

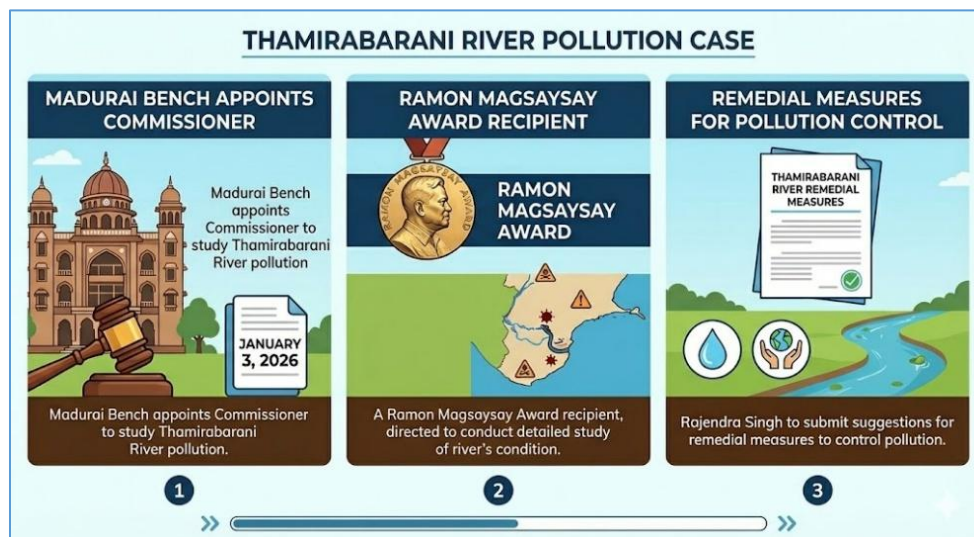
January - 06

## TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Bharatanatyam dancer Urmila Satyanarayanan was conferred the Nritya Kalanidhi award.
- ❖ A three-day international Spice Routes Conference will be held in Kochi, Kerala, to strengthen cultural and heritage tourism and position Kerala as a global heritage destination.
- ❖ On January 3, 2026, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro was taken into U.S. custody and indicted for drug trafficking, narco-terrorism, cocaine importation, and illegal weapons possession.
- ❖ International Mind–Body Wellness Day is observed every year on January 3 to create awareness about the link between mental health and physical health.

## TAMIL NADU NEWS

### Thamirabarani River Pollution Case



- ❖ The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court appointed water conservationist Rajendra Singh as Commissioner to study pollution in the Thamirabarani River.
- ❖ The order was passed on January 3, 2026.
- ❖ Rajendra Singh is a Ramon Magsaysay Award recipient.
- ❖ Rajendra Singh, also known as the "Waterman of India" is a renowned Indian environmentalist and water conservationist.
- ❖ He has been directed to conduct a detailed study of the river's condition.

- ❖ He will submit suggestions for remedial measures to control pollution.

