

## **EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-MARCH 22, 2023**

### **TAMIL NADU**

- **Tamil Nadu Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare Minister MRK Panneerselvam - presented the state's Agriculture budget for the year 2023-2024 on March 21, 2023.**
- ✓ The allocation for this year's budget is Rs 38,904.4 crore, which is higher than the Rs 33,007.68 crore allocated last year.



- ✓ The budget aims to promote organic farming and increase millet production, increase the net area sown and mechanise farming operations with an emphasis on exports
- ✓ The budget also aims to promote the state's farm produce by securing GI tag, and increase the income of farmers through agro-forestry.

#### **Highlights of the Budget**

#### **Schemes and Programmes**

- ✓ The Government aims to implement Kalaigarnin All Village Integrated Agriculture Development Programme, an initiative to make each village self-sufficient, at an outlay of Rs 230 crore in 2,504 villages.
- ✓ Allocation of Rs.744 crore for implementation of the Micro Irrigation Scheme

- ✓ Out of this, 60% of the funds, which is Rs.450 crore, will be spent to cover 53,400 hectares in the group of villages where agriculture is affected due to water shortage.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Cooperative crop loan of ₹14,000 crore</b> will be disbursed during next fiscal</li> <li>➤ Govt to provide <b>₹6,536 crore to Tangedco</b> towards three-phase free power supply to 23 lakh agri connections</li> <li>➤ <b>One scientist from agricultural colleges, research centres or Krishi</b></li> </ul>	<p>Vigyan Kendras as officer-in-charge for each block</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Allocation of ₹744 crore</b> for effective implementation of <b>micro irrigation scheme</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Training for 150 farmers</b> in Israel, The Netherlands, Thailand, Egypt, Malaysia, Philippines</li> </ul>
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- ✓ Steps would be taken to obtain Geographical Indication (GI) for 10 products viz., Krishnagiri Arasampatti Coconut, Krishnagiri Panneer Rose, Thanjavur Peravoorani Coconut, Mulanoor Kuttai Moringa, Sattur Cucumber, Thanjavur Veeramangudi Jaggery (Achu vellam), Thoothukudi Vilathikulam Chilli, Cuddalore Kotimulai Brinjal, Madurai Sengarumbu and Sivagangai Karuppukavuni rice in the coming year with an outlay of Rs.30 lakh.
- ✓ A new regional Startup hub will be created in Thanjavur by the Tamil Nadu Startup and Innovation Mission to promote agrotechnological innovations in the Cauvery delta region.
- ✓ Through the agro-industrial corridor in the Cauvery delta region from Trichy to Nagapattinam, projects of agriculture-related sectors will be coordinated and effectively implemented at an outlay of Rs 1,000 crore in the next five years.
- ✓ A budget of Rs 6,600 crore has been allocated for the rural employment guarantee scheme and Rs 368 crore for the All Grama Anna Marumalarchi Thittam.

### **Promotion of Organic Farming**

- ✓ The government will form 725 clusters covering an area of 14,500 hectares in 32 districts and create awareness about the importance of organic farming among farmers, rural youth, farm women and students.
- ✓ Assistance will also be provided to farmers for setting up organic input production centres.
- ✓ Financial assistance of Rs one lakh per group would be given to 100 farmer groups to establish organic input production centres and sale of organic inputs like panchagavyam, jeevamirtham and vermicompost.
- ✓ Nammazhvar Award with a purse of Rs 5 lakh and a citation will be given during Republic Day to farmers who practice and promote organic farming.
- ✓ A special scheme will be implemented to massively promote organic farming in the Nilgiris district over a period of five years at an outlay of Rs. 50 crore

