

VETRI IAS STUDY CIRCLE

Current Affairs

(A book for TNPSC Examination)

MAY 2024 - PART 1



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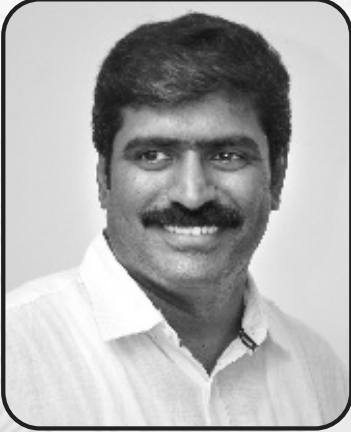
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Preface



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Director

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My Dear Aspirants,

Greetings to all of you! "What we think we become" Gautama Buddha. We all have dreams. To make dreams come into reality it takes a lot of determination, dedication, self discipline and continuous effort.

We at VETRII IAS Study Circle are committed to provide the right guidance, quality coaching and help every aspirants to achieve his or her life's cherished goal of becoming a civil servant.

The class room coaching at VETRII IAS Study Circle is meticulously planned to equip the aspirants with all the relevant facts and fundamentals of the subjects. Further the VETRII IAS Study Circle Study materials aim to support the candidate by providing the most relevant study material in a comprehensive manner.

We also thank other family members of Vetrii for making this effort a reality.

We wish the aspirants ALL THE VERY BEST for their journey in Civil Services !

Published by:

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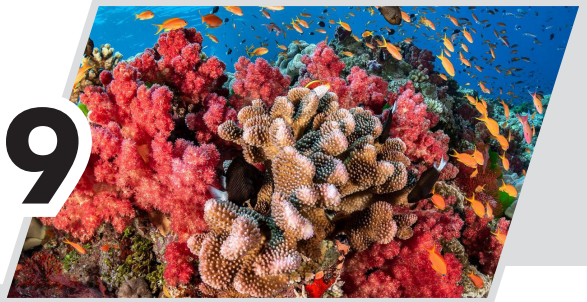
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1. HISTORY



1.1 IMPORTANT DAYS

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
	Ayushman Bharat Diwas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ayushman Bharat Diwas is celebrated every year on the last day of April.This year, it falls on 30 April 2024.The day is observed to promote and uphold the principles of the Ayushman Bharat Yojana also known as Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY). <p>Note</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">PM-JAY is a healthcare scheme launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2018.Under this scheme, free health insurance of Rs 5 lakh is provided to more than 10.74 crore poor and vulnerable families every year.
May 1	May Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none">May 1 is observed as “May Day”, also known as “International Workers’ Day” and “Labour Day” every year in different countries across the world.The day commemorates the contributions of workers and the labour movement.The day was first celebrated on May 1, 1923 by Singaravelar in India.
May 3	International Leopard Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none">International Leopard Day is observed on May 3 every year to raise awareness about leopards and their protection and conservation.India's leopard population is estimated at 13,874.Madhya Pradesh houses the largest population of leopards (3907)Tamil Nadu has 1,070 leopards.

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
May 3	World Press Freedom Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ World Press Freedom Day is observed annually on May 3 every year to honour and uphold the fundamental principles of press freedom. ▪ Theme 2024: A Press for the Planet: Journalism in the Face of the Environmental Crisis. ▪ The day was first proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1993.
May 5	African World Heritage Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ African World Heritage Day is annually observed on 5 May every year to celebrate African culture and heritage. ▪ Theme 2024: Safeguarding Africa's Heritage through Education ▪ The day is observed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in collaboration with the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF).
May 8	World Red Cross Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ World Red Cross Day is observed every year on May 8th to commemorate the birth anniversary of Henry Dunant ▪ He is the founder of the Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). ▪ Theme 2024: "I give with joy, and the joy I give is a reward."
May 8	International Thalassaemia Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ International Thalassaemia Day is observed on May 8 every year to bring awareness to people about the disease. ▪ Theme 2024 : "Empowering Lives, Embracing Progress: Equitable and Accessible Thalassaemia Treatment for All." <p>Note</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission aims to eliminate sickle cell genetic transmission by the year 2047

