

March - 22

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister inaugurated the statue of Sir. John Hubert Marshall, British archaeologist, who was instrumental in excavations of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro sites of Indus Valley Civilization, at Egmore in Chennai.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu government has announced that it would provide ₹37,500 for cattle, ₹6,000 for sheep/goat and ₹200 for poultry as compensation to the farmers in case the animal/bird was killed by street dogs.
- ❖ The Supreme Court has set aside the 2022 order of the National Green Tribunal, Chennai which has barred the Auroville Foundation from going ahead with a proposed township project in Puducherry without environmental clearance.
- ❖ Indore is set to achieve another milestone in sustainable waste management by establishing India's first green waste processing plant under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model.
- ❖ The Kabaddi World Cup 2025 begins in England which marking the first time the tournament is held outside Asia.
- ❖ The 23rd edition of the bilateral naval exercise 'Varuna', was held between India and France at Goa coast.

TAMIL NADU NEWS

Sillahalla hydroelectric project



- ❖ The Sillahalla Ecological Social Protection Association (SESPA) urged to scrap the Silhalla pumped hydro-electric storage project considering the fragile ecology of the Nilgiris.

- ❖ The proposed hydroelectric project aims at building the two dams with a 10 km tunnel and is going to be developed in the middle of the said 25 villages.
- ❖ It is warned that around 1,000 acres of farming land and 500 acres of forest land would likely be submerged.

Chennai Corporation Budget 2025-26

TRACING THE HISTORY	
The civic body will now be known as Greater Chennai Corporation	
Chennai corporation is the oldest municipal body in the country	
 <p>Established in September 1688, under a royal charter issued by King James II in December 1687</p>	<p>Sir Josiah Child, one of the directors of the East India Company was the man behind the formation of corporation</p>
<p>Had powers to levy rates upon inhabitants for building of schools, a town hall, and jail</p>	<p>It is the oldest municipal body of the Commonwealth of Nations outside Great Britain</p>
<p>By 1901, it extended to 68sqkm covering a population of 5.4 lakh</p>	<p>In 1913, corporation moved to Ripon Buildings, named after Lord Ripon, who was viceroy of India from 1880 to 1884</p>
<p>The boundaries were increased to cover 174sqkm in 1978</p>	<p>Has three regions divided into 15 zones, consisting 200 wards</p>

- ❖ The Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) has introduced a QR code system for tax and trade licence payments.
- ❖ It accounts for total receipts of ₹8,267.17 crore and total expenditure of ₹8,404.7 crore.
- ❖ The Councillor's Ward Development Fund would be increased from ₹50 lakh to ₹60 lakh per ward.
- ❖ The Mayor's Special Development Fund would be raised from ₹3 crore to ₹4 crore.
- ❖ A special emergency care centre for injured pet animals would be set up for ₹25 lakh.
- ❖ 10 new veterinary hospitals would be built within the existing Animal Birth Control (ABC) centres of the GCC at ₹15 lakh each.
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- ❖ ₹20 crore was earmarked for special classes to enhance English-speaking skills for students from Classes IX to XII.

- ❖ ₹40.50 crore was allocated for the competitive exam awareness programmes and incentives for students.
- ❖ A ₹4.46 crore allocation will facilitate citizen services, grievance redressal, and automated FAQs through WhatsApp-based communication.

Kamba Ramayana Festivals

- ❖ The South Zone Cultural Centre (SZCC), which is under the Ministry of Culture, is launching a comprehensive initiative aimed at reviving the oral tradition of 'Kamba Ramayana' recitals and its broader cultural impact".
- ❖ It has planned a week-long immersive festival to be held at Kambar Medu, the birthplace of Kambar in Theraazhundur, Mayiladuthurai District.
- ❖ This festival will feature continuous recitals of the 'Kamba Ramayana', dance dramas, and scholarly discussions.



