

November - 20

## TNPSC BITS

- ❖ TN Chief Minister virtually chaired a meeting of his Economic Advisory Council (EAC) from Chennai.
- ❖ The first Integrated Check Post (ICP) along the India-Bhutan border was recently inaugurated at Darranga in Assam.
- ❖ TP Gopalan Nambiar, the visionary founder of BPL Group, passed away recently.
- ❖ GMR Hyderabad International Airport Limited (GHIAL) has received the 'Airport Excellence Awards' for its advancements in digital innovation, in Saudi Airport Exhibition 2024.
- ❖ Valdecy Urquiza of Brazil was elected new INTERPOL Secretary General.
- ❖ Dubai city approved the construction of its first aerial taxi vertiport near Dubai International Airport.
- ❖ Princess Mikasa, the oldest member of Japan's royal family and great aunt to the emperor, died recently
- ❖ Mauritius' opposition coalition has won the country's election by a landslide with Navin Ramgoolam as the country's prime minister.
- ❖ Nvidia and SoftBank Corp have piloted the world's first artificial intelligence (AI) and 5G telecoms network, which can run AI and 5G workloads concurrently.
  - This process is known as an artificial intelligence radio access network (AI-RAN)
- ❖ World Kindness Day is celebrated annually on November 13.

## TAMIL NADU


### **Preliminary assessment of the Pudhumai Penn scheme**

- ❖ A preliminary assessment of the Pudhumai Penn scheme was carried out by the State Planning Commission (SPC) of Tamilnadu.
- ❖ 13,681 additional students benefited from the initiative and joined colleges and institutions offering diploma courses in 2022 and 2023.
- ❖ It was representing a percentage increase of 6.9.
- ❖ Among them, 38.6% were from the Scheduled Castes (SC), 34.4% from the Most Backward Classes (MBC), and 24.8%, from the Backward Classes (BC).

- ❖ Salem had the highest college enrolment at 8.9%, followed by Chennai at 5.8%; Dharmapuri 5.5%; Tiruvannamalai 5.2%; Namakkal 4.8%; and Cuddalore at 4.1%.
- ❖ The number of scheme's beneficiaries at the end of 2023 was 2,30,820.
- ❖ Salem district had the highest number of students who benefited, accounting for 17,032 (7.38%) students.
- ❖ Namakkal had followed with 13,312 (5.77%); Dharmapuri with 11,915 (5.16%); Chennai 11,468 (4.97%); Tiruvannamalai 11,146 (4.83%); and Coimbatore 10,777 (4.67%).

### Educational impetus

The State Planning Commission's preliminary analysis of the government's *Pudhumai Penn* scheme has shown that those in the rural areas have benefited more from the initiative. A look at how the survey was carried out



**For greater good:**  
Chief Minister M.K. Stalin launching the *Pudhumai Penn* scheme in Chennai. Under the initiative, ₹1,000 a month would be disbursed to the beneficiaries till they complete their UG/Diploma/ITI degrees

- The survey was conducted in Erode, Vellore, Tiruvallur, Chennai, Sivaganga, Tenkasi, Villupuram and Tiruvarur districts, covering 5,095 students from 84 institutions including government, government-aided and self-finance institutions

- The main objectives were to assess the implementation of the scheme, the challenges, awareness levels among students, utilisation patterns of assistance, and the initiative's socio-economic implications among college students and their families

- The students involved in the analysis were drawn from streams such as diploma, arts and science, engineering, medicine and law. The survey was carried out from November 2023 to February 2024

- The survey involved qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection. A detailed questionnaire was developed to collect data from students who had not benefited from the scheme
- Focus Group Discussions were held among college students who had benefited from the scheme

## INTERNATIONAL

### MATES Scheme






- ❖ From December 2024, Australia will open a new scheme which allows talented young people from India to work in the country.

- ❖ MATES scheme stands for Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme.
- ❖ It gives Indian university graduates and early career professionals a chance to work in Australia for two years.
- ❖ MATES participants are not eligible to take part in the Scheme more than once.

## ECONOMY

### Anti-Dumping Duty on Epichlorohydrin

- ❖ India has recently imposed an anti-dumping duty of up to USD 557 per tonne on Epichlorohydrin
- ❖ It is a chemical primarily used in the adhesive industry, imported from China, South Korea, and Thailand.
- ❖ This duty, effective for the next five years, is intended to protect Indian manufacturers from the adverse impacts of low-cost imports.
- ❖ Anti-dumping duties are levied to counteract imports priced lower than the fair market value, which can disrupt domestic industries and lead to unfair competition.

