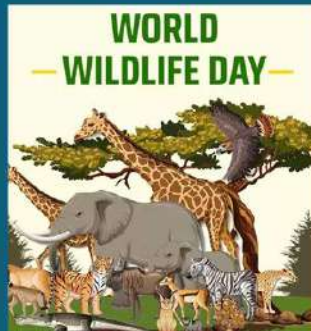
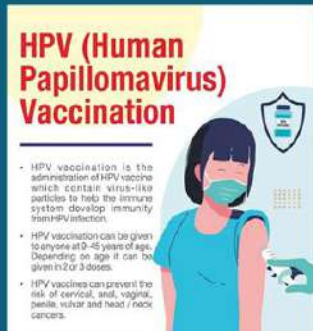
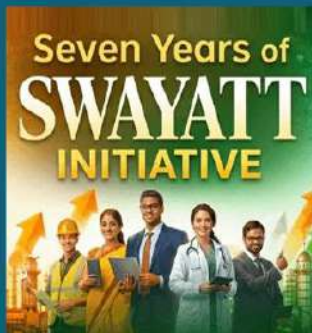


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MARCH

PART 1

VETRI IAS STUDY CIRCLE

Current Affairs

(A book for TNPSC Examination)

MARCH 2026 - PART 1



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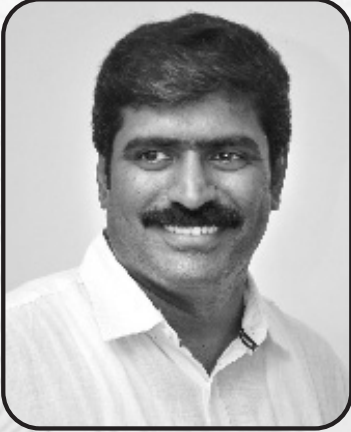
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Preface



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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.

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SCIENCE

GENERAL SCIENCE

Salar de Pajonales

- **Context:** Researchers are studying gypsum deposits in the mineral **Salar de Pajonales**, found on Earth and Mars.

About Gypsum

- Gypsum is a sedimentary rock composed mainly of calcium sulfate dihydrate ($\text{CaSO}_4 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$) and anhydrite (CaSO_4).
- It usually forms in large basins with evaporate minerals such as **anhydrite and halite**.
- In India, **marine gypsum is extracted from salt pans during salt production, mainly in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.**

Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV)

- **Context:** Scientists have developed antibodies that **effectively block Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV) in preclinical studies.**
- Epstein-Barr virus is also known as **Human Herpes Virus 4 or HHV-4**
- It is a **double-stranded DNA virus** that infects approximately 95% of adults worldwide.
- It is transmitted mainly through **saliva, and can also be transmitted through blood transfusions or organ transplants.**
- It is considered a potential trigger for multiple sclerosis and is associated with cancers such as **Burkitt lymphoma**, as well as gastric and nasopharyngeal cancers.

LATEST INVENTIONS IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Inherited Genetic Risk in Indian Breast Cancer

- **Context:** One in four Indian breast cancer patients carries an inherited genetic variant

linked to cancer risk, with the majority of these variants occurring outside the well-known **BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes.**

- 24.6% (nearly one in four) Indian breast cancer patients carry at least one pathogenic or likely pathogenic inherited genetic variant linked to cancer risk.
- Study conducted by **Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M)** in collaboration with Karkinos Healthcare, Kumaran Hospital (Chennai), and Chennai Breast Centre.

Researchers screened 97 cancer susceptibility genes, including:

- **BRCA1 and BRCA2**
- **15 genes linked to the homologous recombination repair (HRR) pathway**
- Special emphasis on **RECQL**, an emerging gene associated with breast cancer and known for population-specific patterns.
- Overall, 67% of all positive findings were in non-BRCA genes, highlighting broader genetic diversity in inherited risk.

SPACE

NavIC Setback: Failure of Atomic Clock on IRNSS-1F

- **Context:** The last working atomic clock on **IRNSS-1F** stopped functioning on 13 March 2026, according to Indian Space Research Organisation.
- This failure weakens India's regional navigation system NavIC, which relies on **atomic clocks to provide accurate positioning, navigation, and timing (PNT) services.**

Role of atomic clocks

- Atomic clocks enable satellites to **calculate precise signal timing, which is essential for determining location accurately.**

- **IRNSS-1F, launched in March 2016**, completed its 10-year design mission life on 10 March 2026, though the satellite can still provide one-way broadcast messaging services.
- After the latest failure, only 3 satellites have working atomic clocks.
- The original atomic clocks used in NavIC satellites were imported from SpectraTime.
- NavIC provides navigation services over India and up to 1,500 km beyond its borders, unlike global systems such as Global Positioning System.
- ISRO plans to deploy new satellites with indigenously developed rubidium atomic clocks. NVS-01 (May 2023) - carries India-made rubidium clock.
- NavIC SPS signals are interoperable with the other global navigation satellite system (GNSS) signals namely GPS, Glonass, Galileo and BeiDou.

ISRO – Cryogenic Engine Test

▪ **Context:** A cryogenic engine test was conducted at the ISRO Propulsion Complex in **Mahendragiri, Tirunelveli district.**

- The cryogenic engine was successfully tested at sea level, generating a thrust of 22 tons.
- Prior to this, the engine had only been tested up to a thrust level of 19 tons.
- **This engine is utilized in the upper stage of the LVM3 rocket.**

Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC)

- To meet the positioning, navigation and timing requirements of the nation, **ISRO has established a regional navigation satellite system** called Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC).
- NavIC was erstwhile known as **Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS).**
- **NavIC is designed with a constellation of 7 satellites** and a network of ground stations operating 24 x 7.
- Three satellites of the constellation are placed in geostationary orbit, at 32.5°E, 83°E and 129.5°E respectively, and four satellites are placed in inclined geosynchronous orbit with equatorial crossing of 55°E and 111.75°E respectively, with inclination of 29° (two satellites in each plane).
- The ground network consists of control centre, precise timing facility, range and integrity monitoring stations, two-way ranging stations, etc.
- This test was conducted to upgrade the C-32 stage, enabling it to carry heavier satellites into space.
- The C-32 engine used in this test set a new record by successfully undergoing hot testing 20 times.
- The test confirmed the engine's capability to be reignited after reaching space.
- Consequently, a powerful engine required for the Gaganyaan mission and future heavy rocket launches is now ready.

About Cryogenic Engines

- A cryogenic engine is a type of rocket engine that utilizes **liquefied gases as both fuel and oxidizer.**
- The term "cryogenic" implies that the gases must be stored at **extremely low temperatures (below -150°C).**
- **Liquid Oxygen (LOX) and Liquid Hydrogen (LH₂)** are the propellants commonly used in these engines.

GEOGRAPHY

ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

Cheetah Reintroduction Programme

- **Context:** Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change released nine cheetahs (6 females, 3 males) into enclosures at **Kuno National Park**.
- This was the **third batch of cheetahs to arrive from an African nation** after the first batch of eight big cats from Namibia in September 2022, and another 12 from South Africa in February 2023.

About Project Cheetah

- India initiated Project Cheetah in 2022 to bring back cheetahs, which had been extinct in the country for more than seven decades.
- The programme functions under Project Tiger and is recognized as the **world's first effort to relocate a large wild carnivore across continents**.

Objectives

- Re-establish Cheetah Populations: Create stable, self-sustaining breeding groups of

cheetahs in protected areas that fall within their former natural range in India.

- **Ecosystem Restoration:** Use the cheetah as a flagship species to revive and conserve grasslands, open forests, and savanna landscapes.
- **Boost Local Economies:** Encourage eco-development and wildlife tourism to generate employment and improve livelihoods of communities living near these habitats.
- **Community Participation & Conflict Reduction:** Increase public awareness, involve local communities in conservation efforts, and minimize incidents of human-wildlife conflict.

Silent Valley National Park

- **Context :** A comprehensive bird survey conducted in **Silent Valley National Park** recorded 192 bird species

About Silent Valley National Park

- Silent Valley National Park is situated along the southwestern corner of the **Nilgiri Hills in southern India, within the state of Kerala**.
- The park forms the core area of the **Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, which was recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2012**.

INDIAN POLITY

Controller General of Accounts

- **Context:** In New Delhi, the Controller General of India launched the Government Bank Dashboard and the Government Bank Manual to improve government banking transactions.

Controller General of India

- The Controller General of India serves as the **Principal Accounting Advisor Government of India**.
- It was set up in **October 1975**.
- The Controller General of Accounts oversees the management of the central government treasury and conducts internal audits.
- It functions under the **Department of Expenditure of the Ministry of Finance**.

Rajya Sabha Election

- **Context :** The Election Commission of India (ECI) has **announced the schedule for the biennial elections to the Rajya Sabha, which will be held to fill 37 seats set to fall vacant across 10 States in April 2026**.

Election process of Rajya Sabha

- The **maximum strength** of the Rajya Sabha is **250 members**.
- **12 members are nominated by the President of India** for their expertise in literature, science, art, or social service.
- The **remaining members are elected representatives of States and Union Territories**.
- Members are **elected indirectly by the elected members of State Legislative Assemblies (MLAs)**.
- The election is conducted through the **system**

of proportional representation by means of the Single Transferable Vote (STV).

- **MLAs of Delhi and Puducherry** elect Rajya Sabha members from their respective Union Territories.
- Some Union Territories such as **Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Chandigarh, and Ladakh** do not have representation in the Rajya Sabha.
- **Jammu and Kashmir** has representation in the Rajya Sabha.
- Unlike the **Lok Sabha**, whose members are **directly elected by citizens**, Rajya Sabha members are **indirectly elected by elected representatives of State Assemblies**.

Rajya Sabha Member Qualification

- **Minimum age** to become a Rajya Sabha MP is **30 years**.
- A candidate must be an **elector in a parliamentary constituency of the State or Union Territory** from which they are contesting.
- The **term of office is six years**.
- **One-third of the members retire every two years**, ensuring periodic renewal.
- The Rajya Sabha is a **permanent House and is never dissolved**.

Opposition Moves No-Confidence

Motion against Lok Sabha Speaker

- **Context:** The Lok Sabha took up a resolution moved by the Opposition seeking the removal of Speaker Om Birla, with both the Treasury and Opposition benches trading sharp accusations over the neutrality of the Chair.

The process for removal of the Speaker

- According to **Article 94(c)** under the Constitution, the Speaker can be removed only

through a resolution passed by a majority of all the members of the Lok Sabha, not merely those present and voting.

- This high threshold reflects the intent to safeguard the stability and dignity of the office.
- The process begins when a member submits a written notice to the Secretary-General of the Lok Sabha seeking removal.
- **At least 14 days' notice** must be given before the motion can be taken up. Once admitted, the motion requires the support of at least 50 members to proceed for discussion in the House.
- The procedural framework governing this process is laid down in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, specifically Rules 200 to 203.
- The rules mandate that the resolution must clearly state the charges against the Speaker.
- During the debate on such a motion, the Speaker may participate in the proceedings as a member of the House, and while the Speaker can vote on the resolution in the first instance, he/she cannot exercise their vote in case of a tie.
- No-confidence motions against the Speaker have been extremely rare in India's parliamentary history. **Only three such attempts** have occurred – in **1954, against G. V. Mavalankar; in 1966, against Hukam Singh; and in 1987, against Balram Jakhar**. In all three cases, the motions failed.

Euthanasia Case

- Context: The Supreme Court of India has allowed passive euthanasia.
- Harish Rana was in a coma for 13 years, so his parents filed a petition seeking permission for euthanasia.

- The Supreme Court of India, a bench of Justices J.P. Parthiwala and K.V. Viswanathan, allowed the removal of life-sustaining devices based on the recommendation of a medical committee.
- The constitutional basis for passive euthanasia in India is found in Article 21 of the Constitution of India.
- It guarantees the 'right to life and personal liberty'. The Supreme Court has interpreted this right to include not just survival but also living with dignity.

Chief Election Commissioner Removal

- **Context:** Opposition parties are considering moving a motion to remove **Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar from office**.
- As per Article 324(5) of the Constitution of India, the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) can be removed from office only on the basis of the procedure and reasons used for the removal of a Supreme Court judge.

Process for removal of Chief Election

Commissioner

- A resolution seeking removal can be introduced in either House of Parliament.
- The resolution requires the support of at least 100 members in the Lok Sabha or at least 50 members in the Rajya Sabha.
- Once the resolution is passed, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha or the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha will constitute an inquiry committee to investigate the allegations.
- If the inquiry committee confirms the allegations, the resolution will be put to a vote in Parliament.
- The resolution must be passed by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting in

both the Houses. After both houses approve the resolution, the **President will issue the final order of impeachment.**

Governor of Tamil Nadu

▪ **Context:** Kerala Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, who was appointed by President Droupadi Murmu to discharge the functions of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, assumed his gubernatorial office at Lok Bhavan in Chennai.

▪ **Chief Justice of the Madras High Court Sushrut Arvind Dharmadhikari** administered the oath of office to Mr. Arlekar.

▪ **Part VI, Article 153-** Governors of States. There shall be a Governor for each State: Provided that nothing in this article shall prevent the appointment of the same person as Governor for two or more States.

▪ The Governor is the **chief executive authority of a state.** However, similar to the President at the national level, the Governor mainly functions as a ceremonial or constitutional head.

▪ The Governor also acts as a representative of the central government, which gives the position a dual character.

▪ Generally, every state has its own Governor. However, the **7th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1956 permits the appointment of the same individual as Governor for two or more states.**

▪ Although the Governor is largely a nominal head of the state executive, the office plays a significant role in the state's political system through a range of **executive, legislative, and judicial powers.**

Supplementary Demands for Grants

▪ **Context:** The Lok Sabha has cleared the second set of Supplementary Demands for Grants for 2025–26. During this process, Union Finance Minister, **proposed the establishment of an Economic Stabilisation Fund (ESF).**

Economic Stabilisation Fund (ESF)

▪ The proposed ESF will have an allocation of Rs.1 lakh crore.

▪ Its objective is to enable India to deal with global economic shocks, unexpected supply-chain disruptions, and other external crises.

About Supplementary Demands for Grants

▪ These are additional funds sought by the government when the amount initially approved by Parliament through the Appropriation Act for a particular service during the financial year proves inadequate.

▪ The proposal is presented by the President before both Houses of Parliament and must be approved before the end of the financial year.

▪ Part V, Article 115- Supplementary, additional or excess grants

INDIAN ECONOMY

India's GST Collection Rises 8.1% in February

- **Context:** Gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections increased by 8.1% year-on-year, crossing Rs.1.83 lakh crore in February.

Domestic vs Import Revenue

- Gross domestic revenue rose 5.3% to approximately Rs.1.36 lakh crore.
- Gross revenue from imports jumped 17.2% to Rs.47,837 crore, driving overall growth.

Net GST Collection

- Net GST revenue stood at over Rs.1.61 lakh crore, reflecting a 7.9% annual increase.

