

January - 29

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Lieutenant K M Sudha became the first person from India's Northeast to win a gold medal at a National Cadet Corps (NCC) officers' training event.
- ❖ Simran Bala is the first woman from the Rajouri district in Jammu and Kashmir to become a CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force) officer.
- ❖ Operation Megaburu, a large-scale anti-Maoist counter-insurgency operation conducted against the Communist Party of India Maoist in the Saranda forest area of West Singhbhum district, Jharkhand.
- ❖ International Holocaust Remembrance Day is observed on 27 January to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust.
- ❖ Data Privacy Day is observed on 28 January to mark the signing of Convention 108.
 - It aims to raise awareness about data protection, privacy rights, and responsible handling of personal data in the digital era.

TAMIL NADU NEWS

Madras Hedgehog Study



MADRAS HEDGEHOG
Paraechinus nudiventris

FOUND IN
Peninsular India,
primarily across Tamil
Nadu, Kerala, Andhra
Pradesh and parts of
Karnataka

NUMBERS IN WILD
**NO KNOWN
ESTIMATES**

CONSERVATION STATUS
Least Concern under
IUCN Red List

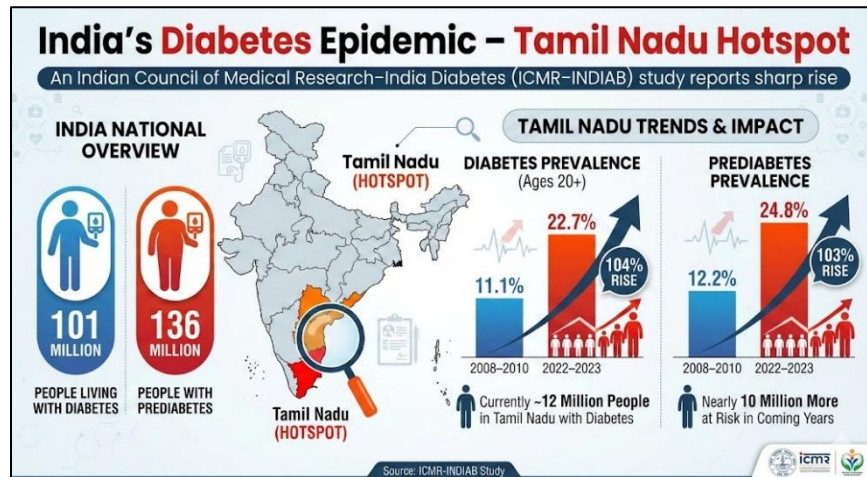
MAJOR THREATS
Habitat loss from
agriculture, plantations,
and wind or solar
infrastructure,
poaching, road
mortality

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Forest Department has begun its first-ever study on the Madras Hedgehog in the Theri forests of Thoothukudi district.
- ❖ The Madras Hedgehog (*Paraechinus nudiventris*), locally called Mulleli, is a rare nocturnal mammal endemic to southern India.

- ❖ The study is led by the Advanced Institute for Wildlife Conservation (AIWC) across Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli, Salem, and Kallakurichi districts.
- ❖ Radio telemetry will be used to track movement, habitat use, and threats such as urbanisation and pesticide exposure.
- ❖ The study aims to prepare a conservation action plan and support reclassification of the species from “Least Concern” to “Threatened” in the IUCN Red List.

India's Diabetes Epidemic Hotspot

- ❖ An Indian Council of Medical Research–India Diabetes (ICMR–INDIAB) study has reported a sharp rise in diabetes and prediabetes in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ India currently has about 101 million people living with diabetes and 136 million people with prediabetes.
- ❖ In Tamil Nadu, diabetes prevalence among people above 20 years increased from 11.1% during 2008–2010 to 22.7% in 2022–2023, showing a 104% rise.
- ❖ Prediabetes prevalence in the state rose from 12.2% to 24.8% in the same period, which is a 103% increase.
- ❖ At present, about 12 million people in Tamil Nadu have diabetes, and nearly 10 million more may develop it in the coming years.

