October - 30

TNPSC BITS

- A Mysuru Dasara drone display set a Guinness World Records title for the largest aerial display of a bird, using 3,473 drones to form a peacock at Bannimantap, Mysuru.
- NIFTEM-K hosted "Hack the Fork", India's first Artificial Intelligence (AI) and food technology hackathon, in collaboration with France-based non-profit Hack the Fork, NIFTEM-K Smart Protein Project and The Good Food Institute India.
- China Zorrilla, the world's largest battery-electric vessel, has entered commercial service on the Buenos Aires–Colonia route between Argentina and Uruguay.
- Indian photographer Sitaram Raul won the 'Behaviour: Invertebrates' category at the 2026 Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition for his photograph Shifting Sand.
- Meeshapulimala in Idukki, Kerala, opened to tourists as Neelakurinji (Strobilanthes kunthiana) came into full bloom at its high-altitude slopes.
  - Meeshapulimala is one of the highest peaks in the Munnar region, and the flowering is considered rare because Neelakurinji usually does not bloom above 2,500 metres.
- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) amended the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 to support vehicles designed for E85 and E100 high-ethanol fuels, with E85 containing up to 85% ethanol and E100 consisting predominantly of ethanol.
  - The amendment includes E100 in emission certification provisions, requiring certified vehicles to meet applicable emission and safety standards.

TAMIL NADU NEWS

TN Free Bus Travel for Persons with Disabilities

- Tamil Nadu introduced free bus travel for persons with disabilities and their companions using the Unique Disability ID (UDID) card, effective October 28, 2026.
- The scheme covers persons with over 40% disability and one companion in eligible non-air-conditioned government buses.
- Eligible services include city ordinary, express, low-floor and deluxe buses, along with ordinary-fare buses in suburban (mofussil) and hilly areas.

- The Department for the Welfare of Differently Abled Persons, Tamil Nadu, issued the government order.
- Existing concessions, including the 75% travel concession, will continue; eligible passengers will receive free travel tickets from bus operators.



NATIONAL NEWS

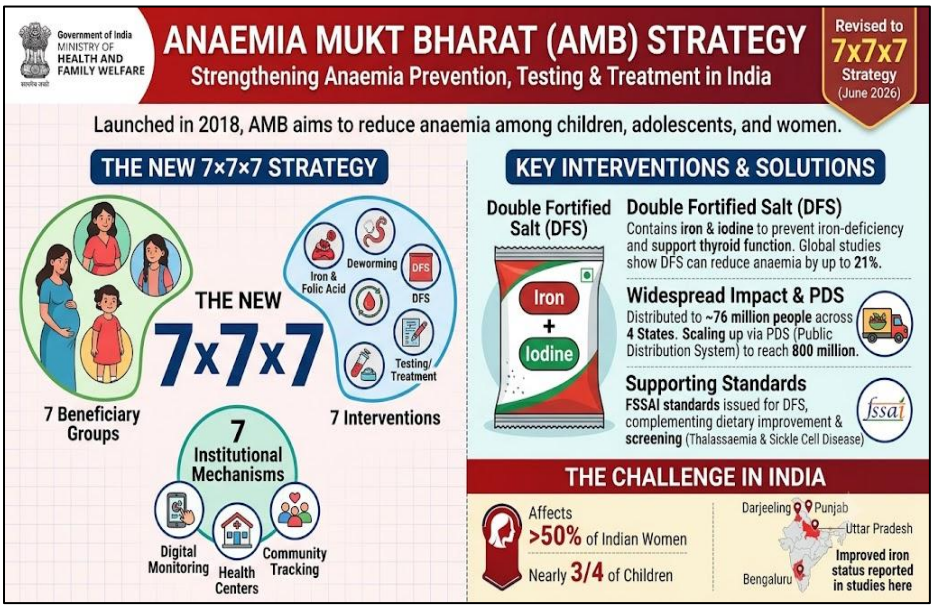
Viksit Bharat Buildathon 2025



- Viksit Bharat Buildathon (VBB) 2025 entered the Guinness World Records as the "Largest Innovation Solution Competition", with 2,87,967 project submissions nationwide.

