Current Affairs – Notes

28 October 2026

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1 Railway Recruitment Boards notify 1,265 Station Master posts – CEN 08/2026; applications from 27 Oct

Jobs, Tamil Nadu, Law & Rural Development

News

The Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs) have issued a separate employment notice (CEN 08/2026) for the post of Station Master. A short notice came out on 21 Oct 2026; online applications run from 27 Oct to 25 Nov 2026 (rrbapply.gov.in). As per the category-wise table, there are 1,265 posts in all. Qualification: any graduate degree; age 20–33 (as on 1.1.2027, with relaxation for reserved categories); Pay Level 6 of the 7th CPC – initial basic pay ₹35,400. Selection: CBT → Computer Based Aptitude Test (CBAT) → document verification → medical test (A-2). RRB Chennai has 119 posts.

Key facts

Notice	CEN 08/2026 – Station Master (separate notice)
Posts	1,265 (UR 542, OBC 296, SC 176, ST 104, EWS 147)
Apply	27 Oct – 25 Nov 2026; rrbapply.gov.in
Eligibility / age	Graduate; 20–33 years (as on 1.1.2027)
Pay	Level 6; initial basic ₹35,400
Selection	CBT (100 marks, 120 min) → CBAT → DV → medical; final merit CBT 70% + CBAT 30%
Southern Railway	RRB Chennai 119 + RRB Thiruvananthapuram 114 = 233

Background

- History: India's first passenger train ran between Bombay (Bori Bunder) and Thane on 16 April 1853. The first electric train ran between Bombay VT and Kurla (Harbour line) on 3 Feb 1925.
- Administration: The apex management body of Indian Railways is the Railway Board (1905). In the Seventh Schedule, 'Railways' is in the Union List (Entry 22) – only Parliament can legislate on it.
- Station Master's job: responsible for safe train operation at the station – signals, line clear, despatch and reception of trains, station administration. Hence the Computer Based Aptitude Test (CBAT) is compulsory.
- Note: Earlier, Station Master posts were filled through the NTPC (graduate level) notice; this time a separate CEN (08/2026) has been issued.

Tamil Nadu link: RRB Chennai has 119 posts (Southern Railway – HQ Chennai). South India's first railway line was run by the Madras Railway Company between Royapuram and Wallajah Road (Arcot) on 1 July 1856. The Nilgiri Mountain Railway (Mettupalayam – Udhagamandalam) became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2005 (part of 'Mountain Railways of India'). India's first vertical-lift railway sea bridge, the new Pamban bridge (Mandapam – Rameswaram), opened on 6 April 2025.

2 Loans to minorities: Tamil Nadu Minorities Economic Development Corporation (TAMCO) wins first prize in the southern zone – awarded by NMDFC

Jobs, Tamil Nadu, Law & Rural Development

News

For its performance in lending to minorities in 2025–26, the Tamil Nadu Minorities Economic Development Corporation (TAMCO) won the first prize in the southern zone. At a regional review meeting at Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, on 9 Oct 2026, the Chairman & Managing Director of the National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC) presented a certificate and shield to TAMCO's Managing Director. The Minister for Minorities Welfare congratulated TAMCO (reported 28 Oct 2026).

Key facts

Award	First prize, southern zone (2025–26 performance) – certificate & shield
Given by	NMDFC CMD; Vijayawada, 9 Oct 2026
TAMCO	Incorporated 31 Aug 1999 under the Companies Act 1956; wholly owned by the TN Government
Role	State Channelising Agency of NMDFC
Beneficiaries	Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Parsis, Jains
Schemes	Individual term loan, SHG micro-credit, education loan, 'Virasat' for artisans

Background

- NMDFC: set up on 30 Sept 1994 as a not-for-profit company (then Section 25, now Section 8 of the Companies Act 2013); under the Union Ministry of Minority Affairs. It gives concessional loans for self-employment and education through State Channelising Agencies.
- Constitution: Article 29 – right to conserve a distinct language, script or culture; Article 30 – right of religious and linguistic minorities to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.
- National Commission for Minorities (NCM): statutory body under the NCM Act 1992 (set up 1993). The 1993 notification listed five communities – Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Parsis; Jains were added as the sixth in 2014.
- Economy: such corporations lend at low interest for income-generating activities; NMDFC provides most of the funds, and the State agency adds its share and reaches beneficiaries through banks and cooperative societies.

Tamil Nadu link: TAMCO is NMDFC's State Channelising Agency in Tamil Nadu and lends through District Central Cooperative Banks, urban cooperative banks and primary agricultural cooperative credit societies. Main schemes: individual term loans, micro-credit for SHGs, education loans and the 'Virasat' loan for artisans.

3 POCSO probe: Chennai Police issue 'Look Out Circulars' against five persons – what is an LOC?

Jobs, Tamil Nadu, Law & Rural Development

News

As reported: the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Greater Chennai Police, probing POCSO cases against Gem Granites owner R. Veeramani and others, issued Look Out Circulars (LOCs) to stop five persons believed to hold documents/information relevant to the probe from leaving India. One of them, his daughter Archana Veeramani, was reportedly stopped at Chennai International Airport on 23 Oct 2026 while trying to fly to Singapore, questioned about financial transactions, and later allowed to return home as she said she felt unwell. The reports do not describe her as an accused.

Key facts

What is an LOC	A directive to immigration authorities to watch, stop or detain a named person leaving/entering India
Executed by	Bureau of Immigration (BoI) – Union Ministry of Home Affairs (1971)
Legal basis	No specific statute – MHA Office Memoranda: 27.10.2010, amendment 5.12.2017, 2018 amendment, consolidated guidelines 22.02.2021
Who can request	Designated officers – Deputy Secretary (GoI), Joint Secretary (State), District Magistrate, SP; officers of CBI, ED, DRI, RAW, SFIO; criminal court orders
Validity	2010 OM: one year; 2021 OM: in force until the originating agency seeks deletion
Remedy	Representation to originating agency; writ under Article 226 in the High Court

Background

- History: LOC guidelines began with a 1979 MHA letter, then a 2000 memorandum; the OM of 27 Oct 2010 set today's framework. The 2017 amendment allowed an LOC even without a criminal case if departure would hurt India's sovereignty, security, bilateral relations, economic interests or the 'larger public interest'. A 2018 amendment let heads of public sector banks seek LOCs against wilful defaulters.
- Constitution: Satwant Singh Sawhney v. D. Ramarathnam (1967) – the Supreme Court held that the right to travel abroad is part of 'personal liberty' under Article 21; the Passports Act 1967 followed. Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India (1978) – any procedure curtailing it must be fair, just and reasonable.
- Court rulings: Sumer Singh Salkan (Delhi HC, 2010) – LOC only in cognisable offences where the accused evades arrest; it is executive action open to judicial review. Vikas Chaudhary (Delhi HC, 2022) – no LOC on a mere suspicion of holding foreign bank accounts. Bombay HC (April 2024) struck down the clause allowing public sector banks to seek LOCs.
- LOC vs Interpol notices: an LOC works only at India's own exit/entry points. Interpol notices (HQ Lyon, France; India's National Central Bureau is the CBI) are global: Red Notice – to locate and provisionally arrest a person pending extradition; Blue Notice – to collect information on a person's identity, location or activities; Yellow – missing persons.

