



October - 17

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Kolkata is hosting the 19th World Sudoku Championship and the 33rd World Puzzle Championship from 11 to 18 October 2026 at The Westin, Rajarhat.
- ❖ Sunil Bharti Mittal, Founder and Chairman of Bharti Enterprises, was conferred France's Knight of the National Order of the Legion of Honour.
- ❖ Mongolian President Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh thanked India for supporting the construction of Mongolia's first oil refinery in Altanshiree Soum, Dornogobi Province, to produce fuel locally and reduce imports.
- ❖ Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Teerth Kshetra in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, received the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) certification under the 'Eat Right Place of Worship' initiative on 10 October 2026.
 - The initiative promotes food safety and hygiene during the preparation and distribution of prasad and langar at religious institutions.
- ❖ A new plant species, *Ceropegia tamilnaduensis*, was discovered by botanists from the Botanical Survey of India on the hill slopes of Nellai Wildlife Sanctuary, Tamil Nadu.
 - Nellai Wildlife Sanctuary was declared a wildlife sanctuary in 2015 and has 29 mountain peaks, including Sivagiri Mala (1,748 m).
- ❖ World Food Day is observed annually on 16 October to raise awareness about hunger, food security and access to healthy food.
 - The theme for the year 2026 is "Innovate today. Nourish tomorrow."

TAMIL NADU NEWS

Supreme Court on Caste Reservation

- ❖ The Supreme Court dismissed the Tamil Nadu government's appeal on reservation benefits for people converting to Islam from backward communities.
- ❖ A person from a Hindu Backward Class does not automatically become a member of a notified Backward Muslim community by converting to Islam.
- ❖ The Court held that Article 16(4) of the Constitution does not automatically extend reservation benefits based on a person's previous religious and caste identity.
- ❖ Article 341 empowers the President to notify Scheduled Castes; under the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, Scheduled Caste status is restricted to those professing Hinduism, Sikhism or Buddhism.

- ❖ A Jamath conversion certificate alone cannot establish statutory Backward Class membership; the Tamil Nadu government's March 2024 order was rejected.

SUPREME COURT ON CASTE RESERVATION & CONVERSION

KEY RULINGS ON CONVERSION & RESERVATION BENEFITS



1 SC Dismisses Tamil Nadu's Appeal

The Supreme Court dismissed the Tamil Nadu government's appeal regarding reservation benefits for individuals converting to Islam from backward communities.

2 No Automatic Status Transfer

A person from a Hindu Backward Class does not automatically become a member of a notified Backward Muslim community upon converting to Islam.

3 No Automatic Extension under Article 16(4)

The Court held that Article 16(4) of the Constitution does not automatically extend reservation benefits based on a person's previous religious and caste identity.

4 SC Status Restricted by President's Order

Article 341 empowers the President to notify Scheduled Castes; under the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) 1950, SC status is restricted to those professing Hinduism, Sikhism, or Buddhism.

5 Jamath Certificate Not Enough

A Jamath conversion certificate alone cannot establish statutory Backward Class membership; the Tamil Nadu government's March 24, 2024 order was rejected.



Tamil Nadu Semiconductor Ecosystem Scheme 2026

TAMIL NADU SEMICONDUCTOR ECOSYSTEM SCHEME 2026

Launched by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu in Chennai

Guidance Tamil Nadu

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

- Make Tamil Nadu a leading semiconductor & advanced electronics manufacturing hub in India.
- Attract massive global and domestic investments.



CHENNAI

COMPLEMENTING SEMICON INDIA 2.0 (Approved on 15 July 2026)

TWO-TIER SUPPORT SYSTEM

- Additional Incentives for projects approved under the Union Government's Semiconductor Scheme.
- Support for Important Local Projects crucial to Tamil Nadu's domestic semiconductor ecosystem.

