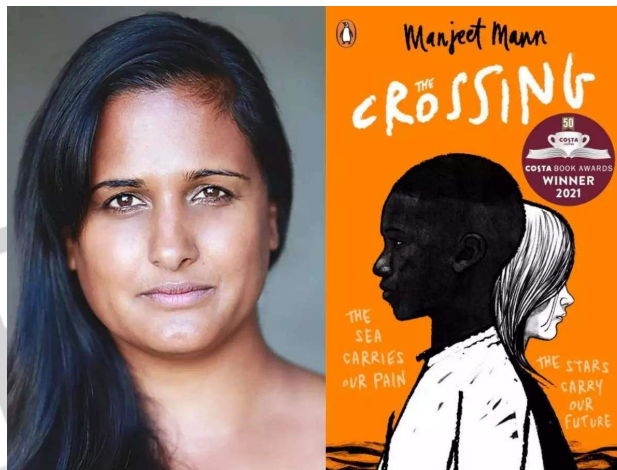
➤ SC has clarified that its 2020 order was for academic year 2020-21 and the state can implement its decision in the present session

- ✓ The apex court was listening to a petition challenging the Tamil Nadu government's decision pertaining to NEET super speciality reservation.
- ✓ The petitioners claimed that the Tamil Nadu government's decision dated November 7, 2020, was in clear violation of Article 14 of the Indian Constitution as it creates an impermissible classification, contrary to the law
- ✓ The state of Tamil Nadu was represented by Additional Advocate General Amit Anand Tiwari who had argued that non-service candidates do not stand by their compulsory bond duty.
- ✓ The Tamil Nadu government had in 2020 passed an order for 50% reservation in super-specialty seats (DM/MCh) for in-service candidates in government medical colleges in the state.
- **On March 16, the Supreme Court - upheld the Centre's 'One Rank One Pension' policy for defence forces**
 - ✓ A bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud, Surya Kant and Vikram Nath found no constitutional infirmity in the OROP principle adopted by the Centre
 - ✓ The scheme promised equal pension to military personnel retiring in the same rank with the same length of service, regardless of the date of their retirement
 - ✓ The court found no merit in the main demand of the ex-servicemen petitioners that the pensions of veterans should be automatically revised every year instead of the current model that is based on a review once in five years as per the notification dated November 7, 2015
 - ✓ The contention of veterans is that the current OROP model will result in senior officers receiving lesser pension than junior officers
 - ✓ The court directed that the pending re-fixation exercise of OROP, which has not been done due to pendency of the matter before the court after the expiry of five years, should be carried out from July 1, 2019, and arrears be paid to the pensioners in three months.
 - ✓ The top court disposed of a plea filed by the Indian Ex-Servicemen Movement seeking implementation of the One Rank-One Pension as recommended by the Bhagat Singh Koshyari Committee with an automatic annual revision

- ✓ The OROP scheme was implemented for the retired personnel of armed forces from July 1, 2014
- ✓ Before the 2014 general elections, the Congress-led UPA government allocated ₹500 crore for OROP, an amount that was considered insufficient to implement the scheme.
- ✓ The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government implemented OROP seven years ago with an initial corpus of ₹8,300 crore
- ✓ In the 2022-23 Union Budget announced on February 1, India allocated ₹5.25 lakh crore for military spending, including a pension outlay of ₹1.19 lakh crore.
- ✓ India has at least 3.3 million defence pensioners

AWARDS

- **Indian-origin author Manjeet Mann - has been shortlisted for her children's book 'The Crossing' for the UK's prestigious Yoto Carnegie Medal.**



- ✓ Mann, a UK-based author, has been previously shortlisted for the prize for her debut children's novel 'Run, Rebel'.
- ✓ 'The Crossing' is her second novel and recently won the 2022 Costa Children's Book Award.
- ✓ 'The Crossing' is a tale of a little girl's friendship with an Eritrean refugee

SPORTS

- **Mamallapuram, the temple town by the Bay of Bengal, 40 km away from Chennai - set to host the 44th FIDE Chess Olympiad later this year.**
- ✓ The matches will take place in a five-star hotel close to the sea.
- ✓ In November 2013, Chennai hosted the World championship clash featuring Viswanathan Anand and Magnus Carlsen with the Norwegian going on to clinch his first world title.
- ✓ The chess Olympiad is a biennial team tournament where teams from close to 190 nations compete over a period of two weeks.



