Current Affairs – Notes

4 November 2026

Notes PDF

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

For TNPSC · UPSC · SSC · RRB · Bank exams

www.shanmugamiasacademy.in · இலவச quiz + தினசரி PDF

Shanmugam IAS Academy · Coimbatore · Madurai · Online · 99941 46662

Contents

1. Tamil Nadu State Board for Wildlife reconstituted: CM chairs, Forest Minister vice-chair, 3 MLAs as members
2. Air Force Station Avadi honoured with the Tamil Nadu Governor's Unit Citation
3. CM Vijay opens ₹19.20-crore integrated government silk cocoon market complex at Sokkathur, Dharmapuri
4. Union Cabinet approves ₹4,371.10-crore 'VISTAR' scheme to modernise India's statistical system
5. MSDE recognises MANAGE, Hyderabad, as 'Centre of Excellence-Skills' in the agriculture sector
6. JNCASR Bengaluru builds a terahertz silicon chip carrying data at up to 100 Gbps – a step towards 6G
7. Agnipath: Cabinet approves an extra two-year term for the 75% of Agniveers not retained
8. 'Vayo Samman Rashtriya Abhiyan' – national campaign for senior citizens launched in New Delhi on 4 Nov
9. FM Nirmala Sitharaman releases ₹250 commemorative coin in Varanasi on Muthuswami Dikshitar's 250th birth anniversary
10. Sabir Hossain of Purba Bardhaman (W. Bengal) wins Singapore's SLINGSHOT 2026 award for 'StopBleed' blood-clotting technology
11. Sikkim's Soreng is India's first notified organic fisheries cluster under PMMSY; SOP for organic fish certification in the North-East launched
12. Manipur hosts the first 'North East Waree Leeba (storytelling) Festival 2026' – inaugurated by Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla
13. Three indigenous AI foundation models released under IndiaAI Mission – 'EKA-1', 'Dhīr 2B' and 'Dhīr 5B'
14. Assam: government employees practising polygamy to be dismissed and barred from future government jobs
15. India and Kazakhstan sign extradition treaty
16. ISSF World Championships (Doha): India win gold in men's 50m pistol team event
17. QS Asia University Rankings 2027: 71% of Indian universities slip; IIT Delhi (66th) stays India's best
18. 3,300-year-old Egyptian scarab amulet found in Israel – spotted by a 17-year-old American student
19. Fifth and final S-400 'Sudarshan Chakra' air-defence squadron from Russia – arrival now expected in early 2027
20. World Tsunami Awareness Day – 5 November
21. Mangalyaan launch (5 Nov 2013, PSLV-C25): India first to reach Mars orbit on its maiden attempt, and first in Asia

SHANMUGAM IAS ACADEMY
www.shanmugamiasacademy.in

1 Tamil Nadu State Board for Wildlife reconstituted: CM chairs, Forest Minister vice-chair, 3 MLAs as members

Environment

News

A Government Order (G.O.(D) No. 198, dated 28.10.2026) under Section 6(1) of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 reconstituted the Tamil Nadu State Board for Wildlife; it was reported on 1–3 Nov 2026. Re-formed after the change of government, the Board is chaired by CM C. Joseph Vijay, with the Forest Minister as Vice-Chairperson and the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Chief Wildlife Warden as Member-Secretary. The 30 members include 3 MLAs – Dr M. Sudhakar (Katpadi), S. Karthikeyan (Madurai East) and M.R. Pallavi (Thiru.Vi.Ka. Nagar) – 3 NGO representatives, 10 experts and 14 officials; the Chief Secretary is a special invitee. Non-official members serve 2 years.

Key facts

Order	G.O.(D) No. 198, 28.10.2026 – Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972, Section 6(1)
Chair / Vice-chair	CM C. Joseph Vijay / Forest Minister
Member-Secretary	PCCF & Chief Wildlife Warden
MLAs	M. Sudhakar (Katpadi), S. Karthikeyan (Madurai East), M.R. Pallavi (Thiru.Vi.Ka. Nagar)
Others	3 NGOs (WTI, NCF, OMCAR), 10 experts (BNHS, IUCN India…), 14 officials – 30 in all
Term	Non-official members – 2 years; Chief Secretary – special invitee

Background

- Law: the Wild Life (Protection) Act was enacted in 1972. The 2002 Amendment Act (Act 16 of 2003) created the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) under Section 5A and State Boards under a new Section 6. The NBWL is chaired by the Prime Minister; its Standing Committee (Section 5B) by the Union Environment Minister. Its forerunner was the Indian Board for Wildlife (1952).
- State Board's role: advising the government on selecting areas to be declared protected (sanctuaries, national parks), their management, wildlife policy, amending the Act's schedules and balancing tribal needs with conservation. Projects such as roads, dams or mines in sanctuary areas need the Board's recommendation.
- Constitution: the 42nd Amendment (1976) moved 'Forests' and 'Protection of wild animals and birds' from the State List to the Concurrent List (entries 17A, 17B); the same amendment added the Directive Principle on protecting the environment, forests and wildlife – Article 48A.
- Board composition (Section 6): Chief Minister (Administrator in a UT) – Chairperson; Minister for Forests & Wildlife – Vice-Chairperson; three legislators; three NGOs; ten conservationists/ecologists (at least two from Scheduled Tribes); representatives of the Wildlife Institute of India, Botanical Survey and Zoological Survey of India; Chief Wildlife Warden – Member-Secretary.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has five tiger reserves – Kalakad–Mundanthurai, Anamalai, Mudumalai, Sathyamangalam and Srivilliputhur–Megamalai – and the Board's advice matters for project decisions around them. Members include the Director of the Advanced Institute for Wildlife Conservation (AIWC), Vandalur, the head of wildlife science at Madras Veterinary College, the Students' Sea Turtle Conservation Network (SSTCN), Chennai and the OMCAR Foundation, Thanjavur.

2 Air Force Station Avadi honoured with the Tamil Nadu Governor's Unit Citation

Defence

News

Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar presented the Governor's Unit Citation to Air Force Station Avadi at a ceremony at Lok Bhavan (Makkal Maligai), Chennai, on 4 Nov 2026; Air Commodore Pradeep Sharma, Air Officer Commanding, received it on behalf of the station. It recognises sustained commitment to operational excellence, logistics readiness, training and personnel welfare. At the same ceremony the National Security Guard's 27 Special Composite Group, Chennai, also received the Governor's citation.

Key facts

Award	Governor's Unit Citation
Date / venue	4 Nov 2026 – Lok Bhavan (Makkal Maligai), Chennai
Presented by	Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar
Received by	Air Commodore Pradeep Sharma, Air Officer Commanding
Station roles	Procuring & distributing uniforms, vehicles; small-arms repair/overhaul, ammunition management; driver, technical and base-protection training
Also honoured	NSG 27 Special Composite Group, Chennai

Background

- Governor's Unit Citation: an appreciation given by the Governor to units that served with distinction in military operations, disaster relief and the like. In July 2025 the then Governor R.N. Ravi gave it to four Army units – 16 Madras (Travancore), 35 Field Regiment, Ordnance Depot Avadi and 65 Company ASC.
- IAF structure: 7 commands – 5 operational (Western–Delhi, South Western–Gandhinagar, Central–Prayagraj, Eastern–Shillong, Southern–Thiruvananthapuram), Training Command–Bengaluru and Maintenance Command–Nagpur. In Nov 2025 the AOC-in-C of Maintenance Command reviewed Avadi station's readiness.
- National Security Guard (NSG): a counter-terror force raised in 1984 and given statutory status by the NSG Act, 1986; it works under the Union Ministry of Home Affairs ('Black Cats'). After the 2008 Mumbai attacks, regional hubs (Special Composite Groups) were set up in major cities including Chennai.
- Rank equivalence: IAF 'Air Commodore' = Army 'Brigadier' = Navy 'Commodore'. Group Captain = Colonel; Air Vice Marshal = Major General.

