

**February - 08**

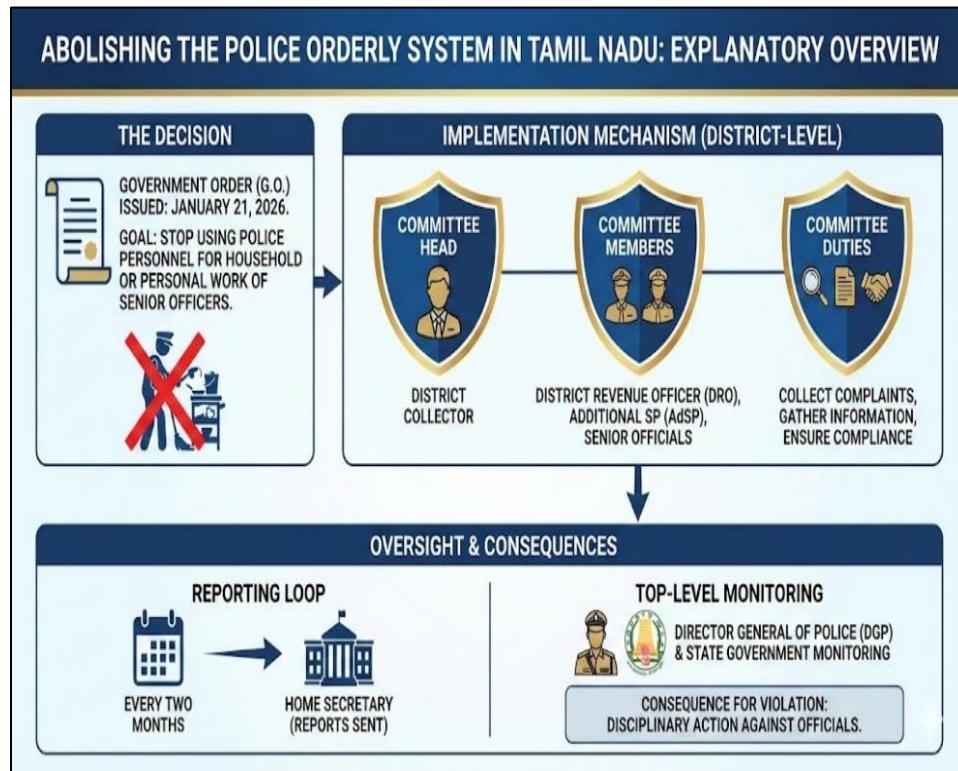
## **TNPSC BITS**

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu State Council for Science and Technology (TNSCST) won the first prize at the 38th Kerala State Science Congress.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister unveiled the statue of the late actor 'Kalaivanar' N.S. Krishnan in Chennai.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister inaugurated the State's first glow garden in Mamallapuram.
- ❖ The 13th India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Military Exercise KHANJAR-XIII is scheduled in Misamari, Assam.
- ❖ The Indian Air Force (IAF) will conduct its largest day-and-night air power exercise, Vayu Shakti-2026, in Rajasthan.
- ❖ The Union Ministry for Railways announced the completion of second Mountain Tunnel MT-6 in Palghar, Maharashtra, for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR) project.
- ❖ Indian teacher Rouble Nagi has won the Global Teacher Prize 2026, a one-million-dollar award, at the World Government Summit in Dubai.
- ❖ Soraya Aghaei Hajiagha, an Iranian badminton player, was elected as the first female member from Iran to the International Olympic Committee (IOC).
- ❖ Gyalyum Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck, Queen Mother of Bhutan, received the 22nd Upendra Nath Brahma 'Soldier of Humanity' Award 2025.
- ❖ The 25th edition of Bharat Rang Mahotsav, the world's largest international theatre festival, will be held in Rohtak, Haryana.
- ❖ Volcán de Fuego (Volcano of Fire), one of the most active volcanoes in Central America, erupted recently in Guatemala.
- ❖ India's first dedicated Glass Museum is being developed in Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh, known as the "Glass City of India".
- ❖ Tripura Gramin Bank (TGB) launched India's first Regional Rural Bank (RRB) co-branded RuPay credit card to expand digital banking services and financial inclusion in rural and semi-urban areas.
- ❖ Walmart became the first retailer in the world to reach a market capitalisation of \$1 trillion in February 2026.

