

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—JANUARY 14, 2023

TAMIL NADU

- **On January 13, Tamil Nadu assembly - passed a bill making Tamil language paper compulsory in direct recruitment for government posts.**
- ✓ The bill tabled by finance minister Palanivel Thiaga Rajan introduces an amendment in the Tamil Nadu Government Servants (conditions of services) Act, 2016, with retrospective effect, from December 1, 2021.
- ✓ The Bill inserted a new Section (21-A) after Section 21 which read: “any person who applies for recruitment to any post in any service by direct recruitment shall pass the Tamil language paper in the examination conducted for the recruitment with not less than forty percent marks”.
- ✓ Earlier, the Act enabled candidates without the knowledge of Tamil to apply for direct recruitment of government posts and they were mandated to clear Tamil language paper within two years of their appointment.
- ✓ The state has introduced a compulsory Tamil language paper in all competitive examinations for direct recruitment conducted by all recruiting agencies through a Government Order dated December 1, 2021.
- ✓ This was done to ensure 100% recruitment of Tamil youth in all State government departments and State Public Sector enterprises in the State
- ✓ Last year, Tamil Nadu Higher Education Minister K Ponmudy requested Union Home Minister Amit Shah to make Tamil the official language in central government offices.

- **On January 13, Chief minister M K Stalin - announced that the Tamil Nadu government would hold the 3rd global investors meet on January 10 and 11 in the year 2024 in Chennai**
- ✓ During the meet, the government is planning to ensure participation of more than 100 countries to attract more investments, generate jobs and strengthen the economy.

- ✓ Further, the CM said the government has decided to extend the Chief Minister's Breakfast scheme, launched for school students studying in classes I to V on September 15 last year, to all the school across Tamil Nadu during 2023 – 24 fiscal in a phased manner for the benefit of primary school students.
 - ✓ The CM also announced the improvement of about 10,000km long panchayat union roads at a cost of Rs.4,000 crore through the Chief Minister's Rural Road Development scheme
 - ✓ Replying to the debate on motion of thanks to the governor for his address to the assembly, the CM said Tamil Nadu was one of the leading states in India in terms of economic and industrial development.
 - ✓ According to the CM, Tamil Nadu is the second largest economy in the country and the state is aiming to achieve the target of \$1 trillion economy by 2030.
 - ✓ As part of the state's objective, the CM said investors' meeting were held in several places, including Dubai.
 - ✓ A high-level delegation led by Industries minister Thangam Thennarasu also visited countries like Germany, USA, South Korea, Japan and Taiwan to attract global investments.
 - ✓ The representatives of the government took part in the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland, last year.
 - ✓ Also, the Chief Minister announced enhancing the subsidy for mosques under the major repair grant (MRG) to Rs 10 crore from Rs 6 crore provided by the DMK government last year.
- **On January 13, the Tamil Nadu Assembly - passed three bills, which were introduced a day earlier.**
- ✓ The bill to repeal 169 obsolete and redundant laws, the bill to repeal the Tamil Nadu Building and Construction Workers (Conditions of Employment and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1984 and the bill to amend the Tamil Nadu Agricultural Produce Marketing (Regulation) Act, 1987, were passed with a majority by voice vote.
 - ✓ The House was later adjourned sine die.
- **On January 13, the government - issued an order granting exemption to all battery-operated vehicles, both transport and non-transport (electric vehicles) from payment of motor vehicle tax for three years.**
- ✓ The period of exemption would be from January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2025
 - ✓ This was announced in an order issued by home secretary Phanindra Reddy.
 - ✓ The transport commissioner had requested the government to extend the exemption granted for the period ending December 31, 2022
 - ✓ The request is necessitated after certain passenger vehicle manufacturers requested an extension for a further period of three years for all battery operated vehicles.