Tamil Nadu link: In Karti P. Chidambaram v. Bureau of Immigration (2018), the Madras High Court held that its judicial-review power under Article 226 includes the power to cancel an LOC. In this news,

the LOC was issued by the Greater Chennai Police SIT and enforced at Chennai International Airport.

4 Cabinet approves Pradhan Mantri Viksit Gram Swaraj Yojana (PM-VGSY) as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for 2026–27 to 2030–31; ₹7,395.55 crore

Jobs, Tamil Nadu, Law & Rural Development

News

The Union Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi on Wednesday, 28 Oct 2026, approved the 'Pradhan Mantri Viksit Gram Swaraj Yojana' (PM-VGSY) as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for 2026–27 to 2030–31 (co-terminus with the 16th Finance Commission period). Total outlay ₹7,395.55 crore – Centre ₹4,869.48 crore, States ₹2,526.07 crore. About 32 lakh elected representatives and functionaries in over 2.55 lakh panchayats and traditional local bodies will benefit. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj called it a next-generation governance transformation initiative aligned with Viksit Bharat.

Key facts

Approval	28 Oct 2026 – Union Cabinet (chaired by PM)
Type / Ministry	Centrally Sponsored Scheme; Ministry of Panchayati Raj
Period	2026–27 to 2030–31 (16th Finance Commission period)
Outlay	₹7,395.55 crore (Centre ₹4,869.48 + States ₹2,526.07)
Key components	2.55 lakh GPDPs a year on eGramSwaraj; AuditOnline audits; capacity building for 32 lakh people; own-source revenue; 17-language AI platform PANCHAM
Coverage	All States/UTs, incl. traditional bodies in non-Part IX areas

Background

- Earlier scheme: Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) – launched 24 April 2018 (National Panchayati Raj Day); the revamped RGSA ran from 2022–23 to 2025–26 (₹5,911 crore), focusing on capacity building and governance of panchayats.
- Constitution: Article 40 (DPSP) – organise village panchayats. 73rd Amendment (1992; in force 24.4.1993) – Part IX (Articles 243–243O), Eleventh Schedule (29 subjects); three tiers, Gram Sabha, five-year term, State Election Commission, State Finance Commission. Part IX does not apply to Nagaland, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Sixth Schedule areas (Article 243M).
- History: The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee (1957) recommended three-tier 'democratic decentralisation'; the first Panchayati Raj began at Nagaur, Rajasthan, on 2 Oct 1959. The Ashok Mehta Committee (1977) recommended a two-tier system. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj was created in 2004.
- Economy: The 16th Finance Commission (Chairman Arvind Panagariya) has recommended about ₹4.35 lakh crore in grants for rural local bodies for 2026–27 to 2030–31. Raising panchayats' own-source revenue (such as property tax) is one of the scheme's goals.

Tamil Nadu link: The inscriptions of the Vaikunda Perumal temple at Uthiramerur (Kancheepuram district), of Parantaka Chola I (10th century CE), describe the 'Kudavolai' (pot-and-palm-leaf) election of assembly members – ancient evidence of local democracy. Today, under the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act 1994, TN has a three-tier system (village panchayat – panchayat union – district panchayat) with over

12,500 village panchayats. TN holds six Gram Sabha meetings a year – 26 Jan, 22 Mar (World Water Day), 1 May, 15 Aug, 2 Oct and 1 Nov (Local Governance Day).

5 India–Republic of Korea naval exercise: INS Sahyadri arrives at Busan

Defence, Energy, Industry & Parliament

News

Indian Navy stealth frigate INS Sahyadri arrived at Busan Naval Harbour on 26 Oct 2026 for the India–Republic of Korea (South Korea) Navy bilateral exercise (IN–RoKN). The harbour phase has professional interactions, cross-deck visits, cross-training and sports; the ship's Commanding Officer will call on senior RoKN officials. In the sea phase, the ship will carry out coordinated maritime drills with ROKS Munmu the Great. Before this, the ship took part in INDRA 2026 at Vladivostok, Russia (13–18 Oct) and left on 20 Oct.

Key facts

Arrival	26 Oct 2026 – Busan Naval Harbour, South Korea
Exercise	IN–RoKN bilateral exercise – harbour phase + sea phase
Indian ship	INS Sahyadri – Shivalik-class (Project-17) stealth frigate; commissioned 2012; Eastern Fleet, Visakhapatnam
Korean ship	ROKS Munmu the Great (destroyer)
First edition	Oct 2025 – Busan; INS Sahyadri + ROKS Gyeongnam
Earlier drill	INDRA 2026 (India–Russia), Vladivostok, 13–18 Oct

Background

- India–South Korea ties: full diplomatic relations in 1973; the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) in force from 1 Jan 2010; upgraded to a 'Special Strategic Partnership' during PM Modi's Seoul visit in May 2015.
- History: in 1929 Rabindranath Tagore praised Korea as 'The Lamp of the East'. In the Korean War (1950–53) India sent the 60th Parachute Field Ambulance; after the 1953 armistice, Lt Gen. K.S. Thimayya chaired the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC) for prisoners of war, and Maj. Gen. S.P.P. Thorat led the Custodian Force (India).
- Geography: Busan, at the south-eastern tip of the Korean peninsula, is South Korea's largest port and second-largest city. The Korea Strait (with Tsushima island in the middle) separates Korea from Japan. The Yellow Sea lies to the west of the peninsula and the Sea of Japan (East Sea) to the east.
- Policy: 'Look East' policy – 1991, PM P.V. Narasimha Rao; upgraded to 'Act East' in 2014; Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) in 2019. Eastern Fleet ships are regularly deployed to the South China Sea and the Pacific.

