
- It intends to create a framework that enables accelerated development of solar energy in the state
- The policy aims to provide a significant number of green jobs and make solar energy accessible and affordable for all the citizens of the state
- The sector is also expected to significantly contribute to reducing carbon and water footprint of the state
Under the Paris Climate Change Agreement, India has to add 100GW solar capacity by 2022

**Highlights of the new policy**
- The new policy targets 9000 MW of installed capacity in the state by 2023 from the present capacity of 2,200 MW of installed solar capacity
- About 40% of the additional capacity of 6,800 MW should come from the consumer (rooftop solar system) category
- The policy defines 2 categories for solar power generation – Utility category and consumer category
- The objective of utility category is to sell the solar energy to Tangedco
- The consumer category will encourage self-consumption and export of surplus energy to the grid
- The state is also planning to incentivize electricity consumers to set up solar energy systems
- A single-window system for technical support, funding support and project clearance, encourage public-private partnerships and joint ventures to mobilize investments in solar energy projects, manufacturing facilities, research and technology development is also planned
- The state seeks to facilitate ‘Ease of Doing Business’ in the solar energy sector, with all its initiative to boost investment in the sector
- The LT electricity consumers can export surplus solar energy to the grid and has the option of receiving payment at the end of a 12-month settlement period
- The policy encourages public buildings to install solar energy systems, besides pushing Corporations, municipalities and urban local bodies to use solar PV energy based street lights and water supply installations
- Suitable incentive schemes will be worked out to promote solar energy generation in agricultural sector and in co-utilisation of land for solar energy projects, crop cultivation and water conservation
The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami and Deputy Chief Minister O Paneerselvam - have released the Tamil Nadu combined development and building rules 2019 on February 4, 2019.

The rules aim at efficient and sustainable utilization of scarce land making housing more affordable and achieving inclusive, sustainable and denser developments.

As per the TN combined development regulations and building rules, 2019, all rules relating to planning and building permit for construction and layout have been brought into a single document, applicable to the entire State, except Hill areas.

The Rules come into being from February 4, 2019.

Highlights of the new rules:

- Obtaining a completion certificate is made obligatory for all developments excluding residential building upto 12m in height, not exceeding 3 dwelling units or 750 sq.m floor area and all types of industrial buildings.

- To ensure compliance with approved plans and to curtail deviations in construction at the initial stage itself, inspections have been mandated during construction at the plinth level and at the last storey level.
To reduce the number and length of commutes, mixed use development will be promoted. Accordingly, the primary residential use zone and mixed residential use zone have been combined.

The planning parameters have been simplified by removing minimum plot extent requirement, plot frontage requirement, and plot coverage for many of the developments.

For high-rise building on sites abutting 18 m road there is no restriction on number of floors and the maximum setback for high-rise buildings is capped at 20m.

Minimum road width for non high-rise buildings upto 18.3m is reduced to 9m from 10m.

In accordance with the National Building Code, extended basements will be permitted in high-rise buildings upto 4.5m from the boundary in the front setback and 3m from the other sides.

In case of layouts, half of the area reserved as public purpose plots must be gifted to the local authorities free of cost for public purpose use.

In line with the government’s earlier decision to increase the FSI to permit denser development and make housing more affordable, the Floor Space Index has been revised upward.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl No.</th>
<th>Type of building</th>
<th>Earlier FSI</th>
<th>Proposed FSI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Residential (Non-high-rise buildings)</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Commercial (Non-high-rise buildings)</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>1 to 1.5</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>High-rise buildings in 12 m wide road</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>High-rise buildings in 15 m wide road</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>High-rise buildings in 18 m wide road</td>
<td>2 to 2.5</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tamil Nadu Government – appointed Narayanasamy of Dindigul district - as the ward manager at the Government Hospital in Dindigul under the Chief Minister’s Health Insurance Scheme

- 30-year old Naryanaswamy underwent the first double hand transplant in the state last year
- In February 2018, he was performed a 13-hour surgery at Government Stanley Medical college and Hospital, Chennai - for reconstructing his hands, below the elbow, with a pair of hands donated by an accident victim who was declared brain dead
- He was undergoing intensive physiotherapy sessions as inpatient at the Stanley Hospital for the last one year
- In 2015, Narayanaswamy, a mason, lost both hands after he accidentally suffered an electric shock.

