Current Affairs – Notes

5 November 2026

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1 'Vetri Special Vegetable Pack' sale launched – 10 vegetables for ₹100 at 218 cooperative outlets

Tamil Nadu

News

To shield consumers from rising vegetable prices ahead of Deepavali, Cooperation Minister V. Gandhiraj launched the Tamil Nadu Cooperation Department's 'Vetri Special Vegetable Pack' in Chennai on Thursday, 5 Nov 2026. The pack of 10 vegetables (about 2.55–2.60 kg) is sold for ₹100 for three days, 5–7 Nov, at 218 cooperative outlets across the State and from 4 mobile vegetable vans in Chennai. Only one pack per person; it is not sold through ration shops (PDS).

Key facts

Launch	5 Nov 2026 – Cooperation Minister V. Gandhiraj; Chennai
Price / weight	₹100; about 2.55–2.60 kg; eco-friendly bag
Contents	Onion, tomato (500 g each); brinjal, potato (250 g each); carrot, beans (200 g each); green chilli, lemon (100 g each); ginger 50 g; 1 coconut
Sale	5–7 Nov; 218 cooperative outlets + 4 mobile vans in Chennai; one per person
Funding	Gap between cost and ₹100, plus packing – reimbursed from the Cooperative Education Fund
Aim	Festival-season price relief; direct purchase from farmers

Background

- Price stabilisation: 'Operation Greens' – announced in the Union Budget 2018–19 with ₹500 crore to stabilise prices of tomato, onion and potato (TOP); run by the Union Ministry of Food Processing Industries. In 2020 it was extended to all fruits and vegetables ('TOP to TOTAL').
- Science (botany): onion – a bulb (a reduced stem with fleshy leaves); ginger – a rhizome (underground stem); potato – a stem tuber; carrot – a modified tap root. Lemon is rich in citric acid and vitamin C.
- Uzhavar Sandhai: Tamil Nadu's first farmers' market, where farmers sell directly to consumers without middlemen, opened at Madurai on 14 Nov 1999.
- Cooperation: the 97th Constitutional Amendment (2011) gave cooperative societies constitutional status (Part IXB); 'co-operative societies' are in the State List.

Tamil Nadu link: the scheme is run entirely by the Tamil Nadu Cooperation Department; registrars in all districts monitor supply. The 'Uzhavar Sandhai' system of direct farmer sales also began in Tamil Nadu – at Madurai in 1999.

2 Madras HC orders immediate closure of 87 unauthorised resorts in Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve

Environment

News

On Tuesday, 3 Nov 2026, a Madras High Court Bench of Justices N. Sathish Kumar and G.K. Muthukumar ordered the immediate closure of all 87 resorts operating in the Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve area (Erode district) without planning permission / building approval from the Directorate of Town and Country Planning (DTCP), and steps to demolish them as per law. The Erode Collector's status report said none had DTCP approval, nor Hill Area Conservation Authority (HACA) clearance for changing land use from residential to commercial. Unlicensed units are to be locked and sealed; the case filed by environmentalist Dr R. Karpagam (W.P. 13711 of 2022) was adjourned to 27 Nov.

Key facts

Bench / date	Justices N. Sathish Kumar & G.K. Muthukumar; 3 Nov 2026
Case	Dr R. Karpagam v. PCCF & Chief Wildlife Warden (W.P. 13711 of 2022)
Violation	87 resorts – no DTCP planning/building approval; no HACA clearance for land-use change
Order	Immediate closure, demolition as per law; unlicensed units to be locked and sealed
Next hearing	27 Nov 2026 – action-taken report
Reserve area	Core 793.49 + buffer 614.91 = 1,408.4 sq km; tiger reserve since 2013 (NTCA)

Background

- Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve: notified in 2013; covers the Sathyamangalam and Hasanur forest divisions. It is contiguous with Mudumalai, BRT (Biligiri Ranganathaswamy Temple) and Bandipur tiger reserves; the Moyar valley links it to Mudumalai. Home to elephant, tiger, leopard, sloth bear, gaur and blackbuck.
- Law: Project Tiger – 1973. The 2006 amendment to the Wild Life (Protection) Act made the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) a statutory body, chaired by the Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. A reserve's core is its 'critical tiger habitat'.
- Precedent: on 14 Oct 2020 the Supreme Court (Bench led by CJI S.A. Bobde) upheld the Tamil Nadu Government's notification of an elephant corridor in the Sigur Plateau of the Nilgiris, affirming a July 2011 Madras High Court ruling; resorts on the corridor were closed.
- Planning law: the DTCP grants planning/building approval outside the Chennai metropolitan area under the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act, 1971. In hill areas, land-use change also needs HACA clearance.

Tamil Nadu link: Bhavanisagar Dam (Erode district) stands just below the confluence of the Bhavani and Moyar rivers (TN Water Resources Department). The Moyar flows through the Mudumalai–Sathyamangalam landscape.

3 DRDO successfully tests 'Pralay' quasi-ballistic missile off the Odisha coast – user evaluation trial

Defence

News

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight-tested the indigenous 'Pralay' quasi-ballistic missile from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast at about 11:10 am on Thursday, 5 Nov 2026, as a user evaluation trial. Data from range instruments of the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur, confirmed that all objectives were met. It was developed by Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad, with other DRDO labs; Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL) is the development-cum-production partner. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh lauded the test; induction into the armed forces is said to be imminent.

Key facts

Test	5 Nov 2026, about 11:10 am – Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha; user evaluation trial
Type	Surface-to-surface, quasi-ballistic; solid propellant; manoeuvres in flight
Range	About 500 km; multiple warhead types
Developer	Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad + other DRDO labs; BDL – development-cum-production partner
Tracking	ITR Chandipur instruments – all objectives met
Earlier tests	Dec 2021 (maiden tests); July 2025 (two back-to-back tests); 31 Dec 2025 (salvo of two from one launcher)

Background

- Quasi-ballistic missile: it flies a lower path than a pure ballistic missile and can manoeuvre in flight, making interception by air defences harder. Pralay has modern guidance and navigation for precision strikes.
- Export-control regimes: India joined the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) in 2016, the Wassenaar Arrangement in 2017 and the Australia Group in 2018. India is still not a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). The MTCR restricts transfer of missiles above 300 km / 500 kg.
- History: the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP, 1983) – Prithvi, Agni, Trishul, Akash, Nag. Prithvi (surface-to-surface) was the first missile developed under it. Astra is DRDO's beyond-visual-range (BVR) air-to-air missile.
- Set-up: DRDO – under the Ministry of Defence, HQ New Delhi; formed in 1958 by merging the Army's Technical Development Establishments (TDEs) and the Directorate of Technical Development & Production (DTDP) with the Defence Science Organisation (DSO). RCI Hyderabad is the key lab for missile guidance systems and avionics.

