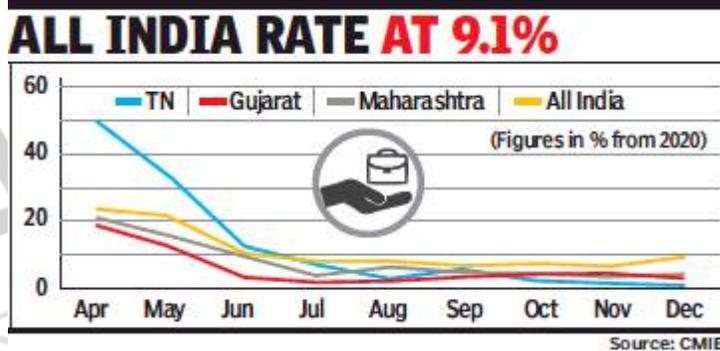


EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JANUARY 5, 2021

TAMIL NADU

- **Tamil Nadu's unemployment rate - fell to 5-year low of 0.5% in December, 2020 from 1.1% in November, 2020**
- ✓ The drop in the rate is attributed to an increase in industrial and agricultural activity alongwith a rise in the services sector's contribution



- ✓ This was revealed by the data released by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy.
- ✓ Nationally, the unemployment rate rose to 9.1% in December from 6.5% a month ago.
- ✓ Among the large manufacturing states, Gujarat's unemployment rate dropped to 3% from 3.9%, while Maharashtra's rate rose to 3.9% from 3.1% between November and December.
- ✓ Anyone who has earned a salary or wage in a particular month is considered employed.
- ✓ The unemployment rate in Tamil Nadu showed a direct correlation to the unlock guidelines.
- ✓ When the state was under complete lockdown in April, the rate was 49.8%, which gradually fell to 8.1% in July, 5% in September and dropped further to 2.2% in October

- ✓ After the Centre increased the allocation for Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in May 2020, there was an increase (year on year) in rural employment generation.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu had 41 million person days of employment under the scheme in October 2020, the highest among states and an increase of 151% year on year.
- **The state government - has sanctioned ₹22.3 crore to Greater Chennai Corporation to tackle Covid-19 pandemic.**
 - ✓ The fund has been allocated from the state disaster response fund (SDRF) for engaging manpower, procuring PPEs, masks, testing kits and other expenses towards handling of the pandemic.
 - ✓ The move follows the representation from GCC commissioner requesting that an amount of ₹70.91 crore be sanctioned towards expenses incurred for July and August 2020.
 - ✓ Of the total amount sanctioned, ₹3.07 crore was allocated towards manpower expenses, ₹9.4 crore towards procuring PPEs, masks and testing kits, ₹3.48 crore for disinfection material, machinery and ₹6.33 crore towards transportation and food arrangements for staff.
 - ✓ Meanwhile, Greater Chennai Corporation authorities have been directed to audit the expenditure from the SDRF and state disaster management authority fund through Director of Local Fund Audit.
- **On January 4, the Tamil Nadu government - permitted cinema theatres and multiplexes to screen movies with 100% occupancy.**
 - ✓ The move is expected to help new Tamil films releasing ahead of the Pongal festival in the state
 - ✓ The decision has been taken by the government considering the decrease in Covid-19 cases day-by-day in the state
 - ✓ Earlier, based on the directions of the ministry of home affairs, cinemas/theatres/multiplexes were permitted to open from November 10, 2020
 - ✓ They were permitted to screen movies with 50% of their seating capacity by following the standard operating procedure.
 - ✓ Tamil Nadu has 1,213 screens, with over 6.36 lakh seats.

STATES

- **On January 4, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and Rajasthan - confirmed the outbreak of bird flu (avian influenza) in the states**
 - ✓ The disease is attributed as the cause of death of hundreds of birds in these states
 - ✓ Further, several other states including Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand sounded alerts on the disease.

- ✓ In Kerala, bird flu was reported in Kottayam and Alappuzha and that 12,000 ducks were killed by the disease.

