Current Affairs – Notes

23 October 2026

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1 CM Vijay launches 'Thuli' – a State-wide rainwater harvesting awareness campaign

Tamil Nadu & Agriculture

News

CM C. Joseph Vijay on 21 Oct 2026 (Wednesday) launched 'Thuli', a State-wide rainwater harvesting awareness campaign, at the Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage (TWAD) Board headquarters, Chepauk, Chennai, and released its logo and mascot. 'Thuli' means a drop of water; the mascot is a blue water-drop carrying a house. He inspected a model rainwater-harvesting house and released an awareness short film at Marina Beach. The Municipal Administration and Water Supply Department had issued G.O. No. 184 on 16 Oct 2026. The aim: inspect structures in government offices, schools, hospitals, homes and commercial buildings, repair damaged ones and build new ones where needed – ahead of the Northeast monsoon.

Key facts

Launch	21 Oct 2026 – CM C. Joseph Vijay; TWAD Board HQ, Chepauk, Chennai
Name / mascot	'Thuli' (a drop) – a blue water-drop carrying a house
G.O.	G.O. No. 184, 16.10.2026 – Municipal Administration & Water Supply Dept (coordination, monitoring)
Coverage	Corporations, municipalities, town and village panchayats
Aim	Inspect – repair – build new; groundwater recharge; district-level water-table monitoring
Trigger	Mid-Sept 2026 petition by Chennai resident welfare associations for strict enforcement

Background

- History: CM J. Jayalalithaa started a rainwater harvesting drive in 2001; after the 2001–03 drought, a 2003 ordinance made RWH structures mandatory in all buildings (deadline 31 Aug 2003). Exams cite Tamil Nadu as the first State to make rooftop RWH compulsory in every house.
- Central scheme: Jal Shakti Abhiyan – 1 July 2019 (256 water-stressed districts); 'Catch the Rain' – launched by the PM on 22 March 2021 (World Water Day); tagline 'Catch the rain, where it falls, when it falls'. The Ministry of Jal Shakti was formed in May 2019.
- Geography: Tamil Nadu's main rainy season is the Northeast monsoon (Oct–Dec) – about 48% of its annual rain. During the Southwest monsoon, Tamil Nadu lies in the rain-shadow of the Western Ghats.
- 2019 Chennai water crisis: after the failed 2018 NE monsoon, the Poondi, Red Hills (Puzhal), Cholavaram and Chembarambakkam lakes dried up; drinking water was brought to Chennai by train from Jolarpettai.

Tamil Nadu link: after the 2003 mandate the Chennai water board reported about 8.9 lakh RWH structures, but many failed for lack of maintenance – repairing them is the core task of the 'Thuli' campaign.

2 CII Special Awards for FPOs 2026: Isha-guided FPOs win national awards for the 4th year in a row

Tamil Nadu & Agriculture

News

At the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) 'Special Awards for Farmer Producer Organisations 2026' in New Delhi, three FPOs guided by Isha Outreach won national awards (reported 23 Oct 2026): Thencherimalai FPO, Coimbatore – first in India in marketing; Chenniyandavar FPO, Coimbatore – special recognition in marketing; Ponnad FPO, Kodagu (Karnataka) – first in technology & sustainability. Hundreds of FPOs from across India applied; selection was by a three-stage evaluation. It is the 4th straight year Isha-guided FPOs have won national awards.

Key facts

Award	Special Awards for FPOs 2026 – CII, New Delhi
Thencherimalai FPO	Sultanpet, Coimbatore – first in India, marketing (also NABARD Tamil Nadu 'Best Performing FPO' 2023–24)
Chenniyandavar FPO	Coimbatore – special recognition, marketing; buys coconuts from about 240 farmers
Ponnad FPO	Kodagu, Karnataka – first in technology & sustainability
Isha FPO network	25 FPOs in TN & Karnataka; 17,000+ members (≈60% small/marginal, ≈15% women); ₹400 crore+ business

Background

- Law: the 'Producer Company' form was added as Part IXA of the Companies Act 1956 by a 2002 amendment; registration is now under Chapter XXIA of the Companies Act 2013. FPOs may also register as cooperative societies.
- Scheme: 'Formation and Promotion of 10,000 FPOs' – a Central Sector Scheme launched by the PM at Chitrakoot (UP) in Feb 2020; outlay ₹6,865 crore; 5 years of hand-holding per FPO.
- Bodies: Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) – an autonomous society set up on 18 Jan 1994 under the Union Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare; NABARD (1982) and NCDC also promote FPOs. CII – industry body founded in 1895, HQ New Delhi.

Tamil Nadu link: Isha's first FPO, 'Velliangiri Uzhavan Producer Company' in Thondamuthur block, Coimbatore, began operations in Nov 2013. Thencherimalai FPO, set up at Sultanpet, won NABARD Tamil Nadu's 'Best Performing FPO 2023–24' award. Isha also runs a free soil-testing lab in Coimbatore.

3 NAAS showcases Indian agri-research at World Food Prize Foundation's Borlaug Dialogue 2026; Indian student wins GYI award

Tamil Nadu & Agriculture

News

At the World Food Prize Foundation's '2026 Norman E. Borlaug International Dialogue' (theme: 'Before Hunger Wins') in Des Moines, Iowa, USA, on 20–22 Oct 2026, the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS), New Delhi, took part: an exhibition booth of NAAS and ICAR publications; 7 Indian high-school students selected through 'NAAS-YUVA' presented food-security research papers at the Global Youth Institute (GYI); among them Ameena Nazreen A S won the GYI award (US$500 cash). Dr M.L. Jat, Secretary DARE and DG ICAR, addressed a roundtable on agricultural higher education virtually; NAAS signed an MoU with the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST), USA.

Key facts

Event	2026 Norman E. Borlaug International Dialogue – 20–22 Oct, Des Moines, Iowa (USA)
Theme	'Before Hunger Wins' – 40th year of the World Food Prize
Student award	Ameena Nazreen A S – GYI award, US$500; 7 students chosen via 'NAAS-YUVA'
MoU	NAAS – CAST (USA): research, capacity building, knowledge exchange
2026 Prize	Huub Lelieveld (Netherlands) – global food-safety standards; US$500,000

Background

- World Food Prize: founded in 1986 by Norman Borlaug, Nobel Peace laureate (1970); called the 'Nobel of agriculture'; prize US$500,000. The first prize (1987) went to M.S. Swaminathan. The Borlaug Dialogue is held every October in Des Moines, around World Food Day (16 Oct).
- 2026 laureate: Huub Lelieveld of the Netherlands – food-safety science; led a volunteer effort in 113+ countries to build science-based international food-safety standards, cutting foodborne illness and food loss (announced March 2026).
- NAAS: National Academy of Agricultural Sciences – set up in 1990; located in the NASC Complex, Pusa, New Delhi; the idea was proposed by Dr B.P. Pal. It honours agricultural scientists and publishes policy papers.
- Per FAO, food security has four dimensions: availability, access, utilisation and stability.

