VETRII IAS STUDY CIRCLE
Current Affairs

(A book for TNPSC Examination)

JANUARY 2023

An ISO 9001: 2015 Institution | Providing Excellence Since 2011

Head Office

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

Branches

SALEM
No. 189/1, Meyanoor Road,
Near ARRS Multiplex, (Near Salem
New Bus Stand), Opp. Venkateshwara
Complex, Salem - 636 004.
Ph: 0427-2330307 | 95001 22022

KOVAI
No. 347, D.S. Complex
(3rd floor), Nehru Street,
Near Gandhipuram Central Bus
Stand, Ramnagar, Kovai - 641 009.
Ph: 75021 65390

MADURAI
No. 199, Dharshini Tower,
1st Floor, Vaigai Colony,
Anna Nagar,
Madurai - 625 020.
Ph: 91500 21999 | 91500 21998

TIRUNELVELI
No. 58, IVY Towers, 3rd Floor,
Palayamkottai, Near Palai Bus Stand,
(Next to Muthamil Hospital),
Tirunelveli - 627 002. Ph: 91500 10079

THANJAVUR
Muthu Complex, (Pantaloons
Showroom Basement) No. 243, Cauvery
Nagar, Opp. New Housing Unit,
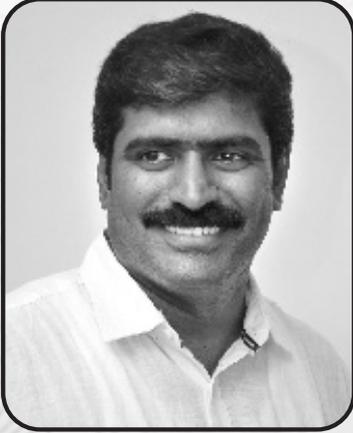Thanjavur - 613 005.
Ph: 78711 69099 | 78715 71819

KOVILPATTI
No. 15, Kathiresan Kovil Road,
Behind Kaliamman Temple,
Kovilpatti – 628 501.
Ph: 90037 90335 | 81222 80685

www. vetriias. com

Preface

My Dear Aspirants,

Greetings to all of you! "What we think we become" Gautama Buddha. We all have dreams. To make dreams come into reality it takes a lot of determination, dedication, self discipline and continuous effort.

We at VETRII IAS Study Circle are committed to provide the right guidance, quality coaching and help every aspirants to achieve his or her life's cherished goal of becoming a civil servant.

The class room coaching at VETRII IAS Study Circle is meticulously planned to equip the aspirants with all the relevant facts and fundamentals of the subjects. Further the VETRII IAS Study Circle Study materials aim to support the candidate by providing the most relevant study material in a comprehensive manner.

We also thank other family members of Vetrii for making this effort a reality.

We wish the aspirants ALL THE VERY BEST for their journey in Civil Services !

M. SHUNMUGAM
Director
Vetrii IAS Study Circle.

CONTENTS

G20
भारत 2023 INDIA
वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्
ONE EARTH · ONE FAMILY · ONE FUTURE

46வது சென்னை
புத்தக காட்சி! 2023
06-01-2023 முதல்
22-01-2023 வரை
காலை 11:00 மணி முதல்
இரவு 08:30 மணி வரை

1. HISTORY

1.1 IMPORTANT DAYS

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
January 4	*World Braille Day*	▪ The Day is observed to mark the **birth anniversary of Louis Braille**, the **inventor of Braille** for people with visual disabilities. ▪ **World Braille Day** was declared **in 2019** by the **United Nations General Assembly.** ▪ The Day is observed to raise awareness of the importance of Braille as a means of communication in the full realization of the human rights for blind and partially sighted people *Note* ▪ **Louis Braille**, a Frenchman who was accidentally rendered blind at a young age, developed the Braille method in late 1820s ▪ According to a report by the **World Health Organization about 39 million people** are visually challenged in the world and about 253 million people are suffering from some kind of eye problem.
January 5	*National Bird Day*	▪ The Day is observed across the world, but particularly in the United States. ▪ It was launched with an aim to reduce the suffering of birds by raising public awareness of the destructive bird trade, the realities of cruel bird breeding mills, and ways to improve the welfare of birds already in captivity. *Note* ▪ **Vedanthangal** which was declared as a Bird Sanctuary in 1936 was the first Bird Sanctuary in India. ▪ There are **17 bird sanctuaries** in Tamil Nadu. ▪ In 2022, the Tamil Nadu government notified the **Nanjarayan tank in Tiruppur district** as the **17th bird** sanctuary of the State.

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
January 24	**National Girl Child Day (NGCD)**	▪ It is observed in **January 24** every year since **2008** by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development** ▪ **Objective**: To **promote awareness** about the **rights of the girl child to bridge the gender divide** and to lay emphasis on the **importance of girl's education, health and nutrition** *Note:* ▪ The event of National Girl Child Day 2023 is **organized by the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education (MoE)**
	International Day of Education	▪ It is annually observed across the globe on **January 24 by United Nations** ▪ **Objective**: To celebrate the **role of education in peace and development** ▪ **Theme: "To invest in people, prioritize education"** *Note:* ▪ The **United Nations General Assembly** (UNGA) adopted the **resolution** on 3rd December 2018 and proclaimed January 24 of every year observed as International Day of Education ▪ The **1st International Day of Education** was observed on **24th January 2019** *About United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)* ▪ Year of Formation – **1945** ▪ It is the United Nation's **chief policy-making and representative organ** ▪ Headquarters - **New York City, US**
January 25	**National Tourism Day**	▪ It is annually observed across India on **January 25** ▪ This day was initiated by the Indian government in **1948** ▪ **Objective**: To **raise awareness and promote tourism** for India's economic and financial growth and development ▪ **Aim**: The day aims **to save national heritage** and **create popular tourist spots** across India *About Ministry of Tourism* ▪ It is the nodal agency for the formulation of national policies and program for the development and promotion of tourism in the country ▪ **Minister of Tourism - Shri G. Kishan Reddy**

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
	National Voters Day	▪ The **Election Commission** released a song **"Main Bharat Hoon"** on the occasion of 13th National Voters Day ▪ The song is written and composed by **Subhash Ghai** in association with Whistling Woods International School of Music, Mumbai ▪ **Song's Objective:** To aspire each **voter to be one of the best architects of modern India,** who understand their duty as well as their right to vote for their nation, irrespective of their status, class, religion, cast, place, language, and gender ***About Election Commission:*** ▪ The Election Commission was established in accordance with the Constitution on 25th January 1950 ▪ The Election Commission of India is an **autonomous constitutional authority** responsible for **administering Union and State election processes in India** ▪ **Present Chief Election Commissioner - Shri Rajiv Kumar** ▪ **Present Election Commissioners - Shri Anup Chandra Pandey and Shri Arun Goel**
January 28	*Data Privacy Day*	▪ Data Privacy Day or **Data Protection Day** is an **international initiative** annually observed on January 28 ***Objective:*** ▪ To sensitize individuals and disseminate privacy practices and principles ▪ It encourages everyone to own their privacy responsibilities to create a culture of privacy. ▪ **Data Security Council of India** (DSCI) observed this day in India ▪ **Theme: "Think Privacy First"** ***About DSIC*** ▪ Founded in **2008** ▪ It is a not-for-profit, industry body on data protection in India, **set up by the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM)** ▪ **Objective**: To make the cyberspace safe, secure and trusted by establishing best practices, standards and initiatives in cyber security and privacy

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
January 30	*World Neglected Tropical Diseases Day*	▪ It is annually observed across the globe by **World Health Organisations (WHO)** *Objective:* • To create better **awareness on the devastating impact** of Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) on the poorest populations around the world • To call on everyone to support the growing momentum for the control, elimination and eradication of these diseases ▪ **Theme: "Act Now, Act Together, Invest in Neglected Tropical Diseases"** *About WHO* ▪ Founded in **1948** ▪ **Headquarters**: Geneva, Switzerland ▪ **Director General**: Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus ▪ It leads **global efforts to expand universal health coverage**
	World Leprosy Day	▪ It is observed across the globe on the **last Sunday of every January** ▪ **Objective:** • To create **awareness against the stigma** attached to the disease • To make the general community aware that it is a **disease spread by a type of bacteria** and it can be easily cured ▪ The day also aims to **celebrate the people who have experienced leprosy** ▪ **Theme: "Act Now: End Leprosy"** ▪ In India, it is observed on **30th January** every year as **National Anti – Leprosy Day** *Note:* ▪ The **United Nations** aims **to eradicate leprosy by 2030** by achieving the Sustainable Development Goals
	Martyrs' Day	▪ It is also known as Sarvodaya day ▪ It is annually observed across the globe to pay tribute to all who sacrificed their lives for India *Note:* ▪ The day also marks the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi ▪ 30th January 2023 marks the 75th anniversary of the Martyrdom Day of Mahatma Gandhi

1.2 DEFENCE, NATIONAL SECURITY AND TERRORISM

K9-Vajra

- The **Defence Ministry** has started the process for the procurement of **100 more K9-Vajra tracked self-propelled howitzers.**
- They are manufactured in India by **Larsen & Toubro (L&T)** using technology transferred from South Korean defence major Hanwha Defense.
- The induction of **Dhanush, K-9 Vajra** and **M777 Ultra Light Howitzers** has enhanced the reach of artillery firepower on the northern borders.

About K9-Vajra:

- It is a **155 mm, 52-calibre** tracked self-propelled howitzer.
- It can be mainly used in deserts, but can be deployed in the mountains as well.
- To ensure that these systems performed optimally,
- The Army also procured winterisation kits for the regiment deployed to enable K9 - Vajra to be used in the extreme cold weather conditions of the mountains.

About M777 Ultra Light Howitzers:

- It is a **155 mm, 39-calibre** towed artillery gun and weighs 4 tonnes.
- It is made of titanium and aluminium alloys.
- It has a range of 2.4 to 30 km.

28 Projects inaugurated in Arunachal Pradesh

- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** also virtually inaugurated the 28 projects of the Border Road Organisation (BRO)
- Out of these, eight have been constructed in Ladakh, four in Jammu and Kashmir, five in Arunachal Pradesh, three each in Sikkim, Punjab and Uttarakhand and two in Rajasthan.

Siyom Bridge in Arunachal Pradesh

- The bridge is a 100-metre 'Class-70' steel arch superstructure built on the Aalo-Yingkiong road between West Siang and Upper Siang districts.
- It is one of the 28 projects completed by the BRO at a cost of Rs 724.3 crore to bolster border infrastructure.

DAC approves 3 proposals worth Rs 4,276 cr

- Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) approved **three proposals worth 4,276** crore rupees to strengthen the country's deterrence and combat readiness.
- The DAC has accorded approval for procurement of
  - **HELINA Anti-Tank Guided Missiles,** launchers and associated support equipment which will be integrated to the Advanced Light Helicopter.
  - **Very Short Range Air Defence Systems (VSHORAD)** (IR Homing) missile system.
  - **Brahmos** Cruise Missile Launcher
  - **Fire Control System for** the Shivalik class of ships
  - **Next Generation Missile Vessels** for the Indian Navy.

About DAC:

- It is constituted for overall guidance of the defense procurement planning process.
- It is headed by the Minister of Defence.
- It decides new policies and capital acquisitions for the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard.
- It was formed, after the Group of Ministers recommendations on 'Reforming the National Security System', in 2001, post Kargil War (1999).

Prithvi-II Ballistic Missile successfully tested

- India successfully carried out a test launch of tactical ballistic missile **Prithvi-II** from from the **Integrated Test Range, Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.**
- The Prithvi-II missile has a range of **around 350 kilometers.**

Note

- Prithvi is a tactical **surface-to-surface short-range ballistic missile (SRBM).**
- It was developed by the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** under the **Integrated Guided Missile Development Program (IGMDP).**

Sainya Ranakshetram 2.0

- The Indian Army organised the **second edition of 'Sainya Ranakshetram'** from October 2022 to January 2023

- **Objective**: To **seek operational solutions to cyber challenges** and jumpstart the development time for **innovative solutions in the Cyber Security domain**

21st edition of Naval Exercise VARUNA

- The 21st edition of the **bilateral naval exercise** between **India and France** 'VARUNA' is being held from 16 -20 January 2023.

- It is organized on the **Western Seaboard**

- It will witness advanced air defence exercises, tactical manoeuvres, surface firings, underway replenishment and other maritime operations

About VARUNA

- It is the bilateral exercise between the two navies of India and France

- It was **initiated in 1993 and christened as 'VARUNA' in 2001**

Exercise Cyclone – I

- The **first edition** of **joint exercise** between the special forces of the **Indian Army and the Egyptian** Army named "Exercise Cyclone-I" is in progress at **Jaisalmer in Rajasthan**

- It is the 14 days long exercise which is being carried out in the deserts of Rajasthan

- **Aim:** To **bolster defence co-operation** between the two nations and focus on **sharing professional skills** and **interoperability of Special Forces in desert terrain** while undertaking special operations

Ops Alert exercise

- The **Border Security Force (BSF)** has started an **'Ops Alert' exercise** in view of the upcoming Republic Day celebrations

- **Aim:** To **enhance security along the India-Pakistan border** in Kutch district of Gujarat and Barmer in Rajasthan

- The exercise was being carried out **to prevent any ill designs of anti-national elements during the Republic Day celebrations**

- The exercise will continue till January 28 all along the India-Pakistan International Border from Sir Creek (marshy area) to the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat and Barmer of Rajasthan

INS Vagir

- INS Vagir, the **5th submarine of the Kalvari Class submarines**, was commissioned into the Indian Navy

- It has been **built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited** with **technology transfer from France**

- It is equipped with many advanced sensors, long-range missiles and anti-ship missiles

Note:

- INS Vagir is built entirely in India under **'Project 75'**

- '**Vagir**' means **'Sand shark'**, which represents stealth and fearlessness

About 'Project 75':

- It was approved by the Ministry of Defence in **1997**

- After Kargil war in **1999**, the Project – 75 was **brought under the 30-year submarine plan**

- India signed a **transfer of technology** contract with the **France to construct six submarines** at the Mazagon Dock Limited in 2005, under Project – 75

Veer Guardian-2023

- It is a **joint Air Exercise** between **India and Japan** involving the Indian Air Force and Japan Air Self Defence Force (JASDF)

- It was held from 12th January 2023 to 26 January 2023 at **Hyakuri Air Base, Japan**

- **Objective:** To **strengthen strategic connections and defence cooperation** between the two Nation

Note:

- This is the **inaugural edition** of the bilateral Air Exercise between India & Japan

1.3 EMINENT PERSONS

Birth Anniversary of Queen Velu Nachiar (3 January 1730 – 25 December 1796)

- **Veeramangai Velu Nachiyar** of Tamil Nadu was the **first woman** to fight the British and the only female hero to recapture her lost kingdom.
- Born in **1730** to the **Ramanathapuram king Muthu Vijayaragunatha Selladurai Sethupathi**.
- She was married to the **Sivagangai Seemai Poligar Muthu Vaduganathar in 1746.**
- She escaped from Sivagangai Seemai when the British killed Muthu Vaduganathar in 1772 and took refuge in the Dindigul and Virupatchi forts.
- With the help of the Marudhu Brothers, she fought the British with modern weapons supplied by Hyder Ali and captured Kalaiyar Kovil
- Later, on a Vijayadasami Day, along with her 'only women army' she besieged and captured the Sivagangai Fort.
- Velu Nachiyar's life testifies to the courage of the Tamil land and the heroism of women

Centenary celebration of Pollachi Mahalingam

- The TN government christened the road connecting Coimbatore and Palladam Roads in Pollachi after state's prominent industrialist and educationalist **Pollachi N Mahalingam** to honour his contribution to Tamil Nadu in many fronts.

