

## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—FEBRUARY 3, 2021

### TAMIL NADU

- **Governor Banwarilal Purohit – delivered his customary address to the assembly on February 2**
- ✓ The one-hour long speech marked the beginning of the last session of 15<sup>th</sup> assembly in the New Year
- ✓ During the address, the Governor mentioned Tamil Nadu was “one of the best administered states” in the country
- ✓ He highlighted various policy initiatives of the government, including 7.5% NEET quota for government school students.

#### NEW POLICIES

➤ CM helpline number 1100 to access the government from the comfort of homes

➤ Homeless families to get a concrete-roofed house in rural areas and an apartment in a multi-storied building in urban areas

➤ New industrial policy has been approved by the government and will be unveiled shortly to provide a fillip to industrial growth

➤ A new MSME policy has been finalised and will be released by the chief minister shortly

➤ Fresh additional capital of ₹1,000cr over three years to TIIIC to expand



**Rapt Audience:** Governor Banwarilal Purohit addresses the assembly on Tuesday

lending operations

➤ A state action plan for senior citizens will be implemented shortly

➤ The minorities commission will be expanded through legislation to provide representation to linguistic minorities

- ✓ The Governor announced the rollout of the ‘BharatNet project’ – the rural broadband connectivity programme -- to one third of the revenue villages in the state by March 31, and the remaining villages by November 30, 2021

- ✓ He said that a new convergent digital service delivery platform – Unified Digital Infrastructure -- will be built exclusively for the programme
  - ✓ The new platform will integrate BharatNet with TNSWAN, TamilNet and TACTV's broadcast infrastructure
  - ✓ It aims to deliver high speed, scalable bandwidth to all households in the state.
  - ✓ The Governor praised the government for attracting an “unprecedented” ₹60,674 crore worth investments through 73 MoUs, generating employment for one lakh people, all during the pandemic
  - ✓ The State Minorities Commission would be expanded through legislation to provide representation to linguistic minorities, he said.
  - ✓ The state government also demanded that the Centre reject Karnataka's Mokedatu dam project at the inter-state border, and not to allow Kerala to build a new dam across Periyar river.
  - ✓ It sought Central assistance of ₹5,264 crore to compensate the damage caused by two cyclones – Nivar and Burevi - recently and urged the Centre to take up the fishermen issue with Sri Lanka.
  - ✓ According to the Governor, the state received ₹13,300 crore towards compensation from the Centre
  - ✓ This includes ₹4,890 crore towards borrowings in lieu of compensation as per the mechanism put in place by the GST council.
  - ✓ The assembly session will conclude on February 5, 2021
- **The State government – to infuse an additional capital of ₹1,000 crore into the Tamil Nadu Industrial Investment Corporation (TIIC) over three years**
- ✓ The move will help the agency to function as an effective term-lending institution and expand lending to MSME units that have no access to institutional credit
  - ✓ This was announced by the Governor Banwarilal Purohit in the Assembly on February 2.
  - ✓ His announcement was in line with the recommendations of an expert committee, led by former RBI Governor C. Rangarajan
  - ✓ The committee was constituted to suggest ways to help important sectors of the economy overcome the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and promote further growth.
  - ✓ The Governor also said that a new MSME policy had been finalised during consultations with stakeholders, and it would be released by the Chief Minister shortly.
- **Tamil Nadu - has been provided ₹773.24 crore in financial support under the India COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Package**
- ✓ This was revealed by Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Ashwini Kumar Choubey as a written reply in the Rajya Sabha on February 2

- ✓ Under the package, ₹6,309.9 crore had been released to the States and the Union Territories, through the National Health Mission as on January 15.
  - ✓ Totally, 18.66 lakh N-95 masks and 5.39 lakh PPE kits had been procured centrally and distributed in Tamil Nadu.
  - ✓ Further, 3,625 oxygen cylinders had been distributed in the State as on January 24.
  - ✓ The State was given 1,52,700 Truenat COVID cartridges and 14,000 Xpert COVID cartridges as on January 24.
  - ✓ Besides, about 6.4 lakh Covid-19 diagnostic kits had been supplied to Tamil Nadu as on January 24.
  - ✓ A total of 18 diagnostic machines had been supplied to the State.
  - ✓ A total of 1,450 ventilators had been distributed to Tamil Nadu, out of which 1,447 of them had been installed.
  - ✓ The vaccination drive was aimed at covering 5,32,605 healthcare workers in Tamil Nadu
- **The Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) - is planning to build Chennai's fourth integrated mofussil bus terminus at Kuthambakkam village, near Thirumazhisai.**

**One more transport hub**


Chennai's fourth integrated bus terminus will come up on 25 acres of land at Kuthambakkam near Thirumazhisai. The following are the highlights of the project

