

# VETRI IAS STUDY CIRCLE

## Current Affairs

(A book for TNPSC Examination)

**FEBRUARY 2026 - PART 1**



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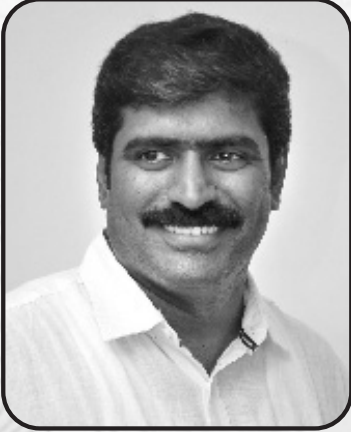
Old No. 52, New No. 1, 9<sup>th</sup> Street,  
F Block, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue Main Road, (Near Isha Siddhi Vinayakar Temple), Anna Nagar East – 600 102.  
**Ph: 044-2626 5326 | 98844 21666 | 98844 32666**

### Branches

**SALEM:** No. 189/1, Meyanoor Road, Near ARRS Multiplex, (Near Salem New Bus Stand), Opp. Venkateshwara Complex, Salem - 636 004. Ph: 95001 22022 | 99436 22022. **KOVAI:** No. 347, D.S. Complex, (3rd floor), Nehru Street, Near Gandhipuram Central Bus Stand, Ramnagar, Kovai - 641 009. Ph: 7502165390. **MADURAI:** No.199, Dharshini Tower, 1st Floor, Vaigai Colony, Anna Nagar, Madurai - 625 020. Ph: 91500 21999 | 91500 21998. **TIRUNELVELI:** No. 58, IVY Towers, 3rd Floor, Palayamkottai, Near Palai Bus Stand, (Next to Muthamil Hospital), Tirunelveli - 627 002. Ph: 91500 10079. **THANJAVUR:** Muthu Complex, (Pantaloon Showroom Basement) No. 243, Cauvery Nagar, Opp. New Housing Unit, Thanjavur - 613 005. Ph: 78711 69099 | 78715 71819. **KOVILPATTI:** No.4, Santhaipeetai Street, (Near Sowbakya Towers), Opposite to Old Bus Stand, Kovilpatti 628 502. Ph: 90037 90335 | 81222 80685. **TIRUCHENGODE:** Vivekananda Educational Institutions, Elayampalayam (Po), Thiruchengode (TK), Namakkal - 637 205. Ph: 78457 79908. **TRICHY:** No : 48, Karur Bypass Road, Chatram Bus Stand (Opp. to St.Joseph College) Trichy - 620 002. Ph: 9500278085 | 9500278086. **TIRUVANNAMALAI:** MSTs Building, Vettavalam Main Road, Near Vijaya Mall Tiruvannamalai - 606601. Ph: 9884043666. **KRISHNAGIRI:** 7 D, Anna Salai, Next to Anna Arch, near New Bus station, Krishnagiri -635001. Ph: 86374 23404. **DHARMAPURI:** No.53, Nethaji Bypass Road, Dharmapuri - 636701. Ph:7092922022 | 8489822022

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# Preface



**M. SHUNMUGAM**

Director

Vetrii IAS Study Circle.

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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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F Block New No. 1, 9<sup>th</sup> Street,  
1<sup>st</sup> Avenue Main Road, Chinthamani,  
Anna Nagar (E), Chennai - 102.

Phone : 044-2626 5326

98844 72636 | 98844 21666 | 98844 32666

E-mail : [enquiry@vetriias.com](mailto:enquiry@vetriias.com)

Web : [www.vetriias.com](http://www.vetriias.com)

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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 4<sup>th</sup>, 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)**.
- Mons Mouton is a mountain about 6,000 meters high located near the **South Pole of the Moon**.

### 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.
- 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.
- If the mission succeeds, **India will become the fourth country** after the United States, Russia, and China to achieve this highly challenging milestone.