GST Rate Rationalisation

- GST rates on about 375 items were reduced.
- The earlier four tax slabs (5%, 12%, 18%, 28%) were merged into two main slabs – **5% and 18%**.
- A **new 40% slab** was introduced for select ultra-luxury goods and tobacco products.

India's Industrial Growth

- **Context:** India's industrial activity **slowed to a three-month low of 4.8% in January 2026**, dragged down by a broad-based slowdown across manufacturing, mining, electricity, and consumer-facing sectors.

Manufacturing Sector

- Growth eased to 4.8% in January 2026.
- Down from 8.4% in December 2025.
- Also lower than 5.8% in January 2025.

Mining Sector

- Growth slowed to 4.3% in January.
- This follows two months of accelerating growth.

Electricity Sector

- Growth moderated to 5.1% in January.
- Down from 6.9% in December 2025.
- Still higher than 2.4% in January 2025.

Infrastructure Sector

- Growth accelerated to 13.7% in January 2026.
- Fastest expansion since August 2023.
- **The only broad sector showing improved momentum.**

About Index of Industrial Production (IIP)

- The **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** is a key economic measure that tracks short-term movements in the output of a selected group of industrial products in India. It indicates how the country's industrial sector – **comprising manufacturing, mining, and electricity** – is performing over time.

- Published by the **National Statistical Office (NSO) under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)**, Government of India.

- **Base Year:** Currently uses **2011-12 as the base year** (updated from the earlier base year of 2004-05).

- Covers three major sectors: **Mining, Manufacturing and Electricity.**

- **Objective:** Designed to track industrial output trends, support government policy formulation, and serve as an early signal of overall economic momentum.

- **Frequency of Release:** Published every month, typically with a lag of about one month.

- **Economic Significance:** Plays an important role in assessing sector-wise growth patterns, understanding inflationary pressures, and evaluating the broader progress of industrial development in the country.

Government Bank Dashboard and Government Bank Manu

- **Context:** The Ministry of Finance has introduced the **Government Bank Dashboard and the Government Bank Manual** to strengthen governance and streamline operations in banks that manage government-related transactions.

Government Bank Dashboard

- A unified digital system designed to monitor government banking transactions and track fund utilisation in real time, ensuring greater transparency and efficiency.

Government Bank Manual

- A comprehensive guideline document that lays down uniform procedures, reporting requirements, and strict timelines for reconciliation, applicable to both public and private sector banks handling government business.

Objective

- These measures seek to eliminate procedural confusion, reduce operational vulnerabilities, and create consistent performance standards across all participating banks.
- The initiatives mark a shift from a corrective, after-the-fact supervisory approach to a preventive framework focused on continuous, real-time monitoring and stronger institutional accountability.

Sixteenth Finance Commission (2026–31)

- **Context:** The Sixteenth Finance Commission (16th FC), **chaired by Arvind Panagariya**, submitted its final report covering the award period 2026–31.
- The Finance Commission of India is constituted under **Article 280** of the Constitution to

regulate fiscal relations between the Union and the States.

- Its task includes determining: Vertical devolution (Centre–State tax share), and Horizontal distribution formula (division among states).

Vertical Tax Devolution – 41%

- The Commission retained the states' share of the divisible central tax pool at 41%, continuing the arrangement recommended by the 15th FC.

Revised Horizontal Distribution Formula

- Introduced a 10% weight for Contribution to GDP, calculated using the square root of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP).
- This replaces the earlier Tax Effort parameter used in previous formulas.

Grants to Local Governments – ₹7.9 Lakh Crore

- Significant allocations to rural and urban local bodies.
- 80% as unconditional basic grants.
- 20% tied to performance metrics.

Disaster Management Funding – ₹2.04 Lakh Crore

- Recommended corpus for State Disaster Relief and Mitigation Funds.
- Cost-sharing pattern: 75:25 (Centre: State) for general states, 90:10 for Himalayan and North-Eastern states.

Urbanisation Incentive

- Proposed a Rs.10,000 crore “Urbanisation Premium”.
- Objective: Encourage integration of peri-urban villages into larger municipal bodies to support planned urban growth.

Fiscal Consolidation Roadmap

- Centre to reduce fiscal deficit to 3.5% of GDP by 2030–31.

- States required to strictly maintain a 3% of GSDP deficit ceiling

SEBI to Strengthen Market Surveillance Using AI

- **Context:** The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has decided to intensify oversight of stock market manipulation and cyber-enabled financial frauds by leveraging advanced technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- The move aims to detect irregular trading patterns, insider misconduct, and digital fraud more effectively.

About SEBI

- SEBI is the apex regulator of India's securities and capital markets.
- Initially set up in 1988, it was granted statutory authority through the SEBI Act, 1992.
- It functions under the administrative supervision of the Ministry of Finance, Government of India.

Objectives

- Safeguard the interests of investors in securities.
- Foster orderly growth and development of the capital market.
- Ensure proper regulation of stock exchanges and other securities market intermediaries.

Composition of SEBI

- A Chairperson appointed by the Central Government.
- Two officials nominated from the Ministry of Finance.
- One representative from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- Five additional members, with at least three serving as whole-time members.

Powers of SEBI

▪ Quasi-Judicial Authority

- SEBI can adjudicate cases involving fraudulent activities and unfair trade practices.
- It has the authority to issue orders and penalties to ensure fairness and integrity in the securities market.

▪ Quasi-Executive Authority

- Empowered to inspect account books, records, and documents of market participants.
- Can conduct investigations, enforce compliance, and initiate action against entities violating regulations.

▪ Quasi-Legislative Authority

- Authorized to frame regulations and guidelines to protect investors.

18% increase in foreign direct investment

- **Context:** Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows into India increased by **18% to US\$ 47.87 billion (\$47.87 billion)** in the first three quarters of the current financial year 2025-26.

- Investment from the **US has doubled to \$7.80 billion** compared to the same period in the financial year 2024-25.

- **Singapore is at the top of the total investment** with \$17.65 billion. It is followed by the US and Mauritius.

- **Maharashtra continues to be at the top** with \$15.38 billion in attracting foreign investment state-wise.

- Karnataka (\$11.20 billion), Gujarat (\$5.00 billion), Tamil Nadu (\$3.89 billion), and Haryana (\$3.84 billion) are in the top five.

India's Export Growth and Sector-wise Performance

- **Context:** India has built a **strong and resilient export-driven economy** by utilising its sound banking sector, substantial foreign exchange reserves, and a stable current account position.
- **Overall Exports:** India's total exports **increased by 6.15%** year-on-year, reaching \$720.76 billion during April-January 2025-26.
- **Services Exports:** Exports in the services sector rose to \$354.13 billion, registering a 10.57% year-on-year growth.
- **Trade Partnerships:** According to the UNCTAD Trade and Development Report 2025, India ranks third among Global South economies in terms of diversity of trade partnerships, after China and the United Arab Emirates.
- **Free Trade Agreements:** Over the past three years, India has finalised nine Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) covering 38 countries.
- **Market Access:** These FTAs grant mostly duty-free access to markets that together account for around 70% of global GDP.
- **Pharmaceuticals:** Often called the "Pharmacy of the World," India ranks **third globally in pharmaceutical exports** by volume and 11th by value.
- **Automobiles:** The automobile sector, which provides employment to over 30 million people, recorded around 30% growth in exports from FY21 to FY25.
- **Textiles:** India stands as the sixth-largest exporter of textiles and apparel, contributing about 4% to global textile exports.
- **Defence:** Defence exports have increased nearly 23 times, rising from less than ₹1,000 crore in 2014 to ₹23,622 crore in FY25, with exports now reaching more than 100 countries.

Economic growth of states

- **Context:** Among the 4 largest economic states of India, **Maharashtra has recorded the lowest economic growth in the last 4 years.** However, Maharashtra still ranks first in terms of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP).
- The GSDP of Maharashtra is estimated to be Rs. 42,67,771 crore in the financial year 2024-25.
- **Karnataka has topped the list with a growth of about 65%** in the post-Corona period (2021-22 to 2024-25).
- Karnataka's GSDP has increased from Rs. 17,02,227 crore to Rs. 28,09,063 crore.
- **Gujarat has come second with a growth of 48%.**
- Gujarat's economic value has increased from Rs. 18,79,826 crore to Rs. 27,90,000 crore.
- **Tamil Nadu has secured the third position with a growth of 47%.**
- **The GSDP of Tamil Nadu has increased from Rs.21,36,351 crore to Rs.31,55,096 crore.**

Sector-wise Export Performance

- **Electronics:** In FY25, electronics became India's third-largest export category, following engineering goods and petroleum products.
- **Mobile Phones:** India has become the **second-largest manufacturer of mobile phones globally**, with production increasing 28 times between FY15 and FY25.
- **Petroleum:** India holds the **7th position worldwide** in refined petroleum exports and is also counted among the top five refining countries.

RBI Conducts Open Market Operations to Increase Liquidity

- **Context:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) carried out Open Market Operations (OMO) by purchasing Government Securities (G-Secs) worth ₹50,000 crore to add liquidity to the banking system.

Open Market Operations (OMO)

- Open Market Operations are monetary policy instruments used by the RBI to control the amount of liquidity in the financial system.
- Through OMOs, the RBI buys or sells Government Securities in the open market.

Types of OMO

- **OMO Purchase:** When the RBI purchases government bonds from banks, money flows into the banking system, thereby increasing liquidity.
- **OMO Sale:** When the RBI sells government bonds to banks, money is taken out of circulation, helping to reduce excess liquidity in the market.

Government Securities

- Government Securities are tradable financial instruments issued by the Central or State Governments to borrow funds from the market.

Types of G-Secs

- **Short-term securities:** Known as Treasury Bills, which usually have a maturity period of less than one year.

- **Long-term securities:** Referred to as government bonds or dated securities, with maturity of one year or more.

Issuance in India

- The Central Government issues both Treasury Bills and long-term bonds.
- State Governments issue only long-term securities, commonly called State Development Loans (SDLs).

Consumer Price Index Inflation

- **Context:** The country's retail inflation rose to 3.21% in February. In January, it stood at 2.74%.

- This information is indicated by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) statistics released by the National Statistics Office.

- The rise in the prices of food items is the primary reason for the increase in inflation.

- Food inflation, which was 2.13% in January, rose to 3.47% in February.

- Inflation was recorded at 3.37% in rural areas and 3.02% in urban areas.

About Retail Inflation

- Retail inflation refers to the rise in the prices of goods and services (such as food, clothing, housing, and fuel) that consumers purchase from stores for their daily use.

- It is measured using the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

TAMIL NADU

INITIATIVES / SCHEMES

Naagam app

- **Context:** Naagam app, a new mobile platform designed to streamline snake rescue operations and strengthen scientific data collection.
- Unveiled in July 2025 by senior officials of the Forest Department, the app was meant to facilitate technology-driven wildlife rescue efforts in the State.
- The Forest Department has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Madras Crocodile Bank Trust (MCBT) to manage the application and conduct structured training programmes for rescuers.
- The new app is expected to streamline rescue requests and ensure quicker response times, in addition to generating data to study rescue patterns and snake distribution.
- Currently, access to the app is limited to trained rescuers, with new features being added ahead of the public launch.
- The application is modelled after SARPA, Kerala's snake rescue platform.

Project to create Maragatha Pooncholai in 100 villages

- **Context:** 23 new Maragatha Pooncholai were opened in 10 districts under the leadership of the Ministry of Forests and Environment.

"Maragatha Pooncholai in 100 Villages"

Project

- "Maragatha Pooncholai in 100 Villages" Project was announced in 2022-23.
- The objective is to create one hectare of community forest in every village under the Green Tamil Nadu Movement.

- Each Margatha Pooncholai will function as a village forest, ecological recreation complex and environmental learning centre.
- With the 23 new complexes, a total of 98 Maragatha Pooncholai have been established in Tamil Nadu.
- The project will increase rural green cover, improve groundwater levels, conserve biodiversity, create ecological commons accessible to the public and strengthen climate resilience.
- The Green Tamil Nadu Movement aims to increase the forest and tree cover of Tamil Nadu to 33% of the state's land area.

As per ISFR 2023 released by FSI, the forest and tree cover of Tamil Nadu is

- Forest Area: 26,450 sq km (20.34%)
- Area of trees: 5,371 sq km (4.13%)
- Total area of forest and trees: 31,821 sq km (24.47%)

Chennai Valarchi Thittam

- **Context:** The Deputy Chief Minister inaugurated the Chennai Middle School building, bus stand and sports complex, built by CMDA at a cost of Rs. 53 crore under the North Chennai Development Project.

- This project is a special project implemented with a budget of ₹1,000 crore over 3 years (2023-26) for infrastructure and social development in the North Chennai region of Tamil Nadu.

- **The project aims to modernize basic facilities such as health, education, drinking water, electricity, sports, housing and roads.**

Tamil Nadu Policy and Governance Experiential Learning Centre (TNPAGE)

- **Context:** The Tamil Nadu Policy and Governance Experiential Learning Centre

(TNPAGE), built by the Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission under the **Singara Chennai 2.0 fund**, was inaugurated on the **Nungambakkam Highway in Chennai**.

- TNPAGE is the first governance experiential learning centre set up in India.
- It is designed as a public knowledge platform that provides easy-to-understand and virtual experiences of government policies, development indicators and governance decisions.

Senior Citizens' Home

- **Context:** Chief Minister inaugurated a home for senior citizens established by the **Arulmigu Devi Balamman and Ilankalamman Temple at Kolathur in Chennai**.
- **TVS Motor** is providing funds for the maintenance of the home which would accommodate those aged above 60 and whose families could not afford their maintenance.
- In 2021, the government said it would construct homes for senior citizens at three temples at **Kolathur in Chennai, Palani, and Palayamkottai in Tirunelveli**.

Thiranagam

- **Context:** Thiranagam set up in 23 districts of Tamil Nadu were inaugurated via video conferencing.
- Thiranagam were set up in 23 districts to coordinate activities under the **Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation and the Tamil Nadu Women Employment and Security Scheme**.
- These will function as one-stop centres for **skill development, career guidance and employment related services**.

Naan Mudhalvan Project Centres

- **Context:** **11 Naan Mudhalvan Project** University Operational Centres of Tamil Nadu were inaugurated via video conferencing.
- Naan Mudhalvan Project Operational Centres have been set up in **11 government universities including Anna University**.
- These centres will help in developing the skills of students and guiding them according to the industry requirements.

About Naan Mudhalvan Project

- The project was launched on **1 March 2022**.
- It is a project implemented by the **Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation**.
- It is a flagship initiative designed to provide **training, skill development and career guidance to over 10 lakh students and youth** across the state annually.

Ship building Policy

- **Context:** The **Tamil Nadu government unveiled its Ship building Policy 2026** introducing a capital subsidy and incentive framework backed by a special purpose vehicle to attract global shipyards and position the state as a hub for shipbuilding.
- The five year policy seeks to build large, technologically advanced and sustainable shipyards capable of producing high value ocean going vessels, including Very Large Crude Carriers.

