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VOLUME - 6 CHENNAI | DAILY | 10 Pages | Wednesday November 18 2026 | Rs.2/- | ISSUE - 129

PRESIDENT OF INDIA INAUGURATES THE YEAR-LONG GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS OF INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH-NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MALARIA RESEARCH

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 PRESIDENT OF INDIA INAUGURATES THE YEAR-LONG GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS OF INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH-NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MALARIA RESEARCH. The President of India, Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the year-long Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Malaria Research in New Delhi today (November 17, 2026).



India to leverage Joint Crediting Mechanism with Japan to accelerate Low-carbon Transition, attract Investment and Strengthen Domestic Capabilities: Bhupender Yadav at COP31 in Antalya (Türkiye)

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 India to leverage Joint Crediting Mechanism with Japan to accelerate Low-carbon Transition, attract Investment and Strengthen Domestic Capabilities: Bhupender Yadav at COP31 in Antalya (Türkiye).

Antalya (Türkiye), 17th November, 2026

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav, today highlighted the progress in operationalising the India-Japan Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM), emphasising its potential to mobilise finance, facilitate technology transfer and advance low-carbon development.

Addressing the 12th JCM Partner Countries' Meeting at the Japan Pavilion during UNFCCC COP31 in Antalya, Türkiye, the Minister said that mechanisms such as JCM can promote equitable and scalable climate cooperation while supporting the national priorities of developing countries.

Addressing the event, the Minister of Environment (Japan), H.E. Sasakawa Hiroyoshi highlighted that JCM holds tremendous potential to foster global partnerships in mobilising finance and leveraging technology to advance decarbonisation. It is a practical model to accelerate decarbonisation projects across the globe. Japan would extend all support and knowledge to its partners to achieve this goal, he stated. Ministers from other JCM partner countries including Oman, Mongolia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Tunisia and Ukraine also presented their views during the event.

Highlighting the longstanding India-Japan partnership, Yadav noted that the two countries signed a Memorandum of Cooperation on August 7, 2025, establishing the JCM under Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement. The mechanism is expected to support India's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy (LT-LEDS), with projects aligned with Government-approved activities and applicable JCM requirements. Beyond emission reductions, it is expected to strengthen domestic capabilities, skills and local value chains while generating wider sustainable development benefits.



The Minister highlighted significant progress in implementation, including the adoption of the Rules of Implementation by the Joint Committee on June 8, 2026, and the launch of the Operational Manual on September 30, 2026. The Manual establishes procedures for project submissions, methodology development, project design, sustainable development assessment, independent validation and verification, project registration, credit issuance and authorisation of mitigation outcomes.

Yadav said India and Japan are working towards digitalising the JCM project cycle to streamline submissions, facilitate processing and enhance transparency. Immediate priorities include inviting applications for Third-Party Entities, receiving proposed methodologies and facilitating Project Idea Note submissions. He also underscored the importance of strengthening domestic validation and verification capacities to ensure robust monitoring, reporting and verification.

Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan participates in 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan' in Punjab

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, and Rural Development, Shivraj Singh Chouhan today participated in the 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan' programme organised at Badarpur village in Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar district (Mohali), Punjab, and announced significant support for the state's farmers. In the presence of Punjab Agriculture Minister Gurmeet Singh Khuddian, Chouhan handed over an approval letter for the release of ₹254.20 crore as the second tranche of the Mother Sanction under the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY) for the financial year 2026–27. In addition, the central government approved seven new agricultural projects under the state's Annual Action Plan, with a total outlay of ₹98.44 crore.

Addressing the programme, the Union Minister announced strict action against those involved in the black marketing of fertilisers and the practice of forcibly tagging other products with fertiliser purchases. He said that those found engaging in such practices would face imprisonment. He also announced that a stringent new pesticide law would be introduced to curb the sale of fake pesticides and other substandard agricultural inputs. Alongside these measures, he shared details of a new green ammonia trial across 10,000 hectares, being undertaken as an alternative to urea.



Records Cumulative Sales of ₹17.37 Lakh; Growing Consumer Response Strengthens Livelihood Opportunities for Traditional Artisans Over 130 Artisans from 19 States Showcase India's Rich Handicraft, Handloom

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 Reflecting growing consumer appreciation for indigenous craftsmanship and traditional handmade products, the pavilion of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment at the ongoing 45th India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, in the National Capital here, has recorded cumulative sales of ₹17.37 lakh as of November 16, 2026.

The cumulative sales have witnessed a more than threefold increase from approximately ₹5.50 lakh recorded up to November 15, 2026, highlighting the encouraging consumer response and expanding market opportunities for participating artisans and entrepreneurs.

The Ministry's pavilion, located at Hall No. 5, Ground Floor, ITPO, continues to bring together traditional craftsmanship, cultural diversity and entrepreneurial talent from across the country, providing artisans with opportunities to connect directly with consumers, enhance product visibility and strengthen their economic prospects.

A Senior Official in the Ministry said more than 130 artisans from 19 States are showcasing their products at the ongoing Trade Fair through the Ministry's three Apex Corporations, namely the National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC), National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC) and National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC).

He said the pavilion showcases a diverse range of intricately crafted handicrafts, traditional handlooms, handcrafted jewellery, footwear, textiles, handmade articles and other indigenous products, reflecting the rich cultural heritage and artistic traditions of different regions of the country.



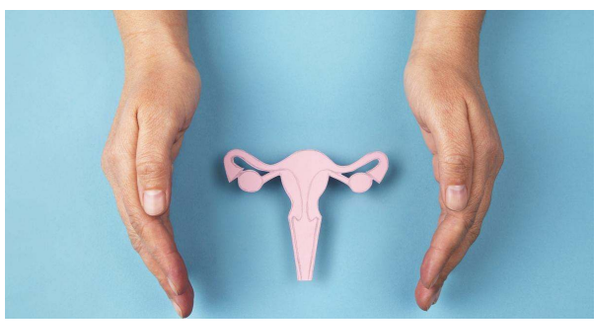
The Official said the significant increase in cumulative sales reflects growing consumer appreciation for traditional products and highlights the importance of national-level exhibitions in creating market-oriented livelihood opportunities for artisans and small entrepreneurs.

He said beyond facilitating the direct sale of products, the Trade Fair provides an opportunity for participating artisans to understand changing consumer preferences, explore emerging market trends, establish new business connections and identify opportunities for long-term entrepreneurial growth.

The Official said such platforms play an important role in bridging the gap between traditional producers and mainstream markets, enabling artisans to translate their skills, creativity and indigenous knowledge into sustainable income-generating opportunities.

He said guided by the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the principle of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas', the Ministry continues to facilitate greater economic participation of artisans and entrepreneurs belonging to Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes, Safai Mitras and De-Notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (DNTs).

HPV-DNA testing is to be implemented in five of the most affected districts of Tamil Nadu.



CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 The Health Department plans to test 124,215 women under the HPV-DNA testing program.

In the first phase, Tamil Nadu is ready to implement HPV-DNA testing for cervical cancer in five highly affected districts: Dharmapuri, Villupuram, Thiruvannamalai, Perambalur, and Ariyalur. The Health Department plans to test 124,215 women under the HPV-DNA testing program.

In a recent order, the State Government granted permission to the Mission Director of the Tamil Nadu National Health Mission (NHM) to implement this scheme, which was one of the announcements made by the Chief Minister in the Legislative Assembly earlier this year.

The National Health Mission (NHM) has sent a proposal to the State Government to implement the HPV-DNA screening program for cervical cancer in women under the Tamil Nadu Cancer Care Mission. According to the Tamil Nadu Cancer Registry Program 2023 report, 87,156 new cancer patients - 37,931 men and 49,225 women - were registered in Tamil Nadu in 2023. It stated that the number of new cancer cases for 2026 is projected to be around one lakh (94,098).

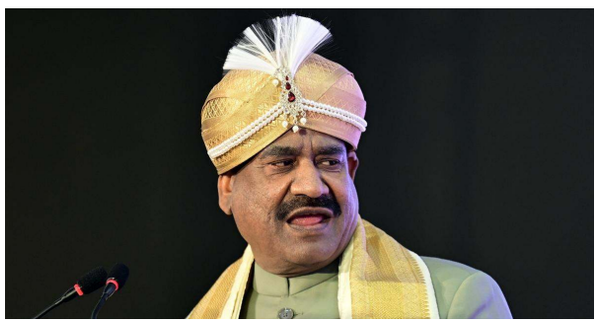
Women legislators should use artificial intelligence for transparent and accountable governance: Om Birla

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 On Tuesday, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla appealed to female legislators to effectively use artificial intelligence (AI) and digital platforms to enhance administrative transparency and strengthen accountability. He said these technologies could help address public grievances more quickly and make democracy more responsive.

Inaugurating the first-ever Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) India Regional Conference held in Bengaluru, Birla said that the role of women in democracy should go beyond numerical representation and extend to meaningful engagement in policymaking and governance.

Describing Bengaluru as a global hub of technology and innovation, he urged the women representatives to use emerging technologies to improve public service delivery.

Describing India as the “mother of democracy,” Birla referred to the country's democratic traditions, which originated from the Anubhava Mantapa associated with Basaveshwara, the 12th-century social reformer and poet. He also recalled the contributions of Rani Chennamma of Kittur and Rani Lakshmibai, who were inspirations for women.



