

# TNPSC THERVUPETTAGAM

## CURRENT AFFAIRS MAY 2026

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## TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Rare sea slug *Discodorid cebuensis* has been recorded for the first time in India at Haji Ali, Mumbai.
  - Sea slugs are soft-bodied, shell-less marine gastropods found in reefs and act as indicators of healthy marine ecosystems.
- ❖ China unveiled the Atlas drone swarm system of the People's Liberation Army, an AI-based platform that can launch and control up to 96 drones for surveillance and attack.
- ❖ A new “fanged frog” species named *Limnonectes motijheel* has been discovered in Namdapha Tiger Reserve in Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh.
- ❖ Himadri Speciality Chemicals launched India’s first anode material plant for lithium-ion batteries in Mahistikry, Hooghly, West Bengal.
- ❖ Colombia and the Netherlands will host the first conference on transitioning away from fossil fuels in Santa Marta, Colombia.
- ❖ World Veterinary Day is observed every year on April 25 to highlight the role of veterinarians in food safety, public health, and animal health.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is “Veterinarians: Guardians of Food and Health”.
- ❖ International Jazz Day is observed every year on April 30 to promote peace, cultural dialogue and unity through jazz music.
- ❖ R. Rithika Sri from Salem became India’s first transgender cricket umpire from Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ N. Alim Yusuf was honoured by the World-Wide Fund for Nature for developing an AI-based app that identifies nearly 100 invasive plant species in Kerala, supporting early detection and biodiversity conservation.
- ❖ Padma Shri awardee Raghu Rai, a renowned Indian photographer, passed away in Delhi at the age of 83.
- ❖ Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology Pune installed a new X-band Doppler Weather Radar at Mahabaleshwar in Maharashtra under Mission Mausam, improving real-time monitoring and short-term forecasts for nearby regions.
- ❖ Defence Research and Development Organisation conducted the maiden salvo launch of NASM-SR (Naval Anti-Ship Missile – Short Range) with the Indian Navy from a helicopter off the Odisha coast in the Bay of Bengal.
  - Salvo launch means firing two missiles quickly from one platform.
- ❖ World Immunization Week is observed every year from 24 to 30 April to spread awareness about vaccines.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is “For every generation, vaccines work”.

- ❖ The Government of India will launch Prashast 2.0 to identify 21 types of disabilities, support early screening of Children with Special Needs (CWSN) in schools, simplify certification, and link students to Samagra Shiksha.
- ❖ London Marathon 2026 saw Sebastian Sawe from Kenya become the first athlete to run a sub-two-hour marathon in an official race, finishing in 1 hour 59 minutes 30 seconds.
- ❖ FIDE (International Chess Federation) has been admitted as a member of the International World Games Association, with the decision approved at its Annual General Meeting in Lausanne
- ❖ The 13th Sur Jyotsna National Music Awards were held in New Delhi to honour Indian classical music artists, where Hindustani vocalists Sumitra Guha and Pandit Laxman Krishnarao Pandit were recognised for their lifelong contribution to music.
- ❖ Google plans to set up a \$15 billion Artificial Intelligence hub in Visakhapatnam, which will include energy-efficient “green” data centres to support Artificial Intelligence development and large-scale data processing.
- ❖ India launched its first official F1 Sim Racing India Open 2026 to connect esports with motorsport, organised by Formula 1 and Mumbai Falcons Racing Limited.
- ❖ The 17th Old Seed Festival was held in Araku Valley, Andhra Pradesh, to promote tribal biodiversity and traditional farming.
- ❖ A stretch of National Highway 44 in Tamil Nadu has been painted red for the first time to improve road safety and visibility.
  - The red markings are introduced on Thoppur Ghat Road, an accident-prone area with over 200 deaths in the last 3 years.
- ❖ Two new jumping spider species belonging to the Salticidae family, *Mogrus shushka* and *Mogrus pune*, have been discovered in India.
  - *Mogrus shushka* was found in the dry regions of Rajasthan and Gujarat, while *Mogrus pune* was found in urban parks in Maharashtra.
- ❖ The Indian Army is hosting the first multilateral exercise “Pragati” in Meghalaya at Umroi with participation from 11 countries to improve interoperability, coordination and defence cooperation.
  - “Pragati” stands for Partnership of Regional Armies for Growth and Transformation in the Indian Ocean Region.
- ❖ World Tuna Day is observed on May 2 annually to promote sustainable fishing and protect marine resources.
- ❖ International Firefighters’ Day is observed on May 4 annually to honour firefighters for their service and sacrifice.
- ❖ Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) granted a licence to India’s first seaplane airline, SkyHop Aviation, which will start services in Lakshadweep, connecting islands with the mainland.

- ❖ France has announced a roadmap to end fossil fuel use by 2050, with plans to phase out coal by 2030, oil by 2045 and gas by 2050, aiming to achieve carbon neutrality.
- ❖ The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) signed a 70-year lease to set up India's first integrated Basmati and organic demo farm at Tanda Bijaisi village in Pilibhit to promote sustainable farming by combining Basmati cultivation with organic practices.
- ❖ Finland launched Europe's first fully integrated lithium project near Kokkola, covering mining to refining, to boost energy independence and support electric vehicle battery production.
- ❖ IN-SLN DIVEX 2026, 4th edition, held between India and Sri Lanka in Colombo.
- ❖ India successfully tested a long-range hypersonic anti-ship missile developed by the DRDO with a strike range of over 1,500 km and speeds up to Mach 10.
  - The missile uses a hypersonic glide vehicle for high speed and manoeuvrability to evade radar.
- ❖ World Portuguese Language Day is observed annually on 5 May to promote the Portuguese language, linguistic diversity, and Lusophone (Portuguese-speaking) cultures.
- ❖ Ishank Singh (7) became the youngest person to swim across the Palk Strait, which lies between Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka and connects the Bay of Bengal with the Gulf of Mannar.
- ❖ Indian Railways has launched the 100th Vande Bharat trainset, which was manufactured at the Modern Coach Factory with a Siemens propulsion system.
- ❖ Rohit Jain appointed as Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India for a term of three years.
- ❖ The University of Oxford and Serum Institute of India have partnered to develop the next-generation R78C malaria vaccine, which targets Plasmodium falciparum.
- ❖ P. V. Sindhu has been elected Chair of the Athletes' Commission and got a voting role in the Badminton World Federation Council.
- ❖ International No Diet Day is observed on May 6 every year to spread awareness about healthy body image and to promote body positivity, self-acceptance, and respect for all body types.
- ❖ Southern Railway recorded its best-ever performance in Traction Distribution (TRD) assets in 2025–26.
  - Asset failures reduced to just 3 failures in 2025–26 from 13 in 2024–25, showing a 77% improvement in Southern Railway performance.
- ❖ India launched its first barrier-free Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) toll plaza on NH-48 in Gujarat.

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways plans to expand barrier-free tolling across all four-lane highways by 2029.
- ❖ International Leopard Day is observed on May 3 every year to raise awareness about leopard conservation.
- ❖ World Asthma Day is observed on the first Tuesday of May (May 5 in 2026) to raise awareness about asthma care.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is “Access to anti-inflammatory inhalers for everyone with asthma – still an urgent need”.
- ❖ Mayon Volcano erupted in the Philippines, forcing the evacuation of nearly 1,500 families and restrictions on airspace near Manila.
  - The Philippines lies in the Pacific Ring of Fire, a region frequently affected by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.
- ❖ Scientists have discovered “cleaner ants” in the Arizona, United States desert that groom much larger harvester ants without attacking them.
  - Small cone ants from the genus *Dorymyrmex* were observed cleaning the bodies and open jaws of harvester ants (*Pogonomyrmex barbatus*).
- ❖ Balikatan 2026, a joint military exercise between the Philippines and the United States (US), is being conducted from 20 April to 8 May 2026 in the Philippines.
- ❖ Pixxel and Sarvam are developing India’s first orbital data centre satellite, Pathfinder, a 200 kg-class satellite expected to be launched in Q4 2026.
  - The mission aims to enable real-time data processing for environmental monitoring, resource management, and infrastructure tracking.
- ❖ India Post marked the birth centenary of cartoonist Mario Miranda on 3 May 2026 with a philatelic tribute in Panaji, Goa.
- ❖ World Laughter Day 2026 will be observed on 3 May 2026 (first Sunday of May) to promote health, happiness, and peace through laughter.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is "World Peace through Laughter".
- ❖ World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day is observed on 8 May every year to honour humanitarian workers and volunteers.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is “Keeping Humanity Alive”.
- ❖ The 2nd edition of Exercise CINBAX-II (Cambodia-India Bilateral Army Exercise) 2026 is being held in Cambodia.
- ❖ Royal Enfield announced a ₹2,200 crore investment to set up its first manufacturing plant outside Tamil Nadu at Satyavedu in Tirupati district of Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ The first phase of the Guindy Eco-Park project, being developed on 118 acres of Guindy Race Course land in Chennai, is expected to be completed by October 2026.

- ❖ India created a Guinness World Record by unfurling the largest underwater national flag at Radhanagar Beach in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- ❖ International Day of the Midwife (IDM) is observed on May 5 every year across the world to recognize the important role of midwives in maternal and newborn healthcare.
  - The theme for 2026 is “One Million More Midwives.”
- ❖ World Hand Hygiene Day is observed on May 5 every year to spread awareness about the importance of hand hygiene in preventing infections and improving patient safety.
  - The theme for 2026 is “Action saves lives.”
- ❖ UNESCO awarded the 2026 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize to the Sudanese Journalists Syndicate.
- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved a ₹1,570 crore ship repair facility project at Vadinar, Gujarat.
- ❖ World Cartoonist Day is observed every year on May 5 to honour cartoonists and their contribution to art, satire, journalism, and social commentary.
- ❖ World Athletics Day is observed every year on May 7 to promote athletics, fitness, and healthy living among youth.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is "Sport: Building Bridges, Breaking Barriers".
- ❖ Chennai Metro Rail Limited won the Global Environmental Leadership Project of the Year 2026 award in the Metro Rail category at the GEEF (Global Energy and Environment Foundation) Global Environmental Excellence Awards 2026.
- ❖ India’s first Urban Weather Testbed and Aerosol Observatory was launched in Chennai to improve weather forecasting and climate research in cities.
- ❖ Lieutenant General NS Raja Subramani (Retd) was appointed as the next Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of India and replace General Anil Chauhan on 30 May 2026.
- ❖ The National Crime Records Bureau released the Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India (ADSI) 2024 report, which recorded 1,70,746 suicides in India during 2024.
- ❖ A Royal Bengal Tiger was spotted in D’Ering Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary in Arunachal Pradesh after nearly 20 years.
- ❖ World Ovarian Cancer Day is observed on 8 May every year to spread awareness about ovarian cancer and early diagnosis.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is “No Woman Left Behind”.
- ❖ Mother’s Day 2026 was observed on 10 May 2026, the second Sunday of May, to honour the love, care, and contributions of mothers and maternal figures.

- ❖ Indian journalists R. K. Anand and Suparna Sharma won the Pulitzer Prize (2026) for Illustrated Reporting and Commentary, shared with Natalie Obiko Pearson for work published in Bloomberg.
  - The award-winning investigation titled ‘trAPPed’ highlighted cyber fraud and a “digital arrest” scam involving a neurologist in India.
- ❖ Ted Turner, founder of CNN, died at the age of 87, and he created the world’s first 24-hour all-news television network.
- ❖ Hyderabad-based startup EON Space Labs launched Lumira\_E40I50, India’s first germanium-free thermal drone camera for surveillance applications.
  - The system is designed for aerial intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) missions using drone platforms.
- ❖ IIT Madras Global Research Foundation established its first international centre in Menlo Park, California, USA, to support deep-tech research and startups.
- ❖ The Archibald Prize 2026 was awarded to Melbourne-based artist Richard Lewer for his portrait of Iluwanti Ken.
  - It is an Australian portraiture award established in 1921 and is awarded annually for portrait painting.
- ❖ O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU) became India’s first Institution of Eminence (IoE) to receive accreditation from the Data Science Council of America (DASCA).
- ❖ Suwendu Adhikari took oath as Chief Minister of West Bengal, leading the first BJP government in the State after the 2026 Assembly elections.
- ❖ Himanta Biswa Sarma took oath as the Chief Minister of Assam for a second consecutive term on 12 May 2026, becoming the first non-Congress leader to serve consecutive terms in the post.
- ❖ The International Day of Plant Health is observed every year on 12 May to spread awareness about protecting plant health.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is “Plant Biosecurity for Food Security”.
- ❖ India conducted the maiden test of a nuclear-capable Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) from Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast.
  - An Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) is a long-range missile with a range above 5,500 km and can carry conventional or nuclear warheads.
- ❖ World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) 2026 is observed every year on 9 May and 10 October to promote migratory bird conservation through community science and public participation.
  - The theme for 2026 is “Every Bird Counts – Your Observations Matter!”
- ❖ India signed an MoU to set up the country’s first Mega Greenfield Shipyard at Thoothukudi in Tamil Nadu.

- The project is part of the India–Republic of Korea maritime cooperation framework called VOYAGES (Shared Vision for Operation of Yard Assisted Growth with Efficiency and Scale).
- ❖ Scientists discovered a rare giant tree species named *Daturodendron* in the Andes Mountains, belonging to the Solanaceae family, which grows up to 20 metres tall in the cloud forests of Colombia and Peru.
- ❖ Soma Mandal from India won the South Asia regional award in the Cambridge Dedicated Teacher Awards 2026.
- ❖ Skyroot Aerospace, a Hyderabad-based private space startup, became India’s first space-tech unicorn after raising USD (United States Dollar) 60 million in funding.
  - A unicorn is a startup company valued at more than USD 1 billion.
- ❖ South Korea introduced its first humanoid robot monk named “Gabi” at the Jogye Temple in Seoul ahead of Buddha’s Birthday celebrations.
- ❖ International Nurses Day is observed on May 12 every year to honour the contribution of nurses in healthcare services.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is “Our Nurses. Our Future. Empowered Nurses Save Lives.”
- ❖ DRDO plans to establish an Aircraft Integration and Flight-Testing Complex at Puttaparthi in Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ India activated a nationwide Viral Research and Diagnostic Laboratory Network with 165 laboratories for Hantavirus surveillance.
  - The surveillance system works with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), National Institute of Virology (NIV), and World Health Organisation (WHO).
- ❖ Mental Health Awareness Week 2026 is observed from 11 May to 17 May every year to spread awareness about mental wellbeing and emotional health.
  - The theme for 2026 is “Action”.
- ❖ International Day of Families is observed on 15 May every year to spread awareness about issues affecting families worldwide.
  - The theme for 2026 is “Families, Inequalities and Child Wellbeing.”
- ❖ Indian scientist Kuljeet Kaur Marhas became the first Indian woman to be elected Fellow of The Meteoritical Society for 2026 in the field of meteoritics and planetary science.
- ❖ The foundation stone for the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) programme facility was laid at Puttaparthi in Andhra Pradesh.
  - The facility, developed by the Aeronautical Development Agency under the DRDO, will support the development and flight testing of India’s indigenous fifth-generation stealth fighter aircraft.

- ❖ Rajasthan inaugurated its first Semiconductor Assembly, Testing, Marking and Packaging (ATMP)/Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test (OSAT) facility at Bhiwadi, Alwar district, Rajasthan.
  - Rajasthan introduced its Semiconductor Policy in March 2026 to promote chip manufacturing and the electronics industries.
- ❖ India's first hydrogen-powered shuttle bus service started in the Central Vista area of New Delhi.
  - Hydrogen fuel cell buses produce electricity using hydrogen and oxygen, and emit only water vapour as tailpipe emissions.
- ❖ Pune, Maharashtra, will establish India's first Low Emission Zone (LEZ) to reduce vehicular pollution and improve air quality.
- ❖ National Endangered Species Day is observed on 15 May 2026, the third Friday of May, to spread awareness about endangered wildlife and biodiversity conservation.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is "Celebrating America's Wildlife Comeback Stories. Championing the Endangered Species Act."
- ❖ A new plant species named *Cyphostemma annamalaii* belonging to the Vitaceae family was discovered on Sanjeevi hill in Villupuram district of Tamil Nadu in the southern Eastern Ghats.
- ❖ India received its first Alzheimer's disease-modifying therapy with the launch of Donanemab under the brand name Lormalzi.
- ❖ Indian agencies made the first-ever seizure of Captagon drug worth ₹182 crore under Operation RAGEPILL, targeting a consignment destined for the Middle East.
- ❖ DRDO and the Indian Air Force successfully conducted the maiden flight trial of TARA (Tactical Advanced Range Augmentation), India's first indigenous glide weapon system, off the Odisha coast.
- ❖ Indian chess player Apaar Saxena earned the International Master (IM) title after securing all three IM norms with strong performances in European chess tournaments.
- ❖ The first Made-in-India Airbus C-295 military transport aircraft was completed at the Tata-Airbus facility in Vadodara, Gujarat and is ready for flight testing.
- ❖ Roche launched India's first under-the-skin (subcutaneous) immunotherapy drug, Tecentriq SC, for lung cancer treatment.
- ❖ The Indian Coast Guard commissioned ICGS Achal, a new-generation Adamyaclass Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV) and the fifth vessel in a series of eight ships, at Goa Shipyard Limited.

- ❖ Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General of India and author, launched his books *The Bench, The Bar and The Bizarre* and *The Lawful and The Awful*, based on humour and unusual courtroom experiences in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Andaman and Nicobar Islands hosted two underwater Guinness World Record events at Swaraj Dweep (Havelock Island) to promote eco-tourism, including the “Largest Flag Unfurled Underwater” with a 60 metre × 40 metre Indian flag near Radha Nagar Beach.
  - Divers also created a 10-metre-high human stack underwater near the lighthouse area under the “Tallest Human Stack Underwater” event.
- ❖ International Day of Living Together in Peace is observed on 16 May every year to promote peace, tolerance and harmony among people.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is “Building Trust through Dialogue, Inclusion and Reconciliation”.
- ❖ International Museum Day is observed every year on 18 May to highlight the importance of museums in society.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is “Museums Uniting a Divided World”.
- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the Ahmedabad–Dholera semi high-speed rail project at an estimated cost of ₹20,667 crore.
  - The double-line railway corridor connecting Sarkhej in Ahmedabad with Dholera in Gujarat will be Indian Railways’ first semi high-speed rail project using indigenously developed technology.
- ❖ Nepal’s Kami Rita Sherpa climbed Mount Everest for the 32nd time, extending his record for the highest number of Everest summits since his first climb in 1994.
  - Lhakpa Sherpa broke her own record with her 11th Everest summit, after becoming the first Nepali woman to successfully climb and descend Everest in 2000.
- ❖ India’s first Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered autonomous combat aircraft, “Kaal Bhairava”, developed by Flying Wedge Defence & Aerospace, will be manufactured in Europe for the first time.
- ❖ International Day of Light is observed on 16 May every year to highlight the importance of light and light-based technologies in science and daily life.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is "Light for a Sustainable Future".
- ❖ National Dengue Day is observed on 16 May every year across India to raise awareness about dengue prevention and mosquito control.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is “Community Participation for Dengue Control: Check, Clean and Cover”.

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi received Sweden’s Royal Order of the Polar Star, Degree Commander Grand Cross, which is Sweden’s highest honour given to a foreign Head of Government.
- ❖ The 25th anniversary of the Sino-Russian Treaty of Good-Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation (originally signed in 2001) is being commemorated throughout 2026.
- ❖ The Ministry of AYUSH launched the Ayush Anudan Portal under the Ayush Grid initiative to digitise grant management in the AYUSH sector.
- ❖ Bharat Forge signed a MoU with Andhra Pradesh to establish India’s first private-sector Marine Gas Turbine (MGT) facility in Visakhapatnam.
- ❖ Former Twitter CEO Parag Agrawal launched the “Index” platform through his startup Parallel Web Systems to help content creators and publishers receive compensation when Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems use their content.
- ❖ World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD) is observed every year on 17 May to raise awareness about the importance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and digital connectivity in society.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is "Digital lifelines: Strengthening resilience in a connected world".
- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi received the Agricola Medal, the highest honour given by the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).
- ❖ A. Amalraj was appointed as the new Commissioner of Police for Chennai, while G. S. Sameeran assumed charge as Commissioner of the Greater Chennai Corporation in May 2026.
- ❖ Manindra Agrawal, Director of the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur, was elected Fellow of the Royal Society, London.
- ❖ Kevin Warsh is set to be sworn in as the 11th Chair of the Federal Reserve, the central banking system of the United States.
- ❖ Rajnath Singh inaugurated the Indian War Memorial at Imjingak Park near Seoul to mark the 75th anniversary of the Korean War.
- ❖ West Bengal made the singing of “Vande Mataram” compulsory in all State-aided madrasas through an order issued by the Directorate of Madrasa Education.
  - Students must sing “Vande Mataram” before classes along with the National Anthem “Jana Gana Mana”.
- ❖ International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT) is observed every year on 17 May to raise awareness about discrimination and violence faced by LGBTQIA+ people.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is "At the heart of democracy."

- ❖ World Bee Day is observed every year on 20 May to raise awareness about the importance of bees and other pollinators.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is “Bee together for people and the planet – A partnership that sustains us all.”
- ❖ 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.”
- ❖ Taiwan Travelogue by Taiwanese novelist, essayist, and cultural critic Yáng Shuāng-zǐ, translated into English by Lin King, won the International Booker Prize in 2026.
- ❖ Gp Capt. K.K. Venugopal became the first Indian test pilot to be elected as a Fellow of the Society of Experimental Test Pilots (SETP) in 2026.
- ❖ Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers launched the Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel (NGOPV) Yard 3039 ‘INS Sanghmitra’ for the Indian Navy in Kolkata, West Bengal.

- ❖ The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment launched the JEEVAN (Joint Elderly Empowerment & Virtual Assistance Network) mobile application for senior citizens.
  - The app aims to improve the safety, healthcare access, welfare, dignity, and social inclusion of elderly people.
- ❖ The SHATAYU (Senior Holistic Care Assistance and Training for Your Utility) Geriatric Caregiver Dashboard was launched during a national workshop on “Creating a Well-Functioning Care Economy” in New Delhi to strengthen caregiving services for senior citizens in India.
  - The dashboard helps senior citizens find the availability of geriatric caregivers in different districts and states.
- ❖ World Metrology Day is observed every year on 20 May to highlight the importance of measurement science in daily life.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is “Metrology: Building Trust in Policy Making”.
- ❖ Liesl Zühlke (South Africa), Felice Jacka (Australia), Sarah A Teichmann (United Kingdom), Raquel Lia Chan (Argentina), and Gordana Vunjak-Novakovic (United States) were named laureates of the L’Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Awards for contributions to life and environmental sciences.
- ❖ The Panzath Nag Spring Conservation Festival was recently observed in the Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir.
  - It is a community-led festival that combines spring cleaning, wetland restoration, and traditional fish-catching practices.
- ❖ Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) was ranked among the world’s top five water utilities at the Global Water Summit 2026 held in Madrid of Spain under the “Utility of the Year” category.
  - BWSSB was recognised for its five-pillar approach to water conservation, wastewater recycling, reuse, and sustainable urban water governance, while its Cauvery Stage V Drinking Water Project was shortlisted among the world’s top five in the “Water Project of the Year” category.
- ❖ Salim Abdool Karim received the Order of Mapungubwe in Gold for contributions to HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis research, and COVID-19 leadership, while Keertan Dheda received the award in Silver for research on tuberculosis and drug-resistant respiratory infections in Pretoria.
  - The Order of Mapungubwe is South Africa’s highest civilian honour awarded for excellence and exceptional achievements benefiting society and humanity.
- ❖ Anti-Terrorism Day is observed every year on May 21 across India to spread awareness about the dangers of terrorism and violence.
- ❖ International Tea Day is observed every year on May 21 to highlight the cultural, economic, and health importance of tea worldwide.

- ❖ World Fair Play Day is observed annually on May 19 to promote peace, inclusion, justice, unity, fairness, and respect through sports across the world.
- ❖ The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare brought Pregabalin under the stricter Schedule H1 category of the Drugs Rules, 1945, to control drug abuse, misuse of medicines, and antimicrobial resistance.
  - Pregabalin is used for neurological disorders, but its misuse can lead to addiction, sedative effects, and severe respiratory depression when combined with opioids or alcohol.
- ❖ Indian sprinter Gurindervir Singh became the fastest Indian runner after clocking 10.09 seconds in the men's 100 metre race at the Federation Cup in Ranchi, becoming the first Indian to enter the 10.0-second range.
- ❖ The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) successfully completed its first all-women Mount Everest expedition, with all 11 women climbers reaching the 8,848-metre summit through the South Col Route.
- ❖ India successfully test-fired the Agni-1 short-range ballistic missile from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur, Odisha.
- ❖ World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development is observed every year on 21 May to promote cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, peace, and sustainable development across the world.
- ❖ International Day for Biological Diversity is observed every year on 22 May to spread awareness about biodiversity conservation.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is "Acting locally for global impact".
- ❖ International Missing Children's Day is observed every year on 25 May to raise awareness about missing and abducted children.
- ❖ India successfully tested the indigenous Vayu Astra loitering munition developed by Nibe Limited.
  - The system completed demonstrations in mountainous terrain at Malari in Uttarakhand and desert terrain at Pokhran in Rajasthan.
- ❖ Oil India Limited discovered a new natural gas zone in the Dandewala Field of Jaisalmer district, western Rajasthan, marking the first successful gas discovery in the shallow Sanu Formation.
- ❖ Squadron Leader Saanya became the first woman officer in the Indian Air Force to receive the Category-A Qualified Flying Instructor (CAT-A QFI) qualification.
- ❖ India unveiled its first indigenous 300-km "Suryastra" Universal Rocket Launching System in Shirdi, Maharashtra.
  - Suryastra is a precision-guided rocket system capable of striking targets at ranges of 150 km and 300 km.

- ❖ The Maharashtra government signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) worth ₹6.5 lakh crore with Adani Power, Reliance Industries, NTPC Limited, and Lalitpur Power Generation Company Limited to generate 25,400 MW of nuclear power.
- ❖ Odisha made Electric Vehicles (EVs) mandatory for all new government two-wheelers and four-wheelers from 1 June 2026.
- ❖ World Football Day is observed every year on 25 May to recognise the role of football in promoting peace, inclusion, and development.
- ❖ Jharkhand will establish India's first Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based Human-Elephant Conflict Research Centre in the Palamu Tiger Reserve.
- ❖ Google introduced "Information Agents" at its 2026 developer conference, which are Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools that continuously monitor the internet and provide personalised updates based on user preferences.
  - These AI agents can track housing listings, travel plans, stock prices, and other personalised information automatically on behalf of users.
- ❖ China successfully launched the Shenzhou 23 spacecraft with three astronauts to the Tiangong Space Station to conduct experiments in space biology, medical science, human physiology, and technology research.
- ❖ India will send its first official freediving team to the World Apnea Pool Championship in Budapest, Hungary, from June 2, 2026.
- ❖ India entered the next generation of wireless connectivity with the start of local manufacturing of Wi-Fi 7 devices by TP-Link.
  - Wi-Fi 7, officially called IEEE 802.11be, is the latest wireless networking standard offering speeds up to 46 Gigabits per second (Gbps), nearly 4.8 times faster than Wi-Fi 6.
- ❖ The Museum of Medical Archives was opened in Ulloor, Thiruvananthapuram, as Kerala's first private medical museum and India's first private medical museum.
- ❖ World Schizophrenia Awareness Day is observed every year on May 24 to spread awareness about schizophrenia and reduce stigma related to mental health.
  - Schizophrenia is a chronic mental health condition that affects thinking, behaviour, emotions, and perception of reality.
- ❖ Delhi International Airport Limited is planning India's first driverless airport air train at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi.
- ❖ Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL) commissioned a 3.37 Gigawatt-hour (GWh) Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at Khavda, Gujarat, becoming the world's largest single-location battery storage system outside China.
- ❖ Russia and Kazakhstan signed an agreement to build Kazakhstan's first nuclear power plant, which will be developed by Rosatom at Ulken village near Lake Balkhash in south-eastern Kazakhstan.

- ❖ Karnataka Grameena Bank (KGB) received the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) award for outstanding performance under the Atal Pension Yojana (APY).
  - The bank achieved 2,49,185 APY enrolments against the target of 1,75,500 accounts, recording 142% achievement.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government has appointed Mahesh Kumar Aggarwal as the Director General of Police (DGP) and Head of the Police Force (HoPF), succeeding Sandeep Rai Rathore.
- ❖ The International Day of Action for Women's Health is observed every year on 28 May to promote women's health rights and access to quality healthcare services.
- ❖ Menstrual Hygiene Day is observed annually on 28 May to promote menstrual health, hygiene, and dignity for women and girls worldwide.

## **TAMIL NADU**

### **Madras High Court on Maternity Leave**

- ❖ The Madras High Court said the Tamil Nadu government cannot limit maternity leave to 12 weeks for the third pregnancy.
- ❖ The court rejected a Government Order (G.O.) issued on March 13, 2026, restricting leave to 3 months.
- ❖ It stated that women employees are entitled to 365 days leave even for a third pregnancy.
- ❖ The court said pain and care are the same in all pregnancies, so no discrimination is allowed.
- ❖ The decision is based on Supreme Court rulings on maternity leave, which allow leave for the third pregnancy.
- ❖ The order used Article 162 (power of the State government under the Constitution of India), but the court said it cannot override maternity rights.

### **Tamil Nadu Assembly Election Key Facts**

- ❖ Tamil Nadu election history shows important changes in the voting system and schedule over time.
- ❖ The 1967 election was a major turning point as Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam defeated the Indian National Congress, and seats increased from 206 to 234 after delimitation.

- ❖ The 1971 election was held over three days, but in 1977 all 234 constituencies voted on a single day for the first time.
- ❖ Despite this, the State returned to a two-phase election in 1980, and the 1984 election was the first to be held at the end of the year instead of in the summer.
- ❖ The 1996 election was the last with ballot papers; in Modakurichi, voting was held on June 1 due to 1,033 candidates making printing difficult.
- ❖ Electronic Voting Machines were first used in all 234 constituencies in 2001, also in Kerala, Puducherry, and West Bengal.
- ❖ The 2011 election had the longest gap between polling (April 13) and counting (May 13) due to a multi-state schedule by the Election Commission of India.
- ❖ In 2016, voting in Aravakurichi and Thanjavur was postponed for the first time due to large-scale voter bribery.

### **Madras High Court on Dual Candidacy**

- ❖ The Madras High Court said the law still allows candidates to contest from two constituencies at the same time.
- ❖ The Election Commission of India in 2004 proposed that candidates should not be allowed to contest from more than one constituency.
- ❖ It also suggested that if dual contest is allowed, candidates must bear the cost of by-elections if they vacate one seat after winning both.
- ❖ The Commission recommended a fixed deposit of ₹5 lakh for the State Assembly and ₹10 lakh for the Lok Sabha to cover by poll expenses.
- ❖ These electoral reform proposals made in 2004 have still not turned into law.
- ❖ The Supreme Court of India in 2023 upheld Section 33(7) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, which allows contesting from two constituencies.

### **Tamil Nadu Economic Growth Record**

- ❖ Tamil Nadu recorded strong growth with 10.83% GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product) in 2025-26 after 11.19% in 2024-25.
- ❖ This is above the national average of 7.4%, showing two years of double-digit growth.
- ❖ The State is the second-largest economy and recorded average growth of 9.07% (2021-22 to 2025-25).
- ❖ This is higher than 5.21% (2016-17 to 2020-21) and 7.18% (pre-COVID), showing a strong recovery due to fiscal and industrial policies.

- ❖ Nominal GSDP increased from ₹31.19 lakh crore (2024-25) to ₹35.29 lakh crore (2025-26), with 13.16% growth, the highest among States.
- ❖ The secondary sector is the main driver with 15.02% growth, higher than the national 6.6%; manufacturing grew 14.22% and construction 15.02% (both ~7% nationally); the State contributes 13.35% to India's manufacturing GDP and has 40,000+ factories employing about 25 lakh workers (highest in India).
- ❖ The services sector contributes 53.54% of GVA (Gross Value Added) and grew 8.54% (below the national 9.1%); transport, storage and communication grew 13.35% and financial services 11.11%.
- ❖ The primary sector grew 5.92% (above the national 2.7%), supported by the agriculture growth of 8.91%.
- ❖ Per capita income (NSDP – Net State Domestic Product) increased from ₹2.096 lakh (2020-21) to ₹4.08 lakh (2025-26), second highest after Karnataka; the all-India average is ₹2.196 lakh.
- ❖ FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) inflows rose from \$2,169 million (2022-23) to \$3,681 million (2024-25).
- ❖ TN ranked 2nd in Export Preparedness Index by NITI Aayog with a score of 64.41 after Maharashtra.
- ❖ Fiscal deficit reduced from 4.91% of GSDP (2020-21) to 3% (2026-27 BE – Budget Estimate); revenue deficit reduced from 3.49% to 1.2%; debt-GSDP remains around 26%, showing fiscal discipline despite limited devolution after the Finance Commission.

### **Marine Fish Landings 2025**

- ❖ Tamil Nadu recorded the highest marine fish landings in India in 2025.
- ❖ The State landed about 6.85 lakh tonnes of fish, slightly higher than 6.79 lakh tonnes in 2024.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu surpassed Gujarat, which recorded 6.43 lakh tonnes in 2025.
- ❖ Mechanised boats contributed 71.7% of total landings, followed by motorised boats (28.2%).
- ❖ Kanniyakumari (23%) recorded the highest share, followed by Thoothukudi (16%) and Pudukkottai (14%).

### **TN Assembly Elections 2026 Voting Data**

- ❖ Final voting data for the Tamil Nadu Assembly Elections 2026 has been released.
- ❖ A total of 4,87,98,833 voters out of 5,73,43,291 cast their votes on April 23 across 75,064 polling booths.

