Current Affairs – Notes

October 2026 – Monthly compilation

Notes PDF

368 news items · key facts · background · Tamil Nadu link

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5 October 2026

1. World Cerebral Palsy Day – 6 October
2. Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2026 for optogenetics
3. Uttar Pradesh renames Bhadohi as Sant Ravidas Nagar Bhadohi
4. Premier League opens its first Premier League Park in Delhi
5. India wins 4 gold and 1 silver at the 19th International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics
6. Three High Court Chief Justices appointed Supreme Court judges
7. Indian Telecom Services Yearly Performance Indicators 2025-26
8. PM Awas Yojana – Urban awards for Tamil Nadu and Puducherry
9. Kuno National Park: female cheetah gives birth to 5 cubs
10. Exercise Mountain Guardian 2026: India and UAE armies train together
11. UCIL begins its Diamond Jubilee (60th) year at Jaduguda
12. Loans up to ₹5 crore for women entrepreneurs: Tamil Nadu issues guidelines
13. Goa international Silambam meet: Gudiyatham students win 24 gold medals
14. Pushpavanam Kuppusamy appointed Chairperson of the Iyal Isai Nataka Manram

6 October 2026

1. World Cotton Day and World Day for Decent Work (7 October)
2. The New York Times praises Tukaram Mundhe
3. Physics Nobel 2026 for Belgian-born Francis Halzen
4. eSanjeevani crosses 50 crore teleconsultations
5. New milestone: India's nuclear triad at full strength
6. Naval shipbuilding projects launched at Visakhapatnam
7. Cabinet approves the Integrated Transport and Logistics Authority (ITLA)
8. NSO's first National Household Travel Survey
9. Indian parliamentary delegation at the 153rd IPU Assembly in Tanzania
10. IIT Ropar launches the AVNI app for learning about farming
11. DRDO's High-Altitude Platform flies successfully
12. Surya, the first indigenous Fleet Support Ship
13. Guidelines for declaring brain death: Centre's directive
14. High-level advisory panel to cut Tamil Nadu government spending
15. India's first offshore wind prototype planned off Thoothukudi
16. 19th-century inscription discovered in Tenkasi

7 October 2026

1. World Sight Day 2026 & World Octopus Day 2026 (8 October)
2. Indian Air Force Day 2026 (8 October)
3. IOC confirms India among seven countries bidding for the 2036 Olympics
4. 2026 Chemistry Nobel to Henri Kagan and Kenso Soai for 'mirror-image' molecules
5. Mahesh Kakde wins the 2026 Ramanujan Prize
6. Coast Guard's SAREX-2026 search-and-rescue exercise off Paradip
7. RBI raises repo rate by 25 basis points to 5.50%
8. World Bank ranks India among top 10 in AI readiness
9. Indian Navy receives indigenous military-grade ROVs

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10. Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit named next Chief of the Air Staff
11. Union Cabinet resolution on Modi's 25 years as head of government
12. World Bank praises Tamil Nadu's 'Thozhi' working women's hostels
13. Wind energy conference in Chennai – 'Windergy India 2026'
14. DSP passing-out parade: CM Vijay presents medals
15. 3,000-year-old rock paintings found near Denkanikottai

8 October 2026

1. World Egg Day 2026 (9 October)
2. World Post Day 2026 (9 October)
3. Actor Nana Patekar dies at 75
4. 2026 Nobel Prize in Literature to Canadian writer Anne Carson
5. Weak monsoon: Maharashtra to cut water supply by at least 10% from 16 October
6. 53.4% rain deficit: 21 of Andhra Pradesh's 26 districts declared drought-hit
7. GST officers' arrest power removed; prosecution threshold raised to ₹5 crore
8. 57th GST Council: no rate change; rates to be reviewed only once a year
9. MNRE event in New Delhi on World Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Day
10. Keralam Police sets up 'Speak Up' task force against domestic violence
11. PM Modi opens 10th India Mobile Congress at Yashobhoomi
12. World Space Week: ISRO Propulsion Complex space exhibition in Coimbatore
13. Centre moves to cut cancer drug prices
14. Ladakh launches India's first high-altitude snow leopard safari
15. Asia's largest seawater desalination plant near Mamallapuram
16. ₹212.58 crore for modernising Tamil Nadu Police
17. Minister Arunraj releases field manual on tuberculosis
18. Tamil Nadu issues two Government Orders on building permits

9 October 2026

1. World Mental Health Day, World Day Against the Death Penalty, World Homeless Day 2026 (10 October)
2. National Postal Day 2026 (10 October)
3. South Korea test-flies its first domestically developed hypersonic weapon
4. Wildlife populations fell 73% on average in 52 years – WWF Living Planet Report 2026
5. 'Pandharpur Wari' documentary named India's national winner at Asian Academy Creative Awards 2026
6. Israel to honour Indian pilot Smit Machchhar with its top civilian award
7. Jewar airport to be named 'Narendra Modi International Airport': Yogi Adityanath
8. TTD introduces 'Garuda Map' app to guide Tirupati pilgrims
9. Minister Ranjith Kumar launches wildlife ambulance in Chennai
10. Minister Rajeev opens help desk for the Online Consent Management and Monitoring System
11. NFDC-NFAI adds three Sivaji Ganesan films to the national collection

12 October 2026

1. Indian Foreign Service (IFS) Day 2026 – 9 October (80th year)
2. International Day of the Girl Child 2026 (11 October)
3. Smriti Mandhana named UNICEF India Celebrity Advocate
4. Economics Nobel 2026 – Robert E. Hall and Michael Woodford
5. 'Project DRISHTI' – AI system to secure freight wagons, launched by Northeast Frontier Railway

6. PM Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PM-DDKY) completes a year; top districts named
7. Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses completes one year (11 Oct 2026)
8. Draft National Steel Policy – Vision 2047: 604 MT capacity target by 2047
9. Forest Rights Act 2006 – second regional review conference, Kolkata
10. India's first synchronised nationwide Sarus Crane survey (BNHS)
11. Gujarat's Ambaji temple 'Mohanthal' prasad gets GI tag
12. Sunil Bharti Mittal conferred France's Legion of Honour (Chevalier)
13. INS Trishul reaches Plymouth, UK, for India–UK naval exercise KONKAN-26
14. AI misuse and nuclear war could threaten humanity by 2100, warns Lancet Commission
15. Record warmth in the Pacific as El Niño strengthens: WMO
16. Transgender doctor Dr Ruth John Paul completes MD, joins ESI hospital
17. INS Mangrol, third Mahe-class anti-submarine warfare craft, commissioned in Mumbai
18. IIT Madras's Sudha Gopalakrishnan Brain Centre dedicated to the nation
19. CERVAVAC – India's first indigenous HPV vaccine gets WHO prequalification
20. President Droupadi Murmu appoints Governors for six States
21. R.V. Arlekar appointed full-time Governor of Tamil Nadu by the President

13 October 2026

1. Right to Information Act completes 21 years (12 Oct)
2. PM GatiShakti National Master Plan completes 5 years (13 Oct)
3. World Standards Day 2026 (14 October)
4. International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction 2026 (13 October)
5. IMF nudges global growth forecast up to 3.1%, warns of rising debt and AI investment risks
6. India and UK inaugurate a Genomics Centre of Excellence
7. India hosts the first BIMSTEC Home Ministers' Meeting; 'Delhi Declaration' adopted
8. ICMR's first high-altitude medicine research centre – foundation stone laid at Keylong, Himachal Pradesh
9. 'Bharat Rice' launched for Army troops
10. IBSAMAR IX (2026): India–Brazil–South Africa maritime exercise, led by India
11. INDRA 2026: India–Russia naval exercise – INS Sahyadri reaches Vladivostok
12. International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) opens new headquarters at Lodhi Estate, Delhi
13. Lakshadweep declared a fully literate Union Territory under ULLAS
14. Karnataka High Court strikes down SC/ST quota hike that took total reservation to 56%
15. World Bank Poverty and Equity Brief (Oct 2026): extreme poverty in India at 2.6%
16. Madurai ornamental fisheries cluster – Union Fisheries Secretary inspects
17. Tamil Nadu Government Environment Awards 2025 – applications invited
18. CM Vijay meets Andhra CM Chandrababu Naidu, seeks more Krishna water for Chennai under Telugu Ganga

14 October 2026

1. 15 Oct: International Day of Rural Women, Global Handwashing Day, White Cane Safety Day 2026
2. Oscar Whitfield named Young Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2026
3. Kerala launches India's first Red List of Ecosystems assessment
4. Indigenous multi-purpose vessel INS Samarthak, built at Kattupalli (Tamil Nadu), to be commissioned
5. Indian Army's Assam Regiment team wins gold at Exercise Cambrian Patrol 2026 in Wales
6. Dr Abdul Kalam's birthday (15 Oct) – Tamil Nadu's 'Youth Awakening Day' since 2015; 'World Students' Day' 2026

7. IMF raises India's 2026–27 growth forecast to 7%
8. 21st Maritime States Development Council (MSDC) meets in Mumbai
9. Soybean varieties NRC 268 and NRC 270 yield about 20 quintals/ha despite bad weather
10. Coast Guard ship ICGS Ajit commissioned; to be based at Okha, Gujarat
11. NSAP extended to 2030–31, renamed 'PM Samajik Sahayata Yojana'
12. Swapped Murugan idol of 1,000-year-old Thogaimalai temple recovered and reinstalled
13. Four Tamil Nadu Agricultural University professors in the world's top 2% scientists list
14. Pallikaranai marsh: interim 'Zone of Influence' cut from 8,397 acres to 316.76 acres
15. 'Palli Paarvai 3.0' app introduced for school monitoring
16. CM Vijay lays foundation for ₹3,108 crore water ring-main pipeline in Chennai

15 October 2026

1. World Anaesthesia Day and World Spine Day 2026 (16 October)
2. World Food Day 2026 (16 October) – 'Innovate today. Nourish tomorrow.'
3. U23 World Wrestling Championships, Las Vegas: Vishvajit More wins historic Greco-Roman silver
4. Oman overtakes US as India's top LNG supplier in September 2026; Nigeria 2nd, US 3rd
5. IMF, World Bank and Bank of Thailand release the 'Bangkok Blueprint for Fraud-Resilient Financial Services'
6. India's largest integrated phenol–acetone plant opens at Haldia
7. Jindal Steel Limited wins worldsteel's 2026 Steelie Award for 'Excellence in People'
8. DRDO successfully tests Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) platform on a live network at Chandipur, Odisha
9. Gujarat's Barda Wildlife Sanctuary emerging as a second home for Asiatic lions
10. Proposed bauxite mine in Odisha's Balda hills threatens the rare Jeypore ground gecko
11. Himachal Pradesh's first battery-integrated solar project opened in Spiti valley
12. Centre renames three pension schemes that carried Indira Gandhi's name
13. CM Vijay releases Tamil Nadu Semiconductor Ecosystem Scheme – State incentives on top of 'Semicon India 2.0'

16 October 2026

1. International Day for the Eradication of Poverty – 17 October 2026
2. Centre approves India's accession to the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) as a full Contracting Party
3. J&K and Ladakh High Court bans fuel-powered motorboats and jet skis on Dal Lake to curb pollution
4. SEWA Director Reema Nanavaty receives the 2026 Hillary Rodham Clinton Award
5. FAO's SOFO 2026 – India first in area under active forest restoration (9.8 Mha); China second (7.9 Mha)
6. Henley Passport Index (Oct 2026) – India 84th; visa-free access to 55 destinations
7. UNDP Human Development Report 2025 – India 130th of 193; HDI value 0.685
8. World Happiness Report 2026 – India 116th of 147; Finland tops for the 9th year in a row
9. Global Peace Index 2026 – India 127th of 163 countries; Iceland most peaceful, Russia least
10. Global Innovation Index 2026 – India 38th of 139 economies; first among lower-middle-income economies
11. Global Hunger Index 2026 – India 100th of 122 countries; 'Serious' category
12. New terminal at Leh's Kushok Bakula Rimpochee Airport – India's first with geothermal heating; opened by PM
13. Ladakh notifies Sankoo as its eighth district – carved out of Kargil district
14. Gujarat expands 'Shramik Annapurna' meal scheme – 101 new centres in 28 districts; full meal for ₹5
15. HAL-built ALH MK-III helicopter (CG 875) inducted into 831 Squadron at Coast Guard Air Station Ratnagiri

16. Clean hydrogen: India ranks 3rd in the world in cumulative contracted volumes – BNEF 'India Transition Factbook 2026'
17. Dr Sudha Yadav sworn in as Governor of Karnataka – the State's second woman Governor
18. MoD signs ₹4,106-crore contracts – 'Varunastra' anti-submarine torpedoes for Navy, GSAT-7C satellite for IAF
19. Chandigarh's Sukhna wetland and UP's Sauj Jheel (Mainpuri) take India's Ramsar sites from 101 to 103; Tamil Nadu (20) tops
20. Cotton Revival Mission in Tamil Nadu – ₹26.21 crore sanctioned for 2026–27; Minister R. Vinoth urges farmers to benefit
21. Neyveli and Tiruchi badlands are Mars-analogue sites – University of Kerala scientists
22. CM Vijay opens 'Periyar Arivulagam' library and science centre in Coimbatore

18 October 2026

1. India's first field study of dengue vaccine (Qdenga) and mosquito repellents begins at Kadayanallur: Minister Arunraj
2. 'Thenisai Thendral' composer Deva (75) passes away – laid to rest with State honours and 72-gun salute in Ranipet district
3. PM-AJAY: 18,093 Scheduled Caste-majority villages declared 'Adarsh Grams' (model villages)
4. Zero sugar diversion to ethanol in ESY 2026–27 – cane juice, sugar syrup, B-heavy molasses excluded: Centre
5. US firm Reflect Orbital, which plans to 'sell sunlight at night', books two launches with India's Skyroot Aerospace
6. North Korea successfully tests a new high-speed torpedo that uses AI to detect and precisely hit targets
7. India's space economy is about $9 billion now and may reach $40–45 billion in 7–8 years – Minister Jitendra Singh (17 Oct)
8. Trade margins on anti-cancer drugs capped at 30% – prices may fall by up to 70%
9. Nutrient-rich purple potato 'Kufri Jamunia' – anthocyanin-rich variety developed by ICAR-CPRI
10. 18 October – World Menopause Day; 2026 theme: 'Chronic Pain at Midlife'
11. TB Mukt Panchayat – 46,118 gram panchayats certified TB-free nationwide; 2,390 in Tamil Nadu
12. 5th Asian Para Games open in Aichi–Nagoya, Japan on 18 Oct (18–24 Oct)
13. Misleading food claims: FSSAI issues notices to Nestle India and Hindustan Unilever
14. Converts to Islam cannot claim BC (Muslim) 3.5% quota on the basis of former caste – Supreme Court
15. Internet access a fundamental right for everyone, including children (Art. 21 with 19(1)(a)) – Supreme Court
16. FSSAI draft rule bans adding sucrose and fructose to products for infants up to 6 months
17. FSSAI proposes new maximum residue limits for acetamiprid and imidacloprid pesticides in tea
18. PMAY-Urban 2.0: Centre approves over 1.93 lakh more houses
19. Maharashtra's first 'Annapurti Grain ATM' opens at Nashik Road – beneficiaries get ration at their convenience
20. Bengaluru-born Ramya Anche to lead NASA's $20 million 'PUFFINS' ultraviolet space telescope mission
21. 13-year-old Raji Doshi wins 2026 3M Young Scientist Challenge for a solution to ocean acidification

19 October 2026

1. ASI launches conservation works on the upper rampart (wall) of the Brihadeeswarar (Big) Temple, Thanjavur
2. Maiden export of 1.755 tonnes of organic palmyra jaggery powder from Erode district to Varna, Bulgaria
3. WINDS project to install automatic rain gauges and weather stations in States runs over a year late due to land shortage

4. Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar for 2024 and 2025 conferred on 106 young performing artists
5. CARA issues nationwide directions to strengthen adoption procedures, safeguard records and protect children's identity
6. 61st meeting of the International Committee of Legal Metrology (CIML) in New Delhi, 26–28 Oct 2026 – India hosts it for the first time
7. Dr Dhal Singh Bisen sworn in as the 9th Governor of Uttarakhand at Lok Bhavan, Dehradun (19 Oct 2026)
8. Braj Mohan Ram sworn in as Governor of Odisha at Lok Bhavan, Bhubaneswar (18 Oct 2026)
9. SBI named 'World's Best Consumer Bank 2026' by Global Finance – second year in a row
10. Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal launches the National Strategic Trade Command Centre (NSTCC) in New Delhi
11. Government reconstitutes the Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB) – S.C.L. Das named part-time Chairperson
12. Madhya Pradesh tops the country in crop-residue burning, overtaking Punjab (15 Sept–15 Oct 2026)
13. Chinese state media show, for the first time, a YJ-21 anti-ship ballistic missile launched from a PLA H-6K bomber
14. Asian Para Games: women's 10m air rifle SH1 – Mona Agarwal wins gold with a Games record, Avani Lekhara takes silver
15. Japan readies its Martian Moons eXploration (MMX) mission to Mars' moon Phobos for launch on an H3 rocket
16. Asian Para Games: Kancheepuram's Thulasimathi (with Manasi Joshi) assures India's first medal by reaching the doubles semi-finals
17. Jantar Mantar protest violence probe: SC-appointed HPEC headed by former SC judge Justice R. Subhash Reddy
18. 'Akhand Prahar-II': Indian Army's integrated combat exercise in the Jaisalmer desert, Rajasthan (Konark Corps)

21 October 2026

1. How are rain warnings issued? – IMD rainfall categories and colour-coded warnings explained
2. Nationwide 'Green Diwali' campaign, 20 Oct – 8 Nov – launched by WWF-India's EIACP centre; appeal to avoid firecrackers
3. Ipsos Quality of Care Perception Index 2026 – India 3rd among 32 countries (joint with Singapore); Malaysia tops
4. Delhi CM Rekha Gupta opens 200-tonne-per-day cow-dung biogas plant at Goyla Dairy (19 Oct)
5. Vummidi Ethiraj (99), who crafted the Sengol given to Nehru in 1947 and installed in the new Parliament in 2023, passes away
6. Nationwide financial inclusion saturation campaign from 21 Oct to 31 Dec – 2.70 lakh gram panchayats and urban local bodies
7. European bee-eater recorded in Chennai for the first time – near the Adyar estuary
8. Centre's draft for Ladakh: a directly elected body, with the Lieutenant Governor keeping the final say on laws
9. Ladakh Bench of the J&K and Ladakh High Court opens at Melongthang, Leh – India's highest HC bench; 4 initiatives incl. 'Green Wall', e-Filing
10. UDAN regional air connectivity scheme completes 10 years (launched 21 Oct 2016)
11. Indian Navy to host 'Swavlamban 2026' (5th edition) seminar in New Delhi on 26–27 Oct
12. India–New Zealand FTA in force from 20 Oct 2026; 100% duty-free access for Indian goods on all 8,284 tariff lines

13. Coal Controller's Organisation (CCO) wins SKOCH Gold Award 2026 for 'SUVIKALP' mine-repurposing tool (26 Sept)
14. DCGI approves cancer drug toripalimab (Zytorvi) – second use, for oesophageal cancer
15. 'Tree surgery' to save over 500 girdled trees in Chhattisgarh's Udanti–Sitanadi Tiger Reserve
16. Ladakh's first Government Medical College (Leh) to become operational in the 2027–28 academic year
17. Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launches the upgraded Agri Welfare Portal
18. 5th edition of India–Australia joint military exercise 'AUSTRAHIND 2026' begins in Thiruvananthapuram
19. Beijing may become a 'super-aged society' by 2035 – one in three residents aged 60 or above
20. World Osteoporosis Day 2026 – 20 Oct; theme: 'Build, Protect and Strengthen Your Bones for Life'
21. Police Commemoration Day 2026 – 21 Oct; Amit Shah leads homage at the National Police Memorial, Delhi
22. Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders Prevention Day 2026 – 21 Oct; importance of iodised salt

22 October 2026

1. Kashi Tamil Sangamam 5.0 to focus on Thirukkural – 28 Nov to 12 Dec 2026
2. Tuticorin International Container Terminal (TICT) at VOC Port, 100% electrified, declared a 'Green Terminal'
3. NE monsoon: Blue Tiger, Dark Blue Tiger and Crow butterflies migrate from Eastern to Western Ghats
4. Home Minister Amit Shah launches 43 Yamuna rejuvenation projects worth ₹8,941 crore in Delhi
5. IIT Madras launches 'UDYOG' finishing school for biotechnology students
6. Jaipur in National Geographic's 'Best of the World 2027' list; the city turns 300 in 2027
7. President Murmu releases ₹200 commemorative coin in Raipur on the 200th birth anniversary of Sindhi spiritual leader Mata Hasi Devi Ji
8. 33rd Singapore–India Maritime Bilateral Exercise 'SIMBEX-2026' begins at Visakhapatnam (21–26 Oct)
9. ISRO to launch NVS-03, the 12th NavIC satellite, on GSLV Mk II from Sriharikota on 30 Oct
10. France confirms the world's first human case of Shamonda virus – patient in Lyon died
11. Inaugural Commonwealth Kabaddi Championship 2026 begins in Ahmedabad on 23 October (till 31 October)
12. Nationwide 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan – Rabi 2026' (Save the Fields campaign) launched today from Karnal, Haryana
13. Powerful El Niño could trigger major economic shocks worldwide – UN (WMO, OCHA) warns
14. India and Poland agree to deepen defence, space and nuclear energy cooperation – Polish PM Donald Tusk visits India
15. International Snow Leopard Day 2026 – 23 October

23 October 2026

1. CM Vijay launches 'Thuli' – a State-wide rainwater harvesting awareness campaign
2. CII Special Awards for FPOs 2026: Isha-guided FPOs win national awards for the 4th year in a row
3. NAAS showcases Indian agri-research at World Food Prize Foundation's Borlaug Dialogue 2026; Indian student wins GYI award
4. C-DOT sets up its 6th Centre of Excellence at IIT (BHU), Varanasi for next-gen telecom technologies
5. Oil India discovers natural gas in a Krishna–Godavari Basin shallow-offshore block
6. Indian Army receives 'Nagastra-2' anti-tank loitering munitions – made by Nagpur's Solar Defence & Aerospace
7. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh releases the new 'Land Warfare Doctrine' at the Army Commanders' Conference
8. MHA and Army launch first-of-its-kind pilot training for Civil Defence master trainers – 12 States/UTs incl. Tamil Nadu

9. Sovereign Gold Bond 2018–19 Series-II completes its 8-year term on 23 Oct – redemption price ₹14,425 per gram
10. Asian Para Games: Kancheepuram's Thulasimathi Murugesan wins doubles gold, ends with 3 medals in a day (1 gold, 2 silver)
11. Om Prakash Mathur sworn in as the 29th Governor of Keralam – oath by Kerala High Court Chief Justice Soumen Sen
12. September 2026: 330 drug samples Not of Standard Quality, one spurious – CDSCO monthly drug alert
13. Kochi architecture student wins the 28th Charles Correa Gold Medal – presented in Mumbai on 22 Oct
14. Greek Parliament passes law banning social media for children under 15 – in force from 1 January 2027
15. Global Media and Information Literacy Week 2026 – 24 to 31 October; theme: 'We All Play a Part – MIL for the People'
16. Chance of limiting warming to 1.5°C with no or limited overshoot is gone – UNEP Emissions Gap Report 2026 warns
17. Disarmament Week: 24 to 30 October
18. United Nations Day 2026 – 24 October; 81 years since the UN Charter came into force
19. World Development Information Day – 24 October 2026
20. World Polio Day – 24 October 2026
21. Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) Raising Day – 24 October 2026
22. Marudhu Brothers' Memorial Day – 24 October (day of their hanging at Tiruppathur, 1801)

25 October 2026

1. Madurai Bench of Madras HC bars registration of documents on lands dedicated to Srirangam temple by an 1887 deed
2. Flood water gushes down Thalaiyar (Rat Tail) Falls, Tamil Nadu's highest waterfall
3. Tenkasi Forest Division adds the Madras hedgehog to its 'Golden Jackal Ambassadors' conservation programme
4. Voters too can file private criminal complaints over a candidate's false election affidavit – Supreme Court
5. PM Modi to open RBI's Tier IV Data Centre and Enterprise Computing & Cybersecurity Training Institute at Bhubaneswar
6. Jitendra Singh opens 'AATAL' air-pollution analysis laboratory for Delhi-NCR at IITM's Delhi branch
7. 19th Urban Mobility India Conference and 2nd National Urban Conclave in Bhubaneswar – Bhubaneswar wins 'Best Green Transport Initiative' city award
8. Agriculture Ministry notifies 16 new indigenous livestock and dog breeds, including Tamil Nadu's Kombai dog
9. Odisha announces India's first dedicated Agri-PV (agrivoltaics) policy – 'One Field, Two Harvests'
10. Sidhi district gets rail link for the first time since Independence – Rewa–Churhat (65 km) and Satna–Devendranagar (53 km) sections opened
11. With 305 talukas declared drought-hit, Maharashtra launches 'Mission Murghas' to tackle fodder shortage
12. MoRTH draft makes Advanced Emergency Braking System (AEBS) mandatory in all new car models from Oct 2030
13. Singer Usha Mangeshkar named first recipient of Assam's 'Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika National Award'
14. Uttar Pradesh ranked first in implementing Mission Karmayogi; Rajasthan 2nd, Jammu & Kashmir 3rd
15. France to host the 8th AgriVoltaics World Conference in 2027
16. World's largest battery-electric ship 'China Zorrilla' begins Argentina–Uruguay passenger service
17. Bharat Biotech, Gavi and UNICEF agree to cut price of 'Mosqivac' (RTS,S/AS01) malaria vaccine by about 40%

18. Lionel Messi receives 2026 Princess of Asturias Award for Sports – presented by Princess Leonor in Oviedo
19. Trichy-origin English girl Bodhana Sivanandan becomes youngest female International Master in chess history
20. India wins record 114 medals (30 gold) at 2026 Asian Para Games – 4th in medal table
21. Pankaj Advani wins his 29th world title – the WBL World Billiards Championship in England
22. Kerala plans statewide child vulnerability mapping
23. US Department of Energy adds helium to its Critical Material List
24. International Criminal Court and its officials win the European Parliament's 2026 Sakharov Prize
25. Eminent painter and former Rajya Sabha member Jogen Chowdhury (87) passes away in Kolkata
26. Physicist Ashoke Sen becomes the first Indian physicist to receive the Oskar Klein Medal (2026)
27. International Artist's Day – 25 October (birth anniversary of Pablo Picasso)
28. International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (18–24 Oct 2026) – theme 'From Detection to Prevention'

26 October 2026

1. Bay of Bengal deep depression intensifies into Cyclone 'Arnab' (named by Bangladesh; means 'sea') – to cross Andhra coast on 28 Oct
2. Palani Dhandayuthapani temple tops Tamil Nadu's 10 highest-earning temples with ₹233.50 crore (HR&CE list)
3. India will have four functional launch pads by 2029 – ISRO Chairman V. Narayanan
4. Ladakh declared India's first '100% organic' Union Territory; complete ban on chemical fertilisers
5. Shivraj Singh Chouhan launches upgraded NMMS (2.0) app for attendance under the VB-G RAM G job scheme
6. India's rice export value up 13% (Apr–Sep 2026): global demand keeps rising
7. Uttarakhand youth Ravi Tamta's electric 'flying car' HAPIDA SKYNeX – test flight succeeds
8. 'International Year of Millets 2023' drew a very positive global response – PM Modi in the 139th 'Mann Ki Baat'
9. Indian photographer Sitaram Raul wins 'Behaviour: Invertebrates' category at Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2026
10. Kerala approves India's first cooperative-sector airline ('Co-Keralam', headquartered in Kochi)
11. PM Modi inaugurates Arvind Ltd's ₹150-crore garment manufacturing unit in Varanasi
12. Ahmedabad to host the 2029 World Weightlifting Championships – a first for India
13. Major Abhilasha Barak gets the '2025 UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award' for her service with UNIFIL, Lebanon
14. Student movement's 'Student List' wins Serbia's snap parliamentary election; Aleksandar Vučić concedes defeat
15. Lula wins Brazil's presidency for a fourth time, defeating Flávio Bolsonaro in the runoff
16. Vigilance Awareness Week 2026 (26 Oct – 1 Nov) – theme 'Probity for Prosperity'
17. Infantry Day 2026 (27 Oct) – 80th observance; honours 1 Sikh's 1947 air-landing at Srinagar
18. World Day for Audiovisual Heritage 2026 (27 Oct) – theme 'Your Window to the World'

27 October 2026

1. ₹57 crore sanctioned for the free milch cow scheme – 10,000 rural women; G.O. issued
2. WorldSkills 2026 (Shanghai) – CM Vijay gives ₹49 lakh incentives to Tamil Nadu medal winners and participants
3. 'Vetri Tamil Nadu e-Sevai 2.0' to be launched soon – mobile-first, AI-enabled platform
4. Greater flamingos sighted at Veeranam lake – a rare inland sighting of a coastal wetland bird
5. 11th India–Indonesia joint special forces exercise 'Garuda Shakti' begins at Banyuwangi, Indonesia

6. Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada 1–15 Nov 2026: nationwide celebration ending with Janjatiya Gaurav Divas on 15 Nov, Birsa Munda's birth anniversary
7. Indian Naval Academy develops a twin-drone maritime rescue system that spots people at sea and drops lifebuoys
8. Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan releases Anil K. Antony's book 'Advantage India: Reshaping the Future for an Equitable World'
9. Defence Acquisition Council clears procurement proposals worth ₹2.12 lakh crore for the three Services
10. Central Motor Vehicles Rules amended: E100 (pure ethanol) added alongside E85 as fuel for flex-fuel vehicles
11. Up to 3 years' jail for abandoning or ill-treating elders: Kerala Assembly unanimously passes Senior Citizens Bill
12. England footballer Bukayo Saka wins the 2026 Sócrates Award for charity work – presented at the Ballon d'Or ceremony in London
13. US–Japan joint military exercise 'Keen Sword 27' (19–29 Oct 2026) – seven partner nations also take part
14. Fine magnetic threads above quiet regions of the Sun – NAOJ-led study using balloon telescope 'Sunrise III'
15. Tata Steel introduces hydroseeding at its West Bokaro Division, Jharkhand – over 50 acres of mined land greened

28 October 2026

1. Railway Recruitment Boards notify 1,265 Station Master posts – CEN 08/2026; applications from 27 Oct
2. Loans to minorities: Tamil Nadu Minorities Economic Development Corporation (TAMCO) wins first prize in the southern zone – awarded by NMDFC
3. POCSO probe: Chennai Police issue 'Look Out Circulars' against five persons – what is an LOC?
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
5. India–Republic of Korea naval exercise: INS Sahyadri arrives at Busan
6. PM Modi to inaugurate Bharat Renewable Energy Summit & Expo (BRESE) 2026 on 2 November
7. Union Cabinet approves ₹10,000 crore Container Manufacturing Promotion Scheme (CMPS)
8. Green hydrogen: a key pillar of India's clean energy transition – progress of the National Green Hydrogen Mission
9. 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum at Samvidhan Sadan, New Delhi (26–27 Oct) – chaired by Speaker Om Birla; 'New Delhi Declaration' adopted
10. ASI begins fresh excavation at Kashipur, Uttarakhand – occupation from Painted Grey Ware times; Xuanzang's 'Govisana'; Mahabharata legend
11. Jal Shakti Minister C.R. Patil launches 'Punah Bharan' app for groundwater-recharge planning; 'Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari: Catch the Rain' drive
12. Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel 'Srishti' (Yard 1283) launched at Goa Shipyard Ltd on 27 Oct
13. Chennamma Freedom Park at Kittur – ₹40 crore in next Budget, announces Karnataka CM D.K. Shivakumar
14. Earthshot Prize 2026 comes to India for the first time – Awards Night in Mumbai on 17 Nov; Prince William's environment prize
15. Uttar Pradesh Cabinet approves 'PRAGATI' AI & Robotics Park in Greater Noida; targets over 1 lakh jobs
16. India should rethink its stand on GM crops – Nobel laureate Richard Roberts at ESTIC 2026, New Delhi
17. 96% of the world's warm-water coral reef ecosystems Critically Endangered – risk of collapse by 2075: IUCN Red List of Ecosystems
18. World Stroke Day – 29 October: 'Every Minute Counts' – know the signs of stroke, act fast
19. International Day of Care and Support – 29 October: 'Building sustainable care and support systems through decent work'

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

30 October 2026

1. Chidambaram Nataraja temple: Madras High Court sets up retired judges-led committee to oversee administration
2. ₹38,000 crore Thoothukudi shipyard: talks with HD Hyundai – Detailed Project Report within six months
3. Direct recruitment to TN Government posts: upper age limit raised by 5 years – CM Vijay's order; 37 years for Group-I general category
4. CM Vijay to attend the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting at Davos, Switzerland (18–22 Jan 2027)
5. TN Cabinet approves incentives for eight industrial projects worth ₹3,767 crore; 4,853 jobs
6. India's green hydrogen offtake contracts cross 5.5 lakh tonnes a year – world's largest, says MNRE
7. Air Marshal Inderpal Singh Walia named Vice Chief of the Air Staff; takes over on 1 Nov
8. CCS clears 8 Next Generation Corvettes for the Indian Navy at over ₹40,000 crore
9. Tobacco-Free Youth Campaign 4.0 launched – 60-day nationwide drive focused on colleges and universities
10. Sikkim holds its first 'Himalayan Yak Festival' at Gnathang Valley near the India–China border
11. GST on e-commerce delivery services cut from 18% to 5% (without ITC) – 57th GST Council recommendation; notifications effective 1 Nov
12. New pink-flowering shrub species 'Osbeckia assamensis' discovered in Assam's Manas National Park
13. Chhattisgarh's Sirpur Cultural and Archaeological Landscape added to UNESCO's World Heritage Tentative List
14. UAE confers 'First Class Order of Zayed II' on Indian pilot Captain Smit Machchhar – awarded by President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed
15. PM inaugurates ₹325-crore Bharat Bovine Breeding and Research Centre at Bhildi, Banaskantha (Gujarat) – Kankrej, Gir and other native breeds
16. Bihar Museum ranked 9th in 'World's 100 Best Museums' list – the only Asian museum in the top 10
17. UNEP recognition: India's Ganges River Dolphin Recovery Programme cited among the UN World Restoration Flagships
18. Google to invest €13 billion (about $15 billion) in AI infrastructure in Finland – its largest single investment in Europe
19. SBI launches 'CyRIS', its cybersecurity Centre of Excellence, in Mumbai
20. WJP Rule of Law Index 2026: India 88th of 143 countries (score 0.48; 86th in 2025); Denmark first, Venezuela last
21. Indian-origin NASA astronaut Anil Menon completes his 4th spacewalk at the International Space Station
22. Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Thevar's 119th Jayanti and 64th Guru Puja – 30 Oct, Pasumpon
23. World Thrift Day (World Savings Day) 2026 – 30 Oct in India; 31 Oct worldwide
24. National Unity Day (Rashtriya Ekta Diwas) 2026 – Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's 151st birth anniversary, 31 Oct
25. India's extreme poverty falls from 27.1% to 2.6% (2011–2023) – World Bank Poverty and Equity Brief

5 October 2026 – Current Affairs

1 World Cerebral Palsy Day – 6 October

Important Days

News

World Cerebral Palsy Day is observed on **6 October**. The **2026 theme is '#UniqueANDUnited'**: it celebrates each person's own experience while building one shared voice for access and inclusion. In India the **National Trust** is holding a virtual **National Meet** on **6 October 2026**.

Key facts

Began	**2012**, by the **Cerebral Palsy Alliance**, Sydney, Australia
Colour	**Green**
People with CP	About **50 million** worldwide; the most common lifelong physical disability of childhood
2026 theme	**#UniqueANDUnited**

Background

- **Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016** lists **21 disabilities** (up from 7 in the 1995 Act); **cerebral palsy** is under **locomotor disability**. It gives **4% reservation** in government jobs and **5%** in higher education; 'benchmark disability' means at least **40%**.
- **National Trust Act, 1999** covers **Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities**; schemes include **Niramaya** (health insurance), **Disha**, **Vikaas** and **Gharaunda**.
- India ratified the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** in **2007**.
- **International Day of Persons with Disabilities: 3 December**.

What is cerebral palsy? A group of **permanent, non-progressive** disorders of **movement and posture** caused by damage to the **developing brain**, mostly before or around birth. Types: **spastic** (most common), dyskinetic, ataxic and mixed. It is not contagious.

Tamil Nadu link: Vidya Sagar (formerly the **Spastics Society of Tamil Nadu**) was founded in **Chennai in 1985** by **Poonam Natarajan**, who later chaired the National Trust. The **National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (NIEPMD)** is at **Muttukadu**, Chennai. The term **'Maatru Thiranaali'** (differently abled) was adopted by the Tamil Nadu Government.

2 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2026 for optogenetics

Awards

News

On **5 October 2026** the **Nobel Assembly at Karolinska Institutet**, Stockholm, awarded the **2026 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine** jointly to **Karl Deisseroth**, **Peter Hegemann** and **Georg Nagel** **"for their discoveries concerning light-gated ion channels and optogenetics"**.

Key facts

Karl Deisseroth (54)	USA
Peter Hegemann (71)	Germany
Georg Nagel (73)	Germany

Background

- The Medicine prize is chosen by the **Nobel Assembly at Karolinska Institutet**; Physics and Chemistry by the **Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences**; Peace by the **Norwegian Nobel Committee (Oslo)**. Prizes are given on **10 December**, Alfred Nobel's death anniversary. The prize is reported as **SEK 12 million** this year.
- First Medicine Nobel (1901): **Emil von Behring** (diphtheria antitoxin).
- **Har Gobind Khorana** (born in Raipur, Punjab, British India) shared the **1968** Medicine prize for the **genetic code**. **Ronald Ross**, born at **Almora** (India), won in **1902** for work on **malaria**.
- **2025:** Mary Brunkow, Fred Ramsdell, Shimon Sakaguchi (peripheral immune tolerance). **2024:** Victor Ambros, Gary Ruvkun (microRNA). **2023:** Katalin Karikó, Drew Weissman (mRNA vaccines).

The science: Hegemann and Nagel found **channelrhodopsin**, a protein in the green alga ***Chlamydomonas reinhardtii*** that opens an ion channel when light falls on it, helping the alga swim towards light. **Deisseroth** put this gene into nerve cells; in **2005** he showed that pulses of **blue light** could switch neurons on within milliseconds. This method, **optogenetics** (light + genetics), lets scientists turn chosen brain cells on or off to study memory, depression, Parkinson's disease and vision.

Tamil Nadu link: Nobel laureates with Tamil Nadu roots: **C.V. Raman** (Physics 1930, born **Tiruchirappalli**), **S. Chandrasekhar** (Physics 1983) and **Venkatraman Ramakrishnan** (Chemistry 2009, born **Chidambaram**). Ronald Ross worked for a time at **Ooty** (Nilgiris) before his 1897 malaria discovery at **Secunderabad**.

3 Uttar Pradesh renames Bhadohi as Sant Ravidas Nagar Bhadohi

Governance

News

On **4 October 2026** Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister **Yogi Adityanath** announced at Bhadohi that the district will now be called **'Sant Ravidas Nagar Bhadohi'**, in honour of the Bhakti saint **Sant Ravidas**. He also opened or laid stones for **112 projects worth over ₹1,340 crore**.

Key facts

30 June 1994	Bhadohi carved out of **Varanasi** district as UP's **65th district**
Mayawati (BSP) rule	Known as **Sant Ravidas Nagar**
2014	Samajwadi Party government restored the name **Bhadohi**
4 Oct 2026	Renamed **Sant Ravidas Nagar Bhadohi**

Background

- **Bhadohi** is the **'Carpet City of India'**, between Varanasi and Prayagraj; HQ **Gyanpur**. **Bhadohi handmade carpets** got a **GI tag in 2010**. The **Indian Institute of Carpet Technology** is at Bhadohi.
- **Sant Ravidas** (15th–16th century) was a **nirguna Bhakti** saint born at **Seer Govardhanpur, Varanasi**. **40 of his hymns** are in the **Guru Granth Sahib**. Tradition calls him a guru of **Meera Bai**.

He dreamt of **'Begampura'**, a city without sorrow or caste.

- A **district** is renamed by the **State government** by notification. A **State's** name can be changed only by **Parliament under Article 3** (simple majority, after the President refers the Bill to the State legislature for its views).

Tamil Nadu link: Madras State became **Tamil Nadu** under the **Madras State (Alteration of Name) Act, 1968**, effective **14 January 1969**, under **C.N. Annadurai**. The city **Madras** became **Chennai** in **1996**.

4 Premier League opens its first Premier League Park in Delhi

Sports

News

England's **Premier League** opened India's first **Premier League Park (PL Park)** at **Chhatarpur, New Delhi** on **1 October 2026** (reported 5 October). It is built and run by **GoalTech Innovation India** through its **Claygrounds** brand.

Key facts

Facilities	Two **7-a-side** football pitches, **pickleball** and **padel** courts, an events and social area
Purpose	A year-round place for fans to play, watch live matches and join tournaments
PL India	MD **Hrishikesh Shende**; Premier League's **Mumbai office** opened in **April 2025**; broadcast partner **JioStar**

Background

- The **Premier League** was founded in **1992** (first season 1992-93) when clubs broke away from the Football League; **20 clubs**, HQ **London**.
- **Manchester United** has won the most Premier League titles (13).
- In India, football is run by the **All India Football Federation (AIFF, 1937)**, HQ **Dwarka, New Delhi**; the **Indian Super League** began in **2014**.
- India's oldest football tournament is the **Durand Cup (1888)**, among the oldest in the world.

Tamil Nadu link: Chennaiyin FC (ISL champions **2015 and 2017-18**) represents Tamil Nadu. Chennai's **Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium** hosts its home matches.

5 India wins 4 gold and 1 silver at the 19th International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics

Science

News

India is reported to have won **4 gold medals and 1 silver** at the **19th International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics (IOAA 2026)**, held at **Phenikaa University, Hanoi, Vietnam** (closing ceremony **4 October 2026**). All five members of the Indian team won medals. This was the **first IOAA in Vietnam** and the largest so far: about **67 teams from 66 countries**.

Key facts

Edition	**19th** IOAA, **Hanoi, Vietnam** (first time in Vietnam)
India	**4 gold + 1 silver** (5 students per team)
Host Vietnam	6 gold, 4 silver
Rounds	Theory, data analysis, telescope observation, planetarium observation
Previous edition	**18th IOAA 2025, Mumbai** – India's first time as host (HBCSE); India also won 4 gold + 1 silver

Background

- The **IOAA** began in **2007**; the first edition was at **Chiang Mai, Thailand**. It is for pre-university students.
- India's team is chosen by the **Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education (HBCSE)**, Mumbai, part of **TIFR** under the **DAE**, the **nodal centre for India's science olympiads** (with **IAPT**). Stages: **NSEA → INAO → selection camp → pre-departure training**.
- India also won **all 5 golds at the International Physics Olympiad 2026** (56th IPhO, Bucaramanga, Colombia, July 2026).

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has a strong astronomy heritage: the **Kodaikanal Solar Observatory (1899)** and the **Vainu Bappu Observatory at Kavalur** (Tirupattur district), whose 2.34 m telescope was once Asia's largest. **S. Chandrasekhar** (Nobel Physics 1983), of a Tamil family, gave the **Chandrasekhar limit**.

6 Three High Court Chief Justices appointed Supreme Court judges

Polity

News

On **5 October 2026** the Centre notified the appointment by **President Droupadi Murmu** of three High Court Chief Justices as **Supreme Court judges**, on the **collegium's** recommendation of **28 September 2026** led by **CJI Surya Kant**. The Court's working strength rises to **37** against a sanctioned strength of **38**.

Key facts

Justice Sunita Agarwal	**Gujarat HC** (now the 3rd sitting woman judge of the Supreme Court)
Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya	**Delhi HC** (earlier Bombay HC CJ)
Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh	**Telangana HC** (earlier Tripura HC CJ)

Background

- **Article 124(1):** a Supreme Court with a CJI and judges in a number fixed by **Parliament by law**. The **Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Act, 2026** raised the strength from **34 to 38** (CJI + 37).
- **Article 124(2):** judges are appointed by the **President**; they retire at **65**.
- **Article 124(3):** qualifications – 5 years as an HC judge, or 10 years as an HC advocate, or a distinguished jurist.
- **Collegium** (CJI + 4 senior-most judges) came from the **Three Judges Cases (1981, 1993, 1998)**; the **NJAC (99th Amendment, 2014)** was struck down in **2015**.

- Strength over time: **8 (1950)**, 11 (1956), 14 (1960), 18 (1978), 26 (1986), 31 (2009), 34 (2019), **38 (2026)**.

Tamil Nadu link: The **Madras High Court** (1862) is one of the **three chartered High Courts** under the **Indian High Courts Act, 1861** (with Calcutta and Bombay) and covers Tamil Nadu and **Puducherry**; its **Madurai Bench** opened in **2004**. None of the three new judges comes from the Madras HC.

7 Indian Telecom Services Yearly Performance Indicators 2025-26

Technology

News

On **5 October 2026** the **Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)**, under the **Ministry of Communications**, released **'The Indian Telecom Services Yearly Performance Indicators 2025-26'**, with data as on **31 March 2026**.

Key facts

Telephone subscribers	**1,330.58 million** (+10.81%)
Tele-density	**93.26%** (urban 151.47%, rural 60.46%)
Internet subscribers	**1,092.79 million**; broadband 1,065.88 million
Internet per 100 people	76.59
Data use per wireless user	**25.51 GB a month**
ARPU (wireless)	**₹180.73 a month**
Revenue per GB of data	₹8.02 (down 10.59%)

Background

- **Market share: Reliance Jio 39.41%**, **Bharti Airtel 37.04%**, then Vodafone Idea and **BSNL (7.55%)**.
- **Delhi** has the highest tele-density (**206.90%**); **Himachal Pradesh** has the highest rural tele-density.
- **TRAI** was set up on **20 February 1997** under the **TRAI Act, 1997**; HQ New Delhi. The **TDSAT** (appellate tribunal) came by a **2000** amendment.
- The **Telecommunications Act, 2023** replaced the **Indian Telegraph Act, 1885**.
- **Tele-density** = telephone connections per 100 people.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's tele-density (108.48%) is well above the national average. Chennai is linked to the world by several **submarine cables**, including the **Chennai–Andaman & Nicobar Islands cable (2020)**. **Puducherry's** tele-density is 77.31%.

8 PM Awas Yojana – Urban awards for Tamil Nadu and Puducherry

Welfare Schemes

News

At the **World Habitat Day** function of the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** at **Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi** on **5 October 2026**, the **PMAY-U Awards 2026** were presented. **Tamil Nadu** and **Puducherry** were among the States and UTs honoured for carrying out the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban**. Minister of State **Tokhan Sahu** presented the awards. (Exact award categories for Tamil Nadu and Puducherry were not given in the reports we found.)

Key facts

Event	World Habitat Day (first Monday of October), MoHUA, Vigyan Bhawan
Other winners	**Arunachal Pradesh** (2 best-performing State awards), **Uttar Pradesh** (1st in BLC house completion), **Madhya Pradesh**, **Odisha** (most PMAY-U 2.0 reforms), Bihar
Union Minister, MoHUA	**Manohar Lal**
PMAY-U 2.0	Approved **9 August 2024**: **1 crore** urban houses in 5 years; government help up to **₹2.5 lakh per house** (Centre and State together)

Background

- **PMAY-U** was launched on **25 June 2015** for **'Housing for All'**.
- PMAY-U 2.0 has four verticals: **BLC** (Beneficiary Led Construction), **AHP** (Affordable Housing in Partnership), **ARH** (Affordable Rental Housing) and **ISS** (Interest Subsidy Scheme).
- Houses are registered in the name of the **woman** of the family or jointly.
- **World Habitat Day** was set by the **UN in 1985** and first held in **1986**; it is led by **UN-Habitat** (HQ **Nairobi**).

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu carries out PMAY-U through the **Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board** (formerly the **Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, 1970**, India's first such board). In the PMAY-U Awards 2021, Tamil Nadu was **3rd best performing State**. A Tamil report says about 25,000 houses were approved for Tamil Nadu under PMAY-U 2.0.

9 Kuno National Park: female cheetah gives birth to 5 cubs

Environment

News

On **5 October 2026** Union Environment Minister **Bhupender Yadav** announced that **KJP21**, a **32-month-old India-born** female cheetah, gave birth to **5 cubs** at **Kuno National Park**, Sheopur district, **Madhya Pradesh**. The father is a male from **Botswana**, so these are the **first cubs of the Botswana line** in India. India's cheetah count is now **60**, of which **41 were born in India**.

Key facts

Mother	**KJP21**, born in Kuno; the **3rd India-born female** to give birth (after **Mukhi** and KGP12)
Father	A male brought from **Botswana** (9 cheetahs arrived on **28 Feb 2026**)
Count	**60** cheetahs in India; **41** India-born
Second home	**Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary** (Mandsaur–Neemuch, MP) from April 2025
Agency	**National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)** with the MP Forest Department and Wildlife Institute of India

Background

- **Project Cheetah** began on **17 September 2022**, when **8 cheetahs from Namibia** were released at Kuno – the world's first intercontinental move of a large wild carnivore. **12 from South Africa** followed in **February 2023**.
- The cheetah was declared **extinct in India in 1952**.

- **Kuno** is named after the **Kuno river**, a tributary of the **Chambal**; sanctuary in 1981, **national park in 2018**.
- **IUCN:** African cheetah – **Vulnerable**; Asiatic cheetah – **Critically Endangered**, now found only in **Iran**. Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) is the **fastest land animal**.
- **Banni grasslands** (Kutch, Gujarat) is being prepared as another cheetah site.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu runs similar recovery work for its own threatened species: the **Nilgiri tahr** (State animal) under **Project Nilgiri Tahr (2023)**, and vultures at the **Mudumalai–Sathyamangalam** landscape. Tamil Nadu has **5 tiger reserves**: Kalakad–Mundanthurai, Anamalai, Mudumalai, Sathyamangalam and Srivilliputhur–Megamalai.

10 Exercise Mountain Guardian 2026: India and UAE armies train together

Defence

News

The **Indian Army** and the **UAE Land Forces** began the joint exercise **'Mountain Guardian 2026'** on **5 October 2026** at the **Foreign Training Node, Chaubatia**, near **Ranikhet**, Almora district, **Uttarakhand**. It runs until **18 October 2026**.

Key facts

Troops	**92** personnel in all; India: a **Bhairav Battalion**; UAE: a Mountain Infantry Battalion
Women	Women officers and soldiers of both armies take part
Focus	**Mountain warfare** and joint action in sub-conventional operations
Training	Drone operations, surveillance grids, rock climbing, obstacle and endurance drills, firing, a final field exercise
Edition	Reports call it the **third edition** of the India–UAE army exercise (earlier editions were held as **Desert Cyclone**; the first, in January 2024, was at Mahajan, Rajasthan)

Background

- **Bhairav battalions** are new light commando units the Indian Army began raising in **2025**.
- Other India–UAE exercises: **Desert Knight** (Air Force, with France), **Zayed Talwar** (Navy), and **Desert Flag** (multinational air exercise hosted by the UAE).
- India and the UAE signed a **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) in February 2022**, India's first such deal in the region; they have been **Comprehensive Strategic Partners since 2017**.
- **UAE:** federation of **7 emirates**, capital **Abu Dhabi**; formed in **1971**.

Tamil Nadu link: The **Madras Regiment** (HQ **Wellington, Nilgiris**) is the oldest infantry regiment of the Indian Army (from 1758). The **Defence Services Staff College** is also at Wellington, and the **Officers Training Academy** is in **Chennai**.

11 UCIL begins its Diamond Jubilee (60th) year at Jaduguda

Energy

News

On **4 October 2026** the **Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL)** began its **Diamond Jubilee** year at **Jaduguda**, East Singhbhum district, **Jharkhand**, marking six decades of uranium mining. UCIL was incorporated on **4 October 1967**. The chief guest was **Seema Jain**, Member (Finance), **Atomic Energy Commission**. UCIL's CMD is **Dr Kacham Anand Rao**.

Key facts

UCIL	Public sector company under the **Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)**; HQ **Jaduguda**
First mine	**Jaduguda** – India's first uranium mine (production from 1967; uranium found there in 1951)
Other mines	Bhatin, **Narwapahar**, **Turamdih**, Bagjata, Mohuldih, **Banduhurang** (first opencast uranium mine) – all in the **Singhbhum Thrust Belt**, Jharkhand
Andhra Pradesh	**Tummalapalle** (YSR Kadapa) – one of the world's largest uranium deposits
New plan	A proposed **dark matter laboratory** of the Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics, about **815 m underground** in the Jaduguda mine

Background

- **DAE** was set up in **1954** and works directly under the **Prime Minister**; the **Atomic Energy Commission** dates from **1948**.
- **Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD)**, Hyderabad, finds uranium deposits; other deposits include **Domiasiat (Meghalaya)** and **Rohil (Rajasthan)**.
- **Homi J. Bhabha** framed India's **three-stage nuclear programme**: natural uranium (PHWR), then plutonium (fast breeders), then **thorium**.
- India has large **thorium** reserves in the **monazite sands** of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Odisha.

Tamil Nadu link: Kalpakkam (Chengalpattu district) has the **Madras Atomic Power Station** (India's first fully indigenous PHWR plant, 1984), the **Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (1971)** and the 500 MWe **Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor**, the second stage of the programme. **Kudankulam** (Tirunelveli) is India's largest nuclear power plant, built with **Russia**. **IREL** mines monazite at **Manavalakurichi** (Kanyakumari).

12 Loans up to ₹5 crore for women entrepreneurs: Tamil Nadu issues guidelines

Tamil Nadu

News

On **4 October 2026** the Tamil Nadu Government released guidelines for the **Vetri Magalir Thozhil Munaivor Membattu Thittam** (Vetri Women Entrepreneurs Development Scheme), which gives women loans of **₹10 lakh to ₹5 crore** to start or expand a business. It is run through the **Tamil Nadu Industrial Investment Corporation (TIIC)**. Industries Minister **S. Keerthana** announced the scheme on 27 September 2026.

Key facts

Loan	Minimum **₹10 lakh**, maximum **₹5 crore** (new unit or expansion)
Interest	**9.95%** a year, on reducing balance
Repayment	Up to **9 years**, including a **2-year moratorium**
Ownership	Women must hold at least **51%** of the business
Security	Property worth **40%** of the loan (units under 3 years old); **20%** for older units
Selection	**10 women per Assembly constituency × 234 = 2,340** in the first round, recommended by MLAs and then checked by TIIC on merit

Background

- **TIIC** began in **1949** as the **Madras Industrial Investment Corporation**, one of India's oldest State-level financial corporations; HQ Chennai.
- **Stand-Up India (2016):** bank loans of **₹10 lakh to ₹1 crore** for at least one SC/ST and one woman borrower per bank branch.
- **PM Mudra Yojana (2015):** loans for micro units (Shishu, Kishore, Tarun, Tarun Plus).
- **Article 15(3)** allows the State to make special provisions for women.

Tamil Nadu link: The **Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women (1983)** runs the **Mahalir Thittam** self-help groups, which began in **Dharmapuri (1989)** with IFAD support.

13 Goa international Silambam meet: Gudiyatham students win 24 gold medals

Tamil Nadu

News

24 students from **Gudiyatham** (Vellore district) won **24 gold medals** at an international **Silambam** championship in **Goa** (reported **3 to 5 October 2026**). They won **21 golds in single-stick (otrai silambam)** and **3 in double-stick (irattai silambam)**. Teams from **Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Nepal** also took part. The students train at the Thalai Silambam training school, Gudiyatham, and were given a public welcome on their return.

Key facts

Sport	**Silambam**: an ancient Tamil martial art fought with a long **bamboo staff**
Medals	24 gold: 21 single-stick + 3 double-stick
Other countries	Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Nepal
Next goal	Asian-level competition

Background

- The word comes from **'silam'** (hill) and **'bam'** (bamboo): the staff was made from hill bamboo. The ideal staff reaches the user's **forehead**.
- **Sangam literature** mentions it: the **Silappathikaram** refers to silambam staves being sold to foreign traders.
- Silambam was a **demonstration sport for the first time at the Khelo India Youth Games 2023**, held in **Tamil Nadu** (Chennai, Madurai, Tiruchirappalli, Coimbatore) in January 2024.

- It is popular in **Malaysia**, where Tamil migrants took it.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu gives Silambam players a place in the **3% sports quota** for government jobs. **Gudiyatham** is a taluk town on the **Koundinya river**, known for its **match and beedi** industries. Vellore district is also home to the **Vellore Fort** and the **Vellore Mutiny (10 July 1806)**, the first large-scale sepoy mutiny against the British.

14 Pushpavanam Kuppusamy appointed Chairperson of the Iyal Isai Nataka Manram

Tamil Nadu

News

On **5 October 2026** the Tamil Nadu Government appointed folk singer **Dr Pushpavanam Kuppusamy** as Chairperson of the **Tamil Nadu Iyal Isai Nataka Manram**. He succeeds actor **Vagai Chandrasekar**. The Manram works under the State's Tamil Development Department.

Key facts

Who	**Dr Pushpavanam Kuppusamy**: folk singer, playback singer, lyricist and researcher; credited with reviving **Naattupura Paattu** (Tamil folk song) on stage and screen
Home town	**Vedaranyam**, Nagapattinam district
Education	MA, MPhil and **PhD in music** from the **University of Madras**
Family	Wife **Anitha Kuppusamy**, also a folk singer; the couple have given thousands of stage shows in India and abroad
Honour	**Kalaimamani** awardee
Body	**Tamil Nadu Iyal Isai Nataka Manram**, Chennai

Background

- **1955:** set up as the **Tamil Nadu Sangeetha Nataka Sangam**, the State counterpart of the central **Sangeet Natak Akademi** (1953, New Delhi).
- **1973:** renamed **Iyal Isai Nataka Manram**, after the three branches of Tamil, **Muthamizh**: **Iyal** (literature), **Isai** (music) and **Nadagam** (drama).
- It gives the **Kalaimamani** awards, the State's highest honour for artists, and also the **Bharathi, M.S. Subbulakshmi and Balasaraswathi** national awards.
- At the national level, the **Sangeet Natak Akademi** (music, dance, drama), **Sahitya Akademi** (1954, letters) and **Lalit Kala Akademi** (1954, fine arts) work under the Ministry of Culture.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's folk arts such as **Karagattam, Oyilattam, Therukoothu, Villupattu, Kavadi attam and Silambattam** are promoted by the Manram and by the State's **Kalai Panpattu Thurai** (Art and Culture Department). Vedaranyam, Kuppusamy's home town, is also famous for **Rajaji's Salt Satyagraha (1930)**.

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

Important Days

News

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

Key facts

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

Background

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

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

2 The New York Times praises Tukaram Mundhe

World

News

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

Key facts

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

Background

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

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

3 Physics Nobel 2026 for Belgian-born Francis Halzen

Awards

News

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

Key facts

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

Background

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

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

4 eSanjeevani crosses 50 crore teleconsultations

Health

News

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

Key facts

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

Background

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

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

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

Defence

News

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

Key facts

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

Background

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

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

6 Naval shipbuilding projects launched at Visakhapatnam

Defence

News

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

Key facts

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

Background

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

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

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

Infrastructure

News

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

Key facts

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

Background

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

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

8 NSO's first National Household Travel Survey

Indices & Reports

News

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

Key facts

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

Background

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

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

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

International Relations

News

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

Key facts

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

Background

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

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

10 IIT Ropar launches the AVNI app for learning about farming

Agriculture

News

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

Key facts

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

Background

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

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

11 DRDO's High-Altitude Platform flies successfully

Defence

News

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

Key facts

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

Background

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

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

12 Surya, the first indigenous Fleet Support Ship

Defence

News

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

Key facts

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

Background

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

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

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

13 Guidelines for declaring brain death: Centre's directive

Health

News

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

Key facts

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

Background

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

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

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

Tamil Nadu

News

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

Key facts

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

Background

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

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

15 India's first offshore wind prototype planned off Thoothukudi

Energy

News

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

Key facts

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

Background

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

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

16 19th-century inscription discovered in Tenkasi

Tamil Nadu

News

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

Key facts

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

Background

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

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

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

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1 World Sight Day 2026 & World Octopus Day 2026 (8 October)

Important Days

News

World Sight Day falls on the second Thursday of October – 8 Oct in 2026. It is coordinated by the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB); theme 'Love Your Eyes'. About 1 billion people worldwide have vision loss that could be prevented or treated. World Octopus Day is on the same date (8 Oct), raising awareness about this intelligent sea creature and ocean conservation.

Key facts

World Sight Day	2nd Thursday of October (2026: 8 Oct); IAPB
Theme	'Love Your Eyes'
Main causes	Cataract (leading cause of blindness), uncorrected refractive error, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy
World Octopus Day	8 October
Octopus	Phylum Mollusca, class Cephalopoda; 8 arms, 3 hearts, blue blood

Background

- World Sight Day was begun in 2000 by the Lions Clubs' 'SightFirst' campaign and joined WHO–IAPB's 'VISION 2020: The Right to Sight' (1999).
- India: the National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB) began in 1976 as a 100% centrally funded scheme; NPCBVI since 2017. Eye Donation Fortnight runs 25 Aug–8 Sep.
- Science – octopus: blood is blue because of copper-based 'haemocyanin' (humans have iron-based haemoglobin); 2 gill hearts + 1 main heart; camouflage by chromatophore cells; escapes by squirting ink.
- An octopus has about 500 million neurons, two-thirds of them in its arms – the most intelligent invertebrate. The blue-ringed octopus carries deadly tetrodotoxin.
- Cephalopods: octopus, squid, cuttlefish and nautilus. They are an important part of India's seafood exports.

Tamil Nadu link: the Regional Institute of Ophthalmology, Egmore, Chennai (1819) is Asia's oldest eye hospital; Aravind Eye Hospital, Madurai (1976, Dr G. Venkataswamy); Sankara Nethralaya, Chennai (1978, Dr S.S. Badrinath). The Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve (1989) is India's first marine biosphere reserve and home to octopus and other cephalopods; CMFRI has a regional centre at Mandapam.

2 Indian Air Force Day 2026 (8 October)

Important Days

News

The Indian Air Force marks its 94th anniversary on 8 Oct 2026. Theme: 'Indian Air Force – Infallible, Impervious and Precise'. The main parade and investiture are at Hindon Air Force Station near Ghaziabad (UP), reviewed by Air Chief Marshal A.P. Singh; the multinational air exercise 'Tarang Shakti 2026' is also under way at Jodhpur.

Key facts

Anniversary	94th (founded 8 Oct 1932)
Theme 2026	Infallible, Impervious and Precise
Main venue	Hindon AFS, Ghaziabad (UP)
Motto	'Nabhah Sprisham Deeptam' – Bhagavad Gita (Ch. 11)
Current chief	Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh
Exercise	'Tarang Shakti 2026' (26 Sep–12 Oct, Jodhpur) – multinational air exercise

Background

- History: set up on 8 Oct 1932 under the Indian Air Force Act 1932 as an auxiliary of the Royal Air Force; the first squadron (No. 1) formed on 1 Apr 1933 at Drigh Road, Karachi, with four Westland Wapiti aircraft.
- For its World War II service it became the 'Royal Indian Air Force' in 1945; the prefix was dropped when India became a Republic in 1950.
- First Indian chief: Air Marshal Subroto Mukerjee (1 Apr 1954) – 'Father of the Indian Air Force'. Arjan Singh is the only 5-star Marshal.
- Display teams: Suryakiran (1996, now Hawk Mk132 jets) and Sarang (ALH Dhruv helicopters). The motto 'Nabhah Sprisham Deeptam' means 'Touch the sky with glory'.
- Key operations: the 1971 Bangladesh war, 'Meghdoot' (Siachen, 1984), 'Safed Sagar' (Kargil, 1999), Balakot (2019) and 'Sindoor' (2025).

Tamil Nadu link: Sulur air base near Coimbatore hosts the first Tejas squadron, No. 45 'Flying Daggers' (raised 2016; at Sulur since 2018), and No. 18 'Flying Bullets' (2020); Tambaram has the Flying Instructors' School; Thanjavur has Su-30MKIs.

3 IOC confirms India among seven countries bidding for the 2036 Olympics

Sports

News

On 6 Oct 2026 the IOC confirmed that seven countries are in continuous dialogue to host the 2036 Summer Olympics and Paralympics: India, Qatar, South Africa, Germany, Hungary, Turkey and South Korea. India's proposed host city is Ahmedabad. The deadline to declare interest is 31 Oct 2026, and the IOC Executive Board will draw up a shortlist in March 2027.

Key facts

7 countries	India, Qatar, South Africa, Germany, Hungary, Turkey, South Korea
Indian city	Ahmedabad (Gujarat) – also hosts the 2030 Commonwealth Games
Timeline	31 Oct 2026 – interest deadline; Mar 2027 – shortlist
IOC President	Kirsty Coventry (Zimbabwe)
Next Games	2028 – Los Angeles; 2032 – Brisbane

Background

- IOC: founded by Pierre de Coubertin in Paris on 23 June 1894 (Olympic Day – 23 June); HQ Lausanne, Switzerland. Kirsty Coventry is the 10th president – the first woman and first African (June 2025).

- Major events India hosted: Asian Games 1951 and 1982 (Delhi); Commonwealth Games 2010 (Delhi); 2030 Commonwealth Games (Ahmedabad, centenary edition). The 141st IOC Session was in Mumbai (Oct 2023).
- India's Olympic story: first appearance 1900 (Norman Pritchard); 8 hockey golds; individual golds – Abhinav Bindra (2008) and Neeraj Chopra (2020). Six medals at Paris 2024.
- Ahmedabad has the world's largest cricket ground – the Narendra Modi Stadium (Motera) – on the Sabarmati, and the planned Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Enclave.
- Olympic symbol: five rings (blue, yellow, black, green, red) for five continents; motto 'Citius, Altius, Fortius – Communiter' ('Together' added in 2021).

Tamil Nadu link: the 44th Chess Olympiad (2022) was held at Mamallapuram – the first in India ('Thambi' mascot). Chennai's Bhavani Devi was India's first Olympic fencer (Tokyo 2020). Chennai hosted the 1995 South Asian (SAF) Games.

4 2026 Chemistry Nobel to Henri Kagan and Kenso Soai for 'mirror-image' molecules

Awards

News

On 7 Oct 2026 the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences awarded the 2026 Nobel Prize in Chemistry to Henri B. Kagan of France (95, Université Paris-Saclay, Orsay) and Kenso Soai of Japan (76, Tokyo University of Science) 'for the discovery of non-linear effects and autocatalysis in asymmetric organic synthesis'. The prize is 12 million Swedish kronor.

Key facts

Laureates	Henri B. Kagan (France, b. 1930); Kenso Soai (Japan, b. 1950)
Kagan	1986 – 'non-linear effect' in asymmetric catalysis; DIOP ligand; samarium iodide (SmI_2) reagent
Soai	1995 – the 'Soai reaction': asymmetric autocatalysis, the product speeds up its own formation
Significance	Making the right 'hand' of drugs; origin of life's homochirality
Prize	SEK 12 million; presented in Stockholm on 10 Dec

Background

- Chirality: from Greek 'cheir' = hand. Mirror-image molecules that cannot be superimposed, like left and right hands, are 'enantiomers'; they rotate plane-polarised light in opposite directions.
- Louis Pasteur first observed molecular chirality in 1848 by separating tartaric acid crystals.
- The thalidomide tragedy (1957–61): one form eased morning sickness while its mirror form caused birth defects – showing why the right form must be made.
- Related Nobels: 2001 – Knowles, Noyori, Sharpless (asymmetric catalysis); 2021 – List, MacMillan (organocatalysis). Kagan's omission in 2001 was debated; he won the 2001 Wolf Prize.
- Nobel Prize: from Alfred Nobel's will (1895); first awarded in 1901; the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences chooses chemistry and physics; the economics prize was added in 1968.

Tamil Nadu link: Venkatraman Ramakrishnan, born at Chidambaram (Cuddalore district), won the 2009 Chemistry Nobel for ribosome structure. C.V. Raman (born Thiruvanaikaval, Trichy) won the 1930

Physics Nobel; S. Chandrasekhar (Presidency College, Madras) the 1983 Physics Nobel.

5 Mahesh Kakde wins the 2026 Ramanujan Prize

Awards

News

Prof. Mahesh Kakde of the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, has been named winner of the 2026 ICTP Ramanujan Prize for his work in algebraic number theory – especially non-commutative Iwasawa theory and the Gross–Stark and Brumer–Stark conjectures, which bear on Hilbert's 12th problem.

Key facts

Prize	ICTP Ramanujan Prize 2026 – US$10,000
Given by	ICTP (Trieste, Italy) + International Mathematical Union; funded by India's DST
Eligibility	Mathematicians under 45 working in developing countries
Education	ISI Bengaluru (B.Math); Cambridge PhD (2008)
Career	Princeton, UCL, King's College London; IISc since 2019
Earlier honours	Infosys Prize (2022); ICM speaker (2022)

Background

- Srinivasa Ramanujan: born 22 Dec 1887 at Erode; grew up in Kumbakonam; wrote to G.H. Hardy in 1913; went to Cambridge in 1914; elected FRS in 1918; died on 26 Apr 1920, aged 32.
- 1729 is the 'Hardy–Ramanujan number' (smallest number expressible as a sum of two cubes in two ways). National Mathematics Day is 22 Dec (announced at Chennai in Dec 2011; 2012 was National Mathematics Year).
- ICTP (Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics) was founded in 1964 at Trieste, Italy; the Ramanujan Prize has been given since 2005.
- Hilbert's 23 problems were posed by David Hilbert at the 1900 International Congress of Mathematicians in Paris.
- Maths honours: the SASTRA Ramanujan Prize (2005, for those aged 32 or under – Ramanujan's age at death); Manjul Bhargava (2014) and Akshay Venkatesh (2018) won the Fields Medal.

Tamil Nadu link: Ramanujan was born at Erode, studied at Kumbakonam and worked as a clerk at the Madras Port Trust. SASTRA University, Kumbakonam, gives the SASTRA Ramanujan Prize. Chennai-born S.R.S. Varadhan won the Abel Prize in 2007.

6 Coast Guard's SAREX-2026 search-and-rescue exercise off Paradip

Defence

News

The Indian Coast Guard's National Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise 'SAREX-2026' is held off Paradip, Odisha. Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth inaugurated it on 7 Oct 2026; the sea phase was on 8 Oct. 32 observers from 30 friendly countries took part. (Note: SAREX is not a missile drill; it is a life-saving search-and-rescue exercise.)

Key facts

Full form	Search and Rescue Exercise
Place	Paradip, Odisha (Bay of Bengal)
Opened by	Sanjay Seth, MoS Defence – 7 Oct 2026
Observers	32 from 30 countries
Assets	15 ICG ships, 2 Dornier, 3 ALH, 1 Chetak, IAF C-130J and Mi-17, 2 Navy ships
Scenario	Airliner with 228 people ditches at sea and collides with a cargo ship
Also	24th NMSAR Board meeting chaired by ICG DG Paramesh Sivamani

Background

- Indian Coast Guard: set up on an interim basis on 1 Feb 1977 (ICG Day); Coast Guard Act of 18 Aug 1978; under the Defence Ministry; motto 'Vayam Rakshamah' (We Protect).
- India's maritime search-and-rescue region covers about 4.6 million sq km; three Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCCs): Mumbai, Chennai and Port Blair.
- Sci-tech: satellite-aided SAR has moved from LEOSAR to GEOSAR to MEOSAR, and the MEOLUT system is fully operational. India's Mission Control Centre (INMCC) is in Bengaluru.
- Geography: Paradip port – Odisha, Jagatsinghpur district, at the Mahanadi mouth; made a major port in 1966, the first on the east coast after Independence.
- SAREX is held every two years; the previous edition, SAREX-24, was held at Kochi (Nov 2024).

Tamil Nadu link: the Coast Guard's Eastern Region headquarters and an MRCC are in Chennai; there are ICG stations at Thoothukudi and Mandapam.

7 RBI raises repo rate by 25 basis points to 5.50%

Economy

News

On 7 Oct 2026 the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) led by Governor Sanjay Malhotra unanimously raised the repo rate by 25 basis points from 5.25% to 5.50% – the first hike since February 2023. The stance moved from 'neutral' to 'calibrated tightening'. Reasons: volatile crude prices after the West Asia conflict flared up again, and energy- and food-driven inflation.

Key facts

Repo rate	5.25% → 5.50%
SDF	5.25%
MSF / Bank Rate	5.75%
Stance	Neutral → calibrated tightening
Vote	Unanimous (6–0)
FY27 projections	GDP growth 7.1%; CPI inflation 5.2%

Background

- Repo rate is the rate at which the RBI lends short-term to banks against government securities. SDF is the rate at which it absorbs banks' surplus without collateral (floor of the corridor); MSF is emergency borrowing (ceiling).

- 1 basis point = 0.01%, so 25 bps = 0.25%. A repo hike raises loan rates and EMIs, cools demand and curbs inflation (contractionary policy).
- MPC: RBI Act 1934, Section 45ZB (2016 amendment); 6 members – 3 from the RBI including the Governor and 3 external members named by the Centre; the Governor has a casting vote; at least 4 meetings a year.
- Inflation target: CPI 4% (±2%), set by the Central Government in consultation with the RBI.
- History: on the Hilton Young Commission's (1926) advice the RBI began on 1 April 1935, first in Kolkata and in Mumbai from 1937; nationalised on 1 Jan 1949. Sanjay Malhotra is the 26th Governor (Dec 2024).

Tamil Nadu link: Dr C. Rangarajan, born in Tiruchirappalli, was RBI Governor (1992–97) and later chaired the PM's Economic Advisory Council. The RBI has a regional office in Chennai.

8 World Bank ranks India among top 10 in AI readiness

Indices & Reports

News

The World Bank report 'India and Artificial Intelligence: Seizing the Development Opportunity' (6 Oct 2026) placed India among the top 10 emerging markets in AI readiness. Private AI investment in India more than tripled, from $1.2 billion in 2024 to $4.1 billion in 2025.

Key facts

Report	India and Artificial Intelligence: Seizing the Development Opportunity
Private AI investment	$1.2 bn (2024) → $4.1 bn (2025)
GCC jobs	1.9 million → 2.36 million
AI adoption	About 23% of Indian firms (US about 43%)
Strengths	Tech workforce, global IT sector, digital public infrastructure
Growth forecast	FY27 GDP growth 7.1% (World Bank)

Background

- IndiaAI Mission: approved in March 2024 with ₹10,371.92 crore; run by MeitY; thousands of GPUs for shared compute.
- AI summits: Bletchley Park (UK, 2023), Seoul (2024), Paris (2025) and the 'India AI Impact Summit' in New Delhi (Feb 2026) – the first in the Global South.
- Digital public infrastructure (DPI): Aadhaar, UPI (2016), DigiLocker and ONDC form the base for AI use in India.
- Science: John McCarthy coined 'Artificial Intelligence' at the 1956 Dartmouth conference; Alan Turing proposed the 'Turing test' in 1950.
- World Bank Group: IBRD (loans to middle-income countries), IDA (concessional loans to the poorest), IFC, MIGA and ICSID. The IMF and World Bank were born at Bretton Woods in 1944.

Tamil Nadu link: Chennai and Coimbatore are major hubs for Global Capability Centres; IIT Madras hosts the Centre for Responsible AI (CeRAI); Tamil Nadu released a 'Safe and Ethical AI Policy' in 2020.

9 Indian Navy receives indigenous military-grade ROVs

Defence

News

Kochi-based EyeROV (IROV Technologies) handed over two 'TROUT' systems – India's first indigenous military-grade underwater Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) – to the Indian Navy on 7 Oct 2026. Five systems are on order; they work down to 300 m. TROUT was built under the iDEX DISC-7 'SPRINT' challenge; the contract is worth about ₹47 crore.

Key facts

Company	EyeROV (IROV Technologies), Kochi – Johns T. Mathai (CEO), Kannappa Palaniappan (CTO)
Name	TROUT – underwater ROV
Number	5 ordered; first 2 delivered
Depth	Up to 300 m
Programme	iDEX DISC-7 SPRINT; cleared by DQA (Naval)
Uses	Hull and port-infrastructure inspection, harbour security, surveillance, search and recovery

Background

- An ROV is tethered to a ship and piloted from the surface; an AUV runs untethered on a pre-programmed mission.
- iDEX (Innovations for Defence Excellence) was launched by the Defence Ministry in 2018 and is run by the Defence Innovation Organisation set up by HAL and BEL. SPRINT (2022) aimed at 75 indigenous technologies for the Navy.
- The Deep Ocean Mission (2021, Ministry of Earth Sciences) includes 'Samudrayaan', where NIOT Chennai is building 'Matsya-6000' to carry 3 people to 6,000 m.
- Naval commands: Western (Mumbai), Eastern (Visakhapatnam), Southern (Kochi – training). Navy Day is 4 Dec (1971 'Operation Trident').
- Aatmanirbhar Bharat: 'positive indigenisation lists' bar imports of listed defence items so they are made in India.

Tamil Nadu link: the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT, 1993) is at Pallikaranai, Chennai – it built the 'ROSUB 6000' ROV and is building 'Matsya-6000'. INS Rajali at Arakkonam is India's largest naval air station; L&T's Kattupalli shipyard is near Chennai.

10 Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit named next Chief of the Air Staff

Appointments

News

Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit, now Vice Chief of the Air Staff (VCAS), was appointed the 29th Chief of the Air Staff of the Indian Air Force (7 Oct 2026). He takes over on 31 Oct 2026, when Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh retires.

Key facts

Post	29th Chief of the Air Staff; from 31 Oct 2026
Predecessor	Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh (28th)
Commissioned	6 Dec 1986 – fighter stream
Experience	Test pilot; 3,500+ flying hours – Mirage 2000, MiG, Jaguar, Tejas, Hawk, Kiran, IL-78
Operations	Safed Sagar (Kargil 1999), Rakshak, Sindoor
Awards	PVSM (2026), AVSM (2023), VSM (2011), VM (2006)
Training	NDA Khadakwasla; DSSC (Bangladesh); National Defence College

Background

- Constitution: Article 53(2) vests the supreme command of the Defence Forces in the President. Service chiefs are selected by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC – PM and Home Minister).
- IAF set-up: HQ Vayu Bhawan, New Delhi; 7 commands – Western (Delhi), South Western (Gandhinagar), Central (Prayagraj), Eastern (Shillong), Southern (Thiruvananthapuram), Training (Bengaluru), Maintenance (Nagpur).
- Ranks: Air Chief Marshal is a 4-star rank. The only officer made 5-star 'Marshal of the Air Force' is Arjan Singh (2002).
- Sci-tech: the Tejas light combat aircraft is designed by ADA and built by HAL; Dixit once commanded the flight-test squadron at ASTE, Bengaluru.
- History: 'Operation Safed Sagar' was the IAF's role in the 1999 Kargil war; 'Operation Sindoor' was in May 2025.

Tamil Nadu link: Thanjavur air base hosts the BrahMos-armed Su-30MKI 'Tigersharks' (No. 222 Squadron, 2020); Sulur has Tejas squadrons; Tambaram has the Flying Instructors' School.

11 Union Cabinet resolution on Modi's 25 years as head of government

Governance

News

On 6 Oct 2026 the Union Cabinet passed a resolution marking PM Narendra Modi's completion of 25 years as head of government (Gujarat CM + PM) on 7 Oct 2026. Citing a 'Nation First, Citizen First' approach, it listed 60 crore Jan Dhan accounts, capital spending rising from ₹2 lakh crore to over ₹12 lakh crore, and 'Operation Sindoor' (2025), among others (these are the government's own claims).

Key facts

Gujarat CM	7 Oct 2001 – 22 May 2014
Prime Minister	Since 26 May 2014; third term from 9 June 2024
Record	22 Mar 2026 – India's longest-serving elected head of government (passed Pawan Chamling)
Born	17 Sept 1950, Vadnagar (Mehsana, Gujarat)
Lok Sabha seat	Varanasi (UP)

Background

- Pawan Kumar Chamling was Sikkim's CM for over 24 years (1994–2019, 8,930 days); Modi passed this on his 8,931st day.
- Longest-serving PM: Jawaharlal Nehru (16 years 286 days). Modi passed Indira Gandhi's continuous tenure (4,077 days) in July 2025.
- Constitution: Art. 74 – Council of Ministers to aid and advise the President; 75(1) – President appoints the PM; 75(3) – collective responsibility to the Lok Sabha; 78 – duties of the PM; 164 – State Chief Minister.
- 91st Amendment (2003): ministers may not exceed 15% of Lok Sabha strength. The word 'Cabinet' appears in the Constitution only in Article 352 (44th Amendment, 1978).
- Schemes: Jan Dhan (2014), PM-KISAN (2019, ₹6,000 a year), Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (106th Amendment, 2023 – 33% seats for women in legislatures).

Tamil Nadu link: M. Karunanidhi served longest as Tamil Nadu CM (5 terms, about 19 years). The Kashi Tamil Sangamam (from 2022, Varanasi) and the Sengol installed in the new Parliament (2023, from Thiruvavaduthurai Adheenam) link to Tamil Nadu.

12 World Bank praises Tamil Nadu's 'Thozhi' working women's hostels

Tamil Nadu

News

A World Bank article titled 'More Than a Roof: How Safe Housing is Unlocking Women's Path to Education and Jobs in Tamil Nadu' praised Tamil Nadu's 'Thozhi' hostels and said other States and countries could adopt the model. Former Chief Minister and DMK president M.K. Stalin welcomed it on 7 Oct 2026. 'Thozhi' means 'female friend'.

Key facts

Run by	Tamil Nadu Working Women's Hostels Corporation (TNWWHCL)
Launch	July 2023 – first 11 hostels in 9 districts
Operating	25 hostels, 2,282 beds; about 5,300 women served
Expansion	22 under construction (+2,540 beds); 27 more planned; at least one in each of 38 districts
Average rent	Chennai ₹5,400; elsewhere ₹3,850 (monthly)
Finance	World Bank and ADB loans, State equity; 'Tamil Nadu Shelter Fund'

Background

- Economy: India's female labour-force participation is about 35%; the World Bank estimates that raising it to 50% could add about 1 percentage point to annual GDP growth. Tamil Nadu is above the national average.
- Model: government-owned buildings run through public–private partnership; biometric entry, 24-hour CCTV, Wi-Fi and online booking.
- Central scheme: the working women's hostel scheme is now 'Sakhi Niwas' under the 'Samarthya' arm of 'Mission Shakti' (2022).
- Constitution: Article 15(3) – special provisions for women; Article 39(d) – equal pay for equal work; Article 42 – maternity relief.

- World Bank: created at the 1944 Bretton Woods conference; headquarters Washington DC; President Ajay Banga (since 2023).

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has the largest number of women factory workers in India. 'Pudhumai Penn' (Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Higher Education Assurance Scheme, 2022) gives ₹1,000 a month to girls who studied Classes 6–12 in government schools and go on to higher education.

13 Wind energy conference in Chennai – 'Windergy India 2026'

Energy

News

The 8th 'Windergy India 2026' conference and trade fair, organised by the Indian Wind Turbine Manufacturers Association (IWTMA) with PDA Ventures, is held on 7–9 Oct 2026 at the Chennai Trade Centre (Nandambakkam). Theme: 'Wind – Powering India's Energy Resilience'. It is supported by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), with companies from 30+ countries.

Key facts

Edition / dates	8th; 7–9 Oct 2026
Organisers	IWTMA + PDA Ventures; MNRE support
India wind capacity	58.52 GW (Aug 2026)
Record	6.05 GW added in 2025–26 – highest ever
Target	100 GW wind by 2030
Manufacturing	24 GW of turbines a year

Background

- Wind power converts the wind's kinetic energy into electricity; the power available is proportional to the cube of the wind speed.
- Tamil Nadu's wind corridors: the south-west monsoon (June–Sept) funnels through the Palghat, Shencottah and Aralvaimozhi gaps, so wind farms cluster in Coimbatore–Tiruppur, Theni, Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari.
- Muppandal (Kanyakumari) is one of India's largest onshore wind farms. The National Institute of Wind Energy (NIWE, formerly C-WET, 1998) is in Chennai.
- State ranking: Gujarat is first and Tamil Nadu second in installed wind capacity. Globally India ranks fourth (after China, the USA and Germany).
- Offshore wind: under the Viability Gap Funding scheme for 1 GW, 500 MW is earmarked off Tamil Nadu and 500 MW off Gujarat; the Gulf of Mannar–Palk Strait zone has high potential.
- Economy: 500 GW of non-fossil capacity by 2030 is one of India's 'Panchamrit' pledges at COP26 (Glasgow); Global Wind Day is 15 June.

Tamil Nadu link: over 7 GW of the State's older turbines are due for repowering, and Chennai and Coimbatore are key hubs for wind-component manufacturing.

14 DSP passing-out parade: CM Vijay presents medals

Tamil Nadu

News

On 7 Oct 2026 the passing-out parade of the 14th batch of directly recruited Deputy Superintendents of Police (DSPs) was held at the Tamil Nadu Police Academy, Oonamancheri, near Vandalur (Chengalpattu district). 25 officers (14 men, 11 women) completed 52 weeks of training. Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay reviewed the parade and gave the Chief Minister's Cup, sword of honour and medals to the best trainees.

Key facts

Batch	14th batch – direct-recruit DSPs
Strength	25 (11 women)
Training	52 weeks
Venue	Tamil Nadu Police Academy, Oonamancheri (near Vandalur)
Modules	Intelligence, cybercrime, forensics, jungle training, deep-sea swimming, army attachment at Wellington
Police chief	DGP Mahesh Kumar Agarwal

Background

- Constitution: 'Police' and 'Public order' are in the State List (List II, Entries 2 and 1) of the Seventh Schedule, so policing is a State responsibility.
- In Tamil Nadu, direct DSPs are recruited through the TNPSC Combined Civil Services Exam – Group I (along with Deputy Collectors). Sub-Inspectors and constables are recruited by TNUSRB (1991).
- Police reform: the Prakash Singh case (2006) directed a State Security Commission, a minimum 2-year tenure for the DGP, a Police Establishment Board and Police Complaints Authorities.
- IPS officers train at the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy, Hyderabad. Wellington (Nilgiris) hosts the Defence Services Staff College (DSSC).
- Women in police: India's first all-women police station opened at Kozhikode (Kerala) in 1973; Tamil Nadu's first opened at Thousand Lights, Chennai, in 1992.

Tamil Nadu link: Chennai city police dates back to 1659, among the oldest city police forces. 11 of the 25 officers in this batch are women; Tamil Nadu is a pioneer in women's participation in policing.

15 3,000-year-old rock paintings found near Denkanikottai

Tamil Nadu

News

Rock paintings about 3,000 years old were found on the 'Vedankal' rock at Choolakunda village in Denkanikottai taluk, Krishnagiri district. History students of Government Men's Arts College, Krishnagiri, led by Prof. Venkateswaran, studied them for Periyar University, Salem's professional training / PG research. The paintings appear in three clusters on one rock, and megalithic dolmens lie on the southern part of the same rock (reported 7 Oct 2026).

