

# VETRI IAS STUDY CIRCLE

## Current Affairs

(A book for TNPSC Examination)

**FEBRUARY 2025**



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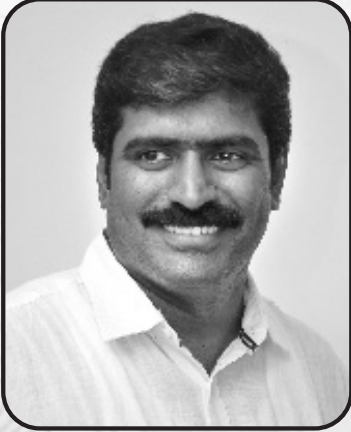
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# Preface



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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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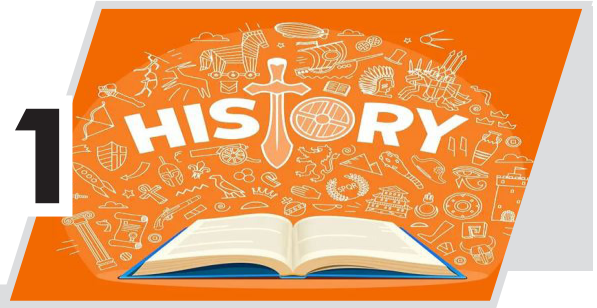
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# 1. HISTORY



## 1.1 IMPORTANT DAYS

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
<b>February 2</b>	<b>World Wetlands Day</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Theme - Protecting Wetlands for Our Common Future</li></ul>
<b>February 10</b>	<b>International Epilepsy Day (IED)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>International Epilepsy Day (IED)</b> is a global healthcare event observed on the 2nd Monday of February every year, since its inception in 2015.</li><li>▪ The event aims to bring together patients suffering from epilepsy and create a sense of community to discuss the condition,</li><li>▪ This year, International Epilepsy Day 2025 celebrated on <b>10th February</b></li><li>▪ Theme- <b>"My Epilepsy Journey"</b>.</li></ul>
<b>February 13</b>	<b>National Women's Day</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The Government of India designated <b>February 13</b> as <b>National Women's Day</b> to commemorate Sarojini Naidu's contributions in various fields, including politics, literature, and social justice.</li><li>▪ Born in Hyderabad on February 13, 1879</li><li>▪ First Woman President of the Indian National Congress (1925)</li><li>▪ First Woman Governor of an Indian State (1947)</li></ul>

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
<b>February 21</b>	<b>International Mother Language Day</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The year 2025 marks the 25th anniversary of International Mother Language Day</li> <li>Theme "<b>Silver Jubilee Celebration of International Mother Language Day,</b>"</li> <li>In recognition of the Bengali people's struggle for their language and culture, in November 1999, the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) declared International Mother Language Day, which the UN General Assembly further recognised in a 2002 resolution.</li> </ul>
<b>February 29</b>	<b>National Science Day</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is observed on <b>February 29</b> to commemorate the discovery of the Raman Effect by the eminent physicist Dr. C.V. Raman in 1928.</li> <li>This discovery earned him the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930, making him the first Indian to receive this prestigious honor in the field of science.</li> <li><b>Theme</b> - "Empowering Indian Youth for Global Leadership in Science and Innovation for Viksit Bharat."</li> <li>This theme underscores the role of young minds in shaping India's future in science and technology, aligning with the vision of <b>Viksit Bharat 2047</b>.</li> <li>The first official celebration took place in <b>1987</b></li> </ul>

## 1.2 NATIONAL SYMBOLS

### Home Ministry asks State governments to prevent misuse of State Emblem of India

- The Union Home Ministry has asked State governments to prevent the misuse and improper depiction of the State Emblem Of India
- Emphasised that the Lion Capital logo is incomplete without the motto – Satyamev Jayate in Devanagari script

- Incomplete display of the State Emblem is a violation

#### About

- The State Emblem of India was adopted on **January 26, 1950** from the Sarnath Lion Capital of Ashoka.
- 'Satyameva Jayate', Taken from the Mundaka Upanishad, meaning "**Truth Alone Triumphs**'



## 1.3 DEFENCE, NATIONAL SECURITY AND TERRORISM

### 'Ekuverin' military exercise

- The 13th edition of the joint India-Maldives military exercise 'Ekuverin' is being hosted by the Maldives from **2-15 February 2025**. This biennial exercise, which alternates between **India** and the **Maldives**, is a cornerstone of the defence cooperation between the two nations.
- The inaugural ceremony of the 13th Ekuverin exercise was held on 2 February 2025 at the **Official Composite Training Center of the Maldives National Defence Forces (MNDF)** in Maafilaafushi, Maldives.

### Porpanaikottai excavation

- Archaeologists have reported discovering a bone point tool and a piece of gold during ongoing excavations at Porpanaikottai near Pudukkottai.
- Tamil Nadu Open University conducted excavations here in **2021**.
- The first phase of excavations was carried out in 2023. This yielded 533 artifacts including a six-petaled gold nose ring, bone point tool, and carnelian paste bead.
- Additionally, a circular brick structure with an 8-foot circumference was uncovered.
- So far, **1,743** artifacts have been discovered, including circular stones, glass beads, glass bangles, steatite beads, crystal beads, iron nails, terracotta wheel, kohl stick, copper coin, grinding stone, agate bead, spindle whorl, bone point tool, copper nails, coral beads, jasper stone, terracotta earring, and items made of iron and copper.

### Army's Fort William in Kolkata set to be known as Vijay Durg

- Objective Eliminate Colonial Vestiges in Indian Armed Forces

- Fort William in Kolkata is the Head Quarters of Eastern Army Command, renamed Vijay Durg
- Vijay Durg is named after the Maratha naval base under **Chhatrapati Shivaji**

### Other renames

- Along with it, Kitchener House renamed Manekshaw House, and St. George's Gate renamed Shivaji Gate as part of the "Indianisation" of military traditions.

### Rs.10,147-crore worth contracts signed for Pinaka ammunition

- The Defence Ministry signed contracts worth Rs.10,147 crore for Pinaka Multiple Rocket Launch Systems (MRLS)

### About Pinaka

- Pinaka is an indigenously developed rocket launcher system by India.
- The Indian Army has four Pinaka regiments in service, with six more on order.
- Pinaka Mk1 has a range of 38 km and can fire various types of ammunition.
- Armenia is the first export customer, with several other countries showing interest.

### Exercise - Cyclone 2025

- India and Egypt commenced joint military exercise named "Cyclone 2025" on February 10, 2025. This exercise takes place at the Mahajan Field Firing Range in Rajasthan
- The primary aim of Cyclone 2025 is to strengthen defence cooperation between India and Egypt.

- This exercise seeks to improve the operational capabilities of special forces in counterterrorism, reconnaissance, and raids.
- The Indian Army is represented by personnel from the Parachute Regiment (Special Forces).
- This is the third edition of cyclone exercise
- This aircraft can fly up to 2,800 km without landing on a single fuel fill.
- It costs Rs. 715 crores to manufacture one F-35 fighter aircraft. This is considered the world's best fighter aircraft.
- Only Britain, Germany, Canada, Australia, Japan, South Korea, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, and Switzerland possess F-35 fighter aircraft so far .

### Note

- The first edition was conducted in **2023 in India**
- The second edition was conducted in **2024 in Egypt**

### HAMMER Weapon System and LEAP

#### Engine

- **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)** and Safran Electronics & Defense of France announced a partnership to manufacture the **HAMMER (Highly Agile Modular Munition Extended Range)** smart precision-guided air-to-ground weapon in India.
- Its modular design allows it to be used on different aircraft, including the Rafale and LCA Tejas fighter jets.
- HAL will produce critical turbine forged parts for the LEAP engine.
- Safran Aircraft Engines expanded partnership with the HAL for the LEAP engine programme.

### India to Get 36 F-35 Fighter Aircraft

- U.S. President Donald Trump has announced that India will receive America's advanced F-35 fighter aircraft.

### Procurement of 149 Software Radios at a cost of Rs. 1,220.12 crore; Ministry of Defense signs contract with 'BEL'

- This procurement contract has been undertaken under the category of Indigenous Design, Development, and Manufacturing (IDDM).
- Through this, the Coast Guard's capabilities will be strengthened to fully undertake its responsibilities including strict enforcement of maritime laws, maritime search and rescue operations, fishermen's safety, and maritime environmental protection.
- The Ministry of Defense also undertook a contract for procuring 1,868 'RTFLT' trucks capable of carrying heavy loads to facilitate the transportation of defense equipment from one place to another for all three armed forces at a cost of Rs. 697.35 crore from ACE (AC E) company and JCB India.



## 1.4 WORLD SUMMITS AND ORGANISATION

### BIMSTEC Youth Summit

- India is hosting the first-ever BIMSTEC Youth Summit in Gandhinagar, Gujarat
- **Aim** :promote regional cooperation among the youth of the Bay of Bengal region
- The Summit's theme is 'Youth as a bridge for intra-BIMSTEC exchange
- 4th BIMSTEC Summit and is jointly organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports and the Ministry of External Affairs.

### About BIMSTEC

- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional organization that was established on 06 June 1997 with the signing of the Bangkok Declaration.
- **Headquarters**: Dhaka, Bangladesh (Permanent Secretariat since 2014)
- Initially known as BIST-EC (Bangladesh-India-Sri Lanka-Thailand Economic Cooperation)

### 17th 'BRICS' Summit

- The annual summit of the 'BRICS' alliance is scheduled to take place on July 6-7, 2025, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

### About BRICS

- **Founded**: 2009
- **First BRIC Summit**: Russia (2009)
- **16th BRICS Summit**: Kazan, Russia (2024)

### Members (10):

- **Original 5 members (BRICS)**: Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa

- **New 5 members**: Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirate

### Indian Ocean Conference

- 8th edition of the **Indian Ocean Conference (IOC)** commenced in Muscat on February 16-17, 2025.
- This year's theme is **Voyage to New Horizons of Maritime Partnership**
- **Established** - 2016

### OPEC+

- **Context** : Brazil has officially announced its decision to join the OPEC+ group of oil-producing nations as an observer.

### About OPEC +

- **Formation** - Formed in late 2016 as an extension of OPEC
- **Members** - 12 OPEC countries (Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, UAE, Venezuela, Nigeria, Libya, Algeria, Equatorial Guinea, Republic of Congo, Gabon) plus 10 non-OPEC countries(Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Russia, Mexico, Malaysia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Oman)
- **Headquarters** - Vienna, Austria ( OPEC Headquarters)
- **Goals** - Regulate oil supply to stabilize oil prices and ensure profitability for member countries
- **Influence** - Controls over 80% of oil reserves with OPEC+ nations.

## 1.5 SPORTS AND GAMES

### Women's T20 World Cup

- Champions - India won the **Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup** cricket championship held in Malaysia.

### 38th National Games Conclude

- These games held in Uttarakhand, Services team secured first place with 121 medals, Maharashtra got second place with 201 medals, and Haryana team secured third place with 153 medals
- Tamil Nadu team secured 6th place with 92 medals

- More than 10,000 athletes from 37 states and union territories participated.

### 23rd National Para Athletics

#### Championship

- In this competition held in Chennai, the Tamil Nadu team secured 2nd place with 50 medals including 17 gold, 18 silver, and 15 bronze.
- Haryana secured first place, and Uttar Pradesh secured third place.

## 1.6 AWARDS AND HONORS

### 18 Artisans Receive State Government Awards

- To encourage artisans, state awards are given under the name "Living Handicraft Treasure" and by Poompuhar.