- ❖ The overall voter turnout was 86.2% for women, 83.96% for men, and 58.45% for others.
- ❖ Women voters (2,52,59,596) outnumbered men voters (2,35,34,720); 4,517 voters were from other gender category.
- ❖ Final figures may increase as postal ballots of officials, police personnel, service voters, and Form 12D voters (persons aged 85+ and persons with disabilities) are yet to be included.

### **TN Assembly Elections 2026 Results**

- ❖ Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) emerged as the single largest party with 108 seats.
- ❖ The majority mark is 118 out of a total of 234 seats; no party secured a full majority, leading to a hung Assembly.
- ❖ Joseph C. Vijay led TVK in its debut election and won from Perambur and Tiruchirappalli (East).
- ❖ Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam won 73 seats, and All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) secured 53 seats.
- ❖ The election saw a three-cornered contest mainly between TVK, DMK, and AIADMK, breaking the long-standing two-party dominance in the state.
- ❖ Indian National Congress (INC), Pattali Makkal Katchi, Communist Party of India, Communist Party of India (Marxist) and others hold limited seats and may play a key role in post-poll support.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu recorded its highest-ever voter turnout of 85.1%.

### **Courtallam Cave Inscription**

- ❖ An ancient inscription in Courtallam Hills has been successfully deciphered after remaining unread for many years.
- ❖ The discovery was decoded by K. Balakrishnan and Mathur B. Pavendan after 2.5 years of detailed research.
- ❖ The inscription is located in the Sanyasi Pudavu cave at around 1000 m elevation.
- ❖ It uses the Prakrit-Brahmi script with modified diacritic marks to represent Tamil language words.
- ❖ Researchers identified 14 out of 15 characters and used mathematical methods and comparison with Sanskrit and Pali to decode them.
- ❖ The message highlights wisdom and unity, stating that knowledge remains the same even if taken from different sources.
- ❖ The cave and inscription were earlier mentioned in the 1917 Tinnevely Gazetteer during British rule.

## **Dissolution of the 16<sup>th</sup> Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly**

- ❖ The 16th Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly was dissolved by the Governor of Tamil Nadu with effect from 5 May 2026.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar dissolved the Assembly after the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly election results.
- ❖ Under Article 174(2)(b) of the Constitution, the Governor has the power to dissolve the State Legislative Assembly.
- ❖ The Legislative Assembly is automatically dissolved after 5 years under Article 172(1), unless dissolved earlier.
- ❖ S. R. Bommai Case stated that the majority should be tested on the floor of the House before dissolution.
- ❖ The dissolution of the existing Assembly was a mandatory procedure for the constitution of a new Assembly after completing elections.

## **TN Elections 2026**

### ***Defeat of Sitting CM***

- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin was defeated in his Kolathur Assembly constituency, a seat he had represented thrice since 2011.
- ❖ Stalin is the fourth sitting Chief Minister in Tamil Nadu to lose an Assembly election.
- ❖ In the past, P.S. Kumarasamy Raja (1952), M. Bhakthavatchalam (1967), and Jayalalithaa (1996) were sitting Chief Ministers who lost elections.
- ❖ K. Kamaraj, another former Chief Minister, was also defeated in 1967, but he was not in office at the time; he lost from the Virudhunagar Assembly constituency.

### ***Past History***

- ❖ In what is clearly a tectonic shift in Tamil Nadu politics, the fledgling Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) led by actor Joseph C. Vijay has emerged as the single largest party in the 2026 Assembly elections.
- ❖ With the Congress dominating until 1967, the ecosystem post that shifted to a Dravidian framework.
- ❖ Since 1967, Tamil Nadu has been dominated by one of the two major Dravidian parties — the DMK and the AIADMK.
- ❖ While the DMK has enjoyed two successive terms once initially (1967 and 1971), it did not sustain this for the entirety of its second term.
- ❖ The AIADMK has been able to come back to power three times consequently, under the leadership of M.G. Ramachandran (1977, 1980, and 1984), and once again under Jayalalithaa (2011 and 2016).

- ❖ Other than this, the State has been alternating power between the DMK and the AIADMK.
- ❖ In 2006, when Tamil Nadu last saw a hung Assembly, the PMK offered support to the DMK without sharing power in the ministry.

### **Resignation**

- ❖ DMK president and outgoing Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said the Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) had secured only 17.43 lakh more votes than his party, a margin of just 3.52 percentage points over the DMK's vote share.
- ❖ M.K. Stalin resigns as Tamil Nadu Chief Minister.
- ❖ His resignation was sent to the Governor's office in Lok Bhavan.
- ❖ As per convention, the Governor is expected to request the incumbent Chief Minister to continue as interim Chief Minister, until the new government assumes office.

### **Results**

- ❖ TVK was emerging as the single largest party with 108 seats in the 17th Tamil Nadu Assembly election.
- ❖ It fell just 10 seats short of the halfway mark in the 234-member House.
- ❖ The party secured an impressive 35% vote share, polling over 1.6 crore votes.
- ❖ Vijay himself won from both Perambur and Tiruchi East.
- ❖ J. Jayalalithaa won two assembly seats in the 1991 Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly elections.
- ❖ Contesting from both Kangeyam and Bargur, she registered handsome victories in both.
- ❖ Following the AIADMK landslide victory, she became the Chief Minister for the first time.
- ❖ Later she retained the Bargur seat and resigning from Kangeyam.
- ❖ Perhaps for the first time, the 17th Tamil Nadu Assembly will include a member who had previously served as a legislator in another House.
- ❖ This distinction will be achieved by N. Anand, alias 'Bussy' Anand, general secretary of Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam.
- ❖ Minister K.R. Periyakaruppan lost the Assembly election from Tirupattur in Sivaganga district by just one vote.
- ❖ In Edappadi, AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami recorded the highest victory margin in the State, winning by 98,110 votes.
- ❖ The Secular Progressive Alliance (SPA), led by the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), has been pushed to second place with leads in 73 seats — a steep fall from 159 seats in 2021.

- ❖ DMK was reduced to the principal Opposition with 59 seats in what became a three-cornered contest.
- ❖ While the All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)-led coalition, which includes the BJP and the PMK, has come third with leads in 54 seats.
- ❖ AIADMK finished third with around 47 seats.
- ❖ Naam Tamilar Katchi, led by Seeman, which contested all 234 seats, once again failed to open its account.
- ❖ In terms of vote share, however, the three formations are remarkably close — TVK: 35.09%, SPA: 31.4%, and the AIADMK-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA): 27.2%.
- ❖ It marks the second time Tamil Nadu voters, known for delivering decisive mandates for a single party or front (DMK alliance, 2006), have produced a hung Assembly.
- ❖ 1952 (Madras State): The first election saw the Indian National Congress (INC) win 152 seats out of 375, short of a majority, but they formed the government under C. Rajagopalachari (Rajaji).
- ❖ C. Joseph Vijay is set to become the first Chief Minister not from either of the two principal Dravidian parties since the DMK first captured power in the State in 1967.
- ❖ He is likely to become the first minority Chief Minister (Christian Chief Minister) in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ Vijay secured a commanding 34.92 per cent vote share in its maiden election.
- ❖ Historically, third-party aspirants in Tamil Nadu have struggled to cross the 10 per cent threshold.
- ❖ Vijay's TVK surpassed MGR's 1977 record of 30.6% vote share in a maiden election.
- ❖ Unlike MGR, who had an alliance with CPI(M) and IUML in his first election, Vijay's TVK contested alone in 233 of the 234 seats.
- ❖ On 30 June 1977, M.G.R. was sworn in as the chief minister of Tamil Nadu, becoming the first actor to become the chief minister in the Republic of India
- ❖ For the first time in 59 years a party other than the DMK or AIADMK has led the state in vote share.
- ❖ N.T. Rama Rao (TDP): Founded the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in March 1982 and led it to victory in the Andhra Pradesh assembly elections in January 1983, becoming CM in less than a year.
- ❖ Founded in February 2024, the TVK party is set to assume power in just over two years.

- ❖ The ADMK party was founded on 17 October 1972 by M. G. Ramachandran (M.G.R.) and swept to power, defeating the DMK in the 1977 assembly election after 5 years of party formation.
- ❖ Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) was founded in Delhi by Arvind Kejriwal on 26 November 2012.
- ❖ First, it came to power in Delhi on 28 December 2013, with Arvind Kejriwal taking oath as the Chief Minister.

### **Minority Government in Tamil Nadu**

- ❖ The Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) failed to secure the required majority in the Tamil Nadu Assembly to independently form the government.
- ❖ TVK won 108 seats in the 234-member Assembly.
- ❖ Since Vijay was elected from both Perambur and Tiruchi (East), the party's effective strength stands reduced to 107 seats.
- ❖ In 2006, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) formed the government despite winning only 96 seats, with support from allies holding 68 seats.
- ❖ DMK allies had submitted letters of support to Governor Surjit Singh Barnala.
- ❖ The precedent of inviting the single-largest party to form the government dates back to 1952.
- ❖ In 1952, the Indian National Congress formed the government in Madras State under C. Rajagopalachari, despite securing only 152 seats in a 375-member Assembly.
- ❖ The Congress strength later increased to 165 members by the time the Assembly was constituted.
- ❖ M.A. Manickavelu Naicker of the Commonweal Party was included in Raja Gopalachari's Cabinet.
- ❖ In July 1979, President Neelam Sanjiva Reddy consulted party leaders after the fall of the Janata Party government led by Morarji Desai.
- ❖ Opposition leader Yashwantrao Balwantrao Chavan expressed an inability to form the government.
- ❖ Subsequently, Charan Singh was invited to form the government.
- ❖ In November 1990, President Ramaswamy Venkataraman sought views from major parties after the fall of the government led by Vishwanath Pratap Singh.
- ❖ After the major parties declined, Chandra Shekhar was invited to form the government.
- ❖ If no party can form a stable government, the Governor may recommend President's Rule and keep the Assembly under suspended animation or dissolve it.

- ❖ The Punchhi Commission recommended that the party or coalition commanding the widest support in the Assembly should be invited to form the government.
- ❖ The Commission suggested preference for government formation in the following order:
  - Pre-poll alliance with the largest support.
  - Largest single party with outside support.
  - Post-poll coalition with all partners in government.
  - Post-poll alliance with some parties in government and others offering outside support.

### **Majority Support in the Legislative Assembly**

- ❖ The Supreme Court of India stated that a Governor's first priority is to ensure the formation of a stable government.
- ❖ The demand that C. Joseph Vijay prove majority support in the Legislative Assembly is based on constitutional principles.
- ❖ A stable government is necessary to avoid a breakdown of constitutional machinery and the imposition of President's Rule.
- ❖ Supreme Court judgments have stated that a Governor cannot refuse government formation once majority support is established.
- ❖ The only exception is when the Governor believes that the claimants cannot provide a stable government.
- ❖ The court also observed that a Governor should not wait indefinitely, as it may encourage defections and unethical political activities.
- ❖ The Sarkaria Commission and the Supreme Court supported giving Governors a reasonable time to explore alternatives for government formation.
- ❖ The Constitution does not clearly define the term "reasonable time."
- ❖ In a hung Assembly, the Governor's first preference is a pre-poll alliance with the largest number of seats.
- ❖ The second option is the single-largest party if it can demonstrate majority support.
- ❖ A post-poll coalition or alliance becomes the final option for government formation.
- ❖ In the *S. R. Bommai v. Union of India* judgment, a nine-judge Bench approved this order of preference.
- ❖ The judgment also clarified that the Governor may invite either the single-largest party or a group commanding majority support.

- ❖ The court stated that it does not matter whether the group was formed before or after the election.
- ❖ Failure of all alternatives to secure majority support may lead to constitutional breakdown in the State.
- ❖ In the Rameshwar Prasad v. Union of India case, the Supreme Court warned Governors against partisan misuse of constitutional powers.
- ❖ The judgment referred to the criticism made by the Sarkaria Commission regarding the misuse of Article 356.
- ❖ The Commission observed that Governors had sometimes recommended President's Rule to favour the ruling party at the Centre.
- ❖ Article 356 deals with the imposition of President's Rule in states.
- ❖ Supreme Court judgments have recognised that coalition governments have become common in Indian politics.

### **Deposit Forfeiture in Tamil Nadu Assembly Polls**

- ❖ In the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections held on April 23, 2026 4,032 candidates contested across the State.
- ❖ A total of 3,352 candidates lost their election deposit for failing to secure one-sixth of the valid votes polled in their constituencies.
- ❖ In the Karur constituency, 76 out of 79 candidates forfeited their deposits.
- ❖ Candidates of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) lost deposits in 19 constituencies.
- ❖ Candidates of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) lost deposits in five constituencies.
- ❖ The Naam Tamilar Katchi (NTK) lost deposits in all 234 constituencies it contested.
- ❖ The Indian National Congress, Communist Party of India (CPI), Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)], Desiya Murpokku Dravida Kazhagam (DMDK), Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), and Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) did not lose deposits in any contested constituency.
- ❖ The Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) retained deposits in all 233 constituencies it contested.
- ❖ Among independent candidates, 2,208 candidates forfeited their deposits, while only one independent candidate retained the deposit.
- ❖ According to the Election Commission of India, the overall voter turnout in Tamil Nadu was 86.03%.
- ❖ Excluding postal ballots, the polling percentage stood at 85.01%.

- ❖ Of the 108 winning TVK candidates, 13 were women.
- ❖ Among the 47 winning All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) candidates, six were women.
- ❖ The only winning candidate of the Desiya Murpokku Dravida Kazhagam (DMDK) was a woman.
- ❖ One winning candidate each from the Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)], Indian National Congress, and Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) was a woman.
- ❖ No women candidates won from the Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazagam (AMMK), Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Communist Party of India (CPI), Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), and Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK).

### **15th CM of Tamil Nadu**

- ❖ C. Joseph Vijay, president of Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), was sworn in as the 15th Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The swearing-in ceremony was held at Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Chennai.
- ❖ Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar administered the oath of office and secrecy to the new Chief Minister.
- ❖ Nine ministers were sworn in along with him.
- ❖ The Governor appointed the Chief Minister under Article 164 of the Constitution.
- ❖ The Governor also directed Vijay to seek a vote of confidence in the Assembly on or before 13 May 2026.
- ❖ The new Cabinet marked the first time in five decades that Tamil Nadu was ruled by neither the All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) nor the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK).
- ❖ Since 1950, Tamil Nadu has had 14 Chief Ministers before Vijay, and he became the 9th Chief minister after the State was renamed Tamil Nadu in 1969.
- ❖ V. R. Nedunchezhiyan served twice as Acting Chief Minister after the deaths of C. N. Annadurai in 1969 and M. G. Ramachandran in 1987.
- ❖ K. Kamaraj of the Indian National Congress served as Chief Minister for the longest period from 1954 to 1963.

### **TN and Government Hospital Treatment**

- ❖ Tamil Nadu has recorded the highest share of patients choosing government hospitals among southern states.

- ❖ Around 43% of inpatients in Tamil Nadu received treatment in government hospitals.
- ❖ About 53.4% of patients chose private hospitals, while 3.6% used charitable trust hospitals.
- ❖ The average treatment cost under the Chief Minister's insurance scheme in government hospitals was ₹1,357.
- ❖ The amount is lower than the national average treatment cost of ₹6,631.
- ❖ The report also stated that 99% of deliveries in Tamil Nadu take place in hospitals.

### **Lowest Medical Spending in Public Hospitals - Tamil Nadu**

- ❖ A National Sample Survey report found that Tamil Nadu recorded the lowest out-of-pocket medical expenditure (OOPME) for treatment in government hospitals among major States in India.
- ❖ The average out-of-pocket expenditure for hospitalisation in government hospitals in Tamil Nadu was ₹1,357, compared to the national average of ₹6,631.
- ❖ The survey covered medical expenses for in-patient treatment during the previous 365 days.
- ❖ Treatment costs in private hospitals in Tamil Nadu were higher than the national average.
- ❖ The average expenditure in private hospitals was ₹74,168, while the national average was ₹50,508.

### **17th Legislative Assembly - Key Governance Updates**

- ❖ Karuppaiah M.V. (Sholavandan MLA) sworn in as Pro-tem Speaker by Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar at Lok Bhavan.
- ❖ The 17th Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly convened its first sitting at 9:30 a.m. on May 11, 2026.
- ❖ All newly elected MLAs are to take the oath or affirmation during the inaugural session.
- ❖ Election for Speaker and Deputy Speaker scheduled on May 12, 2026 at 9:30 a.m.
- ❖ C. Joseph Vijay resigned as MLA from Tiruchi East constituency in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly.
- ❖ Resignation submitted by ministers K.A. Sengottaiyan and P. Venkataramanan to Principal Secretary K. Srinivasan.
- ❖ Vijay was elected from the Perambur and Tiruchi East constituencies; Tiruchi East resignation triggered a by poll within six months.

- ❖ Udhayanidhi Stalin was elected leader of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) Legislature Party and to serve as Leader of Opposition.
- ❖ K.N. Nehru appointed Deputy Leader of the DMK Legislature Party, and E.V. Velu was designated as DMK Whip.

### **CM's First Day Actions**

- ❖ C. Joseph Vijay, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, signed three key files immediately after the swearing-in ceremony in Chennai.
- ❖ The decisions include approval of 200 units of free electricity for domestic consumers using up to 500 units bimonthly.
- ❖ The launch of an elite women's safety unit named 'Singa Pen Special Force' for the rapid response to women-related complaints.
- ❖ Creation of an Anti-Narcotic Task Force to combat illegal drugs and psychotropic substances across the State.
- ❖ The task force will function through 65 police stations across 37 districts and nine cities.
- ❖ Senior IAS officer P. Senthil Kumar was appointed as Secretary-I to the Chief Minister.
- ❖ G. Laxmi Priya was appointed as Secretary-II to the Chief Minister shortly after he assumed office.

### **Tamil Nadu CM - Second Debutant Legislator Milestone**

- ❖ C. Joseph Vijay, founder of Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam and actor, became the second debutant legislator since 1967 to be sworn in as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ He is also the first Chief Minister from a minority religious denomination (Christian) in the State.
- ❖ In 2001, O. Panneerselvam became Chief Minister in his first term as legislator after the Supreme Court disqualified J. Jayalalithaa from office.
- ❖ Unlike that case, Vijay entered electoral politics as the Chief Ministerial face of the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam, which he launched in February 2024.
- ❖ C.N. Annadurai served as a legislator from 1957–62 before becoming Chief Minister in 1967, while his successor, M. Karunanidhi, was a third-time legislator when he took office in 1969.
- ❖ M.G. Ramachandran served as a legislator in 1967 and 1971 before becoming Chief Minister in 1977 during his third term.

- ❖ J. Jayalalithaa became Chief Minister in 1991 after earlier serving as a legislator and Leader of Opposition in 1989, and having been a Rajya Sabha member earlier.
- ❖ Edappadi K. Palaniswami became Chief Minister in 2017 during his fourth term as a legislator and after holding ministerial experience.
- ❖ M.K. Stalin assumed office as Chief Minister in 2021 during his seventh entry into the Assembly.
- ❖ Incidentally, Janaki Ramachandran, widow of M.G. Ramachandran, briefly served as Chief Minister without being a member of the legislature, but her ministry was short-lived.

### **Governor's Role in a Hung Assembly**

- ❖ Under Article 164 of the Constitution, the Governor appoints the Chief Minister, but there is no fixed constitutional procedure for selecting a Chief Minister in a hung Assembly.
- ❖ Constitutional conventions require the Governor to act with neutrality, sobriety, and the objective of ensuring a stable government.
- ❖ The Governor, as the constitutional head of the State, is primarily responsible for ensuring continuity of constitutional governance and political stability.
- ❖ The Sarkaria Commission, the Committee of Governors appointed after the November 1970 Conference in New Delhi, and the Supreme Court conventions state that the Governor's personal bona fides are irrelevant in decision-making.
- ❖ The Governor must explore all possible options by consulting political parties, coalitions, and independent MLAs within a reasonable time to enable government formation.
- ❖ The Constitution does not define "reasonable time," but Governors cannot delay indefinitely, as such delay may encourage horse-trading and political instability.
- ❖ The Governor's duty is to act to preserve constitutional machinery in the State and avoid breakdown of governance.
- ❖ If all possibilities fail, the Governor may recommend President's Rule under Article 356 as a last resort to maintain constitutional order.
- ❖ The Governor cannot remain in limbo, neither appointing a government nor dissolving the Assembly without constitutional justification.
- ❖ The Supreme Court in B.R. Kapur (2001) and Rameshwar Prasad (2006) held that a Governor may dissolve a Legislative Assembly under Article 174(2)(b) even before its first meeting in rare cases to prevent constitutional breakdown.
- ❖ The Governor must avoid leaving the field open for manipulation or delay that undermines the electorate's mandate.

- ❖ The Sarkaria Commission (1988), later endorsed by the Supreme Court, laid down a clear order of preference for government formation.
  - First preference is to invite a pre-poll alliance that has a clear majority in the House.
  - Second preference is to invite the single largest party that can demonstrate the ability to form a stable government.
  - The third preference is a post-poll alliance of parties that can collectively demonstrate majority support.
- ❖ The use of post-poll alliances has become more common due to coalition politics and fragmented mandates.
- ❖ The Supreme Court in S.R. Bommai (1994) held that the Constitution does not require that a government must necessarily have a pre-formed majority at the time of appointment.
- ❖ Ideologically similar parties may form post-poll alliances to secure a majority in the House, which is constitutionally valid.
- ❖ If none of the options result in a stable government, the Governor may recommend President's Rule, but only as an extreme and last resort measure.
- ❖ The Supreme Court has repeatedly emphasized that "constitutional machinery in the State should, as far as possible, be maintained."
- ❖ The Committee of Governors also concluded that testing majority support should normally be done on the floor of the Assembly.
- ❖ Though S.R. Bommai included observations limiting floor tests to situations where an incumbent Chief Minister is alleged to have lost majority, later judgments expanded its use.
- ❖ Successive Supreme Court rulings have established the floor test as the most objective, transparent, and democratic method to determine majority support.
- ❖ Courts have stressed that the fate of the people's mandate must not depend on the Governor's subjective discretion.
- ❖ The Supreme Court has repeatedly ordered floor tests to resolve disputes over majority, whether for existing or incoming governments.
- ❖ The floor test has become the primary constitutional mechanism to ensure stability and prevent misuse of discretionary power.
- ❖ The Court has affirmed that the legislature, not the Raj Bhavan, is the true forum where democracy is exercised.
- ❖ Ultimately, the decision on who governs must be determined on the floor of the House, not by the Governor's personal assessment.

### **Oath Ceremony of MLAs in Tamil Nadu Assembly**

- ❖ The elected Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) took oath in the 17th Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly on 11 May 2026.
- ❖ The oath ceremony was conducted in the presence of Pro-tem Speaker M. V. Karuppaiah.
- ❖ He was sworn in as the Pro-tem Speaker by Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar.
- ❖ Thousand Lights MLA J. C. D. Prabhakar was nominated for the post of Speaker of the Assembly.
- ❖ Chief Minister Vijay handed over the nomination papers to Assembly Secretary K. Srinivasan.
- ❖ Vijay also nominated Thuraiyur MLA M. Ravisankar for the post of Deputy Speaker.
- ❖ The strength of the Assembly became 233 after Vijay resigned from his second seat, Tiruchi East.

### **Pro-tem Speaker**

- ❖ Pro-tem Speaker M. V. Karuppaiah administered the oath to newly elected MLAs of the 17th Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly on 11 May 2026.
- ❖ A Pro-tem Speaker is a temporary presiding officer appointed during the transition between two legislative assemblies.
- ❖ The term “pro tem” means “for the time being.”
- ❖ The Pro-tem Speaker acts as the bridge between the formation of a new Assembly and the election of the permanent Speaker.
- ❖ The main role of the Pro-tem Speaker is to administer the oath of office to newly elected Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs).
- ❖ The Pro-tem Speaker also presides over the House until the election of the permanent Speaker and Deputy Speaker.
- ❖ Usually, the senior-most member of the House, based on the number of terms served, is chosen for the role, though it is not a legal rule.
- ❖ The Governor appoints the Pro-tem Speaker in State Legislative Assemblies and administers the oath of office to them.
- ❖ In the Lok Sabha, the oath to the Pro-tem Speaker is administered by the President of India.
- ❖ The functions of the Pro-tem Speaker are similar in both the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies.

- ❖ The office of the Pro-tem Speaker is temporary and ends immediately after the election of the permanent Speaker of the House.

### **Singappen Special Task Force**

- ❖ The Singappen Special Task Force was formed by the Tamil Nadu government to strengthen women's safety and preventive protection across the State.
- ❖ The task force functions under the direct supervision of Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay.
- ❖ The first phase of the force has 36 sanctioned posts and is headed by an Inspector General of Police (IGP).
- ❖ The sanctioned strength includes one Inspector General of Police, one Superintendent of Police (SP), two Deputy Superintendents of Police (DSPs), four Inspectors, eight Sub-Inspectors, and 20 personnel from other ranks.
- ❖ The task force has been created mainly for prevention and protection related to women's safety.
- ❖ It will identify vulnerable and crime-prone areas across the State.
- ❖ The unit will conduct surveillance and deploy personnel in places frequently visited by women.
- ❖ Key focus areas include bus stands, railway stations, educational institutions, and other public spaces.

### **Speaker of the Tamil Nadu**

- ❖ J. C. D. Prabhakar of Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam was unanimously elected as the Speaker of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly on 12 May 2026.
- ❖ After taking charge, Speaker Prabhakar conducted the Deputy Speaker election in which Ravishankar was elected unopposed.
- ❖ Chief Minister Vijay recalled that the tradition of the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition escorting the Speaker to the Chair originated in the United Kingdom Parliament system.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government has ordered the closure of 717 Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation liquor shops located within 500 metres of educational institutions and places of worship within two weeks.
- ❖ TASMAL operates 4,765 retail liquor outlets across Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The Madras High Court restrained TVK MLA R. Seenivasa Sethupathy from participating in the Assembly trust vote scheduled on 13 May 2026.
- ❖ The interim order was passed by a summer vacation Bench of Justices on 12 May 2026.

- ❖ The writ petitioner claimed confusion during elections due to two constituencies named Tirupattur in Tirupattur district and Tirupattur in Sivaganga district with similar names and spellings.

### **Women Ministers in Tamil Nadu**

- ❖ No women were included in the Cabinet formed in the Madras Presidency under C. Rajagopalachari, after the 1937 elections held under the Government of India Act, 1935.
- ❖ The Cabinet resigned on 30 October 1939, after which Governor's rule continued till 30 April 1946.
- ❖ After the Second World War, a new Cabinet led by T. Prakasam took office on 30 April 1946.
- ❖ Freedom fighter Rukmini Lakshmipathi became the first woman included in a Cabinet in the Madras Presidency and handled the Public Health and Medicine portfolios.
- ❖ The T. Prakasam Cabinet lasted for one year and resigned on 23 March 1947.
- ❖ After India became a Republic, no women were included in the Cabinet formed by C. Rajagopalachari on 10 April 1952 after the first general elections.
- ❖ During the Cabinet reshuffle on 9 October 1953, Jothi Venkatachalam was inducted along with M. Bhakthavatchalam and K. Rajaram, and she served as Minister till April 1954.
- ❖ No women were included in the later Cabinet formed under K. Kamaraj, but after the 1957 elections, Lourd Ammal Simon became a Minister in his Cabinet formed on 13 April 1957.
- ❖ When the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam formed the government for the first time in 1967, Satyavani Muthu became Adi Dravidar Welfare Minister in the Cabinet led by C. N. Annadurai and later continued in the Cabinets of M. Karunanidhi.
- ❖ After the death of M. G. Ramachandran, Janaki Ramachandran became Chief Minister for a short period, and she was the only woman in that Cabinet.
- ❖ After the 1991 elections, R. Indirakumari became a Minister in the Cabinet formed by J. Jayalalithaa, and since then, women have continuously been part of Cabinets in Tamil Nadu.

### **TN Assembly Floor Test 2026**

- ❖ C. Joseph Vijay won the confidence motion in the Tamil Nadu Assembly with 144 votes during the 2026 floor test.

- ❖ Out of 171 MLAs present, 25 MLAs led by S. P. Velumani voted in favour, while 22 MLAs led by Edappadi K. Palaniswami voted against the motion, showing a split in the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam legislature party.
- ❖ Four Pattali Makkal Katchi MLAs and the lone Bharatiya Janata Party MLA abstained or voted neutral, while Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam MLAs and Premalatha Vijayakant of the Desiya Murpokku Dravida Kazhagam walked out before voting.
- ❖ Speaker J. C. D. Prabhakar conducted a division vote, clearly showing the split among the 47 AIADMK MLAs.
- ❖ The Supreme Court of India stayed the High Court order and allowed TVK (Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam) MLA R. Sreenivasa Sethupathi to participate in the trust vote, stating that the matter should be decided through an election petition and not under Article 226 of the Constitution.
- ❖ After the trust vote, the Assembly was adjourned sine die (without fixing the next meeting date), and for the first time, the full proceedings of a Tamil Nadu Assembly confidence vote were telecast live.

### **Preferential Reservation for SC(A) Candidates**

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government issued fresh instructions on implementing reservation for Arunthathiyars under the Tamil Nadu Arunthathiyars (Special Reservation) Act, 2009.
- ❖ The directions were issued to all government-run, State-aided, and private educational institutions after a judgment of the Madras High Court.
- ❖ Institutions were instructed to fill all open, general, and unreserved seats first purely on merit. Arunthathiyar candidates are also eligible to compete in these categories.
- ❖ While filling the 18% Scheduled Caste (SC) quota, institutions must strictly follow the horizontal rotation system prescribed in April 2009 through G.O. (Government Order) No. 50.
- ❖ Under this rotation system, points 2, 32, and 66 are first offered to SC(A) Arunthathiyar candidates.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Arunthathiyars (Special Reservation of seats in Educational Institutions, including Private Educational Institutions and of appointments or posts in the services under the State within the Reservation for the Scheduled Castes) Act, 2009 provides 16% preferential reservation for Arunthathiyars within the overall 18% SC reservation.
- ❖ The reservation applies to admissions in educational institutions and appointments or posts under the State government.

- ❖ In the remaining SC general seats, all Scheduled Caste candidates, including Arunthathiyars, must compete based on inter-se merit.
- ❖ Selection of meritorious Arunthathiyar candidates in SC general seats should not reduce or affect the 16% SC(A) preferential sub-quota under any circumstance.
- ❖ The State government also clarified through Government Orders that if SC(A) preferential seats remain vacant, they may later be filled by other Scheduled Caste candidates on merit.

### **MK Gandhi's Salem Visit**

- ❖ MK Gandhi's historic visits to Salem and his anti-untouchability campaign of 1934 were recalled.
- ❖ Gandhi stayed at Hasthampatti in Salem during his eight-hour visit in February 1934 as part of his countrywide campaign for the abolition of untouchability.
- ❖ Among his visits to the Madras State between 1896 and 1946, Gandhi visited Salem in 1920, 1923, and 1934.
- ❖ The 1934 visit became especially important because Gandhi travelled across India at that time to campaign against untouchability.
- ❖ Salem held special importance for Gandhi as it was the hometown of Congress leaders C. Vijiaraghavachariar and P. Varadarajulu Naidu.
- ❖ In August 1920, Gandhi, C. Rajagopalachari, and Shaukat Ali stayed at Varadarajulu Naidu's residence before leaving for Bengaluru during the Khilafat movement period.
- ❖ At the special session of the All-India Congress Committee in Kolkata in September 1920, Vijiaraghavachariar and Motilal Nehru advised Gandhi to include the demand for "Swaraj" (self-rule) in his proposed resolution.
- ❖ The Salem Municipal Council later passed a resolution directing restaurants within its limits to allow Scheduled Castes (SCs) and warned that licences of eateries violating the rule could be cancelled.
- ❖ A philatelic museum connected to this history was established in Salem in January 1997.

### **Advocate General - Vijay Narayan**

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government, led by Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam, appointed Vijay Narayan as the Advocate General of the State.
- ❖ With this appointment, Vijay Narayan became one of the few legal professionals to serve as Advocate General twice under two different governments.
- ❖ He had earlier served as the top law officer of Tamil Nadu during the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam government from August 2017 to May 2021.

- ❖ After his resignation in May 2021, the post was held by senior counsels R. Shunmugasundaram and P. S. Raman.
- ❖ P. S. Raman resigned from the post of Advocate General on May 12, 2026.

### **Election Deposit Trend in 2026**

- ❖ Around 83% of candidates in Tamil Nadu lost their election security deposit in the 2026 Assembly elections.
- ❖ An election security deposit is the amount paid to the Returning Officer while filing nomination papers for an election.
- ❖ The deposit is forfeited if a candidate gets less than one-sixth (1/6) of the total valid votes polled in the constituency.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu recorded the highest percentage of candidates losing deposits, followed by West Bengal, where 78% of candidates lost their deposits.
- ❖ In Tamil Nadu, 3,352 candidates lost their deposits out of 4,023 candidates who contested the Assembly elections.
- ❖ In West Bengal, 2,298 candidates forfeited their deposits out of 2,920 candidates in the election fray.

### **India's 2nd Largest Jewelry Leasing Market - Chennai**

- ❖ Chennai became India's second-largest jewellery leasing market in 2025, according to a report by CBRE South Asia Pvt Ltd.
- ❖ Chennai accounted for 27% of India's jewellery leasing activity in 2025, rising sharply from 16% in 2024.
- ❖ The city recorded around 0.25 million square feet of cumulative jewellery leasing during 2023–2025.
- ❖ Major jewellery leasing activity was concentrated in Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Delhi-NCR, and Mumbai, which together contributed over 90% of total leasing volume.
- ❖ Areas such as T. Nagar, Anna Nagar, and Velachery remained key retail destinations with premium rental demand.

