

May - 01

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Rare sea slug *Discodorid cebuensis* has been recorded for the first time in India at Haji Ali, Mumbai.
 - Sea slugs are soft-bodied, shell-less marine gastropods found in reefs and act as indicators of healthy marine ecosystems.
- ❖ China unveiled the Atlas drone swarm system of the People's Liberation Army, an AI-based platform that can launch and control up to 96 drones for surveillance and attack.
- ❖ A new “fanged frog” species named *Limnonectes motijheel* has been discovered in Namdapha Tiger Reserve in Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh.
- ❖ Himadri Speciality Chemicals launched India’s first anode material plant for lithium-ion batteries in Mahistikry, Hooghly, West Bengal.
- ❖ Colombia and the Netherlands will host the first conference on transitioning away from fossil fuels in Santa Marta, Colombia.
- ❖ World Veterinary Day is observed every year on April 25 to highlight the role of veterinarians in food safety, public health, and animal health.
 - The theme for the year 2026 is “Veterinarians: Guardians of Food and Health”.
- ❖ International Jazz Day is observed every year on April 30 to promote peace, cultural dialogue and unity through jazz music.

TAMIL NADU NEWS

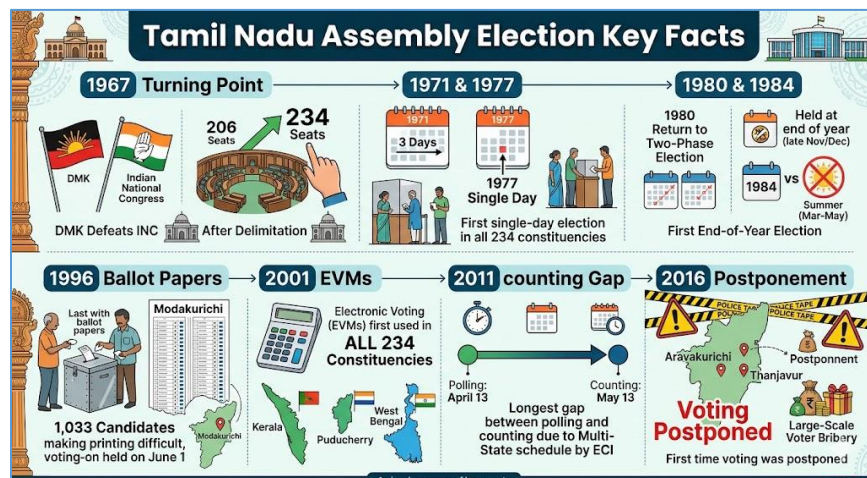
Madras High Court on Maternity Leave

- ❖ The Madras High Court said the Tamil Nadu government cannot limit maternity leave to 12 weeks for the third pregnancy.
- ❖ The court rejected a Government Order (G.O.) issued on March 13, 2026, restricting leave to 3 months.
- ❖ It stated that women employees are entitled to 365 days leave even for a third pregnancy.
- ❖ The court said pain and care are the same in all pregnancies, so no discrimination is allowed.
- ❖ The decision is based on Supreme Court rulings on maternity leave, which allow leave for the third pregnancy.

- ❖ The order used Article 162 (power of the State government under the Constitution of India), but the court said it cannot override maternity rights.



Tamil Nadu Assembly Election Key Facts



- ❖ Tamil Nadu election history shows important changes in the voting system and schedule over time.
- ❖ The 1967 election was a major turning point as Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam defeated the Indian National Congress, and seats increased from 206 to 234 after delimitation.
- ❖ The 1971 election was held over three days, but in 1977 all 234 constituencies voted on a single day for the first time.

- ❖ Despite this, the State returned to a two-phase election in 1980, and the 1984 election was the first to be held at the end of the year instead of in the summer.
- ❖ The 1996 election was the last with ballot papers; in Modakurichi, voting was held on June 1 due to 1,033 candidates making printing difficult.
- ❖ Electronic Voting Machines were first used in all 234 constituencies in 2001, also in Kerala, Puducherry, and West Bengal.
- ❖ The 2011 election had the longest gap between polling (April 13) and counting (May 13) due to a multi-state schedule by the Election Commission of India.
- ❖ In 2016, voting in Aravakurichi and Thanjavur was postponed for the first time due to large-scale voter bribery.

