

March - 16

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Tamil Nadu CM has inaugurated Chennai's first wetland sponge park in an OSR land near Poonamallee High Road, Porur.
- ❖ Australia and England will mark the 150th anniversary of Test cricket with a historic day-night match at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) in 2027.
- ❖ Central America's the most active volcano in Guatemala - Volcan de Fuego has erupted recently after its previous eruption in 2018
- ❖ India, led by Union Minister for Women and Child Development, participated in the 69th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of the Women (UNCSW).
- ❖ The 4th No Money for Terror (NMFT) Conference was held in Germany to enhance international cooperation in curbing terror financing.
- ❖ Delhi International Airport wins prestigious ASQ Award for Best Airport over 40 million passengers in Asia-Pacific the seventh consecutive year.
- ❖ The Bureau of Water Use Efficiency (BWUE) in association with The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), had organized a one-day conference titled "the Water Sustainability Conference 2025" in New Delhi.
- ❖ The 54th National Safety Week was observed from March 4 to March 10 to raise awareness about safety measures across industries and workplaces to promote accident prevention and ensure employee well-being.

TAMIL NADU NEWS

Tamil Nadu Mineral Bearing Land Tax Act, 2024

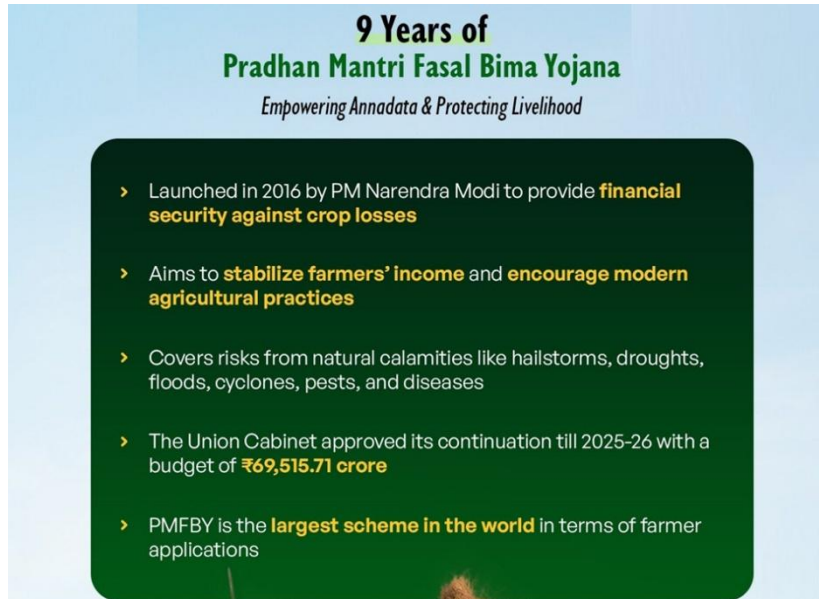


- ❖ The Legislative Assembly passed the Tamil Nadu Mineral Bearing Land Tax Act, 2024 (the Act), which was published in the gazette on February 20, 2025.

- ❖ The Act imposes a mineral-bearing land tax on mining of the various minerals, including limestone at ₹160 per metric tonne.
- ❖ The government is yet to make the rules for carrying out the purposes of this act.
- ❖ The rules may provide for the manner of levy, assessment and collection of tax, manner of payment of tax, etc.

NATIONAL NEWS

PMFBY extension



9 Years of
Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana
Empowering Annadata & Protecting Livelihood

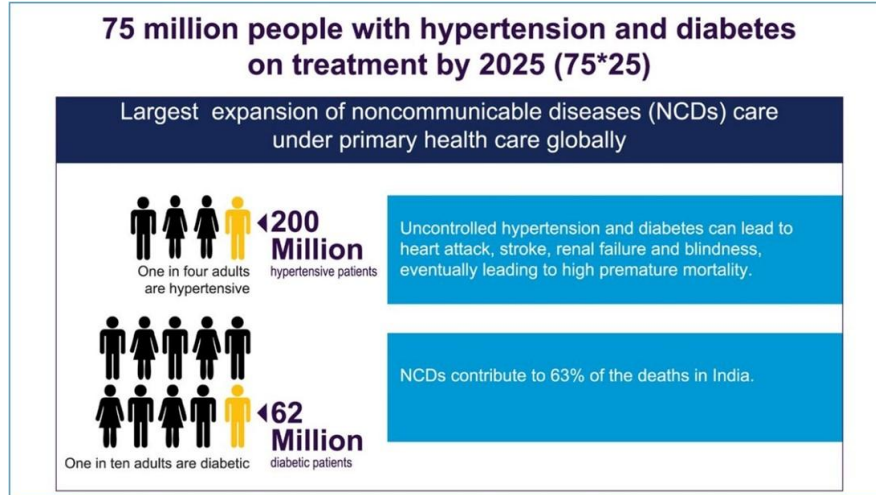
- Launched in 2016 by PM Narendra Modi to provide **financial security against crop losses**
- Aims to **stabilize farmers' income** and **encourage modern agricultural practices**
- Covers risks from natural calamities like hailstorms, droughts, floods, cyclones, pests, and diseases
- The Union Cabinet approved its continuation till 2025-26 with a budget of **₹69,515.71 crore**
- PMFBY is the **largest scheme in the world** in terms of farmer applications