Tamil Nadu link: Avadi is in Tiruvallur district; it was upgraded to a Municipal Corporation by Tamil Nadu Act 24 of 2019. Ordnance Depot Avadi also received the Governor's citation (2025). Tamil Nadu also has Air Force stations at Tambaram, Sulur and Thanjavur.

3 CM Vijay opens ₹19.20-crore integrated government silk cocoon market complex at Sokkathur, Dharmapuri

Tamil Nadu

News

On 4 Nov 2026, CM C. Joseph Vijay, by video link from the Secretariat in Chennai, opened the 'Integrated Government Silk Cocoon Market Complex' built at Sokkathur, Dharmapuri district, for ₹19.20 crore on about 80,000 sq ft. It has a dedicated cocoon sales hall, separate waiting halls for men and women farmers and reelers, a canteen, parking, drinking water and a sericulture-inputs sales centre; 9 old buildings were renovated and a 1,110 m compound wall built. Cocoons will be sold through transparent e-auctions. MSME Minister P. Madhanraja and Chief Secretary M. Saikumar were among those present.

Key facts

Place	Sokkathur, Dharmapuri district
Cost / area	₹19.20 crore; about 80,000 sq ft
Opened	4 Nov 2026 – CM C. Joseph Vijay (video link, Secretariat)
Sales mode	E-auction
Market record	About 40 years old; average 600 MT of cocoons a year; farmers from 15–20 districts
Officials	Handlooms, Handicrafts, Textiles & Khadi Secretary R. Lilly; Director of Sericulture R. Satheesh

Background

- Sericulture is rearing silkworms to produce silk. Life cycle: egg → larva → pupa (inside the cocoon) → moth. Cocoons are heated and reeled before the moth emerges. The silk filament is made of the protein fibroin, coated with the gummy protein sericin.
- Silk varieties in India (MoSPI): Mulberry – Karnataka, West Bengal, J&K, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh; Tasar – Jharkhand, Bihar, Chhattisgarh etc.; Eri – Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya etc.; Muga – Assam only. India is the world's second-largest silk producer (after China).
- Central Silk Board (CSB): a statutory body set up by an Act of Parliament in 1948, under the Union Ministry of Textiles; headquarters Bengaluru. The mulberry silkworm is Bombyx mori, which feeds only on mulberry leaves.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's Department of Sericulture is headquartered at Salem and has functioned as a separate department since 1979. In 1956 sericulture was confined to pockets of Coimbatore and Dharmapuri districts and later spread to the plains (TNAU). Tamil Nadu is in the forefront in India in bivoltine silk (TNAU). Kancheepuram and Arani silk sarees hold GI tags. The government aims to make Tamil Nadu India's top silk-producing State.

4 Union Cabinet approves ₹4,371.10-crore 'VISTAR' scheme to modernise India's statistical system

Governance

News

On 4 Nov 2026 the Union Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi approved 'VISTAR' (Viksit Bharat Initiative for Statistical Transformation, Analytics & Research), a Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), with an outlay of ₹4,371.10 crore for 2026–27 to 2030–31 (the 16th Finance Commission cycle). It brings all of MoSPI's surveys, data work and the Economic Census under one umbrella – 59 surveys instead of the earlier 43 major ones, the 8th Economic Census, and use of AI/ML. Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw briefed the media.

Key facts

Full name	Viksit Bharat Initiative for Statistical Transformation, Analytics & Research
Outlay / period	₹4,371.10 crore; 2026–27 to 2030–31; Central Sector Scheme
Ministry	Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)
Components	(1) Statistical operations & ecosystem strengthening (2) Support for Statistical Strengthening to States (SSS 2.0) (3) Economic Census
Surveys	59 (earlier 43); 8th Economic Census – non-farm establishments down to panchayat/ward level
New indices	Headline Index of Services Production; Index of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises
Previous scheme	Capacity Development scheme – ₹3,179 crore (Feb 2022, 15th FC cycle)

Background

- Aim: a 'real-time, future-ready' official statistical architecture using alternative data (mobile phone, scanner, e-commerce) and AI/ML in processing and validation. Under SSS 2.0, funds to States are deliverable-linked and support district-level and million-plus-city estimates (e.g. PLFS) and State/district GDP compilation.
- Institutions: MoSPI was formed in 1999. In 2019 the Central Statistical Office (CSO) and the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO, 1950) were merged to form the National Statistics Office (NSO). Dadabhai Naoroji made the first estimate of national income (1867–68); Mahalanobis chaired the National Income Committee of 1949.
- P.C. Mahalanobis (1893–1972): founded the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), Kolkata, in 1931; devised the 'Mahalanobis distance'; his model, prioritising heavy industry, was the basis of the Second Five-Year Plan (1956–61). His birthday, 29 June, is observed as National Statistics Day (since 2007).

Tamil Nadu link: SSS 2.0 will give central support for State/district GDP compilation, which in Tamil Nadu is done by the Department of Economics and Statistics (DES), Chennai. The 8th Economic Census will be conducted together with State governments.

5 MSDE recognises MANAGE, Hyderabad, as 'Centre of Excellence-Skills' in the agriculture sector

Agriculture

News

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has recognised the National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Hyderabad, as a 'Centre of Excellence-Skills (CoE-Skills)' in the agriculture sector. MSDE Secretary Debashree Mukherjee presented the certificate at Kaushal Bhawan, New Delhi, on 2 Nov 2026; it is valid for three years (9 Oct 2026 – 8 Oct 2029). MANAGE is the only agriculture institution among the 19 empanelled through the 'Green Channel' under the Guidelines for Empanelment of CoE-Skills and Vocational Training Centres. The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare announced it on 4 Nov.

Key facts

Recognition	CoE-Skills (Agriculture) – MSDE; certificate 2 Nov 2026, Kaushal Bhawan, New Delhi (Secretary Debashree Mukherjee)
Validity	3 years – 9 Oct 2026 to 8 Oct 2029
Green Channel	For Institutes of National Importance, PM-SETU-upgraded ITIs and ministry/State CoEs – go straight to the Executive Committee without the regular evaluation
This batch	19 institutions – renewable energy 5, chemicals 5, multi-sector 4; construction, iron & steel, marine engineering, tourism, agriculture 1 each
MANAGE	Set up 1987; autonomous body under the Agriculture Ministry; Rajendranagar, Hyderabad (Telangana); DG Sanjay Kumar Agarwal
Courses	PGDM (Agri-Business Management, 2 years); PG diplomas in Agricultural Extension Management (PGDAEM) and Agri-warehousing Management (PGDAWM)

Background

- Agricultural extension carries research results to farmers. MANAGE was set up in 1987 to strengthen the country's extension system and offers training, consultancy, research and policy support. The Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA), piloted under the NATP and extended nationwide by the 2005 extension-reforms scheme, works as a registered society at the district level.
- Agri-Clinics and Agri-Business Centres (ACABC) scheme: MANAGE coordinates free 45-day training for agriculture graduates through Nodal Training Institutes. NABARD channels the subsidy through banks – 36% for the general category and 44% for women, SC/ST and candidates from North-Eastern and hill States.
- Skilling: MSDE was created in 2014. Its empanelment guidelines for CoE-Skills came out in 2026; empanelment is scheme-agnostic and meant as a long-term association. The Agriculture Ministry said the recognition will help MANAGE expand into skilling.
- Geography: Hyderabad is the capital of Telangana (formed on 2 June 2014); it stands on the Musi river on the Deccan Plateau.

