

## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-APRIL 14,2022

### TAMIL NADU

- On April 13, Chief minister M K Stalin - announced that the government would celebrate Dr B R Ambedkar 's birth anniversary on April 14 as the Day of Equality (Samathuva Naal).



- ✓ On the occasion, Day of Equality pledge would be taken by government workers across the state.
- ✓ Making a suo motu announcement under Rule 110 in the state assembly, the CM said the government would install a life-size bronze statue of Ambedkar at his memorial in Chennai
- ✓ The CM also announced that selected works of Ambedkar will be translated to Tamil by the Tamil Nadu government.
- ✓ The CM informed that the decision to celebrate the day was put forth in a State Vigilance and Monitoring Committee Meeting held on April 12
- ✓ Notably, reformist leader Periyar's birth anniversary, on September 17, has already been declared as Social Justice Day by the DMK government.
- ✓ Among other States, Maharashtra government proposed to unveil a 72-foot tall statue called 'Statue of Knowledge' dedicated to Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar on his birth anniversary in Latur city in the presence of Union Minister Ramdas Athawale.
- ✓ The Telangana government would install a 125-ft tall statue of Dr B R Ambedkar in Hyderabad by December 2022

- ✓ The 131st birth anniversary of Babasaheb Ambedkar will be observed at the joint initiatives of BP Koirala India-Nepal Foundation and Kathmandu University in Nepal
  - ✓ On this occasion, KU-Nepal Center for Contemporary Studies will also be launched.
  - ✓ Ambedkar Jayanti or Bhim Jayanti is celebrated annually on April 14 to pay homage to the father of the Constitution of India, Dr B.R. Ambedkar.
  - ✓ Born on 14 April 1891, Ambedkar was a politician, economist, philosopher, anthropologist and social reformer who fought for the rights of the Dalit community by raising his voice against the Indian caste system.
  - ✓ BR Ambedkar was the chief architect of the constitution of India, who also stood for women and labour rights.
  - ✓ Ambedkar drafted the Indian constitution that guarantees equal rights to all citizens, regardless of caste, creed, religion, race, or culture.
  - ✓ He died on 6 December 1956.
  - ✓ In 1990, Ambedkar was conferred with the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award
- **Agriculture Minister MRK Panneerselvam – made 15 announcements, which would be implemented at a cost Rs 104.97 crore, in the assembly during the discussion on demand for grants to his department.**



- ✓ During the discussion, the minister said the State will implement an Onion Cultivation Mission (OCM) at a cost of Rs 40 crore this financial year to ensure an uninterrupted supply of onions
- ✓ Besides, input subsidy of Rs 8,000 per acre would be given to farmers for 27,170 hectares under OCM.
- ✓ Under OCM, the area under onion cultivation would be increased, and facilities to store the vegetable would be set up by providing subsidies to the farmers
- ✓ To improve soil fertility and increase farmers' income, pulses will be cultivated on rice fallows after harvesting samba paddy.
- ✓ A detailed project report would be prepared for setting up an ethanol plant using sugarcane and foodgrain waste within the sugar mill in Perambalur at a cost of Rs 10 lakh.

- ✓ A Cashew Development Mission to increase the cultivation of cashew in Ariyalur, Cuddalore, Pudukottai, Sivaganga and Villupuram districts would be implemented at a cost of Rs 4.20 crore.
- ✓ Besides, a value addition centre for jackfruit would be set up in Panruti, Cuddalore district, at a cost of Rs 3.75 crore.
- ✓ As per the third advance estimates, as on April 7, the production of paddy and other agricultural crops in the state is estimated at a record 118 lakh tonnes.
- ✓ This is 9% more than the previous year's production of 108 lakh tonnes and a remarkable achievement in the last six years, said agriculture minister MRK Panneerselvam in the assembly
- ✓ The total production of rice last year is estimated at 80.2 lakh tonnes.
- ✓ It would be 16.1 lakh tonnes more than the average production of 64 tonnes in the last six years.

## STATES

- **The Asian Development Bank (ADB) – has announced \$2 million loan for designing climate resilient urban infrastructure, strengthening institutional capacity and improving municipal resource mobilization in Nagaland.**
- ✓ In this regard, the ADB and Government of India have signed a Project Readiness Financing (PRF) Loan on April 12, 2022
- ✓ The towns and cities in Nagaland face the long-term challenges of climate change, lack of basic amenities, poor connectivity
- ✓ Major transport routes around urban areas are severely affected by landslides during the monsoon season
- ✓ The PRF loan will help design water supply, sanitation, solid waste management and urban roads in 16 district headquarter towns (DTHs) with climate-resilient features and improved access to poor and vulnerable

## NATIONAL

- **On April 13, the University Grants Commission (UGC) – announced new guidelines that will be applicable from the academic year 2022-23 onwards**