About Mahalingam (March 21, 1923 to October 2, 2014)

- Mahalingam was a noted industrialist in the Coimbatore region.
- He served three times as Congress MLA from 1952 to 1967.
- He translated Thirukkural into English and Hindi and distributed several copies for free to people in north India.
- He was an ardent follower of Ramalinga Swamigal alias Vallalar.

BV Doshi [1927-2023]

- Balkrishna Doshi, **pioneer of modernist architecture in India**, passes away at 95
- Doshi was the **1st Indian** to be awarded the **Pritzker award**, called as the **Noble Prize of Architecture in 2018**
- He received **Padma Bhushan,** the 3rd highest civilian award of India in **2020**

1.4 SPORTS AND GAMES

FIH Men's Hockey World Cup

- The **15th edition** of **International Hockey Federation** (FIH) Hockey World Cup 2023 would be held in **Bhubaneswar and Rourkela** from January 13 to 29.
- The state **Odisha** would be hosting this event

About International Hockey Federation (FIH)

- FIH is founded in 1924
- It is the **international governing body of field hockey** and indoor field hockey
- Headquarters - **Lausanne, Switzerland.**

1.5 BOOKS & AUTHORS

"Revolutionaries: The other story of how India won its freedom"

▪ This book is written **by Sanjeev Sanyal**

▪ The book narrates the **stories of Armed Revolutionaries** and their role in Freedom Struggle

About Sanjeev Sanyal:

▪ He is an **Indian Economist and Member of Economy Advisory Council to Prime Minister Narendra Modi**.

▪ **His other works**

- The Incredible History Of The Indian Ocean
- India In The Age Of Ideas: Select Writings
- The Ocean Of Churn
- The Incredible History Of India's Geography

- The India Renaissance: India's Rise After a Thousand Years of Decline

Braving a Viral Storm: India's Covid-19 vaccine Story

▪ Minister Mansukh Mandaviya releases the book "Braving a Viral Storm: India's Covid 19 vaccine Story" in New Delhi.

▪ It is the book written by Ashish Chandorkar and Suraj Sudhir

▪ It tells about the story of how India got its two indigenously made vaccines.

Note

▪ India was the first country to announce a clear Public Private Partnership to develop vaccines for Covid-19.

1.6 AWARDS & HONOURS

UN-Habitat's World Habitat Awards 2023

▪ Odisha won the **UN-Habitat's World Habitat Awards 2023** for **Jaga Mission, a 5T initiative (5T** denotes - Team work, technology, transparency, transformation and time limit) of the state.

▪ **UN-Habitat's World Habitat Awards**

▪ Initiated in 1985, the annual World Habitat Awards recognise and highlight innovative, outstanding and revolutionary housing ideas, projects and programmes from across the world.

▪ **Jaga Mission**

▪ It is the world's largest land titling and slum upgrading program that aims at empowering the lives of slum dwellers.

About UN- Habitat

▪ United Nations Human Settlements Programme programme established for human settlements and sustainable urban development.

▪ Formation - 1977

▪ Headquarters - Nairobi, Kenya.

About Odisha

▪ Capital - Bubaneswar

▪ Governor - Ganeshi Lal

▪ Chief Minister - Naveen Patnaik

▪ Awards and Honour

Digital India Awards 2022

▪ President Draupadi Murmu conferred the **Digital India Awards, 2022.**

▪ These awards aim to inspire and motivate not only the government entities but also start-ups and grassroot level digital initiatives in fulfilling the Digital India vision.

▪ DIA has been instituted by the **Minister for Electronics & Information Technology, under the aegis of National Portal of India.**

▪ The **7th edition of Digital India Awards** was presented under the following seven categories:

- **Digital Empowerment of Citizens - e-NAM** (Pan-India electronic trading portal to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities)

- **Digital Initiatives at Grassroots Level - e-Vivechna App** (Madhya Pradesh) (To help in crime investigation)

- **Digital Initiatives for Ease of Doing Business** - Mine Mitra (Uttar Pradesh) (For online approval of Mining plan)
- **Data Sharing and Use for Socio Economic Development** - Smart Cities Mission, M/o Housing and Urban Affairs
- **Public Digital Platforms**
- **Central Ministries, Departments - ICEGATE Portal** (Makes Customs clearance process transparent)
- States - **DUARE SARKAR** (West Bengal) (For service delivery and welfare schemes at peoples' doorsteps)
- **Digital Initiatives in Collaboration with Startups - Digital Workforce Management System (Kerala)**
- **Best Web & Mobile Initiatives Complying with GIGW & Accessibility Guidelines - Bilaspur District Website** (Chhattisgarh)

80th Golden Globe Awards

- RRR's "Naatu Naatu" song bagged Golden Globe award 2022 in the category of Best Original song
- It becomes the first Asian song to win this award
- M.M. Keeravani is the Music composer of this song

Other category

- Best flim(Drama) - Steven Spielberg's "The Fablemans"
- Best flim (Musical/Comedy) - Martin McDonagh's "The Banshees of Inisherin"

About Golden Globe Awards

- It is presented annually by The Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA) since 1943.
- Objective: To recognise excellence in film, both American and international, and American television.

UN-Habitat's World Habitat Awards 2023

- **Odisha has won the "Bronze Award"** in the United Nations Human Settlements Programme's (UN-Habitat) "World Habitat Awards 2023".
- The award is for their **Jaga Mission.**

About Jaga Mission

- Launched in **May 2018.**
- It is **'Odisha Liveable Habitat Mission'.**
- It is **India's largest land titling and slum upgrading** initiative.

About UN-Habitat's World Habitat Awards

- World Habitat award is established on **1985** as a part of **United Nations International Year of Shelter for the Homeless.**
- The awards were **given by World Habitat,** a UK based organisation in collaboration with UN-Habitat

'Best Sustainable Greenfield Airport' award

- **GMR Goa International Airport (GGIAL)** has won 'Best Sustainable Greenfield Airport' award **under aviation sustainability and environment**
- The award presented at **ASSOCHAM's 14th International Conference - cum -Awards for Civil Aviation 2023**

About ASSOCHAM

- The **Associated Chambers of Commerce & Industry of India** (ASSOCHAM) is the country's oldest apex chamber started in 1920
- It has the **vision of creating a New India** and works as a **channel between the industry and the Government**

Prime Minister's National Award for children

- **President Droupadi Murmu** will confer the Prime Minister's National Award for children for the year 2023
- The awards will be given to 11 children for their exceptional achievements in fields such as art and culture, innovation and sports

About Prime Minister's National Award for children

- The '**Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar**' award would be given to the children for their **exceptional abilities and outstanding accomplishments**
- This award is given under two categories:
  - **Bal Shakti Puraskar**
  - **Bal Kalyan Puraskar**

1.7 CULTURAL PANORAMA

Octave 2023

- Tamil Nadu Governor RN Ravi inaugurated the **Octave 2023** in Chennai.

- Octave 2023 is a **cul1tural festival** held under the aegis of the **South Zone Cultural Centre, Thanjavur,** to showcase the indigenous art and culture of the **North East India.**

Site Museum at Keezhadi

- The Tamil Nadu Government stated that the setting up of a **site museum at Keezhadi** will be completed soon.

About the Keezhadi Excavation

- The first phase of excavation began in Keezhadi in the year **2014** and three phases **namely 2nd and 3rd phase of excavation** were carried out by the C**entral Archeology Department in 293 sites** along the Vaigai river valley in Theni, Dindigul, Madurai, Sivaganga and Ramanathapuram districts.

- It was followed **by 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th** excavations by the **Tamil Nadu Archeology Department.**

- The **8th phase of excavation** work in Keezhadi areas was completed last September.

- Carbon dating of charcoal found at the Keezhadi site in February 2017 established that the settlement there **belonged to 200 BC.**

- The excavations proved that urban civilisation had existed in Tamil Nadu since the Sangam age.

- More than 20 thousand antiquities have been discovered through the excavations that have been completed so far.

- Important Artifacts found so far are
  - **A beautifully crafted earthen pot with leaf decoration**
  - **Pallichandai Thidal.**

26th National Youth Festival, 2023

- The Prime Minister inaugurated the 26th National Youth Festival on January 12 in **Hubballi-Dharwad, Karnataka.**

- The festival is to be held from **January 12-16**

- Theme: "Viksit Yuva Viksit Bharat" **(Developed Youth - Developed India)**

- It is organized by the **Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, in collaboration with the Government of Karnataka**

- **Objective:** To empower the youth of India and promote their active participation in shaping the country's future.

Jaipur Literature Festival

- **16th edition** of the Jaipur Literature Festival is launched on January 19, 2023.

- **Noble Laurette Abdulrazak Gurnah** gave the keynote address.

About Abdulrazak Gurnah

- Abdulrazak Gurnah is a **Tanzanian-born British novelist and academic.**

- He had been awarded the **2021 Nobel Prize for Literature** "for his uncompromising and compassionate penetration of the **effects of colonialism** and the **fate of the refugee in the gulf** between cultures and continents".

Ahom burial sites to be nominated for UNESCO tag

- The Centre had decided to nominate **Assam's Charaideo Maidams - the Ahom equivalent of the ancient Egyptian pyramids** for the **UNESCO World Heritage Site status this year**

About Assam's Charaideo Maidams:

- This place represents the **late medieval** (13th to 19th century CE) **mound burial tradition of the Tai Ahom community in Assam**

- The Charaideo Maidams **enshrine the mortal remains of the members of the Ahom royalty,** who used to be buried with their paraphernalia

About Ahom rule:

- The Ahom rule lasted for about 600 years in the **Brahmaputra valley of Assam**

- The rule **exists** until the **British annexed Assam in 1826**

- **Charaideo was the first capital of the Ahom**

dynasty founded by **Chao Lung Siu-Ka-Pha in 1253**

Bharatpur excavations reveals presence of a Buddhist monastery

- Recent excavations at **Bharatpur in Paschim Bardhaman district** of **West Bengal** have revealed the **presence of a Buddhist monastery**

- According to experts, the unique feature of this Buddhist site is the **presence of a large stupa,** along with a monastery complex and black and red ware pottery from the Chalcolithic or Copper Age

1.7 APPOINTMENTS – WHO IS WHO?

Siachen gets first woman Army officer

- **Captain Shiva Chouhan**, an officer from the Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers, became the **first woman officer** to be operationally deployed at Kumar Post in the Siachen Glacier.

- The post is located at an altitude of **15,632 feet.**

- Siachen Glacier is the **longest glacier** in the **Karakoram range** and second-longest in the world's non-polar areas.

Pankaj Kumar Singh appointed as Deputy NSA

- The **Appointment Committee of Cabinet (ACC)** approved the appointment of Pankaj Kumar Singh as the **Deputy National Security Adviser in National Security Council Secretariat**

- Pankaj Kumar Singh, a 1988 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, previously served as the Director General of Border Security Force (BSF)

About National Security Council:

- The NSC was established in **1998** by the government of **AB Vajpayee**

- It is the executive agency responsible for **advising the Prime Minister's Office on issues of national security and strategic interest.**

- **1st** National Security Advisor (NSA) - **Brajesh Mishra**

- **Present** National Security Advisor – **Ajit Kumar Doval**

Vikram Dev Dutt to be the New DG of the DGCA

- The **Appointment Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)** has approved the appointment of **Vikram Dev Dutt** as **Director General (DG) of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)** with effect from 28th February 2023

- He will succeed Arun Kumar, DG of the DGCA

About Vikram Dev Dutt

- He is the 1993 batch IAS officer of AGMUT (Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram and Union Territory) cadre, currently serving as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Air India Assets Holding Limited (AIAHL)

About Appointment Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) **appoints several top posts** within the Government of India

- The committee is composed of the **Prime Minister of India** (ex-officio Chairman) and the **Minister of Home Affairs**

2. POLITICAL SCIENCE

2.1 INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

India and Austria to sign migration and mobility agreement

- India signed a **"Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement"** (MMPA) **with Austria.**
- While India has been keen to sign the agreement with Austria to resolve issues over facilitating Indian professionals working in these countries, Austria wants to find a way to curb illegal immigration from India.

About Austria

- Capital - Vienna
- President - Alexander Van der Bellen
- Currency - Euro

36th round of the Indo-French Strategic Dialogue

- **National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval** and **External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar** met with the **French National Security Adviser Emmanuel Bonne** in New Delhi.
- India- France discussed on a variety of issues which include
  - Current global security situation in the context of the conflict in Ukraine.
  - Regional security in the context of Afghanistan.
  - Counter terrorism
  - Cybersecurity
  - Defense cooperation in the Indo -Pacific region.

About France

- President - Emmanuel Macron
- Prime Minister - Élisabeth Borne
- Capital - Paris
- Currency - Euro

Young Professional Scheme in London

- High Commissioner of India to the **UK, Vikram K Doraiswami and Matthew Rycroft**, the permanent secretary at the Home Office of the UK signed and exchanged letters for formalising the **Young Professional Scheme.**
- The event took place at the High Commission of India in London.

About the Scheme

- The scheme will permit up to **3,000 of their degree -holding citizens aged between 18 and 30** to live and work in each other's countries for a period of two years.
- The scheme was conceived as part of an India¬ U.K. Migration and Mobility MoU signed in May 2021, was announced in November at the G20 summit in Bali.
- Migration and Mobility agreement of 2021 seeks to address the return of illegal migrants to their home countries.

About United Kingdom

- Capital - London
- Monarch - Charles III
- Prime Minister - Rishi Sunak
- Currency - Pound sterling

30th Indo-Israel Agri hub

- India and Israel inaugurated the **30th Centre of Excellence (CoE) at Grignow village in Bhiwani, Haryana**
- It is inaugurated as a **mark to celebrate the completion of 30 years of full diplomatic relations** between India and Israel

About CoE Agri hub

- It is the part of its joint **agricultural project** under its collaborative work programme for the farm sector
- **Objective**: To **maximise resources in an arid environment** by overcoming harsh climatic conditions

MoU between India and Egypt

- **Prasar Bharati of India** and **National Media Authority of Egypt** signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) **to facilitate content exchange, capacity building and co-productions**
- Under this, both the broadcasters will exchange their programmes of different genres like

sports, news, culture, entertainment and many more areas on bilateral basis

- It also facilitates **Co-productions and training of the officials of both the broadcasters** in the latest technologies

About Prasar Bharati:

- It is a **statutory autonomous body** established under the **Prasar Bharati Act in 1997**
- It is the **Public Service Broadcaster of the country.**
- **Objective:** To provide autonomy to Doordarshan and Akashvani in order to educate and entertain the public

2.2 PUBLIC AWARENESS & GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Women outnumber men in the electoral roll of State

- As per the integrated final electoral roll of special summary revision of photo electoral roll, 2023 the total electorate of Tamil Nadu is **6,20,41,179.**
- Women **outnumber men in the final list.**
- The total number of male voters is 3,04,89,866 and the total number of female voters is 3,15,43,286. As many as 8,027 third gender voters are there in the final roll. The number of voters between the age group of 18 and 19 is 4,66,374.
- **Highest** number of voters - **Sholinganallur** Assembly constituency (6,66,295 voters).
- **Lowest** number of voters - **Harbour** constituency (1,70,125 voters).

About Tamil Nadu State Election Commission

- Formation - July 15, 1994
- Tamil Nadu State Election Commissioner - V. Palani Kumar.
- State Election Commissions are formed as per Article 243K of the Constitution of India

Policy to make IST mandatory soon

- The government is planning to develop

a comprehensive policy and regulatory framework for mandatory **adoption of Indian Standard Time** under the **Legal Metrology Act, 2009.**

- The purpose is to ensure synchronization of all networks and computers to IST and adoption of IST by Telecom Service Providers, Internet Service Providers, power grids, banks, stock exchange, etc.
- The **Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA)** is working in coordination with the **National Physical Laboratory (NPL)** and **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** to generate and disseminate accurate time traceable to IST.
- The Project aims to create technology and infrastructure to **disseminate** IST from **five sites (Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Bhubaneswar, Faridabad and Guwahati)** across India to all the telecom operators, power grids, financial institutions, data centres, common citizens etc.

