

August - 24

TAMIL NADU NEWS

Tamil Nadu Vision 2031

- ❖ Tamil Nadu has announced Vision 2031 to increase the State's renewable energy share to 50% by 2031.
- ❖ The plan includes establishing 20,000 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, with priority for major city corridors.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu had 5.50 lakh registered EVs and 2,425 charging stations as of April 2026.
- ❖ The State will establish 1,000 megawatt-hour (MWh) battery energy storage systems (BESS) through six stations to support renewable energy integration.
- ❖ Under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS), ₹8,929.86 crore has been approved for measures to reduce aggregate technical and commercial losses to 10%, including smart meters.



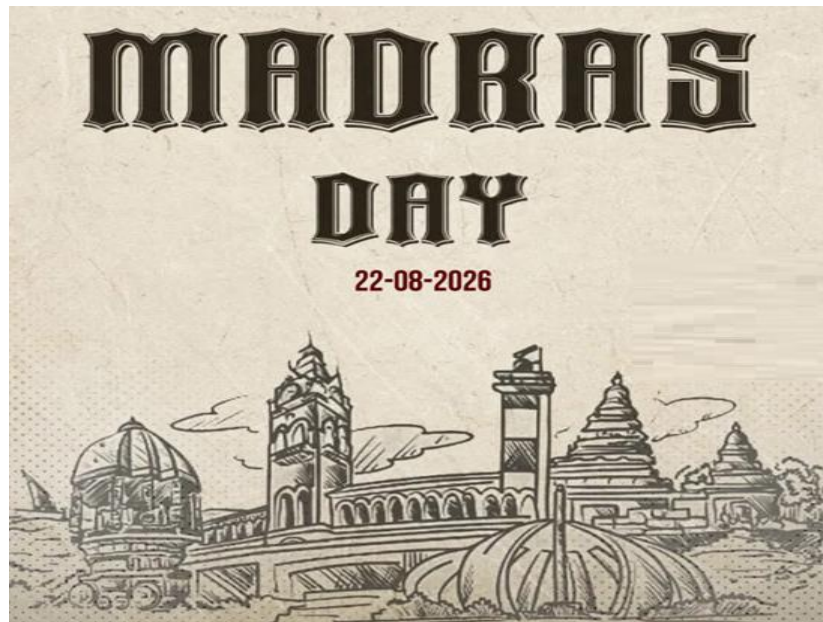
ADB-Chennai Water Project

- ❖ The Government of India and Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a \$230 million loan to modernise Chennai's water supply and sanitation infrastructure.
- ❖ The Chennai Climate-Resilient Water Security and Sewerage Project will improve access to safe and reliable water and sanitation services.

- ❖ More than 170 km of water supply and sewer pipes will be constructed.
- ❖ Seven water pumping stations and 38 sewer pumping stations will be upgraded.
- ❖ The project will strengthen water utility management through performance-based contracts.
- ❖ It aims to improve climate resilience, public health and quality of life while making Chennai's water system more efficient and financially sustainable.



Madras Day 2026



- ❖ Madras Day is observed every year on August 22, and in 2026 it marks the 387th anniversary of the founding of Madras in 1639.
- ❖ The day commemorates the 1639 land grant through which the English East India Company acquired land at Madraspatnam from local rulers.



- ❖ Fort St. George was later established and became the centre around which Madras developed as a trading settlement.
- ❖ Madras Day was first celebrated in 2004 and marks the city's history, heritage, culture and evolution into modern Chennai.
- ❖ Madras State was officially renamed Tamil Nadu on January 14, 1969, while Madras city was officially renamed Chennai on July 17, 1996.

