VETRII IAS STUDY CIRCLE
Current Affairs

(A book for TNPSC Examination)

JULY - 2023

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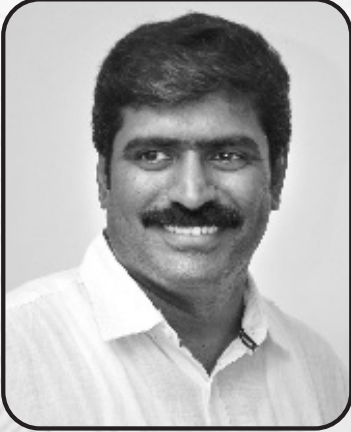Ph: 78711 69099 | 78715 71819

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Preface

M. SHUNMUGAM
Director
Vetrii IAS Study Circle.

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 !

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This day is celebrated to demonstrate solidarity with all fis

condensing water vapour

rain shadow region

dry, descending ai

moist, rising air

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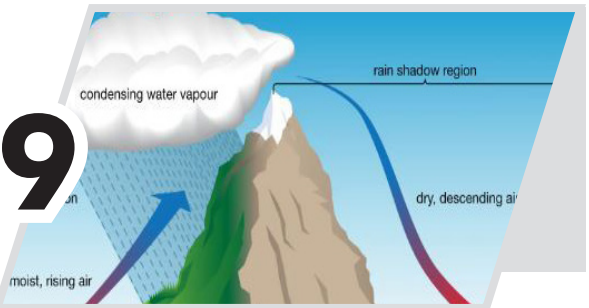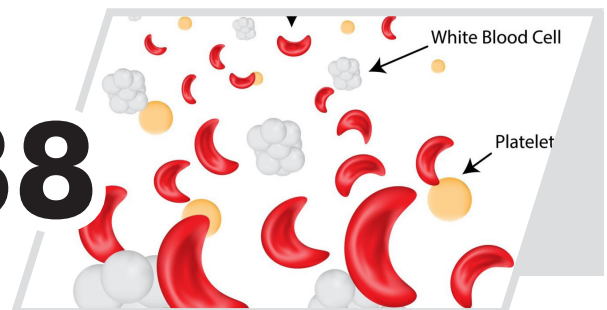
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1. HISTORY

1.1 IMPORTANT DAYS

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
June 30	*Hul Diwas*	▪ The Santhal rebellion or 'Hul' (revolution) began in 1855, two years before the uprising of 1857, often referred to as "the first war for Indian independence". ▪ Every year, the state of Jharkhand celebrates June 30 as "Hul Diwas", marking the beginning of the rebellion. ▪ Even though some historical accounts date it to the first week of July instead. ▪ Prime Minister wished the people of Santhal tribe on occasion of Hul diwas using Ol Chiki Script of Santhali language. **About Santhali Language** ▪ 92nd Constitutional Amendment Act added Santali to Schedule VIII to Constitution of India, which lists the official languages of India, along with Bodo, Dogri and Maithili languages. ▪ Ol Chiki script was created in 1925 by Raghunath Murmu. ▪ Santhali is a Munda language and is spoken mainly in Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha and also in Bangladesh, eastern Nepal and Bhutan. ▪ There are about 7.3 million speakers of Santali in India according to 2011 census.

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
July 01	*National Doctor's Day*	▪ Theme 2023 - Celebrating Resilience and Healing Hands. **History** ▪ It dates back to the birth anniversary of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, a renowned physician and the second Chief Minister of West Bengal. ▪ He dedicated his life to the medical profession, making significant contributions to the field of healthcare and public health. ▪ The Government of India designated July 1st as National Doctor's Day in 1991.
July 3	*International Plastic Bag Free Day*	▪ Theme - advocate for a plastic-free world and promote reusable alternatives.
July 6	*World Zoonoses Day*	▪ Theme 2023 - One World, One Health: Prevent Zoonoses, Stop the Spread. **Background** ▪ On this day in 1885, the French biologist, Louis Pasteur successfully administered the first vaccine against rabies, which is a zoonotic disease. ▪ On July 6, 2007, the 100th anniversary of Louis Pasteur's passing, the first World Zoonoses Day was commemorated to recognise his contributions to the study of zoonotic illnesses. **Zoonotic diseases** ▪ Zoonosis is an infectious disease that has jumped from a non-human animal to humans. ▪ Zoonotic pathogens may be bacterial, viral or parasitic, or may involve unconventional agents and can spread to humans through direct contact or through food, water or the environment. **Zoonotic Diseases in India** ▪ A recent report from the State of the World's Forests 2022 predicts India as a potential hotspot for zoonotic viral diseases. ▪ About 70% of all emerging diseases such as rabies, swine flu, nipah, brucellosis, leptospirosis, porcine cysticercosis, kala azar (Black fever) and zika that affect humans are zoonotic in nature.

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
July 10	*National Fish Farmer's Day*	▪ To recognize the immense contributions of fish farmers and their commitment toward sustainable aquaculture. **Significance** ▪ In order to commemorate the accomplishments of India's fisheries sector, the Department of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying has arranged the 'Summer Meet 2023' and the 'Start-up Conclave' in Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu.
July 11	*World Population Day*	▪ Theme 2023 – "Unleashing the power of gender equality: Uplifting the voices of women and girls to unlock our world's infinite possibilities".
July 12	*World Paper Bag Day – July*	▪ Theme 2023 – "If You're 'Fantastic', Do Something 'Dramatic' To Cut The 'Plastic', Use "Paper Bags".
	World Malala Day	▪ The theme of fame is significant in the book 'I Am Malala' as it highlights renowned individuals who can work for the betterment of society.
	National NABARD Day	▪ Theme – "NABARD: 42 Years of Rural Transformation."
July 15	*Education Development Day*	▪ With the view to eliminate illiteracy in Tamil Nadu, the School Education Department has announced that July 15, the birth anniversary of former Chief Minister K.Kamarajar will be observed as "Education Development Day" in the State.
	World Youth Skills Day	▪ Theme 2023 – "skilling teachers, trainers, and youth for a transformative future".
July 17	*World Day for International Justice*	▪ Theme 2022 - "Achieving Social Justice through Formal Employment."
July 18	*Tamil Nadu Day*	▪ On this day in 1967, the resolution was moved by then CM C.N. Annadurai in the State Assembly, to rename Madras State as Tamil Nadu. **Note** ▪ On November 1, 1956, Linguistic Reorganisation of States was done in the country following which parts of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala "went away" from the then Madras State. ▪ Subsequently, the previous government had announced November 1 from 2019 as Tamil Nadu Day.
July 20	*International Chess Day*	▪ Theme 2022 - "Women in Chess"

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
July 20	*International Moon Day*	▪ To commemorate the anniversary of the United States' first crewed mission to the moon, and the landing of astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin on moon on July 20, 1969. ▪ Theme 2022 - "Lunar Exploration Coordination and Sustainability"
July 26	*Kargil Vijay Diwas*	▪ Kargil Vijay Diwas is celebrated every year on 26th July to celebrate the pride and valour of the soldiers who took part in Operation Vijay. ▪ The day commemorates the victory of the Indian Armed Forces in the Kargil War of 1999.
July 26	*World Mangroves conservation day*	▪ Largest Mangroves in the World: Sundarban Mangrove Forests, West Bengal ▪ Second Largest Mangroves in the World: Pichavaram Mangrove Forests, Tamil Nadu **Importance of Mangroves** ▪ Act as carbon sink ▪ Biodiversity hotspot ▪ Improve and maintain local water quality ▪ Coastal protection ▪ Resource factory
July 28	*World Hepatitis Day*	▪ The birthday of Nobel-laurete Dr. Baruch Blumberg, who discovered hepatitis B virus is observed as World Hepatitis day. ▪ Theme 2023 - "One Life, One Liver" ▪ Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.3 aims to end viral Hepatitis by 2030.
July 29	*International Tiger Day*	▪ It is observed on July 29 every year to raise awareness about the endangered tiger species. 1. The day was first observed in 2010 at Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit in Russia. 2. In India, tigers are protected under Schedule 1 of Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. 3. Project Tiger is a tiger conservation programme launched on April 1, 1973 by the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.
July 30	*The World Day Against Trafficking in Persons*	▪ Theme 2023 - "Reach every victim of trafficking, leave no one behind"

1.2 DEFENCE, NATIONAL SECURITY AND TERRORISM

Tejas-Mk1A

- The delivery of **Tejas LCA-Mk-1A aircraft** by **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)** is likely to commence from 2024, while marking the seventh anniversary of the induction of the **made-in-India fighter jet.**

- The new variant will be capable of firing weapons from increased stand-off ranges and many of these weapons will be of indigenous origin.

- The LCA MK-1A will see a substantial increase in the indigenous content of the aircraft.

- Tejas is a **single-engine multi-role fighter aircraft** capable of operating in high-threat air environments.

Japan India Maritime Exercise 2023 (JIMEX 23)

- **Indian Navy (IN)** along with **Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF)** conducts the 7th edition of the bilateral Japan-India Maritime Exercise 2023 (JIMEX 23) **in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.**

- This edition marks the 11th anniversary of JIMEX, since its inception in 2012.

- JIMEX 23 provides an opportunity for the two navies to learn from each other's best practices and facilitate operational interactions to foster mutual cooperation and reaffirm their shared commitment towards maritime security in the region.

  ### About JIMEX 23
  - The JIMEX 23 spans six days and consists of two phases.
    1. Harbour Phase:
       - The initial phase, known as the Harbour Phase, will take place in Visakhapatnam.
       - During this phase, participants will engage in professional discussions, sporting events, and social interactions.
    2. Sea phase:
       - This phase will be conducted on the open sea, enabling the two navies to collaborate and refine their war fighting capabilities.
       - Through intricate multi-discipline operations in the surface, sub-surface and air domains to enhance their interoperability.

IN-USN Salvage and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Exercise (SALVEX)

- The 7th edition of **Indian Navy (IN)** - the **United States of America (USA) Navy (USN)** Salvage and the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) exercise, SALVEX was conducted in **Kochi, Kerala.**

- To strengthen US and Indian divers' capability in diving and salvage techniques.

- The first-ever IN-USN SALVEX was conducted in 2005 and the SALVEX series of exercises have been conducted annually thereafter, alternately in Indian and US Pacific locations.

  ### Participants:
  - The exercise witnessed participation from both navies which included the vessels/ Ships: **Indian Naval Ship (INS) Nireekshak** and **US Naval Ship (USNS) Salvor**, as well as Specialist Diving and EOD teams.

NIA Raids in Kashmir

- **The National Investigation Agency (NIA)** raided the premises of hybrid terrorists and overground workers linked with the newly formed offshoots and affiliates of banned terror outfits in **Anantnag, Shopian and Pulwama districts of south Kashmir.**

- The newly floated terror outfits under investigation include **The Resistance Front, United Liberation Front Jammu & Kashmir, Mujahideen Gazwat-ul-Hind, Jammu & Kashmir Freedom Fighters, Kashmir Tigers, PAAF** and others.

  ### About NIA
  - **Director-General** - Dinkar Gupta
  - **HQ** – New Delhi
  - **Founded** - 31 December 2008

Operation Blue Star

- It was an **Indian Armed Forces operation in 1984** to remove Damdami Taksal Jathedar Jarnail Singh **Bhindranwale** and his followers from the buildings of the **Golden Temple**, the holiest site of Sikhism, in **Amritsar, Punjab**.

Rafale - M

- **The Ministry of Defence** granted approval for the acquisition of **26 Rafale Marine fighter jets** and three **Scorpene diesel-electric submarines** from **France.**

- This paves the way for the official announcement of these two significant deals at the **Modi-Macron summit.**

- The proposed inter-governmental agreement for the **Rafale-M fighters** includes the purchase of 22 single-seat jets and four twin-seat trainers, along with associated equipment, weapons, simulators, spares, crew training, and logistic support.

Rafale M vs Rafale:

Feature	Rafale M	Rafale
Airframe	Strengthened for carrier landings	Standard airframe
Wing	Foldable	Non-foldable
Tailhook	Yes	No
Radar	Maritime-optimized	Standard radar

Weapons	Wider range of weapons, including antiship missiles	Standard range of weapons
Mission	Carrier operations	Air superiority, ground attack, air-to-air refueling

Nomadic Elephant – 2023

- **India-Mongolia joint military exercise** "Nomadic Elephant – 2023" to commence at **Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.**

- The contingent will participate in the **15th edition of bilateral joint military exercise.**

- It is an annual training event with Mongolia which is conducted alternatively in Mongolia and India.

INS Kirpan decommissioned

- Decommissioning of the **indigenous missile corvette INS Kirpan** after 32 years in the Indian Navy, and was **handed over to** Cam Ranh, **Vietnam**.

- The transfer of INS Kirpan from the Indian Navy to the VPN symbolises the status of Indian Navy being the 'Preferred Security Partner' in the Indian Ocean Region and would definitely be a catalyst for enhancing the existing bilateral relations between the two navies.

1.3 WORLD ORGANISATIONS – PACTS AND SUMMITS

India votes in favour of UNHRC resolution

- **The Geneva-based 47-member UN Human Rights Council** adopted the draft resolution **'Countering religious hatred constituting incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence',** with 28 members voting in favour, seven abstentions and 12 nations voting against.

- **India voted in favour of the resolution** that "condemns and strongly rejects the recent public and premeditated acts of desecration of **the Holy Quran** and underscores the need for holding the perpetrators of these acts of religious hatred to account in line with obligations of States arising from international human rights law".

▪ **The draft resolution was brought by Pakistan** on "behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation" as well as by the State of Palestine.

About UNHRC

- **High Commissioner** - Volker Turk
- **HQ** - Geneva, Switzerland
- **Established** - 15 March 2006 (replacing the Commission on Human Rights)

SCO summit

▪ **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will "virtually host" Russian President Vladimir Putin, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Central Asian Presidents as India chairs the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's Council of Heads of State (SCO-CHS)** for the first time.

▪ **Iran** was inducted as a member of the SCO, while the process for Belarus – a key ally of Russia is under way.

▪ The grouping's decision to induct **Iran as its ninth and latest member** was one of a number of agreements signed at the summit.

▪ However, **India, who hosted the summit for the first time**, refused to join other members on paragraphs relating to **China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)** in the joint statement, and stayed out of a joint statement on **SCO Economic Development Strategy 2030**, indicating a lack of consensus in the grouping.

▪ India took sharp aim at Pakistan for cross-border terrorism, and at China for connectivity projects that do not respect sovereign boundaries.

▪ The agreements signed include the **New Delhi Declaration**, outlining areas of cooperation between SCO countries; a joint statement on countering radicalisation; and one on **digital transformation**, where India offered to share expertise on **digital payment interfaces.**

Note:

- The SCO grouping now comprises **China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.**

High Seas Treaty

▪ The UN adopted the **Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction** (BBNJ) or the **High Seas Treaty**.

▪ It became the third agreement to be approved under UNCLOS, after the 1994 and 1995 treaties, which established the International Seabed Authority and the Fish Stocks agreement.

▪ The treaty's objective is to implement international regulations to protect life in oceans beyond national jurisdiction through international cooperation.

