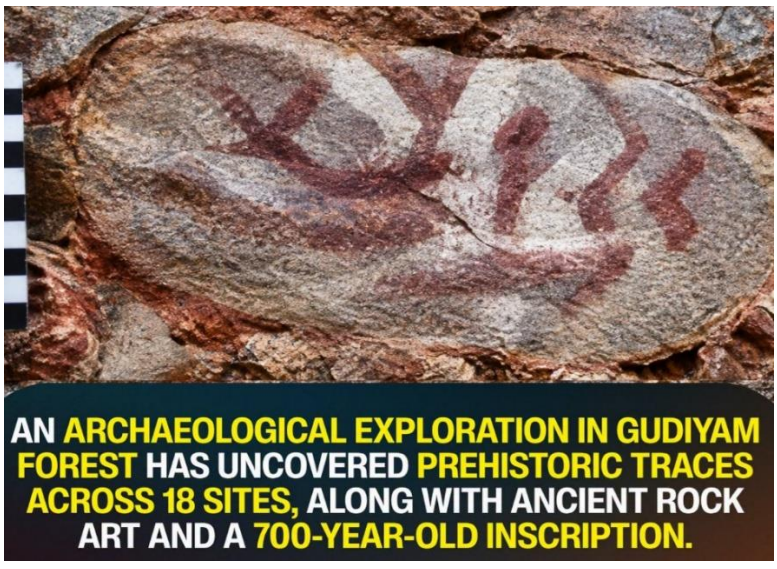
November - 13

TNPSC BITS

- A rare White Stork (Ciconia ciconia) was spotted at Okhla Bird Sanctuary, on the Delhi–Noida border.
- Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw reviewed the manufacturing of India's first indigenous bullet train at Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML), Bengaluru, designed for the Mumbai–Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Corridor and planned to use the indigenous Bharat Train Control System (BTCS).
- The first North East Waree Leeba Festival 2026 was held in Imphal West district, Manipur, to preserve and promote Waree Leeba, the State's traditional storytelling art.
- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister launched the 'Eri' portal on 10 November 2026 to simplify online applications for waterbody restoration.
  - The portal was developed by the Water Resources Department (WRD) and lists more than one lakh waterbodies under five government departments.
- Researchers identified a new flowering plant species, Disporum kamakhasiense, belonging to the family Colchicaceae, in Assam and Meghalaya.

TAMIL NADU NEWS

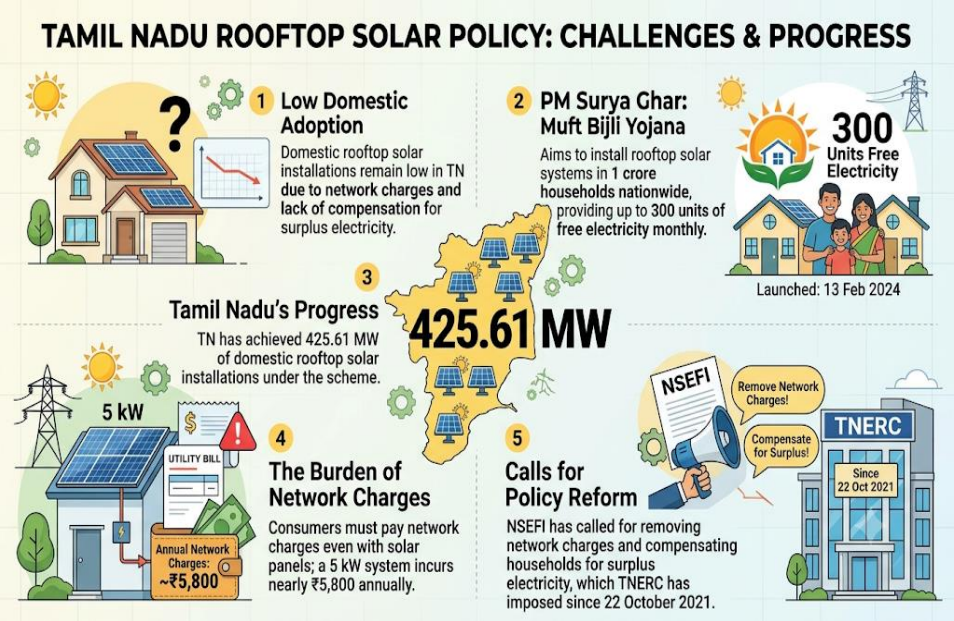
Gudiyam Prehistoric Discoveries



- Ancient rock paintings, a 700-year-old inscription and a tunnel-like cave were discovered in the Gudiyam forest area of Tiruvallur district, Tamil Nadu.

