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# VETRI IAS STUDY CIRCLE

## Current Affairs

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**JANUARY 2026**



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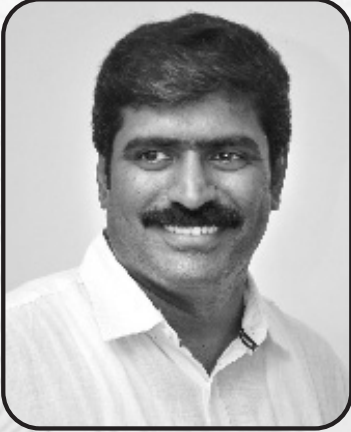
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# Preface



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Greetings to all of you! "What we think we become" Gautama Buddha. We all have dreams. To make dreams come into reality it takes a lot of determination, dedication, self discipline and continuous effort.

We at VETRII IAS Study Circle are committed to provide the right guidance, quality coaching and help every aspirants to achieve his or her life's cherished goal of becoming a civil servant.

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We also thank other family members of Vetrii for making this effort a reality.

We wish the aspirants ALL THE VERY BEST for their journey in Civil Services !

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# SCIENCE

## GENERAL SCIENCE

### International Year of Quantum Science 2025

- **Context:** 2025 has been declared the International Year of Quantum Science and Technology by UNESCO, marking 100 years since the formal development of quantum mechanics in 1925.
- Quantum mechanics is the branch of physics that explains the **behaviour of matter and energy at atomic and subatomic scales.**

### National Quantum Mission (NQM)

- **Aim:** To seed, nurture and scale up **scientific and industrial R&D** and create a vibrant & innovative ecosystem in **Quantum Technology (QT)**.
- It's objectives is to developing intermediate-scale **quantum computers with 50-1000 physical qubits in 8 years** in various platforms like superconducting and photonic technology.

### Dengue

- **Background:** Chennai, January 3, 2025 - Tamil Nadu has topped the list as the state with the **highest number of dengue fever cases in the country.** According to statistics released by the Union Health Ministry, 20,866 people have been affected by dengue in Tamil Nadu. The increase in **Aedes aegypti mosquitoes** has been cited as the reason for this.

### About Dengue

- Dengue is a viral disease that is spread by the bite of the **Aedes aegypti mosquito.**

- It has four different serotypes – DEN-1, DEN-2, DEN-3 and DEN-4.
- In India, **National Dengue Day** is observed on May 16.

### Almond Kid Medicine

- **Background:** The Drug Control Directorate has stated that the controversial Almond Kid medicine is not sold in Tamil Nadu.
- Medicines containing a combination of **Levocetirizine dihydrochloride and Montelukast sodium** are commonly used for cold, allergy, and asthma symptoms.
- Generally, **propylene glycol** is used as a solvent in **liquid medicines.**
- However, it was found that Almond Kid medicine contained diethylene glycol.
- Diethylene glycol is a chemical used in the manufacture of **resins, oils, paints, and inks.**
- Ingesting medicine containing this chemical carries the risk of **kidney failure and death**

## LATEST INVENTIONS IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### PathGennie

- The **Ministry of Science and Technology** has developed a new open-source software called **PathGennie.**
- It aims to accelerate drug discovery through **advanced molecular simulations.**

### Asteroid Benu

- NASA's **OSIRIS-REx spacecraft** collected samples from asteroid **Benu in 2020** and returned them to Earth in **September 2023.**
- The research teams reported that Benu contains **key molecules essential for life:**

**Sugars:** ribose (RNA sugar) and glucose (metabolism), **Amino acids,** All five nucleobases found in DNA and RNA.

### 'Param Rudra' Supercomputer

- The Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology inaugurated the high-performance 'Param Rudra' supercomputing facility at IIT Madras.
- This system has been jointly steered by the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** and the Department of Science and Technology under the National Supercomputing Mission and has been designed and implemented by the **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)**.
- These initiatives are strengthening India's research and innovation ecosystem.
- It will significantly enhance computational capabilities in fields such as computational fluid dynamics, aerospace engineering, materials science, molecular dynamics, nuclear science, and drug discovery.

### Indigenous Chip for Space

- **ISRO** and **IIT Madras** have successfully developed 'IRIS' (Indigenous RISC-V Microprocessor for Space Applications), a semiconductor chip designed for space missions.
- This is a semiconductor chip built on the open-source **RISC-V architecture**. Developed on the patent-free RISC-V architecture, it is derived from the **SHAKTI microprocessor project**.
- It has been developed with the aim of reducing dependence on foreign technology in critical sectors.

### First Genetically Modified Rice

- **India** has become the **first country to introduce genetically modified rice varieties**.
- The rice varieties **DRR Rice 100** and **Pusa DST Rice 1** promise high yield and better climate adaptability.
- These varieties are poised to **increase productivity, conserve water and enhance resilience to climate change**, marking a significant leap for India in agricultural modernization.

### India's First State-Funded BSL-4 Laboratory to Research Zoonotic Diseases

- **India's first state-funded Bio-Safety Level 4 containment facility and laboratory** is being set up in **Gandhinagar, Gujarat**.
- The laboratory is **fully funded and controlled by the Gujarat government** under the **Gujarat State Biotechnology Mission**.
- The **Department of Biotechnology (DBT)** intends to designate it as a '**National Centre for High Containment Pathogen Research Facility**' under the **BioE3 policy**.
- The facility will support research on **high-risk viruses like Ebola, Marburg, Nipah, Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic Fever, and Kyasanur Forest Disease**.
- It will be **India's second civilian BSL-4 laboratory, after the National Institute of Virology in Pune**.

### World's First Repository of Mountain Ice Cores

- Recently, scientists inaugurated the **world's first global repository of mountain ice cores** at **Concordia Research Station** on the **Antarctic**

**Plateau to preserve vital climate records threatened** by rapid glacier loss due to global warming.

- The facility, known as the **Ice Memory Sanctuary**, has been **developed by the Ice Memory Foundation**, a consortium of European research institutions from **France, Italy, and Switzerland**.

### **Diabetes deduction without blood testing**

- **Context:** A new technique has been introduced to detect diabetes without the need for blood tests.
- This research was conducted jointly by the **Madras Diabetes Research Foundation, Yenepoya Deemed University in Mangaluru, and Emory University in the United States**.
- The new technique involves taking retinal images and analyzing them using AI technology to detect the disease in its early stages.
- This also makes it possible to easily detect changes in blood vessels.

### **Extraction of Copper and Iron from Electronic Waste**

- **Context:** IIT Madras researchers have developed a green method for recovering valuable metals from electronic waste using environmentally friendly solvents derived from natural compounds.
- This method is safe, waste-free, and more efficient than traditional chemical-based recycling methods.
- It helps in recovering metals such as copper, gold, and iron, which are abundant in e-waste.

In the research, **deep eutectic solvents (DES)** were used to effectively dissolve copper, which was then safely separated using non-toxic trisodium citrate.

- Through pH control, it was possible to create various forms such as copper oxide nanoparticles and pure copper metal.
- **Iron recovery** from real e-waste samples was also successfully demonstrated.
- This green recovery process will reduce pollution caused by **e-waste and decrease the need for virgin metal mining**.
- **IIT Madras** is planning for testing, technology transfer, and licensing with industrial and recycling companies.

## **SPACE**

### **PSLV-C62/EOS-N1 Mission**

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is scheduled to launch the **PSLV-C62/EOS-N1 Mission on January 12**.

- EOS-N1 is an **earth imaging satellite** said to be built for strategic purposes.
- The launch of the PSLV-C62/EOS-N1 mission will be the **105th launch from Sriharikota**.
- The EOS-N1 satellite will provide data for services including **agriculture, urban planning, environmental monitoring, and military surveillance**.
- PSLV-C62/EOS-N1 Mission will also launch payloads developed by **start-up and academia from India and abroad**.

### **Anvisha Satellite**

- **Background:** The advanced satellite called 'Anvisha', also known as **EOS-N1**, developed by the **Defence Research and Development**

## Organisation (DRDO) for military applications. **India's First Private National Earth Observation Satellite**

- It is scheduled to be launched from the first launch pad of the **Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh, using the PSLV-C62 rocket.**
- This satellite will be placed in a **sun-synchronous orbit** at an altitude of **505 kilometers** above the Earth. It will play a crucial role in Earth observation and intelligence gathering for military security, thereby strengthening the country's defense.
- At the same time, it will also be useful in fields such as agriculture, urban planning, and environmental monitoring.

### **Aditya-L1 solar mission**

- Context:** ISRO said the **Aditya-L1 solar mission** has provided new insights into how **powerful solar storms affect Earth's magnetic field.**
- ISRO explained that **space weather** is caused by transient solar activities such as **solar plasma eruptions.**
- Such events can affect **satellites, communication and navigation systems, and power grid infrastructure** on Earth.

### **About Aditya-L1 Mission**

- It is **India's first dedicated solar mission.**
- It was launched in **2023 by PSLV-C57**
- Objectives:** To understand Coronal Heating and Solar Wind Acceleration; flares and near-earth space weather; Solar wind distribution and temperature anisotropy etc.
- Lifespan:** 5 years
- It placed in a **halo orbit** around the **Lagrange point 1 (L1)** of the Sun-Earth system, which is about **1.5 million km from the Earth.**

**Context:** A consortium led by Pixxel signed an agreement with IN-SPACE to build **India's first private national Earth Observation (EO) satellite constellation.**

**IN-SPACE:** The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre is the nodal agency for authorising, regulating, and promoting private-sector participation in space activities.

The consortium, led by Pixxel, includes Indian startups **Dhruva Space, PierSight, and SatSure.**

Its aim to reduce India's dependence on foreign geospatial data while marketing EO data globally.

Under a public-private partnership, the consortium owns and operates the satellites, with the government having priority access to data.

### **Earth Observation Satellites**

EO satellites are spacecraft equipped with **remote sensing technology** to monitor Earth's physical, chemical, and biological systems from space.

**Sensor Types:** They use active sensors, which emit their own radiation, like radar or passive sensors, which detect reflected solar radiation or thermal emissions.

**Indian Milestones:** The first experimental EOS was **Bhaskara-I (1979), and IRS-1A (1988)** was the first operational remote sensing satellite.

# GEOGRAPHY

## ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

### Parvati-Arga Bird Sanctuary

- The Parvati-Arga Bird Sanctuary in **Gonda district of Uttar Pradesh** has been declared an **Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ)**.
- Eco-Sensitive Zones are declared around protected areas by the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change**.

### Environmentally sensitive zones

- In India, conservation planning follows an ecosystem-based approach to **protect representative habitats**.
- Eco-sensitive zones **extend up to 10 km from protected areas, national parks, and wildlife sanctuaries**.
- While in India, until 2014, there were only 23 Eco-Sensitive Zones covering 25 protected areas, currently, 353 Eco-Sensitive Zone notifications have been issued covering 496 protected areas. Tamil Nadu has **69 Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs)**.

### Secondary Pollutants

- Context: A recent analysis by the **Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA)** shows that **secondary pollutants contribute nearly one-third of Delhi's annual PM2.5 load**.
- Secondary pollutants are **not emitted directly**.
- They form in the atmosphere when **primary pollutants (gases)** react under the influence of **sunlight, humidity, temperature, and stagnant air**.
- Major Secondary Pollutants are Ammonium sulphate, Ammonium nitrate, Sulphuric acid, Nitric acid.

## India's Clean Energy Achievements

- **Global Ranking:** India ranks **4<sup>th</sup> globally** in total installed renewable capacity at **253.96 GW**, with **23% year-on-year growth**.
- **Solar Capacity Growth:** Increased by **34.98 GW to 132.85 GW (41% YoY growth)**.
- **Wind Capacity Growth:** Increased by **5.82 GW to 53.99 GW (12.5% YoY growth)**.
- **Solar Capacity Growth:** Increased by **34.98 GW to 132.85 GW (41% YoY growth)**.
- **Wind Capacity Growth:** Increased by **5.82 GW to 53.99 GW (12.5% YoY growth)**.
- **China Dependence Reducing:** Historically reliant on Chinese solar imports, India is now expanding domestic capacity.

### Sandalwood-colored leopard

- **Background:** A rare leopard, the "**sandalwood-colored leopard**," was discovered for the second time in India in the **Vijayanagara district of Karnataka**, drawing national and global attention to the state's genetically diverse wildlife.
- The "**sandalwood leopard**" was first discovered in **November 2021 in Ranakpur, Rajasthan**.

### Olive Ridley Sea Turtles

- The nesting season for Olive Ridley sea turtles has begun. These turtles lay their eggs on the Tamil Nadu coast from Chennai to Kanyakumari from December to April

### Olive Ridley

- The Olive Ridley sea turtle is listed as a '**vulnerable**' species on the **IUCN Red List**, and is a protected species included in **Schedule-I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and in CITES Appendix-I**.

## INDIAN POLITY

### First phase of Census 2027

- The first phase of Census 2027, the houselisting operations (HLO) phase, will be conducted from **April 1 to September 30** across all States and Union Territories.
- This phase will be conducted in each **State over a 30-day period**, with the specific dates to be notified by the States.
- The **second phase** of the Census is the population enumeration phase in **February 2027**.
- Census 2027 will be the **16<sup>th</sup> census of India and 8<sup>th</sup> since Independence** covering the entire population and providing granular village town and ward level data on housing amenities demography education economic activity migration and more.
- India's 2027 Census brings digital tools, self-enumeration, GPS tracking, and caste data collection for the first time since 1931.

### Kerala's new language Bill

- Context: The **Karnataka government has opposed the Malayalam Bhasha Bill, 2025**, which makes **Malayalam a compulsory first language** in all schools across Kerala.
- A **similar language Bill passed in 2017** was **rejected by the President**, strengthening Karnataka's objection.
- As per **Article 350 and Article 350A**, it is the duty of the State government to protect rights of linguistic minorities.
- **Article 350** - Languages to be used in representations for redress of grievances.
- **Article 350A** - Facilities for instruction in mother-tongue at primary stage

### Centre Moves to Restore Elected Government in Manipur

- Context: The Centre is holding talks to **restore a popular government in Manipur**, which will complete **one year under President's Rule on February 13**.
- President's Rule **cannot be extended beyond one year** without a **Constitution amendment Bill** in Parliament.
- **Article 355**: Obligation of the Union to safeguard states from external aggression and internal disturbances.
- **Article 356**: It allows the President to take over the functions of the state government when the constitutional machinery fails.
- **Article 365**: Consequences of failing to comply with or implement directions issued by the Union.
- The **44<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act of 1978** introduced a provision allowing the extension of the President's Rule beyond one year, six months at a time, only under **two specific conditions**:
  - A proclamation of National Emergency is in effect throughout India or in the entire state or any part of it.
  - The Election Commission of India (ECI) certifies that general elections for the Legislative Assembly of the state cannot be conducted due to certain difficulties.
- **The President of India can revoke the President's Rule** at any time with a proclamation, and **this does not require parliamentary approval**.

### Supreme Court on Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988

- Context: The Supreme Court delivered a **split verdict on the validity** of Section 17A of the

**Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988**, which requires **prior sanction** before prosecuting public servants for decisions taken in official capacity.

- **Justice Viswanathan:** Section 17A is constitutionally valid subject to the condition that the sanction must be decided by the Lok Pal or the Lok Ayukta of the State.

- **Justice BV Nagarathna:** Section 17A of the Act is in violation of Article 14 of the Constitution inasmuch as it seeks to protect only a class of public servants.

- Owing to the **split verdict**, the matter will be **referred to the Chief Justice of India** for constitution of a **three-judge Bench**.

#### **About the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988**

- The **Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988** came into force on **9th September, 1988**.
- It was aimed at making anti-corruption laws more effective by widening their coverage and by strengthening the provisions to make the overall statute more effective.
- **Section 17A** mandates that there should be a prior sanction from the Government to launch an investigation against a public servant under the Act.
- **Definition of Corruption:** Acceptance or solicitation of gratification (other than legal remuneration) by a public servant for performing or not performing an official act.
- **Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018:** To ensure that the public servants can discharge their public duty without fear of harassment and prosecution.

#### **Other legal measures to control corruption**

- Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013.
- Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) Act, 2003.
- Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005.
- United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC).

#### **Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)**

- **Context:** **Shri Praveen Vashista**, IPS (Bihar cadre, 1991 batch), was appointed as Vigilance Commissioner of the **Central Vigilance Commission** and took oath on 16 January 2026.

#### **About Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)**

- The **apex integrity and vigilance institution** of the Government of India.
- Mandated to **promote integrity, transparency and accountability in public administration and to prevent corruption in Central Government organisations**.
- The **Central Vigilance Commission** was established in **1964** through an **executive resolution** of the Government of India.
- It was later given **statutory status** by the **Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003**.
- Originated from the recommendations of the **Santhanam Committee (1962-64)** on Prevention of Corruption.
- The **Central Vigilance Commissioner and the Vigilance Commissioners are appointed by the President of India on the recommendations of a High-Powered Committee (HPC)** consisting of:
  - Prime Minister
  - The Minister of Home Affairs
  - The Leader of the Opposition in the House of the People (Lok Sabha).

## INDIAN ECONOMY

### India's Rice Production Strains Water Resources

- India overtook China as the **world's largest rice producer**, exporting over 20 million metric tonnes.
- Rice farming in **Punjab and Haryana** is depleting groundwater.
- Government subsidies, including high rice prices and power support, encourage water-intensive cultivation.
- Producing **1 kg of rice uses 3,000–4,000 liters** of water, 20–60% above the global average.

### India's FY26 GDP Growth

- The Union government has projected real **GDP growth at 7.4% for FY 2025–26**, higher than **6.5% in FY25**.
- Nominal GDP growth** for FY26 is estimated at **8%**, according to the First Advance Estimates (FAE).
- The FAE for any year is important as it forms the basis for various calculations and ratios **used in preparing the Union Budget**.
- While the country's economic growth was 6.5 percent in the 2024–25 financial year, the first national income estimate **released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation** indicates that the growth rate could increase to 7.4 percent in the 2025–26 financial year due to the performance of the manufacturing and services sectors.
- The real **Gross Value Added (GVA)** is projected to increase to **7.3 percent** in the 2025–26 financial year.

- The Reserve Bank of India had projected the country's economic **growth to be 7.3 percent in the 2025–26 financial year**.

### China leads among India's major export destinations.

- Background:** According to data from the Union Ministry of Commerce, **China is leading among India's major export destinations**.
- In the 2022–23 financial year (April–November), Indian exports to China amounted to \$10.2 billion.
- This decreased to \$9.2 billion in the 2024–25 financial year.
- However, in the April–November period of the current year, exports to **China increased by 33% to \$12.22 billion**.
- This is the **first time in the last four years that Indian exports to China** have increased to this extent.

### Retail Inflation

- Context:** India's retail inflation rose to a **three-month high of 1.33% in December 2025**.
- Despite the rise, inflation remained **below the RBI's lower comfort level of 2%**.
- The RBI's inflation target is **4%, with a ±2% tolerance band**.

### About Retail Inflation

- Retail inflation, also known as **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** inflation, tracks the change in retail prices of goods and services which households purchase for their daily consumption.
- Significance:** Widely used macroeconomic indicator of inflation, tool for inflation targeting by governments and central banks, deflators in national accounts, indexing dearness allowance to employees.

- **Published by:** Central Statistical Office (CSO) on 12th of every month.
- **Components:** Includes 4 CPI numbers at the national level, namely:
  - CPI for Industrial Workers (IW),
  - CPI for Agricultural Labourers (AL),
  - CPI for Rural Labourers (RL) and
  - CPI for Urban Non-Manual Employees (UNME).
- **Base Year for CPI: 2012**

### Reserve Bank – Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS)

- **Context:** With the aim of improving the grievance redressal process, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released the Reserve Bank – Integrated Ombudsman Scheme, 2026, replacing the 2021 edition.

### Reserve Bank – Integrated Ombudsman Scheme

- RB-IOS is a free mechanism for resolving customer complaints against entities regulated by the Reserve Bank under an **alternative dispute resolution framework**.
- It follows a jurisdiction-neutral, integrated framework based on the "One Nation – One Ombudsman" principle.

### India's Fisheries Sector Growth

- **Context:** Government data shows India's fish production rose by **~106% jump in a decade**, driven by aquaculture expansion and policy push.
- India is the world's 2nd-largest fish producer, contributing **~8% of global fish output**, strengthening India's Blue Economy footprint.
- Seafood exports touched an **all-time high value of Rs.62,408 crore**, reflecting stronger value chains and export competitiveness.

▪ Fish is a low-cost **high-quality protein** source; it helps improve nutrition.

▪ Marine fisheries are integral to **India's Blue Economy framework**, promoting sustainable marine resource utilisation and coastal development.

### IMF Revises India's GDP Growth for 2025-26

▪ **Context:** IMF World Economic Outlook (January 2026) upwardly revises India's GDP growth for FY 2025-26 from 6.6% to 7.3%.

▪ IMF's 7.3% growth estimate is slightly below the Union government's **7.4% prediction** for FY 2025-26.

▪ The report predicted that inflation in India is expected to go back to near-target levels after a decline in 2025 driven by subdued food prices. The **Reserve Bank of India's target for inflation is 4%**.

### Core Industries Growth Rises to Four-Month High

▪ **Context:** Growth in the eight core industries accelerated to **3.7% in December, a four-month high**. Despite the uptick, growth was slower than **5.1% recorded in December last year**.

▪ Electricity sector growth rebounded to a **nine-month high of 5.3%** in December.

▪ Coal Sector output growth improved to a four-month high of 3.6% in December 2025.

▪ Steel Sector growth edged up to **6.85% in December, from 6.7% in November**.

▪ Cement Sector output rose by **13.5% in December 2025**.

### RBI Proposes Linking BRICS CBDCs

▪ **Context:** Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recommended including a proposal to connect

BRICS central bank digital currencies (CBDCs) on the agenda of the 2026 BRICS Summit.

- Proposal aims to make **cross-border payments faster and cheaper**.
- Builds on the **2025 BRICS Summit declaration (Brazil)** calling for interoperability of payment systems.
- Linking CBDCs could reduce reliance on the U.S. dollar amid rising geopolitical tensions.
- RBI clarified that promoting the digital rupee's global use is not aimed at de-dollarisation.

### India's Digital Rupee and RBI's Vision

- RBI has shown interest in linking India's e-rupee with other nations' CBDCs.
- **E-rupee launched in December 2022.**
- RBI has promoted adoption through:
  - Offline payment functionality
  - Programmability for government subsidies
  - Allowing fintech firms to offer CBDC wallets

### Cabinet Approves Capital Support to SIDBI

- **Context:** The **Union Cabinet** has approved a major financial decision to support India's MSME sector. The Union Cabinet approved a Rs.5,000 crore equity infusion into SIDBI.
- Aims to strengthen SIDBI's capital base, expand credit to MSMEs, improve access to affordable finance, and support employment generation across the country.
- SIDBI is India's principal financial institution for the MSME sector and plays a key role in **refinancing banks, NBFCs, and MFIs**.

### Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)

- Established on **2 April 1990** set up under an Act of the Indian Parliament.
- Functions under the **Ministry of Finance, Government of India**.
- **Objectives:** Promote, finance, and develop the MSME sector. Coordinate the activities of institutions engaged in MSME financing.

### MSDE Signs Landmark MoU with WEF

- **Context:** The **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **World Economic Forum to deepen cooperation in vocational education, training, and skill development** through the launch of the India Skills Accelerator.
- It aims to strengthen India's **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)** ecosystem through global collaboration.
- MSDE and WEF will work together to identify **skill gaps, promote innovation, and scale public private partnerships**.

- The partnership brings together government, industry, and educational institutions to ensure that India's skilling ecosystem remains aligned with emerging labour-market needs and global standards.