Madras High Court on Dual Candidacy

The Madras High Court has dismissed a petition seeking to make candidates bear the election expenses of the constituency they resign from if they win in two constituencies.

The court stated:

- The **law allows** candidates to contest in two constituencies.
- A similar petition opposing this practice has already been **dismissed by the Supreme Court.**

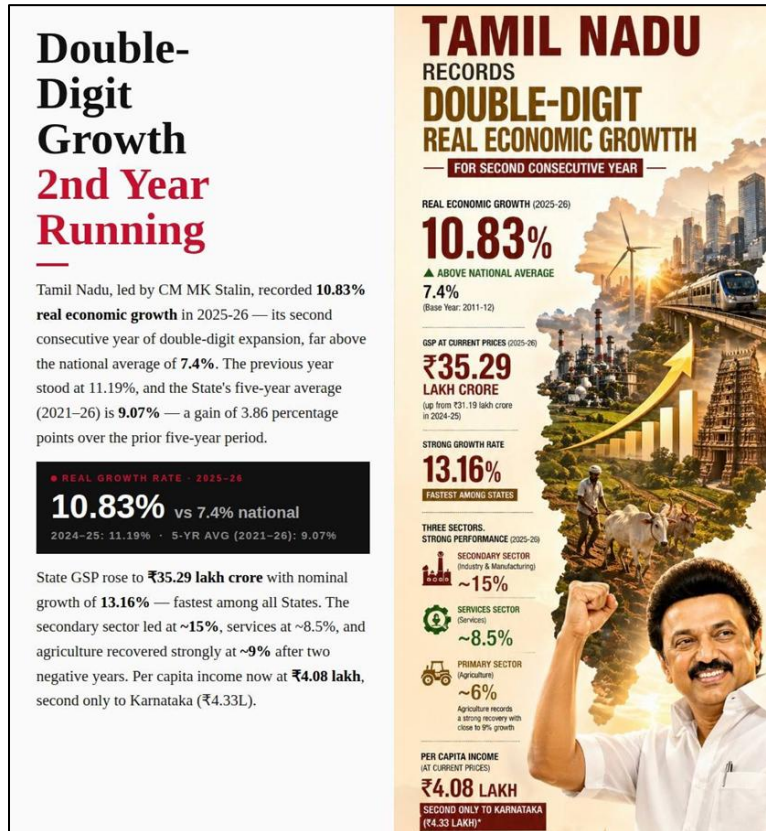
Therefore, the **petition was rejected.**



- ❖ The Madras High Court said the law still allows candidates to contest from two constituencies at the same time.
- ❖ The Election Commission of India in 2004 proposed that candidates should not be allowed to contest from more than one constituency.
- ❖ It also suggested that if dual contest is allowed, candidates must bear the cost of by-elections if they vacate one seat after winning both.
- ❖ The Commission recommended a fixed deposit of ₹5 lakh for the State Assembly and ₹10 lakh for the Lok Sabha to cover by poll expenses.
- ❖ These electoral reform proposals made in 2004 have still not turned into law.

- ❖ The Supreme Court of India in 2023 upheld Section 33(7) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, which allows contesting from two constituencies.

Tamil Nadu Economic Growth Record



- ❖ Tamil Nadu recorded strong growth with 10.83% GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product) in 2025-26 after 11.19% in 2024-25.
- ❖ This is above the national average of 7.4%, showing two years of double-digit growth.
- ❖ The State is the second-largest economy and recorded average growth of 9.07% (2021-22 to 2025-25).
- ❖ This is higher than 5.21% (2016-17 to 2020-21) and 7.18% (pre-COVID), showing a strong recovery due to fiscal and industrial policies.
- ❖ Nominal GSDP increased from ₹31.19 lakh crore (2024-25) to ₹35.29 lakh crore (2025-26), with 13.16% growth, the highest among States.
- ❖ The secondary sector is the main driver with 15.02% growth, higher than the national 6.6%; manufacturing grew 14.22% and construction 15.02% (both ~7% nationally); the State contributes 13.35% to India's manufacturing GDP and has 40,000+ factories employing about 25 lakh workers (highest in India).