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
May 11	National technology day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ India observes National Technology Day on May 11 every year to commemorate the successful nuclear test at Pokhran in 1998. ▪ Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee designated May 11 as National Technology Day in India in 1998. ▪ It was celebrated by the first time in 1999. <p>Note</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ India's first nuclear test - Smiling Buddha (May 1974) ▪ Second Nuclear Test - Operation Shakti (May 1998)
May 12	International Nurses Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ International Nurses Day is observed every year on May 12 to honour the birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale. ▪ The day was first observed by the International Council of Nurses on 12 May 1974. ▪ Theme for 2024 : Our Nurses. Our Future. The economic power of care.
May 12	International Day of Plant Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The International Day of Plant Health is observed on May 12 every year to raise global awareness on the importance of protecting plant health. ▪ The day was established in 2022 by the United Nations. ▪ Theme 2024 : 'Plant Health, Safe Trade, Digital Technology.'
May 13	World Migratory Bird Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ World Migratory Bird Day is observed on May 13 every year to raise awareness about the importance of migratory birds and their conservation. ▪ The day was observed for the first time in 2006. ▪ Theme 2024 : Protect Insects, Protect Birds.

1.2 DEFENCE, NATIONAL SECURITY AND TERRORISM

Supersonic Missile-Assisted Release of Torpedo (SMART) system

- SMART system was successfully flight-tested from Dr.APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.
- It was designed and developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)
- It is a Next-generation missile-based light-weight torpedo delivery system.

Exercise Shakti

- The 7th edition of India- France Joint Military Exercise SHAKTI commenced at Umroi in Meghalaya.
- Exercise SHAKTI is a biennial training event conducted alternatively in India and France.
- First edition - 2011.

About France

- Capital - Paris
- President - Emmanuel Macron
- Prime Minister - Gabriel Attal
- Currency - Euro

1.3 WORLD SUMMITS AND ORGANISATION

First International Conference on DPI

- The first United Nations Conference on Digital Public Infrastructure was held in New York under India's leadership.
- The session was hosted by the Permanent Mission of India and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, in collaboration with iSPIRT (Indian Software Products Industry Round Table)

- The conference introduced India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) framework as a global standard.

Note

- Digital public infrastructure (DPI) refers to blocks or platforms such as digital identification, payment infrastructure and data exchange solutions

1.4 PLACES IN NEWS

Shinku La tunnel

- The Union Cabinet gave approval for the construction of the 4.1-km Shinku La tunnel on the Nimu-Padam-Darcha road link.
- The Tunnel aims to provide all-weather connectivity to the border areas of Ladakh.
- The Shinku La tunnel is a part of Project Yojak.

About Project Yojak

- Implemented by Border Roads Organisation (BRO).
- Aim - To Boost Road Infrastructure and strengthen the connectivity to Ladakh

1.5 SPORTS AND GAMES

India's third female Grand Master

- **Vaishali Rameshbabu** has been officially bestowed with title of **Grand Master** by **International Chess Federation (FIDE)**.
- Vaishali is the **third Indian woman** to win the Grand Master title **after Koneru Humpy and Dronavalli Harika**.
- She is the **first woman from Tamil Nadu** to win the Grand Master Title.
- She and her brother **Rameshbabu Pragnanandhaa** are the **World's First Grand Master Brother-Sister duo**.

1.6 AWARDS & HONOURS

Goldman Environmental Prize 2024

- The **Goldman Environmental Prize 2024** was awarded recently.
- The prize honors ordinary people who take extraordinary actions to protect our planet.
- **Alok Shukla** won the prize from Asia for his contribution to protect the environment.

Note

- **Alok Shukla** led a successful community campaign that led to the cancellation of **21 planned coal mines in Hasdeo Aranya in July 2022 in Chhattisgarh**.
- **Hasdeo Aranya** popularly known as the **lungs of Chhattisgarh**.