### RBI Report on State Budgets

- **Context:** The Reserve Bank of India released its annual report, "State Finances", for the fiscal year 2025-26 to assess states' fiscal health and budgetary priorities.
- The consolidated Gross Fiscal Deficit of states is budgeted at **3.3% of GDP** for FY25. State

capital expenditure is projected at **3.2% of GDP**.

- States with youthful populations like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh must increase education and skills spending to utilise their working-age populations.
- States like Kerala and Tamil Nadu are facing rising fiscal pressure from pension and geriatric healthcare demands.
- Demographically transitioning states like **West Bengal and Maharashtra** need to adjust their fiscal strategies for **long-term revenue sustainability**.

### Urban Co-operative Banks

- **Context:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed reopening the licensing window for **Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs)** after a gap of more than 20 years, seeking stakeholder feedback.
- **Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs)** are member-owned, community-based banks operating mainly in urban and semi-urban areas, providing banking and credit services to small borrowers, traders, salaried employees and MSMEs.
- The **first urban co-operative credit society was registered in Kanchipuram (1904) under the Co-operative Credit Societies Act, 1904.**

### Index of Industrial Production

- **Context:** Growth in industrial activity accelerated to a 26-month high of 7.8% in December 2025, driven by strong performances across sectors including manufacturing, electricity, and consumer goods.
- Data released by the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on the Index of Industrial Production.**

▪ Manufacturing led the growth, expanding 8.1%, sharply higher than 3.7% in December 2024, though slightly below November's 8.5%.

### About the Index of Industrial Production (IIP)

- The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is a key statistical tool used to measure the short-term changes in the volume of production in Indian industries.
- IIP tracks the growth or contraction of industrial activity over a specific period. It is widely used to assess the overall health and momentum of the industrial sector.
- The IIP is published by the **Central Statistics Office (CSO)**, which is part of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

### Economic Survey Report

- According to the 2025-26 Economic Survey Report released by the Central Government, the Indian economic situation (2025-26 and 2026-27) is as follows:
  - GDP growth in the 2025-26 financial year: 7.4%.
  - GDP growth in the 2026-27 financial year: Projected to grow between 6.8% and 7.2%.
  - The service sector grew by 9.1%.
  - The Central Government's revenue increased to 9.2% of GDP.
  - There are 9.2 crore direct taxpayers. Total GST collection was ₹17.4 lakh crore, 6.7% higher than the previous year.

### Finance, Banking and Investment

- The Central Government's capital expenditure was 4% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the financial year 2025-26.

- India's debt-to-GDP ratio has decreased by approximately 7.1% since 2020.

### **Banking Sector Status:**

- Gross Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) have decreased to 2.2%.
- Net Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) have decreased to 0.5%.
- Banks' total credit growth increased to 14.5% in 2025 (11.2% in 2024).
- 55.02 crore new bank accounts have been opened under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana.
- Funding of ₹36.18 lakh crore has been provided to 55.45 crore beneficiaries under schemes for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

### **Demat Accounts and Investors:**

- The total number of Demat accounts has crossed 21.6 crore.
- The number of new investors is 5.9 crore, of which 3.5 crore are from Tier-2 cities.

### **Agriculture Sector Growth and Foodgrain**

#### **Production**

- Average annual growth rate of agriculture and allied sector over the last five years: ~4.4% (at constant prices).
- In the second quarter of 2025-26, the agriculture sector registered a growth of 3.5%, almost one percentage point less than the average.
- The decadal growth of 4.45% (2015-16 to 2024-25), the highest in comparison to previous decades.
- It has primarily resulted from the strong performance in livestock (7.1%) and fishing and aquaculture (8.8%), followed by the crop sector at 3.5%.

- India's food grain production in the 2024-25 financial year was 3,577.3 lakh metric tons, which is 254.3 lakh tons more than the previous year. Under the PM-KISAN scheme, ₹4.09 lakh crore has been provided to farmers.

### **Industry, Production and Employment**

- Through the production-linked incentive scheme operating in 14 key sectors, investments worth ₹2 lakh crore have been attracted. This has created 12.6 lakh new jobs.
- India is the third largest country globally in solar power and renewable energy production.

### **Social, Educational and Digital Ethics**

- The multidimensional poverty rate, which was 55.3% in 2005-06, has decreased to 11.28% by 2022-23.
- The report states that restrictions should be imposed to prevent children from accessing harmful content when using the internet, and that children should be encouraged to learn in a safe manner by reducing internet usage for educational purposes and providing instruction through low-tech devices (such as question-and-answer formats and educational apps).

### **Trade and Foreign Investment**

- From 2005 to 2024, India's share of merchandise exports increased from 1% to 1.8%, while service exports rose from 2% to 4.3%.
- The country's total exports reached \$825.3 billion, a 6.1% increase compared to the previous year. Service sector exports grew by 13.6%, reaching \$387.6 billion.
- In the first quarter of the 2026 fiscal year, the country's current account deficit was 1.3% of GDP.

- Remittances sent by Indians residing abroad reached \$135.4 billion in the 2025 fiscal year.
- As of January 16, 2026, the country's foreign exchange reserves increased to \$701.4 billion.
- India attracted \$64.7 billion in investment from April to November 2025.
- Since August of last year, the US imposed a 50% trade tariff on Indian goods, impacting exports. To address this, India is negotiating a free trade agreement with the US. Six rounds of talks have been held so far, and the agreement is expected to be signed within this year. This will reduce foreign trade-related uncertainties.

#### **MMR & IMR**

- Since 1990, India has reduced its Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) by 86%, far higher than the global average reduction of 48%
- Under-Five Mortality Rate (U5MR) declined by 78%, Exceeded the global reduction of 61%
- **Neonatal Mortality Rate (NMR)** fell by 70%, Compared with a 54% decline globally, these improvements recorded during the period **1990 to 2023**
- **Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)** dropped by over 37% in the past decade, reduced from **40 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013, to 25 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2023.**

#### **Evolution of Budget: Grains to gigabytes**

- The history of India's Union Budget is effectively the biography of a nation in transformation. This timeline traces the shifting centre of economic gravity through five decisive phases and how the 'Briefcase'

has carried India's destiny - from grain sacks to smartphones.

#### **PHASE 1: 1947-1960 THE EARLY YEARS: FOUNDATIONS & SURVIVAL**

#### **A Free Nation-Year: 1947-48-FM: R.K. SHANMUKHAM CHETTY**

- The primary focus was for the nation to "**consolidate into one unified whole**," dealing with the "setbacks resulting from Partition," and the rehabilitation of refugees. The estimates include... a lump sum provision of 22 crores for expenditure on the evacuation, relief and rehabilitation of refugees from Western Pakistan.

#### **Food security - Year: 1951-52- FM: C.D.**

#### **DESHMUKH**

- The '**Grow More Food**' campaign was placed at the heart of economic planning to tackle food shortages. The FM argued that the food situation has deteriorated and as a result imports had to be increased. An additional 2 million tonnes of wheat were planned to be procured from the United States. Although Government are doing everything possible... the coming year the food position in the country is not likely to be easy.

#### **The plan era- Year: 1955-56- FM: C.D.**

#### **DESHMUKH**

- The last Budget of the First Five Year Plan was framed to secure the "orderly implementation of the Plan" and stock-taking of achievements. The plan was formulated under difficult circumstances with inflation, shortages and the like clouding the economy.

**PHASE 2 : 1961-1989- MIDDLE DECADES:  
DEFENCE & AGRICULTURE**

**National security - Year: 1963-64- FM: MORARJI DESAI**

- Following Chinese aggression, the "paramount consideration" became building defence potential. Defence expenditure was increased to 1867 crore.

**Social justice- Year: 1970-71- FM: INDIRA GANDHI**

- It is generally accepted that social, economic and political stability is not possible without the growth of productive forces and the augmentation of national wealth. Also, that such growth and increase in wealth cannot be sustained without due regard to the welfare of the weaker sections of the community.

**Rural focus- Year: 1979-80- FM: CHARAN SINGH**

- Eradicating poverty/unemployment by assigning "pride of place" to agriculture and rural development. So long as there is great poverty and unemployment, particularly in the rural areas. Agriculture has the largest potential for generating employment, there can be no let up in the task of agricultural improvement.

**PHASE 3 : 1990-2000- TURNING POINT:  
THE REFORM ERA**

**Liberalisation - Year: 1991-92- FM: MANMOHAN SINGH**

- Budget was presented during a "fiscal crisis" and "balance of payments" trouble. The focus shifted to "macro-economic stabilisation" and "structural reform" to integrate India with the world. "After four decades of planning for industrialisation, we have now reached a stage

where we should welcome, rather than fear, foreign investment."

**A modern tax system- Year: 1994-95- FM: MANMOHAN SINGH**

- Focus on restoring the health of the banking sector and phasing out "ad hoc Treasury Bills" to strengthen fiscal and monetary discipline. We must accelerate the reform and modernisation of our tax system...structure now proposed goes a long way towards the kind of modern tax system and moderate tax rates and an emphasis on compliance.

**Knowledge economy- Year: 1999-2000 FM: YASHWANT SINHA**

- "Jai Vigyan" became a tribute to scientists and innovators. The time has come to unleash the creative potential of our scientists and innovators at grass roots level. Only then we can make India truly self-reliant and a leader in sustainable technologies. I propose a national foundation for helping innovators all over the country.

**PHASE 4 : 2001-2013- TECHNOLOGY IN  
FOCUS: INCLUSION & INFRA**

**Infotech revolution- Year: 2000-01- FM: YASHWANT SINHA**

- Acknowledged the potential of IT firms. Young Indian entrepreneurs are at the forefront of the infotech revolution, whether in Silicon Valley, Bangalore or Hyderabad. They have shown us how ideas, knowledge, entrepreneurship and technology can combine to yield unprecedented growth of incomes, employment and wealth.

**Rural infrastructure- Year: 2005-06- FM: P. CHIDAMBARAM**

- Launch of a business plan for rural infrastructure, among others. Bharat Nirman

has to be implemented over a period of four years, for building infrastructure, especially in rural India. It will have six components, namely, irrigation, roads, water supply, housing, rural electrification and rural telecom connectivity.

**Debt relief- Year: 2008-09- FM: P**

**CHIDAMBARAM**

- A massive agricultural debt waiver scheme was a prominent talking point. "Government is conscious of the dimensions of the problem and is sensitive to the difficulties of the farming community... government estimates that about three crore small and marginal farmers and about one crore other farmers will benefit from the scheme."

|  |
|--|
| PHASE 5: 2014-2024 MODERN ERA:<br>ASPIRATIONAL INDIA |
|--|

**Smart Cities & Skill India- Year: 2014-15-**

**FM: ARUN JAITLEY**

- "One hundred Smart Cities" and "Skill India" to focus on employability and entrepreneurship. "For this it is proposed to launch a pan India programme 'Digital India' A National Rural Internet and Technology Mission for services in villages and schools, training in IT skills... is also proposed."

**Doubling farmers' income- Year: 2016-17-**

**FM: ARUN JAITLEY**

- A specific target was set to double the income of farmers by 2022. "Access to markets is critical for the income of farmers. The Government is implementing the Unified Agriculture Marketing Scheme which envisages a common e-market platform that will be deployed in selected 585 regulated wholesale markets."

**Digital economy & GST- Year: 2017-18- FM:**

**ARUN JAITLEY**

- "Digital economy" to increase speed and transparency. "Demonetisation has strong potential to generate long-term benefits in terms of reduced. Corruption, greater digitisation of the economy... We firmly believe that demonetisation and GST... will have an epoch making impact on our economy."

**Health & wellbeing- Year: 2021-22- FM:**

**NIRMALA SITHARAMAN**

- Following the pandemic, the Budget rested on six pillars, with 'health and wellbeing' as the first. "So far, only three times has a Budget followed a contraction in the economy. All such contractions were as a result of situations typical to India. This time, the contraction in our economy is due to a global pandemic...."

**Seven priorities- Year: 2023-24- FM:**

**NIRMALA SITHARAMAN**

- Seven priorities including green growth, youth power, and the financial sector were established. "Our vision for the Amrit Kaal includes technology-driven and knowledge-based economy with strong public finances... To achieve this, Jan Bhagidari through Sabka Saath Sabka Prayas is essential..."

**New definitions- Year: 2024-25- FM:**

**NIRMALA SITHARAMAN**

- A focus on four major castes: 'Garib' (Poor), 'Mahilayen' (Women), 'Yuva' (Youth) and 'Annadata' (Farmer). A new definition of GDP: 'Governance, Development and Performance'. "We believe in empowering the poor. The earlier approach of tackling poverty through entitlements had resulted in very modest outcomes."

## TAMIL NADU

### INITIATIVES / SCHEMES

#### Pharmacies to Display QR Code for Reporting Adverse Drug Events

- **Context:** Pharmacy outlets across Tamil Nadu have begun displaying a QR code to help the public report suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs).
- **Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO)** has directed all retail and wholesale pharmacies nationwide to display the QR code at a prominent location.
- The initiative aims to strengthen patient safety and pharmacovigilance.
- **Tamil Nadu is the first State** to implement this initiative.

#### Expansion of Free Vaccination Programme in Tamil Nadu

- **Context:** The Tamil Nadu government, through the **Public Health Department (DPH)**, is taking steps to expand free vaccination services to all private hospitals with adequate infrastructure.
- Under the **UIP**, launched in 1985, 11 vaccines were administered to children and pregnant women against 12 vaccine-preventable diseases.
- **12 vaccine preventable diseases:**
  - **Nationally against 9 diseases:** Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Measles, Rubella, severe form of Childhood Tuberculosis, Hepatitis B and Meningitis & Pneumonia caused by Haemophilus Influenzae type B.
  - **Sub-nationally against 3 diseases:** Rotavirus diarrhoea, Pneumococcal Pneumonia and Japanese Encephalitis.

- Around **9.40 lakh children** are vaccinated annually under this programme.
- Annually, around **12.0 pregnant women** and **11.0 lakhs infants** are being targeted under Immunization programme.
- Tamil Nadu has reported **more than 95 % coverage over the years.**

#### About Immunisation in India

- **Universal Immunization Programme (UIP):** Initially launched as the Expanded Programme on Immunization in 1978, it was rebranded as the UIP in 1985 when coverage expanded from urban to rural areas.
  - In 1992, the UIP was incorporated into the **Child Survival and Safe Motherhood Programme** and later, in 1997, into the **National Reproductive and Child Health Programme.**
  - Since 2005, under the **National Rural Health Mission**, the UIP has focused on ensuring vaccine access for every child, even in remote areas.
- **Mission Indradhanush (MI):** MI was launched in December 2014 with a goal of achieving **90% full immunisation coverage.**
- **U-WIN Portal:** It is a digital platform designed to streamline vaccine delivery and record-keeping, enabling easy access and management of immunisation records.

#### Thayumanavar Scheme

- **Background:** Under the Chief Minister's Thayumanavar Scheme, essential commodities under the **Public Distribution System** will be delivered to the homes of **elderly people above 65 years of age and persons with disabilities** through 990 fair price shops operating in the 15 zones of Chennai.

- The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu launched the **Thayumanavar Scheme** on **August 12, 2025**.
- This scheme provides doorstep delivery of ration commodities to elderly people above **70 years of age and persons with disabilities**.
- It covers over 21.7 lakh beneficiaries across the state, Distribution will be **done through vehicles**
- Ration commodities will be distributed on **the second Saturday and Sunday of every month**.

### **She Leads Tamil Nadu**

- **Background:** Ahead of the **Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly elections**, UN Women India is organizing a two-day training workshop called **'She Leads Tamil Nadu'** with the aim of increasing women's political participation. This is the first workshop of its kind to be held in Tamil Nadu.

### **She Leads**

- She Leads is an initiative of UN Women.
- It aims to promote gender equality in public and political leadership and to support women leaders contesting in the upcoming parliamentary and state assembly elections.

### **UN Women**

- It was created by the **United Nations General Assembly in July 2010**.
- UN Women works to create changes in laws, social norms, and services to advance **women's rights, gender equality, and the empowerment of girls**.

### **High Court Enlists Water Conservation Expert to Restore Tamirabharani River**

- The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court has appointed **eminent water conservationist and Ramon Magsaysay awardee Rajendra Singh** as Commissioner to undertake a detailed

study of the river and suggest appropriate remedial measures.

- **Rajendra Singh** is called as the **Waterman of India**, has restored streams and rivers in **Rajasthan that had gone dry**.

### **Ulagam Ungal Kayil (The World in Your Hands Scheme)**

- A new scheme called **"The World in Your Hands"** planned to provide a total of 20 lakh laptops to college students under the **"World in Your Hands"** scheme. In its first phase, 10 lakh laptops are being distributed to students was launched by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, on **January 5, 2026**.

### **Key features of the scheme:**

- The main objective is to provide **free laptops to college students to enhance their skills and digital literacy**.
- In the first phase, laptops are being provided to approximately 10 lakh students studying in higher education institutions such as government **arts and science colleges, engineering colleges, medical colleges, polytechnics, and ITIs**.
- The laptops for this scheme are procured and supplied by the **Tamil Nadu Electronics Corporation (ELCOT)**.
- Students can utilize an AI-powered research and learning platform with a six-month Perplexity Pro subscription, which guides them from a hardware-only focus to integrated digital skill development.

### **Tamil Nadu Guaranteed Pension Scheme**

- **January 3, 2025:** Chief Minister announced the Tamil Nadu Guaranteed Pension Scheme for Tamil Nadu government employees and teachers who joined service after **1.4.2004**.

## Key Features of the Guaranteed Pension Scheme

### Scheme

#### ▪ Guaranteed Pension

- Tamil Nadu government employees will be guaranteed and provided with a pension equivalent to **50% of their last drawn monthly salary**.
- Employees must **contribute 10% towards this 50% guaranteed pension**. The Tamil Nadu government will bear the remaining full amount required for the pension fund.

#### ▪ Dearness Allowance (DA) Increase

- Pensioners receiving the 50% guaranteed pension will receive an annual dearness allowance increase every six months, equivalent to the increase given to serving government employees.

#### ▪ Family Pension

- If a pensioner passes away, **60% of the pension** they were receiving will be provided as a family pension to the family member they had previously nominated.

#### ▪ Gratuity

- Government employees will be provided with a gratuity of up to a maximum of **Rs. 25 lakhs upon** retirement or in case of death during service, depending on their length of service.

#### ▪ Minimum Pension

- After the implementation of the new guaranteed pension scheme, a minimum pension will be provided to all officers **who retire without completing the required qualifying service period for pension eligibility**.

#### ▪ Special Compassionate Pension

- A special compassionate pension will be provided to those **who joined service**

under the contributory pension scheme and retired without a pension during the interim period before the implementation of this new scheme.

### Regional office of the National Turmeric Board (NTB)

- Union Agriculture Minister announced plans to set up a **regional office of the National Turmeric Board (NTB)** in Erode, Tamil Nadu.
- An **accredited turmeric testing laboratory** will also be established in Erode.

### National Turmeric Board (NTB)

- By the initiative of Ministry of Commerce and Industry and its headquarters at Nizamabad, Telangana.
- Established to promote the cultivation, production, processing, and marketing of turmeric in India and enhancing the income of turmeric farmers.

### Tamil Nadu Signs MoU with UN Women

- **Chief Minister** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with UN Women to enhance **women's welfare, gender equality, and inclusive development** in Tamil Nadu.

#### Aims to:

- Strengthen **gender-responsive governance and planning**.
- Achieve **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** through a gender-equality perspective.
- Improve **gender-responsive planning and budgeting**.
- Create **economic opportunities for women**.
- **UNICEF Office of Innovation (Sweden)** selected Tamil Nadu as the **first sub-national**

government globally for a six-month cooperation agreement.

- The initiative aims to promote **inclusive social development**, align with Tamil Nadu's **long-term vision**, and **improve public service delivery systems**.

### UN Women

- It was created by the United Nations General Assembly in July 2010.
- UN Women works to create changes in laws, social norms, and services to advance women's rights, gender equality, and the empowerment of girls.

### Scheme to provide e-scooters to 'Gig' workers

- **Background:** A scheme to provide e-scooters at subsidized rates to workers registered with the Gig Workers Welfare Board in Tamil Nadu has been launched.
- The Gig Workers Welfare Board was established in **2023**;
- A group insurance scheme of up to **₹5 lakh has been** implemented for the workers.
- Under the new scheme, ₹4 crore has been allocated to provide new e-scooters to **2,000 workers with a subsidy of ₹20,000 each**.
- Currently, e-scooter subsidies were provided to 100 workers in the first phase.

### Organ Donation - Tamil Nadu

- **Background:** In 2025, organ donation from 266 brain-dead individuals in Tamil Nadu has given a new lease on life to 1,476 people; the brain death organ transplant program created for this purpose is currently being implemented by the Tamil Nadu Organ Transplant Authority.

### Brain Death Organ Transplant Program 2008

- The Tamil Nadu Organ Transplant Authority (TRANSTAN) manages the brain death organ transplant program.
- Tamil Nadu is the first state to make brain death certification mandatory in **2008**.
- In **September 2023**, the Government of Tamil Nadu honoured those who **donated organs after brain death**.
- This **first-of-its-kind government** order has had a significant impact on the program.

### Tamil Nadu Organ Transplant Authority

- The Tamil Nadu Transplant Authority (TRANSTAN) was launched on **December 12, 2014**.
- TRANSTAN (2014) is the pioneering state authority in Tamil Nadu that manages the organ donation program in a **digital, transparent, and equitable** manner.

### Human Organ Transplantation Act

- Following the enactment of the **Human Organ Transplantation Act in 1994**, Tamil Nadu was one of the first states to begin **cadaveric organ transplantation in 1995**.
- For the **sixth consecutive year**, Tamil Nadu remains the **best-performing state** in organ transplantation activities.
- **World Organ Donation Day** is celebrated every year on **August 13**.
- The practice of observing **September 23<sup>rd</sup> as Organ Donation Day** was **initiated in Tamil Nadu**.
- The Tamil Nadu government launched the **Transplant Organ Allocation app**.

## World Bank Praises MTC

- The World Bank has lauded Chennai's Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) for a major turnaround in operations and service delivery.
- Chennai City Partnership (CCP) aims to bring the bus network to financial sustainability, backed by better performance and improvements in efficiency, supported by predictable viability gap funding from the State government.
- MTC has taken big strides on various fronts, including the integration of the ticketing systems of various public transports through the "Chennai One" app.

## Mannuyir Kaathu Mannuyir Kaapom scheme

- **Context:** The State Planning Commission has recommended to the Tamil Nadu government to promote the **decentralised production of green manure seeds to improve the implementation of long term effectiveness of** Chief Minister's Mannuyir Kaathu Mannuyir Kaapom scheme

### SPC recommended

- Integrating green manuring with regular soil testing and soil health cards.
- Establishment of village level soil testing units to help farmers track improvements in soil organic carbon nutrient availability and water holding capacity is must.

### Mannuyir Kaathu Mannuyir Kaapom scheme

- The Tamil Nadu government launched the "Chief Minister's Mannuyir Kaathu Mannuyir Kaappom" on **12th June 2024**.
- It is aimed at improving soil quality and moving towards the sustainable and chemical

free agriculture practices for the wellbeing of the society.

- It also announced steps to reduce chemical fertilizers in paddy crops.
- **Distribution of green manure seeds to farmers**, which helps replenish nutrients in the soil.

## Deep Tech Policy

- The State unveiled **India's first dedicated Deep Tech Startup Policy 2025-2026 (TNDTSP)** at the **4<sup>th</sup> edition of UmagineTN**.
- Aim: To position Tamil Nadu as **India's premier deep tech hub**, foster advanced innovation, drive industrial growth, empower MSMEs, and support the State's journey towards a **\$1 trillion economy**.
- The iTNT Hub will serve as the nodal implementing agency for the TNDTSP. It will house a dedicated team to coordinate all initiatives, manage funds, and act as a single point of contact for stakeholders.

