

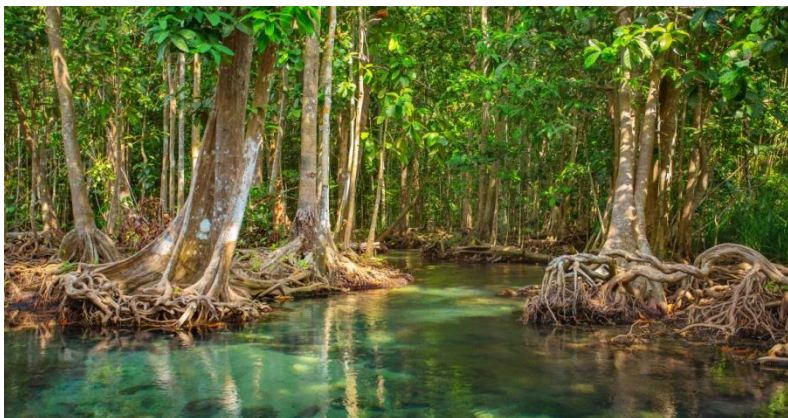
EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JULY 30, 2023

TAMIL NADU

- **The flight operations from the Salem airport – are set to resume by September-end under the UDAN scheme of the Union Government.**
- ✓ IndiGo and Alliance Air will operate flights to Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Cochin from Salem.
- ✓ TruJet was the last operator to start operations from the airport in 2018.
- ✓ It stopped the service between Salem and Chennai during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

STATES

- **West Bengal government – recently announced the setting up of a ‘Mangrove Cell’ in the State.**



- ✓ The announcement was made on the occasion of the International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem marked annually on July 26
- ✓ The mangrove cell, set up at Aranya Bhavan in Salt Lake, will bring government officials, forest personnel, NGOs and academics under a single platform to provide guidance on negotiating the challenges faced in conserving mangroves.

- ✓ It has to be recalled that West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced mass Mangrove plantation in the year 2020
 - ✓ Under the initiative, 15.56 crore mangrove saplings were planted by the West Bengal Forest Department in an area of about 10,398 acres from 2020 to 2021.
 - ✓ West Bengal is home to about 40% of mangrove forests in India
- ✓ The Bengal government's Mission Plantation, a low-cost natural solution to mitigation of disaster, is now serving as a case study for the central government which has started the Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes (MISHTI).
 - ✓ This programme was announced by finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her last budget.
- ✓ The Tamil Nadu Forest Department has undertaken massive plantations of mangroves in the coastal areas of the state as part of International Mangroves Day.
- ✓ The theme of this year's International Mangrove Day is 'Raising awareness about Mangrove'.
- ✓ Mangroves act as natural barriers, reducing erosion caused by storm surges, waves, and tides, besides being efficient carbon-sinks.
- ✓ Mangroves cover just 0.1% of the Earth's surface but can store up to 10 times more carbon per hectare than terrestrial forests.

NATIONAL

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - inaugurated the Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam 2023 at Bharat Mandapam in Pragati Maidan, New Delhi on July 29 to mark the third anniversary of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**



- ✓ The two-day Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam provides a platform for academics, experts, policymakers, industry representatives, teachers, and students to share insights and best practices in implementing NEP 2020.

- ✓ During the event, the PM released the first instalment of the SHRI Schools Yojana, which amounts to a total of Rs.630 crore.
- ✓ Under the centrally-sponsored PM SHRI (Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India) scheme, about 14,500 schools across the nation will be developed as model schools
 - ✓ These schools will nurture students to become "engaged, productive, and contributing citizens," aligned with the goals of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- ✓ During the inaugural session of the Samagam, PM Modi launched 100 education and skill curriculum books translated in 12 Indian languages, including Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu
 - ✓ This step aligns with the NEP's vision of providing equal respect and opportunities to all languages.
- ✓ The two-day Samagam inauguration witnessed the participation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, University Grants Commission (UGC) Chairman M Jagadesh Kumar, officials, Kendriya Vidyalaya students and others.
- ✓ During the event, a total of 106 MoUs were signed between the Centre and various organisations to promote partnerships, innovation and research in multiple domains.
- ✓ The MoUs were signed by the ministries of education and skill development and entrepreneurship with several public and private entities.
 - ✓ Under school education and literacy, 20 MoUs were signed under the aegis of eVidya initiative.
 - ✓ Under CBSE, 19 MoUs were signed, with 10 of them being in association with Atal Innovation Mission.
 - ✓ The organisations participating in this endeavour included IBM, Intel and Microsoft.
 - ✓ Further, five MoUs were signed with Logistics Sector Skill Council, Furniture and Fittings Sector Skill Council, Life Sciences Sector Skill Council, Textiles Sector Skill Council and Healthcare Sector Skill Council.
 - ✓ In higher education, six MoUs were established to promote the Indian knowledge system.
 - ✓ Besides, 14 MoUs under National Educational Technology Forum (NETF) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) were also signed.
 - ✓ In a bid to bolster international collaborations, six MoUs were signed, including for the Zanzibar campus of IIT-Madras.
 - ✓ Additionally, MoUs were also signed between IIT-Tirupati and IIFCET; IIT-Tirupati and Siemens/ Wipro; IIT-Ropar and five central universities, among others.
 - ✓ Under the skill development and entrepreneurship ministry, a total of 14 MoUs were signed.

