

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS–FEBRUARY 9, 2021

TAMIL NADU

- The Srivilliputhur Megamalai Tiger Reserve – is officially notified as the fifth tiger reserve in Tamil Nadu.

Tiger reserves in TN	
Name	Area (In hectares)
Mudumalai	32,100
Kalakad Mundanthurai	70,654
Anamalai	95,859
Satyamangalam	79,349
Srivilliputhur-Megamalai	1,01,657.13
TN tiger population	
Census	No. of tigers
2006	76
2010	163
2014	229
2018	264



- ✓ In a government order issued on February 8, Forests Secretary Sandeep Saxena announced the creation of the new reserve.
- ✓ The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) has approved the creation of the tiger reserve in the state
- ✓ It will support the conservation of large mammals such as elephants, tigers, leopards, Indian gaur and Nilgiri tahr, besides the endangered grizzled giant squirrel,

- ✓ An area of 1,01,657.13 hectares or 1,016.5713 sq km in the Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary, Srivilliputhur, and the Megamalai Wildlife Sanctuary have been combined to create the new tiger reserve.
 - ✓ Of this, 64,186.21 hectare will be the core area and 37,470.92 hectare will fall under the buffer zone.
 - ✓ The new tiger reserve has Madurai territorial forest division in the north, Virudhunagar and Madurai district revenue areas on its east, Tirunelveli forest division and Periyar tiger reserve (Kerala) in south and Theni revenue district, Theni territorial forest division and partly Periyar reserve on its west as boundaries.
 - ✓ Significant parts of the Megamalai landscape encompassing Varushanad hills, Cumbam Valley and a portion of the northern slopes of the landscape together with the Madurai forest division were declared as the Megamalai wildlife sanctuary
 - ✓ With this new tiger reserve, Vaigai river and its catchments will be fully protected.
 - ✓ The tiger reserve will be headed by a field director in the rank of chief conservator of forests, who will be stationed at Madurai.
 - ✓ For this purpose, the post of chief conservator of forests, Madurai, will be re-designated as field director of the tiger reserve and chief conservator of forests, Madurai circle.
 - ✓ In Tamil Nadu, the Anamalai Tiger Reserve provides one of the largest habitats for the tigers and other co-predators.
 - ✓ The Srivilliputhur Wildlife Sanctuary was established in the year 1988 with the objective of protecting the near threatened grizzled giant squirrel
 - ✓ The sanctuary is bordered by the Periyar Tiger Reserve in the southwest
- **Tamil Nadu government – to establish 10 more Emergency Care and Recovery Centres (ECRCs) in two phases to take care of the wandering mentally ill persons**
- ✓ The National Health Mission (NHM)-Tamil Nadu, in coordination with the Directorates of Medical Education and Medical and Rural Health Services, the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) and The Banyan, an NGO, entered into a tripartite agreement in the presence of Health Secretary J. Radhakrishnan.
 - ✓ The aim of the agreement was to operationalise ECRCs to cater to homeless persons with mental illness.
 - ✓ Already, the NHM has established ECRCs in 10 districts.
 - ✓ The additional ECRCs will come up in Madurai, Tenkasi, Sivaganga, Thanjavur, the Nilgiris, Erode, Krishnagiri, Cuddalore, Kanniyakumari and Tirunelveli.
 - ✓ The identified NGOs would extend services, including outreach, rescue, treatment, rehabilitation, reintegration and after-care.
 - ✓ Earlier, care for the wandering mentally ill was taken up through the District Mental Health Programme (DMHP).
 - ✓ The ECRC is a model developed by The Banyan

- **On February 7, as many as 100 Femto satellites - were launched from Rameswaram, the birthplace of former President APJ Abdul Kalam**
- ✓ Also known as miniaturised satellites or smallsats, these includes one made by 10 students from an Aurangabad municipal corporation (AMC) school
- ✓ The initiative was part of the Dr APJ Adbul Kalam Space Research Payload Cubes Challenge – 2021, and is scheduled to enter into the record books.

