



March - 15

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Bansi Lal Bhat has been appointed as the officiating Chairperson of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal for a period of 3 months.
- ❖ Greece First female president Katerina Sakellaropoulou took her office at Athens.

TAMIL NADU

Testing Labs

- ❖ With the addition of the Viral Research and Diagnostic Laboratory at Tiruvarur, Tamil Nadu now has three testing facilities for SARS-CoV-2, the virus behind COVID-19.
- ❖ The King Institute of Preventive Medicine, Guindy was the first one.
- ❖ The facility at Government Medical College, Theni, is the second.

ECONOMY

The Mineral Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020

- ❖ The Bill amends the Mines and Minerals Development and Regulation Act, 1957 (MMDR Act) and the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015 (CMSP Act).
- ❖ The MMDR Act regulates the overall mining sector in India.
- ❖ This will speed up the process of implementation of projects, ease of doing business, simplification of procedure and benefit all the parties in areas where minerals are located.
- ❖ In August 2019, the government announced 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) under the automatic route in coal mining for open sale, besides creating associated infrastructure, such as washeries.
- ❖ This opens up the sector to players outside steel and power as well as removes end-use restrictions.
- ❖ It will create an efficient energy market and bring in more competition as well as reduce coal imports.
- ❖ India imported 235 million tonnes (mt) of coal last year, of which 135 mt valued at Rs 171,000 crore could have been met from domestic reserves.
- ❖ It might also put an end to Coal India Ltd's monopoly in the sector.



Under the Bill

- ❖ Currently, separate licenses are provided for prospecting and mining of coal and lignite, called prospecting license, and mining lease, respectively.
- ❖ The bill adds new type of license that is allocation of coal/lignite blocks for composite prospecting licence cum mining lease.
- ❖ Companies will be allowed to carry on coal mining operation for own consumption, sale or for any other purposes, as may be specified by the central government.
- ❖ The Bill clarifies that the companies need not possess any prior coal mining experience in India in order to participate in the auction of coal and lignite blocks.
- ❖ The Bill provides that the various approvals, licenses, and clearances given to the previous lessee will be extended to the successful bidder for a period of two years.
- ❖ During this period, the new lessee will be allowed to continue mining operations.
- ❖ Under the MMDR Act, mining leases for specified minerals (minerals other than coal, lignite, and atomic minerals) are auctioned on the expiry of the lease period.
- ❖ The Bill provides that state governments can take advance action for auction of a mining lease before its expiry.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Solar Receiver Tube Technology

- ❖ The Scientists from ARCI-International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials operating under DST (Department of Science and Technology), Ministry of Science & Technology have developed cost effective solar receiver tube technology.
- ❖ The tubes developed absorbs solar energy and converts the heat to required application.
- ❖ They provide high resistance to corrosion especially to Indian weather conditions.
- ❖ The Technology is a wet chemical process that is used to coat stainless steel tubes that are used in industrial heat applications.
- ❖ The tubes manufactured by this technology absorbs 93% of radiant energy and 14% of emittance.
- ❖ Emittance is the amount of light emitted by an area of a radiating surface.

ENVIRONMENT

White giraffe

- ❖ Poachers have killed two extremely rare white giraffes in northeast Kenya, leaving just one such animal in the world.
- ❖ The white appearance of the giraffe is due to leucism, a genetic condition that causes skin cells to have no pigmentation.
- ❖ Leucism is different from albinism where no melanin is produced at all.
- ❖ The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) had classified giraffes as vulnerable in the Red List in December 2016.
- ❖ According to IUCN, the four principal factors that have led to a population decline among giraffes are habitat loss, civil unrest, poaching and ecological issues.




STATES

Basmati GI tag

- ❖ Madhya Pradesh government's struggle to join the elite 'basmati' league has failed once again
- ❖ The Madras high court has dismissed the state's plea seeking geographical indication (GI) tag for basmati rice grown in areas falling under the state.
- ❖ The court said that Two GI certificates of registration for a same produce cannot be issued.

