

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – july 3,

TAMIL NADU

- **Archaeologists – have discovered a rubble stone well at the Kodumanal site, close to the banks of river Noyyal near Chennimalai in Erode district**
- ✓ Earlier, ring wells and brick wells have been found in other archaeological sites in Tamil Nadu like Keezhadi in Sivagangai district
- ✓ The well measures 10x10 metres and has two paths, one on the southern side and the other on the northern side



- ✓ Earlier, archaeologists have found evidence for existence of iron smelting unit with furnaces in the site, besides urn burials, beads, pot shreds with brahmi inscriptions, aged 2,300 years.
- ✓ In fact, Kodumanal has yielded the highest number of pot sherds with Tamil brahmi inscriptions
- ✓ Kodumanal site has copper, gold, iron and glass pieces as well as artefacts.
- ✓ There were three types of burial methods – cairn circles, urn burials and urn burials with cists - found at Kodumanal site.

STATES

➤ **Delhi Government – to launch the ambitious cloud-based Health care Information Management System (HIMS) by March 2022**

- ✓ This was announced by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal
- ✓ Under the digital initiative, health cards will be issued to all the residents of Delhi, for which special surveys will be conducted by the Delhi government.
- ✓ All the patient care services, hospital administration, budgeting and planning, supply chain management, and backend services and processes will be brought under the proposed system.
- ✓ By using the registered card number entered in the system, the hospitals can access all of the patients' health-related information and past registry.
- ✓ The system will also include a 24x7 call centre, or Health Helpline, to help patients with health-related information, seeking consultation, and other related assistance.
- ✓ With the launch of HIMS, Delhi will become the only state in the country to have a cloud-based digital 'health management system'
- ✓ This facility will also be extended to private hospitals in the future by the State

NATIONAL

➤ **The Government - has approved Covid vaccinations for pregnant women on July 2**

- ✓ According to the health ministry, the decision has been taken based on recommendations of National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI)
- ✓ The Ministry has highlighted that Covid-19 vaccines available are safe and protect pregnant women like other individuals
- ✓ However, long-term adverse effects and safety of the vaccines for foetus and child are not established yet.
- ✓ Pregnant women, who opt for vaccination, can take the vaccine at any time during their pregnancy after registration on CoWIN portal or by walk-in registration.
- ✓ According to the studies cited by the Centre, Covid-19 infection during pregnancy may result in rapid deterioration of health of pregnant women, leading to an increased risk of severe diseases, affecting the fetus too.
- ✓ Pregnant women with Covid-19 infection are at increased risk for preterm birth and other adverse pregnancy outcomes including higher chances of neonatal morbidity.

➤ **On July 2, the government - reinstated retail and wholesale trade in the category of the micro, small and medium enterprises segment**

- ✓ This makes the entities eligible for priority sector funding and special liquidity scheme from banks, under RBI guidelines.

- ✓ The move, according to MSME minister Nitin Gadkari, would benefit 2.5 crore enterprises
 - ✓ With the revised guidelines, the retail and wholesale trades will now be allowed to register on Udyam Registration Portal, which is a free, paperless online and instant registration portal.
 - ✓ As per the existing definition of MSMEs, enterprises in the manufacturing and service categories alone are considered to be MSMEs.
 - ✓ Earlier, the government has removed the retail and wholesale trade enterprises from the MSME segment on the basis of recommendations of a committee in June 2017.
 - ✓ However, the retail and wholesale trade sectors were included in the MSME (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) Development Act, 2006
 - ✓ Apart from access to priority sector loans from banks, retail and wholesale trade enterprises can also benefit from other schemes for MSMEs.
 - ✓ There are an estimated 6.3 crore MSMEs that exist in the country, as per the National Sample Survey 73rd Round (2015-2016).
 - ✓ Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of MSMEs at 90 lakh enterprises followed by West Bengal at 88.7 lakh enterprises.
- **The policy think tank, NITI Aayog - has recommended privatisation of state-owned insurer United India Insurance Company**
- ✓ The think tank has suggested that the public sector insurer be considered for privatisation in the banking, insurance and financial services sector
 - ✓ The new public sector enterprise (PSE) policy for Atmanirbhar Bharat proposes the “bare minimum” presence of government-owned companies in these strategic sectors
 - ✓ In the Union Budget 2021-22, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced that the government would take up the privatisation of one general insurance company in 2021-22
 - ✓ United India Insurance Company is the insurer for Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Health Insurance Scheme for 10 years
 - ✓ It is also the implementing agency for Maharashtra Government’s Mahathma Jyothiba Phule Jan Arogya Yojana Health Insurance Scheme from 2020.
 - ✓ United India Insurance Company was incorporated as Company on February 18, 1938.
 - ✓ In India, General Insurance Business was nationalized in the year 1972.
- **The Department of Justice - has launched an “Enforcing Contracts Portal” recently to promote ease of doing business in the country.**
- ✓ The portal will provide latest information on all commercial cases in dedicated Commercial Courts of Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Kolkata
 - ✓ The portal will also provide access to a repository of commercial laws, legislative and policy reforms being undertaken on the Enforcing Contracts parameters.



