

February - 19

## TNPSC BITS

- ❖ India emerged as the world's fifth largest economy by overtaking the UK and France in 2019.
  - This announcement was made by a US based think tank World Population Review.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu chief Minister has inaugurated leading Indian tire manufacturer Ceat's 6<sup>th</sup> new factory for the manufacture of radial tires in Chennai.

## TAMIL NADU

### Morning Breakfast Scheme – Tamil Nadu

- ❖ Tamil Nadu government announced that breakfast scheme for school students will be implemented all over Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ So far, this scheme is applying only in the Greater Chennai Corporation.
- ❖ The Akshaya Patra Foundation has been commissioned by the State government to serve breakfast to 32,000 students in corporation schools across Chennai.
- ❖ "Kaalai Unavu Thittam" (Breakfast Scheme) is jointly implemented by the Greater Chennai Corporation and the Akshaya Patra Foundation.

### 8 agro-processing clusters in Tamil Nadu

- ❖ An inter-ministerial team of the Centre will meet on February 26 to clear the State government's proposals for the setting up of 8 agro-processing clusters in various districts.
- ❖ The clusters, estimated to cost ₹218 crore, were expected to come up in Theni, Dindigul, Krishnagiri, Tiruvannamalai, Salem, Cuddalore, Villupuram and Madurai.
- ❖ They will be covered under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY).

### Voters in Tamil Nadu

- ❖ Tamil Nadu has over 6.13 crore voters, as per the final rolls of the Special Summary Revision 2020.
- ❖ This Special Summary Revision 2020 was published by the Election Commission.
- ❖ The electorate, with a qualifying date of January 1, 2020, comprises of



- 3,10,45,969 women,
  - 3,02,54,172 men and
  - 6,497 transperson.
- ❖ Sholinganallur Assembly Constituency continues to have highest number of 6,60,317 voters.
  - ❖ Chennai Harbour Assembly Constituency with 1,73,337 electors is the smallest electorate.