Objectives

- Strengthen the State's maritime manufacturing ecosystem.
- Position Tamil Nadu as a major shipbuilding hub in India's blue economy.
- Develop integrated shipbuilding clusters including: Design, Fabrication, Repair, Research & Development, Training.

Industries Eligible for Incentives

- Shipyards involved in:
 - Large ocean-going vessels for international and coastal trade.
 - Medium specialised vessels.
 - Defence and naval crafts and coast guard vessels.
 - Submarines and underwater transport equipment.
 - Mechanised fishing boats (excluding trawlers and FRP boats).
 - Ship maintenance, repair and recycling (excluding recycled steel processing).

Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)

- Government will create an SPV under SIPCOT.
- The SPV will:
 - Facilitate establishment of shipyards in identified clusters.
 - Invite a Centre-nominated agency as a major stakeholder.
 - Enable investment and infrastructure support.

Agroforestry Policy

- **Context:** Chief Minister released the **Tamil Nadu Agroforestry Policy 2026**, aimed at promoting the cultivation of high value trees such as teak, sandalwood, red sanders and rosewood on agricultural land parcels, simplifying procedures for harvesting and marketing timber and expanding the **states forest and tree cover to 33%**.
- The policy aims to ensure ecological resilience by promoting trees that improve soil health, conserve water and enhance climate resilience, aligning with the goals for environmental sustainability and integrated growth.

Objectives

- Improve forest cover
- Increase farmer's income
- Strengthen sustainability
- Creation of a new board for promoting agroforestry
- Simplify procedures for harvesting and marketing timber

Trees to be promoted for cultivation

- High value trees like Sandalwood, red sanders, rosewood
- Timber species like teak, mahogany, Vengai, poovarsu, Kumil, Vagai, Sisoo
- Industrial wood species such as alianthus, acrocarpus, silver oak, melia, casuarina
- Oilseeds like neem, pungam, punnai, simarouba, mahua
- Non-timber forest product trees like naval, palamyhra, tamarind, kadukal

Cervical Cancer Vaccination

- **Context:** The **Public Health Department** has announced that the cervical cancer vaccination program for girls has been completed in **4 districts of Tamil Nadu**. A total of 30,209 girls have been vaccinated.
- Girls studying in **government and government-aided schools** were vaccinated in **2 installments**.
- **Cervical cancer is mostly caused by human papillomavirus (HPV) infection.**
- In Tamil Nadu, **Dharmapuri and Perambalur** have the highest incidence of cervical cancer. That is, 36 per lakh women are affected in those districts.
- The rate is next to that in Ariyalur at 29.9. As far as Chennai is concerned, it is 13 and the total cervical cancer incidence rate in Tamil Nadu is 14 per lakh.

About Cervical Cancer Vaccination

- The HPV vaccination program for **girls aged 9-14 years** was launched in Tamil Nadu on January 27, 2026.
- For the first time in India, free cervical cancer vaccination has been administered to pre-pubescent girls in **Tiruvannamalai, Ariyalur, Perambalur and Dharmapuri** in Tamil Nadu.

Tamil Nadu Integrated Drinking Water Redressal Centre

- **Context:** The Chief Minister inaugurated the Tamil Nadu Integrated Drinking Water Redressal Centre 'Punal' to take action on complaints related to drinking water supply across Tamil Nadu.
- This centre has been set up to **receive all complaints related to drinking water** supply across Tamil Nadu at one place.
- This centre has been established by the **Tamil Nadu Drinking Water Supply and Drainage Board**.
- The public can report their complaints through the toll-free number **1916, Punal website**.

Tamil Nadu Launches Women Entrepreneur Empowerment Scheme and Major Development Initiatives

- **Context:** Chief Minister has launched the **Tamil Nadu Women Entrepreneur Empowerment Scheme (TWEES)**, designed by the MSME Department, which **aims to encourage one lakh women** to take up entrepreneurship in five years.

Tamil Nadu Women Entrepreneur Empowerment Scheme

- **Scheme for women/Transgender entrepreneurs**, especially from economically and socially disadvantaged backgrounds.

- Applicants must be of age **between 18-55 years**. No minimum educational qualifications required
- Manufacturing / Trading / Service projects with **maximum Project costs Rs.10.00 lakh**.
- Individual Based Capital Subsidy @ **25% of the Project cost (Maximum Rs.2.00 lakh)**
- Must be a Domicile of Tamil Nadu. No Ceiling on Income Limit
- **Kalaingar Kaivinai Thittam** women beneficiary intended to avail loan for expansion can top up under this scheme.

Welfare, Conservation and Cultural Initiatives in Tamil Nadu

- Chief Minister virtually inaugurated welfare centres for construction workers and elderly citizens, set up by the **Labour Welfare and Skill Development Department**.
- Chief Minister released the **Tiruchirappalli Master Plan 2045** and the **Thoothukudi Master Plan 2045**.
- Chief Minister laid the foundation for the construction of a **Mangrove Conservation Centre at Pichavaram in Cuddalore district**, an **International Migratory Bird Centre at Marakkanam in Villupuram district** under the Tamil Nadu Sustainably Harnessing Ocean Resources and Blue Economy, and a **Conservation Centre for the Nilgiri Tahr in Coimbatore**.
- Chief Minister also presented the Dr. A.J.T. Johnsingh Wildlife Conservation Award to the son of late veterinarian **Vaidyanathan Krishnamurthy**.
- The Tamil Nadu government had nationalised the works of late **Periyarist V. Anaimuthu and writer Erode Tamilanban**.

- Chief Minister also released the translation of **73 works of B.R. Ambedkar from Marathi to Tamil.**

Kanavu illam Thittam

- Context: Three writers were given high-income category flats by the Tamil Nadu Housing Board under the Knavi illam Thittam.

Writers who were given houses

- **Thayammal Aravanan**, winner of the Classical Tamil Award
- **Ponninan**, winner of the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1994 for his **novel Puthiya Darishanagal**
- **A.R. Venkatachalapathy**, winner of the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2024 for his book **“Tirunelveli Ezhuchiyum, VOC 1908”**

About Kanavu illam thittam

- The Tamil Nadu government’s Kanavu illam thittam has been implemented **since 2021.**
- The Kanavu illam thittam is an initiative by the **Tamil Nadu government** to encourage **writers from Tamil Nadu who have received national awards such as the Jnanpith, Sahitya Akademi, state literary awards, and awards from renowned global organizations** to provide houses in their district of residence or in the district of their choice.

Those eligible to apply under this project

- Sahitya Akademi Award
- Tamil writers who receive the Jnanpith Award
- Members of the Central Institute of Semmozhi Tamil Research Tamil writers who have received and are receiving awards such as the
- Tolkappiyar Award
- Kalaignar M. Karunanidhi Classical Tamil Award
- Nobel Prize

Kalaignar Kanavu Illam Scheme

- Context: The Chief Minister announced that a total of 7 lakh houses will be built for the poor in Tamil Nadu by 2030.
- Under the “Kalaignar Kanavu Illam” scheme, **5 lakh houses will be built in rural areas and 2 lakh houses in urban areas by 2030.**

Development Plans of TN government

- Under the “**Nalamudan Tamil Nadu 2030**” plan, steps will be taken to provide adequate health insurance to all and special medical camps will be held for early detection of diseases like diabetes, high blood pressure and cancer.
- Special measures will be taken to **reduce maternal mortality and mental health counseling centers will be set up in every district.**
- In the agriculture sector, it is planned to **increase the net cultivation area to 50 lakh hectares and provide soil health cards to 43 lakh farmers.**
- **Organic farming will be expanded to 17,000 hectares and bio-farming to one lakh hectares.**
- To improve water conservation, micro-irrigation will be expanded to 21 lakh hectares and **1,000 rainwater harvesting structures will be set up in the Western and Eastern Ghats.**
- Steps will be taken to increase food production to 125 lakh metric tons.
- 1,000 model schools will be expanded under the “**Vetri palligam Scheme**”.
- In all government and government-aided schools Smart classrooms will be set up and steps will be taken to **increase the enrollment rate in higher education to 90 percent by 2030.**

- Artificial intelligence technologies will be introduced in the education sector and AI labs will be set up in every educational institution.
- It was said that steps will be taken to **provide housing land patta to every Adi Dravidian and tribal family without a house.**
- It was announced that a new scheme called **“Uttamar Gandhi Model Villages”** will be introduced to **improve rural development.**
- By **2030** The target has been set to make **Tamil Nadu a trillion dollar economy** state by the year.
- **Target Group: 14-year-old girls** are being vaccinated to protect against Cervical Cancer caused by Human Papillomavirus (HPV).
- **Pilot Districts:** The programme started in **Ariyalur, Tiruvannamalai, Perambalur, and Dharmapuri.**
- The vaccination programme, which was started in the four districts in campaign mode, was conducted in **government and government-aided schools.**
- **Nationwide Initiative: The Government of India launched a national HPV vaccination campaign on February 28.**

TNExpat

- **Context:** Industries Minister of Tamil Nadu, launched **TNExpat**, a digital platform for expatriates and international visitors.
- The platform **helps global users explore living, working, culture, and lifestyle in Tamil Nadu.**
- The website is available in **five languages** to reach a wider international audience.
- **Guidance Tamil Nadu**, the State’s investment promotion agency, is setting up a dedicated **“Expat Desk” to support expatriates.**
- The initiative aims to improve ease of living and integration for foreign professionals in the State.
- **Vaccination Facilities:** Vaccines are now available at Primary Health Centres, Government Hospitals, and Government Medical College Hospitals.
- **Vaccine Used:** A **single-dose Gardasil HPV vaccine is given to 14-year-old girls.**

Tamil Nadu Unveils Statue Reflecting Growth of Education Sector

- **Context:** Chief Minister inaugurated the **“Kattranai Thoorum Arivu”** statue installed at Marina Beach at a cost of Rs1.43 crore.
- The statue installed by the **Tamil Nadu Text book and Educational Services Corporation** is aimed at showcasing the development of the state’s education department.
- The release noted that TN continues to excel in the field of education through continuous improvements in educational planning, administration and infrastructure from **class I to XII.**
- In the centre of the sculpture, a man and a woman are seen rising towards the sky. They are depicted overcoming the barriers of poverty, circumstance and geography.

HPV Vaccination Programme

- **Context:** The State government’s Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination programme reached **81% coverage in the four pilot districts of Ariyalur, Tiruvannamalai, Perambalur and Dharmapuri.**
- The HPV vaccination programme was launched on **January 27 by the Tamil Nadu State government.**

- **The sculpture symbolizes the moment when learning transforms one's aspirations and dreams into achievements.**
- The figures of a boy, a girl and a differently-abled student at the base of this sculpture complex affirm that education is a birth right for every child and that no learner is left behind.
- From this strong base, figures representing the diverse life paths that education opens up rise up - a doctor, an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, a woman pilot, an engineer and a sports person.
- Learning empowers a person to serve society, lead, innovate and excel. The banner below the statue states that the lesson all of this teaches us is that if a child is educated, their future will be bright.

TN-CReSt Website

- **Context:** Adyar Cancer Research Institute has launched a new website called TN-CReSt.
- This website has been created to **monitor cancer incidence in Tamil Nadu.**

Key Features

- Tamil Nadu Cancer Registry data can be easily **accessed online by the public and researchers.**
- Its objective is to help in collecting and **analyzing cancer data.**

Udangudi Thermal Power Station

- **Context:** The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu inaugurated a new thermal power station **established at Udangudi in the Thoothukudi district, built at a cost of ₹13,077 crore.**
- This power station comprises two units, each with a **capacity of 660 megawatts.**
- It is a high-efficiency thermal power station constructed using **supercritical technology.**
- To facilitate the transport of coal to the power station, a jetty has been constructed in the open sea, located 9 kilometers offshore.
- Since a reduced quantity of coal is required to generate one unit of electricity, carbon dioxide emissions are reduced by 25–30%.
- Through this project, the state's power generation capacity will increase, thereby reducing the need to procure electricity from the open market.

TNSCST – ICMR Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

- **Context:** The Tamil Nadu State Council for Science and Technology (TNSCST) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen initiatives related to **medical research and development projects within academia and the bio-industry, as well as to enhance Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) protection.**
- This agreement was established with the specific objective of reinforcing medical research, development, and the protection of Intellectual Property.
- It will facilitate the protection of biomedical innovations emerging from academic institutions and help promote technology transfer.
- **Tamil Nadu has emerged as a leading state in India in terms of the highest number of patent applications filed.**
- This agreement was signed in New Delhi under the guidance of NITI Aayog.
- **The Tamil Nadu State Council for Science and Technology was established by the Government of Tamil Nadu in 1984 as an autonomous institution.**

Indian Council of Medical Research

- **Established in 1911**, it is one of the oldest medical research institutions in the world.
- It receives funding through the Department of Health Research, which functions under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.
- The ICMR plays a pivotal role in guiding, coordinating, and promoting biomedical research across India.

Tamil Virtual Academy

- **Context:** The Minister for Information Technology and Digital Services inaugurated three new webpages.
- On behalf of the Tamil Virtual Academy, the following webpages have been created: **“Tamizhil Peyargal”**, **“Naatudamai Noozhgal”** and **“Tamil Nadu Panpaatu Min Nilavarai Yaedu”**
- These webpages have been hosted on the official website of the Tamil Virtual Academy.
- The **“Tamizhil Peyargal”** page features a collection of Tamil names suitable for children, along with their corresponding meanings and explanations.
- The **“Naatudamai Noozhgal”** page contains the biographies and literary works of authors whose works were nationalized during the period from 1963 to 2025.
- The **“Tamil Nadu Panpaatu Min Nilavarai Yaedu”** page is being populated with information regarding temples, archaeological sites, and historical monuments.
- In the initial phase, information pertaining to the districts of **Madurai, Virudhunagar, Dindigul, Sivaganga, and Theni** has been added.

About Tamil Virtual Academy

- It was originally established as the **“Tamil Virtual University”** under the **Tamil Nadu Co-operative Societies Act**.
- The **“Tamil Virtual University”** was subsequently renamed as the **“Tamil Virtual Academy”** on **July 16, 2010**.

POLITY

New Governor Appointments in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu

- **Context:** Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi has been appointed as the new Governor of West Bengal. **The President has announced that Kerala Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar will additionally hold the post of Governor of Tamil Nadu.**

About the Governor

- The **7th Amendment to the Constitution of 1956** allows the appointment of the same person as Governor of two or more states.
- The Governor is appointed under **Article 155 of the Constitution**.
 - He must be a citizen of India.
 - He must be at least **35 years of age**.
- The Governor must not be a member of Parliament or any State Legislature.
- **Article 153** of the Constitution of India: There shall be one Governor for each State. However, nothing in this Article shall prevent the appointment of the same person as Governor of two or more States.

New Chief Justice of Madras High Court

- **Context:** Justice Arvind Dharmadhikari has been appointed as the new Chief Justice of Madras High Court.

