

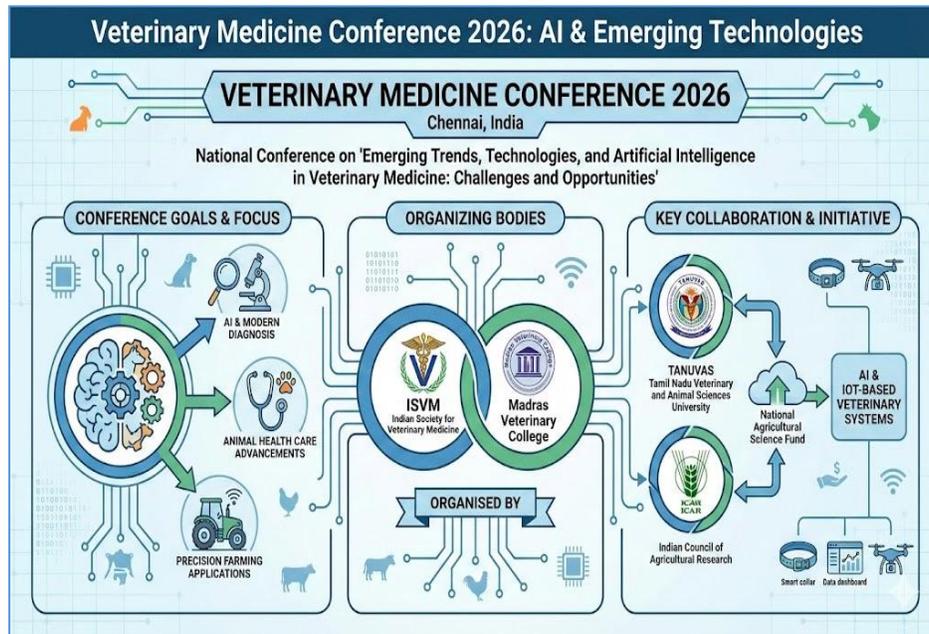
February - 21

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Lucas Pinheiro Braathen won Brazil's first-ever Winter Olympics gold medal in alpine skiing at the giant slalom event during the 2026 Winter Olympics.
- ❖ The Rajasthan desert city of Jaisalmer will host the country's first Jain Chadar Mahotsav from 6 to 8 March 2026.
- ❖ David J. Farber, known as the "Grandfather of the Internet" passed away at the age of 91 in Tokyo.
 - He was an American computer scientist who contributed to the development of early computer networking and the expansion of ARPANET, the precursor to the Internet.

TAMIL NADU NEWS

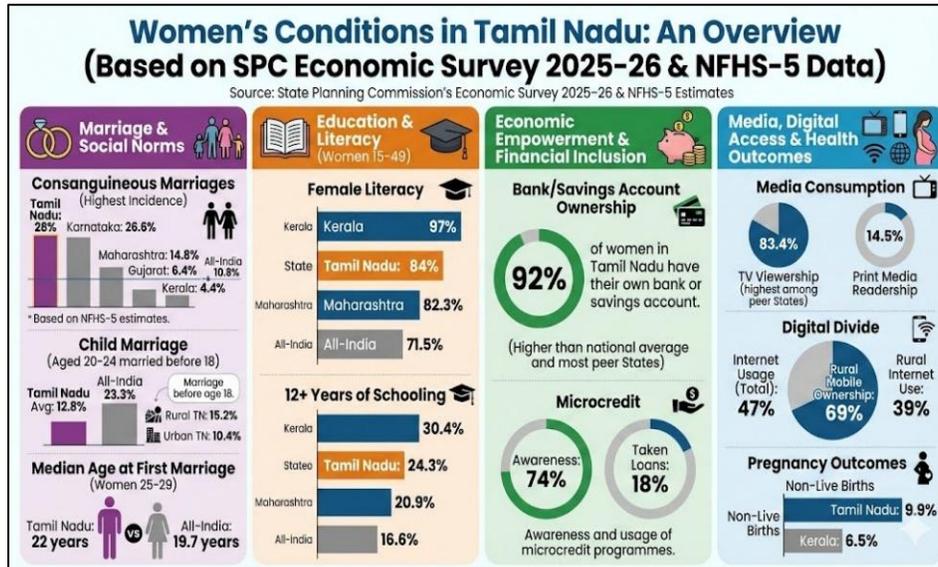
Veterinary Medicine Conference 2026



- ❖ A national conference on "Emerging Trends, Technologies, and Artificial Intelligence in Veterinary Medicine: Challenges and Opportunities" began in Chennai.
- ❖ The conference aims to promote the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and modern technologies for veterinary diagnosis, animal health care, and precision farming.