Key facts

Place	Vedankal rock, Choolakunda, Denkanikottai taluk, Krishnagiri
Age	About 3,000 years – Iron Age / Megalithic
Team	Govt Men's Arts College, Krishnagiri students (Periyar University study) – Prof. Venkateswaran
Motifs	Dancers holding hands, armed men, grids (fields), circles (sun / time-wheel), raised-hand ritual figures
Also found	Dolmens (megalithic burial markers)

Background

- Types of rock art: painted (pictographs) and engraved (petroglyphs). Red comes from iron oxide (ochre / haematite); white from lime or kaolin clay.
- India's best-known rock-art site is Bhimbetka (Raisen district, Madhya Pradesh), discovered by V.S. Wakankar in 1957 and a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2003.
- Rock-art sites in Tamil Nadu: Kilvalai and Sethavarai (Villupuram), Mallapadi (Krishnagiri), Karikkiyur (Nilgiris). Megalithic burial types: dolmen, stone circle, menhir, urn burial.
- Iron Age in Tamil Nadu: the 'Antiquity of Iron' report (Jan 2025) dated iron from Sivakalai (Thoothukudi) to about 3345 BCE; the Adichanallur urn burials are also well known.
- History: the Krishnagiri–Hosur tract was called 'Baramahal'; after the Third Anglo-Mysore War, Tipu Sultan ceded it to the British by the Treaty of Seringapatam (1792).
- Geography: Krishnagiri district was carved out of Dharmapuri on 9 February 2004; it borders both Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh and is known for mangoes.

Tamil Nadu link: the find is evidence of Krishnagiri's Iron Age and megalithic heritage. Nearby Mallapadi also has ancient rock paintings. Periyar University, Salem, was founded in 1997.

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1 World Egg Day 2026 (9 October)

Important Days

News

World Egg Day falls on the second Friday of October – 9 Oct in 2026. Begun in Vienna in 1996, it marks its 30th year. 2026 theme: 'Protein that Powers and Protects'.

Key facts

Date	2nd Friday of October (2026: 9 Oct)
Origin	1996, Vienna – International Egg Commission (IEC); 2026 is the 30th year
Theme	Protein that Powers and Protects
Nutrition	Complete protein with all 9 essential amino acids; choline, vitamins D and B12, selenium

Background

- India: second in world egg output (China first). Among States, Andhra Pradesh leads, followed by Tamil Nadu and Telangana.
- The 'Silver Revolution' refers to the rise in egg/poultry output. The National Egg Coordination Committee (NECC, 1982) was founded by Dr B.V. Rao; known for the slogan 'Sunday ho ya Monday, roz khao ande'.
- Science: eggshell is about 95% calcium carbonate; the yolk carries fats and vitamins; the white is mostly albumin protein.
- Nutrition schemes: 'PM POSHAN' (formerly the Mid-Day Meal scheme, 1995) – many States serve eggs; Poshan Abhiyaan (2018) fights malnutrition.
- World Food Day is 16 Oct (FAO, 1945); World Egg Day comes about a week before it.

Tamil Nadu link: Namakkal is the 'Egg City', a leading egg-production and export hub. Tamil Nadu's Nutritious Noon Meal scheme began in 1982 under M.G.R.; schoolchildren are served eggs. Kamaraj expanded the mid-day meal in 1956.

2 World Post Day 2026 (9 October)

Important Days

News

World Post Day, 9 October, marks the founding of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) at Bern, Switzerland, on 9 October 1874. 2026 theme: 'One postal network, infinite possibilities'. India observes National Postal Week on 9–15 October.

Key facts

Date	9 Oct – founding of the UPU (1874, Bern)
Theme 2026	One postal network, infinite possibilities
Declared	By the 1969 UPU Congress in Tokyo
Global network	Over 660,000 offices, 4.6 million staff
India	National Postal Week 9–15 Oct; UPU member since 1 July 1876

Background

- UPU: set up by the 1874 Treaty of Bern as the 'General Postal Union', renamed 'Universal Postal Union' in 1878; a UN specialised agency since 1948; HQ Bern; the second-oldest international body (after the ITU, 1865).
- PIN code: introduced on 15 Aug 1972 by Shriram Bhikaji Velankar; 6 digits; 9 PIN zones (8 geographic + 1 Army Postal Service).
- Law: the Post Office Act 2023 replaced the Indian Post Office Act 1898 (in force from 18 June 2024).
- India Post: the world's largest postal network (about 1.6 lakh post offices); India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) – 1 Sept 2018. National Post Day – 10 Oct.
- History: Asia's first postage stamp, the 'Scinde Dawk' – 1852, Karachi; India's first airmail – 18 Feb 1911, Allahabad–Naini.

Tamil Nadu link: PIN codes starting with '6' cover Tamil Nadu and Keralam (with Puducherry and Lakshadweep). The Chennai GPO building (1884) is a heritage structure; the Tamil Nadu Postal Circle is headquartered in Chennai.

3 Actor Nana Patekar dies at 75

Obituary

News

Veteran Hindi and Marathi actor Nana Patekar (75) died of a severe cardiac arrest at his home in Goa on 8 Oct 2026. He won National Awards for 'Parinda', 'Krantiveer' and 'Agni Sakshi', and the Padma Shri in 2013.

Key facts

Real name	Vishwanath Patekar
Born	1 Jan 1951, Murud-Janjira (Raigad district, Maharashtra)
Died	8 Oct 2026, Goa – cardiac arrest
National Awards	Parinda – Best Supporting Actor; Krantiveer – Best Actor; Agni Sakshi – Best Supporting Actor
Other	Debut 'Gaman' (1978); directed 'Prahaar' (1991); Padma Shri 2013; 'NAAM Foundation' (2015)

Background

- Social work: in 2015 he founded the NAAM Foundation with Makarand Anaspure to help drought-hit farmers in Maharashtra and families of farmers who died by suicide.
- Career: films such as 'Salaam Bombay!' (1988), 'Tirangaa', 'Angaar', 'Khamoshi', 'Apaharan' and 'Welcome'; famous for his intense dialogue delivery.

- National Film Awards began in 1954 and are given by the Information and Broadcasting Ministry; the highest honour is the Dadasaheb Phalke Award (since 1969).
- Padma awards: since 1954 – Bharat Ratna, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan, Padma Shri; announced on Republic Day.
- Geography: Murud-Janjira is a famous sea fort in the Arabian Sea (Siddi dynasty), in Raigad district on Maharashtra's Konkan coast.

Tamil Nadu link: Nana Patekar played the villain 'Hari Dada' in the Tamil film 'Kaala' (2018), directed by Pa. Ranjith and starring Rajinikanth.

4 2026 Nobel Prize in Literature to Canadian writer Anne Carson

Awards

News

On 8 Oct 2026 the Swedish Academy awarded the 2026 Nobel Prize in Literature to Canadian poet, essayist and translator Anne Carson (76), for a bold and inventive body of work whose playful engagement with the classical Greek tradition has reshaped contemporary literature. The prize is 12 million Swedish kronor.

Key facts

Laureate	Anne Carson – born 21 June 1950, Toronto, Canada
Profession	Professor of classics (ancient Greek), poet, translator
Key works	Eros the Bittersweet (1986), Autobiography of Red (1998), If Not, Winter – Sappho (2002), Nox (2010)
Earlier awards	T.S. Eliot Prize (2001 – first woman), Griffin Poetry Prize (twice), Princess of Asturias Award (2020)
Prize	SEK 12 million; presented in Stockholm on 10 Dec

Background

- Classical tradition: Carson translated and reworked the ancient Greek poet Sappho (of Lesbos) and the dramatist Euripides, in a unique mix of poetry, essay and drama.
- The Literature Nobel is chosen by the Swedish Academy and has been given since 1901. The previous Canadian winner was Alice Munro (2013, short stories).
- India's only Literature Nobel: Rabindranath Tagore – 1913, 'Gitanjali'; he was also Asia's first Nobel laureate.
- 2026 Nobel announcements: Chemistry – Henri Kagan and Kenso Soai (7 Oct); Literature – Anne Carson (8 Oct). Prizes are presented on 10 Dec, Alfred Nobel's death anniversary.
- Canada: capital Ottawa; largest city Toronto; official languages English and French.

Tamil Nadu link: like Greek, Tamil is a classical language – declared India's first classical language on 12 Oct 2004. A.K. Ramanujan introduced Sangam poetry (Kurunthogai, Purananuru) to the world through English translation.

5 Weak monsoon: Maharashtra to cut water supply by at least 10% from 16 October

Environment

News

Citing a deficient monsoon, El Niño and fears of drought, Maharashtra will cut water supply by at least 10% in all urban and rural local bodies (corporations, municipalities, gram panchayats) from 16 Oct. Water Resources Minister Girish Mahajan announced it. Dam-wise water planning runs to 31 Aug 2027.

Key facts

Cut	At least 10% from 16 Oct
Applies to	All urban and rural local bodies
Priority	Drinking water first, then livestock and fodder, then irrigation
Industry	Reuse or recycle at least 30% of water
Emergency reserve	10% in every dam
Enforcement	Joint police–revenue teams; illegal pumps seized

Background

- El Niño is unusual warming of the central-eastern Pacific surface; it usually weakens the Indian monsoon. La Niña is the opposite and tends to help rain.
- Geography: Marathwada and parts of Vidarbha lie in the rain shadow of the Western Ghats (Sahyadri) and face frequent drought.
- Water governance: the Maharashtra Water Resources Regulatory Authority (2005) was India's first State water regulator. 'Jalyukt Shivar Abhiyan' builds village water works against drought.
- Constitution: 'Water' (drinking water, irrigation) is State List Entry 17; inter-State rivers are Union List Entry 56; Article 262 covers river-water disputes.
- Jal Jeevan Mission (2019): tap water to every rural home ('Har Ghar Jal'); the Jal Shakti Ministry was formed in 2019.

Tamil Nadu link: in 2003 Tamil Nadu became the first State to make rainwater harvesting compulsory in all buildings. Chennai faced a severe water crisis in 2019.

6 53.4% rain deficit: 21 of Andhra Pradesh's 26 districts declared drought-hit

Environment

News

With a rainfall deficit of about 53.4% during the south-west monsoon (June–August) of the 2026 kharif season, the Andhra Pradesh government declared 388 mandals in 21 districts drought-hit (7 Oct 2026): 283 severely and 105 moderately affected.

Key facts

Districts	21 of 26
Mandals	388 (283 severe, 105 moderate)
Rain deficit	About 53.4% (June–Aug 2026)
Season	Kharif 2026 – south-west monsoon
Declared by	Andhra Pradesh government

Background

- Drought declaration uses the criteria of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare's 'Manual for Drought Management' (2016, revised 2020) – rain deficit, crop condition, soil moisture, reservoir levels; the State government declares it.
- IMD scale: −20% to −59% of normal is 'deficient'; −60% or worse is 'large deficient'. 53.4% falls in 'deficient'.
- Geography: Andhra's Rayalaseema (Anantapur, Kurnool, Kadapa, Chittoor) lies in the rain shadow of the Western Ghats; Anantapur is among India's driest districts.
- Administration: Andhra Pradesh was reorganised from 13 to 26 districts in April 2022. The Disaster Management Act 2005 provides the SDRF and NDRF.
- Economy: a drought declaration opens input subsidy, loan restructuring, extra MGNREGA workdays (up to 150) and PM crop-insurance claims.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu depends mainly on the north-east monsoon (Oct–Dec). After the 2016 north-east monsoon failed, the State declared all its districts drought-hit in January 2017. Krishna water from Andhra reaches Chennai through the 'Telugu Ganga' project.

7 GST officers' arrest power removed; prosecution threshold raised to ₹5 crore

Economy

News

The 57th GST Council recommended removing GST officers' power of arrest and raising the threshold for criminal prosecution from ₹1 crore to ₹5 crore. Minimum punishment goes, the general penalty falls from ₹25,000 to ₹10,000, and no notice will issue for tax below ₹10,000. The changes take effect from 1 April 2027.

Key facts

Arrest power	Removed for GST officers (prosecution still possible where criminality exists)
Prosecution threshold	₹1 crore → ₹5 crore
General penalty	₹25,000 → ₹10,000
Minimum punishment	Removed – left to the court
Small amounts	No notice for tax below ₹10,000
Vehicle checks	Only on specific intelligence with Joint Commissioner-level approval
Effective	From 1 April 2027

Background

- Decriminalisation: minor technical lapses are settled through interest and penalties instead of jail – the same approach as the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Act 2023.
- Nirmala Sitharaman: 'any random GST officer cannot stop a vehicle' – inspection and seizure are limited to officers of the supplier or destination State.
- Other decisions: faceless tax administration; simpler registration for small e-commerce sellers; an officers' committee (report in 3 months) on genuine buyers losing ITC.
- Legal steps: Parliament must amend the CGST Act 2017 and related laws, and State legislatures their SGST Acts.
- Economy: trust-based tax administration improves 'Ease of Doing Business'.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's MSMEs – Tiruppur knitwear, Coimbatore engineering, Sivakasi fireworks and others – can work without fear of prosecution for minor lapses.

8 57th GST Council: no rate change; rates to be reviewed only once a year

Economy

News

At the 57th GST Council meeting in New Delhi on 8 Oct 2026, chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, no tax rates were changed. She announced that rate changes will now be considered only once a year and take effect from 1 April, to give businesses a stable, predictable tax regime.

Key facts

Meeting	57th GST Council, 8 Oct 2026, New Delhi
Rates	No change
New practice	Rate changes once a year, effective 1 April
ITC	Extended to employee health/life insurance, telecom towers, pipelines outside factories
Refunds	Acknowledgement 15 → 10 days; 90% of eligible claims auto-sanctioned
Small business	Optional scheme for B2C sellers up to ₹5 crore turnover – annual return, quarterly tax (approved in principle)

Background

- Constitution: GST came through the 101st Amendment (2016) and began on 1 July 2017. Article 246A – power to make GST laws; 269A – IGST on inter-State trade; 279A – GST Council.
- GST Council: chaired by the Union Finance Minister; members – the Union MoS Finance and all State finance ministers. Votes: Centre 1/3, States 2/3; decisions need a 3/4 majority; quorum is half the members.
- GST 2.0: from 22 Sept 2025, two main slabs – 5% and 18% – and 40% for luxury and sin goods. After its first year, the focus has moved to process reforms.
- History: GST was recommended by the Vijay Kelkar Task Force (on implementing the FRBM Act, 2004); the Empowered Committee of State Finance Ministers led by Asim Dasgupta shaped it. 'One Nation, One Tax'.
- GST types: CGST (Centre), SGST (State), UTGST (UT) for intra-State sales; IGST for inter-State sales and imports.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's Finance Minister is a member of the GST Council, and Tamil Nadu is among the top States in GST collection. Chennai hosts a zonal GST Principal Chief Commissionerate.

9 MNRE event in New Delhi on World Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Day

Energy

News

For World Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Day (8 Oct), the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) held an event at Atal Akshay Urja Bhawan, New Delhi. Prof. Ajay Kumar Sood, Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, was chief guest. Panels discussed hydrogen standards and safety, and a report, 'India's Hydrogen Standards: Gap Assessment and Preliminary Action Framework', was released.

Key facts

Date	8 Oct – reflects hydrogen's atomic weight, 1.008
Venue	Atal Akshay Urja Bhawan, New Delhi
Chief guest	Prof. Ajay Kumar Sood (Principal Scientific Adviser)
Report	Hydrogen standards gap assessment (prepared with BCG)
Bodies	BIS, PNGRB, PESO, OISD, CEEW, SECI, NISE

Background

- National Green Hydrogen Mission: approved in January 2023 with ₹19,744 crore; target of 5 million metric tonnes a year of green hydrogen capacity by 2030. The 'SIGHT' programme gives incentives for electrolyser making and hydrogen production.
- Hydrogen 'colours': green – from electrolysis of water using renewable power; grey – from natural gas (emits CO_2); blue – grey plus carbon capture.
- Science: in a fuel cell, hydrogen and oxygen combine to produce electricity with only water as by-product. Hydrogen is element 1 of the periodic table and the most abundant in the universe.
- Regulators: PESO (Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation, Nagpur) licenses hydrogen storage safety; BIS sets standards; PNGRB regulates pipelines.
- Goal: net zero by 2070 (COP26 Panchamrit) – replacing grey hydrogen with green in fertiliser, steel and refining.

Tamil Nadu link: V.O. Chidambaranar Port, Thoothukudi, was chosen with Deendayal (Kandla) and Paradip ports to be developed as a green hydrogen hub; green hydrogen and ammonia projects are coming up there.

10 Keralam Police sets up 'Speak Up' task force against domestic violence

Governance

News

Keralam Police set up a special task force, 'Speak Up', to prevent domestic violence and give survivors safety, legal aid, counselling and livelihood support (8 Oct 2026). On the State Home Department's order, Inspector General of Police Ajitha Begum heads it. Home Minister Ramesh Chennithala announced it.

Key facts

Name	'Speak Up' special task force
In charge	IGP Ajitha Begum IPS
Access	Digital helpline, WhatsApp, dedicated app; central command centre
Features	One officer per case with weekly review; privacy; responding officers in plain clothes
Context	92 women died of domestic violence in the past 7 years

Background

- Name change: by the Kerala (Alteration of Name) Act 2026, the State officially became 'Keralam' from 25 Aug 2026. The Lok Sabha passed it on 11 Aug and the Rajya Sabha on 12 Aug 2026.
- Constitution: Article 3 empowers Parliament to form States and change their boundaries or names; it needs the President's recommendation and the State legislature's views (which are not binding).
- Law: the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 (in force 26 Oct 2006) – protection officers, protection orders, right to residence. Section 85 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023 – cruelty by husband or relatives (formerly IPC 498A).
- Helplines: 181 – women's helpline; 1091 – women's helpline (police); 112 – emergency.
- History: India's first all-women police station opened at Kozhikode in 1973.

Tamil Nadu link: by the Madras State (Alteration of Name) Act 1968, Madras State became 'Tamil Nadu' from 14 January 1969 (CM C.N. Annadurai). Tamil Nadu's first all-women police station opened in Chennai in 1992.

11 PM Modi opens 10th India Mobile Congress at Yashobhoomi

Technology

News

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the 10th edition of the India Mobile Congress (IMC), Asia's largest telecom and technology event, at Yashobhoomi, New Delhi, on 8 Oct 2026. Dates: 7–10 Oct. Theme: 'Scale Without Boundaries'. It is organised jointly by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and the Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI).

Key facts

Edition	10th; 7–10 Oct 2026
Venue	Yashobhoomi (India International Convention & Expo Centre), Dwarka, New Delhi
Theme	Scale Without Boundaries
4 pillars	Srishti, Samvardhan, Sashakt, Suraksha
Focus	5G/6G, AI networks, semiconductors, non-terrestrial networks, cybersecurity, quantum communication
Scale	100+ countries, 1.5 lakh+ visitors, 600+ start-ups

Background

- PM Modi launched 5G services in India at the 6th IMC on 1 Oct 2022. The 'Bharat 6G Vision' document came out in March 2023.

- Law: the Telecommunications Act 2023 replaced the Indian Telegraph Act 1885. The regulator is the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI, 1997).
- Yashobhoomi is the India International Convention and Expo Centre (IICC) at Dwarka, opened in 2023. Bharat Mandapam is a separate venue at Pragati Maidan (G20, 2023).
- Digital public infrastructure: Aadhaar, UPI and BharatNet (optical fibre to villages); 'Sanchar Saathi' (2023) is the portal against fraud calls and lost phones.
- Science: 5G uses higher frequencies, including millimetre waves, for high speed and very low latency; 6G aims at terahertz bands.

Tamil Nadu link: Sriperumbudur–Oragadam–Hosur are hubs of mobile and electronics manufacturing; the 5G Testbed built by IIT Madras and other institutes was dedicated in 2022.

12 World Space Week: ISRO Propulsion Complex space exhibition in Coimbatore

Science

News

For World Space Week, the ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC), Mahendragiri, with Sri Krishna College of Engineering and Technology, Coimbatore, held a three-day space exhibition on 5–7 Oct 2026. It had models, videos, expert talks on human spaceflight, launch vehicles and propulsion, and telescope sky-watching; entry was free for students and the public.

Key facts

Organisers	ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC), Mahendragiri + Sri Krishna College of Engineering
Dates	5–7 Oct 2026
World Space Week	4–10 Oct; 2026 theme – 'Rocket Revolution'
Events	Exhibition, expert talks, drawing/elocution/quiz contests, sky-watching

Background

- World Space Week was declared by the UN General Assembly in 1999. 4 Oct – launch of Sputnik-1 (1957); 10 Oct – the Outer Space Treaty came into force (1967).
- IPRC is at Mahendragiri, Tirunelveli district; once part of the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC), it became a separate centre in 2014. It tests cryogenic, liquid and semi-cryogenic engines and rocket stages.
- ISRO was founded on 15 Aug 1969, is headquartered in Bengaluru and works under the Department of Space. India's first satellite, Aryabhata (1975), was launched from the Soviet Union.
- History: India's first rocket was launched on 21 Nov 1963 from the Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station (TERLS) in Keralam.
- Gaganyaan is India's human spaceflight programme; human-rating tests of its engines are done at Mahendragiri.

Tamil Nadu link: the foundation stone for India's second spaceport, for Small Satellite Launch Vehicles (SSLV), was laid at Kulasekarapattinam, Thoothukudi district, in Feb 2024. IPRC Mahendragiri tests Gaganyaan engines.

13 Centre moves to cut cancer drug prices

Health

News

The Centre has decided to cap trade margins at 30% of MRP for 110 non-scheduled anti-cancer drugs (reported 8 Oct 2026). Officials said prices of some drugs could fall by up to 70%, saving about ₹2,500 crore a year. Margins of 170% to 700% were found at some outlets.

Key facts

Measure	Trade margin capped at 30% of MRP
Drugs	110 non-scheduled anti-cancer drugs (35 patented)
Impact	Prices down by up to 70%; ₹2,500 crore saved a year
Earlier step	2019: 30% cap on 42 cancer drugs – 526 brands, ₹984 crore saved
Bodies	Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)

Background

- Scheduled vs non-scheduled: the NPPA fixes ceiling prices for drugs in the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM 2022 – 384 medicines). For non-scheduled drugs, makers may raise prices by up to 10% a year.
- Law: the Drugs (Prices Control) Order (DPCO) 2013 is issued under the Essential Commodities Act 1955. The NPPA was set up in 1997 under the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.
- Trade margin is the gap between the price a maker charges distributors and what consumers pay. Adding 'Trade Margin Rationalisation' (TMR) to the DPCO is under study.
- Other steps: the 2025–26 Budget exempted 36 life-saving drugs (including cancer drugs) from basic customs duty and announced day-care cancer centres in district hospitals.
- Supreme Court: a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta is hearing a case on the scheduled/non-scheduled distinction.

Tamil Nadu link: the Adyar Cancer Institute, Chennai, was founded in 1954 by Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy; Dr V. Shanta built it into a world-famous centre (Ramon Magsaysay Award 2005). Tamil Nadu's Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme covers cancer treatment.

14 Ladakh launches India's first high-altitude snow leopard safari

Environment

News

During Wildlife Week, Lt Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena flagged off six specially designed open vehicles for India's first high-altitude snow leopard safari at Leh on 7 Oct 2026. It is run by the SHAN Society with Ladakh's Department of Forest, Ecology and Environment. First areas: Rumbak, Shang and Uley.

Key facts

Launch	7 Oct 2026, Leh – LG Vinai Kumar Saxena
First areas	Rumbak, Shang, Uley
Next routes	Hemis NP, Changthang, Karakoram WLS, Nubra, Zanskar, Kargil, Drass
Population	India about 718; Ladakh 477 (highest)
Scientific name	Panthera uncia
Aims	Responsible tourism, community conservation, local livelihoods

Background

- Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India (SPAI), released in 2024: 718 in India – Ladakh 477, Uttarakhand 124, Himachal 51, Arunachal 36, Sikkim 21, J&K 9.
- Protection: IUCN 'Vulnerable'; Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972. State animal of Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh. 'Project Snow Leopard' began in 2009.
- Geography: Hemis National Park is India's largest national park and called the 'snow leopard capital'. Ladakh is a cold desert in the Trans-Himalaya.
- Polity: under the J&K Reorganisation Act 2019, Ladakh became a Union Territory without a legislature on 31 Oct 2019, run by a Lieutenant Governor.
- Wildlife Week: 2–8 October in India, an initiative of the Indian Board for Wildlife (1952); observed as a week since 1955 (2024 was the 70th Wildlife Week).

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's State animal is the Nilgiri tahr – 'Project Nilgiri Tahr' began in 2023. The Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve (1986) is India's first; the State has the Mudumalai, Anamalai, Kalakad–Mundanthurai, Sathyamangalam and Srivilliputhur–Megamalai tiger reserves.

15 Asia's largest seawater desalination plant near Mamallapuram

Tamil Nadu

News

Construction is in full swing on a 400 MLD (400 million litres a day) seawater desalination plant at Perur (Nemmeli panchayat) on East Coast Road near Mamallapuram, Chengalpattu district – on a scale not found elsewhere in Asia. It covers 85.51 acres, is funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and implemented by the Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (CMWSSB).

Key facts

Place	Perur, Nemmeli panchayat, ECR, Chengalpattu district
Capacity	400 million litres a day (400 MLD)
Technology	Seawater reverse osmosis (SWRO)
Funding	JICA loan
Implementer	CMWSSB (Chennai Metrowater); contractor – VA Tech Wabag–Metito JV
Foundation	21 August 2023
Beneficiaries	About 22.67 lakh people in Chennai, Tambaram and nearby areas

Background

- Science: reverse osmosis pushes seawater under high pressure through a semi-permeable membrane, leaving the salt behind. Seawater averages about 35 g of salt per litre (3.5%).
- Chennai's desalination plants: Minjur (Kattupalli) – 100 MLD (2010, the first); Nemmeli – 100 MLD (2013). The existing plants meet a sizeable share of the city's drinking-water need.
- Geography: Chennai has no large river; it relies on the Poondi, Puzhal, Chembarambakkam, Cholavaram and Kannankottai–Thervoy Kandigai lakes, Veeranam, and Krishna water (Telugu Ganga), and depends heavily on the north-east monsoon.
- History: Mamallapuram was the Pallava port city (Narasimhavarman I 'Mamalla'); the Shore Temple and Five Rathas became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1984.
- Environment: the concentrated brine from desalination must be diffused far out at sea to protect marine life, and the plants need a lot of electricity.

Tamil Nadu link: in 2019 Chennai faced an acute water crisis (water was brought by train from Jolarpettai). Desalination gives a steady source that does not depend on rain.

16 ₹212.58 crore for modernising Tamil Nadu Police

Tamil Nadu

News

A High Powered Committee approved ₹212.58 crore to modernise the Tamil Nadu Police (Oct 2026). The biggest share is for communication equipment (₹99.03 crore). It also covers 500 special vehicles for the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS), CCTV monitoring of police stations, bomb-detection gear and weapons.

Key facts

Total	₹212.58 crore
Communication	₹99.03 crore (largest share)
ERSS vehicles	₹55 crore – 500 special-purpose four-wheelers
CCTV	₹30.51 crore – VPN for 877 police stations, CCTV in 46 cyber-crime stations
IT	₹13.43 crore
Security	₹11.28 crore – Security Branch CID, bomb detection and disposal
Weapons	₹3.33 crore

Background

- ERSS (Emergency Response Support System): a single nationwide emergency number '112' for police, fire and ambulance, implemented under the 'Nirbhaya Fund'.
- Nirbhaya Fund: announced in the 2013 Budget for women's safety projects; ERSS and Safe City projects come under it.
- Central support: through the umbrella scheme 'Assistance to States for Modernisation of Police', the Home Ministry funds weapons, communication and forensics.
- Constitution: police is in the State List (List II, Entry 2), so modernisation is mainly the State's responsibility.
- Technology: a VPN (virtual private network) securely carries police-station CCTV feeds to a central control room; the Supreme Court ordered CCTV in police stations in the Paramvir Singh Saini case

(2020).

Tamil Nadu link: the Tamil Nadu Police 'Kaaval Uthavi' app lets people seek emergency help; the State has cyber-crime police stations in every district.

17 Minister Arunraj releases field manual on tuberculosis

Tamil Nadu

News

On 8 Oct 2026 Dr Arunraj, Minister for Medicine, Medical Education and Public Health, released a field manual on tuberculosis and launched the State-level 'TB-Free JOSH' (Joint Squad for Health) team. It uses young people for awareness, community mobilisation, and early identification and referral of people with TB symptoms.

Key facts

Team	TB-Free JOSH (Joint Squad for Health)
First-phase districts	Cuddalore, Dharmapuri, Tiruchi, Theni, Thoothukudi
TB-free panchayats	2,390 village panchayats – recognised after verification under national guidelines
Minister	Dr Arunraj
Goal	TB-free Tamil Nadu, TB-free India

Background

- Science: TB is caused by the bacterium Mycobacterium tuberculosis and spreads through the air. Robert Koch announced the bacterium on 24 March 1882 – now World TB Day. Vaccine: BCG.
- India's programme: the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP – RNTCP renamed in 2020); 'Ni-kshay Poshan Yojana' gives patients nutrition support (₹1,000 a month since Nov 2024); 'Pradhan Mantri TB Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan' (2022) with Ni-kshay Mitra volunteers.
- Target: the UN SDG goal is ending TB by 2030; India set an earlier target of 2025. India has the world's highest TB burden.
- 'TB Mukt Panchayat' recognises village panchayats that meet set criteria. Tamil Nadu has about 12,525 village panchayats.
- Tamil Nadu initiative: the 'Tamil Nadu Kasanoi Erappilla Thittam' (TN-KET, 2022) reduces deaths through differentiated care based on how sick each patient is.

Tamil Nadu link: ICMR's National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis (NIRT), Chennai, began in 1956 as the Tuberculosis Chemotherapy Centre; the famous 'Madras study', which proved home treatment works, was done here. The Tambaram TB sanatorium opened in 1928.

18 Tamil Nadu issues two Government Orders on building permits

Tamil Nadu

News

The Housing and Urban Development Department issued two Government Orders. G.O. (Ms) No. 179 (07.10.2026) allows permits through 'third-party certification' for buildings up to set sizes. G.O. (Ms) No. 180 (08.10.2026) raises the floor-area limits up to which local bodies themselves can approve buildings. Both were announced in the 2026–27 Assembly demand for grants.

Key facts

Department	Housing and Urban Development
GO 179 – residential	Up to 750 sq m (8,070 sq ft) floor area – third-party certificate
GO 179 – commercial	Up to 300 sq m (3,230 sq ft)
GO 179 – factories	Up to 2,500 sq m (26,900 sq ft) in SIDCO, SIPCOT, ELCOT estates
Certifier	Architect registered on the Single Window portal / Grade-I engineer
GO 180 – corporations, municipalities	Residential: 10,000 → 16,140 sq ft (1,500 sq m)
GO 180 – town / village panchayats	Residential: 10,000 → 12,912 sq ft (1,200 sq m)
GO 180 – commercial	All local bodies: 2,000 → 5,380 sq ft (500 sq m)

Background

- Third-party certification: without visiting the local body office, a registered architect or engineer inspects the site, checks documents and rule compliance, and issues an electronic certificate.
- Constitution: the 12th Schedule added by the 74th Amendment (1992) lists 'urban planning including town planning' and 'regulation of land use and construction of buildings' as municipal functions. The 73rd Amendment added the 11th Schedule (panchayats, 29 subjects).
- Tamil Nadu bodies: the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act 1971; the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA); the Directorate of Town and Country Planning (DTCP); the Tamil Nadu Combined Development and Building Rules 2019 (TNCDBR).
- Industrial agencies: SIPCOT – State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu (1971); SIDCO – Small Industries Development Corporation (1970); ELCOT – Electronics Corporation of Tamil Nadu (1977).
- Unit conversion: 1 sq m ≈ 10.764 sq ft, so 750 sq m ≈ 8,070 sq ft and 1,500 sq m ≈ 16,140 sq ft.
- Economy: under 'Ease of Doing Business', faster approvals save time and cost for home builders, small traders and entrepreneurs.

Tamil Nadu link: GO 180 follows the announcement of 'more devolution of powers to local bodies'. Factory builders in SIPCOT, SIDCO and ELCOT estates need not visit district offices.

1 World Mental Health Day, World Day Against the Death Penalty, World Homeless Day 2026 (10 October)

Important Days

News

Three world days fall on 10 October. World Mental Health Day 2026 theme (World Federation for Mental Health – WFMH): 'Lived Experiences Heard: Real Voices, Real Change'. The 24th World Day Against the Death Penalty theme: 'Stories for Life'. World Homeless Day has been observed since 2010 and has no yearly theme.

Key facts

World Mental Health Day	Since 1992 – WFMH; 2026: 'Lived Experiences Heard: Real Voices, Real Change'
Against Death Penalty	24th; World Coalition Against the Death Penalty (2002) – since 2003; 2026–27 theme 'Stories for Life'
Global (Amnesty)	113 countries have abolished it for all crimes
World Homeless Day	10 Oct since 2010; no annual theme

Background

- India's mental health: the Mental Healthcare Act 2017 – Section 115 presumes a person who attempts suicide was under severe stress, so they are not punished. National Mental Health Programme 1982; 'Tele-MANAS' 24-hour helpline 14416 (10 Oct 2022); National Suicide Prevention Strategy 2022.
- Death penalty in India: only in the 'rarest of rare' cases – Bachan Singh v. State of Punjab (1980). Article 72 – the President's pardoning power; Article 161 – the Governor's. India executes by hanging.
- Homelessness: Census 2011 counted about 17.7 lakh homeless people in India. 'Shelter for Urban Homeless' (DAY-NULM); Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY, 2015). The Supreme Court held the right to shelter part of Article 21 (Chameli Singh case, 1996).
- The WFMH was founded in 1948; World Mental Health Day was first observed in 1992, with WHO support.

Tamil Nadu link: the Institute of Mental Health, Kilpauk, Chennai, began in 1794 – among India's oldest mental hospitals. The Supreme Court used Article 142 to release Perarivalan, jailed in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, on 18 May 2022.

2 National Postal Day 2026 (10 October)

Important Days

News

10 October is observed as National Postal Day to honour India Post's service of over 170 years. It falls within National Postal Week (9–15 Oct). Day-wise themes in 2026: 12 Oct – Fun with Philately Day; 13 Oct – Financial Inclusion Day; 14 Oct – Mails & Parcels Day; 15 Oct – Technology & Innovation Day.

Key facts

Date	10 Oct – National Postal Day; 9–15 Oct – National Postal Week
India Post	1 Oct 1854 – set up as a department under Lord Dalhousie
Ministry	Ministry of Communications – Department of Posts
Network	World's largest postal network – about 1.6 lakh post offices; 23 postal circles
New initiatives (2026)	N-Gen post offices, Jan Sewa Connect post offices, 'Dak Sewa' and 'Dak Mitra' apps

Background

- History: India's first all-India postage stamps came out in 1854. Speed Post – 1986; PIN code – 1972; India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) – 1 Sept 2018.
- Financial inclusion: post office schemes include Sukanya Samriddhi (2015), PPF, National Savings Certificates and Postal Life Insurance (1884 – India's oldest life insurance).
- Philately: the 'Deen Dayal SPARSH' scholarship scheme encourages stamp collecting among schoolchildren.
- Law: the Post Office Act 2023 (replacing the 1898 Act) ended the department's exclusive privilege over letters and empowers it to set addressing standards.

Tamil Nadu link: the Madras General Post Office opened on 1 June 1786 – among India's oldest; its present Rajaji Salai building dates from 1884. The Tamil Nadu Postal Circle is headquartered in Chennai.

3 South Korea test-flies its first domestically developed hypersonic weapon

Defence

News

South Korea flight-tested its first indigenous hypersonic glide vehicle (HGV), developed by the Agency for Defense Development (ADD), on 8 Oct 2026; President Lee Jae-myung watched the test. It adds the ability to strike key targets on the Korean Peninsula; the presidential office called it a 'key strategic asset capable of changing the course of the battlefield'. The President also inspected the high-yield 'Hyunmoo-5' missile.

Key facts

Weapon	Hypersonic glide vehicle (HGV) – South Korea's first indigenous one
Developer	Agency for Defense Development (ADD)
Date	8 Oct 2026; observed by President Lee Jae-myung
Speed	Hypersonic – over five times the speed of sound (Mach 5+)
Context	Lee pledges to take back wartime operational control (OPCON) from the US within his term (to 2030)

Background

- Science: hypersonic means above Mach 5 (sound travels about 343 m/s at sea level). An HGV is boosted by a rocket and then glides through the atmosphere; because it can manoeuvre, air defences find it hard to intercept. Hypersonic cruise missiles use 'scramjet' engines.

- India: DRDO's long-range hypersonic missile was tested on 16 Nov 2024 from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha; the HSTDV scramjet test was in 2020; BrahMos (India–Russia) is a supersonic cruise missile.
- Others: Russia (Avangard, Kinzhal) and China (DF-17) have deployed hypersonic weapons; the US is developing 'Dark Eagle'; North Korea also claims hypersonic tests.
- Korea: the 1950–53 Korean War ended in an armistice; the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) near the 38th parallel divides the two Koreas. South Korea's capital is Seoul.

Tamil Nadu link: Rameswaram-born Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, 'India's Missile Man', led the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP, 1983); Odisha's Wheeler Island was renamed 'Abdul Kalam Island' in 2015. South Korea's Hyundai has made cars at Irungattukottai near Sriperumbudur since 1998.

4 Wildlife populations fell 73% on average in 52 years – WWF Living Planet Report 2026

Environment

News

WWF's Living Planet Report 2026 (7 Oct 2026) found that monitored vertebrate populations (mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, fish) fell by an average of 73% over the 52 years from 1970 to 2022. The Living Planet Index (LPI), produced by the Zoological Society of London (ZSL), tracked 35,803 population trends of 5,790 species.

Key facts

Average decline	73% (1970–2022)
Scope	5,790 species, 35,803 population trends
By ecosystem	Freshwater 85%, terrestrial 69%, marine 59%
By region	Latin America & Caribbean 95%, Africa 80%, Asia-Pacific 49%, North America 28%, Europe & Central Asia 23%
Hope	Recoveries in tigers, southern African elephants, green turtles, bluefin tuna
Note	An average proportional change – not the total number of animals lost

Background

- WWF was founded in 1961 in Switzerland (HQ Gland); its logo is the panda. The Living Planet Report has come out since 1998, usually every two years.
- Causes: habitat loss (mainly land converted to farming) leads; then overexploitation, invasive species, disease, climate change and pollution.
- Treaties: the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD, 1992, Rio); the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (2022) with its '30x30' goal – protect 30% of land and sea by 2030.
- India: the Biological Diversity Act 2002 – National Biodiversity Authority (Chennai). India is one of 17 megadiverse countries with 4 biodiversity hotspots (Himalaya, Western Ghats, Indo-Burma, Sundaland). India's tigers: 3,682 (2022).

Tamil Nadu link: the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) is in Chennai. Tamil Nadu has the most Ramsar wetlands of any Indian State; the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve (1986) was India's first.

5 'Pandharpur Wari' documentary named India's national winner at Asian Academy Creative Awards 2026

Awards

News

The 22-minute English documentary 'Pandharpur Wari – In the Footsteps of the Saints', made by Maharashtra's Information and Public Relations Department (IPRD) with Warner Bros. Discovery, was named India's national winner in the 'Best Branded Programme' category of the Asian Academy Creative Awards (AACA) 2026. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis praised it.

Key facts

Film	Pandharpur Wari – In the Footsteps of the Saints (22 min, English)
Category	Best Branded Programme – India national winner
Makers	Maharashtra IPRD + Warner Bros. Discovery; aired worldwide on Discovery channels
Next	International round; grand gala – 3 Dec 2026, Capitol Theatre, Singapore
Other Indian winners	Anil Kapoor – Best Actor ('Subedaar'); 'Bison Kaalamaadan' – Best Feature Film

Background

- Pandharpur Wari: a roughly 700-year-old pilgrimage in which Warkari devotees walk about 250 km over 21 days to the Vitthal (Vithoba) temple at Pandharpur for Ashadhi Ekadashi (June–July). Sant Dnyaneshwar's palanquin starts from Alandi and Sant Tukaram's from Dehu.
- Geography: Pandharpur is in Solapur district on the Bhima river (called 'Chandrabhaga' here).
- Bhakti movement in Maharashtra: Dnyaneshwar ('Dnyaneshwari', 13th c.), Namdev, Eknath and Tukaram ('abhangs') – a message of equality across caste.
- Asian Academy Creative Awards (AACA): held in Singapore since 2018 for TV, streaming and film from Asia-Pacific – first country-wise 'national winners', then regional 'grand' winners.

Tamil Nadu link: the Bhakti movement began in Tamil Nadu in the 6th–9th centuries through the Alvars (Vishnu) and Nayanmars (Shiva) and spread north. 'Bison Kaalamaadan', chosen Best Feature Film, is a Tamil film directed by Mari Selvaraj (Neelam Studios).

6 Israel to honour Indian pilot Smit Machchhar with its top civilian award

Awards

News

Israeli President Isaac Herzog announced (8 Oct 2026) that Indian pilot Captain Smit Machchhar will receive Israel's highest civilian award, the Presidential Award for Civil Heroism. On flydubai flight FZ1073 from Dubai to Tel Aviv (30 Sept 2026), the co-pilot sent the plane into a steep dive; the injured captain regained control and the crew and passengers restrained the co-pilot. The aircraft made an emergency landing at Tabuk, Saudi Arabia.

Key facts

Award	Presidential State of Israel Award for Civil Heroism – reported as its highest civilian award
Announced by	Israeli President Isaac Herzog – Jerusalem
Flight	flydubai FZ1073 (Boeing 737 MAX 8), Dubai → Tel Aviv; 30 Sept 2026
Emergency landing	Tabuk, Saudi Arabia
Smit Machchhar	Ex-SpiceJet; flydubai captain since 2022; grew up in Ghatkopar, Mumbai; family roots in Rajkot district, Gujarat
Gujarat honour	CM Bhupendra Patel announced the 'Vishisht Gujarat Garima' award (1 Oct)

Background

- India–Israel: India recognised Israel in 1950 and set up full diplomatic relations in 1992. Narendra Modi became the first Indian PM to visit Israel in 2017.
- Indian bravery awards: Ashoka Chakra (highest peacetime gallantry), Kirti Chakra, Shaurya Chakra; 'Jeevan Raksha Padak' awards for saving lives. Flight attendant Neerja Bhanot, killed in the 1986 Pan Am hijacking, is the youngest Ashoka Chakra recipient.
- Aviation safety: the 'two-person rule' keeps two crew in the cockpit at all times (widespread after the 2015 Germanwings crash). The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) – Montreal, under the 1944 Chicago Convention.
- Geography: Tabuk is in north-west Saudi Arabia; Dubai is in the UAE; Israel declares Jerusalem its capital, while many embassies are in Tel Aviv.

Tamil Nadu link: J.R.D. Tata flew India's first commercial airmail service on 15 Oct 1932 from Karachi via Bombay to Madras (Tata Air Services), giving Madras a key place in Indian aviation history.

7 Jewar airport to be named 'Narendra Modi International Airport': Yogi Adityanath

Infrastructure

News

UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath announced on 9 Oct 2026 that the State Cabinet approved a proposal to name Noida International Airport at Jewar, Gautam Buddh Nagar district, 'Narendra Modi International Airport, Noida–Jewar'. The Cabinet also congratulated Modi on 25 years as head of government. He said it will be the State's largest airport.

Key facts

Current name	Noida International Airport, Jewar (IATA: DXN)
Proposed name	Narendra Modi International Airport, Noida–Jewar
District	Gautam Buddh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh
Opened	By PM Modi – 28 March 2026
Developer	Yamuna International Airport Pvt Ltd – subsidiary of Zurich Airport (Switzerland)

Background

- Constitution: 'airways' and aerodromes are in the Union List (Entry 29), so the State proposes and the Centre (Civil Aviation Ministry / Union Cabinet) must approve an airport's renaming.
- National Capital Region: the second big airport after Delhi's Indira Gandhi International; a greenfield airport.
- Other 'Modi' names: Ahmedabad's Motera stadium was renamed 'Narendra Modi Stadium' in 2021 – the world's largest cricket ground.
- Aviation schemes: 'UDAN' (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik, 2016) for regional connectivity; India is the world's third-largest domestic aviation market.
- Geography: Jewar lies near the Yamuna, along the Yamuna Expressway.

Tamil Nadu link: Chennai airport's domestic terminal is named after Kamaraj and its international terminal after Anna. Tamil Nadu's international airports are Chennai, Coimbatore and Tiruchirappalli (Madurai is a customs airport); a second greenfield airport for Chennai is planned at Parandur.

8 TTD introduces 'Garuda Map' app to guide Tirupati pilgrims

Technology

News

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) introduced 'Garuda Map', a digital guide app that helps pilgrims reach places in Tirumala–Tirupati without help (Oct 2026). Users can search by typing or speaking; it shows walking/vehicle distance, travel time and alternative routes. It comes ahead of the Navaratri Brahmotsavam on 12–20 Oct.

Key facts

App	Garuda Map – TTD
Search	By typing or voice; e.g. 'Kalyana Katta' (tonsure halls)
Listings	Darshan entries, queue complexes, laddu counters, lodging, free annaprasadam, water, medical and emergency centres
Routing	Walking/vehicle distance, time, faster alternatives
Festival	Navaratri Brahmotsavam 12–20 Oct; lakhs expected on Garuda Vahana Seva day; VIP break darshan and arjitha sevas cancelled

Background

- Geography: Tirumala is in the Seshachalam range of the Eastern Ghats (seven hills – 'Ezhumalai'), in Andhra Pradesh's Tirupati district (formed 2022). Seshachalam is a biosphere reserve (2010), famous for red sanders.
- TTD: an autonomous trust set up in 1932 under a Madras Government Act; one of the world's richest temple bodies. The Tirupati laddu got a GI tag in 2009.
- Garuda Vahana Seva: Garuda is the mount of Lord Vishnu; it is the holiest day of the Brahmotsavam.
- Technology: GPS is American; India's own navigation system is 'NavIC' (IRNSS, ISRO).
- Devotional literature: the Alvars sang of Lord Venkateswara; Tallapaka Annamacharya (15th c.) composed thousands of kirtanas.

Tamil Nadu link: when Andhra State was formed in 1953, Tirupati went to Andhra; after the 'northern border struggle' led by Ma. Po. Sivagnanam, Tiruttani joined Tamil Nadu on 1 April 1960. In Sangam literature, Venkatam marked the northern boundary of the Tamil land ('Vadavenkatam Thenkumari').

9 Minister Ranjith Kumar launches wildlife ambulance in Chennai

Tamil Nadu

News

At the Wildlife Week closing ceremony at the Guindy Children's Nature Park, Chennai, Forest Minister R.V. Ranjith Kumar flagged off a 'wildlife ambulance' to give immediate treatment to injured wild animals in and around Chennai (Oct 2026). He released an SOP book on monitoring and releasing sea turtles and gave kits to snake-rescue volunteers registered on the 'Naagam' app.

Key facts

Event	Wildlife ambulance launch – Wildlife Week closing
Venue	Guindy Children's Nature Park, Chennai (1959)
Minister	R.V. Ranjith Kumar – Forests
Also	Sea-turtle SOP book; kits for 'Naagam' app snake rescuers; prizes for painting, quiz, photo contests
Minister said	Elephant and Nilgiri tahr numbers in Tamil Nadu have risen considerably

Background

- Guindy National Park is one of the very few national parks inside a city (declared in 1976), known for blackbuck and spotted deer. The Children's Park opened in 1959.
- Law: Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 (amended 2022); Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1960. Article 48A (State) and 51A(g) (citizen's duty of compassion for living creatures); the 42nd Amendment moved 'Forests' and 'wild animals' to the Concurrent List.
- Sea turtles: Olive Ridleys nest on Tamil Nadu's coast from Chennai to Cuddalore and Nagapattinam in December–March; the Forest Department hatches eggs in hatcheries and releases the young. Odisha's Gahirmatha sees mass nesting (arribada).
- Wildlife Week: 2–8 October; the 2026 week began on 2 October.
- Green cover: the National Forest Policy 1988 targets 33% of land under forest/tree cover; Tamil Nadu also aims for 33% green cover.

Tamil Nadu link: the Arignar Anna Zoological Park, Vandalur (begun in Chennai in 1855), is among India's oldest public zoos; Vedanthangal is India's oldest bird sanctuary.

10 Minister Rajeev opens help desk for the Online Consent Management and Monitoring System

Tamil Nadu

News

Dr V.K. Rajeev, Minister for Environment and Climate Change, opened the help desk for the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board's (TNPCB) Online Consent Management and Monitoring System (OCMMS) on 9 Oct 2026 at the Board's head office, 76 Mount Road, Guindy, Chennai. It guides factories and entrepreneurs in filling consent and authorisation / Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) applications online and uploading documents.

Key facts

System	Online Consent Management and Monitoring System (OCMMS)
Body	Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB)
Minister	Dr V.K. Rajeev – Environment and Climate Change
Venue	TNPCB HQ, 3rd floor, Mount Road, Guindy, Chennai
Contact	044-43722000; helpdesk@tnpcb.gov.in; working days 10 am–5.45 pm; walk-in on Fridays
Aim	Cut delays and office visits; simplify procedures

Background

- Pollution control boards: the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) was set up in 1974 under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act; TNPCB was formed in 1982. Air Act 1981; Environment (Protection) Act 1986 (after the Bhopal gas tragedy).
- Consent types: 'Consent to Establish' (CTE) before building a unit; 'Consent to Operate' (CTO) before production. CPCB categories: Red, Orange, Green, White – White-category units need no consent.
- EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) makes the maker or importer responsible for collecting and recycling the waste from its products – under the Plastic Waste Management Rules, E-Waste Rules 2022 and Battery Waste Rules 2022.
- Constitution: Article 48A – environmental protection as a Directive Principle; Article 51A(g) – citizens' Fundamental Duty (42nd Amendment, 1976). The Water Act was passed under Article 252 with the States' consent.
- The National Green Tribunal (NGT, 2010) hears environmental cases; its Southern Zone bench sits in Chennai.

Tamil Nadu link: TNPCB is headquartered at Guindy, Chennai, as is the NGT Southern bench. Tamil Nadu's 'Manjappai' campaign (2021) promotes cloth bags over single-use plastic.

11 NFDC-NFAI adds three Sivaji Ganesan films to the national collection

Tamil Nadu

News

The NFDC–National Film Archive of India (NFAI), Pune, added 35 mm prints of three Sivaji Ganesan films – 'Thiruvilayadal' (1965), 'Thiruvarutchelvar' (1967) and 'Thillana Mohanambal' (1968) – to its national collection (8 Oct 2026). All three were directed by A.P. Nagarajan. FTII film research officer Aparna Subramanian acquired and donated the prints.

Key facts

Films	Thiruvilayadal (1965), Thiruvarutchelvar (1967), Thillana Mohanambal (1968)
Director	A.P. Nagarajan (all three)
Donor	Aparna Subramanian, FTII research officer; collected in Chennai on 13 Sept 2026
Note	'Thiruvarutchelvar' was not held in any format before; the other two are second copies
Archive	NFAI, Pune – set up in 1964

Background

- Sivaji Ganesan: born V.C. Ganesan (Chinnaiah Manrayar Ganesamoorthy) on 1 Oct 1928 at Villupuram; Periyar called him 'Sivaji' after his role as Shivaji in a 1946 play. His first film was 'Parasakthi' (1952); he died on 21 July 2001.
- Honours: Best Actor at the 1960 Afro-Asian Film Festival, Cairo, for 'Veerapandiya Kattabomman' – the first Indian actor to win it; France's 'Chevalier' (1995); Dadasaheb Phalke Award (1996); Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan.
- Thiruvilayadal is based on Paranjothi Munivar's 'Thiruvilayadal Puranam' – Lord Shiva's 64 divine plays at Madurai; Nagesh's 'Dharumi' role is famous. Thillana Mohanambal comes from Kothamangalam Subbu's serial in Ananda Vikatan – the story of a nadaswaram player and a dancer.
- NFAI was set up at Pune in 1964 under the I&B Ministry; in 2022 Films Division, NFAI, the Directorate of Film Festivals and CFSI were merged into the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC). The 'National Film Heritage Mission' (NFHM) restores and digitises old films.
- Science: dyes in old colour prints break down, causing 'magenta fading'; cold, low-humidity storage is essential.

Tamil Nadu link: Sivaji Ganesan was born at Villupuram; 'Thiruvilayadal' draws on the sacred lore of Madurai's Meenakshi–Sundareswarar temple. The Sivaji Ganesan memorial (Manimandapam, 2017) stands at Adyar, Chennai.

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1 Indian Foreign Service (IFS) Day 2026 – 9 October (80th year)

Important Days

News

9 October is observed every year as 'IFS Day' to mark the Government of India's creation of the Indian Foreign Service on 9 Oct 1946; in 2026 the service completes 80 years. On 12 Oct 2026 External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar interacted with IFS officers of the 2011 batch attending mid-career training.

Key facts

Date	9 Oct – the IFS was created (1946)
Observed	IFS Day observed since 2011
First batch	First batch recruited through UPSC in 1948
Training	Foundation course – LBSNAA, Mussoorie; then the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service, New Delhi
Minister	External Affairs Minister – Dr S. Jaishankar (since 2019)

Background

- History: K.P.S. Menon was independent India's first Foreign Secretary (1948–52). Nehru, the first PM, was also the first External Affairs Minister. The Foreign Service Institute was renamed the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service in 2020.
- Constitution: Article 51 (Directive Principle) – promote international peace and security; 'foreign affairs' is in the Union List.
- Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961) – privileges of diplomats. Panchsheel – 1954, India–China.

Tamil Nadu link: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar comes from a Tamil family; his father, strategic analyst K. Subrahmanyam, was born in Tiruchirappalli. Jaishankar was Foreign Secretary in 2015–18.

2 International Day of the Girl Child 2026 (11 October)

Important Days

News

11 October is the International Day of the Girl Child. The 2026 theme (UN, UNICEF) is 'End child marriage and invest in girls' rights'. UNICEF says about one in five girls worldwide is married before 18, and over 12 million girls are married as children every year.

Key facts

Date	11 Oct – International Day of the Girl Child
2026 theme	End child marriage and invest in girls' rights
Resolution	UNGA resolution 66/170 – 19 Dec 2011; first observed 2012
India	National Girl Child Day – 24 Jan (since 2008)

Background

- Indian law: the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006 – 18 for women, 21 for men; earlier the 'Sarda Act' (1929). POCSO Act 2012.
- 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' – 22 Jan 2015, Panipat (Haryana); the 'Sukanya Samriddhi' savings scheme began the same day.
- Globally, girls aged 15–19 are twice as likely as boys to be out of education, employment or training (UNICEF). Child marriage is highest in sub-Saharan Africa.

Tamil Nadu link: the 'Cradle Baby Scheme' began at Salem in 1992 to stop female infanticide; the 'Chief Minister's Girl Child Protection Scheme' came the same year. The 'Pudhumai Penn' scheme (5 Sept 2022) gives ₹1,000 a month to girls from government schools who go on to higher education.

3 Smriti Mandhana named UNICEF India Celebrity Advocate

Appointments

News

Indian women's cricket captain Smriti Mandhana was named UNICEF India 'Celebrity Advocate' on 11 Oct 2026, the International Day of the Girl Child. She will champion equal chances for girls to learn, play and thrive, adolescent girls' health and girls' participation in sport. UNICEF India Representative Cynthia McCaffrey called investing in girls' rights 'a nation's smartest investment'.

Key facts

Role	UNICEF India Celebrity Advocate – 11 Oct 2026
Focus	Girls' education, health and sport; empowering adolescent girls
Mandhana	Born in Mumbai in 1996; grew up in Sangli, Maharashtra; captain in all formats since 6 Oct 2026
Honours	Arjuna Award (2019); ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year (2018, 2021)
Other UNICEF India faces	Sachin Tendulkar (Regional Ambassador), Kareena Kapoor Khan, Ayushmann Khurrana (National Ambassadors), Keerthy Suresh (Celebrity Advocate)

Background

- UNICEF: the UN Children's Fund, set up on 11 Dec 1946, headquartered in New York; it won the 1965 Nobel Peace Prize.
- India has 253 million adolescents – a fifth of its population and 21% of the world's adolescents.
- Cricket: India's women won their first ICC Women's ODI World Cup in 2025, with Mandhana in the team. She holds the fastest ODI century by an Indian woman (50 balls, 2025).

Tamil Nadu link: Chennai-born actor Keerthy Suresh is also a UNICEF India Celebrity Advocate. Chennai's M.A. Chidambaram Stadium, Chepauk (1916), is one of India's oldest cricket grounds.

4 Economics Nobel 2026 – Robert E. Hall and Michael Woodford

Awards

News

On 12 Oct 2026 the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced in Stockholm that the 2026 Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences (Economics Nobel) goes to Robert E. Hall (Stanford University) and Michael Woodford (Columbia University), both of the USA, 'for microeconomic foundations of macroeconomic stabilisation'. The prize of SEK 12 million is shared equally.

Key facts

Laureates	Robert E. Hall (Stanford), Michael Woodford (Columbia) – both American
Citation	For microeconomic foundations of macroeconomic stabilisation
Contribution	Macro models built on forward-looking households and firms; Woodford's work underpins central banks' 'forward guidance'
Prize	SEK 12 million (raised from 2026); announced 12 Oct 2026
2025 winners	Joel Mokyr, Philippe Aghion, Peter Howitt – innovation-driven growth

Background

- The economics prize is not in Alfred Nobel's will; Sweden's central bank (Sveriges Riksbank) founded it in 1968; the first prize (1969) went to Ragnar Frisch and Jan Tinbergen.
- Indian-origin laureates: Amartya Sen (1998 – welfare economics), Abhijit Banerjee (2019 – with Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer, on global poverty). Women: Elinor Ostrom (2009), Esther Duflo (2019), Claudia Goldin (2023).
- Macroeconomics deals with national output, inflation and jobs; microeconomics with individual and firm decisions. India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC, 2016) sets the repo rate; the inflation target is 4% (±2%).

Tamil Nadu link: Nobel laureates with Tamil roots – C.V. Raman (Physics 1930, born at Thiruvanaikaval, Tiruchirappalli), S. Chandrasekhar (Physics 1983), Venkatraman Ramakrishnan (Chemistry 2009, Chidambaram). Navi Pillay, the 2026 Peace laureate, is also of Tamil descent.

5 'Project DRISHTI' – AI system to secure freight wagons, launched by Northeast Frontier Railway

Technology

News

Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR), a zone of Indian Railways, introduced 'Project DRISHTI', an artificial intelligence (AI) system developed with IIT Guwahati (launched 25 Sept 2026 at Maligaon, Guwahati). Trackside high-speed cameras let the AI read each wagon number on a passing freight train and check whether doors, locks and seals are intact; open doors, damage or pilferage are flagged to staff at once.

Key facts

System	Project DRISHTI – AI-based monitoring of freight-wagon locks and seals
Developed by	Northeast Frontier Railway + IIT Guwahati (Technology Innovation and Development Foundation)
Launch	25 Sept 2026, NFR HQ, Maligaon, Guwahati
Use	Helps the Railway Protection Force (RPF) and commercial staff; faster checks at night and in bad weather

Background

- Note: this is not an all-India Railways launch but an NFR zone project, with phased expansion planned. It is not a track-defect detection system either.
- Related: 'Kavach' – the indigenous automatic train protection (ATP) system developed by RDSO; Railway Protection Force Act 1957.
- India's first train ran on 16 Apr 1853 from Bombay to Thane (34 km). The Railway Budget was merged with the Union Budget in 2017.

Tamil Nadu link: Southern Railway, the first zone of Indian Railways, was formed on 14 Apr 1951 with headquarters in Chennai. The Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Perambur, Chennai, built the first 'Vande Bharat' train (2018).

6 PM Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PM-DDKY) completes a year; top districts named

Agriculture

News

The 'PM Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana' (PM-DDKY), which aims to lift 100 low-productivity farm districts, completed one year on 11 Oct 2026. At a review led by Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on 12 Oct, Gaya (Bihar), Nagaur (Rajasthan) and Umaria (Madhya Pradesh) were named the top three districts. A 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan' on soil health and balanced fertiliser use will run from 22 Oct to 30 Nov 2026.

Key facts

Launch	11 Oct 2025 – PM Modi, IARI Pusa (Cabinet approval 16 July 2025)
Scale	₹24,000 crore a year; 6 years; 100 districts (at least one per State)
Convergence	36 schemes of 11 ministries; about 1.7 crore farmers
Selection	Low productivity, low cropping intensity, low farm credit
Top three (2026)	Gaya (Bihar), Nagaur (Rajasthan), Umaria (Madhya Pradesh)

Background

- Model: NITI Aayog's Aspirational Districts Programme (2018). Six objectives – productivity, crop diversification, post-harvest storage, irrigation, credit and governance; 121 indicators, monthly ranking.
- Committees: chaired by the Collector at district level, the Chief Secretary at State level and the Union Agriculture Minister nationally.

- Related schemes: PM-KISAN (2019, ₹6,000 a year), Soil Health Card (2015, Suratgarh, Rajasthan), PM Fasal Bima Yojana (2016).

Tamil Nadu link: four Tamil Nadu districts are in the scheme – Ramanathapuram, Sivaganga, Thoothukudi and Virudhunagar (mostly rain-fed, dry southern districts). No Tamil Nadu district was among the 2026 award winners.

7 Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses completes one year (11 Oct 2026)

Agriculture

News

The 'Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses', launched by PM Modi at Pusa (IARI), New Delhi, on 11 Oct 2025, completed one year on 11 Oct 2026. With an outlay of ₹11,440 crore over six years (2025–26 to 2030–31), it targets 350 lakh tonnes of pulses by 2030–31. In its first year (2025–26) output rose to 274.09 lakh tonnes, and pulse imports fell 31.52% by value.

Key facts

Launch	11 Oct 2025 – PM Modi, IARI Pusa (Cabinet approval 1 Oct 2025)
Outlay	₹11,440 crore; 2025–26 to 2030–31
Targets (2030–31)	Output 350 lakh tonnes; area 310 lakh ha; yield 1,130 kg/ha
Procurement	Tur, urad, masoor – 100% bought at MSP through NAFED and NCCF for 4 years
Year one	Output 274.09 lakh tonnes; imports down 31.52% by value

Background

- India is the world's largest producer, consumer and importer of pulses. Chickpea (gram) is the biggest pulse crop. Imports come from Canada and Australia (lentils, peas), Myanmar and Mozambique (tur).
- Science: 'Rhizobium' bacteria in the root nodules of pulse crops fix atmospheric nitrogen and enrich the soil.
- 2016 was the UN International Year of Pulses; 10 Feb is World Pulses Day. NAFED dates from 1958; purchases are made under PM-AASHA's Price Support Scheme.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu Agricultural University's National Pulses Research Centre is at Vamban, Pudukkottai district – the Union Agriculture Minister praised its varieties. In the Cauvery delta, black gram and green gram are grown on rice-fallow land after the paddy harvest.

8 Draft National Steel Policy – Vision 2047: 604 MT capacity target by 2047

Industry

News

The Union Ministry of Steel released the 'Draft National Steel Policy – Vision 2047' for comments (Oct 2026). It will replace the National Steel Policy 2017. By 2047 it targets raising crude steel capacity from about 220 million tonnes (MT) to 604 MT (about three times), per-capita steel consumption from about 116 kg to 302 kg, and cutting CO2 emissions from 2.54 to 1.54 tonnes per tonne of steel.

Key facts

Capacity	604 MT (2047) – about 220 MT now
Production / use	Production 531 MT; finished-steel consumption 505 MT
Per capita	302 kg (about 116 kg now)
Emissions	2.54 → 1.54 t CO2 per tonne (39% cut)
Earlier policy	NSP 2017 – 300 MT capacity and 160 kg per capita by 2030–31

Background

- India is the world's second-largest crude steel producer after China. About 92% of its coking coal is imported.
- History: TISCO – 1907, Jamshedpur (Jamsetji Tata). The Second Five-Year Plan set up Bhilai (USSR), Rourkela (West Germany) and Durgapur (Britain) steel plants.
- Green steel: green-hydrogen-based direct reduced iron (DRI) and carbon capture (CCUS); India's 'Green Steel Taxonomy' grades steel by emissions. There is a PLI scheme for specialty steel.

Tamil Nadu link: SAIL's Salem Steel Plant makes stainless steel; Kanjamalai in Salem district has iron ore (magnetite). Tamil Nadu's automobile industry is a major user of steel.

9 Forest Rights Act 2006 – second regional review conference, Kolkata

Governance

News

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs held the second regional review conference on implementing the Forest Rights Act 2006 in Kolkata on 9 Oct 2026, opened by Secretary Ranjana Chopra. Eight States took part – West Bengal, Assam, Tripura, Jharkhand, Odisha, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Nationally (as of 31 Aug 2026) over 54 lakh claims have been received and about 25 lakh titles distributed; about 11 lakh are pending.

Key facts

Organiser	Ministry of Tribal Affairs; Secretary Ranjana Chopra
Date & venue	9 Oct 2026, Kolkata; first conference – Bengaluru (10 Sept 2026, southern States)
National figures	Claims 54 lakh+; titles about 25 lakh; pending about 11 lakh; rejected 18 lakh+ (31.08.2026)
Directions	Action plans for Gram Sabhas; Community Forest Resource (CFR) management plans; entering rights in revenue and forest records; National FRA portal and app

Background

- Law: the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006, in force from 31 Dec 2007. Individual rights (up to 4 hectares), community rights, minor forest produce, Community Forest Resource (CFR) rights and PVTG habitat rights.
- Eligibility: occupation of forest land before 13 Dec 2005; 'Other Traditional Forest Dwellers' must prove 75 years (three generations) of residence. The Gram Sabha starts the claim process; then the Sub-Divisional and District Level Committees.

- Constitution: Fifth Schedule (Article 244) – Scheduled Areas; PESA Act 1996 empowers Gram Sabhas in Scheduled Areas. Article 338A – National Commission for Scheduled Tribes.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's 6 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) are the Todas, Kotas, Kurumbas, Irulas, Paniyas and Kattunayakans (mostly in the Nilgiris). The first regional conference, for the southern States, was held in Bengaluru.

10 India's first synchronised nationwide Sarus Crane survey (BNHS)

Environment

News

The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) held India's first synchronised nationwide Sarus Crane survey on 10–11 Oct 2026 (10 Oct was World Migratory Bird Day). Under BNHS's Central Asian Flyway programme, led by Director Kishor Rithe and Deputy Director Dr P. Sathiyaselvam, State Forest Departments, farmers, colleges and citizen scientists took part. It aims to set a baseline count, map breeding sites and identify power lines that kill the birds.

Key facts

Run by	Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) – citizen-science method
Dates	10–11 Oct 2026
Earlier estimate	International Crane Foundation (2026): about 23,255 in India; Uttar Pradesh 19,918
Sarus	World's tallest flying bird (about 1.5 m); Antigone antigone
Status	IUCN Vulnerable; Wildlife Act Schedule I; CITES Appendix II

Background

- Sarus crane: the only crane species that breeds as a resident in India; pairs stay together for life, making it a symbol of marital fidelity; it is Uttar Pradesh's State bird.
- Range: Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana. Threats: wetland loss, pesticides, power-line collisions, egg theft.
- BNHS: a non-government research body founded in Mumbai in 1883; Dr Salim Ali, the 'Birdman of India', was associated with it.
- Note: this is not an official government 'census' but a citizen-science 'survey' run by BNHS; results are not yet out.

Tamil Nadu link: the Sarus crane does not normally occur in Tamil Nadu. BNHS runs a 'Bird Migration Study Centre' at Point Calimere (Kodiakkarai), Nagapattinam district. Vedanthangal is India's oldest bird sanctuary.

11 Gujarat's Ambaji temple 'Mohanthal' prasad gets GI tag

History & Culture

News

'Ambaji Mohanthal', the prasad sweet of the Ambaji temple in Banaskantha district, Gujarat, has received a Geographical Indication (GI) tag. The applicant is Shree Arasuri Ambaji Mata Devsthan Trust; application No. 1228 (filed 18 Apr 2024); certificate dated 1 Oct 2026. On 11 Oct 2026, the first day of Navratri, Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trade Marks Prof. Unnat P. Pandit handed over the certificate.

Key facts

Product	Ambaji Mohanthal – sweet of gram flour, ghee and sugar; Class 30 (foodstuffs)
Applicant	Shree Arasuri Ambaji Mata Devsthan Trust
Timeline	Filed 18 Apr 2024; certificate 1 Oct 2026; handed over 11 Oct 2026; valid to 17 Apr 2034
Ambaji	Banaskantha district; Arasur hills (Aravallis); one of the 51 Shakti Peethas; the 'Visa Yantra' is worshipped instead of an idol

Background

- Law: the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999, in force from 2003; registration lasts 10 years and is renewable. It fulfils India's obligation under the WTO's TRIPS Agreement.
- India's first GI – Darjeeling Tea (2004–05). The GI Registry is at Guindy, Chennai, under DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- Other Gujarat GIs: Patan Patola, Kutch embroidery, Jamnagari Bandhani, Gir Kesar mango, Bhalia wheat.
- Temple prasad with GI: Tirupati Laddu (2009), Palani Panchamirtham (2019).

Tamil Nadu link: the GI Registry is in Chennai. Panchamirtham of the Palani Murugan temple (Dindigul district) got a GI in 2019 – Tamil Nadu's first temple prasad with a GI. Srivilliputhur Palkova and Kovilpatti Kadalai Mittai are other GI-tagged Tamil Nadu sweets.

12 Sunil Bharti Mittal conferred France's Legion of Honour (Chevalier)

Awards

News

French President Emmanuel Macron conferred on Sunil Bharti Mittal, founder-chairman of Bharti Enterprises, the rank of 'Chevalier' (Knight) of the Legion of Honour (Légion d'honneur), France's highest order (announced Oct 2026). It recognises his work strengthening India–France economic ties and his contribution to telecom and digital infrastructure. The insignia will be presented on 28 Oct 2026 at the Embassy of France, New Delhi.

Key facts

Award	Legion of Honour – rank of Chevalier (Knight)
Conferred by	French President Emmanuel Macron
Ceremony	28 Oct 2026, French Embassy, New Delhi; Ambassador Thierry Mathou
Mittal	Founder-chairman, Bharti Enterprises (Airtel); Ludhiana, Punjab
Other honours	Padma Bhushan (2007); honorary KBE from the UK (2024)

Background

- Legion of Honour: founded by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802; France's highest order (civil and military). Five grades (lowest to highest): Chevalier, Officier, Commandeur, Grand Officier, Grand-Croix – Mittal received the first grade.
- India–France: strategic partnership since 1998; 'Horizon 2047' roadmap (2023); Rafale fighters; the International Solar Alliance (ISA, 2015 – launched by India and France, HQ Gurugram).
- Indian civilian awards (highest first): Bharat Ratna, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan, Padma Shri.

Tamil Nadu link: Puducherry was French territory – de facto transfer on 1 Nov 1954, de jure on 16 Aug 1962. Sivaji Ganesan (1995) and Kamal Haasan (2016) received France's 'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres' – a different order from the Legion of Honour.

13 INS Trishul reaches Plymouth, UK, for India–UK naval exercise KONKAN-26

Defence

News

INS Trishul, an Indian Navy guided-missile stealth frigate, reached Plymouth, UK, for the India–UK naval exercise KONKAN-26. The exercise runs on 8–15 Oct 2026 off Plymouth in a harbour phase and a sea phase – air, surface and anti-submarine drills, cross-deck helicopter landings and firing.

Key facts

Exercise	KONKAN-26 – India–UK naval exercise; 8–15 Oct 2026
Venue	Plymouth, UK
Ship	INS Trishul (F43) – Talwar-class frigate; built in Russia; commissioned 25 June 2003
Since	KONKAN exercise held since 2004
KONKAN 2025	First combined carrier strike group drill – INS Vikrant and HMS Prince of Wales

Background

- India–UK: Comprehensive Strategic Partnership; 'Vision 2035' roadmap; the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) was signed in July 2025.
- Other India–UK exercises: 'Ajeya Warrior' – army; 'Indradhanush' – air force.
- 'Trishul' is Lord Shiva's trident. In March 2024 INS Trishul rescued 23 Pakistani crew from a hijacked Iranian fishing vessel near Socotra.
- Geography: Plymouth is on England's south-west Devon coast on the English Channel; the 'Mayflower' sailed from here to America in 1620.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's waters come under the Eastern Naval Command; INS Adyar is the naval base in Chennai. (INS Vikrant, which took part in KONKAN 2025, was built in Kochi.)

14 AI misuse and nuclear war could threaten humanity by 2100, warns Lancet Commission

Indices & Reports

News

The Lancet Commission on 21st-Century Global Threats to Health released its report on 11 Oct 2026 at the World Health Summit in Berlin. It lists 17 threats to human health for 2025–2100. Two of them – malicious use of artificial intelligence (including making biological weapons) and nuclear war ('nuclear famine') – could end humanity in the most extreme scenarios. But the Commission calls their likelihood 'low' and says severe outcomes are 'not inevitable'.

Key facts

Report	Lancet Commission on 21st-Century Global Threats to Health
Released	11 Oct 2026, World Health Summit, Berlin
Co-chairs	Christopher Murray (IHME, University of Washington), Natalia Kanem (former UNFPA Executive Director)
Extinction-level	Malicious AI use; nuclear war – likelihood 'low'
Major catastrophic	Air pollution, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), child malnutrition, climate change

Background

- DALY (disability-adjusted life years) = years of life lost to early death + years lived with disability. IHME runs the 'Global Burden of Disease' (GBD) study.
- The Lancet: a British weekly medical journal founded by Thomas Wakley in London in 1823; editor Richard Horton.
- Nuclear winter: soot from nuclear war blocks sunlight in the upper atmosphere, crops fail and famine follows. Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT, 1968) – India has not signed it.
- AMR: microbes becoming resistant to medicines; India's National Action Plan on AMR – 2017.

Tamil Nadu link: the 'Chennai Declaration' (2012) by Indian medical societies to tackle antimicrobial resistance. India's largest nuclear power plant is at Kudankulam (Tirunelveli district), built with Russia; Kalpakkam hosts the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR).

15 Record warmth in the Pacific as El Niño strengthens: WMO

Environment

News

According to the World Meteorological Organization's (WMO) Global Seasonal Climate Update (8 Oct 2026), sea-surface temperatures in the central-eastern equatorial Pacific (Niño 3.4) are forecast to be about +3.7°C above normal in Oct–Dec 2026, beating the previous peak of +2.6°C (Nov 2015 – Jan 2016). In early October the Niño 3.4 sea temperature crossed 30°C for the first time. This may be one of the strongest El Niños since 1950, with a near-100% chance of lasting to Feb 2027.

Key facts

Report	WMO Global Seasonal Climate Update – 8 Oct 2026
Forecast	Niño 3.4 Oct–Dec +3.7°C above normal; previous peak +2.6°C (2015–16)
Measured	Niño 3.4 sea temperature above 30°C for the first time in early Oct
Indian Ocean	Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) – positive, peaking in October
WMO head	Secretary-General Celeste Saulo (Argentina) – first woman SG

Background

- El Niño: unusual warming of the central-eastern equatorial Pacific, every 2–7 years. Spanish for 'the boy / Christ child', as Peruvian fishermen noticed it around Christmas. The opposite phase is La Niña; together they form ENSO (El Niño–Southern Oscillation).
- Impact on India: El Niño usually weakens the southwest monsoon; a positive IOD can partly offset it.
- WMO is a UN specialised agency in Geneva; its Convention came into force on 23 March 1950, hence World Meteorological Day on 23 March. India Meteorological Department (IMD) – 1875.
- 2024 was the hottest year on record, about 1.55°C above pre-industrial (1850–1900). The Paris Agreement (2015) aims to limit warming to 1.5°C.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu gets most of its rain from the northeast monsoon (Oct–Dec), which tends to be normal or above normal in El Niño and positive-IOD years – e.g. the 2015 Chennai floods during the strong 2015 El Niño (a tendency, not a fixed rule).

16 Transgender doctor Dr Ruth John Paul completes MD, joins ESI hospital

Health

News

Dr Koyyala Ruth John Paul, a transgender woman from Khammam district, Telangana, completed her MD in Emergency Medicine at ESIC Medical College, Hyderabad, and joined ESI Hospital, Sanathnagar, Hyderabad, as a senior resident (Oct 2026). In 2023 the media described her as the first transgender person admitted to a medical PG course.

Key facts

Doctor	Dr Koyyala Ruth John Paul – Khammam, Telangana
MBBS	2018 – Malla Reddy Institute of Medical Sciences
MD	Emergency Medicine – ESIC Medical College, Hyderabad (admitted 2023 on a third-gender seat after a High Court interim order)
Now	Senior resident, ESI Hospital, Sanathnagar
Earlier	2022 – among Telangana's first transgender government doctors, at Osmania General Hospital

Background

- Supreme Court – NALSA v. Union of India (15 Apr 2014): recognised transgender persons as the 'third gender' with rights under Articles 14, 15, 16, 19 and 21.
- The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 bans discrimination and set up a National Council for Transgender Persons; the 'SMILE' scheme (2022) supports rehabilitation.

- ESIC – Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESI Act 1948), under the Ministry of Labour and Employment.
- Note: the Oct 2026 report does not itself claim 'India's first transgender PG doctor'; the 'first' label was used at her 2023 admission.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu set up India's first Transgender (Aravani) Welfare Board in 2008; 15 April is 'Transgender Day' in Tamil Nadu. K. Prithika Yashini became India's first transgender police Sub-Inspector (2017, Tamil Nadu).

17 INS Mangrol, third Mahe-class anti-submarine warfare craft, commissioned in Mumbai

Defence

News

INS Mangrol, the third Mahe-class 'Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft' (ASW-SWC) built by Cochin Shipyard (CSL), was commissioned on 12 Oct 2026 at the Naval Dockyard, Mumbai, in the presence of Vice Admiral Sanjay Vatsayan, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command. It has over 80% indigenous content and is named after Mangrol port in Gujarat.

Key facts

Ship	INS Mangrol – Mahe-class ASW-SWC (third from CSL)
Builder	Cochin Shipyard Ltd, Kochi
Specs	About 78 m long; 25 knots; DRDO 'Abhay' sonar
Name	Mangrol port, Junagadh district, Gujarat; revives the old minesweeper INS Mangrol (served till 2004)
Programme	16 ASW-SWCs – 8 by GRSE (Arnala class) + 8 by CSL (Mahe class)

Background

- Role: hunting submarines in shallow coastal waters, laying mines, search and rescue; they replace the old 'Abhay'-class corvettes.
- Earlier ships of the type: Arnala (June 2025, the first ASW-SWC), Androth, Mahe, Anjadip (Feb 2026, Chennai) and Malvan (July 2026, Kochi).
- Naval Commands: Western – Mumbai; Eastern – Visakhapatnam; Southern – Kochi (training). Cochin Shipyard built INS Vikrant, India's first indigenous aircraft carrier (commissioned 2 Sept 2022).
- Geography: Mangrol is on Gujarat's Saurashtra coast (Arabian Sea), in Junagadh district.

Tamil Nadu link: INS Anjadip, a ship of the same type, was commissioned at Chennai Port on 27 Feb 2026. INS Rajali at Arakkonam is one of Asia's largest naval air stations.

18 IIT Madras's Sudha Gopalakrishnan Brain Centre dedicated to the nation

Science

News

On 11 Oct 2026 PM Narendra Modi dedicated the Sudha Gopalakrishnan Brain Centre (SGBC) at IIT Madras to the nation, with CM C. Joseph Vijay present. He launched a global mission to build 3D cellular-resolution atlases of more than 100 human brains, from foetus to old age, and released 'C-STROKE', described as the world's first 3D atlas of a brain affected by ischaemic stroke.

Key facts

Centre	Sudha Gopalakrishnan Brain Centre (SGBC), IIT Madras – started 2022
Funding	Kris Gopalakrishnan (Infosys co-founder) and Sudha Gopalakrishnan; Prem Watsa
C-STROKE	World's first 3D atlas of a stroke brain; 1,000+ sections; processed on 'Param Shakti' supercomputer
DHARANI	2024 – 3D atlas of the human foetal brain (5,132 sections)
Partners	CMC Vellore, NIMHANS, Saveetha Medical College and others

Background

- Science: the cerebrum, the largest part, handles thought and memory; the cerebellum keeps balance; the medulla controls involuntary actions like heartbeat and breathing. The neuron is the basic unit of the nervous system.
- Stroke: blocked blood flow to the brain causes 'ischaemic' stroke; a burst blood vessel causes 'haemorrhagic' stroke.
- Supercomputing: India's first supercomputer 'PARAM 8000' (1991, C-DAC Pune); National Supercomputing Mission (NSM) – 2015. 'Param Shakti' is at IIT Kharagpur.
- IIT Madras was founded in 1959 with West German assistance; it has repeatedly topped the NIRF rankings.

Tamil Nadu link: the centre is at IIT Madras; CMC Vellore and Saveetha Medical College in Tamil Nadu are partners. On the same visit the PM opened a Chennai Metro Phase II stretch (item 17).

19 CERVAVAC – India's first indigenous HPV vaccine gets WHO prequalification

Health

News

On 5 Oct 2026 the World Health Organization (WHO) granted 'prequalification' to CERVAVAC, Serum Institute of India's (Pune) vaccine against cervical cancer and India's first indigenous HPV (human papillomavirus) vaccine. UN agencies such as UNICEF and GAVI can now buy and supply it to other countries. It is the Serum Institute's 32nd WHO-prequalified product.

Key facts

Vaccine	CERVAVAC – quadrivalent HPV vaccine: types 6, 11, 16, 18
Maker	Serum Institute of India, Pune; DBT–BIRAC support
DCGI approval	July 2022; launched 1 Sept 2022
Age group	Girls and boys aged 9–26; 2 doses at 9–14 years
WHO status	Prequalified – 5 Oct 2026

Background

- Science: HPV 16 and 18 are high-risk types behind most cervical cancers; 6 and 11 cause genital warts. Harald zur Hausen won the 2008 Medicine Nobel for linking HPV to cervical cancer.
- India: cervical cancer is the second most common cancer among Indian women after breast cancer. Under the national HPV drive, 14-year-old girls get a free single dose of 'Gardasil-4' (registered on U-WIN); over 80 lakh doses had been given by Sept 2026.
- WHO's '90-70-90' targets for 2030: 90% of girls vaccinated, 70% of women screened, 90% of patients treated.
- Institutions: Department of Biotechnology (DBT) 1986; BIRAC – DBT's public-sector company (2012). Serum Institute – founded by Cyrus Poonawalla in 1966; the world's largest vaccine maker by doses.

Tamil Nadu link: the Union Health Ministry named Tamil Nadu among the leading States in the national HPV drive. The Cancer Institute, Adyar, Chennai (1954) was founded by Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy; Dr V. Shanta later led it.

20 President Droupadi Murmu appoints Governors for six States

Appointments

News

On 12 Oct 2026 President Droupadi Murmu appointed Governors for six States: Tamil Nadu – R.V. Arlekar (moved from Keralam); Keralam – Om Prakash Mathur (moved from Sikkim); Odisha – Braj Mohan Ram; Karnataka – Dr Sudha Yadav; Uttarakhand – Dhal Singh Bisen; Sikkim – Dushyant Gautam. Each appointment takes effect from the date the person assumes charge.

Key facts

Tamil Nadu	R.V. Arlekar
Keralam	Om Prakash Mathur (ex-Rajya Sabha MP, Rajasthan)
Karnataka	Dr Sudha Yadav – succeeds Thaawarchand Gehlot; the State's second woman Governor
Odisha	Braj Mohan Ram – succeeds Hari Babu Kambhampati
Uttarakhand	Dhal Singh Bisen (ex-MP, Balaghat) – succeeds Lt Gen (retd) Gurmit Singh
Sikkim	Dushyant Gautam (ex-Rajya Sabha MP)

Background

- Article 154 – the State's executive power vests in the Governor; Article 163 – a Council of Ministers headed by the Chief Minister aids and advises the Governor; Article 164 – the Governor appoints the Chief Minister.

- Article 158 – the Governor may not be a member of Parliament or a State legislature or hold any office of profit. Article 161 – power to pardon. Article 200 – assent to Bills; Article 213 – ordinances.
- Sarkaria Commission (1983–88) on Centre–State relations recommended that a Governor be someone outside active politics and from outside the State. Punchhi Commission (2007).
- Karnataka's first woman Governor was V.S. Ramadevi (1999–2002), who was also India's first woman Chief Election Commissioner (1990).

Tamil Nadu link: the Rajamannar Committee (1969–71), set up by Tamil Nadu CM Karunanidhi, made recommendations on State autonomy and the Governor's office – the first State-appointed committee on Centre–State relations.

21 R.V. Arlekar appointed full-time Governor of Tamil Nadu by the President

Appointments

News

Rashtrapati Bhavan announced on 12 Oct 2026 that Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Governor of Keralam who was holding additional charge of Tamil Nadu, is now the full-time Governor of Tamil Nadu. He had taken oath as Tamil Nadu Governor (additional charge) at Lok Bhavan, Chennai on 12 March 2026. The previous Governor, R.N. Ravi, was moved to West Bengal. Om Prakash Mathur is the new Governor of Keralam.

Key facts

Governor	Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar – full-time (announced 12 Oct 2026)
Earlier	Governor of Keralam (from 2 Jan 2025); TN additional charge (from 12 Mar 2026)
Past posts	Governor of Himachal Pradesh (2021–23) and Bihar (2023–25); Speaker, Goa Assembly (2012–15)
Born	23 Apr 1954, Panaji, Goa
New Keralam Governor	Om Prakash Mathur (was Governor of Sikkim)

Background

- Constitution: Article 153 – a Governor for each State; the 7th Amendment (1956) lets one person be Governor of two or more States. Article 155 – the President appoints the Governor by warrant under his hand and seal.
- Article 156 – holds office during the pleasure of the President (normally 5 years); Article 157 – minimum age 35; Article 159 – oath given by the Chief Justice of the State High Court.
- Renaming: the Bill renaming 'Kerala' as 'Keralam' passed Parliament in August 2026 (Article 3, amending the First Schedule); in 1969 'Madras State' became 'Tamil Nadu'.
- Governors' residences have been renamed from 'Raj Bhavan' to 'Lok Bhavan'; Chennai's Lok Bhavan is at Guindy.

Tamil Nadu link: M. Fathima Beevi (1997–2001) was Tamil Nadu's first woman Governor – she was also the first woman judge of the Supreme Court (1989). In 'State of Tamil Nadu v. Governor of Tamil Nadu', the Supreme Court on 8 Apr 2025 used Article 142 to deem 10 pending Bills as assented to.

1 Right to Information Act completes 21 years (12 Oct)

Polity

News

The Right to Information Act 2005 completed 21 years of full operation on 12 Oct 2026. A report released for the occasion by Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS) found 3.85 lakh appeals/complaints pending across 28 information commissions as of 30 June 2026; nine commissions returned 37,701 cases without orders in July 2025 – June 2026.

Key facts

Act	RTI Act 2005 – Presidential assent 15 June 2005; fully in force 12 Oct 2005
Pendency	3.85 lakh appeals/complaints – 28 commissions (30.06.2026)
Chief Information Commissioner	Raj Kumar Goyal (since 15 Dec 2025)
Time limit	Section 7 – reply within 30 days; 48 hours if life or liberty is involved
Amendments	RTI (Amendment) Act 2019 – tenure and pay set by Central rules; DPDP Act 2023 amended Section 8(1)(j) (from 13 Nov 2025)

Background

- Constitution: the right to information is part of Article 19(1)(a) (freedom of speech and expression) – State of U.P. v. Raj Narain (1975). Rajasthan's 'Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan' (MKSS, Aruna Roy) movement paved the way for RTI.
- Structure: Central Information Commission (Section 12) – a Chief plus up to 10 Commissioners; State Information Commissions (Section 15). Section 4(1)(b) – 17 categories of suo motu disclosure; Section 8 – exemptions; Section 20 – penalties. The first Chief Information Commissioner was Wajahat Habibullah.
- 2019 amendment: the 5-year term and pay equal to Election Commissioners were earlier fixed in the Act; now set by Central rules (currently 3 years).

Tamil Nadu link: before the 2005 central law, Tamil Nadu enacted the 'Right to Information Act 1997' – among the country's first State laws, alongside Goa. The Tamil Nadu State Information Commission was set up in 2005; the State Chief Information Commissioner's post is currently vacant.

