

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-MARCH 18, 2023

TAMIL NADU

- **The Tamil Nadu State Council for Higher Education (TANSCHE) – has introduced the model syllabus for 127 UG and PG programmes with a common weightage for assessment.**
- ✓ As per the new syllabus, students of arts and science courses in Tamil Nadu colleges will have semester exams for 75 marks and internal assessment for 25 marks from the next academic year.
- ✓ As of now, autonomous colleges have different weightage such as 50:50, 60:40 for semester exams and internal assessment, while some courses such as MBA may have a different weightage system for assessment.
- ✓ As per the new syllabus, all universities and institutions must include 75% of the course content from the model syllabus.
- ✓ The remaining 25% can be decided by universities and autonomous colleges based on local industry needs.
- ✓ A UG course will have 140 credits while a PG course will have 91 credits.

STATES

- **The Himachal Pradesh government - will impose a cow cess of Rs 10 per bottle on the sale of liquor in the state.**
- ✓ The decision to levy the cow cess on liquor sale was announced in the state budget on March 17
- ✓ The move is intended to raise additional revenue of Rs.100 crore per annum.
- ✓ Himachal Pradesh chief minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu presented the annual budget for the financial year 2023-24 in the state assembly.
- ✓ Himachal Pradesh was the first state to link alcohol sales to a cow tax, while other states like Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh have earlier levied a 'Cow Cess' or 'Cow Welfare Cess' in order to raise revenue to care for cows and stray animals.

- ✓ Punjab was one of the first states to impose such a tax for the purchase of four-wheelers and two-wheelers, energy use, marriage hall bookings, cement bags, and other items.
- **Maharashtra – is likely to become the first state in India to pass a law for procuring medical supplies for public hospitals and medical colleges.**
- ✓ In this regard, the Maharashtra Medical Goods Procurement Authority Act, 2023 was passed after the governor's assent on March 17
- ✓ The Act seeks to streamline the procurement process by creating a dedicated authority that will solely handle the purchase of medical devices and medicines.
- ✓ The new law will facilitate the creation of an agency with the financial resources and manpower to make the government's medical purchases more swift, efficient, cost-effective and transparent.
- ✓ The agency will be overseen by the chief minister, with the ministers of the public health and medication education departments serving as key members due to the agency's role in procurement for these departments primarily.
- ✓ An IAS officer will serve as CEO of the agency.
- ✓ The medical education and public health department jointly make purchases to the tune of Rs.1,800-2,000 crore annually.

NATIONAL

- **On March 17, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that seven 'PM MITRA (Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel Parks) mega textile parks' will be set up in Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh**
- ✓ The mega textile parks will boost the textiles sector in line with 5Fs (farm to fibre to factory to fashion to foreign) vision, he said.
- ✓ Textile minister Piyush Goyal said that these parks will create 20 lakh jobs and attract an estimated Rs.70,000 crore domestic and foreign investment.
- ✓ The parks are meant to create an integrated textiles value chain — from spinning, weaving, processing or dyeing and printing to garment manufacturing — at a single location.
- ✓ While the plan to set up the parks, with an outlay of around Rs.4,500 crore, was announced over a year ago, the locations have been announced now.

INTERNATIONAL

- **On March 17, the International Criminal Court (ICC) - said it issued an arrest warrant for Russian President Vladimir Putin for war crimes because of his alleged involvement in abduction and illegal deportation of children from Ukraine.**



- ✓ According to ICC, Putin “is allegedly responsible for the war crime of unlawful deportation of population (children) and that of unlawful transfer of population (children) from occupied areas of Ukraine to the Russian Federation”.
- ✓ It also issued a warrant for the arrest of Maria Alekseyevna Lvova-Belova, the commissioner for children’s rights in the office of the President of the Russian Federation, on similar allegations.
- ✓ Putin is only the third serving president to have been issued an ICC arrest warrant, after Sudan’s Omar al-Bashir and Libya’s Muammar Gaddafi.
- ✓ However, Russia doesn’t recognise the International Criminal Court and considers its decisions “legally void”.
- ✓ Russia has repeatedly denied accusations that its forces have committed atrocities during the invasion.
- ✓ However, it is unlikely that Putin will end up in court any time soon, but the warrant means that he could be arrested and sent to The Hague if travelling to any ICC member states.