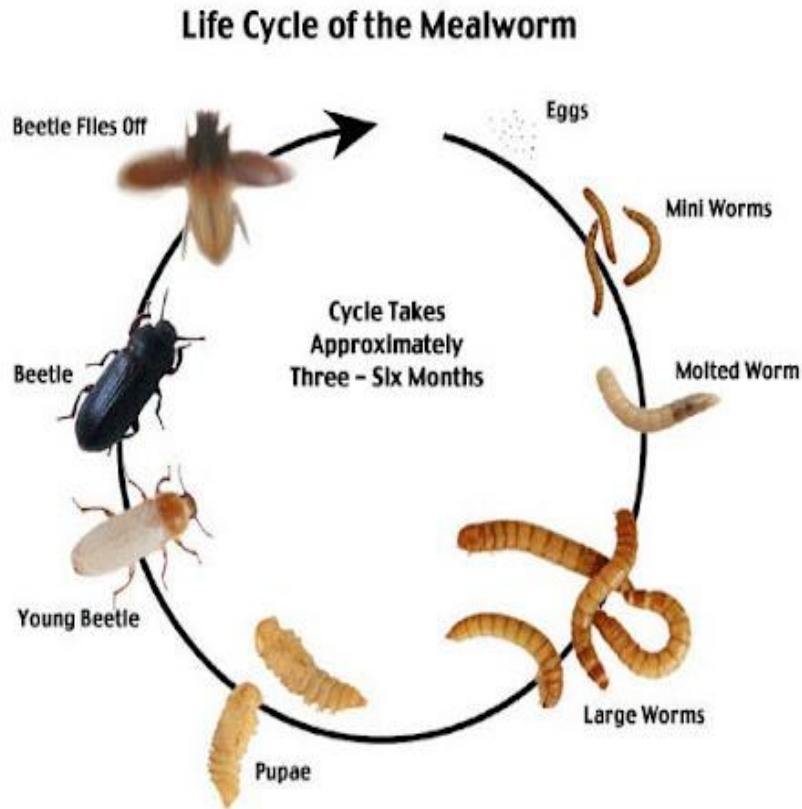
	 Global Safeguards	 Anti-Dumping measures	 Countervailing Duties
<b>Legal Basis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GATT Article XIX</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GATT Article VI</li> <li>Agreement on Implementation of Article VI (AD Agreement)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WTO Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives and Features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create "breathing room" for domestic industry struggling with increasing imports</li> <li>MFN based import restrictions</li> <li>No allegations about unfair trade</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect domestic industry from imports sold "at less than the normal value of the products"</li> <li>Departure from MFN principle</li> <li>It's about the "unfair" (pricing) practices of individual firms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect domestic industry from effects of another country's export subsidies actions</li> <li>Departure from MFN principle</li> <li>It's about the "unfair" (subsidies) practices of governments</li> </ul>
<b>Measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supplementary tariffs beyond bound MFN rates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supplementary tariff beyond bound MFN rates targeted at particular foreign firms based on difference between the import price and the "normal" value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supplementary tariff beyond bound MFN rates based on the value of the subsidy provided by the government of the exporting country</li> </ul>
<b>Criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Imports must be rising (absolute)</li> <li>Imports are causing "serious" injury to the domestic industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dumping, thus pricing below (1) production cost or (2) market price</li> <li>Imports are causing "material" injury to the domestic industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific subsidies (financial contribution) by foreign governments that are exported</li> <li>Imports are causing "material" injury to the domestic industry</li> </ul>

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Lesser mealworm Larvae

- ❖ The larvae of the Kenyan lesser mealworm can chew through polystyrene and host bacteria in their guts that help break down the material.

- ❖ The lesser mealworm is the larval form of the Alphitobius darkling beetle.
- ❖ These bacteria produce enzymes capable of digesting the plastic.
- ❖ The larval period lasts between 8 and 10 weeks.
- ❖ Polystyrene is known as Styrofoam.
- ❖ It is a plastic material that's widely used in food, electronic and industrial packaging.



## ENVIRONMENT

### **Sukhna Lake – ESZ**

- ❖ The Centre was demarcating an area from 1 km to 2.035 km around the Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary as an eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) on the Haryana side.
- ❖ All activities in the ESZ will be governed by the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
- ❖ The prohibited activities include the commercial mining, stone quarrying and crushing units, setting of new saw mills, setting of industries causing pollution.

- ❖ Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary is under the control of the Chandigarh Administration and shares boundary with Punjab and Haryana.



### World's largest coral



- ❖ The largest coral ever recorded has been found by scientists in the southwest Pacific Ocean.

- ❖ It is as big as two basketball courts and visible from space in the waters of the Solomon Islands.
- ❖ The mega coral - which is a collection of many connected, could be more than 300 years old.

### **Red-Headed Vulture in Kerala**

- ❖ In a remarkable first, the critically endangered Red-Headed Vulture has been sighted in Kasaragod.
- ❖ This bird is also known as the “Asian King Vulture.”
- ❖ It is distinguished by its striking red head and impressive wingspan of up to 2.5 m.
- ❖ It is typically found in Central India, Nepal, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, and parts of Kerala, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu.



