

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – AUGUST 3, 2023

TAMIL NADU

- Oscar winning 'Elephant Whisperer' fame V Bellie, a tribal woman - has become the first woman kavadi (assistant to a mahout) in Tamil Nadu.



- ✓ Chief minister M K Stalin gave her the appointment order at the secretariat on August 2.
- ✓ Bellie will be posted at the Theppakadu elephant camp, the oldest in the country, located at the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) in the Nilgiris.
- ✓ Bellie and her husband K Bomman were taking care of abandoned elephant calves Bommi and Raghu at Theppakadu around two years ago.
- ✓ The Oscar-winning movie was made on the deep bonding between the mahout couple and the elephant calves, Raghu and Bommi, at Theppakadu.
- **Ignatius Delos Flora - became the first woman to reach the rank of Major General in the Military Nursing Service**
- ✓ On August 2, the Twitter handle of the Indian Army's Northern Command congratulated Major General Flora, who hails from Kanyakumari district

- ✓ Shortly after this, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK president MK Stalin reposted the same and congratulated Major General Ignatius Delos Flora for her achievement.



- ✓ The 38-year service of Flora includes the handling of Covid-19 as well.

STATES

- **The Uttarakhand tourism department - has decided to waive off fees charged from Indian mountaineers in order to promote adventure tourism in the Himalayan state**
- ✓ The fee charged earlier from them went to the forest department and the Indian Mountaineering Foundation (IMF).
- ✓ Uttarakhand attracts hundreds of adventure sports lovers each year both from the country and abroad who try to summit some of the most popular and difficult peaks
 - ✓ Nanda Devi, Panchachuli III, Trishul III, Mukut Parbat, Bhagirathi III and Gangotri III. Satopanth, Shivling, Srikantha, Vasuki Parbat, Kamet, Hathi Parbat, Dunagiri and Chaukamba IV (route 1 and 11) are the popular mountains in the state.
- ✓ From now on, the tourism department will pay the fee charged by the IMF, whereas the forest department has agreed to waive off its share of the fee.
- ✓ To scale a peak upto 6,500 metres, an Indian mountaineer has to pay Rs 3,000 and for foreign nationals, it is Rs 20,000.
 - ✓ For peaks between 6,500 to 7,000 metres, the charge for Indian climbers is Rs 4,000, and Rs 25,000 for a foreigner.
 - ✓ For 7,001 metres and above, the fee is Rs 6,000 for Indian climbers and Rs 40,000 for their foreign counterparts.
- ✓ However, no changes have been made in the fee structure for foreign nationals coming to Uttarakhand for mountaineering.
- ✓ Despite the relaxation in fee, Indian mountaineers would be required to submit an application and get an approval from the state tourism department.

NATIONAL

- **On August 2, the Rajya Sabha - passed the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2023 by a voice vote**

- ✓ Coal and mines minister Pralhad Joshi moved the bill in Rajya Sabha
- ✓ It seeks to amend the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957.
- ✓ The bill intends to grant Exploration Licence to private sector players for critical minerals.
- ✓ It envisages the exploration licence-holder getting a share of the premium to be paid by the mining leaseholder.
- ✓ The bill also reserves the allocation of operating rights for Atomic Minerals exclusively to Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).
- ✓ It also empowers the central government to exclusively auction mining lease and composite licence for certain critical minerals.
- ✓ The bill provides for omission of six minerals, including Lithium and deep-seated minerals, from the list of 12 atomic minerals for the private sector.
 - ✓ The others are beryllium, niobium, titanium, tantalum and zirconium.
 - ✓ Deep-seated minerals include gold, silver, copper, zinc, lead, nickel, cobalt, platinum group of minerals and diamond.
- ✓ The Bill seeks to provide a fixed 50-year production lease for offshore minerals, eliminating the provision for lease renewals, similar to the provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957.
- ✓ The bill is passed against the backdrop of the recent lithium deposit discovery in Jammu & Kashmir's Reasi district.
 - ✓ Lithium plays a strategic role in energy transition due to its application in batteries for electric vehicles, energy storage devices, right up to laptops and mobiles.
 - ✓ The deep-seated minerals covered by the bill have application in medical, space and defence sectors.
- ✓ The bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on July 28 and it will become law after the President's assent.
- ✓ Overall, the Rajya Sabha passed three bills connected to promoting the ease of doing business during the day.
- ✓ The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Bill and the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill were all cleared by Lok Sabha earlier.
- ✓ These bills are related to decriminalising minor offences, exempting land within 100-km of a border from forest conservation laws and allowing private sector to mine some atomic and deep-seated minerals