**Project cost: ₹314 crore**

Total area: <b>1 lakh</b> square metres	Built up area: <b>40,000</b> square metres	Green cover: <b>15,000</b> square metres	Car parking: <b>10,000</b> square metres
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Other facilities: Sewage and effluent treatment plants

**Capacity of the terminus: 225 buses**



An artist's impression of the Kuthambakkam bus terminus

- ✓ The proposed integrated bus terminus will be constructed in over 25 acres of land at an outlay of ₹314 crore
- ✓ It will look to ease traffic congestion in Koyambedu and provide the much-needed public transport facility to nearly 40,000 people working in the industrial complexes, including SIPCOT.
- ✓ The integrated bus terminus, built on the lines of the one at Kilambakkam, will be completed within 18 months.

- ✓ With an area of 1 lakh sq m, the bus terminal would have two cellar floors for parking facility, ground floor for shops and booking offices, a mezzanine floor and a first floor.
  - ✓ It would also have a sewage treatment plant, an effluent treatment plant, a RO plant, rooms for the crew, toilets, shopping area and dormitory.
  - ✓ It will have the capacity to accommodate 225 buses, including those of private operators, State Transport Corporation and Metropolitan Transport Corporation
  - ✓ More than 15% (4 acres) of the 25 acre site would be allotted for greenery and 10% (2.5 acres) for car parking.
  - ✓ A separate water tank, a vehicle washing area, a workshop, an electricity substation and a petrol pump were planned on the premises.
  - ✓ At present, Dr. MGR bus terminus in Koyambedu is in operation and the Madhavaram bus terminus has been completed
  - ✓ The two bus termini, one at Kilambakkam and the other at Kuthambakkam, were intended to serve as transport hubs in the south and west sections
- **India's first wetland conservation centre – to come up in Chennai**
- ✓ The Centre for Wetland Conservation and Management (CWCM) will act as a knowledge hub for various stakeholders for conserving wetlands that occupy 4.6% of the country's total land area
  - ✓ The CWCM has been set up as a part of the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM), Chennai.
  - ✓ This national centre is an institution under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change.
  - ✓ It will assist the national and state/UT governments in the design and implementation of policy and regulatory frameworks, management planning, monitoring and targeted research for conservation of wetlands
  - ✓ This was announced by the environment ministry on the eve of World Wetlands Day
  - ✓ At present, India has 42 sites designated as wetlands of international importance under Ramsar convention, covering a surface area of 1.08 million hectares.
  - ✓ The year 2021 also commemorates the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Convention on Wetlands on February 2, 1971 in Ramsar, Iran.
  - ✓ The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), on the occasion, launched community-based programmes to raise awareness about conservation and rejuvenation of 10 wetlands in each of over 50 districts along the river under its flagship 'Namami Gange' mission.
  - ✓ The 'Namami Gange' is the first of its kind programme where wetland conservation is integrated with the river basin management plan.
  - ✓ February 2 is observed as World Wetlands Day every year to highlight the importance of conservation of wet lands

➤ **A 14<sup>th</sup> century inscription mentioning a temple deity - was found near Thondi in Ramanathapuram district**

- ✓ The inscription mentioned the name of the deity as Puravuvvari Vinnakara Peruyan, where 'Puravuvvari' referring to land tax
- ✓ Dating to 1329, the inscription was found in the sanctum sanctorum of Garudhazhvar in the Uthipootha Perumal temple
- ✓ The stone inscription contains 35 lines of which the first and last lines have been erased.



- ✓ It was carved during the 15th regnal year of Sri Parakrama Pandiyan, who ruled between 1315 and 1334.
- ✓ Puravuvvari is the land tax collected by the king, and the deity has been named so.
- ✓ Usually, a temple for the deity Vishnu is called Vinnakara.
- ✓ In another development, an archaeological team from Tirupur found two 13th century and one 17th century hero stones at Vinnampallai village near Pujappulliyampatti-Sathiyamangalam highways in Erode district.
- ✓ Based on the sculpture's dressing style and hairstyle, it is estimated to be at least 800 years old

## STATES

➤ **Kerala - to open its first Human Milk Bank (HMB) on February 5, 2021**

- ✓ The new facility will be opened at the Ernakulam general hospital by the Health Minister of Kerala, KK Shailaja.
- ✓ It has been set up at a cost of ₹35 lakh following a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was signed between the state health department and Rotary Club of Cochin Global in the year 2020.
- ✓ The milk bank will ensure the availability of the breast milk for new-born babies who are not breastfed by their own mothers who are sick or deceased or due to insufficient production of breast milk.
- ✓ The pasteurized breast milk from the milk bank will reduce the risk of infections and help in boosting the immunity of newborns.
- ✓ The milk will be collected by following all the safety protocols and procedures
- ✓ The collected milk will be stored for 6 months safely in the bank.
- ✓ It will be preserved and provided to needy children as per government guidelines.