### **Titan Arum Flower**

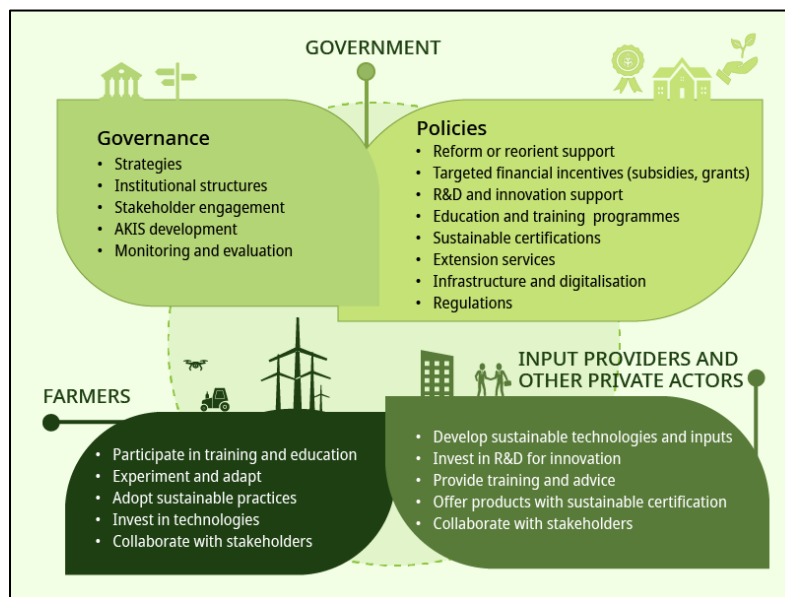
- ❖ *Amorphophallus Titanum*, often shortened to Titan Arum is bloomed in the south of Melbourne, Australia
- ❖ It blooms once in a decade and is one of the largest in the world — growing over 10 ft in height.
- ❖ The flower smells like putrid dead bodies.

- ❖ It is called as the 'corpse flower', native to western Sumatra, Indonesia.
- ❖ It was first described by Italian botanist Odoardo Beccari in 1878.
- ❖ The flower has been listed as “endangered” under the IUCN Red List.



## REPORTS AND INDICES

### Agricultural Policy Monitoring and Evaluation 2024 Report



- ❖ This report was released by The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

- ❖ Total support to the agricultural sector across the 54 countries are covered by this report averaged USD 842 billion per year during 2021-23.
- ❖ Transfers to the sector have declined in 2022 and 2023 relative to their peak in 2021.
- ❖ 12.6% of agricultural support goes to key services like innovation, biosecurity, and infrastructure.
- ❖ 5% of support promotes voluntary environmental action beyond requirements.
- ❖ Support remains concentrated in a few large economies, with China, the United States, India and the European Union representing 37%, 15%, 14% and 13% of the total respectively.
- ❖ Individual farmers received USD 628 billion per year in positive support over the 2021-23 period.

## PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

### Award to Indian Prime Minister 2024



- ❖ Nigeria is to honour Indian Prime Minister with its award- The Grand Commander of The Order of the Niger (GCON).
- ❖ Queen Elizabeth is the only foreign dignitary who has been awarded GCON in 1969.
- ❖ This will be the 17th such international award being conferred to PM by a country.



- ❖ The Commonwealth of Dominica will also bestow its highest national award, the Dominica Award of Honour, upon Indian Prime Minister.
- ❖ This is a recognition of his contributions to Dominica during the COVID-19 pandemic and his dedication to strengthening the partnership between India and Dominica.
- ❖ The Dominica Award of Honour was earlier received by Fidel Castro, Cuban leader and revolutionary.
- ❖ Each President of Dominica also is bestowed with that honour.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### World Usability Day 2024 - November 14



- ❖ It is celebrated on the second Thursday of November every year.
- ❖ It promotes the values of Virtual Healthcare, Electronic health records, and other health-related Technologies this year.
- ❖ In November 2005, the User Experience Professional Association created this day.
- ❖ The theme of 2024 is “Designing for a Better World”.

### Janjatiya Gaurav Divas or Tribal Pride Day 2024 - November 15

- ❖ Birsa Munda’s birth anniversary is observed as Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas since 2021.
- ❖ This year marks the 150th anniversary of Birsa Munda’s birth.

- ❖ The Centre unveiled a commemorative stamp and coin to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary.
- ❖ Birsa Munda is a 19<sup>th</sup>-century tribal leader and an anti-colonial icon from Jharkhand.



### **Jharkhand Foundation Day 2024 - November 15**



- ❖ The state was a part of Bihar before the Bihar Reorganisation Act of 2000.
- ❖ Jharkhand, also referred to as the “land of forests,” is endowed by nature with a wealth of mineral resources.
- ❖ With 29 per cent of the territory covered by forests and woodlands, it has the highest forest occupancy rate of any Indian state.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **Walking Pneumonia**

- ❖ There are significant spike of cases of walking pneumonia across the United States - especially among children.

- ❖ Walking pneumonia is a milder form of pneumonia.
- ❖ It is a less serious form of lung infection often caused by the bacteria *Mycoplasma pneumoniae*.
- ❖ The bacteria in the droplets can be inhaled by others, causing infection.
- ❖ Most kids with this type of pneumonia do not feel sick enough to stay home, hence the name "walking" pneumonia.

