

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JULY 30, 2021

TAMIL NADU

- **A punch-marked silver coin - was located at the Keeladi excavation site in Sivaganga**
- ✓ This new find indicates that people from the region were involved in trade with north India using coins prevalent in the 6th century BCE.



- ✓ The discovery was announced by Archaeology minister Thangam Thennarasu
- ✓ The coin having the figures of the sun, moon, bull, taurine, an animal figurine, and geometric designs show that Keeladi inhabitants were a trading community.
- ✓ Located at a depth of 1.46 m, the punch-marked coin indicates the existence of trade between north and south, particularly with the Gangetic valley.
- ✓ During the ancient period, such silver punch-marked coins were in circulation from the time of Mahajanpadas of the 6th century BCE.
- ✓ Such coins have been recovered from excavations conducted at Alangulam also.

STATES

- **Uttar Pradesh – has the maximum number of manual scavengers in the country (37,379 people), followed by Maharashtra (7,378) and Assam (4,295), based on two surveys carried out in 2013 and 2018**



- ✓ This was announced by minister of state for social justice and empowerment Ramdas Athawale in response to a written question in Rajya Sabha
- ✓ The 'Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act 2013' bans the practice of manual scavenging in the country
- ✓ A total of 66,692 people were engaged in manual scavenging before a ban came into effect in December 2013
- ✓ No death has been reported due to manual scavenging during the last five years.
- ✓ For the record, manual scavenging was outlawed in India in 1993.

NATIONAL

- **In a landmark decision, the Union government - has announced a 27% reservation for OBC, and a 10% reservation for EWS candidates in the All India Quota for UG and PG medical/dental courses in state-run colleges from the current academic year 2021-22 onwards.**
- ✓ The reservations are expected to benefit nearly 5,550 students every year.
- ✓ It will benefit nearly 1,500 OBC students in MBBS and 2,500 OBC students in post-graduation and around 550 EWS students in MBBS and 1,000 in post-graduation

CENTRAL LIST TO BE USED

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meant for undergraduate and PG medical and dental courses – MBBS, MD, MS, diploma, BDS & MDS – from current academic year (2021-22) ➤ All India quota (AIQ) scheme consists of 15% of total available UG seats and 50% of total available PG seats in govt medical colleges | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ AIQ was introduced in 1986 under SC directions to provide for domicile-free, merit-based opportunities to students from any state to study in a medical college located in another state ➤ In 2007, Supreme Court introduced 15% quota for SCs and 7.5% for STs in AIQ scheme ➤ Central list of OBCs to be used |
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This will immensely help thousands of our youth every year get better opportunities and create a new paradigm of social justice in our country

—PM Narendra Modi on Twitter

- ✓ The All India Quota (AIQ) Scheme was introduced in 1986 under the directions of the Supreme Court
- ✓ It seeks to provide merit-based opportunities to students from any state aspiring to study in a good medical college in another state

