

CURRENT AFFAIRS

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TOPIC: UNEMPLOYMENT

Youth employment declined in India, says ILO report

'COVID-19 has hurt youth more than any other age group'

A.M. JIGEESH
NEW DELHI

India experienced severe working-hour and employment losses in 2020 and 2021, and Indian youth employment deteriorated in 2021 compared with the 2020 situation, according to the Global Employment Trends for Youth 2022 report released by the International Labour Organisation on Thursday. The recovery in youth employment is still lagging globally, the report says confirming that COVID-19 has hurt young people more than any other age group.

It finds that the pandemic has worsened the numerous labour market challenges facing those aged between 15 and 24. Youngsters in this age group experienced a much higher percentage loss in employment than adults since early 2020. "The total global number of unemployed youth is estimated to reach 73 million in 2022, a slight improvement from 2021 (75 million), but still six million above the pre-pandemic level of 2019," the report said.

In India, the report said surveys conducted by the Centre for Monitoring the Indian Economy show that the youth employment partici-



Job hunt: People from wait by the roads waiting for work in Manesar Industrial Area, in Haryana. •AP

pation rate declined by 0.9 percentage points over the first nine months of 2021 relative to its value in 2020, while it increased by 2 percentage points for adults over the same time period.

It also warns that the unemployment rate of young people in the Asia and Pacific region is projected to reach 14.9% in 2022, the same as the global average, although there are important divergences between subregions and countries.

In India, the report added that school closures lasted 18 months and among the 24 crore school-going children, only 8% of such children in rural areas and 23% in urban areas had adequate access to online education.

"Given the deeply unequal access to online resources in developing countries, children from

socio-economically disadvantaged families, which are the large majority, had almost no access to education," the report said.

It said school closures not only prevented new learning, but also led to the phenomenon of "learning regression", that is, children forgetting what they had learned earlier. "In India, 92% of children on average lost at least one foundational ability in language and 82% lost at least one foundational ability in mathematics," the report said citing studies.

It appreciated the MGNREGA and said it has played an important role in providing paid employment, particularly for women, but also in carbon sequestration because of the Act's focus on natural resources, such as land, water and trees, which provide adaptation benefits.

- Unemployment occurs when a person who is actively searching for employment is unable to find work.
- Unemployment is often used as a measure of the health of the economy.
- The most frequent measure of unemployment is the unemployment rate, which is the number of unemployed people divided by the number of people in the labour force.

Dhankhar sworn in as Vice-President

Inspired, motivated to be ever in service of Bharat, he tweets after Raj Ghat visit

- Article 63: There shall be a Vice President of India
- Article 64: The Vice-President shall be ex-officio Chairman of the Council of States and shall not hold any other office of profit
- Article 69: Every Vice-President shall make an Oath or Affirmation on entering upon his office before the President, or some person appointed in that behalf by him

AHEAD OF THE CURVE

A forerunner to the Great Rebellion of 1857

The perceived harm to religious practices was the trigger for the 1806 Vellore Revolt, which saw Hindus and Muslims together fight the British

T. RAMAKRISHNAN

Tamil Nadu, which played an important role in the country's freedom struggle and produced a number of sterling leaders during the national movement, had to its credit recorded an event, the Vellore Revolt of 1806, regarded as a forerunner to the 1857 Great Rebellion.

As in the case of the 1857 uprising, the perceived harm to religious practices was the trigger for the Vellore Revolt, which broke out in the early hours of July 10, 1806. Another similarity between the events of 1806 and 1857 was that Hindus and Muslims were on the same page while fighting the British. Again, as in the case of 1857, wherein a Muslim – the titular Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar – was proclaimed as the leader, the Vellore Revolt saw



Symbols of rebellion: The memorial pillar at Makkam signal; right, the Vellore Fort lit up in the colours of the national flag to mark the 75th anniversary of Indian Independence. •C. VENKATACHALAPATHY

TOPIC: UPRISING AGAINST BRITISH

The fort in Vellore, apart from serving as a testimony to the historic events, accommodates a site museum, which is being maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India.

its participants declaring Tipu Sultan's second son Fateh Hyder as their king. But the 1857 uprising lasted much longer than the 1806 Revolt and its coverage was more widespread. So was its impact.

