

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-MARCH 25, 2022

STATES

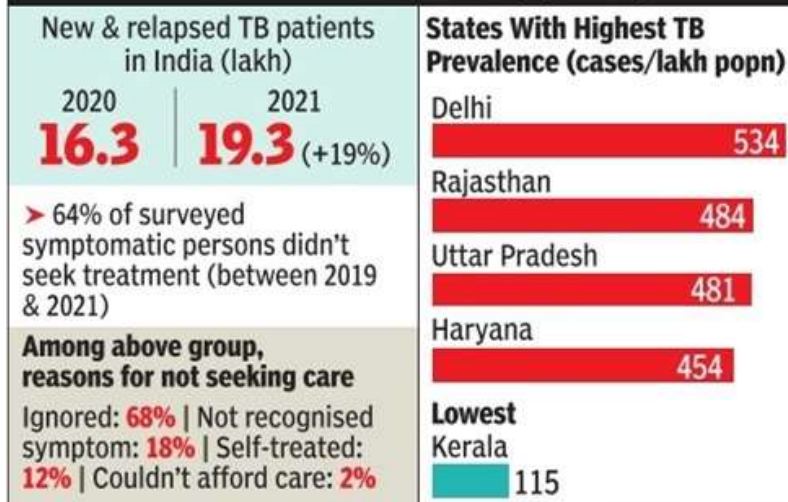
- **The Uttar Pradesh Board of Madrassa Education – has decided that the students of Madrassas across the State will have to recite the national anthem as a mandatory activity along with morning prayers**
- ✓ Earlier, in 2017, the board had made the recital of the national anthem and hoisting of the national flag mandatory on Independence Day.
- ✓ The board also decided that a Teachers' Eligibility Test (TET)-based Madrassa Teachers' Eligibility Test (MTET) be started as a pre-qualification to become a madrassa teacher.
- ✓ Several other decisions related to examinations, attendance and recruitment of teachers were taken at the board's meeting

NATIONAL

- **On March 23, Union health minister Mansukh Mandaviya – released the India TB report 2022 and National TB Prevalence Survey**
- ✓ The report indicates that the country recorded 19% rise in tuberculosis cases in 2021 over the previous year
- ✓ As per the report, about 64% of the surveyed symptomatic population did not seek healthcare services between 2019 and 2021
- ✓ A total of 19.33 lakh new and relapsed TB patients were notified in 2021, compared to 16.28 lakh the previous year
- ✓ Deaths due to TB also increased to 4.93 lakh, excluding HIV patients, in 2020, up 13% from a year ago, while the mortality rate due to all forms of TB between 2019 and 2020 rose by 11%.
- ✓ The TB prevalence survey indicates that the prevalence of TB among Indians aged above 15 years is 312 cases per 1 lakh population, more than double the global average of around 127 cases per 1 lakh people.

64% OF PATIENTS DIDN'T SEEK CARE

National TB Prevalence Survey (2019-21)



- ✓ Delhi, with 534 cases per 1 lakh population, has the highest prevalence of TB, followed by 484 in Rajasthan, 481 in Uttar Pradesh, 465 in Haryana and 454 in Chhattisgarh.
 - ✓ Kerala has lowest prevalence with 115 per 1 lakh people.
 - ✓ As per the survey, childhood TB remains a major problem contributing to around 31% of the global burden.
 - ✓ The survey was conducted after a gap of 60 years from the first National Survey 1955-58
 - ✓ During the release event, the Union Minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to making India tuberculosis-free by 2025 and said this will be achieved by ensuring access to quality healthcare and advanced treatment.
- **The Ministry for Heavy Industries – has selected four companies for receiving benefits under the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for advanced chemistry cell (ACC) battery storage**
- ✓ The companies selected are Rajesh Exports, Hyundai Global Motors Company, Ola Electric Mobility and Reliance New Energy
 - ✓ The allotment was made for a total of 50 GWh of battery capacity to the four successful bidders.
 - ✓ These four companies will receive incentives up to Rs 18,100 crore to boost local battery cell production.
 - ✓ Hyundai Global Motors Company Ltd and Ola Electric Mobility Pvt Ltd bagged 20 GWh each, while Reliance New Energy Solar Ltd and Rajesh Exports won 5 GWh each.
 - ✓ As per the ministry, ten companies had submitted bids under the ACC battery storage programme for which request for proposal (RFP) was released by the ministry in October last year.

- ✓ Companies that are on the waiting list of the scheme are M&M, Exide Industries, L&T Amara Raja Batteries and India Power Corporation.