#### Living Handicraft Treasure Awards 2023-24

- Awarded to 9 artisans including C. Murugesan, R. Radha (Thanjavur - Art plate, Netti work), S.Rajagopal (Erode - Pancha Loha sculpture), C. Balaraman (Viluppuram - Terracotta sculpture), and others
- Each recipient gets Rs. 1 lakh cheque, 8-gram gold medal, copper medal, and certificate

#### Poompuhar State Awards 2023-24

- Awarded to 9 artisans including C.V.Ramakrishnan, K. Gunasundari, C.

Kathan, R. Meyyar (Chennai metal sculpture, paper pulp dolls, Thanjavur painting, terracotta sculpture) and others

- Each recipient gets Rs. 50,000 cheque, 4-gram gold medal, copper medal, and certificates

#### Time Magazine's Women of the Year List

- Purnima Devi Barman, a wildlife biologist from Assam, has been named in Time Magazine's Women of the Year list for 2025
- 13 women from various countries have been selected
- She leads initiatives to protect the 'Hargila' stork species. Under her leadership, a group called 'Hargila Army' consisting of 20,000 women is engaged in protecting the nests of Hargila birds.

## 1.7 APPOINTMENTS – WHO IS WHO?

### **New Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) appointed**

- Former IAS officer and Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar has been appointed as the new Chief Election Commissioner (CEC).

### **Old method**

- Article 324 -CEC and ECs will be appointed by the President, this is subject to Parliamentary law (if such law exists)
- In the absence of such a law, the President has been making appointments as per the recommendations of the Prime Minister.

### **New method**

- The selection process follows the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023.
- A panel consisting of the Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition and a Union Cabinet Minister.

### **About the Election Commission of India:**

- It was established on January 25, 1950.
- Part XV of the Indian Constitution deals with elections.
- Articles 324 to 329 cover the powers, functions, tenure, and eligibility of the Commission and its members.
- It consists of one Chief Election Commissioner and 2 Election Commissioners.

### **New Election Commissioner Appointed**

- **Vivek Joshi** took charge as the new **Election Commissioner**
- A 1989 batch IAS officer from Haryana cadre, he has served as Chief Secretary of Haryana state government, Secretary in the Central

government's Department of Personnel and Training and Financial Services, Registrar General and Census Commissioner, and Member Secretary of Haryana's 5th Finance Commission

### **New FBI Director Appointment**

- Kash Patel, of Indian descent, has been selected as the Director of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
- In the Senate vote for the FBI leadership position, 51 members voted in favor while 49 members voted against.

### **Appointment of Prime Minister's Second Principal Secretary**

- Shaktikanta Das, former Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, has been appointed as the Second Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister.
- He previously served as a member of the 15th Finance Commission headed by N.K. Singh, as India's representative to the G20, and as the 25th Governor of the Reserve Bank.
- Retired IAS officer R. Balakrishnan has been appointed as the head of the International Institute of Tamil Studies.
- He is the first Tamil student to have written and passed the civil service examinations in Tamil.
- He was selected for the Indian Administrative Service in 1984.
- His activities and contributions are notable in the areas of the spread of Dravidian language family, Indus Valley civilization, ancient Tamil legends, Sangam literature, and Thirukkural.

- International Institute of Tamil Studies
- **Established:** 1968

### **New 'SEBI' Chairperson Appointed**

- Tuhin Kanta Pandey, Secretary of the Central Finance and Revenue Department, has been appointed as the new Chairperson of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)
- He is a 1987-batch Odisha cadre IAS officer and the most senior official handling the Revenue Department in the Finance Ministry

### **About SEBI :**

- Established on April 12, 1988
- **Founder:** Ministry of Finance, Government of India
- **Headquarters:** Mumbai, Maharashtra
- **Regional offices** located in Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Chennai, and Delhi
- Received statutory status on January 30, 1992.



# 2. POLITICAL SCIENCE

## 2.1 LATEST COURT VERDICTS

### Ad hoc judges

- Originally, Ad hoc judges could be appointed to State High Courts only if judicial vacancies exceeded 20% of the sanctioned strength
- The condition was relaxed due to the urgent need to address growing case pendency.
- Article 224A provides for the appointment of retired High Court judges as ad hoc judges.
- High Courts have over 60 lakh cases pending, with nearly 20 lakh being criminal appeals.
- 10% of the pendency has crossed five years.
- The rate of disposal is lower than the institution of fresh cases.

### SC directive on sacred groves

- SC held Rajasthan Forest Department to classify sacred groves as forests under **WLPA 1972**.
- Shifts control from communities to Forest Department, conflicting with **FRA 2006**
- **Rajasthan's 'Orans' (Sacred Groves):** 25,000 hectares, crucial for biodiversity, water recharge, religious & cultural traditions.
- SC's order overrides traditional conservation practices, affecting local governance & biodiversity

### About sacred groves

- Community-protected Forest patches with cultural and ecological significance, conserved through traditional customs and religious beliefs.

- Found across India, these groves serve as biodiversity hotspots and water recharge zones.

### Section 14(1) of the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013

- The following public servants fall under the Lokpal's purview, As per the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013.
- Prime Minister (with certain limitations, e.g., national security issues are excluded), Union Ministers
- Members of Parliament (MPs) (except in cases related to parliamentary speech/voting in the House),
- Group A, B, C, and D government officials (including all bureaucrats and civil servants), Employees of public sector undertakings (PSUs).
- Employees of public sector undertakings (PSUs)
- Chairpersons, members, officers, or employees of: (Any body established by an Act of Parliament, Any entity wholly or partially financed by the Central Government, Any organization controlled by the Central Government, Any society, trust, or autonomous body receiving government funds.
- Officials of NGOs receiving government funding above a certain threshold

**Who Does Not Come Under Lokpal**

- Judges of the Supreme Court (As per the January 3, 2025 Lokpal ruling)
- State Government Employees (They come under Lokayuktas, not Lokpal)
- Private Citizens (unless involved in corruption cases linked to government funds)

**Lokpal**

- The top anti-corruption ombudsman in India, established under the Lokpal and Lokayuktas

Act, 2013 (a statutory body), to investigate corruption complaints against public officials, including the Prime Minister, Ministers, MPs, and bureaucrats

- It consists of a Chairperson (a former Chief Justice or Supreme Court judge) and up to 8 members, with at least 50% from judicial backgrounds and 50% from SC/ST/OBC, minorities, or women categories.

**2.2 PROBLEMS IN CONDUCT OF PUBLIC ELECTIONS****Delimitation**

- Delimitation is the process of redrawing electoral constituency boundaries based on the latest Census (Article 82).
- It ensures equal representation by adjusting Lok Sabha seats according to population changes (Article 81).
- **Conducted four times:** 1952, 1963, 1973, and 2002.
- **1976 (42nd Amendment):** Indira Gandhi froze the number of Lok Sabha seats until 2001 Census to protect states with better population control.
- **2002 (84th Amendment):** Vajpayee government extended the freeze until 2026 (after the 2031 Census).

- **Current debate:** The 2021 Census is delayed, and the government may advance delimitation.

**Delimitation Process**

- The Delimitation Commission (appointed by the President) includes A retired Supreme Court/High Court judge, Chief Election Commissioner and State Election Commissioner
- The draft report is published for public feedback before finalization.

**Judicial Review of Delimitation**

- Article 329(a) prevents courts from questioning delimitation decisions
- Supreme Court (July 2024 ruling): Courts can review delimitation if it is arbitrary or unconstitutional.

**2.3 PUBLIC AWARENESS & GENERAL ADMINISTRATION****Century-Old Railway Bridge Named After Narayanasamy Naidu**

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has announced that the railway overbridge being constructed in Coimbatore district will be named after **Narayanasamy Naidu**, commemorating his

centenary, and a centenary celebration will be held in his birthplace Vayampalayam.

- Narayanasamy Naidu started a separate organization for farmers and established farmers' associations in many states.



- In 1982, he founded the Indian Farmers and Laborers Party. Throughout his lifetime, he continuously fought for the rights of farmers and laborers.

from amongst its members according to the principle of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote.

### **Status of Devolution to Panchayats in**

### **3 Town Panchayats Upgraded to Municipalities; Order Published in Government Gazette**

- Three town panchayats in Tamil Nadu have been upgraded to municipalities, and the order has been published in the government gazette.
- Local bodies are upgraded to town panchayats, municipalities, and corporations based on population size and revenue criteria.
- The three upgraded town panchayats are: Sriperumbudur (Kanchipuram District), Mamallapuram (Chengalpattu District), and Thiruvaiyaru (Thanjavur District).
- The order was issued by the Municipal Administration and Water Supply Department.

▪ Union Minister of State released a title Status of Devolution to Panchayats in States - An Indicative Evidence Based Ranking"

▪ Highlighted Panchayat Devolution Index is crucial for the holistic, inclusive and sustainable development of India

▪ Uttar Pradesh has jumped from 15th rank to 5th rank

### **Report highlights**

▪ devolution has increased from 39.9% to 43.9% between the period 2013-14 to 2021-22.

▪ Tamil nadu holds 3rd position in panchayat development index .

▪ Karnataka holds 1st position

### **Toll tax**

- The Public Accounts Committee of Parliament directed the government to review the existing rules that decide the toll tax on National Highways.
- The current toll taxes are levied based on the base rate of fee per kilometre as prescribed by the NH Fee Rules, 2008

### **Panchayat Devolution Index (PDI)**

▪ Tamil Nadu ranked third at the all-India level with a score of 68.38, behind Karnataka (72.23) and Kerala (70.59).

▪ Study conducted by Union Panchayati Raj Ministry & Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA).

▪ Report as 6 dimension - framework, functions, finances, functionaries, capacity enhancement/ building, and accountability.

▪ The study revealed that as for Tamil Nadu, the share of panchayats' revenue in the State's Own Revenue was 0.31% during 2021-22.

▪ Tamil Nadu has the highest score at the national level with 60.24 with regard to the dimension of "functions," one of the six dimensions scrutinised to assess the performance of 28 States and seven Union Territories

### **About PAC**

- The Committee on Public Accounts was first set up in 1921 in the wake of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms
- The Public Accounts Committee is now constituted every year under Rule 308 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha
- The Public Accounts Committee consists of not more than 22 members comprising of 15 members elected by Lok Sabha every year

- The Tamil Nadu Panchayat Act, 1994, was enacted with the primary goal of furthering the objective of decentralized democracy and making the systems and institutions of local self-governance solid and formal.
- The Act deals with multiple aspects, like the creation, constitution, powers, and functions of various tiers of panchayat bodies in the state of Tamil Nadu.

## 2.4 GOVT – WELFARE ORIENTED GOVT SCHEMES

### Anti-conversion Bill tabled in Rajasthan House by govt.

- The Rajasthan Legislative Assembly introduced Rajasthan Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Bill, 2025
- **Aim** :to curb religious conversions through "inducement, fraudulent means, or marriage."
- The bill incorporates elements from the Rajasthan Religious Freedom Bill, 2008.
- Which was twice passed during Vasundhara Rajé's tenure but failed to receive central approval.

### About anti conservation bill

- The Constitution guarantees the freedom to profess, propagate, and practise religion, and allows all religious sections to manage their own affairs in matters of religion.
- Further, in 2015, the Union Law Ministry stated that Parliament does not have the legislative competence to pass anti-conversion legislation.
- However, it is to be noted that, since 1954, on multiple occasions, Private Member Bills have been introduced in (but never approved by) the Parliament, to regulate religious conversions.

### Ministry of Labour and Employment's 2024 year-end review report.

- States and Union Territories to draft rules for new Labour Codes

### Economic Survey 2024

- Mental health acknowledged as an 'impactful driver' for individual and national development.
- 10.6% of adults in India suffer from mental disorders.
- Treatment gap ranges between 70% and 92% depending on the specific condition (National Mental Health Survey 2015-16).

