

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—JANUARY 18, 2022

TAMIL NADU

- **On January 17, the State government - notified the reservations of the office of Mayors of municipal corporations.**
- ✓ In this regard, a government order was passed under the Tamil Nadu town panchayats, municipalities and corporations (delimitation of wards and divisions and reservations) rules, 1996.
- ✓ As per the G.O., the Mayor's post in Chennai and Tambaram Corporation's has been reserved for Scheduled Castes (Women), while the post in Avadi Corporation is reserved for Scheduled Castes (General category).
- ✓ The Mayor posts in nine other corporations - Cuddalore, Dindigul, Vellore, Karur, Sivakasi, Kancheepuram, Madurai, Coimbatore and Erode - were reserved for women (General category)
- ✓ The Tamil Nadu government has also reserved the post of chairperson of 10 municipalities to SC (general), 10 municipalities to SC (women) and 58 others to women (general).
- ✓ The post of chairman in one municipality in Nelliya in Nilgiris district has been reserved for a woman from the scheduled tribe (ST)
- ✓ The government order has been issued following a proposal sent by the Director of Municipal Administration to the department.

- **The Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT) - is planning to establish four classical Tamil chairs in the prominent universities in Southeast Asian countries during the next academic year (2022-23).**
- ✓ The Tamil chairs will be set up in countries having a large Tamil population and ancient cultural ties with Tamil Nadu
- ✓ In this regard, the institute has sent a proposal to the ministry of education for which approval is awaited
- ✓ Chief Minister M K Stalin, who is the chairperson for the governing board of the CICT, visited its new campus in Perumbakkam on January 17.



- ✓ During the visit, the CM released eight new books published by the institute including Ainkurunuru Kurinji, Ainkurunuru Palai, Dravidian Comparative Grammar-II and A Historical Grammar of Tamil
 - ✓ The copies of the books were received by minister for Tamil official language Thangam Thennarasu.
 - ✓ Further, the CM announced that Kalaingar M Karunanidhi Classical Tamil awards for the years between 2010 and 2019 will be presented on January 22, 2022.
 - ✓ The event will be held in Anna Centenary Library in Kotturpuram.
 - ✓ Former Chief Minister, Dr Kalaingar M Karunanidhi created an endowment in his name for Classical Tamil research in the CICT, under which an award will be given to the scholars and researchers of eminence every year.
 - ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently inaugurated the new complex of CICT on a land of 16.9 acres built at the cost of Rs. 24 crore.
 - ✓ It has four stories with a library, two conference halls, an administrative building and e-library, a video conferencing room, and rooms for visiting professors and researchers.
 - ✓ Tamil was given Classical status by the Union government in 2004, and the CICT was given autonomous status in 2008.
 - ✓ The CICT was constituted specifically for higher research on classical Tamil at international level.
- **The Tamil Nadu government - has appointed U Mathivannan as the chairman of the Tamil Nadu Adi Dravidar Housing Development Corporation.**



- ✓ The agency was established in 1974 by then chief minister M Karunanidhi
 - ✓ It was set up with an objective to implement economic development schemes, skill development and training programmes for scheduled tribes and scheduled castes.
 - ✓ Mathivanan, a law graduate, was elected as MLA from Tiruvarur assembly constituency in 2006
 - ✓ He had served as the Minister of Dairy Development during the 2006-11 DMK government
 - ✓ He once again contested in Kilvelur constituency in 2016, from where he won and served the House for five years as MLA
- **The international township in the making, Auroville - will hold the 7th Auroville Film Festival from January 18 to 23.**
- ✓ The biennial festival, to be conducted as an online edition this year, features films in two categories.