NATIONAL NEWS

Industry Definition - State of Uttar Pradesh vs Jai Bir Singh case

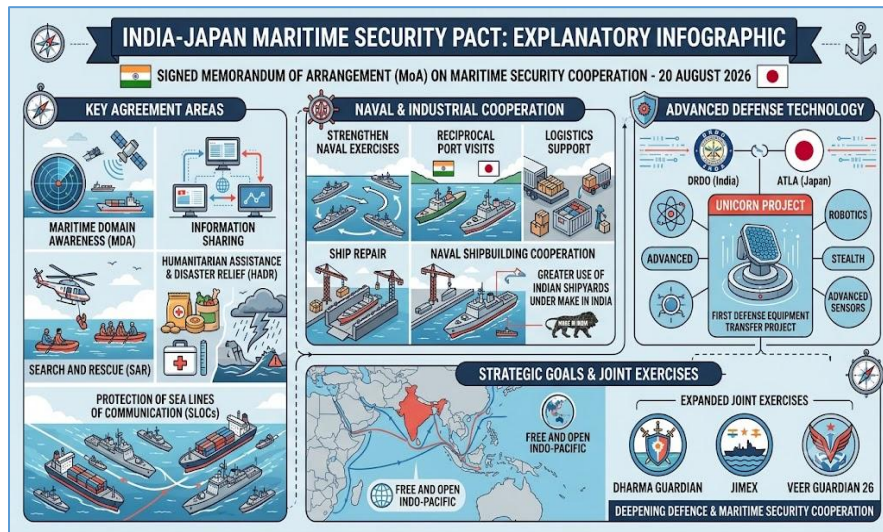
SUPREME COURT CLARIFIES 'INDUSTRY' DEFINITION FOR PENDING ID ACT CASES

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY CASE DEFINITION TO APPLY

- ❖ The Supreme Court's nine-judge Constitution Bench, headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant, delivered a 5:4 verdict on the meaning of "industry" under labour law.
- ❖ The Court held that the broad interpretation in the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board v. R. Rajappa (1978) case will not govern future disputes under the Industrial Relations Code (IRC), 2020.
- ❖ The 1978 judgment had used a triple test—systematic activity, employer-employee cooperation, and production or distribution of goods or services—to identify an industry.
- ❖ The 1978 interpretation will continue for pending disputes under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, while future disputes under the IRC, 2020 will follow the new framework.
- ❖ The Court held that the definition of "industry" under the IRC, 2020 must be interpreted on a clean slate, without being based on the 1978 ruling.
- ❖ The Industrial Relations Code, 2020 is one of the four Labour Codes that consolidated 29 central labour laws.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India-Japan Maritime Security Pact



- ❖ India and Japan have signed a Memorandum of Arrangement (MoA) on Maritime Security Cooperation on 20 August 2026 to deepen defence and maritime security cooperation.
- ❖ The agreement covers Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), information sharing, Search and Rescue (SAR), Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) and protection of Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs).
- ❖ Both countries will strengthen naval exercises, reciprocal port visits, logistics support, ship repair and naval shipbuilding cooperation, including greater use of Indian shipyards under Make in India.
- ❖ India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Japan's Acquisition, Technology & Logistics Agency (ATLA) will expand cooperation in advanced defence technologies; UNICORN is the first defence equipment transfer project between the two countries.
- ❖ India and Japan also reaffirmed commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific and will expand exercises such as Dharma Guardian, JAIMEX and Veer Guardian 26.

Kuril Islands Dispute

- ❖ Russian President Vladimir Putin visited Iturup Island in the disputed Kuril Islands, prompting strong protests from Japan.
- ❖ The Kuril Islands are a volcanic archipelago of 56 islands, stretching about 1,200 km in the North Pacific.



- ❖ Japan claims four islands—Iturup, Kunashir, Shikotan and Habomai, known as the Northern Territories, while Russia administers them as part of the Sakhalin region.
- ❖ Russia took control of the islands after World War II, while Japan continues to claim sovereignty over the four islands.
- ❖ Russia cites post-war agreements such as the Yalta Agreement and Potsdam Declaration (1945), while Japan refers to earlier treaties including the Treaty of Shimoda (1855) and Treaty of St. Petersburg (1875).
- ❖ The dispute has prevented the signing of a formal Russia-Japan peace treaty since World War II.

