

January - 20

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Tamil Nadu police in the Southern districts arrested 598 individuals against whom non-bailable warrants (NBWs) had been pending for a long-time during Operation DragNet.
- ❖ 21-year-old Aaryan Varshney (of Delhi) became India's 92nd Chess Grandmaster at the Andranik Margaryan Memorial Tournament in Armenia.
- ❖ The Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) received the Asia Best Employer Brand Award 2026 at the Hong Kong Leadership Awards and CMO Asia Awards.
- ❖ Justice Revati Mohite Dere became the first woman Chief Justice of the Meghalaya High Court.
- ❖ The President of India appointed Praveen Vashista as Vigilance Commissioner in the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC).
- ❖ Union Home Minister inaugurated the 3rd International Kite Festival 2026 in Baansera Park, New Delhi.
- ❖ India has become the world's second-largest 5G subscriber base after China, with over 400 million 5G users.
- ❖ Mizoram Governor extended Governor's Rule in the Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC) for six more months, citing continuing political uncertainty and administrative considerations.
 - The Governor assumed functions and powers of the CADC on July 7, 2025
- ❖ Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan became the first Indian to be inducted into Kenjutsu, an ancient Japanese samurai swordsmanship art.
 - Kenjutsu is a classical Japanese martial art focusing on discipline, precision, mental balance, and ethical conduct.

TAMIL NADU NEWS

Literary award for 7 non-Hindi languages

- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister announced annual literary awards in 7 languages including Tamil, Bengali and Marathi.
- ❖ In the first phase, award will be given in the name of 'Semmozhi Illakiya Virudhu'.
- ❖ It is for the best works in the languages of Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odiya, Bengali and Marathi.

- ❖ The award for each language carries Rs 5 lakh cash prize.”

“தமிழ்நாடு அரசின் தேசிய அளவிலான விருது..”

**தமிழ்நாடு அரசு சார்பில் தேசிய அளவில்
தலை ரூ.5 லட்சம் பரிசுடன் செம்மொழி
இலக்கிய விருதுகள் வழங்கப்படும் என
முதலமைச்சர் மு.க.ஸ்டாலின் அறிவிப்பு.**

முதற்கட்டமாக தமிழ், தெலுங்கு, கன்னடம், மலையாளம், ஓட்டயா,
வங்காளம், மராத்திய மொழிகளில் சிறந்த படைப்புகளுக்கு விருது.
ஒவ்வொரு மொழிக்கும் தனி விருது தேர்வுக் குழு அமைக்கப்படும்.

NATIONAL NEWS

Inquiry Committee for Judge Removal

**Supreme Court
Notes 'Some Infirmity'
In Forming Inquiry
Committee On
Justice Yashwant Varma;
Will See If It's Grave
Enough**

- ❖ The Supreme Court upheld the Lok Sabha Speaker's formation of an Inquiry Committee to investigate the removal of Justice Yashwant Varma.
- ❖ Rejection of a motion in one House (Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha) does not prevent the other House from forming an inquiry committee.
- ❖ Articles 124 (Supreme Court judges) and 218 (High Court judges) deal with the removal of judges.
- ❖ Judges can be removed only for proven misbehaviour or incapacity.
- ❖ The Inquiry Committee comprises a Supreme Court judge, a High Court Chief Justice, and a distinguished jurist, and is formed by the Speaker or Chairman after admission of the motion.

- ❖ The motion requires a special majority in both Houses of Parliament, and removal is executed by the President of India.
- ❖ No judge of the higher judiciary has been successfully removed so far.

PM CARES Privacy Rights

- ❖ The Delhi High Court observed that the Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations (PM CARES Fund) has a right to privacy under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005.
- ❖ The bench noted that privacy protections may extend to juristic or government-linked entities.
- ❖ This observation came during an appeal against a single-judge ruling that had set aside the Central Information Commission (CIC) order on disclosure of PM CARES tax exemptions.
- ❖ The Income Tax Department had challenged the CIC order, which sought details of donors, contributions, tax exemptions, and expenditures of the fund.
- ❖ The court will continue hearing the appeal on February 10, 2026, and no information will be disclosed until a final decision.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UN High Seas Treaty

- ❖ The United Nations (UN) High Seas Treaty will officially come into force on 18 January 2026.

