Current Affairs – Notes

6 October 2026

Notes PDF

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1 World Cotton Day and World Day for Decent Work (7 October)

Important Days

News

Two world days fall on **7 October**. The official **World Cotton Day 2026** event is hosted in **Tashkent, Uzbekistan**, by the Government of Uzbekistan and the **International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC)**; theme: **'Cotton for Good: Building Prosperity Through Trade, Transformation and Partnership'**. The **World Day for Decent Work** is also observed the same day.

Key facts

Started by	**Cotton-4** (Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali), **2019 at the WTO**
Recognition	**UN General Assembly, August 2021**
2026	Sixth global observance, Tashkent
Related body	**FAO, ICAC, WTO**
SDG	Poverty reduction, trade

Background

- **India and cotton:** India has the **world's largest cotton area** and vies with China for top producer. Main States: **Gujarat, Maharashtra, Telangana**. The **Indus Valley Civilisation** (Mohenjo-daro) gives some of the world's oldest evidence of cotton cloth.
- **Growing conditions:** a **kharif** crop on **black (regur) soil**, formed from weathered **Deccan Trap basalt**, which holds moisture. **Bt cotton** is the only GM crop approved in India (2002); the pink bollworm is a problem.
- **Bodies: Cotton Corporation of India (CCI, 1970)** buys at the minimum support price; **'Kasturi Cotton Bharat'** is India's cotton brand (2020).
- **Decent work:** the **ILO** coined the idea in **1999**: jobs, rights, social protection and social dialogue. The ILO won the **1969 Peace Nobel**; India is a founding member. India's **four Labour Codes** (wages, industrial relations, social security, occupational safety) came into force on **21 November 2025**.

Tamil Nadu link: Coimbatore, the 'Manchester of South India' (spinning mills); **Tiruppur, the 'Knitwear Capital' and 'Dollar City'**; **Karur**, home textiles; **Erode**, a major textile market. Tamil Nadu has the most **spinning mills** in India. The black-soil (karisal) lands of **Kovilpatti, Virudhunagar and Thoothukudi** are known for rain-fed cotton. Coimbatore hosts a **regional station of the Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR)**.

2 The New York Times praises Tukaram Mundhe

World

News

Tukaram Mundhe, IAS, Commissioner of Maharashtra's **Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**, appeared on the **front page of The New York Times** under the headline **'In India, a Food Inspector Is a Rock Star'**, with the line 'Diners revere him and owners fear him' (Oct 2026).

Key facts

Who	**Tukaram Mundhe**, **2005-batch IAS** (Maharashtra cadre), nicknamed 'IAS Singham'
Born	3 June 1975, **Beed district, Marathwada**
Action	Surprise raids on restaurants, warehouses and quick-commerce **dark stores**; temporary closures and licence suspensions
His reply	'Good governance is not about making headlines but about making a difference'
Known for	**25 transfers in 21 years** for his strict approach; Solapur Collector, Navi Mumbai and Nagpur Municipal Commissioner

Background

- **Food Safety and Standards Act 2006:** merged eight laws including the **Prevention of Food Adulteration Act 1954**; in force from **5 August 2011**.
- **FSSAI:** set up in **2008** under the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**, New Delhi. **State Food Safety Commissioners** enforce the law. **World Food Safety Day is 7 June**; FSSAI publishes the **State Food Safety Index (SFSI)**.
- **Constitution: Art. 47** (Directive Principle): raising nutrition, living standards and public health is a primary duty of the State; courts have read safe food into the **right to life (Art. 21)**.
- **Marathwada's history:** ruled by the **Nizam of Hyderabad** until 1948; joined India through **Operation Polo (September 1948)**; **17 September is Marathwada Liberation Day**.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's Food Safety Department promotes **hygiene ratings** for restaurants and **'Eat Right' campus** certification in Chennai and elsewhere. Tamil Nadu leads in nutrition: the **Nutritious Meal Scheme (1982)** and the **Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme in schools (15 September 2022)**.

3 Physics Nobel 2026 for Belgian-born Francis Halzen

Awards

News

On **6 October 2026** the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences awarded the **2026 Nobel Prize in Physics** solely to Belgian-born American physicist **Francis Halzen (82)** 'for **decisive contributions to the IceCube Neutrino Observatory and the discovery of high-energy neutrinos of astrophysical origin**'.

