

January - 04

## TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated the Indian Library Congress in Kannur.

## TAMIL NADU

### Whole-day annadhanam scheme

- ❖ TN Chief Minister launched whole-day Annadhanam in three more temples in the state.
- ❖ The 3 temples are Ramanathaswamy temple in Rameswaram, Arunachaleswarar temple in Tiruvannamalai and Meenakshi Sundareswarar temple in Madurai.
- ❖ With this, the scheme to provide annadhanam from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. now covers eight temples.



### Borrowing of ₹51,000 crore

- ❖ Tamil Nadu is planning to raise ₹51,000 crore in the fourth quarter (January-March) of fiscal 2022-2023.
- ❖ This will be done by auctioning off bonds called State Development Loans.


- ❖ This is 45.7% higher than the ₹35,000 crore it borrowed in the fourth quarter (Q4) of fiscal 2022.
- ❖ From April-December 2022, the State borrowed ₹49,000 crore, which is lower than the ₹52,000 crore it borrowed during the same period in 2021.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu's total revenue receipts is ₹1,29,600.46 crore so far in fiscal 2022-23 (till October).
- ❖ This is a 28.3% increase from ₹1,01,047.40 crore in the same period last year.
- ❖ The State's fiscal deficit stood at ₹25,931.10 crore as of October-end, 2022.
- ❖ This was ₹28,108.69 crore at the end of October 2021.
- ❖ In fiscal 2021-22, the State's gross borrowings was ₹87,000 crore.

## NATIONAL

### Women workers in MGNREGS

### Kickstarting rural demand

The government aims to revise wages of MGNREGA workers to address the slowdown in the rural economy



- MGNREGA wages will be linked to an updated inflation index
- Higher wages will increase MGNREGA expenditure by 10%
- They may also increase purchasing power and revive rural demand
- MGNREGA budgetary allocation for FY20: **₹60,000 crore**
- Funds released till Sept. 17: **₹46,486 cr.**
- Additional funds requested: **₹15,000-20,000 crore**

- ❖ The proportion of women workers participating in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) has touched a ten-year high in the ongoing financial year.
- ❖ As per the Union Ministry of Rural Development report, 57.8% of the workers who used the scheme this year were women.
- ❖ This is their highest level of participation since 2012-13.

- ❖ Out of the reviewed 15 States, 14 States reported an upward trend in women's participation.
- ❖ The Kerala witnessed the minute drop.
- ❖ For the last five years, in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, women's share in the MGNREGA workforce has been hovering between 85-90%.
- ❖ The growth spike was higher in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ The proportion of women workers in Bihar grew 3.7 percentage points this year, while UP saw a 3.3 percentage point hike.
- ❖ But even after this year's spike, UP is still skimming just above the mandatory women's participation level of 33% under MGNREGA.
- ❖ This year, 37.6% person days were used by women as opposed to last year's figure of 34.28%.
- ❖ women make up less than 50% of the MGNREGA workforce in seven States: Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Assam, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

### **New integrated Food Security Scheme**

**Food Security For All**

**Modi Govt.'s historic decision**

- Improved access, affordability & availability of entitled foodgrains for about 81 Crore NFSA beneficiaries
- Removes financial burden from the poorest of poor beneficiaries
- Ensuring nationwide uniformity and effective implementation of NFSA

**Food Security For All**

**Modi Govt.'s historic decision**

- Free of cost foodgrains as per entitlement for National Food Security Act (NFSA) beneficiaries
- Scheme effective from 1st January to December 2023
- Centre's food subsidy expense in next one year under NFSA & other welfare schemes to increase to over ₹2 lakh crore

- ❖ The Central Government of India recently announced the launch of a new integrated food security scheme.
- ❖ It will provide free food grains to 81.35 crore beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) for the year 2023.

- ❖ The Cabinet has decided to implement this central sector scheme in order to fulfil the vision of “One Nation-One Price-One Ration”.
- ❖ This is intended to benefit the most vulnerable 67% of the population, which is 81.35 crore persons covered under the NFSA.

## 108<sup>th</sup> Indian Science Congress (ISC)



- ❖ The 108th annual session of ISC held at Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University, Nagpur.
- ❖ The focal theme of this year's ISC is “Science and Technology for Sustainable Development with Women Empowerment”.
- ❖ Tribal Science Congress will also be held along with this event.
- ❖ The first session of the Congress was held in 1914.

