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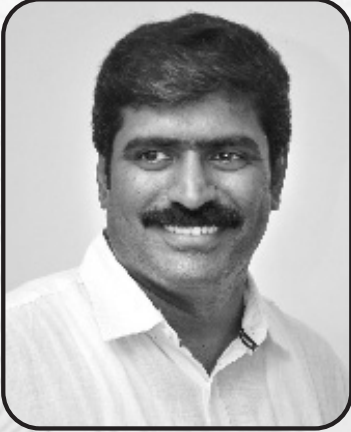
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Preface



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My Dear Aspirants,

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.

The class room coaching at VETRII IAS Study Circle is meticulously planned to equip the aspirants with all the relevant facts and fundamentals of the subjects. Further the VETRII IAS Study Circle Study materials aim to support the candidate by providing the most relevant study material in a comprehensive manner.

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

LATEST INVENTIONS IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Moltbook

- **Context:** Moltbook is a newly launched **AI-exclusive social media platform, similar in structure to Reddit**, where only AI agents interact.

Creator & Framework

- Created by Matt Schlicht, founder of Octane AI
- Built using the OpenClaw framework (formerly Moltbot / Clawdbot)
- Requires no coding skills from human users to deploy agents

Submolts

- Topic-based communities called “**submolts**”
- AI agents post, comment, debate, and collaborate autonomously
- No human moderation or participation in discussions

AI-Only Interaction Model

- Agents connect via APIs only
- Human keyboard input is prohibited after setup
- Humans can observe but cannot intervene

Cancer genome database

- **The Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras)** has released a genome database covering **paediatric leukaemia, colorectal and pancreatic cancers**.
- This genome database, the first of its kind in India, was launched at **the IIT Madras campus on February 4th, coinciding with World Cancer Day**.

- The **Bharat Cancer Genome Atlas (BCGA)** has been made publicly accessible to researchers and clinicians in India and abroad at **bpga.iitm.ac.in**.

- The database can help identify biomarkers, enable early diagnosis, monitor disease progression and guide population-specific treatment.

- Indian Council of Medical Research report shows that one in nine Indians is likely to develop cancer, with about 2.5 million people currently living with the disease and incidence rising by 12.8% annually since 2022.

BharatGen AI

- **Background:** The **Union Minister of Science and Technology** stated that text-based services in all 22 official languages will soon be implemented in the **BharatGen multilingual artificial intelligence (AI) model**.

- Previously, text-based services were already operational in **15 official languages**.

- Services in the remaining **7 languages will be fully operational by the end of this month**.

- Along with text-based services in **15 languages, services will also be handled in audio, photo, and video formats**.

BharatGen AI Project 2024

- The **BharatGen AI project** was launched by the **Central Government in October 2024, providing AI services for 22 Indian languages**, including text-to-speech and automatic speech recognition.

- It is designed to address **India’s regional, linguistic, and cultural diversity**.

- It was developed by the **TIH Foundation for IoT and IoE at IIT Bombay**.

- It was funded under the **National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS)**.
- The launch marks a milestone in advancing **safe, ethical, and evidence-based deployment of Artificial Intelligence in India's healthcare ecosystem.**

India AI Stack

- **Background:** India has launched the **India AI Stack initiative** to make artificial intelligence accessible to all and to enable its application at a population scale in sectors such as healthcare, agriculture, education, and governance.
- The AI Stack is a five-layered architecture that enables reliable, affordable, and inclusive artificial intelligence applications at a population scale across various sectors.

Key Layers

- The Application Layer provides AI for **healthcare, agriculture, language, courts, and weather services.**
- The AI Model Layer involves the creation of India-centric AI models through national initiatives.
- The Computing Layer provides processing power through **GPUs, TPUs, supercomputers, and indigenous chips.**
- The Data & Network Layer is supported by **fiber, 5G, and expanded data centers.**
- The Energy Layer ensures sustainable electricity through **500+ gigawatts of capacity, over 51% non-fossil fuel sources, and storage facilities**

Launch of SAHI & BODH at India AI Impact Summit

- Context: **Union Health and Family Welfare Minister** launched two digital health initiatives **SAHI (Strategy for AI for Health Initiative)** and **BODH (Benchmarking Open Data Platform for Health AI)** during the India AI Impact Summit.

Strategy for Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare for India (SAHI)

- The **Strategy for Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare for India (SAHI)** serves as a national-level framework designed to **guide the responsible integration of Artificial Intelligence** within India's healthcare sector.
- Its purpose is to promote the **safe, ethical, inclusive, and evidence-driven use** of AI technologies across the health system.
- The framework offers strategic guidance on areas such as **governance structures, data management and protection, validation processes, implementation standards, and ongoing monitoring of AI tools.**

Benchmarking Open Data Platform for Health AI (BODH)

- The **Benchmarking Open Data Platform for Health AI (BODH)** has been developed by the **Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur, in partnership with the National Health Authority.**
- It functions as a **secure, privacy-protecting benchmarking system** that allows comprehensive assessment of AI models using varied, real-world healthcare data, without requiring the actual datasets to be shared.
- Recognized as a digital public good under the **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, BODH aims to promote confidence, openness, and high standards of quality** in the deployment of AI technologies in healthcare.

Yuva AI for All Initiative

- Context: The **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** has recently introduced **Kaushal Rath** as part of

the National AI Literacy Programme under “Yuva AI for All.”

- The course content is designed to be **simple, practical, and engaging, using relatable Indian examples** to make AI concepts easier to understand.
- It is offered free of cost on major learning platforms such as **FutureSkills Prime, iGOT Karmayogi, and other well-known ed-tech portals.**
- Participants who successfully complete the programme receive an **official Government of India certificate.**

About the Yuva AI for All Initiative

- Yuva AI for All is a programme launched by **MeitY under the IndiaAI Mission.** It is a unique, **nationwide free course aimed at familiarising Indians particularly young people** with the fundamentals of Artificial Intelligence.
- The programme offers a **4.5-hour self-learning course designed to help students, working professionals, and other interested learners** gain a clear understanding of basic AI concepts in an easy and accessible manner.
- Its objective is **to equip one crore (10 million) citizens with essential AI knowledge and foundational skills.**

Protein-rich ‘Designer Rice’

- Context: **CSIR-NIIST, an institute under the Central Council of Scientific and Industrial Research,** has developed a variety of designer rice, which is designed to help address malnutrition among the population.
- CSIR-NIIST says it is **high in nutrients like protein, iron, folic acid and vitamin B12.**
- This new rice has **3 times more protein than regular rice.**

▪ It has a low glycemic index (GI), so **it causes a slow rise in blood glucose levels; hence, it is safe for diabetics.**

▪ **CSIR-NIIST is based in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala**

Sarvam AI Unveils India’s Own LLM

▪ Context: Union government announced that **India would create its own large language model (LLM)** similar to ChatGPT and DeepSeek, the **Bengaluru-based Sarvam AI unveiled two language models at the AI Impact Summit.**

- Sarvam AI, a Bengaluru-based startup, unveiled two new large language models (LLMs) **named Vikram.**
- The announcement was made at the AI Impact Summit during the models will be open source.
- Two versions launched: **35-billion parameter model and 105-billion parameter model.**

Focus on Indian Languages

- **A major goal is improving AI performance in Indian languages.**
- Addresses the challenge of limited training data in **regional languages.**
- Demonstrated **English-to-Indian language translation** at the event.

VoicERA launched at Bhashini National Infrastructure

▪ Context: **VoicERA, an open-source complete voice AI suite,** was launched at **Bhashini National Language Infrastructure** at the India AI Impact Summit 2026.

- VoiceERA is an open-source, complete voice AI implementation layer used in India’s Bhashini National Language Infrastructure.
- It serves as the national implementation layer for **multilingual voice and language AI, enabling scalable deployment of speech and conversational systems** across sectors

- It was launched by **Digital India Bhashini Division (DIBD)** under **Digital India Corporation (DIC)**, MeitY
- Developed in collaboration with **EkStep Foundation**, **COSS**, **IIIT Bangalore** and **AI4Bharat**.
- If the mission succeeds, **India will become the fourth country** after the United States, Russia, and China to achieve this highly challenging milestone.

New Astronomical Observatories in Ladakh

IIT-Madras Patents Optics-Based Blood Clot Detection Technique

- **Context:** Researchers at the **Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT-M)** have patented a new optics-based method to detect blood clot formation by measuring changes in reflected light on implant surfaces.
- Haemocompatibility ensures medical devices (stents, heart valves, catheters) do not trigger harmful blood clotting.
- Current techniques (mechanical tilting method and free haemoglobin method) lack precision. The new method improves accuracy and measures clotting time down to milliseconds.

- **Context:** The Union Budget 2026 has sanctioned the construction of **two new major telescopes** and the modernization of an existing facility in **Ladakh**, reinforcing India's standing in global observational astronomy.

- India plans to set up **two state-of-the-art ground-based astronomical observatories in Ladakh**, dedicated to **studying the Sun and exploring the distant universe**, while also upgrading the **current Himalayan Chandra Telescope**.

- These observatories are intended to boost India's research capabilities in **heliophysics, exoplanet studies, stellar evolution, and cosmology**, taking advantage of **Ladakh's high altitude, arid climate, and clear, dark skies**.

SPACE

Mons Mouton

- **Context:** **ISRO's Space Applications Centre (SAC)** has identified **Mons Mouton** as the **landing site for India's Chandrayaan-4** (first lunar sample return mission).
- Mons Mouton is a mountain about 6,000 meters high located near the **South Pole of the Moon**.
- Located on the rim of the South-Pole-Aitken basin.
- It receives sunlight for extended periods, aiding solar-powered operations
- Chandrayaan-4 **aims to achieve a soft landing on the Moon**, collect lunar rock samples, and return them to Earth.

- The **National Large Solar Telescope (NLST)** will feature a 2-metre aperture and operate as a ground-based solar observatory, capturing the **Sun's activity in both visible and near-infrared wavelengths**.

- It will be situated in the **Merak region, near Pangong Tso**, providing optimal conditions for solar observations.

NISAR Satellite

- **Context:** The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has announced that it will release data from the 'NISAR' satellite every 12 days **to study soil moisture conditions over the Indian territory**.

- NISAR is an Earth observation satellite developed in a **joint venture between ISRO and NASA**.
- The satellite is continuously conducting research on changes in the **Earth's surface and climate change**.
- NISAR will accurately measure the soil moisture content of the Indian territory up to **100 meters using both the S-band and L-band frequencies** and will release two **data sets every 12 days**.
- This is an important factor in soil moisture, agriculture, water management, crop growth and drought vulnerability assessment.
- NISAR data will be used to accurately assess the **agro-climatic zones of India, from irrigated areas to arid, desert and high rainfall zones**.
- This data will help in **agricultural planning, guidance to farmers and preparation of drought response plans**.
- The technology for this project is said to have been designed at **ISRO's Space Operations Centre**.

About NISAR

- **NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar)** is a joint Earth observation satellite developed by ISRO and NASA.
- It was launched on **July 31, 2025**, aboard **GSLV-F16** from **Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota**.
- The mission's life span is **5 years (2025–2030)**.
- NISAR monitors **land surface erosion, glaciers, forests, wetlands and soil moisture, and detects natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, landslides and volcanic activity**.
- It supports agriculture, infrastructure, coastal management and climate monitoring.

- This satellite uses **dual-frequency SAR with L-band (NASA) to penetrate forest, snow, and soil for biomass and decomposition studies, and S-band (ISRO) to monitor crops, wetlands, and surface features**.

Gaganyaan Drogue Parachute Test

- **Context:** India's first human space mission, **Gaganyaan**, got a major boost as the **Drogue Parachute successfully passed the qualification load test** conducted jointly by DRDO and ISRO at the Rail Track Rocket Sled (RTRS) facility in Chandigarh.
- RTRS is a specialized dynamic test facility of DRDO that is **widely used for high-speed aerodynamics and ballistic evaluations**.

Gaganyaan Project

- ISRO's Gaganyaan Project is India's **first human space mission program**.
- It aims to send a team of 3 astronauts to a low Earth orbit (LEO) of 400 km for 3 days and return them safely to Earth.

▪ The launch vehicle for this mission is the **Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark III, also known as LVM-3**

- If the project is successful, India will become the **fourth country in the world to conduct human spaceflight after the US, Russia and China**.

Aditya-L1 Decodes Rare Dawn-Time

Geomagnetic Disturbances

- **Context:** Observations and measurements made by **India's maiden solar mission, Aditya-L1**, have helped to decode the unusual dawn-time geomagnetic disturbances during strong solar storms.

- Geomagnetic disturbances can disrupt satellites, navigation systems, and other technologies.
- Understanding these variations improves space weather forecasting and preparedness.
- Data from Aditya-L1 and global ground magnetometer networks provided new insights. It helps explain how extreme solar wind conditions alter normal geomagnetic patterns.
- It can understand and work in English and Hindi.
- Monitors air pressure, temperature, environmental conditions, etc.
- Operates environmental control and warning systems.
- Performs many human tasks.
- Maintains continuous communication with the Earth Command Center.
- If all unmanned tests are successful, human spaceflight will take place in 2027.

Geomagnetic Storms

- Caused by sudden changes in solar wind charged particles emitted by the Sun.
- Solar wind pressure impacts Earth's magnetic shield, triggering sharp magnetic field changes.

Gaganyaan Mission

- India's first mission to send humans into space and safely return them to Earth.
- Planned target – 2027.
- A spacecraft will be sent to an altitude of 400 km and will be studied for 3 days.
- If this mission is successful, India will become the 4th country to send humans into space after the US, Russia and China.
- Selected astronauts Prashant Nair, Ajit Krishnan, Angad Pratap, Subhanshu Shukla
- They were given special training in Russia.

Unmanned Missions

- 3 unmanned spacecraft tests will be conducted before sending humans.
- A humanoid robot named Vyomitra will be sent in the first test.

Vyomitra's capabilities

- It can understand and respond to commands from astronauts.

Bharatiya Andarish Station (Indian Space Station)

- After the success of the Gaganyaan project, the "Bharatiya Andarish Station" will be established at an altitude of 400 km above the Earth.
- The Indian Space Station is set to be established by 2035.

India's early space efforts

- 1963, November 21 – India launched its first research rocket.
- 1984, April 3 – Rakesh Sharma became the first Indian to go into space in the Soviet Soyuz T-11.

World Space History – Key Events

- 1926, March 16 - American scientist Robert H. Goddard successfully launched the first liquid- fueled rocket.
- 1944, June 20 - Germany's V-2 rocket reached an altitude of 174 km.
- 1957, October 4 - The Soviet Union launched Sputnik 1 (the first satellite).
- 1957, November 3 - The dog 'Laika' was sent into space by Sputnik 2.

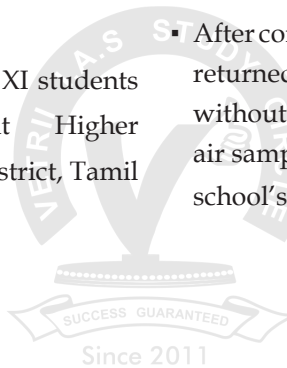
- 1961, April 12 - **Yuri Gagarin became the first human to go into space.**
- 1969, July 16 - **The United States' Apollo 11 mission to the moon.**

Vikko Sat-1

- Context: In a remarkable achievement, 13 Class XI students from Ariyakudi Government Higher Secondary School in Sivagangai district, Tamil Nadu, successfully launched a 600-gram mini satellite named Vikko Sat-1, showcasing notable scientific capability.

About Vikko Sat-1

- Vikko Sat-1 is a lightweight mini satellite weighing 600 grams.
- It was created by a team of Class XI students from Ariyakudi Government Higher Secondary School in Sivagangai district, Tamil Nadu.
- The satellite was specially built to identify fungal spores in the stratosphere using five advanced sensors.
- Fungal spores are microscopic biological particles that significantly influence agriculture and environmental processes. When these spores travel through the upper atmosphere and eventually settle, they can affect crop health.
- To gather accurate atmospheric data, the students sent the compact satellite into the stratosphere using a helium balloon.
- The device reached an altitude of 22 km, entering the stratosphere – the second layer of Earth's atmosphere.
- After completing its mission, the payload safely returned to the ground and was recovered without damage, ensuring that the collected air samples could be properly examined in the school's control room.



GEOGRAPHY

ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

ICAR-CMFRI Achieves Captive Breeding of *Geloina erosa*

- ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) successfully induced captive breeding of *Geloina erosa* (mangrove/mud clam).
- This is a global first it offers potential for restoring overexploited populations in Indian mangroves.
- It is organic-rich, muddy intertidal zones of mangroves and estuaries across South and Southeast Asia.
- Mangrove clams, commonly known as mud clams, locally called 'Kandal Kakka' in northern Kerala.
- It acts as an efficient filter feeder, improving estuarine water quality through nutrient recycling.

Carbon Capture and Utilization (CCU) Technologies

- **Context:** The Union Budget 2026 recently allocated Rs.20,000 crore to scale up carbon

capture, utilization and storage (CCUS) technologies over the next five years.

- Carbon capture and utilization (CCU) is a set of technologies designed to capture carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from industrial point sources or directly from the atmosphere and convert them into commercially valuable products instead of storing them underground.

The process involves three main stages:

- **Capture:** CO₂ is separated from the air.
- **Compression and transport:** CO₂ is compressed and transported through pipelines or tankers.
- **Conversion/utilization:** CO₂ is processed into useful products.

CCU Types:

- **Direct utilization:** Use CO₂ as is (e.g., carbonated beverages, enhanced oil recovery).
- **Chemical conversion:** Convert CO₂ into chemicals (urea, polymers) or fuels (methanol).
- **Bioconversion:** Use algae/bacteria to convert CO₂ into biofuels, bio-fuels or feedstock.
- **Mineralization:** React CO₂ with minerals to form solid carbonates for bricks or green concrete.

INDIAN POLITY

Vice-Chancellor Appointments: High Court Order Quashed

- Context: **The Supreme Court quashed the Madras High Court** order that had imposed an interim stay on the amendment laws brought by the Tamil Nadu government regarding the appointment of Vice-Chancellors.
- The Supreme Court directed the Madras High Court to hear the case again comprehensively and deliver a verdict within six weeks.
- The Supreme Court recorded the Tamil Nadu government's assurance that no new Vice-Chancellor appointments would be made until the case is concluded.
- As background, the Supreme Court had ruled last year that Governor indefinite withholding of assent to several bills submitted by the state government was unconstitutional.
- The Supreme Court used its **special powers under Article 142** of the Indian Constitution to grant assent to the pending bills.
- Following this, the Tamil Nadu government passed amendment laws in the State Assembly transferring the Governor's power to appoint Vice-Chancellors in state universities to the state government.

No-confidence motion against the Speaker of the Lok Sabha

- Context: **No-confidence motion** (removal of impeachment) has been moved against the Speaker of the Lok Sabha under **Article 94(c) of the Constitution of India**.

Removal of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha

- The Speaker of the Lok Sabha **can be removed from office** by a resolution passed in the Lok Sabha.

- That is, he can be removed from office by a majority of the total number of members of the House, excluding vacancies.
- A resolution to remove the Speaker of the Lok Sabha can be moved **only after giving 14 days' notice to the Speaker**.
- This resolution to remove the Speaker of the Lok Sabha can be considered and debated only if it is **supported by at least 50 members**.
- While the resolution to remove the Speaker of the Lok Sabha is under consideration by the House, **he cannot preside over the sitting of the House, even if he is present**.
- However, **he can speak and participate in the proceedings of the House at that time, and vote** on the first occasion, even in the absence of a tie.
- Historical precedents: **No Speaker of the Lok Sabha** has ever been removed from office by a no-confidence or impeachment motion.

Impeachment motions against Speakers of the Lok Sabha

- 1954 - G.V. Mavalankar (first Speaker).
- 1966 - Hukam Singh.
- 1987 - Balram Jaggar.

Speaker of the Lok Sabha

- Elected by the Lok Sabha from among its members, the date of election being **fixed by the President of India**.
- Holds office for the life of the Lok Sabha and continues to **hold office even after its dissolution until a new House is convened**.
- Acts as the final interpreter of the Constitution and Rules of Procedure in the Lok Sabha.
- Has the final authority to decide whether a **Bill is a Money (Article 110) Bill**.
- Decides matters related to **disqualification under the Tenth Schedule (Prohibition of Defection Act)**.

Regionalization of Constitution to raise awareness

- **Context:** On the occasion of **International Mother Language Day**, the Vice President released the updated Tamil and Gujarati language versions of the Constitution of India and the eighth edition of the **English-Hindi Legal Dictionary**.
- It was said that providing the **Constitution in regional languages** would increase legal awareness and democratic participation.
- Official versions were published in **Bodo, Dogri, Santali and Nepali** for the first time in the last 10 years.
- He cited **Mahatma Gandhi's statement** that language is a bridge to the cultural sensibilities of a country and **Subramania Bharati's** emphasis that Indians should be united in serving Mother India despite speaking many languages.

Constitution of India

- The Constitution of India was adopted on **November 26, 1949**.
- It came into force on **January 26, 1950**, and this date is celebrated as **Republic Day in India** every year.
- The Constitution declares India to be a **sovereign, socialist, secular and democratic** republic.
- **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar** is considered the chief architect of the Indian Constitution.

Supreme Court - Rules for Solid Waste Management

- **Context:** The Supreme Court, while hearing appeals filed against the judgments of the

National Green Tribunal, has issued **new guidelines for solid waste management to be followed across the country.**

- **A clean and hygienic environment is part of the right to life.** The court noted that negligence in the matter of solid waste can also affect health and economy.
- **District Collectors were ordered to conduct a solid waste management survey and submit a time-bound action report to the Chief Secretary.**
- **Corporations, municipalities and village panchayats were urged to follow the solid waste rules 100%.**
- District Collectors should be given the power to monitor the solid waste handling system and report to the concerned departments.
- **The new rules related to solid waste will come into effect from April 1.** A copy of the order should be given to those who generate excessive waste by March 31.
- Solid waste management rules should be included in the school curriculum and translated into local languages.
- Violations should not only be considered administrative misconduct, but should be subject to fines and strict action.
- In case of repeated violations, criminal cases should be pursued under environmental laws.
- **Local governments should take steps to create awareness among the public and encourage the habit of separating and handing over waste at home.**

Union Cabinet Approves Kerala's Name Change

- **Context:** The Union Cabinet has approved the name change of the state of **Kerala to Keralam.**

After this, the President will send the Kerala Bill 2026 to the state legislature.

Legal Procedure

- The bill will indicate the name change in all languages, **including the 8th Schedule of the Constitution.**
- After the approval of the state legislature, the Union government will introduce the bill in Parliament and pass it.
- Once all the procedures are completed, the **name “Keralam”** will be officially announced.
- The **First Schedule of the Constitution lists the states and union territories.**
- **Article 3** of the Constitution of India empowers the Union to change the name of the existing states.
- **Kerala was formed on November 1, 1956, under the States Reorganisation Act.**
- Before introducing such a bill in Parliament, the President has to hear the views of the concerned state legislature.

States that have changed their names

- **United Provinces became Uttar Pradesh** (1950): The first state to be renamed.
- **Travancore-Cochin became Kerala** (1956): Renamed during the state reorganization.
- **Madras State became Tamil Nadu** (1969): Officially changed on 14 January 1969.
- **Mysore became Karnataka** and was renamed in 1973.
- **Uttarangal was renamed Uttarakhand** in 2007.

Appointment of Chief Justice of the High Court

- Context: The Supreme Court Collegium has decided to transfer the judge who will be

appointed as the Chief Justice of the High Court two months in advance.

- The current Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, M.M. Srivastava, will retire on March 5.
- The Supreme Court Collegium has recommended the appointment of Sushrut Arvind Dharmadhikari (from Madhya Pradesh) as the new Chief Justice.
- The judge who will take oath as the Chief Justice of the High Court will be transferred to the High Court two months in advance. This will enable him to know the environment and situation of the concerned High Court and work better before the vacancy occurs there.
- The Supreme Court Collegium has taken this policy decision to strengthen the administration and quality of justice.

Collegium

- The Second Judges Case (1993) established the Collegium system for judicial appointments in India.
- The Collegium is a body for the appointment and transfer of judges in the Supreme Court and High Courts.

Appointment of High Court Judges

- Article 217 of the Constitution: The President appoints a judge of a High Court in consultation with the Chief Justice of India (CJI) and the Governor of the state.
- While appointing a judge other than the Chief Justice, the Chief Justice of the High Court is consulted.

INDIAN ECONOMY

CHAKRA' – Centre of Excellence (CoE)

- **Context:** State Bank of India (SBI) has launched 'CHAKRA' – Centre of Excellence (CoE). To finance sunrise sectors critical to India's economic development and transformation.
- The Centre will function as a **knowledge-driven platform to facilitate funding for next-generation, technology-led and sustainability-focused industries.**
- **By 2030, these sectors are expected to unlock, Cumulative capital expenditure exceeding ₹100 lakh crore.** CHAKRA aims to enable and channel this investment.

CHAKRA Focus Areas

- Renewables
- Data Centres
- E-Mobility & Charging Infrastructure
- Advanced Cell Chemistry / Battery Technologies
- Semiconductors
- Green Hydrogen and Ammonia
- Decarbonization
- Smart Infrastructure

Technology & Innovation

- Will drive **technology adoption and AI-led innovation**
- Provides strategic advisory support to:
 - SBI's **Project Finance & Structuring teams**
 - The **broader Indian financial ecosystem**

16th Finance Commission

- **Context:** Despite five southern States being assigned a collectively higher share under the

vertical distribution scheme of the 16th Finance Commission (FC) than in the past, Tamil Nadu's share has seen only a marginal rise.

Marginal Increase for Tamil Nadu

- Tamil Nadu's share rose from **4.079% (15th FC) to 4.097% (16th FC).**
- Net increase of just **0.44%**, termed "**virtually nothing**" by public finance experts.

Comparison with Other Southern States

- Telangana: +3.43%
- Andhra Pradesh: +4.2%
- Karnataka: +13.27%
- Kerala: +23.74%
- **Kerala's increase is second-highest nationally, after Haryana (24.52%).**

Finance Commission

- The Finance Commission is a constitutional body in India established under Article 280 of the Constitution.
- It is constituted by the **President of India every 5 years or earlier.** It consist of Chairman and 4 other members appointed by the president.
- The Commission plays a crucial role in maintaining fiscal **federalism, ensuring effective governance, and addressing economic disparities among states.**

16th Finance Commission

- The 16th Finance Commission, commencing **April 1, 2026, is chaired by Dr Arvind Panagariya.**
- The government has accepted its key recommendation to maintain the states' share in central taxes at 41% for the period of 2026-31.
- The 16th Finance Commission functions **under Article 280 of the Constitution, guiding fiscal relations between the Union and the States.**

Functions

- **Vertical Devolution:** The distribution of net tax proceeds between the Centre and the States.
- **Horizontal Devolution:** The allocation of these proceeds among the States themselves.
- **Grants-in-Aid: Principles governing financial assistance to States from the Consolidated Fund of India (Article 275).**

Grants-in-Aid to States

- Lays down principles for grants-in-aid of State revenues.
- Aims to address fiscal imbalances and support essential public services.

Strengthening State Finances

- Suggests measures to augment the Consolidated Fund of States.
- Focus on improving fiscal capacity and long-term financial sustainability.

Support to Local Bodies

- Recommends resource transfers to Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).
- Enhances grassroots governance and service delivery.

Disaster Management Financing

- Reviews existing arrangements for disaster risk management and response.
- Suggests funding mechanisms for relief, rehabilitation, and preparedness.
- The 16th FC recommended including **Heatwaves and Lightning in the list of nationally notified disasters**, allowing states to access central funds for these events.
- **Centre-State Cost Sharing**
 - 90:10 for Northeastern & Himalayan states.
 - 75:25 for all other states.

Orange Economy

- **Context:** The Union Budget 2026–27 highlighted creative industries as a key driver of services-led economic growth. This marks a clear policy push towards **strengthening India's Orange Economy**

Orange Economy

- Orange Economy also known as the **Creative Economy**. A knowledge-based sector where value is created from **Ideas, Cultural capital, Intellectual Property (IP)**.
- Focuses on **intangible assets** rather than physical goods.

Origin of the Term

- Coined by Iván Duque Márquez (former President of Colombia) and Felipe Buitrago. Introduced in their 2013 book, **The Orange Economy: An Infinite Opportunity**.
- The color orange symbolizes **culture, creativity, and identity across civilizations**.

Global Significance

- Generates **over \$2 trillion annually worldwide**.
- Provides employment to nearly **50 million people globally**.

RBI MPC Raises Collateral-Free Loan

- **Context:** The RBI Monetary Policy Committee has increased the collateral-free loan limit for micro and small enterprises (MSEs) from ₹10 lakh to ₹20 lakh.
- The new limit will apply to all eligible loans sanctioned or renewed on or after April 1, 2026.
- The RBI Monetary Policy Committee reviewed existing credit norms for micro and small enterprises.
- The ₹10 lakh collateral-free loan limit had remained unchanged since 2010 and lost relevance due to inflation.

- Rising prices, input costs, and operating expenses increased the funding needs of small businesses. To address this, the RBI MPC doubled the collateral-free loan limit to ₹20 lakh.
- The objective is to **keep loan support meaningful in real (inflation-adjusted) terms.**
- The decision covers banks and all RBI-regulated lending institutions.
- The Monetary Policy Committee meets at **least four times** a year.
- A quorum of at least four members is required for the meeting. Decisions are made by majority vote.

RBI Enhances Collateral-Free Loan Limit for MSEs

Reserve Bank's Monetary Policy Stance

- Context: In February 2026, RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) **kept the repo rate unchanged at 5.25%**, after a 25 bps cut in December 2025.
- The **monetary policy stance** remains **neutral**, with no immediate commitment to rate hikes or cuts.
- **GDP growth forecast for FY26** revised upward from 7.3% to **7.4%**.
- **Retail inflation projection for FY26** slightly increased from 2.0% to **2.1%**.
- Context: RBI has increased the collateral-free loan limit for **Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) from ₹10 lakh to ₹20 lakh.**
- Banks are also advised to extend **collateral-free loans up to ₹20 lakh** to all units financed under the **Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) administered by KVIC**
- Banks may raise the collateral-free threshold to ₹25 lakh for MSEs with a good repayment track record and sound financial position, subject to internal policies.

Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP)

Monetary Policy Committee 2016

- **Monetary Policy Framework Agreement (2015)** Signed between GoI and RBI based on **Urjit Patel Committee** recommendations to formalize **inflation targeting.**
- Its responsibility is to determine the repo rate to control inflation.
- It comprises the RBI Governor (Chairperson), the Deputy Governor (in charge of monetary policy), one officer nominated by the RBI, and three external members nominated by the Government.
- The **external members** serve for a term of **four years**, while the **Governor and Deputy Governor** serve as members by **virtue of their office.**
- PMEGP is a Central Sector Scheme.
- Administering Ministry: **Implemented by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).**
- Implementing Agency: **Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) at the national level.**

Eligibility

- Applicants must be **18 years or above.**
- **No income ceiling** for assistance under PMEGP.
- For manufacturing projects **above ₹10 lakh** → **Minimum VIII standard pass**
- For Business/Service projects **above ₹5 lakh** → **Minimum VIII standard pass**

Objectives

- To create self-employment opportunities in **both rural and urban areas** through new micro-enterprises.
- To bring together traditional artisans, rural and urban unemployed youth and provide **employment near their place of residence**.
- To ensure sustainable employment, helping reduce migration of rural youth to urban centres.
- To enhance the wage-earning capacity of workers and artisans and contribute to overall employment growth.

Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)

- It is a **statutory body** established under the **Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act of 1956**.
- It is an apex organization under the **Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises**.
- The KVIC is charged with the **planning, promotion, organisation and implementation of programmes** for the development of Khadi and other village industries in rural areas.

New Series of the Consumer Price Index (CPI)

- **Context:** Based on 2023-24 consumption patterns, India's new CPI series (2024 base year 100) replaces the 2012-based series.

Key features of CPI 2024 series:

- The CPI 2024 series Classifies prices into **12 categories** like **health, transport, education, and communication**, improving clarity over the previous 6 categories.
- The price basket now includes **358 goods and services** instead of **299, reflecting current**

consumption patterns for more accurate inflation measurement.

- More services, such as education, transport, healthcare, and OTT platforms, are included to account for increased household spending on services.

▪ **Inflation data** is available monthly for India overall, as well as separately for each state, rural, and urban areas, allowing detailed analysis.

- Prices are collected digitally via tablets, online marketplace prices are included, official government rates (LPG, petrol, rail fares) are used, and rural house rent is included for the first time.

▪ With the **reduction of food and beverage weight** from **45.86% to 36.75%**, inflation measurement becomes more accurate.

- For guiding **monetary policy, budget planning, and ensuring macroeconomic stability**, the CPI now provides more accurate inflation data.

▪ By providing back data and adopting a **five-year revision cycle**, comparability and relevance of the CPI can be maintained

Consumer Price Index (CPI)

- It measures the **average change in prices of a fixed basket of goods and services** consumed by households over time.

▪ It published by **Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** through NSO (**National Statistical Office**).

Base year:

- **New base:** 2024 = 100
- **Earlier base:** 2012 = 100

Union Cabinet Approves Startup India Fund of Funds 2.0

- Context: The Union Cabinet has recently sanctioned the creation of the **Startup India Fund of Funds 2.0 (FoF 2.0)** with a total corpus of ₹10,000 crore to channel **venture capital into India's fast-growing startup ecosystem.**

About Startup India Fund of Funds 2.0

- FoF 2.0 builds on the success of the Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS 1.0) launched in 2016 under the Startup India initiative, which **aimed to fill funding gaps and stimulate domestic venture capital investments.**
- Under FFS 1.0, the ₹10,000 crore corpus was deployed across 145 Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs).
- These AIFs collectively invested over ₹25,500 crore in more than 1,370 startups across sectors including **AI, robotics, clean tech, fintech, healthcare, manufacturing, biotech, and space technology.**
- The initiative played a pivotal role in **supporting first-time founders and attracting private capital to strengthen India's venture capital ecosystem.**

Objectives of FoF 2.0

- To expand startup investments beyond major metro cities, ensuring innovation reaches all regions of the country.
- To support startups developing globally competitive technologies, products, and solutions, advancing India's innovation-driven growth agenda.
- To align with the government's **Viksit Bharat @ 2047 vision, fostering economic resilience, enhanced manufacturing, job creation, and positioning India as a global innovation hub.**

Core Sector Growth Slows to 4% in January

- Context: Growth of India's eight key infrastructure sectors slowed to 4% in January

(two-month low). It was 5.1% in January 2025 and 4.7% in December 2025.

- Crude oil and natural gas output recorded negative growth in January.
- Production growth of coal and cement moderated to 3.1% and 10.7% during the month under review against 4.6% and 14.3%, respectively, in January 2025.
- However, fertilizer, steel and electricity output recorded a positive growth during the month.

IIP Outlook

- ICRA Ltd. expects Index of Industrial Production (IIP) growth to slow.
- IIP growth likely to ease to 5.5% in January from 7.8% in December.
- Slowdown described as broad-based, with 7 of 8 sectors showing weaker YoY performance.

Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAC)

- Context: **India and France** have signed an Amending Protocol to update the 1992 Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAC) to align it with international tax standards.

About the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAC) 1992

- It is also known as a double taxation avoidance agreement or tax treaty.
- It is designed to ensure that the same income is not taxed in both the country where it is earned and the country where the taxpayer is resident (country of residence).

Key Features of the Revised India-France DTAC

- **Capital Gains Taxation:** It gives a company full taxing rights on gains arising from the sale of its shares to the country of residence.
- **Revised dividend rates:** Replaces the standard 10% rate with a split rate of 5% for holders of at least 10% of the company's capital and 15% for all other cases.

- **MFN clause removal:** Formally removes the most-favoured-nation (MFN) clause, ending interpretation conflicts and ensuring that treaty benefits are limited to specific agreed terms.
- **BEPS integration:** Incorporates provisions from the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) Multilateral Instrument (MLI) to prevent tax avoidance by multinational enterprises.
- **Enhanced cooperation:** Updates the rules on exchange of information and introduces a new article on assistance in tax collection to combat financial evasion.
- **Service Permanent Establishment (PE):** Expands the scope of permanent establishment by including service PE and aligns the definition of fees for technical services with international models.

Objectives

- Promote stronger collaboration between the Central and State Governments for MSME growth and development.
- Improve the impact of existing MoMSME initiatives, particularly those focused on technology upgradation.
- Develop and deepen the receivables financing ecosystem for MSMEs.
- Strengthen the functioning of the Credit Guarantee Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE), including extending credit guarantees for environmentally sustainable (green) initiatives and women-led micro and small enterprises.
- Minimize the problem of delayed payments faced by micro and small enterprises (MSEs).

Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP)

- Context: The 5th National MSME Council recently assessed the implementation status of the World Bank-assisted RAMP Programme.

About RAMP

- RAMP is a World Bank-supported Central Sector Scheme designed to strengthen the performance of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).
- It seeks to improve their access to markets, finance, and technology by expanding and improving the reach of existing schemes of the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MoMSME).
- The RAMP programme aims to boost MSME productivity and competitiveness by encouraging technology adoption, innovation, digital transformation, better market linkages, improved credit access, and environmentally sustainable practices.

Indian Economic Growth 2025-26

- Context: The Indian economy has registered a growth of 7.8 percent in the third quarter (October-December) of the current financial year 2025-26.
- Data released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

Method of calculation

- The economy has registered a growth of 7.8 percent in the third quarter of the current financial year.
- The economic growth in the same period last year was 6.2 percent.
- This growth was 8.2 percent in the previous second quarter.
- The central government has now changed the base year in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) calculation method from 2011-12 to 2022-23.
- According to the new calculation method, India's overall growth in the current financial year is estimated to be 7.6 percent. This is higher than the previously projected 7.4 percent.

TAMIL NADU

INITIATIVES / SCHEMES

Finger Millet Procurement Scheme – 2025–2026

- The objective of this scheme is to procure finger millet directly from farmers and provide them with a fair price.
- This scheme is implemented by the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation (TNCSC).
- The procurement period is from **November 1, 2025, to August 31, 2026 (subject to extension later)**.
- The districts where procurement will take place are **Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Erode, and Salem**. Currently, 9 direct procurement centres are operational in these districts.

Satellite Tracker Project for Sea Turtle Conservation

- **Context:** The satellite tracker project is a crucial initiative to protect the lifestyle, migration, and nesting sites of sea turtles.
- This project aims to ensure the conservation of Olive Ridley sea turtles.
- It involves scientifically studying the travel routes, migration patterns, and nesting habits of sea turtles.
- This project is being implemented jointly by the **Government of Tamil Nadu and the Wildlife Institute of India**.
- Satellite Tracker Operation
- So far, satellite trackers have been fitted to 8 sea turtles.
- Data related to their movement is being monitored directly.

- **5 turtles fitted with trackers:** Arasi, Kayal, Iniya, Malar, Aathirai.

- This project has confirmed the habit of returning to the same beach for nesting.

Tamil Nadu Global Tourism Summit 2026

- **Context:** To put Tamil Nadu on the map as the destination for art and cultural tourism, a “Tamil Biennale” will be organised in **January 2027**, Chief Minister said at the **Tamil Nadu Global Tourism Summit 2026**.
- Through 127 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), an investment of Rs. 22,794.78 crore in the tourism sector was confirmed at the summit.
- Several tourism development projects were inaugurated in places like **Poompohar, Chidambaram, Mamallapuram, Thirukkadaiyur, and Tharangambadi**.

Mamallapuram Development

- Creation of a **Special Area Development Authority**

- **₹100 crore** allocated for world-class tourism infrastructure

Tourism Policy Implementation

- Under **Tamil Nadu Tourism Policy 2023**, SIPCOT will identify tourist locations and develop facilities
- **Four special tourist destinations** identified in **Kanniyakumari, Kallakurichi, Erode, and Thoothukudi**

VinGroup Investment

- VinGroup Asia signed an MoU to set up world-class amusement parks, hotels, and EV mobility solutions

The renovated eco-park at Navalur Lake

- **Context:** The Navalur Lake in the Siruseri SIPCOT IT Park complex was desilted and

an **eco-park** was developed at a cost of Rs. 30 crore.

- **The Siruseri SIPCOT IT Park was established in 2002** on 782.51 acres, providing employment to approximately 1 lakh people and attracting investments worth Rs. 14,000 crore.
- The **Navalur Lake** has been expanded to an area of 33.43 acres, with strengthened embankments, and parks, lawns, walking and cycling tracks have been created.
- The eco-park includes an environmental awareness center, a children's play area, open-air fitness facilities, a bird-watching center, an open-air amphitheater, an administrative office, a restaurant, gazebos, a sewage treatment plant, and security facilities.
- This project is designed to **improve groundwater recharge and ensure environmental sustainability.**

En Uur En Kanavu Thittam

- Context: The Handloom Department Minister launched a new scheme called "**En Uur En Kanavu Thittam**".
- **The objective of this project** is to assess the reach and effectiveness of government welfare schemes among the people, identify unmet needs, and propose new initiatives.

About the "En Uur En Kanavu" Thittam

- The '**En Uur En Kanavu**' thittam is a visionary initiative launched by the Government of Tamil Nadu to achieve sustainable and **inclusive rural/urban development in Tamil Nadu by 2030.**
- It aims to prepare a **development plan report for 2030** by obtaining suggestions from local representatives and the general public.

Key Features of the Project

- Developing strategies to achieve better

infrastructure and sustainable **development by 2030.**

- Consultations are conducted under the leadership of District Collectors with the public, **Members of Parliament/Legislative Assembly, and local representatives.**
- Suggestions are received regarding the development works needed in **rural and urban areas (universities, flyovers, trade centers).**
- This is part of a new initiative called '**Tell Your Dream**' (Ungal Kanavai Sollungal).

'En Kanavu En Ethirkaalam' Scheme

- Context: The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu launched the '**En Kanavu En Ethirkaalam**' scheme and website in **Tindivanam, Villupuram district.**

Scheme Objective

- The '**En Kanavu En Ethirkaalam**' scheme is being implemented to **collect the dreams of every family** and to understand the aspirations of the younger generation and collect their dreams.
- To implement this scheme and record the dreams of the youth, a website called '**En Kanavu En Ethirkaalam**' has also been created through the **Department of Youth Welfare and Sports Development.**

- Based on the dreams registered on this website, schemes for youth welfare will be formulated, and their future dreams will be fulfilled.

"Unga Kanava Sollunga" Scheme

- To **identify the future dreams and needs of the people of Tamil Nadu**, by directly visiting their residences and inquiring about them.
- Based on this, the "**Unga Kanava Sollunga**" scheme was launched by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on January 9, 2026, in **Tiruvallur district**, to initiate new schemes.

Glow garden

- **Context:** The State's first glow garden, a day-and-night entertainment hub, has opened on East Raja Street in Mamallapuram. It was inaugurated by Chief Minister.
- An amphitheatre, food kiosks, selfie points, walkways lined with artificial trees, plants and flowers, and seats that light up are among the features of the garden that has come up on land belonging to the **Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation**.

Sea Turtle Conservation Centre

- **Context :** CM M.K. Stalin laid the foundation for **Tamil Nadu's first Sea Turtle Conservation Centre at Guindy**, Chennai on February 6, 2026, costing ₹14.50 crore.
- The centre is set up under the **Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission with World Bank** support to tackle scientific and operational challenges in sea turtle conservation.
- It will have infrastructure for scientific research, telemetry, monitoring, and centralized data management.
- Thousands of Olive Ridley sea turtles lay eggs annually along Tamil Nadu's coast.

Olive Ridley

- Olive Ridley is an **endangered species**.
- It protected under the **Wildlife Protection Act 1972** (Schedule I) and **CITES Appendix I**.

Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission

- In **2023-24**, Tamil Nadu launched the **Coastal Restoration Mission** covering **14 districts**, **1,076 km** with **World Bank** support for **5 years**.
- Focus: **coastal biodiversity, protection, livelihoods, pollution control**.

- **Tamil Nadu Blue Carbon Agency** to restore **mangroves, corals, salt marshes**.
- Key projects: **Biodiversity Park (Kadambur), Sea Turtle Centres (Nagapattinam & Chennai), Dugong Centre (Manora), Coastal Wetlands Restoration**.
- **11 beaches** targeted for **Blue Flag certification**.

Tamil Nadu State Urban Greening Policy 2026

- **Context :** The Chief Minister released the '**Tamil Nadu State Urban Greening Policy 2026**'.
- It provides a **comprehensive framework** to integrate **trees, urban forests, parks, wetlands, and blue-green infrastructure** into city planning.
- It aims to tackle **heat island effect, air pollution, biodiversity loss, and shrinking green spaces** due to urbanization.
- It aligns with **state climate change goals** and ongoing **green initiatives**.
- It focuses on **ecological integration** in urban development for **sustainable cities**.

Key Features of the Policy

- **State-level coordination committee** and **urban forestry division** to be created under Municipal Administration.
- **4 city-level urban biodiversity plans**, GIS mapping, carbon accounting, and monitoring dashboards will be prepared.
- All departments to participate in **greening and land restoration**; "Green Fee" may be collected; incentives for achieving **Urban Greening Factor**.
- Every **urban local body** to maintain at least **15% green cover**.
- Implementation of **3-30-300 urban green guidelines**, Singapore Index, local tree selection, and urban nurseries.

- Development of **tree parks, biodiversity parks, and urban forests** with community participation.
- **Monitoring** through dashboards and **annual urban green reports**.
- Integrates **ecological aspects into urban planning** for climate-resilient, sustainable cities.
- Policy aligns with **SDG 11 – sustainable cities and communities**.
- The government was **providing sanitation workers with housing, entrepreneurship loans, life insurance, and assistance for the education of their children**.
- Many welfare schemes are provided through the **“Sanitation Workers Welfare Board” established in 2007**.
- Skill training, safety equipment, health insurance, health check-ups and alternative livelihood activities are provided without any hindrance through the **“Sanitation Workers Development Scheme”**.

Jaguar Land Rover plant

- Context: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister inaugurated the ₹9,000-crore **Tata Motors Jaguar Land Rover car manufacturing plant** and rolled out the **first Range Rover Evoque at Panapakkam village in Ranipet district**.
- The plant would manufacture 2.5 lakh vehicles a year over the next 5-7 years for domestic and international consumers, and is expected to create over 5,000 direct and indirect jobs.
- **Vietnamese electric vehicle (EV) maker VinFast’s** first manufacturing plant in India was opened at **Thoothukudi in August 2025**.
- **Chennai is nicknamed the Detroit of Asia (or the Detroit of India)** due to the presence of major automobile manufacturing units and allied industries around the city.
- The families of the sanitation workers receive subsidized loans under the **Chief Minister’s Adi Dravidar and Tribal Socio-Economic Development Scheme** to start their own businesses.
- The children of the sanitation workers are also provided with various welfare schemes, including a new higher education scholarship scheme.

Food Scheme for Sanitation Workers

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister launched a **free meal scheme for sanitation workers of the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) on November 15, 2025**.
- The new scheme will provide **nutritious meals**, which will be served in clean lunch boxes to keep the food warm.
- The food will be served at buildings owned by local civic bodies located conveniently near their workplaces.

Free meal programme for sanitation workers

- Context: Chief Minister extended the **free meal programme for sanitation workers in urban local bodies** to one lakh more workers. He launched the programme last year for 29,455 workers of the **Greater Chennai Corporation**.
- The extension, launched by the Chief Minister at an event held at **Polivakkam in Tiruvallur district**.

Bonded Labour Abolition Day Awareness

- **Context:** With the aim of completely eradicating the bonded labour system, a **state-level Bonded Labour Abolition Day awareness meeting** was held at Thyagaraya Nagar, Chennai.

- The **Minister of Labour and Welfare** said that the target has been set to make **Tamil Nadu a bonded labour free state by 2030**.
- If bonded labourers are found, they are **rescued within 24 hours**, issued a certificate of release by the **Revenue Commissioner** and immediate relief is provided.

Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act, 1976

- The Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act, 1976, **was enacted in India on February 9, 1976**.
- It provides for the **legal abolition of bonded labour** and provides for the identification, release and rehabilitation of bonded labourers.

Constitutional and Legal Framework against Bonded Labour

- **Part III, Article 21**- Protection of life and personal liberty; this includes the right to live with dignity.
- **Part III, Article 23** - Prohibition of traffic in human beings and forced labour.
- **Part III, Article 24** - Prohibition of employment of children in factories, etc.
- **Part IV, Article 42** - Provision for just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief.
- **Part IV, Article 43** - Living wage, etc., for workers.
- **Part IV, Article 46** - Promotion of educational and economic interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections.

Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023

- Section 143 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, punishes trafficking and forced labour, strengthening criminal action against bonded labour practices.

Current status of bonded labour in India

- According to the Global Slavery Index 2023 published by the Walk Free Foundation, **India ranks 34th out of 160 countries**.

- Approximately **8 out of every 1,000 people** are victims of modern slavery.

Palliative Care Centre for End-of-Life Cancer Patients

- **Context:** For the first time in India, a government-run **Palliative Care Centre for cancer patients** in the end-of-life stage is to be started.
- The Public Health Secretary has issued a government order to set up the centre.
- More than **1 lakh people are diagnosed with cancer in Tamil Nadu every year**. Women are the most affected.
- Breast cancer occurs in **16.7 out of a lakh women**. Oral cancer affects **13.6 out of a lakh men**.

Nutrition Box for low birthweight Babies

- **Context:** Tamil Nadu launched the **Nutrition Box for low birthweight Babies** and the **Maternity App to reduce maternal and child mortality**.
- **About 8 lakh babies** are born yearly in the state, 20% of those in government hospitals weigh **under 2 kg**, totalling around 52,000 low birth weight babies.
- The **Nutrition Box** includes **iron supplements, vitamin B3, and multivitamin drops to improve nutrition and immunity**.
- The **Maternity App** monitors **pregnancy registration, antenatal check-ups, delivery, newborn growth, vaccination, and aftercare**, and it is India's first such state-level implementation.
- **Infant Mortality Rate in Tamil Nadu** has declined from **10.4 (2021-22) to 7.7 (2024-25)**, and **Maternal Mortality Rate** dropped from **90.5 to 39.5 per lakh pregnancies** in the same

period, making Tamil Nadu the second lowest MMR state in India.

- India's IMR is 25 per 1,000 births (rural 28, urban 18), and national MMR is 88 (2020–22), showing significant improvement.

Thiran 360° web Portal

- Context :** Thiran 360° Portal was launched by the Chief Minister to promote management excellence among government employees.
- Developed by the Department of Human Resource Management and Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation, in collaboration with leading vocational training providers.
- Aims to enhance skills in emerging technologies for government employees.
- Offers free online training in Artificial Intelligence, Data Analysis, Project Management, Communication Skills, and more.
- Training is accessible through the Thiran 360° Web Portal to improve employee efficiency and capability.

Thervukkalam app

- Context:** The Chief Minister launched the Thervukkalam mobile app to provide notifications for all competitive exams.
- It covers exams conducted by TNPSC, TRB, USRB, and MSRB.
- Users can apply, download hall tickets, and check exam results through the app.
- The app also provides syllabus, previous question papers, free coaching classes, employment news, and educational videos.

SimpleGov Project - Phase II

- Context:** The second phase of SimpleGov Project (Batch II) has been launched with the

aim of "Outcome-based Administration". More than 50 additional key government services are to be included in it.

SimpleGov

- The Government of Tamil Nadu launched the SimpleGov project in November 2023 to simplify services for the public (G2C), businesses (G2B), and government departments (G2G).
- Services are designed to be quick, easy, and transparent through digital platforms.
- In the first phase (Batch I), on 29.05.2025, 10 key government services across multiple sectors were made fully online by the Chief Minister.
- The services were digitally restructured using modern technology, reducing the need for in-person visits and long waiting times.
- Phase II (Batch II) aims for Outcome-based Administration, adding 50 more key government services in a fully digital-first approach.

International Vallalar Conference

- Context:** Chief Minister announced that the birth anniversary of Vallalar will be celebrated for three days every year. The conference is organised by Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department. Also inaugurated the complete portions of Vallalar International Centre in Vadalur.
- He also announced the establishment of a centre for research on the saint in Chennai. It would come up at the HR&CE Department headquarters in Nungambakkam.
- Vallalar's book titled Spiritual Alchemy would be brought out by the HR&CE Department and Vallalar Annadhanam Centres will be established in Mettukuppam, Karunguzhi and Marudhur.

About Vallalar

- Ramalinga Swamikal, widely revered as **Thiruvartuprakasa Vallalar**, arose in 19th-century Tamil Nadu as a radiant **force against ignorance and social injustice**.
- A visionary reformer, he challenged **rigid caste hierarchies and harmful superstitions**, striving to unite people through **spiritual compassion and equality**.
- In 1865, at **Vadalur**, he founded the **Samarasa Suddha Sanmarkka Sangam**, followed by the establishment of the **Sathya Dharma Salai in 1867**.
- Just as he worked to relieve physical hunger, he also sought to eradicate ignorance by founding two learning centers—the **Samarasa Veda School and the Sanmarkka Bodhini**.
- His verses, progressing from intense devotion to universal compassion and social reform, were compiled as the **Thiruvartup**.
- Stressing compassion toward all living beings as the highest virtue, he also authored a prose treatise titled **Jeevakarunya Ozhukkam**.
- Advocating the worship of the Divine as radiant grace—“**Arutperunjothi**,” the Supreme Light of Compassion—he established the **Samarasa Suddha Sanmarka Sathya Gnana Sabha in 1872 near the Dharma Salai, on land gifted by the people of Vadalur**.
- In recognition of his enduring legacy, the Government of India released a commemorative **postage stamp in 2007**.
- Later, in 2021, Chief Minister announced that **October 5, Vallalar’s birth anniversary, would be observed annually as “Dhaniperunkarunai Naal,”** commemorating his **200th birth anniversary** and honouring his message of boundless compassion.

Solar Power Generation Project

- **Context:** Solar power generation project is to be **implemented in government offices across Tamil Nadu**.
- Solar panels are being installed on the roofs of buildings such as corporation, municipal offices, collector offices, government hospitals, schools and colleges.
- The work is being done by **contracting companies through the Green Energy Corporation**, and the contract was issued last year.
- The project is being implemented in government offices in **Chennai, Tiruvallur, Kanchipuram and Chengalpattu districts in the first phase**.
- The electricity generated **will be spent on primary office use**, and the remaining electricity will be **purchased by the Electricity Board**.
- Priority is being **given to hospitals**.
- The work will be completed soon and power generation will start.

Prime Minister’s Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana

- The Central Government launched the **Prime Minister’s Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli yojana on 15 February 2024**.
- The scheme aims to **install solar panels on the roofs of one crore houses in residential areas** at a cost of Rs. 75,021 crore by the financial year 2026-27.
- Under this scheme, households will be **given subsidy to install solar panels on their roofs**. The subsidy will cover up to **40% of the cost of the solar panels**.
- This scheme is implemented by the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Government of India**.

'Tamilar Thadam' Website

- Context: The **Minister of Minority Affairs and Overseas Tamil Welfare**, from the Chief Secretariat, launched the online repository 'Tamilar Thadam' for the welfare of Tamil diaspora.
- It helps in **recording and sharing historical news, research articles, migration notes, and historical events related to the migration of Tamil diaspora** living around the world.

Tamil Manam Project

- **Context:** Under the Tamil Manam Project, appointment orders have been issued to 10 art instructors who have been selected to **work in 8 countries including Reunion, Maldives, Indonesia, Malawi and Cambodia.**

Tamil Manam Project

- The Tamil Nadu government has launched a new project called "Tamil Manam" for the Tamil communities living in the neighbouring countries.
- Under this project, **trained teachers and Tamil artists will conduct training classes directly and teach Tamil language and cultural arts to the neighbouring Tamils.**
- 8 countries have been selected; these include **Reunion, Maldives, Indonesia, Malawi and Cambodia.**

Tamil Nadu Climate Summit 4.0

- Context: The Tamil Nadu State Budget will be formulated to **integrate climate action across schemes implemented by all departments to ensure climate considerations are embedded in governance** at every level, said Chief Minister at the Tamil Nadu Climate Summit 4.0.

State-Level Emission Reduction Targets

- Tamil Nadu to formulate **State-level**

Determined Contributions (SDCs) to cut carbon emissions by 2030.

- Modelled on **India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** under the Paris Agreement.
- Clear targets with concrete implementation measures to be defined.

Expansion of Green Cover

- Distribution of five lakh sandalwood saplings across Tamil Nadu.
- Aim to increase forest and green cover to combat climate change.

Promotion of Green Technologies

- Joint investments by **industries and government institutions.**
- Focus on adoption of **clean and green technologies to reduce emissions.**

Dugong Conservation Initiative

- Foundation laid for the **International Dugong Conservation Centre** in Thanjavur.
- Intended to **strengthen marine biodiversity and dugong conservation efforts.**

Launch of TN-SHORE Scheme

- Launched the **Tamil Nadu Sustainably Harnessing Ocean Resources and Blue Economy (TN-SHORE)** initiative.
- ₹1.7 crore earmarked as revolving funds and micro-credit support.
- Support extended to 34 mangrove conservation committees.
- ₹25 lakh each distributed to three mangrove forest protection committees in **Killai, Cuddalore district.**

Viluthugal - Integrated Service Centre

- Context: The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu inaugurated **105 "Viluthugal - Integrated Service Centres"** at the Secretariat on

16.02.2026, providing integrated services with accessibility for persons with disabilities.

- The Government of Tamil Nadu is implementing the **Viluthugal Integrated Service Centres project with World Bank funding under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Scheme.**
- **6 services are provided** to meet the daily rehabilitation needs of PwDs at the Revenue Divisional Centres: Special Education, Optometry, Hearing and Speech Therapy, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, and Psychotherapy
- Special Education, Physiotherapy, and Psychological Counseling are provided at the Regional Centres
- **PwDs will receive services through a pre-booked appointment, thus reducing waiting times**

Tamil Nadu Rights Project

- The Tamil Nadu Rights Project (Tamil Nadu Rights) is an initiative launched with the **assistance of the World Bank, which aims to empower PwDs** through comprehensive rehabilitation services, social registration, and livelihood support.
- Implemented by the Department of PwDs, **it aims to create an inclusive ecosystem.**

Deployment of Tethered Drones to Prevent Elephant

- Context: Following the success of AI-based cameras in preventing elephant deaths on railway tracks over the past two years, the **Tamil Nadu Forest Department with support from the Tamil Nadu Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Corporation** has now deployed tethered drones.
- It will prevent the elephants from approaching the railway tracks in Madukarai Forest Range.

- The drones will operate **24 hours a day**, each tethered drone is equipped with a thermal camera capable of 360 degree rotation and can detect the elephant movement up to **two kilometres away.**

Hi-Tech Labs in Government-Aided Schools

- **Context:** Tamil Nadu School Education Minister inaugurated 654 hi-tech laboratories. It enhance teaching and learning **using video, audio, and digital tools.**
- **Mechanical laboratories** have been set up in government schools to develop problem-solving skills and teamwork skills of **students of classes 6-9.**
- The labs would support the implementation of schemes such as **Targeted Help for Improving Remediation and Academic Nurturing (THIRAN)** and the **Tamil Nadu School Programme for AI, Robotics & Knowledge of Online Tools (TN SPARK).**

Languages Scheme

- The Tamil Nadu government has implemented the **"Languages Scheme"** to **improve the English proficiency of students of classes 6-8.**
- High-tech laboratories in all **government middle, high and higher secondary schools** are being used for this.
- The scheme helps students improve their **listening, speaking, reading and writing (LSRW) skills** through self-paced learning in a digital manner.

High-tech laboratories

- High-tech laboratories and efficient classrooms **using ICT technology** have been set up in all government schools.
- High-tech labs facilitate teaching and learning with **video, audio and digital tools.**

- The laboratories are equipped with audio-visual and digital tools **aimed at making classroom teaching more interactive and helping students better understand textbook content.**
- AI, mechanical engineering and coding programs like **TN SPARK for grades 6-9** have been implemented in these labs.

TN SPARK

- The **Tamil Nadu School Programme for AI, Robotics & Knowledge of Online Tools (TN SPARK)** is a pilot initiative by the **Department of School Education (DSE), SCERT, and Samagra Shiksha (SS).**
- It aimed at **integrating AI education into the curriculum for Classes 6-9** across 3,000 government schools with functional Hi-Tech labs.
- Launching in the **2025-26 academic year**, the program will deliver foundational education in **Computer Science and AI by leveraging 8,209 Hi-Tech Labs and 22,931 Smart Classrooms** already established statewide.
- Supported by partners like Microsoft, Intel, Cognizant, Namma School Namma Ooru Palli, and Teach for India (PMU), TN SPARK is expected to benefit over 7 lakh students in its pilot phase.

SimpleGov

- **Context:** The Tamil Nadu government recently launched the **simplification, digitisation, and process re-engineering** of a total of **55 government services, as part of the second phase of the SimpleGov initiative.** On February 13, Chief Minister launched the initiative during a function in Chennai.
- SimpleGov is a governance reform initiative **launched in 2023** by the Government of

Tamil Nadu to streamline and simplify administrative processes across departments.

Core Objective

- Systematically simplify rules, procedures, approvals, and service delivery mechanisms
- Reduce bureaucratic delays and enhance transparency
- Improve ease of access to public services

Focus Areas

- Process Re-engineering - Removal of redundant steps and outdated rules
- Digitization - Promoting online applications and approvals
- Time-bound Service Delivery - Ensuring faster approvals
- Transparency & Accountability - Clear guidelines and reduced discretion

Impact Areas

- G2C (Government to Citizen)
 - Simplified access to citizen services (certificates, licenses, welfare schemes)
 - Reduced documentation requirements
 - Faster grievance redressal
- G2B (Government to Business)
 - Streamlined approvals and clearances
 - Improved ease of doing business
 - Reduced compliance burden
- G2G (Government to Government)
 - Simplified inter-departmental coordination
 - Standardized procedures
 - Reduced file movement and duplication

Cross-Sectoral Applicability

- Citizen service delivery
- Welfare scheme implementation
- Business-facing approvals
- Inter-departmental administrative processes

e-Vadagai 2.0 Mobile App

- **Context:** The Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, launched the enhanced mobile app e-Rent 2.0 at Madhikonpalayam, Dharmapuri district.

Purpose of the App

- Simplify the process for farmers to rent agricultural machinery.
- Improve service delivery using modern technology.
- Increase the use of agricultural machinery and implements.

Features

- Farmers can book agricultural machinery online from their location.
- Direct contact between farmers and Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society machinery or private machinery owners.
- Eliminates intermediaries, reducing additional costs.
- Ensures transparency and reliability in service delivery.

Political Training Initiative for Women

- **Context:** In an effort to democratise political knowledge and deepen political consciousness of women, **The Penn Collective (TPC)**, a non-governmental organisation, is organising political training and mentorship for women.
- **Open to women from all political parties as well as independent candidates.**
- Encourages digital engagement and content creation to enhance civic presence and local visibility.

Aim of the Initiative

- **The initiative, Thenkoodu**, seeks to promote political awareness and leadership among women.

