

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – DECEMBER 20, 2022

TAMIL NADU

- On December 19, Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin – launched the 'Namma School Foundation' project



- ✓ The new initiative aims to improve infrastructure of State government-run schools with private participation
- ✓ During the event, Namma school portal (<https://nammaschool.tnschools.gov.in>) and school virtual pavilion were also launched by the Chief Minister.
- ✓ Chairman emeritus of TVS Motor company, Venu Srinivasan, will be the chairman, and grandmaster Viswanathan Anand will be the brand ambassador of the foundation that will help bring in more funds under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
- ✓ The CM announced his contribution of Rs 5 lakh from his personal fund for the foundation as a first contributor.
- ✓ He also appealed to philanthropists to contribute for the development of the schools.

- ✓ The funds would be used to develop health and hygiene, nutrition, pedagogy, promote sports and culture, co-curricular activities and upskilling of the students
 - ✓ Further, the CM urged Tamils across the world to re-establish their links with their villages and schools through a virtual pavilion introduced by the State government and thereby contribute.
 - ✓ The Chief Minister facilitated actor Sivakumar, who along with his classmates, adopted a government school in Sular.
 - ✓ Earlier, the CM renamed the DPI complex of the state school education department as “Perasiriyar K Anbazhagan Education Complex” and unveiled the memorial arch commemorating the centenary of the former finance minister cum DMK general secretary.
 - ✓ The launch of the Namma School Foundation of the school education department coincides with his birth anniversary on December 19
- **On December 19, Chief Minister MK Stalin - constituted a welfare board for non-resident Tamils and Tamils living in other states of the country**
- ✓ The secretary of DMK’s environment wing and activist Karthikeya Sivasenathipathi of Kangeyam in Tiruppur is appointed as the chairman of the board



- ✓ The Emigrant Tamils Welfare Board shall have Mauritius-based Arumugam Parasuraman, London-based Mohammed Faizal, the UAE-based Siddhiq Syed Miran, the U. S. -based Caldwell Velnambi, Singapore-based G V Ram alias Gopalakrishnan Venkataramanan, Mumbai-based A Miran and Chennai-based Pugazh Gandhi as members
- ✓ A Meeran from Mumbai and Advocate Pugazh Gandhi from Chennai will be non-official members of this welfare board
- ✓ Public secretary, home secretary, finance secretary, labour welfare secretary (or officers appointed by them) and an IAS officer in the rank of secretary looking after the welfare of NRI Tamils are among the ex-officio members of the welfare board.
- ✓ The chairman and other members will hold office for a tenure of three years.

- ✓ This board, established with an NRI Tamils Welfare Fund of Rs.5 crore, will implement welfare schemes for NRI Tamils and Tamils living in other states of India.
 - ✓ The government allocated Rs 1.40 crore as capital expenditure towards this welfare board, and Rs.3 crore a year towards administrative expenditure.
 - ✓ A database of NRI Tamils and Tamils living in other states would be created for implementing welfare schemes through this board
 - ✓ Those who become members of this board will be issued an identity card and can avail of accident, life and health insurance
 - ✓ The NRI Tamils Welfare Act was enacted during the previous DMK regime headed by former Chief Minister M Karunanidhi in March 2011
- **On December 19, artist, theatre veteran and president of Alliance Française of Madras, Pravin Kannanur - was awarded the distinction of 'Chevalier des Arts Et Lettres' by the French government at the Alliance Française.**



- ✓ Pravin was awarded in recognition of his contribution to the promotion of the arts, theatre, and cultural cooperation in France and India.
 - ✓ The Alliance Française of Madras will be celebrating its 70th year next year while the Alliance Française, an international organisation, will be celebrating its 140th year
 - ✓ Alliance Française of Madras, started in 1953, enjoys an excellent reputation in Chennai for its French courses and vibrant cultural programmes.
 - ✓ The Alliance Française is a non-profit organisation to promote French language and culture.
- **The Tamil Nadu government - has allowed mining and quarrying in the buffer zones of reserve forests**

- ✓ In this regard, amendments have been made to the Tamil Nadu minor mineral concession rules, 1959.
- ✓ The prohibition of quarrying and mining activity near reserve forests was rescinded so as to protect the interest of lessees and to augment revenue to the government
- ✓ Two years ago, an order was passed creating a buffer zone of 1km radius around reserve forests.

