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Polity & Governance

National Testing Agency (NTA)

Why in the news?

- **Allegations** have been raised **against the credibility of the National Testing Agency (NTA)** due to **discrepancies in NEET UG scoring** released on June 4.
- Makkal Kalvi Kootiyakkam, called for the **dissolution of the NTA**, an agency dedicated to conducting entrance examinations.

About NTA:

- The **National Testing Agency (NTA)** is an **autonomous agency** under the **Department of Higher Education** of the Ministry of Education of India.
- It was established by the **Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD)**, now known as the **Ministry of Education (MoE)**.
- It was established in **November 2017**.
- Its **main purpose** is to **conduct entrance examinations for admission/fellowship in higher educational institutions**.

National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA)

Why in the news?

- A team of **National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA)** officials **inspected the safety of Sothuparai dam** in Periyakulam.

About NDSA:

- The **National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA)** is a **regulatory body** established under the **Dam Safety Act, 2021**.
- The NDSA is **responsible for implementing policies of the National Committee on Dam Safety**.
- It **offers technical assistance to State Dam Safety Organisations (SDSO)**.
- The NDSA is the **custodian of dam safety, overseeing inspections, evaluations, and enforcement of regulations**.
- **Headquarters: Delhi**



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Justice K. Chandru committee

Why in the news?

- The **one-man committee**, led by **retired Madras High Court judge Justice K. Chandru**, has **recommended that the Tamil Nadu government ban students from wearing colored wristbands, rings, or forehead marks that indicate their caste.**
- Additionally, it suggested **removing caste appellations from the names of schools.**

Advocating reforms

The Justice K Chandru Committee, formed after the mysterious death of a 17-year old inmate of the Government Observation Home in Chengalpattu in December 2022, has given various recommendations to the government with respect to administration of homes for children in conflict with law (CCL). Here are a few of them:



Justice K. Chandru submitting the one-man panel's report to Chief Minister M.K. Stalin at the Secretariat.

- The affairs of the homes should be monitored daily through a special monitoring room
- Each home should have a medical doctor, a psychologist and a qualified counsellor
- A training academy should be set up for staff
- Admission certificate should be given to parents of CCL
- Each home must have a de-addiction centre
- CCL should be provided with recreation facilities and allowed to play on open ground

National Commission for Women (NCW)

Why in the news?

- The **National Commission for Women (NCW)** has taken **suo motu cognisance** of media reports on Kallakurichi hooch tragedy.

About NCW:



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- **Establishment:** NCW was established in January **1992** under the provisions of the **National Commission for Women Act, 1990**.
- **Objective:** It is aimed at promoting and safeguarding the rights and interests of women in India.
- **Composition:** The Commission consists of a **Chairperson, five Members, and a Member-Secretary, all appointed by the Government of India**.
- **Functions:**
 - Investigate and examine matters related to the constitutional and legal safeguards for women.
 - Present recommendations for effective implementation of laws and policies affecting women's rights.
 - Review the existing legislation and suggest amendments to bring about gender equality.
 - Provide redressal to grievances and complaints received from women.
 - Conduct studies, research, and workshops aimed at raising awareness about women's issues.
 - **Powers:** NCW has the powers of a civil court while investigating complaints, such as summoning witnesses and examining them on oath.

Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016

Why in the news?

- The Madurai Bench of the **Madras High Court** has taken cognizance of a **public interest litigation (PIL) petition**, urging authorities to ensure that all government offices in Tamil Nadu are accessible to differently-abled individuals.

About Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016:

- **Enactment and Objective:**
 - Enacted by the Parliament of India in December **2016**.
 - Aimed at ensuring **equal opportunities, protection of rights, and full participation of persons with disabilities**.
- **Key Provisions:**
 - **Definition Expansion:** The Act expands the **definition of disabilities** from 7 to 21 conditions, including autism, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, and multiple disabilities.
 - **Reservation in Employment:** Increased reservation for persons with disabilities in government jobs from **3% to 4%**.
 - **Educational Rights:** Mandates **inclusive education and reservation of seats for children with disabilities** in higher educational institutions.
 - **Accessibility:** Requires both **public and private establishments to adhere to accessibility norms and standards**.
 - **Legal Capacity:** Recognizes the legal capacity of persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life.
 - **Special Courts:** Establishment of special courts in each district to **handle cases concerning the violation of rights of persons with disabilities**.



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- **Chief Commissioner and State Commissioners:** Appointment of a Chief Commissioner for persons with disabilities at the central level and State Commissioners at the state level for redressal of grievances.

Aadhaar authentication

Why in the news?

- The Minister for Food and Civil Supplies announced the **introduction of iris-based scanners for Aadhaar authentication** at fair price shops, alongside the existing fingerprint-based system.

About Aadhaar authentication:

- **Definition:** Process involving **submission of Aadhaar number and individual information for verification.**
- **Types of Information Submitted:**
 - **Demographic Information:** Includes name, date of birth, gender, etc.
 - **Biometric Information:** Includes fingerprint or iris data.
- **Verification Authority:** UIDAI's Central Identities Data Repository (CIDR).
- **Verification Process:** UIDAI verifies the submitted details based on its records, confirming correctness or identifying discrepancies

Focus Blocks Development Programme

Why in the news?

- The **Madras Institute of Development Studies** has thanked the State government for making it the **knowledge partner for the focus block development programme.**

Key points:

- The State government had announced the launch of **Focus Blocks Development Programme** in its 2023-24 budget.
- Under the scheme, **₹5-crore worth projects would be implemented in 50 most backward blocks** in the State.

About Focus Blocks Development Programme:

- **Objective:** To **accelerate development in the most backward blocks of Tamil Nadu** through targeted interventions.
- **Target Areas:** Selected backward blocks **identified based on key socio-economic indicators.**
- **Key Components:**
 - **Infrastructure Development:** Improvement of basic infrastructure like roads, water supply, and sanitation.
 - **Education and Health:** Enhancement of educational and healthcare facilities to improve the quality of life.
 - **Livelihood Support:** Promotion of sustainable livelihood opportunities through skill development and financial support



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Environment

Tamil Nadu State Coastal Zone Management Authority (TNSCZMA)

Why in news?

- The **Tamil Nadu State Coastal Zone Management Authority (TNSCZMA)** has informed the Southern Bench of the **National Green Tribunal** that **no prior clearances were given for the construction of groynes on Chengalpattu coast.**

About TNSCZMA:

- **Coastal Zone Management:** TNSCZMA is responsible for **managing the coastal zones of Tamil Nadu**, which has a **coastal length of 1076 kms**, constituting about **15% of the total coastal length of India.**
- **Coastal Regulation Zone Notification:** The Government of India issued the **Coastal Regulation Zone Notification in 2011** under the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986** to **protect the coastal environment and regulate development activities along the coastal areas.**
- **Zones:** As per this notification, the coastal areas have been classified into **four zones:**
 - CRZ-I (ecologically sensitive),
 - CRZ-II (built-up area),
 - CRZ-III (Rural area), and
 - CRZ-IV (water area).
- **Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM):** ICZM is a dynamic, multidisciplinary, and iterative process to **promote sustainable management of coastal zones.**
- **Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP):** The preparation of CZMP for Tamil Nadu has been entrusted to the **National Center for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM), Chennai.**

Re-wilding and ecological restoration programme

Why in the news?

- Recently, a **re-wilding and ecological restoration program** was undertaken in **Udhagamandalam (Ooty), Tamil Nadu.**
- It is to mark **World Environment Day 2024.**

Key points:

- **Theme:** "**Land restoration, desertification, and drought resilience,**" emphasizing the global need to protect and revive ecosystems.
- The **Cantonment Board, Madras Regimental Centre**, and **other units of the Wellington Cantonment** collaborated to **restore a piece of wetland within the cantonment limits.**

About Re-wilding and ecological restoration programme:

- **Re-wilding** is a conservation and ecological restoration approach that aims to improve biodiversity and ecosystem health by restoring natural processes.



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- It also focuses on providing connectivity between natural processes and ecosystem health, as well as reintroducing apex predators and keystone species.

Green Tamil Nadu Mission

Why in the news?