- It plans to mentor **100 women and transwomen aspiring to contest in the 2026 local body elections.**

- Focus on building a strong network of grassroots women leaders.

Tamil Nadu Forms Steering Committee for Human Resources for Health

- **Context:** The Tamil Nadu government has set up a **State-level Steering Committee** to prepare a comprehensive **Human Resources for Health (HRH) Strategy**.

- To strengthen the **State's public healthcare workforce through systematic planning and governance.**

- Initiative launched under the **World Bank-supported Enhanced Health Service Delivery Program (EHSDP)**.

Objectives of the HRH Strategy

- Identify and address gaps in: Recruitment, Capacity-building, Workforce distribution, Retention of health workers

- Improve availability, skills and long-term retention of healthcare staff across public facilities.

Three-Tier Implementation Structure

- **Micro Level - Technical Working Groups (TWGs)**

- Responsible for detailed planning, data analysis and drafting of the strategy.

- **Meso Level - Technical Advisory Group (TAG)**

- Provides expert inputs, reviews drafts and refines policy recommendations.

- **Macro Level - State-Level Steering Committee**

- Final decision-making body for approval, governance and overall supervision.

Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS) 2.0

- **Context:** Chief Minister is set to launch the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS) 2.0 and the Digital Fingerprint Collection System (DFCS).
- These projects are of strategic importance and align with the **digital governance and police modernisation initiatives**.
- These projects will be formally launched at all the police station/First Information Report registering units across the State on that day.
- The application has been developed to enhance the **operational efficiency of the police in crime detection, investigation, supervision, and data-driven policing** by leveraging emerging technologies.
- The DFCS enables digital collection, validation, and storage of fingerprint records.

Tamil Nadu's first Dark Sky Park

- **Context:** The Tamil Nadu government has announced the launch of the State's first Dark Sky Park at the Ariyur Shola Reserve Forest in Kolli Hills in Namakkal district.
- Dark Sky Park is a protected landscape with minimal artificial light pollution, enabling clear observation of celestial bodies such as the moon, stars and planets.
- Kolli Hills, with its elevated terrain, dense forest cover and low urban light disturbance, offers ideal conditions for night-sky preservation and astronomical observation.
- The project, announced in the Assembly on June 25, 2024, was established at a cost of ₹1 crore after assessing ecological suitability and sky visibility at the Ariyur Shola Reserve Forest.

- The park is equipped with three advanced telescopes for structured sky-watching sessions and solar panels to power on-site operations sustainably.

Chennai Ula 2.0

- **Context:** 6 special electric air-conditioned tourist buses have been launched under the name "Chennai Ula 2.0".
- 5 traditional buses under the name "Chennai Ula" have been in operation since January 14.
- Ticket fare is Rs. 100 – one ticket can be used for the entire day. You can also get an electronic ticket through the "Chennai One" app.
- Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation (TTDC) was established in 1971.
- Tamil Nadu ranks second in India in terms of tourist arrivals.

Chennai One

- Chennai One is a mobile app launched on September 22, 2025.
- The app acts as an integrated platform for planning and booking trips across the city of Chennai.

ENVIRONMENT

Pennaiyar River Water Tribunal

- **Context:** India's long-running interstate water disputes returned to focus as the Supreme Court intervened in the **Pennaiyar river water conflict between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka**. The apex court directed the Union government to constitute a dedicated water disputes tribunal within a month.
- The Pennaiyar river flows through **Karnataka and Tamil Nadu**, making it an interstate river.
- The dispute arose over Karnataka's **construction of check dams and diversion structures on the river**.

- Tamil Nadu argues that such unilateral actions reduce downstream water flow. The river's waters are critical for agriculture and drinking needs in parts of Tamil Nadu, making the **dispute both economically and socially sensitive.**
- **Part XI, Article 262-** Adjudication of disputes relating to waters of inter-State rivers or river valleys.
- Originates on the eastern slope of **Nandi hills, Karnataka and flows through Tamil Nadu into the Bay of Bengal.**
- Its tributaries including the **Pambar, Markandanadhi, Vaniyar, Chinnar, Kallar, and Thurinjalar.**
- Dugong is found in Gulf of Mannar and at Palk Bay in Tamil Nadu.
- The IUCN status of Dugong 'vulnerable to extinction species'.

Integrated Landbird Survey

- Context: **Integrated Landbird Survey** was conducted on 14th and 15th February 2026.
- The survey was conducted at least 25 locations in each forest division using a 2 km long line transect method.
- Detailed data on birds in various habitats was collected using **direct counting and acoustic survey methods.**
- The main objective is to **generate robust scientific data for long-term monitoring and conservation planning across the state.**
- Since Tamil Nadu is a major biodiversity hub for **both domestic and migratory birds, bird conservation and monitoring is a priority in the state.**

Dugong population in Tamil Nadu

- **Context:** A survey undertaken by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), in collaboration with the Forest Department, along the Tamil Nadu coast has found that there are 158 dugongs in Palk Bay and 112 dugongs in the Gulf of Mannar.
- The estimated population of dugongs in Tamil Nadu has been put at 270.
- Palk Bay and the Gulf of Mannar together now represent the largest viable dugong population in India.
- The Tamil Nadu government is implementing projects such as **India's first Hornbill Conservation Centre at the Anaimalai Tiger Reserve (ATR), Raptor Research Centre under the Advanced Institute of Wildlife Conservation (AIWC), and the Marakkanam International Bird Conservation Centre.**

Dugong Conservation Reserve

- Tamil Nadu is the first state in India to setup Dugong Conservation Reserve in the Palk Bay on the southeast coast.
- It will also construct a Dugong Marine Conservation Reserve in the Gulf of Mannar and Palk Bay areas.
- Dugong or sea cow is an endangered marine mammal. It is the only living species of the order Sirenia.
- **Scientists Urge Withdrawal of Mamallan Reservoir Project**
- **Context:** A group of 22 experts including ecologists, hydrologists, ornithologists, and marine biologists wrote to Chief Minister **requesting withdrawal of the proposed Mamallan Reservoir project in the Kovalam-Nemmeli backwaters.**

- The scientists warned that implementing the project would cause irreversible damage to a vital coastal wetland ecosystem.
- It is found throughout the Indian subcontinent—from northeast Pakistan and southern Nepal to northwest Bangladesh, and across most parts of India, except Assam.

Importance of Tidal Exchange

- Tamil Nadu's own 'Ecosystem Health Card' for wetlands and the Department of Environment's publication on lagoon ecosystems show that brackish wetlands depend on tidal exchange.
- The species plays a vital role in maintaining ecosystems by acting as an important seed disperser.
- According to the IUCN, it is classified as Least Concern.
- Restricting tidal flow, they noted, alters salinity, temperature, and circulation, limiting marine biodiversity.

Ecological Nature of the Backwaters

- The Kovalam-Nemmeli system is described as a tidal marsh ecotone, connected to the Bay of Bengal through the Kovalam and Kokilamedu inlets. It is not an isolated freshwater body.
- The southern stretch near Mamallapuram remains ecologically active due to ongoing tidal inflow.
- The Nemmeli stretch shows early degradation, mainly due to roads and bund construction.
- Retired Indian Police Service Officer Shakeel Akhter is serving as the State Principal Information Commissioner.

Indian Grey Hornbill

- Context: In a public poll conducted by the Forest Department, the Indian Grey Hornbill was selected as the 'Bird of Tirupattur' district in Tamil Nadu, receiving more than 41,000 votes.
- Retired Indian Administrative Service Officer Atulya Mishra and Retired Indian Police Service Officer Abhay Kumar Singh
- They will hold office for a period of three years from the date of their assumption of office.

About the Indian Grey Hornbill

- The Indian Grey Hornbill is a commonly found hornbill species across the Indian subcontinent. It is usually seen in pairs.
- The bird has predominantly grey plumage with a pale grey or whitish underside. Its beak is black or dark grey and features a casque that curves along with the bill.
- Retired Indian Police Service Officer Shakeel Akhter is serving as the State Principal Information Commissioner.

POLITY

State Information Commission

- Context: Two more Information Commissioners have been appointed in the Tamil Nadu State Information Commission.
- The new Information Commissioners are: Retired Indian Administrative Service Officer Atulya Mishra and Retired Indian Police Service Officer Abhay Kumar Singh
- They will hold office for a period of three years from the date of their assumption of office.
- Retired Indian Police Service Officer Shakeel Akhter is serving as the State Principal Information Commissioner.

State Information Commission

- It is a statutory body established under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005.
- The State Information Commission is headed by a State Chief Information Commissioner, and there are a maximum of 10 State Information Commissioners.
- Should not be a member of Parliament or a State Legislative Assembly.
- Tenure: They shall hold office for five years or till the age of 65, whichever comes first.
- Appointment: They are appointed by the Governor on the recommendation of the Committee

- The Chief Minister as Chairman
 - The Leader of the Opposition in the State Legislative Assembly
 - A State Cabinet Minister nominated by the Chief Minister.
- **Removal:** The Governor may remove the State Chief Information Commissioner or the State Information Commissioner from office under certain conditions. They are:
 - If declared bankrupt
 - If convicted of a crime of moral turpitude
 - If engaged in paid work outside official duties
 - If physically or mentally unfit
 - If receiving financial or other benefits that would affect the position
- The exhibition showcased **Thanjavur paintings, terracotta, pottery, Kalamkari, bamboo, fibre, wood, and stone sculpture artifacts.**

Republic Day Parade 2026

- Context: In the Republic Day parade 2026, among the tableaux representing various departments and showcasing government schemes, the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department received the first prize for the best tableau.
- The Chief Minister presented the prize shields to the Youth Welfare and Sports Development Department, which won the second prize, and to the Police Department, which won the third prize.

AWARDS

Awards for Artisans

- **Background:** The Chief Minister inaugurated the grand handicrafts exhibition and seminar organized by the **Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation.**
- The objective is to popularize Tamil Nadu's traditional handicrafts and the skills of its artisans globally.
- Ten artisans above the age of 65 were awarded the **Vazhum Kaivinayi Pokisham** ("Living Craft Treasure") award.
- Each Living Craft Treasure awardee received Rs. 1 lakh, an 8-gram gold medal, a copper plaque, and a certificate.
- Ten artisans were awarded Poompuhar State Awards for their outstanding contribution and creativity in the handicrafts sector.
- **Poompuhar State awardees received Rs. 50,000, a 4-gram gold medal, a copper plaque, and a certificate.**

HISTORY & CULTURE

Tamil Nadu Excavation Museum

Keeladi Museum

- **Keeladi Museum located at Kondagai in Sivaganga district**

Theme: materials excavated in Keeladi

- The Keeladi Museum evokes Tamil Nadu's artistic heritage. Excavations here revealed **Sangam-age characteristics and continuity of brick structures.**
- Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS) dates from stratigraphical contexts show that Keeladi's inhabitants were literate as early as the 6th Century BCE and lived in an urban civilisation along River Vaigai.
- The museum features organised galleries with informative panels and curated archaeological exhibits in six thematic sections
 - Vaigai and Keeladi
 - Agrarian and Water Management

- Ceramic Industries
- Weaving and Beads
- Sea Trade
- Lifestyle

Excavated features

- Aligned **burnt-brick walls, rectangular brick tanks identified as dyeing vats, covered drainage of terracotta pipes and bricks, and terracotta ring wells** for water management.

Porunai Museum

- Porunai Museum located at Reddiarpatti in Tirunelveli district.
- **Theme: Materials excavated at Sivagalai, Adichanallur and Korkai.**
- These archaeological sites in the Porunai river valley contribute significantly to the understanding of **the region's cultural heritage, social life, and historical evolution.**
- The museum features a **5D theatre, VR boat simulators depicting ancient maritime trade, and more than 33,000 artefacts** highlighting early Tamil literacy and metallurgical practices.
- It also displays underwater finds, **including shipwreck materials, lead ingots, and Roman pottery, pointing to ancient trade links with Rome, China, and Southeast Asia.**

Gangaikonda Cholapuram Museum

- **Gangaikonda Cholapuram Museum located at Gangaikonda Cholapuram in Ariyalur district**
- **Theme: Rajendra Chola's imperial legacy, maritime trade and diplomacy.**
- The museum at Gangaikonda Cholapuram, **a city established by Rajendra Chola I to mark his conquest of the north,** is being developed to preserve and present the historical and cultural heritage of the Imperial Chola Dynasty.

- It will display brick remains of the royal palace at Maligaimedu, war trophies, stone sculptures, inscriptions, architectural fragments, and archaeological artefacts from the region, with interpretative panels and visual exhibits explaining the significance of the capital founded by Rajendra Chola and its role in South Indian history.

Grand Chola Museum

- **Grand Chola Museum located at Tamil University in Thanjavur.**
- **Theme: Historical significance of the Chola dynasty.**
- Construction is under way to establish the museum on the campus of Tamil University in Thanjavur. It will foreground the historical significance of the Chola dynasty.
- A centrepiece of the museum will be a 125-foot-tall statue of Emperor Raja Raja Chola I.

Naavai Museum

- **Naavai Museum located at Mandapam in Ramanathapuram district**
- **Theme: Materials excavated at Alagankulam district.**
- The ancient Tamil word **Naavai, which means a large ship,** lends its name to the proposed museum, envisioned as the State's premier centre for maritime history and archaeology.
- The historical basis for this lies in **the extensive archaeological finds from Alagankulam,** an ancient port located at **the confluence of the Vaigai and the Bay of Bengal.**
- Between the 2nd Century BCE and the 5th Century CE, the port functioned as a **major Pandya trade hub, linking South India with Rome, Egypt, and Southeast Asia.**
- Among the most striking exhibits will be the 'ship graffito' – a rare potsherd bearing the

incised image of a three-masted sailing vessel – offering material evidence of advanced seafaring traditions.

Noyyal Museum

- Noyyal Museum located at Perundurai in Erode district.
- **Theme: Material excavated at Kodumanal.**
- The Noyyal Museum is dedicated to the excavations at Kodumanal, referred to as Kodumanam in the Padhitrupathu of Sangam literature.
- Situated on the northern bank of the Noyyal, Kodumanal functioned as a multi-industrial settlement between the 5th Century BCE and the 3rd Century CE.
- The museum is intended to foreground the industrial heritage of the Noyyal river valley, highlighting Kodumanal's contributions to early science and technology.
- The site was a major centre for the production of semi-precious stone beads, with thousands of beads made of beryl, carnelian, agate, quartz, lapis lazuli, and sapphire being discovered at various stages of manufacture.
- While beryl was sourced from nearby Padiyur, lapis lazuli originated in Afghanistan, pointing to extensive long-distance trade networks.
- Evidence of furnaces and high-carbon steel tools indicates a sophisticated iron-smelting tradition.
- Kodumanal has also yielded one of the largest collections of Tamil-Brahmi inscribed potsherds in the State, suggesting widespread literacy among artisans and traders.
- The museum will also present the region's megalithic burial culture, including menhirs and cist burials.

Tamizhar Panbattu Arunkatchiyagam

- Tamizhar Panbattu Arunkatchiyagam located at Mamallapuram in Chengalapattu district.
- **Theme: Tamil cultural heritage, with an emphasis on architecture and artistic traditions that reached their Zenith during the Pallava period.**
- Known in ancient literature as Thirukadalmallai, Mamallapuram in Chengalpattu district, the ancient port city of the Tamil country, has stood for centuries as a powerful symbol of maritime strength, architectural innovation – exemplified by rock-cut temples – and Tamil cultural diplomacy.
- Flourishing from the Sangam Age and reaching its architectural zenith under the Pallavas between the 6th and 9th Centuries CE, it was not only a centre of trade but also a bridge linking the Tamil region with Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, and beyond.
- The museum will come up on 4.5 acres on East Coast Road in the Beach Resort Complex owned by the Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation.

Pallava-era rock structures discovered at Mamallapuram beach

- **Context:** It has been revealed that Pallava-era rock structures and steps have resurfaced at Mamallapuram beach.
- During the Pallava period (6th century), Mamallapuram was a port city.
- The Central Archaeological Department has properly fenced the rocks to protect them.
- Previous excavations (1990) have uncovered Pallava art treasures such as a pond area, a monkey sculpture, and stone steps.

- Due to the structure of the Shore Temple, it did not suffer any damage even during the 2004 tsunami.

Mamallapuram

- Located about 58-60 km from Chennai in Tamil Nadu, the Mamallapuram monuments were built by the Pallava kings in the 7th-8th centuries.
- Most of the monuments are monolithic sculptures carved from a single rock.
- Key sculptures include the Pancha Rathas (Dharmaraja, Arjuna, Draupadi, Bhima, Ganesha/Sahadeva), 11 cave temples (Varaha Cave Temple, Parameswara Mahavar Cave), the Seven Pagodas, and the Descent of the Ganges, Arjuna's Penance, and the Shore Temple.
- Marco Polo mentioned the Seven Pagodas of Mamallapuram in his travels. Of the Seven Pagodas, six were destroyed by the sea, and only one remains.
- Mamallapuram in Tamil Nadu has been granted a Geographical Indication (GI) tag for its handcrafted stone sculptures.
- The monuments at Mamallapuram – became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Tamil Nadu in 1984.

Tamil Brahmi inscriptions discovered in Egypt

- **Context:** A path-breaking finding has shed new light on trade links between ancient Tamilagam, other parts of India, and the Roman Empire.
- Two researchers have identified close to 30 inscriptions in Tamil Brahmi, Prakrit and Sanskrit at tombs in the Valley of the Kings in Egypt.
- The name **Cikai Korran** (pronounced 'Kotran') appears repeatedly. It was inscribed

eight times across five tombs. The name was found near entrances and high on interior walls among other graffiti marks.

- It carries strong warlike associations, as it derives from a root, **korram**, meaning **victory and slaying**. This root is echoed in the Chera warrior goddess **Korravai** and the term **korraavan**, meaning **king**". The name korran also came up in other finds in Egypt. It appears in **Korrapuman**, written on a sherd discovered at **Berenike**, a Red Sea port city, in 1995.
- The name also occurs in the **Sangam corpus**, where the Chera king **Pittankorran**, praised in the **Purananooru**, is sometimes directly addressed as **korran**, the scholars pointed out, adding that these parallel attestations in **inscriptions from Pugalur**, the ancient Chera capital, dated back to the 2nd or 3rd century C.E.
- One inscription reads **Kopan varata kantan** (**Kopan came and saw**). The name **Kopan** has also been found at **Ammankovilpatti** in Tamil Nadu. Other Tamil names identified include **Catan** and **Kiran**.

Keezhadi Open Air Museum

- The Chief Minister inaugurated the open air museum at Keezhadi near Madurai, spread over an area of about 4.5 acres (65,380 sq ft, 2 exhibition halls) at a cost of Rs. 24.30 crore.
- It displays archaeological evidence of the Sangam urban civilization discovered on the banks of the Vaigai river.

Keezhadi

- It is located on the banks of the **Vaigai river**, about **12 km southeast of Madurai** in the **Sivaganga district of Tamil Nadu**.

- Archaeological excavations began in **2015 under the leadership of Amarnath Ramakrishnan.**
- **The first three excavations were conducted by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).**
- Subsequently, this work was carried out by the **Tamil Nadu State Archaeological Department.**
- **More than 120 pottery sherds** inscribed with **Tamil-Brahmi script** show early literacy and long-term continuity of the writing system.
- This indicates a **well-planned urban settlement.**
- Evidence of organized industries such as **pottery, weaving, dyeing and bead making** has been found.
- **Agate and carnelian beads** indicate long-distance trade networks.

Manora Monument

- Infrastructure works worth Rs. 2.75 crore and renovated facades were inaugurated at the **Manora Monument on the Sarapendrarajapattinam beach in Thanjavur district.**

Noyyal Museum

- The foundation stone of the **Noyyal Museum** to be built at a cost of Rs. 33.19 crore at **Chellipalayam in Karumandi, Erode district** was laid.

Navai Museum

- The foundation stone of the **Navai Museum**, to be built at a cost of Rs. 34.55 crore in the **Mandapam area of Ramanathapuram district**, was laid.

Chola Museum on the Tamil University campus

- As announced in the 2023–24 budget, the foundation stone was laid for the construction

of the **Chola Museum** on an area of 50 acres on the **Thanjavur Tamil University campus** at a cost of Rs. 56.41 crore.

- The aim is to **preserve and display artifacts and monuments of the Chola period.**

ECONOMY

Tamil Nadu Economic Survey 2025–26

- Context: **The Chief Minister released the Tamil Nadu Economic Survey for the year 2025-26 prepared by the State Planning Commission.**
- **Tamil Nadu's economic growth is 11.19 percent.** This is **almost twice the national average growth rate**, according to the Economic Survey.
- The Economic Survey further states that the **per capita income in Tamil Nadu has increased to Rs. 3.62 lakh.** This is **1.77 times higher than the national average.**
- The manufacturing sector has registered a **growth rate of 14.74 percent.** This is three times higher than the national average of 4.5 percent.
- **Tamil Nadu ranks first among all states, contributing 15 percent to the country's total manufacturing employment.**
- **₹1.57 lakh crore** has been spent on **education, health and social welfare schemes.**
- While labour force participation has **increased to 72.1 percent**, **unemployment has come down to 3.5 percent.**
- Tamil Nadu has set a target of becoming a **trillion dollar economy with strong manufacturing capacity and human capital.**
- Exports of merchandise from Tamil Nadu have almost **doubled to \$52.07 billion.** **Foreign direct investment has also increased.**

- New plans for the development of the **maritime economy of Tamil Nadu, which has a coastline of 1,076 km.**
- **Tamil Nadu ranks first in the production of cotton and sugarcane**
- **Tamil Nadu ranks first in the export of electronics, textiles and leather**
- India's GDP growth: 6.49% (2024–25) → 7.4% (2025–26).
- Global growth in 2025: 3.3%.

Manufacturing Strength

- Real manufacturing growth: **14.74% (2024–25) more than three times the national average of 4.5%.**
- Average manufacturing growth (2021–22 to 2024–25): **9.38% (highest in India).**
- **Contributes 15% of India's total factory workforce, as noted in the Economic Survey of India 2025-26.**

Sectoral Contribution (2024–25)

- **Primary: 13.4%** to Tamil Nadu's Gross State Value Added
- **Secondary: 33.1%**
- **Services: 53.6%**, the services sector also registered a strong performance, achieving a double-digit real growth of 11.3% in 2024-25.

Inflation Trends

- Urban inflation declined from **5.2% (2023–24) to 2.5% (2025–26).**
- Rural inflation fell from **5.8% to 2.1%.**
- Food inflation plummeted to **0.003% in 2025–26.**
- Government subsidies on essentials helped stabilise prices.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

- Tamil Nadu continues to rank among the top Indian States in attracting foreign direct investment.
- While India's overall FDI equity inflows declined from \$46.03 billion in 2022-23 to \$44.42 billion in 2023-24 amid global uncertainty and tighter financial conditions, Tamil Nadu defied the trend.

Trillion-Dollar Economy Target

- **Tamil Nadu can become a \$1 trillion economy by 2031** if it sustains a 16% nominal growth rate (2024–25 level), assuming a 2% annual appreciation of the dollar against the rupee. If the dollar rises by 3.5% annually, the milestone may be delayed by one year.
- **The report was prepared by the State Planning Commission and submitted to Chief Minister.**

Balanced Growth Model

- The Survey describes Tamil Nadu's model as **combining economic growth with social justice.**
- **Double-digit growth was driven mainly by the secondary (manufacturing) sector.**
- The report highlights both strong performance and areas needing attention to achieve twin goals
 - \$1 trillion economy
 - Developed-country-level per capita income

Macroeconomic Performance

- GSDP (2024–25): ₹31.19 lakh crore
- Nominal growth: 16%
- Real growth: 11.2% (highest among major States)
- Per capita income: ₹3.62 lakh (1.77 times national average)
- Ranked third among States in per capita income.

- Tamil Nadu's FDI in-flows increased steadily from \$2,169 million in 2022-23 to \$2,436 million in 2023-24, and further to \$3,681 million in 2024-25.
- **These have been exceeded - only by Kerala (97% and 30.4% respectively).** The figures of all-India average are 71.5% and 16.6%.

Access to Economic Resources

- 92% of women have their own bank/savings account (above national average).
- 74% aware of microcredit programmes.
- 18% have availed loans – showing strong financial inclusion.

Maternal Health Concern

- 9.9% pregnancies end in non-live births (higher than Kerala's 6.5%).
- Indicates gaps in maternal health conditions and quality of care.

Tamil Nadu Interim Budget 2026-27

- **Context: Tamil Nadu Finance Minister presented the Interim Budget for 2026-27,** while high-lighting the achievements of the government in the last five years.
- The Finance Minister presented the interim budget of the Tamil Nadu government at Rs. 2.55 lakh crore for the financial year 2026-27.

Revenue Deficit

- The revenue deficit is estimated to come down to Rs. 48,696.32 crore in the Interim Budget Estimates for 2026-27.
- The revenue deficit is expected to come down to Rs. 42,964.61 crore in 2027-28 and Rs. 35115.33 crore in 2028-29. This will pave the way for additional capital expenditure.

Debt Burden

- The total borrowing is planned to be Rs. 178,308.05 crore. Out of this, the government will repay public debt worth Rs. 60,418.42 crore, so the outstanding debt as on March 31 next year will be Rs. 1071770.34 crore.
- **This is 26.35 percent of the GDP.**
- It is expected to further decline to 25.30 percent in 2027-28 and 25.43 percent in 2028-29.

Women & Marriage Trends in Tamil Nadu – Economic Survey 2025-26

- **Context: Tamil Nadu's marital landscape** is still characterised by the prevalence of consanguineous marriages, according to the **State's Economic Survey 2025-26 of the State Planning Commission (SPC).**
- **Tamil Nadu reports 28% highest incidence among its peer States - Kerala, Karnataka, Gujarat and Maharashtra.**
- As per estimates based on reports and datas of the **National Family Health Sur-vey (NFHS)-5, Karnataka with 26.6%, Maharashtra (14.8%), Gujarat (6.4%) and Kerala (4.4%).** The all-India average is 10.8%.

Child Marriage Situation

- The report also says the concept of child marriages is still in vogue and has been defined by women, **aged from 20 to 24 at the time of the survey, as get-ting married before the age of 18.**
- **In rural areas, the proportion of such women is 15.2%, and in urban areas, it is 10.4%.** The State's average stands at 12.8%, while **the all-India average is 23.3%.**
- The median age of women (in the age group of 25-29) at first marriage is 22 against the all-India average of 19.7.

Educational Attainment

- In terms of access to education, **female literacy among women aged 15-49 has reached 84%, with 24.3% completing 12 or more years of schooling.**

Special Project Implementation Department

- Rs.17,088 crore has been allocated for the Special Project Implementation Department.
- So far, 48,65,050 skill certificates have been issued to college students under the 'Naan Mudhalvan' scheme in Tamil Nadu. The selected students have participated in international training in countries like England, Japan and South Korea.
- Assistance and incentives are being provided to Tamil Nadu youth to ensure maximum success in the Central Civil Services Examination.
- Out of the 59 Tamils who succeeded in the Civil Services Examination held in 2025, 52 were beneficiaries of the 'Naan Mudhalvan' scheme.

Water Resources Department

- In the interim financial statement of the Tamil Nadu government, Rs. 10,076 crore has been allocated for the Water Resources Department.
- In the Cauvery Delta, Parambiku M. Aliyar, Thamiravaruni Vaigai basins for irrigation facilities have been carried out at a cost of Rs. 498 crore.
- Flood control measures have been taken at a cost of Rs. 1,518 crore in Chennai and surrounding areas.
- Permanent flood control works have been carried out at a cost of Rs. 362 crore to prevent flood damage due to storms and heavy rains in other parts of Tamil Nadu.

Higher Education Sector

- Rs.8.505 crore has been allocated for the Higher Education Sector in the Interim Budget.
- In order to maintain social justice in higher education, the government has borne the education and food fees of 54,301 students

who have been admitted to government schools under the 7.5 percent reservation for vocational education, and Rs. 1.512 crore has been spent so far.

- Tamil Nadu is at the forefront of higher education enrollment in the country, with 47 percent, almost double the national average.
- Like the Puthumai Penn, the Tamil Puthalvan provides Rs. 1,000 per month for higher education for men. So far, 5,40,511 students have benefited from this program.

Public Health Department

- The Finance Minister said that Rs. 22,090 crore has been allocated for the Health and Public Health Department.
- Under the People's Health Search Scheme, 2.55 crore beneficiaries have been provided with first-time medical services and 4.75 crore have been provided with continuous services.
- 5,11,916 lives have been saved through the 'Innuvir Kaapom-Nammai Kaakum 48' scheme. Rs. 493 crore has been spent for this.
- 17,82,687 people have benefited from 1,206 Nalam Kaakum Stalin Medical Camps conducted across the state. In the last five years alone, an insurance amount worth Rs. 6,374 crore has been released under the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Insurance Scheme.
- Under the Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy Maternity Fund, financial assistance of Rs. 4,042 crore has been provided to 34,40,550 women in the last five years.
- The Tamil Nadu government has received a UN award for its effective work in the People's Health Project.
- Youth Welfare and Sports Development Department

- Rs 718 crore has been allocated for the Youth Welfare and Sports Development Department in the Interim Budget Estimates
- Under the Kalaingar Sports Kits Scheme, 16,798 sports kits have been provided to 12,525 village panchayats with a financial allocation of Rs. 86 crore.
- Rs. 176 crore has been provided as a high incentive to 5,403 sportsmen and sportswomen who have brought glory to Tamil Nadu by winning medals in national and international competitions.
- In the last five years, Chief Minister's Cup sports competitions have been organized and winners have been given a prize money of Rs. 101 crore.
- Rs. 43 crore has been allocated for organizing Chief Minister's Youth Sports Festival-Idhu Namma Attam 2026 competitions at the state level.

Magalir Vidiyal Payanam

- The Tamil Nadu government has allocated Rs. 4,00 crore for Magalir Vidyal Payanam Scheme in the interim budget.
- In the last five years, steps have been taken to purchase 12,087 new buses at an estimated cost of Rs. 6.121 crore. Buses are being operated on 1,603 routes to connect areas adjacent to cities.
- Rs. 4,000 crore for Magalir Vidyal Payanam Scheme and Rs. 1.782 crore for Students' Bus Travel Scheme, making a total of Rs. 13.062 crore for the Transport Department.

Welfare of Differently Abled

- Rs.1,417 crore has been allocated for the Disabled Welfare Department.
- **For the first time in the country, the Tamil Nadu government has brought appropriate amendments in the laws to appoint disabled people as members in local bodies.** Through this, 3,632 disabled people have taken charge as appointed members in local bodies so far.
- **While 4 % reservation** is being given to the differently-abled in government employment through direct appointment, the government has now ordered reservation in the promotion system as well.
- **A monthly maintenance allowance of Rs. 2,000** is being provided to the differently-abled who are unable to take care of themselves.

Welfare for Senior Citizens

- Under the **Anbu Cholai scheme**, Anbu Cholais have been set up as day care centers for **senior citizens in 25 places to alleviate the suffering of old age.**
- Recently, with the noble aim of ensuring that differently-abled and elderly people can get goods without any hassle, **this government has implemented the Thayumanavar scheme, which provides direct delivery of goods to their homes.**
- So far, 27 lakh 40 thousand 709 eligible beneficiaries have benefited under this scheme.

