

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—JANUARY 13, 2023

TAMIL NADU

- On January 12, the Tamil Nadu assembly - unanimously passed a resolution urging the Union government to implement Sethusamudram ship channel project without further delay.
- ✓ The resolution mentioned that the state government would provide all cooperation for implementation of the project.
- ✓ All parties, including the AIADMK, the PMK and the DMK allies the Congress, the VCK, MDMK and the Left parties supported the resolution.

LONG PENDING

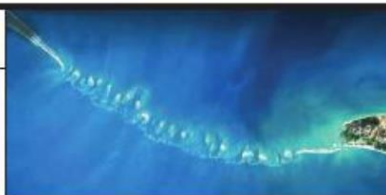
➤ The Sethusamudram channel originally conceived in 1860 by Commander Taylor at a cost of ₹50 lakh

➤ In 1955, Union government sets up a committee headed by A Ramasamy Mudaliar to examine the feasibility

➤ In 1964, another committee under Nagendra Singh is set up

➤ In 1999, defence minister George Fernandes announces project will be built in two phases

➤ In 2005, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh lays foundation stone. Centre allocates ₹2,427 crore



➤ In 2007, Supreme Court stays project after BJP leader Subramanian Swamy asks it to declare Ram Setu a national monument and not to implement the project

➤ UPA government tells SC it is willing to explore another route without damaging Ram Setu

➤ In March 2018, NDA government tells SC it does not want to implement the proposed alignment

- ✓ Moving the resolution, chief minister M K Stalin said that the Sethusamudram project is essential for the economic development of Tamil Nadu and India
- ✓ The project was originally conceived in 1860 by Commander Taylor at a budget of Rs.50 lakh.
- ✓ Subsequently, the project was studied for several years and designed by various technical experts including A Ramasamy Mudaliar in 1955.
- ✓ Later, a high-level committee led by Nagendra Singh was appointed in 1964.

- ✓ The earlier NDA government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee had given permission to conduct a feasibility study for the project.
 - ✓ A project alignment was subsequently finalised and the UPA government led by former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh sanctioned the project in 2004 and the project was started in July 2005, only to be put on hold by the union government in 2007
 - ✓ Sethusamudram Project is a proposed shipping canal project in South India that would connect the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait
 - ✓ It aims to reduce the distance and time required for ships to travel between the east and west coasts of India, bypassing the traditional shipping route through the Palk Strait
- **DMK Parliamentary members' team, led by law minister S Regupathy – handed over a sealed letter from Chief Minister Stalin to President Droupadi Murmu in New Delhi on January 12**



- ✓ In the memorandum, CM MK Stalin told President Droupadi Murmu that Governor RN Ravi was engaged in an “political ideological conflict” with the state government and should be advised against doing so
- ✓ He further urged the President to uphold the principles of democracy in the matter.
- ✓ The CM also highlighted the fact that Governor Ravi had not given his assent to several bills passed in the assembly claiming minor issues, thereby causing hurdles to the functioning of the state government.
- ✓ He urged President Murmu to intervene in the issue and advise Governor Ravi to act as per the Constitution following the guidance of the cabinet.
 - ✓ According to Article 163 (1) of the Indian constitution, the governor should exercise his duty as per the aid and advice of the council of ministers.
- ✓ The CM wrote a letter to the president three days after the DMK and its allies protested against the governor during his customary address at the start of the state Assembly session

- ✓ In his customary address, the governor was said to have skipped some parts of the speech prepared by the state government and added some portions that had not been prepared by the government.
- ✓ DMK MPs A Raja, P Wilson, and NR Elango were also present during the meeting with the President.
- **On January 12, Chief Minister M K Stalin - announced that the state government would provide pension to the families of Tamils who die while working in foreign countries and in other Indian states.**



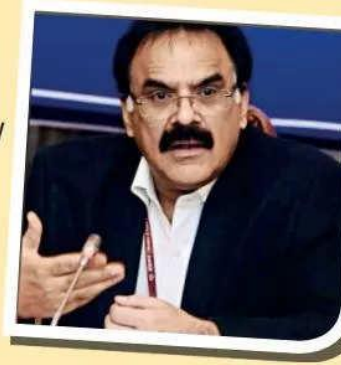
- ✓ The Chief Minister addressed the gathering at a function held at Kalaivanar Arangam in Chennai to celebrate the Day of Non-Resident Tamils (NRTs)
- ✓ During his speech, the CM made several announcements for the welfare of Non-Resident Tamils.
- ✓ The CM announced that cultural tours would be organised every year for 200 students to renew the cultural roots of children of Tamils who have settled outside Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ The state government, in October 2021, had announced that January 12 would be celebrated as the Day of Non-Resident Tamils
- ✓ The first year celebration of the Day was organised in 2022 in which Tamil diaspora from across the world participated.
- ✓ In the second edition, which commenced on January 11, various events like cultural programmes and conferences on the history of Tamil diaspora and their contribution to the Tamil language were held