- The Ministry of Education has organised the initiative through the Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), in collaboration with Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and the All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).
- The initiative promotes creativity, scientific curiosity, entrepreneurship and problem-solving among school students through Idea and Prototype tracks.
- Its four pillars are Atmanirbhar Bharat, Swadeshi, Vocal for Local and Samriddh Bharat.
- The event also featured the launch of guidelines for Teacher Education Institutions under ULLAS (Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society) – Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram.

Anaemia Mukt Bharat Strategy



- The Government of India revised the Anaemia Mukt Bharat (AMB) programme to a 7×7×7 strategy in June 2026 to strengthen anaemia prevention, testing and treatment.
- It was launched in 2018 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- AMB aims to reduce anaemia among children, adolescents and women; its traditional 6×6×6 strategy covers six beneficiary groups, six interventions and six institutional mechanisms.
- The revised 7×7×7 strategy covers seven beneficiary groups, seven interventions and seven institutional mechanisms, including iron and folic acid supplementation, testing and treatment, deworming, awareness and digital monitoring.

- Double Fortified Salt (DFS) contains iron and iodine to help prevent iron-deficiency anaemia and iodine-deficiency disorders; iodine supports normal thyroid function and growth.
- Anaemia affects over half of Indian women and nearly three-fourths of children; studies in Bengaluru, Darjeeling, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh reported improved iron status, while a global review found that DFS can reduce anaemia by up to 21%.
- Government programmes distribute DFS to about 76 million people across four States; wider distribution through the PDS (Public Distribution System), which serves around 800 million people, remains uneven.
- The FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) has issued DFS standards; DFS complements iron supplementation, dietary improvement and screening for thalassaemia and sickle cell disease.

ECONOMY NEWS

Soybean Imports in India



- India's soybean imports reached a record 1.1 million tonnes in the 2025–26 marketing season, up from around 2,000 tonnes in the previous season.
- Higher domestic soybean prices encouraged processors to import cheaper supplies; Niger became the largest reported supplier, with shipments exceeding 430,000 tonnes.
- India permits imports of only non-genetically modified (non-GM) soybeans, limiting the number of eligible suppliers.

- India's Soybean Processors Association of India (SOPA) reported that soymeal exports fell by about half to around 1 million tonnes in 2025–26.
- Soybean (Glycine max) is a Kharif oilseed crop used to produce edible oil, protein-rich soymeal for animal feed and food products.

ENVIRONMENT NEWS

CBD COP 17 – Biodiversity Conservation



- India reaffirmed its commitment to biodiversity conservation at the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP-17) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Yerevan, Armenia.
- The Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) is implemented through India's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, with 23 national targets and 142 indicators.
- India has 1,134 Protected Areas, 103 Ramsar sites, 57 Biodiversity Heritage Sites and 18 Biosphere Reserves, including 13 under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Man and the Biosphere Programme.
- Key initiatives: MISHTI (Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes), Amrit Dharohar for wetland conservation, Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) and Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam.

- India called for adequate international funding, technology transfer and fair benefit-sharing from Digital Sequence Information (DSI) on genetic resources, including through the Cali Fund.

REPORTS AND INDICES

UN Report on Women in Conflict Zones

- UN Women released the UN Secretary-General's report on Women, Peace and Security, highlighting rising deaths and violence against women and girls in armed conflicts.
- In 2025, over 37,000 civilians were killed in armed conflicts; one in four was a woman or girl, with their share doubling since 2021.
- Over 750 million women and girls lived within 50 km of active conflicts; the UN verified 9,788 cases of conflict-related sexual violence in 2025.
- Women constituted only 5% of negotiators across 57 peace processes in 2025, and none of the 13 ceasefire agreements explicitly prohibited conflict-related sexual violence.
- Women in conflict-affected countries spent five times as many hours on unpaid domestic and care work as men; girls were 2.5 times more likely to be out of school.