Home Ministry seeks another six months to frame the rules of CAA

- The Union Home Ministry has sought another extension of six months to frame the rules of the **Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA)**

without which it cannot be implemented.

- This is the **seventh such extension** sought by the Ministry.

- **CAA Act**

  - The CAA was passed on **December 11, 2019** for fast-tracking the citizenship of people from the **Hindu, Sikh, Parsi, Christian, Buddhist and Jain communities** from **Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh** who entered India before December 31, 2014 without any documents.

  - The Ministry noted that the Act would come into force from January 10, 2020. However, the rules have not been notified.

- The **Manual on Parliamentary Work** states that if a Ministry is not able to frame the rules governing a law within six months after the law is passed it should seek extension of time **from the Committee on Subordinate Legislation** stating reasons for such extension.

Revised norms mandate under BEE's star label

- The **ceiling fans** are included in the **mandatory abelling** under the revised norms for BEE's star labelling.

- BEE has tightened norms **for refrigerators from January 1**, which require separate star labelling for freezers and refrigerator provisioning units (storage section) of frost-free versions in addition to strengthening labelling.

- An existing refrigerator with 3-star rating will become 2-star labelled.

About BEE's Star Label

- The scheme was launched by the **Minister of Power in May,2006.**

- The Star Labeling Programme has been formulated by the **Bureau of Energy Efficiency,** under the **Energy Conservation Act, 2001.**

- It is invoked for household equipment/appliances which includes 26 appliances. BEE's star label is a way of describing the energy performance of a product. It denotes the energy efficiency of an appliance of a particular brand in comparison to similar offerings from other brands. It is thus a comparative label rather than an endorsement label.

Note

- The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) was formed on **March 1, 2002** under the provisions of the **Energy Conservation Act, 2001.**

Centre adopts new standards for digital TV receivers

- The **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)** has published new country ¬specific standards for the manufacturing of digital television receivers with built¬in satellite tuners, for Universal Serial Bus (USB) Type C receptacles, plug and cables and for video surveillance systems.

- The measure is in line with meeting international standards in the area of electronics.

- Under the new standard,

- The digital television receivers will be manufactured with in¬built satellite tuners.

- It will enable reception of free to air TV and radio channels of Doordarshan (DD) and All India Radio (AIR) just by connecting a dish antenna.

- The move can save the cost of purchasing set top boxes for viewing various paid and free channels.

About BIS

- BIS is the National Standards Body of India under Department of Consumer affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.

- It is formed under **BIS Act, 2016.**

Cabinet approved Three New Cooperative Bodies

- The Union Cabinet approved setting up of **three new Cooperative Bodies under Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS)Act, 2002**

- They are,

- National Multi-state cooperative Export society

- National Multi-state cooperative Organic society
- National Multi-state cooperative Seed society
- Their objective is to promote Organic products, seeds and exports
- These societies will manage various activities related to organic sector by providing certified and authentic organic products
- Apex organization for the three new cooperatives bodies is Seed Cooperative Society

About Multi State Cooperative Societies ACT, 2002

- **Objective**: To facilitate the voluntary formation and democratic functioning of co-operatives as people's institutions to promote their economic and social betterment and to provide functional autonomy.

Grievance Appellate Committees

- The Centre established three Grievance Appellate Committees (GAC) **based on the recently amended Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021** (IT Rules 2021)
- **Vision:** It is the overall policy and legal framework **to ensure that the Internet in India is Open, Safe, Trusted and Accountable**

- **Objective:** To **look into users' complaints** against large social media companies such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- **Composition of GAC**: It will have a chairperson, two whole time members from various government entities and retired senior executives from the industry for a term of three years from the date of assumption of office

India International Arbitration Centre

- The **Delhi International Arbitration Centre (Amendment) Act, 2022** came into force
- It will **rename** the New Delhi International Arbitration Centre to the **India International Arbitration Centre**

About International Arbitration Centre

- Established in **2019**
- **Objective:**
  - To provide **cost effective and timely services** for the **conduct of arbitration** and conciliation at national and international level
  - To **impart training** in **alternative dispute resolution** and in fields of arbitration, conciliation and mediation

2.3 GOVT – WELFARE ORIENTED GOVT SCHEMES, THEIR UTILITY

Women break new ground in MGNREGS

- Women's participation in **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)** has increased to a **10 year high in the financial year 2022-23.**

- According to the latest statistics available with the Union Rural Development Ministry 57.8% of the workers who used the scheme in 2022 were women which is their highest level of participation since 2012-13.

- For the past five years, in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, women's share in the **MGNREGS workforce** has been hovering **between 85% and 90%.**

- Women's participation increased due to **two factors - market forces** and **welfare incentives for women MGNREGS workers.**

- The growth spike was **higher in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.**

- The proportion of women workers in Bihar grew 3.7 percentage points this year, while U.P. saw a 3.3 percentage point hike.

About MGNREGA

- Launched on **August 25, 2005.**

- The MGNREGA provides a legal guarantee for one hundred days of employment to adult members of any rural household willing to do unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage.

- Implemented by the **Ministry of Rural Development (MRD).**

- Aims to improve the purchasing power of the rural people, primarily semi or unskilled work to people living below poverty line in rural India.

- The employment will be provided within a **radius of 5 km:** if it is above **5 km extra wage will be paid.**

SMART program for Ayurveda professionals

- **SMART (Scope for Mainstreaming Ayurveda**

Research in Teaching Professionals) program has been launched by **National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM)** and **Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS)** under **Ministry of Ayush (MoA).**

- It is aimed to boost scientific research in priority healthcare research areas like Iron Deficiency Anaemia, Obesity, etc. through Ayurveda colleges and hospitals.

- It has been launched for regulating medical education and conducting scientific research respectively.

- The proposed initiative is conceptualised with an objective to identify, support and promote innovative research ideas in healthcare research areas including Osteoarthritis, Iron Deficiency Anaemia, Chronic Bronchitis, Dyslipidemia, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Obesity, Diabetes Mellitus, Psoriasis, Generalised Anxiety Disorder, Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD).

About NCISM

- It is a **statutory body** established under **MoA through NCISM Act, 2020** for regulating medical education.

- Works to improve access to quality and affordable medical education, ensures availability of adequate and high-quality medical professionals of Indian System of Medicine in all parts of the country etc.

About CCRAS

- An autonomous body of MoA.

- Apex body for undertaking, coordinating, formulating, developing and promoting research on scientific lines in Ayurvedic Sciences.

- Its research activities include Medicinal Plant Research (Medico-Ethno Botanical Survey, Pharmacognosy and Tissue Culture), Drug Standardization, etc.

Initiatives to promote Ayurveda

- Central Sector Scheme for **Ayush Oushadhi Gunavatta evam Uttpadan Samvardhan Yojana (AOGUSY).**
- **9th World Ayurveda Congress** was held **in Goa** to showcase the efficacy and strength of AYUSH systems of medicine at Global level.

Office of Banking Ombudsman (OBO)

- The **Reserve Bank of India** stated that the **volume of complaints** received under the Ombudsman Schemes/ Consumer Education and Protection Cells during 2021¬-22 was **increased by 9.39% in 2022** and stood at 4,18,184.
- **Complaints related to ATM/ debit cards** were the **highest at 14.6% of the total,** followed by mobile/ electronic banking at 13.6%.

Note

- The **Banking Ombudsman Scheme** was introduced under **Section 35 A of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949** by RBI with effect from **1995.**
- Presently the **Banking Ombudsman Scheme 2006** (As amended upto July 1, 2017) **is in operation.**
- The Banking Ombudsman is a senior official appointed by the Reserve Bank of India to redress customer complaints against deficiency in certain banking services

Samudrayaan Mission

- India is planning to send **three explorers to a depth of 500 meters** under the sea in an indigenously built vessel, MATSYA 6000' under **Samudrayaan Mission.**
- MATSYA 6000' vehicle is being designed and developed by **National Institute of Ocean Technology** (NIOT), Chennai under Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- It is **India's first unique manned ocean mission** and is a part of the Rs 6000-crores **Deep Ocean Mission.**

About Deep Ocean Mission

- It was approved **in June 2021** by the **Ministry of Earth Sciences.**
- The mission aims to explore the deep ocean for resources, develop deep-sea technologies for sustainable use of ocean resources, and support the Blue Economy Initiatives of the Indian Government.

PM SVANidhi scheme had aided over 9,000 street food vendors

- More than 9000 street food vendors have been onboard on food delivery platforms like Swiggy and Zomato as part of PMSVANidhi scheme

About PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbharNidhi (PM SVANidhi)

- It is launched by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** (MoHUA) in June 1, 2020
- It is a scheme **to empower Street Vendors by extending loans** to them and focus on their holistic development and economic upliftment.
- Objective:
  - To facilitate **working capital of loan** up to 10,000
  - To incentivize regular repayment
  - To reward digital transactions

District-wise Chief Minister Field Review

- **Chief Minister M.K. Stalin** has introduced a new scheme 'District-wise Chief Minister Field Review'
- **First phase** - Vellore, Ranipet, Tirupattur and Tiruvannamalai

About "District-wise Chief Minister Field Review"

- **Objective**: Reiterating the **importance of field visits** during review meetings of various departments
- Under the scheme, the **Chief Minister** would **visit districts** with important Ministers and Secretaries of various departments and **review the administrative and development work**

3. GEOGRAPHY

3.1 POLICY ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

Zero Poaching of Rhinos in Assam in 2022

▪ Assam recorded zero poaching of Rhinoceros for the first time in nearly 45 years in 2022.

About India Rhinoceros

▪ Indian Rhinos are Asia's largest species of rhino.

▪ They are found in India (Assam, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh), Nepal and Bhutan.

▪ IUCN Status - Vulnerable

▪ Indian Rhinos have only one horn Rhino horn is made up of keratin - protein which forms the basis of our hair and nails.

▪ Habitat: Tropical and subtropical grasslands, savannas and shrublands, tropical moist forests, deserts and shrublands.

▪ Threats: Horn poaching for medicinal value, habitat loss.

▪ Highest Population : **Kaziranga National Park**

▪ Highest Population density of Indian Rhinos : **Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary**

Initiatives for rhino conversion in India

▪ Indian Rhino Vision 2020 was launched in 2005 to increase the rhino population in Assam to 3,000 by establishing populations in seven protected areas.

▪ Special Rhino Protection Force constituted by Assam to check rhino poaching and related activities

Green Hydrogen Mission

▪ The Union Cabinet approved the **National Green Hydrogen Mission** with an initial outlay of ₹19,744 crore

▪ The Mission was aimed at making India a global hub to produce, utilise and export green hydrogen and its derivatives.

▪ The **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)** will formulate the scheme guidelines for its implementation.

Main Objectives

▪ To develop a green hydrogen capacity of at least 5 MMT (million metric tonnes) per annum.

▪ Creation of more than 6 lakh jobs in the sector.

▪ To abate nearly 50 million tonnes (MT) of annual greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 which is in line with our Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) targets.

▪ To cumulatively reduce fossil fuel imports estimated at over ₹1 lakh crore.

▪ To make India energy independent and in decarbonising major sectors of the economy.

Note

▪ The **National Hydrogen Mission was launched on August 15, 2021**, with a view to cutting down carbon emissions and increasing the use of renewable sources of energy.

▪ **Green hydrogen** is the hydrogen produced by splitting water by **electrolysis from renewable energy.**

Report by Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air

▪ According to the report, there is no change in air quality in most cities since the induction of the **National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)**

▪ Air quality has improved only in 49 out of 131 cities in 2021-22.

About NCAP:

▪ It was launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) in **January 2019.**

- It is the **country's first national policy** on curbing air pollution.
- **Goal**: To meet annual average ambient air quality standards.
- **Target 2024:** To reduce the concentration of coarse and fine particulate matter in the atmosphere by at least 20% to 30% with 2017 as the base year for comparison
- **Method:** Through city specific air pollution abatement action plan

Neelakurinji on the list of protected plants

- The **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF)** has included Neelakurinji on the list of protected plants under **Schedule III of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**

About Neelakurinji:

- **Botanical name** - Strobilanthes kunthiana
- It is found in the **shola forests** of the **Western Ghats** in Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu
- The purplish blue flowers bloom only once in 12 years.

About Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972

- The Act was enacted for the protection of plants and animal species
- **Bodies Constituted under the Act**
  - National Board for Wildlife (NBWL)
  - State Board for Wildlife (SBWL)
  - Central Zoo Authority
  - National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)
  - Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB)

Greater Scaup Spotted after 90 years

- A **rare species of duck**, Greater Scaup, locally known as **Sadangman**, was recently sighted in **Loktak lake in Manipur's Bishnupur district** after a gap of over 90 years.

About Greater Scaup:

- It is a **medium-sized diving duck** species that belongs to the **family of Anatidae.**
- It is a **migratory bird** distributed across the **Arctic and Subarctic regions** where it mainly nests in **coastal tundra habitats.**
- Its IUCN status is **Least Concern**

Fall short of target to improve forest cover

- **India is lagging behind** in the targets to increase the number and quality of tree and forest cover plantations set in the **Green India Mission**
- This is according to the data accessed through the Right to Information (RTI) Act

About Green India (GIM)

- The National Mission for a Green India (GIM) is launched in **2014**
- It is **one of the eight missions** under the **National Action Plan on Climate Change**
- **Aim:** To **protect, restore and enhance India's forest cover** and thus responding to climate change
- **Mission's target:**
  - **Increasing the forest and tree cover** in 10 million hectares of forest and non-forest lands chosen under the mission
  - **Improving the quality** of existing forests

Vulture Census across Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka

- The **State-level Vulture Conservation Committee (SVCC)** has decided to conduct a synchronised vulture census in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka

Note:

- It was decided in SVCC's 1st meeting
- Plan of designating a **Vulture Safe Zone (VSZ)** around the **Mudumalai Tiger Reserve** is discussed

About SVCC

- State-level Vulture Conservation Committee (SVCC) is constituted by the **Government of Tamil Nadu**

Objective:

- To implement the **Action Plan for Vulture Conservation** (APVC) 2020-2025

▪ It creates an **institutional framework for the conservation of vultures** in the state

About Vulture in India:

▪ **Seven of the nine species** of vultures found in India are **'critically endangered' and 'near threatened'**

▪ This is according to the **International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List** of Threatened Species

About International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List

▪ Established in **1964**

▪ It is a **critical indicator of the health of world's biodiversity**

▪ Divides species into **nine categories**: Not Evaluated, Data Deficient, Least Concern, Near Threatened, Vulnerable, Endangered, Critically Endangered, Extinct in the Wild and Extinct

Noble's Helen

▪ Three butterfly enthusiasts **Atanu Bose, Loren Sonowal and Monsoon Jyoti Gogoi** recorded the extremely rare Noble's Helen in the **Namdapha National Park of Arunachal Pradesh (India's easternmost tiger reserve)**

▪ It has been recorded for the **first time in India**

About Noble's Helen

▪ Zoological name - **Papilio noblei**

▪ This **species of swallowtail butterfly** has also been reported from the Myanmar, Yunnan and Hubai regions of China, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam

▪ It is characterized by a **large dorsal white spot**

▪ It has a complete row of **red lunules on the underside of the hind wing** and discal **white areas on the upper side**

Soligas - New Genus of Wasp

▪ The scientific community has named a **new genus of wasp after Soligas**

▪ It is done for recognition of their conservation of forests and biodiversity

▪ **New name - Soliga ecarinata**

About Soligas

▪ Soligas were the **indigenous community of the Biligiri Rangan Hills (B.R. Hills) in Chamarajanagar district of Karnataka**

▪ **Soliga lifestyle** is rooted in the **philosophy of sustainability** since ancient days and it is the mantra in modern times

Realtime Pollution Factors Gathering Mechanism

▪ Delhi's Chief Minister, Arvind Kejriwal launched a **Real-time source apportionment 'supersite'** and a **Mobile Air Quality Management Van**

▪ It would **collect pollution data in real-time to identify factors** that are responsible for increasing air pollution at any place in Delhi

Highlight:

▪ Delhi has become the **first city** in the country **to get a real-time source segmentation of air pollution**

4. ECONOMICS

4.1 NEW ECONOMIC POLICY AND GOVERNMENT SECTOR

UPI payments record high of ₹12.82 lakh crore in December

- **Unified Payments Interface (UPI) payments** have touched record high of ₹12.82 lakh crore in December, 2022.
- In December, 782 crore transactions in volume terms were done on the platform.