## Tamil Nadu Assured Pension Scheme

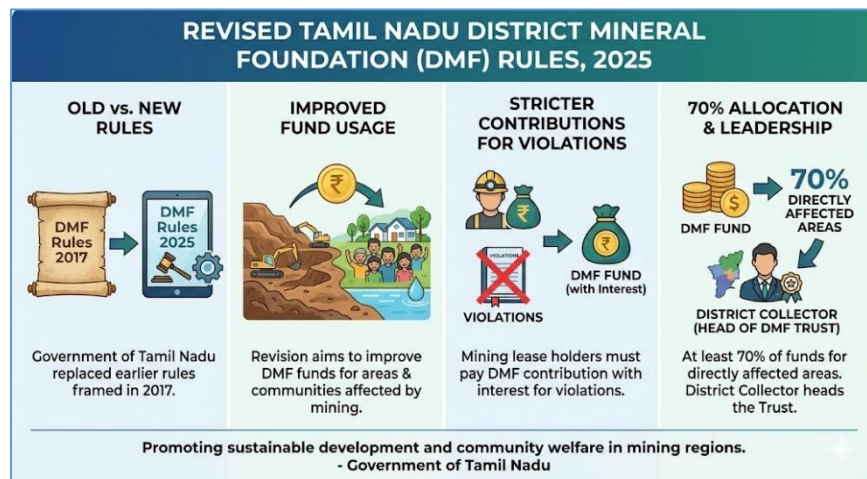
Assured benefits			
The Tamil Nadu Assured Pension Scheme, which is virtually a replica of the Old Pension Scheme, is also an improved version of the Unified Pension Scheme			
Feature	Old Pension Scheme	Unified Pension Scheme	Tamil Nadu Assured Pension Scheme
Employee contribution	Nil	10% of Basic Pay (BP) + Dearness Allowance (DA)	10% of BP + DA
Government contribution	Not applicable - (burden of full pension being absorbed by the government)	18.5% of BP + DA	18.5% of BP + DA
Post-retirement benefits	Guaranteed pension (50% of BP+DA as monthly pension) and family pension (60% of pension)	Lump sum (10% of last drawn pay x no. of completed 6-month service blocks) plus guaranteed pension (50% of BP+DA as pension) & family pension (60%)	Lump sum (10% of Last drawn pay x no. of completed 6-month service blocks) plus guaranteed pension (50% of BP+DA as pension) & family pension (60%)
Pension adjustment	Increases with every Pay Commission	Pension fixed (DA increases with inflation, no basic pay hike due to Pay Commission)	Pension fixed (DA increases with inflation, no basic pay hikes due to Pay Commission)
Minimum pension	Qualifying service - 10 completed years	Qualifying service - 10 years	All, regardless of the length of service
Cost to government	Entire pension & family pension and other benefits- DCRG, commutation and miscellaneous benefits	18.5% monthly contribution	18.5% monthly contribution (and DCRG, commutation and miscellaneous benefits)
Minimum pension	Qualifying service - 10 completed years	Qualifying service - 10 years	All, regardless of the length of service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ DCRG - Death-cum-Retirement Gratuity</li> <li>■ Old Pension Scheme - applicable to the Tamil Nadu government's employees who have been appointed before April 1, 2003</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Unified Pension Scheme - applicable to the existing employees of the Union government covered under the National Pension System (NPS) as on April 1, 2025 and those who join the service on or after the date</li> <li>■ Tamil Nadu Assured Pension Scheme - offered to all the employees of the Tamil Nadu government who are covered under the Contributory Pension Scheme</li> </ul>	

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government introduced the Tamil Nadu Assured Pension Scheme (TAPS), which broadly follows the Old Pension Scheme (OPS).
- ❖ Under TAPS, the pension will be fixed at 50% of the pay drawn in the last month of service.
- ❖ The scheme includes Death-cum-Retirement Gratuity (DCRG), with a maximum limit of ₹25 lakh.
- ❖ Family pension under TAPS will be 60% of the pension amount.

- ❖ Existing employees under the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS) are expected to shift to TAPS.
- ❖ The scheme will come into force after amendments are made to the pension rules.

### **District Mineral Foundation Rules**

- ❖ The Government of Tamil Nadu revised the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) Rules.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu District Mineral Foundation Rules, 2025, replaced the earlier rules framed in 2017.
- ❖ The revision aims to improve the use of DMF funds for areas and communities affected by mining.
- ❖ Under the new rules, mining lease holders must pay the DMF contribution with interest for violations.
- ❖ At least 70 % of DMF funds must be spent on directly affected areas.
- ❖ The District Collector will be the head of the District Mineral Foundation Trust.