2 PM GatiShakti National Master Plan completes 5 years (13 Oct)

Infrastructure

News

The 'PM GatiShakti National Master Plan', which integrates infrastructure planning, completed 5 years on 13 Oct 2026. PM Modi launched it at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi, on 13 Oct 2021. It now covers 58 central ministries/departments and all 36 States/UTs, with over 23,493 data layers (as of 12 Oct 2026). Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said the next phase will focus on multimodal connectivity, district-level planning and social sectors such as schools and health centres.

Key facts

Launch	13 Oct 2021 – PM Modi, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi; ₹100 lakh crore
7 engines	Roads, railways, ports, waterways, airports, mass transport, logistics
Platform	GIS platform built by BISAG-N (Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics), Gandhinagar
At 5 years	58 ministries/departments; 36 States/UTs; 23,493+ data layers
Implementation	DPIIT (Ministry of Commerce and Industry); the Network Planning Group (NPG) appraises projects

Background

- National Logistics Policy (NLP) – 17 Sept 2022; target: a top-25 rank in the World Bank's Logistics Performance Index (LPI) by 2030. India's logistics cost was 7.97% of GDP in 2023–24 (DPIIT–NCAER).
- LEADS (Logistics Ease Across Different States) ranks States' logistics performance. Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (2022) is in Vadodara, Gujarat.
- Schemes brought together: Bharatmala (roads), Sagarmala (ports), inland waterways, UDAN (regional flights) and Dedicated Freight Corridors.

Tamil Nadu link: the 'Tamil Nadu Logistics Policy and Integrated Logistics Plan 2023' (18 Mar 2023) uses the GatiShakti-style two-tier structure – an Empowered Group of Secretaries and a Network Planning Group. Chennai, Thoothukudi (V.O. Chidambaranar) and Kamarajar (Ennore) are major ports.

3 World Standards Day 2026 (14 October)

Important Days

News

14 October is World Standards Day. The 2026 theme (IEC, ISO, ITU) is 'Shared vision for a better world: Spotlight on SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy'. The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) holds awareness events across the country – e.g. a 'Quality Walk' at Faridabad (9 Oct).

Key facts

Date	14 Oct – World Standards Day (since 1970)
2026 theme	Shared vision for a better world: Spotlight on SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy
Why 14 Oct	14 Oct 1946 – delegates of 25 countries met in London to create an international standards body; ISO was formed in 1947 (HQ Geneva)
Organisers	IEC (1906), ISO (1947), ITU (1865)
India	Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) – Ministry of Consumer Affairs

Background

- BIS: earlier the Indian Standards Institution (ISI, 1947); working from 1 Apr 1987 under the BIS Act 1986; now governed by the BIS Act 2016. HQ – Manak Bhavan, New Delhi. Industrial products carry the 'ISI' mark.
- Quality marks: BIS 'Hallmark' for gold jewellery (with a HUID number); 'Agmark' for farm produce (1937 Act); FSSAI for food; 'Jaivik Bharat' for organic food.

- SDG 7 – affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all (UN 2030 Agenda – 17 goals, 2015).

Tamil Nadu link: BIS's Southern Regional Office is in Chennai, with a branch office at Coimbatore. BIS has held World Standards Day events at Coimbatore and Villupuram in earlier years. Tamil Nadu is a leader in wind power – relevant to SDG 7.

4 International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction 2026 (13 October)

Important Days

News

13 October is the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction. The 2026 theme (UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction – UNDRR) is 'Resilience Starts at Home', stressing safe, disaster-resilient housing. Events run from 5 to 15 Oct in Geneva and elsewhere.

Key facts

Date	13 Oct – International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction
2026 theme	Resilience Starts at Home
Origin	1989 – at the UN General Assembly's call; fixed on 13 Oct from 2009
UNDRR	UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction – Geneva
India	NDMA – 22nd Formation Day, 28 Sept 2026; theme 'Risk Reduction in Action'

Background

- Sendai Framework 2015–2030: adopted on 18 Mar 2015 at the 3rd UN World Conference in Sendai, Japan; 4 priorities and 7 global targets. It replaced the 'Hyogo Framework for Action' (2005–2015).
- India: the Disaster Management Act 2005 – NDMA (chaired by the PM), State authorities (chaired by CMs) and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF). The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) was launched by PM Modi on 23 Sept 2019 at the UN Climate Action Summit, New York; secretariat in New Delhi.
- National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) – New Delhi; the 'Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar' is the national disaster-management award (23 Jan).

Tamil Nadu link: the 26 Dec 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami devastated Tamil Nadu, especially Nagapattinam, and led to the Disaster Management Act 2005. Cyclones Gaja (2018) and Michaung (2023) followed. The CM chairs the Tamil Nadu State Disaster Management Authority.

5 IMF nudges global growth forecast up to 3.1%, warns of rising debt and AI investment risks

Economy

News

In its World Economic Outlook (WEO) released on 13 Oct 2026 at the IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings in Bangkok, Thailand, the International Monetary Fund raised its 2026 global growth forecast from 3.0% to 3.1%, with 3.4% for 2027. India is projected at 7.0% for both 2026 and 2027 – the fastest among major economies. The IMF said AI investment is propping up growth but a correction could follow if productivity gains fail to appear, and that rising public debt could push up borrowing costs.

Key facts

Global growth	2026 – 3.1% (3.0% in July); 2027 – 3.4%
India	2026 – 7.0%; 2027 – 7.0% (fiscal-year basis)
Released	13 Oct 2026 – IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings, Bangkok (12–18 Oct)
Risks	Public debt to top 100% of world GDP before 2030 (Georgieva); AI investment correction risk; Middle East war, oil prices
Leadership	MD Kristalina Georgieva; Chief Economist Silvana Tenreyro (since 10 Aug 2026)

Background

- IMF: created with the World Bank at the Bretton Woods (USA) conference in July 1944; HQ Washington DC; 191 members. Special Drawing Rights (SDR) are the IMF's international reserve asset.
- IMF reports: World Economic Outlook (WEO – April and October; updates in January and July), Fiscal Monitor, Global Financial Stability Report (GFSR). The World Bank publishes 'Global Economic Prospects' (GEP).
- The Annual Meetings are held outside Washington every third year – Marrakech (Morocco) in 2023, Bangkok in 2026. Silvana Tenreyro, a former Bank of England MPC member, succeeded Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu targets a US$1 trillion economy by 2030. Tamil Nadu leads India's electronics exports, so the AI-linked electronics investment wave matters for the State.

6 India and UK inaugurate a Genomics Centre of Excellence

Science

News

During the 8th India–UK Science and Innovation Council meeting (12 Oct 2026, New Delhi), Dr Jitendra Singh, Minister of State for Science and Technology, and UK Secretary of State Jonathan Reynolds jointly inaugurated the 'BRIC-CDFD – ONT India Genomics Centre of Excellence'. Its partners are the Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics (CDFD), Hyderabad, and the UK's Oxford Nanopore Technologies (ONT). Focus areas: rare diseases, cancer, infectious-disease surveillance and newborn screening.

Key facts

Centre	BRIC-CDFD – ONT India Genomics Centre of Excellence
Partners	CDFD, Hyderabad (under DBT's BRIC) + Oxford Nanopore Technologies (UK)
Inaugurated	12 Oct 2026, New Delhi – Dr Jitendra Singh, Jonathan Reynolds
Occasion	8th India–UK Science and Innovation Council (SIC)
Technology	Nanopore sequencing – reads DNA from changes in electric current as a strand passes through a tiny pore

Background

- Genome India project: Department of Biotechnology, Jan 2020; whole genomes of 10,000 Indians; data released on 9 Jan 2025 and stored at the Indian Biological Data Centre (IBDC), Faridabad.
- DNA fingerprinting was invented by Alec Jeffreys (UK) in 1984; its pioneer in India was Dr Lalji Singh (CCMB, Hyderabad). BRIC was formed in 2023 by merging 13 DBT autonomous institutes.
- India–UK: the 'Technology Security Initiative' (TSI, July 2024); 'Vision 2035' (July 2025, alongside the CETA trade deal).

Tamil Nadu link: IIT Madras was among the institutions in the Genome India project. Oral cancer, one of the centre's focus areas, is among the commoner cancers in Tamil Nadu too.

7 India hosts the first BIMSTEC Home Ministers' Meeting; 'Delhi Declaration' adopted

International Relations

News

The first BIMSTEC Home Ministers' Meeting was held in New Delhi on 13 Oct 2026, chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Five items were approved – a BIMSTEC Convention against Trafficking in Persons, a Plan of Action on Drug Control, an MoU on capacity building against money laundering and terror financing, a Plan of Action on illicit financial flows, and a Bay of Bengal disaster-preparedness plan – and a 'Delhi Declaration' was adopted. Shah said 'drug trafficking is death trafficking'.

Key facts

Meeting	1st BIMSTEC Home Ministers' Meeting – 13 Oct 2026, New Delhi
Chair	Amit Shah; senior officials' meeting (12 Oct) – Home Secretary Govind Mohan
Adopted	5 documents + 'Delhi Declaration' – terrorism, drugs, human trafficking, cybercrime
Origin	At the 6th BIMSTEC Summit (Bangkok, 4 Apr 2025) PM Modi offered to host the first meeting
Note	All 7 members took part; Bangladesh's Home Minister skipped it – an official delegation attended

Background

- BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation): Bangkok Declaration, 6 June 1997 (BIST-EC – Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand); Myanmar joined in 1997, Nepal and Bhutan in 2004. 7 members – 5 South Asian, 2 South-East Asian.

- Secretariat – Dhaka (2014). BIMSTEC Charter – signed at the 5th Summit in Colombo (2022), in force from 20 May 2024. Secretary General – Indra Mani Pandey (India).
- 6th Summit (Bangkok, 2025) – 'Bangkok Vision 2030'; the PM announced 'BODHI' (training 300 youth a year) and a disaster management centre of excellence in India.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's long Bay of Bengal coast matters for BIMSTEC maritime and disaster cooperation. Curbing drug and gold smuggling across the Palk Strait (Rameswaram–Sri Lanka) ties in with the meeting's drug-control plan.

8 ICMR's first high-altitude medicine research centre – foundation stone laid at Keylong, Himachal Pradesh

Health

News

Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda laid the foundation stone of the 'ICMR Centre for High Altitude Medicine and Public Health Research' (ICMR-CHAMP) at Keylong, headquarters of Lahaul–Spiti district, Himachal Pradesh (about 3,080 m / 10,000 ft), on 12 Oct 2026. At about ₹36 crore, ICMR's existing Keylong field station will become a permanent year-round centre. Partners include the Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS), DRDO and the Himachal government; it will serve both soldiers and civilians, including tribal people.

Key facts

Centre	ICMR-CHAMP – India's first centre for high-altitude medicine and public health
Location	Keylong, Lahaul–Spiti district, Himachal Pradesh (about 3,080 m)
Foundation	12 Oct 2026 – Health Minister J.P. Nadda; ICMR DG Dr Rajiv Bahl
Cost	About ₹36 crore
Research areas	High-altitude physiology, climate-sensitive diseases, maternal and child health, nutrition, mental health, disaster medicine, telemedicine, drone delivery

Background

- ICMR began in 1911 as the Indian Research Fund Association (IRFA) and was renamed ICMR in 1949; it is under the Department of Health Research (DHR, 2007), whose Secretary is also ICMR's Director General.
- High-altitude illness (background): caused by hypoxia – acute mountain sickness (AMS), fluid in the lungs (HAPE) and brain swelling (HACE); immediate descent and oxygen are needed. Air pressure falls as altitude rises.
- Geography: Keylong lies on the Bhaga river; the 'Atal Tunnel' (about 9.02 km, opened Oct 2020) links Manali with Lahaul valley all year – the world's longest highway tunnel above 10,000 ft.

Tamil Nadu link: Chennai hosts two ICMR national institutes – the National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis (NIRT; begun in 1956 as the Tuberculosis Research Centre) and the National Institute of Epidemiology (NIE).

9 'Bharat Rice' launched for Army troops

Defence

News

'Bharat Rice' for Indian Army troops was launched in New Delhi on 12 Oct 2026 in the presence of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Food Minister Pralhad Joshi. High-quality ration rice, milled to defence specifications with minimal broken grains, will be supplied by NAFED from 2026–27 directly to Army Supply Depots, including in Ladakh and the North East (10 kg and 30 kg bags). An Army–FCI MoU was also signed letting the Army use FCI warehouses in emergencies.

Key facts

Launch	12 Oct 2026, New Delhi – Rajnath Singh, Pralhad Joshi
Supplier	NAFED – from 2026–27, directly to Army Supply Depots
Nature	High-quality ration rice to defence specs; 10/30 kg bags (not reported as fortified or sold via canteens)
MoU	Army–FCI MoU – 5 years; use of FCI warehouses, labour and equipment
Led by	Army's Directorate General of Supplies & Transport (ASC)

Background

- The 'Bharat' brand: Bharat Rice was launched for the public in Feb 2024 at ₹29/kg through NAFED, NCCF and Kendriya Bhandar; Bharat Atta (wheat flour) and Bharat Dal (chana) also aim to check prices.
- The Food Corporation of India (FCI) was set up in 1965 under the Food Corporations Act 1964. National Food Security Act (NFSA) – 2013. 'Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan' – Lal Bahadur Shastri (1965).
- NAFED – National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (1958); NCCF – National Cooperative Consumers' Federation (1965).

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu runs a universal Public Distribution System; the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation (TNCSC, 1972) procures paddy. The Cauvery delta (Thanjavur) is the 'rice bowl of Tamil Nadu'.

10 IBSAMAR IX (2026): India–Brazil–South Africa maritime exercise, led by India

Defence

News

IBSAMAR IX, the 9th trilateral exercise of the Indian, Brazilian and South African navies, began at South Africa's Simon's Town naval base on 12 Oct 2026. Hosted by South Africa, it is led by India. INS Tarkash (with a Chetak helicopter), Brazil's BNS Barroso and South African warships and a submarine are taking part. Theme: 'Stronger Together Towards a Shared Future in the Maritime Domain'.

Key facts

Edition	IBSAMAR IX (9th); began 12 Oct 2026
Venue	Simon's Town, Western Cape, South Africa (False Bay)
Lead	India – lead nation; South Africa – host
Indian ship	INS Tarkash – Talwar-class frigate (Yantar shipyard, Russia; commissioned 2012)
Drills	Surface, anti-air, anti-submarine warfare; VBSS boarding; anti-piracy; search and rescue

Background

- IBSAMAR – since 2008, usually every two years. IBSA Dialogue Forum – 'Brasilia Declaration', 6 June 2003. All three are members of BRICS and the G20.
- Geography: Simon's Town is near the Cape of Good Hope, where the Atlantic meets the Indian Ocean. In 1498 Vasco da Gama rounded this cape to reach Calicut.
- En route, INS Tarkash called at Victoria (Seychelles) and Mombasa (Kenya).

Tamil Nadu link: a large Tamil-origin community lives in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal (Durban) – including Navi Pillay, the 2026 Peace Nobel laureate. Thillaiyadi Valliammai took part in Gandhi's satyagraha in South Africa.

11 INDRA 2026: India–Russia naval exercise – INS Sahyadri reaches Vladivostok

Defence

News

Indian Navy stealth frigate INS Sahyadri reached Vladivostok, Russia, on 10 Oct 2026 for the India–Russia bilateral naval exercise INDRA 2026. The exercise runs 13–18 Oct with a harbour phase and coordinated operations at sea. Before this, the ship took part in the ASEAN–India Maritime Exercise (AIME 2026) in the Philippines.

Key facts

Exercise	INDRA 2026 – India–Russia navies; 13–18 Oct 2026
Venue	Vladivostok, Russia (Sea of Japan / Pacific)
Ship	INS Sahyadri – Shivalik-class (Project-17) stealth frigate; built by Mazagon Dock; commissioned 2012; Eastern Fleet
History	INDRA – since 2003; 2025 was the 14th edition (harbour phase at Chennai)
Context	India's 'MAHASAGAR' maritime vision

Background

- Other India–Russia drills: the first tri-service INDRA was in 2017 at Vladivostok. India and Russia share a 'Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership'; the 23rd annual summit was in Dec 2025.
- MAHASAGAR – Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions (2025), expanding the earlier 'SAGAR' (2015) vision.
- Geography: Vladivostok hosts Russia's Pacific Fleet and is the eastern end of the Trans-Siberian Railway.

Tamil Nadu link: INDRA 2025's harbour phase was held in Chennai. The Chennai–Vladivostok 'Eastern Maritime Corridor' cuts shipping time between the two countries. Kudankulam nuclear plant is built with Russian cooperation.

12 International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) opens new headquarters at Lodhi Estate, Delhi

Environment

News

Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav opened the new headquarters office of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) at 55 Lodhi Estate, New Delhi, on 12 Oct 2026. IBCA Director General Dr S.P. Yadav welcomed guests. The alliance now has 29 member countries and 5 observers. India is providing ₹150 crore over 2023–24 to 2027–28.

Key facts

HQ	55 Lodhi Estate, New Delhi – opened 12 Oct 2026
Opened by	Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav (IBCA President)
Director General	Dr S.P. Yadav
Members	29 member countries, 5 observers
Seven big cats	Tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, cheetah, jaguar, puma

Background

- IBCA: announced by PM Modi at Mysuru on 9 Apr 2023 at the 50th-anniversary event of Project Tiger; came into force as a treaty-based body in Jan 2025; first Assembly – 16 June 2025, New Delhi.
- Project Tiger – 1 Apr 1973, first reserve Jim Corbett (Uttarakhand); National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) – 2006. Of the seven big cats, all but the jaguar and puma occur in India; the cheetah was reintroduced at Kuno National Park (MP) in 2022.
- Other India-led international bodies: the International Solar Alliance (ISA, Gurugram), the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI, New Delhi) and the Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA, 2023).

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has 5 tiger reserves – Mudumalai, Anamalai, Sathyamangalam, Kalakad–Mundanthurai and Srivilliputhur–Megamalai. Mudumalai is part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve and adjoins Karnataka's Bandipur near Mysuru.

13 Lakshadweep declared a fully literate Union Territory under ULLAS

Education

News

Under ULLAS – Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram, Administrator Praful Patel declared Lakshadweep a 'fully literate' Union Territory at Kavaratti (Oct 2026). All 1,113 non-literate adults identified in a survey passed the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Test (FLNAT) conducted by NIOS. It is the second UT to reach this status, after Ladakh (June 2024).

Key facts

Declared by	Administrator Praful Patel, Kavaratti – Oct 2026
Learners	1,113 adults – passed NIOS's FLNAT
Benchmark	95% literacy = 'fully literate' (ULLAS)
Earlier	Ladakh (June 2024, first UT); Mizoram (May 2025, first State); Goa; Tripura; Himachal Pradesh; Sikkim; Uttarakhand
Census 2011	Lakshadweep literacy 91.85%

Background

- ULLAS – Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society; a centrally sponsored scheme of the Education Ministry (2022–27), aligned with NEP 2020, for people aged 15+ who missed school.
- Census definition: a person aged 7+ who can read and write with understanding in any language is literate. India was 74.04% in 2011; highest Kerala (93.91%), lowest Bihar.
- Lakshadweep: 36 islands, capital Kavaratti; under the Kerala High Court; the 8° Channel separates Minicoy from the Maldives and the 9° Channel separates it from the rest of Lakshadweep.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's literacy was 80.09% in Census 2011, with Kanniyakumari the top district. The 'Arivoli Iyakkam' led literacy work in Tamil Nadu in the 1990s. Tamil Nadu has not yet been declared fully literate under ULLAS.

14 Karnataka High Court strikes down SC/ST quota hike that took total reservation to 56%

Polity

News

On 12 Oct 2026 the Karnataka High Court struck down Sections 3 and 4 of a 2022 Karnataka law – to the extent they cross 50% – which had raised SC reservation from 15% to 17% and ST from 3% to 7%, taking total reservation (SC + ST + OBC 32%) to 56%. A bench of Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice K.S. Hemalekha held that the Indra Sawhney (1992) 50% ceiling 'is not an elastic limit' and that no extraordinary circumstances were shown.

Key facts

Law	Karnataka SC and ST (Reservation of Seats in Educational Institutions and of Appointments or Posts in the Services under the State) Act, 2022 (assent 11 Jan 2023)
Hike	SC 15 → 17%; ST 3 → 7%; OBC 32%; total 50 → 56%
Verdict	12 Oct 2026 – CJ Vibhu Bakhru, Justice K.S. Hemalekha; Sections 3 and 4 struck down beyond 50% (violating Articles 14, 15, 16)
Other ground	National Commissions for SCs and STs were not consulted beforehand (Articles 338(9), 338A(9))
Next	State weighing a Supreme Court appeal; request to the Centre for Ninth Schedule protection pending

Background

- Indra Sawhney v. Union of India (1992, the 'Mandal case', 9 judges) – reservation must not exceed 50% save in extraordinary situations; 'creamy layer' excluded from OBCs. Maharashtra's Maratha quota was struck down in the Jaishri Patil case (May 2021).
- Articles 15(4), 16(4) – special provisions for backward classes. The 103rd Amendment (2019) – 10% for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS), upheld in Janhit Abhiyan (Nov 2022); but the High Court said it does not lift the 50% ceiling for other categories.
- Ninth Schedule – 1st Amendment (1951), Article 31B. I.R. Coelho case (2007): laws added after 24 Apr 1973 can still be reviewed for violating the basic structure.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has 69% reservation under its 1994 Act (Act 45 of 1994), placed in the Ninth Schedule by the 76th Constitutional Amendment (1994) under CM Jayalalithaa. Split: BC 30%, MBC 20%, SC 18%, ST 1%. A challenge to its validity is pending in the Supreme Court. Karnataka's Act title mirrors Tamil Nadu's.

15 World Bank Poverty and Equity Brief (Oct 2026): extreme poverty in India at 2.6%

Indices & Reports

News

According to the World Bank's Poverty and Equity Brief for India (Oct 2026), extreme poverty at the international line of $3 a day (2021 PPP) fell from 27.1% in 2011 to 2.6% in 2023. At the $4.20 lower-middle-income line, poverty fell from 57.7% to 16.1%, lifting about 496 million people; it is projected to fall to 12.1% by 2028, though the pace is slowing.

Key facts

Extreme poverty ($3/day)	27.1% (2011) → 2.6% (2023)
$4.20/day line	57.7% → 16.1%; about 496 million lifted; 12.1% by 2028 (projected)
Concentration	About 57% of the poor in the belt from Uttar Pradesh to West Bengal
Jobs	2017–2023: about 134 million jobs added
New poverty line	$3.00/day (2021 PPP) from June 2025; earlier $2.15 (2017 PPP)

Background

- World Bank: the IBRD was created at the 1944 Bretton Woods conference; HQ Washington DC; President Ajay Banga (since 2023). These briefs come out twice a year, before the Spring and Annual Meetings.
- Indian poverty estimates: Tendulkar Committee (2009), Rangarajan Committee (2014). NITI Aayog's Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) – health, education, living standards; 11.28% in 2022–23.
- PPP (purchasing power parity) adjusts for price differences between countries. New lines: lower-middle income $4.20, upper-middle income $8.30.

Tamil Nadu link: in NITI Aayog's National MPI (2023), Tamil Nadu is among the States with the lowest multidimensional poverty (about 2.2%), credited to welfare schemes like the PDS, the breakfast scheme and the women's entitlement grant.

16 Madurai ornamental fisheries cluster – Union Fisheries Secretary inspects

Tamil Nadu

News

Union Fisheries Secretary Dr Abhilaksh Likhi visited the Madurai ornamental fisheries cluster – one of four 'priority clusters' under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) – on 12 Oct 2026. An integrated ornamental fish farm at Mukkampatti near Melur, set up under PMMSY for ₹25 lakh, breeds over 30 varieties including guppy, molly, goldfish and koi (about 2 lakh fish a year).

Key facts

Cluster	Madurai ornamental fisheries cluster – PMMSY priority cluster
Other priority clusters	Hazaribagh (Jharkhand) – pearl; Lakshadweep – seaweed; Andaman & Nicobar – tuna
Visit	12 Oct 2026 – Secretary Dr Abhilaksh Likhi; Mukkampatti, Melur
Farm	PMMSY – ₹25 lakh; 30+ varieties; about 2 lakh fish a year
Total clusters	34 fisheries clusters nationwide (all types)

Background

- PMMSY: launched 10 Sept 2020 with ₹20,050 crore – the largest-ever investment in fisheries; Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.
- National Fish Farmers' Day – 10 July: in 1957 Dr Hiralal Chaudhury and Dr K.H. Alikunhi achieved induced breeding of Indian major carps. India's first organic fisheries cluster is Soreng (Sikkim).
- India is the world's second-largest fish producer (after China); the 'Blue Revolution' refers to fisheries development.

Tamil Nadu link: Kolathur in Chennai is the main hub of India's ornamental fish trade, followed by Madurai. Chennai hosts the ICAR-Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture (CIBA); Nagapattinam has the Dr J. Jayalalithaa Fisheries University.

17 Tamil Nadu Government Environment Awards 2025 – applications invited

Tamil Nadu

News

Tamil Nadu's Department of Environment and Climate Change invited applications for the 2025 Environment Awards on 13 Oct 2026. Individuals, educational institutions and NGOs in Tamil Nadu may apply for work done between 1 Jan and 31 Dec 2025. Applications must be made online at awards.tn.gov.in by 12 Nov 2026.

Key facts

Department	Department of Environment and Climate Change, Govt of Tamil Nadu
Categories	Environmental awareness & education; environmental protection; environmental management – ₹50,000 / ₹30,000 / ₹20,000 each
Research article	Best research article – ₹50,000 (published in 2025; Tamil or English)
Eligibility	Individuals aged 18+; one category only
Last date	12 Nov 2026 – awards.tn.gov.in

Background

- This is separate from the 'Green Champion Award' given by the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) – ₹1 lakh each.
- Tamil Nadu's green initiatives: the 'Green Tamil Nadu Mission' (2021) targeting 33% green cover; 'Meendum Manjappai' (2021); the Tamil Nadu Climate Change Mission.
- Tamil Nadu Additional Chief Secretary Supriya Sahu won the UN Environment Programme's (UNEP) 'Champions of the Earth' 2025 award. UNEP is headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya (1972).

Tamil Nadu link: this is entirely a Tamil Nadu Government award. Note: the 13 Oct notice only invites applications – no winners have been named yet.

18 CM Vijay meets Andhra CM Chandrababu Naidu, seeks more Krishna water for Chennai under Telugu Ganga

Tamil Nadu

News

Tamil Nadu CM C. Joseph Vijay met Andhra Pradesh CM N. Chandrababu Naidu at his residence in Undavalli, Amaravati, on 13 Oct 2026 and asked for additional Krishna water for Chennai's drinking needs under the Telugu Ganga project. Naidu said El Niño had cut Krishna inflows this year, that 4.08 TMC had already been released, and that more would be considered depending on availability. No new quantity was agreed. The Godavari–Cauvery river link and Andhra's proposed dams on rivers flowing into Tamil Nadu were also discussed.

Key facts

Meeting	13 Oct 2026, Undavalli (Amaravati), Andhra Pradesh
Entitlement	12 TMC a year (after losses) – 8 TMC in July–Oct, 4 TMC in Jan–Apr
This year	AP released 4.08 TMC; TN received 2.251 TMC (to 9 Oct, at the border)
Route	Srisailam → Somasila → Kandaleru → Poondi (Sathyamurthy Sagar)
Canal	Kandaleru–Poondi 177 km (about 152 in AP, 25 in TN); 'Zero Point' – Thamaraikuppam, Uthukottai (Tiruvallur district)

Background

- History: the Telugu Ganga agreement – 1983, N.T. Rama Rao (AP) and M.G. Ramachandran (TN). Originally 15 TMC, with Maharashtra, Karnataka and AP giving 5 TMC each; 12 TMC after losses. Water has flowed from Kandaleru to Poondi since 1996.
- Geography: the Krishna rises at Mahabaleshwar (Maharashtra) and flows through Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana and AP into the Bay of Bengal; tributaries include the Tungabhadra and

Bhima. 1 TMC = one thousand million cubic feet.

- Constitution: Article 262 – inter-State river water disputes; Inter-State River Water Disputes Act 1956. Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal I – the Bachawat Tribunal; Tribunal II – the Brijesh Kumar Tribunal.

Tamil Nadu link: Chennai's drinking-water lakes are Poondi, Puzhal (Red Hills), Chembarambakkam, Cholavaram and Kannankottai–Thervoy Kandigai. Telugu Ganga water is stored at Poondi and sent on to the other lakes. CM Vijay's August 2026 Karnataka visit on the Cauvery–Mekedatu issue was cancelled.

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1 15 Oct: International Day of Rural Women, Global Handwashing Day, White Cane Safety Day 2026

Important Days

News

Three days fall on 15 Oct. The International Day of Rural Women 2026 theme (UN) is 'Rural Women Farmers Caring for Mother Nature' – women produce half the world's food yet own only about 15% of farmland. Global Handwashing Day carries the multi-year theme 'Be a Handwashing Hero!'. White Cane Safety Day marks the independence of people who are blind or visually impaired.

Key facts

Rural Women Day	2026: 'Rural Women Farmers Caring for Mother Nature'; UNGA resolution 62/136 (2007); first observed 2008
India	15 Oct – 'Mahila Kisan Diwas' (Women Farmers' Day), since 2016, Agriculture Ministry
Handwashing Day	Begun at Stockholm World Water Week 2008; first observed 15 Oct 2008; theme 'Be a Handwashing Hero!' (multi-year)
White Cane Day	US Congress resolution (6 Oct 1964); first proclaimed by President Lyndon Johnson; no 2026 theme

Background

- The white cane: in 1921 James Biggs, a photographer from Bristol (UK), painted his walking stick white after losing his sight; the US Lions Clubs popularised it from 1930. Braille was devised by Louis Braille (France); 4 Jan is World Braille Day.
- Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 – recognised disabilities raised from 7 to 21 (including blindness and low vision); in force from 19 Apr 2017; 4% reservation in government jobs.
- Handwashing: washing hands with soap for at least 20 seconds cuts diarrhoea and respiratory infections. In 1847 Ignaz Semmelweis (Hungary) showed the importance of handwashing in hospitals.

Tamil Nadu link: 'Magalir Thittam' self-help groups – Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women (1983); the 'Kalaignar Magalir Urimai Thogai' – ₹1,000 a month (from 15 Sept 2023). Tamil Nadu has a separate Department for the Welfare of Differently Abled Persons.

2 Oscar Whitfield named Young Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2026

Awards

News

Results of the 62nd Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition, run by the Natural History Museum (NHM), London, were announced on 13 Oct 2026. Oscar Whitfield, a British boy living in Zimbabwe, won Young Wildlife Photographer of the Year for 'Labour of Love', showing a dung beetle rolling a ball of dung. The overall winner was Federico Veronesi of Italy for 'The Aftermath', a female elephant carrying her dead calf in Namibia.

Key facts

Young winner	Oscar Whitfield (British, lives in Zimbabwe) – 'Labour of Love' (dung beetle); 11–14 category
Overall winner	Federico Veronesi (Italy) – 'The Aftermath' (elephant, Huab River valley, Namibia)
Competition	62nd edition; since 1965; Natural History Museum, London; 65,403 entries from 121 countries
Indian winner	Sitaram Raul – Behaviour: Invertebrates – 'Shifting Sand' (a scorpion in the Thar Desert)
Exhibition	16 Oct 2026 – 11 July 2027, NHM London

Background

- Dung beetles roll and bury dung, helping soil fertility, seed dispersal and parasite control; some species navigate by the Milky Way. Ancient Egyptians held the 'scarab' beetle sacred.
- Geography: Zimbabwe – capital Harare; Victoria Falls (Zambezi river) on the Zimbabwe–Zambia border. Namibia – the Namib Desert; the cheetahs brought to India in 2022 came from here.
- The Natural History Museum, London, opened in 1881; it holds collections including Darwin's specimens.

Tamil Nadu link: no Tamil Nadu photographer was among this year's winners. Western Ghats areas of Tamil Nadu such as Mudumalai, Anamalai and Valparai are major spots for wildlife photographers.

3 Kerala launches India's first Red List of Ecosystems assessment

Environment

News

The Kerala State Biodiversity Board (KSBB) launched India's first sub-national ecosystem risk assessment under the IUCN Red List of Ecosystems (RLE) framework at Kollam on 14 Oct 2026. Implemented by the Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI, Peechi) and others, it will assess shola-grasslands, riparian evergreen forests, Myristica swamps, coastal mangroves and river systems. Riparian evergreen forests of the southern Western Ghats are noted to have lost 83% of their area in about 100 years.

Key facts

Launch	14 Oct 2026, Kollam – Kerala State Biodiversity Board (KSBB)
Implementing	Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI), Peechi; MES Asmabi College research centre
Ecosystems	Shola–grassland, riparian evergreen forest, Myristica swamp, mangroves, estuaries, rivers
Outputs	Risk register, ecosystem typology atlas, restoration-priority maps
RLE categories (8)	Collapsed (CO), Critically Endangered (CR), Endangered (EN), Vulnerable (VU), Near Threatened (NT), Least Concern (LC), Data Deficient (DD), Not Evaluated (NE)

Background

- IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature: founded 5 Oct 1948 at Fontainebleau (France); HQ Gland (Switzerland). The Red List of Threatened Species dates from 1964; the Red List of Ecosystems was adopted by IUCN in 2014.
- RLE criteria A–E: A – decline in area; B – restricted distribution; C – degradation of the abiotic environment; D – disruption of biotic processes; E – quantitative risk analysis. The 'Collapsed' category is specific to the RLE.
- Myristica swamps – rare, ancient freshwater swamp forests of the Western Ghats, often called 'living fossils'.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has the same ecosystem types – shola-grasslands of the Nilgiris, Anamalai and Palani hills, and mangroves at Pichavaram (Cuddalore district) and Muthupet (Tiruvarur district). The Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve (1986, India's first) spans Tamil Nadu, Keralam and Karnataka.

4 Indigenous multi-purpose vessel INS Samarthak, built at Kattupalli (Tamil Nadu), to be commissioned

Defence

News

INS Samarthak, the first Multi-Purpose Vessel (MPV) built at Larsen & Toubro's (L&T) Kattupalli shipyard in Tamil Nadu, is to be commissioned at Naval Base Karwar, Karnataka, on 16 Oct 2026. About 107 m long and 3,750 tonnes, with over 75% indigenous content, it will tow targets, launch and recover torpedoes, test indigenous weapons and sensors, act as a mothership for unmanned systems and support disaster relief.

Key facts

Ship	INS Samarthak – first Multi-Purpose Vessel (MPV); second ship 'Utkarsh'
Builder	L&T, Kattupalli shipyard (Tiruvallur district, Tamil Nadu); contract 25 Mar 2022, 2 ships, ₹887 crore
Commissioning	16 Oct 2026 (scheduled), Naval Base Karwar, Karnataka; delivered 27 Aug 2026
Specs	About 107 m long; 3,750 t; 15 knots; 75%+ indigenous
Motto	'Vijayartham Eknishthata' – Victory is our sole aim; crest – an Indian elephant rising from the waves

Background

- Roles: launching and recovering targets and torpedoes, towing, salvage, mothership for unmanned systems, maritime surveillance, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR); it can be converted into a small hospital ship.
- Naval Base Karwar – 'Project Seabird', INS Kadamba; being developed as one of Asia's largest naval bases.
- Note: the ship is not yet commissioned (16 Oct is the scheduled date). There is no ship named 'Shaktak' – the second ship is 'Utkarsh'.

Tamil Nadu link: Samarthak was built at L&T's Kattupalli shipyard in Tiruvallur district near Chennai (near Ennore and Kamarajar Port) and launched there on 14 Oct 2024 in the presence of Navy chief

Adm Dinesh K. Tripathi.

5 Indian Army's Assam Regiment team wins gold at Exercise Cambrian Patrol 2026 in Wales

Defence

News

An Indian Army team from the Assam Regiment won a gold medal at Exercise Cambrian Patrol 2026, one of the world's toughest military patrolling exercises, held by the British Army at Brecon, Wales, in early October 2026. Over 100 teams took part and 10 golds were awarded. The Army said: 'Forged in Grit. Crowned in Gold.' The Nepal Army also won gold.

Key facts

Exercise	Cambrian Patrol 2026 – Brecon, Wales (UK); 2–12/13 Oct 2026
Host	British Army – HQ 160th (Welsh) Brigade
Result	Assam Regiment – gold; 10 golds among 100+ teams
Challenge	About 60 km over 48 hours; 8-member team; up to 32 kg each
Earlier Indian golds	2016 – 2/8 Gorkha Rifles; 2021 – 4/5 Gorkha Rifles; 2023 – 3/5 Gorkha Rifles

Background

- Assam Regiment: raised at Shillong on 15 June 1941; regimental centre – 'Happy Valley', Shillong; mascot – the one-horned rhino; war cry 'Rhino Charge', greeting 'Tagra Raho'. Battle of Kohima, 1944.
- Assam Regiment's Hav. Hangpan Dada won the Ashoka Chakra (2016, posthumously). Some reports say the regiment's 'Bhairav' light-commando battalion won (not officially confirmed).
- The India–UK army exercise is 'Ajeya Warrior'. Wales's capital is Cardiff; the Brecon Beacons (Bannau Brycheiniog) is a national park.

Tamil Nadu link: the Madras Regiment, the Indian Army's oldest regiment, has its centre at Wellington in the Nilgiris, which also hosts the Defence Services Staff College (DSSC).

6 Dr Abdul Kalam's birthday (15 Oct) – Tamil Nadu's 'Youth Awakening Day' since 2015; 'World Students' Day' 2026

Important Days

News

Tamil Nadu observes 15 Oct, the birthday of former President Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, as 'Youth Awakening Day', as announced by CM J. Jayalalithaa on 31 July 2015, four days after his death. The same announcement instituted the 'Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Award' (₹5 lakh, an 8-gram gold medal and a citation), presented on Independence Day (15 Aug) – in 2026 CM Vijay gave it to diabetologist Dr V. Mohan. Though 15 Oct is widely celebrated as 'World Students' Day', the UN has not officially declared it.

Key facts

TN day	15 Oct – Youth Awakening Day (since 2015; 'Youth Inspiration Day' in the English release)
Kalam Award	₹5 lakh + 8 g gold medal + citation; on 15 Aug; for science, student welfare, humanities
2026 awardee	Dr V. Mohan – diabetologist, Chennai (presented by CM Vijay)
World Students' Day	Not declared by the UN (confirmed by UN India); the UN day on 15 Oct is the International Day of Rural Women

Background

- Kalam: born 15 Oct 1931, Rameswaram; India's 11th President (2002–07); 'Missile Man of India'; died 27 July 2015 while lecturing at IIM Shillong; memorial at Pei Karumbu, Rameswaram.
- Honours: Padma Bhushan (1981), Padma Vibhushan (1990), Bharat Ratna (1997). Project Director of SLV-3 – Rohini satellite, 18 July 1980; Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (Agni, Prithvi); Pokhran-II (May 1998).
- Books: 'Wings of Fire' (1999, with Arun Tiwari), 'India 2020', 'Ignited Minds'.

Tamil Nadu link: Kalam was born in Rameswaram and studied at Schwartz School, Ramanathapuram, St Joseph's College, Tiruchirappalli, and MIT, Chennai. Youth Awakening Day and the Kalam Award are both Tamil Nadu Government initiatives.

7 IMF raises India's 2026–27 growth forecast to 7%

Economy

News

In its World Economic Outlook released on 13 Oct 2026 (titled 'Resilience Under Strain, Urgent Choices'), the International Monetary Fund raised India's growth forecast for FY 2026–27 by 0.6 percentage point from July's 6.4% to 7.0%, and projected 7.0% for 2027–28 too (up 0.3 point). Strong domestic demand, services activity, favourable demographics and structural reforms were cited. India grew 7.8% in 2025–26.

Key facts

India 2026–27	7.0% (6.4% in July; +0.6 pp)
India 2027–28	7.0% (+0.3 pp)
2025–26	7.8% growth
RBI (7 Oct 2026)	Repo 5.25% → 5.50% (first hike since Feb 2023); FY27 GDP forecast 7.1%; CPI inflation 5.2%
World	2026 – 3.1%; 2027 – 3.4%

Background

- The IMF gives India's forecasts on a fiscal-year basis (April–March). In the IMF's April 2026 WEO, India was the world's 6th-largest economy by nominal GDP (after GDP rebasing and the rupee's fall).
- Monetary Policy Committee (MPC): created by amending the RBI Act 1934 (2016); 6 members (3 from RBI + 3 appointed by the Centre); chaired by the RBI Governor (Sanjay Malhotra). Inflation target 4% (±2%).

- The repo rate is the rate at which RBI lends short-term to banks; raising it helps curb inflation. GDP is estimated by the National Statistics Office (NSO).

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu aims to become a US$1 trillion economy by 2030; it is India's second-largest State economy.

8 21st Maritime States Development Council (MSDC) meets in Mumbai

Infrastructure

News

The 21st Maritime States Development Council (MSDC) meeting, chaired by Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal, concluded in Mumbai on 13 Oct 2026. It was the first since MSDC became a statutory body under the Indian Ports Act 2025. Targets were set for all ports to adopt 'One Nation One Port Process' (ONOP) reforms and join the 'Sagar Setu' maritime single window by March 2027, and electronic publication of port tariffs was made mandatory.

Key facts

Meeting	21st MSDC – Mumbai, concluded 13 Oct 2026; chaired by Sarbananda Sonowal
Significance	First meeting since becoming a statutory consultative body under the Indian Ports Act 2025
Decisions	ONOP reforms and 'Sagar Setu' onboarding by March 2027; port master plans for non-major ports; mandatory e-publication of tariffs
Shipbuilding	Two credit-risk insurance products – ECGC (export), New India Assurance (domestic)
TN presence	Tamil Nadu Maritime Board; Chennai and Kamarajar port chairpersons

Background

- MSDC – the apex advisory body for the maritime sector, set up in 1997; chaired by the Union Ports Minister; members include maritime States' ministers, the Navy and the Coast Guard. The 20th meeting was in Goa (Sept 2024).
- Laws: the Indian Ports Act 2025 (assented Aug 2025) replaced the Indian Ports Act 1908. The Major Port Authorities Act 2021 replaced the Major Port Trusts Act 1963. Major ports are on the Union List; other ports on the Concurrent List.
- Visions: Maritime India Vision 2030 (2021); Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 (2023); Sagarmala (2015).

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has 3 major ports – Chennai, Kamarajar (Ennore) and V.O. Chidambaranar (Thoothukudi). Kamarajar was India's first corporatised major port. Non-major ports are run by the Tamil Nadu Maritime Board (1997).

9 Soybean varieties NRC 268 and NRC 270 yield about 20 quintals/ha despite bad weather

Agriculture

News

At a 'Soybean Harvest Day' held on 9 Oct 2026 by ICAR–National Soybean Research Institute (NSRI), Indore, its improved varieties NRC 268 and NRC 270 gave a preliminary yield of about 20 quintals per hectare despite adverse weather (the national average is about 10–11 q/ha). ICAR Director General Dr M.L. Jat called the results encouraging.

Key facts

Varieties	NRC 268, NRC 270 – improved soybean varieties
Institute	ICAR–National Soybean Research Institute (NSRI), Indore (formerly Indian Institute of Soybean Research; began 1987 as NRC for Soybean)
Yield	About 20 q/ha (preliminary) – national average 10–11
Event	Soybean Harvest Day – 9 Oct 2026, Indore
Note	No formal 'release' was reported – the news is about yield results

Background

- Soybean: the 'golden bean' / 'miracle crop'; about 40% protein and 20% oil; a kharif legume that fixes nitrogen. Madhya Pradesh is called the 'Soya State'; Maharashtra is also a major producer.
- National Mission on Edible Oils – Oilseeds (NMEO-Oilseeds): approved in 2024, running 2024–25 to 2030–31 – for self-reliance in oilseeds. India depends heavily on edible-oil imports.
- The 'Yellow Revolution' – the drive to raise oilseed output (1986 Technology Mission on Oilseeds; Sam Pitroda).

Tamil Nadu link: groundnut is Tamil Nadu's main oilseed; soybean is a minor crop here. Tamil Nadu Agricultural University's Oilseeds Research Station is at Tindivanam.

10 Coast Guard ship ICGS Ajit commissioned; to be based at Okha, Gujarat

Defence

News

ICGS Ajit, an 'Adamya'-class fast patrol vessel built indigenously by Goa Shipyard Ltd (GSL), was commissioned into the Indian Coast Guard at Goa on 9 Oct 2026, with Dr Sirish Choudhary, Principal Integrated Financial Adviser (Coast Guard), presiding. Its home base is Okha, Gujarat (North-West region). It is 51.43 m long, does over 27 knots, has controllable-pitch propellers and over 60% indigenous content.

Key facts

Ship	ICGS Ajit – Adamya-class fast patrol vessel (one of 8)
Commissioning	9 Oct 2026, Goa Shipyard, Goa – home base Okha, Gujarat
Specs	51.43 m long; about 320 t; 27+ knots; 1,500 nm range
Armament	One 30 mm gun, two 12.7 mm guns
Roles	EEZ surveillance, search and rescue, anti-smuggling, fisheries protection, pollution response

Background

- Indian Coast Guard: raised 1 Feb 1977 (1 Feb is Coast Guard Day); Coast Guard Act 1978; under the Ministry of Defence; HQ New Delhi; motto 'Vayam Rakshamah' (We Protect).
- 5 regions: West (Mumbai), East (Chennai), North-East (Kolkata), Andaman & Nicobar (Port Blair), North-West (Gandhinagar) – Okha falls under North-West.
- Adamya class: a ₹473 crore contract with GSL for 8 ships in March 2022; the first, ICGS Adamya (Sept 2025, Paradip). Geography: Okha sits at the mouth of the Gulf of Kutch, Devbhumi Dwarka district.

Tamil Nadu link: the Coast Guard's Eastern Region HQ is in Chennai, with stations at Thoothukudi and Mandapam. Sister ship ICGS Akshar is based at Karaikal (Puducherry).

11 NSAP extended to 2030–31, renamed 'PM Samajik Sahayata Yojana'

Welfare Schemes

News

The Union Cabinet chaired by PM Modi on 14 Oct 2026 approved continuing the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) from 2026–27 to 2030–31 at a cost of ₹53,428 crore, renaming it 'Pradhan Mantri Samajik Sahayata Yojana'. The disability-pension threshold was lowered from 80% to 40% disability, with eligibility from birth, and the amount raised to ₹375 a month (0–79 years) and ₹625 (80+). About 3.20 crore beneficiaries in 36 States/UTs.

Key facts

Approval	14 Oct 2026 – Union Cabinet; 2026–27 to 2030–31; ₹53,428 crore
New names	NSAP → PM Samajik Sahayata Yojana; IGNOAPS → PM Vridhavastha Pension; IGNWPS → PM Vidhawa Pension; IGNDPS → PM Divyangjan Pension; NFBS → PM Parivar Labh Yojana
Disability pension	Threshold 80% → 40%; from birth; ₹375 (0–79), ₹625 (80+) – earlier ₹300 / ₹500
Unchanged	Old-age ₹200 (60–79), ₹500 (80+); widow ₹300; family benefit ₹20,000 (one-time)
Beneficiaries	About 3.20 crore; 36 States/UTs

Background

- NSAP – launched 15 Aug 1995; Ministry of Rural Development; 100% centrally funded. Article 41 (Directive Principle) – right to public assistance in old age, sickness, disablement and similar cases.
- NSAP components: old-age pension (IGNOAPS), widow pension (IGNWPS), disability pension (IGNDPS), National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and Annapurna (10 kg free foodgrain a month).

- Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 – 'benchmark disability' means 40% or more; the new change aligns with this.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu adds its own top-up to the central pension and runs social security pensions for the elderly, widows and the disabled through its Revenue Department.

12 Swapped Murugan idol of 1,000-year-old Thogaimalai temple recovered and reinstalled

Tamil Nadu

News

At the roughly 1,000-year-old Meenakshi Sundareswarar – Balathandayuthapani temple at Thogaimalai near Kulithalai, Karur district (under the HR&CE Department), the main Balathandayuthapani (Murugan) idol was found to have been swapped after the 27 Nov 2025 consecration. Inquiries by HR&CE and the idol-theft prevention wing police found that a priest had replaced it. The old idol was recovered from a nearby spring (20 Jan) and the priest was arrested. On the orders of the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court, the old idol was reinstalled on 12 Oct 2026.

Key facts

Temple	Meenakshi Sundareswarar – Balathandayuthapani temple, Thogaimalai (near Kulithalai), Karur district – about 1,000 years old
Incident	Main idol found swapped after the 27 Nov 2025 consecration
Recovery	Recovered from a nearby spring (20 Jan); priest arrested
Reinstalled	12 Oct 2026 – on the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court's order
Note	The report does not give the idol's metal or age; '1,000 years' refers to the temple

Background

- The Idol Wing CID of the Tamil Nadu Police dates from 1983. A notable return: the Sripuranthan Nataraja from Ariyalur, handed back by Australia in 2014.
- Laws: Antiquities and Art Treasures Act 1972; Tamil Nadu Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act 1959. The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court began in 2004.
- Murugan's six abodes (Arupadai Veedu): Thiruparankundram, Thiruchendur (the seashore temple), Palani, Swamimalai, Thiruthani, Pazhamudircholai. At Palani, Murugan is worshipped as 'Dhandayuthapani'.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's temples are administered by the HR&CE Department. Kulithalai lies on the Cauvery in Karur district.

13 Four Tamil Nadu Agricultural University professors in the world's top 2% scientists list

Tamil Nadu

News

Four professors of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore, are in the 'World's Top 2% Scientists' list by Stanford University (USA) and Elsevier (2026 edition, released 7 Oct): acting Vice-Chancellor Ravindran, former Director of Research Subramanian, Agricultural Microbiology head Sivakumar and Crop Physiology professor Janakiraman. Only two were on the list last year. Six professors of Periyar University, Salem, are also on the list.

Key facts

List	Stanford–Elsevier 'World's Top 2% Scientists' (2026, released 7 Oct)
TNAU professors	Ravindran, Subramanian, Sivakumar, Janakiraman (2 last year)
Basis	Composite citation indicator incl. citations and h-index; 22 fields, 174 subfields
Lead	Prof. John P.A. Ioannidis, Stanford
India	Among Indian institutions IISc Bengaluru leads, followed by IIT Delhi

Background

- Tamil Nadu Agricultural University was set up at Coimbatore in 1971; its farm-college tradition goes back to the 1868 agricultural school at Saidapet.
- Elsevier is a Netherlands-based science publisher (the Scopus database). The h-index was devised by Jorge Hirsch (2005).
- Note: it is not four from all of Tamil Nadu – many from several institutions are listed; 'four' refers to TNAU alone. It is a list, not a ranking.

Tamil Nadu link: TNAU (Coimbatore) and Periyar University (Salem) are both Tamil Nadu State universities. Dr M.S. Swaminathan, father of India's Green Revolution, studied at the Agricultural College, Coimbatore.

14 Pallikaranai marsh: interim 'Zone of Influence' cut from 8,397 acres to 316.76 acres

Tamil Nadu

News

The Tamil Nadu State Wetlands Authority told the Madras High Court in a status report (Oct 2026; decided at a 30 Sept 2026 meeting) that the interim 'Zone of Influence' around Chennai's Pallikaranai marsh will be cut from the 8,397 acres covered by the National Green Tribunal's 1-km zone to 316.76 acres across 36 survey numbers. It said the area was drawn using hydrological links, drainage paths and satellite imagery, and that the final boundary will follow scientific study. PMK president Anbumani Ramadoss criticised the move.

Key facts

Cut	8,397 acres (NGT 1-km zone) → 316.76 acres (interim; 36 survey numbers)
Body	Tamil Nadu State Wetlands Authority – status report to the Madras High Court
Case	Challenge to the NGT Southern Zone's 1-km Zone of Influence order (24 Sept 2025)
Rules in zone	Construction regulated, not banned – NOC from the District Wetlands Management Committee needed; no sewage, dumping or Red-category industry
Ramsar	Pallikaranai Marsh Reserve Forest – Ramsar site (8 Apr 2022), 1,247.5 ha

Background

- Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules 2017 (replacing the 2010 Rules) – State Wetlands Authority (chaired by the State Environment Minister); a 'Zone of Influence' is the area around a wetland where activities are regulated.
- Ramsar Convention – 2 Feb 1971, Ramsar (Iran); 2 Feb is World Wetlands Day. Tamil Nadu has the most Ramsar sites of any Indian State.
- Pallikaranai is one of south Chennai's last natural wetlands; declared a reserve forest in 2007; 337 species recorded, including 115 bird species. It has shrunk greatly from about 15,000 acres.

Tamil Nadu link: Pallikaranai is closely tied to the IT corridor (OMR), Metro Phase II works and flood drainage. The NGT Southern Zone bench sits in Chennai.

15 'Palli Paarvai 3.0' app introduced for school monitoring

Tamil Nadu

News

Tamil Nadu's School Education Department introduced the 'Palli Paarvai 3.0' app (Oct 2026) to digitise inspections and classroom monitoring in government schools and raise teaching quality. Chief Educational Officers, District Educational Officers and block officials must record their school visits in it, and inspection data flows straight into EMIS. It has 5 sections: student attendance, classroom observation, spot assessment, project interventions (Vasippu Iyakkam, clubs) and an observation report.

Key facts

App	Palli Paarvai 3.0 – school inspection and classroom monitoring
Department	Tamil Nadu School Education Department
Users	CEOs, DEOs, inspectors, block officials
Data	Linked directly to EMIS (Education Management Information System)
Classroom check	At least 2 random students tested on Tamil/English reading and the four basic arithmetic operations

Background

- Tamil Nadu school welfare: the Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme – 15 Sept 2022, Madurai; free noon meal – CM Kamaraj (1956); Nutritious Meal Programme – MGR (1982).

- 'Vasippu Iyakkam' builds reading skills through the levels 'Enter, Walk, Run, Fly'; 'Vaanavil Mandram' fosters interest in science and maths.
- Right to education: Article 21A (86th Amendment, 2002) – free and compulsory education for children aged 6–14; Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 (from 1 Apr 2010).

Tamil Nadu link: this is entirely a Tamil Nadu Government initiative. Note: reports do not clearly say who launched the app, and no details of earlier versions (1.0, 2.0) were found.

16 CM Vijay lays foundation for ₹3,108 crore water ring-main pipeline in Chennai

Tamil Nadu

News

CM C. Joseph Vijay laid the foundation stone at Sholinganallur on 14 Oct 2026 for a ₹3,108.55 crore 'ring main' that will link all of Chennai's drinking-water sources in one loop. Implemented by the Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (CMWSSB), about 98 km of stainless-steel pipe will connect 9 sources – the Poondi, Puzhal, Cholavaram and Chembarambakkam lakes, groundwater and desalination plants. Surplus water from one area can then be moved to an area facing shortage. It is funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and due in about 4½ years.

Key facts

Cost	₹3,108.55 crore – foundation 14 Oct 2026, Sholinganallur
Agency	Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (CMWSSB)
Length / capacity	About 98 km closed loop; design capacity 1,762 MLD; 9 water sources
Funding	Asian Development Bank (ADB) – 'Chennai Climate-Resilient Water Security and Sewerage Project' ($230 million loan, Aug 2026)
Significance	Chennai will be the first Indian city with a comprehensive ring-main system (ADB)

Background

- Chennai's desalination plants: Minjur (100 MLD, 2010), Nemmeli-I (100 MLD, 2013), Nemmeli-II (150 MLD, 2024); a 400 MLD plant at Perur is under construction – among the country's largest.
- Asian Development Bank (ADB): founded 1966; HQ Manila, Philippines. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is in Beijing; the New Development Bank (NDB) in Shanghai.
- CMWSSB was set up under a 1978 Act. 1 MLD = one million litres a day. Chennai also gets Telugu Ganga (Krishna) and Veeranam (Cauvery) water.

Tamil Nadu link: about 85.7 lakh people in metro Chennai get roughly 1,200 MLD a day through 84 distribution systems. In the severe 2019 drought, water was brought to Chennai by train from Jolarpettai.

1 World Anaesthesia Day and World Spine Day 2026 (16 October)

Important Days

News

16 October is World Anaesthesia Day ('Ether Day'), marking 16 Oct 1846, when dentist William T.G. Morton gave the first successful public demonstration of ether anaesthesia at Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, USA. World Spine Day falls on the same day – its 2026 theme is 'Spine Health for Life', organised by the World Federation of Chiropractic. About 1 billion people worldwide have spinal pain.

Key facts

Anaesthesia Day	16 Oct 1846 – William T.G. Morton (dentist), ether; Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston ('Ether Dome'); surgeon John Collins Warren
WFSA	World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists – 9 Sept 1955, Scheveningen (Netherlands); 2026–28 theme 'Anaesthesiology Along the Patient Pathway'
Spine Day	2026 theme 'Spine Health for Life'; World Federation of Chiropractic; first official observance 2012
India	First ether anaesthesia in India – 22 Mar 1847, Medical College Hospital, Calcutta (Dr O'Shaughnessy); Indian Society of Anaesthetists (ISA) – 1947
Back pain	Leading cause of disability worldwide; 619 million low-back-pain cases in 2020, projected 843 million by 2050

Background

- History of anaesthesia: chloroform – James Young Simpson (1847, Edinburgh); nitrous oxide ('laughing gas') – discovered by Joseph Priestley (1772); Humphry Davy noted its pain-relieving effect; used by dentist Horace Wells. The word 'anaesthesia' was suggested by Oliver Wendell Holmes. Ancient Indian texts credit Sushruta with using wine and cannabis during surgery.
- Spine: the human vertebral column has 33 vertebrae (26 after fusion) – cervical 7, thoracic 12, lumbar 5, sacral 5 (fused), coccygeal 4 (fused). The spinal cord carries messages between the brain and the body.
- Types: general anaesthesia (complete unconsciousness), regional (spinal / epidural) and local anaesthesia.

Tamil Nadu link: CMC Vellore performed India's first successful kidney transplant (1971).

2 World Food Day 2026 (16 October) – 'Innovate today. Nourish tomorrow.'

Important Days

News

16 October, the day the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was founded, is World Food Day. The 2026 theme is 'Innovate today. Nourish tomorrow.' – with events in about 150 countries and the main event at FAO headquarters in Rome. FAO's State of Food Security and Nutrition (SOFI 2026) report says about 645 million people (7.8%) faced hunger in 2025 – 14 million fewer than in 2024.

Key facts

2026 theme	Innovate today. Nourish tomorrow.
FAO	16 Oct 1945, Quebec City (Canada); HQ Rome; 194 Member Nations + the EU; Director-General Qu Dongyu (China)
Origin	Proposed by Hungary at the 1979 FAO Conference; first World Food Day – 1981 ('Food comes first')
Hunger (SOFI 2026)	About 645 million (7.8%) in 2025; 1 in 5 in Africa
Earlier themes	2025 – Hand in Hand for Better Foods and a Better Future; 2024 – Right to foods for a better life and a better future

Background

- India: National Food Security Act 2013; PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana – free foodgrain for about 81.35 crore people for 5 years from 1 Jan 2024. SDG 2 – 'Zero Hunger'.
- FAO's only Indian Director-General was B.R. Sen (1956–67). The UN's Rome-based food agencies are FAO, the World Food Programme (WFP – 2020 Peace Nobel) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).
- The World Food Prize was founded by Norman Borlaug in 1986 – the 'Nobel for food'. Borlaug won the 1970 Peace Nobel ('father of the Green Revolution').

Tamil Nadu link: Kumbakonam-born Dr M.S. Swaminathan, father of India's Green Revolution, was the first World Food Prize laureate (1987) – he used the prize to found the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation in Chennai; Bharat Ratna (posthumous) in 2024. Tamil Nadu runs a universal Public Distribution System.

3 U23 World Wrestling Championships, Las Vegas: Vishvajit More wins historic Greco-Roman silver

Sports

News

At the U23 World Wrestling Championships in Las Vegas, USA, India's Vishvajit Ramchandra More won silver in the men's Greco-Roman 55 kg category (15 Oct 2026, IST). He lost the final 12–13 in the last seconds to Koba Karumidze of Georgia. He is the first Indian to reach a Greco-Roman final and win silver at the U23 Worlds. In the quarter-final he beat Iran's U20 world champion Armin Shamsipour 8–1.

Key facts

Wrestler	Vishvajit Ramchandra More – born 1 Jan 2004, Sarawade, Radhanagari taluka, Kolhapur district, Maharashtra
Category	Men's Greco-Roman 55 kg – silver
Final	Lost 12–13 to Koba Karumidze (Georgia)
History	First Indian Greco-Roman finalist and silver medallist at the U23 Worlds; bronze in 2024 and 2025
Army	Indian Army – Maratha Light Infantry, Havildar (sports entry, 2025)

Background

- Wrestling styles: Greco-Roman bans holds below the waist and use of the legs; freestyle allows leg holds. United World Wrestling (UWW) – founded 1921 in Stockholm (formerly FILA; renamed 2014); HQ Corsier-sur-Vevey, Switzerland.
- India's Olympic wrestling medals: K.D. Jadhav (1952 Helsinki, bronze – independent India's first individual Olympic medal), Sushil Kumar (2008 bronze, 2012 silver), Yogeshwar Dutt (2012), Sakshi Malik (2016), Ravi Dahiya (2020 silver), Bajrang Punia (2020), Aman Sehrawat (2024).
- India's first Greco-Roman medal at the U23 Worlds – Sajan Bhanwala (77 kg bronze, 2022, Spain). K.D. Jadhav was also from Maharashtra (Satara) and studied in Kolhapur.

Tamil Nadu link: there is no direct Tamil Nadu link to this event. Tamil Nadu's traditional wrestling is 'malyutham' / 'kusthi'; the Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu (SDAT) runs wrestling training centres.

4 Oman overtakes US as India's top LNG supplier in September 2026; Nigeria 2nd, US 3rd

Economy

News

According to ship-tracking firm Kpler (IANS, Oct 2026), Oman (585,000 t, 27%) was India's largest supplier of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in September 2026, followed by Nigeria (351,000 t) and the US (about 350,000 t), which had led in August. Qatar, normally the top supplier, fell to 6th after an Iranian strike on its Ras Laffan complex in March 2026. Total imports fell 14% to 2.17 million tonnes.

Key facts

Period	September 2026 (one month only) – Kpler data
Ranking	1. Oman 585,000 t (27%); 2. Nigeria 351,000; 3. US ~350,000; 4. UAE; 5. Angola; 6. Qatar 94,000
Total	2.17 million t – down 14% from August (2.5)
Qatar's fall	Iranian strike on Ras Laffan, March 2026; Strait of Hormuz disruption
Oman's edge	Its Qalhat LNG terminal (near Sur) lies outside the Strait of Hormuz

Background

- LNG – natural gas cooled to about −162°C and liquefied, shrinking its volume about 600 times. Its main component is methane.
- India aims to raise natural gas in its energy mix from about 6% to 15% by 2030. The largest LNG terminal is Dahej (Gujarat, Petronet, 22.5 MTPA – expanded from 17.5 in 2026); others include Hazira, Kochi, Dabhol, Mundra, Ennore and Dhamra.
- The Strait of Hormuz links the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, between Iran and Oman. In May–July 2026 the US was the top supplier as imports from Qatar fell 91% year-on-year.

Tamil Nadu link: Indian Oil's Ennore LNG terminal (5 million tonnes a year) at Kamarajar Port, Chennai, has run since 2019 – key for south India's gas pipeline network.

5 IMF, World Bank and Bank of Thailand release the 'Bangkok Blueprint for Fraud-Resilient Financial Services'

Economy

News

The 'Bangkok Blueprint for Fraud-Resilient Financial Services', developed jointly by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank Group and the Bank of Thailand, was released on 14 Oct 2026 during the IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings in Bangkok. It sets out 12 key considerations under 5 pillars and is not formal IMF/World Bank policy guidance. Thailand's Finance Minister said fraud costs the world about $1 trillion a year.

Key facts

Release	14 Oct 2026 – Queen Sirikit National Convention Centre, Bangkok (IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings)
Developed by	IMF, World Bank Group, Bank of Thailand
Structure	5 pillars, 12 key considerations
5 pillars	Legal–strategic foundations; fraud life-cycle (prevent, detect, respond, support victims); existing risk–enforcement frameworks; domestic and cross-border cooperation; consumer protection and resilience
Scale	About $1 trillion a year (Thai Finance Minister's estimate); Asia 67% of global fraud losses (2024)

Background

- Speakers: Bank of Thailand Governor Vitai Ratanakorn (presented the blueprint), IMF MD Kristalina Georgieva, Bank of England Governor Andrew Bailey (Financial Stability Board chair) and World Bank MD Anshula Kant.
- India's anti-fraud tools: cyber financial fraud helpline 1930; Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) – Home Ministry; RBI's 'MuleHunter.AI'; the '.bank.in' domain for banks.
- Thailand: capital Bangkok (Krung Thep); currency baht; Bank of Thailand – 1942. The same day the IMF Fiscal Monitor put global public debt at 94% of GDP in 2025, heading for 100% by 2029.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamils trafficked to online-scam compounds in Myanmar and the Mekong region have been rescued via Thailand. Tamil Nadu Police has a Cyber Crime Wing.

6 India's largest integrated phenol–acetone plant opens at Haldia

Industry

News

West Bengal CM Suvendu Adhikari on 14 Oct 2026 inaugurated India's largest integrated phenol plant, built for ₹6,000 crore by Haldia Petrochemicals Ltd (HPL) through a subsidiary at Haldia, Purba Medinipur district. It can make 3.45 lakh tonnes of phenol and 2.15 lakh tonnes of acetone a year and includes India's first on-purpose propylene unit (olefin conversion technology). It uses propylene (from the new on-purpose propylene unit) and benzene, drawing on HPL's cracker streams, and will cut imports.

Key facts

Plant	India's largest integrated phenol–acetone plant; includes India's first on-purpose propylene unit
Company	Haldia Petrochemicals Ltd (HPL) – via a subsidiary; technology by Lummus (TCG group)
Capacity / cost	Phenol 3.45 lakh t, acetone 2.15 lakh t a year; ₹6,000 crore
Inauguration	14 Oct 2026 – West Bengal CM Suvendu Adhikari
Feedstock	Propylene (from a new on-purpose propylene unit) and benzene, using HPL's cracker streams

Background

- Chemistry: the 'cumene process' (Hock process) – benzene + propylene → cumene; oxidising cumene → phenol + acetone. Phenol (carbolic acid, C_6H_5OH) goes into bisphenol-A, polycarbonate and epoxy resins; acetone is a solvent used in paints and pharmaceuticals.
- Joseph Lister used phenol (carbolic acid) as a surgical antiseptic in 1867. Other Indian phenol plants: Dahej (Gujarat, Deepak Phenolics) and Kochi (HOCL).
- The Haldia Dock Complex is part of Kolkata's Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, at the Haldi–Hooghly confluence. Suvendu Adhikari has been West Bengal's first BJP Chief Minister since May 2026.

Tamil Nadu link: Chennai's Manali has the Chennai Petroleum Corporation (CPCL) refinery and petrochemical industries; CPCL is building a new refinery in the Cauvery basin near Nagapattinam.

7 Jindal Steel Limited wins worldsteel's 2026 Steelie Award for 'Excellence in People'

Awards

News

The World Steel Association's (worldsteel) 17th Steelie Awards were presented in New Delhi on 12 Oct 2026. Jindal Steel Limited (formerly Jindal Steel & Power – JSPL) won in the 'Excellence in People' category for its 'Dakshata Engineering Safety' programme. Another Indian firm, JSW Steel, won 'Excellence in clean steel production' (for its green hydrogen–oxygen ecosystem). Japan's Nippon Steel won in two categories.

Key facts

Awards	17th Steelie Awards – 12 Oct 2026, New Delhi
Jindal Steel	'Excellence in People' – 'Dakshata Engineering Safety: One Duty Position at a Time'
JSW Steel	'Excellence in clean steel production' – green hydrogen and oxygen ecosystem; worldsteel 'Sustainability Champion' for the 8th year
Other winners	Nippon Steel (2 categories), JFE Steel, Hyundai Steel, Aceros AZA (Chile)
Jindal Steel	Chairman Naveen Jindal; main plants – Angul (Odisha), Raigarh (Chhattisgarh)

Background

- World Steel Association: founded 10 July 1967 in Brussels as the International Iron and Steel Institute (IISI); renamed 'worldsteel' in 2008; HQ Brussels (Belgium); members make about 85% of the world's steel. The Steelie Awards began in 2010.
- India is the world's second-largest crude steel producer (China first). The Draft National Steel Policy 2047 targets 604 million tonnes of capacity (12.10.2026 set, item 14).
- 'Dakshata' means 'skill / efficiency' in Sanskrit. Jindal Steel's Raipur Machinery Division recorded a lost-time injury frequency rate (LTIFR) of 0.00 in 2025–26.

Tamil Nadu link: JSW Steel has a plant at Salem (formerly Southern Iron & Steel); SAIL's Salem Steel Plant makes stainless steel.

8 DRDO successfully tests Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) platform on a live network at Chandipur, Odisha

Science

News

A fibre-based, scalable Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) platform developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) was successfully tested on the live network of the test ranges of the Proof and Experimental Establishment (PXE), Chandipur, Odisha (announced 14 Oct 2026). It will secure real-time observation and telemetry data from artillery and armoured-weapon trials. Bengaluru's Taqbit Labs is the production partner.

Key facts

Test	Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) – fibre-based; live network; announced 14 Oct 2026
Site	Proof and Experimental Establishment (PXE), Chandipur, Odisha (not the Integrated Test Range – ITR)
Developer	DRDO's Micro Electronic Devices, Computational Systems & Cyber Security cluster; production partner Taqbit Labs, Bengaluru
Use	Securing data from artillery and armoured-weapon trials
Earlier milestone	Feb 2022 – DRDO–IIT Delhi: 100+ km QKD between Prayagraj and Vindhyachal (commercial optical fibre)

Background

- QKD uses quantum physics to create and share encryption keys (it does not encrypt the data itself); any eavesdropping disturbs the quantum states and is detected. The first QKD protocol was BB84 (Bennett and Brassard, 1984); the 'no-cloning theorem' dates from 1982.
- National Quantum Mission (NQM): Cabinet approval 19 Apr 2023; ₹6,003.65 crore; 2023–24 to 2030–31; Department of Science and Technology. 4 hubs: computing – IISc Bengaluru; communication – IIT Madras (with C-DOT); sensing – IIT Bombay; materials – IIT Delhi.
- Chandipur (Balasore district) hosts both DRDO's PXE and the Integrated Test Range (ITR). China's 'Micius' (2016) was the world's first quantum-communication satellite.

Tamil Nadu link: the National Quantum Mission's 'quantum communication' hub is at IIT Madras (with C-DOT).

9 Gujarat's Barda Wildlife Sanctuary emerging as a second home for Asiatic lions

Environment

News

According to a PLOS One study by Gujarat Forest Department officials, 'Beyond Gir: Barda Wildlife Sanctuary as a Potential Stronghold for Asiatic Lions' (reported Oct 2026), Barda Wildlife Sanctuary now holds 17 lions – the first there in about 144 years (since 1879). Recolonisation began with a male that dispersed on its own; 5 females were later released. GPS collars on 6 lions gave over 1.69 lakh location fixes (2023–25).

Key facts

Sanctuary	Barda Wildlife Sanctuary – 192.31 sq km; Porbandar and Devbhumi Dwarka districts, Saurashtra (1979)
Lions	17 – after about 144 years; 6 radio-collared
Prey	441 chital moved from Gir in 2025–26
2025 census	16th lion estimation (May 2025) – 891 lions (674 in 2020; +32.2%)
Tourism	Ecotourism since 2024; 3,359 visitors in 2025–26 (+48%)

Background

- The Asiatic lion lives in the wild only in Gujarat, India; Gir became a sanctuary in 1965 and a national park in 1975; 'Project Lion' – 2020; Wildlife Act Schedule I.
- A single population risks being wiped out by disease or disaster, hence the need for a second home. On 15 Apr 2013 the Supreme Court ordered lions moved to Kuno (MP) – this has not happened; Kuno now holds African cheetahs.
- 2025 census: 507 of the 891 lions live outside the Gir National Park and Sanctuary; results were announced by Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel in Gandhinagar on 21 May 2025.

Tamil Nadu link: Arignar Anna Zoological Park, Vandalur (Chennai), has a lion safari. Tamil Nadu has no wild lions; its big cats are tigers and leopards.

10 Proposed bauxite mine in Odisha's Balda hills threatens the rare Jeypore ground gecko

Environment

News

The Hindu (15 Oct 2026) reported that the Endangered 'Jeypore ground gecko' (Cyrtodactylus jeyporensis) – four individuals – was recorded in the past year in the Balda hills of Nageswari reserve forest, Koraput district, Odisha – inside the site of an opencast bauxite mine planned by Kalinga Alumina, an Adani group firm. The 4-million-tonne-a-year mine is feared to destroy the gecko's rare habitat; villagers have alleged that gram sabha consent was forged.

Key facts

Species	Jeypore ground gecko – Cyrtodactylus jeyporensis (formerly Geckoella jeyporensis)
Location	Balda hills, Nageswari reserve forest, Nandapur tehsil, Koraput district, Odisha
Mine	Kalinga Alumina (Adani group) – 'Ballada Bauxite Block', 4 MTPA
Status	IUCN Endangered; Wildlife Act Schedule I; CITES Appendix II (CoP19, 2022, India's proposal)
History	Described by Beddome in 1877–78; rediscovered in Koraput in 2010 after about 130 years

Background

- Habitat: Eastern Ghats forests above about 1,000 m; nocturnal, about 9 cm long. Also recorded on Galikonda hill (Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh).
- Bauxite is the main ore of aluminium. Odisha has India's largest bauxite reserves; NALCO's mining and refinery complex is at Damanjodi, Koraput district.
- CITES – the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (1973, Washington); CoP19 was in Panama, 2022. Gram sabha consent comes from the Forest Rights Act 2006; Odisha's Niyamgiri case (2013) is the landmark precedent.

Tamil Nadu link: the Eastern Ghats extend into Tamil Nadu – the Javadhu, Shevaroy (Yercaud), Kolli and Pachamalai hills. Bauxite deposits occur in the Shevaroy hills of Salem district.

11 Himachal Pradesh's first battery-integrated solar project opened in Spiti valley

Energy

News

Himachal Pradesh CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on 14 Oct 2026 inaugurated the State's first solar project with a battery energy storage system (BESS) at Rongtong near Kaza, Lahaul–Spiti district (about 3,600 m). It has 2 MW of solar capacity and a 1 MWh battery, cost ₹4.42 crore and is expected to generate about 36 lakh units a year. It has run since Dec 2024 and was now formally inaugurated.

Key facts

Site	Rongtong near Kaza, Spiti valley, Lahaul–Spiti district (about 3,600 m)
Capacity	2 MW solar + 1 MWh battery storage
Cost / output	₹4.42 crore; about 36 lakh units a year
Inauguration	14 Oct 2026 – CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu (running since Dec 2024)
Same day	Foundation stones for 66/22 kV substations at Sumdo and Kaza (₹47.95 crore); projects worth ₹116.28 crore in all

Background

- Himachal solar: Pekhubela, Una district – 32 MW (HPPCL, 2024). Himachal had targeted becoming India's first 'Green Energy State' (target March 2026). A 1 MW solar + 500 kW battery project at Pangi (Chamba) is a separate project.

- BESS stores surplus daytime solar power for night or peak use, usually with lithium-ion batteries. MW measures power; MWh measures stored energy.
- Geography: Spiti is a 'cold desert'; the Spiti river joins the Sutlej in Kinnaur. Kaza is Spiti's sub-divisional headquarters; Sumdo lies close to the India–China border (Kaurik).

Tamil Nadu link: the 648 MW solar park at Kamuthi, Ramanathapuram district (2016), was then among the world's largest single-site solar plants. Tamil Nadu is a leading State in wind and solar power.

12 Centre renames three pension schemes that carried Indira Gandhi's name

Welfare Schemes

News

While approving the continuation of the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) for 2026–31 on 14 Oct 2026, the Union Cabinet renamed three pension schemes that carried Indira Gandhi's name: Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme → 'PM Vridhavastha Pension Yojana'; Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme → 'PM Vidhawa Pension Yojana'; Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme → 'PM Divyangjan Pension Yojana'. NSAP became 'PM Samajik Sahayata Yojana' and the National Family Benefit Scheme 'PM Parivar Labh Yojana' – 5 renamings in all.

Key facts

Old age	IGNOAPS → PM Vridhavastha Pension (60–79: ₹200; 80+: ₹500)
Widow	IGNWPS → PM Vidhawa Pension (age 40–79, ₹300)
Disability	IGNDPS → PM Divyangjan Pension (40% disability, from birth; ₹375 / ₹625)
Other renamings	NSAP → PM Samajik Sahayata Yojana; NFBS → PM Parivar Labh Yojana
Outlay	₹53,428 crore (2026–27 to 2030–31); about 3.2 crore beneficiaries

Background

- History: NSAP began on 15 Aug 1995 with three parts – the National Old Age Pension (NOAPS), National Family Benefit (NFBS) and National Maternity Benefit (NMBS); in 2007 NOAPS was renamed after Indira Gandhi and extended to all BPL persons; the widow and disability pensions were started as new schemes in 2009.
- Other renamings: MGNREGA was replaced in 2025 by the 'VB-G RAM G' Act (guaranteed work raised from 100 to 125 days); Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana → PM Matru Vandana Yojana (2017).
- Indira Gandhi: India's first (and so far only) woman PM (1966–77, 1980–84); the 'Garibi Hatao' slogan (1971); bank nationalisation in 1969; Bharat Ratna in 1971.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu adds its own top-up to the central pension and pays social-security pensions to the elderly, widows and the disabled through its Revenue Department. (The continuation and disability-pension changes were item 6 of the 14.10.2026 set.)

13 CM Vijay releases Tamil Nadu Semiconductor Ecosystem Scheme – State incentives on top of 'Semicon India 2.0'

Tamil Nadu

News

CM C. Joseph Vijay released the 'Tamil Nadu Semiconductor Ecosystem Scheme' (policy) at the Secretariat, Chennai, on 15 Oct 2026. It covers the whole value chain – chip design, equipment and materials, wafer fabs, assembly-testing-marking-packaging (ATMP/OSAT) and R&D. Projects approved under the Centre's 'Semicon India 2.0' will get State incentives on top of central support; other key projects will get tailored support. The incentive percentages have not yet been published.

Key facts

Release	15 Oct 2026 – CM C. Joseph Vijay, Secretariat, Chennai; Industries, Investment Promotion & Commerce Department
Coverage	Chip design, equipment & materials, wafer fabs, ATMP/OSAT, R&D
Incentives	State top-up over central support for Semicon India 2.0 projects; tailored support for others
Semicon 2.0	Union Cabinet approval 15 July 2026; ₹1,27,500 crore
State park	SIPCOT semiconductor & electronics park at Maduramangalam, Kancheepuram – ₹175 crore (Rule 110 announcement, 31 Aug 2026)

Background

- India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) / Semicon India 1.0 – Dec 2021, ₹76,000 crore; 12 projects in 6 States. Tata–PSMC wafer fab – Dholera (Gujarat); Micron ATMP – Sanand (Gujarat).
- Science: semiconductors conduct between conductors and insulators – silicon, germanium; doping creates n-type (phosphorus) and p-type (boron) material.
- Earlier State effort: 'Tamil Nadu Semiconductor Mission 2030' (2025–26 Budget, ₹500 crore) – two semiconductor manufacturing parks at Sulur (Coimbatore) and Palladam (Tiruppur).

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has led India's electronics exports for three years running – $14.65 billion in 2024–25, 41.23% of the national total.

1 International Day for the Eradication of Poverty – 17 October 2026

Important Days

News

The UN observes 17 October every year as the 'International Day for the Eradication of Poverty'. Theme for 2026–2028: 'United for Peace and Human Rights'; 2026 focus: 'Safe Homes for All'. Over 2.8 billion people face some form of housing inadequacy. The UN commemoration was held at UN Headquarters, New York, on 16 Oct 2026, highlighting the Doha Political Declaration of the World Social Summit and the right to an adequate standard of living.

Key facts

Date	17 October (annual)
UN declaration	UNGA resolution 47/196 – 22 Dec 1992
Origin	17 Oct 1987 – Trocadéro, Paris; Joseph Wresinski (ATD Fourth World)
Theme	2026–28: United for Peace and Human Rights; 2026 focus: Safe Homes for All
SDG	Goal 1 – End poverty in all its forms everywhere
World Bank	International poverty line $3.00/day (2021 PPP; June 2025)

Background

- History: on 17 Oct 1987 a gathering in Paris honoured victims of extreme poverty; a commemorative stone was unveiled with the words of Father Joseph Wresinski, founder of ATD Fourth World: 'Wherever men and women are condemned to live in extreme poverty, human rights are violated.'
- India – multidimensional poverty: NITI Aayog discussion paper (Jan 2024) – 24.82 crore people escaped multidimensional poverty between 2013-14 and 2022-23; the headcount fell from 29.17% to 11.28%. MPI – 3 dimensions (health, education, standard of living), 12 indicators.
- Economy: in June 2025 the World Bank raised the international extreme poverty line from $2.15 to $3.00 a day (2021 PPP). Constitution: Articles 38 and 39 (Directive Principles) – reducing inequalities of income.

Tamil Nadu link: per NITI Aayog's National MPI 2023, Tamil Nadu's headcount fell from 4.76% (2015-16) to 2.20% (2019-21), against the national 24.85% to 14.96%. Kerala is lowest (0.55%).

2 Centre approves India's accession to the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) as a full Contracting Party

International Relations

News

The Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying announced on 14 Oct 2026 that the Centre has approved India's accession to the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA). India, a Cooperating Non-Contracting Party (CNCP) since 2022, will become a full Contracting Party (formal deposit of accession is a separate step). Indian-flagged vessels can then carry out authorised fishing of non-migratory stocks such as squid, toothfish and alfonsino in the SIOFA area, and India can join scientific assessments, action against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and the High Seas Boarding and Inspection (HSBI) scheme.

Key facts

Agreement	Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) – a Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (RFMO)
Signed / in force	7 July 2006, Rome (FAO) / 21 June 2012
Secretariat	La Réunion island (France)
Coverage	Non-migratory high-seas stocks – toothfish, alfonsino, orange roughy, squid; not tuna-like highly migratory species
India's status	CNCP since 2022 → Oct 2026 approval: full Contracting Party
Related body	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) – India a member (accepted 1995; agreement in force 1996)

Background

- International law: UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS, 1982) – territorial sea 12 nautical miles; Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) up to 200 nm. Beyond lie the 'high seas', where RFMOs regulate fisheries.
- IOTC: the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission set up in 1993 under FAO; HQ Victoria (Seychelles). Highly migratory tunas come under IOTC; non-migratory high-seas stocks under SIOFA.
- Economy: India is the world's 2nd largest producer of fish and of aquaculture. About 65% of the ocean is high seas, dominated by China, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea and Spain. India issued 'Guidelines for High Seas Fisheries' in Dec 2025. Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) – 2020.

Tamil Nadu link: a Centre–State scheme began in 2017 (G.O. 139, 14 July 2017) to cut trawlers in Palk Bay and shift fishers to deep-sea tuna long-liners – unit cost ₹80 lakh per vessel with ₹56 lakh subsidy. Wider high-seas access can benefit Tamil Nadu's fishers too.

3 J&K and Ladakh High Court bans fuel-powered motorboats and jet skis on Dal Lake to curb pollution

Environment

News

A Division Bench of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh – Chief Justice Dr Pushpendra Singh Bhati and Justice Rajesh Sekhri – on 14 Oct 2026 barred fuel-powered motorboats, including motorised shikaras and jet skis, from Dal Lake, Srinagar, until further orders; violation will be treated as contempt. Government boats for emergency services, law and order, disaster management and safety are exempt. The Court ordered an expert-backed comprehensive motorboat policy and asked authorities to explore solar/electric boats. Case: Mohammad Rafiq Mir & Ors v UT of J&K; next hearing 30 Oct.

Key facts

Court	High Court of J&K and Ladakh – CJ Pushpendra Singh Bhati, Justice Rajesh Sekhri
Date	14 Oct 2026; next hearing 30 Oct
Banned	Fuel motorboats, motorised shikaras, jet skis
Exempt	Emergency, law-and-order, disaster and safety boats
Enforcement	Lakes Conservation & Management Authority (LCMA), Tourism Dept, Police
Way out	Solar / electric boats

Background

- Dal Lake: Srinagar; about 18 sq km; 'Jewel in the crown of Kashmir'; causeways divide it into Gagribal, Lokut Dal, Bod Dal and Nagin basins. Floating gardens are called 'Rad'; Rup Lank (Char Chinari) island lies in Lokut Dal. The Zabarwan range overlooks it; Shalimar Bagh (Jahangir) is on its shore.
- Geography: the largest lake of J&K is not Dal but Wular (one of India's largest freshwater lakes, Jhelum basin). Dal is fed mainly by the Telbal stream.
- Constitution: the right to a pollution-free environment is part of Article 21 (Subhash Kumar v State of Bihar, 1991). Public Trust Doctrine – lakes, rivers and forests belong to the public, the State is their trustee – adopted by the Supreme Court in M.C. Mehta v Kamal Nath (1996).
- Science: engine fuel and oil leaks, noise and sewage add to eutrophication – weeds multiply and dissolved oxygen falls.

Tamil Nadu link: no direct link. Tamil Nadu's hill-station lakes also face tourism pressure – Ooty Lake was created in 1824 by John Sullivan, Collector of Coimbatore; the star-shaped Kodaikanal Lake was created in 1863.

4 SEWA Director Reema Nanavaty receives the 2026 Hillary Rodham Clinton Award

Awards

News

Reema Nanavaty, Director of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), received the 'Hillary Rodham Clinton Award' of the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security (GIWPS) on 15 Oct 2026 at Gaston Hall, Georgetown University, Washington; Hillary Clinton presented it. It honours her work for the economic empowerment, livelihoods and resilience of informal women workers. 2026 theme: 'Women's Economic Empowerment: A Key for Peace and Security'. Tory Burch and Muhammad Yunus were the other 2026 awardees.

Key facts

Award	Hillary Rodham Clinton Award 2026 – GIWPS, Georgetown University
Date/venue	15 Oct 2026 – Gaston Hall, Washington
Theme	Women's Economic Empowerment: A Key for Peace and Security
Co-awardees	Tory Burch (Tory Burch Foundation); Muhammad Yunus (Grameen Bank founder)
Reema Nanavaty	Born 1964, Ahmedabad; joined SEWA in 1985; Padma Shri 2013
SEWA	1972, Ahmedabad – founder Ela Bhatt

Background

- Reema Nanavaty: postgraduate in microbiology. She led SEWA's food security programme (one million households), the 'Hariyali' green energy and livelihoods initiative, and Gujarat earthquake rehabilitation. When FAO's Jacques Diouf Award (2013) was given to SEWA, she received it on the organisation's behalf.
- SEWA: a trade union of informal women workers founded in 1972 in Ahmedabad by Ela Bhatt (1933–2022). Ela Bhatt – Ramon Magsaysay Award (1977), Padma Shri (1985), Padma Bhushan (1986).
- Economy: most Indian women workers are in the informal sector; self-help groups (SHGs), microcredit and cooperatives drive their empowerment – SDG 5 (gender equality).
- GIWPS: research institute on women, peace and security. The 2025 awards honoured 'Women Safeguarding Democracy'.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu pioneered the women's SHG movement – the SHG approach began in 1989 in Dharmapuri district with IFAD support; after its success, 'Mahalir Thittam' was extended to all districts with State funding from 1997-98. It is implemented by the Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women (TNCDW, 1983).