- Russian President Vladimir Putin visited Iturup in the Kuril Islands on Thursday, his first visit to the disputed island chain, triggering a strong protest from Japan
- Japan claims the four southern Kuril Islands as its “Northern Territories”, while Russia has controlled them since the Soviet Union seized them in the final days of World War II
- The long-running territorial dispute has prevented Russia and Japan from signing a formal post-war peace treaty
- Japan called Putin’s visit unacceptable and reaffirmed its claim over the islands

SAVE America Act

- ❖ U.S. President Donald Trump cited India’s voter identification system while seeking support for the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) America Act.
- ❖ Trump said India’s recent general election saw over 646 million voters, with less than 1% voting by postal ballot, and highlighted the use of valid photo identification.
- ❖ The SAVE America Act proposes proof of citizenship for voter registration and a nationwide voter identification requirement in the U.S.
- ❖ It also seeks to restrict voting by mail and change other election-related rules.
- ❖ The White House has pointed to India and Brazil as countries that link voter identity cards with biometric databases, while the U.S. largely relies on voter self-attestation.

- ❖ The bill has faced divisions among Democrats and Republicans, and the U.S. Senate had not taken concrete steps to pass it before its five-week recess.

Trump Cites India's Voter ID System in Push for SAVE America Act

US President Donald Trump cited India's voter ID system while urging the passage of the SAVE America Act, calling for stricter voter identification and citizenship requirements in US elections.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

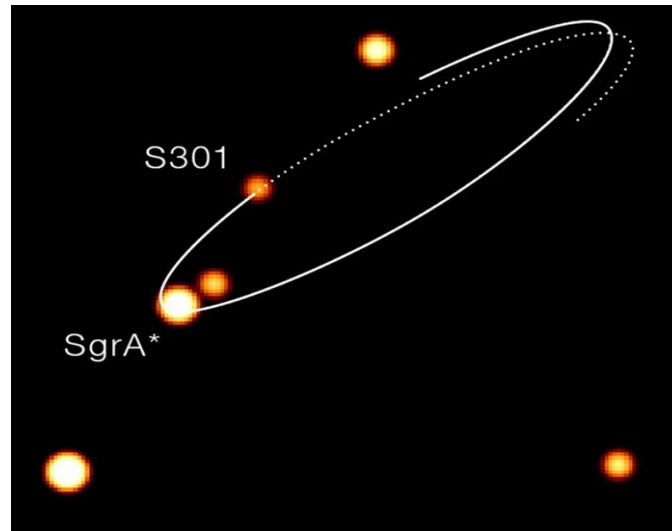
Mega Earth GJ 523b



- ❖ Scientists have identified GJ 523b, an exoplanet classified as a “mega-Earth”.
- ❖ It has a radius about 2.55 times Earth's, a mass of 23.5 Earth masses, and a density of about 7.8 g/cm³.
- ❖ It orbits a mid-K dwarf star once every 17.75 days, with an estimated equilibrium temperature of 538 K.
- ❖ Its properties were determined using transit observations from NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) and radial velocity measurements from the NEID spectrograph on the WIYN 3.5-metre Telescope.
- ❖ A “mega-Earth” is a rocky exoplanet with a radius of at least 2.1 Earth radii and density of at least 5.5 g/cm³.

- ❖ The planetary system is estimated to be 169 million years old; its unusually massive rocky nature challenges expectations that such a planet would develop a thick gas envelope.

