

## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—JANUARY 23, 2022

### TAMIL NADU

- **Chief minister M K Stalin - has announced a solatium of ₹11.3 crore to the owners of boats that were damaged in Sri Lankan shores and in the recent rains in the state.**
  - ✓ The CM made the announcement on January 21 following representations made to him by the representatives of fishermen bodies a day earlier.
  - ✓ This includes ₹5.6 crore as solatium to the owners of 125 boats from the southern and central coastal districts
  - ✓ These boats were detained by the Sri Lankan navy in recent years for crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) and illegally engaged in fishing in the Sri Lankan waters.
  - ✓ A total of 108 mechanised boats and 17 motorised boats in Sri Lankan harbours are now in an unusable condition as they got completely damaged without maintenance.
  - ✓ The CM also announced a solatium of ₹5.6 crore to the owners of 105 boats and fishermen whose fishing gear was damaged caused during the Northeast monsoon.
  
- **On January 22, the Tamil Nadu government - announced that it would provide e-seva services at private browsing centres at affordable costs.**
  - ✓ Minister of information technology T Mano Thangaraj issued 36 licences to set up the e-seva services at private browsing centres.
  - ✓ At present, the state has 2,457 e-seva centres under the department.

### NATIONAL

- **Mahatma Gandhi's favourite hymn 'Abide with Me' - has been dropped from the Beating Retreat ceremony on January 29 this year**
  - ✓ 'Abide with Me', the haunting Christian hymn has been part of the Beating Retreat ceremony since 1950.

- ✓ It was composed by poet Henry Francis Lyte in 1847 and usually sung to William Henry Monk's melody 'Eventide'
  - ✓ The hymn was retained in 2020 and 2021 at the last moment after the government's move to discard it from the musical spectacle
  - ✓ The Beating Retreat ceremony is performed by massed military bands at Vijay Chowk on Rajpath to signal the end of the Republic Day celebrations every year.
  - ✓ This year, 'Abide with Me' has been replaced with the popular 'Ae Mere Watan ke Logon' during the ongoing 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' to commemorate 75 years of Independence.
  - ✓ Written by Kavi Pradeep and composed by C Ramchandra, 'Ae Mere Watan ke Logon' was hauntingly sung by Lata Mangeshkar for the first time during the Republic Day celebrations in 1963
  - ✓ The song was written to honour the 3,250 soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice during the 1962 war with China.
  - ✓ The western tunes are being replaced by 'swadeshi' tunes composed by Indian composers over the past few years
  - ✓ The patriotic 'Sare Jahan se Acha' also replaced the older tradition of playing 'Abide with Me' at the end of ceremony.
  - ✓ In earlier years, apart from Indian tunes, the military bands played western tunes like the evergreen 'Colonel Bogey', written in 1914, and 'Sons of the Brave', composed in 1898, which were borrowed from the British.
  - ✓ They have all been gradually discarded.
- **On January 21, the Centre - directed states and Union territories to defer Covid vaccinations, including "precaution" doses, by three months post recovery for people whose infection status had been confirmed by laboratory tests**
- ✓ This follows the rising number of Covid cases across the country.
  - ✓ The Centre has announced this as part of guidance on the administration of the precaution dose to eligible people having Covid illness.
  - ✓ Meanwhile, of the 5.5 lakh people in Tamil Nadu eligible to get booster doses, 2.1 lakh people have received the shots so far.
  - ✓ The booster dose is being administered to healthcare providers, frontline workers and senior citizens with comorbidities
  - ✓ Covid-19 vaccination of adolescents aged 15 to 18 years started on January 3, and the administration of precaution dose began on January 10.
- **The Centre - has decided to provide 'incentive' to states by rating their environment impact assessment authorities on the basis of their efficiency in granting faster green clearance to projects.**
- ✓ The environment ministry issued an office memorandum (OM) on its star-rating system for states' green authorities recently

