

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-MARCH 6, 2023

TAMIL NADU

- On March 5, Chief Minister M K Stalin - inaugurated the state-of-the-art Keeladi museum in Sivaganga district, that was built at the cost of Rs.18 crore



- ✓ The museum, which has been divided into six blocks over 31,000 sqft, will exhibit around 10,000 artefacts excavated from Keeladi, Agaram and Manalur excavation sites
 - ✓ The six themes are related to agriculture and water management, Madurai and Keeladi, ceramic industries, weaving and beads, sea trade and lifestyle
- ✓ Visitors to Keeladi museum will be able to see Sangam-era artefacts, play ancient games, watch the excavations through virtual reality and even see their names in ancient Tamil Brahmi (Tamili) script on touchscreens.
- ✓ The museum also has a theatre to watch the documentary about the ancient history of Tamil Nadu and the importance of Keeladi excavations.
- ✓ It was built in traditional Chettinad style with red terracotta and Athangudi tiles.
- ✓ The museum has a model of a Sangam age ship, carnelian beads, pots and models of excavation trenches.
- ✓ Two-minute animation clips have been prepared on agriculture, iron tools making, weaving, stone cutting, and maritime and literary heritage.

- ✓ The food court will serve traditional Sivaganga area food and dishes made from millets.

TIMELINE FOR KEELADI EXCAVATIONS

1976 | Local school teacher V Balasubramaniam informs the archaeology department about the antiquities found in the village. But the site was not excavated

2013-14 | During the exploration of Vaigai river valley, ASI team finds about the mound in Keeladi, 12km southeast of Madurai in Sivaganga district

2014-15 | First season of excavations begins

2015-16 | In the second season, ASI team unearthed huge structures belonging to Sangam age and totally 5,500 artefacts were found

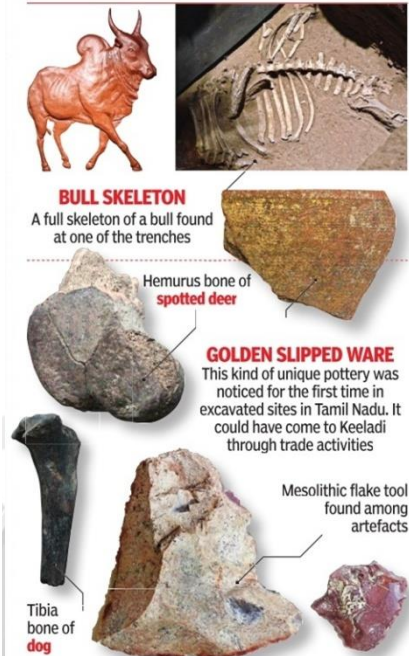
March 2017 | Ahead of third season excavation, ASI transfers superintending archaeologist K Amarnath Ramakrishna, who led the excavation to Assam. ASI gives a report saying there were no significant findings in the third season and closes excavation

2018 to 2022 | After the court's intervention, the state department of archaeology took over the excavation. In five seasons, it found more than 13000 artefacts.

2023 | The Tamil Nadu government plans to excavate for the ninth season at sites in Keeladi.

KEELADI FINDINGS

In the last eight seasons, more than 18,000 artefacts have been unearthed at Keeladi by ASI and Tamil Nadu state department of archaeology including beads, potsherds and bones



BULL SKELETON
A full skeleton of a bull found at one of the trenches

Hemurus bone of spotted deer

GOLDEN SLIPPED WARE
This kind of unique pottery was noticed for the first time in excavated sites in Tamil Nadu. It could have come to Keeladi through trade activities

Mesolithic flake tool found among artefacts

Tibia bone of dog

- ✓ After six phases of excavation at Keeladi, the foundation stone for the museum was laid in July 2020.
- ✓ Keeladi is a village located on the banks of the Vaigai river in the erstwhile Madurai district.
- ✓ The ASI has excavated the Keeladi site from 2014 to 2016.
- ✓ The state archaeology department then took over the excavation and has found more than 13,000 artefacts, the earliest of them dating to the 6th century BCE.

INTERNATIONAL

- **China - announced a 7.2% increase in its defence budget for the coming year**
- ✓ This is for the eighth consecutive year that China has announced a single-digit percentage point increase in its military budget.
- ✓ The proposed defence Budget was announced in a draft Budget report issued at the opening of the annual session of the National People's Congress, the country's top legislature, on March 5.
- ✓ Last year, China kept its defence budget at 1.45 trillion yuan, a 7.1% increase from 2021.
- ✓ This year the defence spending is increased to 1.55 trillion yuan.