NATIONAL NEWS

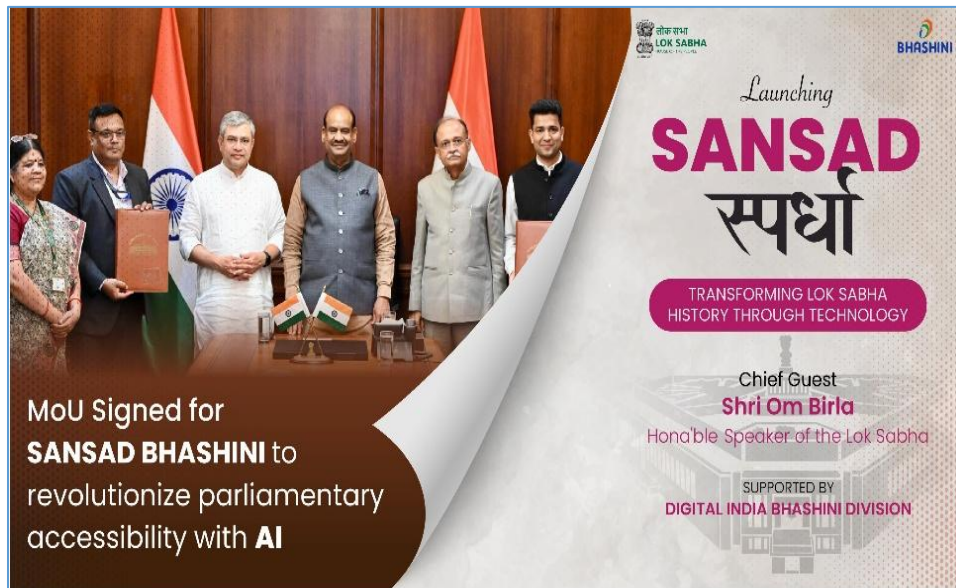
NIDAR challenge

- ❖ The MeitY in collaboration with the Drone Federation India (DFI), launched the National Innovation Challenge for Drone Application and Research (NIDAR).
- ❖ This is launched under the 'SwaYaan – a Capacity Building for Human Resource Development in Unmanned Aircraft Systems' initiative.

- ❖ The drones are designed to contribute to disaster management by scouting and delivering essential supplies in affected areas.



Sansad Bhashini initiative

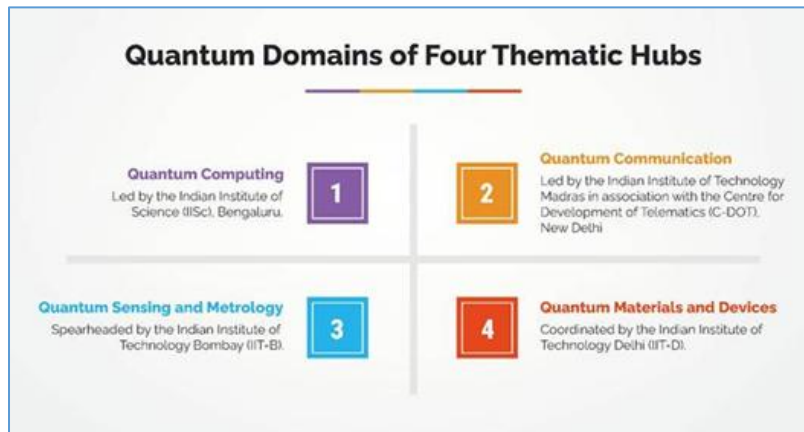


- ❖ The Lok Sabha Secretariat and MeitY have signed a MoU to develop the Sansad Bhashini initiative.
- ❖ It aims to leverage a cutting-edge AI to enhance multilingual support, streamline parliamentary operations, and improve access to vast archives of parliamentary debates and records.

- ❖ It will feature the AI-based translation that enables the real-time translation of the parliamentary content, including legacy debates, committee meetings, and agenda files, into various regional languages.
- ❖ It will also be making documents more accessible to all citizens.

Four T-Hubs - National Quantum Mission

- ❖ The National Quantum Mission is a nationwide initiative driving the cutting-edge advancements in quantum technology.
- ❖ As part of this mission, four Thematic Hubs (T-Hubs) have been set up, bringing together 14 Technical Groups across 17 states and 2 Union Territories.
- ❖ The four T-Hubs have been established across leading institutions in India:
 - Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru
 - Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras in association with the Centre for Development of Telematics, New Delhi
 - Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay
 - Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