### World Health Organization about mental health

- Excessive workloads or rapid work pace.
- Long unsocial and inflexible hours, unsafe or poor physical.
- These risks mainly impact blue-collar workers.

### HCE Survey

- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has released the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) 2023-24,
- National Statistical Office (NSO) under MoSPI. Cobducted the survey

### About

- HCES is designed to collect information on consumption and expenditure of the households on goods and services.
- Provides essential data for economic planning, poverty measurement, and updating the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

- The Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (**MPCE**) compiled from HCES is the primary indicator used for most analytical purposes.

### Note

- Among the 18 major states, the urban-rural gap in average MPCE has declined in **18 states**.

### Prashad scheme

- Parliamentary committee has asked the government to develop a clear-cut Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

### About

- Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spirituality Augmentation Drive (PRASAD) scheme was launched by the Ministry of Tourism in 2014.
- Provides Financial Assistance to the State Governments and Union Territories
- Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned 46 projects under its PRASHAD Scheme
- It is funded on a 100% public funding model for eligible project components.
- Additionally, the scheme incorporates voluntary contributions through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP).

### NITI Aayog released a report

- 'Expanding Quality Higher Education through States and State Public Universities'
- The report is a first-of-its kind policy document in the higher education sector
- **Focus** : specifically on **States and State Public Universities (SPUs) for NEP** implementation and India's vision for Viksit Bharat 2047.
- 80% of India's higher education taking place in SPUs
- **The report addresses three major constraints raised by vice-chancellors:**

- funding limitations
- governance issues
- the need for capacity building of VCs, teachers,staff.

### President's Rule in Manipur

- President's Rule has been implemented in Manipur and the State Legislative Assembly has been suspended.
- Chief Minister N. Biren Singh resigned from his position. Due to disagreements over selecting a new Chief Minister, discussions continued for the past 4 days. In this situation, President's Rule was implemented.
- According to Article 356 of the Constitution, the President will exercise his powers and carry out all functions of the Manipur government and all powers of the State Governor.
- This rule will continue until 2027. Furthermore, the powers of the Assembly may be exercised under Parliament.

### Samagra Shiksha Scheme

- It is a comprehensive education program from pre-school to class twelve. It supports free and compulsory education rights for all children.
- **Objective:** To provide equal, inclusive classroom environment and quality education for all children. It should effectively engage children in learning, considering their diversity, multilingual needs, and educational abilities.
- Extended from 2021-22 to 2025-26.
- Follows SDG-4 (Sustainable Development Goal for Education) and National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- SDG-4.1 (Ensuring free and quality education for all by 2030),

- SDG-4.5 (Equal education and technological access for gender equality, disabilities, tribal people, and children in vulnerable situations).
- To providing long-term risk coverage for farmers against unpredictable natural calamities, thus ensuring a safety net for the agricultural community in India

### **New Delhi Chief Minister Takes Oath**

- Rekha Gupta of BJP, a first-time MLA, was selected as Delhi's ninth Chief Minister
- She becomes the fourth BJP Chief Minister of Delhi, following BJP leaders Madan Lal Khurana, Sahib Singh Verma, and Sushma Swaraj.

### **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)**

- India's flagship crop insurance scheme, launched on February 18, 2016
- Under - Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers welfare centrally sponsored scheme

#### **Aim:**

- Provides comprehensive crop insurance to safeguard farmers against natural disasters, pests, and diseases.

#### **Achievements over the past 9 years**

- Rs. 1.75 lakh crore disbursed in claims.
- Benefitted over 23.22 crore farmers.
- Helped in stabilizing incomes and promoting innovation & sustainable agriculture.

### **YES-TECH (Kharif 2023)**

- A significant advancement was introduced in Kharif 2023 with the launch of YES-TECH (Yield Estimation System Based on Technology) to improve accuracy in yield loss assessment.

#### **Future Hold for (PMFBY)**

- Government Extended the PMFBY and the Restructured Weather-Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS) for the 2025-26 period with Rs.69,515.71 crore allocation

### **PM Kisan**

- Under this scheme (Farmers' Assistance Fund), the central government released more than Rs.22,000 crore to about 9.8 crore farmers as the 19th installment.

#### **About PM Kisan**

- **Started:** February 24, 2019
- All small and marginal farmers receive Rs.6,000 annual income in three installments. The amount is directly deposited into bank accounts.
- Provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

### **NAKSHA**

- National geospatial Knowledge-based land Survey of urban Habitations (NAKSHA)
- It is a city survey initiative under the existing Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP).
- It aims to modernize urban land records using GIS and aerial surveys by creating an accurate geospatial database for towns and cities.

- **Launched On:** February, 2025

- **Ministry :** Ministry of Rural Development, Department of Land Resources (DoLR)
- The initiative is 100% centrally funded and is currently in a pilot phase covering 152 urban local bodies in 26 states.
- Tamil Nadu is one of the 26 states where the pilot phase of NAKSHA is being conducted.
- Tamil Nadu is one of the few states (along with Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Goa) that already has structured and relatively updated urban land records.



# 3. GEOGRAPHY

## 3.1 POLICY ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

### India's Ethanol Push: A Path to Energy Security

- Ethanol blending is the process of mixing ethanol with petrol to create a cleaner-burning fuel.
- **Aim** : To Achieve 15% ethanol blending in 2024, India targets 20% by 2025
- Launched in 2003 as a pilot project.
- Led by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas

### Mission Amrit Sarovar

- Mission Amrit Sarovar was launched in April 2022 to construct or rejuvenate 75 Amrit Sarovars (ponds) in each district, totaling 50,000 across the country.
- This initiative has made significant progress in addressing the critical issue of water scarcity.
- As on January 2025, over 68,000 Sarovars have been completed, enhancing surface and groundwater availability across various regions.

### Green Credit Programme (GCP)

- The Green Credit Programme (GCP) and the Ecomark Scheme are two initiatives launched by the Government of India in October 2023.
- These programmes aim to promote environmental sustainability and encourage eco-friendly practices among individuals, communities, and businesses.
- 7 states have allocated 57,700 hectares of degraded forest land for tree plantations.

- Madhya Pradesh leads with 15,200 hectares, followed by:

- Andhra Pradesh (11,361 ha)
- Gujarat (6,760 ha)
- Jharkhand (5,648 ha)
- Tamil Nadu (4,708 ha)
- Bihar (4,108 ha)

### Nocturnal, Diurnal, Crepuscular Animals

- Scientists at Macquarie University, have found that two nocturnal bull ant species (*Myrmecia pyriformis* and *Myrmecia midas*) use polarized moonlight as a guide to navigate in the dark.
- Wildlife biologists sort animals into **three categories** based on the time of day when they are most active
  - **Nocturnal animals are most active at night**
    - **Examples:** bats, owls, some rodents, raccoons, moths, badgers, some frogs and toads, geckos.
  - **Diurnal animals are most active in the daytime.**
    - **Examples:** many snakes and other reptiles, hummingbirds, hawks, eagles, falcons, ducks, bees, butterflies, moose.
  - **Crepuscular animals are most active during twilight - at dusk and/or dawn**
    - **Examples:** deer, cougars, some rabbits and hares, some songbirds, coyotes, foxes, some beetles, some frogs and toad.



## UNESCO Heritage Status Proposal

- **Maharashtra has submitted a proposal to UNESCO** for World Heritage status for 12 forts associated with Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj
- **Proposal Theme:** The proposal is submitted under the concept of 'Maratha Military Landscape of India', highlighting the strategic and historical significance of the forts.
- The 12 forts in the proposal are :
  - **Maharashtra:** Lohagad, Salher, Raigad, Rajgad, Pratapgad, Panhala, Shivneri, Sindhudurg, Suvarnadurg, Vijaydurg, Khanderi.
  - **Tamil Nadu:** Gingee Fort
- Total UNESCO World Heritage sites in India - 43 ( 35 - cultural , 7 -natural , 1 - mixed )

## Indian Carbon Market

- **Emissions Intensity Targets:** The Union government will announce emissions intensity targets for nine industrial sectors by February-end 2024.

### Carbon Trading Timeline:

- Industries will have one year to implement compliance measures.
- Carbon credit trading is expected to begin by October 2026.

### Indian Carbon Market:

- Aims to reduce, remove, or avoid greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through a carbon trading framework.
- Focuses on emissions intensity (GHG emitted per unit of activity) rather than absolute cuts.
- **Industries Affected :** The nine sectors required to comply are iron & steel, aluminium, chlor-alkali, cement, fertilizers, pulp & paper, petrochemicals, petroleum refineries, and textiles.

### Carbon Credit Mechanism:

- Unlike European emission trading, where companies must cap emissions, India's

approach focuses on making production more efficient.

- **Example:** Steel production – industries can adopt technologies that reduce coal consumption or recover waste heat.

### Voluntary Carbon Offsets:

- Private projects, like afforestation, can generate carbon credits.
- These credits can be sold internationally to companies needing offsets for regulatory compliance.

### India's Climate Commitment:

- India aims to reduce its emissions intensity to 45% of 2005 levels by 2030.

## India's First Biannual Transparency Report (BTR)

- Being prepared under the 2015 Paris Agreement obligations.
- Will undergo technical review by UNFCCC-accredited experts.

### Context :

- BTR is a new reporting requirement for all signatories of the Paris Agreement.
- Previously, only developed nations were required to submit such reports.
- The COP 2024 in Baku marked the first official submission of BTRs.
- India missed the December 2024 deadline but is finalizing the report.

### Contents of the BTR:

- Covers energy efficiency trends and renewable energy adoption
- Provides a detailed overview of emissions sources and climate mitigation efforts.
- Sectoral Contributions to Emissions (2020 Data):
  - Energy Sector: 75.66% (largest contributor)
  - Agriculture: 13.72%



- Industrial Processes: 8.06%
- Waste Management: 2.56%

### **Forest & Tree Cover:**

- Sequestered 522 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> (offset 22% of total emissions).

### **Blue-Cheeked Bee-Eater (*Merops persicus*) Breeding Discovery**

- Confirmed to breed in Peninsular India for the first time (Previously known as a passage migrant and winter visitor in India and Breeding regions: Nile Delta (Egypt), Pakistan, Iran).
- Location: Saltpans of Aandivilai, near Manakudy Mangroves, Kanniyakumari district, Tamil Nadu

### **Characteristics of the Blue-Cheeked Bee-Eater**

- Scientific Name: *Merops persicus*.
- Appearance (Vibrant green plumage, Distinctive blue cheek patch, Elegant tail streamers enhance its graceful look)

### **COP16 (Convention on Biological Diversity)**

- Held in Rome, Italy, from February 25-27, 2025.
- Objective: Secure financial and policy commitments to protect biodiversity

### **Key Agenda Items**

- Launch of the Cali Fund to ensure fair financial benefits from Digital Sequence Information (DSI)
- Support for Indigenous communities and biodiversity conservation
- Finalizing decisions under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework to halt biodiversity loss and restore ecosystems by 2030

### **Gharial Conservation**

- IUCN - critically endangered.
- Under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 (WPA).
- Madhya Pradesh hosts 80% of India's gharials (2,456 in Chambal Sanctuary, 2024 Census).
- **Five main sanctuaries:** Chambal (Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh), Katarniaghat (Uttar Pradesh), Chitwan (Nepal), Son River (Madhya Pradesh), Satkosia Gorge (Odisha).
- **Cultural Significance :** Sacred in Indian mythology; often depicted as the mount of Goddess Ganga
- **Context :** Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister released 10 gharials (9 males, 1 female) into Chambal River on Feb 17, 2025, to boost the population

### **Olive Ridley turtle**

- A 16-year-long study (2008-2024) on India's turtle populations, led by Dakshin Foundation, IISc Bengaluru, and State Forest Departments, finds that Olive Ridley turtles are stable or growing.
- other species of sea turtles found in the Indian territory - the leatherback turtles of the Andaman and Nicobar islands and the Green Turtles of the Lakshadweep islands
- Operation Olivia: Indian Coast Guard initiative (since the 1980s) to protect nesting turtles and prevent illegal trawling.
- Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule 1
- IUCN Red List: Vulnerable

### **Mass Nesting (Arribada)**

- Gahirmatha and Rushikulya (Odisha) are among the largest nesting sites globally.
- Other nesting spots in India - Gahirmatha beach, and Devi river mouth in Odisha, the Andaman Islands and Tamil Nadu's beaches

## 3.2 MISCELLANEOUS

### Tribes of Koraput

- **Indigenous Communities-** Koraput district in Odisha
  - Traditional healing systems using medicinal plants.
  - Unique folk music, dance, and handicrafts
- **Agricultural Practices** - dependent on shifting cultivation, now shifting towards sustainable farming with crop diversity
  - **Other tribes from Odisha** - Paroja, Bonda, Gadaba, Kandha, and Saora.





