

May - 24

TNPSC BITS

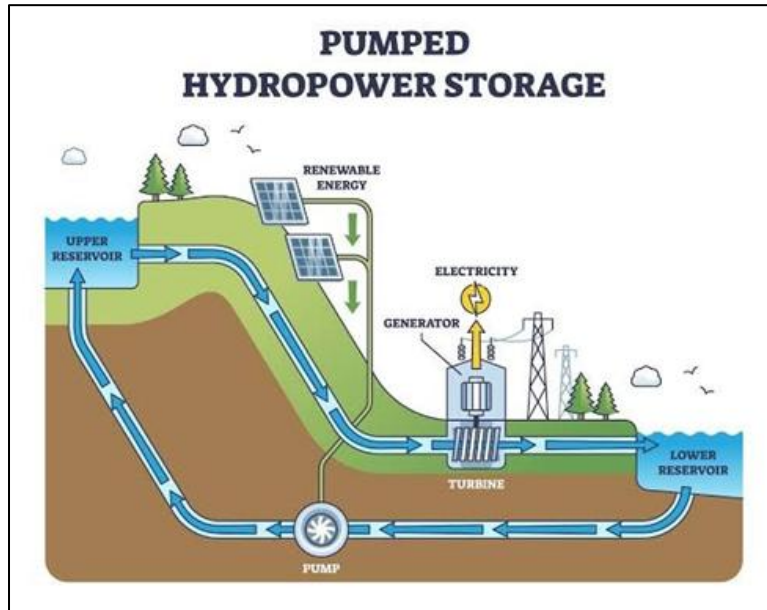
- ❖ DRDO successfully completed the final development trials of the indigenous ULPGM-V3 missile at a DRDO test range near Kurnool in Andhra Pradesh using an integrated Ground Control System.
 - ULPGM-V3 (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Launched Precision Guided Missile-Version 3) is a missile designed for launch from unmanned aerial vehicles with a strike range of about 10 kilometres.
- ❖ The UK government announced a free bus travel scheme for children in England under the “Great British Summer Savings” package, applicable in August 2026 on participating local bus services, allowing children aged 5–15 years free unlimited travel.
- ❖ The 68th Session of the Asian Productivity Organization (APO) Governing Body Meeting was held in New Delhi.
 - The meeting focused on productivity, innovation, sustainability, and inclusive growth across Asia-Pacific member economies.
- ❖ International HR Day is observed every year on 20 May to celebrate the contribution of Human Resources (HR) professionals in building better workplaces and supporting employees worldwide.
 - The theme for the year 2026 is “Empower People to Lead Change.”
- ❖ International Day for Women in Maritime is observed on 18 May every year to celebrate the contribution of women in the global maritime sector.
 - The theme for the year 2026 is “From Policy to Practice: Advancing Gender Equality for Maritime Excellence.”
- ❖ International Museum Day is observed on 18 May every year to highlight the importance of museums in preserving culture, heritage, and education.
 - The theme for the year 2026 is “Museums Uniting a Divided World.”

TAMIL NADU NEWS

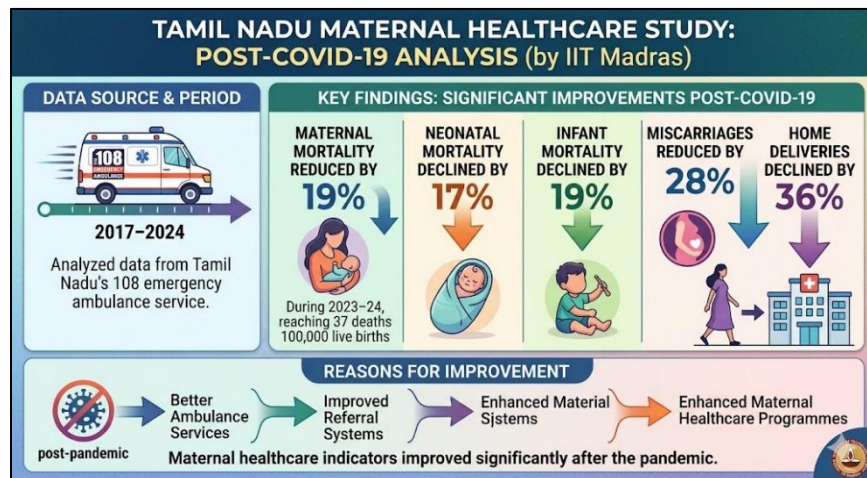
Velimalai Pumped Storage Project

- ❖ The 1,100 MW Velimalai Pumped Storage Hydro Electric Project in Kanniyakumari received Terms of Reference (ToR) clearance from the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- ❖ The project will be developed at Vellimalai in Tamil Nadu as a pumped hydropower storage plant.