In the early part of the 19th Century, just as many other parts of Tamil Nadu, Vellore too was under the control of the East India Company. Its famous fort, built during 1526-1595 CE, was 'home' to members of Tipu Sultan's family – 12 sons and six daughters – who were held there by the British after the

fall of Srirangapatnam and Tipu's death in 1799. It also housed the English garrison, which consisted of over 10 companies of soldiers, of whom Europeans accounted for nearly 370. As many as 1,700 soldiers were Indians.

In March 1806, the introduction of a code of military regulations and dress generated resentment among the Indian soldiers as Hindus were prohibited from wearing religious marks on their foreheads and Muslims were required to shave their beard and trim their moustache. As historian K.A. Manikumar

mentioned in an article published by *Frontline* on July 30, 2021, the most offensive part, from the Indian perspective, was the leather cockade in the new turban. Usually, the turban was made of an iron frame and blue braid cloth and a plume or cotton tuft.

Sent to Fort St. George The revolting soldiers were sent to Fort St. George. Two soldiers – a Hindu and a Muslim – were given 900 lashes each and their services terminated. Nineteen soldiers were given 500 lashes each

and forced to seek pardon for their action.

But this was not enough to suppress the sentiments of the Indian members of the Army. Around 2 a.m. on July 10, the Indians began their Revolt, killing nearly 15 British officers and 100 English soldiers. John Fancourt, Commander of the fort and garrison, was the first to be shot (He died hours after the Revolt was crushed). For some hours of the day, the Fort had Tipu's Royal Tiger Flag flying over it.

But the Revolt was crushed in a matter of hours

– by about 2 p.m. the same day – essentially due to weaknesses on the part of those who had planned and executed it. Reinforcements came from a nearby military post and Col. Rollo Gillespie led a counter-attack. Over 800 soldiers were killed inside the fort and 17 Indian officers hanged outside. Numerous persons were imprisoned at the Vellore and Tiruchi prisons. Tipu's sons were shifted to Kolkata. The event, however, alarmed the British. William Bentinck, Governor of Madras, was recalled.

The fort, apart from serving as a testimony to the historic events, accommodates a site museum, which is being maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

Letters from 1806

A storehouse of knowledge, the museum, functioning at the Badhusha Mahal and Begum Mahal, provides a glimpse of the events that preceded and followed the Revolt. A collection of letters from 1806 is one of the prized collections of the museum. It took more than 190

years for a structure to come up in Vellore in memory of the Indian soldiers killed in the Revolt. On December 20, 1998, the then Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi unveiled the memorial at the junction of Bengaluru Road and Officers' Line. Again, in July 2006, it was left to him to release a postal stamp in Vellore during the bicentenary celebration of the Revolt.

Karunanidhi had even announced that his government would consider installing another memorial for the martyrs. There has been little progress in this regard.