NATIONAL

- **The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) - has filed a corruption case against former Union finance secretary Arvind Mayaram for alleged irregularities in a currency printing case**

CBI alleges that a criminal conspiracy was hatched among the UK company, Mayaram, unknown officials of RBI, finance ministry

Mayaram provided 'undue favour' to UK co selling security features for currency notes by way of granting illegal extension



This resulted in wrongful gain for co and caused wrongful loss to govt exchequer

- ✓ The CBI alleged that Mayaram, in 2013, had given an “illegal extension” to UK-based firm De La Rue International for supplying exclusive colour shift (security thread) for Indian bank notes for a period of five years.
- ✓ He was then the secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA).
- ✓ Former Union finance minister, P Chidambaram, on July 17, 2004, had authorised RBI to enter into Exclusivity Agreement with the suppliers of exclusive security feature on behalf of Indian government
- ✓ The UPA government entered into a five-year agreement with M/s De La Rue International Ltd for supply of exclusive colour shift security thread, (which is available in every bank note) for Indian bank notes in 2004, which was extended four times till December, 2015
- ✓ The agency alleged that Mayaram granted an illegal three- year extension to an expired contract with De la Rue without taking the mandatory security clearance from the Union home ministry.
- ✓ The 1978 batch retired IAS officer of Rajasthan cadre, Mayaram, De La Rue and unknown officials have been booked for criminal conspiracy, cheating and sections pertaining to criminal misconduct and undue benefit under PC act
- ✓ Mayaram had served in the economic affairs department of the finance ministry as joint secretary and took over as secretary in 2012
- ✓ Post-retirement, Mayaram joined as economic adviser to Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot

- **The subject expert committee (SEC) of the Central Drug Standards Control Organisation (CDSCO) - recommended for market authorisation of Covid vaccine, Covovax as a booster dose for adults who have been administered two doses of Covishield or Covaxin**
- ✓ The DCGI had approved Covovax for restricted use in emergency situations in adults on December 28, 2021, in the 12-17 age group on March 9, 2022 and also in children aged 7-11 years on June 28, 2022 subject to certain conditions.
- ✓ Covovax is manufactured through technology transfer from Novavax.
- ✓ In August 2020, US-based vaccine maker Novavax Inc. had announced a licence agreement with SII for development and commercialization of NVX-CoV2373, its Covid-19 vaccine candidate in India and low-and-middle-income countries

- ✓ The vaccine has been approved by the European Medicines Agency for conditional marketing authorization.
- ✓ It was granted emergency-use listing by the World Health Organization (WHO) on December 17, 2021.

COURT VERDICT

- **The Delhi High Court – has ruled that the benefits of the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) in accordance with Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules, 1972, shall be applicable to all personnel of central armed police forces (CAPF)**
- ✓ A bench of Justices Neena Bansal Krishna and Suresh Kumar Kait has directed the Union government to issue necessary orders within eight weeks.
- ✓ The order came on a batch of 82 petitions seeking quashing of central orders denying OPS benefits to CRPF, BSF, CISF and ITBP personnel.
- ✓ The bench noted that a notification of December 22, 2003, on the new pension system (NPS) states the system would be mandatory for all new central recruits from January 1, 2004 — “except the armed forces in the first stage”.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **On January 12, Prime Minister Narendra Modi – addressed the opening session of Voice of Global South summit**



- ✓ During his address, PM Modi gave a new mantra - Respond, Recognise, Respect, Reform - to deal with the challenges of the global south
- ✓ The PM also flagged the issue of food, fuel, and fertiliser shortage, and attributed it to war, conflict, political tension and the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

- ✓ Leaders of several countries including Bangladesh, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Guyana, Mozambique, Mongolia and Senegal were among those who attended the summit.
- ✓ The two-day virtual summit, which has the theme “Unity of voice, unity of purpose”, will bring together developing countries on a common platform to present their priorities and challenges related to developmental issues.
- ✓ The summit will feature focused discussions spread across 10 sessions on issues such as foreign policy, finance, energy, trade, health, education and environment.
- ✓ More than 120 countries have been invited to participate in this Summit.
- ✓ PM Modi will chair two sessions for heads of state and government, one each at the start and conclusion of the summit.
 - ✓ The inaugural session had the theme “voice of Global South for human-centric development”, and the closing session for leaders has the theme of “Unity of voice, unity of purpose”.
- ✓ In addition, there would be eight ministerial sessions, with various themes
- ✓ Global South refers to the developing and the less-developed countries of the world
- ✓ The Summit envisages 10 sessions—four would be held on January 12, and six sessions on January 13.
- ✓ Each session is expected to witness the participation of leaders and ministers from 10-20 countries.