Key facts

Winner	**Francis Halzen**, born in **Tienen, Belgium**; US citizen
Works at	**University of Wisconsin–Madison**, USA
Observatory	**IceCube**: light sensors in **1 cubic km of ice at the South Pole** (Amundsen–Scott station); proposed by Halzen in 1988; completed **2011**
Significance	Opened 'a new kind of astronomy' (neutrino astronomy)
Prize money	**SEK 12 million** (about €1.1 million)

Background

- **Neutrino:** an elementary particle with **no electric charge and an extremely tiny mass**; it rarely interacts with matter, hence the **'ghost particle'**. Proposed by **Wolfgang Pauli (1930)**, named by **Enrico Fermi**, detected by **Cowan and Reines (1956)**.
- **How is it caught?** When a neutrino rarely hits the ice, the particles it creates give off **Cherenkov light**, picked up by sensors buried in the ice. Neutrinos come from the Sun, supernovae and 'blazars' near black holes.
- **Exam note: UPSC Prelims 2015** asked a question on IceCube.
- **Earlier Belgian Nobel: François Englert**, Physics 2013 (with Peter Higgs, Higgs mechanism). Prizes since 1901 under **Alfred Nobel's** will; the **Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences** awards Physics and Chemistry.

Tamil Nadu link: The **India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO)** was planned under a hill at **Pottipuram (Bodi West Hills), Theni district**, but stalled over environmental objections. Atmospheric neutrinos were first detected in the world at the **Kolar Gold Fields** (Karnataka) in **1965**. Physics Nobel laureates linked to Tamil Nadu: **C.V. Raman (1930, Tiruchirappalli)** and **S. Chandrasekhar (1983, educated in Chennai)**.

4 eSanjeevani crosses 50 crore teleconsultations

Health

News

eSanjeevani, India's national telemedicine service, crossed **50 crore** consultations on **15 September 2026** (total **50,00,92,730** across 36 States/UTs). The Health Ministry called it the **world's largest telemedicine implementation in primary healthcare** (reported 6 Oct 2026).

Key facts

Network	**1.42 lakh** Ayushman Arogya Mandir spokes, **19,473** hubs, **901** online OPDs
Providers	**2,41,923** registered health workers and doctors
Languages / scale	**15 languages**; **2.5-3 lakh** consultations a day
Users	Women **57.14%**; over 40% aged 46 and above
Award	Its AI clinical-decision support won the **National e-Governance Gold Award 2026**

Background

- **Launch: November 2019**; built by **C-DAC Mohali**. Two variants: **eSanjeevani AB-HWC** (doctor-to-doctor, through the Arogya Mandir health worker) and **eSanjeevani OPD** (patient-to-doctor from home, April 2020, during Covid).
- **Ayushman Bharat (2018):** (1) **Ayushman Arogya Mandirs** (formerly Health and Wellness Centres); (2) **PM-JAY**, ₹5 lakh cover per family per year.
- **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM): 27 September 2021**; **14-digit ABHA** health ID; run by the **National Health Authority (NHA)**.
- **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI):** Aadhaar, UPI, CoWIN and eSanjeevani; India's DPI model was praised at the G20 Summit (2023).

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's **'Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam'** began on **5 August 2021 at Samanapalli, Krishnagiri district**; it delivers medicines for diabetes, BP and other non-communicable diseases at home and won the **UN Inter-Agency Task Force (UNIATF) award in 2024**. Chennai-based **Apollo Hospitals** set up India's first rural telemedicine centre at **Aragonda**, Andhra Pradesh, **in 2000**.

5 New milestone: India's nuclear triad at full strength

Defence

News

October 2026 reports note that India's **nuclear triad**, the ability to deliver nuclear weapons from **land, air and sea**, is now fully operational. The key step was **INS Aridhaman**, India's third nuclear ballistic-missile submarine, commissioned at Visakhapatnam on **3 April 2026**. With three SSBNs, one can always be on patrol, making **continuous at-sea deterrence (CASD)** possible (this is the assessment of media and analysts; the government does not publish details).