- ✓ The international category of films will feature the theme of 'Human Unity' and includes 35 films from 18 different countries.
- ✓ It includes award-winning films like 'Barricade' (German/David Klammer) and 'Body and Soul' (French/Magali Chapelan), 'Amuka' (Congo/Antonio Spano) and 'The Awakening of the Goddess' (Debjani Mukherjee).
- ✓ The Aurovilians' category has 36 films from 14 Aurovilians and residents of the township, including one student.
- ✓ These films give a taste of the creative life in the Auroville area.
- ✓ The organisers earlier planned to hold the event at the Town Hall in the township like the previous editions but were forced to hold the festival 'online' due to Covid restrictions.
- ✓ With the support of Auroville International USA, the festival will be held in an entirely virtual mode this year in partnership with New Zealand-based video streaming service, Shift72, which is an online video-on-demand film festival platform.
- ✓ The films can be watched free of cost by visiting <https://auroville.shift72.com>.

STATES

- **On January 17, the Election Commission - has decided to reschedule the general elections to legislative assembly of Punjab to February 20 from February 14**
- ✓ The change in the polling date to the state's 117 assembly seats is based on the request of several political parties and the state government in view of Guru Ravidas Jayanti on February 16.
- ✓ As per the new schedule, January 25 will be the date for poll notification, February 1 the last date of filing nominations, February 2 date of scrutiny of nominations, February 2 the last date for withdrawal, and February 20 the date of poll.
- ✓ The counting date remains unchanged on March 10.
- ✓ Punjab has a substantial population of followers of Guru Ravidas, including the Scheduled Caste community, which is around 32% of the state's population.
- ✓ Various leaders of parties had cited the expected movement of many electors who are Guru Ravidas's followers and travel from Punjab to Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh during the week coinciding with Gurupurab.

NATIONAL

- **The Union Ministry of health – has unveiled the country's latest Covid management guidelines on January 17, 2022**
- ✓ The new guidelines does not include oral anti-virals, antibiotics, monoclonal antibodies and vitamins as part of the treatment process

REVISED COVID CARE GUIDELINES

New ICMR guidelines for management of adult Covid patients

MILD DISEASE | Upper respiratory tract symptoms and/ or fever without shortness of breath or hypoxia
Advice | Home isolation & care

MODERATE DISEASE | Breathlessness, respiratory rate $\geq 24/\text{min}$ Or SpO_2 at 90% to $\leq 93\%$
Advice/treatment

- **Admit in ward**
- O2 support
- Anti-inflammatory or immunomodulatory therapy: Injection methylprednisolone or dexamethasone
- Anticoagulation | Heparin
- Monitoring: breathing rate, HRCT chest to be done only

if patient's condition worsens.
Tests: CRP, D-dimer, blood sugar 4 to 72 hourly, CBC, KFT, LFT 24 to 48 hourly

SEVERE DISEASE | Breathlessness, respiratory rate $>30/\text{min}$ Or $\text{SpO}_2 <90\%$
Advice/treatment | Admit in HDU/ICU

- Respiratory support | Deliver O2 through NIV, or high flow nasal cannula (HFNC) or ventilator, depending on patient's condition
- Injection methylprednisolone or dexamethasone for 5-10 days. This therapy can have risk of mucormycosis
- Monitoring as for moderate disease cases



For use in 'specific circumstances'
(based on limited available evidence)

- **Remdesivir may be considered** if moderate/severe disease symptoms persist for 10 days in patients not on IMV or ECMO. Not to be used for patients not on O2 support or in home setting
- **Tocilizumab to be considered** if above conditions are met and disease is rapidly progressing

