

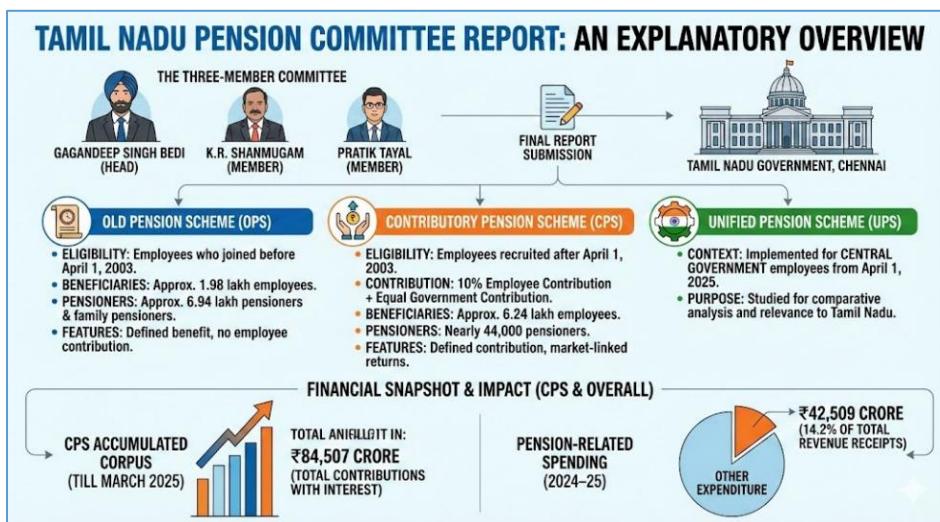
January - 02

## TNPSC BITS

- ❖ The DRDO successfully conducted the maiden flight test of the Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR-120) at the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur.
- ❖ Indian chess players Koneru Humpy and Arjun Erigaisi won bronze medals at the FIDE (Fédération Internationale des Échecs) World Rapid Chess Championships 2025 was held in Doha, Qatar.
- ❖ Divya Arul from Puducherry successfully summited Mount Elbrus (5,642 metres) in Russia, which is the highest peak in Europe.
- ❖ A rare Eastern Imperial Eagle (Aquila heliaca) was spotted in the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) during the winter migratory season.

## TAMIL NADU NEWS

### Tamil Nadu Pension Committee Report



- ❖ A three-member Pension Committee submitted its final report to the Tamil Nadu government in Chennai.
- ❖ The committee was headed by Gagandeep Singh Bedi, and the other members were K.R. Shanmugam and Pratik Tayal.
- ❖ The committee studied the Old Pension Scheme (OPS), the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS), and the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) implemented for Central government employees from April 1, 2025.

- ❖ OPS covers employees who joined service before April 1, 2003, benefiting about 1.98 lakh employees and 6.94 lakh pensioners and family pensioners.
- ❖ CPS applies to those recruited after April 1, 2003, with a 10% employee contribution plus an equal government contribution.
- ❖ It covers around 6.24 lakh persons, including employees of local bodies, while the strength of pensioners under the given category is nearly 44,000.
- ❖ Under CPS, around ₹84,507 crore was accumulated as contributions with interest till March 2025.
- ❖ Pension-related spending in 2024–25 was about ₹42,509 crore (14.2% of total revenue receipts).

### University of Madras Amendment Bill



- ❖ The Tamil Nadu University of Madras Amendment Bill was returned without presidential assent.
- ❖ The bill was passed by the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly in April 2022 and sent for approval.
- ❖ The bill aimed to give the Tamil Nadu state government the power to appoint the Vice-Chancellor (VC) of the University of Madras.
- ❖ It proposed to amend the University of Madras Act by shifting this power from the Governor, who is the ex officio Chancellor, to the government.
- ❖ The Bill sought to replace the word, 'Chancellor', with the word, 'Government', in Section 11 of the Madras University Act, 1923.
- ❖ The bill was reserved for consideration due to concerns over conflict with UGC (University Grants Commission) regulations.
- ❖ After the bill was returned, the Tamil Nadu Assembly must reconsider the legislation.