- ❖ NTPC Green Energy Limited (NGEL) is going to develop India's first large-scale green urea production ecosystem at the Pudimadaka Green Hydrogen Hub near Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

## TAMIL NADU NEWS

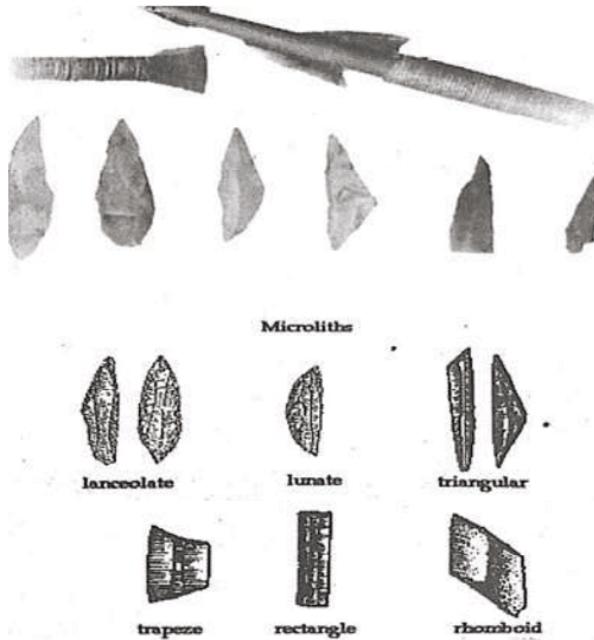
### Abolition of the Police Orderly System



- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government informed the Madras High Court that it issued a Government Order (G.O.) on January 21, 2026, to abolish the police orderly system.
- ❖ District-level committees headed by the District Collector have been formed in every district to monitor the abolition of the practice.
- ❖ The committees include the District Revenue Officer (DRO), Additional Superintendent of Police (AdSP), and other senior officials.
- ❖ These committees will collect complaints, gather information, and ensure police personnel are not used for household or personal work of senior officers.
- ❖ Reports on implementation must be sent to the Home Secretary every two months.

- ❖ The Director General of Police (DGP) and the State government will monitor compliance, and disciplinary action may be taken against officials who violate the order.

### Palaeolithic Sites in Tamil Nadu



- ❖ Over 500 stone age tools have been discovered in Tiruchi, Pudukottai, and Namakkal districts, Tamil Nadu, suggesting Lower and Middle Palaeolithic habitation.
- ❖ Tools found include hand axes, cleavers, choppers, flakes, and multi-directional discoidal cores, mainly made of quartz.
- ❖ Sites were identified in Kurumbappati, Kallikudi, Valkaradu, Veeramalai, Nadukattupatti, Mullipatti, Malampatti, Sarugumalai, Sitharmalai, and Thalaimalai.
- ❖ Microlithic tools indicate a later prehistoric phase at these sites.

## NATIONAL NEWS

### Motion of Thanks 2026

- ❖ The Lok Sabha had passed the Motion of Thanks by a voice vote, without Prime Minister's customary reply.
- ❖ After repeated disruptions from the morning, the Speaker took up the Motion of Thanks and put the amendments moved by the Opposition to vote.

- ❖ They were rejected.
- ❖ Mr. Birla then read out the Motion of Thanks to the President for her address to both Houses of Parliament on January 28
- ❖ It was passed by a voice vote, even as the Opposition sloganeering continued.
- ❖ The Prime Minister was not present in the House of People when the Motion was put to vote.
- ❖ Home Minister Amit Shah and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh were also not present.
- ❖ The last time that the Motion of Thanks to the President's address was passed without the PM's reply was in June 2004
- ❖ The then-Prime Minister Manmohan Singh could not deliver his reply to the debate in the Lok Sabha.
- ❖ The Rajya Sabha adopted a Motion to thank President Droupadi Murmu for her address to the Joint Session of Parliament.
- ❖ Here the PM's speech lasted 97 minutes.
- ❖ The amendments moved by Opposition MPs were defeated in a voice vote in their absence.