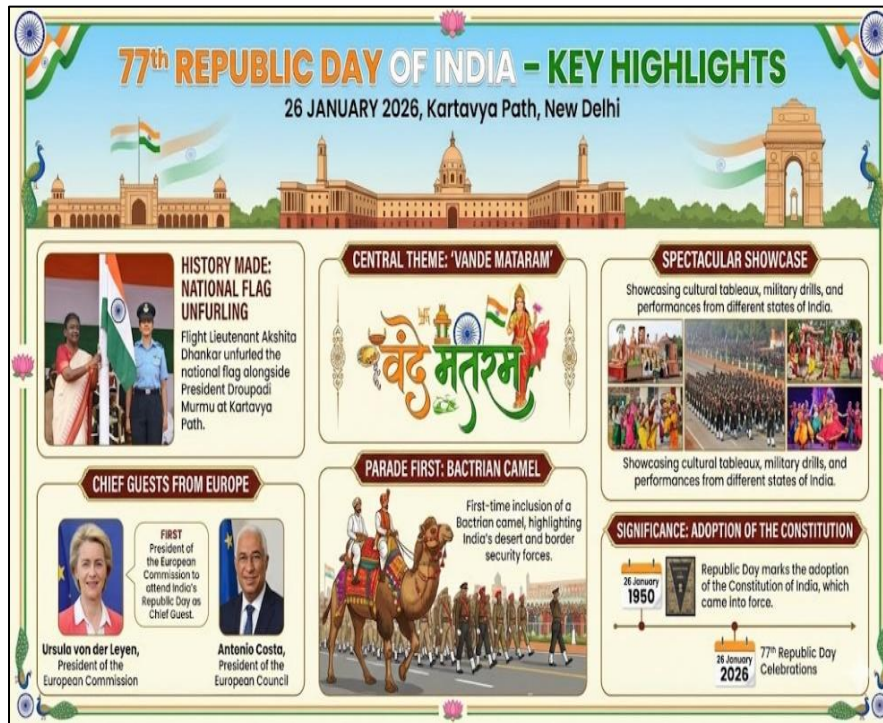


NATIONAL NEWS

77th Republic Day of India – Key Highlights

- ❖ Flight Lieutenant Akshita Dhankar made history by unfurling the national flag alongside President Droupadi Murmu during the 77th Republic Day celebrations on 26 January 2026 at Kartavya Path, New Delhi.

- ❖ The Chief Guests were Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, and Antonio Costa, President of the European Council.
- ❖ Ursula von der Leyen is the first President of the European Commission to attend India's Republic Day celebrations as Chief Guest.
- ❖ The central theme of the Republic Day parade was 'Vande Mataram'.
- ❖ For the first time, a Bactrian camel (two-humped camel) was included in the parade, highlighting India's desert and border security forces.
- ❖ Republic Day marks the adoption of the Constitution of India, which came into force on 26 January 1950.