Tamil Nadu link: there is no direct Tamil Nadu link to this news. In Tamil Nadu, agricultural extension and skill training are led by Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore (1971).

6 JNCASR Bengaluru builds a terahertz silicon chip carrying data at up to 100 Gbps – a step towards 6G

Science

News

According to a PIB release of the Ministry of Science & Technology on 4 Nov 2026, researchers at the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bengaluru – an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) – led by Dr Abhishek Kumar, have designed a silicon chip that guides terahertz waves past barriers with only about 1–2% loss, using 'topological photonics'. Its power-splitter device carried data at up to 100 Gbit/s (QAM-32). The work appeared in 'Advanced Materials'; IISER Kolkata, IIT Bombay, Singapore's A*STAR and France's University of Lille–CNRS collaborated.

Key facts

Institute	JNCASR, Jakkur, Bengaluru (DST); lead – Dr Abhishek Kumar (Meta Optics Lab); first authors Samina Mulla, Sangram Kumar Sadhu
Technology	Triangular holes in a silicon slab – a 'photonic crystal' mimicking graphene's honeycomb lattice; waves travel along the boundary of two regions
Speed	Up to 100 Gbit/s (splitter); double barrier – 48; omega-shaped – 60 Gbit/s
Loss	One barrier – about 1–2%; two barriers – 2–3%
Frequency	310–360 GHz (terahertz band); high-resistivity silicon – compatible with standard chip-making
Journal	Advanced Materials; next – tuning barriers electrically, thermally or mechanically

Background

- Terahertz waves lie between microwaves and infrared in the electromagnetic spectrum. Their very wide bandwidth suits future 6G links, but they are easily scattered and lost at bends, defects and barriers – the problem this work eases.
- Science: a 'photonic crystal' is a periodic structure that controls light the way a semiconductor controls electrons. The idea of 'topology' in matter won the 2016 Physics Nobel (Thouless, Haldane, Kosterlitz). Graphene – a one-atom-thick honeycomb sheet of carbon – was isolated in 2004 by Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov (Nobel 2010).
- JNCASR: set up by DST in 1989 to mark Jawaharlal Nehru's birth centenary; founding president Bharat Ratna C.N.R. Rao; located at Jakkur, Bengaluru, it is a deemed university.
- India's chip push: India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) – Dec 2021, ₹76,000 crore; 'Semicon 2.0' (₹1.27 lakh crore) – Cabinet approval in July 2026. The 'Bharat 6G Vision' document came out in 2023.

Tamil Nadu link: on 24 Apr 2026 MeitY Secretary S. Krishnan launched an indigenously developed Silicon Photonics Process Design Kit (PDK – over 50 verified components) and a Programmable Photonic IC (PPIC) Test Engine from IIT Madras's Centre of Excellence for Compound Photonics and Photonic Integrated Circuits Systems (CoE-CPPICS), Chennai, which MeitY supports.

7 Agnipath: Cabinet approves an extra two-year term for the 75% of Agniveers not retained

Defence

News

On Wednesday, 4 Nov 2026, the Union Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi approved changes to the Agnipath scheme recommended by the forces; Chief of Defence Staff Gen N.S. Raja Subramani announced them. Selection of 25% as regulars on merit at the four-year mark continues; the remaining 75% may, if willing, serve two more years (years 5 and 6) with higher pay, an enhanced 'Seva Nidhi' package and seniority benefits. After that, those willing who meet the selection criteria will be enrolled as regular soldiers. The decision comes as about 18,300 first-batch Agniveers were due to exit by 31 Dec 2026. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh called it the 'Second Tour of Duty'.

Key facts

Decision	4 Nov 2026 – Union Cabinet (PM Modi); announced by CDS Gen N.S. Raja Subramani
Tier 1	Top 25% – regular service on merit after 4 years (unchanged); senior to Tier 2
Tier 2	Remaining 75% – optional 2 more years (years 5–6); higher pay, enhanced Seva Nidhi, seniority
After year 6	Willing personnel enrolled as regulars subject to objective selection criteria (not automatic)
Numbers	First batch – about 18,300 (due to exit by 31 Dec 2026); over 3 lakh Agniveers now serve
Scheme	Agnipath continues; annual performance reviews tracked in a central database for all three services

Background

- Agnipath: approved by the Cabinet on 14 June 2022. It recruits Personnel Below Officer Rank into the Army, Navy and Air Force for four years; age 17½–21 (up to 23 in the first cycle only); up to 25% of each batch go into regular service. The aim is a younger age profile for the forces.
- Pay and Seva Nidhi: ₹30,000 a month in year 1, rising to ₹40,000 in year 4. 30% of pay goes into a corpus and the government adds a matching amount. On exit about ₹11.71 lakh with interest – a tax-free one-time sum, not a pension.
- Quotas for ex-Agniveers: 50% of CAPF Constable (GD) and Assam Rifles constable posts (Home Ministry); 10% in the Coast Guard, defence civilian posts and 16 defence PSUs.
- Constitution: Article 33 lets Parliament restrict or abrogate the Fundamental Rights of the armed forces, police and similar forces. Defence and the armed forces are in the Union List. The President is the Supreme Commander (Article 53(2)).
- Training: the Navy's first Agniveer batch (2,585, including 273 women) passed out at INS Chilka, Odisha, on 28 March 2023.

Tamil Nadu link: this is a nationwide decision; there is no separate Tamil Nadu announcement. Agniveers from Tamil Nadu also get the two-year extension and the path to regular service. The Officers Training Academy (OTA, 1963) at Alandur, Chennai, trains Short Service Commission officers – Agnipath does not cover officers.

8 'Vayo Samman Rashtriya Abhiyan' – national campaign for senior citizens launched in New Delhi on 4 Nov

Schemes

News

Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Dr Virendra Kumar launched the national 'Vayo Samman Rashtriya Abhiyan' in New Delhi on 4 Nov 2026. It runs under the Ministry's flagship 'Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana' (AVYAY). Its aims: strengthen intergenerational bonding and solidarity, recognise the experience and contributions of senior citizens, see them as contributors rather than only welfare recipients, and reduce isolation. It will reach villages and mohallas through panchayats, local bodies and educational institutions. A 'Vayo Samman Pledge' was taken and a handbook released. The Minister urged that no elderly person be left alone during Deepavali.

Key facts

Launch	4 Nov 2026, New Delhi – Dr Virendra Kumar (Social Justice Minister); under AVYAY
5C model	Connect, Converse, Co-create, Contribute, Continue
Themes	e.g. '30 Minutes Together', 'Teach Me – I'll Teach You', 'My Story, My India', 'Digital Dada-Dadi', 'Silver Skills – Seniors as Mentors'
Vayo SAATHI	Volunteers aged 18+ – register on the SCW SAMAVESH Portal / JEEVAN App; certificate. SAATHI = Support, Awareness, Assistance, Training, Health, Inclusion
MoUs	Shri Ram Chandra Mission (SRCM); Adhyatma Vigyan Satsang Kendra (AVSK), Jodhpur
Elderly numbers	Aged 60+ – about 10 crore (2011) → about 23 crore projected (2036)

Background

- AVYAY (Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana) is the Social Justice Ministry's umbrella scheme for senior citizens: (1) Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC) – grants for senior citizen homes and continuous care homes; (2) Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY) – free assistive devices (wheelchairs, walking sticks, hearing aids) to BPL senior citizens.
- RVY is implemented by the Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), a central PSU headquartered in Kanpur. The SAGE (Seniorcare Ageing Growth Engine) portal promotes the 'silver economy' – elder-care start-ups get up to ₹1 crore for at most 49% equity.
- Social context: the Ministry noted that urbanisation, migration and changing family structures have raised loneliness, low awareness of welfare schemes and exposure to cyber fraud among the elderly; engaging youth in 'dignified ageing' is the core of the campaign.