Describing the Nari Shakti Vandan Act, enacted in 2023, as a historic milestone, he said its implementation would significantly strengthen the representation of women in Parliament and state legislatures.

How will Trump's chip restrictions in Southeast Asia affect China?

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 As U.S. President Donald Trump heads to China, his administration has renewed its efforts to restrict China's access to state-of-the-art semiconductors.

On Monday, Washington announced new interim rules to increase oversight of data center operators in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and Brazil.

This measure not only limits the export of advanced chips, but also limits their access to the computing power that Chinese companies currently rent abroad to train artificial intelligence (AI) models.

In particular, Southeast Asian countries have invested heavily in data centers to achieve their AI goals – and Chinese companies seeking computing power abroad have been a key market.

But now these companies will need a license from the U.S. government to buy advanced chips from Nvidia or other U.S. chipmakers. This allows Washington to monitor whether those chips are being used to serve Chinese companies or are being smuggled into China.

This poses a new challenge for Beijing, as it relies heavily on obtaining computing services from abroad due to U.S. export restrictions. According to research by the Institute for Progress, a U.S.-based think tank, it is predicted that at least 30% of China's advanced AI computing power in 2027 will come from being rented or smuggled abroad.



Prakasam tobacco farmers await relief after double cyclone blow as ‘Akvan’ threat looms



CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 Several tobacco farmers in the coastal villages of combined Prakasam district have suffered losses due to the back-to-back cyclones Arnab and Murasu. However, they have received no relief from either the government or insurance companies and are now worried about Cyclone Akvan.

Strong winds and heavy rain severely damaged tobacco barns (also called curing barns or tobacco sheds, used for drying and curing harvested tobacco leaves). They also wetted tobacco bales, which will be penalised or rejected at auction centres.

Molakalapalli Sambasiva Rao, a tobacco farmer from Ammanabrolu village in Naguluppalapadu mandal of Prakasam district, said, “We cultivate tobacco in 7-8 acres on lease basis. Tobacco barn worth ₹10 lakh was damaged because of the gale triggered by Cyclone Murasu.”

He said the rain caused excess moisture, which ruins the quality of the tobacco leaf. The wet tobacco bales will be destroyed. Since the tobacco farmers are preparing for the next harvesting season, they are afraid of the likely impact of Cyclone Akvan.

Meanwhile, in view of the heavy rain alert, Prakasam District Collector P.

UK sanctions eight Israeli construction firms over West Bank settlements

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 The government of the United Kingdom has imposed sanctions on eight Israeli construction companies involved in building Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank and a settler group blocking aid to Gaza.

The companies affected in Tuesday's asset freezes include Har Hevron Development Company Ltd, Hemdat Shomron Ltd and SAG (Velvel) Construction and Development Ltd, which construct and develop homes in West Bank settlements, which are illegal under international law.

The measures were announced shortly before the final deadlines for the tenders for E1, a settlement project that would bisect the West Bank and cut it off from occupied East Jerusalem, fragmenting the land Palestinians hope will form the heart of an independent state.

“Protecting the two-state solution is the North Star of this Government's approach,” British Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband said in a statement. “That is why my message on E1 is clear: do not bid, do not build, and do not profit from the destruction of the two-state solution.”

The government also imposed sanctions on Tzav 9, a group it said had regularly blocked humanitarian aid trucks from delivering food, water and fuel to the Gaza Strip.



‘Minnum Oru Iravu’ Audio and Trailer Launch in Chennai!

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 The audio and trailer launch of ‘Minnum Oru Iravu’, starring Inigo Prabhakaran and directed by debutant Sivaprabhu Selvaraj, was held in Chennai with the presence of prominent personalities from the Tamil film industry.

Produced by Dr. P. Robert Raj under the banner of Robert Productions, the film features Inigo Prabhakaran, Anju Krishna Ashok, Bigg Boss Sathya, Subramaniya Siva, Saravana Sakthi, Rajan, Udayaraj, ‘Aruvi’ Bala, Yasar, Prathiksha and Pasupathi Raj, among others. Suresh Kumar Sundaram has handled the cinematography, Pranav Suraj has composed the music, and S.N. Fazil is in charge of editing. Distributor Kugan presents the film under the banner of Everyday Cinema Networks.

Made as a crime thriller, the film unfolds over the course of a single night. The story revolves around five friends who discover a treasure in a village and the unexpected incidents and complications that follow. Since the entire story takes place at night, the film was shot exclusively during night hours.

Directors S.R. Prabhakaran and Manikandan, along with producer Aravind and other film personalities, attended the event as special guests. Directors Manikandan and S.R. Prabhakaran jointly released the film's trailer.

Speaking at the event, producer Dr. P. Robert Raj said that he was impressed by director Sivaprabhu's story and decided to produce the film. He appreciated the dedication and hard work of the entire team and expressed confidence that the songs would appeal to audiences. He also sought the support and encouragement of film lovers.

Actor Udayaraj said that the screenplay was designed to keep audiences engaged and excited from the first 15 minutes. He also praised Inigo Prabhakaran for his dedication and commitment to the project.

Distributor Kugan described the film as an engaging crime thriller created by a team of young talents. He also highlighted the need for better opportunities and support for small-budget films and stressed the importance of proper planning and clarity in theatrical releases.

Director Manikandan appreciated Sivaprabhu's long journey and dedication towards filmmaking. Director S.R. Prabhakaran praised Inigo Prabhakaran's acting abilities and expressed confidence that the film would bring him the recognition and success he deserves.



Actor Inigo Prabhakaran revealed that he decided to be part of the film immediately after reading its storyline. He appreciated the director and the entire team for their cooperation and commitment in bringing the project to life.

Director Sivaprabhu Selvaraj thanked producer Dr. P. Robert Raj for giving him the opportunity to make his debut and expressed gratitude to the actors, technicians and everyone who supported the film's production.

With its audio and trailer generating expectations among film enthusiasts, ‘Minnum Oru Iravu’ is scheduled for a worldwide theatrical release on November 27.



Printed by R.SATHYANARAYANAN and published by R.SATHYANARAYANAN on behalf of R.SATHYANARAYANAN and printed at Chennai Offset Printers, No.191, 212, Khaja Khan Bhandar Street, Ellis Road, Chennai-600 002, and published at No.11, South Perumal Koil Street, Vadapalani, Chennai - 600 026.
Editor: R.SATHYANARAYANAN

In slamming 'Arogara' chants for Vijay at temple festival, DMK, BJP find common ground

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 The chant belonged to Lord Murugan. At Tiruchendur's seaside temple on Sunday, playback singer Velmurugan extended it to the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and his minister for temples. A festival celebrating the defeat of a demon acquired a dispute over the promotion of politicians.

"Arogara," the devotional invocation familiar to generations of worshippers, became praise for Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay and Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) Minister S Ramesh during live commentary accompanying Soorasamharam observance.

By Tuesday, the DMK and the BJP had found something to agree on: the ruling TVK had crossed a line.

The setting mattered. Soorasamharam, the climax of Kanda Sashti, re-enacts Murugan's slaying of Surapadman. For devotees who fast and gather to witness it, the chant is part of worship. A familiar sound, repeated with others, carrying a meaning that precedes whoever holds the microphone.



Former DMK minister P Geetha Jeevan condemned the elevation of a person to the level of god. Another DMK leader and former minister who used to head the HR & CE ministry, P K Sekar Babu, accused the government of converting a devotional occasion into a political stage.

Tamil Nadu government issues guidelines for 'Annan Seer' marriage assistance scheme



CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 The Tamil Nadu government has issued detailed guidelines setting out the eligibility criteria for the 'Annan Seer' scheme, under which eligible brides will be provided with an eight-gram gold coin and a silk saree at the time of their marriage.

The State government had already allocated ₹812 crore for the implementation of the scheme. According to the Government Order issued by the Social Welfare and Women Empowerment Department, the annual family income of the bride should not exceed ₹2.5 lakh. The bride and the groom must have attained the minimum legal age for marriage, and the bride's name must be included in the ration card.

Family home of least wealthy Bihar BJP minister burgled, valuables worth Rs 90 lakh stolen

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 The family home of Bihar Higher Education and Law Minister Sanjay Singh Tiger, who has the lowest declared assets among BJP ministers in the current Bihar Cabinet, was burgled during the Chhath festivities, with thieves escaping with around 600 grams of gold jewellery, 2 kg of silver, and Rs 7 lakh in cash. The stolen valuables are estimated to be worth approximately Rs 90 lakh.

The burglary took place at the family's two-storey house in Patna's AG Colony under the jurisdiction of Shastri Nagar police station, between the night of November 14 and the early hours of November 15. The minister's extended family was away at their native village, Amrai Nawada, in Bhojpur district, at the time.

Tiger, in his mid 50s, is among the only three ministers in the 35-member Samrat Choudhary cabinet who have declared assets of less than Rs 1 crore, according to their affidavits.

With declared assets of approximately Rs 32.61 lakh, as per his annual cabinet asset disclosure made in December 2025, he is the least wealthy among the BJP ministers



in the Cabinet, and only second least in the full list.