- ✓ All states were required to surrender 15% undergraduate and 50% postgraduate medical and dental seats in state-run colleges to a "central pool" or AIQ, with the rest going to a "state pool"
 - ✓ In 2007, the SC introduced 15% reservation for Scheduled Castes and 7.5% for Scheduled Tribes in the all-India quota scheme.
 - ✓ When the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Act became effective in 2007 providing for uniform 27% reservation to OBCs, the same was implemented in all the Central Educational Institutions
 - ✓ However, the reservation was not extended to the AIQ seats of state medical and dental colleges
 - ✓ In order to provide benefit to students belonging to EWS category in admission to higher educational institutions, a Constitutional amendment was made in 2019 which enabled the provision of 10% reservation for EWS category.
- **On July 29, Lok Sabha - passed two bills, while Rajya Sabha passed the Factoring Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2021**
- ✓ In Rajya Sabha, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman moved the Factoring Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2021 to amend laws to help the MSME sector
 - ✓ The bill has already been passed by Lok Sabha.
 - ✓ In Lok Sabha, the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (Amendment) Bill, 2021, moved by Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, was passed within 13 minutes
 - ✓ The bill was earlier brought to Parliament in March this year and was referred for a review by the standing committee on transport, tourism, and culture.
 - ✓ The bill seeks to amend the 2008 Act by modifying the definition of "major airport"
 - ✓ The second one, Inland Vessels Bill, 2021, moved by Shipping and Waterways Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, got the House's approval with a voice vote in just six minutes.
 - ✓ The new bill seeks to replace the Inland Vessels Act of 1917
 - ✓ The Bill seeks to incorporate a common law for the country, instead of separate rules framed by the States.
 - ✓ The registration certificate under the new law will be considered valid all over the country, and separate permissions from States shall not be required.
 - ✓ The Bill also seeks to create a central database for recording the details of the vessels and their crew on an electronic portal.
- **On July 29, Prime Minister Narendra Modi - launched SAFAL (Structured assessment for analysing learning), and 'AI For All' joint initiative**
- ✓ The initiatives were launched to commemorate the first anniversary of National Education Policy 2020
 - ✓ Intel India will be collaborating with the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Ministry of Education for the 'AI For All' initiative to create a basic understanding of artificial intelligence (AI) for every person in the country



- ✓ Based on Intel's 'AI For Citizens' program, 'AI For All' is a 4-hour, self-paced learning program
 - ✓ It is divided into two sections – AI Awareness (1.5 hours) and AI Appreciation (2.5 hours) – and available in 11 vernacular languages
 - ✓ The program aims to introduce Artificial Intelligence to 1 million citizens in its first year.
 - ✓ India's National Education Policy 2020 emphasizes preparing students for an AI-driven economy.
 - ✓ In India, the 'AI For All' initiative is part of Intel's corporate social responsibility efforts towards bringing AI for all.
 - ✓ SAFAL is a competency-based assessment for grades 3, 5, and 8 introduced by CBSE on a pilot basis during the academic year 2021-22 in key curricular areas of language, mathematics, and EVS/science.
 - ✓ It will be used to assess the progress of foundational skills and basic learning outcomes/ competencies among students.
- **Fourteen tiger reserves in India, including Anamalai and Mudumalai in Tamil Nadu - have attained the globally accepted Conservation Assured |Tiger Standards accreditation**



- ✓ This was announced by Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhopender Yadav on the occasion of International Tiger Day on July 20
- ✓ Assam and Madhya Pradesh has received the CATS accreditation for the maximum of three reserves.

- ✓ The tiger reserves received the accreditation for meeting the criterion of effective management of tiger conservation and for implementing best practices and standards to manage tigers
 - ✓ It is being implemented across 125 sites in seven tiger range countries.
 - ✓ India has the highest 94 sites, out of which assessment was completed for 20 tiger reserves this year.
 - ✓ The accreditation has been granted to 14 reserves in India, one each in Nepal, Bhutan, and Russia
 - ✓ The 14 reserves which have been accredited include - Anamalai and Mudumalai in Tamil Nadu, Parambikulam in Kerala, Bandipur in Karnataka, Manas, Kaziranga and Orang in Assam, Sundarbans in Bengal, Valmiki in Bihar, Dudhwa in Uttar Pradesh, Panna, Kanha and Satpura in Madhya Pradesh and Pench in Maharashtra.
 - ✓ The three most popular tiger reserves in terms of tourist attraction — Corbett (Uttarakhand), Ranthambore (Rajasthan) and Bandhavgarh (Madhya Pradesh) — did not get the CA|TS tag
 - ✓ The Global Tiger Forum (GTF), an international NGO working on tiger conservation, and World Wildlife Fund India are the two implementing partners of the National Tiger Conservation Authority for CATS assessment in India.
 - ✓ On the occasion of International Tiger Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that India has achieved the target of doubling the tiger population four years ahead of the schedule under the St Petersburg Declaration.
 - ✓ In the 2010 declaration, 13 countries, including India, agreed to a Global Tiger Recovery Programme and pledged to double the number of tigers by 2022
 - ✓ India is home to 51 tiger reserves spread across 18 states
 - ✓ As per the last census (2018), India has 2,967 tigers (as against 1,706 tigers in 2010) and 12,852 leopards.
- **Union Minister of State for Earth Sciences, Jitendra Singh – launched a new portal for 'Earth System Science Data' during the 15th foundation day event of the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) on June 27**
- ✓ Along with the portal, the newly refurbished MoES website with a more user-friendly interface and cyber secure experience to the public was also launched.