5 FAO's SOFO 2026 – India first in area under active forest restoration (9.8 Mha); China second (7.9 Mha)

Environment

News

FAO Director-General QU Dongyu launched 'The State of the World's Forests 2026' (SOFO 2026) on 28 Sep 2026 at the opening of the 28th session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO 28) at FAO headquarters, Rome. Its title: 'Restoring forests and landscapes: The way forward for a sustainable future'. Using Global Forest Resources Assessment 2025 (FRA 2025) data, India ranks first in the world in forest area under active restoration with 9.8 million ha, ahead of China (7.9 Mha) and Ethiopia (5.0 Mha). Note: by the measure in India's 7th National Report to the CBD (18.9 Mha under forest and landscape restoration), India is second after China.

Key facts

Report	State of the World's Forests (SOFO) 2026 – FAO; biennial
Launch	28 Sep 2026 – COFO 28, FAO HQ, Rome
Focus	Forest and Landscape Restoration (FLR)
Ranking	India 9.8 Mha (1), China 7.9 (2), Ethiopia 5.0 (3)
Global	Forests 4.14 bn ha (32% of land); degraded land 1.56 bn ha (incl. 460 Mha forest)
Economics	Up to $30 return per $1 invested in restoration

Background

- FRA 2025 (Oct 2025): India is 9th in the world in forest area (72.74 Mha, about 2% of the world's forests) and 3rd in annual net forest gain. Since 1990, 489 Mha of forest has been cleared.
- India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023 – Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun; 18th biennial report: forest 7,15,343 sq km (21.76%) + tree cover 1,12,014 sq km (3.41%) = 25.17%. National Forest Policy 1988 goal – 33% of land under forest/tree cover.
- Global targets: under the Bonn Challenge India pledged to restore 26 Mha of degraded land by 2030 (UNCCD COP14, 2019, Greater Noida). Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Target 2 – 30% of degraded ecosystems under effective restoration by 2030.
- Constitution: the 42nd Amendment (1976) moved 'Forests' from the State List to the Concurrent List and added Article 48A (State's duty) and Article 51A(g) (citizens' duty).

Tamil Nadu link: per ISFR 2023, Tamil Nadu's green cover is 24.47% (forest 20.34% + tree cover 4.13%). The 'Green Tamil Nadu Mission' (launched 24 Sep 2022) aims to raise green cover from 23.69% to 33% in 10 years.

6 Henley Passport Index (Oct 2026) – India 84th; visa-free access to 55 destinations

Indices & Reports

News

In the Henley Passport Index released in October 2026 by London-based Henley & Partners, the Indian passport ranks 84th (tied with Algeria and Mauritania). Indians can reach 55 destinations without a prior visa (visa-free / visa-on-arrival). That is one place up from 85th in Oct 2025, though destinations fell from 57 to 55. India's 2026 positions: January 80, February 75, May 78, July 81, October 84. Singapore is first with 193 destinations; Japan, South Korea and the UAE (188) are second; the USA is 10th (180).

Key facts

Publisher	Henley & Partners (London); Oct 2026 edition; updated quarterly
Data	International Air Transport Association (IATA) – Timatic database; 199 passports, 227 destinations
India	84th (tied with Algeria, Mauritania); 55 destinations
Top	Singapore – 193; Japan, South Korea, UAE – 188; Sweden – 187
Others	USA 10th (180); UK 6th (184); Afghanistan last in the earlier 2026 editions

Background

- History: Christian Kaelin started it in 2005 as the 'Henley & Partners Visa Restrictions Index'; it was renamed the 'Henley Passport Index' in January 2018. It uses IATA's Timatic data plus the firm's own research.
- Polity / law: Indian passports are issued under the Passports Act, 1967; the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is responsible. In Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India (1978), the Supreme Court held that the right to travel abroad is part of personal liberty under Article 21.
- Sci-tech: Passport Seva Programme 2.0 (PSP V2.0) went live on 26 May 2025 across 37 Passport Offices, 93 Passport Seva Kendras and 450 Post Office PSKs; GPSP V2.0 for missions abroad followed on 28 Oct 2025. The e-passport carries an RFID chip and antenna storing biometric data to ICAO standards.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has four Regional Passport Offices (RPOs) – Chennai, Madurai, Tiruchirappalli and Coimbatore. Passport strength matters directly to the many Tamils who travel to the Gulf, Singapore and Malaysia for work and travel.

7 UNDP Human Development Report 2025 – India 130th of 193; HDI value 0.685

Indices & Reports

News

UNDP released the Human Development Report 2025, titled 'A matter of choice: People and possibilities in the age of AI', on 6 May 2025. India is 130th of 193 countries (133rd for 2022); its HDI rose from 0.676 to 0.685 (2023 data) – 'medium human development'. Life expectancy reached 72 years, the highest since the index began. Iceland is first (0.972); South Sudan is last (193rd).

Key facts

Release	6 May 2025; UNDP; title – 'A matter of choice: People and possibilities in the age of AI'
India	130/193; HDI 0.685 (2023); medium human development
India's indicators	Life expectancy 72; expected schooling ≈13 yrs; mean schooling 6.9 yrs; GNI per capita $9,047 (2021 PPP)
Inequality	Inequality cuts India's HDI by 30.7%; Gender Inequality Index 102/193
Top / bottom	Iceland (0.972), Norway, Switzerland / South Sudan (193)
Neighbours	Bangladesh 130 (tied with India), Nepal 145, Pakistan 168

Background

- History: UNDP published the first Human Development Report in 1990. The HDI was devised by Pakistani economist Mahbub ul Haq, working with Indian economist Amartya Sen (1998 Economics Nobel). Sen's 'capability approach' is its theoretical basis.
- Three HDI dimensions: (1) a long and healthy life – life expectancy at birth; (2) knowledge – mean and expected years of schooling; (3) a decent standard of living – GNI per capita (PPP). Groups: very high (≥0.800), high (0.700–0.799), medium (0.550–0.699), low (<0.550).
- AI findings: India has the highest self-reported AI skill penetration in the report; 20% of Indian AI researchers now stay in India (almost none in 2019). India's HDI has risen by over 53% since 1990.

Tamil Nadu link: the Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission brought out the 'Tamil Nadu Human Development Report' in 2003 (it is also listed on UNDP's HDR site). In the 2017 Tamil Nadu Human Development Report, Kanniyakumari district ranked first in HDI and Ariyalur last.

8 World Happiness Report 2026 – India 116th of 147; Finland tops for the 9th year in a row

Indices & Reports

News

The World Happiness Report 2026 was released on 20 March 2026, the International Day of Happiness, by Oxford University's Wellbeing Research Centre with Gallup and the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UN SDSN). India is 116th of 147 countries (118th in 2025). Finland is first for the 9th year running; Iceland is 2nd, Denmark 3rd, Costa Rica 4th. Afghanistan is last (147th). This year's special theme: Happiness and Social Media (its effect on young people's well-being).

Key facts

Release	20 Mar 2026; Oxford Wellbeing Research Centre + Gallup + UN SDSN
India	116/147 (118th in 2025)
Top	Finland (9th straight year); Iceland 2, Denmark 3, Costa Rica 4
Bottom	Afghanistan (147), Sierra Leone (146), Malawi (145)
Neighbours	China 65, Nepal 99, Pakistan 104, Bangladesh 127, Sri Lanka 134
Others	USA 23rd; theme – Happiness and Social Media

Background

- Method: in the Gallup World Poll people rate their lives on a 0–10 'Cantril Ladder'; a three-year average is used. Six explaining factors: GDP per capita, social support, healthy life expectancy, freedom to make life choices, generosity and perceptions of corruption.
- History: the first World Happiness Report came out in 2012. The UN General Assembly declared 20 March as the International Day of Happiness in June 2012 (resolution 66/281); it has been observed since 2013. Bhutan led the initiative.
- Bhutan's 'Gross National Happiness' (GNH): a concept put forward in the 1970s by the Fourth King, Jigme Singye Wangchuck – measuring people's well-being rather than GDP alone; 4 pillars and 9 domains.

Tamil Nadu link: the report ranks only countries; there is no State-wise data. For comparison: Madhya Pradesh was the first Indian State to set up a 'Department of Happiness' (2016).

9 Global Peace Index 2026 – India 127th of 163 countries; Iceland most peaceful, Russia least

Indices & Reports

News

The Sydney-headquartered Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP) released the 20th Global Peace Index (GPI 2026) in June 2026, covering 163 countries and territories (99.7% of the world's population). India is 127th with a score of 2.409 – down 12 places from 115th in 2025. Iceland (1.161) remains the most peaceful country; Russia (163rd) is ranked least peaceful for the second year in a row. The USA is 134th. Global peacefulness has declined for the 12th year in a row.

Key facts

Publisher	Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP), Sydney; June 2026; 20th edition
Method	3 domains, 23 indicators; lower score = more peaceful
India	127/163 (score 2.409); 115th in 2025
Top 5	Iceland, New Zealand, Switzerland, Slovenia, Ireland
Bottom 5	Russia (163), Sudan (162), DR Congo (161), Ukraine (160), Israel (159)
Neighbours	Bhutan 16, Sri Lanka 67, Nepal 111, Bangladesh 117, China 118, Myanmar 151, Pakistan 152, Afghanistan 157

Background

- The GPI's three domains: (1) Societal Safety & Security – crime, political instability, terrorism; (2) Ongoing Domestic & International Conflict; (3) Militarisation – military spending, arms imports and exports, etc. 23 indicators in all.
- History: the GPI has been published every year since 2007; the IEP was founded by Australian entrepreneur Steve Killelea. Iceland has been first every year since 2008 – it has no standing army and low crime.
- Reasons cited for India's fall: border tensions with neighbours, domestic incidents such as the April 2025 Pahalgam terror attack, higher militarisation and arms imports. In South Asia, Bhutan (16th) is the most peaceful, Sri Lanka (67th) second.

Tamil Nadu link: the GPI ranks only countries; there is no State-level data. A Tamil Nadu fact related to its 'militarisation' domain: one of India's two Defence Industrial Corridors announced in 2018 is in Tamil Nadu – with five nodes at Chennai, Hosur, Salem, Coimbatore and Tiruchirappalli (the other is in Uttar Pradesh).

10 Global Innovation Index 2026 – India 38th of 139 economies; first among lower-middle-income economies

Indices & Reports

News

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) released the 19th Global Innovation Index (GII 2026) in Geneva on 29 Sept 2026. India is 38th of 139 economies (also 38th in 2025); 1st among 36 lower-middle-income economies; 1st of 11 in Central and Southern Asia (followed by Kazakhstan 73, Bhutan 74). It is 49th in innovation inputs and 25th in outputs. Switzerland is 1st for the 16th year running; Sweden 2nd, the USA 3rd. In the top-100 cluster ranking released earlier on 8 Sept 2026: Bengaluru 25, Delhi 27, Mumbai 43, Chennai 79.

Key facts

Release	29 Sept 2026, Geneva – WIPO; 19th edition
Top ranks	1 Switzerland, 2 Sweden, 3 USA, 4 Rep. of Korea, 5 Singapore, 6 UK; China 10
India	38/139; inputs 49, outputs 25; an 'innovation overperformer' for 16 years
India – strengths	1st in ICT services exports; 4th in late-stage venture capital deals
Clusters	World No. 1 – Shenzhen–Hong Kong–Guangzhou; India: Bengaluru 25, Delhi 27, Mumbai 43, Chennai 79
Framework	About 80 indicators; 5 input pillars + 2 output pillars

Background

- The GII was first published in 2007 and is now published by WIPO – a UN specialised agency headquartered in Geneva (Switzerland), set up by the 1967 Convention; India joined in 1975.
- Framework: innovation inputs – institutions, human capital & research, infrastructure, market sophistication, business sophistication; innovation outputs – knowledge & technology outputs, creative outputs. Overall score = average of the two. 2026 focus – deep-science entrepreneurship ('Powering entrepreneurs at the frontier of science').
- India's trend: 40th in 2022 and 2023, 39th in 2024, 38th in 2025 and 2026. WIPO notes India is still weak in researcher numbers and scientific articles. Among the top 100 clusters, China has 25 and the USA 20.

Tamil Nadu link: Chennai is 79th among WIPO's top 100 innovation clusters – up 5 places from 2025; one of India's 4 clusters. In NIRF 2025, IIT Madras was No. 1 overall for the 7th consecutive year.

11 Global Hunger Index 2026 – India 100th of 122 countries; 'Serious' category

Indices & Reports

News

The 2026 Global Hunger Index (GHI) was released in Oct 2026 (launch event 14 Oct, Berlin) with the theme 'No Security Without Food Security'. Of 136 countries assessed, 122 were ranked. India is 100th (tied with Ethiopia) with a score of 24.1 – 'Serious'; it was 102nd of 123 in 2025. Sri Lanka 53, Nepal 72, Bangladesh 84, Pakistan 106, Afghanistan 108. Last is Somalia (122, score 47.0). The world score is 18.1 ('Moderate').

Key facts

Publishers	Welthungerhilfe (Germany), IFHV (Ruhr University Bochum, Germany), Helvetas (Switzerland)
India	100/122; score 24.1 (2018: 25.8; 2000: 38.1); 'Serious'
India indicators	Undernourishment 9.8%; child stunting 29.3%; child wasting 19.0% (highest in South Asia)
4 indicators	Undernourishment (1/3), under-5 mortality (1/3), stunting (1/6), wasting (1/6)
Severity scale	≤9.9 low; 10–19.9 moderate; 20–34.9 serious; 35–49.9 alarming; ≥50 extremely alarming
Neighbours	Sri Lanka 53, Nepal 72, Bangladesh 84, Pakistan 106, Afghanistan 108; China – in the group of 24 countries scoring below 5 (ranks 1–24)

Background

- The GHI is a peer-reviewed annual report scoring countries on a 0–100 scale – lower is better. The 24 countries scoring below 5 are not ranked individually (jointly 1–24). In 2026, 8 countries are 'alarming': Somalia, DR Congo, Chad, Madagascar, and provisionally Burundi, Sudan, South Sudan and Yemen.
- Terms: stunting – low height for age (chronic undernutrition); wasting – low weight for height (acute undernutrition). Both are measured for children under 5.
- Government of India's stand: in earlier years (2022, 2023) the Ministry of Women and Child Development rejected the GHI as an 'erroneous measure of hunger', arguing that 3 of its 4 indicators relate to children's health and do not represent the whole population. India's schemes: POSHAN Abhiyaan (2018), PM-POSHAN, PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (free foodgrains to over 80 crore people), National Food Security Act 2013.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu pioneered school meal schemes – free midday meals under Kamaraj (1956); MGR's 'Nutritious Noon Meal Scheme' (1 July 1982); the 'Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme' launched at Madurai on 15 Sept 2022.

12 New terminal at Leh's Kushok Bakula Rimpochee Airport – India's first with geothermal heating; opened by PM

Infrastructure

News

On 15 Oct 2026 Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the new passenger terminal of Kushok Bakula Rimpochee Airport, Leh – one of 5 projects worth about ₹3,350 crore. Built for about ₹640 crore over 23,800 sq m, it is the country's first terminal with a geothermal heating and cooling system; it also uses solar power. It is designed to handle 35 lakh passengers a year. The project was executed by the Airports Authority of India (AAI).

Key facts

Inauguration	15 Oct 2026 – PM Modi (virtually)
Cost / Area	About ₹640 crore; 23,800 sq m
Capacity	35 lakh passengers a year; up to 54 flights a day
Geothermal system	457 boreholes (110–120 m deep each) – heating, cooling, hot water; rooftop solar PV
Airport	Elevation 3,256 m – India's highest commercial airport; IATA code IXL; owned by IAF, run by AAI
Other projects	Nimmu–Padum–Darcha road (298 km, BRO, via Shinkun La); Hanu 9 MW hydro project; Petroglyph park at Sindhu Ghat

Background

- Science: geothermal energy is heat from the Earth's interior. Shallow ground stays at a nearly constant temperature all year; ground-source heat pumps draw heat in during winter and push it out in summer to condition buildings.
- Geothermal in India: the Geological Survey of India (GSI) has mapped 381 hot springs; theoretical potential is about 10.6 GW. Key sites – Puga valley (Ladakh), Tattapani (Chhattisgarh), Manikaran (Himachal Pradesh). The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) notified the first 'National Policy on Geothermal Energy' in Sept 2025.
- Puga project: in Puga valley, eastern Ladakh (about 14,000 ft), the ONGC Energy Centre has drilled geothermal wells; the next phase is a 1 MW pilot power plant. It lies on the Indus suture zone.
- Name: the airport is named after the 19th Kushok Bakula Rimpochee, a Buddhist monk. The PM laid the foundation stone of the new terminal in Feb 2019.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has no geothermal airport project. Related fact – PM Modi inaugurated the new integrated terminal (over ₹1,100 crore) of Tiruchirappalli International Airport on 2 Jan 2024.

13 Ladakh notifies Sankoo as its eighth district – carved out of Kargil district

Governance

News

On 16 Oct 2026 the Revenue Department of the UT of Ladakh issued notification S.O. 284 creating 'Sankoo' district, approved by Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena. Four tehsils of Kargil district – Sankoo, GM Pore, TSG and Taisuru – form the new district, with headquarters at Sankoo. The notification was issued under Section 5 of the J&K Land Revenue Act, 1996. Five new districts notified on 27 Apr 2026 had taken Ladakh to 7 districts; with Sankoo it now has 8.

Key facts

Notification	S.O. 284, 16 Oct 2026 – Ladakh Revenue Dept; approved by LG Vinai Kumar Saxena
Parent district	Kargil – 4 tehsils: Sankoo, GM Pore, TSG, Taisuru
Location	Suru valley; about 42 km south of Kargil town
Original districts	Leh, Kargil (Ladakh district split in 1979)
Apr 2026 districts	From Leh: Nubra (Diskit), Sham (Khaltse), Changthang (Nyoma); from Kargil: Zanskar (Padum), Drass
Total	8 districts

Background

- History: the Union Home Ministry announced five new districts on 26 Aug 2024; they were notified in the gazette on 27 Apr 2026. Residents of Sankoo and Shakar-Chiktan protested at the time, demanding districts of their own.
- Polity: under the J&K Reorganisation Act 2019, Ladakh became a Union Territory without a legislature on 31 Oct 2019, headed by a Lieutenant Governor. Vinai Kumar Saxena took oath as the 4th LG on 13 Mar 2026, succeeding Kavinder Gupta. Leh (1995) and Kargil (2003) have Autonomous Hill Development Councils (LAHDC).
- Sixth Schedule demand: the Leh Apex Body and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) seek statehood and Sixth Schedule safeguards. The Sixth Schedule – Articles 244(2) and 275(1) – provides autonomous district councils for tribal areas of 4 States: Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.
- Geography: the Suru is a tributary of the Indus, flowing south to north past Kargil. At Sankoo the Lingber Lungpa stream joins the Suru. NH-301 (Kargil–Pensi La–Padum) runs through the area.

Tamil Nadu link: there is no direct Tamil Nadu link. For comparison – Tamil Nadu has 38 districts; Mayiladuthurai (2020), carved out of Nagapattinam, is the 38th. Five districts – Kallakurichi, Tenkasi, Chengalpattu, Tirupathur and Ranipet – were created in 2019.

14 Gujarat expands 'Shramik Annapurna' meal scheme – 101 new centres in 28 districts; full meal for ₹5

Welfare Schemes

News

On 16 Oct 2026 Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel launched 101 new meal centres in 28 districts under the 'Shramik Annapurna Yojana' for construction workers, and served meals at Chanakyapuri, Ahmedabad. Construction workers and their families get a meal of rotis, vegetables, dal, rice, pickle and jaggery for ₹5 per person, with a sweet once a week. Daily meals will rise from about 35,000 to about 45,000. Over 5 crore meals have been served so far; sites with 50+ workers also get doorstep delivery (about 27 lakh meals). Media reports put the total number of centres variously at 372 and 394.

Key facts

Date	16 Oct 2026 – CM Bhupendra Patel (Chanakyapuri, Ahmedabad)
Expansion	101 new centres in 28 districts
Price	₹5 per person (₹10 at launch in 2017)
Beneficiaries	Construction workers & families; ~45,000 meals/day (earlier 35,000+)
Implementer	Gujarat Building & Other Construction Workers Welfare Board; Labour, Skill Development & Employment Dept
Record	5 crore+ meals so far; ~27 lakh delivered at sites

Background

- Building and Other Construction Workers (BOCW) Act 1996 + Welfare Cess Act 1996: a cess of 1–2% of construction cost; a welfare board in every State. These are now subsumed in the new Labour Codes (in force from 21 Nov 2025).
- e-Shram portal – launched by the Union Labour Ministry on 26 Aug 2021; national database of unorganised workers.
- Constitution: Arts. 39(e), 41, 43 (Directive Principles) – workers' welfare, living wage; Art. 47 – duty of the State to raise the level of nutrition. 'Welfare of labour' is in the Concurrent List.

Tamil Nadu link: the pioneer of subsidised meals, 'Amma Unavagam', was launched in Chennai in 2013 by CM J. Jayalalithaa (idli at ₹1). The 'Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme' for primary school children was launched in Madurai on 15 Sep 2022. Tamil Nadu also has a Construction Workers Welfare Board.

15 HAL-built ALH MK-III helicopter (CG 875) inducted into 831 Squadron at Coast Guard Air Station Ratnagiri

Defence

News

On 13 Oct 2026 the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) inducted the indigenous Advanced Light Helicopter ALH MK-III (CG 875), built by Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL), into 831 Squadron at Coast Guard Air Station Ratnagiri, Maharashtra. The station's Commanding Officer received it with a water cannon salute. It is the first of five ALH MK-IIIs allotted to 831 Squadron. It has advanced radar, an Electro-Optical Pod, an Automatic Identification System (AIS) and a 12.7 mm heavy machine gun. It will boost surveillance and search-and-rescue over Region (West), including the Maharashtra coast.

Key facts

Date / place	13 Oct 2026 – Coast Guard Air Station Ratnagiri (Maharashtra)
Helicopter	ALH MK-III (maritime) – CG 875; built by HAL, Bengaluru
Squadron	831 Squadron (CG) – first of 5 allotted
Equipment	Radar, EO Pod, AIS, 12.7 mm heavy machine gun
Contract	Mar 2024 – ₹8,073 crore with HAL: 34 ALH (ICG 9, Army 25); Mar 2026 – 6 more for ICG (₹2,901 crore)
Earlier delivery	10 Apr 2026 – 4 ALH MK-III (MR) – to Kochi and Porbandar squadrons

Background

- Indian Coast Guard: set up as an interim body on 1 Feb 1977; made a formal armed force by the Coast Guard Act, 1978. Under the Ministry of Defence; HQ New Delhi; motto 'Vayam Rakshamah' (We Protect).
- ALH 'Dhruv': a twin-engine multi-role helicopter designed and built by HAL. MK-III has a glass cockpit and night capability; roles – maritime surveillance, search and rescue, casualty evacuation, coastal security and anti-piracy.
- ICG regions: West (Mumbai), East (Chennai), North-East (Kolkata), North-West (Gandhinagar), Andaman & Nicobar (Port Blair). Ratnagiri is in Region (West), on the Konkan coast.

Tamil Nadu link: the Coast Guard Region (East) HQ is in Chennai. 840 Squadron (ALH MK-III) was commissioned at Coast Guard Air Station Chennai on 30 Nov 2022 – for surveillance of the Tamil Nadu and Andhra coasts.

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16 Clean hydrogen: India ranks 3rd in the world in cumulative contracted volumes – BNEF 'India Transition Factbook 2026'

Energy

News

According to BloombergNEF's 'India Transition Factbook 2026' (commissioned by Bloomberg Philanthropies; 13 Oct 2026), India ranks third in the world in cumulative contracted clean hydrogen volumes. In the first four months of 2026, Indian firms signed binding contracts to supply 0.3 million tonnes a year of clean hydrogen – more than firms in any other country (including green ammonia exports). Three major binding agreements to export over 1 million tonnes a year of green ammonia were also signed. Union New and Renewable Energy Minister Pralhad Joshi highlighted this on 16 Oct.

Key facts

Report	BNEF 'India Transition Factbook 2026' (13 Oct 2026)
India	3rd globally in cumulative contracted clean hydrogen
2026 (Jan–Apr)	Binding deals for 0.3 Mt/yr – highest of any country
Exports	3 major green ammonia export deals – 1 Mt+/yr
Reason	Among the world's cheapest green ammonia – cheap clean power, subsidies, competitive auctions
Minister	Pralhad Joshi – Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)

Background

- National Green Hydrogen Mission: Union Cabinet approval 4 Jan 2023; outlay ₹19,744 crore; target – 5 million tonnes (MMT) a year of green hydrogen by 2030. Nodal ministry – MNRE.
- SIGHT (Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition) – ₹17,490 crore: incentives for electrolyser manufacturing and green hydrogen production.
- Science: hydrogen – atomic number 1, the lightest element. Grey hydrogen – from natural gas (steam methane reforming); blue – the same with carbon capture; green – by electrolysis of water using renewable power.
- Green hydrogen hubs: in Oct 2025 MNRE recognised three major ports as 'Green Hydrogen Hubs' – Deendayal (Kandla, Gujarat), Paradip (Odisha) and V.O. Chidambaranar (Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu).

Tamil Nadu link: V.O. Chidambaranar Port, Thoothukudi, is one of India's three 'Green Hydrogen Hubs' – a key east-coast base for green hydrogen/ammonia production and export.

17 Dr Sudha Yadav sworn in as Governor of Karnataka – the State's second woman Governor

Polity

News

Dr Sudha Yadav was sworn in as Governor of Karnataka on Friday, 16 Oct 2026, at Lok Bhavan (formerly Raj Bhavan), Bengaluru. Karnataka High Court Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru administered the oaths of office and secrecy. Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh read out the warrant of appointment. CM D.K. Shivakumar, Deputy CM G. Parameshwara and outgoing Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot attended. President Droupadi Murmu appointed her on 12 Oct. She is Karnataka's second woman Governor after V.S. Ramadevi.

Key facts

Sworn in	16 Oct 2026 – Lok Bhavan, Bengaluru
Oath by	Karnataka HC Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru
Predecessor	Thaawarchand Gehlot (since 11 July 2021)
Background	BJP, Haryana; Mahendragarh MP 1999–2004; PhD Chemistry (Roorkee)
Party roles	BJP OBC Morcha in-charge; Parliamentary Board member (Aug 2022)
Personal	Husband, BSF Deputy Commandant Sukhbir Singh Yadav, killed in 1999 Kargil war

Background

- Constitution: Art. 153 – a Governor for each State; 155 – appointed by the President by warrant under hand and seal; 156 – term 5 years (during the pleasure of the President); 157 – citizen of India, 35 years of age.
- Art. 158 – conditions of office (cannot be an MP/MLA); 159 – oath administered by the High Court Chief Justice (or senior-most judge in absence); 161 – pardoning power.
- Karnataka: formed as 'Mysore State' on 1 Nov 1956, renamed 'Karnataka' on 1 Nov 1973; capital Bengaluru. Raj Bhavans are now called 'Lok Bhavan'.
- In the 1999 Lok Sabha election she defeated Congress's Rao Inderjit Singh in Mahendragarh (Haryana). She was also a member of the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) – given constitutional status under Art. 338B by the 102nd Amendment (2018).

Tamil Nadu link: in the same reshuffle on 12 Oct 2026, Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar (Kerala Governor, holding additional charge of TN since March 2026) was appointed Governor of Tamil Nadu. The previous Governor, R.N. Ravi, had been moved to West Bengal. India's first woman Supreme Court judge, M. Fathima Beevi, served as Governor of Tamil Nadu.

18 MoD signs ₹4,106-crore contracts – 'Varunastra' anti-submarine torpedoes for Navy, GSAT-7C satellite for IAF

Defence

News

On 15 Oct 2026 in New Delhi, the Ministry of Defence signed two contracts worth about ₹4,106 crore in all. (1) 'Varunastra' Heavy Weight Torpedoes for the Indian Navy – ₹1,543 crore – with Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL), Hyderabad. It is an indigenous ship-launched anti-submarine torpedo that can engage enemy submarines at long range, developed by DRDO's Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL). (2) A dedicated communication satellite, GSAT-7C, for the Indian Air Force – ₹2,563 crore – with NewSpace India Ltd (NSIL), Bengaluru.

Key facts

Date / place	15 Oct 2026, New Delhi – in presence of A. Anbarasu, Addl. Secretary & DG (Acquisition)
Total value	About ₹4,106 crore (2 contracts)
Varunastra	₹1,543 crore – BDL, Hyderabad – for Navy; ship-launched anti-submarine heavyweight torpedo
Developer	NSTL (DRDO), Visakhapatnam; handed to Navy 29 June 2016
GSAT-7C	₹2,563 crore – NSIL, Bengaluru – secure communication for IAF
GSAT-7C approval	DAC – 23 Nov 2021 (AoN); to link software-defined radios (SDRs)

Background

- Varunastra means the weapon of Varuna (sea god). It runs on electric (silver oxide–zinc battery) propulsion; speed over 40 knots. Then Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar handed it to the Navy on 29 June 2016.
- Defence procurement: the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) is chaired by the Defence Minister and grants Acceptance of Necessity (AoN). Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020 gives top priority to 'Buy (Indian-IDDM)' (Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured).
- Companies: BDL – Defence Ministry PSU, Hyderabad; makes missiles and torpedoes. NSIL – ISRO's commercial arm under the Department of Space (2019), Bengaluru.
- Military satellites: GSAT-7 'Rukmini' (2013) – for the Navy; GSAT-7A (2018, GSLV-F11) – for the IAF. GSAT-7C continues the series.

Tamil Nadu link: the 'Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor' has 5 nodes – Chennai, Hosur, Salem, Coimbatore and Tiruchirappalli. The Navy's anti-submarine P-8I aircraft are based at INS Rajali, Arakkonam.

19 Chandigarh's Sukhna wetland and UP's Sauj Jheel (Mainpuri) take India's Ramsar sites from 101 to 103; Tamil Nadu (20) tops

Environment

News

On 15 Oct 2026 Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav announced that Chandigarh's Sukhna wetland (Ramsar site no. 2602) and Sauj Jheel near Kishni, Mainpuri district, Uttar Pradesh (no. 2603) had been designated Ramsar sites, taking India's tally from 101 to 103. Sukhna is Chandigarh's first Ramsar site; Sauj Jheel takes UP's count to 14. Tamil Nadu leads with 20 sites, and UP is second with 14.

Key facts

Announced	15 Oct 2026 – Union Minister Bhupender Yadav; India 101 → 103
Sukhna	Chandigarh; Shivalik foothills; man-made lake formed in 1958 by damming the Sukhna Choe; Chandigarh's first Ramsar site
Sauj Jheel	Kishni, Mainpuri district, UP; shallow Gangetic-floodplain lake; 30,000+ waterbirds; Sarus crane, Greater spotted eagle (Vulnerable)
Species (Sukhna)	Common pochard (Vulnerable), Pallas's fish eagle and black pond turtle (both Endangered); Central Asian Flyway
State count	Tamil Nadu 20 (first); Uttar Pradesh 14 (second)
Mainpuri	Now two Ramsar sites, with Saman Bird Sanctuary (2019)

Background

- Ramsar Convention: signed on 2 Feb 1971 at Ramsar, Iran; in force from 1975. 2 Feb is World Wetlands Day. India joined on 1 Feb 1982; its first sites were Chilika Lake (Odisha) and Keoladeo National Park (Rajasthan), 1981.
- Montreux Record: a list of Ramsar sites at risk of ecological change; from India, Keoladeo and Loktak (Manipur) are on it; Chilika was removed in 2002. Ramsar COP15 – July 2025, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.
- UP's 2026 additions: Patna Bird Sanctuary (Etah), Shekha Jheel (Aligarh – 99th) and Jai Prakash Narayan Bird Sanctuary / Surha Tal (Ballia – 100th, June 2026). The 101st was Glaw Lake (Arunachal Pradesh, Aug 2026). India has the most Ramsar sites in Asia and is third in the world (after the UK and Mexico).
- History: Sukhna Lake was created in 1958 by Chandigarh's planner Le Corbusier and chief engineer P.L. Varma. Its catchment has been notified as the Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary.

Tamil Nadu link: with 20 Ramsar sites Tamil Nadu leads the country. Its first was Point Calimere (Kodiakkarai) Wildlife and Bird Sanctuary, 2002. In Jan 2025 the Sakkarakottai and Therthangal bird sanctuaries of Ramanathapuram district were added, making 20. Vedanthangal (Chengalpattu) and the Gulf of Mannar Marine Biosphere Reserve are also Ramsar sites.

20 Cotton Revival Mission in Tamil Nadu – ₹26.21 crore sanctioned for 2026–27; Minister R. Vinoth urges farmers to benefit

Agriculture

News

In a statement on 16 Oct 2026, Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister R. Vinoth said ₹26.21 crore has been sanctioned for 2026–27 for the 'Cotton Revival Mission' – a five-year scheme jointly funded by the Centre and the State – and ₹10.48 crore released as the first instalment. Close planting, high-density planting and extra-long-staple (ELS) cotton are prioritised; farmers in 22 districts can apply at block agricultural extension centres. The mission was announced in the 2026–27 Agriculture Budget (6 Aug 2026).

Key facts

Funds	₹26.21 crore for 2026–27; first instalment ₹10.48 crore; 5-year scheme (Centre–State)
Minister	R. Vinoth – Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare
Present status	About 1.27 lakh ha; about 2.50 lakh bales
Demo subsidy (per ha)	Close planting ₹14,000; high-density ₹18,500; ELS cotton ₹9,500; integrated crop management ₹7,500
Other help	Seed subsidy; 100% subsidy on liquid biofertilisers, biocontrol agents, micronutrients, TNAU growth promoter; drone spraying; training
Districts	22 – incl. Ariyalur, Coimbatore, Cuddalore, Dharmapuri, Dindigul, Perambalur, Ramanathapuram, Salem, Theni, Virudhunagar

Background

- Geography: cotton is a Kharif crop (Gossypium); black soil (regur) suits it best; it needs high temperature, light rain or irrigation, about 210 frost-free days and bright sunshine. One bale = 170 kg of lint.
- Science: Bt cotton carries a gene from the bacterium Bacillus thuringiensis and resists bollworms; approved for commercial cultivation in India in 2002 – the only GM crop approved for commercial cultivation in India.
- Central scheme: 'Mission for Cotton Productivity' – announced in the Union Budget 2025–26; approved by the Union Cabinet in May 2026; ₹5,659 crore for 2026–27 to 2030–31; ELS cotton, high-density planting and the 'Kasturi Cotton Bharat' brand.
- Economy: Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) – 1970, Ministry of Textiles; it buys cotton at the minimum support price (MSP). ICAR-Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR) – Nagpur; its regional station is at Coimbatore.

Tamil Nadu link: Coimbatore is the 'Manchester of South India' for its spinning mills; Tiruppur is the knitwear export hub. Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) and the CICR regional station are both in Coimbatore. As much of the cotton for the State's textile industry comes from other States, the mission aims to raise local output.

21 Neyveli and Tiruchi badlands are Mars-analogue sites – University of Kerala scientists

Science

News

A team led by Dr Sajin Kumar K.S. (DST-FIST Project Coordinator), Department of Geology, University of Kerala (Thiruvananthapuram), has identified Martian-analogue sites at Neyveli and the Tiruchirappalli badlands in Tamil Nadu and in Chile's Atacama Desert. Hydrous sulphate minerals – 'melanterite' (iron sulphate) formed from marcasite in the Neyveli lignite beds, and 'gypsum' at Tiruchi and Atacama – were confirmed with a laser Raman spectrometer. The work appeared as two papers in the 'Journal of Geophysical Research: Planets'; the Department of Science and Technology (DST) announced it on 16 Oct 2026.

Key facts

Institution	University of Kerala, Dept of Geology; led by Dr Sajin Kumar K.S.; funded by DST-FIST
Neyveli (Cuddalore dist.)	Melanterite ($FeSO_4 \cdot 7H_2O$) – formed within 23 days from marcasite (FeS_2) in lignite exposed to air; first record in Peninsular India
Tiruchi badlands	Gypsum ($CaSO_4 \cdot 2H_2O$) – semi-arid terrain; gypsum also at Atacama, Chile
Significance	Melanterite – short-lived wet, acidic conditions on Mars; gypsum – past water, may preserve biosignatures
Tool / journal	Laser Raman spectrometer; Journal of Geophysical Research: Planets (2 papers)

Background

- An analogue site is a place on Earth whose geology, chemistry or environment resembles another planet. ISRO's space analogue mission 'HOPE' (Himalayan Outpost for Planetary Exploration) was held in Ladakh's Tso Kar valley on 1–10 Aug 2025; India's first analog space mission had been held earlier at Leh in Nov 2024.
- Mangalyaan (Mars Orbiter Mission): launched on 5 Nov 2013 from Sriharikota by PSLV-C25; entered Mars orbit on 24 Sep 2014 – India was the first nation to succeed at the first attempt and the first in Asia.
- Science: Mars is the 'Red Planet' because of iron oxide on its surface; its moons are Phobos and Deimos; Olympus Mons is the tallest volcano in the Solar System. Sulphate minerals need water to form, so on Mars they are evidence of past water.
- Economy: Neyveli is India's key lignite mining centre; NLC India Ltd (a central PSU) runs mines and thermal power stations here.

Tamil Nadu link: anorthosite soil (similar to lunar soil) from Sithampoondi and Kunnamalai in Namakkal district has been supplied to ISRO since 2012 and used to test the Chandrayaan-2 lander and Chandrayaan-3's soft landing (with Periyar University, Salem). Now Neyveli and Tiruchi make Tamil Nadu a field for Mars studies too.

22 CM Vijay opens 'Periyar Arivulagam' library and science centre in Coimbatore

Tamil Nadu

News

On 16 Oct 2026 CM C. Joseph Vijay opened 'Periyar Arivulagam', a library and science centre built for about ₹300 crore at Gandhipuram, Coimbatore (Nanjappa Road, near the town bus stand). Built by the Public Works Department on 7 acres of Prison Department land, the ground-plus-seven-floor building covers 1.98 lakh sq ft. It has over one lakh books, a digital library, a planetarium, a science centre, a STEM lab, a separate floor for persons with disabilities, a competitive-exam training centre and a start-up incubation centre.

Key facts

Opened	16 Oct 2026 – CM C. Joseph Vijay
Site	Gandhipuram, Coimbatore – Prison Department land, 7 acres
Cost	About ₹300 crore (building ₹245 cr; books ₹50 cr; e-books/IT ₹5 cr)
Building	1.98 lakh sq ft; ground + 7 floors; Public Works Department
Features	1 lakh+ books, planetarium, STEM lab, auditorium, Periyar statue
Foundation	Nov 2024 – then CM M.K. Stalin

Background

- Periyar E.V. Ramasamy: born 17 Sep 1879 at Erode; died 24 Dec 1973 at Vellore. In 1925 he left the Congress and started the Self-Respect Movement; the same year (2 May 1925) he launched the journal 'Kudi Arasu'.
- Vaikom Satyagraha (1924–25): a struggle in Travancore (today's Kerala) for the right of oppressed castes to use the roads around the Vaikom temple; Periyar joined, was jailed, and is hailed as 'Vaikom Veerar'. The renovated Periyar memorial at Vaikom was opened on 12 Dec 2024.
- Polity: President of the Justice Party in 1938; at the 1944 Salem conference the Justice Party was renamed 'Dravidar Kazhagam'. The title 'Periyar' was conferred at a women's conference in Madras in 1938. Since 2021 Tamil Nadu observes 17 Sep as 'Social Justice Day'.
- Tamil Nadu's big libraries: Anna Centenary Library, Kotturpuram, Chennai (15 Sep 2010); Kalaignar Centenary Library, Madurai (15 July 2023); now Periyar Arivulagam, Coimbatore (2026).

Tamil Nadu link: it follows Chennai (Anna) and Madurai (Kalaignar) as the big knowledge hub for the western region. The same day, 89 completed works worth ₹408.25 crore were opened in Coimbatore and welfare aid of ₹34.72 crore was given to 9,343 beneficiaries.

1 India's first field study of dengue vaccine (Qdenga) and mosquito repellents begins at Kadayanallur: Minister Arunraj

Health

News

At an event at the Kadayanallur Government General Hospital, Tenkasi district, on 17 Oct 2026, Medical, Medical Education and Public Welfare Minister K.G. Arunraj launched India's first field study on dengue vaccination and mosquito repellents. It is not a mass vaccination rollout but a pilot study with voluntary, written consent. ICMR's National Institute of Epidemiology (NIE), Chennai, is conducting it with the Tamil Nadu Public Health Department in the 33 wards of Kadayanallur municipality. Japan's Takeda vaccine 'Qdenga' will be used, and skin-applied creams and electric liquid repellents will also be tested. Results go to NTAGI; any statewide expansion depends on its advice.

Key facts

Date, place	17 Oct 2026 – Kadayanallur Govt General Hospital, Tenkasi district
Announced by	Minister K.G. Arunraj (Health & Family Welfare)
Nature	Pilot field study – voluntary, written consent, ethics approval
Conducted by	ICMR–NIE (Chennai) + TN Public Health Dept; 33 wards of Kadayanallur municipality
Vaccine	Qdenga – Takeda (Japan); all 4 serotypes; 2 doses 3 months apart; CDSCO approval July 2026 (age 4–60)
Repellents	Skin creams, electric liquid vaporisers – tested for reduction in lab-confirmed dengue

Background

- Science: dengue is caused by a flavivirus (family Flaviviridae, an RNA virus) with 4 serotypes, DENV-1 to DENV-4. A second infection with a different serotype raises the risk of severe dengue. Symptoms: high fever, body pain, falling platelets. There is no specific drug.
- Vector: female Aedes aegypti (also Aedes albopictus) – a day-biter that breeds in stored clean water. The same mosquito spreads chikungunya, Zika and yellow fever.
- India: National Dengue Day – 16 May. Dengue control – National Center for Vector Borne Diseases Control (NCVBDC), Health Ministry. Phase-3 trial of the indigenous vaccine 'DengiAll' (ICMR, Panacea Biotec) began in 2024.
- Qdenga – a live attenuated tetravalent vaccine; licensed in 40+ countries; WHO-prequalified (May 2024). Indian manufacturing partner – Biological E (Hyderabad).

Tamil Nadu link: ICMR–NIE is in Chennai. India's first State public health law – the Tamil Nadu Public Health Act, 1939; Tamil Nadu has a separate Directorate of Public Health. Kadayanallur, which recently saw a dengue outbreak with deaths, was chosen for the study.

2 'Thenisai Thendral' composer Deva (75) passes away – laid to rest with State honours and 72-gun salute in Ranipet district

Tamil Nadu

News

Composer Deva (Devanesan Chokkalingam, 75), hailed as 'Thenisai Thendral' and the 'King of Gaana', died of cardiac arrest at a private hospital in Chennai on Saturday, 17 Oct 2026. CM C. Joseph Vijay paid homage at his T. Nagar residence, consoled his son Srikanth Deva and announced full State honours. On 18 Oct he was laid to rest on his family farmland in Sakkaramallur near Arcot, Ranipet district, with a 72-gun salute. Rajinikanth, Kamal Haasan and others paid tribute.

Key facts

Death	17 Oct 2026, Chennai – cardiac arrest; age 75
Real name	Devanesan Chokkalingam; born 20 Nov 1950
Funeral	18 Oct – Sakkaramallur near Arcot, Ranipet district; 72-gun salute
Debut	'Maattukara Mannaru' (1986); 400+ films in 4 languages
Key films	Annamalai, Baashha, Arunachalam, Aasai, Kadhal Kottai, Vaalee, Kushi, Avvai Shanmugi
Awards	TN State Film Award – 'Vaigasi Poranthachu' (1990), Aasai, Kushi; Filmfare (Kannada) – 'Amrutha Varshini'

Background

- Gaana – an urban folk music form born among the working people of North Chennai, sung at funerals and festivals. Deva brought it into mainstream film music, earning the title 'Father/King of Gaana'.
- Bridging the Ilaiyaraaja and A.R. Rahman eras, he gave hits for Rajinikanth ('Annamalai', 'Baashha'), Kamal Haasan, Vijay and Ajith. His 100th film was 'Veluchami' (1995).
- State honours: granting a full State funeral is the State government's decision – it includes draping the body in the national flag, a police guard and a gun salute.
- TN arts awards: 'Kalaimamani' is given by the Tamil Nadu Iyal Isai Nataka Manram. Nationally – Sangeet Natak Akademi (New Delhi); cinema's highest honour is the Dadasaheb Phalke Award (I&B Ministry).

Tamil Nadu link: Deva was a Chennai composer who took North Chennai's Gaana music to the world. The Tamil Nadu government gave him the Best Music Director award three times. He was laid to rest with State honours in Ranipet district.

3 PM-AJAY: 18,093 Scheduled Caste-majority villages declared 'Adarsh Grams' (model villages)

Welfare Schemes

News

Under the 'Adarsh Gram' component of the Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM-AJAY), run by the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, 18,093 Scheduled Caste-majority villages had been declared model villages as of 8 Sept 2026 (PIB, 16 Oct 2026). Over 47,200 villages are covered; over 47.79 lakh people have benefited; 46,944 works are complete and 27,032 Village Development Plans prepared. Under Grants-in-Aid, about ₹1,730 crore was released directly to States from 2021–22 to 2025–26, giving skilling and livelihood support to over 2.5 lakh beneficiaries; 785 student hostels were completed by Sept 2026.

Key facts

Scheme	PM-AJAY – launched 2021–22; 100% centrally funded
Ministry	Social Justice & Empowerment
Merged schemes	PMAGY (2009–10), SCA to SCSP, Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana
3 components	Adarsh Gram; Grants-in-Aid for State/district projects; hostels
Adarsh Gram	18,093 declared (as of 8 Sept 2026); 47,200+ villages covered
GIA / hostels	₹1,730 crore (2021–26); 2.5 lakh+ beneficiaries; 785 hostels

Background

- History: Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY) was announced in the 2009–10 Union Budget and piloted in 1,000 villages with over 50% SC population in 5 States – Assam, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. In 2021–22, PMAGY, SCA to SCSP and BJRCY were merged into PM-AJAY.
- Constitution: Art 15(4) – special provisions for SCs; Art 17 – abolition of untouchability; Art 46 (DPSP) – promotion of educational and economic interests of SCs/STs; Art 341 – President notifies Scheduled Castes; Art 338 – National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC).
- Funding: up to 50% for gap-filling works in villages, up to 5% for technical support groups, up to 2% for hostels; the rest as Grants-in-Aid. 100% centrally funded. Monitored via the PM-AJAY app and portal.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu was one of the 5 States in the 2009–10 PMAGY pilot – 225 villages. As per Census 2011, Scheduled Castes form 20.01% of Tamil Nadu's population. The Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department implements these schemes in the State.

4 Zero sugar diversion to ethanol in ESY 2026–27 – cane juice, sugar syrup, B-heavy molasses excluded: Centre

Economy

News

The Centre has directed that sugar diversion for ethanol be 'reduced to zero' in Ethanol Supply Year 2026–27 (ESY: 1 Nov 2026 – 31 Oct 2027). Accordingly, the tender for about 1,100 crore litres of ethanol issued by the public-sector oil marketing companies (IOCL, BPCL, HPCL) on 16 Oct 2026 sought no ethanol made from sugarcane juice, sugar, sugar syrup or B-heavy molasses. C-heavy molasses, maize, broken/damaged grains and surplus FCI rice are allowed. The incentive for maize ethanol was cut from ₹5.79 to ₹2.79 a litre. Reason – drought in Maharashtra and Karnataka has cut sugar output; the aim is to secure domestic sugar stocks and prices. The Government says the E20 target will not be affected.

Key facts

Directive	Sugar diversion in ESY 2026–27 = zero
Tender	OMCs (IOCL, BPCL, HPCL), 16 Oct 2026; ~1,100 crore litres
Excluded	Cane juice, sugar, sugar syrup, B-heavy molasses
Allowed	C-heavy molasses, maize, damaged grains, surplus FCI rice
Reason	Drought – lower sugar output (2025–26: 30.6 million t); 1 Oct stock 3.75 million t
Feedstock share	About three-fourths of ethanol now comes from grains

Background

- Policy: National Policy on Biofuels 2018 (Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas); the 2022 amendment advanced the E20 target from 2030 to ESY 2025–26. E20 (20% ethanol in petrol) is now the nationwide standard. Aims – cut crude imports and emissions, raise farm income.
- Science: ethanol (C_2H_5OH) is made by yeast (Saccharomyces cerevisiae) fermenting sugar/starch. 1G ethanol – cane, grain; 2G – straw, farm residue (cellulose). India's first 2G plant – Panipat (Haryana, IOCL), 2022. 'PM JI-VAN Yojana' (2019) supports 2G.
- Molasses: the syrup left after sugar is extracted. B-heavy still holds much sugar (using it cuts sugar output); C-heavy is final molasses from which no more sugar can be recovered. Cane-juice use was also curbed in Dec 2023 and relaxed for 2024–25.
- Economy: Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of cane is fixed by the Centre on CACP's advice (Sugarcane (Control) Order 1966, Essential Commodities Act 1955). Levy sugar was abolished in 2013 on the Rangarajan Committee's advice – partial decontrol. Top cane producer – Uttar Pradesh.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has cooperative, public-sector and private sugar mills, many with distilleries. The State announces a 'special incentive' over the Centre's FRP every year. With sugar-based ethanol barred, mills must turn to C-heavy molasses and grain ethanol.

5 US firm Reflect Orbital, which plans to 'sell sunlight at night', books two launches with India's Skyroot Aerospace

Science

News

Reflect Orbital, a California-based US start-up, announced on 14 Oct 2026 that it has booked two dedicated rocket launches with Hyderabad's Skyroot Aerospace. The first will fly on 'Vikram-1' and the second on 'Vikram-1U', still under development; launch dates and prices were not disclosed. The company plans to use mirrors in orbit to reflect sunlight onto chosen spots on Earth (a patch about 5 km across) after sunset – for uses such as search-and-rescue and extending power generation at solar farms.

Key facts

Deal	Reflect Orbital (California, USA) – Skyroot Aerospace (Hyderabad); announced 14 Oct 2026
Rockets	1st: Vikram-1; 2nd: Vikram-1U (extra first-stage boosters, under development)
Concept	Orbital mirrors reflect sunlight to light a patch about 5 km wide at night
Demo satellite	'Eärendil-1' – cleared by the US FCC in July 2026
Vikram-1	Maiden orbital flight 'Aagaman' – 18 July 2026, Sriharikota; up to 350 kg to LEO
Concerns	Light pollution, interference with astronomy, wildlife and human circadian rhythms

Background

- Skyroot Aerospace – Hyderabad; co-founder Pawan Kumar Chandana (CEO). The 'Vikram' rockets are named after Vikram Sarabhai, father of the Indian space programme. 'Vikram-S' (mission Prarambh) flew from Sriharikota on 18 Nov 2022 – India's first private rocket (sub-orbital). Vikram-1 became the first orbital rocket launched from Indian soil by a private Indian company (18 July 2026).
- Policy: the space sector was opened to private players in 2020; IN-SPACe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre) is the single-window body that promotes and authorises private space activity, headquartered in Ahmedabad. The Indian Space Policy 2023 was approved by the Union Cabinet in Apr 2023.
- Science: a mirror works by reflection – angle of incidence equals angle of reflection. A similar attempt was made before: Russia's 'Znamya' experiment (1993) sent a beam of reflected sunlight from orbit to Earth; it was later dropped for lack of funds.

Tamil Nadu link: ISRO is building the small-satellite launch complex (SSLV Launch Complex) at Kulasekarapattinam, Thoothukudi district, on about 2,233 acres at ₹986 crore – the PM laid the foundation stone in Feb 2024. In Aug 2026 IN-SPACe invited Expressions of Interest from private firms to operate and maintain it; ownership stays with the Department of Space.

6 North Korea successfully tests a new high-speed torpedo that uses AI to detect and precisely hit targets

Defence

News

North Korea's state news agency KCNA reported on 17 Oct 2026 that the country had tested a new 'high-speed precision-guided torpedo' system underwater on Thursday, 15 Oct 2026. Target detection and guidance are handled by artificial intelligence (AI); KCNA said the test verified propulsion technology developed through more than 180 tests over five years and called it 'a significant step in the country's naval development'. Earlier, on 14 Oct, two types of submarine-launched 'strategic cruise missiles' were tested – the first publicly reported submarine-launched cruise-missile test since January 2024.

Key facts

Test	High-speed precision-guided torpedo – 15 Oct 2026; KCNA report 17 Oct
AI role	Target detection and guidance
Propulsion	180+ tests over 5 years; improved propulsion efficiency verified
Related tests	14 Oct – 2 types of submarine-launched strategic cruise missiles (eastern waters); 3 Oct – hypersonic intermediate-range missile test
Leader / capital	Kim Jong Un; Pyongyang
Headline note	Not an 'underwater bomb' – a torpedo; nor the 2023 'Haeil' nuclear underwater drone

Background

- History: after World War II, Korea was divided in 1945 along the 38th parallel – Soviet north, US south. The Korean War lasted from 25 June 1950 to 27 July 1953; the armistice was signed at Panmunjom (no peace treaty); a Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) separates the two. India chaired the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission for prisoners of war (Gen. K.S. Thimayya).
- Nuclear: North Korea announced withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT, 1968/1970) in January 2003 – the only country to do so; its first nuclear test was in Oct 2006. UN Security Council sanctions continue. In 2023 it also claimed tests of 'Haeil', a nuclear-capable underwater drone.
- Science: a torpedo is a self-propelled underwater weapon. Underwater targets are found with SONAR (Sound Navigation And Ranging) – ultrasonic waves are sent out and distance is worked out from the time the echo takes to return; bats and dolphins use the same echolocation. Sound is used because radio waves fade quickly in water. India's heavyweight torpedo is 'Varunastra' – DRDO's NSTL, Visakhapatnam.

Tamil Nadu link: no direct link. Related TN fact: the naval station 'INS Kattabomman' (1990) at Vijayanarayanam, Tirunelveli district, is a Very Low Frequency (VLF) transmitting station used to communicate with submerged submarines.

7 India's space economy is about $9 billion now and may reach $40–45 billion in 7–8 years – Minister Jitendra Singh (17 Oct)

Space

News

Speaking at a media roundtable, 'Space, Sovereignty and New Economy', organised by the Bloomberg New Economy Forum in New Delhi on Saturday, 17 Oct 2026, Minister of State for Space Dr Jitendra Singh said India's space economy is about US$9 billion now and could grow nearly five-fold to $40–45 billion in the next 7–8 years. He stressed domestic and foreign investment, faster licence approvals, government 'anchor customer' support and real benefits from GST reforms for space products.

Key facts

Event	Bloomberg New Economy Forum media roundtable, New Delhi – 17 Oct 2026
Current size	About $9 billion
Target	$40–45 billion in 7–8 years (about 5-fold)
IN-SPACe decadal vision	$44 billion by 2033; about 8% of the global space market
Minister	Dr Jitendra Singh – MoS (Independent Charge) Science & Technology, Earth Sciences; MoS in PMO, Atomic Energy and Space
Private opening	Sector opened to private players in June 2020; over 400 space start-ups by June 2026

Background

- Structure: the Department of Space (DoS, 1972) functions directly under the Prime Minister; ISRO was formed on 15 Aug 1969 (forerunner INCOSPAR, 1962 – Vikram Sarabhai); HQ Bengaluru. Commercial arms: Antrix (1992) and NewSpace India Limited (NSIL, 2019); IN-SPACe (2020) authorises private players.
- Future plans (Space Vision 2047): India's own space station 'Bharatiya Antariksh Station' (BAS) by 2035; an Indian on the Moon by 2040; Gaganyaan – the human spaceflight programme.
- Economy: Indian Space Policy 2023; FDI rules eased in 2024 – up to 74% automatic route in satellite manufacturing, 49% in launch vehicles, 100% in components. Most revenue comes from satellite communication, Earth observation and geospatial services.

Tamil Nadu link: the ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC) at Mahendragiri, Tirunelveli district, tests and integrates cryogenic and liquid engines and rocket stages. The SSLV launch port at Kulasekarapattinam, Thoothukudi district (₹986 crore), is being built – targeted for commissioning in 2026–27.

8 Trade margins on anti-cancer drugs capped at 30% – prices may fall by up to 70%

Health

News

The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), at its 151st meeting on 8 Oct 2026, approved in principle a cap on the trade margin of about 110 non-scheduled anti-cancer drugs (35 of them patented) at 30% of the maximum retail price (MRP). Prices are expected to fall by 20% to 70%, saving patients about ₹2,500 crore a year. NPPA will issue the formal notification after an expert committee under the Director General of Health Services (DGHS) finalises the list. The Centre also informed the Supreme Court of the decision on 12 Oct.

Key facts

Decision	NPPA 151st meeting, 8 Oct 2026 – in-principle approval; formal notification to follow
Drugs	About 110 non-scheduled anti-cancer drugs (35 patented); branded, generic, domestic and imported
Cap	Trade margin ≤ 30% of MRP
Benefit	Prices down 20–70%; about ₹2,500 crore saved a year
Reason	Average mark-up about 170%; up to 700% in places
Precedent	Feb 2019 – 42 cancer drugs (526 brands), about ₹984 crore saved a year

Background

- Structure: NPPA was set up in 1997 by a Government of India resolution; it is an attached office of the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers. It enforces the Drugs (Prices Control) Order (DPCO) 2013, issued under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.
- Rules: 'scheduled' drugs are those in the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM; the current one is NLEM 2022 – 384 drugs) and have ceiling prices. Makers of other 'non-scheduled' drugs may not raise MRP by more than 10% a year. Para 19 of the DPCO lets the government fix the price of any drug in public interest (the 2019 move used it). Trade margin = the gap between the price to the distributor/stockist and the MRP.
- Other steps: the Union Budget 2025–26 fully exempted 36 life-saving drugs (cancer, rare diseases) from basic customs duty; PM Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana runs low-cost generic medicine stores (Department of Pharmaceuticals). Science: cancer is uncontrolled multiplication of cells (loss of control over mitosis); treatments – surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy, immunotherapy.

Tamil Nadu link: the Cancer Institute (WIA), Adyar, Chennai, was started in 1954 by the Women's Indian Association through the efforts of Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy; Dr V. Shanta led it for decades (Ramon Magsaysay Award 2005, Padma Vibhushan 2016). Muthulakshmi Reddy was India's first woman legislator (Madras Legislative Council).

9 Nutrient-rich purple potato 'Kufri Jamunia' – anthocyanin-rich variety developed by ICAR-CPRI

Agriculture

News

The purple potato variety 'Kufri Jamunia', developed by ICAR's Central Potato Research Institute (ICAR-CPRI, Shimla), was highlighted on 18 Oct 2026 (New Delhi) as a nutrient-rich food to fight 'hidden hunger' (micronutrient deficiency). With dark purple skin and purple flesh, it was officially released in 2024 (one of 109 new crop varieties released by the PM on 11 Aug 2024). It has 42.05 mg anthocyanins per 100 g in the flesh and 80.66 mg in the skin; vitamin C about 42.75 mg; it is also richer in zinc and iron. Yield is 32–35 tonnes per hectare; recommended for the North Indian plains.

Key facts

Variety	Kufri Jamunia – India's first purple-fleshed potato; medium maturing
Developer	ICAR-CPRI, Shimla (Himachal Pradesh)
Anthocyanin	Flesh 42.05 mg/100 g; skin 80.66 mg/100 g
Other nutrients	Vitamin C ~42.75 mg; zinc 2.28 mg; iron 3.22 mg (per 100 g)
Yield	32–35 t/ha; ~90% marketable
Earlier coloured varieties	Kufri Neelkanth (2018 – purple skin), Kufri Manik (2021 – red skin, yellow flesh)

Background

- Potato (Solanum tuberosum) – family Solanaceae; the edible part is a stem tuber – its 'eyes' are nodal buds. Greened tubers form the toxin solanine. Origin: the Andes of South America (Peru–Bolivia); brought to India by the Portuguese.
- Science: anthocyanins are water-soluble flavonoid pigments stored in the cell vacuole; red in acid, blue in alkali; antioxidants. Also found in jamun, brinjal and red cabbage. Biofortification – raising micronutrients in the crop itself through breeding.
- Institutions: ICAR-CPRI – set up at Patna in Aug 1949, moved to Shimla in 1956, under ICAR since 1966. International Potato Center (CIP, a CGIAR centre) – Lima, Peru. UN 'International Day of Potato' – 30 May.
- Economy–geography: India is the world's second-largest potato producer (China first); 2024–25 final estimate 585.71 lakh tonnes. Uttar Pradesh leads, followed by West Bengal and Bihar. In the plains it is a Rabi (winter) crop.

Tamil Nadu link: ICAR-CPRI's Central Potato Research Station has functioned at Muthorai near Udhagamandalam since 1957; the Nilgiris hills are TN's potato hub. A cyst-nematode-resistant variety it released in 1985 is still widely grown in the Nilgiris; the TN Government opposed a move to close the station in 2018. Kufri Jamunia is recommended only for the northern plains.

10 18 October – World Menopause Day; 2026 theme: 'Chronic Pain at Midlife'

Important Days

News

World Menopause Day is observed every year on 18 October; in 2026 it falls on a Sunday. It is led by the International Menopause Society (IMS). The 2026 theme is 'Chronic Pain at Midlife' – recognising persistent pain in midlife women, improving research and providing evidence-based care.

Key facts

Date	18 October (annual)
Led by	International Menopause Society (IMS)
2026 theme	Chronic Pain at Midlife
2025 theme	Lifestyle Medicine
Definition (WHO)	12 consecutive months without menstruation; usually at 45–55 years
IMS Congress 2026	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (30 Sep – 3 Oct)

Background

- Science: menopause is a natural event in which ovarian function declines and the hormones oestrogen and progesterone fall. The transition before it is 'perimenopause'. Symptoms: hot flushes, night sweats, sleeplessness, mood changes, joint and back pain.
- Health risks: oestrogen protects bone; its fall reduces bone density and raises the risk of osteoporosis and fractures, and also of heart disease. Calcium, vitamin D and exercise are advised; doctors may give menopausal hormone therapy (MHT) where needed.
- Polity: in Dr. Jaya Thakur v. Union of India (30 Jan 2026; Justices J.B. Pardiwala and R. Mahadevan), the Supreme Court held menstrual health in schools to be part of Article 21 (life and dignity) and ordered free oxo-biodegradable sanitary napkins and separate toilets for girls in all schools – government, aided and private.

Tamil Nadu link: under the menstrual hygiene programme started in 2011 under the late CM J. Jayalalithaa, adolescent girls get free sanitary napkins; it ran in rural areas for nine years and was extended to urban areas in 2020; postnatal mothers and women prisoners are also covered.

11 TB Mukt Panchayat – 46,118 gram panchayats certified TB-free nationwide; 2,390 in Tamil Nadu

Health

News

According to a Press Information Bureau (PIB) note of 14 Oct 2026 on the Union Health Ministry's National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP), 46,118 gram panchayats across India have been certified TB-free under the 'TB Mukt Panchayat' initiative. As per the WHO Global TB Report 2025, India's new TB cases fell 21% between 2015 and 2024 (12% globally) and deaths fell 28%. In Tamil Nadu, 2,390 village panchayats were certified TB-free for 2025.

Key facts

Launch	24 Mar 2023 – One World TB Summit, Varanasi – PM Modi
Ministry	Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (Central TB Division); implemented through panchayats
Criteria	Presumptive-TB testing rate, notification rate (mandatory) + drug-susceptibility testing, treatment adherence, nutrition, Ni-kshay Poshan payment
Award	Mahatma Gandhi statuette with certificate – bronze (1 yr), silver (2 yrs), gold (3 yrs); given by the District Collector on World TB Day
Ni-kshay Poshan	Since 2018 (₹500 a month); doubled to ₹1,000 in 2024 (DBT)
100-day campaign	7 Dec 2024 – 347 districts in 33 States/UTs; later nationwide

Background

- Science: tuberculosis is caused by the bacterium Mycobacterium tuberculosis; it spreads through the air and mostly affects the lungs. The day Robert Koch announced discovering the germ (24 March 1882) is marked as World TB Day. The vaccine for children is BCG (Bacillus Calmette–Guérin).
- Programme history: the Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP) was renamed the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP) in 2020. India set a goal of ending TB by 2025, five years ahead of the UN SDG (3.3) target of 2030.
- PM TB Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan – 9 Sep 2022: a people's movement (Jan Andolan) in which 'Ni-kshay Mitra' donors give nutrition kits to patients.
- Polity: public health is a State List subject (Seventh Schedule); the Eleventh Schedule (73rd Amendment) gives panchayats 'health and sanitation' – the basis for the TB Mukt Panchayat effort.

Tamil Nadu link: 2,390 village panchayats in TN were certified TB-free in 2025; 93,203 cases were detected in 2025 and 48,469 in Jan–June 2026 (Health Minister K.G. Arunraj, July 2026). Since April 2022, the 'Tamil Nadu Kasanoi Erappila Thittam' (TN-KET, TB death-free project) triages severely ill patients at diagnosis (severe undernutrition, breathlessness, inability to stand) and admits them, cutting deaths.

12 5th Asian Para Games open in Aichi–Nagoya, Japan on 18 Oct (18–24 Oct)

Sports

News

The 5th Asian Para Games open on 18 Oct 2026 at Paloma Mizuho Stadium, Nagoya, in Aichi–Nagoya, Japan (18–24 Oct), with 18 sports across Aichi and Shizuoka prefectures and about 45 nations. Motto: 'Imagine One Heart'; mascot: 'Uzumin'. India sends 168 athletes (112 men, 56 women) in 11 sports; Pramod Bhagat (para badminton) and Simran Sharma (para athletics) carry the flag at the opening (Bhavina Patel, named earlier, was replaced due to her match schedule). Chef de Mission: Rahul Swami.

Key facts

Edition	5th Asian Para Games; 18–24 Oct 2026
Venue	Aichi–Nagoya, Japan; opening at Paloma Mizuho Stadium
Scale	18 sports, 508 events, about 45 nations
India team	168 athletes, 11 sports; flag-bearers: Pramod Bhagat, Simran Sharma
Last edition	Hangzhou 2022 (held Oct 2023) – India 111 medals (29 G, 31 S, 51 B) – best ever
PCI	President Devendra Jhajharia; Chef de Mission Rahul Swami

Background

- History: the first Asian Para Games were held at Guangzhou, China, in 2010; then Incheon (2014), Jakarta (2018) and Hangzhou (2022 edition, held in 2023). They are run by the Asian Paralympic Committee (APC), headquartered in Dubai, UAE.
- The 20th Asian Games were held in the same cities from 19 Sep to 4 Oct 2026. Para sport worldwide is governed by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) – Bonn, Germany.
- Polity–law: the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 recognises 21 disabilities; 'sports' is a State List subject (Entry 33). The Union Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports supports athletes through TOPS.

Tamil Nadu link: India's para badminton squad includes Tamil Nadu's Thulasimathi Murugesan (SU5 – Paris 2024 silver), Manisha Ramadass (SU5 – Paris bronze), Nithya Sre Sivan (SH6 – Paris bronze) and Sivarajan Solaimalai (SH6). High jumper Mariyappan Thangavelu of Periyavadagampatti, Salem (Rio 2016 gold, Tokyo silver, Paris bronze) is not in this squad.

13 Misleading food claims: FSSAI issues notices to Nestle India and Hindustan Unilever

Food Safety

News

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) announced on 17 Oct 2026 that it had served notices on two major companies. (1) Nestle India – 'Resource Renal Vanilla Flavour Powder' (for dietary management of chronic kidney disease): the prior approval required under the 2022 special-food regulations had not been obtained, and the mandatory veg/non-veg symbol was missing – a show-cause notice. (2) Hindustan Unilever (HUL) – claims on 'Horlicks Mother's Plus' ('for baby's healthy birth weight') and 'Horlicks Women's Plus' ('clinically proven to improve bone strength', 'No Added Sugar' though it contains maltodextrin) were found potentially misleading, and an explanation was sought. The same day the licence of 'Bala Ji Food Products' was cancelled for hygiene violations.

Key facts

Announced	17 Oct 2026 – FSSAI
Nestle product	Resource Renal – kidney-disease food; no prior approval, no veg/non-veg logo
HUL products	Horlicks Mother's Plus, Women's Plus – birth-weight, bone-strength, 'No Added Sugar' claims
Rules	FSS (Health Supplements, Nutraceuticals, FSDU, FSMP…) Regulations 2022; FSS (Advertising & Claims) Regulations 2018
Licence cancelled	Bala Ji Food Products – hygiene violations
FSSAI	FSS Act 2006; set up 2008; Health Ministry; HQ New Delhi

Background

- FSSAI: statutory body set up in 2008 under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006; under the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; HQ New Delhi (FDA Bhawan, Kotla Road). The Act consolidated older laws including the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954. The 'Eat Right India' movement was launched in 2018.
- Legal framework: FSS (Advertising and Claims) Regulations, 2018 – food claims must be scientifically substantiated; words like 'natural', 'fresh', 'healthy' are restricted. Section 53 of the FSS Act – penalty up to ₹10 lakh for misleading advertisements. FSS (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020 – green dot for veg, brown dot for non-veg.
- Consumer protection: the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) was set up on 24 July 2020 under Section 10 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019; it issued Guidelines for Prevention of Misleading Advertisements in 2022. CCPA is under the Department of Consumer Affairs.
- Companies & science: Nestle – Switzerland (Vevey); Nestle India – Gurugram. HUL – Mumbai; parent Unilever (London); Horlicks came to HUL in 2020 through the merger of GSK Consumer Healthcare. Maltodextrin is a glucose polymer derived from starch; it is quickly broken down to glucose, which is why the 'No Added Sugar' claim was questioned.

Tamil Nadu link: the FSS Act is enforced in the State by the Tamil Nadu Food Safety and Drug Administration Department (Commissioner of Food Safety). As per Lok Sabha replies of 24 July 2026, Tamil Nadu recorded the highest number of criminal convictions in the country – 2,865 from 2021–22 to 2025–26 – and topped food testing in 2025–26 with 44,603 samples.

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14 Converts to Islam cannot claim BC (Muslim) 3.5% quota on the basis of former caste – Supreme Court

Judiciary

News

On 15 Oct 2026 (Thursday) the Supreme Court upheld the Madras High Court (Madurai Bench) judgment of 25 June 2026 (Justices G.R. Swaminathan and P.B. Balaji) that struck down Tamil Nadu's G.O.(Ms) No. 31 of 9 March 2024, which allowed converts to Islam from Hindu BC, MBC, Denotified Communities and SC to be treated as BC (Muslims); it dismissed the State's SLP. Bench: Justices Prashant Kumar Mishra and Shree Chandrashekhar. It held that backwardness from the former social order cannot be carried into a backward class of the new religion. Note: the 3.5% BC (Muslim) internal quota itself was NOT struck down; it continues. The case arose from Sameer Ahamed, who converted in 2015 and sought a 'Muslim Lebbai' community certificate.

Key facts

Verdict	15 Oct 2026 – Supreme Court; Justices P.K. Mishra, Shree Chandrashekhar
Outcome	Tamil Nadu's SLP dismissed; HC judgment upheld
Order quashed	G.O.(Ms) No. 31, 9 Mar 2024 – BC(M) certificates for converts
High Court	Madurai Bench, 25 Jun 2026 – Justices G.R. Swaminathan, P.B. Balaji
3.5% quota	2007 Act; within BC 30% – continues (not struck down)
BC(M) groups	Ansar, Dekkani Muslims, Dudekula, Labbai (Rowther, Marakayar), Mappilla, Sheik, Syed

Background

- Constitution: Article 15(4) – special provisions for socially and educationally backward classes and SC/ST (First Amendment, 1951, following Madras State's 'Champakam Dorairajan' case). Article 16(4) – reservation in public posts for backward classes. Article 340 – President may appoint a Backward Classes Commission. Article 342A – 102nd Amendment (2018); the 105th Amendment (2021) restored States' power to prepare their own lists.
- Case law: Indra Sawhney (Mandal, 1992) – 50% ceiling, creamy-layer exclusion. Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950 – only Hindus, Sikhs (1956) and Buddhists (1990) can be SC. Vanniyar 10.5% internal quota (2021 Act) – struck down by the Supreme Court on 31 March 2022.
- Tamil Nadu's 69%: BC 26.5% + BC (Muslim) 3.5% + MBC/DNC 20% + SC 18% (incl. 3% preferential for Arunthathiyar) + ST 1% = 69%. The 1993 Act (Act 45 of 1994) was placed in the Ninth Schedule by the 76th Amendment (1994). The 3.5% BC(M) quota comes from the Tamil Nadu Backward Class Christians and Backward Class Muslims (Reservation) Act, 2007.
- Tamil Nadu BC Commissions: first – A.N. Sattanathan (1969; report 1970); second – J.A. Ambasankar (1982; report 1985). The Justice Party government's 1921 'Communal G.O.' was among India's earliest communal-reservation orders.

Tamil Nadu link: the case is entirely from Tamil Nadu – the G.O. was the State's, the judgment came from the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court (set up in 2004). Despite the Mandal 50% ceiling, Tamil Nadu continues 69% reservation with Ninth Schedule protection.

15 Internet access a fundamental right for everyone, including children (Art. 21 with 19(1)(a)) – Supreme Court

Judiciary

News

On 15 Oct 2026 the Supreme Court held that the right to access and use the internet is a fundamental right of every individual, including children – under Article 21 (life and personal liberty) read with Article 19(1)(a) (speech and expression). Bench: Justices J.B. Pardiwala and K. Vinod Chandran. The ruling came on applications by the NGO Just Rights for Children Alliance on Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Material (CSEAM). Blanket restrictions such as age-based social-media bans are disproportionate; protection must target harmful content and those who spread it. It suggested safeguards like parental consent, a 'child mode' and private-by-default accounts, and ordered a National Hash and URL Database for CSEAM; next hearing 10 Dec 2026.

Key facts

Ruling	15 Oct 2026 – Justices J.B. Pardiwala, K. Vinod Chandran
Basis	Article 21 read with Article 19(1)(a)
Petitioner	Just Rights for Children Alliance (CSEAM case, follow-up to 2024 judgment)
Rejected	Blanket age-based social-media bans for children
Directions	National CSEAM Hash & URL database; monthly compliance reports; digital safety in NCERT curriculum
Next hearing	10 Dec 2026

Background

- Evolution of case law: Faheema Shirin v. State of Kerala (Kerala HC, 2019) – internet access is part of the right to education and privacy (Art. 21). Anuradha Bhasin v. Union of India (2020, J&K internet shutdown) – speech and trade through the internet are protected under Art. 19(1)(a) and 19(1)(g); indefinite shutdowns not allowed. Pragya Prasun (2025) – digital access is an intrinsic part of Art. 21.
- Right to education: Article 21A – free and compulsory education for children aged 6–14 (86th Amendment, 2002); RTE Act 2009 (in force from 1 April 2010). Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023 – a person below 18 is a 'child'; processing their data requires verifiable parental consent; Data Protection Board of India.
- Cyber laws: IT Act 2000, Section 79 – 'safe harbour' for intermediaries, lost if due diligence is not followed. POCSO Act 2012 – protection of children from sexual offences. In its 23 Sept 2024 judgment the Supreme Court advised using 'CSEAM' instead of 'child pornography'.

Tamil Nadu link: 'Kalvi Tholaikkatchi' (Kalvi TV), the School Education Department's education channel for Classes 1–12 (with SCERT content), was launched by CM Edappadi K. Palaniswami on 26 Aug 2019. During COVID it carried lessons to students without internet access.

16 FSSAI draft rule bans adding sucrose and fructose to products for infants up to 6 months

Food Safety

News

FSSAI published the draft 'Food Safety and Standards (Foods for Infant Nutrition) Amendment Regulations, 2026' in the Gazette of India on 16 Oct 2026. A proviso will be inserted in Regulation 3(6) of the 2020 regulations: 'sucrose and fructose shall not be added in products intended for infants up to the age of 6 months'. At present lactose and glucose polymers are the preferred carbohydrate sources, and sucrose/fructose are allowed within limits when needed. Though the 2020 regulations cover foods from birth to 24 months, the ban applies only to the 0–6 month group. Public comments – 60 days. Aim: complement exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months and reduce childhood-obesity risk. It is a draft, not yet a final rule.

Key facts

Draft	16 Oct 2026 – Gazette of India
Amends	FSS (Foods for Infant Nutrition) Regulations, 2020 – Reg. 3(6)
Ban	Adding sucrose, fructose to products for infants up to 6 months
Still preferred	Lactose, glucose polymers
Comments	60 days from public availability of the Gazette
2020 rules cover	Birth to 24 months

Background

- Science: sucrose (cane sugar) is a disaccharide of glucose + fructose. Lactose (milk sugar) = glucose + galactose; the main carbohydrate of breast milk. Fructose (fruit sugar) is the sweetest natural sugar. Maltodextrin is a glucose polymer obtained from starch.
- Breastfeeding: WHO (Geneva) and UNICEF recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months, then continued breastfeeding with complementary food up to 2 years or beyond. World Breastfeeding Week – 1–7 Aug. India's 'MAA' (Mothers' Absolute Affection) programme – 2016.
- Law: the Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992 (IMS Act; amended 2003) bans advertising and promotion of these products to protect breastfeeding. It is based on WHO's 1981 International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes.
- Background: in April 2024 the Swiss NGO Public Eye, with IBFAN, reported that Nestle's 'Cerelac' baby cereal sold in India and other developing countries contained added sugar, unlike in European markets such as Switzerland; FSSAI then began an examination.

Tamil Nadu link: marking World Breastfeeding Week, CM J. Jayalalithaa on 3 Aug 2015 opened, via video-conference, 352 breastfeeding rooms at bus stands across the State and 7 human milk banks in government hospitals at Tiruchirappalli, Madurai, Coimbatore, Theni, Salem, Thanjavur and Egmore.

17 FSSAI proposes new maximum residue limits for acetamiprid and imidacloprid pesticides in tea

Food Safety

News

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) published the draft 'Food Safety and Standards (Contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Amendment Regulations, 2026' in the Gazette of India on 16 Oct 2026. It proposes a maximum residue limit (MRL) of 20 mg/kg (20 ppm) for acetamiprid and 50 mg/kg (50 ppm) for imidacloprid in tea. The acetamiprid limit is lower than Japan's (30 ppm) and the USA's (50 ppm); the imidacloprid limit follows international Codex standards. Stakeholders have 60 days to comment; the limits are subject to finalisation.

Key facts

Draft	FSS (Contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Amendment Regulations, 2026 – Gazette, 16 Oct 2026
Acetamiprid	20 mg/kg (Japan 30, USA 50 ppm)
Imidacloprid	50 mg/kg – based on Codex standards
Comments	60 days from notification
Background	CIB&RC approved use on tea (Jan 2026); Tea Board added them to the Plant Protection Code (Apr 2026); small growers sought MRLs
Target pest	Tea mosquito bug (Helopeltis)

Background

- Science: acetamiprid and imidacloprid are 'neonicotinoid' insecticides – chemically similar to nicotine, they act on nicotinic acetylcholine receptors in the insect nervous system and paralyse it. They are systemic (spread inside the plant). They harm bees and other pollinators – so in 2018 the European Union banned outdoor use of imidacloprid, clothianidin and thiamethoxam.
- Law: registration, manufacture and sale of pesticides – Insecticides Act, 1968; registering body – Central Insecticides Board & Registration Committee (CIB&RC), Ministry of Agriculture, Faridabad. Residue limits (MRLs) in food are fixed by FSSAI. The international standard-setter is the Codex Alimentarius Commission (FAO–WHO, 1963).
- Economy: the Tea Board was set up under the Tea Act, 1953; HQ Kolkata; Ministry of Commerce and Industry. India is the world's second-largest tea producer after China; Assam leads. Darjeeling tea was India's first product to get a Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

Tamil Nadu link: the Nilgiris and Valparai (Coimbatore district) are major South Indian tea areas; 'Nilgiri (Orthodox)' tea has a GI tag. The United Planters' Association of Southern India (UPASI, 1893) is headquartered at Coonoor, and its Tea Research Institute (UPASI TRI) is at Valparai. The Tea Board has its South India office at Coonoor. The MRLs matter directly to the Nilgiris, home to many small tea growers.

18 PMAY-Urban 2.0: Centre approves over 1.93 lakh more houses

Welfare Schemes

News

The 10th meeting of the Central Sanctioning and Monitoring Committee (CSMC), held in New Delhi on 16 Oct 2026 and chaired by Satendra Singh, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), approved over 1.93 lakh more houses for 11 States under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban 2.0 (PMAY-U 2.0). They include Uttar Pradesh (73,182), Bihar (52,866), Telangana (18,120), West Bengal (16,559) and Gujarat (14,290), under the Beneficiary Led Construction (BLC) and Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP) verticals. Total PMAY-U 2.0 sanctions now stand at 20.80 lakh houses.

Key facts

Meeting	10th CSMC meeting, 16 Oct 2026, New Delhi
Approved	1.93 lakh+ houses, 11 States (most – UP 73,182; Bihar 52,866); Tamil Nadu not in this list
Total	20.80 lakh houses under PMAY-U 2.0; 97% (20.16 lakh) in women's sole or joint names
Both phases	PMAY-U + 2.0: 1.27 crore+ sanctioned, 1.01 crore completed
Assistance	Up to ₹2.50 lakh per house; EWS / LIG / MIG families with income up to ₹9 lakh a year

Background

- History: PMAY-Urban was launched on 25 June 2015. The Union Cabinet approved PMAY-U 2.0 in Aug 2024 – 1 crore urban poor and middle-class families over 5 years, with central assistance of ₹2.30 lakh crore. It is run by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA). Rural housing is under PMAY-Gramin – Ministry of Rural Development.
- Four verticals: (1) Beneficiary Led Construction (BLC); (2) Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP); (3) Affordable Rental Housing (ARH) – for migrant workers, students and working women; (4) Interest Subsidy Scheme (ISS) – interest subsidy on home loans.
- Polity: the 74th Amendment (1992) gave urban local bodies 18 functions in the 12th Schedule. Registering houses in women's sole or joint names is a key feature of the scheme.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu was not in this round. Urban housing in the State is implemented by the Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board (TNUHDB; formerly the Slum Clearance Board, 1970). For rural areas, the 'Kalaignar Kanavu Illam' scheme (2024–25 Budget) replaces huts with concrete houses – target 8 lakh houses by 2030; 1 lakh houses in 2024–25 at ₹3.5 lakh each (Rural Development & Panchayat Raj Department).

19 Maharashtra's first 'Annapurti Grain ATM' opens at Nashik Road – beneficiaries get ration at their convenience

Welfare Schemes

News

Maharashtra's first 'Annapurti Grain ATM' was inaugurated at Nashik Road (Gorewadi Road, near the Divisional Commissioner's Office) by State Food and Civil Supplies Minister Chhagan Bhujbal on 17 Oct 2026. Set up by the State with the UN World Food Programme (WFP), it lets beneficiaries – such as workers and migrants who cannot reach fair price shops during fixed hours – collect grain round the clock at their convenience. The next two grain ATMs are planned at Nagpur and Thane.

Key facts

Place	Nashik Road, Nashik district, Maharashtra – State's first grain ATM
Opened by	Minister Chhagan Bhujbal (Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Protection); 17 Oct 2026
Partner	UN World Food Programme (WFP)
Next	Nagpur, Thane
State PDS	About 54,000 fair price shops; 7–7.5 crore beneficiaries
India's first	Bhubaneswar, Odisha – 9 Aug 2024 (WFP–Odisha Govt); up to 50 kg in 5 minutes

Background

- Annapurti means 'fulfiller of food' in Hindi. It dispenses rice / wheat 24×7 after biometric (Aadhaar) authentication; no under-weighing; waiting time cut by 70%; can run on solar panels. India's first Annapurti – Bhubaneswar (Odisha), 9 Aug 2024; Gujarat's first – Bhavnagar, 17 Sept 2024.
- Law: National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 – subsidised grain for up to 75% of the rural and 50% of the urban population; 5 kg per person a month for priority households and 35 kg per family for Antyodaya (AAY). PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) – free grain for 5 years from 1 Jan 2024 (to 2028). 'One Nation One Ration Card' (ONORC) – ration from any State.
- World Food Programme (WFP): UN agency, 1961; HQ Rome (Italy); won the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize. Geography: Nashik is on the Godavari; one of the four Kumbh Mela sites.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu follows a Universal PDS covering all family-card holders. The Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation (TNCSC) was set up in 1972 for procurement, storage and distribution – Tamil Nadu was the first State to set up such a corporation.

20 Bengaluru-born Ramya Anche to lead NASA's $20 million 'PUFFINS' ultraviolet space telescope mission

Science

News

Dr Ramya Manjunath Anche, assistant research professor at the University of Arizona's Steward Observatory, will lead – as Principal Investigator – the $20 million 'PUFFINS' SmallSat mission selected under NASA's Astrophysics Pioneers programme (reported 16–17 Oct 2026). PUFFINS = 'Polarimetry in the Ultraviolet to Find Features in INterStellar dust'. Its 10-inch (about 25 cm) ultraviolet telescope will measure the polarisation of light from about 70 stars to study interstellar dust grains smaller than 50 nanometres. It will fly in low-Earth orbit, with launch targeted for 2030. Indian partners: IUCAA (Pune) and IIA (Bengaluru).

Key facts

Leader	Dr Ramya Manjunath Anche – University of Arizona, Steward Observatory; grew up in Devanahalli near Bengaluru; enrolled at IIA in 2012 (PhD 2020); moved to the US in 2021
Mission	PUFFINS – SmallSat ultraviolet spectropolarimeter
Programme / cost	NASA Astrophysics Pioneers; $20 million
Science goal	Interstellar dust – its interaction with light and magnetic fields; star and planet formation
Launch	Target 2030; low-Earth orbit
Partners	McDonald Observatory (Texas), IUCAA Pune, IIA Bengaluru, Austrian and Korean institutes

Background

- NASA Pioneers programme: started in 2020; astrophysics missions under a $20 million cap using SmallSats, balloons and ISS payloads; lets early- and mid-career scientists lead a mission for the first time. Its 'Pandora' (exoplanets) launched in Jan 2026.
- Science: Earth's ozone layer absorbs most ultraviolet light, so UV astronomy must be done from space. Interstellar dust scatters, dims (extinction) and polarises starlight; UV spectropolarimetry has not flown in space for nearly three decades.
- NASA: founded in 1958. Hubble (1990, NASA–ESA) – ultraviolet and visible; James Webb (JWST, 2021, NASA–ESA–CSA) – infrared. India's 'AstroSat' (2015) – its first multi-wavelength space observatory, carrying the UVIT ultraviolet telescope.

Tamil Nadu link: the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA, Bengaluru), where Ramya Anche studied (PhD, 2020), runs two observatories in Tamil Nadu – the 'Vainu Bappu Observatory' at Kavalur in the Javadhu Hills (Tirupattur district) and the 'Kodaikanal Solar Observatory' (1899) in Dindigul district. (No direct Tamil Nadu link of hers is verified.)

21 13-year-old Raji Doshi wins 2026 3M Young Scientist Challenge for a solution to ocean acidification

Awards

News

Raji Doshi, a 13-year-old Indian-American eighth-grader from Farmington, Connecticut (USA), won the 'Discovery Education – 3M Young Scientist Challenge 2026', earning the title 'America's Top Young Scientist' and $25,000 (announced 14 Oct 2026). The finals were held on 12–13 Oct at 3M's headquarters in St. Paul, Minnesota. Her 'ALKACORE' system combines macroalgae cultivation with aragonite to raise seawater alkalinity and remove CO_2. Second and third: Aaisha Asif (Florida) and Sharvi Mahajan (California).