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved continuation of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme till 2025-26.
- ❖ It will help in risk coverage of crops from non-preventable natural calamities for farmers across the country till 2025-26.
- ❖ The Union Cabinet has also approved the creation of Fund for the Innovation and Technology (FIAT) with a corpus of Rs.824.77 Crore.
- ❖ The fund will be utilised towards the funding technological initiatives under the scheme namely, YES-TECH, WINDS, etc.

Update on “75/25” Initiative

- ❖ As of March 5, 2025, a total of 42.01 million individuals have received treatment for hypertension.
- ❖ 25.27 million have been treated for diabetes, achieving 89.7% of the target.

- ❖ On the World Hypertension Day, celebrated on May 17, 2023, the Government had unveiled the "75/25" initiative.
- ❖ It aims to provide the standardized care to 75 million individuals living with the hypertension and diabetes by December 2025.



Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Amendment Bill 2024



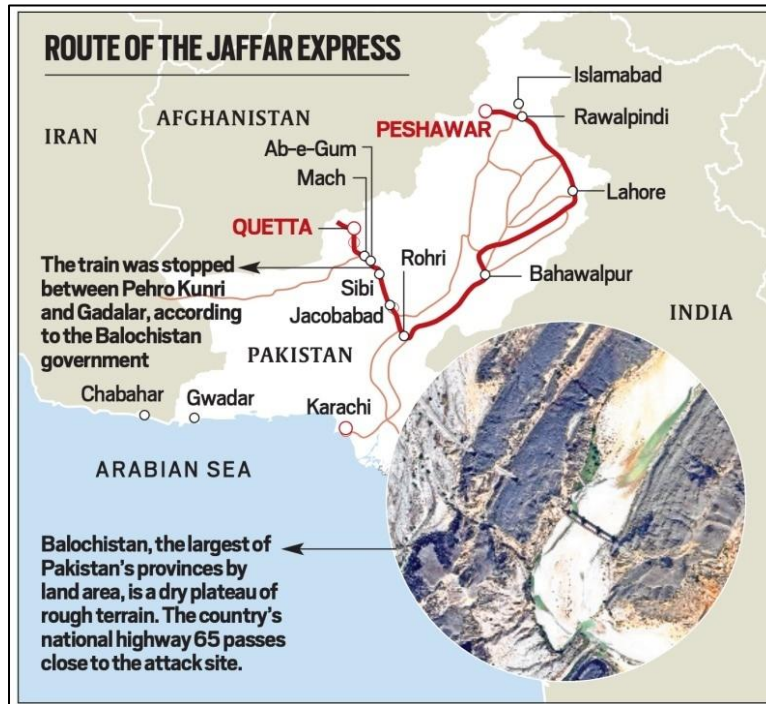
- ❖ The Lok Sabha passed the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Amendment Bill, 2024.
- ❖ The Bill seeks to update the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Act, 1948.
- ❖ It explicitly excludes coal, lignite, and helium, likely because these are governed under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957.
- ❖ The Bill replaces the term 'mining leases' with 'petroleum leases', which will now govern exploration, production, and disposal activities.
- ❖ The new Bill replaces imprisonment with the financial penalties, increasing the maximum fine to ₹25 lakh.

- ❖ India's crude oil demand is expected to rise to 6.5-7 million barrels per day (bpd) from the current 5.5 million bpd.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Pakistan Jaffar Express issue

- ❖ The Jaffar Express, carrying 440 passengers, was hijacked by Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) members.
- ❖ The BLA, the strongest rebel group, is active in Balochistan, Pakistan.
- ❖ The group has been actively seeking independence for Balochistan that borders Afghanistan.
- ❖ Balochistan is a significant part of China's \$65 billion investment in the China Pakistan Economic Corridor.



ECONOMY NEWS

India - Top Source of FDI into Dubai

- ❖ Dubai has been ranked the world's No.1 destination for Greenfield Foreign Direct investment (FDI) projects for the fourth successive year.