School Education Department

- Rs.48,534 crore has been allocated for the School Education Department in the Interim Budget.
- Under the **Professor Anbazhagan School Development Scheme**, 3,771 classrooms, 107 laboratories, 4 boys' hostels and 4 girls' hostels have been constructed and inaugurated at a cost of Rs.673 crore.
- Work on setting up **modern libraries** at a cost of Rs.902 crore has been undertaken.
- **The Kalaingar Centenary Library is functioning in Madurai. New libraries are being set up in the cities of Coimbatore, Trichy, Cuddalore, Salem and Tirunelveli.**

- **Tamil Nadu Model Schools are functioning in 38 districts with boarding and lodging facilities.**
- In the last four years, 2,358 students have been admitted in 50 departments in 93 leading educational institutions. Out of these, 41 students are studying in IITs.
- Another 17 students are studying in Japan, Taiwan, and Malaysia on full scholarships.

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

- The government has announced that steps have been taken to provide bank loans of Rs. 10.70 lakh crore to MSMEs in the last five years.
- So far, Rs. 405 crore in loans and Rs. 83 crore in subsidies have been provided under the **Kalaigñar Handicraft Scheme. The first phase of the Gold and Jewellery Park in Coimbatore** is being carried out at an estimated cost of Rs. 81 crore.
- **The number of startups registered in Tamil Nadu has increased 5 times in the last five years alone.**
- Bank loans of Rs. 10.70 lakh crore have been provided to MSMEs. **18 new industrial parks have been created.**
- In the interim budget, Rs. 1.943 crore has been allocated for the MSME sector.

New museums

- Following the **Keezhadi and Porunai museums**, new museums are being set up in many parts of Tamil Nadu at a cost of Rs. 285 crore.
- **The excavation results have shown that the technology of extracting iron from iron ore was introduced in the Tamil Nadu region, which has attracted national and global attention.**

The world-class Keezhadi and Porunai museums have already been opened. The Keezhadi Open Air Museum has also been opened recently.

The Chola Museum in Thanjavur, the Chola Museum in Gangaikonda, the Noyyal Museum in Erode, the Navai Museum in Ramanathapuram, the New Bronze Museum and Indus Valley Civilization Museum in Egmore, Chennai, and the Tamil Cultural Museum in Tiruvannamalai are being set up at a cost of Rs. 285 crore.

Kalaigñar Magalir Urimai Thogai

- **Under the Kalaigñar Magalir Urimai Thogai, Rs. 1,000 is paid directly to the bank accounts of women every month.** About 1.31 crore women are beneficiaries of this scheme.
- To ensure uninterrupted access to the amount in the coming months, a total of Rs. 5,000 was paid in one installment, including Rs. 3,000 for the months of February, March and April and Rs. 2,000 as a special summer amount. For this, Rs. 6,500 crore was released in a single day.
- **The facility of free travel in government buses has been provided through the 'Vidiyal Payanam' scheme, which reduces the travel expenses of women.**
- **So far, 881 crore women have travelled. Through this, they get an average saving of up to Rs. 888 per month.**

Integrated Renewable Energy Policy

- Finance Minister said that a new integrated renewable energy policy will be released soon to improve the green energy capacity of Tamil Nadu.
- New plans are being prepared to generate 100 billion units of renewable green energy considering the future power demand.

- Tenders for battery storage projects with a capacity of 1,000 MWh for green power supply have been finalized.
- Rs.18,091 crore has been allocated for the energy sector in the Interim Budget.

70 percent revenue from commercial taxes

- **The interim budget report has stated that 70 percent of the Tamil Nadu government's own tax revenue will come from commercial taxes.**
- The total revenue in the interim budget for the year 2026-27 is Rs. 3,44,575 crore. Of this, the state's own tax revenue is Rs. 2,29,579 crore.
- 70 percent of the revenue is generated from commercial taxes, 13.9 percent from stamp duty and deed registrations, 6 percent from excise clearance, 6.5 percent from taxes on vehicles, and 2.9 percent from others.
- **This tax revenue will increase by 11.15 percent in the interim budget.**
- The total expenditure is Rs. 3,93,272 crore, of which capital expenditure is Rs. 59,562 crore.

State Disaster Management Authority

- A state disaster management authority with modern facilities is being set up at a cost of Rs. 50 crore, the budget statement said.
- **The Tamil Nadu government is taking several precautionary measures to deal with disaster situations.**
- **An Urban Disaster Management Authority has been formed for the Greater Chennai Corporation and is working to effectively deal with the threat of natural disasters.**
- Three regional relief centres have been set up and are functioning in Chennai and its suburbs at a cost of Rs. 36 crore to reduce the time for rescue and relief operations and to stock relief materials in advance.

Tamil Nadu Semiconductor Mission

- **The Tamil Nadu Semiconductor Mission will be implemented by 2030** at a cost of Rs. 500 crore under the five-year action plan, the budget statement said.
- 54 industrial parks are operating in many districts of Tamil Nadu on 49,468 acres. Work has been underway to acquire an additional 28,392 acres of land.
- **New Tidal Parks are being set up at Trichy, Madurai and Hosur at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,070 crores. Tidal Neo Mini IT Parks have been completed in Villupuram, Thanjavur, Salem, Thoothukudi, Tiruppur, Vellore and Karaikudi.**
- Mini IT parks are being set up at a cost of Rs. 388 crore in Namakkal, Tiruvannamalai, Virudhunagar, Tirunelveli, Kanyakumari, Erode, Nagapattinam, Karur and Pudukkottai. This will create 25,500 new jobs.
- **Work is underway to set up a quality semiconductor technology centre and a semiconductor design competence centre in collaboration with IIT Madras.**
- In the interim budget, a budget of Rs. 4,282 crore has been allocated for the industry and commerce department.

Kalaingar Kavanu Illam Project

- **It has been announced that 8 lakh concrete houses will be built in Tamil Nadu by 2030 under the Kalaingar Kavanu Illam Project.**
- **The aim of this project is to make Tamil Nadu a slum-free state.**
- So far, 1,71,000 houses have been completed and construction work on 29,000 more houses is underway.
- **Due to the great response from the people, the Chief Minister has announced that an additional 1 lakh houses will be built.**

- 1,14,488 houses built by the government till 2001 have been repaired and reconstructed at a cost of Rs. 969 crores.

Puthumai Penn Thittam

- The Puthumai Penn Thittam promotes women's education and helps them continue their education from school to higher education.
- Under this scheme, girls studying in government and government-aided schools from class VI to XII receive Rs. 1,000 every month. So far, 6,95,296 girls have benefited from it.
- Women's Self-Help Groups were formed in 1989 by Chief Minister Karunanidhi. So far, 6,23,529 groups have been provided with bank loans worth Rs. 1,47,718 crores.
- 19 hostels have been built with modern facilities for the safe stay of rural women.
- Due to Tamil Nadu's leading position in safe childbirth, the maternal mortality rate is 35 per 1,00,000 and the infant mortality rate is 12 per 1,000, which is lower than the national average.
- The Tamil Nadu Women's Employment and Security Project were developed and operates with the assistance of the World Bank to promote women's economic participation and empowerment.

Translation Projects

- Under the Muthamizhaarignar Translation Project, 160 books have been translated into Tamil, including medical, engineering and educational books.
- Under the Dravidam Project, 74 books have been translated into Tamil of the best books published in foreign languages such as English.

- The works of Periyar and Ambedkar have been published in many foreign languages, so far books have been published in 21 languages including English, French, Arabic, Hindi, Gujarati.

- 27 volumes of Ambedkar's works have been translated into Tamil and published as a public edition.

- The Development of Computer Tamil and the International Mathematical Tamil Seminar were successfully held in India, which has not been done in any other state.

- The Sangamam-Namma Uru festival, which provides opportunities for folk artists, is being held in Chennai and major cities.

- The Samathuvap Pongal festival is celebrated in all districts with great success.

Cancer detected at an early stage

- The Finance Minister said that 1,929 people were diagnosed with cancer at an early stage through the efforts of the Tamil Nadu government.

- Cancer detection camps were held in 23 districts on behalf of the government; due to this, 79.17 lakh people were tested.

- Immediate treatment is being provided to 1,929 people who were detected; this helps in the effort to detect cancer at an early stage.

- A scheme to provide cervical cancer vaccination to girls below the age of 14 was launched by the Chief Minister.

- Kanchipuram Arignar Anna Cancer Hospital will be upgraded to a referral center at an estimated cost of Rs. 398 crore.

Discount on registering property in the name of women

- 1% reduction in registration fee for houses, plots and agricultural lands worth Rs. 10

- lakhs registered in the name of women. So far 3,71,705 women have benefited
- **41% of working women across the country work in factories in Tamil Nadu**
 - 19.34 lakh students have benefited under the breakfast scheme in government schools. ₹1,284 crore has been spent in the last four years and children's attendance and learning have improved
 - **Under the Anbu Karangal scheme, children who have lost their parents are given ₹2,000 per month to continue in school without dropping out until the age of 18. So far 10,637 children have benefited**
 - **Subsidy is provided to them to engage in self-employment under the Transgender Promotion Scheme. They have been encouraged to join the Home Guard.**

Ungaludan Stalin Thittam

- **10,000 camps have been conducted across the state under the Ungaludan Stalin Thittam.**
- So far, 38.53 lakh petitions have been received and 38.48 lakh petitions have been resolved.
- **The Chief Minister's Address Department acts as a grievance redressal system for the public to easily access the government administration.**
- 4,835 camps were conducted under the previous project, Chief Minister with the People, and 23.50 lakh petitions were resolved.
- **Through the new project, services are provided to all sections of the population in urban and rural areas in all districts.**

High-speed internet infrastructure in 95% of villages

- High-speed internet infrastructure work has been completed in 95% of the 12,525 village

panchayats in Tamil Nadu, that is, 11,953 villages.

▪ **This high-speed internet is provided using a fiber optic network.**

▪ In October last year, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin addressed the Gram Sabha meetings held in 10,000 villages online.

▪ In the Interim Budget, ₹219 crore has been allocated for the Information Technology and e-Digital Services Department.

Chennai Metro Phase-II Issue

- Centre approved Chennai Metro Rail Phase-II under 50:50 cost-sharing model.
- State paid ~₹29,500 crore towards Union share.
- Amount reflected in State's outstanding debt, affecting debt-to-GSDP ratio and borrowing capacity.

Fiscal Indicators (Interim Budget Estimates 2026-27)

- Outstanding debt projected at ₹2, 10.71 lakh crore.
- Revenue receipts estimated at ₹2, 34,400 crore (11.26% increase).
- Revenue expenditure projected at ₹2, 39,300 crore (3.79% increase).

INTERIM AGRICULTURE BUDGET 2026-27

Highlights of Budget

- Context: An interim budget of Rs. 47,248 crore has been presented to the agriculture sector for the financial year 2026-27 in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly.
- For the first time in the history of Tamil Nadu, a separate budget was presented for the agriculture sector in 2021-22, in which ₹34,220 crore was allocated.

- The allocation for the agriculture sector in 2025-26 has been increased to ₹45,661 crore, an increase of ₹1,587 crore over the previous year.
 - **Tamil Nadu ranks first in the national level in the production of sorghum, second in the production of sorghum, and fifth in the production of small grains.**
 - The Small Grains Movement is being implemented as a five-year plan from 2023-24; so far, 12.84 lakh farmers have benefited from a fund of ₹178 crore.
 - Small grains have been cultivated in an area of 20 lakh acres; 3.36 lakh acres of cluster demonstration plots have been set up and **90 small grains value addition centres have been established.**
 - **Maize production increased from 26 lakh metric tons to 27 lakh metric tons.**
 - **Allocation of Rs. 707 crore under Kalaignar's All Village Integrated Agricultural Development Scheme, benefiting 61 lakh farmers.**
 - Development of 58,712 acres of fallow lands into arable land.
 - 21.35 lakh farmers benefited under **the Mannuir Kaathu Mannuir Kaapom scheme.**
 - 900 metric tons of traditional seeds were produced under the Jayaraman Traditional Paddy Varieties Conservation Movement, distributed to 70 thousand farmers.
 - About 2 lakh new free electricity connections have been provided to farmers in the last 5 years.
 - Irrigation facilities have been provided to 3.48 lakh hectares of agricultural land.
 - **Tamil Nadu ranks first in the country in the production of cassava and jasmine, and first in the productivity of amla, cabbage and radish; Second place in productivity of tapioca, jasmine, jackfruit, guava**
 - In the last 5 years, GI applications have been made for 41 unique products, out of which 9 products have been granted GI: Sholavandhan betel, Panrutti jackfruit, Panrutti cashew, Virudhunagar sambavathal, Ramanathapuram Chithiraikkar rice, Puliyangudi lemon, Chettikulam small onion, Thooyamalli rice, Kaundhapadi country sugar
- Increase in Double-Cropping Area**
- Area under double-cropping rose to 13.99 lakh hectares in 2024-25.
 - Increase of nearly 2 lakh hectares compared to 2019-20.
 - Attributed to government initiatives addressing climate change and natural calamities.
- Budget Allocation for Agriculture**
- Interim Agriculture Budget 2026-27 outlay: ₹2,47,248.24 crore.
 - Allocation for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Department: ₹47,248.24 crore.
- Steady rise in allocation:**
- ₹2,34,220 crore (2021-22)
 - ₹2,45,661 crore (2025-26)
- Growth in Agricultural GSVA**
- Average Gross State Value Added (GSVA) in agriculture increased from 1.36% (2012-13 to 2020-21) to 3.03% (2021-22 to 2024-25).
 - GSVA at constant (2011-12) prices rose by 9.97%, reaching ₹2,59,11,708 lakh in 2024-25.

Focus on Farmers' Welfare**Schemes aimed at**

- Increasing farmers' income
- Enhancing production and productivity
- Ensuring food and nutrition security
- Promoting sustainable agricultural development

Expansion of Tree & Forest Cover

- Target: Increase State's tree and forest cover to 33%.
- Agroforestry promoted under the Green Tamil Nadu Mission.

Achievements in last five years:

- 3.24 crore saplings produced and distributed.
- 2.24 lakh acres brought under agroforestry.

Policy Changes & Crop Protection

- The Tamil Nadu Rosewood Trees (Conservation) Act, 1994 not extended beyond February 13, 2025, to encourage rosewood cultivation.
- Guidelines formulated and enforced for culling wild boars to protect crops.

Water & Land Resource Development**Over the last five years:**

- 68,930 traditional waterbodies renovated.

- 1 lakh supply and irrigation canals desilted.
- 29,800 check-dams constructed.
- 31,325 groundwater recharge systems established.
- 83,015 plantation works completed involving 2.78 crore saplings.

Salem Javvarisi (Sago)

- **Context:** APEDA facilitated the **first-ever direct export of GI-labelled Salem Javvarisi from Tamil Nadu to Canada**, marking a major milestone for producer-led exports.
- Salem Javvarisi is a starch-based food product made from cassava.
- It is native to the Salem district of Tamil Nadu, known as Javvarisi Nilam.
- Salem Javvarisi was granted GI in March 2023

Agriculture and Processed Food Products**Export Promotion Authority (APEDA)**

- APEDA is a statutory body under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**.
- It was established under the **Agriculture and Processed Food Products Export Promotion Authority Act, 1985**.
- It is the **apex body** for agricultural export promotion in India.

TN BUDGET 2025 - 26

HIGHLIGHTS OF UNION BUDGET

- The term 'Budget' is not mentioned in the Constitution; it is referred to as the Annual Financial Statement in Article 112.

- Article 110 - Definition of "Money Bill"
- Article 113 - Procedure relating to estimates
- Article 114 - Appropriation Bills
- Article 115 - Supplementary Grants
- Article 116 - Votes on Account
- Article 117 - Financial Bills
- Article 265 - Taxes under the authority of law
- Article 266 - Consolidated Fund and Public Accounts
- Article 267 - Contingency Fund

- **Context:** Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Budget 2026 in Parliament, with the aim of increasing productivity across sectors and ensuring employment generation. Its Ninth consecutive Union Budget by the Finance Minister.

The Budget is anchored around three "kartavyas" (duties).

- **Kartavya 1:** Accelerate & Sustain Economic Growth by boosting productivity, competitiveness, and resilience amid global uncertainties
- **Kartavya 2:** Fulfil People's Aspirations by strengthening their capacities and making them active partners in India's prosperity. The second kartavya focused on measures targeted at the services sector
- **Kartavya 3:** The vision of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, seeks to ensure inclusive access to resources, amenities, and opportunities.

Budget Objectives

- This budget focuses on three key objectives: sustainable development, meeting the needs of the people, and inclusive growth.

Budget Figures and Expenditures

- The Union Finance Minister presented the Union Budget, comprising schemes worth ₹53.47 lakh crore, towards the goal of a "Developed India".
- The government's capital expenditure, which was ₹11.2 lakh crore in the last financial year, has been increased to ₹12.2 lakh crore in this budget.

Fiscal Deficit and Debt Targets

- In the next fiscal year, the government debt to **Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio is planned to be reduced from 56.1% to 55.6%**.
- The fiscal deficit, which is **4.4% in the current fiscal year, is projected to be reduced to 4.3% in the next year.**

Tax Reforms

Changes in Income Tax Rates

- **No changes have been made to individual income tax rates** for the financial year 2026-27.
- Last year, under the new income tax law, the tax exemption limit was increased from **Rs. 7 lakhs to Rs. 12 lakhs.**

Income Tax Slabs

- Up to Rs. 4 lakhs: No tax
- Rs. 4–8 lakhs: 5%
- Rs. 8–12 lakhs: 10%
- Rs. 12–16 lakhs: 15%
- Rs. 16–20 lakhs: 20%
- Rs. 20–24 lakhs: 25%
- Above Rs. 24 lakhs: 30%

New income tax law

- Income tax rates remain unchanged. **The new Income Tax Act 2025 will be implemented from April 1, 2026.**
- **Tax rules and forms were simplified and made understandable to ordinary people.**
- Long, complex sections and ambiguities, similar to those in the **1961 Act, were eliminated.**

- A **100% penalty will be imposed** for fraudulent tax returns; tax offenses will be punishable only by fines, without imprisonment.
- Students and technology professionals paying lower taxes can utilize a 6-month foreign asset disclosure scheme.
- It was announced that the TCS (Tax Collected at Source) for foreign travel, education, and medical expenses has been reduced to 2%.
- A dedicated freight corridor will be constructed **connecting Dankuni in West Bengal to Surat in Gujarat.**
- **Seven high-speed rail corridors** will be developed between cities.
- A scheme to bring 20 new national waterways into operation **within 5 years and promote coastal cargo transport will also be introduced.**

High-speed railway projects

- Chennai – Bengaluru
- Chennai – Hyderabad
- Pune – Hyderabad
- Bengaluru – Hyderabad
- Bengaluru – Varanasi
- Varanasi – Siliguri

Electric Vehicles and Electronics

Manufacturing

- Dedicated manufacturing facilities will be established in **Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Odisha, and Andhra Pradesh for the production, processing, safeguarding, and distribution of rare minerals essential for electric vehicles, renewable energy, electronics, and defence sectors.**

Medicine, Healthcare and Pharmaceuticals

- Centres will be established as integrated campuses with **medical, educational, and research facilities.**

- **BioPharma Power Initiative** – A ₹10,000 crore scheme to transform India into a global biopharmaceutical manufacturing hub.

- **Customs duty exemption for medicines and mental health products imported for personal use for seven rare diseases.**

- **Basic customs duty exemption is provided for 17 types of cancer drugs.**

Central Budget Allocation for the Health Sector: ₹1,06,530 crore

- A 10% increase compared to last year. Of this, approximately ₹1.01 lakh crore is for the **Department of Health and Family Welfare, and the remaining amount for the Department of Health Research.**

Benefits in income tax administration

- It is expected that the new law will reduce court cases in taxation.
- The size and sections of the old law have been reduced by approximately 50%.

Industry, Manufacturing and Technological Development

- **Indian Semiconductor Mission 2.0 – ₹40,000 crore** incentive for semiconductor and supply chain development.
- Allocation of ₹40,000 crore for the scheme to **promote the manufacturing of electronic components.**
- **Rare Earth Minerals Corridor Project** – A project to create corridors for rare earth minerals in the states of **Odisha, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.**

Data Centers and Service Sector Incentives

- **Tax exemptions will be provided until 2047 for foreign companies** that establish data centers and provide global services in India.
- A high-level committee has also been constituted to increase **India's global contribution in the service sector by 10%.**

Financial Market Activities

- The Securities Transaction Tax (STT) has been **increased by up to 150%.**
- The Tax Collected at Source (TCS) for **foreign travel has been reduced by 2%.**

Infrastructure and Transport

- The total public infrastructure expenditure has been **increased to ₹12.2 lakh crore.**

Plan to establish 5 Regional Medical Centres

- Objective: To transform India into a major medical tourism destination
- To be implemented in collaboration with states and private institutions

Paramedical Education and Workforce Development Program

- New paramedical training institutions are being established
- Existing institutions will be upgraded

1 lakh paramedical personnel will be trained in the next 5 years

- Training in 10 disciplines: **Ophthalmology, Radiology, Anesthesiology, Operation Theatre Technology, Psychology, and other fields**
- Elderly Care and Wellness Program
- 1.5 lakh caregivers will be trained in wellness, yoga, and medical devices

Financial Growth

- Funding for the health sector has **increased by 164% in the last 12 years**
- First-time allocation of ₹1,000 crore for the paramedical workforce development program

Customs Reforms and Trade Incentives

- International passenger baggage customs regulations will be simplified, reducing **difficulties for passengers.**
- A **single-window system will be introduced** for cargo clearance at ports.
- Easier verification and clearance procedures will be implemented for honest and trustworthy importers.
- Simplified tax payment rules will be introduced for authorized economic operators.
- An **Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based** inspection system will be implemented in the customs department.

- For minor tax-related issues, an option to settle by paying an additional amount instead of a penalty will be provided.

- A new system integrating all customs procedures will be implemented within **the next two years.**

- A **single-window customs clearance** system is provided for exports and imports.

- The tax on personal imports has **been reduced from 20% to 10%.**

- Basic customs duty has been **exempted for aircraft spare parts.**

- The Integrated Customs System (CIS) will be implemented **within 2 years.**

Tax concessions for raw materials for seafood and footwear exports Processed seafood

- The duty-free import limit for specific raw materials **used in exports has been increased.**

- The **previous year's limit was 1% of the export sales value;** this has now been increased to 3%.

Leather and artificial leather footwear

- **Duty-free import permission** is granted for specific raw materials used in exports.

- The **previous 6-month limit for finished leather and ready-made garments, leather/artificial footwear and other leather products** has been extended to 1 year.

Benefits for companies and workers

- The US tax (50%) on goods manufactured in India was detrimental to labor-intensive manufacturing sectors.

- The new changes will create a favorable environment for Indian industries and the export sector.

Changes in Product Prices

- The prices of 17 cancer drugs, medicines and food products for 7 rare diseases, and microwave ovens will decrease.

- The prices of imported umbrellas, ATM machines, and machines used in coffee production and sales are likely to increase.

Agriculture, Water Security and Environment

- Approximately ₹95,692 crore allocated for new employment schemes such as the **Viksit Bharat-Rozgar Ajeevika Mission**.
- ₹67,670 crore allocated for the **Jal Jeevan Mission**; ensuring continuous water supply to rural households.
- Funding allocations for environmental projects such as **Carbon Capture, Utilization and Storage (CCUS)**.

Tourism and Culture

- Tourist destinations are being developed in 5 high-priority states.

Mountain Trails and Tourism Development

- It was announced that ecologically sustainable mountain trails would be developed in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir, the Eastern Ghats (Andhra Pradesh), and the Western Ghats (Podhigai Hills, Tamil Nadu-Kerala) to provide world-class trekking experiences.

Coastal and Birdwatching Trails

- **Turtle migration routes** will be established in the coastal areas of Odisha, Karnataka, and Kerala to important nesting sites.
- Birdwatching trails will be created in the **Pulicat Lake area on the Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu border**.

Development of archaeological sites

- A plan to develop 15 archaeological excavation sites into cultural centers.

Defence and Military Expenditures

- The Union Budget allocated ₹7,84,678 crore to the defence sector.
- This is a **15.19% increase compared to last year**.
- **14.67% of the total central government expenditure and 2% of the GDP will be spent on defence**.
- ₹63,733 crore was allocated for aircraft and aero-engines, and ₹25,023 crore for naval projects.
- ₹2,19,306 crore has been allocated for capital expenditure (a 21.84% increase).

- ₹5,13,900 crore (75%) was allocated for domestic arms manufacturing.
- ₹5,53,668 crore was allocated for pensions and employee benefits, of which ₹1.71 lakh crore is for pensions.
- The total increased allocation of **₹7.85 lakh crore to the defence sector prioritizes military security and modernization**.

Education, Skill Development and Employment

- A scheme will be established to set up **AVGC (Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics)** content creator labs in 15,000 schools and 500 colleges.
- A scheme will be established to set up a **women's hostel in every district**.
- A scheme to train 10,000 tourist guides for the travel and tourism sector.

MSME Growth Fund – 2026–27 Budget Highlights

- The Central Government has announced a growth fund of ₹10,000 crore in the 2026–27 budget to create future champions in the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector.

Through this fund

- Capital support, liquidity support, and business support will be provided to **enable MSME enterprises to emerge as successful ventures**.
- Micro-enterprises will be assisted in fulfilling government regulatory requirements at a reduced cost.
- An additional ₹2,000 crore will be allocated to the **Atmanirbhar Bharat Fund, which was launched in 2021**.
- The schemes for invoice discounting for enterprises will be fully utilized to **provide liquidity support**.
- Short-term training and practical programs will be developed for micro and medium-sized enterprises with the help of professional educational **institutions such as ICAI, ICSI, and ICAI**.

- This will be done with the objective of strengthening **micro-enterprises in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities.**

Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission Union Budget 2026-27

- A total fund allocation of **Rs. 95,692.31 crore has been made.**
- The number of workdays has been increased from **100 to 125 days.**
- Rs. 30,000 crore has been allocated for the **full implementation of the existing scheme.**
- A new 60:40 funding sharing pattern between the Central and State Governments has been implemented.

Infrastructure Development

- **Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana** (Prime Minister's Rural Roads Programme) – ₹19,000 crore
- **National Rural Livelihoods Mission** – ₹19,200 crore
- **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana** (Prime Minister's Housing Scheme) – ₹54,916 crore

Allocation for the Electronics Manufacturing Sector

- A project expenditure of ₹40,000 crore has been allocated for the financial year 2026-27.
- **Objective: To increase electronics manufacturing in the country and promote domestic production.**

Schemes and Initiatives

- **Capital Goods Manufacturing:** Two high-tech equipment facilities are being established.
- **Container Manufacturing Project:** To be implemented to ensure global competitiveness.
- **Chemical Manufacturing:** 3 dedicated chemical parks will be created to reduce imports and expand domestic production.

Mobile Phone Manufacturing Growth

- 30-fold growth during the period 2015–2025.
- ₹18,000 crore in 2015 → ₹5.45 lakh crore in 2025.
- iPhone exports in 2025: ₹203,000 crore (previous year ₹1.1 lakh crore).

- **Expectation:** Production of ₹6.76 lakh crore and exports of ₹2.7 lakh crore in the financial year 2026.

Semiconductor Manufacturing

- Investment of ₹1.6 lakh crore in 6 states as of August 2025.
- Approval has been granted for 10 semiconductor manufacturing and packaging projects, which are currently operational.

New Scheme for Biopharmaceutical Production – “BioPharma Shakti”

Total Fund Allocation: ₹10,000 crore

Duration: Next 5 years

- **Objective:** To establish India as a hub for biopharmaceutical production, ensuring affordable long-term health and well-being.

Biopharmaceuticals

- Medicines produced from biological cells or tissues, not through synthetic chemical methods.
- **Diseases:** Infectious diseases such as diabetes, cancer, and autoimmune diseases.

Institutions and Research

- **Three new National Institutes of Pharmaceutical Education and Research will be established.**
- Seven existing institutions will be upgraded.
- More than 1,000 accredited Indian clinical trial sites will be established.
- **The Central Drugs Standard Control Organization will be strengthened to meet global standards.**

Ayurveda Development

- **Three new All India Institutes of Ayurveda will be established.**
- A total of ₹4,408 crore has been allocated to the AYUSH sector (20% increase compared to the previous budget).
- **AYUSH dispensaries and laboratories will be upgraded to high standards.**

- The production of quality **Ayurvedic medicines, cultivation of medicinal plants by farmers, and involvement of youth in drug processing will be encouraged.**
- The Union Budget is divided into **Revenue Budget and Capital Budget.**
- India's first budget was presented in 1860 by **James Wilson.**

Central Budget Allocation for the Sports Sector

- The Union Budget for 2026-27 has allocated ₹4,479.88 crore to the sports sector; this is approximately ₹1,133 crore more than the previous year.
- The allocation for the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has been significantly increased, reflecting the central government's emphasis on sports development.
- The 'Khelo India' scheme has been allocated ₹924.35 crore; although the amount has been adjusted considering the expenditure level, it remains the scheme receiving the highest allocation.
- The Sports Authority of India (SAI) has been allocated ₹917.38 crore, strengthening training camps, national competitions, and sports complex maintenance.
- Incentives for athletes have been increased from ₹28 crore to ₹40 crore.
- The allocation for the National Sports Development Fund has been increased to ₹5 crore.
- Although the allocation for anti-doping organizations (NADA, laboratory) has been slightly reduced, monitoring will continue.
- For the first time, ₹500 crore has been allocated to the sports equipment manufacturing sector, and steps have been taken to promote the production of world-class sports equipment under the 'Make in India' initiative.
- The first Union Budget of independent India was presented in **1947 by R. K. Shanmukham Chetty.**
- The **1949-50** budget was the **first budget of a unified India.**
- **Since 2017**, the Union Budget is presented on **February 1st.**
- **The Railway Budget was merged with the Union Budget in 2017.**
- **Indira Gandhi is the only woman who presented the budget while serving as both Prime Minister and Finance Minister.**
- The **1973-74** budget is known as the **"Black Budget"**.
- The **1991-92** budget marked the **beginning of economic liberalization in India.**
- The **"Dream Budget"** of **1997-98** focused on major tax reforms.
- The **Millennium Budget of 2000-01** helped position India as a **technology hub.**
- **Features for Tamil Nadu in the Union Budget**
- **Adichanallur:** One of the 15 archaeological sites to be developed.
- **Pothigai Hills (Tamil Nadu-Kerala):** World-class eco-tourism trekking routes will be created.

Critical Minerals

- To reduce dependence on China, dedicated mineral resource development will be undertaken in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha.
- **Pulicat Lake (Tamil Nadu-Andhra Pradesh border):** Birdwatching trails will be established.
- **Coastal Protection:** Protection pathways for turtle nesting sites (Odisha, Kerala, Karnataka)

Information about the Union Budget

- **The Union Budget is prepared under Article 112 of the Indian Constitution.**
- The budget period is from **April 1st to March 31st.**

NATIONAL - NEWS

Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP)

- Context: **Oil India** conducted a seismic study of blocks awarded in **OALP Round IX**. Its objective is to **formulate a bidding strategy** for **OALP Round X**.
- Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP)** introduced on **March 30, 2016**. Its part of the **Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP)**.
- HELP** replaced the **New Exploration and Licensing Policy (NELP)**, which existed for over 18 years.
- OALP** is a major reform that changed **how companies can apply for oil & gas exploration blocks in India**.
- Under the **OALP**, the company has the option to undertake prospecting for fuels in areas which are not **notified by the GoI**.
- The **OALP** regime also allows companies access to **seismic data at the National Data Repository (NDR)**.

NDR is an online data library containing

- seismic surveys, Geological maps
- Well logs, Exploration history

Grain ATM

- Context: **Bihar government** approved installation of the **first set of three Grain ATM machines in Patna**. It implemented as a **pilot project**.

About Grain ATM

- It also known as **Annapurthi** (meaning provider of grain). An **automated dispensing machine** for food grains such as **wheat and rice**

- Technology developed by the **World Food Programme (WFP)** and implemented in collaboration with **Food Corporation of India (FCI)** and Various **State governments**.