- ✓ India bid for the event in February after FIDE shifted it from the previous venue -- Moscow --as a result of Russia invading Ukraine on February 24
- ✓ The All-India Chess federation (AICF) had submitted a guarantee of \$10 million (around Rs 70 crore) to FIDE to host the tournament.
- ✓ The original dates of the tournament were 26 July to August 8, 2022.
- ✓ The AICF didn't specify whether Russian and Belarussian players will be allowed to take part in the event.
- ✓ The other events that have been moved away from Russia are the first Chess Olympiad for People with Disabilities and the 93rd FIDE Congress.

RANKINGS

- **Mukesh Ambani** - continued to be the richest Asian with a net worth of \$103 billion and is the only Indian in the global top 10, as per the latest Hurun rich list

AT \$103BN, AMBANI RICHEST INDIAN

Mukesh Ambani is the richest Asian with a net worth of **\$103bn**.

The RIL chief is also the only Indian in the global top 10 richest persons



Cyrus Poonawalla (Serum) is world's richest **healthcare** billionaire at **\$26bn**

Ashwin Dani (Asian Paints) is world's richest **paints** billionaire with **\$9.7bn** wealth



Gautam Adani added **\$49bn** to his wealth in 2021, roughly **₹6,000cr** per week.

He is the world's biggest wealth gainer in absolute terms. Adani's net worth is **\$81bn**



Rakesh Gangwal (left - **\$4.3bn**) and **Rahul Bhatia** (**\$4.2bn**) of IndiGo are world's richest **aviation** billionaires

Falguni Nayar of Nykaa is the wealthiest (**\$7.6bn**) new entrant into the rich list



249 No. Indian or Indian-origin billionaires. Roughly seven of world's 100 billionaires are Indian

Source: Hurun India Rich List

- ✓ The report indicated that out of every 100 billionaires in the world, seven are either Indian or of Indian origin.

- ✓ Of the 3,381 billionaires globally, 249 are either Indian or of Indian origin and of these, 215 reside in India.
- ✓ Gautam Adani added the most wealth over last one year at about \$49 billion, at the rate of Rs 6,000 crore per week.
- ✓ With a total net worth at \$81 billion, he's the second richest Indian and 12th globally according to the M3M Hurun report.
- ✓ After the listing of FSN ECommerce Ventures that owns the Nykaa brand, its main promoter Falguni Nayar became the wealthiest new entrant into the rich list with a net worth of \$7.6 billion.
- ✓ The report also showed that Indians topped the global list in several sectors.
- ✓ Cyrus Poonawalla, the main promoter of world's largest vaccine-maker Serum Institute, is world's richest healthcare billionaire with a net worth of \$26 billion.
- ✓ Kumar Mangalam Birla, with a net worth of \$18 billion, is the richest cement billionaire in the world.
- ✓ The list also showed that Asian Paints's Ashwin Dani and family, with a net worth of \$9.7 billion is world's richest paints billionaire.
- ✓ Rakesh Gangwal and Rahul Bhatia of Interglobe Aviation, which runs the Indigo Airlines, are world's richest aviation billionaires with a net worth of \$4.3 billion and \$4.2 billion respectively.
- ✓ Ambani is also the richest telecom entrepreneur in the world while Adani is the richest globally in the energy sector.
- ✓ Mumbai, financial capital of the country, is also home to 72 billionaires while Delhi had 51 and Bengaluru 28 billionaires