STATES

- **On February 8, the Karnataka government - passed the anti-cow slaughter bill in the legislative council.**



- ✓ The Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Bill, 2020 was passed by a voice vote and now awaits the governor's assent.
- ✓ The bill, which envisages a total ban on cow slaughter, was already passed by the state assembly on December 9
- ✓ On January 5, the government promulgated the anti-cow slaughter ordinance that provides for punishment for killing of cattle
- ✓ Under the ordinance, slaughter of cattle would lead to imprisonment of upto 3 to 7 years and a fine ranging from ₹ 50,000 to ₹ 5 lakh.
- ✓ Subsequent offences would attract imprisonment of upto seven years and a fine from ₹ 1 lakh to ₹ 10 lakh.
- ✓ As per the ordinance, cattle is defined as a cow, calf of a cow, bull and bullock of all ages and buffalo below the age of 13, while beef has been defined as the flesh of the cattle in any form
- ✓ The Bill also terms shelters established for the protection and preservation of cattle registered with the Department of Animal Husbandry and Fisheries as 'gau shalas'.
- ✓ For a Bill to become a law, its passage in both Houses followed by assent by the Governor is necessary.

NATIONAL

- **The Centre – has allocated Rs. 1050 crore for Sub Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) for the financial year 2021-2022 in the Union Budget**

- ✓ The SMAM scheme was launched in the year 2014-15
 - ✓ It aims to make the farm machines accessible and affordable for the small and marginal farmers (SMFs).
 - ✓ To achieve the goal, the scheme seeks to establish the custom hiring centres and farm machinery banks, thereby creating hubs for hi-tech & high value farm equipment
 - ✓ Under the scheme, the subsidized agricultural equipment and machines are provided by the government to individual farmers on a 'hire' basis.
 - ✓ It also raises awareness among the stakeholders by demonstrating the machine operations and skill development of farmers
 - ✓ Further, the performance testing and certification of machines at the designated testing centres ensures the functioning of farm machinery effectively and efficiently.
 - ✓ Under the scheme, Rs.4556.93 crores of funds has been released for the States during the financial year 2014-2015 to 2020-2021.
 - ✓ Around 13 lakh agricultural machines have been distributed to the farmers so far
 - ✓ Moreover, 27.5 thousand custom hiring institutions have been established as of now.
- **On February 7, Union Fisheries Minister Giriraj Singh - announced an investment of ₹ 400 crore in Goa to make it a fisheries hub of India**
- ✓ The amount of the investment would jointly be raised by the Union government and the state fisheries board.
 - ✓ The State of Goa has huge potential for the fishery industry and the grant will be used to revive the industry and ensure safe fishing practices
 - ✓ Already, Rs. 41.47 crore has been sanctioned by the Centre to the state to develop the fishery industry
 - ✓ As per the plan, 30 fish landing jetties will be created in order for the fishermen to anchor their boats near their villages.
 - ✓ Goa has nine landing jetties already that are used for fishing and tourism purposes.
 - ✓ A Goa-based CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) has revealed that 200 sq km area in the coastal state is feasible for cage culture.
 - ✓ Cage culture is an aquaculture production system in which the fish are held in floating net pens.
 - ✓ Further, the central government will be appointing "Sagar Mitra" for all the 70 fishing villages in Goa.
 - ✓ The Sagar Mitra would help fishermen to communicate with the government.
 - ✓ India ranks second in aquaculture while it is ranked third in the fisheries production.
 - ✓ Fisheries sector amounts to 1.07% of the Total GDP of India.