- ❖ India has emerged as the key source country for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into Dubai.
- ❖ For the year 2024, India has surpassed USA, France and UK to become the top source countries for FDI into Dubai.
- ❖ India's contribution to FDI inflow accounted for 21.5%, followed by the United States (13.7%), France (11%), United Kingdom (10%), and Switzerland (6.9%).



Digital Payment Transactions in 2024-25

Financial Year	Total Digital Payments Transactions	
	Volume (in Crore)	Value (in Lakh Crore)
2020-21	4,370.68	1,414.58
2021-22	7,197.68	1,744.01
2022-23	11,393.82	2,086.85
2023-24	16,443.02	2,428.24
2024-25*	18,120.82	2,330.72

- ❖ Over 18,120.82 crore transactions are recorded in the financial year 2024-25 (till January 2025).

- ❖ The Digital transactions have seen an impressive 4x growth, rising from 4,370.68 crore transactions in FY 2020-21 to 18,120.82 crore in FY 2024-25.
- ❖ UPI holds a highest share (70%) in Total Digital Transactions in FY 2023-24.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Existence of Fourth Form of Water



RESEARCHERS AT FRANCE'S INSTITUT LAUE-LANGEVIN HAVE IDENTIFIED PLASTIC ICE VII, A UNIQUE WATER FORM BEHAVING LIKE BOTH LIQUID AND SOLID UNDER EXTREME PRESSURE

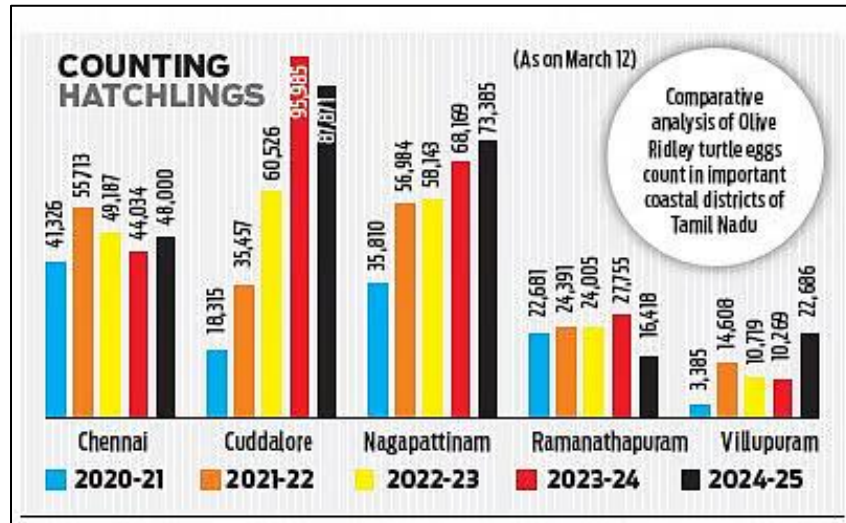
- ❖ Scientists have now confirmed a fourth form of ice, called Plastic Ice VII.
- ❖ This rare phase allows water molecules to rotate freely while staying in a solid structure.
- ❖ Unlike regular ice, the Plastic Ice VII has a rigid structure but allows molecular rotation.
- ❖ The ice forms under pressures above three gigapascals (GPa), about 30,000 times Earth's atmospheric pressure.
- ❖ It also needs temperatures above 450 Kelvin (177°C).
- ❖ This extreme phase, exists on the Jupiter's and Saturn's icy moons, such as the Ganymede and Titan.

ENVIRONMENT NEWS

Olive Ridley turtle nesting in Tamil Nadu 2025

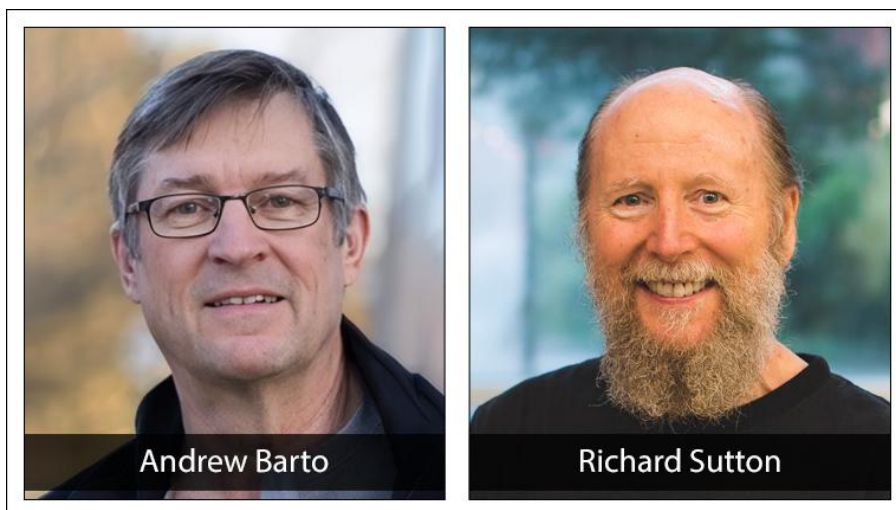
- ❖ The Volunteers and the Tamil Nadu Forest Department have collectively gathered 2,53,719 turtle eggs across the State so far, nearing last year's total of 2,58,907.