- The appointment of the Chief Justice of a High Court in India is governed by **Article 217 of the Constitution of India.**
- The SPV will **develop infrastructure, enter joint ventures, lease assets, and support capital raising** for shipbuilding projects.

About the Chief Justice of the High Court

- The Chief Justice of the High Court of India is **appointed by the President of India under Article 217 of the Constitution.**
- He must be a **citizen of India.**
- He must have served in a judicial capacity in India for **at least 10 years.**
- **Tenure:** He will remain in office till the **age of 62 years.**
- The President will consult both the **Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India and the Governor of the concerned state** while making this appointment.
- **Resignation:** If a judge wishes to resign voluntarily, he must submit his resignation **letter to the President of India.**
- His tenure will automatically end if he is appointed as a **Supreme Court judge or transferred to another High Court.**
- The State government may **participate in equity up to 49% in shipyards or lease assets up to 20% of project cost.**
- **Two shipbuilding clusters** are planned in **Thoothukudi and Cuddalore.**
- The government signed an **MoU with Hyundai (South Korea)** to develop a shipyard at Thoothukudi.
- Another yard may be developed by public sector companies such as **Cochin Shipyard Limited** or **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited.**
- The policy includes **training institutions for shipbuilding engineers and skilled workers** (welding, erection, electrical work).
- The initiative aims to build a **complete maritime ecosystem including supply chains, manpower training, and housing for workers.**

Tamil Nadu State Information

Commissioners

- Context : The **Governor administered the oath of office to two new State Information Commissioners** to the Tamil Nadu Information Commission.
- In exercise of the powers conferred by **subsection (3) of section 15 of the Right to Information Act, 2005 (Central Act 22/2005).**
- The **Governor has appointed retired IAS Atulya Mishra and retired IPS officer Abhay Kumar Singh** as State Information Commissioners to the Tamil Nadu Information Commission.

State Information Commission (SIC)

- It is a **statutory body** established under the **Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005.**

Tamil Nadu - Merchant Shipbuilding Policy

- **Context:** Tamil Nadu launched a **Merchant Shipbuilding Policy** to promote large-scale shipbuilding and maritime industry development.
- The initiative aims to position **Tamil Nadu as a leader in shipbuilding in India** and support the country's transition to a **high-growth, developed economy.**
- **Guidance Tamil Nadu,** the State's investment promotion agency, is playing a key role in implementing the policy.
- A **Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)** named NSHIPTN will be created under **SIPCOT** with participation from the Union government.

- The State Information Commission consists of a **State Chief Information Commissioner** and a **maximum of 10 State Information Commissioners**.
- The **Governor appoints** the State Chief Information Commissioner and State Information Commissioners on the recommendation of a **selection committee comprising the Chief Minister (Leader), the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly and a Cabinet Minister nominated by the Chief Minister**.
- Their term of office is **three years or up to the age of 65 years**.
- In its report titled Organic Waste Management in Urban Tamil Nadu released the commission noted that Chennai which generates 5000 tonnes of waste per day accounted for more than one third of the total 14,600 tonnes produced daily across Tamil Nadu.
- BSF is a non-pest, non-vector insect species. Unlike common houseflies BSF do not transmit diseases, bite, or sting and are not attracted to human habitation.
- BSF uses the feeding capacity of its larvae to rapidly cover organic waste into valuable products such as protein meal, insect oil and frass fertiliser.
- The larvae can consume up to four times their body weight in waste daily and reduce waste mass by 50-80% while producing near-zero methane emissions as the process involves an aerobic mechanism.

ENVIRONMENT

Synchronised Vulture Census

- **Context:** Synchronised Vulture Census will be conducted at forest land scapes of **Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka** to assess population in the **Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve**.
- **India is home to nine vulture species, seven of which are recorded in Tamil Nadu**, including White-rumped, Long-billed and Red-headed vultures that have established breeding populations.
- This will be the fourth synchronised survey. The survey will use vantage point counts and nest monitoring.
- **Kochi undertook large scale biomining** and introduced BSF technology to process municipal wet waste, becoming the first Indian city to deploy it at a municipal scale with success.
- The commission urged the state government to allocate funds to launch the BSF technology on a pilot basis in **Chennai and also in Coimbatore, Madurai, Trichy and Salem** before scaling up across Tamil Nadu.

Black Soldier Fly (BSF) Technology for Urban Organic Waste Management

- **Context:** The Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission has recommended the state government to adopt Black Soldier Fly (BSF) bioconversion technology for solid waste management on a pilot basis in five cities particularly Chennai.

AWARDS

Kalaichemmal Award

- **Context:** Kalaichemmal Award is presented every year by the **Department of Art and Culture, Government of Tamil Nadu**.
- This award is given to the best artists in the fields of **traditional and modern style painting and sculpture**.

- The award carries a prize money of Rs. 1 lakh, a copper plate, and a certificate of appreciation.
- **6 best artists are selected for this award every year.**

The awardees for the year 2025–2026 are:

- Traditional Painting - **M. Balasubramanian**
- Traditional Sculpture - **D. Srikanda Sthapathi, D. Padmanaban**
- Modern Style Painting - **G.Vilvanathan, M. Raja**
- Modern Style Sculpture - **S. Shanthi**

HISTORY & CULTURE

Jain Archaeological Sites in Tamil Nadu

- **Context:** Jain archaeological remains have been identified in **37 districts of Tamil Nadu**, covering around 480 sites. Many of these sites require urgent preservation and protection.

Cave Structures and Ancient Heritage

- Over 200 hill sites in Tamil Nadu contain cave structures where Jain monks **lived for more than 2,500 years.**
- Brahmi inscriptions, including one from the **3rd century BCE**, confirm the antiquity of Jain presence.
- **Jainism is believed to have existed in Tamil Nadu even before Chandragupta Maurya.**

Protected Monuments Status

- **Out of 200 hill sites:**
- 48 sites are protected by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), mostly declared during the pre-Independence period.
- Around 25 sites were declared protected by the Tamil Nadu State Archaeology Department after Independence.

Government and Community Initiatives

- A memorandum has been submitted to district Collectors seeking preservation measures.

- The Tamil Nadu government supports conservation efforts with assistance from the State Archaeology Department.

- **A Jain Heritage Centre is being established in Madurai, with work already underway.**

- Awareness campaigns have been conducted across all districts over the past 14 months.

- **The State is home to over 50,000 Tamil Jains.**

COMMITTEE

Expert Panel Formed in Tamil Nadu to Frame Pet and Community Dog Rules

- **Context:** The Tamil Nadu Government has formed an **expert committee** to draft “Pet and Community Dog Bye-laws.”

- The objective is to **regulate or ban aggressive and dangerous dog breeds** to ensure **public safety.**

- The decision was taken based on proposals from the **Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services and Greater Chennai Corporation.**

- The **Union Government of India** had earlier identified certain dog breeds as **ferocious and dangerous to human life.**

- The Union government recommended **banning the import, breeding, and sale** of such dog breeds, including crossbreeds.

- The panel will be **headed by the Director of Municipal Administration**, with the **Chief Executive Officer of the Tamil Nadu Animal Welfare Board as Member-Secretary and Convenor.**

- The Union government has already notified:
 - Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Dog Breeding and Marketing) Rules, 2017
 - Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Pet Shop) Rules, 2018.

NATIONAL - NEWS

Discontinuation of Rice Fortification

- **Context:** Rice fortification has been halted following findings from a study conducted by the **Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur**.
- The study revealed that extended storage of fortified rice under government distribution systems reduces its effective shelf life, thereby weakening the expected nutritional benefits.
- Researchers observed that several factors significantly affect the quality and stability of **Fortified Rice Kernels (FRK) and fortified rice**. These include moisture levels, temperature, storage environment, relative humidity, and the type of packaging used.

About Food Fortification

- Food fortification refers to the intentional addition of essential micronutrients—such as **vitamins and minerals**—to commonly consumed foods to enhance their nutritional value and improve overall public health.

Regulatory Framework and Initiatives

- Guided by the **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** through the Food Safety and Standards (Fortification of Foods) Regulations, 2018.
- Fortified foods are distributed through government welfare schemes such as the **PM-POSHAN Scheme and other food safety net programmes**.
- By **March 2024**, all custom-milled rice supplied under the **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY)** and related schemes had been replaced **with fortified rice, with distribution planned until December 2028**.

Examples of Fortified Foods

- Wheat flour and rice enriched with **Iron, Vitamin B12, and Folic Acid**

- Milk and edible oil fortified with **Vitamins A and D**
- Double fortified salt containing **Iodine and Iron**

Micron Technology's Semiconductor Assembly, Test, Marking and Packaging (ATMP) plant

- **Context:** Prime Minister inaugurated **Micron Technology's Semiconductor Assembly, Test, Marking and Packaging (ATMP) plant in Sanand, Gujarat**.
- The event signalled the commencement of commercial manufacturing and marked an important advancement in India's semiconductor ambitions.
- The Prime Minister termed the facility a landmark development, **highlighting India's transition from being largely software-driven to emerging as a strong player in hardware manufacturing**, thereby deepening its integration into the global semiconductor supply chain.

Micron ATMP Sanand: Boost to India Semiconductor Mission

- The Sanand ATMP unit is among the most sophisticated **semiconductor investments in India**.
- ATMP refers to the crucial processes of **assembling, testing, marking, and packaging chips** before they are supplied to international markets.

Strengthening India's Semiconductor Ecosystem

- The inauguration advances the goals of the **India Semiconductor Mission 2.0**, which seeks to establish a comprehensive semiconductor ecosystem nationwide.
- The Prime Minister stressed the strategic importance of semiconductors in the era of artificial intelligence, remarking that just as oil shaped the 20th century, microchips will define the 21st century.

- So far, 10 semiconductor projects have been cleared under the **Semicon India Programme, with more units planned in states such as Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Odisha, and Punjab.**
- The Micron Sanand facility will manufacture **DRAM and NAND memory products**, which are vital components for AI technologies, data centres, smartphones, and advanced computing systems.

Bureau of Energy Efficiency

- **Context: The Bureau of Energy Efficiency, under the Ministry of Power, celebrated its 25th Foundation Day**, highlighting a significant milestone in India's journey toward efficient energy use.

About Bureau of Energy Efficiency

- BEE is responsible for formulating and executing energy conservation policies and programs in India, serving as the nodal institution for driving sustainable energy use.
- It acts as the national agency for **promoting energy efficiency and reducing energy intensity across all sectors.**
- Established: **1 March 2002 under Energy Conservation Act, 2001.**
- Statutory body under the **Ministry of Power, Government of India.**

Objectives

- Lower the energy intensity of India's economy.
- Promote self-regulation and market-driven approaches for energy conservation.
- Enable sustainable development by encouraging efficient energy use in all sectors.

Expansion of FRA Cells into Project Monitoring Units

- **Context: The Ministry of Tribal Affairs had launched funding for Forest Rights Act (FRA) Cells under the DAJGUA programme.**
- **Objective: Strengthen implementation of the Forest Rights Act, 2006** by providing additional staff, speeding up forest rights claims, maintaining records, and digitising titles.

Reasons for the Change

- Separate FRA cells were reportedly increasing costs.
- Multiple policy-specific cells created coordination challenges.
- A unified PMU system is expected to improve efficiency and streamline communication.

Concerns and State Response

- Some States expressed concerns about closing existing FRA cells.
- Odisha has already ordered closure of FRA cells in 50 sub-divisions.
- Chhattisgarh is exploring restructuring options under the new PMU model.

Amorphous Metal Plant

- **Context: Japan-based Proterial plans to invest USD 80 million to set up India's first amorphous metal plant in Srinagar, Andhra Pradesh.**
- The initial production capacity of the unit will be 30,000 tonnes per annum, eventually expanding to 1 lakh tonnes.
- **Amorphous metal is a non-crystalline, electrical grade steel, which is mainly used to improve energy efficiency in transformers.**
- It is used in power distribution transformers, energy-efficient electrical equipment, and in grid modernization and integration of renewable energy.

Football for Schools (F4S) Initiative

- **Context: The Union Minister of State for Education attended and led a football distribution programme in West Bengal under the Football for Schools (F4S) initiative.**

About F4S

- F4S is an international programme introduced in 2019 by Federation Internationale de

Football Association (FIFA) in partnership with UNESCO.

Objective

- The initiative seeks to embed football within the school system to expand educational access and foster children's learning, personal growth, and empowerment through sports.

Implementation in India

- In India, the programme is coordinated by the Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) under the Ministry of Education. It is implemented with support from the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and the Sports Authority of India (SAI).

Target Coverage

- Globally, F4S aims to reach around 700 million children, ensuring that at least half the beneficiaries are girls. India has pledged to extend the programme to approximately 25 million children.

Policy Convergence

- The initiative complements the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and aligns with international commitments such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the WHO's Global Action Plan on Physical Activity (GAPPA).

Cabinet Committee on Security

- **Context:** Prime Minister chaired a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) to assess the developing situation in West Asia.

About the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)

- The CCS is India's highest decision-making authority on issues concerning national security and defence.
- It is led by the Prime Minister.
- Its core members generally include: The Home Minister, The Defence Minister, The Finance Minister and The External Affairs Minister
- The National Security Advisor (NSA) functions as the principal coordinator at the secretary level for matters handled by the CCS.

Responsibilities of the CCS

▪ Defence & National Security

- Examines both internal and external security threats.
- Takes key decisions on defence preparedness, military operations, and intelligence coordination.

▪ External Relations & Strategic Affairs

- Frames policies related to foreign affairs.
- Reviews strategic international partnerships and security cooperation.

▪ Nuclear & Space Matters

- Supervises important policy decisions regarding nuclear capability and space programmes.

▪ Senior-Level Appointments

- Clears appointments to top positions in defence forces and intelligence organizations.

NITI Aayog – JICA SDG Cooperation

- **Context:** NITI Aayog and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) formalised the Record of Discussions (RoD).

- The agreement launches Phase II of the Japan-India collaboration on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- Aim of the Project: To enhance policy design and execution mechanisms for achieving SDGs.

Encompasses six priority sectors:

- Global partnerships
- Health and nutrition
- Education
- Agriculture and water management
- Financial inclusion and skill development
- Core infrastructure

Planned Interventions

- Exchange programmes between Indian and Japanese stakeholders.

- Training and institutional capacity-building initiatives.
- Joint knowledge-sharing platforms and forums.
- Documentation and replication of successful best practices.

Megalithic Rock-Cut Chamber Discovery

- **Context:** A 2,000-year-old laterite rock-cut burial chamber from the Megalithic era was discovered during construction work in Panayal. The site lies in the Kerala region, which has many ancient Megalithic archaeological remains.

Laterite Rock-Cut Chambers

- These are underground burial chambers carved directly into laterite rock formations.
- They served as funerary spaces where the dead were buried along with objects such as pottery or tools.
- Such burials reflect the ritual practices and beliefs about life after death among Megalithic communities.