VELLORE REVOLT

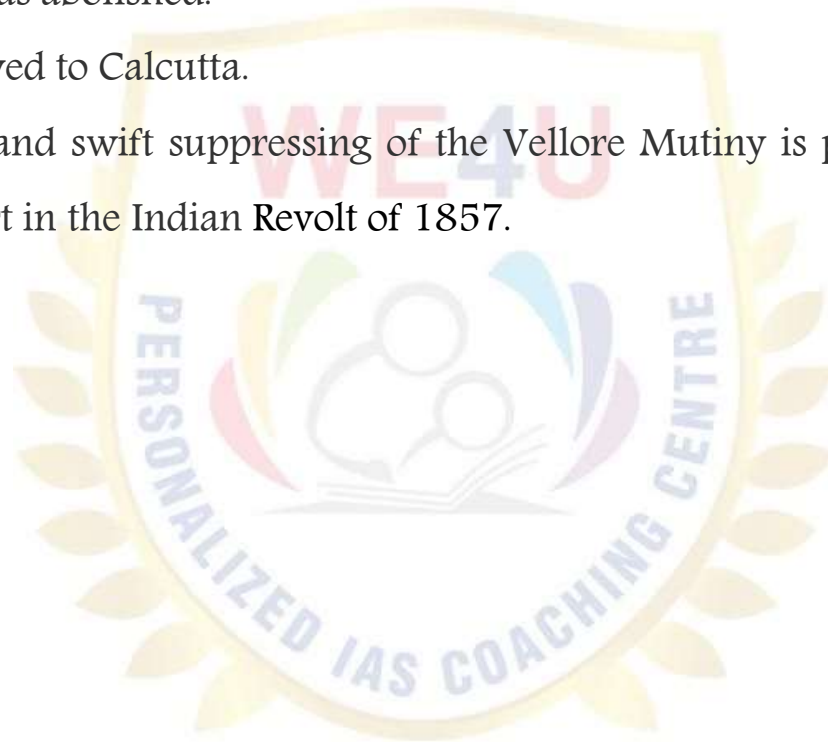
■ Vellore Mutiny Causes

- The English disregard to the religious sensitivities of the Hindu and Muslim Indian sepoy.
- Sir John Craddock, the Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Army had issued orders prohibiting soldiers from wearing religious marks on their foreheads and also to trim their moustaches and shave off their beards. This offended both Hindu and Muslim soldiers.
- They were also asked to wear new round hats instead of the traditional headgear that they were used to. This led to suspicion among the sepoy that they were being converted to Christianity.
- A few sepoy who had protested against these new orders were taken to Fort St. George and punished severely. They were given heavy flogging.

The **major impact** of the Vellore mutiny are given below:

- All three Madras regiments involved in the Vellore Mutiny were disbanded.
- After a trial, sepoy involved in the mutiny were punished by death (blown away from canons, hanging and firing squads) and by penal transportation.
- John Craddock and other senior British officers responsible for the new dress regulations were recalled to Britain.
- The new dress regulations were abolished.

- Flogging for Indian soldiers was abolished.
- Tipu Sultan's family were moved to Calcutta.
- It is believed that the brutal and swift suppressing of the Vellore Mutiny is partly responsible for the Southern sepoys not taking part in the Indian Revolt of 1857.



TOPIC:REVOLUTIONARY TERRORISM

DARING ACT

A political assassination in south India

Robert William Ashe was the first and last British officer to be assassinated in the region

B. KOLAPPAN

It was 9.30 a.m. on June 17, 1911. Maniyachi Mail was at the Tirunelveli Junction. Robert William Ashe, the Collector of Tirunelveli, was on the train with his wife. As the train was about to leave the station, two youth boarded it, and as it reached Maniyachi at 10.35 a.m., the two young men moved towards the First Class carriage. The one wearing a coat shot Ashe in the chest with a pistol.

The book *Ashe Kolaiyum Indiya Puratchi Iyakkamum* (Murder of Ashe and Indian Revolutionary Movement - Kalachuvadu Publishers) by A. Sivasubramanian reads like a thriller. The youth who shot Ashe was R. Vanchinathan and his comrade was Madasamy, hailing from Ottapidaram, and a close friend of freedom fighter V.O. Chidambaram Pillai. Madasamy ran across some paddy fields and fled while Vanchinathan hid in a toilet and shot himself. A letter was recovered from his pocket. "It was the first political assassination in the Freedom Movement in South India. It was not done unilaterally by a few but had close links with revolutionary terrorism in North India and the revolutionaries who functioned outside India un-



Vanchinathan

der the leadership of Madam Cama," writes Mr. Sivasubramanian, a former professor of V.O.C. College, Thoothukudi. The Browning automatic pistol used by Vanchinathan was sent from France by Madam Cama. "Ashe was the first and the last British officer who was assassinated in South India," writes historian A.R. Venkatachalapathy.

Ashe was buried in the English Church in Palayamkottai. Vanchinathan was 25 when he died, and his father Ragupathi Iyer refused to perform his last rites.