DEFENCE

- **The Ministry of Home Affairs - has announced a 10% reservation for former Agniveers in vacancies in the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF).**
- ✓ The ministry had earlier notified a similar quota for them in the BSF.
- ✓ The ministry also notified relaxation in the upper age limit depending on whether they are part of the first batch or subsequent batches of Agniveers.
 - ✓ The upper age limit shall be relaxable up to five years for candidates of the first batch of former Agniveers and up to three years for candidates of other batches, the ministry said.
- ✓ Ex-Agniveers will also be exempted from the physical efficiency test, the notification said.
- ✓ The Centre had on June 14 last year unveiled the ambitious Agnipath scheme for the recruitment of youths aged between 17-and-a-half and 21 in the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, largely on a four-year short-term contractual basis.
- ✓ After the completion of the four-year tenure, 25% of the recruits, called ‘Agniveers’, from each batch will be offered regular service.

- ✓ At that time, the home ministry had announced that 10% vacancies in central paramilitary forces and Assam Rifles shall be reserved for demobilised 75% Agniveers.
- ✓ It had also announced that the upper age limit was also relaxed for the first batch of ex-Agniveers by up to five years and for the subsequent batches for three years.
- ✓ In addition, the ex-Agniveers would be exempted from the physical proficiency test.
- ✓ The specified age limit for recruitment to paramilitary forces is 18-23 years

OBITUARY

- **Indian Army - paid last tributes with full military honours to Lieutenant Colonel VVB Reddy and Major Jayanth A of Army Aviation**
- ✓ The two Indian Army personnel sacrificed their lives in the line of duty on March 16 while they were on an operational sortie between Missamari in Assam's Sonitpur and Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh.



- ✓ Lt Col Reddy and Major Jayanth were in the single-engine Cheetah helicopter when it crashed near Mandala hills in West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh
- ✓ The mortal remains have been moved to their home towns Yadadri in Telangana and Madurai in Tamil Nadu in a Special Military Plane.
- ✓ The wreckage of the Cheetah helicopter was located 16 km north of Lipo in Arunachal Pradesh at an elevation of 12,000 feet.
- ✓ Madurai Collector Anish Shekhar, officers of the Indian Army paid a ceremonial tribute to Major Jayanth A at the Madurai airport.

- ✓ Following this, the body was taken to his native place Jayamangalam near Periyakulam in Theni district and Major Jayanth A was cremated with full military honours.
- ✓ In a statement, chief minister M K Stalin condoled Jayanth's death and expressed his shock and anguish
- ✓ State rural development minister I Periasamy paid the respect on behalf of the state government
- ✓ The chief minister also ordered the release of 20 lakh as compensation to the family of Jayanth.
- ✓ Jayanth A was selected as the best NCC cadet at Tamil Nadu level which gave him motivation to become an Army officer.
- ✓ He joined the Army in 2010 and was commissioned into the Artillery Regiment in 2011.
- ✓ Later, when he got an opportunity to take up the flying course for operating lighter helicopters for the Indian Army, he took it up and became a pilot in 2016

SPORTS

- **On March 17, India men's hockey team vice-captain Hardik Singh and women's hockey team captain Savita Punia – won the top honours for the year 2022 at the Hockey India 5th Annual Awards 2022 in New Delhi**



- ✓ The duo won Balbir Singh Senior Award for Player of the Year in their respective categories while taking a cash award of Rs 25 lakh each.
- ✓ The awards ceremony started with the felicitation of awardees from 2021 and 2022.
- ✓ The legendary Gurbux Singh, 87, was honoured with the Major Dhyan Chand Lifetime Achievement Award for 2022.
 - ✓ Gurbux was a member of the gold medal winning Indian team at the 1964 Olympics.
 - ✓ He was also the captain of the gold winning 1966 Asiad team.
- ✓ For the year 2021, current India men hockey captain Harmanpreet Singh won the Player of the Year award while Savita was declared women player of the year.

- ✓ Amit Singh Bakshi, who was part of India's 1956 Melbourne Olympics gold medal winning team, was given the Major Dhyan Chand Lifetime Achievement Award for the year 2021.
- ✓ Union Minister of Law and Justice Kiren Rijju, Minister of Sports, Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Narendra Tomar and Youth Affairs and Minister of Information and Broadcasting Anurag Thakur attended the event.