Purpose of the Chambers

- These chambers were mainly used for secondary burial practices.
- After initial burial rituals, the bones of the deceased were later collected and placed inside the chamber.
- Grave goods such as pottery, iron implements, and beads were included, possibly to help the soul in the afterlife.

Different Local Names

- In Kerala and nearby areas, these structures are referred to by various traditional names:
- Muniyara – meaning hermit's chamber
- Pandava Cave – associated with the legendary Pandavas
- Peeranki Cave – also called cannon cave
- Nidhikuzhi – meaning treasure pit
- Kalppathayam – meaning stone box or stone granary

Kerala Language Bill

- **Context:** The Governor has approved the Language Bill-2025, which will make Malayalam the official language in the state of Kerala.
- According to this bill, Malayalam has been made compulsory as the first language in government and government-aided schools till class 10.
- The bill states that the language rights of linguistic minorities like Tamil and Kannada will be protected.

Constitutional Provisions

- Part XVII, Articles 343 to 351 of the Constitution of India specify the official languages of India.

Part XVII, Article 345 of the Constitution of India

- Official language or languages of a State.
- The legislature of a state may adopt one or more languages in use in the state or Hindi as the language to be used for any official purpose of the state.

Part XVII, Article 346 of the Constitution of India

- Official language for communication between a state and another state or between a state and the Union Government.

Part XVII, Article 347 of the Constitution of India

- Special provision relating to language spoken by a section of the population of a State.
- The President may order the declaration of any language as officially recognized throughout the State or in any part of the State.

Andhra Pradesh Draft Population Management Policy to Raise Fertility Rate

- **Context:** Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, introduced the Draft Population Management Policy in the State Assembly.

- **The policy aims to increase the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) from 1.5 to the replacement level of 2.1.**
- Objective: **Reverse the declining fertility trend** and prepare the State for an ageing society **by 2047.**
- The policy is proposed to be implemented from **April 1, 2026.**
- The government proposed an incentive of **₹25,000 to encourage families to have a third child.**
- A **“Poshana - Shiksha - Suraksha”** package will be provided for families with a third child:
 - ₹25,000 incentive at the time of delivery
 - ₹1,000 monthly assistance for five years
 - Free education up to 18 years for the child
- The Chief Minister warned that declining fertility could lead to a shrinking workforce and economic challenges.
- If the trend continues, about 23% of the State’s population may become elderly in the future.
- The policy also aims to nearly double women’s labour force participation to boost the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) by 15%.
- **Tamil Nadu (TFR 1.4) and Kerala (TFR 1.6) were cited as examples of States with declining fertility rates.**
- Countries like **Japan, Italy, and South Korea** were mentioned as facing challenges due to very low TFRs.

Raisina Dialogue (2026)

- Context: The 11th edition of the Raisina Dialogue (2026), India’s leading conference on geopolitics and geo-economics, has commenced in New Delhi.
- The Raisina Dialogue, launched in 2016, is an annual multilateral forum that discusses issues related to global governance and international cooperation.

- The event is jointly organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Observer Research Foundation.
- The theme for 2026 is **“Samskāra: Assertion, Accommodation, Advancement”**, which emphasises the role of civilisational values in shaping global engagement, cooperation, and development.
- Chief Guest: Alexander Stubb, the President of Finland, is attending as the chief guest.

Key Focus Areas:

- The discussions revolve around six major pillars, including:
 - Shifting global power dynamics
 - Governance of oceans and cyberspace
 - Climate challenges and sustainability
 - Artificial intelligence and digital governance

India orders refiners to boost LPG production

- **Context:** In the wake of the escalating war in the Middle East, the central government has issued an emergency order to oil refineries to increase LPG production to prevent a shortage of cooking gas in India.
- The order has been issued using the **emergency powers granted under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.**
- The central government has instructed all public and private oil refineries to increase LPG production using chemicals like **propane and butane.**
- At the same time, refineries have been banned from using these chemicals to manufacture petrochemicals.

Indian Cities Exceed PM2.5 Limits

- **Context:** 204 out of 238 Indian cities recorded average PM2.5 levels above the **Indian standard of 40 µg/m³ during the last winter, according to Central Pollution Control Board**

(CPCB) data analysed by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA).

- **Ghaziabad** was the most polluted city with an average PM_{2.5} level of 172 µg/m³, followed by Noida (166 µg/m³) and Delhi (163 µg/m³).
- The analysis used data from **Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS) of CPCB from October 1, 2025 to February 28, 2026.**
- No city met the World Health Organization (WHO) PM_{2.5} standard of 5 µg/m³.
- Among major Indian cities, Delhi (163 µg/m³), Kolkata (78 µg/m³), Mumbai (48 µg/m³), and Chennai (44 µg/m³) recorded winter PM_{2.5} levels above the national standard, while Bengaluru (39 µg/m³) was slightly below the limit.
- **Chamarajanagar in Karnataka** was the cleanest city with an average PM_{2.5} level of 19 µg/m³.
- Among the 10 cleanest cities, eight were from Karnataka, and one each from Madhya Pradesh and Meghalaya.

NITI Aayog - UNICEF Partnership to Improve Maternal and Child Nutrition

- Context: NITI Aayog and UNICEF India signed a **Statement of Intent (SoI)** to strengthen **health and nutrition conditions in Aspirational Districts and Aspirational Blocks.**
- The partnership is aimed at **improving the nutritional status of mothers and children in underdeveloped and underserved areas of the country.**
- It is intended to **speed up development progress** under the Aspirational Districts Programme and Aspirational Blocks Programme.
- The initiative will focus **on upgrading Anganwadi infrastructure, strengthening**

the capacity of frontline workers, increasing the use of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), and promoting nutrition awareness among communities.

- Through UNICEF's **IMPAct4Nutrition (I4N) platform**, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds will be directed towards community-level nutrition programmes.
- The collaboration encourages **evidence-based nutrition strategies** to improve public health and contribute to building a **healthy and productive population in line with India's Viksit Bharat 2047 vision.**

Aspirational Districts Programme (2018)

- It is launched by the NITI Aayog
- It aims to improving key **social and economic indicators in 112 districts** by ensuring **better coordination between central and state government schemes.**

Aspirational Blocks Programme (2023)

- It is launched by the NITI Aayog on January 7, 2023.
- It is a **decentralised governance model** created to **strengthen service delivery and ensure complete access to essential government services in 500 blocks.**

India's first riverine lighthouses

- Context: The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) is indeed constructing **India's first set of riverine lighthouses along the Brahmaputra River in Assam** to enhance navigation on National Waterway-2.
- The initiative aims to **ensure safe round-the-clock inland navigation and encourage river tourism along the Brahmaputra waterway.**
- The project is being implemented jointly by the **Directorate General of Lighthouses and Lightships** and the **Inland Waterways Authority of India.**

- Four lighthouses will be established at **Bogibeel, Pandu, and Silghat on the south bank, and Biswanath Ghat on the north bank.**
- These lighthouses will **operate on solar energy and include sensors to monitor weather and river conditions for better navigation safety.**
- The project will **support cargo transport on National Waterway-2 and help lower logistics costs in Northeast India.**
- **National Waterway 2** is situated on the **Brahmaputra River in Assam.**
- It extends for around **891 km from Dhubri to Sadiya.**

India's Commitment to Eliminate Cervical Cancer

- Context : The Union Health Minister reiterated India's commitment to achieving the **World Health Organization 90-70-90 targets** for the elimination of Cervical Cancer by 2030.
- The goal is to ensure **90% of girls receive the complete course of the Human Papillomavirus Vaccine before the age of 15.**
- It also aims for **70% of women to be screened with a reliable test by age 35 and again by age 45.**
- Additionally, **90% of women with precancerous conditions should receive treatment, and 90% of women with invasive cervical cancer should be provided proper medical care.**
- Cervical Cancer is caused by the **human papillomavirus (HPV).**

About HPV Vaccination

- It is launched on **February 28, 2026**, aims to immunise **around 12 million 14-year-old girls each year.**
- Under the programme, the **Gardasil Quadrivalent** will be provided **free of cost in a single dose** to protect against **Human Papillomavirus infection.**

Moonshot project

- Context : The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and Pratiksha Trust have launched a **"Moonshot" project** aimed at developing **AI-based brain co-processors to support stroke rehabilitation.**

About Moonshot Project

- The **Moonshot project** aims to develop advanced **brain-computer technologies** to assist or restore brain functions lost due to neurological disorders.
- It focuses on helping **stroke survivors regain movement and coordination**, especially functions like reaching and grasping.
- The project seeks to develop **AI-driven closed-loop neural devices** that can decode brain signals and stimulate brain activity to aid recovery.

SWAYATT

- Context: Government e-Marketplace (GeM) celebrated **7 years of the SWAYATT initiative** to promote inclusive public procurement in India.

About SWAYATT

- **SWAYATT (Startups, Women and Youth Advantage through e-Transactions)** was launched on **19 February 2019.**
- The initiative aims to enable **startups, women entrepreneurs, youth, MSEs and Self Help Groups (SHGs)** to participate directly in government procurement.
- It focuses on solving three key challenges **access to markets, access to finance, and value addition opportunities.**
- Through GeM's digital platform, sellers can **connect directly with government buyers**, reducing entry barriers.
- Dedicated portals such as **Startup Runway** and **Womaniya** improve visibility of startups and women-led enterprises.

- The initiative strengthens **inclusive economic growth and digital public procurement in India.**

Jal Jeevan Mission

- **Context:** The Union Cabinet approved the extension of the **Ministry of Jal Shakti's Jal Jeevan programme to 2028** and provisioned more money to meet its goal of **providing a minimum amount of daily potable water to every rural household in the country.**
- The Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) was introduced in **2019 with the objective of ensuring Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC) that supply 55 litres of drinking water per person per day to every rural household in India by 2024.**
- The mission promotes planning at the village level and encourages active involvement of local communities in making decisions related to water supply systems.
- Under the programme, at least 50% of the members in the Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC) / Pani Samiti must be women, ensuring gender participation in water management.

About Jal Jeevan Mission

- The earlier National Rural Drinking Water Programme was reorganized and merged into the Jal Jeevan Mission.
- Nodal Ministry: The mission is implemented by the **Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation under the Ministry of Jal Shakti.**
- It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

Funding Pattern (Centre–State Sharing)

- **90:10:** For Himalayan States such as **Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, and for North-Eastern States.**
- **100% Central Funding:** For Union Territories.
- **50:50:** For all other States in India.

Major Achievements of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)

- Since the launch of Jal Jeevan Mission in 2019, more than 12 crore rural households have been provided with piped drinking water connections, compared to 3.23 crore households earlier, according to the Economic Survey 2024–25.
- States that have reached **100% tap water coverage** include Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab, Telangana, and Mizoram.
- **Union Territories with full coverage** are Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, and Puducherry, where every rural household now has access to piped drinking water.

Madurai Airport Upgraded to International Status

- **Context:** Madurai airport was officially declared an **international airport**, following the union cabinet's approval and the issuance of formal orders **by the Airport Authority of India.**
- Marking a major milestone for aviation connectivity in **Southern Tamil Nadu.**

Major Benefits

- Direct international air connectivity to global destinations for the people of Southern districts of Tamil Nadu
- Easier access for international tourists and devotees visiting Madurai and nearby pilgrimage sites
- Boost to tourism, automobile, rubber, chemical and granite industries of the region
- Promotion to trade and investment opportunities; contributing to local economic development

Nationwide Darknet Drug Racket Busted by NCB

- Context: The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has dismantled a nationwide drug trafficking network known as “**Team Kalki**”, which had been operating across India through the **Darknet since January 2025**.

About Darknet

- The darknet refers to a hidden section of the internet that cannot be accessed using regular web browsers or common search engines.
- Access to this network requires special software such as Tor, along with specific configurations or permissions.
- It provides high levels of anonymity, as users’ identities and locations are concealed through encryption techniques.
- The darknet forms a small portion of the larger Deep Web.

Anavaran System for Tracking Deforestation Stopped

- **Context:** The Forest Survey of India (FSI) has reportedly stopped issuing the fortnightly alerts produced by its **AI-driven Anavaran Deforestation Alert System**, which was designed to track forest cover loss almost in real time.

About Anavaran Deforestation Alert System

- **Anavaran is an artificial intelligence-based platform** created by the Forest Survey of India to monitor deforestation activities.
- It analyzes satellite data along with **machine learning techniques** to identify areas where forest cover has been reduced.
- The system sends alerts to State Forest Departments every **15 days** to help them respond quickly to forest loss.
- It was introduced as a **pilot initiative in 2024** to improve near real-time monitoring of forests.

Technology Used

- The system operates on the **Google Earth Engine (GEE) platform**.
- It processes data from Sentinel-2 optical satellite imagery, which provides 10–20 metre spatial resolution.
- It also uses **Sentinel-1 Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR)** data, allowing forest monitoring even during cloudy weather or monsoon conditions.

New Welfare Schemes for Persons with Disabilities

- **Context:** During a post-budget webinar, highlighted two new initiatives – **Divyang Sahara Yojana and Divyangjan Kaushal Yojana** – introduced in the Union Budget 2026–27 under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Divyang Sahara Yojana

- The objective of this scheme is to ensure affordable availability of advanced assistive devices for persons with disabilities (Divyangjan) so that they can lead more independent lives.

- It will support the **Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO)** in boosting production of assistive equipment by incorporating artificial intelligence and modern technologies.

- **Assistive Marts:** Dedicated retail-like centres will be created where beneficiaries can view, try, and select suitable assistive devices according to their requirements.

- **Service Hubs:** Existing **Pradhan Mantri Divyasha-Vayoshri Kendras (PMDVKs)** will be upgraded to provide evaluation, custom fitting, repair, and maintenance services.

Divyangjan Kaushal Yojana

- This programme focuses on providing skill development training aligned with industry needs, enabling persons with disabilities to secure respectable employment opportunities.

- Priority Sectors: Training will be offered in areas such as Information Technology (IT), Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics (AVGC), Hospitality, and Food & Beverage services.
- Digital Linkage: The registration process for skill training will be integrated with the **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD)** and the **PM-DAKSH Portal** to streamline access and monitoring.

SHINE App

- **Context:** The Indian Railways introduced the **SHINE App** on **International Women's Day (March 8, 2026)** to enhance workplace safety and support women employees across the organisation.
- This step aims to create a safer and more supportive working environment.

About the SHINE App

- SHINE stands for Sexual Harassment Incident Notification for Empowerment.
- The application enables women employees to report cases of sexual harassment directly through the Human Resources Management System (HRMS).

Key Features

- The SHINE app provides a dedicated digital platform for women staff in Indian Railways to submit complaints of workplace harassment quickly and securely.
- It is integrated with the HRMS platform used by railway employees for personnel-related services.
- Through the Employee Self-Service (ESS) portal, women employees can file complaints directly online.
- Once submitted, the complaints are automatically forwarded to the appropriate committees responsible for addressing such issues.