Tamil Nadu link: RBI's 'State Finances: A Study of Budgets of 2025–26' projects 15.8% of Tamil Nadu's population to be 60+ in 2026 (Kerala 18.7% – the highest). Then CM M.K. Stalin launched 25 'Anbucholai' day-care centres for the elderly (about ₹10 crore) at Tiruchi in Nov 2025 – with chess, carrom, a library, yoga, physiotherapy and lunch.

9 FM Nirmala Sitharaman releases ₹250 commemorative coin in Varanasi on Muthuswami Dikshitar's 250th birth anniversary

Art & Culture

News

On 3 Nov 2026 Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman released a ₹250 commemorative coin at Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, marking the 250th birth anniversary of Muthuswami Dikshitar, one of the Trinity of Carnatic music. The programme was organised by IIT (BHU)'s Centre of Excellence for Indian Knowledge Systems (CoE-IKS), with support from BSE under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme. Minted in limited numbers in precious metal, the coin is a collector's item, not for daily circulation; it is sold on the Government mint website at ₹6,985.

Key facts

Event	3 Nov 2026 – Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Varanasi
Released by	FM Nirmala Sitharaman; BHU VC Ajit Kumar Chaturvedi and IIT-BHU Director Amit Patra present
Organised by	IIT (BHU) – Centre of Excellence for Indian Knowledge Systems; BSE – CSR support
Coin	₹250; precious metal; for collectors only; price ₹6,985
Dikshitar	Born 1775 (some sources 1776), Tiruvarur; died 1835, Ettayapuram; signature 'Guruguha'
Works	About 450–500 kritis, mostly in Sanskrit; Navagraha kritis, Kamalamba Navavarana kritis

Background

- Trinity of Carnatic music: Tyagaraja (1767–1847), Muthuswami Dikshitar (1775–1835) and Syama Sastri (1762–1827) – all three were born in Tiruvarur. Tyagaraja composed mostly in Telugu (signature 'Tyagaraja'); Syama Sastri was a devotee of Bangaru Kamakshi of Thanjavur (signature 'Syama Krishna'); Dikshitar composed mostly in Sanskrit (signature 'Guruguha').
- Life: his father was Ramaswami Dikshitar. The ascetic Chidambaranatha Yogi took him to Kashi (Varanasi), where he learnt music, philosophy and yoga and absorbed the influence of Dhrupad (Hindustani) – hence the coin's release in Varanasi. He was a veena player (vainika); his brother Baluswami pioneered the violin in Carnatic music.
- Works: the 'Kamalamba Navavarana kritis' honour Goddess Kamalamba, who has an independent shrine in the Thyagaraja temple at Tiruvarur, and follow Sri Chakra worship. The 'Navagraha kritis' praise the nine planets. Influenced by Western music heard at Fort St. George, Madras, he also composed about 40 'Nottuswara' songs.
- Disciples: the 'Tanjore Quartet' – Ponnaiah, Chinnaiah, Sivanandam and Vadivelu – were Dikshitar's disciples; they shaped the present Bharatanatyam concert repertoire (margam).
- Coinage: under the Coinage Act, 2011 the Union Government designs and mints coins; the Government Mints (Mumbai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Noida) work under SPMCIL. Commemorative coins are mostly collector's items.

Tamil Nadu link: all three of the Carnatic Trinity were born in Tiruvarur. Dikshitar died on Deepavali day, 1835, at Ettayapuram (now Thoothukudi district), where his samadhi stands – Ettayapuram is also the birthplace of poet Subramania Bharati. The annual 'Tyagaraja Aradhana' is held at Thiruvaiyaru

(Thanjavur), where Tyagaraja's samadhi is. The 'Tamil Isai Moovar' (Tamil Trinity) – Muthu Thandavar, Arunachala Kavirayar and Marimutha Pillai – who laid the foundation of Tamil kritis, were from Sirkazhi.

10 Sabir Hossain of Purba Bardhaman (W. Bengal) wins Singapore's SLINGSHOT 2026 award for 'StopBleed' blood-clotting technology

Awards

News

'StopBleed', a powder that rapidly stops bleeding from wounds, developed by young innovator Sabir Hossain (also spelt Sabir Hussain), reported to hail from Badulia village, Khandaghosh block, Purba Bardhaman district, West Bengal, was the overall grand winner of SLINGSHOT 2026, the deep-tech startup competition held in Singapore, and also topped its 'Health and Biomedical' category (results 29 Oct 2026; reported by Bengali dailies on 3 Nov 2026). He developed it under Prof. Devendra Verma of the Department of Biotechnology and Medical Engineering, NIT Rourkela (Odisha); his startup is Miraqules MedSolutions.

Key facts

Inventor	Sabir Hossain – Purba Bardhaman (W. Bengal); research graduate under Prof. Verma, NIT Rourkela; heads Miraqules
Award	SLINGSHOT 2026 – overall grand winner + 'Health & Biomedical' category; by Enterprise Singapore at SWITCH 2026 (27–29 Oct)
Prize pool	SLINGSHOT 2026 total prize pool over S$2.2 million (for all winners); 10th edition
Product	'StopBleed' – nano-biopolymer haemostat; powder and pellet forms; 3-year shelf life at room temperature
Approval	CDSCO – medical-device approval (Feb 2026)
Mentor / firm	Prof. Devendra Verma, NIT Rourkela; Miraqules MedSolutions (NIT Rourkela spin-off)

Background

- How it works: StopBleed uses nanofibrous aggregate technology – it rapidly absorbs blood plasma, traps blood cells in a fibrous mesh, speeds up the body's natural clotting and forms a hydrogel seal over the wound. It is meant for road-accident, gunshot, blast and industrial injuries.
- Science – blood clotting: after an injury, platelets (thrombocytes) gather to form a plug. Clotting factors convert prothrombin into 'thrombin', which turns the soluble protein fibrinogen into insoluble 'fibrin' threads – blood cells trapped in this mesh form the clot. Calcium ions are needed, and vitamin K is needed for the liver to make clotting factors.
- Disorders: haemophilia is an X-linked hereditary bleeding disorder that mostly affects males (haemophilia A – factor VIII deficiency). Heparin is a drug that prevents clotting (anticoagulant).
- Regulation: under the Medical Devices Rules, 2017, devices are classed by risk as A (low), B, C and D (high). CDSCO is under the Union Health Ministry, headed by the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI). SLINGSHOT is part of the Singapore Week of Innovation and Technology (SWITCH); 2026 was its 10th edition.

Tamil Nadu link: controlling bleeding in the first hours after an accident saves lives. On this principle, Tamil Nadu launched 'Innuyir Kappom – Nammai Kaakkum 48' at Melmaruvathur on 18 Dec 2021:

road-accident victims get free emergency treatment in empanelled government and private hospitals during the first 48 hours; the cover, initially ₹1 lakh, was later raised to ₹2 lakh.

