

January - 05

## TNPSC BITS

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu's first jallikattu for 2025 was held at Thatchankurichi village in Gandarvakottai taluk of the Pudukkottai district.
- ❖ The Centre has set up an 18-member panel, chaired by Dr. Ramesh Chand of NITI Aayog, to revise the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) base year to 2022-23.
- ❖ The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has completed full-scale implementation of the new Centralised Pension Payments System (CPPS) to provide PF pensions under the Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS).
- ❖ Zomato-owned quick commerce platform Blinkit has announced a 10-minute ambulance delivery service in flat rate of Rs 2000 in Gurugram, Haryana.
- ❖ Air India has become the first airline to offer in-flight Wi-Fi on both domestic and international routes.

## TAMIL NADU

### Fifth Police Commission report



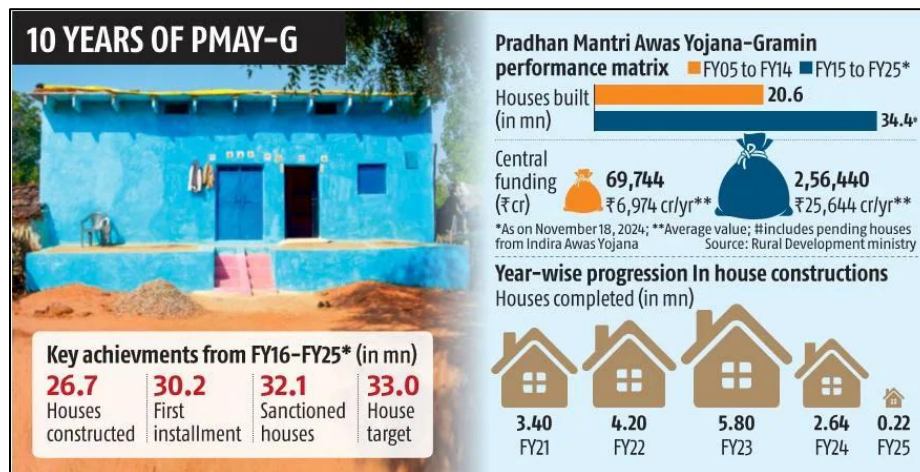
- ❖ The Fifth Police Commission headed by former Judge of the Madras High Court C.T. Selvam submitted its final report to CM.
- ❖ It is covering various aspects of policing from the stage of recruitment into the force till retirement has recommended major reforms in the Tamil Nadu police.

- ❖ It contained recommendations to address mutual interests and expectations of the police and public to strengthen their relationship.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu police have a strength of about 1.3 lakh personnel.

## NATIONAL

### PMAY-G program extension

- ❖ The Ministry of Rural Development has set an ambitious target of sanctioning 10 lakh houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) in January 2025.
- ❖ The PMAY-G programme, extended for five years in August 2024, aims to build two crore additional houses by 2029.
- ❖ The scheme's eligibility rules have been revised to include more families and advance the goal of housing for all.
- ❖ The financial year 2024-25 has seen the highest budget allocation for the housing scheme, amounting to Rs 54,500 crore.



### Bharatiya Vayuyan Adhiniyam 2024

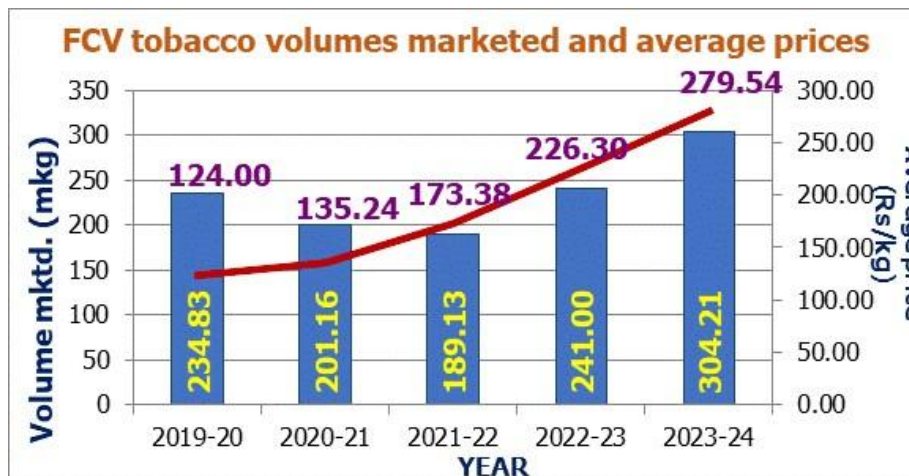
- ❖ The Bharatiya Vayuyan Adhiniyam 2024 was passed by the Lok Sabha on 09.08.2024 and by Rajya Sabha on 05.12.2024.
- ❖ As per the Central Government, the 1st day of January, 2025 the provisions of the said Act, shall come into force.
- ❖ This legislative reform aimed at modernizing India's aviation sector by re-enacting the Aircraft Act, 1934, in alignment with the contemporary needs and the global standards.