Vanchinathan, an employee of the Forest Department in erstwhile Travancore, was a member of the Abinav Bharathi Samithi, launched by V.D. Savarkar and had close contacts with Nilakanta Brahmachari.

"Once he (Vanchinathan) came to meet me in Pudukcherry. Since I was not there, he had met V.V.S. Iyer, who

spotted his boldness and unwavering mind, and convinced him to kill Ashe," wrote Nilakanta Brahmachari, who was arraigned as the first accused in the case.

Political or casteist?

The letter recovered from Vanchinathan gave rise to a controversy many decades later over his motive. After Congress leader Kumari Ananthan demanded that Maniyachi railway station be named after Vanchinathan, the Dravidar Kazhagam sought to portray Vanchinathan as 'casteist', and Ashe as a saviour of the oppressed class. In the letter, Vanchinathan had accused the British of destroying 'sanatana dharma' and of trying to organise a crowning ceremony for "the beef eater" and "panchama" King of England (George V, who visited India later in 1911). His detractors contend Vanchinathan was upset because Ashe allowed all communities to bathe in the Courtallam Falls and transported a pregnant Dalit woman in his coach through the streets of caste Hindus.

"I have not found any records or evidence to support these incidents. The assassination had no narrow casteist and selfish motives. It was purely political," Mr. Sivasubramanian said.

He argued one should not single out Vanchinathan for his beliefs as those who were involved in the case had not freed themselves from their faith in religion and 'sanatana dharma.'

"They belonged to the Velala and Brahmin communities, who occupied the top layer of society. Their shortcomings notwithstanding, they were driven by the fervour of the Freedom Movement," he said.

Mr. Venkatachalapathy had invited Ashe's grandson Robert to visit India on the occasion of his death centenary in 2011. He could not come, but wrote a letter to Vanchinathan's family. It reads: "On this day of sad but proud remembrance, we, the grandchildren and great grandchildren of Robert William Ashe would like to extend to the family of Vanchi Iyer, a message of reconciliation and friendship. Vanchi was an idealist political campaigner whose zeal for the freedom of his beloved India sent Robert to his early grave. Moments later, he took his own young life. All who act fervently in the political arena, both ruler and oppressed, risk making mortal mistakes, and we who are fortunate enough to live on, must forgive and live in peace together."

- Abhinav Bharat Society (Young India Society) was an Indian Independence secret society founded by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar and his brother Ganesh Damodar Savarkar in 1904.
- Initially founded at Nasik as "Mitra Mela" when Vinayak Savarkar was still a student of Fergusson College at Pune, the society grew to include several hundred revolutionaries and political activists with branches in various parts of India, extending to London after Savarkar went to study law.
- It carried out a few assassinations of British officials, after which the Savarkar brothers were convicted and imprisoned.
- The society was formally disbanded in 1952

TOPIC: EARLY UPRISING AGAINST BRITISH

FOLK HERO

Kuyili: a warrior in Velu Nachiyar's army

The 18th Century freedom fighter's legend lives on in oral tradition

PON VASANTH B.A.

When Tamil Nadu's tableau depicting the State's role in the Freedom Movement was rejected for the Republic Day parade in Delhi this year, the issue became controversial. The Tamil Nadu government exhibited the tableau across the State and also used it in the Republic Day parade in Chennai.

One of the personalities prominently featured in the tableau was queen Velu Nachiyar, who ruled Sivaganga in the late 18th Century. President of India Draupadi Murmu mentioned Velu Nachiyar in her inaugural speech recently.

The tableau also featured another woman warrior near Velu Nachiyar. While Velu Nachiyar's story has gained popularity in recent times as the queen who fought against the British even before Rani of Jhansi, many would have wondered who the other woman was.

It was Kuyili, believed to be a brave warrior and an aide of Velu Nachiyar. Unfortunately, no written history exists about her life. However, a few writers



Not forgotten: The memorial pillar built in honour of Kuyili near Sivaganga. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

have tried in the last few decades to paint the story of Kuyili based on oral histories and folk songs.