### **Anti defection law issue in Tamil Nadu**

- ❖ As per the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution and the Members of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly (Disqualification Ground of Defection) Rules, 1986, there are two grounds for disqualification in the event of defection.

- ❖ When a member voluntarily gives up membership of his or her political party and when a member votes or abstains from voting contrary to any direction issued by his or her political party.
- ❖ Over the years, different judicial pronouncements have been given and, in some cases, judgments have differed from each other.
- ❖ Palaniswami is of the view that he, being the general secretary of the party, had appointed his colleague-former Minister “Agri” S.S. Krishnamurthy, as the whip of the legislature party and the latter, in turn, conveyed through e-mail, registered post and SMS, about the line to be pursued by the legislators in the Assembly on the trust motion.
- ❖ He claims the AIADMK’s legislative party has been constituted with him at the helm.
- ❖ He also contends that written consent has been secured from all the legislators with regard to his election as the leader of the legislature party.
- ❖ However, the opposite camp dismisses Mr. Palaniswami’s account of events and asserts that no election has taken place.
- ❖ It also demands that the resolution with regard to the appointment of the leader and the whip be made public.
- ❖ On the contrary, that group has nominated persons for different posts in the legislature party.
- ❖ If Mr. Palaniswami gives a petition to the Speaker requesting him to initiate disqualification proceedings, Mr. Prabhakar can set the process in motion by sending notices to the legislators concerned.
- ❖ Ordinarily, seven days will be provided to such members for giving their comments.
- ❖ Upon the receipt of the members’ responses, the Speaker can either decide on his own or refer the matter to a committee and await the panel’s report, after which he can take a final call.
- ❖ Else, the Speaker can conclude that the AIADMK’s legislature party has not yet been constituted and may not take cognisance of the petition, if any, given by the Palaniswami camp.
- ❖ Palaniswami will have to decide whether to seek the disqualification of those who voted against him.
- ❖ The 10th Schedule gives a political party the option of condoning such a vote within 15 days.
- ❖ In 2017, he did not seek action against 11 AIADMK legislators of the O. Panneerselvam faction when they voted against him.
- ❖ A related question is whether a whip was issued and received by all members of the AIADMK.

- ❖ It remains to be seen whether Mr. Palaniswami is going to cite the second scenario, which appears to be a straightforward instance of defection.
- ❖ In September 2017, the then Assembly Speaker P. Dhanapal referred to the first scenario while disqualifying 18 AIADMK MLAs for having given representations in the previous month to Governor Vidyasagar Rao, expressing their lack of confidence in Mr. Palaniswami, who was the Chief Minister.
- ❖ The Supreme Court verdict in Subash Desai vs. Principal Secretary to the Governor, delivered in May 2023, deals squarely with the fate of dissident legislators who are numerically larger than the MLAs loyal to the original party leadership.
- ❖ A key ruling in the judgment is that it is the political party and not the legislature party that appoints its whip and gives the direction to vote in a particular manner or abstain.
- ❖ Therefore, any claim by another faction that it has its own whip and its own direction to vote cannot be countenanced by the Speaker.
- ❖ The second principle in the judgment is that the numerical strength of respective factions is irrelevant.
- ❖ However, the Court also recognised that the Speaker may have to determine which of the two factions constitutes the original party, and he may examine the party's own constitution and other regulations that spell out its structure.
- ❖ The structure of leadership outside the House is also a relevant consideration.
- ❖ The Speaker's determination on which group constitutes the party is only a prima facie finding, and would not have any impact on the Election Commission's power to adjudicate the question under Paragraph 15 of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968.
- ❖ That order deals with the recognition of parties and the allotment of symbols.
- ❖ A key question is whether the dissidents have incurred disqualification under the anti-defection law.
- ❖ The camp led by Mr Palaniswami cites the Supreme Court's judgement in the Shiv Sena case of May 2023, wherein the Court addressed one of the issues which is of relevance to Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ In Maharashtra, too, conflicting whips were issued by rival groups to members of the Shiv Sena.
- ❖ Eventually, the Court held that "to hold that it is the legislature party which appoints the Whip would be to sever the figurative umbilical cord which connects a member of the House to the political party."
- ❖ It concluded that "the political party, and not the legislature party, appoints the Whip and the Leader in the House."

- ❖ Under the rules governing the question of disqualification in the Assembly, each party has to submit a list of its members and designations within 30 days of the first sitting of the House.
- ❖ The appointment of a member as the Whip, as well as the existence of a 'direction' to the members on the manner of voting (the word 'whip' is not used in the Tenth Schedule) and its communication to all members, will all be questions of fact that may require adjudication.
- ❖ If he seeks the rebels' disqualification, the move may lead to a formal split in the party, and may result in byelections that would lead to further marginalisation.
- ❖ On the other hand, even if he doesn't, the other faction, led by former ministers S.P. Velumani and C. V. Shanmugam, may gain the upper hand within the party structure.
- ❖ However, what stands in his favour is that the dissidents are in no position to save themselves from disqualification, as they do not have the requisite two-thirds strength to claim that they have merged with another party.
- ❖ The 2023 judgment of a Constitution Bench on related questions arising from the anti-defection law is also not in their favour.

### **Illegal voting in the 2026 elections**

- ❖ About 25 foreign nationals have been arrested or detained so far for allegedly casting votes with fraudulently obtained identity documents in the recent Tamil Nadu Assembly election.
- ❖ The accused persons, carrying foreign passports, were intercepted by officials of the Bureau of Immigration and detained by the local police after indelible ink (the mark of a cast ballot) was found on their index fingers.
- ❖ Legal proceedings under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, the Representation of the People Act, 1950, and other laws were initiated against them.
- ❖ Under ECI rules, an 'overseas elector' must be a citizen of India who has not acquired citizenship in any other country.
- ❖ While Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) can register themselves to vote under Section 20A of the Representation of the People Act, they are required to produce an original Indian passport at the polling booth.
- ❖ Those who have renounced Indian citizenship are barred from voting.

### **Ancient Buddha Sculpture – Vedaranyam**

- ❖ An ancient Buddha sculpture was identified at the Pidari Amman temple complex in Umbalacheri village near Vedaranyam in Nagapattinam district, Tamil Nadu.

- ❖ The stone sculpture shows Buddha in a meditative posture called ardhapadmasana with elongated ears and a halo around the head.
- ❖ Researchers identified Chola-style Buddhist features such as the ushnisha (cranial protuberance) and robe folds on the idol.
- ❖ Nagapattinam district is known for its Buddhist heritage due to the historical presence of Buddhist viharas in Nagapattinam and Poompuhar.
- ❖ Other Buddha statues have also been documented in places like Pushpavanam, Budhamangalam, Keezhaiyur, and Velankanni in the district.

### **Tamil Nadu Cabinet Portfolios 2026**

- ❖ The new Cabinet portfolio allocation of Tamil Nadu was announced on 16 May 2026.
- ❖ C. Joseph Vijay will handle the Home, Police, Municipal Administration, Women Welfare, and Youth Welfare departments.
- ❖ K. A. Sengottaiyan was given the Finance portfolio, while N. Anand will manage Rural Development and Water Resources.
- ❖ Aadhav Arjuna will oversee the Public Works Department (PWD), Highways, Minor Ports, and Sports Development.
- ❖ S. Keerthana was appointed as Industries Minister, and K. G. Arunraj will handle Health and Family Welfare.

### **Chola-era Anaimangalam Plates**

- ❖ The Chola-era Anaimangalam copper plates were returned to India by Leiden University in the Netherlands.
- ❖ The 21 copper plates belong to the Chola period and contain inscriptions in Sanskrit and Tamil.
- ❖ The plates carry the royal seal of Rajendra Chola I and provide details about the Chola and Srivijaya empires.
- ❖ The inscriptions mention the donation of 26 villages for a Buddhist vihara at Nagapattinam.
- ❖ The plates had been kept at Leiden University in the Netherlands since 1862 and will now be handed over to the Archaeological Survey of India for preservation and display.

### **Wind Energy Generation in Tamil Nadu 2026**

- ❖ Wind energy generation in Tamil Nadu is expected to be lower in 2026 compared to last year.

- ❖ Tamil Nadu is one of the largest wind energy producing states in India with nearly 10,000 megawatts (MW) installed capacity.
- ❖ The peak wind season in the State usually begins in May every year.
- ❖ Experts said wind power generation in 2026 may be at least 5% lower than the State's peak generation capacity.
- ❖ Factors such as weather conditions and the impact of El Niño may affect wind energy generation this year.

### **Pattinamarudhur Archaeological Site**

- ❖ Around 1,500 artefacts were recently excavated at Pattinamarudhur, located near the coast of Thoothukudi Archaeological Site, by the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology.
- ❖ The excavation found ancient coins, porcelain pottery pieces, shell ornaments and figurines.
- ❖ Experts believe Pattinamarudhur was an important coastal trade centre similar to Korkai, the ancient port of the Early Pandyas.
- ❖ Korkai was famous during the Sangam Age for pearl fishing and trade with the Roman Empire and the Far East regions.
- ❖ The discoveries show that the region had different cultural phases and active maritime trade in ancient times.

### **Madras High Court Judge Recommendations**

- ❖ The Supreme Court Collegium recommended 19 names for appointment as judges of the Madras High Court.
- ❖ The court, had a working strength of 52 judges against a sanctioned strength of 75
- ❖ The recommendations include 9 judicial officers and 10 advocates from the Bar.
- ❖ The decision was approved during a collegium meeting held on 18 May 2026.
- ❖ The names were proposed earlier between November and December 2025.
- ❖ The recommended judicial officers include the present Registrar General of the Madras High Court.
- ❖ The judicial officers recommended include Dr. P. Murugan, Mrs. M.D. Sumathi, and Mrs. S. Alli.
- ❖ The advocates recommended include Natarajan Ramesh, G.K. Muthukumaar, and Rajnish Pathiyil.

- ❖ The Supreme Court Collegium is headed by the Chief Justice of India and recommends appointments of High Court and Supreme Court judges.

### **TVK Cabinet Generational Shift**

- ❖ The 2026 Cabinet, led by C. Joseph Vijay, has an average age of 44.6 years.
- ❖ The average age was 51.8 years in the 2011 All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam Cabinet led by J. Jayalithaa and 61.3 years in the 2021 Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam Cabinet.
- ❖ Out of the 33 Ministers in the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam government, 22 Ministers are below 50 years of age.
- ❖ The Cabinet includes several first-time MLAs, young leaders, professionals, lawyers, doctors, film personalities, and grassroots organisers from different parts of Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ S. Kamali, representing Avinashi constituency in Tiruppur district, became the youngest Minister in the Cabinet at the age of 28.
- ❖ S. Keerthana, representing Sivakasi constituency in Virudhunagar district, became one of the youngest Ministers at the age of 29.
- ❖ The Cabinet has seven Ministers from the Scheduled Caste (SC) community, the highest SC representation in the history of Tamil Nadu Cabinets.
- ❖ Earlier, the reshuffled 2024 DMK Cabinet had four Ministers from the SC community.
- ❖ SC representation in Tamil Nadu Cabinets dates back to the Madras Presidency period.
- ❖ In 1937, M. C. Rajah was included in the interim Cabinet formed under K. V. Reddy under the Government of India Act, 1935.
- ❖ M. C. Rajah was given the Development portfolio in the Madras Presidency government.
- ❖ In July 1937, V. I. Munuswamy Pillai became Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Cabinet headed by C. Rajagopalachari.
- ❖ After the 1957 general elections, P. Kakkan joined the Cabinet led by K. Kamaraj and handled the Public Works Department.
- ❖ In 1962, P. Kakkan was given the agriculture portfolio.
- ❖ In 1963, when M. Bhakthavatchalam became Chief Minister, the home portfolio was assigned to P. Kakkan.
- ❖ After the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam came to power in 1967, Satyavani Muthu was included in successive Cabinets.

- ❖ The present SC representation in the Cabinet may increase further if Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi joins the government in the future.
- ❖ With the induction of Vanni Arasu from VCK, the number of Scheduled Caste members in the Cabinet has increased to eight.
- ❖ This is the first time that eight people from the SC community have been included simultaneously in the Tamil Nadu Cabinet
- ❖ With VCK's Vanni Arasu and IUML's Shahjahan on board, Vijay's Cabinet in Tamil Nadu now has 35 Ministers.
- ❖ Mr. Shahjahan will be the Minister for Minorities Welfare, while Mr. Vanni Arasu will be handling the Adi Dravidar Welfare and Hill Tribes portfolio, and will be known as Minister for Social Justice.
- ❖ This is the first time the VCK and the IUML have been made part of the government.
- ❖ With the induction of Congress MLAs into the Cabinet, the party has joined the government after 59 years, since 1967.
- ❖ It was making the State's first coalition government since 1952.

### **Tamil Nadu Cabinet Expansion 2026**

- ❖ The Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam-led Tamil Nadu Cabinet expanded from 10 to 33 ministers.
- ❖ Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay inducted 23 new ministers into the Cabinet.
- ❖ The Indian National Congress joined the Tamil Nadu government after 59 years, making it the State's first coalition government after 1952.
- ❖ Velachery MLA R. Kumar was appointed Minister for Artificial Intelligence (AI), Information Technology (IT), and Digital Services.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu became the second State in India, after Kerala, to create a dedicated Artificial Intelligence ministry.

### **SC Judges in Stalin Election Case**

- ❖ Two Supreme Court judges withdrew from delivering the verdict in the 2011 Kolathur election dispute case involving DMK leader M.K. Stalin and AIADMK leader Saidai S. Duraisamy.
- ❖ Supreme Court Justices J.K. Maheshwari and Vijay Bishnoi recused themselves from the case on 15 May 2026.
- ❖ The case relates to allegations of "corrupt practices" during the 2011 Tamil Nadu Assembly election in the Kolathur constituency in Chennai.

- ❖ AIADMK (All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) leader Saidai S. Duraisamy accused DMK (Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) leader M.K. Stalin of influencing voters using money and gifts.
- ❖ The appeal had been pending in the Supreme Court since 2017 and was reserved for judgment on 19 February 2026 after detailed hearings.
- ❖ The judges ordered that the matter be reheard before another Bench in which neither of them would be members.
- ❖ The Madras High Court had dismissed the allegations in 2017 due to a lack of conclusive evidence and the absence of a valid digital evidence certification under Section 65B of the Indian Evidence Act.
- ❖ A charge of corrupt practice, including bribery of electors to vote in favour of a candidate comes under Section 123 of the 1951 Act.

### **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.

## Tamil Nadu Crop Loan Waiver 2026

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government announced a cooperative crop loan waiver scheme for farmers.
- ❖ The scheme was announced by Chief Minister for loans taken from cooperative banks between 1 May 2025 and 28 February 2026.
- ❖ Marginal farmers will receive a full waiver for loans up to ₹50,000, while small farmers will receive a 50% waiver within this limit.
- ❖ Farmers with loans above ₹1 lakh and other large farmers will receive a flat waiver of ₹5,000 each.
- ❖ Around 14.22 lakh farmers are expected to benefit from the scheme, with an estimated government expenditure of ₹2,044.46 crore.

## Leiden Copper Plates

- ❖ The Leiden Copper Plates, an important record of the Chola Empire, were officially returned to India by Leiden University at The Hague, Netherlands.
- ❖ The plates contain inscriptions issued by Rajaraja Chola I, Rajendra Chola I, and Kulottunga Chola I, recording land grants to the Chudamani Vihara at Nagapattinam.
- ❖ The inscriptions provide valuable information on Chola administration, land revenue, maritime trade, and cultural links with Southeast Asia.

- ❖ The larger set contains 21 copper plates (16 in Tamil and 5 in Sanskrit written in Grantha script) and dates to the early 11th century.
- ❖ The plates record the support given by the Cholas to a Buddhist monastery built by the Sailendra rulers of Srivijaya (Java), showing strong India–Southeast Asia relations.

## **NATIONAL**

### **Ayushman Bharat Diwas 2026**

- ❖ The day is observed on 30 April to promote universal healthcare in India.
- ❖ It celebrates Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), launched in 2018.
- ❖ The scheme provides cashless health coverage of up to ₹5 lakh per family per year.
- ❖ It benefits over 10.74 crore families across India.
- ❖ It supports Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and aligns with World Health Organization goals.

### **Creamy Layer – SC/ST Reservation Issue**

- ❖ Supreme Court of India issued notice to Centre and States on a PIL (Public Interest Litigation) seeking exclusion of a “creamy layer” from SC/ST reservations, based on the interpretation of State of Punjab v. Davinder Singh.
- ❖ The 7-judge Bench in Davinder Singh (2024) allowed sub-classification within Scheduled Castes (SC) to direct benefits to the most marginalized, not creamy layer exclusion.
- ❖ The creamy layer principle originated in Indra Sawhney v. Union of India, where OBC (Other Backward Classes) reservations were upheld, but advanced sections were excluded based on relative equality.
- ❖ 1993 OM (Office Memorandum) defined creamy layer mainly by status (Class I/II government posts), recognizing intergenerational institutional power; income was secondary and excluded salary and agricultural income.
- ❖ 2004 DoPT (Department of Personnel and Training) letter treated PSU salary as a disqualification, but it was struck down in Union of India v. Rohith Nathan, restoring status-based criteria and ruling parental salary alone cannot decide creamy layer.

- ❖ B. R. Ambedkar (1932 Lothian Committee note) called the exclusion of wealthy/educated SC persons “erroneous”, stating that caste status depends on community, not individual progress.
- ❖ At the 1936 Mahar Conference, he noted educated and wealthy persons from marginalized castes still face social exclusion in jobs and public life.
- ❖ Data from Jaishri Patil v. Union of India showed that even Group D employees were excluded from benefits due to income limits; the same ceiling treated ₹6 lakh and ₹24 lakh families equally.
- ❖ Impact of reservation is concentrated among less-educated SC members in rural areas, not an elite “creamy layer”.
- ❖ This creates a “creamy layer trap”: threshold excludes moderately stable families while caste-based disadvantages persist.
- ❖ Sub-classification identifies the least represented SC sub-groups, whereas creamy layer exclusion removes individuals based on parental income.
- ❖ Justice B. R. Gavai acknowledged that SC/ST criteria cannot be identical to OBC criteria.
- ❖ SC/ST representation in Group A Union posts is slightly below their population share and quota; backlog vacancies remain unfilled.
- ❖ Extending the creamy layer to SC/ST is argued as constitutionally and sociologically weak; Parliament has the authority to clarify that sub-classification and creamy layer are distinct mechanisms.

### **SC Upholds RTE Admission Rule**

- ❖ In Lucknow Public School Vs. The State of Uttar Pradesh, the Supreme Court of India said neighbourhood schools must give immediate admission under the RTE Act.
- ❖ The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, gives free and compulsory education to children aged 6–14 years.
- ❖ It is based on Article 21A (added by the 86th Amendment Act, 2002), which makes education a fundamental right.
- ❖ The Act requires 25% reservation for EWS (Economically Weaker Sections) and disadvantaged groups in private schools.
- ❖ The government must provide schools, teachers, and basic facilities, and reimburse expenses to private schools.
- ❖ Other provisions: Article 51A(k) (parents must educate children) and Article 45 (early childhood care).

### **Doppler Weather Radar Expansion in India**

- ❖ India has expanded its Doppler Weather Radar network to 50 units by 2026, improving weather forecasting across the country.
- ❖ The number of radars increased from 14 in 2014 to 50, showing more than 250% growth in the network.
- ❖ These radars now cover about 87% of India, helping in better monitoring of weather conditions.
- ❖ They help in the accurate prediction of cyclones, heavy rainfall, and thunderstorms, improving disaster preparedness.
- ❖ The system is managed by the India Meteorological Department under Mission Mausam.
- ❖ Around 50 more radars are planned to further strengthen early warning systems and weather services.

### **Index of Service Production**

- ❖ The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation released an approach paper to introduce the Index of Service Production (ISP) to track services output monthly.
- ❖ ISP will measure the performance of the services sector every month, similar to the Index of Industrial Production for industry.
- ❖ It uses 2024–25 as the base year and mainly relies on GST data along with official government data sources.
- ❖ It is needed because services form more than half of India's GDP, but there is no proper monthly output-based indicator at present.
- ❖ Currently, policymakers depend on the Purchasing Managers' Index, which is survey-based and does not measure actual output.

### **Ending Live-In Relationship – SC**

- ❖ The Supreme Court of India ruled that ending a consensual live-in relationship is not a criminal offence.
- ❖ The court said a voluntary relationship cannot be treated as sexual assault or exploitation after separation.
- ❖ It clarified that live-in relationships do not have the same legal status as marriage under the law.
- ❖ The court allowed the woman to seek maintenance for the child under Section 125 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC).

- ❖ It noted that the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, covers relationships “in the nature of marriage”.
- ❖ The judgment emphasised that consent is key in deciding criminal liability in such cases.

### **Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2026 – Key Changes**

- ❖ Ministry of Home Affairs notified the Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2026, to streamline Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) processes.
- ❖ Minor children cannot hold both an Indian passport and a foreign passport at the same time.
- ❖ OCI cards can now be issued in electronic form (e-OCI) along with physical cards.
- ❖ All OCI services, including registration, are made fully online.
- ❖ A digital system introduced for renunciation and cancellation of OCI with mandatory surrender of the physical card.
- ❖ Applicants can share biometric data for Fast Track Immigration (FTI) for quicker entry at airports.

### **NMC on MBBS Seat Cap**

- ❖ National Medical Commission (NMC) removed the cap on MBBS seats in medical colleges.
- ❖ The earlier limit of 150 seats per college has been removed to allow expansion.
- ❖ The population-based rule of 100 seats per 10 lakh people has also been removed.
- ❖ The distance rule for teaching hospitals is revised to 10 km (15 km for hilly states).
- ❖ The move aims to increase medical seats and improve doctor availability in India.

### **Underground Coal Gasification - India**

- ❖ Ministry of Coal signed Coal Mine Development and Production Agreements for four coal blocks with UCG provisions.
- ❖ This marks the first use of Underground Coal Gasification (UCG) in India’s commercial coal mining.
- ❖ UCG converts coal into synthetic gas (syngas) underground without physical mining.
- ❖ Syngas contains hydrogen, carbon monoxide and methane and is used in fertilisers, petrochemicals and fuels.

- ❖ It helps utilise deep or unworkable coal reserves and reduces dependence on imported natural gas and naphtha.

### **Geospatial Systems in Governance**

- ❖ India hosted the Asia-Pacific Forum on advancing geospatial systems for sustainable development.
- ❖ Geospatial systems use tools like GIS (Geographic Information System), GPS (Global Positioning System), remote sensing, drones, and Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR).
- ❖ The United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) is the global body for geospatial policymaking under the UN Economic and Social Council.
- ❖ These systems help in urban planning, infrastructure development, disaster management, and internal security.
- ❖ Government initiatives include National Geospatial Policy 2022 and National Geospatial Mission (2025-26).
- ❖ eLoc is a National Digital Address System that provides a unique six-character digital address for every location in India.

### **India in USTR Priority Watch List**

- ❖ India was placed on the Priority Watch List of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) in 2026.
- ❖ The list is part of the Special 301 Report, which reviews the intellectual property rights protection of countries.
- ❖ It highlights concerns over patents, copyrights, trademarks, and enforcement issues in India.
- ❖ The report classifies countries into Priority Foreign Country, Priority Watch List, and Watch List.
- ❖ Being on this list does not impose sanctions but increases monitoring and trade pressure.
- ❖ It may impact trade relations and negotiations between India and the United States.

### **Kailash Mansarovar Yatra 2026**

- ❖ China has announced the reopening of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra for Indian pilgrims with limited entry permission for 1000 pilgrims.

- ❖ Two travel routes have been opened through Lipulekh Pass in Uttarakhand and Nathu La Pass in Sikkim for the pilgrimage.
- ❖ The Yatra connects India with Mount Kailash and Mansarovar Lake, located in the Tibet Autonomous Region of China.
- ❖ The pilgrimage is organized under bilateral arrangements between India and China for the regulated movement of pilgrims.
- ❖ The routes were reopened after restrictions in previous years due to geopolitical and health related factors.

### **National Summit on Public Health Innovations**

- ❖ Union Health Minister inaugurated the 10th National Summit on Innovation and Inclusivity in Public Health.
- ❖ The summit was organised under the National Health Mission to showcase best practices in healthcare.
- ❖ Key initiatives launched include the Swasth Bharat Portal, JANANI digital platform, and RBSK 2.0 (Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram for child health).
- ❖ Swasth Bharat Portal is a digital platform to track health programmes, monitor performance, and improve decision-making.
- ❖ JANANI Digital Platform supports maternal and child healthcare services, ensures tracking of pregnancies, and promotes safe deliveries.
- ❖ The 17th Common Review Mission Report is an assessment of the progress and performance of health schemes across States and Union Territories.
- ❖ Integrated Training Module is a standardised system to train primary healthcare workers, improve service quality, and strengthen coordination.
- ❖ Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram 2.0 provides updated guidelines to strengthen child health screening and ensure early treatment of diseases.
- ❖ India achieved zero median out-of-pocket expenditure for outpatient care in government health facilities (no average cost for patients).

### **Parliamentary Committees 2026–27**

- ❖ Lok Sabha Speaker reconstituted four major Parliamentary Committees for 2026–27.
- ❖ The four committees include the Public Accounts Committee, Estimates Committee, Committee on Public Undertakings, and Committee on Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- ❖ Parliamentary Committees are groups of Members of Parliament formed to examine government functioning and ensure executive accountability.

- ❖ Types include Standing Committees, permanent bodies such as Financial Committees, Departmentally Related Standing Committees, and Ad hoc Committees for specific tasks.
- ❖ They provide detailed scrutiny of bills, policies, government performance, and public sector undertakings.

### **MyNRAI Athlete App**

- ❖ The National Rifle Association of India launched the MyNRAI athlete app during its 75th anniversary celebrations.
- ❖ MyNRAI is a one-stop digital platform for athlete registration, performance tracking, certification, and database management.
- ❖ It makes NRAI the first fully digitised sports federation in India.
- ❖ The initiative aims to introduce 7.5 lakh students to shooting through a “10-shot experience” programme before the 2028 Olympics.
- ❖ The programme will be implemented with the Central Board of Secondary Education and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan.
- ❖ NRAI also announced the Shooting League of India (SLI), a franchise-based shooting competition to promote the sport.

### **Childhood Diabetes Guidelines 2026**

- ❖ The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare released the first guidance document on Diabetes Mellitus in children.
- ❖ The guidelines provide a national framework for screening, diagnosis, treatment, and long-term management for children from birth to 18 years.
- ❖ Free services at public health facilities include screening, insulin therapy, glucometers, test strips, and follow-up care.
- ❖ The system ensures a continuum of care from community screening to district hospitals and medical colleges.
- ❖ The 4Ts framework (Toilet, Thirsty, Tired, Thinner) It is used for the early detection of Type 1 diabetes.

### **RBSK 2.0 Guidelines**

- ❖ The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare released the Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) 2.0 guidelines.
- ❖ RBSK (Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram) is a child health screening programme under the National Health Mission (NHM – National Health Mission).

- ❖ It screens children (0–18 years) for 4Ds – Defects at birth, Diseases, Deficiencies, and Developmental delays.
- ❖ New guidelines expand 4Ds to include non-communicable diseases, mental health, and behavioural issues.
- ❖ It promotes lifecycle-based screening with continuous care and strengthens referral systems with digital health records.

### **Vande Mataram – Proposal for Legal Protection**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has proposed amending the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971, to extend legal protection to Vande Mataram, similar to the National Anthem.
- ❖ The proposed amendment aims to provide Vande Mataram the same legal protection as Jana Gana Mana (National Anthem).
- ❖ It seeks to make any insult or obstruction to the singing of Vande Mataram a punishable offence.
- ❖ At present, the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971 penalises disrespect to the National Flag, the Constitution of India, and the National Anthem.
- ❖ Under the existing law, intentional disrespect to these symbols is punishable with imprisonment up to three years, a fine, or both.
- ❖ There is currently no specific legal provision under the Act for the protection of the National Song Vande Mataram.
- ❖ Vande Mataram was written by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay and published in his novel Anandamath in 1882.
- ❖ The novel Anandamath is set against the backdrop of the Sannyasi Rebellion in the late 18th century.
- ❖ In 1937, the Indian National Congress (INC) adopted the first two stanzas of Vande Mataram for official use.
- ❖ The Constitution of India accorded Vande Mataram the status of the National Song.
- ❖ The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) issued instructions stating that all six stanzas (around three minutes) may be sung or played at official events.
- ❖ The MHA also stated that the National Song should be given precedence before the National Anthem in events where both are played.
- ❖ However, the MHA guidelines are advisory in nature and do not have statutory backing.

### **South Coast Railway Zone**

- ❖ The Union Government announced that the South Coast Railway Zone (SCoR) will be officially notified on June 1, 2026.
- ❖ The headquarters of the South Coast Railway Zone will be located at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ South Coast Railway Zone will become the 18th railway zone in India.
- ❖ The new railway zone will manage railway administration across Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ The zone will include the existing Guntakal, Guntur, and Vijayawada railway divisions.
- ❖ The formation of the new zone aims to improve railway administration and operational efficiency in the region.

### **Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016**

- ❖ The Supreme Court of India expanded the definition of ‘acid attack victims’ under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016, to include survivors of forcible acid ingestion.
- ❖ The Court used Article 142 of the Constitution to treat this expansion as a “deemed amendment” until Parliament formally amends the law.
- ❖ The ruling applies retrospectively from 2016, allowing eligible past victims to claim disability benefits and compensation.
- ❖ It ensures access to disability rights, rehabilitation, financial aid, and legal protection for victims, even without visible external injuries.
- ❖ The Court also suggested attaching offender assets for compensation, reversing the burden of proof, and including illegal acid sellers as co-accused.

### **Rise in Juvenile Crime Cases**

- ❖ The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) reported an increase in juvenile crime cases in India in 2024.
- ❖ NCRB recorded 34,878 juvenile crime cases in 2024 compared to 31,365 cases in 2023.
- ❖ The juvenile crime rate increased from 7.1 in 2023 to 7.9 in 2024.
- ❖ A total of 42,633 juveniles were apprehended across India in connection with criminal cases.
- ❖ The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, governs children in conflict with the law and children needing care and protection.
- ❖ Delhi recorded the highest number of juvenile crime cases among metropolitan cities, with 2,306 cases in 2024.

## **Labour Codes Implementation**

- ❖ The Central Government fully operationalised the four new Labour Codes by publishing the final rules in the official gazette.
- ❖ The four Labour Codes came into effect on November 21, 2025.
- ❖ The new framework replaced 29 old labour laws with four simplified labour codes.
- ❖ The four codes are: Code on Wages, 2019; Industrial Relations Code, 2020; Code on Social Security, 2020; and Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020.
- ❖ The reforms aim to ensure minimum wages, universal social security, worker safety, and ease of doing business.
- ❖ The Code on Wages provides minimum wages, timely payment of wages, and equal remuneration for workers.
- ❖ The Industrial Relations Code deals with trade unions, industrial disputes, layoffs, retrenchment, and closure of establishments.
- ❖ The Code on Social Security provides the benefits such as Provident Fund (PF), pension, insurance, and maternity benefits for organised and unorganised workers.
- ❖ The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code focuses on worker safety, health facilities, welfare measures, maximum 48 working hours per week, overtime pay, and weekly holidays.

## **DigiPIN - Digital Address System**

- ❖ India Post launched the DigiPIN (Digital Postal Index Number) system under the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communications, for digital address identification.
- ❖ DigiPIN is a 10-digit geo-coded digital address system linked with latitude and longitude for precise location mapping and delivery.
- ❖ It improves address accuracy in postal services through fine location-based digital mapping.
- ❖ The system is integrated with India Post for mail delivery, tracking, last-mile connectivity, and emergency services support.
- ❖ DigiPIN is developed in collaboration with IIT Hyderabad and National Remote Sensing Centre (ISRO) and works alongside the traditional 6-digit PIN code system introduced in 1972.

## Recent Advisories by PM Modi

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi issued advisories asking citizens to adopt fuel-saving and economic precautionary measures amid global uncertainty, rising oil prices, and supply chain concerns.
- ❖ India imports nearly 85–90% of its crude oil requirements, making the country vulnerable to global oil price shocks and foreign exchange pressure.
- ❖ The advisories include reducing petrol and diesel usage, preferring public transport, encouraging carpooling, adopting work from home, and conducting online meetings.
- ❖ Citizens were advised to shift goods transportation to railways and avoid unnecessary domestic and foreign travel.
- ❖ The Prime Minister also advised people to reduce overseas destination weddings and avoid non-essential gold purchases to reduce import pressure.
- ❖ The advisories encouraged support for “Made in India” products, reduction in cooking oil consumption, and use of locally manufactured goods.
- ❖ Farmers were advised to reduce chemical fertiliser usage and promote natural farming practices.
- ❖ The measures also promote electric vehicles (EVs), solar-powered alternatives, and solar pumps to reduce fuel imports and energy dependency.

## Supreme Court Judge Strength 2026

- ❖ The Union Cabinet approved the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026, to increase the sanctioned strength of the Supreme Court of India from 34 to 38 judges, including the Chief Justice of India (CJI).
- ❖ The amendment will change the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956.
- ❖ This is the first increase in the strength of Supreme Court judges since 2019.
- ❖ The decision was taken due to the rising backlog of cases and increased digital e-filings after the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ❖ Article 124(1) of the Constitution allows Parliament to increase the number of Supreme Court judges through law.
- ❖ The Bill must be passed by both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha with a simple majority before receiving Presidential assent.
- ❖ The original strength of the Supreme Court under the Constitution was one Chief Justice of India and seven other judges.
- ❖ This move aims to address a backlog of over 92,000 cases.