- **The National Highways Authority of India - has awarded the contract of 150 advanced ambulances which will all be deployed at all public funded toll plazas.**
- ✓ The move aims to provide ambulance to road accident victims on national highways in less than 20 minutes, so as to save lives in case of crashes
- ✓ Private players are mandated to deploy an ambulance at every 50 km that fall under their jurisdictions.
- ✓ All future contracts including three-year maintenance for all National Highways that are with the state PWDs will include provision for incident management
- ✓ This will involve the provision of ambulances, tow away and highway patrol vehicles for quick rescue of victims and to remove parked or breakdown vehicles.
- ✓ The road transport and highways ministry is introducing this provision based on the experience of Tamil Nadu, where road deaths have fallen drastically due to these measures.

INTERNATIONAL

- **Sri Lanka - cleared a Chinese energy project in three islands off Jaffna peninsula that are barely 50 km from the Tamil Nadu coast**
- ✓ The Cabinet approved a proposal to involve Sinosoar-Etechwin Joint Venture in China to install 'hybrid renewable energy systems' in Nainativu, Delft or Neduntheevu, and Analaitivu, located in the Palk Bay.
- ✓ The islands are connected to the Jaffna peninsula by a limited ferry service, managed mostly by the Sri Lankan Navy.
- ✓ Delft island is one of the closest points to India from northern Sri Lanka.
- ✓ Following years of neglect, the islands have remained much less developed compared to Jaffna peninsula.
- ✓ The project is backed by the Asian Development Bank
- ✓ Sri Lanka has recently decided to pull out of the East Container Terminal (ECT) deal with India and Japan

- **Russia - to launch 40 satellites into orbit from 18 different countries of the world in March 2021**
- ✓ The satellites will be launched using the Soyuz-2.1 carrier rocket on March 20, 2021.
- ✓ It will blast off with the South Korean Compact Advanced Satellite 500 space vehicle called CAS500-1.
- ✓ However, the list of the satellites is yet to be finalised.
- ✓ The payload will launch satellites from Russia, Saudi Arabia, Japan, South Korea, UAE, Israel, Thailand, Germany, Brazil, Canada, Italy, Hungary, Argentina, Netherland, Slovakia, Spain, Tunisia and the United Kingdom.

- **Denmark - has recently given its approval for the plan to construct the first energy field island of the world in the North Sea.**

- ✓ The energy island will be used to produce and store enough green energy to meet the electricity demands of around 3 million European households.
- ✓ The artificial island, equal to the size of 18 football fields, will be linked to hundreds of offshore wind turbines so as to supply power to the households.
- ✓ It will also be used to supply green hydrogen to use in heavy transport, shipping, aviation and industry.
- ✓ The move becomes significant after the European Union's plan to transform its electricity system to rely on the renewable energy and to increase its offshore wind capacity 25 times by 2050.
- ✓ The project, costing around 210 billion Danish crowns, will be constructed 80 kms off the west coast of Denmark.
- ✓ The energy island will have an initial capacity of 3 gigawatts and will be operational by 2033.
- ✓ Denmark has set a target to cut down the greenhouse gas emissions up to 70% by 2030 as compared to the levels in 1990.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **PM Narendra Modi – to inaugurate the World Sustainable Development Summit 2021 on 10th of February through video conferencing**



- ✓ The Theme of the summit is 'Redefining Our Common Future: Safe and Secure Environment for All'.
- ✓ The 20th edition of the summit will be held in between 10th to 12th February 2021.
- ✓ It is organised annually by the Energy and Resources Institute's (TERI).
- ✓ The summit brings together a wide number of governments, academicians, business leaders, climate scientists, civil society and youth to fight against climate change.
- ✓ It will have discussions on various topics ranging from the Climate finance, circular economy, Energy & industry transition, adaptation & resilience, nature-based solutions, clean oceans and air pollution.

- ✓ The key partners of the summit are Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change and the Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- ✓ The summit will be attended by the Speaker of the People's Majlis of Maldives Mohamed Nasheed, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea James Marape, Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations, Amina J. Mohammed, President of Guyana Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, and Union Minister of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar.
- ✓ The summit is organised in accordance with the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.