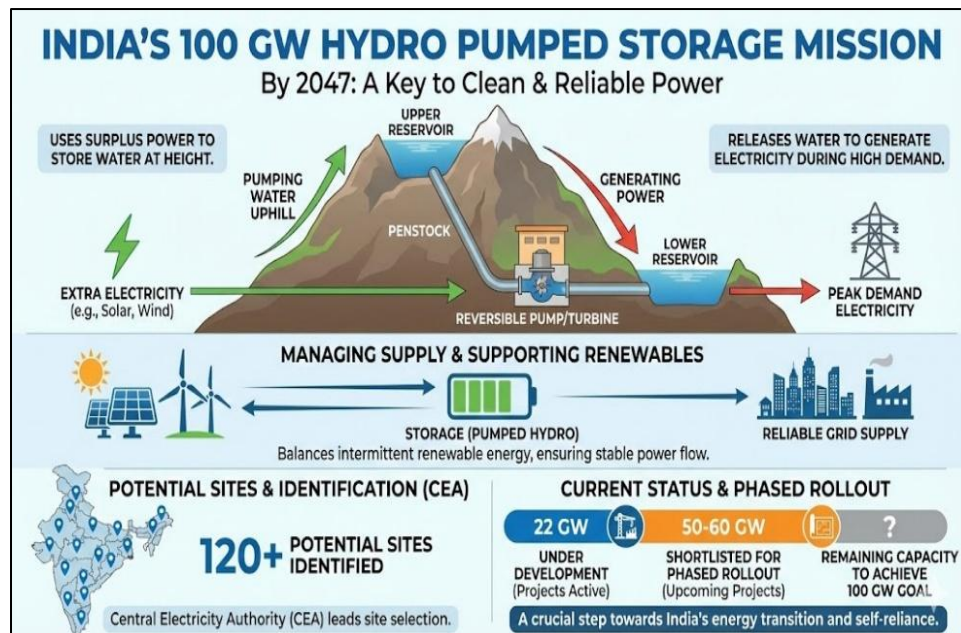
Granth Kutir

- ❖ President Droupadi Murmu has inaugurated Granth Kutir, a book house, at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.
- ❖ Granth Kutir has a collection of about 2,300 books in 11 classical Indian languages, including Tamil, Sanskrit, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese, and Bengali.
- ❖ The collection covers subjects such as epics, philosophy, linguistics, history, governance, science, devotional literature, and the Constitution of India.
- ❖ Around 50 manuscripts are part of the collection, written on palm leaf, paper, bark, and cloth.

- ❖ The aim is to raise awareness about India's cultural, literary, and intellectual heritage.



100 GW Hydro Pumped Storage



- ❖ India is planning 100 gigawatts of hydro pumped storage by 2047.

- ❖ Hydro pumped storage uses extra electricity to pump water uphill and generate power during peak demand.
- ❖ It will help manage electricity supply and support renewable energy like solar and wind.
- ❖ The Central Electricity Authority (CEA) has identified 120 potential sites for these projects.
- ❖ About 22 GW of projects are already under development, and 50–60 GW are shortlisted for phased rollout.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UPI in Japan



- ❖ India's digital payment system, called UPI (Unified Payments Interface), will start in Japan in 2026.
- ❖ It will be tested first with Indian tourists so they can pay directly from their Indian bank accounts.
- ❖ The project is a partnership between Japan's NTT Data and India's National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- ❖ UPI is already operational in eight countries, including Bhutan, Singapore, Nepal, the UAE, Sri Lanka, Qatar, Mauritius, and France.

- ❖ UPI was started in India in 2016 and is the world's biggest real-time payment system.

ECONOMY NEWS

Narayan Ramachandran Committee



- ❖ The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has formed a committee to modernise National Pension System investment rules.
- ❖ The committee is named Strategic Asset Allocation and Risk Governance (SAARG).
- ❖ Narayan Ramachandran has been appointed as the chairperson of the committee.
- ❖ The committee is expected to submit its recommendations within 9 months.
- ❖ It aims to strengthen the NPS investment framework and align it with global pension practices.
- ❖ The committee will review existing asset classes, suggest optimal allocation, improve risk management and governance, and integrate sustainability measures.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

ASC ARJUN Humanoid Robot

- ❖ ASC ARJUN is a humanoid robot designed for advanced research and industrial applications.

- ❖ It can perform tasks that require human-like movements and decision-making.
- ❖ The robot is equipped with sensors, actuators, and artificial intelligence (AI) for autonomous operation.
- ❖ It can assist in dangerous or repetitive tasks, reducing human risk.
- ❖ ASC stands for Advanced Systems and Controls, the organization behind the robot.
- ❖ The development of ARJUN aims to enhance robotics research and automation capabilities in India.



STATES' NEWS

Neolithic Relics in Lakkundi








- ❖ Recent excavations at Kote Veerabhadreshwar Temple in Lakkundi village, Gadag district, Karnataka, have uncovered Neolithic-era artefacts.
- ❖ The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) finds include a broken gray clay pot, a stone axe, cowrie shells, a cross-shaped pedestal, and a stone pedestal carved with a Jina figure.