Key facts

Land	**Agni** missiles; Agni-5 **MIRV** test, **Mission Divyastra (March 2024)**; rail-launched Agni-Prime
Air	**Rafale, Mirage-2000, Su-30MKI** fighters
Sea	Arihant-class SSBNs: **INS Arihant (2016), INS Arighaat (2024), INS Aridhaman (2026)**
Aridhaman	About **7,000 tonnes**; **8 launch tubes**, 8 K-4 (3,500 km) or 24 K-15 Sagarika (750 km)
Control	**Nuclear Command Authority (NCA)**, Political Council chaired by the PM; **Strategic Forces Command (SFC, 2003)**

Background

- **Nuclear doctrine (2003): credible minimum deterrence**, **No First Use**, no use against non-nuclear states, and 'massive' retaliation if attacked.
- **Tests: Pokhran-I 'Smiling Buddha' (18 May 1974)**; **Pokhran-II 'Operation Shakti' (11 and 13 May 1998)**; 11 May is National Technology Day.
- **First triad:** the sea leg became operational when INS Arihant finished its first **deterrence patrol** in 2018. The few countries with a full triad include the USA, Russia, China and India.
- **Second-strike capability:** submarines hidden under the sea can strike back even after an enemy's first strike; this is what makes deterrence credible.

Tamil Nadu link: INS Kattabomman, the Navy's **Very Low Frequency (VLF)** station for talking to submarines, has worked at **Vijayanarayanam, Tirunelveli district**, since 1990. The 'K' missiles honour 'Missile Man' **Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam** of **Rameswaram**. **Kalpakkam** (Chengalpattu) hosts the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research and the PFBR.

6 Naval shipbuilding projects launched at Visakhapatnam

Defence

News

On **6 October 2026**, at one event at **HSL**, Visakhapatnam, Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** launched Surya (FSS-1), **laid the keel of the fifth Fleet Support Ship (FSS-5)**, and opened the upgraded **Slipway-4** and a new **300-tonne Goliath crane**. 'When all of these take place at the same location, on the same occasion, their importance increases even more,' he said.

Key facts

Keel laying	**FSS-5**, the formal start of the ship's construction
Slipway-4	Lengthened and strengthened to build and launch ships up to **45,000 DWT**
Goliath crane	**300-tonne** lift, joins large ship blocks in one go
Present	Chief of the Naval Staff **Admiral Krishna Swaminathan**, Andhra Pradesh Minister Janardhan Reddy
Message	Navy, HSL, DRDO, academia, industry, MSMEs and start-ups must work as one team

Background

- **Stages of shipbuilding:** design → steel cutting → **keel laying** → **launch** → sea trials → delivery → **commissioning**.
- **DWT (deadweight tonnage)** is the total weight a ship can carry (fuel, cargo, water); **displacement** is the ship's total weight.
- **Naval commands:** Western – **Mumbai**, Eastern – **Visakhapatnam**, Southern – **Kochi** (training). The Andaman and Nicobar Command is India's only tri-service command.
- **Shipbuilding goals:** 'Maritime India Vision 2030' and 'Amrit Kaal Maritime Vision 2047' aim to put India among the world's top 10 shipbuilders.

Tamil Nadu link: The **Coast Guard's Eastern Region HQ is in Chennai**. The **L&T shipyard at Kattupalli** is near Chennai, and the State plans a shipbuilding cluster at **Thoothukudi**.

7 Cabinet approves the Integrated Transport and Logistics Authority (ITLA)

Infrastructure

News

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** approved the **Integrated Transport & Logistics Authority (ITLA)** on **6 October 2026**. It will be the **national apex body (a special purpose vehicle)** for integrated planning, research, project appraisal and monitoring in transport and logistics.

Key facts

Task	A **long-term integrated transport plan** covering roads, rail, ports, shipping, aviation, inland waterways, coastal shipping, urban mobility and logistics
Monitoring	Infrastructure projects **above ₹500 crore**
Tools	Policy support, research, **data analytics** for decisions
Problem solved	**Fragmented planning** by many separate ministries
Same-day decision	A **₹10,000 crore SME Growth Fund**

Background

- **PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan: 13 October 2021**; seven engines: roads, railways, airports, ports, mass transport, waterways and logistics infrastructure; a GIS-based digital platform.
- **National Logistics Policy: 17 September 2022**; aims to cut logistics cost to global levels; **ULIP** (Unified Logistics Interface Platform).
- **LEADS report:** published since 2018 by **DPIIT** (Commerce Ministry) to rank States on logistics; the **World Bank's LPI** ranks countries.
- **Sagarmala (2015):** port-led development; **Bharatmala (2017):** roads; **Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFC)**: Eastern and Western.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has three major ports: **Chennai (1881), Kamarajar (Ennore, India's first corporatised major port, 2001) and V.O. Chidambaranar (Thoothukudi)**. Projects such as the **Chennai–Bengaluru Industrial Corridor** and the **Salem–Chennai** corridor are key to its logistics growth.