### **Promotion of Millet cultivation**

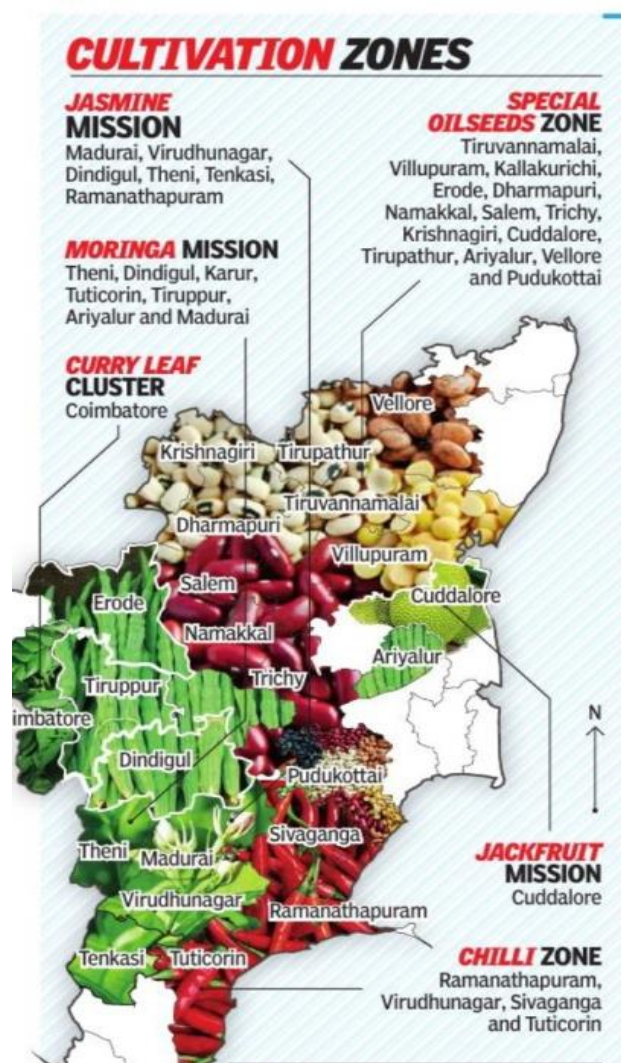
- ✓ The state has proposed to implement the Tamil Nadu Millet Mission for a period of five years
  - ✓ This mission is designed in line with the United Nations General Assembly which has declared 2023 as the “International Year of Millets”.
  - ✓ Under this scheme, subsidies will be given for bringing millet cultivation to fallow lands and crop diversification to millets in 50,000 acres.
  - ✓ It will be implemented with the financial assistance of the Union and State Governments at an estimated cost of Rs.82 crore.
  - ✓ A total of 100 groups of millet producers will be brought together and subsidies will be provided to install sprinkler irrigation systems for 12,500 acres.
- ✓ An assistance of Rs 1 lakh each will also be provided to 40 self-help groups to form millet clusters.
- ✓ Millet festivals would be held under the Tamil Nadu Millet Mission to create awareness among consumers and increase the millet consumption.

### **Farmer Welfare Measures**

- ✓ The government will provide cooperative crop loans of Rs.14,000 crore to farmers in the state during 2023-24 and interest-free cooperative loan of Rs.1,500 crore for goat rearing, dairying, poultry and fisheries.
  - ✓ In 2022-23, a total of 1.643 million farmers were provided with crop loans of Rs.12,648 crore by the cooperative department
- ✓ Considering the welfare of sugarcane farmers in Tamil Nadu, the government will allocate Rs.253 crore to provide special incentive of Rs.195
  - ✓ This will be over and above the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of Rs.2,821 per MT of cane announced by the Union government to eligible farmers during 2022-23 crushing season
- ✓ A total of 150 farmers will be taken overseas to countries, such as Israel, the Netherlands, Thailand, Egypt, Malaysia, and the Philippines, to learn their practices where productivity is high by adoption of high yielding technologies
  - ✓ A sum of Rs.3 crore will be allocated from the union and state government funds for this.
- ✓ The agriculture department has also recognised the increasing demand for horticultural crops of high value and marketability such as dragon fruit, avocado, date palm, lychee, mangosteen, fig and olive.
  - ✓ A sum of Rs.2 crore has been allocated from the union and state governments for this purpose
  - ✓ The funding will be used to expand the cultivation of these crops covering an area of 1,000 ha during the coming year with subsidy along with training on cultivation practices.

- ✓ Allocation of Rs 6,536 crore to provide free power supply to 23 lakh electricity connections of farmers
- ✓ A sum of Rs.29 crore has been allocated for assistance for distribution of onion seeders, storage godowns, harvesting machines and onion de-toppers
  - ✓ This scheme will be implemented in the districts of Perambalur, Namakkal, Salem, Thoothukudi, Trichy, Dindigul and Tiruppur.
- ✓ To increase the productivity of tomato, interventions, such as installation of drip irrigation, staking, cultivation of high yielding varieties and mulching will be provided at an outlay of Rs.19 crore
  - ✓ This scheme will be implemented in districts of Krishnagiri, Dharmapuri, Salem, Dindigul, Theni, Tiruppur and Coimbatore districts.