Tamil Nadu link: the test island bears the name of Rameswaram-born 'Missile Man' Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. DRDO's Combat Vehicles Research and Development Establishment (CVRDE) is at Avadi, Chennai.

4 Vice-President presents the 'PM Surya Ghar Excellence Award' to the Ministry of Railways

Energy

News

At the 'Renewable Energy Summit & Expo 2026' at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan presented the 'PM Surya Ghar Excellence Award' to the Ministry of Railways on 5 Nov 2026. Under the 'PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana', the Railways ranked first in the category 'Maximum Buildings Solarized by Central Ministries/Departments': rooftop solar on 12,495 of 15,868 feasible railway buildings (79%), with 351 MW commissioned against a 424 MW target. The rest are to be covered by March 2027.

Key facts

Award	PM Surya Ghar Excellence Award – first in 'Maximum Buildings Solarized by Central Ministries/Departments'
Presented by / date	Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan; 5 Nov 2026; Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi
Railways' record	12,495 of 15,868 feasible buildings (79%); 351 MW / target 424 MW
Nationally	77 Central Ministries/Departments – 25,984 of 39,135 buildings (66%)
Next target	Remaining feasible buildings – by March 2027

Background

- Railways' green goal: Indian Railways aims to become a 'Net Zero Carbon Emission' transport network by 2030 – through electrification, purchase of solar and wind power, and rooftop solar plants.
- Science: a photovoltaic (solar) cell converts light energy directly into electrical energy as direct current (DC); an inverter changes it to alternating current (AC) for home use. Under net metering only the net of power exported and imported is billed.
- Scheme: 'PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana' – launched in Feb 2024; outlay ₹75,021 crore; rooftop solar for 1 crore homes; run by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE). Solarisation of government buildings is also tracked under it.

Tamil Nadu link: electricity tariffs in the State, and the rules for connecting rooftop solar systems to the grid, are set by the Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission (TNERC) – the State commission functioning under the Electricity Act, 2003.

5 Star cluster 'UBC 63' is actually two separate clusters – Gauhati University study using Gaia data

Science

News

A study led by the Department of Physics, Gauhati University (Assam), has found that 'UBC 63', long treated as a single open star cluster, is really two separate clusters of very different ages – UBC 63A (about 21 million years, 98 member stars) and UBC 63B (about 562 million years, 148 stars). The team analysed ESA's Gaia DR3 data with a machine-learning method (Gaussian Mixture Model). About 6 million years ago the two passed within about 7 parsec (≈23 light-years) of each other; being gravitationally unbound, they are now drifting apart. They lie about 1,500 parsec (≈4,900 light-years) from Earth. The paper appeared in The Astronomical Journal (AJ, 2026); reported 5 Nov 2026.

Key facts

Cluster	UBC 63 → UBC 63A + UBC 63B (open clusters)
Ages	63A ≈ 21 Myr; 63B ≈ 562 Myr – not born together
Lead	Dept of Physics, Gauhati University (Assam); co-authors from IIA Bengaluru, Cotton and Assam Universities, Italy, China, Japan, Spain
Data	ESA Gaia DR3 + machine learning; also GALEX, TESS
Encounter	≈6 Myr ago at ≈7 pc (≈23 ly); now ≈26 pc apart
Distance	≈1,500 pc (≈4,900 light-years)
Journal	The Astronomical Journal (AJ), 2026; arXiv: 20 July 2026

Background

- Science: star clusters are of two kinds – (1) open clusters: in the Milky Way's disc, a few hundred to thousands of young stars born from one molecular cloud, loosely bound (e.g. Pleiades/Karthigai, Hyades); (2) globular clusters: hundreds of thousands of very old stars in a tight sphere, in the galactic halo (e.g. Omega Centauri).
- Stars of one cluster share nearly the same age, distance and motion. In UBC 63 the two groups differ in age by about 540 million years, so they cannot have formed together. Their relative speed (≈3.6 km/s) exceeds the escape velocity (≈0.51 km/s) – an 'unbound flyby'.
- Gaia: ESA's space observatory, launched 19 Dec 2013; from the Sun–Earth L2 point it measured positions, distances (parallax) and motions of over a billion stars to build a 3-D map of the Milky Way. Science observations ended in Jan 2025; it was switched off on 27 March 2025. 'UBC' (University of Barcelona Cluster) objects were found by a University of Barcelona team using machine learning on Gaia DR2.
- Units: 1 parsec ≈ 3.26 light-years; 1 light-year = distance light travels in a year (≈9.46 trillion km) – both are units of distance.

Tamil Nadu link: the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA, Bengaluru), a co-author institution of this study, runs the Vainu Bappu Observatory (2.34 m telescope) at Kavalur in the Javadhu Hills, Tirupattur district, and the Kodaikanal Solar Observatory (1899). Also, the 'Karthigai' star group (Pleiades), linked with the Karthigai Deepam festival, is an open star cluster.

6 Amit Shah inaugurates 1857 martyrs' memorial at Ambala Cantonment, Haryana

History

News

Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on 5 Nov 2026 inaugurated, at Ambala Cantonment (Haryana), a national-level memorial to the martyrs of the 1857 First War of Independence – 'Azadi Ki Pehli Ladai Ka Shaheed Smarak' – built on 22 acres along the Ambala–Delhi National Highway at about ₹594 crore. He said Ambala is the ground where the freedom struggle began on 10 May 1857, and recalled V.D. Savarkar calling 1857 a 'revolution', not a 'mutiny'. CM Nayab Singh Saini and minister Anil Vij were present. The event was part of Haryana's 60th-anniversary celebrations; the ₹1,260 crore Jalbehra–Shahabad highway was also opened.