## Verdict on Demonetization Case

<b>'NOT RELEVANT WHETHER OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED OR NOT'</b>	
<p><b>MAJORITY VERDICT OF JUSTICES SA NAZEER, BR GAVAI, AS BOPANNA &amp; V RAMASUBRAMANIAN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Majority verdict says demonetisation had a “reasonable nexus with its objectives” such as eradicating black money and terror funding and it is not relevant whether those objectives were achieved or not</li> <li>➤ Says government was in consultation with RBI for six months and it is empowered to take such a decision</li> <li>➤ No fresh window to exchange notes, 52 days' time given earlier not unreasonable</li> </ul> <p>“ There has to be great restraint in matters of economic policy. Court cannot supplant the wisdom of executive with its wisdom...”</p>	<p><b>MINORITY VERDICT OF JUSTICE BV NAGARATHNA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Demonetisation move ‘exercise of power’ by Union government, <b>contrary to law and vitiated</b> under the RBI Act</li> <li>➤ Carried out in <b>24 hours</b>, so central bank had no time to consider it</li> <li>➤ <b>Parliament</b>, which is “at the centre of our democracy, <b>cannot be left aloof</b> in a matter of such importance”</li> <li>➤ Around 98% of value of banned currency reported to have been exchanged, so <b>measure may not have been as effective as it was hoped to be</b></li> </ul> <p>“ This (use of phrases such as ‘as desired’ by the Centre in communication to RBI governor) demonstrates that there was no independent application of mind by the Bank</p>

- ❖ The Supreme Court of India has upheld the 2016 decision of the government to demonetize currency notes of INR 500 and INR 1,000 denominations.
- ❖ On November 8, 2016, the Indian Prime Minister announced the demonetization of INR 500 and INR 1,000 banknotes.
- ❖ The decision to demonetize the high-value currency notes was challenged in the Supreme Court.
- ❖ The Supreme Court constituted a Constitution Bench in September 2022 to consider the validity of the demonetization decision.
- ❖ Now this decision, was taken by a 4:1 majority of the Constitution Bench.

## INTERNATIONAL

### International Year of Millets 2023

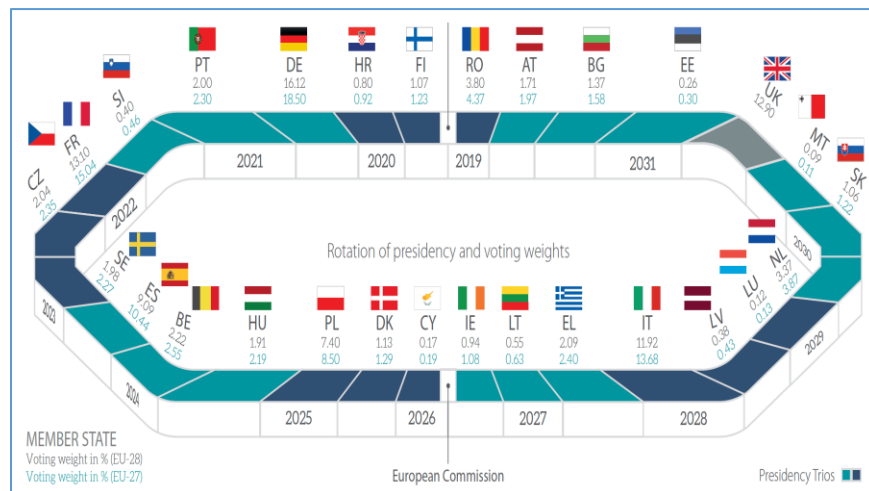


- ❖ The United Nations has declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets (IYM).
- ❖ IYM is a proposal sponsored by the Government of India to promote these "nutri-cereals."
- ❖ It is to make IYM 2023 a 'People's Movement' alongside positioning India as the 'Global Hub for Millets'.
- ❖ In April 2018, Millets were rebranded as "Nutri Cereals".
- ❖ The year 2018 was being declared as the National Year of Millets.
- ❖ India accounts for a fifth of the world's millets production.

- ❖ The main millet-growing states in India are Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh.