### SC on Ad Hoc DGP

- ❖ The Supreme Court observed that States were avoiding appointment of regular Director-Generals of Police (DGPs) with a fixed tenure of two years.

- ❖ They are opting instead for “acting” police chiefs of their choice in violation of a 20-year-old top court judgment.
- ❖ The court, in a 2006 judgment in the Prakash Singh case, had made it clear that the office of DGP should be divorced from political or other external pressures and cautioned governments against mixing politics and law enforcement.
- ❖ It had invoked its extraordinary powers under Article 142 to direct that DGPs must be selected by State governments from among the three senior-most and meritorious officers empanelled by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).
- ❖ The court had thrown out the “concept” of acting DGPs.
- ❖ It had held that State police chiefs should have a minimum fixed tenure of two years.
- ❖ The State concerned shall send a proposal to the UPSC three months ahead of the retirement of the incumbent DGP.
- ❖ The UPSC would prepare a panel of suitable officers.
- ❖ The State would appoint one of the empanelled officers as DGP “immediately”.
- ❖ The Bench was hearing the case of Telangana, where the UPSC said the last regular DGP retired about nine years ago, in November 2017.
- ❖ The State had not forwarded any proposals to initiate the appointment of a regular DGP.
- ❖ Instead, it was choosing to carry on with ‘acting’ DGPs at the helm of its police force.

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Selection of top cop</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">Supreme Court has issued seven directives to be followed by States when appointing the Director General of Police (DGP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Proposals should be sent to the UPSC, three months before incumbent's retirement</li> <li>▪ UPSC to prepare a panel of names as per Prakash Singh judgment. It should try and choose within the zone of consideration who have got two years of service</li> <li>▪ States shall appoint</li> </ul>	<p style="margin: 0;">one of the panel's choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ States shall not appoint DGP on an 'acting basis'</li> <li>▪ The selected person can continue despite his date of superannuation, but the extension should</li> </ul>	 <p style="margin: 0;">be reasonable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appointing persons on their retirement day is not in conformity with the Prakash Singh verdict</li> <li>▪ State's and Centre's rules running counter to the SC directions will remain in abeyance</li> </ul>
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### Constitutional recognition - Denotified tribes

- ❖ Denotified tribes, nomadic tribes, semi-nomadic tribes seek ‘separate column’ in 2027 caste census.

- ❖ They are claiming they have been politically misclassified among SC, ST, OBC groups.
- ❖ They want sub-classification to highlight backwardness within grouping.
- ❖ Their demand is for constitutional recognition of the Denotified Tribes in a Schedule, on par with the existing classifications of Scheduled Castes and Tribes (SCs/STs) and other backward classes (OBCs).
- ❖ In February 2027, India will conduct a caste enumeration for the first time since 1931.
- ❖ Five years after that 1931 Census, the origins of the Scheduled Castes list came into being in the form of the Government of India (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1936.
- ❖ In 1871, a colonial law had classified entire communities, particularly nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes, as “criminals”.
- ❖ After the law was repealed in 1952, these groups became known as “Denotified” tribes.