IIT, Madras researchers – find new ‘Laser tech’ using carrot - that can help humans to see objects that are otherwise invisible to the naked eye
- The team had found out that Carrots are an effective medium to provide a biocompatible laser with applications in photonics, the branch of technology dealing with photons (units of light)
- The discovery was made when Venkata Siva Gummaluri, a research scholar in IIT-M was shooting a blue laser light onto a processed carrot, he noticed a scattered laser light in the green-to-red wavelength was emitted out
The effect was something similar to what Nobel winning physicist from Chennai C V Raman had observed in 1922 (for which he won Nobel in 1930)

Two Regional rural banks, Pallavan Grama Bank and Pandyan Grama Bank – merge into a single bank, Tamil Nadu Grama Bank, in the state

The consolidation, conferred by Ministry of Finance under Regional Rural Banks Act 1976, will be effective from April 1, 2019

Pallavan Grama Bank is sponsored by Indian Bank and Pandyan Grama Bank is sponsored by Indian Overseas Bank

This newly integrated bank will be sponsored by Indian Bank and will have its head office located at Salem, Tamil Nadu.
**SCHEMES**

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik - launched scholarship scheme named ‘KALIA Chhata Bruti Yojana‘ in Keonjhar district of the state

- Under this scheme, the children of farmers will be provided scholarships to pursue higher education in professional courses at free of cost
- KALIA scheme - Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation
- Patnaik also launched Mission Shakti Conclave dedicated the development projects worth Rs 45 crore.

**STATES**

- Madhya Pradesh Government – made it mandatory for all industries in the state to hire 70% local youth
  - The state mandated the condition to seek incentives from the Government as per the new industrial policy of the state

- Kerala – becomes the first state to set up price monitoring and research unit
  - The new unit will track violation of prices of essential drugs and medical devices
  - It has been set up by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)
Prime Minister Narendra Modi - laid the foundation stones of two All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Vijaypur and Awantipora in Jammu and Kashmir

- The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone of northern regional centre campus of Indian Institute of Mass Communication in Jammu
- He also launched the University of Ladakh, which will be the first-ever university in the Ladakh region of the state

COURT VERDICT

The Madras high court – held that 50% wage cut for prisoners in unconstitutional

- A division bench of Justice K K Sasidharan and Justice G R Swaminathan pointed out that Article 3 of the constitution prohibits ‘Begar’, a labour or service which a person is forced to give without receiving any remuneration
- The court also held that the prisoners in Tamil Nadu are not paid the wages as prescribed in the Minimum Wages Act
- As per the provision in the Tamil Nadu prison rules, a deduction of 50% of wages earned by the prisoners is done for their upkeep and 20% of wages is credited to the victim compensation fund (as per the SC direction)
- The Government is currently deducting Rs 100, Rs 90 and Rs 80 from the skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled prisoners wages every day to provide for the average cost of food, clothing and other amenities to the prisoners
- The actual cost for the basic amenities to a prisoner is coming to Rs 153 per day, as per the Government records
INTERNATIONAL

Iran - announced the successful flight test of its new Hoveizeh long-range cruise missile on February 2

- The day coincides with celebrations for the country’s 1979 Islamic revolution, which deposed the monarch Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, replacing his government with an Islamic republic under the Grand Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini
- The test run of the Hoveizeh missile is part of an arms exhibition - called 40 Years of Defensive Achievements - which is being held in Tehran
- The Hoveizeh are a part of the Soumar family of cruise missiles unveiled in 2015
- They have a range of over 1,350 km (840 miles) and are designed to be used against ground targets, even at low altitude, within a shortest possible time of preparedness
- Cruise missiles with a range of over 1,000 km are classified as long range
- Hoveizeh is manufactured by the Aerospace Industries Organization and will be used by the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Aerospace Force
- Iran has voluntarily limited the range of its missiles to 2,000 km (1,250 miles), sufficient to reach Israel and Western bases in the Middle East, even though the United States accuses it of pursuing enhanced missile capabilities to reach European targets
CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

