

March - 18

## TNPSC BITS

- ❖ India is establishing the world's first Autonomous Maritime Shipbuilding and Systems Centre in Andhra Pradesh's Nellore district to develop the unmanned surface vessels (USVs) and autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs) and strengthen maritime security and indigenous defence manufacturing.
- ❖ Avataar amphibious drone, India's first amphibious drone, was launched by Aqua AirX Autonomous Systems.
- ❖ Union Minister of Civil Aviation announced that Tuticorin Airport will be renamed Thoothukudi Airport in English, replacing the earlier name "Tuticorin Airport."
- ❖ Yashwant Gupta received the MP Birla Memorial Award for his contributions to radio astronomy.
- ❖ The ISRO successfully conducted a sea-level hot test of the CE20 Cryogenic Engine at 22-tonne thrust.
  - The CE20 engine powers the C25 cryogenic upper stage of Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3), India's heavy-lift rocket.
- ❖ The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) dismantled a pan-India darknet drug network called "Team Kalki", which had been operating through the darknet and encrypted messaging apps since January 2025.
- ❖ The Lower Kopili Hydroelectric Project, a 120-megawatt run-of-river hydropower project in Assam across the West Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao districts, was recently inaugurated by Prime Minister.

## TAMIL NADU NEWS

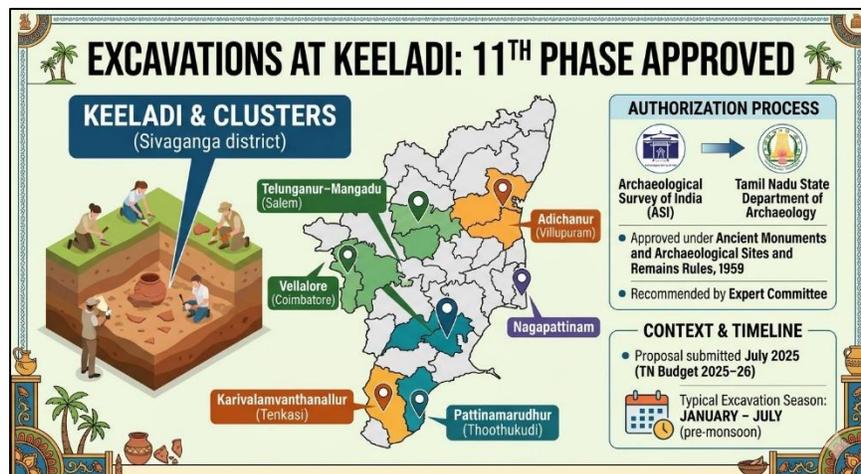
### Early Chola Sculptures and Inscriptions

- ❖ Early Chola Dynasty period sculptures and inscriptions were discovered on the bed of the Cauvery River near Musiri.
- ❖ The sculptures of Dakshinamurthy and Vinadhara Shiva were found about 200 metres from the river bund and likely belonged to a ruined temple.
- ❖ A stone slab contains two Tamil inscriptions dated to the 10th century C.E.
- ❖ One inscription records 120 kasu (ancient coins) donated to the sabha of Mahendramangalam to maintain two perpetual lamps in a temple.
- ❖ Another inscription mentions tax-free land donated to the temple as devadana (gift to the deity).

- ❖ Architectural remains such as pillar fragments, roof structures and a large Shiva Linga were also found at the site.



### Excavations at Keeladi



- ❖ The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has permitted the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology to conduct the 11th phase of excavations at Keeladi and seven other sites.

- ❖ The approval was granted under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Rules, 1959, after recommendation by an expert committee.
- ❖ Excavations will be carried out at Keeladi and its clusters in Sivaganga district.
- ❖ Other approved sites are Pattinamarudhur (Thoothukudi), Karivalam Vantha Nallur (Tenkasi), Manikollai (Cuddalore), Adichanur (Villupuram), Vellore (Coimbatore), Telunganur–Mangadu (Salem), and Nagapattinam.
- ❖ The proposal for excavation was submitted by the State government in July 2025 as part of the Tamil Nadu Budget 2025–26.
- ❖ Excavations in Tamil Nadu are usually conducted between January and July, before the monsoon season begins.

## NATIONAL NEWS

### New Rules for State DGP Appointment

<p><b>How to select DGP</b></p> <p>The Supreme Court has issued seven directives to be followed by the States when appointing the Director General of Police</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Proposals should be sent to the UPSC, three months before incumbent's retirement</li> <li>▪ UPSC to prepare a panel of names as per Prakash Singh judgment. It should try and choose within the zone of consideration who have got two years of service</li> <li>▪ States shall appoint</li> </ul>		<p>one of the panel's choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ States shall not appoint DGP on an 'acting basis'</li> <li>▪ The selected person can continue despite his date of superannuation, but the extension should</li> </ul> <p>be reasonable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appointing persons on their retirement day is not in conformity with the Prakash Singh verdict</li> <li>▪ State's and Centre's rules running counter to the SC directions will remain in abeyance</li> </ul>
<b>OLD RULE (AS PER PRAKASH SINGH JUDGMENT OF 2006)</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DGP shall be selected by the State government from among three senior-most officers of the department empanelled for promotion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The promotion should be based on their length of service, very good record and range of experience for heading the police force</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Once the officer is selected for the job, he or she should have a minimum tenure of at least two years irrespective of their date of superannuation</li> </ul>	

