



EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-MARCH 15, 2023

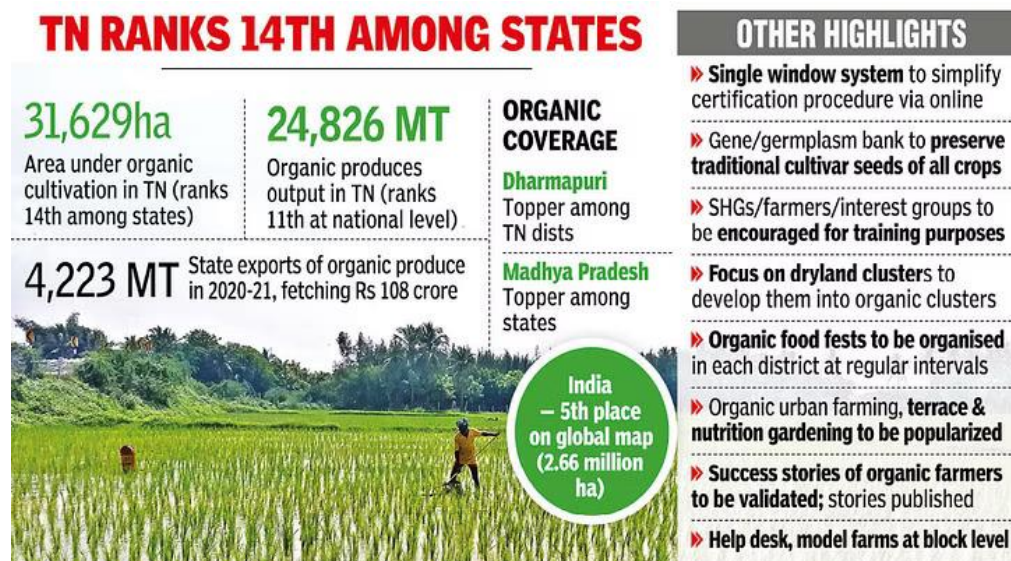
TAMIL NADU

- On March 14, the State government - released the Tamil Nadu Organic Farming Policy 2023 to support chemical-free organic agriculture in the state and provide safe food for the people.



- ✓ Chief Minister MK Stalin released the policy in the presence of Agriculture Minister MRK Panneerselvam and Chief Secretary V Irai Anbu.
- ✓ The policy is aimed strengthening organic certification system, propagation of traditional seeds and encouraging cluster-based dryland cultivation.
- ✓ As per the policy, a baseline survey will be carried out in all the districts to identify potential areas to be brought under organic farming
- ✓ The key features of the policy include -
 - ✓ Commodity-based clusters will be given preference
 - ✓ Organic food festivals will be organised in each district at regular intervals
 - ✓ Public-Private Partnerships to motivate the farmers to the adoption of organic farming will be encouraged

- ✓ Exclusive organic urban farming, terrace gardening, and nutrition gardening will be promoted and popularised
- ✓ Organic activists, exporters, and enthusiasts will be involved in carrying out the promotional activities on organic farming.
- ✓ A State gene / Germplasm Bank will be instituted for preserving traditional cultivar seeds of all crops.
- ✓ A separate organic farming help desk will be created to guide organic farmers on farming activities, certification, and marketing.
- ✓ Experiences of progressive and leading organic farmers will be documented and broadcasted through public media.
- ✓ Model organic farms at the block level will be developed and maintained both in Government and private level.
- ✓ To promote bio-fertilisers, bio-pesticides and bio-control agents and help farmers export their produce with a view to increasing their revenue.
- ✓ Setting up of a single window system and online registration process for organic certification of farm lands
- ✓ Setting up of laboratories for pesticide residue analysis in accordance with the standards of National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories