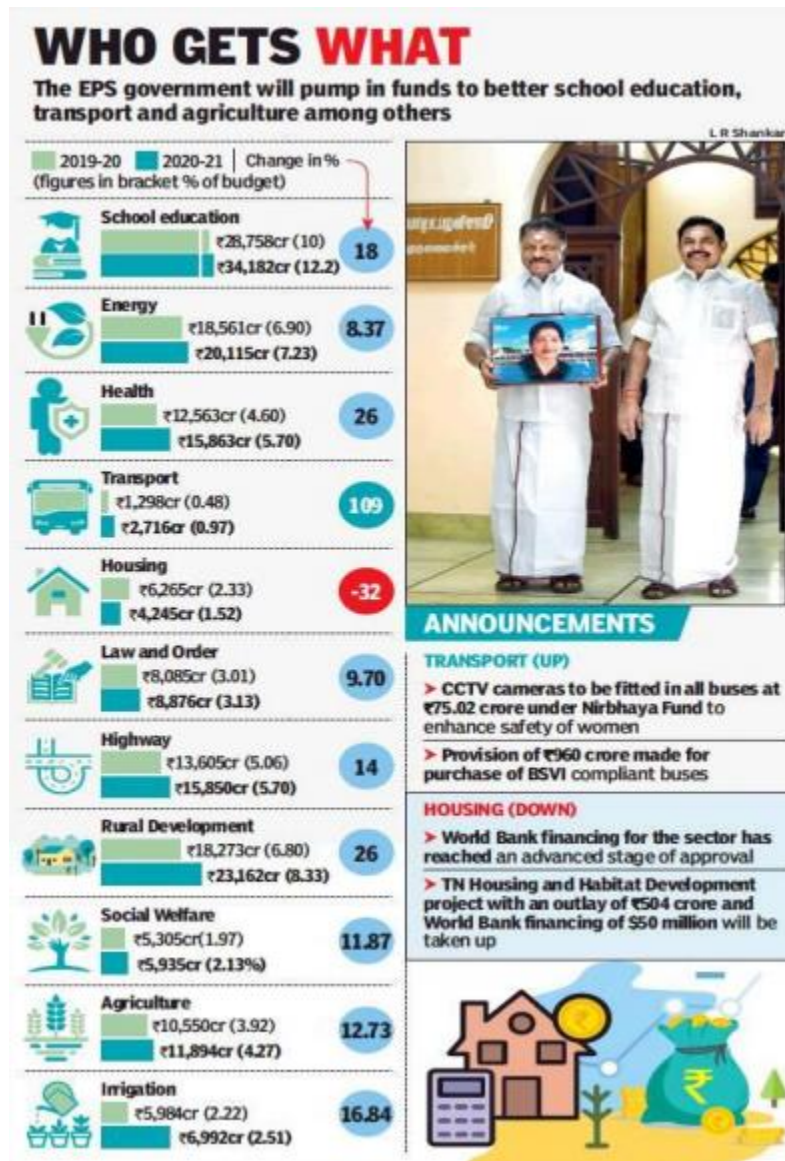
### **Tamil Nadu Budget 2020**

- ❖ Deputy Chief Minister and State Finance Minister O. Panneerselvam presented the State Budget in the Assembly for the 10th time in a three-hour-fifteen-minute speech on February 14.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu's economic growth for 2019-20 is projected to be 7.27%, a fall from 8.17% in 2018-19 due to global and national economic headwinds.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu government's fiscal deficit is estimated to be 2.84%.

#### **Highlights of Tamil Nadu Budget 2020 – 21**

- ❖ Food parks proposed to be established in Dharmapuri, Ariyalur, Perambalur, Karur, Nagapatnam, Ramanathapuram, Tenkasi districts at a cost of Rs 70 crore.
- ❖ The state intends to launch Uzhavar-Aluvalar Thodarpu Thittam soon - for a closer interface of officials with farmers.
- ❖ The government has decided to form a 'not-for-profit' Special Purpose Vehicle to finance and manage the Amma Unavagam programme.
- ❖ Environmental Clearance for Athikadavu - Avinashi irrigation scheme has been obtained Rs. 500 crores.
- ❖ Eco-restoration of the Buckingham Canal, its drains and all the drains of the Cooum and Adyar at a total cost of Rs.5,439.76 crore to be taken up.
- ❖ Rs 34,181.73 crore allocated for School Education Department, Rs 5,052.84 crore for Higher Education.
- ❖ Stamp duty tax has been reduced to 0.25 per cent from the earlier 1 per cent.
- ❖ Fisheries department - To improve communication for fishermen more mechanised boats to be fitted with transponders.
- ❖ Chennai - Peripheral Ring Road and Chennai to Kanyakumari industrial corridor projects with an allocation of ₹1,000 crore each.
  - The ring road project will provide access to Ennore port.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government has sanctioned ₹12.21 crore for a site museum at Keeladi.

- ❖ The government has allocated funds for the ongoing construction of a desalination plant at Nemmeli and to start work for another plant at Perur.



### Initiatives for the elder people – Tamil Nadu

- ❖ Deputy chief minister O Panneer selvam announced that the government will launch a number of initiatives for the elderly.
- ❖ These initiatives will be based on the findings of study by the Nobel laureate Esther Duflo-led research team in the state.
- ❖ Earlier, the government, in association with Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Lab (JPAL), launched a survey on issues relating to the elderly.

- ❖ As a pilot project, the government has decided to launch Elderly resource centres in two blocks in all 37 districts at a budget of ₹37 lakh.
- ❖ The State government led by former chief minister J Jayalalithaa signed an MoU with J-PAL founded by Nobel laureates Abhijit Banerjee and his wife Duflo in November 2014
  - To devise an evidence-based approach for policy making and
  - To maximise the impact of anti-poverty programmes

## NATIONAL

### **Kashi Mahakal Express**

- ❖ The third “private” train of the Indian Railways, named as Kashi Mahakal Express, is to be introduced soon.
- ❖ It will be operated thrice a week between Varanasi and Indore by railway PSU, IRCTC.
- ❖ It will connect three Jyotirlingas – Omkareshwar (near Indore), Mahakaleshwar (Ujjain) and Kashi Vishwanath (Varanasi).



### **Asur tribe using mobile radio**

- ❖ The Asur tribe has been using mobile radio to transmit local news and songs which is helping them revive the dying tribal language.

- ❖ Asur Tribe are an Austroasiatic ethnic group living primarily in the Indian state of Jharkhand.
- ❖ They are included in the list of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG's).
- ❖ The main festival of the tribe includes Sarhul, Phagua, Navakhans among others.

