

MANIDHANAHEYAM FREE IAS ACADEMY – TNPSC GROUP II & IIA
UNIT – V – CURRENT AFFAIRS

Current Affairs

Vanavil Mandram:

- ✓ Tamil Nadu government has launched Vanavil Mandram Scheme 2023 to promote scientific interest among school students.
- ✓ In this scheme, students of class 6th to 8th will be able to learn Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).
- ✓ 100 mobile science and mathematics laboratories on behalf school's Education department to stimulate the scientific temper among students.
- ✓ It is aimed at promoting interest among the students of standards 6 to 8 to learn Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to stimulate the scientific temper among students
- ✓ They would teach students science experiments and mathematics, on a monthly basis, with proper guidance, and display science tools made by students.
- ✓ Vanavil Mandram scheme will be implemented at an estimated cost of Rs. 25 crore to benefit 25 lakh government school students.
- ✓ Special training has been given to teachers who had expressed interest in participating in the Vanavil Mandram programme across the state.
- ✓ These students will share the methods they have used so far in teaching and provide suggestions for continued implementation of the programme.
- ✓ About 710 STEM facilitators have been selected across Tamil Nadu to implement Vanavil Mandram programme
- ✓ They can act as mobile science and mathematics experimenters.
- ✓ They will guide in conducting simple science experiments for students of 6th to 8th standard.

Disaster preparedness index:

- ✓ Natural disasters are consequences of a natural hazard like an earthquake, landslide, cyclone, flood, or tsunami which affects human activities.
- ✓ Human vulnerability to disasters is increased by poverty and the risk potential for disasters.

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- ✓ A lack of planning, preparedness and appropriate emergency management systems can lead to devastating to human, animal, economic, and environmental.
- ✓ The impact of natural disasters has been reduced by increasing preparedness for them, and when a disaster occurs, rapidly and effectively assessing the impact of same.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu covers an area of 13, 00,582 kms and has a coastline of about 1,076 kms which is about 15% of the coastline of India.
- ✓ More than 40% of the fisher population lives within 1km of coast and 50% of them live within 2km of the coast.
- ✓ The geographical setting of Tamil Nadu makes the state vulnerable to natural disasters such as cyclones floods and earthquake-induced tsunami
- ✓ About 8% of the state is affected by five to six cyclones every year, of which two to three are severe.
- ✓ Cyclonic activities on the east coast are more severe than on the west coast, and occur mainly between April-May and October-November.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu is also subjected to annual flooding, including flash floods, cloudburst floods, monsoon floods of single and multiple events, cyclonic floods, and those due to dam bursts or failure.
- ✓ Every year, on average thousands of people are affected, a few hundred lives are lost, thousands are rendered homeless and several hectares of crops are damaged.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu is also prone to very severe damaging earthquakes.
- ✓ Its people feel much more vulnerable to earthquake-induced tsunamis
- ✓ Since the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, which affected the coast of Tamil Nadu is destroying much of the marine biology and severely damaging the ecosystem.
- ✓ Crops, settlements, trees, birds, fishes, wildlife, and properties were destroyed.
- ✓ Precious coral reefs and mangrove areas were crushed by the huge tsunami waves that devastated South India, an environmental and economic setback that could take years to reverse.

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- ✓ Power and communications were totally disrupted. The damage to humans, especially women and children, and animal life, was tremendous, resulting in emotional and mental trauma.
- ✓ Community faces disasters like cyclone and floods periodically. Communities in other hazard prone plains and hilly regions of the State face threats from
- ✓ Landslides, Earthquakes and Floods. Urban flooding is also becoming a growing concern in the State.
- ✓ There has been a paradigm shift in the focus of Disaster Management, from response-centric covering rescue, relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction to laying greater emphasis on the other elements of disaster management cycle
- ✓ Prevention, mitigation, and preparedness—as a means to avert or soften the impact of future emergencies
- ✓ The Member of the State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA), which has the Honorable Chief Minister as its Chairperson.
- ✓ Relief and Rehabilitation Activities
- ✓ During and after any disaster in the State, the department provides relief. Post disaster periodic reviews are made and arrangements made to swiftly disburse relief
- ✓ Preparation and Updating of Disaster Management (DM) Plans
- ✓ Strengthening of Emergency Operation Centers in the State/Districts
- ✓ Sensing the need to create an effective emergency operation center, it is proposed to provide all essential facilities to promote effective coordination between stakeholders and enhance efficiency of emergency management operations.
- ✓ Transport facilities, communication systems (Fax, Telephone, VHF Radio etc.,) and office requirements (essential appliances, furniture) will be provided for, under this component.
- ✓ It is being proposed to strengthen the emergency management systems at the Sub-divisional and Taluk levels also.

