

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-MARCH 1,2023

TAMIL NADU

- On February 28, the council meeting of Greater Chennai Corporation - began with the singing of Tamil Thai Vaazhthu, for the first time.



- ✓ This follows an appeal by Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK) councillor S Jeevan in January.
- ✓ Earlier, council sessions would start with the reciting of the Thirukkural followed by an oath for abolishing untouchability.
- ✓ Henceforth, Tamil Thai Vaazhthu will be sung at the beginning of every corporation council session.
- ✓ Tamil Thai Vaazhthu, penned by Manonmaniam Sundaranar, had been declared the state anthem by chief minister M K Stalin recently
- ✓ The singing of Tamil Thai Vaazhthu has been made mandatory at all government and educational institutions where everyone except the disabled is required to stand.

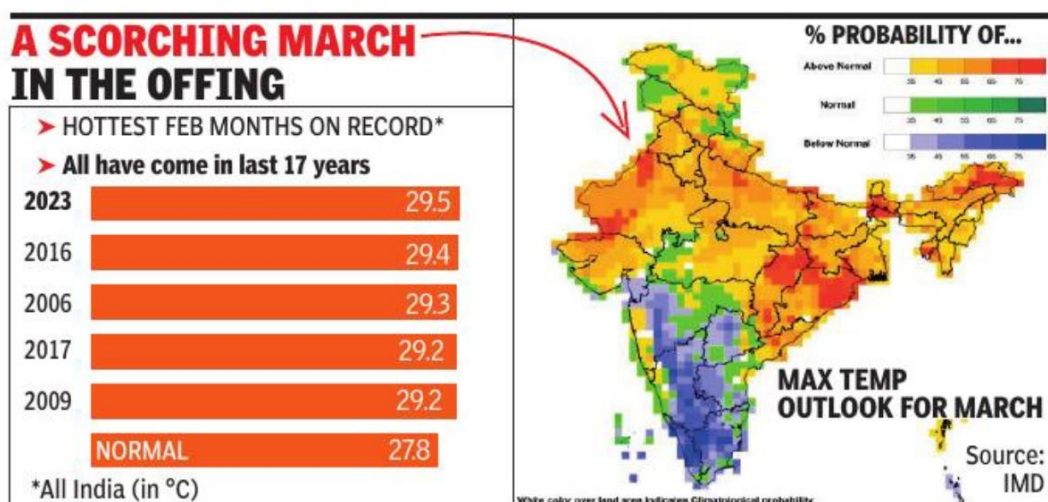
NATIONAL

- **The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi - has accorded investment approval for the implementation of Dibang Multipurpose Project (MMP) in Arunachal Pradesh.**
- ✓ The Project is located on river Dibang, in Lower Dibang Valley District of Arunachal Pradesh.
- ✓ Dibang Multipurpose Project is envisaged as a storage based hydro-electric project with flood moderation as the key objective
- ✓ The cost of India's largest hydro project, which includes storage, is estimated to be Rs.31,876.39 crore.
- ✓ The Cabinet has approved the expenditure of Rs 1,600 crore on pre-investment activities and various clearances for the Dibang MMP
- ✓ The project is being developed by state-run hydropower producer NHPC Limited.
- ✓ The estimated completion period for the project shall be nine years from receipt of Government sanction.
- ✓ The dam is 278 metres high and it will be the highest dam in India once completed
- ✓ The Lower Dibang Valley district project will generate 11,223 million units of energy per year
- **Microsoft's co-founder and billionaire philanthropist, Bill Gates - arrived in India as a part of his foundation's endeavour and to monitor its activities**



- ✓ The philanthropist, who has been working on various social causes through his foundation, is expected to meet with business leaders and members of civil society during his visit.
- ✓ Author, philanthropist, investor, technology founder, and co-chair and trustee of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Gates will deliver the 5th Ramnath Goenka Memorial Lecture on the subject "Creating an Equal World: The Power of Innovation" on March 1 in New Delhi
- ✓ Over the years, the foundation has invested heavily in India, particularly in areas such as immunization, maternal and child health, and sanitation.