- ✓ It has been launched to improve the 'Contract Enforcement Regime' in the country.
- ✓ The Department of Justice under the Ministry of Law and Justice is the nodal agency for all reforms to strengthen the 'Enforcing Contracts' regime to promote Ease of Doing Business in India.
- ✓ The portal contains instructional videos and manuals to explain e-filing and other useful applications such as eCourt Service Application and Justice Application
- ✓ Enforcing Contracts is a method used to resolve a standardized commercial dispute and it is one of the 11 business areas used in World Bank's Ease of Doing Business rankings
- **India - has slashed import tax on crude palm oil from 15 % to 10% for three months, starting from June 30, 2021.**
- ✓ India meets about two-thirds of its edible oil demand through imports.
- ✓ It buys palm oil from Indonesia and Malaysia, and soy oil and sunflower oil come from Argentina, Brazil, Ukraine and Russia.
- ✓ India, the world's leading vegetable oil buyer, had imported 4,00,506 tonne palm oils in May 2020.
- ✓ The share of palm oil is more than 60% of the country's total vegetable oil imports.
- ✓ India's import of palm oils increased by 48% to 7,69,602 tonne in May 2021 on higher shipments of crude palm oil.
- ✓ Earlier this month, the government had reduced the tariff value for the import of edible oil, including palm oil, by up to \$112 per tonne
- ✓ The cut in duty on crude palm oil will result in effective reduction of ₹4,500 a tonne
- **A total of 26.4% of all school children in India – are studying in English medium schools**
- ✓ Overall, Hindi remains the biggest medium of instruction in the country, accounting for over 42% of total enrolment.
- ✓ This was revealed in the latest UDISE (Unified District Information System for Education) report for 2019-20

- ✓ The study covers about 26.5 crore children from primary to senior secondary level in over 15 lakh schools
- ✓ In the last five years English has overtaken Tamil as the preferred medium of instruction in Tamil Nadu
- ✓ About 57.6% of the students are now studying in English medium in the State, as against 42.6% in the 2014-15 report.

TELUGU FAR 2ND IN AP, TELANGANA

Top 5 states/UTs in English-medium education Share in total enrolment (%)		
State/UT	English Medium	Other Language Medium*
Jammu & Kashmir	100.0	0
Telangana	73.8	23.7 (Telugu)
Kerala	64.5	34.8 (Malayalam)
Andhra Pradesh	63.0	35.5 (Telugu)
Delhi	59.2	40.1 (Hindi)
India	26.4	Hindi (42.2), Bengali (6.7), Marathi (5.6)

Source: UDISE, GoI *Only those with 5% or more enrolment mentioned

- ✓ The biggest increase in the proportion of children choosing English medium has been in Haryana, which has a jump of over 23 percentage points, compared to 27.6% students in the 2014-15 report.
- ✓ Haryana is followed by Telangana (73.8%) with a jump of 21.7 percentage points.
- ✓ Telangana and Andhra Pradesh have the smallest proportion of students studying in the vernacular medium, Telugu in this case.
- ✓ Enrolment in Malayalam medium too has also reduced to 35% from 46% in 2014-15.
- ✓ Among larger states, Telangana, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh had more than half the enrolled students in English medium schools
- ✓ Karnataka remains the only southern state where vernacular medium schools have more students (53.5%), than English medium ones
- ✓ Delhi, Haryana and Punjab are the only states in the North where the vernacular medium schools have been overtaken by English.

