IIT Madras School Connect: 20 online courses for Classes 9–12

Topics: Education · UPSC Prelims · TNPSC · SSC · Current Affairs



News

News On AIR reported on 20 November 2026 that IIT Madras, Chennai, has invited registrations for the January 2027 batch of its School Connect Programme. It offers 20 online certificate courses for students of Classes 9 to 12, including Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Aerospace Engineering and Cybersecurity. The last date to register is 8 January 2027; classes begin on 11 January 2027 and run for eight weeks. The fee is ₹500 per course. The programme is run by IIT Madras's Centre for Outreach and Digital Education. So far more than 2.25 lakh students from over 6,500 partner schools across the country have joined it. Its aim is to introduce high-technology fields to students while they are still at school.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Institution	IIT Madras – Centre for Outreach and Digital Education
Programme	School Connect – January 2027 batch
Courses	20 online certificate courses (AI, Data Science, Aerospace, Cybersecurity and more)
Eligibility	Classes 9 to 12
Duration	8 weeks; starts 11.01.2027

Point	Details
Registration	Till 8 January 2027; ₹500 per course
So far	2.25 lakh+ students; 6,500+ schools

Background

- IIT Madras was founded in 1959. Parliament declared it an 'Institute of National Importance' under the Institutes of Technology Act, 1961. NPTEL online courses, run jointly by the IITs and IISc, are offered on the Government's SWAYAM platform, with IIT Madras as NPTEL's coordinating institute.
- The National Education Policy 2020 aims to raise the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education, including vocational education, to 50% by 2035, and urges early exposure to technology and vocational learning in school. The 86th Amendment (2002) added Article 21A and recast Article 45 to deal with early childhood care and education for children below six.
- In 2023 IIT Madras opened its first overseas campus at Zanzibar, Tanzania – the first IIT to set up a campus abroad. In 2020 it also launched an online BSc in Programming and Data Science (now the BS in Data Science and Applications).

Tamil Nadu link: IIT Madras is located near Guindy, Chennai. Tamil Nadu's school students can join these online courses; more than 6,500 schools across India are partner schools (no State-wise figure has been published).

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

News On AIR reported on 20 November 2026 that IIT Madras, Chennai, has invited registrations for the January 2027 batch of its School Connect Programme. It offers 20 online certificate courses for students of Classes 9 to 12, including Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Aerospace Engineering and Cybersecurity.

What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Institution: IIT Madras – Centre for Outreach and Digital Education; Programme: School Connect – January 2027 batch; Courses: 20 online certificate courses (AI, Data Science, Aerospace, Cybersecurity and more); Eligibility: Classes 9 to 12.

What is the background to this news?

IIT Madras was founded in 1959. Parliament declared it an 'Institute of National Importance' under the Institutes of Technology Act, 1961.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. NPTEL online courses, run jointly by the IITs and IISc, are offered on which national MOOC platform?

A) DIKSHA

B) SWAYAM

C) e-PATHSHALA

D) NISHTHA

Answer: B – Explanation: SWAYAM – the Education Ministry's platform; NPTEL is one of its national coordinators. DIKSHA is the digital platform for school education.

2. Which law gives IITs, including IIT Madras, the status of 'Institutes of National Importance'?

A) UGC Act

B) Inst. of Technology Act

C) AICTE Act

D) NIT Act

Answer: B – Explanation: The Institutes of Technology Act, 1961 – it also sets out how IITs are run. NITs have a separate law, the NIT Act, 2007.

3. NEP 2020 aims to raise the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education to what level by 2035?

A) 35%

B) 40%

C) 45%

D) 50%

Answer: D – Explanation: 50% – including vocational education. The policy also calls for public spending on education to reach 6% of GDP.

4. After the 86th Amendment, which Article directs the State to provide early childhood care and education for children below six?

A) Article 45

B) Article 21A

C) Article 46

D) Article 51A(k)

Answer: A – Explanation: Article 45 – a Directive Principle. 21A makes education for ages 6–14 a fundamental right; 51A(k) is the parents' fundamental duty.

5. IIT Madras, the first IIT to open a campus abroad, set it up in which country?

A) UAE

B) Malaysia

C) Tanzania

D) Sri Lanka

Answer: C – Explanation: Tanzania – the Zanzibar campus, 2023. IIT Delhi's overseas campus is in Abu Dhabi (UAE).

Sources: News On AIR; IIT Madras; SWAYAM; Ministry of Education; Constitution of India. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.