- ✓ Gates Foundation has also tied up with India's public sector and CGIAR institutions to support the work of researchers at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI).
 - ✓ Gates is known for his philanthropic work around the world, particularly in developing countries, where he has invested billions of dollars to improve health and education outcomes
 - ✓ Apart from his philanthropy work, Gates is also a prominent advocate for climate change action and has been urging governments and businesses to take swift action to mitigate the effects of climate change.
- **India - reported its warmest February this year since 1901, when the IMD started keeping weather records**
- ✓ This year, the country has recorded the highest monthly national average maximum (day) temperature of 29.5 degrees Celsius in the month of February.
 - ✓ The five warmest Februaries in India have all been in the last 14 years, indicating the impact of the climate crisis.
 - ✓ Even in terms of minimum temperatures, the month was the fifth warmest since 1901, with the warmest being February 2016
 - ✓ Among different regions, February recorded the highest monthly averaged day temperature in northwest India, followed by central India
 - ✓ In northwest India, the monthly average temperature in February was 3.4 degrees Celsius higher than the normal while in Central India, the monthly average temperature was 2.05 degrees Celsius above the normal.
 - ✓ During the month of February, Chennai recorded relatively cooler temperature of 19.5 degrees Celsius.
 - ✓ Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department forecasted hotter than normal summer in many parts of the country during the March-May period.



- ✓ According to IMD, north, northeast, and some parts of northwest and central India were expected to report above-normal maximum temperatures in the March-May period.

- ✓ Southern peninsula and most of Maharashtra are, however, expected to face normal summer temperatures.
 - ✓ Starting March 1, the IMD will issue heatwave warnings for a period of five days.
 - ✓ There was a 68% deficiency in rainfall in February over the country with 75% deficiency over northwest India
 - ✓ La Niña and El Niño are ocean currents that play an important role in the development of the monsoons.
 - ✓ At present, La Niña conditions are prevailing over the equatorial Pacific region.
 - ✓ The La Niña is likely to weaken and turn into El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) neutral conditions during the pre-monsoon season.
 - ✓ The IMD is expected to come up with its first outlook for the monsoon in April.
- **Public broadcaster Prasar Bharati - has signed a two-year contract with the RSS-linked wire service Hindusthan Samachar (HS) to supply news feed for Doordarshan and All India Radio (AIR).**



- ✓ Earlier, in 2020, Prasar Bharati cancelled its subscription to Press Trust of India (PTI), the non-profit cooperative of Indian newspapers.
- ✓ The public broadcaster, which runs a host of Doordarshan and All India Radio channels, works under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting
- ✓ Prasar Bharati had been taking feed from HS on a trial basis from 2017 onward, while negotiations for a contract continued
- ✓ Soon after it entered into a contract with HS in February 2020 and in 2020, 2021, and 2022, one-year contracts for Rs 2 crore each were signed.
- ✓ The new contract is for 25-and-a-half months, from February 14, 2023 to March 31, 2025, for the supply of newsfeed in 12 languages.
- ✓ HS will supply 12 national news stories and 40 “local stories” in regional languages every day
- ✓ HS provided services in Hindi, Urdu, Marathi, Odiya, Bangla and Asomiya for Rs 2 crore per annum until February 13 this year.
- ✓ As part of the new agreement, free services in six other languages — Kannada, Telugu, Gujarati, Punjabi, Nepali, and English – were also agreed

- ✓ A total Rs 7.70 crore will be paid to HS for the new contract period, which is coming to Rs 30.17 lakh per month.
 - ✓ Prasar Bharati's deal with HS is significantly better than its earlier arrangements with PTI and UNI agencies that were contracted for Rs 9 crore and Rs 5 crore per annum for news in just two languages, English and Hindi.
 - ✓ The New Delhi-headquartered HS agency has 22 news bureaus and 600 correspondents spread across the country
 - ✓ The Group Editor is Ram Bahadur Rai, an acclaimed journalist who worked with Jansatta for several years, and is now chairman of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) under the central government's Ministry of Culture.
 - ✓ Hindustan Samachar, a multi-lingual news agency, was founded in 1948 by Shivram Shankar Apte, a senior RSS pracharak and co-founder of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad along with RSS ideologue M.S. Golwalkar.
 - ✓ Apte, a journalist who was born in Baroda in Gujarat, had a lifelong association with the RSS, and became the founding general secretary of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) in 1964.
 - ✓ In 1975, soon after the proclamation of the Emergency, Indira Gandhi's government merged the four news agencies of the time — PTI, United News of India (UNI), Hindusthan Samachar, and Samachar Bharati — into a single news agency, Samachar.
 - ✓ The decision was reversed by the Janata Party government that came to power after the elections of 1977
 - ✓ In 1986, the HS was shut down due to a financial crisis and it was revived in 2002 with the help of PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee
- **The Central government - has sought nominations for Senior Mission Leaders' (SML) course to be held in Japan's capital Tokyo from June 19 to 30 this year.**
- ✓ The SML course is designed to prepare participants to assume roles and responsibilities in a mission's leadership team, such as Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), Deputy SRSG, Force Commander, Police Commissioner, Director of Mission Support, or Chief of Staff.
 - ✓ The 12-day course is also intended to deepen the understanding of Member State officials of contemporary United Nations peace operations.
 - ✓ The nomination of eligible and willing officers— one male and one female— of the rank of Inspector General and Additional Director General active in police service for the course is sought by March 24.
 - ✓ Candidates nominated for the course should have a strong interest in potential appointment to a senior leadership position in a United Nations field mission
 - ✓ The Integrated Training Service of the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), jointly with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Centre, will conduct the United Nations Senior Mission Leaders' (SML) course in Tokyo