Fastest Star in Milky Way - S301



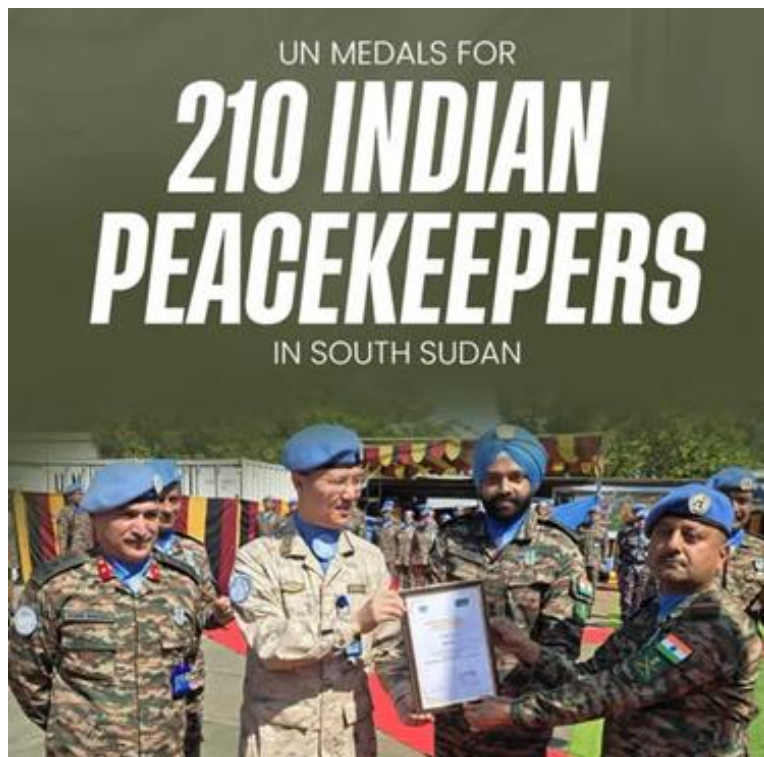
- ❖ Scientists have identified S301 as the fastest-moving star on a confirmed orbit in the Milky Way.
- ❖ S301 reaches a maximum speed of about 25,000 km/s, nearly 8% of the speed of light.
- ❖ It follows a highly elliptical 8.7-year orbit around Sagittarius A*, the supermassive black hole at the centre of the Milky Way.
- ❖ At its closest approach, S301 comes within about 12 astronomical units (AU) of Sagittarius A*.
- ❖ The discovery used observations from the European Southern Observatory's Very Large Telescope Interferometer (VLTI) in Chile.

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

UN Medal for Indian Personnel

- ❖ 210 Indian peacekeepers received the United Nations (UN) Medal in Juba, South Sudan.
- ❖ The recipients included six women and seven staff officers serving with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).

- ❖ India is the second-largest contributor of uniformed personnel to UN peacekeeping operations, with over 4,200 personnel deployed globally in 2026.
- ❖ India has contributed more than 2 lakh personnel to 49 of the 71 UN peacekeeping missions established since 1948.
- ❖ UNMISS was established in 2011 after South Sudan gained independence.
- ❖ It works on civilian protection, humanitarian assistance and the peace process.



IMPORTANT DAYS

National Space Day 2026 - August 23

- ❖ The observance commemorates India's Chandrayaan-3 mission.
- ❖ That mission successfully soft-landed the Vikram lander in the Moon's south polar region in 2023.
- ❖ In 2023, India became the fourth country to achieve a successful soft landing on the Moon and the first to land in the lunar south-polar region.
- ❖ The Government of India declared August 23 as National Space Day to celebrate the achievement and encourage interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).
- ❖ 2026 theme: "Towards Viksit Bharat – Innovating, Collaborating and Aspiring Global Space Leadership."

- ❖ The day also highlights India's upcoming space missions, including Gaganyaan and Chandrayaan-4.



MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Oldest Microbial Life Traces



- ❖ Researchers found evidence of microbial life dating back at least 3.5 billion years in a rock from eastern India.
- ❖ The rock, a carbon-bearing chert, was found at Bhitardari in the Singhbhum Craton, covering parts of Jharkhand and Odisha.



- ❖ Four of eight zircon crystals analysed gave an age of about 3,497 million years, helping establish the rock's age.
- ❖ Chemical evidence, including carbon isotope patterns and degraded organic matter, indicates that the carbon was produced by living organisms.
- ❖ The finding could represent the oldest directly dated rock with a confirmed biosignature, according to the researchers.
- ❖ The discovery suggests that microbial life existed relatively early in Earth's history, about 1 billion years after Earth formed.

