TAMIL NADU

➢ The new Tertiary treatment reverse osmosis (TTRO) plant at Koyambedu – to become operational from November 29

- It was earlier commissioned by chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami
- It is the second such facility to come up in Chennai after the one at Kodungaiyur, which was commissioned in the first week of last month
- The plant will limit the total dissolved solids (TDS) level in water to lesser than 70 milligram/litre during the process.
- Water is deemed potable if the TDS levels are between 250 mg/ litre and 500 mg/litre.
- When the new plant becomes operational, it will supply an additional 20 million litres of water a day to the residents of Chennai
- The water from the plant will also be distributed to Sipcot industrial units in Irungattukottai, Sriperumbudur and Oragadam in Kancheepuram
- Of the 45MLD distributed, Irungattukottai, Sriperumbudur and Oragadam used to get 13MLD, 10MLD and 20MLD respectively
Six cities in Tamil Nadu - are set to get 525 electric buses in the first phase of the roll-out of the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles (FAME) scheme.

- The city-wise breakup of the 525 e-buses allotted is - Coimbatore 100, Tiruchi 100, Madurai 100, Erode 50, Tiruppur 50, Salem 50, Vellore 50 and Thanjavur 25
- Apart from this, the State government has also requested the Centre to allot 500 electric buses under the FAME 2 scheme for Chennai
- At present, one electric bus manufactured by Ashok Leyland plies on the city roads, from Central station to Thiruvanmiyur (route no. A1), on a trial basis
- Also, the State government will be purchasing 500 electric and 2,213 Bharat Stage VI buses, at a cost of ₹1,580 crore, through funding from KfW of Germany.
- The agreement between the State government and KfW, signed on September 26, will facilitate the funding for the purchase of a total of 10,000 new buses, with BS VI engines, and 2,000 electric buses in the long run.

The Tamil Nadu Health department – to categorise pregnant women visiting the government antenatal clinics as red (high risk), yellow (moderate risk) and green (safe)

- The move to tag pregnant women is aimed to reduce maternal mortality rates (MMR) in the state
- Pregnant women in the state are registered under the ‘pregnancy and infant cohort monitoring and evaluation’.
- A woman can continue to remain in green or move to yellow and red any time during the pregnancy.
- Only women with green tag will be allowed to deliver at primary health centres, where staff will be mentored by gynaecologists.
- Until 2009, Tamil Nadu was second only to Kerala in low MMR
- In the 2010-2012 report, Maharashtra secured the second place with 87 deaths (per 100,000 births) compared to 90 in Tamil Nadu.
Last year, the gap between both the states reduced to five points.
This year, Maharashtra, at 55, has been placed eight points lower than Tamil Nadu.
Tamil Nadu reduced MMR from 66 per 1 lakh live births in 2014-2016 to 63 per 1 lakh live births in 2015-17
About 30% of maternal deaths occur among women who have more than two children, and their percentage in TN had remained at 7.5% for the past three years.

The Elephant Rehabilitation Centre (ERC) at M R Palayam in Trichy – is all set to get funding from ‘Project Elephant’, a Central scheme

PROJECT ELEPHANT

ERC is a first of its kind facility in the state developed for rehabilitation of privately owned captive elephants.
It started operating from September and the number of privately owned captive elephants went up to 5 now, leading to the increasing operational costs to run the camp
While ERC is owned and managed by the forest department, the operational costs of the elephants are supposed to borne by their owners, which did not happen till now
The ‘Project Elephant’ was launched by the Centre in 1992
It was initiated to take care of the welfare of the elephant, apart from addressing issues related to man-animal conflict and protection of elephant habitat
In Tamil Nadu, a huge chunk of funds from ‘Project Elephant’ is used for maintenance of elephants in Mudumalai Elephant Camp in Nilgiris, while a portion of it is currently being directed towards the ERC

The Tamil Nadu Directorate of Government Examinations (TNDGE) – has made arrangements to accept application forms of Class X students with
long names or two initials in the portal Educational Management Information System (EMIS)
✓ TNDGE had earlier set a limit of 34 characters (in English) for students' full names while uploading their details in this portal.
✓ Tamil versions of the names can have maximum 54 characters
✓ Aadhaar was also made mandatory for linking students' details with EMIS portal.

SCHEMES

➢ The Assam government – launches 'Arundhati Swarna Yojana' scheme in the state

✓ As per the scheme, the Assam government will offer 10 grams of gold as a gift to every adult bride who has finished at least 10th standard and has registered her marriage.
✓ The scheme will cost about Rs 800 crore annually on the government exchequer.
✓ The scheme will start on January 1, 2020
✓ The annual income of the bride's family must be less than Rs. 5,00,000 to avail the scheme.
✓ As per the scheme, the minimum education should be 10th standard, which will be relaxed for the tribes and workers of tea gardens.
✓ Assam has about 3,00,000 marriages every year but only 50,000-60,000 are registered.