▪ The treaty aims to address critical issues such as the increasing sea surface temperatures, overexploitation of marine biodiversity, overfishing, coastal pollution, and unsustainable practices beyond national jurisdiction.

G20 conference on cyber security

▪ **The Ministry of Home Affairs** (MHA) conducted the G-20 conference on **"Crime and Security in the Age of NFTs (Non-Fungible Tokens) AI and Metaverse"** at **Gurugram.**

▪ There is a need for analysis of capabilities and applications of **AI technologies** used by malicious actors that can be exploited for malicious purposes.

▪ Discussions on the need for **transparent and accountable AI governance frameworks** to ensure the responsible use of AI technologies is necessary considering the recent developments in the field.

▪ The merging challenges and risks associated with the misuse of **Non Fungible Tokens (NFTs)** needs to be explored.

▪ The conference also shed light on challenges in tackling illicit activities associated with **Metaverse technologies**.

Note

- India is currently chairing the G20 presidency.

Mekong–Ganga Cooperation

▪ External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar co-chaired the 12th Mekong Ganga Cooperation meeting in Bangkok, Thailand.

- In the meeting, Dr.Jaishankar prioritised the implementation of the India-Myanmar Thailand Trilateral Highway.

- They decided to establish a Mekong Ganga Cooperation Business Council to take forward economic cooperation and expand the ambit of exchanges in agriculture, science and technology and water resource management.

- The meeting also explored new areas of development partnership, including through Quick Impact Projects and taking forward culture and tourism, and deepening museum-based cooperation.

About Mekong-Ganga Cooperation
- Established in - November, 2000.
- Comprises - Six member countries (India, Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam).
- Areas of cooperation - Tourism, culture, education, and transportation.

1.4 EMINENT PERSONS

125th birth anniversary of Alluri Sitaraman Raju.

- President Droupadi Murmu paid tribute to the **freedom fighter Alluri Sitramam Raju** at the closing ceremony of his **125th birth anniversary** celebrations in Hyderabad.

- Known for: Rampa Rebellion of 1922.

Kamala Harris

- **US Vice-President Kamala Harris** made history again when she cast her **31st tiebreaking vote in the US Senate**, tying the record set by John C Calhoun.

- Harris already holds the distinction of being the **first woman/person of colour to serve as the US vice-president.**

- According to the **US Constitution, the vice-president also serves as the president of the Senate.** In this capacity, he or she may cast the deciding vote when there is a tie in the Senate.

  Note
  - Interestingly, current US President Joe Biden, who served as a vice-president during the Barack Obama's presidency, did not cast a single tiebreaking vote.

Follow the footsteps of King Panagal : Stalin

In a tweet in Tamil, Stalin said:
- It is the **King of Panagal's birth anniversary (July 09).**
- He was the progenitor of the Dravidian Kingdoms.
- He was the one who showed what good we can do to our people by attaining power with countless revolutionary schemes such as women's suffrage and Endowment Protection Act.

- A supplementary essay on the King of Panagal became a political crucible for the then school student, M Karunanidhi.

- Let's walk the path of King of Panagal, who was praised by Thanthai Periyar as **'the incomparable leader'.**

About Panagal Raja

- Raja Sir Panaganti Ramarayaningar, also known as the Raja of Panagal, was a **zamindar of Khalasthi.**

- He was also an important member of the Justice Party which was the prelude to the Dravidian political parties.

- He was considered as a major champion of democracy and a staunch supporter of the empowerment of the depressed classes.

- Raja of Panagal was the **Chief Minister of Madras Presidency** from 1921 to 1926.

- He also served as **the president of Justice Party** from 1925 till his death on December 16, 1928.

IIT director Preeti Aghalyam

- Preeti Aghalyam, **the first woman to become an Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) director.**

- While the **first IIT was set up at Kharagpur in 1951**, it was after seven decades that a woman has been appointed head of the prestigious institute.

- **Ms. Aghalyam, director-in-charge of the new IIT in Zanzibar.**

  Note
  - **IIT-Madras**, set up in 1959, has **become the first IIT in the country to launch an international campus, with the new institute in Zanzibar in Tanzania** set to begin its first academic session in October, 2023.

Thiyagi Sankaralinganar

- In 1956, Congress leader **K P Sankaralingam** began an **indefinite fast.** One of his demands was **the renaming of the state to Tamil Nadu.**

- It is noted that Sankaralinganar **fasted for 76 days**, which resulted in **his death** on October 13, 1956. Sankaralinganar's death further **spurred on the fight for renaming the state.**

As a Result

- **On July 18, 1967, CM Annadurai** prepared a **resolution** in the State Assembly. Tamil Nadu was accepted as the name and a resolution passed unanimously.

- Since the renaming needed a **Constitutional amendment**, both Houses of the Parliament approved the Bill in November and December 1968 respectively.

- The state government later issued a **gazette notification** to bring **the name change into effect on January 14, 1969.**

Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Chandra Shekhar Azad

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid his tributes to legendary **freedom fighters Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Chandra Shekhar Azad** on their **birth anniversaries in July 23.**

- **Lokmanya Tilak** shook the foundation of British rule by **demanding complete Independence**. Tilak born in 1856 was among the first leaders with a pan-India appeal to have emerged in the freedom movement.

- Born in Uttar Pradesh in 1906, **Azad** ran a **revolutionary network** and had pledged to never get caught by the British. He took his own life during an encounter with the police in 1931, staying true to his resolve to remain 'azad' (free).

1.5 SPORTS AND GAMES

India claims eighth Asian kabaddi title

- The **Indian men's kabaddi team** beat Iran 42-32 to defend its **Asian Championships title** in **BUSAN (KOREA).**

- It was **India's eighth title** in the continental championships.

Asian Squash Mixed Doubles title

- The Indian pair of **Dipika Pallikal-Harinderpal Singh Sandhu** clinched the **gold medal** at the **Asian Mixed Doubles Squash Championship** at **Huangzhou in China.**

- The Asian Games will witness mixed doubles for the first time.

- Though squash has been a part of the Asian Games for more than two decades, the mixed doubles event will be a new addition this time.

Lausanne Diamond League 2023

- Olympic champion **Neeraj Chopra** continued his tremendous form spot in the Lausanne leg of the **Diamond League**, his **second straight win** of the season in the prestigious one-day meeting series.

SAFF Championship

- **Hosts India** clinched the **SAFF Championships**

title for the ninth time after beating Kuwait 5-4 in a tense penalty shootout after both sides were deadlocked 1-1 in 120 minutes in the summit.

Note

- **Captain** – Sunil Chethri
- **Goal Keeper** – Gurpreet Singh Sandhu

Triple jumper Selva Prabhu Thirumaran

▪ Stalin congratulated Tamil Nadu **triple jumper Selva Prabhu Thirumaran,** who was recently named the **'Best Asian Under-20 Male Athlete of the Year'** by the **Asian Athletics Association (AAA).**

Basketball Federation of India (BFI)

▪ The president of the **Tamil Nadu Basketball Association (TNBA), Aadhav Arjuna** was elected as **president of the Basketball Federation of India** (BFI) in the election held at the Nehru Stadium.

World Youth Championships Archery

▪ **India compound women archers win U-18, U-21 gold medals** in World Youth Championships and totally 4 medals won in Archery held in Ireland.

▪ India women's under-18 compound team of **Aishwarya Sharma, Aditi Swami and Ekta Rani** defeated their opponents from USA for their first gold medal.

▪ The U-21 trio of **Avneet Kaur, Parneet Kaur and Pragati** prevailed over Mexico's Adriana Castillo, Jimenez Valdez and Selene Rodriguez 222-214 to complete its dominance.

Lakshya Sen wins Canada Open 2023

▪ **Lakshya Sen** ended his year-long title drought with a win over All England champion Li Shi Feng in the **Canada Open** BWF Super 500 final in **Calgary.**

▪ This is Sen's first title after the **Commonwealth Games gold** last year.

Wimbledon Tennis 2023

▪ Czech's Marketa Vondrousova stunned Tunisia's Ons Jabeur 6-4, 6-4 to become the first unseeded player in the professional era to win the Wimbledon women's singles title.

▪ Spain's Carlos Alcaraz defeated seven-time champion Novak Djokovic to claim his first Wimbledon title.

Asian Athletics Championships

▪ **India finished 3rd in the medal table** at the **Asian Athletics Championships 2023** with 27 medals, including 6 Golds.

▪ India finished **behind Japan and China.**

▪ Japan finished on top with 37 medals, including 16 Gold medals, while China finished second with 22 medals, including 8 Gold Medals.

Gold Medal Winners

1. Jyothi Yarraji - Women's 100m hurdles
2. Abdulla Booobacker - Men's triple jump
3. Parul Chaudhary - Women's 3000m
4. Ajay Kumar Saroj - Men's 1500m
5. Tajinderpal Singh Toor - Men's shot put
6. Mixed 4 × 400m relay team

Satwik sets record

▪ **India's R. Satwiksairaj** set the **Guinness World Record** for the **fastest hit by a male player in badminton**, recording in **565kmph with his smash.**

▪ Satwiksairaj broke the record set in 2013 by Malaysian Tan Boon Heong, who had produced speed of 493kmph with his smash.

World Para Athletics

▪ The Indian team won the **Paris 2023 World Para Athletics Championships with 10 medals** that included three gold and 17 quota places for the Paris 2024 Paralympics.

▪ This was India's best-ever show at a World Para Athletics Championships surpassing the mark at Dubai 2019 Worlds that had nine medals.

Tennis: Karman Kaur

▪ Rising Indian star **Karman Kaur Thandi** achieved a remarkable feat at the **Evansville event in the USA** by clinching her second W60 ITF title of her career.

▪ This triumph marked her second singles crown at an ITF women's world tour $60,000 tournament and further solidified her position

as a rising star in the tennis world. Karman become only the second woman after the legendary **Sania Mirza** to claim a **professional title in the United States**.

Torch design for 2024 Paris Olympics unveiled

- Paris Olympics organisers unveiled **Frenchman Mathieu Lehanneur's torch design** that mark the year-to-go countdown to the July 26 opening in 2024.
- Organisers said **2,000 torches** are being produced from **recycled steel**. Each one weighs 1.5 kg and is 70 cm tall.

Bomman unveiled as mascot for hockey Asian Champions Trophy

- Sports Development of Tamil Nadu, unveiled the **mascot for the Hero Asian Champions Trophy Chennai 2023** at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Hockey Stadium in Egmore.
- The mascot, **named "Bomman,"** takes inspiration from the **Oscar-winning documentary "The Elephant Whisperers,"** in which **Bomman cares for orphaned baby elephant** Raghu along with Bellie, both belonging to indigenous tribes in **Mudumalai Tiger Reserve in Tamil Nadu**.

Norwegian & Nepali become world's fastest to climb all 14 tallest peaks

- In a world record achievement, **Norwegian woman mountaineer Kristin Harila and Nepali guide Tenzen Sherpa** set the record for the fastest summit of **all 14 of the world's 8,000-metre mountains on the globe in 92 days**.
- There are **only 14 mountains** in the world which are **over 8000m** above sea level. They are known as the "eight-thousanders".
- These mountains are all located in the Himalayan and Karakoram mountain ranges – across India, Nepal, Tibet (China) & Pakistan.
- **The 14, 8000m+ mountain peaks are** : Everest, K2, Kanchenjunga, Lhotse, Makalu, Cho Oyu, Dhaulagiri, Manaslu, Nanga Parbat, Annapurna I, Gasherbrum I, Broad Peak, Gasherbrum II and Shishapangma.

1.6 PLACES IN NEWS

Tamil inscriptions at Thulukkarpatti site

- Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology (TNSDA) recently found potsherds with Tamil inscriptions during the excavation work at Thulukkarpatti near Radhapuram in Tirunelveli district.
- The TNSDA has been carrying out excavations at Thulukkarpatti village since March 15, 2022. A pot shell with Tamil inscriptions 'Puli' (Tiger) was found on the site.
- Among the potsherds found there are potsherds with Tamil inscriptions such as 'Thi E ya', 'Thi sa' and 'Ku vi ra (n)'.
- This is a good proof of literature in the Tamil community living on the banks of Nambiar with its own cultural elements.
- Since red, black, black and red tiles, black and red tiles with white spots and burial urns were found in this archaeological site that covers 36 acres, the TNSDA has been carrying out excavations along the Nambiyar to unearth the rich culture of ancient Tamils, their living conditions, the objects they used during the iron-age.
- As the Thulukkarpatti civilization is said to have flourished during the same period of 3,000 year old Sivakalai and Aditchanallur civilizations in Thoothukudi district, the excavation will throw light on some interesting findings.

Archaeologists rare findings in Tamil Nadu

- **A gold stud, a bone point and a carnelian bean** have been unearthed by archaeologists **at Porpanaikottai in Pudukottai district** of Tamil Nadu, where the State Archaeology Department has taken up excavation.
- A **Sangam-age fort** is believed to have existed at the site.
- **The stud in floral design with six petals**

was found at a depth of 133 cm in one of the eight trenches dug at the site. The ornament, weighing 0.26 grams, was probably was as a nose stud and is an indication of the culture of the Sangam Age.

▪ **The bone point,** with pointed ends on both sides and carvings, was probably used for **weaving**.

▪ The discover of the red round-shaped carnelian bead is a pointer to domestic trade. Carnelian beads have been found at Kodumanal and a few other places in Tamil Nadu. The stones were usually sourced from Gujarat.

Keeladi ninth phase of excavation

▪ A total of nine quadrants have been excavated and **183 antiquities** have been discovered so far in the ninth phase of the archaeological excavations at **Keeladi in Sivagangai district.**

▪ The antiquities that have been discovered so far in the ninth phase **includes a gold ornament, finely-shaped terracotta animal figurines, spindle whorls, gamesman, hopscotch, glass beads, antimony rod, copper needle, bone points and iron nails.**

▪ In the fourth phase **at Konthagai**, which is part of the Keeladi cluster, **trench** measuring 10 × 10 m was excavated and a **total number of 17 burial urns** were unearthed at three different strata.

4 Natural caverns found at Tirumayam hillock

▪ A contiguous group of **four natural caverns**, believed to have been the dwelling **sites of prehistoric man**, were found at the southern ledge of the **Tirumayam hillock in Pudukottai district**, with one of them containing **ancient rock art paintings.**

▪ The first cavern, situated was filled with soil in its interior. Ancient rock art paintings in red colour were found on the ceiling of the second cavern.

▪ The first cavern is filled with debris. The second one, slightly smaller in size and is at a higher level from the ground, can accommodate a few persons in its interior.

▪ The **ancient rock art paintings** in one of the caverns were similar to those found elsewhere in Tamil Nadu, **dating back to 2,500-3,000 BC.**

▪ The Tirumayam hillock has a 17th Century fort at the top and cave temples of Siva and Vishnu on its southern side.

Discovery of Dosaikal in Vembakottai Excavation

▪ **Dosaikal made of flint** was found in the second phase of excavation in **Vembakottai, Virudhunagar district.**

▪ At this stage, a dosaikal made of flint was found. It is said that the ancestors may have used it to bake dosa.

1.7 BOOKS & AUTHORS

4 Ambedkar works chosen for translation

▪ A panel appointed by the Tamilnadu government has identified four works of the **Father of the Constitution, B.R. Ambedkar**, for translation into Tamil and publication as a **critical edition**.