SEMICONDUCTOR VALUE CHAIN FOCUS AREAS


CHIP DESIGN


WAFER FABRICATION


EQUIPMENT & RAW MATERIALS


RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT (R&D)


SKILL DEVELOPMENT

- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister launched the Tamil Nadu Semiconductor Ecosystem Scheme 2026 in Chennai.
- ❖ The scheme aims to make Tamil Nadu a leading semiconductor and advanced electronics manufacturing hub in India and attract investments.
- ❖ It has two categories: additional incentives for projects approved under the Union government's semiconductor scheme and support for other eligible projects important to Tamil Nadu's semiconductor ecosystem.
- ❖ The scheme will complement the Union government's Semicon India Programme 2.0, approved on 15 July 2026.

- ❖ Semicon India 2.0 focuses on the semiconductor value chain, including chip design, wafer fabrication, equipment, raw materials, research and development, and skill development.

NATIONAL NEWS

Bharat Stage VII Norms

- ❖ The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways proposed introducing BS-VII emission standards for passenger cars from 1 April 2029.
- ❖ The standards aim to reduce vehicle pollution through stricter exhaust-emission limits, real-world driving tests and on-board emission monitoring.
- ❖ Implementation is planned in three phases: April 2029, April 2031 and April 2035, covering exhaust emissions, brake particles, tyre abrasion and battery durability.
- ❖ The rules cover petrol, diesel, Compressed Natural Gas (CNG), ethanol-blended fuels, hydrogen, hybrid and electric vehicles; electric vehicle batteries must retain at least 75% performance for 5 years or 100,000 km.
- ❖ An Environmental Vehicle Passport will provide information on vehicle emissions, fuel consumption and battery health; India currently follows BS-VI standards, introduced nationwide in April 2020.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement

- ❖ The Union Government approved India's accession to the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA).

- ❖ Signed in Rome on 7 July 2006, it entered into force in June 2012 to conserve and sustainably use fishery resources in the southern Indian Ocean.
- ❖ It covers fish, molluscs, crustaceans and other sedentary species, excluding highly migratory species under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
- ❖ Its main bodies are the Meeting of the Parties, Scientific Committee and Secretariat.
- ❖ India's accession will enable full participation in decision-making, access to scientific data and research, and new fishing opportunities for Indian fishers and entrepreneurs.



INDIA JOINS THE SOUTHERN INDIAN OCEAN FISHERIES AGREEMENT (SIOFA)

Expanding Opportunities for Indian Fisheries in the High Seas

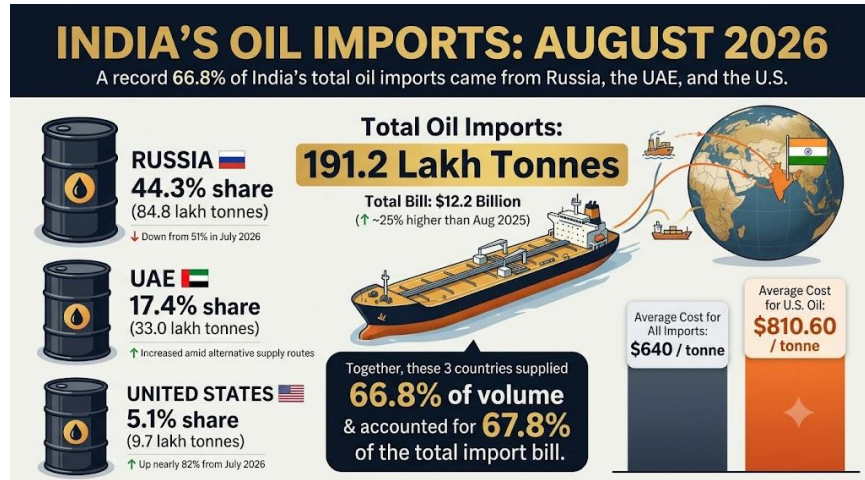
- 
New opportunities for Indian fishing vessels and enterprises
- 
Access to high-value marine resources
- 
Greater participation in global fisheries governance
- 
Advancing sustainable fishing and India's Blue Economy