## Count the uncounted

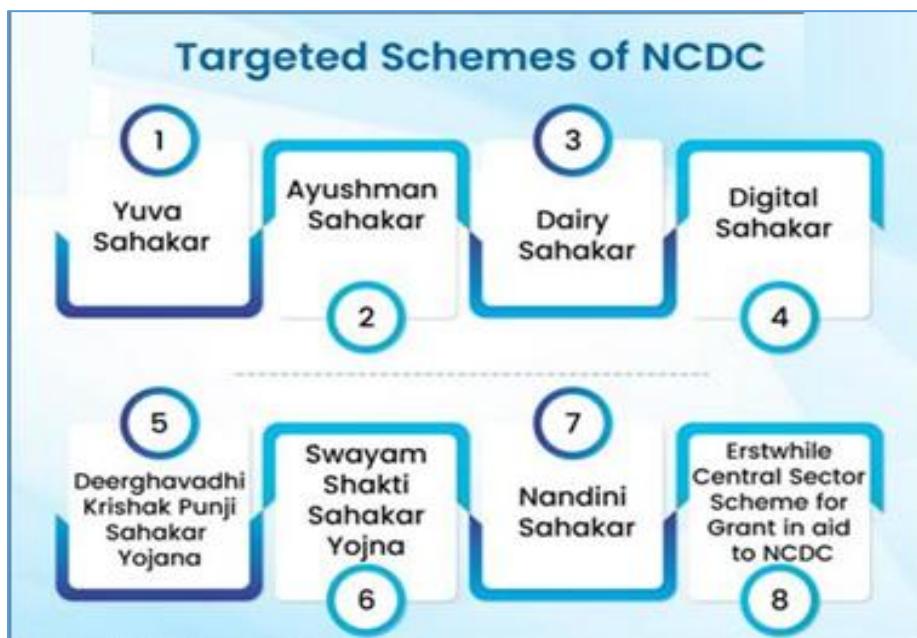
Denotified tribes seek ‘separate column’ and formal identity after decades of misclassification

Classification & numbers	Key demands
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ They were labelled ‘criminal tribes’ under the Criminal Tribes Act, 1871</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The previous National Commission identified nearly 1,200 communities</li> <li>■ Nearly 267 communities remain outside the SC, ST, and OBC lists</li> <li>■ Estimates suggest up to 7 crore people in Uttar Pradesh alone</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Act was repealed in 1952, after which these communities were denotified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Separate Census column for denotified tribes</li> <li>■ Dedicated Constitutional Schedule</li> <li>■ Sub-classification to reflect graded backwardness within communities</li> </ul>

- ❖ The Social Justice Ministry has now recommended to the Office of the Registrar General of India that these Denotified, nomadic, and semi-nomadic tribes be included in the upcoming Census.
- ❖ The Criminal Tribes Act was first enacted in 1871 and then amended in 1924, before being officially repealed on August 31, 1952.
- ❖ The 1871 Act said it was for the “registration, surveillance and control of certain criminal tribes and eunuchs”.

- ❖ It was describing “criminal tribes” as “tribe, gang, or class of persons” that are “addicted” to committing non-bailable offences.
- ❖ After the Act was repealed in 1952, the communities notified as “criminal” under the law had become “denotified”.
- ❖ Thus, they are coming to be known as the denotified, nomadic, and semi-nomadic tribes (DNTs).
- ❖ The last National Commission for DNTs, headed by Bhiku Ramji Idate, identified 1,200 such tribes.
- ❖ Most of them have been assimilated in the SC, ST, or OBC classifications over the last seven decades.
- ❖ In its 2017 report, however, the Idate Commission, also listed about 267 DNT communities that have not been classified as such.
- ❖ The scheme SEED is aimed for the welfare of these communities.