Key Features

- Can dispense **up to 50 kg of grain in 5 minutes**
- Operates **24 × 7**, similar to bank ATMs
- Can be **solar-powered**
- Requires **internet connectivity** to access the **Public Distribution System (PDS) database** and individual **BPL beneficiary profiles**.

Working Mechanism

- Once a **PDS beneficiary** swipes their beneficiary or grain **ATM card on a PoS machine, linked to the ration card or to their Aadhar card**.
- They must also undergo **Aadhar-based biometric authentication**.
- Once the grain is dispensed, the beneficiary's **PDS data is updated, and a slip is also issued for confirmation** and as a physical record.

Driver Rating System: IIT Madras

Agreement

- Context: **IIT Madras and Daimler India Commercial Vehicles** have entered into a joint agreement to develop a global driver rating system.
- The new system, called the **'Driver Rating System' (TRS)**, will evaluate and rank the performance of trucks and drivers using smartphone and sensor data.
- Objective:** To encourage better driver performance, reduce dangerous driving practices, and save lives, costs, and time.
- This initiative will be conducted in line with the corporate social responsibility policies of the partnering companies.

- This effort will provide better solutions to commercial transportation and environmental challenges through technology and data-driven innovations.

Monazite Reserves in 8 States, Including Tamil Nadu

- **Context:** The Central Government stated that **1.31 crore tonnes of monazite** (a reddish-brown phosphate mineral) are present in 8 states, including Tamil Nadu.
- **Monazite is obtained from coastal sands and igneous rocks.**
- The **Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD)** under the **Department of Atomic Energy** monitors this.
- States with monazite reserves: **Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Jharkhand, West Bengal.**
- Coal mines are being allocated through 136 successful auctions following a **NITI Aayog recommendation** in 2020.

Union Government Releases First National Data on Waste-Pickers Enumeration

- **Context:** The Union government released data for the first time on the ongoing enumeration of waste-pickers across the country, showing that a total of 1.52 lakh such workers had been profiled and validated so far **in urban areas of 35 States and Union Territories.**
- The data was tabled in Parliament by the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.**
- The enumeration is being conducted **under the NAMASTE scheme.**

At the national level

- **84.5%** of waste-pickers belong to Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC).

- **10.7%** are from the General category.

State/UT-level variations were observed

- In Delhi and Goa, waste-pickers from the General category outnumbered those from SC, ST, and OBC communities combined.
- In West Bengal, 42.4% of profiled waste-pickers belonged to the General category

NAMASTE Scheme

- **NAMASTE is a human-centric, rights-based initiative** aimed at eliminating hazardous manual scavenging of sewers and septic tanks, launched in 2023 as a **Central Sector Scheme for a period of 3 years (2023–24 to 2025–26).**
- Jointly launched by the **Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MoSJE)** and the **Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA).**
- Implemented by the **National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFCDC).**
- Aims to **eliminate the manual engagement of sanitation workers** in hazardous tasks related to sewer and septic tank cleaning.

State Science and Technology Council receives award

- **Context:** The Tamil Nadu State Science and Technology Council received an award at the **National Science Conference held in Kerala.**
- The **Tamil Nadu State Science and Technology Council**, which functions under the **Tamil Nadu Higher Education Department**, participated in the conference.
- The state's initiatives and achievements in the fields of **science, technology, and innovation** were presented.
- This included **GI-tagged products, Kodaikanal tribal products, and women entrepreneurship development programs.**

- Patent Information Centre, Intellectual Property Facilitation Centre, and Technology Transfer Centre services were also introduced.
- The **Tamil Nadu State Science and Technology Council won the first prize** in the “Other State Councils” category at the exhibition.
- Tamil Nadu State Science and Technology Council
 - It is an autonomous body **established in 1984**.
 - It acts as the **apex body for science and technology initiatives in Tamil Nadu**.
 - It formulates **science and technology policies** at the state level.
 - It provides funding for research projects in **universities and institutions**.
 - It offers **young scientist fellowships** for research capacity building.

Silk production without killing silkworms

- **Context: Researchers at IIT Bombay** have successfully developed a new technology to produce silk yarn without harming silkworms.
- Traditionally, during silk production, the cocoons are placed in boiling water, which kills the silkworms inside. As an alternative, IIT Bombay’s Rural Technology Centre has developed a new project called ‘Jeevoday’.
- Silkworms that feed on mulberry leaves are trained to spin only **silk fibers on a flat surface, instead of building cocoons in the traditional way**.
- Through this method, the silkworms are not killed; **they transform into butterflies and complete their full life cycle**.
- This research has been fully funded by **Coal India**.

Coal India Limited (CIL)

- **Established in November 1975 and headquartered in Kolkata.**
- It is a **Maharatna public sector undertaking operating under the Ministry of Coal.**
- It contributes more than **80% to India’s domestic production.**

PLASTINDIA 2026

- Context: PLASTINDIA 2026, one of the world’s largest and most influential plastics exhibitions at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.
- The PLASTINDIA 2026 edition is being organised with the support of the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.
- The theme of PLASTINDIA 2026 is “Bharat Next”. This theme aligns closely with the national vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat and Viksit Bharat.

Significance

- **One of the world’s largest and most influential plastics exhibitions**
- Highlights India’s growing role in **global manufacturing, sustainability, and innovation**
- Showcases the plastics sector as a major contributor to India’s economy

About PLASTINDIA

- A globally recognised exhibition for plastics **processing, machinery, raw materials, and sustainable solutions**
- Acts as a major platform connecting Indian industry with international markets and advanced technologies.

India joins the BRICS Centre for Industrial Skills

- **Context: India joined the BRICS Centre for Industrial Skills (BCSI)** at an event organized by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) of the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**, at **Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi**.
- This centre will serve as a single point of contact to provide integrated support to **manufacturing companies and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) of BRICS countries**, with the aim of strengthening Industry 4.0 skills.
- The BCSI has been launched in collaboration with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).
- The National Productivity Council has been designated as the Indian centre for BRICS Industrial Skills.

Disaster Victim Identification

- **Context: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) released India's first-ever Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and Guidelines for Disaster Victim Identification (DVI).**
- The guidelines were issued on the **25th anniversary of the 2001 Bhuj earthquake** to improve handling of Mass Fatality Incidents (MFIs).

Four-Stage Identification Workflow

- **Systematic Recovery:** Organised retrieval of remains to avoid commingling and loss of evidence.
- **Post-Mortem (PM) Data:** Collection of biometric data such as DNA, fingerprints, and dental records.

- **Ante-Mortem (AM) Data:** Gathering medical records and personal details from families of victims.
- **Reconciliation:** Scientific matching of PM and AM data before official identification and release of remains.

Deep Tech Start-ups

- **Context:** The Central Government, through a gazette notification by DPIIT, has formally defined and announced the eligibility criteria for 'Deep Tech' start-ups.

About Deep Tech Start-ups

- Deep Tech start-ups are companies that develop solutions based on new **scientific and engineering knowledge**.
- They focus on research and development (R&D).
- Deep Tech start-ups create **significant new intellectual property (IP) and engage in efforts to commercialize them**.
- They operate with high capital requirements and aim for long-term growth.
- The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** is the final authority for certifying **start-ups and Deep Tech start-ups**.
- The **Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF)** will manage a **₹1 lakh crore research and development fund** and will act as a key financier for Deep Tech start-ups.

Key Features

- Deep Tech start-ups are granted an extended recognition period of up to 20 years, compared to only 10 years for regular start-ups.
- The revenue limit has been increased to ₹300 crore, compared to the ₹200 crore limit for regular start-ups.

- With policy support, Deep Tech start-ups can access concessional long-term financial assistance, **with interest rates of 2–4% and loan tenures of up to 15 years.**
- The certification process will be conducted under the guidance of a multi-ministerial technology board with governance oversight.
- The judgment reaffirmed reproductive autonomy as part of personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution.

Legal Framework: MTP Act (Amendment), 2021

- **Up to 20 weeks:** Termination with the opinion of one registered medical practitioner.
- **20–24 weeks:** Requires the opinion of two registered medical practitioners (for specified categories).
- **Beyond 24 weeks:** Permissible with approval of a Medical Board in exceptional cases.

eSankhyiki Portal

- Launched by: **National Statistics Office (NSO) under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).**
- Recent development: **Beta version of Model Context Protocol (MCP)** server launched for the portal.

Model Context Protocol (MCP)

- A technology that enables direct connection to datasets through users' own AI tools and applications.
 - Enhances machine-readable access to official statistics.

About eSankhyiki Portal

- A **centralized digital platform** for accessing India's official statistics.
- Designed to ensure **seamless, transparent, and timely data dissemination.**
- Supports **data-driven policymaking, academic research, and public awareness.**
- Improves **accessibility, usability, and interoperability** of government statistical data.

Reproductive Autonomy in India

- **Context:** The Supreme Court permitted termination of a **30-week pregnancy** of a minor, exceeding the 24-week statutory limit under the MTP Act, 1971 (amended in 2021).

Judicial Basis

- **Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (2017):** Recognized reproductive choices as an integral part of the **right to privacy and personal liberty (Article 21).**

AAI-Bharat Taxi MoU to Improve Airport Last-Mile Connectivity

- **Context:** The Airports Authority of India (AAI) signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bharat Taxi** to enhance last-mile connectivity at select airports.
 - To provide **regulated, transparent, reliable, and passenger-friendly taxi** services at AAI-managed airports.
 - Airports Covered: **Rajkot, Vadodara, Surat, Bhuj, Pune, Aurangabad, Varanasi, Kanpur, Prayagraj, and Agra.**

Focus Areas

- Fair and predictable pricing
- Improved passenger experience
- Reliable last-mile transport solutions

Bharat Taxi

- **Union Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation** will launch India's first cooperative-based ride-hailing platform, **Bharat Taxi.**

- Bharat Taxi has been conceptualised as a transformative initiative in the mobility sector, **placing drivers – referred to as sarathis (charioteers)** - at the centre of ownership, operations, and value creation.
- Each honoured sarathi will be provided with a **personal accident insurance cover of ₹5 lakh and family health insurance cover of ₹5 lakh.**
- Bharat Taxi aims to expand to **all States and cities across the country in the next two years.**
- Created using a computer resource.
- Designed to appear real, authentic, or true.
- Depicts or portrays any individual or event.
- Likely to be perceived as indistinguishable from a real person or real-world event.

Labelling of AI Content

- Platforms will be required to seek disclosures from users in case their content is AI-generated.
- The amended rules mandate that AI-generated imagery be labelled “prominently”.
- While the draft version specified that 10% of any imagery would have to be covered with such a disclosure.

IT Rules 2026: AI Labelling & Faster Takedowns

- Context: The Union government has notified amendments to the **Information Technology Act, 2021**, requiring photorealistic AI-generated content to be prominently labelled.
- The changes, which will come into force on February 20, also significantly shorten timelines for takedown of illegal material.
- Under the new rules, social media platforms will now have **between two and three hours to remove certain categories of unlawful content**, a sharp reduction from the earlier 24-36 hours.
- Content deemed illegal by a court or an “appropriate government” will have to be taken down **within three hours, while sensitive content, featuring non-consensual nudity and deepfakes, must be removed within two hours.**
- Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment Rules, 2026 defines synthetically generated content as
- Includes audio, visual, or audio-visual information.
- Content is artificially or algorithmically created, generated, modified, or altered.

India Semiconductor Mission 2.0

- Context: The Union Budget 2026–27 announced India Semiconductor Mission 2.0 building on the first phase of ISM.
- From focusing mainly on fabrication plants to **developing a comprehensive high-value ecosystem.**
- To achieve **70–75% self-sufficiency in domestic chip demand by 2029** and promote locally designed and manufactured chips.
- Strengthening workforce through the **Chips to Startup (C2S) programme** and industry partnerships.

About India Semiconductor Mission

- ISM was launched in **2021, under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY).**
- Provides 50% fiscal support of project cost and applicable across eligible semiconductor manufacturing categories.
- The **Design Linked Incentive (DLI) offers up to 50%** reimbursement of eligible expenditure for domestic design projects.

India's Regional Service Centre

- Context: India is planning to set up a **Regional Service Centre at Vijaynagar in the Swaraj Island region of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands** at a cost of ₹300 crore to **enhance tsunami monitoring and early warning capabilities**.
- The project will lay about 270 km of submarine cables in tectonic subduction zones, which will enable rapid acoustic signal detection and reduce data gaps caused by damaged buoys or satellite ranges.
- The project is led by the **Indian National Centre for Ocean Information and Services (INCOIS)**, which manages the **Indian Tsunami Warning Centre (ITEWC)**.
- Present System primarily detects tsunamis triggered by undersea earthquakes.
- **Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services** receives earthquake signals and processes tsunami potential at **Hyderabad centre**.
- INCOIS is the nodal agency operating the **Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC)**.
- 80% of tsunamis are triggered by undersea earthquakes and the remaining occur following non-seismic causes **like landslides, submarine volcanic activity and mudslides**.
- The latest infrastructure can further facilitate the monitoring of acoustic signals, which are faster in capturing earthquake signals than the existing network.

Indian Tsunami Warning System

- The **Indian Tsunami Warning System (ITEWS)**, established in 2007, is based out of **INCOIS in Hyderabad**.

Indian National Centre for Ocean Information and Services (INCOIS)

- It is located in **Hyderabad & was established in 1999** as an **autonomous body under the Ministry of Earth Sciences**.
- It coordinates with **Disaster Management Authorities (DMOs)** to implement the **Tsunami Preparedness Plan** at the countrywide level.
- It identifies **Potential Fishing Zones (PFZ)** for the fishing community.

Centre Issues Rules for Vande Mataram Performance

- **Context:** The Union Government has ordered that **'Vande Mataram'** should be played compulsorily before the national anthem at government and school functions, and everyone should stand up and pay respect.
- The **Union Home Ministry** has released new instructions stating that whenever both **Vande Mataram and the National Anthem** are performed at official functions, **all six verses of Vande Mataram must be sung first**.
- Performing all six stanzas takes approximately **3 minutes and 10 seconds**.
- This year, the Centre is also commemorating the **150th anniversary of Vande Mataram**, celebrating an important landmark in India's freedom movement.
- The song should be sung at official functions in the presence of the **President, Governor, Padma awardees and national flag hoisting ceremonies**.
- Everyone **should stand up** and pay respect when **'Vande Mataram'** is sung.
- It is not mandatory to stand up when a documentary or film is being played in theaters.

- Disrespecting the national anthem is punishable by 3 years in prison.

About Vande Mataram

- Vande Mataram was written by **Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay** in the 1875 and was later featured in his novel **Anandamath**.
- The song emerged as a strong rallying cry during **India's independence movement**.
- In 1950, the Constituent Assembly recognized **Vande Mataram as India's National Song**, while **Jana Gana Mana** was declared the **National Anthem**.

Fortified Rice Scheme

- Context: The **Union Minister of State for Food Security** has informed Parliament in writing that there is no issue with the enriched rice scheme in response to a question raised in the Lok Sabha.

About the Fortified Rice Scheme

- In India, fortified rice grains are made from rice flour with **added iron, folic acid and vitamin B12**, mixed with plain rice in a ratio of 1:100.
- The scheme was launched as a **pilot scheme in 2019** and has been extended **from 2024 to December 2028**.
- The scheme is implemented by the **Department of Food and Public Distribution under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution**.
- It has been gradually implemented across the country under schemes including the **National Food Security Act and the Pradhan Mantri Boshan Yojana**.
- The **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** has set standards for enriched rice, enriched rice cereal and vitamin-mineral supplements.

Lymphatic Filariasis

- Context: The **Union Health Minister** has recently inaugurated the **Annual Nationwide Mass Drug Administration (MDA) Campaign** aimed at eliminating **Lymphatic Filariasis**.
- Lymphatic Filariasis can be eliminated by **preventing the spread of infection through preventive chemotherapy**.
- **The World Health Organization (WHO)** recommends **Mass Drug Administration (MDA)** as the main strategy for elimination.

About Lymphatic Filariasis

- Lymphatic Filariasis, commonly called **elephantiasis (Haatipaon)**, is a neglected tropical disease.
- It is a vector-borne illness spread by the bite of **infected female Culex mosquitoes**.

Cause for the disease

- The disease is caused by parasitic nematodes (roundworms) belonging to the family Filarioidea. There are three main types of these thread-like worms
- **Wuchereria bancrofti** – responsible for about 90% of cases
- **Brugia malayi** – accounts for most of the remaining cases
- **Brugia timori** – also causes the infection

Bodhan AI

- **Union Education Minister** launched **Bodhan AI**, which has been established as a **non-profit organisation** under the Education Ministry.
- Bodhan AI is to build an open-source **“Bharat EduAI Stack”** to introduce artificial intelligence across all levels of education.

Bio Threat in India

- Context: In 2025, the **Gujarat ATS** exposed a suspected **bioterror conspiracy** involving

ricin, believed to be **India's first potential case of ricin-related bioterrorism** with possible foreign connections.

Biological Weapons

- Biological weapons involve the use of harmful microorganisms—such as **bacteria, viruses, or fungi**—or **toxic substances like ricin and botulinum toxin** to inflict illness or death on people, animals, or crops.
- Because they can cause widespread destruction and casualties, they are categorized as **Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs)**.
- These weapons are particularly appealing to non-state actors since they are comparatively inexpensive to develop yet capable of creating severe panic and large-scale damage.

Biological Security Challenges in India

- India's vast population and dense urban centres heighten the consequences of any biological attack.
- Moreover, the country's significant reliance on farming and livestock increases its susceptibility to agro-terrorism and diseases that can spread across borders among animals.
- At the same time, the rapid advancement of biotechnology research makes it more challenging to monitor and control dual-use technologies that can serve both peaceful and military purposes.
- The growing interest of extremist or non-state groups in affordable but highly disruptive biological agents further intensifies the national security threat.

India's Tea Export in 2025

- Context: In 2025, India achieved a record high in tea exports, reaching 280.40 million

kilograms between January and December, a notable rise from 256.17 million kilograms in 2024.

India's Tea Exports and Global Presence

- **India ranks as the world's second-largest tea exporter.**
- The bulk of exports consist of black tea, which makes up about 96% of total shipments, while smaller quantities include green tea, regular tea, herbal blends, masala tea, and lemon tea.
- A major factor behind the surge was the sharp increase in demand from West Asian markets, particularly Iraq, the UAE, and Iran, which together now account for nearly 20% of India's total tea exports.
- Key tea-producing regions in India include Assam (notably the Assam Valley and Cachar) and West Bengal (Dooars, Terai, and Darjeeling).
- Indian teas—especially those from Assam, Darjeeling, and Nilgiri—enjoy a strong global reputation for their distinctive flavour and quality.
- **China remains the largest tea producer, followed by India.**

India's First Musical Road

- **Context: Mumbai has launched India's first "musical road"** along the Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj Coastal Road, where vehicles trigger the **Oscar-winning track "Jai Ho"** while driving.
- The project is designed **to improve road safety** by motivating drivers to maintain a consistent speed.

- It employs **technology developed in Hungary**, involving specially designed rumble strips etched into the road surface at carefully measured distances.
- When vehicles pass over these grooves at a speed of **around 70–80 km/h**, the **resulting vibrations and sound frequencies** combine to recreate the tune of the song.
- With this initiative, **Mumbai joins a limited number of global cities that have adopted “melody road” technology**, alongside Japan, Hungary, South Korea, and the UAE.
- the first major port in India to secure the prestigious IGBC Platinum Rating—the highest level of certification conferred by the Indian Green Building Council.
- This honour has been awarded to the Port’s Administration Building in recognition of its exceptional standards in sustainability, energy conservation, and environmentally responsible infrastructure.
- The Administration Building functions under a well-defined green policy and systematic waste management framework.

PAIMANA Web Portal

- **Context:** The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has presented updated information in the Lok Sabha regarding the **PAIMANA Web Portal**, which tracks central infrastructure projects with an **investment of ₹150 crore and above**.
- **PAIMANA (Project Assessment Infrastructure Monitoring and Analytics for Nation-Building)** is an online platform designed to monitor ongoing Central Sector Infrastructure Projects costing ₹150 crore or more.
- The portal is **developed and maintained by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation** and is connected via APIs to the Integrated **Project Monitoring Portal (IPMP)** of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, enabling seamless tracking and coordination of large-scale infrastructure initiatives.
- It features rooftop solar installations and a roof treated with high Solar Reflectance Index (SRI) coating, which minimizes the Urban Heat Island effect and enhances overall energy performance.
- Around 89% of its electricity requirements are met through on-site solar power generation, while the remaining 11% is procured from off-site renewable energy sources.
- This achievement highlights the Port Authority’s strong commitment to lowering carbon emissions and advancing the use of clean and sustainable energy.

AI Impact Summit

- **Context:** Prime Minister will inaugurate the **India AI Impact Expo 2026**, which includes pavilions from 13 other countries **the first such event in the Global South** which will end on Feb 20.
- The summit will push for equitable access to AI resources, adding that India is focusing the summit on a **human centric approach**.
- It marks the **fourth AI Summit after summits in the U.K, South Korea and France**.

IGBC Platinum Rating

- **Context:** The V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority has made history by becoming

- The AI impact event will feature exhibitions and live demonstrations of AI technology and start-ups, which are structured across three thematic chakras- “People, Planet and Progress”.
- **The conference will be held under 7 themes: Human Capital, Science, Democratization of AI Resources, Resilient Innovation and Energy, Inclusive Social Empowerment, Safe and Trustworthy AI and AI for Economic Development and Social Well-Being.**

Previous Conferences:

- The AI Security Conference was held in Bletchley Park, UK in 2023 to explore the impact of emerging AI technology.
- After that, AI conferences were held in Seoul, the capital of South Korea, in 2024, and in Paris, the capital of France, in 2025.
- This is followed by this year’s **AI Impact Summit in India**, where **65 percent of the population is under the age of 35.**

NGT Clears Great Nicobar Mega Project

- **Context:** A Bench of the **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** cleared the **₹2.92 lakh crore Great Nicobar Island mega-infrastructure project**, citing its strategic importance and stating there was no valid ground to interfere.
- The Union government opposed public disclosure of the HPC report, citing strategic, defence, and national importance. The NGT accepted this position, noting the project’s importance to India.
- The NGT said that the **environmental clearance granted to the project has adequate safeguards** and therefore there are no grounds to interfere with it.
- **The Environment Ministry must protect coral reefs along the coast, ensure coral regeneration**

using proven scientific methods, prepare and approve an implementation plan.

About the Great Nicobar Island (GNI) Project

- **The Great Nicobar Island (GNI) Project** was conceptualised by NITI Aayog and formally launched in 2021.
 - It seeks to develop a large-scale infrastructure hub comprising an **International Container Transshipment Terminal (ICTT)**, a new green-field international airport, a planned township, and a gas and solar-based power plant.
 - The project includes a **container terminal, an integrated city, an airport for military and civil use, and a 450MVA gas and solar power plant.**
 - The project is being executed by the **Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation (ANIIDCO).**
 - Strategically, the initiative supports India’s long-term maritime and economic objectives under **Maritime Vision 2030** and is identified as a flagship development programme within the broader **Amrit Kaal Vision 2047** roadmap.
- #### **National Green Tribunal (NGT)**
- **The National Green Tribunal (NGT), set up in 2010**, is a dedicated judicial forum created to ensure the swift resolution of environmental disputes in India.
 - It deals with matters concerning **environmental protection, conservation of forests, and enforcement of environmental rights, and has the authority to award compensation for harm resulting from environmental violations.**
 - **The tribunal aims to dispose of cases within six months**, functioning in accordance with the **principles of natural justice.**

- Its structure includes a Chairperson, along with Judicial Members and Expert Members, allowing for a well-rounded and informed decision-making process.
- The civil H125 will first be built at this facility and in future the military variant of the helicopter could also be built.

VAYYU Virtual Research Centre

- **Context:** IIT Madras is launching a virtual research centre called VAYYU in collaboration with the Finnish Meteorological Institute to study air quality, weather and climate change. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed for this.

The areas of research of the centre are

- Aerosol dust layer and meteorological interactions
- Interactions between the **Himalayan atmosphere and cryosphere layers**
- **Urban air quality** and its changes
- Regional hydro-climate
- Snow formation and glacier melt
- **Impacts of aerosols on air quality in Indian cities**
- The centre will serve as a leading **research centre to monitor and better understand the evidence** related to climate and air quality.

First private sector helicopter FAL

- **Context:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron virtually inaugurated the Tata Advanced Systems **Final Assembly Line (FAL) for the Airbus H125 helicopter.**
- The facility in **Vemagal, Kolar district in Karnataka**, is **India's first private-sector helicopter FAL.**
- This is the **first time India's private sector** will undertake the **manufacturing, integration, testing and maintenance of a sophisticated rotary wing platform.**

- **The first localised H125 is expected to be delivered early 2027** and will also be available for export across South Asia.

Centenary Celebrations of Ol Chiki Script

- **Context:** President of India inaugurated the centenary celebrations of the ol chiki script.
- **The Ol Chiki script was created in 1925 by Raghunath Murmu exclusively for writing the Santhali language.**
- It enabled Santhali to shift from a primarily oral tradition to a structured written form.
- Prior to the development of Ol Chiki, Santhali was written in scripts such as Roman, Bengali, Odia, and Devanagari.
- Santhali, written in the Ol Chiki script, received official status by being added to the **Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India through the 92nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003.**
- In a significant step toward promoting linguistic equity, **the Constitution of India was translated into Santhali in December 2025, using the Ol Chiki script.**

Bhirrana Site and Its Significance

- **Context:** Recent radiocarbon dating studies at **Bhirrana in Haryana suggest that the Harappan Civilisation in the Indian subcontinent may date back more than 8,000 years**, making it one of the oldest known urban cultures.
- It situated along the ancient (paleo) channels of the Ghaggar River.

Hakra Ware Culture

- Featured carefully plastered underground dwelling pits dug into natural soil.
- The distinctive pottery assemblage known as Hakra ware.

Early Harappan Phase

- Construction of houses using mud bricks.
- Pottery classified into six fabric types, comparable to those found at Kalibanga-I.

Early Mature Harappan Phase

- Notable changes in town planning and settlement pattern.
- The settlement was protected by a mud-brick fortification wall.

Mature Harappan Phase

- Presence of steatite seals and other typical Harappan artifacts.
- Evidence of standardized Harappan cultural materials.

Bee Corridors

- Context: The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has announced plans to create the country's first "Bee Corridors" along National Highways.

About Bee Corridors

- Bee corridors are uninterrupted stretches of vegetation designed to support pollinators.
- They include flowering trees and plants that provide nectar and pollen year-round.
- The goal is to create a supportive habitat for bees along highway networks.

Importance of the Initiative

- The project aims to ease the growing environmental pressures affecting honeybees and other pollinating insects.

- By improving food sources and habitat connectivity, it strengthens pollinator populations and overall ecological balance.

80 Years of the RIN Revolt

- Context: 18 February 2026 marks the 80th anniversary of the Royal Indian Navy Revolt, a brief yet highly significant armed uprising that reflected militant anti-colonial sentiment and remarkable Hindu-Muslim unity during the closing phase of British rule in India.

About the Revolt

- The uprising witnessed participation from more than 20,000 naval ratings.
- The movement began at HMIS Talwar in Bombay and quickly expanded to naval bases in Karachi, Madras, Cochin, Visakhapatnam, Calcutta, and the Andaman Islands.
- The revolt was initially triggered by sailors at HMIS Talwar in Bombay due to:
 - Poor-quality food and inadequate pay.
 - Racial discrimination and ill-treatment by British officers.
 - The arrest of a sailor who had written the slogan "Quit India" on the ship.

India's New International Subsea Digital Gateway

- Context: This is a joint infrastructure project aimed at creating a new global undersea cable gateway at Visakhapatnam (Vizag), supported by a five-year investment of \$15 billion in AI-driven digital infrastructure.
- The project proposes a direct fibre-optic connection from Vizag to Chennai, extending further to South Africa. This route connects the American East Coast to Vizag via Africa.

- Another direct cable between **Vizag and Singapore will provide a South Pacific route**, linking the American West Coast through Australia to India.
- The initiative will complement the Blue subsea cable, Raman subsea cable, and Sol subsea cable, which together create a digital corridor from the American East Coast to Mumbai via the Red Sea.

Undersea/Submarine Communication Cables

- These are **fibre-optic cables laid along the ocean floor to carry internet and communication data across continents**. They form the **backbone of the global digital network**.
- Over **95% of international data traffic passes through such cables**, which can transmit multiple terabits of data per second.
- They consist of numerous thin **optical fibres made of glass or plastic that transmit data as light signals with minimal signal loss**.
- The cables are protected by steel armouring, waterproof layers, and repeaters that amplify signals over long distances.
- India has already implemented submarine optical fibre links between **Chennai and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, and between Kochi and Lakshadweep**, to enhance connectivity in island regions.

'MANAV' Vision for Artificial Intelligence

- **Context:** The 'MANAV' vision was unveiled by the Prime Minister at the India AI Impact Summit in 2026. It is a **human-centric governance framework for transparent, inclusive and responsible development of Artificial Intelligence**.

5 key pillars of the MANAV vision

- Morality
 - Justice and ethical basis in AI development
 - Protection of human dignity and rights
- Accountable governance
 - Transparent policy and regulation
 - High accountability for AI institutions
 - Clear security protocols are essential
- National sovereignty
 - Value of data sovereignty
 - Clear and secure data architecture for AI training
- Accessibility and inclusion for all
 - AI technology should be available to all sections of society
 - Inclusive development objective
- Trust, Safety, and Legality at the centre of AI deployment
 - AI systems should operate within a legal framework
 - Security and reliability ensured

Rare Earth Permanent Magnet Production

- **Context:** The **Union Coal and Mines Minister** said that the production of rare earth permanent magnets in India will start this year itself.
- The Union Cabinet has approved a project with a budget of ₹7,280 crore to **produce 6,000 metric tonnes of magnets per year**.
- The Central Government is making serious efforts to reduce import dependence on **rare earth elements like neodymium and praseodymium**
- This is being implemented as **part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat**
- It has been decided to set up new plants in the states of **Andhra Pradesh, Odisha,**

Maharashtra and Gujarat to address the shortage of rare earth extraction and refining plants in the country

- Work has already started in Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh
- Rare earth permanent magnets play a **key role in the manufacture of electric vehicles, wind turbines, electronic devices, aerospace and defence equipment.**

ISA Launches Global AI Mission

- **Context: The International Solar Alliance (ISA)** unveiled the Global Mission on AI for Energy at the India AI Impact Summit 2026, aiming to **speed up the use of artificial intelligence in clean energy systems across its 120+ member nations.**
- The initiative highlights the importance of digital public infrastructure, such as India's Energy Stack, in driving the energy transition.

AI for Energy Mission

- The mission places **digital ecosystems and citizen-focused platforms** at the heart of transforming the energy sector.
- It seeks to unite **governments, private companies, financial institutions, and multilateral agencies to expand AI-enabled clean energy** solutions on a large scale.
- Rather than limiting efforts to pilot projects, the initiative focuses on comprehensive transformation by aligning national policies, strengthening data systems, enhancing technical expertise, and mobilizing investments.

Significance of the Initiative

- **Accelerating Energy Transition:** AI can improve the integration of renewable sources, minimize transmission losses, and enhance forecasting of solar and wind generation.

▪ **People-Centered Energy Systems:** AI-powered platforms can make energy access more inclusive, transparent, and efficient for citizens.

▪ **Policy and Data Coordination:** The mission promotes harmonized regulations, shared data frameworks, and coordinated financing among member countries.