STATES

➢ The Andhra Pradesh government - cancelled licences of all existing bars in the state
The move is seen as a first step towards total prohibition, which would be implemented in the state in a phased manner.

All existing bars have been served a notice to wind up their operations by December 31.

New bar licences will be issued from January 1, but their total number will be reduced by nearly 50%.

However, all star hotels and micro-breweries are exempted from the new policy and they would continue to operate on existing licences.

Kerala – to become the country’s first fully ‘digital state’ by December 2020

To achieve the task, the state cabinet approved the Kerala Fibre Optic Network (KFON) project in October this year.

The project aims to provide high-speed internet to one crore households, 30 lakh commercial and industrial establishments, 30,000 government offices and schools.

It also intends to bring high-speed internet to every household, including 20 lakh below poverty line (BPL) families who would get the service for free.

A 28,000km-long “internet highway” — a network of fibre optic cables — is being laid ‘aerially’ through the poles in the state, as part of the project.

The Rs 1,548 crore-project is being funded by Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB) which powers large infrastructure projects.

Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) and Kerala State IT Infrastructure Ltd (KSITIL) have also been roped in as part of the project.

A consortium led by Bharat Electronics Ltd has won the tender to develop the fibre cable network.

Cables are being imported from the US while their quality testing is done in Chennai.

Currently, Kerala’s internet penetration rate stands at 54%, which is second only to Delhi (69%).

In 2017, the Left Democratic Front (LDF) government of the state declared internet as a basic human right.

Earlier, in 2016, the United Nations declared internet as a basic human right.

Countries like Spain, France, Greece and Costa Rica have also recognised internet as a fundamental right.

Recently, Sudan’s interim constitution also held the right to access internet as a fundamental right.

NATIONAL

The Union Government – plans to merge two Union Territories — Daman and Diu, & Dadra and Nagar Haveli — into one

The Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (Merger of Union Territories) Bill 2019 is part of the proposed government bills in parliament for the next week.
Till Now, both the UTs have separate budgets and different secretariats even though they are just 35 km apart.

Dadra and Nagar Haveli has just 1 district while Daman and Diu has 2 districts.

The merger of the two UTs, located along the western coast near Gujarat, will facilitate better administration and check duplications of various work.

The merged UT is likely to be named as Dadra, Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu while its headquarters could be Daman and Diu.

The move comes three months after Jammu & Kashmir was bifurcated into two UTs — Jammu & Kashmir, and Ladakh on August 5.

INTERNATIONAL

Oxford Dictionaries - has named “climate emergency” as its 2019 Word of the Year

It was chosen among the other all-environmental shortlisted words, which included “climate action,” “climate denial,” “eco-anxiety,” “extinction” and “flight shame.”

Recent winners have included “toxic,” “youthquake,” “post-truth” and “vape.”

The use of the term “climate emergency” has increased by a hundred-fold since 2018.

In fact, it was the most common compound involving “emergency,” occurring three times as often as the next most-common, “health emergency.”

PERSONALITIES

Jaipur-based Mayank Pratap Singh – becomes the youngest judge in the country

At the age of just 21 years, Mayank made history by cracking the Rajasthan judicial services 2018 exam.

He took admission in 2014 in the five-year LLB course from the Rajasthan University, which ended this year.
The original age requirement for appearing in the judicial services exam was 23 years, which had been reduced to 21 years by the Rajasthan high court in 2019.

DEFENCE

- Lieutenant Shivangi will join Indian Navy as its first female pilot on December 2, 2019.
- Shivangi will fly fixed-wing Dornier surveillance aircraft.

  Lieutenant Shivangi, hailing from Muzaffarpur in Bihar, will be involved in Operation Duty in Kochi

- Bhawna Kanth became the first woman pilot of the Indian Air Force this year after undergoing all the required tests.
- Apart from Bhawna, Mohana Singh and Avni Chaturvedi also became fighter pilots later.
- Dornier (DO-228) aircraft, manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), is India’s lightweight maritime surveillance aircraft
- These surveillance aircraft are sent on short-range maritime missions

SPORTS

- Double Asian Games medallist Equestrian Fouaad Mirza - secured an Olympic quota after finishing as the top-ranked rider in his group in the qualifiers
The 27-year-old Mirza was the highest ranked rider in Group G for the South East Asia, Oceania in the individual eventing category after the end of the Europe stage earlier this month

However, the official confirmation will be announced by the International Equestrian Federation (FEI) on February 20

Imtiaz Anees (2000 Sydney) and Late Wing Commander IJ Lamba (1996 Atlanta) are the only Indians to have represented the country in the Equestrian event at the Olympics.

Earlier, Mirza was honoured with the Arjuna Award in August 2019