### Start-up & Investment Targets

- Support **100 deep tech start-ups**
- Mobilise **₹100 crore** in public and private investments (VCs and co-investments)

### Innovation & IP Goals

- Enable **10 technology transfer/licensing deals** from academic and R&D institutions
- Achieve **25% annual growth in patent filings** by deep tech start-ups

### Skill Development

- Train **10,000+ students and professionals** in deep tech domains (AI, ML, robotics, biotech, etc.)
- Award **10 research fellowships**

## Unga Kanava Sollunga (Tell Us Your Dream) Scheme

- **Background:** The Chief Minister is launching this new scheme on, **January 9<sup>th</sup>, in Padiyanallur, Ponneri, Thiruvallur district.**

### Highlights of the scheme:

- This scheme has been launched to verify the beneficiary details of social welfare schemes implemented **since 2021** and to gather people's feedback on the schemes' performance and their future aspirations.
- 50,000 volunteers will visit 1.91 crore families in rural and urban areas to collect information.
- The government plans to issue a dream card with a **unique identification number to each family.**
- It aims to understand the dreams of the people for the development of **Tamil Nadu by 2030.**
- It is being implemented through **the Chief Minister's Mudhalavarin Mugavari** Department.
- A separate website will be created for the dreams of young people, and the opinions of Tamils living abroad will also be collected.
- Families will share feedback on benefits received under State schemes.
- Each family will list **three priority aspirations.**
- Aspirations will be **digitised**, assigned a **unique code**, and families will receive a **tracking card.**

## Cervical Cancer Vaccine

- **Background:** The Public Health Department is taking steps to launch a program to provide cervical cancer vaccines to adolescent girls in four districts by the end of this month.
- The Chief Minister will soon inaugurate the vaccination program for **girls aged 9 to 14 years.**

- Cervical cancer is caused by the **Human Papillomavirus (HPV) infection.**
- The overall incidence rate of cervical cancer in Tamil Nadu is 14 per lakh population.
- For the **first time in India**, the cervical cancer vaccine will be administered free of charge to **adolescent girls in Tamil Nadu.**
- **Two doses of the vaccine** will be given to girls studying in government and government-aided schools from Monday to Friday.
- In the first phase, it was found that the prevalence of cervical cancer is high in **Tiruvannamalai, Ariyalur, Perambalur, and Dharmapuri districts.** Therefore, the program is being launched in these districts.

## Namma Arasu

- **Context:** The state government in partnership with Meta launched unified **WhatsApp chatbot Namma Arasu at Umanage TN 2026** a technology and innovation summit bringing **51 essential citizen services** on to a single digit platform.
- Developed under the leadership of **Tamil Nadu e-Governance agency**, the chatbot is part of the state ongoing efforts to strengthen digital public service delivery.
- The chatbot available in both **Tamil and English**, allowing the citizens to access a range of services across multiple government departments.
- These services include key departments such as Local Administration, Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments, and the Electricity Department.
- The initiative aims to make public service **delivery faster, simpler more inclusive and easily accessible.**

## Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme (CMCHIS)

- **Context:** Tamil Nadu government paid an annual premium of Rs.1,237.80 crore for the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme (CMCHIS).
- Through Ungaludan Stalin and Nalam Kaakkum Stalin camps, 2,77,735 new beneficiaries were enrolled under CMCHIS.

### About Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme (CMCHIS)

- CMCHIS was launched in 23rd July 2009 by former Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi.
- The Tamil Nadu government hiked the health insurance cover under the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme (CMCHIS) from Rs 2lakh to Rs 5 lakh. This came into effect on December 1, 2018, and as a cashless scheme, it benefits 1.58 crore families.
- Annual income limit, Rs. 72,000, has increased to Rs. 1,20,000 and the number of treatment procedures has increased from 1090 to 2053.
- This scheme operates in 2,157 hospitals. Through this insurance scheme, the public is benefiting from treatments worth up to Rs. 22 lakh for certain procedures.
- This follows the decision of the State Government to link the scheme with Centre's Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana under the Ayushman Bharat programme.

## OVERSEAS TAMILS CONFERENCE

- Overseas Tamils from 70 countries and several states participated in the Overseas Tamils Conference held in Chennai.

### Special Schemes for Overseas Tamils

- The Overseas Tamils Welfare Board was established for the welfare of Tamils living abroad.

- A toll-free helpline has been launched for overseas Tamils.
- The 'My Village' scheme is being implemented to enable expatriate Tamils to develop their native villages.
- 10 teachers have been appointed to teach Tamil in countries including Tanzania, Indonesia, and Uganda.
- Tamil Mamani and Kaniyan Poongundranar awards are presented to those who have excelled in Tamil service in various countries.

## Tamil Nadu Close to Malaria elimination

- **Context:** Tamil Nadu is nearing malaria elimination, with 33 out of 38 districts reporting zero indigenous cases over the past three years.
- Chennai remains among the five districts (Ramanathapuram, Thoothukudi, Chengalpattu, Salem and Chennai) yet to achieve zero transmission, contributing 37%-45% of the State's malaria cases, though cases declined from 173 (2023) to 121 (2025).
- Thirty-three districts have achieved 'Category 0' status, indicating malaria-free conditions.
- A national conference on malaria elimination is scheduled for January 19-21, reinforcing the State's commitment to elimination.
- There have been no malaria outbreaks in the last three years, and the Annual Parasite Incidence (API) has been reduced to below 1%, according to the Directorate of Public Health (DPH).
- WHO and NCVBDC have set a 2030 target for malaria elimination in India; Tamil Nadu is aligning its strategies with this goal.

- **Malaria** is caused by **Plasmodium vivax** and **Plasmodium falciparum**, transmitted by **Anopheles mosquitoes**.
- **Vaccine:** The **RTS,S** (world's first malaria vaccine) and **R21** malaria vaccines act against **P. falciparum**, the deadliest malaria parasite globally and the most prevalent in Africa.
- The project involves an **investment of Rs.10,000 crore** and will be set up in collaboration with **IIT Madras**.
- The AI Centre will **create around 1,000 high-skilled technology jobs**.
- This will be the **first dedicated AI centre for a State in India**.

### **Indian government Initiatives to Control Malaria**

- **Malaria cases** in India have reduced from **11.7 lakh in 2015** to approximately **2.27 lakh in 2024**, with a **78% reduction** in deaths.
- India **aims for zero indigenous cases by 2027**, aligning with WHO's global strategy.
- In India, a National Framework for Malaria Elimination (NFME) has been developed and launched in 2016 aligned with the **Global Technical Strategy (GTS)** for malaria elimination 2016-2030.
- **Malaria Elimination Research Alliance-India (MERA-India):** It was established by the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** as a conglomeration of partners working on malaria control.
- **National Vector-Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP):** It is the central nodal agency for prevention and control of six vector borne diseases i.e. **Malaria, Dengue, Lymphatic Filariasis, Kala-azar, Japanese Encephalitis and Chikungunya in India**. It works under the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**.
- **All the data from government departments** will be included in it.
- A key objective is to ensure **Tamil Nadu's data remains within the State**, addressing data **sovereignty and security** concerns.

### **Tamil Nadu Launches Semmozhi Literary Award**

- **Context:** Tamil Nadu Chief Minister announced the institution of a **National literary award for works in seven Indian languages**.
- In the first phase, the best literary works in the Indian languages of **Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Bengali, and Marathi** will receive the **Semmozhi Literary Award every year**.
- The award will carry a **cash prize of Rs.5 lakh for each language**.
- The translation of **Heart Lamp into English** had made **Kannada writer Banu Mushtaq** famous across the world.
- The selection process for the awards will be conducted in a high-quality and transparent manner.
- The awards will be determined by a committee of renowned writers and awardees.

### **Separate Artificial Intelligence Centre for Tamil Nadu**

- Tamil Nadu government signed an MoU with **Sarvam AI** to establish a **dedicated Artificial Intelligence (AI) Centre in Chennai**.

### **Air Quality Display Boards**

- **Context:** The **Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC)** plans to install digital air quality

display boards at 100 locations across the city at a cost of Rs.6.3 crore to provide real-time air quality and climate data.

- In the first phase, an **Internet of things (IoT)**-based environmental sensor and display board have been installed on a trial basis.
- The system will monitor 19 parameters, including particulate matter levels such as **PM2.5 and PM10**, and gases – nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide and ozone, along with temperature, humidity, wind speed, wind direction, atmospheric pressure, rainfall, ambient light levels, and air dust and noise levels.
- The real-time data will be used to generate localised Air Quality Index readings, issuing smog and heatwave alerts, and sending notifications to the authorities.

### **Climate education - Cool Schools program**

- **Background:** The Climate Education - Cool Schools project was launched at Chennai by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change and the Minister for School Education.

#### **Climate Education Program**

- An announcement was made in the Legislative Assembly regarding the initiative to integrate climate literacy across all levels of the state education system.
- Summer and winter nature camps are planned for students.
- Residential training camps will be conducted for school teachers on climate change.
- Quiz competitions titled "**Know Your Environment**" will be held for school students.

- Course modules on climate literacy were released, and the climate education program was officially launched.

#### **Cool Roof Project**

- Studies indicate that climate change is causing urban heat island effects, which can affect students' health and learning abilities.
- To create a comfortable learning environment in school classrooms, the cool roof initiative has been included in the **Tamil Nadu Climate Change Mission's 2025-2026 action plan**.
- This project was implemented at **Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Girls Higher Secondary School** in Ambattur, Chennai.
- It was found that this reduced the temperature in the classrooms by 1.5 to 3 degrees Celsius.
- The Chief Minister has announced that this project will be extended to all green schools in Tamil Nadu.
- Books related to cool classrooms and green schools, developed under the United Nations' environment program, were released.
- The Green Schools Impact Report published by the Indian Institute of Human Settlements was released.
- Green school certificates were awarded to Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Girls Higher Secondary School in Ambattur, Chennai, and Kollumedu Government Higher Secondary School in Tiruvallur district.

#### **Kuppai Thiruvizha**

- **'Kuppai Thiruvizha'**: This massive waste collection drive, scheduled to take place from January 21 to 23, 2026, was launched across all 200 wards under the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) limits. is the first initiative in India to transform sanitation work from

an administrative function into a social movement.

- Arrangements have been made for households to hand over segregated dry waste at collection centres.
- The goal is a "Tamil Nadu without landfills".

### 'Cleanliness Movement'

- Announced on **April 2, 2025**, and implemented from **June 5, 2025**.
- Objective: To ensure a "Zero Waste to Landfill" situation and to transition to a system where waste is transformed into reusable resources.

### Tamil Nadu Lays Foundation for Mamallan Reservoir

▪ **Context:** Tamil Nadu Chief Minister laid the foundation for the **Mamallan reservoir**, proposed as Chennai's sixth drinking water source and the **State's first freshwater reservoir** along the coast at **Vada Nemmeli on East Coast Road**.

- The reservoir was named after **Pallava ruler Narasimhavarman I**, also known as **Mamallan**, who founded **Mamallapuram**.
- The Pallavas, renowned for their water management system, created nearly 39 tanks, including **Uthiramerur and Thenneri**, which are still in use.
- This will improve the livelihood of fishermen dependent on brackish water fishing. Fishing licences would also be issued to fishermen in neighbouring localities

### State Resource Centre

- **Context:** With the objective of providing teachers with laboratory-based experiential learning in teaching-learning activities, the Government of Tamil Nadu has established a

State Resource Centre at a cost of Rs. 5 crore at the Professor Anbazhagan Educational Complex in Nungambakkam, Chennai.

▪ This State Resource Centre has been established with funding from the **Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (Integrated School Education Programme)**.

▪ To enhance experiential learning for teachers and students using modern educational technologies, this State Resource Centre has been equipped with various subject laboratories, special halls, and online training programs.

▪ A separate hall named "**Kasadara**" has been set up for students to conduct experiments themselves and understand concepts.

▪ This State Resource Centre will function throughout the year for the benefit of teachers and students.

### Chief Minister's Urban Residences

▪ **Context:** Under the North Chennai Development Project, the Chief Minister inaugurated the "**Chief Minister's Urban Residences**," a complex of 776 apartment units built with modern infrastructure facilities at a cost of Rs. 147 crore in the Seven Wells area of Chennai, by the **Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority**.

▪ Facilities such as an Anganwadi centre, urban health centre, fair price shops, Chief Minister's office, modern library, gymnasium, open-air theatre, and children's play area have been created near the residences.

### Vada Chennai Valarchi Thittam

- The "**Vada Chennai Valarchi Thittam**" was launched on 14.03.2024.

- The objective of the project is to address the areas in North Chennai that lack adequate infrastructure and basic amenities.
- This project will be implemented with funding from the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority.
- The facility for registering residents' associations completely online has been introduced under the **Tamil Nadu Apartment Ownership Act, 2002**.
- The STAR computerization project was launched in the Registration Department in 2000. STAR 3.0 has now been implemented as a continuation of that project.

### **STAR (Simplified and Transparent Administration of Registration) 3.0**

- **Context:** Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin launched **Sprint 1 under STAR (Simplified and Transparent Administration of Registration) 3.0** for the Registration Department.
  - It provides 18 services for property buyers and the general public. It has introduced **'presenceless registration' and 'paperless registration', among others.** **'Paperless registration'** is now available for all 30 deed types.
  - Citizens **no longer need to carry physical documents** to Sub Registrar Offices (SRO) to register their documents. Citizens can complete end-to-end registration completely online without having to visit the Sub Registrar Office.
  - Citizens can apply for encumbrance certificate (EC) at the present SRO alone even though the village was previously in another SRO – eliminating the need for multiple EC applications.
  - Paperless document registration is done with Aadhaar OTP/fingerprint verification, and documents are issued online with electronic signatures.
  - EC, token, guideline value, and registration status can be obtained through the **TNREGINET mobile app and WhatsApp**.
- ### **Seawater Desalination Project**
- **Context:** On January 22, 2026, the Chief Minister laid the foundation stone for a seawater desalination project with a capacity of 60 million liters per day, at a cost of Rs. 2292.38 crore, in **Mullakkadu village, Thoothukudi district**.
  - This project is designed to meet the water needs of the industries in the **Thoothukudi SIPCOT industrial park and surrounding areas**.
  - The project is being implemented under the Hybrid Annuity Model; with **40% contribution from SIPCOT and 60% from a private consortium**.
  - Through this project, uninterrupted water supply will be ensured to the industrial units through pipelines.
  - As a result, the water from the **Thamirabarani river** will be reserved for public drinking water and agricultural use.
- ### **Tamil Nadu Seawater Desalination Projects**
- The **Minjur Seawater Desalination Plant** (100 MLD), **India's first such plant, has been operating in the Bay of Bengal since 2010**, supplying drinking water to Chennai.
  - The **Nemmeli Seawater Desalination Plant** has two separate units; the 150 MLD capacity plant was inaugurated in 2024 and will provide drinking water to 9 lakh residents.

- The Perur Seawater Desalination Plant (400 MLD) is under construction near Nemmeli; funded by the **Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)**, it is expected to be the largest plant in Southeast Asia.
- Tamil Nadu contributes **40% to India's total renewable energy** generation capacity.
- It ranks fourth in India in renewable energy production.
- The state aims to **achieve 50%** of its total energy from renewable sources and **reduce carbon emissions by 70%** by 2030.

### **New website to promote energy production in Tamil Nadu**

- **Context:** On **January 23, 2026**, the Transport Minister launched the **Tamil Nadu Renewable Energy Land Portal** in Chennai.
- The portal helps register unused lands and allows investors to identify sites for renewable energy projects.
- The **"Solar Power for Every Home"** scheme and Rooftop Solar Guide app were launched.
- Tamil Nadu ranks 3rd in green energy, 2nd in wind power, and 4th in solar power in India.

### **"Solar Power for Every Home" (PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana)**

- It is a **Central Sector Scheme** was launched in **February 13 2024** by the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)**.
- Implemented nationally by National Programme Implementation Agency (NPIA) and at state level by **State Implementation Agencies (SIA)**.
- Offers up to 300 units of free electricity per month for household. Targets 1 crore households by March 2027.

### **Renewable energy status in Tamil Nadu**

- **52% of Tamil Nadu's total installed energy capacity** is generated from renewable energy sources.
- The state has an estimated wind power potential of approximately **64 GW**.

### **Skill Development Program Training**

- **Context:** The skill development program training for students studying in **classes 6 to 9** in government schools has been extended until the annual examinations of the current academic year.
- This program was implemented in government schools from July with the aim of improving **language and mathematical skills** in the 2025-2026 academic year.
- Training was provided until the **half-yearly examinations** to ensure students achieved basic learning skills.
- As there is a need to provide additional training to students who have not yet achieved proficiency, the skill development training has been extended until the annual examinations.

### **"Thiran" (Targeted Help for Improving Remediation & Academic Nurturing) Program**

- Thiran scheme has been launched by the **Tamil Nadu School Education Department**.
- It aims to bridge learning **gaps for students of Classes 6 to 9**.
- The program focuses on improving **Tamil, English, and Mathematics skills**.
- The training runs for **six months** to strengthen basic learning abilities.

- Targeted training and academic support are provided to selected students.
- It helps students consolidate basic skills and prepare for higher-level subjects.

### The Great Tamil Dream Project

- Context: Under the Great Tamil Dream Project, a fund of Rs. 1.08 crore has been allocated for teacher training workshops. A total of 1,500 teachers from four districts – Chennai, Coimbatore, Trichy, and Madurai – will participate in 12 events, receiving two days of training.

### The Great Tamil Dream Project

- This project was launched by the Government of Tamil Nadu in the 2022-23 academic year and aims to create awareness among students in over 200 colleges about **Tamil heritage, culture, Sangam literature, social justice, and women's empowerment.**
- The objective of this project is to connect the younger generation with Tamil heritage and pave the way for career opportunities and skill development.
- The **Tamil Virtual Academy**, in collaboration with the **Department of Higher Education**, is implementing this project.

### Tamil Nadu Republic Day Parade 2026

- Context: Tamil Nadu Governor unfurled the **national flag** in Chennai in the presence of Chief Minister and other dignitaries, marking the Republic Day celebrations.
- **Wing Commander Paramjeet Singh Arora** was the parade commander, while **Flight-Lieutenant Thamizhvani** served as the parade adjutant.

### Tamil Nadu Republic Day Awards

- Madurai city, Tiruppur city, and Coimbatore district secured the top three positions in the Chief Minister's Trophies for the Best Police Stations in the State.
- CM presented various awards, including the Anna Medal for Gallantry to three men in the Fire and Rescue Services Department. Fireman-driver V. Sankar, fireman S. Rameshkumar, and fireman P. Suresh and Peter Johnson(Late).
- M. Kalimula of Tiruppur district received the **Kottai Ameer Communal Harmony Award.** He worked for promoting communal harmony and it consist of **Rs 5 lakh cash prize**, a gold coated medal and a certificate.
- **Farmer G. Veeramani received the Narayanasamy Naidu Paddy Productivity Award.** This award is given to a farmer who obtains the highest yield using the System of Rice Intensification method. The award carries **Rs 5 lakh cash prize** and a gold plated silver medal with a certificate.
- Inspector P. Natarajan, sub-inspectors M. Sathianandan, S. Manikandan, K. Natarajan, and constable V.P. Kannan received the **Gandhi Adigal Police Medals.** The medal carries **Rs 40,000 cash prize.**

### TNWeSafe Project

- Context: The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu launched the Tamil Nadu Women's Employment and Safety (TNWeSafe) project, funded by the World Bank.
- Its objective is to create the necessary infrastructure so that all educated women can live independently, earn respectable salaries, grow as entrepreneurs, and live without fear.

- The TNWeSafe project is an integrated system for the advancement of women and the improvement of their quality of life.
- It provides employment opportunities, services, and recognition. The World Bank will provide Rs.1,250 crore in funding, of which Rs/147 crore was released to Tamil Nadu in the first phase.
- Under this project, the Tamil Nadu government is implementing nine key schemes:
  - Womenomics
  - Women Information Bank
  - Synergy
  - Thiransudar
  - Kalangarai
  - Thozhil Vidhai
  - Thozhilanangu
  - Anbu Kudil
- These schemes are designed to strengthen the existing women's empowerment initiatives

### HPV Vaccination Programme

- **Context:** Chief Minister launched the cervical cancer (HPV) vaccination program for schoolgirls on Tuesday (Jan. 27).
- In the first phase, the vaccine will be administered to schoolgirls in **Dharmapuri, Perambalur, Tiruvannamalai, and Ariyalur** districts, which have a high incidence of cervical cancer.
- The plan is to administer the HPV vaccine to girls aged 9–14 years.
- The Expanded Immunization Programme to prevent six diseases was launched in Tamil Nadu in 1978, and to further strengthen it, the immunization program was implemented nationwide in 1985.
- Under this program, 11 types of vaccines are provided to pregnant mothers and children, thereby providing protection against 12 types of diseases.
- Approximately 1.2 lakh women are newly diagnosed with cervical cancer every year in India, and in Tamil Nadu, cervical cancer is the second most common cancer affecting women, after breast cancer.
- Cervical cancer is caused by **Human Papillomavirus (HPV) infection**.

### Scheme for providing Turtle Excluder Devices

- **Context:** To protect sea turtles that come to the coast for breeding in the coastal districts of Tamil Nadu from fishing trawlers, a scheme to provide **Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs)** to fishermen free of cost, at an estimated value of Rs. 6.40 crore, was launched by the Department of Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare.
- Every year, from January 1st to April 30th, the Government of Tamil Nadu implements sea turtle conservation measures during the breeding season.
- The movement of fishing boats is **monitored through ISRO transponders**.
- The **Turtle Excluder Device (TED)**, which allows turtles caught in fishing nets to escape, has been designed and provided with the assistance of the **Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT)**.
- The use of TEDs ensures the safe release of sea turtles from fishing trawls.

### Bank of Baroda–TNSRLM MoU

- Bank of Baroda, Chennai Zone signed an MoU

- with the Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihoods Mission (TNSRLM).
- The MoU aims to extend banking and financial services to Self-Help Groups promoted by TNSRLM across Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihoods Mission (TNSRLM)
  - Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihood Mission is implemented by the Government of Tamil Nadu from the year 2012-13.
  - The primary objective of TNSRLM is to reduce poverty by enabling poor households to engage in gainful self-employment and skilled wage employment through livelihood interventions and facilitating access to financial and other services.
  - Mahalir Thittam, the precursor to TNSRLM promoted Women Self Help Groups of 12-20 women aged between 18 to 60 years who voluntarily came together to promote savings.
  - TNSRLM in the state was fashioned on the core principles of the Vaazhndhu Kaattuvom Project to reach the poorest of the poor through creating institutions of the poor in the form of SHGs, PLFs etc.

### India Global Education Conference 2026

- Context: The India Global Education Conference 2026 was held at the Kalaivanar Arangam in Chennai. Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and Letters of Intent (LoIs) were signed with universities and educational institutions from various countries in the presence of the Chief Minister.
- This conference was held with the aim of strengthening Tamil Nadu as a global hub of knowledge, innovation, and skill development.

- Tamil Nadu stands as the only state in India to have achieved double-digit growth of 11.19%, comparable to the strength of the world's top 50 economies.
- Tamil Nadu is one of the states in India with the strongest higher education infrastructure and the highest student enrollment rate.
- In collaboration with the National Indian Students and Alumni Union from the UK, the India International Education Conference is being held for the first time in India, in Tamil Nadu.
- This conference serves as a unique platform where education, innovation, employment, and global partnerships converge.

### Tamil Nadu Knowledge City Project

- Context: The Chief Minister laid the foundation stone for the Tamil Nadu Knowledge City, which is to be established in Sengathukulam, Melmaligaipattu, and Inambakkam villages of Uthukottai taluk in Tiruvallur district.
- This city is being developed as a global knowledge hub by integrating higher education, research and development, technology, and entrepreneurship.
- The city will serve as an integrated landscape where educational, research, and industrial institutions seamlessly connect.