# 4. ECONOMICS

## 4.1 CURRENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

### Central Government Schemes

- **Jal Jeevan Mission** has provided drinking water connections to **120 million** households
- **Urban Housing Scheme** has constructed 8.9 million houses
- Farmer Scheme has benefited **110 million** farmers
- Government expenditure on healthcare sector has increased by 48%
- Industrial sector will grow by 6.2%. 99% of smartphones are manufactured domestically. Rs. 50,000 crore financial assistance will be provided to **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)**.
- The service sector contributes 55.3% to the country's economy.
- After the **COVID-19 pandemic**, its growth rate has increased

### Trade and Investment Conference to Increase Opportunities in the Northeast Region

- A trade and investment conference was held in Chennai to increase opportunities in the Northeast region.
- India's key gateways are Mumbai, Chennai, and the northeastern states. States like Nagaland, Mizoram, and Tripura share borders with Southeast Asian countries, increasing international economic opportunities.
- Road, railway, and air transportation have improved in the northeastern states. Roads

connecting villages have been constructed, leading to a **12% increase in economic opportunities**.

- Progress has been made in agriculture and horticulture. The value of natural food products produced there has increased by **70% due to exports to countries like Germany and Dubai**.

### World Gold Council Report

- India's gold imports increased 5% to 802.8 tonnes in 2024
- Driven by strong investment demand and significant purchases by the Reserve Bank of India
- RBI added 73 tonnes of gold to its forex reserves, raising gold's share to a record 11%.

### About

- The World Gold Council was formed in 1987
- They had headquartered across the world and have mining operations in over 45 countries.

### Sebi launches MITRA

- Recently, the Securities and Exchange Board of India introduced a new digital platform called MITRA.
- MITRA - Mutual Fund Investment Tracing and Retrieval Assistant, is to encourage investors to search for forgotten MF (mutual fund) investments and update KYC (know your customer) as per the current norms.

- The MITRA platform, developed by Registrar and Transfer Agents (RTAs), provides a centralised database of inactive and unclaimed mutual fund folios across the industry.
  - It was introduced to promote transparency in the Indian investment market
  - It aims to inculcate a safe investment environment by implementing several rules and regulations and formulating investment-related guidelines.
- Sebi**
- SEBI is essentially a statutory body of the Indian Government that was established on the 12th of April in 1992.

## 4.2 NEW ECONOMIC POLICY & GOVT. SECTOR

### Ministry of Finance Economic Survey Report

- The country's economic growth is projected to increase between **6.3%** and **6.8%** in the fiscal year 2025-26.
- The country's fiscal deficit is **1.2% of GDP** and external debt is 19.4%. Total Foreign Direct Investment has increased by **17.9% to \$556 billion**.
- Foreign exchange reserves stand at \$640.30 billion at the end of December
- Exports increased by **6% until December of 2024-25**. India ranks 7th in global services exports.
- Capital expenditure has been increasing since 2019-20. It rose by **8.2% during July-November** period.
- In the current fiscal year, **2,031 km** of new railway lines and **5,853 km** of national highways have been opened.

## 4.3 CURRENT TRENDS IN INDIAN ECONOMY

- **India's Digital Economy**
- India's telecom sector is the second-largest globally.
- India is the third-largest start-up hub globally, with significant growth in AI, machine learning, and digital sectors.
- UPI has set global standards in digital transactions, contributing to a digital revolution.
- The government is focused on technological and economic development to achieve the vision of a developed India by 2047, following the principle of "Initiate, Improve, and Transform (IIT)".
- India aims to reach Rs.50,000 crore in defence exports by 2029.
- **Current Status:** Achieved 88% self-sufficiency in ammunition production; defence exports stood at Rs.23,000 crore in 2023-24.

## 4.4 REPORTS AND INDICES

### Dollar Index (DXY)

- Measures USD strength against 6 major world currencies (**Euro, Yen, Pound, CAD, Krona, Swiss France**).
- Dollar Index rose above 109, indicating USD appreciation, making imports costlier for India.
- The dollar index, often known as the U.S. Dollar Index (USDIX),
- It is a tool for assessing the strength or weakness of the US dollar in relation to a basket of major currencies.
- It tracks shifts in the index provides investors, traders, and economists with useful information regarding the dollar's performance in global currency markets.

### World's Best Medical Colleges

- In the list of world's best medical colleges published by 'CEO World' Magazine in America, Chennai Medical College (MMC) has been ranked 60th.
- The college received this recognition for its excellence in medical education quality, research activities, and other aspects.
- In the 2024 list, Harvard Medical College tops with 99.06 points. Following this are Delhi AIIMS (22nd), Pune Armed Forces Medical College (37th), Vellore CMC (46th), Puducherry JIPMER (55th), and Chennai MMC at 60th position with 78.77 points.
- Varanasi BHU Medical College is ranked 69th.

### Unemployment and Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)

- (PLFS) released by the Statistics and Programme Implementation Ministry

- The unemployment rate in urban areas of the country was 6.4% for the period of October to December in 2024 for persons of age 15 and above.
- In 2023 the unemployment rate for the cohort was 6.5%, while in the July-to-September 2024 quarter, it was 6.4%. The female unemployment rate last year was 8.6%.

#### Definition

- The PLFS defines unemployment rate as the percentage of unemployed persons in the labour force in current weekly status (CWS).
- The number of persons either employed or unemployed on an average in a week.

#### Unemployment Rate (Oct-Dec 2024)

- Highest: Himachal Pradesh - 10.4% (Female UR: 24%)
- Lowest: Gujarat - 3%
- The female unemployment rate too was the highest in Himachal Pradesh at 24%. The lowest was 1.3% in Delhi.

#### Employment Distribution by Category

- Self-Employed: 39.9%
- Regular Wage/Salaried Employees: 49.4%
- Casual Labourers: 10.7%

#### Sector-Wise Employment Distribution

- Agriculture** : 5.5%
- Secondary Sector (Manufacturing, Mining, etc.)** : 31.8%
- Tertiary Sector (Services)** : 62.7%

### The National Statistical System -2024 Data Collections and Records

- The National Statistical System, under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, has created new modernized databases and record collections

- This is a compilation of approximately 270 databases and records obtained from extensive sources across 40 central government ministries and departments, covering various sectors including agriculture, health, education, labor, rural development, tourism, social justice, and banking.
- Monitoring, MP Local Area Development Scheme

### Time Use Survey 2024

- Conducted by the **National Statistics Office (NSO)** under the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)**
- Survey covered **1,39,487** households (Both **Rural: 83,247 & Urban: 56,240**)
- Included **4,54,192** individuals aged 6 and above.

### Employment Participation

- Women's participation in employment-related activities increased to **25%** (from **21.8%** in 2019).
- Men's participation rose to **75%** (from **70.9%** in 2019).

### About the Ministry of Statistics and Programme

- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation was formed in 1999. It has two major divisions:
- **Statistics Division:** Central Statistics Office, Information Technology Division, National Sample Survey Office
- **Programme Implementation Division:** Twenty Point Programme, Infrastructure

## 4.5 MONEY & BANKING

### IRDAI

- **The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** directed insurers not to raise health insurance premiums for senior citizens (aged 60 and above) by more than 10% per annum.
- This is due to the possible cut in the **18% Goods and Services Tax** levy on health policies.
- Senior citizens are the most vulnerable age group with limited sources of income.

## 4.6 TAX STRUCTURE IN INDIA

### Income Tax Bill introduces new 'Tax Year' concept, replacing assessment year

### About Income Tax

- The new concept of "tax year" means income tax will be assessed based on economic activity and income earned during that year.
- Instead of the previous system, where tax was assessed in the following financial year. This change could pave the way for a more flexible tax reporting system in the future.
- Individual and corporate income is taxed by the government, which relies on the money created by individuals and businesses for a fiscal year.
- The Income Tax Act of 1961 mandates that the federal government collect this tax for the state.



- It authorises the Internal Revenue Service (ITD) to charge tax on the income of people, enterprises, corporations, local governments, organisations, and other artificial juridical entities
  - **Russia** : 6.6%
  - **Transport Equipment**: 28.2%
  - **Cotton and Textiles**: 16%
  - **Leather & Footwear**: 15.1%
  - India is **exporting more to the U.S.**, increasing its trade surplus with the country.
  - India refuses to negotiate agricultural tariffs (e.g., cereals) in Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), but this may change in U.S.-India trade talks.
  - **India's exports to the U.S. crossed \$53 billion in FY25 (April-November).**
  - U.S. share in India's total exports:
    - **2024-25: 18.6%**
    - **2015-16: 15%**
  - Increasing trade surplus could lead to more tariff reduction demands from the U.S.
- India's High Import Tariffs**
- India's average import tariff in 2023 was 17%, five times higher than the U.S. (3.3%).
  - India had the highest average tariff among BRICS nations
  - The agricultural, dairy products, beverages, and tobacco continue to attract more than 30% as import duty
  - Duty on transport equipment, cotton, and textiles came down between 2018 and 2023
  - **Brazil**: 11%
  - **South Africa & China** : 7%

## UNION BUDGET 2025 - 26

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

#### Economic & Fiscal Policies

- GDP Growth Projection: 6.4% for 2025-26.
- Fiscal Deficit Target: 4.4% of GDP (down from 4.8% in FY25).
- Capital Expenditure: Record allocation of 11.2 lakh crore to boost infrastructure.
- States' Support: 1.5 lakh crore interest-free loans for states to enhance infra development.
- Exemption for key minerals like cobalt, lithium-ion battery waste, lead, zinc.
- FDI in Insurance: Raised from 74% to 100%, conditional on reinvestment in India.

#### MSME Sector

- Investment & turnover limits revised.
- Credit guarantee cover increased from 5 crore to 10 crore.
- New credit cards with 5 lakh limit for micro-units.

#### Tax Reforms

- Income up to 12 lakh made tax-free.
- 1 lakh crore in direct tax relief.
- Reduction in TDS & TCS rates for ease of compliance.
- Industrial & Trade Policies

#### Infrastructure & Energy

- UDAN Scheme: Extended for another 10 years to enhance air connectivity.
- Electric Mobility: Import duty exemption for battery manufacturing materials.
- Nuclear Energy: 20,000 crore for Small Modular Reactors (SMRs).

#### Customs Duty Rationalization

- Removal of seven tariff rates; now only eight remain.

- Green Initiatives: National Critical Minerals Mission allocated 410 crore.

### Agriculture & Rural Development

- PM Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana: To boost crop production in 100 low-yield districts.
- Self-Reliance in Pulses: Six-year mission focusing on tur, urad, and masoor dal.
- Fertilizer Subsidy Cut: Allocation reduced by Rs.26,500 crore.
- Fisheries Support: Import duty on frozen fish paste & fish hydrolysate reduced.

