

## UPSC CURRENT AFFAIRS NOTES 12-11-2023

### Global Tiger Recovery Program (GTRP)

As per the report submitted under the Global Tiger Recovery Program (GTRP) 2.0 overall tiger population increased 60%.



#### **About Global Tiger Recovery Program (GTRP):**

It was launched in 2010 under the Global Tiger Initiative (GTI) by the World Bank to save wild tigers.

This initiative set up the ambitious target of reversing the rapid decline of wild tigers across their range and doubling their population numbers by 2022.

Alongside these top-level targets, the GTRP set out urgent thematic actions at a national level to strengthen wild tiger conservation in sync with this global goal.

The first GTRP helped to pull focus to wild tiger conservation and secure a collective commitment from TRCs.

It was endorsed in the St Petersburg Declaration in 2010 which saw 13 tiger range countries committing to reverse the decline of the species population.

The 13 tiger range countries are Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia, Thailand, and Vietnam.

### What is GTRP 2.0?

It has been firming up by tiger range countries through the intergovernmental platform of the Global Tiger Forum along with collaborators like the WWF.

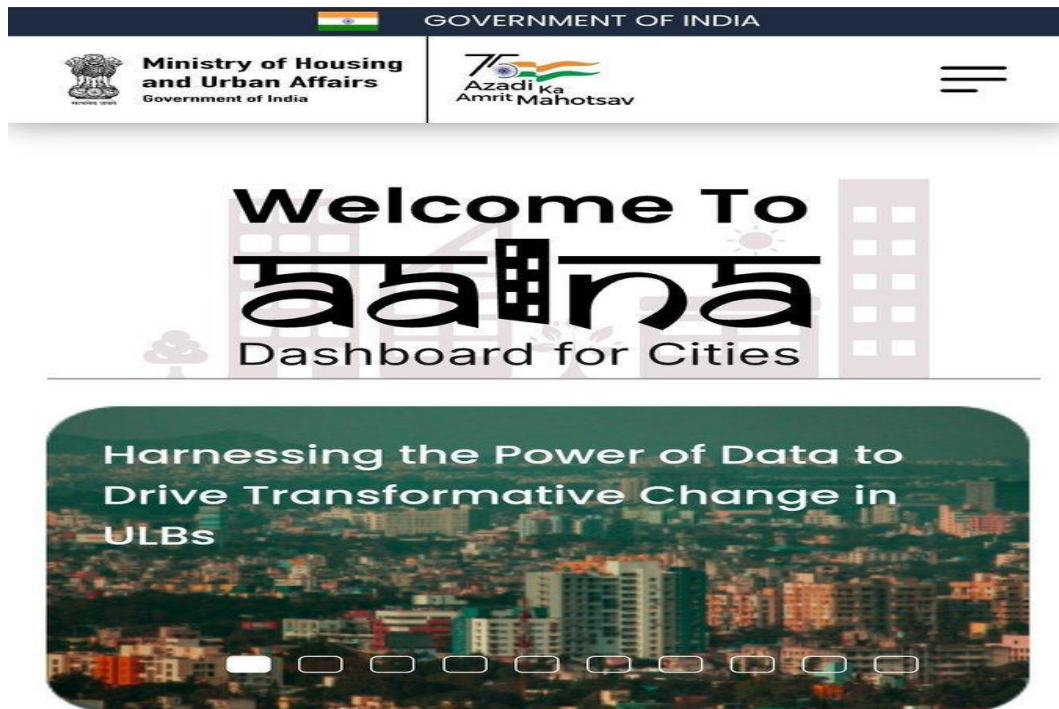
It emphasizes on strengthening tiger governance, enhancing resources and protection, while addressing contemporary challenges like Human-Wildlife Conflict.

**It aims to pave the way for tiger conservation from 2023-2034.**

### AAINA Dashboard for Cities

Recently, the ‘AAINA Dashboard for Cities’ portal has been made live by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).

#### About AAINA Dashboard for Cities:





It would serve as a tool for comparing similarly placed Urban Local Bodies (ULBs ) and promoting peer learning amongst ULBs.

This dashboard will inspire the ULBs by pointing to possibilities and areas of improvement and providing them the opportunity to learn and engage with frontrunners.