- ❖ Lakkundi, historically called Lokkigundi, was an important centre from the 10th–13th centuries under the Kalyana Chalukyas and Hoysalas.
- ❖ The discoveries show continuous human occupation from prehistoric to early medieval times.



PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

Anna Medal for Gallantry 2026

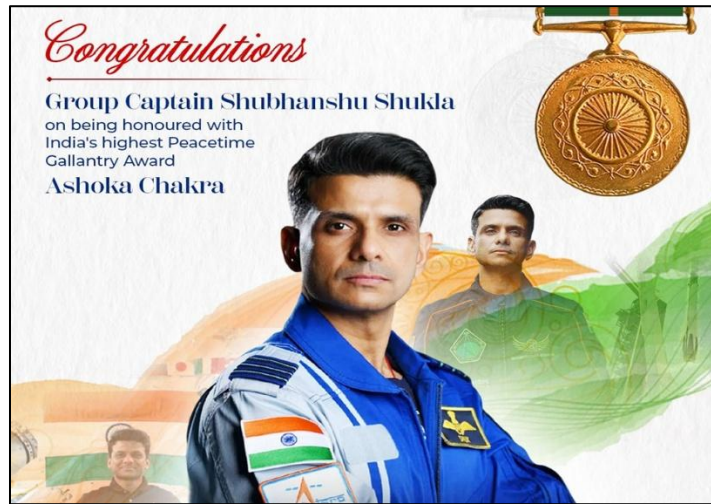
ANNA MEDAL FOR GALLANTRY 2026 (AWARDED DURING 77 TH REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATIONS, CHENNAI)			
AWARDEE(S) & STATUS	REASON FOR AWARD (GALLANT ACTION)	DATE & LOCATION OF INCIDENT	AWARD DETAILS (COMPONENTS)
 Peter Johnson (Posthumously Awarded)	 Saved two youngsters from drowning in the Thamirabharani River, sacrificing his own life.	 June 2025, Thamirabharani River, Kanniyakumari district	 ₹1 lakh Cash Award, Medal worth ₹9,000, and a Certificate.
 V. Sankar, S. Rameshkumar, P. Suresh (Fire and Rescue Services personnel)	 Rescued people during flash floods.	 During flash floods (Specific dates vary)	Award details consistent with the Anna Medal for Gallantry. Includes Medal, Certificate, and Cash.

Explanatory table based on 2026 Republic Day announcements in Chennai.

- ❖ The Anna Medal for Gallantry 2026 was posthumously awarded to Peter Johnson during the 77th Republic Day celebrations (26 January 2026) in Chennai.

- ❖ He died while saving two youngsters from drowning in the Thamirabarani River in Kanniyakumari district in June 2025.
- ❖ Three Fire and Rescue Services personnel, V. Sankar, S. Rameshkumar, and P. Suresh, were also honoured for rescuing people during flash floods.
- ❖ The Anna Medal for Gallantry carries a ₹1 lakh cash award, a medal worth ₹9,000, and a certificate.

Ashoka Chakra Award 2026



- ❖ Indian Air Force Group Captain and astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla was awarded the Ashoka Chakra, India's highest peacetime gallantry award, on Republic Day 2026.
- ❖ The award recognises his bravery and courage during the Axiom Mission 4 to the International Space Station (ISS).
- ❖ Shukla served as the primary mission pilot, ensuring safety and success during critical orbital operations.
- ❖ He became the first Indian to set foot on the ISS since Rakesh Sharma in 1984, marking India's return to human spaceflight.
- ❖ The Ax-4 mission included international crew members and focused on scientific experiments, technology demonstrations, and collaboration.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Customs Day 2026 - January 26

- ❖ The day marks the first session of the Customs Cooperation Council (1953), which later became the World Customs Organization (WCO).

- ❖ The WCO has 183 member countries, and its headquarters is in Brussels, Belgium.
- ❖ Customs authorities facilitate international trade, collect revenue, ensure border security, and prevent smuggling and illegal trafficking.
- ❖ The theme for 2026 is “Customs protecting society through vigilance and commitment.”

