

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – FEBRUARY 14, 2019

TAMIL NADU

- ◆ **Tamil Nadu Government – introduces a bill in the state legislative assembly, amending the municipal laws to fix the penalty for the violators of single-use plastic ban**
 - ✓ The fine for a first-time offence of storage, supply, transport, sale and distribution of use-and-throw plastics will be Rs 25,000
 - ✓ It will be Rs 50,000 for the second time and Rs 1 lakh for the third offence.
 - ✓ In case of large commercial establishments such as malls, textile shops and super markets, the use and distribution of single-use plastic will invite a penalty of Rs 10,000, Rs 15,000 and Rs 25,000 for the first, second and third offences
 - ✓ In case of medium commercial establishments such as grocery shops and pharmaceuticals shops, the violation will attract a fine of Rs 1,000, Rs 2,000 and Rs 5,000 for the first, second and third offences
 - ✓ Small commercial vendors will be levied a fine of Rs 100, Rs 200 and Rs 500 for the first three offences respectively
 - ✓ The proposed bill seeks to amend the Chennai City Municipal Corporation Act, 1919, Tamil Nadu District Municipalities Act, 1920, Madurai City Municipal Corporation Act, 1971 and Coimbatore city Municipal Corporation Act, 1981

- ◆ **Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami – announced the 900-acre ‘Integrated livestock park’ to come up at Salem district**
 - ✓ Touted as Asia’s biggest, it will have a business incubation centre and a research facility
 - ✓ It will be set up at a budget of Rs 396 crore
 - ✓ The park would have several components including a veterinary hospital with modern amenities, a daily farm to demonstrate the latest practices in animal husbandry, a conservation and breeding unit for indigenous cattle breeds like Kangayam, Umbalachery, Pulikulam and Burgur, a sheep and goat farm, a

piggery unit, a poultry unit and a conservation unit for indigenous dogs like Rajapalayam, Sippiparai, Kombai and Kanni

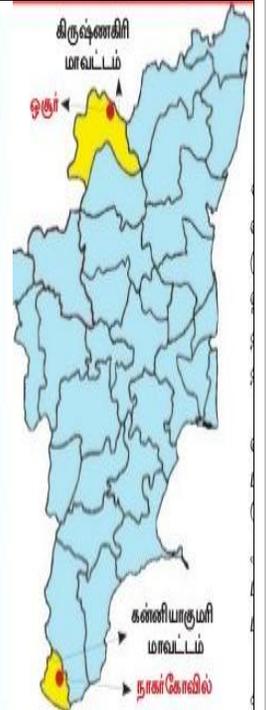
- ✓ It would also have facilities for preservation and processing of milk, meat, fish and egg
- ✓ Another highlight of the facility is a business incubation centre for entrepreneurs and modern facilities to enable students of Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal sciences University (TANUVAS) and international veterinary students to get trained and undertake research
- ✓ A frozen semen station with high pedigree country and cross breed bulls will also be established in the park at a budget of Rs 100 crore

◆ Tamil Nadu Government – introduces bills on February 13 to establish 2 new corporations – Hosur in Krishnagiri district and Nagercoil in Kanyakumari district

- ✓ Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami announced the upgrading of Hosur municipality during the centenary celebrations of late Chief Minister MG Ramachandran held on September 23, 2017 in Krishnagiri district
- ✓ Similarly, the Chief Minister announced about the Nagercoil municipality's upgradation during the centenary celebrations of former CM late MG Ramachandran held on September 22, 2018 in Kanyakumari district
- ✓ As corporations, the two civic bodies will get an elected mayor each.
- ✓ With this, the number of municipal corporations in Tamil Nadu will become 14

மாநகராட்சிகள் எண்ணிக்கை 14 ஆக உயர்வு

தமிழகத்தில் மிகவும் பாரம்பரியமான சென்னை மாநகராட்சி உள்பட மொத்தம் 12 மாநகராட்சிகள் உள்ளன. சட்டப் பேரவையில் தாக்கல் செய்யப்பட்ட புதிய சட்ட மசோதாவின்படி, மாநகராட்சிகளின் எண்ணிக்கை 14 ஆக உயர் உள்ளது. சென்னை (200 வார்டுகள்), கோயம்புத்தூர் (100 வார்டுகள்), மதுரை (100 வார்டுகள்), திருச்சி (65 வார்டுகள்), சேலம் (60 வார்டுகள்), திருநெல்வேலி (55 வார்டுகள்), தூத்துக்குடி (60 வார்டுகள்), திருப்பூர் (60 வார்டுகள்), ஈரோடு (60 வார்டுகள்), வேலூர் 60 வார்டுகள்), தஞ்சாவூர் (62 வார்டுகள்), திண்டுக்கல் (51 வார்டுகள்) ஆகிய மாநகராட்சிகள் ஏற்கெனவே உள்ளன. இந்த மாநகராட்சிகளின் பட்டியலில் ஒருரும், நாகர்கோவிலும் இணைய உள்ளன.