Sahitya Akademi Fellowship

- Author **Ruskin Bond** has been recently awarded the **Sahitya Akademi Fellowship**.
- It is the highest honour given by the literary organisation.

About Ruskin Bond

- Received Sahitya Akademi Award in **1992** for the book **'Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra'**
- Awards
 - **Padma Shri** – 1999
 - **Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar** – 2012.
 - **Padma Bhushan** – 2019

1.7 APPOINTMENTS

Goods & Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT)

- Centre has appointed retired **Justice Sanjaya Kumar Mishra** as the new **President of GSTAT**.
- It hears appeals against orders passed by **Appellate Authority under CGST Act, 2017 and State GST Acts**.
- The **Principal Bench** is situated in **New Delhi**.

About GSTAT

- It is a **Appellate Authority** established under **Central GST (CGST) Act, 2017**

2. POLITICAL SCIENCE

2.1 INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

UPI in Namibia

- **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) International** has signed a pact with Namibia to develop a **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** like instant payment system for Namibia.
- NPCI International is the overseas arm of the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)**.

About NPCI International (NIPL):

- Formation - 2020
- CEO - Ritesh Shukla
- Headquarters - Mumbai.
- NIPL is a wholly owned subsidiary of NPCI.

India-Ghana

- The **Fourth Session of India-Ghana Joint Trade Committee** was held in Accra, Ghana recently.
- Both countries agreed to operationalise **United Payments Interface (UPI) in Ghana** Interbank Payment and Settlement Systems in six months.
- Digital economy, textiles, renewable energy and healthcare sectors were identified as focus areas.

About Ghana

- Capital - Accra
- Currency - Ghanaian Cedi
- President - Nana Akufo-Addo

U.N. Trust Fund for Counter-Terrorism

- **India** recently made a voluntary financial contribution of **USD 5,00,000** to the **UN Trust Fund for Counter-Terrorism**.
- **India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN) Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj** presented the contribution to the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT).
- This contribution aims to support UNOCT's global programmes.

About United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT)

- Formation - 2017.
- **Aim** - Promotes international cooperation in the fight against terrorism

Palestine's full membership

- India has voted in favour of a draft resolution at the **UNGA** that seeks full membership of Palestine in the United Nations.
- The resolution which was brought by **UAE** got **143 votes** in favour, including India.
- The resolution determined that the State of Palestine is qualified for membership in the United Nations per Article 4 of the Charter of the United Nations.

About United Nations General Assembly

- Headquarters - New York
- Formation - 1945

India - Iran

- **India and Iran** recently signed a **10-year contract** for the operation of the **Shahid**

Beheshti Port Terminal at the strategically important **Chabahar port in Iran**.

- This move will boost regional connectivity as well as trade ties.

Note

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the development of the **Chabahar port** was signed in **May 2015**.

About Iran

- **Capital** - Tehran
- **President** - Ebrahim Raisi
- **Currency** - Iranian Rial

India's top trading partner in FY 2024

- According to the think tank **Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI)**, China became **India's top trading partner** in the fiscal year 2024.
- India's bilateral trade with China reached at \$118.4 billion in the fiscal year 2024.
- United States was India's top trading partner during **FY22 and FY23**.

2.2 LATEST COURT VERDICTS

Exemptions to Right to Information (RTI) Act

- The **Delhi High Court** recently held that a public authority cannot deny information under the **Right to Information (RTI) Act** on the grounds that the information sought is "bulky".
 - **Section 8 of RTI Act** deals with exemption from disclosure of information.
 - **Section 8 (1)** mentions exemptions against furnishing information under RTI Act.

- **Section 8 (2)** provides for disclosure of information exempted under **Official Secrets Act, 1923** if larger public interest is served.

About RTI Act, 2005

- It is derived from the **fundamental right of freedom of speech and expression** under **Article 19 of the Constitution**.
- **Aim** - To empower the citizens, promote transparency and accountability in the working of the Government.