- ❖ The treaty is called the Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ).
- ❖ It aims to protect marine life in international waters, covering more than two-thirds of the world's oceans and about 10 million species.
- ❖ 148 countries have signed the treaty since its adoption in June 2023; 81 countries have fully ratified it in their national laws.
- ❖ Countries that ratified include Palau, Cuba, the Maldives, China, Germany, Japan, France, and Brazil.
- ❖ The treaty sets binding rules for conservation, sustainable use, benefit-sharing, protected areas, and scientific research in the high seas.



Israel's withdrawal from UN Bodies

- ❖ Israel announced its withdrawal from seven United Nations (UN) agencies and affiliated bodies in January 2026.
- ❖ The agencies include UN Women, UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, UN Alliance of Civilisations, UN Energy, and the Global Forum on Migration and Development.
- ❖ The decision follows a review after the United States exited 66 international organisations.

- ❖ Israel cited alleged political bias against Israel and bureaucratic inefficiency as reasons for its withdrawal.
- ❖ Israel had previously cut ties with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict in 2024.
- ❖ Countries can withdraw from UN agencies without leaving the UN itself.



World's Oldest Flowing River - Finke River



- ❖ The Finke River has been recognised as the world's oldest flowing river based on geological evidence.

- ❖ It is believed to be 300–400 million years old, older than the age of dinosaurs.
- ❖ The river flows through the Northern Territory and South Australia in central Australia.
- ❖ It is also known as Larapinta by the Arrernte people.
- ❖ The river cuts through the MacDonnell Ranges due to a geological process called antecedence (river existed before mountain uplift).
- ❖ Despite being intermittent, it remains part of the same ancient river system.

ECONOMY NEWS

Integrated Ombudsman Scheme 2026

RBI's Internal Ombudsman Directions, 2026:

A New Compliance Reality for NBFCs



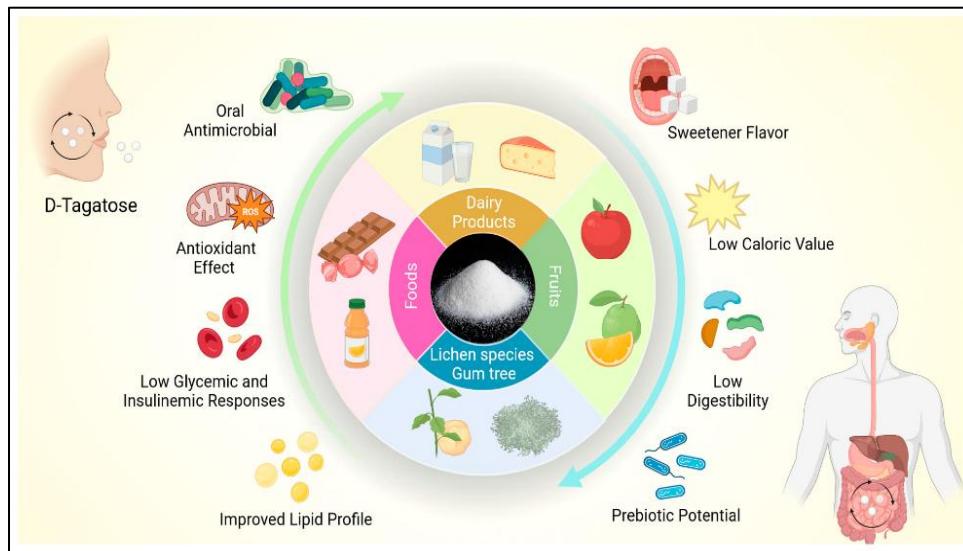
**RBI'S INTERNAL OMBUDSMAN
DIRECTIONS, 2026: A NEW COMPLIANCE
REALITY FOR NBFCs**

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will implement the Reserve Bank - Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS) 2026 from July 1, 2026.
- ❖ The scheme provides a cost-effective and fast grievance redress mechanism for complaints against entities regulated by the RBI.
- ❖ RBI may appoint Ombudsman and Deputy Ombudsman officers, usually for a period of three years.
- ❖ A Centralised Receipt and Processing Centre (CRPC) will handle complaints from all over India.