- ❖ The services sector contributes 53.54% of GVA (Gross Value Added) and grew 8.54% (below the national 9.1%); transport, storage and communication grew 13.35% and financial services 11.11%.
- ❖ The primary sector grew 5.92% (above the national 2.7%), supported by the agriculture growth of 8.91%.
- ❖ Per capita income (NSDP – Net State Domestic Product) increased from ₹2.096 lakh (2020-21) to ₹4.08 lakh (2025-26), second highest after Karnataka; the all-India average is ₹2.196 lakh.
- ❖ FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) inflows rose from \$2,169 million (2022-23) to \$3,681 million (2024-25).
- ❖ TN ranked 2nd in Export Preparedness Index by NITI Aayog with a score of 64.41 after Maharashtra.
- ❖ Fiscal deficit reduced from 4.91% of GSDP (2020-21) to 3% (2026-27 BE – Budget Estimate); revenue deficit reduced from 3.49% to 1.2%; debt-GSDP remains around 26%, showing fiscal discipline despite limited devolution after the Finance Commission.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement

**INDIA
NEW ZEALAND
FTA**

**EXPANDING MARKETS
AND OPPORTUNITIES**

- Zero duty on 100% of goods exports**
upon entry into force
- Fast track mechanism**
for inputs for our exports under our Foreign trade Policy
- Tariff elimination across all**
tariff lines

- ❖ India and New Zealand signed a landmark Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

- ❖ New Zealand will give 100% duty-free access to Indian exports, helping sectors like MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises), textiles and leather.
- ❖ New Zealand will invest USD 20 billion in India over 15 years as FDI (Foreign Direct Investment).
- ❖ India opened 70% tariff lines but kept 30% excluded to protect sectors like dairy, sugar and farmers.
- ❖ The agreement includes Rules of Origin to stop misuse and allows visas for students and skilled workers.
- ❖ It also promotes AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy) and improves trade and services between both countries.
- ❖ Seven other free trade agreements in the past three and a half years with Mauritius, the UAE, Australia, the EFTA nations (European Free Trade Association - Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), the U.K., the EU, Oman, and now New Zealand have been signed by India.

ENVIRONMENT NEWS

Multilateralism in Climate Action



The global energy crisis dominated talks at the **Petersberger Climate Dialogue** in Berlin, where over 30 countries discussed climate priorities and made preparations for the UN climate conference.

- ❖ The 17th Petersberg Climate Dialogue reaffirmed commitment to multilateral climate action amid global tensions.
- ❖ It is an annual meeting started by Germany in 2010 and is the first major climate ministerial before COP31 under UNFCCC.

- ❖ Multilateralism treats climate as a global issue and supports cooperation through NDCs (Nationally Determined Contributions).
- ❖ Global agreements like UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), UNCBD (United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity) and UNCCD (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification) help in climate action.
- ❖ It supports climate justice through CBDR (Common But Differentiated Responsibilities) and provides funds via GEF (Global Environment Facility) and GCF (Green Climate Fund).
- ❖ Challenges include slow decisions, a lack of \$100 billion in funding by developed countries, and rising geopolitical conflicts.

Soil-Eating Behaviour in Gibraltar Macaques



Monkeys in Gibraltar are **eating soil** to **help digest junk food** given by tourists. Experts say the food given are very **high in calories, sugar, salt, and dairy.**

- ❖ Scientists found Barbary macaques in Gibraltar eating soil (geophagy) to reduce the effects of junk food from tourists.
- ❖ It is the only wild primate found in Europe and the only macaque species living outside Asia.
- ❖ It is naturally found in the Atlas Mountains of Algeria and Morocco and introduced in Gibraltar.
- ❖ It lives in mountains, rocky areas and cedar forests and is active during the daytime.
- ❖ It is omnivorous, tailless (called Barbary ape) and shows group care of young ones.