INTERNATIONAL

- On March 24, North Korea – announced that it has successfully conducted its largest ever intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) test



- ✓ This would be the first full-capability launch of the North Korea's largest missiles since 2017
- ✓ The launch is a "new type" of ICBM that flew for about 71 minutes to an altitude of about 6,000km and a range of 1,100 km from its launch site.
- ✓ It landed inside Japan's exclusive economic zone, 170 km west of the northern prefecture of Aomori.
- ✓ This is further and longer than North Korea's last ICBM test in 2017
- ✓ In 2017, North Korea launched a Hwasong-15 missile that flew for 53 minutes to an altitude of about 4,475 km and range of 950 km.

- ✓ The current launch would be at least the 11th North Korean missile test this year.
- **On March 24, the leaders of G-7 nations – announced restrictions on the Russian Central Bank's use of gold in transactions**
- ✓ The restrictions are designed to limit Russia's ability to use gold to avoid Western sanctions.
- ✓ For several years, President Vladimir Putin has been building Russia's gold reserves and currently Russia has the fifth largest stockpile of gold in the world.
- ✓ Russia has roughly \$130 billion in gold reserves, which is about 20% of the holdings in the Russian central bank
- ✓ The new ban effectively bans individuals – including gold dealers, distributors, wholesalers, buyers and financial institutions – from buying, selling or facilitating gold-related transactions involving Russia and the various parties that have been sanctioned
- ✓ Meanwhile, US also announced fresh sanctions against 48 state-owned defence companies, 328 members of Russia's parliament Duma and Herman Gref, the head of Russia's largest lender, Sberbank.
- ✓ The United States, Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan constitute the Group of Seven Nations (G-7)

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **On March 24, India yet again abstained in the UN General Assembly on a resolution by Ukraine and its allies on the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine**
- ✓ This is India's third successive abstention in UN Security Council and UN general assembly in the past two days.

BLOWBACK AT UN & IN BRUSSELS

UNSC | Resolution by Russia for humanitarian assistance in Ukraine
13 of 15 members abstain; Russia, China vote in favour

UNGA | Resolution moved by Ukraine blames Russia for creating "dire" humanitarian situation
140 in favour, 5 against (Russia, Syria, N Korea, Eritrea & Belarus); **38 abstain**

India also abstains as UNGA decides not to vote on South African draft resolution seen as soft on Moscow

➤ At successive summits in Brussels, **G7 leaders announce plan to cut Russia off its gold reserves** "to blunt Russia's ability to fund... Putin's war"

➤ **US imposes new round of sanctions** targeting more than 400 elites & 48 state-owned defence companies

- ✓ The 193-member General Assembly resumed its 11th Emergency Special Session on Ukraine and voted on a draft resolution 'Humanitarian consequences of the aggression against Ukraine' by Ukraine and its western allies.
- ✓ The resolution, brought by France and Mexico, was adopted with 140 votes in favour, 38 abstentions and five against.

- ✓ India joined China, Pakistan and 35 others in abstaining from a resolution in UNGA on the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine that laid the blame for it squarely on Russia
- ✓ An earlier UNGA resolution deploring Russia's actions had been adopted with support from 141 countries, while India was among the 35 who had abstained then.
- ✓ A day earlier, India, along with 12 other UN Security Council members, had abstained on a resolution by Russia on the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine.
- ✓ India was among the 13 in UNSC who abstained to defeat the Russian resolution, while only Russia and China voted in favour of the UNSC resolution.
- ✓ The UNSC resolution failed to pass as it did not get nine required votes in its favour.
- ✓ The draft resolution by Russia was co-sponsored by Syria, North Korea and Belarus
- ✓ India had previously abstained on two occasions in the Security Council and once in the General Assembly on resolutions on Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

DEFENCE

- **On March 24, the defence ministry – announced ban on import of 107 subsystems, components or 'line replacement units (LRUs)' of major weapon systems and platforms between December 2022 and December 2028.**
- ✓ Many of the LRUs identified are for Russian-origin hardware like T-90S and T-72 main-battle tanks, BMP infantry combat vehicles, Konkurs-M anti-tank guided missiles, warships and submarines.
- ✓ As per the ministry, the manufacturing of these LRUs will be indigenised.
- ✓ They will only be procured from the Indian Industry after the timelines indicated against each of them in the list
- ✓ The new list adds to a similar ban on 351 sub-systems and components, announced in December last year
- ✓ These items will have to be indigenised over the next three years to boost self-reliance in defence manufacturing and minimise imports by defence PSUs.