### 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**

### New Astronomical Observatories in Ladakh

- **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**.

- The **National Large Solar Telescope (NLST)** will feature a 2-metre aperture and operate as

## 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).

- 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 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.

### **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.
- **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.

## 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.



# 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)**.

## 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**

### 16<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission

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

vertical distribution scheme of the 16<sup>th</sup> 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% (15<sup>th</sup> FC) to 4.097% (16<sup>th</sup> 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.**

### 16<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission

- The 16<sup>th</sup> 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 16<sup>th</sup> 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 16<sup>th</sup> 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

## 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 Poompuhar, 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 extension, launched by the Chief Minister at an event held at **Polivakkam in Tiruvallur district**.
- 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

### 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**.
- 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.

### 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 34<sup>th</sup> 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

- **Contex:** 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.

## 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 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.

### 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.
- Dugong is found in Gulf of Mannar and at Palk Bay in Tamil Nadu.
- The IUCN status of Dugong 'vulnerable to extinction species'.

## 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 Poompohar State Awards for their outstanding contribution and creativity in the handicrafts sector.
- **Poompohar State awardees received Rs. 50,000, a 4-gram gold medal, a copper plaque, and a certificate.**
- 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.

## 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 6<sup>th</sup> 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 ditrict**
- **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 2<sup>nd</sup> Century BCE and the 5<sup>th</sup> 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 5<sup>th</sup> Century BCE and the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 **Thirukadmallai, 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 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> 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**.
- Mamallapuram**
- Located about 58–60 km from Chennai in Tamil Nadu, the Mamallapuram monuments were built by the Pallava kings in the 7<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> 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.**

### **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 (6<sup>th</sup> 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.**

### **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 korraivan, 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**.
- 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**.

### **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)**.

# 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.

### **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.

### **Information about the Union Budget**

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

- The Union Budget is divided into **Revenue Budget and Capital Budget.**

- India's first budget was presented in 1860 by **James Wilson.**

- 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)

## 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. It is 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 (NSKFDC).**
- 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**.

### **Enriched 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 Enriched Rice Scheme**

- In India, enriched 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.

### 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.

### IGBC Platinum Rating

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

## 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.**

- 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

- **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**

### 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.**

### 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.**

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 'Niryat 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.**

## 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.”**

becomes special as it will mark the **147<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Sarojini Naidu.**

**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.”

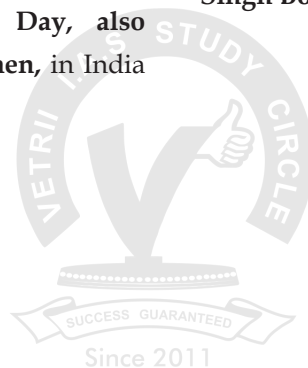
- Sarojini Naidu, famously known as the **Nightingale of India or Bharat Kokila**, is a monumental figure in Indian history.

**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.

**National Women’s Day**

- India is celebrating **National Women’s Day 2026 on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026.**
- This year **National Women’s Day, also known as National Day of Women**, in India



## REPORTS & INDICES

### Corruption Perceptions Index

- Context: **India has moved up 5 places to 91<sup>st</sup> 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 45<sup>th</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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”.

## 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.

## AWARDS & HONOURS

### Grammy Awards

- **Bad Bunny** made history at the Grammys, winning **Album of the Year** for his **Debi Tirar 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

## DEFENCE

### Indian Coast Guard

- **Context:** Prime Minister recently extended greetings to the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) on its 50<sup>th</sup> 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-**

**babbler.** 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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### 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.
- Features stealth design, electronic warfare systems, and advanced sensors.
- Enhances combat readiness, situational awareness, and coastal security.

### 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).
- **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.

### 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.
- 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.**

### 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.**
- 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.

## 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

## 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**



## 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".**

**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 **Namakkal 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.

