

## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-MARCH 27, 2022

### TAMIL NADU

- **In a first, Chandanraj Dakshayani, a transgender - has been appointed as the panchayat secretary in the Tiruvallur district of Tamil Nadu**
- ✓ Chandanraj, a diploma holder was appointed as the panchayat secretary in Annampedu panchayat under Poonamallee union in 2010, but he resigned from the job in 2015 because of the body change he was experiencing.
- ✓ After undergoing surgery he changed into a transgender, Dakshayani, and again applied for the post of panchayat secretary in 2020
- ✓ Tiruvallur District Collector Dr Albijan Varghese selected her for the post in 2022 on compassionate grounds and gave the appointment order
- ✓ On March 24, 2022, six years after a sex-change operation, Dakshayani, 30, was appointed secretary of Kodiveli panchayat in Tiruvallur district as the state's first transwoman panchayat secretary.



- ✓ This is the first time in Tamil Nadu that a transgender has been offered a job in the Rural Development Department

- **The Ramanathapuram Archaeological Research Foundation - discovered traces of two ancient villages, Oriyur and Marungur, which could have been from the Sangam period, near Thondi in Ramanathapuram district**
- ✓ Ancient potsherds, including black and red ones, have been discovered near the temple tank spread over 10 acres in Marungur

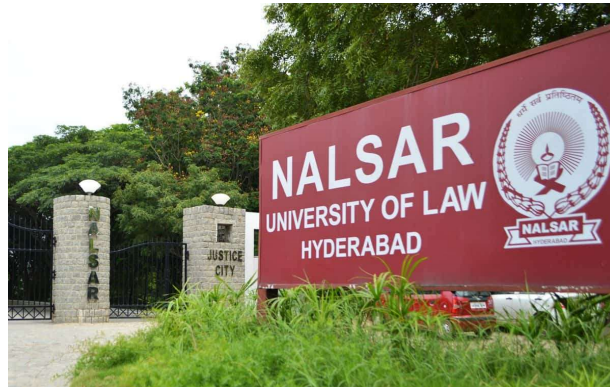


- ✓ Apart from this, sawed conches, spouts of kettles or jugs, iron ore, hopscotches, grinding stone, even Chinese porcelain and Celadon potsherds have been found.
- ✓ Sangam era literature including Ahananooru, Purananooru and Natrinai have detailed mention about the villages, Marungurpattinam and Oonur.
- ✓ Marungurpattinam had a beach oasis, backwater and a bazaar which sold jewels under the name, 'Navaratna bazaar'.
- ✓ Oonur was a red sand village where one could hear the sound of the ocean and it is the place where paddy was cultivated.
- ✓ The fort of Vazhuthunai Thalumban is said to have been situated near this village.
- ✓ As per the field study conducted, these ancient villages could have been Marungur, situated two kilometres away from Theerthandathanam and Oriyur, which is five kilometres away on a straight route from Marungur
- ✓ In Oriyur, there has been a sangam era mud fort, brick fort of the Pandiyar era, and stone of the Sethupathi period

## NATIONAL

- **On March 26, the government - cleared a six-month extension of the PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PM-GKAY), offering an extra 5kg of free ration to 80 crore families across the country**
- ✓ This will cost the central exchequer an additional ₹80,000 crore.
- ✓ Since the lockdown was imposed two years ago, the Union government has so far spent close to ₹2.6 lakh crore on providing additional foodgrains for free
- ✓ The government had allocated about 759 lakh tonnes of free foodgrains under the PMGKAY till Phase V.
- ✓ Under the Phase VI extended currently, another 244 LMT of free foodgrains will be allocated, taking the aggregate allocation of free foodgrains under the PMGKAY to 1,003 lakh tonnes of foodgrains

- **The National Academy of Legal Studies and Research (Nalsar) in Hyderabad - is set to become India's first fully gender-neutral educational institution**



- ✓ It has introduced a policy of inclusive education for gender and sexual minorities.
  - ✓ As part of its policy, the law school would have gender-neutral hostels, leading the way for inclusive campuses for the LGBTQ+ community.
  - ✓ The institution has also done away with gender salutations such as “Miss” and “Mr” on their degree certificates.
  - ✓ It will no longer have male/female washrooms but gender-neutral ones.
- **The defence ministry - has approved 21 new Sainik Schools in partnership with NGOs, private schools and state governments**



- ✓ This is in line with the government decision last year to set up 100 such institutions around the country.
- ✓ Of the 21 new schools to be operationalised soon, 17 of the schools are ‘brownfield running schools’ and four are ‘greenfield’ ones
- ✓ These schools will be distinct from the existing 33 Sainik Schools in the country, which come under the defence ministry.
- ✓ These new Sainik Schools, besides their affiliation to respective education boards, will function under the aegis of the Sainik Schools Society.
- ✓ They will follow the rules and regulations for new Sainik Schools in partnership mode prescribed by the Society
- ✓ The objectives behind PM Modi's vision of setting up of 100 new Sainik Schools is to provide quality education to students in tune with the National Education Policy and give them better career opportunities, including joining the armed forces