- ✓ The milk will be provided free of cost initially to those babies who are admitted in the neonatal intensive care unit.
- ✓ The milk will be donated by the mothers from the hospital who have delivered babies
- ✓ This human milk bank comprises of a pasteurization unit, deep freezers, refrigerators, sterilizing equipment, RO plant, and computers.
- ✓ The Indian Medical Association (IMA) and the Indian Association of Pediatricians (IAP) will be providing trained nursing staff to operate the milk bank.

## NATIONAL

- **For the first time ever, the Finance Commission - has created the provision for ₹8,000 crore incentive for eight states to develop one new city in each state as a pilot project.**
  - ✓ The housing and urban affairs ministry will come up with the framework for this.
  - ✓ The 15th Finance Commission stressed about the need for both rejuvenation of old cities and setting up of new cities.
  - ✓ The grant available for each proposed new city is ₹1,000 crore and a state can have only one new city under the proposed scheme
  - ✓ Another recommendation by the panel is to fix price for water on a graded basis
  - ✓ Accordingly, higher consumption means higher charges and periodic revision of the charges will also be undertaken
  - ✓ The Union budget has announced the launch of a ₹2.64 lakh crore scheme to provide universal household tap water connection to all houses across 4,378 municipal areas by 2026.
- **The PGIMER, Chandigarh - has launched the country's first ever 'PGI Amputee Clinic'.**



- ✓ The clinic was inaugurated by the PGIMER Director Professor Jagat Ram.
- ✓ It was set up to improve the amputation patient care by providing them various services with significant coordination.
- ✓ Under this initiative, the amputee will be taken care of and treated to become a near normal functional human being.

- ✓ The clinic will provide appropriate management to the amputees so as to guide them in their path of rehabilitation in society.
  - ✓ This is done by a team of occupational therapists and a psychologist who gets involved in amputee patient care.
  - ✓ The clinic would provide a platform for future research and provides the essential information about the burden, long-term complications and rehabilitation issues of the amputees.
- **The NITI Aayog - has recently released its plan document for Little Andaman titled “Sustainable Development of Little Andaman Island Vision Document”.**
- ✓ The Little Andaman is a 680 sq km fragile Island in the Andaman and Nicobar island group.
  - ✓ In the year 2020, Prime Minister, Narendra Modi declared that the Andaman and Nicobar Islands will be developed as a “maritime and start-up hub”.
  - ✓ The document by NITI Aayog has been formulated to reach the goal set out by the PM.
  - ✓ The Vision Document has been developed to achieve the twin objectives of getting investments to the region and to provide a better infrastructure and connectivity to the island to enhance its military and naval
  - ✓ The NITI Aayog is planning to build a new greenfield coastal city, which will also act as a free trade zone.
  - ✓ The developmental plan has been divided into three zones:
    - ✓ Zone 1 is being developed as the monetary district and is spread over 102 sq km in the east coast of Little Andaman.
    - ✓ Zone 2 is a leisure zone that is spread over 85 sq km of pristine forest.
    - ✓ Zone 3 would be a nature zone and spread over 52 sq km of pristine forest.
  - ✓ The little Andaman is is the fourth largest island in Andamans.
  - ✓ It is famous for the largest settlement on the island called Hut Bay, also known as the Kwate-tu-kwage.
  - ✓ The island is home to Onge Tribes apart from other multilingual settlers of Bengali, Telugu, Tamil and Ranchi communities.
  - ✓ It is located at about a distance of 120 Kilometers by sea from the Port Blair.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

- **Russian Covid-19 vaccine Sputnik V – has shown an efficacy of 91.6% against symptomatic Covid-19 in a two-dose regimen, as per the medical journal Lancet**
- ✓ The 91.6% efficacy was seen 21 days after the first dose of giving the vaccine, which has to be stored at 2-8°C for global distribution
  - ✓ The makers of the vaccine are planning an emergency use authorisation (EUA) rollout in India in March

- ✓ The peer-reviewed journal published interim analysis data of Phase III trials of the vaccine involving over 20,000 persons in Russia on February 2
- ✓ As per a sub-analysis of over 2,000 participants aged over 60 years, the vaccine was found to be similarly effective and well tolerated in the elderly as well.
- ✓ The Phase 3 trials were held between September 7 and November 24, 2020 at 25 sites in Moscow
- ✓ The Sputnik V vaccine uses a different technology from the one used by Oxford-AstraZeneca.
- ✓ AstraZeneca uses the same adenovirus vector to carry the genetic material into cells
- ✓ Sputnik V vaccine uses two different adenovirus vectors – adenovirus 26 (Ad26) for the first dose and adenovirus 5 (Ad5) for the second dose – to carry the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein.
- ✓ Using two varying serotypes of adenovirus is intended to overcome any pre-existing adenovirus immunity in the population.