- ❖ The Act provides for the regulation and control of the design, manufacture, maintenance, possession, use, operation, sale, export and import of aircraft and connected matters.
- ❖ The legislation also removed redundancies and replace the Aircraft Act, 1934, which has been amended 21 times.

## BHARATIYA VAYUYAN VIDHEYAK 2024

- Introduced in Lok Sabha on **July 31, 2024**  
this Bill aims to replace the *Aircraft Act, 1934*.
- Organised and Structured with Provisions made **Chapter-wise** and **Section-wise**

### Tobacco farmers income 2024

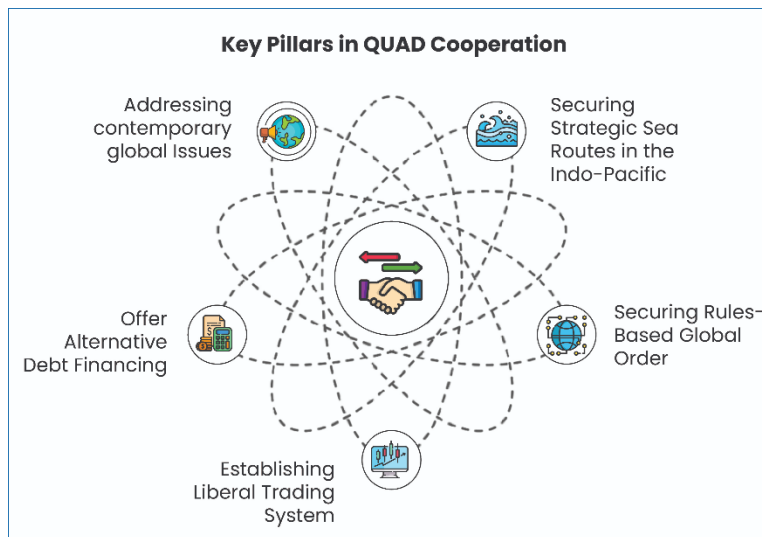


- ❖ The country's tobacco exports are likely to register an over 8 per cent growth and cross Rs 13,000 crore this year.
- ❖ India is the second largest producer of tobacco in the world after China.
- ❖ It is also the fourth largest producer of Flue-Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco in the world after China, Brazil and Zimbabwe.
- ❖ India is the second largest exporter of unmanufactured tobacco (quantity terms) after Brazil.
- ❖ During 2023-24, the outbound shipments were Rs 12,005.89 crore (\$ 1.5 billion).

- ❖ Tobacco farmers income has also doubled over the last 5 years.
- ❖ Andhra Pradesh tobacco contains higher levels of nicotine than Karnataka's.
- ❖ The Tobacco Board was established on January 1, 1976, by an Act of Parliament for the overall development of the tobacco industry.

## INTERNATIONAL

### 20 years of QUAD



- ❖ The foreign ministers of India, Australia, Japan and the United States issued a joint statement on December 31 to mark the “20th anniversary of the Quad Cooperation”.
- ❖ The four had come together “in response to the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami” and its object was “service to the people of this region.”
- ❖ The Quad formally emerged in 2007, with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe proposing the idea.
- ❖ The first official Quad talks were held in the Philippines in 2017.
- ❖ Australia withdrew in 2008 due to Chinese pressure and regional tensions and returned in 2018.

### Swiss Burqa Ban

- ❖ A Swiss prohibition on facial coverings in public spaces widely known as the “burqa ban” took effect January 1.
- ❖ Anyone who unlawfully flouts the prohibition faces a fine of up to 1,000 Swiss francs (\$1,144).





- ❖ The measure involves a prohibition on covering the nose, mouth, and eyes in both public spaces and private buildings accessible to the public.
- ❖ The ban does not apply to planes or in diplomatic and consular premises, and the faces may also be covered in places of worship and other sacred sites.
- ❖ In 2021, Swiss people voted in favour of banning face coverings in public, including the burka and niqab worn by Muslim women.
- ❖ People in Switzerland are given a direct say in their own affairs under the country's system of democracy.
- ❖ About 5% of Switzerland's population of 8.6 million people are Muslim, most originating from Turkey, Bosnia and Kosovo.