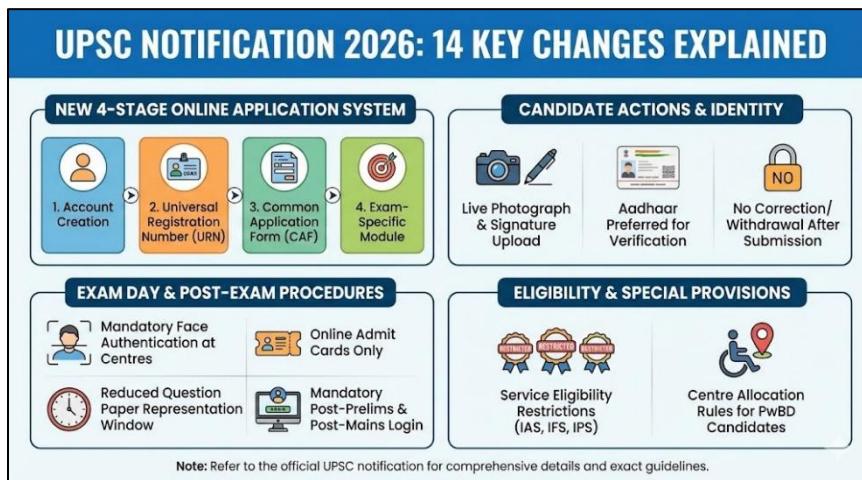
### Yuva Sahakar and Swayamshakti Sahakar Schemes



- ❖ The National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) implements the Yuva Sahakar Scheme and Swayamshakti Sahakar Scheme.
- ❖ The Yuva Sahakar Scheme encourages newly formed cooperative societies with innovative ideas.
- ❖ Financial assistance under the Yuva Sahakar Scheme for 2024-25 was ₹165.91 lakh for 11,010 beneficiaries.

- ❖ Financial assistance under the Swayamshakti Sahakar Scheme for 2024-25 was ₹1,754.60 crore for 3,15,211 beneficiaries.

### Key Changes in CSE 2026 - UPSC



- ❖ The Union Public Service Commission's (UPSC) CSE notification 2026 introduces 14 major changes in the Civil Services Examination.
- ❖ UPSC has introduced a four-stage online application system, including account creation, Universal Registration Number (URN), Common Application Form (CAF), and an exam-specific module.
- ❖ Candidates must upload a live photograph and signature, Aadhaar verification, and no correction or withdrawal is allowed after submission.
- ❖ UPSC has also introduced mandatory face authentication at exam centres, online admit cards, and restrictions on service eligibility for IAS, IFS, and IPS candidates.
- ❖ Other changes include a reduced question paper representation window, centre allocation rules for PwBD candidates, and mandatory post-Prelims and post-Mains login.

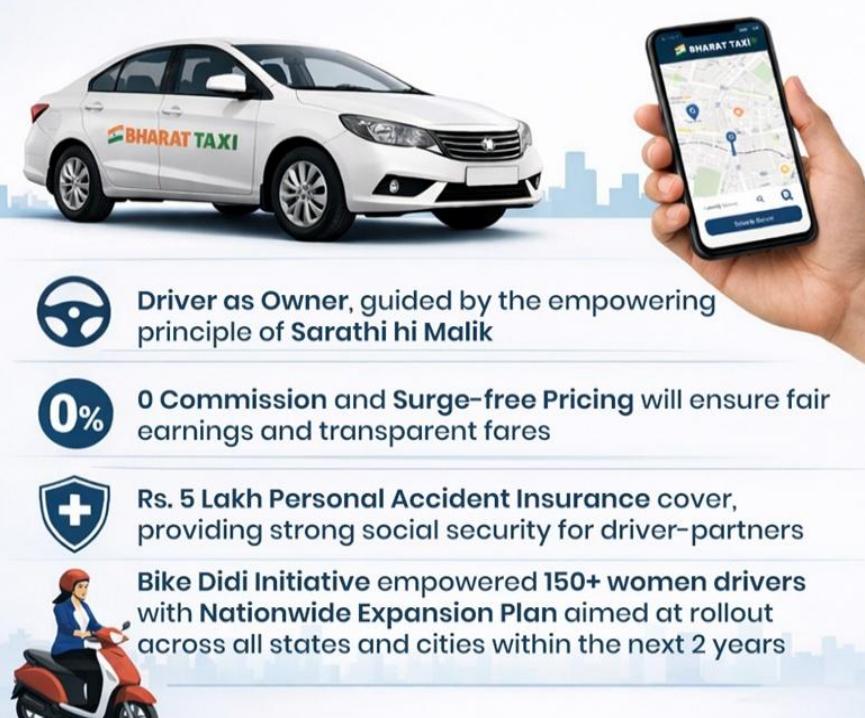
### Bharat Taxi Cooperative Cab Service

- ❖ Union Home and Cooperation Minister launched Bharat Taxi, India's first cooperative-based ride-hailing platform.
- ❖ It was registered under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002, and established on 6 June 2025.
- ❖ The platform places drivers, called sarathis (charioteers), at the centre of ownership and operations, removing dependence on exploitative aggregator models.