### SOCIAL SECTOR & WELFARE

#### Healthcare:

- 99,858 crore allocated to the Union Health Ministry.
- 36 life-saving drugs (cancer, rare diseases) exempted from customs duty.
- PM-JAY health cover extended to gig workers.

#### Education:

- 500 crore allocated for AI Centre of Excellence in Education.
- 50,000 Atal Tinkering Labs to be set up in government schools.
- 10,000 new medical seats added; target of 75,000 in the next decade.

### Employment & Women Empowerment

- New Employment Generation Scheme gets 20,000 crore.
- 26,889 crore allocated to Women & Child Development Ministry.
- Entrepreneurship loans of 2 crore for 5 lakh women.

### Defence & Security

- **Total Defence Budget:** 6.81 lakh crore (13.4% of total expenditure).
- **Capital Expenditure:** 1.8 lakh crore for modernization.

- **Coast Guard & Border Roads:** Significant budget hikes.

- Indigenization Drive: 75% of capital procurement reserved for domestic firms

### International Trade & Digital Economy

- **Export Promotion Mission:** Rs.2,250 crore to support MSME exports.

- **Bharat-TradeNet (BTN):** A digital platform for trade documentation.

- **Maritime Development Fund:** Rs.25,000 crore for shipping industry.

- **Startups:** Additional Rs.10,000 crore for Fund of Funds via SIDBI.

### Major Schemes Announced

- New Employment Generation Scheme - 20,000 crore allocated to support employment generation.

- Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana - Targets 100 districts with low productivity.

- Multi-Sectoral Rural Prosperity and Resilience Programme - Focuses on skilling, investment, and technology in agriculture.

- National Manufacturing Mission - Covers small, medium, and large industries under 'Make in India'.

- Nuclear Energy Mission - 20,000 crore allocated for Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) development.

- Mission for Cotton Productivity - Aims at increasing cotton productivity and sustainability.

- Gyan Bharatam Mission - For conservation of India's manuscript heritage; allocation increased from 3.5 crore to ₹60 crore.

- Atal Tinkering Labs - 50,000 labs to be set up in government schools.

- Women Entrepreneurship Loan Scheme - Loans of up to 2 crore for five lakh women.

- Tourism for Employment-led Growth - Focuses on skill development, tourism destinations, and homestay loans.
- PM Internship Scheme - 10,780 crore allocated to support one crore internships in five years.
- Makhana Board - 100 crore allocated for foxnut farmers in Bihar.
- Science and Technology Innovation Fund - 20,000 crore allocated for R&D in the private sector.
- Mission Vatsalya (Child Protection Services) - 1,500 crore (↑from 1,391 crore).

### Industry & MSME

- MSME Credit Guarantee - Credit cover increased from 5 crore to 10 crore.
- Revised MSME Classification - Investment & turnover limits enhanced.
- Customized Credit Cards for Micro Enterprises - 5 lakh credit limit for Udyam-registered units.

## SECTOR-WISE ALLOCATION

### 1. Agriculture & Rural Development

- Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare - 1,27,290 crore (↓3,905 crore from previous RE).
- Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana - 12,242 crore (↓3,622 crore from previous RE).
- Fertilizer Subsidy - 1,56,502 crore (↓26,501 crore from previous RE).

### Crop-Based Missions

- Cotton Technology Mission - ₹500 crore.
- Mission for Pulses - 1,000 crore.
- Mission for Vegetables and Fruits - 500 crore.
- National Mission on Hybrid Seeds-100 crore.

### Animal Husbandry & Fisheries

- Animal Husbandry - 407 crore reduction.
- Dairy-321 crore increase.
- Fisheries - 87 crore increase.

### Social Welfare

- Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment - 14,886 crore (+4.6%).
- Ministry of Tribal Affairs - 14,925 crore (+14.81%).
- MGNREGS-86,000 crore (unchanged).
- Eklavya Model Residential Schools - Rs.7,089 crore (↑from 6,399 crore).
- Saksham Anganwadi & Poshan 2.0-Rs.21,960 crore.

### Infrastructure & Transport

- Railways-2.65 lakh crore (unchanged).
- Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation - Allocation decreased from 5,499 crore to 500 crore.
- Roads & Highways - Increase in capital expenditure; detailed allocations not mentioned.

### Energy & Environment

- Nuclear Energy Mission - 20,000 crore for SMRs.
- Indian Railways Green Initiative - 410 crore for clean energy transition.
- Critical Minerals Exploration - 410 crore for domestic production and foreign asset acquisition.

### Science, Technology & Education

- Ministry of Science & Technology - 20,000 crore for private sector R&D.
- AI Centre of Excellence in Education - Rs.500 crore.
- Higher Education Funding - 7.7% increase from previous year.
- Atal Tinkering Labs in Schools - 50,000 new labs to foster innovation.

### Defence

- Total Defence Budget-6.81 lakh crore (13.4% of total Union expenditure).

- Defence Services (Army, Navy, Air Force, DRDO) - 4.92 lakh crore.
  - Pensionary Expenses - 1.61 lakh crore.
  - Civil Organizations (Border Roads Organisation, Coast Guard) - 28,683 crore.
- Textiles & Manufacturing**
- Total Allocation for Textiles Sector - 5,272 crore (↑57.7% from 3,342 crore RE).
  - Leather & Footwear Sector - 4 lakh crore turnover target, 22 lakh job generation.

### Women & Child Development

- Ministry of Women & Child Development - 26,889 crore (↑from 23,182 crore).
- Entrepreneurship Loans for Women - 2 crore loans for 5 lakh women.

### Tourism & Employment

- Employment Generation Scheme - 20,000 crore.
- Tourism Growth Initiative - Skill development, tourism hubs, homestay loans.





# 5. SCIENCE

## 5.1 LATEST INVENTIONS ON SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### Lumpy skin disease vaccine

- Biovet - Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech group created vaccine for Lumpy skin disease vaccine
- It has received licence from Central Drug Standards Control Organization (CDSCO)

### About Lumpy skin disease

- LSD is a transboundary animal disease

### Characterized

- the development of skin nodules across the body
- fever
- swollen lymph nodes
- decreased milk yield
- transmitted by vector bites - mosquitoes, ticks

### Note:

- (CDSCO) is the Central Drug Authority for discharging functions assigned to the Central Government under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.
- It has Regulatory control over the import of drugs, approval of new drugs and clinical trials

### "IIT Chennai Achieves Milestone by Developing Advanced Semiconductor Chip with ISRO"

- Under the Indian government's Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, a semiconductor chip has been completely developed in India in collaboration with ISRO and its subsidiaries. This marks a significant contribution to India's space sector.

- The chip was developed by ISRO's Inertial Systems Unit in Thiruvananthapuram and designed by IIT Chennai.
- Finally, the software was developed by IIT Chennai.

### Srjanam

- Union Minister launched India's first indigenous Automated Bio Medical Waste Treatment Plant at AIIMS New Delhi.
- It is 1st of his own kind, developed by CSIR-NIIST Thiruvananthapuram

### About srjanam

- Traditional biomedical waste treatment methods often rely on incineration
- Srjanam rig is designed to treat pathogenic biomedical waste—such as blood, urine, sputum, and laboratory disposables without conventional incinerators.
- It neutralize the foul odors with pleasant fragrance

### 'CeRAI-Roche symposium' on 'Responsible AI in Healthcare' was organised at IIT-M.

- (CeRAI) - Centre for Responsible AI partnership between IIT-M and Roche Diagnostics (Switzerland)
- Roche - A global leader in in-vitro diagnostics and digital health solutions.

### Other health AI initiatives.

- E-Paarvai - TneGA has developed an intelligent AI-powered mobile application

called E-Paarvai to identify the presence of cataracts in a person's eye. Sanctioned Rs 13.93 crore for Tamil Nadu Artificial Intelligence Mission

### Multilingual AI hub

- The Union government has begun revamping its official websites and is working on an artificial intelligence hub to distribute information on government initiatives.
- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) released a Digital Brand Identity Manual, seeking to create a standard design language for government websites.
- **Other initiatives include** : Digital India Bhashini, a language translation platform; BharatGen, the world's first government-funded multimodal large language model (LLM) initiative launched in 2024 the Sarvam-1 AI LLM
- Chitraklekha, an open-source video transcreation platform
- Multilingual AI system Everest 1.0, which caters to various Indian languages

### World's Largest Thrust Mixer Engine: ISRO

- In order to achieve self-reliance in the space sector, cryogenic engines are currently being developed domestically.
- In this context, ISRO has successfully developed the world's largest thrust mixer engine weighing 10 tons.
- It has been manufactured in collaboration with the Central Manufacturing Technology Institute (CMTI) located in Bangalore.

### AMRSense

#### AI-Driven Tool for AMR Tracking

- It is an AI-powered tool to track antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in real time.
- Developed by the Researchers from IIIT-Delhi, CHRI-PATH, Tata 1mg, and ICMR
- It analyzes routine hospital data to predict resistance trends at global, national, and hospital levels.

#### Uses

- Affordable Alternative to Genomics (Traditional genomic methods - expensive; this AI model utilizes hospital reports cost-effectively)
- The AI tool enables early detection and intervention by predicting resistance trends.

### India's First Wildlife Biobank

- Established at Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park (PNHZP), Darjeeling.
- Operational since July 2024.
- In collaboration with Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Ministry of Science & Technology.

#### Biobank Purpose & Storage:

- Preserves genetic materials (DNA, tissues, reproductive cells) from endangered species.
- Uses cryogenic storage (-196°C, liquid nitrogen) to ensure long-term viability.

#### Current Status (Feb 2025):

- Collected genetic materials from 60 animals across 23 species.

#### Future Plans:

- Similar biobanks planned for Delhi Zoo & Nandankanan Zoo (Odisha).
- Potential role in species revival and genetic research.



## 5.2 LATEST DISCOVERIES IN HEALTH SCIENCE

### High-entropy alloys (heas) for hydrogen production

- Recent advancements in clean energy technology have brought into light the potential of high-entropy alloys (HEAs) for hydrogen production.
- These innovative materials can reduce the reliance on precious metals such as platinum.
- Researchers at the Centre for Nano and Soft Matter Sciences (CeNS) in Bengaluru have developed a new HEA catalyst, PtPdCoNiMn, which demonstrates enhanced efficiency in the electrolysis of water.

### New mRNA-based personalized cancer vaccine

▪ Russia announced the development of a new mRNA-based personalized cancer vaccine,

#### What is mRNA (Messenger RNA)?

- mRNA is a type of RNA that **transports genetic information from DNA to ribosomes**, guiding the production of proteins.
- It tells the cell which proteins to make by providing the exact sequence of amino acids.
- This technology gained prominence with the **COVID-19 vaccines (Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna)** and is now being adapted for cancer treatment.
- These vaccines are **therapeutic**, designed for **patients who already have cancer**, not for prevention.

## 5.3 SPACE

### Budget 2025: National Geospatial Mission

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced the National Geospatial Mission in Budget 2025-26
- **AIM:** to modernize land records and enhance urban planning across India
- The mission will leverage the PM Gati Shakti framework to develop foundational geospatial infrastructure and data.
- The mission will also utilize cutting-edge technologies such as AI and quantum computing to drive advancements in various areas, including agriculture, transportation, and climate monitoring

#### About Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

- Geospatial refers to data or information that is associated with a specific location on the Earth's surface.
- By creating a robust geospatial database, the government aims to streamline processes

involved in land reforms, making them more efficient and transparent.

### Sagittarius A (Sgr A) – Black hole

- The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) has provided new insights into the supermassive black hole at the center of the Milky Way, Sagittarius A (Sgr A).

