

15 - MARCH 2025

TAMILNADU

Coastal Erosion Threatens Tamil Nadu's Shoreline :

- ❖ **Rising Sea Levels:** Increasing global temperatures cause ice caps to melt, leading to higher sea levels that accelerate coastal erosion.
- ❖ **Unchecked Coastal Development:** Unregulated infrastructure projects disrupt natural coastal defenses, worsening shoreline erosion.
- ❖ **Affected Areas:** Chennai, Nagapattinam, and Cuddalore are experiencing severe erosion due to these factors.

Expert Recommendations:

- ❖ **Mangrove Restoration:** Planting and conserving mangroves to act as natural barriers against coastal erosion and storm surges.
- ❖ **Sustainable Coastal Zone Management:** Implementing policies that regulate development, protect ecosystems, and ensure long-term coastal resilience.
- ❖ **Goal:** Protect vulnerable communities from displacement, property loss, and environmental degradation.

Madras HC Imposes Cap on Tourist Vehicles in Hill Stations

(Coaching for Civil Services - IAS, IFS, IPS, IRS etc.)

- ❖ **Vehicle Cap in Nilgiris:** The Madras High Court has imposed a restriction on the number of tourist vehicles entering the Nilgiris to prevent overcrowding and environmental degradation. The limit is set at 6,000 vehicles per weekday and 8,000 on weekends.
- ❖ **Restriction in Kodaikanal:** A similar cap has been introduced for Kodaikanal, but with a lower limit compared to the Nilgiris, ensuring controlled tourism and reduced ecological impact.
- ❖ **Environmental Concerns:** The decision aims to protect the fragile ecosystem of these popular hill stations, which have been facing increasing environmental stress due to excessive tourist footfall, vehicular pollution, and improper waste disposal.
- ❖ **Preference for Electric Vehicles:** To promote sustainable tourism, preference will be given to tourists using electric vehicles (EVs), encouraging a shift towards eco-friendly transportation and reducing carbon emissions.

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- ❖ **Court's Intervention:** The Madras High Court's ruling highlights the need for balancing tourism with environmental conservation, ensuring that natural habitats and local communities do not suffer due to unregulated tourism.
- ❖ **Regulated Tourism Approach:** The restriction serves as a step towards better tourism management, reducing traffic congestion, preserving local biodiversity, and enhancing the visitor experience in the long run.

Tamil Nadu to Boost Healthcare with More Doctors

- ❖ **Increase in Doctors at PHCs:** The State government has decided to enhance healthcare services by increasing the number of doctors at Primary Health Centers (PHCs) from the existing two to three.
- ❖ **Improvement in Rural Healthcare:** This initiative aims to strengthen medical services in rural areas, ensuring better healthcare accessibility for residents.
- ❖ **Gradual Implementation:** The appointment of the third medical officer will begin with an initial phase covering 100 PHCs, allowing for a structured and efficient rollout.
- ❖ **Enhanced Patient Care:** With an additional doctor available, PHCs can cater to more patients, reduce waiting times, and improve overall medical attention.
- ❖ **Better Emergency Handling:** The increased workforce will help PHCs handle emergency cases more efficiently, providing quicker responses and better treatment options.
- ❖ **Step Towards Strengthening Healthcare:** This move reflects the government's commitment to improving public health infrastructure, particularly in rural and underserved regions.

TAMIL NADU ECONOMIC SURVEY

(Coaching for Civil Services - IAS, IFS, IPS, IRS etc.)

Tamil Nadu Releases First-Ever Economic Survey (2024-25)

The Tamil Nadu government has released its first-ever Economic Survey for the year 2024-25, marking a historic milestone.

- ❖ The report was prepared by the State Planning Commission and presents key economic indicators and growth projections.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government replaced the Indian rupee (₹) symbol with the Tamil letter 'Roo' in the state budget logo.
- ❖ The term 'Roo' represents 'Roobai' (rupee) in Tamil, symbolizing linguistic and cultural pride.



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- ❖ The official logo was shared on the Chief Minister's X (Twitter) page, featuring the slogan "Ellarkum Ellam" (Everything for Everyone) to convey inclusiveness.

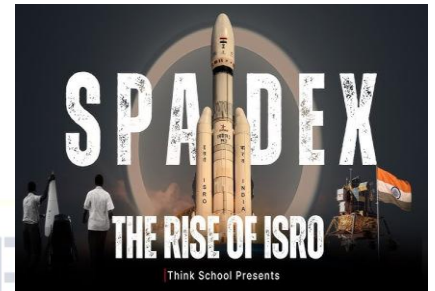
Economic Growth and Per Capita Income

- ❖ Tamil Nadu's first Economic Survey projects a growth rate of 8.5% for 2024-25, surpassing the national average.
- ❖ The report highlights strong performances in the industrial and service sectors as key growth drivers.
- ❖ The state's per capita income is ₹2.78 lakh, which is 1.64 times higher than the national average, reflecting economic prosperity.