ECONOMY NEWS

Oil Imports of India

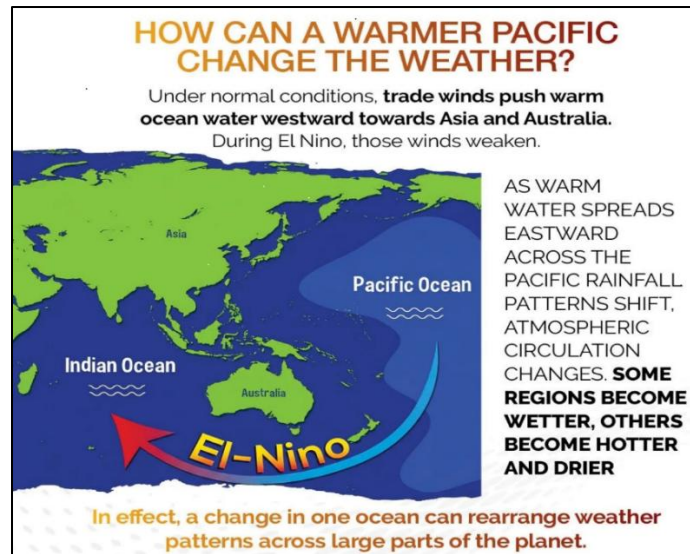
- ❖ Russia, the United States (U.S.) and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) supplied a record 66.8% of India's total oil imports by volume in August 2026.
- ❖ Russia supplied 44.3% (84.8 lakh tonnes), while the UAE supplied 17.4% (33 lakh tonnes) and the U.S. supplied 5.1% (9.7 lakh tonnes).
- ❖ India imported 191.2 lakh tonnes of oil in August 2026, while its oil import bill reached \$12.2 billion, nearly 25% higher than in August 2025.

- ❖ Russia's share fell from 51% in July to 44.3% in August 2026; U.S. oil imports rose nearly 82% from July, while UAE imports increased amid alternative supply routes.
- ❖ The three countries accounted for 67.8% of India's total oil import bill; U.S. oil cost an average of \$810.6 per tonne, compared with \$640 per tonne for all imports.



ENVIRONMENT NEWS

El Niño in the Pacific

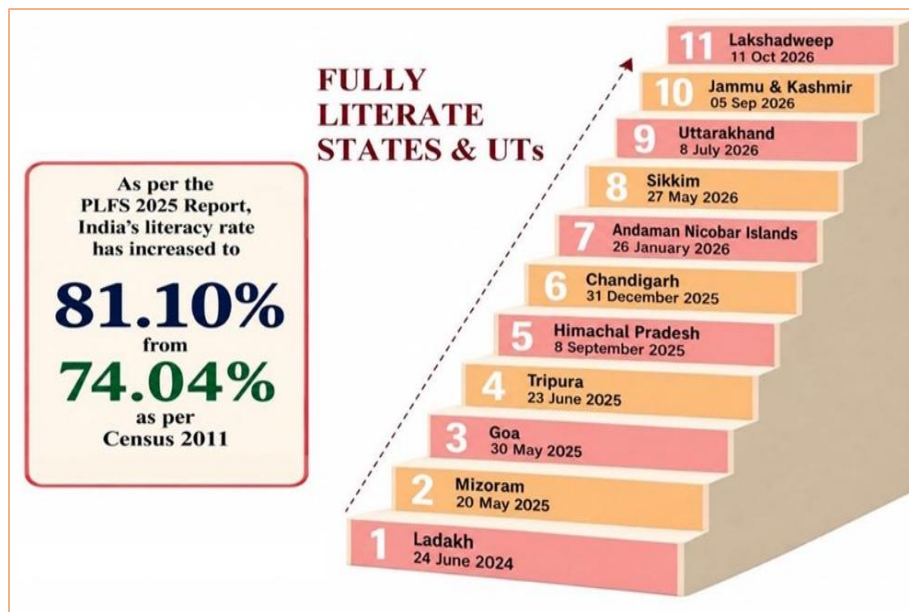


- ❖ The European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service reported that the Pacific Ocean's Niño 3.4 region reached a record sea surface temperature of 29.70°C in September 2026.