- ✓ While 12 of the new schools are by NGOs, trusts and societies, six are private schools and three state government-owned schools.
- ✓ Unlike the existing Sainik Schools, which are purely residential in nature, seven of the new schools are day-school and 14 have residential arrangements.
- **The annual Surajkund International Craft Mela – is held this year from March 19 to April 4, after a gap of two years**



- ✓ This year, over 30 countries, including South Asia, Africa, and Europe, have confirmed their participation in the fair, which will see around 1,100 stalls
- ✓ This year, Jammu & Kashmir has been chosen as the theme state of 35<sup>th</sup> Surajkund International Crafts Mela and Uzbekistan will be the 'partner country'
- ✓ The Surajkund International Crafts Mela was earlier scheduled to take place from February 4 to 20, but due to rising covid cases, the Haryana government decided to reschedule the event.
- ✓ The mela is a major platform for artists across the globe to showcase their culture and talent
- ✓ The Mela is organized annually in Surajkund, Faridabad by the Surajkund Mela Authority & Haryana Tourism in collaboration with Union Ministries of Tourism, Textiles, Culture and External Affairs.
- ✓ In 2013, the fair was upgraded to an international level and the last edition was held in 2020, before the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ✓ Surajkund, meaning 'Lake of the Sun', is an ancient reservoir that was built by King Suraj Pal of the Tomar dynasty in the 10th century
- **Procurement of goods and services from government portal, Government e-Market (GeM) - has crossed the Rs 1 lakh crore-mark in the current fiscal year 2021-22 (April-March).**
- ✓ This is the first time that the GeM has been to breach the Rs 1 lakh crore mark since its inception almost 4.5 years ago
- ✓ With this figure, the GeM is among the top five e-public procurement systems globally with no Chinese products on the portal

- ✓ The cumulative transaction value of goods and services procured from GeM by state and central government organisations grew from Rs 51,154 crore a year ago to Rs 1,00,610.3 crore as on March 25 this year



- ✓ In total, the number of sellers grew from 3.45 lakh a year ago to 12.67 lakh as on March 25, while the number of start-ups registered on the platform grew from 5,592 a year ago to 8,864
- ✓ Currently, government departments, ministries, public sector units, state governments, and Central Armed Police Forces are allowed to carry out transactions through this portal.
- ✓ The portal was launched on August 9, 2016 by the commerce and industry ministry for the online purchase of goods and services by all Central ministries and departments, replacing Directorate General of Supplies and Disposal
- ✓ The portal had earlier achieved the mark of Rs. 1 lakh crore in four-and-a-half years
- ✓ The portal provides a wide range of products from office stationery to vehicles.
- ✓ Automobiles, computers and office furniture are currently the top product categories.
- ✓ Services, including transportation, logistics, waste management, web casting and analytical, are also listed on the portal
- ✓ GeM is quite popular among the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) as over 57% of the procurement accounts from this segment.
- ✓ Both, the Centre and state governments are buying significantly from this platform with 30% of the total purchased in this financial year
- ✓ Uttar Pradesh has been the biggest buyer from this platform, followed by Delhi, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh

- ✓ Among the central government ministries, departments related to the defense sectors are the biggest buyers from this platform
- ✓ The platform has been made for local manufacturers and goods where any foreign good is not permitted to be sold

## INTERNATIONAL

- **China and Nepal – signed nine agreements, including one on the technical assistance scheme for the China-aided feasibility study of the cross-border railway.**



- ✓ On March 26, Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi held talks with Nepal's top leadership and discussed bilateral relations and mutual cooperation
- ✓ Wang, who holds the rank of a state councillor — a high ranking position in the executive organ of the Chinese government, called on PM Sher Bahadur Deuba at the PM's official residence at Baluwatar
- ✓ This is the first visit of a high-ranking Chinese official to Nepal since Nepali Congress president Deuba became the PM in July.
- ✓ Before meeting the prime minister, Wang held one-on-one talks with his Nepalese counterpart Narayan Khadka which was followed by delegation-level talks.
- ✓ While Khadka led a 25-member delegation from Nepal's side, Wang led a 17-member Chinese delegation.
- ✓ During their meeting, Khadka and Wang focused on relations, their mutual welfare and concerns as well as other issues at the national, regional and international level
- ✓ After their talks, the two sides signed nine MoUs related to various projects
- ✓ This includes one on the cross-border railway, which is an important component of the Trans-Himalayan Multi dimensional connectivity network between Nepal and China.
- ✓ The cross-border railway was incorporated into China's ambitious BRI in April 2019.



## CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - will attend the 5th Bimstec Summit which is being held in virtual mode by Sri Lanka on March 30.**
- ✓ The summit is being hosted by Sri Lanka in its capacity as the chair of the BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation).



- ✓ The Summit will be inaugurated by Gotabaya Rajapaksa, the President of Sri Lanka in Colombo, Sri Lanka
- ✓ The theme of the Summit is “BIMSTEC-Towards a Resilient Region, Prosperous Economies and Healthy Peoples”
- ✓ To prepare for the summit, meetings of the Bimstec foreign ministers will be held on March 29 in which foreign minister S Jaishankar will participate in-person.
- ✓ The main agenda of the summit includes Covid pandemic-related challenges and the uncertainties within the international system
- ✓ Six documents including BIMSTEC Charter are likely to be adopted and signed at the summit
- ✓ The leaders are expected to discuss establishment of basic institutional structures and mechanisms of the group.
- ✓ Besides India and Sri Lanka, the Bimstec comprises Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, Nepal and Bhutan.

## DEFENCE

- **The 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the Joint Military Exercise, Lamitiye 2022 between the Indian Army and Seychelles Defence Forces (SDF) – is being conducted at the Seychelles Defence Academy (SDA) from March 22 to 31, 2022**
- ✓ An infantry platoon strength each from the Indian Army and SDF, along with respective company headquarters, will participate in this exercise
- ✓ The Indian Army comprises troops from the 2/3 Gorkha Rifles group (Prikanthi Battalion).



- ✓ The exercise aims to share experiences gained during various operations against hostile forces in a semi-urban environment and enhance capability to undertake joint operations
- ✓ Lamitiye, which in Creole means friendship, is a biennial training event being conducted in Seychelles since 2001.
- ✓ The 10-day-long joint exercise will include field training exercises, combat discussions, lectures, demonstrations and culminate with a two days validation exercise.
- **The bi-annual military exercise 'Cold Response 2022' – is currently underway in Norway with the participation of NATO allies**



- ✓ The ongoing exercise has been organized by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) from 14th March till 1st April 2022
- ✓ The previous iteration of the drill was cancelled because of the coronavirus and was last held in 2018 when it was called Trident Juncture.
- ✓ The exercise brings together 220 aircrafts, 30000 soldiers, and over 50 ships from 27 countries.
- ✓ This exercise is a defensive exercise where the allies of Norway as well as their own army trains on various combat situations to defend the country against outside threats
- ✓ This exercise has been held biennially off Norway's coast since 2006
- ✓ It is held in a combat environment that portrays the harsh Arctic setting with cold weather and rough terrain.



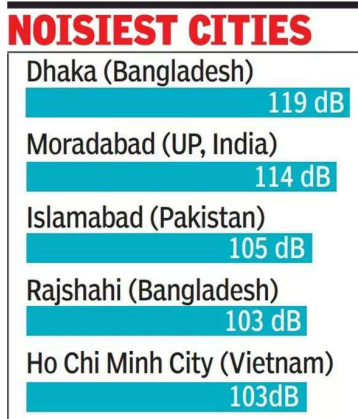
# RANKINGS

- **Gujarat - has retained the top position at the NITI Aayog's second edition of the Export Preparedness Index 2021**



- ✓ It was followed by Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana as the top 10 performers.
  - ✓ Among union territories, Delhi has topped the index followed by Goa, Jammu and Kashmir, Chandigarh and Puducherry
  - ✓ Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Tripura, Sikkim and Manipur were at the top five paces among Himalayan states.
  - ✓ The index was prepared by NITI Aayog in partnership with the Institute of Competitiveness
  - ✓ It is a comprehensive analysis of India's export achievements and is used to compare the performance of states and UTs against each other
  - ✓ The EPI ranks states and UTs on four main pillars, policy; business ecosystem; export ecosystem and export performance along with 11 sub-pillars
- **Moradabad in Uttar Pradesh is the second-most noise polluted city globally, according to the recent 'Annual Frontier Report, 2022' published by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**
  - ✓ The city recorded noise pollution of 114 decibels at its highest (dB) in 2021, said the report
  - ✓ The report ranked 61 cities around the world, of which Dhaka tops with a noise pollution level of 119 dB.
  - ✓ Islamabad is ranked third, with maximum noise pollution of 105 dB.
  - ✓ Thirteen cities from south Asia feature on the list, with five of them are from India.
  - ✓ The other four are Kolkata at 89 dB, Asansol (89 dB), Jaipur (84 dB), and Delhi at 83 dB.
  - ✓ Sounds with a frequency of over 70 dB are considered harmful to health.