8 NSO's first National Household Travel Survey

Indices & Reports

News

The **National Statistics Office (NSO)** of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released the results of **India's first National Household Travel Survey (NHTS)**, held from **July 2025 to June 2026** (Oct 2026). It was run as part of the **NSS 80th round** at the request of the **Railways Ministry**.

Key facts

Sample	**4.92 lakh** households, **20.34 lakh** persons; 14,274 villages, 10,377 urban blocks
Mode to work	**Two-wheeler 42.6%** (urban 52.3%, rural 37.1%)
Monthly commute cost	Average **₹785** (urban ₹1,044, rural ₹612); average time 25 minutes
Students	66.4% travel over 1 km; walking 37%, bus 29.5%, bicycle 15.8%; average 23 minutes
Overnight trips	**Bus 55.8% + rail 17.7% = 73.5%**; car 15.1%; purpose: social/religious 70.2%, leisure 7.4%

Background

- **Gender gap:** 61.9% of male workers but only 41.9% of female workers travel over 1 km to work, showing transport as a barrier for women's jobs.
- **Use:** data for planning public transport, railways, urban mobility and roads.
- **NSO:** formed in **2019** by merging the **Central Statistics Office (CSO, 1951)** and the **National Sample Survey Office (NSSO, 1950)**. It publishes GDP estimates, the PLFS (jobs) and the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES).
- **P.C. Mahalanobis:** 'father of Indian statistics'; founded the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), Kolkata, in **1931**; his birthday, **29 June, is National Statistics Day**; author of the Second Five-Year Plan model.

Tamil Nadu link: Studies show **free travel for women in town government buses (since 2021, 'Vidiyal Payanam')** has increased women's travel to work in Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu's State transport corporations run one of India's largest government bus networks, and **Chennai Metro** Phase II is under way.

9 Indian parliamentary delegation at the 153rd IPU Assembly in Tanzania

International Relations

News

The **153rd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)** is being held at **Arusha, Tanzania**, from **5 to 9 October 2026**. A nine-member Indian parliamentary delegation led by **Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh** is taking part.

Key facts

Venue	**Arusha, Tanzania** (host: Tanzania's National Assembly, the 'Bunge')
Theme	**Good governance and empowering communities** through inclusivity, trust and opportunity for all
Participation	183 member parliaments, over 2,000 delegates
Indian team	**Harivansh** (leader), Anurag Thakur, Aparajita Sarangi, Sasmit Patra, Sanjay Jaiswal, Kamaljeet Sehrawat, Lata Wankhede, Bijuli Kalita Medhi, N.K. Premachandran
Harivansh's role	IPU Governing Council, General Debate, the emergency item, and a hearing with candidates for IPU President

Background

- **IPU:** founded in **1889** in Paris by **William Randal Cremer** (Britain) and **Frédéric Passy** (France), both Peace Nobel winners (Passy 1901, Cremer 1903). HQ **Geneva**. One of the oldest international political bodies; it has **observer status** at the UN.
- **India** has been a member since 1949; the Assembly meets **twice a year**.
- **Tanzania:** formed on **26 April 1964** when **Tanganyika and Zanzibar** united; first President **Julius Nyerere**; capital **Dodoma**; largest city Dar es Salaam. **Kilimanjaro** (5,895 m), Africa's highest peak, lies near Arusha.
- **Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha: Art. 89**, elected by Rajya Sabha members; the Vice-President is the Chairman.

Tamil Nadu link: The Rajya Sabha's Chairman, **Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan**, is from **Tiruppur**, Tamil Nadu. Tamil ports have traded with East African coasts such as Tanzania and Kenya since ancient times.

10 IIT Ropar launches the AVNI app for learning about farming

Agriculture

News

IIT Ropar launched **AVNI**, an **AI-supported** digital learning platform that helps children learn about **plants, crops and agriculture** through observation-based activities (Oct 2026). It is available in **Hindi and English**.