- ❖ It is the first project in Tamil Nadu to be developed under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model on a Build-Own-Operate-Transfer (BOOT) basis.
- ❖ The project is planned as a closed-loop off-river system to support peak power management and renewable energy integration.
- ❖ It will have four underground generating units of 275 MW each, with a total installed capacity of 1,100 MW.



Tamil Nadu Maternal Healthcare Study



- ❖ A study by researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology Madras found that Tamil Nadu's maternal healthcare indicators improved significantly in the post-COVID-19 period.

- ❖ The study analysed data from Tamil Nadu's 108 emergency ambulance service between 2017 and 2024.
- ❖ Maternal mortality reduced by 19% during 2023–24, reaching 37 deaths per 100,000 live births.
- ❖ Neonatal mortality declined by 17%, infant mortality by 19%, miscarriages by 28%, and home deliveries by 36%.
- ❖ Researchers said improvements were linked to better ambulance services, referral systems, and maternal healthcare programmes after the pandemic.

Space Facilities in Tamil Nadu and Gujarat



- ❖ The Department of Space approved new Common Technical Facilities in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu to support India's private space manufacturing sector.
- ❖ A Space Manufacturing Park will be developed at Khoraj near Ahmedabad for spacecraft and payload system manufacturing.
- ❖ A Space Vehicles Cluster will be established at Thoothukudi near the upcoming launch complex at Kulasekarapattinam.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu facility will focus on manufacturing, testing, and integration of launch vehicle systems.
- ❖ The Union Government sanctioned ₹100 crore for the specialised facility in Thoothukudi.

- ❖ Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) will initially operate the technical systems before transferring them to the State governments.
- ❖ Common Technical Facilities are shared infrastructure hubs used for testing, validation, and integration of space hardware by startups and industries.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India-Italy Special Strategic Partnership

- ❖ India and Italy upgraded their bilateral ties to a “Special Strategic Partnership” during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Italy in May 2026.
- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi held talks with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni in Rome.
- ❖ Both countries signed a defence industrial roadmap and agreed to increase bilateral trade to €20 billion by 2029.
- ❖ India and Italy reviewed the Joint Strategic Action Plan 2025–2029 covering trade, technology, artificial intelligence (AI), space, energy, and connectivity.



India - RCA for 2026

- ❖ India has assumed the chairmanship of the Regional Cooperative Agreement (RCA) for 2026 under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

- ❖ The announcement was made during the 48th Meeting of National Representatives held in Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- ❖ RCA promotes peaceful use of nuclear science and technology in the Asia-Pacific region.
- ❖ The agreement supports research, training, and technical cooperation among member countries in healthcare, agriculture, and energy.
- ❖ India is a founding member of RCA, which came into force in 1972 and currently has 22 Asia-Pacific member states.



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

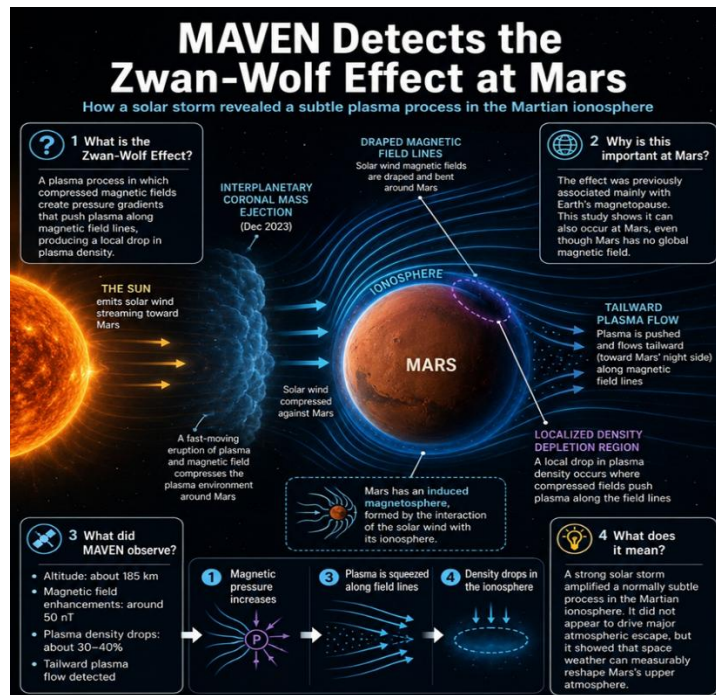
Hop Experiment of Chandrayaan-3

- ❖ Scientists revealed new details about the Moon's upper surface at the Shiv Shakti landing site using data from the "Hop Experiment" of Chandrayaan-3.
- ❖ The Vikram lander successfully lifted off the lunar surface by restarting its engines, demonstrating technology useful for future sample-return missions.
- ❖ Scientists found layered "cake-like" structures on the Moon formed by long-term micrometeorite impacts.
- ❖ The study showed that lunar soil becomes denser and more compact below the surface.
- ❖ Chandra's Surface Thermophysical Experiment (ChaSTE) recorded rapid temperature drops during lunar twilight due to the Moon's airless environment.