▪ **Annihilation of Caste, Riddles in Hinduism, Philosophy of Hinduism** and **Who Were the Shudras?** Were selected in the first phase.

▪ The first drafts of the Tamil translation of two works – **Annihilation of Caste** and **Philosophy of Hinduism** – have been prepared, and the panel expects to release them on **Ambedkar's death anniversary on December 6.**

Note

• It is part of initiative of the **Tamil Nadu Textbook and Educational Services Corporation** (TNTB & ESC) to identify and **translate Tamil literary works into**

English and other Dravidian languages, 'Thisaidhorum Dravidam'.

- 'Thisaidhorum Dravidam' is an ambitious project aimed at translating Tamil literary works into the other Dravidian languages Kannada, Telugu and Malayalam that might enhance the reach of Tamil antiquity, tradition and contemporaneity and enrich world literature.

- There are also projects to translate works from the three other Dravidian languages into Tamil.

▪ The TNTB & ESC is also running two other projects:

▪ **'Muthamizh Arignar Mozhipeyarppu Thittam'** (MAMT) for translating technical books into Tamil.

▪ **'Ilanthalir Ilakkiya Thittam'** aimed at attracting children categorised in different age groups.

MSSRF releases book on mangrove forests

▪ A book, "Biodiversity and Importance of Mangrove Ecosystem", authored by scientists from the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) was released by Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav.

▪ The pictorial book contains descriptions of mangrove species across India, their medicinal uses, and several wildlife creatures that thrive in the ecosystem.

Sahitya Akademi Book

▪ **Thiru M. Rajendran**, former Vice-Chancellor of Tamil University, Thanjavur called on the Honble Chief Minister and presented the book titled **'India Ilakkiya Sirpigal - Kalaignar Mu. Karunanidhi'** of **Sahitya Akademi Publication**.

Amitav Ghosh's New Book

▪ T.M. Krishna launched the book, **"Smoke and Ashes: A Writers Journey through Opium's Hidden Histories"** written by **Amitav Ghosh** in Chennai.

Book on APJ Abdul Kalam

▪ Union Home Minister **Amit Shah** unveiled the book **'Dr APJ Abdul Kalam: Memories Never Die',** a tribute to the life and legacy of the late scientist and former President **APJ Abdul Kalam** in Rameswaram.

▪ The book is co-authored by **APJM Nasima Maraikayar** (Kalam's niece) and scientist **YS Rajan**.

1.8 AWARDS & HONOURS

British royals honour The Elephant Whisperers team

▪ Britain's King Charles III and Queen Camilla presented the coveted **Elephant Family environmental award Tara Award**, to Indian conservationists **Kartiki Gonslaves**, the filmmaker behind the **Oscar-winning** documentary.

▪ **The Elephant Whisperers** and The Real Elephant Collective (TREC) of 70 Adivasi artists at a cermony.

Narendra Modi was conferred highest award of France

▪ **Narendra Modi** has become **the first Indian Prime Minister** to be conferred the **"Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour"**, **France's highest civilian and military honour.**

▪ He received the honour at the Elysee Palace and joined the ranks of world leaders such as former South African President Nelson Mandela and former German Chancellor Angela Merkel, among others.

International Eni Award

- **T. Pradeep, professor** in the Department of **Chemistry** of the Indian Institute of Technology Madras **(IIT-M)** has been selected for the **International Eni Award.**
- Instituted by the **Italian energy company Eni**, the award is in recognition of his work on sustainable and **affordable nanoscale material for removing toxic contaminants** from water.
- Some Nobel laureates and Bharat Ratna award-winner **C.N.R.Rao** had won the award in the past.

A JCB operator from Kerala who won literary award

- **Akhil** is the recipient of the prestigious **Gita Hiranyan** endowment award for the year 2022, instituted by the **Kerala Sahitya academy**.

- The Kannur native, who discontinued his studies after plus two, got the recognition for his collection of short stories, **Neelachadayan**, published in 2020.

Asian Chess Excellence Awards 2023

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister **M K Stalin conferred with Man of the Year** for his invaluable involvement for the **successful hosting of 44th FIDE Chess Olympiad at Mahabalipuram**.
- For the outstanding performance of winning Gold medal on Board number one in the Olympiad, Grandmaster **D Gukesh** bagged the **Player of the Year award**.

2. POLITICAL SCIENCE

2.1 INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

India, Tanzania begin trade settlements in local currencies

- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said that **India and Tanzania** have started **trade settlements in local currencies.**
- This new initiative will help in promoting commerce between the two countries.
- The Reserve Bank of India and Indian Finance Ministry asked the top management of banks and representatives of trade bodies to push export and import transactions in rupee.
- They want banks in India to connect with their foreign counterparts for opening special rupee vostro accounts to facilitate cross-border trade in the Indian currency.

  Note
  - About 18 countries have already opened special vostro accounts with Indian banks.

About Tanzania
- **President** – Samia Suluhu Hassan
- **Capital** – Dodoma
- **Currency** - Tanzanian Shilling

Defence Minister Rajnath bilateral ties with Malaysia

- Mr. Singh arrived in **Kuala Lumpur** on a three-day official visit to Malaysia.
- This is the first bilateral visit after the establishment of the Enhanced Strategic Partnership, which was announced during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Malaysia in 2015.
- Recognising defence exports as a key pillar of sustainable growth of the Indian defence industry, Defence Minister Rajnath

Singh **inaugurated the Regional Office of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) in Kuala Lumpur.**
- This Regional Office will facilitate close defence industrial collaboration between India and Malaysia.
- It will also serve as a hub for the HAL's engagement with the wider South-East Asian region and act as a window for other Indian Defense PSUs, the defence ministry said in New Delhi.
- Incidentally, Malaysia has evinced interest in **procuring Tejas light combat aircraft (LCA)** indigenously designed and manufactured by the HAL.

About Malaysia
- **Prime Minister** - Anwar Ibrahim
- **Capital** - Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur
- **Currency** - Malaysian Ringgit

PM Modi begins 2-day France visit

- **PM Modi** is on a two-day visit to **France**, where he attended the **Bastille Day Parade On July 14** as the guest of honour.
- He engaged in discussions with **French President Emmanuel Macron**, focusing on defence, space, trade and investment.
- India, an important customer for French arms, including Dassault's Rafale fighter jets, is likely to extend its defence procurement from France during this visit.
-

About France
- **President** - Emmanuel Macron
- **Prime minister** - Elisabeth Borne

- **Capital** – Paris
- **Currency** - (French) Franc

India & UAE: Use rupee, dirham for trade

▪ India moved a step closer to increasing circulation of the rupee in the Gulf region with the signing of two memoranda of understanding **(MoU) between the Reserve Bank of India and the Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates.**

▪ The first agreement between the RBI and the UAE Central Bank will establish a framework to **"promote the use of local currencies (rupee and dirham)** for cross-border transactions".

▪ The other MoU between the two central banks is aimed at interlinking their "payment and messaging systems".

Note

- Prime Minister conveyed India's full support to UAE for its **COP-28 Presidency in 2023.**

About UAE

▪ **President** – Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan

▪ **Prime Minister** – Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum

▪ **Capital** – Abu Dhabi

▪ **Currency** - Emirati Dirham (AED)

India and Sri Lanka Economic Ties

▪ The two sides exchanged documents on cooperation in the field of animal husbandry, renewable energy, development projects in Trincomalee district in eastern Sri Lanka, and online payment services between the two sides.

▪ **The MoU on Trincomalee** is aimed at developing the port and its nearby areas as a "regional hub for industry, energy, including renewable energy,"

▪ The agreement on digital transactions was signed between Lanka Pay and ECI International to facilitate acceptance of **India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) in Sri Lanka**.

▪ Mr. Modi announced a package of 75 crore for various development projects for the Tamil community of Indian origin. India will also contribute additionally for development programmes in the northern and eastern parts of Sri Lanka.

▪ The two sides adopted a **vision document** to enhance maritime, energy and people-to-people connectivity.

About Sri Lanka

▪ **President** - Ranil Wickremesinghe

▪ **Prime minister** - Dinesh Gunawardena

▪ **Capitals**

1. Executive and Judicial capital - Colombo
2. Legislative capital - Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte

▪ **Currency** - Sri Lankan Rupee

2.2 LATEST COURT VERDICTS

SC asks ED chief to quit, but upholds amendments

▪ **The Supreme Court** asked **Enforcement Directorate (ED) Director Sanjay Kumar Mishra** to quit four months before his third extension ends in November even as it upheld statutory amendments that facilitate the tentures of Directors of the Central Bureau

of Investigation and the ED to be stretched "piecemeal".

▪ **CBI and ED chiefs have fixed tenures of two years.**

▪ However, **amendments introduced in 2021** to the Central Vigilance Commission Act, the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act and the Fundamental Rules **allow them three annual extensions.**

About Enforcement Directorate
- **Executive Director** - Sanjay Kumar Mishra
- **HQ** – New Delhi
- **Ministry** – Finance (Revenue Department)
- **Founded** - 1 May 1956

Right to Silence
- **Supreme Court** said that **all accused have a right to silence** and investigators cannot force them to speak up or admit guilt.
- Right to silence emanates **from Article 20(3),** which states that no one can be compelled to be a witness against himself.
  - Protection **limited only to criminal proceedings.**
  - **Right is not available to a person** who is being **interrogated under Customs Act, 1962, or Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999,** since person is not "accused of an offence" and isn't entitled to a lawyer.
  - In **Nandini Satpathy v. P.L. Dani case**, SC stated that compelling a person to answer a question within limits of the police station may result in violation of Article 20(3).

HC imposes Rs.5,000 cost on encroacher
- The **Madras high court** has **imposed a cost of 5,000** on a petitioner who committed in **encroachment case.**
- The amount shall be payable to the bank account to be opened by the registrar judicial of Madurai bench for **donating law books to a separate section** in the name **of 'Madurai bench of Madras high court'** in Kalaignar Centenary Library in Madurai.
- **A division bench of justice S S Sundar and justice D Bharatha Chakravarthy** observed that the facts narrated in the affidavit filed in support of this petition are misleading.

2.3 PROBLEM IN CONDUCT OF PUBLIC ELECTIONS

New ECI web portal for political parties
- All political parties will now be able to file their financial accounts online, with **the Election Commission of India (ECI) launching a new web portal** to facilitate the same.
- The online availability of the data is expected to **enhance the level of compliance** and **transparency.**
- According to provisions in the **Representation of the People (RP) Act, 1951**, the political parties are required to **submit a Contribution Report, Audited Annual Account and Election Expenditure Statement** to the ECI and Chief Electoral Officers of States and Union Territories.

Twin objectives
- The online facility has been created with twin objectives:
- To facilitate political parties in overcoming the difficulties in physical filing of reports.
- To ensure timely filing of financial statements in the prescribed or standardized formats.

About ECI
- It is a permanent and autonomous **constitutional body.**
- **Chief Election Commissioner** - Rajiv Kumar
- **Term length** - 6 years or up to 65 years of age (whichever is prior)
- **HQ** - New Delhi
- **Founded** - 25 January 1950

New Feature in Voter Machines
- **The Election Commission** has introduced a new feature in the symbol loading process of paper trail machines in an effort to enhance transparency in the election process, according to a Union Law Ministry document.
- **The new feature provides for simultaneous visual display of the serial number, symbol and name of candidates** being uploaded to the **VVPATs (voter verifiable paper audit trail machines)** during the first-level checks and commissioning on a monitor or a TV screen for stakeholders to cross-check.

About VVPAT

- Since 2019, VVPAT (paper trail machine) slips from five randomly selected polling stations per assembly constituency (or segment in cases of Lok Sabha seats) are matched with the EVM count for greater transparency.
- No mismatch was found in the counting of paper trail machine slips and votes polled in EVMs in the assembly elections in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh, and the seven bypolls held late last year.
- The VVPAT slips appear in a window for seven seconds after a vote is cast on an EVM to allow the voter to cross-check whether the ballot cast has gone to the intended candidate.
- The slip then falls in a basket. The voter cannot take the slip as it violates the principle of a secret ballot.
- Like the EVMs, the VVPATs also do not use an external power supply and run on internal power packs.

Electoral Bonds (EBs)

- It is a **bearer instrument,** like a **promissory note,** that is payable to the bearer on demand to donate their contributions to political parties.
- **SBI is the only bank authorised** to sell these bonds.

Working of Electoral Bonds

- **A citizen of India or a body incorporated in India** is eligible to purchase the bond.
- EBs are issued/purchased for any value, in multiples of Rs.1,000, Rs.10,000, Rs.1,00,000, Rs.10,00,000 and Rs.1,00,00,000 from the specified branches of the State Bank of India (SBI).
- EBs have a **life of only 15 days** during which it can be **used for donating only to the**
- **registered political parties**.
- The bonds shall be **available for purchase for 10 days each in January, April, July and October** as may be specified by the Central Government.
- The bond can be encashed by an eligible political party only through a designated bank account with the authorised bank.

Rationale behind the introduction of EB

- **Shift from cash-based to digital transactions to curb unaccounted or black money in political funding.**
- Ensure donor anonymity to promote broader participation in political funding.
- Formalize political contributions through the banking system **for transparency and accountability.**
- Electoral bond scheme mandates disclosure of bond donations in party financial statements to **improve funding transparency.**

2.3 POLITICAL PARTIES AND POLITICAL SYSTEM IN INDIA

Gender parity on RS panel

- **Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar** nominated **four women MPs** to the **panel of vice-chairpersons**.
- The move gives **women equal representation on the panel for the first time in the history of the Rajya Sabha**, even as the women's reservation Bill, that was first introduced in 1996, remains pending.
- The **panel** has a **total of eight members**.
- Among the newly nominated members, **S.**

Phangnon Konyak is the first ever woman from **Nagaland** to be elected as a member of the Rajya Sabha.
- The other members are nominated member P.T. Usha, Biju Janata Dal's Sulata Deo and Nationalist Congress Party's Fauzia Khan.

About Rajya Sabha

- **Chairman** (Vice President of India) – Jagdeep Dhankhar
- **Other names** - Permanent house/ Council of States/ Upper house

- **Maximum Membership limits** - 250 members
- **Present strength** - 245 members.
- **Elected members** -233
- **Nominated by the President** - 12 (for their contributions to art, literature, science, and social services).

No-Confidence Motion

- **Lok Sabha Speaker** Om Birla **accepted the Opposition's no confidence motion against the Government**.
- The motion was brought to the House by Congress Party MP Gaurav Gogoi.

About no confidence motion

- In a parliamentary democracy, a government can be in power only if it commands a majority in the directly elected House.
- **Article 75(3)** of our Constitution embodies this rule by specifying that the **Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha**.
- For testing this collective responsibility, the rules of Lok Sabha provide a particular mechanism, **motion of no-confidence**.

- **Any Lok Sabha MP**, who can garner the **support of 50 colleagues**, can, **at any point of time, introduce a motion of no-confidence** against the Council of Ministers.
- Thereafter, a discussion on the motion takes place. MPs that support the motion highlight the government's shortcomings, and the Treasury Benches respond to the issues they raise.
- Finally, a vote takes place, in case the motion carries, **the government is bound to vacate the office**.
- A no confidence motion can **only be moved in the Lok Sabha**.