#### Key findings from the study include:

- **Flickering Light & Flares:** The telescope observed constant flickering from the accretion disk (the swirling gas around the black hole), with 1 to 3 large flares every 24 hours.
- James Webb Space Telescope (JWST)
- NASA's most advanced space observatory.
- Designed to explore the universe with unprecedented infrared sensitivity.
- Launched on December 25, 2021, it is a collaboration between NASA, the European Space Agency (ESA), and the Canadian Space Agency (CSA).

## 5.4 NEW SCIENTIFIC LABORATORIES/ OBSERVATORIES/ CENTRES

### Golden-headed Cisticola (*Cisticola exilis*)

- Found in Mathikettan Shola National Park.
- Idukki, southern part of the Palakkad Gap in the Western Ghats.

### About Golden-headed Cisticola

- Usually found in grasslands in mountain ranges
- Male birds have distinct golden-orange

plumage on their head, neck, and chest during breeding.

- IUCN Status: Least Concern

### About Shola National Park.

- Muthavan tribes are situated about the northeastern borders of Mathikettan Shola.
- Kattumala is located in the eastern border of the park adjoining Tamil Nadu.





# 6. NATIONAL – DIARY OF EVENT

## Toilet Facilities at All Toll Plazas

- Under the **Swachh Bharat Mission**, the Central Government has constructed toilets near toll plazas.
- Since 2015, the National Highways Authority has built separate toilets for men and women.
- Currently, there are 1,300 toilets at toll plazas.
- If toilets do not meet the necessary requirements, a fine of Rs. 1 lakh will be imposed. So far, fines totaling Rs. 46 lakhs have been imposed.
- Complaints about toilets can be filed through the "**Rajmarg Yatra**" application.

## 10 New commodities added to e- nam

- Directorate of Marketing and Inspection (DMI) has formulated tradable parameters for 10 additional agricultural commodities
- previously, DMI has formulated tradable parameters for 221 agricultural commodities.
- totally we have 231 commodities

## About E nam

- National Agriculture Market (eNAM) is a pan-India electronic trading portal which networks the existing APMC mandis
- To create a unified national market for agricultural commodities.
- Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) is the lead agency for implementing eNAM under the agency of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Government of India
- **launched on** : 2016

## 'Skill India' program to continue with Rs. 8,800 crore: Union Cabinet approval

- The Prime Minister's Skill Development Scheme (PMKVY 4.0), Prime Minister's National Apprenticeship Scheme (PM-NAPS) and Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) programs have been integrated under the "Skill India" initiative.

### **Prime Minister's Skill Development Scheme (PMKVY 4.0):**

- Provides short-term skill development training for those aged 15-59.
- Rs. 6,000 crore has been allocated for this scheme.

### **Prime Minister's National Apprenticeship Scheme (PM-NAPS)**

- Provides apprenticeship training for youth aged 14-35.
- Rs. 1,942 crore has been allocated for this scheme.

### **Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS):**

- Skill development training for women aged 15-45 and vulnerable communities.
- Rs. 858 crore has been allocated for this scheme.

### **Skill India Program:**

- Launched in 2015, training institutes are accredited by the National Skill Development Corporation.
- Skill assessment and certification provided to those who complete training.

## **38th National Games**

- The 38th National Games are being held in Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

- Tamil Nadu's Adarsh Ramu won gold in men's high jump with a height of 2.14m.
- In men's shooting, Prithviraj Tondaiman won gold.
- In athletics 4x100m relay, the team of Tamilarasu, Sivakumar, Rahul Kumar, and Rajanarayanan won silver.
- In women's 400m, Vidhya Ramraj won silver with a time of 54.43 seconds.
- In men's 110m hurdles, Manav Rajanarayanan won silver.
- Tamil Nadu won two gold medals in fencing: Bhavani Devi in women's sabre individual and Bibish in men's foil individual.
- It is an Author Mentorship programme to train young and budding authors below 30 years of age.
- The National Book Trust, India (under BP Division, Ministry of Education, GOI) as the Implementing Agency.
- 500-crore fund gives autonomy for National Mission on Manuscripts
- The NMM has digitised **3.5 lakh** manuscripts that contain 3.5 crore pages. File photo
- Steps have been initiated to make the National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM) autonomous
- The NMM was established in **February 2003** by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture.
- The Mission seeks to unearth and preserve the vast manuscript wealth of India.

### 15th 'Aero India' Event

- The 15th 'Aero India' exhibition will be held in Bangalore. Over 150 foreign companies and more than 900 aviation industry companies are participating.
- The event is being held under the theme "Runway to Billion Opportunities."
- This biennial event is conducted under the Ministry of Defence.
- For the first time, Russia's Su-57 and America's F-35 fighter aircraft are participating.
- **UDAN 5.5**
- UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik) scheme has reached a new milestone with the launch of its 5.5 version.
- This phase aims to improve regional air connectivity, particularly for remote areas, hilly regions, and islands.
- The initiative focuses on utilising seaplanes and helicopters to connect underserved locations. The scheme is step towards enhancing last-mile connectivity in India.

### New books under the PM YUVA 2.0

- Union Minister for Education launched 41 new books under the PM YUVA 2.0 scheme at the New Delhi
- The scheme aims to create routes that link 80 water bodies, including ponds and dams.

### The Market Intervention Scheme (MIS)

#### About PM YUVA 2.0 Scheme

- Launched in 2022 by Ministry of Education as part of India@75 Project (Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav).
- The Theme of **PM-YUVA 2.0** is Democracy (Institutions, Events, People, and Constitutional Values)
- The Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) is important initiative under the PM-AASHA scheme aimed at supporting farmers during price fluctuations of perishable agricultural commodities.
- This mechanism ensures that farmers do not have to sell their produce at distress prices.

- It specifically targets perishable goods such as tomatoes, onions, and potatoes.
- The scheme operates under specific conditions, including a minimum price drop threshold.
- The government has revised guidelines to enhance its effectiveness, allowing for increased procurement limits and flexible payment methods.

### Corruption Index Rankings Released

- India ranks 96th with 38 points in the 2024 Corruption Index.
- Last year, it was ranked 93rd with 39 points, and in 2022, it was 85th with 40 points.
- Countries scoring 100 points are considered corruption-free, while those with 7 points are considered highly corrupt.
- **Neighboring Countries:** Pakistan (135th with 27 points), Sri Lanka (121st with 32 points), Bangladesh (151st with 23 points), China (76th with 43 points)
- **Leading Countries:** Denmark (1st with 90 points), Finland (2nd with 88 points), Singapore (3rd with 84 points)
- **Last Place:** South Sudan, along with Somalia, Venezuela, and Yemen are among the most corrupt countries.
- Published annually by the Non-governmental Organisation Transparency International since 1995.

### 74 Women MPs in Current Lok Sabha; Election Commission Releases Information Compilation

- In the current 18th Lok Sabha, out of total 543 MPs, 74 are women. Of these, 11 are from West Bengal.
- Among male MPs, Uttar Pradesh has elected

the maximum of 73 representatives. This election was held in seven phases from April 19 to June 1, 2024.

West Bengal has elected 11 women MPs. Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh have 7 women MPs each, Madhya Pradesh has 6, and Tamil Nadu has 5 women MPs. States like Kerala, Arunachal Pradesh, and Goa have no women MPs.

In the Lok Sabha elections, 111 women candidates contested from Maharashtra. Uttar Pradesh with 80 and Tamil Nadu with 77 candidates are in the next positions. 152 constituencies had no women candidates.

Voter turnout was 65.78% for women voters and 65.55% for male voters.

### Bharat Tex - A Textile Industry Exhibition

- The textile industry's share in India's manufacturing sector is 11%.
- India's textile and garment exports saw a 7% growth in the last year.
- India ranks 6th among the world's largest textile and garment exporting countries.
- Currently, the value of textile exports is approximately Rs. 3 lakh crores, with a target to increase it to Rs. 9 lakh crores by 2030.

### Aadi Mahotsav

- The National Tribal Festival 'Aadi Mahotsav' was inaugurated by the President of India
- It will be celebrated from February 16 to 24
- This is an flagship initiative of the Tribal Co-operative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED)
- Some of the important schemes for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)

- **PM-JANMAN Abhiyan (launched in 2023):** ensuring doorstep delivery of essential services.
- **Dharti Aba Janjati Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan** (launched on October 2, 2024):
  - Connecting 63,000 tribal villages to roads and mobile networks.
  - Providing permanent housing to tribal families.
  - Ensuring tribal citizens benefit from government welfare schemes.
- As per Article 366(25) of the Indian Constitution, STs are communities notified under Article 342 as Scheduled Tribes.

### **Cheetah Reintroduction Project**

- Five cheetahs were released in the Khajuri forest area of the Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park (KNP).
- Part of India's Cheetah Reintroduction Program to restore the species after their extinction in India in 1952. ( under Project Cheetah )
- This is the **world's first inter-continental wild carnivore translocation project** (The initiative is part of the world's first intercontinental translocation of cheetahs).
- Under the program Kuno National Park (KNP) was chosen due to its suitable habitat.
- Total Cheetahs in KNP: Currently, **26 cheetahs** are in Kuno National Park (8 from South Africa, 4 from Namibia, 14 cubs born in India)
- Cheetah--IUCN status - **Critically Endangered**

### **New Criminal Law Implementation in Jammu-Kashmir**

- Jammu-Kashmir, which was a state, was divided into two Union Territories (Jammu-Kashmir, Ladakh) in 2019
- Law and order in both Union Territories is directly handled by the Central Government
- New criminal laws - Bharatiya Nyaya Samhita, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Samhita, and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam - replaced colonial-era criminal laws (Indian Penal Code, Criminal Procedure Code, Indian Evidence Act) from July 1, 2024
- Implemented in 11 states and Union Territories including Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat

### **Kashi Tamil Sangamam 3.0**

- The 3rd edition KTS 3.0, a cultural confluence between Tamil Nadu and Kashi, held in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
- The 1st edition of KTS was held in 2022, while the 2nd in 2023.
- The event aligns with the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative.
- **Nodal Ministry:** The Ministry of Education in collaboration with various ministries and the Government of Uttar Pradesh.

### **Celebrating 22 Years of Empowerment**

- The 22nd Foundation Day of the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) was celebrated with events focusing on its role in protecting the rights and promoting the development of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in India.

#### **About NCST:**

- The NCST is a constitutional body created to protect the rights of Scheduled Tribes (STs) and their social, economic, educational, and cultural interests.
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi.
- Indian traditions contribute to technological progress in fields like drone and space technology - highlighted by the Indian External Affairs Minister .



- The historical ties between Kashi (Uttar Pradesh) and Tamil Nadu date back to the 15th century when King Parakrama Pandya of Madurai traveled to Kashi to bring back a sacred lingam for his temple (Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu).
- of the Bay of Bengal Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO) from Bangladesh.
- This transition took place during the 13th Governing Council Meeting held in Malé, Maldives.
- The event was part of a high-level conference focused on mainstreaming ecosystem approaches to fisheries management in small-scale fisheries.

### **International Conference On Women Peacekeepers**

- India is hosting a two-day conference on women peacekeepers at UN missions from February 24-25, 2025, in New Delhi.
- **Theme:** “Women in Peacekeeping: A Global South Perspective”.
- The event will highlight the contributions of women peacekeepers from the Global South.
- **Participants:** Women peacekeepers from 35 troop-contributing countries.
- **Organizers :** Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Ministry of Defence, Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping.

