

Cauvery Delta and Protected Special Agriculture Zone

August 20, 2020

- Tamil Nadu Government introduced a Bill in the Legislative Assembly seeking to declare the Cauvery delta region a Protected Special Agriculture Zone (PSAZ), a policy decision which it had announced recently. However, the Bill excluded from its ambit Tiruchi, Ariyalur and Karur districts, which geographically fall within the Delta region.

About the protected zone

- The protected zone will cover Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Nagapattinam districts and delta regions of Cuddalore and Pudukkottai. These areas have been listed under the First Schedule of the Act, to which the government may add or omit any area in the future.
- The creation of the protected zone was meant to offer farmers of the delta region relief from further hydrocarbon exploration.
- The Protected Agricultural Zone Development Act will prevent new hydrocarbon projects in the region.

Provisions of the bill

- The Bill mentioned that, since certain non-farming activities were adversely affecting agriculture in the region, threatening the State's food security, "to protect the agriculture in this region, it is proposed to prohibit certain activities in the region."



- It sought to establish a 30-member Tamil Nadu Protected Agricultural Zone Authority headed by the Chief Minister

to advise the government on various measures to protect and improve farming activities to increase farm production and farm productivity to serve the interest of farmers

- According to the bill the legislation would not affect infrastructure developments in the protected agricultural zone such as harbor, pipelines, road, telecommunications, power, water supply and other utilities.

Industries affecting the area

- The government has identified zinc smelter, iron ore process plants, copper smelter, aluminum smelter, tannery, and ship breaking industries among others as industries that adversely affect agriculture developments in the PSAZ.