

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAY 10, 2022

TAMIL NADU

- **On May 9, the Tamil Nadu government - introduced a bill to revive the comprehensive Tamil Nadu Urban Local Bodies Act, 1998**
- ✓ The Act was suspended within 22 days of coming into force on August 1, 2000, since certain local bodies sought time to study the provisions of the new Act before its implementation.
- ✓ The government has decided to enact the Tamil Nadu Urban Local Bodies (Amendment) Act, 2022, by updating and reviving the 1998 Act
- ✓ The objective is to strengthen municipal governance and facilitate continuous process of transfer of functions, funds and functionaries to the urban local bodies.
- ✓ Municipal Administration Minister K N Nehru introduced the bill in the Assembly
- ✓ Among other things, the legislation empowers the elected council to enhance property tax “within the minimum and maximum rates” as notified by the state government from time to time.
- ✓ On revival of the Act, all corporation laws, the Tamil Nadu District Municipalities Act, 1920 and the Tamil Nadu Urban Local Bodies (Suspension of Operation) Act, 2000 will stand repealed.
- ✓ All amendments made after 1998 to municipal laws separately will also come under the new law
- ✓ The bill also provides for 5% of the net property tax payable by an assessee, subject to a maximum of Rs 5,000 as an incentive to those who pay the tax within 30 days of commencement of half-year.
- ✓ The bill facilitates all local bodies to establish commercial infrastructure projects including industrial estates tourist lodges with commercial complexes on their own or in PPP mode
- ✓ The Bill also provides for the construction of swimming pools only with the permission of the authorities concerned, and also has provisions for rainwater harvesting.

- ✓ Further, the Bill provides for the digging of wells only with the permission of the authorities concerned, and for the imposition of a penalty for digging wells without permission.
 - ✓ The constitution of standing committees, ward sabhas and area sabhas have also been provided for in the Bill.
 - ✓ Under the proposed Act, urban local bodies are empowered to levy company tax, protect water bodies and regulate private fairs and exhibitions, hoardings, digital banners and placards, grant licences for spa and massage parlours, promote urban forestry and create playgrounds
 - ✓ Under the proposed Bill, the urban local body council shall levy user charges on waste generators within municipality limits for solid waste disposal and can also impose fine to the tune of Rs. 2,000 to Rs.1 lakh on violators
 - ✓ The government can remove chairpersons, deputy chairpersons and councillors, according to the Bill
 - ✓ Being one of the most urbanised states in the country, Tamil Nadu, as per 2011 census, has an urban population of 48.45% and which has now increased to over 53%
 - ✓ The Tamil Nadu State Assembly adopted 20 bills on the day, following which the House was adjourned sine die.
 - ✓ The 22-day session, which commenced on April 6, saw the passage of several crucial bills including one to empower the state government to appoint vice-chancellors of state universities curtailing the Governor's powers, and another making Chief Minister M K Stalin chancellor of the proposed Siddha Medical University.
- **On May 9, the state government - tabled a bill to amend the Tamil Nadu Cooperative Societies Act, 1983 to act against outsiders, who, in connivance with the management or employees of the society, may be involved in misappropriation of funds.**
- ✓ Cooperation minister I Periyasamy introduced the bill in the assembly
 - ✓ Further, an amendment also sought to be made whereby no action shall be commenced after the expiry of seven years from the “date of detection” of any act.
 - ✓ Another bill introduced in the assembly also provides for dispensing with autonomy to the Short Term Cooperative Credit Structure Societies in all financial and administration matters, including borrowings and investments, loan policies and personnel policy.
 - ✓ Further, the Assembly adopted another Bill that paves the way for private persons to be appointed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Development Board (TNIDB), a post hitherto held by the Secretary of the Finance Department.
 - ✓ Minister for Finance and Human Resource Management Palanivel Thiaga Rajan moved the Bill in the Assembly

- ✓ Earlier, as per the law, the CEO of the Board would be in the rank of Secretary to Government in the Finance Department, appointed by the government.
 - ✓ The Bill also seeks to reduce the number of members of the Board and the Executive Committee by removing the Secretaries of the Public Works, Industries, Municipal Administration, Rural Development, Housing, Law, Revenue and Environment Departments from the panels.
 - ✓ Instead of the earlier provision for five members, there shall be two, who are experts in finance, economics and infrastructure.
 - ✓ The House also adopted a Bill to amend the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994 to enable the State government to transfer the village panchayat secretaries to other panchayats.
 - ✓ Existing provisions allow them to continue to work for years together in the same native panchayat.
 - ✓ The Assembly also adopted a Bill to repeal 91 Acts, which have become obsolete and redundant, based on the recommendations of Law Commission
- **On May 9, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman - inaugurated the 'Amudham project' to offer free cow milk to lactating mothers and children below two years in Coimbatore south constituency.**