- **The Assam Rifles - bagged the top spot at the 23rd all-India police shooting competition held at Othivakkam near Chennai between January 9 and January 13.**
- ✓ The Tamil Nadu police department and the CRPF came second and third, respectively.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu police department entered the top three positions for the first time in the all-India shooting competition.
- ✓ Excluding paramilitary forces, the Tamil Nadu police department secured the top position among states while Rajasthan and Odisha got the second and third prizes respectively.
- ✓ In the carbine shooting category, Rajasthan bagged the first prize, the CRPF got second and Tamil Nadu police secured the third prize.
- ✓ Palani armed reserve policeman R Sathisivanesh scored the top rank in pistol firing competition, and was adjudged the best shooter.
- ✓ Chief Minister M K Stalin handed over a trophy to the constable.
- ✓ Around 673 police personnel from 24 states and Union territories and eight paramilitary units had participated in the event.
- ✓ This is the second time that Tamil Nadu police is hosting the shooting competition.
- ✓ Earlier, the state had hosted the competition in 2011.
- ✓ HR&CE minister P K Sekar Babu, additional chief secretary K Phanindra Reddy, DGP C Sylendra Babu, city police commissioner Shankar Jiwala and other senior police officers and retired police officers participated.

STATES

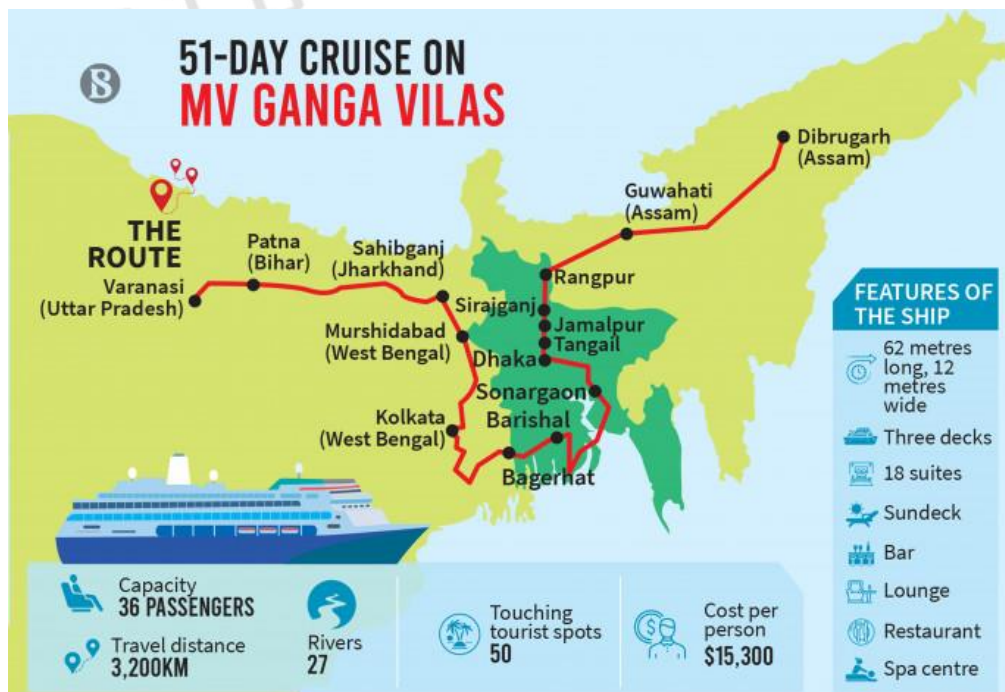
- **Himachal Pradesh - became the fourth state to restore the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) for about 1.36 lakh government employees on January 13**
- ✓ This fulfils Congress's poll promise in the very first meeting of the new cabinet under Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu
- ✓ Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, both governed by Congress, and Punjab, where Arvind Kejriwal's AAP is at the helm, have already rolled out OPS for their employees.
- ✓ In Himachal Pradesh, employees will have the choice to choose between OPS and the contributory National Pension Scheme (NPS).