- The discoveries include Early Iron Age paintings dating back more than 3,000 years.
- Prehistoric human activity has been documented at 18 out of 40 locations during a four-month survey.
- Rock paintings were found at Kuralchavadu Sunai, Pasumaadu Parai and Kannithoppu, featuring human figures and geometric designs.
- A tunnel-like cave called Vavaal Cave (Bat Cave) was documented, measuring 11.87 metres in length.
- A 14th-century inscription, about 700 years old, records that a carpenter named Veera Gangathattan excavated a spring at the site.

Tamil Nadu Rooftop Solar Policy

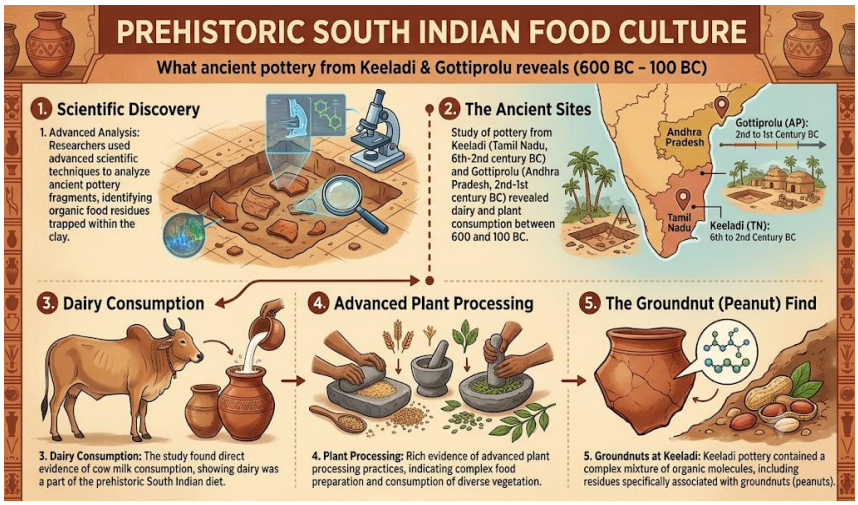


- Domestic rooftop solar installations remain low in Tamil Nadu due to network charges and the lack of compensation for surplus electricity.
- The PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, launched on 13 February 2024, aims to install rooftop solar systems in one crore households and provide up to 300 units of free electricity per month.
- Tamil Nadu has achieved 425.61 megawatts (MW) of domestic rooftop solar installations under the scheme.
- Consumers have to pay network charges even after installing rooftop solar panels; a 5 kilowatt (kW) system may incur nearly ₹5,800 annually in charges.
- The National Solar Energy Federation of India (NSEFI) has called for removing network charges and compensating households for surplus electricity, while the

Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission (TNERC) has imposed these charges since 22 October 2021.

Prehistoric South Indian Food Culture

- A scientific study of ancient pottery fragments from Keeladi (Tamil Nadu) and Gottiprolu (Andhra Pradesh) revealed evidence of dairy consumption and plant processing between 600 and 100 BC.
- The study identified evidence of cow milk consumption and advanced plant processing practices in prehistoric South India.
- Keeladi, in Tamil Nadu, dates from the 6th to 2nd century BC, while Gottiprolu, in Andhra Pradesh, dates from the 2nd to 1st century BC.
- Researchers analysed pottery fragments using advanced scientific techniques to identify ancient food residues.
- The Keeladi pottery contained a mixture of organic molecules, including residues associated with groundnuts (peanuts).