  Note
  - **Indira Gandhi** faced the most number of no-confidence motions in the history of independent India, **with 15 motions during her 16-year tenure** (1966-77 and then from 1980 to her assassination in October 1984) as prime minister.

2.4 PUBLIC AWARENESS AND GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Supreme Court opens with a 'futuristic' look

- The Supreme Court opened to tech-savvy, paperless courtrooms with free wi-fi for all.
- The new courtroom decor has big screens for virtual hearings.
- The Supreme Court called the design **"futuristic"**.
- **Digital enhancements** have been implemented as **part of green initiatives** for optimum use of technology in justice delivery systems.
- **Free Wi-Fi facility for lawyers and others visiting SC** has been announced as part of the **e-initiatives** in the Supreme Court of India.
- **Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud**, who has steered the court into the digital age.
- During and post the COVID-19 pandemic years, invited lawyers to give their feedback.

- Recent months had seen the Chief Justice insist that lawyer stick to their tablets or-ipads rather than bulky paper files.

Data Protection Bill

- The parliament has passed the **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Bill.**
- The data protection legislation specifies norms on management of personal data of Indian residents and requires explicit consent from people whose data is collected and used.
- The Bill essentially allows laypersons to complain to a **Data Protection Board**, consisting of technical experts, constituted by the government, if they have reason to believe that their personal data has been used without their consent (for example, mobile phone numbers or Aadhaar details). "The Board will institute an investigation into the breach".

- The DPDP Bill also out-lines practices for entities that collect personal data on how that data should be stored and processed to ensure there is no breach, as well as rights of persons whose data is being used.

- The Bill has a clause for offering voluntary undertaking in case an entity wants to admit that a breach has occurred and pay penalty as mitigation measure to avoid court litigation. "Penalties can even reach up to Rs.250 crore for each instance of breach ranging up to Rs.250 crores and an upward revision of Rs.500 crore can be made".

- The Data Protection Board of India could fine firms which do not protect user data with fines for individual offences ranging from Rs.10,000 to Rs.500 crore, which may apply in case of data breaches.

- In an eco-system where **artificial intelligence** is rapidly evolving and applications such as ChatGPT is **scraping data from social media platforms** to test its models, the upcoming Bill was "tech agnostic", and "would cater to the world we are in today".

- Courts and law enforcement agencies enjoy wide exemptions from key requirements, as the Bill's requirements do not apply when "personal data is processed in the interest of prevention, detection, investigation or prosecution of any offence or contravention of any law" or "the processing of personal data by any court or tribunal or any other body in India.

- Right to information activists have raised concerns on an amendment to the **RTI Act, 2005** in the DPDP Bill that would prohibit government departments from sharing personal information.

- The Bill is the result of the process that was started way back in 2017 with the K.S.Puttaswamy v Union of Indian judgment, where privacy was declared as key to the **fundamental right to life and personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution.**

Note:
- Along with the data protection Bill, the Union government may also table the **Indian Telecommunications Bill.**

- The **telecom Bill** will overhaul the **Telegraph Act**, which is the legal framework for telecom firms and Internet service providers.

Compulsory 5 years work in Govt hospitals for doctors after PG completion

- Currently, there are 2100 MD and MS post graduate or master degrees courses present across various medical colleges in TN.

- Out of the total 2100 seats 1050 seats are reserved for the All India Quota.

- It must be noted that out of the remaining 1050 seats 50% seats are reserved for the students working in the primary health centres or PHCs and the government hospitals present in the remote places.

- In this scenario, the TN govt has passed an order mentioning that those who join PG medical seats based on the **quota for the govt doctors must compulsorily work in the govt hospitals for 5 years.**

Family planning slogan boards installed on 4,000 government buses in T.N.

- At a World Population Day event, **Health Minister Ma.Subramanian** said that boards **carrying slogans** such as **maintaining a three-year gap between two children** were put up on **4,000 buses** across the State to take forward the messages on family planning.

- The Minister said that the **State's population has increased to 8.4 crore, while India's population has crossed 142 crore**.

- Raising the need for population control, "As the population increases, the livelihood of people becomes a question."

- To prevent **marriages of minors**, he said that awareness initiatives were being taken up in districts such as **Krishnagiri and Dharmapuri.**

▪ The Minister also released a pamphlet on family welfare on the occasion. **Permanent and temporary contraceptive methods for men and women** are outlined in the pamphlets.

MPI 2023 Report

▪ A Total of **415 million people moved out of poverty in India within just 15 years** from 2005-06 to 2019-21, with its incidence falling from 55.1% to 16.4% during the period, the **United Nations (UN).**

▪ The latest update of the **global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)** was released by the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) at the University of Oxford.

▪ It said that **25 countries, including India, successfully halved their global MPI values within 15 years,** showing that rapid progress is attainable.

▪ The report demonstrates that poverty reduction is achievable. However, the lack of comprehensive data during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic poses challenges in assessing immediate prospects.

▪ In 2005-06, about 645 million people were in multidimensional poverty in India, with this number declining to about 370 million in 2015-16 and 230 million in 2019-21.

▪ The report noted that de- privation in all indicators declined in India and "the poorest States and groups, including children and people in disadvantaged caste groups, had the fastest absolute progress".

▪ According to the report, people who are multidimensionally poor and deprived under the nutrition indicator in India declined from 44.3% in 2005-06 to 11.8% in 2019-21, and child mortality fell from 4.5% to1.5%.

▪ Those who are poor and deprived of cooking fuel fell from 52.9% to 13.9% and those deprived of sanitation fell from 50.4% in 2005/2006 to 11.3% in 2019/2021," according to the report.

▪ In the drinking water Indicator, the percentage of people who are multidimensionally poor and deprived fell from 16.4 to 2.7 during the period, electricity (from 29 to 2.1) and housing from 44.9 to 13.6.

▪ India was among the 19 countries that halved their global MPI value during one period - for India it was 2005-06 to 2015-16.

▪ According to the 2023 release, 1.1 billion out of 6.1 billion people (just more than 18%) live in acute multidimensional poverty across 110 countries.

Women only courts for alternative dispute resolution to be set up

▪ The Union government is set to launch an initiative under which **women only courts** will be set up at the village level as an **alternative dispute resolution forum** for **issues such as domestic violence and property rights, and to counter the patriarchal system.**

▪ The scheme will be launched on a **pilot basis in 50 villages each in Assam and Jammu and Kashmir** in August and extended to the rest of the country over the next six months.

▪ Detailed standard operating procedures have been prepared for all the States, which will be released soon.

▪ The scheme would be run by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development** under the **Sambal sub-scheme of Mission Shakti,** which is dedicated to strengthening women's safety, security and empowerment.

About Nari Adalat

▪ Members known as **Nyaya Sakhis (legal friends)** will be nominated or selected by the gram panchayat, while **the head of Nari Adalat called the Mukhya Nyaya Sakhi (chief legal friend)** will be chosen among the Nyaya Sakhis.

▪ The tenure of the head will be generally six months after which a new one will be selected.

▪ **The Nari Adalat (women's court)** of each village will have seven to nine members half of which would be the elected members of the gram panchayat while the other half will include teachers, doctors and social workers

who would be nominated by the villagers.

- The Nari Adalat will also raise awareness government schemes and the **legal rights and entitlements of women.**

Stalin to inaugurate new government hostel

- Chief Minister M. K. Stalin is planning to inaugurate a new government hostel in Chennai for the convenience of women who come to Chennai for various reasons like education and work.

- This is how women from different districts stay and work or study in Chennai. To benefit them, Tamil Nadu Government is setting up women's hostels in various districts for economically backward and low income groups.

- Through the organization **'Tamil Nadu Working Women's Hostels Institute'**, the government is carrying out works like building new hostels for working women in Tamil Nadu and renovating the existing hostels. In this situation, a women's hostel was newly built by the government at Adyar, Chennai.

- The hotel has free Wi-Fi, fingerprint registration facility, purified drinking water facility, 24-hour security, recreation room etc. Charges here are lower than private hotels.

Help road accident victims, get cash reward: TN CM Stalin

- **Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin** announced a new scheme, **cash rewards** and certificates for people who will help provide **medical care facilities for road accident victims** in the state.

- People who help those involved in a road accident and take them to a medical care facility within the **golden hour period** will be rewarded with a certificate of appreciation and a **Rs.5,000 cash reward.**

  Note

  - The Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways said that it has created a system for **'Good Samaritans'** under which people who save the lives of road accident victims by transporting them to a hospital within

the 'golden hour' after the accident will receive a financial reward of Rs 5,000.

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) announced in a letter to all state and union territory principals and transport secretaries that the programme will be in force from October 15, 2021, to March 31, 2026.

'Bharat Dal' brand

- Union Food Minister Piyush Goyal launched the sale of **'subsidised' chana dal** under the **brand name 'Bharat Dal'** at the rate of Rs.60 per kg for one kg pack and Rs.55 per kg for 30 kg pack.

- The Centre's move to launch chana dal at a 'subsidised' rate comes at a time when retail prices of tur (arhar) have risen sharply.

Land Record Digitisation

- **President Droupadi Murmu** was awarding **Bhoomi Samman Award 2023** to 68 district collectors and nine State Secretaries **for achieving 100% digitisation of all land records** as part of the Union **Government's Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme.**

- It is **aimed** at **reducing the court cases involving land disputes** and effective implementations of various welfare schemes of the government.

- The digitisation process of the land records will help mitigate the huge pendency of court cases involving land disputes cutting down the GDP loss to the country's economy due to projects being stalled over litigation involving land disputes.

- Department of Land Resources has achieved **94% digitisation targets pan-India** and is **aiming for 100% by March 31, 2024.**

- These land records will also come in handy for effective and efficient implementation of the various services.

Uniform Civil Code

- The **22nd Law Commission of India** extended the deadline for the public and organisations to send their feedback on the **Uniform Civil Code**.

- The **Uniform Civil Code (UCC)** aims to enforce a **uniform legal framework to all citizens, irrespective of their religion**.

- At present, matters including **marriage**, **divorce and succession** are governed by **religion-based personal laws**.

Constitutional backgruound

- **Part IV (DPSP)**, **Article 44** of the Indian Constitution says, "The State shall endeavor to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India."

22nd Law Commission

- **Constituted** – February 21, 2020 (For a period of 3 years).

- **Chairperson of Panel** - Justice Rituraj Awasthi (retd).

Chennai Metro's WhatsApp ticket

- Over 10,000 persons of Chennai Metro Rail bought the tickets on WhatsApp in one week after the launch of this service.

- **Following Bengaluru's Namma Metro, Chennai Metro Rail Ltd.** (CMRL) also introduced the **WhatsApp e-ticket**.

- Commuters can generate a ticket if they send a message on WhatsApp to 8300086000 and make a payment.

- According to officials of CMRL, nearly 2.5 lakh commuters take the system and for a start, 1,500 WhatsApp e-tickets are sold on an average every day.

Funds allotted for MLACDS 2023-24

- **The Tamil Nadu Government** has accorded its administrative sanction for `702 crore for the implementation of the **Member of Legislative Assembly Constituency Development Scheme** (MLACDS) for 2023-24.

- Every MLA has been allocated **3 crore for development works** in his/her Assembly constitutency.

Gig workers werlfare Bill passed in Rajasthan

- **The Rajasthan Assembly** passed Based **Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Bill, 2023**, extending social security to gig workers and creating **a regulatory framework** for aggregators along with the setting up of a Welfare Board for th unorganised segment not covered under existing labour laws.

- This is the **first law in the country outlining welfare measures for platform-based workers**.

Five crore names out of MGNREGS list in 2022-23

- Names of over five crore workers had been deleted under the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme** (MGNREGS) in the financial year 2022-23. This is a 247% increase from 2021-22 figure.

- These deletions are a "regular exercise" conducted by the State governments and listed five reasons for the deletions fake job card, duplicate job card, not willing to work, family shifted from gram panchayat permanently and single person in job card and the person is expired.

- Statistics maintained by **the Rural Development Ministry** say there are 10 reasons listed for deletions of workers and job cards.

- The deletions are spiralling because of the government's emphasis on linking MGNREGS job cards with Aadhaar and making wage payments through the **Aadhaar Based Payments System (ABPS)**.

- Among the 34 States and Union Territories, between the financial years 2021-22 and 2022-23, West Bengal has reported the largest hike in deletion, a whopping 5, 199%.

Parliament passes Bill to expand ST list from Chhattisgarh

- The Rajya Sabha passed the **Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Fifth Amendment) Bill, 2022** to include several communities from Chhattisgarh in the list of STs.

- The Bill will correct several anomalies in the Hindi and English spellings of many tribal groups and will help thousands of tribal people.

- **Note**: Minister of Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda

  Note
  - National Commission for Scheduled Tribes – Article 338A.

Pharma QR code packaging

- As per the notification by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**, Government of India, the top 300 pharmaceutical brands are required to include QR codes on the product packaging by **August 1st 2023**.

- Brands are now required to apply a **Barcode/ QR code on their packaging** at either the primary or secondary level. When users scan the QR code, they will be able to access eight specific attributes on their device.

- These attributes include unique product identification code, generic name of the drug, brand name, name and address of the manufacturer, batch number, date of manufacturing, date of expiry and manufacturing license number.

- By incorporating these eight attributes in the QR code, the mandate aims to enhance transparency, enable better product identification, facilitate quality control, and promote safety for patients.

SC directs States & UTs to submit their responses on menstrual hygiene policies

- **The Supreme Court** warned the States and Union Territories to submit their response to the Centre by August 31 on forming a **uniform national policy on menstrual hygiene** for girls studying in schools.

- A bench of justices **Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud**, justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra issued the direction after Delhi, Haryana, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh submitted their responses.

- Earlier, SC had directed the Centre to frame a **National Policy on Menstrual Hygiene for girls studying in schools**.

Need for Policy on Menstrual Hygiene

- Increase **awareness** among adolescent girls **on Menstrual Hygiene**.

- Increase **access to and use of high quality sanitary napkins** to adolescent girls in rural areas.

- Ensure **safe disposal of Sanitary Napkins** in an environmentally friendly manner.

- **Reduce female dropout** rate in schools.

Challenges associated with Menstrual Hygiene

- **Social Taboo** and limit activities of girls, undermining their development.

- **Insufficient toilet and sanitary facilities** in schools and public places.

- **High** cost of menstrual products, making it **unaffordable** for marginalised people.

- **Illiteracy** leads to prevalence of unhygienic practices.

  Note
  - In India, the **right to health** derives from the **Directive Principles of State Policy**. It is an established right under **Article 21** of the Constitution of India which guarantees the **right to life and dignity**.
  - The ability to manage menstruation in a hygienic manner is fundamental to the dignity and well-being of women, especially in a democratic society.
  - It constitutes an integral component of basic hygiene, sanitation, and reproductive health services.
  - Inadequate menstrual hygiene management compromises girls' education, health, and well-being.

Initiatives

- **Menstrual hygiene scheme** under **National Health Mission** for adolescent girls **in age group of 10-19 years** in rural areas.

- State initiatives like **Kerala's 'She Pad', Odisha's 'Kushi'** etc. to deliver sanitary pads.