### Promotion of various Missions



- ✓ The mission for Madurai jasmine aimed at developing an integrated cluster for jasmine covering the districts of Madurai, Virudhunagar, Dindigul, Theni and Tenkasi
- ✓ The Jack Mission will be implemented by forming a cluster for Panruti Jack specific to Cuddalore

- ✓ The Moringa Mission will promote moringa cultivation in 1,000 hectares in Theni and other districts
- ✓ The Curry Leaf Cluster for Coimbatore
- ✓ Chilli Zone for Ramanathapuram, Virudhunagar, Sivaganga and Thoothukudi.
- ✓ A specific cluster development scheme at cost of Rs 130 crore for bananas in the Theni district.
- ✓ Announcement of 'Special Oilseeds Zone' covering Tiruvannamalai, Villupuram, Kallakurichi, Erode, Dharmapuri, Namakkal, Salem, Tiruchy, Krishnagiri, Cuddalore, Tirupattur, Ariyalur, Vellore, Pudukkottai districts
  - ✓ Major oilseeds, such as groundnut and sesame, are grown in these districts and attention will be given for production, value addition, marketing and export of oilseeds.
- ✓ To increase cotton production to 4.52 lakh bales, 'Sustainable Cotton Cultivation Mission' will continue at a cost of Rs 12 crore.

**KEY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- TN government will pay ₹2,337 crore towards its share of premium subsidy under crop insurance scheme
- Allocation of ₹500 crore to provide incentive of ₹100 and ₹75 per quintal respectively for fine and bold paddy varieties
- Plans to get Geographical Indication for ten products, Krishnagiri Arasampatti coconut, Krishnagiri paneer rose, Thanjavur Peravurani coconut, Mulanoor kuttai morina, Sattur cucumber, Thanjavur Veeramangudi jaggery, Tuticorin Vilathikulam chilli, Cuddalore Kotimulai brinjal, Madurai sengarumbu and Sivagangai Karuppu Kavuni rice

**60,000** agricultural implement kits will be given to small and marginal farmers and landless agricultural labourers

### Subsidies

- ✓ A subsidy of Rs 50,000 will be extended to 10,000 integrated farming system units and Rs 50 crore will be allocated.
- ✓ An additional 20% subsidy to be provided for small and marginal farmers of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- ✓ The Government will provide financial subsidy schemes for cultivation of Pulses, oilseeds, dwarf and tall hybrid coconut and cotton.

### Further Allocations

- ✓ Kits containing perennial fruit seedlings such as mango, guava, jackfruit, amla, acid lime, and custard apple will be distributed to 10 lakh households at an outlay of Rs 15 crore
- ✓ Rs 5 crore each for the beautification of government botanical gardens, Yercaud and horticultural park and Madhavaram in Chennai.

- ✓ Farm tourism to be promoted in association with the education department for school students at a cost of Rs 1 crore.
- ✓ Expansion of the electronic national agriculture markets (e-NAM) for Rs 9 crore
- ✓ Twenty-five farmers' markets to be renovated at a cost of Rs 9 crore.

### **Research Centers and Committees**

- ✓ An exclusive research centre for bananas will be established at the Agriculture College, Killikulam, Thoothukudi.
- ✓ A separate research centre for palmyra would be established in the same college at a cost of Rs 15 crore.
- ✓ The constitution of a special committee under the chairmanship of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) to review and provide solution for crop damage caused by the wild animals.