- ✓ The National Education Policy 2020 was released on July 29, 2020, after being approved by the Union Cabinet

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Elon Musk-led SpaceX - launched the world's largest private satellite, named JUPITER-3, to space on July 28.**



- ✓ The satellite, also called EchoStar XXIV, was launched aboard the company's most powerful Falcon Heavy rocket from Launch Complex 39A in Florida.
- ✓ Developed by Maxar Technologies in Palo Alto, California, the satellite named JUPITER-3 is the largest commercial communications satellite ever built.
- ✓ Weighing more than nine metric tons and roughly the size of a bus, the Jupiter 3 satellite will provide wireless internet connectivity and higher speed broadband plans over North and South America.
- ✓ The communications satellite will support in-flight Wi-Fi, maritime connections, enterprise networks, backhaul for Mobile Network Operators (MNOs), and Community Wi-Fi solutions across North and South America.
- ✓ It will be operated by Hughes Network Systems, a unit of satellite communications company EchoStar Corp.

DEFENCE

- **Taiwan - staged its first-ever military drill at Taoyuan International Airport recently on July 26**



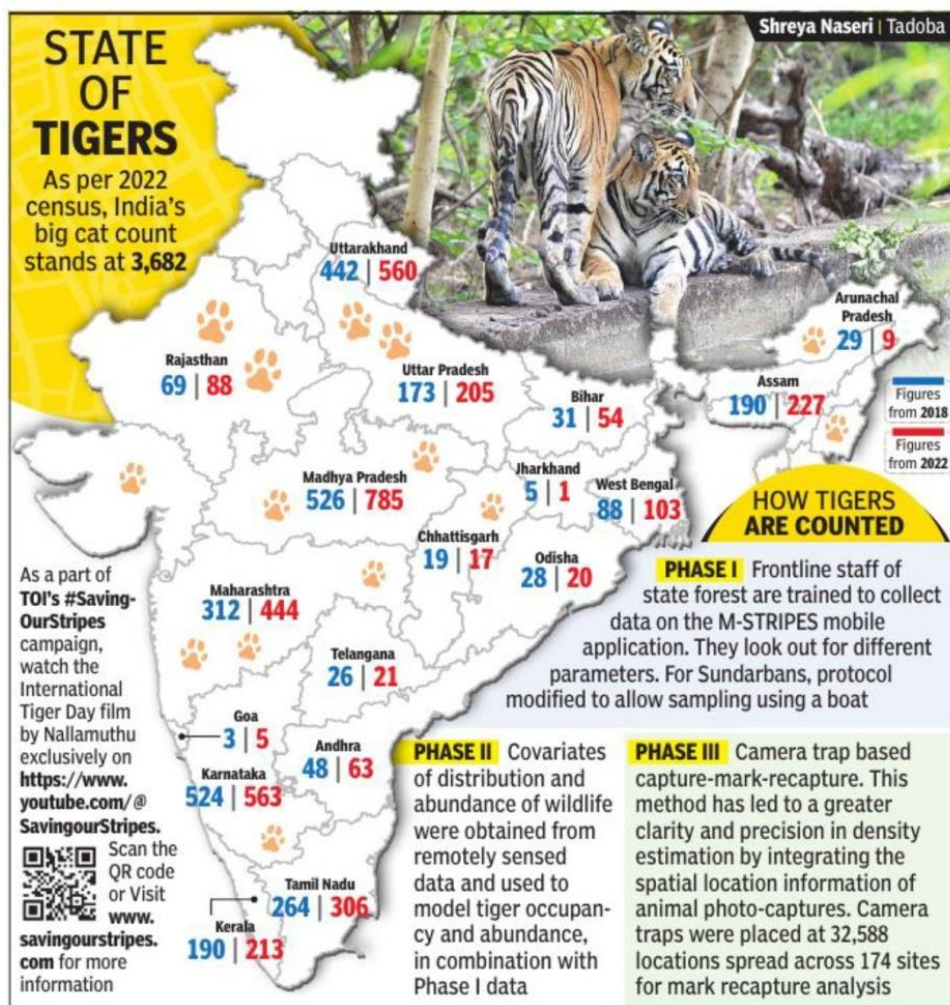
- ✓ The exercise was part of Taiwan's week-long massive wargames -- the annual "Han Kuang" (Han Glory) drills
- ✓ This year, the drills have included protecting civilian airports as Beijing ramps up military and political pressures on the island.
- ✓ This is the first such drill held at Taiwan's biggest airport near the capital since it opened in 1979.