### BOTH MODES ALSO OK

➤ **New guidelines** will not only allow pursuing two degrees at a time in physical mode but will also permit students to take courses in a **mix of physical and online modes** at the **same university** or at **different universities**

➤ Will be **applicable to diploma, undergrad & PG programmes** pursued simultaneously

- ✓ As per the new regulations, students will now be allowed to simultaneously pursue two full-time degree programmes in physical mode
  - ✓ In May 2020, the UGC had approved a proposal to allow students to pursue two degree programmes at the same time — one in regular mode and the other in open/distance learning/online format.
  - ✓ The new guidelines will also permit students to take courses in a mix of physical and online modes at the same university or at different universities.
  - ✓ The guidelines will be applicable to diploma, undergraduate and PG programmes pursued simultaneously across domains such as sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, and a wide variety of disciplines.
  - ✓ The guidelines shall be applicable only to the students pursuing academic programmes other than PhD programme.
- **The Union Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Cooperation, Amit Shah - inaugurated the “Amrit Samagam”, a two-day conference of tourism and culture ministers of the country**



- ✓ The Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) concluded its first year recently, since its launch on March 12, 2021.
- ✓ In view of this, Ministry of Culture, Government of India, has organized “Amrit Samagam” conference on April 12 and 13, 2022, in New Delhi
- ✓ The objective of the conference is to discuss the progress of AKAM and formulate strategies to be adopted for the remaining period of the celebration
- ✓ The topics of discussion include landmark AKAM initiatives that involve mass public participation such as ‘Har Ghar Jhanda’, ‘International Yoga Day’, ‘Digital District Repository’, ‘Swatantra Swar’ and ‘Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar’.
- ✓ Among states, Congress-ruled Rajasthan has organised the most number of events under AKAM in the last one year with 1,284 programmes.
- ✓ Haryana (1,208), Gujarat (1,018), Tripura (716), Madhya Pradesh (402) and Uttar Pradesh (327) have also shown enthusiastic participation.

- ✓ Telangana (11) and Assam (20) have recorded the lowest number of events.
  - ✓ The Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress government in West Bengal is not part of the Centre's mega initiative 'AKAM' to celebrate India's 75 years of independence
  - ✓ Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav is a flagship initiative of the Central and State Governments, which has been launched to commemorate 75 years of India's independence
  - ✓ The objective of the program is to recreate and renew the patriotic fervor of the independence movement, recall the contribution of India's freedom fighters, and create a vision for India@2047.
  - ✓ The celebrations and initiatives will end on August 15, 2023.
  - ✓ Further, the period of 25 years from Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to the Centenary year of independence is to be celebrated as Azadi Ka Amrit Kaal.
  - ✓ Along with this, the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav will also be celebrated as Sankalp Varsh by taking resolutions that help the country
- **The Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) - launched the "Svanidhi se Samridhhi" programme in 126 additional cities across 14 states and Union territories on April 12, 2022**
- ✓ On January 4 2021, the first phase of "Svanidhi se Samridhhi", an additional programme of PM Svanidhi, was launched in 125 cities, covering around 35 lakh street vendors and their families.
  - ✓ Under the second phase of the scheme, 28 lakh street vendors and their families will be covered
  - ✓ MoHUA has been implementing Prime Minister Street Vendors Atmanirbhar Nidhi (PM Svanidhi), a central sector scheme, since June 1, 2020.
  - ✓ The scheme aims at providing an affordable working capital loan to street vendors and has successfully crossed the 30-lakh mark

## CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) - has organized "Waterways Conclave 2022" on April 11 and 12 in Dibrugarh, Assam**



- ✓ The conclave was launched by Sarbananda Sonowal, Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- ✓ Union Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways organized the conclave with the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) as the Industry partner
- ✓ Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari and Chief Minister of Assam Himanta Biswa Sarma addressed the conclave.
- ✓ During the conclave, six Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) and agreements were signed by the IWAI
- ✓ In line with the aspirations of PM Gati Shakti National Masterplan, Waterways Conclave aims for speedy development of multimodal projects in the North-eastern region to boost the economic activities and augment employment generation
- ✓ The waterways conclave was attended by participants from the port sector, ship builders, vessel owners and operators, Indian chamber of commerce and container corporation of India
- ✓ Further, experts from World Bank of India and Asian Development Bank, foreign experts from Netherlands and Belgium officials from the Ministry of Commerce, Inland water Transport, IWAI and customs and all those connected with transport and logistics also took part in the conclave
- ✓ Ministers from Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal also attended the conclave
- ✓ The Government of India has signed bilateral agreements with the Government of Bangladesh for strengthening and reinforcing inland water transportation and marine relations.
- ✓ In 2008, India and Netherlands signed an MoU between the Ministries of Shipping of India and the Ministry of Infrastructure & Water of the Netherlands, which will shortly be renewed

