

February - 18

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ The Indian Army will host the first-ever International Military Adventure Challenge Cup (IMACC – International Military Adventure Challenge Cup) 2026 in the Eastern Himalayas.
 - Military teams from Bhutan, Brazil, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Saudi Arabia will participate in the event.
- ❖ The Indian Air Force (IAF) is conducting a joint in-situ air exercise with the Royal Thai Air Force (RTAF) to enhance defence cooperation, operational coordination, and interoperability between the two forces.
- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved India's first underwater twin-tube road-cum-rail tunnel project in Assam.
 - The tunnel will be built under the Brahmaputra River, connecting Gohpur (NH-15) and Numaligarh (NH-715).
- ❖ Goa is set to release its first biodiversity and cultural features map, developed by WWF India (World Wide Fund for Nature India), to promote environmental awareness among students.
 - The map highlights traditional art forms and 48 commonly found species, including birds, mammals, reptiles, marine animals, mangroves, and insects.
- ❖ The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched Kaushal Rath, a mobile Artificial Intelligence (AI) awareness initiative under the “Yuva AI for All” National AI Literacy Programme in February 2026.
- ❖ Cyclone Gezani made landfall in Toamasina, a major port city in Madagascar.
- ❖ India hosted the first BRICS Sherpa and Sous-Sherpa Meeting in New Delhi as part of its 2026 chairmanship of BRICS.
 - The theme of India's chairmanship is “Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability.”
- ❖ Darwin Day is observed every year on 12 February to mark the birth anniversary of Charles Darwin, celebrating intellectual bravery, scientific thinking, curiosity, and the search for truth.

TAMIL NADU NEWS

Baby Care Kit scheme

- ❖ The Government of Tamil Nadu launched a “Baby Care Kit” scheme to reduce the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) among low birth weight (LBW) babies.

- ❖ The scheme provides monthly kits with iron drops, multivitamin drops, Vitamin D3 drops, an infant medical card, and a booklet on 12 child development signs.
- ❖ Around 4.5 lakh deliveries take place yearly in government hospitals, and about 52,000 babies are born with low birth weight (less than 2.5 kg).
- ❖ The initiative, announced in the State Budget, is implemented at a cost of ₹8.07 crore.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu's IMR reduced from 8.2 (2023–24) to 7.7 (2024–25) per 1,000 live births.
- ❖ The Pregnancy and Infant Cohort Monitoring and Evaluation (PICME) mobile app “Thaimai” was also launched for monitoring antenatal care, immunisation, and high-risk alerts.

The baby care kits

- The kits will be procured through the Tamil Nadu Medical Services Corporation and supplied to district drug warehouses. From there, they will be distributed to medical college hospitals, district hospitals, and sub-district hospitals with SNCUs
- The kit includes iron drops, multivitamin drops, vitamin D3 drops, Infant Supplementary Medical Card, and a booklet on 12 signs of child development
- The drugs will be replenished through monthly follow-up visits at the SNCU Well Baby Clinic ensuring growth monitoring, developmental surveillance, and immunisation tracking



Health Minister Ma. Subramanian launching the 'Baby Care Kit' scheme implemented at a cost of ₹8.07 crore at the Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Egmore on Friday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

What does the scheme aim for?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A reduction in Infant Mortality Rate and neonatal morbidity among high-risk LBW babies ■ Improved weight gain and nutritional outcomes through systematic micronutrient supplementation ■ Enhanced immunity, reducing susceptibility to recurrent infections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Prevention of complications associated with prematurity and LBW ■ A substantial increase in facility-based follow-up rates, from the current 30% to a targeted 90% ■ Strengthened continuum of care, bridging the gap between SNCU discharge, and community-level child health services ■ Expansion of this programme to all LBW babies in the community in future
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Vallalar Birth Anniversary

- ❖ The Government of Tamil Nadu has announced that the birth anniversary of Ramalinga Swamigal (Vallalar) will be celebrated for three days every year.
- ❖ The announcement was made by the Chief Minister M. K. Stalin during the International Vallalar Conference organised by the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) Department.
- ❖ A research centre on Vallalar will be established at the HR&CE Department headquarters in Chennai.

- ❖ Vallalar’s book titled “Spiritual Alchemy” will be published by the HR&CE Department.
- ❖ Vallalar Annadhanam Centres will be established at Mettukuppam, Karunguzhi, and Marudhur.
- ❖ Thiruvottiyur High Road in north Chennai has been renamed Vallalar High Road.