- Menstrual hygiene management is an integral part of **Swachh Bharat Mission**.

- Kerala and Bihar have implemented **menstrual leave policies**.

2.5 GOVT – WELFARE ORIENTED GOVT SCHEMES, THEIR UTILITY

Centre announces scheme to support minor rape victims

▪ Recognising the trauma faced by minor rape victims, the Union government has decided to provide medical, financial and infrastructure support to victims in cases where the sexual assault results in pregnancies.

▪ The special scheme, announced by the **Women and Child Development Ministry** (WCD) would operate under the aegis of the **Nirbhaya Fund** and an amount of Rs.74.1 crore has been allocated.

▪ Additional support would be available at the level of CCIs up to the age of 18 and thereafter up to the age of 23 in aftercare facilities.

   Note:

   • **Mission Vatsalya, launched in 2021**, is focused on the **protection and welfare of children.**

   • In 2021, the **National Crime Records Bureau** reported 51,863 cases under the **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012.**

   • The government had already accelerated access to justice for minor victims of rape by establishing 415 POCSO fast track courts in the country.

   • **This scheme aims** to provide **integrated support to girl child victims under one roof,** facilitate immediate, emergency and non-emergency access to a range of services.

eSARAS mobile App

▪ **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojna-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)** has launched eSARAS mobile App.

▪ eSARAS an **e-commerce mobile app** will be used as a more effective **platform for marketing of the products made by women of self-help groups.**

   • **eSARAS fulfilment centre will be used for processing, packaging and shipping of products that customers purchase through eSARAS Portal** and eSARAS mobile App.

   • DAY-NRLM, launched by **Ministry of Rural Development, aims** to **improve living conditions of rural Indians by enhancing livelihoods through SHG ecosystem** and providing SHG members' better income.

CM breakfast scheme to be extended

▪ The state government has issued orders to **extend the Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme** to **31,008 government schools** functioning in corporations, municipalities, town panchayat, and panchayat areas.

▪ The government has also **allocated Rs. 404.41 crore** to extend the benefits of the scheme which is already under implementation in the financial year 2023-24.

▪ Former State finance minister Palanivel Thiaga Rajan had announced in the State Assembly on March 20, 2023, that the scheme would be expanded to 30,122 schools in which 18 lakh students would benefit and Rs.500 crore would be allocated for the same.

▪ The government has instructed officials to ensure that the students are provided locally grown millet-based breakfast at least twice a week.

   Note:

   • The inauguration of Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme by Tamil Nadu CM M.K. Stalin held in **Madurai on September 15, 2022.**

Adult literacy programme survey in TN

▪ The Directorate of Non-Formal and **Adult Education** will implement the volunteer-based **New India Literacy Programme** for people who lack reading and writing skills in the state from **September to February**.

▪ While the annual target of the scheme is to reach 4.8 lakh people, it benefitted 5.28 lakh last academic year.

▪ The directorate has asked district school education department officials to conduct a survey in July to identify those **above 15 years of age eligible for the programme.**

▪ Participants will receive **two hours of instruction each day, totaling 200 hours** of learning over a **period of six months.**

   Note:
   • New India Literacy Programme (NIPL), A New Scheme of Adult Education for **FYs 2022-27**, has been launched by Government of India.

Guidelines issued for "Kalaignar Magalir Urimai Thogai" scheme

▪ The **operational guidelines** released by the State government for the implementation of **"Kalaignar Magalir Urimai Thogai".**

▪ Women's Would be eligible to avail themselves of a monthly aid of Rs.1,000 under the scheme.

Eligibility Condition:

▪ Women, who have completed 21 years of age (born before September 15, 2002) are eligible to apply for the scheme.

▪ Only one women member in a ration card is eligible to apply.

▪ Families headed by unmarried single women, destitute and transpersons will also be considered woman head of the family.

▪ Women with an annual family income of less than Rs.2.5 lakh

▪ Family land holding not exceeding 5 acres (wetland) and 10 acres (dryland)

▪ And annual household electricity consumption below 3, 600 units

   Note:
   • The scheme has been touted as the first-of-its-kind programme in the country, and named after former Chief Minister Karunanidhi.

• It is to be **launched on September 15**, the **birth anniversary of** former Chief Minister **Annadurai.**

Exception

• Families that receive maintenance allowance, provided by the Department for the Welfare of Differently-Abled Persons, are eligible to apply for the scheme.

Tamil Nadu pact: Microsoft to train rural children on technologies & tools

▪ The **Tamil Nadu school education department** has signed a **memorandum of understanding** (MoU) with **software major Microsoft** to implement **Technical Education and Learning Support (TEALS) programme** to give rural students the opportunity to learn the latest technologies and tools.

▪ The Agreement was signed by school education minister Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi, who is visiting the US along with senior officials of the department, and Microsoft officials.

▪ The Initiative is part of the state government's effort to promote **STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education** among government school students.

▪ The Programme will give rural students the opportunity to be introduced to the latest technologies, including artificial intelligence, machine learning and robotics.

National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission:

▪ **The National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Program**, introduced in the Union Budget 2023, focuses on addressing the significant health challenges posed by sickle cell disease, **particularly among tribal populations** of the country.

▪ **Sickle cell disease (SCD)** is a chronic **single gene disorder** causing a debilitating systemic syndrome characterized by chronic anemia,

acute painful episodes, organ infarction and chronic organ damage and by a significant reduction in life expectancy.

- The program is executed in a mission mode as part of the **National Health Mission (NHM)**.
- Aims to eliminate sickle cell genetic transmission **by the year 2047.**

Priority to first generation graduates in government jobs

- The **Tamil Nadu government** said it has issued an order on giving priority to first generation graduates in government jobs.
- An official release here said a **Government Order (GO)** has been issued in this connection.
- GO issued on priority for **first-generation graduates in government jobs.**
- The guidelines to issue certificates to beneficiaries in this connection have also been released.

One lakh rupees subsidy for Women Auto Drivers

- **Chief Minister Stalin** launched a scheme to provide a subsidy of **Rs. 1 lakh** each to 500 **women drivers to buy new auto rickshaws.**
- Tamil Nadu Unorganized Drivers and Automatic Motor Vehicle Repair Workers Welfare Board, under the **Department of Labor Welfare and Skill Development,** has launched a scheme to provide a subsidy of Rs 1 lakh each to 500 registered women drivers for purchase of new auto rickshaws.

One District One Product (ODOP) Awards

- Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Under the **Ministry of Commerce**, launched the **ODOP Awards.**

Awards are constituted to:

- Encourage constructive competition, innovation, and efficient public service delivery.
- Promote replication and institutionalization of best practices.
- Recognizing innovations done for successful

identification and solving bottlenecks in supply chain.

Note
- ODOP was **first launched by Uttar Pradesh in 2018**, later adopted by Union with the aim of fostering balanced regional development across all districts of the country.
- ODOP selects brand and promotes **One Product from each District.**

'Naan Mudhalvan' - 'Step Up' scheme

- The Department of School Education has announced that **15 thousand students** have been **enrolled in educational institutions** after identifying **students who drop out after completing 12th standard.**
- 15,713 students were enrolled in the educational institutions after the completion of the three phases of the **'Yurvuku Padi' program** effectively coordinated by the Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation with the support of the District Administration, School Education Department, Social Welfare Department, Leading Banks, Backward Welfare Department, Adi Dravidar Welfare Department and Skill Development.
- **I am Mudhalvan's 'Rise Step Scheme'** was conducted in **three phases**.
  - In which the students identified by the School Education Department were mobilized to divisional camps by the Principal Education Officer.
  - Organized by the Collector, District Skill Development Officer, District Employment Officer coordinated the activities of the camp.
  - In these camps, banks explained their educational loan schemes and organized instant loans in various districts.

Tele MANAS helpline

- **National tele-mental health programme,** Tele MANAS, the digital arm of the District Mental Health Programme was lanched in October 2022.
- The service, aimed at strengthening mental health service delivery in the country, "reached a milestone of having received over 2,00,000 calls from various parts of the nation since the launch of this toll-free service".

- 42 Operational Tele MANAS cells in 31 States and Union Territories, the service is currently catering to over 1,300 calls per-day in 20 languages.

- Of the two lakh calls, 59.6% were male callers, and 40% were female callers.

- The toll-free helpline numbers 14416 or 1-800-891-4416 allow callers to select the language of their choice.

Ayushman Bhava Program

- The aim of the campaign is to ensure **comprehensive and saturation coverage of all health schemes** so that every eligible beneficiary is able to avail their benefits.

- The Union health ministry is planning to launch **'Ayushman Bhava'** programme to ensure optimum delivery of all state-run health schemes to every intended beneficiary, including those in the last mile.

- Ayushman Apke Dwar 3.0, Ayushman Sabha, Ayushman Mela and Ayushman Gram are some of the activities planned under the programme.

- The aim of the campaign is to ensure comprehensive and saturation coverage of all health schemes so that every eligible beneficiary is able to avail their benefits.

- **Ayushman Sabha** will be a **village-level campaign** led by the village health, sanitation and nutrition committee to ensure the benefits of all the health schemes of the central and state governments reach the intended beneficiaries.

- These will also enhance awareness about the importance of **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna** (PMJAY) **health insurance scheme cards** and their distribution and generating Ayushman Bharat Health Accounts (ABHA) numbers.

- The campaign will also help in making people aware about the importance of utilising screening services for **non-communicable diseases** (NCD) and sickle cell disease through health and wellness centres and also about communicable diseases such as elimination of tuberculosis, among others.

Govt. increases aid for persons with disabilities

- The Department for the Welfare of Persons with Disabilities has **increased the financial assistance**, including scholarships, compensation for accidents, and medical expenses, provided through the Tamil Nadu **Welfare Board for Persons with Disabilities**.

- The assistance for death due to accident or the loss of hand, leg or sight will be doubled from 1 lakh to 2 lakh. Incase of a permanent disability, assistance for medical expenses has been increased from 25,000 to 50,000.

- The annual school scholarship given to the children of persons with disabilities has been doubled. The education assistance provided to them when they pursue higher education has also been increased.

New India Literacy Project

- The **Ministry of Education** has approved a new scheme called **"New India Literacy Scheme"** for the financial **year 2022-2027**.

- The plan aims to align adult education to include all aspects of the National Education Policy 2020 and announcements in the 2021-22 Budget.

- The scheme will **benefit illiterate persons aged 15 years and above** in all states/UTs of the country.

- The government has now **replaced the phrase "Adult Education"** in the country with a phrase **"Education for All"**.

'Thozhi' Hostels

- Chief minister **M K Stalin** said that hostels for working women named **'thozhi' (female friend)** will further strengthen the development of women in the state.

- Other schemes rolled out by the Govt. for the uplift of women are Granting equal rights over ancestral property for women, 33 percent reservation for women in local bodies, "Pudhumai Penn" scheme (where 1,000 is given to college going women) and Kalaignar Magalir Urimai Thittam (where 1,000 is given to women family heads).

- Similar to those schemes, "thozhi" hostels will continue to strengthen the development of women in the state.

3. GEOGRAPHY

3.1 ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

Tamil Nadu added 24 reserve forests in past two years

▪ Tamil Nadu has **added 24 reserve forests**, covering an area of 3,585.3 hectares, in the past two years, according to the **Forest Department.**

▪ Under the **Green Tamil Nadu Mission**, the **aim is** at increasing tree and **forest cover from 23.69% to 33%**.

▪ The State had notified **reserve forests in eight districts** – Dindigul, Dharmapuri, Madurai, Namakkal, the Nilgiris, Kallakurichi, Sivaganga and Theni in 2021-2023 under Section 16 of the **Tamil Nadu Forest Act**, 1882.

▪ The State had also established over 250 nurseries to nurture seedlings.

▪ "In addition, the mission helps create thousands of green jobs, especially for rural women".

Note:

• The focus could also be on agroforestry, wherein tree plantation could be done on private cultivable land.

• **Urban reserve forests** have to be improved as there are a lot of developmental activities taking place.

• As urban areas expand, there will be water issues. Forests can augment groundwater supply.

Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980

▪ An Act to provide for the conservation of forests and for matters connected therewith or ancillary or incidental thereto.

Kaziranga National Park

▪ Recently, three persons engaged as mahouts in the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve have been arrested for capturing and consuming a rare species of freshwater turtle inside the National Park.

▪ It is located in the **state of Assam.**

▪ It is also a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** and houses two-thirds of the total world population of greater **one-horned rhinoceros.**

3.2 GEOGRAPHICAL LANDMARKS

Veeranam Lake

▪ The **Water level of Veeranam lake** has reached 45 feet which is located in **Kattumannarkoil, Cuddalore** District.

▪ Water is sent to this lake from **Keelanai of Kallanai through Vadavaru**.

▪ It has been stored in the lake and now there is 45 feet of water at the lake's peak water level of 47.50 feet.

▪ That is 865 million cubic feet of water is stored out of a total capacity of 1,465 million cubic feet.

▪ About 44,856 acres of agricultural land is irrigated by the mouth of Veeranam Lake.

▪ For drinking water in Chennai, water is sent from the lake at the rate of 50 cubic feet per second

Note

- **Chennai's four lakes** - Chembarambakkam, Poondi, Cholavaram and Red Hills - have total storage of 1,450 million cubic feet of water

- 200 MLD of water from two **desalination plants** located in **Nemmeli** and **Minjur** desalination plants.

3.3 POLICY ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

Cheetah Mortalities at Kuno National Park Point to Natural Causes: NTCA

- As per **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)**, Global experience suggests that initial phase of reintroduction of Cheetah in African countries has resulted in more than 50% mortality of introduced Cheetahs.

- Mortality may happen due to intra-species fights, diseases, injury caused during hunting of prey, poaching, road hits, poisoning and predatory attack by other predators etc.

NTCA

- A **statutory body under Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change**, is entrusted with implementation of Project Cheetah.

Project Cheetah

- A **total of 20 radio collared Cheetahs** were brought from **Namibia and South Africa to Kuno National Park (KNP), Madhya Pradesh**, in a first ever **transcontinental wild to wild translocation.**

Challenges

- Having cheetahs for extended periods in quarantine may affect their adaptive capabilities and cause them to have psychological adjustment problems, making them more vulnerable.

- Unlike tigers and leopards, cheetahs are relatively delicate animals and are more likely to be fatally injured in the wild.

- Lack of space and prey at KNP, given that Cheetah is a courser and needs large distances.

Cheetah

- **World's fastest mammal**, is a keystone species (organism that helps define an entire ecosystem) of dry forests, scrub forests, and savannahs.

- Protected under Appendix 1 of CITES.

IUCN status:

- **African Cheetah** - Vulnerable
- **Asiatic Cheetah** - Critically endangered

FSI surveys reveal good number of dolphins, whales on the East Coast

- There are a good number of dolphins and a few whales on the **East Coast of India**, **states marine mammal stock assessment survey**, conducted by the **Visakhapatnam Zonal** Base of the **Fisheries Survey of India (FSI)**.

- The survey had commenced in July 2021, and would continue up to June 2024.

- In all, 2,703 dolphins and four whales were sighted during the survey conducted from Latitude 14° North to 21° North and Longitude 82° East to 89° East in the upper East Coast of India along the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), covering Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal (12 to 200 nautical miles).