PM Modi by his side, Trump calls him 'very tough' at Quad Summit in Manila



CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 US President Donald Trump on Tuesday called his Quad counterparts phenomenal people and close friends, singling out Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi for their resolve.

Speaking to reporters alongside Modi, Takaichi and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Trump said his long personal equations with the three leaders would help the talks.

"We have a great relationship with these people and these countries, and we have right from the beginning," Trump said. "I've been with all three of them for a long time, and they're phenomenal people, and they're friends of mine, so that helps."

Interrupting a follow-up question, he added with a smile: "And by the way, he's a very tough man, just in case," pointing to Modi. "And she may be even tougher. And we're okay, too," he said, gesturing towards Takaichi.

The Manila meeting is the first in-person Quad leaders' summit since 2024, held on the sidelines of the 49th ASEAN Summit, as the four Indo-Pacific nations seek closer coordination on security and economic resilience.

Speaking to reporters, Trump underlined joint progress on supply chains.

U.S. blocks China's remote access to AI chips after Nvidia scandal; China slams move

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 The United States has announced new regulations aimed at curbing Chinese firms' remote access to advanced AI chips through data centres in third party countries, coming amid the scandal surrounding chipmaker Nvidia. Beijing on Tuesday (November 17, 2026) slammed the new restrictions, accusing Washington of "abusing export control measures".

Nvidia's provision of chips to companies running data centres in Southeast Asia has come under the spotlight amid questions surrounding founder Jensen Huang's relationship with Alice Huang, the CEO of one such Singapore-based company, Megaspeed. With Nvidia barred from selling its most advanced chips in China, many Chinese companies instead sought access to its technology through data centres in countries such as Malaysia.

The U.S. Commerce Department's Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) announced an interim final rule (IFR) "to address remote access" to advanced AI chips and servers, saying it was "designed to ensure that existing restrictions on access to sensitive American technology



cannot be circumvented through remote computing arrangements involving data centres in third countries."

DP WORLD STRENGTHENS INDIA-SRI LANKA CONNECTIVITY WITH SECOND WEEKLY COCHIN-COLOMBO SERVICE

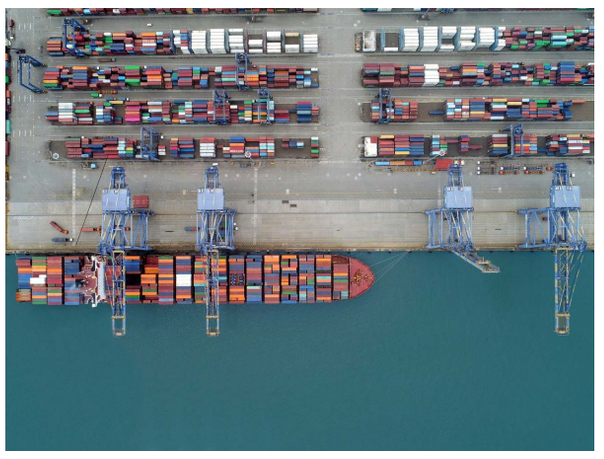
COCHIN – 18 Nov, 2026: DP World has strengthened maritime connectivity between India and Sri Lanka with the introduction of a second weekly service linking Cochin and Colombo. The additional sailing provides businesses in Southern India with greater flexibility in planning cargo movements, while strengthening access to regional and international shipping networks.

The additional service, SIS, operated by Bengal Tiger Line (BTL), runs on the Mangalore–Cochin–Colombo–Mangalore rotation and calls at DP World's International Container Transshipment Terminal (ICTT) in Cochin, facilitating cargo movements between Mangalore and Cochin in both directions.

The inaugural vessel, M.V. TC SYMPHONY, berthed at DP World Cochin with a capacity of approximately 1,000 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs).

Hemant Kumar Ruia, Country Manager, Subcontinent, (India), DP World, said, "As India continues to strengthen its position as a global manufacturing and trade hub, seamless maritime connectivity with key regional markets is increasingly important to sustaining trade growth and competitiveness. The introduction of a second weekly Cochin–Colombo service marks another step towards strengthening regional trade links, offering businesses greater flexibility, improved access to international shipping networks and more reliable supply chains. By enhancing connectivity between India and Sri Lanka, we are enabling more efficient cargo movement and creating new opportunities for businesses to access global markets. At DP World, we remain committed to investing in integrated port and logistics infrastructure that simplifies trade, strengthens regional connectivity and supports India's growing role in global commerce."

The additional service further strengthens DP World Cochin's position as a gateway for Southern India's trade, offering customers more sailing options and supporting connectivity to international markets



through Colombo.

DP World has also developed Kerala's first Free Trade Warehousing Zone (FTWZ) at Cochin; the only facility of its kind in India co-located within a major port. Together with DP World Cochin, the FTWZ facility strengthens DP World's end to end logistics proposition in the region, enhancing connectivity and supply chain resilience for businesses.

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Dhoni ends IPL playing career as CSK appoints him team mentor

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 It is a day that fans of Chennai Super Kings and the wider cricket-watching public had been dreading. On the deadline day for the IPL 2027 retentions, Mahendra Singh Dhoni retired from the league and, with it, brought the curtain down on his career as an active player on Tuesday (November 17).



From next year, Dhoni will take over the role of Team Mentor for the five-time champion. It brings to an end a journey that began in 2008, when he became the costliest buy at the inaugural IPL player auction, when CSK shelled out $1.5 million. Apart from guiding the team to five IPL titles and two Champions League T20 crowns, he is also the second-highest run-scorer for the Super Kings, with 5,314 runs, and the franchise's most-capped player, with 272 appearances.

For the last few years, there has been constant speculation about when he will eventually call it quits, and in recent times, it has become increasingly clear that it is imminent.

Despite retiring from international cricket in 2020, Dhoni continued to play in the IPL and has led CSK to two titles since then, in 2021 and 2023.

ASEAN Summit LIVE updates: Quad announces new maritime exercise, unveils major initiatives on AI, cyber security

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 Prime Minister Narendra Modi poses for a group photo with QUAD Leaders- US President Donald Trump, Japan Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on the sidelines of the ASEAN-India Summit and East Asia Summit, in Manila on Tuesday. Photo: Narendra Modi Photo Gallery/ Photo

Top Quad leaders on Tuesday (November 17, 2026) unveiled a series of initiatives including a maritime surveillance exercise, a cable connectivity framework and cyber security collaboration to boost cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. The Quad summit was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, U.S. President Donald Trump, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi.

The leaders vowed to work together to "ensure open, safe, and resilient maritime transit corridors in the Indo-Pacific."

Earlier, Modi participated in the 23rd ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)-India summit and the 21st East Asia



summit on Tuesday (November 17, 2026) in Manila. Philippines is hosting the summits in its capacity as the current chair of the 11-nation ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations). In a pre-departure statement, PM Modi said India's relationship with the ASEAN region is at the "heart of India's Act East Policy".

President of India inaugurates Golden Jubilee celebrations of ICMR–National Institute of Malaria Research

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 The President of India, Droupadi Murmu, today inaugurated the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Indian Council of Medical Research–National Institute of Malaria Research (ICMR–NIMR). Congratulating the past and present scientists, researchers and healthcare workers associated with the institute, the President recalled that malaria had historically been one of India's most serious public health challenges, particularly affecting rural and tribal communities. Sharing her personal experiences of witnessing the impact of malaria in villages, she highlighted how the disease affected people's livelihoods, education and future. She emphasised the importance of public awareness about completing the prescribed course of medication to ensure effective treatment and prevent recurrence.



The President highlighted India's progress in malaria control, noting that malaria cases and deaths had declined by nearly 80 per cent between 2015 and 2025, while the number of high-burden districts had reduced from 155 to 33. She also noted that 160 districts reported zero indigenous malaria cases during 2022–2025. Appreciating India's exit from the World Health Organization's (WHO) High Burden to High Impact (HBHI) group in 2024, she acknowledged the collective efforts of scientists, healthcare workers and citizens. She recognised ICMR–NIMR's contribution over five decades to research on malaria parasites, mosquito vectors, vector control, insecticide resistance and community surveillance.

Emphasising the need for continued vigilance and effective interventions, the President called for strengthened malaria diagnosis, treatment and surveillance, mosquito control, development of new medicines and vaccines, and greater public awareness and community participation. She stressed that scientific research and its outcomes should reach villages and communities where they are most needed. Drawing attention to emerging challenges such as climate change, unplanned urbanisation and increasing insecticide resistance among mosquitoes, she highlighted the importance of preventing waterlogging, eliminating mosquito breeding sources and strengthening environmental management. She also expressed satisfaction over ICMR–NIMR's contribution to the indigenous malaria vaccine being developed in Bhubaneswar and expressed confidence that it would support India's malaria elimination efforts.

ICAR and RIS Sign MoU to Strengthen Agricultural Cooperation and Knowledge Exchange Across the Global South

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 17 November 2026 at New Delhi to strengthen agricultural cooperation and knowledge exchange across countries of the Global South. The MoU was exchanged by Dr M. L. Jat, Secretary, Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) and Director General, ICAR, and Prof. Sachin Kumar Sharma, Director General, RIS. The partnership, facilitated through DAKSHIN – Global South Centre of Excellence, will focus on sharing agricultural technologies, documenting best practices, knowledge exchange and capacity-building.