It aims to create a robust database of the key performance metrics of Urban Local Bodies, which could be accessed by all stakeholders, and subsequently would open for public view once it gets populated.

Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) across the country can participate in this pioneering initiative to voluntarily submit their key data on a regular basis, through a simple, easy-to-fill, data entry form on the portal.

Objectives of the AAINA Dashboard are to help cities to  
See how they are faring vis-à-vis other cities.

Inspire them by pointing to possibilities and areas of improvement and  
Providing opportunity to learn and engage with frontrunners.

The Dashboard will present the data submitted by the ULBs on the basis of indicators across five broad pillars namely,

Political & Administrative Structure,

Finance

Planning,

Citizen Centric Governance and

Delivery of Basic Services.

The ULBs will submit their data, including audited accounts, and self-reported performance metrics by logging in to the dashboard's portal.

ULBs would be free to update the information initially provided by them, anytime on the portal as per need.



The Dashboard has been envisaged as a permanent platform for ULB related data, that would be updated on a regular basis.

The Ministry through Digital India Corporation will provide handholding support to ULBs / States in the data submission process on a need basis.

### **Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**

The Union government has approved a new policy allowing its advertising wing, the Central Bureau of Communication (CBC), to undertake advertisement campaigns on social media, OTT platforms and other digital media.

What's in Today's Article?

Digital advertising refers to marketing through online channels, such as websites, streaming content, and more.

Digital ads span media formats, including text, image, audio, and video.

The Government of India's Digital India program has led to a huge growth in the number of people in the country who are now connected to the internet, social and digital media platforms.

As per Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, the internet penetration in India as of March 2023, is over 880 million.

The Digital Advertisement Policy 2023 has been formulated after a wide ranging discussions with multiple stakeholders.

It outlines the roadmap of enhancing the Digital Outreach of the Government of India and improving information dissemination to the Citizens.

### **Key Features of the Digital Advertisement Policy, 2023:**

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting approved the "Digital Advertisement Policy, 2023 to enable and empower the Central Bureau of Communication to undertake campaigns in the Digital Media Space.

In response to the evolving media landscape, the policy marks a pivotal moment in CBC's mission to disseminate information and create awareness regarding various schemes, programs, and policies of the Government.



The policy will enable CBC to empanel agencies and organisations in the OTT and Video on Demand Space.

CBC will also be able to leverage the growing number of listeners to Podcasts and Digital Audio platforms through empanelment of Digital Audio platforms.

Apart from rationalising its process of empaneling Internet Websites, CBC now for the first time will be able to channelize its public service campaign messages through Mobile Applications too.

With Social Media Platforms becoming one of the popular channels of public conversations, the policy further streamlines the process through which CBC can place advertisements for government clients on these platforms.

The policy also empowers CBC to empanel Digital Media Agencies to enhance its outreach through the various platforms.

The policy also recognizes the dynamic nature of the digital landscape and empowers CBC to on board New and Innovative Communication Platforms in the Digital Space with the approval of a duly constituted committee.

The policy introduces competitive bidding for rate discovery, ensuring transparency and efficiency.

Further, the rates discovered through this process will remain valid for three years and will be applicable to all eligible agencies.

### **About Central Bureau of Communication:**

Central Bureau of Communication (CBC) is a unit of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

The CBC has the mandate of providing 360 degrees communication solutions to Ministries, Departments, Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), and autonomous bodies.

It was set up in 2017 by the integration of the erstwhile Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP), Directorate of Field Publicity (DFP), and Song & Drama Division (S&DD).

With 23 Regional Offices and 148 Field Offices, CBC is engaged in the process of educating people, both rural and urban, about the Government's policies and programmes.

The bureau undertakes various campaigns towards this end by using different vehicles of communication viz., Print Media advertising, Audio Visual Campaigns, dissemination through Exhibitions, Outdoor Campaigns and Digital Media etc.

### **Kanyakumari Wildlife Sanctuary (KWLS)**

A team of researchers and the forest department have found a rare bioluminescent mushroom in the Kanyakumari Wildlife Sanctuary (KKWLS).

### **Kanyakumari Wildlife Sanctuary**



Kanyakumari Wildlife Sanctuary is a protected area in Kanyakumari district, Tamil Nadu, declared in 2008.

**The area is a tiger habitat.**



Seven rivers originate in the forest including the Thamirabarani River and Pahruli River.