Key facts

Memorial	Azadi Ki Pehli Ladai Ka Shaheed Smarak – Ambala Cantonment, Haryana
Inauguration	5 Nov 2026 – Amit Shah; CM Nayab Singh Saini, minister Anil Vij
Size	22 acres; ₹594 crore (PTI)
Features	20+ galleries, holography, light-and-sound show, phulkari and sarkanda crafts, 2,500-seat open-air theatre
Ambala 1857	Around 9 am on 10 May 1857 the 5th and 60th Native Infantry at Ambala rose – hours before the Meerut rising that evening (historian K.C. Yadav)
Haryana	Formed 1 Nov 1966 under the Punjab Reorganisation Act, 1966

Background

- History: the 1857 uprising broke out at Meerut on 10 May 1857; next day the sepoys seized Delhi and proclaimed Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar II their leader. The immediate cause was the Enfield rifle cartridges said to be greased with cow and pig fat. The Governor-General was Lord Canning. In March 1857 Mangal Pandey of the 34th Bengal Native Infantry attacked British officers at Barrackpore; he was hanged in April.
- Leaders: Nana Saheb, Tatya Tope (Kanpur), Rani Lakshmibai (Jhansi), Begum Hazrat Mahal (Lucknow), Kunwar Singh (Jagdishpur, Bihar), Bakht Khan (Delhi). Bahadur Shah Zafar was exiled to Rangoon (Burma) and died there in 1862. Result: Government of India Act, 1858 – Company rule ended and the British Crown took direct control; Canning became the first Viceroy; Queen Victoria's Proclamation (1 Nov 1858, Allahabad).
- Historiography: V.D. Savarkar called it the 'First Indian War of Independence' in 'The Indian War of Independence, 1857' (1909). British historians called it the 'Sepoy Mutiny'. For the 1957 centenary, S.N. Sen wrote the official history 'Eighteen Fifty-Seven'.
- Polity–geography: Haryana was carved out of Punjab on 1 Nov 1966 as the 17th State; its capital Chandigarh (a Union Territory) is shared with Punjab. Ambala, on the Grand Trunk Road, is an old army cantonment.

Tamil Nadu link: half a century before 1857, on 10 July 1806, Indian sepoys rose against the British in Vellore Fort – the 'Vellore Mutiny', called a forerunner of 1857. The cause was Commander-in-Chief John Cradock's orders banning earrings and caste marks and introducing a new turban (Agnew turban); Tipu Sultan's family was then confined in the fort. After the mutiny, Madras Governor William Bentinck was recalled.

7 Tiger 'Ranoji' (STR-10) sighted by tourists on safari in Radhanagari Sanctuary, Kolhapur

Environment

News

In Radhanagari (Dajipur) Wildlife Sanctuary, Kolhapur district, Maharashtra, tourists from Panvel and Kolhapur on an early-morning safari on Monday, 2 Nov 2026, saw and photographed the tiger 'Ranoji' (STR-10) in the 'Holicha Sada' area – a day after the sanctuary reopened on 1 Nov after the monsoon closure. It is seen as a result of the wildlife department's measures – a cap on vehicles, fixed slots (6 a.m. and 2 p.m.), a guide in every vehicle and about 20 waterholes filled by solar-powered pumps. Ranoji was recorded on camera traps in April 2026, becoming the 10th tiger of the Sahyadri Tiger Reserve landscape.

Key facts

Sanctuary	Radhanagari (Dajipur) – Kolhapur district, Maharashtra; about 351 sq km
Tiger	'Ranoji' (STR-10), male; camera-trapped in April 2026
Sighting	Early morning, 2 Nov 2026 – 'Holicha Sada' area; reopened 1 Nov
History	1958 – Maharashtra's first sanctuary as 'Dajipur'; renamed Radhanagari in 1985
Flagship	Indian gaur (Bos gaurus) – the 'Bison Sanctuary'
Rivers	Bhogavati, Dudhganga, Tulshi – tributaries of the Krishna
Status	Western Ghats UNESCO World Heritage Site (2012) – Sahyadri sub-cluster; Eco-Sensitive Zone (2020)

Background

- Geography: Radhanagari lies in the southern Sahyadri (Western Ghats). It is a key link in the 'Sahyadri–Konkan' tiger corridor – Chandoli National Park and Koyna Sanctuary (Sahyadri Tiger Reserve) to the north and, through Sawantwadi–Dodamarg (Konkan), Goa and Karnataka to the south. Natural tiger movement along the Sawantwadi–Dodamarg corridor helps genetic diversity.
- Sahyadri Tiger Reserve (STR): Chandoli National Park + Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary, notified in 2010. As males outnumber females, female tigers are being moved in phases from Tadoba-Andhari and Pench with central approval; 10 tigers (7 males, 3 females) have been identified in the landscape.
- Law: Project Tiger began on 1 April 1973. The 2006 amendment to the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, made the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) a statutory body, chaired by the Union Environment Minister. The tiger is India's national animal (1973); IUCN status Endangered; Schedule I of the Wildlife Act.
- Biology: the Indian gaur (Bos gaurus) is the world's largest wild bovine; IUCN Vulnerable. It is a major prey of the tiger.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu has 5 tiger reserves – Kalakad–Mundanthurai, Anamalai, Mudumalai, Sathyamangalam (2013) and Srivilliputhur–Megamalai (2021). Mudumalai (Nilgiris) has the well-known Theppakadu Elephant Camp; Anamalai has the Kozhikamuthi Elephant Camp. Gaur are plentiful in the Nilgiris, Anamalai and Sathyamangalam.

8 PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY): cumulative enrolments in Jammu & Kashmir reach 13.07 lakh

Welfare Schemes

News

Cumulative enrolments under the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir have reached 13.07 lakh, Akashvani (All India Radio) News reported on 2 Nov 2026, citing J&K's Department of Information and Public Relations. In 2026–27, premiums of ₹3.01 crore were paid and claims of ₹4.98 crore disbursed. The scheme, which gives ₹2 lakh life cover for death from any cause at a premium of ₹436 a year, reflects the spread of financial inclusion and social security in J&K. (Note: in a Rajya Sabha reply on 28 July 2026, the Union Finance Ministry put cumulative PMJJBY enrolments in J&K at 13,72,345 as of 8 July 2026.)

Key facts

Scheme	PMJJBY – one-year life cover, renewable yearly (1 June – 31 May)
Cover / premium	₹2 lakh for death from any cause; ₹436 a year (from June 2022; earlier ₹330) – auto-debited from bank account
Age	Join at 18–50; cover can continue to 55 if joined before 50
Offered by	LIC and other life insurers through banks/post offices; Department of Financial Services
J&K	13.07 lakh enrolments (Akashvani, 2 Nov 2026); Rajya Sabha data 13.72 lakh (8 July 2026)
All India	About 27.9 crore enrolments (8 July 2026, Rajya Sabha)

Background

- Jan Suraksha schemes: PMJJBY (life cover), PMSBY (Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana – ₹2 lakh for accidental death/total disability and ₹1 lakh for partial disability at ₹20 a year; age 18–70) and Atal Pension Yojana (APY) – all three were launched by PM Narendra Modi in Kolkata on 9 May 2015. They were announced in the Union Budget 2015–16.
- Economy: these covers are linked to PM Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY, 2014) bank accounts – the 'Jan Dhan–Aadhaar–Mobile' (JAM) base. The insurance sector is regulated by IRDAI (HQ Hyderabad). 'Insurance penetration' = premium ÷ GDP.
- Constitution: under the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, two Union Territories were created from 31 Oct 2019 – J&K (with a legislature) and Ladakh (without). UTs with legislatures: Delhi, Puducherry, J&K. 'Social security' – Directive Principle Article 41 (right to work, education and public assistance in old age, sickness and disablement).