About UPI Platform

- It is a system that powers multiple bank accounts into a single mobile application (of any participating bank), merging several banking features, seamless fund routing & merchant payments into one hood.
- It also provides the "Peer to Peer" collect request
- Pilot launch was **on 11th April 2016** when **Dr.Raghuram G Rajan was the Governor of RBI** at Mumbai.
- The service is provided by the **NPCI (National Payments Corporation of India)**

RBI to issue green bonds in two tranches

- The maiden **Sovereign Green Bonds (SGrBs)** would be issued **by RBI** in two tranches of Rs.8,000 crore each on January 25 &February 9.
- The proceeds from the bonds will be utilised for funding public sector projects seeking to reduce carbon emissions.
- The proceeds from the green bonds issuance cannot be used for extraction, production and distribution of fossil fuels or where the core energy source is fossil-fuel based, and nuclear power projects.
- Centre will be issuing the SGrBs for mobilising resources for green infrastructure.
- The bonds are **eligible for trading** in the **secondary market.**
- The green bonds would be available in **5-year and 10-year tenure**

Note

- The Government of India issued the Sovereign Green Bond Framework **on November 9, 2022.**
- **Sovereign Green Bond** : It is a debt instrument issued by the central or state government to borrow money from investors with the commitment that the mobilised fund will be spent on climate or eco-system related activities

4.2 CURRENT TRENDS IN INDIAN ECONOMY

GST revenues in December rise from November lows

- The Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenues rose to nearly ₹1.5 lakh crore in December, 2022.
- It is the **third highest monthly collection** so far and 15% higher than in December 2021.
- This is **the 10th month in a row that GST collections have crossed the ₹1.4 lakh crore mark,** with revenues from import of goods rising 8% and revenues from domestic transactions (including import of services) increasing 18% from the revenues yielded by these sources during December 2021.
- **Central GST (CGST) is ₹26,711 crore, State GST (SGST) is ₹33,357 crore, Integrated GST (IGST) is ₹78,434 crore** (including ₹,263 crore collected on import of goods) and cess is ₹11,005 crore (including ₹crore collected on import of goods).

About GST

- 101st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2016 introduced the GST from 1 July 2017
- GST had replaced the old Indirect tax regime in India.
- It was introduced with the idea of **"One Nation- One Market- One Tax".**
- GST is an indirect, multi-stage, consumption-based tax system. It subsumes several domestic indirect taxes like service tax, purchase tax, value-added tax, excise duty, and others under one head.
- It does not include Petroleum, Liquor, and stamp duty.
- The Three taxes application under the GST are CGST (Central) SGST (State) and IGST (integrated)
- The Four tax slabs are **5%, 12%, 18%, 28%.**

Manufacturing ends 2022 on a high note

- As per the **S&P Global India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI),** India's manufacturing sector recorded its sharpest increase in output in 13 months in December 2022, with new orders rising at the fastest pace since February 2021.
- However the selling prices surged more than input costs for the first time in two and half years.
- The seasonally adjusted PMI reading for December 2022 rose to 57.8 from 55.7 in November, reflecting 'a robust improvement in the health of the sector that was the best seen since October 2020'.
- For the October to December quarter, the PMI averaged 56.3, the highest in a year.

Note

- The **Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)** is an index of the prevailing direction of economic trends in the manufacturing and service sectors.
- PMI focuses mainly on the **five major Survey Areas:**

- Employment
- New orders
- Production
- Inventory levels
- Supplier deliveries

Services PMI shows surge in December 2022

- As per the S&P Global India Services Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), India's services sector reported a sharp growth in new business in December, 2022 led by finance and insurance services.
- The index rose to 58.5 last month from 56.4 in November 2022.
- A reading of 50 on the index indicates that there is no change in business activity levels.
- Real estate and business services saw the slowest expansion in new orders.

Note

- India's Manufacturing PMI also reported a strong rise in December 2022 as per the data released by S&P Global

Coal production grew 10.8% in December

- As per provisional data from the **Coal Ministry,** December 2022 was the second straight month of **double-digit growth** in coal output.
- Production levels for the **first nine months** of 2022-23 were 16.4% higher at 608 MT, compared with **522.34 MT** produced in the **same period of 2021-22.**
- India's coal production increased by 10.8% in December 2022 to almost 83 million tonne (MT) from 74.8 MT in 2021.

Note

- Top 5 States in terms of total coal reserves in India are: **Jharkhand > Odisha > Chhattisgarh > West Bengal > Madhya Pradesh.**
- In April 2018, the Ministry of Coal launched **UTTAM (Unlocking Transparency by Third Party Assessment of Mined Coal) Application** for coal quality monitoring.

Oxfam India's Report on Inequality:

- The **Rights Group Oxfam International** has released the **India supplement of its annual inequality report** on the **World Economic Forum Annual Meeting**
- Title of the Report - **"Survival of the Richest"**

Highlight of the report:

- The **richest 1%** in India own more than **40% of the country's total wealth**
- The bottom half of the population together share **just 3% of country's wealth**

About Oxfam:

- Oxfam International was formed in **1995**
- It is a **global movement of people** who are **fighting inequality to end poverty and injustice**
- Its Secretariat is based in **Nairobi, Kenya**

'State Finances: A Study of Budgets of 2022-23'

- It is an **annual publication by The Reserve Bank of India**
- The report says that 45.3% of the outstanding market borrowings are coming up for repayment in 5-10 years

Tamil Nadu's outstanding liabilities

- Tamil Nadu had an outstanding liability of about Rs.4.73 lakh crore at the end of March 2022, on funds raised through the issue of bonds
- About 32.4% (Rs.1.53 lakh crore) of the outstanding amounts are coming up for repayment by 2026-27

Note:

- To **bridge the gap between its income and expenditure or fiscal deficit**, Tamil Nadu borrows from the market through the issue of **State Development Loans (SDLs) and other bonds**
- **SDLs form a major part of Tamil Nadu's total outstanding liabilities** (Rs.5.32 lakh Crore out of Rs.7.54 lakh crore) estimated at the end of March 2023
- The remaining components of the liabilities include obligations from **UDAY bonds** and loans from financial institutions

About State Development Loans (SDLs):

- SDLs are bonds that are **issued by the state government** to manage their state finances and fund their fiscal deficit
- They are issued in the primary market through normal auctions conducted by the RBI and traded in the secondary market

About UDAY bonds:

- **Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY)** launched in November 2015
- It is under the **Ministry of Power**
- **Aim**: To provide the **solution for revenue-side efficiency** as well as **cost-side efficiency**
- **Objective:** It is for the **Financial Turnaround of Power Distribution Companies (DISCOMs)** to **improve the operational and financial efficiency** of the State DISCOM

World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2023 Report

- It is released by the **United Nations**
- **India's Gross Domestic Product** (GDP) growth forecast for the calendar year 2023 **might reduce** by 20 Basis Points (to 5.8% from 6.4% in 2022)
- However, India will remain the **fastest-growing major economy** recording a growth of 5.8 per cent this year

Note:

- The report is prepared by the **UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA),** the **UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the regional economic commissions** for Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, and Western Asia

About UNDESA

- Founded in **1978**
- It is a **pioneer of sustainable development** and the home of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

About UNCTAD

- Established in **1964**
- It promotes **development-friendly integration of developing** countries into the world economy

4.3 REPORTS AND INDICES

- Unemployment rate rises to 8.3% in December says report

- According to the data from the **Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) India's unemployment** rate **rose to 8.3%** in December from 8% in November 2022.

Key Highlights of the Report

- The Unemployment rate is the **highest in the past 16 months.**

- **The urban unemployment rate rose to 10.09%** in December **from 8.96%** in the previous month.

- The rural unemployment rate slipped to 7.44% from 7.55%.

- The rise in the unemployment rate was not all bad as there is a healthy increase in the labour participation rate which shot up to 40.48% in December, the highest in 12 months.

- The employment rate has increased in December to 37.1%, which is the highest since January 2022.

- In December, the unemployment rate rose to 37.4% in Haryana which is the highest in India.

The Preliminary report of economic survey predicts a growth of 7%

- The Union Government has released the **preliminary report of the Economic Survey** for the current financial year 2022-23 prior to the presentation of the Economic Survey.

- It is reported that the country's economy will grow by 7 percent.

- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the financial statement for the financial year 2023-24 in the Lok Sabha on February 1.

Key Highlights of the Report

- The preliminary report states that the country's economy **will grow by 7 percent** in the current financial year to **Rs.157.60 lakh crore.**

- The country's **exports** will be **Rs 35.70 lakh crore** and imports will be **Rs 46.88 lakh crore.** The **per capita income** will be **Rs.96,522.**

- **Rice production** will decrease by **6.1 percent** and crude oil production by 1.4 percent.

- **Coal production** will increase by **17.2 percent, cement production by 10.8 percent** and **steel consumption** by **11.5 percent.**

- Aggregate savings in banks will increase by 8.9 percent and aggregate credit by 17 percent.

- **Manufacturing sector** will grow by **1.6 percent** and the **construction sector** by **9.1 percent.** Mining sector output will increase by 2.4 percent.

- It has been mentioned that the agriculture sector will grow by 3.5 percent and the industrial sector by 6.4 percent.

- Projection of India's Economic Growth according to various organisation are

  - **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) - 6.8 percent**
  - **International Monetary Fund (IMF) - 6.8 percent**
  - **World Bank - 6.9 percent.**
  - **Asian Development Bank - 7 percent in the current financial year.**

4.4 MONEY AND BANKING

Incentives to Promote Digital Payments

- The Union Cabinet approved an **incentive scheme worth Rs.2,600 crore** to promote payments using **RuPay cards** and the **Unified Payments Interface (UPI).**

- Under this scheme, the financial incentives will be given to banks for promoting point of sale and e commerce transactions using Rupay cards and BHIM-UPI.

- The fund will be paid to banks in order to compensate the loss incurred by **Merchant Discount Rate (MDR)**

About BHIM-UPI (Bharat Interface for Money - Unified Payments Interface)

- It is launched on **30th December 2016**

- It is developed by **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)**

- BHIM is a payment app uses **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** for transactions.

- **Objective:** To bring in Financial Inclusion to the nation and a digitally empowered society.

About National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI):

- It is an initiative of **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** and **Indian Banks' Association (IBA)** under the provisions of the **Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007**

- It is an umbrella organisation for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India.

- Objective: To create a robust Payment and Settlement Infrastructure in India

About Merchant Discount Rate (MDR):

- MDR is a fee that a **merchant is charged by their issuing bank** for accepting payments from their customers via credit and debit cards or through online transactions

Slow economic growth in Financial Year 2024

- According to recent update of **World Bank,** India's economic growth **will slow to 6.6%** in the next fiscal year from an expected 6.9% in the current year.

About World Bank:

- The World Bank was created in 1944 according to the Bretton Woods Agreement

- Headquarters - Washington, D.C

- President – David Malpass

- Objective: To provide financing, advice, and research to developing nations to aid their economic advancement

5. SCIENCE

5.1 LATEST INVENTIONS ON SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Lumpi-ProVacInd

- **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)** has developed **the Lumpi-ProVacInd vaccine for Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD).**
- Vaccine has been jointly developed by **ICAR's National Research Centre on Equines (NRCE) at Hisar, Haryana and Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) at Izatnagar, Uttar Pradesh.**
- It is a homologous, live attenuated vaccine to protect cattle against LSD virus.

Note

- There has been a loss of livestock in many States due to the lumpy skin disease in the recent past.
- Lumpy skin disease is a **viral disease** caused by **Capripoxvirus** that affects cattle.
- It is **transmitted by blood-feeding insects**, such as certain species of flies and mosquitoes, or ticks.
- It causes fever, nodules on the skin and can also lead to death, especially in animals that have not previously been exposed to the virus.
- Control options include vaccinations and culling of infected animals.

Arsenic in water – Risks of Gallblader Cancer

- Public Health Foundation of India, Centre for chronic disease control, B. Borooah cancer institute and IIT-Kharagpur collaborated with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine conducted study on effects of Arsenic.
- **Aim of the study**: To investigate exposure of Arsenic in drinking water and finding its risk of getting affected to Gallbladder Cancer (GBC)
- **Report Findings**: The **chronic arsenic exposure in drinking water**, even at low-moderate levels, may be a **potential risk factor for Gallbladder cancer.**

About Arsenic:

- Arsenic is a **heavy metal atom** and **highly toxic in its inorganic form**
- Long-term exposure to arsenic from drinking-water and food can cause **cancer** and **skin lesions**
- **WHO** recommended the **limit of arsenic in drinking-water is 10 µg/L**

5.2 SPACE

IN-SPACe inks MoU with Nascent Info Technologies

- The **Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe)** made an MoU with Nascent Info Technologies Private Limited

- This collaboration is for the development of various Geographic Information System (GIS) applications.

About IN-SPACe:

- Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) is inaugurated on **10th June 2022**

- Objective: To enable, promote, authorize and supervise **private enterprises** and **start-ups** to undertake space activities

India's first mission to study the sun

- The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) is planning to launch the **Aditya-L1 mission by June or July this year**

- Aditya-L1 is the **first Indian space mission**

- **Objecive**: To **observe the Sun and the solar corona**

About Aditya-L1

- The Aditya-L1 mission will be launched to the **L1 orbit**, the first Lagrangian point of the Sun-Earth system

- Aditya-L1 has **seven payloads**

- The **primary payload** is the **Visible Line Emission Coronagraph** (VELC) designed and fabricated by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Bengaluru

- The other six payloads are being developed by the ISRO and other scientific institutions

About ISRO

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) was formed on August 15, 1969.

- It is the space agency of India

- Objective: To harvest the benefits of outer space for India and the mankind by involvement in science, engineering and technology

- Headquarters: Bengaluru

- Chairman: Shri S. Somanath

5.3 LATEST COURT VERDICTS

SC majority ruling finds no flaw in 2016 demonetisation process

- A **majority of four judges** on a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court found no flaw in the Union government's process to demonetise ₹500 and ₹,000 banknotes through a Gazette notification issued on November 8, 2016.

- The sole woman judge on the five member Bench, **Justice B.V. Nagarathna,** gave the dissent verdict stating that the government's notification issued under Section 26(2) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Act was unlawful.

6. NATIONAL – DIARY OF EVENT

Union government offices to go digital

- The Government has directed all the Union government Ministries and Departments to migrate to **e-office 7.0 by February 2023.**
- So far, **74 Ministries and Departments** have migrated to e-office version 7.0.
- At least **13 offices** that are yet to migrate to the updated system

About e-office 7.0

- It is an in house system developed by the **National Informatics Centre (NIC).**
- Highly secure system with timely security audits and adequate firewalls.
- It is used for unclassified files, with two factor authentication and is not available on the Internet but on **NICNET (ICT network of NIC).**
- The e-office application will be regularly audited for known vulnerabilities by third party agencies on the panel of CERT¬-IN

Reasons to migrate to e-office 7.0

- The half yearly report of the **Computer Emergency Response System (CERT- IN)** states that there were ransomware incidents in 2022.
- Recent cyber and ransomware attack on the servers of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi.

