

**EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – APRIL 1, 2019**

**TAMIL NADU**

- Tamil Nadu Agriculture University's (TNAU) newly-released 'Star Jasmine' – is expected to enter local markets in the next six to seven months

<p><b>YEAR-ROUND AFFAIR</b></p> <p>Farmers have already started cultivating TNAU's new star jasmine variety across Dhamapuri, Sathyamangalam in Erode and Ramanathapuram</p>		
<p>➤ <b>Year-round flowering</b>   Flowers will be available during lean season/off-season (November-February)</p> <p>➤ <b>Attractive bold buds</b> (comparable with <i>J. grandiflorum</i>)</p> <p>➤ <b>Longer life span</b>   Buds remain unopened for <b>12 hours</b> under room temperature and up to</p>	<p><b>60 hours</b> on refrigeration</p> <p>➤ <b>Milder scent</b></p> <p>➤ Easy to pluck and highly suitable for <b>string-making</b> due to bold buds with <b>long corolla tube</b></p> <p>➤ Free of <b>pests &amp; diseases</b></p>	
<p><b>Per plant yield 2.21kg/ plant a year</b></p>		<p><b>A PLEASANT FIND:</b> TNAU first released the Star Jasmine (<i>Jasminum nitidum</i>) in January</p>

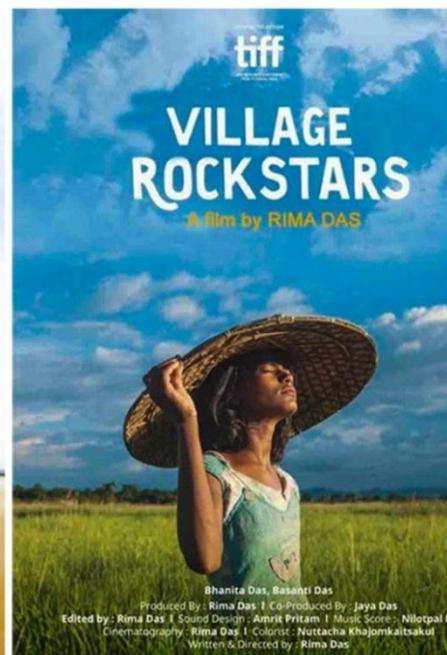
- ✓ TNAU first released the 'star jasmine' or 'jasmine nitidum' in January this year as an alternative to the traditional jathimalli, which becomes unavailable during winter
- ✓ The star jasmine will be available throughout the year and if refrigerated, it promises longer shelf-life
- ✓ The colour of its buds ranges from baby pink to magenta, compared to snowy white buds of jathimalli
- ✓ It is milder in fragrance when compared to jathimalli
- ✓ It can be grown in all types of red and black soil

## STATES

- **In a first, Meghalaya – to get braille-enabled ballot papers at all polling booths**
- ✓ The ballot paper pasted on the EVMs will have the names and symbol of candidates in braille alphabets.
- ✓ The move will facilitate more than 800 visually impaired electorates to vote by a secret ballot.

## NATIONAL

- **Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited – has become the first Indian shipyard to deliver 100 warships to the Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guard and Mauritius Coast Guard.**
- ✓ The 100th Warship, IN LCU L-56, a landing craft utility, was handed over by Rear Admiral V. K. Saxena, Chairman & Managing Director, GRSE to Lt. Cdr. Gopinath Narayanan, Commanding Officer of the Ship.
- **Assam filmmaker Rima Das - has been appointed as the official ambassador of Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF)'s 'Share Her Journey' campaign**



- ✓ She has won several national and international awards for her film 'Village Rockstars', which is India's official entry to Oscars 2019
- ✓ Recently Rima Das was honoured with ICC NE Excellence Award by Indian Chamber of Commerce at North East Business Summit in New Delhi