▪ **India's Strategic Role:** As ISA's founding member and host nation, India reinforces its position as a global leader in combining digital innovation with climate action, linking solar diplomacy with AI-driven governance.

▪ **Boost to Decentralized Renewables:** AI tools can enhance grid reliability, reduce costs, and support faster adoption of decentralized renewable energy, allowing countries to move beyond outdated infrastructure models.

Bharat GI

- **Context: The 'Bharat GI' initiative, a national program aimed at promoting India's Geographical Indication (GI) products** internationally, was showcased at the India AI Impact Summit 2026.

About Bharat GI

▪ Bharat GI acts as a unifying brand that presents India's distinctive GI products, such as Coorg Coffee and Darjeeling Tea, to global audiences.

▪ Launched by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce.

▪ Utilizes AI-based tools for product traceability and market analysis.

▪ It's objective is to enable artisans and producers to directly connect with international buyers, expanding global reach and visibility of Indian GI products.

AI Impact Summit (2026)

- **Context:** At the **AI Impact Summit in New Delhi, 85 countries and three international organisations signed the New Delhi Declaration**, aiming to build broad global consensus on the future of Artificial Intelligence governance.
- The International AI Summit held in New Delhi confirmed investments of \$270 billion (₹24 lakh crore).
- Five pillars were emphasized: ethics, responsible governance, national sovereignty, access for all, and legal use.
- The New Delhi Declaration was adopted at the conclusion of the AI Summit. The declaration has **7 key pillars**
 - Democratization of AI resources
 - Economic growth and social well-being
 - Safe and trustworthy AI
 - Use of AI for science
 - Access to social empowerment
 - Human capital development
 - Resilience and innovative AI systems
 - Broad International Consensus

Signed by 85 countries + 3 international organisations

- Major powers including the **United States and China endorsed the declaration**
- Consensus-building approach similar to the **G20 New Delhi Summit**
- Commitments are voluntary and non-binding

Guiding Philosophy

- Based on the principle of **"Sarvajan Hitaya, Sarvajan Sukhaya"** (Welfare for all, Happiness for all)
- Emphasises equitable sharing of AI benefits globally
- Focus on inclusive and democratic AI growth

Tetanus and Diphtheria (Td) Vaccine

- **Context:** To strengthen India's National Immunization Program, the Union Health Minister launched the **Tetanus and Diphtheria (Td) vaccine at the Central Research Institute, Kasauli.**
- **Tetanus and Diphtheria (Td) vaccine** is a booster vaccine that protects individuals against tetanus and diphtheria.
- It is usually given **after childhood immunization to maintain long-term immunity.**

Types of Vaccines

- **Td vaccine - protects against tetanus and diphtheria only.**
- **Tdap vaccine - protects against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (whooping cough), especially recommended for pregnant women and caregivers of children.**

About Tetanus and Diphtheria Diseases

- Tetanus is caused by the **bacterium Clostridium tetani**. It is found in **soil and animal waste.**
- It enters the body through cuts and causes symptoms such as **muscle stiffness, spasms, and "lockjaw."**
- In severe cases, it can be fatal. However, it can be prevented with **vaccination and booster doses.**

Diphtheria

- Caused by the **bacterium Corynebacterium diphtheriae**. It is spread through **respiratory droplets.**
- It can cause a coating in the throat that blocks breathing. If left untreated, it can affect the **heart and nervous system.**
- The incidence of this disease has been significantly **reduced through vaccination programs.**

Delhi-Meerut RRTS Corridor

- **Context:** The Prime Minister officially launched **India's first Nammo Bharat Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS)** and dedicated the entire **82-km Delhi-Meerut Nammo Bharat corridor** to the nation.

About Nammo Bharat

- **Nammo Bharat is India's first regional rail service** designed to connect major urban centres across the National Capital Region (NCR) through a high-speed rail network spanning **82 kilometres between Delhi and Meerut.**
- It is a rail-based, **high-speed, high-frequency and environmentally sustainable transport system.**
- The trains have a design **speed of 180 km per hour** and an average operational speed of about 100 km per hour, significantly reducing travel time and improving connectivity across the NCR.
- The project is being executed by the **National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC).**
- The system aims to offer a **fast, safe and comfortable commuting experience**, while promoting greater use of public transport through smooth integration with other transit services in the region.

India's Organ Donation and Transplantation Framework

- **Context:** India has recorded a fourfold rise in organ transplants, increasing from fewer than 5,000 procedures in 2013 to almost 20,000 by 2025.

- The country's deceased organ donation rate remains under 1 donor per million people, which is considerably lower than Spain's rate of around 48 donors per million.

Organ Donation and Transplantation

Framework in India

- The **Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Act (THOTA), 1994** provides the legal basis for regulating the removal, storage, and transplantation of human organs and tissues in India.
- The **National Organ Transplant Programme (NOTP)** works to strengthen and promote deceased organ donation through a structured three-tier system at the national, regional, and state levels.
- An **Aadhaar-linked National Organ and Tissue Transplant Registry** has been established to enable secure, transparent, and nationwide registration of organ donation pledges.

Transplant Authority of Tamil Nadu (TRANSTAN)

- **Tamil Nadu is one of the first States to initiate Cadaver Transplant in 1995 after the Transplantation of Human Organs Act was passed in the year 1994.**
- **Cadaver Transplant Program** was started by the then **Hon'ble Chief Minister Dr.Kalaigmar.M.Karunanidhi in the year of 2008.**
- **First State to provide financial assistance** for any transplant to needy people through Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Scheme up to 22 lakhs.
- **First State to start Liver Transplant** in Stanley Government Medical College and Hospital.

- First State in the country to streamline organ allocation.
- First State in the country to clarify Medico legal procedures related to Organ Donation from Brain Dead Donors.
- **First state to undertake many combined transplants like Pancreas & Kidney, Liver & Kidney, Heart & Lung etc.**
- **First State to have won the Best State Award in Organ Donation & Transplantation six times in a row from the Government of India.**
- First State in the country to achieve **Guinness World Record for the largest Organ Donation awareness talk** for 3005 participants held on 24.10.2018.
- First State in the country to achieve **Asia Book of Records for the largest number of participants in Marathon for Organ Donation Awareness** held at Pudukkottai, Tamil Nadu on 17.08.2019 in which more than 12,000 people participated.

Nationwide HPV Vaccination Programme

- **Context:** The nation-wide programme will **target girls aged 14 years**, an age at which the HPV vaccine offers maximum preventive benefit, well before potential exposure to the virus.
- Under India's partnership with **Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, Gardasil vaccines**, which are approved by India's drug regulator and widely used internationally, have been made **available for the national programme.**
- The government to provide **the vaccine free of cost to eligible girls across all States and Union Territories.**
- **Cervical cancer** remains the **second most common cancer among women** in India, with nearly 80,000 new cases reported annually.

Tamil Nadu HPV Vaccination Programme

- Tamil Nadu introduced the **Human Papillomavirus (HPV) immunisation programme.**
- The initiative will initially be implemented in **four districts** reporting higher incidence of cervical cancer - **Ariyalur, Perambalur, Tiruvannamalai, and Dharmapuri.**
- In the first phase, around 27,000 children in these districts will receive the initial vaccine dose.
- In total, nearly 3.38 lakh girls across 38 districts are expected to be covered under the scheme.
- The vaccination campaign **targets girls between 9 and 14 years of age to help prevent cervical cancer.**

National Monetisation Pipeline 2.0 (NMP 2.0)

- **Context:** The Union Finance Minister has unveiled the **National Monetisation Pipeline 2.0 (NMP 2.0)**, aiming to raise ₹16.72 lakh crore through asset monetisation during the period 2025–26 to 2029–30.

About NMP 2.0

- NMP 2.0 expands upon the earlier National Monetisation Pipeline (2021–2025) by setting out a fresh monetisation plan for FY 2026–2030.
- The strategy focuses on **leasing or monetising already operational brownfield public assets**—such as highways and railway infrastructure—to attract private investment.
- The funds generated will be channelled into building new **greenfield infrastructure projects**, without increasing government borrowing or imposing new taxes.
- The framework has been **prepared by NITI Aayog** in coordination with various ministries.

- It operates under the guidance of the **Ministry of Finance** and is overseen by the Core Group of Secretaries on Asset Monetisation (CGAM), chaired by the Cabinet Secretary.

Key Objectives

- Unlock nearly ₹5.8 lakh crore in private capital to support capital expenditure (capex).
- Apply best practices and lessons learned from NMP 1.0 to ensure streamlined procedures and timely implementation.
- Direct monetisation proceeds to the Consolidated Fund of India, Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), or State governments, as applicable.

PM Surya Ghar Scheme Achieves Major Rooftop Solar Milestone

- **Context:** Recently, the **Prime Minister highlighted that 30 lakh households** have adopted rooftop solar systems under the **PM Surya Ghar initiative**, marking an important achievement in India's clean energy transition.
- **Gujarat ranks first in rooftop solar installations.** It is followed by **Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh.**

About PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (PMSG: MBY)

- The PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana was **launched by the Government of India in February 2024.**
- It seeks to facilitate rooftop solar (RTS) installations in **one crore households in the residential sector by FY 2026-27.**
- Eligible households can apply through a dedicated national portal to install solar panels, **making access to clean energy simpler and more affordable.**
- To boost participation, the **scheme offers collateral-free loans up to ₹2 lakh** at a

subsidised interest rate of 6.75%, provided through 12 Public Sector Banks.

President Unveils Bust of C.Rajagopalachari

- **Context:** The President of India inaugurated a bust of **C. Rajagopalachari at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Rajagopalachari was the first and only Indian** to serve as Governor-General after Independence.

About C. Rajagopalachari (Rajaji)

- C. Rajagopalachari Born in 1878 in **Thorapalli, Tamil Nadu. Entered public service in 1917 as the Chairman of the Salem Municipality.**
- His meeting with **Mahatma Gandhi in 1919** significantly influenced his political journey. He gave up his successful legal practice to join the national movement.
- Actively participated in: **Protests against the Rowlatt Act, The Non-Cooperation Movement, The Vaikom Satyagraha, The Civil Disobedience Movement.**
- He was imprisoned five times between **1912 and 1941** for his involvement in the struggle.
- **Post-Independence Roles**

- Served as the last Governor-General of India until 1950.
- Held office as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu from 1952 to 1954.
- Established the Swatantra Party in 1959, promoting classical liberal economic principles.

- He was the author of well-known English retellings of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana and wrote Ramayana - Chakravarti Thirumagan in Tamil.
- He Awarded the Bharat Ratna in 1954 for his significant contributions to public life and literature.

United Nations Road Safety Financing Initiative

- **Context:** The United Nations has initiated a road safety financing initiative in collaboration with four Indian states. Funding support for the project will come from the UN Road Safety Fund.
- The programme will be carried out in Rajasthan, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Assam under the supervision of the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office.
- Its primary aim is to strengthen both national and state-level capabilities to effectively implement road safety action plans.
- The initiative also seeks to lower the number of road crash fatalities and serious injuries that often result in long-term disabilities.
- India records the highest number of road accident deaths globally, with approximately 153,972 fatalities each year and a mortality rate of 15.4 per 100,000 people, as reported by the World Health Organization.
- Families often lose primary earners, while the country as a whole suffers economic losses estimated to exceed 3% of GDP each year.

SUJVICA

- **Context:** On the occasion of its 40th Foundation Day, the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) introduced SUJVICA.

About SUJVICA

- SUJVICA is an AI-powered biotechnology product data portal created by DBT in partnership with Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises (ABLE).
- It functions as a digital trade statistics and intelligence platform, offering verified and well-organized data on biotechnology product imports.

- The portal presents detailed, sector-specific information covering biochemical products, industrial enzymes, and various other biotech-related imports.
- By delivering structured and reliable insights, SUJVICA helps researchers and startups pinpoint high-value imported products, evaluate import dependence, and focus on strengthening domestic research and development efforts.

MeitY Launches Blockchain India Challenge

- **Context:** The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has introduced the Blockchain India Challenge, a nationwide programme designed to promote blockchain-driven digital governance solutions.
- The Blockchain India Challenge seeks to motivate Indian startups to design permissioned blockchain solutions tailored for government applications.
- Its broader goal is to improve transparency, accountability, and efficiency in public service delivery systems.
- The programme is being executed by Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) with backing from MeitY.
- Startups recognized by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), working in collaboration with government departments, will be eligible for phased financial assistance to develop ten high-impact blockchain use cases across ten categories.

The initiative emphasizes

- Strong regulatory oversight
- Enhanced security and reliability

- Transparent audit mechanisms
- Tamper-resistant record-keeping
- A unified and consistent data source across platform
- AI & Tech Boost - Accelerating AI and advanced tech use for safety, maintenance, and operations.
- Talent & Training Revamp - Exploring innovative methods for talent management and skill development of employees.

Rare Earth Minerals from Mine Waste

- **Context:** South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL), a subsidiary of 'Coal India', has started studying the possibility of extracting rare earth minerals from coal mine waste.
- The aim of this initiative is to reduce dependence on China, which is the leader in the global supply of rare earth minerals.
- 7 old mine waste dumps in the states of Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh have been selected for the study.

Sectors where rare earth minerals are used:

- Electric vehicle batteries
- Solar and wind power generation
- Military equipment
- Mobile phone and electronic device manufacturing

Rail Tech Policy

- **Context:** Railway Minister rolled out two more reforms the Rail Tech Policy and second phase of e-RCT (Railway Claims Tribunal) under the government 52Reforms in 52 Weeks initiative
- As a part of the Rail Tech Policy the minister launched the high-tech round-the-clock Rail Tech Portal to engage start-ups, innovators and industry in addressing emerging challenge in the railways.
- 52 Reforms in 52 Weeks: Major Reforms in Indian Railways Aiming for Systemic Improvements in Efficiency, Governance, and Service Delivery.
- Focus on Safety - Consequential train accidents reduced by ~90% (135 in 2014-15 to 11 in 2025-26); aiming to bring it down to a single digit.
- **India-Israel Partnership for a Multi-Layered Air Defence Shield**
- **Context:** The Prime Minister of India's recent visit to Israel has given fresh momentum to defence cooperation, particularly in advanced weapons technology and missile defence under the proposed Mission Sudarshan Chakra framework.
- The initiative gained urgency after Operation Sindoor, during which India encountered drone and missile threats from Pakistan.
- In response to evolving aerial and missile challenges, India has envisioned the Sudarshan Chakra missile shield as a long-term national security project targeted for completion by 2035 under the Make in India programme.
- The plan is to establish a comprehensive, layered air defence network by integrating cutting-edge systems such as Iron Dome, Iron Beam, Arrow, and David's Sling with India's existing platforms like S-400, Barak-8, and Akash.
- This integrated shield would secure India's land borders and extensive coastline against a wide spectrum of threats.

Sudarshan Chakra

- Sudarshan Chakra is envisioned as a multi-tiered, indigenously driven air defence programme. This layered architecture aims

to ensure seamless protection across varying threat ranges and altitudes.

▪ **It will combine:**

- Long-range systems such as the S-400 and Project Kusha,
- Medium-range platforms like MRSAM/Barak-8,
- Short-range defences including Iron Dome,
- Future-directed laser-based weapons such as Iron Beam and DURGA-II for economical interception of drones and low-flying targets.

India–Germany Climate Partnership

- India and Germany have jointly introduced a €20 million Large Grant project under the International Climate Initiative.

About the International Climate Initiative

- Launched in 2008, the International Climate Initiative is Germany’s principal funding platform for global climate action.
- It finances projects focused on climate mitigation, adaptation strategies, and biodiversity conservation across more than 150 partner countries.
- Among its 14 priority partner nations are India, Brazil, China, South Africa, Indonesia, and Mexico.

New India–Germany Project Objectives

- The €20 million programme concentrates on safeguarding India’s most climate-sensitive ecosystems by encouraging nature-based approaches to strengthen long-term environmental resilience.
- The initiative complements India’s Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), including the goal of achieving 50% power generation capacity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.

- It also aligns with the objectives of the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), particularly missions related to sustaining the Himalayan ecosystem and promoting sustainable habitats.

Key regions identified under the project include

- The Himalayas – threatened by glacier retreat and frequent landslides.
- The Western Ghats – biodiversity-rich areas facing deforestation pressures.
- North-East India – ecologically fragile zones vulnerable to soil erosion.
- Island ecosystems such as the Andaman & Nicobar Islands – at risk from rising sea levels.

Him-CONNECT

- Context: The Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change formally opened the 25th edition of the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS), organized by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), along with the launch of Him-CONNECT.
- The central theme of this year’s summit is “Transformations: Vision, Voices, and Values for Sustainable Development.”

About Him-CONNECT

- Him-CONNECT aims to reduce the gap between research and real-world application in the Himalayan region.
- It connects Himalayan researchers with start-ups, industry leaders, investors, and policymakers to promote innovation and implementation.
- The platform has been established by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to strengthen research-to-action linkages.

- It facilitates the transformation of research supported under the National Mission on Himalayan Studies (NMHS) into practical and scalable sustainable development solutions.
- The ESI Act draws its foundation from the recommendations of the B.P. Adarkar Committee, which examined health insurance for industrial workers.

E20 Petrol Mandate from 2026

- Context: The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) has directed oil marketing companies to blend up to 20% ethanol (E20) with petrol from April 1, 2026.
- The order was issued under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, along with the Motor Spirit and High-Speed Diesel Order, 2005.
- E20 petrol should meet the specifications of the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) with a minimum Research Octane Number (RON) of 95.
- The order aims to standardize high-octane fuel across all states and union territories for modern engine requirements and environmental targets.
- The 2022 amendment to the National Biofuel Policy, 2018, increased the target deadline for 20% ethanol blending from 2030 to Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2025-26.
- ESIC administers the Employees' State Insurance (ESI) Scheme, which provides medical care and cash benefits to workers earning up to ₹21,000 per month.
- The scheme follows a self-sustaining health insurance model, financed through fixed contributions made by both employers and employees based on wages.

State Innovation Mission

- **Context:** The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) has introduced the country's first State Innovation Mission (SIM) in Tripura.

About State Innovation Mission (SIM)

- SIM has been launched as part of the approved AIM 2.0 programme under NITI Aayog's State Support Mission (SSM) framework.
- Originally set up in 2016 by NITI Aayog, AIM seeks to encourage a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship throughout the country.
- Its major initiatives include Atal Tinkering Labs, **Atal Incubation Centres, and Atal Community Innovation Centres, among others.**
- The State Innovation Mission is envisioned as a long-term institutional framework that will assist **States and Union Territories** in developing strong, inclusive, and region-specific innovation ecosystems.
- These ecosystems are intended to align both with **national goals and local capabilities.**

Employees' State Insurance Corporation

- Context: The Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) marked the beginning of its 75th Foundation Year celebrations in New Delhi.
- ESIC is a statutory social security organization established under the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948, and functions under the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

NATIONAL SCHEMES

'SHE-Mart'

- **Context:** The Finance Minister recently announced a new platform called 'SHE-Mart' for women entrepreneurs.
- These are community-owned retail outlets under cluster-level federations, supported by innovative financial instruments.
- The objective is to provide women with better market access, branding, and sustainable income while strengthening self-help groups and grassroots enterprises.
- Built on the foundation of the Lakhpati Didi scheme, it signifies a shift from micro-loans to structured women-owned enterprises.

Objectives of SHE Marts

- To provide permanent retail outlets for products made by self-help groups.
- To improve direct market access.
- To support value-added and processed products.
- To be supported by improved financial mechanisms.

Lakhpati Didi Scheme

- This was announced on August 15, 2023.
- This scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development to support rural women and self-help group members.
- The objective is to help women start small businesses and earn a minimum of ₹1 lakh annually.
- Skill training is provided in sectors such as plumbing, LED bulb manufacturing, drone operation and repair, tailoring, and weaving.

- Opportunity for trained women to earn income using their skills.
- Goal: To promote financial independence and train 2 crore women.

Divyangjan Kaushal Yojana and Divyang Sahayata Yojana

- **Context:** The Union Budget for 2026-27 has introduced two key schemes specifically designed to empower persons with disabilities (Divyangjan).

Divyangjan Kaushal Yojana

- This scheme primarily focuses on providing specialized training in relevant industries to create dignified and sustainable livelihood opportunities for persons with disabilities.
- It targets high-growth sectors such as Information Technology, AVGC, hospitality, and food services, which offer suitable job roles for persons with disabilities.

Divyang Sahayata Yojana

- This initiative enhances the availability of affordable, high-quality assistive devices for persons with disabilities.

Key Components

- Supporting the Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO) to increase the production of assistive devices and integrate artificial intelligence technologies.
- Strengthening Pradhan Mantri Divyasha Kendras for integrated care and establishing assistive technology marketplaces for testing and procuring assistive devices.

Gyan Bharatam

- **Context:** Over 7.5 lakh manuscripts have been digitized under Gyan Bharatam 1.29 lakh manuscripts are currently accessible online through the Gyan Bharatam Portal.

About Gyan Bharatam

- Announced in the **Union Budget 2025–26**.
- A **flagship initiative of the Ministry of Culture (MoC)**, Government of India.
- Aims to **unearth, safeguard, and preserve India's vast manuscript heritage**.
- Aligned with the **national vision of Viksit Bharat 2047**.
- Seeks to integrate **cultural preservation with human capital development**, ensuring transmission of ancient knowledge to future generations.

Bharat-VISTAAR

- **Context:** The Union Budget 2026–27 proposed **Bharat-VISTAAR (Virtually Integrated System to Access Agricultural Resources)**.

About Bharat-VISTAAR

- A **multilingual AI-based tool** designed to support farmers with timely and accurate information.
- Provides information in farmers' own language on **Crop planning, Packages of agricultural practices, Pest and disease management, Weather forecasts, Market prices and trends, Government schemes (eligibility, application process), Grievance redressal**.
- The first version of Bharat VISTAAR will be launched in **Hindi and English** and will gradually become capable of responding in regional languages.
- This will enhance farm productivity, **will lead to better farmer decision making and reduce risk** through customized advisory support for the farmer.
- The Finance Minister allocated Rs 150 crore for the **Bharat-VISTAAR for the next financial year (2026-27)**.

Technology Integration

- Will integrate **AgriStack portals with ICAR's** package of agricultural practices.
- Uses AI systems to deliver customized advisory services to farmers.

SAKSHAM 2026

- **Context:** In an effort to enhance awareness about conserving national resources, the campaign **SAKSHAM 2026** has been recently inaugurated by the oil industry.

About SAKSHAM

- **SAKSHAM (Samrakshan Kshamatha Mahotsav)** is an annual awareness campaign.
- Initiated by the **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India**.
- Aims to **promote fuel conservation and encourage sustainable energy practices**.
- Seeks to steer India towards a **greener and energy-efficient future**.

Theme of SAKSHAM 2026

- **"Conserve Oil and Gas, Go Green"** (Tel aur Gas Bachao, Harshit Urja Apnao)
- Emphasizes the shift towards renewable energy sources and energy-efficient solutions for environmental sustainability.

Bharat Taxi

- **Union Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation** will launch India's first cooperative-based ride-hailing platform, **Bharat Taxi**.
- Bharat Taxi has been conceptualised as a transformative initiative in the mobility sector, **placing drivers – referred to as sarathis (charioteers) – at the centre of ownership, operations, and value creation**.

- Each honoured sarathi will be provided with a **personal accident insurance cover of ₹5 lakh and family health insurance cover of ₹5 lakh.**
- Bharat Taxi aims to expand to **all States and cities across the country in the next two years.**
- Target Species: Olive Ridley Turtle to leverage the global appeal of the **Arribada (mass nesting) phenomenon.**
- Promoting niche tourism diversifies India's travel portfolio by **catering to nature and wildlife enthusiasts.**

AIM SUMVAAD

- Context: **The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)** organised AIM SUMVAAD, its annual incubator conclave in New Delhi.
- It acts as a national platform to align policy intent, institutional capacity, and partnerships **and aims to build a high-quality incubation ecosystem in India.**
- It marked the launch of the **National Incubator Assessment Framework**, a digital repository for benchmarking incubator performance across India.
- The scheme will create direct jobs by training local communities to work as **nature guides and conservation stewards.**
- Regulated access fosters public awareness of marine biodiversity and the fragility of coastal ecosystems.

Project Tiger

- **Context:** The Centre has established four working groups to review all policy decisions made over the past five decades regarding tiger conservation. This initiative coincides **with the completion of 50 years of successful Project Tiger.**
- Each of the four working groups will focus on a different Tiger zone: **North, South, East and West.**

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)

- AIM is a flagship initiative set up by the **NITI Aayog in 2016.**
- Its objective to create and encourage an environment of innovation and entrepreneurship across **schools, educational organisations, research institutes, and industries, including MSMEs.**
- **AIM 2.0: The government launched it in 2024** to expand infrastructure, address ecosystem gaps, and extend the **initiative until 2028.**
- Their role is to analyse past policy decisions related to tiger conservation over the last 50 years and prepared reports that evaluate the **current relevance of these policies, identify outdated policies and recommend new policies for the next 25 years.**

Project Tiger

Turtle Trails Initiative

- Context: The Union Budget 2026-27 introduced the **'Turtle Trails'** initiative to drive a national push for ecological tourism.
- It aims to develop strictly **regulated tourism circuits centred on Sea turtle conservation and ethical wildlife observation.**
- **Project Tiger is a wildlife conservation initiative in India that was launched in 1973.**
- The primary objective of Project Tiger is **to ensure the survival and maintenance of the tiger population in their natural habitats by creating dedicated Tiger Reserves.**
- The project has **helped significantly increase the tiger population, creating numerous tiger**

reserves and enhancing overall ecosystem health and biodiversity conservation.

- The **Nation Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)** has overseen the project and conducted a total of 28 policy meetings to implement various programmes and decisions.

Export Promotion Scheme

- **Context:** The **Union Cabinet** has approved two major schemes worth over Rs 45,000 crore. Of this, Rs 25,060 crore has been allocated for the **Export Promotion Scheme** and Rs 20,000 crore for the **Credit Guarantee Scheme**.
- The Export Promotion Scheme will operate under two sub-schemes: '**Niriyat Protsakan**' (financial assistance) and '**Niriyat Disha**' (non-financial assistance).
- Under '**Niriyat Protsakan**', loans will be provided at **low interest rates to micro, small and medium exporters**.
- These include interest subsidy on pre- and post-export loans, credit cards for e-commerce exporters, and credit enhancement facilities for new markets.
- Under the '**Niriyat Disha**' scheme, **quality improvement of export goods, packaging, participation in international exhibitions and transport subsidy** will be provided to exporters from remote districts.
- All the schemes are to be implemented for **six years from 2025 to 2031**.

Urban Challenge Fund

- **Context:** The Union Cabinet has approved the launch of the **Urban Challenge Fund** a new centrally sponsored scheme of the **Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry** with **Rs1 lakh crore central assistance**.
- The scheme aimed to support **transformative and bankable urban projects** through

a competitive challenge mode as urban infrastructure could not be developed with the public finance alone.

- The fund will cover cities with a population of 10 lakhs or more (based on 2025 estimates) all capitals of states and Union Territories and major industrial cities with a population of 1 lakh crore or more.
- Additionally all urban local bodies in hilly states and north eastern states and smaller urban local bodies with a population below 1 lakh will be eligible for support under the **Credit Repayment Guarantee Scheme**.
- Under this scheme, the **Central Government will provide 25% of the project cost if at least 50% of the funding is raised through the market**.
- It aims to build **productive, inclusive and climate responsive cities** positioning them as a key driver of the country's next phase of economic growth.
- It gives effect to the government's vision announced in the Union Budget for 2025-26 to implement proposals relating to cities as **growth hubs, creative redevelopment of cities and water sanitation**.

PM-DAKSH Yojana

- **Context:** According to recent information presented in the **Lok Sabha**, **fewer than 50% of candidates who underwent training under the PM-DAKSH scheme** between 2021 and 2024 were placed.

About PM-DAKSH Scheme

- The **Pradhan Mantri Dakshata Aur Kushalata Sampanna Hitgrahi (PM-DAKSH) Yojana** is a **Central Sector Scheme** introduced in **2020-21** by the **Government of India**.

- The scheme aims to equip **individuals from identified beneficiary groups with quality skill training through recognized institutions**, thereby improving their chances of employment and self-reliance.
- The scheme is designed for **socially and economically disadvantaged sections**, including Scheduled Castes (SCs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Economically Weaker Sections (EWS), De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (DNTs), Safai Karamcharis and waste pickers.
- The PM-DAKSH scheme has now been **integrated with the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship to streamline skill development efforts and improve implementation efficiency.**
- The scheme seeks to enhance employability among marginalized communities, although recent placement data indicates the need for stronger industry linkage and outcome tracking.

Innovative India Scheme

- Context: The Union Cabinet has approved the second phase of the **'Innovative India' scheme with a capital of Rs. 10,000 crore.**
- The 'Innovative India' scheme was launched by the **Union Government in 2016 to provide seed capital assistance to entrepreneurs and create a long-term investment culture.**
- So far, 2 lakh companies have been recognized as innovative companies (startups) by the **Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT).**
- These companies are eligible to **receive incentives under the Innovative India Action Plan.**

Multimodal Rail Route Projects

- Context: The Union Cabinet has approved **three multimodal rail route projects.** The cost of implementing these projects is estimated at Rs. 18,509 crore for the **Ministry of Railways.**
- The project includes construction of third and fourth rail routes from **Kasara Manmad in Maharashtra, Delhi-Ambala in Haryana, and Bellary-Hospet in Karnataka.**
- The multimodal rail route project has been proposed with the **objective of improving multimodal transport connectivity and freight movement.**
- This project was planned to be developed under the **Prime Minister's Utveka (Kathi Shakti) National Master Plan.**

First underwater road-rail dual tunnel project

- Context: The Union Cabinet has approved **the country's first underwater road-rail dual tunnel project in the state of Assam** at a cost of Rs. 18,622 crore.
- The project will be **the first in the country and the second in the world to construct a dual tunnel for road and rail traffic with four lanes under the Brahmaputra river from Gopur (NH 14) to Numaligarh in the state of Assam.**
- Earlier, the country's first road tunnel was built under the Hooghly river in Kolkata, West Bengal.
- Similarly, **the country's first undersea rail tunnel is being constructed for the bullet train project between Ahmedabad, Gujarat and Mumbai, Maharashtra.**

PM RAHAT Scheme

- **Context:** The Government of India has recently introduced the **PM RAHAT (Road Accident Victim Hospitalization and Assured Treatment) Scheme** to strengthen emergency medical care for road accident victims across the country.
- The scheme focuses on ensuring immediate life-saving treatment, providing assured financial support to hospitals, and creating an organized emergency response framework for people injured in road accidents.

Integration with Emergency Services

- The scheme is linked with the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS 112). Accident victims or Good Samaritans can dial 112 to identify the nearest empanelled hospital and request ambulance services without delay.

Cashless Treatment Coverage

- Every eligible road accident victim, irrespective of the type of road on which the accident occurred, is entitled to cashless medical treatment up to ₹1.5 lakh per person.

Digital Implementation Framework

- The scheme is executed by integrating the Electronic Detailed Accident Report (eDAR) system of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways with the Transaction Management System (TMS 2.0) managed by the National Health Authority. This ensures streamlined processing and transparency.

Hospital Reimbursement Mechanism

- Payments to hospitals will be made through the Motor Vehicle Accident Fund (MVAFF).
- If the vehicle responsible for the accident is insured, compensation will be sourced from contributions made by general insurance companies.

- In cases involving uninsured vehicles or hit-and-run incidents, expenses will be covered through budgetary support provided by the central government.

Grievance Redressal System

- Any complaints related to the scheme will be handled by a designated Grievance Redressal Officer appointed by the District Road Safety Committee, which is chaired by the District Collector or District Magistrate.