- ✓ The existing municipal corporations are Chennai, Coimbatore, Erode, Madurai, Dindigul, Salem, Thanjavur, Trichy, Tirunelveli, Tirupur, Thoothukudi and Vellore

◆ **Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami – inspected the ‘demo’ version of the Artificial intelligence-based robot to be procured for Government schools in Tamil Nadu**

- ✓ Brigantia is the private firm working with the Government in this project
- ✓ It had planned to import robots from Taiwan and Germany during the initial stage
- ✓ Local designers have designed an app to suit the needs of the state students
- ✓ The demo version is fed with the syllabus of Class XI and XII state board students
- ✓ A single bot-teacher unit costs about Rs 3 lakhs

◆ **Prime Minister Narendra Modi – is likely to flag off the first set of 4 tuna longliners cum gill netters for Palk Bay fishermen in Kanyakumari in March**

- ✓ They were announced as part of a scheme on Blue revolution two years ago by the Centre



- ✓ Cochin Shipyard Limited, a central enterprise that bagged the contract for 16 deep sea fishing vessels, has completed four units so far
- ✓ The scheme comes with a subsidy, of Rs 56 lakh per vessel, by the centre and state

◆ **A Snegha Parthibaraja, a lawyer from Vellore – becomes the first Indian in the entire country to obtain ‘No-caste-No-religion’ certificate – from Sathiyamoorthy, a Tahsildar in Tirupattur on February 5, 2019**



- ✓ She had applied for the certificate nine years back and the Government had now issued the certificate after verification saying ‘This is to certify that she does not belong to any caste or religion’

◆ **The directorate of employment and training – has signed a 3-year contract with French aircraft manufacturer, Dassault Aviation – to train ITI students in Tamil Nadu**

- ✓ The firm, which manufactures military jets including Rafale fighter aircraft, has selected 3 Industrial Training Institutes in the country, of which 2 are in Tamil Nadu
- ✓ It will train the first-year ITI students in a new course 'aeronautical structure and equipment fitter trade' designed by the company itself
- ✓ The 2-year course will commence in the next academic year starting August 2019
- ✓ The 2 selected institutes in Tamil Nadu are the National Skill Training Institute in Chennai, run by the Central Government and the state-run ITI in Coimbatore
- ✓ The third institute selected for the programme is in Nagpur, Maharashtra
- ✓ Dassault will supply the required tools, equipment and a model aircraft to the institutes
- ✓ After the completion, trainees will be awarded the National trade certificate by the National Council of Vocational Training
- ✓ Based on their merit, students can join an apprenticeship programme at a Dassault workshop in Maharashtra or other leading industries

◆ **Tamil Nadu Government – has introduced a bill to establish and incorporate Greenfield universities in the state under the TN Private Universities Act, 2019**

- ✓ The Act aims at creating world class higher-education institutions by any private trust or society of nonprofit organizations with at least 100 acres of land
- ✓ There will not be any financial assistance from the Government and admissions will be based on the UGC norms

◆ **Registered Construction workers in Chennai city – to get free food at Amma Unavagams soon**

- ✓ A new scheme to this effect will be introduced by the Government through the amendment of Tamil Nadu Manual Workers (Construction Workers) Welfare Scheme, 1994
- ✓ The Municipal administration and water supply department will pass a Government order for it based on a proposal from the Greater Chennai Corporation
- ✓ The scheme will allow workers to avail free food in the Amma canteens and the monthly bills towards it will be settled at the Production cost (not the subsidized rates) by the Tamil Nadu Construction Workers Welfare Board

◆ **Tamil Nadu Innovation Grand Challenge, a startup competition organized by TN's Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute (EDII) – has seen 80% increase in the applications this year**

- ✓ Teams from over 150 startups, of which 30 are from outside Chennai, will participate in the challenge



- ✓ Last year 90 startups have participated in the competition
- ✓ This year, over 30 TN-based business persons were announced as 'mentors' for the teams
- ✓ They include representatives from local companies like SPI Cinemas, InkMonk, Flintobox, Chai Kings, PickYourTrail and some others
- ✓ The challenge is structured in the form of a 3-stage event including a 48-hour Sprint Hackathalon to enhance prototypes, two-day bootcamp involving workshops and knowledge sessions and a final Pitchfest to showcase solutions
- ✓ Three startups will be awarded Rs 5 lakh each in grant money and incubation support
- ✓ Sprint is scheduled to take place on Feb 15-17, Bootcamp on Feb 22-23 and Pitchfest will be hosted on Feb 24

◆ **Chennai Airport – sees a fall in its ranking at a survey conducted by Airports Council International**