- ✓ However, in view of the appreciation of the dollar against the yuan, this year's defence spending of China totalled \$225 billion.
- ✓ Last year, in dollar terms China's defence spending amounted to \$230 billion
- ✓ China has set a target of 2035 for the modernisation of its national defence and armed forces.
- ✓ Meanwhile, China set a modest target for economic growth this year of around 5%
- ✓ China is the second biggest spender on defence next to the US whose defence budget for 2023 totalled \$816 billion

MILITARY POWER: CHINA VERSUS INDIA

Capability	CHINA	INDIA
Defence budget (2023) (\$ bn)	225	72.5
Gross domestic product growth target (%)	5	6.0 to 6.8
Deployed nuclear warheads	350	160
Active military personnel (in mn)	2.18	1.46
Tanks	5,250	4,614
Artillery guns	9,014	4,749
Capital warships*	277	64
Air Force aircraft#	3,805	1,439

Note: *Carriers, destroyers, frigates and corvettes; # Including helicopters and drones
Sources: Published defence budgets, SIPRI database 2022

- ✓ In comparison, India's defence budget for 2023-24 amounted to Rs 5.94 lakh crore (about \$72.5 billion).
 - ✓ The Chinese military is headed by President Xi Jinping, who is the Chairman of the powerful Central Military Commission, the overall high command of the two-million-strong People's Liberation Army (PLA), the world's largest military.
 - ✓ Xi, 69, the only Chinese leader to have been elected for an unprecedented third five-year term by the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) in October last year, also heads the party besides the presidency.
- **The United Nations - signed the first 'High Seas Treaty' to protect the ocean bodies of the world that lie outside the national boundaries, which form almost two-thirds of the world's oceans.**
- ✓ The high seas begin at the border of countries' exclusive economic zones, which extend up to 200 nautical miles (370 kilometers) from coastlines, thereby falling under the jurisdiction of no country.
 - ✓ The negotiators from more than 100 countries completed the UN treaty to protect the high seas after more than 15 years of discussions, including four years of formal talks.
 - ✓ The previous negotiations failed to conclude due to disagreements on funding and fishing rights.
 - ✓ The last international agreement on ocean protection was signed 40 years ago in 1982 - the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

- ✓ The treaty now brings 30% of the world's oceans into the protected domain by the end of the decade, a target known as “30 by 30” agreed in Montreal in December, puts more funding into marine conservation and sets new rules for deep sea mining.
- ✓ The treaty will create a new body to manage conservation of ocean life and establish marine protected areas in the high seas.
- ✓ Only about 1% of the high seas are currently protected, thereby leaving the marine lives in these waters at high risk of exploitation from threats including climate change, overfishing and shipping traffic.
- ✓ In 2017, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution calling on nations to establish a high seas treaty.

PERSONALITIES

- **Mumbai-based Prabhat Koli - became the youngest swimmer to accomplish the rare feat of completing the Oceans Seven challenge**



- ✓ The long-distance swimmer completed the challenge after swimming across Cook Strait in New Zealand on March 1, and covered a distance of 28 kilometres in 8 hours and 41 minutes.
- ✓ Overall, he is the 22nd person to complete the challenge.
- ✓ Oceans Seven is an open water swimming challenge where only a handful of swimmers have completed all seven swims.
- ✓ Oceans Seven comprises English Channel (between England and France), North Channel (between Ireland and Scotland), Molokai Channel (between Molokai and Oahu, Hawaii), Catalina Channel (between Santa Catalina island and California), Straits of Gibraltar (between Spain and Morocco), Cook Strait (between North and South islands of New Zealand), and Tsugaru Strait (between Honshu and Hokkaido, Japan).
- ✓ Prabhat is a recipient of the Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award - the country's highest adventure award.

SPORTS

- **Rest of India (ROI) - thrashed Madhya Pradesh by 238 runs to retain the prestigious Irani Cup at the Captain Roop Singh Stadium in Gwalior on March 5.**
- ✓ Chasing a tough target of 437, last year's Ranji Trophy champions MP were dismissed for 198 during the opening session of the fifth and final day
- ✓ For his brilliant batting across both innings scoring 213 and 144 runs, Yashasvi Jaiswal has been adjudged the Player of the match



- ✓ Jaiswal created history in the match by scoring most runs by a batsman in the one-off fixture, surpassing the record previously held by Shikhar Dhawan.
 - ✓ Back in the 2011-12 season, Dhawan had smashed 332 runs while playing for Rest of India against Rajasthan
- ✓ The ROI side were the defending champions of the Irani Cup, having won the last time in 2019-20.
- ✓ They faced the winners of Ranji Trophy Madhya Pradesh in the finale, which started on March 1.

NATIONAL DAY

- **National Safety Day - March 4**



- ✓ The National Safety Day is celebrated every year to raise awareness about the importance of safety and health in the workplace and to promote a culture of safety among the general public
- ✓ The day commemorates the foundation of the National Safety Council to emphasize on the necessity to adhere to safety standards at the workplace
- ✓ The National Safety Council (NSC) of India, a non-profit, non-governmental organisation, was established on March 4, 1966, and the National Safety Day was first observed in 1972
- ✓ Theme 2023 - "Our Aim – Zero Harm"
- ✓ The National Safety Week is observed from 4 to 10 March annually.