- The **Tamil Nadu government** is considering the **use of treated wastewater for urban greening**.
- An '**Urban Greening Policy**' is currently in the draft stage under the **Green Tamil Nadu Mission**.

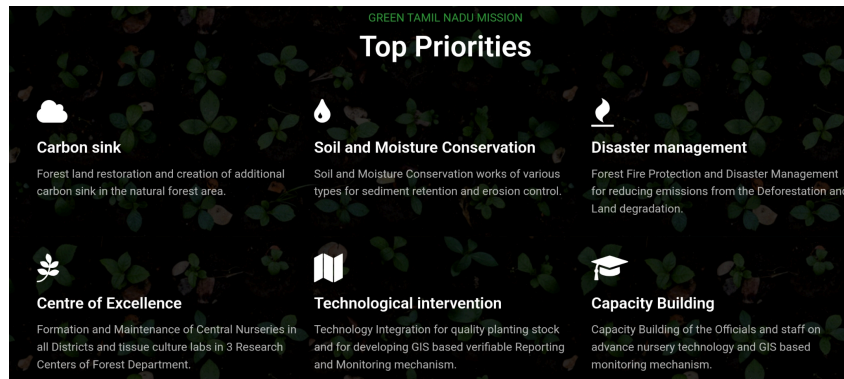
About Green Tamil Nadu Mission:

- **Launch Date:** September 2021
- **Objective:** To **increase the green cover of Tamil Nadu from 23.8% to 33%** over the next **ten years**.
- **Target:** **Planting 2.80 crore saplings annually** to achieve **265 crore saplings by 2030**.
- **Scope:** Includes urban and rural areas, forest and non-forest lands.

Green Tamil Nadu Mission

Why in the news?

- The **Tamil Nadu Forest Department** has planted approximately 37,500 mangrove propagules over 25 hectares in Kudikadu village, as part of the **Green Tamil Nadu Mission**.
- The State government **aims to restore degraded mangrove habitats** and introduce new plantations.



About Green Tamil Nadu Mission:

- **Objective:** The Green Tamil Nadu Mission aims to **increase the green cover in the state of Tamil Nadu** and **address environmental challenges** such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and soil erosion.
- **Launch Date:** The mission was launched in September 2021.
- **Target:** The mission **aims to increase the green cover from the current 23.98% to 33%** of the geographical area by **2030-31**.

Urban Air Mobility (UAM) ecosystem

Why in the news?

- The **Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation Ltd (TIDCO)** has begun **discussions to develop an Urban Air Mobility (UAM) ecosystem** for Chennai.



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Key points:

- The **objective is to enable drone and short-haul air transport operators to safely and successfully provide urban air transport** to the greater Chennai Metropolitan Area.
- The TIDCO plans the **air mobility system for performing emergency response operations and ferrying commuters and cargo.**

About Urban Air Mobility (UAM):

- Urban Air Mobility (UAM) refers to the **use of air transport vehicles**, including **electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft**, within urban environments for passenger and cargo transport.
- **Objective:** The primary goal of UAM is to **alleviate urban congestion, reduce travel time, and enhance transportation efficiency in densely populated areas.**

Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB)

Why in the news?

- The **Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB)** imposes **₹2.6 lakh fine** on tannery near Vaniyambadi for **discharge of effluents into Palar river.**

About TNPCB:

- **Establishment:** The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) was established in **1982** under the provisions of the **Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.**
- **Headquarters:** **Chennai, Tamil Nadu.**
- **Primary Objective:** To **prevent, control, and abate pollution** in the state of **Tamil Nadu.**
- **It enforces the provisions of**
 - The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974,
 - The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981,
 - The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and the rules made under these Acts.
- **It lays down standards for sewage/trade effluent and emissions.**

Sloth bear

Why in the news?

- Two **sloth bears** were spotted wandering around in the **Collector's camp office premises in the Nilgiris**, as captured by CCTV footage.

About Sloth bear:

- **Scientific Name:** *Melursus ursinus*
- **Habitat:** **Primarily found in the Indian subcontinent**, including **India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bhutan.**
- **Distinct Features:** White or yellowish chest patch shaped like a 'Y' or 'V'; large claws



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used for digging.

- **Diet: Omnivorous**, primarily feeds on termites, ants, honey, fruits, and occasionally small mammals and birds.
- **Behavior:**
 - **Nocturnal:** Mostly active during the night.
 - **Arboreal Abilities:** Can climb trees to feed or escape predators.
 - **Social Structure:** Typically solitary except for mothers with cubs or during the mating season.
- **Breeding Season:** Generally from June to July.
- **Gestation Period:** About 6 to 7 months.
- **Conservation Status:** Vulnerable (IUCN Red List)

Conservation of endangered and rare flora

Why in the news?

- The **Tamil Nadu Government's mission to conserve endangered and rare flora** is progressing, with experts shortlisting **eight species of rare plants classified as vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered**.
- This initiative is **part of the Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Conservation and Greening Project for Climate Change Resilience (TBGPCCR)**, in collaboration with the **Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding (IFGTB)** in Coimbatore.

Key points:

- **Some prioritized species include:**
 - **Vernonia shevaroyensis:** A **critically endangered tree** found in the Shevaroy hills of Salem district.
 - **Ceropegia pusilla:** Discovered in the Anamalai hills and some locations of the Valparai plateau in Coimbatore district.
 - **Ceropegia thwaitesii:** Found in the Anamalai Tiger Reserve.
 - **Ceropegia oculata:** Located in the Vattakanal shola forests of Palani hills in Kodaikanal.

Think:

- Know about Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Conservation and Greening Project for Climate Change Resilience (TBGPCCR)

Seismic Hazard Assessment and Microzonation

Why in the news?

- The **Tamil Nadu Government** has taken a significant step toward **enhancing earthquake resilience in Coimbatore**.

Key points:



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- **Objective:** Address seismic vulnerabilities in urban areas categorized under seismic hazard Zone III.
- **High-Risk Areas in Coimbatore:**
 - **Susceptibility:** Approximately 80% of Coimbatore's areas are in Zone III.
 - **Heightened Risk:** About 20% of areas exhibit seismic hazard factors comparable to Zone IV.
 - **Particularly Vulnerable Zones:**
 - Regions around the Noyyal River
 - Ukkadam Lake
 - Sanganoor Stream
- **Recommendations:**
 - **Retrofitting:** Existing buildings need retrofitting.
 - **Construction Techniques:** Adoption of earthquake-resistant construction techniques.
 - **Building Plan Approval:** Incorporate seismic safety measures in the approval process to mitigate casualties and property damage during earthquakes.
- **Capacity-Building Program:**
 - **Title:** Seismic Microzonation and Vulnerability Rating for Plan Approval.
 - **Organizer:** Centre for Climate Change and Disaster Management (CCCDM).
 - **Target:** 12 corporations, including Coimbatore, to enhance awareness and preparedness.

AI-Based Water Quality Monitoring and Landfill Monitoring

Why in the news?

- The **Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB)**, in collaboration with **IIT-Madras**, is embarking on two significant initiatives to enhance environmental monitoring.

Key points:

- **AI-Based Water Quality Monitoring:**
 - In **Chembarambakkam and Poondi lakes**, which provide drinking water to **Chennai**, an AI-based automatic water quality monitoring system will be implemented.
 - A similar system will also be deployed in **Ooty and Kodaikanal lakes**.
 - This real-time monitoring **will ensure the safety and quality of water resources**.
- **Landfill Monitoring Using AI:**
 - Landfills across Tamil Nadu will be monitored using AI technology.
 - The system will **employ thermal cameras and sensors to identify toxic gases**.
 - **Rising temperatures and increased methane levels often lead to landfill fires**, making effective monitoring crucial

Green Yercaud Project



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Why in the news?

- The **Salem district administration** has launched the **Green Yercaud Project** to make the hill station of Yercaud a plastic-free zone.