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- ✓ It is also proposed to form State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) by training a Battalion of Tamil Nadu Special Police. The training will be imparted by National Disaster Response force.
- ✓ Strengthening of Emergency Response at Hospitals
- ✓ Development of Training Modules and Curriculum at State owned Training Institutes
- ✓ NCC cadets will be given one week training in selected locations for preparedness and demand driven services.
- ✓ Conduct of Trainings and Workshops
- ✓ Assessment of Hazard, Vulnerability and Risk in vulnerable districts
- ✓ Risk Reduction in the State
- ✓ Environmental measures such as mangrove plantations in coastal areas prone to cyclonic storms will be developed.
- ✓ The Regional Integrated Multi- Hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia (RIMES) is an international and intergovernmental institution,
- ✓ The Mission of RIMES is building capacity and providing actionable warning information towards forearmed, forewarned and resilient communities.
- ✓ Climate Risk Management shall be utilized in the development planning processes in Tamil Nadu.

Economically weaker section Reservation:

- ✓ The 103rd Constitution Amendment Act provides for 10% reservation in government jobs and educational institutions for the economically weaker section in the unreserved category.
- ✓ This 10% ceiling is independent of ceilings on existing reservations
- ✓ The Act amends Articles 15 and 16 to provide for reservation based on economic backwardness.
- ✓ The new clause (6) to Article 15 allows the government to carve reservations for the economically weaker sections of society in higher educational institutions, including private ones, whether they are aided or not by the State. Minority educational institutions are exempted.

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- ✓ The new clause (6) to Article 16 provides for a quota for economically deprived sections in the initial appointment in government services.
- ✓ It provides reservations with criteria
- ✓ People who have an annual income of less than Rs 8 lakh, or
- ✓ People who own less than five acres of farmland, or
- ✓ People who have a house less than 1,000 sq feet in a town (or 100 sq yards in a notified municipal area).
- ✓ The Supreme Court while upholding the 27% quota for backward classes, struck down the government notification reserving 10% government jobs for economically backward classes among the higher castes.
- ✓ SC in the same case also upheld the principle that the combined reservation beneficiaries should not exceed 50% of India's population.
- ✓ The concept of the 'creamy layer' also gained currency through this judgment and provision that reservation for backward classes should be confined to initial appointments only and not extend to promotions
- ✓ They argue that the Amendment violates the basic features of the Constitution and violates the fundamental right to equality under Article 14.
- ✓ Reservations cannot be based solely on economic criteria, given the Supreme Court's judgment in Indra Sawhney v. Union of India (1992).
- ✓ SCs/STs and OBCs cannot be excluded from economic reservations, as this would violate the fundamental right to equality.
- ✓ The Amendment introduces reservations that exceed the 50% ceiling limit on reservations, established in Indra Sawhney Case.
- ✓ Imposing reservations on educational institutions that do not receive State aid violates the fundamental right to equality.
- ✓ Several issues in the EWS quota challenge were based on crucial aspects already decided by the Supreme Court in the landmark 1992 Indra Sawhney vs Union of India verdict.
- ✓ A nine-judge Bench had upheld the 27 percent quota for OBCs but had struck down the 10 percent quota based on economic criteria.

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- ✓ “A backward class cannot be determined only and exclusively with reference to the economic criterion”.
- ✓ “It may be a consideration or basis along with, and in addition to, social backwardness, but it can never be the sole criterion,” the court had held.
- ✓ Reservation cannot cross 50 percent unless a special case was made out in “extraordinary situations and peculiar conditions”.