According to such writers, Kuyili worked initially in the palace of Velu Nachiyar and later became a key person in the queen's army. Information presented by these writers vary slightly regarding the details of how Kuyili met Velu Nachiyar and the equation between the two. However, details about her valour and her ultimate sacrifice remain the same in all these versions. According to them, Kuyili set herself ablaze and jumped into an armoury of the British, the-

reby destroying it completely.

R. Lenin, who wrote a book on Kuyili under the pen name 'Santhimavo', argues in his book that many folk songs sung in the villages of Sivaganga refer to Kuyili. The book says the deity Theepanja Amman (the name roughly translates to the goddess who jumped into fire), worshipped in Muthupatti village, was in fact Kuyili. Similarly, he points out that a family in Idaikattur village performs annual rituals in the Tamil month of Maasi for Kuyili.

R. Kaleeswaran, a member of the Loyola Students

Support Services in Loyola College, Chennai, and who also runs the organisation Alternative Media Centre, has done similar research before Mr. Lenin and documented many folk songs. He says one cannot insist on written history to trace the stories of those from marginalised communities.

There has been opposition as well from certain sections to the narrative on Kuyili's life. While some argue such a person never existed and the incidents described were unlikely to have happened, others claim she did not belong to the marginalised Arunthathiyar (a Scheduled Caste) community as widely accepted.

When the Tamil Nadu government decided to set up a memorial statue for Velu Nachiyar and an adjacently located memorial for Kuyili in Sivaganga district, the opposition from these sections became more vocal. Mr. Kaleeswaran says he presented all the findings based on oral histories to the State government to persuade it to not heed to such criticisms. The monument was inaugurated by then Chief Minister Jayalalithaa in July 2014.

- Kuyili was an army commander of queen Velu Nachiyar who participated in campaigns against the East India Company in the 18th century. She is considered the first suicide bomber and "first women martyr" in Indian history

TOPIC: EARLY UPRISING AGAINST BRITISH

RELENTLESS FIGHTER

Oomai Durai's reward for 'purest patriotism' was to grace the gallows

Though overshadowed by his sibling Kattabomman, the silent but feared warrior has been accorded a pre-eminent position in both British records and southern ballads for continuing the rebellion at Panchalankurichi after his brother's death

B. KOLAPPAN

Though he was a most capable leader and a fierce fighter, he was overshadowed by the personality of his no less mighty elder brother - as it sometimes happens in history.

When the life of Veerapandiya Kattabomman was made into a film, with the thespian Sivaji Ganesan in the lead role, the character of Oomai Durai, his brother, was relegated to the sidelines. But both the records of the British and southern ballads accord him a pre-eminent position as the one who continued the rebellion with even greater fervour after Kattabomman was captured and hanged.

Colonel James Welsh, the British officer, who waged the war against the Poligars or Palayakarars in South Tamil Nadu, in his book *Military Reminiscences* says, "He [Durai] at last doomed to grace a gallows, in reward for the most disinterested and purest patriotism."

In the fourth chapter, which ends with the capture and hanging of rival Palayakarars, Welsh writes of Oomai Durai that he "cannot close this account of horrors, without a few words, in memory of one of the most extraordinary mortals I ever knew, who was both deaf and dumb."

Jagaveerapandiyanar, an author of recent years, hails Oomai Durai in glowing terms in his book *Panchalankurichi Veeracharithram*, writing, "He knew no fear. If Panchalankurichi is still known by Oomiyanseemai, it bears testimony to his political and administrative skills."

He also contends that since he stammered a lot, he chose to remain silent generally and was affectionately dubbed Oomai Durai - he



Silent warrior: A stone relief of Oomai Durai. • N. RAJESH

had been named Thalavai Kumaraswamy by his parents. He was the younger brother of Kattabomman, the Palayakarar of Panchalankurichi, but Welsh refers to him as a cousin or a near relation.