### **SUTRA PIC Programme**

- ❖ The Government of India has unveiled a programme named SUTRA PIC to research 'indigenous' cows.
- ❖ SUTRA PIC stands for Scientific Utilisation Through Research Augmentation - Prime Products from Indigenous Cows.
- ❖ The department of Science and Technology under the Ministry of Science and Technology is in charge of the programme.
- ❖ Scientific research on the complete characterisation of milk and milk products derived from Indian indigenous cows is the objective of this programme.

### **State of India's Birds 2020**

- ❖ The State of India's Birds 2020 (SoIB), first-of-its-kind analysis, a new scientific report was jointly released by 10 organisations.
- ❖ It has been produced included ATREE, BNHS, Foundation for Ecological Security, NCF, National Biodiversity Authority of India, National Centre for Biological Sciences, SACON, Wetlands International, WII and WWF.
- ❖ It was produced using a base of 867 species, and analysed with the help of data uploaded by birdwatchers to the online platform, eBird.
- ❖ It was released at the 13th Conference of Parties of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals which is taking place in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

# State of INDIA'S BIRDS

Over 15,000 birdwatchers contribute to a report on the state of India's birds

## STATUS ASSESSMENTS

Number of species in different categories. Abundance trends and distribution range size are used to place species in different categories of conservation concern.

	Strong Decline	Moderate Decline	Stable	Moderate Increase	Strong Increase
LONG-TERM TREND	58	77	114	5	7
CURRENT TREND	72	44	9	6	15

	Very Restricted	Restricted	Moderate	Large	Very Large
RANGE SIZE	27	152	396	176	104

### CONSERVATION CONCERN

HIGH	101
MODERATE	319
LOW	442

### WHAT IS THIS REPORT?

- An assessment of the long-term trend, current trend, distribution range size, and the overall conservation status of 867 Indian bird species
- Based largely on >10 million observations contributed by >15,000 birdwatchers to the eBird platform

### SOME GOOD NEWS

- 126 species have stable or increasing trends over the last 25+ years
- Species close to our hearts, like House Sparrow and Indian Peafowl, are doing well
- Some globally Near Threatened species, including Black-headed Ibis and Oriental Darter, have stable or increasing populations and therefore are classified as of Low Conservation Concern for India

### CAUSES FOR CONCERN

- Raptors, migratory shorebirds, and endemics to the Western Ghats have declined considerably
- Common species like Small Minivet, Common Greenshank and Oriental Skylark have declined
- Birds that eat invertebrates have declined as a group

### Recommendations

#### Policymakers and Managers

- Update global and national priorities using conservation assessments from this report
- Fund conservation efforts on High Concern species and habitats where species have declined
- Support monitoring efforts by citizen scientists and researchers

#### Researchers

- Promote collaborations between researchers and the public at large
- Initiate efforts to better understand neglected species
- Investigate reasons for decline

#### The Public at Large

- Document birds seen and upload to a public platform
- Help to fill information gaps in areas with less birdwatching
- Spread the message of birdwatching, and initiate regional monitoring efforts



## ENVIRONMENT

### New Species of Urban Lizard

- ❖ A new species of lizard, the urban bent-toed gecko (*Cyrtodactylus urbanus*) was discovered in Guwahati, Assam.
- ❖ The bent-toed gecko was earlier thought to be the same as the Meghalaya's Khasi Hills lizard.
- ❖ Geckos are mostly small, usually nocturnal reptiles with soft skin.



## STATES

### **Punjab Kinnow**

- ❖ The Punjab Agri Export Corporation recently launched the 'Punjab Kinnow' brand at the kinnow festival in Abohar of Punjab.
- ❖ This brand of kinnow considered as the 'king fruit' of Punjab.
- ❖ It is also said to be "pesticide-free".
- ❖ Punjab being the largest producer of kinnow in the country.
- ❖ The 'Kinnow' is a high yield mandarin hybrid cultivated extensively in the wider Punjab region of India and Pakistan.





## **PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS**

### **Recognition of ERONET**

- ❖ The Election Commission of India has been awarded 'Silver' for Excellence in Government Process re-engineering for digital transformation for the year 2019-20.
- ❖ The award was given in recognition of ERONET.
- ❖ ERONET is a common database for all States and UTs with data of 91 crore electors.
- ❖ ERONET automates the process of electoral roll management.