Key facts

Developer	**IIT Ropar**, Rupnagar, Punjab (set up 2008)
For	**Children / students**
How	Children photograph and observe leaf shape, colour, veins and growth; **computer-vision** AI helps identify the plant
Safeguard	**Human-in-the-loop** checks to avoid wrong identification
Languages	Hindi, English

Background

- **ANNAM.AI:** IIT Ropar's **Centre of Excellence** for AI in agriculture; it has set up **100 AI weather stations** in Punjab for hyperlocal farm forecasts and is training 10,000 people in AI for farming.
- **National Education Policy 2020** stresses experiential, locally rooted learning, which apps like AVNI support.
- **Digital agriculture: AgriStack** (farmers' digital registry), **Kisan e-Mitra** (AI chatbot), **Bhashini** (language translation).
- **IITs:** the first IIT was **Kharagpur (1951)**; IIT Madras **1959** (West German help); IITs are 'Institutes of National Importance' (Institutes of Technology Act 1961).

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) was formed in **Coimbatore in 1971**, tracing back to the 1868 Saidapet farm school. The State's **'Uzhavan'** app (2018) gives farmers subsidy, weather and market-price information. **Thirukkural 1033**, 'those who live by ploughing truly live', praises farming.

11 DRDO's High-Altitude Platform flies successfully

Defence

News

The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** successfully flight-tested its indigenous **High-Altitude Platform System (HAPS)** on **6 October 2026**. It climbed to **21 km** above sea level, held about **20 km for over 30 minutes**, then descended on command and was **recovered safely**.

Key facts

Built by	**ADRDE** (Aerial Delivery Research and Development Establishment), **Agra**
Type	**Lighter-than-air**, long-endurance surveillance platform
Altitude	**21 km**, in the stratosphere
Data	Live video and vehicle data sent to the Ground Control Station
Same week	**Advanced High-Altitude Parachute (AHAP)**: first live jump from 16,000 ft at **Nyoma, Ladakh**

Background

- **Why HAPS?** Like a **pseudo-satellite**, it can hover over one area for long periods for **surveillance, reconnaissance and communications (ISR)** and disaster monitoring; it is cheaper than a satellite and can be recovered and repaired.
- **Layers of the atmosphere:** troposphere (0-12 km, weather) → **stratosphere (12-50 km, ozone layer)** → mesosphere (50-80 km, meteors burn up) → thermosphere (ionosphere).
- **Earlier trial:** in **May 2025** DRDO flew a stratospheric airship to about 17 km (56,000 ft) for 62 minutes at **Sheopur**, Madhya Pradesh.
- **DRDO:** set up in **1958**; HQ New Delhi; about 50 labs under the Defence Ministry.

Tamil Nadu link: DRDO's **CVRDE** (Combat Vehicles R&D Establishment) at **Avadi**, Chennai, designed the **Arjun** tank. Tamil Nadu's **Defence Industrial Corridor** (Chennai, Hosur, Coimbatore, Salem, Tiruchirappalli) is growing aerospace and defence manufacturing.

12 Surya, the first indigenous Fleet Support Ship

Defence

News

On **6 October 2026** Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** launched and dedicated to the nation **Surya**, the Indian Navy's **first indigenous Fleet Support Ship (FSS-1)**, at **Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL), Visakhapatnam**. Chief of the Naval Staff **Admiral Krishna Swaminathan** attended; **Laila Swaminathan**, President of the Navy Wives Welfare Association, named the ship.

Key facts

Ship	**Surya (FSS-1)**, first of a five-ship series
Size	About **43,500 tonnes**
Role	Supplying warships at sea with **fuel, water, ammunition and stores** (replenishment at sea)
Features	Multi-role helicopter deck, repair workshops, self-defence systems
Contract	**August 2023**, about **₹19,000 crore**, five ships, HSL

Background

- **Blue-water navy:** support ships let a navy operate far from port for long periods and help India act as the **first responder** in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- **Earlier support ships:** INS **Deepak** and INS **Shakti** (built in Italy), INS **Jyoti** (Russia), INS **Aditya** (GRSE). The new FSS will replace them.