Objective

- The initiative aims to simplify the reporting process, ensure confidential handling of complaints, and make sure that cases reach the concerned authorities promptly for action.

Government Invokes Essential Commodities Act

- **Context:** Due to the ongoing conflict in West Asia and disruptions in LNG shipments through the Strait of Hormuz, **the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) invoked the Essential Commodities Act, 1955** by issuing the Natural Gas (Supply Regulation) Order, 2026.

Key Provisions of the Natural Gas (Supply Regulation) Order, 2026

Four-tier priority system

- Gas distribution will follow a four-level priority framework. The allocation for each sector will be determined using the average natural gas consumption recorded over the previous six months.

Reallocation of gas supplies

- If shortages occur, gas may be diverted from lower-priority sectors such as petrochemical industries and power plants to higher-priority sectors that require assured supply.

About the Essential Commodities Act, 1955

- The **Essential Commodities Act (ECA), 1955** was enacted to monitor and control the production, supply, distribution, and pricing of essential goods.
- Its purpose is to ensure that such commodities remain available to the public at reasonable prices and to curb practices like **hoarding, black marketing, and excessive profiteering, especially during times of scarcity or crisis.**
- The Act gives the Central Government—and in certain situations state governments—

the authority to intervene in markets when necessary.

- This helps safeguard consumer interests and maintain food and energy security across the country.

Commodities Covered Under the Act

- The central government has the authority to designate particular goods as essential commodities.

Typical items under this category include

- Food grains such as rice, wheat, and pulses
 - Edible oils and sugar
 - Petroleum and petroleum-based products
 - Fertilisers and pharmaceutical drugs
 - LPG and natural gas
- The government can add new items or remove existing ones from the list depending on national needs and circumstances.

Defence Forces Vision 2047

- **Context:** The Minister of Defence, unveiled a document titled “**Defence Forces Vision 2047: A Roadmap for a Future-Ready Indian Military.**” The report was prepared by the Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff to outline the long-term transformation of India’s armed forces.

Objectives of Defence Forces Vision 2047

Preparation for future warfare

- The vision focuses on equipping the military to deal with modern and multi-domain conflicts, including areas such as cyber operations, space security, artificial intelligence, and information warfare.

Link with national development goals

- The transformation of India’s defence capabilities is aligned with the country’s **larger ambition of becoming a developed nation by 2047.**

Key Elements of the Roadmap

Integrated and multi-domain military structure

- The plan proposes building a flexible and unified military system capable of operating effectively across land, sea, air, cyber, and space domains.
- Greater coordination in operational planning among the three services is expected to enhance efficiency and responsiveness.

Stronger jointness among the services

- A central component of the vision is improved collaboration and synergy between the **Army, Navy, and Air Force.**
- Better coordination in strategy, operations, and capability development will help strengthen overall operational effectiveness.

Promotion of defence self-reliance

- The roadmap supports the government’s **Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative by encouraging domestic defence manufacturing and reduced dependence on imports.**

Focus on advanced technologies

- The document highlights the increased use of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, autonomous systems, cyber tools, and advanced surveillance capabilities to modernise the armed forces.

Phased implementation strategy

- The roadmap suggests a step-by-step implementation plan, identifying short-term, medium-term, and long-term priorities for strengthening critical military capabilities.

National Highways Green Cover Index

- **Context:** The **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)**, in collaboration with the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)**, has published the first-ever Annual Report on the **National Highways Green Cover Index (NH-GCI) 2025–26.**

About the National Highways Green Cover Index

- The evaluation uses high-resolution satellite sensors to identify **chlorophyll levels in vegetation, allowing for a scientific and technology-based assessment of greenery** along national highways.
- The NH-GCI score is represented as a percentage, which reflects the **share of land within the Right of Way (RoW) of national highways that is covered by vegetation.**
- The index tracks the extent of green cover on both sides of highways, analysing it at a detailed scale of one kilometre segments.
- In this assessment, nearly 30,000 km of national highways across 24 states were examined for the period between July and December 2024.

Proton Accelerator Project

- **Context:** The state of Andhra Pradesh will host a **high-energy proton accelerator in Visakhapatnam** as part of India's long-term nuclear research and development programme.
- A proton is a **subatomic particle carrying a positive electric charge** and is present within the nucleus of every atom in all chemical elements.
- The development of the proton accelerator forms a part of **India's long-term nuclear energy strategy.**
- It represents a critical and strategically significant technology, which may require several decades before reaching full operational capacity.
- The facility will create **high-energy neutrons** through spallation reactions, enabling the conversion of India's large thorium reserves into uranium fuel that can be used in nuclear reactors.

About the Proton Accelerator Project

- The proposed high-energy proton accelerator in **Visakhapatnam will produce high-energy neutrons**, which can be used to transform thorium into uranium fuel for nuclear reactors.
- The location is considered advantageous due to Visakhapatnam's strong technological infrastructure and proximity to the sea, which can help in cooling the facility.
- The project will operate in association with the **Raja Ramanna Centre for Advanced Technology (RRCAT).**

National Leprosy Eradication Programme

- **Context:** According to the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)**, the National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP) has played a significant role in **lowering the prevalence of Leprosy in India.**
- NLEP is a **centrally sponsored scheme** designed to eliminate leprosy from the country. It has now been incorporated into the National Health Mission (NHM) and functions under the MoHFW.
- The programme aims to achieve **"Leprosy Mukta Bharat"** by 2027, which is **three years earlier than the 2030 target set under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**
- Efforts toward final elimination are guided by the National Strategic Plan and Roadmap (2023–2027), which focuses on reaching the last-mile cases.
- **India officially eliminated leprosy as a public health concern in 2005**, and the current prevalence rate stands at **0.57 per 10,000 people.**

Key Components of NLEP

Standardised Treatment

- Government health facilities provide free

Multi-Drug Therapy (MDT) consisting of **Rifampicin, Dapsone, and Clofazimine.**

- India has also designated leprosy as a notifiable disease and updated its **treatment guidelines in 2025** in accordance with World Health Organization standards.

Disability Support

- Through Disability Prevention and Medical Rehabilitation (DPMR) services, patients receive reconstructive **surgery, protective footwear, and a welfare assistance of ₹12,000 for those undergoing surgery.**

Awareness Campaign

- The Sparsh Leprosy Awareness Campaign (SLAC) is conducted every year on **30 January, observed as Anti-Leprosy Day**, to raise awareness and combat social stigma.

Digital Monitoring

- The Nikusth 2.0 digital platform enables real-time reporting and tracking of patients, thereby improving national surveillance and monitoring of leprosy cases.

ISRO Partners with AIIMS for Space

Medicine Research

- Context: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) for cooperation in space medicine and research.
- According to the ISRO, the MoU aims to promote joint research with a objectives of advancing human health, performance and safety during human space missions.
- “This cooperation is targeted to conduct ground and space-based studies to develop multidisciplinary space medicine expertise, medical devices, procedure and protocols to maintain health and performance under extreme environments as well as advance healthcare for the nation”.

Kisan Credit Card

- Context:** The Kisan Credit Card (KCC) provides timely, affordable, and collateral-free credit to farmers, including small, marginal, tenant farmers and SHGs/JLGs.

About Kisan Credit Card

- The Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme, **launched in 1998**, was created to make it easier and faster for farmers to obtain short-term institutional credit for agricultural production.
- The scheme offers financial assistance for **working capital and investment in allied agricultural activities.**
- It also supports expenses related to post-harvest processes and marketing, thereby providing farmers with broader financial backing to **improve their agricultural income.**
- Under the Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS), **the maximum loan limit has been increased to ₹5 lakh**, while the amount of collateral-free credit available to each borrower has been raised to ₹2 lakh.

PM-SETU Scheme

- Context:** Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship has set up a National Steering Committee (NSC) as the highest decision-making body to oversee and guide the **Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability through Upgraded ITIs (PM SETU) Scheme.**

- The main objective of this scheme is to **strengthen the country's skill development system by modernizing and upgrading Industrial Training Institutes and improving employment opportunities for trainees.**

About PM-SETU Scheme

- The Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs (PM-SETU) is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme introduced to **improve and strengthen India's vocational training system.**

- The scheme focuses on modernizing the Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) network by **upgrading 1,000 government ITIs across the country into advanced training centres** that are better aligned with industry requirements.
- To **encourage responsible reporting of security issues** and strengthen public confidence in digital infrastructure such as the Aadhaar system.

Key Features

- The programme includes **20 selected ethical hackers and cybersecurity specialists** with significant experience in identifying digital security flaws.
- Participants will examine **important UIDAI digital platforms** such as the UIDAI official website, the myAadhaar portal, and the Secure QR Code application to identify potential vulnerabilities.
- Security flaws will be classified into Critical, High, Medium, and Low categories, and rewards will be provided according to the seriousness of the vulnerability discovered.
- The initiative is being implemented in collaboration with ComOlho IT Private Limited, a firm specializing in cybersecurity solutions.

Bug Bounty Programme

- Context: **Unique Identification Authority of India** has introduced its **first organized Bug Bounty Programme to enhance the cybersecurity framework of the Aadhaar ecosystem.**
- This programme adds an extra level of protection to existing security practices, including security audits, vulnerability assessments, penetration testing, and continuous monitoring.

India's First Autonomous Maritime Shipbuilding and Systems Centre

- **About the Bug Bounty Programme**
- A Bug Bounty Programme is a **cybersecurity initiative** in which organizations invite ethical hackers and security experts to detect weaknesses in their digital systems.
- These participants are given incentives for responsibly reporting vulnerabilities before they can be misused by cybercriminals.
- **Context:** India has initiated the establishment of the **country's first Autonomous Maritime Shipbuilding and Systems Centre in Andhra Pradesh.**
- This facility is being developed by the company 'Sagar Defence Engineering'.
- It is situated at the Juvvaladinne fishing harbour in Andhra Pradesh.
- This project marks a significant milestone in **strengthening India's maritime and defense manufacturing capabilities.**

Aim

- To improve the **security of digital platforms** by identifying potential vulnerabilities in advance.

- It will support the development of indigenous autonomous maritime technologies.
- Geospatial data enabled by the policy supports infrastructure development, urban planning, disaster response, and national security initiatives.

GeodCon-26

- **Context:** **GeodCon-26 is the first national conference** in India dedicated to geodesy, organised to deliberate on recent scientific progress in geospatial science. The conference took place at the **Indian National Science Academy (INSA) in New Delhi.**

Geodesy

- Geodesy is the scientific discipline that studies the **Earth's shape, dimensions, gravitational field, and accurate positioning on its surface.**
- It forms the fundamental scientific basis for **cartography, satellite navigation, and geographic positioning systems.**
- Geodesy plays a crucial role in planning infrastructure, managing disasters, monitoring climate changes, and ensuring national security.
- Precise geodetic measurements are essential for satellite-based navigation systems such as **NavIC and Global Positioning System (GPS),** along with other satellite technologies.
- Geodesy acts as the core scientific backbone of the **geospatial ecosystem, enabling accurate Earth observation and spatial data interpretation.**

About National Geospatial Policy 2022

- The policy aims to boost **India's geospatial sector by enhancing accessibility to geospatial data and encouraging technological innovation.**
- It makes geospatial information more open and accessible, allowing government bodies, private firms, researchers, and citizens to use such data more freely.
- The policy encourages greater involvement of private companies and startups in developing geospatial technologies and services.

Digital Twin system

- **Context:** **The V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority in Tamil Nadu has become India's first major port to introduce a Digital Twin system.**

▪ A Digital Twin refers to a real-time virtual representation of a physical asset, infrastructure, or system, allowing continuous monitoring and analysis.

▪ The platform combines information from multiple technologies such as IoT sensors, GPS tracking systems, LiDAR mapping, drone surveillance, and CCTV networks to build an interactive digital model of the port.

▪ This system enables real-time tracking and visualisation of port operations, including berth availability, ship movements, crane operations, and storage yard usage.

▪ An AI-driven monitoring mechanism helps forecast possible failures in cargo-handling equipment, which improves operational efficiency and reduces vessel turnaround time.

About V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority

▪ **VOC Port, earlier known as Tuticorin Port, is an artificial deep-water port that functions throughout the year. It is located in Thoothukudi in Tamil Nadu.**

▪ The port is named after **V. O. Chidambaram Pillai, who established the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company in 1906, regarded as India's first indigenous shipping enterprise.**

▪ VOC Port is also being developed as a Green Hydrogen production and export hub under the **National Green Hydrogen Mission.**

Small Modular Reactors

- Context: India is working on three types of indigenous Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) as part of the **Nuclear Energy Mission for Viksit Bharat**.

About Small Modular Reactors

- SMRs are compact nuclear fission reactors with a power output of up to 300 MWe, which is roughly one-third the capacity of traditional nuclear reactors.
- The indigenous SMR designs are being developed by the **Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) and the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL)**.
- As of early 2026, only **Russia and China have operational SMR facilities**.
- India's Recent Nuclear Power Reforms
- **India plans to increase its nuclear energy capacity from 8.18 GW to about 100 GW by the year 2047.**
- Under the Nuclear Energy Mission, the **country aims to develop at least five domestically built SMRs by 2033.**
- The **SHANTI Act, 2025** permits private companies to participate in the nuclear power sector.
- The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) has been given statutory authority, strengthening its role as an independent regulator for nuclear safety and oversight.

International Solar Alliance

- Context: The **International Solar Alliance (ISA) launched the Green Hydrogen and Storage Start-up Challenge 2026.**
- The initiative aims to **identify and support innovative startups** that are developing advanced technologies in green hydrogen production and energy storage systems.

About International Solar Alliance (ISA)

- ISA is a global intergovernmental body committed to promoting the large-scale adoption of solar energy in order to support the transition towards a **carbon-neutral world**.
- The alliance was established in 2015 through a joint initiative of **India and France during the COP21 Climate Conference held in Paris.**
- Its headquarters is located in **Gurugram, India.**
- ISA follows the **"Towards 1000 Strategy"**, which seeks to mobilise **USD 1,000 billion in investments in solar energy by 2030**, while providing clean energy access to 1,000 million people and facilitating the installation of 1,000 GW of solar power capacity worldwide.
- This initiative is expected to reduce global solar-related emissions by around **1,000 million tonnes of CO₂ every year.**
- The alliance currently includes **125 member and signatory countries.**

Four Strategic Pillars

- **Catalytic Finance Hub:** Works to unlock and channel large-scale investments for solar energy projects.
- **Global Capability Centre and Digitisation:** Encourages innovation, digital solutions, and skill development in the solar sector.
- **Regional and Country-Level Engagement:** Focuses on customised actions and support for different countries and regions.
- **Technology Roadmap and Policy:** Promotes the adoption and deployment of emerging solar technologies through policy guidance.

