

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JANUARY 5, 2023

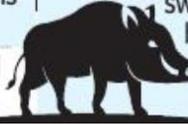
TAMIL NADU

- **On January 4, the Tamil Nadu cabinet - approved eight new industrial investment proposals worth Rs.15,610 crore, which are expected to generate 8,776 jobs in the state**
- ✓ This was announced by industries minister Thangam Thennarasu at the state secretariat after the cabinet meeting.
- ✓ The investment proposals are for multiple sectors including electric vehicles, wireless technology, textiles and oxygen manufacturing.
- ✓ These projects would come up in Krishnagiri, Theni, Pudukkottai and in districts around Chennai.
- ✓ The cabinet took note of the recent findings of the industries department that Tamils constituted 87% of the workforce in the investments made in the state since 2010, for which incentives had been granted by the state government.
- ✓ The minister said the southern parts of the state had been receiving sizable investments including the green hydrogen project.
 - ✓ Tata Group is setting up a mega solar power equipment plant at Gangaikondan in Tirunelveli district.
 - ✓ The government has also proposed to set up a textile park in E Kumaralingapuram near Virudhunagar.
- ✓ Cabinet approval has been given for a few projects in the industrial complexes in Sriperumbudur, Pillaipakkam and Oragadam near Parandur, the site chosen for the new greenfield airport.
- ✓ Further, the cabinet approved extension of 100% road tax exemption for electric vehicles by three years, ending December 31, 2025.
- ✓ The earlier two-year extension ended on December 31, 2022.

- **The forest department - confirmed the outbreak of African swine fever among wild boars in the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) in the Nilgiris district**

WHAT IS AFRICAN SWINE FEVER?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ An acute virus affecting only wild boars and pigs ➤ No symptoms shown by the affected wild boars/pigs. ➤ Affected wild boars/pigs face sudden death ➤ Only 5-10% of the affected wild boars/pigs show symptoms of staggering gait ➤ Haemorrhages in all the vital organs were found during 	<p>post-mortem examination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ African Swine fever recorded in Bhutan – officially declared ➤ In the last week of August 2022, Kerala recorded African swine fever in domestic pigs ➤ MTR recorded its first African swine fever in a bunch of four wild boars on December 25
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- ✓ At least 27 wild boars have succumbed to the African swine fever (ASF) on the periphery of Theppakadu region in MTR in the recent days.
- ✓ The government has taken efforts to contain the spread of the disease
- ✓ The disease was reported in Kerala two months ago and in Bandipur Tiger Reserve in Karnataka a month ago
- ✓ ASF is a highly infectious haemorrhagic viral disease of domestic and wild pigs and has no effective vaccine.
- ✓ It causes 100% mortality to the affect animals and is not transmitted from animals to humans

NATIONAL

- On January 4, the Centre - approved the National Green Hydrogen Mission with an initial financial outlay of Rs.19,744 crore.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES BY 2030

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Development of green hydrogen production capacity of at least 5 MMT (million metric tonne) per annum  ➤ An associated renewable energy capacity addition of about 125 GW  ➤ Over ₹8 lakh crore in total investments  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Creation of over 6 lakh jobs  ➤ Cumulative reduction in fossil fuel imports by over ₹1 lakh crore  ➤ Abatement of nearly 50 MMT of annual greenhouse gas emissions 
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- ✓ The mission was approved by the Cabinet in its meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ✓ It aims at producing 5 million tonne of green hydrogen annually by 2030.
- ✓ The initial outlay for the Mission will be Rs.19,744 crore, including an outlay of Rs.17,490 crore for the SIGHT programme, Rs.1,466 crore for pilot projects, Rs.400 crore for R&D, and Rs. 388 crore towards other Mission components

- ✓ Under the 'Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition' (SIGHT) programme, financial incentives would be provided for domestic manufacturing of electrolyzers and green hydrogen for a period of five years
 - ✓ The mission will help India not only reduce its carbon footprint but also save a substantial amount of foreign exchange on import of fossil fuels.
 - ✓ It is expected to reduce 50 million metric tonnes of annual greenhouse gas emission by 2030
 - ✓ The Mission aims to make India a global hub for production, utilisation and export of green hydrogen and its derivatives
 - ✓ It will help the country become energy independent while progressing towards decarbonisation of major sectors of the economy as part of its long-term goal of carbon neutrality by 2070.
 - ✓ This is in sync with India's updated climate action pledge under the Paris Agreement to reduce emissions intensity (emission per unit of its GDP) by 45% by 2030 from 2005 level.
 - ✓ The regions capable of supporting large scale production and utilization of hydrogen will be identified and developed as green hydrogen hubs.
 - ✓ Further, a public-private partnership framework for R&D (Strategic Hydrogen Innovation Partnership – SHIP) will be facilitated under the mission.
 - ✓ The ministry of new and renewable energy, being the nodal agency, will formulate the guidelines for implementation of the different components of the mission
 - ✓ Unlike grey hydrogen which uses natural gas, green hydrogen is produced by the electrolysis of water using renewable energy and thus doesn't emit carbon dioxide into the atmosphere
 - ✓ India is amongst the top three hot spots globally for investment and production of the 'fuel of the future', Green Hydrogen
 - ✓ The US recently extended support to GH2 under its Inflation Reduction Act.
 - ✓ Germany, UK and Japan also have announced programmes to support clean hydrogen
 - ✓ The draft national green hydrogen policy was released in February this year after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced to come up with a green hydrogen mission on 15 August, 2021.
- **On January 4, the cabinet committee on economic affairs (CCEA) - approved the 'Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development' scheme for the expansion and upgradation of broadcasting infrastructure at Prasar Bharati.**
- ✓ The Rs.2,539.6 crore scheme will also support Prasar Bharati in undertaking expenses for content development and organisation-related civil work
 - ✓ It will especially help to expand the reach of the public service broadcaster in border, left wing extremism affected, and strategic areas.
 - ✓ Union I&B minister Anurag Thakur said the scheme envisions how Doordarshan should be in the future.