About Green Yercaud Project:

- **Objective:** To enhance the green cover and promote sustainable tourism in Yercaud, a hill station in Tamil Nadu.
- **Key Components:**
 - **Afforestation:** Planting native tree species to restore degraded forest areas.
 - **Eco-tourism:** Developing eco-friendly tourism facilities to attract visitors while preserving the environment.
 - **Waste Management:** Implementing solid waste management practices to reduce pollution and promote recycling.
 - **Water Conservation:** Installing rainwater harvesting systems and restoring water bodies to ensure sustainable water supply.
 - **Biodiversity Conservation:** Protecting and conserving local flora and fauna through various conservation programs

Geography & Places in News

Kalaignar Centenary Park

Why in news?

- **Kalaignar Centenary Park** to have rope car, glass garden.

About Kalaignar Centenary Park:

- **Location:** Kalaignar Centenary Park is situated in **Chennai**, Tamil Nadu.
- **Inauguration Date:** The park was inaugurated on February 17, **2023**.
- **Named After:** The park is named in honor of **M. Karunanidhi**, the former **Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu**, commonly known as **Kalaignar**.
- **Purpose:** The park was established to commemorate the **100th birth anniversary of M. Karunanidhi**.
- The park is under construction and is expected to become a major attraction with features like a rope car facility, a tree tower, and a glass garden.
- It is being modelled after renowned parks like the **Botanical Garden and Gardens by the Bay in Singapore**.
- The park is being set up by the **Department of Horticulture and Plantation Crops**

Tropical Butterfly Conservatory



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Why in the news?

- Despite the searing summer heat, over 40,000 people visited the **Tropical Butterfly Conservatory** in **Srirangam** during April and May.

About Tropical Butterfly Conservatory:

- **Location:** Tiruchirappalli (Trichy), Tamil Nadu.
- **Inauguration:** November 2015
- **Objective:** Conservation of butterflies and environmental education
- **Unique Feature:** One of the **largest butterfly conservatories in Asia**
- **Managed By:** Tamil Nadu Forest Department

Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve (STR)

Why in the news?

- The **Tamil Nadu forest department** recently commenced a three-day-long **elephant census** at the **Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve (STR)**.

About Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve (STR):

- **Location:** Situated in the **Erode District of Tamil Nadu**, at the **intersection of the Western and Eastern Ghats**.
- **Establishment:** Declared a **Tiger Reserve in 2013** under the **Project Tiger initiative**.
- **Area:** Covers an area of approximately 1,411 square kilometers, making it the **largest wildlife sanctuary in Tamil Nadu**.
- **Tiger Population:** STR has shown a significant **increase in tiger population**, with the latest estimates indicating around **83 tigers**.
- **Conservation Status:** Recognized as a **critical habitat for tiger conservation** and is **part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve**.
- **Biodiversity Hotspot:** Located within one of the **biodiversity hotspots of the world**, the **Western Ghats**, which is known for its **high level of endemism**.

Maragatha Pooncholai

Why in the news?

- The **Tamil Nadu Forest Department** has created '**Maragatha Pooncholai**' in five villages.

About Maragatha Pooncholai:

- Maragatha Pooncholai is an initiative by the Tamil Nadu Forest Department **aimed at promoting sustainable community woodlots, biodiversity conservation, and rural livelihood support**.
- The project involves the **creation of 'Maragatha Pooncholai' in various villages** with the **aim of increasing green cover and supporting the rural livelihood of local residents** through **community-driven management of natural resources**.
- The initiative is **designed to create sustainable community woodlots** that provide essential natural resources, such as **timber, fuel wood, and fodder to local communities**.



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- By reducing the dependency on forest areas for these resources, 'Maragatha Pooncholai' aims to alleviate the biotic pressure on forests, promoting both environmental sustainability and economic benefits for the local villagers.

Athikadavu Avinashi scheme

Why in the news?

- Opposition in Tamil Nadu advised the government to take actions for implementing the Athikadavu Avinashi scheme.

About Athikadavu Avinashi scheme:

- The scheme aims to recharge groundwater in drought-prone and groundwater-depleted areas in the districts of Erode, Tiruppur, and Coimbatore.
- It involves the diversion of surplus water from the Bhavani river to various water bodies, including lakes, ponds, and other water bodies.
- The scheme includes the construction of check dams, percolation ponds, and tanks to store and utilize water effectively.

Palar river

Why in the news?

- The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) imposes ₹2.6 lakh fine on tannery near Vaniyambadi for discharge of effluents into Palar river.

About Palar river:

- **Location:** Originates in the Nandi Hills of Karnataka, flows through the states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu, and empties into the Bay of Bengal.
- **Tributaries:** Major tributaries include the Cheyyar River, the Agaram Aru, and the Poini River

Pallikaranai Marshland

Why in the news?

- The Alliance of Residents' Welfare Associations, a state-wide organisation, on Sunday passed a resolution demanding restoration and conservation of the Pallikaranai Marshland.

About Pallikaranai Marshland:

- **Location:** Situated in the southern part of Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- **Significance:** One of the few natural coastal aquatic habitats that qualify as a wetland in India.
- It is locally known by the generic Tamil name 'kazhuveli' which means a flood plain or water logged area.
- Recognized for its rich biodiversity of flora and fauna.

Gulf of Mannar



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Why in the news?

- The study conducted by the Suganthi Devadason Marine Research Institute (SDMRI) and partners, revealed that **nearly 50% of marine litter in the Gulf of Mannar consists of fishing gear** that has been abandoned or lost.
- On the Indian side, **microplastics were recorded in significant quantities** in surface sediment at various beach locations.



About Gulf of Mannar:

- The Gulf of Mannar is **situated between the southeastern tip of India and the west coast of Sri Lanka.**
- **Geography:** The Gulf is **part of the Laccadive Sea** in the Indian Ocean.
- **Biodiversity:**
 - Recognized as one of the **richest coastal regions** in terms of **biodiversity.**
 - Contains 21 islands and adjacent **coral reefs.**
- **Protected Area:**
 - Declared as the **Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park**, comprising 21 small islands and the surrounding shallow waters.
 - The park **aims to protect the marine and terrestrial ecosystems of the region.**
- **Significance:**
 - Known for its extensive **coral reefs, sea grasses, and mangroves.**
 - **Important habitat for endangered species** like the **dugong (sea cow)** and various species of **sea turtles**

Thoppur ghat

Why in the news?

- The **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** has undertaken various initiatives in the past two months to rectify the issues on the **Thoppur ghat road** and make commuting safe for motorists.

About Thoppur ghat:

- **Location:** Thoppur Ghat is located in the **Dharmapuri district** of **Tamil Nadu.**
- **Connectivity:** It **connects the cities of Dharmapuri and Salem**, serving as a crucial route on the **NH 44 (formerly NH 7).**
- **Geography:** The ghat section is known for its steep and winding roads, **passing through the Eastern Ghats**



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Korattur lake

Why in the news?

- **Squatters continue to occupy the bed of Korattur lake**, despite a **Madras high court** order issued five months ago for their eviction.

Key points:

- The lake's **waterspread area was originally 214 acres** but has now **shrunk to about one-fourth of that size due to encroachments**.
- The **National Green Tribunal Southern Zone (NGT SZ)** has directed state agencies to **remove all squatters and set up a bio-diversity park or bio-fences** to prevent further encroachments.

About Korattur lake:

- **Location:** Korattur Lake is located in the Korattur area of **Chennai**, Tamil Nadu.
- **Significance:** It is **one of the largest lakes in Chennai** and plays a crucial role in recharging the groundwater in the region.
- **The lake once had thriving populations of fish, visiting birds, snakes and turtles**, along with microscopic and macroscopic plants
- The **eBird database**, a repository of birds from around the world, has recorded more than 130 species of birds in and around Korattur lake.

Pachamalai Tourism Development Project

Why in the news?

- The **Pachamalai Tourism Development Project** is an exciting initiative **aimed at promoting sustainable tourism and uplifting the livelihoods of tribes in the Pachamalai region**.

About Pachamalai Tourism Development Project:

- **Location:** Pachamalai is a **low mountain range** in the **Eastern Ghats**, near **Thuraiyur**, Tamil Nadu.
- **Attractions:** Pachamalai boasts attractions like the **Periyapakkalam** and **Koraiyaru waterfalls**.
- **Project Goals:**
 - **Generate livelihood** opportunities for local tribes.
 - Elevate **Koraiyaru Falls** as a **premier tourist destination**.
 - Stimulate economic growth.
- **Funding:** The project will be implemented under the **Tamil Nadu Innovative Initiative (TNII)**, with ₹4.27 crore allocated by the State government.

