

February - 20

## TNPSC BITS

- ❖ The United States (US) successfully transported a micro nuclear reactor by air for the first time using a military cargo aircraft.
  - The Micro nuclear reactors are small, advanced nuclear systems that usually produce up to 10 megawatts of power.
- ❖ Magnus Carlsen won the 2026 Freestyle Chess World Championship, the first tournament officially recognised by FIDE (International Chess Federation), by defeating Fabiano Caruana in the final.
- ❖ Global Tourism Resilience Day is observed every year on 17 February to promote resilient and sustainable tourism development to handle crises and disruptions affecting the tourism sector.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is “Tourism Resilience in Action: From Crisis Response to Impactful Transformation”.

## TAMIL NADU NEWS

### Tamil Nadu Interim Agriculture Budget 2026-27 highlights



- ❖ The Interim Agriculture Budget 2026-27 of Tamil Nadu was presented in the State Assembly by the Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare M.R.K. Panneerselvam.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu has been presenting a separate agriculture budget since 2021-22, focusing on farmers' welfare and agricultural development.

### Budget Allocation



- ❖ The total allocation for the Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Department is ₹47,248.24 crore.
- ❖ The agriculture budget allocation increased from ₹34,220 crore in 2021–22 to ₹47,248 crore in 2026–27.
- ❖ The total budget for agriculture and allied sectors is ₹45,661.44 crore (Capital: ₹8,352.19 crore; Revenue: ₹37,309.25 crore).

### ***Growth and Performance***

- ❖ The average Gross State Value Added (GSVA) in agriculture had risen from 1.36% during 2012-13 to 2020-21 to 3.03% during 2021-22 to 2024-25.
- ❖ The GSVA at constant (2011-12) prices increased by about 9.97% to ₹59,11,708 lakh in 2024-25 from ₹53,75,639 lakh.
- ❖ The gross cropped area increased from 146.77 lakh acres (2019–20) to 151 lakh acres (2023–24).
- ❖ The double-cropped area increased from 29.74 lakh acres (2019–20) to 33.60 lakh acres (2023–24).
- ❖ Food grain production reached 346.38 lakh metric tonnes during 2021–24.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu ranks 1st in Ragi productivity, 2nd in Maize, Oilseeds, and Sugarcane productivity, and 3rd in Groundnut and Minor Millets productivity in India.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu stands first in area under tapioca and jasmine cultivation, first in the productivity of amla, cabbage, and radish, and second in the productivity of tapioca, jasmine, jackfruit, and guava at the national level.
- ❖ During 2024-25, the double-cropped area increased to 13.99 lakh hectares. This is an increase of about 2 lakh hectares compared to 2019-20.

### ***Farmer Support Measures***

- ❖ Since 2021–22, about 1.81 lakh free electricity connections have been provided to farmers for irrigation.
- ❖ Around 55,000 farmers received subsidized agricultural machinery, and 1,109 Custom Hiring Centres were established.

### ***Water Resources and Agroforestry***

- ❖ Over the last five years, 68,930 traditional waterbodies were renovated, 1 lakh irrigation canals were desilted, 29,800 check dams were constructed, and 31,325 groundwater recharge systems were created.
- ❖ A total of 3.24 crore saplings were distributed, and 2.24 lakh acres were brought under agroforestry.

### ***New Schemes and Missions***

- ❖ The government announced 1,000 Farmers Service Centres to provide agricultural inputs, expert guidance, and modern technologies.



- ❖ The Hill Farmers Development Scheme will support 63,000 hill farmers.
- ❖ A Village Outreach Campaign will provide technical advisories in 17,116 villages.
- ❖ The Millet Mission will promote millet cultivation through farmer groups and crop production packages.
- ❖ Natural Farming initiatives will promote eco-friendly farming, organic certification, and marketing support.
- ❖ Farmers are encouraged to cultivate alternative crops such as millets, pulses, and oilseeds that require less water.
- ❖ An amount of ₹250 crore was allocated for quality seed production and distribution.

