

17 - MARCH 2025

### TAMILNADU

#### **Tamil Nadu Government's Gig Worker Support**

- ❖ Tamil Nadu announced a ₹20,000 subsidy for 2,000 gig workers and auto drivers to buy e-scooters and electric rickshaws.
- ❖ Limited charging infrastructure raises concerns about e-scooter adoption.
- ❖ A group insurance scheme will cover accidental death and disability for 1.5 lakh gig workers.
- ❖ Slow onboarding of gig workers prompts plans for biometric registration.

#### **Tamil Nadu's Role in SpaceX's Starlink Expansion**

- ❖ Bharti Airtel and Reliance Jio signed agreements with SpaceX's Starlink.
- ❖ The agreement is subject to Starlink receiving regulatory approvals in India.
- ❖ Starlink aims to provide satellite-based internet connectivity across India.
- ❖ Airtel already has a partnership with Eutelsat OneWeb, a competitor.
- ❖ Jio has its own JioSpaceFiber initiative.



#### **Tamil Nadu's Digital Push in Education**

- ❖ The state government is increasing smart classrooms in government schools.
- ❖ Plans to provide tablets to students for digital learning.
- ❖ AI-based learning tools to be introduced for better engagement.
- ❖ Free internet access for students in rural areas is being expanded.
- ❖ Partnerships with ed-tech firms are being explored.
- ❖ Focus on bridging the digital divide in urban and rural schools.

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## Agriculture Budget Announcement

- ❖ Tamil Nadu's Agriculture Minister M.R.K. Panneerselvam presented the state's agriculture budget.
- ❖ The total budget allocation for agriculture is ₹45,661 crore.
- ❖ It covers agriculture, horticulture, and other farming sectors across seven agro-climatic zones.
- ❖ The gross cropped area increased from 146.77 lakh acres (2019-20) to 154 lakh acres (2023-24).
- ❖ Double-cropped area also increased from 29.74 lakh acres to 33.60 lakh acres.
- ❖ Desilting work worth ₹120 crore and ₹2,000 crore for water conservation projects under MGNREGA is planned.



### NATIONAL

## India Plans to Fence Its 1,643-km Border with Myanmar

- ❖ The Indian government has approved a ₹31,000 crore project to fence the Indo-Myanmar border completely within 10 years.
- ❖ The fencing is designed with “anti-cut, anti-climb” features to prevent illegal infiltration.
- ❖ The Free Movement Regime (FMR), which allows people from both sides to travel up to 10 km without visas, will be affected.
- ❖ This decision follows ethnic violence in Manipur attributed to unregulated cross-border movement.
- ❖ ₹114.09 crore has already been spent on construction from April to December 2024.
- ❖ Opposition from Naga and Kuki-Zo communities continues due to concerns about disrupting ethnic and familial ties.



## Two Major India-France Defense Deals Await Approval

- ❖ India is set to finalize deals with France for 26 Rafale-M fighter jets and three Scorpene-class submarines.
- ❖ The total value of the agreements is estimated to be around \$11 billion.
- ❖ The Rafale-M jets will enhance the capabilities of India's naval aviation fleet.

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- ❖ The Scorpene submarines will strengthen India's undersea warfare capabilities.
- ❖ The deal is currently awaiting final approval from the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS).
- ❖ These agreements signify the deepening of Indo-French defense cooperation



## Odisha: 21.85% of Landless Rural Families Given Land Under PMAY-G

- ❖ A survey found that 44,743 rural families in Odisha lack land, hindering their access to PMAY-G housing.
- ❖ The state government has granted homestead pattas to 9,777 landless families in 2025.
- ❖ The process of land allocation is ongoing, with efforts to cover all identified landless households.
- ❖ The initiative aims to provide secure housing and promote economic stability.
- ❖ The state is working with the Revenue and Disaster Management Department to streamline land allotment.

## INTERNATIONAL

## NASA-SpaceX Mission to ISS

- ❖ Four astronauts have taken off for the International Space Station (ISS).
- ❖ The mission aims to pave the way for the return of astronauts Butch Wilmore and Sunita Williams, who have been stuck in ISS for nine months.
- ❖ This mission is part of NASA's continuous efforts to maintain and expand human presence in space.
- ❖ It highlights the role of public-private partnerships in space exploration.
- ❖ The mission will conduct various scientific experiments in microgravity conditions.
- ❖ It marks another milestone in the US's space program under SpaceX's commercial crew partnership.

## Guterres Discusses Rohingya Crisis in Bangladesh :

- ❖ UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres met Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus.
- ❖ They discussed the country's domestic issues and the ongoing Rohingya refugee crisis.
- ❖ Guterres expressed solidarity with Bangladesh's reform and transition process.

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- ❖ He is visiting Bangladesh as part of a "Ramzan Solidarity" tour.
- ❖ The Rohingya issue remains a major humanitarian challenge.
- ❖ Bangladesh has been urging international assistance for the refugees

## ECONOMY

### SEBI's New Chairman and Market Regulation

- ❖ Tuhin Kanta Pandey, former Union Finance Secretary, took charge as SEBI Chairman on March 1.
- ❖ His focus will be on "optimum regulation" rather than "maximum regulation" for fair practices in India's securities markets.
- ❖ He has prior experience in public asset management, having overseen LIC's divestment and Air India's strategic sale.
- ❖ Pandey faces challenges in stabilizing volatile markets affected by global economic factors and derivative manipulations.

### India's Rising ITC Fraud Cases

- ❖ ITC (Input Tax Credit) fraud cases rose by 41% in April-January FY25 compared to FY24.
- ❖ The amount detected in these frauds jumped 28%, reaching over ₹46,000 crore.
- ❖ Fake invoices were used to claim ITC without actual supply of goods or services.
- ❖ The GST Network (GSTN) has introduced analytics-based risk assessment to curb fraud.
- ❖ The government is tightening tax compliance, including scrutiny and audits based on risk parameters.