- **HSL:** founded in **1941** by **Walchand Hirachand** for the Scindia Steam Navigation Company; first ship **Jala Usha (1948)**; nationalised 1961; under the **Defence Ministry since 2010**; **Miniratna-I** in 2025.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat:** most new Indian Navy ships are now built in Indian shipyards.

Tamil Nadu link: The **L&T shipyard at Kattupalli** near Chennai builds Navy and Coast Guard vessels. The name **Surya** means the Sun; the **Chola navy** (Rajendra Chola's **Kadaram expedition, 1025**) shows Tamil Nadu's long seafaring tradition.

13 Guidelines for declaring brain death: Centre's directive

Health

News

The **Union Health Ministry** asked States to make sure hospitals follow the **National Brain Stem Death Certification Guidelines (Edition I, 2026)** (5 Oct 2026). Issued in August 2026, they set one uniform, legally sound procedure across India to boost **deceased organ donation**.

Key facts

Who certifies	A **board of 4 doctors** (under the transplant law's rules)
Tests	**Two sets of clinical tests**, at least **6 hours apart** for adults
Includes	Pupil response to light, basic reflexes, the **apnoea test**; reversible causes ruled out first
Issued by	**NOTTO** (National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation), under the DGHS
Benefit	One donor can save **up to 8 lives**; hearts and lungs come only from deceased donors

Background

- **Brain stem death** is the **irreversible** loss of brain stem function; even if a ventilator keeps the heart beating, it is **death** in law. A coma or vegetative state is different.
- **Law:** the **Transplantation of Human Organs Act 1994** recognised brain death; a **2011 amendment** added tissues (THOTA); the **2014** rules set the four-member board: hospital in-charge, an approved independent expert, a neurologist/neurosurgeon and the treating doctor.
- **Health is a State List** subject (Seventh Schedule, List II, entry 6), so the Centre **advises States**.
- **Indian Organ Donation Day: 3 August** (since 2023; earlier 27 November); NOTTO runs awareness drives.

Tamil Nadu link: After student **Hitendran's** organs were donated in Chennai in **2008**, Tamil Nadu started India's first government **deceased-donor programme**, now run by **TRANSTAN** (Transplant Authority of Tamil Nadu). Since **September 2023** donors receive **State honours** at their funerals. Tamil Nadu has won the national award for organ donation many times.

14 High-level advisory panel to cut Tamil Nadu government spending

Tamil Nadu

News

The Tamil Nadu Government is setting up a **high-level expenditure reform advisory panel** to suggest ways to streamline and cut spending while keeping welfare schemes going (reported 6 Oct 2026). It follows the **Revenue Augmentation Committee** set up in July 2026 under economist **Montek Singh Ahluwalia**.

Key facts

New panel	High-level **expenditure reform** advisory panel, to make welfare spending more efficient
Revenue Augmentation Committee	Chair **Montek Singh Ahluwalia** (former Planning Commission Deputy Chairman) + 5 members; GO of **24 July 2026**
Revenue panel's task	Better tax compliance, plugging leakages, rationalising tax/fee exemptions, new revenue sources
Staff rationalisation committee	Chair **S. Audiseshaiah** (retired Principal Secretary): non-essential posts, outsourcing
Why	State's Own Tax Revenue to GSDP fell to **5.45%** in 2025-26, a 20-year low

Background

- **Constitution: Art. 202**, State Annual Financial Statement; **Art. 266**, Consolidated Fund of the State; **Art. 293**, borrowing by States; **Art. 280**, Finance Commission.
- **Committed expenditure:** salaries, pensions and interest. When these eat most of the revenue, less is left for **capital spending** that builds roads, schools and hospitals.
- **Fiscal responsibility: Tamil Nadu Fiscal Responsibility Act 2003**; Union **FRBM Act 2003**. The usual fiscal deficit target is **3%** of GSDP.
- **Key terms:** revenue deficit = revenue expenditure − revenue receipts; fiscal deficit = total expenditure − non-debt receipts.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu is India's **second-largest State economy**. The government formed after the 2026 Assembly election set up these panels to raise revenue without new taxes and to rein in spending. Compare: in 2021 the State had formed the **Chief Minister's Economic Advisory Council** with **Esther Duflo, Raghuram Rajan and Arvind Subramanian** among others.