### **Special Initiatives**

- ❖ The Nutrition Farming Mission will promote vegetables, fruits, pulses, and minor millets for nutritional security.
- ❖ The Integrated Coconut Development Scheme will support coconut cultivation, pest control, and value addition.
- ❖ The Micro Irrigation Scheme received ₹1,168 crore for drip and sprinkler irrigation systems.
- ❖ The timely opening of the Mettur dam had helped bring an additional 3.48 lakh hectares under irrigation in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ An amount of ₹50 crore was allocated to establish 100 value-addition units for agricultural produce.
- ❖ The Crop Insurance Scheme received ₹841 crore to cover 35 lakh acres against natural calamities.
- ❖ The government's commitment is to increase tree and forest cover to 33% in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The agroforestry was being promoted extensively under the Green Tamil Nadu Mission to expand green cover outside forests.
- ❖ A total of 3.24 crore saplings were produced and distributed over the last five years, and 2.24 lakh acres have been brought under agroforestry.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Rosewood Trees (Conservation) Act, 1994, has not been extended beyond February 13, 2025, to encourage the cultivation of rosewood trees.

### **Other Developments**

- ❖ An amount of ₹68 crore was allocated for watershed development projects in six districts.
- ❖ Climate-resilient agriculture initiatives include climate-smart villages and model demonstration farms.

- ❖ Training programmes will support the rural youth in operating agricultural machinery and drones.
- ❖ Support is also provided for Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development, Fisheries, Rural Development, and women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs).
- ❖ An amount of ₹8,186 crore was allocated for free electricity supply to farmers.

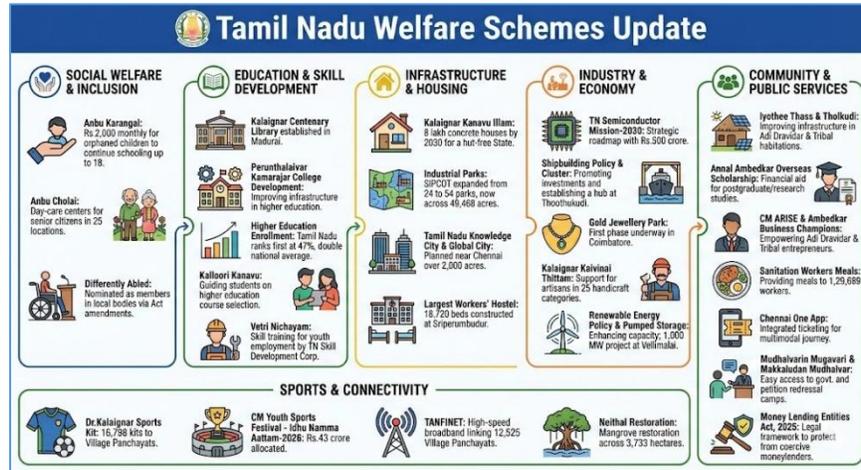
### **Tamil Nadu Climate Summit 4.0**



- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government announced new climate action initiatives at the Tamil Nadu Climate Summit 4.0 held in Chennai.
- ❖ The State government said the Tamil Nadu State Budget will integrate climate action measures across all departments.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu will prepare State-level determined contributions (SDCs) to reduce carbon emissions by 2030, similar to NDCs (Nationally Determined Contributions) under the Paris Agreement.
- ❖ Stalin laid the foundation for the International Dugong Conservation Centre in Thanjavur.
- ❖ About 5 lakh sandalwood saplings will be distributed to increase green cover in the State.
- ❖ The TN-SHORE (Tamil Nadu Sustainably Harnessing Ocean Resources and Blue Economy) scheme was launched, with ₹1.7 crore allocated to support 34 mangrove conservation committees.
- ❖ From this allocation, ₹5 lakh each was distributed to three mangrove forest protection committees from Killai, Cuddalore district.
- ❖ Further, under the Tamil Nadu Green Climate Fund, financial assistance was extended to Kannabiran Polymers Ltd (₹20 crores), Ooru Cabs (₹25 crores), and Esygo Power (₹25 crore) to promote environmentally sustainable industrial practices.

- ❖ A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between IIT Madras, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company for establishing a Centre for Circular Economy at IIT Madras.