Key facts

Winner	Raji Doshi, 13, Grade 8 (Stanford Online school), Farmington, Connecticut
Prize	$25,000 + title 'America's Top Young Scientist'
Invention	ALKACORE – macroalgae + aragonite (calcium carbonate) – raises alkalinity, removes CO_2; computer model for the best aragonite dose
Event	Finals 12–13 Oct, announced 14 Oct 2026; 3M HQ, St. Paul, Minnesota
Organisers	3M and Discovery Education; mentor – 3M engineer Deborah Isabelle
Runners-up	Aaisha Asif (Sarasota, Florida), Sharvi Mahajan (San Diego, California) – $1,000 each

Background

- Science: ocean acidification – when the sea absorbs atmospheric CO_2, $CO_2 + H_2O \rightarrow$ carbonic acid (H_2CO_3), raising hydrogen ions and lowering pH. Average ocean pH, about 8.2 before the Industrial Revolution, is now about 8.1 – still alkaline, but falling.
- Effects: fewer carbonate ions make it harder for corals, oysters, snails and plankton to build calcium carbonate (aragonite / calcite) shells and skeletons. Ocean warming causes coral bleaching – corals expel the 'zooxanthellae' algae living in them.
- Global goal: Sustainable Development Goal 14 (SDG 14 – 'Life Below Water'); target 14.3 – minimise ocean acidification. The UN 'Decade of Ocean Science' is 2021–2030.

Tamil Nadu link: the Gulf of Mannar (between India and Sri Lanka) is rich in coral reefs – the Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park (1986) with 21 islands and the Biosphere Reserve (1989; the first marine biosphere reserve in South and South-East Asia). Acidification and warming threaten these reefs and the seagrass beds that are home to the dugong.

1 ASI launches conservation works on the upper rampart (wall) of the Brihadeeswarar (Big) Temple, Thanjavur

Tamil Nadu

News

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has launched conservation works, estimated at ₹59 lakh, on the upper rampart (upper wall) of the Big Temple (Brihadeeswarar / Rajarajeshwaram), Thanjavur – a UNESCO World Heritage site (Daily Thanthi, 18 Oct 2026). Reason: roots of plants and creepers growing on the wall penetrate the gaps between stones and weaken the structure; rainwater stagnation also damages the old masonry. Vegetation is being removed, damaged portions repaired and a 'brick jelly concrete' coat applied – following archaeological conservation norms without altering the monument's original character.

Key facts

Work	Conservation of the upper rampart – ₹59 lakh; Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)
Reason	Plant and creeper roots entering stone joints; rainwater stagnation
Temple	Brihadeeswarar / Rajarajeshwaram / Big Temple – Rajaraja Chola I, 1003–1010 CE
Architect	Kunjara Mallan Raja Raja Perunthachan
Vimana	About 66 m (216 ft); entirely granite; Dravidian style
UNESCO	1987 – Thanjavur; 2004 – Gangaikonda Cholapuram & Darasuram added → 'Great Living Chola Temples'

Background

- History: Built by Rajaraja Chola I (985–1014 CE), the temple is also called 'Dakshina Meru'; completed in 1010 CE, it marked its 1,000th year in 2010. The vimana over the sanctum is taller than the gopurams – unlike later Tamil temples where gopurams dominate. The fortified walls around the temple are believed to have been added in the 16th century.
- Architecture: the complex spans about 40 acres with two rectangular prakarams; a huge monolithic Nandi at the entrance; Chola-period murals and Tamil inscriptions on Chola administration.
- Body & law: Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) – founded 1861 by Alexander Cunningham; under the Union Ministry of Culture, HQ New Delhi. Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958 – 2010 amendment: 100 m 'prohibited area' around a monument, next 200 m 'regulated area'; created the National Monuments Authority (NMA).
- UNESCO group 'Great Living Chola Temples': Brihadeeswarar, Thanjavur (Rajaraja I); Brihadeeswarar, Gangaikonda Cholapuram (Rajendra I, Ariyalur district); Airavatesvara, Darasuram (Rajaraja II, near Kumbakonam).

Tamil Nadu link: the 'Sathaya Vizha', held at the Thanjavur Big Temple on Rajaraja Chola I's birth star (Sathayam in the month of Aippasi), has been celebrated as a Tamil Nadu Government function since November 2022. All three temples of the UNESCO group lie in Thanjavur and Ariyalur districts.

2 Maiden export of 1.755 tonnes of organic palmyra jaggery powder from Erode district to Varna, Bulgaria

Tamil Nadu

News

Facilitated by the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), the maiden consignment of 1.755 MT of certified organic palmyra jaggery powder, made from palmyra blossom nectar, was flagged off on 15 Oct 2026 from Gobichettipalayam, Erode district, to Varna, Bulgaria, to be shipped via Chennai Port. Made and exported by Wellbeing Foods (Erode) with Chetty Exports (Chennai); importer Sow Life Ltd (Bulgaria). It carries India's NPOP and EU organic certification. The organic project covers 137 acres; farmers are expected to get 15–22% higher prices than in the domestic market.

Key facts

Consignment	1.755 MT organic palmyra jaggery powder – maiden export; 15 Oct 2026
Route	Gobichettipalayam (Erode) → Chennai Port → Varna (Bulgaria, Black Sea)
Certification	NPOP (India) + EU organic
APEDA	APEDA Act 1985; functional from 1986; Ministry of Commerce & Industry (Dept of Commerce); implements NPOP
Palmyra	Borassus flabellifer – State tree of Tamil Nadu
Bulgaria	Capital Sofia; adopted the euro on 1 Jan 2026 – 21st eurozone member

Background

- Palmyra (Borassus flabellifer): revered as 'Karpagatharu', it is Tamil Nadu's State tree. Sap tapped from the inflorescence into a lime-coated pot stays unfermented as 'pathaneer' (neera); fermented, it becomes 'kallu' (toddy). Boiling pathaneer gives karupatti (palm jaggery) and panangarkandu (palm candy). The tender fruit's jelly is 'nungu' (ice apple); the sprouting seed gives 'panangkizhangu'.
- Economy: APEDA is a statutory body under the 1985 Act, under the Union Ministry of Commerce & Industry; it promotes exports of scheduled agricultural and processed food products. It implements India's National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) – standards and accreditation of certification bodies.
- Geography: Bulgaria – a Balkan country in south-east Europe; capital Sofia; the Danube on the north (border with Romania), the Black Sea on the east. Varna is a port city on the Black Sea coast. It joined the EU in 2007 and adopted the euro on 1 Jan 2026.
- Geographical Indication: 'Udangudi Panangarupatti' of Tiruchendur taluk, Thoothukudi district, got a GI tag in 2023 – red sand-dune (theri) soil and dry climate give higher sucrose and long shelf life; no chemical additives. GI Act 1999; registration valid for 10 years, renewable.

Tamil Nadu link: the palmyra is the State tree. In 2021 Tamil Nadu launched the 'Palmyra Development Mission', distributing 76 lakh palm seeds and 1 lakh saplings at 100% subsidy; palmyra research is done at the Government Agricultural College, Killikulam (Thoothukudi district).

3 WINDS project to install automatic rain gauges and weather stations in States runs over a year late due to land shortage

Agriculture

News

The 'Weather Information Network and Data System' (WINDS), executed through the Mahalanobis National Crop Forecast Centre (MNCFC) under the Union Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, is running more than a year behind schedule (The Hindu, 16 Oct 2026). Target: 1,197 automatic weather stations (AWS) and 49,313 automatic rain gauges (ARG) – about 50,500 in all. As of 9 Sept 2026 only 113 AWS (9.4%) and 1,730 ARG (4%) were installed – over 96% pending. Main reason: lack of suitable free land for the instruments; in States such as Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Kerala most proposed sites were rejected. On IMD advice, a 3 Dec 2025 amendment capped rooftop rain gauges at 10–15% of the total. Private partners: Skymet, Ingen Technologies, Azista Industries.

Key facts

Scheme	WINDS – Weather Information Network and Data System; launched July 2023 under PMFBY
Execution	MNCFC (Agriculture Ministry); States via private partners
Density	AWS at taluk/block level; ARG at gram panchayat level
Target	1,197 AWS + 49,313 ARG
Status (9 Sept)	113 AWS (9.4%), 1,730 ARG (4%) – 96%+ pending
Hurdle	Land shortage; rooftop ARG cap 10–15% (3 Dec 2025 amendment)

Background

- Purpose: hyper-local, panchayat-level weather data for computing claims under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), agro-advisories and disaster management. The WINDS portal, YES-TECH (Technology-based Yield Estimation System) manual and AIDE app were launched under PMFBY in July 2023; the WINDS manual is dated 1 Sept 2023.
- PMFBY (2016): farmers' premium – 2% for kharif, 1.5% for rabi, 5% for commercial/horticultural crops; the rest is borne by the Centre and States.
- India Meteorological Department (IMD): founded 1875; under the Ministry of Earth Sciences; HQ New Delhi. Six Regional Meteorological Centres – New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Nagpur, Guwahati. IMD insists rain gauges be ground-mounted for standardised data.
- Science: rain gauge – rainfall (mm); barometer – atmospheric pressure; hygrometer – humidity; anemometer – wind speed. An automatic weather station measures all these together and transmits automatically.

Tamil Nadu link: the news report on WINDS does not mention Tamil Nadu. In Tamil Nadu, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) installed 224 automatic weather stations in 224 blocks under the National Agricultural Development Programme (NADP) in 2007–08. IMD's Regional Meteorological Centre is at Chennai (Nungambakkam).

4 Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar for 2024 and 2025 conferred on 106 young performing artists

Awards

News

The Sangeet Natak Akademi's 'Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar' for 2024 and 2025 was conferred on 106 young artists in all on 19 Oct 2026 (Monday) at the Meghdoot Theatre complex, Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi; Union Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat presented the awards. Awardees span music, dance, theatre, folk and tribal arts, puppetry and allied arts. The award: ₹25,000 cash, a tamrapatra (copper plaque) and an angavastram. The awardees were selected by the Akademi's General Council in June 2026.

Key facts

Ceremony	19 Oct 2026 – Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi; presented by Gajendra Singh Shekhawat (Culture Minister)
Awardees	106 young artists (2024 + 2025)
Award	₹25,000 + tamrapatra + angavastram; artists under 40; instituted 2006
Sangeet Natak Akademi	31 May 1952 – set up; 28 Jan 1953 – inaugurated by President Rajendra Prasad; Ministry of Culture; New Delhi
First Chairman	Dr P. V. Rajamannar
Bismillah Khan	Shehnai maestro; born Dumraon (Bihar); Varanasi; Bharat Ratna 2001

Background

- Sangeet Natak Akademi – the national academy of music, dance and drama; an autonomous body of the Union Ministry of Culture. Its top honours: the Akademi Fellowship (Akademi Ratna – ₹3 lakh) and the Akademi Award (Akademi Puraskar – ₹1 lakh, conferred by the President). For 2024–25, 108 artists were chosen for the Akademi Award.
- Ustad Bismillah Khan (1916–2006): shehnai maestro born in Dumraon, Bihar, who lived in Varanasi; played the shehnai at the Red Fort on Independence Day 1947; Bharat Ratna 2001. This award for young artists was instituted in 2006, after his death.
- Musicians awarded the Bharat Ratna: M. S. Subbulakshmi (1998 – the first musician), Pt Ravi Shankar (1999), Lata Mangeshkar and Bismillah Khan (2001), Bhimsen Joshi (2009), Bhupen Hazarika (2019).

Tamil Nadu link: the Sangeet Natak Akademi's first Chairman, Dr P. V. Rajamannar, was a former Chief Justice of the Madras High Court. The 2024–25 Yuva Puraskar list includes Carnatic music (vocal, flute) categories. At State level, the 'Kalaimamani' award for artists is given by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Manram.

5 CARA issues nationwide directions to strengthen adoption procedures, safeguard records and protect children's identity

Welfare Schemes

News

The Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA), under the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development, issued three Office Memorandums to all State/UT Adoption Resource Agencies (SARAs) under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 and the Adoption Regulations, 2022 (Ministry notification: 16 March 2026). (1) No child may be declared 'legally free for adoption' until due inquiry, tracing of biological parents and restoration efforts are complete; the two-month reconsideration period for surrendered children is mandatory. (2) Physical and digital records must be preserved and handed over to a designated authority even if an adoption agency or child care institution closes – this helps adult adoptees in 'root search'. (3) Under Section 74, photographs, videos or identifying details of children must not be disclosed anywhere, including social media; violations attract penal action under Section 74(3).

Key facts

Issued	CARA – 3 Office Memorandums; Ministry notification 16 March 2026
Legal basis	Juvenile Justice Act 2015 (amended 2021); Adoption Regulations 2022
CARA	Set up 1990; statutory body under Sec 68 of JJ Act; HQ New Delhi
Ministry	Ministry of Women and Child Development
Section 74	Bar on disclosing children's identity; 74(3) – penalty
Hague Convention	Inter-country adoption – 1993; India ratified 2003; CARA = Central Authority

Background

- CARA was set up in 1990; Section 68 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 gave it statutory status. It is the nodal body that monitors and regulates in-country and inter-country adoption of orphaned, abandoned and surrendered children. SARAs work at State level and Specialised Adoption Agencies (SAAs) at the field level.
- Procedure: a child is declared 'legally free for adoption' by the district Child Welfare Committee (CWC). Under the JJ Act, adoption orders are issued by the District Magistrate (after the 2021 amendment). The Act applies to all Indians irrespective of religion.
- Personal law: the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956 (HAMA) applies to Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs; for Muslims and Christians the Guardians and Wards Act, 1890 provides only guardianship.
- International: Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption (1993) – India ratified it in 2003; CARA is its Central Authority. Any sale or payment in adoption is illegal.

Tamil Nadu link: to stop female infanticide, the 'Cradle Baby Scheme' began in Salem district in 1992 under CM Jayalalithaa; it was extended to Madurai, Theni, Dindigul and Dharmapuri in 2001 and to Cuddalore, Ariyalur, Perambalur, Villupuram and Tiruvannamalai in 2011. Babies received in the cradles are sent to licensed adoption centres.

6 61st meeting of the International Committee of Legal Metrology (CIML) in New Delhi, 26–28 Oct 2026 – India hosts it for the first time

International

News

The 61st meeting of the International Committee of Legal Metrology (CIML) – the governing committee of the International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML) – is being held in New Delhi (The LaLiT) on 26–28 October 2026. This is the first time India is hosting it. The Department of Consumer Affairs is organising it with the OIML. 26 Oct – seminar 'Evolutions in Legal Metrology'; 27 Oct – OIML Strategy Workshop. More than 100 international delegates will attend. International Recommendations, the OIML Certification System (OIML-CS) and digital transformation will be discussed. The 60th meeting was held in Paris in October 2025.

Key facts

Meeting	61st CIML meeting – 26–28 Oct 2026, New Delhi (first time in India)
Organisers	Department of Consumer Affairs + OIML
OIML	Intergovernmental body set up 1955; HQ (BIML) Paris; India a member since 1956
OIML certificates	In 2023 India became the 13th country authorised to issue OIML certificates
Indian law	Legal Metrology Act 2009; IST Rules 2026 (Aug 2026)
World Metrology Day	20 May – marks the 1875 Metre Convention

Background

- Legal metrology is the State's assurance that weights, measures and measuring instruments used in trade are accurate. OIML was set up in 1955; the International Bureau of Legal Metrology (BIML) in Paris is its secretariat. It issues 'International Recommendations' (OIML R) for measuring instruments.
- India: the Legal Metrology Act, 2009 (in force from 1 Apr 2011) replaced the weights-and-measures Acts of 1976 and 1985; it mandates the metric system and declarations on pre-packaged goods. The Department of Consumer Affairs administers it; enforcement is by States. Indian Institute of Legal Metrology (IILM) – Ranchi; Regional Reference Standard Laboratories (RRSL) – Bengaluru, Bhubaneswar, Faridabad, Guwahati, Ahmedabad, Varanasi, Nagpur.
- Science: the SI system has 7 base units (metre, kilogram, second, ampere, kelvin, mole, candela), maintained by the International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM, Sèvres, France). India's National Metrology Institute, CSIR–National Physical Laboratory (NPL, New Delhi), maintains Indian Standard Time (IST = UTC + 5:30, 82.5° E longitude). The 'Legal Metrology (Indian Standard Time) Rules, 2026' were notified in August 2026.

Tamil Nadu link: in Tamil Nadu the Legal Metrology Act, 2009 is enforced by the Labour Department – Assistant Commissioners of Labour and Labour Inspectors check weights and measures in shops. State rules: 'Tamil Nadu Legal Metrology (Enforcement) Rules, 2011'.

7 Dr Dhal Singh Bisen sworn in as the 9th Governor of Uttarakhand at Lok Bhavan, Dehradun (19 Oct 2026)

Appointments

News

President Droupadi Murmu appointed Governors for six States on 12 Oct 2026. Accordingly, Dr Dhal Singh Bisen was sworn in as the 9th Governor of Uttarakhand at Lok Bhavan, Dehradun on 19 Oct 2026 (Monday). Acting Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court Manoj Kumar Tiwari administered the oath; Chief Secretary Anand Bardhan read out the warrant of appointment; CM Pushkar Singh Dhami was present. He succeeds Lt Gen Gurmit Singh (Retd), Governor since September 2021.

Key facts

Oath	19 Oct 2026 – Lok Bhavan, Dehradun; 9th Governor
Appointment	12 Oct 2026 – by the President (six Governor appointments)
Predecessor	Lt Gen Gurmit Singh (Retd), since 2021
Profile	Born 1952, Seoni district, MP; physician, farmer; 4-time MP MLA; former MP Minister; 17th Lok Sabha MP (Balaghat, 2019–24)
Uttarakhand	Formed 9 Nov 2000; capital Dehradun; summer capital Gairsain; High Court Nainital

Background

- Constitution: a Governor for each State (Art 153; the 7th Amendment, 1956 allows one person for two or more States). The State's executive power vests in the Governor (Art 154). The President appoints the Governor by warrant under hand and seal (Art 155).
- Tenure and qualifications: holds office during the pleasure of the President, normally 5 years (Art 156). Must be a citizen of India and 35 years of age (Art 157). Acts on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers headed by the CM, except in discretionary matters (Art 163).
- Uttarakhand: created as 'Uttaranchal' on 9 November 2000 under the Uttar Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2000; renamed 'Uttarakhand' in January 2007. First Governor: Surjit Singh Barnala. Dehradun is the capital; Gairsain (Bhararisain) in Chamoli district was declared summer capital in 2020. In Dec 2025 the Raj Bhavans at Dehradun and Nainital were renamed 'Lok Bhavan'.

Tamil Nadu link: in the same 12 Oct 2026 list, Kerala Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar – who had held additional charge of Tamil Nadu since March 2026 – was appointed full-time Governor of Tamil Nadu; he assumed charge at Lok Bhavan, Chennai on 15 Oct 2026. Om Prakash Mathur was appointed to Kerala.

8 Braj Mohan Ram sworn in as Governor of Odisha at Lok Bhavan, Bhubaneswar (18 Oct 2026)

Appointments

News

Braj Mohan Ram, appointed by President Droupadi Murmu on 12 Oct 2026, was sworn in as Governor of Odisha at Lok Bhavan, Bhubaneswar on 18 Oct 2026 (Sunday). Orissa High Court Chief Justice Harish Tandon administered the oath. CM Mohan Charan Majhi and Speaker Surama Padhy were present. He succeeds Hari Babu Kambhampati, Governor since January 2025. A senior BJP leader from Palamu, Jharkhand, he was a three-time Lok Sabha MP from Palamu.

Key facts

Oath	18 Oct 2026 – Lok Bhavan, Bhubaneswar
Oath by	Orissa HC Chief Justice Harish Tandon (Art 159)
Predecessor	Hari Babu Kambhampati (from 3 Jan 2025)
Profile	Palamu (Jharkhand) – three-time Lok Sabha MP (1996–2004); Ranchi University graduate
Lok Bhavan	On MHA's suggestion (2025): Raj Bhavan → Lok Bhavan; Raj Niwas → Lok Niwas
Odisha	Separate province 1 Apr 1936 (Utkal Divas); 'Orissa' → 'Odisha' in 2011

Background

- Lok Bhavan: on the Union Home Ministry's suggestion to drop the colonial association and adopt a people-centric name, Governors' residences (Raj Bhavan) were renamed 'Lok Bhavan' and Lt Governors' residences (Raj Niwas) 'Lok Niwas' in late 2025; West Bengal and Ladakh were among the first.
- Constitution – Governor's powers: oath before the High Court Chief Justice, or in his absence the senior-most judge (Art 159). Pardon and remission (Art 161); assent / withholding / reserving Bills for the President (Art 200); ordinances (Art 213); report to the President on breakdown of constitutional machinery (Art 356). Must not be a member of Parliament or a State Legislature; emoluments cannot be cut during the term (Art 158).
- Odisha: became a separate province on linguistic lines on 1 April 1936 – celebrated as 'Utkal Divas' (Odisha Day). The Orissa (Alteration of Name) Act, 2011 renamed it 'Odisha', and the 96th Constitutional Amendment (2011) changed 'Oriya' to 'Odia' in the Eighth Schedule. Capital Bhubaneswar (earlier Cuttack); the High Court at Cuttack is still called the 'Orissa High Court'.

Tamil Nadu link: the landmark ruling on the Governor's power of assent to Bills (Art 200) came in 'State of Tamil Nadu v. Governor of Tamil Nadu' on 8 April 2025 – the Supreme Court held that Bills cannot be kept pending indefinitely and, using Art 142, deemed assent granted to 10 Bills. A five-judge Bench later gave its opinion on the President's reference (Art 143) on 20 November 2025. Tamil Nadu's Governor's residence is now 'Lok Bhavan', Chennai.

9 SBI named 'World's Best Consumer Bank 2026' by Global Finance – second year in a row

Awards

News

New York-based Global Finance magazine named State Bank of India (SBI) the 'World's Best Consumer Bank 2026'; the winners were announced on 16 July 2026. The award was presented at the World's Best Bank Awards ceremony in Oct 2026, held on the sidelines of the IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings in Bangkok, Thailand. It is SBI's second consecutive win (it also won in 2025). SBI Chairman Challa Sreenivasulu Setty credited the bank's digital transformation.

Key facts

Award	World's Best Consumer Bank 2026 – Global Finance magazine (1987, New York)
Announced / ceremony	Announced 16 July 2026; ceremony Oct 2026, Bangkok (IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings)
Streak	Second year running (2025 award – Oct 2025, Washington)
SBI Chairman	Challa Sreenivasulu Setty (since 28 Aug 2024)
Other 2026 winners	World's Best Bank – Santander (Spain); Best Corporate Bank – DBS (Singapore)
SBI	HQ Mumbai; India's largest commercial bank; over 100 million registered YONO users

Background

- History: Bank of Calcutta (2 June 1806) → Bank of Bengal (1809). With the Bank of Bombay (1840) and Bank of Madras (1843), these three 'Presidency Banks' merged on 27 Jan 1921 to form the Imperial Bank of India.
- Birth of SBI: On the recommendation of the All India Rural Credit Survey Committee (AIRCS, 1951; report 1954) headed by A.D. Gorwala, the Imperial Bank became the State Bank of India on 1 July 1955 under the SBI Act, 1955. On 1 Apr 2017, five associate banks and Bharatiya Mahila Bank were merged into SBI.
- Reserve Bank: recommended by the Hilton Young Commission (1926); began on 1 Apr 1935 under the RBI Act, 1934 (first Kolkata; Mumbai from 1937); nationalised on 1 Jan 1949. Bank nationalisation: 14 banks on 19 July 1969; 6 more in 1980.
- Economy: consumer (retail) banking covers personal savings, home/vehicle loans and digital payments. Financial inclusion, digital banking and customer service are among the judging criteria.

Tamil Nadu link: the Bank of Madras (1843) was one of the three Presidency Banks from which SBI descends. Public sector banks Indian Bank (1907) and Indian Overseas Bank (founded in 1937 by M.Ct.M. Chidambaram Chettiar) are headquartered in Chennai; both were nationalised in 1969.

10 Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal launches the National Strategic Trade Command Centre (NSTCC) in New Delhi

Economy

News

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal launched the National Strategic Trade Command Centre (NSTCC) at Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi, on 15 Oct 2026. Developed by the Department of Commerce, it uses integrated data analytics to give a single view of India's trade performance, export promotion schemes, regulatory approvals and application pendency. Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal and Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) Lav Agarwal were present. Reviewing the SCOMET dashboard, the Minister asked the Inter-Ministerial Committee to meet regularly – weekly if needed – to clear pending applications.

Key facts

Launch	15 Oct 2026 – Piyush Goyal, Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi
Developed by	Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry
Dashboards	IEC, Advance Authorisation, EPCG, Certificate of Origin, SCOMET, restricted imports/exports
Analytics	Product- and market-wise; FTA utilisation; benchmarking DGFT regional authorities
Built on	DGFT systems and the Trade Connect ePlatform; automated alerts later
Access	Phased access for ministries, State governments, Export Promotion Councils

Background

- DGFT: an attached office of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry; formerly the Chief Controller of Imports and Exports, renamed DGFT in 1991. It implements the Foreign Trade Policy under the Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992, and issues the 10-digit Importer Exporter Code (IEC).
- Foreign Trade Policy 2023: in force from 1 Apr 2023; an open-ended policy with no end date. EPCG lets exporters import capital goods duty-free, with an export obligation of 6 times the duty saved within 6 years.
- SCOMET – Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment and Technologies: India's national export control list for dual-use (civil–military) items; their export needs a licence.
- World Trade Organization (WTO): 1 Jan 1995 (Marrakesh Agreement, 1994); replaced GATT; HQ Geneva (Switzerland); India is a founding member. The Commerce Ministry has two departments – Commerce, and Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

Tamil Nadu link: in 2024–25 Tamil Nadu topped India's electronics exports for the third year running – $14.65 billion (41.23% of the national total). Tiruppur is India's 'knitwear capital' and a major hub of cotton knitwear exports. DGFT has a zonal office in Chennai.

11 Government reconstitutes the Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB) – S.C.L. Das named part-time Chairperson

Appointments

News

The Centre reconstituted the Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB) with effect from 16 Oct 2026. Retired IAS officer (1992 batch, AGMUT cadre) Subhas Chandra Lal Das (S.C.L. Das) was appointed part-time Chairperson for three years; he is a former Union MSME Secretary and currently chairs the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC). The post had been vacant for about three and a half months after former Chairperson Bhanu Pratap Sharma's extended tenure ended on 30 June 2026. Six part-time members were named – banking: Arijit Basu (former SBI MD), Satish Kashinath Marathe (former RBI Central Board director), Ramanathan Subramanian (former RBI Executive Director); insurance: Siddhartha Mohanty (former LIC CEO & MD), Neerja Kapur (former New India Assurance CMD), T.L. Alamelu (former IRDAI whole-time member, non-life).

Key facts

Effective	From 16 Oct 2026; Finance Ministry notification
Chairperson	S.C.L. Das – part-time, 3 years (earlier Bhanu Pratap Sharma, 2022–June 2026)
Banking members	Arijit Basu, Satish K. Marathe, Ramanathan Subramanian
Insurance members	Siddhartha Mohanty, Neerja Kapur, T.L. Alamelu
Role	Recommends whole-time directors and non-executive chairpersons of PSBs, financial institutions and public sector insurers
Final say	FSIB only recommends; final approval – ACC chaired by the PM

Background

- History: the P.J. Nayak Committee (RBI, 2014) recommended a Banks Board Bureau (BBB). 'Indradhanush' (Aug 2015) set out 7 elements of PSB reform (ABCDEFG: Appointments, BBB, Capitalisation, De-stressing, Empowerment, Framework of accountability, Governance). BBB began work in 2016; its first chairman was Vinod Rai.
- Birth of FSIB: after the Delhi High Court held that the BBB was not competent to select directors of public sector general insurers, the BBB was converted into the FSIB in July 2022. It was set up by a government resolution of the Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance; it is not a statutory body.
- Set-up: India now has 12 public sector banks (after the 2020 mergers). LIC – 1 Sept 1956, Mumbai; insurance regulator IRDAI – Hyderabad. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) is chaired by the PM, with the Home Minister as member.

Tamil Nadu link: three institutions whose top posts go through FSIB selection are headquartered in Chennai – Indian Bank and Indian Overseas Bank (public sector banks) and United India Insurance (public sector general insurer).

12 Madhya Pradesh tops the country in crop-residue burning, overtaking Punjab (15 Sept–15 Oct 2026)

Environment

News

As per satellite monitoring data of CREAMS at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI, New Delhi), 793 crop-residue burning events were recorded in the 7 monitored States between 15 Sept and 15 Oct 2026 (724 in the same period of 2025). Madhya Pradesh topped the country with 350 (138 in 2025), followed by Punjab 185, Uttar Pradesh 134, Rajasthan 99, Uttarakhand 16, Haryana 8 and Delhi 1. One reason is MP farmers shifting from soybean and black gram to paddy. On 13 Oct, Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan told Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan to identify affected districts and villages. (MP also topped during the April 2026 wheat-harvest season, with Vidisha district the worst.)

Key facts

Data	CREAMS – IARI, New Delhi; satellite monitoring (kharif season 15 Sept – 30 Nov)
Total	793 (2025: 724) – 7 States, 15 Sept–15 Oct
Madhya Pradesh	350 (2025: 138) – first
Other States	Punjab 185; UP 134; Rajasthan 99; Uttarakhand 16; Haryana 8; Delhi 1
Cause (MP)	Shift from soybean and black gram to paddy; short harvest–sowing window
Machines	Over 3.54 lakh crop residue management (CRM) machines supplied

Background

- Causes: in the paddy–wheat cycle the gap between paddy harvest and wheat sowing is short; combine harvesters leave tall stubble; the Punjab Preservation of Subsoil Water Act, 2009, delayed paddy transplanting and squeezed the window further.
- Science: burning releases PM2.5, PM10, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide and methane, and destroys soil nitrogen, organic matter and microbes. PM2.5 are fine particles 2.5 micrometres or smaller that go deep into the lungs.
- Solutions: 'Pusa Decomposer' – a fungus-based microbial solution developed by IARI that rots straw in the field. 'Happy Seeder' – a tractor-mounted machine that sows wheat without removing the straw.
- Law and administration: the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) was formed by an ordinance in 2020, replacing EPCA; the CAQM in NCR and Adjoining Areas Act, 2021 now gives it statutory backing. The Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) has 4 stages based on Delhi-NCR air quality and is enforced by the CAQM.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu is not among the 7 States monitored by CREAMS; large-scale residue burning like north India's is not reported here. Tamil Nadu's paddy seasons are Kuruvai, Samba and Thaladi; the Cauvery delta (Thanjavur) is the 'rice bowl of Tamil Nadu'. The Tamil Nadu Rice Research Institute is at Aduthurai (Thanjavur district).

13 Chinese state media show, for the first time, a YJ-21 anti-ship ballistic missile launched from a PLA H-6K bomber

Defence

News

Footage released by Chinese state media (reported 15–16 Oct 2026) showed, for the first time, a YJ-21 ('Ying Ji' – 'Eagle Strike') anti-ship ballistic missile being launched from a PLA Air Force H-6K bomber. The hypersonic 'carrier-killer' is claimed to cruise above Mach 6 with a terminal speed of about Mach 10; its range is estimated at 1,000–2,000 km. One H-6K can carry up to four YJ-21s. Some outlets describe this as 'eight years' after the missile's unveiling (Zhuhai Airshow 2018), but its widely documented first public appearance was in 2022 (April – launch video from a Type 055 destroyer; November – a YJ-21E model under an H-6K at the Zhuhai Airshow).

Key facts

Missile	YJ-21 ('Ying Ji-21' – Eagle Strike)
Type	Anti-ship ballistic missile (ASBM); hypersonic
Platform	H-6K bomber (Chinese version based on the Soviet Tu-16); Type 055 destroyer
Speed (claimed)	Cruise Mach 6+; terminal ~Mach 10
Range (estimate)	About 1,000–2,000 km
Earlier reveal	Apr 2022 – Type 055 launch video; Nov 2022 – Zhuhai Airshow (YJ-21E)

Background

- Science: a ballistic missile is rocket-powered only in its initial phase and then follows a gravity-driven arc to the target (e.g. Agni). A cruise missile is jet-powered and guided throughout a low flight (e.g. BrahMos). 'Mach number' = an object's speed ÷ the speed of sound in that medium (named after Austrian physicist Ernst Mach); above Mach 5 = hypersonic.
- Strategy: China's anti-ship ballistic missiles (land-based DF-21D, DF-26 and others) are seen as part of its 'anti-access/area-denial' (A2/AD) approach to keep foreign navies away from its coast. Air launch extends the strike reach further.
- India – BrahMos: the India–Russia inter-governmental agreement was signed in Moscow on 12 Feb 1998 (Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam for India, N.V. Mikhailov for Russia). Name = Brahmaputra + Moskva rivers. First test 12 June 2001, Chandipur (Odisha). JV share – India 50.5%, Russia 49.5%.
- India's hypersonic missile: DRDO's Long Range Anti-Ship Hypersonic Missile (LR-AShM) – range about 1,500 km; successfully tested in November 2024; first shown publicly at the 77th Republic Day parade (26 Jan 2026).

Tamil Nadu link: the Indian signatory of the BrahMos agreement was Rameswaram-born 'Missile Man' Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. The Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor (TNDIC) was launched at Tiruchirappalli on 20 Jan 2019 by then Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman; nodes: Chennai, Hosur, Salem, Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli. (There is no verified report of BrahMos production in Tamil Nadu.)

14 Asian Para Games: women's 10m air rifle SH1 – Mona Agarwal wins gold with a Games record, Avani Lekhara takes silver

Sports

News

At the 5th Asian Para Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan (18–24 Oct 2026), Mona Agarwal won gold in the women's 10m air rifle standing SH1 final on 19 Oct at the Aichi Prefectural General Shooting Range, scoring 250.0 – a new Asian Para Games record (previous: Avani Lekhara's 249.6 at Hangzhou). Avani Lekhara took silver with 249.6 and South Korea's Yunri Lee bronze (227.9). On the same opening medal day (19 Oct) India also won medals in athletics, judo and swimming.

Key facts

Event	5th Asian Para Games, Aichi-Nagoya (Japan), 18–24 Oct 2026; 18 sports
Gold	Mona Agarwal – 250.0 (Games record)
Silver / Bronze	Avani Lekhara 249.6 / Yunri Lee (South Korea) 227.9
Mona Agarwal	Born Sikar, Rajasthan (1987); polio at nine months; took up shooting Dec 2021; Paris 2024 bronze
Avani Lekhara	Jaipur, Rajasthan (2001); Tokyo 2020 gold + bronze; Paris 2024 gold; Khel Ratna 2021; Padma Shri 2022
Previous Games	Hangzhou 2022 (held 2023) – India 111 medals (29 gold)

Background

- Para-shooting classes: SH1 – athletes who can hold the gun without external support (standing, or seated in a chair/wheelchair); both rifle and pistol. SH2 – athletes whose arm impairment needs a stand to support the rifle; rifle only. Rules are World Shooting Para Sport (IPC) rules adapted from the ISSF (HQ – Munich, Germany).
- Asian Paralympic Committee (APC): HQ Dubai (UAE); founded 2002 at Busan (South Korea). Asian Para Games – 2010 Guangzhou (China), 2014 Incheon (South Korea), 2018 Jakarta (Indonesia), 2022 Hangzhou (China; held in 2023), 2026 Aichi-Nagoya (Japan). The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) is headquartered in Bonn (Germany).
- Avani Lekhara: spinal injury in a 2012 car accident. At Tokyo 2020 she won 10m air rifle SH1 gold – the first Indian woman to win a Paralympic gold – and also 50m rifle 3 positions SH1 bronze. Gold again at Paris 2024 (30 Aug) – the first Indian woman with two Paralympic golds; Mona took bronze in the same final.

Tamil Nadu link: no direct Tamil Nadu link in this event (both shooters are from Rajasthan). Tamil Nadu's Paralympic star is high jumper Mariyappan Thangavelu of Periavadagampatti, Salem district: Rio 2016 gold (T42), Tokyo 2020 silver, Paris 2024 bronze (T63); Padma Shri and Arjuna (2017), Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna (2020).

15 Japan readies its Martian Moons eXploration (MMX) mission to Mars' moon Phobos for launch on an H3 rocket

Space

News

JAXA's Martian Moons eXploration (MMX) spacecraft was scheduled to launch on H3 flight No. 10 (H3-24L configuration) from the Yoshinobu Launch Complex, Tanegashima Space Center, at 04:41 JST on 20 Oct 2026 (01:11 IST, 20 Oct); the reserve window runs to 7 Nov. After about a year's cruise it will reach the Mars system in 2027 and study both Phobos and Deimos; it will land on Phobos to collect at least 10 g of regolith, and deploy the French-German 'IDEFIX' rover there. Its sample capsule will land in Australia in 2031. The original 2024 launch slipped because of H3 problems.

Key facts

Mission	Martian Moons eXploration (MMX) – JAXA; Phobos sample return
Launch	H3 flight 10 (H3-24L), Tanegashima; 20 Oct 2026, 04:41 JST (scheduled)
Sample	≥10 g from Phobos; capsule lands in Australia in 2031
Rover	IDEFIX (~25 kg) – CNES (France) + DLR (Germany); named after the dog in 'Asterix'
Other partners	NASA – MEGANE gamma-ray/neutron spectrometer; ESA – communications support
Phobos / Deimos	~22 km / ~12 km; discovered by Asaph Hall (USA) in 1877

Background

- Moons of Mars: Phobos ('fear') and Deimos ('dread') are named after the sons of the Greek war god Ares (Roman 'Mars'); discovered in 1877 by Asaph Hall at the US Naval Observatory. MMX seeks to settle whether they are captured asteroids or formed from debris of a giant impact on Mars. Earth–Mars launch windows open about every 26 months.
- JAXA: formed on 1 Oct 2003 by merging ISAS, NAL and NASDA. Hayabusa – sample from asteroid Itokawa (returned 2010); Hayabusa2 – sample from asteroid Ryugu (capsule landed in Australia, Dec 2020). If MMX succeeds, it will be the first sample return from the Mars system.
- India: Mangalyaan (Mars Orbiter Mission – MOM) was launched on 5 Nov 2013 by PSLV-C25 from Sriharikota and entered Mars orbit on 24 Sep 2014. India became the first country to reach Mars orbit on its maiden attempt and the first Asian nation to do so.

Tamil Nadu link: Mangalyaan's Programme Director Mylswamy Annadurai was born at Kothavadi, Coimbatore district; he was Project Director of Chandrayaan-1 and received the Padma Shri (2016). S. Arunan, the Project Director who built the Mangalyaan spacecraft, is also from Tamil Nadu.

16 Asian Para Games: Kancheepuram's Thulasimathi (with Manasi Joshi) assures India's first medal by reaching the doubles semi-finals

Sports

News

At the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games on 17 Oct 2026, Kancheepuram's Thulasimathi Murugesan and Manasi Joshi beat China's Liu Yuemei and Li Tongtong in straight games in women's doubles SL3–SU5 (Group A) to reach the semi-finals, assuring India's first medal (at least bronze) of the Games. They had earlier beaten an Indonesian pair. The same day Thulasimathi won her SU5 singles match 21-2, 21-2. (This was the first medal assured; India's first medals were actually won on 19 Oct.)

Key facts

Athlete	Thulasimathi Murugesan – born 11 Apr 2002, Kancheepuram; congenital left-hand impairment
Class	Singles SU5; doubles SL3–SU5 (partner Manasi Joshi)
17 Oct win	Beat China's Liu Yuemei/Li Tongtong in straight games – semi-final; medal assured
Hangzhou 2022	Singles SU5 gold; women's doubles silver (with Manasi); mixed doubles bronze (with Nitesh Kumar)
Paris 2024	Women's singles SU5 silver – lost the final to China's Yang Qiuxia
Award / training	Arjuna Award 2024 (announced 2 Jan 2025); Gopichand Academy, Hyderabad; studies veterinary science at Namakkal

Background

- Para-badminton classes: WH1, WH2 – wheelchair; SL3, SL4 – standing, lower-limb impairment; SU5 – standing, upper-limb impairment; SH6 – short stature. Para-badminton made its Paralympic debut at Tokyo 2020.
- Governing body: the Badminton World Federation (BWF) – HQ Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia); it has governed para-badminton since 2011. India's Paralympic badminton golds: Pramod Bhagat (SL3) and Krishna Nagar (SH6) – Tokyo 2020; Nitesh Kumar (SL3) – Paris 2024.
- Historic feat: at Paris 2024 (2 Sep), Thulasimathi (silver) and Manisha Ramadass (bronze) in women's singles SU5 became the first Indian women to win Paralympic badminton medals; the same day Nithya Sre Sivan won SH6 bronze – all three from Tamil Nadu.

Tamil Nadu link: on 25 Sep 2024 the Chief Minister presented cash awards to the Paris 2024 Paralympic medallists – ₹2 crore to Thulasimathi; ₹1 crore each to Nithya Sre Sivan, Manisha Ramadass and Mariyappan Thangavelu. All three Tamil Nadu para-shuttlers – Thulasimathi, Manisha and Nithya Sre – received the Arjuna Award for 2024.

17 Jantar Mantar protest violence probe: SC-appointed HPEC headed by former SC judge Justice R. Subhash Reddy

Judiciary

News

To probe allegations of excessive police force (pellet guns, tear gas, lathi charges) and of protester violence against police during the July 2026 student protests at Jantar Mantar, Delhi and elsewhere (over alleged exam paper leaks; led by the 'Cockroach Janata Party' (CJP); clashes during the 20 July march to Parliament), a Supreme Court bench of CJI Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V. Mohana constituted a five-member High-Powered Enquiry Committee (HPEC) on 18 Aug 2026, headed by former SC judge Justice R. Subhash Reddy. Allegations of targeted violence and sexual harassment against women protesters get priority. On 15 Oct 2026 the panel invited complaints and evidence through the portal hpec.nic.in; vulnerable witnesses' identities will be kept confidential.

Key facts

Constituted by	Supreme Court – 18 Aug 2026; bench: CJI Surya Kant, Justices Joymalya Bagchi, V. Mohana
Case	Shailendra Mani Tripathi v. Union of India – WP(Crl) 280/2026
Chair	Justice R. Subhash Reddy (SC judge 2018–22; ex-Chief Justice, Gujarat HC)
Members	Ravi Shankar Jha (ex-CJ, Punjab & Haryana HC), Shalinder Kaur (ex-judge, Delhi HC), Rishi Kumar Shukla (ex-CBI Director), L.R. Bishnoi (ex-DGP, Meghalaya)
Mandate	Police force, chain of command, protester violence, property damage – interim report 'at the earliest'
Complaints	hpec.nic.in portal (15 Oct 2026) or in person – Shiksha Sadan, Rouse Avenue, New Delhi

Background

- Constitution: Article 19(1)(b) – right to assemble peaceably and without arms; Article 19(3) – the State may impose 'reasonable restrictions' in the interests of sovereignty and integrity of India and public order. Prohibitory orders are now issued under Section 163 BNSS (formerly Section 144 CrPC).
- Jantar Mantar as protest site: protests shifted there after curbs on the Boat Club lawns near India Gate in 1993. In Oct 2017 the National Green Tribunal (NGT) ordered protests there to end. In Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan v. Union of India (July 2018; Justices A.K. Sikri and Ashok Bhushan) the SC held there cannot be a complete ban on protests at places like Jantar Mantar and Boat Club, and ordered guidelines.
- Follow-up: on 11 Oct 2026 the Delhi Police Commissioner, on an MHA committee's recommendation, de-notified Jantar Mantar as a designated protest site; Ramlila Ground, Burari Ground and CBD Ground (East Delhi) were named instead.
- History: 'Jantar Mantar' = 'yantra' (instrument) + 'mantra' (calculation). Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II of Amber/Jaipur built observatories at Delhi (1724), Jaipur, Ujjain, Varanasi and Mathura. Jaipur's Jantar Mantar became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2010; the Delhi observatory is an ASI-protected Monument of National Importance.
- Justice R. Subhash Reddy: born 5 Jan 1957, Kamaram, Medak district (Telangana); judge, Andhra Pradesh HC (2002–16); Chief Justice, Gujarat HC (Feb 2016 – Nov 2018); Supreme Court judge (2 Nov

2018 – 4 Jan 2022).

Tamil Nadu link: there is no direct Tamil Nadu link in this news (the chair hails from Telangana). Astronomy link: the 'Madras Observatory', set up in Chennai by William Petrie in 1786, became the East India Company's official observatory in 1792; its work moved to the Kodaikanal Solar Observatory (founded 1 April 1899), where John Evershed discovered the radial flow of gas in sunspots (the 'Evershed effect', 1909). It is now run by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bengaluru.

18 'Akhand Prahar-II': Indian Army's integrated combat exercise in the Jaisalmer desert, Rajasthan (Konark Corps)

Defence

News

The Indian Army conducted Exercise 'Akhand Prahar-II' in the Jaisalmer desert sector of Rajasthan (reported 18 Oct 2026). It was jointly conducted by the 'Black Mace' Brigade and the 'Battle Axe' Division (12 Infantry Division) of the Konark Corps (XII Corps) under Southern Command. Aim: integrate New Generation Equipment (NGE) and force multipliers with conventional capabilities and validate combat readiness in a multi-domain battle environment. Konark Corps GOC Lt Gen A.V.S. Rathee commended the formations. It follows 'Akhand Prahar' (first edition), held in Nov 2025 as part of tri-service Exercise 'Trishul'.

Key facts

Exercise	Akhand Prahar-II – reported 18 Oct 2026; 1st edition Nov 2025 (part of tri-service Ex Trishul)
Location	Jaisalmer desert sector, Rajasthan (Thar Desert)
Formations	Black Mace Brigade + Battle Axe Division (12 Infantry Division, HQ Jaisalmer)
Corps / Command	Konark Corps (XII Corps) – HQ Jodhpur; Southern Command – HQ Pune
Reviewed by	Lt Gen A.V.S. Rathee, GOC, Konark Corps
Aim	Integrate NGE & force multipliers with conventional power; multi-domain combat readiness

Background

- Army structure: 7 commands – Northern (Udhampur), Western (Chandimandir), South Western (Jaipur), Southern (Pune), Eastern (Kolkata), Central (Lucknow) and the training command ARTRAC (Shimla). Hierarchy: Command → Corps → Division → Brigade → Battalion. Southern Command has XII Konark Corps (Jodhpur) and XXI Sudarshan Chakra Corps (Bhopal).
- First 'Akhand Prahar' (Nov 2025): held in the Jaisalmer desert as part of tri-service Exercise Trishul; the newly formed all-arms 'Rudra' Brigade was validated; indigenous drones, counter-drone systems and electronic-warfare (EW) grids were used.
- Geography: the Thar (Great Indian) Desert lies mostly in Rajasthan; Jaisalmer is on the India–Pakistan border. The Aravallis bound it on the east; shifting dunes are called 'dhrian' and salt lakes 'dhand'; the Indira Gandhi Canal irrigates it.
- Nuclear tests: India's first nuclear test, 'Smiling Buddha', was held at Pokhran (Jaisalmer district) on 18 May 1974 (PM Indira Gandhi, President V.V. Giri); 'Operation Shakti' (Pokhran-II) followed on 11

and 13 May 1998 – hence 11 May is National Technology Day.

Tamil Nadu link: the same Southern Command's 'Dakshin Bharat Area' HQ is in Chennai; Southern Army Commander Lt Gen Rajesh Pushkar reviewed it on 15 Oct 2026. The Madras Regiment, the Army's oldest infantry regiment, has its Regimental Centre at Wellington, Nilgiris (war cry: 'Veera Madrassi, Adi Kollu'). The Officers Training Academy (OTA), Alandur, Chennai, began on 15 Jan 1963 and has trained women officers since 1992.

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1 How are rain warnings issued? – IMD rainfall categories and colour-coded warnings explained

Environment

News

After the Northeast monsoon set in around mid-October, the Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC) Chennai issued an 'orange alert' (heavy to very heavy rain) for four districts – Chennai, Tiruchirappalli, Coimbatore and the Nilgiris – on 19 Oct 2026, and for Tirunelveli and Madurai on 20 Oct; heavy rain was forecast in 35 districts on 20 Oct. On 18 Oct the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said heavy to very heavy rain would continue over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal till 21 Oct. How are such warnings decided? – district-wise, colour-coded warnings are issued on the basis of the expected rainfall in 24 hours (in mm), its likely impact, observations from satellites, radars and ground stations, and computer-model (NWP) forecasts.

Key facts

Rain in 24 h	Very light 0.1–2.4 mm; light 2.5–15.5; moderate 15.6–64.4; heavy 64.5–115.5; very heavy 115.6–204.4; extremely heavy ≥204.5 mm
Colour code	Green – no warning; Yellow – be aware; Orange – be prepared; Red – take action
Nowcast	Local forecast for the next 3 hours; updated frequently using radar data
Cyclone – 4 stages	Pre-cyclone watch (72 h ahead), Cyclone alert (48 h, yellow), Cyclone warning (24 h, orange), Post-landfall outlook (12 h, red)
Tools	Doppler weather radars (over 50 in 2026), INSAT-3D/3DR/3DS satellites, NWP models, Automatic Weather Stations (AWS), Automatic Rain Gauges (ARG)
IMD	Founded 1875; HQ New Delhi; under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES, 2006)
RMC Chennai	Nungambakkam; RMC since 1 Apr 1945; southern States, Andaman & Nicobar, Lakshadweep, Puducherry

Background

- Measuring rain: a rain gauge measures rainfall in millimetres (mm); 1 cm = 10 mm. In India the 'rain day' runs from 08:30 IST to 08:30 IST the next day. The news phrases 'heavy rain above 7 cm', 'very heavy above 12 cm' and 'extremely heavy above 21 cm' are rounded forms of the mm ranges above. Spread is also stated: widespread (76–100% of stations), fairly widespread (51–75%), scattered (26–50%), isolated (up to 25%).
- Impact-based warning: the colour reflects the expected impact, not just the amount of rain. Yellow – stay informed; Orange – road/rail traffic and power may be disrupted, be prepared; Red – serious risk to life and property, the district administration must act at once (school holidays, evacuation). IMD gives 5-day district-level forecasts/warnings and 3-hour 'nowcasts'.
- Sci-tech: a Doppler Weather Radar (DWR) uses the Doppler effect to measure the movement of raindrops and wind speed/direction; DWRs rose from 14 in 2014 to 50 by April 2026; the 51st was

opened at Sambalpur (Odisha) in Sept 2026. The geostationary satellites INSAT-3D (2013), INSAT-3DR (2016) and INSAT-3DS (2024) supply cloud and temperature data. Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP) models run on supercomputers such as 'Pratyush' (IITM Pune) and 'Mihir' (NCMRWF Noida). 'Mission Mausam' (2024) is expanding the radar network further.

- Cyclone warnings: IMD's Regional Specialised Meteorological Centre (RSMC) New Delhi issues warnings for, and names, North Indian Ocean cyclones. Four stages: Pre-cyclone watch (72 h ahead), Cyclone alert (at least 48 h ahead, yellow), Cyclone warning (at least 24 h ahead, orange), Post-landfall outlook (at least 12 h before landfall, red).
- Geography: Northeast monsoon (Oct–Dec) – after the southwest monsoon withdraws, winds reverse and blow from the northeast; Bay of Bengal depressions and cyclones bring rain. Tamil Nadu's normal annual rainfall is 921.4 mm, of which the NE monsoon gives 442.8 mm (about 48%) and the SW monsoon only about 36%, because the State lies in the rain shadow of the Western Ghats. Normal onset is around 20 October.

Tamil Nadu link: RMC Chennai traces its roots to the 'Madras Observatory' – set up privately by William Petrie in 1786 and taken over by the East India Company in 1792. Today, from Nungambakkam, it issues district-wise rain warnings for Tamil Nadu and the southern States; the Chennai Doppler radar has worked since 2001–02. Since about half the State's annual rain comes from the NE monsoon, the Oct–Dec warnings are vital for Tamil Nadu.

2 Nationwide 'Green Diwali' campaign, 20 Oct – 8 Nov – launched by WWF-India's EIACP centre; appeal to avoid firecrackers

Environment

News

WWF-India's EIACP (Environmental Information, Awareness, Capacity Building and Livelihood Programme) Programme Centre–Resource Partner, supported by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), launched a nationwide 'Green Diwali' campaign from 20 Oct to 8 Nov 2026 (Diwali falls on 8 Nov 2026). It urges people to avoid firecrackers, use diyas and energy-efficient lights, avoid single-use plastic, segregate waste and buy local products. Schools, colleges and resident welfare associations can take a 'Green Diwali Pledge'; the 130 cities under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) get special focus. The campaign is aligned with Mission LiFE.

Key facts

Run by	WWF-India EIACP Programme Centre–Resource Partner; supported by MoEFCC
Period	20 Oct – 8 Nov 2026
Activities	Green Diwali Pledge; WWF Carbon Footprint Survey; reports with geo-tagged photos
Focus	130 NCAP cities
Mission LiFE	Lifestyle for Environment – 20 Oct 2022, Ekta Nagar (Kevadia, Gujarat)
EIACP	Formerly ENVIS (1983) – MoEFCC's environmental information network

Background

- Green crackers: developed by CSIR's National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (CSIR-NEERI, Nagpur). About 30% less pollution than conventional crackers; no barium nitrate. Types: SWAS (Safe Water Releaser – releases water vapour to suppress dust), STAR (Safe Thermite Cracker), SAFAL (Safe Minimal Aluminium). Identified by a green logo and QR code; explosives safety is licensed by PESO (HQ Nagpur).
- Supreme Court: in Arjun Gopal v. Union of India (23 Oct 2018) it allowed only green/improved crackers, a 8–10 pm window on Diwali and banned online sales. In 2021 it censured makers who used banned barium salts. Courts treat clean air as part of Article 21 (right to life); Article 48A – protection of environment (DPSP); 51A(g) – fundamental duty.
- Air Quality Index (AQI): launched 2014; 6 categories – Good (0–50), Satisfactory (51–100), Moderately polluted (101–200), Poor (201–300), Very poor (301–400), Severe (401–500). 8 pollutants are counted: PM10, PM2.5, NO2, SO2, CO, O3, NH3 and lead (Pb) – carbon dioxide is not one. Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) – Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.
- National Clean Air Programme (NCAP): launched by MoEFCC in Jan 2019; aims to cut PM10 levels in non-attainment cities by up to 40% (by 2025–26) over the 2017 base. WWF – international conservation body founded in 1961; HQ Gland (Switzerland).

Tamil Nadu link: Sivakasi in Virudhunagar district – the hub producing the bulk of India's firecrackers ('Kutty Japan'); a leading supplier of green crackers. Green rules and time limits affect the livelihood of lakhs of workers here. After the 2018 SC order, the Tamil Nadu Government fixed two one-hour slots on Deepavali – 6–7 am and 7–8 pm.

3 Ipsos Quality of Care Perception Index 2026 – India 3rd among 32 countries (joint with Singapore); Malaysia tops

Health

News

In the 'Quality of Care Perception Index' of the 'Ipsos Health Service Report 2026', released on 16 Oct 2026 by the Paris-based market-research firm Ipsos, India ranked 3rd among 32 countries, jointly with Singapore; Malaysia topped (72%) and Hungary was last (28%). 68% of Indians rated healthcare quality positively; 64% expressed trust; 73% found it easy to get a doctor's appointment – the highest of the 32 countries. But 42% named treatment cost as a major problem and 74% said many cannot afford good care. It is an online survey (13 Jul – 7 Aug 2026); the Indian sample is more urban and educated than the general population.

Key facts

Report	Ipsos Health Service Report 2026 – released 16 Oct 2026
Ranking	1. Malaysia (72%); 3. India & Singapore; last – Hungary (28%)
India – strengths	Easy doctor appointment 73% (highest of 32); pharmacy access 81%; quality good 68%; trust 64%
India – challenges	Cost of treatment 42%; many cannot afford 74%; long waits 62%
Optimism	54% in India expect improvement (global average 31%)
Method	32 countries, online (Global Advisor); 13 Jul – 7 Aug 2026
Ipsos	Founded 1975 by Didier Truchot; HQ Paris (France)

Background

- Global trend: across 32 countries, mental health is seen as the biggest health problem (average 48%; top since 2023), followed by cancer (40%), stress (32%) and obesity (25%).
- Constitution: 'Public health and sanitation; hospitals and dispensaries' – Entry 6, State List, Seventh Schedule. Article 47 – raising nutrition, the standard of living and improving public health is a primary duty of the State (DPSP). The SC has read the right to health into Article 21 (Paschim Banga Khet Mazdoor Samity, 1996).
- Central schemes: National Rural Health Mission (2005) + National Urban Health Mission (2013) = National Health Mission (NHM, 2013). Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) was launched at Ranchi on 23 Sep 2018; ₹5 lakh cover per family per year; implemented by the National Health Authority (NHA). National Health Policy 2017.
- Economy: the key challenge shown is out-of-pocket expenditure on health. 70% said people often rely on over-the-counter medicines or home remedies without medical advice. Note: it is a perception survey, not a measure of health outcomes (life expectancy, infant mortality).

Tamil Nadu link: 'Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam' (Healthcare at People's Doorstep) was launched on 5 Aug 2021 in Krishnagiri district – doorstep medicines for hypertension and diabetes and physiotherapy for those above 45; it has reached over 2 crore people. It won Tamil Nadu's Health Department the 2024 UN Inter-Agency Task Force (UNIATF) award on prevention and control of non-communicable diseases. The Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme also operates in the State.

4 Delhi CM Rekha Gupta opens 200-tonne-per-day cow-dung biogas plant at Goyla Dairy (19 Oct)

Environment

News

On 19 Oct 2026 (Monday), Delhi CM Rekha Gupta inaugurated a biogas plant at Goyla Dairy in the Najafgarh area of south-west Delhi. Built by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) at ₹16 crore, it handles 200 tonnes of cow dung a day, producing about 14,000 cubic metres of raw biogas and about 5.6 tonnes of compressed biogas (CBG) daily, which is piped to Indraprastha Gas Ltd (IGL); the leftover slurry is sold as organic manure. The main aim is to stop dung flowing through drains into the Yamuna. Three such plants have started in the past 18 months and six more are under construction.

Key facts

Opened	19 Oct 2026 – Delhi CM Rekha Gupta; Goyla Dairy, Najafgarh
Built by / cost	Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) / ₹16 crore
Capacity–output	200 t dung/day → ~14,000 m³ biogas, ~5.6 t CBG/day (to IGL) + organic manure
Dung purchase	67 paise per kg paid to dairy owners
Delhi context	About 1,500 t dung daily; first plant – Nangli Sakrawati Dairy (Sep 2025)
Yamuna	Yamunotri glacier (Uttarakhand) – joins the Ganga at Prayagraj

Background

- Science: biogas forms when microbes break down organic waste without oxygen – 'anaerobic digestion'. It is about 45–75% methane, the rest mostly carbon dioxide. Removing CO2, moisture and hydrogen sulphide and compressing it gives CBG – similar to natural gas (CNG) and usable as vehicle fuel. Since methane is a potent greenhouse gas, turning dung into fuel instead of letting it rot in the open also helps the climate.
- Schemes: GOBARdhan (Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan) – launched 30 Apr 2018; nodal Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti; part of Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) Phase II. SATAT (Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation) – launched by the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas on 1 Oct 2018; target of 5,000 CBG plants; oil companies buy the CBG. MNRE's National Bioenergy Programme also supports such plants.
- Environment–geography: the Yamuna is the longest tributary of the Ganga; it rises at Yamunotri and joins the Ganga at Prayagraj (Triveni Sangam). The Delhi stretch is its most polluted; dairy waste is one cause. ₹50 crore has been allotted for drainage in Delhi's dairy colonies.

Tamil Nadu link: a 100-tonne-per-day wet-waste biogas plant has run at Chetpet, Chennai, for the Greater Chennai Corporation since 2022. CM C. Joseph Vijay inspected it on 20 Jul 2026 and ordered the model to be extended to all 25 corporations; three more 100-tonne plants are being built at Sholinganallur and Koyambedu. In Aug 2025 the foundation was laid for a ₹69.2-crore, 250-tonne-per-day biogas plant at Vellalore, Coimbatore.

5 Vummidi Ethiraj (99), who crafted the Sengol given to Nehru in 1947 and installed in the new Parliament in 2023, passes away

Tamil Nadu

News

Vummidi Ethiraj, one of the craftsmen of the Sengol and patriarch of the family that owns Chennai's 125-year-old Vummidi Bangaru Jewellers, died in Chennai on Wednesday, 21 Oct 2026. Born on 25 Nov 1926, he was 99; he was 20 when the Sengol was made in 1947. PM Narendra Modi, Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan and Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar condoled his death. The PM recalled meeting him when the Sengol was installed in the new Parliament in 2023.

Key facts

Name	Vummidi Ethiraj
Born–died	25 Nov 1926 – 21 Oct 2026, Chennai; aged 99
Firm	Vummidi Bangaru Chetty – Chennai jewellers (125 years)
Sengol	Gold-plated silver; about 5 ft long; Nandi on top
1947	Night of 14 Aug 1947 – Thiruvavaduthurai Adheenam handed it to Nehru; 'Kolaru Pathigam' was sung
2023	28 May 2023 – installed by PM Modi near the Lok Sabha Speaker's chair

Background

- History: when Mountbatten asked about a symbol for the transfer of power, C. Rajagopalachari (Rajaji) suggested the Chola tradition of a spiritual head handing a sceptre to a new king. At the request of the Thiruvavaduthurai Adheenam, the Sengol was made by Vummidi Bangaru Chetty jewellers of Madras. The Adheenam's envoys first handed it to Mountbatten, sanctified it with holy water and presented it to Nehru at his residence on the night of 14 Aug; Thirugnana Sambandar's 'Kolaru Pathigam' was sung by Oduvars.
- Museum: the Sengol was kept for decades with Nehru's other belongings in the Allahabad (Prayagraj) Museum (not Anand Bhavan), where it was listed as a 'golden stick'. It was installed in the Lok Sabha at the inauguration of the new Parliament building on 28 May 2023.
- Literature: 'Sengonmai' (just rule) is chapter 55 of the Thirukkural, in the Arasiyal section of Porutpal (Kurals 541–550); the next chapter is 'Kodungonmai' (tyranny, 56). Kural 546 says it is not the spear but the king's unbending sceptre that brings victory.
- Debate: the 1947 event drew little attention at the time; in 2023 some questioned whether a monarchical symbol suits a parliamentary democracy.

Tamil Nadu link: the Thiruvavaduthurai Adheenam that presented the Sengol is a Saiva mutt in Mayiladuthurai district; it was made by Chennai jewellers. In 2023, Adheenams from Tamil Nadu handed the Sengol to the PM in New Delhi.

6 Nationwide financial inclusion saturation campaign from 21 Oct to 31 Dec – 2.70 lakh gram panchayats and urban local bodies

Economy

News

A nationwide campaign by the Department of Financial Services (DFS), Union Finance Ministry, to saturate financial inclusion schemes runs from 21 Oct 2026 to 31 Dec 2026. Camps will be held across about 2.70 lakh gram panchayats and urban local bodies. It covers opening Jan Dhan accounts, enrolment in PMJJBY, PMSBY and Atal Pension Yojana, Aadhaar seeding, re-KYC of accounts, updating nominations, awareness on digital frauds and on unclaimed financial assets ('Aapki Poonji, Aapka Adhikar'), Kisan Credit Cards for PM-Kisan beneficiaries, and crop insurance for the Rabi season. The Finance Ministry announced it on 19 Oct.

Key facts

Period	21 Oct – 31 Dec 2026
Run by	Department of Financial Services, Finance Ministry; through State Level Bankers' Committees
Coverage	About 2.70 lakh gram panchayats + urban local bodies
Schemes	PMJDY, PMJJBY, PMSBY, APY, KCC, PMFBY; re-KYC, nominations
Earlier drive	1 Jul – 30 Sep 2025 (same 2.70 lakh GPs/ULBs)
RBI FI-Index	March 2026: 70.0 (March 2025: 67.0)

Background

- Jan Suraksha schemes: PM Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) – 28 Aug 2014; a zero-balance account with RuPay card for every unbanked household. PMJJBY (₹436 a year, ₹2 lakh life cover, age 18–50), PMSBY (₹20 a year, ₹2 lakh accidental death/disability cover, age 18–70) and Atal Pension Yojana (join at 18–40, pension ₹1,000–5,000 a month from 60; administered by PFRDA) – all three launched on 9 May 2015 in Kolkata.
- History: 14 commercial banks were nationalised on 19 July 1969. On the advice of the D.R. Gadgil Study Group (Oct 1969) and the Nariman Committee (Nov 1969), RBI introduced the Lead Bank Scheme in Dec 1969 – one lead bank for each district. State Level Bankers' Committees (SLBCs) were set up in 1977.
- Economy: RBI's Financial Inclusion Index (FI-Index, since 2021) is on a 0–100 scale with three parts – Usage (45%), Access (35%) and Quality (20%). It rose to 70.0 in March 2026.

Tamil Nadu link: the convenor bank of Tamil Nadu's State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC) is Chennai-headquartered Indian Overseas Bank (IOB); the 187th SLBC meeting in Chennai on 24 Sep 2026 reviewed financial inclusion schemes. This campaign too will be run in the districts through the SLBC.

7 European bee-eater recorded in Chennai for the first time – near the Adyar estuary

Environment

News

A juvenile European bee-eater (Merops apiaster), a migratory bird, was seen on 11 Oct 2026 at the 'Broken Bridge' near the Adyar estuary, Chennai – the species' first recorded appearance in Chennai. R.V. Ramanan and his son Shreyas Ramanan first noticed it among two Green bee-eaters; Bharath Ravikumar and Balakrishnan confirmed it from photographs. The record was accepted on the citizen-science platform eBird. A Eurasian wryneck was also recorded at the same spot on the same day.

Key facts

Bird	European bee-eater – Merops apiaster; juvenile
Place–date	Broken Bridge, Adyar estuary, Chennai – 11 Oct 2026
Taxonomy	Family Meropidae; order Coraciiformes (kingfisher order)
Diet	Flying insects – bees, wasps; rubs off the sting on a perch
Range	Breeds in Europe & western Asia; winters in TN around Coimbatore, Tiruppur, Salem
IUCN	Least Concern

Background

- Biology: bee-eaters have slender bodies, pointed wings and long, slightly curved bills, and catch prey in flight. They are not passerines – they belong to Coraciiformes with kingfishers and rollers. India's common species is the Green bee-eater (Merops orientalis). The wryneck belongs to the woodpecker family (Picidae).
- Migration: India lies on the Central Asian Flyway. The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS / Bonn Convention) was adopted in Bonn, Germany, in 1979 and came into force in 1983; it works under UNEP; India has been a party since 1983. CMS COP13 – Gandhinagar, Gujarat (Feb 2020).
- Ecology: an estuary is a partly enclosed coastal water body where river water mixes with sea water. The Ramsar Convention on wetlands was signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971. eBird is a citizen-science platform run by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, USA.

Tamil Nadu link: Vedanthangal in Chengalpattu district – protected by the British as early as 1798 and declared a sanctuary in 1936 – is India's oldest bird sanctuary and became a Ramsar site in 2022. Chennai's Pallikaranai Marsh also became a Ramsar site in 2022.

8 Centre's draft for Ladakh: a directly elected body, with the Lieutenant Governor keeping the final say on laws

Polity

News

A draft framework for Ladakh's governance prepared by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) was given to the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) at a sub-committee meeting in Leh on 15 Oct 2026. It proposes a directly elected UT-level body, but, according to LAB and KDA, substantial powers stay concentrated with the Lieutenant Governor's administration – in effect, the LG keeps the final say. It is to be done in two stages: a constitutional amendment (a new Article 371-K), followed by a regulation under Article 240. As it has no legislature, LAB and KDA rejected it as an old 'NEFA'-type model. The next round of talks is on 22 Oct in New Delhi.

Key facts

Draft	MHA; sub-committee meeting in Leh, 15 Oct 2026; shared 16 Oct
Proposal	Directly elected UT body; substantial powers with LG administration
Route	Constitutional amendment (Art 371-K) → regulation under Art 240
Talks with	Leh Apex Body (LAB), Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA)
Demands	Legislature, statehood, Sixth Schedule, Art 371 safeguards
Next round	22 Oct 2026, New Delhi

Background

- Constitution: Part VIII (Arts 239–242) deals with UTs. Art 239 – UTs are administered by the President through an administrator. Art 240 – the President may make regulations for the 'peace, progress and good government' of certain UTs, with the force of an Act of Parliament (A&N Islands, Lakshadweep, DNH–Daman & Diu, Puducherry). In June 2025, regulations on reservation and official languages for Ladakh were issued under Art 240.
- Ladakh basics: under the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019, it became a UT without a legislature on 31 Oct 2019 (after Art 370 was revoked). Autonomous Hill Development Councils (LAHDC) – Leh 1995, Kargil 2003; 30 members each (26 elected, 4 nominated). June 2025 regulations – total reservation in government jobs up to 85% (EWS 10% separate); official languages English, Hindi, Urdu, Bhoti, Purgi; one-third of LAHDC seats for women.
- Background: LAB/KDA demands – statehood, the Sixth Schedule (Art 244(2); tribal areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram), a separate public service commission, and separate Lok Sabha seats for Leh and Kargil. After the Sept 2025 violence in Leh, climate activist Sonam Wangchuk was detained under the National Security Act; the order was revoked in March 2026. LAB/KDA say a 22 May 2026 meeting agreed on a 'UT with a legislature'; on 9 Sept 2026 the MHA floated a new Art 371(K).

Tamil Nadu link: neighbouring UT Puducherry has a legislature under Art 239A (14th Amendment, 1962); while that legislature functions, the President cannot make regulations for it under Art 240. Delhi has Art 239AA (69th Amendment, 1991). Ladakh has no legislature.

9 Ladakh Bench of the J&K and Ladakh High Court opens at Melongthang, Leh – India's highest HC bench; 4 initiatives incl. 'Green Wall', e-Filing

Judiciary

News

Chief Justice of India Surya Kant inaugurated the Ladakh Bench of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh at the High Court complex, Melongthang, Leh, on 18 Oct 2026. At about 3,500 m above sea level, it is the highest-altitude High Court bench in India. Four initiatives were launched: (1) the Green Wall, (2) an e-Filing portal for the Ladakh Bench, (3) a Document Management System (DMS) and (4) the High Court's online recruitment portal. A Division Bench of Chief Justice Pushpendra Singh Bhati and Justice Sanjay Parihar hears the first cases; 75 pending cases from Ladakh were transferred to it.

Key facts

Inauguration	18 Oct 2026 – CJI Surya Kant
Place	HC complex, Melongthang, Leh (~3,500 m altitude)
High Court	Common HC of J&K and Ladakh; Chief Justice: Pushpendra Singh Bhati
4 initiatives	Green Wall, e-Filing portal, Document Management System, online recruitment portal
First bench	CJ Bhati + Justice Sanjay Parihar; 75 pending cases transferred
Benefit	Leh and Kargil litigants need not travel to Srinagar/Jammu

Background

- The J&K High Court was set up in 1928 under Maharaja Hari Singh. Under the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019 it has functioned since 31 Oct 2019 as the common High Court for the two UTs of J&K and Ladakh; principal seats – Srinagar and Jammu.
- Constitution: Art 214 – a High Court for each State; Art 231 – Parliament may by law set up a common High Court for two or more States (and a Union Territory); Art 226 – writ jurisdiction of High Courts; Art 241 – High Courts for Union Territories.
- Art 217: High Court judges are appointed by the President after consulting the CJI, the Governor and the Chief Justice of that High Court; retirement age 62. Common HC examples: Gauhati (Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh), Punjab & Haryana (+ Chandigarh).
- Technology: e-Filing, document management and video hearings are part of the e-Courts drive towards paperless courts. The CJI said the Supreme Court would list all Ladakh matters on a single day once adequate video-conferencing is available.

Tamil Nadu link: The Madras High Court was set up by Letters Patent under the Indian High Courts Act, 1861 on 15 Aug 1862 – one of the three Chartered High Courts with Calcutta and Bombay. Its Madurai Bench has functioned since 24 July 2004. The Madras HC's jurisdiction also covers the UT of Puducherry.

10 UDAN regional air connectivity scheme completes 10 years (launched 21 Oct 2016)

Economy

News

The regional connectivity scheme 'Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik' (UDAN – let the common citizen of the country fly), launched on 21 Oct 2016, completed 10 years on 21 Oct 2026. The first UDAN flight flew Shimla–Delhi on 27 Apr 2017. As of July 2026, 679 routes and 95 airports/heliports/water aerodromes had been connected, with over 3.58 lakh flights carrying more than 1.68 crore passengers. The Union Cabinet approved 'Modified UDAN' (₹28,840 crore), extending it to 2035–36, on 25 Mar 2026.

Key facts

Launch	21 Oct 2016; under the National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) 2016
Ministry / implementer	Ministry of Civil Aviation / Airports Authority of India (AAI)
First flight	27 Apr 2017 – Shimla–Delhi
Support	Viability Gap Funding (VGF) from the Regional Connectivity Fund; Centre–State 80:20 (NE/hill 90:10)
Achievement (July 2026)	679 routes; 95 airports/heliports/water aerodromes; 1.68 crore+ passengers
Modified UDAN	Cabinet 25.3.2026; ₹28,840 crore; 2026–27 to 2035–36; 100 airports, 200 helipads

Background

- UDAN rounds: 1.0 (2017) – 128 routes to 70 airports; 2.0 (2018) – helipads for the first time; 3.0 (2019) – tourism routes, seaplanes; 4.0 (2020) – hill, North-East and island areas; 5.5 – special bids for seaplanes and helicopters.
- Economy: airlines must offer half the seats at capped fares; VGF compensates them. States provide land, power, security etc. UDAN won the PM's Award for Excellence in Public Administration (Innovation), 2020.
- Related: Krishi UDAN – air transport of farm produce (58 airports); 'UDAN Yatri Cafe' – low-cost eateries at airports (Kolkata, Chennai). Modified UDAN – HAL Dhruv helicopters for Pawan Hans and HAL Dornier aircraft for Alliance Air.
- Airports Authority of India (AAI) – statutory body under the AAI Act, 1994; HQ New Delhi. Aviation safety regulator – DGCA.

Tamil Nadu link: Under UDAN, Salem airport resumed operations on 25 Mar 2018 with TruJet's Chennai–Salem service. Funds were also sanctioned under UDAN to develop Neyveli, Vellore, Thanjavur and Ramanathapuram airports. A 'UDAN Yatri Cafe' has opened at Chennai airport.

11 Indian Navy to host 'Swavlamban 2026' (5th edition) seminar in New Delhi on 26–27 Oct

Defence

News

'Swavlamban' (self-reliance), the Indian Navy's flagship innovation and indigenisation seminar, holds its 5th edition on 26–27 Oct 2026 at the Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi. Aim: turning indigenous innovations into operational naval capability. Focus areas: maritime surveillance, counter-UAS, AI, quantum technologies and NBCD. The 'Swavlamban 5.0' document, a Compendium on Technology Imperatives and the 'NAUSETU' interface standards will be released. The Vice Chief of the Naval Staff held the curtain-raiser press conference on 19 Oct.

Key facts

Edition / dates	5th; 26–27 Oct 2026
Venue	Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi
Organiser	Indian Navy – Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO)
Releases	Swavlamban 5.0 document; Compendium on Technology Imperatives; NAUSETU interface standards
iDEX (Navy)	4,000+ proposals; ~150 MSMEs/start-ups; ₹1,900 crore+ contracts
First edition	18–19 July 2022 – PM's address; 'SPRINT' challenges unveiled

Background

- NIIO – launched by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in August 2020. Three tiers: Naval Technology Acceleration Council (N-TAC), a working group under it, and the Technology Development Acceleration Cell (TDAC).
- SPRINT (2022) – 'Supporting Pole-Vaulting in R&D through iDEX, NIIO and TDAC'; target of inducting at least 75 indigenous technologies into the Navy as part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- iDEX (Innovations for Defence Excellence) – launched by the PM in April 2018; funded and managed by the Defence Innovation Organisation (DIO), a not-for-profit Section 8 company (Companies Act 2013) founded by HAL and BEL.
- Aatmanirbhar Bharat – self-reliance in defence production. Two Defence Industrial Corridors: Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

Tamil Nadu link: the Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor was inaugurated by then Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at Tiruchirappalli on 20 Jan 2019. Its 5 nodes: Chennai, Hosur, Salem, Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli. DefExpo 2018 was held at Thiruvidanthai, Kancheepuram district.

12 India–New Zealand FTA in force from 20 Oct 2026; 100% duty-free access for Indian goods on all 8,284 tariff lines

Economy

News

The India–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA) entered into force on 20 Oct 2026. Talks began in March 2025 and concluded in December 2025; Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and NZ Trade Minister Todd McClay signed it in New Delhi on 27 Apr 2026. Indian goods get 100% duty-free access on all 8,284 of New Zealand's tariff lines from day one. India has opened about 70% of its tariff lines (~95% of NZ's current exports); dairy, sugar, edible oils, onions, chickpeas etc. are excluded. New Zealand committed to US$20 billion of investment in India over 15 years.

Key facts

In force	20 Oct 2026; ratification exchanged 21 Sept 2026, Wellington
Signed	27 Apr 2026, New Delhi – Piyush Goyal, Todd McClay
For India	100% duty-free on 8,284 tariff lines; NZ's earlier peak tariff 10% (textiles & clothing, engineering, leather, footwear)
Excluded	Dairy, sugar, edible oils, onions, chickpeas, peas, corn, almonds
Services / mobility	118 service sectors (incl. Ayurveda, Yoga); up to 4 years' post-study work for STEM graduates
Target	Bilateral trade NZ$7 bn by 2030; US$20 bn investment (15 yrs)

Background

- Terms: FTA – tariffs removed on most goods; CEPA (Comprehensive Economic Partnership) – goods, services, investment, IPR; CECA – narrower cooperation than CEPA; PTA – concessions on only some goods.
- India's recent pacts: Mauritius CECPA (2021 – first with an African country), UAE CEPA (1 May 2022), Australia ECTA (29 Dec 2022), EFTA TEPA (1 Oct 2025), Oman CEPA (1 June 2026), UK CETA (15 July 2026).
- RCEP – 10 ASEAN nations + China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand; India walked out in November 2019. So this is India's first bilateral trade pact with New Zealand.
- Tariff line – a product category based on the Harmonized System (HS) code, developed by the World Customs Organization (WCO, Brussels) – 6 digits internationally; India uses the 8-digit ITC-HS. Geography: New Zealand – capital Wellington, largest city Auckland; two main islands, North and South.

Tamil Nadu link: the pact gives duty-free access to textiles and apparel; Tiruppur, India's knitwear capital, and auto-component exporters can gain (no State-specific estimate has been published yet).

13 Coal Controller's Organisation (CCO) wins SKOCH Gold Award 2026 for 'SUVIKALP' mine-repurposing tool (26 Sept)

Awards

News

The Coal Controller's Organisation (CCO) under the Ministry of Coal received the SKOCH Gold Award 2026 on 26 Sept 2026 for its 'SUVIKALP – Mine Repurposing Tool' (category: Digital Operational Efficiency – Data Driven Decision Making). SUVIKALP is an in-house digital tool developed by the CCO that ranks options for reusing mined-out land on technical, environmental, social and economic criteria. Its component PRISM (Post-Mining Repurposing Implementation Strategy Model) provides project concepts and case studies.

Key facts

Award	SKOCH Gold Award 2026 – 26 Sept 2026
SUVIKALP	Digital tool ranking reuse options for closed-mine land; PRISM model; 'SUVIKALP Samvaad' – 12 webinars
CCO	Subordinate office of the Ministry of Coal; head office – 1, Council House Street, Kolkata
Field offices	Dhanbad, Ranchi, Bilaspur, Nagpur, Sambalpur, Kothagudem (+ Delhi office)
Functions	Statistical authority for coal & lignite; checks coal grade/size; hears objections under the Coal Bearing Areas Act 1957
SKOCH	Independent (non-government) award given since 2003

Background

- Coal nationalisation: coking coal mines in 1971–72; non-coking mines under the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973. Coal India Ltd was formed in November 1975; HQ Kolkata.
- Coal ranks (falling carbon): anthracite > bituminous > sub-bituminous > lignite (brown coal) > peat. Most Indian coal is Gondwana (Damodar, Mahanadi, Godavari valleys); Tertiary coal – North-Eastern States.
- Environment: mine-closure plans and financial assurance make restoration a mandatory part of mining; closed-mine land can be reused for solar parks, reservoirs, afforestation, tourism, etc.

Tamil Nadu link: lignite at Neyveli was discovered in 1934 while a well was being dug on T.M. Jambulingam Mudaliar's land. NLC India, under the Ministry of Coal, was formed in 1956; HQ Neyveli (Cuddalore district). Its first thermal power unit was synchronised in May 1962.

14 DCGI approves cancer drug toripalimab (Zytorvi) – second use, for oesophageal cancer

Health

News

The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has approved Dr. Reddy's Laboratories' 'Zytorvi' (toripalimab) as first-line treatment, with the chemotherapy drugs cisplatin and paclitaxel, for adults with unresectable advanced, recurrent or metastatic oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma (ESCC) (the company announced it on 21 Oct 2026). This is the drug's second indication in India; the first – nasopharyngeal carcinoma – was launched in Nov 2024. Note: the drug was first approved back in 2024; this is approval for a new disease.

Key facts

Drug	Toripalimab (brand Zytorvi) – anti-PD-1 monoclonal antibody; immunotherapy
Developer / rights	Shanghai Junshi Biosciences (China); Dr. Reddy's (Hyderabad) holds rights in 21 countries incl. India under a 2023 deal
New indication	Oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma (ESCC) – with cisplatin + paclitaxel; no PD-L1 test required
Trial	JUPITER-06 (Phase 3): 42% lower risk of progression or death; median survival 17.7 months (chemo alone 12.9)
First indication	Nasopharyngeal carcinoma (NPC) – launched Nov 2024; first immuno-oncology drug approved in India for NPC
Burden	ESCC is about 80% of oesophageal cancers in India; 4th leading cause of cancer death (company data)

Background

- Regulation: the DCGI heads the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), under the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), Union Health Ministry. Legal basis – Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940; New Drugs and Clinical Trials Rules, 2019. CDSCO HQ – New Delhi.
- Science: PD-1 is an 'immune checkpoint' brake on T-cells. Cancer cells switch it on via PD-L1 to escape the immune system. Toripalimab blocks PD-1 so T-cells can attack the tumour. Monoclonal antibody names end in '-mab' (e.g., nivolumab, pembrolizumab).
- Nobel Prize 2018 (Physiology or Medicine): James P. Allison (USA – CTLA-4) and Tasuku Honjo (Japan – PD-1), for cancer therapy by inhibition of negative immune regulation.
- Diseases: nasopharyngeal carcinoma (NPC) is linked to the Epstein–Barr virus (EBV); in India it is commonest in the North-East (Kohima, Nagaland). Tobacco and alcohol are major risk factors for oesophageal cancer.

Tamil Nadu link: CDSCO's South Zone office is in Chennai (other zonal offices include Ghaziabad – North, Kolkata – East, Mumbai – West). On 31 Aug 2024 TN Health Minister Ma. Subramanian announced that cancer screening would be made mandatory for all above 18; the State recorded about 82,000 cancer cases in 2023.

15 'Tree surgery' to save over 500 girdled trees in Chhattisgarh's Udanti–Sitanadi Tiger Reserve

Environment

News

In the Karka village area of Chhattisgarh's Udanti–Sitanadi Tiger Reserve (USTR), the Forest Department is launching 'tree surgery' to save over 500 trees damaged by girdling (removal of a ring of bark) by encroachers (reports of 18–21 Oct 2026). A DGPS drone survey (22 Sep – 10 Oct) found about 2,500 girdled trees (sal, bija, tendu). The main method is 'bridge grafting'. 'Tree Doctor' Vijay Nishanth (Project Vruksha Foundation) will visit to assess the trees and train staff. Note: this is not road widening; it is damage from encroachment inside the reserve.

Key facts

Place	Karka, Udanti–Sitanadi Tiger Reserve – Gariaband & Dhamtari districts, Chhattisgarh
Damage	500+ trees freshly girdled; about 2,500 in all; encroachment 22 ha (2016) → 102.47 ha (2026)
Species	Sal, bija, tendu
Method	Bridge grafting – a healthy twig joined across the wound to restore food flow; at present cow-dung–soil paste wrapped in gunny
People	Varun Kumar Jain – USTR Deputy Director; Vijay Nishanth – 'Tree Doctor'
Earlier try	Bridge grafting in 2022 – only about 10% success

Background

- Reserve: formed by merging Udanti and Sitanadi wildlife sanctuaries, notified as a tiger reserve in 2009; area 1,842.54 sq km (core 851.09). It is a key habitat of the endangered Asiatic wild buffalo – Chhattisgarh's State animal. Other Chhattisgarh tiger reserves include Indravati (Bijapur) and Achanakmar.
- Science: girdling cuts the phloem just beneath the bark; food made in the leaves can no longer reach the roots, so the roots starve and the tree slowly dies. The xylem carries water upward.
- Geography: the Pairi river rises in Udanti sanctuary and the Sondur in Sitanadi; they meet the Mahanadi near Rajim (Gariaband). The Mahanadi rises in the Sihawa hills of Dhamtari district. Chhattisgarh was carved out of Madhya Pradesh on 1 Nov 2000.
- Tree-protection movements: Chipko (1973, Uttarakhand – Gaura Devi, Sunderlal Bahuguna); Appiko (1983, Karnataka – Uttara Kannada, Panduranga Hegde) – the 'Chipko of the South'.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's State tree is the palmyra palm (Borassus flabellifer). Tree felling in hill areas is regulated by the Tamil Nadu Hill Areas (Preservation of Trees) Act, 1955.

16 Ladakh's first Government Medical College (Leh) to become operational in the 2027–28 academic year

Health

News

Ladakh LG Vinai Kumar Saxena announced on 20 Oct 2026 that Ladakh's first Government Medical College, at Leh, will be operational from the 2027–28 academic year. The Union Health Ministry granted a one-time relaxation of the rule that 80% of infrastructure must be complete before staff are recruited (ministry letter of 13 Oct 2026; the Department of Expenditure, Finance Ministry, agreed subject to conditions); the LG thanked Health Minister J.P. Nadda for it. Recruitment against the 103 regular posts already sanctioned (27 Nov 2024) will be phased. The permanent campus is being built at Spituk Pharka.

Key facts

College	Government Medical College, Leh – Ladakh's first
Start	2027–28 academic year
Announced	20 Oct 2026 – LG Vinai Kumar Saxena
Relaxation / posts	One-time relaxation of the 80% infrastructure rule (Union Health Ministry); 103 regular posts (sanctioned 2024)
Campus	Spituk Pharka (under construction); temporary arrangement till then
Scheme	Centrally Sponsored Scheme for new medical colleges attached to district/referral hospitals – Phase III (approved 2019)

Background

- Regulation: the National Medical Commission Act, 2019 dissolved the Medical Council of India (MCI, since 1934); the National Medical Commission (NMC) has functioned since 25 Sep 2020, with 4 autonomous boards (UG, PG, assessment & rating, ethics & registration).
- Admission: MBBS and other medical courses use the all-India NEET-UG, conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA, since 2019).
- Traditional medicine: Ladakh's 'Sowa-Rigpa' (Amchi) is a Himalayan traditional system; the Union Cabinet approved a National Institute of Sowa-Rigpa at Leh in Nov 2019 (₹47.25 crore) – an autonomous body under the Ministry of AYUSH.
- High-altitude medicine: Leh is at about 3,500 m; lower air pressure causes hypoxia and can lead to acute mountain sickness (AMS) – training local doctors is a key aim of the college.

Tamil Nadu link: Madras Medical College was founded in 1835 – among the oldest medical colleges in India and Asia; it is affiliated to the Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G.R. Medical University. Its alumna Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy was nominated to the Madras Legislative Council in 1926, becoming British India's first woman legislator.