- ✓ One of the major thrust areas of the scheme will be to develop high-quality content for both domestic and international audience
 - ✓ It also seeks to ensure the availability of diverse content to viewers by upgrading DTH platform capacity to accommodate more channels.
 - ✓ Prasar Bharati will also purchase OB vans and undertake a digital upgradation of DD and AIR Studios to make them high definition ready as part of the BIND project.
 - ✓ The public services broadcaster at present operates 36 TV channels through Doordarshan and the radio services through over 500 broadcasting centres of All India Radio.
 - ✓ Prasar Bharati serves as a crucial vehicle of information, education, entertainment and engagement for the people in remote areas through Doordarshan and All India Radio
 - ✓ The BIND scheme will target increasing coverage of AIR FM transmitters to 66% by geographical area and 80% by population up from 59% and 68%, respectively.
 - ✓ The scheme also envisages free distribution of over eight lakh DD Free Dish set top boxes to people living in remote, tribal, LWE and border areas.
- **On January 4, former Karnataka chief minister and external affairs minister SM Krishna - announced his retirement from active politics citing age as the reason**



- ✓ A Fulbright scholar, Krishna began his political journey in 1962 by winning the Maddur assembly seat in Mandya as an independent.
- ✓ He went on to join Congress and served as chief minister of the state between 1999 and 2004.
- ✓ He also served as Maharashtra governor (2004–08) and external affairs minister between 2009 and 2012.
- ✓ He represented Mandya thrice in the Lok Sabha.
- ✓ Krishna was the 16th Chief Minister of Karnataka from October 11, 1999 to May 28, 2004 (from Congress).
- ✓ He had served as Governor of Maharashtra and was the External Affairs Minister during the Manmohan Singh-led United Progressive Alliance government from 2009 to 2012.

- ✓ The 90-year-old leader joined the BJP in March 2017, ending his nearly 50- year-long association with the Congress.
- ✓ Krishna had served as the Speaker of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly from December 1989 to January 1993.
- ✓ He was also a member of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha at various times from 1971 to 2014.
- ✓ He was a member of both Karnataka Assembly and Council, and also had served as Deputy Chief Minister (1993 to 1994)

INTERNATIONAL

- **On January 4, US social media giant Meta - was slapped with fines totalling 390 million euros (\$413 million) for breaching EU personal data laws on Facebook and Instagram**
 - ✓ Ireland's Data Protection Commission imposed two fines to Facebook parent Meta and banned the company from forcing users in the 27-nation bloc to agree to personalized ads based on their online activity.
 - ✓ A decision in a third case involving Meta's WhatsApp messaging service is expected later this month.
 - ✓ The Irish watchdog fined the company 210 million euros for violations of EU data privacy rules involving Facebook and an additional 180 million euros for breaches involving Instagram.
 - ✓ The decision is related to complaints filed in May 2018 when the 27-nation bloc's privacy rules, known as the General Data Protection Regulation, or GDPR, took effect.
 - ✓ The regulator has also asked Meta to legalise its ad-serving practices as per EU's data protection law General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in three months.
 - ✓ The Irish authority is the lead watchdog for some of Silicon Valley's biggest tech firms including Meta which have set up their European headquarters in Ireland
 - ✓ Irish regulators have already slapped Meta with four other fines for data privacy infringements since 2021 that total more than 900 million euros
 - ✓ The biggest penalties under GDPR so far have been a record €746 million fine for Amazon.com Inc. by Luxembourg regulators, followed by a €405 million fine for Instagram, and a €265 million fine for Meta for failing to prevent a data leak.
- **United States - has proposed significantly higher fees for many non-immigrant employment-based visas such as H-1B and also L visas (for those on intra-company transfers).**
 - ✓ These fees are borne by the US employer and will increase the costs of hiring immigrant employees.
 - ✓ Those seeking investment-linked green cards, will now have to pay \$11,160 for the initial application itself — a rise of 204%.

- ✓ The fee proposals were released by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) on January 3
- ✓ However, the hike won't be introduced immediately and the actual implementation of the revised fees could take a few months.
- ✓ Nearly 96% of the funding is derived by USCIS from such filing fees.

APPOINTMENTS

- **US President Joe Biden - has renominated Eric Garcetti as his envoy to India**



- ✓ The former Mayor of Los Angeles is expected to be confirmed by the Senate this time.
- ✓ Garcetti, 51, is a close aide of President Biden and has been Mayor of Los Angeles since 2013.
- ✓ In July 2021, President Biden nominated Garcetti as his Ambassador to India.
- ✓ Garcetti was among dozens of Presidential selections who failed to win confirmation from the US Senate last year.