VALLALAR BIRTH ANNIVERSARY ANNOUNCEMENTS:
Tamil Nadu Government Initiatives

THREE-DAY ANNUAL CELEBRATION
(Every Year)

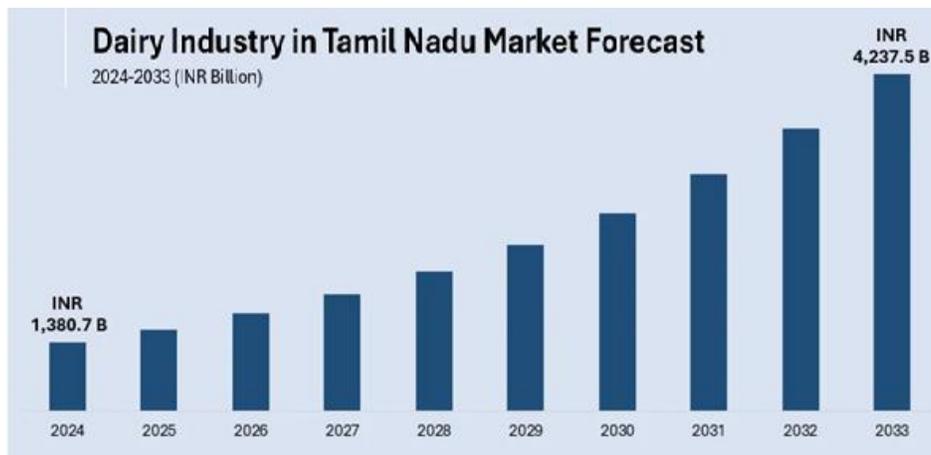


ANNOUNCED BY CM M.K. STALIN
(International Vallalar Conference, HR&CE Dept.)

Conference location: Ekambaranathar Temple Land, Chennai

<p>RESEARCH & PUBLICATION</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">    </div>	<p>VALLALAR ANNADHANAM CENTRES</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">    </div> <p>Established for service</p>	<p>ROAD RENAMING</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;">  </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;">  </div>
<p>INTERNATIONAL CENTRE INAUGURATION</p>  <p>VALLALAR INTERNATIONAL CENTRE, VADALUR Completed Portions Inaugurated by CM</p>	 <p>PHILOSOPHY & SERVICE LEGACY</p>	<p>GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT</p>  <p>Honoring Ramalinga Swamikal's contributions to society and spirituality.</p>

Milk Production in Tamil Nadu



- ❖ Recent Basic Animal Husbandry (BAH) statistics show that milk production per crossbred cow in Tamil Nadu has remained almost stagnant, mainly due to a shortage of feed and fodder.
- ❖ In Tamil Nadu, milk production per crossbred cow has remained around 7.1 kg per day between 2018 and 2025.
- ❖ It ranged from 7.03 kg per day in 2023–24 to 7.84 kg per day in 2024–25, showing only a small improvement.

- ❖ The area under fodder crops in Tamil Nadu declined from 48,000 hectares (2018–19) to 35,000 hectares (2025).
- ❖ In Karnataka, fodder-crop coverage increased from 71,000 hectares to 90,000 hectares, and crossbred cattle produce about 10.71 kg of milk per day.
- ❖ Karnataka provides a milk subsidy of ₹5 per litre (recently increased to ₹7 per litre), while Tamil Nadu provides ₹3 per litre.
- ❖ Aavin currently procures about 30–35 lakh litres of milk per day, though its processing capacity is around 50 lakh litres per day.

NATIONAL NEWS

World's Second Largest Smartphone Market - India

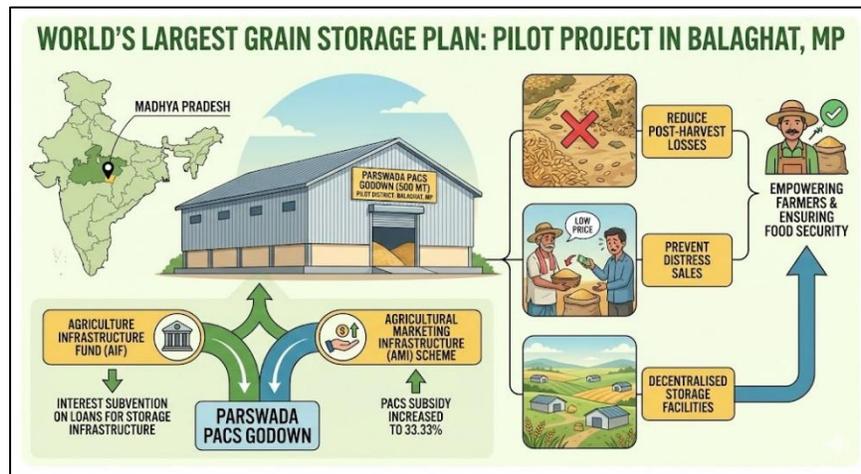
- ❖ India became the second-largest active smartphone installed base globally in 2025, with over 740 million smartphones in use, after China.
- ❖ The active installed base refers to the total number of smartphones currently being used, not just yearly sales.
- ❖ More than 50% of India's population (about 1.45 billion) now uses smartphones.
- ❖ The average smartphone replacement cycle in India is about 42 months, slightly lower than the global average of 47 months.