### International Textile Conference

- Context: The "First International Textile Industry Conference 360" was held in Coimbatore.
- This conference is jointly organized by the Department of Textiles of the Government of Tamil Nadu and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

- Tamil Nadu has consistently been the largest exporter of ready-made garments in India for the past 5 years. Tamil Nadu's share in the Indian textile trade is 33%.
- Main objective of the conference: To introduce the robust infrastructure of the textile sector in Tamil Nadu to global customers and attract international investments.
- Tamil Nadu's 'Integrated New Textile Policy 2025-26' was released.

### **Arasu Palli Thoothuvar Scheme**

- **Context:** The Minister of School Education launched the Arasu Palli Thoothuvar Scheme
- In the ambassador program, alumni will be appointed as ambassadors in their respective schools.
- The ambassadors will be involved in activities such as **improving students' higher education prospects and upgrading school infrastructure.**
- The Alumni Mentorship Program and the 'Vizhuthugal' app were also launched.

### **'Vizhuthugal' Program 2025**

- The "Vizhuthugal" program was launched by the School Education Department on January 9, 2025, with the aim of improving Tamil Nadu government schools.
- Alumni of Tamil Nadu government schools who have **achieved success worldwide are the beneficiaries of this program.**
- This initiative encourages community participation in the progress of government schools and aims to **create a model for**

**educational development with the support of alumni who have excelled in various fields.**

- This initiative is designed to enable alumni to take on social responsibility in supporting and nurturing the schools that contributed to their success.

## **POLITY**

### **Tamil Nadu State Information Commission**

- **Context:** Tamil Nadu will soon have **seven State Information Commissioners** in the Tamil Nadu Information Commission.
- At present, the Commission consists of **one State Chief Information Commissioner and five State Information Commissioners.**

#### **Background**

- When the Commission was constituted (statutory body) in 2005 (under the provisions of the Right to Information Act (2005)), it had **one State Chief Information Commissioner and two State Information Commissioners.**
- In 2008, the State government increased the number of State Information Commissioners from two to six.
- As per **Section 15(2) of the Right to Information Act, 2005**, a State Information Commission can have **one State Chief Information Commissioner and up to ten State Information Commissioners.**
- The **State Chief Information Commissioner and State Information Commissioners** are appointed by the **Governor.**
- **Appointments** are made on the **recommendation of a committee comprising:**
  - Chief Minister (Chairperson)

- The Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly
- A Cabinet Minister nominated by the Chief Minister.
- **Eligibility:** Companies fulfilling prescribed criteria after **July 1, 2024**.
- **Eligible units** will get an **employment incentive as the reimbursement of the employer's EPF contribution** for net new jobs created during the **policy period**.

### **About the RTI Act of 2005**

- The Right to Information (RTI) Act of 2005 gives **Indian citizens the legal right to access information** held by government bodies and public authorities, **subject to certain exceptions and limitations**.
- It **aims to promote transparency and accountability** in the functioning of public authorities.
- It replaced the former **Freedom of Information Act of 2002**.
- It seeks to **implement the Right To Information**, contained in the fundamental right of **Freedom of Speech and Expression (Article 19)**.
- This incentive will be provided for one year, capped at **Rs.10,000** per employee (those domiciled in Tamil Nadu) per month, with a maximum limit of 50 employees per organisation.
- The policy also provides for **skilling incentives and payroll subsidy**.

### **Tamil Nadu Warehousing Policy, 2026**

- It provides for incentives to **stakeholders** in the ecosystem, including **market participants, operators, and developers**.
- These incentives will be applicable for a **period of five years** from the date of promulgation of the policy.

### **Circular Economy Policy and Warehousing Policy**

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister on 13.01.2026 released the **Tamil Nadu Circular Economy Investment Policy, 2026**, and the **Tamil Nadu Warehousing Policy, 2026**, at the Secretariat in Chennai.
- Both the policies provide **eligible units with incentives**.
- An **extension** will be considered based on the **effectiveness** of the policy and **emerging requirements**.
- Warehouse must be **located in Tamil Nadu**.
- The incentives for **greenfield warehouse development** will be **extended** to only those units that are **established or commence commercial operations during the policy period**.

### **Tamil Nadu Circular Economy Investment Policy, 2026**

- Aims to **promote recycling facilities and circular economy technology enablers/platforms**.
- Provides a special incentive package, in addition to benefits under: **MSME Policy, 2021 and Facilitating MSMEs of Tamil Nadu Sponsorship Policy**.
- The incentives for brownfield expansion will be applicable to warehouse units that have undertaken **expansion during the policy period**.
- **As for green incentives**, all eligible new warehouses could avail themselves of a **subsidy of 25%** of the cost of the green initiatives, subject to a limit of **Rs.2 crore**.

## ECONOMY

### Circular Economy Investment Policy 2026

- **Context:** Tamil Nadu has rolled out a **Circular Economy Investment Policy 2026** to promote **recycling based industries, attract private investment, and create green jobs** across key industrial sectors.
- The policy launched by Chief Minister focuses on waste **heavy sectors such as textile, automobile and electronics**.
- To anchor circular manufacturing SIPCOT will develop low-carbon green industrial parks in partnership with national and international players aimed at reducing direct and indirect emissions.
- **Tamil Nadu is the country's second largest producer** of electronics and optical products and generates an estimated 31,000 tonnes of e-waste annually.
- Tiger populations
- **Co-predators** such as leopards, wild dogs, and hyenas
- **Prey base** including gaur, sambar deer, spotted deer, and barking deer.
- Tamil Nadu, which is home to five tiger reserves – Kalakad Mundanthurai, Anamalai, Mudumalai, Sathyamangalam, and Srivilliputhur-Megamalai.
- The State's **tiger population increased from 264 (2018) to 306 (2022)**.
- The main methods employed are pugmark analysis, scat analysis (DNA testing), camera trapping, radio-collaring, remote sensing, and data management through the M-STripes software.
- The final report of the 2026 census will be released in 2027.

## ENVIRONMENT

### First Phase of Nationwide Tiger Estimation Exercise

- **Context:** The **first phase of the All India Tiger Estimation (AITE) 2026** will begin in Tamil Nadu on January 5.
- AITE is the **world's largest wildlife monitoring exercise**, conducted once every four years.
- It is carried out by the **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)** and the Wildlife Institute of India (WII). In the state, the Tamil Nadu Forest Department conducts the survey work.
- The survey assesses
- **Forest Department Rejects Further Tests for Upper Bhavani Hydroelectric Project**
- **Context:** The Tamil Nadu Forest Department has refused permission to NTPC Tamilnadu Energy Company Limited (NTECL) to conduct further exploratory tests at the proposed **Upper Bhavani Pumped Storage Hydroelectric Project** site.
- The project site lies between Mukurthi National Park and Avalanche Reserve Forest, both ecologically fragile and protected habitats in the Nilgiris.
- **Mukurthi National Park**
- The Mukurthi National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, as a part of the Western Ghats.
- The park was created with an intent to protect the **Nilgiri Tahr** and previously known as the **Nilgiri Tahr National Park**.

- Nilgiri Tahr is the state animal of Tamil Nadu.
- The park preserves endangered species such as the Royal Bengal Tiger and the Asian Elephant, apart from the Nilgiri Tahr.
- Currently, 24.47% of Tamil Nadu's land area is covered by forests.
- Reserve forests are declared with the aim of protecting wildlife habitats, water bodies, and ecological corridors.

### Vulture Safe Zones (VSZs) in Tamil Nadu

- **Context:** Tamil Nadu Forest Department informed the Madras High Court that the process to establish Vulture Safe Zones has begun.
- **Purpose of VSZs:** To create a safe environment for vultures by eliminating threats, especially toxic veterinary NSAIDs like diclofenac, a major cause of vulture mortality.
- **First VSZ location:** Around the Moyar River Valley in the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve.
- VSZs to be set up as per the Vision Document for Vulture Conservation (VDVC) in Tamil Nadu 2025–30.
- **Monitoring mechanism:** A field-level monitoring committee chaired by the Field Director of Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) has been constituted.
- **Monitoring scale:** 100-km radius around Moyar vulture nesting sites to be monitored for two years with scientific data generation.
- The protected forest area has increased by approximately 135 square kilometers due to the new reserve forests.
- These reserve forests are spread across 10 districts: Dindigul, Madurai, Kallakurichi, Theni, Sivaganga, Namakkal, Nilgiris, Salem, and Tenkasi.
- A total area of 13,494.95 hectares has been declared as new reserve forests.
- The Highways area in Theni district is the largest reserve forest, covering an area of 2,836 hectares.

### All-India Tiger Estimation 2026

- **Context:** The first phase of the All-India Tiger Estimation 2026 (AITE-26) officially began on January 6, 2026, at the Thanthai Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary under the Erode Forest Division. It is conducted once every four years
- Recording pugmarks, animal droppings, and direct sightings
- Surveying along predefined forest paths

**Although tigers remain the primary focus, the survey also documents**

- Co-predators such as leopards
- Large mammals including gaur, elephants, and bears

### Thanthai Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary

- It is located between the Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve of Tamil Nadu and the Male

### 100 New Reserve Forest Areas in Tamil Nadu

- **Background:** 100 new reserve forest areas have been declared across Tamil Nadu from 2021 to 2025.
- The government's goal is to increase the forest cover to 33% of Tamil Nadu's geographical area.

Mahadeshwara Wildlife Sanctuary and the Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary of Karnataka.

- It is one of the tiger corridors identified by the National Tiger Conservation Authority.

### **Olive Ridley Turtles Satellite-Tagged on Chennai Coast**

- **Context:** Two Olive Ridley sea turtles nesting on the Chennai city beach were **satellite-tagged and released**, marking a major step in marine conservation.
- The two-year study, scheduled to run from **2025 to 2027**, aims at strengthening conservation efforts by using telemetry **technology to monitor turtle behaviour, nesting patterns, and interactions with fishing activities**.
- The **telemetry study** aims at generating data on the Olive Ridleys' migratory routes, foraging grounds, and nesting behaviour, which will help inform future conservation policies.
- The study is being carried out jointly by the **Wildlife Institute of India and the Advanced Institute for Wildlife Conservation, Vandalur**.

### **Conservation Status of Olive Ridley Turtle**

- IUCN Red List: **Vulnerable**
- **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule 1**
- **CITES: Appendix I**

### **International Dugong Conservation Centre**

- **Context:** The **Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC)** of the **MoEFCC** asked the Tamil Nadu government to revise the design of the proposed **International Dugong Conservation Centre**.
- The centre is proposed at Manora, Thanjavur district, with an estimated cost of ₹40.94 crore.

- The project is planned over about 28,000 sq. metres, largely falling within CRZ-III (No Development Zone).

### **About Dugongs**

- Dugong is a large, slow-moving marine mammal, commonly called a "sea cow", that feeds exclusively on seagrass.
- It is a **keystone species**, playing a vital role in maintaining healthy **seagrass meadows**.
- They are found along the **Indian coastline**, primarily inhabiting warm waters around the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the **Gulf of Mannar, Palk Bay, and the Gulf of Kutch**. The dugong is a long-lived species, able to live up to 70 years.
- IUCN status: Vulnerable.

### **Tamil Nadu's First State-wide Raptor Assessment**

- **Context:** The first-ever State-wide raptor assessment will be conducted on **January 31 and February 1**. To study raptor population, biology, and ecology and support localised conservation efforts amid rising threats such as habitat loss, poisoning, electrocution, and illegal wildlife trade.
- The Western Ghats, Eastern Ghats, and the coastal wetlands of Tamil Nadu were vital raptor habitats.
- The **Advanced Institute for Wildlife Conservation (AIWC)** aims to assess the raptor population through a State-wide synchronised survey. The assessment is to include both diurnal and nocturnal raptors.
- Tamil Nadu is a significant habitat for raptors, hosting over 65 raptor species of the orders **Accipitriformes, Falconiformes, and Strigiformes**.

**Raptors**

- Raptors are keystone species and provide various ecosystem services and are considered bio-indicators of environmental health.
- Decline of raptors globally hinders the ecosystem functions of birds of prey, including pollination, seed dispersal, scavenging, and predation.

**Madras Hedgehog**

- **Context:** For the first time, the **Tamil Nadu forest department** has begun a study on the rare mammal species Madras Hedgehog at the Theri forests in the district.
- **Paraechinus nudiventris** is the scientific name of the Madras Hedgehog.
- The species prefers dry **scrublands, thorn forests, grasslands and the edges of farmlands.**
- It is found only in peninsular India, primarily across Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and parts of Karnataka.
- IUCN Status **Least Concern**

▪ **Individual category:**

- **R. Siva (Chennai district)**
- Honoured for rehabilitation and social reintegration of persons affected by leprosy.
- **P. Vijayakumar (Tiruchi district)**
- Recognised for conducting dignified last rites for abandoned and unclaimed bodies.

**Environmental Protection**▪ **Institution category:**

- **Green Rameswaram Trust** (Ramanathapuram district)
- Acknowledged for **rejuvenation of water bodies and conservation of flora and fauna**, including the **coastal ecosystem** of Rameswaram.

▪ **Individual category:**

- **R. Manikandan** (Coimbatore district)
- Founder of “**Kovai Kulangal Padhukappu Amaippu**”, noted for **restoring water bodies** and biodiversity through **community participation.**

**AWARDS****Governor's Awards 2025**

- **Context:** Lok Bhavan announced the **Governor's Awards 2025** under two categories: Social Service and **Environmental Protection.**

**Social Service**

- **Institution category:**
  - **Venkatraman Memorial Trust** (Chengalpattu district)
  - Recognised for **uplifting government schools in Kovalam village** and improving the **quality of education.**

**Tamil Nadu State Awards 2025**

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Thiruvalluvar Award (2026) | Aagama Arignar<br>M.P. Sathiyavel<br>Muruganar |
| Periyar Award (2025)       | A. Arulmozhi                                   |
| Ambedkar Award (2025)      | Chinthanaichelvan                              |
| Anna Award (2025)          | Duraimurugan<br>(Water Resources<br>Minister)  |
| Kamarajar Award (2025)     | S.M. Idayathulla                               |
| Bharathiyar Award (2025)   | Poet Nellai<br>Jayantha                        |
| Bharathidasan Award (2025) | Poet Yugabharathi                              |

|                                    |                           |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Thiru.Vi.Ka. Award (2025)          | V. Iraianbu               |
| Ki.Aa.Pe. Viswanatham Award (2025) | Dr. S. Sellappa           |
| Kalaignar Award (2025)             | Writer Viduthalai Virumbi |

### Ilakkiya Mamani Awards (2025)

- **Traditional Tamil** - T. Ramalingam
- **Research Tamil** - C. Mahendran
- **Creative Tamil** - R. Narendrakumar

### Ilaiyaraaja Honoured with Padmapani Award

- Veteran composer **Ilaiyaraaja** selected for the **Padmapani Award at the 11th Ajanta-Ellora International Film Festival**. The award comprises a Padmapani memento, a citation certificate, and a cash prize of Rs.2 lakh.
- Award recognises his **unparalleled contribution to Indian cinema and music**.
- Padmapani Award is a lifetime achievement honour of the Ajanta-Ellora International Film Festival.
- The festival is organised with the support of the **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting**, Government of India, and the Department of Cultural Affairs, Government of Maharashtra.

### State Literacy Award

- Under the New India Literacy Programme, basic literacy education has been provided to 30 lakh people in **Tamil Nadu since 2022**. The School Education Minister presented the State Literacy Award to 342 literacy centres that performed exceptionally well under this scheme.
- In Tamil Nadu, through the Directorate of Non-Formal and Adult Education, basic literacy

education was provided to approximately 15 lakh people in the first 3 years under this scheme.

- In the last 4 years, more than 30 lakh people have received basic literacy education under this programme.

### New India Literacy Programme 2022

- The **New India Literacy Programme** was launched by the Central Government in 2022 to impart basic literacy to illiterate individuals aged 15 and above across the country with the help of volunteers.
- Under this scheme, a **target has been set to educate 50 million people by the year 2027**.

### Best Election District Award

- **Thanjavur district** has received the **Best Election District Award for the year 2025**.
- The President presented this award to the District Collector of Thanjavur.
- Thanjavur district excelled in **voter list management, inclusion, and deletion processes by fully utilizing technology**.

## HISTORY & CULTURE

### Pazhayarai Somanathar Temple

- Context: The HR&CE Department has begun construction of a **seven-tier gopuram at the Somanathar Temple, Pazhayarai, near Kumbakonam**.
- The **Somanathar Temple** is a prominent **Saivite shrine**, praised in the hymns of **Appar, Sambandar, and Sundarar**.

### Historical significance of Pazhayarai

- Once a **residential centre of Chola kings and their families** before Thanjavur became the capital.

- The temple is also known as **Kara Koil**, as its **mahamandapam resembles a chariot**.
- The long-neglected east-facing gopuram came to be called the “mottai gopuram”.
- **Epigraphic importance:** Inscriptions record a royal order of **Uttama Chola** issued from Pazhayarai palace, documented by **Puliyur Kizhavan, with Rajendra Chola present**.
- Historian **K.A. Nilakanta Sastri** notes that Palaiyaru (Pazhayarai) housed the Arulmolideva-Isvara temple, associated with **Rajaraja Chola** and served as a residence for **Kundavai**, his sister.
- The ancient Shiva temple at Pazhayarai is noted for its **remarkable late Chola architectural style**.
- **SDG 8 - JOBS: Unemployment down to 4.8%**
- **SDG 13 - Climate & Action: Rank 1 nationally**
- Tamil Nadu has also ranked among the top states on climate action, disaster resilience and coastal restoration.

### **Economic Survey 2025–26 Highlights on Tamil Nadu**

- **Context:** The Economic Survey 2025-26, tabled by Union Finance Minister in Parliament, has highlighted some of the key initiatives being implemented by the Tamil Nadu government, including the ‘Thozhi’ working women’s hostels that provide affordable housing to working women.

#### **‘Thozhi’ Hostels**

- According to the survey, these hostels, run by the Tamil Nadu Working Women’s Hostels Corporation through public-private partnerships. They offer a practical blueprint for States seeking to expand women workforce.
- It will be operated under the aegis of the Tamil Nadu Working Women’s Hostel Corporation Ltd which has been established under the Companies Act of 2013.
- They aim to creating high quality affordable self- sustaining chain of hostels across Tamil Nadu, as one of its kind in the country.
- Tamil Nadu is a leading State in India in terms of women labour force. So far, 19 ‘Thozhi’ hostels, equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, have been established in 15 districts, benefiting 1,824 women.

## **REPORT / SURVEY**

### **State Indicator Framework 2.0 report**

- According to the framework Tamil Nadu has achieved near universal coverage under key social indicators.

#### **TN’s performance across SDG’s**

- **SDG 1- No Poverty: 100% MGNREGA demand net - Rank 1**
- **SDG 3 - Health: Under five mortality 13/1000 - Rank 2**
- **SDG 4 - Education: Higher Education GER 47% - Rank 1**
- **SDG 6 - Water & Sanitation: ODF Districts 100%- Rank 1**
- **SDG 7 - Energy: Household and Electrification 100%**

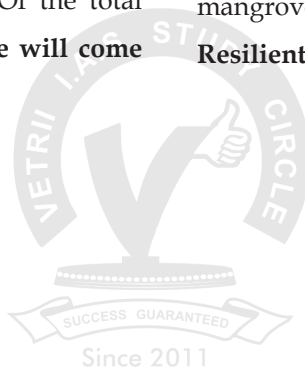
**TN-SHORE**

- The survey notes that **Tamil Nadu has a coastline of 1,069 km across 14 districts** that are vulnerable to shoreline erosion, storm surges, and sea-level rise.
- The Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission (TN-SHORE) employs a multi-pronged approach to improve coastal biodiversity and protection, enhance livelihood, and mitigate pollution.
- TN-SHORE is a Rs.1,675-crore World Bank-funded project to strengthen the State's coastal resilience and economy. Of the total investment, around **Rs.1,000 crore will come**

from the World Bank and the State will contribute the rest.

**Climate Resilient Villages**

- The survey also highlights Climate Resilient Villages, an initiative taken up in Tamil Nadu and in a few other States.
- It says such an initiative demonstrates how resilience can be institutionalised at the grassroots by transforming resilience from a project into a function of local governance.
- In Tamil Nadu, **Killai near Pichavaram in Cuddalore district**, known for its vast mangrove forests, was the **first Climate Resilient Village**.



## NATIONAL - NEWS

### Army's Animal Contingent to Debut at Republic Day Parade

- Context: For the **first time**, the Indian Army will showcase a **special animal contingent** of the **Remount & Veterinary Corps (RVC)** at the Republic Day parade on **Kartavya Path**.
- The contingent highlights the **critical role of animals** in India's military operations, especially in **high-altitude and extreme terrains**.
- In line with the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India, the Army has increasingly inducted indigenous dog breeds such as Mudhol Hound, Rampur Hound, Chippiparai, Kombai and Rajapalayam.

### Ban on Oral Formulations of Nimesulide Above 100 mg

- The Union Health Ministry has **banned oral formulations of nimesulide above 100 mg**.
- Union Health Ministry took the recommendation of the ICMR and Drugs Technical Advisory Board.
- Reason for the ban: Serious health risks, especially **potential liver toxicity**.

#### About Nimesulide:

- A **non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID)** used for **acute pain relief, painful osteoarthritis, and primary dysmenorrhea**.

### India's First Bullet Train

- Union Minister for Railways stated that the bullet train project is progressing as planned and will be ready for operations in 2027.

- The project marks a major step in **high-speed rail development** and **Indo-Japanese technological collaboration**.

- The bullet train will run on the **Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Corridor**.

- Its designed operating speed is up to **320 kilometers per hour**.

### Vande Bharat Sleeper Train

- Background:** The new Vande Bharat sleeper train between **Kolkata and Guwahati** is scheduled to be inaugurated soon.

#### Information about Vande Bharat Express:

- Train 18 is officially named **Vande Bharat Express**.
- It is India's first **indigenously manufactured high-speed train**.
- This train was manufactured by the **Integral Coach Factory in Chennai**.
- Its maiden journey was on the route from **Varanasi to New Delhi**.

### 50th meeting of PRAGATI

- Prime Minister chaired the **50th meeting of PRAGATI**.
- PRAGATI (Pro-Active Governance And Timely Implementation)** is a **technology-driven governance and monitoring platform**.
- Launched in 2015**.
- To improve **public administration and accelerate implementation** of government programmes and projects.

### Nuclear power plant list exchange

- India and Pakistan** exchanged lists of their operational nuclear power plants.
- Agreement on **Prohibition of Attacks against Nuclear Installations and Facilities** between

Pakistan and India signed on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1988.

- **According to the Agreement,**
  - Neither country shall attack the other's nuclear power plants.
  - The lists must be exchanged on **January 1<sup>st</sup> of every year**

### **Operation Milap**

- **Operation Milap, run by the Delhi Police,** is aimed at tracing missing persons especially children.
- Missing person's cases involve coordination with hospitals and transport hubs.
- District police units play a central role in urban public safety.

### **Financial Stability Report (December 2025)**

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** released the Financial Stability Report (FSR), December 2025.
- The report reviews systemic risks, banking sector health, and emerging vulnerabilities in India's financial system.
- The Report also discusses issues relating to the development and regulation of the financial sector.

### **Report status**

- India's financial system remains resilient despite global economic uncertainties.
- Strong economic growth, improved bank balance sheets, and adequate capital buffers support stability.
- RBI cautions against new and rising risks that require close monitoring.
- The rupee depreciated against the US dollar due to falling terms of trade, high tariffs and a slowdown in capital flows.

