

February - 18

## TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Puducherry launched a campaign named “Zero Covid by Feb28”.
  - It aims to ensure that there are no COVID-19 cases by the end of February 2021 in the union territory.
- ❖ Meghna Pant has penned a new book “The Terrible, Horrible, Very Bad Good News”.
- ❖ The Prime Minister virtually laid the foundation stone of the Maharaja Suheldev Memorial in Bahraich, Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ The International Solar Alliance has announced Dr Ajay Mathur as its new Director-General.
- ❖ Justice Puligoru Venkata Sanjay Kumar has been sworn-in as the Chief Justice of Manipur High Court.
- ❖ Maharashtra government has signed an MoU with Flipkart to promote wooden toys, local artefacts, handicrafts.
- ❖ The former European Central Bank Chief Mario Draghi has been sworn in as the new Prime Minister of Italy.

## NATIONAL

### **Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship Programme (MGNF)**

- ❖ The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship recently rolled out this programme in all the districts India.
- ❖ This programme was earlier working across 69 districts.
- ❖ The Fellows under this Programme will acquire the academic expertise and technical competency.
- ❖ MGNF is a two-year fellowship programme.
- ❖ The fellows should be aged between 21 to 30 years to get enrolled.
- ❖ It has been designed under the SANKALP scheme.

### **Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav**

- ❖ The 11<sup>th</sup> Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav was inaugurated at West Bengal.
- ❖ It is a flagship programme of the Ministry of Culture.

- ❖ It is organised under the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Programme, since 2015.
- ❖ It aims to celebrate the idea of unity in diversity.

### **Commercial Jute seed distribution scheme**

- ❖ The Union Textile Minister Smriti Irani has launched the commercial Jute seed distribution scheme.
- ❖ It was launched in the backdrop of MoU signed between the Jute Corporation of India and the National Seeds Corporation.
- ❖ The MoU 2020 was for the commercial distribution of 1 thousand Metric Tonne certified jute seeds in the year 2021-22.
- ❖ The Golden Fibre Revolution in India is associated to the jute production.

### **e-Chhawani Portal**

- ❖ The Defence Minister of India Rajnath Singh has launched the e-Chhawani portal.
- ❖ Using this portal, the residents of Cantonment areas can now register their complaints with respect to the civic issues.
- ❖ The cantonment board is a civic administration body.
- ❖ It functions under the Ministry of Defence in India.
- ❖ The board is constituted of the elected members, ex-officio members and nominated members in accordance with the Cantonments Act-2006.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

### **New START nuclear disarmament treaty**

- ❖ The United States has extended the “New START” nuclear disarmament treaty with Russia for a period of five years.
- ❖ The new strategic arms reduction treaty was formally signed on April 8, 2010.
- ❖ After ratification, it entered into force on 5 February 2011.
- ❖ The New START treaty was set to expire on February 5, 2021.
- ❖ But both the parties have further extended it for five more years, till February 2026.

## ECONOMY

### 8-member expert panel

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India has constituted an eight-member expert committee on Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks (UCBs).
- ❖ It aims to examine issues and suggest a road map for strengthening the sector.
- ❖ The committee will be chaired by the former RBI Deputy Governor N. S. Vishwanathan.