"It is well-established that they were brothers. I do not know why Welsh had chosen to describe him as a near relative. A study of ballads, field works and British records clearly establishes that he is the younger brother," said V. Manickam, a retired professor of St. John's College, who studied the ballads on Kattabomman for his Ph.D. thesis.

cate the boy, but when she set about removing him for treatment, he told her weakly but firmly, "Oh mother! let me die, but try to save the life of Swamy (Durai), who too was wounded and lies near me." And she obeyed and shifted the 'Swamy' with the help of some others to a safe place, evading the enemies along the way by claiming he had been infected with small pox.

Mr. Manickam explained that the British were very particular in subduing Panchalankurichi because it was the richest Palayam. "Its revenue was equal to that of six Palayams." Obviously because fertile regions like Attur, Arumugamangalam, Alwarthirunagari and Srivakuntam, where paddy was cultivated

Jagaveerapandiyanar, an author of recent years, hails Oomai Durai in glowing terms in his book *Panchalankurichi Veeracharithram*, writing, "He knew no fear. If Panchalankurichi is still known by Oomiyanseemai, it bears testimony to his political and administrative skills."

ed, fell under the Panchalankurichi subdivision.

Welsh vividly portrayed how Oomai Durai mobilised his people in the campaigns against the British.

"His method of representing the English was extremely simple: he collected a few little pieces of straw, arranged them on the palm of his left hand to represent the English force; then, with other signs, for the time, he drew the other hand across and swept them off, with a whizzing sound from his mouth, which was the signal for attack; and he was generally the foremost in ex-

ecuting those plans, for our annihilation," says Welsh.

First, Major Bannerman overwhelmed Kattabomman with his cannon and had the leader hanged in 1799 in Kayathar. The younger brother was detained in Palayamkottai prison along with 14 other rebels. They were in jail for almost a year while Oomai Durai hatched a plan for escape.

His supporters, entered Palayamkottai in disguise, stormed the jail and released all the detained comrades. They fled to Panchalankurichi, which is 30 km away, where Oomai Durai succeeded in rebuilding Kattabomman's fort that had been razed. They accomplished this formidable task in under five days. The shell-shocked British resumed attacks on Panchalankurichi after reinforcements arrived. Many sepoy of the East India Company perished in the clashes at the time, and they had to sue for peace. Welsh himself acknowledges the generosity of Oomai Durai, who unconditionally accorded permission to the British to collect and bury the mutilated bodies of their soldiers. But Oomai Durai's victory proved short-lived.

The Panchalankurichi fort was destroyed a second time, but Oomai Durai managed to escape again. "He escaped and joined the Marudu Brothers, who gave him asylum which, predictably, infuriated the British. Hostilities became inevitable, and the Marudu brothers too were duly vanquished, but the Cat, as Oomai Durai was called, was not. He took refuge in Virupachi hills and continued to fight. Unfortunately, though he was plagued by a lack of food supply and also by diseases among his ranks and had to give in. At the end, he was hanged at the cannon tower in Panchalankurichi," Mr. Manickam said.

- Oomathurai (real name Kumarasamy Naiyakar), was an Indian Poligar (Palaiyakkarar) from Tamil Nadu, who fought against the British East India Company in the Polygar Wars.

- He was the younger brother of Veerapandiya Kattabomman. He died due to hanging by British in Tirumayam, Pudukottai Dist.
- Poligar:Kakatiya dynasty/Vijayanagara Empire, Madurai Nayakas

Kodi Kaatha Kumaran, the man who held the flag aloft

A weaver from Tiruppur left his mark in the Freedom Movement's history as the one who protected the Tricolour's honour

- Kumaraswamy Mudaliar was born on 04 October 1904 in a middle-class family in Chennimalai, now Erode in Tamil Nadu
- Inspired by Gandhiji's values and objectives, he began participating in demonstrations and activities as per Gandhiji's directives
- He became so involved in the Indian independence movement that he soon founded the Desa Bandhu Youth Association. The members of this group were primarily the youth from Tamil Nadu and other surrounding areas who were eager to fight for India's independence. Together, they organized numerous anti-British protest marches all across Tamil Nadu. Kumaran was fondly referred to as Tirupur Kumaran as he was the motivational factor in the youth joining the freedom movement.
- 11 January 1932 in the, in Tirupur, a patriotic march led by Thiyagi P S Sundaram was held in honour of the movement and to also show their defiance towards the British authorities