## **India's Renewable Energy Growth**

- ❖ India became the world's 3rd largest country in installed renewable energy capacity.
- ❖ India's non-fossil fuel energy capacity crossed 262.7 Gigawatt (GW), accounting for more than 50% of the country's total installed power capacity.
- ❖ Domestic solar module manufacturing capacity increased from 38 GW in 2024 to 74 GW in 2025.
- ❖ Solar cell manufacturing capacity also increased from 9 GW to 25 GW during the same period.
- ❖ Despite this growth, 60–80% of upstream solar components such as wafers and polysilicon are still imported from China.
- ❖ Solar and wind energy remain the major contributors to renewable energy expansion, with solar capacity reaching 44 GW additions in 2025.

## **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960**

- ❖ The National Crime Records Bureau compiled national-level statistical data for the first time on crimes registered under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960.
- ❖ The Act aims to prevent unnecessary pain or suffering to animals.
- ❖ The Act defines an animal as any living creature other than a human being.
- ❖ The highest number of cases was reported from Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The Animal Welfare Board of India was established under Section 4 of the Act to advise the government on animal welfare and the prevention of cruelty.

## **Mission for Cotton Productivity**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet approved the "Mission for Cotton Productivity" with an outlay of ₹5,659 crore for 2026–27 to 2030–31.
- ❖ The mission aims to improve cotton yield, quality, farmer income, and India's textile value chain through climate-smart and pest-resistant cotton varieties.
- ❖ The programme will be implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and the Ministry of Textiles with support from the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research institutes.
- ❖ The mission will initially cover 140 districts in 14 major cotton-growing States and promote modern farming methods, mechanisation, and biotechnology tools.

- ❖ The government aims to increase cotton productivity from 440 kilograms per hectare to 755 kilograms per hectare and raise production to 498 lakh bales by 2031.
- ❖ India is the world's second-largest cotton producer after China, but faces challenges such as Pink Bollworm, Whitefly attacks, climate stress, low productivity, and dependence on imports of Extra Long Staple (ELS) cotton.

### **AI-Enabled Advanced Weather Forecast Systems**

- ❖ The India Meteorological Department launched two advanced Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based weather forecast systems for better monsoon prediction.
- ❖ The first system is India's first AI-enabled block-level monsoon forecasting model for predicting rainfall and monsoon onset at the local level.
- ❖ The second system provides AI-driven impact-based weather services by combining numerical weather prediction models with Artificial Intelligence technology.
- ❖ The systems were developed with the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology and the National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting.
- ❖ The model gives forecasts every Wednesday up to four weeks in advance with an error margin of nearly four days.
- ❖ At present, the system covers 3,196 blocks across 15 States and one Union Territory, mainly in rainfed regions.

### **70 Years of the Directorate of Enforcement**

- ❖ The Enforcement Directorate (ED) was established on May 1, 1956, under the Department of Revenue in the Ministry of Finance.
- ❖ ED is a non-constitutional and non-statutory executive body that investigates financial crimes and enforces economic laws across India.
- ❖ It works mainly under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 and the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999.
- ❖ Under the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act (FEOA), 2018, ED can seize properties of economic offenders who flee India to avoid prosecution.
- ❖ ED is headed by the Director of Enforcement and has its headquarters in New Delhi with 10 zonal offices and 11 sub-zonal offices across the country.

### **ECLGS 5.0 Scheme**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet approved the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) 5.0 to support businesses affected by the West Asia crisis.

- ❖ The scheme will provide additional credit support through the National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited to banks and lending institutions.
- ❖ ECLGS 5.0 targets an extra credit flow of ₹2.55 lakh crore, including ₹5,000 crore for airlines.
- ❖ The scheme offers 100% guarantee coverage for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and 90% coverage for non-MSMEs and airlines.
- ❖ The scheme will apply to loans sanctioned up to 31 March 2027.

### **India Semiconductor Mission 2.0**

- ❖ The Union Budget 2026–27 announced India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0 to strengthen India's semiconductor ecosystem.
- ❖ ISM 2.0 aims to make India a major player in the global semiconductor value chain under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India initiatives.
- ❖ A budget allocation of ₹1,000 crore has been made for the Financial Year 2026–27.
- ❖ The mission focuses on indigenous manufacturing of semiconductor equipment, chemicals, gases, and materials to reduce import dependence.
- ❖ Under ISM 1.0, approved in 2021, ten semiconductor projects worth ₹1.60 lakh crore have been approved across six states.
- ❖ India's semiconductor market is expected to grow from \$45–50 billion in 2024–25 to \$100–110 billion by 2030.

### **School Management Committee Guidelines 2026**

- ❖ The Union Education Minister launched the School Management Committee (SMC) Guidelines 2026 in New Delhi.
- ❖ Every school up to Grade 12 must form a School Management Committee (SMC) within one month of the academic year.
- ❖ At least 75% of SMC members must be parents or guardians, and 50% members must be women.
- ❖ The guidelines require SMCs to prepare a three-year School Development Plan (SDP) for infrastructure and academic improvement.
- ❖ SMCs will monitor school safety, government grants, social audits, and student welfare activities.

### **International Big Cat Alliance Summit 2026**

- ❖ The Union Environment Minister launched the official website and logo for the 1st International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) Summit 2026 in New Delhi.

- ❖ IBCA was launched on 9 April 2023 as an inter-governmental alliance for global big cat conservation.
- ❖ The IBCA Secretariat is headquartered in New Delhi, India and connects 95 big cat range countries.
- ❖ The alliance focuses on the conservation of seven big cats — the tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar, and Puma.
- ❖ IBCA aims to strengthen transboundary cooperation, scientific research, capacity building, and conservation financing.
- ❖ The 2026 Summit is expected to adopt the first global declaration on big cat conservation.

### **CBI director extension 2026**

- ❖ The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Director, Praveen Sood, has been given another one-year extension.
- ❖ It was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) based on the recommendations of the Selection Committee.
- ❖ The 1986-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer was earlier granted a one-year extension in May 2025 after completion of his two-year term as CBI chief.
- ❖ The Selection Committee, headed by the Prime Minister, also includes Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and the Opposition leader.
- ❖ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) is India's highest-level executive body responsible for appointing senior officials to top positions in the central government, public sector undertakings, and financial institutions.
- ❖ The committee consists of the Prime Minister (Chairperson) and the Minister of Home Affairs.

### **Phase III of Special Intensive Revision**

- ❖ The Election Commission of India (ECI) announced the schedule for Phase 3 of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in 16 States and three Union Territories.
- ❖ The States and Union Territories where the SIR-3 would be carried out in a staggered manner are: Delhi, Odisha, Mizoram, Sikkim, Manipur, Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Chandigarh, Telangana, Punjab, Karnataka, Meghalaya, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Nagaland, Tripura, Dadar and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.
- ❖ With this phase, the exercise would cover the entire country, except Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

- ❖ The SIR schedule for these States would be announced later, after considering the completion of Phase-II of the Census and due consideration of the weather in the upper reaches or snow-bound areas.
- ❖ In Assam, due to the legalities of the National Register of Citizens (NRC), a “special revision” was conducted.
- ❖ While announcing Phase 2, the EC had introduced certain changes with learnings from Bihar.
- ❖ In Bihar, the first phase had been carried out.
- ❖ The most important of them was that no documents were to be collected from electors during the Enumeration Phase.
- ❖ Aadhaar had been added as the 12th document as directed by the Supreme Court, but only as proof of identity and not of citizenship.
- ❖ The Special Intensive Revision is being conducted to ensure that only eligible voters are included in the electoral rolls.
- ❖ The Commission also informed that electors aggrieved by decisions of the ERO may file an appeal before the District Magistrate under Section 24(a) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.
- ❖ It is followed by a second appeal to the Chief Electoral Officer under Section 24(b) and Rule 27 of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960.

### **One Case One Data Initiative**

- ❖ The Chief Justice of India (CJI) launched the ‘One Case One Data’ initiative and an AI-powered chatbot called ‘Su Sahay’.
- ❖ It is a major digital infrastructure project designed to integrate judicial information across all levels of the Indian judiciary into a single, unified system.
- ❖ The primary goal is to develop an efficient national case management system that eliminates data fragmentation by connecting the records of different court tiers, thereby enhancing the speed and transparency of the judicial process.
- ❖ ‘Su Sahay’ is an Artificial Intelligence-powered assistance chatbot integrated directly into the Supreme Court of India’s website.
- ❖ It was developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) in collaboration with the Supreme Court Registry.

### **NITI Aayog report on school education system (2014-15 to 2024-25)**

- ❖ NITI Aayog released a policy report titled ‘School Education System in India: Temporal Analysis and Policy Roadmap for Quality Enhancement’.

- ❖ It is a policy document that presents a comprehensive, decade-long analysis of India's School Education System across key parameters such as access and enrolment, infrastructure, equity and inclusion, and learning outcomes.
- ❖ It draws on secondary data from UDISE+ 2024-25, PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan 2024, NAS 2017 and 2021, and ASER 2024.
- ❖ India's school education system today spans 14.71 lakh schools, serving over 24.69 crore students, making it the largest system in the world.
- ❖ While there are about 7.3 lakh primary schools, there are only around 1.64 lakh higher secondary schools.
- ❖ Four out of every 10 children who enter the system drop out before completing higher secondary education.
- ❖ It means only 5.4% of schools offer a continuous journey from Grade 1 to 12.
- ❖ Close to 7,993 schools across the country reported zero student enrolment.
- ❖ The highest numbers were seen in West Bengal (3,812) and Telangana (2,245).
- ❖ The report recommends 'Cylindrical' Schooling to fix the "leaky pipeline" of student dropouts, which involves creating composite schools that cover Grades 1-12 under one roof.
- ❖ The report highlights that, according to UDISE+ 2024-25, 1.19 lakh schools lack access to functional electricity.
- ❖ Access to water and hygiene facilities is also inconsistent.
- ❖ The share of schools with drinking water facilities has increased from 96.5% in 2014 to 99% in 2025, but 14,505 schools still lack functional water sources, and nearly 59,829 lack hand-washing facilities, compromising student health and hygiene.
- ❖ Improving learning outcomes in children and responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) are challenges that need to be tackled in the school education system.
- ❖ The report points to the fact that the Right to Education Act ends at age 14, leaving families to bear the costs of tuition, books, and transport for older children.
- ❖ The report noted that India's current 4.6% GDP allocation to education remains below the 6% target first recommended in 1964.

### **Justice Aravind Kumar Committee**

- ❖ Chief Justice of India Surya Kant has announced to constitute a high-powered committee headed by Supreme Court Justice Aravind Kumar to prepare a blueprint for the Modernisation of courts across the country.

- ❖ And it will secure a government allocation of 40 to 50 thousand crore rupees for the purpose.
- ❖ The 'Judicial Infrastructure Advisory Committee' will address infrastructural deficiencies in courts through substantial financial support from the government.
- ❖ It will focus on seven key areas, including identifying systemic constraints, improving facilities for litigants and lawyers, and implementing cutting-edge technology to accelerate case disposal.
- ❖ The panel will also focus on the e-courts initiative to bridge the digital divide and the construction of modern court complexes designed for the 21st century.

### **Human-Animal Conflict Zones 2025/26**

- ❖ In 2025, India recorded 166 tiger deaths, the highest annual figure since 1973
- ❖ Karnataka is recording 53 human deaths in the 2025-26 fiscal year, and Madhya Pradesh is witnessing a crisis with 28 tiger deaths in the first five months of 2026.
- ❖ Approximately 500 people are killed annually in India due to encounters with elephants alone, primarily in Odisha, West Bengal, and Assam.

### **Indian Agri-Exports 2025/26**

- ❖ Indian Agri-Exports defied Trade Barriers to post record growth.
- ❖ It was surpassing \$50 billion in FY 2025–26, despite steep tariffs imposed by the United States.
- ❖ Share of processed food exports has risen consistently, from ~15 % in FY18 to ~20 % in FY25.
- ❖ Lower crop yields in the world's biggest coffee producers (Brazil and Vietnam) created a lucrative gap for Indian exports.
- ❖ The marine product exports saw rising shipments to China, Vietnam, Japan, and Belgium.
- ❖ In spices, India has become a substantial exporter of chilli, cumin, mint, turmeric, coriander, ginger, fennel, oleoresins and curry powder/paste.
- ❖ India is also a net importer of traditional plantation spices such as pepper and cardamom.

### **JANANI Platform**

- ❖ The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched the JANANI (Journey of Antenatal, Natal and Neonatal Integrated Care) digital platform during the National Summit on Best Practices.

- ❖ JANANI is an upgraded version of the Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) portal used to track maternal and child healthcare services across India.
- ❖ The platform creates digital health records for women and children, covering antenatal care, childbirth, neonatal care, and family planning services.
- ❖ It provides QR-enabled Mother and Child Health (MCH) cards, automated high-risk pregnancy alerts, and citizen reminders for check-ups and immunisation.
- ❖ JANANI integrates with platforms like U-WIN and POSHAN for better healthcare monitoring and aims to reduce maternal and child mortality rates.

### **Swasth Bharat Portal**

- ❖ The Government of India recently launched the Swasth Bharat Portal to create a unified digital health platform across the country.
- ❖ The portal integrates different health programme systems through APIs (Application Programming Interfaces) to improve interoperability and reduce duplicate data entry.
- ❖ It supports faster decision-making, evidence-based planning, and better monitoring of healthcare programmes.
- ❖ The portal is ABDM (Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission) compliant and is linked with ABHA (Ayushman Bharat Health Account).
- ❖ It will integrate national registries such as HPR (Healthcare Professionals Registry) and HFR (Health Facility Registry).

### **Workers Health Check-up Scheme**

- ❖ The Union Labour Ministry announced free annual health check-ups for workers aged 40 years and above through the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC).
- ❖ The scheme is linked to the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) Code, 2020.
- ❖ Workers handling toxic chemicals or heavy machinery will get mandatory health check-ups and free treatment if illness is detected.
- ❖ The scheme mainly focuses on non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and hypertension.
- ❖ Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) hospitals and dispensaries will provide the health services.
- ❖ The e-Shram portal is being integrated with ESIC to improve worker coverage across India.

### **Micro Irrigation under NMSA**

- ❖ The government targets an additional 100 lakh hectares under micro-irrigation from 2025-26 to 2029-30 through the Per Drop More Crop initiative.
- ❖ National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) was launched in 2014-15 under the National Action Plan on Climate Change.
- ❖ NMSA aims to improve agricultural productivity, water-use efficiency, soil health, and sustainable farming practices.
- ❖ Per Drop More Crop promotes drip and sprinkler irrigation systems and has covered about 109 lakh hectares since 2015-16.
- ❖ Other components of NMSA include Rainfed Area Development, Soil Health Management, and Climate Change and Sustainable Agriculture Monitoring.

### **Committee on Empowerment of Women**

- ❖ The Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women was reconstituted for 2026-27 by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.
- ❖ Daggubati Purandeswari was appointed as the Chairperson of the committee.
- ❖ The committee was first constituted on 29 April 1997 during the 11th Lok Sabha.
- ❖ It is a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) with 18 members from the Lok Sabha and 10 members from the Rajya Sabha.
- ❖ The committee reviews women's welfare policies, gender equality measures, and reports of the National Commission for Women (NCW).

### **Offshore Hydrocarbon Exploration Drive**

- ❖ The Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) launched one of India's largest offshore hydrocarbon exploration programmes.
- ❖ The project aims to map over 161,000 kilometres of lines in the Bay of Bengal and nearby basins over two years.
- ❖ The survey will cover offshore basins such as Krishna-Godavari, Mahanadi, Cauvery, Saurashtra, Bengal Offshore, and Andaman Basin.
- ❖ The exploration uses 2D and 3D seismic surveys and stratigraphic drilling to identify oil and natural gas reserves.
- ❖ The initiative supports India's domestic oil and gas production and energy security goals.

### **Supreme Court on Maternity Leave for Adoptive Mothers**

- ❖ The Supreme Court of India expanded maternity leave benefits for adoptive mothers in the case Hamsaanandini Nanduri vs Union of India.

- ❖ The Court struck down Section 60(4) of the Code on Social Security, 2020, which allowed maternity leave only if the adopted child was below three months of age.
- ❖ Adoptive mothers are now entitled to 12 weeks of maternity leave irrespective of the child's age at the time of adoption.
- ❖ The judgment stated that the restriction violated Article 14 (Right to Equality) and Article 21 (Right to Life and Dignity) of the Constitution.
- ❖ The Code on Social Security, 2020, is one of the four labour codes that combine laws related to social security, maternity benefits, provident fund, and gratuity.

### **SEHAT Initiative**

- ❖ The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) jointly launched the SEHAT (Science Excellence for Health through Agricultural Transformation) mission on 11 May 2026 in New Delhi.
- ❖ SEHAT is a national mission-mode programme aimed at integrating agriculture, nutrition, and public health to improve measurable health outcomes.
- ❖ The initiative focuses on preventive healthcare, shifting from curative to preventive and promotive health approaches in India.
- ❖ It prioritises biofortified crops, integrated farming systems, occupational health of farmers, and prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, hypertension, and cancer.
- ❖ The programme promotes evidence-based policy, indigenous innovation, and collaboration between science, agriculture, and health sectors for improved nutrition security.

### **Kalam and Kavach 3.0**

- ❖ Kalam & Kavach 3.0 was held in New Delhi at the Manekshaw Centre.
- ❖ The theme of the event was "Taking JAI Forward With I<sup>2</sup>".
- ❖ JAI stands for Jointness, Aatmanirbharta (self-reliance), and Innovation.
- ❖ I<sup>2</sup> represents Indigenisation and International Collaboration in the defence sector.
- ❖ The conclave focused on Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled warfare, hypersonic technology, quantum-enabled C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance), and integrated theatre commands.

### **BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting 2026**

- ❖ The BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting 2026 was held in New Delhi to discuss multilateral cooperation and global issues.

- ❖ The meeting highlighted the need for reform in the international financial architecture and for strengthening multilateral institutions.
- ❖ India, Iran, Cuba, and Uganda discussed cooperation in areas such as health, food security, technology, and development partnership.
- ❖ India and Cuba exchanged a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for regular consultations between their foreign ministries.
- ❖ The BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting was hosted in India as part of the BRICS India 2026 presidency activities.

### **Integrated CCUS Field Laboratory**

- ❖ India's first Integrated Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage (CCUS) Field Laboratory Facility was inaugurated at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay under Bharat Innovates 2026.
- ❖ The facility integrates carbon capture technology with carbon utilisation and permanent geological carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) storage.
- ❖ The project supports India's Panchamrit climate commitments and long-term Net-Zero emission targets.
- ❖ The laboratory uses non-potable water to capture carbon emissions and convert them into industrial-grade carbonate and bicarbonate salts.
- ❖ The project also includes India's first pilot-scale scientific drilling initiative to study carbon dioxide storage potential in the Deccan Traps basalt formations.

### **Supreme Court Judges' Strength**

- ❖ President Droupadi Murmu promulgated the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance, 2026, to increase the number of judges in the Supreme Court.
- ❖ The ordinance increases the number of Supreme Court judges from 33 to 37, excluding the Chief Justice of India (CJI), raising the total sanctioned strength from 34 to 38.
- ❖ The ordinance was promulgated under Article 123 of the Constitution, which allows the President to issue ordinances when Parliament is not in session, and immediate action is necessary.
- ❖ The amendment changes Section 2 of the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956, by replacing the word "thirty-three" with "thirty-seven".
- ❖ The gazette notification dated 16 May 2026 stated that Parliament was not in session and that circumstances required immediate action by the President.

- ❖ The ordinance will be placed before both Houses of Parliament and will cease to operate if no approval is passed within 6 weeks after Parliament reassembles or if both Houses disapprove it.

### **MSP for Kharif Crops 2026-27**

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved higher Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for 14 Kharif crops for the 2026-27 marketing season.
- ❖ MSP for common paddy was increased to ₹2,441 per quintal and Grade A paddy to ₹2,461 per quintal.
- ❖ The highest MSP increase was announced for sunflower seed at ₹622 per quintal, followed by cotton at ₹557, Niger seed at ₹515 and sesamum at ₹500.
- ❖ MSP for tur/arhar was fixed at ₹8,450 per quintal, moong at ₹8,780 and urad at ₹8,200 per quintal.
- ❖ Procurement of 14 Kharif crops during 2014-15 to 2025-26 reached 8,746 lakh metric tonnes (LMT), compared to 4,679 LMT during 2004-05 to 2013-14.

### **Largest Ethanol Feedstock - Maize**

- ❖ Maize became India's largest feedstock for ethanol production in Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2025-26.
- ❖ India produced 182 crore litres of maize-based ethanol during the first half of ESY 2025-26.
- ❖ Ethanol is produced from sugarcane and grain-based feedstocks, with maize becoming the top grain contributor.
- ❖ Maize requires less irrigation water and has a shorter growing cycle compared to sugarcane.
- ❖ India's E20 target aims to achieve 20% ethanol blending with petrol.
- ❖ Uttar Pradesh set a target to increase maize cultivation to 11.3 lakh hectares in 2026-27 to support ethanol production.

### **1 percent Labour Welfare Cess**

- ❖ The Government of India notified a 1% welfare cess on construction costs under the Code on Social Security, 2020.
- ❖ The cess is imposed on the total construction cost paid by employers for building and construction works.
- ❖ Individuals constructing houses costing less than ₹50 lakh are exempt from the cess from 21 November 2025.

- ❖ The cess funds are used for welfare schemes such as health support, insurance, financial aid, and education benefits for construction workers.
- ❖ The welfare funds are managed by Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Boards in States and Union Territories.
- ❖ Section 100(1) of the Code on Social Security, 2020, provides the legal basis for the construction welfare cess.

### **Separate FASTags for Toll-Exempt Vehicles**

- ❖ The Government is planning a separate category of FASTags for toll-exempt vehicles under the Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) tolling system.
- ❖ The proposed system will cover armed forces and authorised government vehicles to enable smooth toll-free movement.
- ❖ Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) tolling uses Artificial Intelligence (AI), satellite tracking, and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) for electronic toll collection without stopping vehicles.
- ❖ Under the proposal, exempt vehicles may use specially configured FASTags that record movement without deducting toll charges.
- ❖ The government is considering either a centralised database of exempt vehicles or dedicated FASTags with unlimited free-pass privileges.

### **Indian Ocean Dialogue 2026**

- ❖ India hosted the 10th edition of the Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD) in New Delhi under the theme “Indian Ocean Region in a Transforming World”.
- ❖ This year India assuming the chairship of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) for 2025–27.
- ❖ Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD) is a Track 1.5 forum that brings together government officials, scholars, think tanks, and civil society experts.
- ❖ The dialogue was first proposed during the 13th IORA Council of Ministers meeting in Perth, Australia, in 2013, and the first session was held in Kerala in 2014.
- ❖ It focuses on maritime security, blue economy, disaster risk management, and trade cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- ❖ The dialogue supports India’s MAHASAGAR vision (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions).

### **Kimberley Process Meeting 2026**

- ❖ India hosted the Kimberley Process (KP) Intersessional Meeting 2026 in Mumbai as the Chair of the Kimberley Process for 2026.
- ❖ The meeting focused on strengthening the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) to prevent conflict diamonds from entering the global market.
- ❖ India is one of the founding members of the KPCS, established under the United Nations General Assembly Resolution.
- ❖ India's 2026 Chairship theme is based on the 3Cs — credibility, compliance, and consumer confidence.
- ❖ The Kimberley Process was launched in 2000 by Southern African countries to regulate the trade in rough diamonds.
- ❖ India processes nearly 90% of the world's diamonds and accounts for around 75% of global diamond turnover by value.

### **Global Jaggery Production**

- ❖ India remains the world's largest producer of jaggery (gur), contributing over 70% of global production.
- ❖ Jaggery is a traditional, unrefined natural sweetener made by concentrating sugarcane juice without chemical refining.
- ❖ Nearly 20–30% of India's sugarcane output is used for jaggery production, supporting around 2.5 million rural livelihoods.
- ❖ Uttar Pradesh contributes 48.5% of India's sugarcane production, followed by Maharashtra (24.1%) and Karnataka (10.5%).
- ❖ India's jaggery exports rose from USD 197 million in 2015–16 to USD 406.8 million in 2024–25, showing 106.5% growth in value.

### **Supreme Court on Saranda Forest**

- ❖ The Supreme Court directed Jharkhand to notify 31,468.25 hectares of Saranda Forest as a wildlife sanctuary.
- ❖ Saranda Forest is the largest Sal forest in Asia and is located near Jamshedpur in Jharkhand.
- ❖ "Saranda" means "land of seven hundred hills" and the forest spreads over around 900 square kilometres.
- ❖ The Supreme Court upheld the 1968 notification of the former Bihar government declaring it as the "Saranda Game Sanctuary."
- ❖ The Court reiterated that mining is prohibited inside national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and within a one-kilometre Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ).

## **Country Strategic Opportunities Programme**

- ❖ The Government of India and the International Fund for Agricultural Development have launched a new Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP) for 2026–2033.
- ❖ COSOP is an eight-year strategic framework for strengthening rural livelihoods and improving rural incomes.
- ❖ The programme focuses on climate-resilient agriculture, financial inclusion, and market-oriented rural development.
- ❖ It aims to strengthen grassroots institutions such as Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), and cooperatives.
- ❖ COSOP also promotes innovation in agriculture, fisheries, and animal husbandry with support from NABARD.
- ❖ The programme supports South-South cooperation by sharing India's rural development and digital agriculture experience with other countries.

## **Urtan and Dhirauli Mines**

- ❖ The Ministry of Coal announced the start of coal production from the Urtan and Dhirauli coal mines in Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ Urtan became India's first underground coal mine to start production under the commercial coal auction regime.
- ❖ Both mines produce non-coking coal that can be sold in the open market under the liberalised commercial coal mining policy.
- ❖ The mines are located in the Gondwana Coal Basin, which contains most of India's black coal reserves.
- ❖ The project aims to strengthen domestic coal production, underground mining and India's energy security.

## **Coal/Lignite Gasification Scheme**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet approved the Scheme for Promotion of Surface Coal/Lignite Gasification Projects with an outlay of ₹37,500 crore.
- ❖ The scheme aims to promote coal gasification technology to convert coal and lignite into Synthesis Gas (Syngas) for producing fuels and chemicals.
- ❖ It is implemented by the Ministry of Coal and targets 100 million Tonnes (MT) of coal gasification by 2030.
- ❖ Financial assistance under the scheme is capped at 20% of plant and machinery cost, with a maximum support of ₹5,000 crore per project.

- ❖ The scheme aims to reduce imports of urea, ammonia, methanol, and natural gas and strengthen India's energy security under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative.

### **NHRC Advisory 2.0**

- ❖ The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) issues Advisory 2.0 to states and UTs to ensure the welfare of transgender persons
- ❖ The Advisory focuses on ten key areas for action to ensure the welfare of transgender persons.
- ❖ The key recommendations are as follows:
  - Inclusion of distinct categories such as 'Intersex', 'Transmen' and 'Transwomen' in the upcoming Census of India and other national surveys to ensure accurate and inclusive gender-disaggregated data collection;
  - Review of laws, including the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, Juvenile Justice Act and succession laws, to ensure recognition of self-identified gender and protection of the rights of transgender and intersex persons;
  - Ensuring equal inheritance, succession, housing and property rights for transgender and intersex persons without discrimination;
  - Developing comprehensive SOPs for police and correctional institutions regarding arrest, detention, searches, interrogations, imprisonment, confidentiality and access to gender-affirming healthcare for transgender persons;
  - Establishing dedicated legal aid cells, helplines and independent grievance-redressal mechanisms for transgender and gender-diverse persons facing discrimination, violence or custodial abuse;
  - Admission of transgender students in educational institutions based on self-identified gender without requiring medical proof, along with the creation of gender-neutral facilities and grievance-redressal mechanisms;
  - Mandatory gender-sensitization training for teachers, counsellors, police, prison personnel, judicial officers and healthcare professionals to promote inclusion and reduce discrimination;
  - Developing standardized and ethical medical protocols for gender-affirming healthcare, regulation of Sex Reassignment Surgery costs and equal insurance coverage for transgender healthcare needs;
  - Prohibition of coercive or non-consensual medical procedures on intersex children, except in life-saving situations, while ensuring counselling and psychosocial support for parents;
  - Promoting inclusive workplaces through gender-neutral facilities, inclusive Human Resource policies, workplace grievance mechanisms and mandatory

diversity disclosures, alongside welfare measures for elderly transgender persons; and

- Simplifying the documentation process and enabling self-identification-based enrolment for elderly transgender persons in welfare schemes and establishing transgender-inclusive old-age homes and community shelters, ensuring privacy, healthcare access, social interaction and emotional well-being.

### **Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2026**

- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs has amended Citizenship Rules, 2009.
- ❖ It notified Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2026
- ❖ It was targeting applicants from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh.
- ❖ Applicants must declare whether they have a valid or expired passport from Pakistan, Afghanistan, or Bangladesh.
- ❖ They are required to provide passport details including number, date and place of issue, and expiry.
- ❖ It has introduced electronic Overseas Citizen of India (e-OCI) cards.

### **Inquiry report on Yashwant Varma**

- ❖ The Judges Inquiry Committee submitted its report to Parliament in accordance with the statutory requirements under the Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968.
- ❖ The committee was constituted by the Lok Sabha Speaker to inquire into allegations against former High Court judge Justice Yashwant Varma.
- ❖ The Presiding Officer of the Judges Inquiry Committee, Supreme Court Judge Justice Aravind Kumar, along with the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court Justice Shree Chandrashekhar and Senior Advocate of the Karnataka High Court B.V. Acharya, presented the Report of the Judges Inquiry Committee to Mr Birla.
- ❖ It will be laid before both Houses of Parliament in due course.

### **BIS Fuel Standards 2026**

- ❖ Bureau of Indian Standards notified new standards for E22, E25, E27, and E30 ethanol-blended petrol fuels under IS 19850:2026.
- ❖ E30 fuel contains 30% ethanol blended with petrol, and India aims to achieve 30% ethanol blending by 2030 under the National Policy on Biofuels, 2018.
- ❖ BIS also released IS 18698:2026 standards for Dimethyl Ether (DME) blended Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), replacing the 2024 standard.

- ❖ Dimethyl Ether (DME) is a clean-burning synthetic fuel used as an alternative to LPG, and China accounts for nearly 90% of global DME production capacity.
- ❖ BIS develops standards for petrol, biofuels, hydrogen, biodiesel, and green fuels to ensure fuel quality, safety, and reduced environmental impact.

### **PRAGATI Platform**

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired interactions through PRAGATI to review major government projects and public grievance matters.
- ❖ PRAGATI stands for Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation.
- ❖ It is an Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-based multi-modal digital governance platform launched in 2015.
- ❖ The platform helps the Prime Minister review infrastructure projects, government schemes, and citizen grievances directly with Central and State officials.
- ❖ PRAGATI improves coordination between the Central Government, State Governments, and district-level administration for faster project implementation and decision-making.

### **Chenab Hydropower Projects**

- ❖ India started work on new Chenab River hydropower projects amid the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty.
- ❖ The projects include the ₹2,352 crore Chenab-Beas Link Tunnel in Himachal Pradesh and the ₹268 crore sediment-bypass tunnel at Salal Dam in Jammu and Kashmir.
- ❖ The Chenab is one of the western rivers of the Indus river system shared by India and Pakistan.
- ❖ The Indus Waters Treaty was signed in 1960 between India and Pakistan with the World Bank as a signatory.
- ❖ India has also fast-tracked major Chenab hydropower projects such as Pakal Dul, Kiru, Kwar, Ratle, and Sawalkote in Jammu and Kashmir.

### **Supreme Court on Stray Dogs**

- ❖ The Supreme Court of India allowed civic authorities to take legal action, including euthanasia, against rabid, incurably ill, or highly dangerous stray dogs under the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules, 2023.
- ❖ The Court said Article 21 of the Constitution protects citizens' right to life and safety from stray dog attacks.

- ❖ It also stated that Article 19(1)(d) gives citizens the right to move freely in public places without fear.
- ❖ The Court directed every State and Union Territory to establish at least one Animal Birth Control (ABC) centre in each district with trained veterinary staff.
- ❖ States were instructed to ensure the availability of anti-rabies vaccines and immunoglobulin in government hospitals.
- ❖ The Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules, 2023, under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, allow euthanasia only for rabid, terminally ill, or fatally injured dogs.

### **New Committee Heads**

- ❖ Medha Vishram Kulkarni was appointed as the Chairperson of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change.
- ❖ The committee examines government policies, budget allocations, annual reports, and bills related to science, technology, environment, forests, and climate change.
- ❖ Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees help Parliament in detailed examination of ministries and legislative proposals.
- ❖ These committees consist of members from both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and function as permanent parliamentary committees.
- ❖ Sudheer Gupta was appointed as the Chairperson of the Joint Committee on the Corporate Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026.
- ❖ The Joint Committee was formed to study and review the provisions of the Corporate Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026 before it is passed by Parliament.
- ❖ Members of the committee include MPs such as Bajjayant Panda, Tejasvi Surya, Dimple Yadav, Mahua Moitra, and Supriya Sule.

### **India at ITU Council 2026**

- ❖ India participated in the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Council 2026 meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland.
- ❖ India's proposal to host the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (PP)-2030 was accepted by the ITU Council.
- ❖ India announced voluntary support for work related to 6G, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI).
- ❖ The International Telecommunication Union is the United Nations (UN) agency for global telecom and digital cooperation.
- ❖ India has been a member of the ITU Council since 1952.