- ✓ The course, to be provided for 26 participants, will be funded by the government of Japan

COURT VERDICT

- **On February 28, the Madras high court - has ordered to ensure that no temple or private person in the state acquires elephants anymore**
- ✓ Delivering the order, Justice G R Swaminathan asked the officials to inspect all temple as well as privately-owned elephants to prevent cruelty to elephants
- ✓ More importantly, the court asked the government to decide on shifting all these elephants to government-run rehabilitation camps.
- ✓ To implement this three-pronged strategy, the order noted that the secretary to the environment and forest department may coordinate with the secretary to the HR and CE department
- ✓ The court passed the order while hearing a petition pertaining to the injuries sustained by a private captive elephant named Lalitha from Virudhunagar who had fallen down on a few occasions.
- ✓ The judge has observed that in many temples, the elephants are housed in an absolutely unacceptable conditions, inflicting terrible pain and cruelty on them

INTERNATIONAL

- **Canada - announced a ban on the use of the Chinese-owned social media app TikTok on government-issued devices due to concerns over privacy and security risks.**
- ✓ The Canadian government said that the app is getting banned because it presents unacceptable levels of risk and security.
- ✓ The app was banned because it is owned by a Chinese company - ByteDance Ltd- and there are concerns that the Chinese government may have access to user data
- ✓ The ban will take effect immediately from February 28, and Canadian government employees will no longer be able to download the app in the future
- ✓ The ban is a precautionary measure to protect the Canadian government and personal information, as well as to address concerns about the potential misuse of user data by the Chinese government.
- ✓ The Bank of Canada is also barring the use of the short video sharing app on staff devices.
- **The White House - has set a 30-day deadline for US government agencies to remove Chinese-owned social media app TikTok from all federal devices and systems.**
- ✓ The ban, which was ordered by the US Congress last year, cited an “unacceptable level” of risk to privacy and security as a reason.
- ✓ Owned by Singapore-headquartered Chinese tech giant and the world’s most valuable start-up ByteDance, TikTok has been the subject of political scrutiny due

to concerns that it could be used for spying or propaganda by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

- ✓ The White House is giving all federal agencies 30 days to wipe TikTok off all government devices.
- ✓ The White House already does not allow TikTok on its devices.
- ✓ Congress passed the “No TikTok on Government Devices Act” in December as part of a sweeping government funding package.
- ✓ The legislation does allow for TikTok use in certain cases, including for national security, law enforcement and research purposes.
- ✓ The current ban will not affect businesses in the US not associated with the federal government or the millions of private citizens who use the app
- ✓ Meanwhile, the European parliament too has decided to ban TikTok from staff phones for security reasons.
 - ✓ The ban will also apply to private devices with parliament email and other network access installed on them and the decision is expected to be announced soon.
 - ✓ The European Commission and the EU Council last week banned TikTok from staff phones.
- ✓ The Danish parliament urged lawmakers and employees against having TikTok on work phones as a cybersecurity measure, saying “there is a risk of espionage.”

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **India and the UK - launched the Young Professionals Scheme on February 28**



- ✓ The establishment of the Young Professionals Program between the UK and India is regarded as a significant step in the development of the relationship between the two countries
- ✓ The scheme is an agreement for three years, effective from March 2023
- ✓ The scheme will allow degree-holding Indian nationals to live and work in Britain for up to two years.