- ✓ The other Indian ambassadors of the campaign include Filmmakers Mira Nair, Deepa Mehta, and Actress Priyanka Chopra
- ✓ TIFFF launched the five years 'Share Her Journey' campaign in 2017 with an aim to increase participation, skills, and opportunities for women in film industry.
- **Assam's Bongaigaon district administration – has developed a mobile App 'Sankalp' to encourage first time voters**
- ✓ It has been developed with the help of National Informatics Centre
- ✓ The first time voters will be able to sign digital 'sankalp patra' to cast their votes on day of polling.
- **India – to post tri-services women officers as 'defence attaches' in its overseas missions**
- ✓ The first missions have been identified in Europe and America
- ✓ So far, only male officers have been posted as 'defence attaches'
- **The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) - extended the last date for intimating the Aadhaar number and linking it with Permanent Account Number (PAN) by six months to September 30**
- ✓ The earlier last date for linking PAN with Aadhaar was March 31
- ✓ This is the sixth time the government has extended the deadline for individuals to link their Permanent Account Number (PAN) to Aadhaar
- ✓ However, it'll be mandatory to quote and link Aadhaar while filing income tax return from April 1, 2019 unless specifically exempted.

## INTERNATIONAL

- **Russia - has opened a training Centre for 'military helicopter pilots' in Venezuela**
- ✓ Rosoboronexport, Russia's arms export company will collaborate with Venezuelan Military Industrial Company, Cavim for the training centre
- ✓ It will train pilots to fly Russian-built Mil helicopters

## INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **UAE – to issue equivalency for all Indian degrees that match the set criteria**
- ✓ The UAE government had earlier rejected the equivalency of some Indian degrees as some of the Indian universities issue both internal and external mark sheets as part of their degrees
- ✓ This had created considerable difficulty for those seeking jobs in the nation and even for some teachers who were already working there
- ✓ The Indian Ambassador to UAE, Navdeep Singh Suri had called on the UAE Minister of Education, Hussain Al Hammadi, to explain and resolve the issue



- ✓ The UAE equivalency on Indian degrees is mandatory for Indians to work in the UAE

## SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- Isro – launches EMISAT along with 29 satellites of global customers on April 1



- ✓ These 28 satellites, together weighing about 220 kg, belong to Spain (1), Lithuania (2), Switzerland (1) and the United States (24).
- ✓ These include 20 Flock-4A satellites and 4 Lemur satellites.
- ✓ The 436 kg electronic intelligence satellite, EMISAT has been launched at an altitude of 749 km orbit, while the remaining 28 satellites were launched at an altitude of 504 km orbit
- ✓ EMISAT will be utilized for monitoring radar network by locating the positions of enemy radars.
- ✓ It is intended for electromagnetic spectrum measurement

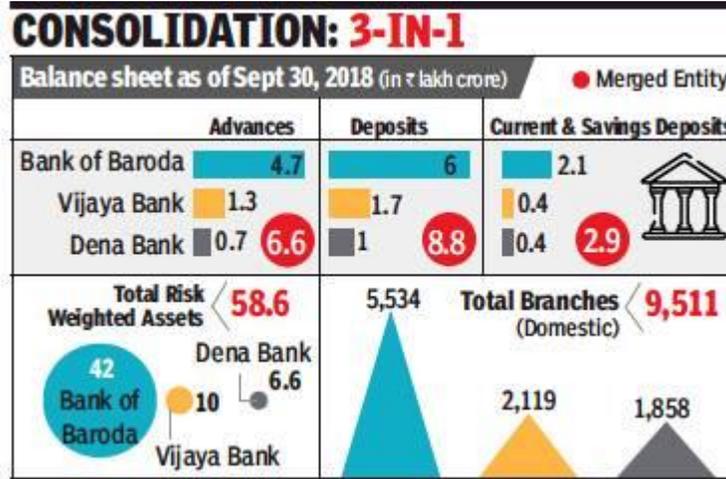
- ✓ They were launched aboard the PSLV-C45 from Satish Dhawan Space Center in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
  - ✓ This was the 47th mission for ISRO's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) Programme and was the 71st launch vehicle mission from Sriharikota.
  - ✓ For the first time, ISRO invited common people to view the launch
  - ✓ It had opened a visitors' gallery with 5,000 capacity at Andhra Pradesh's Sriharikota launching centre.
  - ✓ The gallery has a clear line of sight to two launch pads and large screens to explain launcher and satellite features
- **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) – lists Hump-backed Mahseer as Critically Endangered in the Red List of Threatened Species**



