

## **EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MARCH 6, 2022**

### **TAMIL NADU**

- **Chief Minister M K Stalin - will chair the district collectors, district police officers and district forest officers meeting from March 10 to 12.**
- ✓ Ministers and senior officials from various government departments will take part in the meeting to be held at the Government secretariat in Chennai
- ✓ The state level meeting by the CM is usually conducted only for the district collectors and the heads of the city and district police units
- ✓ This is the first time the CM is holding the meeting for the district forest officers also in order to have focussed discussions on the implementation of forest related schemes.
- ✓ The key objective of the meeting, according to a government statement, is to know the status of the various schemes mentioned in the announcements and the extent to which the schemes were implemented in the state.
- ✓ During the meeting, the CM will review the status of GOs issued for 80% of the 1,704 announcements made by the government since it came to power in May 2021
- ✓ The announcements include those made during the Governor's address and under rule 110 of the State Assembly by the Chief Minister and the cabinet ministers during the budget debate
- ✓ During the meeting, the Chief Minister will have an open discussion with the officials to know about the ground-level implementation of the schemes.
- ✓ Among the other key aspects of the conferences is the maintenance of law and order at the macro level.

### **NATIONAL**

- **On March 4, the University Grants Commission (UGC) – released the new draft 'Guidelines for Transforming Higher Education Institutions into Multidisciplinary Institutions'**


- ✓ The Commission is seeking suggestions from different stakeholders for the next two weeks before its committee finalises the regulations by April-May 2022
- ✓ As per the draft guidelines, the centre plans to allow all its affiliated colleges to become 'degree-awarding multidisciplinary autonomous institutions' by 2035.
- ✓ Further, students would also be allowed to simultaneously pursue dual degrees from two institutions, earn 40% of credits from outside the parent university/college, and allow colleges to form clusters or even a larger university to offer multidisciplinary degrees.

## PLAN FOR HIGHER EDU INSTITUTES

**HIGHLIGHTS**

**TYPES OF INSTITUTES ENVISAGED**

- Multidisciplinary research-intensive universities (RUs)
- Multidisciplinary teaching-intensive universities (TUs)
- Degree-awarding multidisciplinary autonomous colleges (smaller than a university)



**OBJECTIVES**

- Convert single-stream institutions into multidisciplinary large universities or autonomous degree-awarding HEIs
- Strengthening of institutions by adding departments such as languages, literature, music, philosophy, indology, art, dance, theatre, education, mathematics, statistics, pure and applied sciences, sociology, economics, sports, translation and interpretation, among others
- By 2035 all affiliated colleges should become degree-awarding multidisciplinary autonomous institutions
- Merger of single-stream institutions with other multidisciplinary institutions under the same or different managements

- ✓ The policy also proposed institutional collaboration whereby an undergraduate student, upon completion of his/her degree course, need not have to take another entrance test but would get direct entry in a master's programme of a partner institution.
- ✓ The policy proposes a three-pronged strategy for the higher educational institutions
- ✓ The first strategy is to establish additional departments, which have not been the core areas thus far of existing higher educational institutes.
- ✓ The second proposal is to bring together smaller institutions working on focussed areas under one umbrella and convert them into larger universities, while retaining their autonomy with their own management.
- ✓ The third plan is to bring autonomous colleges as a cluster with their own board of directors and their own academic council, so that students from colleges within the cluster can access each other's courses and earn credit.

- **The road transport ministry - has proposed a lower rate of third party (TP) premium for electric and hybrid electric vehicles for the next financial year**
- ✓ In addition, the ministry has proposed marginal increase in the premium for all other categories of vehicles.
- ✓ The only exception is for the multi-axle trailers where the premium may increase by nearly 6%.
- ✓ After two years' moratorium due to Covid-19 pandemic, the revised TP insurance premium will come into effect from April 1.
- ✓ This is also for the first time that the road transport ministry will notify the TP rates in consultation with the insurance regulator IRDA.
- ✓ Earlier, this was done by the regulator itself.
- ✓ The ministry has invited suggestions and objections from all stakeholders by March 14 before notifying the final rates.
- ✓ The draft notification has proposed a 15% discount for all types of electric vehicles in its bid to incentivise the penetration of environment friendly vehicles.
- ✓ Electric private cars will attract a premium of ₹1,780 to ₹6,712 depending on their capacity.
- ✓ Similarly, it has proposed a 7.5% discount on TP for hybrid electric vehicles.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