INTERNATIONAL

- **Former US President Donald Trump - has been indicted on four counts by a federal grand jury for plotting to overturn his 2020 election defeat**



- ✓ This is the third time this year the former US president has been criminally charged but marks the first time that he has been formally held accountable for his efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election
 - ✓ The indictment was filed by the special counsel Jack Smith in federal district court in Washington
 - ✓ Trump, 77, was charged with conspiracy to defraud the United States, witness tampering, conspiracy against the rights of citizens, and obstruction of and attempt to obstruct an official proceeding.
 - ✓ These charges relate to Trump's actions over a period from the election day (November 3) until the day he left the White House on 20th January 20.
 - ✓ The case has been assigned to US district judge Tanya Chutkan, who was appointed by Trump's predecessor Barack Obama.
 - ✓ The most serious charge against Trump carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison.
 - ✓ The plot to overturn the 2020 election resulted in an unprecedented physical assault by Trump's supporters on the US Capitol on January 6, 2021
- **Myanmar's former ruler and Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi - has been pardoned by the military regime in a partial pardon**



- ✓ The amnesty marks an important Buddhist religious day—Dhamma Cakka Day – and will reduce her 33 years jail term by six years
- ✓ The 78-year-old Nobel Laureate, Suu Kyi was last week moved from prison to house arrest in the capital, Naypyitaw.

- ✓ On July 31, Military Junta extended a state of emergency for another six months and thereby postponed an election promised by August this year.
- ✓ Suu Kyi was sentenced to 33 years in prison after being ousted by a military coup in Myanmar in 2021
- ✓ Suu Kyi was also convicted on charges of manipulating the November 2020 election for her party, the National League for Democracy and charged with 19 criminal cases ranging from corruption to breaching Covid-19 rules
- ✓ Former Myanmar president Win Myint, who was also removed in the 2021 coup, was granted a four-year reduction in relation to two cases

ECONOMY

- **On August 2, the GST Council - decided to go ahead with the levy of 28% GST on the face value of chips bought at casinos and the bet amount for online games**



- ✓ The Centre and states will now move amendments to the laws as they seek to introduce the tax from October.
- ✓ The Council has proposed the mandatory registration of foreign companies with GST authorities to prevent the tax evasion.
- ✓ The government plans to invoke provisions of the Information Technology Act to ensure that access to consumers is blocked for those who do not register.
- ✓ The council has also decided to review the tax six months after implementation
- ✓ Tamil Nadu also flagged its concern on the tax since it has banned online games in the state and wanted the law to clearly specify that the levy will not nullify or dilute its position.
- ✓ According to the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, only the initial value of chips or bets placed online will face the 28% tax and not the winning amount.
- ✓ These decisions have been taken at the 51st GST Council meeting held through video conferencing under the chairmanship of the Finance Minister from New Delhi

SPORTS

- **The seventh edition of the Asian Champions Trophy hockey - is being held at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Stadium in Chennai from August 3 to 12**
- ✓ India, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Japan and the People's Republic of China are the countries participating in the tournament
- ✓ India, led by Harmanpreet Singh, will face World No. 25 China in their first match of the series on August 3.
- ✓ For the first time in 16 years, International Hockey will return to Chennai's Mayor Radhakrishnan Stadium.



- ✓ Defending Champions South Korea will face Japan in the first match of the tournament.
- ✓ The 21-year-old forward from Ariyalur, Karthi Selvam is the only player from Tamil Nadu to represent India in the tournament
- ✓ The Indian men's hockey team, ranked fourth in the world, and world No. 16 Pakistan are the joint most-successful teams at the Asian Champions Trophy with three titles each.
- ✓ South Korea defeated Japan to win the last edition of the Asian Champions Trophy hockey hosted by Bangladesh in 2021.
- ✓ India finished the last edition as the third best-placed team after securing a victory over arch-rivals Pakistan in the third-place playoff game.
- ✓ Korea, ranked ninth in the world, was the only Asian nation in the Hockey World Cup 2022-23 quarterfinals when they last played in India