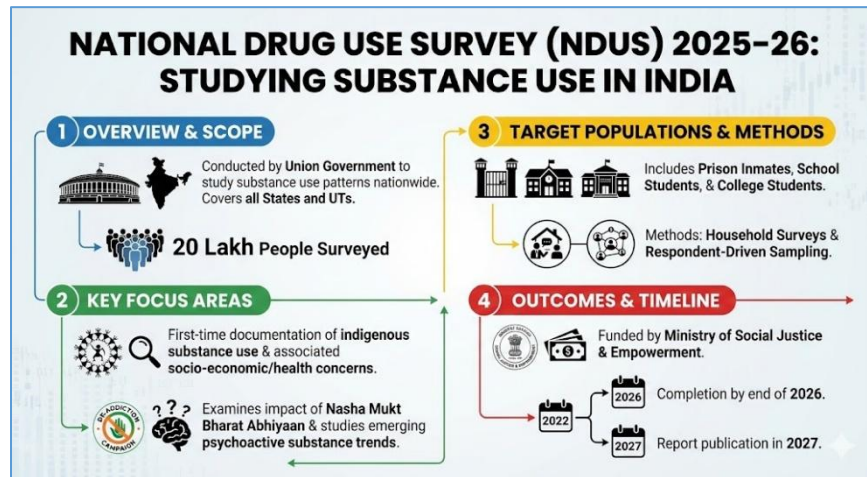


## **NATIONAL NEWS**

### **National Drug Use Survey 2025–26**

- ❖ The Union government will conduct the National Drug Use Survey (NDUS) 2025–26 to study substance use patterns across India.
- ❖ The survey will cover nearly 20 lakh people through household surveys and respondent-driven sampling in all States and Union Territories.
- ❖ For the first time, the survey will document indigenous forms of substance use and their associated socio-economic and health concerns.

- ❖ The survey will include specific populations such as prison inmates, school students, and college students.
- ❖ It will examine the impact of initiatives like the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan and study emerging trends in psychoactive substances.
- ❖ The survey is funded by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, will be completed by the end of 2026, and the report is expected to be published in 2027.



## 50<sup>th</sup> PRAGATI Meeting

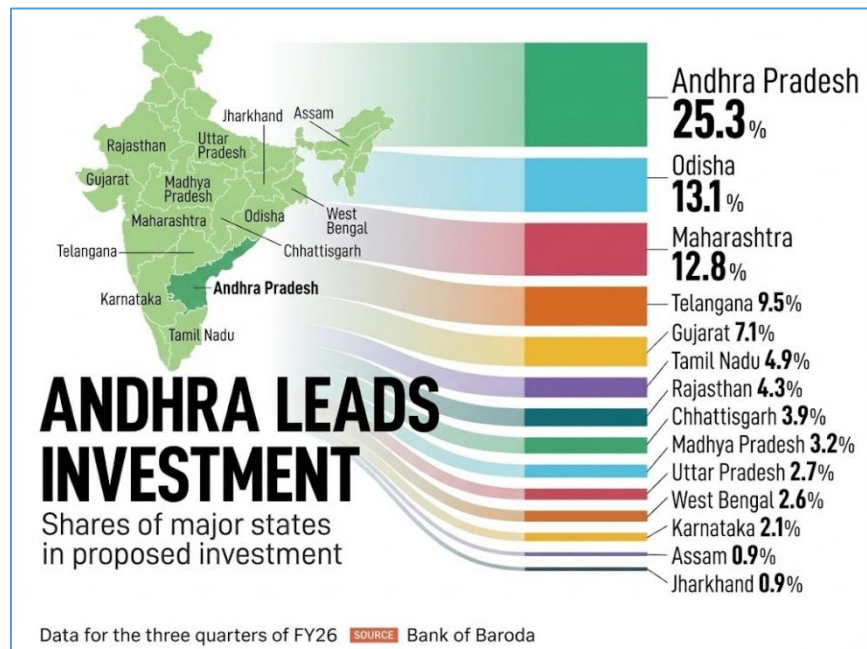


- ❖ The 50th meeting of PRAGATI was held in New Delhi.