### **Fourth S-400 Air Defence System**

- ❖ India is set to receive the fourth squadron of the S-400 Triumf air defence missile system from Russia.
- ❖ India signed a 5.43 billion US dollar agreement with Russia in 2018 to procure five S-400 air defence squadrons.
- ❖ The S-400 Triumf is a long-range surface-to-air missile system designed to destroy aircraft, cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles.
- ❖ The fourth S-400 squadron is expected to be deployed in Rajasthan for air defence coverage along the western border.
- ❖ The fifth and final squadron under the original agreement is expected to be delivered by November 2026.

### **India Semiconductor Mission 2.0**

- ❖ The Central Government is considering extending the tenure of India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0 from 5 years to 12 years to strengthen domestic semiconductor manufacturing and supply chains.
- ❖ The extended timeline aims to support Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in becoming suppliers for global semiconductor companies.
- ❖ The mission focuses on developing India's semiconductor ecosystem, including chip manufacturing, packaging, and raw material supply chains.
- ❖ The longer incentive period is expected to help firms improve quality, scale, and competitiveness in the semiconductor sector.
- ❖ The India Semiconductor Mission was launched to promote domestic semiconductor and display manufacturing in India.

### **India Heatwave 2026**

- ❖ India recorded 97 of the world's 100 hottest cities on 22 May 2026 during a severe heatwave across northern, central, and eastern regions.
- ❖ Balangir in Odisha and Sasaram in Bihar recorded 48°C, while Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh recorded 47°C.
- ❖ Earlier on the same day, all 50 of the world's hottest cities were in India.
- ❖ The India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast heatwave to severe heatwave conditions until 27 May 2026 across several states in northern and eastern India.
- ❖ A heatwave is a period of abnormally high temperature lasting several days and is classified by IMD using temperature thresholds and departure from normal conditions.

- ❖ Low humidity levels of 6–8%, along with extreme temperatures increased risks of heat stress, dehydration, and heatstroke.

### **Raghav Chadha - Petition Panel**

- ❖ Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament (MP) Raghav Chadha was appointed as the Chairman of the Committee on Petitions of the Rajya Sabha in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Committee on Petitions examines petitions submitted by citizens on public issues and government matters.
- ❖ The committee was reconstituted by Rajya Sabha Chairman C. P. Radhakrishnan with effect from 20 May 2026.
- ❖ The panel has 10 members, including Harsh Mahajan, Gulam Ali, Jebi Mather Hisham, and P. Sandosh Kumar.

### **Sample Registration Survey 2024**

- ❖ The latest Sample Registration Survey (SRS) 2024 bulletin showed a decline in India's birth rate, death rate, and Infant Mortality Rate (IMR).
- ❖ India's birth rate declined from 21 per 1,000 population in 2014 to 18.3 in 2024, while the death rate declined from 6.7 to 6.4.
- ❖ The Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), which measures infant deaths per 1,000 live births, declined from 39 in 2014 to 24 in 2024.
- ❖ Urban areas performed better than rural areas in birth rate, death rate, and Infant Mortality Rate indicators.
- ❖ The Natural Growth Rate (NGR) measures population increase through births and deaths, excluding migration.
- ❖ Kerala recorded the lowest Natural Growth Rate of 3.9 and the lowest Infant Mortality Rate of 8 in the country.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu ranked second among larger States with a Natural Growth Rate of 4.8 and an Infant Mortality Rate of 11.
- ❖ Among smaller States, Goa performed well with a Natural Growth Rate of 4.2 and an Infant Mortality Rate of 11.

### **SC Order on Missing Child Cases**

- ❖ The Supreme Court of India ordered all police stations to register a First Information Report (FIR) for every missing child and missing person complaint.
- ❖ The Court directed police to immediately treat missing child cases as possible kidnapping or abduction cases under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023.

- ❖ The judgment was delivered by a bench of Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah and Justice R. Mahadevan.
- ❖ The Court ordered all Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) across India to become fully functional within four weeks.
- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs was directed to create a national data grid linking all police stations for missing children, missing women, and trafficking cases.
- ❖ The Court also formed a committee headed by Justice Mukta Gupta to prepare a pan-India Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for missing children cases.

### **Cockroach Janta Party**

- ❖ The Central Government blocked the website and social media accounts of the newly formed Cockroach Janta Party using powers under Section 69A of the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000.
- ❖ Section 69A of the Information Technology (IT) Act allows the government to block online content in the interest of national security, public order, sovereignty, or defence of India.
- ❖ The action included blocking the party's digital platforms and online communication channels.
- ❖ Orders under Section 69A are implemented through the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- ❖ The blocking process follows procedures and safeguards provided under the Information Technology Rules, 2009.

### **BHAVYA Scheme Guidelines**

- ❖ The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade released operational guidelines for the Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana (BHAVYA) Scheme.
- ❖ BHAVYA is a Central Sector Scheme launched to develop investment-ready and world-class industrial parks across India.
- ❖ The scheme aims to develop 100 industrial parks between 2026-27 and 2031-32 with a total outlay of about ₹33,660 crore.
- ❖ The scheme supports the Make in India initiative, the PM Gati Shakti programme, manufacturing growth, logistics improvement, and employment generation.
- ❖ Projects will be implemented through Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) under the Companies Act, 2013, with National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation acting as the Project Management Agency.

### **AI Platforms Kautilya and Q-FORCE**

- ❖ The Indian Army developed two Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based platforms, Kautilya and Q-FORCE, for command intelligence and logistics management.
- ❖ Kautilya is an AI-powered command intelligence platform used for data analysis, decision support, and operational readiness.
- ❖ Q-FORCE is a digital logistics application designed for inventory handling, supply chain management, and sustainment operations.
- ❖ Kautilya uses Natural Language Processing (NLP) technology for structured data generation and analytics.
- ❖ The platforms support the Indian Army's plan to expand AI integration and data-centric military operations by 2027.
- ❖ Earlier AI applications used by the Army included ECAS and TRINETRA under Project SANJAY during Operation Sindoor.

### **High Out-of-Pocket Health Spending in India**

- ❖ The latest National Health Accounts (NHA) Estimates 2022-23 showed that people in India still spend a very high amount from their own pockets for healthcare.
- ❖ Out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE) forms nearly 50% of the Current Health Expenditure (CHE) in India.
- ❖ Government Health Expenditure (GHE) increased from 1.15% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2013-14 to about 1.48% in 2022-23.
- ❖ India's public health spending is still below the World Health Organization (WHO) recommendation of 5% of GDP and below the National Health Policy target of 2.5% of GDP.
- ❖ Private hospitals accounted for the largest share of healthcare spending at 30.83%, while preventive healthcare spending was only 8.88% of CHE.
- ❖ State governments contributed more than 63% of total government health spending, while private health insurance spending was higher than government-funded insurance schemes.

### **New Judges of the Supreme Court**

- ❖ The Supreme Court Collegium recommended four High Court Chief Justices and one-woman senior advocate for appointment as judges of the Supreme Court.
- ❖ The Collegium proposed the name of senior advocate V. Mohana, a lawyer practising in the Supreme Court, as a judge of the apex court.
- ❖ Currently, Justice B.V. Nagarathna is the only woman judge in the Supreme Court, and she is also a member of the Supreme Court Collegium.

- ❖ The last woman judge was appointed to the Supreme Court in August 2021, and V. Mohana would become the first woman judge appointed after a gap of over five years if approved.
- ❖ The recommendations were made after the sanctioned strength of Supreme Court judges, including the Chief Justice of India (CJI), was increased from 32 to 38.
- ❖ The four High Court Chief Justices recommended were Sheel Nagu, Shree Chandrashekhar, Sanjeev Sachdeva and Arun Palli.

### **First BRICS Tourism Meeting**

- ❖ India chaired the first BRICS Tourism Working Group (TWG) Meeting under its BRICS 2026 Chairship in virtual mode.
- ❖ The meeting focused on tourism cooperation among BRICS nations.
- ❖ India's tourism agenda theme was "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability."
- ❖ India highlighted four key priorities — use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in tourism, sustainable tourism, tourism skill development and seamless travel cooperation.
- ❖ India stressed the use of AI for personalised travel services, tourism forecasting and smart destination management.
- ❖ The 2nd BRICS Tourism Working Group Meeting and BRICS Tourism Ministers' Meeting will be held in Jaipur, Rajasthan, in August 2026.

### **PM-AJAY Portal and Mobile App**

- ❖ The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment launched the PM-AJAY Portal and AJAY Mobile App in New Delhi to strengthen Scheduled Caste (SC) welfare scheme implementation.
- ❖ PM-AJAY stands for Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana.
- ❖ The initiative was launched by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- ❖ The portal and mobile app aim to shift the scheme from paper-based work to a fully digital workflow and real-time processing system.
- ❖ The AJAY Mobile App will support village-level planning, field monitoring, geo-tagging, photo uploads, dashboard reporting and transparent digital governance.
- ❖ The platform has been developed to improve service delivery, transparency and implementation of welfare schemes for Scheduled Castes (SCs).

## **National Sports Governance Rules 2026**

- ❖ The Central Government notified the National Sports Governance Board Rules and National Sports Tribunal Rules, 2026, under the National Sports Governance Act, 2025.
- ❖ The Act aims to promote sports, ensure athlete welfare, strengthen good governance and provide fair dispute resolution in sports.
- ❖ The National Sports Board (NSB) will function as the apex regulatory body for the recognition and governance of National Sports Bodies.
- ❖ The National Sports Tribunal (NST) was created for the speedy and cost-effective resolution of sports-related disputes.
- ❖ The Chairperson of the NST can be a current or former Supreme Court judge or a former Chief Justice of a High Court.
- ❖ Appeals against the orders of the National Sports Tribunal can be filed in the Supreme Court within 30 days.

## **Google AI Learning Program**

- ❖ Google announced “Google AI Educator Series (GES)”, a free Artificial Intelligence (AI) training programme for school and higher education teachers in India.
- ❖ The programme will provide AI training to teachers in Maharashtra, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Ladakh, Punjab, and other regions.
- ❖ Google launched the initiative at the Education World Forum 2026 held in London.
- ❖ The training will focus on the responsible use of AI tools such as Gemini in classrooms and academic activities.
- ❖ The programme will initially be available in six Indian languages — Assamese, Hindi, Marathi, Telugu, Odia, and Punjabi.

## **High-Level Committee on Demographic Change**

- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) formed a High-Level Committee to study demographic changes caused by illegal immigration and abnormal migration patterns in India.
- ❖ The committee is headed by retired Supreme Court Judge Justice Prakash Prabhakar Navlekar.
- ❖ The panel will study population changes, border security issues, and their impact on tribal and local communities.
- ❖ It will recommend measures for the identification, detention, and deportation of undocumented immigrants under the Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025.

- ❖ The committee will also suggest stronger border management, identity verification, and monitoring systems using technology.

### **India's Four-Dimensional Security Framework**

- ❖ The union home minister proposed the Four-Dimensional Grid Border Security Model during his visit to the Sanchu Border Outpost on the India–Pakistan border in Rajasthan.
- ❖ It is a new integrated border security framework to strengthen India's international border protection.
- ❖ The model brings together the Border Security Force (BSF), Army, district administration, cyber surveillance units, and border residents under one coordinated system.
- ❖ It aims to prevent infiltration, smuggling, drone intrusions, and cross-border terrorism through multi-layered security.
- ❖ The framework uses technology such as cyber monitoring, drone tracking, real-time intelligence sharing, and advanced communication systems.

### **150 Years of Indian Science Excellence**

- ❖ The Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science (IACS) celebrated the 150th anniversary of its establishment in 2026.
- ❖ IACS was founded in 1876 by Mahendralal Sircar at Kolkata and is considered Asia's first research institution established by Indians for scientific research.
- ❖ The Government inaugurated the Plasma Enhanced Chemical Vapour Deposition (PECVD) system at IACS to develop India's first amorphous silicon solar cell.
- ❖ Eminent scientists such as Jagadish Chandra Bose, Meghnad Saha, Satyendra Nath Bose, and C. V. Raman were associated with IACS.
- ❖ C. V. Raman discovered the Raman Effect at IACS, earning India's first Nobel Prize in Science in 1930.

### **SARTHAK-PDS Scheme**

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the SARTHAK-PDS scheme with a Central outlay of ₹25,530 crore for the period up to March 2031.
- ❖ SARTHAK-PDS (Scheme for Assistance in Ration Transport and Handling-Income with Automation in Public Distribution System) integrates ration transport support and SMART-PDS reforms under one umbrella scheme.

- ❖ The scheme aims to strengthen the Public Distribution System (PDS) and ensure efficient last-mile delivery of food grains under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013.
- ❖ It will provide financial assistance for intra-state movement, handling of food grains, and Fair Price Shop (FPS) dealers' margins.
- ❖ The scheme will support food security for 81.35 crore beneficiaries covered under NFSA.

### **Water Budgeting - 11,000 Villages**

- ❖ India's water budgeting initiatives have improved groundwater levels, helping make over 11,000 villages drought-free.
- ❖ Under the Atal Bhujal Yojana, 180 of 229 blocks recorded measurable groundwater improvement during 2023–24 and 2024–25.
- ❖ Water budgeting assesses water availability and demand to ensure sustainable use of groundwater and surface water resources.
- ❖ The Varuni App, developed with support from NITI Aayog, automatically generates block-level water budgets using rainfall and land-use data.
- ❖ Maharashtra's Jalyukt Shivar Abhiyan (2014) helped make over 11,000 villages drought-free through water conservation and groundwater recharge measures.
- ❖ Rajasthan's Mukhyamantri Jal Swavlamban Abhiyan (2016) contributed to an approximately 4% rise in groundwater levels.

### **SC on Special Intensive Revision**

- ❖ The Supreme Court has upheld the constitutional validity of the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, beginning with Bihar and extending to other States and Union Territories.
- ❖ The Court ruled that SIR is within the powers of the Election Commission of India under Article 324 and helps maintain accurate electoral rolls.
- ❖ The exercise was justified due to migration, urbanisation, duplicate entries, and unreported deaths affecting voter lists.
- ❖ In Bihar, the electoral roll decreased from 7.89 crore to 7.42 crore voters after the revision process.
- ❖ Persons excluded on citizenship grounds must have their cases referred to authorities under the Citizenship Act, 1955, for adjudication.
- ❖ The Court mandated safeguards such as publication of exclusion lists, disclosure of reasons, and opportunities for appeal to ensure procedural fairness.

## INTERNATIONAL

### India–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement

- ❖ India and New Zealand signed a landmark Free Trade Agreement (FTA).
- ❖ New Zealand will give 100% duty-free access to Indian exports, helping sectors like MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises), textiles and leather.
- ❖ New Zealand will invest USD 20 billion in India over 15 years as FDI (Foreign Direct Investment).
- ❖ India opened 70% tariff lines but kept 30% excluded to protect sectors like dairy, sugar and farmers.
- ❖ The agreement includes Rules of Origin to stop misuse and allows visas for students and skilled workers.
- ❖ It also promotes AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy) and improves trade and services between both countries.
- ❖ Seven other free trade agreements in the past three and a half years with Mauritius, the UAE, Australia, the EFTA nations (European Free Trade Association - Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), the U.K., the EU, Oman, and now New Zealand have been signed by India.

### SCO Defence Ministers' Meeting 2026

- ❖ The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers' Meeting was held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, where India highlighted its stand on terrorism.
- ❖ India showcased Operation Sindoor as an example of its zero-tolerance policy towards terrorism.
- ❖ India urged SCO members to take strict action against countries that support or shelter terrorists.
- ❖ It referred to the Tianjin Declaration (2025), which focuses on regional security and counter-terrorism cooperation.
- ❖ India highlighted the role of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in tackling extremism.

### WTO Peace Clause by India

- ❖ India invoked the World Trade Organization peace clause for the 7th time with rice subsidies of \$7.6 billion.
- ❖ The peace clause was agreed at the WTO Ministerial Conference in Bali in 2013 as an interim arrangement.

- ❖ It allows developing countries to provide subsidies under public stockholding programmes for food security.
- ❖ It protects such subsidies from legal challenges in the WTO dispute settlement system, even if limits are exceeded.
- ❖ These subsidies are linked to the Minimum Support Price procurement of crops by the government.
- ❖ It is a temporary measure until a permanent solution to food security is agreed upon at the WTO.

### **UAE on OPEC and OPEC+**

- ❖ The United Arab Emirates announced it will exit Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and OPEC+ from May 1, 2026.
- ❖ The move aims to increase production flexibility and allow independent energy policy decisions.
- ❖ The UAE has been a member of OPEC since 1967, marking nearly six decades of association.
- ❖ It is one of the few countries with high spare oil production capacity.
- ❖ The exit may weaken OPEC's control over global oil supply and price stability.

### **US Waiver on Chabahar Port**

- ❖ The United States ended the sanctions waiver on Chabahar Port on April 26, 2026.
- ❖ This creates uncertainty for India's connectivity project linking Afghanistan and Central Asia via Iran.
- ❖ India is reviewing its role and has withdrawn personnel while prepaying \$120 million investment.
- ❖ Chabahar Port is located in Sistan-Baluchistan, Iran, and provides access bypassing Pakistan.
- ❖ It connects to the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) for trade with Central Asia and Europe.

### **Jordan in India-led Global Initiatives**

- ❖ Jordan joined India-led global initiatives ISA, CDRI and GBA.
- ❖ The International Solar Alliance (ISA) was launched by India and France in 2015 to promote solar energy.

- ❖ Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), which focuses on building disaster-resilient infrastructure.
- ❖ Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA), launched during the G20 Summit 2023, to promote biofuels.
- ❖ These initiatives aim to support clean energy, disaster resilience, and sustainable development.

### **12 New UNESCO Global Geoparks**

- ❖ UNESCO designated 12 new Global Geoparks.
- ❖ The total number of Global Geoparks increased to 241 sites in 51 countries.
- ❖ New sites are in China, France, Greece, Ireland, Japan, Malaysia, Portugal, Russia, Tunisia and Uruguay.
- ❖ Tunisia got its first-ever Global Geopark under this list.
- ❖ UNESCO Global Geoparks were established as an official label in 2015 and follow a bottom-up approach with active involvement of local communities and stakeholders.
- ❖ The status is given for four years and requires revalidation to continue.

### **India–Caribbean Health Cooperation Boost**

- ❖ India deployed the Aarogya Maitri system in Jamaica to strengthen health cooperation with Caribbean nations.
- ❖ It is part of India’s HADR (Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief) framework for global emergency support.
- ❖ The system is a portable, modular healthcare unit for rapid medical response, diagnosis, and treatment in disasters.
- ❖ The deployment was coordinated by the National Security Council Secretariat and the Ministry of External Affairs.
- ❖ It involves collaboration between RailTel Corporation of India Limited and Green Genome India Pvt Ltd.

### **EPC Summit 2026**

- ❖ Canada became the first non-European country to attend a summit of the European Political Community (EPC).
- ❖ The 8th EPC Summit was held in Yerevan, Armenia.
- ❖ The European Political Community (EPC) was formed in 2022 after Russia invaded Ukraine.

- ❖ EPC is a political forum that includes European Union (EU) and non-European Union countries such as the United Kingdom (UK), Turkey, Norway, and Switzerland.
- ❖ The summit discussed issues related to politics, security, and infrastructure cooperation.

### **Das Adam Smith Problem**

- ❖ The 250th anniversary of The Wealth of Nations revived debates on the “Das Adam Smith Problem” in economic thought.
- ❖ The Das Adam Smith Problem refers to the perceived contradiction between self-interest in The Wealth of Nations and moral sympathy in The Theory of Moral Sentiments.
- ❖ Modern scholars argue that Adam Smith combined ethics and economics into a single moral framework instead of treating them as separate ideas.
- ❖ The concept of the “Invisible Hand” explains how individual actions in markets can produce socially beneficial outcomes.
- ❖ The idea highlights the balance between self-interest, morality, welfare, and social responsibility in modern capitalism.

### **Project Freedom – US**

- ❖ The United States launched “Project Freedom”, in the Strait of Hormuz.
- ❖ The project was started to escort commercial ships and restore freedom of navigation in the region.
- ❖ The Strait of Hormuz connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea and is an important global oil trade route.
- ❖ The operation involves United States Central Command assets, including guided-missile destroyers, aircraft, unmanned systems, and 15,000 service members.
- ❖ Iran blocked the Strait on February 28, 2026, after US and Israeli airstrikes, while the US imposed a naval blockade on Iranian ports on April 13, 2026.
- ❖ The Maritime Freedom Construct is a new United States initiative for maritime security coordination involving the Department of State and the Department of War.

### **India–Jamaica Trade Cooperation**

- ❖ External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar made his first bilateral visit to Jamaica to strengthen India–Jamaica relations.

- ❖ Both countries signed agreements related to digital transformation, cultural exchange, sports, and digital payments.
- ❖ India recognised Jamaica as an important logistics hub and gateway to the Caribbean region.
- ❖ India appreciated Jamaica's support for India's candidature for a non-permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council for 2028–29.
- ❖ India announced humanitarian assistance, including dialysis units, fishing boats, GPS devices, and support for Jamaica's recovery after Hurricane Melissa.

### **India-Vietnam Strategic Relations**

- ❖ The President of Vietnam visited India during the 10th anniversary of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.
- ❖ India and Vietnam upgraded ties to an "Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership".
- ❖ Both countries set a bilateral trade target of USD 25 billion by 2030.
- ❖ Vietnam joined India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) to support a free and open Indo-Pacific region.
- ❖ India and Vietnam signed agreements on defence, digital payments, rare earth minerals, healthcare, and cultural cooperation.
- ❖ Both nations supported freedom of navigation and peaceful dispute resolution in the South China Sea under UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea) 1982.

### **Marka-e-Haq Day of Pakistan**

- ❖ Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has announced that May 10 will be celebrated as 'Marka-e-Haq Day' annually.
- ❖ In response to the Pahalgam terror attack, India launched Operation Sindoor on May 7 last year.
- ❖ The day honours the Pakistani armed forces' response during the April 22 – May 10, 2025, conflict with India.

### **Five New Members - IUCN**

- ❖ The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) approved 48 new members globally, including five organisations from Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean region.

- ❖ IUCN was established in 1948 for global nature conservation and sustainable development.
- ❖ It is a membership union of governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), Indigenous groups, and civil society organisations.
- ❖ IUCN works on biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration, environmental research, and global policy support.
- ❖ The new members include organisations from Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, and El Salvador.
- ❖ The addition increased IUCN membership in the Mesoamerica and Caribbean region to 123 organisations.

### **Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor**

- ❖ A new report warned that the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor is under threat from oil expansion, logging, and organised crime.
- ❖ The corridor is a proposed 16-million-hectare protected area in the Amazon region along the Peru–Brazil border.
- ❖ It is home to the world’s largest population of isolated Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact (PIACI).
- ❖ The region is an important carbon sink and a major biodiversity hotspot with very high primate diversity.
- ❖ Oil and gas blocks overlap more than 10% of the corridor, threatening large areas of tropical forest.
- ❖ Logging activities are also affecting forest areas in the Peruvian section of the corridor.

### **Trump-Xi Talks in Beijing**

- ❖ United States President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping held high-level talks in Beijing.
- ❖ The discussions focused on trade, tariffs, Artificial Intelligence (AI), semiconductors, and business cooperation.
- ❖ The United States claimed that China may purchase Boeing aircraft and American agricultural products.
- ❖ No major agreements or detailed trade deals were officially confirmed after the talks.
- ❖ Technology cooperation and semiconductor supply chains were key areas discussed during the summit.

### **Ebola Health Emergency - WHO**

- ❖ The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).
- ❖ PHEIC (Public Health Emergency of International Concern) is declared under the International Health Regulations (IHR) 2005 for serious disease outbreaks requiring global response.
- ❖ Ebola Virus Disease is a severe viral haemorrhagic fever caused by Ebolavirus and was first identified in 1976 near the Ebola River region.
- ❖ The current outbreak is caused by the Bundibugyo virus species, first identified in Uganda in 2007.
- ❖ More than 246 suspected cases and over 80 suspected deaths were reported in Ituri province of Congo, while Uganda reported two cases, including one death in Kampala.
- ❖ WHO deployed health experts and released US\$500,000 from its emergency contingency fund to support outbreak response measures.

### **Green Strategic Partnership 2026**

- ❖ India and Norway upgraded their ties to a Green Strategic Partnership during talks in Oslo, Norway.
- ❖ The talks were held between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre.
- ❖ The partnership includes clean energy, green shipping, maritime security, digital health, space cooperation and the blue economy.
- ❖ Norway joined India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative, and ISRO signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Norwegian Space Agency.
- ❖ India and Norway also agreed on technical cooperation for Gujarat's Kalpasar Project and green maritime development.

### **India-Nordic Summit 2026**

- ❖ The 3rd India-Nordic Summit was held in Oslo, Norway.
- ❖ The five Nordic nations are Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.
- ❖ India and the Nordic countries upgraded ties to a Green Technology and Innovation Strategic Partnership.
- ❖ The summit focused on green technology, clean energy, Artificial Intelligence (AI), maritime security, space cooperation and climate action.

- ❖ Nordic countries supported India's permanent membership in a reformed United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and India's membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).
- ❖ Finland will host the 4th India-Nordic Summit.

### **India-Bangladesh Trade**

- ❖ India became the second-largest trading partner of Bangladesh, surpassing the United States, according to data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).
- ❖ China remained Bangladesh's largest trading partner with about 21.21% share of total trade.
- ❖ India accounted for about 8.47% of Bangladesh's external trade by February 2026, slightly ahead of the United States at 8.46%.
- ❖ Bangladesh imports rice, onions, sugar, cotton, yarn, food products and industrial intermediate goods from India.
- ❖ India's long land border with Bangladesh helps reduce transport costs, improve connectivity and support faster trade movement.

### **India-UK Steel Trade Issue**

- ❖ India joined several countries at the World Trade Organization (WTO) in opposing the United Kingdom's steel safeguard measures.
- ❖ The United Kingdom (UK) imposed tariff-rate quotas and a 25% tariff on steel imports above quota limits.
- ❖ The safeguard measures were introduced after global steel overcapacity and the United States (US) Section 232 steel tariffs imposed in 2018.
- ❖ India said the new UK steel restrictions could affect the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).
- ❖ A safeguard measure is a temporary trade restriction allowed under WTO rules to protect domestic industries from a sudden rise in imports.

### **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.

### **Saudi Arabia in IBCA**

- ❖ Saudi Arabia became the 26th member nation of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA).
- ❖ IBCA is a global platform for the conservation of seven big cats — lion, tiger, leopard, snow leopard, cheetah, jaguar, and puma.
- ❖ The alliance was established in 2024 by Narendra Modi as a multi-country and multi-agency coalition for big cat conservation.
- ❖ IBCA includes 95 big cat range countries, non-range countries, scientific organisations, and corporate partners supporting wildlife conservation.
- ❖ The alliance aims to promote international cooperation, scientific research, and the sharing of successful conservation practices for big cats.

### **India on China's WTO Request**

- ❖ India blocked China's request at the World Trade Organization (WTO) to form a dispute panel against India's solar energy and Information Technology (IT) measures.
- ❖ China claimed that India imposed customs duties on imported Information Technology (IT) products above the tariff limits allowed under World Trade Organization (WTO) rules.
- ❖ China also objected to India's solar sector incentives linked to local value addition in solar module manufacturing.

- ❖ The World Trade Organization (WTO) Dispute Settlement Body handles trade disputes between member countries through consultations and panels.
- ❖ Under World Trade Organization (WTO) rules, the first request for setting up a dispute panel can be blocked by the opposing country.
- ❖ India stated that its tariff measures and solar incentives are consistent with World Trade Organization (WTO) trade regulations.

### **Stroke - Public Health Priority**

- ❖ The 79th World Health Assembly passed its first-ever resolution recognising stroke as a major public health priority in May 2026.
- ❖ The resolution calls for stronger action on stroke prevention, timely treatment, rehabilitation, and long-term patient support.
- ❖ Stroke is a medical emergency caused by blockage or bleeding that interrupts blood flow to the brain and can lead to death or disability.
- ❖ According to the World Health Organisation, strokes affect nearly 12 million people globally every year and kill more than half of them.
- ❖ In India, stroke incidence ranges from 108 to 172 cases per 1,00,000 people annually, with a one-month fatality rate between 18% and 42%.
- ❖ Major stroke risk factors include hypertension, diabetes, tobacco use, obesity, unhealthy diet, alcohol misuse, physical inactivity, and air pollution.

### **11th NPT Review Conference**

- ❖ The 11th Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons concluded in New York City in May 2026 without achieving consensus on an outcome document.
- ❖ The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons (NPT) aims to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and support nuclear disarmament.
- ❖ The European Union said the NPT remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and international peace and security.
- ❖ Major concerns discussed included Russia's nuclear threats linked to Ukraine, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) nuclear and missile programme, and China's rapid nuclear build-up.
- ❖ The conference also supported stronger transparency measures and improvements in reviewing treaty obligations of member countries.

### **5th Largest Market - Taiwan**

- ❖ Taiwan became the world's fifth-largest stock market, overtaking India in total market value.
- ❖ Taiwan's stock market capitalization reached about 4.95 trillion US dollars, while India's stood at about 4.92 trillion US dollars.
- ❖ The rise was mainly driven by strong growth in Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), the world's largest chipmaker.
- ❖ According to the latest ranking, the world's largest stock markets are the United States, mainland China, Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and India.
- ❖ Stock market capitalization means the total combined value of all listed companies in a country's stock market.

### **5 Major Indo-Pacific Initiatives by QUAD**

- ❖ The QUAD Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in New Delhi announced new initiatives to strengthen security, connectivity, and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.
- ❖ The Quad includes India, the United States, Japan, and Australia.
- ❖ QUAD launched the Indo-Pacific Maritime Surveillance Cooperation Initiative to improve maritime monitoring and information sharing.
- ❖ The Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) initiative was expanded to strengthen regional maritime security.
- ❖ QUAD announced the "Ports of the Future" initiative to improve port infrastructure in Pacific Island countries.
- ❖ India and the United States signed the Critical Minerals Framework for cooperation in mining, processing, and recycling of critical minerals and rare earths.
- ❖ QUAD launched a new Indo-Pacific Energy Security Initiative to support regional energy resilience, technology cooperation, and emergency response systems.

### **Education World Forum 2026**

- ❖ Education World Forum 2026 concluded in London with major discussions on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education and future learning skills.
- ❖ OpenAI highlighted its "Education for Countries" initiative for secure AI tools, teacher training, and research-based learning systems.
- ❖ The forum brought together education ministers and global education leaders to discuss education reforms, AI adoption, and workforce skills.

- ❖ OpenAI stated that students and teachers are rapidly adopting AI tools such as ChatGPT in classrooms.
- ❖ The event also focused on non-formal education, resilience, and human skills needed for future jobs.

### **Quad Critical Minerals Initiative Framework**

- ❖ The Quad countries unveiled the Quad Critical Minerals Initiative Framework during the 11th Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in New Delhi.
- ❖ The framework is a joint initiative of India, the United States, Japan, and Australia to build secure and diversified critical mineral supply chains.
- ❖ It aims to reduce dependence on China-dominated supply routes for critical minerals and rare earth elements.
- ❖ The initiative plans to mobilise nearly 20 billion US dollars through public and private investments.
- ❖ It covers the entire supply chain, including mining, processing, refining, manufacturing inputs, and recycling of critical minerals.
- ❖ Critical minerals are essential for Electric Vehicle (EV) batteries, semiconductors, solar panels, and defence technologies.

### **India–Cyprus Strategic Partnership**

- ❖ India and Cyprus elevated their bilateral relations to a Strategic Partnership during the visit of the Cyprus President Nikos Christodoulides to India.
- ❖ India and Cyprus agreed to establish a Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and reaffirmed cooperation against all forms of terrorism, including cross-border terrorism.
- ❖ Both countries signed agreements on counter-terrorism cooperation and diplomatic training.
- ❖ New initiatives include a Cyber Security Dialogue, a Consular Dialogue, and a Roadmap for Bilateral Defence Cooperation (2026–2031).
- ❖ Cyprus is the 9th largest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into India and the second largest among European Union (EU) countries after the Netherlands, with cumulative investments of about US\$16 billion since 2000.

## **ECONOMY**

### **E-PRAAPTI Portal**

- ❖ Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) is set to launch the E-PRAAPTI portal for EPF account management.
- ❖ E-PRAAPTI (EPF Aadhaar-Based Access Portal for Tracking Inoperative Accounts) helps track, link and activate old EPF accounts.
- ❖ A Provident Fund (PF) account becomes inactive if no contribution is made for 36 months or if it is not linked to UAN.
- ❖ UAN (Universal Account Number) is a 12-digit number given to employees since 2014.
- ❖ The portal uses Aadhaar-based authentication to securely access and link old accounts.

### **PaRRVA Framework**

- ❖ The Securities and Exchange Board of India operationalised the Past Risk and Return Verification Agency (PaRRVA).
- ❖ It verifies past risk and return data of financial market entities.
- ❖ CARE Ratings Limited is designated as PaRRVA, and the National Stock Exchange acts as PaRRVA Data Centre (PDC).
- ❖ It covers investment advisors, research services, and algorithmic trading performance.
- ❖ It allows the use of verified data in advertisements as per SEBI norms.
- ❖ It improves transparency and reduces misleading claims in financial markets.

### **Mission SAKSHAM for Cooperative Banks**

- ❖ Reserve Bank of India launched Mission SAKSHAM for Urban Cooperative Banks.
- ❖ It is a nationwide capacity-building programme to improve governance, resilience and professional standards.
- ❖ The mission will cover about 1.40 lakh participants through physical and digital training.
- ❖ It targets board members, management, risk and compliance officials, and staff of Urban Cooperative Banks.
- ❖ Urban Cooperative Banks are regulated by the RBI for banking operations and by state cooperative laws for management.