Gangaikondacholapuram:

- ✓ It is situated in Jayangondam Taluk of Perambalur District.
- ✓ It was a secondary capital of the Cholas for about 250 years. The city seems to have had two fortifications, one inner and the other outer.
- ✓ Excavation conducted at two locations at Maligaimedu revealed the remains of royal palace, built with burnt bricks
- ✓ The ceilings were covered with flat tiles. The pillars were probably made of polished wood, supported on granite bases
- ✓ Excavations revealed brick walls about 1.10cm in thickness.
- ✓ On the foundation wall, granite stone pillar bases were embedded at an equal distance of 2 meters.
- ✓ Bone objects with animal figures, ivory carvings, quartz beads, shell bangle pieces and stone objects were found during the excavation.
- ✓ The excavation also yielded celadon ware and porcelain sherds. Both of them are of Chinese origin.
- ✓ This shows the contact of the Chola kingdom with China during 11th to 12th centuries CE.
- ✓ Roofing tiles and iron nails were recovered in large numbers.
- ✓ Chola period copper coin, glass beads and bangles, hopscotch markers and spouted knobs were found.
- ✓ Terracotta pieces and ceramics, such as red ware, black ware, decorated ware and Chinese ware, including celadon ware, were found.
- ✓ The recovery of the Chinese ware indicated that trade ties had existed between the two countries then.

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Mega Textile Park:

- ✓ The Tamil Nadu government is planning to establish a 1,500-acre textile park in the southern part of the State and a textile park in Chennai.
- ✓ It will also unveil a new integrated textile policy to attract investments in the state, said the State Chief Minister MK Stalin
- ✓ SIPCOT (State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamilnadu Ltd) has acquired over 1,500 acres for a mega textile park at Kumaralingapuram village in Virudhunagar District.
- ✓ It is also taking steps to establish a textile city in Chennai. Also, small-sized textile parks are being created with subsidy support of ₹2.5 crore,

Importance:

- ✓ Lauding the textile industry's growth and its contribution to exports
- ✓ The technical textile sector has been added to the list of 'Thrust sectors' and the State government was providing subsidy support of ₹1.5 crore to textile entrepreneurs.
- ✓ The State government is also establishing "Export Hubs" in Karur, Tiruppur, and Kancheepuram to increase the textile exports of the State, which is presently accounting for 12 percent of the total textile exports from India.
- ✓ "The textile sector in Tamil Nadu is a front runner in adopting new technologies and produces various types of garments to serve the global markets,"
- ✓ "After the government declared the Textile Industry as a sunrise sector, there has been an increase in investments from International and domestic companies which is very encouraging.
- ✓ The sector now positioned in the 3rd place when it comes to attracting foreign investments, and in exports too,"
- ✓ Under the PM Mega Integrated Textile Regions and Apparel Parks (MITRA) scheme
- ✓ It was designed to strengthen the Indian textile industry by enabling the scale of operations and reducing logistics costs by housing the entire value chain in one location.

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17TH Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu:

- ✓ An area in the reserve forests of Krishnagiri and Dharmapuri have been notified as the Cauvery South Wildlife Sanctuary.
- ✓ The declaration was made under the Section 26A (1) (b) of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
- ✓ 17th wildlife sanctuary in Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ wildlife sanctuary spans an area of 686.406 sq. Km.
- ✓ It is home to 35 mammal species and 238 bird species.
- ✓ It hosts Leith's soft shelled turtles, smooth coated otters, marsh crocodile and four horned antelopes.

Significance:

- ✓ The Cauvery South Wildlife Sanctuary connects the Cauvery North Wildlife Sanctuary of Tamil Nadu with the Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary in the neighbouring state of Karnataka.
- ✓ This creates a large, contiguous network of protected areas for wildlife in Cauvery River Basin.
- ✓ It also creates further continuity to the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve via the Malai Mahadeshwara Wildlife Sanctuary, Billigiri Rangaswamy Temple Tiger Reserve of Karnataka and the Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve and Erode Forest Division of Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ The newly notified sanctuary is an important elephant habitat.
- ✓ Two elephant corridors – the Nandimangalam-Ulibanda Corridor and the Kovaipallam-Anebiddahalla Corridor.
- ✓ Ecosystem conservation of Cauvery basin critical for the protection of riverine species that are dependent on Cauvery River.
- ✓ Grizzled giant squirrel, four-horned antelope, and Lesser Fish Eagle are exclusively reliant on the Cauvery River and its riverine forest ecosystem.
- ✓ It ensure the protection and restoration of habitat, minimisation of soil erosion and siltation of downstream Stanley Reservoir.
- ✓ Improvement of habitat in the sanctuary will increase prey base for tigers living in the nearby protected areas.