World's Largest Grain Storage Plan

- ❖ Balaghat, Madhya Pradesh, has been selected as the pilot district under the World's Largest Grain Storage Plan in the Cooperative Sector.
- ❖ A 500 Metric Tonne (MT) godown was constructed at the Primary Agricultural Credit Society (PACS) level in Parswada.

- ❖ The project is implemented through the convergence of schemes like the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) and the Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure (AMI) Scheme.
- ❖ Under AIF, PACS receive interest subvention on loans for building storage infrastructure.
- ❖ The subsidy for PACS under AMI has been increased to 33.33 %.
- ❖ The initiative aims to reduce post-harvest losses and prevent distress sales by farmers through decentralised storage facilities.



Private Sectors in Nuclear Energy

Adani Power has incorporated a wholly owned subsidiary, **Adani Atomic Energy Ltd, marking its entry into the nuclear energy sector, the company said in a regulatory filing.**

The newly incorporated entity has an authorised capital of ₹5 lakh, comprising 50,000 equity shares of ₹10 each, with **Adani Power Ltd holding 100% stake.**

- ❖ The Adani Group entered the nuclear power sector after the passage of the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Act, 2025.

- ❖ Adani Power Limited has created a wholly owned subsidiary called Adani Atomic Energy Limited.
- ❖ The SHANTI Act allows private companies to operate nuclear power plants in India and collaborate with foreign technology partners.
- ❖ The law replaces the Atomic Energy Act and enables private participation in nuclear energy production.
- ❖ India currently has about 8.8 gigawatts (GW) of installed nuclear power capacity, contributing around 3 % of total electricity generation.
- ❖ The government aims to increase nuclear power capacity to 32 gigawatts in the next decade as part of the energy transition goal.

Lakhpati Didi Scheme Expansion



- ❖ The Government of India has doubled the target of the Lakhpati Didi Scheme to 6 crore women beneficiaries by March 2029 after achieving the earlier 3 crore target ahead of schedule.
- ❖ The scheme supports women in Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to earn at least ₹1 lakh annual income through livelihood activities.
- ❖ In the Union Budget 2026–27, the government announced the launch of “SHE-Marts” (Self Help Entrepreneur Marts).

- ❖ SHE-Marts will provide better marketing platforms for SHG products across the country.
- ❖ The initiative aims to increase income opportunities and promote rural women's entrepreneurship.

New Bullet Train Corridors in India

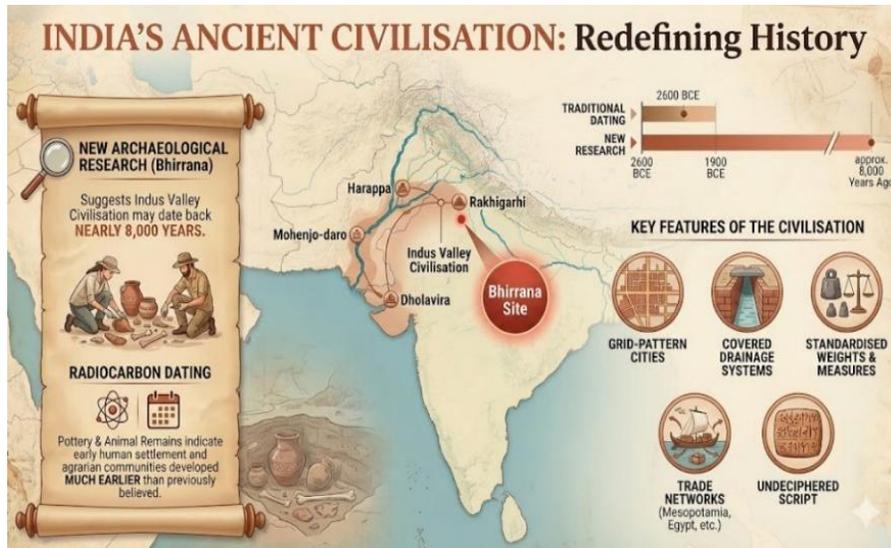


- ❖ The Government of India has started a viability assessment for seven new high-speed rail (bullet train) corridors announced in the Union Budget 2026–27.
- ❖ The project will be implemented by the National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL).
- ❖ The seven proposed corridors will cover about 4,000 kilometres across major cities in India.
- ❖ The total estimated cost of the project is about ₹16 trillion.