The ban was proposed by the right-wing Swiss People's Party (SVP), with slogans like "Stop extremism." While it did not explicitly mention Islam, it was widely seen as a "burqa ban." The government had opposed the measure, stating it should not dictate what women wear.

The ban applies to public spaces and private buildings open to the public, with exceptions:

- Planes and diplomatic premises
- Places of worship and sacred sites
- Health, safety, customs, weather, art, or advertising purposes
- Coverings for expression or assembly require prior approval if public order is upheld.

## ECONOMY

### Government Debt Relief Scheme

- ❖ RBI has laid down some certain broad principles for lenders relating to their participation in Government Debt Relief Scheme (DRS).
- ❖ It is including sacrifice of interest and/or principal and loan account status.
- ❖ This comes in the backdrop of States announcing the DRS to provide relief to borrowers.
- ❖ This includes farmers during natural calamities or political parties promising the same for a targeted segment of borrowers in the run up to elections.

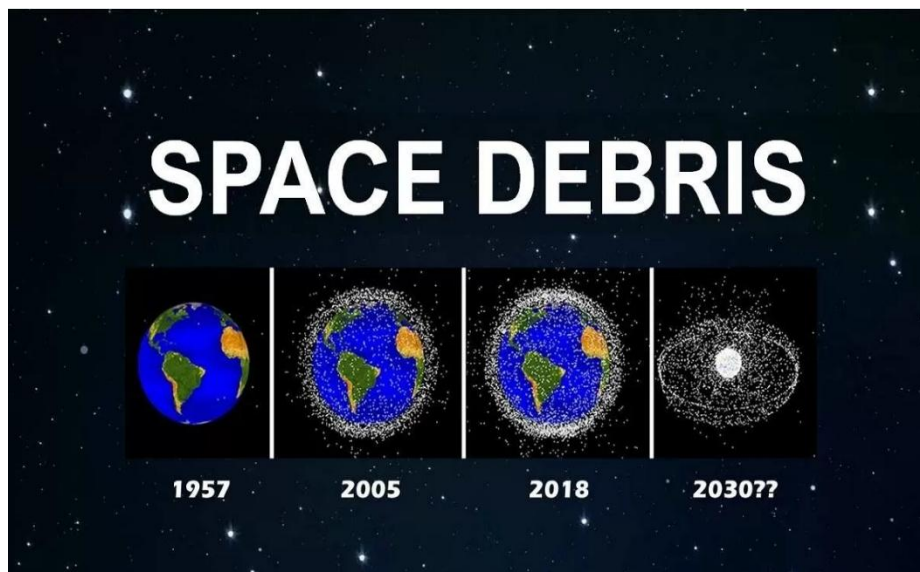
- ❖ Any waiver of accrued but unrealised interest and/ or sacrifice of principal will be treated as a compromise settlement.
- ❖ It would be attracting usual provisioning and asset classification norms.

The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has introduced guidelines for lenders regarding their involvement in the **Government Debt Relief Scheme (DRS)**. This initiative aims to assist borrowers, particularly farmers, during crises such as natural disasters. State governments have announced various DRS to provide relief, especially in the lead-up to elections. The RBI's guidelines include a model operating procedure (MOP) to ensure effective implementation and adherence to financial discipline.



## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### India – Japan collaboration for space debris



- ❖ The Space startups in Japan and India had agreed to jointly study using laser-equipped satellites to remove debris from orbit.
- ❖ This is an experimental approach to the increasingly imminent problem of orbital congestion.
- ❖ Tokyo-based Orbital Lasers and Indian robotics company InspeCity would study business opportunities for in-space services.


- ❖ It includes de-orbiting a defunct satellite and extending a spacecraft's life.
- ❖ The Orbital Lasers plans to demonstrate the system in space and supply it to operators after 2027.
- ❖ Orbital Lasers is building a system that will use laser energy to stop the rotation of space junk by vaporising small parts of its surface.

## ENVIRONMENT

### New Ant Species in Western Ghats

- ❖ Scientists have identified a new species of ant from the Western Ghats region in Kodagu district of Karnataka called *Tapinoma onaele*.
- ❖ The word *Onaele* in Kannada means dried leaves, which are a very important part of the forest floor in the Western Ghats.
- ❖ Recently *Probolomyrmex procne* was rediscovered after three decades in this region.
- ❖ This species has only been documented in two other locations in India.