- ✓ The survey conducted among 20 Airports Authority of India (AAI) airports showed the ranking of Chennai airport dipped from 53 in 2017 to 63 in 2018
- ✓ The airport received the quality rating of 4.65 in 2018, higher than 4.60 received in 2017
- ✓ An airport receiving the quality rating of atleast 4.75 (out of 5 in a scale) will be categorized under 'excellent' grade
- ✓ Kolkata airport has received the rating of 4.79, surpassing the target set by the Aviation ministry
- ✓ 11 airports at Mangalore, Lucknow, thiruvananthapuram, Indore, Ahmedabad, Varanasi, Calicut, Bhubaneshwar, Pune and Srinagar have fared better than Chennai
- ✓ It has to be recalled that Chennai airport has recently received AirSewa award for better handling of complaints

◆ **18th Tamil Internet Conference – to be held between 20 and 22 September in Anna University, Chennai**



- ✓ Theme – Tamil Robotics and Language Processing
- ✓ Organisers - International Forum for Information Technology in Tamil (INFITT) and Anna University
- ✓ The 17th Tamil Internet conference was held in the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore

SCHEMES

◆ **Andhra Pradesh Government – launches ‘Annadata Sukheebhava scheme’**



- ✓ The scheme is an open-ended scheme without any conditions
- ✓ It provides Rs 10,000 assured financial assistance to each farmer, including tenant farmers, every year
- ✓ Recently, the centre announced PM Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme, under which Rs 6000 per year would be provided to farmers holding upto 5 acres of land
- ✓ As per the new scheme, those who are covered under the PM-Kisan scheme would be provided Rs 4000 separately
- ✓ Those who are not covered under PM-Kisan scheme will get Rs 10,000 each from the State government
- ✓ The scheme is similar to Telangana’s Rythu Bandhu scheme, with the addition that it includes tenant farmers as well and ties up with the Central Government
- ✓ The scheme will be implemented at a cost of Rs 2,370 crore
- ✓ The state has around 76.21 lakh farmers with around 60 lakh having five acres of land or less
- ✓ The state cabinet also decided to create a state agriculture council to roll out the benefits of the scheme
- ✓ It had also cleared the proposal to give Smart mobile phones to members of Self-help groups (SHGs) for women in the state with a free sim card and 3 years of free talk time

- ✓ There are around 94 lakh women in SHGs, who have already received the first instalment (of Rs 2,500) of Rs 10,000 benefit released by the state government under Pasupu-Kumkuma scheme and the balance would be released in 2 instalments of Rs 3,500 and Rs 4,000 within the next 2 months
- ✓ The state Government had also increased the old-age monthly pension from Rs 1000 to Rs 2,000 besides withdrawing life tax on autos and tractors

STATES

◆ **Rajasthan – passed a bill to give 5% separate quota in jobs and educational institutions to Gujjars and 4 other communities by clubbing them as ‘More Backward Class’ within the OBC (other backward class)**

- ✓ The bill also provides for increasing the income limit for the creamy layer in OBC from Rs 2.5 lakh to Rs 8 lakh per annum
- ✓ The state assembly had also given its nod for implementing the 10% EWS (economically weaker section) as approved by the centre
- ✓ With all these reservations, the total reservation in the state stands at 64% now
- ✓ The OBC reservation increases from the present 21% to 26% with 5% exclusive quota for Gujjars, Banjaras, Gadia Lohars, Raikas and Gadarias under MBC category
- ✓ The state also passed a unanimous resolution requesting the centre to put the bill in Schedule IX of the constitution to avoid judicial scrutiny, as the reservations breach the 50% cap set by the Supreme Court

NATIONAL

◆ **3 EU Countries, Germany, Hungary and Netherlands along with IIT, Kanpur – signed agreements with India at the 4th EU-India Water Forum in New Delhi – to join the country’s river rejuvenation project under the India-EU water partnership framework**



- ✓ The agreement will enable the implementation of EU’s innovative technologies for the river rejuvenation programme
- ✓ The India-EU water partnership framework aims to develop an integrated river basin management plan for the ‘Tampi basin’ bringing together Gujarat, MP and Maharashtra that shares the basin

INTERNATIONAL

◆ **European Union – adds Saudi Arabia, Panama, Nigeria along with 9 other countries – to a blacklist of nations linked with terrorism financing and money laundering**

- ✓ The list now has 23 jurisdictions up from the earlier 11.
- ✓ The newly added countries include Libya, Botswana, Ghana, Samoa, the Bahamas and the four US territories of American Samoa, US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and Guam
- ✓ The other listed states include Afghanistan, North Korea, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Syria, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia and Yemen
- ✓ The decision by EU commission raises complicated financial relations with EU apart from causing reputational damage to these countries
- ✓ The bloc's banks will have to carry out additional checks on payments involving entities from listed jurisdictions

