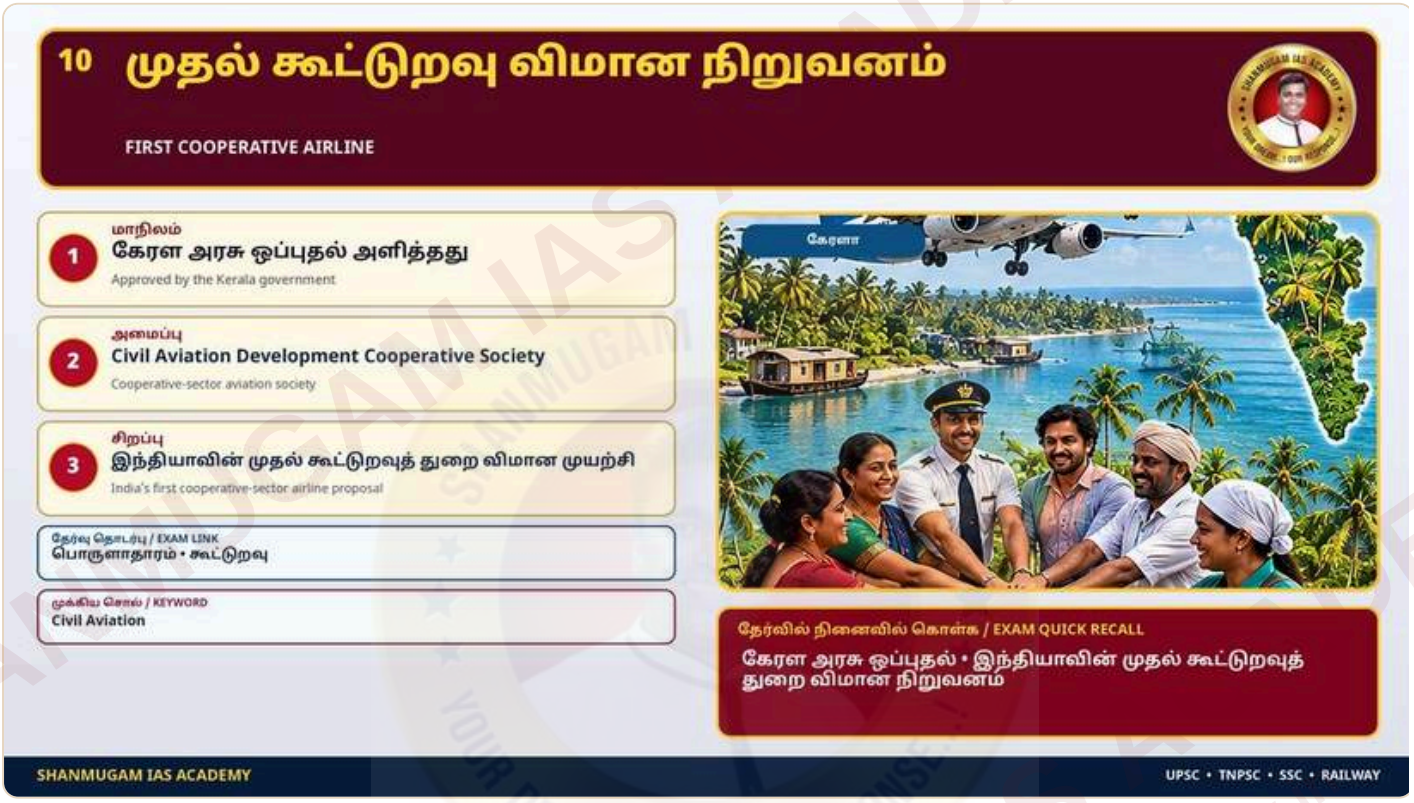
Kerala approves India's first cooperative-sector airline ('Co-Keralam', headquartered in Kochi)