Tamil Nadu link: M.S. Swaminathan, first World Food Prize laureate (1987), was born in Kumbakonam and is the father of India's Green Revolution. With the prize money he founded the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) in Chennai in 1988. (The award-winning student's school/State was not reported.)

4 C-DOT sets up its 6th Centre of Excellence at IIT (BHU), Varanasi for next-gen telecom technologies

Science, Economy & Defence

News

The Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT), the premier R&D centre of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), signed an MoU with IIT (BHU), Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) and opened its 6th Centre of Excellence (CoE) (announced 23 Oct 2026). It was signed in the presence of Dr Pankaj Kumar Dalela, EVP, C-DOT, and Prof. Amit Patra, Director, IIT (BHU), followed by the CoE's inauguration. Focus: wireless communications, quantum technologies, cybersecurity and AI-driven communication; 5G-Advanced/6G, very-large-scale MIMO, integrated sensing and communication (ISAC), and quantum and post-quantum communication.

Key facts

Centre	C-DOT's 6th CoE – IIT (BHU), Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh
Earlier 5 CoEs	IIT Kanpur, IIT Gandhinagar, IIT Roorkee, IIT Hyderabad, IISc Bengaluru
Research	5G-Advanced/6G, massive MIMO, ISAC, AI-native networks, quantum & post-quantum comms
C-DOT	Autonomous R&D centre of DoT; CEO: Dr Rajkumar Upadhyay
Aim	Link academic research with real telecom needs; build talent; indigenous technology

Background

- C-DOT history: set up in August 1984 as an autonomous body under Sam Pitroda; took telephones to villages with the Rural Automatic Exchange (RAX) and MAX switches; now develops indigenous 4G/5G and GPON. HQ New Delhi.
- Policy: the 'Bharat 6G Vision' document was released by the PM in March 2023 (target 2030); TRAI is the telecom regulator set up in 1997 under the TRAI Act; the Telecommunications Act 2023 replaced the Indian Telegraph Act 1885.
- Science: MIMO (Multiple-Input Multiple-Output) uses many antennas to send more data at once; post-quantum cryptography means encryption designed to resist attacks even by quantum computers.
- Geography: Varanasi (Kashi) lies on the Ganga in Uttar Pradesh; BHU was founded in 1916 by Madan Mohan Malaviya; IIT (BHU) became an IIT in 2012.

Tamil Nadu link: India's indigenous 5G Testbed was built by 8 institutes led by IIT Madras at over ₹220 crore; the PM launched it on 17 May 2022 at TRAI's silver jubilee. (None of C-DOT's 6 CoEs is in Tamil Nadu.)

5 Oil India discovers natural gas in a Krishna–Godavari Basin shallow-offshore block

Science, Economy & Defence

News

Public-sector Oil India Ltd (OIL) on 23 Oct 2026 announced a natural-gas discovery in the 'Godavari-1' appraisal well of block KG-DSF/GSKW/2018, a 'Discovered Small Field' (DSF) block in the shallow offshore of the Krishna–Godavari (KG) Basin. Hydrocarbons were confirmed at 2,024–2,027 m in the previously unappraised 'Matsyapuri' formation. Testing from 16 Oct gave about 1 lakh, peaking at 2 lakh standard cubic metres of gas per day (SCMD), plus about 170 barrels/day of condensate. OIL is the block's sole operator.

Key facts

Company	Oil India Ltd (1959; HQ Duliajan, Assam)
Block / well	KG-DSF/GSKW/2018 (DSF bid round) / 'Godavari-1' appraisal well
Location	KG Basin – shallow offshore, Bay of Bengal
Formation	Matsyapuri – 2,024–2,027 m
Flow	Gas 1–2 lakh SCMD; condensate ≈170 bbl/day; testing from 16 Oct 2026

Background

- Geography: the KG Basin is a sedimentary basin stretching from the Krishna and Godavari deltas of Andhra Pradesh into the Bay of Bengal. Reliance made the big 'Dhirubhai-1' gas find in block KG-D6 in 2002.
- Policy: the Discovered Small Field (DSF) policy – 2015; the Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP) – 2016, replacing NELP (1997-98): a uniform licence for oil, gas and coal-bed methane, a revenue-sharing model, and the Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP) letting firms choose blocks.
- Bodies: Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) – 1993, under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas; the KG, Cauvery, Cambay, Mumbai Offshore, Rajasthan and Assam basins are Category-I basins with commercial production.
- Science: condensate is a light hydrocarbon that is gas underground but turns liquid at the surface; the main component of natural gas is methane (CH_4).

Tamil Nadu link: the Cauvery Basin is also a Category-I oil-gas basin. But the 'Tamil Nadu Protected Agricultural Zone Development Act 2020' (CM Edappadi K. Palaniswami, Feb 2020) declared all of Thanjavur, Thiruvarur and Nagapattinam districts and some blocks of Cuddalore and Pudukkottai a protected agricultural zone, banning new oil, natural-gas and methane exploration projects.

6 Indian Army receives 'Nagastra-2' anti-tank loitering munitions – made by Nagpur's Solar Defence & Aerospace

Science, Economy & Defence

News

Reports on 23 Oct 2026 said Nagpur-based Solar Defence and Aerospace Ltd (SDAL, Solar Industries group) has delivered its indigenous 'Nagastra-2' anti-tank loitering munitions to the Indian Army. Deliveries began after technical trials at the Mahajan Field Firing Range (Rajasthan) in August 2026; the Nagastra family has also been tested in high-altitude Ladakh and the plains of Babina (UP). Its 4 kg tandem shaped-charge warhead can pierce 650 mm of rolled homogeneous armour; range 25 km in recover-and-reuse mode and 50 km in fire-and-forget mode; endurance up to 60 minutes. Shortly before, on 13–14 Oct 2026, about 450 'Nagastra-1R' units were delivered.

Key facts

Maker	Solar Defence & Aerospace Ltd (SDAL), Nagpur – Solar Industries group
Role	Strike tanks and armoured vehicles
Warhead	4 kg tandem shaped charge – pierces 650 mm RHA
Range / endurance	25 km (recoverable), 50 km (fire-and-forget); up to 60 min
Features	Day/night EO/IR cameras; encrypted links; ECCM against GPS jamming & spoofing
Trials	Mahajan range (Aug 2026); Nagastra family – Ladakh, Babina (UP)

Background

- A loitering munition ('kamikaze drone') is an unmanned aircraft that hovers over a target area, watches it, and then dives into the target and explodes. It combines a missile's strike power with a drone's surveillance; many models can abort the attack and be recovered.
- Nagastra-1: developed by Economic Explosives Ltd (EEL, Nagpur), a Solar Industries subsidiary, with Bengaluru's Z-Motion; over 75% indigenous. The first batch (120) reached the Army in June 2024; it was used in 'Operation Sindoor' (2025). Nagastra-1 has a small (1–1.5 kg) fragmentation warhead; Nagastra-2 carries a heavier anti-tank warhead.
- Background – missile programme: DRDO's Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP, 1983), led by A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, produced five missiles – Prithvi, Agni, Trishul, Akash and Nag. Nag is a third-generation fire-and-forget anti-tank guided missile (ATGM).
- Science: a tandem warhead has two shaped charges – the first sets off the tank's outer explosive reactive armour (ERA); the second pierces the main armour.