NATIONAL

- **Google - announced a grant of \$1 million to set up India's first multi-disciplinary centre for responsible AI at IIT, Madras.**
- ✓ The centre aims to research on various aspects of bias in artificial intelligence (AI) while focusing on the Indian context.
- ✓ The tech giant is also going to offer a similar grant amount to independent non-profit Wadhvani AI in order to develop AI models which will help monitor crop diseases, predict yield outcomes and bring efficiencies to Kisan call centers.
- ✓ The tech giant has already initiated a pilot project with the Telangana government and has also been working with a few startups



- ✓ Further, Google plans to collaborate with Indian Institute of Science (IISc) for project Vaani, an AI model that attempts to better understand different languages, accents, and dialects.
- ✓ Under the partnership, Google aims to build an artificial intelligence/machine learning (AI/ML) model to collect language samples/speech data from 773 districts across India in nearly 1000 languages.
- ✓ This open source data will ensure that respondents can speak in any language that the users are comfortable with.
- ✓ Project Vaani aims to ensure the collected and produced data will be open-source
- ✓ Google will also focus on investing in women-led early-stage startups through its Rs 75,000 crore India Digitisation Fund (IDF), which seeks to make access to the internet affordable
- ✓ Through Google IDF, the company bought a 7.73% stake in Jio for \$ 4.5 billion and a 1.2% stake in Bharti Airtel for \$700 million.

- ✓ Google and Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai participated at the eighth edition of its flagship 'Google for India' event in New Delhi on December 19
- **President Droupadi Murmu - recently launched the 'EV-Yatra Portal' and a mobile application during National Energy Conservation Day celebrations in New Delhi on December 14**
- ✓ The portal, developed by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency, was launched with the aim to facilitate in-vehicle navigation to the nearest public Electric Vehicle charger.



- ✓ The mobile app will offer details such as the types of chargers installed at the station, availability of charging slots, tariff to charge the EV, service provided etc.
- ✓ It is currently available in English and Hindi languages in Google Playstore and Apple Store for download.
- ✓ During the event, President Murmu also presented the National Energy Conservation Awards, National Energy Efficiency Innovation Awards and National Painting Competition prizes.
 - ✓ The South Central Railways received the first and second prizes for Energy Conservation Measures in the Railway Stations category, while Ajmer Workshop of North Western Railway received the first prize under the Buildings Category
- ✓ Currently, there are around 5,151 operational public charging stations for EVs in India.
 - ✓ Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Maharashtra are among the largest EV markets in India.
- ✓ The National Energy Conservation Day is observed on December 14 each year to raise awareness about the importance of saving energy resources to halt global warming and address climate crisis.
- ✓ On this day in 2001, the Energy Conservation Act was executed by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)
- ✓ The day was first observed in the year 1991, when the National Energy Conservation Awards were conferred for the first time.

- **Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi – to become the first among IITs to start offshore operations**



- ✓ The offshore campus of IIT, Delhi will start its academic sessions in United Arab Emirates' capital Abu Dhabi from September 2024.
 - ✓ The other two IITs planning to launch offshore campuses are IIT Madras in Sri Lanka, Nepal and Tanzania and IIT Kharagpur in Malaysia.
 - ✓ On February 18 this year, as part of the India-UAE trade deal, the Centre had announced establishing the campus in the UAE.
 - ✓ Earlier a central government panel has recommended that IITs setting up their offshore camp uses may get a royalty using the brand name.
- **NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and UNDP India - launched the fifth edition of 'Youth Co:Lab' to support young social entrepreneurs recently on December 15**



- ✓ Youth Co:Lab is an initiative launched in 2019 in India by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India in partnership with Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog
- ✓ It aims to establish a common agenda for Asia-Pacific countries to invest in and empower youth to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through leadership, social innovation, and entrepreneurship.