Tamil Nadu link: the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), the main PMJJBY insurer, was formed on 1 Sept 1956 under the LIC Act, 1956. The 'LIC Building' on Anna Salai, Chennai (1959), which houses its Southern Zonal Office, was India's tallest building when built.

9 Mayon volcano erupts in the Philippines – Alert Level 3; thousands evacuated

International

News

Mayon volcano in Albay province, the Philippines, had a 'moderately explosive' eruption lasting about 6 minutes at 11:53 a.m. local time on Friday, 30 Oct 2026; the ash plume rose about 3,000 m above the crater. The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) raised the alert from Level 2 to Level 3 the same day (the highest is 5). By that evening 746 families (2,041 people) had been evacuated from Tabaco City, Camalig and Ligao City; entry into the 6-km Permanent Danger Zone (PDZ) was barred.

Key facts

Location	Albay province, Bicol region, Luzon island, Philippines
Eruption	30 Oct 2026, 11:53 a.m.; about 6 minutes; plume 3,000 m
Alert	Level 2 → 3 (scale 0–5) – PHIVOLCS
Evacuation	746 families / 2,041 people (evening of 30 Oct; Albay disaster office)
Danger zone	6-km Permanent Danger Zone – entry barred
Earlier in 2026	6 Jan – Level 3 (lava-dome collapse); another eruption with evacuations in May

Background

- Geography: Mayon is a 'stratovolcano' (composite volcano) famous for its almost perfect cone – built of alternating layers of lava and ash; its viscous magma makes it explosive. Japan's Fuji and Italy's Vesuvius are of the same type. By contrast, Hawaii's Mauna Loa is a 'shield volcano' – fluid basaltic lava and gentle slopes.
- Pacific Ring of Fire: a horseshoe-shaped belt around the Pacific Ocean with about 75% of the world's active volcanoes and about 90% of its earthquakes. Cause – oceanic plates sinking beneath other plates at convergent boundaries (subduction). The Philippines lies on its western rim.
- History: Mayon's 1814 eruption buried the Cagsawa church – its ruins are now a tourist site. Luzon's Mount Pinatubo produced one of the 20th century's largest eruptions in June 1991; sulphur dioxide spread in the stratosphere temporarily cooled global temperatures by about 0.5°C.
- Science: a 'lahar' is a mudflow of water, rock debris and ash rushing down a volcano's slopes (an Indonesian word); common on Mayon in the rainy season. A 'pyroclastic flow' is a fast-moving current of very hot gas, ash and rock. PHIVOLCS works under the Philippines' Department of Science and Technology (DOST).

Tamil Nadu link: there is no direct Tamil Nadu link; Tamil Nadu has no volcanoes. But subduction-zone disasters have hit the State – in the tsunami raised by the Sumatra–Andaman subduction earthquake of 26 Dec 2004, Nagapattinam was the worst-affected district on the Tamil Nadu coast.

10 Bay of Bengal countries launch a fisheries research network – 'BOB-NOR' (Kochi)

International Relations

News

India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the Maldives have launched the 'Bay of Bengal Network of Ocean Researchers for Fisheries' (BOB-NOR) (reported 5 Nov 2026). It was launched at a meeting at the ICAR–Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), Kochi, Kerala, on the sidelines of an international symposium on fisheries and remote sensing. Its aim is to study how rising sea temperatures, monsoon changes, salinity and ocean currents alter fish movement, breeding, growth and numbers – by combining satellite data, sea surveys, and climate and fisheries data. Scientists from the US, Brazil, Chile, Portugal, the UK and Greece also took part.

Key facts

Name	BOB-NOR – Bay of Bengal Network of Ocean Researchers for Fisheries
Countries	India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Maldives
Venue	ICAR–CMFRI, Kochi (Kerala) – on the sidelines of the SAFARI / Trevor Platt Science Foundation symposium
Focus	Sea temperature, monsoon, salinity, currents → fish movement, breeding, numbers
Tools	Satellite data + sea surveys + climate and fisheries data
Background	14 Feb 2023 – a 'Bay of Bengal Marine Research Network' was proposed at a BOBP-IGO dialogue in Kochi

Background

- BOBP-IGO: the 'Bay of Bengal Programme' began in 1979 as a regional fisheries programme of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Through an agreement signed in Chennai in April–May 2003 it became an inter-governmental organisation (BOBP-IGO); members – Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka. Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand are cooperating non-contracting parties. Aim – better livelihoods for small-scale fishers. At the 13th Governing Council in Malé on 21 Feb 2025, India took over the chair from Bangladesh.
- CMFRI: began on 3 Feb 1947 in Madras (now Chennai) as a marine fisheries research station; came under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) in 1967; its headquarters moved from Mandapam (Tamil Nadu) to Kochi in 1971. It leads India's fish-stock assessment and mariculture research.
- Geography: the Bay of Bengal is the world's largest bay; the Ganga–Brahmaputra, Mahanadi, Godavari, Krishna and Kaveri flow into it. Heavy freshwater inflow keeps its surface water less salty. Millions of coastal people depend on its fisheries.
- Science: remote-sensing satellites measure sea-surface temperature and chlorophyll, helping predict where fish shoals may gather. In India, INCOIS (Hyderabad) issues 'Potential Fishing Zone' (PFZ) advisories.

Tamil Nadu link: BOBP-IGO's headquarters is at 91 St. Mary's Road, Abhiramapuram, Chennai; the agreement making it an inter-governmental body was also signed in Chennai in 2003. CMFRI too began in Chennai in 1947 and later functioned from Mandapam, Ramanathapuram district, where its regional centre still works.

11 Cristiano Ronaldo retires from international football – 146 goals in 234 matches for Portugal

Sports

News

Portuguese footballer Cristiano Ronaldo (41) announced his retirement from international football in an Instagram video on Thursday, 5 Nov 2026. Having debuted against Kazakhstan in August 2003, he scored 146 goals in 234 matches over 23 years – Portugal's most-capped player and all-time top scorer. He played at six European Championships. At the 2026 World Cup Portugal lost to Spain in the Round of 16. He will continue to play club football for Al Nassr of Saudi Arabia.