Tamil Nadu link: The Madras Institute of Technology (MIT), Chromepet, Chennai (1949, founded by Chinnaswami Rajam) was the first in India to offer an undergraduate course in aeronautical engineering; A.P.J. Abdul Kalam studied aeronautical engineering here. This Anna University campus houses the 'Dr. Kalam Advanced UAV Research Centre' (2019), with which the 'Tamil Nadu Unmanned Aerial Vehicles Corporation' (TNUAVC) was set up in 2022.

7 Defence Minister Rajnath Singh releases the new 'Land Warfare Doctrine' at the Army Commanders' Conference

Science, Economy & Defence

News

At the Army Commanders' Conference in New Delhi (21–23 Oct 2026; an apex forum held twice a year, chaired by Chief of the Army Staff Gen Dhiraj Seth), Defence Minister Rajnath Singh released the revised 'Land Warfare Doctrine' on 23 Oct. It is an overarching framework to prepare the Army for warfare shaped by drones, AI, precision weapons and multi-domain operations; it stresses jointness among the services, manned-unmanned teaming and alignment with 'Defence Forces Vision 2047'. The minister asked commanders to build a strategic vision for the next 20–30 years.

Key facts

Release	23 Oct 2026 – Rajnath Singh, New Delhi
Conference	Army Commanders' Conference, 21–23 Oct; held twice a year
Earlier doctrine	Land Warfare Doctrine 2018 (posted online, Dec 2018)
Key themes	Multi-domain ops, jointness, AI, drones, manned-unmanned teaming, resilient logistics
Army Chief	Gen Dhiraj Seth (since 30 June 2026; Armoured Corps)
CDS	Gen N.S. Raja Subramani (succeeded Gen Anil Chauhan, 31 May 2026)

Background

- A military doctrine is the set of basic principles on how to fight. The earlier 2018 Land Warfare Doctrine dealt with the China–Pakistan 'two-front' threat and Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs). The new doctrine, coming after experiences such as 'Operation Sindoor', puts technology-driven warfare at the centre.
- Polity: the post of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) was created in Dec 2019; the first CDS was Gen Bipin Rawat (1 Jan 2020). The CDS heads the new Department of Military Affairs (DMA) in the Defence Ministry as its Secretary. The President is the Supreme Commander of the armed forces (Article 53(2)).
- History: on 15 Jan 1949 Gen K.M. Cariappa took over from Gen Francis Butcher, the last British chief, as the first Indian Commander-in-Chief – marked as 'Army Day'. Only two Army officers have held the rank of Field Marshal: Sam Manekshaw (1973) and K.M. Cariappa (1986).
- Gen Dhiraj Seth is the first Armoured Corps officer to become Army Chief since Gen Shankar Roychowdhury (1997); he succeeded Gen Upendra Dwivedi.

Tamil Nadu link: Sam Manekshaw, hero of the 1971 Bangladesh war and India's first Field Marshal, lived at Wellington near Coonoor in the Nilgiris after retirement; he died at the Military Hospital, Wellington, on 27 June 2008 and was buried in the Parsi cemetery at Udhagamandalam. Wellington is also home to the Defence Services Staff College (DSSC).

8 MHA and Army launch first-of-its-kind pilot training for Civil Defence master trainers – 12 States/UTs incl. Tamil Nadu

Science, Economy & Defence

News

The MHA's Directorate General of Fire Services, Civil Defence and Home Guards (DGFSCDHG), with the Indian Army, announced a first-of-its-kind pilot training for Civil Defence master trainers (23 Oct 2026). In phase one, 600 trainers – 50 each from 12 States/UTs – get 3 days of training at Army training establishments, to finish by the second week of November 2026. Each will train 100 volunteers, creating about 60,000 volunteers. It is part of the 'vibrant Civil Defence network' the PM announced in his Independence Day speech on 15 Aug 2026.

Key facts

Partners	DGFSCDHG (MHA) + Indian Army
States/UTs (12)	J&K, Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Delhi, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Assam, UP, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu
Scale	600 master trainers (50 each) → 60,000 volunteers
Modules	Hybrid war, drone & air-raid awareness, critical infrastructure, CBRN, search & rescue, cyber hygiene, civil-military coordination
Duration	3 days; done by 2nd week of Nov 2026

Background

- Law: Civil Defence Act, 1968 (May 1968, Act 27) – measures to protect people and property during war or hostile attack; a 2009 amendment added disaster management to the Civil Defence Corps' role. 244 districts across the country are categorised as Civil Defence districts.
- History: Civil Defence policy was overhauled after the 1962 China war and the 1965 India–Pakistan war. Home Guards were first raised on 6 Dec 1946 in Bombay Province under Morarji Desai; 6 Dec is 'All India Civil Defence and Home Guards Day'.
- Training: National Civil Defence College (NCDC), Nagpur – began on 29 Apr 1957 as the Central Emergency Relief Training Institute (CERTI), renamed in 1968; it trains master trainers.
- Recent: after the Pahalgam attack (22 Apr 2025), the 'Operation Abhyaas' civil defence mock drill was held in 244 districts on 7 May 2025 – the largest since the 1971 war.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka are the southern States among the 12 chosen for phase one – 50 master trainers from Tamil Nadu will be trained. In the 'Operation Abhyaas' drill of 7 May 2025, Chennai and the Madras Atomic Power Station (MAPS) at Kalpakkam took part.

9 Sovereign Gold Bond 2018–19 Series-II completes its 8-year term on 23 Oct – redemption price ₹14,425 per gram

Science, Economy & Defence

News

Sovereign Gold Bond (SGB) 2018–19 Series-II, issued on 23 Oct 2018, matured on 23 Oct 2026 on completing its eight-year term. The RBI fixed the final redemption price at ₹14,425 per unit (1 gram) – the average of IBJA's closing prices for 999-purity gold on 19, 21 and 22 Oct. The issue price was ₹3,146 a gram (₹3,096 for online/digital payers), plus 2.5% annual interest. The price gain alone is about 358% (online: 366%).