2.3 GOVT – WELFARE ORIENTED GOVT SCHEMES, THEIR UTILITY

PM Gati Shakti

- **Ministry of Labour and Employment** has joined the **PM Gati Shakti portal** recently to identify and bridge gaps in social security coverage.

About PM Gati Shakti

- **Launch** - 2021
- Also known as **National Master Plan for Multimodal Connectivity**.
- **Aim** - To provide multimodal connectivity infrastructure to various economic zones.

2.4 PUBLIC AWARENESS & GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Re-polling

- **Election Commission of India** recently conducted **re-polling** for the ongoing Lok Sabha General Elections in various polling stations of **Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh**.
- **Provisions related to Re-polling under Representation of the People Act (RPA), 1951**
 - **Section 57** - Natural calamity, violence, etc.
 - **Section 58(2)** - Damage or destruction of voting machines.
 - **Section 58A** - Booth capturing.
 - **Section 52** - Death of candidate of recognised political party (National party/ State party)

Uncontested Election

- **BJP candidate Mukesh Dalal** was elected unopposed from **Surat Lok Sabha** constituency recently.
- The **Section 53 of The Representation of the People Act, 1951** states that if the number of contesting candidates is equal to the number of seats to be filled, then the Returning Officer will declare all such candidates to be duly elected to fill those seats.
- **Five candidates** won the general elections uncontested in **1951-52**
- **Seven candidates** won the general election unopposed in **1957**.
- **Dimple Yadav** was the most recent MP to be elected unopposed **before Dalal in 2012**.

Reservation for Women in bar association committee

- The **Supreme Court** recently reserved **one-third** of the seats in the executive committee of the **Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA)** for women.
- Accordingly, a minimum of **3 out of 9** positions in the **Executive Committee** and **2 of 6** Senior

Executive Member posts will be reserved for women.

Present status of Women in Judiciary

- Since independence **only 11 women Judges** were appointed in **Supreme Court**.
- **Justice Fathima Beevi** was the first women judge to serve the Supreme Court in 1989

Krishi Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC)

- **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare** recently inaugurated a **Krishi Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC)** at **Krishi Bhavan in New Delhi**.
- **ICCC** aims to empower the farmers of the country with information, services and facilities using digital technology.
- The **ICCC** will help in India becoming a **developed nation** by the year 2047

NHRC – India accreditation deferred

- The **Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI)** deferred the accreditation of the **National Human Rights Commission-India (NHRC)** for the second year in a row.
- This is the **first time India's** status has been suspended for two years in a row, in **2023 and in 2024**.

About NHRC

- A **statutory body** established under the **Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993**.
- **Chairperson** – Arun Kumar Mishra

Note

- **GANHRI** is an organisation affiliated to the **UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**.



3. GEOGRAPHY

3.1 POLICY ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

Translocation of Tigers

- The Maharashtra forest department is planning to translocate tigers from **Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR) in Chandrapur district to Sahyadri Tiger Reserve (STR).**
- The move aims to revive the population of tigers in STR.

Tiger Translocation in India

- Tiger translocation projects have been undertaken in India since 2008.
 - Sariska Tiger Reserve – 2008
 - Panna Tiger Reserve – 2009

Tiger Reserves with zero tigers

- Sahyadri Tiger Reserve (STR)
- Kaval TR in Telangana
- Kamlang TR in Arunachal Pradesh
- Dampa TR in Mizoram
- Satkosia TR in Odisha.

Note

- The STR is located in northern **Western Ghats**
- It comprises of **Chandoli National Park and Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary.**

Coral Bleaching in Lakshadweep

- The ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has recently found that coral reefs in the **Lakshadweep Sea** have undergone severe bleaching due to prolonged marine heatwaves since **October 2023.**
- **Lakshadweep Sea** has previously seen coral bleaching events in 1998, 2010 and 2015, but the scale of the current one is unprecedented.

Note

- Coral bleaching takes place when the water is **too warm.**
- In such conditions, **corals expel the microscopic algae** which live in their tissues.