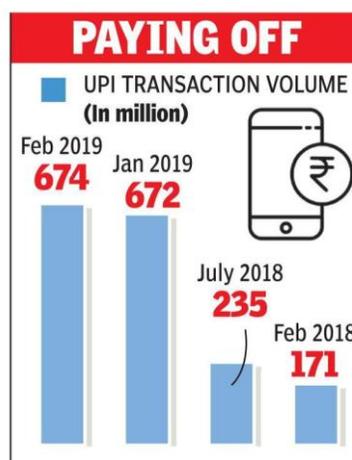
- ✓ It is found only in the Cauvery river basin including Pambar, Kabini and Bhavani rivers
- ✓ It is a species of freshwater fish and referred as 'tiger of water'
- ✓ There are about 16 species of mahseer in India
- ✓ For the conservation of mahseer, 'Project Mahseer' has been initiated by Shoal, an international organization in collaboration with other stakeholders in three states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka

## **ECONOMY**

- **The merger of Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank with Bank of Baroda – becomes effective on April 1, 2019**
- ✓ This is the first-ever three-way merger in the country's banking sector
  - ✓ Post merger, Bank of Baroda becomes India's second largest Public Sector Bank after the SBI and India's third largest lender overall after the SBI and ICICI Banks
  - ✓ It has a total business of more than Rs 14.82 lakh crore, 9,500 branches and 13,400 ATMs now.



- ✓ Dena Bank CEO, Karnam Sekar is likely to join Chennai-based Indian Overseas Bank while R A Sankara Naryanan, CEO of Vijaya Bank is likely to take charge of Canara Bank in Bengaluru
  - ✓ Dena and Vijaya banks were both founded by Indian entrepreneurs in the 1930s and nationalized in 1969 and 1980 respectively
  - ✓ Both Dena and Vijaya banks will continue to display their former signage, but it will now include a strip 'Now Bank of Baroda'
  - ✓ The merger of these banks was first announced in September 2018 and approved by Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister, on January 2, 2019
  - ✓ The amalgamation would be carried out under Alternative Mechanism, which is headed by Arun Jaitley, Finance Minister
  - ✓ Other members of Alternative Mechanism included Railway Minister Piyush Goyal and Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.
  - ✓ Post this merger, the number of PSU banks will come down to 19
- **Kotak Mahindra Bank – becomes the first lender to charge for UPI transactions**



- ✓ The bank has decided to charge beyond a monthly limit of 30 peer-to-peer transactions in the Unified Payments Interface from May onwards
- ✓ It will charge Rs 2.50 for every transaction worth Rs 1,000 or less while the same would be Rs 5 for transactions of more than Rs 1,000
- ✓ This will be applicable for all platforms, including Paytm, PhonePe and Google Pay, the three main players controlling 90% of the transactions
- ✓ National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is the umbrella payments body that manages UPI

## SPORTS

- **Elavenil Valarivan, 19 years old – wins her first individual gold medal in the senior category in women’s 10m air rifle final of the 12<sup>th</sup> Asian Airgun Championships in Taoyuan, Taipei**



- ✓ The Cuddalore-born Gujarat-settled girl, who trains at Gagan Narang’s ‘Gun For Glory’ shooting academy is part of their ambitious programme ‘Project Leap’
- ✓ Elavenil has won two junior World Cup gold along with a silver at Juniors’ World championships last year

- **India’s Kidambi Srikanth – loses the final in the Yonex-Sunrise India Open at New Delhi**



- ✓ He lost the final match against the World No. 6, Viktor Axelsen of Denmark in straight sets
- ✓ Srikanth was the winner of the event in 2015
- **Formula One world champion Lewis Hamilton (Great Britain-Mercedes) – won the Bahrain Formula 1 Grand prix in Manama**



- ✓ After becoming the second-youngest driver in F1 history to take pole position on March 30, the 21-year-old Charles Leclerc (Ferrari) finished third
- ✓ Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes) finished at second place in the action-packed race
- ✓ Red Bull's Max Verstappen placed fourth with Sebastian Vettel (Ferrari) in fifth place