- ✓ According to the Centre, the move is intended as a mode of recognition and encouragement as well as for promoting improvements where needed.
  - ✓ The Centre also recalled how its several initiatives in the past had cut down the average time taken in grant of environment clearance (EC) to 75 days as against the prescribed timeline of 105 days.
  - ✓ Under the system, state environment impact assessment authorities (SEIAAs) will be rated to encourage transparency, efficiency and accountability.
- **Banaras Hindu University (BHU) - has become the first university in the country to introduce “Hindu dharma” in its regular curriculum.**



- ✓ The university has started a two-year postgraduate course in Hindu studies, which is an interdisciplinary programme, in line with the New Education Policy 2020
  - ✓ This is the first such course offered by any university in the country.
  - ✓ The course offered by BHU’s faculty of arts will be conducted at Bharat Adhyayan Kendra, a centre established in the centenary year of the university
  - ✓ It will be conducted in collaboration with the departments of philosophy and religion, Sanskrit and ancient Indian history, culture and archaeology.
- **‘Collarwali’, one of India’s most popular tigresses in the wild - died of old age at the Pench Tiger Reserve in Chhindwara district, Madhya Pradesh**



- ✓ The legendary tigress was almost 16 years old and had earned the 'Super Mom' title by giving birth to a world record 29 cubs in eight litters over 11-year period (from 2008 to 2018)
- ✓ The specialists radio-collared her in 2008, and again in January 2010, which gave her the name "Collarwali" or T15 tigress
- ✓ The collars are worn on the neck of tigers to monitor their movement in the jungle.
- ✓ The tigress earned popularity after it featured in a BBC documentary called "Spy in the jungle".
- ✓ The documentary tracked the life of four of her cubs for two years.
- ✓ Collarwali was born as one of the four cubs to famous tigress T-7 in 2005.
- ✓ The Madhya Pradesh Forest Department performed the Collarwali tigress's last rites on January 16, 2022
- ✓ Madhya Pradesh, with 526 tigers, had emerged as the "tiger state" of the country in 2018

## **INDIA AND NEIGHBOURS**

- **India and Pakistan - have finally arrived at an agreement to transport 50,000 MT of Indian wheat to Afghanistan through the land route that passes through the Attari-Wagah border.**
- ✓ The massive exercise involving thousands of trucks is expected to roll out in early February.
- ✓ India and Pakistan had been engaged in finalising the modalities for transporting wheat to drought-stricken Afghanistan for almost two months.
- ✓ The government have conveyed to Pakistan that it will be ready to despatch the first consignment by the second week of next month.
- ✓ India recently sent its third batch of assistance to Kabul, mostly life-saving medicines, by air.
- ✓ Pakistan has rarely, if ever, allowed transit facilities for Indian aid to Afghanistan in the past several decades
- ✓ In 2002, it had rejected the same proposal by India when Afghanistan was faced with a similar humanitarian crisis.

## **SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT**

- **Space PSU NewSpace India Limited (NSIL) – is planning to launch the GSAT-24 in the early part of the first quarter of next fiscal, 2022-23**
- ✓ In a first, the GSAT-24 will be a dedicated satellite for a private enterprise, TataSky
- ✓ It is in advanced stages of testing at the UR Rao Satellite Centre and will be launched using Ariane-5 launcher operated by French firm Arianespace.