- ❖ The event is organised by the Indian Society for Veterinary Medicine (ISVM) and the Madras Veterinary College.

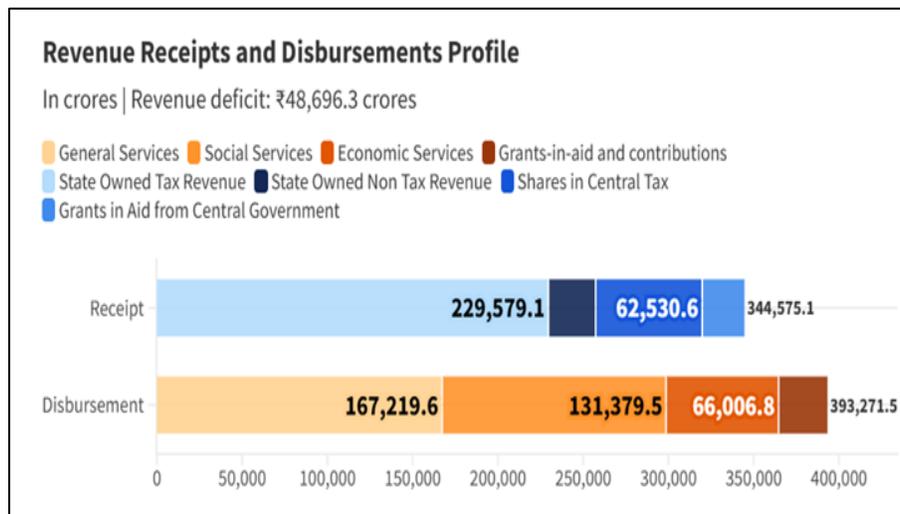
Women's Conditions in Tamil Nadu



- ❖ The Economic Survey 2025-26 of the State Planning Commission (SPC) highlights data on women's social and economic conditions in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu reports the highest incidence of consanguineous marriages among peer States at 28%, according to estimates based on the National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5).
- ❖ The all-India average is 10.8%, followed by Karnataka (26.6%), Maharashtra (14.8%), Gujarat (6.4%), and Kerala (4.4%).
- ❖ Child marriage is any marriage where a person is under 18 years old.
- ❖ In Tamil Nadu, 15.2% of women in rural areas and 10.4% in urban areas were married before 18, making the State average 12.8%, compared to the all-India average of 23.3%.
- ❖ The median age at first marriage for women aged 25-29 in Tamil Nadu is 22 years, which is higher than the all-India median of 19.7 years.
- ❖ Female literacy (women aged 15-49) in Tamil Nadu is 84%, and 24.3% of women have completed 12 or more years of schooling.
- ❖ Only Kerala has higher figures (97% literacy and 30.4% schooling), while Maharashtra follows Tamil Nadu with 82.3% literacy and 20.9% schooling.
- ❖ The all-India averages are 71.5% literacy and 16.6% schooling.
- ❖ About 92% of women in Tamil Nadu have their own bank or savings account, which is higher than the national average and most peer States.

- ❖ Awareness of microcredit programmes is 74%, and 18% of women report taking loans from them.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu has the highest television viewership among peer States (83.4%), but print media readership among women is only 14.5%.
- ❖ About 47% of women use the internet, and the rural–urban digital divide is visible, as 69% of rural women own a mobile phone and only 39% use the internet.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu reports the highest proportion of pregnancies ending in non-live births at 9.9%, compared to 6.5% in Kerala.

Tamil Nadu Finance Data 2026–27



- ❖ The financial figures were presented in the Interim Budget Estimates 2026–27 of the Government of Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The outstanding debt of Tamil Nadu is estimated at ₹10.71 lakh crore in the Interim Budget Estimates 2026–27.
- ❖ In the Revised Estimates 2025–26, it is ₹9.52 lakh crore, compared to ₹9.29 lakh crore in the Budget Estimates 2025–26.
- ❖ The debt figure includes ₹9,523 crore related to the approval of Chennai Metro Rail Limited Phase-II as a Central Sector Project, which will later reflect in the Union Government accounts.
- ❖ Excluding this amount, the outstanding debt is ₹9.42 lakh crore (Revised Estimates 2025–26) and ₹10.62 lakh crore (Interim Budget Estimates 2026–27).
- ❖ The State plans to borrow ₹1.79 lakh crore in 2026–27 and repay ₹60,413.42 crore during the same period.
- ❖ The debt-to-GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product) ratio is estimated at 26.12%.