- ✓ A book titled 'Hydrocarbon fluid inclusions in petroliferous basins' was also released by the minister during the event.
 - ✓ The MoES-ESSDP (Earth System Science Data Portal), an integrated digital web portal of MoES institutes, hosts data on various themes of earth system science for public use.
 - ✓ The portal has been developed using the latest information technology tools and is available at <https://incois.gov.in/essdp>.
 - ✓ On the occasion, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) introduced a new mobile app named 'Pune Weather Live', which would provide real-time and location-specific weather updates for Pune city.
 - ✓ The app captures live data from more than 80 weather stations, including information on rainfall
- **The Union railway ministry - has sanctioned a 23km-long line to provide direct connectivity from Karaikal to Peralam**
- ✓ The new line will be laid as part of the Trichy-Thanjavur-Nagore-Karaikal gauge conversion project at a budget of Rs.177.69 crore
 - ✓ This was announced by Union railways minister Ashwini Vaishnaw.
 - ✓ Karaikal is located at 140 kms south of Puducherry, while Peralam is in Tiruvarur district, Tamil Nadu
 - ✓ The railways ministry had submitted land acquisition proposals for 3.2 hectares to the Tamil Nadu government in September 2019 for the project.
 - ✓ A metre gauge line laid years ago from Karaikal to Peralam and which remained in existence till the 1980s was dismantled leading to suspension of train services in the section.
 - ✓ As part of the project, the Southern Railway Construction Organisation would construct new railway stations along the stretch including one at Tirunallar, where the famous shrine for Lord Saneeswarar is situated
 - ✓ The new line from Karaikal to Peralam would substantially reduce time for freight trains and also lead to cut in fuel usage in diesel locomotives in both directions

INTERNATIONAL

- **A total of more than 4 billion anti-Covid vaccines - have been administered around the world, eight months after the vaccination drive started**
- ✓ The fourth billion dose was reached in 30 days, while it took only 26 days to reach the third billion dose.
 - ✓ The first and second billion were reached after about 140 and 40 days respectively.
 - ✓ 40% (1.6 billion) of the four billion shots have been administered in China.
 - ✓ India (451 million) and the US (343 million) constitute the Top-3 countries that have administered the most jobs.

- ✓ In terms of population among countries with more than one million people, the UAE leads the list with 168 first and second doses administered per 100 inhabitants.
- ✓ Uruguay is ranked second in the list (137), followed by Bahrain (134).
- ✓ The UAE is close to having 70% of its population fully vaccinated while Uruguay and Bahrain have both reached more than 60%.
- ✓ After this, the leading vaccinated countries are Qatar, Chile and Canada (129 shots per 100 inhabitants), Israel (128), Singapore (125), the UK, Mongolia and Denmark (124) and Belgium (121).
- ✓ These countries have fully vaccinated more than half their populations.
- ✓ China (111), the US (104) and the EU (103) complete the list.
- ✓ The US and EU have fully vaccinated nearly half their population, while China does not provide any information on this.
- ✓ Most poor countries have now started to vaccinate, mainly thanks to the Covax scheme, but the vaccination coverage remains very unequal.
- ✓ High-income countries administered an average of 97 doses per 100 inhabitants compared with just 1.6 doses in low-income countries.
- ✓ On average 52 shots have been injected per 100 inhabitants worldwide.
- ✓ Three countries yet to start their vaccination programme are Burundi, Eritrea and North Korea.
- ✓ Meanwhile, Israel has become the first country to offer a third shot of the Pfizer/BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine to people aged over 60 to tackle the spread of the highly contagious Delta variant.