Paliyar tribe

Why in the news?

- Dindigul Collector M.N. Poongodi on Thursday took stock of the **status of government welfare measures disbursed to the Paliyar tribe community** in the district.



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About Paliyar tribe:

- **Location:** The Paliyar tribe is primarily found in the southern parts of India, especially in the states of **Tamil Nadu and Kerala**.
- **Language:** The Paliyar people speak a dialect known as **Paliyan**, which is a **mix of Tamil and Malayalam**.
- **Lifestyle:** Traditionally, the Paliyar tribe are **hunter-gatherers** and have a deep knowledge of the forest and its resources. They **rely on the forest for food, medicinal plants**, and other necessities.

Ranipet

Why in the news?

- The industrial town of **Ranipet**, will see the **restoration of a medieval memorial**.

Key points:

- **Ranipet**, often referred to as the “**Queen’s colony**,” serves as an **industrial hub**.
- The town lies along the **NH 4 Chennai-Bangalore highway** on the **northern bank of the Palar River**.
- It was built **by the Nawab of Arcot**.
- Constructed in the early **1700s**, the memorial features two tombs with a central pillar in **Mughal architectural style**.
- The town is named after the young wife of a **18th-century Rajput ruler of Gingee**
- Currently, the heritage structure is under the ownership of the **Ranipet municipality**.

Bhavani river

Why in the news?

- The **Coimbatore district administration** has issued a **flood alert** for areas along the banks of the **Bhavani river**.

About Bhavani river:

- **Location:** The Bhavani River flows through the Indian states of **Tamil Nadu and Kerala**.
- **Origin:**
 - It **originates** from the **Nilgiri hills** of the **Western Ghats in Tamil Nadu**.
 - It flows through the **Silent Valley National Park in Kerala** and **then back towards Tamil Nadu**.
- **Tributaries:** Major tributaries include the **Kundah River, Siruvani River, and Kodiveri River**.
- **Confluence:** The Bhavani River **joins the Cauvery River at Bhavani town near Erode** in Tamil Nadu.
- **Dams:** **Bhavanisagar dam** and the **Kodiveri dam**

Pallikaranai Marshland

Why in the news?



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- The **Tamil Nadu government** plans to construct a high-level bridge to **protect the Pallikaranai marshland**.

About Pallikaranai Marshland:

- **Location:** Freshwater marsh and partly saline wetland about 20 km south of Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- **Significance:** One of the **last remaining natural wetlands in Chennai city**.
- **Function:** Acts as an **aquatic buffer for the flood-prone Chennai and Chengalpattu districts**.
- **Drainage Area:** Covers 250 sq.km, **includes 65 wetlands**, drains through Okkiyam Madavu and Kovalam Creek into the Bay of Bengal.
- **Adjacent Feature:** Flanked by the **Buckingham Canal** on its eastern periphery.
- **Ramsar Site:** Recognized as one of the Ramsar sites in India.

History & Culture

Sri Parthasarathy Perumal temple

Why in the news?

- The **annual brahmotsavam festival** at the **Sri Narasimhar shrine of the Sri Parthasarathy Perumal temple** in Triplicane began on Monday morning with the customary flag hoisting.



About Sri Parthasarathy Perumal temple:

- **Location:** Situated in Triplicane, **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**.
- **Deity:**
 - Dedicated to **Lord Krishna**, worshipped as **Sri Parthasarathy**.
 - The temple also **houses shrines for other forms of Vishnu**, including **Narasimha, Rama, Ranganatha, and Varadaraja**.
- **Historical Significance:**
 - One of the **oldest temples in Chennai**, dating back to the **Pallava period (8th century)**.
 - Built by Pallava king **Narasimhavarman I**.
- **Architecture:**
 - **Dravidian style architecture**.
 - Features **five main shrines, each dedicated to a form of Vishnu**.
 - Notable for its tall, intricately carved gopurams (gateway towers).



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Excavation works in Tamil Nadu

Why in the news?

- Tamil Nadu CM flags off **excavation works at eight sites**.

Key points:

- **Sites Involved:**
 - Keeladi
 - Vembakottai
 - Thirumalapuram (Tenkasi)
 - Kilnamandi (Tiruvannamalai)
 - Porpanaikottai (Pudukkottai, second phase)
 - Chennanur (Krishnagiri)
 - Kongalnagaram (Tiruppur)
 - Marungoor (Cuddalore)
- **Key Highlights:**
 - **Funding:** Government allocated `5 crore for excavations.
 - **Significance of Keeladi:** Artefacts date back to 2600 BC; evidence of literacy and trade with Rome.
 - **Books Released:** "Perumbalai Excavation Report" and "Tamil Nadu Inscriptions (Volume - XXVIII)".

Excavations at Perumbalai

Why in the news?

- **Archaeological excavations at Perumbalai** have revealed **ancient potsherds adorned with intriguing geometric graffiti marks**.

Key points:

- **Location:**
 - Perumbalai is situated on the bank of the **Nagavathi River** (ancient **Palar**), a **tributary of the Cauvery River**.
- **Dating Back:** Lower-most level of the **site dates back to the 6th Century BCE**.
- **Pottery Assemblage:**
 - The pottery sequence demonstrates chronological development.
 - Lower-most level pottery is thin with fine **Black and Red Ware (BRW)** dominating.
 - **Well-levigated clay** used for making these potteries.
- **Graffiti Marks:**
 - **Common graffiti marks include:**
 - Geometrical signs (two oblique lines meeting a central vertical at the top).
 - Stars, U-shaped and T-shaped signs, bow and arrow, ladder motifs.
 - **Swastik-like symbols**.



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- **Marks confined to the Iron Age** and early historic period.
- **Other Discoveries:**
 - Over 200 terracotta objects including human and bird figurines, beads, wheels, and more.
 - An unidentified **copper coin** and a **copper bell** were also unearthed.

Tamil Mozhi Thiyagigal Naal

Why in the news?

- The Minister for Tamil Development, Information and Publicity, announced in the Assembly that **January 25 would be observed as 'Tamil Mozhi Thiyagigal Naal' (Tamil Language Martyrs' Day) starting from 2025.**

Key points:

- Additionally, **June 3, the birth anniversary of former Chief Minister and DMK president M. Karunanidhi**, would be celebrated as '**Semmozhi Naal Vizha**'.
- Tamil Language Martyrs' Day, observed on January 25, commemorates those **who sacrificed their lives for the preservation and promotion of the Tamil language.**
- It is a **day to honor the contributions of individuals who championed Tamil culture and literature.**
- In **Sri Lanka**, a similar remembrance day called "**Maaveerar Naal**" is **observed by Sri Lankan Tamils** to remember the deaths of militants who fought for an independent Tamil homeland

TNSDA unearths Neolithic tool

Why in the news?

- The **Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology (TNSDA)** recently made a **discovery in Virudhunagar district.**



Key points:

- During the ongoing third phase of excavation at the **Vembakottai-Vijayakaraisalkulam site**, they **unearthed a woman's head made of flint.**
- The Vembakottai archaeological excavation has also **revealed evidence of a rich civilization that once existed on the banks of the Vaippar River** near Sattur.
- This **civilization is comparable to the ancient cultures found in Keeladi and Porunai.**
- Additionally, in the same excavation site in **Sennanur (Krishnagiri district)**, the TNSDA **discovered a broken Neolithic tool.**

Inscriptions in Vadakkuserpatti village



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Why in the news?

- **Vadakkuserpatti village**, located in Manapparai, Tiruchi district, has recently gained attention due to its ancient **Tamil inscriptions found on rocks**.