Key facts

Issue	Subscription 15–19 Oct 2018; issued 23 Oct 2018; ₹3,146/g (online ₹3,096)
Redemption	23 Oct 2026; ₹14,425/g (RBI)
Price basis	Average IBJA closing price of 999-purity gold, previous 3 business days
Return	Price gain ~358% (online ~366%) + 2.5% a year interest
Tax	Interest taxable; capital gains exempt if bought at issue and held to maturity

Background

- Scheme: the SGB scheme was launched by PM Modi on 5 Nov 2015 (Cabinet approval 9 Sep 2015). The RBI issues it on behalf of the Government of India; tenure 8 years, premature exit after the 5th year; units of 1 gram, up to 4 kg per individual per year; tradable on stock exchanges.
- Aim (economy): reduce household demand for physical gold, curbing gold imports and the current account deficit. The 'Gold Monetisation Scheme' (GMS – depositing idle household gold in banks for interest) and the 'Indian Gold Coin' were launched the same day.
- Discontinued: the last issue was 2023–24 Series-IV (21 Feb 2024). As rising gold prices made it costly borrowing for the government, FM Nirmala Sitharaman indicated after the 1 Feb 2025 Budget that there would be no new issues; existing bonds are unaffected.
- Science: gold's chemical symbol is Au (Latin 'Aurum'); atomic number 79. '999 purity' = 99.9% pure (24-carat) gold; jewellery is usually 22 carat (91.6%).

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's 'Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Ninaivu Marriage Assistance Scheme' gave an 8-gram 22-carat gold coin for making the thirumangalyam (raised from 4 g from 23.05.2016), plus ₹25,000 for a Class-10-pass bride and ₹50,000 for a graduate. The scheme is named after Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar, who campaigned to abolish the Devadasi system. In 2022 it was converted into the 'Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Higher Education Assurance Scheme' ('Pudhumai Penn'), giving girl students ₹1,000 a month.

10 Asian Para Games: Kancheepuram's Thulasimathi Murugesan wins doubles gold, ends with 3 medals in a day (1 gold, 2 silver)

Sports, Governance, Health & Awards

News

At the 5th Asian Para Games in Aichi–Nagoya, Japan (18–24 Oct 2026), Kancheepuram's Thulasimathi Murugesan won three medals on 23 Oct: (1) women's doubles SL3–SU5 gold with Manasi Joshi, beating world champions Yang Qiuxia–Xiao Zuxian of China 21-16, 21-13 (upgrading their previous-edition silver); (2) mixed doubles SL3–SU5 silver with Nitesh Kumar (lost to Indonesia's Leani Ratri Oktila–Hikmat Ramdani); (3) women's singles SU5 silver, losing the final to China's Yang. (The headline's 'gold' came in doubles; singles was silver.) That day India stood 4th with 106 medals (28 gold, 34 silver, 44 bronze).

Key facts

Gold	Women's doubles SL3–SU5 – Thulasimathi / Manasi Joshi
Silver (2)	Mixed doubles SL3–SU5 (with Nitesh Kumar); women's singles SU5
Other Indian badminton medals (23 Oct)	Nitesh Kumar – SL4 gold (Pramod Bhagat silver); Naveen Sivakumar – SL3 gold; Nithya Sre Sivan – SH6 silver
India (23 Oct)	106 medals (28-34-44), 4th
Previous edition	Hangzhou 2022 (Oct 2023): India 111 medals (29-31-51), 5th

Background

- Para-badminton classes: SL3/SL4 – lower-limb impairment (standing); SU5 – upper-limb impairment; SH6 – short stature; WH1/WH2 – wheelchair. In SL3–SU5 doubles, players of these classes pair up.
- Paralympic history: India's first Paralympic gold – Murlikant Petkar, Heidelberg (Germany) 1972, men's 50 m freestyle swimming (world record). To spot para talent at home, the first 'Khelo India Para Games' were held in New Delhi on 10–17 Dec 2023 with 7 sports.
- Kancheepuram: capital of the Pallavas; the 'city of a thousand temples'. The Kailasanathar temple built by Rajasimha (Narasimhavarman II) is a fine example of the structural stone temple. Kanchipuram silk sarees have a Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

Tamil Nadu link: Thulasimathi is from Kancheepuram (Paris 2024 Paralympic SU5 silver, Arjuna Award 2024). Nithya Sre Sivan, who won women's singles SH6 silver at these Games, was born in Karur and raised in Hosur – Paris 2024 Paralympic SH6 bronze, Arjuna Award 2024.

11 Om Prakash Mathur sworn in as the 29th Governor of Keralam – oath by Kerala High Court Chief Justice Soumen Sen

Sports, Governance, Health & Awards

News

Om Prakash Mathur took oath as the 29th Governor of Keralam at noon on Friday, 23 Oct 2026, at the Lok Bhavan auditorium, Thiruvananthapuram. Kerala High Court Chief Justice Soumen Sen administered the oath. It is one of six Governor appointments made by President Droupadi Murmu on 12 Oct 2026. His predecessor, Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, has moved to Tamil Nadu as full-time Governor. Mathur was earlier Governor of Sikkim (from July 2024).

Key facts

Oath	23 Oct 2026 – Lok Bhavan, Thiruvananthapuram
Oath by	Kerala HC Chief Justice Soumen Sen
Number	29th Governor of Keralam
Predecessor	Rajendra V. Arlekar (2 Jan 2025 – Oct 2026) → Governor of Tamil Nadu
Profile	Born 2 Jan 1952, Bedal village, Pali district (Rajasthan); RSS pracharak; Rajasthan BJP president (2008–09); Rajya Sabha MP (2008–14, 2016–22)
Previous post	18th Governor of Sikkim (from 31 July 2024)

Background

- Governor – Constitution: Art 153 (a Governor for each State), 154 (State executive power vested in Governor), 155 (appointed by the President), 159 (oath before the High Court Chief Justice). Art 167 – the Chief Minister must communicate Cabinet decisions on administration and legislative proposals to the Governor and furnish information he calls for (Art 78 is the PM's counterpart). Art 174 – summoning and proroguing the Legislature and dissolving the Assembly.
- Formation of Kerala: under the States Reorganisation Act, 1956, Kerala was formed on 1 Nov 1956 by joining Travancore-Cochin, Malabar district of Madras State and the Kasaragod area of South Canara. By the Kerala (Alteration of Name) Act 2026 its official name became 'Keralam' from 25 Aug 2026.
- Kerala Governors – highlights: first Governor P.S. Rao (acting, 1956); V.V. Giri (1960–65) later became President; former CJI P. Sathasivam (2014–19) – first ex-CJI to become a Governor; Arif Mohammed Khan (2019–2025).

Tamil Nadu link: (1) Former Kerala Governor P. Sathasivam hails from Kadappanallur near Bhavani, Erode district; he was India's 40th Chief Justice (2013–14). (2) Kerala's first woman Governor, Jothi Venkatachalam (1977–82), was Madras State's first woman minister (Rajaji Cabinet, 1953). (3) In the 1956 reorganisation, the Thovalai, Agastheeswaram, Kalkulam and Vilavancode taluks of Travancore-Cochin joined Madras State as Kanyakumari district. (4) Previous Kerala Governor Arlekar is now Tamil Nadu's full-time Governor.