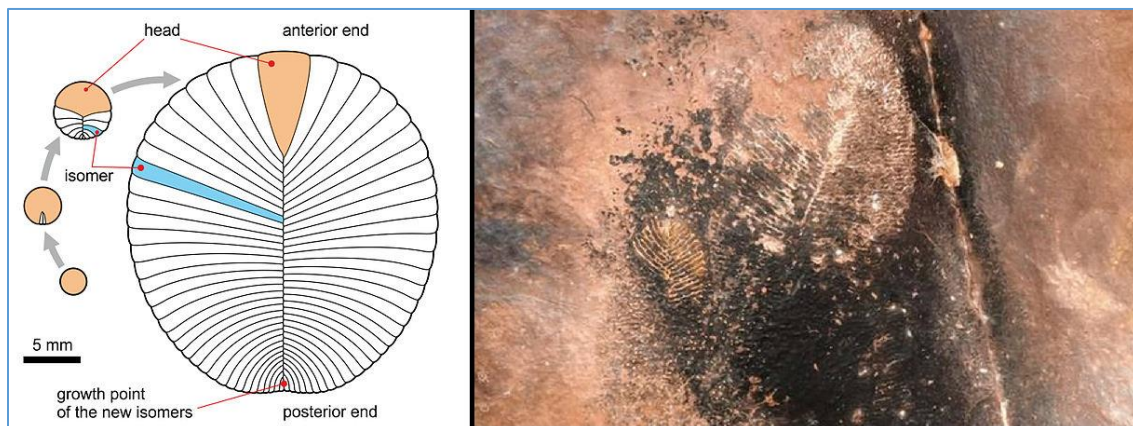
### Corporate India Risk Index

- ❖ ICICI Lombard has launched the 'Corporate India Risk Index'.
- ❖ This is intended to be a unified, standardised corporate risk index that spans industries and companies.
- ❖ This will help the companies to understand the level of risk that their business is facing.
- ❖ It will also assist in developing a successful risk aversion plan.

## ENVIRONMENT

### Fossils of 'Dickinsonia'

- ❖ Researchers have discovered three fossils of the earliest known living animal, the 550-million-year-old 'Dickinsonia'.
- ❖ It was discovered on the roof of the Bhimbetka Rock Shelters near Bhopal.
- ❖ One fossil is 17 inches long, the other two are much smaller.



## STATES

### Rajasthan Prison Rules – 1951

- ❖ The Rajasthan government has amended the Rajasthan Prison Rules, 1951 recently.
- ❖ The move was aimed to do away with the caste-based assignment of labour.
- ❖ Earlier, every person entering to the prison are asked about his caste.
- ❖ Once their caste was identified, the menial jobs such as cleaning toilets, sweeping the prisons etc are assigned to them.

### One Nation One Ration Card system reform

- ❖ Punjab has become the 13th State in the country to successfully undertake “One Nation One Ration Card system” reform.
- ❖ Thus, the State has become eligible to mobilise additional financial resources of Rs.1,516 crore through Open Market Borrowings.
- ❖ Permission for the same was issued by the Department of Expenditure of the Union.

Sl.No.	State	Amount (Rs in crore)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2,525
2.	Goa	223
3.	Gujarat	4,352
4.	Haryana	2,146
5.	Karnataka	4,509
6.	Kerala	2,261
7.	Madhya Pradesh	2,373
8.	Punjab	1,516
9.	Rajasthan	2,731
10.	Tamil Nadu	4,813
11.	Telangana	2,508
12.	Tripura	148
13.	Uttar Pradesh	4,851

### Mini Museums

- ❖ The Kerala government has launched an initiative to establish and promote mini museums in state.
- ❖ The new museum movement has been started by the Keralam Museum.
- ❖ It is an organisation that build and modernise the museums.

- ❖ The government has also decided that the Bastion Bungalow at Fort Kochi will function as the Ernakulam District Heritage Museum.

### **Mandu Festival**

- ❖ “Mandu Festival” began at the historic town of Mandu in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ The festival is to showcase each and every aspect of the ancient Mandu city.
- ❖ During this festival, the newly constructed Dino Adventure Park and Fossils Museum in Mandu were inaugurated.



## **PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS**

### **Sanctuary Lifetime Service Award - 2020**

- ❖ S. Theodore Baskaran, a naturalist and an activist, has won the Sanctuary Lifetime Service Award, 2020.
- ❖ The award was instituted by the Sanctuary Nature Foundation.
- ❖ He was chosen for the award in the light of his dedication to the wildlife conservation.
- ❖ Earlier, he was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award (Iyal Virudhu) for his writing on nature in Tamil.
- ❖ The award was given by the Canada Literary Garden in the year 2014 at Toronto.