STATUS OF TIGERS 2022 - REPORT

- Union minister of state for environment, forest and climate change Ashwini Kumar Choubey – released the “Status of Tigers: Co-Predators & Prey in India-2022” report at Uttarakhand’s Corbett Tiger Reserve on the occasion of International Tiger Day on July 29.



- ✓ As per the report, there are 3,682 tigers now in India, up from 2,967 in 2018 — a rise of almost 24% in four years
 - ✓ The numbers are also up from the 3,167 tigers announced by PM Narendra Modi in Mysuru on April 9 at a programme to commemorate 50 years of Project Tiger, a conservation effort applauded across the world.
- ✓ The revised figures follow detailed analyses of census data collected during the fifth cycle of estimation conducted in 2022.
- ✓ With this, India is now home to approximately 75% of the world’s tiger population.
- ✓ **Among the states, Madhya Pradesh (785) has the highest number of tigers in the country, followed by Karnataka (563) and Uttarakhand (560).**
 - ✓ The number of tigers in Madhya Pradesh rose to 785 in 2022 from 526 in 2018, with a massive jump of 49%
 - ✓ Madhya Pradesh has six tiger reserves - Kanha, Bandhavgarh, Panna, Pench, Satpura and Sanjay-Dubri Tiger Reserve.
- ✓ Maharashtra has 444 big cats, up from 312 in 2018, a rise of 29%, while the count in Tamil Nadu, Assam and Kerala stood at 306, 227 and 213, respectively.



- ✓ Uttar Pradesh, too, saw a rise of 32 tigers with 205 in 2022, up from 173 in 2018, and is placed at No. 8.
- ✓ The maximum increase in tiger numbers was in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Uttarakhand — 259, 132 and 118, respectively.
- ✓ The landscape-wise report indicated that the maximum tigers were in the Central Indian Landscape and Eastern Ghats (1,439), followed by the Western Ghats Landscape (1,087), Shivalik Hills and Gangetic Plains (819), North East Hills and Brahmaputra Plains Landscape (236), and the Sunderbans (101).
- ✓ **Among the 53 tiger reserves in India, Corbett is the leader with 260 big cats.**
- ✓ Following Corbett in the ranking of individual reserves is Bandipur and Nagarhole with 150 and 141 tigers.
- ✓ Bandhavgarh and Dudhwa are at 4th place with 135, followed by Mudumalai (114), Kanha (105), Kaziranga (104), Sundarbans (100) and Tadoba in Maharashtra (97).
- ✓ **The tiger population in Tamil Nadu has risen from 264 in 2018 to 306 in 2022, as per the census results.**
- ✓ The government attributed the increase to better protection, an improved prey base and the absence of organized poaching.

- ✓ Among the southern states, Karnataka has the most tigers at 563 followed by Tamil Nadu with 306 and Kerala with 213.
- ✓ In the Western Ghats region that is spread across the three southern states, the tiger population in 2022 is at 1,087 against 981 in 2018.
- ✓ Compared to 2006, when 76 tigers were recorded in Tamil Nadu, there has been a four-fold increase, more than the other southern states.
- ✓ In Kerala, the number of tigers which was 190 during the 2018 census went up to 213 in 2022, while in Karnataka the big cat population went up from 524 in 2018 to 563 in 2022.
- ✓ The tiger population estimate report is usually published after a gap of four years in the country by the NTCA and Wildlife Institute of India with support from respective state forest departments.