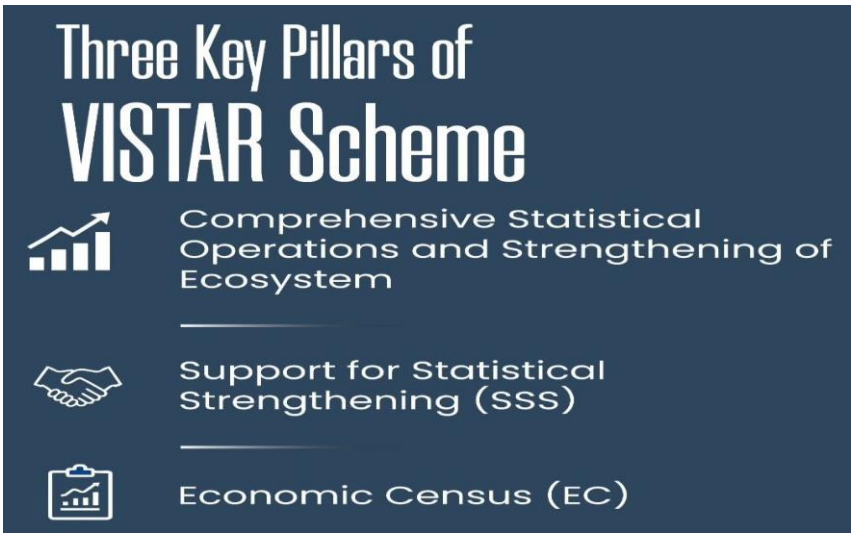


NATIONAL NEWS

VISTAR Scheme

- The Union Cabinet approved the ₹4,371 crore Viksit Bharat Initiative for Statistical Transformation, Analytics & Research (VISTAR) scheme.
- The scheme will be implemented from 2026–27 to 2030–31 to modernise India's statistical system at the Central and State levels.
- It aims to improve data collection, analysis, accuracy and timely availability of official statistics.

- It will use Artificial Intelligence (AI) and harmonised datasets to improve statistical analysis.
- The scheme will provide fresh data on the unorganised sector to improve the accuracy of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) estimates.



Capex Support Scheme for Critical Minerals



- The Union Cabinet approved the ₹2,814-crore Capital Expenditure (Capex) Support Scheme on to promote domestic processing of critical minerals.
- The scheme will operate from 2026–27 to 2030–31 to reduce import dependence and strengthen domestic processing capacity.
- It targets four processing plants: two lithium plants (minimum 30 kilotonnes each) and two nickel plants (minimum 50 kilotonnes each).
- A capital subsidy of 30% of eligible investment will be provided, with maximum support of ₹500 crore per lithium beneficiary and ₹900 crore per nickel beneficiary.
- Cobalt will also be recovered as a by-product of nickel processing.

- The scheme supports sectors such as electric mobility, Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS), electronics, defence and speciality steel.

Supreme Court on Additional Sales Tax

- The Supreme Court's seven-judge Constitution Bench disposed of the nearly three-decade-old Arjun Flour Mills reference concerning States' power to levy additional sales tax.
- The Court clarified that an additional tax or surcharge calculated as a percentage of existing sales tax is an enhancement of the sales tax rate and falls under the States' powers under Entry 54 of the State List (Seventh Schedule).
- The Court held that the reference had become academic because the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime replaced the earlier tax laws in 2017.
- The case arose from a challenge to the Odisha Sales Tax Act, 1947, which imposed additional tax of 10% and 15% on dealers based on their annual turnover.
- The reference was made in 1999 due to differences between earlier Supreme Court judgments, including S. Kodar v. State of Kerala (1974) and India Cement v. State of Tamil Nadu (1990).
- Justice K.V. Viswanathan separately held that the S. Kodar judgment remains valid and that additional sales tax is not a tax on dealers' income.