12 September 2026: 330 drug samples Not of Standard Quality, one spurious – CDSCO monthly drug alert

Sports, Governance, Health & Awards

News

In its September 2026 surveillance report (reported on 23 Oct 2026), the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) under the Union Health Ministry flagged 330 drug samples as 'Not of Standard Quality' (NSQ): 42 by Central Drugs Laboratories and 288 by State Drug Testing Laboratories. One sample from NCT Delhi was 'spurious' – made by unauthorised makers using another company's brand name; it is under investigation. CDSCO said the failure applies only to the tested batch. The August 2026 figure was 220.

Key facts

Report	September 2026 surveillance; reported 23 Oct 2026
NSQ	330 – Central labs 42 + State labs 288
Spurious	1 – NCT Delhi; unauthorised maker using another's brand name
Comparison	August 2026 – 220 NSQ (Central 29, State 191)
CDSCO	Under Union Health Ministry via DGHS; headed by Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI); HQ New Delhi
Practice	NSQ & spurious list published monthly on the CDSCO portal

Background

- Law: Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 – Sec 17 (misbranded), 17A (adulterated), 17B (spurious: made under another drug's name, fictitious manufacturer, substituted substance, etc.). NSQ = failing one or more specified quality parameters.
- Schedule M: Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) under the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945. Revised Schedule M notified 28 Dec 2023; large firms by June 2024; MSMEs (turnover up to ₹250 crore) given time till 31 Dec 2025.
- Science: diethylene glycol (DEG) is an industrial solvent; substituted for pharmaceutical solvents (propylene glycol, glycerine) it causes acute kidney failure. In Oct 2025 WHO issued a Medical Product Alert on Coldrif, Respifresh TR and ReLife.

Tamil Nadu link: Coldrif cough syrup, linked to child deaths in Chhindwara district, Madhya Pradesh in 2025, was made by Sresan Pharmaceuticals at Sunguvarchatram, Kancheepuram district; it contained about 48.6% diethylene glycol. Tamil Nadu banned its sale (1 Oct), stopped production and fully revoked the firm's manufacturing licence (13 Oct 2025); owner G. Ranganathan was arrested in Chennai on 9 Oc. 'Drugs' are in the Concurrent List; under the Act most drug-manufacturing licences are issued by State Licensing Authorities.

13 Kochi architecture student wins the 28th Charles Correa Gold Medal – presented in Mumbai on 22 Oct

Sports, Governance, Health & Awards

News

The 28th Charles Correa Gold Medal of the Charles Correa Foundation (CCF) was presented in Mumbai on 22 Oct 2026 to an architecture student from Kochi. The winning undergraduate thesis: 'Energy Commons: Reimagining energy infrastructure as a place for civic engagement' – reimagining energy infrastructure as a space for public participation. Prize – the gold medal and ₹25,000. Theme for 2025–27: 'Equitability through Design'.

Key facts

Medal	28th Charles Correa Gold Medal; ₹25,000
Presented	22 Oct 2026 – Mumbai
Thesis	'Energy Commons' – energy infrastructure as a civic space
Organiser	Charles Correa Foundation (CCF); started by Correa in 1998
Eligibility	Final-year UG students of COA-approved colleges – solo thesis; all-India since 2022 (earlier only Mumbai & Goa)
Theme	Equitability through Design (2025–27)

Background

- Charles Correa (1930–2015): born in Secunderabad; studied at the University of Michigan and MIT. Known for 'open-to-sky' spaces, local materials and housing for the urban poor. Chief Architect of Navi Mumbai (1970–75); Chairman, National Commission on Urbanisation (1985).
- Works: Mahatma Gandhi Sangrahalaya, Sabarmati Ashram (Ahmedabad); MP Legislative Assembly (Vidhan Bhavan), Bharat Bhavan (Bhopal); Jawahar Kala Kendra (Jaipur); National Crafts Museum, British Council (Delhi); Kanchenjunga Apartments (Mumbai). Honours: Padma Shri (1972), RIBA Royal Gold Medal (1984), Praemium Imperiale (1994), Aga Khan Award (1998), Padma Vibhushan (2006).
- Regulation: the Council of Architecture (COA), set up under the Architects Act, 1972, is the statutory body regulating architectural education and practice and registers architects. The Indian Institute of Architects (IIA) is a professional association.

Tamil Nadu link: Robert Fellowes Chisholm, pioneer of Indo-Saracenic architecture in Madras, designed the Revenue Board building at Chepauk Palace (1871), the Senate House of the University of Madras (1874–79) and Presidency College (1865–70). The University of Madras itself was founded in 1857.

14 Greek Parliament passes law banning social media for children under 15 – in force from 1 January 2027

Sports, Governance, Health & Awards

News

After a debate of over 16 hours, the Greek (Hellenic) Parliament in the early hours of 23 Oct 2026 passed a law barring children under 15 from social media, effective 1 Jan 2027. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok are covered; parental consent gives no exemption and existing accounts are included. Where a platform cannot determine age, a QR code linked to the government 'Kids Wallet' app confirms only whether the user is over or under 15, without sharing name or birth date. Only the ruling New Democracy party backed it; PM Kyriakos Mitsotakis.

Key facts

Passed	Early 23 Oct 2026 – Hellenic Parliament, Athens
In force	1 January 2027
Age limit	Under 15; no parental-consent exemption
Age check	Government 'Kids Wallet' app – QR code; no personal details shared
Oversight	Greek broadcasting council & data protection authority; for the largest platforms the European Commission under the Digital Services Act (DSA)
Politics	Backed only by New Democracy; PM Kyriakos Mitsotakis

Background

- Globally: Australia – Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024; its under-16 ban took effect on 10 Dec 2025 – the first such nationwide ban; regulator – the eSafety Commissioner. France's under-15 ban was struck down by its Constitutional Council (Aug 2026) as unduly restricting free expression.
- European Union: Digital Services Act (DSA) – platform responsibility for content; General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, from 2018) – personal data; Digital Markets Act (DMA) – competition. Greece is one of seven EU countries working with the Commission on an age-verification tool.
- India: Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023 – a 'child' is under 18; verifiable parental consent is mandatory to process a child's data; the Data Protection Board of India hears complaints. DPDP Rules, 2025 notified 13 Nov 2025; core duties apply from 13 May 2027. The IT Act, 2000 covers cyber offences.

Tamil Nadu link: In December 2025 the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court (Justices G. Jayachandran and K.K. Ramakrishnan) observed that the Centre could consider a law like Australia's (no social media accounts for under-16s) to regulate children's internet use; until then the State and National Commissions for Protection of Child Rights could draw up an awareness action plan (PIL by S. Vijayakumar).

15 Global Media and Information Literacy Week 2026 – 24 to 31 October; theme: 'We All Play a Part – MIL for the People'

International & Important Days

News

The UNESCO-led 'Global Media and Information Literacy Week' (Global MIL Week) 2026 is being observed from 24 to 31 October. The 2026 theme is 'We All Play a Part – Media and Information Literacy for the People'. It stresses that policymakers, teachers, journalists and parents all share responsibility for countering false information. Instead of a single feature conference in one city, this year UNESCO offices and partners worldwide are holding regional and thematic events and webinars.