- ✓ Space PSU NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), which has contracts to launch GSAT-24 as a dedicated satellite for TataSky, is looking to launch it in the early part of the first quarter of next fiscal.
  - ✓ Isro, through URSAC, is building the satellite for NSIL, which will procure the satellite and launch it for TataSky.
  - ✓ GSAT-24 — the 25th Indian satellite Arianespace will be launching — will be shipped to Guiana Space Centre, Europe's Spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana, from where the Ariane-5 will lift off.
  - ✓ A Ku-band satellite, GSAT-24 is a four-tonne class communications satellite that will be placed into a Geostationary Transfer Orbit (GTO).
  - ✓ Once orbited, it will provide high-quality television, telecommunications and broadcasting services.
  - ✓ GSAT-24 — fully funded by NSIL — will be owned and operated by PSU on a commercial basis.
  - ✓ The satellite will carry 24 Ku-band transponders.
- **Scientists - have discovered a giant gaseous planet about 379 light-years from Earth, orbiting a star with the same mass as the Sun**
- ✓ The exoplanet, called TOI-2180 b, was discovered in NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) data.
  - ✓ TOI-2180 b is almost three times bigger than Jupiter but has the same diameter, meaning it is denser than Jupiter.
  - ✓ It is 105 times denser than the earth and takes 261 days to orbit its star.
  - ✓ Its surface temperature is 76 degrees Celsius and is made of helium and hydrogen.
  - ✓ Tom Jacobs of Bellevue, Washington, a former US naval officer discovered the exoplanet.
  - ✓ The planet has rings and moons and is full of swirling gases.
  - ✓ Also, the new planet is warmer than the outer planets in our solar system.
  - ✓ However, as compared to the other exoplanets discovered so far, it is abnormally chill.
- **On January 19, a giant asteroid named 7482 (1994 PC1) – safely flew past our planet at a distance of nearly 1.93 million kilometres away.**
- ✓ It has been classified as "potentially hazardous" because of its size and its regular close visits to our planet
  - ✓ According to astronomers, this will remain the closest approach of the asteroid for at least the next 200 years
  - ✓ The rock was travelling at a speed of 19.56kmph, relative to Earth, when it flew closer to it
  - ✓ The asteroid was discovered by Australian astronomer Robert McNaught in 1994
  - ✓ It is an S – type asteroid, which are made of siliceous minerals, that is, mainly silica.

# ECONOMY

- **The digital payments in the country - have increased by 40% in September 2021 as compared to March 2021, based on the Digital Payment Index released recently by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**



- ✓ The index is released semi-annually in the months of March and September with a gap of four months
- ✓ The base year of the RBI Digital Payment Index is 2018, indicating the score of the index for the March period was set to 100
- ✓ The RBI's digital payment index stood at 304.06 during September 2021 as against 270.59 in March 2021 and 217.74 in September 2020
- ✓ The RBI Digital Payment Index was launched in January 2021 and the first index was published in March 2021 indicating the extent of digitisation of payments across the country
- ✓ The DPI index comprises five broad parameters that enable us to know the penetration of digital payments in the country over different time periods.
- ✓ These parameters are - Payment Enablers (weight 25%), Payment Infrastructure – Demand-side factors (10%), Payment Infrastructure – Supply-side factors (15%), Payment Performance (45%) and Consumer Centricity (5%).

## REPORT

- **Global electricity demand - increased by 6% year-on-year in 2021, based on the bi-annual Electricity Market Report released by the International Energy Agency (IEA)**
- ✓ It was the steepest year-on-year increase recorded by the IEA since 2008 financial crash.
- ✓ Global energy intensity decreased by 1.9% year-on-year, which was only half as compared to the level required to lay foundation for net-zero by 2050.
- ✓ In 2021, the electricity generation from renewable sources increased by 6% year-on-year, while the generation from coal was increased by 9%.

- ✓ Further, there was a 7% year-on-year increase in emissions from power sector, due to an increase of 2% in gas-fired generation
- ✓ According to IEA, power sector emissions will remain around the same level, for next three years.
- ✓ To achieve net-zero by 2050, there has to be a 55% decrease in sectoral emissions by 2030, as opposed to 2019 baseline.
- ✓ The January 2022 edition of the IEA's semi-annual Electricity Market Report analyses the extraordinary rebound in global electricity demand that took place in 2021
- ✓ Based on the analysis of these recent developments, the report forecasts demand, supply and emissions in global electricity markets through 2024.
- ✓ The IEA published its first ever Electricity Market Report in December 2020, which focused on developments in the world's electricity markets amid the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ✓ The mid-2021 edition of the Electricity Market Report was released in July 2021.
- ✓ This is the third edition of the report, which was recently released on January 14, 2022