- ❖ The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) revised the rules for appointing the State Director General of Police (DGP).
- ❖ States must now seek permission from the Supreme Court of India if there is any delay in sending the names of eligible officers for DGP empanelment.
- ❖ States must send proposals to UPSC at least three months before the retirement of the current DGP.
- ❖ The rule follows the judgment in Prakash Singh vs Union of India, which laid guidelines for police reforms and DGP appointments.
- ❖ The Supreme Court clarified that there is no concept of an “acting DGP” and that states must appoint a regular DGP.

- ❖ UPSC prepares a panel of three senior IPS (Indian Police Service) officers, from which the State government selects the DGP.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

### Asteroid 2024 YR4

- ❖ NASA confirmed that Asteroid 2024 YR4 will not collide with the Moon in 2032 after new observations.
- ❖ The asteroid was discovered in 2024 and was earlier predicted to have about a 3.8–4.3% chance of hitting the Moon on 22 December 2032.
- ❖ Scientists refined its orbit using observations from the James Webb Space Telescope.
- ❖ New calculations show the asteroid will pass the Moon at a safe distance of about 21,200 kilometres.
- ❖ The asteroid is about 65 metres wide and is classified as a Near-Earth Object (NEO).

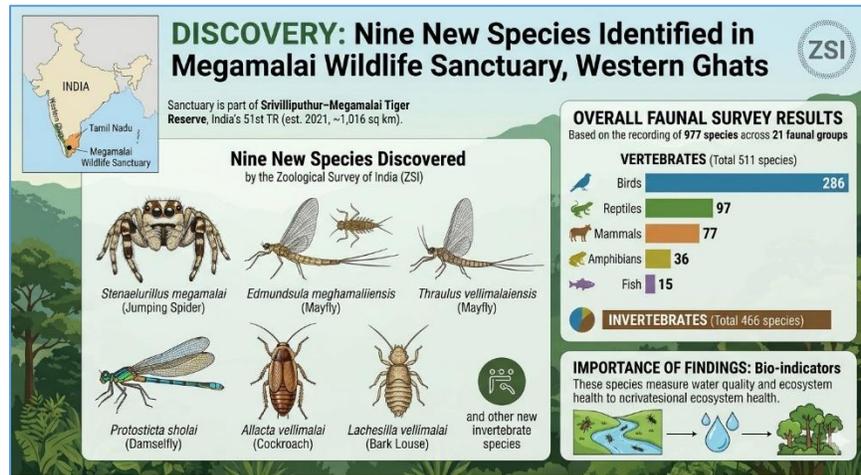


## ENVIRONMENT NEWS

### Nine New Species in Megamalai Wildlife Sanctuary

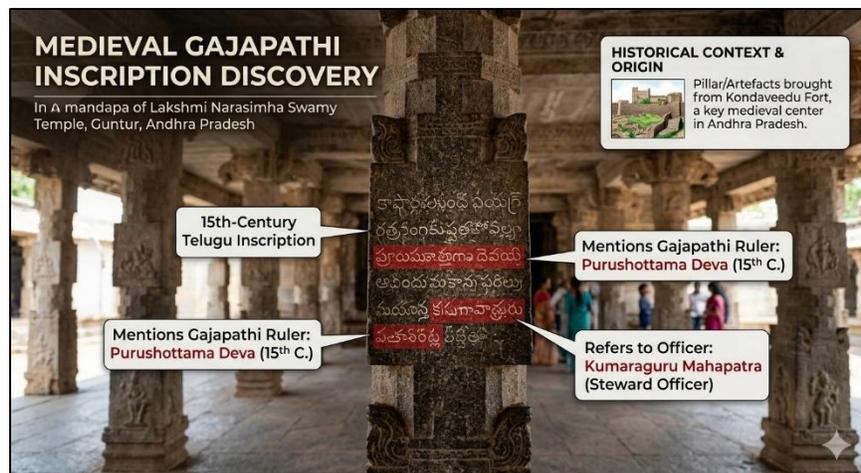
- ❖ The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) discovered nine new species during a faunal survey at Megamalai Wildlife Sanctuary in the Western Ghats.
- ❖ The newly identified species include *Stenaelurillus megamalai* (jumping spider), *Edmundsula meghamalaiensis* (mayfly), *Thraulius vellimalaiensis* (mayfly), *Protosticta sholai* (damsfly), *Allacta vellimalai* (cockroach), and *Lachesilla vellimalai* (bark louse), along with other new invertebrate species.

- ❖ The survey recorded 977 species across 21 faunal groups, including 511 vertebrates (286 birds, 97 reptiles, 77 mammals, 36 amphibians, and 15 fish) and 466 invertebrates.
- ❖ The sanctuary is part of the Srivilliputhur–Megamalai Tiger Reserve, India’s 51st tiger reserve, notified in 2021, covering about 1,016 sq km.
- ❖ Many species found in the survey act as bio-indicators that help measure water quality and ecosystem health.



