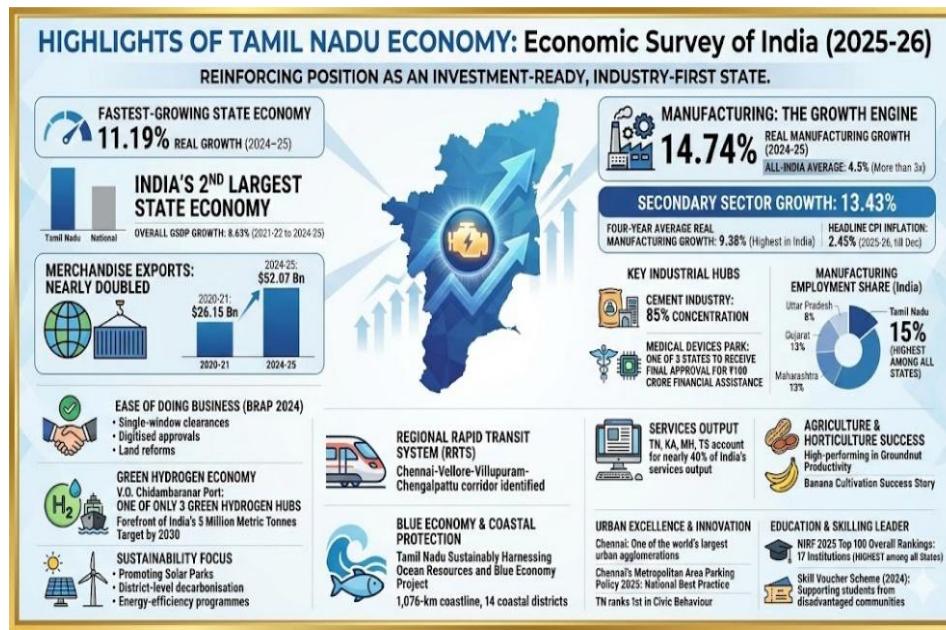


February - 06

TAMIL NADU NEWS

Highlights of Tamil Nadu economy



- ❖ The Economic Survey of India (2025-26) reinforces Tamil Nadu's position as an investment-ready, industry-first State.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu stands out as the fastest-growing State economy, registering 11.19% real growth in 2024-25.
- ❖ As India's second-largest State economy, Tamil Nadu is also a major contributor to national growth.
- ❖ This performance is driven primarily by the secondary sector, which grew by 13.43%.
- ❖ Within this, manufacturing has emerged as a key growth engine, recording 14.74% real growth — more than three times the all-India average of 4.5%.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu also leads every State in four-year average real manufacturing growth (2021-22 to 2024-25) at 9.38%, while its overall GSDP grew by 8.63%.
- ❖ Headline CPI inflation declined to 2.45% in 2025-26 (till December).
- ❖ The State's merchandise exports have nearly doubled from \$26.15 billion in 2020-21 to \$52.07 billion in 2024-25.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu is among the few States where 85% of the cement industry is concentrated.

- ❖ It is also one of three States to receive final approval for financial assistance of ₹100 crore to establish a Medical Devices Park under the Scheme for Promotion of Medical Devices Parks.
- ❖ According to the Survey, Tamil Nadu contributes 15% of India's manufacturing employment.
- ❖ It is the highest among all States.
- ❖ Tamilnadu is surpassing Gujarat (13%), Maharashtra (13%), and Uttar Pradesh (8%).
- ❖ Under the Business Reforms Action Plan (BRAP) 2024, Tamil Nadu has enhanced ease of doing business through single-window clearances, digitised approvals and land reforms, while promoting solar parks, district-level decarbonisation plans and energy-efficiency programmes.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu has secured a pivotal role in India's green hydrogen economy with the designation of the V.O. Chidambaranar Port as one of only three green hydrogen hubs under the National Green Hydrogen Mission.
- ❖ This positions the State at the forefront of India's target to produce five million metric tonnes of green hydrogen annually by 2030.
- ❖ The Chennai-Vellore-Villupuram-Chengalpattu corridor has also been identified as a potential Regional Rapid Transit System route.
- ❖ The Survey takes note of the Tamil Nadu Sustainably Harnessing Ocean Resources and Blue Economy Project addressing climate vulnerabilities along the State's 1,076-kilometre coastline across 14 coastal districts.
- ❖ It further notes that Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Telangana together account for nearly 40% of India's services output.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu is also identified among high-performing States in groundnut productivity, alongside Gujarat and Karnataka, due to improved varieties, multiple crop cycles and sustained policy focus on oilseeds.
- ❖ Its achievements in banana cultivation are similarly recognised as region-specific success stories in horticulture.
- ❖ On urban development, the Survey highlights Chennai to be one of the world's largest urban agglomerations.
- ❖ Chennai's Metropolitan Area Parking Policy 2025 is cited as a national best practice.
- ❖ And Tamil Nadu ranks first in Civic Behaviour in the India Today Gross Domestic Behaviour Survey.
- ❖ In higher education, 17 institutions from Tamil Nadu feature in the NIRF 2025 Top 100 Overall Rankings — the highest among all States.