### **Tapentadol and Carisoprodol**

- The Health Ministry has banned the export of Tapentadol and Carisoprodol-containing drugs following unapproved exports by Aveo Pharmaceuticals, Mumbai, to West Africa.
- These drugs are individually approved in India but their combination is not authorized.
- They are also not listed under the NDPS Act.
- **Tapentadol:** An opioid painkiller for moderate to severe pain
- **Carisoprodol:** A muscle relaxant that acts on the brain and spinal cord.

### **Bay of Bengal Inter-Governmental Organisation**

- India has recently assumed the Chairmanship

### **About BOBP-IGO**

- The BOBP-IGO was established in 2003.
- This Regional Fisheries Advisory Body (RFAB) gives advice on fishing to countries around the Bay of Bengal.
- Its primary aim is to assist member countries in enhancing livelihood opportunities for small-scale fisherfolk in the Bay of Bengal region.
- Current member countries include Bangladesh, Maldives, and Sri Lanka.
- Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Thailand participate as cooperating non-contracting parties.

### **Prakriti 2025 - International Conference on Carbon Markets**

- Prakriti 2025 (Promoting Resilience, Awareness, Knowledge, and Resources for Integrating Transformational Initiatives) was organized by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) under the Ministry of Power and the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change .

### **Held in New Delhi**

- The conference focused on global carbon market trends, policy frameworks, and financing mechanisms to support climate goals.

### **National Conference on 'Sustainable Cooling and Doubling the Rate of Energy Efficiency Improvement**

- Held on February 21-22, 2025, in New Delhi.
- Organized by BEE and PFI under the Ministry of Power
- the event aimed to accelerate energy efficiency and sustainable cooling solutions in India
- emphasizing India's power sector progress, with non-fossil fuel capacity at 47.15% and emission intensity reduced by 36%.

### **About the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)**

- The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) was established on March 1, 2002, under the Energy Conservation Act, 2001.
- It operates under the Ministry of Power, Government of India and aims to enhance energy efficiency across various sectors
- Its primary objective is to reduce the energy intensity of the Indian economy through policy-making, regulations, and market-driven initiatives.

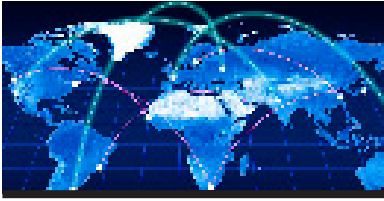
### **SARAS Ajeevika Mela 2025**

- **Organized by:** Ministry of Rural Development in collaboration with **National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR)** at Uttar Pradesh.

- **Objective:** To showcase and promote the crafts, arts, and products of rural India, especially those made by **Self-Help Groups (SHGs)**.
- **Theme: Tradition, Art, and Culture & "Developing the Export Potential of Lakhpati SHG Didis."**
- **Launched under Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)** to promote inclusive growth and economic self-sufficiency for rural artisans and craftsmen.

### **Customs Department, GST Officials Get Arrest Powers**

- The Supreme Court confirmed that legislative amendments granting arrest powers to Customs and Goods and Services Tax (GST) officials are constitutionally valid
- In 2011, the Supreme Court had ruled that before making arrests under the **Customs Act of 1944 and Central Excise Act**, officials must obtain warrants from a judicial magistrate as per the Criminal Procedure Code
- Following this ruling, the central government made amendments under Section 104 of the Customs Act
- Similarly, under the GST Act of 2017, officials have been granted arrest powers in specific cases. Around 280 petitions were filed regarding this issue



# 7. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

## International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)

- The International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) has officially become a treaty based intergovernmental organisation,
- As of **January 23**, IBCA and its secretariat have gained full international legal status
- The **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)** confirmed that five countries Nicaragua, Eswatini, India, Somalia, and Liberia have ratified the Framework Agreement, formally establishing IBCA.

### Background

- IBCA was launched on **9th April, 2023**
- **AIM** - conservation of seven big cats Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar and Puma

## Paris AI Action Summit

- The summit Co-chaired by PM Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron.
- **Aim** : fostering global cooperation in the development of Artificial Intelligence technologies
- The summit is initiated by France in collaboration with UN Environment Programme (UNEP) & International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

- India is a founding member

### Other AI initiatives

- The Union cabinet has approved over Rs 10,300 crore for IndiaAI Mission

- **BHASHINI** - [BHASHa INterface for India] an AI- based language translation tool for Indian languages.
- **AIRAWAT**: India's AI supercomputer installed at C-DAC, Pune

## New Indian Consulate Opens in France

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron inaugurated a new Indian Consulate in Marseille, France.
- Prime Minister Modi co-chaired the Global Artificial Intelligence Summit with Macron in Paris.
- The International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) was opened in Cadarache near Marseille. This is the first time a leader from another country has visited the ITER facility, which is one of the world's most important nuclear fusion energy projects.

## World's First Person with Disability to Visit International Space Station

- The European Space Agency has approved John McFall as the world's first astronaut with a disability to visit the International Space Station (ISS).
- In 2006, he won silver medal in 100 meters and bronze medal in 200 meters at the International Paralympic Committee's World Athletics Championships in the Netherlands.
- In 2007, he won gold medal in 200 meters at the Visa Paralympic World Cup held in Britain.

## India-Qatar 7 Agreements

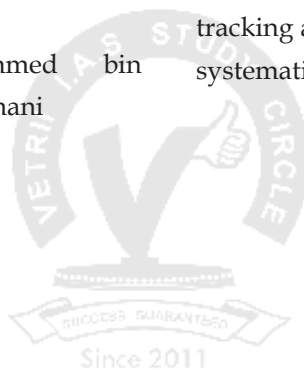
- India and Qatar Signed Seven Memorandums of Understanding were signed regarding the establishment of bilateral strategic partnership, revised agreement on avoidance of double taxation and prevention of financial fraud, economic cooperation, collaboration in archives and documentation, cooperation in youth welfare and sports, between Invest India and Invest Qatar, and between Confederation of Indian Industry and Qatari Businessmen Association.

### About Qatar

- **Capital:** Doha
- **Currency:** Qatari Riyal
- **Prime Minister:** Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani

## USAID Funding in India (FY 2023-24)

- The Finance Ministry's annual report for 2023-24 reveals that The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) allocated \$97 million for seven projects in India in 2023-24.
- **Project Areas:** Funding was directed toward agriculture, food security, WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene), renewable energy, disaster management, health, climate adaptation, and energy efficiency technology commercialization.
- No Funding for Voter Turnout (Voter Turnout means it is a crucial electoral tool for real-time tracking and monitoring of voter participation systematically).





# 8. TAMILNADU AFFAIRS

## Private Septic Tank Owners Must Compensate for Deaths During Cleaning - High Court Order

- "For accidents occurring in private individuals' and private septic tanks, the respective owner must take responsibility.
- Therefore, the petitioner must provide compensation to the deceased person's family. If the municipality provides the amount on an emergency basis, they can recover it from the house owner as per the government order."

## Two More Ramsar Sites in Tamil Nadu

- World Wetlands Day is observed on February 2nd.
- On this occasion, the **Sakkarakottai** and **Therathangal Bird Sanctuaries** in Ramanathapuram district have been declared as new Ramsar sites. With this, Tamil Nadu now has 20 sites, the highest in India. Of these, 19 locations were previously designated as wetlands.
- These sites house over 400 plant and animal species. Furthermore, these sanctuaries serve as habitats for endangered bird species such as Spoonbill, Darter, and Snake Bird.
- As a first phase, an integrated management plan report has been prepared for 13 Ramsar sites. This report includes water management, biodiversity conservation, and enhancement of livelihood opportunities for local communities.
- A Ramsar site is a wetland that has been designated as being of international importance under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

- The convention was established in 1971 by UNESCO and named after the city of Ramsar in Iran, where it was signed.

## Modern Headquarters for Tamil Nadu Scout Movement

- A new headquarters with modern training facilities is being established for the Tamil Nadu Scout Movement at a cost of Rs. 10 crore.
- Globally, this movement has 8 million members in India alone. Of this, Tamil Nadu accounts for one-eighth with 1.2 million members.
- School Education Minister Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi has been awarded the Silver Elephant Statue Award for his outstanding service to the Bharat Scouts and Guides Movement.
- This is the highest award given in the Scout Movement.
- Trichy District Collector M. Pradeep Kumar has been awarded the Silver Star Award for successfully organizing the Scout Movement rally.

## Environmental Forums at schools

- The Chief Minister has announced at the Climate Summit inauguration that "Environmental Forums" will be established in all schools across Tamil Nadu.
- The "Tamil Nadu Climate Summit 3.0" organized by the Environmental Department began yesterday, Chennai.
- Environmental Forums will be established in all schools across Tamil Nadu.

- Awards were presented for environmental education and awareness. Additionally, a document titled "Climate-Appropriate Lifestyle" was released.
- First State: Tamil Nadu is the first state to conduct a conference to study climate change
- The government has successfully conducted two climate summits so far
- The Tamil Nadu government has declared heat waves as a state disaster and published it in the official gazette.
- It has been announced that Rs.4 lakhs relief will be provided in case of death due to heat waves.
- This solar cell and module manufacturing plant is the largest in India.
- The state-of-the-art facility is spread across 313 acres and has a production capacity of 4.3 gigawatts.

### **Tamiravaruni - Karumeniyaru Nambiyaru Link Canal Project:**

- Chief Minister Stalin inaugurated this project in Tirunelveli.
- Former Chief Minister Karunanidhi launched this project on February 21, 2009.
- After 16 years, it has now come into public use.
- Will provide 2,765 million cubic feet of water for 10 days by connecting surplus water from **Tamiravaruni River to Karumeniyaru and Nambiyaru rivers.**
- Will provide irrigation facilities to a total of **23,040 hectares - 14,084.98 hectares** in Tirunelveli district and 8,905.02 hectares in **Thoothukudi** district.

### **Kalaingar Treasury Special Web Page**

- As a result of the "**Tamil Internet 99**" conference conducted by M. Karunanidhi, the Tamil Virtual Academy was established in 2001 under the Department of Information Technology and Digital Services.
- This institution teaches Tamil online to more than **18,000 children** through 181 contact centers in **39 countries**, and also conducts **research and develops tools** related to Tamil computing.
- Following the nationalization of Karunanidhi's books, Chief Minister Stalin yesterday launched a special webpage called "**Kalaingar Treasury**" (<https://tamildigitallibrary.in/kalaingar>) created by the Tamil Virtual Academy.
- This page contains **955** rare contents.

### **Elephant population in Tamil Nadu rises to 2,961**

- Forest Minister K. Ponmudi inaugurated the **Elephant Festival at Chennai Guindy Children's Park.**
- **5 sanctuaries** have been created to protect elephants.
- The elephant population in Tamil Nadu has now increased to 2,961.
- Special training is being provided to forest officials to prevent elephants from entering residential areas.
- Tamil Nadu government provides relief to those affected by elephants.

### **Solar Panel Manufacturing Plant**

- Chief Minister inaugurated the solar panel production operations at Tata Power (TP) Solar facility, established at a cost of Rs. 3,800 crore in the SIPCOT complex at Gangaikondan, Tirunelveli district.

### **Best Book Award Scheme: Tamil Nadu Government**

- Through the **2023 Best Book Award Scheme**,



**33 authors and 33 publishers** received prize money and certificates of appreciation from the Minister of Tamil Development and Information.

- Books are selected in 33 categories (novels, short stories, travel literature, traditional poetry, micro art).
- Authors receive **Rs. 50,000 and Publishers receive Rs. 25,000 as prize money**, increased from the previous **Rs. 30,000 and Rs. 10,000** respectively.

### **Drone-based Crop Protection: Tamil Nadu Government Training for Self-Help Groups**

- Tamil Nadu Government, in collaboration with the Central Government, has implemented a drone technology training program for women's self-help groups.
- Under this scheme, 44 women from 28 districts were selected through the Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihood Mission and provided drone operation training.
- Specifically, training was provided on crop protection using drones.
- Trained self-help group women can provide crop protection services to farmers.