Speaking at the inaugural session of the High-Level Policy Dialogue on "Global South: Towards a New Strategic Partnership", Kirti Vardhan Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs, Government of India, emphasised that the Global South must strengthen its collective voice in shaping global narratives, building economic resilience and ensuring equitable access to emerging technologies, particularly Artificial Intelligence. He called for stronger India–Africa partnerships, greater institutional collaboration and active engagement of young researchers and policymakers in translating knowledge into meaningful policy outcomes.

Recalling the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Second Voice of the Global South Summit in November 2023, the Minister highlighted the importance of developing common perspectives on shared challenges, strengthening economic resilience and promoting affordable, scalable and locally relevant



development solutions. He emphasised the need to move beyond traditional development cooperation towards co-development and shared solutions.

Dr M. L. Jat, Secretary, DARE and Director General, ICAR, highlighted ICAR's role as a century-old apex organisation for agricultural research, education and extension, with 114 research institutions, 152 regional research centres and 731 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), while coordinating with nearly 80 agricultural universities. He informed that ICAR has 74 Memoranda of Understanding with different countries and institutions, of which nearly 60 per cent are with institutions from the Global South.

Over 12,000 Devotees Pay Homage to the Sacred Relics of Shakyamuni Buddha at Golden Pagoda, Namsai, in the First Two Days

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 Over 12,000 Devotees Pay Homage to the Sacred Relics of Shakyamuni Buddha at Golden Pagoda, Namsai, in the First Two Days.

The exposition of the Sacred Relics of Shakyamuni Buddha at the Golden Pagoda (Kongmu Kham), Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh, has received an overwhelming response from devotees. More than 12,000 devotees visited the exposition during its first two days, on 14 and 15 November 2026. They offered prayers, paid homage to the Sacred Relics and sought the blessings of Lord Buddha.

With more than 31,000 devotees visiting the exposition at Tawang and over 35,000 at Bomdila, the cumulative footfall across the three venues has exceeded 78,000 by the end of 15 November 2026.

Devotees from different parts of Namsai district and neighbouring regions have been gathering at the Golden Pagoda since the commencement of the exposition. Long queues of devotees reflect their deep faith and reverence for the Sacred Relics. The large turnout also reflects the enduring influence of Buddhist teachings and traditions in the region.

The exposition at Namsai marks the third and final phase of the Sacred Relics Exposition in Arunachal Pradesh, being held from 31 October to 21 November 2026.

The exposition commenced at the historic Gaden Namgyal Lhatse (Tawang Monastery) on 31 October 2026. Union Minister of Culture and Tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Pema Khandu attended the inaugural ceremony. Venerable Buddhist monks and other distinguished guests were also present.

Following the conclusion of the exposition at Tawang on 7 November, the Sacred Relics were taken to Thubchog Gatsel Ling (TGL) Monastery, also known as Lower Gompa, in Bomdila. The six-day exposition at Bomdila was held from 8 to 13 November 2026.

The Sacred Relics



arrived at Namsai on 14 November 2026. They were ceremonially received and enshrined at the Golden Pagoda. The Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, Lt Gen Kaiwalya Trivikram Parnaik (Retd.), inaugurated the exposition in the presence of Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein and Raghav Prasad Bhatnagar, Director General, International Buddhist Confederation (IBC). State Ministers, public representatives, Buddhist monks and other dignitaries attended the ceremony.

The exposition across Tawang, Bomdila and Namsai has brought the Sacred Relics closer to devotees from different parts of Arunachal Pradesh. It has also brought together people from different Buddhist traditions in a spirit of shared faith and devotion.

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‘Chitukurinji’ Celebrates Grand Audio Launch and Pre-Release Event in Chennai; Film to Release on November 27

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 A Fantasy Romantic Drama That Connects Two Different Timelines, Featuring Sets and Musical Contributions from the Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra Black & White Media Solutions’ upcoming film ‘Chitukurinji’, written and directed by VJ Meenakshi Sundharam, is gearing up for a theatrical release on November 27. Blending fantasy, romance and elements of magical storytelling, the film features a distinctive screenplay that poetically connects two different timelines.

Cinematography is handled by Francis Rajkumar A, while debutant music director Maara has composed the music. The film also features musical contributions from the renowned Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra of Hungary. Shot extensively near Kodaikanal, the film features an elaborate village set spread across 80 acres, along with several other specially constructed sets that bring its unique fictional world to life. The grand audio launch event witnessed the presence of director VJ Meenakshi Sundharam, producer D Jude Anantth, actors Rajith CR, G.M Kumar, Naksha Saran, Sreeram Karthick, VJ Pappu, Venkatesh and LV Aadhavan along with several members of the cast and crew, who shared their experiences of working on the film. Veteran filmmaker RV. Udayakumar graced the occasion as the chief guest. Director VJ Meenakshi Sundharam fondly recalled his college days, when he served as the editor of the college magazine ‘Ilankathir’. Describing ‘Chitukurinji’ as a film that seemed to have guided him through several magical experiences, he spoke about the 20-year journey of Black & White Media Solutions, which had been filled with challenges and struggles. He acknowledged that there was still a long way to go and emphasised that the journey ahead could be accomplished only with the continued support of the media. He sought everyone's encouragement and wholehearted support for the film. Actor L.V. Aadhavan appreciated the dedication and hard work of director VJ Meenakshi Sundharam and the entire technical team. He expressed happiness over the film carrying such a beautiful Tamil title and highlighted how the contribution of the Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra had added tremendous value to the film. He also applauded the team's efforts in creating an entire village across an expansive 80-acre location near Kodaikanal, appreciating the work of cinematographer Francis Rajkumar A. and the rest of the crew. Quoting, "A teacher does not earn pride through students; it is the students who bring pride to their teacher," he encouraged audiences to experience the film in theatres, particularly because of its fresh and unconventional approach. Cinematographer Francis Rajkumar A described ‘Chitukurinji’ as a film that beautifully blends love, fantasy and romance. He revealed that the story connects two different periods, including 1983 and 2025, and highlighted the distinctive screenplay that sets the film apart. He also acknowledged editor Mahendran Ganesan and music director Maara for their contributions, expressing confidence that the film would appeal to audiences across all sections. Veteran actor G.M. Kumar spoke about the challenges faced by smaller films in reaching audiences, pointing out that while promotions for big-budget films easily capture public attention, bringing smaller films into the spotlight requires considerable effort. He appreciated producer D Jude Anantth and the entire team for their determination in overcoming several challenges to bring the film to life. He emphasised the need to provide smaller films with fair opportunities in theatres and create an environment that allows them to succeed. He also lauded the dedication of director VJ Meenakshi Sundaram and producer D Jude Anantth, wishing the film great success. Editor Mahendran Ganesan shared that ‘Chitukurinji’ was his next project after ‘Yaathisai’. Describing Black & White Studio as a family, he expressed his gratitude to director VJ Meenakshi Sundaram and producer D Jude Anantth for the opportunity. He highlighted the film's unique fantasy-romantic narrative, which travels across two different timelines through an unconventional screenplay. He urged audiences to watch the film in theatres when it releases on November 27. Music director Maara thanked everyone who attended the event and expressed his gratitude for being part of the project. Although he has worked on several films, he described the opportunity to collaborate with the internationally acclaimed Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra as a rare and significant milestone in his musical journey. He appreciated the dedication of the entire team and urged audiences to extend their wholehearted support to such sincere and ambitious filmmaking efforts. Actress Nakshaa Saran thanked director VJ Meenakshi Sundharam, producer D Jude Anantth and Thandapani Baskaran for being part of the project. She appreciated the efforts of music director Maara and cinematographer Francis Rajkumar A., and appealed to audiences to watch ‘Chitukurinji’ with their families in theatres from November 27. Producer DaJude Anantth spoke about the various challenges encountered during the initial stages of the film's production. He expressed his gratitude to Rajesh, proprietor of A.V. Solutions, Dr. K.S. Senthil of Anakaputhur Hospital and Peter for extending their support during difficult times. He shared insights into director VJ Meenakshi Sundharam's story and the extensive production journey, including the creation of elaborate sets across 80 acres in locations such as Pallangi. He encouraged audiences to experience the film with their families in theatres on November 27. Actor Rajith CR recalled his journey into Tamil cinema through director Vikraman's film and thanked director VJ Meenakshi Sundharam and producer D Jude Anantth for giving him the opportunity to be part of ‘Chitukurinji’. He highlighted how every scene had been crafted to offer a distinctive experience and explained that the narrative, despite its linear progression, was designed to encourage repeated viewings. He also appreciated the film's music and background score, acknowledging the producer's tremendous support throughout the making of the film. Chief guest R.V. Udhayakumar congratulated the entire team and appreciated the artistes and technicians associated with the project. While mentioning that he had not watched the trailer and therefore was not fully familiar with the storyline, he commended the efforts of the cast and crew. He also appreciated D.S.R. Subash, National General Secretary of Black & White Media Solutions, and praised lead actor Rajith CR and the technical team for their collective efforts. He wished the film great success. Actor Sreeram Karthik recalled how the two-hour narration by director VJ Meenakshi Sundharam transported him into an entirely different world. He revealed that he initially had reservations about accepting the role, as he had been playing lead characters at the time. However, he eventually agreed to be part of the film for Rajith CR and also because of his previous association with the director, who had given him a memorable role in ‘Mylanji’. Expressing confidence in the film's unconventional storyline, he appreciated producer D Jude Anantth and music director Maara for their contributions and requested audiences to support the film. Censor Board member Venkatesh thanked everyone who attended the event and acknowledged director Kumar, R.V. Udhaykumar and LV Aadhavan, with whom he has shared a long-standing professional association in the media industry. He described the entire team as one family and appreciated the uniqueness of the film's title. Highlighting the crucial role played by journalists and media professionals in taking a film to audiences, he appealed to the media fraternity to extend their support and help bring positive awareness about ‘Chitukurinji’.