- **The larger marine mammal sighting survey** was conducted by various FSI zonal bases on the East and West coasts, and the one in Port Blair, using the FSI fleet, all along the Indian EEZ.

Note:

- The survey was conducted as part of the **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY),** which had been launched on September 10, 2020, with the objective of bringing in the **'Blue Revolution'** through **sustainable development of the fisheries**

sector for five years from 2020 to 2025, with a total outlay of ₹20,050 crore.

- For the first time in India, a total of 150 Risso's dolphin (Grampus griseus) were sighted at 105 nautical miles south-east of Paradeep.

About FSI (Fisheries Survey of India)

- **Director General –** Shri Premchand
- **HQ –** Mumbai
- **Founded –** 1983

Tiger Census

- As many as **306 tigers** were recorded **in Tamil Nadu** in the nation-wide census by the **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)** for the year **2022**. This is an increase from the figure 264, recorded in the 2018 survey.
- The NTCA report also showed a population of **3,682 tigers across India**, an increase from a mere 1,411 in 2006.
- According to the **NTCA's 'Management Effectiveness Evaluation' (MEE) report** released in April, **Tamil Nadu's Anamalai Tiger Reserve and Mudumalai Tiger Reserve** were among the **top 12 tiger reserves, out of 51 surveyed** in the country, ranked 'excellent'.

- As per the report, only the Western Ghats showed a decline in tiger numbers.
- India's tiger population increased to **3,682 in 2022**, up from 2,967 in 2018, show an estimate released recently.
- This is an upward revision from April, when a minimum of 3,167 animals were estimated by the **Wildlife Institute of India (WII)**, which coordinates the quadrennial tiger census.
- In 2022, **the highest number of tigers, 785, was reported to be in Madhya Pradesh**, followed by Karnataka (563), Uttarakhand (560) and Maharashtra (444).
- Nearly a quarter of the tigers were reportedly outside protected areas.
- India's tigers are largely concentrated in **53 dedicated tiger reserves** spread across 75,796 square km, spanning **about 2.3% of India's total land area**.
- The reserves with the **most number of tigers were the Corbett National Park in Uttarakhand**, which reported 260 animals, followed by Bandipur (150) and Nagarhole (141), both in Karnataka.
- **India's tiger numbers** have been **increasing at 5% to 6% each year**.

3.4 NATURAL DISASTERS – SAFEGUARD MEASURES

Gujarat Cloudburst

- **Heavy to very heavy rains pounded** several districts in Gujarat's south and Saurashtra regions, triggering a flood-like situation in urban areas and isolating villages amid rising water levels in dams and rivers surging to danger levels due to cloudburst.

About Cloudburst

- Cloudburst is defined as a **geo-hydrological hazard.**
- Cloudbursts are sudden, unprecedented heavy rainfall.
- **Rainfall over 100 mm or 10 cm per hour over a region** of 20 to 30 square km falls into this category.

Causes

- It **occurs mainly in mountainous areas** when the warm air currents rise from the ground towards clouds. It carries the falling raindrops along with it.
- Thus, the rainfall fails to occur steadily, and the clouds have excessive condensation. There is also an accumulation of a large amount of water at high altitudes.
- The upward current becomes weak, and the waterfalls on a single stretch.
- Generally, cloudbursts occur at an **elevation of 1000 to 2500 meters above sea level**.
- **Cumulonimbus clouds** are responsible for the **heavy downpour**.

National Disaster Management Authority

- It is **headed by the Prime Minister** of India.
- It was **established** on September 27, **2006** .
- Set up based on **National Disaster Management Act, 2005.**

Kerala reports most deaths from heatwave in 2022

- As many as **120 people died in Kerala from heatwaves** till June-end, the **highest in the country**.
- Kerala was followed by Gujarat with 35 deaths, Telangana 20, Maharashtra 14, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh 12 each, West Bengal 11 and Madhya Pradesh 10.

Note

- The **India Meteorological Department** issues heatwave alerts and these are shared with the State level nodal officers on climate change to ensure health facility preparedness and follow-up.

About Heat wave

- If **maximum temperature** of a station reaches at least **40°C or more** for Plains and at least 30°C or more for Hilly regions.

3.5 MISCELLANEOUS

Marine Heatwave in the Bay of Bengal

- Marine heatwaves are prolonged periods of anomalously **high sea surface temperature.**
- **It may result in:**
  - **Meteorological implications:** a warmer-than-normal Bay of Bengal likely contributes to current extreme rainfall especially over northwest India.
  - **Affecting marine biodiversity:** 85% of the corals in the Gulf of Mannar near the Tamil Nadu coast got bleached after the marine heatwave in 2020.
  - **Socio economic impact:** on coastal communities

4. ECONOMICS

4.1 CURRENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

Price Monitoring Division (PMD)

- **Prices of 16 more food items**, including eggs, millets may **be tracked by PMD due** to the **recent rise in retail prices** of several essential commodities.
  - **Currently, PMD tracks the daily prices of 22 commodities,** including grains, pulses, edible oil, and vegetables.
- PMD is **under Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution.**
- PMD monitors the **retail and wholesale prices**, and **spot and future prices** of selected essential commodities on a **daily basis**.
- It **also implements commodity-specific market intervention schemes** to give temporary relief to consumers in case of price rise.

Ban on export of non-basmati white rice

- The Union government **banned the export of non-basmati white rice**.
- The step was taken to ensure adequate availability of non-basmati white rice in the domestic market and **to curb the price rise**. Non-basmati rice was exported under the category 'Free with export duty of 20%'.
- Export duty of 20% on non-basmati white rice was imposed last year to lower the price and to ensure availability in the domestic market.
- This sharp increase in exports is ascribed to high international prices due to geo-political scenario, El Nino sentiments and extreme climatic conditions in other rice-producing countries, etc.

4.2 CURRENT TRENDS IN INDIAN ECONOMY

North East is the biggest beneficiary of GST

- **Assam was the first state to ratify the GST Act**, four days after it was passed and since then there has been a 12 times increase in the collection of taxes and the northeastern states have benefited from the GST.
- According to the **2023 RBI report on state finances**, the **eight NE states** have registered a compounded annual **GST hike of 27.5 percent**, the finance minister said in Guwahati.
- The GST's principal largely is on the **basis of tax & consumption** not just tax on the basis of where it is produced.
- As a result, unlike the central sales tax, which is the origin base tax, **GST is a destination based tax**.

About Assam

- **Governor** – Gulab Chand Kataria
- **Chief Minister** – Himanta Biswa Sarma
- **Capital** – Dispur

Tamil Nadu and Puducherry GST zone stands third

- The Tamil Nadu and Puducherry Goods and Services Tax (GST) zone has a tax base of 4.57 lakh tax payers administered by Central GST authorities.
- **It has contributed 8.12% of all of India's GST** revenue and 4.72% of the all-India Central Excise Revenue in 2022-23.

- **The zone stands third** in the **all India-GST revenue collection.**
- The year-on-year **national growth in GST** revenue collection is **21% during 2022-23** compared to the previous year.
- Likewise, the **Tamil Nadu and Puducherry** Zone revenue has shown a **19% increase in 2022-23** compared to last year.
- **Tamil Nadu stands third in the large State** category **after Karnataka and Maharashtra.**

About GST
- The goods and services tax (GST) is a value-added tax (VAT) levied on most goods and services sold for domestic consumption.
- **4 Slabs of GST** - 5%, 12%, 18%, and 28%

GST Council
- **Chairman** - Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

- **Office** – New Delhi
- **Started** – July 1, 2017

Rupees appreciated against Yuan
- **Rupee has appreciated 6% versus** the Chinese Yuan in last three months.
- This is because of a **faltering Chinese re-opening** after Covid restrictions, **higher returns in the US**, and **slower demand for exports** a midst weakening global growth.

Possible impact on India
- It can lead to **an increase in the import** from China.
- It may help **to bring down core inflation** (excluding food and energy) because **imported Chinese goods will be cheaper.**

4.3 REPORTS AND INDICES

NITI Aayog Export Preparedness Index 2022
- The **Export Preparedness Index** was released by **Niti Aayog** in New Delhi.
- **Tamil Nadu** has been **ranked the number one** State in **Export Preparedness Index (EPI) for 2022.**
- It is followed by **Maharashtra and Karnataka.**
- Gujarat has been pushed to the fourth slot.
- Tamil Nadu has been in the **top 5 list among Large/Coastal States categories** in the past two years.
- The objective of EPI, is to evaluate the export performance and pending potential of the Indian States and Union Territories.
- Additionally, the index investigates the direct and indirect factors that promote and support the export environment throughout the region.

Key highlights of Tamil Nadu
- Tamil Nadu has long been an export leader in sectors. Such as automotive, leather and textiles, and we recently became the number one exporter of electronic goods.

- According to the report, the **top three exporting districts of Tamil Nadu** are **Kanchipuram, Chennai, and Tiruppur.**
- Other than its top export which is engineering goods, Kanchipuram is the leading exporter of silk, and its finished products. Chennai's primary exports include petroleum products, engineering goods, and drugs and pharmaceuticals. Tiruppur stands 22nd in the country, in terms of value of exports, on the back of its textile exports which include raw material exports, cotton products and handloom products.
- The report also mentioned that **Karnataka and Tamil Nadu** have the **highest number of geographical indication (GI) Products being exported.**
- Tamil Nadu's performance across four pillars ensured that it occupied the top slot among overall rankings.

NITI Aayog report on Poverty Index
- **"National multidimensional poverty index:** a progress review, 2023", was released by **NITI Aayog.**

- India has registered a significant decline of 9.89 percentage points in the number of multidimensionally poor, from 24.85% in 2015-16 to 14.96% in 2019-2021.

Key Highlights

- The study says nearly **13.5 crore people came out of multidimensional poverty** during the period, assessed by identifying "acute deprivations in **health, education and standard of living"** using United Nations-approved parameters.

- **Rural areas witnessed the fastest decline in poverty** from 32.59% to 19.28%, mainly due to a decrease in number of multidimensionally poor in States such as Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Rajasthan.

- Delhi, Kerala, Goa, and Tamil Nadu have the least number of people facing multidimensional poverty, along with the Union Territories.

- Bihar, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh top the chart where the percentage of population which is multi-dimensionally poor is high.

- Multidimensional poverty in urban areas, during the same period, saw a decrease from 8.65% to 5.27%.

- **Uttar Pradesh registered the largest decline in number of poor** with 3.43 crore people escaping multidimensional poverty.

- The report has been prepared based on the latest **National Family Health Survey** of 2019-21 and is the second edition of the National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI).

- 12 parameters of health, education, and standard of living are examined in the report.

- These include nutrition, child and adolescent mortality, maternal health, years of schooling, school attendance, cooking fuel, sanitation, drinking water, electricity, housing, assets, and bank accounts.

India reports 93% DPT3 immunisation : WHO

- The coverage rate for **DPT3, the third dose of diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus vaccines,** in India rose to an all-time of **93% in 2022, surpassing the previous pre-pandemic best of 91% recorded in 2019**, and also marking a sharp increase from the 85% recorded in 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) has stated in its **"The WHO and UNICEF estimates for national immunization coverage for 2022".**

- It showed that in the **WHO South-East Asia Region,** the coverage rate for DPT3 recovered to the pre-pandemic level of 91%.

- The region also witnessed a 6% improvement in the coverage of the measles vaccine, rising to 92% in 2022.

- **The number of zero-dose children** (those that have not received even the first dose of DPT vaccine) **halved to 2.3 million in 2022.**

- The number of **partially vaccinated children** (those that have received at least one dose of DPT vaccine but did not complete the primary series of three doses) **reduced to 6.5 lakh in 2022.**

- The region had the best immunization recoveries among all the WHO regions. This can be majorly attributed to the **efforts being made by India and Indonesia.**

Henley Passport Index

- Index lists the world's passports according to the number of destinations their holders can access without a prior visa.

- It is released by Henley & Partners, a global leader in residence and citizenship planning.

Key findings

- **Singapore** has replaced Japan for having the world's most powerful passport, allowing **visa-free entry to 192 global destinations** in the top of the indices.

- **India ranked at 80th**, allowing **visa-free travel to 57 destinations**.

- Indian passport holders need a visa to enter 177 destinations across the world.

UNCTAD's World Investment Report 2023:

India and ASEAN top recipients of FDI.

▪ According to the **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)'s "World Investment Report 2023(WIR 2023):** Investing in Sustainable Energy for All".

▪ Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Asia's developing countries remained unchanged at USD 662 billion.

▪ **India and Association of Southeast Asian Nations** (ASEAN) were the top recipients, with an **increase of 10% and 5%** respectively.

▪ Asia accounted for more than 50% of the global FDI.

▪ The FDI increase in developing countries was unevenly shared and much of the growth was concentrated in a few large emerging economies.

About UNCTAD

▪ UNCTAD is an intergovernmental organization which promotes the interests of developing countries in world trade.

▪ **Secretary-General** - Rebeca Grynspan

▪ **Headquarters** - Geneva, Switzerland

4.4 NEW ECONOMIC POLICY & GOVT. SECTOR

GST Council 50th Meeting

▪ **The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council, as its 50th meeting** reduced or clarified the tax rate on some items ranging from uncooked or unfried snack pellets to special utility vehicles (SUVs), **exempted imported drugs to treat cancer and rare diseases.**

▪ Whether they involve skill or chance, or both or neither, **bets and wagers** made on all three activities, will **attract a 28% levy**.

▪ The GST laws will be amended to include online gaming.

▪ The council also examined States proposals to set up **50 Benches of the GST Appellate Tribunals** in the country.

▪ The statutory bodies to resolve mounting GST disputes shall become operational within four to six months.

TN in GST Council

▪ Tamil Nadu on told the GST Council that any decision on online games should conform to the **Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Online Gambling Act, 2022.**

▪ Tamil Nadu supported the proposal to **grant exemption** from payment of **Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST)** on **import of expensive medicines used to treat cancer patients.**

▪ It supported the proposal to **grant exemption on IGST payable on import of medicines and Food for Special Medical Purposes (FSMP)** used in the treatment of certain rare diseases.

About GST

▪ The Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017 was passed as the **101st amendment act.**

▪ **GST laws were implemented** - On July 1, 2017.

De-Dollarisation

▪ Bangladesh and India launched the **trade transaction in rupees**, a step towards de-dollarization.

▪ **De-Dollarisation** refers to countries **reducing their reliance on the US dollar,** and advancing trade and economic reserves in their own currency or alternate resources.

▪ It will **strengthen regional currency and trade**.

▪ Also, both countries will gradually adopt Bangladeshi currency 'Taka' for trade.

▪ Exchange rate will be fixed in line with market demand and banks involved in the process.

About Internationalisation of the Rupee

▪ It is a process that involves **increasing the use of the local currency in cross-border transactions.**

- It involves enhancing the currency's acceptance, liquidity, and usability in global markets.

Steps Taken to Promote International Trade Settlement in Rupees

- In July 2022, the RBI provided an additional arrangement for invoicing, payment, and settlement of exports/imports in the rupee.
- As part of this mechanism, in December 2022, India saw its **first settlement of foreign trade in rupee with Russia.**

- **So far banks in 19 countries** including the UK, New Zealand, Germany, Malaysia, Israel, and the UAE have been permitted to make settlements in rupees.