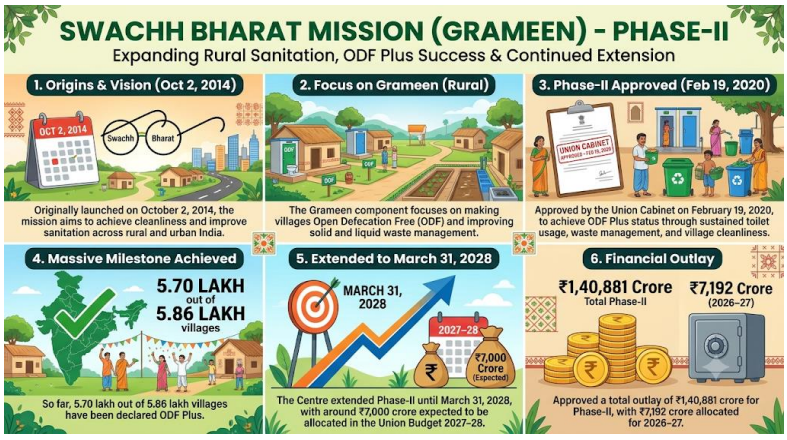
Supreme Court on Two-Child Norm

- The Supreme Court questioned the relevance of laws penalising people for having more than two children, citing India's declining fertility rate.
- India's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has declined from 3 to 1.9, below the replacement fertility rate of 2.1.

- The replacement rate of 2.1 is the average number of children per woman needed for one generation to replace itself.
- The Court warned that falling fertility could lead to an ageing population and a decline in the share of the working population.
- A Bench headed by Justice P.S. Narasimha observed that population-control laws could restrict political representation and reproductive autonomy under Article 21.
- The Court referred the legal question on the continuation of the two-child norm as an eligibility condition for contesting elections to a larger Bench.
- Current Case Name: Mangala Bhimrao Ingle v. The Additional Commissioner, Amravati Division and Ors.



Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) – Phase-II

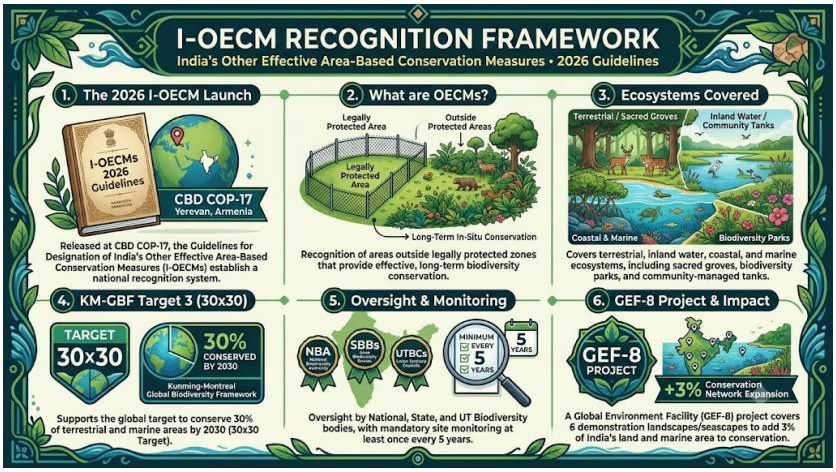


- The Centre extended the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) Phase-II until March 31, 2028, with around ₹7,000 crore expected to be allocated in the Union Budget 2027–28.

- Launched on October 2, 2014, the Swachh Bharat Mission aims to achieve cleanliness and improve sanitation across rural and urban India.
- The Grameen (rural) component focuses on making villages Open Defecation Free (ODF) and improving solid and liquid waste management.
- Phase-II was approved by the Union Cabinet on February 19, 2020, to achieve ODF Plus status through sustained toilet usage, waste management and village cleanliness.
- So far, 5.70 lakh out of 5.86 lakh villages have been declared ODF Plus.
- The Centre approved a total outlay of ₹1,40,881 crore for Phase-II, and ₹7,192 crore was allocated for 2026–27.

