



**January - 02**

## **TNPSC BITS**

- ❖ The Erode district forest department along with the Tamil Nadu Butterflies Society (TNBS) carried out a census on butterflies for the first time in Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve (STR) on December 29 and 30.
  - Besides 150 varieties of butterflies, the census team also spotted 241 varieties of birds in the forest.
- ❖ The government has declared the entire state of Nagaland as “disturbed area” for six more months, till June end, under the AFSPA (Armed Forces Special Powers Act).
  - It empowers the security forces to conduct operations anywhere and arrest anyone without any prior notice.
- ❖ The Indian Government ties up with JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency), Japanese funding agency to manufacture 75% of Metro rail coaches in India either by setting up its own plant or by collaborating with Indian firms.
- ❖ The Union Government has appointed Sudhir Bhargava as new Chief Information Commissioner along with four new Information Commissioners in the Central Information Commission (CIC).
- ❖ The Union Government appointed V K Yadav as the new chairman of railway board on the retirement of Ashwani Lohani.
- ❖ The Indian woman cricket opener Smriti Mandhana was named the ICC Women’s Cricketer of the Year as well as the ICC Women’s ODI Player of the Year by the International Cricket Council (ICC).
- ❖ Magnus Carlsen retained his world blitz chess title in St Petersburg with a score of 17/21, defeating Polish Grand Master Jan-Krzysztof Duda. Japanese-American Hikaru Nakamura finished third.
  - This was the Norwegian ace’s 10<sup>th</sup> world title of his career.
- ❖ The Bangladesh team Cricket captain Mashrafe Mortaza has registered a landslide victory in the 11<sup>th</sup> general elections of Bangladesh and becoming the first active cricketer in the country to be elected as a lawmaker.

## TAMIL NADU

## Ban on single-use plastic

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Government's order banning Manufacturing, trade and use of 14 kinds of plastic products – kicks off on 2019 January 1 in the state.
- ❖ The state will decide on the penalty for the users who violate the ban after studying the models of other states, including Karnataka.
- ❖ 14 banned items only constitute five per cent of the total plastic manufactured in the state.
- ❖ The Union Environment Ministry has already notified the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2018, which mandates phasing out of manufacture and use of non-recyclable multi-layered plastic in two years.



# NATIONAL

## New immigration check post

- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs has designated Port Blair airport as an authorised immigration check post for entry and exit from India.
- ❖ Hereafter foreign tourists can directly fly to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.



- ❖ Also, the ministry appointed the superintendent of police, CID, the Andaman and Nicobar Police, as the “civil authority” for the immigration check post at Port Blair airport with effect from December 31, 2018.

### **Monuments of national importance**

- ❖ The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has recently declared 6 monuments as protected and national importance.
- ❖ There were 3,686 centrally protected monuments/sites under the ASI in the country, the number has now been increased to 3,693.
- ❖ Uttar Pradesh (745 monuments/sites), Karnataka (506) and Tamil Nadu (413) have the highest number of ASI-maintained sites.
- ❖ The New Monuments which are added newly includes
  - 125-year-old Old High Court Building in Nagpur, Maharashtra
  - Mughal-era monuments in Agra — Haveli of Agha Khan and Hathi Khana
  - Ancient Neemrana Baori in Rajasthan's Alwar district
  - The Group of Temples at Ranipur Jharail in Odisha's Bolangir district and
  - The Vishnu Temple in Kotali, Pithoragarh district, Uttarkhand.
- ❖ According to the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, an “Ancient Monument means
  - any structure, erection or monument, or
  - any tumulus or place of interment, or
  - any cave, rock-sculpture, inscription or
  - Monolith which is of historical, archaeological or artistic interestand which has been in existence for not less than 100 years."
- ❖ In 2016 and 2017, no new monument was included in the list of sites of national importance.
- ❖ The last monument to be included in the list, in 2015, was the Vishnu Temple in Nadavayal in Kerala's Wayanad district.

### **Mahila Police Volunteers -MPVs**

- ❖ The Ministry of Women and Child Development in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs has envisaged engagement of Mahila Police Volunteers (MPVs) in the States and Union Territories.



- ❖ This Volunteers scheme envisages creation of a link between the police authorities and the local communities in villages through police volunteers who will be women specially trained for this purpose.
- ❖ One Mahila Police Volunteer (MPV) is envisaged per Gram Panchayat across the country.
- ❖ Haryana was the first state to adopt the initiative at Karnal and Mahendergarh District on a pilot basis under Nirbhaya Fund during the financial year 2016-2017.