Awards, Aviation, Industry & Sports · 26 October 2026 · https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/current-affairs-english/2026/10/26



News

On 25 Oct 2026 at Kozhikode, at the silver jubilee of the Calicut City Service Cooperative Society, Kerala CM V.D. Satheesan announced State approval for the 'Kerala Civil Aviation Development Cooperative Society' (HQ: Nedumbassery, Kochi) to start flight services – India's first airline in the cooperative sector, tentatively named 'Co-Keralam'. C.N. Vijayakrishnan, chairman of MVR Cancer Centre, leads the project. About 200 cooperative societies will invest ₹2 crore each (about ₹400 crore) as equity, on the Cochin International Airport (CIAL) model, with the CM as chairman and the Cooperation Minister as vice-chairman. It plans two leased 72-seat aircraft at first (later 4, then 6), with routes from Kochi to Kozhikode, Kannur, Mangaluru, Bengaluru, Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai. Services have not yet begun.

Key facts

Announced	25 Oct 2026, Kozhikode – CM V.D. Satheesan
Body	Kerala Civil Aviation Development Cooperative Society; Nedumbassery, Kochi
Lead	C.N. Vijayakrishnan (MVR Cancer Centre)

Capital	~200 cooperatives × ₹2 crore ≈ ₹400 crore; CIAL model
Fleet	2 leased 72-seaters → 4 → 6
Routes	Kochi to Kozhikode, Kannur, Mangaluru, Bengaluru, Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai
Note	Distinct from the private 'Air Kerala' (Gulf-backed)

Background

- Constitution: the 97th Amendment Act 2011 added 'co-operative societies' to Article 19(1)(c), making their formation a fundamental right; added Article 43B (promotion of cooperatives) to the Directive Principles; and inserted Part IXB (Articles 243ZH–243ZT). In July 2021 the Supreme Court (Union of India v. Rajendra N. Shah) held that, since 'co-operative societies' is in the State List (Entry 32), Part IXB – passed without ratification by half the State legislatures (Art. 368(2)) – cannot apply to State cooperatives; it survives for multi-State cooperatives (Union List Entry 44).
- Administration: the Union Ministry of Cooperation was created on 6 July 2021; first minister Amit Shah; motto 'Sahakar se Samriddhi' (prosperity through cooperation). The Multi-State Co-operative Societies Act 2002 was amended in 2023. The UN declared 2025 the International Year of Cooperatives (theme: 'Cooperatives Build a Better World'). Amul, Anand (Gujarat), is India's best-known dairy cooperative.
- Aviation: Cochin International Airport (CIAL, Nedumbassery) was India's first airport built under public-private partnership (PPP) (1999); in 2015 it became the world's first fully solar-powered airport and in 2018 won the UN 'Champions of the Earth' award. The aviation regulator is the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) under the Ministry of Civil Aviation; a new airline needs a DGCA Air Operator Certificate (AOC).
- History: India's cooperative movement began with the Co-operative Credit Societies Act 1904 (Lord Curzon's time); the 1912 Co-operative Societies Act allowed non-credit societies too.

Tamil Nadu link: India's first cooperative society – the 'No. 1 Tirur Primary Agricultural Cooperative Credit Society' – was started for farmers at Tirur, Tiruvallur district, on 22 August 1904; its old building is being restored and a museum on cooperative history is planned. Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai are also on Co-Keralam's planned routes.

Shanmugam IAS Academy – your next step

- **Courses:** TNPSC Group 1, 2 / 2A (Prelims + Mains), Group 4, UPSC / IAS – Coimbatore · Madurai · Online – https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/fees
- **Books (PDF):** TNPSC PYQ books, UPSC books – https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/study-materials
- **Free quiz + daily PDFs:** https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/free-pdf-download · All news of this day: https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/current-affairs-english/2026/10/26

Admissions – call / WhatsApp: 99941 46662 · 99944 27714 · www.shanmugamiasacademy.in