Tamil Nadu link: this news has no direct Tamil Nadu link. But Tamil Nadu is a key base for South Korean firms – Hyundai Motor India's car plant at Irungattukottai (near Sriperumbudur) and Samsung's electronics plant at Sriperumbudur.

6 PM Modi to inaugurate Bharat Renewable Energy Summit & Expo (BRESE) 2026 on 2 November

Defence, Energy, Industry & Parliament

News

The 'Bharat Renewable Energy Summit & Expo 2026' (BRESE 2026) will be held on 2–5 Nov 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi; PM Narendra Modi will inaugurate it on 2 Nov, MNRE Secretary Santosh Kumar Sarangi announced on 28 Oct. Theme: 'Invest. Innovate. Inspire.' The 9th Session of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Assembly and the 4th International Conference on Green Hydrogen (ICGH) are held alongside. Participants from over 130 countries, 9 country partners and 13 partner States/UTs are expected.

Key facts

Dates / venue	2–5 Nov 2026 – Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi; opening 2 Nov – PM Modi
Hosts	MNRE + International Solar Alliance; organising partners – IREDA, SECI
Co-located	9th ISA Assembly; 4th International Conference on Green Hydrogen
Country partners	Australia, Denmark, EU, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, UK
Capacity	Non-fossil capacity 308 GW; target 500 GW by 2030; about $220 bn investment needed in 2027–30
Global rank	Renewables & solar – 3rd; wind – 4th

Background

- Climate pledge: at COP26, Glasgow (2021), India announced the 'Panchamrit' pledges – 500 GW non-fossil capacity by 2030 and net zero by 2070, among others. India met its NDC goal of 50% installed power capacity from non-fossil sources in June 2025 – five years early.
- International Solar Alliance (ISA): launched by India and France at COP21, Paris, on 30 Nov 2015; HQ Gurugram. Originally for 'sunshine' countries between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn; a 2020 amendment opened it to all UN members. The Assembly is its apex decision-making body. 'One Sun One World One Grid' (OSOWOG) is its initiative.
- Bharat Mandapam: the international exhibition-cum-convention centre at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi; opened in July 2023; venue of the G20 Leaders' Summit in Sept 2023.
- Economy: PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (Feb 2024; ₹75,021 crore) – rooftop solar for 1 crore homes with up to 300 units of free power a month; beneficiary households crossed 50 lakh in Aug 2026. MNRE began as the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources in 1992 and took its present name in 2006.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu ranks 2nd in installed wind capacity – 12,273.69 MW at end-June 2026 (21.4% of the national total), after Gujarat (16,086.66 MW). Under the Viability Gap Funding (VGF) scheme for offshore wind (June 2024), the first 1 GW is 500 MW off Tamil Nadu and 500 MW off Gujarat. (Tamil Nadu is not in the list of 13 partner States announced.)

7 Union Cabinet approves ₹10,000 crore Container Manufacturing Promotion Scheme (CMPS)

Defence, Energy, Industry & Parliament

News

The Union Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi on 28 Oct 2026 approved the ₹10,000 crore 'Container Manufacturing Promotion Scheme' (CMPS), valid till FY 2039–40. Announced in the Union Budget 2026–27, it aims to make shipping containers (steel boxes) of global shipping standard in India and cut import dependence. The target is to raise annual capacity about tenfold, to 7.5 lakh TEU. Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw briefed on the Cabinet decision.

Key facts

Approval	28 Oct 2026 – Union Cabinet; valid till 2039–40
Outlay	₹10,000 crore – incl. operational expenditure assistance ₹8,891 cr; interest subvention ₹859 cr; testing & certification ₹150 cr
Interest subvention	3% a year on term loans for greenfield / brownfield units
Target	7.5 lakh TEU a year (about tenfold rise)
Jobs	~3,000 direct, 50,000+ indirect
Eligible units	New unit – at least 1 lakh TEU; expansion – at least 25,000 TEU added

Background

- History: the modern intermodal shipping container was introduced by US businessman Malcom McLean – in 1956 the ship 'Ideal X' carried containers from Newark to Houston. ISO standard sizes are 20 ft and 40 ft; one 20-ft box = 1 TEU (Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit).
- Science: containers are mostly made of 'Cor-Ten' weathering steel – a stable oxide layer on its surface stops further rusting. Ancillary industries such as corner castings, special steel, wooden floors and paints will also grow.
- Precursor: the first 'Made-in-India' EXIM container prototype was unveiled on 3 July 2026 at the Maersk–CONCOR Inland Container Depot, Dadri (Uttar Pradesh); it meets ISO specifications and the International Convention for Safe Containers (CSC, 1972). It was unveiled by Ports, Shipping and Waterways Minister Sarbananda Sonowal.
- Maritime economy: Sept 2025 shipbuilding package of ₹69,725 crore – Shipbuilding Financial Assistance Scheme, Maritime Development Fund and Shipbuilding Development Scheme. Vizhinjam (Kerala) is India's first deep-water container transshipment port, dedicated to the nation on 2 May 2025.

Tamil Nadu link: Chennai Port, Kamarajar Port (Ennore), Kattupalli Port and V.O. Chidambaranar Port, Thoothukudi, are key container hubs on the east coast. VOC Port's Tuticorin International Container Terminal was declared a 'Green Terminal' in Oct 2026 for 100% electrification. More domestic container output will ease empty-container shortages for Tamil Nadu exporters.

8 Green hydrogen: a key pillar of India's clean energy transition – progress of the National Green Hydrogen Mission

Defence, Energy, Industry & Parliament

News

An explainer on green hydrogen's role in India's clean energy transition (28 Oct 2026) compiles government data: the National Green Hydrogen Mission (Jan 2023; ₹19,744 crore) targets at least 5 million tonnes a year of capacity by 2030. Under its 'SIGHT' programme (₹17,490 crore), 15 companies got incentives for 3,000 MW a year of electrolyser manufacturing, and incentives were awarded for 8.62 lakh tonnes a year of green hydrogen output; about 8,000 tonnes a year of capacity was commissioned as of Feb 2026. The 4th International Conference on Green Hydrogen is in Delhi on 2–5 Nov.