- ❖ The Revenue Deficit for 2026–27 is estimated at ₹48,696.32 crore.
- ❖ It was ₹69,219 crore in the Revised Estimates 2025–26 and ₹41,635 crore in the Budget Estimates 2025–26.
- ❖ The Fiscal Deficit for 2026–27 is estimated at ₹1.21 lakh crore, compared to ₹1.24 lakh crore in the Revised Estimates 2025–26.
- ❖ The Fiscal Deficit as a percentage of GSDP is expected to reduce from 3.48% (Revised Estimates 2025–26) to 3% (Interim Budget Estimates 2026–27).
- ❖ Since the 9th Finance Commission, Tamil Nadu's share in central tax devolution has reduced from 7.9% to 4.079%, resulting in a loss of ₹3.17 lakh crore, which is about 33% of the State's outstanding debt.
- ❖ In the 16th Finance Commission, Kerala and Karnataka received increases of 23.74% and 13.27% respectively, while Tamil Nadu received an increase of only 0.44%, the lowest among comparable States.

ECI De-Registration Case 2026

Madras High Court refuses interim relief to political parties de-registered by ECI for not contesting polls

- ❖ The Madras High Court refused to grant interim relief to political parties de-registered by the Election Commission of India (ECI).
- ❖ The ECI de-registered parties that had not contested Legislative Assembly or Parliamentary elections in the last six years.
- ❖ Parties such as Tamizhaga Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam, Manithaneya Makkal Katchi and Manithaneya Jananayaga Katchi filed writ petitions challenging the de-registration orders.
- ❖ The Court said granting a stay would allow the parties to contest the upcoming Tamil Nadu Assembly elections.
- ❖ The petitioners argued that Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, provides only for registration and not de-registration of political parties.

- ❖ They contended that Section 21 of the General Clauses Act, 1897 cannot be invoked to de-register parties and relied on the Supreme Court judgement in Indian National Congress vs Institute of Social Welfare (2002).
- ❖ In the 2002 judgement, the Supreme Court held that de-registration is permitted only in extreme cases such as fraud, forgery or loss of allegiance to the Constitution and its principles like socialism and secularism.
- ❖ The ECI stated that the 2002 judgement was delivered before it issued detailed guidelines in 2014 under Article 324 of the Constitution, requiring political parties to contest elections at least once in a six-year block period.

Champions of Tamil Nadu Sports Event 2026

- ❖ Tamil Nadu celebrated five years of sporting achievements at the 'Champions of Tamil Nadu' event in Chennai.
- ❖ Over 175 sportspersons received appointment orders under the 3% sports quota in government employment.
- ❖ 50 para-athletes are among those getting government job appointments.

- ❖ A total of ₹33.5 crore in incentives awarded to 1,172 sportspersons for their achievements.
- ❖ The foundation stone for the ₹261 crore International Sports City project in Chennai was laid at the event.

NATIONAL NEWS

International Conference on Dam Safety 2026

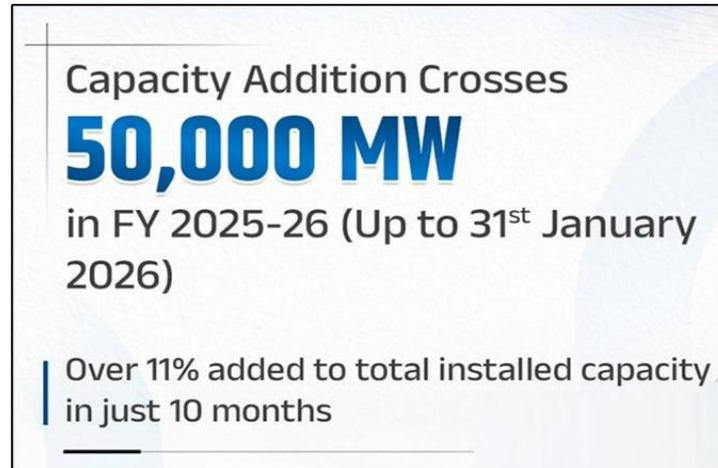


- ❖ The International Conference on Dam Safety (ICDS) 2026 concluded in Bengaluru.
- ❖ The conference was organised by the Ministry of Jal Shakti to discuss dam safety, climate resilience, and water infrastructure management.
- ❖ Discussions focused on the Dam Safety Act, 2021 and the Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP).
- ❖ Technical sessions covered ageing dams, sediment management, risk-informed decision-making, flood management, and dam safety monitoring systems.
- ❖ The conference highlighted the need for Emergency Action Plans (EAPs), real-time monitoring, reservoir sediment management, and coordinated reservoir operations.

Power Capacity in FY 2025–26

- ❖ The Ministry of Power announced that India added 52,537 megawatts (MW) of power generation capacity in the current financial year up to January 31, 2026.

