

## 8. Short News

### 1. Perumbidugu Mutharaiyar II (Suvaran Maran)

Commemorative postage stamp released by the Vice-President.

**Identity-** King of the Mutharaiyar dynasty (c. 705–745 CE); initially a feudatory of the Pallavas.

**Region-** Ruled the fertile Cauvery River basin with his capital at Tiruchirappalli. Controlled areas like Thanjavur, Pudukkottai, and Perambalur.

**Alliances-** Fought alongside Pallava King Nandivarman II against the Pandyas and Cheras.

#### Legacy

**Architecture-** Built early rock-cut and structural stone temples (precursors to Chola architecture).

**Religion-** Patronized Shaivism but hosted Jain scholars (e.g., Vimalachandra), showing religious tolerance.

**Social Status-** A revered icon for the Mutharaiyar community (MBC in Tamil Nadu).

### 2. Karthigai Deepam & The Deepathoon Controversy

**Issue-** Dispute over lighting the *Karthigai Deepam* lamp on a stone pillar (*Deepathoon*) at Thirupparankundram hill.

**High Court View-** The *Deepathoon* is historically associated with Jain ascetic practices, not Hindu rituals.

**Historical Evidence-** Archaeological sources indicate Digambara Jain monks from Ujjain used the pillar. Similar pillars exist in Samanar Hills and Shravanabelagola.

#### The festival

**Karthigai Deepam-** A major Tamil "Festival of Lights" celebrating Lord Shiva.

**Tradition-** The lighting of the deepam atop Tiruvannamalai hill signals the start of the festival across the state.

**Harmony-** Marked by the participation of various religious communities.

### 3. Ponduru Khadi (GI Tag)

**Status-** Granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

**Origin-** Ponduru village, Srikakulam district, Andhra Pradesh.

**Raw Material-** Made from indigenous short-staple Hill Cotton (Red cotton/Punasa cotton) which is pest-resistant and rain-fed.

#### Unique Production Process

**Ginning-** Uses the jawbone of the indigenous Valuga fish to remove seeds (only place in India to do so).

**Spinning-** Uses a rare single-spindle charkha with 24 spokes.

**Storage-** Slivers are stored in dried banana stems.

### 4. India & Asian Development Bank (ADB) Deal

**Deal-** Signed loan agreements worth \$2.2 billion.

#### Key Projects Funded

**Skilling-** Upgrading 650 ITIs and 5 National Skill Training Institutes (Pradhan Mantri Skilling Programme).

**Energy-** Supporting rooftop solar for 10 million households (PM Surya Ghar).

**Health-** Strengthening tertiary care in Assam.

**Transport-** Expanding the Chennai Metro.

**Livelihood-** Ecotourism and agriculture in Meghalaya.

#### Asian Development Bank (ADB)

**HQ-** Manila, Philippines (Est. 1966).

**Structure-** Voting power is based on capital subscription.

**Shareholders-** Japan and USA are largest; India holds 6.317%.

### 5. New Ramsar Sites (Wetlands)

India's total Ramsar sites count has reached 96.

| Feature  | Siliserh Lake                | Kopra Reservoir                        |
|----------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Location | Alwar, Rajasthan             | Chhattisgarh (State's 1st Ramsar site) |
| Type     | Human-made Lake (Built 1845) | Reservoir in Mahanadi catchment        |

|           |                                      |                                   |
|-----------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Geography | Buffer zone of Sariska Tiger Reserve | Shallow, nutrient-rich backwaters |
| Key Fauna | Tiger, Leopard, Indian Pangolin      | River Tern, Egyptian Vulture      |

## 6. Geminid Meteor Shower

**Event-** Peaked over India in mid-December.

**Distinct Feature-** Originates from an Asteroid (3200 Phaethon), unlike most showers that come from comets.

**Characteristics-** Known for high meteor counts and bright, slow-moving streaks.

**Significance-** Provides insights into asteroid debris and Earth's atmospheric interaction.

## 7. Bondi Beach

**Context-** Shooting incident declared a terrorist act.

**Location-** Sydney, Australia (facing the Tasman Sea).

**Name Origin-** "Bondi" is a Dharawal Aboriginal word meaning "loud thud" (waves crashing).

**Tourism-** Famous for surfing and coastal recreation.

## 8. MahaCrimeOS AI

**Launched By-** Microsoft & Maharashtra Government (under initiative MARVEL).

**Function-** AI-powered platform for cybercrime investigation.

### Key Features

**Ingestion-** Reads PDFs, handwritten notes, and audio.

**Language-** Supports Marathi FIR processing.

**Analysis-** Connects dots between telecom data and open-source intelligence.

**Output-** Generates court-ready, time-stamped digital case diaries.

## 9. ICTP Prize 2025

**Winners-** Indian physicists Titas Chanda (IIT Madras) and Sthitadhi Roy (ICTS-TIFR).

**Field of Work-** Quantum many-body physics and quantum information science (e.g., quantum batteries).

### About the Prize

**Scope-** Honors young scientists from developing countries.

**Institution-** International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), founded by Nobel Laureate Abdus Salam.