- ❖ The Skill Voucher Scheme launched in 2024 by the Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department is also acknowledged for supporting students from disadvantaged communities.

NATIONAL NEWS

World Seafood Congress 2026

- ❖ India will host the World Seafood Congress (WSC) 2026 for the first time in Chennai.
- ❖ World Seafood Congress is a biennial global forum on fisheries and aquaculture.
- ❖ WSC 2026 is jointly organised by the International Association of Fish Inspectors, PDA Ventures, and the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB).
- ❖ It is co-organised by the Department of Fisheries with support from the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Ministry of Earth Sciences, and NITI Aayog.
- ❖ The congress will focus on sustainable seafood trade, fisheries technology, food security, and global collaboration.



Buddhist Circuit in Northeast India

- ❖ Union Budget 2026–27 announced a new scheme to develop a Buddhist Circuit in the Northeast.
- ❖ The scheme aims to preserve and develop Buddhist temples and monasteries in the northeastern States.
- ❖ It focuses on improving tourism infrastructure and connectivity around Buddhist pilgrimage sites.

- ❖ The initiative is part of the government's plan to promote cultural heritage and regional development.

BUDDHIST CIRCUIT: A NEW SACRED TRAIL IN THE NORTH EAST

New Buddhist Circuit scheme across Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Assam, Mizoram, Tripura and Manipur

Focus on preservation and restoration of Buddhist temples and monasteries

Improved pilgrim amenities across the identified states

2026 Delhi Declaration



- ❖ The 2026 Delhi Declaration was adopted during the second India-Arab Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in New Delhi.
- ❖ The meeting marked 10 years since the first India-Arab Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in Bahrain.
- ❖ The Declaration was jointly issued by India and the League of Arab States.
- ❖ It supported the Arab Peace Initiative, 2002 for a peaceful resolution of the Israel-Palestine issue.

- ❖ It emphasised respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries such as Sudan, Libya, and Somalia.
- ❖ It condemned Houthi attacks in Yemen and supported Yemen's unity and stability.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India-U.S. Trade Deal 2026

- ❖ India and the U.S. finalised a major trade understanding in 2026 to reduce tariffs and expand bilateral trade.
- ❖ India has agreed to import goods worth about 100 billion US dollars annually from the United States for the next five years.
- ❖ The United States has agreed to reduce tariffs on Indian goods from 50% to about 18%.
- ❖ Key imports from the United States will include energy products, aircraft and aircraft parts, technology goods, and selected agricultural products.
- ❖ India has kept sensitive sectors such as dairy, genetically modified (GM) crops, poultry, and cereals protected.
- ❖ The agreement aims to improve market access and strengthen economic and strategic ties between the two countries.

