

March – 13

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Tamilnadu government employees can now receive gifts up to Rs.25,000 with prior permission from higher officials. Earlier it was Rs.5,000.
- ❖ For adopting the green building concept and being user friendly, 14 underground stations of Chennai Metro Rail have been given platinum ratings by the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC).
 - IGBC rating systems are voluntary, consensus based, market-driven building programmes.
 - The rating systems are based on the five elements of the nature (Panchabhutas) and are a perfect blend of ancient architectural practices and modern technological innovations.
- ❖ Sulur Airforce station was awarded “Nishanth” Presidential colours by the President Ramnath Kovind.
 - The award of President's colours is one of the greatest honours bestowed upon in recognition of exceptional service rendered to the nation, both during war and in peace.
- ❖ Japanese government decided to provide Rs. 22 lakhs for the Rabindra Bharati Museum in Kolkata of West Bengal in order to establish deeper and stronger historical and cultural ties with India.
- ❖ Upamanyu Dutta from Mumbai won Bronze medal, which is India's first ever medal in the Laser Standard race for men in the Asian Open Laser Sailing Championship held in Singapore.

TAMIL NADU

e-Waste and Biomedical Waste Management

- ❖ Tamilnadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) has called for consultants to study the gap between waste generation and end disposal/recycling of the waste and suggest ways to bridge the gap.
- ❖ Consultants have been instructed to establish the Biomedical waste chain - linking different stakeholders, to understand the route, with economics and associated environmental impact.

GI Mark - Thirubuvanam silk saree

- ❖ Geographical Indication mark has been awarded to historically famous Thirubuvanam silk sarees.
- ❖ Silk saree weaving has been practised in Thirubuvanam region since the times of Chola king Kulothungan the Third.



Chennai Sholavaram Airstrip

- ❖ The Indian Air Force (IAF) is setting up its first East Coast Air surveillance base at the unused World War 2 era Sholavaram airstrip.
- ❖ If operational, this air surveillance base at Sholavaram will help the forces to secure the 2,500-kilometre coastline covering Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha.
- ❖ IAF is planning to station few attack helicopters here. This would bolster INS Rajali, the Indian Naval Station at Arakkonam, which carries out surveillance through Boeing P8I.
- ❖ In Sholavaram, a small airstrip is to be developed under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (UDAN) of the Union Civil Aviation Ministry.
- ❖ Sholavaram air strip was created by the British during World War II.

NATIONAL

Pinaka

- ❖ India's defence lab DRDO successfully test-fired the indigenously developed guided rocket system "Pinaka" at Pokhran desert in Rajasthan.



- ❖ The weapon system is equipped with state-of-the-art guidance kit, comprising of an advanced navigation and control system.

INTERNATIONAL

Trends in International Arms Transfers - 2018

- ❖ The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has released the Trends in International Arms Transfers 2018 Report.
- ❖ India is now the World's second largest importer of arms in 2014-18 and accounted for 9.5% of total global imports.
- ❖ India's imports are decreased partly due to delays in deliveries of arms produced under licence from foreign suppliers, such as combat aircrafts ordered from Russia in 2001 and submarines ordered from France in 2008.
 - SIPRI, established in 1966, is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament.
 - Based in Stockholm the Institute provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.

ECONOMY

World Gold Council Report

- ❖ World Gold Council (WGC) has released a report on gold holdings of various countries.
- ❖ India has 11th largest gold reserve in the world with 607 tonnes.
- ❖ The World Gold Council is the market development organisation for the gold industry.
- ❖ Its purpose is to stimulate and sustain demand for gold.

Gold cache		
Rank	Possessor	Tonnes
1	U.S.	8,133.5
2	Germany	3,369.7
3	IMF	2,814.0
4	Italy	2,451.8
5	France	2,436.0
6	Russia	2,119.2
7	Mainland China	1,864.3
8	Switzerland	1,040.0
9	Japan	765.2
10	Netherlands	612.5
11	India	607.0
12	ECB	504.8
13	Taiwan	423.6
14	Portugal	382.5
15	Kazakhstan	353.3