Key facts

Mission	National Green Hydrogen Mission – Jan 2023; ₹19,744 crore; nodal – MNRE
SIGHT	Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition – ₹17,490 crore (till 2029–30)
Hydrogen hubs	Deendayal (Kandla, Gujarat), V.O. Chidambaranar (Thoothukudi), Paradip (Odisha) ports
Standard	Green Hydrogen Standard (Aug 2023) – ≤2 kg CO_2e per kg H_2 (well-to-gate)
Incentive	25-year inter-State transmission charge waiver for plants commissioned by 31 Dec 2030
Hydrogen valleys	Pune, Jodhpur, Bhubaneswar, Kerala – 4 innovation clusters

Background

- Science: in water electrolysis ($2H_2O \rightarrow 2H_2 + O_2$), hydrogen is released at the cathode and oxygen at the anode, in a 2:1 volume ratio. About 9 litres of demineralised water are needed per kg of hydrogen (MNRE).
- Hydrogen 'colours': grey – steam methane reforming of natural gas (no carbon capture); blue – same plus carbon capture and storage; green – electrolysis using renewable power; pink – nuclear power; brown/black – coal.
- History: Henry Cavendish identified hydrogen as a distinct substance ('inflammable air') in 1766; Lavoisier named it 'hydrogen' (water-former). Haber–Bosch process: $N_2 + 3H_2 \rightarrow 2NH_3$ – green hydrogen gives 'green ammonia', and from it fertilisers such as urea.
- Pilots: 5 steel projects (including a 100% hydrogen injection trial); in transport 27 buses, 43 trucks and 16 refuelling stations; a 1 MW indigenous plant at Kandla port (July 2025). The Green Hydrogen Certification Scheme of India (GHCI) was launched in April 2025. Over 6 lakh jobs and about 50 million tonnes of CO_2 avoided a year are expected by 2030.

Tamil Nadu link: V.O. Chidambaranar Port, Thoothukudi, is one of the three ports MNRE has recognised as green hydrogen hubs, and the mission's shipping pilot – a green methanol bunkering and refuelling facility – was awarded to VOC Port. SPIC's fertiliser plant at Thoothukudi makes urea from ammonia, giving the region local demand for green ammonia.

9 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum at Samvidhan Sadan, New Delhi (26–27 Oct) – chaired by Speaker Om Birla; 'New Delhi Declaration' adopted

Defence, Energy, Industry & Parliament

News

Under India's BRICS chairship, the 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum was held on 26–27 October 2026 in the Central Hall of Samvidhan Sadan in the Parliament complex, New Delhi. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla chaired the Forum. Theme: 'Fostering Parliaments for People-Centric Development'. 11 member and 10 partner countries were invited. It closed with the 'New Delhi Declaration', calling for UN reform including the Security Council, zero tolerance for terrorism and fair access to artificial intelligence (AI).

Key facts

Date / venue	26–27 Oct 2026; Central Hall, Samvidhan Sadan, New Delhi
Chair	Om Birla, Lok Sabha Speaker (Kota, Rajasthan)
Theme	Fostering Parliaments for People-Centric Development
Sessions	Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation, Sustainability – 4 high-level sessions
Outcome	New Delhi Declaration – UN reform, counter-terrorism, AI cooperation
Forum history	1st Forum: Moscow, 8 June 2015; 11th: Brasília (Brazil), 2025
Next	BRICS chairship 2027 – China

Background

- BRICS began in 2006 as a meeting of BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) foreign ministers; first summit – Yekaterinburg (Russia), 2009; South Africa joined in 2010, making it BRICS. Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the UAE became full members on 1 Jan 2024, and Indonesia on 6 Jan 2025. India's 2026 chairship theme: 'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability' (initials spell BRICS).
- Parliamentary Forum: a dialogue platform for BRICS parliaments; the 1st Forum was held in Moscow on 8 June 2015. India earlier chaired it in 2016 (at Geneva, on the sidelines of the 135th IPU Assembly) and in 2021; 2024 – St Petersburg (10th).
- Constitution: Article 93 – the Lok Sabha chooses a Speaker and Deputy Speaker from among its members. Article 94 – the Speaker addresses his/her resignation to the Deputy Speaker and can be removed by a resolution passed by a majority of all the then members (14 days' notice). The Speaker presides over a joint sitting of Parliament (Article 108; Article 118(4)).
- Samvidhan Sadan: the old Parliament House – designed by Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker; opened by Viceroy Irwin on 18 Jan 1927. The Constituent Assembly met in its Central Hall. It was named 'Samvidhan Sadan' when Parliament moved to the new building (Sept 2023).

Tamil Nadu link: M. Thambidurai (AIADMK) served twice as Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha – 1985–89 and 2014–19. The second Lok Sabha Speaker, M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar (1956–62), was from the Madras Presidency.

10 ASI begins fresh excavation at Kashipur, Uttarakhand – occupation from Painted Grey Ware times; Xuanzang's 'Govisana'; Mahabharata legend

History, Water, States, Environment & Science

News

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) began a fresh excavation in the third week of October 2026 at a roughly 90-acre mound at Kashipur, Udham Singh Nagar district, Uttarakhand; it will run until March 2027. The aim is to scientifically validate earlier finds and establish the site's cultural sequence. Pottery from the site shows continuous occupation from the Painted Grey Ware (PGW) period to the early medieval period. The site is identified with 'Govisana', described by the Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang; local legend says Dronacharya trained the Pandavas here (Drona Sagar lake).

Key facts

Site	Kashipur, Udham Singh Nagar district, Uttarakhand – about 90-acre mound
Excavation	ASI – from Oct 2026 till March 2027
Identification	Xuanzang's 'Kiu-pi-shwang-na' = Govisana; identified by Alexander Cunningham
Earlier digs	1939–40, 1965–66, 1970–71 – temple complex in three phases, Gupta to early medieval
Pottery	PGW, Kushan, Gupta and medieval wares – continuous habitation
Legend	Dronacharya's training ground; Drona Sagar lake said to be the Pandavas' guru dakshina

Background

- Painted Grey Ware (PGW): fine, smooth grey pottery with black / deep-brown geometric designs; bowls and dishes. Dated c. 1100 BCE – 500/400 BCE; Upper Ganga plains and the Ghaggar–Sutlej region. Associated with the Iron Age / Later Vedic culture.
- In the 1950s B.B. Lal (later ASI Director General) excavated Hastinapur near Meerut and linked PGW to the Mahabharata period. This remains debated among archaeologists; the Kashipur link too is a matter of legend.
- Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsang): the 'Prince of Pilgrims'; travelled in India c. 629–645 CE; stayed at Harshavardhana's court; studied at Nalanda; work 'Si-Yu-Ki' (Records of the Western World). (Some reports wrongly say '6th century' – it is the 7th century.)
- ASI: founded in 1861 by Alexander Cunningham; now under the Union Ministry of Culture. Cunningham himself identified Kashipur as Govisana in the 19th century.