- ❖ This is the highest ever annual capacity addition, surpassing the previous record of 34,054 MW in FY 2024–25.
- ❖ Out of the total addition, 39,657 MW came from renewable energy sources, including 34,955 MW from solar and 4,613 MW from wind.
- ❖ As of January 31, 2026, India's total installed power generation capacity stands at 5,20,510.95 MW.
- ❖ About 50.5% of the total capacity comes from renewable sources, 48% from fossil fuels, and 1.6% from nuclear energy.



Infrastructure Project - Great Nicobar Island

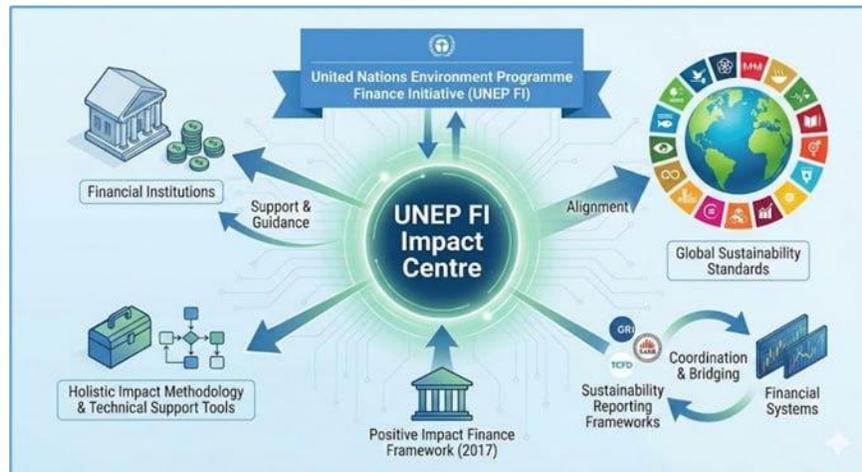


- ❖ The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has cleared the Great Nicobar Island infrastructure project while ensuring the strict compliance with environmental safeguards.

- ❖ The project includes an International Container Transshipment Terminal (ICTT), township development, and a 450 MVA gas- and solar-based power plant.
- ❖ The NGT noted the project’s strategic importance near the Malacca Strait and its relevance to India’s Act East policy and Indian Ocean presence.
- ❖ Coral protection measures include the translocation of over 16,000 coral colonies and monitoring, in line with the Island Coastal Regulation Zone (ICRZ) Notification, 2019.
- ❖ The tribunal confirmed there is no major coral reef within the direct project area at Galathea Bay.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UNEP FI Impact Centre



- ❖ The United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI) has launched the UNEP FI Impact Centre.
- ❖ The centre is a specialised platform to support impact management in financial institutions.
- ❖ The centre provides a holistic impact methodology and technical support tools to UNEP FI members.
- ❖ The initiative builds on UNEP FI’s Positive Impact Finance framework introduced in 2017.

African Union Summit 2026

- ❖ The 39th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union was held in Addis Ababa, Capital of Ethiopia.

- ❖ Évariste Ndayishimiye, President of Burundi, was elected the Chairperson of the African Union for 2026, succeeding the outgoing Chairperson from Angola.
- ❖ The summit's theme for 2026 was "Ensuring sustainable water availability and safe sanitation systems to achieve the goals of Agenda 2063".



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

First Remote Ultrasound in Antarctica

TELEROBOTICS: CONNECTING CONTINENTS

Distance | Patient located in Antarctica; doctors operated from Delhi

Method | Robotic arm fitted with an ultrasound probe, remotely controlled using a haptic device

Technology | Real-time movements of the robotic arm generated ultrasound images, which were transmitted live to the doctors in Delhi

Areas Scanned | Abdomen, chest, heart and blood vessels

Significance | Absence of on-site medical specialists and extreme difficulty in medical evacuation from Antarctica

Future Scope | Currently in trial phase; holds potential for healthcare delivery in remote, rural, hilly and disaster-affected regions



The illustration shows three medical professionals in a control room, seated at desks with multiple computer monitors. One monitor displays a world map, another shows a live ultrasound image. A robotic arm is positioned in front of a patient lying on a table. The scene is set in a futuristic, high-tech environment with blue lighting and large windows.

- ❖ The AIIMS, New Delhi, conducted the first remote real-time ultrasound on a patient at India's Maitri research station in Antarctica.

- ❖ The tele-robotic system allows specialists to operate ultrasound equipment remotely.
- ❖ The tele-robotic system was first used during the Covid-19 pandemic and adapted for extreme Antarctic conditions.