Key facts

Announcement	5 Nov 2026 – Instagram video; age 41
Record	234 caps, 146 goals – men's world records for most international goals and appearances
Debut	August 2003, v Kazakhstan
Titles	Euro 2016 (captain); UEFA Nations League 2019, 2025
2026 World Cup	Lost to Spain in the Round of 16
Club	Al Nassr (Saudi Arabia) – will continue

Background

- Records: in September 2021, against Ireland, he broke Iran's Ali Daei's men's record of 109 international goals. In June 2023 he became the first male player to reach 200 international caps (Guinness World Record).
- Euro 2016: in the final in France (Saint-Denis), Portugal beat France 1–0 through Eder's extra-time goal – Portugal's first major international trophy. At Euro 2004, at home, they had lost the final to Greece.
- Ronaldo: born on 5 Feb 1985 at Funchal on the island of Madeira. He played for Sporting Lisbon, Manchester United, Real Madrid and Juventus; a five-time Ballon d'Or winner.
- Bodies: FIFA was founded in Paris in 1904; HQ Zurich (Switzerland). UEFA (European football's governing body) – HQ Nyon (Switzerland). In India, football is governed by the AIFF.

Tamil Nadu link: there is no direct Tamil Nadu link. A historical Portugal–Tamil Nadu link: the San Thome Basilica in Mylapore, Chennai, was built by the Portuguese in the 16th century over the tomb of St Thomas; the British rebuilt it in Neo-Gothic style in 1893.

12 The Bahamas joins the International Solar Alliance (ISA) as its 116th member

International Relations

News

The Bahamas, a Caribbean island nation, handed over its instrument of ratification of the Framework Agreement of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) in New Delhi on 3 Nov 2026, on the sidelines of the 9th ISA Assembly. Bahamas High Commissioner to India P. Nicholas Symonette Jr. handed it to P.S. Gangadhar, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs and head of the ISA Depositary. With this the Bahamas became the ISA's 116th member. The Bahamas Foreign Ministry said it will help expand solar power and battery storage and cut dependence on imported fuel.

Key facts

Date / place	3 Nov 2026 – New Delhi, on the sidelines of the 9th ISA Assembly
Handover	High Commissioner P. Nicholas Symonette Jr. → MEA Joint Secretary P.S. Gangadhar (ISA Depositary)
Status	ISA's 116th member country
ISA launch	30 Nov 2015 – Paris, COP21; India (Modi) – France (Hollande)
Framework Agreement	Opened for signature 15 Nov 2016 – Marrakesh (COP22); in force 6 Dec 2017; Depositary – Government of India (Art. XIV)
HQ	Gurugram (Haryana) – National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) campus

Background

- ISA – legal status: the Framework Agreement enters into force on the 30th day after the 15th ratification (Article XIII). Guinea became the 15th on 6 Nov 2017, so the ISA became a treaty-based international body on 6 Dec 2017. The Government of India is the Depositary – so new members lodge their instruments with India's Ministry of External Affairs. An 'Assembly', with one vote per member, meets every year.
- The Bahamas – geography: an archipelago in the Atlantic Ocean, south-east of Florida (USA) and north of Cuba. Capital Nassau (on New Providence island). The Tropic of Cancer passes through the Exuma islands. Currency – the Bahamian dollar.
- The Bahamas – history and polity: most scholars believe Columbus first landed in the 'New World' on San Salvador island in the Bahamas on 12 Oct 1492. Independence from Britain in 1973 (self-government in 1964); the British monarch is head of state (through a Governor-General). Member of the Commonwealth and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM, since 1983).
- Small islands and solar: Caribbean and Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS) depend on imported diesel, so power is costly, and hurricanes damage their grids. Solar plus battery storage gives them energy security. Under an amendment adopted at the first ISA Assembly in 2018, in force from 15 July 2020, all UN member states can join the ISA.

Tamil Nadu link: there is no direct Tamil Nadu link. Related fact: since the 2024 power-sector restructuring, solar, wind and hydro projects in Tamil Nadu are handled by the 'Tamil Nadu Green Energy Corporation Ltd' (TNGECL).

13 Asteroid '2026 QQ8' becomes Earth's temporary 'mini-moon' – to stay bound to Earth until December 2026

Space

News

The roughly 1-metre asteroid '2026 QQ8' entered Earth's gravitational domain (the Hill sphere) in late April 2026 and became a temporary natural satellite of Earth – a 'mini-moon'. Hungarian astronomer Krisztián Sárneczky spotted it on 20 Aug 2026 at Piszkéstető Observatory in northern Hungary. It was first suspected to be old rocket debris; after follow-up with the University of Hawaii 2.2-m telescope and the Lowell Discovery Telescope, the Minor Planet Center (MPC) announced on 29 Oct 2026 that it is a natural asteroid 'temporarily bound to the Earth'. It will stay bound until December 2026, then escape and orbit the Sun in 2027.

Key facts

Name / size	2026 QQ8 – about 1 m; a natural asteroid
Discovery	20 Aug 2026 – Krisztián Sárneczky, Piszkéstető Observatory, Hungary
Confirmation	29 Oct 2026 – Minor Planet Center (MPC) announcement
Bound period	Late April 2026 to December 2026; returns to a solar orbit in 2027
Closest distance	About 0.0038 AU (~570,000 km) – about 1.5 times the Moon's distance
Orbit	Circles the Sun in about 358 days; tilt about 0.5°; passed close in 1965 without capture; next in 2058
Risk	None – so small it would burn up in the atmosphere

Background

- Science: a 'mini-moon' is a small asteroid captured by Earth's gravity for a while before it escapes. The region where a planet's gravity dominates over the Sun's is its 'Hill sphere'. Asteroids that circle the Sun on Earth-like orbits are the ones that get captured. A 'quasi-moon' is different – it does not orbit Earth but stays near it while orbiting the Sun (e.g. 2025 PN7).
- Earlier mini-moons: 2020 CD3 (2020) and 2024 PT5. 2024 PT5 was found on 7 Aug 2024 by the NASA-funded ATLAS telescope at Sutherland, South Africa; about 10–11 m long; bound to Earth from 29 Sep to 25 Nov 2024. It belongs to the 'Arjuna asteroid belt' (asteroids on Earth-like orbits) and may be a fragment of the Moon. It returns near Earth in 2055.
- Bodies: the Minor Planet Center works under the authority of the International Astronomical Union (IAU) at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, Cambridge (Massachusetts), USA; it collects position measurements of asteroids and comets and assigns provisional designations (e.g. 2026 QQ8).
- Asteroid vs comet: asteroids are rocky/metallic – most lie in the main belt between Mars and Jupiter. Comets are made of frozen gases, ice and dust and grow a glowing tail near the Sun. A space rock that reaches the ground is a 'meteorite'.