11 Sikkim's Soreng is India's first notified organic fisheries cluster under PMMSY; SOP for organic fish certification in the North-East launched

Agriculture

News

Under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY), Soreng district of Sikkim is India's first notified 'Organic Fisheries Cluster'. On a visit to Sikkim on 2 Nov 2026, Union Fisheries Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh (Lalan Singh) launched the 'Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Organic Certification of Fisheries' for the North-Eastern region and inaugurated PMMSY projects worth ₹3.75 crore in Sikkim. The cluster aims at fish farming without harmful chemicals, antibiotics and pesticides; target species are Amur carp, Indian Major Carps and trout.

Key facts

Cluster	Soreng district, Sikkim – India's first notified organic fisheries cluster (first announced 6 Jan 2025, Guwahati)
SOP	SOP for organic certification of fisheries – North-Eastern region; 2 Nov 2026
Launched by	Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying Rajiv Ranjan Singh (Lalan Singh)
Projects	₹3.75 crore; Biofloc and RAS technologies
Species	Amur carp, Indian Major Carps, trout
Clusters	34 fisheries clusters notified under PMMSY; organic clusters in Sikkim and Meghalaya
Market link	Sikkim Govt – MoU with ITBP for procurement of rainbow trout

Background

- PMMSY: the 'Blue Revolution' scheme for fisheries launched on 10 Sept 2020, implemented by the Department of Fisheries, Union Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying. Its 'cluster approach' links production, processing, value addition and marketing within one area – priority clusters include pearl (Hazaribagh, Jharkhand), ornamental fish (Madurai), seaweed (Lakshadweep) and tuna (Andaman & Nicobar).
- Sikkim: declared India's first fully organic farming State in 2016 – organic fish farming builds on that base. On 21 Dec 2021 Sikkim created two new districts – Soreng (from West Sikkim) and Pakyong (from East Sikkim) – and renamed the old ones Gangtok (East), Mangan (North), Gyalshing (West) and Namchi (South); it now has six districts.
- Fish science: Indian Major Carps (IMC) – catla, rohu and mrigal – are the base of composite fish culture. Amur carp is an improved strain of the common carp. Rainbow trout is a 'cold-water fish' needing cool, flowing water and is farmed in the Himalaya. Biofloc uses microbes to turn waste into fish feed; RAS (Recirculating Aquaculture System) filters and reuses water in tanks.
- Economy: India is the world's second-largest producer of fish and of aquaculture. Organic fish fetch premium prices at home and abroad; the SOP ensures certification and traceability.

Tamil Nadu link: the Madurai ornamental fisheries cluster is one of PMMSY's priority clusters. The Tamil Nadu Dr J. Jayalalithaa Fisheries University (TNJFU), set up in 2012 exclusively for fisheries education, is headquartered at Nagapattinam; the Fisheries College at Thoothukudi and the Dr M.G.R. Fisheries College at Ponneri are among its constituent colleges.

12 Manipur hosts the first 'North East Waree Leeba (storytelling) Festival 2026' – inaugurated by Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla

Art & Culture

News

On 2 Nov 2026 Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla inaugurated the first 'North East Waree Leeba Festival 2026' at the Irom Meijrao Mamang Community Hall, Imphal West. The five-day festival is organised by the Repertory of Waree Leeba, Manipur (Khurai) with the Irom Meijrao Women for Cultural Centre, funded by the Union Ministry of Culture's Cultural Function and Production Grant (CFPG). Artists from Manipur, Assam and Tripura took part, and gurus from Assam and Tripura were felicitated. Festival Director Takhellambam Shyamkanhai Singh narrated an episode from the Mahabharata. Manipur's Art & Culture Minister Kh. Loken Singh attended.

Key facts

Event	1st North East Waree Leeba Festival 2026 – opened 2 Nov 2026; five days
Venue	Irom Meijrao Mamang Community Hall, Imphal West, Manipur
Inaugurated by	Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla
Organisers	Repertory of Waree Leeba, Manipur (Khurai) + Irom Meijrao Women for Cultural Centre; funding – Union Ministry of Culture (CFPG)
Participation	Artists of Manipur, Assam and Tripura; souvenir 'Ningshing Chephong' released
Art form	Waree Leeba – traditional storytelling art of the Meiteis; traced to the reign of King Khagemba (1597–1652)

Background

- Waree Leeba means 'storytelling'. Usually a single performer narrates the Mahabharata, Ramayana and other religious tales using dialogue, rhythmic narration, dramatic technique and humour; striking a pillow placed beside him for emphasis is a distinctive feature. The Governor called it a 'living tradition' that passes knowledge, beliefs, myths and social values across generations; as the art is declining, the festival aims to revive it among the young.
- Manipuri culture: Manipuri is one of India's classical dances; the 'Ras Lila', depicting Krishna and the gopis, is its high point. 'Lai Haraoba' is an ancient ritual festival of the Meiteis; 'Thang-Ta' (sword and spear) is Manipur's martial art. The State's tourism festival held every November is the 'Sangai Festival', named after the Sangai deer, the State animal.
- Geography: Manipur's Loktak Lake is the largest freshwater lake in the North-East, famous for its floating vegetation mats called 'phumdis'. Keibul Lamjao on it is the world's only floating national park and the only natural home of the endangered Sangai (brow-antlered deer).
- Polity: Manipur merged with India in 1949, became a Union Territory in 1956 and a full State on 21 Jan 1972 under the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971 (along with Tripura and Meghalaya). Special provision for Manipur's hill areas – Article 371C.

Tamil Nadu link: storytelling is a strong tradition in Tamil Nadu too. 'Villupattu' (bow song) of the southern districts (Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli) is narrated to the beat of a large bow strung with bells, struck with sticks, accompanied by a pot (kudam) and udukkai; its noted exponent Subbu Arumugam received the Padma Shri in 2021. 'Kathakalakshepam' (Harikatha), narrating epics with music, grew in Tamil Nadu through the Thanjavur Maratha court.

13 Three indigenous AI foundation models released under IndiaAI Mission – 'EKA-1', 'Dhīr 2B' and 'Dhīr 5B'

Science

News

The Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) released three indigenous AI models, built under the 'Foundation Models' initiative of the IndiaAI Mission, in New Delhi on 3 Nov 2026 in the presence of MeitY Secretary S. Krishnan. 'EKA-1', built by Soket AI Labs, has 26.3 billion parameters and was trained on about 7.5 trillion tokens; it supports all 22 scheduled languages and English. 'Dhīr 2B' and 'Dhīr 5B', built by ZenteiQ, are small, lightweight models supporting English and 10 Indian languages that can run on mobile phones without cloud connectivity. They can be used in data-sensitive sectors such as defence, cybersecurity and banking–finance, including in 'air-gapped' (offline, isolated) settings; the aim is to reduce dependence on foreign AI.

Key facts

Release	3 Nov 2026 – New Delhi; MeitY, IndiaAI Mission (Foundation Models pillar); Secretary S. Krishnan
EKA-1	Soket AI Labs – 26.3 billion parameters, ~7.5 trillion tokens; 22 scheduled languages + English; 'sparse hybrid' model; CEO Abhishek Upperwal
Dhīr 2B / 5B	ZenteiQ – open-source models; English + 10 Indian languages; run on mobile phones without cloud connectivity
Access	To be made available to researchers, students and the public via IndiaAI's 'AIKosh' platform
Use	Air-gapped / on-premise deployment – defence, cybersecurity, banking–finance, government

Background

- Foundation Models pillar: 12 organisations are funded under this IndiaAI pillar (Lok Sabha reply, Apr 2026) – Sarvam AI, Soket AI, Gnani AI, Gan AI, Avataar AI, BharatGen, GenLoop, ZenteiQ, Intellihealth, Shodh AI, Fractal Analytics and Tech Mahindra Maker's Lab. The largest grant went to the IIT Bombay-led 'BharatGen' consortium (₹1,058.52 crore). Sarvam's and BharatGen's models were unveiled at the 'India AI Impact Summit' in Feb 2026.
- Science & tech: a 'foundation model' is an AI model trained on vast data that can be adapted to many tasks. 'Parameters' are the internal weights learnt in training; a 'token' is the word/sub-word unit used in training.
- Security / sovereignty: an 'air-gapped' system is fully cut off from the internet and other outside networks, so sensitive data stays within the country. 'Open-weight' models can be downloaded and improved by researchers, students and firms. AIKosh is the IndiaAI Mission's national repository of datasets and AI models.