Key facts

Dates	24–31 October every year
2026 theme	'We All Play a Part – MIL for the People'
Led by	UNESCO – celebrated since 2011
UN recognition	UN General Assembly proclaimed the week on 25 March 2021
What MIL means	Skills to access, critically evaluate, and responsibly create and share information and media content
India	PIB Fact Check Unit – Nov 2019 (Ministry of Information & Broadcasting)

Background

- UNESCO (UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization): its Constitution was adopted in London on 16 Nov 1945 and came into force in 1946; HQ Paris (France). It also runs the World Heritage list and the Memory of the World Register.
- Types of false information: 'misinformation' – falsehood spread without intent to harm; 'disinformation' – deliberately spread to cause harm. AI-generated 'deepfake' videos are a new challenge. In India, the PIB Fact Check Unit was set up in November 2019 to check fake news about the Central Government.
- Constitution: freedom of the press is not mentioned separately; it is part of the freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(1)(a). Article 19(2) allows reasonable restrictions (sovereignty, public order, defamation etc.).
- Press Council of India (PCI): set up on 16 Nov 1966 under the 1965 Act on the First Press Commission's recommendation; abolished during the Emergency and re-established under the Press Council Act, 1978. A statutory, quasi-judicial body; by convention a retired Supreme Court judge is chairman. 16 Nov is National Press Day.

Tamil Nadu link: G. Subramania Iyer started the Tamil paper 'Swadesamitran' in 1882 – one of the earliest Tamil papers run by Indians; Mahakavi Bharathi worked as its sub-editor from 1904. Iyer, with M. Veeraraghavachariar and others of the 'Triplicane Six', had also founded 'The Hindu' in Madras on 20 Sept 1878. In 'Romesh Thappar v. State of Madras' (1950), one of the earliest cases holding press freedom to be part of Article 19(1)(a), the Supreme Court struck down the Madras Government's ban on the journal 'Cross Roads'.

16 Chance of limiting warming to 1.5°C with no or limited overshoot is gone – UNEP Emissions Gap Report 2026 warns

International & Important Days

News

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) released its 17th annual report, 'Emissions Gap Report 2026: The Point of Return', on 21 Oct 2026. It warns that the chance of holding global warming below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels with no or limited overshoot is gone. Current policies would lead to about 2.8°C of warming this century; full delivery of national pledges (NDCs) to about 2.6°C; and NDCs plus net-zero targets to about 2.1°C. Global greenhouse-gas emissions in 2025 were about 58.4 billion tonnes CO2-equivalent – roughly level with 2024; G20 members account for about 76%. The report came ahead of COP31 at Antalya, Türkiye, on 9–20 Nov 2026.

Key facts

Release	21 Oct 2026 – UNEP; 17th edition; title 'The Point of Return'
Warming outlook	Current policies ~2.8°C; full NDCs ~2.6°C; NDCs + net zero ~2.1°C
2025 emissions	58.4 Gt CO2e; G20 ~76%
Cuts needed	For the lowest-overshoot path: 18% by 2030 and 45% by 2035, from 2025 levels
Best case	Peak ~1.7–1.8°C around mid-century; 50% chance of returning to 1.5°C by 2100
COP31	9–20 Nov 2026 – Antalya, Türkiye

Background

- 'Emissions gap' means the difference between the emissions expected in 2030/2035 under countries' pledges and the level needed to meet the 1.5°C or 2°C goal. The report has been issued every year since 2010. Earlier titles: 2023 'Broken Record', 2024 'No more hot air... please!', 2025 'Off Target'.
- Paris Agreement: adopted at COP21 on 12 Dec 2015; in force 4 Nov 2016. Goal – keep warming 'well below' 2°C and pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. Each country submits a 'Nationally Determined Contribution' (NDC) every five years. The report cites the US withdrawal from the Agreement as one reason for this year's worse outlook.
- India's targets: updated NDC (2022) – cut emissions intensity of GDP by 45% from 2005 levels by 2030; 50% non-fossil power capacity. New NDC (2031–35, March 2026) – 47% intensity cut by 2035, 60% non-fossil capacity, an additional 3.5–4.0 billion tonne carbon sink. Net zero by 2070 (COP26, Glasgow 2021). Mission 'LiFE' (Lifestyle for Environment) was launched on 20 Oct 2022 at Ekta Nagar, Gujarat.
- Science: the main greenhouse gases are carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), nitrous oxide (N2O) and fluorinated gases. Different gases are converted to CO2-equivalent (CO2e) using their Global Warming Potential (GWP). The report says every five years of CO2 emissions at current levels adds about 0.1°C to peak warming.

Tamil Nadu link: to institutionalise the State's climate action, the 'Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company' (TNGCC) was set up in 2021 as a special purpose vehicle under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013 (office: Nandanam, Chennai). It runs four flagship missions – the Tamil Nadu Climate Change Mission, Green Tamil Nadu Mission, Wetlands Mission and Coastal Restoration Mission (TN-SHORE) – aiming to put Tamil Nadu on a net-zero pathway well before 2070. Every district has a District Climate Change Mission.

17 Disarmament Week: 24 to 30 October

International & Important Days

News

The UN 'Disarmament Week' is observed every year from 24 to 30 October. It begins on 24 October, the anniversary of the founding of the UN. It was called for in the Final Document (resolution S-10/2) of the UN General Assembly's first Special Session devoted to Disarmament (SSOD-I) in 1978. The aim is to raise awareness of the dangers of the arms race and the need for disarmament. The UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) coordinates it.

Key facts

Dates	24–30 Oct (from UN founding anniversary)
Origin	SSOD-I Final Document, 1978 (resolution S-10/2)
UN body	UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)
Nuclear treaties	NPT (1968/1970); CTBT (1996 – not yet in force); TPNW (2017/2021)
Other treaties	Biological Weapons Convention (1972/1975); Chemical Weapons Convention (1993/1997) – OPCW, The Hague
India's policy	Nuclear doctrine, 4 Jan 2003 – No First Use, credible minimum deterrence

Background

- Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT): opened for signature in 1968; in force in 1970. India has not signed it, calling it discriminatory (it divides nuclear-weapon States from others); Pakistan and Israel have not signed either; North Korea withdrew in 2003. India has also not signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT, 1996), whose organisation (CTBTO) is in Vienna.
- Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC): opened for signature in 1993 and in force on 29 April 1997; it bans an entire class of weapons of mass destruction with a verification system. Its body, the OPCW, is at The Hague, Netherlands, and won the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize. India is an original State Party. The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) came into force in 1975. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) was adopted in 2017 and came into force on 22 Jan 2021 – India has not joined it.
- India's stand: on 9 June 1988, at the UNGA's third Special Session on Disarmament (SSOD-III), PM Rajiv Gandhi presented the 'Action Plan for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free and Non-Violent World Order'. Pokhran tests – 1974 and 1998 (Rajasthan). Under the 2003 doctrine, only the Political Council of the Nuclear Command Authority, chaired by the Prime Minister, can authorise nuclear use; the Executive Council is chaired by the National Security Adviser.
- UN machinery: the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva is the world's single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which promotes peaceful uses of nuclear energy, is in Vienna.