Tamil Nadu link: Xuanzang visited the Pallava capital Kanchipuram around 640 CE during the reign of Narasimhavarman I (Mamalla) and described it as a centre of learning and Buddhism. Iron Age: Tamil Nadu's 'Antiquity of Iron' report (Jan 2025), based on finds at Sivakalai (Thoothukudi), traces iron use in Tamil Nadu to the first quarter of the 4th millennium BCE.

11 Jal Shakti Minister C.R. Patil launches 'Punah Bharan' app for groundwater-recharge planning; 'Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari: Catch the Rain' drive

History, Water, States, Environment & Science

News

Union Jal Shakti Minister C.R. Patil launched the 'Punah Bharan' ('recharge') mobile app in New Delhi on 28 October 2026. It was developed by BISAG-N with the National Water Mission (NWM) and the Department of Water Resources, RD&GR. It identifies potential artificial-recharge zones within a 3-km radius of the user and suggests structures suited to local conditions. Its web portal offers village-level Artificial Recharge Structure (ARS) zonation maps and GIS tools, using rainfall, groundwater-level, groundwater-yield, slope and drainage data. It supports the 'Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari: Catch the Rain' (JSJB: CTR) drive, under which over 1.58 crore artificial groundwater-recharge structures have been built (as of Sept 2026).

Key facts

App	Punah Bharan – 28 Oct 2026, New Delhi
Launched by	C.R. Patil, Union Jal Shakti Minister
Developed by	BISAG-N (Gandhinagar) + National Water Mission, DoWR
Feature	Recharge zones within 3 km; village-level ARS maps
JSJB	6 Sept 2024 – Surat (Gujarat), launched by PM; guided by '3Cs' – Community, CSR, Cost
Progress	JSJB 1.0 – 27 lakh+ (May 2025); JSJB 2.0 – 1.5 crore+ (May 2026); total 1.58 crore+ (Sept 2026)

Background

- Timeline: Ministry of Jal Shakti – May 2019; Jal Shakti Abhiyan – 1 July 2019 (1,592 water-stressed blocks in 256 districts); 'Catch the Rain' – 22 March 2021. In June 2026 JSJB was merged with Catch the Rain as 'JSJB: CTR'.
- Constitution: 'Water' (water supplies, irrigation, canals, drainage, embankments, storage) – Seventh Schedule, State List Entry 17, subject to Union List Entry 56 (inter-State rivers).
- Bodies: Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) – HQ Bhujal Bhawan, Faridabad (Haryana); National Water Mission – one of the eight missions of the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC, 2008); BISAG-N – Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics, Gandhinagar.
- Science: artificial recharge sends rainwater into the ground to refill aquifers – through recharge pits, check dams, percolation tanks and by converting defunct borewells into recharge wells.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu was the first State to make rainwater harvesting compulsory in all buildings (2003). The 'Kudimaramathu' scheme to restore minor-irrigation tanks and lakes with farmers' participation was launched on 13 March 2017 by the Edappadi K. Palaniswami government ('kudi' = people, 'maramathu' = repair). The 'Thuli' rainwater-harvesting campaign was launched in Oct 2026.

12 Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel 'Srishti' (Yard 1283) launched at Goa Shipyard Ltd on 27 Oct

History, Water, States, Environment & Science

News

The Indian Navy's Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel (NGOPV) 'Srishti' (Yard 1283) was launched on 27 October 2026 at Goa Shipyard Limited's (GSL) Vaddem facility. Smt Sandeepa Sahay launched the ship in the presence of Secretary (Defence Finance) Vishvajit Sahay. 'Srishti' is Sanskrit for 'creation'. These indigenously designed and built ships are meant for maritime surveillance, search and rescue, protection of offshore assets, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) and anti-piracy tasks. Outfitting and trials will follow before commissioning.

Key facts

Ship	Srishti (Yard 1283) – NGOPV; launched 27 Oct 2026
Builder	Goa Shipyard Ltd (GSL), Vaddem, Goa; keel laid 9 June 2025
Programme	11 NGOPVs – GSL 7, GRSE (Kolkata) 4; contract 30 March 2023, ₹9,781 crore
Category	Buy (Indian-IDDM) – Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured
Sister ships	Shachi (GSL, 31 Mar 2026); Sanghmitra, Shruti, Shreyas (GRSE)
Crest	Ursa Major (Saptarishi) + red-and-white lighthouse

Background

- 'Launch' means the built hull enters the water for the first time; outfitting, sea trials and delivery follow; 'commissioning' is the formal induction into the Navy with the 'INS' prefix.
- Defence procurement: DAP 2020 gives top priority to 'Buy (Indian-IDDM)'. Aligned with Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India. GSL is a public sector undertaking under the Ministry of Defence.
- Naval history: Navy Day – 4 Dec, marking 'Operation Trident', the 1971 attack on Karachi harbour. Naval Commands – Western (Mumbai), Eastern (Visakhapatnam), Southern (Kochi).
- Astronomy: Saptarishi (Ursa Major / Great Bear / Big Dipper) – seven bright stars; its two 'pointer' stars point to the Pole Star (Polaris), which made it useful for navigation at sea.

Tamil Nadu link: the naval air station INS Parundu is at Uchipuli, Ramanathapuram district; patrol ships and aircraft like these keep watch over the Palk Strait and the Gulf of Mannar. The Tamil Nadu & Puducherry Naval Area HQ is in Chennai (INS Adyar).

13 Chennamma Freedom Park at Kittur – ₹40 crore in next Budget, announces Karnataka CM D.K. Shivakumar

History, Water, States, Environment & Science

News

At the valedictory of 'Chennammana Kittur Utsav-2026' at Kittur, Belagavi district, on Sunday 25 Oct 2026, Karnataka CM D.K. Shivakumar announced a 'Chennamma Freedom Park' at Kittur. A government order will be issued at once and ₹40 crore allocated in the next State Budget. The park will present Kittur's history and Rani Chennamma's resistance to British rule through visual displays. He also said the North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (NWKRTC) will be renamed the 'Kittur Rani Chennamma Road Transport Corporation'. The park was requested by Kittur MLA Babasaheb Patil.