Tamil Nadu link: Government Astronomer Norman Pogson discovered asteroids from the Madras Observatory between 1861 and 1885. 104 years later, R. Rajamohan's team found asteroid '4130 Ramanujan' (reported in 1989) with the 48-cm Schmidt telescope of the Vainu Bappu Observatory, Kavalur (Javadhu Hills, Tirupattur district) – the first asteroid discovered from an Indian observatory in the 20th century.

14 2026 Antarctic ozone hole is the 7th largest in 48 years of records: NOAA–NASA

Environment

News

According to measurements released by the US agencies NOAA and NASA on 4 Nov 2026, the 2026 Antarctic ozone hole was the seventh largest in 48 years of monitoring (by seasonal mean area). During peak depletion (7 Sep – 13 Oct) it averaged about 25 million sq km – more than twice the area of the USA – and peaked at 27.1 million sq km on 18 Sep. The lowest ozone over the South Pole was 105 Dobson units on 17 Oct. An unusually strong 'polar vortex' was the cause; yet the ozone layer is healing – scientists expect full recovery by the 2070s.

Key facts

Release	4 Nov 2026 – NOAA and NASA (USA)
Rank	7th largest in 48 years (seasonal mean)
Area	Mean ~25 million sq km (7 Sep – 13 Oct); peak 27.1 million sq km (18 Sep)
Lowest ozone	105 Dobson units – South Pole, 17 Oct 2026 (record low: 92 DU, Oct 2006)
Cause	A strong polar vortex; weak planetary-scale waves in Aug–Sep
Recovery	Antarctic stratospheric chlorine down about one-third from the 1980s peak; full recovery by the 2070s

Background

- Science: ozone (O_3) is a molecule of three oxygen atoms, found mostly in the stratosphere, where it absorbs the Sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV-B) rays. Ozone is measured in 'Dobson units' (DU); an area below 220 DU is called the 'ozone hole'.
- Cause: chlorine and bromine from man-made chemicals such as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and halons destroy ozone. 'Polar stratospheric clouds' formed in Antarctica's bitter winter speed up these reactions, so the hole grows in the southern spring (Sep–Oct). British Antarctic Survey scientists first reported the ozone hole in 1985.
- Treaties: the Vienna Convention (1985) – framework for ozone protection; the Montreal Protocol (16 Sep 1987) – phases out ozone-depleting substances; it is the first treaty in UN history to achieve universal ratification. The Kigali Amendment (2016) phases down HFCs. 16 Sept is World Ozone Day.
- Science award: Paul Crutzen, Mario Molina and Sherwood Rowland won the 1995 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for explaining the chemistry of ozone depletion.

Tamil Nadu link: India's earliest ozone observations were made at the Kodaikanal Observatory (Dindigul district) in 1928–29. Routine ozone observations on a six-station network began in the International Geophysical Year (1957); Kodaikanal was one of that network's six Dobson spectrophotometer stations (the others: Srinagar, New Delhi, Varanasi, Ahmedabad/Mt Abu and Pune).

15 Filipino engineer Aldrei Ong wins the 2026 James Dyson Award global Sustainability prize

Awards

News

Filipino structural engineer Aldrei Ong, a De La Salle University (Manila) alumnus, was named the 2026 James Dyson Award global Sustainability winner for 'Sentinel', a low-cost building-damage sensor (reports of 4 Nov 2026). It turns the ordinary concrete spacer block, which holds steel bars in place during construction, into 'self-sensing concrete' mixed with conductive materials; a crack changes its electrical resistance, and the data are sent wirelessly to an online dashboard. Prize: £30,000 (about PHP 2.39 million). The global Medical winner is 'Rumble Rims' by Harvard students – an infrared eye-tracking headset for concussion screening.

Key facts

Winner	Aldrei Ong – structural engineer, De La Salle University alumnus, Philippines
Invention	'Sentinel' – self-sensing concrete spacer block; detects cracks through change in electrical resistance
Prize	£30,000 – for each global winner (two categories)
Medical winner	'Rumble Rims' – Harvard students (Radhika Saran, Cleo Pontone, Sophia DeVito)
Entries	2,294 entries from 28 countries and regions in 2026 – a record
Eligibility	Design and engineering students and recent graduates; winners chosen by Sir James Dyson

Background

- Award: the James Dyson Award is an international engineering-design prize named after British inventor Sir James Dyson (born 1947). In 2002 he set up the James Dyson Foundation to draw young people into engineering. His best-known invention is the 'Dual Cyclone' bagless vacuum cleaner.
- Filipino precedent: the first-ever Sustainability prize (2020) went to Carvey Ehren Maigue of Mapúa University, Philippines, for 'AuREUS', a crop-waste material that turns UV light into electricity.
- Geography: the Philippines is an archipelago of over 7,000 islands; capital Manila. Lying on the Pacific 'Ring of Fire', it faces high earthquake and volcanic risk; Pacific tropical storms there are called 'typhoons'. A scenario of a magnitude-7.2 quake in Metro Manila killing about 48,000 people is the backdrop to the invention.
- Science: Structural Health Monitoring uses sensors on bridges and buildings to track cracks and damage continuously, helping engineers decide quickly whether a building is safe after an earthquake.

Tamil Nadu link: CSIR's Structural Engineering Research Centre (CSIR-SERC) has worked at Taramani, Chennai, since 1965 – researching structural design, analysis, testing and rehabilitation, and the safety and resilience of infrastructure.

16 India's 183rd seismological observatory opens at Kishtwar, Jammu & Kashmir – 4th in the UT

Science

News

Dr Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Earth Sciences, inaugurated India's 183rd seismological observatory at Kishtwar, Jammu & Kashmir, on 2 Nov 2026. It is the fourth in J&K – the others are at Jammu, Srinagar and Udhampur. Fitted with modern digital seismic equipment, it will send real-time data to the 24x7 earthquake monitoring centre of the National Center for Seismology (NCS) in New Delhi, strengthening earthquake monitoring and disaster preparedness in the Himalaya. Officials said Kishtwar 'sits in the middle of a fault line'.