17 Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launches the upgraded Agri Welfare Portal

Agriculture

News

Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched the upgraded 'Agri Welfare Portal' in New Delhi on 19 Oct 2026. It is a 'single-window gateway' that lets farmers access schemes, subsidies, rules and digital services on their mobile phones without visiting offices – integrating PM-KISAN, AgriStack and the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana. A nationwide training drive through Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) will help farmers use it.

Key facts

Launch	19 Oct 2026 – Shivraj Singh Chouhan, New Delhi; NIC officials attended
Integrates	PM-KISAN, AgriStack, PM Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)
Features	Eligibility check, online application, DBT, weather, seed & fertiliser stock, market prices
Access	Works on basic smartphones and weak internet; screen-reader support for persons with disabilities
Connects	FPOs, PACS, scientists, researchers, start-ups
Training	Nationwide training through KVKs

Background

- Schemes: PM-KISAN – 24 Feb 2019, Gorakhpur (UP); ₹6,000 a year in three DBT instalments. Digital Agriculture Mission – Cabinet approval Sep 2024; its core is 'AgriStack' (farmers' registry, crop-sown registry, geo-referenced village maps). PMFBY – 2016.
- Credit, soil: Kisan Credit Card (KCC) – Aug 1998; NABARD prepared the model scheme on the R.V. Gupta Committee's advice; extended to fisheries and animal husbandry in 2019. Soil Health Card scheme – 19 Feb 2015, Suratgarh (Rajasthan).
- Set-up: the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is under the Union Agriculture Ministry; it was renamed from the 'Department of Agriculture and Cooperation' in 2015. Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) are district-level farm science centres under ICAR.

Tamil Nadu link: India's first Krishi Vigyan Kendra was started in 1974 at Puducherry under Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore (Mohan Singh Mehta Committee). In 2018 the Tamil Nadu government launched the bilingual 'Uzhavan' mobile app for farmers (subsidies, crop insurance, machinery booking, seed & fertiliser stock, weather).

18 5th edition of India–Australia joint military exercise 'AUSTRAHIND 2026' begins in Thiruvananthapuram

Defence

News

The 5th edition of the India–Australia joint military exercise 'AUSTRAHIND 2026' began on 19 Oct 2026 at the Foreign Training Node, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, and runs till 1 Nov. India has about 120 troops, including the Garhwal Rifles; Australia about 120 from 13 Brigade. Theme: 'Joint Sub-Conventional Operations in Island and Coastal Environment under Chapter VII of the UN Mandate'. A New Zealand observer delegation is taking part for the first time.

Key facts

Edition / dates	5th; 19 Oct – 1 Nov 2026
Venue	Foreign Training Node, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala
Troops	India – about 120 (Garhwal Rifles + other arms); Australia – about 120 (13 Brigade)
Theme	Joint sub-conventional operations in island & coastal settings under UN Charter Chapter VII
Drills	Surveillance & reconnaissance, protection of vital installations, HADR
Previous	4th – Irwin Barracks, Perth (Australia), 13–26 Oct 2025; NZ observers this time (first)

Background

- UN Charter: Chapter VI – pacific settlement of disputes; Chapter VII (Articles 39–51) – action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression – the Security Council can impose sanctions and authorise force.
- Other India–Australia exercises: AUSINDEX – navy (bilateral, since 2015); Pitch Black – multinational air exercise hosted by the Royal Australian Air Force at Darwin; Malabar – navies of India, US, Japan and Australia (Australia back since 2020).
- Ties: QUAD – India, US, Japan, Australia; revived in 2017. India–Australia 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' – 2020. Garhwal Rifles Regimental Centre – Lansdowne (Uttarakhand).

Tamil Nadu link: Thiruvananthapuram, the venue, was the capital of the old Travancore State. Its Thovalai, Agastheeswaram, Kalkulam and Vilavancode taluks joined Madras State on 1 Nov 1956 (States Reorganisation Act, 1956) to form Kanyakumari district; Marshal A. Nesamony of the Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress led that struggle. (No report says the Madras Regiment is taking part in this exercise.)

19 Beijing may become a 'super-aged society' by 2035 – one in three residents aged 60 or above

International

News

According to the official Beijing Daily (18 Oct 2026), by 2035 more than one-third (over 33%) of Beijing's population will be aged 60 or above, making the city a 'super-aged society'. At the end of 2025 Beijing had 5.288 million permanent residents aged 60+ (24.3%). The city will add 30,000 home-based elderly-care beds over the next three years and has raised the basic pension.

Key facts

Source	Beijing Daily (18 Oct 2026); quoted by Global Times, Reuters
Beijing 60+	End-2025: 5.288 million (24.3%) → 2035: over 33%
China 60+	End-2025: 323.38 million (23%); population falling since 2022
China's yardstick (60+)	Ageing ≥10%, aged ≥20%, super-aged ≥30%
International yardstick (65+)	Ageing >7%, aged >14%, super-aged >20%
Japan	65+ share 29.6% (Sept 2026) – highest among major nations

Background

- China's population policy: the one-child policy (from 1980) was dropped at the end of 2015; a universal two-child policy from 1 Jan 2016; a three-child policy announced in May 2021. Fertility is about 1.0–1.2 against the replacement level of 2.1.
- Retirement age raised: approved by China's NPC Standing Committee in Sept 2024; phased over 15 years from 1 Jan 2025 – men 60→63, women 50→55 / 55→58.
- Geography/administration: Beijing – China's capital; a municipality directly under the central government, like Shanghai, Tianjin and Chongqing.
- India: 'India Ageing Report 2023' (UNFPA + International Institute for Population Sciences, IIPS, Mumbai) – 60+ share 10.5% in 2022 → 20.8% in 2050 (347 million). LASI (Longitudinal Ageing Study in India) Wave 1 was conducted by IIPS in 2017–18. Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 – Maintenance Tribunals. International Day of Older Persons – 1 Oct (UNGA resolution, 1990).

Tamil Nadu link: As per the Sample Registration System (SRS) Statistical Report 2023, Kerala (15.1%) leads in the share of people aged 60+, Tamil Nadu (14%) is second and Himachal Pradesh (13.2%) third; national average 9.7%.

20 World Osteoporosis Day 2026 – 20 Oct; theme: 'Build, Protect and Strengthen Your Bones for Life'

Important Days

News

World Osteoporosis Day was observed on 20 Oct 2026. The 2026 campaign theme of the organiser, the International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF, Nyon, Switzerland), is 'Build, Protect and Strengthen Your Bones for Life'. Its three messages: build strong bones early (nutrition, exercise); protect through risk checks, bone-density testing and fall prevention; strengthen through timely treatment after a fracture. Worldwide, 1 in 3 women and 1 in 5 men over 50 will suffer a fragility fracture.

Key facts

Date	20 October (annual)
Origin	20 Oct 1996 – UK National Osteoporosis Society (European Commission support); run by IOF since 1997
Organiser	International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF) – Nyon, Switzerland
2026 theme	Build, Protect and Strengthen Your Bones for Life
Burden	Over 500 million people worldwide; up to 80% of fracture patients go undiagnosed/untreated
Test	DEXA scan – bone mineral density (BMD); T-score of −2.5 or lower = osteoporosis (WHO)

Background

- Science: 'Osteoporosis' is Greek for 'porous bone'. Bone density and quality fall, so even minor falls break the hip, spine or wrist. It progresses without symptoms – hence the 'silent disease'.
- Bone mineral is calcium phosphate (hydroxyapatite). Vitamin D is needed to absorb calcium; it is made in the skin under UV-B sunlight – the 'sunshine vitamin'. Deficiency: rickets in children,

osteomalacia (bone softening) in adults.
- Risk factors: age, low oestrogen in post-menopausal women, smoking, alcohol, inactivity, long-term steroids. Prevention: calcium- and protein-rich diet, weight-bearing exercise, sunlight, fall prevention.

Tamil Nadu link: No dedicated State osteoporosis scheme could be verified. However, a State Government press release (5 July 2023) states that calcium-rich ragi (finger millet) is supplied at 2 kg per family card through ration shops in the Nilgiris and Dharmapuri districts.

21 Police Commemoration Day 2026 – 21 Oct; Amit Shah leads homage at the National Police Memorial, Delhi

Important Days

News

Police Commemoration Day, honouring police personnel who died on duty, is observed across India on 21 Oct 2026. Union Home Minister Amit Shah leads the ceremony at the National Police Memorial, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi, with a joint parade of the CAPFs and Delhi Police; he also flags off an anti-drug motorcycle rally. From 22 to 30 Oct police forces nationwide hold rallies and blood-donation camps. This year's number of police martyrs had not been released at the time of writing.

Key facts

Date	21 October (annual)
Origin	21 Oct 1959 – Hot Springs, Ladakh: 10 CRPF personnel killed in an ambush by Chinese troops
National Memorial	Chanakyapuri, New Delhi – dedicated to the nation by PM Narendra Modi on 21 Oct 2018
Memorial features	30-ft granite monolith central sculpture, Wall of Valour, museum
2026 event	Led by Amit Shah; CAPF–Delhi Police joint parade; anti-drug motorcycle rally
Constitution	'Police' – Seventh Schedule, State List (Entry 2); 'Public order' – Entry 1

Background

- History: until autumn 1959 the India–Tibet border was guarded by the police. A CRPF patrol led by Karam Singh, searching for three missing men, was ambushed by Chinese troops at Hot Springs; 10 were killed and others taken prisoner. Since then 21 Oct is observed as Police Commemoration Day.
- Polity: Article 246 – three lists of the Seventh Schedule. Police and public order are in the State List, so law and order is a State responsibility. The Central Armed Police Forces (CRPF, BSF, CISF, ITBP, SSB) are under the Union Home Ministry.
- Institutions: Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) – 28 Aug 1970, Union Home Ministry. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy – Hyderabad (IPS training). India's first all-women police station – Kozhikode, Kerala (1973).

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu Police (Madras Police) was formed in 1859 under the Madras District Police Act; HQ – Kamarajar Salai, Mylapore, Chennai (Marina). Women were first inducted in 1973. The State's first All Women Police Station was opened at Thousand Lights, Chennai, in 1992 by then CM J. Jayalalithaa; in 2003 Tamil Nadu formed India's first women commando unit.

22 Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders Prevention Day 2026 – 21 Oct; importance of iodised salt

Important Days

News

Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD) Prevention Day is observed on 21 Oct 2026. It stresses adequate dietary iodine and the daily use of iodised salt. In India, the National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme (NIDDCP) implements Universal Salt Iodisation of all edible salt. No official theme has been announced for 2026.

Key facts

Date	21 October (annual)
National programme	National Goitre Control Programme (1962) → expanded and renamed NIDDCP in 1992
Salt standard (FSSAI)	Iodine – 30 ppm at manufacture, at least 15 ppm at consumer level
Ban	FSS (Prohibition & Restriction on Sales) Regulations 2011, Reg 2.3.12 – non-iodised salt banned for direct human consumption
Iodising chemical	Potassium iodate
Monitoring	Salt Commissioner's Organisation (Jaipur) – iodised salt output & quality; national reference lab – NCDC, Delhi

Background

- Science: iodine is an essential part of the thyroid hormones thyroxine (T4) and triiodothyronine (T3), which regulate metabolism and brain development. Deficiency → enlarged thyroid (goitre) – usually the earliest sign.
- Effects of deficiency in pregnancy: miscarriage, stillbirth; severe deficiency causes 'cretinism' in the child (intellectual disability, deaf-mutism, stunting); even mild deficiency lowers children's IQ.
- Sources: iodised salt, sea fish, prawns and other seafood, seaweed (kelp), milk, eggs. Soils of hills and flood plains are iodine-poor – the Himalayan foothills were historically the 'goitre belt'.
- Economy: Gujarat produces about 85% of India's salt (2021–22) – first; Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu about 6% each (Indian Minerals Yearbook 2022). Iodised salt output was about 7.86 million tonnes in 2020–21.

Tamil Nadu link: Thoothukudi district leads Tamil Nadu's salt production; there are also salt pans at Vedaranyam and Marakkanam. History: a team led by C. Rajagopalachari (Rajaji) set out from Tiruchirappalli on 13 April 1930 and broke the salt law at Vedaranyam on 30 April – the Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha.

1 Kashi Tamil Sangamam 5.0 to focus on Thirukkural – 28 Nov to 12 Dec 2026

Tamil Nadu

News

The fifth edition of the Kashi Tamil Sangamam (KTS 5.0) will be held from 28 Nov to 12 Dec 2026 on the theme 'Thirukkural Payilvom – Thirukkural Abhyas Karen' (Let us learn Thirukkural). Union Education Minister Pralhad Joshi launched the registration portal on 22 Oct 2026. About 1,400 people from Tamil Nadu (7 groups of about 200) will make an 8-day trip to Varanasi, Prayagraj and Ayodhya. A Thirukkural student engagement programme will run in 1,000 higher education institutions across India.

Key facts

Theme	'Thirukkural Payilvom – Thirukkural Abhyas Karen'
Dates / venues	28 Nov – 12 Dec 2026; Varanasi, Prayagraj, Ayodhya
Organisers	Ministry of Education (Dept of Higher Education); IIT Madras, Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT), UP Government
Delegates	About 1,400 in 7 categories – students, teachers, writers & media, agriculture, professionals & artisans, women, spiritual leaders
Registration	22 Oct – 13 Nov 2026; kashitamil.iitm.ac.in
Student programme	One student from each of 1,000 colleges learns Thirukkural in own language; one-month internship, ₹10,000 stipend (implemented by CICT)

Background

- Earlier editions: KTS 1.0 – 2022 (one month; inaugurated by PM Modi in Varanasi on 19 Nov 2022); 2.0 – 2023; 3.0 – Feb 2025 ('Legacy of Sage Agastya'); 4.0 – from Dec 2025 ('Learn Tamil – Tamil Karkalam'). 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' (EBSB) – announced in 2015 on Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's 140th birth anniversary; nodal ministry – Education.
- Thirukkural: by Thiruvalluvar; 1,330 couplets in 133 chapters; three sections – Aram (virtue), Porul (wealth/polity), Inbam/Kamam (love); also called 'Ulaga Podhumarai' and 'Muppal'; one of the Eighteen Minor Classics (Pathinenkilkanakku).
- Translations: first – Latin by Beschi (Veeramamunivar), 1730; first English (partial) – N.E. Kindersley, 1794; Drew and Lazarus prose (1840–1885); G.U. Pope – complete English verse translation, 1886.
- Kashi–Tamil links: in the 15th century the Pandya king Parakrama Pandya built the Kasi Viswanathar temple at Tenkasi; in the 17th century Kumaraguruparar renovated the Kedareswarar temple in Kashi and founded the Kumaraswamy Mutt on land given by Dara Shikoh.

Tamil Nadu link: Mahakavi Bharathiyar (Ettayapuram, Thoothukudi district) stayed in Varanasi after his father's death and learnt Sanskrit, Hindi and English; BHU has a 'Subramania Bharati Chair of Tamil Studies' (announced 2021). Kumaraguruparar was born at Srivaikuntam. A 133-ft Thiruvalluvar statue stands at Kanyakumari (1 Jan 2000).

2 Tuticorin International Container Terminal (TICT) at VOC Port, 100% electrified, declared a 'Green Terminal'

Tamil Nadu

News

VOC Port said on 22 Oct 2026 that the Tuticorin International Container Terminal (TICT) at V.O. Chidambaranar Port, Thoothukudi, has been declared a 'Green Terminal' after 100% of its operational equipment was electrified. Union Shipping Secretary Vijay Kumar made the declaration while reviewing projects worth ₹18,000 crore; on 20 Oct he had flagged off 13 electric Internal Transfer Vehicles (E-ITVs). TICT is run by J M Baxi Ports & Logistics.

Key facts

Terminal	TICT – operator J M Baxi Ports & Logistics; operations from Sep 2024 (PM's video address, 16 Sep 2024)
Capacity	0.6 million TEU a year; 370 m quay, 14.2 m draught
Electric kit	3 rail-mounted quay cranes (RMQC), 9 electric RTG cranes, electric reach stacker, 13 E-ITVs
Declared	22 Oct 2026 – Union Shipping Secretary Vijay Kumar
VOC Port	Gulf of Mannar; 82 MTPA capacity; Chairman Sushanta Kumar Purohit; outer harbour project over ₹15,000 crore

Background

- VOC Port: declared a major port on 11 July 1974; 'Tuticorin Port Trust' renamed 'V.O. Chidambaranar Port Trust' in 2011; now a 'Port Authority' under the Major Port Authorities Act, 2021. Sheltered by Sri Lanka, it is relatively safe from cyclones.
- Green-port drive: 'Harit Sagar' Green Port Guidelines – 10 May 2023, Minister Sarbananda Sonowal; aims – cutting carbon emissions, 'zero waste discharge', green hydrogen/ammonia/methanol. VOC Port hosts India's first port-based green hydrogen pilot (10 Nm^3/hr, ₹3.87 crore, Sep 2025).
- Science: green hydrogen comes from electrolysis of water using renewable power; grey hydrogen from steam reforming of natural gas; blue hydrogen is the same plus carbon capture. TEU – twenty-foot equivalent unit (a 20-ft container).
- V.O. Chidambaram Pillai (1872–1936): born at Ottapidaram; 'Kappalottiya Thamizhan'; founded the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company at Tuticorin in 1906 (ships S.S. Gallia, S.S. Lawoe) to challenge the British shipping monopoly; arrested in 1908; made to pull an oil press in Coimbatore jail.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has 3 major ports (Chennai, Kamarajar–Ennore, VOC–Thoothukudi) and 17 non-major ports. VOC Port is being developed as a green hydrogen hub and the nodal port for offshore wind energy.

3 NE monsoon: Blue Tiger, Dark Blue Tiger and Crow butterflies migrate from Eastern to Western Ghats

Environment

News

With the onset of the North-East monsoon, lakhs of milkweed butterflies – Blue Tiger, Dark Blue Tiger, Common Crow and Double-branded Crow – are migrating from the Eastern Ghats across the Tamil Nadu plains towards the Western Ghats (reported 22 Oct 2026). Intense movement was seen on 17–18 Oct in Salem, Namakkal, Erode, Tiruppur and Coimbatore districts; counts in Coimbatore district ranged from 5 to 135 butterflies a minute, with 120 a minute on Kalapatty Main Road on 18 Oct. Hundreds are killed by road traffic.

Key facts

Direction	Eastern Ghats → Western Ghats (NE monsoon, Oct–Dec); return in Apr–May (before the SW monsoon)
Species	Blue Tiger (Tirumala limniace), Dark Blue Tiger (T. septentrionis), Common Crow (Euploea core), Double-branded Crow (E. sylvester)
Group	Danainae – milkweed butterflies; family Nymphalidae
Starting hills	Yercaud (Shevaroys), Pachamalai, Kolli and Kalvarayan hills
Monitoring	The Nature and Butterfly Society (TNBS) – since 2013

Background

- Migration cycle: in Apr–May they move from the Western Ghats to the Eastern Ghats and Coromandel coast; in Oct–Dec, with the NE monsoon, they return west and congregate in the Western Ghats for 3–4 months. Six of South India's 10 danaine species migrate; first scientific record – E.H. Aitken (1897).
- Science: they store alkaloids from milkweed-family (Asclepiadaceae) host plants, making them toxic to predators; males use them to make courtship pheromones. Harmless species copying their look is 'Batesian mimicry'.
- Geography: the Western Ghats – UNESCO World Heritage Site (2012) and a global biodiversity hotspot. The Eastern Ghats are discontinuous, lower hills. Weak rains mean weaker migration (as in 2023).

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's State butterfly is the 'Tamil Maravan' (Tamil Yeoman, Cirrochroa thais), declared in 2019 – the 5th State to name a State butterfly; it is endemic to the Western Ghats. In Tamil Nadu the migration mainly starts from the Eastern Ghats hills of Yercaud, Pachamalai, Kolli and Kalvarayan.

4 Home Minister Amit Shah launches 43 Yamuna rejuvenation projects worth ₹8,941 crore in Delhi

Environment

News

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on 22 Oct 2026, at Najafgarh, Delhi, launched 43 Delhi Jal Board projects worth ₹8,941.22 crore to rejuvenate the Yamuna – 10 inaugurated and foundation stones for 33. They include a 124 MGD (million gallons a day) sewage treatment plant at Okhla, upgrades of 8 STPs, 29 decentralised STPs in outer Delhi, a 1,034-km sewer network and a 477 MLD water treatment plant at Chandrawal. Shah pledged that the Yamuna in Delhi would be cleaned by May 2029. CM Rekha Gupta and Water Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh attended.

Key facts

Total	43 projects, ₹8,941.22 crore – 10 inaugurated + 33 foundation stones; Delhi Jal Board
Okhla	New 124 MGD sewage treatment plant (STP) – ₹1,161 crore; Delhi's biggest
Upgrades	8 STPs: 78.2 → 140.8 MGD (₹1,041 crore)
Outer Delhi	29 decentralised STPs/pumping stations – 358 unauthorised colonies, 113 villages, 36.29 lakh people; 1,034-km sewer network
Water	Chandrawal 477 MLD water treatment plant (replacing 1935 & 1955 plants); 4.5-km Mundka trunk drain
Target	Clean Yamuna in Delhi by May 2029

Background

- Yamuna: rises from the Yamunotri glacier near Bandarpunch peak, Uttarkashi district, Uttarakhand; about 1,376 km long; flows through Uttarakhand, Himachal, Haryana, Delhi and UP to join the Ganga at Prayagraj (Triveni Sangam) – the Ganga's longest tributary.
- Tributaries: Tons – largest; Chambal – longest (about 960 km); west to east Chambal, Sind, Betwa, Ken; Hindon on the left bank. Delhi has the Wazirabad and Okhla barrages; the Agra Canal leaves the Okhla barrage.
- River-cleaning history: Ganga Action Plan – 14 Jan 1986 (Rajiv Gandhi); Yamuna Action Plan – Apr 1993 (under GAP-II, Japan's JICA-aided); National River Conservation Plan – 1995; Ganga declared National River – 2008; 'Namami Gange' – 2014, Union Ministry of Jal Shakti (National Mission for Clean Ganga – NMCG).
- Units: MGD – million gallons a day; MLD – million litres a day (1 MGD ≈ 4.5 MLD). In the 'Chalo Yamuna' clean-up (18 Oct), over 35,000 people removed 76,755 kg of waste from 70 sites.

Tamil Nadu link: the 'Chennai Rivers Restoration Trust' (CRRT – formerly the 'Adyar Poonga Trust') works to restore Chennai's Adyar and Cooum rivers; its first project, the Adyar Eco Park (Tholkappia Poonga), opened in 2011.

5 IIT Madras launches 'UDYOG' finishing school for biotechnology students

Education

News

On 21 Oct 2026 IIT Madras Director V. Kamakoti inaugurated the 'IITM-Biofoundry Finishing School – UDYOG' (Upskilling and Development for Young Graduates). It is run by SynBioME, the IIT Madras–TICEL Biofoundry; the coordinator is Prof. Guhan Jayaraman of the Department of Biotechnology. Pre-final and final-year B.Tech / M.Tech / M.Sc students of biotechnology and allied streams from any institution in India can join. Three stages: about 3 months of online learning through CODE → evaluation → a 4-week hands-on programme at the IIT Madras Biofoundry → internship opportunities with industry partners. The first batch begins on 18 Jan 2027. Aim: bridge the gap between academics and industry and create a job-ready workforce for biomanufacturing.

Key facts

Name	IITM-Biofoundry Finishing School – UDYOG (Upskilling and Development for Young Graduates)
Launch	21 Oct 2026 – Director V. Kamakoti, IIT Madras campus, Chennai
Run by	SynBioME – IIT Madras–TICEL Biofoundry; online part via CODE (Centre for Outreach and Digital Education)
Eligibility	Pre-final / final-year B.Tech, M.Tech, M.Sc students of biotechnology and allied streams
Structure	~3 months online + 4-week hands-on + industry internship opportunity
First batch	18 Jan 2027; early-bird registration till 15 Dec 2026

Background

- IIT Madras: started in 1959 with West German assistance (1959 Bonn agreement – equipment, German professors). IITs are Institutions of National Importance under the Institutes of Technology Act, 1961. NIRF 2025: No. 1 overall for the 7th year in a row. IIT Madras Research Park is India's first university-based research park.
- Biotech governance: Department of Biotechnology (DBT) – 1986, under the Union Ministry of Science & Technology. BIRAC (Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council) – a not-for-profit Section 8 PSU set up by DBT in 2012 to fund start-ups and industrial research.
- BioE3 Policy (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment and Employment) – Union Cabinet approval, Aug 2024. It promotes high-performance biomanufacturing through biomanufacturing hubs, biofoundries and Bio-AI hubs.
- Science: a 'biofoundry' uses synthetic biology and automated lab tools to design, build, test and scale up engineered microbes (design–build–test–learn cycle). Enzymes, vaccines, biofuels and bioplastics are biomanufactured products.

Tamil Nadu link: partner TICEL Bio Park at Taramani, Chennai, was promoted by the Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO) with technical collaboration from Cornell University (USA); CM J. Jayalalithaa inaugurated it on 10 Nov 2004.

6 Jaipur in National Geographic's 'Best of the World 2027' list; the city turns 300 in 2027

Art & Culture

News

On 20 Oct 2026 National Geographic released its 'Best of the World 2027' list of 25 places to visit in 2027. It includes Jaipur ('Pink City'), the capital of Rajasthan. Reasons cited: the city, founded on 18 Nov 1727, marks its 300th year in 2027; the 20th edition of the Jaipur Literature Festival (14–18 Jan 2027, one of the world's largest literary festivals); and its palaces and crafts such as block printing, blue pottery and meenakari. The list also includes Vestland (Norway), Penang (Malaysia) and Luxor (Egypt); no other Indian destination is reported.

Key facts

List	National Geographic 'Best of the World 2027' – 25 places; released 20 Oct 2026
Founder	Sawai Jai Singh II (Kachwaha Rajput ruler of Amber) – 18 Nov 1727
Planner	Vidyadhar Bhattacharya – grid plan based on Vastu / Shilpa Shastra
Pink City	Painted pink in 1876 by Maharaja Ram Singh II for the visit of the Prince of Wales (Albert Edward)
UNESCO	Walled City of Jaipur – 2019; Jantar Mantar – 2010; Amber Fort ('Hill Forts of Rajasthan') – 2013
JLF	Jaipur Literature Festival – 20th edition, 14–18 Jan 2027

Background

- History: Amber (Amer) was the old Kachwaha capital. Owing to water shortage and a growing population, Sawai Jai Singh II built the planned city of Jaipur on the plains in 1727. A keen astronomer, he built observatories at Delhi, Jaipur, Ujjain, Varanasi and Mathura.
- Planning: Bengali architect Vidyadhar Bhattacharya designed the city on Vastu and Shilpa Shastra principles with wide streets, grid blocks (chowkris) and bazaars – one of India's earliest planned cities. Landmarks: Hawa Mahal (1799, Sawai Pratap Singh), City Palace, Jal Mahal.
- UNESCO: the 'Walled City of Jaipur' became a World Heritage Site in 2019 (43rd session, Baku, Azerbaijan) – India's second World Heritage City after Ahmedabad. The forts of Amber, Chittorgarh, Kumbhalgarh, Ranthambore, Gagron and Jaisalmer form the 'Hill Forts of Rajasthan' (2013).

Tamil Nadu link: TN's UNESCO World Heritage sites – Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram (1984); 'Great Living Chola Temples' – Brihadisvara, Thanjavur (1987), with Gangaikondacholapuram and Airavatesvara, Darasuram added in 2004; Nilgiri Mountain Railway ('Mountain Railways of India', 2005); Gingee Fort ('Maratha Military Landscapes', 2025).

7 President Murmu releases ₹200 commemorative coin in Raipur on the 200th birth anniversary of Sindhi spiritual leader Mata Hasi Devi Ji

History

News

On 22 Oct 2026 President Droupadi Murmu released a ₹200 commemorative coin at 'Chhattisgarh Mandapam', Lok Bhavan, Raipur, marking the 200th birth anniversary of Mata Hasi Devi Ji (Mata Sahib Hasi Devi), a revered Sindhi spiritual leader and the 5th Peethadheesh (head) of the Shadani Darbar, Raipur. The coin is issued by the Union Ministry of Finance; one side carries her image and the other the Lion Capital of Ashoka with the denomination. Governor Ramen Deka and CM Vishnu Deo Sai attended; the present Peethadheesh, Sant Dr Yudhishthir Lal, gave the welcome address. Devotees and collectors can book the coin through Shadani Darbar units.

Key facts

Event	22 Oct 2026 – Chhattisgarh Mandapam, Lok Bhavan, Raipur
Released by	President Droupadi Murmu; Governor Ramen Deka, CM Vishnu Deo Sai present
Honouring	Mata Hasi Devi Ji – 5th Peethadheesh of Shadani Darbar; Sindhi spiritual leader; 200th birth anniversary
Coin	₹200; issued by Union Finance Ministry; her image on one side, Ashoka Lion Capital on the other
Shadani Darbar	Founded in 1786 by Sant Shadaram Sahib (b. 1708, Lahore) at Hayat Pitafi, Sindh (now Pakistan)

Background

- Coinage authority: under the Coinage Act, 2011 only the Union Government designs and mints coins; coins up to ₹1,000 may be issued. RBI puts coins into circulation (RBI Act, 1934, Section 38). Banknotes are issued by RBI (Section 22), but the ₹1 note is issued by the Union Finance Ministry.
- Mints: India's four Government Mints – Mumbai, Kolkata, Hyderabad and Noida – are under the Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Ltd (SPMCIL), a central PSU formed in 2006. Commemorative coins are mostly for collectors and do not enter circulation. A ₹200 coin was earlier issued for the 200th birth anniversary of Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati.
- Sindhi community: after Partition (1947) many Sindhi Hindus migrated from Sindh (now in Pakistan) to India. Sindhi was added to the Eighth Schedule by the 21st Constitutional Amendment (1967) – a Scheduled language that is not the official language of any State.
- Polity: the Lion Capital of Ashoka (Sarnath) on the coin has been India's State Emblem since 26 Jan 1950, with 'Satyameva Jayate' (Mundaka Upanishad) below. Chhattisgarh was carved out of Madhya Pradesh on 1 Nov 2000; capital Raipur.

Tamil Nadu link: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh released a ₹100 commemorative coin marking the birth centenary of former CM M. Karunanidhi in Chennai on 18 Aug 2024.

8 33rd Singapore–India Maritime Bilateral Exercise 'SIMBEX-2026' begins at Visakhapatnam (21–26 Oct)

Defence

News

The 33rd edition of the Singapore–India Maritime Bilateral Exercise, 'SIMBEX-2026', is being held at Visakhapatnam from 21 to 26 Oct 2026. Republic of Singapore Navy ship RSS Supreme arrived on 21 Oct; the opening ceremony was held the same day. INS Nilgiri and INS Kamorta represent the Indian Navy. Harbour phase (21–23 Oct) – subject-matter expert exchanges, cross-deck visits, sports and planning conferences; sea phase (24–26 Oct, Bay of Bengal) – anti-submarine, anti-surface and anti-air warfare drills. Aim: interoperability and peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

Key facts

Edition	33rd; 21–26 Oct 2026; Visakhapatnam (Eastern Naval Command)
Ships	Singapore – RSS Supreme (Formidable-class frigate); India – INS Nilgiri (Project 17A), INS Kamorta (Project 28)
Phases	Harbour 21–23 Oct; Sea 24–26 Oct (Bay of Bengal)
Origin	1994 – as 'Exercise Lion King'
Other exercises	SITMEX – Singapore–India–Thailand trilateral maritime exercise (since 2019); 'Bold Kurukshetra' – army

Background

- History: begun in 1994 as 'Lion King', an anti-submarine exercise, SIMBEX is one of the Indian Navy's longest-running bilateral naval exercises, held both in Indian waters and in the Singapore / South China Sea region. Its silver jubilee (25th edition) in 2018 was held at Port Blair and Visakhapatnam.
- Relations: Singapore is a key partner in India's 'Act East' policy (2014). Ties were elevated to a 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' during PM Modi's visit in Sept 2024. Singapore is a founding member of ASEAN (1967).
- Geography / history: Singapore is a city-state at the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula, at the southern entrance of the Strait of Malacca. Stamford Raffles set up a British trading post in 1819; it joined Malaysia in 1963 and became independent on 9 Aug 1965. Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) is HQ of the Eastern Naval Command.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil is one of Singapore's four official languages, with English, Malay and Mandarin; most people of Indian origin there are Tamils. Chennai and Singapore have close sea, air and trade links.

9 ISRO to launch NVS-03, the 12th NavIC satellite, on GSLV Mk II from Sriharikota on 30 Oct

Science & Space

News

According to ISRO's announcement on 22 Oct 2026, NVS-03 – the 12th satellite of the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS / NavIC) and the third of the second-generation NVS series – will be launched on 30 Oct 2026 by a GSLV Mk II from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. Mass 2,232 kg; life 12 years; it carries an indigenous Rubidium atomic clock developed by the Space Applications Centre (SAC), Ahmedabad. It was earlier targeted for 15–20 Oct. With ageing satellites and clock failures, only three satellites now provide service (standalone positioning needs at least four), so NVS-03 aims to restore NavIC.

Key facts

Satellite	NVS-03 – 12th NavIC satellite (counting failed IRNSS-1H and NVS-02); 3rd of NVS series; 2,232 kg; 12-year life
Launch	30 Oct 2026 – GSLV Mk II, Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota (Andhra Pradesh)
Signals	L1, L5 and S bands; indigenous Rubidium atomic clock (SAC, Ahmedabad)
NavIC	7-satellite design (3 geostationary + 4 geosynchronous); India + ~1,500 km beyond its borders
NVS-02	29 Jan 2025 – GSLV-F15 (100th launch from Sriharikota); orbit-raising failed due to a pyro-valve problem
ISRO chief	Dr V. Narayanan (since Jan 2025; Kanyakumari district)

Background

- History: IRNSS-1A – 1 July 2013, PSLV-C22. In 2016 PM Modi named it 'NavIC' (Navigation with Indian Constellation). IRNSS-1H (2017) failed as its heat shield did not separate. Failures of imported Rubidium clocks created the need for replacements. NVS-01 (29 May 2023, GSLV-F12) carried the first indigenous atomic clock.
- Science: satellite navigation fixes position from the time differences of signals from several satellites – so highly precise atomic clocks are essential. NavIC offers a Standard Positioning Service (SPS) for civilians and a Restricted Service (RS) for authorised users. The NVS series adds the L1 band to L5 and S – helping use in common devices such as phones.
- Global systems: GPS – USA; GLONASS – Russia; Galileo – European Union; BeiDou – China (global); QZSS – Japan and NavIC – India (regional). GSLV Mk II is a three-stage rocket with solid, liquid and indigenous cryogenic stages.

Tamil Nadu link: GSLV's cryogenic and liquid engines are tested at the ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC), Mahendragiri, Tirunelveli district. ISRO Chairman Dr V. Narayanan hails from Kanyakumari district. ISRO's second spaceport, for small rockets (SSLV), is coming up at Kulasekarapattinam, Thoothukudi district.

10 France confirms the world's first human case of Shamonda virus – patient in Lyon died

Health

News

France's health and agriculture ministries confirmed on 22 Oct 2026 the first human case of Shamonda virus, until now considered to affect only livestock. A severely immunocompromised patient at the Hospices Civils de Lyon died in early October; brain complications were 'very likely linked' to the infection. The person was probably infected by a Culicoides biting midge in eastern France. Authorities said no risk to the general public has been identified; France has notified WHO and ECDC.

Key facts

Confirmed	22 Oct 2026 – French health & agriculture ministries; Lyon (Hospices Civils de Lyon)
Patient	Severely immunocompromised; died in early October
Vector	Culicoides biting midges
Classification	Genus Orthobunyavirus, Simbu serogroup – related to Schmallenberg virus
In cattle	Fever, lethargy, diarrhoea, milk drop; abortion and birth defects in calves
Spread	First found in Nigeria, mid-1960s; Africa, Japan; first in Western Europe in summer 2026 (France, Germany, Switzerland etc.)

Background

- Zoonoses: diseases passing from animals to humans – rabies, Nipah, bird flu, Kyasanur Forest Disease (monkey fever), leptospirosis. Most emerging infections are of animal origin.
- One Health: the approach that human, animal and environmental health are interlinked. A livestock virus reaching a human shows why animal and human disease surveillance must be joined up.
- Science: Shamonda and Schmallenberg (found in Germany in 2011) are both RNA viruses of genus Orthobunyavirus (family Peribunyaviridae), Simbu serogroup. The same Culicoides midges spread bluetongue. Experts link warming temperatures to the northward spread of these midges.
- India: the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC, Delhi) tracks outbreaks through the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP). France – Western Europe, capital Paris; Lyon lies where the Rhône and Saône rivers meet.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu was the first State in India to enact a Public Health Act (1939); its Directorate of Public Health and Preventive Medicine was formed in 1923. Studies at sheep farms in Tamil Nadu have recorded Culicoides imicola and other bluetongue-spreading midge species.

11 Inaugural Commonwealth Kabaddi Championship 2026 begins in Ahmedabad on 23 October (till 31 October)

Sports

News

The inaugural 'Commonwealth Kabaddi Championship 2026' is being held at the Veer Savarkar Sports Complex, Ahmedabad (Gujarat), from 23 to 31 October, hosted by the Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India (AKFI). First announced for 21–31 October, the start was moved to 23 October. 13 men's and 10 women's teams take part (Pakistan withdrew). Semi-finals are on 30 October and the finals on 31 October.

Key facts

Dates	23–31 Oct 2026 (originally to start 21 Oct)
Venue	Veer Savarkar Sports Complex, Ahmedabad, Gujarat
Host	Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India (AKFI)
Men's teams (13)	Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, England, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Scotland, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda
Women's teams (10)	Bangladesh, England, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Scotland, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Uganda
Telecast	Star Sports; JioStar app

Background

- Kabaddi is a traditional Indian sport; it became a medal sport for the first time at the 1990 Beijing Asian Games, where India's men won the gold.
- Bodies: the Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India (AKFI) governs the sport in India; the Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) began in 2014. Kabaddi has never been an official Commonwealth Games medal sport, and was not at Glasgow 2026 either.
- 2030 Commonwealth Games: Ahmedabad was confirmed as host at the Commonwealth Sport General Assembly in Glasgow on 26 Nov 2025 – the centenary Games, back in India after Delhi 2010. The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has proposed adding kabaddi for 2030. The first Games were the 1930 British Empire Games at Hamilton, Canada.
- Geography: Ahmedabad, Gujarat's largest city, stands on the Sabarmati river; Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram is here (the Dandi March began from it in 1930).

Tamil Nadu link: Kabaddi is the state game of Tamil Nadu. In Tamil it is also called 'Sadugudu'; the word 'kabaddi' is believed to come from the Tamil 'kai-pidi' (holding hands).

12 Nationwide 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan – Rabi 2026' (Save the Fields campaign) launched today from Karnal, Haryana

Agriculture

News

Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched the nationwide 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan – Rabi 2026' (Save the Fields campaign) at Karnal, Haryana, on 22 Oct 2026; it runs till 30 Nov (about 40 days). Aims: balanced fertiliser use based on soil testing, crop diversification (oilseeds, pulses, horticulture), water conservation, natural farming, crop-residue management, and awareness of PMFBY crop insurance and Kisan Credit Cards. It targets about 1 crore participants through 4,150 teams of KVKs and ATMA. Speaking at Karnal, the Minister urged farmers to stop burning stubble.

Key facts

Launch	22 Oct 2026, Karnal (Haryana) – Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan
Period	22 Oct – 30 Nov 2026
Ministry	Union Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare
Partners	State agri depts, KVKs, ICAR institutes, agri universities, ATMA; 4,150 teams; ~1 crore target
Earlier phase	Kharif-season drive – 1 June 2026, Raisen district (Madhya Pradesh)
Focus	Soil health, balanced fertiliser, crop diversification, residue management, natural farming

Background

- Seasons: Kharif – sown in June–July with the south-west monsoon (rice, cotton, maize); Rabi – sown October–December, harvested April–June (wheat, mustard, gram, barley); Zaid – summer crops (watermelon, cucumber). Winter rain from Western Disturbances helps rabi crops.
- ICAR: set up on 16 July 1929 as the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research on the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Agriculture (chaired by Linlithgow); HQ New Delhi; works under the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE).
- Karnal hosts ICAR's National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), Indian Institute of Wheat and Barley Research and Central Soil Salinity Research Institute. Paddy-stubble burning in Punjab–Haryana in Oct–Nov is a major cause of Delhi's air pollution.
- Soil Health Card scheme: launched on 19 Feb 2015 at Suratgarh, Rajasthan – gives farmers soil-test-based fertiliser advice, aiming to check overuse of fertilisers.

Tamil Nadu link: unlike North India's rabi–kharif pattern, Tamil Nadu's paddy seasons are Kuruvai (sown June–July), Samba (August; long-duration crop relying on the north-east monsoon), Thaladi (Sept–Oct), Navarai (Dec–Jan) and Sornavari (Apr–May) (TNAU Agritech).

13 Powerful El Niño could trigger major economic shocks worldwide – UN (WMO, OCHA) warns

International

News

WMO Secretary-General Celeste Saulo and UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Tom Fletcher issued a joint warning in Geneva on 21 Oct 2026. WMO's Global Seasonal Climate Update says tropical Pacific sea-surface temperatures could be up to 3.8°C above average in Nov 2026 – Jan 2027, beating the 2015–16 record of 2.6°C. Saulo said it is 'off the monitoring charts that we have used for the past four decades'. Fletcher called the El Niño a 'wrecking ball' that could bring economic shocks for the global economy, conflict and displacement. The UN released $50 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) for 11 countries.

Key facts

Warning	21 Oct 2026, Geneva – WMO + UN humanitarian office (OCHA)
Forecast	Pacific SST up to 3.8°C above average (Nov–Jan); peak around Dec 2026
Previous record	2015–16 El Niño – 2.6°C
El Niño threshold	Eastern tropical Pacific 0.5°C above average
Aid	CERF – $50 million for 11 countries (incl. Chad, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, El Salvador)
Impacts	SE Asia – rain deficit, wildfires; East Africa – heavy rain; Latin America, Asia–Pacific – heat, drought, floods; ~50 million people at risk of hunger

Background

- Science: El Niño is abnormal warming of the central–eastern equatorial Pacific surface; La Niña is the opposite (cooling). Together with the 'Southern Oscillation' – a see-saw in air pressure – they form ENSO. Events recur every 2–7 years and last 9–12 months. The 'Niño 3.4' region (5°N–5°S, 170°W–120°W) is used for monitoring.
- Name: Peruvian fishermen called the warm current that appeared around Christmas 'El Niño' (Spanish for 'the boy' / 'the Christ child'). Warm water suppresses the upwelling of cold, nutrient-rich water, hurting Peru's anchovy fishery.
- Walker circulation: normally, easterly trade winds over the Pacific push warm water towards Indonesia–Australia. In El Niño they weaken and the Walker circulation shifts east. The Southern Oscillation (Tahiti–Darwin pressure difference) was identified by Sir Gilbert Walker, Director General of the IMD.
- Indian monsoon: El Niño usually weakens the southwest monsoon (June–Sept), causing drought and food inflation; La Niña usually strengthens it. The Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) is the temperature difference between the western and eastern Indian Ocean; a positive IOD can partly offset El Niño's adverse effect.
- Economy: droughts and floods can hit prices of rice, sugar, cotton, cocoa, coffee and maize, hydropower output, insurance and financial markets. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is a UN specialised agency headquartered in Geneva; World Meteorological Day is 23 March.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu gets most of its annual rain from the northeast monsoon (Oct–Dec). IMD studies show a tendency for normal or above-normal northeast monsoon rain over south-east

peninsular India (Tamil Nadu) in El Niño years – the 2015 Chennai floods in a strong El Niño year are an example. It is a tendency, not a fixed rule.

14 India and Poland agree to deepen defence, space and nuclear energy cooperation – Polish PM Donald Tusk visits India

International Relations

News

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk paid an official visit to India on 21–23 Oct 2026. On 22 Oct he held talks with PM Narendra Modi at Hyderabad House, New Delhi. 'Today we have agreed to deepen ties in defence, space and nuclear energy,' Modi said. A 'Defence Industry Dialogue' for co-development and co-production will be set up; the two aim to double bilateral trade by 2030 using the India–EU Free Trade Agreement; a new partnership in critical minerals. Finance and Economy Minister Andrzej Domański and about 100 business representatives accompanied him; a business forum is scheduled in Bengaluru on 23 Oct.

Key facts

Visit	21–23 Oct 2026; talks 22 Oct, Hyderabad House, New Delhi; business forums – New Delhi, Bengaluru
Significance	Tusk's last visit as PM was in 2010 – first in 16 years
Defence	Defence Industry Dialogue; 8th Joint Working Group on Defence – Warsaw, Sept 2026; classified-information agreement soon
Trade	US$6.36 billion in 2025 (Indian exports 4.83 billion); target to double by 2030
Other areas	Critical minerals, semiconductors, battery recycling; National Archives pact finalised
Poland	Capital Warsaw (on the Vistula); currency złoty; NATO 1999; EU 2004; GDP crossed US$1 trillion

Background

- History: India–Poland diplomatic ties began in 1954. PM Modi's visit on 21–22 Aug 2024 (the first by an Indian PM in 45 years, after Morarji Desai in 1979) raised ties to a 'Strategic Partnership'; an Action Plan for 2024–28 was adopted.
- 'Good Maharaja': in World War II, Jam Saheb Digvijaysinhji of Nawanagar (today's Jamnagar, Gujarat) sheltered hundreds of Polish children rescued from Soviet camps at Balachadi in 1942. Warsaw has a 'Good Maharaja Square' in his honour. The Valivade camp near Kolhapur was the largest Polish refugee settlement in India.
- Geography–politics: Poland is a Central European country with about a 530-km border with Ukraine. During 'Operation Ganga' (2022) it helped Indian students leave Ukraine safely.
- Economy: Indian investment in Poland exceeds US$3 billion; about 10,000 Poles work for Indian IT firms. Poland is to get €43.7 billion in loans from the EU's SAFE defence-procurement fund.

Tamil Nadu link: the visit made no direct announcement for Tamil Nadu. But the State matters in two of the agreed sectors: nuclear energy – Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant in Tirunelveli district (Russian cooperation, VVER reactors) is India's largest; space – ISRO's second launch port (for small launch vehicles) is being built at Kulasekarapattinam, Thoothukudi district.

15 International Snow Leopard Day 2026 – 23 October

Important Days

News

International Snow Leopard Day is observed every year on 23 October. It marks 23 Oct 2013, when 12 range countries adopted the 'Bishkek Declaration' in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, and launched the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP). On 12 Dec 2024 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution officially proclaiming 23 October the 'International Day of the Snow Leopard'; 61 countries, including India, co-sponsored it. India's first scientific count, SPAI (2019–23), reported 718 snow leopards on 30 Jan 2024.

Key facts

Day	23 Oct – Bishkek Declaration, 2013; UNGA recognition 12 Dec 2024
Scientific name	Panthera uncia; 'ghost of the mountains'
Status	IUCN – Vulnerable; CITES Appendix I; Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 – Schedule I
India (SPAI)	718 – Ladakh 477, Uttarakhand 124, Himachal 51, Arunachal 36, Sikkim 21, J&K 9
12 range countries	India, Nepal, Bhutan, China, Mongolia, Russia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan
State animal	Ladakh (2021), Himachal Pradesh

Background

- Biology–geography: the snow leopard is a solitary cat of the high mountains of Central and South Asia (about 3,000–5,500 m); it cannot roar. Its main prey are blue sheep (bharal), Himalayan ibex and marmots. It is an 'indicator species' of high-mountain ecosystem health.
- Indian conservation: Project Snow Leopard – 2009; the GEF–UNDP 'SECURE Himalaya' project (Ladakh, Himachal, Uttarakhand, Sikkim); listed among 21 critically endangered species for recovery. Hemis National Park, Ladakh, is called the 'snow leopard capital of the world'.
- SPAI survey: the Wildlife Institute of India (WII, Dehradun) was national coordinator, with NCF (Mysuru) and WWF-India as partners. Camera traps at 1,971 sites; about 70% of the habitat lies outside protected areas. A dedicated Snow Leopard Cell at WII and a count every fourth year were recommended.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has no snow leopards, but its counterpart in mountain-species conservation is the State animal, the Nilgiri tahr. CM M.K. Stalin launched the ₹25 crore 'Project Nilgiri Tahr' on 12 Oct 2023; 7 October, the birthday of Dr E.R.C. Davidar, who did a pioneering tahr study in 1975, is 'Nilgiri Tahr Day'. Mukurthi National Park in the Nilgiris was created to protect the tahr.

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 Oct. '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.

1 Madurai Bench of Madras HC bars registration of documents on lands dedicated to Srirangam temple by an 1887 deed

Tamil Nadu

News

The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court has restrained the Sub-Registrars of Srirangam, Tiruchirappalli Joint-III, Musiri and Kulithalai from registering any document relating to the lands listed in an 1887 deed (Document No. 1646 of 1887) that dedicated properties to the Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple, Srirangam (reported 18 Oct 2026). A Division Bench of Justices C.V. Karthikeyan and R. Sakthivel, hearing a petition by A. Sampathkumar, observed that the deed reflects an 'absolute dedication' of the scheduled lands to the temple. The petitioner alleged that some lands may have been transferred in breach of the endowment and sought their identification and verification against revenue and registration records, and legal action by the HR&CE Department. The case will be heard next on 5 Nov 2026.

Key facts

Court	Madurai Bench, Madras HC – Justices C.V. Karthikeyan & R. Sakthivel
Deed	Document No. 1646 of 1887 – absolute dedication to the temple
Restrained	Sub-Registrars of Srirangam, Trichy Joint-III, Musiri, Kulithalai
Petitioner	A. Sampathkumar; next hearing 5 Nov 2026
Madurai Bench	Functioning since 24 July 2004
Laws	TN HR&CE Act 1959; Registration Act 1908

Background

- Srirangam temple: on an island between the Kaveri and the Kollidam; Lord Ranganatha in reclining posture. Foremost of the 108 Vaishnava Divya Desams, praised by the Alvars. Seven prakaras and 21 gopurams; regarded as one of the largest functioning Hindu temples in the world.
- Rajagopuram: 13 tiers, about 236 ft, built through the efforts of the 44th Jeer of Ahobila Mutt (Azhagiasingar); consecrated in 1987. Ramanuja spent his later life at Srirangam; tradition holds that Kambar first presented his Ramayanam here.
- Legal background: Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Act 1926 (Justice Party government) → Tamil Nadu HR&CE Act 1959. Under Section 34, any sale, mortgage, exchange or lease beyond 5 years of a temple's immovable property is void unless sanctioned by the Commissioner.
- Constitution: Article 26 – religious denominations may own and acquire movable and immovable property and administer it in accordance with law. 'Registration of deeds and documents' is in the Concurrent List (List III, Entry 6); the Registration Act 1908 is a central law that States may amend.

Tamil Nadu link: Srirangam temple won the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Award of Merit for cultural heritage conservation in 2017 for its restoration – the first temple in Tamil Nadu to get it. Musiri is in Tiruchirappalli district and Kulithalai in Karur district.

2 Flood water gushes down Thalaiyar (Rat Tail) Falls, Tamil Nadu's highest waterfall

Tamil Nadu

News

After the north-east monsoon set in on 15 Oct 2026 (IMD), heavy rain in the Palani Hills has sent flood water gushing down Thalaiyar Falls in Dindigul district – Tamil Nadu's highest waterfall. Dropping about 297 m (975 ft), the falls can be seen from the Dum Dum Rock viewpoint on the Batlagundu–Kodaikanal ghat road; there is no road to the falls themselves.

Key facts

Falls	Thalaiyar Falls – 'Rat Tail Falls'
Height	About 297 m (975 ft) – highest in Tamil Nadu
Location	Palani Hills, Dindigul district (Western Ghats)
River	Manjalar – tributary of the Vaigai; Manjalar Dam downstream (Devadanapatti, Theni district)
Viewpoint	Dum Dum Rock – Batlagundu–Kodaikanal ghat road
Cause	North-east monsoon – set in 15 Oct 2026 (IMD)

Background

- Geography: the Palani Hills are an eastward spur of the Western Ghats; Kodaikanal here is called the 'Princess of Hill Stations'. Silver Cascade and Bear Shola falls are in the same area.
- River: water from Thalaiyar flows on as the Manjalar, a tributary of the Vaigai. Other Vaigai tributaries include the Suruliyar, Varahanadhi and Mullaiyar. The Vaigai flows past Madurai to the Ramanathapuram Big Tank.
- Climate: Tamil Nadu gets the bulk of its annual rain from the north-east monsoon (Oct–Dec); during the south-west monsoon it lies largely in the rain-shadow of the Western Ghats.

Tamil Nadu link: Courtallam – Chittar river, Tenkasi ('Spa of the South'); Hogenakkal – Kaveri, Dharmapuri; Suruli and Kumbakkarai – Theni; Agaya Gangai – Kolli Hills (Namakkal); Kiliyur – Yercaud (Salem); Catherine – Kotagiri (Nilgiris); Monkey Falls – Aliyar (Coimbatore).

3 Tenkasi Forest Division adds the Madras hedgehog to its 'Golden Jackal Ambassadors' conservation programme

Tamil Nadu

News

On 22 Oct 2026 the Tenkasi Forest Division proposed adding the Madras hedgehog – locally called 'mulleli' – to its 'Golden Jackal Ambassadors' programme launched in 2025. The programme trains students, volunteers and village youth as conservation ambassadors. Hedgehogs have been recorded around Alangulam, Sankarankovil, Sivagiri and Uthumalai; in a survey of 867 people in 38 villages, 53% reported seeing them during the monsoon. Habitat loss, road kills and hunting for supposed medicinal use are the main threats. Note: do not confuse it with the porcupine ('mullampanri'); the animal in this news is the hedgehog ('mulleli').

Key facts

Animal	Madras / bare-bellied hedgehog – Paraechinus nudiventris
IUCN status	Least Concern; very poorly studied
Range	Southern India only – most records from Tamil Nadu grasslands and scrub
Programme	Golden Jackal Ambassadors – Tenkasi Forest Division (2025)
Funding	₹1 crore for 4 lesser-known species (2025); ₹20.5 lakh for the hedgehog
Study	Theri forests (Thoothukudi) – AIWC, Vandalur

Background

- Science: the hedgehog is a nocturnal, insect-eating mammal (order Eulipotyphla) that rolls into a spiny ball when threatened. The porcupine is entirely different – it is a rodent.
- State funding: in Oct 2025 Tamil Nadu set aside ₹1 crore for four lesser-known endangered species – lion-tailed macaque (₹48.5 lakh), Madras hedgehog (₹20.5 lakh), hump-backed mahseer (₹17 lakh) and striped hyena (₹14 lakh). The ₹50-crore TN Endangered Species Conservation Fund is managed by AIWC, Vandalur.
- Other TN efforts: Project Nilgiri Tahr (2022); India's first Dugong Conservation Reserve – Palk Bay (2022); India's first slender loris sanctuary – Kadavur (Karur & Dindigul, 2022); Grizzled Giant Squirrel Sanctuary – Srivilliputhur.
- Law: Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 – the 2022 amendment simplified the schedules (Schedules I and II for animals).

Tamil Nadu link: most records of the Madras hedgehog come from Tamil Nadu – the grasslands of Tenkasi district and the Theri forests of Thoothukudi (studied by AIWC, Vandalur, since Jan 2026). Under the Madras Hedgehog Conservation Project (2025–26), a radio-tagged hedgehog gave birth in the Peikulam grassland in Oct 2026.

4 Voters too can file private criminal complaints over a candidate's false election affidavit – Supreme Court

Polity, Economy & Urban Affairs

News

On 16 Oct 2026 the Supreme Court held that any private person, including a voter, can file a criminal complaint before a magistrate under Section 125A of the Representation of the People Act 1951 against a candidate who gives false information or conceals information in the nomination affidavit (Rajkumar Madki v. Dr Shailendra Beldale). The Bench of Justices Dipankar Datta (author) and Sheel Nagu rejected the Karnataka High Court's view that only the Election Commission or a public servant could complain, holding that Section 125A is outside Section 195(1) CrPC. A 2020 ECI press note does not bind courts. On facts (an address allegation against a Bidar, Karnataka MLA), the quashing of the complaint was upheld on other grounds.

Key facts

Case	Rajkumar Madki v. Dr Shailendra Beldale – Crl. Appeal 3387 of 2026
Judgment	16 Oct 2026
Bench	Justices Dipankar Datta & Sheel Nagu
Section 125A	False/concealed info – up to 6 months' jail, fine or both (inserted 2002)
Key point	Sec 195(1) CrPC bar does not apply; magistrates can weed out frivolous complaints
Appeal from	Karnataka HC (7 Mar 2025) – Bidar MLA case

Background

- RP Act 1951: Section 33A – duty to disclose information including criminal antecedents; Section 125A – penalty for false information (both added in 2002). Candidates declare assets, liabilities, education and criminal cases in the 'Form 26' affidavit.
- Landmark rulings: Union of India v. ADR (2002) and PUCL v. Union of India (2003) – a voter's right to know a candidate's background is part of Article 19(1)(a). PUCL (2013) – NOTA. Lily Thomas (2013) – Section 8(4) of the RP Act struck down.
- Election disputes: an election result is challenged by an 'election petition' in the High Court (RPA Sections 80, 81 – within 45 days); Article 329(b). Superintendence, direction and control of elections – Election Commission of India (Article 324).

Tamil Nadu link: the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly election (234 seats) was held in a single phase on 23 Apr 2026, with counting on 4 May. Every candidate filed a Form 26 affidavit – under this ruling, any voter can move a magistrate if such an affidavit is false.

5 PM Modi to open RBI's Tier IV Data Centre and Enterprise Computing & Cybersecurity Training Institute at Bhubaneswar

Polity, Economy & Urban Affairs

News

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to inaugurate, on 25 Oct 2026, the Reserve Bank of India's new greenfield Data Centre and its Enterprise Computing & Cybersecurity Training Institute, built for about ₹169 crore on an 18.55-acre campus at Info Valley-II, Khordha district, near Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The data centre holds Tier IV certification for its design and will serve as a critical backup to RBI's primary data centre at Kharghar, Navi Mumbai, supporting currency management, payment and settlement systems and regulatory data. The site was chosen for low seismic risk and distance from border zones.

Key facts

Facilities	Greenfield Data Centre + Enterprise Computing & Cybersecurity Training Institute
Site	Info Valley-II, Khordha district (near Bhubaneswar); 18.55 acres
Cost	About ₹169 crore
Foundation	22 Mar 2023 – then RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das
Rating	Tier IV (design certification) – fault tolerant
Role	Backup to the primary data centre at Kharghar, Navi Mumbai

Background

- Tier standard (Uptime Institute): Tier I – basic (~99.671%); Tier II – redundant components (~99.741%); Tier III – concurrently maintainable (~99.982%); Tier IV – fault tolerant, with multiple simultaneously active power/cooling paths (~99.995%, only about 26 minutes' downtime a year).
- Cyber-security bodies: CERT-In – under the Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY), operational since 2004; national incident-response agency under Section 70B of the IT Act 2000. NCIIPC protects critical information infrastructure (Section 70A).
- RBI technology bodies: Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT) – Hyderabad, set up by RBI in 1996; RBI's IT subsidiary ReBIT – Mumbai. The RBI Governor and Deputy Governors are appointed by the Central Government (RBI Act, Section 8).

Tamil Nadu link: RBI's apex training college, the Reserve Bank Staff College, has functioned on Anna Salai (Teynampet), Chennai, since 3 July 1963 and also trains officers of foreign central banks. The new Bhubaneswar institute will specialise in technology and cyber-security training.

6 Jitendra Singh opens 'AATAL' air-pollution analysis laboratory for Delhi-NCR at IITM's Delhi branch

Polity, Economy & Urban Affairs

News

On 24 Oct 2026, Dr Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, opened the 'Integrated Atmospheric Chemistry and Aerosol Toxicity Analysis Laboratory' (AATAL) at the Delhi branch of the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), New Delhi. The Ministry of Earth Sciences set it up under 'Mission Mausam' at about ₹80 crore. It analyses PM2.5, gases, metals and toxic elements to work out how much pollution comes from each source (source apportionment) – vehicles, industry, crop-residue burning, construction and road dust, and pollution carried in from nearby regions. Linked to IITM's 'AIRWISE' decision-support system, it will give evidence-based inputs to CAQM and other agencies.

Key facts

Opened	24 Oct 2026 – Dr Jitendra Singh
Place	IITM Delhi branch, New Delhi
Set up by	Ministry of Earth Sciences – Mission Mausam; about ₹80 crore
Task	Pollution composition, sources and their shares (source apportionment), health impact
Linked to	AIRWISE – 72-hour forecasts at 400 m resolution; supports GRAP and CAQM
Present	Dr T. Srinivasa Kumar (Secretary, MoES); Dr A. Suryachandra Rao (Director, IITM)

Background

- IITM (Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology) – Pune; an autonomous institute of the Ministry of Earth Sciences. 'SAFAR' (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research) was built to monitor air quality during the 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games, and later extended to Pune, Mumbai and Ahmedabad.
- Mission Mausam – approved by the Union Cabinet in Sept 2024; ₹2,000 crore for the first two years. Implemented by IMD, IITM and the National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF); aim – a 'weather-ready and climate-smart Bharat'.
- Science: PM2.5 – particles 2.5 micrometres or less in diameter; they reach the air sacs (alveoli) of the lungs and can enter the blood. PM10 – up to 10 micrometres. The National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS, 2009, CPCB) set limits for 12 pollutants; PM2.5 limit – 40 µg/m³ (annual), 60 µg/m³ (24-hour). WHO's 2021 guideline (annual) is 5 µg/m³.
- Governance: the Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR (CAQM) is a statutory body under a 2021 Act; the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) is applied in winter. AATAL's measured 'which source, how much' evidence will help decide where curbs are needed.

Tamil Nadu link: four TN cities – Chennai, Madurai, Tiruchirappalli and Thoothukudi – are on the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) list of 'non-attainment cities'. The Manali industrial area of North Chennai is classed a 'Critically Polluted Area' under CPCB's Comprehensive Environmental Pollution Index (CEPI).

7 19th Urban Mobility India Conference and 2nd National Urban Conclave in Bhubaneswar – Bhubaneswar wins 'Best Green Transport Initiative' city award

Polity, Economy & Urban Affairs

News

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), through the Institute of Urban Transport (India) and with Odisha's support, held the 19th Urban Mobility India (UMI) Conference & Exhibition in Bhubaneswar on 23–24 Oct 2026. Theme: 'Urban Accessibility and Liveability in Digital Age'. At the valedictory on 24 Oct, Union Minister Manohar Lal gave the awards: 'City with Best Green Transport Initiative' – Bhubaneswar (CRUT); 'Best Non-Motorised Transport System' – Chennai (Greater Chennai Corporation); 'Best Passenger Services (Metro)' – Chennai Metro Rail Ltd and NCRTC. Odisha also hosted the 2nd National Urban Conclave alongside it in Bhubaneswar.

Key facts

Event	19th UMI, 23–24 Oct 2026, Bhubaneswar; about 1,500 delegates
Organiser	MoHUA via Institute of Urban Transport (India); Odisha support
Theme	Urban Accessibility and Liveability in Digital Age
Green award	Bhubaneswar – CRUT (Capital Region Urban Transport)
Chennai awards	Non-motorised transport – GCC; Metro passenger services – CMRL; financing commendation – MTC
Manohar Lal's 3-I	Integration, Inclusiveness, Intelligence; operational Metro 1,185 km in 26 cities

Background

- The National Urban Transport Policy (NUTP) 2006 – core idea: 'move people, not vehicles'; priority to public transport, walking–cycling facilities and integrated land-use–transport planning. The UMI conference is held annually in this spirit.
- Metro Rail Policy 2017 – new metro proposals must show socio-economic returns, PPP component, last-mile connectivity and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD); cities above 20 lakh population may plan a metro.
- PM-eBus Sewa (Aug 2023, MoHUA) – 10,000 e-buses on the Public–Private Partnership (PPP) model; Segment A – city bus services in 169 cities; Segment B – green mobility initiatives in 181 cities (bus priority, NCMC fare collection, charging). At UMI 2026 the Minister said 1,100 e-buses run in 28 cities.
- 25 June 2015 – the Smart Cities Mission, AMRUT (Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation) and PMAY-Urban were launched on the same day. AMRUT's priority is water supply, then sewerage; storm-water drains, green spaces and non-motorised transport are also covered.

Tamil Nadu link: Chennai won two main awards at UMI 2026 – Greater Chennai Corporation (Best Non-Motorised Transport System – footpaths, cycling facilities) and Chennai Metro Rail Ltd (Best Passenger Services, jointly with NCRTC); the Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) got a commendation for 'most viable financing'. Citing the 20-lakh population threshold of the Metro Rail Policy 2017, the Centre returned the Coimbatore and Madurai metro DPRs in Nov 2025.

8 Agriculture Ministry notifies 16 new indigenous livestock and dog breeds, including Tamil Nadu's Kombai dog

Agriculture, Infrastructure & Governance

News

Through a gazette notification dated 16 Oct 2026, the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, recognised 16 new indigenous breeds from 13 States and the UT of Jammu & Kashmir. ICAR had registered them in Aug 2026 on the recommendation of the 14th meeting of its Breed Registration Committee (BRC); ICAR-National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR), Karnal, gave the accession numbers. The only dog breed is Tamil Nadu's Kombai (accession INDIA_DOG_1800_KOMBAI_19006). India's registered breeds now total 262 (258 indigenous + 4 synthetic).

Key facts

Gazette	16 Oct 2026 – DARE, Agriculture Ministry (UNI, 19 Oct)
Registration	ICAR – 14th BRC meeting; ICAR release 7 Aug 2026
16 breeds	Cattle 4, buffalo 1, goat 2, sheep 4; donkey, horse, pig, yak, dog – 1 each
Some breeds	Periyar cattle (Kerala), Koppal cattle (Karnataka), Kashmiri horse, Sikkimese yak, Nagal pig (Nagaland), Braj donkey (UP)
Kombai	Named after Kombai town, Theni district; guard and protection dog; also called 'Polygar dog'
Total	262 registered breeds (258 indigenous + 4 synthetic)

Background

- ICAR-NBAGR (National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources) – Karnal, Haryana; the nodal agency for registering livestock and poultry breeds. It studies physical and genetic data and assigns accession numbers. The Breed Registration Committee is chaired by ICAR's Deputy Director General (Animal Science). The National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI) is also at Karnal.
- Dog breed registration: NBAGR's first three registered dog breeds were Tamil Nadu's Rajapalayam and Chippiparai and Karnataka's Mudhol Hound (reported Dec 2020). The Kombai is broad, short and muscular, red-brown with a black mask-like muzzle, and takes its 'Polygar dog' name from the Poligar chieftains who prized it.
- Rashtriya Gokul Mission – December 2014; scientific development and conservation of indigenous cattle and buffalo breeds; run by the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying. As most indigenous animals are held by small, marginal farmers and landless labourers, it also helps the rural poor.
- Law: in 2017 Tamil Nadu amended the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1960 for Jallikattu; a Supreme Court Constitution Bench upheld it in May 2023. Pulikulam and Kangayam bulls are widely used in Jallikattu.

Tamil Nadu link: TN's registered dog breeds – Rajapalayam (Virudhunagar), Chippiparai (Virudhunagar area) and now Kombai (Theni). TN's indigenous cattle breeds – Kangayam (Kongu region), Umblachery (Cauvery delta – Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Nagapattinam), Bargur (Bargur hills, Erode district), Pulikulam (Sivaganga, Ramanathapuram area – Jallikattu bulls) and Alambadi (Dharmapuri–Krishnagiri area).

9 Odisha announces India's first dedicated Agri-PV (agrivoltaics) policy – 'One Field, Two Harvests'

Agriculture, Infrastructure & Governance

News

At the Ministerial Session of the 7th Agrivoltaics World Conference at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi (reported 22 Oct 2026), Odisha Deputy CM and Agriculture–Energy Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo announced the 'Odisha Agri-PV Policy 2026', set to make Odisha the first State with a dedicated Agri-PV policy. Target – 1 GW by 2030. At least 90% of each project site must stay under cultivation; the land keeps its agricultural status and crop-insurance eligibility. Farmers/FPOs may own the systems or lease land to developers; 25-year power purchase agreements with GRIDCO. The policy was announced as finalised; formal notification is awaited.

Key facts

Announced	Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, Odisha Deputy CM – 7th Agrivoltaics World Conference, Bharat Mandapam (reported 22 Oct 2026)
Motto	'One Field, Two Harvests' – farmer before the panels
Target	1 GW Agri-PV by 2030
Condition	At least 90% land under cultivation; farm-land status and crop insurance retained
Power purchase	GRIDCO – 25-year PPA, assured offtake, grid connectivity
Pilots	1 MW Agri-PV plant running; pilot with Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Background

- Agrivoltaics (Agri-PV) – growing crops and generating solar power on the same land at the same time. Raised panels give shade, keep soil moisture and cut heat stress, easing the land-versus-energy conflict. Panels are mounted high enough for tractors to pass.
- PM-KUSUM (Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan) – approved 19 Feb 2019; Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE). Component A – grid-connected solar plants up to 2 MW (on barren or cultivable land); Component B – standalone solar pumps in off-grid areas (Centre 30% + State 30% + farmer 40%); Component C – solarising existing grid-connected pumps (feeder solarisation).
- Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission (JNNSM) – January 2010; one of the eight missions of the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC, 2008). The International Solar Alliance (ISA) – launched by India and France at Paris in 2015; HQ Gurugram.
- Odisha background: the policy builds on the Odisha Renewable Energy Policy 2022 and the Feb 2026 investor conclave (₹67,000 crore, 6.8 GW of commitments). The State has mapped 47.7 lakh acres of fallow and 40.7 lakh acres of suitable cropland; incentives are linked to drip irrigation, solar pumps, cold storage and agro-processing.

Tamil Nadu link: the Tamil Nadu Energy Development Agency (TEDA), the State's renewable-energy nodal agency since 1984, was merged in 2024 – along with TANGEDCO's renewable-energy wing – into the newly formed Tamil Nadu Green Energy Corporation Ltd (TNGECL), a dedicated company for hydro, solar, wind and energy storage. (Tamil Nadu has no separate Agri-PV policy yet.)

10 Sidhi district gets rail link for the first time since Independence – Rewa–Churhat (65 km) and Satna–Devendranagar (53 km) sections opened

Agriculture, Infrastructure & Governance

News

On 24 Oct 2026, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and Madhya Pradesh CM Dr Mohan Yadav, at events held at Churhat and Nagod stations, virtually opened two new sections – Rewa–Churhat (65 km) and Satna–Devendranagar (53 km), 118 km in all. With this, Sidhi district of Madhya Pradesh got rail connectivity for the first time since Independence. The Rewa–Churhat section has a 3.33-km tunnel through the hills. A new Devendranagar–Churhat MEMU passenger service was also flagged off. Both are parts of the Lalitpur–Singrauli new line project.

Key facts

Opened	24 Oct 2026 – Ashwini Vaishnaw, Mohan Yadav; events at Churhat & Nagod
Sections	Rewa–Churhat 65 km + Satna–Devendranagar 53 km = 118 km
Feature	3.33-km tunnel; several bridges
Project	Lalitpur–Singrauli new line – Panna, Satna, Rewa, Sidhi, Singrauli (Vindhya region)
Zone	West Central Railway – HQ Jabalpur
State allocation	Railway outlay for MP in 2026–27: ₹15,188 crore

Background

- Geography: Sidhi lies in eastern Madhya Pradesh (Rewa division); the Son river flows through it. Sanjay National Park (Sanjay–Dubri Tiger Reserve) is in Sidhi district. Neighbouring Singrauli, rich in coal mines and thermal power plants, is called India's 'energy capital'.
- Lalitpur–Singrauli / Mahoba–Khajuraho new line project – 541 km in all; from Lalitpur (UP) through Bundelkhand and the Vindhya region to Singrauli. The Mahoba–Khajuraho part was completed in 2008.
- Economy–administration: on the Acworth Committee's (1920–21) advice, the Railway Budget was separated from the General Budget by the 1924 'Separation Convention'; after the Bibek Debroy committee's recommendation it was merged back from 2017–18. PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan (Oct 2021) – integrated planning of rail, road and other infrastructure.
- West Central Railway (WCR) – HQ Jabalpur; Jabalpur, Bhopal and Kota divisions. Rewa and Satna fall in the Jabalpur division.

Tamil Nadu link: the Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Perambur, Chennai, began in 1955; India's first 'Vande Bharat' train (Train 18) was built here in 2018, and its first service ran New Delhi–Varanasi in Feb 2019. Southern Railway is headquartered in Chennai.

11 With 305 talukas declared drought-hit, Maharashtra launches 'Mission Murghas' to tackle fodder shortage

Agriculture, Infrastructure & Governance

News

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis announced on 14 Oct 2026 that 305 of Maharashtra's 358 talukas are drought-affected (265 at first, 40 more added after review). To prevent a fodder shortage for livestock, the State Animal Husbandry Department launched 'Mission Murghas' on 24 Oct 2026. In Marathi, 'murghas' (मुरघास) means silage – preserved green fodder. Farmers will get training and village-level demonstrations to cut, chop, press and store available green fodder airtight as silage; maize, jowar (sorghum) and Napier grass get priority. An additional ₹76.41 crore was sanctioned (₹66.41 crore District Annual Plan + ₹10 crore Vidarbha–Marathwada Dairy Development Project).

Key facts

Mission	Mission Murghas (Marathi: silage) – 24 Oct 2026
Implemented by	Maharashtra Animal Husbandry Department
Drought	305 of 358 talukas (declared 14 Oct 2026; CM Fadnavis)
Fodder crops	Maize, jowar, Napier grass
'Magel Tyala Murghas'	₹3/kg subsidy on silage purchase in 19 Vidarbha–Marathwada districts (DBT)
Fodder gap	Green fodder 22.79%, dry fodder 21.43% short (1 Oct 2026 estimate)

Background

- Drought declaration: the State Government declares drought using the 'Manual for Drought Management' (2016; revised 2020) of the Union Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare. Three steps – rainfall deficit (first trigger), then impact indicators (area sown, vegetation index NDVI, soil moisture, water storage), and finally field verification.
- Relief funds: under the Disaster Management Act 2005, the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF – Sec 48) is used immediately; in severe drought, when it is insufficient, the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF – Sec 46) is released after a central team's visit and approval by a High-Level Committee chaired by the Union Home Minister. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is chaired by the Prime Minister.
- Science: silage is green fodder preserved by anaerobic fermentation by lactic acid bacteria; hay is fodder dried in the sun. Azolla is a floating water fern; the cyanobacterium Anabaena living inside it fixes atmospheric nitrogen – used as cattle feed and as a biofertiliser in paddy.
- Geography: Maharashtra's Marathwada lies in the rain-shadow of the Western Ghats on the Deccan Plateau and faces frequent drought. All 10 talukas of Latur district are drought-hit this time.

Tamil Nadu link: the Cumbu–Napier hybrid grasses CO (CN) 4 and CO (BN) 5, developed by Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore, are grown across India as green fodder (CO (CN) 4 = CO 8 × FD 461). Veterinary education is led by the Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS), Chennai.

12 MoRTH draft makes Advanced Emergency Braking System (AEBS) mandatory in all new car models from Oct 2030

Agriculture, Infrastructure & Governance

News

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) issued a draft notification on 19 Oct 2026 amending the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989. The Advanced Emergency Braking System (AEBS) will be mandatory in M1 (passenger car) vehicles – for new models from 1 Oct 2030 and for all models in production from 1 Oct 2032. From 1 Oct 2028, M1 and N1 vehicles fitted with AEBS must conform to AIS-185. Public comments are invited within 30 days.

Key facts

Draft	19 Oct 2026 – MoRTH; amends Central Motor Vehicles Rules 1989
Timeline	New models: 1 Oct 2030; all models: 1 Oct 2032
Standard	AIS-185 (M1, N1 fitted with AEBS – from 1 Oct 2028)
Categories	M1 – passenger vehicle up to 8 seats besides driver; N1 – goods vehicle up to 3.5 t
Other ADAS	Emergency lane keeping, driver drowsiness warning – transport M1 vehicles from 1 Oct 2029
Trucks	Electronic Stability Control (ESC, AIS-162) – from 1 Oct 2027

Background

- What AEBS is: using radar/camera sensors it detects a vehicle or obstacle ahead and, if the driver fails to brake in time, brakes automatically to avoid a crash or reduce its impact. It belongs to the family of Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS).
- Law: Motor Vehicles Act 1988 (the Central Motor Vehicles Rules 1989 are made under it); the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act 2019 – higher penalties, protection of Good Samaritans (Sec 134A), recall of defective vehicles, National Road Safety Board.
- Safety standards: Bharat NCAP (New Car Assessment Programme) – announced Aug 2023, in force from 1 Oct 2023; 1–5 star rating from crash tests for M1 vehicles up to 3.5 t (adult, child occupant protection, safety assist technologies). Emissions: India jumped from BS-IV directly to BS-VI (1 Apr 2020) – modelled on European 'Euro' norms.
- Road accidents (MoRTH 'Road Accidents in India 2023'): 4,80,583 accidents, 1,72,890 deaths; highest deaths – Uttar Pradesh.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu recorded the most road accidents in India in 2023 – 67,213 (about 14% of the total), and also topped accidents on National Highways (MoRTH report). Chennai is called the 'Detroit of Asia' for automobile manufacturing, so new standards such as AEBS directly affect the Chennai–Sriperumbudur auto industry.

13 Singer Usha Mangeshkar named first recipient of Assam's 'Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika National Award'

Agriculture, Infrastructure & Governance

News

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced in Guwahati on 23 Oct 2026 that the Assam Government's newly instituted 'Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika National (Rashtriya) Award' will go first to veteran singer Usha Mangeshkar. It carries ₹10 lakh cash and a citation and will be given once every three years. PM Narendra Modi will present it on 29 Nov at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, at the closing ceremony of Hazarika's year-long birth centenary.

Key facts

Award	Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika National Award – Govt of Assam
First recipient	Usha Mangeshkar (announced 23 Oct 2026)
Prize / cycle	₹10 lakh + citation; once in 3 years
Presentation	29 Nov 2026 – PM Modi, Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi
Hazarika	Born 8 Sept 1926, Sadiya (Assam); died 5 Nov 2011, Mumbai
Usha Mangeshkar	Born 15 Dec 1935, Indore; sister of Lata, Asha, Meena

Background

- Bhupen Hazarika: singer, composer and film-maker called 'Sudhakantha' (nectar-voiced) and the 'Bard of the Brahmaputra'. Awards: Padma Shri (1977), Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1987), Dadasaheb Phalke Award (1992), Padma Bhushan (2001), Padma Vibhushan (2012, posthumous), Bharat Ratna (2019, posthumous). Chairman of the Sangeet Natak Akademi 1998–2003. Music for 'Rudaali' (1993); famous song 'Bistirno Parore'.
- Bharat Ratna 2019: former President Pranab Mukherjee, social worker Nanaji Deshmukh (posthumous) and Bhupen Hazarika (posthumous). For the Hazarika centenary the PM released a ₹100 commemorative coin and the biography 'Bharat Ratna Bhupen Hazarika'.
- Geography: Hazarika was born at Sadiya in Assam's Tinsukia district. The Dhola–Sadiya bridge over the Lohit river, named 'Bhupen Hazarika Setu' and opened on 26 May 2017, improves road access to Arunachal Pradesh.
- Usha Mangeshkar: has sung in Marathi, Hindi, Bengali, Assamese, Odia and other languages; known for 'Main To Aarti Utaroon' (Jai Santoshi Maa, 1975) and 'Mungda' (Inkaar, 1977). In 2022 she received the Asam Sahitya Sabha's 'Bhupen Hazarika International Solidarity Award' – a different body's award; the present one is the Assam Government's new national award.

Tamil Nadu link: the first musician to receive the Bharat Ratna was Madurai-born Carnatic vocalist M.S. Subbulakshmi (1998). Later musicians honoured were Ravi Shankar (1999), Lata Mangeshkar and Bismillah Khan (2001), Bhimsen Joshi (2008) and Bhupen Hazarika (2019).

14 Uttar Pradesh ranked first in implementing Mission Karmayogi; Rajasthan 2nd, Jammu & Kashmir 3rd

Agriculture, Infrastructure & Governance

News

At the Northern Regional Workshop ('Sadhana Shrinkhla') held in Lucknow on 23–24 Oct 2026 by the Capacity Building Commission (CBC) and the Dr Ram Manohar Lohia UP Academy of Administration and Management (RUPAM), on 23 Oct Uttar Pradesh was ranked first for effectively implementing Mission Karmayogi; Rajasthan was second and Jammu & Kashmir third. UP has about 19.23 lakh registered users on iGOT Karmayogi with over 99% active participation. UP's Home Department completed over one crore training courses and topped Category A. At the same event the CBC launched the 'Unnati Capability Index' and the 'National Curriculum Design Framework'.

Key facts

Ranking	1. Uttar Pradesh 2. Rajasthan 3. Jammu & Kashmir
Event	Northern Regional Workshop, Lucknow – CBC + RUPAM, 23–24 Oct 2026
UP data	~19.23 lakh iGOT users; 99%+ active; 350+ training institutes on 'Unnati'
Mission Karmayogi	National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB) – Cabinet approval 2 Sept 2020
Structure	PM's Public HR Council (chaired by PM); Coordination Unit under Cabinet Secretary; CBC; Karmayogi Bharat (SPV)
Platform	iGOT Karmayogi – online learning platform

Background

- Mission Karmayogi: shift from 'rule-based' to 'role-based' HR management; a Framework of Roles, Activities and Competencies (FRACs) for posts; continuous building of behavioural, functional and domain competencies. Targets about 46 lakh Central Government employees; nodal department – Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).
- Bodies: the Capacity Building Commission (CBC) harmonises training standards and supervises central training institutions. 'Karmayogi Bharat' – a 100% government-owned not-for-profit Special Purpose Vehicle under Section 8 of the Companies Act 2013; it runs the iGOT Karmayogi platform.
- Constitution: All India Services – Article 312; Parliament can create a new All India Service if the Rajya Sabha passes a resolution by two-thirds majority. At present IAS, IPS and IFoS (Indian Forest Service). Rajya Sabha resolution to legislate on a State List subject – Article 249.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's Administrative Training Institute (ATI) for State officials is the 'Anna Administrative Staff College', Chennai – set up in 1979 as the 'Madras Institute of Management', renamed 'Anna Institute of Management' in 1980, upgraded to State ATI in 1999, and given its present name in 2021 (G.O. No. 110, 7.10.2021). Foundation training for Assistants and Junior Assistants is held at the Civil Services Training Institute, Bhavanisagar, Erode district (1974). Tamil Nadu's position in this ranking has not been published.

15 France to host the 8th AgriVoltaics World Conference in 2027

Science, Environment & Health

News

The 7th AgriVoltaics World Conference, hosted by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, on 21–23 Oct 2026 (theme 'Powering the Global South'), concluded on 23 Oct. At the closing ceremony, hosting of the 8th edition in 2027 was formally handed over to France; the city and dates are yet to be announced. The Indo-German Cooperation on Agrivoltaics project (Germany's International Climate Initiative – IKI) supported the conference.

Key facts

8th edition	2027 – France (city, dates not yet announced)
7th edition	21–23 Oct 2026 – Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi; MNRE
Theme (2026)	Powering the Global South
First edition	14–16 Oct 2020 – Perpignan, France (online due to COVID); INRAE + Fraunhofer ISE, Germany
Support	Indo-German Cooperation on Agrivoltaics (IKI); ISA DG Ashish Khanna at closing

Background

- History: the conference series began in 2020 at Perpignan, France (online), organised by the French agricultural research institute INRAE and Germany's Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems (ISE). The 2027 edition thus returns to France.
- Science: generation of voltage/current when light falls on a material is the 'photovoltaic effect' – discovered in 1839 by French physicist Edmond Becquerel. Einstein won the 1921 Nobel Prize for explaining the photoelectric effect.
- France – climate: the Paris Agreement was adopted on 12 Dec 2015 at the 21st Conference of Parties of the UNFCCC (COP21, Paris) and entered into force on 4 Nov 2016; it aims to keep warming well below 2°C, preferably 1.5°C; countries submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).
- French settlements in India: Puducherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam – de facto transfer to India on 1 Nov 1954; treaty of 28 May 1956; de jure cession with exchange of ratifications on 16 Aug 1962.

Tamil Nadu link: Puducherry and Karaikal are French-linked enclaves surrounded by Tamil Nadu. Auroville, the international township mostly in Viluppuram district (partly in Puducherry), was founded on 28 Feb 1968 by French-born Mirra Alfassa ('The Mother'); Auroville Foundation Act 1988. Tharangambadi (Tranquebar, Mayiladuthurai district) was a Danish – not French – settlement.

16 World's largest battery-electric ship 'China Zorrilla' begins Argentina–Uruguay passenger service

Science, Environment & Health

News

Built by Incat Tasmania at Hobart, Australia, the world's largest battery-electric ship 'China Zorrilla' (Incat Hull 096) began commercial passenger service for Buquebus across the Río de la Plata (River Plate) estuary between Buenos Aires (Argentina) and Colonia del Sacramento (Uruguay) – about 55–60 km, roughly 90 minutes. The official launch ceremony was held in Buenos Aires on 21 Oct 2026. It is 130 m long and 32 m wide, with over 40 MWh of lithium-ion batteries weighing more than 250 tonnes, and carries 2,100 passengers and 225 vehicles.

Key facts

Ship	China Zorrilla (Incat Hull 096) – named after Uruguayan actress 'China' Zorrilla (1922–2014)
Builder / operator	Incat Tasmania, Hobart (Australia) / Buquebus
Battery	Over 40 MWh, 250+ tonnes; Corvus Energy lithium-ion system
Propulsion	8 electric motors driving Wärtsilä waterjets; speed 25 knots
Size / capacity	130 m × 32 m; 2,100 passengers, 225 vehicles; 2,300 m² duty-free shop
Timeline	Floated out 2 May 2025 (Hobart); reached Uruguay on heavy-lift ship 'Black Marlin' in Sep 2026; launch ceremony 21 Oct 2026

Background

- Science: the 2019 Nobel Prize in Chemistry went to John B. Goodenough (USA), M. Stanley Whittingham (UK–USA) and Akira Yoshino (Japan) for developing the lithium-ion battery. During charging, lithium ions move from the cathode to the graphite anode.
- Geography: the Río de la Plata is the wide estuary formed by the Paraná and Uruguay rivers flowing into the Atlantic; it forms the Argentina–Uruguay boundary. Uruguay's grid relies largely on wind and hydropower, so the ferry runs almost carbon-free.
- International: the International Maritime Organization (IMO) is a UN specialised agency headquartered in London; it administers the MARPOL convention on ship pollution. Incat is also building three 129 m battery-electric ferries for Denmark's Molslinjen.
- India: Kochi Water Metro, India's first water metro, was launched by the PM on 25 Apr 2023 with electric-hybrid boats built by Cochin Shipyard (CSL). India's first indigenous hydrogen fuel-cell passenger vessel (built by CSL, owned by IWAI, 50 passengers, LT-PEM fuel cell) began commercial service on the Ganga at Varanasi on 11 Dec 2025.

Tamil Nadu link: under the Union Ports Ministry's Green Tug Transition Programme (50 green tugs by 2030), V.O. Chidambaranar Port, Thoothukudi, ordered a fully electric 60-tonne bollard-pull tug in Dec 2025 (₹385.76 crore; Knowledge Marine & Engineering Works; delivery within 2 years).

17 Bharat Biotech, Gavi and UNICEF agree to cut price of 'Mosqivac' (RTS,S/AS01) malaria vaccine by about 40%

Science, Environment & Health

News

Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech announced on 23 Oct 2026 an agreement with Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and UNICEF to cut the price of RTS,S/AS01 – the world's first malaria vaccine, which it makes under the name 'Mosqivac' (GSK's brand is 'Mosquirix') – by about 40%, to €5.50 per dose. The price applies from early 2027, saving about US$50 million in 2027–29 and helping protect about one million more children. UNICEF executes the deal and Gavi backs it financially.