- ❖ The Shiv Shakti point is the landing site of Chandrayaan-3 near the Moon's south polar region.



Zwan-Wolf Effect on Mars



- ❖ Scientists using data from MAVEN have observed the Zwan-Wolf effect deep in Mars' atmosphere for the first time.

- ❖ The phenomenon was recorded during a solar storm in December 2023.
- ❖ The Zwan–Wolf effect describes the compression of charged particles along magnetic field structures called flux tubes.
- ❖ On Mars, the effect was seen in the ionosphere (below ~200 km), where charged particles were “squeezed” and redistributed during space weather events.
- ❖ The discovery helps scientists better understand how solar activity affects Mars’ atmosphere and climate evolution.

REPORTS AND INDICES

World Cities Report 2026



- ❖ UN-Habitat released the World Cities Report 2026 at the World Urban Forum in Baku, Azerbaijan.
- ❖ The report states that nearly 40% of the global population, around 3.4 billion people, face a housing crisis due to unaffordable housing, poor living conditions, and a lack of basic services.
- ❖ The global house price-to-income ratio increased from 9.3 in 2010 to 11.2 in 2023, while Central and South Asia recorded a high ratio of 16.8.
- ❖ Around 44% of households worldwide spend more than 30% of their income on housing, showing rising rental and housing burdens.

- ❖ Indian cities like Mumbai and Delhi recorded high housing price-to-income ratios of 14.3 and 10.1, respectively.

STATE NEWS

India's First AI Minister

- ❖ Kerala became the first Indian state to create a dedicated cabinet-level Artificial Intelligence (AI) portfolio.
- ❖ P. K. Kunhalikutty became India's first AI Minister after being assigned the new AI department in Kerala.
- ❖ The Artificial Intelligence (AI) portfolio was created under the Industries, Commerce, and Information Technology (IT) departments.
- ❖ The announcement was made after the new United Democratic Front (UDF) government took office in Kerala in May 2026.
- ❖ The new ministry will focus on AI governance, innovation, digital infrastructure, start-ups, and AI-based public services.



Mission Arunachal Kiwi 2026

- ❖ The Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER) launched "Mission Arunachal Kiwi" to promote Arunachal Pradesh as India's premium organic kiwi hub.
- ❖ The mission is implemented under the "Viksit North East" vision with an outlay of about ₹167 crore.
- ❖ It follows a cluster-based model with six post-harvest hubs across key regions of Arunachal Pradesh.
- ❖ The initiative focuses on branding, value addition, cold-chain development, and market integration for farmers.

- ❖ Arunachal Pradesh produces over 50% of India’s kiwi output and is the first state to receive organic kiwi certification.



Maharashtra in Central Government Projects



- ❖ Maharashtra has become the top state in India with the highest number of central government projects.
- ❖ It leads with 215 projects worth about ₹5.5 trillion, driven by strong industrial and port infrastructure.

- ❖ Uttar Pradesh ranks second with 180 projects, followed by Andhra Pradesh with 141 projects.
- ❖ Gujarat holds the fourth position with 127 projects valued at ₹4.3 trillion, mainly in manufacturing and logistics.
- ❖ Madhya Pradesh and Bihar each have 125 projects, showing rising infrastructure growth in central and eastern India.

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

Cecily Demise

- ❖ Cecily, widely recognised as Tamil Nadu's first woman police constable, passed away recently.
- ❖ She joined the Tamil Nadu Police in 1973 as part of the State's first all-women police unit in Madras City.
- ❖ The pioneering batch included 22 women personnel, including the first woman Sub-Inspector, Usharani Narendra.
- ❖ The first batch of women police personnel was recruited during the tenure of former Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi.
- ❖ G. Thilakavathi and Latika Saran later became the first women from Tamil Nadu to join the Indian Police Service (IPS).
- ❖ Former Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa inaugurated India's first All-Women Police Station in Chennai's Thousand Lights area.