NATIONAL

ISRO Successfully Undocks SpaDeX Satellites :

- ❖ The undocking took place in a 460 km circular orbit with a 45-degree inclination. This altitude and inclination are significant for orbital experiments and satellite maneuvers.
- ❖ The mission involved two satellites: SDX01 (Chaser) and SDX02 (Target). These satellites were designed to test and demonstrate docking and undocking technologies in space.
- ❖ The satellites were launched aboard PSLV C60 on December 30. The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) has been a reliable workhorse for ISRO's missions.
- ❖ Successful docking was achieved on January 16. This marked a crucial milestone in the mission, proving ISRO's capability in autonomous docking operations.
- ❖ The undocking process was executed smoothly, showcasing India's advancements in space technology. This success is a step towards future missions involving in-orbit servicing, refueling, and space station development.



Attukal Pongala Festival in Kerala Draws Thousands

- ❖ **Attukal Pongala Festival:** Kerala hosted the grand festival, attracting thousands of women devotees.
- ❖ **Women's Devotion:** Women prepared the traditional sweet rice offering for Attukal Amma.
- ❖ **Mass Participation:** One of the world's largest women-only religious gatherings.



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- ❖ **Eco-Friendly Measures:** Authorities promoted steel and earthen utensils over plastic.
- ❖ **Cultural Significance:** The festival symbolizes faith, unity, and women's empowerment.

Puducherry Government Approves Six New Distilleries:

- ❖ **New Distilleries Approved:** Puducherry government granted NOCs for six new distilleries to boost revenue and economic growth.
- ❖ **Revenue Generation:** Expected to bring ₹500 crore, strengthening the state's finances.
- ❖ **Job Creation:** Projected to provide employment for 5,000 women, promoting financial independence.
- ❖ **Opposition's Concerns:** Allegations of corruption and lack of transparency in approvals.
- ❖ **Public Concerns:** Fears over social and environmental impact, potential misuse, and health risks.
- ❖ **Government's Justification:** Claims strict monitoring will ensure regulation while boosting industry.

India's First Critical Minerals Auction Begins

- ❖ The Indian government has initiated its first-ever auction for exploration licenses of critical minerals.
- ❖ The auction includes rare earth elements, copper, zinc, and other essential minerals.
- ❖ These minerals are vital for defense, electronics, and renewable energy sectors.
- ❖ The move aims to reduce India's dependence on imports.
- ❖ It is expected to boost domestic production and self-sufficiency.
- ❖ The initiative aligns with India's strategy for securing critical mineral supply chains.
- ❖ Successful auctions could attract investment in the mining and processing industries.
- ❖ This step is part of broader economic and strategic policies for resource security.

Jadavpur University Loses 'Institute of Eminence' Status

- ❖ **Loss of IoE Status:** Jadavpur University has lost its prestigious 'Institute of Eminence' (IoE) recognition due to funding cuts.
- ❖ **Drastic Budget Reduction:** Allocation slashed from ₹3,299 crore to ₹606 crore, severely impacting development plans.

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- ❖ **Setback for Higher Education:** A major blow to West Bengal's academic excellence and research potential.
- ❖ **Hindered Academic Growth:** Limited funds will affect infrastructure, research, and global competitiveness.
- ❖ **Impact on Research:** Ongoing and future projects may suffer due to financial constraints.
- ❖ **Faculty and Student Concerns:** Fewer resources, scholarships, and opportunities for both teaching and learning.
- ❖ **Declining Reputation:** The downgrade may affect rankings and the university's appeal.
- ❖ **Wider Educational Impact:** The setback may weaken West Bengal's overall academic ecosystem.
- ❖ **Need for Policy Review:** The funding cut raises concerns about the government's commitment to higher education.

IoE" status, or Institute of Eminence, is a recognition scheme by the University Grants Commission (UGC) in India aimed at empowering higher education institutions to become world-class teaching and research institutions.

SCIENCE AND TECH

Hantavirus Resurfaces as a Global Health Concern

- ❖ **CDC Warning** – The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has warned about hantavirus, a rare but deadly disease.
- (Coaching for Civil Services - IAS, IFS, IPS, IRS etc.)
- ❖ **Rodent Transmission** – Spread through contact with infected rodent droppings, urine, or saliva, mainly via airborne particles.
- ❖ **Severe Symptoms** – Causes respiratory distress, internal bleeding, and kidney failure, often starting with flu-like symptoms.
- ❖ **High Fatality Rate** – No specific cure; supportive care is essential for survival.
- ❖ **Prevention** – Avoid rodent exposure by sealing homes, keeping food secure, and maintaining cleanliness.
- ❖ **Early Treatment** – Immediate medical attention is crucial if symptoms appear after rodent exposure.

India Launches Thematic Hubs for Quantum Technology

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- ❖ The Indian government has launched four thematic hubs (T-Hubs) under the National Quantum Mission (NQM).
- ❖ These hubs focus on quantum computing, quantum communication, quantum sensing, and quantum materials research.
- ❖ IIT-Kanpur has been appointed as the management coordination center for these hubs.
- ❖ The initiative aims to accelerate advancements in quantum technologies in India.
- ❖ A total of ₹1,500 crore has been allocated for funding these hubs in the upcoming year.