### **Challenges Faced by Rural, Tribal, and Migrant Groups in Fighting Tuberculosis (TB) in India**

- **Context:** India accounts for about **27% of global TB cases**, making it one of the most affected countries worldwide.
- Rural, tribal, and migrant populations face **multiple barriers** due to poverty, malnutrition, poor living conditions, and limited access to healthcare.

### **Causes of TB**

- Tuberculosis (TB) is caused by a bacterium called **Mycobacterium tuberculosis**.
- It **affects the lungs** but can also affect other parts of the body.

### **National Tuberculosis Elimination**

#### **Programme**

- India's flagship program to eliminate TB by **2025**.
- Uses molecular tests like **CBNAAT and TrueNat** for quick and accurate TB detection.

### **Ni-kshay Poshan Yojana (NPY)**

- It is a government scheme that **provides financial and nutritional support** to TB patients to help them recover faster.
- Each TB patient **receives ₹1,000 per month** to buy nutritious food.
- The scheme helps improve **patients' health and treatment** outcomes by addressing undernutrition.

### **Buddha Relics Exposition**

- Prime Minister inaugurated the **Grand International Exposition of Sacred Piprahwa Relics** related to **Lord Buddha** in New Delhi.
- Government of India recognised **Pali** as a **classical language**.

### **Kalai-II project granted environmental clearance**

- The Kalai-II project is a 1,200-MW hydroelectric scheme planned on the Lohit River in Anjaw district of Arunachal Pradesh.
- Environmentalists flagged the critically endangered white-bellied heron found in the project area.
- The white bellied heron is a Schedule-I species under the Wildlife Protection Act 1972.

### **Re-circulatory Aquaculture System**

- The state-of-the-art Re-circulatory Aquaculture System (RAS) Facility in Hyderabad, Telangana by the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.
- This is used for high-density culture of various species of fish, utilizing minimum land area and water.

### **Artificial Intelligence Medical Center**

- **Background:** India's first government hospital-based Artificial Intelligence medical center has been established at GIMS Hospital in Greater Noida.

### **3D-Printed Automatic Weather Stations**

- **Background:** India has developed indigenously manufactured 3D-printed automatic weather stations under the Mission Mausam project. These will be installed in Delhi from February 2026. This is a significant step towards strengthening India's weather monitoring and forecasting network.

### **Mission Mausam**

- This project was approved on September 11, 2024.
- It is a project of the Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- It aims to improve weather and climate services.
- This project is being implemented by IMD, NCMRWF, and IITM.

### **1,000th anniversary of the first attack on the Somnath shrine (1026).**

- Year-long commemorative events are planned at the temple under the banner "Somnath Swabhiman Parv."
- Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel led efforts to rebuild the temple after Independence.
- 2026 will also mark 75 years since the restored Somnath Temple was inaugurated on May 11, 1951.

### **Somnath Temple**

- Somnath temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva, located in Prabhas Patan near Veraval in Saurashtra on the western coast of Gujarat.
- Mahmud of Ghazni attacked and looted the temple and he was the ruler of Afghanistan.
- The present temple was reconstructed in the Chalukya style of Hindu temple architecture.

### **e-B-4 Business Visa for Chinese Nationals**

- India has launched a new e-Production Investment Business Visa (e-B-4 Visa) for Chinese nationals.
- The visa is meant for specific business activities including installation and commissioning of equipment.
- The e-B-4 Visa came into effect on January 1.
- It will be issued in about 45 to 50 days, with permission to stay in India for up to six months.

### **India ranks first in rice production.**

- **Background:** India is the world's leading producer of rice; surpassing China, it produced 150.18 million tons of rice (China: 145.28 million tons, 2024-25).

### **State-wise rice production ranking (2023-24) – Based on statistics from the Economic Survey report:**

- Telangana - 16.63 million tons (~12.17% share)
- Uttar Pradesh - 15.72 million tons (~11.50% share)

- West Bengal - 15.12 million tons (~11.06% share)
- An apex national facility for Testing, Calibration, Certification of air pollution monitoring equipment under Indian climatic and environmental condition.

### **IITM Global to Become World's First Multinational IIT**

- Union External Affairs Minister launched **IITM Global**, Position **IIT Madras as the world's first multinational IIT**.
- Marks a major step in **internationalising Indian higher education and innovation**.
- **Aim:**
- To establish India-specific standards for air pollution monitoring instruments.
- To support effective implementation of pollution control policies such as National Clean Air Programme.

### **Hydrogen-powered train in India**

- **Background:** For the first time in India, the manufacturing of a hydrogen-powered train has reached its final stages.
- This hydrogen train is planned to be operated on a trial run between **Jind and Sonipat** in the state of Haryana.
- **National Clean Air Programme (NCAP):**
- This programme was launched by the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** in January 2019.
- It aims to reduce the levels of **PM10 and PM2.5 particles by 20%** by 2024-25, using 2017 as the base year.
- This target has been revised to reducing **PM10 levels by 40% or achieving national standards (60 µg/m<sup>3</sup>) by 2025-26**.

### **Payment Regulatory Board**

- The first meeting of the Payment Regulatory board was held in Mumbai under the chairmanship of RBI Governor **Sanjay Malhotra**
- The Payments Regulatory Board (PRB) is the statutory body through which the Reserve Bank of India exercises regulatory and supervisory powers over payment and settlement systems in India.
- **India's first urban night safari**
- Lucknow is set to introduce **India's first urban night safari** and Aims to blend **wildlife conservation with city-based eco-tourism**.

### **World's Second National Environmental Standard Laboratory (NESL)**

- India has inaugurated the **world's second National Environmental Standard Laboratory (NESL)**.
- Also inaugurated the **world's fifth National Primary Standard Facility for Solar Cell Calibration**.
- Location at **CSIR-National Physical Laboratory (NPL), New Delhi**.
- Only the UK and India currently have such national-level facilities.
- Located at **Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, Kukrail Forest Area**, along the **Kukrail River**
- **Objectives**
- Promote **urban eco-tourism**.
- Strengthen **wildlife conservation awareness** among urban residents.
- Allow families and students to observe **nocturnal animal behaviour** without travelling to distant forests.
- Integrate **conservation, education, and recreation** through a sustainable urban model.

## National Highways from Agricultural Waste

- **Background:** CSIR-CRRI and CSIR-IIP have successfully undertaken an indigenous technology transfer titled "Bio-bitumen through Pyrolysis: Roads from Agricultural Waste," creating a significant advancement in India's green road construction.
- This initiative has laid the foundation for India to become a leading nation in the generation of 'cleaner, greener highways'.
- In the construction of national highways, renewable materials will be replaced with materials produced from agricultural waste through pyrolysis.
- The Central Road Research Institute and the Indian Institute of Petroleum are jointly contributing to the construction of these green roads.
- India is the first country in the world to commercially produce bitumen from agricultural waste.

## Drone Data Repository

- **Context:** Country's first state level Drone Data Repository has been launched in **Madhya Pradesh**. It will make administrative process more streamlined, robust and transparent.
- DDR is a centralized cloud based secure and interoperable digital infrastructure that lays the groundwork for the future of geospatial governance.
- It stores high quality drone data including the high resolution orthomosaics, **3D terrain models, LIDAR Scans, video imagery, legacy baseline data and multi departmental survey records.**

## Centre to Launch Cashless Treatment Scheme

- The Centre will launch a scheme providing **cashless medical treatment up to ₹1.5 lakh** for road accident victims across India.
- The scheme will apply to **all road accidents**, not limited to national highways.
- Based on an **AIIMS study**, timely treatment within the first **60 minutes ("Golden Hour")** can reduce road fatalities by **up to 30%**.
- Individuals (termed "**Rahavir**") who take accident victims to hospitals will receive a **cash award of ₹25,000**.
- The scheme was successfully piloted in **Assam, Chandigarh, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Uttarakhand, and Puducherry.**

## Innuvir Kaapom Nammai Kaakum 48 Scheme

- The Tamil Nadu "**Innuvir Kappom - Nammai Kaakum 48**" scheme, providing free emergency care for road accident victims, was launched on **December 18, 2021** by Chief Minister.
- The government pays for the medical bills of **all accident victims** in enlisted hospitals for treatment within **48 hours of the accident**.
- Those who are not eligible for the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme are also covered under the scheme.
- The free treatment will be provided with the collaboration of **Department of Highways and Department of Transport**.
- The state government has raised the insurance cover for the treatment up to **2 lakh for the accident victims (initially 1 lakh)**.

## India Reaffirms Commitment to International Solar Alliance

- **Context:** The **United States announced its withdrawal from ISA** through an executive order signed on **January 7**, citing concerns over funding and effectiveness of certain international organisations.
- India will continue to **work with and support the International Solar Alliance (ISA)** to promote solar energy adoption and energy transition goals.

### International Solar Alliance (ISA)

- The **125-member alliance was conceptualised on the sidelines of COP21 in Paris in 2015** and was formally instituted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President of France Francois Hollande.
- It aspires to **unlock \$1 trillion in solar investments by 2030** whilst reducing technology and financing costs relating to solar implementation.
- The sources stated that the alliance's programmes are operational in more than 95 countries and had supported creation of national pipelines, regulatory frameworks, and market creation.

### Asha Van' Mobile Unit

- **Gujarat launches Asha Van**, a mobile cancer screening unit bringing advanced medical technology to villages and remote areas.
- Asha Van is a fully equipped mobile medical unit **created for cancer screening and diagnosis**.
- This mobile unit is capable of identifying signs of several serious diseases, especially different types of cancer.

## National IED Data Management System (NIDMS)

- **Background:** The National IED Data Management System (NIDMS) has been established at the National Security Guard (NSG) camp in **Manesar, Gurugram district, Haryana**.
- It will serve as a **next-generation security measure against terrorism and a preventive measure against bomb blasts**.
- This national data management system on explosives, **aided by artificial intelligence technology**, will create a robust security system by integrating with other data.
- This system will analyse and provide operational data on bomb blasts to the police, intelligence agencies, state anti-terrorism squads, and central forces such as the NIA.
- **India is ranked 14th in the Global Terrorism Index for 2025.**

### Bharat Steel Awards

- **The Ministry of Steel, Government of India**, has introduced a new awards scheme called the **"Bharat Steel Awards"** to recognize outstanding performance and significant contributions in **key areas of the steel sector**.

### Data-driven zero-fatalities programme

- **Context:** The **Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways**, in collaboration with **Save Life Foundation**, launched a data-driven zero-fatalities programme to reduce road accident deaths.
- The initiative aligns with the government's target to **cut road deaths by 50% by 2030**

- **100 high-risk districts** across **15 States** have been identified based on the highest number of road crashes.
- **The programme has already been rolled out in:**
  - Uttar Pradesh - 20 districts
  - Tamil Nadu - 19 districts
  - Maharashtra - 11 districts
  - Karnataka - 9 districts
- **The India-Germany Higher Education Action Plan** was signed.

### **Launch of India's First Sleeper Vande Bharat Train**

- **Context:** Prime Minister inaugurated **India's first overnight sleeper Vande Bharat train**. The launch ceremony was held in **Malda, West Bengal**.
- The sleeper Vande Bharat train will operate between **Howrah (Kolkata) and Kamakhya (Guwahati)**.

### **Kathputli Puppetry**

- **Context:** **Jaipur's Kathputli Nagar**, home to nearly 250 families of traditional puppeteers, has drawn attention for preserving one of **Rajasthan's oldest living folk art traditions**.
- **Kathputli** is a form of **traditional string puppetry of Rajasthan**, where wooden dolls dressed in colourful costumes are animated with strings to narrate stories of kings, warriors, folklore and moral tales.
- **Traditional Puppetry of Tamil Nadu**
  - Tolu bommalatam (shadow)
  - Bommalatam (string-cum-rod)
  - Pava koothu (glove)
- PM Modi highlighted that the **Vande Bharat sleeper train** is indigenously manufactured, reflecting a move towards **self-sufficient Indian Railways**.

### **Vande Bharat Train**

- Vande Bharat Express, earlier known as **Train 18**, is **India's fastest indigenous train**, built by the **Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai** under the **Make in India** initiative.
- It is **India's first semi-high-speed train**, capable of attaining a **maximum speed of 160 kmph**. It is also the first locomotive-less train in the country.

### **India and Oman Memorandum of Understanding**

- **Context:** **India and Oman signed a Memorandum of Understanding** in Muscat regarding the preservation of maritime heritage and museums.
- India and Oman are strengthening their relations through joint port projects, shipping operations, and maritime cooperation.
- Key projects include the **Tuticorin Outer Harbour in Tamil Nadu** (\$1.3 billion) and a \$9 billion port in Oman with a capacity to handle 23 million TEUs annually.
- **19 key agreements** were signed between India and Germany to strengthen cooperation in various sectors, including defence, trade, and technology.
- **Visa-free travel permission** was announced for Indians travelling to other countries via Germany.
- This is **German Chancellor Friedrich Merz's first official visit to Asian countries**.

- INS Kaundinya is undertaking a voyage from **Porbandar in Gujarat to Sultan Qaboos Port** in Muscat, commemorating maritime heritage.

### Guidelines to promote exports

- **Context:** The Central Government has formulated guidelines for Indian trade offices abroad to promote exports.
- **India has set a target** to increase revenue from exports of goods and services to **2 trillion US dollars by 2030**.
- The guidelines cover aspects such as non-tariff trade barriers, market engagement, planning, resource management, trade intelligence, and market research.

### Human-Carrying Drone Ambulance

- **Context:** The Andhra Pradesh government has partnered with **Dr. Kalam Advanced UAV Research Centre (CASR), Anna University, Chennai**, to develop the world's first long-range, human-carrying drone ambulance.
- The project is aimed at ensuring **rapid medical response in remote and underserved regions by leveraging advanced unmanned aerial vehicle technologies** to save lives and strengthening public health infrastructure.
- Apart from patient transport, the network would support rapid delivery of **medical supplies, blood, diagnostic samples, and emergency medical equipment**.
- The project is a flagship initiative envisioned by **Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu** to modernise emergency healthcare and human transport systems.

### Chips to Start-up (C2S) Programme

- **Context:** The **Chips to Start-up (C2S) Programme** has delivered measurable

outcomes in strengthening India's semiconductor ecosystem.

- The C2S Programme is an **umbrella capacity-building** initiative launched in 2022 by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- To develop industry-ready chip-design talent and strengthen India's indigenous semiconductor design ecosystem.
- It is implemented by the **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)**.

### Second Rangewide Estimation of River Dolphins

- **Context:** The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) launched the **second range-wide estimation** of riverine and estuarine dolphins under Project Dolphin.
- **Project Dolphin** is a comprehensive conservation movement launched by the **MoEFCC in 2020** to protect both riverine and marine dolphin species.
- The survey includes the **Irrawaddy dolphin** for the **first time**, along with the **Gangetic river dolphin and the Indus river dolphins**.
- It will be conducted in two phases across the Ganga and Brahmaputra river systems, covering the Sundarbans and Odisha.
- The survey uses advanced tools like hydrophones for underwater acoustic monitoring.
- **First Survey Result:** It estimated about **6,327 riverine dolphins** across India, with only three Indus River Dolphins recorded in the **Beas River, Punjab**. **Uttar Pradesh** recorded the highest dolphin population, followed by **Bihar**.

## Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of Electoral Rolls

- **Context:** Election Commission (EC) told the Supreme Court that the SIR order was “legislative” in character.
- Authority derived from Article 324 of the Constitution, which grants the EC wide powers to conduct and control elections.
- PART XV- Article 324- Superintendence, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission.
- **Article 324** provided the commission with the freedom to “deviate” as an enabling feature to prepare the electoral roll, considering the myriad situations that may occur in time.
- Reaffirmed commitment to **deepen ASEAN-India digital cooperation.**
- Annual forum reviewing progress and setting priorities for **digital integration and inclusion.**
- Attended by digital and telecom ministers from 11 ASEAN Member States.
- The ministers acknowledged the adoption of the ASEAN-India Joint Statement on Advancing Digital Transformation at the **21st ASEAN-India Summit held in October 2024 in Vientiane.**
- **Key cooperation areas:** Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), FinTech, Cybersecurity, Artificial Intelligence, Capacity building & knowledge sharing, Sustainable financing.

## India’s 2026 Republic Day Parade

- **Context:** For the first time, the Indian Air Force will showcase an operational formation based on “**Operation Sindoor**”, highlighting real-world battle integration rather than traditional static displays. The move reflects India’s evolving defence communication strategy and focus on modern warfare preparedness.
- Operation Sindoor was a high-precision tri-services military campaign launched in May 2025 following a major terror attack in Pahalgam.
- The 2026 celebrations also commemorate the **150th anniversary of “Vande Mataram”.**
- European Union leaders **Antonio Costa, President of the European Council, and Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission,** will be the chief guests at **India’s 77th Republic Day celebrations.**

## 6th ASEAN-India Digital Ministers’ Meeting

- **Sixth ASEAN-India Digital Ministers’ Meeting (ADGMIN)** held virtually.

## Mumbai Climate Week 2026

- **Context:** Mumbai is set to host a landmark urban climate event, positioning climate action as a fundamental child rights issue.
- **India’s first city-led initiative** focused on citizen-driven climate solutions with a strong emphasis on children and youth participation.
- A key feature will be an electronic waste installation under the **Ministry of Education’s Mission LiFE,** highlighting responsible consumption and youth-led action on e-waste management.

## India International Conference on Democracy and Election Management (IICDEM) 2026

- **Context:** The Election Commission of India (ECI) will host the India International Conference on Democracy and Election Management (IICDEM) **2026 in New Delhi.**
- The event aims to showcase **India’s electoral practices and foster global dialogue on strengthening democratic institutions.**

### **Election Commission of India- PART XV (Article 324-329)**

- The Election Commission of India is an **autonomous constitutional** authority responsible for administering for **Union and State election process in India.**
- The body administers election to the **Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies in India, and the offices of the President and Vice President in the country.**
- Election Commission of India is a **permanent Constitutional Body.** The Election Commission was established in accordance with the Constitution on **25th January 1950.**
- The President appoints Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners. They have **tenure of six years, or up to the age of 65 years,** whichever is earlier.

### **India-UAE Sign Long-Term LNG Deal**

- **Context:** India and the **UAE signed a long-term LNG supply agreement** during the visit of **Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan to New Delhi.**
- UAE becomes India's second-largest LNG supplier, after **Qatar.** Agreement covers **0.5 million metric tonnes of LNG per year.**
- LNG is a cleaner fossil fuel used in power generation, industry, and domestic cooking gas.
- Supports India's rising energy demand driven by economic growth and urbanisation.
- **Diversification of LNG sources** reduces supply risks and strengthens long-term energy security.
- Contributes to **sustainable economic development.**

### **India's First Open Sea Marine Farming Project**

- **Context:** India launched its first open-sea marine fish farming pilot project. The initiative focuses on finfish and seaweed cultivation in the Andaman Sea.
- It described as a landmark initiative to unlock the economic potential of India's oceans.
- It marks a shift from near-shore aquaculture to open-ocean farming in natural sea conditions and reflects increased policy focus on the blue economy since 2014.

#### **Primary focus:**

- **Marine finfish cultivation** in open-sea conditions.
- **Seaweed farming** in deep-water environments.
- Aims to promote **sustainable and scalable marine aquaculture.**

### **Population Census-2027**

- **Context:** The Registrar-General and Census Commissioner of India (RG&CCI) notified **33 questions** that residents will have to answer in the **first phase of Census 2027,** which will be conducted between April 1 and September 30.
- The notification published on January 7, 2020 for Census 2021, which was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and never took off, had 31 questions, the current notification has 33.
- According to the government, this will be the **first digital Census, the first to count caste and also the first where respondents will be able to self-enumerate through a yet-to-be announced portal.**

#### **Census in India**

- Provides basic statistics on human resources, demography, culture, and economic structure at local, regional, and national levels.

- Beginning in the year 1872, when the first census was conducted non-synchronously, the first synchronous census was taken under British rule in 1881, by W.C. Plowden, Census Commissioner of India.
- Population census is listed in Union List (entry 69) of Seventh Schedule in Indian Constitution. Census is conducted under the provisions of the Census Act, 1948.
- The **LR-AShM is a hypersonic glide missile** capable of engaging both static and moving targets with high precision.
- The 150th year celebrations of the National Song, Vande Mataram, was the prominent theme, the event celebrated the country's successes during last year's "Operation Sindoor".
- President Droupadi Murmu presided over the event. President of the European Council, Antonio Costa and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen were the chief guests.
- Over 100 artists came together to kick-start the celebration on the theme of Vividata Mein Ekta (unity in diversity), performing with traditional musical instruments from across the country, to demonstrate the nation's rich cultural diversity.
- The parade was led by Parade Commander Lieutenant-General Bhavnish Kumar, General Officer Commanding, Delhi Area, a second-generation officer.
- The celebration also saw the parade debut of the newly raised Bhairav Battalion, a specialised assault infantry unit.

### India Flags the Indigenous Light Water Reactor (LWR)

- **Context:** India opens its **nuclear power sector to private players** and explores export opportunities, the nuclear establishment has stressed the need to fast-track the fabrication of indigenous Light Water Reactors (LWR)
- Light Water Reactors (LWR)
- LWR use ordinary (light) water as both a coolant and a neutron moderator.
- Its simpler design and engineering compared to heavy water reactors.
- It usually involves lower construction costs.

### Republic Day parade

- **Context:** The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) will highlight **India's growing indigenous defence capabilities** by showcasing several path-breaking technologies at the 77th Republic Day parade and "**Bharat Parv 2026**" at the **Red Fort**.
- The key attractions of the programme include the Long Range Anti-Ship Hypersonic Missile (LR-AShM), and a dedicated DRDO tableau.
- The DRDO will display the LR-AShM along with its launcher during the Republic Day parade at Kartavya Path.
- **Fighter jets to lead Republic Day flypast**
- **Context:** The Indian Air Force (IAF) will showcase a formation of frontline fighter

jets with the call sign “**Sindoor**” during the **Republic Day flypast**, symbolising India’s aerial dominance during Operation Sindoor.

- The spearhead formation will comprise two **Rafale jets, two MiG-29s, two Su-30 MKIs and one Jaguar aircraft** – all of which actively participated in the operation.
- The flypast will carry the flag of Operation Sindoor, commemorating India’s decisive military response following the **Pahalgam terror attack**.

### India’s First ‘State Bacterium’

- **Kerala** is set to become the **first state in India** to declare a state **bacterium to highlight the importance of beneficial microbes**
- A **bacterium** is a **microscopic, single-celled organism** that belongs to the group prokaryotes.
- The initiative **focuses** on the role of **microbes in agriculture**, health, and environmental sustainability, and seeks to move public perception beyond viewing microbes only as disease-causing agents.
- The objective is **not to conserve just one bacterium**, but to represent and promote the **entire spectrum of beneficial microbes**.
- **India’s national microbe** is **Lactobacillus bulgaricus**, declared in **2012**, and **used in yogurt production**.

### Granth Kutir

- **Context:** The President of India inaugurated **Granth Kutir at Rashtrapati Bhavan**. It has a rich collection of manuscripts and books in 11 classical languages of India which are **Tamil, Sanskrit, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, Odia, Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese, and Bengali**.

- The aim of developing the **Granth Kutir** is to enhance awareness among the citizens regarding the **rich cultural and literary heritage of India**.

- It has a collection of about 2,300 books in 11 Indian classical languages of India.

- It has been developed through collaboration with central government, state governments, universities, research institutions, cultural organisations.

### Digital Climate Atlas

- **Context:** The Government launched a **digital climate atlas, the Atlas of Climate Adaptation in Indian Agriculture (ACASA-India)**.

- It marked 15 years of the **National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA)** programme.

- It is developed by **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)** and **Borlaug Institute for South Asia**.

- **ACASA-India** is designed to support location-specific, data-driven adaptation planning to safeguard agri-food systems from climate stress.