Key facts

Announcement	23 Oct 2026 – Bharat Biotech (Hyderabad), Gavi, UNICEF
Vaccine	RTS,S/AS01 – 'Mosqivac' (Bharat Biotech); 'Mosquirix' (GSK); developed by GSK, PATH and partners
New price	€5.50 per dose (about 40% lower) – from early 2027
Benefit	~US$50 million saved in 2027–29; up to 1 million more children
Use	In routine immunisation in 25 African countries; UNICEF has delivered 74 million+ doses
Tech transfer	GSK–Bharat Biotech deal (2021); full production with Bharat Biotech by 2028; GSK keeps supplying the AS01 adjuvant

Background

- Science: malaria is caused by the single-celled parasite Plasmodium (falciparum, vivax, malariae, ovale, knowlesi) and spread by the bite of the female Anopheles mosquito. Both RTS,S and R21 target the circumsporozoite protein of the deadliest species, Plasmodium falciparum. Urban malaria is spread by Anopheles stephensi.
- History: in 1880 Alphonse Laveran found the malaria parasite in human blood (Nobel 1907). Sir Ronald Ross found it in the mosquito's gut at Secunderabad on 20 Aug 1897 – hence World Mosquito Day on 20 Aug; Ross won the 1902 Nobel in Medicine. World Malaria Day is 25 April.
- Vaccines: WHO recommended RTS,S in Oct 2021 (piloted in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi from 2019); the second vaccine, R21/Matrix-M (University of Oxford – Serum Institute of India, Pune), was recommended in Oct 2023. Globally, 2024 saw about 282 million malaria cases and 610,000 deaths, mostly in Africa.
- India: the National Framework for Malaria Elimination (NFME) 2016–2030 targets elimination by 2030; States are grouped as Category 0 (prevention of re-establishment), 1 (elimination phase – API<1), 2 (pre-elimination) and 3 (intensified control). It is run by the National Center for Vector Borne Diseases Control (NCVBDC). Bharat Biotech also makes Covaxin (with ICMR-NIV) and Rotavac.

Tamil Nadu link: in NCVBDC's malaria monthly monitoring report (Oct 2025), Tamil Nadu is listed among 'Category 1' (elimination phase – Annual Parasite Incidence below 1) States. In cities like Chennai, Anopheles stephensi breeding in construction sites and overhead tanks spreads urban malaria.

18 Lionel Messi receives 2026 Princess of Asturias Award for Sports – presented by Princess Leonor in Oviedo

Sports

News

Argentine footballer Lionel Messi received the 2026 Princess of Asturias Award for Sports from Princess Leonor at the Teatro Campoamor, Oviedo, Spain, on 23 Oct 2026. A jury chaired by Paralympic swimmer Teresa Perales announced the award on 3 June 2026, citing his sporting career, his charity work for disadvantaged children's education and health, his humility and team spirit. Messi is the first footballer to win it on his own.

Key facts

Ceremony	23 Oct 2026 – Teatro Campoamor, Oviedo (Asturias, Spain)
Announced	3 June 2026 – jury chaired by Teresa Perales
Award	Joan Miró sculpture, diploma, insignia, €50,000
Earlier football winners	Brazil national team (2002); Spain national team (2010); Iker Casillas & Xavi (jointly, 2012)
Messi	Born 24 June 1987, Rosario; 8 Ballon d'Or (record; last in 2023); captained Argentina to the 2022 World Cup; Inter Miami
Other 2026 laureates	Patti Smith (Arts), Studio Ghibli (Communication & Humanities)

Background

- History: the Prince of Asturias Foundation was set up on 24 Sep 1980; the first awards ceremony was in 1981. In 2014, when Felipe VI became King and his daughter Leonor became heir (Princess of Asturias), they were renamed the Princess of Asturias Awards.
- Eight categories: Arts, Communication & Humanities, Social Sciences, Concord, International Cooperation, Literature, Sports, and Technical & Scientific Research. Indian economist Amartya Sen won the Social Sciences award in 2021.
- Football: in the FIFA World Cup 2026 final (USA, Canada, Mexico – first 48-team edition) at MetLife Stadium, New Jersey, on 19 July 2026, Spain beat Argentina 1–0 after extra time – Spain's second title (first in 2010). FIFA is headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland.
- Ballon d'Or: started in 1956 by the French magazine France Football; organised with UEFA since 2024. Messi holds the record with 8 wins.

Tamil Nadu link: there is no direct Tamil Nadu link to Messi's award. Related fact: Chennaiyin FC has won the Indian Super League (ISL) football title twice – 2015 and 2017–18.

19 Trichy-origin English girl Bodhana Sivanandan becomes youngest female International Master in chess history

Sports

News

Bodhana Sivanandan (born 7 March 2015) of Harrow, London, England, whose family hails from Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu, completed the requirements for the International Master (IM) title on 23 Oct 2026 at the age of 11 years, 7 months and 16 days. She earned her third and final IM norm at the 30th European Club Cup for Women in Budva, Montenegro (5.5/7) and crossed the required 2400 live-rating mark. She broke the 38-year-old record set by Hungary's Judit Polgar in 1988 to become the youngest female IM in chess history (FIDE will formally confirm the title).

Key facts

Record	Youngest female IM in chess history – 11 years 7 months 16 days
Venue / date	30th European Club Cup for Women, Budva (Montenegro) – 23 Oct 2026
Record broken	Judit Polgar (Hungary), 1988
Background	Born 7 March 2015, London; family roots in Tiruchirappalli
Other records	Played for England at the 2024 Budapest Olympiad; youngest girl to beat a GM; youngest Women's British Champion (Aug 2026); completed WGM requirements at the Samarkand Olympiad (Sep 2026)
IM rule	3 IM norms + 2400 FIDE rating (GM 2500; WGM 2300; WIM 2200)

Background

- FIDE (International Chess Federation) was founded in Paris on 20 July 1924 – hence 20 July is International Chess Day (UN, 2019). HQ: Lausanne (Switzerland); motto 'Gens una sumus' (We are one family); recognised by the IOC in 1999.
- FIDE leadership: after Arkady Dvorkovich temporarily stepped aside in July 2026 following EU sanctions, Viswanathan Anand became interim president. At the FIDE General Assembly in Samarkand (Uzbekistan) on 26–27 Sep 2026, Timur Turlov was elected President and Anand Deputy President.
- FIDE titles (descending): Grandmaster (GM), International Master (IM), FIDE Master (FM), Candidate Master (CM); women-only titles are WGM, WIM, WFM and WCM. GM and IM are open to both men and women.
- Indian women's chess: S. Vijayalakshmi of Chennai became India's first woman IM and first WGM (2001). Koneru Humpy became India's first woman Grandmaster in 2002.

Tamil Nadu link: Bodhana's family hails from Tiruchirappalli. Chennai's Viswanathan Anand (India's first GM, 1988) is now FIDE Deputy President (Sep 2026). Chennai's S. Vijayalakshmi was India's first woman IM.

20 India wins record 114 medals (30 gold) at 2026 Asian Para Games – 4th in medal table

Sports

News

At the 5th Asian Para Games in Aichi–Nagoya, Japan (18–24 Oct 2026), India won 30 gold, 35 silver and 49 bronze – 114 medals in all – to finish 4th in the medal table, its best ever. It surpassed India's previous best at Hangzhou 2022 (held in 2023). India won 9 golds on 23 Oct alone. Para-athletics gave the most medals – 65 (22 gold). China (over 400 medals), Japan (186) and Uzbekistan (145) took the top three places.

Key facts

Event	5th Asian Para Games – Aichi–Nagoya, Japan; 18–24 Oct 2026
India	30 G, 35 S, 49 B = 114; 4th place; 168 athletes, 11 sports
Top	China (400+ medals); Japan 2nd, Uzbekistan 3rd
Growth	Para-swimming 1 → 11 medals; para-table tennis 2 → 7 bronze

Background

- Paralympic Committee of India (PCI): founded in 1992 as the Physically Handicapped Sports Federation of India; HQ New Delhi; affiliated to the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and the Asian Paralympic Committee (APC). Two-time Paralympic javelin champion Devendra Jhajharia was elected its president unopposed in March 2024.
- Trailblazers: Deepa Malik won silver in shot put (F53) at Rio 2016 – the first Indian woman to win a Paralympic medal; she later headed the PCI. Sumit Antil (Haryana) won javelin F64 gold at both Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024.
- Sheetal Devi (Jammu & Kashmir) – an armless para-archer who draws the bow with her feet; bronze in the mixed team event at Paris 2024. 'T64' is the track class for below-knee limb loss/prosthesis.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's para-shuttlers won medals at Aichi–Nagoya – Thulasimathi Murugesan (women's doubles SL3–SU5 gold with Manasi Joshi; silver in singles SU5 and mixed doubles), Nithya Sre Sivan (women's singles SH6 silver), Manisha Ramadass (women's singles SU5 bronze) and Sivarajan Solaimalai (men's doubles SH6 silver, with Krishna Nagar). Tamil Nadu created a separate department for persons with disabilities in 1992, renamed it the Department for the Welfare of Differently Abled Persons in 2010, and the Chief Minister holds this department.

21 Pankaj Advani wins his 29th world title – the WBL World Billiards Championship in England

Sports

News

Bengaluru cueist Pankaj Advani (41) beat England's Robert Hall 1906–1206 in the final of the WBL World Billiards Championship (22 Oct 2026) at Landywood Snooker Club, Great Wyrley, near Birmingham, England. Trailing by more than 300 points in the five-hour final, he came back with a 587 break – the highest of the championship. It is his 29th world title (21 billiards + 8 snooker) and his first win in this event since 2014. He beat Sourav Kothari in the quarter-final and David Causier in the semi-final. India's Shruthi L retained the women's title.

Key facts

Event	WBL (World Billiards Ltd) World Billiards Championship 2026 – Landywood Snooker Club, Great Wyrley (near Birmingham), England
Final	22 Oct 2026 – beat Robert Hall (England) 1906–1206; top break 587
Tally	29 world titles = 21 billiards + 8 snooker
WBL	International body for English billiards, founded 2011; a subsidiary of WPBSA
Awards	Arjuna (2004), Khel Ratna (2006), Padma Shri (2009), Padma Bhushan (2018)
Next	IBSF World Snooker Championship, Indore, November – bid for 30th title

Background

- Pankaj Advani: born in Pune in 1985 and raised in Bengaluru (Karnataka). His first world title was the 2003 IBSF World Snooker Championship. In Nov 2024 at Doha (Qatar) he also beat Robert Hall in the IBSF World Billiards (150-up format) final.

- Bodies: IBSF (International Billiards & Snooker Federation) runs amateur world events; WPBSA governs the professional game, with WBL under it for English billiards. In India the national body is BSFI (Billiards and Snooker Federation of India).
- Billiards vs snooker: English billiards uses only three balls (two cue balls + one red). Snooker uses 22 balls – 15 reds (1 point each), 6 colours (yellow 2, green 3, brown 4, blue 5, pink 6, black 7) and one white cue ball.
- Indian history: Wilson Jones won the World Amateur Billiards title at Kolkata in 1958, becoming the first Indian world champion in any sport. Michael Ferreira and Geet Sethi are other world billiards champions.

Tamil Nadu link: Snooker grew among British Army officers in India in the 1870s (Jabalpur); Neville Chamberlain, who devised and popularised it, finalised its first set of rules at Ootacamund (Ooty), Nilgiris district, in 1882 – so Ooty is celebrated as the place where snooker's rules were born.

22 Kerala plans statewide child vulnerability mapping

International, Personalities & Important Days

News

After the suspected malnutrition death of a two-year-old at Karthikappally, Alappuzha district (18 Oct 2026), following a meeting convened by Kerala's Women and Child Development Minister Bindhu Krishna on 23 Oct, the department decided on statewide 'child vulnerability mapping' to identify children whose health, education or safety is at risk. District Women and Child Development Officers, with the Local Self-Government, Health and Police departments, will ensure their safety and rehabilitation; social investigation reports will reach Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) within a set time; every child in a care institution will get an individual care plan; and protection will continue even if parents do not cooperate.

Key facts

Decision	23 Oct 2026 – Kerala Women & Child Development Dept (Minister Bindhu Krishna)
Trigger	18 Oct – suspected malnutrition death of a two-year-old, Karthikappally, Alappuzha
Aim	Early identification of children at risk in health, education, safety
Follow-up	Anganwadi workers, ICDS supervisors, counsellors track nutrition & growth
Commission	Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (KeSCPCR) took suo motu case
Legal basis	Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of Children) Act 2015 – Sec 27: a CWC for every district

Background

- Constitution: Article 39(f) – children to be given opportunities to develop in a healthy manner, in freedom and dignity, and protected against exploitation (Directive Principle). Art 21A – free and compulsory education for 6–14; Art 24 – no employment of children below 14 in factories; Art 45 – early childhood care and education up to 6 years.
- Laws & bodies: The National Commission (NCPCR) was set up on 5 March 2007 under the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act 2005 (Ministry of Women and Child Development,

HQ New Delhi). It monitors the RTE Act 2009, POCSO Act 2012 and JJ Act 2015. Under POCSO, everyone below 18 is a 'child'.

- Schemes: 'Mission Vatsalya' (from 2021–22) – the Centre's umbrella child-protection scheme; the child helpline 1098 runs under it and is integrated with emergency number 112 (ERSS). Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) provides supplementary nutrition and growth monitoring through anganwadi centres.

Tamil Nadu link: The Tamil Nadu State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (TNSCPCR) was constituted by G.O. (Ms) No. 45 dated 28.03.2012 (Social Welfare & Nutritious Meal Programme Dept). For child nutrition, the 'Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme' was launched on 15.09.2022 at Adhimoolam Corporation Primary School, Madurai. The 'Oottachathai Uruthi Sei' scheme, which identifies and treats malnourished children, was launched on 21 May 2022 in the Nilgiris district; its second phase was launched at Ariyalur in November 2024.

23 US Department of Energy adds helium to its Critical Material List

International, Personalities & Important Days

News

The US Department of Energy (DOE) added helium to its 'DOE Critical Material List' under Section 7002 of the Energy Act of 2020. The notice was signed on 21 Oct 2026 and released on 23 Oct. Helium has no substitute in semiconductor (chip) manufacturing, leak-testing of natural-gas pipelines and quantum computing, and is vital in medical and scientific uses. DOE said rising chip demand for AI and data centres has raised supply risk. It builds on the 2023 DOE Critical Materials List.

Key facts

Notice	Signed 21 Oct 2026; released 23 Oct – DOE Office of Critical Minerals & Energy Innovation
Law	US Energy Act of 2020, Sec 7002 – high supply-risk + essential energy function
Helium	Atomic no. 2; noble gas (Group 18); second-lightest element; lowest boiling point of all elements
Discovery	18 Aug 1868 – Janssen saw a yellow spectral line during a solar eclipse at Guntur (AP); Lockyer named a new element; Ramsay isolated it on Earth in 1895
Source	By-product of natural gas; top two producers – USA, Qatar
India	Fully import-dependent for helium; over half from Qatar

Background

- Science: Helium is a colourless, odourless, non-flammable, inert noble gas. It is the second most abundant element in the universe after hydrogen, but being light it escapes Earth's atmosphere. It forms underground by alpha decay of uranium and thorium and collects with natural gas. Its name comes from the Greek 'helios' (Sun).
- Uses: liquid helium cools the superconducting magnets of MRI machines; semiconductor making; optical-fibre production; pressurising rocket fuel tanks; 'heliox' mixtures for deep-sea diving; balloons.

- India's critical minerals: the Ministry of Mines released a list of 30 critical minerals in 2023 (lithium, cobalt, rare earth elements etc.). The 'National Critical Mineral Mission' (NCMM) was approved by the Union Cabinet in January 2025 (₹34,300 crore over 7 years). KABIL (Khanij Bidesh India Ltd), a joint venture of NALCO, HCL and MECL under the Ministry of Mines, acquires mineral assets abroad – e.g. lithium exploration in Catamarca, Argentina.

Tamil Nadu link: At Manavalakurichi (near Colachel), Kanyakumari district, the mineral separation plant of IREL (Indian Rare Earths Ltd, under the Department of Atomic Energy) separates ilmenite, zircon, rutile, monazite and sillimanite from beach sand. Monazite is a key source of thorium and rare earth elements. Also, the Kodaikanal Solar Observatory (working since 1899) is renowned for solar spectrum studies.

24 International Criminal Court and its officials win the European Parliament's 2026 Sakharov Prize

International, Personalities & Important Days

News

European Parliament President Roberta Metsola announced at Strasbourg on 22 Oct 2026 that the 2026 'Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought' goes to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and its officials, recognising its work to uphold international law and justice. The other finalists were Tanzanian opposition leader Tundu Lissu and Iranian sisters Taraneh and Romina Rahimi. The award ceremony will be held at Strasbourg on 16 Dec 2026. The award comes as the US has imposed sanctions on ICC officials. (The prize is given by the European Parliament, an institution of the EU.)

Key facts

Announced	22 Oct 2026 – EP President Roberta Metsola, Strasbourg
Finalists	ICC; Tundu Lissu (Tanzania); Taraneh & Romina Rahimi (Iran)
Ceremony	16 Dec 2026 – Strasbourg; prize money €50,000
Sakharov Prize	Since 1988; named after Soviet physicist and rights activist Andrei Sakharov; first – Nelson Mandela & Anatoly Marchenko
ICC	Rome Statute (1998), working since 2002; The Hague (Netherlands); genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, aggression
India	India is not a party to the Rome Statute; no Indian has won the Sakharov Prize

Background

- ICC vs ICJ: The International Criminal Court (ICC) is a permanent court that tries individuals; it is not a UN organ; the Rome Statute was adopted on 17 July 1998 and entered into force on 1 July 2002. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the UN's principal judicial organ, set up under the UN Charter (1945); it settles disputes between States; 15 judges. Both sit in The Hague.
- India's position: India has not signed the Rome Statute; the USA, China and Russia are also not parties. Indian judges at the ICJ include Nagendra Singh (President, 1985–88) and Dalveer Bhandari.
- Sakharov Prize: set up by the European Parliament in December 1988; Andrei Sakharov – nuclear physicist who worked on the Soviet hydrogen bomb, later a human-rights campaigner; Nobel Peace

Prize 1975. From South Asia, Taslima Nasrin (Bangladesh, 1994) and Malala Yousafzai (Pakistan, 2013) have won it. 2025 – Andrzej Poczobut (Belarus) and Mzia Amaglobeli (Georgia).

Tamil Nadu link: Navanethem (Navi) Pillay, winner of the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize (announced 9 Oct), is of Tamil origin – born in Durban, South Africa, in 1941 into a Tamil family that had settled there. She served as an ICC judge (2003–2008), President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (2008–2014). CM C. Joseph Vijay congratulated her. In Tamil Nadu, the 'Tamil Nadu State Human Rights Commission' (HQ Chennai) is set up under Section 21 of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.

25 Eminent painter and former Rajya Sabha member Jogen Chowdhury (87) passes away in Kolkata

International, Personalities & Important Days

News

Eminent Indian painter and former Rajya Sabha member Jogen Chowdhury died on the morning of Sunday, 25 Oct 2026, at Ruby General Hospital, Kolkata; he was 87. He had been under treatment for blood cancer for about 14 months and was admitted on 16 Oct with an infection. He was known for satirical paintings of politics and society and for blending Indian tradition with modern art.

Key facts

Born	1939 – Daharpara, Faridpur district (now Bangladesh); moved to Calcutta with his family during Partition
Education	Govt College of Art & Craft, Calcutta (1955–60); Paris – École des Beaux-Arts, Atelier 17 (1965)
Career	Handloom Board designer (Calcutta, later Madras); curator of the Rashtrapati Bhavan art collection (from 1972, 15 years)
Santiniketan	Professor of painting at Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati from 1987; later principal and professor emeritus
Rajya Sabha	Elected from West Bengal on a Trinamool Congress ticket – 3 Apr 2014 to 2 Apr 2020
Awards	Kalidas Samman (2001, Madhya Pradesh), Banga Bibhushan (2012, West Bengal), Zainul Samman (2016, Dhaka University)

Background

- Art bodies: Lalit Kala Akademi (National Academy of Fine Arts) – set up on 5 Aug 1954; HQ Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi; an autonomous body funded by the Union Ministry of Culture. It has held the 'Triennale India' international exhibition since 1968.
- History: Rabindranath Tagore started Kala Bhavana at Santiniketan in 1919 – today the fine-arts faculty of Visva-Bharati (a central university). Nandalal Bose was its famous principal. Jogen Chowdhury served here as professor and principal.
- Polity: Rajya Sabha representatives of a State are elected by the elected MLAs of that State by proportional representation through the single transferable vote (Art 80(4)). Jogen Chowdhury was elected this way – not a nominated member.
- Award: Kalidas Samman – a national-level arts award given by the Government of Madhya Pradesh in music, theatre, dance and plastic arts (painting–sculpture). Jogen Chowdhury received it in 2001.

Tamil Nadu link: From 1968 Jogen Chowdhury worked as a textile designer with the Handloom Board in Madras (Chennai), leaving in 1972 to become curator at Rashtrapati Bhavan. In the same period the 'Madras Art Movement' grew in Chennai – K.C.S. Paniker, former principal of the Madras School of Arts, founded the Cholamandal Artists' Village at Injambakkam, Chennai, in 1966; it brought modernism to South Indian art.

26 Physicist Ashoke Sen becomes the first Indian physicist to receive the Oskar Klein Medal (2026)

International, Personalities & Important Days

News

String theorist Ashoke Sen received the 2026 Oskar Klein Medal in Stockholm on 22 Oct 2026 – the first Indian physicist to receive it. It recognises his pioneering contributions to string theory, black hole entropy and string field theory. The same day he delivered the Oskar Klein Memorial Lecture, 'Gravity from Strings and Strings from Gravity', at Stockholm University's AlbaNova Centre.

Key facts

Medal	Oskar Klein Medal – instituted 1988; annual
Awarded by	Stockholm University + Nobel Committee for Physics of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences
Past recipients	Chen-Ning Yang, Steven Weinberg, Hans Bethe (Nobel laureates)
Present post	ICTS-Infosys Madhava Chair Professor, International Centre for Theoretical Sciences (ICTS-TIFR), Bengaluru
Research	S-duality, precise counting of black hole entropy, string field theory
Other awards	S.S. Bhatnagar Prize (1994), Padma Shri (2001), Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics (2012), Padma Bhushan (2013), Dirac Medal (2014); FRS (1998)

Background

- Oskar Klein (1894–1977): Swedish theoretical physicist; the 'Kaluza–Klein theory' (extra dimensions) and the 'Klein–Gordon equation' bear his name. His extra-dimension idea is one of the foundations of later string theory.
- Science: string theory treats elementary particles not as points but as tiny vibrating 'strings'; it attempts to unite gravity with quantum mechanics. Sen's S-duality work played a key role in the 'second superstring revolution' of the 1990s.
- Science awards: the Centre introduced the 'Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar' (first awards announced in 2024) in four categories – Vigyan Ratna, Vigyan Shri, Vigyan Yuva–Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar (up to 45 years) and Vigyan Team.
- Indian Physics Nobels: C.V. Raman – 1930 (Raman effect; discovered 28 Feb 1928 – National Science Day); Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar – 1983 (structure and evolution of stars; 'Chandrasekhar limit' – the maximum mass of a white dwarf, about 1.4 solar masses). Chandrasekhar was the son of Raman's elder brother.

Tamil Nadu link: both Indians who won the Physics Nobel came from a Tamil family. C.V. Raman was born in Tiruchirappalli (Thiruvanaikaval) and graduated (B.A., 1904) from Presidency College, Madras,

with gold medals in physics and English. His nephew S. Chandrasekhar (born Lahore, 1910) studied at the same Presidency College. Ashoke Sen himself has no direct Tamil Nadu link.

27 International Artist's Day – 25 October (birth anniversary of Pablo Picasso)

International, Personalities & Important Days

News

International Artist's Day is observed every year on 25 October; in 2026 it falls on a Sunday. Canadian artist Chris MacClure started the day in 2004 to honour the contribution of painters, sculptors and other artists. Pablo Picasso was born on this day (25 Oct 1881) in Málaga, Spain. It is not a UN-declared day – it is observed worldwide by art bodies.

Key facts

Date	25 October – every year (since 2004)
Founder	Chris MacClure, Canadian artist
Picasso	Born 25 Oct 1881, Málaga (Spain); died 1973, France
Cubism	Art movement developed by Picasso with Georges Braque
Guernica	1937 – protest painting on the bombing of the Basque town of Guernica in the Spanish Civil War; now in the Reina Sofía Museum, Madrid

Background

- Picasso: one of the most influential painters of the 20th century. After his 'Blue Period' and 'Rose Period' he developed 'Cubism' with Georges Braque – breaking objects into geometric shapes seen from several angles at once. 'Les Demoiselles d'Avignon' (1907) was the pioneering work.
- History: in 1937, during the Spanish Civil War, aircraft of Germany's 'Condor Legion' bombed the Basque town of Guernica. Picasso's 'Guernica', painted in protest, became a world symbol against war.
- Indian painters: Raja Ravi Varma (1848–1906) – born at Kilimanoor in the princely State of Travancore; painted Indian mythological scenes in the European oil technique and spread them to the people through his printing press. Amrita Sher-Gil (1913–1941) – a pioneer of modern Indian painting; her works are declared 'National Art Treasures'.

Tamil Nadu link: 'Thanjavur painting' – a distinctive style with gold foil, raised gesso relief and inlaid glass beads/stones; influenced by Nayak and Vijayanagara traditions; it flourished under the patronage of the Maratha rulers of Thanjavur. It holds a Geographical Indication (GI, application no. 47).

28 International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (18–24 Oct 2026) – theme 'From Detection to Prevention'

International, Personalities & Important Days

News

The 14th International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week was observed from 18 to 24 Oct 2026 with the theme 'From Detection to Prevention'. The message: lead poisoning is often hidden and comes from many sources, so it must first be identified and then proven preventive actions applied. It is driven by the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint, led by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP); governments were urged to enact and enforce laws eliminating lead paint.

Key facts

Week	18–24 Oct 2026 – 14th edition
Theme	'From Detection to Prevention'
Driven by	Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint – led by WHO + UNEP
Deaths	More than 3.5 million deaths worldwide in 2023 attributed to lead exposure (mainly cardiovascular) – WHO
Lead-paint laws	Only 48% of countries had legally binding controls as of Jan 2024
Safe level	No level of lead exposure is known to be safe (WHO)

Background

- Science: lead – symbol Pb (Latin 'plumbum'), atomic number 82. A cumulative toxicant affecting many organs – brain, kidneys, blood, heart. It permanently harms children's brain development and lowers IQ; it blocks haem synthesis, causing anaemia; it also raises blood pressure.
- Sources: mining, smelting, recycling (especially used lead-acid batteries), paint, solder, ceramic glazes, toys, and some traditional cosmetics and medicines (WHO).
- Petrol: tetraethyl lead (TEL) was added to petrol as an anti-knock agent. India phased it down from 1994 and switched fully to unleaded petrol nationwide in 2000. With Algeria, the last country, stopping in July 2021, UNEP declared the leaded-petrol era over in August 2021.
- Indian law: under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change notified the 'Regulation on Lead Contents in Household and Decorative Paints Rules, 2016' – lead above 90 ppm banned (in force from Nov 2017). Used batteries are covered by the 'Battery Waste Management Rules, 2022' – extended producer responsibility (EPR).

Tamil Nadu link: Pure Earth assessed a used lead-acid battery (ULAB) smelter at Rangapuram near Vellore in 2012. Later, in a Vellore project with the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board and VIT as partners (preliminary assessment Sept 2018), the highest lead levels were found in the yard of a school/day-care centre attended by about 50 children under 5 near a ULAB smelter – a direct example of the theme 'From Detection to Prevention'.

1 Bay of Bengal deep depression intensifies into Cyclone 'Arnab' (named by Bangladesh; means 'sea') – to cross Andhra coast on 28 Oct

Tamil Nadu, Weather & Space

News

On the morning of 26 Oct 2026 (Monday), the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said a deep depression had intensified into Cyclonic Storm 'Arnab', centred over the east-central and adjoining west-central Bay of Bengal. It moved west at about 15 km/h. It was forecast to become a severe cyclonic storm on the night of 26 Oct and a very severe cyclonic storm on 27 Oct, and to cross the Andhra Pradesh and Yanam coast between Bapatla and Visakhapatnam in the forenoon of 28 Oct, with winds of 115–125 km/h gusting to 140 km/h. Andhra Pradesh and Odisha were put on high alert, and evacuations began in vulnerable areas of Andhra Pradesh. Tamil Nadu faces no direct impact, but the Regional Meteorological Centre, Chennai, issued an orange alert for heavy to very heavy rain in Pudukottai, Sivaganga and Ramanathapuram districts on 26 Oct.

Key facts

Name	Arnab (IMD pronunciation 'Ornab') – contributed by Bangladesh; Bengali for 'sea'
Became cyclone	26 Oct 2026 – east-central & adjoining west-central Bay of Bengal
Forecast	Severe cyclonic storm (26 Oct night) → very severe cyclonic storm (27 Oct)
Landfall	28 Oct forenoon – between Bapatla and Visakhapatnam (near Yanam); 115–125 km/h, gusts 140
Tamil Nadu	No direct impact; 26 Oct – orange (heavy rain) alert for Pudukottai, Sivaganga, Ramanathapuram
Next name	Murasu – contributed by India

Background

- Naming: North Indian Ocean (Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea) cyclones have been named since 2004. The list is drawn up by the WMO/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones (set up in 1972). Its 13 members: Bangladesh, India, Iran, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, UAE and Yemen. A new list of 169 names (13 countries × 13) was released in April 2020. Names are assigned by IMD's Regional Specialised Meteorological Centre (RSMC) New Delhi – one of the world's six RSMCs.
- IMD classification (maximum sustained wind): Depression 31–49 km/h; Deep Depression 50–61; Cyclonic Storm 62–88 (the stage at which a name is given); Severe Cyclonic Storm 89–117; Very Severe 118–166; Extremely Severe 167–221; Super Cyclonic Storm 222 and above.
- Science: a tropical cyclone needs sea-surface temperature above about 26.5°C, the Coriolis force, low vertical wind shear and a pre-existing disturbance. Its energy comes from latent heat released when water vapour condenses. The Coriolis force is zero at the Equator, so cyclones rarely form within about 5° of it. In the Northern Hemisphere cyclones rotate anticlockwise.
- Geography: the Bay of Bengal sees more cyclones than the Arabian Sea – because of warmer water and the remnants of systems moving west from the Pacific / South China Sea. Cyclone seasons: pre-

monsoon (Apr–May) and post-monsoon (Oct–Dec).

Tamil Nadu link: in the 2020 list, the name after 'Arnab' is 'Murasu' – a Tamil word (the drum) contributed by India. Cyclones that hit Tamil Nadu: Thane – between Cuddalore and Puducherry, 30 Dec 2011; Vardah (named by Pakistan) – near Chennai, 12 Dec 2016; Gaja (very severe cyclonic storm) – between Nagapattinam and Vedaranyam, early 16 Nov 2018.

2 Palani Dhandayuthapani temple tops Tamil Nadu's 10 highest-earning temples with ₹233.50 crore (HR&CE list)

Tamil Nadu, Weather & Space

News

A list of Tamil Nadu's 10 highest-earning temples released by the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) Department was reported on 24–26 Oct 2026. The Arulmigu Dhandayuthapani Swamy Temple at Palani, Dindigul district, tops it with an annual income of ₹233.50 crore. Next come Arunachaleswarar, Tiruvannamalai (₹139.06 crore); Subramanya Swamy, Tiruchendur (₹131.38 crore); Samayapuram Mariamman (₹111.09 crore); Subramanya Swamy, Tiruttani (₹74.98 crore); Meenakshi Sundareswarar, Madurai (₹73.72 crore); Ramanathaswamy, Rameswaram (₹64.33 crore); Ranganathaswamy, Srirangam (₹50.57 crore); Kallazhagar, Alagar Kovil (₹34.20 crore); and Bannari Amman, Sathyamangalam (₹29.16 crore). The ten together earned ₹941.99 crore. Hundi offerings, paid darshan, prasadam sales and rent are the main sources. (The reports do not name the financial year.)

Key facts

List	HR&CE Department – reported 24–26 Oct 2026
Top	Palani Dhandayuthapani temple (Dindigul) – ₹233.50 crore
2nd–4th	Tiruvannamalai (₹139.06 cr), Tiruchendur (₹131.38 cr), Samayapuram (₹111.09 cr)
5th–10th	Tiruttani, Madurai Meenakshi, Rameswaram, Srirangam, Kallazhagar, Bannari Amman
Total	10 temples – ₹941.99 crore
Use	Renovation, devotee facilities, annadhanam, cleanliness

Background

- Palani: the temple stands on Sivagiri hill (the other hill is Sakthigiri) at the foot of the Palani Hills, Dindigul district. It is the third of Murugan's six abodes (Arupadai Veedu). Nakkeerar's 'Thirumurugatrupadai' (Pathuppattu) refers to it as 'Thiruvavinankudi'.
- Presiding deity: by tradition, the Dandayuthapani idol (Murugan as an ascetic holding a staff) was made by Siddhar Bogar from 'navapashanam', an amalgam of nine herbs/minerals. Temple lore says a Chera king found the neglected idol and built the shrine.
- Festivals and tradition: Thaipusam, on the Pusam star day of the Tamil month Thai, is the main festival; Panguni Uthiram, Vaikasi Visakam and Soorasamharam are also important. The story of Idumban, who carried the two hills as a 'kavadi' at Sage Agastya's bidding, is held to be the origin of kavadi worship. The hill has steps, a winch (funicular) railway and a rope car. Palani Panchamirtham got a GI tag in 2019.

- Other temples in the list: Arunachaleswarar, Tiruvannamalai – the Pancha Bhoota Sthalam for fire (Agni), famous for the Karthigai Deepam. Tiruchendur and Tiruttani are two more of the six abodes. Rameswaram is one of the 12 Jyotirlingas.

Tamil Nadu link: all six abodes of Murugan are in Tamil Nadu – three of them (Palani, Tiruchendur, Tiruttani) are in this top-10 list. Four of the five Pancha Bhoota Sthalams are in Tamil Nadu: Ekambareswarar, Kanchipuram (earth), Jambukeswarar, Thiruvanaikaval (water), Tiruvannamalai (fire) and Chidambaram (space); Srikalahasti (air) is in Andhra Pradesh.

3 India will have four functional launch pads by 2029 – ISRO Chairman V. Narayanan

Tamil Nadu, Weather & Space

News

Speaking at a private university's graduation ceremony in Chennai on 24 Oct 2026 (Saturday), ISRO Chairman Dr V. Narayanan said India will have four functional launch pads by 2029. A dedicated launch complex for the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) is coming up on about 2,000 acres at Kulasekarapattinam, Thoothukudi district. Partnering with private firms is needed to meet the demand for thousands of satellites, but ISRO will not be privatised, he said. Gaganyaan's first uncrewed test flight will take place within two months, followed by two more uncrewed flights; about 8,000 ground tests are done and four astronaut-designates are in training. Chandrayaan-5, with Japan, will carry a 350-kg rover for 100 days of study. (He did not name the other three pads; official records show they are Sriharikota's First, Second and Third Launch Pads.)

Key facts

Statement	24 Oct 2026, Chennai – graduation ceremony – Dr V. Narayanan (ISRO Chairman since Jan 2025)
Existing pads	First Launch Pad (FLP, 1993 – PSLV, SSLV); Second Launch Pad (SLP, 2005 – GSLV, LVM3) – Sriharikota
Third Launch Pad	Union Cabinet, 16 Jan 2025; ₹3,984.86 crore; to be completed in 48 months; for NGLV
Fourth	Kulasekarapattinam (Thoothukudi) – SSLV launch complex; foundation Feb 2024
NGLV	Cabinet, 18 Sep 2024; ₹8,240 crore; up to 30 t to LEO; reusable first stage
Gaganyaan	First uncrewed flight (G1) – humanoid robot 'Vyommitra'

Background

- Sriharikota: a barrier island between Pulicat Lake and the Bay of Bengal in Tirupati district, Andhra Pradesh. The first rocket from here (an RH-125 sounding rocket) flew on 9 Oct 1971. It was renamed 'Satish Dhawan Space Centre – SHAR' on 5 Sep 2002. India's first rocket (Nike-Apache) was launched from Thumba, Keralam, on 21 Nov 1963.
- Science: the Earth spins from west to east, so a rocket launched eastward gains that rotational speed (about 0.46 km/s at the Equator). Launching from the east coast drops spent stages into the sea. From Kulasekarapattinam, polar-orbit launches can head straight south; from Sriharikota they must curve around Sri Lanka, wasting fuel.

- Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV): about 3 times LVM3's payload at 1.5 times the cost; 3 development flights; target 96 months. Goals: Bharatiya Antariksh Station (2035) and an Indian landing on the Moon (2040). The Third Launch Pad will also be a standby for the Second Launch Pad.
- Chandrayaan-5 / LUPEX: a joint mission of ISRO and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA); ISRO builds the lander, JAXA the rover; it will be launched on Japan's H3 rocket from Tanegashima to study water and other resources at the lunar south pole. Government approval came in March 2025.

Tamil Nadu link: the fourth pad is coming up at Kulasekarapattinam, Thoothukudi district – India's second spaceport. ISRO's rocket engines are tested at the ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC), Mahendragiri, Tirunelveli district. ISRO Chairman V. Narayanan hails from Kanyakumari district. Pulicat Lake, next to Sriharikota, straddles the Tamil Nadu–Andhra Pradesh border.

4 Ladakh declared India's first '100% organic' Union Territory; complete ban on chemical fertilisers

Environment, Rural Development & Economy

News

On 25 Oct 2026 (Sunday), at Leh, Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena declared Ladakh (Leh and Kargil) 'India's first 100% organic Union Territory'. In July 2026 a complete ban was imposed on the procurement, distribution, sale and use of chemical and synthetic fertilisers in farming; in March 2026 organic manure was supplied to villages before the sowing season. Apricot, sea buckthorn, buckwheat, barley and vegetables are the main crops. (Note: in Dec 2020 the whole of Lakshadweep was declared an organic agricultural area under PGS-India and called the 'first organic UT'; the 'first' here is the Ladakh administration's claim.)

Key facts

Declaration	25 Oct 2026, Leh – LG Vinai Kumar Saxena
Fertiliser ban	July 2026 – complete ban on procurement, distribution, sale and use of chemical/synthetic fertilisers
Crops	Apricot, sea buckthorn, buckwheat, barley, vegetables
Earlier UT	Lakshadweep – Dec 2020, PGS-India (PKVY)
First State	Sikkim – declared by the PM at Gangtok, 18 Jan 2016
Certification	PGS-India (Agriculture Ministry); NPOP (Commerce Ministry – APEDA)

Background

- Sikkim: by an Assembly resolution in 2003 (Pawan Chamling government) it decided to go organic; about 75,000 ha became certified organic. On 18 Jan 2016 PM Modi declared it India's first fully organic State at Gangtok.
- Lakshadweep: in Dec 2020 its entire land area (about 32 sq km) was declared an organic agricultural area under PGS-India through the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) – then called the 'first 100% organic UT'.
- Central schemes: PKVY (2015) – cluster-based organic farming with PGS certification and marketing support; Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER, 2015–16); National Mission on Natural Farming (Cabinet approval, Nov 2024).

- Certification: PGS-India (Participatory Guarantee System) – Agriculture Ministry; farmer groups assess one another; for the domestic market. NPOP (National Programme for Organic Production, 2001) – Commerce Ministry, run by APEDA; third-party certification; for exports. FSSAI's 'Jaivik Bharat' logo marks organic food.

Tamil Nadu link: the State released the 'Tamil Nadu Organic Farming Policy 2023' in March 2023 – promoting chemical-free farming, integrated organic farming systems, millets and farmer producer organisations. Tamil Nadu's organic-farming pioneer G. Nammalvar (born 6 Apr 1938, Elangadu, Thanjavur district; died 30 Dec 2013) founded 'Vanagam' at Karur and opposed the methane project in the Cauvery delta.

5 Shivraj Singh Chouhan launches upgraded NMMS (2.0) app for attendance under the VB-G RAM G job scheme

Environment, Rural Development & Economy

News

Union Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on 23 Oct 2026 in New Delhi launched an upgraded version of the National Mobile Monitoring System (NMMS) app, which records the attendance of workers under the 'Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin)' (VB-G RAM G). Its aim is to stop fake attendance. Built with technical support from IIT Madras, it offers AI-based face verification, liveness detection, device-level security, anti-cloning and anti-tampering safeguards, AI photo de-duplication and offline attendance for sites without network. An exception mechanism covers elderly workers, persons with disabilities and those with mobile-device problems.

Key facts

Launch	23 Oct 2026, New Delhi – Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan (Rural Development + Agriculture & Farmers Welfare)
Tech support	IIT Madras and other agencies
New features	AI face verification, liveness detection, offline attendance, AI photo de-duplication
Face authentication	Since March 2026; about 40 crore person-days recorded through it
Progress (since 1 July)	About 46 crore person-days; 3.65 crore workers; 2.41 lakh gram panchayats
Funds 2026–27	Central allocation ₹95,692 crore; over ₹1.51 lakh crore with States' share

Background

- History: the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) was enacted in September 2005 and launched on 2 Feb 2006 at Bandlapalli, Anantapur district, Andhra Pradesh, in 200 districts; 'Mahatma Gandhi' was added to its name in 2009 (MGNREGA). It guaranteed 100 days of work a year; Section 17 provides for social audit by the Gram Sabha.
- New law: VB-G RAM G Act 2025 – Presidential assent December 2025; replaces MGNREGA with 125 days of guaranteed work a year; Centre–State funding 60:40 (90:10 for NE and Himalayan States); a pause of up to 60 days in peak farm season; weekly wages. Rolled out nationwide from 1 July 2026 (launched from Andhra Pradesh).
- NMMS: introduced by the Ministry of Rural Development in 2021 – real-time attendance at worksites with time-stamped, geo-tagged photographs; made universal for all works from 1 Jan 2023.

- Constitution: the right to work is a Directive Principle (Article 41). Wages are not triggered by attendance alone – they are calculated from work measured by engineers and logged in electronic measurement books, and paid by Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

Tamil Nadu link: IIT Madras, Chennai, gave technical support for the app. Tamil Nadu is also one of the nine States that record 100% of attendance through the system (the others: Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand).

6 India's rice export value up 13% (Apr–Sep 2026): global demand keeps rising

Environment, Rural Development & Economy

News

As per government data, the value of India's rice exports rose 13% to ₹54,937.71 crore in the first six months (April–September) of the current fiscal 2026–27 (rupee value, not volume). Indian Rice Exporters Federation (IREF) Vice-President Dev Garg cited this on the sidelines of the Bharat International Rice Conference (BIRC 2026), held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, on 23–25 Oct 2026. Global demand is rising as El Niño may cut output elsewhere; Indian rice is at least 10% cheaper than competitors (Thailand, Myanmar). Rice currently faces no export duty, minimum export price or restriction.

Key facts

Export value	Apr–Sep 2026: ₹54,937.71 crore (+13%); full 2025–26 ≈ ₹1,12,000 crore
Apr–Aug 2026	Basmati ₹22,864 crore (+11.6%); non-basmati ₹22,874 crore (+14.2%)
World share	World's largest rice producer and exporter; ≈40% of world rice trade (IREF)
Volume	≈22 million tonnes exported last year; ≈24 million tonnes projected this year (USDA)
Basmati market	Over 74% of basmati exports go to the Middle East
Output, stocks	2025–26 output 154 million tonnes+; govt stocks 38 MT (October buffer norm 10.25 MT)

Background

- Policy: the ban on non-basmati white rice exports imposed in July 2023 was lifted in Sept 2024 and its minimum export price dropped in Oct 2024; the basmati minimum price was also scrapped in Sept 2024. Exports have recovered since.
- Geography: rice is a Kharif crop needing temperatures above 25°C, rainfall above 100 cm and water-retaining alluvial/clayey soil; in low-rainfall Punjab and Haryana it grows with irrigation.
- Basmati GI: on APEDA's application, the Intellectual Property Appellate Board (IPAB) ordered registration in Feb 2016. The GI area covers Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Uttarakhand, western Uttar Pradesh and parts of Jammu & Kashmir; Madhya Pradesh is not included.
- Science & institutions: International Rice Research Institute (IRRI, 1960) – Los Baños, Philippines; its South Asia Regional Centre – Varanasi. India's ICAR-National Rice Research Institute (NRRI) – Cuttack, Odisha.

Tamil Nadu link: 'Thooyamalli rice', a traditional paddy variety for which the Tamil Nadu State Agricultural Marketing Board (TNSAMB) applied, has received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag

(reported Dec 2025) – an aromatic samba-season variety of 135–140 days; the name ('pure' + 'jasmine') refers to its fragrance. With the five products tagged in that batch, Tamil Nadu's GI count rose to 74. The Cauvery delta (Thanjavur) is the 'rice bowl of Tamil Nadu'.

7 Uttarakhand youth Ravi Tamta's electric 'flying car' HAPIDA SKYNeX – test flight succeeds

Environment, Rural Development & Economy

News

Ravi Tamta of Kaflikhan village near Jageshwar Dham, Almora district, Uttarakhand – self-taught over about 13 years through the internet, with no engineering degree – built 'HAPIDA SKYNeX', a single-seat electric flying vehicle, through his firm Hapida Sky Private Limited. Based on scaled-up multirotor drone technology, it is a battery-powered electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) prototype. In August 2026 it flew for nearly a minute at an Army helipad in Almora; it was back in the news in October 2026 (The Better India – 21 Oct; Channel IAM – 25 Oct). The goal is to cut a 40 km, 90-minute road trip to 10–15 minutes. It is an early prototype that needs further testing.

Key facts

Builder	Ravi Tamta (BA graduate, self-taught) – Kaflikhan, Almora, Uttarakhand
Vehicle	HAPIDA SKYNeX – single-seat, battery-electric eVTOL; multiple motors/propellers, transparent canopy
Test	August 2026 – Army helipad, Almora; airborne for about a minute
Firm	Hapida Sky Private Limited
Other inventions	Phone-charging shoes, smart walking stick for the visually impaired, bamboo-splitting machine
Status	Early prototype; further testing needed

Background

- eVTOL: an electrically powered aircraft that takes off and lands vertically without a runway. Being developed worldwide for urban 'air taxi' (Advanced Air Mobility) services – zero exhaust emissions and low noise.
- Regulation: civil aviation safety and certification in India is handled by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) – under the Ministry of Civil Aviation, HQ New Delhi. Drones are governed by the 'Drone Rules 2021' (25 Aug 2021) – five classes: nano (up to 250 g), micro, small, medium, large; permissions via the 'Digital Sky' platform.
- Science: a multirotor's propellers push air downward and the reaction pushes the vehicle up – Newton's third law. Bernoulli's principle explains wing lift arising from the pressure difference above and below a wing.
- Other Indian efforts: 'The ePlane Company' (2019; founder Prof. Satya Chakravarthy), incubated at IIT Madras – received DGCA Design Organisation Approval (DOA) in 2023.

Tamil Nadu link: IIT Madras-incubated 'The ePlane Company' unveiled the full-scale prototype (PT-01) of 'e200X', a compact passenger eVTOL air taxi, in July 2026 – a pilot plus 200 kg payload (2 passengers or cargo), about 110 km range. It was built at a 60,000 sq ft facility on IIT Madras's Discovery Campus at Thaiyur (Chengalpattu district); certified flight trials are targeted for mid-2027.

8 'International Year of Millets 2023' drew a very positive global response – PM Modi in the 139th 'Mann Ki Baat'

Environment, Rural Development & Economy

News

In the 139th 'Mann Ki Baat', broadcast on Sunday 25 Oct 2026, PM Narendra Modi recalled that India's call to mark 2023 as the 'International Year of Millets' received a very positive global response, and said millets ('Shree Anna') are deeply rooted in Indian culture. Examples of the millet revival in the Northeast: two women friends in Khanduli village, West Jaintia Hills, Meghalaya, making millet cookies, cakes and baby food; farmer Chekjing Sangma of Sadolpara village, West Garo Hills; and Kezoma village, Kohima district, Nagaland – cultivation resumed in 2024 and its first millet festival held in 2025. He also recalled the programme's 12-year journey.

Key facts

Episode	Mann Ki Baat – 139th episode; 25 Oct 2026 (Sunday); All India Radio
Millet message	Global response to IYM 2023; revival in the Northeast – Khanduli, Sadolpara (Meghalaya), Kezoma (Nagaland)
Other topics	Vocal for Local during Diwali–Chhath, khadi, e-Sanjeevani (≈50 crore tele-consultations), IIT Madras brain research, organ donation, tributes to Sardar Patel and Narinder Singh Kapany (fibre-optics pioneer)
IYM 2023	UNGA resolution – 3 March 2021; proposed by India; backed by over 70 countries
Shree Anna	Union Budget 2023–24: millets named 'Shree Anna'; ICAR-Indian Institute of Millets Research (IIMR), Hyderabad – 'Global Centre of Excellence'

Background

- Mann Ki Baat: the PM's monthly radio address; first broadcast on 3 Oct 2014 (Vijayadashami) on All India Radio (Akashvani); usually on the last Sunday of the month at 11 a.m.
- International Year of Millets: FAO endorsed India's proposal in 2018; the UN General Assembly declared 2023 the International Year of Millets on 3 March 2021. India observed 2018 as the 'National Year of Millets'.
- Agri-science: millets – pearl millet (bajra/kambu), sorghum (jowar/cholam), finger millet (ragi), foxtail, little, kodo, proso and barnyard millets. Drought-tolerant, low-water 'climate-resilient' crops rich in fibre, iron and calcium. Wheat, barley and oats are not millets. Rajasthan leads in pearl millet output.
- Institution: ICAR-Indian Institute of Millets Research (IIMR) – Hyderabad, Telangana; named a 'Global Centre of Excellence' in Budget 2023–24.

Tamil Nadu link: the five-year 'Tamil Nadu Millet Mission' was announced in the State's Agriculture Budget (2023–24) presented on 21 March 2023 (estimated cost ₹82 crore; Centre–State funding). Namakkal, Tiruppur, Coimbatore, Erode and Pudukkottai were added as millet zones. Sangam literature mentions thinai and varagu.

9 Indian photographer Sitaram Raul wins 'Behaviour: Invertebrates' category at Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2026

Awards, Aviation, Industry & Sports

News

Sitaram Raul, a photographer from Badlapur, Maharashtra, won the 'Behaviour: Invertebrates' category of the 62nd Wildlife Photographer of the Year (WPY) competition run by the Natural History Museum (NHM), London. Results were announced in London on 13 Oct 2026. His image 'Shifting Sand' shows a Buthacus scorpion burrowing into a sand dune at sunrise to escape the heat, near Sam village in Rajasthan's Thar Desert – timed so that the dug-out sand hangs in the air. The competition drew more than 65,000 entries from 121 countries.

Key facts

Winner	Sitaram Raul – Badlapur (Maharashtra); wildlife and macro photographer
Category / image	Behaviour: Invertebrates – 'Shifting Sand' (Buthacus scorpion)
Location	Near Sam village, Thar Desert, Rajasthan
Announced	13 Oct 2026, London; exhibition from 16 Oct 2026 at NHM
Overall winner	Federico Veronesi (Italy) – 'The Aftermath'
Earlier honour	2025 – 'Highly Commended', Urban Wildlife (fruit bats, Maharashtra)

Background

- Science: scorpions are arthropods of the class Arachnida (like spiders, ticks and mites) – four pairs (8) of legs, pincer-like pedipalps and a venomous sting at the tail tip. They give birth to live young. Under ultraviolet (UV) light they glow blue-green because of chemicals such as beta-carboline in the cuticle. There are over 2,500 described species.
- Medicine: the sting of the Indian red scorpion (Hottentotta tamulus) can be fatal. Dr Himmatrao Bawaskar of Maharashtra's Konkan region showed that the drug prazosin sharply cuts scorpion-sting deaths (The Lancet, 1986); he received the Padma Shri in 2022.
- Geography: the Thar (Great Indian Desert) lies mostly in Rajasthan and extends into Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab and Pakistan. The Sam sand dunes are in Jaisalmer district. The Desert National Park (Jaisalmer–Barmer) is a key home of the Critically Endangered Great Indian Bustard.
- Competition: WPY has run since 1965 and is organised by the Natural History Museum, London; it is often called the 'Oscars of wildlife photography'.

Tamil Nadu link: the award has no direct Tamil Nadu link. But Tamil Nadu has its own small 'desert' – the red 'Theri' sand dunes near Tiruchendur, Thoothukudi district. They are red because iron-rich minerals such as ilmenite, magnetite and garnet were oxidised; south-west monsoon winds are thought to have carried the sand from the Nanguneri area of Tirunelveli district.

10 Kerala approves India's first cooperative-sector airline ('Co-Keralam', headquartered in Kochi)

Awards, Aviation, Industry & Sports

News

On 25 Oct 2026 at Kozhikode, at the silver jubilee of the Calicut City Service Cooperative Society, Kerala CM V.D. Satheesan announced State approval for the 'Kerala Civil Aviation Development Cooperative Society' (HQ: Nedumbassery, Kochi) to start flight services – India's first airline in the cooperative sector, tentatively named 'Co-Keralam'. C.N. Vijayakrishnan, chairman of MVR Cancer Centre, leads the project. About 200 cooperative societies will invest ₹2 crore each (about ₹400 crore) as equity, on the Cochin International Airport (CIAL) model, with the CM as chairman and the Cooperation Minister as vice-chairman. It plans two leased 72-seat aircraft at first (later 4, then 6), with routes from Kochi to Kozhikode, Kannur, Mangaluru, Bengaluru, Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai. Services have not yet begun.

Key facts

Announced	25 Oct 2026, Kozhikode – CM V.D. Satheesan
Body	Kerala Civil Aviation Development Cooperative Society; Nedumbassery, Kochi
Lead	C.N. Vijayakrishnan (MVR Cancer Centre)
Capital	~200 cooperatives × ₹2 crore ≈ ₹400 crore; CIAL model
Fleet	2 leased 72-seaters → 4 → 6
Routes	Kochi to Kozhikode, Kannur, Mangaluru, Bengaluru, Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai
Note	Distinct from the private 'Air Kerala' (Gulf-backed)

Background

- Constitution: the 97th Amendment Act 2011 added 'co-operative societies' to Article 19(1)(c), making their formation a fundamental right; added Article 43B (promotion of cooperatives) to the Directive Principles; and inserted Part IXB (Articles 243ZH–243ZT). In July 2021 the Supreme Court (Union of India v. Rajendra N. Shah) held that, since 'co-operative societies' is in the State List (Entry 32), Part IXB – passed without ratification by half the State legislatures (Art. 368(2)) – cannot apply to State cooperatives; it survives for multi-State cooperatives (Union List Entry 44).
- Administration: the Union Ministry of Cooperation was created on 6 July 2021; first minister Amit Shah; motto 'Sahakar se Samriddhi' (prosperity through cooperation). The Multi-State Co-operative Societies Act 2002 was amended in 2023. The UN declared 2025 the International Year of Cooperatives (theme: 'Cooperatives Build a Better World'). Amul, Anand (Gujarat), is India's best-known dairy cooperative.
- Aviation: Cochin International Airport (CIAL, Nedumbassery) was India's first airport built under public-private partnership (PPP) (1999); in 2015 it became the world's first fully solar-powered airport and in 2018 won the UN 'Champions of the Earth' award. The aviation regulator is the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) under the Ministry of Civil Aviation; a new airline needs a DGCA Air Operator Certificate (AOC).
- History: India's cooperative movement began with the Co-operative Credit Societies Act 1904 (Lord Curzon's time); the 1912 Co-operative Societies Act allowed non-credit societies too.

Tamil Nadu link: India's first cooperative society – the 'No. 1 Tirur Primary Agricultural Cooperative Credit Society' – was started for farmers at Tirur, Tiruvallur district, on 22 August 1904; its old building is being restored and a museum on cooperative history is planned. Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai are also on Co-Keralam's planned routes.

11 PM Modi inaugurates Arvind Ltd's ₹150-crore garment manufacturing unit in Varanasi

Awards, Aviation, Industry & Sports

News

On 25 Oct 2026 PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Ahmedabad-based Arvind Ltd's ₹150-crore garment manufacturing unit at Khochwan village, Mirzamurad, near NH-19, in his Varanasi Lok Sabha constituency. It is Arvind's first large manufacturing plant in the Purvanchal region and will make sportswear, innerwear and other garments for brands such as Jockey, U.S. Polo Assn. and Arrow. Over 300 local women have already been recruited and are being trained; the unit aims to employ about 1,000 women, and a second phase is planned. UP Governor Anandiben Patel and CM Yogi Adityanath attended.

Key facts

Inauguration	25 Oct 2026 – PM Modi; Khochwan, Mirzamurad, Varanasi (UP)
Company	Arvind Ltd – 1931, Ahmedabad (Lalbhai family); India's largest denim maker
Investment	₹150 crore (phase 1); phase 2 planned
Products	Sportswear, innerwear, other garments – Jockey, U.S. Polo Assn., Arrow
Jobs	300+ women in training; ~1,000 women targeted

Background

- Company history: Arvind Mills was founded in Ahmedabad in 1931 by Kasturbhai Lalbhai and his brothers. In the 1980s it introduced denim to the Indian market; it is now India's largest denim producer.
- Schemes: PM MITRA (PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel parks) – Union Ministry of Textiles; announced in Budget 2021–22; ₹4,445 crore; 7 sites chosen in March 2023: Tamil Nadu (Virudhunagar), Telangana (Warangal), Gujarat (Navsari), Karnataka (Kalaburagi), Madhya Pradesh (Dhar), Uttar Pradesh (Lucknow) and Maharashtra (Amravati). '5F' vision – Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign; run in PPP mode through a State–Centre SPV.
- PLI (Production Linked Incentive) for textiles – ₹10,683 crore (Sept 2021) for man-made fibre (MMF) apparel and fabrics and technical textiles.
- Culture: Varanasi's 'Banarasi' sarees are brocades woven in Katan silk with gold/silver 'zari' thread, famous since Mughal times; 'Banaras Brocades and Sarees' received a GI tag in 2009. National Handloom Day – 7 August (the day the Swadeshi Movement began in 1905).

Tamil Nadu link: one of India's 7 PM MITRA parks is coming up on 1,052 acres of SIPCOT land at E. Kumaralingapuram, Virudhunagar district; Tamil Nadu was the first State to sign the agreement and launch its park (March 2023, Chennai). Also, the first National Handloom Day was launched by PM Modi on 7 August 2015 at the Centenary Hall, University of Madras, Chennai.

12 Ahmedabad to host the 2029 World Weightlifting Championships – a first for India

Awards, Aviation, Industry & Sports

News

After an Executive Board meeting of the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) in Ningbo, China, Ahmedabad (Gujarat) was named on 25 Oct 2026 as host of the 2029 senior World Weightlifting Championships – the first time India will stage the senior Worlds. The same meeting gave the 2030 Worlds to Moscow (Russia), the 2028 World Youth Championships to Prishtina (Kosovo) and the 2028 World Junior Championships to Caracas (Venezuela). The 2026 Worlds are being held in Ningbo from 27 Oct. Ahmedabad will also host the 2030 Commonwealth Games.

Key facts

Decision	IWF Executive Board, Ningbo (China); announced 25 Oct 2026
Event	2029 senior World Weightlifting Championships – Ahmedabad, Gujarat
Significance	First senior Weightlifting Worlds in India
Other awards	2030 – Moscow; 2028 Youth – Prishtina; 2028 Junior – Caracas
2026 Worlds	Ningbo, China (from 27 Oct)
Ahmedabad	2030 Commonwealth Games; India's proposed 2036 Olympic city

Background

- Sport: weightlifting has two lifts – the snatch (bar overhead in one movement) and the clean and jerk (to the shoulders, then overhead); the total of the best of each decides the result. Powerlifting (squat, bench press, deadlift) is a different sport. Women's weightlifting entered the Olympics at Sydney 2000.
- Indian stars: Karnam Malleswari (Andhra Pradesh) – bronze at Sydney 2000 (69 kg), the first Indian woman to win an Olympic medal. Mirabai Chanu (Manipur) – 2017 world champion; silver at Tokyo 2020 (49 kg).
- Body: the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) – HQ Lausanne, Switzerland (earlier Budapest). Ahmedabad lies on the Sabarmati; the 2026 Asian Weightlifting Championships were held in nearby Gandhinagar.

Tamil Nadu link: Sathuvachari near Vellore is called 'the cradle of Tamil Nadu weightlifting'. Sathish Kumar Sivalingam, who grew up there, won Commonwealth Games gold in the men's 77 kg twice – Glasgow 2014 and Gold Coast 2018; an Arjuna awardee, he is the fourth from Sathuvachari to receive it.

13 Major Abhilasha Barak gets the '2025 UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award' for her service with UNIFIL, Lebanon

International

News

UN Secretary-General António Guterres presented the '2025 UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award' to Major Abhilasha Barak of the Indian Army on 5 June 2026 at UN Headquarters, New York, at the ceremony for the International Day of UN Peacekeepers. She serves with the Indian Battalion of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in south Lebanon as Female Engagement Team Commander and Gender Focal Point. In six months she ran 539 gender-focused field activities, reaching more than 5,000 women and girls. She is the third Indian to win the award. The award was announced in May 2026; PM Narendra Modi congratulated her on 7 June.

Key facts

Award	2025 UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year – 5 June 2026, New York; presented by António Guterres
Role	Female Engagement Team Commander & Gender Focal Point – Indian Battalion, UNIFIL (south Lebanon); since June 2025
Work	539 field activities in 6 months (highest in the mission); 5,000+ women and girls; 75 Lebanese women got Indian ITEC scholarships
Profile	Rohtak (Haryana); Delhi Technological University (2016); OTA Chennai (2017); Army Air Defence (2018); May 2022 – Army's first woman combat aviator
Award history	Started 2016 by the Office of Military Affairs, UN Dept of Peace Operations; based on UNSC Resolution 1325 (2000)
Earlier Indians	Maj Suman Gawani (2019, South Sudan – UNMISS); Maj Radhika Sen (2023, DR Congo – MONUSCO)

Background

- UNIFIL: set up on 19 March 1978 by UN Security Council Resolutions 425 and 426 to confirm Israel's withdrawal from south Lebanon; HQ at Naqoura. Its mandate was expanded by Resolution 1701 after the 2006 war. Resolution 2790 (28 Aug 2025) gave a final extension to 31 Dec 2026, with withdrawal from 1 Jan 2027. As of 23 Sep 2026 it had 7,565 troops from 46 countries; India 633 (fifth).
- India and UN peacekeeping: began with an army field hospital sent to Korea in 1950. In 2007 it sent the first all-women Formed Police Unit (FPU) to Liberia. International Day of UN Peacekeepers – 29 May (start of UNTSO, 1948).
- Geography: Lebanon lies on the eastern Mediterranean coast; capital Beirut. Syria to the north and east, Israel to the south. The UN-drawn 'Blue Line' (2000) separates Israel and Lebanon. Its flag carries a cedar tree.
- Defence / polity: in the Babita Puniya case (17 Feb 2020) the Supreme Court ordered Permanent Commission for women Army officers. The Army Aviation Corps was formed on 1 Nov 1986; Abhilasha trained at the Combat Army Aviation Training School (CATS), Nashik.

Tamil Nadu link: Abhilasha Barak was born at the Military Hospital, Wellington (Nilgiris), while her father (a retired colonel) was attending the Defence Services Staff College (DSSC) there. In 2017 she

trained at the Officers Training Academy (OTA, 1963), Alandur, Chennai.

14 Student movement's 'Student List' wins Serbia's snap parliamentary election; Aleksandar Vučić concedes defeat

International

News

In Serbia's snap parliamentary election on 25 Oct 2026, the 'Student List – Students Win', born out of the student protests, won. The same night Aleksandar Vučić, leader of the ruling Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), conceded defeat. By the sample count he cited, the Student List got about 2.2 million votes and 135–140 of the 250 seats; SNS about 1.7 million votes and about 105 seats. Turnout was close to 70%. Dr Ilija Srdanović, a physician and professor at the Novi Sad Faculty of Medicine, headed the list. Vučić, President since 2017, resigned on 27 Sep 2026 to run for Prime Minister; Speaker Ana Brnabić is acting President. Final results and the formation of the new government are still pending.

Key facts

Election	25 Oct 2026 – snap parliamentary election; National Assembly – 250 seats, 3% threshold
Winner	'Student List – Students Win' (registered 15 Sep 2026); lead candidate Dr Ilija Srdanović
Projection	Student List ~2.2 m votes, 135–140 seats; SNS ~1.7 m, ~105 seats (as stated by Vučić)
Vučić	PM 2014–17; President 2017–2026; resigned 27 Sep 2026; acting President Ana Brnabić
Origin	1 Nov 2024 – Novi Sad railway-station canopy collapse, 16 killed; protests against corruption
Serbia	Capital Belgrade; currency Serbian dinar; EU candidate since 2012

Background

- History: after World War I the 'Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes' was formed in 1918 – later Yugoslavia. After World War II it became a socialist federation under Josip Broz Tito. Yugoslavia broke up in 1991–92; when Montenegro left in 2006, Serbia became a separate state. Kosovo declared independence in 2008 – neither Serbia nor India recognises it.
- Non-Aligned Movement (NAM): first summit 1–6 Sep 1961 at Belgrade (then Yugoslavia) – 25 countries. Founders: Nehru (India), Tito (Yugoslavia), Nasser (Egypt), Sukarno (Indonesia), Nkrumah (Ghana). Its base was the 1955 Bandung Asian–African Conference. It has 120 members today.
- Geography: Serbia is a landlocked Balkan country. Belgrade stands where the Sava joins the Danube. The Danube rises in Germany's Black Forest and enters the Black Sea; it is Europe's second-longest river after the Volga. Novi Sad, on the Danube, is the capital of the autonomous province of Vojvodina.
- Polity: Serbia is a parliamentary republic. The President is directly elected for 5 years, at most two terms. The National Assembly is unicameral with 250 members chosen by proportional representation. SNS was founded in 2008 by Vučić and Tomislav Nikolić and has ruled since 2012.

Tamil Nadu link: there is no direct Tamil Nadu link to this news. A parallel: after the 1965 anti-Hindi agitation, the DMK won 137 seats in the 1967 Madras State election and C.N. Annadurai became Chief

Minister on 6 March 1967. At Virudhunagar, DMK student leader P. Seenivasan defeated K. Kamaraj by 1,285 votes.

15 Lula wins Brazil's presidency for a fourth time, defeating Flávio Bolsonaro in the runoff

International

News

In the runoff of Brazil's presidential election on 25 Oct 2026, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (80) of the Workers' Party (PT) defeated Senator Flávio Bolsonaro of the Liberal Party (PL), son of former President Jair Bolsonaro. Lula won about 51.8% of the vote, a margin of about 4.4 million votes. In the 4 Oct first round Flávio had 47.03% and Lula 45.16%; as no one crossed 50%, a runoff was held. This is Lula's fourth, non-consecutive term. Flávio refused to accept the result and seeks to annul it, citing the extension of voting hours. The new term begins on 5 Jan 2027.

Key facts

Runoff	25 Oct 2026 – Lula ~51.8%, Flávio ~48.2%; margin ~4.4 m votes
First round	4 Oct 2026 – Flávio 47.03%, Lula 45.16%
Lula	Born 1945, Pernambuco; former metalworkers' union leader; co-founder of PT (1980); President 2003–2010, 2023–2026
Opponent	Senator Flávio Bolsonaro (PL) – son of Jair Bolsonaro (President 2019–22)
Inauguration	5 Jan 2027 – moved from 1 Jan by Constitutional Amendment 111 (2021)
Election body	Superior Electoral Court (TSE); compulsory voting for most adults

Background

- History: Brazil was a Portuguese colony; independence on 7 Sep 1822; official language Portuguese. It is South America's largest country. Under President Juscelino Kubitschek the capital moved from Rio de Janeiro to the newly built Brasília on 21 April 1960 – city plan by Lúcio Costa, buildings by Oscar Niemeyer.
- Geography / environment: the Amazon rises in the Andes of Peru and enters the Atlantic; it is the world's largest river by discharge. The Amazon is the world's largest tropical rainforest. The UN climate conference COP30 was held at Belém (Pará State), 10–21 Nov 2025.
- Groupings: BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa and others; 17th summit 6–7 July 2025, Rio de Janeiro. G20 summit Nov 2024, Rio (presidency received from India). IBSA (India–Brazil–South Africa, 2003); G4 (India, Brazil, Germany, Japan – bid for permanent UNSC seats).
- India–Brazil: strategic partnership since 2006. On his 8 July 2025 visit to Brasília, PM Modi received Brazil's highest honour, the 'Grand Collar of the National Order of the Southern Cross'. Economy: Brazil is the world's largest producer of coffee and sugarcane.

Tamil Nadu link: there is no direct Tamil Nadu link to this election. Related fact: Brazil is the world's largest coffee producer. In India, Karnataka (~72%), Kerala (~20%) and Tamil Nadu (~5%, mostly Arabica) lead – Coffee Board data (2015–16). Tamil Nadu's coffee areas: Nilgiris, Shevaroy Hills (Yercaud, Salem), Palani Hills (Dindigul), Anamalai (Coimbatore).

16 Vigilance Awareness Week 2026 (26 Oct – 1 Nov) – theme 'Probity for Prosperity'

Important Days

News

By Circular No. 05/09/26 dated 18 Sep 2026, the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) announced that Vigilance Awareness Week 2026 will be observed from 26 Oct to 1 Nov. Theme: 'Probity for Prosperity' (Hindi: 'सत्यनिष्ठा से समृद्धि'). The week opens with public servants taking the Integrity Pledge at 11 am on 26 Oct; citizens can take the e-pledge on the CVC website. It is preceded by a three-month 'preventive vigilance campaign' from 17 Aug to 16 Nov 2026. The week is observed every year in the week that includes 31 Oct, the birthday of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Key facts

Dates	26 Oct – 1 Nov 2026
Theme	'Probity for Prosperity' (सत्यनिष्ठा से समृद्धि)
Organiser	Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), New Delhi – Circular 05/09/26 (18.09.2026)
Preceding campaign	17 Aug – 16 Nov 2026: pending complaints/cases, capacity building, digital initiatives, contract management
Earlier themes	2024 – 'Culture of Integrity for Nation's Prosperity'; 2025 – 'Vigilance: Our Shared Responsibility'
Why this week?	31 Oct – birthday of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

Background

- History of the CVC: it was set up by a government resolution in February 1964 on the recommendation of the Committee on Prevention of Corruption (Santhanam Committee, 1962–64). In 'Vineet Narain v. Union of India' (1997) the Supreme Court directed that the CVC be given statutory status; after a 1998 Ordinance it became a statutory body under the Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003.
- Structure (polity): a Central Vigilance Commissioner + up to two Vigilance Commissioners, appointed by the President on the recommendation of a committee of the Prime Minister, the Union Home Minister and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha. Term: 4 years or up to age 65. The CVC is a statutory, not a constitutional, body; it submits its annual report to the President.
- Anti-corruption laws: the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 – its 2018 amendment made bribe-giving an offence and added prior approval (Section 17A) for inquiry against a public servant. The Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013 – Lokpal at the Centre and Lokayuktas in the States. The first Administrative Reforms Commission (1966, Morarji Desai) first recommended Lokpal and Lokayukta.
- Economic angle: corruption raises the cost of public procurement, erodes investor confidence and stops welfare benefits from reaching the right people – which is why the 2026 theme links 'probity' with 'prosperity'. Digital tools such as e-procurement and Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) are instruments of preventive vigilance.

Tamil Nadu link: K. Santhanam (1895–1980), who headed the Santhanam Committee, was born in Madras; he was a freedom fighter, the first editor of 'The Indian Express', a Constituent Assembly member from Madras and Chairman of the Second Finance Commission (1956). Tamil Nadu set up its

State Vigilance Commission and the Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (DVAC; HQ Alandur, Chennai) in 1964. The State Lokayukta was created under the Tamil Nadu Lokayukta Act, 2018.

17 Infantry Day 2026 (27 Oct) – 80th observance; honours 1 Sikh's 1947 air-landing at Srinagar

Important Days

News

The Indian Army observes 'Infantry Day' (Shaurya Diwas) every year on 27 Oct. On 27 Oct 1947 the 1st Battalion of the Sikh Regiment (1 SIKH) was flown from Palam airfield, Delhi, in Dakota aircraft and air-landed at Srinagar airfield, where it beat back tribal raiders backed by the Pakistan Army – the first military operation of independent India. Since the 79th Infantry Day was observed in 2025, 2026 marks the 80th. The Infantry is the Indian Army's largest fighting arm ('Queen of the Battle').

Key facts

Day	27 Oct – Infantry Day / Shaurya Diwas; 2026 – 80th
1947 event	1 SIKH – Palam (Delhi) → Srinagar airfield, 27 Oct 1947
Commander	Lt Col Dewan Ranjit Rai – killed on 27 Oct 1947 itself; first Maha Vir Chakra (posthumous)
Instrument of Accession	26 Oct 1947 – signed by Maharaja Hari Singh; accepted by Mountbatten on 27 Oct
Invasion	Pakistan's 'Operation Gulmarg' – Oct 1947 (via Muzaffarabad)
Training	Infantry School – Mhow (Dr. Ambedkar Nagar), Madhya Pradesh

Background

- History: in October 1947 Pakistan sent tribal lashkars into Jammu & Kashmir under the code name 'Operation Gulmarg'; they advanced through Muzaffarabad and Baramulla towards Srinagar. On 26 Oct 1947 Maharaja Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession to India; Governor-General Mountbatten accepted it on 27 Oct, the day Indian troops landed at Srinagar.
- Heroes: 1 SIKH's commanding officer Lt Col Dewan Ranjit Rai (born 1913, Gujranwala) was killed in action on the Baramulla–Srinagar road on 27 Oct 1947 itself; he was the first recipient of the Maha Vir Chakra (posthumous). Major Somnath Sharma (4th Bn, Kumaon Regiment), killed at the Battle of Badgam on 3 Nov 1947, was the first recipient of the Param Vir Chakra.
- Polity: the Instrument of Accession ceded three subjects – defence, external affairs and communications – to India; Article 370 later gave special status. Article 370 was rendered inoperative in Aug 2019, and two Union Territories, J&K and Ladakh, came into being on 31 Oct 2019.
- Training: the Infantry School is at Mhow in Indore district, Madhya Pradesh; its Commando Wing is at Belgaum, Karnataka. Mhow, the birthplace of Dr B.R. Ambedkar, was renamed 'Dr. Ambedkar Nagar' in 2003.

Tamil Nadu link: Major Mukund Varadarajan, who grew up in Tambaram, Chennai (Rajput Regiment; 44th Rashtriya Rifles) – an infantry officer – was killed fighting terrorists in Shopian, Kashmir, on 25 Apr 2014 and was awarded the Ashoka Chakra, India's highest peacetime gallantry award (posthumously).

He was commissioned from the Officers Training Academy (OTA), Chennai, in 2006. His life was filmed as the Tamil movie 'Amaran' (2024).

18 World Day for Audiovisual Heritage 2026 (27 Oct) – theme 'Your Window to the World'

Important Days

News

UNESCO observes the 'World Day for Audiovisual Heritage' every year on 27 Oct. The 2026 theme is 'Your Window to the World', highlighting the role of audiovisual records in connecting and understanding societies. Film and sound archives worldwide hold events together with the Coordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations (CCAAA). The Day aims to raise awareness that film reels, audio tapes and radio–TV recordings are at risk of being lost, and that urgent measures are needed to preserve them.

Key facts

Date	27 October (annual)
2026 theme	'Your Window to the World'
Proclaimed	UNESCO General Conference, 2005
Commemorates	1980 'Recommendation for the Safeguarding and Preservation of Moving Images' (21st General Conference)
Coordination	UNESCO + CCAAA
Indian archive	NFAI (Pune, 1964) – part of NFDC since 2022

Background

- UNESCO: its 21st General Conference (1980) adopted the 'Recommendation for the Safeguarding and Preservation of Moving Images'; to mark it, the 2005 General Conference proclaimed 27 Oct as this Day. UNESCO launched the 'Memory of the World' programme in 1992 to protect documentary heritage.
- India in the Memory of the World Register: 1997 – the I.A.S. Tamil Medical Manuscript Collection (Institute of Asian Studies, Chennai; India's first entry); 2005 – Shaiva manuscripts in Pondicherry; 2007 – Rigveda manuscripts (Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune); 2017 – Gilgit manuscripts; 2025 – Bhagavad Gita and Bharata's Natyashastra, taking India's total to 14.
- Indian film heritage: the first full-length Indian feature film was 'Raja Harishchandra' (1913, Dadasaheb Phalke); the first talkie was 'Alam Ara' (14 March 1931, Ardeshir Irani; Majestic Cinema, Bombay) – no print of it survives today, a stark reminder of why audiovisual preservation matters. The National Film Archive of India (NFAI, Pune, 1964) was merged into the NFDC in March 2022 along with Films Division, the Directorate of Film Festivals and the Children's Film Society; the National Film Heritage Mission (NFHM – digitisation and restoration) is now run by the NFDC.
- Science angle: old nitrate film is highly inflammable; acetate film suffers chemical decay called 'vinegar syndrome'; magnetic tapes also degrade over time. Cool, humidity-controlled storage and digitisation are therefore essential.

Tamil Nadu link: the first silent film made in South India was 'Keechaka Vadham' (1917–18), directed by R. Nataraja Mudaliar and produced by his India Film Company (1917), Madras. The first Tamil talkie,

'Kalidas', directed by H.M. Reddy, was released on 31 Oct 1931 – the same year as 'Alam Ara'. In 1897 M. Edwards held Madras's first film screenings at the Victoria Public Hall. And India's very first Memory of the World entry (1997) is the Tamil medical palm-leaf manuscript collection of the Institute of Asian Studies, Chennai – covering Siddha, Ayurveda, Unani, agriculture and animal husbandry.

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1 ₹57 crore sanctioned for the free milch cow scheme – 10,000 rural women; G.O. issued

Tamil Nadu

News

The Tamil Nadu Government issued a G.O. giving administrative and financial sanction of ₹57 crore for 2026–27 to give free milch cows to 10,000 eligible women in rural areas (reported 27 Oct 2026). Each beneficiary gets one healthy crossbred cow able to yield at least 8 litres of milk a day; each cow is expected to give 3–4 calves in five years. The scheme was announced in the 2026–27 State Budget presented on 5 Aug 2026 – '10,000 women every year'.

Key facts

Outlay	₹57 crore – administrative & financial sanction (2026–27)
Beneficiaries	10,000 eligible rural women (every year)
Cow	One crossbred cow each; at least 8 litres/day
Announced	2026–27 State Budget (5 Aug 2026)
Aim	Women's income, milk output, stronger milk co-operatives, family nutrition
Same Budget	'Vetri Magalir' goat-rearing scheme – 5 goats/sheep, ₹110 crore

Background

- History: the free milch cow and goat/sheep schemes were first launched in 2011 under CM J. Jayalalithaa. The target was 60,000 crossbred cows over five years, 2011–12 to 2015–16 (12,000 a year). Aavin collected milk daily from the beneficiary villages through its milk routes.
- Economy: India is the world's largest milk producer. 'Operation Flood' (1970), the 'White Revolution', was implemented by the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB, Anand, Gujarat) under Dr Verghese Kurien; his birthday, 26 Nov, is National Milk Day.
- Structure: Tamil Nadu's apex dairy co-operative is the Tamil Nadu Co-operative Milk Producers' Federation (TCMPF), brand 'Aavin' – a three-tier 'Anand pattern' of village primary milk producers' societies, district unions and the State federation.
- Polity: 'Preservation, protection and improvement of stock' is in the State List (Entry 15). Article 48 (DPSP) – organise agriculture and animal husbandry on scientific lines and prohibit slaughter of cows and calves.

Tamil Nadu link: native cattle breeds of Tamil Nadu – Kangayam (Tiruppur, Erode, Coimbatore, Karur), Umblachery (Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Nagapattinam – Cauvery delta), Bargur (Erode), Pulikulam (Madurai, Sivaganga), Alambadi (Dharmapuri, Salem). Aavin's average daily procurement had slipped to about 31.5 lakh litres (Aug 2026); the scheme is meant to raise milk output.

2 WorldSkills 2026 (Shanghai) – CM Vijay gives ₹49 lakh incentives to Tamil Nadu medal winners and participants

Tamil Nadu

News

CM C. Joseph Vijay on 27 Oct 2026, at the Secretariat, Chennai, gave ₹49 lakh in all to the 12 Tamil Nadu competitors at the 48th WorldSkills Competition, Shanghai, China (22–27 Sept 2026). J. Mohammed Salam, silver medallist in Dental Prosthetics, got ₹15 lakh; four Medal for Excellence winners got ₹5 lakh each; seven other participants got ₹2 lakh each. India's 70-member team in 63 skills won 6 silver and 20 Medals for Excellence and finished 10th.

Key facts

Event	48th WorldSkills Competition, Shanghai (China), 22–27 Sept 2026
India	70 competitors (largest ever), 63 skills; 6 silver + 20 Medals for Excellence; 10th (13th at Lyon 2024)
Tamil Nadu	12 competitors; 1 silver (Mohammed Salam – Dental Prosthetics), 4 Medals for Excellence
Incentives	Silver ₹15 lakh; Excellence ₹5 lakh; participation ₹2 lakh – total ₹49 lakh
Coordination	State: Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation (TNSDC); national: NSDC under MSDE
Eligibility	Age 16–23; selected via State → South zone → national rounds
Next	49th – 2028, Aichi (Japan)

Background

- WorldSkills International grew out of post-WWII efforts to create youth jobs; the first competition was held in Madrid, Spain, in 1950. Formerly the International Vocational Training Organisation (IVTO). Held every two years – the 'Olympics of skills'.
- India became the 48th member of WorldSkills International in 2007. In 2026 India debuted in 11 new skills (incl. Dental Prosthetics, Retail Sales, Aircraft Maintenance). Smriti Nambiar (Bakery, silver) was 'Best of Nation'.
- National: the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) was set up in 2014; Jayant Chaudhary is MoS (Independent Charge). The Skill India Mission began on 15 July 2015. The UN General Assembly declared 15 July 'World Youth Skills Day'.

Tamil Nadu link: State skill competitions are run by the Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation (TNSDC), open to school, arts & science, engineering, polytechnic, ITI and hotel-management students and working youth. TNSDC also runs the 'Naan Mudhalvan' skilling scheme, launched on 1 March 2022. The CM asked heads of schools and colleges to raise participation.

3 'Vetri Tamil Nadu e-Sevai 2.0' to be launched soon – mobile-first, AI-enabled platform

Tamil Nadu

News

Tamil Nadu's e-Sevai platform will be fully upgraded as the 'Vetri Tamil Nadu Integrated e-Sevai 2.0' platform. The Tamil Nadu e-Governance Agency (TNeGA) has issued an Expression of Interest/tender; eligible technology firms must apply by 3 Nov 2026 (reported 24–27 Oct 2026). Features: mobile-first design, applying from home, status alerts by SMS/WhatsApp, protection of Aadhaar and personal data, and capacity to handle heavy simultaneous log-ins. Today 275 services of 38 departments are delivered through 25,277 centres; the new platform is to scale up to 1,000 services.

Key facts

Name	Vetri Tamil Nadu Integrated e-Sevai 2.0
Implementing body	TNeGA – AI & IT Department
Tender	EOI issued; last date 3 Nov 2026
Present scale	38 departments, 275 services, 25,277 centres; 50,000–60,000 requests/day
Target	Up to 1,000 services; peaks up to 1.5 lakh requests/day
AI features	Tamil–English conversational help, document processing, grievance routing; 'no-application' delivery using government databases
Budget	5 Aug 2026: all centres to e-Sevai 2.0; 'Namma Arasu' WhatsApp chatbot services 76 → 275

Background

- National e-governance: the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) began in 2006, under which Common Service Centres (CSCs) were set up in villages. 'Digital India' was launched on 1 July 2015; nodal ministry – Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY).
- Tamil Nadu history: the Directorate of e-Governance was formed in 2006 and TNeGA registered in 2007 as a society under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975. e-Sevai centres are run by agencies such as TACTV, Primary Agricultural Co-operative Credit Societies (PACCS) and Village Poverty Reduction Committees (VPRC). 'e-Sevai for All' began on 15 March 2023.
- Law / tech: the Information Technology Act, 2000 gives legal recognition to electronic records and digital signatures. Aadhaar numbers are issued by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), a statutory body under the Aadhaar Act, 2016.

Tamil Nadu link: the 2026–27 Budget (5 Aug 2026) announced upgrading all e-Sevai centres to 'e-Sevai 2.0', an AI-enabled project-approval portal 'SPEED' (₹40 crore), a stronger 'Tamil Nadu AI Mission', and a feasibility study (₹5 crore) for 'Arivagam', an AI technology city. Patta transfer and caste, income and residence certificates are key e-Sevai services.

4 Greater flamingos sighted at Veeranam lake – a rare inland sighting of a coastal wetland bird

Tamil Nadu

News

Eighteen greater flamingos (Phoenicopterus roseus) were sighted at Veeranam lake, Cuddalore district, on 25 Oct 2026, recorded by bird researcher Prof. J. Pandiyan of A.V.C. College, Mayiladuthurai, with research scholars Saravanakumar and Veerasamy. The species usually lives in coastal wetlands; Veeranam is a freshwater lake about 50 km inland. Researchers linked the visit to a weak southwest monsoon, low Cauvery flows, dried coastal mudflats with less food, and a 'Super El Niño'. The receding lake has left shallow feeding grounds.

Key facts

Event	25 Oct 2026 – 18 greater flamingos, Veeranam lake, Cuddalore district
Recorded by	Prof. J. Pandiyan, A.V.C. College, Mayiladuthurai
Species	Phoenicopterus roseus – IUCN: Least Concern
Veeranam lake	10th century; Rajaditya Chola (son of Parantaka I); near Kattumannarkoil
Water source	Vadavar from the Kollidam; Sengal stream; capacity about 1,465 mcft
Chennai water	New Veeranam Project – conceived 1967; completed 2004
Biodiversity	Key Biodiversity Area (KBA); 20,000+ waterbirds

Background

- History: Veeranam (Veeranarayanan) lake was dug in the 10th century by Rajaditya, son of Parantaka I Chola. Rajaditya was killed on his elephant at the Battle of Takkolam (949 CE) against the Rashtrakuta king Krishna III. Kalki's novel 'Ponniyin Selvan' opens with Vandiyathevan on the banks of the Veeranarayana lake.
- Geography: the lake lies in the lower Cauvery basin and is fed from the Kollidam (Lower Anicut at Anaikarai) through the Vadavar channel. It irrigates the delta and is a key drinking-water source for Chennai.
- Science: flamingos feed head-down, filtering algae, small crustaceans and invertebrates with their bills; carotenoid pigments in the diet give the pink colour. The greater flamingo is the largest and most widespread flamingo; in India it breeds in large numbers in the Great Rann of Kutch ('Flamingo City'). It is Gujarat's State bird.
- Climate: El Niño is the abnormal warming of the eastern Pacific Ocean; it tends to weaken India's southwest monsoon.

Tamil Nadu link: flamingos normally gather at coastal wetlands – Kodiakkarai/Point Calimere (Nagapattinam), Pulicat (Tiruvallur) and Dhanushkodi (Ramanathapuram). Cuddalore district also has the Pichavaram mangroves. The sighting at Veeranam, about 235 km south of Chennai, shows birds shifting habitat as monsoon patterns change.