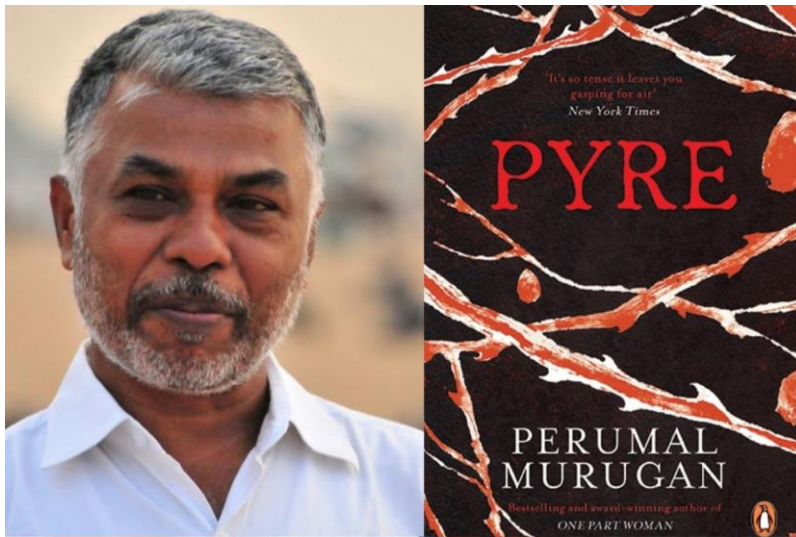


- ✓ The state government prefers a cluster-approach for organic farming, as pesticide residues can get on to organic produce of neighbouring lands.
 - ✓ As per this approach, existing dryland clusters will be developed into organic clusters and create organic zones by integrating clusters.
 - ✓ Various activities ranging from crop planning to production of on-farm inputs, processing, transportation and marketing will be performed with the clusters.
- ✓ The government is also keen on incentivising organic farmers.
 - ✓ Bio-fertilisers and bio-inputs would be provided at subsidized rates.

- ✓ Self-help groups and farmer producer organisations would be roped in to prepare on-farm inputs like panchagavyam, jeevamirtham and vermicompost.
- ✓ Renewable energy sources will be encouraged in the farms and testing of off-farm inputs will be strengthened.
- ✓ Inclusion of organic farming in education and research
 - ✓ Research programs would be taken up by agricultural institutes for development of organic practices for all major crops.
- ✓ To implement the policy, various committees will be formed by the Government.
 - ✓ The policy will be implemented with the involvement of all related Central and State schemes of Departments like Agriculture, Horticulture, Agriculture Marketing, Agriculture Engineering, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Khadi, and Textiles in an integrated approach.
 - ✓ A high-level committee will be formed under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary with members from the government and institutions to review the policy and status.
 - ✓ A steering committee will be formed under the chairmanship of the Agriculture Secretary to the government, and the Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Department to monitor the implementation of organic farming policy and finalisation of schemes.
 - ✓ Besides, a district-level committee will be formed under the Chairmanship of the District Collector with members from various departments and institutions.
- ✓ The policy will come into effect from the date of issuance of the government order and will be reviewed after a period of five years.
- ✓ The terms organic farming and natural farming are sometimes used interchangeably by farmers and others in India.
 - ✓ In natural farming, the use of bio-inputs prepared from the farm and local ecosystems is emphasised rather than those purchased from outside while in organic farming, farmers also use off-farm purchased inputs such as bio-fertilisers.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu is ranked 14th in the country in organic farming with 31,629 hectares of organic farm land.
 - ✓ It includes 14,086 hectares of organic certified area and 17,543 hectares under the process of certification.
 - ✓ Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri occupy first and second positions in terms of total area
 - ✓ The state ranked 11th in production of organic food in 2020-21.
 - ✓ It produced 24,826 tonnes of organic food, out of which 4,223 tonnes was exported, fetching Rs.108 crore revenue.
- ✓ India occupies fifth place with a total area of 2.66 mha under the organic certification process (certified).

- ✓ The total organic cultivable area includes 1.49 mha certified and 1.17 mha area under conversion.
- ✓ Among all the States, Madhya Pradesh has the largest area under organic certification followed by the States of Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Karnataka.
- ✓ India produced around 3.48 million MT (2020-2021) of certified organic products which include oil seeds, cereals and millets, cotton, pulses, aromatic and medicinal plants, etc.
- ✓ In terms of export value realization, processed foods (45.87%) lead among the products followed by oilseeds (13.25%) and cereals (7.61%).

➤ **Tamil writer Perumal Murugan - has been selected for the International Booker prize longlist for 2023**



- ✓ This was announced by the Booker Prize Foundation on March 14.
- ✓ Murugan makes it to the prestigious list with his 2016 book 'Pyre', translated from Tamil by Aniruddhan Vasudevan.
- ✓ The book is a translation of his original Tamil work 'Pukkuli'
- ✓ 'Pyre' tells the tale of an inter-caste couple who elope, setting in motion a terrifying story dealing with honour killing.
- ✓ The 56-year-old is the first Tamil writer to make it to the longlist of 13 works.
- ✓ Murugan, who lives in Namakkal in Salem district of Tamil Nadu, has authored 11 novels, 5 collections each of short stories and poetry and non-fictional works.
- ✓ He was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Translation Award for his book 'One-Half Woman', which has been translated by Vasudevan from his novel 'Madhorubhagan'.
- ✓ The 13 books on the long list for the Booker Prize are from 12 different nations and 11 different languages.
- ✓ Among these, six novels from this longlist will be chosen as finalists for this year's award on April 18 at the London Book Fair

- ✓ Last year, Hindi writer Geetanjali Shree became the first Indian writer, along with American translator Daisy Rockwell, to win the award for her book "Tomb of Sand".
 - ✓ Originally written in Hindi, it was the first book in any Indian language to win the high-profile award.
- ✓ The Booker international prize is awarded every year for a single book that is translated into English and published in the UK or Ireland.
- ✓ The winner of the award receives a prize of 50,000 pounds, which is split between the author and translator equally.
- ✓ On May 23, the International Booker Prize 2023 winner will be revealed at an event in London's Sky Garden