- ❖ The temperature exceeded peaks recorded during the strong El Niño events of 1982–83, 1997–98 and 2015–16.
- ❖ El Niño is a natural climate pattern that warms the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, altering global rainfall and weather patterns.
- ❖ It can increase the risk of droughts, floods, extreme heat and crop losses.
- ❖ Global average sea surface temperature reached a September record of 21.05°C, while September 2026 was the world's second-hottest September on record.
- ❖ Copernicus said the current El Niño is exceptionally strong but has not yet been confirmed as the strongest ever recorded.

STATE NEWS

ULLAS Programme - Lakshadweep



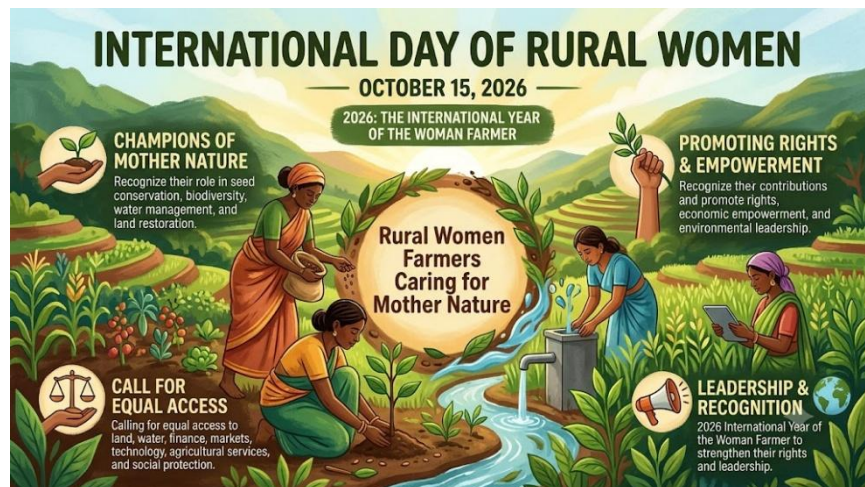
- ❖ Lakshadweep was declared a 100% literate Union Territory by Administrator Praful Patel at Kavaratti.
- ❖ The achievement was recorded under ULLAS (Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society) – Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for adult education.
- ❖ All 1,113 identified adult non-literate learners cleared the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Test (FLNAT).
- ❖ ULLAS targets adults aged 15 years and above who missed formal schooling and promotes basic literacy, numeracy and critical life skills.

- ❖ Unlike the Census of India's conventional literacy measure for people aged 7 and above, this achievement is based on the assessment of eligible learners identified under ULLAS.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day of Rural Women 2026 - October 15

- ❖ The day aims to recognise the contributions of rural women and promote their rights, economic empowerment, environmental leadership and equal access to resources.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is "Rural Women Farmers Caring for Mother Nature."
- ❖ It recognises rural women's role in seed conservation, biodiversity protection, water management and land restoration.
- ❖ It calls for equal access to land, water, finance, markets, technology, agricultural services and social protection.
- ❖ 2026 is the International Year of the Woman Farmer, providing an opportunity to strengthen the rights and leadership of rural women.



MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Giant Fungus Discovered in China

- ❖ Scientists discovered a giant fungus, *Dianjunus rex* (D-rex), in Yunnan Province, China.
- ❖ It grows up to 50 cm tall and weighs up to 2.2 kg, making it the largest known fruiting body in the fungal phylum Ascomycota.

- ❖ It represents a new species, genus (*Dianjunus*) and family (*Dianjunaceae*) under the order *Xylariales*.
- ❖ Genetic analysis estimates that its family originated around 65 million years ago, shortly after the Cretaceous–Paleogene mass extinction.
- ❖ It grows on woody roots.



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