STATES TAKE STEPS

- 2,300 migratory birds dead in HP. **Sale, purchase, slaughter of poultry banned in Fatehpur, Dehra, Jawali, Indora.** Export of poultry and fish stopped
- In Kerala, cases in Kottayam and Alappuzha; **12,000 ducks killed.** Birds within 1km radius of affected areas to be culled
- 522 birds dead in Rajasthan's Jhalawar, Kota, Baran, Bikaner, Dausa and Jodhpur



- ✓ The presence of the H5N8 subtype of the Influenza A virus was reported in ducks
- ✓ All birds within one-kilometre radius of the areas in which bird flu was reported will be culled to avoid further spread of the disease as per the centre's guidelines
- ✓ This would include all types of poultry and ornamental birds, numbering around 36,000 birds

Influenza Type A Viruses

Subtypes ■ Hemagglutinin (HA)
■ Neuraminidase (NA)

(Viruses are divided into subtypes on the basis of two proteins on the surface of the virus)



■ 18 known HA subtypes



■ 11 known NA subtypes

Different combinations of HA and NA proteins are possible

- An H7N2 virus designates an influenza A virus subtype that has an HA7 protein and an NA2 protein
- H5N1 virus has an HA5 protein and an NA1 protein

Influenza A H5

- There are nine known subtypes of H5 viruses
- H5N1, H5N2, H5N3, H5N4, H5N5, H5N6, H5N7, H5N8, H5N9

All known subtypes of Influenza A viruses can infect birds, except subtypes H17N10 and H18N11, which have only been found in bats

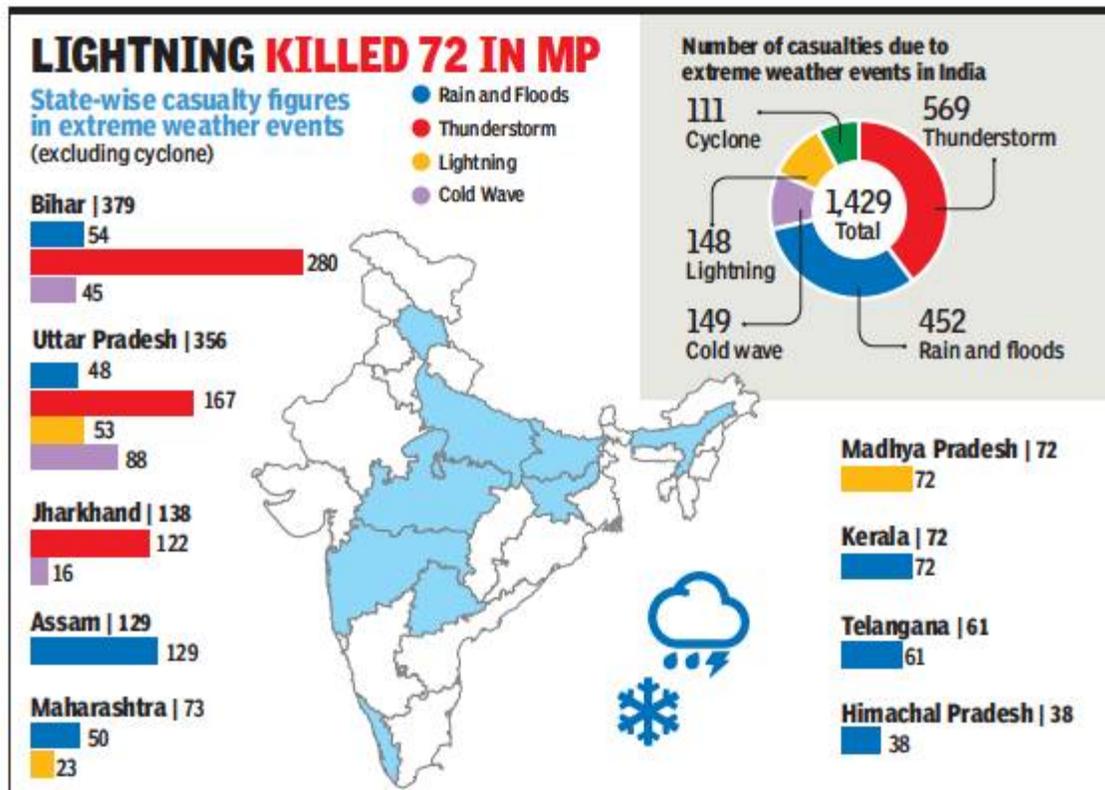
- ✓ This is the third outbreak of bird flu in Alappuzha over the past seven years.
- ✓ The death of around 2,300 migratory birds in the Pong Dam reservoir area in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh was also attributed to avian flu.
- ✓ Around 95% of birds that were found dead in the Pong Dam Sanctuary were the Bar Headed Geese that migrate from Siberia and Mongolia.
- ✓ As a precaution, the state government has banned the sale, purchase and slaughter of poultry in various districts.