APPOINTMENTS

- **The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki - has appointed Hisashi Takeuchi as the new MD and CEO with effect from April 1**
- ✓ He replaces incumbent Kenichi Ayukawa, who is completing his India tenure on March 31
- ✓ In order to facilitate a smooth transition, Ayukawa will continue as a whole-time director designated as executive VC till September 30, 2022
- ✓ The appointments are subject to shareholder approval.



- ✓ Takeuchi joined Suzuki Motor Corporation (SMC) in 1986.
- ✓ With vast experience in the international operations at SMC as well as in overseas markets, Takeuchi has been on the board of Maruti Suzuki since July 2019, as joint MD (commercial) since April 2021.

HIGHLIGHTS OF CAG REPORT ON URBAN LOCAL BODIES IN TAMIL NADU

- The CAG's "Performance audit on the implementation of 74th Constitutional Amendment Act" for the period 2015-20 in 38 urban local bodies across all tiers - was tabled in the Tamil Nadu Legislative assembly on March 24

RECOMMENDATIONS OF CAG

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Revision of property tax for every five years may be made mandatory ➤ Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping of all urban local bodies to bring left out properties to assessment ➤ 'Any time anywhere' remittance 	<p style="text-align: center;">systems for property tax</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Property tax on re-measured and re-classified properties ➤ Constitution of Taxation Appeals Committee and sufficient resources for Property Tax Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Form a permanent state finance commission cell for effective monitoring of recommendations ➤ Timely release of grants by state and Union governments ➤ Preparation of budgets in a scientific manner
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- ✓ Following the audit, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India recommended to the state government that revision of property tax in urban local bodies may be made mandatory every five years
- ✓ The State has incurred a loss of revenue of ₹2,598 crore for five years since 2013 as there is no change in property tax for urban local bodies
- ✓ The country's top auditor, CAG also found several shortcomings in empowerment of urban local bodies and their functioning, financial management, fiscal autonomy, self-reliance, quality of expenditure, role of parastatals and human resources of the urban local bodies.

- ✓ The report pointed out that the fiscal transfers constituted about 40% of the revenue of urban local bodies during the period 2015-20.
 - ✓ The urban local bodies lacked autonomy in generating their own revenue due to the intervention of the state government with regard to levy of property tax
 - ✓ There was a shortfall in release of the state finance commission grants and non-release of central finance commission grants from the year 2017-18 onwards.
 - ✓ Further, the share of own revenue to total revenue of urban local bodies for the period 2015-20 was only 40.7%.
 - ✓ The Union government did not release performance grants of Rs 1,324 crore for the period 2017-20 due to non-conduct of local body polls which were due from 2013.
 - ✓ The urban local bodies were able to generate their own resources to the extent of only 56% of revenue expenditure.
 - ✓ In order to meet their ever-increasing expenses, the urban local bodies resorted to borrowings, thereby paying interest and consequent additional financial burden.
- ✓ Audit scrutiny of the budgetary provisions for the period 2015-20 revealed that budget preparation was not based on scientific analysis and there was a wide gap between the budget estimates and actual revenue and expenditure.
- ✓ The Comptroller and Auditor General of India has found deficiencies in the management of public sector undertakings – Tangedco, Tansidco and Tiic, causing ₹337 crore loss to the state exchequer
 - ✓ The deficiencies include failure of Tangedco to factor transmission loss in the energy purchase agreements with solar power generators, resulting in additional expenditure of ₹245 crore.
 - ✓ Tangedco entered into a long-term energy purchase agreement for 25 years with 86 solar power generators under a preferential tariff scheme between 2015 and 2019.
 - ✓ In the case of Tamil Nadu Small Industries Development Corporation Limited, the CAG report said the PSU did not conduct any demand survey before finalising seven sites and developing them as industrial estates
 - ✓ The seven sites are Katuvananjur in Villupuram Parvathanahally in Dharmapuri, Eachambadi in Dharmapuri, Mallur in Ariyalur, Periyanesalur in Cuddalore, Sakkarakottai in Ramanathapuram and Vettambadi in Namakkal.
 - ✓ The failure to assess the demand resulted in non-saleability of the plots and consequent unproductive investment of ₹28. 5 crore.
- ✓ The erstwhile Pallavaram municipality was involved in corruption of ₹17. 54 crore under a solid waste management project in 2008, said the report

- ✓ In 2008, the municipality proposed a ₹44.2 crore project for scientific capping of legacy waste over 1.55 lakh cubic metres in Tambaram, Alandur and Pallavaram municipalities and for setting up a waste to energy plant.
- ✓ The project had 35% funding from Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), 15% from the state government and 50% from the municipality