About Inscriptions in Vadakkuserpatti village:

- **Historical Significance:**
 - The inscriptions provide **insights into the Medieval India period**.
 - They record **details about land donations for alms**, referred to as 'Buthanam'.
 - Engravings of names like **Chinna Lakka Nayakan** and **Ramanujan**, believed to be their ancestors, are etched into the rocks.
 - Additionally, symbols such as the **conch, wheel, and feet of Lord Ranganathar** adorn the inscriptions.
- **Spiritual Practices:**
 - According to village elders, their ancestors followed a custom of **worshipping Srirangam Sri Ranganathaswamy**.
 - They offered 'annadanam' (**free food**) at the temple before the British era, a tradition that continues today.

Excavation at Keeladi

Why in the news?

- During the ninth phase of **excavation at Keeladi in Sivaganga district**, a remarkable **804 artefacts were unearthed**.

About excavation at Keeladi:

- **Bone and charcoal samples were collected for scientific analysis**. Notably, a **floor made of clay and lime was also uncovered**, with a width ranging from three to six units.
- In the nearby **site of Kondagai**, 24 **burial urns** were discovered.
 - These **urns** contained over 110 **black-and-red ware and red slip ware pieces**, along with **human skeletal remains and nine artefacts**, including **carnelian beads, iron knives, chisels, and rings**.
- Furthermore, the excavation revealed other intriguing items such as a **copper coin featuring an elephant figure, terracotta balls, and a crystal quartz** weighing unit.



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Economy & Infrastructure

INTEC 2024

Why in the news?

- The five-day **international industrial fair “Intec 2024”** inaugurated at the CODISSIA Trade Fair Complex.
- The **CII - TVS Mobility Centre of Excellence on Employment and Livelihood** will partner with **Coimbatore District Small Industries Association (CODISSIA)** to support MSMEs in skilling, training, etc in the mobility sector.

About INTEC 2024:

- INTEC 2024 is an **international machine tools and industrial trade fair**.
- The **20th edition of INTEC** is scheduled at the **Codissia Trade Fair Complex, Coimbatore**.
- The fair is **organized by the Coimbatore District Small Industries Association (CODISSIA)**.
- **Industries from Taiwan, China, Germany, Japan, Singapore, and the USA** are participating at the fair along with their counterparts from various Indian states.
- The fair provides a **platform for industries to showcase their latest products and technologies**

Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST)

Why in the news?

- The **Tax Research Unit** set up by the **Commercial Taxes Department** has helped **Tamil Nadu recover ₹1,523.95 crore** under the **Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST)**.

About IGST:

- **IGST is one of the three components of the Goods and Services Tax (GST)** in India, the other two being **Central GST (CGST)** and **State GST (SGST)**.
- It is governed by the **Integrated Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017**.
- **Purpose:**
 - IGST is **levied on inter-state transactions of goods and services**, including **imports** into India.
 - It ensures that the **tax burden** is **shared between the central and state governments**.
- **Levy and Collection:**
 - IGST is **collected by the central government**.
 - The **revenue generated** is **shared between the central and state governments based on the destination principle**.

Parandur Greenfield Airport

Why in the news?



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- The **Ministry of Defence** has granted **No Objection** for the grant of site clearance to set up a **Greenfield Airport** at **Parandur** near **Chennai** in **Tamil Nadu**.

Key points:

- The proposed airport will be situated in **Parandur**, approximately 14 km from the **Parandur lake**, a **man-made wetland**.
- The **Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation Limited (TIDCO)** is the **project proponent agency**.
- **Environmental Clearance (EC)**:
 - The **Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC)** of the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change** will discuss **issuing environmental clearance** for the project.

Augmenting income of marginal farmers

Why in the news?

- **Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU)**, **Coimbatore**, has developed a **strategy** to **increase income** for **marginal farmers** in the **State** by **diversifying their revenue streams** beyond farming.

About Augmenting income of marginal farmers:

- **Objective**: The initiative **aims to generate an additional monthly income of at least ₹20,000** for every farmer owning **2.5 acres of land**.
- **Implementation**:
 - **TNAU will deploy 100 scientists** across the state's **385 blocks**.
 - Each scientist will **collect baseline data on crops and sustainability factors** in **collaboration with agricultural officers**.
- **Ventures**: The program encourages farmers to participate in ventures such as **value additions, packaging, and market linkages**.
- **Technology Integration**: **TNAU aims to enhance productivity through technology integration**.
- **Youth Involvement**: The strategy also aims to attract youth to consider agriculture as a **viable career option**.

IATA certification training programme

Why in the news?

- The **Tamil Nadu Adi Dravidar Housing and Development Corporation (TAHDCO)** has relaunched the **International Air Transport Association (IATA)** certification **training programme** for **graduates from Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities**.
- The aim is to **provide job opportunities** in both **domestic and international airlines**.

Key points:



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- **Global Recognition:** Acknowledging the international value of IATA certificates, TAHDCO decided to relaunch the programme with modifications.
- The International Air Transport Association (IATA) offers certification training programmes designed to enhance knowledge and skills in the aviation and travel industry.
- These programmes cover a wide range of topics including airline operations, airport management, cargo handling, and travel and tourism.
- **Key Objectives:**
 - To provide industry-recognized credentials that improve career prospects.
 - To enhance operational efficiency and safety within the aviation sector.

Internet connectivity in Tamil Nadu

Why in the news?

- The **Optical Fibre Cable (OFC)** laying project in Tamil Nadu, part of the **BharatNet initiative**, is making significant strides.

Key points:

- It will connect all **12,525 gram panchayats** across the state with **high-speed broadband connectivity**.
- **Implementation:** The state-owned **Tamil Nadu Fibernet Corporation (TANFINET)** is overseeing the project, which is expected to provide 1 Gbps bandwidth to each gram panchayat, with scalability as needed.
- The Tamil Nadu Fibernet Corporation (TANFINET) is a **Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)** established by the **Government of Tamil Nadu**.
- **Unified Digital Infrastructure (UDI):** TANFINET will also **integrate TamilNet and BharatNet** to enhance digital infrastructure across urban and semi-urban regions.

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)

Why in the news?

- The **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)** in Chennai organized a programme on the draft **Indian Standard for stainless steel utensils**.
- The **Central government** has mandated that **manufacturers of stainless steel cookware** must obtain **BIS certification** by **September 1**, as per the **Cookware, Utensils, and Cans for Foods and Beverages (Quality Control) Order 2024**.

About BIS:

- **Establishment:** Established in **1986**.
- **Governing Act:** Operates under the **Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2016**.
- **Objective:** To ensure **uniformity in the standards of products and services** in India.
- **Headquarters:** Located in **New Delhi**.
- **Certification Marks:**
 - **ISI mark** for industrial products.
 - **Hallmark** for gold and silver jewelry.



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- Eco Mark for environmentally friendly products.
- International Memberships:
 - Member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).
 - Member of the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)

Palm trade centre

Why in the news?

- The Khadi Craft Department has proposed a **Palm trade centre in Sayalkudi**, to **encourage the sale of palm products**, which has been positively received by farmers in **Ramanathapuram**.

Key points:

- **Ramanathapuram, home to over one crore palm trees**, has around 3,540 licensed palm tree farmers and over **10,000 workers involved in palm jaggery production**.
- Annually, the **district produces approximately 1.1 lakh metric tonnes of palm jaggery**.
- Farmers believe the trade center **will boost palm jaggery sales**, as **Ramanathapuram is one of the largest producers in the country**.
- The trade center could help farmers get better prices, as current market rates are higher than what farmers receive

Direct purchase Centres (DPC)

Why in the news?

- The Minister for Food and Civil Supplies revealed plans to **construct 50 new buildings for direct purchase centres (DPC)** in 14 districts, under the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme**.

About DPC:

- **Definition:** Direct Purchase Centres (DPC) are **facilities set up by government agencies to directly procure agricultural produce from farmers**.
- **Objective:** The main objective of DPCs is to **ensure that farmers get fair and remunerative prices for their produce without the involvement of middlemen**.
- **Location:** DPCs are **typically established in rural areas close to the farming communities** to facilitate easy access for farmers.
- **Products Procured:** These centres primarily procure staple crops such as rice, wheat, and other grains, depending on the region and the agricultural produce predominant there.
- **Government Agencies:** Agencies such as the **Food Corporation of India (FCI)** and **state-level agricultural marketing boards** manage the DPCs.
- **Pricing:** DPCs purchase produce at **Minimum Support Prices (MSP)** set by the government to **safeguard farmers against price fluctuations**.