## NATIONAL NEWS

### Trademark Registrations 2024–25

#### Key Developments



*Record 5.5 lakh+ domestic filings in 2024-25*



*Highest no. of trademarks registered in pharmaceuticals, veterinary & sanitary preparations, etc.*



*Policy reforms, digitisation & initiatives contributing to India's growing global standing in IP ecosystem*

- ❖ India registered over 5.5 lakh domestic trademarks in Financial Year (FY) 2024–25, the highest ever in a single year.
- ❖ The information was announced by the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- ❖ The rise reflects the faster and digitised Intellectual Property (IP) registration processes in India.
- ❖ Online filing, quicker examination, and reduced pendency supported higher registrations.
- ❖ The highest number of filings came from the pharmaceutical, veterinary, and healthcare sectors.
- ❖ Trademark protection in India is governed by the Trade Marks Act, 1999, with 10-year validity, renewable indefinitely.

### 8th Central Pay Commission

- ❖ The 8th Central Pay Commission (CPC) was notified in November 2025 by the Government of India.
- ❖ Its effective date is January 1, 2026, but salary revision will not start immediately.
- ❖ The Commission will review pay, allowances, and pensions of central government employees and pensioners.

- ❖ Actual implementation is expected after Cabinet approval, likely in late 2027 or early 2028.

WHAT HAPPENS FROM JAN 1, 2026	EXPECTED PAY HIKE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay Commission deemed effective from Jan 1, 2026</li> <li>• Arrears to accumulate from this date</li> <li>• Employees &amp; pensioners to receive dues later</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum salary may rise from ₹18,000 to ₹50,000</li> <li>• Top pay grade could go up to ₹1 crore annually (gross)</li> <li>• Revision may align govt pay with private sector trends</li> </ul>

### Road Safety Construction Standards

**NHAI Signs MoU with National Test House**  
to Strengthen Quality Assurance in National Highway Projects



- ❖ National Test House (NTH) signed an MoU with the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).
- ❖ The collaboration aims to strengthen quality control, transparency, and safety in national highway projects.
- ❖ NTH will be empanelled as a recognized testing laboratory for NHAI and conduct tests on highway construction materials and allied works.
- ❖ Testing will be done at NTH's regional labs in Ghaziabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Jaipur, Guwahati, Bengaluru, and Varanasi.
- ❖ The MoU includes capacity-building programs, workshops, and technical guidance for NHAI officials, along with support for enhancing NHAI lab facilities.
- ❖ National Test House functions under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### 2,200-Year-Old Chinese highway



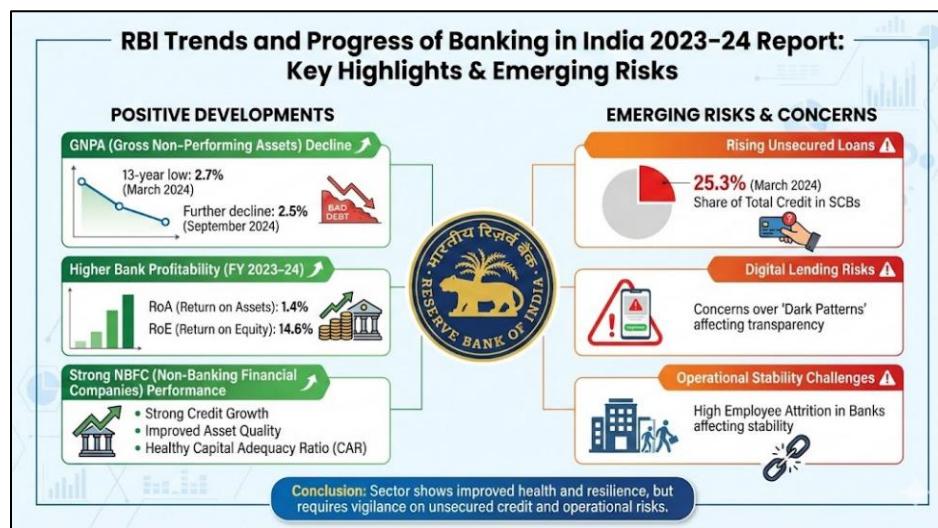
- ❖ Archaeologists in China have unearthed a 2,200-year-old Qin Straight Road, a 900 km highway built by Emperor Qin Shi Huang.
- ❖ The road runs from Xianyang to Jiuyuan and was constructed between 212 BC and 207 BC under the supervision of General Meng Tian.
- ❖ It was designed for rapid troop movements against Xiongnu nomads and featured rammed earth, filled valleys, and straight trenches, creating a level path 40–60 meters wide.
- ❖ Excavations in Yulin, Shaanxi, revealed a 13-km stretch, showing compacted roadbeds, reinforced slopes, and evidence of heavy use.
- ❖ A nearby relay station contained Qin-to-Han ceramics, confirming its long-term strategic and commercial importance.
- ❖ The highway is considered “the ancestor of the world’s highways”, second only to the Great Wall in scale and defence function.

