Tamil Nadu Directorate of Government Examinations – announced that there will be only multiple choice questions (MCQs) in the objective section for students of Classes XI and XIII in the coming state board exams.

Earlier, the Government had released the model question paper pattern in the last week of January, with the Part-A paper for Mathematics and science including fill in the blanks, match the following and assertion-reasoning type questions.


The agreement, signed in the presence of Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami, aims to strengthen the cultural and educational cooperation of students studying in Government schools and colleges.
The IRCTC – to start a special ‘Ram Sethu Express-Tamil Nadu Temple Tour’ in the state

- It will start from Tambaram railway station in Chennai on February 28 and will return back on March 3
- This is a Bharat Darshan exclusive tourist train, spanning 4 days of travel
- Tourists can board at Chengalpet, Tindivanam, Villupuram and Vridachalam as well

States

The Jammu & Kashmir Government – withdrew the security cover of 18 separatist leaders in the state
- Earlier, on February 17, the state government had withdrawn the security cover of 6 separatists
- The separatist leaders whose security cover has been withdrawn includes Syed Ali Shah Geelani, Yaseen Malik, Abdul Gani Shah among others
The Union cabinet – re-promulgates the Triple talaq ordinance for the third time
- The ordinance makes the practice of Triple Talaq instant divorce by Muslim men a penal offence
- The bill, passed in Lok Sabha earlier, could not pass through Rajya Sabha and is set to lapse once the Lok Sabha is dissolved

The Union cabinet - approves the Promulgation of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Ordinance, 2019 on February 19, 2019
- The proposed Ordinance will immediately tackle the menace of illicit deposit taking activities like ponzi schemes in the country
- The Lok Sabha had earlier passed the Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Bill, 2018 on February 13, 2019
- The bill specifies 3 different types of offences, namely, running of Unregulated Deposit Schemes, fraudulent default in Regulated Deposit Schemes, and wrongful inducement in relation to Unregulated Deposit Schemes.
- The Bill bans unregulated deposit taking activities altogether, by making them an offence with severe punishment

The centre – had announced the easing of tax rules for the Start-ups
- As per the new rules, the large listed companies and alternate investment funds can now invest any amount in start-ups without worrying about tax scrutiny on valuations, while angel investors can infuse upto Rs 25 crore
- The start-ups will be allowed to claim 3-year tax holiday during a 10-year period, instead of a 7-year block now
- An entity with a turnover of up to Rs 100 crore, against Rs 25 crore earlier, will be considered a ‘start-up’ through a new system, requiring less paperwork to register with the Department for promotion of industry and internal trade

Justice T B Radhakrishnan – appointed as the Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court
- The 5-member Supreme court collegium headed by CJI, Ranjan Gogoi had reiterated its January 10 recommendation transferring Telangana High Court CJ as the CJ of Calcutta High Court
The centre had earlier returned the collegium’s recommendation for reconsideration on certain grounds.

The Collegium also comprised Justices A K Sikri, S A Bobde, N V Ramana and Arun Mishra.

Centre – to launch ‘Operation Digital Board’ (ODB) across 2 lakh classrooms in higher education institutes at a cost of Rs 2,000 crore from 2019-20 academic season.

It is also planning to implement the scheme across 1.5 lakh secondary and senior secondary government and government-aided schools over a period of 3 years.

The scheme, announced in the 2018 union budget, will set up ‘digital classrooms’ in the educational institutions to make the learning and teaching interactive.

UGC will be the implementing agency for ODB in Higher educational institutions.

It had already passed a resolution for extending digital education in every classroom in country by 2022.

2 Surya Kiran Aircrafts, part of an IAF aerobatic team – collided mid-air and crashed in Bengaluru on February 19 during a practice session for the 12th edition of Aero India.

Wing Commander Sahil Gandhi was killed as he failed to eject.
Wing Commander Vijay Shelke, who was the second-in-command of Surya Kiran aerobatic team and Squadron Leader Tejeshwar Singh were admitted in the hospital with fractures and injuries.

The Surya Kiran team had recently upgraded to Hawk Mk-132 aircraft from the earlier Kiran trainer aircraft, which was de-commissioned by the IAF.

The rest of the Surya Kiran team (7 aircrafts in total) landed and grounded in HAL airport safely and they will not perform in the Aero India show.

Aero India kicked off in Bengaluru on February 20.

**CONFERENCES & SUMMITS**


The lineup at the 5-day event includes 61 aircrafts from India (including HAL's indigenous product Light Combat Aircraft, Tejas), France, and the United States.

The event intends to showcase India’s air defence skills apart from providing a platform for aviation companies, the defence sector and government to forge new alliances and contracts.

Besides the Tejas, the HTT-40 (Basic Trainer Aircraft), first indigenously upgraded Hawk Mk132- named as Hawk-i, Civil Do-228, Advanced Light Helicopter (Rudra), Light Utility Helicopter (LUH), Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) are scheduled to fly in the air show.

American defence giant, Lockheed Martin unveiled the F-21 multi-role fighter jets especially for Indian Air Force, to be manufactured under Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s 'Make in India' initiative.

Sarang, the helicopter display team of the Indian Air Force flying HAL Dhruv helicopters was one of the highlights of the event.