- **On March 5, China – announced an increase in its annual defence budget by 7.1% to \$230 billion from last year's \$209 billion, which is three times that of India's military spending.**
- ✓ The Chinese government proposed the defence budget for the fiscal year 2022 at 1.45 trillion yuan
- ✓ Last year, China's defence spending had for the first time crossed \$200 billion.
- ✓ In 2021, the defence budget grew by 6.8% to \$209 billion.
- ✓ China's defence budget is over three times that of India's defence budget of Rs 5.25 lakh crore (about \$70 billion) for 2022.
- ✓ Besides the defence budget, China has a separate internal security budget that often surpasses the defence spending.
- ✓ China continues to be the largest standing army despite downsizing its troops to 2 million from the earlier 2.3 million in 2017
- ✓ China is the second-biggest spender on defence after the United States, whose defence budget is over \$600 billion.
- ✓ Further, China cut its GDP target to 5.5% to focus on slower growth to stabilise its economic fundamentals this year
- ✓ This was announced by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang in his annual work report submitted to the opening session of the National People's Congress
- ✓ The lowering of the GDP target from 6% to 5.5% is against the backdrop of uncertain global recovery due to Covid-19 and the Ukraine turmoil as well as a slump in China's vast property sector

## INDIA AND NEIGHBOURS

- **India - will send 50,000 tonnes of high quality wheat worth ₹125 crore to Afghanistan in batches of 2,000 tonnes each**
- ✓ The government has already prepared a schedule to ship out 10,000 tonnes by March 20.
- ✓ The wheat sent to Afghanistan is from the Food Corporation of India's central pool
- ✓ The consignments "meet all parameters" and have been tested by reputed private labs
- ✓ India is providing wheat to Afghanistan at an "economic cost" of ₹24,996 per tonne.

## DEFENCE

- **The naval variant of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile - was successfully tested from destroyer INS Chennai on March 5.**



- ✓ The land-attack supersonic cruise missile hit its intended target with pinpoint accuracy after traversing an extended range trajectory and performing complex manoeuvres
- ✓ Both the Brahmos missiles and INS Chennai are indigenously-built
- ✓ BrahMos is a deadly conventional (non-nuclear) weapon jointly developed with Russia that flies almost three times the speed of sound at Mach 2.8
- ✓ The range of BrahMos has been extended from the original 290-km to 350-400-km now, while a 800-km variant is also in the works.
- ✓ The Army's BrahMos missile batteries have been deployed in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh, along with tanks, howitzers, surface-to-air missiles and other weapons, as part of the overall military readiness posture against China.
- ✓ BrahMos has emerged as the "prime strike weapon" for armed forces over the years, with contracts worth over ₹36,000 crore already inked till now.

## NATIONAL DAY

- **National Safety Day – March 4**



- ✓ The observance of this Day aims to create awareness about the importance of following safety regulations and measures related to workplaces, roads, environment, and health
- ✓ The objective of this day is to help the general public and employees to work carefully by adhering to all safety norms.
- ✓ The day was first announced at the Ministry of Labour and Employment's inaugural industrial safety conference in India, which recognised the necessity for national and state-level safety councils.
- ✓ The National Safety Day (NSD) is marked every year by the National Safety Council of India.
- ✓ The National Safety Council is a non-profit and self-financing organization running at the national level.
- ✓ Theme 2022 - 'Nurture young minds - Develop a safety culture'
- ✓ In 1972, National Safety Day was celebrated for the first time on the foundation day of National Safety Council
- ✓ On March 4, 1966, the Ministry of Labour and Employment established the National Safety council to develop and implement a voluntary routine in the areas of safety, health, and the environment.
- ✓ Last year, the 50th annual National Safety Day was observed with the theme of Sadak Suraksha (Road safety)

