

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAY 18, 2019

TAMIL NADU

- ◆ **The Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) – to study the relationship between lightning and rainfall with the help of two lightning sensors it received from the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)**
 - ✓ Installed on its campuses in Trichy and Tirur, the varsity plans to use the data from the sensors and the rainfall data in these areas to see if they could observe a pattern.
 - ✓ If successful, the varsity would acquire a sensor for Coimbatore too.
 - ✓ The lightning sensors could record time, location and type of lightning through radio frequency using a time of arrival technique
 - ✓ The lightning strikes kill more number of people than any another extreme weather event in the country
 - ✓ According to the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune, there were 41,000 cloud to ground lightning strikes across the country on April 16 alone.
 - ✓ Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority has already begun sending out phone alerts to people about impending lightning strikes.
- ◆ **The Public Works Department (PWD) - is preparing a ₹ 60 crore master plan to revive Kolavai, the 10th largest of the 14,000-odd lakes it maintains in the state**
 - ✓ It plans to desilt it to increase storage capacity, treat the sewage that flows in from Chengalpet municipality and bringing back boating facilities
 - ✓ The municipal administration and tourism department would be involved in the project.
 - ✓ Despite a poor monsoon in 2018, Kolavai lake is still nearly half full, retaining 48% of capacity
 - ✓ Presently, the water body with a depth of 15 feet has a capacity to store 475 MCFT (0.48 TMC feet) of water.

- ✓ Kolavai lake is located at 60km south of Chennai in Chengalpet district



- ✓ After the completion of the restoration works, it may emerge as a source to supply residents of the southern suburbs beyond Pallavaram and Sholinganallur
- ✓ Pallavaram, Sholinganallur and Tambaram have not yet come under the distribution network of Metrowater.

NATIONAL

◆ Indian Oil Corporation - has become the first Indian refiner to buy US equity oil

- ✓ The move is part of its plan to substitute Iranian supplies that were stopped since this month under threat of US sanctions.
- ✓ It had signed the term contracts with Equinor (formerly Statoil) of Norway and Sontrach of Algeria for a total volume of 4.6 million tonne in 2019 calendar year.
- ✓ According to US Energy Information Agency, both companies have stake in oil and gas fields in the US.
- ✓ The contracts with Equinor and Sonatrach will cover 50% of the 9 million tonne of crude the company had imported from Iran in 2018-19.
- ✓ IOC had bought 9 million tonne of Iranian crude in 2018-19.
- ✓ India has been the second biggest buyer of Iranian oil after China, buying 24 million tonne of crude in 2018-19, or a tenth of its total imports
- ✓ Indian Oil also has an annual contract for 5.6 million tonne of crude from Saudi Arabia
- ✓ Indian Oil became the first Indian refiner to test the US waters by importing a shipment of US oil in October 2017

◆ National Council of Educational Research Training – announces a review of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) soon

<p>What is National Curriculum Framework? It provides the framework for creation of school syllabi and writing of textbooks, and gives guidelines on teaching practices</p>	<p>should be learner-centred, develop well-defined abilities in cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains</p>
<p>Past Guidelines 1975: General science as a compulsory subject, activity-based integrated science recommended up to Class X 1988: Science curriculum</p>	<p>2000: Teaching of science and tech in upper primary & secondary, part of environment studies in primary recommended 2005: Focus on 'learning without burden', reduction in syllabus, including age-appropriate concepts</p>



- ✓ NCF provides the framework for creation of the school syllabi and the writing of textbooks, while giving guidelines on teaching practices in India.
- ✓ Of the four NCFs released in 1975, 1988, 2000 and 2005, the last removed the focus from teachers to students to ensure 'learning without burden'

◆ **The Union Government - has issued a drought advisory to 6 states including Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Tamil Nadu**

- ✓ It had asked them to use water wisely as water storage in dams is dropping to a critical level.
- ✓ The advisory was issued to the state of Tamil Nadu on May 18
- ✓ The drought advisory is issued to concerned states when the water level in reservoirs is 20% less than the average of live water storage figures of the past 10 years
- ✓ The southern states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu have 31 reservoirs in total (two of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana combined and one individually in Andhra Pradesh and two in Telangana, four in Karnataka, six each in Kerala and Tamil Nadu)
- ✓ The total live storage available in these reservoirs is 6.86 BCM, which is 13% of total live storage capacity of these reservoirs (51.59 BCM)
- ✓ The storage during corresponding period of last year was 13% and average storage of last ten years during corresponding period was 16%.
- ✓ The water storage level in 91 major reservoirs across the country is monitored by the Central Water Commission.
- ✓ Currently, the total water storage available is 22% of total storage capacity of these reservoirs (161.993 BCM)

INTERNATIONAL

◆ **Taiwan - became the first Asian country to legalize same-sex marriage on May 17**

- ✓ The bill offers same-sex couples similar legal protections for marriage as heterosexuals
- ✓ It takes effect on May 24 after President Tsai Ing-wen signs it
- ✓ The law, however, allows same-sex marriages only between Taiwanese, or with foreigners whose countries recognise same-sex marriage.
- ✓ It permits adoption of children biologically related to at least one of the same-sex pair.