## **SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT**

- **A team of researchers at the University of Washington - have recently created a new protein-based biosensor that will detect the Coronavirus**
- ✓ The team is led by David Baker, who is the professor of biochemistry and director of the Institute for Protein Design at UW Medicine
- ✓ The protein-based biosensors will detect the proteins that make up the coronavirus.
- ✓ It would also help in detecting the antibodies against it.
- ✓ These biosensors will recognize the specific molecules on the surface of the virus.
- ✓ The protein will bind to them and then emit the light through a biochemical reaction.
- ✓ The biosensor will glow when mixed with components of the specific coronavirus
- ✓ The RT-PCR technique amplifies the genetic material from the virus in order to make them visible.
- ✓ This technique is used to measure the amount of a specific RNA.
- ✓ However, the technique requires specialized staff and equipment.

## **DEFENCE**

- **Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh - has inaugurated a new plant for the production of Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) at the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) in Bengaluru.**
- ✓ This 35-acre plant will help to double the production of India's indigenous fighter jet, LCA Tejas, to 16 aircrafts per year.
- ✓ The Hindustan Aeronautics Limited is to sign an order of Rs 48,000 crore from the armed forces to produce 83 jets during the Aero India 2021 show



- ✓ During the inauguration, the minister highlighted that India will reach its target of Rs 1.75 lakh crore in the defence manufacturing soon



- ✓ This is the first time that Indian private players have joined together to produce the aircraft wings and fuselage.
  - ✓ It is expected that the project will create 5,000 primary jobs in the private sector.
  - ✓ The order for 83 LCA's will be completed by 2030
  - ✓ Tejas is an Indian single-engine, fourth-generation and multirole light fighter.
  - ✓ It is designed by the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) and the Aircraft Research and Design Centre (ARDC) of the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the Indian Air Force and Indian Navy.
  - ✓ The LCA was officially named as “Tejas” in 2003.
- **The Aero India 2021 show - will start from February 3, 2021 in Bengaluru, Karnataka.**



- ✓ During the show, a deal will be signed with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for Rs 48,000 crore to manufacture the 83 indigenous Teja Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)-73
- ✓ The first aircraft under the deal will be handed over in the next three years
- ✓ Further, the Aero India Show will include the defence ministers' conclave of countries of the Indian Ocean Region.

- ✓ The conclave will witness the participation of 28 countries, with 19 ministers and representatives will be present at the event while nine will attend it virtually
- ✓ The show will conclude on February 5, 2021.
- ✓ The Aero India exhibition is organized every alternate year.
- ✓ It is one of the major exhibitions for the aerospace and defence industries with the public air show.
- ✓ This is the 13th edition of Aero India, which will provide opportunity to demonstrate the products to the potential customer and investors.
- ✓ It will be joined by 600 exhibitors, including 80 foreign companies that would showcase the defence manufacturing prowess.
- ✓ The logo for aero India 2021 is inspired by the Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA).
- ✓ The core motif of the logo is the tri-coloured silhouette of the Tejas LCA with the Ashok Chakra in the centre.

## SPORTS

- **New Zealand - became the first team to qualify for the inaugural World Test Championship final, to be held at Lord's in England from June 18 to 22**
- ✓ The upcoming India-England four-Test series will decide which team joins New Zealand in the final – India, England or Australia

### WTC POINTS TABLE

Rank	Team	PCT (%)	Points	Series	Matches	Won	Lost	Drawn
1	India	71.7	430	5	13	9	3	1
2	New Zealand	70.0	420	5	11	7	4	0
3	Australia	69.2	332	4	14	8	4	2
4	England	68.7	412	5	17	10	4	3
5	Pakistan	37.7	226	5.5*	11	3	5	3
6	South Africa	34.3	144	4*	10	3	7	0
7	Sri Lanka	16.7	80	4	8	1	6	1
8	West Indies	11.1	40	3	7	1	6	0
9	Bangladesh	0	0	1.5	3	0	3	0

PCT is points earned/points available | \* indicates ongoing series

SOURCE: ICC

- ✓ Australia had recently announced the pulling out of their South Africa tour because of the outbreak of a fresh Covid-19 wave in South Africa
- ✓ The decision virtually knocks the Aussies out of contention from the final to be played later this year.
- ✓ At this stage, Australia (69.17%) are marginally behind New Zealand (70%) on the points table.
- ✓ India (71.70%) and England (68.67%) play each other and only one of them can exceed New Zealand's percentage points.