NATIONAL

- **The government – has decided to formalise the arrangement for IPS probationers to undergo their foundational training at institutes other than Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) in Mussoorie**
- ✓ In this regard, the Indian Police Service (Probation) Rules, 1954 has been amended by the government
- ✓ As per the earlier Rules, IPS officers selected through the annual Civil Services Examination has to undergo the mandatory three-month foundational course at LBSNAA, followed by further training at the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy (SVPNPA), Hyderabad

SUPREME COURT VERDICT

- **On March 14, the Supreme Court - dismissed the central government's plea seeking additional compensation for the 1984 Bhopal gas tragedy victims from US-based firm Union Carbide Corporation (UCC), now owned by Dow Chemicals.**
- ✓ The apex court said that a sum of Rs 50 crore lying with the RBI for the victims shall be utilised by the Union of India to satisfy pending claims of victims.
- ✓ The judgment was pronounced by a five-judge constitution bench headed by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul.
- ✓ The bench also comprised Justices Sanjiv Khanna, Abhay S Oka, Vikram Nath and JK Maheshwari.
- ✓ The court noted that the failure to take insurance policies is gross negligence on the part of the Government of India.
- ✓ Seeking enhanced compensation, the Centre submitted that damage done to life and environment wasn't estimated properly in 1989 and more people died or suffered over the years, which must be taken into account

- ✓ The government sought a re-examination of the apex court's February 14, 1989 judgment which had fixed compensation at \$470 million, contending that the settlement was seriously impaired.
- ✓ The Centre also sought additional compensation of around Rs 7,844 crore from the UCC's successor firms for the victims of one of the most catastrophic industrial disasters globally.
- ✓ The Central government, led by Congress, had filed a curative petition seeking enhanced compensation in the Supreme Court in December 2010.
 - ✓ A curative petition is the last resort for a plaintiff after an adverse judgement has been delivered and the plea for its review is rejected
- ✓ The toxic methyl isocyanate gas leak from the Union Carbide factory on the intervening night of December 2 and 3, 1984 killed 5,295 people and affected more than 5.5 lakh persons, besides causing huge environmental impact in Bhopal - the state capital of Madhya Pradesh.

INTERNATIONAL

- **Australia - has signed a tripartite contract with the US and the UK to acquire, operate and eventually build at least eight conventional armed nuclear-powered submarines (SSN) to counter a combative China in the Indo-Pacific region.**



- ✓ Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese announced the deal in San Diego when he met American President Joe Biden and UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak.
- ✓ The programme will cost up to A\$368 billion (\$245 billion) over the next three decades
- ✓ The submarine deal was part of the security pact between the three countries called AUKUS (Australia, UK, US) formed in 2021 to counter China's aggressive behaviour in the strategic Indo-Pacific region
- ✓ This would be the first time that the US will share nuclear-propulsion technology since it did so with Britain in the 1950s.

- ✓ Under the agreement, Australia will first receive at least three nuclear-powered submarines from the US
- ✓ Meanwhile, members of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) will also be trained at US and UK submarine bases from this year to gain the necessary skills to use the submarines.
- ✓ From 2027, the US and UK will station a small number of nuclear submarines at a RAN base in Perth, Western Australia, before Australia buys three American Virginia-class submarines in the early 2030s – with options to purchase two more.
- ✓ After that, the plan is to design and build an entirely new nuclear-powered submarine for the UK and Australian navies, called SSN-AUKUS.
- ✓ This attack submarine will be built in the UK and Australia to a British design, but use technology from all three countries.
- ✓ China is engaged in hotly contested territorial disputes in both the South China Sea and the East China Sea.
- ✓ China claims sovereignty over all of the South China Sea, while Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei and Taiwan have counterclaims.

DEFENCE

- **The government - has now set up a committee of secretaries to fast-track infrastructure projects — roads, tunnels and bridges — along the northern borders with China.**
- ✓ The decision was announced after defence minister Rajnath Singh chaired a high-level meeting to review the progress in construction of various border infrastructure projects on March 14
- ✓ The committee of secretaries will include the ministries of defence, road, transport & highways, telecommunications, environment and power, among others

INTERNATIONAL DAY

- **World Consumer Rights Day – March 15**



- ✓ The day is observed every year in order to raise awareness about consumer rights and promote consumer protection
- ✓ World Consumer Rights Day was first observed on March 15, 1983, by Consumers International, a federation for consumer groups.
 - ✓ Consumer International was founded in the year 1960 as an independent and influential voice for consumers.
- ✓ The date was chosen to commemorate the historic speech given by US President John F. Kennedy in 1962 to the US Congress to uphold consumer rights.
- ✓ Theme 2023 - 'Empowering Consumers Through Clean Energy Transitions.'
- ✓ In India, the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, guarantees six basic rights to consumers.
- ✓ The country marks National Consumer Day or National Consumer Rights Day on December 24 annually, to mark the day that the Consumer Protection Act of 1986 was signed into law by the president.