## Tamil Nadu Welfare Schemes update



- ❖ 'Anbu Karangal' scheme provides monthly financial assistance of Rs.2,000 to protect children who have lost their parents, and to ensure that they continue their schooling up to the age of 18 without dropping out.
- ❖ To alleviate the difficulties faced by the elderly, day-care centers called 'Anbu Cholai' have been set up for senior citizens in 25 locations.
- ❖ Necessary amendments have been brought to the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994, and the Tamil Nadu Urban Local Bodies Act, 1998, to nominate differently abled persons as members in local bodies.
- ❖ The Kalaignar Centenary Library was established in the historic city of Madurai.
- ❖ The 'Perunthalaivar Kamarajar College Development Scheme' is being implemented to improve the infrastructure in arts and science, engineering and polytechnic colleges.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu ranks first in the country with a higher education enrollment rate of 47 per cent, nearly double the national average.
- ❖ The 'Kalloori Kanavu' scheme is being implemented to guide students who have completed their school education in selecting higher education courses aligned with their interests.
- ❖ The 'Vetri Nichayam' scheme is implemented by the Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation, to equip youth with skill training and prepare them for employment.



- ❖ 'Ungal Thoguthiyil Muthalamaichar' scheme has been launched to fulfill ten priority demands arising from the long-standing grievances of people.
- ❖ Under the 'Dr. Kalaignar Sports Kit Distribution Scheme', 16,798 sports kits have been distributed to 12,525 Village Panchayats.
- ❖ At the State level, a sum of Rs.43 crore has been allocated for conducting the 'Chief Minister's Youth Sports Festival - Idhu Namma Aattam-2026' competitions.
- ❖ With the objective of constructing 8 lakh concrete houses by 2030 and transforming Tamil Nadu into a hut-free State, the 'Kalaignar Kanavu Illam' scheme was launched.
- ❖ Until 2021, 24 SIPCOT industrial parks were functioning in 15 districts, covering an extent of 32,525 acres.
- ❖ After this Government assumed office, new industrial parks have been established in 12 additional districts, and currently 54 industrial parks are operational across 49,468 acres.
- ❖ The initiatives of establishing the 'Tamil Nadu Knowledge City' and a 'Global City' spread over 2,000 acres near Chennai have been undertaken.
- ❖ At Sriperumbudur, India's largest workers' hostel with 18,720 beds has been constructed.
- ❖ New TIDEL Parks are being established at Tiruchirappalli, Madurai, and Hosur.
- ❖ TIDEL Neo Mini IT Parks have been inaugurated at Villupuram, Thanjavur, Salem, Thoothukudi, Tiruppur, Vellore, and Karaikudi.
- ❖ Further, Mini IT Parks are being set up at Namakkal, Tiruvannamalai, Virudhunagar, Tirunelveli, Kanyakumari, Erode, Nagapattinam, Karur, and Pudukkottai.
- ❖ The 'Tamil Nadu Semiconductor Mission-2030' is a strategic five-year roadmap being implemented at an estimated cost of Rs.500 crore.
- ❖ The 'Tamil Nadu Shipbuilding Policy' aimed at promoting investments in shipbuilding and marine ancillary manufacturing, is set to be released shortly.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu is poised to emerge as a global hub for the shipbuilding industry.
- ❖ SIPCOT, in association with the V.O. Chidambaranar (VOC) Port Authority, is establishing a new shipbuilding cluster at Thoothukudi.
- ❖ The first phase of works for a Gold Jewellery Park in Coimbatore district is being undertaken.
- ❖ The 'Kalaignar Kaivinai Thittam' was launched with the objective of providing financial assistance, skill training, and comprehensive infrastructure support for the development of artisans engaged in 25 categories of handicrafts.