Advantages of Internationalisation of the Rupee

1. Mitigates currency risk for Indian businesses.
2. Reduces the need for holding foreign exchange reserves.
   - Reducing dependence on foreign currency.

5. SCIENCE

5.1 SPACE

ISRO to transfer SSLV to private sector

- **The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** will soon transfer its **Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) to the private sector**, after conducting two development flights of the rocket that seeks to provide on-demand services to put satellites weighing up to 500 kg in a low-earth orbit.

- Small rockets, such as the SSLV, target nano and micro-satellites, which weigh less than 10 kg and 100 kg respectively, and offer on-demand launch services, without requiring clients to wait for larger rockets to carry them as co-passengers.

- Last year, the ISRO had awarded a contract to build five polar satellite launch vehicles (PSLVs), its warhorse rocket with 54 successful launches, to a consortium of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and Larsen and Toubro.

Six launch vehicles developed by the ISRO

1. Satellite Launch Vehicle-3 (SLV-3),
2. Advanced Satellite Launch Vehicle (ASLV),
3. Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV),
4. Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV),
5. Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM-3) and
6. Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV)

Note

- The SLV-3 and the ASLV have been retired

CHANDRAYAAN-3: Explore the Moon's South Pole

- **Chandrayaan-3** is a follow-up to **Chandrayaan-2 mission (2019)**, which partially failed after its lander and rover couldn't execute a soft-landing on Moon.

- Landing site of Chandrayaan-3 is more or less the same as Chandrayaan-2: near **south pole of moon** at 70 degrees latitude.

- If successful, Chandrayaan-3 will become **world's first mission to soft-land near lunar south pole.**

- Moon's south pole has certain advantages including:

    1. Its craters have been **untouched by sunlight** for billions of years offering an **undisturbed record of solar system's origins**.

    2. Its permanently shadowed craters are estimated to **hold enough water** that could potentially be used for future missions.

- Its positional advantages make it a suitable **pit stop for future space exploration.**

    1. It has traces of hydrogen, ammo**nia, methane, sodium, mercury, and silver** making it an untapped source of essential resources.

- All previous spacecraft to have landed on Moon have landed in equatorial region.

    1. It is **easier and safer to land near equator.**

    2. Terrain and temperature are more hospitable and conducive for a long and sustained operation of instruments.

    3. Sunlight is present in abundance, at least on the side facing earth.

History of Chandrayaan

Chandrayaan-1

▪ Chandrayaan-1, an **Orbiter mission launched in 2008.**

▪ **Confirmed presence of lunar water**

▪ **Evidence of lunar caves** formed by an ancient lunar lava flow

▪ Past tectonic activity were found on the lunar surface.

  • The faults and fractures discovered could be features of past interior tectonic activity coupled with meteorite impacts.

Chandrayaan-2:

▪ Chandrayaan-2 was **launched in 2019.**

▪ It is an **integrated 3-in-1 spacecraft** of around 3,877 kg comprising of an **Orbiter of the Moon, Vikram (after Vikram Sarabhai) the lander and Pragyan (wisdom) the rover,** all equipped with scientific instruments to study the moon.

▪ The Orbiter will orbit from 100 km away, while the Lander and Rover modules will separate and make a soft-landing on the surface.

▪ **Lander (Vikram)** will remain stationary after touching down, will mainly study the moon's atmosphere. It will also look out for seismic activity.

▪ **Rover (Pragyan)**: Once on the Moon, the Rover, a six-wheeled solar-powered vehicle,

▪

▪

▪ will detach itself and slowly crawl on the surface, making observations and collecting data.

  • It **will study the composition of the surface near the lunar landing site,** and determine the abundance of various elements.

▪ **Orbiter:** While the Lander and Rover are designed to work for only 14 days (1 lunar day), the Orbiter, a 2,379-kg spacecraft with seven instruments on board, would remain in orbit for a year.

  • It is equipped with different kinds of cameras to **create high-resolution three-dimensional maps of the surface.**

• It will **study the mineral composition on the moon** and the lunar atmosphere, and also to **assess the abundance of water.**

Chandrayaan-3

▪ **Chandrayaan 3** spacecraft is the 3rd lunar exploration expedition.

Features of Chandrayaan 3 Spacecraft

▪ **Chandrayaan 3** will take its flight into outer space with a rover and lander. It will not include any orbiter like Chandrayaan 2.

▪ India aims to **examine the Moon's surface**, especially areas that have not been receiving sunlight in some billion years.

▪ Scientists and astronomers are suspecting the presence of ice and abundant mineral stocks in these darker parts of the lunar surface.

▪ In addition, this exploration will not limit to the surface but aim to **study the sub-surface and exosphere.**

▪ The **rover** of this spacecraft will **communicate to earth via an orbiter taken from Chandrayaan 2.**

▪ It will study the surface by taking images at a distance of 100km from the lunar orbit

Space Slingshot:

▪ The Chandrayaan-3 mission will be launched into space by the Launch Vehicle Mark-III, (LVM-III).

▪ After launching into an orbit around the Earth at an altitude of 179 km on the spacecraft will gradually increase its orbit in a series of manoeuvres to escape the Earth's gravity and slingshot towards the moon.

▪ After reaching close to the moon, the spacecraft will need to be captured by its gravity.

Sagar Sampark

▪ The **indigenously developed Differential Global Navigation Satellite System (DGNSS)** was inaugurated recently.

▪ This state-of-the-art system is named **'Sagar Sampark'**.

▪ It aims to strengthening **digital transformation of the Indian maritime sector**.

▪ It enhances navigation safety by reducing the risk of collisions, groundings and accidents.

PSLV puts 7 satellites in orbit

- **PSLV-C56** carrying **seven satellites** including the **primary satellite DS-SAR** and six co-passengers has been successfully placed in the right orbit by **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** The rocket lifted off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota.

- The co-passengers on the missions were VELOX-AM, a 23-kg technology demon-stration microsatellite:

- Atmospheric Coupling and Dynamics Explorer (AR- CADE), an experimental satellite;

- SCOOB-II, a 3U nanosatellite flying a technology demonstrator pay- load;

- NuLION by NuSpace,

- An advanced 3U nanosatel- lite enabling seamless IoT connectivity in both urban and remote locations;

- Galassia-2, a 3U nanosatellite that will be orbiting on a low-earth orbit; and ORB-12 STRIDER,

- A satellite developed under an international collaboration.

5.2 LATEST DISCOVERIES IN HEALTH SCIENCE

"Brain-eating amoeba" infection

- **Primary amoebic meningoencephalitis** (PAM), a rare infection of the central nervous system caused by Naegleria fowleri, commonly known as **"brain-eating amoeba".**

- Most **Naegleria fowleri** infections reported around to bathing and swimming in waterbodies.

- The free-living amoeba, which is **mostly found in stagnant freshwater** enters the body through the nose.

- It destroys the brain tissue and causes swelling of the brain.

  Note

  - The disease, usually fatal, was **first detected in Alappuzha municipality, Kerala.**

Pholcodine

- **India's drug regulatory authority** was issuing a **warning regarding cautious use of Pholcodine** containing **cough and cold remedies** in the country amid concerns that they can trigger **life threatening allergic reactions.**

- Pholcodine is an opioid cough suppressant that helps mildly sedate a patient and suppress dry coughs. It is found in **cough medications.**

- The **World Health Organisation (WHO)** had earlier issued a safety alert warning regulators around the world about the potential **dangers of pholcodine use.**
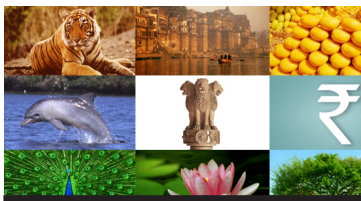
National conference of Food Ministers of States and Union Territories

▪ Tamil Nadu Minister for Food and Civil Supplies R. Sakkarapani requested the Centre to allot 60,000 tonnes of rice per month under **Open Market Sales Scheme (OMSS).**

▪ TN need about 60,000 tonnes per month of rice apart from regular allotment under **National Food Security Act (NFSA)** for Public Distribution system and Noon Meal Scheme as TN have been implementing Universal Public Distribution System even before the introduction of NFSA."

▪ The conference was chaired by Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Piyush Goyal.

   Note

   • In Tamil Nadu, wheat consumption has increased due to change in food habits.

   • **Tamil Nadu is not a wheat producing State** and depends on supply from other States.

Lighthouses into Tourism Destinations

▪ Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, launched a campaign to transform **75 historic Lighthouses** across India into Tourism Spots from **Dwaraka, Gujarat.**

▪ He inaugurated the 1st three renovated lighthouses in Dwarka, Gopnath and Veraval in Gujarat.

Significance of the campaign:

▪ The aim of the campaign is to showcase the rich culture, significance, and magnificent structures of India.

▪ These historic sites have the potential to develop into tourist attractions and to boost the local economy.

Note:

• Prime Minister Narendara Modi has spoken about the unique appeal of lighthouses and their potential as tourist attractions during the **75th episode of Mann Ki Baat.**

International conference on Green hydrogen

▪ The **Three-day international conference** on green hydrogen was held at **New Delhi.**

Note

• India recently announced the **National Green Hydrogen Mission** to build capacity to produce at least **5 million tonnes** of green hydrogen per year **by 2030**.

• The Ministry of Renewable Energy issued guidelines for providing funds of Rs.17,490 crore to support the manufacture of **electrolysers** (which produces hydrogen).

About Green Hydrogen

▪ **Green hydrogen** is a type of hydrogen that is produced through the **electrolysis of water using renewable energy sources** such as solar or wind power.

▪ The **electrolysis process splits water into hydrogen and oxygen**, and the hydrogen produced can be used as a clean and renewable fuel.

Uses:

▪ **Chemical industry:** Manufacturing ammonia and fertilisers.

▪ **Petrochemical industry:** Production of petroleum products.

▪ Furthermore, it is starting to be used in the **steel industry**, a sector which is under considerable pressure in Europe because of its polluting effect.

Year-End Review Dec, 2022- Ministry of New and Renewable Energy

- **India stands 4th globally in Renewable Energy Installed Capacity** (including Large Hydro), 4th in Wind Power capacity & 4th in Solar Power capacity.

- **Generation from non-fossil fuel sources is 42.26%** of total installed generation capacity in the country.

Gruha Lakshmi scheme in Karnataka

- Karnataka govt. is set to launch **the income guarantee scheme Gruha Lakshmi for women family head.**

- The woman head of a family, as mentioned in the ration card (BPL, APL and Antyodaya cards), will be the eligible beneficiary.

- However, she or her husband should not be a taxpayer (Income Tax or GST payee).

- As many as 1.28 crore families are set to benefit through this scheme.

- The beneficiary has to provide the ration card number and Aadhaar card number, which is linked to the bank.

- The **cash benefit of ₹2,000** will be transferred through **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** from **August 16 every month** to the bank account that is linked to the Aadhaar number of the beneficiary.

Govt acquires 3 Lakh Tonne of Onion

- Union Consumer Affairs Secretary announced that the government has procured three lakh tonne of onions, a 20% increase from last year's buffer stock.

- They are also testing the use of **irradiation with the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC)** to **prolong the shelf life of onions.**

- The buffer stock, maintained under the **Price Stabilisation Fund** (PSF), aims to address any potential shortage and price fluctuations during lean supply seasons.

- The Consumer Affairs Ministry, in collaboration with the Department of Atomic Energy and BARC, is piloting **onion irradiation using gamma radiation from Cobalt-60** at Lasalgaon in Maharashtra to **extend the onions' shelf life.**

Over 2.7 lakh children missing since 2018

- **Over 2.75 lakh children went missing** in the country in the last five years, while more than 2.4 lakhs were traced, Union women and child development minister Smriti Irani informed the Lok Sabha.

- Among the missing, over 2.12 lakh children were girls, more than three times the number of boys 62,000.

- The total number of missing children stood at 2,75,125 and this included 2,12,825 girls and 62,237 boys and 63 children of the third gender, the number of children who went missing **between January 2018 and June 2023**.

- **Madhya Pradesh topped** the list with 61,102 missing children.

- The ministry unified its efforts and schemes related to children under **Mission Vatsalya** and announced that **four portals – TrackChild** (for missing/found children), **CARINGS** (for the adoption of children), **ICPS portal** (for monitoring the scheme) and **Khoya-Paya** (citizen-centric application for missing and sighted children) – would be integrated into one common platform.

Law governing anti-trafficking crimes:
- The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act 1956

ICMR doing 3 studies on post-Covid heart attack

- **The Indian Council of Medical Research** is conducting **three different studies** to ascertain the facts regarding rising cases of cardiac arrest after the pandemic, Mandaviya said in response to a question in the Lok Sabha.

- He said a multi-centric matched case control study on factors associated with sudden deaths among adults aged 18 to 45 in India is ongoing at around 40 hospitals/research centres.

- Another multicentric hospital-based matched case control study is underway at around 30 COVID-19 clinical registry hospitals to determine the effect of the Covid vaccine on thrombotic events among the population aged 18 to 45 in 2022 in India.

- To address the health issues related to cardiovascular disease, the Centre's

Department of Health and Family Welfare provides technical and financial support to states and Union Territories under the **National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases**.

Cardiovascular disease is an integral part of NP-NCD.

- The programme includes **strengthening infrastructure**, human resource development, health promotion, population-based screening of the population in the 30-year and above age group under the Ayushman Bharat Health Wellness Centre, early diagnosis, and management and referral to an appropriate level of health care facility.

- There is also focus on cardiovascular diseases in its various aspects in case of new AIIMS and many upgraded institutions under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana.

- To facilitate accessible and affordable health care and treatment under the **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, health insurance cover of Rs 5 lakh per family per year** for secondary or tertiary care hospitalisation is provided to over 60 crore beneficiaries.

- Under the **umbrella scheme of the Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi, financial assistance** is provided to families living below the threshold poverty line for treatment in government hospitals.

Cinematograph Amendment Bill 2023

- The Centre has introduced **Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill 2023** in the Parliament, which aims to curb the menace of film piracy as well as revamp age-based certification given by the Central Board.

- Under this the government plans to add age certfication beyond "U", "A" and "UA". Three additional categories of "**UA 7+", "UA 13+" and "UA 16+"** will be introduced. The proposed provisions will also empower the Censor Board to sanction separate certificates to a film for exhibition on television and other such media.

- The proposed amendments would make the certification process more effective, in tune with the present times and comprehensively curb the menace of film piracy and thus help in faster growth of the film industry and boost job creation in the sector.

Assam to ban packaged drinking water bottles

- The Assam government has decided to ban packaged drinking water bottles of less than one litre from October 2.

- From October 2024, bottles of less than two litres will also be banned in the state.

- Assam govt. will also strictly implement the ban on single-use plastic in the state as per the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2021.

  Note
  - **Polyethylene terephthalate or PET** is a type of **polyester** that is widely used in the production of plastic bottles, films and other products. It is known for its strength, flexibility and chemical resistance.

CERT-In cautions against ransomware Akira' attack

- **The country's federal cybersecurity agency** said, An **Internet ransomware virus 'Akira'** that steals vital personal information and encrypts data leading to extortion of money from people has been reported in cyberspace, in the latest advisory.

