

March – 16

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Pankaj Kumar has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Thoothukudi-based Sterlite Copper.
- ❖ France announced to freeze all assets of Pakistan based terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Masood Azhar in application of its Monetary and Financial Code.
- ❖ In the worst attack in the Pacific country's history, around 49 people have been killed and over 20 injured in shootings at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand.

NATIONAL

First TIR shipment

- ❖ The first shipment under the United Nations 'Transports Internationaux Routiers' (TIR) convention arrived in India from Afghanistan through Chabahar Port of Iran.
- ❖ International shipments moved under TIR convention are subjected to minimal checks by customs officials.
- ❖ Reciprocal recognition of Customs is at the heart of TIR Convention.
- ❖ The customs officials only verify the document and check the seal without requiring physical checking of the contents.
- ❖ This enables shipments to pass through countries without being opened at borders.
- ❖ The convention acts as a strong catalyst for moving goods using the multi-modal transportation route like Chabahar and International North-South Transport (INSTC) Corridor.

First Workshop on India Energy Modelling Forum

- ❖ The NITI Aayog and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) organized the first workshop on development of the India Energy Modelling Forum (IEMF)

- ❖ The IEMF seeks to provide a platform for leading experts and policy makers to study important energy and environmental issues and ensure induction of modelling and analysis in informed decision-making process.
- ❖ Energy-modeling can be used to determine the best energy savings option, the best cost saving options, and the best carbon reduction options for a nation.
- ❖ Energy modeling can reduce the overall energy use in buildings and guide us on the use of Specify energy-efficient equipment and technologies.
- ❖ On a macro level, Energy modeling helps government anticipate, plan and prepare appropriate power projects – both conventional and renewable energy projects.

INTERNATIONAL

AFINDEX-19

- ❖ Africa-India Joint Field Training Exercise (AFINDEX-19) between the Indian Army and 16 African nations will be conducted in Pune from March 18 to 27.
- ❖ AFINDEX-19 aims to train the participating contingents in Humanitarian Mine Assistance (HMA) and Peace Keeping Operations (PKO) under the United Nations Charter through practical and comprehensive discussions and tactical exercises.
- ❖ It will also focus on achieving interoperability, learning each other's methodologies and tactics through synchronised operational level planning and tactical level training.

ECONOMY

New oil and gas exploration policy

- ❖ Government has overhauled oil and gas exploration policy after two decades.
- ❖ Government will not charge any share of profit on hydrocarbons produced from less explored areas as it looks to attract the elusive private and foreign investment to raise domestic output.
- ❖ Irrespective of the basins, producers will get complete marketing and pricing freedom for oil and gas in future bid rounds.
- ❖ Companies are required to pay a share of revenue from oil and gas produced in Category-I sedimentary basins such as Krishna Godavari, Mumbai Offshore, Rajasthan or Assam where commercial production has already been established.

- ❖ Companies will be charged only prevalent royalty rates on oil and natural gas in the less explored Category-II and III basins.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Observer App

- ❖ Election Commission has for the first time started using a mobile application, “Observer App” that will help poll observers to submit reports.
- ❖ Over 1,800 IAS, IPS and IRS officials and some others from the Central services are to be deployed as observers in the coming Lok Sabha and State Assembly polls.
- ❖ They will get all the important notifications, alerts, and urgent messages through the “Observer App”.
- ❖ It will help them to get their deployment status, download the ID card and update their profile.

ENVIRONMENT

Annual Quality of Living Survey

- ❖ Global consulting firm Mercer has released its annual quality of living survey in which 231 cities across the globe were ranked based on various factors.
- ❖ This is the 21st edition of the survey.
- ❖ Following factors are evaluated in Mercer’s Quality of Living Reports, which offer city-to-city comparisons for nearly 500 global assignment destinations.
 - Recreation, Public Transport
 - Natural, Economic, Political & Social and Socio-cultural Environment
 - School and Education
 - Medical Facility
 - Housing
- ❖ Vienna tops world ranking for the Tenth consecutive time.
- ❖ Chennai leads the ranking of cities in India ranked 105 and Bengaluru second best with the ranking of 149.

In Southern Asia, the Indian cities of New Delhi (162), Mumbai (154) and Bengaluru (149) remained unchanged from last year's ranking for overall quality of living, with Colombo (138) topping the ranking. In 105th place, Chennai ranks as the region's safest city, while Karachi (226) is the least safe.

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS

National Grassroots Innovators Awards

- ❖ President awarded National Grassroots Innovators at Grambharti near Gandhinagar in Gujarat.



- ❖ President also inaugurated the exhibition of the Festival of Innovation and Entrepreneurship.
- ❖ Prakash Singh Raghuvanshi from Uttar Pradesh has been awarded lifetime achievement award for his innovations in new varieties of agriculture crops.
- ❖ First prize in Veterinary, Herbal medication for coccidiosis was presented to Periyasami Ramasami of Salem, Tamil Nadu.

IMPORTANT DAYS

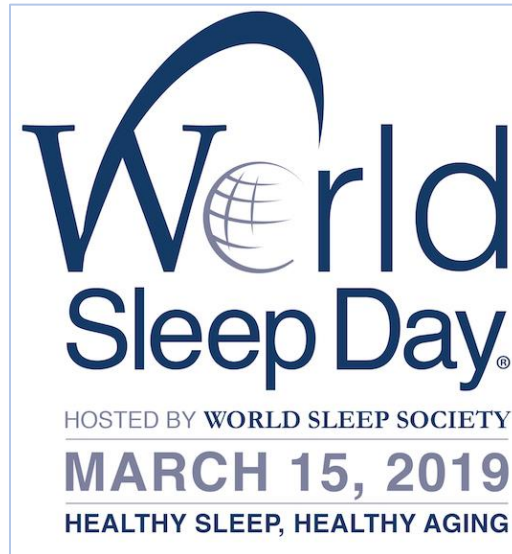
World Consumer Rights Day – March 15

- ❖ World Consumer Rights Day is celebrated every year on 15 March as part of an initiative by Consumer International, a membership organisation for consumer groups around the world.
- ❖ The day is celebrated every year, to celebrate consumer rights and build a world where everyone has access to safe and sustainable products and services.
- ❖ The theme for World Consumers day 2019 is "Trusted Smart Products" chosen in view of the increased popularity of smart gadgets.



World sleep day - March 15

- ❖ World Sleep Day is observed annually on the Friday before the northern hemisphere vernal equinox day.
- ❖ This year World Sleep Day was observed across the globe on March 15, 2019 with the theme 'Healthy Sleep, Healthy Aging'.
- ❖ It is aimed to celebrate sleep and raise awareness of how important it is for good health.
- ❖ This event is being organized by the World Sleep Day Committee of the World Sleep Society since 2008.



MISCELLANEOUS

Coin to honour Stephen Hawking

- ❖ A new 50 pence coin was unveiled to honour the legacy of Stephen Hawking by the UK Royal Mint to recognise his seminal work of black hole.



- ❖ This coin features Hawking's name, a drawing of concentric circles representing a black hole.
- ❖ The coin depicts black hole and one of the late physicist's most important formulas.