Choreographer Deena revealed that director VJ Meenakshi Sundharam narrated the screenplay to him three times, reflecting how engaging and interesting the story was. He appreciated the songs for their energetic and graceful choreography and particularly praised the climax song composed by Sean Roldan, describing it as exceptionally moving. He shared that the music had even brought audiences to tears during its screening. He also appreciated the performances of Naksha and Rajith, while acknowledging the involvement of the Sreeram in the project. Expressing confidence in the film's success, he appealed to everyone to support it. Music director Dhina appreciated producer D Jude Anantth for his thorough understanding of the technical and financial aspects of filmmaking, including visuals, studio processes and DI. He noted that the producer had even established a well-equipped studio in Chennai before undertaking the project, demonstrating his commitment to maintaining complete control over the production process and budget. He further praised the film for featuring the internationally renowned Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra, which has contributed significantly to its musical richness. He also emphasised the importance of recognising the contributions of Tamil cinema's music professionals and conveyed his best wishes to the entire team. D.S.R. Subash, President of the Tamilnadu Journalists Association, began his address by expressing his respect and gratitude to his mentor, R.V. Udayakumar, who had travelled from Coimbatore for the occasion. He appreciated Black & White Media Solutions for establishing themselves as a quality post-production facility. Praising director VJ Meenakshi Sundharam and the entire team, he highlighted how the film's songs beautifully explore the theme of love with depth and a distinctive perspective, reminiscent of the poetic brilliance of legendary lyricist Kannadasan. He also appreciated the film's editing and cinematography.



Stressing the importance of supporting Tamil cinema and smaller films, he urged the industry to ensure that such films receive their rightful space and adequate theatrical showtimes. VJ Pappu began his speech by thanking senior journalist Subash and shared his experience of delivering dialogues in Malayalam for the film. He expressed confidence that the performances of the entire cast would feel natural and lively on screen. Comparing the experience of watching ‘Chitukurinji’ to the feeling of reading a beautiful book, he encouraged audiences to watch and support the film upon its theatrical release. The team also reiterated their appreciation for the film's distinctive narrative, vibrant songs and dance sequences choreographed by Deena, as well as the emotionally impactful climax music. They highlighted the collective dedication of the cast and crew, expressing confidence that the film's unique storytelling and technical strengths would resonate with audiences. With its intriguing fantasy-romantic premise, two-timeline narrative, elaborate 80-acre village set and the musical contribution of the Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra, ‘Chitukurinji’ is all set for a theatrical release on November 27.

CAST Rajith Menon Sreeram Karthik Deepshikha Naksha Saran VJ Pappu GM. Kumar Thozhar L.V. Aadhavan Poo Ramachandran Hello Kandhasamy Theni Murugan Sujatha Karate Raja Advocate Babu Easwarbabu Manju

TECHNICAL CREW Written & Directed by: VJ Meenakshi Sundharam Produced by: Black and White Media Solutions Private Limited Producer: D. Jude Anantth Co-producer: R. Rajesh, Dr. K.S. Senthil (Sasiram Pictures), Kadaiyanenthal R.A. Peter Music: Maara Cinematography: Francis Rajkumar A. Editing: Mahendran Ganesan Art Direction: Ramji Choreography: Dheena Audiography: Tony J SFX: Kishore Kamaraj Foley: Dinesh Narayanan Dubbing Engineer: Mohamad Rizwan VFX: Jeevarathinam R Costume Designer: Harivardhani Costumer: S. P. Sukumar Make-up: Velmurugan Publicity Design: Tamilchezhian Stills: Ajay Executive Producer: N. Kuzhandaivelu (Manju Cine Equipments) Line Producer: Guruvel Karthik Production Manager: A V Palanisamy Public Relations: Riaz K Ahmed, Paras Riyaz Digital Marketing: A. S. Bhaktheeswaran, RJ Mohamed Rafi Meerran, Shreeinidhi Bhaktheeswaran Digital Partners; Uyire Media, Infinity plus digital, Media Cinemax Audio Rights: Saregama India Ltd. (RPSG Group) Distribution Partner: Shaalini Cine Creations

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Union Minister Sh. Nitin Gadkari Honours Winners of Job-Creating Micro-Entrepreneurs at JRD Tata Awards 2026

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 India's MSME sector is the backbone of the Indian economy, with over 9.90 crore micro enterprises accounting for over 99% of registered MSMEs.

The MSME sector has reported employment generation of over 44 crores, second highest to agriculture, underscoring its contribution to India's economic growth and job creation. Reflecting the employment potential of grassroots enterprises, fourteen BYST supported Grampreneurs® were shortlisted from across India for the JRD Tata Awards 2026, including five women entrepreneurs. Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Government of India, chaired the Awards ceremony organised by Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust (BYST) in New Delhi today and felicitated outstanding grassroots entrepreneurs. Vijay Chintakayala, Member of Parliament representing Andhra Pradesh in the Rajya Sabha, and Prof. S. Mahendra Dev, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM), also graced the special plenary as the Guests of Honour alongside the Minister.

The Award was instituted by BYST in 1995 as a tribute to its Founding Chairman, Bharat Ratna JRD Tata, to recognise outstanding first-generation entrepreneurs who have built growing businesses, generated employment and contributed to the local economy. Reflecting this year's theme, "Celebrating Grampreneurs®, Growing India," the Awards recognised entrepreneurial excellence across three categories: Entrepreneur of the Year 2026, Woman Entrepreneur of the Year 2026 and Fastest Growing Entrepreneur of the Year 2026.

Addressing the gathering, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, said, "India's economic growth must create more employment opportunities especially in rural, tribal and semi-urban areas. Strengthening micro and small enterprises through technology, innovation and access to finance can help increase production, convert waste into wealth and create jobs locally, besides removing regional income disparities. The Grampreneurs® recognised through the JRD Tata Awards demonstrate how grassroots entrepreneurship under the handholding of experienced mentors can strengthen economically viable entrepreneurship ecosystems and contribute to the vision of Atmanirbhar and Viksit Bharat."

Prof. S. Mahendra Dev, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM), said, "Micro and small enterprises play a vital role in driving inclusive economic growth, generating employment and strengthening local economies. Recognising grassroots entrepreneurs is important not only to celebrate their achievements but also to encourage a culture of innovation, enterprise and self-reliance. With access to finance, technology, markets and structured mentorship, first-generation entrepreneurs can scale their businesses, create sustainable livelihoods and contribute meaningfully to India's vision of Viksit Bharat. Initiatives such as BYST's mentoring-led approach demonstrate the importance of nurturing entrepreneurial potential at the grassroots level."

Lakshmi Venkataraman Venkatesan, Founding and Managing Trustee, BYST, said, "Across India, we have seen micro entrepreneurs transform modest loans into thriving enterprises, often creating businesses worth hundreds or even thousands of times their initial investment. Their achievements go far beyond loan repayment or turnover figures; they generate employment, uphold responsible environmental and labour practices, and strengthen the social and economic fabric of their communities. Credit alone is not enough for enterprises to survive, scale and create jobs. They need sustained mentoring, market access, capacity building and institutional support alongside finance. National economic growth does not always translate into prosperity, increased incomes and employment opportunities in villages and small towns. We must look beyond top-line growth indicators. This was the philosophy of JRD Tata who believed in empowering small businesses to build resilient local economies and inspire others through their success."

The Entrepreneur of the Year 2026 Award was presented to J. Haja Funyamin, mentored by K. V. Nagabhushana Rao, founder of M/s. Hafa Foods & Frozen Foods and Hafa Frozen Foods International Pvt. Ltd., based in Redhills, Chennai, for building a ₹15.58 crore frozen-food enterprise from a street samosa vendor, exporting to the UAE, USA, Canada, Singapore and Sri Lanka, and generating employment for over 100 direct employees and 450 indirect livelihoods.

The Woman Entrepreneur of the Year 2026 Award was conferred upon Sujata Manoj Ganage, mentored by Dr. Dilip Vairagade, who built S M Engineering specialising in recycling machinery and automobile-related components, and Madhavi Chandrashekhar Girnale, mentored by Dr. Anil Kausadikar, who established Girnale Programming Solution, in the precision manufacturing sector, specialising in CNC machining of dies and moulds, in recognition of their entrepreneurial achievements and contributions.