Tamil Nadu link: 'AI4Bharat', which builds free, open-source AI for Indian languages (machine translation, speech recognition, open datasets), is an IIT Madras initiative; the 'Nilekani Centre at AI4Bharat' was set up at IIT Madras with a ₹36 crore grant from Nandan and Rohini Nilekani.

14 Assam: government employees practising polygamy to be dismissed and barred from future government jobs

Governance

News

On 3 Nov 2026 (Tuesday), the Assam Cabinet chaired by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma decided to amend the 'Assam Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1964'. A government employee found guilty of polygamy in disciplinary proceedings will be dismissed from service and barred from future government jobs. Earlier, remarrying without prior permission while a spouse was alive attracted only action such as suspension. The CM said the rule applies to all religions and follows the State's Uniform Civil Code (UCC) push.

Key facts

Decision	3 Nov 2026 – Assam Cabinet; CM Himanta Biswa Sarma
Rules amended	Assam Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1964 – amended (Rule 7 – penalties)
Penalty	Dismissal (earlier suspension) + bar on future government jobs; only after guilt is proved in proceedings
Polygamy Bill	Assam Prohibition of Polygamy Bill, 2025 – passed Nov 2025; second marriage – up to 7 years, concealing earlier marriage – up to 10 years; not applicable to Sixth Schedule areas and tribal communities
Assam UCC	Assam Uniform Civil Code Bill, 2026 – passed 27 May 2026; third State after Uttarakhand and Gujarat; awaiting President's assent; Scheduled Tribes excluded
Same meeting	CBI probe recommended into the July 2026 floods in Sivasagar and Charaideo; Assam's first Defence Park at Nellie

Background

- Constitution: Article 44 (Part IV – Directive Principles) – the State shall endeavour to secure a Uniform Civil Code for citizens throughout India; under Article 37 these are not enforceable by courts. Article 25 – freedom of conscience and religion, subject to public order, morality and health; it does not bar laws for social welfare and reform [25(2)(b)].
- Laws: Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 – Section 5(i) requires monogamy; Section 17 makes bigamy punishable (formerly IPC 494, 495 → now Section 82 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita). The Special Marriage Act, 1954 also requires monogamy. Muslim personal law (Shariat Application Act, 1937) permits up to four wives. For Central employees, Rule 21 of the CCS (Conduct) Rules, 1964 bars remarriage while a spouse is living without government permission.
- Judgments: Sarla Mudgal v. Union of India (1995) – converting to Islam to remarry does not dissolve the first Hindu marriage; it is still bigamy; the Supreme Court stressed the need for a UCC. Shah Bano (1985) – maintenance for a divorced Muslim woman; Shayara Bano (2017) – instant triple talaq struck down.

- State UCCs: Goa's Portuguese Civil Code (1867) continued after liberation. Uttarakhand was the first to enforce a UCC passed by its own legislature (27 Jan 2025); Gujarat and Assam later passed Bills. A committee was formed on 30 Oct 2026 to frame Assam's UCC rules.

Tamil Nadu link: to give legal validity to 'Self-Respect marriages' – held without a priest, before relatives and friends, by exchanging garlands/rings or tying the thali – Section 7-A was inserted into the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 under CM C.N. Annadurai (decided 1967, law in 1968). The monogamy condition applies to these marriages too.

15 India and Kazakhstan sign extradition treaty

International Relations

News

Kazakhstan's news agency 'Kazakhstan Today' reported on 3 Nov 2026 that India and Kazakhstan have signed an extradition treaty. Kazakhstan's Prosecutor General Berik Asylov and India's Ambassador to Kazakhstan Y.K. Sailas Thangal signed it at a ceremony hosted by the Prosecutor General's Office. It provides for each country to hand over persons wanted for criminal prosecution or to serve a court-imposed sentence. Together with the existing pacts on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters and transfer of sentenced persons, it completes the legal-cooperation framework. (Reports do not state where it was signed.)

Key facts

Report	3 Nov 2026 – 'Kazakhstan Today' (kt.kz); signing place not stated
Signatories	Berik Asylov – Prosecutor General of Kazakhstan; Y.K. Sailas Thangal – Indian Ambassador (credentials to President Tokayev, 28 Aug 2025)
Purpose	Surrender of persons wanted for prosecution or to serve a sentence
Earlier pacts	Mutual legal assistance (criminal) – New Delhi, 17 Aug 1999; legal assistance (civil) – Astana, 16 Apr 2011; transfer of sentenced persons – Astana, 8 July 2015
Note	The Indian Embassy's list also shows an 'Extradition Treaty – New Delhi, 24 Jan 2009'; but Kazakhstan is not in MEA's list of extradition-treaty countries; reports do not explain its relation to the 2026 signing
Indian law	Extradition Act, 1962; Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) handles extradition requests

Background

- Law: the Extradition Act, 1962 lays down the procedure for surrendering fugitives from and to India; it applies to treaty States by notification; no surrender for offences of a political character (Section 31). Officers at Joint Secretary (Consular) level in the MEA receive requests. For economic offenders, the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018 allows confiscation of property.
- Principles: 'dual criminality' – the act must be an offence in both countries; 'rule of speciality' – the person may be tried only for the offence for which he was surrendered. As per the MEA list, India has treaties with 37 countries and arrangements with 10.
- Transfer of prisoners: the 2015 India–Kazakhstan agreement was given effect by a Home Ministry notification (2017) under the Repatriation of Prisoners Act, 2003 – a convicted foreigner can serve the sentence in his own country.

- Relations: a 'Strategic Partnership' was announced when President Nazarbayev was Republic Day chief guest in 2009. India announced its 'Connect Central Asia' policy in 2012; the first India–Central Asia Summit was held virtually in Jan 2022. Kazakhstan is a key supplier of uranium for India's nuclear power plants.

Tamil Nadu link: there is no direct Tamil Nadu link to this news. Related fact: India has had an extradition 'arrangement' with Sri Lanka, across the Palk Strait, since 1978 (MEA list) – relevant to cases of fugitives crossing via the Tamil Nadu coast.

16 ISSF World Championships (Doha): India win gold in men's 50m pistol team event

Sports

News

At the 2026 ISSF World Shooting Championships in Doha, capital of Qatar, the Indian team of Ravinder Singh (559), Saurabh Chaudhary (551) and Amanpreet Singh (549) won gold in the men's 50m pistol team event on 3 Nov 2026 with 1,659 points. China (1,648) took silver and South Korea (1,643) bronze. In the individual event Ravinder Singh won silver; gold went to Russia's Anton Aristarkhov (561) and bronze to Romania's Luca Joldea (558). The championship is the first qualifying event for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics, though 50m pistol is not an Olympic event.