ECONOMY

- **Three women-owned businesses — Bunko Junko, My Chapter One and MoWo Social Initiatives — have received financial grant from payments major, Visa**
- ✓ The three companies have been announced a grant of ₹7 lakh each from Visa under its programme in India in partnership with IFundWomen.
- ✓ These three business entities were chosen from around hundreds of businesses across India
- ✓ The applications were received from various sectors including fashion and apparel, healthcare & wellness, food & beverages and art & events.
- ✓ Sixteen semi-finalists were evaluated by a jury panel comprising senior leaders across Visa, FICCI FLO (FICCI Ladies' Organization) and e-commerce platform Instamojo.
- ✓ The final winners were selected based on jury votes.
- ✓ Mumbai-based Bunko Junko, founded by Bhavini Parikh, is in the upcycling textile business
- ✓ It uses preconsumer excess as a source for manufacturing exclusive designer pieces in clothing, accessories and home linen.
- ✓ Chennai-based My Chapter One, founded by Ranjani Indrajith and Madhumati Narayanan, is a 'reading gym', which aims to inculcate reading habits and life skills in children.
- ✓ They have 40 mompreneurs as reading hosts and have engaged 600 kids so far.
- ✓ MoWo Social Initiatives, started by Jai Bharathi Addepalli, offers two and three-wheeler training and related livelihood opportunities to women in Hyderabad.
- ✓ In addition to the grant, digitisation partner Instamojo is providing the winners with tools to help build their digital presence
- ✓ The benefits include free payment collection of up to ₹3 lakh and free shipping for products listed on Instamojo for first fifteen shipments.

SPORTS

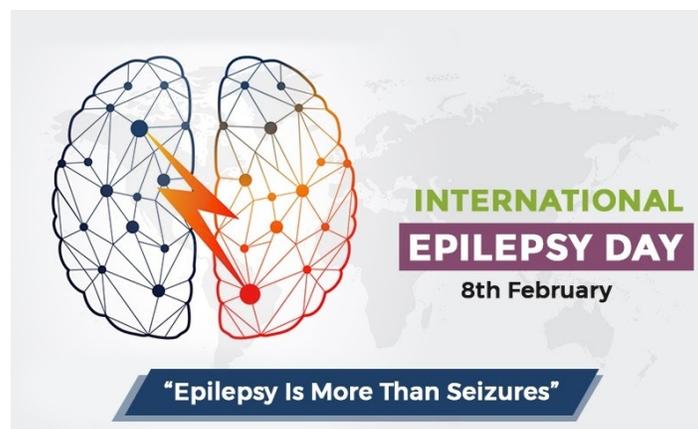
- **India's wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant - won the ICC's inaugural Player of the Month award on February 8**



- ✓ He has overtaken England's Joe Root and Ireland's Paul Stirling for the award based on his superlative performances in two Tests against Australia in January.
 - ✓ South Africa's Shabnim Ismail was named the ICC Women's Player of the Month.
 - ✓ She took seven wickets in the ODI series against Pakistan, before taking five wickets in the second T20I against the same opposition.
- **Edtech major Byju's - has signed a deal in the range of ₹120-₹130 crore to become a global partner with International Cricket Council (ICC) for a period of three years**
 - ✓ India is slated to host two major cricketing events — the T20 World Cup in 2021 and the 50-over cricket World Cup in 2023.
 - ✓ As a global partner, Byju's will have extensive in-venue, broadcast, and digital rights across all ICC events.
 - ✓ Byju's is the Indian cricket team's official sponsor

INTERNATIONAL DAY

- **International Epilepsy Day – February 8**



- ✓ The day is celebrated across 120 countries to promote awareness about the second most common neurological disorder globally

- ✓ Every year, the second Monday of February is observed as the International Epilepsy Day
- ✓ Epilepsy is a neurological condition which can cause seizures
- ✓ The Day is a joint initiative by the International Bureau for Epilepsy (IBE) and the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE).
- ✓ There are nearly 12 million people suffering from epilepsy in India and globally around 65 million people are affected by the disease