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Tamil Nadu Minorities Economic Development Corporation Limited:

- ✓ The Tamil Nadu Minorities Economic Development Corporation (TAMCO)
- ✓ Started in the year of 31.8.1999
- ✓ For the benefit of Minorities viz. Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Parsis and Jains in Tamil Nadu.

Objective:

- ✓ TAMCO is to provide loans at low rate of interest to Minorities for Self-Employment and income generation activities.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu Minorities Economic Development Corporation is acting as State Channelising Agency of National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC), New Delhi.
- ✓ TAMCO is lending Term Loan, Virasat loan, Micro Credit Loan & Education Loan for economic advancement of Minorities as detailed below:-
- ✓ At lower rate of Interest to take up self-employment activities.

Term Loan Scheme:

- ✓ Under Term Loan scheme individual beneficiaries are considered for financing projects costing up to Rs.30.00 lakh for carrying out business /trade/purchase of milch animals/autos etc.

Virasat Scheme:

- ✓ Under Virasat scheme loans are given to artisans for upto Rs.10.00 lakh both in terms of working capital requirement and fixed capital requirement
- ✓ Under Micro financing scheme Micro credit extended to the members of Minority Self Help Group (Male/Female) to start
- ✓ To develop their Micro business such as Textiles, Sales of Cloth, Chappals, manufacturing and selling of Pickles and Pappadam, Knitting Wire, Tiffin centre, Sweet Stall etc. Towards the upliftment of their economic status

Educational Loan:

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- ✓ Educational loan is sanctioned to the Minorities who pursue Professional and Job Oriented Degree Courses in Government / Private Institutions recognized by Government.

Skill Development Training:

- ✓ In order to encourage Minorities youth to get self and wage employment Skill Development training is imparted.
- ✓ Beneficiary should belong to a minority community between 18 to 55 years of age and whose parental annual income is upto Rs.6 lakh

Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Higher Education Assurance Scheme:

- ✓ The Government of TamilNadu has launched Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Higher Education Assurance Scheme

Objective:

- ✓ It increase literacy rate of women
- ✓ It increase gender equality
- ✓ It increase self dependence for women
- ✓ To enhance the enrolment ratio of girls from Government schools to Higher Education Institutions
- ✓ Through this scheme, the financial assistance of Rs. 1000/month will be provided to the girls till their completion of UG degree/Diploma/ITI/any other recognized cours
- ✓ The incentive amount under this scheme will be disbursed directly into the student's Bank Account.
- ✓ The scheme provides financial aid of ₹ 1000 to girls studying from class VI to XII to pursue higher education like graduation, diploma, ITI or other courses.
- ✓ The amount of ₹1000 will directly be sent to the bank account of the girl student.
- ✓ The scheme motivates the girl student to continue their higher education and discourages evil norms like child marriage from prevailing in society.
- ✓ The debit card was given to around 613 students during the initial phase of the scheme.

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- ✓ Through the scheme, it is estimated that around 6 lakh females per year will be benefited from the spending of 698 crores.
- ✓ Under the Pudhumai Penn Scheme's initial phase, approximately 6500 students of Tiruchi district who are enrolled in engineering, science, and art institutions will be benefited.
- ✓ It increase literacy rate of women
- ✓ It increase gender equality
- ✓ It increase self dependence for women

Tamilnadu state child policy:

- ✓ Facilitation of the holistic development of children with emphasis On their strengths and empowering them to manage their lives, Body and behavior.
- ✓ Provision of a safe, secure learning setting that ensures the physical, Mental and emotional safety and well-being of the child.
- ✓ Access to a formal school within their neighbourhood for all Children completing 5 years.
- ✓ Digital education to all children that is safe, enjoyable and age Appropriate.
- ✓ Make schools free from alcohol, tobacco and all narcotic substances
- ✓ Introduce child safeguarding policy in all schools to make all Schools safe for children.
- ✓ Form Internal Complaints Committee under POSH Act in all Schools.
- ✓ Strengthen existing child protection systems particularly Village Level Child Protection Committee (VLCPC) and Neighborhood Child Protection Committee (NCPC).
- ✓ Address key determinants of feticide, child mortality
- ✓ Morbidity; with emphasis on health, nutrition, safe potable water And high sanitation standards.
- ✓ Avert HIV infections at birth and make sure that children
- ✓ Receive appropriate care pathway, nutrition and after-care.
- ✓ Encourage and support focused behavior change to improve new
- ✓ Born and child care practices at the household and community Levels.
- ✓ Deliver timely interventions to prevent disabilities (both mental And physical), during, before and after pregnancy in the mother And child.

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- ✓ Offer services for early detection, treatment and management of Disabilities at the pre and post-natal stage.
- ✓ Fortify services for management, support and rehabilitation Of children with special needs and education for children with Disability.
- ✓ Ensure adequate food-security and safety is available to all children
- ✓ Ensure adolescent friendly health services.
- ✓ Prevent micro-nutrient deficiencies by improving awareness of And access to micro-nutrient rich foods.

HOUSTON Tamil studies chair:

- ✓ One of the premier and oldest languages of the Tamil Dravidian language family.
- ✓ This language, more than 2,000 years old. Tamil has a special privilege than other rituals.
- ✓ The oldest literary style and structure is no longer present in any other language but in Tamil only 2000 thousand years old Thirukkural and festivals are the foundation of Tamil society today
- ✓ A few years ago decided to popularise the language in the City.
- ✓ People especially children were curious to learn the language and initially, we taught Thirukural to the children.
- ✓ There has been good response among the children and parents encourage their kids to learn the language. And the number was increasing every day. Knowing this, several volunteered themselves to teach the language”.
- ✓ Following this, decided to establish the Tamil chair at the University of Houston to provide a forum for the growing population Tamil-Americans in the United States – approximately 2,50,000 people.
- ✓ Tamil diaspora live in different parts of the world and language has been recognised in many countries.
- ✓ Today, Tamils live in more than 100 countries.
- ✓ The University readily agreed to their proposal and commenced work, but seeking a fund of `5 crore. Houston Tamil Studies Chair, Inc has raised `6 crore so far.

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- ✓ The Tamil seat in Harvard University has been set up to do research on various topics.
- ✓ Initially, 20 subjects have been short-listed. He said research has to be done in several subjects including Tamil culture, history, and language.
- ✓ Literature, sea trade, music, dance, folk art, martial arts, painting, sculpture, architecture, inscriptions etc.
- ✓ Houston Tamil Studies Chair, Inc signed a MoU with Madurai Kamaraj University to assist the Chair and invited suggestions for research proposal from experts across the world.
- ✓ On completing the research the Chair will take steps to popularise them.

Education under state list:

- ✓ Education is the only asset that can never be snatched away by anyone under any situation
- ✓ It is the duty of a State government to impart the wealth of education
- ✓ When the Constitution was framed and came into force, education was originally placed under the State list
- ✓ It was moved to the Concurrent list only during the period of Emergency [in 1976].
- ✓ There were 22 universities functioning effectively under the State's control in various departments including arts, science, medicine, agriculture and law among others.
- ✓ "To further strengthen the sector in the State, which is one of the best performing in higher education,
- ✓ the State is formulating various schemes benefiting the student community, including Pudhumai Penn scheme – to promote higher education of women;
- ✓ providing 7.5% reservation in higher education for the benefit of government school students; Naan Mudhalvan scheme and Illam Thedi Kalvi
- ✓ Assembly should adopt a resolution demanding transfer of education as subject to List II in Seventh Schedule under Article 246 of the Constitution of India (as was the case in the original Constitutional scheme)