OBITUARY

- **Former Union minister and RJD leader Sharad Yadav - died on January 12 in a private hospital at Gurugram at the age of 75**



- ✓ The Bihar government declared state mourning on January 13 as a mark of respect to veteran socialist leader
- ✓ Sharad Yadav was a three-time member of the Rajya Sabha from three states (Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar) and a seven-time Lok Sabha MP.
- ✓ Yadav, one of the tallest socialist leaders of the country, remained at the centre of Janata politics for decades.

- ✓ Sharad Yadav was instrumental in forcing Prime Minister VP Singh in implementing the Mandal Commission report granting reservation to the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) that changed the course of Indian politics in the year 1990
- ✓ In 2011, Sharad Yadav was one of the leaders who pushed the Congress-led government into initiating a socio-economic caste census, but its findings were never published.
- ✓ Yadav had served as the union minister for civil aviation, consumer affairs and food and public distribution in the NDA government led by Atal Bihari Vapayee between 1999 and 2004.
- ✓ A product of the Janata Party movement of the 1970s, Sharad Yadav, who lost to Rajiv Gandhi in the 1981 Amethi bypoll, was also greatly influenced by socialist leader Ram Manohar Lohia's ideals
- ✓ In 2003, Yadav became the president of the Janata Dal United JD(U), a party that included his other former follower, Nitish Kumar.
- ✓ He recently merged Loktrantik Janata Dal (LJD), a party he had floated in 2018, with the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD).

SPORTS

- **India – to take on Spain (World No. 8) in their opening match of the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup 2023 at the Birsa Munda Stadium in Odisha's Rourkela on January 13**

INDIA LOOK TO END HOCKEY WORLD CUP MEDAL DROUGHT ON HOME TURF

For the first time since 1982, hosts India, ranked No. 6 in the world, will begin their hockey World Cup campaign as Olympic medallists. Buoyed by their Tokyo bronze-medal show, they will look to end a 47-yr medal drought at the 16-nation extravaganza. They will take on Spain (No. 8) in their opener in Odisha's Rourkela today



With a seating capacity of 20,000, Birsa Munda stadium is the 2nd biggest hockey ground in India after Chandigarh

Venues:
Bhubaneswar & Rourkela

INDIA'S PREVIOUS BEST PERFORMANCES:
1971: Third place
1973: Runners-up
1975: Winners
Last edition in 2018: Fifth

MOST SUCCESSFUL TEAMS:

Pakistan 4-time winners	Australia & Netherlands 3-time winners
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Participating Nations: **16**

Defending Champions: **Belgium**

- > It is the **fourth time that India is hosting the event** after 1982, 2010 and 2018
- > It is the **first time that the men's event is being hosted in two cities** – Rourkela and Bhubaneswar
- > It is the seventh edition of the competition being held in Asia. **India, Pakistan and Malaysia have not won the WC at home.** Netherlands (in 1973 & 1998) and Germany (in 2006) are the only countries to have won the Cup as hosts

> **Birsa Munda hockey stadium in Rourkela will make its debut as a World Cup venue.** It is the second biggest hockey stadium in India after Chandigarh with a seating capacity of 20,000

> Two Argentina stars from the 2014 and 2018 World Cups, Gonzalo Peillat and Joaquin Menini, have switched countries and will be representing Germany and Spain, respectively

FULL COVERAGE: P 19

- ✓ For the first time since 1982, hosts India, ranked No. 6 in the world, will begin their hockey World Cup campaign as Olympic medallists.
- ✓ The World Cup got underway on January 11 with a spectacular opening ceremony at the Barabati Stadium in Cuttack
- ✓ Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, International Hockey Federation president Tayyab Ikram and Hockey India chairman Dilip Tirkey were present at the ceremony to welcome members of all the 16 participating teams.
- ✓ Odisha is the only state which has hosted the mega event twice consecutively, the last one being held in Bhubaneswar in 2018
- ✓ The matches will be held at two venues – Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium in Rourkela and Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar — from January 13 to January 29
- ✓ While 20 matches will be played at Rourkela, 24 matches, including the final, will be held in Bhubaneswar.
- ✓ Interestingly, India is the only team to have participated in every edition of the tournament, as India makes its 15th appearance at the tournament in 2023
- ✓ Ajit Pal Singh led the Indian side to a World Cup title triumph in 1975 but since then India have failed to even reach the semifinals
- ✓ Since 1975, India's best finish came in the 1982 and 1994 editions where they were placed 5th.