The Fastest Growing Entrepreneur of the Year 2026 Award was presented to Rupesh Hanumant Shivarkar, mentored by Soumitra Ghotikar, of Microtech Polymers, for exceptional business growth, with turnover increasing from ₹1.56 crore in FY 2022-23 to ₹2.58 crore in FY 2023-24 and further to ₹5.57 crore (provisional) in FY 2024-25, representing growth of 65% and 116% respectively, besides expansion of its precision injection-moulded plastic components business and exports to more than seven countries.

Beyond the award winners, other shortlisted Grampreneurs® represent diverse sectors, including manufacturing, food processing, agri-business, farm technology, recycling and industrial solutions. Many have overcome challenges in accessing formal finance to build businesses with an active support of BYST, are supplying to larger companies, generating local employment and, in some cases, serve international markets.

The JRD Tata Awards 2026 also provided a platform for strengthening institutional partnerships and advancing entrepreneurship through collaborative initiatives. As part of the conference, BYST exchanged Six MoUs with organisations across academia, government, civil society and the skilling ecosystem. The partner organisations included BML Munjal University - Institute of Innovation & Entrepreneurship (I2E), NAB India Centre for Blind Women & Disability Studies (National Association for the Blind), Skills Development Network (SDN), Wadhwani Foundation, Symbiosis Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation - Technology Business Incubator (SCEI-TBI), Sharda University, and AMRUT - Academy of Maharashtra Research, Upliftment and Training, Government of Maharashtra. These partnerships aim to strengthen entrepreneurship development through institutional collaboration, mentoring, skill development, training and expanded support for aspiring entrepreneurs.

The award ceremony also brought together policymakers, industry leaders, entrepreneurs and mentors to discuss the role of micro enterprises in India's economy. plenary sessions focused on women entrepreneurship, technology adoption, access to markets and the growth of micro enterprises into sustainable businesses. In addition, the Grampreneurs® booklet was released, continuing the initiative's efforts to showcase and celebrate the journeys and contributions of grassroots entrepreneurs.

The Awards jury consisting of nine members was chaired by Prof. S. Mahendra Dev, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India, with Sunil Kant Munjal, Chairman, Hero Enterprise, serving as Co-Chair. The entrepreneurs were evaluated on parameters such as business growth, profitability, loan repayment, job creation, innovation, exports, and technology adoption. Based on this rigorous assessment, the winners were selected unanimously and recognized for their outstanding achievements.

Alongside the entrepreneurs, the Awards also recognise mentors who provide one-on-one business guidance. This mentoring approach, rooted in the age old "Guru-Shishya Parampara", complements BYST's support in accessing institutional finance and building sustainable businesses.

Since its inception in 1992, BYST has supported more than 72,000 entrepreneurs, helping first-generation entrepreneurs build businesses, create employment and contribute to local economic growth.

IndusInd Bank and Mastercard Move collaborate to enhance outbound cross-border payments from India

MUMBAI – 18 Nov, 2026 IndusInd Bank and Mastercard today announced a collaboration to enhance outbound cross-border payments from India through Mastercard Move, Mastercard's portfolio of global money movement capabilities. The collaboration will support non-trade current account remittances, including person-to-person (P2P) remittances and education-related payments, enabling fast, reliable and seamless payments from India to the U.S., UK, Europe, Canada and Australia, with greater transparency and end-to-end visibility.

IndusInd Bank has facilitated international trade and payment flows, including remittance capabilities supporting education, travel, business and other overseas payment requirements. The collaboration with IndusInd Bank marks an important milestone for Mastercard Move in India, with the Bank planning to expand its scope to support SME payments.

India sits at the center of significant global money flows. Approximately $12.1 billion in personal remittances were sent from India in 2025, according to the World Bank. At the same time, more than 1.2 million Indian students were enrolled in higher education abroad in 2025, highlighting the scale of outbound cross-border payments for Indian consumers and families.

Mastercard Move enables banks and fintechs to modernize this experience without having to build individual connections into every market. For IndusInd Bank, this will help build a stronger cross-border payments proposition, deepen customer relationships and create a more scalable foundation to address evolving customer needs and opportunities across the global payments ecosystem.

"Cross-border payments are becoming increasingly important as our customers' needs become more global. IndusInd Bank has built a strong presence in the remittances market over years, and our collaboration with Mastercard reinforces our position in this space. Through this collaboration, we aim to simplify the international payments experience, while strengthening our capabilities to support customers' evolving needs," said Ganesh Sankaran, Executive Director, IndusInd Bank.

"India is one of the world's most dynamic markets for cross-border money movement, with growing demand from consumers and businesses for better ways to send money internationally. Together with IndusInd Bank, we're bringing the capabilities of Mastercard Move to important use cases such as remittances and education payments, while laying the groundwork to serve a broader range of payment needs over time," said Pratik Khowala, Global Head of Transfer Solutions, Mastercard.

Mastercard Move is Mastercard's portfolio of global money movement capabilities, enabling banks, corporates, non-bank FIs, digital players and governments – and their customers – to send and receive funds across borders and payment types. It enables money to move quickly, safely and with ease, within and across more than 200 countries and territories, including high-demand, hard to access markets, and in more than 150 currencies, reaching more than 17 billion endpoints and 95% of the world's banked population.

India and Sweden launch LeadIT 3.0 at COP31 to accelerate Low-carbon Industrial Transition

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 LeadIT as its newest Country Member.

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav, today announced the launch of the third phase of the Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT 3.0) at the Industry Leaders' Roundtable during the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP31) in Antalya, Türkiye. The roundtable was co-chaired by Yadav and H.E. Helena Dyrssen, State Secretary, Ministry of Climate and Enterprise, Sweden. Also present on the occasion was Selwin Hart, Special Advisor and Assistant Secretary-General, UN Climate Action.

Addressing the gathering, Yadav highlighted that geopolitical conflicts, volatile energy markets and competing development priorities make international cooperation even more important, particularly in hard-to-abate industrial sectors. He emphasised that India's priorities of poverty alleviation, energy access, job creation and infrastructure development must advance alongside its pursuit of a sustainable, low-carbon future.

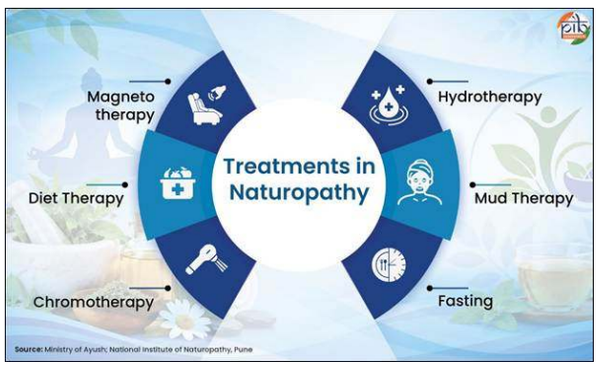


Highlighting India's climate achievements, the Minister noted that the country has achieved a 37.38% reduction in emissions intensity between 2005 and 2022 and reached 50% non-fossil fuel-based installed electricity capacity, five years ahead of its target. India's additional forest carbon sink has also reached approximately 2.44 billion tonnes of CO_2 equivalent. India's achievements under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi were given a round of applause and the country's commitment was termed as a guiding light for other Nations in the fight against climate change. India's efforts in decarbonising hard to abate sectors was appreciated by Hart and the European Union.

Recalling LeadIT's progress since its launch by India and Sweden in 2019, Yadav highlighted that its second phase facilitated eleven pre-pilot projects in steel and cement under the India-Sweden Industry Transition Partnership, besides expanding cooperation into low-carbon heavy-duty transport. The projects cover hydrogen-based ironmaking, electrification of industrial heat, carbon capture and utilisation, clinker substitution, industrial circularity and artificial intelligence to reduce cement demand. LeadIT has also supported South Africa's investment plan under the Climate Investment Funds and Ethiopia's engagement on low-carbon cement, he informed.

Naturopathy: Natural Healing for a Healthy India

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 Naturopathy is a drug-free, cost-effective system that helps the body heal itself through diet, fasting, water, mud, massage and natural living. India observes National Naturopathy Day on 18 November, and the 9th edition will be held at Nagamangala, Karnataka, under the theme 'Prakrutik Chikitsa, Swasth Bharat'. The National Institute of Naturopathy, Pune, runs Nisarg Gram, a 250-bedded naturopathy hospital with the first Bachelor of Naturopathy and Yogic Sciences (BNYS) college under the Central Government.



Healing with Nature

Naturopathy rests on a simple idea: the body has the power to heal itself. Rooted in the healing wisdom of many cultures, it is a cost-effective, drug-free approach that uses natural materials for health care and healthy living. It works by boosting the body's own vitality, with the help of the five elements of nature: earth, water, air, fire and ether.

Naturopathy is a system of natural treatment and also a way of life. It calls for a "Return to Nature": simple eating and living habits, and a life in harmony with oneself, society and the environment. It has the potential to promote health, prevent illness, cure it and help in recovery.

Treatments in Naturopathy

A naturopath treats with what nature provides: fasting and diet, hydrotherapy (treatment with water), mud packs, cold packs, baths and massages. At Nisarg Gram, the Pune campus of the National Institute of Naturopathy, treatment sections also offer magnetotherapy (treatment with magnets), chromotherapy (colour therapy) and physiotherapy, along with a yoga hall and a Saatvik diet centre.