- ✓ The other drugs that do not find their place in the guidelines are Favipiravir and the recently approved Molnupiravir
- ✓ For mild cases, the guidelines state home isolation with physical distancing, indoor mask use, and strict hand hygiene
- ✓ Medical attention shall be sought if there is difficulty in breathing or oxygen saturation drops below 93%, or high grade fever/severe cough last for more than five days
- ✓ As per the revised guidelines, Covid-19 is classified mainly into three types –
 - ✓ Mild cases — one without breathlessness and no oxygen requirement;
 - ✓ Moderate — breathlessness or oxygen requirement of SpO2 level 90 to 93%, and
 - ✓ Severe — patient with respiratory distress or Spo2 level less than 90%
- ✓ The guidelines continue to recommend emergency use of remdesivir given via an intra-venous drip in moderate to severe disease level of patients on oxygen support with 10 days of onset of symptoms.
- ✓ Off-label use of the rheumatoid arthritis drug, tocilizumab, continues for severe patients who don't improve with steroids.
- ✓ The latest guidelines, which were last updated in July 2021, state that patients with mild illness need symptomatic treatment for fever and pain and, if needed, a nasal spray of corticosteroid (budesonide).
- ✓ CT scans and expensive blood tests for Ddimer and IL-6 levels are only recommended for moderate and severely ill patients.
- ✓ As per the new guidelines, if cough persists for more than two-three weeks, it is necessary to check for tuberculosis and other conditions in Covid-19 patients
- ✓ The guidelines were drafted by experts from the Indian Council of Medical Research-Covid19 Task Force, AIIMS, and Directorate General of Health Services

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **On January 17, Prime Minister Narendra Modi - delivered a special address at the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Davos Agenda through a video conference**
- ✓ During the address the PM said that India has given the entire world a "bouquet of hope" containing trust towards democracy, technology to empower 21st century and talent & temperament of Indians
- ✓ PM Modi made a bold pitch for foreign investment, assuring all support to investors, while positioning India as an attractive and robust investment destination.
- ✓ The PM further pointed to the developing technologies and platforms such as CoWin to deal with the pandemic, the pharma industry's contribution and sought to position India as a "trusted partner" for global supply chains.

- ✓ He suggested that the proposed free trade agreements with the UK, European Union, UAE and Australia would help and push for investment in semiconductors and other businesses

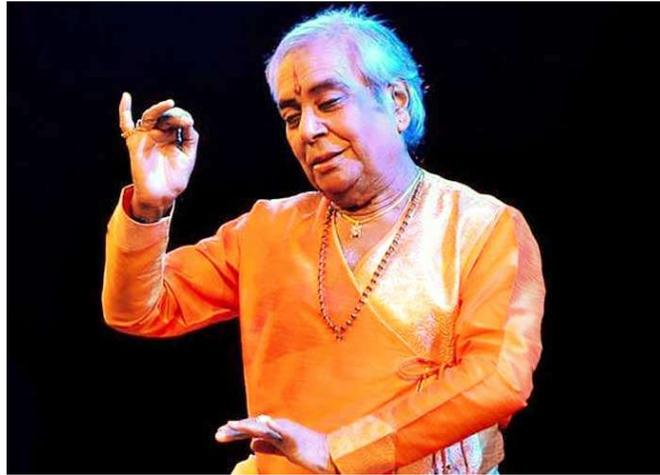


- ✓ The Davos event is being held in virtual mode from January 17-21 due to the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic
- ✓ This is the second consecutive year that the forum has had to host the summit digitally due to the Covid-19 pandemic
- ✓ The event is being convened on the theme of "The State of the World."
- ✓ Several heads of state will address the event including Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, Chinese President Xi Jinping, and EU Commission's chief Ursula von der Leyen.
- ✓ Furthermore, WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, IMF managing director Kristalina Georgieva, special presidential envoy for climate of the US John F Kerry, European central bank president Christine Lagarde, and WTO director-general Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala are also expected to attend the event
- ✓ The event will also witness the participation of top industry leaders and international organisations among others.
- ✓ This year's online event is expected to host two virtual summits – one on Covid-19 and another on technology cooperation in the fourth industrial revolution.
- ✓ The WEF has been holding its annual meeting in the Swiss ski resort of Davos every year for the last 50 years
- ✓ This dialogue will be a precursor to the Annual Meeting in Davos, scheduled for early summer.