- ✓ The Youth Co:Lab initiative, till date, has been implemented in 28 countries and territories, reaching over 2,00,000 participants, benefitting more than 11,000 young social entrepreneurs and supporting over 1,240 social enterprises
- ✓ Youth Co:Lab is the largest youth innovation movement in the Asia Pacific, which was launched jointly in 2017 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Citi Foundation
- **Union health minister Mansukh Mandaviya - inaugurated ICMR's National Animal Resource Facility for Biomedical Research (NARFBR) at Genome Valley in Hyderabad recently on December 17**



- ✓ The new centre will have great significance in animal studies for biomedical research as it is crucial in discovering causes, diagnosis and treatment of zoonotic agents and diseases.
- ✓ NARFBR is an apex facility which will provide ethical care and use and welfare of laboratory animals during research.
- **Union Minister for Science & Technology Jitendra Singh - launched CSIR (Council of Scientific & Industrial Research) "One Week, One Lab" countrywide campaign from 6th January, 2023**



- ✓ During the week, each of the 37 premier Laboratories/Institutes of CSIR spread across the country will, one after the other in every successive week, showcase their exclusive innovations and technological breakthroughs to the people of India.

- ✓ At the 200th Governing Body Meeting of CSIR held on December 17, Dr Jitendra Singh announced a Special Call for Research Grant Proposals for Women Scientists
- ✓ "One Week One Lab" theme-based campaign is expected to ignite the minds of young innovators, students, academia, and industry to look for opportunities through deep tech Start-ups ventures
- ✓ The Minister also launched the new tagline of the organisation, "CSIR-The Innovation Engine of India"
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the President of CSIR, while Union Minister for Science & Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh is its Vice President
- ✓ CSIR was established on 26 September 1942 and was registered as a CSIR Society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- ✓ The first meeting of the Governing Body was held on 09 March 1942 that framed the Bye Laws for the Council amongst other agenda items.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- The 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) held in Montreal - adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) on December 19.

KEY TARGETS

- > Effectively **conserve at least 30%** of world's lands, inland waters, coastal areas & oceans
- > Currently, **17% of world's land** and **10% of marine areas** are under protection
- > **Completely restore at least 30%** of degraded land, inland waters, coastal and marine ecosystems
- > Cut to half **global food waste, pesticide use**

- ✓ The framework has 23 targets that the world needs to achieve by 2030 to reverse ecosystem degradation under four main goals.
- ✓ In the historic UN biodiversity agreement, more than 190 countries agreed to protect 30% of land and 30% of coastal and marine areas by 2030, fulfilling the deal's highest-profile goal, known as 30-by-30
- ✓ The Global Environment Facility has been requested to establish a Special Trust Fund to support the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework ("GBF Fund").
- ✓ Under the deal, participating countries agreed to reduce harmful government subsidies worth \$500 billion annually, while vowing to identify subsidies which are "harmful for biodiversity" by 2025.

- ✓ One of the deal's more controversial targets sought to reduce the use of pesticides by up to two-thirds.
- ✓ Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav delivered the National Statement at COP15 of Convention on Biodiversity on December 16
- ✓ **Earlier, the United Nations has recognized ten ground-breaking ecosystem restoration initiatives from across the world at the COP 15**
- ✓ They are recognized for promoting the best practices of large-scale and long-term ecosystem restoration while also embodying the Ten Restoration Principles of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration
- ✓ The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, which runs through 2030, is a global movement that was jointly coordinated by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).
- ✓ Together, the 10 flagships seek to restore more than 68 million hectares and create around 15 million jobs.
- ✓ The United Nations (UN) has recognized **Namami Gange** initiative to rejuvenate India's sacred River Ganga as one of the top 10 World Restoration Flagships to revive the natural world.



- ✓ The Award was received by G. Asok Kumar, Director General, Namami Gange at a function in the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) to the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) in Montreal, Canada on 14th December, the World Restoration Day.
- ✓ Namami Gange was selected from over 150 such initiatives from 70 countries across the globe.
- ✓ The recognized initiatives, including Namami Gange, will now be eligible to receive UN support, funding or technical expertise.
- ✓ The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) has previously won the "Public Water Agency of the Year" in the Global Water Awards, 2019 by Global Water Intelligence 3
- ✓ 'Namami Gange Programme', is an Integrated Conservation Mission, approved as a 'Flagship Programme' by the Union Government in June 2014.

- ✓ A budget of Rs 20,000 crore was approved to accomplish the twin objectives of effective abatement of pollution, conservation and rejuvenation of the National River Ganga.
- ✓ The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) was registered on August 12, 2011, under the Societies Registration Act 1860
- ✓ It is the implementation arm of the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) which was constituted under the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act (EPA), 1986.
- ✓ The NMCG is chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and is regularly reviewed by Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, the Union Minister for Jal Shakti

FIFA WORLD CUP 2022 - REPORT