- ❖ This is the highest in the last six years.
- ❖ In January and February, over 1,200 dead turtles washed ashore along the coasts of Chennai and Chengalpattu.
- ❖ Cuddalore tops the list with 89,784 eggs collected as of March 11.
- ❖ It is followed by Chennai division with 47,082 eggs.
- ❖ Nagapattinam ranks third with 73,728 eggs.
- ❖ Villupuram and Ramnad divisions collected 23,403 and 18,073 eggs respectively.



PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

ACM A.M. Turing Award 2024



- ❖ Andrew G. Barto (University of Massachusetts, Amherst) and Richard S. Sutton (University of Alberta) were chosen for the 2024 ACM A.M. Turing Award.

- ❖ They are awarded for their pioneering work in reinforcement learning (RL).
- ❖ RL is a process where an agent learns to behave successfully by receiving rewards for actions in a stochastic environment.

Fisheries Startup Conclave 2.0

- ❖ The Department of Fisheries, under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, organised the Fisheries Startup Conclave 2.0 in Hyderabad.
- ❖ The event aimed at fostering entrepreneurship, technological advancements and sustainability in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors.
- ❖ During the conclave, the NFDLP Mobile Application was launched.
- ❖ It is developed under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Samridhi Sah-Yojana (PM-MKSSY).
- ❖ This app is designed to streamline access to government schemes, particularly benefiting startups and stakeholders in the fisheries sector.

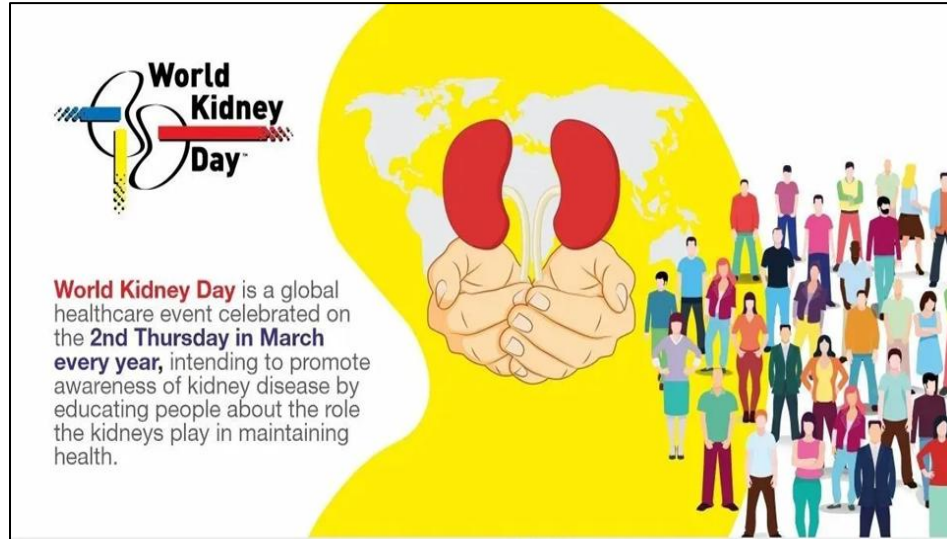


IMPORTANT DAYS

World Kidney Day 2025 - March 13

- ❖ The world observes this day every year on the second Thursday of March.
- ❖ It aims to spread awareness about kidney-related diseases and infections and some preventive measures.
- ❖ The theme of 2025 is “Are Your Kidneys OK? Detect early, protect kidney health.”

- ❖ The Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is estimated to impact around 850 million individuals globally.



MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

135th Foundation Day NAI



- ❖ The National Archives of India (NAI) celebrated its 135th Foundation Day on 11th March with an exhibition titled "Indian Heritage through Architecture."
- ❖ NAI, an attached office under the Ministry of Culture, was originally established as the Imperial Record Department on 11 March 1891 in Kolkata (Calcutta).



- ❖ The complete transfer of records from Calcutta to New Delhi was finalized in 1937.
- ❖ The National Archives of India also serves as the nodal agency for implementing the Public Records Act, 1993, and the Public Record Rules, 1997.
- ❖ During the event the 'Gyan Bharatam Mission', was also launched to surveying, documenting, and conserving India's vast manuscript heritage.