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Tamil Nadu Startup and Innovation Mission (StartupTN)

Why in the news?

- The **Tamil Nadu government** will introduce a **special seed fund** to support start-ups run by persons with disabilities and transgender persons.
- The **fund**, amounting to **₹50 lakh**, will be provided as a **grant to promote inclusive growth in new-age entrepreneurship development**.
- The **Tamil Nadu Startup and Innovation Mission (StartupTN)** will identify the beneficiaries.

About StartupTN:

- **Objective:**
 - To **foster a robust startup ecosystem** in Tamil Nadu.
 - To support innovation and entrepreneurship across various sectors.
- **Support:**
 - Provides **financial support, mentorship, and resources** to startups.
 - Facilitates **access to venture capital and angel investors**

IT park

Why in the news?

- The **Perungudi industrial estate in Chennai, Tamil Nadu**, is set to witness the development of a **new IT park/office space** spanning approximately 3.60 acres.

Key points:

- This **initiative aims to cater to the increasing demand for office spaces by IT and ITeS firms** in the region.
- Additionally, **the IT Minister revealed other significant measures:**
 - **TANFINET**, the **Tamil Nadu FiberNet Corporation**, will enhance **network services** by providing **higher bandwidth to primary health centers, government colleges**, and other state institutions during the current fiscal year.
 - The **network service initiative will facilitate seamless delivery of various government services** to rural communities.
 - **Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation** will offer IP TV services at an affordable cost to subscribers using the **optic fiber cable technology of TANFINET**.
- The state government will soon release its **Tamil Nadu Deep Tech Policy**, aimed at **promoting the utilization of discoveries in deep technology** and supporting deep tech firms.

Science & Technology

Quantum computing

Why in the news?

- The **state government of Tamil Nadu** is in talks with Finland.
- The discussion is about **seeking Finland's help to set up a quantum computing centre** in Tamil Nadu.



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About Quantum computing:

- **Definition:** Quantum computing is a type of computing that leverages the principles of quantum mechanics to perform calculations far more efficiently than classical computers.
- **Qubits:** The fundamental unit of quantum computing is the quantum bit or qubit, which can exist in multiple states simultaneously due to superposition.
- **Superposition:** Unlike classical bits, which can be either 0 or 1, qubits can be both 0 and 1 at the same time, enabling quantum computers to process a vast amount of possibilities simultaneously.
- **Entanglement:** Quantum entanglement is a phenomenon where qubits become interconnected and the state of one qubit can depend on the state of another, even when separated by large distances. This property is crucial for quantum computing.

Microplastics

Why in the news?

- The study conducted by the Suganthi Devadason Marine Research Institute (SDMRI) and partners, microplastics were recorded in significant quantities in surface sediment at various beach locations.

About Microplastics:

- Microplastics are tiny plastic particles less than 5 millimeters in diameter, often invisible to the naked eye.
- **Sources:**
 - **Primary Microplastics:** Directly released into the environment as small particles (e.g., microbeads in cosmetics, plastic pellets).
 - **Secondary Microplastics:** Result from the breakdown of larger plastic debris through weathering processes.
- **Types:**
 - **Fibers:** From synthetic textiles and fishing nets.
 - **Fragments:** From the breakdown of larger plastic items.
 - **Nurdles:** Pre-production plastic pellets.
 - **Microbeads:** Used in personal care products.
- **Environmental Impact:**
 - **Marine Life:** Ingestion by marine animals can lead to physical harm, blockage of digestive tracts, and exposure to toxic substances.
 - **Food Chain:** Microplastics can enter the food chain, affecting human health.
 - **Habitats:** Can affect the physical and chemical properties of habitats, such as soil and marine sediments.

Seed Cube Making Machine

Why in the news?

- Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) has received a design patent for its Seed Cube Making Machine.



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Key points:

- It is awarded by the **Office of the Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trademarks**, under the Union **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**.
- The **Seed Cube technology** is designed to **optimize seed germination and establishment**.
- The seed cube machine is likely to **enhance seed germination and improve crop productivity**.

Yellow Mosaic Virus (YMV)

Why in the news?

- **Black gram** farmers in the district are staring at a heavy loss as yield is expected to be next to nothing due to the attack of the **Yellow Mosaic Virus (YMV)**.

About YMV:

- Yellow Mosaic Virus (YMV) is a **plant pathogen** that **primarily affects leguminous crops**.
- It is a **major agricultural concern** due to its **impact on crop yield and quality**.
- **Causative Agents:**
 - YMV is caused by several species of viruses, with **Mungbean Yellow Mosaic Virus (MYMV)** and **Mungbean Yellow Mosaic India Virus (MYMIV)** being the most common.
- **Transmission:**
 - The virus is primarily **transmitted by whiteflies (Bemisia tabaci)**.
 - Infected whiteflies transfer the virus to healthy plants during feeding.

Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Biotechnology

Why in the news?

- **Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU)** in **Coimbatore** is set to **establish a Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Biotechnology**, estimated to cost ₹435 crore.

Key points:

- **Focus:** The CoE will focus on **developing novel bio-inputs to promote agriculture in the State**
- The centre will also **house 100 start-ups** involved in the **production and distribution of agri-biologicals**.

About Biotechnology:

- Biotechnology involves the **use of living organisms, biological systems, or derivatives to develop or create different products**.
- **Applications:**
 - **Healthcare:** Development of vaccines, antibiotics, and gene therapy.
 - **Agriculture:** Genetic modification of crops for increased yield and pest resistance.
 - **Environmental:** Bioremediation, using microorganisms to clean up oil spills or heavy metal contamination.



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○ **Industrial:** Production of biofuels, biodegradable plastics, and fermentation processes.

● **Key Techniques:**

- **Genetic Engineering:** Manipulation of an organism's genes using biotechnology.
 - **CRISPR-Cas9:** A modern method for precise editing of DNA.
 - **Cloning:** Creating identical copies of organisms or cells.
 - **PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction):** Amplifying DNA sequences for various Applications.

Bharat Innovative Glass Technologies (BIG Tech)

Why in the news?

- **Corning Incorporated and Optiopus Infracom Limited** have broken ground on India's first cover-glass finishing facility in Tamil Nadu.

Key points:

- **Project Name:** The facility is named **Bharat Innovative Glass Technologies (BIG Tech)**.
- **Purpose and Products:**
 - BIG Tech will produce high-quality, finished cover-glass parts for mobile consumer electronics.
 - These cover-glass parts are essential components used in smartphones and other electronic devices.
- **Investment and Location:**
 - The joint venture firm signed an MoU with the Tamil Nadu government to set up the factory. The facility will be located at the SICPOT-Pillaipakkam Industrial Estate in Kancheepuram district.

MoU for cybersecurity and renewable energy technologies

Why in the news?

- The **Indian Institute of Information Technology, Design and Manufacturing (IIITDM), Kancheepuram**, signed an MoU with the **National Power Training Institute (NPTI)** to collaborate on cybersecurity and sustainable renewable energy technologies.
- The partnership aims to offer short-term training courses and enable joint research activities in these fields.

Military and Exercises

Operation Sagar Kavach

Why in the news?

- 'Operation Sagar Kavach' drill was conducted on Wednesday in the coastal districts of Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi, Kanniyakumari, and Ramanathapuram.



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Key points:

- It is to **assess the operational preparedness of the police and armed forces at sea and coastal areas**, and their **coordination in neutralizing sea-based threats**.
- The drill aims to **enhance coordination among security forces and ensure their preparedness in neutralizing infiltration by anti-social elements and terrorists** via the sea route.
- **Initiated after the 2008 Mumbai attacks**, where terrorists exploited Maharashtra's porous coastline.
- This **annual drill reviews the readiness and coordination of**
 - The police,
 - Marine police,
 - Coastal security group,
 - Q Branch police,
 - Central Industrial Security Force,
 - Indian Coast Guard, and
 - The Indian Navy to counter sea-based threats.

High-altitude training centre

Why in the news?

- In **Udhagamandalam**, situated at **2,240 metres above sea level in the Nilgiris**, a new **high-altitude training centre** has been established by the Tamil Nadu government.