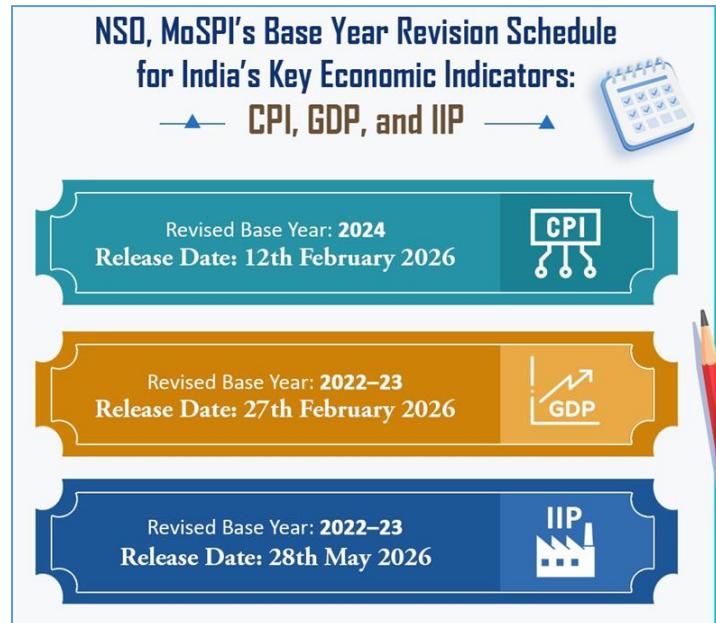


ECONOMY NEWS

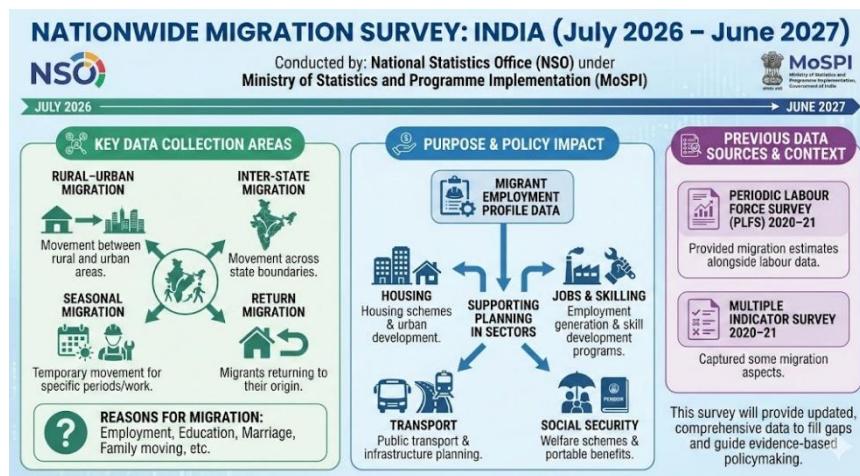
New Consumer Price Index Series

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released details of a new Consumer Price Index (CPI) series.
- ❖ The base year of CPI has been revised from 2011-12 to 2023-24.

- ❖ CPI means an index used to measure retail inflation based on changes in prices paid by consumers.
- ❖ The weight of food and beverages has been reduced from about 46% to about 37% in the new series.
- ❖ The revision is based on the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey 2023–24.
- ❖ CPI is the main inflation indicator used by the RBI for monetary policy decisions.



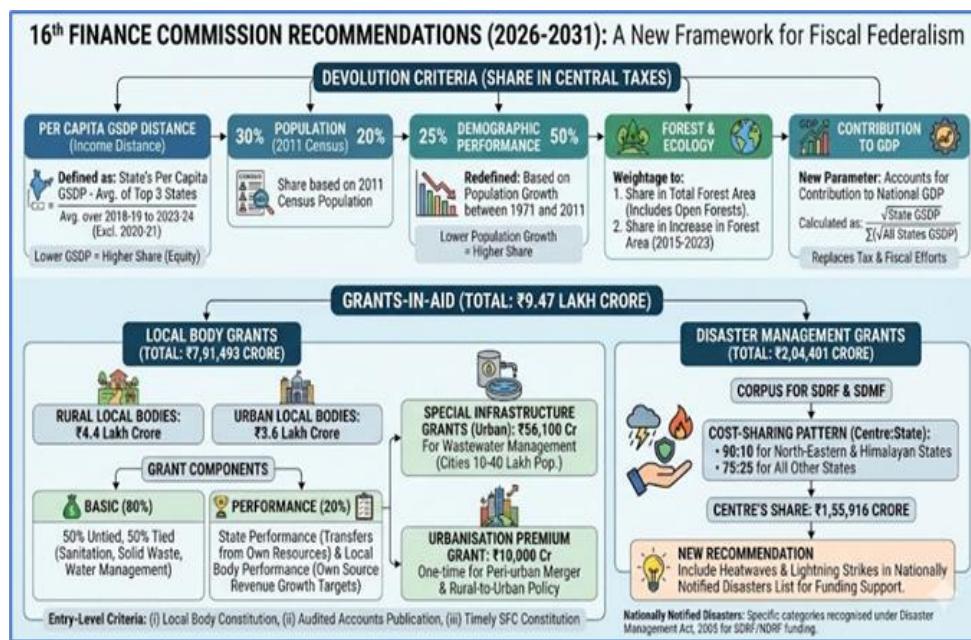
Nationwide Migration Survey



- ❖ The National Statistics Office (NSO) will conduct a nationwide Migration Survey from July 2026 to June 2027.