5 11th India–Indonesia joint special forces exercise 'Garuda Shakti' begins at Banyuwangi, Indonesia

Defence, Tribal Affairs, Transport & Welfare

News

The 11th edition of 'Garuda Shakti', the India–Indonesia joint special forces exercise, began on Tuesday, 27 Oct 2026, at Banyuwangi in Indonesia's East Java province and runs till 6 Nov. Troops of the Parachute Regiment (Special Forces) represent India and Indonesia's Special Forces represent the host. Training covers special operations in jungle terrain, obstacle crossing, combat marksmanship, mountaineering and air assault, plus sharing of weapons, equipment and operational practices. It ends with a validation exercise simulating realistic scenarios.

Key facts

Edition / venue	11th; Banyuwangi, East Java, Indonesia
Dates	27 Oct – 6 Nov 2026
Indian contingent	Parachute Regiment (Special Forces)
Focus	Jungle warfare, special operations, sharing of weapons & practices
10th edition	3–12 Dec 2025 – Special Forces Training School, Bakloh (Himachal Pradesh)
9th edition	1–12 Nov 2024 – Cijantung, Indonesia; 25 Indian and 40 Kopassus personnel
Other exercise	Samudra Shakti – India–Indonesia naval exercise

Background

- Geography: Indonesia is the world's largest archipelagic country; capital Jakarta (Java); a new capital, 'Nusantara', is being built in East Kalimantan on Borneo. The ASEAN Secretariat is in Jakarta. The Six Degree Channel separates India's Great Nicobar (Indira Point) from Sumatra – Indonesia is India's maritime neighbour.
- History: Hindu–Buddhist kingdoms such as Srivijaya (Sumatra) and Majapahit (Java); Borobudur (Buddhist) and Prambanan (Hindu) temples are in Java. Indonesia's President Sukarno was chief guest at India's first Republic Day (1950); President Prabowo Subianto was chief guest in 2025.
- Defence ties: relations were raised to a 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' in 2018; Indonesia is a key partner in India's Act East Policy. Army – Garuda Shakti; Navy – Samudra Shakti; the two navies also run coordinated patrols (CORPAT).
- Special forces: the Parachute Regiment's Special Forces battalions (Para SF) are trained in airborne insertion, counter-terrorism and jungle warfare; the 10th edition was held at the Special Forces Training School, Bakloh (HP). The Indonesian Army's special forces are 'Kopassus'.

Tamil Nadu link: around 1025 CE Rajendra Chola I led a naval expedition against the Srivijaya empire of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula and took the title 'Kadaram Kondan'. Earlier, Srivijaya king Mara Vijayottungavarman built the 'Chudamani Vihara', a Buddhist monastery at Nagapattinam, with Rajaraja I's permission (Anaimangalam / Leiden copper plates).

6 Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada 1–15 Nov 2026: nationwide celebration ending with Janjatiya Gaurav Divas on 15 Nov, Birsa Munda's birth anniversary

Defence, Tribal Affairs, Transport & Welfare

News

On 27 Oct 2026 the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs announced that 1–15 Nov 2026 will be observed as 'Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada' (Tribal Pride Fortnight) – a time-bound drive to speed up flagship programmes and spread awareness, culminating in 'Janjatiya Gaurav Divas' on 15 Nov, the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda. Over 300 projects (228 inaugurations, 74 foundation stones) are planned. On 12 Nov about 200 Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS) students will meet President Droupadi Murmu; 12–13 Nov – National Tribal Literary Festival (New Delhi); 14 Nov – Rani Durgavati Adivasi Mahila Sammelan (500 tribal women entrepreneurs from 30 States/UTs); 1–2 Nov – a conclave of about 1,500 traditional healers in Hyderabad. The 'Jan-HIT' health portal, built with ICMR, and a National FRA Digital Platform will be launched.

Key facts

Period	1–15 Nov 2026; 15 Nov – Janjatiya Gaurav Divas
Ministry	Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs
Projects	300+ – 228 inaugurations, 74 foundation stones
Events	12 Nov – EMRS students meet the President; 12–13 Nov – National Tribal Literary Festival; 14 Nov – Rani Durgavati Adivasi Mahila Sammelan
Digital	Jan-HIT health portal (with ICMR, 20 States); National FRA Digital Platform
Volunteers	About 1.54 lakh 'Adi Karmayogi' volunteers – 76,963 villages
Past JGD venues	Ranchi (2021), Khunti (2022, 2023), Jamui (2024), Dediapada (2025)

Background

- History: Birsa Munda was born on 15 Nov 1875 at Ulihatu (now in Khunti district, Jharkhand) in the Munda tribe. He led the 'Ulgulan' (Great Tumult, 1899–1900) in Chotanagpur against the British, zamindars and moneylenders (dikus) and is revered as 'Dharti Aaba' (Father of the Earth). He died in Ranchi jail on 9 June 1900. The Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, 1908 followed.
- Janjatiya Gaurav Divas: observed on 15 Nov since 2021 to honour tribal freedom fighters. Jharkhand State was created on 15 Nov 2000, Birsa's birth anniversary. His 150th birth anniversary year (2024–25) was celebrated as 'Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh' – 28+ national events and 3.8 crore participants.
- Constitution: Article 342 – the President specifies the Scheduled Tribes; only a law of Parliament can change the list. Article 338A – National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (89th Amendment, 2003). Fifth Schedule – Art 244(1); Sixth Schedule – Art 244(2). The Ministry of Tribal Affairs became a separate ministry in October 1999.
- Schemes: PM-JANMAN – for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), launched at Khunti on 15 Nov 2023; 'Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan' (2024); EMRS schools; the 'Adi Karmayogi' mission. Rani Durgavati – Gond queen of Garha (Gondwana); she died fighting the Mughal army in 1564.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's Scheduled Tribe list has 37 entries (Narikoravan and Kurivikkaran were added in 2022); Census 2011 counted 7,94,697 tribal people (1.1% of the State's population). Six PVTGs – Toda, Kota, Kurumba, Irular, Paniyan, Kattunayakan. The State's Tribal Research Centre (TRC) was set

up at Udhagamandalam in 1983–84 and has run a tribal museum since 1996. The Nilgiris, Jawadhu, Kalrayan, Kolli and Shevaroy hills are major tribal areas.

7 Indian Naval Academy develops a twin-drone maritime rescue system that spots people at sea and drops lifebuoys

Defence, Tribal Affairs, Transport & Welfare

News

On 27 Oct 2026 a team of the Indian Naval Academy (INA), Ezhimala (Kerala), unveiled an indigenous twin-drone maritime search-and-rescue system (Midshipman Sudhanshu Tanwar, one of the developers, spoke to ANI). The search drone – a quadcopter – scans the sea with 2K optical and thermal cameras; a 'YOLO' AI model analyses its live feed and flags a person in the water. Linked by long-range RF, a hexacopter then flies to the spot using GPS, drops a lifebuoy only on the operator's command and returns on its own. Developer figures: quadcopter – 45 min, 0.5 kg payload, 50 km/h; hexacopter – 25 min, 2.5 kg, 40 km/h; both have a 10 km operating radius. Uses: man-overboard cases and fishing-boat accidents. Full open-sea trials and formal induction are not yet publicly confirmed.

Key facts

Developer	Indian Naval Academy, Ezhimala (Kannur, Kerala)
Search drone	Quadcopter (4 rotors) – 2K optical + thermal cameras; YOLO AI; 45 min
Delivery drone	Hexacopter (6 rotors) – 2.5 kg payload; GPS; 25 min
Operating radius	10 km for both; long-range RF link
Human control	Lifebuoy drop only on the operator's command
Status	Open-sea trials and induction not yet confirmed

Background

- Indian Naval Academy: at Ezhimala, Kannur district, Kerala; inaugurated by PM Manmohan Singh on 8 Jan 2009 (foundation stone by Rajiv Gandhi, 1987). The naval academy was first set up at Kochi in 1969. It received the President's Colour on 20 Nov 2019. Indian Military Academy – Dehradun; Air Force Academy – Dundigal (Hyderabad); National Defence Academy – Khadakwasla (Pune).
- Science: a thermal camera senses the infrared radiation given off by warm bodies, so people can be found at night and in poor visibility; William Herschel discovered infrared in 1800. YOLO – 'You Only Look Once' – is an AI model that detects objects in real time in a single pass over an image. A quadcopter has 4 rotors; a hexacopter has 6 and can lift more.
- International: the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR), 1979 was adopted at Hamburg under the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and came into force in 1985. IMO is a UN specialised agency headquartered in London. In India's region, the Indian Coast Guard coordinates maritime search and rescue.
- Related: in 2021 the Navy signed a ₹13 crore iDEX contract with Visakhapatnam-based Saif Seas for robotic lifebuoys – these move on the water surface, whereas the INA concept is aerial.

Tamil Nadu link: such drones could help in fishing-boat accidents along Tamil Nadu's long coast. INS Rajali, the naval air station near Arakkonam in Ranipet district (commissioned 11 March 1992), is the base of the Navy's P-8I maritime patrol aircraft and has one of Asia's longest military runways. INS Parundu, another naval air station, is at Uchipuli, Ramanathapuram district.

8 Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan releases Anil K. Antony's book 'Advantage India: Reshaping the Future for an Equitable World'

Defence, Tribal Affairs, Transport & Welfare

News

On Friday, 23 Oct 2026, Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan released 'Advantage India: Reshaping the Future for an Equitable World' by Anil K. Antony (Rupa Publications) at Uprashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi. Saying 'Advantage India is Advantage to Humanity', he said innovations and emerging technologies must benefit all of humanity rather than remain one country's property. He listed India's strengths – civilisational heritage, democracy, demography, economy, institutions and technology; recalled the African Union's entry into the G20 during India's Presidency and COVID-19 vaccine supplies to over 100 countries; and called for citizens' participation in building Viksit Bharat by 2047. Principal Scientific Adviser Prof. Ajay Sood and EAC-PM member Dr Shamika Ravi attended.

Key facts

Event	23 Oct 2026 (Fri) – Uprashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi
Book	Advantage India: Reshaping the Future for an Equitable World (publisher listing: '...World Order')
Author	Anil K. Antony – BJP National Secretary & National Spokesperson
Publisher	Rupa Publications
Contents	Part 1 – data, AI, silicon sovereignty, adaptive defence, space, Digital India, women, youth; Part 2 – India's view of world affairs, roadmap to 2047
VP's message	'Advantage India is Advantage to Humanity'

Background

- Constitution (1): Article 63 – there shall be a Vice-President of India; Article 64 (with Art 89) – ex officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha; Article 65 – acts as President when that office falls vacant, until a new President is elected (within 6 months). Article 66 – elected by an electoral college of all members of both Houses of Parliament (nominated members included), by proportional representation through the single transferable vote, by secret ballot; eligibility – citizen, 35 years, qualified for election to the Rajya Sabha.
- Constitution (2): Article 67 – five-year term; resignation addressed to the President; removal by a Rajya Sabha resolution passed by a majority of all its then members and agreed to by the Lok Sabha (14 days' notice). Article 69 – oath before the President. Article 71 – election disputes are decided by the Supreme Court.
- 2025 election: after Jagdeep Dhankhar resigned on 21 July 2025, the election was held on 9 Sept 2025. NDA candidate C.P. Radhakrishnan won 452 first-preference votes, defeating the INDIA bloc's Justice B. Sudershan Reddy (300). He was sworn in as the 15th Vice-President by President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan on 12 Sept 2025.
- Author: Anil K. Antony is the son of A.K. Antony, former Kerala Chief Minister and Union Defence Minister; he studied at the College of Engineering, Trivandrum and Stanford University, USA.

Tamil Nadu link: Chandrapuram Ponnusamy Radhakrishnan was born in Tiruppur; he won the Coimbatore Lok Sabha seat twice (1998, 1999) and was Tamil Nadu BJP president in 2004–07. He was Governor of Jharkhand (Feb 2023 – July 2024; with additional charge of Telangana and Puducherry as LG for a period) and Governor of Maharashtra (from 31 July 2024). He is the third person from Tamil

Nadu to be Vice-President, after Dr S. Radhakrishnan (first VP, 1952–62) and R. Venkataraman (1984–87).

9 Defence Acquisition Council clears procurement proposals worth ₹2.12 lakh crore for the three Services

Defence, Tribal Affairs, Transport & Welfare

News

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, met in New Delhi on 26 Oct 2026 and accorded Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) to capital acquisition proposals of the three Services worth about ₹2,12,000 crore; about 82% will be sourced from Indian industry. For the Army: High Mobility Vehicles, a Self-Propelled Tracked Gun System, Gun Shot Response System (GSRS), Light Multi-Role Helicopters (LMRH), Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS), Counter-UAS, surveillance UAVs and long-range kamikaze drones. For the Navy: an Active Offboard Decoy System (AODS) to defeat anti-ship missiles and indigenously designed major naval platforms. For the IAF: Special Utility Helicopters, air-defence systems, weapons and a Mobile X-Band Doppler Weather Radar.

Key facts

Meeting	26 Oct 2026, New Delhi; chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh
Total value	About ₹2,12,000 crore (AoN); about 82% from Indian industry
Army	High Mobility Vehicles, tracked SP gun, GSRS, VSHORADS, C-UAS, surveillance UAVs, kamikaze drones
Navy	AODS (creates false targets to divert missiles); indigenous major naval platforms
Air Force	Special Utility Helicopters, air defence, weapons, X-band Doppler weather radar
LMRH	Light Multi-Role Helicopters – for both the Army and the IAF
Earlier approval	About ₹1.10 lakh crore in Sept 2026

Background

- DAC: set up in 2001 on the recommendation of the Group of Ministers (GoM) that examined the post-Kargil (1999) Kargil Review Committee report (chaired by K. Subrahmanyam). Chaired by the Defence Minister; members include the three Service Chiefs, the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) and the Defence Secretary. AoN is only the first step – Request for Proposal (RFP), trials and price negotiation follow; big contracts need Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) approval.
- Procedure: Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020 gives top priority to 'Buy (Indian-IDDM)' (Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured); a draft 'DAP 2026' was released for comments in Feb 2026. The indigenous share is being raised under 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'.
- Science: Doppler effect – the apparent change in frequency when a wave source and an observer move relative to each other; explained by Christian Doppler (Austria) in 1842. A Doppler weather radar measures the speed and direction of rain drops and clouds; X-band (short wavelength) suits high-resolution local monitoring – useful for air operations in forward areas.
- Drone warfare: 'kamikaze drones' are also called 'loitering munitions' – they hover over a target area and dive onto the target once found, exploding on impact. 'Kamikaze' is Japanese for 'divine wind'

and referred to Japan's WWII suicide pilots. Counter-UAS systems detect hostile drones by radar and defeat them by jamming or shooting them down.

Tamil Nadu link: Armoured Vehicles Nigam Ltd (AVNL), formed on 1 Oct 2021 when the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) was split into 7 public-sector companies, is headquartered at Avadi, Chennai; the Heavy Vehicles Factory (HVF), Avadi, makes Arjun tanks. The 82% domestic sourcing is an opportunity for the Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor (nodes: Chennai, Coimbatore, Hosur, Salem, Tiruchirappalli).

10 Central Motor Vehicles Rules amended: E100 (pure ethanol) added alongside E85 as fuel for flex-fuel vehicles

Defence, Tribal Affairs, Transport & Welfare

News

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), under Section 110 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, issued notification G.S.R. 911(E) amending the Central Motor Vehicles Rules (CMVR), 1989, on 23 Oct 2026; it was published in the Gazette on 26 Oct and took effect at once. In Rule 115, 'E85' now reads 'E85 or E100'. A new explanatory note says E85 or E100 shall be used in vehicles designed as flex-fuel vehicles by the manufacturers (OEMs). In the fuel table, petrol references now read E10 and E20, biodiesel B10 becomes B100, and the weight threshold rises from 3,000 to 3,500 kg. The draft rules had been published on 27 Apr 2026.

Key facts

Notification	G.S.R. 911(E) – issued 23 Oct 2026; Gazette 26 Oct 2026; draft G.S.R. 313(E), 27 Apr 2026
Legal basis	Motor Vehicles Act 1988, Sec 110; Central Motor Vehicles Rules 1989 (Rules 115, 115E)
E100 / E85	E100 – 100% ethanol-based fuel; E85 – 85% ethanol + petrol
Use	Only in vehicles designed as flex-fuel vehicles by OEMs
E100 sale	IndianOil 'ETHANOL 100' – 15 Mar 2024; 183 outlets in 5 States (incl. Tamil Nadu); octane 100–105
Vehicles	Maruti Wagon R Flex Fuel (June 2026; for commercial use) – India's first flex-fuel hatchback

Background

- Policy: the Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) programme began in 2003. National Policy on Biofuels 2018 (Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas); its 2022 amendment advanced the E20 target to Ethanol Supply Year 2025–26. E20 is now the nationwide standard. Next step – higher blends and flex-fuel vehicles; aims – cutting crude imports and emissions, and raising farm incomes.
- Science: ethanol (C_2H_5OH) absorbs water and corrodes rubber and some metals; it has a higher octane rating than petrol but less energy per litre. Hence flex-fuel vehicles need compatible seals, fuel lines and injectors; sensors detect the blend and adjust engine settings.
- Constitution: in the Seventh Schedule, 'mechanically propelled vehicles including the principles of taxing them' is Concurrent List Entry 35, while 'taxes on vehicles' is State List Entry 57. So the Centre frames vehicle rules while States levy road tax.

- World: Brazil has run a flex-fuel vehicle programme since 2003 – a pioneer in sugarcane ethanol; the USA leads in corn ethanol. India, Brazil, the USA and others launched the Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA) at the G20 New Delhi Summit in 2023.

Tamil Nadu link: CM M.K. Stalin released the 'Tamil Nadu Ethanol Blending Policy 2023' in March 2023 – aiming to meet a blending requirement of about 130 crore litres within the State and attract about ₹5,000 crore in molasses-, sugar- and grain-based distilleries (valid for 5 years). Tamil Nadu was also one of the 5 States where IndianOil launched 'ETHANOL 100' in 2024.

11 Up to 3 years' jail for abandoning or ill-treating elders: Kerala Assembly unanimously passes Senior Citizens Bill

Defence, Tribal Affairs, Transport & Welfare

News

The 'Keralam Senior Citizens (Care and Protection of Rights) Bill, 2026' ('Vayojana Bill'), introduced in the Assembly by Kerala Chief Minister V.D. Satheesan on 13 Oct 2026, was passed unanimously on 26 Oct 2026. It provides up to 3 years' imprisonment and a fine of up to ₹50,000 for abandoning a senior citizen without consent, cruelty by family members or caregivers (including physical or mental abuse and forcing an elder out of home) and misappropriating their property. It also mandates caregiver training and certification, police verification and recognises the 'living will'. It becomes law after the Governor's assent.

Key facts

Introduced / passed	13 Oct 2026 (CM V.D. Satheesan) / 26 Oct 2026 – unanimously
Penalty	Abandonment, cruelty, property misappropriation – up to 3 years and ₹50,000 fine; unregistered care home – 1 year, ₹25,000
Guiding principles	Dignity, best interests, ageing in place, safety, independence, participation in decisions
Caregivers	Mandatory training and certification, police verification, public register; compulsory registration of care centres
Bodies	State / district Senior Citizen Protection Units; abuse to be reported within 48 hours; special cells in cyber police stations
Others	Living will (advance medical directive) recognised; home-based care preferred

Background

- Central law: Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 (Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment) – Indian citizens aged 60+ are 'senior citizens'. A Maintenance Tribunal for each sub-division (presided by an officer not below Sub-Divisional Officer; Sec 7); Appellate Tribunal (District Magistrate rank; Sec 15). Maintenance up to ₹10,000 a month (Sec 9); lawyers barred before Tribunals (Sec 17); at least one old-age home per district (Sec 19).
- Penalty comparison: under Sec 24 of the 2007 Act, abandoning a senior citizen attracts up to 3 months' jail or ₹5,000 fine or both; the Kerala Bill raises it to 3 years / ₹50,000. Sec 23 – if a property transferred on condition of maintenance is not followed by maintenance, the transfer can be declared void as obtained by fraud.

- Constitution: public assistance in old age – Directive Principle, Article 41. Living will – in 'Common Cause v. Union of India' (2018) the Supreme Court held the right to die with dignity part of Article 21 and recognised passive euthanasia and living wills.
- Social context: as per the SRS Statistical Report 2023, Kerala has the highest share of population aged 60+. National elderly helpline 'Elderline' – 14567.

Tamil Nadu link: in Tamil Nadu, maintenance petitions under the 2007 Act are heard by Revenue Divisional Officers (RDOs) as Maintenance Tribunals, with appeals to the District Collector. Madras High Court rulings on Section 23 differ: in 'Mohamed Dayan v. District Collector' (2023, Justice S.M. Subramaniam) 'love and affection' was treated as an implied condition of a settlement deed, while in 'Dr A. Panner v. District Collector' (2026) the court held a deed can be cancelled only if the maintenance condition is expressly stated.

12 England footballer Bukayo Saka wins the 2026 Sócrates Award for charity work – presented at the Ballon d'Or ceremony in London

Sports, International, Science & Environment

News

Arsenal and England forward Bukayo Saka received the 2026 Sócrates Award at the 70th Ballon d'Or ceremony held at the London Palladium on 26 Oct 2026. The award, for footballers' social and humanitarian work, was presented by Nigerian singer Burna Boy. With the German charity BigShoe, Saka funded surgeries for 120 children in Kano, Nigeria, in 2022; through it he also supports eye treatment for children in Africa.

Key facts

Ceremony	70th Ballon d'Or, London Palladium, 26 Oct 2026
Presented by	Burna Boy – Grammy-winning Nigerian singer
Reason	BigShoe charity – surgeries for 120 children in Kano, Nigeria (2022); eye care for children
Saka	England, Arsenal; born in Ealing, London; Nigerian parents
Award	Started 2022; France Football with 'Peace and Sport'
Earlier winners	2022 Sadio Mané (Senegal); 2023 Vinícius Júnior (Brazil); 2024 Jenni Hermoso (Spain); 2025 Xana Foundation (Luis Enrique)

Background

- Sócrates: celebrated Brazilian footballer and medical doctor ('Doctor Sócrates'); captained Brazil at the 1982 World Cup. In the 1980s he co-founded the 'Corinthians Democracy' movement against Brazil's military rule. The award honours his voice for social justice.
- Ballon d'Or: started in 1956 by the French magazine France Football; the top individual award for the year's best footballer. The 2025 ceremony was at the Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris; the 70th (2026) ceremony was at the London Palladium. The Kopa Trophy (best young player) and Yashin Trophy (best goalkeeper) are also presented there.
- Geography: Kano is a major city of northern Nigeria; Nigeria is Africa's most populous country, capital Abuja. First winner Sadio Mané built a hospital and a school in his home village of Bambali (Senegal).

Tamil Nadu link: this news has no direct Tamil Nadu link. A related Tamil Nadu football fact: Chennai-based 'Chennaiyin FC' has won the Indian Super League (ISL) title twice – 2015 and 2017–18; its home ground is the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, Chennai.

13 US–Japan joint military exercise 'Keen Sword 27' (19–29 Oct 2026) – seven partner nations also take part

Sports, International, Science & Environment

News

Japan's Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) and US forces began the bilateral exercise 'Keen Sword 27' on 19 Oct 2026; it runs to 29 Oct. Japan fields about 45,000 personnel, 6,100 vehicles, 40 vessels and 260 aircraft; the US about 11,000 troops. Seven partners – Australia, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand and the Philippines – take part; South Korea and the UK are observers. Main areas: the south-western island chain from Kyushu to near Taiwan (incl. Okinawa), the Sea of Japan and the East China Sea. US Marines have taken the NMESIS anti-ship missile system to Yonaguni, Japan's westernmost island, for the first time.

Key facts

Dates	19 – 29 Oct 2026
Exercise controllers	Adm. Tateki Tawara (JSDF Joint Operations Command); Adm. Stephen Koehler (US Pacific Fleet)
Japan's share	About 45,000 personnel, 6,100 vehicles, 40 vessels, 260 aircraft
US share	About 11,000 troops; carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt
Partners	Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Netherlands, New Zealand, Philippines; observers: South Korea, UK
History	Since FY1985; field and command-post exercises alternate; this is the 18th field training exercise

Background

- Japan's Constitution (in force from 3 May 1947) – Article 9 renounces war and war potential. Hence Japan's forces are called the 'Self-Defense Forces' (1954). Japan's parliament is the 'National Diet'.
- Alliance: under the 1960 US–Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, US forces are stationed in Japan; Yokosuka is home of the US 7th Fleet.
- Geography: the Nansei (Ryukyu) island chain runs from Kyushu towards Taiwan; its westernmost island, Yonaguni, is about 110 km from Taiwan. The East China Sea and Taiwan Strait are among the world's tense sea zones.
- India–Japan: 'Dharma Guardian' – bilateral army exercise (7th edition from 24 Feb 2026, Chaubattia, Uttarakhand). JIMEX – naval exercise. 'Malabar' – began in 1992 between India and the US; Japan became a permanent member in 2015, Australia joined from 2020.

Tamil Nadu link: the exercise has no direct Tamil Nadu link. But Japan–Tamil Nadu ties are strong – Phase I of Chennai Metro Rail was built with loan assistance from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

14 Fine magnetic threads above quiet regions of the Sun – NAOJ-led study using balloon telescope 'Sunrise III'

Sports, International, Science & Environment

News

An international team led by the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan (NAOJ), using data from the balloon-borne solar telescope 'Sunrise III', has found fine thread-like magnetic structures woven into the 'magnetic canopy' that spreads through the chromosphere above the Sun's 'quiet' regions. The study says motions on the solar surface twist magnetic field lines to form them; computer simulations reproduce the pattern. At the solar limb the team also measured magnetic fields inside spicules – narrow jets of plasma. The study appeared in The Astrophysical Journal Letters (NAOJ release 30 Sep 2026; widely reported 23–25 Oct 2026).

Key facts

Telescope	Sunrise III – balloon-borne solar telescope with 1-m mirror; flew at about 35–36 km (stratosphere)
Flight	Launched 10 July 2024 from Esrange Space Center near Kiruna, Sweden; landed in north-western Canada on 16 July 2024
Instrument	SCIP – Sunrise Chromospheric Infrared spectroPolarimeter; led by NAOJ
Mission lead	Max Planck Institute for Solar System Research (MPS), Germany; balloon operations – NASA's CSBF
Journal	The Astrophysical Journal Letters, 2026; first author Masahito Kubo (NAOJ)
Significance	Helps explain how energy moves up and heats the solar atmosphere even in calm-looking regions

Background

- Layers of the Sun: core → radiative zone → convective zone → photosphere (visible surface, about 5,500–6,000°C) → chromosphere → transition region → corona (over 1 million °C). Why the corona is far hotter than the surface is the 'coronal heating problem'.
- Why a balloon? At about 35 km it sits above most of Earth's atmosphere, so UV and infrared light can be measured cleanly, at far lower cost than a space telescope. Sunrise flew earlier in 2009 and 2013. Sunrise III carried three instruments from Germany (SUSI), Japan (SCIP) and Spain (TuMag).
- India's Aditya-L1: launched on 2 Sep 2023 by PSLV-C57 from Sriharikota; placed on 6 Jan 2024 in a halo orbit around the Sun–Earth L1 point, about 1.5 million km from Earth. Seven payloads; the largest, the Visible Emission Line Coronagraph (VELC), was built by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bengaluru. SUIT images both the photosphere and the chromosphere.

Tamil Nadu link: Kodaikanal Solar Observatory in Kodaikanal, Dindigul district, began in 1899 and is now run by IIA. In 1909 John Evershed discovered here the radial flow of gas in sunspot penumbrae (the 'Evershed effect'). It holds over a century of solar images. Nigar Shaji, Project Director of India's solar mission Aditya-L1, hails from Sengottai, Tenkasi district.

15 Tata Steel introduces hydroseeding at its West Bokaro Division, Jharkhand – over 50 acres of mined land greened

Sports, International, Science & Environment

News

Tata Steel has introduced 'hydroseeding' at its West Bokaro Division (coal mine) in Ramgarh district, Jharkhand (reports of 23–25 Oct 2026). It has been applied on over 50 acres of mine areas, nurseries and overburden dumps. The machine sprays the slurry up to 50 m and can cover slopes up to 80 m long. It is described as the first such initiative in the State; the company says greenery has already appeared at several spots.

Key facts

Place	West Bokaro Division (Ghatotand), Ramgarh district, Jharkhand
Area	Over 50 acres – mines, nurseries, overburden dumps
Slurry	Seeds, water, mulch, fertiliser, tackifier (binder), soil conditioners
Reach	Sprays up to 50 m; slopes up to 80 m
Benefits	Erosion control, slope stability, lower landslide risk, moisture retention, biodiversity
Coalfield	West Bokaro Coalfield – upper Damodar basin; mainly medium coking coal

Background

- What is hydroseeding? A mechanised planting method that sprays a slurry of seeds, mulch, fertiliser and tackifier under high pressure onto bare ground. The mulch crust holds moisture and shields seeds from sun and birds. It suits steep slopes hard to plant by hand and improves worker safety. (It differs from seed balls and hydroponics.)
- Mine reclamation: in open-cast mining the soil and rock above the mineral is called 'overburden'; the dumps it forms erode and slide in rain. Under mine-closure plans they are levelled, topsoiled and revegetated – 'reclamation'.
- Jharkhand geography: carved out of Bihar on 15 Nov 2000; capital Ranchi; Chota Nagpur Plateau. The Damodar valley (Gondwana coal) holds the Jharia, Bokaro and Karanpura coalfields. The Damodar is the 'Sorrow of Bengal'; the Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) was set up in 1948.
- Economy: coking coal is heated into 'coke', which smelts iron ore in blast furnaces – hence vital for steel. Tata Steel (TISCO) was founded in 1907 at Jamshedpur (Sakchi); it sources part of its coal from its West Bokaro and Jharia mines.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has no major coal mines (only lignite at Neyveli). But Salem district is famous for magnesite; the State-owned Tamil Nadu Magnesite Ltd (TANMAG) mines it at Salem. Magnesite is used in refractory bricks that line steel furnaces.

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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1 Chidambaram Nataraja temple: Madras High Court sets up retired judges-led committee to oversee administration

Tamil Nadu

News

In its judgment of 30 Oct 2026, a Madras High Court Bench (Justices G. Jayachandran and E. Manoharan) constituted a five-member committee to oversee the administration of the Chidambaram Nataraja temple. The verdict disposed of petitions by the Podhu Dikshitars against the Tamil Nadu G.O. (17 May 2022) allowing devotees to worship from atop the Kanaka Sabha, and petitions supporting it. The court said the temple had not been properly managed since administration was handed to the Dikshitars in 2014, full income accounts had not been given for about 12 years, and new constructions had damaged ancient sculptures. Daily rituals and festivals remain the Dikshitars' prerogative.

Key facts

Committee	Chairman: retd. Justice V. Bharathidasan; Vice-chairman: retd. Justice R. Sureshkumar; Member: retd. IAS officer C. Rajendran
Ex-officio members	Secretary, Podhu Dikshitars' body; Secretary, HR&CE Department
Tasks	Recover encroached property, inventory assets incl. jewels, collect rent arrears, remove unauthorised structures, renovation and consecration
Worship	All devotees to have equal access to the Kanaka Sabha and to sing Thevaram and Thiruvasagam
Constitution	Permanent supervision would violate Article 26(d); committee till defects are cured
Place	Chidambaram, Cuddalore district

Background

- Case history: the State appointed an Executive Officer in 1987; the High Court upheld it in 2009. But the Supreme Court (Justices B.S. Chauhan and S.A. Bobde), on 6 Jan 2014, held that the Podhu Dikshitars are a 'religious denomination' and that the State may intervene only temporarily to cure mismanagement, and returned the administration to them.
- Polity: Article 25 – freedom of conscience and religion; Article 26 – right of religious denominations to manage their own affairs in matters of religion; 26(d) – administer property in accordance with law. In Tamil Nadu temples are administered under the Tamil Nadu Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) Act, 1959.
- Culture–history: it is the 'Akasha' (space) shrine among the Pancha Bhoota Sthalams; the deity is Nataraja performing the Ananda Tandava. The 'Chidambara Rahasyam' denotes formless space. Nataraja was revered as the family deity of the Cholas; Parantaka Chola I is credited with covering the Chit Sabha with gold (Ponnambalam). The gopurams carry sculptures of the 108 karanas described in Bharata's 'Natya Shastra'.
- Literature: Manikkavasagar's 'Thiruvasagam' (8th Thirumurai) and 'Thirukkovaiyar' are linked with Chidambaram. Its old name 'Thillai' comes from the Thillai trees (a mangrove species) once found here.

Tamil Nadu link: Chidambaram is in Cuddalore district; Annamalai University here was founded in 1929 by Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar. The G.O. permitting worship from the Kanaka Sabha was issued by the Tamil Nadu Government on 17 May 2022.

2 ₹38,000 crore Thoothukudi shipyard: talks with HD Hyundai – Detailed Project Report within six months

Tamil Nadu

News

Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal met HD Hyundai Chairman Chung Ki-sun in Seoul (South Korea) on 28 Oct 2026. A joint venture structure for the greenfield shipyard at Thoothukudi is under discussion; a joint working group will oversee it, and the Detailed Project Report (DPR) will be finalised within six months. Investment is about ₹38,000 crore (~$4 billion) and capacity about 2.5 million Gross Tonnage a year – once operational it would be India's largest commercial shipyard.

Key facts

Lead investor	HD Korea Shipbuilding & Offshore Engineering (HD KSOE) – HD Hyundai group
Indian side	NSHIP-TN – 50:50 JV of V.O. Chidambaranar Port and SIPCOT
MoU	20 Apr 2026 – tripartite MoU of HD KSOE, NSHIP-TN and Sagarmala Finance Corporation (during Korean President Lee Jae-myung's India visit)
Scale	₹38,000 crore; ~2.5 million GT/yr; ~15,000 direct jobs; anchor of a 2,500-acre shipbuilding cluster
Scheme	Shipbuilding Development Scheme (SbDS) – part of the ₹69,725 crore maritime package
Vision	Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 – target of 4.5 million GT annual shipbuilding by 2047

Background

- Visit: during his four-day South Korea visit, Sonowal also visited HD KSOE's shipyard at Ulsan. The project is a flagship of the India–Republic of Korea Special Strategic Partnership and includes technology transfer and workforce training.
- Economy: Indian public agencies plan to acquire over 400 vessels in the coming years; the yard can meet part of this demand. The Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 aims to place India among the world's top five shipbuilding nations.
- Science: 'Gross Tonnage' measures a ship's total internal volume, not its weight. 'Deadweight' is the weight of cargo, fuel etc. a ship can carry; 'Displacement' is the weight of water the ship displaces.
- Progress: in Sept 2026 VOC Port floated a ₹6.78 crore tender for a land and seabed study (127 boreholes); a techno-economic feasibility report has been completed.

Tamil Nadu link: Thoothukudi is called the 'Pearl City' for the pearl fishery of the Gulf of Mannar; nearby Korkai was the ancient pearl port of the Pandyas. In 1906 V.O. Chidambaram Pillai started the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company from here.

3 Direct recruitment to TN Government posts: upper age limit raised by 5 years – CM Vijay's order; 37 years for Group-I general category

Tamil Nadu

News

On the orders of CM C. Joseph Vijay, the upper age limit for direct recruitment to Tamil Nadu Government posts has been raised by 5 years. It is in force for five years from 30 Oct 2026. The Government press note says it accepted the demand of competitive-exam aspirants; it will help those who crossed the age limit owing to delays in recruitment and exam schedules. It is in addition to the existing age concessions for BC, BC(M), MBC/DNC, SC, ST and destitute widows.

Key facts

Group-I	General: 32 → 37; reserved: 37 → 42; PwD (general): 42 → 47; PwD (reserved): 47 → 52
Group-II, IIA	General: 30 → 35; PwD (general): 40 → 45; no upper limit for reserved categories (continues)
Group-IV	General: 30 → 35; BC, BC(M), MBC/DNC (SSLC-level qualification only): 32 → 37; SC/ST/destitute widows (SSLC-level only): 35 → 40; no upper limit for reserved categories with higher qualification
Validity	Five years from 30 Oct 2026
Reason	Aspirants' demand; recruitment and exam delays

Background

- Constitution: Part XIV (Articles 308–323) – services and public service commissions. Article 309 – the legislature may regulate recruitment and conditions of service; until then the Governor may make rules. Article 16 – equality of opportunity in public employment.
- Commission: Article 315 – Union and State PSCs; Article 316 – Governor appoints the State PSC chairman and members (6 years or till 62); Article 317 – removal by the President after a Supreme Court inquiry; Article 320 – functions; Article 323 – annual report to the Governor.
- TNPSC history: the 'Madras Service Commission' was set up in 1929 under an Act of the Madras Legislature – India's first provincial PSC. It became the Madras PSC in 1957 and the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission (TNPSC) in 1970. It has 15 members including the chairman; HQ Chennai.

Tamil Nadu link: TNPSC conducts Group-I (Deputy Collector, DSP etc.), Group-II/IIA and Group-IV (VAO, Junior Assistant etc.) exams; the raise benefits lakhs of aspirants preparing for them.

4 CM Vijay to attend the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting at Davos, Switzerland (18–22 Jan 2027)

Tamil Nadu

News

CM C. Joseph Vijay will attend the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting at Davos-Klosters, Switzerland, on 18–22 Jan 2027. The visit, on WEF's invitation, aims to attract global investment and showcase Tamil Nadu's strengths in technology, manufacturing and emerging sectors. Earlier, during his London visit (Sept 2026), investment agreements worth about ₹15,300 crore were signed, the State Government said.

Key facts

Meeting	WEF Annual Meeting 2027 – 18–22 Jan 2027
Venue	Congress Centre, Davos (Davos-Klosters), Switzerland
Aim	Global investment – technology, manufacturing, emerging sectors
Earlier visit	London (Sept 2026) – ~₹15,300 crore investment deals
WEF	Founded 1971 by Klaus Schwab (as 'European Management Forum'; renamed 1987); HQ Cologny, Geneva
2026 meeting	19–23 Jan 2026; theme 'A Spirit of Dialogue' (56th meeting)

Background

- Organisation: the World Economic Forum is a not-for-profit international organisation for public-private cooperation. Every January, heads of government, business leaders and economists meet at Davos.
- Reports: WEF publishes the Global Gender Gap Report, Global Risks Report, Future of Jobs Report and Travel & Tourism Development Index. The World Economic Outlook is by the IMF; World Development Report by the World Bank; Human Development Report by UNDP.
- Geography: Davos is a town in the Alps in the canton of Graubünden, eastern Switzerland. Switzerland's capital is Bern; currency, the Swiss franc.

Tamil Nadu link: 'Guidance Tamil Nadu' is the State's nodal agency for investment promotion and single-window facilitation. The Tamil Nadu Global Investors Meet 2024 was held in Chennai on 7–8 January 2024.

5 TN Cabinet approves incentives for eight industrial projects worth ₹3,767 crore; 4,853 jobs

Tamil Nadu

News

The Tamil Nadu Cabinet, chaired by CM C. Joseph Vijay on 29 Oct 2026, approved incentives for eight industrial projects with a total investment of ₹3,767 crore, expected to create 4,853 jobs. Three are expansion projects. In technical textiles, aerospace & defence, life sciences and electronics, they will come up in Kancheepuram, Chengalpattu, Coimbatore, Krishnagiri and Erode districts. Company names were not disclosed. Minister C.T.R. Nirmal Kumar briefed the media.

Key facts

Date	29 Oct 2026 – Cabinet meeting chaired by CM Vijay
Investment / jobs	₹3,767 crore; 4,853 jobs; 8 projects (3 expansions)
Sectors	Technical textiles, aerospace & defence, life sciences, electronics
Districts	Kancheepuram, Chengalpattu, Coimbatore, Krishnagiri, Erode
Other decision	Commission headed by a retired judge for a statewide 'Social Justice Survey'

Background

- Polity: Article 163 – Council of Ministers with the CM at its head aids and advises the Governor; Article 164(2) – the Council is collectively responsible to the Legislative Assembly; Article 167 – CM's

duty to communicate Cabinet decisions to the Governor.

- Economy: 'Technical textiles' are made for function rather than aesthetics – 12 segments including Agrotech, Meditech, Geotech, Protech and Mobiltech. The Union Ministry of Textiles launched the National Technical Textiles Mission in 2020.
- Geography: Hosur in Krishnagiri district, on the Karnataka border, is an automobile, EV and electronics hub; Erode is a turmeric-trade centre ('Erode Manjal' has a GI tag); Coimbatore is a textile, pump and engineering hub.

Tamil Nadu link: all projects are in Tamil Nadu; they are seen as part of investment commitments of about ₹1.02 lakh crore announced in the new Government's first 100 days. The same meeting approved a commission to conduct a statewide Social Justice Survey after the Centre's caste enumeration.

6 India's green hydrogen offtake contracts cross 5.5 lakh tonnes a year – world's largest, says MNRE

Energy, Defence & Health

News

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) said on 29 Oct 2026 that since the National Green Hydrogen Mission began (2023), Indian firms have signed 23 offtake (supply) contracts totalling 5,55,610 tonnes a year of 'green hydrogen equivalent' – the world's largest such commitments. In 2026 alone, 18 deals (over 4 lakh tonnes) were signed. Over 70% is meant for export (Japan, Germany, South Korea). These are future supply commitments, not current output; they need over ₹90,000 crore of investment.

Key facts

Announced by	MNRE, 29 Oct 2026
Contracts	23 deals – 5,55,610 tonnes a year (green H_2 equivalent); about 11% of the 2030 target
Exports	Over 70%; Japan, Germany, South Korea
Key deals	Reliance–Samsung C&T (S. Korea, green ammonia, over $3 bn, from 2028); AM Green–Germany (H2Global auction, from 2029)
Domestic (SIGHT)	6.7 lakh tonnes a year of green ammonia for 11 fertiliser units; 30,000 tonnes of green hydrogen for IOCL, BPCL, HPCL, NRL refineries
Investment	Over ₹90,000 crore (about $9.5 billion)

Background

- National Green Hydrogen Mission: approved by the Union Cabinet in Jan 2023; target of at least 5 MMT a year of production capacity by 2030; expected to bring over ₹8 lakh crore of investment, 6 lakh jobs and avoid 50 million tonnes of carbon emissions a year. Implementing agency for the auctions – SECI (Solar Energy Corporation of India).
- An 'offtake' contract is a long-term commitment to buy a fixed quantity from a producer. Since hydrogen gas is hard to ship, it is exported as ammonia (NH_3) or methanol (CH_3OH) – hence volumes are counted as 'green hydrogen equivalent'.

- Science: ammonia is made by the Haber–Bosch process – nitrogen + hydrogen over an iron catalyst at high pressure (about 200 atm) and about 450–500°C. With hydrogen from natural gas it is 'grey' ammonia; with hydrogen from renewable-powered electrolysis it is 'green' ammonia.
- H2Global: a German auction mechanism to import green hydrogen derivatives; its intermediary HINT.CO buys on long-term contracts and resells in Europe on short-term contracts. Numaligarh Refinery (NRL) – Golaghat district, Assam; an outcome of the 1985 Assam Accord.

Tamil Nadu link: no Tamil Nadu-specific deal is named in this announcement. The Chennai Petroleum Corporation (CPCL) refinery at Manali, Chennai, is a subsidiary of Indian Oil (IOCL); replacing grey hydrogen with green hydrogen in refineries is a key aim of the Mission.

7 Air Marshal Inderpal Singh Walia named Vice Chief of the Air Staff; takes over on 1 Nov

Energy, Defence & Health

News

The Ministry of Defence announced on 30 Oct 2026 that Air Marshal Inderpal Singh Walia will be the next Vice Chief of the Air Staff (VCAS) of the Indian Air Force. He takes over on 1 Nov 2026 from Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit, who becomes the 29th Chief of the Air Staff on 31 Oct. He now heads the Eastern Air Command as Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief (AOC-in-C).

Key facts

Announced	Ministry of Defence, 30 Oct 2026; takes over 1 Nov 2026
Predecessor	Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit – Chief of the Air Staff from 31 Oct
Present post	AOC-in-C, Eastern Air Command (since 1 Feb 2026); HQ Shillong
Commissioned	11 June 1988 – fighter stream; alumnus of the National Defence Academy (NDA)
Experience	Qualified on MiG-21, MiG-23, MiG-27, Jaguar, Su-30 MKI
Earlier posts	Commanded a frontline fighter squadron and TACDE; Defence Attaché to Japan & South Korea; SASO, Eastern Air Command
Awards	Vayu Sena Medal (2008), Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (2018)

Background

- IAF structure: HQ – Vayu Bhawan, New Delhi. Seven commands – five operational (Western – Delhi; Eastern – Shillong; Central – Prayagraj; South Western – Gandhinagar; Southern – Thiruvananthapuram), Training Command – Bengaluru, Maintenance Command – Nagpur. The VCAS is a principal staff officer at Air HQ.
- The National Defence Academy (NDA) is at Khadakwasla near Pune, Maharashtra – a joint-services academy that trains cadets of the Army, Navy and Air Force together.
- TACDE (Tactics and Air Combat Development Establishment) – started at Adampur (Punjab) on 1 Feb 1971; now at Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh). It trains the IAF's best fighter pilots in air-combat tactics.
- Gallantry: the highest wartime award is the Param Vir Chakra. The only IAF recipient – Flying Officer Nirmal Jit Singh Sekhon (1971 war, Srinagar, Gnat aircraft, posthumous). The Vayu Sena Medal is an IAF-specific medal for devotion to duty or courage.

Tamil Nadu link: the Air Force Administrative College is at Coimbatore. Sulur (Coimbatore) hosts Tejas squadrons; Thanjavur hosts No. 222 'Tigersharks' Su-30MKI squadron; there is also an Air Force Station at Tambaram, Chennai.

8 CCS clears 8 Next Generation Corvettes for the Indian Navy at over ₹40,000 crore

Energy, Defence & Health

News

The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), chaired by PM Narendra Modi, on 28 Oct 2026 approved the building of 8 Next Generation Corvettes (NGCs) for the Indian Navy at over ₹40,000 crore. Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata, will build 5 and Goa Shipyard Ltd (GSL) 3. The design is indigenous, made in-house by the Navy; speed about 30 knots. The first ship is expected by 2030; contracts are to be signed shortly.

Key facts

Approval	Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), 28 Oct 2026
Value	Over ₹40,000 crore; 8 corvettes
Shipyards	GRSE, Kolkata – 5; GSL, Goa – 3
Roles	Surveillance, escort, deterrence, Surface Action Group, search-and-attack, coastal defence
Speed / design	About 30 knots; Navy's in-house design
Earlier stage	DAC AoN on 6 June 2022; GRSE emerged L1 bidder in May 2025
Delivery	First ship by 2030 (expected)

Background

- Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS): chaired by the PM; members – the Defence, Home, Finance and External Affairs Ministers. It gives final approval to big defence buys. Sequence: DAC Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) → bidding → price negotiation → CCS approval → contract.
- Warship types (in rising size): corvette → frigate → destroyer. A corvette is small and fast – suited to coastal defence and anti-submarine warfare. GRSE built the 'Kamorta' class (Project 28) – anti-submarine stealth corvettes; the lead ship INS Kamorta was commissioned in 2014.
- Shipyards: GRSE (Kolkata) – a Defence Ministry PSU; it built and exported the patrol vessel 'CGS Barracuda' to Mauritius. GSL is at Vasco da Gama, Goa. Science: 1 knot = 1 nautical mile per hour = 1.852 km per hour.

Tamil Nadu link: no Tamil Nadu shipyard is part of this order. INS Parundu, the naval air station at Uchipuli in Ramanathapuram district (commissioned under this name on 26 March 2009), watches over the Gulf of Mannar and Palk Strait; it is under the Eastern Naval Command.

9 Tobacco-Free Youth Campaign 4.0 launched – 60-day nationwide drive focused on colleges and universities

Energy, Defence & Health

News

On behalf of the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Minister of State Prataprao Jadhav launched 'Tobacco-Free Youth Campaign 4.0' (TFYC 4.0) on 28 Oct 2026 at the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Medical Sciences – Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, New Delhi. It runs nationwide for 60 days. Aims: stop young people from starting tobacco, help users quit and enforce the law; this edition focuses on colleges and universities. It follows a whole-of-government approach involving several ministries and State/UT administrations.

Key facts

Launch	28 Oct 2026 – ABVIMS & RML Hospital, New Delhi
Launched by	Prataprao Jadhav – MoS Health; MoS (Independent Charge) AYUSH
Duration	60 days – nationwide
Six strategies	Awareness; Tobacco-Free Educational Institutions (ToFEI); tobacco-free villages; enforcement; social media; colleges & universities
Laws	COTPA 2003; Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Act (PECA) 2019
Earlier editions	1.0 – 31 May 2023; 2.0 – Sept 2024; 3.0 – Oct 2025; so far 5.8 lakh+ institutions and 73,000+ villages declared tobacco-free

Background

- COTPA 2003 (Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act): Section 4 – ban on smoking in public places; Section 5 – ban on tobacco advertising; Section 6 – no sale to under-18s or within 100 yards of educational institutions; Section 7 – health warnings on packs. TFYC 3.0 saw 1,45,477 challans under COTPA.
- The Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Act (PECA) 2019 bans the production, sale, import, export and advertising of e-cigarettes.
- International: the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) – adopted by the World Health Assembly in 2003, in force from 2005; India ratified it in 2004. India's National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) dates from 2007–08. World No Tobacco Day – 31 May.
- Science: the addictive chemical in tobacco is nicotine – an 'alkaloid'. Tobacco is a major cause of mouth, lung and throat cancers.

Tamil Nadu link: in May 2013 the Tamil Nadu government banned gutka, pan masala and other chewable tobacco products under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006; the Commissioner of Food Safety renews the ban each year by notification.

10 Sikkim holds its first 'Himalayan Yak Festival' at Gnathang Valley near the India–China border

States, Tax, Environment, Culture & Awards

News

Sikkim's first 'Himalayan Yak Festival' was held in late October 2026 (27–29 Oct; main events from 28 Oct) at Gnathang Valley in Pakyong district, at about 13,500 ft, near the India–China border. It was organised by the State's Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services Department with 'Sikkim INSPIRES', in collaboration with ATREE and the G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment. About 400–500 yaks took part, and herders from Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh attended. Yak products and advances in artificial insemination were displayed. Aims: yak conservation, herders' livelihoods and high-altitude tourism.

Key facts

Venue	Gnathang Valley, Pakyong district, Sikkim (~13,500 ft)
Dates	27–29 Oct 2026 (first edition)
Organiser	Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Services Dept, Sikkim + Sikkim INSPIRES
Participation	About 400–500 yaks; herders from Sikkim, Arunachal, Ladakh
Sikkim yaks	'Sikkimese yak' – distinct breed registered by NBAGR; reared by the Dokpa herders
Proposal	A 'Himalayan Pole'/'Yak Pole' to mark the yak's importance (Thupden Lachungpa)

Background

- Science: the domestic yak is Bos grunniens (Poephagus grunniens), family Bovidae, adapted to cold high-altitude areas; it gives milk, meat, fibre and carries loads. ICAR–National Research Centre on Yak was set up in 1989 at Dirang, West Kameng district, Arunachal Pradesh.
- Challenges: shrinking grazing land, unpredictable weather, and falling yak numbers as young people move to other jobs. Gnathang–Machong MLA Pamin Lepcha hopes the festival becomes an annual event.
- Polity: Sikkim became India's 22nd State through the 36th Amendment (1975); Article 371F contains special provisions for Sikkim.
- History & geography: in the Anglo-Tibetan war of 1888, British and Tibetan forces clashed at Gnathong on 22 May 1888. The Doklam plateau is about 35 km away; Pakyong district was carved out of East Sikkim in 2021.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu too has a hill pastoral tradition like yak herding – the Toda tribe of the Nilgiris are traditional buffalo herders, and their life and rituals centre on the buffalo. The news itself has no direct Tamil Nadu link.

11 GST on e-commerce delivery services cut from 18% to 5% (without ITC) – 57th GST Council recommendation; notifications effective 1 Nov

States, Tax, Environment, Culture & Awards

News

The 57th GST Council meeting, held in New Delhi on 8 Oct 2026 under Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, recommended 5% GST without input tax credit (ITC) on delivery services (other than courier and postal) supplied through e-commerce operators (ECOs). Where the actual provider is not liable to register, the platform pays the tax under Section 9(5) of the CGST Act. Until now such services attracted 18% (56th Council, Sept 2025). PIB Fact Check and CBIC clarified that this is a cut from 18% to 5%, not a new tax. Notifications (e.g. No. 09/2026-Central Tax (Rate)) were issued on 27 Oct 2026, effective 1 Nov 2026.

Key facts

Meeting	57th GST Council, 8 Oct 2026, New Delhi; chair – Nirmala Sitharaman
Rate	18% → 5% (without ITC); courier and postal services excluded
Who pays	E-commerce operator – Section 9(5), CGST Act
GTA exemption	Exemption (Entry 21A) for GTA transport of e-commerce goods to unregistered persons withdrawn
In force	Notifications 27 Oct 2026; effective 1 Nov 2026
Earlier	56th Council (3 Sept 2025) – local delivery at 18% from 22 Sept 2025

Background

- Polity: GST came through the 101st Amendment (2016) and began on 1 July 2017. Article 279A – GST Council; chair – Union Finance Minister; members – Union MoS (Finance/Revenue) and all State finance/taxation ministers. The Union Revenue Secretary is its ex-officio Secretary.
- Article 366(12A): GST is a tax on the supply of goods or services except alcoholic liquor for human consumption. So liquor stays outside GST – States levy excise and VAT on it.
- Economic concepts: input tax credit (ITC) lets a business set off tax paid on purchases against tax on sales; '5% without ITC' means no such set-off. Section 9(5): for notified services the e-commerce platform is deemed the supplier and pays the tax (e.g. restaurant delivery, cab services).
- GST 2.0: from 22 Sept 2025, two main slabs – 5% and 18% – and 40% for luxury and sin goods. Finance Ministry sources said rate changes will now be considered only once a year, taking effect from 1 April (PTI, 6 Oct).

Tamil Nadu link: in Tamil Nadu, State GST (SGST) is administered by the Commercial Taxes Department (headed by the Commissioner of Commercial Taxes), and the State Finance Minister is a member of the GST Council. With heavy food and quick-commerce delivery in cities like Chennai and Coimbatore, the cut directly affects consumers and delivery platforms.

12 New pink-flowering shrub species 'Osbeckia assamensis' discovered in Assam's Manas National Park

States, Tax, Environment, Culture & Awards

News

A new flowering plant species, 'Osbeckia assamensis', has been found in the grasslands of Manas National Park, Assam. The paper by researchers Barnali Das and Namita Nath was published in the journal 'Phytotaxa' on 22 Oct 2026, and Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced it on 26 Oct. It was found during field surveys in 2021–2025; the first specimen was collected on 8 Oct 2022. It is a perennial shrub (2–2.5 m) of the family Melastomataceae, with pink flowers (3–3.5 cm), 30–35 per cluster, flowering from September to February.

Key facts

Species	Osbeckia assamensis – family Melastomataceae
Location	Grasslands of Manas National Park, Assam
Study	Barnali Das, Namita Nath; 'Phytotaxa', 22 Oct 2026
Features	Perennial shrub, 2–2.5 m; pink flowers 3–3.5 cm; 30–35 per cluster
Difference	Differs from the related O. nayarii in stem, leaves, flower arrangement, hairy calyx margins and seed size
Flowering / status	Sept–Feb; assessed 'Data Deficient' under IUCN criteria

Background

- Manas National Park lies in the Himalayan foothills of Assam. It became a UNESCO natural World Heritage Site in 1985 and was on the 'In Danger' list from 1992 to 2011. In 1973 it was among the first tiger reserves under Project Tiger.
- Geography: the park is named after the Manas River, a major tributary of the Brahmaputra, and borders Bhutan's Royal Manas National Park to the north.
- Wildlife: tiger, greater one-horned rhino, swamp deer, the pygmy hog (the world's smallest wild pig), Bengal florican, Asian elephant and gaur.
- Botany: Melastomataceae is one of the ten largest families of flowering plants (order Myrtales). 'Kaya' (Memecylon umbellatum) of the same family grows in South India and Sri Lanka; its leaves contain a yellow dye.

Tamil Nadu link: the Southern Regional Centre (Southern Circle, 1955) of the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) is at Coimbatore; the old 'Madras Herbarium' was moved from Chennai to Coimbatore and handed over to it. 'Kaya' (Memecylon umbellatum), a member of Melastomataceae, also grows in Tamil Nadu.

13 Chhattisgarh's Sirpur Cultural and Archaeological Landscape added to UNESCO's World Heritage Tentative List

States, Tax, Environment, Culture & Awards

News

The 'Sirpur Cultural and Archaeological Landscape' on the banks of the Mahanadi in Mahasamund district, Chhattisgarh, has been added to UNESCO's World Heritage Tentative List. India's Permanent Delegation to UNESCO submitted it on 28 Sept 2026; the Sirpur Special Area Development Authority (SSADA) announced it on 21 Oct 2026. It is proposed in the cultural category under criteria II and IV. With the Karst–Mud-Volcano Complex of Baratang and the Andaman Subduction Volcanoes also added, India's Tentative List now has 81 properties.

Key facts

Site	Sirpur (ancient 'Shripur') – Mahasamund district, on the Mahanadi; about 78 km from Raipur
Submitted / announced	28 Sept 2026 / 21 Oct 2026 (SSADA)
Criteria	Cultural – criterion II (exchange of human values), IV (outstanding architecture)
Core zone (9)	Lakshmana, Rama, Gandheshwar temples; Anandaprabhu Kuti & Swastika viharas; market complex; royal palace; Harshagupta & Tivaradeva viharas; Baleshwar group
Also added	Baratang karst–mud-volcano complex; Andaman subduction volcanoes (Barren, Narcondam islands)
India's list	81 properties on the Tentative List

Background

- History: from the 5th to the 12th century CE Sirpur was the capital of 'Dakshina Kosala' (South Kosala). Copper-plate grants of the Sharabhapuriya kings Pravararaja and Mahasudevaraja attest its antiquity. The Panduvamshi king Mahashivagupta Balarjuna ruled for about 57 years; a Shaiva, he also patronised Buddhist monasteries.
- Architecture: the 7th-century Lakshmana temple (Vishnu) is built of brick – among India's earliest and best-preserved brick temples. It was commissioned by Queen Vasata, widow of Harshagupta and mother of Balarjuna. Alexander Cunningham visited and reported on it in 1882.
- Religious harmony: Shaiva, Vaishnava, Buddhist and Jain traditions flourished together. In the 7th century the Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang recorded its Buddhist tradition. The Anandaprabhu Kuti and Swastika viharas are notable.
- UNESCO process: a site must first be on a country's Tentative List before it can be nominated for the World Heritage List. ICOMOS evaluates cultural sites and IUCN natural ones. The World Heritage Convention was adopted in 1972; India joined in 1977. Next, the ASI and SSADA will prepare the full nomination dossier.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's 'Chettinad, Village Clusters of the Tamil Merchants' and the 'Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple, Srirangam' have been on India's Tentative List since 2014. The Mahabalipuram monuments, the Great Living Chola Temples and the Nilgiri Mountain Railway are already World Heritage Sites.

14 UAE confers 'First Class Order of Zayed II' on Indian pilot Captain Smit Machchhar – awarded by President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed

States, Tax, Environment, Culture & Awards

News

UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan conferred the 'First Class Order of Zayed II' on flydubai's Indian captain Smit Machchhar and crew members (27 Oct 2026). Dubai Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed presented the honours. It recognises his courage on flight FZ1073 on 30 Sept 2026, when, though injured in an attack by the co-pilot in the cockpit, he protected the aircraft and passengers. He is believed to be the third Indian to receive it (the earlier two were Indian ambassadors). Note: this is the UAE's second-highest civilian honour; the highest is the 'Order of Zayed'.

Key facts

Honour	First Class Order of Zayed II – the UAE's second-highest civilian honour
Conferred by	President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed; presented by Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed (Dubai Crown Prince)
Date	27 Oct 2026
Reason	Courage during the cockpit attack on flydubai FZ1073 (30 Sept 2026)
Earlier Indians	Ambassadors Navdeep Singh Suri (2019), Sunjay Sudhir (2025)
Earlier honour	Israel's Presidential Award for Civilian Heroism, announced by President Isaac Herzog (8 Oct 2026)

Background

- Award: the 'Order of Zayed' is the UAE's highest civilian honour, usually for heads of state; PM Narendra Modi received it in 2019 (announced 4 Apr, presented 24 Aug). The 'Order of Zayed II' usually goes to ambassadors and officials. Both are named after the UAE's founding President, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan.
- Geography: the UAE is a federation of seven emirates (1971); capital Abu Dhabi. It lies on the Persian Gulf, near the Strait of Hormuz.
- India–UAE ties: the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) has been in force since 1 May 2022. PM Modi opened the BAPS Hindu Mandir, Abu Dhabi's first traditional stone temple, on 14 Feb 2024. The UAE has been a BRICS member since 1 Jan 2024.
- Aviation safety: the two-person cockpit rule spread after the 2015 Germanwings crash. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is in Montreal.

Tamil Nadu link: the Tamil Nadu Government gives the 'Anna Medal for Gallantry' for acts of bravery in life-threatening situations – the Chief Minister presents it every year at the Republic Day function (e.g. in 2025 to Leading Fireman K. Vetrivel, who saved three people from drowning in the Adyar).

15 PM inaugurates ₹325-crore Bharat Bovine Breeding and Research Centre at Bhildi, Banaskantha (Gujarat) – Kankrej, Gir and other native breeds

States, Tax, Environment, Culture & Awards

News

On 30 Oct 2026 PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the 'Bharat Bovine Breeding and Research Centre' (BBBRC) at Bhildi, Banaskantha district, Gujarat, to the nation. Built by Banas Dairy on 127 acres at about ₹325 crore, with technical guidance from the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) and support from the 'Rashtriya Gokul Mission', it will use ovum pick-up–in-vitro fertilisation (OPU-IVF) and embryo transfer (ET) to improve native cattle such as Kankrej and Gir and buffalo breeds such as Mehsani and Banni. It targets 25,000 high-quality embryos a year, aiming for 10–20 calves a year from one elite cow instead of one by conventional breeding.

Key facts

Centre	Bharat Bovine Breeding and Research Centre (BBBRC) – 127 acres
Place / date	Bhildi, Banaskantha district, Gujarat / 30 Oct 2026 – PM Modi
Cost / built by	About ₹325 crore / Banas Dairy; NDDB technical guidance; ₹38.83 crore from Rashtriya Gokul Mission
Technology	OPU-IVF and embryo transfer (ET); target 25,000 embryos a year
Breeds	Cattle: Kankrej, Gir, Sahiwal, Tharparkar; buffalo: Mehsani, Banni, Jaffrabadi, Murrah
Other projects	Banas Dairy bio-CNG plants – Tharad, Radhanpur (foundation)

Background

- Kankrej breed: an indigenous breed of the Rann of Kutch area on the Gujarat–Rajasthan border; dual-purpose – milk and draught. Silver to dark grey coat; both sexes have large horns. Also called Talabda and Wadhiar.
- Global link: Kankrej cattle exported to Brazil from about 1870 gave rise to the 'Guzerá' breed, which also contributed to the American 'Brahman'. Ongole (as 'Nelore') and Gir (as 'Gyr') are also famous in Brazil.
- Science: in IVF, egg and sperm are united outside the body in a lab; the embryo is placed in a surrogate cow (embryo transfer), so one elite cow can yield many calves a year. Indian native cattle belong to 'Bos indicus' (humped zebu).
- Scheme: Rashtriya Gokul Mission (Dec 2014) – to conserve and develop indigenous breeds; run by the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying. Banas Dairy is a member union of the 'Amul' federation (GCMMF), headquartered at Palanpur.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's registered native cattle breeds – Kangayam (Kongu region – Tiruppur, Erode), Umblachery (Cauvery delta), Pulikulam (Sivaganga–Ramanathapuram), Bargur (Erode hills) and Alambadi (Dharmapuri–Krishnagiri).

16 Bihar Museum ranked 9th in 'World's 100 Best Museums' list – the only Asian museum in the top 10

States, Tax, Environment, Culture & Awards

News

In the 2026 'World's 100 Best Museums' list by the Germany-based international travel guide 'Worth a Journey', Patna's Bihar Museum ranked 9th (reports of 27–28 Oct 2026). It is the only Asian and only Indian museum in the top 10 – ahead of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art (10th) and the Louvre, Paris (31st). Mexico City's National Museum of Anthropology is first. The ranking is based on algorithmic analysis checked by in-person visits.

Key facts

List	'World's 100 Best Museums' 2026 – Worth a Journey (Germany)
Rank	9th – the only Asian museum in the top 10; the only Indian museum on the list
Top five	National Museum of Anthropology (Mexico), Prado (Madrid), Louisiana (Denmark), Hermitage (Russia), Kunsthistorisches (Vienna)
Bihar Museum	Patna; opened 2015; over 13 acres
Design	Maki and Associates (Japan) + Opolis Architects (Mumbai)
Star exhibit	Didarganj Yakshi – Mauryan-period sculpture (found near Patna, 1917)

Background

- Art history: the Didarganj Yakshi is a standing female figure holding a chauri (fly-whisk), carved in Chunar sandstone with the mirror-like 'Mauryan polish'. It is generally assigned to the Mauryan period and was found at Didarganj on the Ganga in 1917.
- Museum: Bihar's story from the Stone Age onward – sculptures, coins, manuscripts and folk art; it has a Children's Gallery and a Diaspora Gallery. The third Bihar Museum Biennale was held in 2025. A roughly 1.5 km underground walkway to the older Patna Museum is planned.
- Patna (ancient Pataliputra): capital of Magadha and later of the Mauryan Empire, on the Ganga. The Greek envoy Megasthenes described it in his 'Indica'.
- Indian museums: India's oldest museum is the Indian Museum, Kolkata (1814, Asiatic Society). International Museum Day is 18 May (ICOM, since 1977); ICOM is headquartered in Paris.

Tamil Nadu link: the Government Museum, Egmore, Chennai (1851) is India's second-oldest museum, famous for the Amaravati Buddhist sculptures and Chola bronzes. A site museum at Keeladi, Sivaganga district, opened in 2023.

17 UNEP recognition: India's Ganges River Dolphin Recovery Programme cited among the UN World Restoration Flagships

States, Tax, Environment, Culture & Awards

News

The report 'Nature's Comeback – Scaling Ecosystem Restoration for People and Planet', released in October 2026 by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), cited India's Ganges River Dolphin Recovery Programme as one of 35 'UN World Restoration Flagships'. It was held up as a model that links species protection, river-ecosystem restoration and local livelihoods. The report comes at the mid-point of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030) and warns that restoration is not moving fast enough to meet the 2030 goals.

Key facts

Recognition	UNEP–FAO–CBD 'Nature's Comeback' report (Oct 2026) – one of 35 World Restoration Flagships
Implementation	Union Environment, Forest & Climate Change Ministry – 'Project Dolphin'; Comprehensive Action Plan for dolphins 2022–2047
Species	Ganges river dolphin – Platanista gangetica; 'susu'; IUCN: Endangered
Legal protection	Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 – Schedule I; CITES – Appendix I
Status	India's National Aquatic Animal (2009); State aquatic animal of Assam; 5 Oct – National Dolphin Day
First estimate	3 Mar 2025 – 6,327 river dolphins (8 States, 28 rivers); Uttar Pradesh highest, then Bihar, West Bengal, Assam

Background

- Biology: the Ganges dolphin is a freshwater dolphin with very poor eyesight – it finds prey in muddy water by ultrasonic clicks and echoes (echolocation). Being air-breathing, it surfaces every 30–120 seconds through a blowhole on top of its head; its breathing sound gives the name 'susu'. It is an indicator species of river health.
- Geography: found in the Ganges–Brahmaputra–Meghna and Karnaphuli–Sangu river systems of India, Nepal and Bangladesh. The Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary (1991) on the Ganga in Bhagalpur district, Bihar, was set up for it. Threats: dams and barrages, low flows, pollution and entanglement in fishing nets.
- Policy history: declared National Aquatic Animal in 2009; the PM announced 'Project Dolphin' on 15 Aug 2020. The first river-dolphin estimation report was released on 3 Mar 2025 at the National Board for Wildlife meeting at Sasan Gir, Gujarat. 'Namami Gange' was named a World Restoration Flagship at CBD COP15 in Montreal in Dec 2022 (among the first 10).
- Global context: the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030) was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly and is led by UNEP and FAO. Countries have pledged to restore about 1 billion hectares of degraded land. Target 2 of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework: restore at least 30% of degraded ecosystems by 2030.

Tamil Nadu link: the Ganges dolphin does not occur in Tamil Nadu's rivers. But Tamil Nadu leads in marine-mammal protection – India's first Dugong Conservation Reserve was notified in Palk Bay in

2022, and dolphins are also seen in the Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park. (Tamil Nadu ACS Supriya Sahu won UNEP's 'Champions of the Earth' 2025 – 13.10.2026 set.)

18 Google to invest €13 billion (about $15 billion) in AI infrastructure in Finland – its largest single investment in Europe

International, Science, Technology & Indices

News

On 9 September 2026 Google announced it will invest €13 billion (about $15 billion) in Finland over the next two years – its largest single investment in Europe. It covers expansion of its Hamina data centre, three new data centres at Kajaani, Muhos and Vaala, and clean-energy and battery projects, to meet demand for services such as Search, Maps and Gemini AI. Construction is planned for 2027–28 and is expected to support over 37,000 jobs.

Key facts

Announced	9 Sep 2026 – Google (Bikash Koley, VP, Global Infrastructure)
Amount	€13 billion (≈ $15 billion) over 2 years – Google's largest single investment in Europe
Sites	Hamina (former paper mill bought 2009; seawater cooling) + new centres: Kajaani, Muhos, Vaala
Energy	22-year deal with Fortum's Loviisa nuclear plant (from 2028; up to 50% of output); 94 MW battery system; new onshore wind
Jobs	37,000+ during construction (2027–28); €3.6 billion a year to Finland's GDP
Controversy	Oct 2026 (reported 7 Oct) – Finland's supervisory agency (LVV) ordered work halted at the Muhos and Kajaani sites over forest clearing without environmental impact assessment

Background

- Geography: Finland is a Nordic country of northern Europe; capital Helsinki. Sweden lies to the west, Norway to the north and Russia to the east (its longest land border); the Gulf of Finland is to the south (Estonia across it) and the Gulf of Bothnia to the west. 'Land of a thousand lakes'. Hamina is a town on the Gulf of Finland coast.
- Polity: after long neutrality, Finland became NATO's 31st member in April 2023 following the Russia–Ukraine war; Sweden joined as the 32nd in March 2024. NATO – 1949 Washington Treaty; HQ Brussels. Finland has been an EU member since 1995; PM Petteri Orpo.
- Science–economy: training and running AI models needs huge computing power and electricity; cooling is a major data-centre cost. Finland's cold climate and low-carbon power (nuclear, wind, hydro) attract data centres; Microsoft and TikTok owner ByteDance have also announced investments there. The Loviisa nuclear plant supplies about 10% of Finland's electricity.

Tamil Nadu link: Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google and its parent Alphabet, was born in Madurai and grew up in Chennai; he studied engineering at IIT Kharagpur.

19 SBI launches 'CyRIS', its cybersecurity Centre of Excellence, in Mumbai

International, Science, Technology & Indices

News

Department of Financial Services Secretary Sanjay Lohiya inaugurated 'CyRIS', the State Bank of India's (SBI) cybersecurity Centre of Excellence, in Mumbai on 26 October 2026, in the presence of SBI Chairman Challa Sreenivasulu Setty. Bringing cyber policy, a cyber academy, research and innovation, threat intelligence and cyber defence onto one platform, it rests on three pillars – THINK, INNOVATE and DEFEND. Focus areas include digital forensics, malware analysis, ethical hacking, fraud analytics, AI security and quantum-safe technologies.

Key facts

Launch	26 Oct 2026, Mumbai – DFS Secretary Sanjay Lohiya; SBI Chairman C.S. Setty
Three pillars	THINK (policy, academy, citizen awareness); INNOVATE (research, global benchmarking); DEFEND (cyber defence, threat intelligence)
Focus areas	Digital forensics, malware analysis, ethical hacking, fraud analytics, AI security, quantum-safe tech
Partners	Government & regulators, financial institutions, fintechs, academia, technology partners
Training	About 1.81 lakh SBI staff completed mandatory cybersecurity e-learning in 2025–26

Background

- Legal framework: under Section 70A of the IT Act 2000, the national nodal agency for protecting Critical Information Infrastructure (CII – banking, power, telecom etc.) is NCIIPC, a unit of the National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO); under Section 70B, CERT-In is the national agency for responding to cyber-security incidents. The Home Ministry's I4C coordinates action on cybercrime; complaint helpline 1930.
- Technology: 'ransomware' encrypts data and demands payment to release it (e.g. 'WannaCry', 2017); 'phishing' steals passwords via fake e-mails/links. Future quantum computers (Shor's algorithm) could break today's public-key encryption such as RSA; the US NIST released 'quantum-safe' (post-quantum) encryption standards in August 2024.
- Banking history: SBI is India's largest public sector bank; formed from the Imperial Bank on 1 July 1955; HQ Mumbai. The Department of Financial Services (DFS), under the Union Finance Ministry, oversees public sector banks and insurers.

Tamil Nadu link: the 'Tamil Nadu State Cyber Crime Coordination Centre' (TN-S4C), the State counterpart of the Centre's I4C, was set up in August 2026 at the Cyber Crime Wing headquarters in Chennai – its State Cyber Command Centre runs the 1930 helpline, and its State Cyber Crime Investigation Centre handles ransomware and crypto crimes. 'Tamil Nadu Cyber Security Policy 2.0' for government departments was released in September 2024 (first policy 2020).

20 WJP Rule of Law Index 2026: India 88th of 143 countries (score 0.48; 86th in 2025); Denmark first, Venezuela last

International, Science, Technology & Indices

News

In the 'Rule of Law Index 2026' released on 21 October 2026 by the US-based World Justice Project (WJP), India ranked 88th of 143 countries with a score of 0.48 (86th in 2025 – down two places); it is 3rd in South Asia after Nepal and Sri Lanka. Denmark is first, Norway 2nd and Finland 3rd. Venezuela is last at 143rd; Afghanistan is 142nd and Haiti 141st. Rule of law declined globally for the 9th year in a row – scores fell in 62% of countries.

Key facts

Publisher	World Justice Project (WJP), Washington, D.C.; 21 Oct 2026; 143 countries and jurisdictions
India	88th; score 0.48 (0–1 scale); 86th in 2025; 3rd in South Asia (after Nepal, Sri Lanka)
Top three	Denmark (1), Norway (2), Finland (3)
Bottom three	Venezuela (143), Afghanistan (142), Haiti (141)
Neighbour	China – 92nd
8 factors	Constraints on government powers, absence of corruption, open government, fundamental rights, order & security, regulatory enforcement, civil justice, criminal justice

Background

- About WJP: started in 2006 by William H. Neukom as an American Bar Association (ABA) presidential initiative; independent non-profit since 2009; HQ Washington, D.C. The index is built from surveys of the general public and experts. This year freedom of expression fell in 64% of countries and freedom of assembly in 67%.
- Constitution: the 'rule of law' was explained by British jurist A.V. Dicey ('Law of the Constitution', 1885) – supremacy of law, equality before law and predominance of legal spirit. Article 14 of the Indian Constitution guarantees 'equality before the law' (British idea) and 'equal protection of the laws' (American idea). The Supreme Court has held the rule of law to be part of the basic structure.
- Justice system: free legal aid – Article 39A; Legal Services Authorities Act 1987. Case backlogs and a high share of undertrial prisoners are seen as factors dragging down India's criminal- and civil-justice scores.

Tamil Nadu link: on the index's 'absence of corruption' factor – Tamil Nadu's main agency for investigating corruption by public servants is the Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (DVAC), Chennai, which registers cases under the Prevention of Corruption Act 1988. The State Lokayukta was set up under the Tamil Nadu Lokayukta Act 2018.

21 Indian-origin NASA astronaut Anil Menon completes his 4th spacewalk at the International Space Station

International, Science, Technology & Indices

News

Indian-origin NASA astronaut Anil Menon, with Joshua Kutryk of the Canadian Space Agency (CSA), completed a 7-hour 11-minute spacewalk (EVA) at the International Space Station (ISS) on 29 Oct 2026 (US time; early hours of 30 Oct IST), installing the station's 7th IROSA (roll-out solar array); the 8th and final one is planned for a 5 Nov spacewalk. It was Menon's 4th career spacewalk; he has now logged 26 h 31 min of spacewalking on this mission. It was the 100th US spacewalk from the ISS without a Space Shuttle docked, and Kutryk's first. Menon reached the ISS on 14 July 2026 aboard Russia's 'Soyuz MS-29' from Baikonur, Kazakhstan.

Key facts

Spacewalk	29 Oct 2026 – 7 h 11 min; Menon's 4th; installed 7th IROSA solar array
Partner	Joshua Kutryk (Canada, CSA) – his first
Mission	Soyuz MS-29 – 14 July 2026, Baikonur (Kazakhstan); with Pyotr Dubrov and Anna Kikina (Russia); Expeditions 74/75
Anil Menon	Born Minneapolis (USA); father of Kerala roots, mother Ukrainian; physician; NASA class of 2021; former SpaceX flight surgeon
Comparison	Sunita Williams – 9 spacewalks, 62 h 6 min (most among Indian-origin astronauts)
Wife	Anna Menon – SpaceX engineer; flew 'Polaris Dawn' (2024)

Background

- India in space: Rakesh Sharma – first Indian in space; flew Soviet 'Soyuz T-11' to the 'Salyut 7' station on 3 Apr 1984 (Interkosmos programme). Asked by Indira Gandhi how India looked, he replied 'Saare Jahan Se Achha'.
- Indian-origin astronauts: Kalpana Chawla (Karnal, Haryana) – first India-born woman in space; STS-87 Columbia (1997); died in the Columbia disaster (STS-107) on 1 Feb 2003. Sunita Williams – 9 spacewalks. Raja Chari – NASA astronaut (father from Telangana).
- Axiom-4 (Ax-4): Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla lifted off on 25 June 2025 on SpaceX Falcon 9 / Dragon and became the first Indian to visit the ISS – the second Indian in space, 41 years after Rakesh Sharma.
- Gaganyaan: India's human spaceflight programme (ISRO). On 27 Feb 2024 at VSSC, Thiruvananthapuram, four astronaut-designates were named – Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair, Ajit Krishnan, Angad Pratap and Shubhanshu Shukla (all IAF).
- Science: a spacewalk (EVA – Extra-Vehicular Activity) is work done outside a spacecraft in a pressurised suit. The first spacewalk was by Alexei Leonov (USSR) on 18 Mar 1965.

Tamil Nadu link: human-rating tests of Gaganyaan engines are done at the ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC), Mahendragiri, Tirunelveli district.

22 Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Thevar's 119th Jayanti and 64th Guru Puja – 30 Oct, Pasumpon

Important Days

News

The 119th Jayanti and 64th Guru Puja of freedom fighter Pasumpon U. Muthuramalinga Thevar are being held as a State function on 30 Oct 2026 at his memorial in Pasumpon, near Kamuthi, Ramanathapuram district. As Thevar was both born (1908) and died (1963) on 30 October, the Jayanti and Guru Puja fall on the same day. Political leaders and the public pay homage; heavy security arrangements are in place.

Key facts

Born	30 Oct 1908 – Pasumpon (near Kamuthi), Ramanathapuram district
Died	30 Oct 1963
Ordinals	2026 – 119th Jayanti, 64th Guru Puja (2023 – 116th, 61st)
Party	All India Forward Bloc – Tamil Nadu president (from 1948); associate of Netaji
Lok Sabha	Elected thrice – 1952, 1957, 1962
Honours	Postage stamp – 1995; statue in Parliament complex – 1 Oct 2002 (unveiled by President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam)
Gold armour	9 Feb 2014 – 13-kg gold armour donated by CM J. Jayalalithaa; State function since 1979 (MGR)

Background

- History – with Netaji: in the 1939 Congress presidential election Subhas Chandra Bose defeated Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Gandhiji's nominee; Thevar backed Bose at the Tripuri session. In May 1939 Bose founded the 'Forward Bloc' as a left-wing group within the Congress; Thevar built it up in Tamil Nadu.
- Society: he fought the British 'Criminal Tribes Act', which branded whole communities as 'born criminals'. The Act was repealed in 1952 and those communities became 'Denotified Tribes'.
- Temple entry: on 8 July 1939 A. Vaidyanatha Iyer led the oppressed classes into the Madurai Meenakshi Amman temple; Thevar openly supported it. Rajaji's government passed the Temple Entry Authorisation and Indemnity Act in 1939.
- Labour movement: led the unions of the Pasumalai Mahalakshmi Mills and Meenakshi Mills, Madurai; arrested in the 1938 agitation. 1937 – Madras Legislative Assembly (Ramanathapuram); Mudukulathur Assembly seat – 1952, 1957.

Tamil Nadu link: in 1979 CM M.G. Ramachandran declared Thevar Jayanti a State function. Every year between 28 and 30 Oct the gold armour is taken from a bank locker in Madurai and placed on the Pasumpon statue. The Mukkulathor community reveres him as a deity.

23 World Thrift Day (World Savings Day) 2026 – 30 Oct in India; 31 Oct worldwide

Important Days

News

World Savings / Thrift Day is observed worldwide on 31 Oct to promote the saving habit; India observes it on 30 Oct, because 31 Oct is the death anniversary of PM Indira Gandhi, assassinated on 31 Oct 1984. The 2026 World Savings Day campaign slogan is 'AI advises, human decides' – run by the Brussels-based World Savings and Retail Banking Institute (WSBI).

Key facts

Origin	31 Oct 1924 – 1st International Savings Bank Congress, Milan (Italy); proclaimed by Italian Prof. Filippo Ravizza
India	30 Oct (31 Oct – Indira Gandhi's death anniversary, 1984)
2026 slogan	'AI advises, human decides'
Body	WSBI – World Savings and Retail Banking Institute, Brussels (Belgium)
Stamp	World Thrift Day stamp – 31 Oct 1971 (20 paise)
NSSF	National Small Savings Fund – 1 Apr 1999; in the Public Account of India; Finance Ministry (DEA)

Background

- Economy: Saving = Income − Consumption. Household savings fund investment through bank deposits and small savings. Small-savings schemes include the Post Office Savings Account, PPF, National Savings Certificate (NSC), Kisan Vikas Patra, Sukanya Samriddhi and the Senior Citizens' Savings Scheme.
- Polity: small-savings collections are credited to the 'National Small Savings Fund' (NSSF), kept in the Public Account of India under Article 266(2) – not the Consolidated Fund. The Union Finance Ministry notifies small-savings interest rates every quarter.
- History: Prof. Filippo Ravizza proclaimed 'International Saving Day' on the last day of the 1924 Milan congress. WSBI, which traces its origin to 1924, runs the World Savings Day campaign every year.

Tamil Nadu link: Thiruvalluvar stresses thrift in the chapter 'Valiyarithal' (Knowing One's Strength) – Kural 478 'Aakaaru alavitthithaayinum kedillai pokaaru akalaak kadai': a small income does no harm if spending does not exceed it.

24 National Unity Day (Rashtriya Ekta Diwas) 2026 – Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's 151st birth anniversary, 31 Oct

Important Days

News

National Unity Day marks the 151st birth anniversary (31 Oct 2026) of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, India's first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister. Celebrations are held on 30–31 Oct near the 'Statue of Unity' at Ekta Nagar (Kevadia), Gujarat; PM Narendra Modi will attend and address the National Unity Parade on 31 Oct – about 10,000 police and paramilitary personnel, 4,700 artists and an IAF flypast. 'Bharat Parv 2026' runs 29 Oct – 15 Nov. 'Run for Unity' events and the unity pledge are held across the country.

Key facts

Born	31 Oct 1875 – Nadiad (Gujarat); died 15 Dec 1950, Bombay
Day	National Unity Day – since 2014 (Union Government)
Statue of Unity	182 m – world's tallest statue; Sadhu Bet island, Narmada river; unveiled 31 Oct 2018; sculptor Ram V. Sutar
Titles	'Iron Man of India'; 'Patron Saint of civil servants'; Bharat Ratna – 1991 (posthumous)
2026 event	Ekta Nagar 30–31 Oct; National Unity Parade 31 Oct (PM); Bharat Parv 29 Oct – 15 Nov
Feat	Integrated more than 560 princely states into the Indian Union

Background

- Freedom struggle: Kheda Satyagraha (1918) – peasants' struggle with Gandhi. Bardoli Satyagraha (1928) – against a land-revenue hike; after its success the women of Bardoli gave him the title 'Sardar' (leader). Presided over the 1931 Karachi Congress session.
- Polity: in the Constituent Assembly he chaired the 'Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights, Minorities and Tribal & Excluded Areas' and the 'Provincial Constitution Committee'. (Drafting – Ambedkar; Union Powers – Nehru; Steering – Rajendra Prasad.) He championed the All India Services (IAS, IPS).
- Integration: as Home Minister, with V.P. Menon, he brought the princely states in through the Instrument of Accession; Hyderabad – 'Operation Polo' police action, 1948.
- Geography: the Statue of Unity stands at Ekta Nagar (Kevadia), Narmada district, Gujarat, facing the Sardar Sarovar Dam; the Narmada flows west between the Satpura and Vindhya ranges. Built by L&T (2018).

Tamil Nadu link: Pudukkottai State, ruled by the Tondaiman kings in present-day Tamil Nadu, merged with the Indian Union in 1948 (last ruler Rajagopala Tondaiman); today it is Pudukkottai district.

25 India's extreme poverty falls from 27.1% to 2.6% (2011–2023) – World Bank Poverty and Equity Brief

Economy

News

The World Bank's October 2026 Poverty and Equity Brief on India says extreme poverty fell from 27.1% in 2011 to 2.6% in 2023 – one of the fastest declines in the world – with about 496 million people moving out of poverty in that period. At the lower-middle-income line of $4.20 a day (2021 PPP), poverty fell from 57.7% to 16.1%, and is projected (indicative estimate) at 14.2% in 2026 and 12.1% by 2028. Consumption growth, jobs (largely rural women) and social transfers such as food assistance are cited as drivers. The brief also flags concerns: real earnings broadly flat, jobs mostly in low-productivity sectors, and youth unemployment up from 14.6% (Q1 FY26) to 15.9% (Q1 FY27).

Key facts

Report	World Bank – Poverty and Equity Brief (India), October 2026
Extreme poverty	27.1% (2011) to 2.6% (2023)
Poverty lines	International extreme-poverty line $3.00 a day (2021 PPP, since June 2025); lower-middle-income line $4.20
At $4.20 a day	57.7% (2011) to 16.1% (2023); projected 14.2% (2026), 12.1% (2028)
People lifted	About 496 million (2011–2023)
Multidimensional	OPHI MPI 53.8% (2005-06) to 16.4% (2019-21); World Bank measure 15.5% (2022-23)
Concerns	About 57% of the poor in the UP–West Bengal belt; youth unemployment 15.9%

Background

- In June 2025 the World Bank moved the international poverty line from $2.15 (2017 PPP) to $3.00 (2021 PPP); India's extreme poverty was then put at 5.3% for 2022-23.
- Poverty estimates in India use the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) of the NSO (Ministry of Statistics).
- Official Indian poverty line: Tendulkar Committee (2009) – 21.9% in 2011-12; the Rangarajan Committee (2014) report was not adopted.
- NITI Aayog's multidimensional poverty estimate: about 24.82 crore people moved out between 2013-14 and 2022-23 (discussion paper, Jan 2024).

Tamil Nadu link: In NITI Aayog's National MPI (2023), Tamil Nadu is among the states with the lowest multidimensional poverty (about 2.2% in 2019-21).

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