- ❖ To provide high-speed broadband connectivity by linking all 12,525 Village Panchayats in Tamil Nadu through optical fibre cable, works are being implemented by the Tamil Nadu FibreNet Corporation (TANFINET).
- ❖ Preliminary studies to establish a Pumped Storage Hydroelectric Project with a capacity of 1,000 MW in the Vellimalai area of Kanyakumari district at an investment of Rs.5,320 crore through Public-Private Partnership have been completed.
- ❖ A 'New Integrated Renewable Energy Policy' is set to be released soon to enhance renewable energy capacity in the State.
- ❖ The Government is undertaking mangrove restoration across 3,733 hectares under the 'Neithal Restoration Movement'.
- ❖ Under the 'Iyothee Thass Pandithar Habitation Development Scheme', infrastructure facilities in the Adi Dravidar and Tribal habitations is being improved.
- ❖ 'Tholkudi' scheme, is also being implemented at a cost of Rs.1,000 crore to enhance infrastructure facilities in tribal habitations.
- ❖ 'Annal Ambedkar Overseas Scholarship for Higher Education Scheme', was launched to reduce the financial burden on students pursuing postgraduate or research studies.
- ❖ The 'Chief Minister's Adi Dravidar and Tribal Socio-Economic Development Scheme' (CM ARISE) is being implemented with the objective of empowering persons belonging to the Adi Dravidars and Tribal communities as entrepreneurs.
- ❖ Subsidies of Rs.420 crore have been provided to 4,948 Adi Dravidar and Tribal entrepreneurs under the 'Annal Ambedkar Business Champions Scheme'.
- ❖ For the first time in India, a scheme to provide meals to 1,29,689 sanitation workers has been launched in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The Government has released a new 'Tourism Policy' to attract private sector investments and generate employment opportunities at the recently held Global Tourism Summit in Mamallapuram.
- ❖ The recently launched mobile app 'Chennai One' was India's first integrated ticketing application for multimodal journey planning.
- ❖ Government established the Mudhalvarin Mugavari Department immediately upon assuming office, enabling citizens to access Government administration with ease.
- ❖ Soon after assuming office, under the special scheme 'Makkaludan Mudhalvar', 4,835 camps were organized throughout the state, redressing over 23.50 lakh petition.

- ❖ Under a new initiative called 'Ungaludan Stalin', 10,000 camps have been conducted across both urban and rural areas across all districts.
- ❖ To protect innocent and economically vulnerable victims from harassment by moneylenders and moneylending institutions, a new legislation titled the Tamil Nadu Money Lending Entities (Prevention of Coercive Actions) Act, 2025 has been enacted and rules have been framed thereunder to provide an effective legal framework.

## NATIONAL NEWS

### AI Governance Framework 2026

- ❖ India released its first Artificial Intelligence (AI) governance framework ahead of the AI Impact Summit 2026.
- ❖ India adopted a principle-based AI governance model instead of introducing a separate AI law.
- ❖ The framework is based on seven guiding principles ("sutras"), including trust, accountability, transparency, safety, fairness, innovation, and sustainability.
- ❖ It proposes new institutions such as a national AI governance coordination group and an AI Safety Institute for testing standards and risk assessment.
- ❖ High-risk AI applications affecting safety, rights, or livelihoods will require human oversight and transparency reporting.



### Yuge Yugeen Bharat National Museum

- ❖ The first gallery of the Yuge Yugeen Bharat National Museum is expected to open by the end of 2026.
- ❖ It is being developed by the Ministry of Culture under the Central Vista Redevelopment Project.

- ❖ It will replace the existing National Museum and will be located in the North Block and South Block buildings in New Delhi.
- ❖ The museum will showcase 5,000 years of Indian civilisation and display artefacts such as Indus Valley objects, Gupta-period sculptures, and Chola bronzes.
- ❖ India and France are jointly developing the museum, using France's expertise in museum design and management.