More than 600 Indian Companies and 200 Foreign Companies are participating in Aero India 2019, the largest Air show of Asia.
**DEFENCE**

- Indian Air Force – receives the ‘release to service’ from DRDO for the indigenously developed Light Combat Aircraft, Tejas

- This means, the fighter aircraft has secured the final operational clearance for inducting into the service
- Tejas was designed by the Aeronautical Development Agency of DRDO
- The aircraft, conceived first in 1983 and sanctioned only in 1993, is being produced by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)
- The IAF has placed orders for 40 Tejas aircrafts so far, of which HAL has rolled out 14 and the IAF has accepted 10
- Tejas has been in display during Gagan Shakti (in April 2018) and in recently held Vayu Shakti

**ECONOMY**

- Government – allocates Rs 48,239 crore in 12 public sector banks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporation Bank</th>
<th>Amount (in Rs cr)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Allahabad Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>PNB</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bank of Maharashtra</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Govt
Corporation bank emerged the biggest beneficiary with Rs 9,086 crore followed by Allahabad Bank at Rs 6,896 crore.

With this capital infusion, the government has provided Rs 1,00,958 crore out of Rs 1.06 crore 'bank recapitalization plan', aiming to strengthen better performing banks under PCA (prompt corrective action), so that they can come out of this restriction.

In January 2019, RBI had lifted curbs on 3 out of 11 PSB’s.

Allahabad Bank, United Bank of India, Corporation Bank, IDBI Bank, UCO Bank, Central Bank of India, IOB and Dena Bank are still under PCA framework.

**SPORTS**

- Haryana’s Amit Panghal, Asian Games Gold medallist – won a second successive gold in 49 kg category - at the Strandja Memorial boxing Tournament in Sofia, Bulgaria.

  ![Amit Panghal](image1.jpg) ![Amit Panghal](image2.jpg)

- Former Junior world champion, Nikhat Zareen (51 kg) and Meena Kumari Devi (54 kg) – also became the first set of Indian woman boxers to win gold medals at the 70th edition of the prestigious tournament.

- **Laureus Sports Awards, Monaco**
  - Tennis world No. 1, Novak Djokovic of Serbia won his fourth Laureus World Sportsman of the Year - after claiming both the US Open and Wimbledon tennis championships last year.

  ![Novak Djokovic](image3.jpg) ![Simone Biles](image4.jpg)
With his record seventh title at Australian open recently, Djokovic moved ahead of Pete Sampras into third on the men’s all-time list of Grand Slam winners (15), just two behind Spaniard Rafa Nadal with Swiss legend, Roger Federer continues to lead with 20.

American record-holding gymnast, Simone Biles bagged the World Sportswoman of the Year Award - after winning four gold medals, one silver and one bronze at the 2018 World Championships

Also the World Sportswoman of the Year winner in 2017, she made history by becoming the first woman to win four all-around world gymnastics championships.

Biles has a record 14 career world titles under her name at the age of 21, including four Olympic golds

Japan’s world number one female tennis player Naomi Osaka, who won her first Grand Slam title at US Open last year and also the 2019 Australian Open, won the Breakthrough of the Year award

FIFA World Cup winners France became the first national football team to win a second Laureus World Team of the Year Award

Golfing star Tiger Woods received the Laureus World Comeback of the Year Award for winning the Tour Championship, his third Laureus Award after the Laureus World Sportsman of the Year accolade in 2000 and 2001

Legendary football manager Arsene Wenger received the Laureus Lifetime Achievement Award for his contribution to football during his 22 years as manager of Arsenal.

Yuwa, a sport-for-development organization that works in the rural region of Jharkhand in northern India, received the Laureus Sport for Good Award for their life-changing work in using football to improve the lives of young girls from disadvantaged communities

Laureus Sports Award winners

Sportsman of the Year - Novak Djokovic (Tennis)
Sportswoman of the Year - Simone Biles (Gymnast)
Comeback of the Year - Tiger Woods (Golf)
Breakthrough of the Year - Naomi Osaka (Tennis)
Sportsperson of the Year with disability - Henrieta Farkkasova (Skiing)
Action Sportsperson of the Year - Chloe Kim (Snowboarding)
Team of the Year - France football team
Laureus Sporting Moment of the Year - Xia Boyu
Exceptional Achievement Award - Eliud Kipchoge (Athletics)
Lifetime Achievement Award - Arsene Wenger (Football)
Spirit for Sport Award - Lindsey Vonn (Alpine Skiing)
Sport for Good Award - Yuwa (Women’s football in Jharkhand)
INTERNATIONAL DAY

- International Mother Language Day – February 21
  - The annual observance of the day is to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and promote multilingualism among the citizens
  - It was first recognized in November 1999, when the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) brought the subject in the UN General Conference.
  - The day is observed since the year 2000 and later, the resolution was welcomed by the UN General Assembly in 2002

- Theme 2019 - “Indigenous languages matter for development, peace building and reconciliation”
- History of the Day
  - The idea to celebrate International Mother Language Day came from Bangladesh
  - The day is known as Bhasha Dibas or Shahid Dibas in West Bengal and Bangladesh for more than six decades now
  - Post independence in 1948, Pakistan government declared Urdu as its national language
  - Bangladeshi students fought for recognition for the Bangla language as the national language in erstwhile west Pakistan on February 21, 1952
  - This eventually led to Pakistan adding Bengali as one of the national languages in 1956
  - East Pakistan declared its independence and became Bangladesh in 1971, with Bengali as their official language.