- ✓ Last week, the UK government invited 2,400 visa applications for Indians under the UK-India Young Professional Scheme.
- ✓ According to an update shared by the British High Commission in India, Indian citizens between 18 and 30 years of age can enter the ballot if they meet other relevant criteria.
- ✓ Applicants must also have the relevant educational qualifications - bachelor's degree level or above - and possess £2,530 (approximately Rs.2.6 lakhs) in savings before they fill their entries in the ballot.
- ✓ The ballots will open at 2:30 pm (IST) on February 28 and close at 2:29 pm (IST) on 2 March
- ✓ The results of the ballot will be sent by email within 2 weeks of the ballot closing.
- ✓ The selected candidates can visit the UK, leave in between, and return to the country within the valid period
- ✓ Unsuccessful candidates can apply for future ballots, with the next tentatively scheduled for July.
- ✓ The Young Professionals Scheme forms part of the UK-India Mobility and Migration Partnership (MMP) which was signed in May 2021 between then-UK home secretary Priti Patel and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar.
- ✓ India is the first country to benefit under the Mobility Program visa scheme.

AWARDS

- **On February 27, World Cup champion Lionel Messi - secured the FIFA's best men's player award for the seventh time in 14 years**



- ✓ The best women's player was Spain's Alexia Putellas for a second straight year.
- ✓ After steering Argentina to World Cup glory in an epic final against Mbappe's France last year in Qatar, Messi won the best player vote against Mbappe and Karim Benzema
- ✓ In the FIFA Awards vote, Messi had 52 points, Mbappe 44, and Benzema 34.
- ✓ The three players made the final shortlist in voting by a global panel of national team captains and coaches, selected journalists in each of FIFA's 211 member countries, plus fans online.

- ✓ The 35-year-old Messi also beat Mbappe — who was seeking his first best player award from FIFA — to the Golden Ball trophy awarded by FIFA for the World Cup's best player.
- ✓ Mbappe earned the Golden Boot as top scorer.
- ✓ Mbappe, 11 years younger than Messi at 24 and considered Messi's heir apparent on the world stage, made the three-man shortlist for the first time.
- ✓ Real Madrid star Benzema won the more prestigious Ballon d'Or in October ahead of the World Cup.
- ✓ Messi broke a record he shared with Ronaldo by making the men's world best XI for the 16th time.
- ✓ Argentina's Lionel Scaloni and Emiliano Martinez won the coach of the year and keeper of the year awards respectively
- ✓ Argentina's supporters got the best fans prize, while England were rewarded for their victorious women's Euro 2022 campaign.
- ✓ In women's football, Mary Earps was named keeper of the year and England's Dutch coach Sarina Wiegman received the accolade for best coach of a team.
- ✓ Spain's Alexia Putellas, who won the Ballon d'Or last year, was named women's player of the year after inspiring Barcelona to a third consecutive national title in 2022.
- ✓ Polish amputee Marcin Oleksy won the Puskas prize for best goal for a spectacular acrobatic volley with Warta Poznan against Stal Rzeszow.

SPORTS

- **Team India A created history by defeating England A - to win the 2023 Women's Snooker World Cup at the Hi-End Snooker Club in Bangkok on February 27**



- ✓ India A was represented by Ameet Kamani and Anupama Ramachandran, both unranked on the World Women's Snooker tour
- ✓ They have defeated 12-time world champion Reanne Evans and current world number four Rebecca Kenna to lift the title by a margin of 4-3.

- **Karnataka's Mithun Manjunath - defeated Priyanshu Rajawat to clinch the men's singles trophy in the 84th National Badminton championships at Shiv Chhatrapati sports complex in Pune on February 28.**



- ✓ In the women's final, former Junior World No. 1 Anupama Upadhyaya, representing Haryana, won against Aakarshi Kashyap in her first senior nationals final.
- ✓ A first-time finalist, Mithun, 24, had entered the final after beating fourth seed Kaushal Dharmamer in the Round 32, last edition's champion Sourabh Verma in quarters and Kidambi Srikanth in the semi finals
- ✓ Top seed Gayatri Gopichand and Treesa Jolly were crowned as the new champions in Women's doubles, while S Kushal Raj and S Prakash Raj won the Men's doubles championship
- ✓ T Hemanagendra Babu and Kanika Kanwal won the mixed doubles title.