### **MSP for minor forest produce**

- ❖ The Union government has declared inclusion of 17 new minor forest produce (MFP) under the government's Minimum Support Price (MSP) scheme.
- ❖ New MFP under the scheme includes Mahua flowers (dried), Tejpatta (dried) and Kokum (dry).
- ❖ It also is increasing the MSP of 23 MFPs already included in the scheme since 2013.

### **MSP for MFP**

- ❖ In 2013-14, the government had for the first time declared MSP for MFP, after years of demands by the forest dwelling communities.
- ❖ The Pricing Cell, constituted by the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd (TRIFED), recommended the inclusion of new MFPs under the scheme.
- ❖ MFPs contribute up to 80 per cent of tribal communities' cash income.

## **ECONOMY**

### **Survey on Retail Payment Habits of Individuals (SRPHi)**

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has launched Survey on Retail Payment Habits of Individuals (SRPHi).
- ❖ The Survey will capture payment habits of individuals in cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru and Guwahati.
- ❖ The survey seeks qualitative responses around 6000 individuals from various socio-economic backgrounds on their payment habits.
- ❖ The Sigma Research & Consulting Private Ltd has been engaged to conduct the fieldwork of the survey on behalf of the RBI.



## STATES

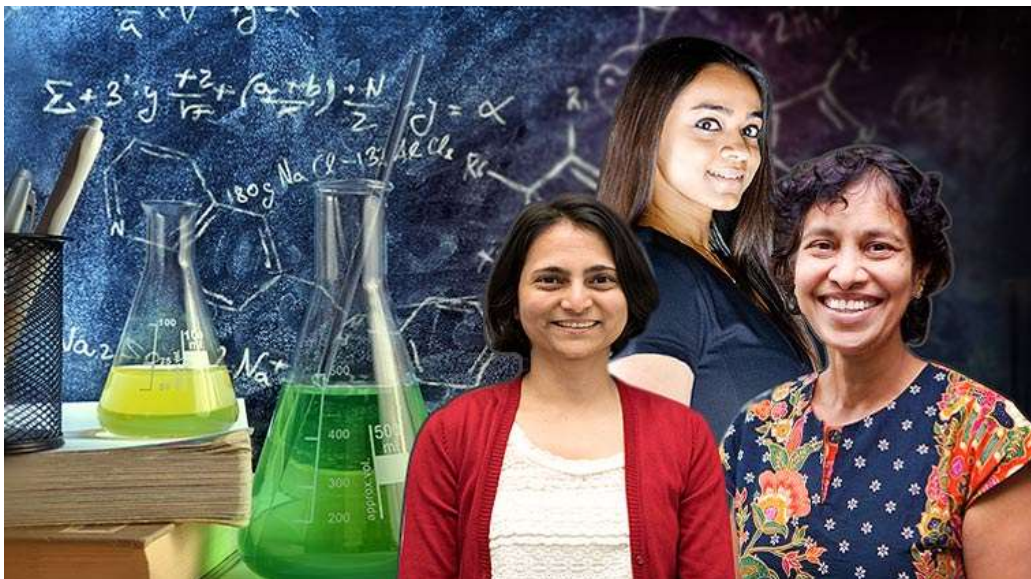
### Minimum educational qualification abolished

- ❖ The Rajasthan government abolished the condition of a minimum educational qualification to contest local body elections.
- ❖ It also decided to set up a committee to frame rules for its farm loan-waiver scheme.
- ❖ The Previous government had introduced the following conditions in 2015
  - Candidates were required to have passed Class X for contesting municipal elections,
  - Class VIII for contesting panchayat polls for the post of a sarpanch, and
  - Class X for contesting zillah parishad or panchayat samiti elections.

## PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS

### Superstar of STEM initiative

- ❖ Three Indian-origin women scientists made it in the list of 60 Superstars of STEM list announced recently by the Australian government's under Superstar of STEM initiative.





- ❖ Onisha Patel, Devika Kamath and Asha Rao are born and brought up in India and have done pathbreaking work in the field of science.

### **National Nritya Shiromani award**

- ❖ The US-based Kathak exponent Anindita Neogy Anaam will be honoured with the National Nritya Shiromani award for promoting the dance form across the world.
- ❖ The award would be conferred on her in Cuttack on the opening day of the 10th Cuttack Mahotsav: International Dance and Music festival in Cuttack.
- ❖ Anindita Anaam is a recipient of prestigious national awards like Jayadev Rashtriya Puraskar and Bidagdha Nartaki Samman for her outstanding achievement in the preservation and promotion of Indian art in India and abroad.

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