

# VETRI IAS STUDY CIRCLE

## Current Affairs

(A book for TNPSC Examination)

**FEBRUARY 2025 - PART 1**



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### Head Office

Old No. 52, New No. 1, 9<sup>th</sup> Street,  
F Block, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue Main Road, (Near Isha Siddhi Vinayakar Temple), Anna Nagar East – 600 102.  
**Ph: 044-2626 5326 | 98844 21666 | 98844 32666**

### Branches

#### SALEM

No. 189/1, Meyanoor Road,  
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#### KOVILPATTI

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#### THIRUCHENGODE

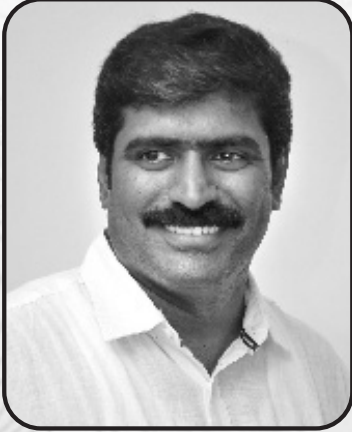
Vivekananda Educational Institutions  
Elayampalayam (Po),  
Thiruchengode (Tk),  
Namakkal (Dt) - 637205.  
Ph: 7845779908

#### TRICHY

No : 48, Karur Bypass Road,  
Chatram Bus Stand (Opp. to  
St. Joseph College)  
Trichy - 620 002.  
Ph: 9500278085  
9500278086

[www.vetriias.com](http://www.vetriias.com)

# Preface



**M. SHUNMUGAM**

Director

Vetrii IAS Study Circle.

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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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F Block New No. 1, 9<sup>th</sup> Street,  
1<sup>st</sup> Avenue Main Road, Chinthamani,  
Anna Nagar (E), Chennai – 102.

Phone : 044-2626 5326

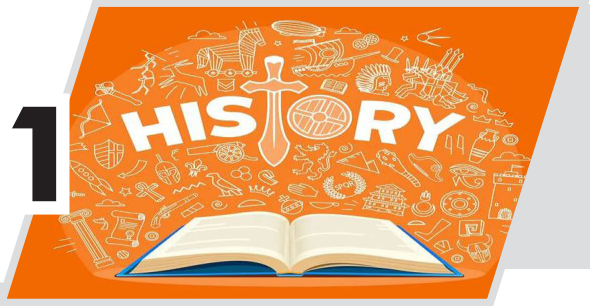
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# 1. HISTORY



## 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>

## 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.

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.

### 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

### 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
- 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

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

## 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)

## 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.

### 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.

## 1.6 APPOINTMENTS

### 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.



# 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.

## 2.2 PUBLIC AWARENESS & GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

### 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.

### 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

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

**Status of Devolution to Panchayats in States**

- 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

**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 Raje'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.

**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.

## 2.3 GOVT – WELFARE ORIENTED GOVT SCHEMES

### Prashad scheme

- Parliamentary committee has asked the government to develop a clear-cut Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)
- The service sector contributes 55.3% to the country's economy.
- After the **COVID-19 pandemic**, its growth rate has increased

### 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).

### 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)**.

### 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.

### '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.

**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

**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)
- 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 Manuscripts1
- 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.



# 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)

### 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.

**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.







# 4. ECONOMICS

## 4.1 CURRENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

### 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.

## 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.

### 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.

#### Sebi

- SEBI is essentially a statutory body of the Indian Government that was established on the 12th of April in 1992.
- 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.

## 4.3 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.

- 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.

### 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.

### 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.

- 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. Conducted 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**.

### **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.

### **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.

## 4.4 MONEY & BANKING

### IRIDAI

- 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.

## 4.5 TAX STRUCTURE IN INDIA

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

- 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.
- 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

### About Income Tax

- Individual and corporate income is taxed by the government, which relies on the money

## 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.
- Reduction in TDS & TCS rates for ease of compliance.
- Industrial & Trade Policies

#### Customs Duty Rationalization

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

#### Tax Reforms

- Income up to 12 lakh made tax-free.
- 1 lakh crore in direct tax relief.

## 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.

## 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).
- 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.

## 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.
- 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.

### 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.
- Civil Organizations (Border Roads Organisation, Coast Guard) - 28,683 crore.

### 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### 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 S

### 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

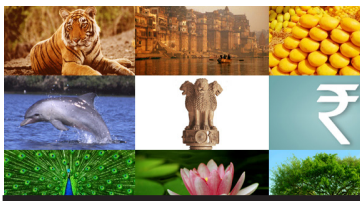
## 5.2 LATEST DISCOVERIES IN HEALTH SCIENCE

**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.





## 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

### 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.
- The scheme aims to create routes that link 80 water bodies, including ponds and dams.

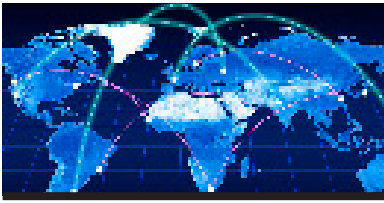
### **The Market Intervention Scheme (MIS)**

- The Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) is an 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.

### **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.



# 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.





## 8. TAMILNADU AFFAIRS

### 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 Poyyamozi 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.

### Kalaigarnar 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 "**Kalaigarnar Treasury**" (<https://tamildigitallibrary.in/kalaigarnar>) created by the Tamil Virtual Academy.

- This page contains **955** rare contents.

### **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.
- 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.

### **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.

### **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 Viralmalai 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.

### **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."

### **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 Araichaalai 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.
- 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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.