Several new species of plants, amphibians and insects discovered here are found nowhere else, making it an endemic region.

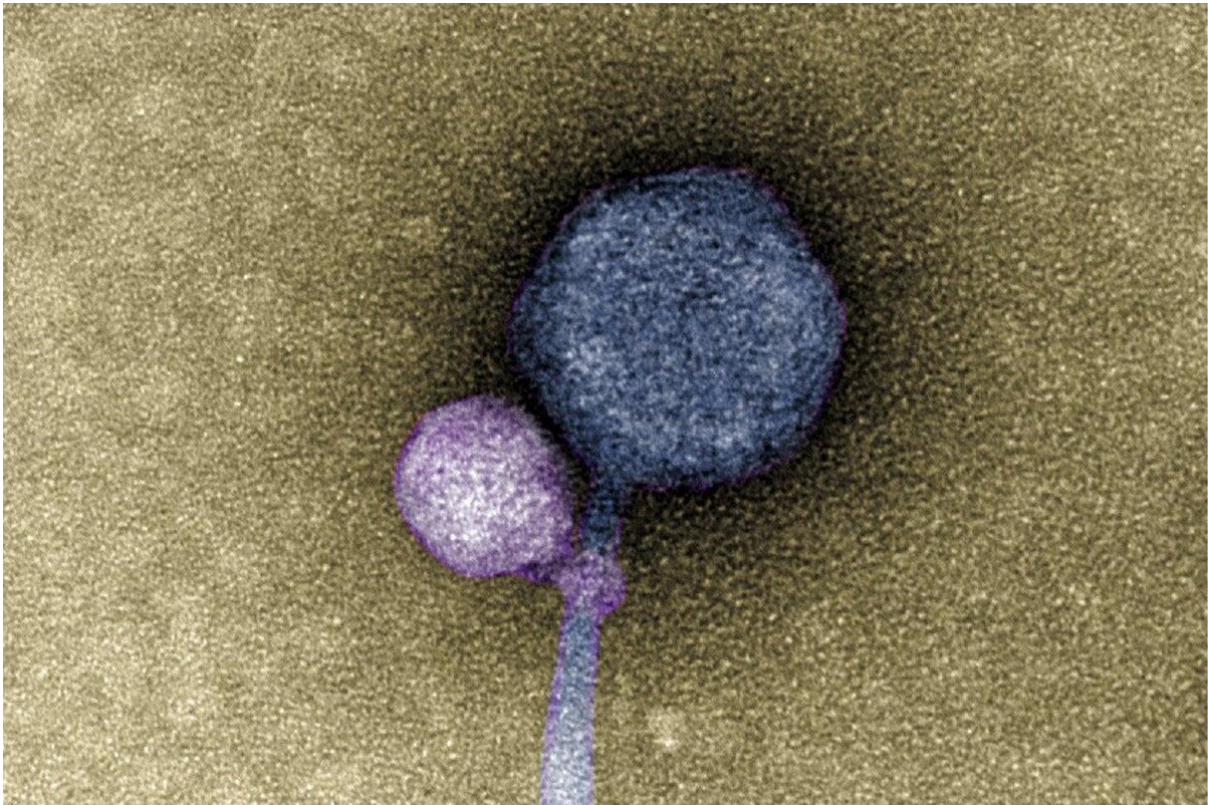
The area is a wildlife corridor with high biodiversity, and in addition to tigers, is home to the threatened species: Indian bison, elephant, Indian rock python, lion-tailed macaque, mouse deer, Nilgiri tahr and sambar deer.

The Arasu Rubber Corporation had destroyed 12,000 acres of forest land to promote rubber estates. This triggered wide protests among the locals and environmentalists.

Another incident was the uprooting of 20,000 forest trees in the guise of clearing the damage caused due to Cyclone Ockhi. This caused anthropogenic disturbance.

## **Vampire Viruses**

Several 'Vampire Viruses' have been recently discovered on US soil for the first time.



### About Vampire Viruses:

They are pathogens that latch onto other viruses in order to replicate themselves.

They emerge when a bacteriophage attaches to a soil-based virus, utilising its "life" for independent survival.

This viral relationship between two pathogens is called a satellite and a helper. The satellite is the infectious strand that relies on the helper for support through its life cycle.

Satellites depend on both their host organism and helper virus to complete its life cycle.