- It strengthens **India’s climate-resilience ecosystem and Viksit Bharat @2047 goals**.

- **NICRA was launched in 2011** by **ICAR** to enhance the resilience of Indian agriculture to climate variability, including crops, livestock, and fisheries.

### UGC’s New Rules to Curb Caste

#### Discrimination in Higher Education

- **Context:** The University Grants Commission (UGC) has issued mandatory regulations to combat caste-based and other forms of discrimination in colleges and universities. Non-compliance will attract strict penalties.

- A 2019 IIT Delhi study found nearly 75% of students from lower castes experienced discrimination.
- Forms of discrimination include social exclusion, disrespectful treatment, and segregation in hostels, dining spaces, and sports.
- The Thorat Committee (2007) highlighted the creation of "separate spaces" for marginalised students within campuses.
- The regulations protect individuals belonging to: Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs).
- Additionally, protection extends to discrimination based on religion, gender, disability, and region, broadening the scope beyond earlier norms.
- Every college must now create an Equal Opportunity Centre (EOC). Listens to complaints about discrimination, Works to make the college more fair and inclusive, Ensures all students are treated equally.
- The central part featured scenes reflecting Tamil Nadu's advancements in electric vehicle manufacturing and clean transportation.
- The rear of the tableau featured tree-shaped displays **showcasing green technology and sustainable development.**
- At the 75th Republic Day celebrations, Tamil Nadu's tableau was designed based on the theme '**The Kudavolai system of ancient Tamil Nadu - the mother of democracy**'.

### Project Sampark

- **Context: The BRO successfully** restored road connectivity and conducted a **rescue operation at Chatergala Pass (10,500 ft)** after heavy snowfall disrupted movement, evacuating civilians and army personnel without any casualties.
- The operation, carried out amid extreme weather and heavy snowfall, ensured the safe evacuation of stranded civilians and troops while restoring a critical communication route.
- Chatergala Pass, located on the Bhadrawah-Chatergala axis in the Jammu region.
- Border Roads Organization
- To strengthen connectivity and bolster strategic infrastructure in border regions, the Government of India established the **Border Roads Organisation in 1960.**
- The organisation is a unique amalgamation of **civilian and military personnel, combining technical expertise with military resolve.**
- BRO plays a vital role in national security, disaster response, and humanitarian assistance, guided by its motto "**Shramena Sarvam Sadhyam**" (Everything is achievable through hard work).

### Tamil Nadu's tableau in the Republic Day parade

- Context: In the 77th Republic Day parade, Tamil Nadu's tableau participated, reflecting its traditional heritage and modern technology.
- The tableau was designed with the theme of the Mantra of prosperity: "Self-Reliant India," showcasing the state's tradition and its pioneering role in development.
- The front of the tableau depicted a Jallikattu scene, combining bravery, skill, technology, and tradition.

## India Energy Week

- India Energy Week (IEW) 2026 will be held in **Goa from January 27-30.**
- IEW 2026 aims to promote energy security, investment promotion, and carbon reduction practices.
- This event is organized by the **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and the Federation of Indian Petroleum Industry (FIPI).**

## India-European Union Trade Agreement

- Context: A free trade agreement between India and the European Union has been finalized.
- 93% of goods exported from India will not be subject to tariffs in European Union countries.
- 90% of goods imported from European Union countries will not be subject to tariffs in India for a period of 10 years.

## India-EU Cooperation on Peaceful Nuclear Energy

- Context: The European Union (EU) and India have committed to promoting collaboration on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under the India-Euratom agreement, according to a statement from the Joint India-European Union Comprehensive Strategic Agenda.

### Areas of Nuclear Collaboration

- Research and development in nuclear science and technology.
- Advanced materials for radiation detectors.
- Radiation safety and nuclear security.
- Non-power applications of atomic energy.
- Cooperation on radio-pharmaceuticals.
- Strengthening collaboration in the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER).

## Indian Railways Deploys Humanoid Robot

- Indian Railways has deployed a humanoid robot named 'ASC ARJUN' at Visakhapatnam Railway Station.
- ASC ARJUN is a humanoid robot that works with the Railway Protection Force (RPF) for security, surveillance and assistance at the station.
- The technology, designed and developed indigenously by the Indian Railways' dedicated technology team, has been implemented in Visakhapatnam.
- **Enhance safety and security of passengers at a busy station.**
- Optimise manpower by taking over routine patrolling and monitoring tasks so RPF staff can focus on critical work.

## Buddhist Diamond Triangle

- Context: Odisha's **Buddhist Diamond Triangle – Lalitgiri, Udayagiri, and Ratnagiri** – has been added to India's Tentative List for World Heritage Sites.
- The three sites form interconnected monastic complexes located in Jajpur and Cuttack districts of Odisha.
- These sites are unique because they document 1,500 years of continuous history, showcasing the transition of Buddhism through three major schools.

### The sites uniquely showcase all three major Buddhist traditions

- Theravada (Hinayana)
- Mahayana
- Vajrayana (Esoteric Buddhism)

## Study Team to Enhance Tamil Nadu

### Farmer Producer Organizations

- **Context:** The Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has constituted a high-level study team to review and improve the functioning of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) in Tamil Nadu, including those involved in banana, turmeric, and coconut cultivation.
- The team will provide recommendations on ways to increase the efficiency, number, and utilization of FPOs in Tamil Nadu.
- The team includes representatives from NABARD, National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation, Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (Tamil Nadu), ICAR National Research Centre for Banana, non-governmental organizations, and central government officials.
- The central government has stated that the final report must be submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare within two months.

### Farmer Producer Organization

- FPO is a producer organization whose members are farmers, and its development is supported by the Small Farmers Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC).
- FPOs were created in 2008, based on the recommendation for amendment to the Companies Act given by economist Y.K. Alagh in 2002.
- FPOs can be registered under the Companies Act, Societies Registration Act, or Indian Trusts Act.

## SAMPANN-UMANG Integration

- **Context:** The SAMPANN pension management system has been integrated with the UMANG platform.
- The objective of the SAMPANN and UMANG integration is to enable pensioners to access all their pension-related information easily, clearly, and seamlessly on a single integrated digital platform

### SAMPANN

- SAMPANN is a **digital pension management platform launched in 2018**.
- It helps in digitally managing all activities of the pension life cycle, including registration, processing, disbursement, and grievance redressal.
- It has been **developed by the Controller of Communication Accounts office**.
- **Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and BSNL** pensioners are the users of the SAMPANN platform.

### UMANG

- **UMANG is a mobile application and web portal launched in 2017**.
- It allows citizens to access hundreds of services of the Central and State Governments in one place.
- Developed as part of the **Digital India initiative**.
- It has been developed by the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and the National e-Governance Division (NeGD)**.
- Users can access government services in an integrated manner without having to download multiple applications.

## PANCHAM

- **Context:** The Union Minister of State for Panchayati Raj launched the PANCHAM - Panchayat Assistance and Messaging Chatbot.

### About PANCHAM

- A flagship digital initiative aimed at empowering Panchayat Elected Representatives and Functionaries.
- Acts as a digital companion for Panchayats, supporting day-to-day governance and service delivery.
- Provides timely, contextual guidance, simplified workflows, and easy access to official information.

### Features of PANCHAM

- Establishes a first-of-its-kind direct link between the Government of India and Panchayat representatives nationwide.
- Integrated with BHASHINI. Supports 22 Indian languages, enabling interaction in local languages.
- Citizens can access PANCHAM via a QR-code-based entry system.
- Panchayat officials can **send feedback, ask questions, and flag local issues** directly to the Ministry.
- Enables the Ministry to **directly share circulars, advisories, key messages, and updates.**
- Promotes **faster decision-making, quicker resolution of field-level issues, and stronger feedback loops** between grassroots institutions and policymakers.

## WaSH Warriors

- **Context:** Ministry of Jal Shakti honoured WaSH Warriors at a Samvad Samaroh in New Delhi.

- WaSH Warriors are grassroots champions from rural communities, they lead efforts in Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WaSH). They work under Jal Jeevan Mission and allied programmes.

### Aim

- Promote safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene through community ownership (Jan Bhagidari)
- Ensure inclusive, equitable, and sustainable WaSH outcomes
- Focus on **women and vulnerable groups**

## PAIMANA Portal

- **Context:** The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has operationalised a new web-based portal, PAIMANA portal for the mandated monitoring of Central Sector Infrastructure Projects worth RS.150 crore.

- **Project Assessment, Infrastructure Monitoring & Analytics for Nation-building (PAIMANA)** acts as a centralized national repository of infrastructure projects, it also enhances **data accuracy, operational efficiency, and analytical reporting.**

- Monitoring of Central Sector Infrastructure Projects with a cost of Rs.150 crore or more.

### Centralized Project Monitoring:

- Single-window interface for uploading, tracking, and reviewing project information
- Accessible to **ministries, departments, and implementing agencies**

### Real-time Dashboards:

- Provides real-time monitoring of project progress

- Drill-down capabilities across **sectors, states, and timelines**
- Free oxo-biodegradable sanitary napkins, preferably via vending machines in toilets.

### **Advanced Data Analytics**

- Role-based user access
- Interactive dashboards and reporting modules
- Enables review cases for **identifying data gaps**

### **Menstrual Health as a Fundamental Right**

- **Context:** The Supreme Court held that the right to menstrual health and access to menstrual hygiene management (MHM) is part of the right to life and dignity under Article 21 of the Constitution.
- Denial of MHM facilities subjects menstruating girls to stigma, humiliation, and exclusion, undermining their dignity and equality.
- Inadequate MHM facilities were held to violate privacy, bodily autonomy, and decisional freedom of students.
- MHM includes autonomy, privacy, access to water, and hygienic disposal, not just basic sanitation.
- The right to life under Article 21 includes the right to menstrual health.
- The right to free and compulsory education under Article 21A includes supply of free sanitary napkins in schools.
- State and Union Territory governments were directed to provide free sanitary napkins to girl students in government and private schools in rural and urban areas across the country.

### **States and UTs must ensure**

- Functional, gender-segregated toilets in all schools.

- Establishment of 'MHM corners' with spare innerwear, uniforms, disposal bags, and essentials.

### **Ramsar Network**

- **Context:** The Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change announced the inclusion of two new wetlands in India's Ramsar network.
- **New Ramsar Sites:** Patna Bird Sanctuary in Etah district, Uttar Pradesh, and Chari-Dhand in Kutch district, Gujarat.
- The new wetlands serve as habitats for hundreds of resident birds, threatened bird species, and wildlife such as Chinkara, wolves, caracal, desert cats, and desert foxes.

### **India - Ramsar Sites**

- India is a signatory to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (1971, Iran). India acceded to it on February 1, 1982.
- India's Ramsar sites increased from 26 in 2014 to 96 in 2025, with two more new sites to be added.
- Tamil Nadu received its first Ramsar recognition in 2002 for the Kodiakkarai Wildlife and Bird Sanctuary.
- Tamil Nadu has 20 Ramsar sites and continues to be the state with the highest number of Ramsar sites in India.

### **LNG-Diesel Dual Fuel Diesel Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) Train**

- **Context:** A significant milestone has been achieved in sustainable and environmentally friendly transportation by operating the

country's first LNG-diesel dual-fuel Diesel Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) train.

- In this system, approximately 40% of the diesel fuel has been replaced by LNG.

### **LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas)**

- This is natural gas that has been cooled and liquefied.
- This reduces its volume by 600 times, making transportation easier.
- It contains 85–95% methane and some ethane, propane, and butane compounds.
- India's first commercial LNG bus was launched in Kerala.

### **Coking Coal Notified as a Critical & Strategic Mineral**

- Context: The Government of India has notified coking coal as a Critical and Strategic Mineral under the MMDR Act, 1957. The move aims to strengthen the domestic steel sector and support the visions of Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Viksit Bharat 2047.

### **About Coking Coal**

- A high-grade bituminous coal that converts into coke when heated without air.
- Essential raw material for steelmaking (blast furnaces).
- Higher carbon, lower moisture, and lower sulphur and phosphorus than non-coking coal.
- Distinguished by plasticity and swelling (caking index), unlike thermal coal which only burns.

Over 90% located in Jharkhand's Jharia coalfield.

### **Mission Coking Coal 2030**

- The Ministry of Coal launched it in 2021 to increase domestic coking coal production to 140 MT by 2030.

### **About Critical Minerals**

- Minerals essential for economic development and national security, with high supply-chain vulnerability.
- In 2023, the Ministry of Mines identified 30 critical minerals, including lithium, cobalt, nickel, graphite, copper, and rare earth elements (REEs).

### **Pragya-AIX**

- **Context:** India's largest energy explorer ONGC (Oil and Natural Gas) has taken a decisive step towards embedding artificial intelligence into everyday operations.
- A new digital platform now brings multiple AI tools under one ecosystem, aiming to improve efficiency, safety and output across oil and gas operations.
- **Pragya-AIX** is a centralized digital platform that brings together ONGC's AI applications into one integrated system.
- The platform creates a **working AI ecosystem** that supports day-to-day decision-making across ONGC's work centres.

## NATIONAL SCHEMES

### Sudarshan Chakra Project

- This is a flagship national security project of DRDO that will protect India's critical resources and population from **aerial, missile, drone, and hypersonic attacks by 2035** with an AI-enabled, indigenous multi-layered defense shield.
- Like Israel's 'Iron Dome', it will integrate satellite surveillance, missile interception, and laser weapons.

### SAMPANN

- This is an integrated online pension management system for pensioners of the telecommunications department.
- It facilitates the processing, sanctioning, and disbursement of pensions directly into the pensioners' bank accounts, all on a single platform.

### Design Linked Incentive (DLI) Scheme

- This scheme is being implemented by the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology under the Semicon India program.**
- Under this scheme, a robust and self-reliant chip design ecosystem will be promoted by providing financial incentives along with advanced design infrastructure to **domestic startups and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).**

### India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)

- **Launched in 2021**, this mission aims to make India a **global electronics manufacturing**

**hub** and increase India's participation in the semiconductor value chain.

- It is implemented by the **Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY).**

### Tex-RAMPS Scheme

- **Context :**The Ministry of Textiles signed MoUs with 15 States under the Tex-RAMPS scheme. Agreements were signed during the national textile ministers conference held in Guwahati.
- To Strengthen data-driven policymaking and promote coordinated development of the textile sector across States.

### Tex-RAMPS:

- Stands for **Textiles focused Research, Assessment, Monitoring, Planning and Start-Up.**
- Aims to improve the **coverage, quality, timeliness, and credibility** of textile-related statistics and research.

### SAMUDRAYAAN

- India's **first manned deep-sea mission**, 'Samudrayaan', is getting ready to be launched soon.
- In this project, the indigenously developed '**Matsya 6000**' submersible will be used to conduct research at depths of up to 6,000 meters.

### Pradhan Mantri-Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana

- The **Union Ministry of Agriculture** has proposed to **merge three separate ongoing schemes** with its **flagship Pradhan Mantri-Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana.**

### **About Pradhan Mantri-Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana**

- Launched in 2007, it focuses on incentivizing states to increase public investment in **agriculture and allied sectors**.
- It is a **Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS)** operating under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- It is aimed at **accelerating agricultural growth and improving farmers' income**.
- The scheme adopts a **decentralized approach**, granting flexibility to states in designing programs based on local needs, ensuring sustainable agricultural practices and better livelihoods for farming communities across India.

### **10 years of Start-up India**

- **Context: On January 16, 2026 (National Start-up Day)**, the Prime Minister of India addressed the start-up ecosystem on the **10th anniversary of the Start-up India** scheme, launched on January 16, 2016.
- Nearly **44,000 start-ups registered in 2025** – the **highest annual addition** since the launch of Start-up India.
- The number of unicorns has surged from 4 in 2014 to nearly 125 active ones by 2025.
- India is now the 3rd-largest start-up ecosystem in the world, according to the Prime Minister.

### **About Startup India Initiative**

- Launched on **16th January 2016**, the Start-up India Initiative aims to **support entrepreneurs, strengthen the start-up ecosystem**, and shift India from a **job-seeking to a job-creating economy**.

- The Start-up India Initiative is implemented by a dedicated Start-up India team under the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**.

### **Offshore Fish Farming Project**

- **Context:** The first-of-its-kind offshore fish farming project in the country has been launched in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The **Union Minister of Science, Technology and Earth Sciences** inaugurated the project on January 18, 2026.
- The project is being implemented jointly by the Ministry of Earth Sciences, the **National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT)**, and the **Andaman and Nicobar Union Territory** administration.
- Under this project, large cages will be set up in the open sea to cultivate sea bass.
- Seaweed cultivation will also be undertaken on an **experimental basis**.
- The objective is to explore **India's vast marine resources** and enhance the country's development through the blue economy.

### **Sukanya Samridhi Yojana**

- **Context:** As the SSY completes 11 years on 22 January 2026, it stands as a testament to the collective faith of millions of families in the promise of their daughters.

### **Sukanya Samridhi Yojana**

- The Sukanya Samridhi Yojana was launched with the aim of ensuring the education and future financial security of girl children.
- It is a key savings scheme launched and implemented on **January 22, 2015**, under the 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' program, as it is

government-backed, it is a safe and reliable investment.

- The high interest rate of 8.2% offers excellent returns for long-term savings.
- The opening of millions of accounts demonstrates the public's trust in and acceptance of the scheme.
- This scheme serves as a social transformation initiative that empowers girl children to become economically self-reliant.

**and support grassroots entrepreneurs across the country.**

- Railway stations are being used to **showcase India's rich regional diversity of resources.**

### **One Station, One Product Scheme**

- This scheme was launched on March 25, 2022. It integrates local heritage with the **national railway network, enhancing the passenger experience and supporting economic growth.**

### **Eliminating Malaria by 2030**

- **Context:** Under the **National Framework for Malaria Elimination (2016–2030)**, India targets zero indigenous malaria cases by 2030, with nationwide **transmission interruption by 2027.**

- **160 districts** across **23 States/UTs** reported zero indigenous cases between 2022–2024, indicating widespread transmission interruption progress (MoHFW).

- Malaria incidence fell by **nearly 80%** between **2015 and 2023** nationwide.

- Tamil Nadu cases declined from **5,587 (2015) to 321 (2025).**

- **Rapid urbanisation** increases breeding sites, with urban areas accounting for a rising proportion of reported malaria cases annually.

### **About Malaria**

- Malaria is a **mosquito-borne infectious disease** that affects humans and other animals.

- It is caused by single-celled microorganisms of the **Plasmodium group of protozoans**

- Infected **female Anopheles mosquitoes** transmit Plasmodium parasites through bites. The parasites **multiply in the liver and destroy red blood cells (RBCs).**

### **Atal Pension Yojana**

- **Context:** The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister, has approved the continuation of the Atal Pension Yojana (APY) till the financial year 2030-31 and has also approved extending financial support for filling the funding gap and for outreach and development activities.
- This ensures old-age income security for millions of low-income workers.

### **Atal Pension Yojana**

- **Launch:** The APY scheme was launched on May 9, 2015, with the objective of providing old-age income security to workers in the unorganized sector.

- **Scheme Features:** The APY scheme provides a guaranteed minimum pension of Rs.1,000 to Rs.5,000 per month from the age of 60, based on subscriber contributions.

### **One Station, One Product Scheme**

- Through the Indian Railways' 'One Station, One Product' scheme, direct economic opportunities have been provided to more than 1.32 lakh passengers daily since 2022.

- This is an initiative to **promote local artisans**

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### International Mind–Body Wellness Day

- International Mind–Body Wellness Day is observed annually on **January 3**.
- To spread awareness about the deep connection between mental health and physical health and promote preventive healthcare practices.

### National Bird Day

- National Bird Day 2026 will be observed on **January 5**.
- To highlight the ecological importance of birds and the urgent need for conservation.
- **Salim Ali is fondly known as the “Birdman of India.”**

### World Braille Day

- World Braille Day, is observed on **January 4**.
- It highlights the importance of Braille in ensuring education, equality, and dignity for persons with visual impairments.
- It is celebrated in commemoration of the birthday of Louis Braille, the creator of the Braille writing system.

### World Day of War Orphans

- World Day of War Orphans is observed every year on **January 6**.
- To highlight the hardships faced by children who lose parents in wars.

### Earth’s Rotation Day 2026

- Earth's Rotation Day 2026 is observed on **January 8**.
- It marks 175 years of Léon Foucault's pendulum experiment proving Earth's rotation.

### Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)

- It is observed every year on **January 9** to recognise and celebrate the invaluable contribution of the **Overseas Indian community to India’s** development.
- It is also known as **Non-Resident Indian (NRI) Day**.
- It marks the return of Mahatma Gandhi to India from South Africa on January 9, 1915, a moment that later shaped India’s freedom struggle.

### World Hindi Day

- **World Hindi Day 2026** (also known as **Vishwa Hindi Diwas**) is observed every year on **January 10**.
- It is celebrated globally to promote **Hindi at the international level**.

### National Youth Day 2026

- National Youth Day is observed every year on **January 12**, the birthday of Swami Vivekananda.

### World Tamil Diaspora Day 2026

- **January 12** was celebrated as World Tamil diaspora Day every year.
- Theme 2026: ‘**Thamizhal Inaivom, Dharaniyil Uyarvom**’

### Lokpal Foundation Day

- **Context:** Lokpal of India observed its **Foundation Day on 16 January 2026**, marking 12 years since its establishment under the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013.

### About Lokpal of India

- A **statutory, independent anti-corruption ombudsman at the Union level**.

- Created under the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013.

- Came into force on 16 January 2014 through commencement of Section 3 of the Act.

- It consists of a Chairperson and up to eight Members.

- Chairperson and the members are appointed by the President of India on the recommendation of a statutory Selection Committee.

- The current Chairperson of the Lokpal of India is Justice Ajay Manikrao Khanwilkar.

### **Kokborok Day 2026**

- Kokborok Day, also known as Tripuri Language Day, is observed on January 19 in Tripura to celebrate the Kokborok language.

- The day marks its recognition as an official language in 1979 and highlights efforts to preserve tribal culture, literature and linguistic identity.

### **Rising Day of the National Disaster Response Force**

- January 19, 2026, marks the 21st Raising Day of the National Disaster Response Force, completing 20 years since its establishment.

- NDRF is a specialised Indian paramilitary force created for response to natural & man-made disasters.

- It was created in 2006 under the Disaster Management Act of 2005.

- The NDRF functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs and is administered by the National Disaster Management Authority.

### **Tripura, Manipur and Meghalaya Foundation Day**

- Tripura, Manipur and Meghalaya Foundation Day 2026 is being observed on 21 January, completing 54 years since statehood.

- The day recalls the implementation of the North Eastern Areas Reorganisation Act, 1971, which reshaped India's north eastern administrative structure.

### **Parakram Diwas 2026**

- Parakram Diwas 2026 is observed on 23 January to remember and honour Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

- The day encourages people to stand up for truth, work hard for the nation, and remain united.

### **International Day of Education**

- The International Day of Education, proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2018, is officially observed on January 24.

- In 2026, it will be celebrated with the theme "The Power of Youth in Co-creating Education".

### **National Girl Child Day**

- The National Girl Child Day, declared by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in 2008, is officially observed on January 24.

- In 2026, it is celebrated with the theme "Empower Every Daughter, Build a Stronger India".

### **Uttar Pradesh Statehood Day (UP Diwas)**

- It is celebrated annually on January 24 to mark the renaming of the region from "United Provinces" to Uttar Pradesh in 1950.

### International Customs Day

- **International Customs Day (ICD)** is celebrated every year on **26 January** to acknowledge the vital contribution of customs authorities in managing international trade and safeguarding borders.

### National Voters' Day

- It is observed on **January 25th** across India every year since 2011 to commemorate the foundation day of the Election Commission of India.
- **Theme:** The theme for National Voters' Day 2026 is "**My India, My Vote**" with a tagline of "**Citizen at the Heart of Indian Democracy**".