Key facts

Announcement	25 Oct 2026 – Kittur Utsav valedictory, Kittur (Belagavi district)
Announced by	CM D.K. Shivakumar – Karnataka's 25th CM (sworn in 3 June 2026 by Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot)
Funding	₹40 crore in next Budget; GO immediately
Renaming	NWKRTC (HQ Hubballi) → Kittur Rani Chennamma RTC
Other projects	₹520-crore Channavrushabhendra irrigation project; ~₹1,000 crore works incl. 100-bed hospital
Kittur war	October 1824 – British collector Thackeray killed

Background

- History: Rani Chennamma was born on 14 Nov 1778 at Kakati in present-day Belagavi district and married Raja Mallasarja, Desai of Kittur. After her husband and son died, she adopted Shivalingappa in 1824. The East India Company refused to accept the adoption and moved to take Kittur. In the first round of war in October 1824, collector and political agent St John Thackeray was killed (largely by her lieutenant Amatur Balappa).
- Captured in the second round, Chennamma was imprisoned at Bailhongal fort and died there on 21 Feb 1829. Her lieutenant Sangolli Rayanna continued a guerrilla war until he was caught and hanged. The refusal to recognise the adoption is seen as a precursor to Lord Dalhousie's 'Doctrine of Lapse' (applied from 1848).
- Memorials: her statue in the Parliament complex was unveiled on 11 Sept 2007 by Pratibha Patil, India's first woman President; a postage stamp was issued on 23 Oct 1977; Coast Guard ship 'Kittur Chennamma' (1983–2011). A ₹200 commemorative coin marked 200 years of the Kittur victory in October 2025.
- Geography: Belagavi (Belgaum) is Karnataka's north-western district bordering Maharashtra and Goa. The 'Suvarna Vidhana Soudha', where the Karnataka Legislature holds its winter session, is in Belagavi.

Tamil Nadu link: in 1780 – 44 years before Chennamma's 1824 war – Rani Velu Nachiyar of Sivaganga fought the British and regained her kingdom; her woman commander Kuyili is remembered for setting the British ammunition store on fire. Velu Nachiyar and Chennamma are pioneers among South India's women freedom fighters.

14 Earthshot Prize 2026 comes to India for the first time – Awards Night in Mumbai on 17 Nov; Prince William's environment prize

History, Water, States, Environment & Science

News

The Earthshot Prize – the leading global environment prize founded by Prince William – is being held in India for the first time, in Mumbai. A summit runs on 16–17 Nov 2026 and Awards Night is on 17 Nov. Five winners, one in each of five categories, will each receive £1 million. The ceremony will be hosted by filmmaker Karan Johar, the first Indian to host it. The 15 finalists for 2026 were announced on 18 Sept; they include India's Mahila Housing Trust (Fix our Climate) and Mahindra Last Mile Mobility (Clean our Air). Mumbai was named host on 17 Feb 2026 during the inaugural Mumbai Climate Week.

Key facts

Ceremony	17 Nov 2026 – Mumbai (summit 16–17 Nov); first time in India
Founder	Prince William & Royal Foundation, 2020; named after Kennedy's 'Moonshot'
Prize	5 winners × £1 million; £25 million awarded so far
5 Earthshots	Protect & Restore Nature; Clean Our Air; Revive Our Oceans; Build a Waste-free World; Fix Our Climate
Past hosts	London (2021), Boston (2022), Singapore (2023), Cape Town (2024), Rio de Janeiro (2025)
Partners	Serum Institute of India – principal sponsor; Prime Video – streaming

Background

- Indian winners: Takachar (Vidyut Mohan, 2021, Clean Our Air – turns crop residue into fuel/fertiliser instead of burning); Kheyti (2022, Protect & Restore Nature – 'Greenhouse-in-a-Box' for smallholders); S4S Technologies (2023, Waste-free World – solar dryers cutting food waste); Boomitra (2023, Fix Our Climate – carbon-credit market for soil restoration).
- Indian finalists: Vinisha Umashankar (2021, Clean Our Air), Fleather (2022), State of Gujarat (2025, Clean Our Air). Earthshot has identified over 5,600 innovations from 156 countries.
- Environment: stubble burning after paddy harvest in Punjab and Haryana worsens north India's winter air pollution; Takachar's machine is reported to cut such smoke emissions by up to 98%.

Tamil Nadu link: Tiruvannamalai student Vinisha Umashankar became a finalist (the youngest) in the 'Clean Our Air' category of the first Earthshot Prize in 2021 for her solar-powered ironing cart (Iron-Max), which replaces charcoal irons; she also spoke at COP26 in Glasgow. The National Innovation Foundation (NIF) helped build the prototype.

15 Uttar Pradesh Cabinet approves 'PRAGATI' AI & Robotics Park in Greater Noida; targets over 1 lakh jobs

History, Water, States, Environment & Science

News

The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet led by CM Yogi Adityanath on 27 Oct 2026 approved the 'PRAGATI' (Platform for Robotics and AI Growth Through Technology and Innovation) AI & Robotics Park in Greater Noida. Total about 69.52 acres: Zone 1 (8 acres), to be developed by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) under the public–private partnership (PPP) model, and Zone 2 (61.52 acres). It is expected to create over 1 lakh direct and indirect jobs and about ₹2,000 crore of annual Gross Value Added (GVA) at full scale. Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna briefed the media.

Key facts

Approval	27 Oct 2026 – UP Cabinet (22 proposals in all)
Site / area	Greater Noida (Gautam Buddh Nagar district); 69.52 acres = Zone 1: 8 (PPP) + Zone 2: 61.52
PPP structure	Zone 1 – developed through an SPV under the PPP model
State support	Greater Noida Authority equity ₹21.1 cr + State 30-year interest-free loan ₹126.2 cr
Facilities	Robot testing & certification, rapid prototyping, AI computing, motion-capture & data labs
Timeline	Zone 1 commercial operations within 36 months of SPV registration (extendable to 48)
Other decisions	4 link expressways (₹17,542 cr, UPEIDA); UP Cyber Security Operations Centre (₹104.28 cr; IIT Kanpur's C3iHub)

Background

- Science: the word 'robot' was first used in Czech writer Karel Čapek's 1920 play 'R.U.R.' (Czech 'robota' = forced labour). The term 'Artificial Intelligence' was coined by John McCarthy at the 1956 Dartmouth conference; he is called the 'father of AI'.
- National policy: the 'IndiaAI Mission' (March 2024, ₹10,371.92 crore) is implemented under the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) by the 'IndiaAI' Independent Business Division of Digital India Corporation; shared GPU compute is a key pillar.
- Economy: Gross Value Added (GVA) = value of output − value of intermediate inputs. GVA at basic prices + product taxes − product subsidies = GDP. PPP projects use a separate legal entity, the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV).
- Geography: Greater Noida is in Gautam Buddh Nagar district, National Capital Region (NCR); the Noida International Airport is nearby at Jewar.