NATIONAL

- **On January 13, Prime Minister Narendra Modi - virtually flagged off the world's longest river cruise 'MV Ganga Vilas'.**
- ✓ The MV Ganga Vilas cruise will begin its journey from Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh and travel around 3,200 km to reach Dibrugarh in Assam via Bangladesh, sailing across 27 river systems in India and Bangladesh
- ✓ Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath were present at Varanasi on the occasion.



- ✓ The MV Ganga Vilas is the first-ever cruise vessel to be made in India and it is operated by Antara Cruises
- ✓ The river cruise, which will cost an average Rs.20 lakh per person for the 51-day trip, is fully booked till March 2024.
- ✓ The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), under the Ministry of Shipping, Ports and Waterways (MoPSW), has extended supported for the cruise project.
- ✓ The Ganga Vilas has three decks, 18 suites on board with a capacity of 36 tourists, with all the luxury amenities.
- ✓ The maiden voyage has 32 tourists from Switzerland signing up for the entire length of the journey
- ✓ During the journey, the passengers on board would be catered only vegetarian Indian cuisine and assorted non-alcoholic drinks



- ✓ The 51 days cruise is planned with visits to 50 tourist spots, including World Heritage Sites, National Parks, River Ghats, and major cities like Patna in Bihar, Sahibganj in Jharkhand, Kolkata in West Bengal, Dhaka in Bangladesh and Guwahati in Assam
 - ✓ Further, the cruise will also cover the famous Ganga Arti in Varanasi, the Buddhist site of Sarnath; and even Majuli, the largest river island in Assam.
 - ✓ The travellers will also visit the Bihar School of Yoga, Vikramshila University and traverse through the Sunderbans in the Bay of Bengal delta, as well as the Kaziranga National Park.
- ✓ The PM released a document - "River Cruise Vision Document 2047" which encapsulates the vision of the progress and growth of River cruise by 2047.
- ✓ Further, the PM inaugurated Haldia Multi-Modal Terminal, 4 floating community jetties in Uttar Pradesh, the Skill Development Centre at Guwahati in Assam
 - ✓ Haldia is an industrial port city located on the confluence of River Hoogly and the Bay of Bengal in the state of West Bengal.
 - ✓ Developed in the Purba Medinipur District of West Bengal under the Jal Marg Vikas Project, the Haldia Multi-Modal Terminal (MMT) has a cargo handling capacity of 3.08 MMTPA.
- ✓ During the event, the PM also inaugurated Rs.1,000-crore projects of waterway development for Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Assam, apart from a Tent City project in Varanasi.
- ✓ The Ministry of Culture recently organized a grand curtain raiser program called 'Sur Sarita – Symphony of Ganga' at the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in Varanasi, on the eve of the launch of the world's longest river cruise
 - ✓ Folk musicians from Assam, Bihar and Bengal joined popular singer Shankar Mahadevan in paying homage to the rivers Ganga, Yamuna, and Brahmaputra.
- ✓ In addition to the cultural program, the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) in Kolkata also organized a mobile science exhibition called 'Arth Ganga' as a tribute to the river Ganges.
 - ✓ The exhibition was flagged off from Varanasi before the concert and will travel through districts and sites located near the river Ganges.
 - ✓ The exhibition is meant to raise public awareness about the conservation and restoration of the holy river.
 - ✓ In its first phase, the Arth Ganga mobile science exhibition bus started from Varanasi on January 12 and travelling to neighbouring Jaunpur, Gazipur and Chanduli in the Varanasi Division, covering nearly 800 kms after its inauguration
 - ✓ The 'Arth Ganga' project has been launched based on a pact between the ministries of Culture and Jal Shakti
 - ✓ It will also see the ministries organise 'Ganga Sanskriti Yatras' in all the basin states on a regular basis to showcase and discover the cultural

diversity, heritage and the places of historical and cultural importance of Ganga river basin