AI-Driven Energy Demand Boosts U.S. Power Mergers

- ❖ Record Mergers: U.S. power sector saw \$36.4 billion in mergers in early 2025, driven by AI data center demand.
- ❖ AI's High Energy Needs: Data centers require vast electricity, pushing energy firms to expand capacity.
- ❖ Private Equity Surge: Investors are heavily funding power infrastructure to meet AI-driven demand.
- ❖ Energy Storage Focus: Funds are flowing into storage solutions for stable power supply.
- ❖ Smart Grid Growth: Rising AI energy use accelerates smart grid adoption for efficient distribution.

Kidney Disease on the Rise Among Young Indians

- ❖ **Rise in CKD Cases:** More young Indians are developing chronic kidney disease, once common in older adults.
- ❖ **Painkiller Overuse:** Frequent NSAID use harms kidney function over time.
- ❖ **Poor Diet:** High salt, processed foods, and low water intake strain the kidneys.
- ❖ **Unregulated Supplements:** Unsupervised use of bodybuilding and herbal supplements damages kidneys.
- ❖ **Lack of Awareness:** Many ignore early symptoms, leading to late diagnosis.
- ❖ **Doctors' Advice:** Regular kidney tests are crucial, especially for at-risk individuals.
- ❖ **Prevention:** Reduce painkillers, eat healthily, stay hydrated, exercise, and avoid unsafe supplements

ECONOMY

RBI Cuts Repo Rate to 6.25% After Five Years

- ❖ **Repo Rate Reduction:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cut the repo rate by 25 basis points, bringing it down to 6.25%. This is the first rate cut in five years, signaling a shift in monetary policy.
- ❖ **Objective:** The primary goal of this rate cut is to increase liquidity in the financial system, making borrowing cheaper for businesses and individuals. Lower interest rates encourage spending and investment, stimulating economic growth.
- ❖ **Banking System Liquidity Crunch:** The decision comes amid a severe liquidity squeeze of ₹1.7 trillion in the banking system. This shortage has made it difficult for banks to lend, affecting economic activity.
- ❖ **Foreign Institutional Investor (FII) Outflows:** A significant factor behind the liquidity crisis is the withdrawal of foreign institutional investors from Indian markets. This capital outflow has tightened liquidity, increasing pressure on financial institutions.
- ❖ **Global Uncertainties:** The decision also takes into account global economic uncertainties, such as trade tensions, fluctuating oil prices, and slowing global growth. These factors have contributed to volatility in financial markets, prompting the RBI to take measures to ensure stability.



India's Power Demand Surges Amid Climate Change Effects

1. **Rising Electricity Demand:** India's electricity consumption is growing at a rapid pace of 9% per year, fueled by industrial expansion, urbanization, and increasing residential demand.
2. **Impact of Climate Change:** Extreme heatwaves and record-breaking temperatures are further driving energy usage, especially for cooling needs such as air conditioning and refrigeration.
3. **Government's Renewable Energy Target:** India has set an ambitious goal of achieving 500 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030 to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and enhance energy security.
4. **Expert Recommendations:** Energy experts argue that 500 GW may not be sufficient, suggesting that at least 600 GW of renewable capacity will be required to meet the surging demand and prevent potential power shortages.
5. **Challenges in Implementation:** Achieving this target requires significant investment, policy support, expansion of grid infrastructure, and storage solutions to manage fluctuations in renewable power generation.

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India-Mauritius Strengthen Trade Ties Amid China's Growing Influence

1. **Trade in National Currencies:** India and Mauritius agreed to trade in their local currencies, reducing reliance on the US dollar.
2. **₹487 Crore Credit Line:** India extended financial support for Mauritius' infrastructure projects.
3. **Countering China:** A strategic move against China's \$1.1 billion trade dominance in Mauritius.
4. **Stronger Economic Ties:** Reinforces India-Mauritius trade and investment partnerships.
5. **Regional Strategy:** Enhances India's influence in the Indo-Pacific region.

RBI Warns of High Risks in Green Financing

- ❖ **Higher Credit Risks:** RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra warns of increased risks in financing green energy projects due to limited historical data.
- ❖ **Uncertainty in Green Projects:** Evolving technologies make it hard to predict long-term viability and profitability.
- ❖ **Need for Risk Assessment Expertise:** RBI urges banks to develop technical skills for evaluating green project risks.
- ❖ **Challenges for Lenders:** Difficulty in assessing repayment capacity and sustainability due to lack of precedents.
- ❖ **Capacity Building:** Financial institutions should invest in research and training for better risk evaluation.

Green financing, also known as sustainable finance, refers to financial products and services that support environmentally friendly projects and initiatives, aiming to promote sustainability and reduce negative environmental impacts.