- ❖ Ombudsman can resolve complaints of any monetary amount and award compensation up to ₹30 lakh.
- ❖ The Complainants or regulated entities can appeal the decisions to the Appellate Authority within 30 days, and each entity must appoint a Principal Nodal Officer to coordinate with RBI.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Low Calorie Sugar Tagatose

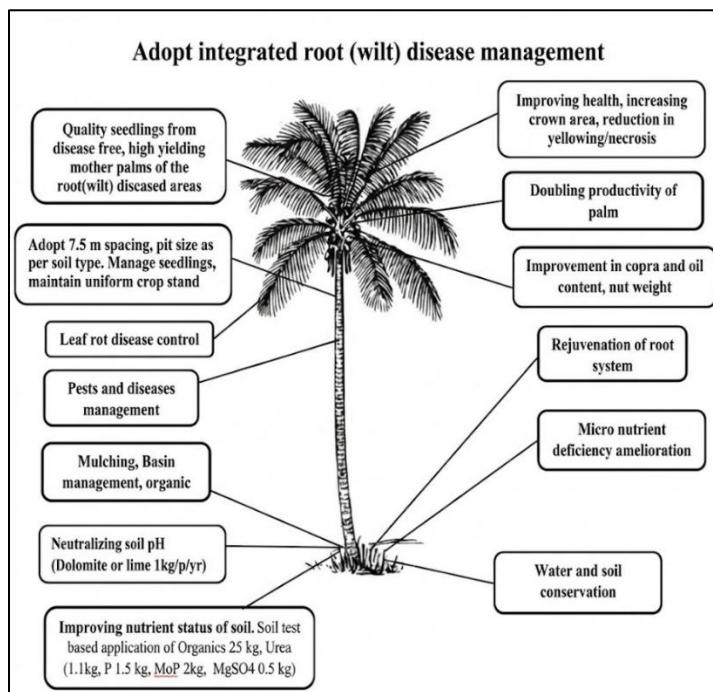


- ❖ Scientists have developed an efficient large-scale method to produce tagatose, a healthier alternative to regular sugar and artificial sweeteners.
- ❖ Tagatose is a low-calorie natural sugar that does not cause sharp spikes in insulin levels.
- ❖ Tagatose is about 92% as sweet as sucrose but contains only one-third of the calories.
- ❖ It has a minimal impact on blood glucose, making it suitable for people with diabetes or insulin sensitivity.
- ❖ A newly discovered enzyme from slime Mold—galactose-1-phosphate-selective phosphatase—was used in the process.
- ❖ The new method achieved up to 95% production yield, far higher than existing techniques.
- ❖ Tagatose occurs naturally in small amounts in fruits and dairy products.
- ❖ It is tooth-friendly, may reduce harmful oral bacteria, and can withstand baking temperatures.

ENVIRONMENT NEWS

Coconut Root Wilt Disease

- ❖ Coconut Root Wilt Disease is spreading rapidly in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka, affecting lakhs of coconut palms.
- ❖ It is a non-fatal disease caused by a phytoplasma (a phloem-limited pathogen) that weakens palms and reduces yield.
- ❖ The disease spreads through sap-sucking insect vectors such as Stephanitis typica and Proutista moesta.
- ❖ Key symptoms include weak, droopy leaves, yellowing from leaf tips, curling of leaflets, poor flowering, premature nut fall, and slow weakening of trees.

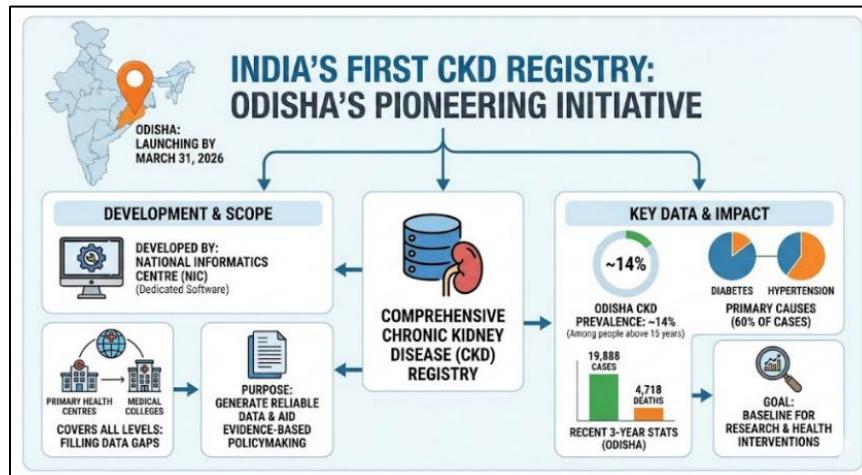


STATES' NEWS

India's First CKD Registry

- ❖ Odisha will become the first Indian state to launch a comprehensive chronic kidney disease (CKD) registry by March 31, 2026.
- ❖ The registry will generate reliable data on CKD prevalence and aid evidence-based policymaking.
- ❖ The National Informatics Centre (NIC) is developing dedicated software for the registry.