Prime Minister's Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana

- **Context:** Gujarat (with 5.6 lakh), Maharashtra (4.5 lakh) and Uttar Pradesh (3.7 lakh) are at the top in terms of the number of households using the Prime Minister's Surya Ghar : Muft Bijli Yojana.
- The Central Government launched this scheme on February 13, 2024. The main objective of this scheme is to provide up to 300 units of free electricity by installing solar panels on the roofs of houses.
- The scheme aims to install solar systems in one crore houses by March 2027.
- The Central Government is providing a one-time financial assistance of up to ₹78,000 per house,
- Under this scheme, more than 23 lakh rooftop solar systems with a capacity of about 8,691 MW have been installed across the country in the last 2 years.
- This project is implemented by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Government of India.

Bharat VISTAAR Scheme

- **Context:** Recently, the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare rolled out Phase-1 of the AI-driven Bharat VISTAAR initiative in Jaipur,

Rajasthan, during the AI Summit held in Delhi. The scheme aims to digitally strengthen and support farmers across the country.

About the Scheme

- Bharat VISTAAR is a multilingual, AI-powered conversational advisory platform.
- It enables farmers to raise agriculture-related queries through basic mobile phones or smartphones and receive prompt responses.
- To transform agriculture into a more accessible, cost-effective, and technology-oriented sector.
- To provide AI-based customised guidance and enhance farmers' self-reliance.

Helpline Facility

- Farmers can call **155261** to obtain instant assistance in their regional language.
- Currently available in **Hindi and English**, with plans to expand to **11 languages**.
- The service also allows farmers to **check up-to-date mandi prices nationwide**.

Unified Digital Platform

- The system integrates multiple databases and services into a single interface, including Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) knowledge resources, India Meteorological Department, (IMD) weather data, AgriStack infrastructure, Market price information, Various government welfare schemes

Digital Farmer ID

- A digital Farmer Identity Card will securely **store farmers' data**.
- It will **link essential services such as Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and the Soil Health Card program**.

Services Offered

- Advisory support on soil testing, seed selection, fertiliser use, irrigation methods, loans, insurance, and scheme entitlements.

- Aims to boost farm productivity while lowering risks.

Additional Measures

- A farmer-focused **AI Hackathon was organised to encourage agri-tech innovation**.
- The **Agri Kosh AI Strategy Roadmap** was also introduced to outline future directions for AI in agriculture.

"One Plant Per Day" Initiative

- **Context:** A Union Minister recently commemorated the completion of five years of the **"One Plant Per Day"** pledge, which began as a personal environmental commitment and has evolved into a proposed nationwide green campaign.

About One Plant Per Day

- The One Plant Per Day Resolution is a **green initiative launched in 2021** by **Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare of India**, through which he committed to planting at least one sapling every day.
- The initiative seeks to **inspire both individuals and communities to take part in tree plantation drives, turning personal ecological responsibility into a broader people's movement**.
- It was led by the **Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare and Ministry of Rural Development**.

Significance

- Transforms individual initiatives into collective climate action and encourages public involvement.
- Contributes to expanding **green cover, conserving biodiversity, and strengthening climate resilience**.
- Fosters eco-friendly social practices, such as presenting saplings instead of traditional gifts,

thereby embedding sustainability into daily life.

Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) scheme

- **Context:** The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has announced a 50% cut in benefits under the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) scheme, effective immediately.

About RoDTEP Scheme

- The RoDTEP scheme was introduced in 2021 by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to support Indian exporters.

Policy Change

- RoDTEP replaced the Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS).
- The earlier MEIS programme provided fixed export incentives, which were considered inconsistent with World Trade Organization (WTO) rules because they were viewed as trade-distorting subsidies.

Fundamental Principle

- The scheme is based on the global trade concept that taxes and duties should not be passed on to exports.
- In other words, exported goods should be free from domestic tax burdens so they can compete internationally at their actual production cost.

WTO-Compliant Framework

- Unlike MEIS, which functioned as a direct subsidy programme, RoDTEP follows a remission-based approach.
- It reimburses exporters for embedded taxes and levies using pre-determined average rates, ensuring compliance with WTO norms.

Dual Administrative Structure

- The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), operating under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, identifies eligible products and specifies the applicable rates.
- Meanwhile, the Department of Revenue under the Ministry of Finance handles the disbursement of refunds.

E-Scrip Mechanism

- Benefits are issued as transferable electronic scrips via the Indian Customs Electronic Gateway platform.
- Exporters may use these e-scrips to pay Basic Customs Duty or trade them in the open market.

CBDC Scheme for Food Subsidy

Distribution

- **Context:** India has launched the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) based food subsidy distribution pilot scheme under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) in Puducherry.
- This marks a significant reform in the delivery of food subsidy through the Public Distribution System (PDS) by integrating digital rupees into the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) framework.
- Digital currency or e-cash transaction is a digital mechanism for money transactions. It is implemented by the Reserve Bank of India.
- The CBDC based subsidy will be directly credited to the digital wallets of the beneficiaries in the form of tokens.
- The tokens can be used to purchase food grains at authorized fair price shops.
- The scheme is being implemented in Puducherry in collaboration with the Reserve

Bank of India, Public Finance Management System (PFMS), Government of Puducherry and Canara Bank.

▪ **Ministry of Finance is the nodal agency.**

ECI Net

▪ Context: "ECI Net" is a new app launched by the Election Commission of India.

▪ It will help you to know the voter registration details instantly.

▪ You can see the vote counting progress and results live.

▪ It will provide **real-time information not only on the election day** but also on the counting day.

▪ It is an open app that can be downloaded and used by the public.

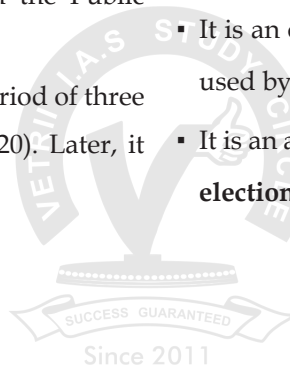
▪ It is an attempt to increase **transparency in the election process.**

Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana

▪ In view of the economic disruptions caused by COVID-19, free food grains were provided under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY).

▪ The scheme aims to provide 5 kg of food grains (wheat or rice) free of cost to every person covered under the National Food Security Act, 2013, in addition to the 5 kg of subsidized food grains already provided through the Public Distribution System (PDS).

▪ It was initially announced for a period of three months (April, May and June 2020). Later, it was extended till September 2022.



IMPORTANT DAYS

Indian Coast Guard Day

- **Indian Coast Guard Day 2026 is observed on a 1 February**, marking a historic milestone of 50 years since the raising of the Indian Coast Guard in 1977.
- The official theme for Indian Coast Guard Day 2026 is **"Suraksha, Seva, Samarpan"** meaning **Security, Service, and Dedication**.

World Wetlands Day

- **World Wetlands Day is celebrated annually on 2 February** to mark the signing of the Ramsar Convention in 1971 at Ramsar in Iran.
- The day aims to raise awareness about wetlands such as lakes, marshes, mangroves, floodplains, and lagoons.
- The 2026 theme, **"Wetlands and Traditional Knowledge: Celebrating Cultural Heritage"**.

Rheumatoid Arthritis Awareness Day

- **Rheumatoid Arthritis Awareness Day is observed every year on 2 February.**
- Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) is a chronic autoimmune disorder in which the **immune system mistakenly attacks healthy joint tissues.**

World Cancer Day

- **World Cancer Day is observed every year on February 4th.**
- The theme for World Cancer Day in 2026 is **"Uniting by Uniqueness"**.

International Day of Human Fraternity

- The International Day of Human Fraternity is celebrated on **February 4, 2026.**
- **2026 Theme:** Dialogue instead of divisions.

World Interfaith Harmony Week

- World Interfaith Harmony Week 2026 is observed from **February 1-7 2026** across the world.
- The observance is led by the United Nations (UN) and aims to **promote peace, tolerance, non-violence, and mutual understanding** among people of different religions and beliefs.

International Epilepsy Day

- International Epilepsy Day 2026 will be observed on **February 9** to raise awareness about epilepsy.
- International Epilepsy Day, a global initiative aimed at improving understanding of epilepsy and supporting the rights of people living with the condition.

World Pulses Day

- World Pulses Day 2026 will be observed on **10 February** to highlight the role of pulses in nutrition, sustainable agriculture, and climate resilience.
- The theme for World Pulses Day 2026 is **"Pulses of the World: From Modesty to Excellence."**

International Day of Women and Girls in Science

- **International Day of Women and Girls in Science** is observed every year on **11 February.**
- The United Nations marks this day to promote equal **participation of women and girls in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.**
- The **theme** for International Day of Women and Girls in Science 2026 is **"Synergizing AI, Social Science, STEM and Finance: Building Inclusive Futures for Women and Girls."**

National Productivity Council

- The National Productivity Council (NPC) is set to mark its 68th Foundation Day on February 12, 2026. In addition, National Productivity Week will be observed nationwide from February 12 to 18, 2026.
- This year's theme is "Clusters as Growth Engine: Maximizing Productivity in MSMEs."

National Women's Day

- India is celebrating **National Women's Day 2026 on 13th February 2026**.
- This year **National Women's Day, also known as National Day of Women**, in India becomes special as it will mark the **147th birth anniversary of Sarojini Naidu**.
- Sarojini Naidu, famously known as the **Nightingale of India or Bharat Kokila**, is a monumental figure in Indian history.

World Radio Day

- World Radio Day 2026 will be observed on February 13, celebrating radio as a powerful public service medium.
- This year's theme, "**Radio and Artificial Intelligence: AI is a tool, not a voice**".
- The so-called "**Radio Man of India**" is **Ram Singh Bout** from Uttar Pradesh.

Ramakrishna Jayanti

- Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa Jayanti 2026 commemorates the birth of the saint on **18 February 1836**.

Shivaji Maharaj Jayanti

- Shivaji Maharaj Jayanti 2026 will be celebrated on 19 February 2026 across India, especially in Maharashtra, to honour Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, the founder of the Maratha Empire.

Tamil Literary Renaissance Day

- The birth anniversary of U.V. Saminathar, also known as Tamil Thatha, is celebrated on February 19 as Tamil Literary Renaissance Day.

Arunachal Pradesh - Statehood Day

- Statehood Day is celebrated in **Arunachal Pradesh every year on 20 February** to commemorate the day on which **Arunachal Pradesh was granted statehood in 1987**.
- The **55th Amendment (1986)** to the Constitution of India granted statehood to Arunachal Pradesh (came into effect on 20 February 1987) and **Article 371-H provides special privileges**.

Mizoram - Statehood Day

- **Mizoram Statehood Day** is celebrated **annually on 20 February** to commemorate the establishment of Mizoram as the **23rd state of India on 20 February 1987**.
- **Mizoram enjoys special privileges under Article 371G of the Constitution of India**, enacted by the **53rd Amendment Act of 1986**.

World Day of Social Justice

- **World Day of Social Justice 2026, observed on February 20**, is celebrated under the theme "**Renewed Commitment to Social Development and Social Justice**".

International Mother Language Day

- **International Mother Language Day 2026 observed on February 21, under the theme "Youth voices on multilingual education"**
- Each year, UNESCO publishes the State of the Education Report for India, focusing on a specific themes. This year, which is the seventh edition (2025), **Bhasha Matters: Mother Tongue and Multilingual Education, brought**

together global research, new national evidence and practical lessons to explore the state of Mother Tongue and Multilingual Education in India.

World Peace and Understanding Day

- **World Peace and Understanding Day 2026** will be commemorated on 23 February, celebrating the founding of Rotary International in Chicago in 1905.

Central Excise Day

- India will celebrate Central Excise Day 2026 on **24 February 2026** to commemorate the enactment of the historic Central Excise Act, 1944.
- The occasion honours the role of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) in effective tax administration and revenue generation.

Tamil Nadu State Girl Child Protection Day

- **February 24**, the birthday of former Chief Minister Jayalithaa, is celebrated as 'Girl Child Protection Day'.
- Three district administrations that excel in their performance in increasing the girl child sex ratio are recognized with awards and certificates on the Tamil Nadu State Girl Child Protection Day on February 24 every year

TRAI Foundation Day

- The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) observed its 29th Foundation Day on **20 February 2026**, commemorating its inception in 1997.
- One of the major themes discussed at TRAI Day 2026 was: **Network Slicing and Net Neutrality**.

International Polar Bear Day

- International Polar Bear Day is observed on **February 27**.
- The occasion aims to increase public awareness about the conservation challenges faced by polar bears and highlight the serious risks they encounter as a result of climate change.

World NGO Day

- World NGO Day is celebrated globally on **February 27, 2026**

National Science Day

- India observes **National Science Day 2026** to commemorate the discovery of the **Raman Effect by Sir C. V. Raman in 1928**.
- The occasion is celebrated annually on **28 February** to recognize his groundbreaking contribution to science.
- The theme for National Science Day 2026 is **"Women in Science: Catalysing Viksit Bharat."**

REPORTS & INDICES

Corruption Perceptions Index

- Context: **India has moved up 5 places to 91st in the 2025 Corruption Perceptions Index.**
- Last year, India was ranked 96th with a score of 38; this year, it has scored 39.
- **Transparency International, headquartered in Berlin, Germany, publishes this list annually.**
- Countries with a score of 100 are considered to be free of corruption, while those with a score of 0 are considered to be highly corrupt.
- A total of 182 countries are included in the 2025 list.
- **Denmark is at the top with a score of 89, Finland (88) is second, and Singapore (84) is third.**
- India is also included in the list of countries where journalists covering corruption are threatened.

Network Readiness Index 2025

- Context: **India has moved up four places to 45th position in the Network Readiness Index 2025 (NRI 2025) report.**
- The report assesses the network readiness status of 127 economies based on 53 indicators across four pillars: technology, people,

governance and impact.

- The report is prepared by the independent, non-profit Portulance Institute, Washington, DC.
- **India has improved its score from 53.63 in 2024 to 54.43 in 2025.**
- **India is ranked 2nd in the group of low-middle income countries.**

India leads in several indicators

- **Top:** “Annual investment in telecommunications services”, “AI scientific publications”, “ICT services exports”, “E-commerce legislation”.
- **Second place:** “FTTH/Building Internet Subscriptions”, “Mobile Broadband Internet Traffic Within the Country”, “International Internet Bandwidth”.
- **Third place:** “Domestic Market Size”, “Income Inequality”.

Global Mind Health 2025 Report

- Context: According to the Global Mind Health 2025 Report, which covers 84 countries, India ranks 60th globally in mental health and well-being among young people aged 18 to 34.
- Their Mental Health Questionnaire (MHQ) score is 33.
- In contrast, Indians aged 55 and above score 96, ranking 49th globally.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

- **Uyir Nigar Tamil** publishes by the **Tamil Virtual Academy**. The book is a documentary which explains Tamil linguistic consciousness and the history of language movements.
- The Vice President released the book **“The Sage who Reimagined Hinduism: The Life,**

Lessons and Legacy of Sree Narayana Guru” written by Member of Parliament Dr. Shashi Tharoor.

Thathumbum Tamizh Perumitham

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has written a book titled **“Thathumbum Tamizh Perumitham”**, which explains the 5,000 years of cultural pride of Tamils as revealed through excavations at Keezhadi and Porunai.

AWARDS & HONOURS

Grammy Awards

- **Bad Bunny** made history at the Grammys, winning **Album of the Year** for his **Debi Tíjar Mas Fotos**, the first Spanish-language work to take the top honour.
- **Kendrick Lamar** won **Record of the Year** award, while **Billie Eilish** took the **Song of the Year** prize.
- The **Dalai Lama** won his **first Grammy** for **audio book and storytelling recording**.

Tamil Nadu climate scientist receives the 'Crafoord Prize'

- Tamil Nadu climate scientist **Veerabhadran Ramanathan** (82) received the prestigious **Crafoord Prize in Geosciences**.
- This prize is **considered the highest award in geosciences, comparable to the Nobel Prize**, and was announced by the **Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences**.

Ramanathan's key research

- He discovered that **CFC gases warm the Earth like carbon dioxide**.
- He has researched **atmospheric brown clouds and their impact on monsoon reduction in South Asia and the melting of Himalayan glaciers**.
- His research formed the basis for global environmental agreements such as the **Montreal Protocol**.
- **Professional life:** Started as an engineer in

Telangana, **worked at NASA**; currently an emeritus professor at the University of California, San Diego.

- **Prize money: 8 million Swedish Kronor (approximately ₹8.25 crore).**

Swachhta Pakhwada Award 2025

- **Context:** The **first prize in the Swachhta Pakhwada Awards 2025**, presented by the **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways**, has been awarded to **Paradip Port Authority**.
- This award has been given in recognition of its outstanding efforts in **cleanliness, sustainability, and proactive community engagement**.

World's Best Teacher Award

- **Background:** **Ruble Nagi from Kashmir, India**, was selected for the **World's Best Teacher Award** at the 'World Government Summit - 2026' held in **Dubai, United Arab Emirates**.
- She was awarded a prize money of **one million dollars (approximately Rs.9 crore)**.

- This award is presented annually by the London-based 'Varkey Foundation', which works in collaboration with the **UN UNESCO** organization

BBC Indian Sportswoman Award

- Indian cricket star **Smriti Mandhana** has been named the **BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year 2025**.
- **Chess prodigy Divya Deshmukh** also made headlines by winning the **Emerging Player of the Year** award.

BAFTA Awards

- India created history at the 79th British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) with **Boong, a Manipuri film directed by Lakshmipriya Devi**, winning the country's first award on the prestigious stage, considered the British equivalent of the Oscars.
- The movie won the award in the **Best Children and Family Film** category.

2025 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation

- Context:** The 475-year-old **Our Lady of Grace Cathedral in Vasai, Maharashtra, has won the 'Award of Merit'** at the 2025 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation.
- This 16th century Portuguese church in Papadi village was given the honour for its traditional, cement-free restoration with the help of local people

- The award was established by **UNESCO in 2000** to promote best practices in cultural heritage conservation across Asia and the Pacific.

Indian Prime Minister Receives Israel's Highest Parliamentary Honour

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi was presented with the **Speaker of the Knesset Medal, Israel's top parliamentary award.**
- He became the **first international leader** to be honoured with this distinction by the Israeli Parliament.
- The award recognises his leadership in strengthening **strategic ties between India and Israel.**
- It also acknowledges his efforts in expanding **cooperation in trade, innovation, defence, and technology sectors.**



DEFENCE

Indian Coast Guard

- **Context:** Prime Minister recently extended greetings to the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) on its 50th Raising Day.

About Indian Coast Guard

- It is a maritime armed force operating under the **Ministry of Defence, Government of India**.
- It was formally established in **1978 by the Coast Guard Act, 1978 as an independent Armed force of India**.
- **Moto: "VAYAM RAKSHAMAH" - WE PROTECT**

Lohit Valley

- **Context:** The **Indian Air Force** carried out a high-risk operation to combat forest fires in the Lohit Valley of Arunachal Pradesh. **Lohit Valley is India's easternmost valley, situated in Arunachal Pradesh near the tri-junction of India, China, and Myanmar.**
- The valley is named after the **Lohit River, a major left-bank tributary of the Brahmaputra**.
- The valley is a critical defence corridor; **Walong was a major battleground in the 1962 Sino-Indian War.**
- The **Dhola-Sadiya Bridge (Bhupen Hazarika Setu), India's longest river bridge (9.15 km), connecting Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, is located here.**
- The region is inhabited by the **Mishmi, Khampti, and Singpho tribes.**
- The valley is home to the **hoolock gibbon, red panda, and the endemic Mishmi wren-**

babblers. It also hosts the **Kamlang Wildlife Sanctuary.**The valley is named after the **Lohit River, a major left-bank tributary of the Brahmaputra.**

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- **babblers.** It also hosts the **Kamlang Wildlife Sanctuary.**

Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) Technology

- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation** successfully carried out the **flight demonstration of Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet technology from the Integrated Test Range, Chandipur, off the coast of Odisha.**
- According to the Ministry of Defence, with this achievement, India has entered an elite group of nations possessing SFDR technology.
- SFDR is a critical capability for developing long-range air-to-air missiles.
- The technology significantly enhance combat effectiveness and provide a decisive tactical edge against adversaries.

Exercise KHANJAR

- The **13th edition of the India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise KHANJAR** commenced on **4 February 2026 at Missamari, located in the Sonitpur district of Assam.**

- Exercise KHANJAR is a bilateral joint special forces exercise conducted annually since 2011.
- The exercise is significant as it strengthens bilateral defence ties and reflects the shared commitment of both nations towards regional and global security.
- Designed for **Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) in coastal and shallow waters. Capable of advanced mine-laying operations.**
- Equipped for underwater **surveillance, search and rescue (SAR), and Low Intensity Maritime Operations (LIMO).**

AGNI-3 Missile

- **Context :** On February 6, India successfully test-fired the Agni-3 medium-range ballistic missile at Chandipur, Odisha.

AGNI-3 Missile

- It is indigenously developed by DRDO, and it uses solid fuel, operates in two stages, and is surface-to-surface on a mobile launcher.
- It has a range of 3,000 km, can carry a 1,500 kg payload, weighs 48,300 kg, measures 16.7 m in length, and 2 m in diameter.
- The Strategic Forces Command has been testing Agni-3 for the past three years.
- Agni missile series ranges: Agni-1 (700 km), Agni-2 (2,000 km), Agni-3 (3,000 km), Agni-4 (4,000 km), Agni-5 (up to 5,000 km).

INS Arnala

- **Context:** INS Arnala is the Indian Navy's first indigenously designed and built Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC).
- Represents a major step in India's shift from a "Buyer's Navy" to a "Builder's Navy" under Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

About INS Arnala

- **First of eight ASW Shallow Water Crafts** being built for the Indian Navy.
- **Designed and built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata.**
- Named after the **historic Arnala Fort located off Vasai, Maharashtra.**

- Features stealth design, electronic warfare systems, and advanced sensors.

- Enhances combat readiness, situational awareness, and coastal security.

First international air exercise of 2026

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) carried out its **first overseas air exercise of 2026 with the Royal Thai Air Force (RTAF)**, highlighting a major advancement in defence ties between India and Thailand.
- The on-site joint drills involved the **IAF's Su-30MKI fighter jets** operating alongside the RTAF's JAS 39 Gripen aircraft.

Exercise Vayushakti-26

- **Context:** The Indian Air Force (IAF) is set to carry out Exercise Vayushakti-26 at the Pokhran Air-to-Ground Range.

- This large-scale triennial live-fire exercise is designed to display the IAF's coordinated combat strength and its ability to deliver accurate and decisive strikes.

- The 2026 exercise will place special emphasis on evaluating the capability and operational success of **advanced weapon platforms that were deployed during Operation Sindoor.**

- The exercise will incorporate both daytime and night time operations, **humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) missions**, electronic warfare capabilities, and coordinated drone swarm operations.

Exercise Milan

- Context: The Indian Navy will host the International Fleet Review and Exercise MILAN in Visakhapatnam. The navies of QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) will also be among the participants.
- This is the first time Exercise MILAN and the IONS (Indian Ocean Naval Symposium) engagement are being held simultaneously.
- Exercise MILAN is a biennial multilateral naval exercise hosted by the Indian Navy since 1995, aimed at fostering naval diplomacy, interoperability, and regional maritime cooperation.

Exercise Vajra Ghaat

- Context: The Indian Army's Southern Command conducted the exercise Vajra Ghaat at Pokhran Field Firing Range in Jaisalmer district demonstrating the combat capabilities of the K9 Vajra self-propelled artillery gun system in desert warfare conditions.
- Exercise was spearheaded by White Tiger Division, focusing on validating refined Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTP) aimed at enhancing battlefield survivability and operational effectiveness.
- Drill showcased the Army's ability to deploy heavy artillery assets swiftly in the harsh terrain of the Thar Desert.

Indigenous Gas Turbine Project

- Context: The Minister for Defence recently visited the Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE) in Bengaluru, a laboratory under the DRDO. During the visit, the Minister assessed progress on ongoing indigenous military gas turbine programmes, including testing of the afterburner for the Kaveri engine.

About Gas Turbine Engines

- A gas turbine engine is a type of internal combustion engine that produces power by burning fuel in compressed air to rotate a turbine.
- Additional air is used to cool the hot gases before they pass through the turbine section.
- It has three main components:
 - Compressor – compresses incoming air.
 - Combustion chamber – mixes compressed air with fuel and burns it at constant pressure.
 - Turbine – hot gases expand and spin the turbine to generate mechanical power.

Gas turbines are widely used in

- Aircraft propulsion systems (jet engines)
- Electricity generation plants
- Operating compressors in oil and gas pipelines

Indian Army Showcases Indigenous AI Innovations

- Context: During the India AI Summit, the Indian Army presented a variety of home grown AI-powered technologies designed for both defence operations and civilian applications, highlighting their dual-use potential.
- Major Innovations Displayed
 - **EKAM (AI-as-a-Service):** A secure, indigenous AI cloud framework operating in an air-gapped environment to safeguard sensitive data and maintain data sovereignty.
 - **PRAKSHEPAN:** An AI-based weather and disaster forecasting platform offering early warnings for hazards such as floods, landslides, and avalanches.

- **XFace:** An artificial intelligence-driven facial recognition solution for identity authentication and security surveillance.
- **SAM-UN:** A geospatial intelligence and AI-supported situational awareness tool used for operational planning, disaster management, and integrated command centres.
- **Driver Fatigue Detection System:** An AI-enabled device that monitors driver alertness and issues warnings to prevent accidents caused by drowsiness.
- **AI-in-a-Box:** A compact, portable edge AI system that can function securely in isolated or connectivity-limited environments.
- **Vehicle Tracking System:** An AI-supported fleet management solution aimed at improving logistics efficiency and operational monitoring.
- **AI Examiner:** A digital evaluation system that automates testing, grading, and feedback for educational and training institutions.
- **Nabh Drishti:** A mobile telemetry-enabled platform providing instant data reporting and visual representation in real time.
- **Deepfake Detection & AI Cybersecurity Tools:** Advanced systems developed to identify manipulated media, prevent cyberattacks, detect malware, and secure critical digital assets.

India Assumes Chairmanship of IONS

- Context: India has taken over the chairmanship of the **Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)** from Thailand.

About Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)

- Established in 2008 as a **voluntary maritime initiative by the Indian Navy.**

- Created to **strengthen naval cooperation and coordination among countries bordering the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).**

- Functions as a platform for enhancing trust, dialogue, and interoperability between member navies.

Exercise Vajra Prahar 2026

- **Context:** The 16th edition of Exercise Vajra Prahar will be conducted jointly by the **Indian Army and the United States Army** at the Special Forces Training School in Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh.

- Exercise Vajra Prahar reinforces India-US military cooperation, enhances combat **synergy between elite forces, and improves readiness to address emerging security threats.**

About the Exercise

- A bilateral Special Forces drill between **India and the United States.**
- Aims to **strengthen defence collaboration and strategic partnership between the two nations.**
- Enhances interoperability, coordination, and combined operational preparedness.
- Facilitates sharing of special operations tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs).

INS Krishna

- **Context:** The **Indian Navy commissioned INS Krishna**, the inaugural vessel in a series of three indigenous Cadet Training Ships (CTS), at the L&T Shipyard located in Kattupalli, Chennai.

- INS Krishna is **the first vessel in a series of three indigenously developed Cadet Training Ships (CTS).** It has been designed and constructed by Larsen & Toubro (L&T).

- The primary objective of INS Krishna is **to enhance the Indian Navy's training ecosystem.**
- It offers a focused environment where cadets **can practice navigation, seamanship, and ship-handling skills.**
- This prevents operational warships from being diverted away from active service for training duties.

PRAHAAR: India's First National Anti-Terror Policy

- **Context:** The **Union Home Ministry (MHA)** has released India's first national **counter-terror policy titled PRAHAAR.** It outlines a structured National Counter Terrorism Policy and Strategy.
- The policy clearly states that India does not associate terrorism with **any specific religion, ethnicity, nationality or civilisation.**

Objectives and key features

- Measures to prevent terrorist attacks
 - Efforts to plan and prevent attacks in advance.
 - Quick Response at the time of attack.
 - Integrated operation of central, state and district security agencies.
- Social rehabilitation and welfare schemes
 - Rehabilitation works in the affected areas.
 - Joint operation of doctors, psychologists, lawyers, voluntary organizations to restore the society.
 - Welfare schemes like education, housing, employment, credit assistance to reduce the environment conducive to terrorism.
- Legal and security measures
 - Criminalization of terrorist acts.
 - Security measures in prisons.
- Provision of necessary weapons, technologies, training.
- Prevention of terrorists, supporters and financiers in India.
- Cooperation with the world
 - Information exchange and counter-terrorism agreements with foreign countries.
 - Coordination in international activities.
- Threats across Water, Land & Air
 - India faces terrorist threats on all three fronts – water, land and air.
 - Critical sectors protected include: Power, Railways, Aviation, Ports, Defence, Space, Atomic energy.
 - Cross-Border & Global Terrorism
 - The policy highlights “sponsored terrorism” from across the border.
 - Mentions threats from global terror outfits such as: al-Qaeda, Islamic State
 - Notes use of drones and advanced technology in regions like Punjab and J&K.
 - Terror groups increasingly collaborate with organised criminal networks.
- Cyber & Digital Threats
 - Warns that criminal hackers and hostile nation states target India through cyber-attacks.
 - Terror groups use: Social media, Encrypted messaging apps, Dark web, Crypto wallets.
 - Highlights challenges in preventing misuse of CBRNED (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive, Digital) materials.
- National & International Cooperation
 - Emphasises inter-state coordination and uniform anti-terror structure across States.

- Calls for international and regional cooperation to tackle transnational terrorism.

Force, has begun at the Overseas Training Centre in **Chapatia, Uttarakhand**.

India's counter-terrorism framework

- Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967
- National Investigation Agency (NIA)
 - NIA is a statutory body established under the NIA Act 2008 and functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Objective of the exercise

- Strengthening coordination for **joint military operations in a semi-urban environment**.
- Improvement in **physical fitness, joint planning and tactical exercises**.
- Use of **modern technology and enhancement of efficiency**.

Global Terrorism Index

- The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) for 2025 has been released by the **Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP)**.
- **India is ranked 14th** in the Global Terrorism Index (GTI) for 2025.

Key features

- Establishment of temporary operational bases.
- Creation of reconnaissance and surveillance network.
- Establishment of mobile vehicle checkpoints.
- Search operations.
- Military operations by helicopter.

Strela-10 VSHORADS Test

- **Context:** The Air Defence personnel carried out an intense live firing exercise of the **Strela-10 Very Short Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS) at the Pokhran Field Firing Range**.
- The drill, held in the desert region of Rajasthan, showcased a **high level of operational preparedness and accuracy in tackling low-altitude airborne threats**.

INS Anjadip

- **Context:** The Indian Navy will commission its latest sub-hunter INS Anjadip as part of a 16 ship indigenous programmes to plug gaps in anti-submarine warfare.

Operational Capabilities

- With an effective strike **range of nearly 6 to 10 km**, the system can effectively counter:
 - **Low-altitude aircraft and Helicopters**
 - **Advanced threats such as unmanned aerial vehicles (drones)**

Strategic Significance

- Anjadip is the third vessel in a series of eight ASW-SWC ships being constructed under this project.
- The programme is a major boost to the government's Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative in the defence sector.
- The ship has been constructed by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata, highlighting India's growing self-sufficiency in warship production.

Dharma Guardian

- **Context:** Dharma Guardian, the **7th annual joint military** exercise between the **Indian Army and the Japan Ground Self-Defense**

Core Role and Capabilities

- Often described as a "Dolphin Hunter," the vessel is specially designed to detect, pursue, and eliminate hostile submarines operating in shallow coastal regions.