## STATE NEWS

### Medieval Gajapathi Inscription



- ❖ A medieval Telugu inscription linked to the Gajapathi dynasty was discovered at the Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple in Guntur, Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ The inscription is associated with Purushottama Deva, a 15th-century ruler of the Gajapathi kingdom of Odisha.

- ❖ It mentions Kumaraguru Mahapatra, a steward officer serving under the Gajapathi ruler.
- ❖ The inscription was found on a stone pillar in the temple mandapa and is written in Telugu.
- ❖ The temple artefacts are believed to have been brought from Kondaveedu Fort, an important medieval centre in Andhra Pradesh.

## PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

### Oscars 2026

**OSCARS 2026:  
LIST OF WINNERS**

 <b>BEST PICTURE</b> - One Battle After Another	 <b>BEST ACTOR</b> - Michael B Jordan - Sinners		
 <b>BEST ACTRESS</b> - Jessie Buckley - Hamnet	 <b>BEST DIRECTOR</b> - Paul Thomas Anderson - One Battle After Another		
 <b>BEST DOCUMENTARY FEATURE FILM</b> - Mr. Nobody Against Putin	 <b>BEST DOCUMENTARY SHORT FILM</b> - All the Empty Rooms		 <b>BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR</b> : Sean Penn - One Battle After Another
 <b>BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS</b> - Amy Madigan (Weapons)	 <b>BEST ANIMATED FEATURE FILM</b> -KPop Demon Hunters		 <b>BEST ANIMATED SHORT FILM</b> - The Girl Who Cried Pearls

- ❖ The winners of the 98th Academy Awards (Oscars 2026) were announced in Los Angeles, United States.
- ❖ The Best Picture award was won by the film One Battle After Another, directed by Paul Thomas Anderson.
- ❖ Michael B. Jordan won the Best Actor award for his performance in the film Sinners.

- ❖ Jessie Buckley won the Best Actress award for the film Hamnet.
- ❖ The Best Animated Feature award was won by KPop Demon Hunters.

## SPORTS NEWS

### World Para Athletics Grand Prix 2026

- ❖ India finished first at the World Para Athletics Grand Prix 2026 held in New Delhi.
- ❖ India won a total of 208 medals, including 75 gold, 69 silver and 64 bronze medals.
- ❖ Russia finished second with 35 medals, while Bosnia and Herzegovina secured third place.
- ❖ Preeti Pal, a double Paralympic bronze medallist, won a gold medal in the women's 200 m T35–T37 race.
- ❖ Shubham Juyal won gold in the men's shot put F57 event with a throw of 14.45 metres.
- ❖ Rakeshbhai Bhatt won gold in the men's 200 m T37–T44 race, leading an all-Indian podium finish.
- ❖ Manojkumar Sabapathi secured gold in the men's 800 m T53–T54 event.



### World Boxing Futures Cup

- ❖ Chandrika Pujari of India won a gold medal at the World Boxing Futures Cup 2026 held in Bangkok, Thailand.

- ❖ She won the women's 51 kg category by defeating Mardonova Nazokat of Uzbekistan in the final.
- ❖ India finished the tournament with five medals – 1 gold, 3 silver and 1 bronze.
- ❖ Gunjan (women's 48 kg), Joyshree Devi (women's 54 kg), and L. Ambekar Meetei (men's 50 kg) won silver medals in their respective categories.
- ❖ Radhamani Longjam won a bronze medal in the women's 57 kg category.
- ❖ The tournament featured young boxers competing in Youth Olympic weight categories and served as preparation for the 2026 Summer Youth Olympics in Dakar, Senegal.



## IMPORTANT DAYS

### National Vaccination Day 2026 - March 16



- ❖ The day is observed in India to highlight the importance of immunisation in protecting public health.

- ❖ The day marks the launch of the Pulse Polio Immunisation Programme on 16 March 1995, when the oral polio vaccine was first given nationwide.
- ❖ India was officially declared polio-free in 2014 after sustained vaccination drives and public awareness campaigns.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is “Immunization for All is Humanly Possible.”

## MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

### Ramesses II Statue Fragment Discovered



- ❖ Archaeologists discovered the missing upper fragment of a 3,200-year-old statue of Ramesses II in Hermopolis Magna, Minya Governorate, Egypt.
- ❖ The statue fragment was found at El Ashmunein, the modern site of the ancient city Hermopolis Magna, about 241 kilometres south of Cairo.
- ❖ The newly discovered limestone fragment is 3.8 metres tall, and when joined with the lower part found in 1930, the statue will be about 7 metres high.
- ❖ The statue shows Pharaoh Ramesses II wearing the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt.
- ❖ Ramesses II ruled Ancient Egypt from 1279 BCE to 1213 BCE during the 19th Dynasty of the New Kingdom.
- ❖ Hermopolis Magna was an ancient religious centre dedicated to Thoth, the ibis-headed god of wisdom, writing and knowledge.