### **Zero Balance SHG Account - IPPB**

- ❖ India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) launched a zero-balance savings account for Self Help Groups (SHGs) to strengthen financial inclusion in rural India.
- ❖ The scheme is aimed at women led SHGs and is supported by the Ministry of Communications.
- ❖ The account has zero minimum balance requirement, no opening deposit, no closure charges, and a maximum balance limit of ₹2 lakh.
- ❖ It enables SHGs to access direct benefit transfer (DBT), digital banking services, and formal credit facilities.
- ❖ It helps reduce dependence on informal lending systems and encourages structured savings among rural groups.

### **100 percent FDI in the Insurance Sector**

- ❖ India allowed 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the insurance sector under the automatic route through amendments to the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) Rules, 2019.
- ❖ Under the automatic route, foreign investors do not need prior government approval for investment.
- ❖ The new rules apply to insurance companies, brokers, consultants, and Third-Party Administrators (TPAs).
- ❖ All investments will be regulated by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).
- ❖ The Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) limit for Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) remains capped at 20%.

### **Electronic Gold Receipts**

- ❖ National Stock Exchange (NSE) launched Electronic Gold Receipt (EGR) trading in 2026.
- ❖ EGRs are SEBI-regulated digital instruments representing physical gold stored in SEBI-approved vaults under the Gold Exchange Framework, 2022.
- ❖ Each EGR represents gold of 995 or 999 purity and is held in demat form through National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL) or Central Depository Services Limited (CDSL) accounts.
- ❖ EGR trading started on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) in October 2022 and on the NSE in 2026 with T+1 settlement.
- ❖ Investors can convert EGRs into physical gold bars or coins by paying applicable withdrawal charges and 3% Goods and Services Tax (GST).

- ❖ EGRs provide transparent pricing, exchange trading, and investor protection compared to unregulated digital gold platforms.

### **Uniform GSVA Guidelines**

- ❖ The National Statistics Office (NSO) introduced uniform guidelines for compiling Gross State Value Added (GSVA) estimates with 2022–23 as the new base year.
- ❖ The new framework aims to improve the accuracy, consistency, and comparability of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) estimates across all States and Union Territories (UTs).
- ❖ The revised method replaces single-deflation with revaluation, double deflation, and volume extrapolation methods for constant-price estimates.
- ❖ The framework uses data sources such as Goods and Services Tax (GST), Annual Survey of Industries (ASI), Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), and Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE).
- ❖ Gross State Value Added (GSVA) measures the value of goods and services produced in a State after deducting input costs.

### **GARUDA Green-Channel for AIFs**

- ❖ The Securities and Exchange Board of India proposed GARUDA, a green-channel mechanism for Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs).
- ❖ GARUDA stands for Green-Channel: AIF Rollout Upon Document Acknowledgement.
- ❖ The proposal aims to reduce the AIF scheme launch time from 30 days to 10 working days after filing the Placement Memorandum (PPM).
- ❖ AIFs are privately pooled investment funds regulated under the SEBI (Alternative Investment Funds) Regulations, 2012.
- ❖ Angel Funds and Accredited Investor-only schemes may get immediate launch approval after direct PPM filing with SEBI.

### **India's Seafood Exports to the EU**

- ❖ The European Union became India's third-largest seafood export market during the Financial Year 2025–26 (FY26), after the United States of America (USA) and China.
- ❖ India exported seafood worth US\$ 1.593 billion to the EU, accounting for 18.94% of total seafood export value.
- ❖ Seafood exports to the EU increased by 41.45% in value and 38.29% in quantity compared to FY25.

- ❖ The EU included India in its revised draft list for the continued export of aquaculture products from September 2026.
- ❖ The achievement reflects efforts by the Marine Products Export Development Authority and the Export Inspection Council to strengthen food safety, residue monitoring, and responsible aquaculture practices.

### **Revised SOP for FDI Approvals**

- ❖ The Ministry of Commerce revised the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for processing Foreign Direct Investment approvals to improve transparency and efficiency.
- ❖ The revised SOP fixes a maximum processing timeline of 12 weeks for FDI applications and makes the process fully digital through the Foreign Investment Facilitation Portal and National Single Window System.
- ❖ The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) will identify the concerned ministry within two days of application submission.
- ❖ Investments in sensitive sectors such as defence, telecom, civil aviation, space, and mining will require security clearance from the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- ❖ FDI proposals involving equity investment above ₹5,000 crore will need approval from the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA).
- ❖ Investments from India's land-border countries, including China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, and Afghanistan, will require additional security clearance.

### **India's First Weather Derivative**

- ❖ National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) launched India's first Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)-approved weather derivative contract called RAINMUMBAI.
- ❖ The contract is linked to Mumbai rainfall during the monsoon season from June to September.
- ❖ Weather derivatives are financial contracts used to manage risks caused by changes in weather conditions.
- ❖ The contract uses official rainfall data from the India Meteorological Department (IMD).
- ❖ NCDEX developed the contract in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay.

### **RBI's Record Surplus Transfer**

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved its highest-ever surplus transfer of ₹2.86 lakh crore to the Central Government for the Financial Year (FY) 2025–26.
- ❖ The decision was taken at the 623rd meeting of the RBI Central Board of Directors, chaired by Governor Sanjay Malhotra in Mumbai.
- ❖ RBI's gross income increased by 26.42% in FY26, while its balance sheet expanded by 20.61% to ₹91.97 lakh crore as of 31 March 2026.
- ❖ The central bank transferred ₹1.09 lakh crore to the Contingent Risk Buffer (CRB) while maintaining the CRB at 6.5% under the revised Economic Capital Framework (ECF).
- ❖ The Board also reviewed global and domestic economic conditions and discussed risks to the economic outlook.

### **Q-SAFE Committee**

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) formed an 8-member expert committee called Quantum Secure and Adaptive Financial Ecosystem (Q-SAFE).
- ❖ The committee will study the impact of quantum technology on India's banking and financial system and submit its report within six months.
- ❖ It will examine risks to cybersecurity, digital payments, and existing cryptographic systems from quantum computing.
- ❖ The panel will also recommend a roadmap for adopting quantum-safe cryptography and improving financial system resilience.
- ❖ The committee is headed by Professor Anil Prabhakar of IIT Madras, with members from the Department of Science and Technology (DST), State Bank of India (SBI), and National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

### **Sri Lanka's 2nd Largest Export Market -India**

- ❖ India surpassed the United Kingdom (UK) to become Sri Lanka's second-largest export destination during January–April 2026.
- ❖ The United States (US) remained Sri Lanka's largest export market during the period.
- ❖ Sri Lanka's exports to India increased by 8.9% and reached 364.15 million United States Dollars (USD) in January–April 2026.
- ❖ Sri Lanka's total exports, including merchandise and services, reached 1.38 billion USD in April 2026, recording a 6% year-on-year growth.
- ❖ Coconut-based products showed strong growth, while apparel, textile and tea exports recorded a decline in April 2026.

- ❖ Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Business Process Management (BPM) service exports reached 146.09 million USD during the month.

### **Memflation: Rising Memory Chip Prices**

- ❖ Memflation is affecting India's electronics sector due to rising prices and shortages of memory chips used in smartphones, laptops, and other electronic devices.
- ❖ Memflation refers to inflation caused by shortages and rising prices of DRAM (Dynamic Random-Access Memory) and NAND (Not AND) Flash Memory chips.
- ❖ The main causes are increased demand from Artificial Intelligence (AI) data centres, a shift towards High-Bandwidth Memory (HBM) production, and reduced supply of conventional memory chips.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

### **Vikram VT 21 Armoured Platform**

- ❖ Defence Research and Development Organisation launched the Vikram VT 21 project for advanced armoured vehicles.
- ❖ It includes wheeled and tracked platforms for the Indian Army's Futuristic Infantry Combat Vehicle (FICV).
- ❖ It has strong armour protection against bullets, blasts, and shrapnel with high mobility on different terrains.
- ❖ It features a 30 mm crewless turret, machine gun, and Anti-Tank Guided Missiles (ATGM).
- ❖ It has amphibious capability and can operate in water using special propulsion systems.
- ❖ Around 65% of the system is made in India, aiming to increase indigenous defence production.

### **Vikram-1 Private Rocket**

- ❖ India's first privately developed orbital rocket, Vikram-1, was flagged off.
- ❖ The rocket has been developed by Hyderabad-based startup Skyroot Aerospace.
- ❖ Vikram-1 is a three-stage carbon-composite launch vehicle with advanced 3D-printed engines and uses both solid and liquid propulsion systems.

- ❖ It is capable of carrying up to 350 kg payload to Low Earth Orbit and is recognised as India's first privately built orbital launch vehicle.
- ❖ The maiden launch is scheduled for June 2026 from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Andhra Pradesh.

### **Mission Drishti OptoSAR Satellite**

- ❖ GalaxEye launched Mission Drishti, the world's first OptoSAR satellite.
- ❖ It is India's largest privately developed Earth observation satellite, weighing about 190 kg.
- ❖ The satellite combines Electro Optical and Synthetic Aperture Radar sensors for all weather, day and night imaging.
- ❖ It was launched aboard Falcon 9 by SpaceX from California.
- ❖ Mission Drishti supports applications in defence, agriculture, disaster management, and infrastructure planning.

### **PoET Telescope**

- ❖ The Paranal solar ESPRESSO Telescope (PoET) achieved "first light" at the European Southern Observatory (ESO) Paranal Observatory in the Atacama Desert, Chile.
- ❖ ESPRESSO stands for Echelle SPectrograph for Rocky Exoplanets and Stable Spectroscopic Observations.
- ❖ PoET studies sunlight and starlight to improve the detection of exoplanets (planets outside the Solar System).
- ❖ The telescope includes a 60-centimetre mirror for observing sunspots and selected solar regions.
- ❖ "First light" means the first successful observation made by a telescope or scientific instrument.

### **Great Dyke of Zimbabwe**

- ❖ NASA scientists discovered a hidden 2.5-billion-year-old internal structure inside the Great Dyke of Zimbabwe using satellite imaging and geophysics mapping.
- ❖ The Great Dyke is a 550-kilometre-long igneous rock formation located in central Zimbabwe.
- ❖ It is classified as a lopolith, which is a saucer-shaped igneous intrusion formed from cooled magma.

- ❖ The structure is believed to be linked to an ancient magma storage zone from the Archaean Eon.
- ❖ The Great Dyke contains important minerals such as platinum, chromium, nickel, copper, iron, titanium, vanadium, and tin.

### **India's First Portable MRI System**

- ❖ India's first portable Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) system was deployed at the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi for ICU and critical care patients.
- ❖ The portable MRI system allows bedside brain imaging for critically ill patients in intensive care units (ICUs), emergency wards, and neurosurgical care.
- ❖ The device is an ultra-low-field MRI that can be moved directly to the patient, removing the need for shifting patients to MRI rooms.
- ❖ It is being used at the Centre for Neurological Conditions at AIIMS Delhi.
- ❖ The system is expected to improve the rapid diagnosis of stroke, trauma, and post-operative brain conditions.

### **Life Under the Atacama Desert**

- ❖ Scientists discovered a microbial ecosystem two metres below the surface of the Atacama Desert in Chile.
- ❖ The ecosystem contains bacteria, archaea, DNA, and microscopic roundworms called nematodes living in extreme desert conditions.
- ❖ The Atacama Desert is the driest hot desert in the world and is widely used for astrobiology studies because its environment is similar to Mars.
- ❖ Earlier studies found microbial life mainly within the top 30 centimetres of soil, but recent findings show life can survive at much greater depths.
- ❖ Researchers from the University of Cologne collected 112 soil samples from six regions and identified at least 36 genera from 21 nematode families.

### **Plastic Waste Road Technology**

- ❖ CSIR-CRRI (Central Road Research Institute) and BPCL (Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited) received recognition from the India Book of Records and Asia Book of Records.
- ❖ They created the first roadblock section using technical textile geocells made from end-of-life plastic waste.

- ❖ The project was developed to promote sustainable road infrastructure and scientific plastic waste management.
- ❖ The technology converts difficult-to-manage plastic waste into durable road construction material, supporting the circular economy.
- ❖ The project was recognised as a first-of-its-kind innovation in road engineering and sustainable infrastructure development in India.

### **Plastic Waste to Hydrogen Fuel**

- ❖ Scientists developed new methods to convert plastic waste into hydrogen fuel using sunlight through a process called photoreforming.
- ❖ Photoreforming is a photocatalytic process where sunlight and catalysts break down plastics to produce hydrogen and industrial chemicals.
- ❖ Researchers from the University of Cambridge and the University of Adelaide developed systems using plastic waste, solar energy, and safe catalysts for clean fuel production.
- ❖ The process can convert plastics like polyethylene and polypropylene into hydrogen, syngas, acetic acid, and liquid fuels.
- ❖ Hydrogen is an important clean fuel used in industries such as refining and ammonia production.
- ❖ Global plastic production is more than 400 million tonnes annually, but less than 10% to 18% of plastic waste is recycled.

### **Hantavirus Outbreak**

- ❖ A suspected Hantavirus outbreak was reported on the Dutch cruise ship MV Hondius near Cape Verde, Africa.
- ❖ Hantavirus is a zoonotic disease spread mainly through infected rodent urine, saliva, or droppings.
- ❖ It can cause Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS) and Hemorrhagic Fever with Renal Syndrome (HFRS).
- ❖ Early symptoms include fever, fatigue, and muscle pain, which may later develop into severe breathing problems.
- ❖ The virus usually does not spread between humans, but rare human-to-human transmission was seen in the Andes virus strain.
- ❖ There is no specific vaccine or cure, so prevention mainly depends on rodent control and sanitation.

### **Mission Divyastra and Agni-5 MIRV**

- ❖ India successfully tested the Agni-5 missile with Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry Vehicle (MIRV) technology under Mission Divyastra.
- ❖ MIRV technology allows a single missile to carry multiple warheads that can strike different targets independently.
- ❖ The missile was launched from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha and tracked through ground and ship-based stations.
- ❖ Agni-5 is a nuclear-capable long-range ballistic missile with a strike range of over 5,000 km.

### **Polyendocrine Metabolic Ovarian Syndrome**

- ❖ An international panel has renamed Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) as Polyendocrine Metabolic Ovarian Syndrome (PMOS) to better reflect its biological complexity.
- ❖ The earlier term PCOS was considered misleading, as many patients do not have actual ovarian cysts, which are actually immature follicles.
- ❖ The new term PMOS highlights multiple hormone systems, including insulin, androgen, luteinising hormone (LH), and follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH).
- ❖ It also places metabolic dysfunction at the centre, linking the condition with insulin resistance, diabetes, obesity, fatty liver disease, and cardiovascular risks.
- ❖ Studies indicate that insulin resistance is present in nearly 70–80% of affected women, including those with normal body weight (“lean PMOS”).

### **Hidden Dwarf Galaxy Loki**

- ❖ Scientists proposed the existence of a hidden ancient dwarf galaxy named “Loki” inside the Milky Way.
- ❖ A dwarf galaxy is a small galaxy with fewer stars and lower mass than large galaxies like the Milky Way.
- ❖ Scientists studied 20 old metal-poor stars located within 2 kiloparsecs of the Sun using spectroscopy techniques.
- ❖ The stars showed both prograde and retrograde motion, which means they move both with and against the Milky Way’s rotation.
- ❖ The study used ESPaDOnS, a high-resolution spectropolarimeter, to examine chemical elements formed from supernovae and neutron star mergers.

### **Freshwater fish - Labeo kaage**

- ❖ Scientists from Indian Council of Agricultural Research - National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (ICAR-NBFGR) discovered a new freshwater fish species named Labeo kaage in the Cauvery River basin of Karnataka.
- ❖ The fish was found in the Shivanasamudra stretch of the Cauvery River in Mandya district.
- ❖ The name “kaage” comes from the Kannada word for crow, referring to the fish’s dark body colour.
- ❖ Locally, the fish is called “kaage meenu” and belongs to the dark-coloured Labeo species found in the Western Ghats.
- ❖ Scientists also discovered Labeo chekida and Labeo uru in Kerala in 2025.
- ❖ The study clarified the identity of Labeo nigrescens, also called the “Dark Labeo”, first described in 1870.

### **Shukrayaan Mission**

- ❖ Sweden joined India’s Venus Orbiter Mission “Shukrayaan” through scientific collaboration with ISRO.
- ❖ Shukrayaan is India’s planned interplanetary mission to study the atmosphere, exosphere, volcanic surface, and weather systems of Venus.
- ❖ The Swedish Institute of Space Physics will develop the Venusian Neutral Analyser (VNA) payload for the mission.
- ❖ The mission was approved by the Union Cabinet in 2024 with an outlay of ₹1,236 crore and will be launched using the LVM-3 rocket.
- ❖ The spacecraft will carry 19 payloads and is expected to reach Venus by July 2028 after a 112-day journey.

### **Microbes Beneath Ross Ice Shelf**

- ❖ Scientists discovered diverse microbial communities living beneath Antarctica’s Ross Ice Shelf without sunlight.
- ❖ The microbes survive through chemosynthesis, using chemicals like ammonium, nitrite, and sulfur compounds for energy instead of sunlight.
- ❖ Researchers found bacteria, archaea, and viruses forming a unique ecosystem under the ice shelf.
- ❖ Ross Ice Shelf is located in Antarctica and is one of the largest ice shelves in the world.

- ❖ The discovery may help scientists understand life in extreme environments and the possibility of life on other planets.

### **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.

### **AI Genome Editing for Crops - Plant-OpenCRISPR1**

- ❖ Scientists developed "Plant-OpenCRISPR1," the world's first Artificial Intelligence (AI)-designed genome-editing platform for crops.
- ❖ The platform was developed by the Central Rice Research Institute under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research.
- ❖ The research was carried out in Cuttack using rice as a model crop for validation.
- ❖ Plant-OpenCRISPR1 supports advanced gene knockout, base editing, and prime editing in plants.

- ❖ The technology uses Artificial Intelligence-designed enzymes instead of naturally occurring microbial proteins used in traditional CRISPR systems.
- ❖ The platform is expected to improve crop breeding, agricultural productivity, and precision genome editing in plants.

### **The SMILE Mission**

- ❖ The European Space Agency and the Chinese Academy of Sciences launched the SMILE (Solar wind Magnetosphere Ionosphere Link Explorer) mission, their first fully joint space mission.
- ❖ The mission carries the world's first space-borne Soft X-ray Imager (SXI) to study the interaction between solar wind and Earth's magnetosphere.
- ❖ SMILE aims to capture global X-ray and ultraviolet images of Earth's magnetic shield during solar activity and space weather events.
- ❖ The mission includes four scientific payloads: Soft X-ray Imager (SXI), Ultraviolet Aurora Imager (UVI), Light Ion Analyser (LIA), and Magnetometer (MAG).
- ❖ The 2,600-kg satellite will operate in a highly elliptical orbit about 1.21 lakh km above Earth's North Pole.
- ❖ The mission will help improve space weather forecasting and protect satellites, Global Positioning System (GPS), power grids, and communication systems from solar storms.

### **Blue Straggler Star**

- ❖ Researchers discovered the first confirmed blue straggler star with a brown dwarf companion in a compact binary system.
- ❖ Blue Straggler Stars are hot, blue, and massive stars mainly found in old stellar systems such as globular clusters.
- ❖ These stars appear brighter and hotter than nearby stars of the same age and seem younger than expected.
- ❖ They are called "stragglers" because they evolve differently and lag behind other stars in the normal stellar life cycle.
- ❖ Scientists believe they form by gaining matter from a companion star or through interactions between multiple stars.

### **10-Billion-Year-Old Radio Signal**

- ❖ Scientists detected FRB 20240304B, a fast radio burst that travelled nearly 10 billion years before reaching Earth.

- ❖ The signal was detected by the MeerKAT telescope in South Africa on 4 March 2024, and its host galaxy was identified using the James Webb Space Telescope.
- ❖ Fast Radio Bursts (FRBs) are short and intense radio wave pulses from distant space objects, and magnetars are considered one possible source.
- ❖ The burst originated during “Cosmic Noon”, the peak star-formation period that occurred about 2–3 billion years after the Big Bang, and it doubled the redshift reach of localised FRBs.
- ❖ LOFAR (Low Frequency Array), a European radio telescope network, also detected a radio mini-halo around the SpARCS1049 galaxy cluster, located about 10 billion light-years away.

### **Loktak Protocluster Discovery**

- ❖ Indian astrophysicist Ronaldo Laishram led an international team that discovered the “Loktak Protocluster”.
- ❖ The galaxy protocluster was formed about 12.6 billion years ago when the Universe was nearly 1.2 billion years old.
- ❖ The structure was named after Loktak Lake in Manipur, the largest freshwater lake in north-eastern India, because the galaxy groups resembled the floating phumdis found in the lake.
- ❖ A protocluster is an early-stage concentration of galaxies that later develops into a massive galaxy cluster containing hundreds or thousands of galaxies.
- ❖ The Loktak Protocluster contains four connected galaxy concentrations and was discovered using the James Webb Space Telescope and the Subaru Telescope.

### **India’s First Geothermal Power Plant**

- ❖ Ladakh approved a five-year extension of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Oil and Natural Gas Corporation to establish India’s first geothermal power plant.
- ❖ The project will be set up at an altitude of nearly 14,000 feet in Puga Valley in eastern Ladakh.
- ❖ Under the revised agreement, ONGC will establish a 1-Megawatt electric (MWe) pilot geothermal power plant and prepare a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for large-scale geothermal energy development.
- ❖ Geothermal energy uses heat stored inside the Earth’s crust and is considered a renewable and clean energy source.
- ❖ The Geological Survey of India has identified 381 hot springs and 10 geothermal provinces in India, with an estimated geothermal power potential of about 10,600 Megawatt (MW).

- ❖ The National Policy on Geothermal Energy, 2025, supports renewable energy expansion, energy security, and India's 2070 Net Zero target.

### **Biomedical Innovation Event**

- ❖ Indian Council of Medical Research organised 'Medical Innovations Patent Mitra: Innovators-to-Industry (I2I) Connect', India's largest biomedical innovation and technology transfer event in New Delhi.
- ❖ The event aimed to support technology transfer and industry partnerships for indigenous biomedical innovations.
- ❖ During the event, 41 public health technologies were transferred to industry partners for development and commercialisation.
- ❖ The transferred technologies included vaccines, diagnostics, medical devices, and biomedical solutions for diseases like tuberculosis, Japanese Encephalitis, Mpox, typhoid, and paratyphoid.
- ❖ The 'Indian Biomedical Patent Landscape Report' and 'Technology Compendium' were also released to strengthen India's biomedical innovation ecosystem.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **Multilateralism in Climate Action**

- ❖ The 17th Petersberg Climate Dialogue reaffirmed commitment to multilateral climate action amid global tensions.
- ❖ It is an annual meeting started by Germany in 2010 and is the first major climate ministerial before COP31 under UNFCCC.
- ❖ Multilateralism treats climate as a global issue and supports cooperation through NDCs (Nationally Determined Contributions).
- ❖ Global agreements like UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), UNCBD (United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity) and UNCCD (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification) help in climate action.
- ❖ It supports climate justice through CBDR (Common But Differentiated Responsibilities) and provides funds via GEF (Global Environment Facility) and GCF (Green Climate Fund).
- ❖ Challenges include slow decisions, a lack of \$100 billion in funding by developed countries, and rising geopolitical conflicts.

### **Soil-Eating Behaviour in Gibraltar Macaques**

- ❖ Scientists found Barbary macaques in Gibraltar eating soil (geophagy) to reduce the effects of junk food from tourists.
- ❖ It is the only wild primate found in Europe and the only macaque species living outside Asia.
- ❖ It is naturally found in the Atlas Mountains of Algeria and Morocco and introduced in Gibraltar.
- ❖ It lives in mountains, rocky areas and cedar forests and is active during the daytime.
- ❖ It is omnivorous, tailless (called Barbary ape) and shows group care of young ones.
- ❖ The Conservation status of the Barbary macaque is Endangered as per IUCN red list.

### **New Climate Targets - India**

- ❖ India submitted updated NDCs (Nationally Determined Contributions) for 2031–35 to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change under the Paris Agreement.
- ❖ Targets include 60% power capacity from non-fossil fuels and 47% reduction in emissions intensity of GDP (from 2005 levels) by 2035.
- ❖ India aims to create a carbon sink of 3.5–4 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> through increased forest and tree cover.
- ❖ It emphasised that achieving targets depends on financial support, technology transfer, and capacity building from developed countries.
- ❖ India has already achieved over 52.5% non-fossil fuel capacity and reduced emissions intensity by 36% (2005–2020).

### **Methane Alert and Response System**

- ❖ The United Nations (UN) expanded the Methane Alert and Response System (MARS) to include the coal and waste sectors.
- ❖ The decision followed satellite data that identified the Kanjurmarg landfill in India among the world's three largest methane-emitting landfill sites.
- ❖ Other major methane-emitting landfill sites were identified in Chile.
- ❖ MARS is the world's first global satellite-based system for monitoring methane super-emitters.

- ❖ The system connects satellite data with rapid methane mitigation and response efforts.
- ❖ MARS functions under the International Methane Emissions Observatory (IMEO) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- ❖ The system was announced during the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP27) and was officially launched in January 2023.

### **Olive Ridley Sea Turtle Conservation - Tamil Nadu**

- ❖ Around 1.65 lakh Olive Ridley Sea turtle hatchlings were released into the sea along the Tamil Nadu coast during the 2026 nesting season.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Forest Department recorded 1,985 turtle nests and protected around 2.29 lakh eggs.
- ❖ Turtle deaths reduced by nearly 50%, from 1,572 last year to 784 this year.
- ❖ Chennai Wildlife Region recorded the highest nesting activity with 656 nests and 74,143 eggs collected.
- ❖ Cuddalore recorded the highest number of hatchlings released into the sea, with 48,617 hatchlings.
- ❖ More than 62,000 hatchlings are yet to emerge during the ongoing nesting season.

### **India's First Satellite-Tagged Turtle**

- ❖ India's first satellite-tagged Ganges Soft-shell Turtle was released in Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve on Endangered Species Day 2026.
- ❖ The project aims to study the turtle's seasonal movement, breeding habitats, and home range in the Brahmaputra River basin.
- ❖ The project was carried out by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) with support from the Assam Forest Department and the National Geographic Society.
- ❖ The Ganges Soft-shell Turtle is protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act (WPA), 1972.
- ❖ The species is listed as Endangered in the IUCN Red List and included in Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

### **Lion Species Spotlight Programme**

- ❖ The 'Lion' Species Spotlight Programme was launched at Sasan Gir, Gujarat, ahead of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) Summit 2026.

- ❖ The programme highlighted India's Asiatic lion conservation efforts and promoted international cooperation among lion range countries.
- ❖ India will host the first IBCA Summit in New Delhi on 1–2 June 2026 with participation from around 95 countries.
- ❖ The Asiatic lion population in the Gir landscape reached 891 in 2025, showing a 32% increase compared to 2020.
- ❖ Project Lion, launched in 2020, focuses on habitat expansion, scientific population monitoring, and conservation of Asiatic lions.

### **Maharashtra Wetland Documentation**

- ❖ Maharashtra completed ground-truthing (physical verification) of 23,404 wetlands out of 23,415 identified wetlands in the state.
- ❖ The remaining 11 wetlands pending verification are located in the Pune district.
- ❖ The verified wetland maps will be sent to district administrations and the State Wetland Authority for notification under the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules.
- ❖ Ahmednagar district has the highest number of wetlands in Maharashtra, with 1,596 wetlands, followed by Nashik and Chandrapur districts.
- ❖ Wetlands include marshes, ponds, peatlands, mangroves and lagoons, and they help in water conservation, flood control and biodiversity protection.
- ❖ The National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management functions under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

### **Second habitat for Asiatic lions**

- ❖ The Barda Wildlife Sanctuary in Gujarat, India, has been officially designated as the second natural habitat for Asiatic lions.
- ❖ Gujarat chief minister Bhupendra Patel virtually inaugurated the first pre-event of the International Big Cat Alliance Summit 2026.
- ❖ The pre-event on lion conservation was organised at Sasan Gir by the ministry of environment, forest and climate change as part of preparations for the International Big Cat Alliance Summit 2026 scheduled to be held in new Delhi. The lion population in Gujarat has increased from 284 in 1991 to 891 today.

### **India's Cheetah Mission**

- ❖ Project Cheetah is a pioneering initiative aimed at reintroducing the cheetah in India after its extinction in the country.

- ❖ India's cheetah population rises to 53 which includes the 33 cheetahs born in India.
- ❖ The programme was initiated through the translocation of a founder population of 20 cheetahs from Namibia and South Africa, which was further supplemented by 9 cheetahs from Botswana.
- ❖ Kuno National Park has been developed as the primary site for establishment of the population, while Gandhisagar Wildlife Sanctuary has been prepared as an additional habitat to support further expansion.
- ❖ Preparatory work is also underway to expand the project to new areas, including the Banni grasslands in Gujarat.
- ❖ The next phase of the project will focus on consolidation and expansion through additional translocations, development of new sites such as Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh.

### **India's First Algae Tree**

- ❖ India's first solar-powered "Algae Tree" was installed in Bhopal to help control air pollution.
- ❖ The Algae Tree has been installed at Swami Vivekananda Park in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ The device uses microalgae technology to absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen through photosynthesis.
- ❖ One Algae Tree can absorb carbon dioxide equal to nearly 25 adult trees.
- ❖ The system can reduce PM2.5 air pollutants by around 45–55% within a 15-metre area.

### **Amur Falcon Tracking Project**

- ❖ Two Amur Falcon birds named Apapang and Alang, tagged with satellite transmitters in Manipur in November 2025, are returning from Southern Africa to East Asia during spring migration.
- ❖ The project is carried out by the Wildlife Institute of India and the Manipur Forest Department with support from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).
- ❖ Amur Falcon is a long-distance migratory raptor (bird of prey) that travels nearly 6,000 km in about six days, including crossing the Arabian Sea.
- ❖ Its breeding grounds are in Northern China and Far-East Russia, while its wintering grounds are in Eastern and Southern Africa.

- ❖ The species is listed as “Least Concern (LC)” in the IUCN Red List and is protected under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

### **Rare Blueberry Rediscovered**

- ❖ A rare blueberry relative named *Vaccinium piliferum* was rediscovered in the Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh after 188 years.
- ❖ The plant was first collected in 1836 from the Mishmi Hills and later recorded in 1850 from the Khasi Hills of Meghalaya.
- ❖ It belongs to the Ericaceae family and is a climbing shrub related to wild blueberry plants.
- ❖ Researchers found only 16 plants in a 2 square kilometre area near the Noa-Dihing River in Vijohnagar, Changlang district, Arunachal Pradesh.
- ❖ The species is listed as “Endangered” by the IUCN.

### **India - IRCC Issuance**

- ❖ India became the world leader in issuing Internationally Recognised Certificates of Compliance (IRCCs) under the Nagoya Protocol.
- ❖ India issued around 3,556 IRCCs out of the global total of 6,311 certificates recorded in the ABS (Access and Benefit-Sharing) Clearing-House.
- ❖ The Nagoya Protocol is linked to the Convention on Biological Diversity and focuses on fair sharing of benefits from genetic resources.
- ❖ IRCCs confirm that Prior Informed Consent and Mutually Agreed Terms were followed for using genetic resources.
- ❖ India’s biodiversity framework includes the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, National Biodiversity Authority, State Biodiversity Boards, and Biodiversity Management Committees.
- ❖ Between 2017 and 2025, India generated about ₹263 crore through ABS approvals.

### **Kopra Reservoir**

- ❖ The Kopra Reservoir emerged as a biodiversity model under the 2026 International Day for Biological Diversity theme, “Local Action, Global Impact.”
- ❖ The Kopra Reservoir is located in the Bilaspur district of Chhattisgarh and is the State’s first Ramsar Site of International Importance.
- ❖ It was originally built for irrigation and fish farming and later developed into a self-sustaining wetland ecosystem.

- ❖ The reservoir is an important habitat for migratory birds and supports rich aquatic biodiversity.
- ❖ Local communities, village panchayats, and self-help groups (SHGs) take part in wetland conservation and monitoring activities.

### **191 Cockroach Species**

- ❖ India has recorded 191 species of cockroaches, with over 60% endemic to the country.
- ❖ A study by the Zoological Survey of India published in the journal *Zootaxa* created India's first and largest DNA barcode reference library for cockroaches.
- ❖ Scientists generated over 100 high-quality DNA barcodes to help identify and classify cockroach species.
- ❖ DNA barcoding uses a short genetic sequence from the mitochondrial cytochrome c oxidase I gene for species identification.
- ❖ Cockroaches belong to the order Blattodea, which also includes termites in modern classification.
- ❖ In March 2026, scientists identified a new endemic species named *Neoloboptera peninsularis* from the Deccan Peninsula near Pune.

## **REPORTS AND INDICATES**

### **Global Report on Food Crises 2026**

- ❖ The 10th Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC) was released by the Global Network Against Food Crises with support from the European Union.
- ❖ In 2025, 266 million people in 47 countries faced high acute food insecurity, which is 22.9% of the population and higher than in 2024.
- ❖ About 1.4 million people in 6 regions were in Catastrophe level under IPC (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification) Phase 5, a sharp rise since 2016.
- ❖ Over 39 million people in 32 countries were in Emergency level (IPC Phase 4), while famine (IPC Phase 5) was confirmed in the Gaza Strip and Sudan.
- ❖ Major causes include conflict, weather extremes and economic shocks, with over 80% affected people living in long-term crisis areas.
- ❖ Around 35.5 million children and 9.2 million women faced malnutrition, while funding for food support has declined to 2016–17 levels.