Key points:

- The centre **aims to provide specialized training opportunities for athletes**.
- It currently accommodates **50 athletes selected from government schools across Tamil Nadu**, housed in the **Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu (SDAT) hostel**.
- The **initiative is expected to enhance the performance of Indian athletes at national and international events** through the benefits of altitude training

Agriculture & Animal Husbandry

'Kar' paddy cultivation

Why in the news?

- **Ahead of the southwest monsoon**, Collector K.P. Karthikeyan released **water from the Papanasam dam for 'kar' paddy cultivation**.



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About 'Kar' paddy cultivation:

- 'Kar' paddy refers to a **specific type of rice cultivation primarily practiced in Tamil Nadu.**
- **Season:** Cultivated during the **Kar season**, which typically **spans from April to August.**
- **Climate:** Grown during the **pre-monsoon period**, requiring **moderate to high temperatures** and adequate water supply.
- **Soil Type:** Prefers **clayey, loamy soils** that can retain moisture well.
- **Water Requirements:** Requires **consistent water supply**; fields are usually **flooded during the initial stages of growth.**
- **Sowing Methods:** **Direct seeding and transplanting** are common methods used for sowing Kar paddy.
- **Harvesting:** Harvested around **August-September**, when the grains reach maturity and moisture content is optimal for threshing.

Social & Welfare Issues

Land purchase scheme

Why in news?

- The **Tamil Nadu Adi Dravidar Housing and Development Corporation (TAHDCO)** implemented a **land purchase scheme** in 2023.
- The scheme **benefited 191 landless agricultural labourers from Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe** communities.

About Land purchase scheme:

- The scheme is **implemented by the Tamil Nadu Adi Dravidar Housing and Development Corporation (TAHDCO).**
- It was introduced by the State government in **2004** to **improve the socioeconomic conditions of landless labourers from Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities.**
- The scheme **primarily focuses on women whose annual family income is not more than ₹3 lakh.**
- The applicant should fall under the **age category between 18 and 65.**
- The **applicant can choose the parcel of land she intends to purchase** from the seller, who **should not be a person belonging to a SC/ST community.**
- The scheme provides a **subsidy of maximum 50% of the market value** of the land or **₹5 lakh**, whichever is lesser, **to each family for purchasing up to either 2.5 acres of nanjai or five acres of punjai land.**
- The **land registration fees and stamp duty are exempted** under the scheme.
- The **subsidy will be directly given to the seller.**
- The scheme was **remodelled to provide the subsidy as a percentage of the market value.**



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Samagra Shiksha

Why in news?

- The **Tamil Nadu Samagra Shiksha** announced to **establish Hi-Tech labs in government middle schools and smart boards in government primary schools** across Tamil Nadu

About Samagra Shiksha:

- **Overarching Programme:** Samagra Shiksha is an overarching programme for the school education sector extending from **pre-school to class 12**.
- **Goal:** The broader goal of Samagra Shiksha is to **improve school effectiveness measured in terms of equal opportunities** for schooling and equitable learning outcomes.
- **Integration of Schemes:** It **subsumes the three schemes** of
 - Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA),
 - Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), and
 - Teacher Education (TE).

Chief Minister's breakfast scheme

Why in the news?

- The **Chief Minister's breakfast scheme**, introduced in September 2022, initially **benefited 3,465 students in 77 primary schools**.

About Chief Minister's breakfast scheme:

- **Launch Date:** 2022
- **Initiated By:** Chief Minister of Tamil nadu
- **Objective:** To **provide nutritious breakfast to students in government primary schools**
- **Target Group:** Students from **Class I to V** in government primary schools
- **Nutritional Focus:** Ensuring balanced nutrition to improve children's health and cognitive performance
- **Implementation:** Managed by **local government bodies** with oversight from the state government

Mannuyir Kaathu Mannuyir Kappom

Why in the news?

- The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu recently launched the 'Chief Minister's **Mannuyir Kaathu Mannuyir Kappom**' scheme, allocating **₹20 crore** to provide **4,000 green manure seeds to farmers** and promote sustainable practices.



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About Mannuyir Kaathu Mannuyir Kappom:

- **Launched by:** The scheme was launched by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, M K Stalin.
- **Purpose:** The scheme aims to preserve soil fertility by distributing green manure seeds to farmers.
- **Budget:** The initiative is part of the state agriculture budget and is worth ₹206 crore.
- **Implementation:** In the first phase in 2024-25, green manure will be cultivated on two lakh acres at a cost of ₹20 crore.
- **Impact:** The scheme aims to increase the nutrients in the soil and protect the microorganisms, thereby preserving the soil.

Innuyir Kappom - Nammai Kaakkum 48

Why in the news?

- The State government's scheme, 'Innuyir Kappom - Nammai Kaakkum 48', was launched by Chief Minister M.K. Stalin in December 2021.
- **More than 2.54 lakh persons have benefitted** from this scheme.

About Innuyir Kappom - Nammai Kaakkum 48:

- "Innuyir Kappom - Nammai Kaakkum 48" is a **health initiative** launched by the Tamil Nadu government.
- The program aims to provide emergency medical care to individuals involved in accidents.
- **Objective:**
 - To offer free emergency medical treatment for the first 48 hours to accident victims.
 - Ensure timely medical intervention to save lives and reduce fatalities.
- **Coverage:**
 - The scheme covers both residents and non-residents of Tamil Nadu.
 - Applicable to all types of accidents, including road accidents, burns, and falls.

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya

Why in the news?

- The district administration has invited Expression of Interest (EOI) from non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to run six Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya.

About Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya:

- KGBV is a scheme launched by the Government of India.
- Aimed at providing educational facilities for girls from disadvantaged groups.
- **Target Group:**
 - Girls from Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Other Backward Classes (OBC), minority communities, and families below the poverty line.
- **Objective:**
 - To ensure access and quality education for girls.



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- To reduce gender disparities in education.
- **Establishment:**
 - Introduced in **2004** under the **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)**.
 - **Focus on rural areas** where female literacy is low

Dr. Kalaignar Sports Kit scheme

Why in the news?

- The '**Dr. Kalaignar Sports Kit**' scheme is an initiative by the **Tamil Nadu government** to **promote sports among youth**.
- The initiative includes **distributing sports kits to 12,000 village panchayats** in the state, with each kit containing equipment for various games.

About Dr. Kalaignar Sports Kit scheme:

- The scheme aims to:
 - Encourage youth participation in sports.
 - **Commemorate the birth centenary of former Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi**.
- **Each kit includes:** 33 pieces of equipment for various sports like cricket, football, silambam, and chess.
- **The distribution:** Aims to **reach out to youth in villages** and **promote physical activity and sportsmanship**.

Naan Mudhalvan scheme

Why in the news?

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Monday felicitated students who recently visited England under the **Tamil Nadu government's flagship 'Naan Mudhalvan' scheme**.

About Naan Mudhalvan scheme:

- **Objective:**
 - To provide **industry-relevant skill training** to the youth of Tamil Nadu.
 - **Enhance employability and bridge the skill gap** in various sectors.
- **Target Audience:**
 - **Youth and students** of Tamil Nadu.
 - Focus on **final year college students and recent graduates**.
- **Key Features:**
 - Collaboration with industries to identify skill requirements.
 - Development of tailored training programs and courses.
 - Provision of training in emerging technologies and domains.
 - Emphasis on practical and hands-on training

Integrated Social Registry Platform

Why in the news?



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- The **Tamil Nadu government** is taking a significant **step toward enhancing transparency and effective implementation of welfare schemes for differently abled individuals.**
- The government is developing an **Integrated Social Registry Platform** and a **Management Information System (MIS)** specifically for this purpose.