<b>ABOUT THE ANT</b>	
<p>➤ The scientists have identified a new species of ant from the Western Ghats region in <b>Kodagu district of Karnataka</b></p>	<p><b>leaves, which make up a major part of forest floor in the Western Ghats of India</b></p>
<p>➤ The new species is called <b>Tapinoma onaele</b></p>	<p>➤ The name is an attempt to direct the attention of everyone towards a very important</p>
<p>➤ <b>Onaele</b> in Kannada means dried</p>	<p><b>habitat of the forests - leaf litter</b></p>



## REPORTS AND INDICES

### Business Ready (B-READY) Report 2024

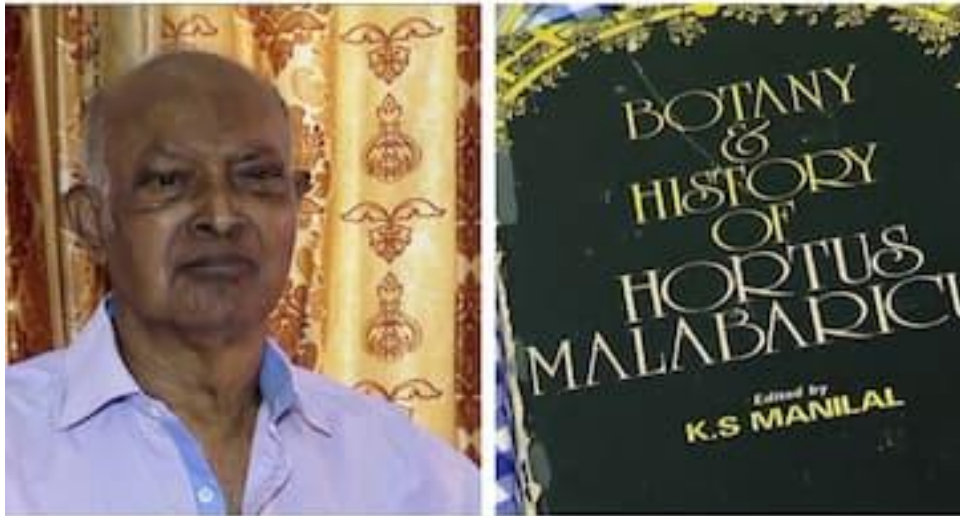
- ❖ The World Bank launched the Business Ready (B-READY) report 2024 to replace the Ease of Doing Business report.
- ❖ In Business Entry, countries like Singapore offer online business registration within a day at minimal cost.

- ❖ In India, businesses still face multiple steps and incomplete digital integration.
- ❖ This report generates two sets of scores for each economy viz Topic Scores and Pillar Scores.
- ❖ Anyway, India did not participate in the 2024 B-READY Report.



## PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

### Botanist K.S. Manilal



- ❖ Dr. K.S. Manilal, the esteemed botanist, passed away recently at Thrissur, Kerala.



- ❖ He has translated, and annotated Hortus Malabaricus, a 17th-century Latin manuscript compiled by Dutch Governor Hendrik Adrian van Rheede.
- ❖ His studies led to the discovery of 19 new plant species, with four species being named in his honour.
- ❖ He was the founding president of the Indian Association for Angiosperm Taxonomy (IAAT) in 1989.
- ❖ He also served as president of the Botanical Society of India in 1999 and treasurer from 1984 to 1986.
- ❖ He won the Vishwambhar Puri Medal (1990), the Y.D. Tyagi Gold Medal (1998), and the E.K. Janaki Ammal Taxonomy Award (2003).
- ❖ He was awarded the Padma Shri in 2020 for his exceptional contributions to botany.
- ❖ He was honoured with the Officer of the Order of Orange-Nassau award from the Netherlands, presented by Queen Beatrix in 2012.
- ❖ This was making him the first Asian to receive this honour.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### DRDO's 67<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day - January 01



- ❖ DRDO is a network of around 41 laboratories and 05 DRDO Young Scientist Laboratories.
- ❖ It was formed in 1958 by merging Technical Development Establishment (TDEs) of the Indian Army and the Directorate of Technical Development & Production (DTDP) with the Defence Science Organisation (DSO).

- ❖ DRDO aims to complete 100 critical projects and the execute over 6,000 tests in 2025.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### India Meteorological Department's 150<sup>th</sup> year



- ❖ The IMD was established in January 15, 1875 and will be completing 150 years of service.
- ❖ IMD is one of the earliest government departments created for the systematic observation, regular reporting, and scientific forecasting of weather in the Indian subcontinent.
- ❖ It was the establishment of the first Meteorological and Astronomical Observatory in (then) Madras in 1793.
- ❖ Later the India Meteorological Department was established in 1875 with H.F. Blanford as the Meteorological Reporter.