Tamil Nadu link: in September 2020 the then CM Edappadi K. Palaniswami released the 'Tamil Nadu Safe and Ethical Artificial Intelligence Policy 2020' along with the Cyber Security and Blockchain policies. IIT Madras hosts the Centre for Responsible AI (CeRAI).

16 India should rethink its stand on GM crops – Nobel laureate Richard Roberts at ESTIC 2026, New Delhi

History, Water, States, Environment & Science

News

Sir Richard J. Roberts, British biochemist and 1993 Nobel laureate in Medicine, spoke on 27 Oct at the Emerging Science, Technology and Innovation Conclave (ESTIC 2026, 27–29 Oct) at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. He urged India to reconsider its approach to genetically modified (GM) crops and study biotech crops to improve nutrition, especially of the poor. He asked why 'Golden Rice', which can fight vitamin A deficiency, is not available in India; said no biotech-attributable safety problem had been shown in 35 years; and called for 'more science in politics and a little less politics in science'.

Key facts

Who	Sir Richard J. Roberts (UK) – New England Biolabs; 1993 Nobel in Medicine (with Phillip Sharp)
Where / when	ESTIC 2026, Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi; 27 Oct 2026
ESTIC 2026	27–29 Oct; coordinated by CSIR with 13 ministries; theme 'Creative Minds, Catalysing Science, Empowering Technologies'
Nobel work	Split genes – introns & gene splicing, adenovirus study 1977
Golden Rice	GM rice producing beta-carotene (converted to vitamin A in the body)
India's status	Only GM crop approved for commercial cultivation – Bt cotton; GM mustard (DMH-11) case in Supreme Court

Background

- Science: Roberts and Phillip Sharp won the 1993 Nobel for discovering 'split genes' – in eukaryotic genes, non-coding 'introns' lie between protein-coding 'exons' and are removed by RNA splicing. In 2016 he also signed the Nobel laureates' letter to Greenpeace supporting GM crops (precision agriculture).
- Regulation: the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) is a statutory body under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, functioning under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC); it approves environmental release of GMOs. GM foods must also meet FSSAI rules.
- Indian context: Bt cotton (2002) is the only commercial GM crop. Bt brinjal was put under a moratorium in February 2010. GEAC cleared environmental release of Delhi University's GM mustard DMH-11 in Oct 2022; on 23 July 2024 the Supreme Court (Justices B.V. Nagarathna and Sanjay Karol) gave a split verdict and directed the Centre to frame a national policy on GM crops.
- Genome editing: in May 2025 ICAR released two genome-edited (CRISPR-Cas, SDN-1) rice varieties – 'DRR Dhan 100 (Kamala)' (IIRR, Hyderabad; based on Samba Mahsuri) and 'Pusa DST Rice 1' (IARI, New Delhi; based on MTU 1010). As no foreign DNA is added, SDN-1/SDN-2 edits are exempt from GM rules.

Tamil Nadu link: Mahyco, which developed Bt brinjal, donated the technology to three institutions – Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore; University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad; and the Indian Institute of Vegetable Research, Varanasi – to develop local varieties. Because of the 2010 moratorium, Bt brinjal never reached farmers in India.

17 96% of the world's warm-water coral reef ecosystems Critically Endangered – risk of collapse by 2075: IUCN Red List of Ecosystems

History, Water, States, Environment & Science

News

On 22 Oct 2026, on the sidelines of the UN Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP17, 19–30 Oct) in Yerevan, Armenia, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) released the first global assessment of coral reefs under the 'IUCN Red List of Ecosystems'. It covered 188,362 sq km of reefs in 127 tropical and subtropical ecoregions. Including projected warming, 96% (122) are 'Critically Endangered' – an extremely high risk of collapse by 2075. Even on observed change over the past 50 years alone, 24% are Critically Endangered. The Western Galápagos reef has already 'Collapsed' since the 1982–83 El Niño; 4 ecoregions are Data Deficient.

Key facts

Release	IUCN, 22 Oct 2026 – CBD COP17, Yerevan (Armenia)
Scope	127 ecoregions; 188,362 sq km; 80+ countries, 250+ experts
Finding	96% Critically Endangered (with projections); 24% (observed 50-year change only)
CR systems	Great Barrier Reef (Australia), Coral Triangle, Mesoamerican Barrier Reef, Red Sea
Main driver	Climate-driven heat stress – mass bleaching; overexploitation of key fish (parrotfish, grouper) threatens 63% of reef ecosystems
Coordinators	IUCN, IUCN CEM, University of Melbourne, CORDIO East Africa; funded by MSC Foundation

Background

- IUCN – founded 1948; headquarters Gland (Switzerland). Its 'Red List of Threatened Species' assesses species; the 'Red List of Ecosystems' (RLE) assesses the 'risk of collapse' of whole ecosystems such as forests, wetlands and reefs. In the same period, IUCN reassessed 892 reef-building coral species and found 44% threatened with extinction.
- Science: corals are colonies of tiny animals called 'polyps' (phylum Cnidaria). Reef 'collapse' means hard corals are replaced by algae, rubble and sponges, so the reef can no longer support its rich life. The assessment uses the IPCC 'middle-of-the-road' scenario (about 2.7°C warming by 2100).
- Geography: reef types – fringing, barrier (e.g. the Great Barrier Reef off Queensland, Australia) and atoll (e.g. Lakshadweep, Maldives). India's main reef areas – Gulf of Mannar, Gulf of Kachchh, Lakshadweep, Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- Other threats: coastal development, pollution, over-tourism, storms, freshwater floods and outbreaks of coral-eating crown-of-thorns starfish. Overfishing of parrotfish and grouper also harms reefs.

Tamil Nadu link: the Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park (1986) has 21 islands between Thoothukudi and Rameswaram, and became a biosphere reserve in 1989. One of India's main reef areas, it suffers bleaching during marine heatwaves.