2nd edition of ASEAN-India Youth Summit – begins in Guwahati on February 3

- Duration – February 3 to 7, 2019
- Inauguration - Union Minister of State for Tourism, KJ Alphons and Assam Chief Minister, Sarbananda Sonowal
- Theme - "Connectivity: Pathway to Shared Prosperity"
- Organised by - India Foundation, in collaboration with ASEAN Secretariat and Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (MEA)
- Participation - Youth delegates from India, Myanmar, Thailand, Indonesia, Brunei, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines
- The first India-ASEAN Youth Summit was held in August 2017 at Bhopal with the theme “Shared Values, Common Destiny”

ECONOMY

The audit committee of RBI – has cleared the payment of Interim dividend of Rs 28,000 crore to the Government

- Now, the proposal needs to be cleared by RBI’s central board
- Earlier, the Government was seeking up to Rs 40,000 crore as the interim dividend before the final payout to be decided in July 2019
- Last year, RBI had paid out Rs 10,000 crore as the Interim dividend and Rs 50,000 crore as the full payout for the financial year
- Surplus transfer was the bone of contention between the Finance ministry and former RBI Governor, Urjit Patel with the Government seeking higher payout from RBI
- The Government has budgeted for a higher dividend payout from RBI and public sector banks during the current financial year, revising it to Rs 74,140 crore from Rs 54,817 crore as estimated in February 2018
- A separate committee for the issue of economic capital framework has been set up under former RBI Governor Bimal Jalan and Rakesh Mohan, former deputy governor as vice chairman
Behrouz Boochani, an Iranian asylum-seeker detained in Papua New Guinea under Australian asylum laws - has won Australia’s top literature prize ‘Victorian Prize for Literature’

- He was awarded for his debut book titled “No Friend But the Mountains: Writing from Manus Prison”
- He was the first non-Australian author to win the award, ever since they were instituted in 1985 to honour Australian writers
- He wrote the book in his native Farsi and sent it through the WhatsApp messaging service to a translator in Australia, Omid Tofighian over a period of 5 years
- The book narrates experiences and fear Boochani felt in the guarded camp
- The Australia Detention Policy deports asylum-seekers who try to enter the country by boat to Manus Island or Nauru in the Pacific, where they are subjected to health crisis and serious mental illnesses
- Boochani has been a prominent critic of the treatment of people under Australia’s hardline immigration policy
- He has been banned from visiting Australia permanently
SPORTS

Ramit Tandon, Kolkata-based Indian squash player – won the 4th Seattle open title in USA

- In the final, he defeated Mohamed El Sherbini of Egypt
- Ramit Tandon rose to his career best ranking of 58 in the latest list released in February 2019 by World Squash Federation

Swiss Football Club, FC Basel – to invest 20 million Euros in Chennai City FC, a major I-League franchisee football club

- The 125-year old swiss club is set to pick up 35% stakes in the Coimbatore-based club
- FC Basel will have a player exchange programme and help the club with technical know-how
- They will also help CCFC in improving their infrastructure at their adopted home, Coimbatore
- Roger Federer, Swiss tennis legend hails from the city of Basel and is a huge fan of the club
Tamil Nadu’s fencer, Bhavani Devi – won 2 gold medals at the 29\textsuperscript{th} National Fencing championships held in Guwahati

- The Sabre fencer won the medals in the individual event and team gold for Tamil Nadu along with Tamilselvi, Carolin sandya and Dharani

Divya Deshmukh, 13-year old Indian Woman International Master – won the Velammal-AICF Women International Grandmaster Round Robin Chess Tournament 2019 in Chennai

- The second place was shared by Osmak Iulija (Ukraine) and Michelle Catherina (India)
- The tournament saw Divya achieving an International Master (IM) norm and a Woman Grandmaster norm