- ✓ It is a new scheme launched by Coimbatore South MLA Vanathi Srinivasan in the lines of Prime Minister's 'Poshan Abhiyaan' scheme, aimed at providing holistic nutrition to mothers and infants.
- ✓ She got this idea from villages in Kongu region where farmers had the habit of leaving 'kuzhandai paal' on their farms for nursing mothers in villages.
- ✓ Under the initiative, nursing mothers registered at neighbourhood anganwadi centres would be eligible for a packet of 250ml of cow's milk a day.
- ✓ BJP Tamil Nadu unit president K Annamalai was also present at the function

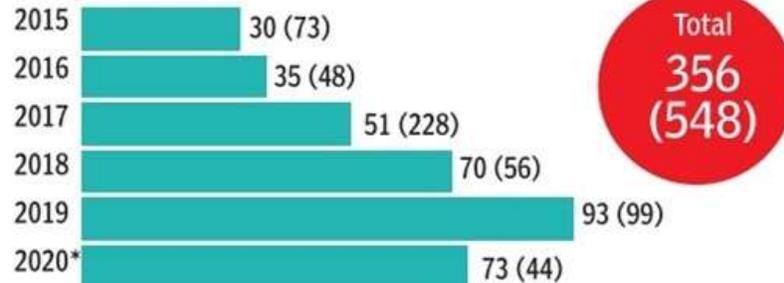
NATIONAL

- **On May 9, the Central government - informed the Supreme Court that it had decided to reconsider and re-examine the sedition law or Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC)**

- ✓ The government also asked the court not to consider the petitions challenging the colonial law and to wait for the reconsideration exercise to be conducted by the Centre.

2015-20: 548 HELD, 12 CONVICTED

Cases registered under Section 124a across India (in brackets, number of people arrested), as per NCRB data



*Year marked by extended lockdown due to Covid

CONVICTED 12 persons in 7 sedition cases during 2015-2020 period

AGE PROFILE 53% of people arrested were aged 18-30 years, 35% were 30-45 yrs old

- ✓ Last week, the Centre had defended in the Supreme Court the British-era penal law on sedition enacted in 1860 and the 1962 verdict of a five-judge constitution bench in the Kedarnath Singh vs State of Bihar case upholding its validity
- ✓ The government will now go for a comprehensive reconsideration of the sedition provision for necessary pruning and provisioning of safeguards to curb its misuse
- ✓ The Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code states that a person commits the crime of sedition if he/she brings or attempts to bring in hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards the government established according to the law.
- ✓ It prescribes the maximum punishment of life imprisonment.

INTERNATIONAL

- **On May 9, Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa - resigned from his post to help form an interim, unity government**
- ✓ The resignation comes a day after President Gotabaya Rajapaksa requested the Prime Minister to step down as a solution to the ongoing political crisis in the country
- ✓ During the day, Sri Lanka's health minister Prof Channa Jayasumana also handed in his letter of resignation to President Gotabaya Rajapaksa
- ✓ Now following Mahinda Rajapaksa's resignation, the President is expected to invite all the political parties in Parliament to form an all-party Cabinet
- ✓ Protesting against the government, thousands of people have taken to the streets across the nation since April 9 demanding resignation of both the President and the Prime Minister.

- ✓ Meanwhile, Sri Lankan authorities imposed a nationwide curfew and Army troops were deployed in the capital

RISE AND FALL OF MAHINDA

MAHINDA RAJAPAKSA, 76, has dominated SL politics for nearly 20 years. His government crushed the Tamil Tigers to bring an end to a long civil war. A look at his political career:



Protesters clash with govt supporters in Colombo



YOUNGEST LEGISLATOR IN 1970 | Mahinda trained as lawyer before becoming youngest legislator at 24

TOOK POWER DURING TUMULTUOUS TIMES | Became PM in 2004, then won first term as president a year later when Sri Lanka was in the middle of a fragile ceasefire with LTTE