### Language Martyrs' Day

- **Language Martyrs' Day** is observed on **January 25th** in Tamil Nadu to commemorate those who sacrificed their lives in the anti-Hindi agitation.
- This day is also celebrated as a state event under the name 'Tamil Language Martyrs' Day'.

### Anti-Hindi Agitation

- On April 21, 1938, the Chief Minister of Madras Presidency, C. Rajagopalachari, issued a government order making **Hindi a compulsory subject in 125 high schools**.
- Several Tamil organizations, led by **Periyar E.V. Ramasamy**, protested through black flag demonstrations and picketing.
- During the agitation, **L.Natarajan** and **Thalamuthu** died in prison.
- Due to public opposition, the **compulsory Hindi order was withdrawn in February 1940**.

### Himachal Pradesh State Day

- Himachal Pradesh Day is observed every year on **January 24th**.
- According to the Himachal Pradesh State Act of 1970, it attained full statehood on January 25, 1971, becoming the **18th state of India**.

### World Leprosy Day

- World Leprosy Day is observed on the **last Sunday of January**. This day was initiated in **1954 by Raoul Follereau**.
- In 2026, it will be observed on **January 25th**.
- **Theme:** "Leprosy is curable, but stigma remains the real challenge".

### World Environmental Education Day

- World Environmental Education Day is observed on January 26.
- **Theme:** "Ending Plastic Pollution."

### International Day of Clean Energy

- The International Day of Clean Energy was observed on **January 26, 2026**.
- Theme: "Clean Energy for People and the Planet".

### National Tourism Day

- National Tourism Day is observed every year on **January 25th in India**.
- The theme for 2026 is 'Sustainable Journeys, Unforgettable Memories'.

### National Geographic Day

- **National Geographic Day 2026** is observed on **27 January** to celebrate exploration, geography, science, wildlife, and environmental conservation.

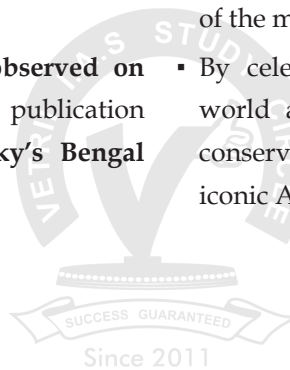
- The day promotes awareness about global challenges such as climate change, habitat loss, and wildlife conservation, reminding people that understanding the planet is essential to protecting its future.
- It was **India's first newspaper** and played a pioneering role in challenging authority and promoting freedom of expression.

### **Martyrs' Day**

- **Martyrs' Day 2026** is observed on **January 30** to commemorate the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
  - **Martyrs Day**, also known as **Shaheed Diwas**, commemorates the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi on January 30, 1948.
- International Data Privacy Day**
- International Data Privacy Day, observed on **28 January**, has once again brought data protection into the national spotlight.
  - The day reminds governments and citizens that privacy is central to trust in digital systems.
  - The theme for 2026 is 'Take Control of Your Data'.

### **International Zebra Day**

- Indian Newspaper Day**
- **Indian Newspaper Day 2026**, observed on **29 January**, commemorates the publication of India's first newspaper, **Hicky's Bengal Gazette**.
  - International Zebra Day is observed every year on **31 January** to spread awareness about one of the most unique animals on Earth the zebra.
  - By celebrating this day, people across the world are encouraged to understand zebra conservation and support efforts to save this iconic African animal.



## REPORTS & INDICES

### Employment and Social Trends 2026 Report

- Recently, the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** released its latest **World Employment and Social Outlook (WESO)** Report highlighting persistent inequalities in the global labour market.
- Projected to remain at a **historically low 4.9%**, affecting about **186 million people** worldwide.
- Over **two billion workers** globally remain in informal jobs.
- Between 2015 and 2025, extreme working poverty declined by only 3.1 percentage points (to 7.9%), compared to a 15 percentage-point decline in the previous decade.

### About the International Labour Organization (ILO)

- **Founded:** 1919; became the first specialized UN agency in 1946.
- **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland.
- **Other Key Flagship Reports Published by the ILO**
  - Global Wage Report
  - Global Employment Trends for Youth
  - Social Protection Reports
  - World Social Protection Report.

### Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2024

- NITI Aayog has released the **Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2024** to assess how ready **Indian States and UTs** are to drive India's export-led growth.
- It highlights the role of **States and districts in driving exports, jobs, and global value chain**

integration, with emphasis on infrastructure, competitiveness, and cluster-led strategies.

- The **top-performing Large States** are **Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu (2nd place), Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh.**
- The leading Small States, North-Eastern States, and Union Territories include **Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir, Nagaland, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, and Goa.**

### The Global Risks Report 2026

- **Context: The World Economic Forum** released the Global Risks Report 2026, based on the Global Risks Perception Survey of over 1300 global experts, highlighting **geo-economics confrontation as the most severe near term global risk.**
- It evaluates **33 global risks across 2-year (short-term) and 10-year (long-term) time horizons.**

### Highlights of the Report

- **Cybersecurity is the top risk for India in 2026**, reflecting dependence on digital governance, fintech, and critical digital infrastructure.
- **Income and wealth inequality is the second biggest risk** for India, highlighting social and regional disparities.

### About World Economic Forum (WEF)

- It is an **inter public-private cooperation body.** Founded in 1971.
- It is **headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.**
- **Other reports published by the WEF**
  - Global Competitiveness Report
  - Global Gender Gap Report
  - Energy Transition Index
  - Global Risk Report.

## NITI Aayog Report on MSME Scheme Convergence

- **Context:** In January 2026, NITI Aayog released a report proposing **convergence of MSME schemes** to reduce duplication, improve efficiency and strengthen last mile delivery.
- **Title: Achieving Efficiencies in MSME Sector through Convergence of Schemes**
- Prepared by **Administrative Staff College of India**
- Analyses **18 centrally administered MSME schemes**
- Recommends **information convergence and process convergence**

- **Information convergence:** Integrating government-generated data at central and state levels to improve coordination, informed decision-making, etc. **E.g.,** PM Gati Shakti integrates 16 Central Ministries.
- **Process convergence:** Merging similar schemes, combining common components, and fostering collaboration across ministries and states. **E.g.,** Unified central sector scheme Vigyan Dhara under Department of Science and Technology acts as an umbrella scheme covering three broad components.

### Key facts of MSME sector

- MSMEs contribute around **29-30% of India's**

GDP, underscoring their role as growth engines.

- The sector employs over **28.7 crore people, second only to agriculture** in workforce absorption.

- MSMEs account for about **45-46% of India's exports**, despite only **~1% being direct exporters**.

## NITI Aayog Reports

- **Context:** NITI Aayog released three reports on "**Promoting Circular Economy in End-of-Life Vehicles, Waste Tyres, E-waste and Lithium-ion Batteries in India**".

- The reports examined the challenges and pathways for progress in India's circular economy landscape.

- The recommendations focus on infrastructure development, sector-specific regulations, **improvement of EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility), and revenue generation**.

- A low-carbon, resource-efficient growth path is essential to achieve the **Viksit Bharat goal by 2047**, in which electrical appliances, EV vehicles, and lithium batteries will play a key role.

- **India has set a target of 30%** of total vehicle sales to be **electric vehicles by 2030**.

## BOOKS & AUTHORS

- The **People of Gopallapuram**, journalist Shubashree Desikan's translation of Ki. Rajanarayanan's **Gopallapurathu Makkal**.

- The Vice President of India, **Shri C.P.Radhakrishnan**, released a new book titled "**Chalice of Ambrosia: Ram Janmabhoomi - Challenge and Response**". The book is written by **Shri Surendra Kumar Pachauri**, a former Secretary to the Government of India.

## AWARDS & HONOURS

### Wiley Research Heroes Prize

- **Chandrakant Lahariya**, former staff member of WHO, has won the Wiley Research Heroes Prize 2025. Dr. Lahariya is the first and only Indian so far to win this prize
- These awards highlight individuals who ensure that research is inclusive, innovative, and impactful. He won in the category of “Impact Beyond Academia” prize this year.

### Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace

- **Mozambican** rights activist and humanitarian **Graca Machel** has been selected for the **Indira**

**Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2025.**

- Ms. Machel was chosen for her “**path-breaking work**” in the fields of **education, health and nutrition, economic empowerment and humanitarian action, carried out under difficult circumstances.**

### Padma Awards

- **Context:** The Centre on Sunday announced Padma honours for 2026, with five **Padma Vibhushan, 13 Padma Bhushan, and 113 Padma Shri awards.** The recipients include eight personalities from Kerala, 11 from West Bengal, and **13 from Tamil Nadu.**

### Padma Vibhushan Winners 2026

| NAMES                              | FIELD                  | STATE         |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| Dharmendra Singh Deol (Posthumous) | Art                    | Maharashtra   |
| K T Thomas                         | Public Affairs         | Kerala        |
| Ms. N. Rajam                       | Art                    | Uttar Pradesh |
| P. Narayanan                       | Literature & Education | Kerala        |
| V. S. Achuthanandhan (Posthumous)  | Public Affairs         | Kerala        |

### Padma Bhushan Winners 2026

| NAMES                         | FIELD              | STATE                    |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Ms. Alka Yagnik               | Art                | Maharashtra              |
| Bhagat Singh Koshyari         | Public Affairs     | Uttarakhand              |
| <b>K. R. Palaniswamy</b>      | <b>Medicine</b>    | <b>Tamil Nadu</b>        |
| Mammootty                     | Art                | Kerala                   |
| Dr. Nori Dattatreyudu         | Medicine           | United States of America |
| Piyush Pandey (Posthumous)    | Art                | Maharashtra              |
| <b>S. K. M. Maeilanandhan</b> | <b>Social Work</b> | <b>Tamil Nadu</b>        |
| Shatavadhani R. Ganesh        | Art                | Karnataka                |
| Shibu Soren (Posthumous)      | Public Affairs     | Jharkhand                |
| Uday Kotak                    | Trade & Industry   | Maharashtra              |
| V. K. Malhotra (Posthumous)   | Public Affairs     | Delhi                    |
| Vellappally Natesan           | Public Affairs     | Kerala                   |
| Vijay Amritraj                | Sports             | United States of America |

**Padma Shri Winners 2026**

| NAMES   | FIELD                    | STATE          |
|---|--------------------------|----------------|
| Ms. Gayatri Balasubramanian & Ms. Ranjani Balasubramanian (Duo) | Art                      | Tamil Nadu     |
| H V Hande   | Medicine                 | Tamil Nadu     |
| K Ramasamy  | Science and Engineering  | Tamil Nadu     |
| K Vijay Kumar   | Civil Service            | Tamil Nadu     |
| Othuvaar Thiruthani Swaminathan                                 | Art                      | Tamil Nadu     |
| Dr. Punniamurthy Natesan  | Medicine                 | Tamil Nadu     |
| R Krishnan (Posthumous)   | Art                      | Tamil Nadu     |
| Rajastapathi Kaliappa Goundar                                   | Art                      | Tamil Nadu     |
| Ms. Sivasankari   | Literature and Education | Tamil Nadu     |
| Thiruvaarur Bakthavathsalam                                     | Art                      | Tamil Nadu     |
| Veezhinathan Kamakoti   | Science and Engineering  | Tamil Nadu     |
| K Pajanivel   | Sports                   | Puducherry     |
| Madhavan Ranganathan  | Art                      | Maharashtra    |
| Baldev Singh  | Sports                   | Punjab         |
| Bhagwandas Raikwar  | Sports                   | Madhya Pradesh |
| Praveen Kumar   | Sports                   | Uttar Pradesh  |
| Rohit Sharma  | Sports                   | Maharashtra    |
| Ms. Harmanpreet Kaur Bhullar                                    | Sports                   | Punjab         |
| Ms. Savita Punia  | Sports                   | Haryana        |
| Vladimer Mestvirishvili (Posthumous)                            | Sports                   | Georgia        |

**Ashoka Chakra Award**

- Ms. Murmu conferring India's highest peacetime gallantry award, Ashoka Chakra, on Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla for being the first Indian to set foot on the International Space Station.
- The Ashoka Chakra is awarded for the most conspicuous bravery or some act of daring or pre-eminent act of valour or self-sacrifice otherwise than in the face of the enemy.

**Republic Day Parade 2026 awards**

- First Place - Maharashtra.** Tableau: "Ganeshotsav: A Symbol of Aatmanirbharta", Highlighted cultural self-reliance and local

traditions aligned with Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

- Second Place - Jammu & Kashmir.** Tableau: "Handicrafts and Folk Dances of J&K", Showcased regional heritage, traditional crafts, and vibrant folk culture.
- Third Place - Kerala.** Tableau: "Water Metro & 100% Digital Literacy", Linked technological innovation with inclusive and sustainable development.
- The **Indian Navy** was adjudged the Best Marching Contingent, praised for discipline and synchronization.
- The **Ministry of Culture** won the award for Best Tableau among Central Ministries for "Vande Mataram - The Soul Cry of a Nation".

## EMINENT PERSONALITIES

### Savitribai Phule

- Born on **January 3, 1831**, in Naigaon village, **Satara district, Maharashtra**.
- In 1848, along with her **husband Jyotirao Phule**, she started the first school for girls in **Bhidewada, Maharashtra**.
- She is hailed as India's first female teacher.
- In **1852**, she established the '**Mahila Seva Mandal**' organization.
- In 1863, she started the **Balhatya Pratibandhak Griha (Home for Prevention of Infanticide)**.
- In 1852, the British government awarded her the '**Best Teacher Award**'.
- In 1998, the Government of India issued a **postage stamp** in her honour.
- In **2015**, **Pune University** was renamed after her.

### Veeramangai Rani Velu Nachiyar

- Born: **January 3, 1730, Ramanathapuram**
- Parents: Father – **Sellamuthu Vijayaragunatha Sethupathi**, Mother – **Sakkanthi Muthaathal Nachiyar**.
- From a young age, she mastered martial arts such as **swordsmanship, archery, spear throwing, and horse riding**.
- In 1746, she married **Muthuvaduganatha, the king of Sivaganga**.
- Key event: In 1772, **Muthuvaduganatha** died a heroic death in the **Kalaiyar Kovil battle against the British**.
- Struggle against the British: She fought with the support of **Hyder Ali, Tipu Sultan, and**

**Dindigul Gopal Nayakkar**. In 1780, she recaptured the Sivaganga kingdom from the British.

- She ruled the Sivaganga kingdom effectively for 16 years.
- The "**first Indian female freedom fighter**" to oppose the British.
- **Died:** December 25, 1796

### Veerapandiya Kattabomman

- Kattabomman was born on **January 3, 1760**.
- His father was **Jagaveera Pandiyan**, his mother was **Arumugathammal**, his wife was **Jakkammal**, and his brothers were **Oomathurai (Kumarasamy) and Sevathaiah**.
- The British forces defeated Kattabomman in the **Battle of Kollarpatti**. Later, Kattabomman was captured from the **Kalappur forest** by the **king of Pudukkottai, Vijaya Raghunatha Thondaiman**, and handed over to the British.
- Kattabomman was hanged at **Kayathar** on **October 16, 1799**.

### Madhav Gadgil

- He was born in **Pune, Maharashtra, in 1942**.
- He played a key role in shaping **India's ecological research and conservation policy**.
- He established the **Centre for Ecological Sciences at Indian Institute of Science in Bengaluru**.
- In 2024, the United Nations awarded him the '**Champions of the Earth**' award, which is the **UN's highest environmental award**.

### Gadgil Commission 2011

- **Madhav Gadgil** chaired the **Western Ghats Expert Panel** constituted by the Central Government.

- This committee studied population pressure, climate change, and development activities in the Western Ghats region.
- The report recommended a ban on development and commercial activities such as mining, thermal power plants, environmentally polluting industries, and large housing projects in the **Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA)** zones.
- She embarked on her **first space mission in 2006** aboard the Discovery space shuttle.
- In 2012, she undertook her second space mission, spending 127 days in space.
- In **June 2024**, she traveled aboard the **Boeing Starliner spacecraft and spent 286 days** in space.
- She has performed a **total of 62 hours and 6 minutes of spacewalks**, holding the world record for the longest cumulative spacewalk time by a woman.

### Tiruppur Kumaran

- He was born on **October 4, 1904, in Chennimalai, Erode** district.
- He founded the **Desh Bandhu Youth Association** and led protests against the British.
- On **January 11, 1932**, he died from injuries sustained during a police attack on the **banks of the Noyyal River in Tiruppur**, during a protest rally against the British government.
- At the time of his death, he was carrying the flag of the Indian nationalists, which had been banned by the British.
- This is why he earned the nickname '**Kodi Kaatha Kumaran**' (Kumaran who protected the flag).
- To commemorate his **100th birthday**, the Indian Postal Department issued a commemorative **postage stamp in October 2004**.
- Sunita Williams also holds the distinction of being the **first person to run a marathon in space**.

### Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

- Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was born on **January 23, 1897, in Cuttack, Odisha**.
- He completed his B.A. at Calcutta University and secured the **fourth position in the ICS examination in 1920**.
- Under the guidance of **Chittaranjan Das**, he joined the Congress and participated in the freedom struggle.
- He was elected as the President of the Indian National Congress in 1938 (Haripura) and 1939 (Tripuri).
- He formed the **Forward Bloc party in 1939**.
- In 1941, he went to Germany and established the Free India Centre and the Indian Legion.
- On October 21, 1943, Subhas Chandra Bose announced the formation of the **Provisional Government of Free India in Singapore**.
- On **July 6, 1944**, he addressed **Mahatma Gandhi as the Father of the Nation**.

### Sunita Williams

- Sunita Williams, an **American astronaut of Indian origin**, has officially retired after 27 years of service at NASA.
- During her career, Sunita Williams set a record by **spending a total of 608 days in space**.
- She participated in **three space missions and conducted numerous scientific experiments at the International Space Station**.

## SPORTS & GAMES

### National Mountaineering Championship 2025

- Amira Gosla (14) won the gold medal in the Under-17 girls' category at the 29th National Sport Climbing Championship 2025, held in Bengaluru from December 26 to 29.

### India's First Triathlon Competition

- Background:** India's first "Ironman 5i50 Triathlon" and "Duosca Duathlon" competitions were flagged off by the Deputy Chief Minister near MGM Beach Resort on the East Coast Road in Chennai.
- Designed based on the Olympic distance (51.50 km), the competition included a 40 km cycling race and a 10 km running race.

### Vijay Hazare Trophy

- Vidarbha achieved a landmark milestone in Indian domestic cricket by winning their maiden Vijay Hazare Trophy.
- The team defeated Saurashtra in the final at Bengaluru.

### Khelo India Winter Games 2026

- Context:** The 6th Khelo India Winter Games 2026 commenced in Leh, Ladakh. Snow sports

events are being held in Leh, and skiing events in Gulmarg.

- Figure skating has been introduced for the first time.
- In women's ice hockey, the ITBP team defeated the Ladakh team 2-1 to win the gold medal.
- In men's 1,000 meters long track skating, Avik Shith Vijay Viswanathan of Tamil Nadu won silver, and M. Selvakumar won bronze.
- In women's 1,000 meters long track skating, Tamil Nadu won the silver medal.

### Khelo India Winter Games

- It is conducted by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and the Sports Authority of India.
- The Khelo India scheme was launched in 2016-17 and encompasses three schemes: RGKA, USIS, and NSTSS.

### National Kabaddi Championship

- Haryana bagged the gold medal at the 72nd women's senior National kabaddi championship, beating defending champion Indian Railways.
- Himachal Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, the two losing semifinalists, took home the bronze medals.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### World's Oldest Known Rock Art

- Context:** Archaeologists discovered the world's oldest known rock art in Liang Metanduno cave on Muna Island, Indonesia.
- The artwork is a hand stencil in which the

fingers were deliberately narrowed to resemble a claw-like or animal feature.

- Uranium-series dating indicates the calcium carbonate layer covering the artwork is at least 67,800 years old.
- This finding surpasses the previous 51,200-year-old record for a wild pig painting discovered in Leang Karampuang cave in South Sulawesi, Indonesia.

## DEFENCE

### Pralay Missile

- The indigenously developed 'Pralay' missile was successfully tested at the Integrated Test Range in Chandipur, Odisha.
- Pralay is a short-range, surface-to-surface, state-of-the-art missile.
- This missile has been developed by DRDO.
- It is capable of carrying up to 1,000 kg of explosives and has a range of up to 500 kilometers.

### Army Signs Deal for Long-Range Rocket Launchers

- The Indian Army has signed a **Rs.293-crore contract** with private defence firm **NIBE Ltd** in collaboration with Israel, for the supply of an advanced long-range rocket launcher system with strike capabilities of 150 km and 300 km.
- The system is being developed in collaboration with **Israeli defence major Elbit Systems**.
- The system, **Suryastra**, is **India's first Made in India universal multi-calibre rocket launcher**.
- It capable of executing precision **surface-to-surface strikes at ranges up to 300 km**.

### Samudra Pratap

- Defence Minister commission the **Indian Coast Guard ship Samudra Pratap in Goa**.
- The vessel is equipped with advanced systems to detect oil spills, enabling comprehensive pollution response operations within the **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)**.

- It is capable of high precision operations, recover pollutants from viscous oil, analyse contaminants, and separate oil from contaminated water.

### 'Samudra Pratap'

- **Defence Minister** commissioned **ICGS Samudra Pratap in Goa**.
- It is the **first of two indigenously designed Pollution Control Vessels (PCVs)** for the **Indian Coast Guard (ICG)**.
- Built by **Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL)** with over 60% indigenous content.
- Its induction substantially enhances the ICG's capability in pollution response, fire-fighting, maritime safety, environmental protection, and extended surveillance across the country's vast maritime zones.
- It is 114.5 meters long and weighs 4,200 tons

### Portable Water Purifier for Soldiers

- DRDO has developed a hand-operated **Sea Water Desalination System (SWaDeS)** for soldiers deployed in remote and coastal areas.
- The system can convert saline water into safe drinking water, ensuring reliable hydration during long patrols and deployments in water-scarce regions.

### 2026 - The Year of Networking and Data Centricity

- **Background:** The Indian Army has declared 2026 as the '**Year of Networking and Data Centricity**'.
- Data centricity refers to treating information as a key warfighting tool.

- This enables real-time decision-making and rapid targeting.
- This initiative supports joint operations among the three armed forces.
- The objective of this exercise is to provide the officers serving on the warships with extensive **operational experience and multi-cultural training**.

### Ramjet Engine

- **Background:** The Indian Army is set to use 155mm artillery shells fitted with a ramjet engine for the first time in the world. This technology has been jointly developed by IIT Madras and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

### Ramjet Engine

- Since it operates by drawing in air, it does not require a turbine or compressor.
- These shells strike at **Mach 2 speed and travel 30-50% farther** than conventional shells.
- This technology, developed under the **Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India)** initiative, will help in accurately striking **long-range targets**.
- This technology can be integrated into and used to upgrade existing 155mm artillery shells.

### Indian Navy's Joint Exercise with Southeast Asian Countries

- **Background:** Warships from the Indian Navy's First Training Squadron, namely **INS Tir (training ship), INS Shardul (warship), INS Sujata (patrol vessel), and ICGS Sarathi**, are undertaking a long-distance deployment to Southeast Asia as part of an integrated training exercise.
- During this deployment, the ships are scheduled to visit major ports in **Singapore, Indonesia, and Thailand**.

- This initiative is in line with **India's Act East Policy** and its vision for the **Indo-Pacific region and aims to strengthen India's maritime cooperation with Southeast Asian countries**.

### DRDO Successfully Tests Scramjet Engine

- **Context:** The Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) achieved a key breakthrough in India's hypersonic missile programme. The test was conducted by the **Defence Research & Development Laboratory (DRDL), Hyderabad**.
- A **full-scale, actively-cooled scramjet combustor** underwent a **long-duration ground test**.
- Conducted at DRDL's Scramjet Connect Pipe Test Facility, a state-of-the-art testing centre.
- The **scramjet combustor demonstrated sustained performance for over 12 minutes**, a critical benchmark.