SPORTS NEWS

Khelo India Sports Manufacturing Scheme

- The Union Cabinet approved the Khelo India Sports Goods Manufacturing Scheme to develop a globally competitive sports goods industry.

- Announced in the Union Budget 2026–27, it has an outlay of ₹1,856.67 crore for 2026–2033–34.
- It aims to boost domestic manufacturing, innovation, exports and employment while reducing import dependence.
- ₹1,130 crore supports investment and production, while ₹105 crore supports international quality certification.
- Sports Goods Manufacturing Zones (SGMZs) will integrate manufacturers, suppliers, testing facilities and design centres; Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) will also receive support.
- The scheme promotes research, skill development and global market access, aligning with Khelo Bharat Niti 2025, Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat.



IMPORTANT DAYS

World Stroke Day 2026 - October 29

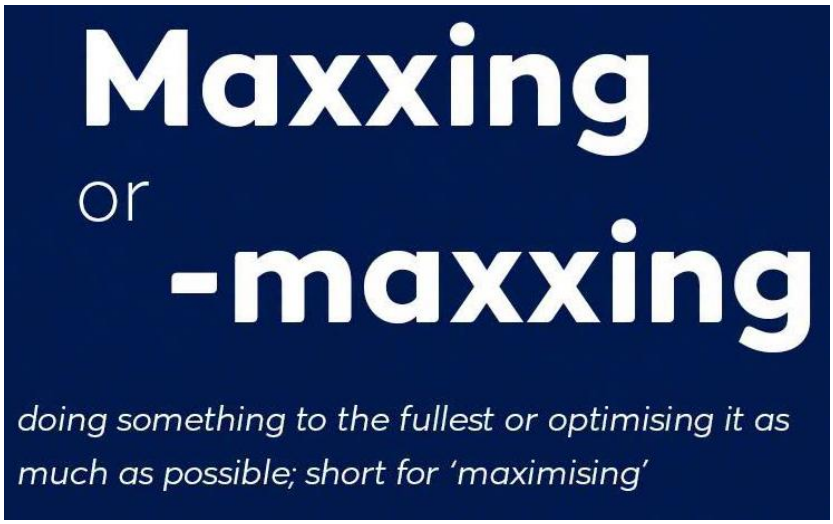
- The day aims to raise awareness about stroke prevention, early detection and treatment.
- The day established by the World Stroke Organization (WSO) in 2006; the 2026 campaign message is “Every M1nute Counts”, using #ActFAST.
- Stroke occurs due to blocked blood flow to the brain (ischaemic stroke) or bleeding caused by a ruptured blood vessel (haemorrhagic stroke).
- Globally, over 12 million people experience a stroke annually; India records an estimated 108–172 cases per 1 lakh people each year.

- Major risk factors include hypertension, diabetes, high cholesterol, heart disease, smoking and physical inactivity; immediate medical attention can reduce complications.



MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Word of the Year 2026 – Maxxing



- Dictionary.com selected "Maxxing" as its 2026 Word of the Year, reflecting the growing online trend of optimising different aspects of life.
- "Maxxing" means maximising or doing something to the fullest and became popular among Generation Z (Gen Z) and Generation Alpha (Gen Alpha).
- "Looksmaxxing" usage increased by over 1,000% since the beginning of 2026 in the media analysed by Dictionary.com.

- Other finalists were Affordability, Data Center, Unc and Odyssey; the 2025 Word of the Year was "67".

Fully Marine Stem Amphibian - Gerrothorax maritimus

- Two nearly complete fossil skeletons of Gerrothorax maritimus, described as the first known fully marine stem amphibian, were discovered in Guizhou Province, China.
- Lived about 237 million years ago during the Late Triassic period of the Mesozoic Era.
- It belonged to Temnospondyli, an extinct group of early four-limbed vertebrates related to the amphibian evolutionary lineage.
- The species was named Gerrothorax maritimus; "maritimus" refers to its marine habitat.



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