PARTNERSHIP WITH BROTHER | After talks with LTTE yielded nothing, Mahinda in 2006 turned to Gotabaya, his brother & defence secy, to draw up a plan to defeat LTTE. The Tigers conceded defeat in 2009

ACCUSED OF WAR CRIMES | Mahinda govt

is accused of war crimes during conflict with LTTE. UN believes up to 100k people were killed. He is also accused of nepotism, failing to check abduction, torture, murder of critics. He denies all charges

NO CHECKS ON PREZ POWER | After the war ended, Mahinda won a landslide re-election in 2010. His party won a two-thirds majority in parliament, allowing him to remove some checks on presidential power

DREW LANKA CLOSE TO CHINA | He invited China for heavy investment

POWER LOSS & VICTORY AGAIN | He lost 2015 prez election. But in 2019, bombings that killed 250, saw Rajapaksas sweep back into power on a platform of national security

- ✓ The south Asian country of 22 million inhabitants is facing its worse economic crisis since 1948, when it became free from British rule
- ✓ The current economic crisis is caused in part by a lack of foreign currency, which has meant that the country cannot afford to pay for imports of staple foods and fuel, leading to acute shortages in essential supplies such as fuel, food and medicines and very high prices.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **The Ministry of Textiles – has organized a National Conference on PM Mega Integrated Textile Regions and Apparel Park (PM MITRA) Parks Scheme on May 4, 2022**
- ✓ The conference was inaugurated by U.P Singh, Secretary, Ministry of Textiles followed by a detailed presentation on the PM MITRA Parks Scheme
- ✓ During the conference, officials from 13 State Governments – Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh made presentations on 18 proposals for setting up of PM MITRA Parks in their respective states

- ✓ PM MITRA Park scheme has been launched to create an Integrated Textiles Value Chain right from spinning, weaving, processing/dyeing and printing to garment manufacturing etc. at one location to reduce logistics cost of industry.
- ✓ The scheme is intended to generate around 1 lakh direct and 2 lakh indirect jobs per park.

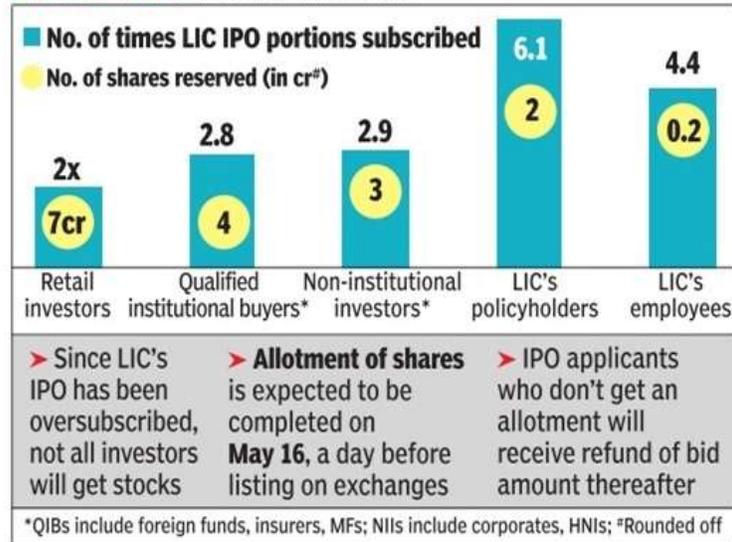
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Indian Institute of Technology, Madras - is establishing a new research centre that will test wastewater for organisms and chemicals.**
- ✓ The facility will act as an intelligence unit to track and prevent a virus outbreak in its early stages.
- ✓ The International Centre for Clean Water (ICCW) is establishing this Wastewater-Based Epidemiology (WBE) research facility.
- ✓ This project is being supported with funding of \$1 million by CryptoRelief, an initiative started by Sandeep Nailwal.
- ✓ The data obtained from various wastewater sources and treatment facilities will be analysed and made available to the public
- ✓ At later stages, this facility will be extended to other parts of the country.
- ✓ The benefits of wastewater analysis include water fingerprinting to study the chemical and biological molecules in it.
- ✓ The WBE project includes aspects such as tracking pollutants, pesticides and drugs.