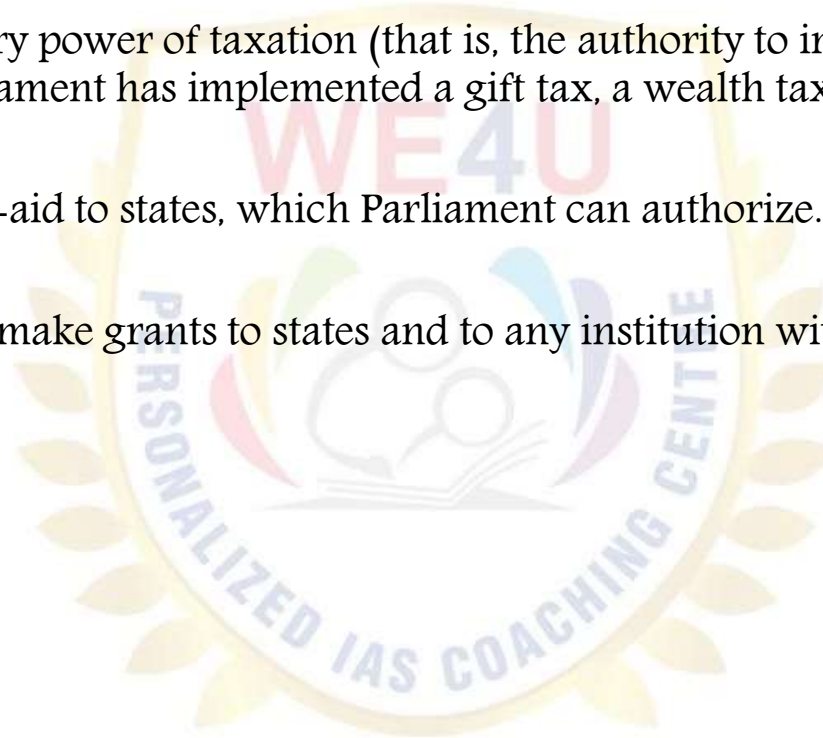
TOPIC:CENTRE STATE RELATIONS

A timely gesture

Transferring more tax devolutions to States early in the year is a prudent move

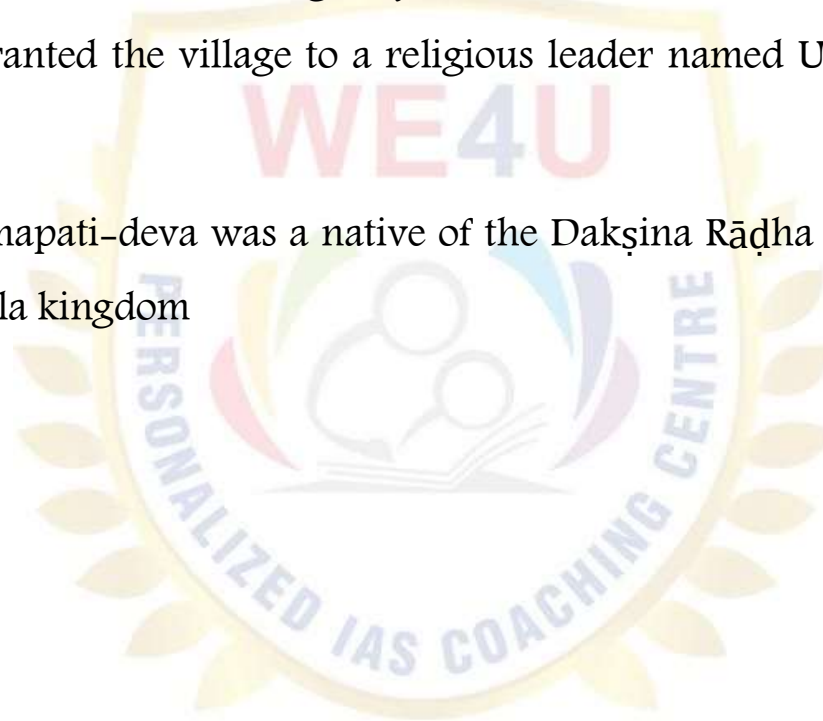
- Financial Relations between Union and State
- Part XII of the Indian Constitution deals with financial relations between the centre and the states.
- The Finance Commission (Article 280) makes recommendations to the President on the division of net tax receipts between the centre and the states.
- Indian Constitution divides the taxation authorities between the Central government and the states in the following ways;
- Parliament has sole authority to charge the taxes included in the Union List.
- The state legislature has sole authority to impose the taxes listed on the state list.