OBITUARY

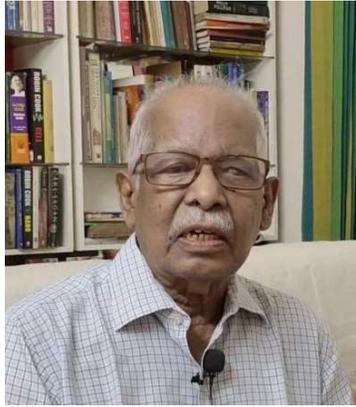
- **Kathak legend Pandit Birju Maharaj (83 years) - died at his home in Delhi in the early hours of January 17 after suffering a heart attack**

- ✓ A recipient of the country's second-highest civilian award, Padma Vibhushan, he was born Brij Mohan Nath Mishra on February 4, 1937 belonging to Lucknow's Kalka-Bindadin Gharana of Kathak



- ✓ Birju Maharaj was a descendant of the Maharaj family of Kathak dancers, which includes his two uncles, Shambhu Maharaj and Lachhu Maharaj, and his father and guru, Acchan Maharaj.
 - ✓ Giving his first performance at the age of 7, Maharaj was known for his animated facial expressions and light-footed movements, accompanied by the sound of bells he wore around his ankles
 - ✓ Birju Maharaj was also a thumri exponent and even rendered a song for Satyajit Ray's Shatranj Ke Khiladi
 - ✓ In the late 1990s, Maharaj opened his own dance school, Kalashram, in the capital New Delhi.
 - ✓ The Kathak legend was also a superb drummer, playing nearly all drums with ease and precision and was also a singer par excellence, having command over Thumri, Dadra, Bhajan and Ghazal.
 - ✓ Ranked among India's best classical dancers ever, he received several awards in his career, including the Padma Vibhushan, Sangeet Natak Akedami Award, Kalidas Samman, a National award as the best choreographer in Vishwaroopam and a Filmfare award for Bajirao Mastani.
 - ✓ Last year, a book on his life, titled Nriya Samrat Pt. Birju Maharaj, was launched.
 - ✓ It has been compiled by Nandkishore Kapote, a senior disciple of Birju Maharaj.
 - ✓ The book comprises 96 (22 in English and 70 in Hindi) short essays written by his disciples, associates, admirers and senior artistes, associates, and well-wishers from around the world.
- **Noted environmentalist Prof M K Prasad (89 years) – passed away on January 17 while undergoing treatment for Covid related complications**
- ✓ Prasad was a prominent figure in the historic grassroots level movement to save the evergreen tropical rain forests in Kerala's Silent Valley from destruction

- ✓ Prasad served as leader of a progressive people's science movement called "Kerala Sasthra Sahithya Parishath" (KSSP).



- ✓ As the lead activist of KSSP, he led the national movement against the state government's move to set up a hydro-power project in Silent Valley in Palakkad district in the 1970s.
- ✓ The struggle was called off in the early 80s after the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi assured that Silent Valley forests will be protected.
- ✓ The Silent Valley forests were declared as a national park by the Union Government on November 15, 1984.
- ✓ Prasad held various academic positions in Kerala, including the post of Pro Vice Chancellor of Calicut University and Principal of Maharaja's College, Ernakulam
- ✓ He has also authored numerous books in Malayalam on environmental issues and popular science.
- ✓ Prasad also served on the United Nations Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Board for five years.
- ✓ He also chaired the All India People's Science Network (AIPSN), an all-India consortium of people's science movements.