Tamil Nadu link: Dr R. Chidambaram (1936–2025), an alumnus of Presidency College, Chennai and IISc Bengaluru, played a key role in the first nuclear test (1974) and led the Department of Atomic Energy team in the Pokhran-II tests (1998). He was Atomic Energy Commission Chairman (1993–2000), Chairman of the IAEA Board of Governors (1994–95) and Principal Scientific Adviser (2001–2018). On peaceful uses: the 500 MWe Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) at Kalpakkam, designed by IGCAR and built by BHAVINI, attained first criticality on 6 April 2026.

18 United Nations Day 2026 – 24 October; 81 years since the UN Charter came into force

International & Important Days

News

24 October is celebrated every year as 'United Nations Day', marking the entry into force of the UN Charter on 24 Oct 1945; 2026 is the 81st anniversary. The UN's 80th anniversary (UN80) was marked in 2025. The big event this year: as Secretary-General António Guterres's term ends on 31 Dec 2026, the Security Council is selecting his successor. In the sixth informal straw poll on 16 Oct (the first with colour-coded ballots), Costa Rica's Rebeca Grynspan held a narrow lead, but no one has been recommended yet. The new Secretary-General will take office on 1 Jan 2027. The President of the 81st UN General Assembly session is Bangladesh's Khalilur Rahman.

Key facts

UN Charter	Signed 26 June 1945, San Francisco; in force 24 Oct 1945
Members	51 original members (incl. India); now 193 (latest South Sudan, 2011)
HQ	New York; other main offices – Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi
Secretary-General	António Guterres (Portugal) – term to 31 Dec 2026; successor from 1 Jan 2027
Race (16 Oct)	6th straw poll – Rebeca Grynspan (Costa Rica) leads; no recommendation yet
UNGA-81 President	Khalilur Rahman (Bangladesh)

Background

- History: the name 'United Nations' was first used in the Declaration of 1 Jan 1942. At the San Francisco Conference (April–June 1945), 50 countries signed the Charter; Poland signed later, becoming the 51st original member. India (then British India) is an original member. The UN's predecessor, the League of Nations, began in 1920.
- Six principal organs: General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Trusteeship Council, International Court of Justice (The Hague) and Secretariat. The Trusteeship Council suspended operation on 1 Nov 1994 after Palau, the last trust territory, became independent.
- Charter rules: the Security Council has 5 permanent members (USA, Russia, China, UK, France – with veto power) and 10 non-permanent members elected for two-year terms. Article 97: the General Assembly appoints the Secretary-General on the Security Council's recommendation.
- India and the UN: India has been a non-permanent member of the Security Council 8 times (latest 2021–22) and is a candidate for 2028–29. In 1953 Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit became the first woman President of the General Assembly. India is among the largest troop contributors to UN peacekeeping.

Tamil Nadu link: Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar (1887–1976) – born at Kurnool in the then Madras Presidency (now Andhra Pradesh); studied at Madras Christian College and Madras Law College; a leading Justice Party figure. He led India's delegation at the 1945 San Francisco Conference, signed the Charter, and chaired the conference committee on economic and social matters. On 23 Jan 1946 he was elected the first President of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); later the last Dewan of Mysore.

19 World Development Information Day – 24 October 2026

International & Important Days

News

World Development Information Day is observed every year on 24 October. Its aim is to draw the attention of world public opinion to development problems and to strengthen international cooperation to solve them. On the recommendation of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the UN General Assembly proclaimed the Day by resolution 3038 (XXVII) on 19 Dec 1972; it was first observed on 24 Oct 1973. Its coinciding with UN Day stresses the central place of development in the UN's work.

Key facts

Proclaimed	UNGA resolution 3038 (XXVII), 19 Dec 1972
First observed	24 Oct 1973
Proposed by	UNCTAD (set up 1964; HQ Geneva)
Why 24 Oct	UN Day; 24 Oct 1970 – adoption of the International Development Strategy for the Second UN Development Decade
SDGs	2015 – 17 goals, 169 targets; deadline 2030
SDG India Index	NITI Aayog – since 2018; latest (4th) edition 2023–24: India 71; Tamil Nadu 78 (3rd)

Background

- History: from the 1960s the UN declared 'Development Decades'; the 'International Development Strategy' for the Second Development Decade (the 1970s) was adopted on 24 Oct 1970. Since spreading information on development and public awareness were seen as vital to the Strategy's success, this Day was created.
- UNCTAD: set up in 1964 at its first conference in Geneva as a permanent body of the UN General Assembly; first Secretary-General Raúl Prebisch. Its flagship publications include the 'World Investment Report'; the 'G-77' group of developing countries was also formed at the 1964 UNCTAD conference.
- After the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs, 2000–2015, 8 goals) ended, the UN adopted the '2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' on 25 Sept 2015 – 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with 169 targets. Goal 1 – no poverty; Goal 14 – life below water.
- India: NITI Aayog has released the 'SDG India Index' since 2018 – a tool of competitive federalism among States. The 4th edition (2023–24, July 2024) used 16 goals and 113 indicators; India's score rose 57 (2018) → 66 (2020–21) → 71. Bands: 0–49 Aspirant, 50–64 Performer, 65–99 Front Runner, 100 Achiever.

Tamil Nadu link: in NITI Aayog's SDG India Index 2023–24, Uttarakhand and Kerala (79 each) shared the top spot; Tamil Nadu was third with 78 – a 'Front Runner'. Goa and Himachal Pradesh (77 each) followed. This is the latest edition released so far.

20 World Polio Day – 24 October 2026

International & Important Days

News

World Polio Day is observed every year on 24 October. Rotary International created it to commemorate the birth of Jonas Salk, who led the team that developed the first vaccine against polio (Salk was actually born on 28 Oct 1914). Wild poliovirus (WPV1) still circulates in only two countries – Pakistan and Afghanistan; in 2026 Afghanistan has 42 cases (GPEI, reported 23 Oct) and Pakistan 6 (as of 5 Oct). Polio spread remains a 'Public Health Emergency of International Concern' (PHEIC).