Key facts

Inauguration	2 Nov 2026 – Dr Jitendra Singh (Ministry of Earth Sciences)
Count	India's 183rd; 4th in J&K (Jammu, Srinagar, Udhampur, Kishtwar)
Earlier	153rd observatory – Udhampur, 21 June 2022
NCS network	About 84 stations in 2014 → 168 by Aug 2025 → 183 now
Other facilities	4 Doppler weather radars in J&K (Banihal, Jot, Jammu, Srinagar); 4 more in 2027 at Doda, Kishtwar, Anantnag, Baramulla
Kishtwar	Chenab valley; Kiru (624 MW), Kwar (540 MW) on the Chenab; Pakal Dul (1,000 MW) on its tributary, the Marusudar

Background

- Body: the National Center for Seismology (NCS) is the Government of India's nodal agency for monitoring earthquake activity; it was set up in Aug 2014 under the Ministry of Earth Sciences. Its work includes 24x7 monitoring, a seismological data centre and city seismic microzonation studies.
- History: after the 1897 Shillong plateau earthquake, India's first seismological observatory was set up at Alipore, Calcutta, on 1 Dec 1898. The national network grew to 6 stations in 1940, 15 in 1960 and 18 in 1970.
- Seismic zones: the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) code IS 1893 divides India into four zones, II to V (V = highest risk). IS 1893:2025, issued in Nov 2025, added a new 'Zone VI' covering the whole Himalaya and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, but BIS withdrew it in March 2026 – the 2016 standard is back in force.
- Science: the point underground where a quake starts is the 'focus' (hypocentre); the point on the surface directly above it is the 'epicentre'. The Richter scale, devised by Charles Richter in 1935, is a logarithmic scale of an earthquake's 'magnitude' (energy released); the 'intensity' of shaking and damage is measured on the Mercalli scale. A seismograph records seismic waves.

Tamil Nadu link: according to the Ministry of Earth Sciences' Lok Sabha reply (20 Mar 2020), Tamil Nadu lies in seismic Zones II and III. Chennai, Tiruvallur, Vellore, Chengalpattu, Ranipet, Kanniyakumari, Tirupattur and Tiruppur are in Zone III; Tiruchirappalli, Madurai, Thanjavur, Nagapattinam, Ramanathapuram, Thoothukudi and others in Zone II; Coimbatore, Salem, the Nilgiris, Kancheepuram and some others straddle both.

17 India plans the world's highest railway station at Taglang (Tanglang) La, Ladakh – on the Bilaspur–Manali–Leh line

Infrastructure

News

Reports on 5 Nov 2026 (citing The Times of India) said the Railway Ministry has completed the survey and prepared the Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the 489-km broad-gauge Bilaspur–Manali–Leh rail line. A station is planned beneath Ladakh's Tanglang (Taglang) La pass at about 5,256 m (17,244 ft) – about 188 m higher than China's Tanggula station (about 5,068 m), now the world's highest. The estimated cost is about ₹1.31 lakh crore and about 270 km of the line would run through tunnels. The project is still at the planning stage – financing, engineering assessments and clearances are yet to come.

Key facts

Line	Bilaspur (Himachal)–Manali–Leh (Ladakh); 489 km; broad gauge
Planned station	Beneath Tanglang La pass, about 5,256 m (17,244 ft)
Current record	Tanggula station, Qinghai–Tibet Railway, China – about 5,068 m
Cost / tunnels	About ₹1.31 lakh crore; about 270 km in tunnels
En-route stations	Sundernagar, Mandi, Manali, Keylong, Sarchu, Pang, Rumtse, Upshi
Status	DPR ready; construction not yet sanctioned

Background

- Geography: Tanglang La (about 5,328 m) is a pass in Leh district of Ladakh on the Leh–Manali highway (NH-3). In Tibetan/Ladakhi, 'La' means a mountain pass – e.g. Khardung La, Zoji La, Bara-lacha La.
- The Qinghai–Tibet Railway (China) links Xining with Lhasa; its Golmud–Lhasa section opened in 2006. Its Tanggula station is now the world's highest railway station.
- Strategic value: the mountain roads to Ladakh are blocked by snow for months in winter; the line would allow all-weather, faster and cheaper movement of troops, fuel and supplies to this frontier region.
- Mandi and Manali on the route lie on the Beas river; Bilaspur (Himachal) is on the Gobind Sagar reservoir of the Bhakra dam on the Sutlej.

Tamil Nadu link: Kanniyakumari is the southernmost railway station of Indian Railways. The Mettupalayam–Udhagamandalam Nilgiri Mountain Railway (a rack railway) was added in 2005 to UNESCO's World Heritage Site 'Mountain Railways of India'.

18 Tanvi Patri makes history – first Indian to reach the girls' singles badminton final at the Youth Olympic Games (BAI)

Sports

News

At the Youth Olympic Games in Dakar, Senegal, 15-year-old Tanvi Patri of Odisha beat Japan's second seed Yuzuno Watanabe 21-14, 11-21, 21-19 in 54 minutes in the semi-final on 4 Nov 2026 (Wednesday). She became the first Indian to reach the YOG girls' singles badminton final (Badminton Association of India – BAI). This assured India's first girls' singles medal at the YOG (at least silver). In the final on the night of 5 Nov (about 11 pm IST) she meets China's Zhang Yi Xin, the recent World Junior champion; the result was not out when this handbook was prepared.

Key facts

Player	Tanvi Patri, 15, Odisha
Semi-final	4 Nov 2026 – beat Yuzuno Watanabe (Japan) 21-14, 11-21, 21-19
Final	5 Nov 2026 – vs Zhang Yi Xin (China); medal assured
Earlier titles	Asian U-15 girls' singles (Chengdu, Aug 2024); Asian U-17 (Chengdu, Sept 2026)
Indians in YOG badminton SF	H.S. Prannoy (2010), Aditya Joshi (2014), Lakshya Sen (2018), Tanvi (2026)

Background

- India's YOG badminton record: H.S. Prannoy won boys' singles silver at Singapore 2010; Lakshya Sen won singles silver and gold in the mixed team event (international mixed team) at Buenos Aires 2018; Aditya Joshi reached the semi-final at Nanjing 2014.
- Tanvi trains at the Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy, Bengaluru (as of 2024). In Aug 2024 at Chengdu, China, she won the Asian U-15 title, beating a Vietnamese player in the final.
- History: badminton is named after 'Badminton House', the Duke of Beaufort's estate in Gloucestershire, England; British officers in India played an early form called 'Poona'.
- World team events: Thomas Cup (men), Uber Cup (women), Sudirman Cup (mixed). India won the Thomas Cup for the first time in 2022 at Bangkok.