SWAMIH Fund

- **Context:** The **Special Window for Affordable and Mid-Income Housing Investment Fund (SWAMIH)** has become an important government initiative **aimed at supporting India's housing sector.**

About SWAMIH

- **Introduced in 2019**, the SWAMIH Fund provides last-mile funding to housing projects that are stuck due to financial difficulties.
- The scheme is **sponsored by the Ministry of Finance**.
- It is administered by SBICAP Ventures Ltd., an investment management company belonging to the State Bank Group.

Impact and Outcomes

- The initiative has helped complete more than 58,596 housing units so far.
- Over 1 lakh homes are expected to be delivered, benefiting around 2.38 lakh individuals.

Purple Fest

- **Context:** Rashtrapati Bhavan organised the **Purple Fest to honour the talents and accomplishments of Divyangjan (persons with disabilities)** and to encourage a more inclusive society.

About Purple Fest

- Purple Fest is an inclusive event conducted by the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** to acknowledge and celebrate the abilities, achievements, and ambitions of persons with disabilities.
- The festival seeks to raise awareness, uphold dignity, and ensure equal opportunities and participation for persons with disabilities in all aspects of society.
- Participants displayed their artistic skills through various cultural performances held at the Open Air Theatre.
- The programme focused on **spreading awareness about the rights, dignity, and abilities of persons with disabilities**.

- The event promoted the involvement of civil society groups, institutions, and citizens in supporting and empowering Divyangjan.

Great Indian Bustard (GIB)

- **Context:** Project Great Indian Bustard has **entered the fourth year of its captive breeding programme**, with around 70 birds currently maintained in captivity to support the species' conservation.

About Great Indian Bustard

- The Great Indian Bustard is an agro-grassland bird native to the Indian subcontinent.
- Its main population is found in Rajasthan, with smaller populations present in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh.
- It is an **omnivorous bird belonging to the Otididae family**.
- The species shows sexual dimorphism, meaning males and females differ in appearance.
- In Rajasthan, the bird is popularly **known as Godawan**.
- The species faces threats such as **illegal hunting and collisions with high-voltage power lines**, which significantly affect its population.
- The species is also protected under the Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats scheme through a dedicated species recovery programme.

Protection Status

- IUCN: Critically Endangered
- Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule I
- CITES: Appendix I

NATIONAL SCHEMES

Eligible Manufacturer Importers (EMI) Scheme

- **Context:** The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has rolled out a deferred payment option for Customs duties for qualifying manufacturer importers under the EMI Scheme.

About the EMI Scheme

- Launched by the CBIC as part of the Union Budget 2026–27 announcements.
- The scheme will remain operational from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2028.
- Under this framework, eligible manufacturer importers (EMIs) are permitted to release imported consignments without making immediate Customs duty payments.
- Instead, the duty can be paid on a monthly basis in accordance with the Deferred Payment of Import Duty Rules, 2016.
- The initiative is aimed at easing working capital pressures for manufacturers, strengthening tax compliance, supporting domestic production, and improving the overall business environment in India.

Coconut Promotion Scheme

- **Context:** The Union Budget 2026–27 introduced a 'Coconut Promotion Scheme' aimed at revitalising the coconut sector in India.

Objective of the Scheme

- **Enhance productivity by:**
 - Rejuvenating aged and low-yielding coconut plantations with superior, high-yield varieties.

- Promoting fresh plantations, particularly in coastal regions.

- The initiative seeks to modernise cultivation practices and boost farmers' incomes.

Coconut Production in India

- **India ranks** as the largest producer and consumer of coconuts globally.
- Coconut is a perennial **plantation crop**.
- It is a monocotyledonous palm belonging to the family Areaceae.
- The crop is believed to have originated in the **Indo-Pacific region, particularly Southeast Asia**.
- Grows well in: Sandy loam soils, Alluvial soils, Laterite soils, Coastal sandy soils.

Pink National Common Mobility Card

- The 'Pink National Common Mobility Card' initiative has been launched with the aim of providing free **bus travel to women in the national capital** and seamless access to multiple public transport systems through a single smart card.

India's first 'Ring Metro'

- **Context:** Prime Minister inaugurated two new corridors of the Delhi Metro, including **India's first fully operational "Ring Metro"**, marking a significant development in the urban transport system of Delhi.
- The newly opened sections include the Majlis Park–Maujpur–Babarpur corridor of the Delhi Metro Pink Line and the Deepali Chowk–Majlis Park extension of the Delhi Metro Magenta Line.

India's First Ring Metro

- India's first Ring Metro became operational in **Delhi**.
- The **Majlis Park–Maujpur-Babarpur stretch** of the Delhi Metro Pink Line was inaugurated.
- The new corridor is 12.3 km long with eight elevated stations, increasing the Pink Line length to 71.56 km.
- This makes Delhi the first city in India with a fully operational Ring Metro system.

Divyang Sahara Yojana and Divyangjan Kaushal Yojana

- Context : In a post-Budget webinar, PM highlighted the Divyang Sahara Yojana and Divyangjan Kaushal Yojana. Both schemes were introduced in the **Union Budget 2026–27** under the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**.

About Divyang Sahara Yojana

- The scheme aims to provide **affordable access to modern assistive devices** to empower persons with disabilities (Divyangjan).
- It will support the **Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India**

(ALIMCO) in increasing production while integrating **AI and advanced technologies**.

- Retail-style centres will be set up where beneficiaries can **see, test, and choose assistive devices** according to their needs.
- Existing **Pradhan Mantri Divyasha-Vayoshri Kendras (PMDVKs)** will be expanded to provide **assessment, customization, and maintenance services**.

About Divyangjan Kaushal Yojana

- The scheme provides **industry-relevant skill training** to create dignified livelihood opportunities for persons with disabilities (Divyangjans).
- It focuses on sectors such as **Information Technology (IT), Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics (AVGC), hospitality, and food & beverages**.
- Skill-training registration under the scheme is integrated with the **PM-DAKSH Portal** of the **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD)**.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Wildlife Day

- The global community will observe World Wildlife Day 2026 on 3 March. This United Nations-designated day highlights the importance of conserving wild animals, plants, and overall biodiversity across the planet.
- The theme for 2026 is “Medicinal and Aromatic Plants: Conserving Health, Heritage and Livelihoods”.

World Hearing Day

- World Hearing Day is observed on 3 March 2026
- The theme for 2026 is “From communities to classrooms: hearing care for all children”.

National Security Day

- National Security Day is celebrated every year on 4th March.
- This day has been celebrated every year since 1972 to commemorate the Indian Defence Forces.

World Obesity Day

- World Obesity Day 2026 will be observed on March 4.
- 2026 theme is “8 Billion Reasons to Act on Obesity.”

International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness

- The International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness is observed annually on March 5.
- The purpose of this day is to increase awareness worldwide about disarmament and the prevention of the spread of weapons, especially among young people.

International Women’s Day

- International Women’s Day is celebrated on March 8, 2026,
- The primary global theme is “Rights. Justice. Action. For ALL Women and Girls,” as declared by the UN Women.

CISF Raising Day 2026

- Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) Raising Day is celebrated across India on March 10 every year.
- The day marks the formation of the CISF and recognises the commitment, courage, and service of its personnel who safeguard the nation’s vital infrastructure.
- The CISF was established in 1969 under the CISF Act, 1968. The force operates under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

No Smoking Day

- No Smoking Day is observed on March 11, 2026, with the aim of motivating people around the world to quit tobacco use and adopt healthier lifestyles.

Dandi March Day

- Dandi March Day, celebrated on March 12th, commemorates the 1930 launch of Mahatma Gandhi’s 24-day, march from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi against the British salt monopoly.

World Kidney Day

- World Kidney Day 2026 observed on March 12.
- The World Kidney Day theme 2026 “Kidney Health for All: Caring for People, Protecting the Planet”.

Pi Day 2026

- Pi Day is observed annually on 14 March to celebrate the mathematical constant Pi (π).

REPORTS & INDICES

Innovators Business Environment Index 2026

- **Context:** StartupLink has released the Innovators Business Environment Index (IBEI) 2026.
- The US topped the list with a score of 100, followed by Singapore at 2nd and the UK at 3rd.
- India ranked 54th globally with a score of 55.035, ahead of China at 85th.

National Highways Green Cover Index (NH-GCI) 2025–26

- **Context :** National Highways Authority of India released the **National Highways Green Cover Index (NH-GCI) 2025–26 annual report.**

About National Highways Green Cover Index

- **It is an initiative of National Highways Authority of India.**
- The report was prepared with **National Remote Sensing Centre of Indian Space Research Organisation.**
- The assessment uses high-resolution satellite sensors to **detect chlorophyll content.**
- **NH-GCI shows the percentage of green cover within the Right of Way (RoW) of highways for every 1 km stretch.**
- The first assessment covered about 30,000 km of highways across 24 states during July–December 2024.

Fiscal Health Index (FHI)

- **NITI Aayog** has released the second edition of its '**Fiscal Health Index (FHI)**' in 2026 to assess the fiscal performance of Indian states.
- The index is a framework designed to assess the fiscal sustainability of states, **improve transparency and support data-based fiscal policymaking.**
- State governments account for nearly one-third of India's total public debt.

- Only 18 major states were assessed in the first edition.
- The new edition also includes 10 states from the North-East and the Himalayan region.
- Gujarat, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka are in the 'Front Runner category' of the Fiscal Health Index 2026.

About Fiscal Health Index (FHI) 2026

- **Context:** NITI Aayog has released the 2nd edition of the Fiscal Health Index (FHI) 2026 to evaluate the fiscal performance and fiscal sustainability of Indian states.
- It analyzes state fiscal trends over a 10-year period, spanning from 2014–15 to 2023–24.
- In addition to the 18 major states, 10 North-Eastern and Himalayan states have now been included and ranked separately.
- This index assesses states based on five key pillars
 - Quality of Expenditure
 - Revenue Mobilisation
 - Fiscal Prudence
 - Debt Index
 - Debt Sustainability

State Rankings (FHI 2026)

- **Achievers:** Odisha, Goa, Jharkhand
- **Frontrunners:** Gujarat, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka
- **Performers:** Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan
- **Aspirants:** West Bengal, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab

North-Eastern and Himalayan States

- **Achievers:** Arunachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand
- **Performers:** Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Sikkim, Tripura
- **Aspirants:** Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Nagaland

EMINENT PERSONALITIES

Ayya Vaikunda Swamikal

- Vaikunda Swamikal (1809-1851) was born in the village of Shasthakovilvilai, now known as **Samithope, near Kanyakumari**.
- His original name was Mudi Soodum Perumal, later his parents changed his name to Muthukutti as the name was opposed by upper caste Hindus.
- Vaikunda Swamikal criticized the British rule and the rule of the Travancore king as the rule of "**white devils**" and "**black devils**" respectively.
- His religious system was known as '**Ayyavazhi**'.
- His views have been collected in the book Akhilathirattu.
- He founded the **Samathuva Samaj in 1836**.
- His 194th birth anniversary was observed on **March 4, 2026**.
- '**Dharma is to protect the downtrodden**' is his motto.

Meenambal Sivaraj

- Meenambal Sivaraj was a pioneering figure in the fight for the **rights of the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and women's empowerment**.
- Born on **December 12, 1904** in Rangoon, Burma, to V.G. Vasudeva Pillai and Minakshi, she was part of a family that placed great importance on education, service, and leadership.
- In the book **Trailblazers: The First Women of South India**, author Nivedita Louis wrote

that as her husband became more involved in politics and social movements, "she too began to engage with the issues affecting the Dalit community".

- In 1928, when the Simon Commission arrived in India, Meenambal supported it, believing it would better serve the interests of the SCs. This marked the beginning of her own political activism.
- She grew disillusioned with Congress leaders who were hesitant to address the concerns of the SCs, especially when it came to caste-based discrimination.
- Over the time, Meenambal became closely connected to leaders such as **B.R. Ambedkar, Periyar E.V. Ramasamy, and Jawaharlal Nehru**.
- She was a regular speaker at rallies and a key figure in the **Self-Respect Movement, a radical initiative led by Periyar to challenge the caste system**.
- One of Meenambal's most significant contributions was her work with the **All India Scheduled Castes Federation (AISCF), founded by Dr. Ambedkar**.
- She became the **first Dalit woman to join the AISCF, and the first woman president of the South India Scheduled Castes Federation**, advocating for greater rights and opportunities for the SCs.
- Meenambal remained fiercely committed to **gender equality and the rights of Dalit women**, who were oppressed by both caste and patriarchy.
- She served as a **magistrate for Madras Province**, and a member of several important

boards and committees, such as the **Film Censor Board and the Madras State Advisory Committee**.

Krishnammal Jagannathan

- A report in The Hindu on April 20, 1939, said she no longer wished to be addressed by her given name, Meenambal Sivaraj, which she believed had “Aryan origins”. Instead, she chose to be called **Angiarkanni Siva Arasu**, a name she felt better represented her identity, free from the caste and colonial influences.
- Meenambal said in a speech, “Whether or not women belonging to other classes are allowed to go forward, we should insist on our women being provided with opportunities of serving in a wider field than that of mere household work.”
- In 1946, she was appointed a member of the **Senate of the University of Madras**. Three years later, she was elected to the **Madras City Council by the members of the Senate**.
- After her husband passed away in 1964, she continued her work in social reform and public service.
- Despite personal losses and electoral defeats, Meenambal remained unbroken in spirit. She contested the elections in 1952 and 1967 but was defeated.
- Nevertheless, her legacy as a social worker, politician, and women’s rights advocate is etched in the history of Tamil Nadu. Meenambal died on November 30, 1992, at the age of 88.
- She was born on **June 16, 1926** in **Pattiveeranpatti, Dindigul district**, into a poor family.
- She studied in Madurai and graduated from **The American College, Madurai**, becoming **the first woman graduate from Madurai**.
- **Krishnammal** and her husband **S. Jagannathan** worked to secure land for landless farmers across villages.
- She was inspired by **Vallalar Ramalinga Adigal** and followed Gandhian ideals of compassion and social justice.
- Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi, she joined the **Sarvodaya movement of Vinoba Bhave and participated in the Bhoodan Movement**, distributing land to poor people in several regions including Bihar.
- They became active in **Thanjavur district after the Keezhvenmani massacre of 1968**, where 44 Dalits were burnt alive.
- She founded **Land for Tillers’ Freedom (LAFTI) to secure land ownership for landless farmers**.
- She **helped register about 13,500 acres of land** in the names of poor farmers.
- For her social service, she received many awards including **the Padma Shri, Jamnalal Bajaj Award, Bhagwan Mahaveer Award, Right Livelihood Award (Alternative Nobel Prize)**, and the **Opus Prize**.

AWARDS & HONOURS

Jnanpith Award

- **Context:** The **60th Jnanpith Award for the year 2025** has been announced for the Tamil poet Vairamuthu.
- Vairamuthu is the first Tamil writer to receive this award specifically for poetry.

About Poet Vairamuthu

- He is a Tamil poet, writer, and film lyricist.
- He was born on July 13, 1953, in Mettur, near Theni district.
- He has authored more than 40 books.

