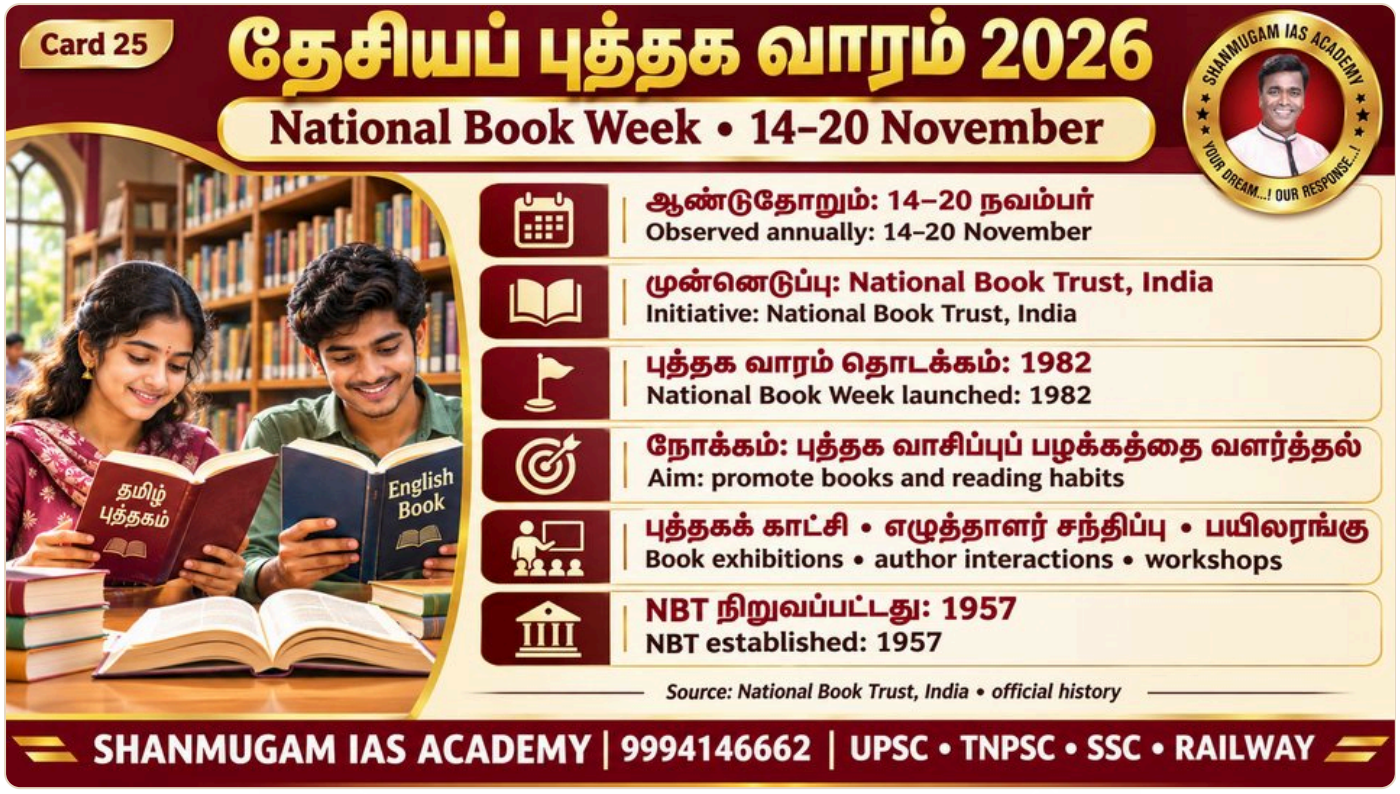
National Book Week 2026 (14–20 November) begins

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News

National Book Week is observed in India every year from 14 to 20 November; in 2026 it begins on 14 November (Children's Day). The National Book Trust (NBT), set up in 1957 and now under the Union Ministry of Education, launched National Book Week in 1982 and organises book-promotion activities during the week every year (NBT). State and district libraries hold book exhibitions, reading events and free membership enrolment during the week (e.g. the Andaman State Library, 2025). Tamil Nadu's public libraries hold an annual library week in the same period (14–21 November) honouring S.R. Ranganathan (DT Next, 2025). Its main aim is to build the reading habit among children and young people. No separate official theme for 2026 had been announced as of 13 November.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Period	14–20 November (every year)
Aim	Promoting the reading habit
National Library	Kolkata – Ministry of Culture
Father of library science	S.R. Ranganathan (b. 1892, Sirkazhi)
First provincial public libraries law	Madras Public Libraries Act, 1948

Point	Details
Deposit law	Delivery of Books and Newspapers (Public Libraries) Act, 1954
National depository (TN)	Connemara Public Library, Chennai (1896)
First printed Tamil book	Thambiran Vanakkam – 1578, Kollam
World Book Day	23 April (UNESCO)