- ❖ PRAGATI (Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation) is a technology-enabled platform launched by the Prime Minister in 2015.
- ❖ It aims to monitor infrastructure projects and public grievances in real time.
- ❖ During the meeting, five critical infrastructure projects across five states, with a cumulative cost of over ₹40,000 crore, were reviewed.
- ❖ PRAGATI has accelerated projects worth over ₹85 lakh crore, resolved around 94% of identified issues.
- ❖ It helped complete long-pending projects such as the Bogibeel Bridge, Jammu-Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link, Navi Mumbai International Airport, Bhilai Steel Plant modernization, and Gadawara and LARA Super Thermal Power Projects.
- ❖ The platform promotes cooperative federalism, bringing together the Central Government, State Governments, and Union Ministries, breaking silo-based functioning and improving accountability.
- ❖ PRAGATI also monitors PM SHRI (Prime Minister Schools for Rising India) schools to make them a national benchmark, and emphasizes reform, performance, and transformation in governance.

### India's Investments in FY26



- ❖ Andhra Pradesh emerged as India's top investment destination in FY26 by securing 25.3% of total proposed investments in the first nine months.

- ❖ A Bank of Baroda report stated that Odisha ranked second with 13.1% and Maharashtra third with 12.8% of proposed investments.
- ❖ Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and Maharashtra together accounted for 51.2% of total proposed investments in the country.
- ❖ Total investment announcements in FY26 increased by 11.5% year-on-year to ₹26.6 lakh crore.
- ❖ Telangana (9.5%), Gujarat (7.1%), and Tamil Nadu (4.9%) were other major contributors, while Uttar Pradesh (2.7%) and Karnataka (2.1%) had lower shares.
- ❖ The data shows that industrial investment activity is shifting towards eastern and southern India.

### Deemed University Status for NCERT



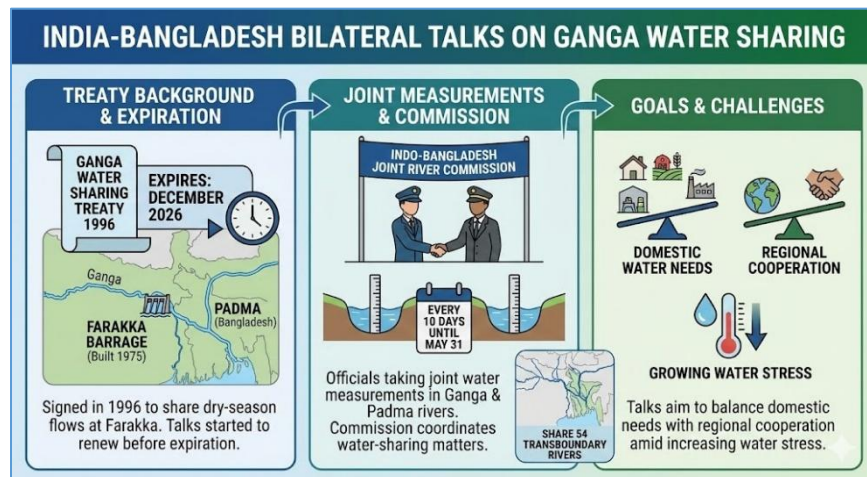
- ❖ The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) may receive deemed-to-be-university status by the end of January 2026.
- ❖ The proposal is awaiting approval at an upcoming meeting of the University Grants Commission (UGC).
- ❖ NCERT is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Education and prepares school curricula and textbooks.

- ❖ Deemed university status is granted under the University Grants Commission Act, 1956.
- ❖ Institutions with deemed status can design courses and award their own degrees.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### Bilateral Talks on Ganga Water Sharing

- ❖ India and Bangladesh started talks to renew the Ganga Water Sharing Treaty, which will expire in December 2026.
- ❖ The treaty was originally signed in 1996 to share dry-season flows of the Ganga at the Farakka Barrage.
- ❖ Officials are taking joint water measurements in the Ganga and Padma rivers every 10 days until May 31.
- ❖ The Indo-Bangladesh Joint River Commission coordinates water-sharing matters between the two countries.
- ❖ India and Bangladesh share 54 transboundary rivers, and the Farakka Barrage was built in 1975.
- ❖ Talks aim to balance domestic water needs with regional cooperation amid growing water stress.