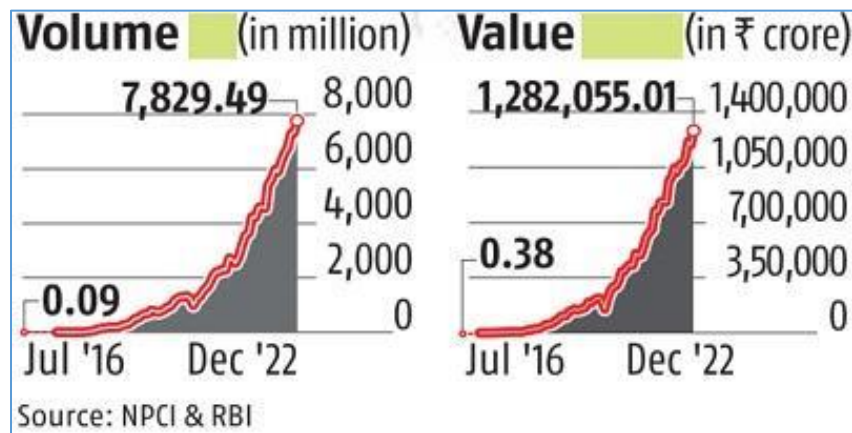
### EU Council presidency

- ❖ Sweden took over from the Czech Republic at the helm of the six-month rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU).
- ❖ Sweden will hold the presidency for six months until June 30, 2023.
- ❖ Sweden joined the EU on Jan. 1, 1995.
- ❖ The country held the Presidency of the Council of the European Union twice before, respectively in 2001 and 2009.



## ECONOMY

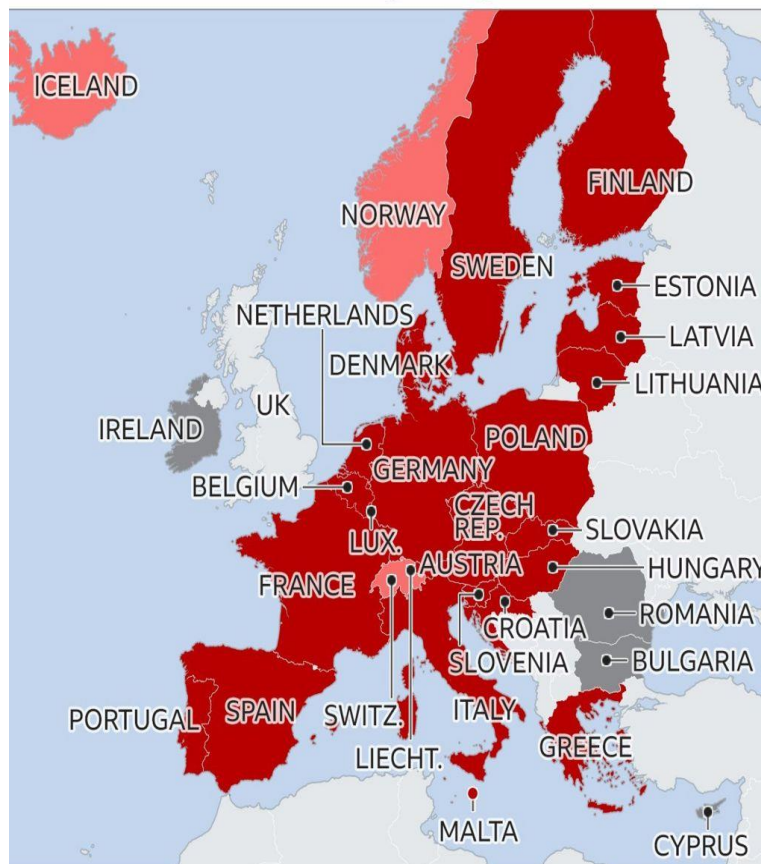
### UPI Payments Record High



- ❖ India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) processed a record 7.82 billion transactions in December
- ❖ This has a worth of INR 12.82tn (\$174.6bn).
- ❖ This represents an increase of 7.12% in volume and 7.73% in value compared to November.
- ❖ On a year-on-year basis, volume and value increased by 71% and 55% respectively.

## Croatia adopting Euro

### Countries in the Schengen Agreement



- Schengen states
- Schengen states not part of the EU
- Non-Schengen EU states

- ❖ Croatia has adopted the euro and joining the Schengen zone.
- ❖ The country officially became the 20th member of the eurozone on January 1<sup>st</sup>.
- ❖ The removal of land border controls with neighbouring Slovenia and Hungary marks its inclusion in the Schengen zone.

- ❖ The inclusion of Croatia in the Schengen zone, which allows for passport-free travel between 26 European countries.

## PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

### Chairmanship of Wassenaar Arrangement (WA)

Founded in 1996, the Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) is an elite club of countries subscribing to arms export controls, similar to the NSG and the Missile Technology Control Regime

- Headquartered in Vienna, it has 42 members, the latest entrant being India. Barring China, all permanent members of the U.N. Security Council are its signatories

- Its goal is to “promote transparency and greater

responsibility in transfer of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies”

- Since it’s not a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, India will look to the WA membership to boost its credentials to enter NSG

- ❖ Ireland’s ambassador Eoin O’Leary hand over the chairmanship to India’s ambassador Jaideep Mazumdar.
- ❖ The Wassenaar Arrangement is a voluntary export control regime that monitors the transfer of conventional weapons and dual-use goods.
- ❖ India joined the WA in December 2017 as its 42nd participating state.