Note

- **CERT-IN, the nodal agency** for responding to computer security incidents.

108th Indian Science Congress

- The **108th session of Indian Science Congress (ISC)** has been launched in **Nagpur, Maharashtra.**
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually addressed the Indian Science Congress 2023.

- The event is being hosted by the **Nagpur University at its Amravati Road Campus.**
- The focal theme of ISC 2022 is **"Science and Technology for Sustainable Development with Women Empowerment."**
- The key highlight of ISC is sustainable development with inclusive involvement of all sections of society including women.

History

- The Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA) owes its origin to the foresight and initiative of **two British Chemists, namely, Professor J. L. Simonsen and Professor P.S. MacMahon.**
- The **first meeting** of the Congress was held **in January, 1914** at the premises of the **Asiatic Society, Calcutta.**

Samvidhan Udyan (Constitution Park) at Raj Bhavan in Jaipur

- President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the **Constitution Park at Raj Bhavan.**
- The Constitution Park was built by the Jaipur Development Authority at an estimated cost of Rs 9 crore
- The Park showcases the Constitution's journey from its making to its implementation through sculptures and pictures on paneled glass, among others.

Background of Indian Constitution

- In 1928, the All Parties Conference convened a committee in Lucknow to prepare the Constitution of India, which was known as the Nehru Report.
- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is widely regarded as the father of the Indian Constitution.
- It was adopted by the Constituent Assembly of India on 26 November 1949 and became effective on 26 January 1950.

Cabinet panel clears scheme to upgrade Prasar Bharati

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the "Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND)" scheme with an outlay of ₹ 2,539.61 crore up to 2025¬-26.
- The initiative aims at upgradation and expansion of the public service broadcasting infrastructure across the country.
- Outcomes of the initiative
- FM broadcasting of All India Radio (AIR) is expected to cover over 80% of the country's population.
- Distribution of over Eight lakh Doordarshan Free Dish DTH set top boxes for people living in remote, tribal and border areas, aspirational districts and zones affected by Left Wing Extremism.

Note

- Currently, Doordarshan operates 36 TV channels, including 28 regional ones, and AIR operates over 500 broadcasting centres.
- Doordarshan was established on 15 September 1959.

All India Annual State Ministers Conference on Water

- The Ministry of Jal Shakti organised **the first All India Annual State Ministers Conference on Water in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.**
- Theme - **"Water Vision@2047"**
- It was proclaimed that the **5 P mantra** is essential for the sustainability of water.
- 5P stands for political will, public financing, partnerships, public participation and persuasion.

India's Largest Hockey Stadium

- The **Birsa Munda International Hockey Stadium** was inaugurated in Rourkela, Odisha.
- The stadium is the **largest hockey stadium in India.**
- The facility was opened ahead of the **FIH Men's Hockey World Cup 2023.**

- Rourkela is the second venue for the international event after the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar.

About Odisha

- Capital - Bubaneswar
- Governor - Ganeshi Lal
- Chief Minister - Naveen Patnaik

India's first Y20 Summit

- Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Thakur launches **the theme, logo and website of Y20 Summit** at the **Curtain Raiser event** in New Delhi.
- The Y20 is the official youth engagement group **for the G20 (Group of 20),** the forum for the world's largest and most advanced economies.
- Y20 will focus on global youth leadership and partnership.
- India is hosting the Y20 summit for the **first time.**
- In Youth 20 Engagement Group, India's key focus is to bring young leaders from all across the globe together and discuss ideas for a better tomorrow and draft an agenda for action.

About G20

- The G20 or Group of Twenty is an intergovernmental forum of major developed and developing economies comprising 19 countries and the European Union (EU).
- Formation - 26 September 1999.
- Chairman - Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India
- First Meeting in Cologne, Germany
- G20 Countries - Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, India, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union.

Astro Tourism – A Sky Gazing event at Delhi's India Gate

- **National Council of Science Museums (NCSM)** in association with **Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML)** organised the **Astro Tourism – A Sky Gazing event at New Delhi's India Gate.**

▪ The Astro Tourism event includes various activities like Astro Talks by expert Astronomers, Exhibition on Astronomy, Storytelling related to celestial objects, Experience of using telescope to see craters of Moon, Astronomy Activities, Photographic Panel Exhibition, and Astro-Photography.

▪ The programme will help in developing scientific temper among the people.

Note

▪ **Article 51 A** of our constitution deals with fundamental duties which makes it a duty of every citizen to develop Scientific Temper

National Geospatial Policy (NGP) 2022

▪ The **Ministry of Science and Technology** has notified a **National Geospatial Policy (NGP) 2022**, with the goal of making India a world leader in the Global Geospatial Sector.

Key Highlights of the policy

▪ It is a **citizen-centric policy** that seeks to strengthen the geospatial sector.

▪ The policy is aimed to set up high resolution topographical survey and mapping, with a high-accuracy **Digital Elevation Model (DEM) by 2030.**

▪ It develops a framework for holistic development of the Geospatial ecosystem.

▪ **Geospatial Knowledge Infrastructure (GKI):** The government will establish an 5. Integrated Data and Information Framework by 2030 (to develop GKI)

▪ A **Geospatial Data Promotion and Development Committee (GDPDC,** will be a **17-member body**) at the national level shall be the apex body for formulating and implementing strategies related to promotion of the Geospatial sector.

▪ The government will also establish **National Digital Twin for high-resolution topographical survey and mapping by 2035.**

17th Edition of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention.

▪ The Three day plenary session of the **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)** convention commenced in Indore, Madhya Pradesh.

▪ The first day today of the convention was celebrated as **Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas** with the theme : **Role of Diaspora Youth in Innovation and Technology.**

▪ The Indian Diaspora brings a multi-layered gain to the IT industry in terms of enhanced skills and capital formation - human, social & financial.

▪ The Indian IT industry has created a strong motivation for the mobility of highly skilled professionals and provided the Diaspora with the much needed opportunity to engage with their motherland.

▪ The theme of the 17th edition of the convention is **'Diaspora: Reliable partners for India's progress in Amrit Kaal'.**

▪ Various Initiatives include

• **Know India Programme KIP** - to expose diaspora Indian youth to various aspects of contemporary India and its vibrant art,heritage and culture.

• The scholarship programme **GIAN (Global Initiative for Academic Network)**

• The **VAJRA Faculty Scheme** : It aims to bring a strong international connect to the R&D ecosystem of India.

• The **Mission Shodh GANGA** (Global Alliance for New Generation Acceleration)

• **Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC)**

• **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC)**

Note

▪ Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is observed on **January 9** to mark the contribution of the **overseas Indian community** towards the development of India.

▪ The day commemorates the **return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa** to Mumbai **on 9 January 1915.**

Kerala becomes country's first fully digital banking state

▪ Kerala has become the **first state in India** to go fully digital in its banking service.

- The State now has at least one product in 3.76 crore accounts enabled digitally, according to the State-Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC)

- **Right to Internet**

- Kerala is the only State in India that has declared 'the right to Internet' as a basic right of its citizens.

- Kerala Fibre Optic Network (K-FON) project:

- The K-FON will ensure internet facility to everyone in the state.

- Optical fibre cable had been drawn over a distance of 17,155 km.

- The project will enable internet to be available to everyone in the state either at lower price or for free-of-cost.

About Kerala

- Capital - Thiruvananthapuram

- Governor - Arif Mohammad Khan

- Chief Minister - Pinarayi Vijayan

RACE testing facility, Sivakasi

- Council of Scientific and Industrial Research - National Environmental Engineering Research Institute **(CSIR - NEERI)** laid the foundation stone for Raw materials/chemicals, compositions emissions (RACE) testing facility at **Sivakasi, Virudhunagar district.**

- The facility will test and certify the **Green Crackers** produced in the district.

- This laboratory is set up based on MoU between CSIR-NEERI and Tamil Nadu Fireworks and Amorces Manufacturers Association (TANFAMA)

About CSIR

- The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is known for its cutting edge (R&D-Research and Development) knowledge base in diverse Science and Technological areas, is a contemporary R&D organization.

- Present Director General - Dr. N. Kalaiselvi (1st Women DG of CSIR)

About NEERI:

- National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) is a pioneer laboratory in the field of environmental science and engineering.

- Objective: To strive for providing innovative and effective solutions for environmentally sustainable development and to help Government, industry and the society.

MV Ganga Vilas - World's longest river cruise

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** flagged off the world's **longest river cruise "MV Ganga Vilas", at Varanasi.**

About My Ganga Vilas

- It is the **river cruise** travels from **Kashi in Uttar Pradesh** to **Dibrugarh in Assam**

- It is **the first indigenously made cruise vessel** in India.

- It covers destinations like Kashi, Patna Sahib, Bodh Gaya, Vikramshila, Dhaka and the Sundarbans

Soul of Steel endurance challenge

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched the Soul of Steel alpine challenge at Dehradun

- The expedition will test one's high-altitude endurance

- It is an initiative to promote tourism in border areas

Note:

- A website for volunteers is launched to sign up for various adventure activities

- It is a joint initiative of the Indian Army and CLAW Global, a veteran's organisation

Rajasthan to implement a blindness control policy

- **Rajasthan** has become the **first State to implement a policy to control blindness**

- **Objective:** To ensure the **"Right to Sight"**

- **Features:**

  - A drive will be undertaken in the State **to reduce the rate of blindness**

  - The policy aims **to bring down the prevalence rate of blindness** in the State, from 1.1% in 2020 to 0.3%.

National Symposium on "India's Roadmap to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis"

- This symposium was held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi **chaired by** the **Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya**

Highlights:

- To **eliminate lymphatic filariasis by 2027,** ministry had developed a **five-pronged plan.**
- As a part of this plan, **Multi-Drug Administration (MDA)** campaign will be **held twice** a year synchronized with the **National Deworming Day on February 10 and August 10.**

About Lymphatic filariasis

- It is commonly known as **elephantiasis**
- It is caused by infection with **nematodes (roundworms) of the family Filariodidea**
- It transmitted to humans mainly through mosquitoes

India's first Centre of Excellence of online gaming

- The **Minister of State for Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) Rajeev Chandrasekhar** announced that India's first Centre of Excellence (CoE) of online gaming would be set up in **Shillong, Meghalaya** by March 2023.
- It is established under the **Digital India Startup Hub** through the **Software Technology Parks of India (STPI)**
- **Aim**: To **catalyse the start-ups** and **entrepreneurs** from **North East Region** to build the next generation of **online gaming ecosystem**

Doppler Weather Radar Network

- Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh announced that **entire Country will be covered by Doppler Weather Radar Network by 2025 to predict extreme weather events more accurately**
- It will **enhance weather monitoring capabilities** and benefit the farmers and other stakeholders to contribute significantly to the economy

About Radar:

- Radar **(Radio Detection and Ranging)** is a device uses electromagnetic waves in the **microwaves region** to detect location (range & direction), altitude, intensity and movement of moving and non-moving objects.

About Doppler Weather Radar:

- Based on Doppler principle, the radar is designed to **improve precision in long-range weather forecasting and surveillance**

Annual Status of Education Report (ASER 2022) survey

- It was released by **Pratham, a non-governmental organisation**
- The ASER is a **household survey** conducted across 616 rural districts covering **6.9 lakh children** in the age group 3 to 16
- **Aim:** To record their **schooling status** and assess their **basic reading and arithmetic skills**

Key Findings:

- Despite school closures during the pandemic, the **overall enrolment figures** for the 6 to 14 age group, **increased** from 97.2% in 2018 to 98.4% in 2022
- Children's **basic literacy levels** with their reading ability compared with numeracy skills is **worsening much more** sharply and **dropping to pre2012 levels**

Asia's 1st Hydrogen Mining Truck

- **Adani Enterprises Limited (AEL)** signed a deal with Ashok Leyland, India, and **Ballard Power, Canada** to manufacture a **Hydrogen Fuel Cell Electric Trucks (FCET)** for mining logistics and transportation purposes.
- It marks the **1st planned Hydrogen – Powered Mining Truck in Asia**

Bharat Pravah-India along its Shores

- **Ministry of Shipping, Waterways, and Ports** has launched an initiative "Bharat Pravah-India along its Shores"

Aim:

- To highlight the **significance and imagery** of rivers, ports, and shipping in everyday life through a series of nationwide events

- To highlight the challenges, policy issues and **future goals relating to the maritime sector.**

International Spice Conference 2023

- The **sixth edition** of the International Spice Conference is being held from January 19 to 22 at ITC Grand Chola, **Chennai.**
- It is hosted by the **All-India Spices Exporters Forum (AISEF).**

Highlights:

- Over the last decade, **India's export volume of spices has grown more than three times**
- Despite the impact of the pandemic in 2020-2021, spice exports volumes have reached an all-time high.

Apple Cluster in Jammu and Kashmir

- The **Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare** approved an "Apple Cluster" for **Jammu and Kashmir's Shopian district** under the **Cluster Development Programme**
- It was announced during a **conference on 'India Cold Chain Conclave'**

Note:

- The cluster envisages the **development of Shopian apple** on three verticals including pre-production-production, post-harvest management and value addition and logistics, marketing and branding to make it globally competitive

About India Cold Chain Conclave:

- It is organised by **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, along with PHD Chamber of Commerce & Industry (PHDCCI) and National Centre for Cold Chain Development (NCCD)**
- **Objective**: To bring together all the stakeholders on one common platform to **explore ways of reducing post-harvest losses** with relevant technologies

New guidelines to regulate promotions on social media

- **Union Consumer Affairs Secretary** released the guidelines to social media influencers to regulate promotions
- It mandated the **compulsory disclosure of monitory or material benefits of a product or** a **brand they are promoting through social media platforms**
- If fail to do so, penalty will be imposed under the Consumer Protection Act 2019

PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development)

- The **National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT)** has notified the **India's first national assessment regulator, PARAKH recently**
- It is launched as part of the implementation of the **National Education Policy (NEP)-2020**
- **Aim:** To set up **assessment guidelines for all boards**

Objectives:

- Uniform Norms & Guidelines
- Enhance Assessment Pattern
- Reduce Disparity in Evaluation
- Benchmark Assessment

About National Education Policy (NEP)-2020

- The National Education Policy (NEP) was **released by the Ministry of Human Resource Development** (Presently the Ministry of Education) in July 2020
- **It replaces the National Policy on Education, 1986**
- **Aim**: To transform the Indian education system to meet the needs of the 21st Century

MoU between IREDA and MNRE

- The **Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)**
- **Aim**: To set an Annual Performance Target for 2022 – 2023

About Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA)

- IREDA is a Public Limited Government Company established as a **Non-Banking Financial Institution in 1987**
- It is a **Mini Ratna (Category – I)** of Government of India Enterprise under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)

▪ **Motto - "Energy for Ever"**

▪ **Objective: To promote, develop and extend financial assistance** for setting up projects relating to new and renewable sources of energy and energy efficiency/conservation

BharOS - Bharat Operating System

▪ **IIT Madras - incubated firm** has developed an **indigenous mobile operating system** called BharOS.