### **Touch Screen Facility at Anna Centenary Library**

- Modern touch screen facility has been introduced at Chennai's Anna Centenary Library.
- Visitors can now read newspapers and periodicals using their fingertips.
- This facility is set up on the first floor of the library, with access to over 150 Tamil and English periodicals and more than 20 newspapers.

### **Trichy Bird Park at Rs. 18.63 Crores**

- Trichy Bird Park has been established in Trichy district under the "Namakku Naame" scheme at a cost of Rs. 18.63 crores.
- The park features over forty foreign birds, fish, a 7D theater with 50-person capacity, and pet shop facilities.
- Spread across 60,000 square feet, it includes five different landscape types (Kurinji, Mullai, Marutham, Palai, Neythal) with hundreds of birds.

### **Ancient Artifacts Found in Kodumbalur Excavation**

- Kodumbalur, near Viralimalai in Pudukkottai district, is an area rich in historical monuments. Historians say this area was an ancient city that emerged 3,000 years ago.
- Kodumbalur is located on the highway between Trichy (Chola capital) and Madurai (Pandya capital).
- The excavation has revealed walls made of bricks and mud, along with needles used in weaving, circular discs, and bones.
- Archaeologists believe these items were used in the weaving industry.

### **Chatbot Service for Chennai Metropolitan Bus Passengers**

- Besides the toll-free number 149, email, and social media for reporting bus-related inconveniences and complaints, a new service has been introduced.
- A WhatsApp and chatbot service has been launched at 94450 33364 to improve public bus usage.
- Upon sending "Hi," the screen displays options for complaints, inquiries, lost items, complaint status, comments, and suggestions.

### **Distribution of Deworming Tablets to 26.9 Million People; Tamil Nadu Government**

- Tamil Nadu has launched a program to provide deworming tablets to children and women under 30 years of age.
- A total of 26.9 million people will benefit from this scheme. National Deworming Day is celebrated in February and August.
- Under this program, Albendazole tablets are provided to children under 19 years and women between 20-30 years of age.
- These tablets are widely distributed through all primary health centers, Anganwadi centers, schools, and colleges.
- Due to worm infections, children suffer from problems like anemia, growth impairment, and reduced performance.

### **Rivers in Chennai and Salem identified as "priority stretches" by (CPCB)**

- Rivers in Chennai and Salem have been identified as "priority stretches" by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) based on water quality data,
- Tamil Nadu has 10 severely polluted river stretches and have been categorised under Priority I to V, the Adyar and Cooum in Chennai, and Thirumanimuthar and Vasishta rivers near Salem are Priority I.

### **State Health Ministers' Meeting: Lymphatic Filariasis Disease Awareness**

- In the country, 111 districts across 13 states have been identified as highly affected by lymphatic filariasis disease.
- States severely affected include **Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Maharashtra, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh.**

- Lymphatic filariasis is caused by filarial worms and is transmitted to humans through mosquitoes.
- Medicines for this disease are being distributed free of cost, benefiting 17.5 crore people across these 13 states.
- With medicines being distributed twice a year, the goal is to achieve "LF-free India" by 2027.

### **800-year-old Pandyan Era Inscriptions; Archaeological Survey of India's Study**

- The Archaeological Survey of India studied and documented three 800-year-old Pandyan era inscriptions found on a hillside in Kampoor village, Madurai district.
- One inscription from 1223 CE, during the 7th regnal year of Maravarman Sundara Pandyan I, mentions that a military commander named Bhaskaran donated land to a Shiva temple, and also records the donation of a coin called "Thiramam" to the temple.
- Another inscription from 1228 CE, during the 12th regnal year of the same Pandyan king, records that the people of Kampoor and the local leader named Thennagangadevan together donated land to military commander Bhaskaran for conducting special pujas to the Araichalai Pillaiyar (Ganesha temple).
- The third inscription mentions land donations made to the temple during the reign of Maravarman Sundara Pandyan I.
- State government considering amending the Tamil Nadu Marine Fisheries' Regulation Act
- To penalise fishermen who turn off GPS transponders in fishing boats.
- Recommended Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) to be mandatory

## **Tamil Nadu Marine Fishing Regulation Act**

- It was introduced in 1983
- An act to provide for the regulation, restriction and prohibition of fishing by fishing vessels in the sea along the whole or part of the coast line of the State.

## **Terracotta Bowl Found in Vembakkottai Excavation**

- A terracotta bowl was discovered during the third phase of excavation near Vembakkottai in Virudhunagar district.
- More than 3,400 artifacts have been discovered so far, including gold coins, copper coins, terracotta figurines, chess pieces, glass beads, circular discs, and conch bangles.

## **About Archaeological Department**

- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) was established in 1861, and operates under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act of 1904 and the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act of 1958.
- The Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology was established in 1961.

## **Two Permanent Judges Appointed to Chennai High Court**

- President Droupadi Murmu has ordered the appointment of V. Lakshminarayanan and P. Vadamalai, who were serving as additional judges in the Chennai High Court, as permanent judges.
- Out of 65 judges in the Chennai High Court, 54 were permanent judges. With the appointment of these two new permanent judges, the number of permanent judges has increased to 56.

## **About Collegium:**

- **High Court (HC) Collegium:** A High Court collegium operates under the leadership of its Chief Justice (CJ) and four other senior judges of that court
- **Article 124:** The President appoints Supreme Court judges after obtaining necessary consultations.
- **Article 217:** High Court judges must be appointed by the President's order after consultations with the Chief Justice of India and the state Governor.

## **'Antiquity of Iron'**

- The report titled 'Antiquity of Iron: Recent radiometric dates from Tamil Nadu' was released by the Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu
- The report claims that the Iron Age in Tamil Nadu began in the first quarter of the 4th millennium BCE, over 5,300 years ago.

## **Keeladi**

- Keeladi, a hamlet in Sivaganga district, 12 kilometers southeast of Madurai.
- Excavations started Since 2015.
- it has Evidence of an urban civilization on the banks of the Vaigai River.
- Hundreds of potsherds containing Tamil Brahmi inscriptions.

## **Sivagalai**

- Excavations Conducted by TNSDA in Sivagalai, Thoothukudi district, between 2019 and 2022.
- It has Paddy sample from an urn dated back to 1,155 BCE.

## **Gangaikondacholapuram**

- a few kilometres north of Kollidam River in Ariyalur district.

- Capital of the Cholas for about 250 years.
- City built by Rajendra Chola after his victorious expedition up to the Gangetic plains.
- Maligaimedu (the mound of a palace), located about 2 km away from the Brihadisvara Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has five regional benches,
- **North Zone:** The principal bench in Delhi
- **Central Zone:** The bench in Bhopal
- **East Zone:** The bench in Kolkata
- **South Zone:** The bench in Chennai
- **West Zone:** The bench in Pune

### **Kodumanal**

- Kodumanal, on the northern banks of the Noyyal River, about 15 km from Chennimalai in Erode district.
- Referred to as Kodumanam in Pathitruvalu of Sangam literature.
- Connected Karur, the capital of Cheras, with Muziris, an ancient port town currently in Kerala.
- Shell bangles, coins, potsherds inscribed with Tamil Brahmi scripts.
- A menhir (standing stone) and a few megalithic burial sites.

### **National Green Tribunal has directed Tambaram Corporation.**

- The Southern Bench of the National Green Tribunal has directed the Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage (TWAD) Board to submit a comprehensive plan to tackle the ongoing water contamination issues in the Tambaram Corporation.
- The samples were sent to the State Level Water Quality Testing Laboratory in Chepauk, Chennai, for analysis.

#### **About**

- The National Green Tribunal has been established in 2010 under the National Green Tribunal Act, 2010
- The Tribunal is mandated to make and endeavour for disposal of applications or appeals finally within 6 months of filing of the case.

### **Tamil Nadu Lok Ayukta Chairman**

#### **Appointment**

- Retired Justice P. Raja Manickam has been appointed as the chairman of the Lok Ayukta

#### **About Lok Ayukta**

- Tamil Nadu Lok Ayukta was established on 13.11.2018
- The Lok Ayukta institution is established to investigate corruption complaints against public servants
- Consists of one chairman, 2 judicial members, and 2 non-judicial members
- Term: 5 years or until 70 years of age

### **Selvamagal Savings Account Scheme: Chennai City Postal Division Achievement**

- The Chennai City Postal Division has reported that more than 10 lakh new savings accounts have been opened under the Selvamagal Savings Account Scheme until January of the current year
- The scheme was launched by the Central Government in 2015 for the welfare of girl children
- Under this scheme, parents can open accounts for girls under 10 years of age with a minimum deposit of Rs.250 and maximum of Rs.1.5 lakh per financial year

### **Tamil Nadu Fiber Net project**

- "Tamil Nadu IT Minister has stated that under the Tamil Nadu Fiber Net project, with support from the Central Government's BharatNet project, there are plans to connect more than 12,000 villages.
- "The National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN), launched in October 2011, was renamed the Bharat Net Project in 2015.
- It is an ambitious project of the Government of India to provide broadband connectivity to all village panchayats in the country.
- People with diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease need to take pills daily. Beneficiaries can save 50 to 75 percent monthly on medicine purchases.
- Medicines will be delivered by vehicles within 48 hours of receiving the prescription list.

### **Uvagai' Grand Festival; Tamil**

#### **Development Department**

- The World Tamil Association Grammar Award for 2023 was presented to Sellathamphi Sreekantharasa from Britain, the World Tamil Association Literary Award to Pichinikkadu Ilango from Singapore, and the World Tamil Association Linguistics Award to Thalinjaan Murugaiah from France by the Minister of Tamil Development and Information Department.
- **'Kalangkarai' Integrated Addiction Recovery Treatment and Rehabilitation Center**
- The Chief Minister inaugurated 'Kalangkarai' Integrated Addiction Recovery Treatment and Rehabilitation Centers in 25 Government Medical College Hospitals across Tamil Nadu.
- **Aim :** To completely rehabilitate those affected by substance abuse and maintain their physical and mental health necessary for them to live well in society.
- **Nodal agency :** Tamil Nadu State health Policy and Public Health Department
- Deep sea region identified in T.N. for oil, gas exploration.
- The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has identified potential hydrocarbon reserves in deep sea areas off the coasts of Tamil Nadu in the Gulf of Mannar, covering Ramanathapuram and Thoothukudi districts

### **'Chief Minister's Pharmacy' Scheme**

- This scheme has been launched in all 38 districts. A total of 1,000 'Chief Minister's Pharmacies' will be opened - 500 through entrepreneurs and 500 through the Cooperative Department.
- A total of 274 types of generic medicines, branded medicines, and nutrition packages have been procured. The Cooperative and Public Health Departments purchase and distribute medicines.
- The Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve is home to rare and endangered species such as dugongs, turtles, and marine mammals.

### **Tamil Nadu State Policy for Care of Homeless Persons with Mental Illness (HPWMI) – 2024**

- **Objective** - Ensure holistic care for HPWMI, from rescue to rehabilitation and social reintegration
- This policy is India's first comprehensive framework to streamline mental health care for the homeless, ensuring multi-department coordination and long-term social security.
- **Four Levels of Care for HPWMI:**
  - Rescue & Acute Care - Emergency response and medical intervention.
  - Intermediary Care - Recovery centers with psychiatric treatment and vocational training.
  - Long-Term Care - Sustained medical and social support.
  - Social Reintegration - Rehabilitation with livelihood and welfare benefits.
- **Helpline** - 102 designated as the official rescue helpline. Other helplines involved: 100 (Police), 104, 14416 (Health), 181 (Women Helpline).