Tamil Nadu link: Chennai-trained Sankar Muthusamy won boys' U-19 singles silver at the 2022 BWF World Junior Championships (Santander, Spain). Kancheepuram's Thulasimathi Murugesan won SU5 para-badminton silver at the Paris 2024 Paralympics.

19 Padma Shri neurosurgeon Ashok Kumar Mahapatra (74) passes away – pioneer in separating twins joined at the head

Health

News

Padma Shri neurosurgeon Prof. Ashok Kumar Mahapatra (74) died at AIIMS New Delhi at about 9.15 pm on 2 Nov 2026 (Monday). First treated at SUM Hospital, Bhubaneswar, for a severe headache, he had been under treatment at AIIMS Delhi since 2 Oct. In 2017 at AIIMS Delhi he led the surgery to separate Odisha's craniopagus twins (joined at the head) Jaga and Kalia – recorded in the Limca Book of Records as India's first successful craniopagus separation. Odisha CM Mohan Charan Majhi and former CM Naveen Patnaik condoled his death.

Key facts

Death	2 Nov 2026, AIIMS New Delhi; aged 74
Award	Padma Shri (announced 2025; conferred by the President in Apr 2025; medicine)
Posts	Head of Neurosurgery, AIIMS Delhi; founding Director, AIIMS Bhubaneswar; Director, SGPGI Lucknow; Vice-Chancellor, SOA University
Twins	Jaga–Kalia (some reports: 'Balia'), Kandhamal district, Odisha; 28 months old
Surgery	Stage 1 on 28 Aug 2017; separation on 25–26 Oct 2017 – about 16 hours

Background

- Types of conjoined twins: head – craniopagus; chest – thoracopagus; abdomen – omphalopagus; pelvis – ischiopagus. Craniopagus occurs in about one in 30 lakh births, and half of them die at birth or within 24 hours (AIIMS doctor, 2017).
- Polity: the Padma awards were instituted in 1954. Article 18 abolishes titles; in Balaji Raghavan v. Union of India (1995) the Supreme Court held that the Bharat Ratna and Padma awards are not 'titles', but must not be used as a prefix or suffix to names.
- Science: the brain and spinal cord are covered by three protective membranes, the meninges – dura mater (outer), arachnoid (middle) and pia mater (inner). Cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) cushions against shocks. Inflammation of these membranes is meningitis.
- AIIMS Bhubaneswar is one of the six new AIIMS started in 2012 under the first phase of the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) – the others being Bhopal, Jodhpur, Patna, Raipur and Rishikesh.

Tamil Nadu link: Dr Jacob Chandy started the neurosurgery department at Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore, in January 1949; formal M.S. Neurosurgery training began there in 1958 (CMC website).

20 International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict – 6 November

Important Days

News

The 'International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict' is observed every year on 6 November. The UN General Assembly declared it on 5 Nov 2001 by resolution 56/4, inviting Member States and UN bodies to observe it. The day recalls that environmental damage in war – polluted water sources, torched crops, felled forests, poisoned soil – often goes unnoticed. According to the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), at least 40% of internal conflicts in the last 60 years have been linked to the exploitation of natural resources (timber, diamonds, gold, oil, fertile land, water).

Key facts

Date	6 November (every year)
Declared by	UNGA resolution 56/4, 5 Nov 2001
UNEP finding	≥40% of internal conflicts in 60 years linked to natural resources; such conflicts twice as likely to relapse
ENMOD Convention	UNGA 10 Dec 1976; signed at Geneva 18 May 1977; in force 5 Oct 1978
UNEA resolution	UNEP/EA.2/Res.15, 27 May 2016 – protecting the environment in conflict-affected areas (tabled by Ukraine, adopted by consensus)

Background

- Vietnam War: US forces sprayed huge amounts of the herbicide 'Agent Orange' to strip forest cover; its dioxin contaminant caused long-term health and environmental damage. The idea of 'ecocide' grew out of this.
- Gulf War (1991): retreating Iraqi forces set hundreds of Kuwait's oil wells on fire and oil was released into the Persian Gulf – causing severe air and sea pollution.
- International law: the ENMOD Convention bans the hostile use of environmental modification techniques (e.g. weather or rain manipulation) having 'widespread, long-lasting or severe' effects. Additional Protocol I (1977) to the Geneva Conventions bans methods of warfare causing 'widespread, long-term and severe' damage to the natural environment.
- UNEP: set up after the 1972 Stockholm Conference; HQ Nairobi (Kenya). It carries out post-conflict environmental assessments and work on natural resources and peacebuilding.

Tamil Nadu link: during World War I, on the night of 22 Sept 1914, the German warship 'Emden' shelled Madras, destroying several oil tanks of the Burmah Oil Company. Since then 'Emden' has been used in Tamil for a fearless, daring person.

21 National Cancer Awareness Day – 7 November (Marie Curie's birth anniversary)

Important Days

News

National Cancer Awareness Day is observed in India every year on 7 November. Then Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan announced it in September 2014, and it has been observed since 2014. The day is the birth anniversary of Marie Curie (7 Nov 1867, Warsaw, Poland), who discovered polonium and radium and paved the way for radiotherapy. It aims to spread awareness of early signs, early detection and lifestyle change, and to encourage free screening at government hospitals.

Key facts

Date	7 November; since 2014
Announced by	Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Health Minister (Sept 2014)
Why 7 Nov	Marie Curie's birth anniversary (1867, Warsaw)
National programme	National Cancer Control Programme 1975; prevention and early detection stressed from 1984–85
World Cancer Day	4 February – led by the UICC (Union for International Cancer Control)

Background

- Marie Curie: Polish-born French scientist. Nobel Prize in Physics 1903 (with Pierre Curie and Henri Becquerel) and in Chemistry 1911 – the first person to win two Nobel Prizes. In 1898, with Pierre Curie, she discovered polonium (named after Poland) and radium.
- Science: types of cancer – carcinoma (skin and lining/epithelial tissue), sarcoma (connective tissue such as bone and muscle), leukaemia (blood-forming tissue such as bone marrow – blood cancer), lymphoma (lymphatic system), melanoma (pigment cells of the skin).
- World Cancer Day (4 Feb) is led by the Geneva-based UICC. In India, population-based screening for oral, breast and cervical cancers for people over 30 is done under the NP-NCD programme.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's 2025–26 Budget (14 March 2025) said the Government Arignar Anna Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Institute in Kancheepuram district, the State-level nodal cancer centre, will be upgraded into an autonomous 800-bed institution with ₹120 crore over two years. The same Budget set aside ₹36 crore for HPV vaccination of 14-year-old girls to prevent cervical cancer.

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