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

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News

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

Key facts

Launch	21 Oct 2026 – CM C. Joseph Vijay; TWAD Board HQ, Chepauk, Chennai
Name / mascot	'Thuli' (a drop) – a blue water-drop carrying a house
G.O.	G.O. No. 184, 16.10.2026 – Municipal Administration & Water Supply Dept (coordination, monitoring)
Coverage	Corporations, municipalities, town and village panchayats

Aim	Inspect – repair – build new; groundwater recharge; district-level water-table monitoring
Trigger	Mid-Sept 2026 petition by Chennai resident welfare associations for strict enforcement

Background

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

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

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