Background

- ❖ In May 2010, GI status was given to basmati grown only in Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and parts of western Uttar Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir.
- ❖ But Madhya Pradesh demanded that its 13 districts be recognised as traditional Basmati growing regions.
- ❖ Geographical Indications are covered as a component of intellectual property rights (IPRs) under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property.
- ❖ GI is also governed by the World Trade Organisation's (WTO's) Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).
- ❖ In India, Geographical Indications registration is administered by the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 which came into force with effect from September 2003.
- ❖ The first product in India to be accorded with GI tag was Darjeeling tea in the year 2004-05.

<p>What is a Geographical Indication? A 'geographical indication' (GI) is a place name used to identify the origin and quality, reputation or other characteristics of products. For instance, Champagne.</p> <p>Why is it important? Article 22 of the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights agreement says unless a geographical indication is protected in the country of its origin, there is no</p>	<p>obligation under the agreement for other countries to extend reciprocal protection.</p> <p>India's Basmati credentials... India is the largest producer and exporter of Basmati rice in the world. Exports totalled Rs. 27,597 crore in 2014-15.</p> <p>Some popular registered GIs in India Darjeeling Tea, Mysore Silk, Mysore Pak (sweet), Thanjavur Veena</p>	 <p>Pusa Basmati 1, a high-yielding Variety of scented Basmati rice. — FILE PHOTO</p>  <p>Sources: WTO and APEDA</p>
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IMPORTANT DAYS

World Rotaract day – March 13

- ❖ It aims to recognize the services offered by the Rotaractors throughout the World.
- ❖ “Rotaract” stands for “Rotary in Action”.
- ❖ Rotary Club is community service organization for young men and women.



- ❖ Rotaract was began as Rotary International youth program in 1968 at North Carolina, USA.
- ❖ The first Rotaract Club was founded on March 13th, 1968.
- ❖ The Motto of Rotary Club is Self-Development – Fellowship Through Service.

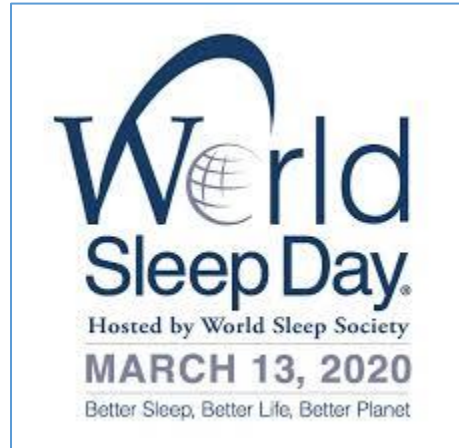


World Sleep Day – March 13

- ❖ It is observed annually on the Friday before the March Equinox or the northern hemisphere vernal equinox.
- ❖ It is an annual event organized by the World Sleep Day Committee of the World Sleep Society.
- ❖ The first World Sleep Day was held on 14 March 2008.
- ❖ Theme of the year 2020 is 'Better Sleep, Better Life, Better Planet'.

About

- ❖ The March equinox is known as the vernal equinox (spring equinox) in the Northern Hemisphere and as the autumnal equinox in the Southern.
- ❖ The March equinox may be taken to mark the beginning of spring and the end of winter in the Northern Hemisphere but marks the beginning of autumn and the end of summer in the Southern Hemisphere.



MISCELLANEOUS

Indian Pharmaceutical industry in Top 5

- ❖ The Indian pharmaceuticals market is the third largest in terms of volume and 14th largest in terms of value, as per a report by Equity Master.
- ❖ India is now among the top five pharmaceutical emerging markets of the world.
- ❖ The Supply Annual Report of UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) recognized India as the world's largest supplier of generic medicines.
- ❖ India's second largest export market is Africa, followed by Europe.