INTERNATIONAL

- **China - became the 40th country to be officially certified as malaria-free by World Health Organisation on June 30, 2021**
- ✓ The certification makes it the first country in the Western Pacific region to eliminate the life-threatening disease in more than 30 years.
- ✓ China also became the second country in the Asia Pacific region to get the certification, after Sri Lanka in 2016.
- ✓ Malaria is a parasitic disease transmitted through the bite of a female anopheles mosquito

- ✓ It kills an estimated 400,000 people every year worldwide, the majority being children younger than 5, according to WHO.
- ✓ In 2020, after reporting four consecutive years of zero indigenous cases, China applied for an official WHO certification of malaria elimination
- ✓ There are 40 countries and territories worldwide that have been declared malaria-free.
- ✓ The only Western Pacific countries with the WHO accreditation are Australia (1981), Singapore (1982) and Brunei (1987).
- ✓ Four other countries that gained the 'malaria free' status recently were El Salvador in 2021, Algeria & Argentina in 2019, and Paraguay & Uzbekistan in 2018.
- ✓ Malaria had been a serious problem for China in the 1940s, with about 30 million cases and 300,000 deaths per year reported annually
- ✓ To find a solution, Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong launched a secret military campaign codenamed "Project 523" in 1967, during the turbulent period of the Cultural Revolution.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **The Samsung Galaxy S21 Ultra - has won the Best Smartphone category at the Global Mobile Awards (GLOMO Awards) during the recently concluded Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2021 at Barcelona, Spain**



- ✓ Along with the Galaxy S21 Ultra, other phones that were nominated for the award include Apple iPhone 12 Pro Max, OnePlus 9 Pro, Samsung Galaxy S20 FE 5G, and Xiaomi Mi 11 Ultra
- ✓ The annual GLOMO Awards celebrate the best hardware, software and services that focus on innovation across the mobile industry worldwide
- ✓ Mobile World Congress (MWC) is the world's biggest mobile event of the year.
- ✓ During the event, many of the year's top smartphones, smartwatches and tablets are launched and the hottest new trends in mobile, such as 5G are showcased for public.

- ✓ SpaceX chief and Tesla CEO Elon Musk delivered a keynote, talking about his internet satellite project Starlink.
- ✓ Starlink allows people to connect to the internet via a satellite dish placed on the rooftop of the home.
- ✓ The idea behind Starlink is to provide faster internet access in those areas where broadband connectivity is poor.
- ✓ Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA), which organises Mobile World Congress, had cancelled last year's event due to the Covid-19 situation.
- ✓ This year, the Barcelona event is delayed from its usual February-March slot and took place from 28 June-1 July 2021.

PERSONALITIES

- **Astronaut Sirisha Bandla - is all set to become the third woman of Indian-origin to go into space, after Kalpana Chawla and Sunita Williams**



- ✓ She will be part of the six-member crew of Virgin Galactic's test space flight 'VSS Unity', scheduled to blast off to space on July 11.
- ✓ Although, this is the fourth space flight to be operated by Virgin Galactic, it will be the first one to carry a crew.
- ✓ The 33-year old Sirisha will accompany the company's founder Richard Branson as a key member of the crew taking care of the researcher experience on the Unity22 mission.
- ✓ Sirisha was born in Tenali, Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh and returned to the Houston, US to pursue her studies.
- ✓ She is a graduate in aeronautical engineering from Purdue University and also holds a Master of Business Administration degree from Georgetown University.
- ✓ The VSS Unity spacecraft will take off from New Mexico carrying a full crew of Virgin Galactic's employees.

- ✓ Sirisha is the Vice President, Government Affairs and Research Operations at Virgin Galactic.
- ✓ She will be fourth Indian to travel in space, after Rakesh Sharma, Kalpana Chawla and Sunita Williams
- ✓ Beth Moses, chief astronaut instructor, along with lead operations engineer Colin Bennett will be heading the mission
- ✓ Pilots Dave Mackay and Michael Masucci will be flying the spacecraft.