## DEFENCE

- **On April 12, India - carried out yet another successful test of the indigenously developed helicopter launched Anti-Tank Guided Missile 'HELINA' (Helicopter-based NAG) in high altitude conditions in Ladakh**



- ✓ The flight test was jointly conducted by teams of scientists from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the Indian Army, and the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- ✓ A day before, the missile was successfully flight tested at high-altitude mountain ranges in Pokhran's desert region as part of user validation trials.
- ✓ The flight trials were conducted from an Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) and the missile was fired successfully engaging a simulated tank target.
- ✓ Helina, which is the Nag missile's helicopter-launched version, is one of the most advanced anti-tank weapons in the world
- ✓ The third-generation anti-tank missile is guided by an Imaging Infra-Red (IIR) Seeker operating in the Lock on Before Launch mode.
- ✓ The system has all-weather day and night capability and can defeat battle tanks with conventional armour as well as with explosive reactive armour.
- ✓ The DRDO has designed and developed a range of anti-tank missile technologies that include the Nag, Helina MPATGM, SANT and Laser Guided ATGM for MBT Arjun.

## ECONOMY

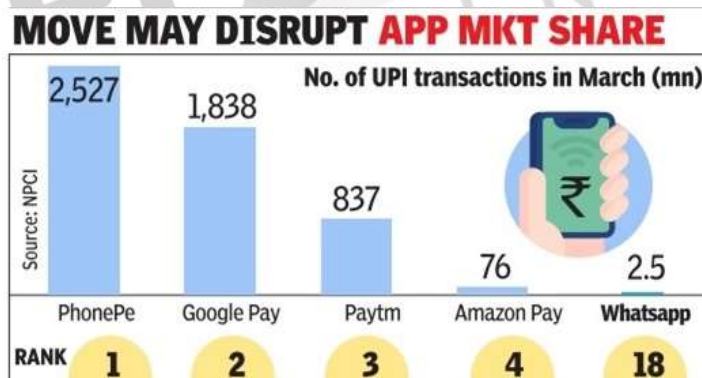
- **On April 13, the World Bank - lowered India's GDP growth estimate for FY23 to 8% from 8.7%**
  - ✓ The agency has cited the impact of the war in Ukraine, high global oil prices, elevated inflation and supply disruptions for the reduction.
  - ✓ Several agencies have cut the country's growth estimate against the backdrop of the war in Ukraine.
  - ✓ Last week, the RBI lowered the GDP growth forecast to 7.2% from 7.8% and also raised the inflation forecast to 5.7% from of 4.5%.
- **India's services exports - rose over 21% during the last financial year and for the first time touched \$250 billion**
  - ✓ This takes the value of goods and services exported from the country to almost \$670 billion, which was an all-time high.

### CLOCK 21% GROWTH IN FY22

Services trade (\$bn)	2020-21	2021-22	% change
Exports	206.1	250.0	21.3
Imports	117.5	144.8	23.2
Trade surplus	88.6	105.2	

- ✓ The government had initially set a target of \$225 billion services exports for the last financial year.
- ✓ The \$250-billion exports (provisional exports) were higher than the \$213 billion 2019-20, which was the earlier record.

- ✓ Unlike goods, where India has a large deficit, on the services front there was a trade surplus of \$105 billion in 2021-22 against \$88.6 billion in the previous year.
  - ✓ Services imports are estimated to have increased 23.2% during the last financial year to around \$145 billion.
  - ✓ India's overall trade, comprising goods and services, was estimated to have increased by 34%, with merchandise exports estimated at close to \$420 billion.
  - ✓ While there was a trade deficit of \$192 billion on the goods side, due to the surplus on the services front, the combined trade deficit was estimated at \$87 billion.
  - ✓ In another development, on April 13, the government decided to fully exempt the import of cotton from customs duties in a move aimed at benefiting the textile chain.
  - ✓ It will provide relief to consumers as a scarcity of cotton had pushed up prices.
- **The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) - has approved an additional six crore users on UPI for WhatsApp.**
- ✓ With this, the messaging app can expand the service to 10 crore customers in the country.
  - ✓ WhatsApp is the most used messaging platform in the country and it has its largest user base in India.
  - ✓ Unlike other applications, WhatsApp plans to use the permission by fully integrating the service in its messaging.



- ✓ It aims to extend the simplicity of a WhatsApp message to any funds transfer.
- ✓ Of the 540 crore UPI transactions recorded in March 2022, PhonePe had a 49% market share in terms of value.
- ✓ Google Pay retained the second position with 35% share and Paytm was in the third position.
- ✓ WhatsApp Pay, despite being allowed to onboard 4 crore customers, had transactions worth only Rs 240 crore and had a market share of only 0.02%.
- ✓ Additionally, unlike other UPI apps, it does not yet promote scanning QR codes for payments.