- ✓ The World Health Organisation had recommended a 55-dB standard for residential areas, while for traffic and business sectors, this limit is 70 dB, in its 1999 guidelines



- ✓ The quietest cities in the world are Irbid at 60 dB, Lyon at 69 dB, Madrid at 69 dB, Stockholm at 70 dB, and Belgrade at 70 dB.

## INTERNATIONAL DAY

### ➤ World Theatre Day – March 27



- ✓ The day is observed every year to raise the importance of theatre arts, their contribution in terms of entertainment and the transformations that theatre brings to people's lives
- ✓ The International Theatre Institute has been celebrating this day since 1962, this year marking the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the day
- ✓ Since then, World Theatre Day is being celebrated every year on March 27, the date of opening of the 1962 "Theatre of Nations" season in Paris.
- ✓ The International Theatre Institute or ITI established World Theatre Day in 1961.
- ✓ French Poet and Play writer, Jean Cocteau was the person who wrote the first World Theatre Day Message in 1962.
- ✓ Theme 2022 – "Theatre and a Culture of Peace"
- ✓ The first ITI conference was held in Finland, Helsinki and the second one was held in Vienna.
- ✓ On this day, a number of national and international theatre events are planned globally

# REPORT

## WHY RUSSIAN OIL AND GAS ARE A BIG DEAL

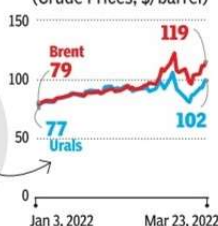
As a group of countries, Europe imports nearly a fourth of global crude. Sanctions on Russia make oil producers in the Middle East, West Africa and the Americas the biggest gainers. India is the third largest importer of crude behind China and the US

### World's Top 10 Crude Importers & Exporters In 2019\*

#### Crude Imports: As % Of Global Imports



#### Oil On The Boil (Crude Prices, \$/barrel)



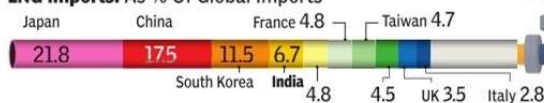
#### Crude Exports: As % Of Global Exports



### Russia Is A Major Player In LNG Too

Behind Japan, China and South Korea, India is the world's fourth-largest importer of liquefied natural gas. Russia's share of global exports is 8%

#### LNG Imports: As % Of Global Imports



#### LNG Exports: As % Of Global Exports



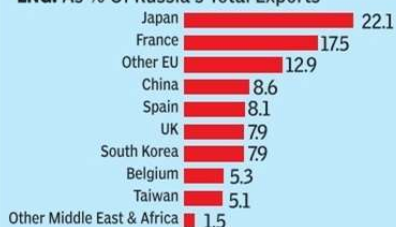
### Ukraine's Allies In Europe Are The Most Dependent On Russian Energy

More than half of Russia's crude and LNG, 65% of petroleum products and over 90% of piped gas are bought by European countries – many of them Nato members

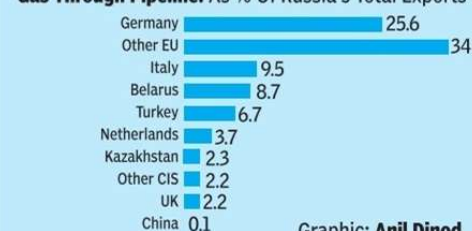
### Oil & Natural Gas Exports From Russia In 2019\*



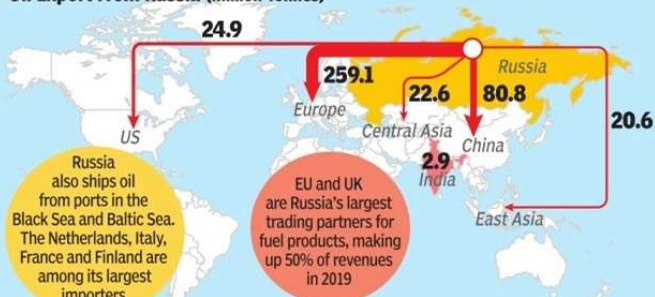
#### LNG: As % Of Russia's Total Exports



#### Gas Through Pipeline: As % Of Russia's Total Exports



#### Oil Export From Russia (Million Tonnes)



#### Crude: As % Of Russia's Total Exports



#### Oil Products: As % Of Russia's Total Exports



\*The graphic uses data from 2019 for a more accurate picture of the global oil trade, which was affected in 2020 on account of Covid-19 lockdowns; Source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2021, Bloomberg; **Other Asia Pacific:** South and East Asian countries other than China, India, Japan and Singapore; **West Africa:** Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Nigeria, Republic of Congo; **S & Cent America:** American continents except US, Canada and Mexico; **Other Middle East:** Middle East except Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Kuwait; **Other EU** for natural gas is EU except western Europe; **Other Europe** for gas pipeline is Europe except EU and CIS

Graphic: Anil Dinod