Key facts

Event	2026 ISSF World Championships – Doha, Qatar; team final 3 Nov 2026
India – gold	Ravinder Singh 559, Saurabh Chaudhary 551, Amanpreet Singh 549 = 1,659
Other teams	Silver – China 1,648; bronze – South Korea 1,643
Individual	Gold – Anton Aristarkhov (Russia) 561; silver – Ravinder Singh 559; bronze – Luca Joldea (Romania) 558
Last edition	2025 (Egypt) – Ravinder Singh individual gold (569); team silver (Ravinder, Kamaljeet, Yogesh Kumar – 1,646)
Olympic quota	First LA 2028 qualifier – 36 quota places in 12 Olympic individual events (3 per event)

Background

- 50m pistol: a precision event fired with a .22 calibre pistol from 50 metres – 6 series of 10 shots (60 shots). Following a 2017 IOC decision, men's 50m pistol was dropped from the Olympics from Tokyo 2020; mixed team events were added for gender balance.
- India's Olympic shooting: Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore – silver (Athens 2004, double trap); Abhinav Bindra – gold (Beijing 2008, 10m air rifle) – India's first individual Olympic gold; Vijay Kumar – silver, Gagan Narang – bronze (London 2012); Manu Bhaker – 2 bronzes, Swapnil Kusale – bronze (Paris 2024).
- Administration: shooting sport in India is governed by the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI), New Delhi.
- Geography: Qatar is a peninsular country in the Persian Gulf; capital Doha. Doha hosted the 2006 Asian Games and Qatar the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

Tamil Nadu link: 10m air rifle shooter Elavenil Valarivan was born in Cuddalore; her family moved to Ahmedabad when she was about three. At the 2018 ISSF Junior World Cup in Sydney she set a junior world record in qualification.

17 QS Asia University Rankings 2027: 71% of Indian universities slip; IIT Delhi (66th) stays India's best

Indices

News

London-based Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) released the 'QS World University Rankings: Asia 2027' on 3 Nov 2026, covering 1,722 universities from 26 higher-education systems. India has 325 institutions (34 new). But 71% of returning Indian universities fell in rank, 18% rose and 11% held their place. IIT Delhi, at 66th (59th last year), remains India's top institution. The University of Hong Kong is Asia's No. 1 for the second year running. QS noted that two-thirds of the Indian universities that slipped actually improved their scores – others simply advanced faster.

Key facts

Release	3 Nov 2026 – QS (London); 1,722 universities from 26 systems (195 new)
India	325 institutions (34 new)
Movement	71% fell, 18% rose, 11% unchanged; 21 in Asia's top 200 (20 last year)
India's top 5	IIT Delhi 66, IISc 79, IIT Bombay 83, IIT Madras 85, IIT Kharagpur 90
Asia's top 3	Univ. of Hong Kong, Peking Univ., Tsinghua Univ.
Why	Academic reputation fell for 76% of Indian universities, employer reputation for 83%, international students for 85%
Strength	27 Indian universities in Asia's top 50 for papers per faculty; IISc first in Asia

Background

- QS: Quacquarelli Symonds is a British firm founded in 1990 by Nunzio Quacquarelli, headquartered in London. Its World University Rankings began in 2004 jointly with Times Higher Education (THE); the two parted in 2009. In the QS World University Rankings 2027 (June 2026), IIT Delhi was India's best at 118th in the world.
- Indian ranking: the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) was launched on 29 Sep 2015 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (now Ministry of Education); first rankings in 2016. Five parameters: Teaching-Learning-Resources, Research, Graduation Outcomes, Outreach-Inclusivity, and Perception.
- Constitution: education was originally in the State List; the 42nd Amendment (1976) moved it to the Concurrent List. Free and compulsory education for children aged 6–14 – Article 21A (86th Amendment, 2002). The National Education Policy 2020 targets a 50% Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education by 2035.
- Economy/internationalisation: QS Asia uses indicators such as academic reputation, employer reputation, international students and faculty, and student exchange. Indian universities are strong on research volume, but only three are in Asia's top 50 for citations per paper.

Tamil Nadu link: IIT Madras is Tamil Nadu's highest-ranked institution in QS Asia 2027 – 85th (70th last year). In the Government of India's NIRF 2025 (4 Sep 2025), IIT Madras topped the 'Overall' category for

the seventh year in a row and has led the engineering category every year since 2016.

18 3,300-year-old Egyptian scarab amulet found in Israel – spotted by a 17-year-old American student

History

News

The Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) announced on 3 Nov 2026 that Shiloh Attoun, a 17-year-old American student on a school trip to Tel Gezer National Park in the Judean Lowlands (Shephelah), found a small Egyptian-style scarab (dung-beetle-shaped) amulet lying on the ground. It shows two cobras (uraei) above the Egyptian hieroglyph 'nb' ('lord'). Prof. Ido Koch of Tel Aviv University dated it to the Late Bronze Age, about 3,300 years ago. It has joined Israel's National Treasures collection, and the student received a certificate of appreciation.

Key facts

Announced	3 Nov 2026 – Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA)
Site	Tel Gezer National Park, Judean Lowlands (Shephelah)
Finder	Shiloh Attoun (17), US student – JNF-USA Muss High School in Israel
Object	Scarab (dung-beetle-shaped) amulet/seal; two uraeus cobras over the 'nb' (lord) sign
Date	Late Bronze Age – about 3,300 years ago (Prof. Ido Koch, Tel Aviv Univ.)
Parallel	A similar scarab with three snakes was found earlier at Tel Megiddo

Background

- History: the scarab copies the dung beetle, sacred to the ancient Egyptians as a symbol of creation and new life; scarabs were sometimes used as seals. The uraeus (cobra) was the Egyptian symbol of royalty and protection, worn on the Pharaoh's crown. Scarabs in Israel reflect Egypt's cultural influence during its periods of rule over the region (Canaan).
- Site: Gezer was one of the most important Canaanite cities, controlling a strategic crossroads in the Judean Lowlands; today it is Tel Gezer National Park. A 'tel' is a mound built up from layer upon layer of settlement over centuries.
- Script: Egyptian hieroglyphs were deciphered by Jean-François Champollion in 1822 with the help of the Rosetta Stone (found in 1799), which carries one decree in hieroglyphic, Demotic and Greek; the stone is in the British Museum, London.
- Indian link: the Indus (Harappan) civilisation also used seals in trade; most were made of soft steatite; the 'unicorn' is the commonest motif; the 'Pashupati' seal was found at Mohenjo-daro.

Tamil Nadu link: ancient Tamilakam traded with Egypt by sea. At Quseir al-Qadim, a Red Sea port of Egypt, an Indian storage jar of the 1st century BCE inscribed 'paanai oRi' in Tamil-Brahmi was found; epigraphist Iravatham Mahadevan read it (The Hindu, 21 Nov 2007). A Tamil-Brahmi pottery inscription was also found (1995) at Berenike, another Red Sea port.

19 Fifth and final S-400 'Sudarshan Chakra' air-defence squadron from Russia – arrival now expected in early 2027

Defence

News

Under the 2018 contract for five S-400 'Triumf' air-defence squadrons (regiments), the fifth and final one, earlier expected in November 2026, is now likely to arrive in January–February 2027, reports of 2–3 Nov 2026 citing government officials said – an Indian team will inspect it in Russia in December and parts may start arriving from January. The first three arrived in 2021–2023 and the fourth in May–June 2026; they are deployed facing the Pakistan and China fronts. It will complete the deal for the system known in India as 'Sudarshan Chakra'. The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) cleared a proposal for five more squadrons in March 2026, and talks with Russia are under way.