### **Agriculture through Technology**

- ✓ Agricultural machinery will be purchased through Primary Agricultural Co-operative Credit Societies (PACCSs) and hired out through e-Vaadagai App to farmers.
    - ✓ About Rs 500 crore will be allocated with National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) assistance for the purpose.
  - ✓ Block wise, district wise details of private owners of tractors and mechanics of agricultural machinery as well as pump sets will be uploaded in the e-Vaadagai App with their name, address and mobile number and linked with Uzhavan App.
    - ✓ This will facilitate the farmers to carry out ploughing operation without any hindrance
  - ✓ Agricultural e-Service centres will be set up in 385 Agricultural Extension Centres in coordination with Tamil Nadu e-governance agency
    - ✓ This will ensure all eligible farmers have access to benefits by the Agriculture-Farmers Welfare Department
  - ✓ A new simplified portal called GRAINS (Grower Online Registration of Agriculture Input System) will be introduced
    - ✓ The portal will help farmers submit documents to avail benefits under various government schemes implemented by 13 agriculture and allied departments.
  - ✓ One scientist from agricultural colleges, research centres or Krishi Vigyan Kendras is set to be appointed as officer-in-charge for each block.
    - ✓ The scientist will provide information about newly released high-yielding varieties, cultivation technologies, crop protection methods, marketing strategies in agriculture, etc.,
- **The French government - has conferred the prestigious 'The Order des Palmes Academiques' award on two French teachers from Chennai**

- ✓ Sumitra Muthukumar, French teacher at Alliance Francaise of Madras and Navis Sybil Abarna Roy, assistant professor of French in Loyola College are awarded in recognition of their outstanding work and commitment in spreading French language.
- ✓ The Order des Palmes Académiques, one of the greatest honour in the field, is bestowed upon remarkable academicians and professors for exemplary service and merit in the field of academics and science.

## STATES

- **On March 21, Rajasthan - became the first state to pass in Assembly the Right to Health Bill 2022**
- ✓ As per the Bill, the people of the state will be entitled for emergency care in public or designated private hospitals without any pre-payment and the requisite fees will be reimbursed by the state government, if the patient is unable to pay.
- ✓ The Bill gives every resident of the state the right to avail free Out Patient Department (OPD) services and In Patient Department (IPD) services at all public health facilities.
- ✓ Also, similar healthcare services will be provided free of cost at select private facilities.
- ✓ According to the bill, the patient during emergency treatment such as accidents, snake or animal bite and any other emergency decided by the state health authority will be treated without prepayment of requisite fee by public health institution, health care establishment and designated health care centres
- ✓ No health care provider shall delay treatment merely on the grounds of receiving police clearance or a police report.
- ✓ Any person who knowingly contravenes any provision of this act or any rule made thereunder shall be punishable with a fine up to Rs.10,000 for the first contravention, and up to Rs.20,000 for the subsequent contraventions.
- ✓ Rajasthan is becoming a model state in the field of health and 7% of the budget is being spent on the health sector.
- ✓ The bill was introduced in assembly last September but it was sent to the select committee and the bill was amended based on the committee's recommendations and was passed by a voice vote now
- ✓ As part of the Chiranjeevi Health Insurance Scheme, the Rajasthan government provides health insurance of Rs 10 lakh and bears organ transplant expenses.
- ✓ Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, in his budget speech, announced to increase this amount to Rs 25 lakh.

## NATIONAL

- **On March 21, the Lok Sabha - passed a Rs.1. 18 lakh crore budget for 2023-24 for the Union territory of Jammu & Kashmir**

- ✓ The Rs 1.18 lakh crore Budget will have a revenue expenditure of Rs 77,009 crore and capital expenditure of Rs 41,491 crore.
- ✓ The Budget of UT Jammu & Kashmir 2023-24 was introduced in Lok Sabha on March 13 by Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Choudhary.
- ✓ The state has also bagged the highest-ever investment of Rs 1,547.87 crore in the last 10 months.
- ✓ The House further passed Jammu & Kashmir Appropriation (No 2) Bill 2023 and the Jammu & Kashmir Appropriation Bill 2023 with voice votes.

## PERSONALITIES

- **US President Joe Biden - to nominate Indian-American Nisha Desai Biswal to a top administrative position in the US International Development Finance Commission.**



- ✓ Biswal, who served as assistant secretary of state for South Asia during the Obama administration, brings over 30 years of work experience in US foreign policy and international development programmes.
- ✓ She is currently senior vice-president for International Strategy and Global Initiatives at the US Chamber of Commerce, overseeing the US India Business Council.
- ✓ She served as assistant secretary for south and central Asian affairs at the state department 2013 to 2017, where she oversaw the US-India partnership during a period of unprecedented cooperation