18 World Stroke Day – 29 October: 'Every Minute Counts' – know the signs of stroke, act fast

Important Days

News

World Stroke Day is observed every year on 29 October, led by the World Stroke Organization (WSO). The current WSO campaign is 'Every Minute Counts' – 'Learn the signs of stroke today; change a life tomorrow' (launched in 2025 and continued for World Stroke Day 2026). 2026 marks 20 years of the World Stroke Campaign. On 22 May 2026 the 79th World Health Assembly (WHA79) in Geneva adopted its first standalone resolution on stroke prevention and treatment.

Key facts

Date	29 October (annual)
Led by	World Stroke Organization (WSO) – formed c. 2006 by merger of the International Stroke Society and World Stroke Federation
Campaign	'Every Minute Counts' – recognise signs, seek emergency care; 2026 – 20th year of the campaign
WHA79	22 May 2026, Geneva – first standalone resolution on stroke
Global burden	Over 100 million people alive today have had a stroke (WSO)

Background

- Science: a stroke is the death of brain cells when blood flow to the brain is disrupted. A blocked artery causes 'ischaemic' stroke (the majority); a burst vessel causes 'haemorrhagic' stroke. A temporary blockage is a 'TIA' (mini-stroke).
- Signs – 'FAST': F – Face drooping, A – Arm weakness, S – Speech difficulty, T – Time to call emergency services. In ischaemic stroke, clot-dissolving treatment (thrombolysis) within a few hours of onset saves lives.
- Risk factors (WHA resolution): high blood pressure (the leading factor), tobacco, unhealthy diet, obesity, diabetes and physical inactivity. India sees 108–172 cases per 100,000 people a year.
- Indian programme: the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS, 2010) was renamed the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD) in 2023; it runs under the National Health Mission (NHM).

Tamil Nadu link: 'Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam' (5 Aug 2021, Samanapalli, Krishnagiri) delivers medicines at home to people with hypertension and diabetes – the main stroke risk factors – and also offers palliative care and physiotherapy, which help post-stroke rehabilitation.

19 International Day of Care and Support – 29 October: 'Building sustainable care and support systems through decent work'

Important Days

News

Under UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/77/317 (adopted 24 July 2023), the International Day of Care and Support is observed every year on 29 October. The 2026 theme (UN Women): 'Building sustainable care and support systems through decent work' – focusing on paid care workers' labour rights, working conditions, social protection, wages and representation. Globally, women spend 2.5 times as many hours on unpaid care work as men.

Key facts

Date	29 October – UNGA resolution A/RES/77/317 (2023)
2026 theme	Building sustainable care and support systems through decent work
Unpaid care	Women spend 2.5 times as many hours as men (UN Women)
ILO data	45% of women outside the labour force cite care responsibilities as the reason (men 5%)
India (TUS 2024)	Unpaid domestic work – women 289 min/day, men 88; caregiving – women 137, men 75 min
ILO resolution	'Decent work and the care economy' – International Labour Conference, June 2024

Background

- Background: caring for children, the elderly, persons with disabilities and the sick – paid (nurses, domestic workers) and unpaid (within families) – is called the 'care economy'. The UN resolution recognises that women and girls bear most of this burden.
- SDG: Goal 5 (Gender Equality) – target 5.4 calls for recognising and valuing unpaid care and domestic work. The ILO's '5R' approach: recognise, reduce, redistribute, reward and represent care work.
- Indian economy: the National Statistics Office (NSO) of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) conducted the first Time Use Survey in 2019 and the second in 2024. Unpaid work is not counted in GDP.
- Constitution: Article 42 – just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief (Directive Principle). Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 (2017 amendment – 26 weeks' leave). The Code on Social Security, 2020 extends protection to unorganised workers.

Tamil Nadu link: the 'Kalaignar Magalir Urimai Thogai' (₹1,000 a month), recognising the work of women heads of families, was launched on 15 Sept 2023 – C.N. Annadurai's birth anniversary – in his home district Kancheepuram; about 1.06 crore women were covered. The government led by CM Vijay continues the payment (May 2026).

20 29 October – International Internet Day (first ARPANET message, 1969) and World Psoriasis Day ('Look Beyond My Skin')

Important Days

News

Two days fall on 29 October: (1) International Internet Day – on the night of 29 Oct 1969, Charley Kline at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) sent the first message over ARPANET to the Stanford Research Institute (SRI); trying to type 'LOGIN', only 'LO' went through before the system crashed. The day marks this event. (2) World Psoriasis Day – led by the International Federation of Psoriasis Associations (IFPA); 2026 theme: 'Look Beyond My Skin' – focusing on stigma faced by young people. Nearly one-third of people with psoriasis develop it before age 18.

Key facts

Internet Day	29 Oct 1969 – UCLA → SRI, first ARPANET message 'LO'
ARPANET	Funded by ARPA (now DARPA) of the US Department of Defense
India	Public internet service – VSNL, 15 Aug 1995
Psoriasis Day	29 Oct – IFPA (founded 1971); 2026 theme: 'Look Beyond My Skin'
WHO	Resolution WHA67.9 (2014) recognised psoriasis as a serious non-communicable disease

Background

- Internet history: ARPANET was one of the first networks to use 'packet switching'. It switched to the TCP/IP protocol of Vint Cerf and Bob Kahn on 1 Jan 1983 – the basis of today's internet. In 1989 Tim Berners-Lee proposed the World Wide Web (WWW) at CERN.
- India: Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL) launched public internet service on 15 Aug 1995. 'BharatNet' (National Optical Fibre Network – NOFN, 2011; renamed 2015) aims at optical-fibre broadband to every gram panchayat. Constitution: telecommunication is in the Union List.
- Science – psoriasis: a chronic, immune-mediated (autoimmune) skin disease; it is not contagious. Skin cells form far faster than normal, causing red, scaly patches. It can come with psoriatic arthritis (joints) and other comorbidities such as heart disease.
- WHO: the 67th World Health Assembly (May 2014), in resolution WHA67.9, recognised psoriasis as a serious non-communicable disease; WHO published its Global Report on Psoriasis in 2016.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu FibreNet Corporation Limited (TANFINET) was set up as the special purpose vehicle (SPV) to implement BharatNet Phase II in the State under a 'State-led model', aiming at optical-fibre broadband for all 12,524 village panchayats.

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