### CBDC-Based Public Distribution System

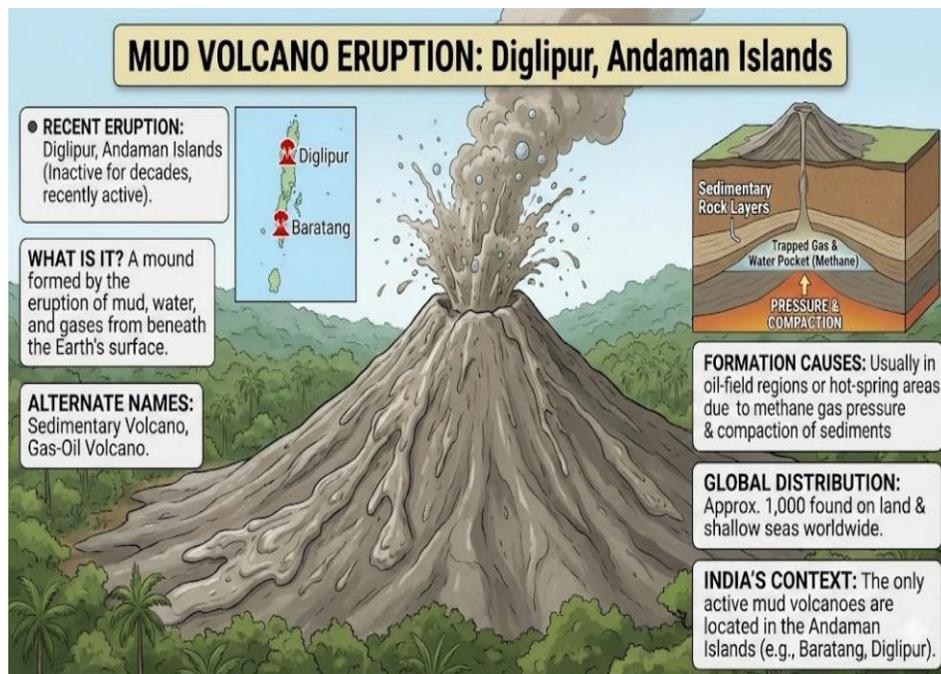


- ❖ Union Home Minister has launched India's first Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)-based Public Distribution System (PDS) in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

- ❖ The pilot has been launched by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution in collaboration with the RBI and the Government of Gujarat.
- ❖ Under this system, beneficiaries receive programmable digital rupee (₹) coupons in their digital wallets to purchase subsidised foodgrains from Fair Price Shops (FPS).
- ❖ The pilot has started in Ahmedabad, Anand, Valsad, and Surat districts of Gujarat and will be expanded to the Union Territories of Chandigarh, Puducherry, and Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu.
- ❖ The initiative integrates CBDC into PDS to enable secure, traceable, and real-time transactions.

## ENVIRONMENT NEWS

### Mud Volcano Eruption



- ❖ A mud volcano recently erupted in Diglipur in the Andaman Islands.
- ❖ A mud volcano is a mound of mud formed when mud, water, and gases erupt from beneath the Earth's surface.
- ❖ It is also called a sedimentary volcano or gas-oil volcano.
- ❖ Mud volcanoes usually form in oil-field regions or areas with hot-spring activity due to methane gas pressure and compaction of sediments.
- ❖ Around 1,000 mud volcanoes are found on land and shallow seas worldwide.

- ❖ In India, the only mud volcano is located at Baratang Island in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

## STATE NEWS

### Regional Connectivity in Northeast India

- ❖ The Indian Prime Minister inaugurated the Kumar Bhaskar Varma Setu and the Northeast's first Emergency Landing Facility (ELF) in Assam.
- ❖ Kumar Bhaskar Varma Setu is a 2.86-km-long, six-lane extradosed bridge built over the Brahmaputra River in Guwahati at a cost of about ₹3,030 crore.
- ❖ The bridge connects Guwahati and North Guwahati and is the first extradosed bridge in Northeast India.
- ❖ The Emergency Landing Facility (ELF) has been developed on the Moran Bypass in Dibrugarh district in coordination with the Indian Air Force.
- ❖ The 4.2-km-long highway stretch can be used for emergency landing of fighter and transport aircraft, strengthening connectivity and strategic preparedness in the Northeast.



**₹3,000 Crore Brahmaputra Bridge and  
Northeast's First Highway Runway  
Inaugurated in Assam**

### Urbanisation Policy Framework

- ❖ Kerala became the first State in India to approve a comprehensive Urban Policy.

- ❖ The State Cabinet approved the draft policy prepared by the Local Self-Government Department, which was announced in the 2023–24 State Budget.
- ❖ The Kerala Urban Policy Commission, formed in December 2023, submitted its report to the Chief Minister in March 2025.
- ❖ The policy will guide urban development in Kerala for the next 25 years, keeping in mind climate change and environmental concerns.
- ❖ According to the commission, about 80% of Kerala is expected to be urbanised by 2050.
- ❖ The policy is based on 10 pillars and promotes public, private and people’s partnership for future development.



## IMPORTANT DAYS

### International Childhood Cancer Day 2026 – February 15

- ❖ It aims to raise awareness about childhood cancer and promote early detection and equal access to treatment.
- ❖ The day was first recognised in 2002 by the International Confederation of Childhood Cancer Parent Organizations (ICCCPO).
- ❖ Over 400,000 children and adolescents are diagnosed with cancer globally each year.
- ❖ It supports the goal of the WHO to increase the childhood cancer survival rate to at least 60% by 2030.

- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is “Demonstrating Impact — From Challenge to Change.”