## **Panchayat Advancement Index 2.0**

- ❖ The Ministry of Panchayati Raj released Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) 2.0 for FY 2023–24 to assess rural local bodies.
- ❖ PAI is a nationwide framework to measure the progress of Gram Panchayats using objective indicators linked to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- ❖ It converts 17 SDGs into 9 Localised Sustainable Development Goal (LSDG) themes for grassroots monitoring.
- ❖ PAI 2.0 evaluates over 2.5 lakh Panchayats using 150+ indicators and 230 data points across sectors like health, water and infrastructure.
- ❖ It classifies Panchayats into five categories: Achiever, Front Runner, Performer, Aspirant and Beginner based on scores (0–100 scale).
- ❖ Around 97.3% participation was recorded with over 2.59 lakh Gram Panchayats assessed, and 3,635 emerged as Front Runners.
- ❖ About 45.7% Panchayats are in the “Performer” category, no Panchayat achieved the A+ (Achiever) overall grade, and Tripura, Kerala, and Odisha are the top-performing states.
- ❖ The index supports data-driven governance, helps prepare Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs), and promotes transparent, participatory rural development.

## **Women and Men in India 2025 Report**

- ❖ The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation released the 27th edition of Women and Men in India 2025 report.
- ❖ It is an annual report since 1995 covering socio-economic status in health, education, economy and population.
- ❖ Sex ratio at birth improved to 917 (2021–23), and infant mortality declined.
- ❖ Gender parity was achieved in school education, and female GER increased to 30.2.
- ❖ Female labour participation rose, especially among rural women, from 37.5% to 45.9%, and women in managerial roles increased sharply.
- ❖ Issues remain like 14.4% literacy gap, low cancer screening (1.7%) and a high unpaid work burden.

## **NITI Aayog Report on City Governance**

- ❖ NITI Aayog released the report “Moving Towards Effective City Government: A Framework for Million-Plus Cities”.

- ❖ India has 47 million-plus cities that house about one-third of the urban population and contribute nearly 60% to GDP (Gross Domestic Product).
- ❖ These cities face problems like weak powers under the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, poor funds, weak services, and a lack of clear leadership.
- ❖ City governments have control over only a few functions and depend heavily on state governments for funds.
- ❖ The report suggests directly elected Mayors, better coordination of services, and stronger municipal finances through SFCs (State Finance Commissions).
- ❖ It also recommends legal reforms and clearer roles to improve urban governance and service delivery.

### **World Press Freedom Index 2026**

- ❖ India ranked 157th out of 180 countries in the 2026 World Press Freedom Index released by Reporters Without Borders.
- ❖ The World Press Freedom Index is an annual ranking that measures press freedom using indicators like media independence, safety, and legal environment.
- ❖ India is placed in the “very serious” category and dropped from rank 151 (2025) to 157 (2026).
- ❖ The 2026 report noted issues like violence against journalists, media ownership concentration, and legal pressures.
- ❖ Globally, more than half of the countries fall under “difficult” or “very serious” categories in 2026.

### **Growth Hubs Index**

- ❖ Bengaluru was ranked the world’s fastest-growing major city till 2035 in Savills’ Growth Hubs Index.
- ❖ The index studied 245 global cities based on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth, migration, and wealth expansion.
- ❖ Bengaluru secured the top rank due to its strong talent pool and Global Capability Centres (GCCs).
- ❖ Global Capability Centres (GCCs) are offshore centres of multinational companies for technology, finance, and operations.
- ❖ Asia-Pacific cities accounted for nearly 85% of the top 20 fastest-growing cities in the ranking.

## **World Migration Report 2026**

- ❖ The International Organization for Migration (IOM) released the 13th edition of the World Migration Report 2026.
- ❖ India remained the world's top remittance recipient country in 2024, receiving over USD 137 billion.
- ❖ India has retained the top position in global remittance inflows since 2010 and is the only country to cross the USD 100 billion mark.
- ❖ Mexico was the second-largest remittance recipient country with USD 67.6 billion in 2024.
- ❖ The Philippines received USD 40.3 billion, France received USD 38.8 billion, and Pakistan received USD 34.9 billion in remittances during 2024.
- ❖ The United States of America (USA) remained the world's top remittance-sending country, with total outflows crossing USD 100 billion in 2024.
- ❖ Saudi Arabia sent over USD 46 billion in remittances, followed by Switzerland with around USD 40 billion and Germany with around USD 24 billion.

## **Crime in India 2024 Report**

- ❖ The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) released the "Crime in India 2024" report, highlighting crime trends in the country.
- ❖ India recorded 58.86 lakh cognisable crimes in 2024, showing a 6% decline compared to 2023.
- ❖ Cybercrime cases increased by 17.9%, rising from 86,420 cases in 2023 to 1,01,928 cases in 2024.
- ❖ Cyber fraud accounted for 72.6% of all cybercrime cases registered in the country.
- ❖ According to the report, India recorded 1,70,746 suicide cases in 2024, with daily wage workers forming the largest affected group.
- ❖ Drug overdose deaths increased by 50% in 2024, with Tamil Nadu reporting the highest number of such deaths in the country.

## **Prison Statistics India 2024 Report**

- ❖ The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) released the Prison Statistics India (PSI) 2024 report on prison conditions in India.
- ❖ Delhi recorded the highest prison occupancy rate at 194.6%, with 19,512 inmates against a capacity of 10,026 prisoners.
- ❖ A large number of prisoners in India were undertrials, meaning they were awaiting completion of their court cases.

- ❖ The report highlighted major shortages in prison staff, with thousands of vacant posts.
- ❖ Many prisoners belonged to economically weaker sections and had an education below Class 10.
- ❖ The report also noted rehabilitation efforts through education, computer courses, and skill development programmes inside prisons.

### **Non-Tariff Barriers and Tariff Barriers**

- ❖ UN Trade and Development released the report “Invisible Barriers: The Costs of Non-Tariff Measures”, stating that Non-Tariff Measures now cost more than tariffs for most countries.
- ❖ Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) include rules like technical standards, quality checks, safety norms, and certification requirements in trade.
- ❖ The report says NTMs impose higher export costs than tariffs for about 88% of countries.
- ❖ Developing countries face a double burden of tariff duties and high compliance costs for meeting complex trade regulations.
- ❖ Least Developed Countries (LDCs) lose around 10% of exports to G20 countries due to a lack of testing facilities and certification systems.
- ❖ Global trade negotiations are now focusing more on regulatory simplification rather than only reducing tariffs.

### **LEADS 2025 Logistics Ranking**

- ❖ The LEADS (Logistics Ease Across Different States) 2025 report ranked Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Mizoram, and Delhi as “Exemplars” in logistics performance.
- ❖ The report was released by DPIIT (Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade).
- ❖ LEADS assesses states and Union Territories based on logistics policy, infrastructure, service delivery, and regulatory systems.
- ❖ LEADS 2025 introduced a new four-tier system: Exemplars, High Performers, Accelerators, and Growth-Seekers.
- ❖ Gujarat and Kerala were placed in the “High Performers” category along with other states and Union Territories.
- ❖ Around 59% weightage in LEADS 2025 was given to objective and evidence-based indicators for better assessment accuracy.

### **Henley Passport Index 2026**

- ❖ Henley & Partners Passport Index 2026 ranked India's passport at 78th position globally.
- ❖ The ranking is based on visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to 199 global destinations using International Air Transport Association (IATA) data.
- ❖ India's passport provides access to 56 destinations either visa-free, visa-on-arrival, or through e-visa facilities.
- ❖ India's ranking fell from 75th (earlier 2026 update) to 78th in 2026, though it has improved compared to 85th (2025) and 90th (2021).
- ❖ The top-ranked passports in 2026 are Singapore (1st), Japan (2nd), and South Korea (3rd).

### **Global Forest Goals Report 2026**

- ❖ The Global Forest Goals (GFG) Report 2026 was released by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) Secretariat.
- ❖ The report assessed progress towards 6 Global Forest Goals set for 2030 under the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests (2017–2030).
- ❖ Global forest area declined by more than 40 million hectares between 2015 and 2025 due to agricultural expansion and rising demand for fuelwood and charcoal.
- ❖ The report identified weak governance, illegal trade, insecure land tenure and limited institutional capacity as major barriers to sustainable forest management.
- ❖ Forest degradation increased because of climate-related pressures such as droughts, heatwaves, wildfires, pests and diseases.
- ❖ The report stated that forest finance reached a record US\$84 billion in 2023, but it remains far below the estimated annual requirement of US\$300 billion by 2030.

### **World Health Statistics Report 2026**

- ❖ The World Health Organization (WHO) released the World Health Statistics Report 2026, an annual compilation of global health indicators published since 2005.
- ❖ The report stated that progress towards health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remains uneven and too slow to meet 2030 targets.
- ❖ Global malaria incidence increased by 8.5% since 2015, despite long-term declines in HIV infections, tuberculosis and neglected tropical diseases between 2010 and 2024.
- ❖ Around 2 billion people worldwide continued using polluting cooking fuels and technologies in 2024.

- ❖ About 1.6 billion people were living in or pushed into poverty due to health expenses as of 2022, while nearly one-fourth of the global population faced financial hardship from out-of-pocket health spending.

### **Global Report on Internal Displacement 2026**

- ❖ The Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID) 2026 reported that 82.2 million people were internally displaced across 104 countries by the end of 2025.
- ❖ The report was released by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre in partnership with the Norwegian Refugee Council.
- ❖ Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are people forced to leave their homes but who remain within their own country's borders.
- ❖ Conflict and violence displaced 68.6 million people, becoming the largest cause of displacement for the first time.
- ❖ Sudan recorded the world's largest internal displacement crisis with more than 9.1 million displaced people.
- ❖ The report noted that 78,000 people remained displaced in Manipur due to Meitei-Kuki violence.

### **New Geopolitics of Food Report**

- ❖ The report "A New Geopolitics of Food" was released by the International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (IPES-Food).
- ❖ The report states that trade wars, military conflicts, and weakening multilateral institutions are reshaping global food systems.
- ❖ It highlighted that food is increasingly being used as a tool of war and economic coercion in global hunger hotspots.
- ❖ The report discussed Public Food Stockholding (PSH), under which governments procure, store, and distribute food grains for food security.
- ❖ India's Public Food Stockholding programme supports the National Food Security Act, 2013 and is managed by the Food Corporation of India (FCI).

### **Sand and Sustainability Report**

- ❖ The United Nations Environment Programme released the report titled 'Sand and Sustainability: An Essential Resource for Nature and Development'.
- ❖ The report states that sand is the most extracted solid material in the world after water, with global consumption reaching about 50 billion tonnes annually in 2020.

- ❖ Sand mining involves the extraction of sand from riverbeds, beaches, and sea beds mainly for construction and industrial purposes.
- ❖ Excessive sand mining leads to riverbed degradation, groundwater depletion, biodiversity loss, and coastal erosion.
- ❖ The report recommends promoting Manufactured Sand (M-Sand), stronger regulation, and protection of ecologically sensitive areas from mining.

### **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.

### **UNEP Global Buildings Report**

- ❖ The United Nations Environment Programme has released the 10th edition of the “Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction 2025–2026”, stating that the sector remains off track to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.
- ❖ The buildings and construction sector accounts for 37% of global carbon emissions and nearly 50% of global material extraction.
- ❖ Buildings’ operational emissions increased to 9.9 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide (GtCO<sub>2</sub>) in 2024 and must decline by 56% by 2030 to meet climate targets.
- ❖ Cement, steel, and aluminium used in buildings contributed around 9% of global emissions in 2024 due to embodied carbon emissions.
- ❖ Global building floor area increased by 1.7% in 2024 to 273 billion square metres, with major growth seen in India and Southeast Asia.

### **State and Trends of Carbon Pricing 2026**

- ❖ The World Bank Group released the 13th edition of the “State and Trends of Carbon Pricing 2026” report.

- ❖ The report identified India as one of the world's largest new carbon markets after the launch of the Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS) in 2026.
- ❖ The report stated that carbon pricing systems now cover 29% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
- ❖ Global revenues from Emissions Trading Systems (ETS) and carbon taxes increased from less than 30 billion US dollars in 2016 to more than 107 billion US dollars in 2025.
- ❖ India's Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS) is administered by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) under the Ministry of Power.
- ❖ India's Carbon Credit Trading Scheme replaced the Perform, Achieve and Trade (PAT) Scheme and supports India's target of net zero emissions by 2070.

## STATES

### West Bengal Assembly Elections 2026 – Record Turnout

- ❖ West Bengal recorded the highest-ever voter turnout of 92.47% in the 2026 Assembly elections since Independence.
- ❖ The elections were held in two phases, with 93.19% turnout in Phase 1 (April 23) and 91.66% in Phase 2.
- ❖ The state has a total voter base of about 6.81 crore, with women's turnout (92.28%) higher than men's (91.07%).
- ❖ The previous highest turnout in West Bengal was 84.72% in the 2011 Assembly elections.
- ❖ Tripura holds the national record with 93.61% turnout in the 2013 Assembly elections.
- ❖ Counting of votes will be held on 4 May for West Bengal and other states.

### NARIT AI Tool

- ❖ Gujarat Police developed NARIT AI, the first Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based tool in India for narcotics investigation.
- ❖ NARIT AI (Narcotics Analysis and Retrieval Augmented Generation-based Investigation Tool) supports police in handling drug-related cases.
- ❖ It analyses the First Information Report (FIR) and generates detailed investigation reports.
- ❖ It is based on Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG) technology and uses laws like the NDPS Act (Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985).

- ❖ It provides evidence checklists, legal guidance, and predicts possible defence arguments in court.

### **Maharashtra Day 2026 - May 01**

- ❖ It marks the formation of Maharashtra on May 1, 1960, after the division of Bombay State.
- ❖ The division was done under the Bombay Reorganisation Act (1960) on a linguistic basis.
- ❖ The movement was led by Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti (United Maharashtra Committee).
- ❖ The demand for a separate state started before independence and became stronger after 1947.

### **Gujarat Foundation Day 2026 - May 01**

- ❖ It marks the formation of Gujarat on May 1, 1960, after separation from Bombay State.
- ❖ The division was done under the Bombay Reorganisation Act (1960) on a linguistic basis.
- ❖ The movement for a separate state was led by Indulal Yagnik under the Mahagujarat Movement.
- ❖ Gujarat was created for Gujarati-speaking people, while Maharashtra was formed for Marathi-speaking people.
- ❖ The first capital was Ahmedabad, later shifted to Gandhinagar in 1970.

### **Maharashtra AI Policy 2026**

- ❖ The Maharashtra government has announced the AI Policy 2026 to promote Artificial Intelligence in governance and industry.
- ❖ The policy aims to attract ₹10,000 crore investment and create over 1.5 lakh jobs by 2031.
- ❖ It proposes setting up the Maharashtra AI Mission and training 2 lakh youth in AI skills.
- ❖ AI cities will be developed, and a State AI Data Exchange platform will be created.
- ❖ A ₹500 crore AI Startup Venture Fund and 12 AI incubators will support startups.
- ❖ MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) will get 20% subsidy for AI adoption.

### **Sikkim Integration – 50 Years**

- ❖ Sikkim marked the 50th anniversary of its integration with India on 16 May 1975.
- ❖ Sikkim was ruled by the Chogyal monarchy from 1642 to 1975 before joining India.
- ❖ 36th Constitutional Amendment Act 1975 made Sikkim the 22nd state of India.
- ❖ A 1975 referendum saw about 97% people voting to abolish the monarchy and join India.
- ❖ Earlier, the Indo-Sikkim Treaty of 1950 made it an Indian protectorate with internal autonomy.
- ❖ Sikkim is located in the eastern Himalayas and became the world's first fully organic state in 2016.

### **India's First Green Methanol Plant**

- ❖ India's first green methanol production plant is being set up in Gujarat.
- ❖ The plant in Gujarat will use invasive shrub *Prosopis juliflora* (locally called Gando Baval in Kutch) as feedstock to produce marine fuel for ocean-going ships.
- ❖ It is being developed at Deendayal Port Authority using gasification technology to convert biomass into methanol.
- ❖ It will use gasification technology to convert biomass into syngas and then into methanol fuel.
- ❖ The plant has an initial capacity of about 5 tonnes per day, with future expansion plans.
- ❖ Green methanol is a low-carbon, renewable fuel used for marine shipping and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

### **Kerala Assembly Elections 2026 Results**

- ❖ In the Kerala Assembly Elections 2026 Left government voted out, ending its rule in the state.
- ❖ United Democratic Front (UDF) won about 97–98 seats, crossing the majority mark of 71 in the 140-member Assembly.
- ❖ Left Democratic Front (LDF) secured around 35 seats and lost power after ruling since 2016.
- ❖ Kerala earlier gave the world its first democratically elected communist government in 1957 under E. M. S. Namboodiripad (Communist Party of India - CPI).

- ❖ With this result, no Indian state is now ruled by Left parties, ending nearly 50 years of continuous Left rule in some state since 1977.
- ❖ Pinarayi Vijayan led the outgoing LDF government (CPI(Marxist)).
- ❖ Elections show a decline of Left influence earlier seen in West Bengal (till 2011) and Tripura (till 2018).

### **West Bengal Assembly Elections 2026 Results**

- ❖ Bharatiya Janata Party won around 206–208 seats out of 294, crossing the majority mark of 148 and forming a government for the first time in the state.
- ❖ All India Trinamool Congress (TMC), led by Mamata Banerjee, lost power after ruling since 2011.
- ❖ Mamata Banerjee also lost her own seat in the Bhabanipur constituency to BJP candidate Suvendu Adhikari.
- ❖ The election ended 15 years of TMC rule and marked the BJP's first breakthrough in West Bengal politics.
- ❖ High voter turnout recorded (around 92%) after revision of electoral rolls before elections.

### **Assam Assembly Election Results 2026**

- ❖ The Bharatiya Janata Party led National Democratic Alliance secured a third consecutive term in the Assam Assembly Election 2026 by winning 102 out of 126 seats.
- ❖ Bharatiya Janata Party won 82 seats while Asom Gana Parishad and Bodoland People's Front won 10 seats each, crossing the majority mark of 64 comfortably.
- ❖ Indian National Congress managed only 19 seats, and Rajior Dal won only 1 seat, indicating a major setback for the opposition alliance.
- ❖ Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma retained the Jalukbari seat for the sixth consecutive term.
- ❖ Assam recorded a voter turnout of 85.9 percent with elections conducted by the Election Commission of India across 126 constituencies and 35 districts involving around 2.5 crore voters and 722 candidates.

### **India's First Paperless Judiciary State - Sikkim**

- ❖ Sikkim has become the first state in India to adopt a fully paperless judiciary, marking a major milestone in digital justice delivery.
- ❖ The declaration was made during the National Conclave on Technology and Judicial Education held in Gangtok.

- ❖ The initiative includes end to end digital functioning through e-filing digital case records, virtual hearings, and automated workflows.
- ❖ The paperless system aims to reduce case pendency, speed up hearings and improve efficiency in justice delivery.
- ❖ The judiciary is increasingly using Artificial Intelligence tools such as SUPACE and SUVAS for research translation and case management.

### **Gig Workers Digital Grievance System**

- ❖ Karnataka launched India's first dedicated digital grievance redressal system for gig workers, marking a major labour welfare reform initiative in the country.
- ❖ Gig workers can file complaints through the Integrated Public Grievance Redressal System portal, covering wages, working conditions and disputes with digital platforms.
- ❖ The mechanism aims to ensure transparency, accountability and faster resolution of grievances in the expanding gig economy sector.
- ❖ Telangana became the fifth state to adopt gig worker legislation after Karnataka, Rajasthan, Bihar and Jharkhand, strengthening legal protection for platform-based workers.

### **Lepcha Traditional Bridge System**

- ❖ UNESCO and the Government of Sikkim are documenting Ru-Soam Engineering of the Lepcha community.
- ❖ Ru-Soam refers to traditional bamboo and cane footbridges built by the Lepcha people in the Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve.
- ❖ These bridges use natural materials like bamboo and cane, acting like modern suspension bridges without steel or concrete.
- ❖ Key parts include the main support cables (Soamgyang), suspender loops (Ahood), and bamboo deck (Soamgur).
- ❖ The bridges can span up to 100 metres and usually support 2–3 people at a time.
- ❖ They are eco-friendly (low carbon footprint) and resilient to earthquakes due to their flexibility.

### **Namma 112 AI Emergency System**

- ❖ Bengaluru City Police introduced an AI-powered multilingual upgrade to the Namma 112 emergency system.

- ❖ Namma 112 is part of the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS), India's national emergency helpline 112.
- ❖ The new system, called VANKI Multilingual Voice AI for Nationwide Key Interventions, enables real-time translation during emergency calls.
- ❖ The system helps provide faster response by police, ambulance, and fire services without language barriers.
- ❖ Bengaluru becomes the first city in India to introduce multilingual AI in emergency helpline services.

### **Centre of Excellence for Space Technology - Karnataka**

- ❖ Karnataka launched India's first State-led Centre of Excellence for Space Technology in Bengaluru.
- ❖ The centre is set up by Karnataka Innovation and Technology Society in collaboration with SIA-India (Satcom Industry Association-India).
- ❖ It aims to promote advanced research, innovation, industry-aligned training, and talent development in space technologies.
- ❖ It will support the start-up incubation, ecosystem building, and cross-sector applications of space technology.
- ❖ The initiative focuses on converting the research into commercial outcomes, economic growth, and job creation.
- ❖ The centre aims to bridge the gap between research and market-ready solutions in the space sector.

### **Puducherry Election Result 2026**

- ❖ Puducherry Assembly Election Result 2026 was announced on 4 May 2026, with the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) securing a majority of seats.
- ❖ N. Rangasamy led the All India N.R. Congress (AINRC)-led NDA, which won 18 out of 30 Assembly seats.
- ❖ AINRC secured 12 seats, while Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won 4 seats in the alliance.
- ❖ N. Rangasamy is set to become Chief Minister for the fifth time after winning both constituencies he contested.
- ❖ The opposition INDIA bloc, led by Congress and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), won 6 seats in the election.

### **India's First Pearl Farming Cluster**

- ❖ Hazaribag in Jharkhand became India's first pearl farming cluster under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY).
- ❖ The project received an investment of ₹22 crore from the Central and Jharkhand governments.
- ❖ Hazaribag was officially notified as the Pearl Cluster on 30 August 2024.
- ❖ The National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) recorded production of 1.02 lakh pearls from Hazaribag district.
- ❖ *Hyriopsis cumingii* is a freshwater mussel species used for pearl cultivation in the cluster.
- ❖ Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) is a central scheme for fisheries and aquaculture development.

### **PMGSY-IV in Odisha**

- ❖ Union Minister for Rural Development launched the fourth phase of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY-IV) in Odisha on 1 May 2026 with a total outlay of ₹1,700 crore.
- ❖ The Union Cabinet approved PMGSY-IV on 11 September 2024 for the financial period 2024–2025 to 2028–2029.
- ❖ The scheme aims to improve rural connectivity by constructing 827 road projects covering 1,701.84 km across eight districts of Odisha.
- ❖ These districts include Kandhamal, Keonjhar, Khordha, Koraput, Malkangiri, Nabarangpur, Rayagada, and Sambalpur.
- ❖ The project will benefit 898 villages and improve access to education, healthcare, and employment in rural areas.

### **Khuarel App - Mizoram**

- ❖ Mizoram launched the 'Khuarel' mobile application in 2026 to strengthen real-time disaster reporting and response.
- ❖ The app was launched in Aizawl by the Disaster Management and Rehabilitation (DM&R) Minister.
- ❖ It is designed as a real-time disaster incident reporting and management system for faster emergency response.
- ❖ The application enables citizens to report disasters quickly and helps authorities coordinate response through State and District Disaster Management Authorities (SDMA and DDMA).

- ❖ The initiative aims to improve communication, coordination, and efficiency during natural and man-made disasters.
- ❖ Mizoram is among the first states in Northeast India to adopt such a digital disaster management system.

### **Human Trafficking in Telangana**

- ❖ Telangana recorded the highest number of human trafficking cases in India in 2024, according to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).
- ❖ Telangana registered 423 human trafficking cases in 2024, accounting for nearly 20% of the total cases reported in India.
- ❖ The number of trafficking cases in Telangana increased by 25.9% compared to 2023.
- ❖ Out of 814 trafficking victims identified in the State, 792 were women, and 49 were minors below 18 years of age.
- ❖ “Sexual exploitation for prostitution” was the main reason behind trafficking cases, linked to 770 victims in the State.
- ❖ Telangana recorded the highest trafficking crime rate in the country at 1.1 cases per lakh population, higher than the national average of 0.2.

### **Highest Violent Crime Rate in Odisha**

- ❖ Odisha recorded the highest violent crime rate in India in 2024, according to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report.
- ❖ Odisha recorded 161.6 victims of violent crimes per lakh population in 2024.
- ❖ The state reported 75,403 violent crime cases, the fourth highest in India after Bihar, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ Bihar ranked second with 83 victims per lakh population.
- ❖ Odisha ranked second in crimes against women, with 118.3 crimes per lakh women, while Telangana ranked first.
- ❖ The report stated that rape cases in Odisha declined from 3,054 in 2024 to 2,994 in 2025.
- ❖ More than 6,000 children went missing in Odisha in 2024, and girls accounted for about 87% of these cases.

### **End of 15 Year TMC Rule - West Bengal**

- ❖ Mamata Banerjee completed her tenure as the Chief Minister of West Bengal after serving for 15 years from 2011 to 2026.

- ❖ She served as Chief Minister during the 15th, 16th, and 17th Vidhan Sabha terms.
- ❖ Her term officially ended on 7 May 2026.
- ❖ Governor R. N. Ravi dissolved the 17th West Bengal Legislative Assembly after the completion of its term.
- ❖ Mamata Banerjee came to power in 2011 after defeating the 34-year-old Left Front government in the State.
- ❖ Suwendu Adhikari was sworn in as the Chief Minister of the 18th West Bengal Legislative Assembly.

### **Road RADAR Initiative**

- ❖ The Delhi Pollution Control Committee launched the Road RADAR (Real-time Air Pollution Detection Across Roads) initiative to identify sources of air pollution through daily ground-level surveys in Delhi.
- ❖ The initiative uses geo-tagged reporting through the MCD-311 mobile application for quick action on pollution sources.
- ❖ The programme covers around 18,000 km of roads every month across Delhi.
- ❖ Road RADAR tracks 11 categories of pollution sources, including road dust, garbage, biomass burning, plastic burning, and construction and demolition waste.
- ❖ The initiative aims to improve real-time monitoring, administrative accountability, and rapid redressal of pollution-related complaints.

### **Odisha in PMAY-U 2.0**

- ❖ Odisha became the top-performing state in house completions under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana–Urban (PMAY-U) 2.0 as of 8 May 2026.
- ❖ Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana–Urban (PMAY-U) 2.0 was launched in September 2024 to provide pucca houses for eligible urban poor and middle-income families.
- ❖ Odisha held the first position in house completion performance from March 2025 to March 2026.
- ❖ A total of 24,625 houses were sanctioned under the scheme in Odisha, of which around 23,464 sites were geo-tagged for monitoring and implementation.
- ❖ Foundation work had started for 3,134 houses, and 2,008 houses had been completed by 5 May 2026.
- ❖ The scheme uses geo-tagging, foundation tracking, and completion monitoring to track construction progress.

### **Jharkhand's achievement - Zero Dropout**

- ❖ Jharkhand recorded a 0% primary school dropout rate in 2024–25, according to Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) data and a NITI Aayog report.
- ❖ The primary dropout rate in Jharkhand declined from 6.41% in 2014–15 to 0% in 2024–25.
- ❖ The upper primary dropout rate reduced from 7.42% to 1.7%, while the secondary dropout rate declined from 23.2% to 3.5%.
- ❖ UDISE+ is the national database used for school education statistics in India.
- ❖ Primary education in India generally covers Classes I to V, while upper primary covers Classes VI to VIII.
- ❖ Jharkhand ranked fourth nationally in reducing secondary school dropout rates in 2024–25.

### **16th Century Telugu Inscription - Andhra Pradesh**

- ❖ A 16th century Telugu inscription was discovered at Sri Bugga Ramalingeswara Swamy Temple in Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ The inscription was found on the north wall of the temple at Tadipatri.
- ❖ Historian MyNaa Swamy dated the inscription to either 1574 CE or 1634 CE.
- ❖ The inscription records obeisance paid by Basavappa, son of Satram Cheruvupalli Kalayya, from Mahimaluru in Udayagiri Seema.
- ❖ The carving also shows Basavappa and his wife standing beside a Sivalingam in a devotional posture.
- ❖ Tadipatri was part of Pennabadi Seema under the Vijayanagara Empire during that period.

### **Draft Uniform Civil Code Bill – Assam**

- ❖ The Assam Government will introduce the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill in the State Assembly.
- ❖ The proposed legislation aims to address issues including the legal age of marriage, polygamy, inheritance, and live-in relationships.
- ❖ The religious practices would remain outside the scope of the Bill.
- ❖ Tribal communities living in both the hill and plain regions of the State will also be exempted from the provisions of the proposed law.
- ❖ With this move, Assam is set to become the third State, after Uttarakhand and Gujarat, to table a Uniform Civil Code Bill.

- ❖ Uttarakhand became the first Indian state to enact a Uniform Civil Code law in 2024.
- ❖ Goa is the only Indian state to implement a Uniform Civil Code (UCC), governed by the Portuguese Civil Code of 1867.
- ❖ Article 44 of the Constitution of India places the UCC among the Directive Principles of State Policy.

### **2022 Hijab Ban Order**

- ❖ The Karnataka government has withdrawn its February 2022 order on school uniforms.
- ❖ It issued new guidelines that permit students to wear a limited range of traditional and religion-based symbols alongside prescribed uniforms in government, aided and private schools and pre-university colleges.
- ❖ It said institutions were spaces intended to promote scientific temper, rationality, equality, dignity, fraternity, discipline, secularism, mutual respect & social harmony.
- ❖ It allows students to wear the hijab or headscarf, turban, Shivadhara, sacred thread and Rudraksha with the institutional uniform.
- ❖ But provided they do not interfere with discipline, safety or student identification.
- ❖ At the same time, no student can be compelled either to wear or to remove such symbols.

### **Highest Cybercrime Cases – Bengaluru**

- ❖ Bengaluru recorded 17,561 cybercrime cases in 2024, the highest among metropolitan cities in India, according to NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau) data.
- ❖ The city reported a cybercrime rate of 206.6 cases per one lakh population in 2024.
- ❖ Fraud was the largest category of cyber offences, with 16,842 fraud-related cases reported in Bengaluru.
- ❖ Karnataka recorded 21,993 cybercrime cases in 2024, making it one of the leading states in cybercrime registration.
- ❖ Across India, cybercrime cases increased from 86,420 in 2023 to 1,01,928 in 2024, showing a 17.9% rise.
- ❖ Bengaluru's charge-sheeting rate in cybercrime cases was 24.2% in 2024.

### **Palaeo-channel Discovery - Uttar Pradesh**

- ❖ Scientists discovered a massive ancient underground river palaeo-channel beneath the Prayagraj–Kanpur stretch in Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ The study was carried out by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).
- ❖ The palaeo-channel lies 10–15 metres below the surface and extends nearly 200 kilometres.
- ❖ Airborne Electromagnetic (AEM) surveys and deep drilling confirmed ancient riverbed sandy deposits in the region.
- ❖ Palaeo-channels are old inactive river channels that are important for groundwater storage and mineral exploration.

### **Annapurna Bhandar Scheme**

- ❖ The West Bengal government launched the Annapurna Bhandar Scheme on 14 May 2026 to strengthen women-centric welfare measures in the state.
- ❖ The scheme will be implemented from 1 June 2026 across West Bengal.
- ❖ Under the scheme, eligible women beneficiaries will receive ₹3,000 per month through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) into their bank accounts.
- ❖ The scheme also includes free travel for women in state-run buses as part of social welfare support.
- ❖ The objective is to improve women's economic independence and strengthen social security systems in the state.

### **Sikkim Statehood Day 2026 - May 16**

- ❖ Sikkim celebrated its 51st Statehood Day recently.
- ❖ Sikkim became the 22nd state of India after the 36th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1975.
- ❖ Before joining India, Sikkim was ruled by the Chogyal monarchy under the Namgyal dynasty.
- ❖ A public referendum held in 1975 supported the merger of Sikkim with India and ended the monarchy system.
- ❖ Sikkim is known for its rich culture, Buddhist monasteries, and as India's first fully organic state.

### **Bhojshala Complex Verdict**

- ❖ The Madhya Pradesh High Court declared the Bhojshala-Kamal Maula Mosque complex in Dhar district as a temple dedicated to Goddess Saraswati.

- ❖ The Indore Bench of the High Court quashed the 2003 Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) order that had restricted Hindu worship rights at the site.
- ❖ The Archaeological Survey of India conducted a scientific survey of the complex from March to June 2024.
- ❖ The ASI survey report stated that the present structure contained parts of earlier temples.
- ❖ Bhojshala is a disputed religious site in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh and is historically linked with Sanskrit learning and Goddess Saraswati worship.
- ❖ The Supreme Court had earlier ordered status quo at the site while allowing the ASI survey to continue.

### **Mizoram Ginger Mission**

- ❖ The Centre launched the ₹189.79 crore Mizoram Ginger Mission to promote processing, branding and export of Mizo ginger.
- ❖ The mission was launched with support from the Ministry of Development of the North-Eastern Region (DONER).
- ❖ The project focuses on value addition, branding, market integration and infrastructure development across the ginger value chain.
- ❖ The mission includes 1 integrated processing hub, 3 spoke processing centres and more than 30 strategic interventions covering nearly 20,000 farming households.
- ❖ Mizoram ginger contains 6–8% oleoresin, higher than the global average of around 3%, making it valuable for food, pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries.
- ❖ Thingpui Ginger and Thinglaidum Ginger of Mizoram received Geographical Indication (GI) tags in 2021.