- This **computer malware** is targeting Windows and Linux-based systems.

- Akira is reportedly active in cyberspace. This group first steals the information, then encrypts data on their systems and conducts double extortion to force the victim into paying.

Govt. introduces two new health Bills in House

- The government on Monday introduced two health Bills - **National Dental Commission Bill, 2023** and **National Nursing and Midwifery Commission Bill, 2023** in Parliament.

- The Bills seek to repeal **Dentists Act**, 1948 and **Indian Nursing Council Act, 1947**.

- It propose to form regulatory bodies for dentists and nurses and midwives on the lines of the **National Medical Commission (NMC),** with autonomous boards for undergraduate and postgraduate education, assessment and

rating board and an ethics and registration board that will look at different aspects of dental and nursing education.

- Both the Bills also have a provision for creating live **national registers**.

- Medical professionals currently need to register with their respective state councils. The registers created under the new Bills will be dynamic, with the state and the national registers syncing automatically, and qualifications of the professionals will be updated from time to time.

Yatra to create awareness on nuclear science

- **"Anu Awareness Yatra - 2023"** with the theme of **'Atoms in the service of the nation'** was launched at the **Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research** (IGCAR), Kalpakkam.

- The programme is being organised by IGCAR in association with the National Council of Science Museums (NSCM), Vigyan Bharathi – Arivial Sangam, Tamil Nadu, and Indian Association for Radiation Protection in seven districts of Tamil Nadu and three districts of Kerala as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations.

   Note

   • Department of Atomic Energy said nuclear energy was an essential ingredient in the energy basket of the country.

Semicon India 2023

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** inaugurated **SemiconIndia 2023** in **Gandhinagar, Gujarat**.

- With the theme **"Catalysing India's Semiconductor Ecosystem"** the conference aims to exhibit India's semiconductor strategy and policy, with a vision to position the country as a global hub for semiconductor design, manufacturing and technology development.

- The Gujarat government also signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) valued at Rs 22,500 crore with semiconductor chip giant **Micron Technology**.

- The MoU aims to set up an advanced Assembly, Testing, Marking and Packaging (ATMP) facility in the state.

- Under this MoU, the US-based firm will receive **50 percent fiscal support** for the entire project cost from the **Central Government**, with the state government offering additional incentives amounting to 20 percent of the total expenditure.

'Lisa', India's first regional AI news anchor

- Odisha TV, an Odia-based news station that introduced its first AI news anchor to the world.

- OTV also mentioned that Lisa is capable of speaking multiple languages and can present news in Odia, English and other languages.

   Note

   • The Indian Media has entered a new era of news broadcasting with the release of India's first Humanoid AI Anchor Robot "Sana" by an Indian media group "India Today".

   • In 2018, China's Xinhua news agency created the world's first AI-powered male news anchor using computer graphics.

7. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Election Commissioner Anup Chandra Pandey in Uzbekistan as poll observer

▪ Election Commissioner **Anup Chandra Pandey** is visiting **Uzbekistan to observe the presidential election** scheduled to be held there under the framework of a new constitution.

▪ According to the Election Commission, Pandey is leading a three-member delegation on the invitation of the Central Election Commission of Uzbekistan.

Russian Navy Exercise in Blacksea

▪ Russia has said it is **withdrawing from the Black Sea grain deal**, which assured safe passage to ships carrying grain from Ukraine **Brokered by the UN and Turkey**.

Black Sea grain deal

▪ Ukraine is among the **world's biggest exporter of food grains**, such as **wheat and corn**, and a major contributor to the UN's food aid programmes.

▪ When Russia invaded the country and blockaded its ports, it sent food prices soaring and raised fears of food security in the poorer nations of the world.

▪ On July 22, 2022, the UN and Turkey got Russia to agree to the Black Sea Grain Initiative, under which cargo ships would be allowed to travel from and to three **Ukrainian ports of Odesa**, Chornomorsk and Pivdennyi (Yuzhny), after inspection that they weren't carrying arms. The deal had been extended twice.

▪ **Russia's navy** carried out a live **fire "exercise" in the northwest Black Sea**, Moscow's Defense Ministry said, days after the Kremlin said it would consider ships traveling to Ukraine through the waterway potential military targets.

▪ The Black Sea Fleet carried out live firing of anti-ship cruise missiles at the target ship in the combat training range in the northwestern part of the Black Sea.

About Russia

• **President** – Vladimir Putin
• **Capital** – Moscow
• **Currency** - Russian Ruble

"SIPCOT BizBuddy Outreach" initiative

- **Industries Minister T.R.B. Rajaa** inaugurated a **new initiative** called **"SIPCOT BizBuddy Outreach**" which aims at improving the industrial eco-system in Tamil Nadu.
- The idea behind the programme is to listen to the industry and address concerns in the best way possible.
- Improving the **infrastructure of SIPCOT parks** and addressing the concerns of the industry are also key to realizing the goal of a **one-trillion dollar economy** in Tamil Nadu.

Alanganallur Jallikattu stadium

- Over 35 per cent of the construction of the mega **Jallikattu stadium at Keelakarai** village near **Alanganallur** is over, said minister of Public Works, Highways and Minor Ports EV Velu after inspecting the work.
- The sporting arena of the much awaited Jallikattu stadium, which is the first of its kind facility in Tamil Nadu, is coming up on a sprawling 77,683 sq ft near Alanganallur.
- The state government had allocated Rs 44.6 crore and 66 acres were acquired for the facility.
- As per the contract agreement, December 17, 2023 was fixed as the deadline for the stadium completion.

Coop Bazaar App Launched

- Minister for Cooperation K.R. Periyakaruppan launched a **mobile app called Coop Bazaar**, for marketing products of cooperatives, including Mangalam, Marudham, Kamdhenu, Ardhanareeswarar and Kanchee.
- At present, **64 products including turmeric, oils, dals, honey, sugar bath soaps and even fertilizers** can be purchased online.

T.N. notifies rules for electric fences, to protect wild animals

- The State government has notified the **Tamil Nadu Power Fences (Registration and Regulation) Rules 2023** to protect wildlife from getting electrocuted by high-voltage electric fences and prevent damage to agricultural produce by wildlife in forests adjoining farms.
- The rules will be applicable "**only within 5 km from notified reserve forest areas**".
- They include provisions such as mandatory permission to erect power fences including solar ones, and registration of already-erected power fences.
- "All companies in the business of erecting power fences are now mandated to comply with BIS standard viz., BIS-302-2-76 (India) Norms,".
- To ensure compliance, the government has ordered that a joint team of the **Tamil Nadu Electricity Board (TNEB) and the Forest Department** take up field-level inspections once a fort-night.

Note
- Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Mangani festival

- The festival has been celebrated every year on the **full moon day** of the Tamil Month **Aani** in a grand manner in veneration of **Karaikal Ammaiyar**, one among the **63 Nayanmars** of Saivism.
- A large number of devotees gathered at Karaikal and flung ripe mangoes to offer worship to the processional idol of Lord Pichandavar, marking the Mangani festival.

10,000 Jobs in BFSI sector

- The Tamil Nadu Apex Skill Development Centre for **Banking Financial Services and Insurance** (TNASDC BFSI) plans to create at least 10,000 jobs in the sector, a bulk of which will come through the **'Naan Mudhalvan' skilling initiative**.

About Naan Mudhalvan Scheme

- This is a comprehensive skill-building program for all the youth of Tamil Nadu, between the ages of 18 and 35 **launched in 2022** by CM M.K.Stalin.

Playgrounds to get makeover under Nirbhaya fund

- **The Greater Chennai Corporation** will **build modern sports training grounds for girls** in Chennai Schools with funds under the **Nirbhaya Scheme.**

About Nirbhaya Fund Scheme

- Nirbhaya Fund Scheme was **established in 2013**, in the aftermath of the December **2012 Delhi gang rape** and murder case.

- **Nirbhaya** (which literally **means fearless**) was given as the victim's name to conceal the victim's identity.

TANGEDCO to begin installation of smart meters

- **The Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (TANGEDCO)** will soon begin installing smart meters for domestic consumers across the State.

- **The Central government funded scheme** follows the successful implementation of the project at T.Nagar under the **Smart Cities Mission's Area Based Development (ABD)** through the **Chennai Smart City Limited**.

- A Total of 1.17 crore smart meters were approved for all categories of low tension consumers, except agriculture and hut services, under the **Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme** aimed at increasing the use of IT-enabled services to improve metering and billing.

About Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme

- **Aim** - To reduce the Aggregate Technical & Commercial (AT&C) losses to pan-India levels of 12-15% and Average Cost of Supply (ACS)-Average Revenue Realised (ARR) gap to zero by 2024-25.

Two major components:

- **Part 'A'** – Financial support for Prepaid Smart Metering & System Metering and upgradation of the Distribution Infrastructure.

- **Part 'B'** – Training & Capacity Building and other Enabling & Supporting Activities

45 Technology Centres Inagurated

- **Chief minister M K Stalin** inaugurated **Tech centres in 45 government ITIs** established at the cost of 1,559.25 crore.

- The Tech centres are established as per **Industry 4.0 standards in association with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS).**

- With the establishment of the centres 5,010 students will be admitted every year in addition to the existing strength.

T.N. the third State to have income scheme for women

- By implementing the **Kalaignar Magalir Urimai Thogai scheme,** Tamil Nadu will become the **third State in the country** to have a basic income scheme for women.

- **West Bengal** was **the first to implement** the concept two years ago with the scheme, **"Lakshmir Bhandar"**, under which **Rs.500 a month is being transferred** to women of the **general category** and **Rs.1,000** a month is given to women of **the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.**

- **Madhya Pradesh**, which State to follow, came up with "**Ladli Bahna Yojana"**, covering women of lower and middle classes and providing them with **Rs.1,000** each a month.

Note

- According to an estimate, the authorities may receive 1.5 crore applications for the Kalaignar Urimai Thogai Scheme.

- The number of beneficiaries is likely to be more in rural areas, with relaxed conditions for landholding size and inclusion of village panchayat ward members.

Kalaignar Centenary Library

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister **M.K. Stalin inaugurated** the state-of-the-art **Kalaignar Centenary Library in Madurai.**
- The **six-storey building**, with a built-up area of 2.13 lakh square feet, has come up on 2.70 acres.
- The air-conditioned library has an art gallery, a multi-purpose hall, a children's theatre and a conference hall and books worth ₹60 crore.
- It has different sections, including those for children and the differently abled.

Monthly pay for urban local body representatives

- In a first, the **Tamil Nadu government** has decided to **pay a monthly honorarium for all elected representatives of urban local bodies**, including mayors.
- The honorarium for mayors will be Rs.30,000 per month, deputy mayors will get Rs.15,000 and corporation councillors will get Rs.10,000 per month.
- Municipal chairpersons will get Rs.15,000, vice-chairpersons Rs.10,000, and municipal councillors Rs.5,000.
- Chairpersons of town panchayats will get Rs.10,000 vice-chairpersons will get Rs.5,000 every month throughout their tenure.

6 districts declared agro drought affected

- The State government declared **six districts as moderate agriculture drought** affected districts.
- Areas where crop damage is more than 33 per cent due to insufficient rainfall during the entire season of North East Monsoon 2022 from October 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022, have been declared as moderate agriculture drought affected.
- According to Additional Chief Secretary **(Revenue and Disaster Management)** Kumar Jayant, 25 blocks of **Pudukkottai, Ramanathapuram, Sivaganga, Tenkasi, Thoothukudi and Virudhunagar districts** have been declared as moderate agriculture drought affected blocks.

Chennai water board signs pact with WATCO

- **Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (CMWSSB**) signed a memorandum of understanding with the **Water Corporation of Odisha (WATCO)** to implement the **round-the-clock drinking water supply** project in two zones of the city on a pilot basis.
- WATCO, which has implemented a similar project in Puri, will be the nodal agency and prepare a detailed project report and also prepare the bid documents.
- Under the project, the capacity of the water distribution infrastructure, including the overhead tanks and storage sumps, would be increased.

Launch of registration of Kalaignar Magalir Urimai Thogai Thittam

- A little over three decades after the launch of the **Self Help Group (SHG) Movement for Women** in **Dharmapuri in 1989**, by late Chief Minister **Karunanidhi** the district became the site for the **launch of registration** for yet another flagship programme of the DMK Government, the **Kalaignar Magalir Urimai Thogai Thittam** (Women's basic income scheme) that provides a monthly financial assistance of `1,000 for eligible woman heads of families. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister **M.K. Stalin** launched the registration camps for the scheme in **Thoppur.**
- The scheme of providing monthly rights grant for women beneficiaries is to be rolled out on **September 15, C.N. Annadurai's birth anniversary**.
- The scheme will, for the first time, recognise women's unpaid labour and make those on the margins self-reliant and economically independent.

Headcount of children to improve immunisation coverage

- To ensure that no child has missed out on vaccine doses or is left out of **routine immunisation**, a headcount through a **door-to-door survey** has started across **Tamil Nadu**.

- **Village Health Nurses** (VHNS) are making household visits to identify drop-out/left-out **children aged below five**.

- Childhood immunisation under the **Universal Immunisation Programme**, which was affected during the COVID-19 pandemic, has bounced back with focused measures.

'Three initiatives'

- The **Intensified Mission Indradhanush**, through which measures are being taken for identifying left-out children.

- A total of 11 vaccines for 12 diseases will be administered till the age of five, data from the headcount would be entered into **U-WIN**, a **platform for monitoring routine immunisation** of children, to help in further follow-up. The second initiative for improving immunisation was the expansion to the entire State of the U-WIN portal, which was piloted in Erode and Dindigul.

- Third, Focus will be on two indicators for **Measles-Rubella (MR) elimination**. The first indicator is to ensure 95% coverage for MR vaccination. Secondly, There is need to have a non-measles, non-rubella discard rate of more than two per million population.

Chief Minister to launch free electricity scheme for farmers

- **Chief Minister M.K. Stalin** would launch the **scheme for providing 50,000 free electricity connections to farmers** at a function scheduled in **Tiruchi**.

- During the event, he would also inaugurate **'Velan Sangamam - 2023' expo**, which would display various schemes for farmers, facilitate the sale of seeds of vegetables and fruits, among others services.

- The event will also witness the participation of various State-run agencies involved in fisheries, animal husbandry, horticulture and organic farming, among other areas.

Mathi Siragugal Thozhil Mayyam

- **Mathi Siragugal** Thozhil Mayyam provides business development **support services for enterprises and entrepreneurs**.

- The access of **single point business solutions** will help **entrepreneurs such as women**, youth and new entrants to overcome the entry barriers and bottlenecks.

- It offers enterprise development support services to **rural enterprises / entrepreneurs** such as:

  - Business ideation and conceptualization
  - Business plan preparation and appraisal
  - Hand-holding support to initiate the business
  - Facilitation support to access the required finance, technology and skills
  - Regulation compliances
  - Market intelligence/information and linkages

Nannan's books will be nationalised

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister **MK Stalin** announced that the poet **M Nannan's 124 books** will be **nationalised** soon while addressing the writer **M Nannan's centenary celebration** in T Nagar, Chennai.