## ECONOMY NEWS

### RBI Report

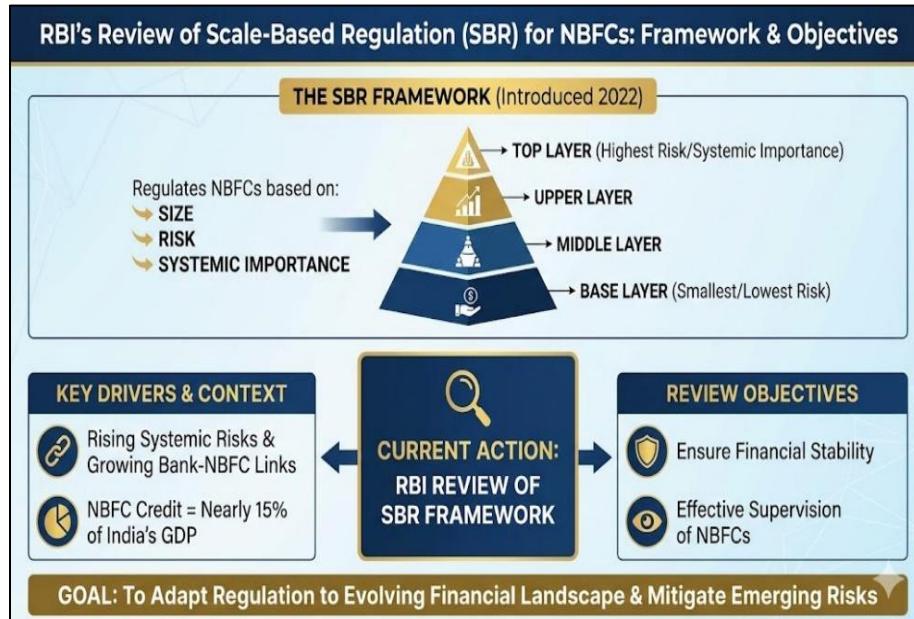
- ❖ The RBI released the Trends and Progress of Banking in India 2023–24 report, highlighting emerging risks in the banking sector.
- ❖ Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPA) declined to a 13-year low of 2.7% in March 2024 and further to 2.5% by September 2024.

- ❖ Banks have recorded higher profitability, with Return on Assets (RoA) at 1.4% and Return on Equity (RoE) at 14.6% in Financial Year (FY) 2023–24.
- ❖ The RBI flagged concerns over the rising share of unsecured loans, which accounted for 25.3% of total credit in Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) by March 2024.
- ❖ Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) showed strong credit growth with improved asset quality and a healthy Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR).
- ❖ The report also noted risks from dark patterns in digital lending and high employee attrition in banks, affecting operational stability.



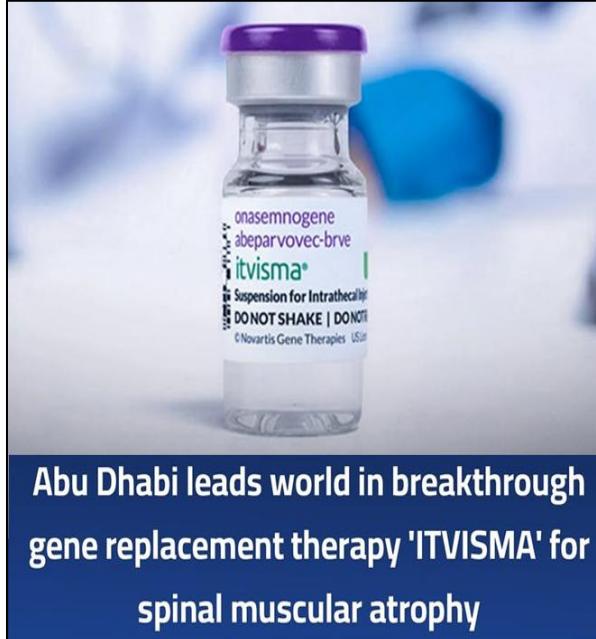
### Scale-Based Regulation for NBFCs

- ❖ The RBI has started a review of the Scale-Based Regulation (SBR) framework for Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs).
- ❖ The SBR framework was introduced in 2022 to regulate NBFCs based on their size, risk, and systemic importance.
- ❖ Under SBR, NBFCs are classified into Base Layer, Middle Layer, Upper Layer, and Top Layer.
- ❖ The review aims to address rising systemic risks and growing links between banks and NBFCs.
- ❖ NBFC credit now accounts for nearly 15% of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
- ❖ The review seeks to ensure financial stability and effective supervision of NBFCs.



## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

### World's First ITIVISMA Gene Therapy

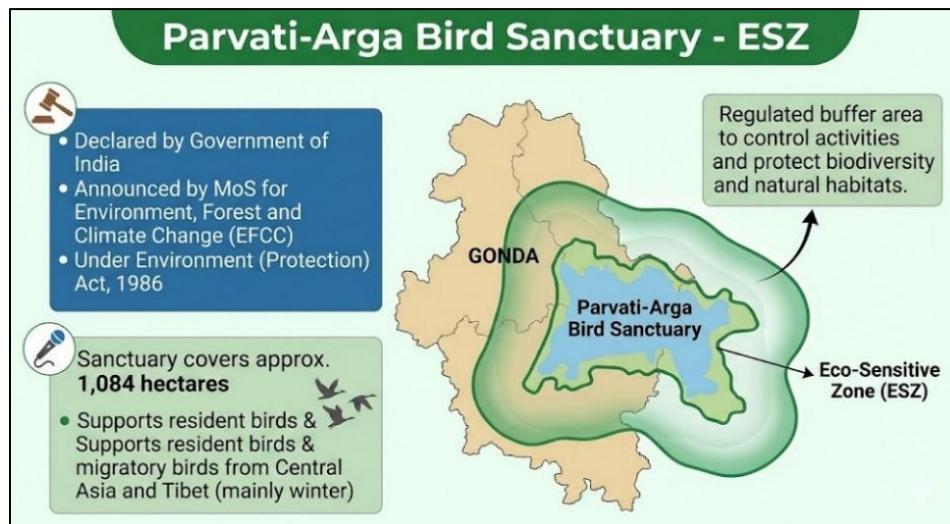


- ❖ Abu Dhabi's Sheikh Khalifa Medical City became the first hospital in the world to administer ITIVISMA gene therapy.
- ❖ The therapy was given to a patient suffering from Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA).
- ❖ ITIVISMA is a one-time gene therapy developed by Novartis.

- ❖ It works by replacing the defective SMN1 (Survival Motor Neuron 1) gene, enabling the body to produce the SMN (Survival Motor Neuron) protein.
- ❖ The United Arab Emirates (UAE) approved ITIVISMA, becoming the second country after the United States of America (USA) to approve it.

## ENVIRONMENT NEWS

### Parvati-Arga Bird Sanctuary - ESZ



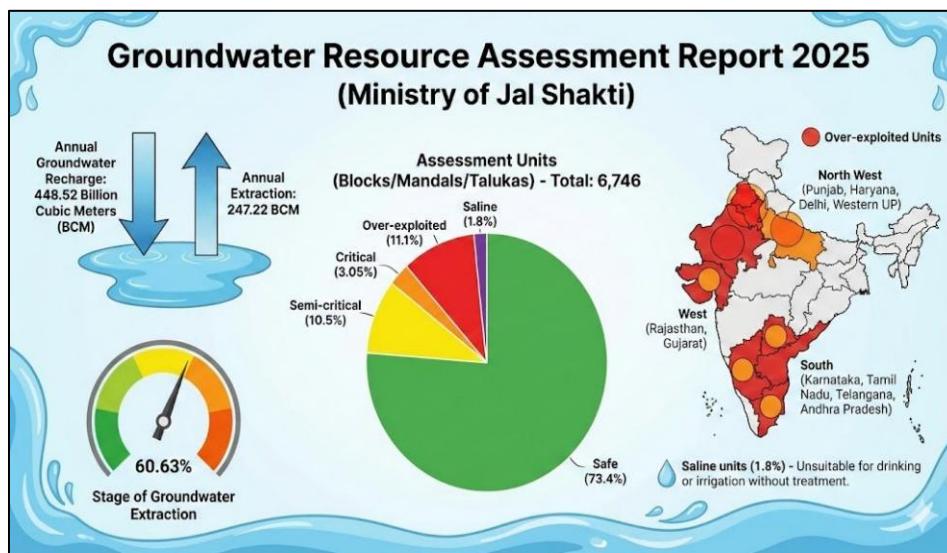
- ❖ The Government of India has declared the Parvati-Arga Bird Sanctuary in Gonda district, Uttar Pradesh, as an Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ).
- ❖ The notification was issued under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
- ❖ The announcement was made by the Minister of State (MoS) for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (EFCC).
- ❖ The sanctuary covers an area of about 1,084 hectares.
- ❖ It supports the resident birds and migratory birds from Central Asia and Tibet, mainly during the winter season.
- ❖ An Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) is a regulated buffer area around protected regions to control activities and protect biodiversity and natural habitats.