Where Naturopathy Helps

Naturopathy is reported to be effective in chronic, allergic, autoimmune, degenerative and stress-related disorders. Its emphasis on nutrition, natural therapies and lifestyle change has found new relevance as attention grows to lifestyle-related disorders, obesity, stress and healthy ageing. A Healthy diet, physical activity, adequate rest and stress management can support preventive healthcare across age groups.

Naturopathy and Yoga in India

Today, what the world needs most is peace, stability, and predictability - PM

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 Your Excellency, President Marcos, Your Majesty, Excellencies, Namaskar! I warmly congratulate President Marcos for the excellent organisation of the East Asia Summit. Friends, Since the COVID pandemic, the world has been facing one crisis after another. Conflicts are putting increasing pressure on food, fuel, and fertiliser supplies. Ships and seafarers are also being targeted on international waterways. Alongside the serious threat of terrorism, new forms of cross-border crime, such as cyber fraud and online scams, are also on the rise. Friends, Today, what the world needs most is peace, stability, and predictability. For many years, the East Asia Summit has served as an important platform for finding solutions to shared challenges and strengthening mutual cooperation. This very spirit of dialogue, mutual respect, and cooperation is the cornerstone of India's foreign policy. ASEAN unity and centrality are at the heart of our Act East Policy. We are committed to a Free, Open, Inclusive, and Rules-based Indo-Pacific. Whether it is Ukraine or West Asia, we will continue to support every effort towards peace. Friends, Our seas are the lifelines of our shared prosperity. Ensuring their security and freedom of navigation is the responsibility of us all. In this direction, we are launching a Seafarers' Safety Initiative, under which we will enhance cooperation in joint training and emergency response. Friends, Ensuring trust and security in the digital world is equally essential. At the AI Impact Summit held in India this year, we emphasized the development of human-centric, inclusive, and safe AI. We also emphasized the need for technologies such as digital watermarking to combat deepfakes and misinformation. We welcome the Joint Statement issued today on combating online scams. To effectively address this growing threat, we propose hosting the East Asia Summit Cyber Crime Conference at India's National Forensic Sciences University. Friends, The foundation of our relationship lies in a shared heritage that goes back thousands of years. The National Maritime Heritage Complex, being developed at Lothal in India, will soon showcase this shared heritage to the world. To further strengthen our historical and cultural ties, we will also host the East Asia Summit Maritime Heritage Festival at Lothal. Next year, we will host the East Asia Summit University Heads Conclave at Nalanda, which will provide fresh impetus to our cooperation in the fields of education and research. Friends, This year, we are commemorating the 50th anniversary of the historic Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia. Fifty years ago, this region gave the world an important message, the message of peace, respect for sovereignty, and dialogue. Today, that message has become even more relevant. Our shared future will be shaped not by conflict, but by mutual respect and cooperation. With this vision, India will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with ASEAN, remaining committed to regional peace, stability, and shared prosperity. Thank you very much. DISCLAIMER -This is the approximate translation of Prime Minister's remarks. Original remarks were delivered in Hindi.

Northeast Cinema Finds its Spotlight at 57th IFFI with Four Indian Panorama Selections

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 The diverse cultures, compelling stories and distinctive cinematic voices of Northeast India will find a prominent place at the 57th International Film Festival of India (IFFI), with four films from the region selected for the prestigious Indian Panorama section. Scheduled to be held in Goa from November 20 to 28, 2026, IFFI will showcase two feature films and two non-feature films from the Northeast, offering audiences a glimpse into the region's indigenous heritage, social transformations and everyday lives.



Leading the feature film selection is Urum (Spirit), which marks a historic milestone as the first Nyishi-language film to be selected for IFFI Indian Panorama. Directed by Duyu Tabyo, this psychological thriller from Arunachal Pradesh is also slated for its World Premiere at the festival. Set in a remote mountain village in Arunachal Pradesh, the film explores indigenous memory, trauma and concealed truths through the story of a father haunted by visions and guilt following the loss of his young daughter.

Joining Urum in the feature film lineup for its World Premiere is Surjyamukhi (Sunflower), an Assamese drama directed by actor-director and theatre practitioner Antara G.G. Choudhury. Set against an urban backdrop, the film follows two young colleagues, Pushpal and Prarthana, whose initial rivalry gradually gives way to friendship and romance. However, the discovery of a lost bag of money sets off a series of unexpected moral dilemmas, testing their choices and relationships.

The Indian Panorama Non-Feature Film section brings two distinct stories from Assam and Mizoram. Red Carpet, a 30-minute Assamese documentary written and directed by award-winning filmmaker Aimee Baruah celebrates the enduring legacy of traditional handloom craftsmanship. Set in the Karbi Anglong hills of Assam, the film follows a Karbi weaver from the village of Donkamokam on an extraordinary journey to the red carpet at Cannes. Through her story, the documentary highlights the resilience of indigenous artisans, the richness of Karbi weaving traditions and the importance of preserving ancestral crafts.

Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas 2026 Celebrated Across the Country

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, together with State Governments and Union Territory Administrations, celebrated Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas across the country on 15 November 2026, marking the 151st birth anniversary of Dharti Aaba Bhagwan Birsa Munda. The day marked the culmination of the Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada, observed from 1 to 15 November 2026 with cultural, educational, welfare and outreach activities in tribal areas across the country.



The celebrations began in New Delhi with the President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President and Rajya Sabha chairman C. P. Radhakrishnan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Sunday paid floral tributes to Bhagwan Birsa Munda on his birth anniversary, observed as Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas, at Prerna Sthal in the Parliament premises. Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Law and Justice and Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Arjun Ram Meghwal, Members of Parliament and other distinguished dignitaries also joined the tribute ceremony.

Floral tributes were also paid at Ulihatu, Jharkhand, the birthplace of Bhagwan Birsa Munda. The National Tribal Pride March was ceremonially flagged off from Ulihatu, in Khunti district of Jharkhand, the birthplace of Bhagwan Birsa Munda, to mark his 151st birth anniversary and Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas.

The main national event was held at the District Sports Complex, Gadchiroli, Maharashtra, where the Prime Minister Narendra Modi joined through video conferencing. The programme was presided over by the Governor of Maharashtra Jishnu Dev Varma, Union Minister of Tribal Affairs Jual Oram, Chief Minister of Maharashtra Devendra Fadnavis, Deputy Chief Ministers Eknath Shinde and Sunetra Pawar, Minister of State for Tribal Affairs Durgadas Uikey, and various other dignitaries.

Floral tribute was paid at the statue of Bhagwan Birsa Munda on behalf of the Prime Minister. Earlier in the day, the Government of Maharashtra inaugurated 22 Ashram Schools and 51 hostels.

DHTI launches first Global Leadership Programme in Defence Governance & Public Administration for officers of Ministry of Defence, Fiji



CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 The Defence Headquarters Training Institute (DHTI), Ministry of Defence has launched its first Global Leadership Programme in Defence Governance and Public Administration for Emerging Leaders for officers of the Ministry of Defence, Fiji. The first phase of the four-week programme, being held in Suva from November 16 to 27, 2026, was inaugurated by Fiji's Minister for Defence and Veteran Affairs Pio Tikoduadua. Appreciating India's initiative, he said that the programme would help strengthen institutional capacity in Fiji.

High Commissioner of India to Fiji Suneet Mehta commended DHTI's efforts and stated that the programme reflects the close & growing partnership between the two countries.

During the first phase, the programme covers facets of good governance, defence procurement, ethics in governance, talent management & capacity building, administrative law, citizen centric governance, modernisation of the audit framework in defence, AI for digital transformation, purpose-driven leadership, strategic communication and emotional intelligence for leaders in the defence sector.

The second phase is scheduled to take place in New Delhi for two weeks in the first quarter of 2027. The programme underscores India's commitment to capacity building in Fiji, while further strengthening bilateral cooperation.

SR/Savvy

Obey the signals - the zebra crossing is for pedestrians.

Children who defied the odds of premature birth reunite at Rainbow Children's Hospital, Chennai

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 Rainbow Children's Hospital, India's leading pediatric multi-specialty and perinatal care hospital chains, today organized a press conference in Chennai to highlight advancements in neonatal care and the hospital's experience in managing complex preterm deliveries, delivered at the limits of viability, which has been defined in India as 24 – 25 weeks. The session brought together the hospital's team of neonatologists, who shared details of many challenging cases involving extremely premature babies who overcame multiple critical complications with specialized medical interventions and intensive neonatal care. The discussion also highlighted the increasing need for advanced neonatal facilities, timely diagnosis and comprehensive medical support to improve outcomes for periviable premature babies.

The first highlighted case involved a baby girl born at 24 weeks and 3 days and weighing 712 grams. The baby required 12 minutes of CPR immediately after birth and subsequently battled severe respiratory complications, pulmonary haemorrhage, bleeding on both sides of the brain and a drug-resistant bloodstream infection. She also underwent laser treatment in both eyes for retinopathy of prematurity. After 105 days of oxygen support and intensive NICU care, she was discharged weighing 1.944 kg. The second case were babies, born as twins at 24 weeks and 2 days and weighing 600 grams, again battling complex respiratory concerns. They were also diagnosed with a significant patent ductus arteriosus (PDA), a condition in which a blood vessel near the heart remains open after birth. Despite two courses of medication, the vessel remained open, necessitating surgical closure with clips when were just four weeks old. They have now recovered well after nearly 75 days of hospital stay and are ready to go home.