4. ECONOMICS

4.1 REPORTS AND INDICES

ISSAR Report 2023

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) recently released the **Indian Space Situational Assessment Report (ISSAR)** for 2023.
- It was compiled by **ISRO System for Safe and Sustainable Space Operations Management (IS4OM)**.
- The report assesses the vulnerability of space assets in outer space to various environmental hazards.

Key Findings

- A total of **127 Indian satellites**, including those from **private operators** have been launched till **31st December 2023**.
- The number of operational satellites owned by Government of India (as of 31 Dec 2023) is
 - **22 in LEO (Low Earth Orbit)**
 - **29 in GEO (Geo-synchronous Earth Orbit)**
 - Three Indian deep space missions namely
 - i. Chandrayaan-2 Orbiter
 - ii. Aditya-L1
 - iii. Propulsion Module of Chandrayaan-3
- Seven successful launches in 2023 include
 - **SSLV-D2/EOS7**
 - **LVM3-M3/ONEWEB_II**
 - **PSLV-C55/ TeLEOS-2**
 - **GSLV-F12 NVS-01**
 - **LVM3-M4/ Chandrayaan-3**
 - **PSLV-C56/ DS-SAR**
 - **PSLV-C57/Aditya L-1**

Asian Development Policy Report

- Asian Development Policy Report was released by **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** recently.

Key Findings

- Asia is aging rapidly with risk of not having adequate resources to support ageing populations.
- Older people (aged 60 and above) are expected to nearly double to **25.2% (1.2 billion)** by 2050.
- The health insurance coverage is lowest among older people in India at **21%**.

World Press Freedom Index 2024

- The **World Press Freedom Index 2024** was released by the **NGO Reporters Without Borders (RSF)**.
- The report was published on **World Press Freedom Day (May 3)**
- The index is based on **5 indicators Political, Economic, Legislative, Social and Security**.

Key Findings

- India ranked **159 among 180 countries** in the Index.
- First three places are occupied by the **Norway, Denmark and Sweden**.

Report on Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs)

- **World Health Organisation (WHO)** releases progress report on **Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs)**.

- The report deals with progress made in 2023 towards the **Road map for NTDs 2021–2030**.

Key Findings

- **1.62 billion people** required interventions against NTDs in 2022.
- India related findings
 - 40.56% of Indian people require interventions against NTDs in 2022.
 - India was certified free of **dracunculiasis (2000) and yaws (2016)**

About NTDs

- NTDs are a diverse group of **20 diseases** that are mainly prevalent in tropical areas including India

World Wildlife Crime Report 2024

- The **third edition** of the **UN World Wildlife Crime Report 2024** was recently released

by the **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime**.

- The report provides insights into the illegal wildlife trade that occurred between **2015 and 2021**.

Key Findings

- **Rhino horns, pangolin scales, and elephant ivory** lead the illegal wildlife market.
- During **2015-2021**, rhinoceroses and cedars were the most impacted animal and plant species respectively.

About United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

- **Formation** – 1997
- **Headquarters** - Vienna, Austria.
- **Director** - General – Ghada Waly





5. SCIENCE

5.1 LATEST DISCOVERIES IN HEALTH SCIENCE

West Nile Fever

- **West Nile Fever** had been recently identified in Kozhikode, Malappuram, and Thrissur districts of Kerala.

About West Nile Fever

- It is caused by the **West Nile Virus** which belongs to Flaviviridae family.

- The disease was **first** discovered in **Uganda** in **1937**
- In India, the **first case of WNV infection** was reported in **Mumbai** in **1952**
- The disease is transmitted to humans through the bite of an **infected mosquito**

5.2 SPACE

Chang'e-6 Mission

- China recently launched the **Chang'e-6 Mission** to the far side of the moon.
- The Mission is expected to collect samples from the far side of the moon for research purposes.

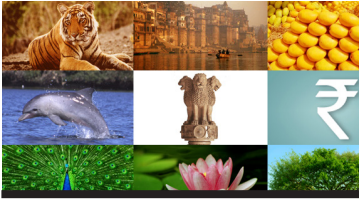
Note

- India is planning to launch **Chandrayaan-4** which is also aimed at bringing back lunar samples.
- India has become the **fourth country** to achieve a **soft landing on the moon**.