▪ It is developed by JandK Operations Pvt. Ltd. which is incubated **by IIT Madras Pravartak Technologies** Foundation, **funded by the Department of Science and Technology** under its **National mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical Systems**

Highlights

▪ It is being provided to organisations that have stringent privacy and security requirements and where users handle sensitive information

▪ It provides access to apps that meet certain security and privacy standards of organisations

About National mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical Systems (NM-ICPS)

▪ Launched in **2018**

▪ The NM-ICPS is a comprehensive mission which would address **technology, application and start-up development in Cyber Physical System (CPS) and associated technologies.**

India's First STEM Innovation and Learning Center

▪ The **American India Foundation (AIF)** inaugurated **India's 1st STEM Innovation and Learning Centre (SILC) at the Chennai, Tamil Nadu**

▪ It also launched the **Drone and Satellite Launch Vehicle (DSLV) Mission**

▪ Both were launched under the **Vanavil Mandram scheme**

About STEM Innovation and Learning Centre (SILC), Chennai

▪ It is designed by **AIF's award-winning flagship education programme, Digital Equalizer (DE)**

▪ **Objective**: To **serve as a one-stop solution for STEM** (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) among students and instructors

About Drone and Satellite Launch Vehicle (DSLV) Mission

▪ **Aim**: To **create a platform for students** to learn about **Drone and Aviation technology**

▪ More than 200 selected students from 12 schools in Chennai were trained for the mission launch to **assemble a drone** and a **PICO satellite** and launch their models on the spot.

▪ It would be **mentored by Dr. Mylswamy Annadurai,** Vice President of the State Council for Science and Technology

India International Science Festival (IISF)

▪ The **8th edition** of the India International Science Festival (IISF) was inaugurated at the **Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology (MANIT), Bhopal**

▪ It is an annual flagship programme of the **Union Ministry of Science and Technology** in collaboration with the Madhya Pradesh government

▪ **Theme: "Marching towards Amrit Kaal with Science, Technology, and Innovation"**

▪ **Aim:** To **promote the Science and technology** among the **general public** and **celebrate Science as a festival**

Andaman Islands named after Param Vir Chakra awardees

▪ **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** named the **21 largest unnamed islands** in the Andaman & Nicobar archipelago (group of islands) after 21 **Param Vir Chakra awardees**

▪ He also **unveiled** a model of the **national memorial dedicated to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose** to be built on **Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep**

About Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep:

▪ **Havelock, Ross** and **Neil Island** of Andaman and Nicobar were **officially renamed** on the occasion of 75th anniversary of historic visit of Subhas Chandra Bose to the islands

▪ Subash Chandra Bose **hoisted the Indian national flag** at the **Gymkhana Ground in Port Blair** on **30 December 1943**

▪ The new names were,

  • Havelock Island - Swaraj Dweep

- Ross Island - Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Island
- Neil Island - Shaheed Dweep

Note:

▪ The 126th birth anniversary of Netaji (January 23) is celebrated as **'Parakram Divas'** means **Courage Day**

Chief Guest at Republic Day Celebrations

▪ **President of Egypt, Abdel Fattah El-Sisi**, will be the Chief Guest on India's 74th Republic Day

▪ A military contingent from Egyptian Army will also participate in the Republic Day parade

Visiting dignitary:

▪ **President Droupadi Murmu** will **host a State Banquet** in honour of the **visiting dignitary** on January 25

▪ The visiting dignitary will have a **bilateral meeting and delegation-level talks** with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on bilateral, regional, and global issues of mutual interest

Note:

▪ India and Egypt are **celebrating 75 years** of establishment of **diplomatic relations** this year

▪ **Egypt** has also been invited as a **'Guest Country'** during India's Presidency of **G-20** in 2022-23

U-WIN

▪ The central government has launched an **electronic registry U-WIN for routine vaccinations**

▪ **Objective**: To **digitize India's Universal Immunization Programme (UIP)**

▪ **Features**: It registers and vaccinate every pregnant woman, record her delivery outcome, registers every new-born delivery, administer birth doses and all vaccination events there after

Note:

▪ The U-WIN would be the **single source of information for immunization services**

▪ It has been **launched in a pilot mode** in two districts of each state and Union Territory.

India's 1st Cervical Cancer Vaccine

▪ The **Serum Institute of India** (SII) had launched **CERVAVAC**, a **vaccine against cervical cancer**

▪ It is India's **1st indigenously developed quadrivalent human papillomavirus (qHPV) vaccine**

▪ It is launched by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on the occasion of **India's National Girl Child Day** (January 24) and the **Cervical Cancer Awareness month**

About Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

▪ **January** is observed as the Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

▪ **Objective:** To raise awareness about cervical cancer and HPV vaccination

▪ **2023 Theme: "Ending cervical cancer within a few generations"**

About Cervical Cancer:

▪ It **develops in a woman's cervix** i.e., the entrance to the uterus from the vagina

▪ Almost 99% of the cervical cancer cases are **linked to infection with high-risk human papilloma virus (HPV)**

Group of Infrastructure Committee

▪ Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari chaired the **10th meeting** of the Group of Infrastructure Committee in **New Delhi**

▪ **Objective of the meeting**: To **address existing inter-Ministerial issues** concerning the implementation of various infrastructure projects

Highlight:

▪ An action plan has been introduced **to accelerate PM Gati Shakti scheme's progress**

About PM Gati Shakti scheme

▪ Launched in **2021**

▪ It is the **National Master Plan for multi-modal connectivity plan**

▪ **Objective: Coordinated planning** and **execution of infrastructure projects** to bring down logistics costs

▪ **Gati shakti** is a **digital platform** which brings 16 ministries together **for integrated planning and coordinated implementation** of infrastructure connectivity projects

AYUSH Ministry signed MoU with ITDC

- The Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC)

- **Objective:** To collaborate on the **promotion of Medical Value Travel (MVT) in Ayurveda and other traditional medical systems**

Features:

- The Ministry of AYUSH will **train ITDC officials on the MVT** in Ayurveda and other traditional systems of medicine

- ITDC, on the suggestion of the AYUSH, will **include historical heritage sites of Indian systems of medicine** in tourist destinations under **"Knowledge Tourism"**

MSDE partners with Bharat Dynamics

- The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has partnered with Bharat Dynamics Limited, under the Ministry of Defence

- **Objective:** To create an **apprenticeship training framework** to address the need for the skilled and future-ready workforce in the Central Public Sector Undertaking and industries

About Bharat Dynamics Limited

- Incorporated on **16 July, 1970**

- It is a **Public Sector Undertaking under the Ministry of Defence**

- It is the **manufacturing base** for **guided missile systems** and **allied equipment for the Indian Armed Forces**

World's first intranasal COVID-19 vaccine 'iNNCOVACC'

- Union Health Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya unveiled **world's first intranasal COVID-19 vaccine, iNNCOVACC in New Delhi**

- It is developed by **Bharat Biotech International Limited (BBIL)** in collaboration with

- **Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance (BIRAC)**

About iNNCOVACC

- It is a **nasal vaccine** indicated for active immunization **against SARS-CoV-2 virus infection**

- **It stimulates a broad immune response** by neutralizing IgG, mucosal IgA, and T cell responses

- Immune **responses at the site of infection** (in the nasal mucosa) which is essential for blocking both infection and transmission of COVID-19

About BIRAC

- Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) is a **non-profit Public Sector Enterprise, set up by Department of Biotechnology (DBT),** Government of India

- **Objective:** To strengthen and empower the emerging Biotech enterprise to undertake strategic **research and innovation,** addressing nationally relevant product development needs

- BIRAC's aim is to play a transformative and catalytic role in **building a US$ 100 billion Indian Bio-Economy**

India Stack Developer Conference

- The first India Stack Developer Conference was held at **New Delhi**

- It is inaugurated by the Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, Rajeev Chandrasekhar

- **Objective:**
  - To **increase access and adoption of India Stack** for countries that are keen to adopt and integrate it as per their requirements
  - To **create a robust ecosystem** of start-ups, developers and system integrators working around it on next-generation innovation

Republic Day Celebrations

- The **74th Republic Day** celebrations held at the renovated **Kartavya Path** in the national capital

- The celebrations had a **chief guest Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi**

Highlights:

- The **drive for Atma-nirbharta** or self-

sufficiency in **India's military strength** and the **key role of women in the armed forces** are the spotlights

- As the National Flag was unfurled, the 21 gun salute was presented for the first time by **Indian made 105mm field guns**, replacing the seven vintage Quick Fire 25 pounder guns used since Independence

- A **combined band** and **marching contingent** with **144 soldiers of the Egyptian Army** and led by Colonel Mahmoud Mohamed Abdel Fattah El Kharasawy, was part of the parade

National Logistics Portal (marine)

- Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated the National Logistics Portal (marine) in New Delhi

- It is a **one-stop platform** aimed at **connecting all the stakeholders of the logistics community using IT**

Features:

- It will be a **single window** for **all trade processes of the logistics sector** spread across the country covering all modes of transport to provide a seamless end-to-end logistic service coverage

- It **will improve efficiency and transparency** by reducing costs and **promote the growth of the logistics sector.**

Bharat Parv

- Union Minister for Culture, Tourism, and Development of North Eastern Region G Kishan Reddy inaugurated the **Bharat Parv at Red Fort, New Delhi**

- This six-day mega event will be celebrated till the 31st of this month as part of the Republic Day Celebrations

- It is a government initiative **to celebrate and commemorate 75 years of independence and the history of India's people, culture, and achievements**

Collaboration of NITI Aayog's AIM, CBSE, and Intel India

- A **tripartite agreement** has been signed between the **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) – NITI Aayog, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Intel India**

- **Objective**: To bring **a change in the education sector by embedding future skills** such as Artificial Intelligence and Tinkering in the formal curriculum

- **Aim:** To make India AI-ready by aligning the **National Education Policy 2020's guidance by**
  - increasing the pace of tech integration for youth
  - bridging the future skills gap in the country
  - optimizing the current infrastructure

About Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)

- It was setup in **2016**

- It is Government of India's flagship initiative to **promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship** in the country

- **Objectives of AIM:**
  - Develop new programs and policies for fostering innovation in different sectors of the economy
  - Provide platform and collaboration opportunities for different stakeholders
  - Create an umbrella structure to oversee the innovation ecosystem of the country

Cheetah project of India - South Africa

- **India and South Africa** have signed an agreement **to translocate 12 cheetahs to India**

- The cheetahs will be transported to India by February end and **introduced into the Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh**

Note:

- Under a similar agreement, eight such cats were brought from **Namibia** in September last year and introduced into the Kuno National Park

Amrit Udyan

- The **Rashtrapati Bhavan gardens**, popularly known as the **Mughal Gardens**, was renamed as Amrit Udyan

About Mughal Garden

- Designed by **Edwin Lutyens**

- The garden is spread across 15 acres and **incorporates both Mughal and English landscaping styles.**

- The main garden has two channels intersecting at right angles dividing the garden into grid

of squares i.e., a **Charbagh (a four-cornered garden)**

▪ The garden houses nearly **2,500 varieties of dahlias** and **120 varieties of roses**

All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), 2020-21

▪ The **Union Education Ministry** released data from the All-India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), 2020-21

Highlights:

▪ **7.5% increase** in student enrolments across the country from the 2019-20 figures, with the total enrolments reaching 4.13 crore.

▪ In 2020-21, when the COVID-19 pandemic began, there was a **7% rise in enrolments in distance education programmes**

▪ The **overall figures for STEM enrolments** (at all levels of higher education) showed that **women lagged behind men**

Khadi Fest – 23

▪ It was inaugurated by the Chairman of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) Mr. Manoj Kumar in **Mumbai**

▪ **Objective:** To provide a **platform to the Khadi Institutions, PMEGP and SFURTI** units to market the products of artisans directly to the hands of customers

About KVIC:

▪ Established in **1957**

▪ It is a **statutory body** established under the **Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act 1956**

▪ It is responsible for the planning, promotion, organisation and implementation of programs for the **development of Khadi and other village industries in rural areas**

About Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP)

▪ Introduced in **2008**

▪ It is the Scheme for providing **financial assistance to set up new enterprises**

▪ **Nodal agency** – KVIC

About Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI)

▪ Introduced in **2005** by Ministry of MSME

▪ It is a Scheme of **Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries**

▪ **Nodal agency - KVIC**

National Strategic Plan and Roadmap for Leprosy 2023-2027

▪ It is launched by Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Dr. Bharati Pravin Pawar on the occasion of **National Anti – Leprosy Day**

▪ **Aim of the Plan**: To **eradicate Leprosy** in the country by 2027

Note:

▪ **National Guidelines for Surveillance for Antimicrobial Resistance in Leprosy** is also launched on the occasion of Anti – Leprosy Day

Nikhat Zareen - Brand Ambassador of NMDC Limited

▪ **National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC)** has signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with **Nikhat Zareen**

▪ **Objective**: To **represent** National Mineral Development Corporation as its brand ambassador

▪ She represents the **strength, courage, agility, and national pride** that goes with the brand of the NMDC

About Nikhat Zareen

▪ She is the **World Boxing Champion** and **gold medal winner of Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games**

About NMDC

▪ Incorporated in **1958**

▪ It is the Government of India **public enterprise** under the **Ministry of Steel**

▪ It is a **National miner** and **India's largest producer of iron ore**

7. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

New President of Brazil

- **Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva** took office for a **third term as Brazil's President**
- He replaced the previous President Jair Bolsonaro.
- The 77-year-old ex-metalworker, who previously led Brazil from 2003 to 2010, took the oath of office before Congress.

About Brazil

- Capital - Brasília
- Currency - Real

International Organisation

Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU)

- India is set to become the **Secretary General of APPU** for a tenure of **4 years** from **January 2023**
- Dr. Vinaya Prakash Singh will assume the charge of Secretary General of the Union during India's four year tenure there.

About APPU

- APPU is an **intergovernmental organization** of 32-member countries of the Asian-Pacific region.
- Goal of APPU is to extend, facilitate and improve postal relations between member countries and to promote cooperation in the field of postal services.
- It is a **specialized agency of the UN.**
- Headquarter: Bangkok, Thailand.

Voice of Global South summit, 2023

- It is a special **virtual Summit to be held on 12-13 January 2023.**
- The inaugural and concluding sessions would be hosted by the Prime Minister of India
- Theme of the Inaugural Leaders' session - **"Voice of Global South - for Human-Centric Development"**
- Theme of the Concluding Leaders' session - **"Unity of Voice-Unity of Purpose".**

About Voice of Global South summit

- It is the **initiative of India's Ministry of External affairs**
- **Objective**: To bring together countries of the Global South to share their perspectives and priorities on a common platform.

India – UAE Agreement

- The agreement was signed by **RK Singh,** the Union Minister of Power and New and Renewable Energy and **Suhail Al Mazrouei,** the UAE's Minister of Energy and Infrastructure

Agreements

- Cooperation in the field of **Green Hydrogen Development and investment**
- Launch of a **Sub-Sea cable** between India and UAE under the mission, **"One Sun, One World, One Grid Initiative"**

About "One Sun, One World, One Grid Initiative":

- India launched the **Green Grids Initiative — One Sun, One World, One Grid (GGI-OSOWOG)** in partnership with the **United Kingdom in 2018**
- It was announced at the **Conference of Parties (26) held in Glasgow, UK**
- **Objective:** To **harness the sun's energy** and build a **global interconnected electricity grid** to accelerate the **Transition to Renewable Energy**

World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos

- The 53rd **Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum** is being held at **Davos, Switzerland** from January 16 – 20, 2023

▪ Theme: **"Cooperation in a fragmented world"**

About World Economic Forum:

▪ It is a **non-profit foundation** established in **1971,** located in **Geneva, Switzerland.**

▪ It is recognized as the **international institution for public-private cooperation**

▪ **Objective**: To improve the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic, and other leaders of society to shape global, regional, and industry agendas

Hyderabad - Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution

▪ **World Economic Forum** (WEF) has **chosen Hyderabad, Telangana** for establishing its **Center for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (C4IR).**

▪ C4IR Telangana will be an autonomous, non-profit organization with a thematic **focus on healthcare and life sciences.**

About Fourth Industrial Revolution:

▪ It is a **fusion of technologies** like Artificial Intelligence (AI), Robotics, Internet of Things (IoT), 3D printing, Genetic Engineering, Quantum Computing and other technologies

Bhopal Declaration

▪ The two-day **Think20 meet (T20)** is **held on Bhopal** and it is concluded with the release of Bhopal declaration

▪ **Recommendations of the Bhopal Declaration**: Need for **development transformation** to support transitions towards **"Global South and Global Governance for (Lifestyle for Environment) LiFE"** and responsible consumption.