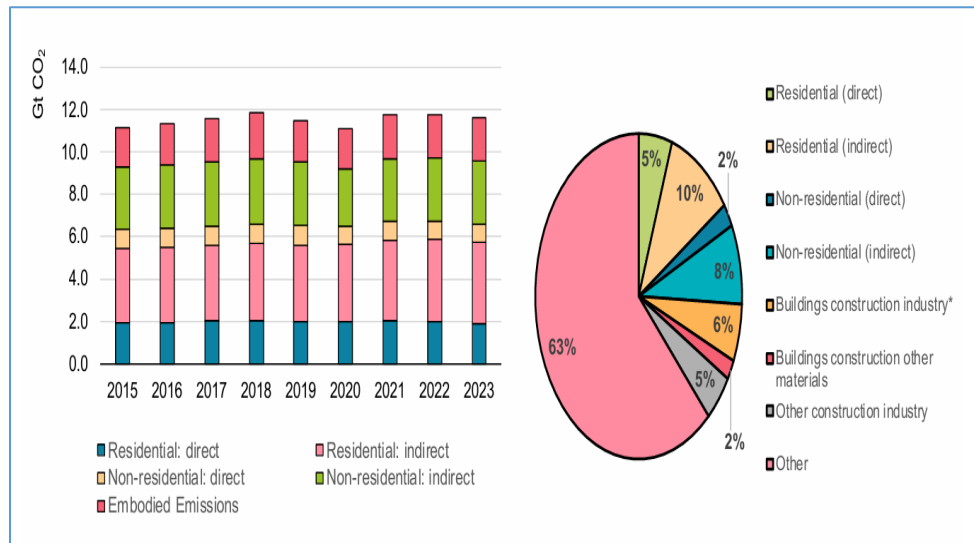
Mexico's Constitutional Reform

- ❖ Mexico has amended its Constitution to recognise native corn as an element of national identity and banning the planting of genetically modified (GM) seeds.
- ❖ The crop has originated in Mexico nearly 9,000 years ago when Mesoamerican farmers domesticated teosinte, a wild grass.
- ❖ Since then, corn has remained central to Mexican life.

- ❖ Corn imports surged from 3.1 million metric tonnes in the early 1990s to nearly 23.4 million metric tonnes today.



Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction 2024-2025



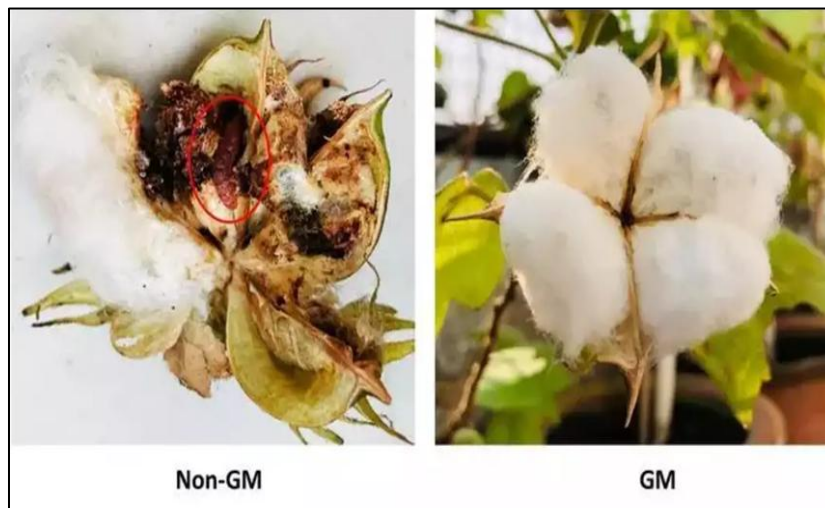
- ❖ The building and construction sector’s emissions did not increase in 2024 for the first time since 2020.
- ❖ The report was released by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and climate alliance Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction.
- ❖ The building sector’s emissions stabilised in 2024.

- ❖ The energy intensity of buildings decreased by nearly 10 per cent.
- ❖ Additionally, the proportion of renewable energy in final energy demand rose by about 5 per cent.
- ❖ The Construction materials like the cement and steel accounts for 18 per cent of global emissions and generate substantial waste.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Pink Bollworm Resistant GM cotton

- ❖ The Scientists at the CSIR-NBRI in Lucknow claim to have developed the world's first genetically modified (GM) cotton.
- ❖ It is totally resistant to the Pink Bollworm (PBW).
- ❖ PBW is a devastating pest affecting cotton crop in India, Africa and Asia.
- ❖ A PBW infestation has been reported from Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and other cotton-growing belts in central and southern India since 2015-2016.



REPORTS AND INDICES

Future of Free Speech Index 2025

- ❖ The report, titled 'Who in the World Supports Free Speech?' was released by The Future of Free Speech, an independent U.S.-based think tank.
- ❖ India ranked 24th out of the 33 countries surveyed on the question of support for free speech.