- ✓ The Pong Dam is an artificial embankment dam constructed across the Beas river in Himachal Pradesh
- ✓ The dam was constructed for hydroelectric power generation and irrigation
- ✓ Around 1.15 to 1.2 lakh birds migrate to Pong Dam Bird Sanctuary during winters every year
- ✓ The reservoir created by the dam is called Maharana Pratap Sagar, which is a renowned bird Sanctuary
- ✓ It is one of the International wetland sites of Ramsar convention

NATIONAL

- **The Ministry Of External Affairs (MEA) - has written to the Election Commission approving its recent proposal to allow non-resident Indians (NRIs) to vote remotely through electronically-transmitted postal ballot system (ETPBS) from their country of residence.**
 - ✓ However, it has suggested that the poll body hold consultations with all stakeholders, including NRI associations and various ministries and departments, before rolling out the facility.
 - ✓ As per the existing election laws, NRIs must cast their vote in person at their respective constituencies in India.
 - ✓ The ETPBS facility is already extended to service voters that include members of the Armed forces and para-military forces as well as government employees serving abroad.
 - ✓ Earlier, the Election Commission proposed that necessary amendments be made in the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, “at the earliest” to enable the Indian diaspora to vote through postal ballot
 - ✓ This was communicated to the law secretary by the EC in its November 27 letter
 - ✓ The change is expected to be implemented in general elections to legislative assemblies of Assam, West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry due in April-May, 2021
 - ✓ There are around 1.17 lakh NRIs registered as voters in the electoral rolls.
- **The India Meteorological Department (IMD) – has announced that the year 2020 was the eighth warmest year in India since nation-wide records commenced in 1901**
 - ✓ This was revealed by the IMD’s ‘Climate of India during 2020’ report released on January 4
 - ✓ The month of September was the warmest, followed by August and October in 2020
 - ✓ A total of over 1,400 lives were killed with thunderstorms and lightning together accounting for more than half of them.
 - ✓ As per the report, the annual mean land surface and air temperature for the country in the year 2020 was 0.29 °Celsius above the 1981-2010 period average

- ✓ This was substantially lower than the highest warming observed over India during 2016 (above 0.71°C).



- ✓ “The mean temperatures exceeded the normal during September (by 0.72 °C, warmest since 1901), August (by 0.58 °C, second warmest), October (by 0.94 °C, third warmest), July (by 0.56 °C, fifth warmest), and December (by 0.39 °C, seventh warmest),” as per the report.
- ✓ As per the IMD, 12 out of 15 warmest years were recorded during the recent fifteen years (2006-2020) with the year 2019 being the seventh warmest.
- ✓ The five warmest years on record were 2016 (+0.71 °C), 2009 (+0.55 °C), 2017 (+0.541 °C), 2010 (+0.539 °C), and 2015 (+0.42 °C).
- ✓ Globally, the mean surface temperature anomaly during 2020 (January to October as per WMO state of the global climate) was +1.2 °C.
- ✓ The World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) will release the report of global January-December estimates by March 2021.
- ✓ Annual rainfall over India as a whole was 109% of its long period average (LPA), based on the data of 1961-2010, last year.
- **The Government of India - recently launched the 40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica.**
- ✓ Ice class vessel MV Vasiliy Golovin has been deployed for the expedition, which was launched by the Ministry of Earth science.