- ❖ The survey will be conducted by NSO under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).
- ❖ The survey will collect data on rural-urban, inter-state, seasonal, and return migration, and reasons for migration.
- ❖ It will also cover the employment profile of migrants to support planning in housing, jobs, transport, and social security.
- ❖ Earlier migration data were collected through the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2020–21 and Multiple Indicator Survey 2020–21.

16th Finance Commission recommendations



Per Capita GSDP Distance (Income Distance)

- ❖ The 16th FC has defined income distance as the difference between the per capita GSDP of a state and the average of the per capita GSDP of the top three large states with the highest per capita GSDP.
- ❖ Per capita GSDP has been computed as the average over the period 2018-19 and 2023-24, excluding the pandemic year of 2020-21.
- ❖ States with a lower per capita GSDP will receive a higher share on this parameter, to maintain equity among states.

Population

- ❖ On this parameter, the share in devolution is determined based on the share in the population as per the 2011 Census.

Demographic Performance

- ❖ The 15th FC had introduced this parameter to award states for controlling population on the basis of Total Fertility Rate (TFR).
- ❖ The 16th FC has redefined this to account for population growth between 1971 and 2011 instead of relying on change in TFR.
- ❖ States with lower population growth will have a higher share under this parameter.

Forest

- ❖ The 16th FC has assigned weightage to both the share of a state in the overall forest area, and its share in the increase in overall forest area between 2015 and 2023.
- ❖ Further, it has also considered open forests in arriving at the total forest area.
- ❖ In contrast, the 15th FC had considered only dense and moderately dense forests, and defined the parameter only in terms of share in the overall forest area.

Contribution to GDP

- ❖ The 16th FC has introduced this parameter to account for the contribution to national GDP.
- ❖ This replaces the tax and fiscal efforts parameter used by the 15th FC which rewarded states with a higher tax collection efficiency.
- ❖ Contribution to GDP by a state is calculated as the squared root of its GSDP to the sum of squared root of GSDP of all states.
- ❖ GSDP of each state has been measured as the average nominal GSDP between 2018-19 and 2023-24 (excluding the pandemic year of 2020-21).

Grants-in-aid

- ❖ The 16th FC has recommended grants worth Rs 9.47 lakh crore over the five-year period.
- ❖ These comprise grants for:
 - Urban and rural local bodies, and
 - Disaster management.
- ❖ The 16th FC has discontinued the following grants recommended by the 15th FC:
 - Revenue deficit grants,
 - Sector-specific grants, and
 - State -specific grants.

Grants for local bodies

- ❖ The 16th FC has recommended grants worth Rs 4.4 lakh crore and Rs 3.6 lakh crore for rural and urban local bodies, respectively.

- ❖ Total Local Body Grants will be ₹7,91,493 crore
- ❖ These grants are divided into basic (80%) and performance-based (20%) components.
- ❖ Special Infrastructure Grants and Urbanisation Premium Grants have also been recommended for urban local bodies.
- ❖ All local body grants will be made available upon fulfilment of three entry-level criteria:
 - Constitution of the local bodies as per the Constitution,
 - Publication of provisional and audited accounts of the local bodies in the public domain, and
 - Timely constitution of the State Finance Commission.

Basic grants

- ❖ 50% of the basic grant will be untied and the rest 50% will be tied to:
 - Sanitation and solid waste management, and/or
 - Water management.

Performance grants

- ❖ These grants for local bodies are further divided into state performance grants and local body performance grants.
- ❖ State performance grants will be made available upon meeting a minimum benchmark for transfers to local bodies from their own resources.
- ❖ Local body performance grants are linked to achievement of minimum targets specified by the Commission for own source revenue growth.

Special infrastructure grants

- ❖ This component will be tied to the development of a comprehensive wastewater management system in cities with population between 1040 lakh as per the 2011 census.
- ❖ Grants worth Rs 56,100 crore have been recommended over five years.

Urbanisation premium grant

- ❖ These will be released to states as a one-time grant for:
 - Merger of peri-urban villages into adjoining urban local body areas and
 - Formulation of a Rural to Urban Transition Policy. Rs 10,000 crore have been recommended under the urbanisation premium component.

Disaster management grants

- ❖ The Commission has recommended disaster management corpus of Rs 2,04,401 crore for State Disaster Relief and Management Funds (SDRF and SDMF).