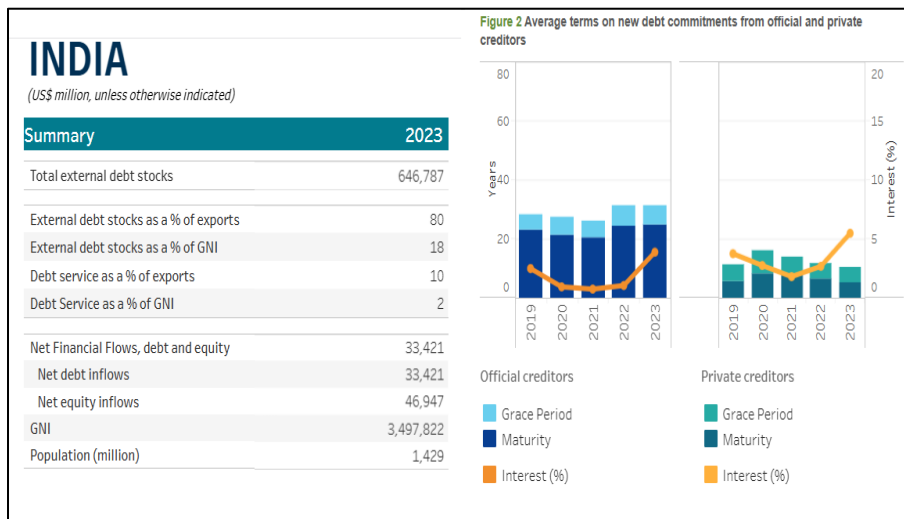
- ❖ Norway and Denmark finishing at the top of the Index.
- ❖ Indonesia (56.8), Malaysia (55.4), and Pakistan (57.0) have showed the biggest improvements.
- ❖ U.S., Israel, and Japan have seen a drop-in free speech support since 2021.

INDIA'S 24TH POSITION IN THE FUTURE OF FREE SPEECH INDEX: AN IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

In recent years, global assessments of free speech have brought to light varying degrees of commitment to this fundamental right across different nations. One such assessment, the Future of Free Speech Index, has positioned India at the 24th spot out of 33 evaluated countries. This ranking offers a nuanced perspective on the state of free speech in India, reflecting both its strengths and areas requiring attention.

March 20, 2025

International Debt Report 2024



- ❖ The International Debt Report 2024 was released by the World Bank.
- ❖ The Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) reached a record high of USD 8.8 trillion by the end of 2023, an 8% increase since 2020.
- ❖ External debt rose by 18%, reaching USD 1.1 trillion.
- ❖ Interest rates doubled to over 4% on loans from official creditors in 2023.

- ❖ Interest rates rose to 6%, the highest in 15 years.
- ❖ For India, the report notes an increase in external debt by \$31 billion, reaching \$646.79 billion in 2023.
- ❖ The interest payments jumped from \$15.08 billion in 2022 to \$22.54 billion in 2023.
- ❖ Long-term debt also increased by 7%, while short-term debt saw a slight decline.

STATES' NEWS

Shishtachar Squad



- ❖ Delhi Police is set to launch 'Shishtachar' squads, also known as 'anti-eve teasing' squads.
- ❖ It aims to improve women's safety in the national capital.
- ❖ The initiative will "focus on enforcing the law, rather than imposing the personal or cultural morality on individuals".
- ❖ Each district will have the Squads led by an Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP).

Hmar and Zomi Tribe

- ❖ The Hmar Inpui and the Zomi Council agreed to work together for the peace in Manipur.
- ❖ Hmar tribe belongs to the larger Chin-Kuki-Mizo ethnic group.
- ❖ Zomis are part of the larger Zo ethnic group, which includes Mizo, Kuki, and Chin communities.

- ❖ Hmar speaks Hmar dialect, part of the Kuki-Chin-Mizo language family.
- ❖ Zomis speaks one of the Kukish language dialects within the Kuki-Chin linguistic family.

Kuki-Zo	Kuki-Zo highlights only Kuki. The exclusive use of "Kuki-Zo" marginalizes the distinct identities of the Hmar and Zomi people. This parallels the representation of "Tangkul-Naga," which implies that the Tangkul are subsumed under the Naga identity. Kuki-Zo can fall into equating the Kuki with their ancestor Zo.
Kuki-Chin Chin-Kuki	Kuki-Chin and Chin-Kuki remove the Hmar and the Zomi from the spotlight. Chin is another colonial terminology used against the Zo people in the present day Myanmar.
Kuki-Zo-Hmar/ Kuki-Hmar-Zo	These identities were recently used which sought to please the Hmar while sidelining the Zomi.

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

4th Conference of Global Intelligence & Security Chiefs



- ❖ The National Security Advisor (NSA) of India hosted the 4th Conference of Global Intelligence and Security Chiefs.
- ❖ It has witnessed the participation of intelligence officials from over 20 countries including the chiefs of the Five Eyes Alliance.
- ❖ This high-level annual security dialogue organized as part of the Raisina Dialogue 2025.
- ❖ It is modelled on the lines of the annual Munich Security Conference and the Singapore's Shangri-La Dialogue.