ECONOMY

- **The initial public offering (IPO) for life insurance major LIC - was over-subscribed 2.95 times by the time it closed on May 9.**
- ✓ LIC's policyholders, its employees, retail investors, high net worth investors (HNIs) and domestic financial institutions contributed majorly to the offer.
- ✓ On the other hand, foreign funds did not figure as expected, according to the final subscription figures.
- ✓ The issue had opened on May 4 and investors were able to bid in the IPO on all the intervening days — including Saturday and Sunday – for the first time ever
- ✓ According to data on the BSE, the portion reserved for LIC's policyholders was subscribed 6.1 times, for eligible employees it was 4.4 times, for retail investors nearly 2 times, for HNIs 2.9 times and for the institutional buyers 2.8 times.
- ✓ The IPO received bids for nearly 48 crore shares against 16.2 crore on offer.
- ✓ A day before the IPO opened for all investors, the government had placed LIC shares worth about Rs 5,600 crore with domestic and foreign investors.
- ✓ This was the first divestment offer in the history of the Indian capital market that had anchor investors.
- ✓ The government aims to generate about Rs 21,000 crore by diluting a 3.5% stake in the insurance behemoth.

WHO BID HOW MUCH



- ✓ According to the pricing policy of the offer, LIC's policyholders will get Rs 60 per share discount on the final price, while retail investors and LIC employees get Rs 45 per share
- ✓ LIC is expected to be listed on May 17.
- ✓ LIC was formed by merging and nationalising 245 private life insurance companies on September 1, 1956, with an initial capital of Rs. 5 crore
- ✓ So far, the amount mobilised from the IPO of Paytm in 2021 was the largest ever at Rs 18,300 crore, followed by Coal India (2010) at nearly Rs 15,500 crore and Reliance Power (2008) at Rs 11,700 crore.
- ✓ In 2019, Saudi Arabia's giant state-owned oil company, Saudi Aramco, had raised over 25.6 billion in the world's biggest IPO ever, surpassing Chinese firm Alibaba's 2014 record.

AWARDS

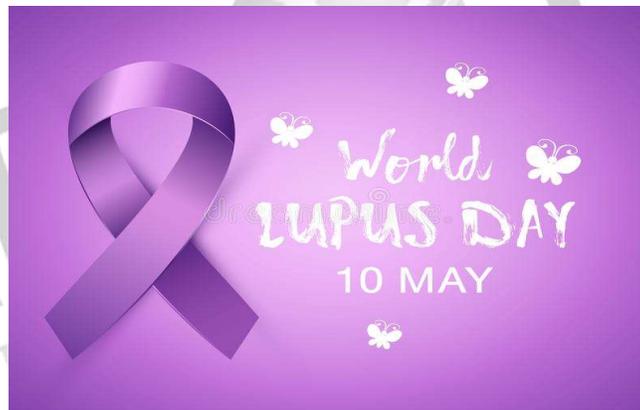
- **Leading climatologist and agronomist, Cynthia Rosenzweig - has been named the 2022 World Food Prize Laureate for her pioneering work in modeling the impact of climate change on food production.**
- ✓ The World Food Prize (WFP) is an international award that honours an individual's contributions to global development by increasing the quantity, quality, or availability of food



- ✓ Cynthia Rosenzweig is a senior research scientist and head of the Climate Impacts Group at NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies in New York City
- ✓ Her work contributed to the scientific foundation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the process which led up to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change in 2015.
- ✓ She had been interested in agriculture for several decades and had been a leader in food and climate policy since the early 1980s
- ✓ Cynthia is the founder of the Agricultural Model Intercomparison and Improvement Project (AgMIP), a globally integrated trans-disciplinary network of climate and food system modelers
- ✓ Her project was named the winner of the World Food Prize in 2022.
- ✓ Nobel Prize laureate Norman Borlaug established the World Food Prize in 1986
- ✓ The first recipient of this prestigious award in 1987 was Indian agricultural scientist M.S. Swaminathan, the father of India's Green Revolution

INTERNATIONAL DAY

➤ World Lupus Day – May 10



- ✓ The day is observed every year to raise awareness about Lupus, which is a serious life-threatening autoimmune disease
- ✓ Every year, around 5 million people are affected by this condition worldwide with 1.5 million people in the United States only.
- ✓ Lupus causes the immune system to become overactive, which creates antibodies and attacks the healthy tissue causing pain, inflammation and damage in a given part of the body like skin, brain or kidney
- ✓ Lupus can be fatal and currently, there is no cure for the disease.
- ✓ World Lupus Day was first observed in 2004 by Lupus Canada, to create awareness about this little-known disease.
- ✓ It was organised by Lupus organisations from 13 countries who have urged their governments to raise funds.