- ❖ The cost-sharing pattern between the centre and states is recommended to be:
 - 90:10 for north-eastern and Himalayan states, and
 - 75:25 for all other states.
- ❖ Centre's share in total will be Rs 1,55,916 crore.
- ❖ It has recommended that heatwaves and lightning strikes be included in India's list of nationally notified disasters.
- ❖ Nationally Notified Disasters are specific disaster categories that are recognised under the Disaster Management Act, 2005.
- ❖ It is for the purpose of relief, response, and funding support from government disaster funds (State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF))
- ❖ Currently it includes cyclones, droughts, earthquakes, fires, floods, tsunamis, hailstorms, landslides, avalanches, cloudbursts, pest infestations, frost and cold waves.

ENVIRONMENT NEWS

Rare Snowfall in Saudi Arabia



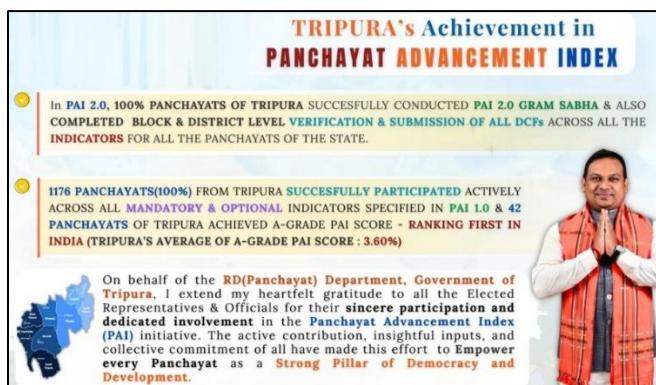
- ❖ The Al-Jawf region of Saudi Arabia recorded snowfall in its interior desert areas for the first time in recorded history in late 2025.
- ❖ The snowfall occurred around November–December 2025 after heavy rain and hail.

- ❖ The event was caused by a cold weather system moving from the Mediterranean region.
- ❖ Temperatures dropped close to 0 degrees Celsius, allowing snow to settle on desert sand.
- ❖ Snow was reported in parts of Al-Jawf, Al-Nafūd desert, and areas near the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- ❖ Northern highland regions like Tabuk receive winter snow, but snowfall in Al-Jawf interior deserts is extremely rare.

REPORTS AND INDICES

Panchayat Advancement Index 2.0

- ❖ Tripura secured the first position in the Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) 2.0.
- ❖ The PAI 2.0 was released by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India.
- ❖ Jugal Kishore Nagar Village Committee in Sepahijala district ranked first in India with a score of 88.44.
- ❖ South Nalchar gram panchayat ranked third (88.14), and Chesrimai gram panchayat ranked fourth (87.85).
- ❖ All 1,176 gram panchayats in Tripura achieved 100% data submission and verification for the year 2023–24.
- ❖ PAI measures the performance of gram panchayats on governance and service delivery.



STATE NEWS

Piloo AI Accounting App

- ❖ Andhra Pradesh launched the Piloo AI accounting and billing application.

- ❖ Piloo AI is a voice-based accounting app designed for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
- ❖ It allows users to create invoices, record sales, payments, and expenses using spoken commands.
- ❖ The app supports five Indian languages for easy use by small traders and entrepreneurs.
- ❖ It uses artificial intelligence (AI) to automate data entry from bills and bank statements.



Matabari Tourism Circuit – Tripura



- ❖ A review meeting on the development of the Matabari Tourism Circuit in Tripura was chaired by the Union Minister of Communications and Development of North Eastern Region.

- ❖ The project aims to develop Tripura as a centre of cultural, spiritual, and eco-tourism.
- ❖ Key places included are Agartala, Neer Mahal, Sepahijala, Udaipur (Tripura Sundari Temple / Matabari), Chabimura, and Dumboor Lake.

Ancient Telugu Epigraphy

- ❖ A rare early 8th-century CE Telugu inscription has been discovered at Pitikayagulla in Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ The inscription is written in early Telugu script and shows the transition of Telugu from Prakrit influence to an independent language.
- ❖ It records the construction of a new embankment, known as nava katta.
- ❖ The work is attributed to Pranimilli Achari, who is believed to have been a sculptor or craftsman.
- ❖ The inscription is linked to the Renadu region, though the ruling king is not named.



PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

Grammy Awards 2026

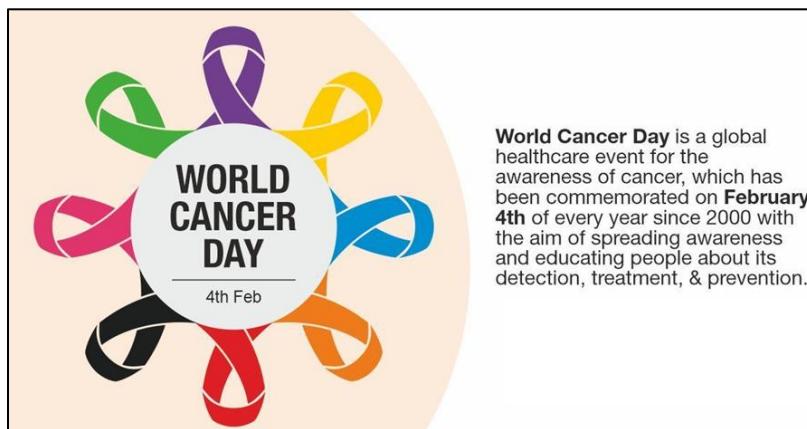
- ❖ The 68th Annual Grammy Awards were held in Los Angeles to honour outstanding achievements in the global music industry.

- ❖ The Dalai Lama won his first Grammy Award in the category of Best Audio Book, Narration and Storytelling Recording.
- ❖ Steven Spielberg won Best Music Film for Music for John Williams, completing his EGOT (Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, Tony) with his first Grammy Award.
- ❖ “Golden” from K-pop Demon Hunters won Song Written for Visual Media, becoming the first K-pop song to win a Grammy Award.



IMPORTANT DAYS

World Cancer Day 2026 – February 04

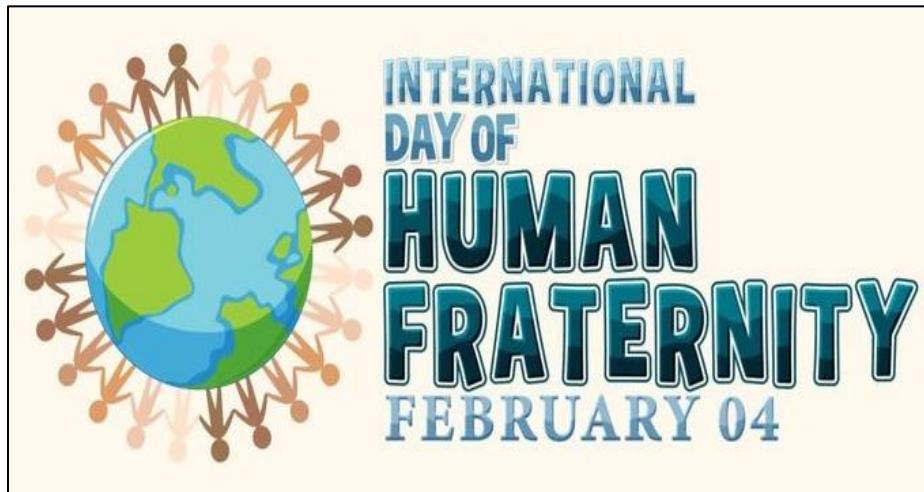


- ❖ The day was observed to raise awareness about cancer prevention, early detection, and treatment.

- ❖ It was established following the World Summit Against Cancer for the New Millennium, held in Paris in 2000.
- ❖ The day is led by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC).
- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is “United by Unique”.

International Day of Human Fraternity 2026 – February 04

- ❖ The day is observed to promote peace, unity, and mutual respect among people of different religions and cultures.
- ❖ It was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2019.
- ❖ The observance is inspired by the Document on Human Fraternity, signed in Abu Dhabi in 2019.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is “Dialogue Over Division.”



MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

QS Europe Rankings 2026

- ❖ The QS Europe Rankings 2026 have been released, listing the top universities across Europe.
- ❖ The University of Oxford secured the first position, rising from third place in the 2025 rankings.
- ❖ ETH Zurich ranked second, retaining its position as the highest-ranked university in continental Europe.
- ❖ Imperial College London and University College London (UCL) jointly secured the third rank.

- ❖ The rankings are based on indicators such as research quality, academic reputation, employability, and international engagement.

FEATURE	DETAILS
	Ranking Overview & Release The QS Europe Rankings 2026 have been released, listing the top universities across Europe.
	First Position (Rank 1) University of Oxford Rose from third place in the 2025 rankings.
	Second Position (Rank 2) ETH Zurich Retains position as the highest-ranked university in continental Europe.
	Joint Third Position (Rank =3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imperial College London • University College London (UCL) Jointly secured the third rank.
	Key Ranking Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research quality • Employability • Academic reputation • International engagement