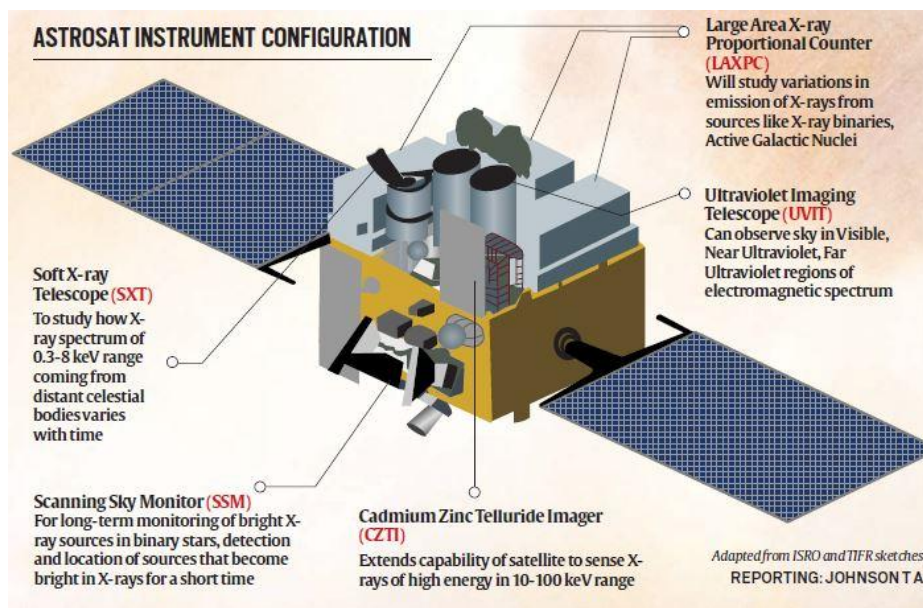
SOURCE:
WGC

- ❖ US occupies the top spot while China and Japan have more gold reserves than India.
- ❖ India is the world's largest consumer of Gold.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

New Group of Stars

- ❖ Researchers from Thiruvananthapuram and Mumbai have identified a new population of ultraviolet stars in the globular cluster NGC 2808 using Indian multi-wavelength space observatory AstroSat.
- ❖ Globular clusters are collections of thousands to millions of stars, moving as one unit.
- ❖ These stars are tightly held together by gravity of the cluster, and are believed to have formed together at roughly the same time.
- ❖ NGC 2808 is one of the most massive globular clusters that we know of, and is located at a distance of 47,000 light years from us.
- ❖ This cluster was observed by the team of researchers using the Ultra Violet Imaging Telescope (UVIT) on-board AstroSat.



Astrosat

- ❖ Astrosat is India's first multi-wavelength space observatory.
- ❖ It was launched on a PSLV-XL on 28 September 2015.
- ❖ With the success of this satellite ISRO has proposed to launch AstroSat-2 as a successor for Astrosat when nears its five-year life span.

- ❖ This mission has put ISRO in a very exclusive club of nations that have space-based observatories.
- ❖ Only the United States, European Space Agency, Japan and Russia have such observatories in space.

ENVIRONMENT

Wetland of International Importance

- ❖ Indian Sundarbans was accorded with the status of 'Wetland of International Importance' in the Ramsar Convention.
- ❖ This site become 27th Ramsar Convention site of India.
- ❖ Sundarbans encompasses hundreds of islands and a maze of rivers, rivulets and creeks, in the delta of the Rivers Ganges and Brahmaputra on the Bay of Bengal in India and Bangladesh.
- ❖ Indian Sundarbans was already a UNESCO world heritage site and it is a home to the Royal Bengal Tiger.
- ❖ Sundarbans Tiger Reserve is situated within the site and part of it has been declared a "critical tiger habitat" under the national law.
- ❖ It is also a "Tiger Conservation Landscape" of global importance.

WORLD'S LARGEST MANGROVE FOREST	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The wetland falls within the Sunderbans mangrove, the largest in the world ➤ It's home to endangered species like the Irrawaddy dolphin, northern river terrapin, fishing cat and several species of kingfisher ➤ The Sunderbans is spread over a 10,000 sq km area with 4,000 sq km on the Indian side ➤ It hosts several species of migratory birds every year 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Sunderbans was recognised as a Unesco World Heritage Site in 1987 ➤ Wetlands act as a barrier against cyclones, tidal surges and intrusion of salt water

Ramsar Convention

- ❖ Ramsar Convention was adopted in February 2, 1971.

- ❖ It is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for international cooperation for the conservation and use of wetlands and their resources.
- ❖ The Convention came into force in 1975.