- ❖ The corridors include Mumbai–Pune, Pune–Hyderabad, Hyderabad–Bengaluru, Hyderabad–Chennai, Chennai–Bengaluru, Delhi–Varanasi, and Varanasi–Siliguri.
- ❖ India’s first bullet train project, the Mumbai–Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Corridor, is currently under construction.

India’s Ancient Civilisation

- ❖ New archaeological research from the Bhirrana site suggests the Indus Valley Civilisation may date back nearly 8,000 years.
- ❖ Radiocarbon dating of pottery and animal remains indicates that early human settlement and agrarian communities developed much earlier than previously believed.
- ❖ The Indus Valley Civilisation (also called the Harappan Civilisation) is traditionally dated between 2600 BCE and 1900 BCE.
- ❖ Major urban centres include Harappa, Mohenjo-daro, Dholavira, and Rakhigarhi.



STATE NEWS

Sthree Suraksha Scheme

- ❖ The Kerala government launched the Sthree Suraksha Scheme to provide financial support to unemployed women and transwomen from economically weaker sections.
- ❖ It provides a monthly pension of ₹1,000 through direct bank transfer.

- ❖ Women aged 35 to 60 years who are not receiving other social welfare pensions are eligible.
- ❖ The first instalment was credited to over 10.18 lakh beneficiaries.

LAYING DOWN THE RULES

The state govt has spelled out who can qualify for the Rs 1,000 monthly aid under the scheme

- Women and transgender women who are permanent residents of Kerala between the ages of 35 and 60
- Must either hold Antyodaya Anna Yojana (yellow ration card) or priority household (pink ration card) cards
- Must not be beneficiary of any other social welfare or pension schemes



SPORTS NEWS

Asian Rifle/Pistol Championship 2026

ASIAN SHOOTING CHAMPIONSHIP 2026

(RIFLE/PISTOL)

TEAM	🥇	🥈	🥉	TOTAL
IND	51	23	20	94
KAZ	3	16	7	26
UZB	3	1	-	4
INA	2	4	4	10
JPN	1	3	3	7
VIE	1	1	1	3
TPE	-	2	4	6
KGZ	-	1	2	3

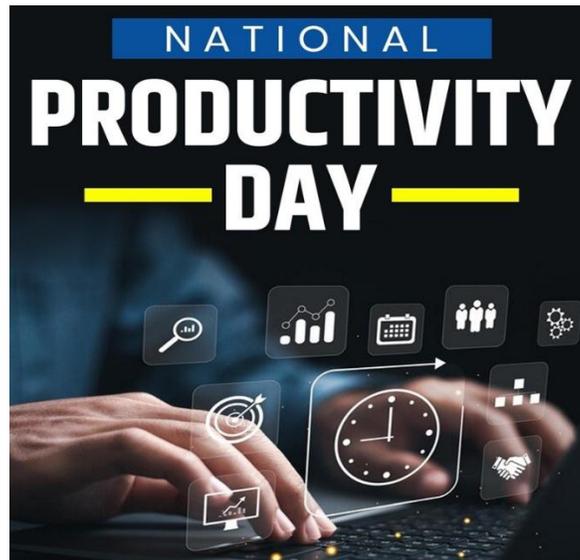


- ❖ India finished first in the medal table at the Asian Rifle/Pistol Championship 2026, held at Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range, New Delhi.

- ❖ The country won 94 medals, including 51 gold, 23 silver, and 20 bronzes.
- ❖ Indian shooters won the 25m Centre Fire Pistol podium with Amanpreet Singh (gold), Gurpreet Singh (silver), and Ankur Goel (bronze).
- ❖ In the 50m Rifle Prone Women's event, Sift Kaur Samra won silver, and Tejaswani Sawant won bronze; the team secured gold.

IMPORTANT DAYS

National Productivity Day 2026 – February 12



- ❖ The day is celebrated by the National Productivity Council (NPC), which was established in 1958 under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- ❖ 2026 marks the 68th Foundation Day of the National Productivity Council, and National Productivity Week is observed from 12–18 February 2026 across India.
- ❖ The celebrations aim to improve competitiveness, quality, and productivity in all sectors of the Indian economy.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is “Clusters as Growth Engine: Maximizing Productivity in MSMEs.”

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Ancient Egypt Tool

- ❖ A copper tool excavated in Egypt has been re-identified as a possible bow drill after fresh microscopic analysis.

- ❖ The artefact was originally classified as a simple awl when it was discovered in the 1920s.
- ❖ If confirmed, the finding could push back evidence of rotary drilling in Ancient Egypt by nearly 2,000 years.
- ❖ Rotary drilling was used in woodworking, bead production, and furniture-making in ancient civilisations.



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