## ECONOMY NEWS

### New Credit-Linked Schemes

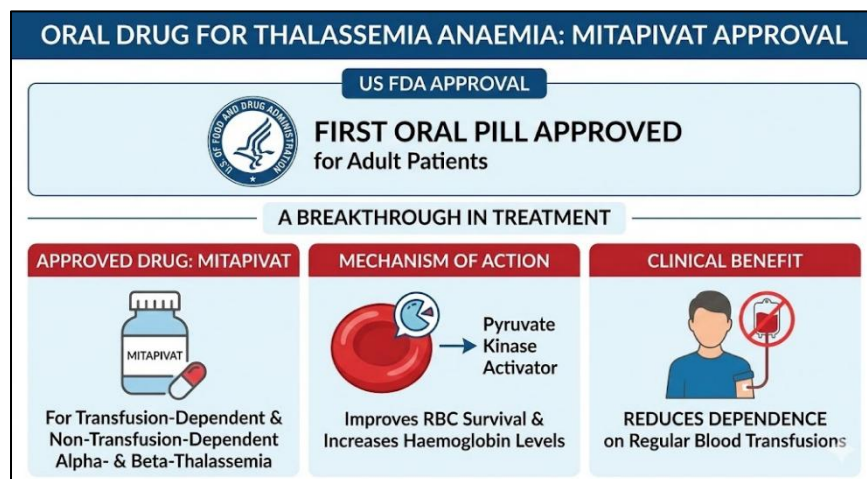
- ❖ The Government of India launched two pilot schemes under the Export Promotion Mission (EPM).

- ❖ These schemes are part of Niryat Protsahan, the financial support pillar of EPM.
- ❖ Interest Subvention Scheme gives 2.75% interest support on rupee export credit for selected exporters.
- ❖ The Collateral Support Scheme provides credit guarantees up to ₹10 crore through the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE).
- ❖ EPM started in November 2025, runs for six years, and has a budget of ₹25,060 crore.
- ❖ It aims to make exporting cheaper, support MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises), boost jobs, and improve India's global export competitiveness.



## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

### Oral Drug for Thalassemia Anaemia



- ❖ The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the first oral pill for treating anaemia in adult thalassemia patients.



- ❖ The approved drug is Mitapivat.
- ❖ It is approved for both transfusion-dependent and non-transfusion-dependent alpha- and beta-thalassemia.
- ❖ Mitapivat works as a pyruvate kinase activator, improving red blood cell survival and increasing haemoglobin levels.
- ❖ The drug reduces dependence on regular blood transfusions.

### **India's First AI Clinic**

- ❖ India's first government hospital-based Artificial Intelligence (AI) clinic was launched at the Government Institute of Medical Sciences (GIMS), Greater Noida.
- ❖ The clinic was inaugurated online by the Additional Director General of Health Services, Government of India.
- ❖ It has been set up under the GIMS Centre for Medical Innovation.
- ❖ The clinic provides a real clinical setting to test and use AI-based healthcare solutions.
- ❖ It focuses on areas such as medical imaging and clinical decision support systems.



### **Automatic Weather Stations**

- ❖ India has developed indigenously made Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) using 3D-printing technology under Mission Mausam.

- ❖ The project is led by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology under the Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- ❖ The first batch of these AWS will be deployed in Delhi from February 2026.
- ❖ Mission Mausam is a ₹2,000 crore national programme to strengthen weather observation infrastructure.
- ❖ These stations automatically record temperature, wind speed, humidity, and rainfall and send data in real time.
- ❖ The new AWS are solar-powered and fully manufactured in India under the Make in India initiative.



## **STATES' NEWS**

### **Indore Water Contamination Crisis**

- ❖ The contamination occurred due to polluted drinking water supplied through municipal pipelines in the Bhagirathpura area of Indore, Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ The contaminated water caused an outbreak of vomiting and diarrhoeal illness among residents.
- ❖ Six people have died, and more than 200 people were hospitalised, according to district officials.
- ❖ The district administration confirmed that the water supply was the source of infection.