- ✓ The expedition will be carried out by a team of 40 members, who will return by April 2021.
- ✓ It will mainly focus on ongoing scientific projects on ocean observations, climate change, electric and magnetic flux measurements, geology, resupplying of food, environmental monitoring, fuel, and accomplish the return of the winter crew.
- ✓ The first ever Indian scientific expedition to Antarctica began in 1981.
- ✓ Dakshin Gangotri, Bharti, Maitri are the various Indian research base stations in Antarctica
- ✓ Dakshin Gangotri was the first permanent settlement of India in Antarctica built in the year 1983.
- ✓ Maitri was the second permanent settlement of India in Antarctica, which was located close to Lake Priyadarshini.
- ✓ It had completed the mission of geomorphological mapping of Schirmacher Oasis.
- ✓ Bharti was established in 2015 to collect evidence of continental break up and reveal the 120-million-year-old ancient history of Indian subcontinent.
- ✓ National Centre for polar and ocean research located in Goa manages the Indian research base stations in Antarctica
- ✓ The Indian Antarctic program was launched in 1981 after India signed the Antarctic treaty.
- ✓ The Treaty was signed in 1961 and there are 54 signatories as on date.
- **The TRIFED (Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India) operating under Ministry of Tribal Affairs - signed a memorandum of understanding with Akhil Bhartiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram to setup TRIFOOD parks in Madhya Pradesh.**
 - ✓ As per the agreement, both the agencies will come together to implement Van Dhan Yojana
 - ✓ They will mobilize self help groups, TRIFOOD parks, Van Dhan Vikas Kendra for the implementation of the scheme
 - ✓ These entities will provide machinery and equipment, identify self help groups, organise training and build the necessary infrastructure.

- ✓ They will also focus on other activities such as Horticulture, fisheries, floriculture, animal husbandry and crafts to improve the livelihood of tribals.
- ✓ The TRIFOOD is a joint initiative of Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Ministry of food processing industry and TRIFED.
- ✓ It was launched under Van Dhan Yojana in August 2020.
- ✓ The TRIFOOD Parks are food processing centres, which aim to promote value addition to the minor forest produce.
- ✓ They will procure raw materials from Van Dhan Kendras and process them before selling the products across the country through the tribes India outlets.
- ✓ The Ministry of Tribal Affairs decides the minimum support price (MSP) for the minor forest produce

SUPREME COURT VERDICT

- **On January 4, Supreme Court – ruled that there will be no seizure of animals unless owner is convicted and proved guilty under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act**
- ✓ Accordingly, authorities have no power under the Act to confiscate animals from traders during pendency of cases
- ✓ The apex court had given a week's ultimatum to the Centre to either amend the Act or face a stay on the 2017 Rules which allowed confiscation.
- ✓ The verdict on a petition filed by Delhi-based Buffalo Traders' Welfare Association was pronounced by a bench of Chief Justice S A Bobde and Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian
- ✓ The Act mandated confiscation of animals from a transporter or owner only after he is convicted for causing cruelty to animals by a court of law, or had been previously convicted of such an offence.
- ✓ However, as per the March 2017 rules, the animals can be sent to infirmaries or animal shelters if police found that these have been treated cruelly or transported in a cruel or unhygienic manner.
- ✓ The Rules related to the verdict is the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Care and Maintenance of Case Property Animals) Rules, 2017 notified on May 23, 2017.
- ✓ The rules were framed under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960.
- ✓ The 2017 Rules allow a Magistrate to forfeit the cattle of an owner facing trial under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act.

INTERNATIONAL

- **On January 4, the UK - became the first nation in the world to start using the Covid-19 vaccine developed by Oxford University and drugmaker AstraZeneca**
- ✓ The UK has been recording over 50,000 new cases a day over the past six days due to a highly contagious virus variant

- ✓ Further, PM Boris Johnson is set to announce a new lockdown similar to the one imposed when the pandemic first hit the UK in March
- ✓ The measures include school closures and work for home option

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **India – has started to export food grains, especially rice, to Vietnam for the first time in decades**
- ✓ Vietnam has started the import of rice due to its attractive prices in Indian market.
- ✓ Vietnam is the third biggest exporter of rice in the world.
- ✓ The local prices in Vietnam jumped to the highest in the last nine years due to limited domestic supplies.
- ✓ This is mainly because Vietnam has begun to stockpile huge quantity of rice for future considering the pandemic situation
- ✓ The Indian traders are to export 70,000 tonnes of broken rice at around \$310 per ton to Vietnam.
- ✓ Vietnam is planning to stockpile \$270,000 of rice to ensure food availability amidst Covid-19 supply chain disruptions worldwide.
- ✓ The total paddy output of Vietnam in 2020 fell by 1.85 % compared to 2019.
- ✓ Further, the rice exports of Vietnam in 2020 have fallen by 3.5% as compared to 2019.
- ✓ In 2020 India exported a record 14 million tonnes of rice, becoming the world's biggest exporter of the grain