- ❖ The registry will cover CKD cases from primary health centres to medical colleges, filling gaps in existing data.
- ❖ CKD prevalence in Odisha is around 14% among people above 15 years; 60% of cases are linked to diabetes and hypertension.
- ❖ Odisha reported 19,888 CKD cases and 4,718 deaths over the last three years.



Aame Padhiba Aama Bhasare Scheme – Odisha



- ❖ The Odisha government launched the 'Aame Padhiba Aama Bhasare' scheme to provide early childhood education in the mother tongue.
- ❖ The scheme is a five-year initiative for children aged 3–6 years.
- ❖ It will be implemented first in Keonjhar, Kandhamal, Gajapati, Rayagada, Nabarangpur and Malkangiri districts.

- ❖ Teaching will be done in tribal languages like Munda, Kui, Saura, Kuvi, Gondi and Koya.
- ❖ Anganwadi workers will receive language-specific training and learning materials.
- ❖ The scheme aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and Article 350A of the Constitution (instruction in mother tongue at the primary level).

Gruha Lakshmi Digital Marketing Portal - Karnataka

- ❖ Karnataka launched the Gruha Lakshmi Digital Marketing Portal to promote products made by women entrepreneurs through an online platform.
- ❖ It is a state government initiative implemented by the Department of Women and Child Development.
- ❖ The portal provides a government-supported e-commerce marketplace for women-led enterprises.
- ❖ It helps women, especially rural women and artisans, sell products beyond local markets.
- ❖ The initiative supports women entrepreneurship, digital inclusion, and income generation in Karnataka.



Spituk Gustor Festival – Ladakh

- ❖ The Spituk Gustor Festival is being observed at Spituk Monastery near Leh, Ladakh.

- ❖ It is a cultural festival celebrating peace and prosperity.
- ❖ The festival is held at Spituk Monastery, located about 8 km from Leh.
- ❖ It also commemorates the Gelukpa Order of Tibetan Buddhism, founded by Je Tsongkhapa (1357–1419).
- ❖ The festival concludes with the burning of an evil effigy, symbolising the victory of good over evil.



Ponduru Khadi - GI Tag

HERITAGE WEAVE EARNS TAG



- Produced from one of three types of cotton – hill cotton, punasa cotton, or red cotton
- Cotton used is indigenous to Srikakulam district and is grown in and around Ponduru
- The khadi is unique as the entire process, from cotton to fabric, is carried out manually
- Process of cleaning the cotton with the jawbone of Valuga fish is unique to Ponduru khadi and is not practised anywhere else in the world
- Ponduru is the only place in India where spinners still use single-spindle charkhas with 24 spokes, also known as the 'Gandhi Charkha'
- The final textile has a very high yarn count, around 100-120 counts
- Spinning thin yarn to 100-120 counts is a difficult process requiring special skill, which very few spinners possess



- ❖ Ponduru Khadi originates from Ponduru village in the Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ It is a traditional hand-woven cotton fabric that has been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- ❖ Ponduru Khadi is locally known as "Patnulu".

- ❖ The fabric is woven entirely by hand using locally grown Hill cotton, Punasa cotton, and red cotton.
- ❖ A distinctive feature is the use of the jawbone of the Valuga fish for cleaning cotton.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Genome Recovery from Woolly Rhinoceros

- ❖ Scientists recovered the genome of a woolly rhinoceros from undigested meat found in the stomach of an Ice Age grey wolf puppy.
- ❖ The wolf puppy lived about 14,400 years ago and was found preserved in permafrost near Tumat village, northeastern Siberia.
- ❖ The study showed that the woolly rhinoceros population remained genetically healthy until near extinction.
- ❖ Researchers found no signs of inbreeding, indicating a rapid population collapse.
- ❖ The extinction is linked mainly to climate warming at the end of the Ice Age, according to the study.

Woolly rhino genome recovered from meat in frozen wolf pup's stomach