The satellite virus depends on the helper virus to build the protective shell that covers its genetic material, called a capsid or to help it replicate its DNA.

Most satellite viruses contain a gene that allows them to integrate into the host cell's genetic material after they enter the cell.





This enables the satellite to reproduce whenever a helper enters the cell from then on.

The host cell also copies the satellite's DNA and its own when it divides.

What is a Bacteriophage?

Bacteriophages (BPs) are viruses that can infect and kill bacteria without any negative effect on human or animal cells. They are comprised of a protein capsule around an RNA or DNA genome.

For this reason, it is supposed that they can be used, alone or in combination with antibiotics, to treat bacterial infections.

## **Exploring Employment Opportunities for Transgenders in Armed Forces**

The Indian Armed Forces are looking at possible employment opportunities for transgenders and the roles they could perform, while examining the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2019 and its implications.

A joint study group constituted by the Principal Personnel Officers Committee (PPOC) was tasked with suggesting a way forward for the implementation of the Act in the defence forces.

What's in Today's Article?

LGBT Rights in India

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 (Background, Objectives, Salient Provisions)

News Summary Regarding Possibilities of Transgender Persons' Entry in the Armed Forces

LGBT Rights in India:

There are approximately 480,000 transgender people in India as per Census 2011.



The Constitution of India under Article 15 (prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth) guarantees fundamental rights and prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Though Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights in India have been evolving rapidly in recent years, they still face social and legal difficulties not experienced by non-LGBT persons.

The country has repealed or modified or read down its colonial-era laws (for example, Section 377 of the IPC) that directly discriminated against homosexual and transgender identities.

In 2018, in the landmark decision of *Navtej Singh Johar v. Union of India*, the Supreme Court of India (SC) decriminalised consensual homosexual intercourse by reading down Section 377 of the IPC.

### **The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2019:**

Background:

In 2014, the SC in *NALSA v. Union of India* held that all persons have the constitutional right to self-identify their gender.

Further, it directed Union and State Governments to allow transgender persons to access reservations in public education and employment.

Following the judgement and the recommendation of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Justice, the 2019 Act was enacted and came into force.

The Act is under the overall supervision of the Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India.

Objectives of the Act:

It protects the rights of transgenders and prevents their marginalisation and discrimination in healthcare, education, employment, public services and benefits, among others.

Thus, the Act is an equal opportunity provider to the transgender community.



Salient provision of the 2019 Act:

**Definition of a transgender person:** A transgender person as one whose gender does not match the gender assigned at birth.

**Prohibition against discrimination:** The act prohibits the discrimination, including denial of service or unfair treatment in relation to - education, employment, healthcare, etc.

**Certificate of identity for a transgender person:** A transgender person may make an application to the District Magistrate for a certificate of identity, indicating the gender as 'transgender'.

**Welfare measures by the government:** The act states that the relevant government will take measures (rescue and rehabilitation, vocational training and self-employment, etc) to ensure the full inclusion and participation of transgender persons in society.

**Offences and penalties:** The act recognise the following offences against transgender persons - forced or bonded labour, denial of use of public places, removal from household and village, etc.

**National Council for Transgender persons (NCT):** The NCT will consist of the Union Minister for Social Justice as Chairperson, and will -

Advise the central government on the impact of policies, legislation and projects with respect to transgender persons.

Redress the grievances of transgender persons.

**News Summary Regarding Possibilities of Transgender Persons' Entry in the Armed Forces:**

The Armed Forces, at present, do not recruit transgenders or people identifying as homosexuals.

A report presented by the Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances proposed that the Ministry of Home Affairs should consider extending reservation benefits to transgender people in the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs).



The joint study group, which comprises top officers of the three services and the Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS), recently sought comments on the feasibility of employing transgenders in the force.

As employment in defence forces is selection and merit-based, it will remain equally applicable to transgenders if recruitment to the military is opened to them at any given point.

It is learnt that a range of suggestions have been received, with some insisting on not providing any special concessions to transgenders, while others pointed to administrative and logistical difficulties (such as their housing).

There have also been questions about how they and their spouses (if any) would be identified in the military and their cultural integration with other serving military personnel.

Therefore, multiple issues will have to be factored in before any decision is taken as the military cannot be looked at as just an employment opportunity.