- ❖ Bharat Taxi operates on zero commission and surge-free pricing, distributing profits directly to drivers.
- ❖ The platform aims to expand across India within two years.

## Launching the Journey of Prosperity through Cooperation

### BHARAT TAXI



**Driver as Owner**, guided by the empowering principle of **Sarathi hi Malik**

**0%** Commission and Surge-free Pricing will ensure fair earnings and transparent fares

**Rs. 5 Lakh Personal Accident Insurance cover**, providing strong social security for driver-partners

**Bike Didi Initiative** empowered 150+ women drivers with **Nationwide Expansion Plan** aimed at rollout across all states and cities within the next 2 years

## PLASTINDIA 2026

- ❖ PLASTINDIA 2026, one of the world's largest plastics exhibitions, is held in New Delhi.
- ❖ It aims to strengthen India's position as a global hub for plastics innovation, sustainable manufacturing, and economic growth, while promoting new technologies and international collaboration.
- ❖ The theme of this edition is "Bharat Next", supporting the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat and Viksit Bharat.
- ❖ The exhibition focuses on four pillars: Men, Material, Machine, and Markets, along with five strategic elements: Trade, Technology, Talent, Tradition, and Tourism.

- ❖ For the first time, PLASTINDIA 2026 is being organised as a Zero Waste exhibition, with all solid waste segregated, recycled, and reused.



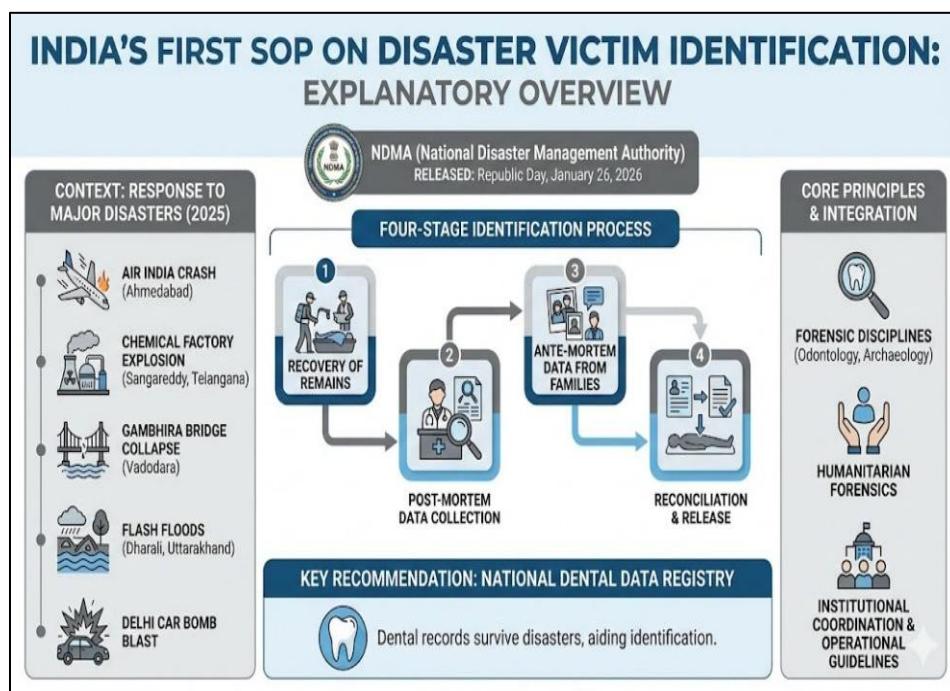
### SabhaSaar Initiative



- ❖ The SabhaSaar Initiative is a new AI-based tool launched by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.
- ❖ It aims to make Gram Sabha and Panchayat meetings easier to document by automatically converting audio and video recordings into text summaries.
- ❖ SabhaSaar works on AI and cloud technology under the India AI Mission and is available for all States and Union Territories.