- **The budget session of Parliament - will begin from January 31 with President Droupadi Murmu's address to the joint sitting of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.**
- ✓ The session will have 27 sittings and will continue till April 6 with a month-long recess to examine the budget papers
- ✓ Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the Union Budget on February 1.
- ✓ The first part of the budget session will conclude on February 14, while the Parliament will reconvene on March 12 for the second part of the budget session

INTERNATIONAL

- **On January 13, Nepal's central bank - barred Nepalese nationals from investing in foreign countries.**
- ✓ According to a notice issued by Nepal Rastra Bank, the country's central bank, Nepalese nationals are not allowed to purchase land, house, property, debenture and deposit money in foreign banks and financial institutions abroad.
- ✓ Except under the provision specifically mentioned by the bank, no one shall engage in making this kind of payment in a foreign country, the notice said.
- ✓ The bank urged citizens not to do any work related to payment abroad.
- ✓ The notice also warned that if anyone is violating the rules, strict action will be taken under the prevailing laws.
- ✓ In April 2022, Nepal's central bank announced the ban on import of vehicles and other luxury items citing liquidity crunch.

DEFENCE

- **Anti-terror crack force National Security Guard (NSG) - will conduct a joint anti-terror mock exercise with the United States special forces at Chennai from January 14 to February 16**
- ✓ During the exercise, both the forces will share best practices on how to carry out swift and well-coordinated operations to counter terror attacks in an urban environment.
- ✓ The month-long joint exercise is an effort aimed at improving bilateral cooperation between India and the US in matters relating to combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.
- ✓ Both the forces will conduct joint mock anti-terror exercises in certain locations to enhance interoperability and coordination
- ✓ The combined exercise will involve sharing of best practices and knowledge of a wide spectrum of combat skills, including close quarter battle, building intervention drills, demolition and breaching, etc.

NATIONAL DAY

➤ Armed Forces Veterans Day – January 14



- ✓ Armed Forces Veterans Day is observed every year on January 14 to honour the sacrifice of our veterans in serving the nation
- ✓ It was on this day in 1953 that the first Indian Commander in Chief of the Indian Army -- Field Marshal K M Cariappa OBE, who led Indian forces to victory in the 1947 war -- formally retired.
- ✓ The first Armed Forces Veterans Day was celebrated on January 14, 2016
- ✓ Armed Forces Veterans Day was called Armistice Day when it was first announced
- ✓ This year, Veterans Day is being celebrated at nine locations -- Jhunjhunu, Jalandhar, Panagarh, New Delhi, Dehradun, Chennai, Chandigarh, Bhubaneshwar and Mumbai -- by the three Service Headquarters.
- ✓ Defence Minister Rajnath Singh presided over the main function in Dehradun and launched the 'Soul of Steel' Alpine Challenge, an initiative to promote tourism in border areas.
 - ✓ The challenge is organised by venture CLAW Global, which is run by veterans and supported by the Indian Army
 - ✓ It will take place in the state of Uttarakhand and is similar to the "Ironman triathlon" long-distance triathlon challenge in Europe
 - ✓ The expedition will officially launch on January 14 and include 12 Indian participants and six international teams, with the age group for applicants being between 18 and 30 years.

- ✓ The Defence Minister also launched a website for volunteers to sign up for various adventure activities under this joint initiative of the Indian Army and CLAW Global, a veterans' organization.
- ✓ 'Road to the End', a 460-km long car rally was also flagged off by the Defence Minister as part of a joint expedition by Indian Army and CLAW.
 - ✓ The rally will reach its destination in the Garhwal Himalayas near Niti Village in Chamoli district in the next three days.
- ✓ The event this year witnessed the release of SAMMAAN magazine, a yearly journal published by Directorate of Indian Army Veterans (DIAV) covering informative articles and various topics of interest to the veteran community.
- ✓ The Indian Air Force also released the VAYU SEMVEDNA magazine.
- ✓ The Veterans' Day event at Chennai was presided over by Minister of State for Defence, Ajay Bhatt.
- ✓ The Tambaram air force station hosted the seventh armed forced veterans day