SPORTS

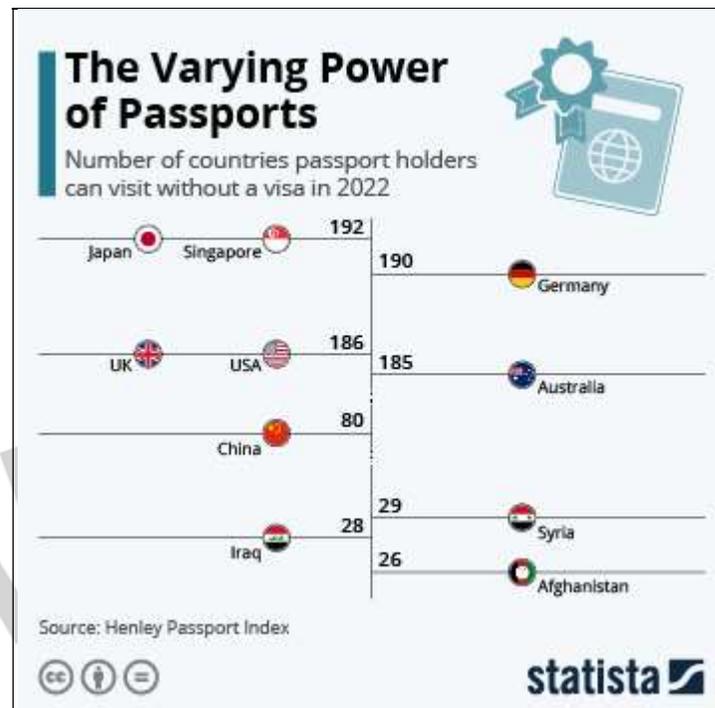
- **Real Madrid - were crowned Spanish Super Cup champions after defeating Athletic Bilbao in Saudi Arabia on January 17**



- ✓ Two goals from Luka Modric and Karim Benzema earned them a 2-0 win over their opponents to bag their first trophy in this season
- ✓ It was the 12th time Real had won the Spanish Super Cup, having claimed both editions of the competition in Saudi Arabia.
- ✓ Last year's edition, won by Athletic, was held in Spain due to the pandemic

RANKINGS

- **Japan and Singapore - tops the list of being the most powerful passport in the world for the year 2022, according to the Henley Passport Index 2022**



- ✓ The nationals of these two countries can visit as many as 192 destinations without the need of a prior visa.
- ✓ Germany and South Korea followed on the second rank with their nationals allowed to visit 190 visa-free destinations around the world.
- ✓ Finland, Italy, Luxembourg and Spain are on the third spot with visa free access to 189 countries
- ✓ France, Netherlands and Sweden climbed one spot to join Austria and Denmark in fourth place with a score of 188
- ✓ Ireland and Portugal are in fifth place with a score of 187
- ✓ The US and the UK passports now ranked at 6th place, with a visa-free access score of 186, after falling to 8th place in 2020 – the lowest spot held by either country in the index's 17-year history
- ✓ India has improved its earlier rank of 90th and is currently placed at 83rd position with its passport getting a visa-free access to 60 countries
- ✓ While last year, the number of countries which provided prior visa-free entry to Indians was 58, Oman and Armenia are the latest additions to grant this facility

- ✓ More than 12.8 million passports were issued in 2019 by the Passport Issuing Authorities (PIA) in India and abroad, making India the largest passport issuer globally after China and the United States.
- ✓ Afghanistan sits at the bottom of the rank at 111th place with a score of 26
- ✓ London-based global citizenship and residence advisory firm Henley & Partners has released the Henley Passport Index for the year 2022
- ✓ The Index is prepared based on exclusive data provided by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) in every quarter
- ✓ The Henley Passport Index ranks 199 passports according to the number of destinations their holders can access without a prior visa.

JALLIKATTU FESTIVITIES – A REPORT

- **World famous Alanganallur jallikattu – held with usual fervour and spirit amidst the Covid-19 restrictions on January 17 in Madurai district as part of Pongal festivities**
- ✓ The event was flagged off by Minister for Commercial Taxes and Registration, P. Moorthy in the presence of Collector S. Aneesh Sekhar



- ✓ As many as 1,020 bulls and 300 bull tamers participated in the eight rounds of the event
- ✓ Karthik from Karuppayurani, Madurai district, who won the best bull tamer prize for taming 21 bulls, received a car costing over ₹5.5 lakh sponsored by DMK MLA Udhayanidhi Stalin
- ✓ Ram Kumar of Alanganallur, who tamed 19 bulls, came second to win a motor bike
- ✓ Another tamer from Sithalankudi village, Gopala Krishnan also received a motor bike for taming 13 bulls and finishing third
- ✓ The bull belonging to Tamil Selvan from Kaikurichi, Pudukottai district was declared the best bull and he was also awarded a car sponsored by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin.
- ✓ Regarding the awards for best bulls, the second place was bagged by M Muthuramalingam, former MLA of Thirumangalam who got a bike and Thirupathi of Kulamangalam, who won the third place and got a milch cow and calf