- ❖ The tool helps generate structured minutes of meetings and ensures uniformity across the country.
- ❖ SabhaSaar is powered by Bhashini, the government's AI language platform, and supports major Indian languages like Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, Gujarati, and English.
- ❖ The initiative is significant because it streamlines documentation, helps administrative bodies, and empowers local communities by giving instant access to meeting insights.

## SOP on Disaster Victim Identification



- ❖ The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) released India's first-ever Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).
- ❖ It is titled as "Comprehensive Disaster Victim Identification and Management" for identifying victims in mass fatality incidents on Republic Day 2026.
- ❖ The SOP responds to major disasters in 2025, including the Air India crash (Ahmedabad), chemical factory explosion (Sangareddy, Telangana), Gambhira bridge collapse (Vadodara), flash floods (Dharali, Uttarakhand), and the Delhi car bomb blast.
- ❖ It prescribes a four-stage identification process: recovery of remains, post-mortem data collection, ante-mortem data from families, reconciliation and release.
- ❖ A National Dental Data Registry is recommended, as dental records survive disasters and help identify victims.

- ❖ The SOP integrates forensic disciplines like odontology and archaeology, emphasizes humanitarian forensics, and provides institutional coordination and operational guidelines to address gaps.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### End of START treaty



- ❖ On February 5, the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) officially expired.
- ❖ It was marking the end of the last remaining bilateral agreement constraining the nuclear arsenals of the U.S. and Russia.
- ❖ The New START treaty emerged from a period of diplomatic reset between Washington and Moscow in the late 2000s.
- ❖ Its predecessor, START I, was signed in 1991 and expired in December 2009.
- ❖ Negotiations for a successor began in earnest in April 2009 after a meeting between then U.S. President Barack Obama and his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev in London.
- ❖ In April 2010, the two leaders signed the treaty in Prague.

- ❖ And, after a contentious ratification process in the U.S. Senate and approval by the Russian Federal Assembly, entered into force on February 5, 2011.
- ❖ The treaty was originally set to expire in 2021.
- ❖ Just days before the deadline, the Biden administration and the Kremlin agreed to a one-time, five-year extension, moving the expiration date to February 5, 2026.
- ❖ It limited each side's nuclear arsenal to 1,550 deployed strategic warheads.
- ❖ And it was a reduction of nearly 30% from the previous limit set in 2002.
- ❖ Today, the legal constraints on the world's two largest nuclear arsenals have dissolved.
- ❖ For the first time since 1972, there are no legally binding limits on the number of strategic nuclear weapons the U.S. and Russia can deploy.