About Think20 meet:

▪ It is the **'think tank'** or **'idea bank'** for the **G20 summit**

▪ It **brings together** the **think tanks and high-level experts to discuss policy issues** relevant to the G20.

Global Tourism Investors Summit

▪ Government of India would host the **1st Global Tourism Investors Summit** from 10th to 12th April 2023 at **Pragati Maidan in New Delhi.**

▪ It is a **part** of the **India's Group of Twenty (G20) presidency**

▪ It is organized by the **Union Ministry of Tourism** with **Confederation of Indian** Industry (CII) as the industry partner

▪ **Objective**: To bring together global business leaders and **policymakers to understand and explore Tourism Business opportunities in India.**

World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2023

▪ It is released by the **International Labour Organisation** (ILO)

Highlights:

▪ The present **global economic slowdown** is anticipated to **worsen social and economic inequalities**

▪ Global unemployment is expected to **rise slightly** which amounts to the rate of **5.8%**

▪ **"Global Jobs Gap"** – A new comprehensive indicator of unmet employment needs

About International Labour Organisation (ILO)

▪ ILO is established on **1919**

▪ Headquarters – **Geneva, Switzerland**

▪ **Objective:** To **promote social justice** and internationally recognized **human and labour rights**

Education for Democracy

▪ The **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** adopted a **resolution** titled "Education for Democracy"

▪ The resolution is **co-sponsored by India** which recognizes that **"education for all"** contributes to the strengthening of democracy.

▪ **Objective:** To **integrate education for democracy** into their education standards.

About United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

▪ Year of Formation – **1945**.

- It is the **United Nation's chief policy-making and representative organ.**
- Headquarters - **New York City, US.**

Redevelopment of Maldives airport

- External Affairs Minister S.Jaishankar launched the **scheme for reconstruction of Hanimaadhoo international airport in Maldives** with Indian funding

Tribute to a warrior

- Minister Jaishankar paid homage at the memorial of **Sultan Mohammad Thakurufanu,** the 16th century warrior who **destroyed the Portuguese rule in the Maldives.**

About Maldives

- Capital – **Malé**
- President - **Ibrahim Mohammad Choli**

India's Civil 20 Engagement Group (C20)

- India's Civil 20 Engagement Group (C20 has been inaugurated at **Amritapuri in the Kollam district of Kerala**
- **Sri Mata Amritanandamayi (Amma)** serves as the Chair of C20
- **Mr.Amitabh Kant**, former CEO of NITI Aayog and **India's Special Representative (Sherpa) at G20**, addressed the C20 inauguration

About C20:

- It is the **official engagement group of the country's G20 leadership** representing the voices of non-profit, voluntary citizens groups in service to society
- **Objective**: To **bring the concerns of the Civil Society Organisations (CSO)** from around the world to the G20 summit

India's G20 task force on digital public infrastructure

- The Union government had set up a task Force on **"Digital Public Infrastructure for Economic Transformation, Financial Inclusion and Development"**
- It would be **co-chaired by** India's G20 **Sherpa Amitabh Kant** and **Infosys chairman Nandan Nilekani**
- **Objective**: To **create a detailed map of India's digital infrastructure** across sectors and shortlisting key digital infrastructure to be presented by India within the individual G20 tracks

B20 Inception Meeting

- The **Buisness20 (B20) Inception Meeting** was held in **Gandhinagar, Gujarat** as the part of G20 Summit
- The meeting was **headed by Mr.Chandrasekaran, Head of TATA sons**

Highlights:

- **Two action groups and seven task forces** were formed on the meeting
- These groups will work and discuss on digital transformation, climate change, financial inclusion, and sustainability

About B20:

- The **Business 20 (B20)** is the **official G20 dialogue forum** which consists of **global business community.**
- Established in **2010**
- **Aim**: To **deliver concrete actionable policy recommendations** to spur economic growth and development

STEM Education Program in Asia

- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and Solvay, a Belgian company, announced the **launch of a Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) Education Program**
- **Objective:** To develop **education programs in STEM** for students in India, Indonesia and South Korea **to help preserve the environment**
- **Theme: "Sustainable living for one planet"**

About UNESCO

- Formed on **16 November 1945**
- **Mission:** To contribute to the building of a culture of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information

- **Headquarters**: Paris, France
- **Director-General:** Ms Audrey Azoulay

India elected as Vice-Chair of FAO's ITWG on AnGR

- India was elected as the **Vice-Chair in the 12th Session of the Inter-governmental Technical Working Group (ITWG) on Animal Genetic Resources (AnGR)**
- It was held at **Rome, Italy**
- It also **represented the Asia & Pacific region**
- **Dr. Bhupendra Nath Tripathi**, Deputy Director General (Animal Sciences), ICAR (Indian Council of Agricultural Research) vice-chaired the Session

About ITWG

- Formed in **May 1997**
- It was created by the **Food and Agricultural Organization's (FAO) Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA)**
- **Functions**: It reviews technical issues, advises and makes recommendations to the Commission and further implements the Commission's programme related to **AnGR at global level**

About FAO

- Established in **1945**
- It is a **specialized agency** of the United Nations that **leads international efforts to defeat hunger**
- **Goal**: To **achieve food security for all** and make sure that people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives

Two-day inception meeting of Startup-20

- It is the new engagement group of G20 initiated by India and begun in Hyderabad

About Startup-20 Engagement Group

- It recommends actions to the G20 Leaders to address growth challenges and other constraints

Objectives:

- To harmonise the global start-up ecosystem through consensus-based definitions
- To promote a global community of knowledge sharing among startup ecosystems to explore opportunities

International Financial Architecture Working Group

- The **first G20 International Financial Architecture Working Group** meeting under the G20 Indian Presidency will be held in **Chandigarh**
- It is a workstream under the **G20 Finance Track**

Highlights:

- The meeting will discuss ways to enhance the stability and cohesion of the **international financial architecture** and how to make it fit for addressing the global challenges of the 21st century
- It will also focus on exploring ways to **provide maximum support to poor and vulnerable countries**

Space20 programme

- **Meghalaya Governor BD Mishra** announced that Space 20 programme of G20 would be held at **Shillong**, the capital of Meghalaya in April 2023
- **Aim:** To make **space economy** a formal agenda item of G20 Summits
- **Objective:** To discuss the **contribution of the space partnerships to the economy** of the countries

Highlight:

- This is the continuation of the Space Economy leaders meeting held by the National Space Agencies of G20 Countries in 2020

G20 Education Working Group Meeting

- G20 education working group will hold its **1st seminar** on the research park of **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Chennai** on January 31, 2023
- **Seminar Topic - Role of Digital Technology in Education**

- **Objective**: To provide a unique platform to all members of the grouping to **showcase their innovation and best practices in using digital technology in education**

Highlights:

- There will be an **exhibition showcasing India's achievements in the field of education and the NE** elements including SWAYAM, DIKSHA, and NIPUN Bharat, and research, and innovations as well as Indian Knowledge systems

About Group of Twenty (G20):

- It is an **informal group of 19 countries** and the European Union, with representatives of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

- The G20 focuses on a broad agenda of issues of global importance and **issues pertaining to the global economy**

India's Presidency:

- India holds the Presidency of the G20 from December 1, 2022 to November 30, 2023

- The **Theme of India's G20 Presidency - "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" or "One Earth, One Family, One Future"**

8. TAMILNADU AFFAIRS

Whole Day Annadhanam Scheme at three more temples

▪ The TN Government launched the whole day annadhanam in three more temples:

- **Ramanathaswamy temple in Rameswaram.**
- **Arunachaleswarar temple in Tiruvannamalai.**
- **Meenakshi Sundareswarar temple in Madurai.**

▪ With this, the scheme to provide annadhanam **from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.** covers **eight temples** in Tamil Nadu.

▪ A total of **754 temples in the State** provide annadha nam to nearly 82,000 devotees a day in the afternoons.

Plans to borrow ₹51,000 cr. in Q4

▪ Tamil Nadu is planning to raise ₹**51,000 crore in the fourth quarter (January, March) of fiscal 2022 - 2023** by auctioning off bonds called State Development Loans, according to the Reserve Bank of India's borrowing calendar.

▪ This is **45.7% higher than the ₹35,000 crore** the State borrowed in the fourth quarter (Q4) of fiscal year 2022.

▪ From April-December 2022, the State borrowed ₹49,000 crore, which is lower than the ₹52,000 crore it borrowed during the same period in 2021.

Note

▪ The **State Development Loans** are the major source of borrowing for the States to **fund their fiscal deficit**, which arises when total expenditure exceeds total revenue.

▪ Tamil Nadu is planning to become **revenue neutral in two to three years.**

▪ Tamil Nadu hikes DA for govt employees to 38%

▪ Tamil Nadu Government hiked the **Dearness Allowance (DA)** for government employees including teachers, pensioners and family pensioners **from 34 per cent to 38 percent** with immediate effect.

▪ The increase, effective January 1, 2023, would benefit about 16 lakh staff.

Note

▪ The Dearness Allowance is a **calculation on inflation and allowance paid to government employees and pensioners.**

▪ Dearness Allowance is calculated as a **percentage of an Indian citizen's basic salary** to mitigate the impact of inflation on people.

Chennai Literary Festival

▪ TN CM MK Stalin inaugurated the pre events of **Chennai Literary Festival** which will be held from January 6 to 8, 2023 **at Anna Centenary Library.**

▪ The TN government planned to organise five literary festivals, among which four are named after rivers - **Vaigai, Cauvery, Porunai and Siruvani.**

TN govt launches toll-free number to help devotees raise temple related grievances

▪ The Ministry for Hindu religious and charitable endowments launched a toll-free telephone number **18004251757** and a 24-hour helpline to help devotees report grievances and get information on temples in Tamil Nadu **24x7**.

▪ A grievance centre was launched on June 25, 2021 to help public and devotees register grievances related to temples. However, the centre used to function only between 10 am and 6 pm.

▪ Now, the newly launched centre will function 24x7.

Special Cover on IMSc issued

▪ The Department of Posts, Chennai City Region, released a special cover on **'60 Years of the Institute of Mathematical Sciences (IMSc)' at Taramani.**

Note

▪ The Institute of Mathematical Sciences (IMSc) is a research centre located in Chennai, India.

▪ The institute was founded by **Alladi Ramakrishnan in 1962.**

'SEVAI' launched in Tirunelveli

▪ For the first time in Tamil Nadu, the Tirunelveli district administration has introduced a WhatsApp¬ based chatbot, **'SEVAI' (Searches Explored Via Artificial Intelligence)** to take government welfare programmes to the public.

▪ Earlier, the chatbot won the first prize in **Tamil Nadu's first 'GovTechThon'** event which was organised by the Tirunelveli Administration, in association with Tamil Nadu Startup and Innovation Mission (TANSIM).

▪ The district administration decided to fine tune the chatbot to make it more user friendly.

▪ The chatbot informs the user about the welfare schemes based on the user's age, financial status and qualifications and guides the user to the relevant welfare programme.

Note

▪ **Thai Care Nellai app** is another app in use by the Tirunelveli Administration for constant monitoring of pregnant women by doctors, nurses and paramedical staff from their early pregnancy to post delivery to avert the death of babies and the mothers.

Region	Normal area (5 years average	Target	Coverage*	
			2022–23	2021–22
Cauvery Delta	3.609	5.046	5.476	5.389
Non–Delta	8.792	8.848	9.174	9.4
Total	12.401	13.894	14.65	14.789

Note:

▪ The Delta comparises the districts of Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Mayiladuthurai and Nagapattinam wholly, and parts of Karur, Tiruchi, Cuddalore, Pudukottai and Ariyalur.

Cumulative coverage of major crops in 2022-2023 (in lakh hectares)

Crop	Annual target for 2022-23	Coverage**		Rise (+) or decline (-)
		2022-23	2021-22	
Paddy	19.7	19.593	19.836	(-) 0.243
Millets	9.67	9.086	9.242	(-) 0.156
Pulses	9.48	5.518	5.335	(+) 0.183
Total foodgrains	38.85	34.197	34.413	(-) 0.216
Cotton	1.74	1.275	1.051	(+) 0.224
Sugarcane	1.71	1.467	1.295	(+) 0.172
Oilseeds	5.5	3.462	3.382	(+) 0.080
Total agricultural crops	47.8	40.401	40.141	(+) 0.260

Source:State Agricultue Department

Key Highlights

- Cash crops have recorded higher coverage in Tamil Nadu this time than the previous year, while the coverage of food crops is marginally lower than last year.

- For the damage, the government has sanctioned around Rs.50.88 crore for nearly 48,600 farmers.

Book Fair was inaugurated in Chennai

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin inaugurated the 46th Chennai Book Fair on the YMCA College of Physical Education campus in Nandanam in Chennai.

- The fair was organised by the Booksellers and Publishers Association of South India (BAPASI).

- **Muthamizharignar Kalaignar M.Karunanidhi Porkizhi Award 2023** to six persons on the occasion.

  - P.R. Subramanian
  - Devibharathi (Novel)
  - Chandra Thangaraj (Short Stories)
  - Poet Devedeven (Quotes)
  - C Mohan (Translation)
  - Piralayan (Drama)

- Linguist P.R. Subramanian, who translated Robert Caldwell's The Comparative Grammar of Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages, received the award for prose/research.

- BAPASI award recipients

  - M Pattazhagan
  - K Rathina Sababathi
  - Deepak Mathiyalagan
  - Devi Natchiyappan
  - S Thirugnasampantham
  - Indumathi
  - Aisha R Nadarajan
  - Vivek (Cinema Lyricist)
  - Mervin

Sangham Literary Monthly Calendar released

- Chief Minister M.K.Stalin released the monthly calendar based on Sangham literature songs.

- The Calendar was published at the Chennai Book Fair.

- Based on Sangham Literary Songs, the Sangham Literary Month Calendar has been developed under the Tamil Advocacy Association for Tamil Development.

- It contains 12 Sangham literature songs based on various categories like gift of Tamil, heroism, ethics of life, love, love, science, life in harmony with nature, business.

Tree loans to farmers as part of Green Mission

- Tamil Nadu government asks banks to offer **tree loans as part of its Green Mission.**

- The **Green Tamil Nadu Mission** launched on **September 24, 2022** is aimed at increasing the State's green cover (areas including forest and the tree cover around it) **to 33% from 23.71%.**

- Under the mission, the State plans to encourage farmers to take up tree plantation on their farmland, besides the cultivation of food crops, to augment wood production and their revenue.

- Agro forestry plays a crucial role in achieving the forest and green cover target and the State government has asked banks to consider financing plantation of agroforestry trees.

- The government plans to encourage farmers to grow long rotation crops like Red Sanders and sandalwood.

- Such trees cannot be sold in the short term like 5 - 10 years but after 20 - 25 years. This would ensure that the green cover is maintained in the State.

- The tree loans are loans which are offered to the farmers to pay for seedlings, inputs and maintenance of trees for 7-8 years.

T.N. Government reconstitutes State Library Committee after over 10 years

- The Tamil Nadu government has issued orders reconstituting the **State Library Committee** and the **Local Library Authority for Chennai** city after more than a decade.

- The 15-member **State Library Committee** will include the School Education Minister, Minister for Rural Development, three legislators,

expert G. Gopanna, Tamil Nadu Library Association's G. Rathinasabapathy, Madras Library Association's K. Nithyanandam, Director of Roja Muthiah Research Library G.Sundar and others.