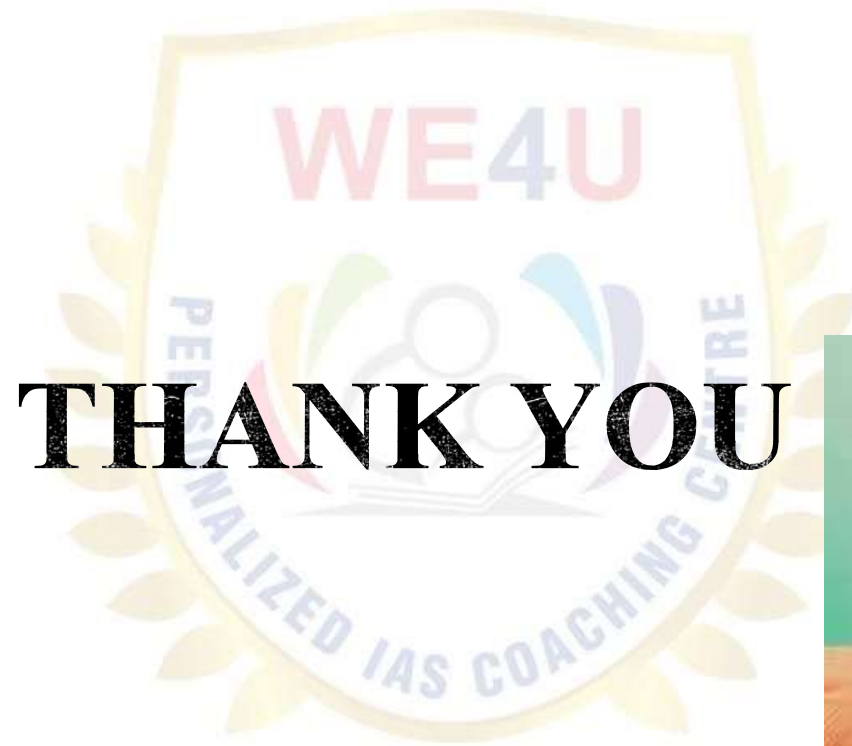
- The taxes included in the Concurrent List can be imposed by both Parliament and state legislatures.
- The Parliament has the residuary power of taxation (that is, the authority to impose taxes not listed in any of the three lists). The parliament has implemented a gift tax, a wealth tax, and an expenditure tax under this clause.
- The Union can make grants-in-aid to states, which Parliament can authorize. Such funds are applied to India's Consolidated Fund.
- The Union has the authority to make grants to states and to any institution within those states for public purposes.



STOLEN BHUDDHA ERA IDOL STUCKS IN U.S

- Arapakkam is a village in the Kanchipuram district of Tamil Nadu, India.
- The Arapakkam inscription, dated to the fifth regnal year of the Chola ruler Rajadhiraja II (r. c. 1166–1178), states that a Chola chieftain had granted the village to a religious leader named Umapati-deva (also known as Jnana-Siva and Svamidevar).
- The inscription states that Umapati-deva was a native of the Dakṣina Rāḍha (present-day West Bengal), and had migrated to the southern Chola kingdom





THANK YOU

