

May – 08

## TNPSC BITS

- ❖ The Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment (GRIHA) Council has launched a rating tool ‘GRIHA for Existing Day Schools’ to evaluate the environmental performance of existing schools across India.
  - It aims to educate students and teachers about the environmental impact of their schools on environment.
- ❖ North Korea fired several short-range projectiles into Sea of Japan under the command of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un.
- ❖ Researchers at Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai have identified a new function for the stress buster Serotonin (Chemical name: 5-hydroxytryptamine (5-HT)).
  - It may help to treat neurological decline.
- ❖ For the first time, one of the rarest oil paintings of Rabindranath Tagore “Three Witches from Macbeth” will be put on display at the Abanindranath Tagore gallery in Rabindra Barati University campus, Calcutta.
  - The visible storage gallery will be inaugurated on the occasion of Tagore’s 158th birth anniversary celebrations.
- ❖ On April 17, Indonesia held its presidential and legislative elections, with around 192.8 million people eligible to vote in more than 800,000 polling stations.
  - According to figures from the Indonesian National Election Commission (KPU) more than 311 election officials have died and another 2,232 people have fallen sick after helping to administer the election.
- ❖ Panamanians have elected Democratic Revolutionary Change party candidate ‘Laurentino Cortizo’ as their President in the recently concluded elections.
- ❖ Two Myanmar Reuters journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo who were jailed for more than 500 days for their reporting on the Rohingya crisis have been freed.

## TAMIL NADU

### **Anti-Cancer Mushroom**

- ❖ A patent has been issued for extracting anti-cancer compounds from a wild mushroom variety found in Western Ghats of Tamil Nadu.

- ❖ It was invented by Madras University professor Venkatesan Kaviyarasan and his PhD student J Manjunathan.
- ❖ *Lentinus tuberregium* is the mushroom variety identified by them.
- ❖ 2 bio-active compounds (LT1 and LT 2) in this mushroom exhibit anti-cancer properties.
- ❖ In the 1970s the Japanese mushroom “*Lentinus edodes*” was proved to exhibit anticancer activity.
- ❖ It was later approved for use by the Food and Drug Administrator (FDA) of USA.

### Common Mushrooms of Tamilnadu

- ❖ ‘Arisi Kalaan’ (*Termitomyces microcarpus*) and ‘Putru Kalaan’ (*Termitomyces heimi*) varieties are sold in the local vegetable markets of Tirunelveli and Thiruvananthapuram.
- ❖ The Kaani tribe in Kanyakumari forests are known to use mushrooms in their daily diet.

### **Grizzled Giant Squirrel**

- ❖ For the first time more than 300 nests of Grizzled Giant Squirrel were sighted by researchers.
- ❖ Its scientific name is *Ratufa macroura*.
- ❖ They were spotted at Pakkamalai Reserve Forests near Gingee (in Eastern Ghats) in Tamilnadu.
- ❖ Tamilnadu government had earlier established The Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary in 1988.
- ❖ It lies mostly in Virudhunagar district (especially in Srivilliputhur) and partly in Madurai district.
- ❖ It is also known as Srivilliputhur Wildlife Sanctuary.

Fact Box: Grizzled Giant Squirrel

Threats: habitat loss, poaching, pet trade

IUCN Red List: Near Threatened

Listed under:

Schedule II of CITES

( Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora)

Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act (WPA),1972.

## NATIONAL

### Honey Mission

- ❖ The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has distributed more than one lakh bee-boxes among farmers and unemployed youths across India.
- ❖ This is done under “Honey Mission” initiative.
- ❖ The mission was launched in 2017 by Prime Minister Modi.
- ❖ He termed it as the beginning of a ‘Sweet revolution’ in India.

### KVIC

- ❖ KVIC is a statutory body formed under ‘Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act of 1956’.
- ❖ It is the nodal agency for the implementation of Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) at national level.

### INS Vela

- ❖ The Indian Navy has launched 4th Stealth Scorpene-Class submarine ‘INS Vela’.
- ❖ It was by built at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in Mumbai.
- ❖ Ms Naval Group (earlier known as DCNS) is the French collaborator.
- ❖ It is named ‘Vela’ after the Soviet era submarine ‘INS Vela’ which joined Indian naval service in 1973.
- ❖ INS Vela is built under Project 75.

- ❖ The Scorpene class is the Navy's first modern conventional diesel-electric submarine series in almost two decades.

## ENVIRONMENT

### Bajirao

- ❖ The last captive white tiger named Bajirao died recently at Sanjay Gandhi National Park, Mumbai.
- ❖ White Tigers are not a separate sub-species of tiger.
- ❖ These tigers are white because of
  - lack of red or yellow 'pheomelanin' pigment
  - presence of unique recessive genes.
- ❖ Now there are no white tigers in the natural habitat.
- ❖ The last white tiger reported in wild was captured in Rewa forest in Madhya Pradesh.

### Sanjay Gandhi National Park

- ❖ It is notable as one of the major national parks existing within a metropolis limit of Mumbai.
- ❖ The park also has the 2400-year-old Kanheri caves sculpted out of the rocky cliffs.
- ❖ This site was an important Buddhist learning centre.

## STATES

### Zero Pendency Courts

- ❖ Zero pendency courts are a pilot project undertaken in the subordinate courts of Delhi.
- ❖ The project aims to study the 'life cycle of cases' to come up with optimal timelines for cases.

### Key Findings

- ❖ Judicial delays cost India around 1.5% of its GDP.
- ❖ Delhi needs 43 more judges to clear all the pending cases in one year. Present strength is 143.

## PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS

### Robert Govender

- ❖ G D Robert Govender, an Indian–origin journalist in South Africa was honoured with V K Krishna Menon Award 2019 in United Kingdom.
- ❖ He was awarded for his contribution as a pioneer of decolonised journalism.
- ❖ Robert Govender was born in South Africa in August 1930.
- ❖ He was the first journalist to call for international boycott of whites-only sports teams of South Africa.

### About VK Krishna Menon

- ❖ Krishna Menon was India’s first High Commissioner to Britain.
- ❖ He served as Defence Minister of India from April 1957 to October 1962.
- ❖ He holds the record for longest speech (8 hours) before UN Security Council (UNSC).
- ❖ He was defending India’s sovereignty over Kashmir in his UNSC speech, 1957.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### World Athletics Day – May 07

- ❖ The World Athletics Day is observed every year on May 7.
- ❖ The day aims to
  - popularize sports among the youth,
  - promote athletics as the primary sport in schools and institutions
  - encourage and introduce new talent and youngsters in the field of athletics.
- ❖ Primo Nebilo, former president of the worldwide athletics federation International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) introduced the day in 1996.

### World Asthma Day

- ❖ World Asthma Day is observed every year on first Tuesday of May.
- ❖ An annual event is organised by the Global Initiative for Asthma.

- ❖ It aims to improve asthma awareness and care around the world.
- ❖ The inaugural World Asthma Day was held in 1998.
- ❖ The theme for World Asthma Day 2019 is “STOP for Asthma.”
- ❖ The STOP in the theme stands for Symptom evaluation, Test response, Observe and assess and Proceed to adjust treatment.

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