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **The Indian Space Research Organization - released the plan for the decade recently.**
- ✓ The plan included reusable satellite launch vehicle, heavy lift rocket and semi-cryogenic engine.
- ✓ As per the plan, ISRO is to complete its moon mission Chandrayaan-3, the solar mission Aditya-L1 and first Indian Data Relay Satellite in the next decade 2021-2030.
- ✓ Also, the space agency will launch the first developmental flight of the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle.
- ✓ Further, the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre will help developing the Semi-Cryogenic Propulsion capability.
- ✓ With this, the Indian rockets will be able to carry 5.5 tonnes to the Geostationary Transfer Orbit.
- ✓ The Aditya-L1 mission will become the first Indian scientific expedition to the sun.
- ✓ The Aditya space probe will be placed at a point in space called the L1 Lagrange point and hence the name Aditya-L1 mission.
- ✓ The mission will study the photosphere, chromospheres and corona of the sun.

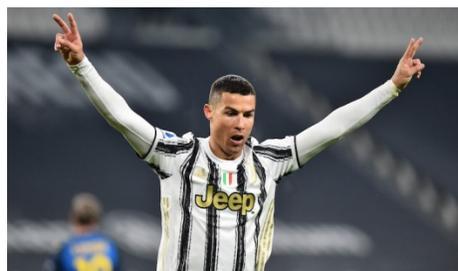
- ✓ It will also study solar winds, solar emissions and solar flares and Coronal Mass Ejections.
- ✓ Chandrayaan-3 is the planned third lunar mission of the ISRO.
- ✓ The Chandrayaan-3 is to include only Rover and lander without an orbiter
- ✓ Under Chandrayaan-2 mission, the lander failed to land on the lunar surface as it crashed during the last few maneuvers towards the ground.
- ✓ India is also planning to launch India Data Relay Satellite System series to track the space assets and enable communication between space-to-space assets.
- ✓ ISRO has planned to launch three of the satellites in the series, covering a third of the earth by each satellite.

ECONOMY

- **The Asian Development Bank - recently signed an agreement of \$100 million to modernize and upgrade the power distribution in Bengaluru city.**
- ✓ The funding is to be used to enhance the quality and reliability of electricity supply in Bengaluru city under the Bengaluru Smart Energy Efficient Power Distribution Project.
- ✓ Also, the loan will be used to install 2,800 km of fiber optical cables in a 'parallel' manner with the underground distribution cables
- ✓ This parallel laying of the electrical and communication lines will help to reduce technical and commercial losses by 30%.
- ✓ The fiber optical cables are to be used for smart metering systems and distribution automation system in the distribution grid.
- ✓ Also, the project will install 1,700 automated ring main units to control the distribution line switch gears.
- ✓ The Bengaluru Smart Energy Efficient Power Distribution Project aims to convert the overhead distribution lines into underground cables.
- ✓ Recently, ADB had announced the loan of \$231 million to increase power generation in Assam.
- ✓ The ADB is mainly assisting India in transport and power projects of India helping towards modernization of the country.

SPORTS

- **Juventus Superstar Cristiano Ronaldo - surpassed Brazilian legend Pele to become the second-highest goalscorer ever**



WHAT'S THE SCORE?

RONALDO SURPASSED PELE
TO BECOME THE 2ND-HIGHEST
SCORER FOR CLUB & COUNTRY

759	Josef Bican
758	Cristiano Ronaldo
757	Pele
742	Lionel Messi
734	Romario

- ✓ Five-time Ballond'Or winner Cristiano achieved the feat after scoring two goals for Juventus in the Serie A clash against Udinese on January 3
- ✓ Cristiano now ranks second in the list of all-time goal-scoring charts in football, only behind Austrian-Czech legend Josef Bican
- ✓ Josef Bican had scored 805 official goals in 530 matches between 1932 and 1955.
- ✓ Bican had played for the clubs of Slavia Prague, Rapid Vienna along with representing Austria and Czechoslovakia at the international level.