Key Works

- Kallikattu Ithikasam
- Karuvachi Kaviyam
- Thanneer Desam
- Moondram Ulaga Por

Awards Received

- Padma Shri – 2003
- Padma Bhushan – 2014
- National Award – 7 times (for Best Lyricist)
- Tamil Nadu State Government Award – 6 times
- Sahitya Akademi Award – 2003 (*Kallikattu Ithikasam*)
- He has received the Kalaimamani Award, presented by the Government of Tamil Nadu.
- He holds the distinction of being the first Tamil writer to receive the Jnanpith Award after a gap of 23 years.

About the Jnanpith Award

- Established in **1961**, this award is presented annually to writers who have excelled in the literature of Indian languages.

- It is conferred upon writers whose works are written in any of the languages listed in the **8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution**, as well as in English.

- The award comprises a cash prize of RS.1 lakh, a citation, and a bronze statue of Goddess Saraswati (Vagdevi).
- This award is presented by the cultural organization Bharatiya Jnanpith.
- The award was first received by G. Sankara Kurup in 1965 for his poetry collection Odakkuzhal.

Previous Tamil Writers Who Received the Jnanpith Award

- **Writer Akilan** received the Jnanpith Award for the year 1975 for his novel Chithirappavai.
- **Jeyakanthan** received the **Jnanpith Award** for the year 2002.

BCCI Naman Awards 2026

- **Roger Binny and Rahul Dravid** will be bestowed with the Col. C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award, the BCCI's highest honour recognising outstanding service to Indian cricket.
- **Mithali Raj** will receive the BCCI Lifetime Achievement Award for women, recognising her extraordinary contribution to the growth and stature of women's cricket in India.
- **Polly Umrigar Award – Best International Cricketer (Men): Shubman Gill**
- **Best International Cricketer (Women): Smriti Mandhana**

DEFENCE

Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS)

- The Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS) is a man-portable air defence missile system (MANPADS), designed to be carried and operated by ground troops.
- The system has been indigenously developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) through its Research Centre Imarat.
- It is capable of detecting, engaging, and neutralising fast-moving aerial targets across different distances and altitudes, enhancing short-range air defence effectiveness.
- The missile system is planned for deployment with the Indian Army, Indian Navy, and Indian Air Force, contributing to India's multi-layered air defence network.

Mudh-Nyoma Air Force Station Upgrade

- **Context:** India's modernised Mudh-Nyoma Air Force Station has become the highest operational airfield in the world capable of supporting fighter aircraft.
- **Location:** Situated in the Changthang area of Eastern Ladakh at an altitude of about 13,700 feet, the airstrip lies roughly 23–35 km from the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Executing Agency

- The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) carried out the upgradation under Project Himank.

- Project Himank is a key BRO programme focused on building and maintaining vital border infrastructure across Ladakh's harsh, high-altitude terrain.

Strategic Connectivity

- The upgraded base ensures faster deployment of forces to strategically important areas such as Pangong Tso, Demchok, and the Depsang Plains along the eastern Ladakh sector.

Operational Capabilities

- The facility now features an all-weather runway designed to accommodate advanced fighter aircraft, heavy-lift transport planes, Apache attack helicopters, and unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAVs).

Strategic Importance

- The airbase enhances India's capacity for swift military response along the China frontier, while also aiding disaster management efforts and improving connectivity in the remote Ladakh region.

Shtil Missile System

- **Context:** The Ministry of Defence signed defence agreements worth ₹5,083 crore to enhance maritime security. The deal includes procurement of Shtil surface-to-air missile system for frontline ships of the Indian Navy.

Shtil Missile System

- Shtil is a naval surface-to-air missile (SAM) system installed on warships.
- It is designed to destroy aerial threats such as: Fighter aircraft, Helicopters, Anti-ship missiles and other airborne targets attacking naval vessels.
- The system provides medium-range air defence for ships operating at sea.

Objective

- To improve the multi-layered air defence network of naval forces.
- To ensure quick-response protection for warships against several types of aerial threats, particularly in sensitive maritime regions.

Major Features

- **Medium-range missile system** capable of targeting aircraft, UAVs, and anti-ship missiles.
- Equipped with a Vertical Launch System (VLS) that enables missiles to be launched rapidly in any direction without rotating launchers.
- All-weather capability, allowing operations both day and night in complex sea conditions.
- Fast reaction time for intercepting incoming threats.
- Integrated with naval radar and fire-control systems for accurate detection and targeting.

Operation Sankalp

- **Context:** Due to rising tensions in West Asia, warships of the Indian Navy deployed under Operation Sankalp have been kept ready to conduct **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)** missions if required.
- Operation Sankalp (meaning commitment in Sanskrit) is a maritime security operation launched by India.
- It aims to protect Indian-flagged merchant ships and support stability in the Indian Ocean Region.

Objectives of Operation Sankalp

- To ensure the safe movement of Indian commercial ships through strategic sea routes

such as: **Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman**

- To counter piracy and maritime threats in the Indian Ocean Region.
- To protect India's maritime trade and energy supplies, particularly oil imports, from potential risks and unconventional attacks.

Exercise LAMITIYE 2026

▪ **Context:** Exercise LAMITIYE is a joint military exercise between India and Seychelles. The 11th edition (2026) is being held at the Seychelles Defence Academy from 9–20 March 2026.

▪ The exercise is conducted between the Indian Armed Forces and the Seychelles Defence Forces (SDF).

▪ Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force are participating together, marking a tri-service participation.

▪ The exercise aims to enhance defence cooperation, interoperability, and joint operational capabilities.

▪ It also focuses on peacekeeping operations, maritime security, and counter-piracy cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

▪ The exercise is biennial (held every two years) and has been hosted in Seychelles since 2001.

▪ The word "LAMITIYE" means "Friendship" in the Creole language, symbolising strong bilateral ties.

▪ Seychelles' strategic location in the western Indian Ocean makes it an important partner for India in ensuring regional stability and maritime security.

Air Droppable Container

Context: Defence Research and Development Organisation and the Indian Navy

- successfully conducted trials of the indigenous Air Droppable Container ADC-150 using a Boeing P-8I Poseidon aircraft.
- During the trials, four mid-air release tests were performed under different challenging conditions. The results demonstrated that the container can safely deliver essential supplies from an aircraft to naval ships operating far out at sea.

Indigenous Air Droppable Container ADC-150 System

- The ADC-150, developed by DRDO, is designed to transport payloads weighing up to 150 kg.
- This system enables aircraft to airdrop important materials directly to naval vessels deployed in distant ocean regions.
- It can carry a wide range of supplies such as medical items, technical equipment, food, and other emergency materials.

- This capability will significantly assist naval operations by ensuring that ships stationed in blue-water areas far from the coast can receive timely logistical support.

INS Taragiri

- Context: India's newest homegrown stealth frigate INS Taragiri will join the Indian Navy's fleet along the eastern seaboard in Visakhapatnam.
- INS Targiri is the fourth Niligiri-class ship under project 17A.
- The P-17A frigates are among India's most advanced warships, built using integrated modular construction.
- INS Taragiri and her sister ships carry a wide range of weapons, including the BrahMos supersonic missile, Barak-8 long range surface to air missile system, 76mm naval guns built under licence and torpedoes for antisubmarine operations.
- The frigates are fitted with the hull mounted sonar advanced next generation (HUMSANG), developed by Bharat Electronics Limited.

SPORTS & GAMES

championship with a 49-31 victory over Maharashtra in the final at Vadodara.

ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026

Ranji Trophy 2025-26

- **Jammu and Kashmir** created history by clinching the **Ranji Trophy 2025-26** title in their very first final, overcoming **Karnataka** in a remarkable performance.

- India secured the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 after defeating New Zealand by a massive 96-run margin at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

- India is the First team to win three (2007, 2024, 2026) T20 World Cup titles.

Men's National kabaddi

- **Indian Railways**, led by **Sunil Kumar**, won the **72nd senior Men's National kabaddi**

India's Grandmaster

- **Mayank Chakraborty** has become India's 94th Grandmaster and the first from **Assam**.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

- **We, the People of India: Decoding a Nation's Symbols-** T.M. Krishna (Carnatic vocalist)

CURRENT FACTS

- The United States military has officially designated its recent combat actions against Iran as Operation Epic Fury.
- Part XII, Article 270- Taxes levied and distributed between the Union and the States.
- Part XII, Article 275- Grants from the Union to certain States
- Part XII, Article 280- Finance Commission
- Chief Minister launched a monthly incentive schemes of Rs1500 for village temple priests at a conference held in Mylapore.
- Sports Achievements of Tamil Nadu
 - Tamil Nadu Champions Foundation has been awarded the “India Sports Award 2025” by FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry).
 - CII 'Best State for Promotion of Sports' for the year 2025.
 - Olympic Academy in Chennai, Madurai, Trichy and Nilgiris districts.
 - Some of the famous international tournaments held in Tamil Nadu- Squash World Cup Tournament, Men's Hockey Junior World Cup Tournament, Chennai Open International Women's Tennis Championship 2025, World Surfing League Tournaments, Chennai Chess Grand Master Tournaments.
- Part VI, Article 226- Power of High Courts to issue certain writs
- Minimum Wages Act, 1948
- Oleum($H_2S_2O_7$) – a concentrated form of diarsulfuric acid – useful form for transporting sulphuric acid compounds, typically in rail tank cars, between oil refineries and industrial consumers.
- Nucleic Acid Test (NAT) for identification of diseases. NAT is a highly sensitive molecular technique that detects the genetic material for viruses such as HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C in the blood.
- Tamil Nadu launched HPV Vaccination campaign on a pilot basis in four districts Ariyalur, Perambalur, Dharmapuri and Tiruvannamalai.
- In Tamil Nadu, where 58.27% of land is under agriculture and only 10.44% is classified as wasteland or dry land.
- Tamil Nadu pioneered the HPV vaccination campaign in four districts: Ariyalur, Perambalur, Dharmapuri, and Tiruvannamalai.
- The State’s current installed solar capacity is 10.15 GW.
- Tamil Nadu Cancer Registry Project report released at the end of the 2023 showed that the Crude Incidence Rate of cervical cancer among women in Chennai was 13.0 per one lakh women, while the same in Dharmapuri was 36.2, followed by Perambalur 36.0, and Ariyalur 29.9.
- Part VI, Article 170- Composition of the Legislative Assemblies

- The South Pennayar originates in the Nandidurg hills of Karnataka and flows through Hosur, Krishnagiri, Tiruvannamalai, Villupuram and Cuddalore districts for a distance of 391 km before emptying into the Bay of Bengal.
- India ranks second globally in childhood obesity. India stood second only to China in the number of children with high BMI (41 million high BMI; 14 million obesity).
- The State government launched a WhatsApp service for booking 108 ambulance for emergencies.
- Sungudi saris are traditional cotton saris which are perfected by the Saurashtrian community, who migrated from Gujarat to Madurai (Tamil Nadu) in the 17th century. Madurai Sungudi sari received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag in December 2005.
- Union Home Minister unveiled two mascots, Pragati and Vikas, for the upcoming Population Census 2027. This will be the first Census that will be digital, and the first to allow self-enumeration and enumeration of caste.
- The Karaivetti Bird Sanctuary, spread over nearly 4.5 square kilometres in Ariyalur district, is an important wetland that attracts thousands of migratory and resident birds each year. The freshwater lake is fed by the Pullambadi and Kattalai Canals. It was declared a bird sanctuary in 1999, and made a Ramsar site in 2024.
- Bhavani 'jamakkalam' refers to the colourful blankets and carpets woven in and around Bhavani in Erode district. They are made with thick cotton threads. The craft received the Geographical Indication tag in 2005. The 'jamakkalam' is exported to European countries, the U.S., and Singapore.
- The Rayakottai Fort in Krishnagiri district is one of the region's historic hill forts. It was constructed by the Vijayanagara rulers in the 14th Century. Later, it came under the control of the Mysore Wadiyars. Following the Third Anglo-Mysore War in 1791, the fort was passed into the hands of the British from Tipu Sultan.
- In the First World War, hundreds of soldiers from the erstwhile Trichinopoly district joined the British Indian Army. Some of them died in the war. To commemorate their sacrifice, a memorial was installed by the government opposite Gandhi Market in the heart of Tiruchi. A clock tower was also erected on the premises.
- In February 1895, the first tram services in Madras ran between the Power Station at Egmore and Pachaiyappa's College, with two short halts, completing the journey in 12 minutes. By 1921, 97 tram cars ran on 24 km of track. The Madras Tramway Company was officially closed in April 1953.
- India is the second largest fish-producing country in the world
- Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989
- Part V, Article 94- Vacation and resignation of, and removal from, the offices of Speaker and Deputy Speaker.
- Prasar Bharati-Shared Audio-Visuals for Broadcast and Dissemination (PB-SHABD) was launched in March, 2024.
- Amrit Bharat Station Scheme was launched in 2022 which aims at development and upgradation of stations over the Indian Railways (IR) network.
- cVIGIL App
 - Introduced by the Election Commission of India (ECI), the cVIGIL app empowers citizens to instantly report violations of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) and expenditure-related issues during election periods.

- Through this app, users can upload photos, audio clips, or videos.
- Promising action on complaints within 100 minutes, the app also features an automated facility for geotagging to pinpoint the exact location.
- India, with the fifth-largest coal reserves and being the second-largest consumer, heavily depends on coal.
- The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization has declared 2026 the International Year of the Woman Farmer.
- The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) is a statutory body established in 1986 under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023
- Joha rice from Assam was granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2017.
- In India, Geographical Indications are regulated under the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.
- Tamil Nadu Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) 2021-26 is 35 per 1 lakh live births.
- Vijayaraman was appointed as the State Information Commissioner of Tamil Nadu.
- The Right to Information Act, 2005, was amended through the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023. This amendment restricts the disclosure of personal information, even in the interest of the public good.
- Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019
- Through the 106th Amendment to the Constitution (2023), a law was enacted providing for a 33% reservation of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. This legislation is known as the “Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam.”
- Part XV, Article 324(5)
- Subject to the provisions of any law made by Parliament, the conditions of service and tenure of office of the Election Commissioners and the Regional Commissioners shall be such as the President may by rule determine:
- Provided that the Chief Election Commissioner shall not be removed from his office except in like manner and on the like grounds as a Judge of the Supreme Court and the conditions of service of the Chief Election Commissioner shall not be varied to his disadvantage after his appointment:
- Provided further that any other Election Commissioner or a Regional Commissioner shall not be removed from office except on the recommendation of the Chief Election Commissioner.
- In the 2026 case of Harish Rana v. Union of India, the Supreme Court of India granted permission for euthanasia to Harish Rana, thereby upholding the right to die with dignity under Article 21 of the Constitution.
- Mazagon is India's only shipyard to have built destroyers and conventional submarines for the Indian Navy. It was given Navratna status in 2024.
- Both the Houses of Parliament seeking the removal of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar. This is the first time that such a notice has been formally submitted in Parliament.