DEFENCE

- **On July 29, the Ordnance Factory Tiruchirappalli (OFT) - launched a new weapon called TriCa (Trichy Carbine), a mini version of the Trichy Assault Rifle (TAR).**



- ✓ The 7.62 X 39mm portable weapon launched on the carbine platform was entirely manufactured at the ordnance factory at Trichy.
- ✓ TriCa weighs 3.17kg (including the magazine) and is lighter compared to the assault rifles.

- ✓ It is a compact automatic weapon designed for the crews of infantry combat vehicles, helicopters, paratroopers, state police force and special operation forces.
 - ✓ TriCa is equipped with a special muzzle booster to hide the flash and mitigate the sound during the firing.
 - ✓ The weapon has an effective range of 150 to 175m.
 - ✓ TriCa can use ammunition and magazines, as well as the interchangeable parts of general assault rifles (TAR and AK-47).
 - ✓ The carbine can be hidden in the jackets of security personnel and even concealed under their clothes.
 - ✓ The weapon was displayed during the defence exhibition held at Bengaluru a few months back.
 - ✓ Trichy Carbine best suits the CISF, state special police forces and NSG commandos.
 - ✓ The weapon was launched by Sanjay Dwivedi, IOFS, general manager, OFT.
- **The 12th edition of military exercise INDRA NAVY - was held in the Baltic Sea from July 28 to 29, 2021**
- ✓ INDRA NAVY is a biennial bilateral maritime exercise involving Indian Navy and Russian Navy, which was initiated in the year 2003



- ✓ The exercise involved 250 personnel from the Navies of both countries
- ✓ The Indian Navy was represented by the stealth Frigate INS Tabar whilst the Russian Federation Navy was represented by Corvettes RFS Zelyony Dol and RFS Odintsovo of the Baltic Fleet.
- ✓ INS Tabar reached St Petersburg, Russia on July 22 to participate in the 325th Navy Day celebrations of the Russian Navy
- ✓ Later, the ship joined a naval parade reviewed by Russian President Vladimir Putin, in which over 50 ships, motor boats, submarines, 48 aircraft and helicopters took part.

- ✓ The maritime exercise included various fleet operations such as anti-air firings, underway replenishment drills, helicopter ops, boarding drills and seamanship evolutions.
- ✓ The Army version of the exercise is scheduled to be held from August 1 to 13 in Russia's Volgograd.
- ✓ For the Army version of Exercise Indra, 250 soldiers from each side will be taking part
- ✓ The exercise involves conducting counter-terror operations under the United Nations (UN) mandate by a joint force against international terror groups.
- ✓ INS Tabar is on a long deployment and has been making a series of port visits in Africa and Europe from June 13, which will go on till September-end.

AWARDS

- **Three India-based enterprises – were named among the winners of UN-sponsored global competition for the 'Best Small Businesses'**



- ✓ 50 small and medium-sized businesses across the world have been named the Best Small Businesses of the UN Food Systems Summit's "Good Food for All" competition
- ✓ The competition involved providing creative, varied, and impactful solutions for increasing access to healthy and sustainable food.
- ✓ Edible Routes Private Limited, Oorja Development Solutions India, and Taru Naturals are the winners from India
- ✓ The 50 winners hailing from 42 countries were chosen from almost 2,000 applications from 135 countries and they will also split US\$ 100,000 in monetary rewards.
- ✓ Edible Routes, established by Kapil Mandawewala, provides clients with simple access to naturally and locally farmed, fresh farm products.
- ✓ Oorja is a farming-as-a-service (FaaS) firm that finances, installs, and maintains solar energy systems for agricultural use, as well as selling farmers cheap and dependable irrigation, milling, and cooling services to help them transition from diesel to solar.