## REPORTS AND INDICES

### Groundwater Resource Assessment Report 2025

- ❖ The Ministry of Jal Shakti has released the Dynamic Groundwater Resource Assessment Report 2025 to evaluate India's groundwater status.

- ❖ The Annual groundwater recharge increased marginally to 448.52 billion Cubic Meters (BCM), while annual extraction was 247.22 BCM.
- ❖ The Stage of Groundwater Extraction is 60.63%, showing the proportion of extracted water to total available resources.
- ❖ Out of 6,746 assessment units (Blocks/Mandals/Talukas), 73.4% are Safe, 10.5% Semi-critical, 3.05% Critical, and 11.1% Over-exploited.
- ❖ Over-exploited units are mainly in North West India (Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Western Uttar Pradesh), West India (Rajasthan, Gujarat), and South India (Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh).
- ❖ 1.8% of units are Saline, where groundwater is unsuitable for drinking or irrigation without treatment.

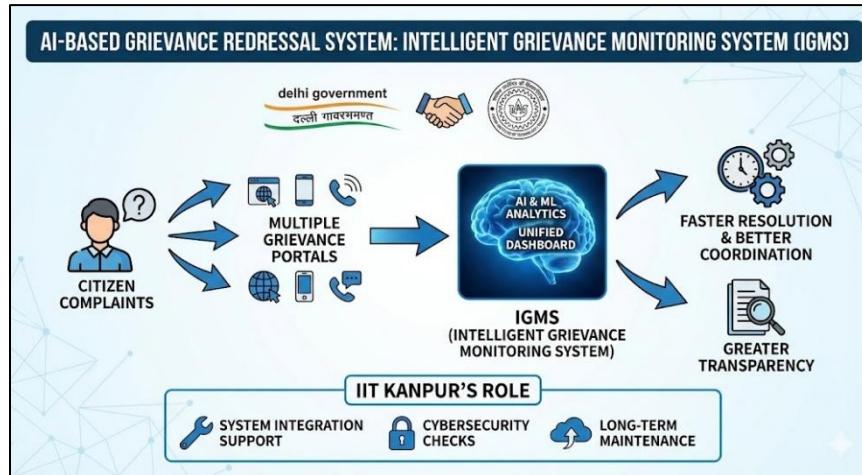


## STATES' NEWS

### AI-Based Grievance Redressal System

- ❖ The Delhi government has partnered with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur to develop an AI-based grievance redressal system.
- ❖ The system is called the Intelligent Grievance Monitoring System (IGMS).
- ❖ IGMS will integrate multiple grievance portals into one unified dashboard.
- ❖ It will use Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) to analyse and track complaints.
- ❖ The system aims to enable faster resolution, better coordination, and greater transparency in public services.

- ❖ IIT Kanpur will support system integration, cybersecurity checks, and long-term maintenance.



## MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

### Indian Standard for Electric Agricultural Tractors



- ❖ The Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, released IS 19262:2025 – Electric Agricultural Tractors: Test Code in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Indian Standard (IS) was developed by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).
- ❖ It aims to ensure the safety, reliability, and performance of electric agricultural tractors through uniform testing protocols.
- ❖ IS 19262:2025 specifies tests for PTO power, drawbar power, belts and pulleys performance, vibration measurement, and inspection of components and assemblies.
- ❖ The standard builds on IS 5994:2022 – Agricultural Tractors: Test Code and relevant automotive standards, adapted for electric tractors.

- ❖ Electric tractors use battery-powered electric motors instead of diesel engines, offering reduced emissions, lower operating costs, quieter operation, and less maintenance.