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

## ENVIRONMENT

### Madhav National Park Declared India's 58th Tiger Reserve

- ❖ The Madhav National Park in Madhya Pradesh has been designated as the 58th tiger reserve in India.
- ❖ This is the ninth tiger reserve in Madhya Pradesh, making it the state with the highest number of tiger reserves.
- ❖ The decision aims to strengthen conservation efforts under Project Tiger, launched in 1973.

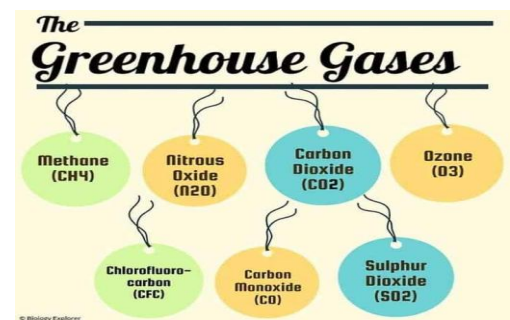


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- ❖ Historical declines in tiger populations due to hunting, deforestation, and poaching have led to strong conservation measures.
- ❖ Project Tiger was initially launched with nine reserves and has since expanded significantly

## Increasing Greenhouse Gas Emissions May Threaten Satellites

- ❖ A study has found that rising greenhouse gas emissions could significantly impact the sustainability of Earth's orbital space.
- ❖ Higher emissions reduce atmospheric density, slowing down the natural decay of space debris.
- ❖ By 2100, under high-emission scenarios, the sustainable number of satellites in orbit could drop by 50-66%.
- ❖ A decrease in the rate of satellite deorbiting increases risks of space debris accumulation.
- ❖ Space sustainability is now being linked directly to climate change mitigation efforts



## Climate Change and Emerging Infectious Diseases

- ❖ Research on climate-driven infectious diseases has largely focused on vector-borne diseases like malaria and dengue.
- ❖ Melioidosis, a bacterial disease caused by *Burkholderia pseudomallei*, is strongly influenced by environmental factors such as rainfall and temperature.
- ❖ South Asia, including India, contributes to 44% of the global burden of melioidosis.
- ❖ The disease has a high fatality rate, particularly in septicemic cases, making early diagnosis crucial.
- ❖ Incorrect diagnosis is common due to bacterial misidentification in microbiology labs.
- ❖ Odisha is emerging as a hotspot for melioidosis cases, necessitating increased medical awareness.

## New Plant Species Discovered in Kerala's Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve

- ❖ A new species of dense shrub, *Uniyala keralensis*, has been discovered in Kerala's Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve.



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- ❖ The species, belonging to the Asteraceae family, was first collected by researchers 27 years ago.
- ❖ It is endemic to the southwest region of India, highlighting the biodiversity significance of the Western Ghats.
- ❖ The discovery underscores the importance of conservation efforts in protected areas



## SPORTS

### Shrivalli and Vaidehi Win ITF Women's Doubles Title

- ❖ Third seeds Shrivalli Bhamidipaty and Vaidehi Chaudhari secured the doubles title at the \$30,000 ITF women's tennis tournament in Nonthaburi, Thailand.
- ❖ They defeated second seeds Punnin Kovapitukted and Yuki Naito 6-4, 6-3 in the final.
- ❖ This marked their first title of the season and fourth overall on the professional circuit.

### Hockey India Awards: 1975 World Cup Team Honored

- ❖ The Indian hockey team that won the 1975 World Cup was awarded the Major Dhyan Chand Lifetime Achievement Award.
- ❖ Balbir Singh Sr. Player of the Year Awards went to Savita Punia (Women) and Harmanpreet Singh (Men), both receiving ₹25 lakh.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu Hockey Unit won the Best Unit of the Year award for its grassroots initiatives.
- ❖ Other category winners included Amit Rohidas (Defender of the Year) and Hardik Singh (Midfielder of the Year).
- ❖ The prize pool exceeded ₹12 crore, recognizing contributions to Indian hockey.
- ❖ The event marked the 100th year of Indian hockey's inception

### India's Wrestling Trials Finalized for Asian Championships

- ❖ Antim Panghal (53kg), Reetika Hooda (76kg), and Deepak Punia (92kg) secured their spots for the Asian Wrestling Championships in Amman, Jordan (March 25-30).
- ❖ The trials were held at the Indira Gandhi Stadium Complex, Delhi.

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- ❖ Indian men's freestyle and Greco-Roman teams also finalized their squads, featuring top wrestlers like Chirag (57kg) and Sujeet Kalkal (65kg).
- ❖ Women's squad includes Ankush (50kg), Neha Sharma (57kg), and Mansi Lathar (68kg).
- ❖ The championships will serve as an important test ahead of the Paris Olympics

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### MARCH 16 - National vaccination day

- ❖ National Vaccination Day was first celebrated on 16 March 1995.
- ❖ The first oral polio vaccine was administered under the Pulse Polio Immunization Programme.
- ❖ **Aim:** Eradicate polio and achieve polio-free India status by 2014 (WHO-certified).
- ❖ Mission Indradhanush (2014) launched to boost immunisation coverage.
- ❖ Intensified Mission Indradhanush (2017) aimed at further increasing coverage.
- ❖ Covers pregnant women, unvaccinated and partially vaccinated children in low-coverage areas.
- ❖ IMI 5.0 (2023) covered 34 lakh children and 6 lakh pregnant women, improving full immunisation rates.

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



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