Children's Day 2026: Nehru's 137th birth anniversary

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News

14 November, the birthday of India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, is celebrated every year as Children's Day (Bal Diwas). 14 November 2026 (Saturday) is his 137th birth anniversary (born 14 November 1889 at Allahabad, now Prayagraj). His affection for children earned him the name 'Chacha Nehru'. A Business Standard report notes that India earlier marked Children's Day on 20 November, the UN's Universal Children's Day, and that after Nehru's death in 1964 a parliamentary resolution moved it to his birthday. Schools hold art, sports and essay events, and the day raises awareness about children's education, health, safety and rights. It is different from 'Veer Baal Diwas' on 26 December (since 2022), which honours the sons of Guru Gobind Singh.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Date	14 November – Nehru's birth anniversary (137th in 2026)
Nehru born	14 Nov 1889, Allahabad (Prayagraj)
PM tenure	1947 – 27 May 1964 (till his death)
Bharat Ratna	1955
Books	The Discovery of India, Glimpses of World History, An Autobiography

Point	Details
Universal/World Children's Day	20 November (UN)
UNCRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – 1989; India ratified 1992
Veer Baal Diwas	26 December (since 2022)
Tamil Nadu	CM's Breakfast Scheme – Madurai, 15 Sep 2022 (renamed Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Breakfast Scheme, 15 Jul 2026)

Background

- History – Nehru: a front-rank leader of the Indian National Congress who was jailed many times. Held at Ahmednagar Fort after the 1942 Quit India arrests, he wrote 'The Discovery of India' (published 1946). He was Prime Minister from 1947 until his death in 1964 – India's longest-serving PM.
- Foreign policy: the five principles of 'Panchsheel' appeared in the 1954 agreement with China (on trade with the Tibet region). He was an architect of non-alignment and, with Tito, Nasser, Sukarno and Nkrumah, played a key role at the 1961 Belgrade NAM summit.
- Economy – planned development: first chairman of the Planning Commission (1950); he laid foundations of Five-Year Plans, the public sector, heavy industry, IITs and science institutions. He called dams 'temples of modern India' and dedicated the Bhakra dam on the Sutlej to the nation in 1963.
- Constitution – child rights: Article 21A (free and compulsory education, 6–14), Article 24 (no employment of children below 14 in factories, mines or hazardous work), Article 39(e),(f) (protecting childhood from exploitation), Article 45 (early childhood care and education below 6). Laws: POCSO Act 2012, Juvenile Justice Act 2015, Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986 (amended in 2016 and renamed the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act).

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu: (1) The 'Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme' for pupils of Classes 1–5 in government schools was launched at Madurai on 15 September 2022 by the then Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, and was extended to urban government-aided schools in August 2025; it was renamed the 'Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Breakfast Scheme' on 15 July 2026 (Tribune/PTI 2022; ThePrint/PTI 2025). (2) The school midday meal was expanded in Kamaraj's time and turned into the State-wide Nutritious Meal Programme in 1982 – regarded as a model for the national PM POSHAN scheme. (3) The Tamil Nadu State Commission for Protection of Child Rights monitors child rights at the State level.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

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What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Date: 14 November – Nehru's birth anniversary (137th in 2026); Nehru born: 14 Nov 1889, Allahabad (Prayagraj); PM tenure: 1947 – 27 May 1964 (till his death); Bharat Ratna: 1955.

What is the background to this news?

History – Nehru: a front-rank leader of the Indian National Congress who was jailed many times. Held at Ahmednagar Fort after the 1942 Quit India arrests, he wrote 'The Discovery of India' (published 1946).

Practice questions (with answers)

1. The Panchsheel principles championed by Nehru first appeared in India's 1954 agreement with which country?

A) Nepal

B) Indonesia

C) Burma

D) China

Answer: D – Explanation: China – the 29 April 1954 agreement on trade with the Tibet region. Five principles incl. mutual respect for sovereignty and non-aggression.

2. Where was Nehru imprisoned when he wrote 'The Discovery of India'?

A) Yerwada Jail

B) Ahmednagar Fort

C) Mandalay Jail

D) Naini Jail

Answer: B – Explanation: Ahmednagar Fort – after the 1942 Quit India arrests; the book came out in 1946. Tilak wrote 'Gita Rahasya' in Mandalay.

3. Nehru called dams 'temples of modern India'. The Bhakra dam he dedicated in 1963 is on which river?

A) Beas

B) Ravi

C) Chenab

D) Sutlej

Answer: D – Explanation: Sutlej – Bilaspur district, Himachal; its reservoir is Gobind Sagar. The Pong dam is on the Beas and Ranjit Sagar dam on the Ravi.

4. Which Article bars employing children below 14 in factories, mines or other hazardous work?

A) Article 23

B) Article 39(f)

C) Article 24

D) Article 45

Answer: C – Explanation: Article 24 – Right against Exploitation. Art. 23 bans trafficking and forced labour; Art. 45 – early childhood care below age 6.

5. Tamil Nadu's breakfast scheme for government school pupils (launched as the Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme, now the Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Breakfast Scheme) was launched in 2022 in which city?

A) Chennai

B) Madurai

C) Coimbatore

D) Tiruchirappalli

Answer: B – Explanation: Madurai – 15 Sep 2022 (Anna's birth anniversary), by the then CM M.K. Stalin, for pupils of Classes 1–5.

Sources: Business Standard (14 Nov 2023); Tribune / PTI (15 Sep 2022); ThePrint / PTI (26 Aug 2025); Constitution of India; MEA – Panchsheel; Britannica – Jawaharlal Nehru. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.