### **Bhimmandali Eco Heritage Site**

- ❖ Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurated the Bhimmandali Eco Heritage Site in Sambalpur district, Odisha.
- ❖ The site is located in the Naktideul Forest Range and contains rock paintings and stone inscriptions over 20,000 years old.
- ❖ The findings show evidence of early human habitation from the Old Stone Age to the Neolithic period.
- ❖ The project aims to conserve prehistoric archaeological remains and promote eco-tourism in Odisha.
- ❖ Bhimmandali is linked to Bhima from the Mahabharata and includes worship sites of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati as Gupteswar.

### **Compliance Reduction and Deregulation Initiative**

- ❖ Tripura became the first state in India to complete all priority areas under Deregulation Phase I and Phase II of the Compliance Reduction and Deregulation Initiative (CRDI).
- ❖ The initiative is led by the Cabinet Secretariat to reduce compliance burdens and improve ease of doing business.
- ❖ Tripura completed all 51 reform areas covering sectors such as land use, labour laws, tourism, environment, and digital governance.
- ❖ The state achieved a 94% score in the Business Reform Action Plan evaluation framework.
- ❖ Tripura attracted investment proposals worth about ₹35,140 crore through 394 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs).
- ❖ The reforms include simplified land-use categories, flexible zoning systems, and self-certification for Change of Land Use (CLU) approvals.

### **Drug Surveillance Portal - Karnataka**

- ❖ Karnataka launched India's first integrated digital portal to monitor Not of Standard Quality (NSQ) medicines and Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) drug sales.
- ❖ The system was introduced by the State Food Safety and Drug Administration (FDA) for real-time drug quality surveillance.
- ❖ Once a medicine batch is declared NSQ, the portal automatically blocks its sale across the supply chain.
- ❖ Retailers selling NDPS drugs must upload patient, doctor and prescription details before dispensing medicines.
- ❖ The portal also tracks stock availability, medicine recalls, and suspicious prescription patterns to improve transparency and patient safety.

### **Coffees of Nagaland Mission**

- ❖ Centre has launched the ₹175-crore "Coffees of Nagaland" Mission to develop Nagaland as a global speciality coffee destination.
- ❖ The mission follows a cluster-based Coffee Value Chain Development model covering plantation, processing, branding, exports, tourism and farmer training.
- ❖ Two pilot coffee clusters were identified — Tuophema village in Kohima district for Arabica coffee and Ghotovi village in Niuland district for Robusta coffee.
- ❖ The initiative aims to create the "Brand North East – Coffees of Nagaland" with coffee tourism, farm stays and international market promotion.

- ❖ The project will promote organic certification, Geographical Indication (GI) tagging, digital traceability and higher income opportunities for coffee farmers.

### **Central Zonal Council Meeting 2026**

- ❖ The 26<sup>th</sup> Central Zonal Council meeting was held in Jagdalpur (Bastar region, Chhattisgarh) under Union Home Minister.
- ❖ It was attended by the Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh (Yogi Adityanath), Madhya Pradesh (Mohan Yadav), Uttarakhand (Pushkar Singh Dhami), and Chhattisgarh (Vishnu Deo Sai).
- ❖ The meeting is being held in Bastar, and even before the meeting, the entire Bastar region has become Naxal-free
- ❖ This zone stretches from the Himalayan region in the north to the Gangetic plains and further to the plateau regions of central India, which are rich in forests and minerals.
- ❖ Chhattisgarh connects nearly seven states, which gives the entire Central Zone immense strategic importance.

### **Hoysala Hero Stone Found**

- ❖ A 12th-century Hoysala Veeragallu (hero stone) was discovered in Maniyur village of Mandya district, Karnataka.
- ❖ The Veeragallu belongs to the reign of the Hoysala ruler Vishnuvardhana.
- ❖ Veeragallu are memorial stones erected in honour of warriors who died in battles or acts of bravery.
- ❖ The Hoysala Empire ruled parts of present-day Karnataka between the 10th and 14th centuries Common Era (CE).
- ❖ Belur in Hassan district is an important heritage centre of the Hoysala dynasty.

### **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.

### **Kumbhalgarh Fort – Great Wall of India**

- ❖ Kumbhalgarh Fort was recognised in a UNESCO survey for having the world’s second longest continuous wall after the Great Wall of China.
- ❖ Kumbhalgarh Fort is located in the Aravalli Hills of Rajasthan, about 84 km from Udaipur.
- ❖ The fort was built by Rana Kumbha between 1443 and 1458 AD, and the architect was Mandan.

- ❖ The fort wall is around 36 km long and 15–25 feet wide, with seven strong gates called “pols.”
- ❖ UNESCO declared it a World Heritage Site in 2013 under the “Hill Forts of Rajasthan.”
- ❖ The fort has more than 360 temples and is also known as the birthplace of Maharana Pratap.

### **India’s First AI-Powered Phygital Banking Branch**

- ❖ India’s first Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered “phygital” banking branch was inaugurated in Guwahati by Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.
- ❖ “Phygital” banking combines physical banking services with digital technology to provide faster and easier customer services.
- ❖ The branch includes AI-enabled self-service kiosks, paperless cash deposits and withdrawals, and digital onboarding systems.

### **SHE-MART Initiative**

- ❖ The Ministry of Rural Development held a national consultation in Bhubaneswar to finalise operational guidelines for the SHE-MART initiative.
- ❖ SHE-MART stands for Self Help Entrepreneurs – Marketing Avenues for Rural Transformation.
- ❖ The initiative aims to support women-led rural businesses and improve market access for Self-Help Groups (SHGs).
- ❖ SHE-MART was announced in the Union Budget 2026–27 and is implemented under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana–National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM).
- ❖ The scheme will establish women-managed retail stores, aggregation hubs, and digital commerce systems linked with the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC).
- ❖ The initiative supports the government’s target of creating three crore “Lakhpati Didis” by 2029.

### **3200 Year Old Settlement Found**

- ❖ Archaeologists discovered evidence of a 3,200-year-old settlement in Hazaribag district in the Mohane river basin of Chauparan block, Jharkhand.
- ❖ The site includes villages such as Dehar, Sohra, Mangarh, and Hathinder, where ancient artefacts were found during farming and digging activities.

- ❖ Surveys using Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) identified large buried structures measuring more than 100 feet in length.
- ❖ Researchers found Northern Black Polished Ware pottery linked to the early historic period in the Indian subcontinent.
- ❖ Statues of Buddha, Tara, Avalokiteshvara, Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh, and Ganesha were also discovered at the site.

### **Bomkai Weaving - Odisha**

- ❖ Odisha launched a revival plan to protect the original Bomkai weaving tradition in Ganjam district.
- ❖ The project is titled “Revival of Languishing Products (Cotton Bomkai Saree)” and was approved by the State government.
- ❖ Subarnapur is another important centre associated with Bomkai weaving.
- ❖ The Bomkai saree has Geographical Indication (GI) status under the Geographical Indications of Goods Act, 1999.
- ❖ The revival project includes documentation of traditional designs, motifs, and colour patterns of Bomkai sarees.
- ❖ The programme also trains young artisans in traditional weaving techniques through orientation programmes and handloom cluster support.
- ❖ Only two weaving families currently continue the original Bomkai weaving tradition in Bomkai village.

### **Uniform Civil Code Bill 2026 – Assam**

- ❖ The Assam Assembly passed the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill, 2026, to create a common civil law framework in the State.
- ❖ The Bill covers marriage, divorce, inheritance, and registration of live-in relationships.
- ❖ The legislation excludes Scheduled Tribes (STs) from its provisions in recognition of their customary laws.
- ❖ The law will promote gender justice, ban polygamy, and ensure equal succession rights.
- ❖ Assam became the third State after Uttarakhand and Gujarat to pass a Uniform Civil Code law.

### **AI Water Summit 2026**

- ❖ India’s first National AI and Digital Water Summit held in Bengaluru.

- ❖ The summit is organised by the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) and Elets Technomedia Pvt. Ltd.
- ❖ The event will focus on Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based urban water management, smart infrastructure, and cybersecurity.
- ❖ BWSSB will showcase digital systems such as SCADA, Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping, Internet of Things (IoT)-enabled tanker tracking, and smart metering.
- ❖ The summit will present the “Five Panchasutras” framework for future urban water governance and climate-resilient water security.

### **Project Zero Against Corruption**

- ❖ Kerala launched “Project Zero” as a state-level anti-corruption initiative through the Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau (VACB).
- ❖ Project Zero aims to reduce bribery, cybercrimes, and corruption in government administration.
- ❖ The initiative encourages people to report corruption complaints directly to the Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau (VACB).
- ❖ The programme includes protection and confidentiality for whistleblowers and complainants.
- ❖ It focuses on faster investigation using technology and improved administrative transparency.

## **PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS**

### **Tatya Tope’s 1857 Letter**

- ❖ A letter from Tatya Tope from 1857 was found in the Madhya Pradesh archives under the Gyan Bharatam Mission.
- ❖ Tatya Tope (1814–1859) was a key leader of the Indian Rebellion of 1857 against British rule.
- ❖ He worked under Nana Saheb (adopted son of Baji Rao II) and led important battles at Kanpur.
- ❖ He fought with Rani Lakshmbai and later took control of rebel forces at Gwalior.
- ❖ He used guerrilla warfare to continue resistance in central India after major battles.
- ❖ He was captured by the British, tried in court, and executed in 1859.

### **Meena Muthiah demise**

- ❖ Meena Muthiah, noted educationist and philanthropist from Chennai, passed away at the age of 91.
- ❖ She founded Kumara Rajah Muthiah School of Traditional Arts and Crafts to promote Tanjore painting.
- ❖ She served as Secretary and Correspondent of institutions like Chettinad Vidyashram and Kumararani Dr. Meena Muthiah College.
- ❖ She received the Living Craft Treasure Award (2016–17) from Poompuhar, Government of Tamil Nadu.

### **Sukumar Azhikode Birth Centenary National Award 2026**

- ❖ Medha Patkar and Perumal Murugan have been selected for the Sukumar Azhikode Birth Centenary National Award.
- ❖ The award is given by the Sukumar Azhikode Trust to honour outstanding contributions to society and literature.
- ❖ Medha Patkar is recognised for her work for the rights of displaced communities, while Perumal Murugan is honoured for his contribution to Indian literature.
- ❖ The award carries a cash prize of ₹50,000 along with a citation.

### **NITI Aayog's New Members 2026**

- ❖ Joram Aniya and R. Balasubramaniam appointed as full-time members of NITI Aayog.
- ❖ Joram Aniya became the first person from Arunachal Pradesh and the Northeast region to hold this position.
- ❖ With these appointments, the total number of full-time members increased to seven.
- ❖ NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India) was established in 2015, replacing the Planning Commission.

### **Whitley Awards 2026 – Indian Winners**

- ❖ Two Indian women conservationists have won the prestigious Whitley Awards 2026, also known as the “Green Oscars.”
- ❖ Parveen Shaikh received the award for her community-based conservation work to protect the endangered Indian skimmer bird.
- ❖ Barkha Subba was honoured for her efforts to conserve the rare Himalayan salamander and restore its habitat.
- ❖ The Whitley Awards are given annually by the Whitley Fund for Nature to support grassroots environmental conservation projects.

- ❖ Each winner receives ₹50,000 funding for one year along with training, global recognition, and project support.

### **Malcolm Adiseshiah and Elizabeth Adiseshiah Awards 2026**

- ❖ The Malcolm Adiseshiah Award 2026 has been awarded to Raghav Das Gaiha for his contributions to development studies.
- ❖ He is a visiting scholar at the University of Pennsylvania and a former Professor of Public Policy at the University of Delhi.
- ❖ Kanika Mahajan has been selected for the Elizabeth Adiseshiah Award 2026.
- ❖ She is an Associate Professor of Economics at Ashoka University, Haryana.
- ❖ These awards are presented by the Malcolm and Elizabeth Adiseshiah Trust to honour social scientists for outstanding work in development studies.

### **MSP in Scotland – Manivannan**

- ❖ Manivannan was elected as a Member of the Scottish Parliament.
- ❖ Manivannan is a non-binary transgender person from Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The Scottish Parliament is the devolved legislature of Scotland and is located at Holyrood in Edinburgh.
- ❖ Members of the Scottish Parliament are known as MSPs (Members of the Scottish Parliament).
- ❖ Manivannan became the first person elected to Holyrood without a permanent visa to live in the United Kingdom.

### **National Panchayat Awards 2025**

- ❖ National Panchayat Awards recognised outstanding Panchayats for achievements in rural development and local governance.
- ❖ Kawrthah North Village of Mizoram received the top rank under the “Clean and Green Panchayat” category.
- ❖ Karnataka topped the awards with 6 awards, followed by Odisha and Andhra Pradesh with 5 awards each.
- ❖ A total of 34 Gram Panchayats (GPs) were selected under the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (DDUPSVP).
- ❖ Eight Panchayats were selected under the Nanaji Deshmukh Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (NDSPSVP).
- ❖ New Napam Gaon Panchayat of Assam won India’s Best Gram Panchayat award under NDSPSVP 2025.

- ❖ Telcup of Bihar and Biraharu of Uttar Pradesh have secured the second and third positions respectively.

### **National Florence Nightingale Awards 2026**

- ❖ President Droupadi Murmu presented the National Florence Nightingale Awards 2026 to 15 nursing professionals at Rashtrapati Bhavan on 12 May 2026 (International Nurses Day).
- ❖ The awards are given by the Union Health Ministry to recognise the service of Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs), registered nurses, nursing officers, and nursing educators.
- ❖ Aysha Beebi K from Lakshadweep received the award for handling a critical midnight delivery on a remote island in 2026.
- ❖ Kulwinder Parhi from Ladakh was honoured for nearly 30 years of nursing service in high-altitude regions.
- ❖ Each awardee received a Certificate of Merit, a medal, and a cash prize of ₹1 lakh.

### **DigiLocker Integration Awards**

- ❖ Five States were felicitated by the National e-Governance Division (NeGD) for outstanding DigiLocker integration initiatives during the National Consultative Workshop on Strengthening Cybersecurity Frameworks for State Data.
- ❖ The awarded States were Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Nagaland, and Rajasthan for expanding DigiLocker-based citizen services.
- ❖ Karnataka recorded the highest number of DigiLocker accounts with over 2.7 crore registered users and digitised around 3 crore electricity bill records.
- ❖ Gujarat integrated 65% of its services and introduced digital disability certificates for free bus transport benefits.
- ❖ Kerala onboarded more than 117 services within seven days, while Nagaland integrated over 32 services in one month under both issuer and requestor models.
- ❖ Rajasthan linked the Family Register Jan Aadhaar with DigiLocker, benefiting more than 7.5 crore citizens.

### **Soumya Swaminathan - Royal Society**

- ❖ Dr Soumya Swaminathan was elected Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS).
- ❖ She became part of India's first father-daughter duo to receive the honour along with her father, M. S. Swaminathan, who was elected FRS in 1973.
- ❖ The Royal Society was founded in 1660 in the United Kingdom (UK), and its fellowship is one of the world's top science honours.

- ❖ Dr Soumya is a paediatrician and medical researcher known for work on tuberculosis (TB), Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), and global public health.
- ❖ She earlier served as Chief Scientist of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and Director-General of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).
- ❖ She also became only the second Indian woman scientist, after Gagandeep Kang, to be elected Fellow of the Royal Society.

### **VD Satheesan - Kerala CM**

- ❖ V.D. Satheesan sworn in as the new Chief Minister of Kerala.
- ❖ Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar administered the oath of office and secrecy to Mr. Satheesan and the Ministers-designate.
- ❖ Apart from Satheesan, a full Cabinet comprising 20 ministers was also sworn in.
- ❖ Satheesan had said that a “complete Cabinet” was being sworn in at one go for the first time in 60 years.

### **Rangasamy - Puducherry CM**

- ❖ Puducherry CM Founder of the All India N.R. Congress (AINRC) and head of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the Union Territory of Puducherry, N. Rangasamy, was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Puducherry for the fifth time.
- ❖ With the latest swearing-in, Rangasamy has become the first leader in Puducherry’s history to hold the office of Chief Minister five times
- ❖ Lieutenant Governor K. Kailashnathan administered the oaths of office and secrecy.
- ❖ Along with Mr. Rangasamy, Bharatiya Janata Party’s legislature party leader A. Namassivayam and AINRC legislator Malladi Krishna Rao were sworn in as Ministers in the second NDA government in the UT.)

### **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.

### **AIAA Award 2026**

- ❖ ISRO's Chandrayaan-3 received the 2026 Goddard Astronautics Award from the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics in Washington, D.C.
- ❖ Chandrayaan-3 achieved the world's first soft landing near the Moon's south pole on 23 August 2023.
- ❖ The mission explored a scientifically important region of the Moon that had not been studied earlier at the surface level.
- ❖ Chandrayaan-3 confirmed the presence of important chemical elements in the lunar south polar soil, indicating possible local resources for future missions.
- ❖ The mission provided important scientific data to support future human missions and long-term exploration of the Moon.

### **UN Award 2025**

- ❖ Major Abhilasha Barak received the 2025 United Nations Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award.
- ❖ She is serving with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon as the Commander of the Female Engagement Team (FET).
- ❖ She will be honoured during the International Day of UN Peacekeepers, observed every year on 29 May.
- ❖ She was recognised for community outreach with women and girls and for gender sensitisation training among peacekeepers.
- ❖ Major Abhilasha Barak is also the first woman combat helicopter pilot of the Indian Army.
- ❖ She is the third Indian recipient of the award after Major Suman Gawani in 2019 and Major Radhika Sen in 2023.
- ❖ The award was created in 2016 by the Office of Military Affairs under the Department for Peace Operations.

### **P.N. Panicker Book Release**

- ❖ Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan released the book 'The Library Man of India: The Story of P.N. Panicker' at Uprashtrapati Bhavan.
- ❖ The book was written by and describes the life and contributions of P. N. Panicker.

- ❖ P. N. Panicker is known as the father of Kerala's Library and Literacy Movement and played an important role in spreading reading habits in the State.
- ❖ He founded the Sanatana Dharma Library in 1945 and later helped establish the Kerala Granthasala Sangham to expand rural libraries.
- ❖ His slogan "Read and Grow" encouraged reading and education in villages and tribal areas across Kerala.
- ❖ His birth anniversary on 19 June is observed as National Reading Day in India.

### **Sansad Ratna Awards 2026**

- ❖ The Sansad Ratna Awards 2026 were announced to honour outstanding performance by Members of Parliament (MPs) and Parliamentary Standing Committees.
- ❖ The awards recognised 10 Lok Sabha MPs, 2 Rajya Sabha MPs, and 4 Parliamentary Standing Committees for their parliamentary performance.
- ❖ Important awardees include Smita Uday Wagh, Medha Kulkarni, Jagdambika Pal, and Nishikant Dubey.
- ❖ The award was instituted in 2010 by the Prime Point Foundation, inspired by former President A. P. J. Abdul Kalam.
- ❖ The awards are based on official parliamentary data such as debates, questions, attendance, committee participation, and private member bills.

### **Padma Awards 2026**

- ❖ The President of India presented the Padma Awards 2026 during the Civil Investiture Ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- ❖ Padma Awards were instituted in 1954 and are among the highest civilian awards in India.
- ❖ The awards are given in three categories — Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Shri.
- ❖ A total of 131 awards will be conferred in 2026, including 19 women awardees, 16 posthumous awards, and 6 awardees from the Foreigners/Non-Resident Indians (NRIs)/Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs)/Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs) category.
- ❖ From Tamil Nadu, gastroenterologist Kallipatti Ramasamy Palaniswamy received the Padma Bhushan in Medicine, while S K M Maeilanandhan received the Padma Bhushan for Social Work.
- ❖ The awards recognise distinguished service in fields such as art, literature, science, medicine, public affairs, and social work.

## SPORTS

### Archery World Cup Stage 2

- ❖ India's women's recurve team won the gold medal at the Archery World Cup Stage 2 in Shanghai.
- ❖ The Indian team of Deepika Kumari (Jharkhand), Ankita Bhakat (West Bengal), and Kumkum Mohod (Maharashtra) defeated China 5-4 in the shoot-off final.
- ❖ India won its first Archery World Cup stage gold medal since 2021.
- ❖ Pravin Jadhav (Maharashtra) won bronze in the compound individual event, while Sahil Jadhav (Maharashtra) won bronze in the men's compound event.
- ❖ Simranjeet Kaur (Punjab) reached the semifinals of the women's recurve individual event.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### International Labour Day 2026 - May 01

- ❖ It is also called May Day and honours workers and labour rights.
- ❖ The day originated from the Haymarket Affair (1886) in Chicago, United States of America.
- ❖ In India, it was first celebrated in 1923 in Chennai by the Labour Kisan Party of Hindustan (Workers and Peasants Party of India).
- ❖ Led by pioneer communist leader Malayapuram Singaravelu, this historic event saw the first-ever usage of the red flag in India to symbolize workers' unity and rights.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is "Ensuring a Healthy Psychosocial Working Environment."

### World Press Freedom Day 2026 - May 03

- ❖ The day aims to promote freedom of expression and independent journalism.
- ❖ It was proclaimed in 1993 on the recommendation of UNESCO.
- ❖ The day marks the anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration (1991), which supports free, independent and pluralistic media.
- ❖ As per the UNESCO World Trends Report 2022–2025, press freedom has seen its steepest decline since 2012, with over 60% rise in self-censorship.
- ❖ The UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize honours individuals or organisations defending press freedom.

- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is “Shaping a Future of Peace: Promoting Press Freedom for Human Rights, Development, and Security”.

### **Fire Safety Week 2026 - May 4 to May 10**

- ❖ The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched Fire Safety Week 2026 from May 4 to May 10 to improve fire safety standards in hospitals across India.
- ❖ The government released new National Guidelines on Fire and Life Safety in Healthcare Facilities.
- ❖ The guidelines focus on risk assessment, emergency response systems, fire-resistant infrastructure, and staff training.
- ❖ Special safety measures are planned for Intensive Care Units (ICUs), Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICUs), Pediatric Intensive Care Units (PICUs), and Operation Theatres (OTs).
- ❖ The theme of Fire Safety Week 2026 is “Safe Schools, Safe Hospitals, and a Fire-Safety Aware Society: Together for Fire Prevention.”

### **World Thalassaemia Day – May 8, 2026**

- ❖ World Thalassaemia Day was observed on May 8, 2026, to spread awareness about thalassaemia and the importance of early diagnosis.
- ❖ Thalassaemia is a genetic blood disorder in which the body cannot produce healthy haemoglobin properly.
- ❖ In India, around 3 to 4 out of every 100 people are silent carriers of the thalassaemia gene.
- ❖ If both parents are carriers, there is a 25% chance that their child may be born with severe thalassaemia.
- ❖ The 2026 theme is “Hidden No More: Finding the Undiagnosed, Supporting the Unseen.”

### **Border Roads Organisation Raising Day 2026 – May 07**

- ❖ The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) was established in 1960 under the Ministry of Defence.
- ❖ BRO is responsible for building and maintaining roads, tunnels, bridges, and other infrastructure in the border and remote areas of India.
- ❖ The organisation works in high-altitude and snow-bound regions across several states and Union Territories.
- ❖ Major BRO projects include the Sela Tunnel in Arunachal Pradesh and the upcoming Shinkun La Tunnel in Ladakh.
- ❖ The motto of BRO is “Shramena Sarvam Sadhyam,” which means “Everything is achievable through hard work.”

### **Time of Remembrance and Reconciliation for Those Who Lost Their Lives during the Second World War 2026 – May 8 and 9**

- ❖ The observance was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2004.
- ❖ It remembers the millions of civilians and soldiers who lost their lives during the Second World War (1939–1945).
- ❖ May 8 is celebrated as Victory in Europe Day (VE Day), marking the unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany in 1945.
- ❖ The observance highlights the importance of peace, reconciliation, human rights, and international cooperation.
- ❖ The Second World War created the conditions for the establishment of the United Nations in 1945 to prevent future wars.

### **World Lupus Day 2026 - May 10**

- ❖ The day aims to spread awareness about lupus, a chronic autoimmune disease.
- ❖ Lupus is an autoimmune disease in which the immune system attacks healthy tissues and organs.
- ❖ Common symptoms include fatigue, joint pain, butterfly-shaped facial rash, fever, hair loss, and mouth ulcers.
- ❖ The observance promotes awareness, early detection, patient support, and reduction of stigma related to autoimmune diseases.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is “Make Lupus Visible”.

### **National Technology Day 2026 - May 11**

- ❖ India observed the day to celebrate the country’s scientific and technological achievements.
- ❖ The day marks the success of Pokhran-II nuclear tests conducted in Rajasthan on 11 May 1998 under Operation Shakti.
- ❖ It also recognises India’s achievements in science, innovation, engineering, and technology development.
- ❖ The Government of India declared 11 May as National Technology Day in 1999.
- ❖ The day highlights the role of scientists, engineers, researchers, and innovators in national development.

### **International Argania Day 2026 – May 10**

- ❖ The day aims to highlight the importance of the argan tree in sustainable development and biodiversity conservation.
- ❖ The argan tree (*Argania spinosa*) is native to southwestern Morocco and grows in arid and semi-arid regions.

- ❖ Argan oil, known as “liquid gold,” is widely used in food, medicine, and cosmetic industries.
- ❖ The argan ecosystem supports local livelihoods, especially rural women, through cooperatives and traditional oil production.
- ❖ In 2021, the United Nations General Assembly officially proclaimed the day.
- ❖ UNESCO recognised the Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve in 1998 and listed argan-related traditional knowledge as Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2014.

### **World AIDS Vaccine Day 2026 - May 18**

- ❖ The day aims to spread awareness about the need for an HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) vaccine.
- ❖ HIV is a virus that attacks the body’s immune system and can lead to AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) if not treated.
- ❖ The day is also called HIV Vaccine Awareness Day and honours scientists, doctors, volunteers and health workers working on HIV vaccine research.
- ❖ The observance began after a 1997 speech by Bill Clinton highlighting the need for an effective HIV vaccine.
- ❖ The first World AIDS Vaccine Day was celebrated on 18 May 1998.

### **World Hypertension Day 2026 – May 17**

- ❖ The day aims to raise awareness about high blood pressure and related health risks.
- ❖ It was started in 2005 by the World Hypertension League (WHL).
- ❖ Hypertension means high blood pressure and is often called a “silent killer” because it may not show early symptoms.
- ❖ Uncontrolled hypertension can increase the risk of heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, and other cardiovascular diseases.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is “Controlling Hypertension Together: Check your blood pressure regularly, defeat the silent killer”.

### **World Turtle Day 2026 - May 23**

- ❖ The day aims to raise awareness about turtle and tortoise conservation.
- ❖ Turtles, tortoises, and terrapins belong to the order Testudines, and more than half of the world’s 359 species face extinction.
- ❖ The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has listed 68 turtle and tortoise species as Critically Endangered.

- ❖ The Burmese roofed turtle is one of the world's most endangered turtles, with only about 10 mature individuals left in the wild.
- ❖ Green turtles were moved from the endangered category to "Least Concern" after their population increased by around 28% since the 1970s.

### **World Thyroid Day 2026 – May 25**

- ❖ World Thyroid Day is observed every year on 25 May to spread awareness about thyroid health and thyroid disorders.
- ❖ The day was started in 2008 by the European Thyroid Association and the American Thyroid Association.
- ❖ The thyroid is a butterfly-shaped gland in the neck that controls metabolism, energy, body temperature, and hormones.
- ❖ Common thyroid disorders include Hypothyroidism, Hyperthyroidism, Hashimoto's Thyroiditis, and Graves' Disease.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is "Closing the Gap between Symptom Onset and Timely Diagnosis".

### **International Day to End Obstetric Fistula 2026 – May 23**

- ❖ The International Day to End Obstetric Fistula is observed every year on 23 May to raise awareness about preventable childbirth injuries affecting women and girls.
- ❖ Obstetric fistula is a serious childbirth injury caused by prolonged or obstructed labour without timely medical treatment.
- ❖ The condition can lead to urine or faeces leakage, infections, emotional trauma, social isolation, and economic hardship.
- ❖ According to the United Nations Population Fund, around 50,000 to 100,000 new obstetric fistula cases occur globally every year, with many cases reported in sub-Saharan Africa.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is "Restore Her Dignity. Protect Her Future."

### **International Day of the Markhor 2026 – May 24**

- ❖ The International Day of the Markhor is observed every year on 24 May to promote conservation of the markhor species and its mountain habitat.
- ❖ The markhor (*Capra falconeri*) is a wild goat species found in mountainous regions of Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

- ❖ The species is listed as “Near Threatened” by the IUCN and has been included in Appendix I of CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) since 1992.
- ❖ The United Nations General Assembly first observed the day of the Markhor in 2024.
- ❖ The markhor is the national animal of Pakistan and is known for its long corkscrew-shaped horns.

### **Commonwealth Day in India 2026 – May 24**

- ❖ The day aims to celebrate cooperation and shared values among Commonwealth nations.
- ❖ India became a republic on January 26, 1950, under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru.
- ❖ India became the first republic to remain a member of the Commonwealth after the 1949 agreement.
- ❖ The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 56 independent countries working in trade, education, democracy, and development.
- ❖ King Charles III is the present symbolic Head of the Commonwealth.
- ❖ Commonwealth Day promotes unity, international cooperation, and strong relations among member countries.
- ❖ The theme for Commonwealth Day 2026 is “Unlocking Opportunities Together For A Prosperous Commonwealth”.

### **International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers 2026 - May 29**

- ❖ The day aims to honour the service and sacrifice of UN peacekeepers.
- ❖ More than 53,000 civilian, military, and police personnel are currently serving in 11 UN peacekeeping missions worldwide.
- ❖ The day also honours nearly 4,500 peacekeepers who lost their lives while serving in peace missions.
- ❖ Since 1948, over two million peacekeepers have served in more than 70 United Nations peacekeeping missions across the world.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is “Invest in Peace”.

### **World Hunger Day 2026 – May 28**

- ❖ The day aims to raise awareness about global hunger and food insecurity.
- ❖ The day highlights the role of farmers, women, youth, and communities in creating a hunger-free world.

- ❖ According to the United Nations (UN) State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) Report 2025, global hunger has started to decline for the first time since 2017.
- ❖ However, about 673 million people (1 in 12 people globally) still suffer from chronic hunger, and 2.6 billion people cannot afford a healthy diet.
- ❖ The day was founded in 2011 by The Hunger Project, a global organisation established in 1977 to work towards ending hunger.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is “The End of Hunger is in Our Hands.”

## MISCELLANEOUS

### QS MBA Rankings 2026

- ❖ In the QS (Quacquarelli Symonds) Executive MBA Rankings 2026, IIM Bengaluru ranked highest among Indian institutes with a global rank of 64.
- ❖ IIM Bengaluru is the only Indian institute placed in the global top 100 in the Executive MBA category.
- ❖ Other Indian institutes featured include Indian School of Business (ISB), IIM Kozhikode, IIM Indore, Institute of Management Technology Ghaziabad, Woxsen School of Business and IIM Ranchi.
- ❖ Globally, the University of Oxford Saïd Business School ranked first, followed by HEC Paris and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Sloan.

### THE Asia University Rankings 2026

- ❖ Times Higher Education released the Asia University Rankings 2026.
- ❖ The Indian Institute of Science is the top-ranked Indian institution, placed 43rd in Asia.
- ❖ India has the highest number of ranked institutions with 128 universities, followed by Japan and China.
- ❖ Other top Indian institutions include Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences, IIT Indore, Shoolini University, and Jamia Millia Islamia.
- ❖ Top universities in Asia include Tsinghua University, Peking University, and National University of Singapore.

### **Rabindranath Tagore Jayanti 2026**

- ❖ Rabindranath Tagore Jayanti 2026 was observed on May 7 to mark the 165th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore.
- ❖ This corresponds to the 25th day of Boishakh in the Bengali calendar (Pochishe Boishakh).
- ❖ It commemorates the birth of Rabindranath Tagore, who was born on May 7, 1861, in Calcutta, West Bengal.
- ❖ He was a poet, writer, philosopher, painter, musician, and educationist.
- ❖ He was the first non-European to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913 for Gitanjali.
- ❖ He composed over 2,000 songs known as Rabindra Sangeet and modernised Bengali literature and music.
- ❖ He wrote the national anthem of India, Jana Gana Mana, and also inspired the national anthem of Bangladesh.
- ❖ He founded Visva-Bharati University at Santiniketan in 1921 to promote holistic education and cultural learning.

### **Somnath Temple 2026**

- ❖ Somnath Temple is commemorating 75 years of its reopening in May 1951 and 1000 years since the first recorded invasion of the temple in 1026.
- ❖ The temple was ceremonially reopened on 11 May 1951 by India's first President, Rajendra Prasad, after reconstruction efforts led by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.
- ❖ Somnath is the first among the 12 Jyotirlingas of Lord Shiva and is located at Prabhas Patan in Gujarat.
- ❖ The temple faced repeated invasions and destruction from the 11th century onwards, beginning with the first recorded attack in 1026.
- ❖ The present temple was rebuilt in the Kailash Mahameru Prasad architectural style and stands as a symbol of faith, resilience, and cultural continuity.
- ❖ PM, Chairman of the Somnath Trust, visited the temple on 11 May 2026 during the Somnath Swabhiman Parv celebrations.
- ❖ Somnath is aiming to become India's first Net-Zero temple through rainwater harvesting, waste recycling, vermicompost production, Miyawaki forests, and renewable sustainability initiatives.