- It is fitted with advanced indigenous weapons and sensors, including the Hull Mounted Sonar 'Abhay,' as well as lightweight torpedoes and Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) rockets.
- In addition to its primary anti-submarine duties, the ship can undertake coastal monitoring, Low-Intensity Maritime Operations (LIMO), and Search and Rescue (SAR) missions.

Agni Varsha

- Context: The Indian Army's Southern Command conducted Exercise Agni Varsha at the Pokhran firing range in Rajasthan.
- It is a large-scale, firing and maneuver military exercise to test operational readiness and integrated combat capabilities in a desert environment.
- The exercise includes Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), counter-drone solutions, modern artillery and network surveillance assets.

- T-90 battle tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, K-9 Vajra and Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) Dhruv are among the assets involved.

Light Combat Helicopter Prachant

- **Context:** The President flew the indigenously designed Light Combat Helicopter Prachant at the Air Force Base in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan.

About Prachant

- Prachant is India's first indigenous multirole combat helicopter.
- It was developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).
- It is designed for the Indian Armed Forces operating in deserts and mountainous areas.
- It can fly up to 700 km.
- It has the highest flight ceiling among all the attack helicopters in the world and can therefore take off and land at an altitude of 5,000 meters.
- This helicopter is capable of carrying lethal weapons and destroying targets



SPORTS & GAMES

Asian Rifle / Pistol Championship

- Esha Singh bagged a second individual career gold at the, Asian Rifle / Pistol Championship. She won the 10m air pistol women's event with a score of 239.8.
- Samrat Rana and Suruchi Singh joined forces to clinch silver in the 10m air pistol mixed team event in the Asian Rifle/Pistol Championship.
- **Elavenil Valarivan and Arjun Babuta** clinched the **10m air rifle mixed** team gold in the Asian Rifle / Pistol Championship in New Delhi
- **Anish Bhanwala** clinched **bronze** in the men's 25m rapid-fire pistol event of the Asian Rifle/ Pistol Championship.
- **Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar** hit a 10.7 in the final shot to clinch the 50m rifle 3 positions (3P) gold in the Asian Rifle/ Pistol Championship.
- India topped the Asian Rifle/Pistol Championship 2026 with 94 medals, including 51 gold, at the event held at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range in New Delhi.
- India's Medal Totally 94: 51 Gold, 23 Silver, 20 Bronze
- **25m Centre Fire Pistol:** Amanpreet Singh (Gold), Gurpreet Singh (Silver), Ankur Goel (Bronze)
- **25m Pistol Junior:** Suraj Sharma (Gold), Mukesh Nelavalli (Silver), Abhinav Deshwal (Bronze)
- **50m Rifle Prone Women:** Sift Kaur Samra (Silver), Tejaswani Sawant (Bronze).

ICC Under-19 World Cup 2026

- **Context:** India won the 2026 ICC Under-19 World Cup.

- They comprehensively defeated **England** by 100 runs in the final match held in Harare, Zimbabwe.
- This is India's **sixth** Under-19 World Cup victory.

BOXAM Elite International 2026

- **Lovlina Borgohain and Arundhati Choudhary** led from the front as India wrapped up a highly successful **BOXAM Elite International 2026** tournament with nine gold medals.

Asian Indoor Athletics Championships

- **Tejaswin Shankar (5993 points)** won the men's heptathlon event to clinch India's lone gold in the Asian Indoor Athletics Championship.

South Asian Football Federation

Under-19 Women's Championship 2026

- In the final of the South Asian Football Federation Under-19 Women's Championship held at Pokhara Rangasala Stadium in Nepal, **India defeated Bangladesh by a score of 4-0.**

National weightlifting championship

- **N. Ajith** created a new snatch record while totalling 320kg to take the elite **men's 71kg gold medal** at National weightlifting championships in Modinagar.

Asian Championships 2026

- Indian shooter Meghana Sajjanar scripted a remarkable sporting moment by winning a bronze medal in the women's 10m air rifle at the Asian Championships 2026

FIDE Freestyle Chess World Champion

- World number one **Magnus Carlsen** has been crowned the **2026 FIDE Freestyle Chess World Champion**, defeating Fabiano Caruana 2.5-1.5 in the final held in Weissenhaus.

Qatar Open 2026

- **World No. 1 Carlos Alcaraz** defeated Arthur Fils to clinch the title at the Qatar Open.

INTERNATIONAL

India-Malaysia Agreements

- **Background:** 11 agreements were signed between India and Malaysia to enhance bilateral cooperation in various sectors.
- Both countries decided to promote the use of local currencies (**Indian Rupee, Malaysian Ringgit**) in trade and investments.
- Agreement was reached to expand cooperation in the **fields of trade, investment, modern technology, artificial intelligence, semiconductors, and the digital economy.**
- It was decided to strengthen partnership in the areas of **defence, maritime cooperation, intelligence sharing, disaster management, and anti-corruption.**
- An agreement was signed between the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and Malaysia's PayNet** for cross-border money transfers; **this will enable Indians in Malaysia to use the UPI service.**
- Agreement was reached to enhance cooperation in health, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, food security, education, vocational training, culture, tourism, and people-to-people contacts.
- It was agreed to strengthen **India-ASEAN relations and to expedite the review of the India-ASEAN Trade Agreement.**
- Malaysia expressed its support for India's bid to become a **permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.**
- An announcement was made regarding the establishment of a **Thiruvalluvar Centre at the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur.**

- A new **Indian Consulate** will be opened in Malaysia.
- Scholarships will be provided in the name of **Thiruvalluvar** to Malaysian students studying in India.

India-US Trade Agreement

- **Background:** The Union Minister stated that the **India-US trade agreement will open up market opportunities worth \$30 trillion for Indian exporters.**
- Indian goods worth approximately **₹4 lakh crore (\$44 billion)** will be exported to the US **without reciprocal additional tariffs.**
- It was announced that the action plan for the India-US interim trade agreement has been finalized by both countries.
- This agreement will greatly benefit **micro, small, and medium enterprises, farmers, and fishermen in particular.**
- The interim trade agreement is expected to be signed in mid-March.
- Under the agreement, the reciprocal additional tariff **imposed by the US on Indian goods will be reduced to 18 percent.**
- **18 percent tariff** will continue to apply in the US to goods worth ₹2.7 lakh crore (\$30 billion) produced in labor-intensive sectors.
- There will be **no change in the 50 percent tariff imposed on goods worth approximately ₹1 lakh crore (\$12 billion)** imported from India, including steel, aluminum, copper, and certain automotive parts.

New Oral Polio Vaccine nOPV2

- **Context:** The World Health Organization (WHO) has approved another **novel oral polio vaccine type 2 (nOPV2)**, boosting global polio eradication efforts and allowing UN agencies, including UNICEF, to procure and distribute it for immunisation campaigns worldwide.

Novel oral polio vaccine type 2 (nOPV2)

- The nOPV2 vaccine is designed to be more genetically stable than earlier oral polio vaccines, reducing the rare risk of mutation that could cause circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus outbreaks.
- nOPV2 vaccine is manufactured by Biological E Limited.
- Global polio cases have fallen by over 99% since the 1980s due to vaccination efforts, but outbreaks of **cVDPV2** continue in under-immunised communities.
- India was certified polio-free in **2014**

India, France Agreements

- **Context:** **In India and France signed 21 agreements** and preliminary agreements to strengthen bilateral cooperation in various sectors including defence, high-tech, key minerals.

Various agreements signed

- 21 agreements and preliminary agreements to enhance bilateral cooperation in various sectors including **key minerals, defence, high-tech, renewable energy, health and investment** were signed.
- The agreement between **Bharat Electronics and France's Safran to manufacture the**

Humvee missile in India includes a double taxation avoidance agreement to encourage mutual investment.

India joins Pax Silica Alliance

- **Context:** **India is to join US-led strategic alliance Pax Silica** at the fifth India Artificial Intelligence Impact Summit marking major step in New Delhi's evolving **technology and economic partnership with Washington**
- India's entry into the initiative which is aimed at **building resilient supply chains for critical minerals and AI**, is expected to formalised at the India AI Impact Summit.
- Pax Silica launched in December 2025 Pax Silica seeks to establish a secure, innovation-driven ecosystem from raw materials and critical minerals to semiconductors and AI Infrastructure.
- India's entry into Pax Silica signals a sharpening **focus on technology-led economic security and recalibration of its strategic alignments** amid intensifying global competition over AI and critical resources.

India-UK Offshore Wind Partnership

- **Context:** **India and the United Kingdom** have set up the **India-UK Offshore Wind Taskforce under the India-UK Vision 2035** framework and during the 4th Energy Dialogue.
- The objective is **to fast-track collaboration in developing offshore wind energy.**

Three major pillars have been identified:

- Ecosystem Planning and Market Structure
 - Focus on seabed leasing mechanisms, regulatory clarity, and ensuring predictable revenue models to attract investors.
- Infrastructure and Supply Chains

- Emphasis on upgrading port infrastructure and promoting domestic manufacturing capabilities to support offshore wind projects.
- Financing and Risk Management
- Mobilising blended finance, encouraging institutional investments, and reducing project risks through supportive financial instruments.

Linkage with Green Hydrogen Mission

- Offshore wind power can supply **clean electricity to coastal industrial zones and green hydrogen hubs.**
- **Under the National Green Hydrogen Mission, India has already achieved competitive hydrogen production costs,** enhancing the viability of such integration.

Offshore Wind Energy

- Offshore wind energy involves generating electricity using wind turbines installed in sea or ocean waters, where wind speeds are generally stronger and more stable than on land.
- According to the National Institute of Wind Energy, India has an estimated offshore wind potential of around 70 GW, mainly along the coasts of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.
- India's total non-fossil fuel power capacity has crossed 272 GW, including more than 141 GW from solar energy and about 55 GW from wind power.
- The National Offshore Wind Energy Policy provides the overall regulatory framework. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy serves as the nodal ministry.

India-Brazil Bilateral Trade

- Context: The target is to increase the value of bilateral trade between India and Brazil to \$20 billion in the next 5 years from Rs. 1.81 lakh crore.
- The current (2024–25) bilateral trade value is \$12 billion, with exports of \$6.77 billion and imports of \$5.47 billion.
- A key agreement on the purchase of rare earth minerals was signed.
- Several agreements were signed in sectors including **steel, trade, MSMEs, health, traditional medicine.**
- Both countries pledged to strengthen cooperation in sectors such as **defence, energy, technology, investment.**
- Efforts are underway to set up an eight-member public infrastructure centre in Brazil. Priority will be given to AI, supercomputers, semiconductors.
- Cooperation in hydrocarbons, renewable energy, and ethanol blends accelerated.

EMINENT PERSONALITIES

Omandur Ramasamy

- Born on **February 1, 1895, in Omandur, near Tindivanam.**
- He had close ties with **Mahatma Gandhi.** He participated in the **Salt Satyagraha, the Civil Disobedience Movement, and the Quit India Movement.**
- In **1947, he became the first Chief Minister (Premier) of Tamil Nadu in independent India.**

Key achievements

- Implementation of complete prohibition
- Abolition of the Devadasi system
- Granting temple entry rights to **Scheduled Castes**
- Publication of the **Tamil Encyclopedia**
- **Nationalization of Bharathiyar's songs**
- Abolition of the **Zamindari system, reservation policies, and educational reforms**
- He played a key role in the **Hyderabad integration issue and advised Sardar Patel.**
- **Periyar and Anna praised him as a champion of social justice.**
- His statue is to be erected at the **Omandur Medical Education Complex in Chennai.**

Maharishi Dayananda Saraswati

- Dayananda Saraswati was born on **12 February 1824 in Dhangarh, Gujarat,**
- Dayananda's views were published in his famous work **Satyartha Prakash (True Explanation).**

- Swami Dayananda Saraswati (1824–1883) was an **Indian philosopher, social reformer, and founder of the Vedic reform movement Arya Samaj.**
- He advocated Swaraj ("**India for Indians**") and a classless, casteless, united India based on Vedic principles.
- He founded the **first Arya Samaj in Mumbai (1875)** and promoted the **Dayanand Anglo Vedic (DAV) schools (1886)** to modernize education.
- Arya Samaj promotes vedic teachings, social reform, female education, mixed marriage, and opposes idolatry, untouchability, and child marriage.
- He supported the idea of **Shuddhi to bring back converts to Islam or Christianity to Hinduism.**
- His followers included Madam Cama, Vinayak Savarkar, Madan Lal Dhingra, and Mahatma Hansraj.
- He was the first to call **Dalits as Harijans.**
- His famous slogan was "**Go back to the Vedas**".

U.V. Saminathar

- Uttamadhanapuram Venkatasubbaiyar Saminathar was born on **19 February 1855 in Uttamadhanapuram**
- He learned Tamil from **Sadagopa Iyengar and Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai** and rose to become a Tamil scholar.
- He worked as a teacher at Kumbakonam College for 23 years from 1880, and at **Madras State College** for 16 years from 1903, and became the principal of Meenakshi Tamil College in 1924.

- He searched for, **identified and arranged Sangam period manuscripts and gave book form to more than 90 books**, and collected more than 3000 manuscripts.
- He published the book **Seevaka Chintamani in 1887**.
- His autobiography '**En Charithram**' was serialized in the **Ananda Vikatan** magazine during 1940–42 and published as a book in 1950.
- He received the **title of Mahamahopadhyaya** in 1906 and the **title of 'Munaivar' from the University of Madras in 1932**.
- He was hailed by the people as "**Tamil Thatha**" for his service to Tamil.
- The Government of India issued a commemorative postage stamp on 18 February 2006.
- His house in Uttamadhanapuram is maintained as a memorial house.

J. Sivashanmugam Pillai

- Born in **February 1901**, Pillai, a postgraduate in humanities and an alumnus of the Loyola and the Presidency Colleges, was an **ardent follower of Mahatma Gandhi**.
- In **July 1937**, he joined the Congress. He was also elected to the **Legislative Assembly from the Chennai (South-Central) constituency**.
- On November 9, 1937, on a motion moved by Congress stalwart S. Satyamurti, **Pillai was unanimously elected Mayor, thus becoming the first Dalit to hold the office**.
- Despite being in the Congress, **he did not boycott committees constituted by the British government to consider constitutional reforms**. For example, he had represented issues and problems of the SCs to the Simon Commission.
- J. Sivashanmugam Pillai was the first Scheduled Caste member to become the Tamil Nadu Assembly Speaker in 1946.
- He demitted the office in **1955 to become Member of the UPSC and was elected to the Rajya Sabha in 1962**

Maruthu Pandiyas – Heroes of Sivagangai

Birth and Early Life

- **Periyamaruth born in 1748 and Chinnamaruth in 1753**.
- Parents: Palaniappan Servai Ponnathal from Mukkulam village, Virudhunagar district.
- Both brothers were **trained in military service**.

Conflict with the British

- British waged war because the **Sivagangai princes did not pay tribute to the Nawab of Arcot**.
- King Muthuvaduganatha died a martyr in the war.
- **Eight years later, Rani Velunachchiar, aided by the Maruthu Pandiyas, Hyder Ali, and Tipu Sultan, reclaimed power**.

Titles and Honours

- The British conferred the **special title of "Servaikars" on the Maruthu Pandiyas**.

Capture and Execution

- Captured by the British in Cholapuram forest on 19 October 1801.
- Hanged on 24 October 1801.

Commemoration

- For the 2024-25 Department of Public Relations grant, a statue of the **Maruthu brothers will be installed in Sivagangai district to honor their decisive fight against the British for the liberation of the motherland.**

Rajagopalachari

- Rajaji was born on **10 December 1878 in Krishnagiri district of Tamil Nadu.**
- He actively participated in the **cooperation movements against the Rowlatt Act.** He participated in protests including the **Vaikom Satyagraha and the Salt Satyagraha.**
- **1937-1940: He was the Chief Minister of Madras Province.**
- He **opposed Mahatma Gandhi's decision to quit the White Movement during the British war against Germany.**
- He **tried to find a solution by negotiating with Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the All India Muslim League. This plan was called the "C. R. Formula".**
- **1946: He was appointed as the Union Minister for Industries, Education and Finance in the Interim Government.**

- He served as the **Governor of West Bengal in 1947-48.**
- He was the **first and last Governor General of India from 21 June 1948 to 26 January 1950.**
- Rajaji passed away on **December 25, 1972,** at the age of 94.

R. Nallakannu

- R. Nallakannu was born on **26 December 1925** in Srivaikundam (united Tirunelveli district) in a farming family.
- Joined the Communist Party of India in 1944.

Political & Social Work

- Served as the President of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural Workers Union for about 25 years.
- Tamil Nadu State Secretary of the **Communist Party of India for 13 years.**
- Also served as a member of the party's Central Committee and the President of the National Control Committee.
- Received the **Ambedkar Award** of the Government of Tamil Nadu in 2017.
- Received the **"Thakaisal Tamilar"** Award of the Government of Tamil Nadu in 2022.

CURRENT FACTS

- **The vitamin essential** for the formation of blood cells and the functioning of nerve cells is mainly found in animal-derived food.
- **B12 deficiency** during pregnancy has been associated with **neural tube defects and poor foetal growth**, affecting long-term health
- **Kalyana Sampada Scheme**: The scheme that identifies agricultural products **in each district and integrates value addition, marketing, and training** is called “Kalyana Sampada”.
- Higher Education Enrollment Rate: **National level: 28.4%, Tamil Nadu: 47%**.
- In Tamil Nadu, **there was the use of iron 5,200 years ago, the use of rice 3,200 years ago, and an urban civilization 4,000 years ago.**
- **President Trump** announced that **the 25% tariff that the US had imposed on Indian goods would be reduced to 18%**.
- **Biomining** is an environmentally friendly technique used **to extract valuable metals from minerals or waste materials using microorganisms.**
- The **Cheyar river** is a major tributary **of Palar river** that originates in Jawadhu Hills, Tiruvannamalai district and merges with Palar at **Thirumukoodal.**
- **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act of 2023**, India’s first legal framework for digital personal data privacy
- **Sex Selection Prohibition Act – 1994**
- **Nivedita Dubey** has taken charge as the first woman Director (HR) of the **Airports Authority of India.**
- **Part III, Article 14- Equality before law**
- **Part IV, Article 44- Uniform civil code for the citizens.**
- **Part IV, Article 48- Organisation of agriculture and animal husbandry.**
- **Part IV, Article 48 A- Protection and improvement of environment and safeguarding of forests and wild life.**
- **Kerala has become the first Indian state** to announce a dedicated **Elderly Budget for financial year 2027.**
- Anti-Hindi Agitation
- Hindi was introduced in schools in the **Madras Presidency in 1927.**
- In the 1938-39 Budget, Premier C. Rajagopalachari announced funds for teaching ‘**Hindustani**’ in **125 schools.**
- On August 1, 1938, 101 Tamil enthusiasts, under the banner of ‘**Thamizhar Padai**’, set out on a march from Tiruchi to Madras against Hindi imposition. Among those who took part in the rally was **Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar.**

- **Natarajan**, 20, was among those arrested on December 5, 1938 for taking part in the anti-Hindi protest. He died at hospital on January 15, 1939. On February 13, **Thalamuthu** of Kumbakonam was arrested for taking part in a protest at George Town. He fell ill and died on March 11. The deaths of the two youngsters fuelled the protest.
- **On June 19, 1939, 'Periyar' E.V. Ramasamy** spoke at a public meeting at **Triplicane in Madras**. He was presented with a purse of ₹1,001, representing 1,001 volunteers who had gone to jail for the anti-Hindi agitation.
- In **1939, the Congress Ministries** in the provinces, including the **Rajaji Ministry in Madras**, resigned against **Viceroy Lord Linlithgow's decision to involve India in the Second World War**.
- On February 22, 1940, **Madras Governor Lord Erskine** halted the compulsory learning of Hindi
- **Green Tamil Nadu Movement (GTM)** : **Goal** Increase Tamil Nadu's **forest and tree cover** from **23.8%** to **33%** by **2030-31**.
- The **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** has elected **Soraya Aghaei** as its first female member from Iran.
- February 9, 2026 will mark **50 years since the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act** was brought in. Though the Act was passed in February 1976, it was given retrospective effect from October 1975.
- **Tamil scholar Devaneyya Pavanar**, who is fondly referred to as **Mozhi Gnayiru**, devoted his life to the **Tamil lexicon project called Agaramudhali Thittam** and worked tirelessly to preserve Tamil's uniqueness.
- A new Income Tax Act, 2025, is set to come into **effect from April 1, 2026**, replacing the **Income Tax Act of 1961**.
- **Part V, Article 94-** Vacation and resignation of, and removal from, the offices of **Speaker and Deputy Speaker**.
- The **H5N1 subtype is an HPAI virus** that causes severe disease and high **mortality in poultry**
- Tamil Nadu has **around 41% share in India's total electronics exports** during the financial year **(FY) 2025 at \$15 billion**.
- **Tamil Nadu** is the leading state in the country in the production and export of electronic goods.
- The electronics manufacturing industry **aims to hit \$500 billion by 2030**, and Tamil Nadu will likely be a \$150 billion market then.
- A report on the Tamil Nadu Electronics Industry, said the State accounted for **28.6% of India's electronics manufacturing gross sales value**, ranking second only to Uttar Pradesh.
- In the **Indira Sahani v. Union of India judgment of 1992**, the Supreme Court of India ruled that the socially, educationally and economically advanced Other Backward Classes (OBCs) were excluded from the benefits of reservation by classifying them as the creamy layer and the concessions have been abolished.
- Under **Article 94(c)** of the Constitution of India, the Lok Sabha has the power to remove its Speaker or Deputy Speaker from office by a majority resolution of all the members present for the time being.

- **Part IVA** was not originally a part of the **Constitution of India 1950**. It was inserted by the Constitution (**Forty-second amendment**) Act, 1976. It contains a list of non-enforceable obligations and duties for the citizens of India.
- **Part III, Article 25** - Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion.
- Tamil Nadu's share in **India's electronics exports is 41%**.
- Tamil Nadu's economic growth rate is **11.19%**, manufacturing sector growth is **14.7%**.
- A **Substantive Motion** is an independent, self-contained proposal submitted for the approval of a Legislative House or Assembly, drafted to express a decision or opinion. The motion entails a debate followed by a compulsory vote **if the notice is accepted and the motion is moved**.
- India's manufacturing performance has strengthened with **GVA growth of 7.72%** in the first quarter of the financial year 2025-26 and 9.13% in the second quarter.
- Public mental health support: **State helpline 104, Tele-MANAS 14416, Sneha helpline 044-24640050** for suicide prevention.
- Book "**Rock Art of Tamil Nadu**" by K. Rajan & R. Sivanandam.
- Poet **Tamil Oli's** epic book is '**Veerayi**'.
- **Kalaingar Magalir Urimai Thogai** scheme was launched in **September 2023**, and 1.13 crore women were disbursed a sum of ₹1,000 each. The programme was since expanded to cover 1.31 crore women across the State
- India currently has an installed **nuclear power capacity of 8.8 GW**, contributing about **3% of its electricity**, and the government aims to expand this **capacity to 32 GW** over the next decade.
- **100 new reserve forests** have been declared across Tamil Nadu in the 4 years between **2021-2025**. This has **increased** the area of forests to **13,494 hectares**.
- The song '**A war will come without a sword and without blood**' was composed by **Namakal poet V. Ramalingam Pillai**. He is the first royal poet of Tamil Nadu. His epic book is '**Avanum Avalum**'.
- Palpandian is known as the Bird Man of Koonthankulam in Tamil Nadu.
- India remains an important contributor to the international wool sector, holding the second position globally in terms of sheep population and standing ninth in overall wool production.
- From 2012-23 to 2023-24 Tamil Nadu's economy grew at an average real rate of 6.37%, compared with the national average of 6.1%.
- During 2024-25 its Gross State Domestic Product registered a growth of 11.2% according to the Reserve Bank of India's Handbook of Statistics on Indian States.
- IUCN Status of Lion-tailed macaque (or wanderoo)- Endangered, CITES: Appendix I, Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule I
- **HAMMER** (Highly Agile Modular Munition Extended Range) developed by Safran electronics & Defence and integrated with the IAF Rafale fighters is a stand-off precision guided air to ground weapon designed for strikes against hardened and high value targets.
- Tamil Nadu is the growth capital of India, at 11.19% Tamil Nadu growth is nearly twice the national average.

- Manufacturing grew at 14.74% and that is more than three times the national average of 4.5%.
- Tamil Nadu leads India in manufacturing employment accounting for 15% of the nation's factory workforce.
- Per capita income reached Rs.3.62 lakh, which is 1.77 times the national average.
- Unemployment declined to 3.5%, while labour force participation rose to 72.1%.
- Tamil Nadu has set its sights on becoming a \$1 trillion economy by 2030.
- Agriculture contributes Rs.1.9 lakh crore to the economy. Tamil Nadu ranks first in Ragi and Sugarcane yields.
- Every district in Tamil Nadu covered by one or more industrial corridors. Tamil Nadu is the only state in India to achieve this.
- The service sector grew at 11.3%. From IT to logistics to hospitality, growth is broad based.
- Rs.54 lakh crore invested in capital expenditure, Roads, ports, logistics, metro expansion infrastructure that powers industry and connects people.
- Social sector spending rose to Rs.1, 57, 864 crore.
- Merchandise exports nearly doubled to reach US\$ 52.07 billion. Tamil Nadu ranks first in electronics, textiles and leather exports.
- FDI inflows has increased to US\$ 3,681 million, even as national inflows slowed.
- Part XII, Article 293- Borrowing by State
- The appointment of the Justice Rajamannar Committee in 1969 by former Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi with A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar and P. Chandra Shetty as its members which, drew national attention to Centre-State relations.
- To improve the relations between the Centre and the State governments, a commission headed by Justice Sarkaria was constituted on behalf of the Central Government in 1983, the Venkatachalaiah Commission in 2000 and the committee headed by Justice Poonchi in 2004.
- In the judgment given by the Supreme Court in the S.R. Bommai case in 1994, it was said that 'federalism is a part of the basic structure of the Constitution.
- The Constitution of India has been amended 106 times
- Article 124 of the Constitution provides that judges of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by the President after consulting the Chief Justice of India (CJI).
- Article 217 provides that judges of a High Court shall be appointed by the President after consulting the CJI, the Chief Justice of the High Court and Governor of the State.
- Article 130 of the Constitution provides that the seat of the Supreme Court shall be in Delhi or such other place(s) as appointed by the CJI with the approval of central government.
- The collegium consists of the CJI with four senior judges of the SC for appointments to the Supreme Court, and the CJI with two senior judges for appointment to the High Courts.
- The collegium initiates the proposal for appointment of judges to the higher judiciary and sends the recommendation to the Central government.
- The Centre may return a recommendation in case of any objection. However, if the collegium reiterates the recommendation, the appointment should be made.
- Kerala - Declares tidal flooding as a state-specific calamity. This decision is the first time in India that tidal flooding has been officially recognised as a calamity by a state.
- Talagirishwara Temple

- The 1,300-year-old Pallava-era paintings at the Talagirishwara Temple at Panamalai in Villupuram was constructed by Pallava King Narasimhavarman II.
- The paintings resemble those at the Ajanta Caves, and are believed to be older than the paintings at Chithannavasal.
- Maveeran Alagumuthu Kone
 - He was one of the earliest freedom fighters from the Tamil land.
 - A polygar, he resisted the British in southern Tamil Nadu.
 - He was executed by the British in 1759.
 - The State government installed his statue near the Egmore railway station, and the Centre released a stamp in his honour in 2015.
- National Fossil Wood Park
 - The National Fossil Wood Park at Tiruvakkarai is a notified national geo-heritage monument located in Villupuram district and
 - Established in 1940, the park houses rare fossilised wood specimens that date back about 20 million years.
- The Madras Presidency Radio Club was formed in May 1924 by a band of dedicated amateurs led by C.V. Krishnaswamy Chetty.
- Slender loris
 - The Kadavur Wildlife Sanctuary was established on 11,806 hectares in Dindigul and Karur districts by the Tamil Nadu government to protect the slender loris.
 - This small nocturnal and arboreal mammal spends most of its life in trees.
 - Listed as endangered by the IUCN, it is largely found in the Eastern Ghats.
- Temple Entry Authorisation Act (1939)
- Sales Tax Act (1939)
- Devadasi Abolition Act (1947)
- Anbukarantal Thittam: 10,637 children who lost their parents receive Rs. 2000 per month to continue their education.
- Anbucholai Thittam: 28 Day Care Centers for Senior Citizens.
- Transgender Welfare
 - Monthly pension increased to Rs. 1,500
 - Appointment in the Village Guard
 - “Aran Illam” for the protection of transgenders
 - Higher education scholarship
- India ranks third in the world in chip exports.
- Bela Gram in Maharashtra's Bhandara district was recognized as India's first net-zero panchayat during Mumbai Climate Week 2026 for its sustainable and carbon-neutral efforts.
- Tetrodotoxin (TTX) is one of the most powerful neurotoxins known, which is very heat-stable. This toxin has no known antidote and ingestion leads to severe, often fatal, paralysis.
- Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023
- The Sholinganallur Assembly constituency in Chengalpattu district continues to have the highest number of electors, estimated at 5,36,991.

- The Harbour constituency in Chennai district has the lowest number of electors, at 1,16,896.
- **Padma Bhushan Winners 2026**

Name	Field	State
K. R. Palaniswamy	Medicine	Tamil Nadu
S. K. M. Maeilanandhan	Social Work	Tamil Nadu

- **Padma Shri Winners 2026**

Name	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	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

- **Tamil Nadu Model School initiative**

- Launched during 2021-22, the scheme has been expanded to all districts to provide residential education to 800 students.
- In the past four years, 2,358 students of these schools and 206 students of Adi Dravidar and tribal welfare schools went on to pursue higher education.
- Adding that 41 of them were pursuing courses at IIT, while 22 were pursuing higher education abroad with full scholarship
- Tamil Nadu's first telemetry study, launched in early January 2026 at the Besant Nagar turtle hatchery, involves flipper tagging to track post-nesting movements, identify migratory routes, and map feeding habitats in the Bay of Bengal.
- A two-day Soybean Festival was organised at Chumoukedima, Nagaland, under the theme "From Field to Feast".
- Achievements of the Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department
 - Free meals programme, launched by Chief Minister for conservancy workers in urban local bodies.
 - Tholkudi programme, civic amenities were improved at their habitations at a cost of Rs.1,000 crore.
 - Iyothee Thass Pandithar Habitation Development Scheme, infrastructure at over 8,500 habitations was improved at a cost of Rs.910 crore.
 - Over 1,000 women benefited from the Nanilam Magalir Nila Udamai Thittam

- Under the En Kalloori Kanavu initiative, 111 students of government tribal residential schools and 26 students of Adi Dravidar welfare schools obtained admission to premier educational institutions such as IIT and NIT.
- The Delhi government is going to implement the Centre's 'Rah-Veer' scheme to motivate citizens to assist seriously injured road accidents.
- The Tamil Nadu Animal Welfare Board (TNAWB) is planning to establish six animal shelters across the State under the Vallalar Palluyir Kappagangal Scheme for abandoned, injured, and rescued animals.
- Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960
- The South-East Asia Region (SEARO) accounts for the second-highest cervical cancer incident (new cases) and death rate among WHO regions, with India contributing over 65% of the burden
- For the first time in Census 2027 operations, "working maps" shall be generated with the latest available satellite imagery to enable clear identification of habitations and settlements on the ground.
- Shingles is caused by the reactivation of the Varicella zoster virus, the same virus that causes chickenpox
- Palamu Tiger Reserve launches 'Vanjeevi Didi' initiative for women to protect wildlife.
- The Assam government has introduced land title grants to over one lakh landless families and public institutions under Mission Pasundhara 3.0.