- India became the **first country** to land near the **moon's South Pole**.

Boeing's Starliner

- Boeing is planning to launch its **Starliner spacecraft** by **Atlas V rocket** from the **Kennedy Space Center** in Florida.
- The spacecraft will be sent to the **International Space Station (ISS)**
- It will be carrying **two NASA astronauts** - **Barry Wilmore** and **Sunita Williams**.
- It will be Starliner's **first crewed test flight**.



6. NATIONAL – DIARY OF EVENT

India's first transshipment port

- The Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways has recently approved Adani Group's Vizhinjam Port in Kerala to operate as India's 1st transshipment port.
- The transshipment port facilitates the transfer of cargo from large vessels to smaller ones.

About Vizhinjam Port

- First automated port in India
- Only port in the country to be located adjacent to an international shipping route.
- Deepest port in India.
- It is a green port.

India is now third largest producer of solar power

- According to the report by international energy analytics agency Ember in 2023, India overtook Japan to become the world's third-highest producer of solar power.
- India generated 113 billion units (BU) of solar power in 2023.
- The top two producers of solar power are China and United States respectively.

Note

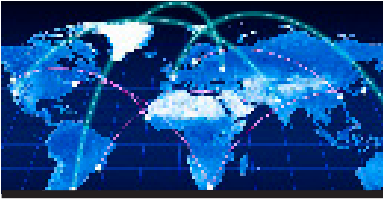
- India's total solar energy potential has been estimated to be 748 GW (Giga Watt).
- India has set a target of achieving 500 GW of installed capacity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.
- Rajasthan is the leading state in solar energy installations.

Aurora Red Arc Event

- Aurora Red Arc Event was recently captured at the Hanle Dark Sky Reserve in Ladakh.
- Astronomers of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Bengaluru (IIA) captured the auroras through the Indian Astronomical Observatory (IAO) in Hanle, Ladakh.
- Auroras are usually seen in high-latitude regions namely the North and the South Pole.
 - Aurora borealis – North Pole
 - Aurora australis – South Pole

Note

- Auroras are the result of disturbances in the Earth's magnetosphere caused by the solar wind.



7. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Astra Zeneca

- U.K.-based pharmaceutical major **AstraZeneca** has started global withdrawal of its COVID-19 vaccine.
- It was provided in India as '**Covishield**' in partnership with **Serum Institute of India**.
- Recently the company admitted to rare side-effects of blood clotting and lowering of platelet counts.





8. TAMILNADU AFFAIRS

e-Pass portal for visitors

- The Tamil Nadu government launched a **portal** for registering to obtain an e-Pass to enter the hill stations of the **Nilgiris and Kodaikanal**.
- An e-Pass is mandatory for tourists and commercial vehicles.
- It was mandated by the **Madras High Court** recently.

Kalloori Kanavu programme

- The **Kalloori Kanavu programme** was inaugurated recently for the year **2024**.
- It is a career guidance initiative for school students who have completed their Class XII to pursue higher education
- It is launched under the **Naan Mudhalvan programme in 2022**.

About Naan Mudhalvan Scheme

- **Launch** - March 1, 2022.
- It aims to empower the **youth of the State** to gain industry-relevant employable skills.

Rise in deceased organ donations

- **Tamil Nadu** has reached a record high in the number of organ donations in 2024.
- In **130 days (as of May 9, 2024)**, the number of **deceased donor organ donations** has crossed **100 in the State**.
- According to the Health Department, this was the **highest number ever registered** since the **Tamil Nadu Cadaver Transplant Program (CTP)** was launched in the State on **September 2008**.

Note

- **Organ transplantation in Tamil Nadu** is regulated by **India's Transplantation of Human Organs Act, 1994**.
- It is facilitated by the **Transplant Authority of Tamil Nadu (TRANSTAN)**