15 India's first offshore wind prototype planned off Thoothukudi

Energy

News

India's **first offshore wind prototype** will come up in the sea off **V.O. Chidambaranar (VOC) Port, Thoothukudi**. A single **6.25 MW** turbine will stand about **1,650 m** from the inner harbour's southern breakwater at an estimated **₹77 crore**. The **Indian Port Rail & Ropeway Corporation (IPRCL)** has floated the tender (open till 29 Oct 2026; work to finish within 12 months of the award) (reported 5 Oct 2026).

Key facts

Capacity	**6.25 MW**, one turbine (prototype)
Cost	About **₹77 crore**
Tendering agency	**IPRCL**, under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways
Aim	Hands-on experience in wind assessment, turbine installation, vessel logistics and bringing power ashore
Next step	A **500 MW** offshore wind farm planned near VOC Port

Background

- **Why offshore?** Winds at sea are **stronger and steadier**, so turbines yield more power than on land, and no land has to be acquired.
- **National Offshore Wind Energy Policy 2015**; target **30 GW by 2030**. India's offshore wind potential lies mainly off **Gujarat and Tamil Nadu**.
- **June 2024:** the Union Cabinet approved a **₹7,453 crore Viability Gap Funding (VGF)** scheme for the first 1 GW: **500 MW off Gujarat and 500 MW off Tamil Nadu**.
- The **National Institute of Wind Energy (NIWE)**, Chennai (Velachery), under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), leads offshore wind resource studies.

Tamil Nadu link: The **Gulf of Mannar – Palk Strait** area is one of India's best offshore wind zones. **Muppandal** in Kanyakumari district is among India's largest onshore wind farms, and Tamil Nadu is a leading wind-power State. The port is named after **V.O. Chidambaram Pillai** ('Kappalottiya Thamizhan'), who started the **Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company in 1906** on the Thoothukudi–Colombo route.

16 19th-century inscription discovered in Tenkasi

Tamil Nadu

News

At **Ilanji** in Tenkasi district, farmer **Thangadurai** told the **Thenpothigai Archives** about a half-buried sculpted stone in his field. A team led by archaeologist **Narayanamoorthi** found it to be a **gift (donation) inscription** dated **4 September 1801** (Tamil month Avani, a Friday, Punarpoosam star) (reported 6 Oct 2026).

Key facts

Place	Ilanji, Tenkasi district (the spot is now called 'Kuruvi Medu')
Size	70 × 45 cm stone; **12 lines**, partly damaged
Script	Early 19th-century **Tamil characters**
Sculpture	Below the text, a **vel** (spear) and a **peacock holding a serpent** in relief
Link	Closely tied to the **Ilanji Murugan (Kumarar) temple**; study continues

Background

- **1801, a turning point in Tamil history:** the **Marudhu brothers**, leaders of the South Indian Rebellion (1800-01), were hanged at **Tiruppattur** on 24 October 1801; **Oomaithurai** was hanged at Panchalankurichi. The **Carnatic Treaty of 31 July 1801** handed the Nawab of Arcot's lands to the British. Earlier, **Veerapandiya Kattabomman** was hanged at **Kayathar** on 16 October 1799.

- **Inscriptions are primary sources of history.** Tamil writing evolved from **Tamili (Tamil-Brahmi)** → **Vattezhuthu** → **modern Tamil script**. More than half of all inscriptions found in India are in Tamil Nadu.
- **Tenkasi's heritage: Parakrama Pandya** built the **Kasi Viswanathar temple** in the 15th century, giving the town its name ('Kasi of the South'). **Courtallam**, the 'Spa of South India', is where the **Chittar** river rises. Tenkasi became Tamil Nadu's **33rd district** on **22 November 2019**, carved out of Tirunelveli.
- **Another 2026 find in the same district:** a **5th-century hero stone** (script between Tamili and Vattezhuthu) and a Sangam-era step well at **Malayadipatti** near Karivalamvanthanallur (August 2026).

Tamil Nadu link: The vel and peacock are emblems of **Murugan**. The Tolkappiyam names **Seyon** (Murugan) as the god of Kurinji (hills), **Mayon** (Thirumal) for Mullai, **Vendhan** (Indra) for Marutham, **Varunan** for Neythal and **Kotravai** for Palai. Temple gift inscriptions tell us about land ownership, taxes and social life of their time.

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