ENVIRONMENT NEWS

OECM Recognition Framework

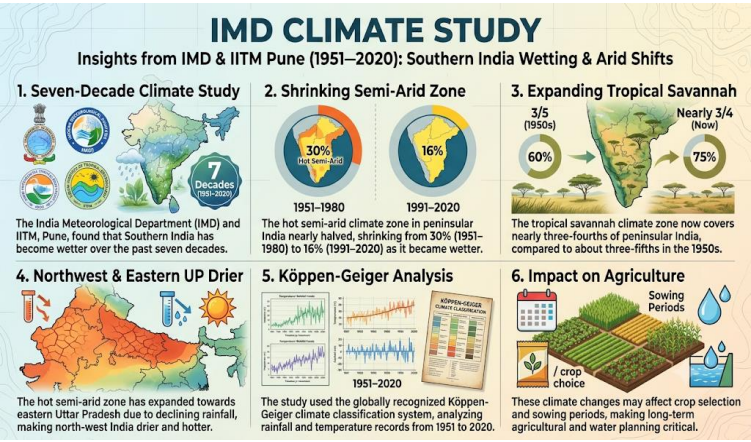


- Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav released the Guidelines for Designation of India's Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (I-OECMs), 2026, at the 17th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP-17) in Yerevan, Armenia.
- OECMs recognise areas outside legally protected areas that provide effective and long-term in-situ biodiversity conservation.
- The guidelines cover terrestrial, inland water, coastal and marine ecosystems, including sacred groves, biodiversity parks and community-managed tanks.
- The initiative supports Target 3 (30x30) of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF), which aims to conserve 30% of land and marine areas by 2030.

- The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), State Biodiversity Boards and Union Territory Biodiversity Councils will oversee recognition; recognised sites must be monitored at least once every five years.
- A Global Environment Facility (GEF-8) project will cover six demonstration landscapes and seascapes and aims to add 3% of India's land and marine area to its conservation network.

IMD Climate Study

- A study by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) and Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune, found that Southern India has become wetter over the past seven decades.
- The hot semi-arid climate zone in peninsular India nearly halved from 30% (1951–1980) to 16% (1991–2020).
- The tropical savannah climate zone now covers nearly three-fourths of peninsular India, compared to about three-fifths in the 1950s.
- In contrast, the hot semi-arid zone has expanded towards eastern Uttar Pradesh due to declining rainfall, making north-west India drier and hotter.
- The study used the Köppen-Geiger climate classification system and rainfall and temperature records from 1951 to 2020.
- These climate changes may affect crop selection and sowing periods, making long-term agricultural and water planning important.

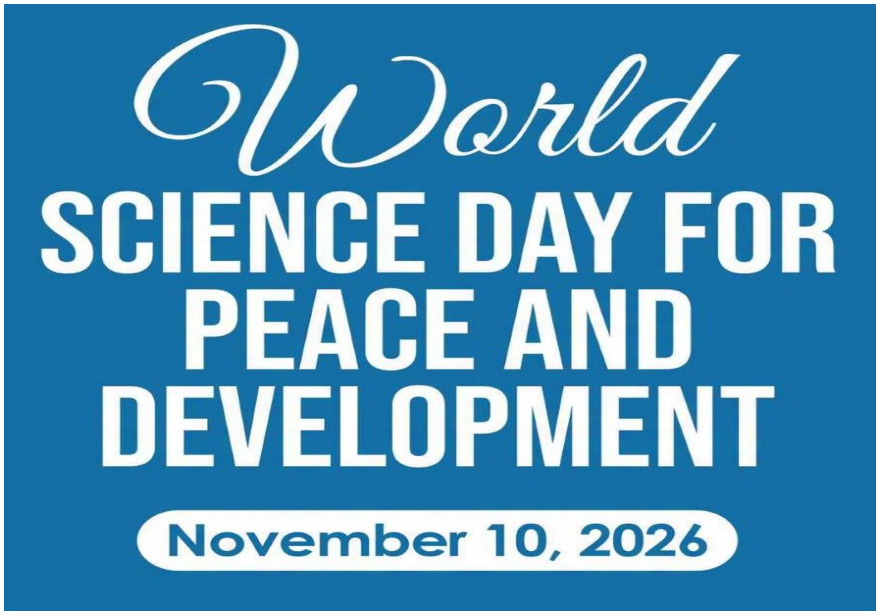


IMPORTANT DAYS

World Science Day for Peace and Development 2026 - November 10

- It was proclaimed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2001.

- The first celebration was held on 10 November 2002.
- The United Nations declared 2024–2033 as the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development in August 2023.
- The day promotes scientific cooperation, sustainable development and global peace.
- The theme for the year 2026 is "Common Ground Through Science Diplomacy."



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