- The successful trial positions India among the global leaders in **advanced hypersonic, aerospace technologies**.

### ICGS Sankalp

- **Context:** Recently, Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) Sankalp visited Port Louis in Mauritius as part of overseas deployment in the Indian Ocean Region.
- ICGS Sankalp is an offshore patrol vessel which was commissioned in **2008**.
- It is equipped with state-of-the-art **navigation and communication equipment**.

- It is designed primarily for extended maritime surveillance, exclusive economic zone (EEZ) protection, search and rescue operations, and enforcement of maritime laws within India's vast oceanic domains.
- **It is being built by Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL)** in partnership with Airbus Defence and Space.
- The Airbus C-295 is a **medium-range, twin-engine turboprop military transport aircraft**.

### **Military Quantum Mission Policy Framework**

- **Context:** The **Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)** General Anil Chauhan has released the **Military Quantum Mission Policy Framework** to integrate quantum technologies into the **Indian Armed Forces**.
- The **Military Quantum Mission Policy Framework** is a strategic vision and roadmap document that lays down how **quantum technologies will be systematically adopted and operationalised** across the **Army, Navy and Air Force** to achieve future battlefield superiority.
- It aims to integrate quantum capabilities across tri-services through jointness and interoperability.
- It aims to align defence requirements with the National Quantum Mission using a civil-military fusion approach.
- **Vadodara facility, opened in 2024, is India's first private sector final assembly line (FAL) for military aircraft.**

### **Pechora Missile System**

- **Context:** Bengaluru-based **Alpha Design Technologies Ltd (ADTL)** has successfully completed a major indigenous upgrade of the Indian Air Force's Pechora SAM system.
- The upgrade aligns with the Centre's push for modernisation of legacy defence systems under indigenous capability initiatives.
- Officially known as **S-125 Neva/Pechora, Soviet-origin, medium-range Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM)** system
- The system consists of a radar-guided missile launcher and a fire control unit, it uses the 4R90 Yatagan radar, equipped with five parabolic antennas, to detect, track, and lock onto targets.
- The system's radar can detect targets up to 100 km away, providing early warning and engagement capability.

### **Operation Megaburu**

- Operation Megaburu is a **large-scale counter-insurgency operation against the CPI (Maoist)**, conducted in the Saranda forest region, one of the last major Maoist strongholds in Jharkhand. It was launched in **January 2026**.

### **C-295 Aircraft**

- **India's first indigenous and privately manufactured C-295 aircraft** will soon roll out of the Vadodara manufacturing facility.

## INTERNATIONAL

### U.S. Formally Withdraws From the World Health Organization

- The United States is set to formally withdraw from the World Health Organization (WHO) after serving a one-year notice, despite warnings about adverse impacts on U.S. and global health governance.

### About World Health Organisation

- The WHO is the **United Nation's specialized health agency** and is mandated to coordinate the world's response to global health threats.

- **Genesis:** The International Health Conference held in **New York in 1946** adopted the Constitution of WHO, which entered into force in 1948.
- It began functioning on April 7, 1948 - a date now being celebrated every year as **World Health Day**.
- **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland.
- **Key Functions:** WHO coordinates the world's response to health emergencies, promote well-being, prevent disease and expand access to health care.



## CURRENT FACTS

- **U. Ve. Swaminatha Iyer**, known as **Tamil Thatha** (the grand old man of Tamil).
- **Chandrayaan-1 (2008)** confirmed the presence of water molecules.
- **Chandrayaan-2 (2019)** mapped the moon with high precision.
- **Chandrayaan-3** made India the first nation to land near the **lunar south pole** on **August 23, 2023**
- In 2014, India became the **first Asian nation and only the fourth in the world** to reach Mars orbit – and on its maiden attempt, with the **Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan)**.
- The **Aditya-L1 mission (2023)**, built through multi-institutional collaboration, is providing unprecedented insights into the sun's corona and its impact on space weather.
- **XPoSat (2024)** is studying black holes, while **SpaDeX (2024)** has demonstrated in-orbit docking for future space stations and lunar missions.
- **National Space Day 2025 (August 23)**.
- **India's G-20 Presidency in 2023, India announced a "G20 satellite" for climate and environmental monitoring with data shared with all nations.**
- **Operation Sagar Bandhu** was the humanitarian mission undertaken by India to Sri Lanka after Cyclone Titwa.
- **Madhya Pradesh is called the 'Tiger State'.**
- **Goa has declared Kushavati as its third district.**
- **Jambutheevu Prakadanam**
- On **June 16, 1801, Chinna Marudu**, younger of the Marudu Brothers, the **rulers of the Sivaganga**, gave a **call to destroy** British and other European powers in India.
- This was known as **Jambutheevu Prakadanam** or **Srirangam Prakadanam** as the notices were affixed on the walls of the **Tiruchi Fort and the Ranganathaswamy Temple**.
- **K.B. Sundarambal**
- Legendary singer and stage artist **K.B. Sundarambal** created history in the post-Independence era by becoming the **first film artist in India** to be nominated to a **Legislative Council**.
- A staunch **Congress activist**, she had taken part in the **freedom movement**.
- **Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary**
- The **Srivilliputhur Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary** was established in **1988** to protect the Grizzled Squirrel.
- In 2021, this sanctuary, combined with the **Megamalai Wildlife Sanctuary**, was declared Tamil Nadu's fifth Tiger Reserve.
- **Romesh Thappar vs State of Madras**
- The Constitution had to be amended in the light of the Supreme Court's landmark judgment in the **Romesh Thappar vs State of Madras**, also known as the Cross Roads case.

- “**This was the first case** in which violation of **Article 19(1) (a)** of the Indian Constitution conferring the right to freedom of speech and expression was alleged.”
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (**COP30**) conference held at **Belem, Brazil**.
- **Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment)**, espoused by **India at COP26, in Glasgow in 2021**.
- The Environment (Construction and Demolition) Waste Management Rules, 2025 are to come into effect from **April 1, 2026**.
- **Swachh Bharat Mission** (‘Clean India Mission’) was launched in **2014**.
- Surat (Gujarat), known as India’s “**Diamond Capital**”, is set to become the country’s **first fully slum-free city**.
- **Under Representation of the People Act**, Membership of the Legislative Assembly will be terminated if a court sentences a **member to two years’ imprisonment or more**.
- **TeleMANAS-14416** (Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States).
- National Cadet Corps (NCC) comes under the **Ministry of Defence**.
- **Acid attack**: In 2023, **57 reported acid attacks took place in West Bengal**, 31 in Uttar Pradesh, and 15 in Gujarat, the three worst affected States.
- **IUCN Status: Back Necked Stork** – Near Threatened, **Citrine Wagtail** – Least Concern.
- India **hosts 75%** of the world’s tiger populace. According to 2022 report India’s tiger **population is 3682**.
- **Pavendhar Bharathidasan’s** original name was **Kanagasubburatnam**. Due to his admiration for Bharathiyar, he changed his name to Bharathidasan. His work ‘**Pisiranthaiyar**’ was awarded the **Sahitya Akademi Award in 1969**.
- M.P. Sivagnanam, known as ‘**Silambu Chelvar**’, was the one who fought and succeeded in reclaiming **Thiruttani** when the states were reorganized on linguistic lines. He received the **Sahitya Akademi Award in 1966** for his book ‘**Vallalar Kanda Orumaippadu**’ (The Unity Envisioned by Vallalar).
- **Thadou tribe** who live in the hill country adjacent to the Imphal Valley in Manipur.
- **India loses 0.4% of its GDP every year to natural disasters**. India’s vulnerability is primarily hydrological (non-storm-related floods and landslides).
- The **Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission** was established by the Government of Tamil Nadu in **1999**.
- **The Indian giant squirrel (Ratufa indica)** is the state animal of Maharashtra and is also known as the ‘**Malabar giant squirrel**’. It is found in the **Western Ghats and the Sahyadri mountains**.
- **India’s** current nuclear power generation capacity is **8.78 gigawatts**, and India aims to increase it to **100 gigawatts by 2047**.
- **The Tamil Nadu Green Energy Corporation** was established in **2024** for setting up solar, wind, and hydroelectric power plants, as well as electric vehicle charging stations in Tamil Nadu.
- **M. Fathima Beevi** was appointed as **the first female judge of the Supreme Court in 1989**.

- **The U.S. Food and Drug Administration** has approved, for the first time, an oral tablet called **Mitapivat** for the treatment of **anemia in adults with thalassemia**.
- From Volga to Ganga (**Volgavilirundhu Gangai Varai**) by **Rahul Sankrityayan (1893-1963)**.
- **A Sixth of Humanity: Independent India's Development Odyssey**, co-author by **Former Chief Economic Advisor Arvind Subramanian**.
- **Article 21** - right to personal liberty and life
- **Hindu Kush Himalayan region** includes 8 countries: India, China, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Bhutan.
- **IUCN Status: Eastern Imperial Eagle - Vulnerable**
- **Most of the water on Earth, 97.4%, is seawater (saltwater). Only less than 3 percent of the remaining water is freshwater, and of that, 1.8% is frozen in glaciers.**
- **Aditya-L1 reached the Lagrangian point (L1) on January 6, 2024. It took 127 days after launch on September 2, 2023 to reach L1.**
- Union Education Minister officially released 55 volumes of literary works in classical Indian languages such as Kannada, Odia, Telugu, Malayalam, and Tamil, along with a sign-language series of the **Tirukkural by Tamil poet Thiruvalluvar**.
- The United Nations has declared 2026 to be the **'International Year for Rangelands and Pastoralists'**.
- **Election Commission**, states that our constitutional duty to ensure there are no foreign voters as far as possible.
- **World Tamil Disapora Day- January 12**
- **India's solar module manufacturing has increased to more than twice since last year, the solar module manufacturing has increased 128.6% on a year-over-year basis to 144 gigawatts (GW) in 2025.**
- **The RailOne app** is a comprehensive mobile application for Indian Railways passengers, providing integrated services through a single platform.
- **Competition Commission of India**
- The Competition Commission of India (CCI), constituted under the **Competition Act, 2002**.
- The CCI functions as a **statutory body** under the **Ministry of Corporate Affairs with its headquarters in New Delhi**.
- **Biohappiness**
- **Biohappiness**, a concept coined by its founder and late agricultural scientist M.S. Swaminathan,
- **Keyi Panyor in Arunachal Pradesh** to become India's 1<sup>st</sup> Bio-Happy District.
- **In Search of Biohappiness: Biodiversity and Food, Health and Livelihood Security** written by **M.S. Swaminathan**
- Article 324 - Superintendence, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission

- The share of senior citizens is projected to be around 18% of the State's overall population in 2031, against little less than 11% in 2011. In other words, with about 72% growth, Tamil Nadu is witnessing the fastest rate of ageing among all States.
- **PARIVESH (Pro-Active and Responsive facilitation by Interactive, Virtuous and Environmental Single-window Hub)**, PARIVESH is a Single-Window Integrated Environmental Management System, developed in pursuance of the spirit of 'Digital India', by the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change**.
- The **Chennai Connemara Public Library** was inaugurated on December 5, 1896.
- The **Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013**, often called the "**Nirbhaya Act**".
- **TN Forest Act - 1882**
- This **Fissured Land: An Ecological History of India** was written by Indian ecologist **Madhav Gadgil** and historian **Ramachandra Guha**.
- Prime Minister appointed distinguished scientist **A.K. Balasubrahmanian** as the Chairman of the **Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB)**.
- **Article 350** of the Constitution states that it is the duty of the state to protect the rights of linguistic minorities.
- **Tamil Nadu** currently has an economic **growth rate of 11.19%**, making it a leading state in India.
- According to Section 3 of the **Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961**, both demanding and giving dowry are crimes, and if the crime is proven, the accused will be sentenced to **5 years imprisonment or fined Rs. 15,000** or the amount of the dowry, whichever is higher.
- **Vairamuthu's** novel '**Kallikkattu Ithikasm**' received the **Sahitya Akademi Award in 2003**.
- **Mu. Mehta's** first poetry collection was '**Kanneer Pookkal**'. His second book was '**Oorvalam**'. He received the **Sahitya Akademi Award in 2006** for his collection '**Akayathukku Adutha Veedu**'.
- India contributes **25 percent** to **global milk production**.
- The **Bharat Pashudhan** website helps in recording activities such as livestock breeding, artificial insemination, health services, and vaccinations.
- The **Bal Vivah Mukt Bharat campaign** aims to **reduce the prevalence of child marriages by 10% by 2026** and make India a **child marriage-free country by 2030**.
- **Balod district in Chhattisgarh** declared itself **India's first child marriage-free district in 2025**.
- On **September 17, 2025**, the **Surajpur district administration in Chhattisgarh** declared **75 Gram Panchayats as "child marriage-free panchayats"**.
- The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has stated that a logo called '**Udai**' has been introduced to help the public easily understand Aadhaar services.
- The **population census** is a **Union subject** under **Article 246** of India Constitution.
- Tamil Nadu accounts for **28% of India's textile exports**.
- **Chief Election Commissioner of India: Gyanesh Kumar**.

- In **January 1026**, Somnath faced its **first** recorded **attack** by **Mahmud of Ghazni** (**Mark 1,000 years**).
- **84<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment (2001)**: Froze Lok Sabha seat allocation till the first Census after 2026 to incentivise population stabilisation.
- **Bagurumba dance** is a traditional dance performed by the **Bodo tribal** people of **Assam**.
- The **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)** has listed the **Western Ghats** as an important **freshwater biodiversity hotspot**.
- **India's first quantum computing village** was launched in **Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh**.
- **Tangeti Janvi** from **Palakollu, Andhra Pradesh**, became the **first Indian** to complete **NASA's International Air and Space Program**.
- The **Kerala** government has officially renamed the **Aralam Wildlife Sanctuary** as the **Aralam Butterfly Sanctuary**. It is now **India's first butterfly sanctuary**.
- **Bhashini AI**: Under the **National Language Translation Mission (NLTM)**, its objective is to **remove language barriers and ensure access to digital services in all Indian languages**.
- **India ranks first in the production of handloom** products for export.
- The discoveries at **Keezhadi** have confirmed a 4,000-year-old history for the Tamils. Evidence of rice cultivation has been found at **Keezhadi**.
- **Article 326 of the Indian constitution: The right to vote**. The elections to the **House of the People and to the Legislative Assembly of every State** shall be on the basis of **adult suffrage**.
- **Article 142** empowers the Supreme Court to **pass any order or decree necessary for complete justice** in any pending case before it. This power is **discretionary** and **unique to the apex court**.
- **Article 21A of the Indian constitution: Right to education**
- **India is the world's third-largest crude oil importer and consumer of crude oil**, after the **United States and China**.
- Tamil Nadu has been **ranked first in organ donation for 6 consecutive years**.
- India ranks **3<sup>rd</sup> globally** in organ transplant surgeries, after the **USA and China**.
- **Human Organ Transplant Act** enacted in **1994**.
- The year **2026** marks the **75<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of the establishment of **diplomatic relations between India and Iran**.
- World Bank raised India's **GDP growth projection for FY 2025–26 to 7.2%**, up by **0.9 percentage points** from its June forecast.
- Bagurumba is a major traditional folk dance of the Bodo tribal community in Assam and Northeast India.
- H5N1 is a type of influenza virus that causes a highly contagious and severe respiratory illness (avian influenza/bird flu) in birds.
- Gopalkrishna Gandhi, former Governor of West Bengal, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi and author of *The Undying Light: A Personal History of Independent India*.

- Nipah virus (NiV) is a paramyxovirus that spreads from animals (bats, pigs) to humans through direct contact or contaminated food.
- Part VI - Article 176 - Special address by the governor. Article 176 of the Constitution mandates a special address by the Governor to State legislatures at the commencement of the first session after a general election and at the start of the first session each year.
- VVPAT: In electronic voting machines, votes are cast by pressing the button next to the candidate's name. In the 2014 general election, the Election Commission introduced a system that allows a voter to verify whether their vote has been recorded correctly.
- Tamil Nadu's economy has achieved a robust growth of 11.19% during the last financial year. For the first time, Tamil Nadu stands as the leading state in the country in terms of economic growth.
- Tamil Nadu stands out as the state with the highest percentage (40.3%) of female employees working in factories in India.
- Anbu Cholai homes- to ensure a safe and supportive day care environment for the elderly.
- Tamil Nadu's share in overall electronics exports of the country has risen to record levels of 41.2%.
- The Jal Jeevan Mission was being implemented with the contributions of both the Union and State governments to supply 55 litres of safe drinking water per person per day.
- Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002
- PART VI- Article 226- Power of High Courts to issue certain writs.
- Article 15(5) of the Constitution, which empowers the state to provide reservation for the Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in private educational institutions.
- IUCN Status of Bluethroat (*Luscinia Svecica*) - Least Concern.
- Seconadary galucoma is a sight threatening condition that causes irreversible blindness.
- Singapore has emerged as the world's most responsible nation, while India secured the 16th position in the newly released Responsible Nations' Index (RNI).
- Tamil Nadu Postal Circle of the Department of Posts inaugurated a Next Generation (N-Gen) Post Office at the Indian Institute of Technology of Madras.
- Bombay blood group: This blood type was first discovered in Mumbai in 1952, making it the first such discovery in the world.
- Part V, Article 86 - Right of President to address and send messages to the House or Houses
- Part V, Article 87 - Special address by the President
- Part III, Article 14- Equality before law
- Part VI, Article 175- Right of Governor to address and send messages to the House or Houses
- Part VI, Article 176- Special address by the Governor
- Simran Bala the first woman paramilitary officer to lead an all male CRPF contingent at the Republic Day parade at the Kartavya Path in New Delhi on January 2026.

- India prepares to open the world's largest museum Yuge Yugeen Bharat Museum in New Delhi.
- Chikungunya is a viral disease transmitted by mosquitoes. This disease, transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes, causes symptoms such as fever, joint pain, severe muscle pain, and fatigue. It is diagnosed through ELISA tests.
- India has set itself the target of achieving zero indigenous cases of malaria by 2027.
- Viralmalai Bird Sanctuary, which is well known for its large population of peafowls, India's national bird.
- Abithana Chintamani is a Tamil language encyclopaedia compiled by A. Singaravelu Mudaliar, It is considered one of the earliest comprehensive encyclopaedias in Tamil.
- Pasteur Institute of India, Coonoor, is a leading centre for the production of anti-rabies vaccine and the DPT group of vaccines. It is now an autonomous body under the Union Ministry of Health.
- The Tamil Virtual Academy, originally known as the Tamil Virtual University, was established by the Tamil Nadu government in 2001.
- Serfoji II, the Maratha ruler of Thanjavur, established the Dhanvantari Mahal as a research centre for preparation of herbal medicines.
- V.O. Chidambaram Pillai, fondly known as VOC and Sekkizhutha Chemmal ("the great man who pulled the oil press"). The title Sekkizhutha Chemmal, words fail to express the physical pain he endured during that period," Kurusamy Mayilvaganan writes in Kelatha Kathai (The Unheard Story). The title Kelatha Kathai is derived from a word in the poem Velalan Siraipugunthan by poet Subramania Bharathiar.
- Part XV, Article 326- Elections to the House of the People and to the legislative assemblies of states to be on the basis of adult suffrage.
- For the first time, Agniveer women are participating in the Republic Day parade alongside the Indian Air Force band.
- The Padma Shri award was first presented in 1954; that year, it was received by Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, C.V. Raman, and Satyendra Nath Bose.
- Kaladi is a traditional GI-tagged dairy product from Udhampur in Jammu & Kashmir.
- Article 19(1)(a) of the Indian Constitution: The fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression.
- Article 14 of the Indian Constitution: Equality before law.
- National education day - November 11
- The Tamil Nadu PSTM Act, 2010 reserves 20% of government job vacancies for candidates educated in Tamil medium.
- Calcium phosphate, a mineral salt of calcium and phosphorus found in bones, teeth, and milk, is essential for bone growth and dental health.

- State's Health and Family Welfare Department had won the U.N. Interagency Task Force Awards (UNIATF) for 2024 in the category of Ministries of Health for its flagship scheme, Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam.
- Tamil Nadu has emerged as the Best Performer State for start-ups. It is topping the Export Preparedness Index with 80.89 points and is also a leading State in electronics goods manufacturing, accounting for 41.23%.
- The State had secured second place in the country in the production of oilseeds, groundnut, sugarcane, and maize.
- Tamil Nadu is the State that has recorded the highest number of tourist arrivals, and it has also received geographical indication tags for 60 products.
- The Gyan Bharatam Mission is a comprehensive national initiative under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, dedicated to the systematic survey, documentation, conservation, and digitisation of India's vast manuscript heritage.
- India is the world's second-largest cement producer after China, contributing about 13% of global output.
- 1,000th year of Rajendra Chola was celebrated as a grand festival at Gangaikonda Cholapuram. The Union Ministry of Culture actively assisted in the celebrations.
- According to a new RBI report, Kerala and Tamil Nadu will be "ageing States" by 2036 because their elderly populations will exceed 22% and 20%, respectively.
- The 'Vande Mataram' song has been recognized as the national song since January 24, 1950.
- Suryastra is India's first indigenously developed, multi-caliber rocket launcher.
- This will be the first time that Census data is captured digitally, on smartphones and mobile apps and the first time when citizens will be able to self-enumerate through a yet-to-be announced portal.
- Thirumangai Azhvar has sung verses in praise of Lord Pundareekaksha, the presiding deity of Thiruvellarai. In these verses, he describes the various avatars of Lord Narayana.
- Chari dance is a traditional folk dance of Rajasthan. It is mainly performed by women from the Kishangarh and Ajmer regions, particularly by women of the Gujjar community.
- Registrar-General and Census Commissioner of India (RG&CCI) Mritunjay Kumar Narayan.
- Kerala became India's first state to officially designate a State Microbe, *Bacillus subtilis*, to promote microbiome awareness.
- India has set a target of attracting \$100 billion (approximately ₹9 lakh crore) in investment in the oil and gas sector by 2030.
- India holds the top position globally in rice production.
- ICAR-National Research Centre for Banana (NRCB) is a premier research institution established on August 21, 1993. It is located in Thayanur, in the Tiruchirappalli district of Tamil Nadu.
- India is the country with the world's 3rd largest metro network.

- India is the world's 2nd largest mobile phone manufacturer.
- The Indian Army's Remount and Veterinary Corps (RVC) showcased a dedicated animal contingent for the first time at the Republic Day Parade.
- Part V, Article 108 - Joint sitting of both Houses in certain cases
- Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1981
- Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1974
- Tamil Nadu is a leading state in sectors such as automobiles, IT, footwear manufacturing, and electronics.
- India, which was ranked 66th in the Global Innovation Index in 2019, has advanced to 38th place in 2025.
- Manchester of South India - Coimbatore
- India ranks 3rd in the world in solar energy and renewable energy.
- State's health helpline 104, Tele-MANAS 14416.
- A black box is a small device that records information about an aircraft during its flight. It helps in the investigation of aviation accidents.
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act of 1958.
- Tamil Nadu Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act of 1966.
- The Tamil Nadu Heritage Commission Act of 2012 was passed by the State legislature to preserve heritage structures in the State.
- Article 356: It allows the President to take over the functions of the state government when the constitutional machinery fails.
- Part III, Article 15- Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.
- R.K. Shanmugam was the first Finance Minister of independent India.
- Morarji Desai holds the record for presenting the most central budgets, having presented 10; he is followed by P. Chidambaram, who presented 9 budgets.
- In the 2017-18 financial year, Arun Jaitley declared February 1st as the permanent date for presenting the budget.
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is set to create a new record by presenting the budget for the ninth consecutive time.