Key facts

Created by	Rotary International – in honour of Jonas Salk
Vaccines	IPV (injected, inactivated) – Jonas Salk, 1955; OPV (oral, live attenuated) – Albert Sabin
India	Last case – Howrah (West Bengal), 13 Jan 2011; WHO certification (SE Asia Region) – 27 Mar 2014
Pulse Polio	First national round 9 Dec 1995; children under 5
Endemic	Pakistan, Afghanistan (WPV1)
Eradicated types	WPV2 – 2015; WPV3 – declared 2019

Background

- Science: polio is caused by the poliovirus, an enterovirus; it spreads by the faecal–oral route through contaminated water and food. It multiplies in the gut and sometimes attacks the motor neurons of the spinal cord, causing permanent paralysis; mostly children under 5 are affected.
- Vaccine history: Salk's injected IPV was licensed in 1955; Sabin's oral OPV spread in the 1960s – cheap, easy to give, and it also builds gut immunity. Rarely, OPV's weakened virus can mutate into 'circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus' (cVDPV); to reduce this, 'novel OPV2' (nOPV2) got WHO Emergency Use Listing in 2020.
- Global effort: the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) began in 1988 – WHO, Rotary, UNICEF, US CDC; later the Gates Foundation and Gavi joined. Rotary's 'PolioPlus' began in 1985. The African Region was certified free of wild polio in 2020 (including Nigeria).
- India: Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) 1985; first national Pulse Polio round on 9 Dec 1995. The last wild polio case was at Howrah (West Bengal) on 13 Jan 2011; India was removed from the endemic list in Feb 2012 and certified polio-free with the WHO South-East Asia Region on 27 Mar 2014. OPV drops are now given along with fractional IPV (fIPV) injections.

Tamil Nadu link: Rotary chose Tamil Nadu to launch its 'PolioPlus' programme; then CM M.G. Ramachandran gave State Health Minister Dr H.V. Hande (1980–86) a free hand to start a mass polio immunisation drive, and the State public health department was placed at Rotary's disposal. Hande has said the nation-wide Pulse Polio concept was Rotary's brainchild and began in Tamil Nadu (Rotary News). Tamil Nadu has been polio-free for 21 years (Health Minister Ma. Subramanian, Oct 2025).

21 Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) Raising Day – 24 October 2026

International & Important Days

News

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) celebrates its Raising Day on 24 October. It was raised with 4 battalions on 24 Oct 1962, during the India–China war. A Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) under the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, it guards the 3,488 km India–China border from the Karakoram Pass in Ladakh to Jachep La in Arunachal Pradesh. Its personnel are called 'Himveers'.

Key facts

Raised	24 Oct 1962 – 4 battalions; first under the CRPF Act
Law	ITBP Act 1992; Rules 1994
Ministry / HQ	Ministry of Home Affairs; New Delhi
Motto	'Shaurya – Dridhata – Karma Nishtha' (Valour – Determination – Devotion to duty)
Border	3,488 km; Karakoram Pass (Ladakh) – Jachep La (Arunachal); 'One Border One Force' – 2004
Training	Academy – Mussoorie (1976); Mountaineering & Skiing Institute – Auli; Basic Training Centre – Bhanu (Haryana)

Background

- History: after the 1962 war ITBP was raised to reorganise intelligence and security along the Indo-Tibetan border. In 2004, under the 'One Border One Force' policy, the entire India–China border was entrusted to ITBP; it took over from the Assam Rifles in Sikkim and Arunachal. Some of its posts lie above 18,000 ft.
- Geography: ITBP is deployed in Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. Key passes: Shipki La (Himachal), Lipulekh (Uttarakhand), Nathu La (Sikkim). ITBP provides security and medical support for the Kailash–Mansarovar Yatra through Lipulekh and Nathu La.
- Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) – under MHA: CRPF (1939), BSF (1965 – Pakistan and Bangladesh borders), CISF (1969 – industries, airports), ITBP (1962 – China border), SSB (Nepal and Bhutan borders), Assam Rifles (Myanmar border; oldest force). UPSC conducts the Assistant Commandant (CAPF AC) exam for BSF, CRPF, CISF, ITBP and SSB.
- Other roles: 'First Responder' in natural disasters in the Himalayan region; anti-Naxal operations; security for sensitive installations and protected persons. It has 60 regular + 4 specialist battalions.

Tamil Nadu link: there is no verified ITBP headquarters or major training centre in Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu youth can join ITBP through the Staff Selection Commission's (SSC) GD Constable exam and UPSC's CAPF Assistant Commandant exam. Pilgrims from Tamil Nadu on the Kailash–Mansarovar Yatra are also escorted by ITBP on the Lipulekh/Nathu La routes.

22 Marudhu Brothers' Memorial Day – 24 October (day of their hanging at Tiruppathur, 1801)

Tamil Nadu History

News

The Marudhu brothers – Periya Marudhu (Vellai Marudhu) and Chinna Marudhu, rulers of the Sivaganga country – were hanged by the British at the Tiruppathur fort (Sivaganga district) on 24 Oct 1801; many of their relatives and followers were also hanged. The day is observed as the Marudhu Brothers' Memorial Day at the memorial pillar in Tiruppathur; their 'Guru Pooja' is held on 27 Oct at their memorial in Kalaiyarkoil.

Key facts

Born	Mukkulam (near Narikudi); Periya Marudhu 1748, Chinna Marudhu 1753
Hanged	24 Oct 1801 – Tiruppathur fort (Sivaganga district)
Proclamation	Tiruchirappalli / Jambudweepa Proclamation – 16 June 1801; pasted on the Nawab's palace in Tiruchi fort and walls at Srirangam
Revolt	South Indian Rebellion 1800–01 (Second Poligar War)
Guru Pooja	27 Oct – Kalaiyarkoil memorial
Postage stamp	24 Oct 2004 – 500 paise

Background

- History: the Marudhu brothers served Muthu Vaduganatha Thevar, ruler of Sivaganga. After he was killed by Company forces in the battle of Kalaiyarkoil in 1772, they stayed with Rani Velu Nachiyar for eight years under Gopala Nayak's protection at Virupachi. Sivaganga was regained with Hyder Ali's help; the brothers received high posts and later ruled Sivaganga.
- Jambudweepa Proclamation (16 June 1801): a call to people of all castes and creeds to take up arms against the English – one of South India's earliest calls for freedom from British rule. 'Jambudweepa' is an ancient name for the Indian subcontinent.
- South Indian Rebellion (1800–01): British records called the Marudhu brothers' revolt the 'South Indian Rebellion'. Allies: Gopala Nayak of Dindigul, Oomaithurai, Kattabomman's brother (sheltered by the Marudhus), Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja, Krishnappa Nayak of Mysore and Dhoondaji Waugh. Company forces under Col. Agnew crushed the revolt; the brothers were captured at Cholapuram.

Tamil Nadu link: a memorial pillar stands at Tiruppathur, where the brothers were hanged; ministers and the district administration pay homage every 24 Oct. Their memorial is at Kalaiyarkoil. A 10-ft bronze statue of the brothers in Madurai was opened by CM Karunanidhi on 15 Dec 2007. The film 'Sivagangai Seemai' (1959) is based on their lives. Note: this Tiruppathur is in Sivaganga district; the 'Tirupathur district' formed in 2019 is different.

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