Background

- Library movement: S.R. Ranganathan (1892–1972) set out the 'Five Laws of Library Science' in 1931 – 'Books are for use', 'Every reader his/her book', 'Every book its reader', 'Save the time of the reader', 'The library is a growing organism'. He also devised the Colon Classification. His birthday (12 August) is observed as National Librarians' Day.
- Laws: India's first comprehensive public libraries law by a province/State was the Madras Public Libraries Act, 1948 (in force from 1950; the princely State of Kolhapur's 1945 Act covered only its State library); Hyderabad (1955), Andhra Pradesh (1960), Mysore/Karnataka (1965), Maharashtra (1967), West Bengal (1979), Keralam (1989) and others followed. Libraries are in the State List (Entry 12) of the Seventh Schedule. Under the 1954 delivery Act every publisher must send a copy to four national depository libraries – the National Library, Kolkata; the Asiatic Society, Mumbai; the Delhi Public Library; and Connemara, Chennai.
- Print history: Johannes Gutenberg of Germany built the movable-type printing press in the 15th century. In India the Portuguese set up the first press at Goa in 1556. 'Thambiran Vanakkam', printed by Henrique Henriques at Kollam in 1578, was the first book printed in Tamil script; Tamil was the first Indian language to appear in print. Ziegenbalg set up a press at Tranquebar in 1712.
- National bodies: the National Library of India began as the Imperial Library in Calcutta in 1903 and opened to the public as the National Library at Belvedere Estate in 1953 (Ministry of Culture). The Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation (Kolkata, 1972) supports public libraries with State governments.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu: (1) India's first comprehensive public libraries law by a province was enacted in Madras in 1948; S.R. Ranganathan pressed the then Education Minister T.S. Avinashilingam Chettiar to take it up; earlier, in the 1930s, Basheer Ahmed Sayeed had introduced a library Bill in the Assembly (INFLIBNET). (2) S.R. Ranganathan, the father of library science, was born at Sirkazhi (now Mayiladuthurai district). (3) Connemara Public Library, Chennai (1896) is one of the country's four national depository libraries. (4) Large libraries include the Anna Centenary Library, Kotturpuram, Chennai (2010) and the Kalaignar Centenary Library, Madurai (2023). (5) The first book printed in Tamil script was 'Thambiran Vanakkam' (1578).

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

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What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Period: 14–20 November (every year); Aim: Promoting the reading habit; National Library: Kolkata – Ministry of Culture; Father of library science: S.R. Ranganathan (b. 1892, Sirkazhi).

What is the background to this news?

Library movement: S.R. Ranganathan (1892–1972) set out the 'Five Laws of Library Science' in 1931 – 'Books are for use', 'Every reader his/her book', 'Every book its reader', 'Save the time of the reader', 'The library is a growing organism'.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. Who formulated the 'Five Laws of Library Science' (1931)?

A) Melvil Dewey

B) B.S. Kesavan

C) Paul Otlet

D) S.R. Ranganathan

Answer: D – Explanation: Ranganathan (b. Sirkazhi, 1892) – father of library science in India; he devised Colon Classification. Dewey devised the Decimal system.

2. Which province/State was the first in India to enact a comprehensive public libraries law?

A) Andhra Pradesh

B) Keralam

C) Madras (Tamil Nadu)

D) West Bengal

Answer: C – Explanation: Madras Public Libraries Act, 1948 (in force from 1950). Andhra Pradesh followed in 1960, West Bengal in 1979 and Keralam in 1989. (The princely State of Kolhapur's 1945 Act covered only its State library.)

3. The National Library of India, housed in the Belvedere Estate, is in which city?

A) New Delhi

B) Mumbai

C) Chennai

D) Kolkata

Answer: D – Explanation: Kolkata – under the Ministry of Culture; opened as the Imperial Library in 1903 and to the public as the National Library in 1953.

4. Under which law does Chennai's Connemara Public Library receive a copy of every book published in India?

A) Copyright Act, 1957

B) PRB Act, 1867

C) Delivery of Books Act 1954

D) PRP Act, 2023

Answer: C – Explanation: Delivery of Books and Newspapers (Public Libraries) Act, 1954 – Connemara (1896) is one of four national depository libraries.

5. 'Thambiran Vanakkam', printed at Kollam in 1578 as the first book in Tamil script, is credited to whom?

A) Ziegenbalg

B) Henrique Henriques

C) Beschi

D) Robert de Nobili

Answer: B – Explanation: Portuguese Jesuit priest Henrique Henriques. Ziegenbalg set up a press at Tranquebar in 1712.

Sources: National Book Trust – nbtindia.gov.in (National Book Week, 1982); DT Next (17 Nov 2025) – Chennai library week; INFLIBNET e-PG Pathshala – public library Acts; Delivery of Books and Newspapers (Public Libraries) Act, 1954 – indiacode.nic.in; Britannica – S.R. Ranganathan. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.