- The Library authority for Chennai city will be reconstituted with 11 members, including writers Manushya Puthiran alias A. Abdul Hameed and Tamildasan.

2023's first Jallikattu of T.N

- The year's first 'Jallikattu' was held at Thatchankurichi in the Gandarvakottai taluk of Pudukkottai district.

Note

- Jallikattu is a traditional sport of Tamil Nadu.
- It is celebrated in the month of January, during the Tamil harvest festival, Pongal.
- It is protected as a collective cultural right **under Article 29 (1).**

Legal Background

- In 2011, the Centre added bulls to the list of animals whose training and exhibition is prohibited.
- The Supreme Court banned Jallikattu through a **judgment in May 2014 in the Animal Welfare Board of India vs A. Nagaraja** case on the grounds of cruelty to animals.
- In 2018, the Supreme Court referred the **Jallikattu case to a Constitution Bench**, where it is pending now.

Global Tamil Angels Platform

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin launched the **Global Tamil Angels platform (www.tamilangels. fund) of Startup** TN at the **"Global Startup Investors Summit".**
- The Summit was jointly organised by **Tamil Nadu Startup and Innovation Mission** and **FeTNA International Tamil Entrepreneur Network.**

Benefits of the Platform

- It will enable investors from the Global Tamil Diaspora to **make investments in Tamil Nadu** based start ups.
- It will help in connecting the Tamil Nadu based start ups with the global Tamil angel investors.

- It will offer legal consultation for investing and help take products to global markets.

Row over TN Governor's deviation from Speech

- Governor R.N. Ravi walked out of the Tamil Nadu Assembly as Chief Minister M.K. Stalin disapproved of his selective deviation from the approved text of the Governor's Address to the House and moved a resolution to take on record only the transcript distributed to the members.
- This is the **first time in the history of Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly** that a Governor has walked out during his speech.

Assembly Rule 17

- The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly rule 17 states that when the Legislative Assembly is assembled **under Article 175 or Article 176 of the Constitution**, no member shall obstruct or interrupt the Address either before or after the address or during its duration with any speech or point of order or in any other manner.
- Such obstruction or interruption shall be regarded as a gross breach of order of the House and shall be dealt with by the Speaker as such at the next sitting of the Assembly.
- **Rule 17 states that appropriate action** will be taken **by the Chairman in the next meeting.**
- **Government relaxed Rule 17** through resolutions moved by Chief Minister MK Stalin, to 'remove' the Governor's speech made with 'addition' and 'omission', and only include the speech printed and circulated to the MLAs.

Tamil Nadu tops in disbursal of Mudra loans

- Minister of State in the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting L.Murugan stated that **Tamil Nadu topped in disbursal of loans under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)**
- Women beneficiaries are in large numbers under the scheme.

About Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana

- The scheme was launched **in 2015** to provide

loans to non- corporate, small and micro-enterprises.

- Under the scheme, **loans up to Rs 10 lakhs** are provided.

- The loans are given by Regional Rural Banks, Commercial banks, Small Finance Banks, Non-Banking Financial Corporations, Micro-Financial Institutions.

Tamil Nadu launches crop insurance disbursal to 2 lakh farmers

- Chief Minister M.K.Stalin initiated the disbursal of **compensation of Rs.318 crore to 2.21 lakh farmers** who were affected by natural disasters under the **Prime MInister Crop Insurance Scheme (Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana)**

About PMFBY

- The Prime Minister's Crop Insurance Scheme is aimed at compensating the farmers for the crop yield loss due to natural calamities.

- It was implemented in 14 clusters of 37 districts through Agriculture Insurance Company of India Ltd. and IFFCO Tokio General Insurance Company Limited during 2021-22.

- Government of Tamil Nadu has implemented **PMFBY from Kharif 2016 onwards** in all the districts of Tamil Nadu except Chennai.

"Kaaval Karangal" initiative

- 160 destitute persons who were of north Indian origin were rescued under the 'Kaaval Karangal' project.

About "Kaval Karangal"

- Launched **in April 2021 by Chennai City Police.**

- **Theme:** "Respect Human" and "Serve the Humanity".

- Mission: To reach out to the abandoned/ uncared citizens who are in need of care and protection.

- The initiative won the **Chief Minister's Best Practising Award 2022.**

Agricultural power supply connection to the 50,000 beneficiaries

- **Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation Limited (TANGEDCO)** provided

50,000 agri power supply connections to **50,000** beneficiaries so far.

About TANGEDCO

- TANGEDCO was formed on 2010 after the restructuring of **Tamil Nadu Electricity Board (TNEB).**

- **Function**: To promote the coordinated development of Generation and Distribution of electricity within the state in most efficient and economical manner.

World Tamil Diaspora Day (January 12, 2023)

- Tamilnadu Government observe this as Day of Non-Resident Tamils every year since 2022

- **Theme: "Thamizhaal Inaivom"**

- **Objective:** To stay connected with the Non-resident Tamils through language, culture, trade, education and other avenues

Resolution on Sethusamudram project

- The **Tamil Nadu Assembly** adopted a resolution, urging the Centre to **implement the Sethusamudram project.**

About Sethusamudram Project:

- **Sethusamudram Shipping Canal Project** was included in **4th Five Year Plan**, approved by the Jawaharlal Nehru's Cabinet

- **Proposal**: To dredge a channel across the Palk Strait between India and Sri Lanka to allow ships to sail between the east and west coasts of India, instead of circumventing the Sri Lanka.

The "Trends in Revenue Receipts and Expenditure" report:

- It is placed in the assembly by **Minister of Finance and Human Resource Development,** Palanivel Thiagarajan

- The report deals with the **economic progress of the state during 1st half of the fiscal year 2022-2023**

Highlights of the Report:

- **State's own tax revenue** had a **37% increase** to Rs. 72,441 Crore in the first six months of the fiscal year 2022-2023; compared to Rs. 52,908 Crore in the same period of 2021-2022

- It also achieved higher growth in State's own Non-tax revenue

- **Overall Revenue Receipts increased by 32%** to Rs. 1.1 Lakh Crore compared to Rs. 85,210 Crore in previous year

Chennai - 3rd Least Polluted City

- Four year analysis of the **National Clean Air Programme** showed that **Chennai is the 3rd least polluted city amoung 131 cities.**

About NCAP:

- National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) is launched by **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** on January 2019.
- It is **country's first national policy on curbing air pollution.**
- **Goal:** To meet annual average ambient air quality standards.
- **Target 2024:** To **reduce** the **concentration of course and fine particulate matter** in the atmosphere by at least 20% to 30% with 2017 as the base year for comparison
- **Method**: Through **city specific air pollution abatement action plan**

First Transgender Village Assistant

- **Ms. Sruthi from Ettayapuram**, Tuticorin District had been selected for the post of **Village Assistant**
- She is the **state's first transgender** to get appointed for this post

All-India police shooting competition

- The **Tamilnadu organized the 23rd all-India police shooting competition** at the Tamil Nadu Police Academy, **Oonamanchery**, Chennai.
- **R. Sathi Shivanesh**, an Armed force constable of Pazhani won the first prize
- The **Assam Rifles** won the **Overall Championship**
- **Tamilnadu Police** and Central Reserve Police Force won the **second** and third prize respectively

Chennai Sangamam-Namma Oor Thiruvizha

- Chennai Sangamam, **a cultural extravaganza** is being held at Chennai city in 18 locations from January 13-17
- Series of cultural performances, literary events like seminars, poetry, dramas, and debates by eminent personalities will also take place.
- **Objective of the event**: To **spread awareness** among the public on **less known artforms**

Operation Black

- The 'Operation Black' was launched **to capture a wild elephant nicknamed Karuppan**
- It is also planned to **fix a radio collar** and **translocate it in Talavadi Hills**

About Karuppan:

- Karuppan is **wild tusker** found involved in **human-elephant conflict** and massive crop destruction at **Rangasamy Kovil and Joraikadu areas of Erode district**

Tamilnadu Government Awards

- Tamilnadu government announced various awards for tamil scholars, late leaders and to eminent personalities
- The awards are given as part of the **Thiruvalluvar Day celebrations**
- **Ambedkar award - SV Rajadurai**
- **Bharathiyar award - AR Venkatachalapathy**
- **KAP Viswanatham award - Mu Metha**
- **Devaneya Pavanar award - Dr R Mathivanan.**
- **Kamarajar award - EVKS Elangovan**
- **Periyar award - Kali Poongundran**
- **Thiru. Vi. Ka award - Namakkal P Velsami.**
- **Thiruvalluvar award - Eranian NK Ponnusamy.**
- **Bharathidasan award - Valajah Vallavan**
- **Anna award - SNM Ubayadullah**

Vallalar biodiverse shelter

- The State government launched "Vallalar biodiverse shelter **(Vallalar Palluyir Kaapagam)"** scheme for the **protection of stray and deserted animals.**
- The scheme is launched **to commemorate the 200th birth anniversary of Vallalar.**

Features:

- **Financial assistance** for providing food and medicine to stray, deserted and injured animals

- For undertaking **animal birth control/rabies vaccine programmes** for stray dogs

- To provide **emergency medical care** for sick animals and **procurement of ambulances for animals**

Chennai's First International Book Fair

- It is organised by the Directorate of Public Libraries, Tamil Nadu Text Book and Educational Services Corporation and Booksellers and Publishers Association of South India (BAPASI).

- **Objective:** It aims for **knowledge transfer** and to **share Tamil literature with other languages** across the world

Global translation grant

- The Tamil Nadu government unveiled its global translation grant programme, as a part of the fair.

- A **non-Tamil publisher** from any country or Indian state, can **apply for funding to translate a work** of fiction or nonfiction **from Tamil**

Awards for Tamilnadu

- **Best performing State** - For implementing schemes during the **"Workshop on school health and wellness ambassador programme"** conducted by the Union Health Ministry on January 16 and 17 in New Delhi.

- **Best Converging Mechanisms Award** - The National Health Mission (NHM).

- Best Menstrual Hygiene Campaign Award.

Note:

- TamilNadu is implementing **the Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) programme and School Health and Wellness Ambassador Programme** in convergence with **the School Education Department through the DPH**

About Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK).

- Launched in February **2013 under National Rural Health Mission** initiated by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

- It is technically called as **Child Health Screening and Early Intervention Services.**

- **Objective: Early detection and management of the 4Ds** prevalent in children

- The 4Ds are

  - Defects at Birth

  - Diseases in Children

  - Deficiency conditions

  - Developmental Delays, including Disabilities

About School Health and Wellness Ambassador Programme

- It is launched in **February 2020** as a part of the Health and Wellness component of the **Ayushman Bharat Programme.**

Features:

- **Two teachers** in every school, designated as **"Health and Wellness Ambassadors"**

- They shall be trained to transact with school children, health promotion and disease prevention information in the form of joyful interactive activities for one hour every week.

Vazhuvoorar Dance and Music Festival

- 43rd Vazhuvoorar Dance and Music Festival at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chennai

- Chief Minister handed over the **Vazhuvoorar Award** to noted **violinist A. Kanyakumari**

About Vazhuvoorar

- **Vazhuvoor Ramaiah Pillai** (1910–1991) was an Indian Bharatanatyam dance teacher and choreographer.

- He **used dance** as a form to participate in **India's freedom struggle.**

Ancient port city of Poompuhar traced under sea

- Researchers of **Bharathidasan University's Department of Remote Sensing** claimed to have **found the traces of an ancient port city Poompuhar**, buried under the sea

- It is at the depth of 50 - 100 metres, about 30 - 40 km off the coast of present day Poompuhar in Mayiladuthurai district

Observations:

- The city Poompuhar was spread over 250 Sq. Km complete with a **huge harbour,**

a lighthouse, ship and dockyards, and settlements

▪ The port city is widely believed to be, and might be more than **15,000 years old**

Note:

▪ The research is **funded by Department of Science and Technology** to digitally reconstruct the history of Poompuhar

▪ These findings were based on **satellite, General Bathymetry Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO) and Multibeam Eco Sounder (MBES) data.**

▪ The MBES data were collected by the **National Institute of Ocean Technology, Chennai**

About Poompuhar:

▪ **Puhar** is a town in the **Mayiladuthurai district, Tamil Nadu.**

▪ It was once a flourishing **ancient port city** known as **Kaveri Poompattinam**

▪ It is **described in Sangam literature** like Silappadikaram, Manimekalai, Pattinapalai and Akananuru as the **capital of the Early Chola kings**

'Kaval Karangal' wins Skoch Gold award

▪ The **Greater Chennai Police** has received the **Skoch Gold award** for the successful implementation of 'Kaval Karangal' programme

▪ They received the award for **rescuing abandoned people** and **performing last rites to the unclaimed bodies** through an NGO in the city

About "Kaval Karangal"

▪ Launched in **April 2021 by Chennai City Police**

▪ Theme: **"Respect Human"** and **"Serve the Humanity"**

▪ **Mission**: To **reach out to the abandoned/ uncared citizens** who are in need of care and protection

▪ This initiative won the **Chief Minister's Best Practising Award 2022**

About Skoch Gold award

▪ It was Instituted in **2003**

▪ SKOCH Award **salutes people, projects and**

institutions that go the extra mile to make India a better nation

▪ The SKOCH Award covers the **best of efforts in digital, financial and social inclusion**

Turtle conservation and rehabilitation centre near Chennai

▪ The State government issued orders to set up a turtle conservation and rehabilitation centre in Chennai

▪ This centre will have State-of-the-art facilities to **promote conservation, research, data collection and help create awareness about saving turtles**

▪ The government will set up a **rescue facility to treat injured turtles** and an **intelligence network** to collect information with the help of Tamil Nadu Forests and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau **to curb poaching**

Tamilnadu Ranks 3rd in MGNREGA

▪ **Tiruvannamalai district** of **Tamilnadu ranks 3rd in generating man days** and **providing 100 days of work to rural households** under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)

▪ **Gangam district in Odisha** holds the top position followed by **Barmera district in Rajasthan**

About MGNREGA

▪ Launched in **2005** by **Ministry of Rural Development**

▪ **Aim:** To **improve the purchasing power of the rural people**, primarily semi or unskilled work to people living below poverty line in rural India.

▪ **Objective**: To **guarantee 100 days of employment** in every financial year to adult members of any rural household

Tamil Nadu Emerging Sector Seed Fund

▪ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin launched the Tamil Nadu Emerging Sector Seed Fund (TNESSF)

▪ He also inaugurated the **Companies Compliances and Financials Monitoring System**

▪ Under TNESSF, E-Sandhai, a business-to-

business digital platform for distribution of fruits and vegetables was given Rs.1 crore

About TNESSF

- It is a **SEBI registered Category I (Venture Capital) Alternate Investment Fund**
- **Objective:** To **invest in start-ups** and undertakings in the **sunrise/ emerging sectors**

TN sanctioned ₹7.5 crore in equity investments to five SC/ST start-ups

- The Tamil Nadu government has sanctioned ₹7.5 crore under The Tamil Nadu SC/ST Start-up Fund
- It is provided to five start-ups that were founded and managed by entrepreneurs of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes

About The Tamil Nadu SC/ST Start-up Fund

- It is an **equity investment and debt fund**
- The government earmarked ₹30 crore for this fund through StartupTN in the 2022-23 Budget

About TANDIM/StartupTN

- Tamil Nadu Government's **Tamil Nadu Start-ups and Innovation Policy 2018-2023** is being branded as StartupTN
- **Vision:** To make **Tamil Nadu a Global Innovation Hub** and the most preferred destination for Startups by 2023
- **Aim:** To provide an enabling, innovative ecosystem in Tamil Nadu by **nurturing and supporting start-ups**