Key facts

Deal	5 Oct 2018 – about $5.43 bn (₹40,000 crore); 5 squadrons
Deliveries	1st in Dec 2021; three by 2023; 4th May–June 2026; 5th expected Jan–Feb 2027
System	Long-range surface-to-air missile system; range up to 400 km (40N6E); designed by Almaz-Antey
NATO name	SA-21 'Growler'; in Russian service since 2007
Op Sindoor	S-400 downed 5 Pakistani fighters and 1 large aircraft at about 300 km – claim by IAF chief A.P. Singh (9 Aug 2025); denied by Pakistan
Next	DAC cleared 5 more squadrons (Mar 2026); talks with Russia

Background

- International relations: the US 'Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act' (CAATSA, 2017) allows sanctions on countries making major arms deals with Russia, Iran or North Korea. NATO member Turkey was sanctioned on 14 Dec 2020 for buying the S-400. India has not been sanctioned so far; it went ahead citing strategic autonomy.
- Defence: Operation Sindoor – in response to the 22 Apr 2025 Pahalgam (J&K) terror attack, India struck terror camps in Pakistan and PoK on the night of 6–7 May 2025. India's S-400 saw combat for the first time; the IAF chief called one of its hits 'the largest-ever recorded surface-to-air kill' (Pakistan denies the claim).
- Policy: in his Independence Day speech of 15 Aug 2025, the PM announced 'Mission Sudarshan Chakra' – to bring key public places such as railway stations, hospitals and places of worship under a nationwide 'security shield' by 2035.
- Science: the S-400 is a layered air-defence system of missiles of different ranges, long-range radars and a command post, able to intercept aircraft, drones, cruise and ballistic missiles. Its Indian name comes from Lord Vishnu's discus in Hindu mythology.

Tamil Nadu link: there is no direct Tamil Nadu link to this news. A Tamil Nadu example of India–Russia cooperation is the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant in Tirunelveli district, being built with Russian cooperation – two 1,000 MW units are running and four more are under construction.

20 World Tsunami Awareness Day – 5 November

Important Days

News

Under UN General Assembly resolution 70/203 of 22 Dec 2015, 5 November is observed every year as World Tsunami Awareness Day; Japan proposed it. The date honours Japan's 'Inamura-no-hi' (burning of the rice sheaves) story. The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) coordinates the campaign. The 2025 theme was 'Be Tsunami Ready: Invest in Tsunami Preparedness'.

Key facts

Date	5 November – observed since 2016
Designation	UNGA resolution 70/203, 22 Dec 2015; proposed by Japan
Coordinator	UNDRR (UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction), Geneva
2025 theme	'Be Tsunami Ready: Invest in Tsunami Preparedness'
Story	'Inamura-no-hi' – 1854, Hiro village, Japan; Hamaguchi Goryo
Indian warning centre	ITEWC – INCOIS, Hyderabad (Ministry of Earth Sciences); since Oct 2007; first advisory about 10 minutes after a quake

Background

- History: as a tsunami approached after the 1854 Nankai earthquake, Hamaguchi Goryo of Hiro village (in today's Wakayama Prefecture), Japan, set fire to his harvested rice sheaves to warn villagers and guide them to high ground. He later hired tsunami victims to build a 5-metre seawall, which protected the village from the tsunami after the 1946 Nankai earthquake.
- Science: 'tsunami' is Japanese for 'harbour wave' (tsu = harbour, nami = wave). Most are caused by undersea earthquakes, some by volcanic eruptions or submarine landslides; they have nothing to do with tides. In the deep ocean the wavelength runs to hundreds of km, the height is small and the speed matches a jet aircraft; near the coast it slows and grows in height.
- Indian system: after the 26 Dec 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC) was set up at INCOIS, Hyderabad, under the Ministry of Earth Sciences, and has been operational since Oct 2007. On 12 Oct 2011 UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) designated it a Tsunami Service Provider for the Indian Ocean; it sends advisories to 25 Indian Ocean Rim countries.
- Disaster management: the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 is in its final stretch; UNESCO-IOC's 'Tsunami Ready' Recognition Programme rates the preparedness of coastal communities.

Tamil Nadu link: the Tamil epic 'Manimekalai' says the ancient Chola port and capital Kaveripoompattinam (Puhar, now in Mayiladuthurai district) was swallowed by the sea; 'Silappathikaram' describes Puhar's streets, its Maruvurpakkam and Pattinappakkam quarters and its harbour. National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) researchers have found submerged structures off Poompuhar, possibly due to sea-level rise and coastal erosion. Tamil Nadu's coast was badly hit by the 2004 tsunami.

21 Mangalyaan launch (5 Nov 2013, PSLV-C25): India first to reach Mars orbit on its maiden attempt, and first in Asia

Space

News

India's first interplanetary mission, the Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM – Mangalyaan), was launched on 5 Nov 2013 by PSLV-C25 from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. After a roughly 300-day journey it entered Mars orbit on 24 Sep 2014 – India became the first nation to do so on its maiden attempt and the first Asian nation to reach Mars. Designed for six months, the craft worked for about eight years; after contact was lost during a long eclipse in April 2022, ISRO declared it non-recoverable on 3 Oct 2022. 5 Nov 2026 marks 13 years since the launch.

Key facts

Launch	5 Nov 2013 – PSLV-C25, Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota
Mars orbit	24 Sep 2014 – after a ~300-day journey
Feat	First nation to succeed on maiden attempt; first Asian nation at Mars
Payloads (5)	MSM (methane), MCC (colour camera), LAP (D/H ratio), MENCA (exosphere gases), TIS (thermal infrared)
End	Designed for 6 months – worked ~8 years; end declared 3 Oct 2022
₹2,000 note	Reverse of the ₹2,000 note (Nov 2016) shows Mangalyaan

Background

- Science: Mars is the fourth planet from the Sun and home to Olympus Mons, the tallest volcano in the Solar System. Since methane can signal biological or geological activity, MOM's 'MSM' was designed to measure it at ppb accuracy and map its sources. The LAP instrument studied Mars' water loss through the deuterium-to-hydrogen (D/H) ratio.
- World efforts: before MOM only the Soviet Union, NASA (USA) and the European Space Agency (ESA) had reached Mars. In Asia, Japan's 'Nozomi' (launched 1998) failed to enter orbit (2003), and China's 'Yinghuo-1' was lost with Russia's 'Phobos-Grunt' in 2011. Later, in 2021, the UAE's 'Hope' and China's 'Tianwen-1' reached Mars.
- Economy: the ₹2,000 note issued by the RBI in Nov 2016 carries a motif of Mangalyaan on its reverse, 'depicting the country's first venture into interplanetary space'. The note was withdrawn from circulation in May 2023 but remains legal tender.
- Organisation: ISRO was formed on 15 Aug 1969; HQ Bengaluru; it is part of the Department of Space (DoS) under the Prime Minister. The Mangalyaan spacecraft was built at the ISRO Satellite Centre (now U R Rao Satellite Centre), Bengaluru.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil faces of Mangalyaan – Project Director Subbiah Arunan, who led the building of the spacecraft, is from Kothaiseri, Tirunelveli district (Padma Shri 2015); Programme Director Mylswamy Annadurai is from Kothavadi, Coimbatore district. The present ISRO Chairman, Dr V. Narayanan (since 14 Jan 2025), is from Melakattuvilai, Kanniyakumari district.

What next? Get the questions PDF for the same day, the free daily quiz and monthly compilations at www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/free-pdf-download · TNPSC / UPSC classroom & online coaching (Coimbatore · Madurai): 99941 46662

SHANMUGAM IAS ACADEMY
www.shanmugamiasacademy.in