- ✓ The is the first time that a gold coin was also given to the owners of around 1,200 bulls participating at the event, even to owners of around 150 bulls which had not been released from the vaadivasal.
 - ✓ State Minister for Commercial Taxes P Moorthy and State Minister for Finance and Human Resources Management PTR Palanivel Thiagarajan handed over the prizes to the winners and other participants
 - ✓ In view of the Covid-19 pandemic situation, residents of Alanganallur were permitted to watch the event from galleries in batches following a rotation system
 - ✓ Teams from the Red Cross, Animal Husbandry Department and the Revenue Department were present.
 - ✓ Twelve ambulances and two bike ambulances and fire tenders were deployed at the venue alongwith adequate Police personnel
 - ✓ The government had also instructed that the events should be conducted in open space, with number of audiences restricted to 150 or upto 50% capacity of the arena, whichever is lower
 - ✓ All the participants, bull owners, audience, program coordinators and department officials must possess a vaccination certificate indicating that they have got two doses, as well as a negative RT-PCR result in the past 48 hours before the event.
 - ✓ The event, which was supposed to have been held on January 16, was rescheduled to January 17 due to a complete lockdown imposed by the Government on January 16
 - ✓ The Alanganallur jallikattu was the last of the events that bring an end to the Pongal festivities after Avaniyapuram and Palamedu, where the bull taming jallikattu was held on January 14 and 15
 - ✓ The Alanganallur jallikattu will be held, from time immemorial, coinciding with Kaanum Pongal marking the end of four-day Pongal festival
 - ✓ The Alanganallur jallikattu attracts a considerable number of foreign tourists every year
- **The Avaniyapuram jallikattu, which went on for seven rounds - concluded on January 14, 2022**



- ✓ It was flagged off by State Minister for Commercial Taxes and Registration P Moorthy and State Minister for Finance and Human Resources Management PTR Palanivel Thiagarajan, in the presence of Madurai district collector S Aneesh Sekhar.
 - ✓ Madurai MP Su Venkatesan also attended the event
 - ✓ More than 700 bulls and 200 tamers participated in the Avaniyapuram jallikattu event
 - ✓ Taming 24 bulls, Karthik won the first prize, followed by Murugan (19 bulls) and Bharathkumar (12 bulls).
 - ✓ The bull of Manapparai Dhevasahayam won the award for the best bull, followed by five others
 - ✓ The Avaniyapuram jallikattu marks the commencement of jallikattu competitions during the Pongal festival in the district
- **On January 15, Palamedu Jallikattu with seven rounds of bull taming - concluded with usual festivities**
- ✓ The Palamedu event was flagged off by Minister for Commercial Taxes and Registration, P Moorthy and Finance Minister PTR Palanivel Thiagarajan in the presence of District Collector S Aneesh Sekhar
 - ✓ Madurai MP Su Venkatesan also attended the event
 - ✓ As many as 704 bulls and 300 tamers took part in the event after proper scrutiny and medical tests.
 - ✓ S Prabakaran (21) from Podhumbu, bagged the Best Tamer award and won a motorcycle sponsored by DMK Youth Wing Secretary and MLA Udhyanidhi Stalin, for taming 21 bulls



- ✓ Notably, Prabakaran had won first place in 2020 and second place in 2021
- ✓ M Karthik Raja, who won second place by taming 11 bulls, was given an LED TV.
- ✓ Sivaganga Puliyur Sooravali bull won the best bull award and a car from the Chief Minister MK Stalin was awarded to the bull owner
- ✓ The bull of Prakash from Melamadai, bagged the second prize along with a native breed cow and a male calf

- ✓ A tamer, named Moorthy, who tamed the first competitive bull, was rewarded with a four gram gold coin sponsored by Minister for School Education, Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozi.