DEFENCE

◆ **India – signs Rs 748 crore contract with United States – for 72,400 new assault rifles for its front-line soldiers under the Fast-track procurement (FTP) route**



- ✓ The 7.62 x 51 mm rifles from US firm SiG Sauer, with a longer 'kill range' will be delivered within a year
- ✓ It will replace the existing glitch-prone 5.56 mm INSAS (Indian Small Arms System) rifles
- ✓ Another purchase through FTP is currently in the pipeline for 93,895 close-quarter battle carbines from UAE company, Caracal for the Indian Army

◆ **India – to manufacture iconic 'Kalashnikov' rifles within the country soon**



- ✓ The Government has cleared a project to manufacture around 7.5 lakh assault rifles in a joint venture with Russia at the Ordnance factory at Korwa, which falls in the Amethi constituency

- ✓ An inter-governmental agreement to manufacture the 7.62x39 mm caliber AK-203 guns, which are a derivative of the famous AK-47 rifle, is likely to be signed on February 15, 2019
- ✓ The project, costing more than Rs 12,000 crore, is likely to be inaugurated by the Prime Minister on February 28 at Korwa
- ✓ For the project, Kalashnikov concern will tie-up with state-run, Ordnance Factory Board

APPOINTMENTS

◆ Ashwani Lohani – appointed as the next Chairman of Air India



- ✓ The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet had appointed Lohani as CMD for a period of 1 year or until further order
- ✓ The AI chairman's post is remaining vacant on January 31, 2019 when then CMD P S Kharola was made aviation secretary
- ✓ Appointed as AI CMD in September 2015, Lohani was moved as Railway Board Chairman in November 2017
- ✓ He retired as Railway Board chairman on December 31, 2019
- ✓ Lohani started the highly successful 'Delhi-San Francisco' non-stop flight in winter of 2015 as a thrice weekly flight

SPORTS

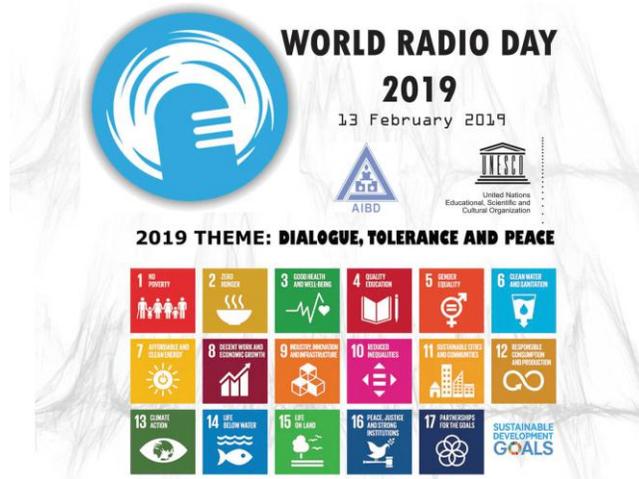
◆ The Sports ministry – has rejected the request of 'Fencing, Kho-Kho and Soft tennis' – to upgrade them to 'priority' category from 'others' category



- ✓ The rejection means that they will not be eligible for more Government's financial assistance and foreign exposure for their players
- ✓ All the 3 disciplines are presently in the 'others' category, which entitles them only to grants for holding the national championships
- ✓ As per the ministry's rules, 'for a discipline to be in the 'priority' category', it should be 6th or 8th in individual/team events at the Asian Games and Commonwealth Games and should be popular among mass
- ✓ In India, sports disciplines have been put in four different categories – high priority, priority, others and general

INTERNATIONAL DAY

◆ World Radio Day – February 13



- ✓ This day marks a time where people around the world celebrate radio and how it shapes everyone's lives
- ✓ The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) will celebrate the eighth edition of the World Radio Day.
- ✓ Theme 2019 – 'Dialogue, Tolerance and Peace'
- ✓ The idea of World Radio Day was first proposed by Spain's Radio Academy in 2010
- ✓ The following year, in 2011, UNESCO declared the first World Radio Day
- ✓ World Radio Day was first celebrated in 2012, following its declaration by the UNESCO General Conference.
- ✓ February 13 was chosen to mark World Radio Day, coinciding with the anniversary of the United Nations Radio, the United Nation's international broadcasting service which was established on February 13, 1946
- ✓ The existence of radio waves and the feasibility of radio transmission was predicted by Scottish Scientist, James Clark Maxwell in the 1860s
- ✓ Guglielmo Marconi, an Italian inventor and electrical engineer, has sent and received his first radio signal in Italy in 1895 and is credited for radio's invention.
- ✓ With over 415 radio stations in about 23 languages, India's All India Radio is one of the largest radio broadcasters in the world, covering 99% of the population in the country