### FORGE Initiative

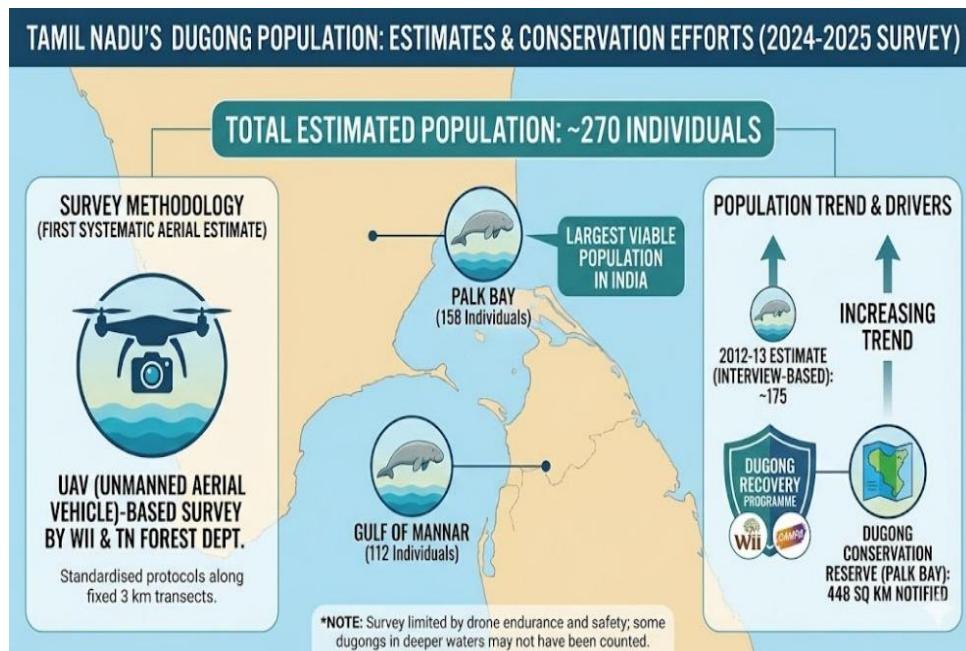


- ❖ India backed the FORGE (Forum on Resource, Geostrategic Engagement) initiative at the Critical Minerals Ministerial in Washington DC.
- ❖ FORGE is a successor to the US-led Mineral Security Partnership and focuses on securing critical minerals.
- ❖ Discussions aimed to de-risk global supply chains and reduce overreliance on China for rare earths and minerals like lithium, cobalt, and nickel.

- ❖ India highlighted initiatives, including the National Critical Minerals Mission and Rare Earth Corridors.

## ENVIRONMENT NEWS

### Population of Dugongs in Tamil Nadu



- ❖ The dugong population in Tamil Nadu has been estimated at 270 individuals.
- ❖ Palk Bay and the Gulf of Mannar now represent the largest viable dugong population in India.
- ❖ A survey conducted by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) in collaboration with the Tamil Nadu Forest Department.
- ❖ It found 158 dugongs in Palk Bay and 112 dugongs in the Gulf of Mannar.
- ❖ This increase is largely attributed to the Dugong Recovery Programme by WII, supported through the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA).
- ❖ The Dugong Conservation Reserve in Palk Bay, covering 448 square kilometres of core habitat, has also been notified.
- ❖ The survey was UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle)-based, following standardised protocols, and is the first systematic aerial population estimate in the region.
- ❖ Earlier estimates in 2012-2013, based on interviews, suggested about 175 dugongs.

- ❖ Surveys were conducted along fixed 3 km transects, limited by drone endurance, battery life, and coastal safety; some dugongs moving to deeper waters may not have been counted.

## PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

### Living Craft Treasure Award

- ❖ The Living Craft Treasure award was presented to senior artisans by the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister at the Mega Handicrafts Exhibition-cum-Conference in Chennai.
- ❖ The Living Craft Treasure Award honours traditional craft artisans for their lifetime contributions to handicrafts.
- ❖ This award was instituted in 2013-2014 by the Government of Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ It is given to artisans aged 65 years or above who have served their craft for many years.
- ❖ Each award includes a cash prize of ₹1,00,000, an 8-gram gold medal, a Thamirapattiram, and a certificate.
- ❖ Ten artisans are selected each year for this award by the state government.



### Poompuhar State Awards 2025-26

- ❖ The Poompuhar State Awards were presented to 10 artisans by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin in Chennai.

- ❖ The awards honour artisans for excellence in traditional crafts in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ Each award carries a cash prize of ₹50,000, a 4-gram gold medal, a Thamirapattiram, and a certificate.
- ❖ The 10 recipients for 2025-26 are K. Venkatesh, C. Sangeetha, A. Babu, K. Reeta, M. Shabana, S. Murugan, A. Raj, A. Gavvabeevi, T. Celine Mary, and M. Kumar.