- ✓ Oorja, which was founded and is managed by Amit Saraogi and Dr. Clementine Chambon, has so far executed 24 solar projects that have benefited close to 2,000 people and saved 30 tonnes of CO₂
- ✓ Ruchi Jain created TARU Naturals and Organics, a grassroots movement of 10,000 tribal and small-scale farmers across India.
- ✓ It is a fair-trade network that connects farmers to markets with nutritious, clean, and organic products.

STATUS OF TIGERS IN INDIA – A REPORT

MP DISLODGES KARNATAKA TO BECOME INDIA'S TIGER CAPITAL

In 1973, when Project Tiger was launched, there were only nine tiger reserves in the country. Now, there are 50, covering an area of 72,749 sqkm. Our tiger count has shot up too, according to the latest census – from 2,226 tigers in 2014 to 2,967 in 2018, a 33% jump. Since 2006, when the four-year tiger census began, the big cat population in India has been growing at a steady clip of 6% per year. The best performers were Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka. However, the drop in tiger population in Odisha and Chhattisgarh is a matter of concern

A LOT WENT INTO THE SURVEY

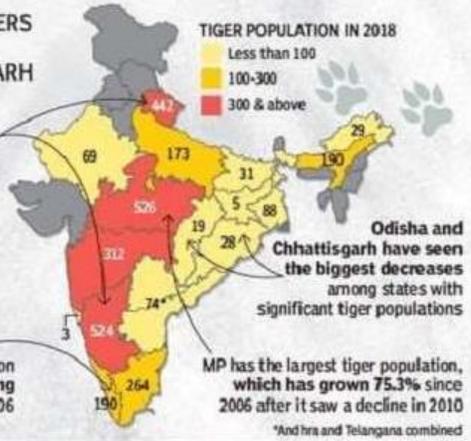
- 3,81,400 sqkm** of forests surveyed for tiger signs and prey estimation
- 5,22,996 km** covered on foot surveys
- 3,17,958** habitat plots sampled for vegetation and prey dung
- 26,838** camera trap locations in 141 sites
- 1,21,337 sqkm** covered by camera traps
- 3,48,58,623** wildlife photographs of which 76,651 were of tigers and 51,777 were of leopards
- 5,93,882** man-days spent

National Tiger Conservation Authority conducted the survey with state forest departments and conservation NGOs

TIGER NUMBERS SUFFER IN ODISHA, C'GARH

Karnataka and Uttarakhand have the second and third largest populations with each growing 80.7% and 148.3% since 2006

Kerala saw the greatest population increase, growing at 313% since 2006



Odisha and Chhattisgarh have seen the biggest decreases among states with significant tiger populations

MP has the largest tiger population, which has grown 75.3% since 2006 after it saw a decline in 2010
*Andhra and Telangana combined

STATES WITH LARGEST POPULATION INCREASE

State	2006 pop.	2018 pop.	Change
Kerala	46	190	+313%
TN	76	264	+247.4%
Bihar	10	31	+210%
Maharashtra	103	312	+202.9%
Assam	70	190	+171.4%

STATES WITH LARGEST POPULATION DECREASE

State	2006 pop.	2018 pop.	Change
Mizoram	6	0	-100%
Odisha	45	28	-37.8%
Chhattisgarh	26	19	-26.9%
Andhra & Telangana	95	74	-22.1%



A total of 2,461 individual tigers over one year old were photo-captured

In 2010, at the St Petersburg Tiger Summit, world leaders committed to doubling tiger numbers by 2022. The tiger population of India is the largest for any country, accounting for over 80% of the global population of 3,159 adult free-ranging tigers

Source: Status of Tigers in India – 2018