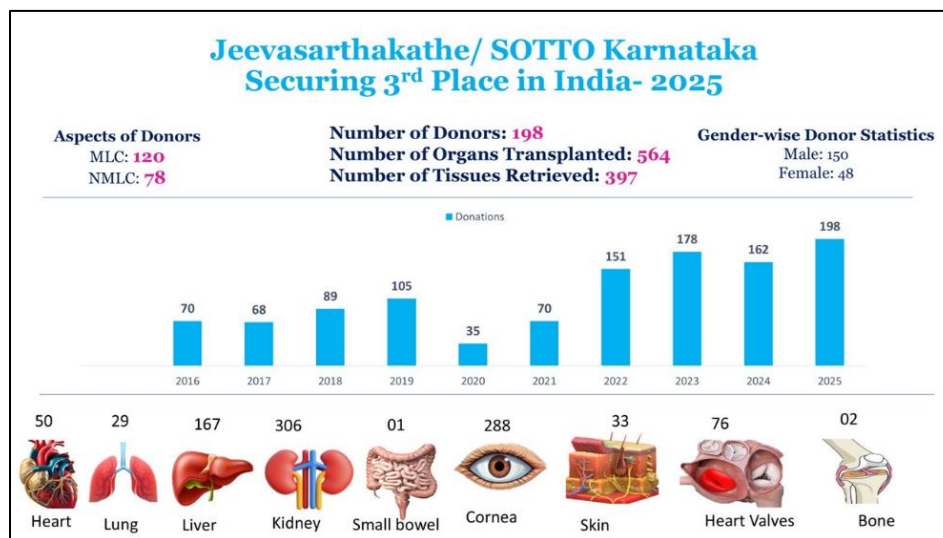
- ❖ Chlorination of pipelines and tube wells was carried out to control the contamination.

### Indore Water Contamination: Over 210 Hospitalised, MP CM Suspends Two Officials For Negligence



Indore is grappling with a major public health crisis after contaminated drinking water allegedly due to sewage leakage sparked a surge in diarrhoea and vomiting cases in the Bhaagirthpura area.

### Organ Donations in 2025

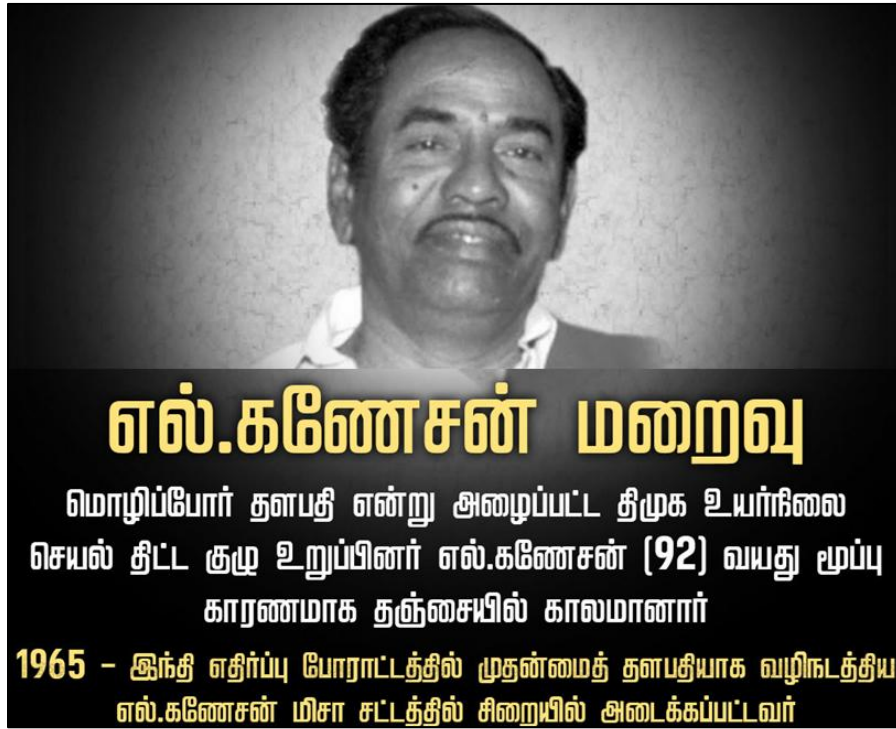


- ❖ Karnataka recorded its highest-ever number of organ donors, with 198 donations in 2025.