APPOINTMENTS

- **The Centre - has extended the tenure of NITI Aayog Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Amitabh Kant, by one more year till June 2022.**



- ✓ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet, headed by PM Modi, has approved the extension in tenure of Amitabh Kant, CEO, National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog)
- ✓ The Kerala Cadre 1980 batch ex-IAS officer has played an instrumental role in initiatives such as Make in India, Start-up India, Incredible India and ease of doing business initiative.
- ✓ Kant was appointed for a two-year term as the CEO of the public policy think tank in 2016 after his retirement, which was extended until June 30, 2019.
- ✓ This was followed by another two-year extension until June 30 this year.
- ✓ Before moving to the NITI Aayog, he was Secretary in the Government of India handling industrial policy and promotion.
- ✓ On January 1, 2015, the Union Cabinet passed a resolution to replace the erstwhile Planning commission with the new agency, NITI Aayog

AWARDS

- **Renowned Odia poet, Dr Rajendra Kishore Panda - has been awarded Kuvempu Rashtriya Puraskar 2020.**



- ✓ The prestigious award carries a cash award of Rs 5 lakh, a silver medal, and a citation.
- ✓ Kuvempu Rashtriya Puraskar is the national award instituted in memory of late poet Kuvempu
- ✓ The name of Dr Panda was finalised by a three-member committee under the chairmanship of Prof Hampa Nagarajaiah
- ✓ The award is given annually to a writer who has contributed in any of the languages recognised by the Constitution of India.
- ✓ It is presented every year at Kuppalli, the birthplace of Kuvempu in Shivamogga district, on December 29 to mark his birth anniversary
- ✓ Founded in 1992, Rashtrakavi Kuvempu Trust instituted this national annual literary award in 2013 in the name of Kuvempu
- ✓ Since then, writers from Malayalam, Hindi, Marathi, Urdu, Kannada, and Panjabi languages had been chosen
- ✓ Dr. Panda, born in 1944, is a poet and novelist from Odisha.
- ✓ He has published 16 poetry collections and a novel.
- ✓ Dr. Panda was presented the Gangadhar National Award in 2010, and the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1985.
- ✓ He was awarded a D.Lit. by Sambalpur University in 2004.
- ✓ His first collection of poems was Gaun Devata (Minor Gods) that was published in 1947.

SPORTS

- **Maana Patel - has become the first Indian female swimmer to qualify for the upcoming Tokyo Olympics through universality quota**



- ✓ This was announced by the Sports Authority of India (SAI) on July 2
 - ✓ The Universality quota allows one male and one female competitor from a country to participate in the Olympics, provided no other swimmer from the same gender qualifies for the Games
 - ✓ Maana is the third Indian swimmer to participate in Tokyo 2020, scheduled in Tokyo, Japan from July 23 to August 8, 2021
 - ✓ Earlier, Srihari Nataraj and Sajan Prakash have earned the automatic qualification for the Tokyo Olympics at the Sette Colli Trophy in Rome last month.
 - ✓ Maana will compete in the women's 100m backstroke event while Sajan Prakash and Srihari Nataraj will take part in the 200m butterfly and 100m backstroke races respectively
- **Top para high-jumper Mariyappan Thangavelu was named the flag-bearer of the Indian contingent at the Tokyo Paralympics, which begin on August 24.**



- ✓ The decision was taken at the executive committee meeting of the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI)
 - ✓ Thangavelu had won the Rio Paralympics T-42 high jump gold by clearing 1.89m.
 - ✓ He qualified for the Tokyo Paralympics after finishing third in the T-42 high jump event at the 2019 IPC World Athletics Championships in Dubai.
 - ✓ The 25-year-old Thangavelu was conferred with the Khel Ratna, the country's highest sporting award, last year
 - ✓ He is one of the 24 para-athletes picked by the selection committee for the Tokyo Paralympics.
 - ✓ Thangavelu, who hails from Salem district in Tamil Nadu, suffered a permanent disability at the age of five when a bus crushed his right leg below the knee.
 - ✓ The current world record in the T-42 high jump stands at 1.96m.
 - ✓ In T-42 category, the athletes have one or more impairment types affecting hip and/or knee function in one or both limbs and with activity limitations in throws, jumps and running competing without prosthesis.
- **The 2022 Commonwealth archery and shooting championships - scheduled to be held in Chandigarh were cancelled amidst the pandemic situation**

- ✓ The decision was taken by the Commonwealth Games India (CGI) executive board with the support of the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) on July 2
- ✓ The two events were scheduled to be held here in January 2022 while the Birmingham Commonwealth Games is scheduled to run from July 27 to August 7, 2022.
- ✓ Shooting and archery are among the various disciplines that fall under the optional category in the Commonwealth Games, which has 10 core sports.