Love Wins In 2017, Taiwan's constitutional court ruled that same-sex couples had the right to legally marry. Parliament was given a 2-year deadline and was required to pass changes by May 24



A look at 26 COUNTRIES where same-sex marriage is legal

- 1 Argentina
- 2 Australia
- 3 Austria
- 4 Belgium
- 5 Brazil
- 6 Britain
- 7 Canada
- 8 Colombia
- 9 Denmark
- 10 Finland
- 11 France
- 12 Germany
- 13 Iceland
- 14 Ireland
- 15 Luxembourg
- 16 Malta
- 17 Mexico
- 18 The Netherlands (1st to legalise in 2001)
- 19 New Zealand
- 20 Norway
- 21 Portugal
- 22 South Africa
- 23 Spain
- 24 Sweden
- 25 Uruguay
- 26 USA

SCENARIO IN ASIA

- > Not all of Mexico and Britain is open to marriage among same-sex couples. It is legal in some parts. Northern Ireland is the only part of the UK in which same-sex marriage is not allowed
- > Same-sex parents can legally adopt in 30 countries, while 28 allow joint adoption
- > According to a 2016 WHO report, homosexuality may be punishable by death in 10 countries: Yemen, Iran, Mauritania, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Somalia, Sudan, UAE
- > In a historic decision, India's Supreme Court decriminalised gay sex in September 2018. Same-sex marriage, however, is yet to be legally recognised
- > Vietnam decriminalised gay marriage celebrations in 2015 but stopped short of full legal recognition for same-sex unions
- > While same-sex marriage is still illegal in China, homosexuality was decriminalised in the country in 1997, and officially removed from its list of mental illnesses in 2001
- > Homosexuality is outlawed in the region's Muslim countries, such as Bangladesh, Malaysia and Pakistan
- > Brunei sparked a worldwide backlash in April when it introduced laws that include death by stoning for gay sex. A month later it said the laws would not be enforced

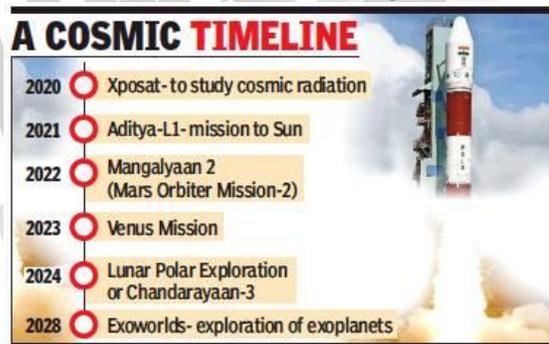
LAWFULLY WEDDED | You Ya-ting (L) and her partner Huang Mei-yu got married in Taiwan's first same-sex Buddhist ceremonial wedding in Taoyuan on August 11, 2012. The couple can now celebrate the legal recognition of their marriage



SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

◆ India - has planned seven scientific missions in the next 10 years, according to ISRO chairman K Sivan

- ✓ He confirmed the schedule in Sriharikota on May 17 while addressing 108 school students as part of the Yuvika-2019 Young Scientist Programme.



- ✓ The spacecraft to Venus will lift off with more than 20 payloads in 2023
- ✓ The mission to the planet will focus on studying the surface and the sub-surface of the planet, atmospheric chemistry, and the interactions with solar radiation or solar winds.
- ✓ Venus is considered Earth's 'twin sister' because of similarities in mass, size, composition, density and gravity
- ✓ According to ISRO chairman, Aditya L1, the Sun mission, may play a key role in understanding and predicting climate change on Earth by doing research on Corona, Sun's outer layer
- ✓ Xposat will be a five-year mission, carrying a polarimeter instrument made by Raman Research Institute to measure cosmic radiation.
- ✓ It will be placed in a circular 500km-700km orbit
- ✓ For this year, Isro's biggest mission, Chandrayaan-2 is all set for a July launch

DEFENCE

◆ **Military Nursing Service (MNS) officers as well as allow those serving as Brigadiers and above – to get “ex-servicemen (ESM) status”**

- ✓ With the grant of ESM status, they can display rank star plates on their official vehicles like other military officers.
- ✓ The ESM status will allow retired MNS officers to get identity cards, seek reemployment in government organizations/PSUs and apply for different resettlement schemes of the armed forces.
- ✓ The MNS, the only all-women officers' corps in the armed forces, currently has 5,300 serving officers
- ✓ But they have never been accorded the full status and privileges of other military officers, including doctors.
- ✓ Even, the olivegreen uniform of the MNS officers was changed to safari-style dark beige color uniforms in 2004.

APPOINTMENTS

◆ **R.N. Jayaprakash of Tamil Nadu and Gujarat's D. Chokshi Monal being unanimously elected as President and Secretary respectively of Swimming Federation of India (SFI)**



- ✓ This is the first time, an administrator from Tamil Nadu has been chosen for the top post in SFI.
- ✓ Jayaprakash, who was the federation's vice-president earlier, took over from Digambhat Kamat

INTERNATIONAL DAY

◆ **International Museum Day – May 18**

- ✓ The day aims to raise awareness about the importance of museums as “means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among peoples.”
- ✓ The day is celebrated every year globally since 1977 by International Council of Museums (ICOM).



- ✓ The theme for this year's IMD is 'Museums as Cultural Hubs: The Future of Tradition.'
- ✓ All 46 museums managed by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) across the country will allow free entry to visitors on the eve of the day
- ✓ The list of ASI museums include Archaeological Museum in Purana Qila, Swatantrata Sangram Sanghralaya, Swantratata Senani Museum and Indian War Memorial Museum in Red Fort in the national capital