Key points:

- **Tamil Nadu** currently implements the **TN RIGHTS project** under the **Directorate for Welfare of the Differently Abled (DWDA)** with assistance from the **World Bank.**
- The **project aims to promote inclusion, accessibility, and opportunities** for people with disabilities.
- However, existing systems rely on paper-based lists and lack interoperability, resulting in inefficiencies and reduced oversight capabilities.
- **The New Integrated Platform will serve two main functions:**
 - **Identification and Registration:** It streamlines the process by using a single or integrated registration form for differently abled individuals across multiple programs.
 - **Service Delivery and Monitoring:** An integrated MIS will help manage citizen applications and monitor the impact of interventions.
- The project is expected to be completed by the end of this year, with collaboration from the **Tamil Nadu e-Governance Agency (TNeGA)** and an **IT company.**

Transforming tribal villages

Why in the news?

- The **Adi Dravidar Welfare Department in Tamil Nadu** has allocated ₹100 crore for **transforming tribal villages into self-sufficient habitations.**

Key points:

- The **department aims to fulfill basic amenities in tribal villages**, enhancing their quality of life.
- **4,500 houses will be built for homeless tribal families**, promoting better living conditions.
- **Approach Roads:**
 - To facilitate access, the department will lay **approach roads to tribal villages and hamlets in remote areas and hilly terrains.**
 - These roads, constructed at a cost of ₹50, will **enable tribals to traverse without difficulties and enjoy facilities in the plains**

Paadham Paadhukappom - An Integrated Foot Protection Programme

Why in the news?

- The **Paadham Paadhukappom - An Integrated Foot Protection Programme** is an



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initiative by the Tamil Nadu Health Department to address diabetic foot issues.

About Programme:

- **Objective:**
 - The program aims to detect diabetic foot problems early and prevent foot loss.
 - **Chronic diabetes affects nerves and blood vessels in the feet**, leading to numbness and ulceration.
 - By identifying these issues promptly, **the program aims to reduce the risk of leg amputation.**
- **Implementation:**
 - The **initial** phase will be implemented in **Thanjavur district.**
 - **Diabetic Foot Surgery services will be provided** in 15 Medical College Hospitals.

International Relations

QS World University Rankings 2025

Why in the news?

- **Anna University** entered the global **top 400 for the first time.**

Key points:

- **Anna University** has been ranked among the **top 10 universities in the country** and the **400 best universities globally, Quacquarelli Symonds (QS).**
- Climbed from **427th to 383rd position** globally.
- **Significance:**
 - **Only Tamil Nadu university** featured in the list.
 - **Followed by IISc (99.9) and IIT Guwahati (97.6)** in citations.
- **Other Institutes from Tamil Nadu:**
 - **IIT Madras:** Improved from 285th to 227th rank.
 - **NIT Trichy:** Improved from the 781-790 band to the 701-710 band.
 - **Vellore Institute of Technology:** Improved from the 851-900 bracket to the 791-800 bracket.
 - **University of Madras:** Ranked 526th in 2024, but not listed in 2025.
 - **Global Ranking Highlights:**
 - **MIT** retained the **top position for the 13th consecutive year.**
 - 61% of Indian universities improved their rankings.
 - **IIT Bombay** ranked as the **top Indian institute.**



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World's Best School Prizes 2024

Why in the news?

- Madurai's **Kalvi International Public School** shortlisted for the **World's Best School Prizes 2024**.

Key points:

- The school empowers students from disadvantaged backgrounds through education and sports.
- It has been recognized in the **Top 10 shortlist for the World's Best School Prize for "Community Collaboration."**

About World's Best School Prizes 2024:

- **Event:** World's Best School Prizes 2024
- **Organized by:** T4 Education, UK
- **Purpose:** To celebrate schools worldwide for their contributions to society's progress, especially in the wake of COVID-19.
- **Prize Fund:** USD 50,000 shared among the winners of five categories.
- **Indian Schools in Top 10 Shortlists:**
 - Government CM RISE Model HSS, Jhabua (**Madhya Pradesh**)
 - Category: Community Collaboration
 - Ryan International School, Vasant Kunj (**Delhi**)
 - Category: Environmental Action
 - G H S S Vinoba Ambedkar Nagar, Ratlam (**Madhya Pradesh**)
 - Category: Innovation
 - Kalvi International Public School, Madurai (**Tamil Nadu**)
 - Category: Community Collaboration
 - Mumbai Public School L K Waghji International (IGCSE), Mumbai (**Maharashtra**)
 - Category: Supporting Healthy Lives

Person in News & Awards

M Karunanidhi

Why in news?

- Tamil Nadu CM pay tribute to former CM M Karunanidhi on his birth anniversary.

About M Karunanidhi:

- **Full Name:** Muthuvel Karunanidhi.
- **Date of Birth:** June 3, 1924.
- **Place of Birth:** Thirukkuvilai, Nagapattinam District, Tamil Nadu.
- **Political Party:** Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (**DMK**).
- **Political Career:**
 - **Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for five terms.**
 - Member of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly for nearly six decades.
 - Influential in Tamil Nadu politics for over 50 years.



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- **Notable Position:** Served as the **Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu** in 1969-1971, 1971-1976, 1989-1991, 1996-2001, and 2006-2011.
- **Contributions to Tamil Culture:**
 - Prolific **writer** and **playwright**.
 - Contributed significantly to **Tamil literature, cinema, and journalism**.
- **Major Initiatives:**
 - **Advocate for social justice, Tamil language,** and cultural pride.
 - Implemented several welfare schemes aimed at improving the lives of the marginalized and economically disadvantaged.
- **Death:** August 7, **2018**, in **Chennai**, Tamil Nadu.

Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty

Why in the news?

- Governor R.N. Ravi launched the book '**The First Native Voice of Madras: Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty**' at a function in Chennai.

About Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty:

- **Birth:** 1806, Chennai, Tamil Nadu
- **Occupation:** Merchant, Philanthropist, Social Reformer
- **Notable Contributions:**
 - **Founder of the Madras Native Association (MNA):** Established in 1849, it was one of the **earliest political organizations in India aimed at representing Indian interests**.
 - **Supporter of Education**
 - **Known for his charitable work**, he funded various public welfare projects, including the construction of schools and hospitals.
 - **Advocate for Indian Rights**
 - **Played a significant role in the trading community of Madras** (now Chennai), with interests in the textile and jewelry business.

Justice S Manikumar

Why in the news?

- **Former Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court, Justice S Manikumar**, has been appointed as the **Chairperson of the State Human Rights Commission (SHRC)** in Tamil Nadu.
- Justice Manikumar **will serve as the head of the commission for three years or until he attains the age of 70 years**.

Dr. V. Mohan

Why in the news?

- **Dr. V. Mohan**, chairman of **Dr. Mohan's Diabetes Specialities Centre** and **Madras Diabetes Research Foundation**, recently received **two prestigious awards from the American Diabetes Association**.



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Key points:

- He was honored with the '2024 Kelly West Award for Outstanding Achievement in Epidemiology,' recognizing his significant contributions to the field. • His major contributions include the CUPS and CURES studies in Chennai, as well as the nationwide ICMR-INDIAB study on diabetes and related non-communicable diseases in India.
- Notably, he is the only Indian to have received both the Kelly West Award and the Emory EGDRD Distinguished Lecture from Emory University

Importants Days

World Milk Day

Why in the news?

- The Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS) and the College of Food and Dairy Technology celebrated World Milk Day.
- The event was held in collaboration with the Indian Dairy Association, Tamil Nadu chapter.

About World Milk Day:

- **Date:** Celebrated annually on June 1st.
- **Established by:** The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.
- **Year of Inception:** 2001.
- **Purpose:**
 - To recognize the importance of milk as a global food.
 - To celebrate the dairy sector and its contributions to sustainability, economic development, livelihoods, and nutrition.

Miscellaneous/GK

Association of Health Providers India (AHPI)

Why in the news?

- The Meenakshi Hospital Thanjavur has bagged the "Best Multi-speciality Hospital Award" instituted by the Association of Health Providers India (AHPI).

About AHPI:

- The Association of Health Providers India (AHPI) represents the majority of healthcare providers in India.
- It operates as a "not for profit" organization and advocates with the government, regulatory bodies, and other stakeholders on issues affecting its member organizations' ability to deliver appropriate healthcare services to the community.
- In 2024, AHPI is organizing events like the AHPI Global Conclave with the theme "India as Vishwa Guru in Healthcare @2047- from Vision to Reality" and the AHPI-TN Excellence Awards



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