- ❖ The data was recorded by Jeevasarthakathe, the State Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (SOTTO) of Karnataka.
- ❖ Karnataka ranked third in India in organ donations, after Tamil Nadu and Telangana.
- ❖ Kidneys and corneas were the most commonly donated organs in the state.
- ❖ The number of organ donors increased from 162 in 2024 and 178 in 2023.

## PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

### Mozhipor Thalapathi L. Ganesan



- ❖ Senior Dravidian leader and DMK high-level action committee member L Ganesan passed away recently.
- ❖ He served as parliamentary secretary when M. Karunanidhi was Chief Minister in 1989.
- ❖ He was a key figure of the 1965 anti-Hindi agitation.
- ❖ He was first elected to the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly from the Orathanadu constituency in 1967.
- ❖ He also served as a member of the Legislative Council and was elected to the Lok Sabha from Tiruchirappalli in 2004.
- ❖ During the Emergency, he was imprisoned for his political activities.

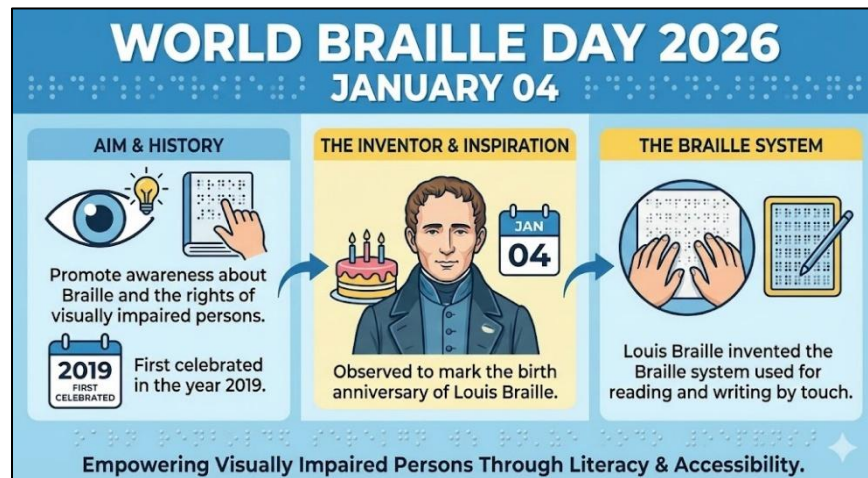


- ❖ He is the only politician in Tamil Nadu politics since independence represented in Lok Sabha (M.P.), Rajya Sabha (M.P.), Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly (M.L.A.) and Tamil Nadu Legislative Council (M.L.C.).

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### World Braille Day 2026 - January 04

- ❖ The aim is to promote awareness about Braille and the rights of visually impaired persons.
- ❖ It was first celebrated in the year 2019.
- ❖ The day is observed because it marks the birth anniversary of Louis Braille.
- ❖ Louis Braille invented the Braille system used for reading and writing by touch.



## MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

### Blue Cross of India – 60 Years of Animal Welfare

- ❖ Captain V. Sundaram rescued two stranded puppies in 1959 in T. Nagar, Madras.
- ❖ He and his wife, Usha Sundaram, built makeshift kennels at home for injured and abandoned animals.
- ❖ The organization started as Animal Aid Association and was registered as Blue Cross of India (BCI) in 1964.
- ❖ BCI's founding members included Sundaram, his family, and early supporters like Daivasigamony.
- ❖ BCI began the Animal Birth Control (ABC) programme for street dogs in 1964.



- ❖ The World Health Organization endorsed the ABC with Anti-Rabies Vaccination (ABC-AR) in 1990.
- ❖ The Corporation of Chennai stopped culling street dogs in 1996 and adopted the ABC programme.
- ❖ The Government of India made ABC mandatory nationwide in 2001 under the Animal Birth Control (Dogs) Rules.
- ❖ BCI provides shelters, veterinary care, adoption drives, and treats injured or rabies-suspected animals.