Rainbow children's hospital reports survival of 68% at 24 weeks of gestational age and 86% at 25 weeks, which is on par with the outcome of these infants in high income countries. This niche care is offered only by selected units in India, again underlining the complexity of care required and the availability of expertise. These statistics should be seen in the context of the high preterm load in India. According to estimates published in The Lancet, India recorded approximately 3.02 million preterm births in 2020, accounting for 13% of all births in the country and over 20% of preterm births worldwide which is the highest number of preterm births globally. Previable babies are those born 26 weeks before gestation, are at the maximal higher risk of complications due to the underdevelopment of their lungs, brain, immune system and other vital organs. This makes access to specialized neonatal care and timely medical intervention critical to their survival and long-term development.

Speaking on the broader challenges and advancements in neonatal care, Dr. Giridhar S, Clinical Lead – Neonatology, Rainbow Children's Hospital, Guindy, said, "India accounts for the highest number of preterm births globally, making this an important public health concern. Care for periviable preterm infants is even more challenging considering the complexity of medical and surgical problems faced by these babies. At Rainbow Children's Hospital, we have created a tiny baby ecosystem combining specialized instruments, advanced monitoring, standardized clinical evidence-based protocols, and developmental supportive care. Our units are backed by a dedicated multidisciplinary team of specialists, including senior neonatologists and nurses, backed by round-the-clock availability of surgeons, cardiologists and radiologists with special expertise in handling these vulnerable babies. Parents must understand that a periviable birth does not necessarily mean an unfavorable outcome. With the right medical support, many of these babies can overcome critical challenges and progress towards healthy development."

Elaborating on common neonatal complications and the role of technology, Dr. Shobana Rajendran, Senior Consultant – Neonatologist, Rainbow Children's Hospital, Annanagar, said, "Extremely premature babies are vulnerable to complications such as respiratory distress, brain haemorrhages, infections, feeding difficulties and retinopathy of prematurity, as several vital organs are still developing. Advancements in neonatal ventilation, surfactant therapy, continuous monitoring and laser treatment for eye complications have significantly improved the management of these conditions. A multidisciplinary approach is equally important to address complications as they arise and support the baby's growth and development beyond the initial critical phase."

Highlighting maternal health and the importance of preventing premature births, Dr. Monisha R, Consultant – Neonatologist, Rainbow Children's Hospital, Sholinganallur, said, "Preterm births can be associated with several factors, including multiple pregnancies, maternal hypertension, diabetes, infections, cervical insufficiency and placental complications. While not all premature births can be prevented, regular antenatal check-ups, timely screening and appropriate management of underlying maternal conditions can help identify and address certain risks. High-risk pregnancies require closer medical supervision and early consultation with specialists to plan for potential complications. Awareness and timely intervention are key to ensuring that mothers and babies receive appropriate care."

The hospital highlighted that managing previable premature babies requires comprehensive care, from antenatal counselling and delivery planning to specialized NICU interventions, nutritional support and long-term developmental monitoring. This calls for advanced neonatal infrastructure and coordinated expertise across specialties to address the evolving needs of these newborns.

India looks forward to Deepen Partnership with Small Island Developing States for Resilient Coasts and Oceans: Bhupender Yadav at COP31 in Antalya (Türkiye)

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 Antalya (Türkiye), 17th November, 2026

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav, today called for strengthening India's partnership with Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to build resilient coasts and oceans through knowledge-sharing, technology partnerships and practical cooperation.

Addressing the high-level ministerial event on 'India–SIDS Partnership for Resilient Coasts and Oceans: Sharing Knowledge, Technology and Solutions' during UNFCCC COP31 in Antalya, Türkiye, the Minister emphasised that healthy oceans and resilient coastlines are fundamental to economic security, ecological stability and people's well-being. The event was organised by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, in partnership with the International Solar Alliance (ISA). It saw participation at ministerial level from the island nations of Mauritius (H.E. Rajesh Anand Bhagwan), Kiribati (H.E Tokaibure Rabaua), Marshal Islands (H.E. Jess Gasper), besides senior officials from the Government of Fiji (Andrew K. Coriakula), TERI and ISA.

Highlighting the growing challenges of sea-level rise, coastal erosion, ocean warming, coral bleaching, stronger storms and marine pollution, Yadav said these are immediate concerns for island nations, affecting homes, infrastructure, livelihoods and, in some cases, the long-term habitability of their territories. Guided by the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, India believes that environmental protection and development must advance together, with climate resilience centred on people, livelihoods and ecosystems, he stated.



Sharing India's experience in coastal resilience, the Minister highlighted the country's approximately 11,099-kilometre coastline and its efforts in scientific assessment, ecosystem conservation, shoreline management and disaster preparedness. He cited the Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes (MISHTI), which advances mangrove conservation and restoration while supporting coastal livelihoods.

The Minister further highlighted India's experience in scientific coastal assessments, ocean forecasting and early warning systems, particularly in the States of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh, as important areas for knowledge exchange with SIDS. Through the International Solar Alliance (ISA), Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS) and Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC), India is seeking to deepen cooperation in renewable energy, disaster preparedness, resilient infrastructure and locally appropriate climate adaptation solutions, he informed.

Stage Set for 'Samaveshi Niti Sankalp': Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment Ready to Welcome Delegates from States, Union Territories for Two-Day Departmental Summit

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 Stage Set for 'Samaveshi Niti Sankalp': Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment Ready to Welcome Delegates from States, Union Territories for Two-Day Departmental Summit.

With preparations in place and the stage set for a significant national-level dialogue on social justice and inclusive development, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is all set to welcome delegates, senior officials and representatives from States and Union Territories for the two-day Departmental Summit titled 'Samaveshi Niti Sankalp', scheduled to begin tomorrow, at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, in the National Capital here.

The Ministry has completed the necessary preparations for the Summit, which will bring together representatives of the Union, State & UT Governments on a common platform to deliberate on key policy priorities, strengthen institutional coordination and work towards more effective implementation of welfare programmes.

The Summit will focus on advancing the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047 through a stronger Centre-State Partnership and a shared commitment to inclusive development.

The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, is scheduled to grace the Valedictory Session of the Summit, where the key outcomes and time-bound action plans emerging from the deliberations will be presented.

Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice And Empowerment, Sudhansh Pant said the Departmental Summit is the third in a series of such summits envisioned by the Prime Minister to encourage collective ownership of national priorities, facilitate exchange of experiences and accelerate development outcomes through coordinated efforts between the Centre and the States.



He said in the run-up to the Summit, the Ministry has undertaken extensive consultations with State and Union Territory administrations, field-level functionaries and other stakeholders to ensure that policy discussions are informed by practical experiences and implementation-related insights.

The Secretary said a series of video conferences were held with State and Union Territory officials, while feedback was sought on four identified thematic areas from stakeholders within and outside the Government.

The consultation exercise received an encouraging response, with more than 13,500 responses from over 450 districts across the country, Pant said. These valuable inputs have been incorporated into the background notes prepared for the Summit to facilitate informed, focused and outcome-oriented deliberations, he said.

Sudhansh Pant said the Departmental Summit provides an important institutional platform for the Centre and States to come together, share successful practices, identify implementation challenges and explore innovative approaches for strengthening the delivery of welfare initiatives.

IFFI 2026 Celebrates Kannada and Tulu Cinema

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 From the socially conscious parallel cinema of Girish Kasaravalli to contemporary family dramas, folklore-rooted epics and documentary storytelling, the 57th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) is bringing the richness and diversity of Kannada and Tulu cinema into focus in Goa.

Kannada Films:

Kantara: A Legend - Chapter 1, directed by and starring Rishab Shetty, is set during the Kadamba era. Berme, a young forest dweller, enters the neighbouring kingdom of Bangra and witnesses the harsh treatment of forest communities by its rulers. When Prince Kulashekara attacks the tribes and kills many of their people, Berme joins them in their fight for justice and dharma. The story brings together folklore, faith and a struggle to protect the forest communities. The film is featured in both Indian Panorama's Mainstream Cinema section and the International Competition.



Ruby-Cube, directed by P. Sheshadri, follows three generations of a family during a short holiday at a hill station. Rohini, a psychologist, reunites with her estranged husband Moorthy through their daughter Chitra, who is facing difficulties in her marriage. As the family spends time together, old tensions and unresolved emotions come to the surface. A Rubik's Cube becomes a symbol of the complexities of relationships, showing how patience and understanding can help people find a way forward.

The Hug of Emptiness, directed by Dr. Pradeep Kenchanuru (Dr. Pradeep Kumar Shetty K), tells the story of Chandrashekhar, whose property was taken over by the Sullia Cooperative Bank in 2003 after he failed to repay a loan. Believing the action to be unjust, he begins a legal battle that continues for more than two decades. Without a permanent home, he lives in his car while pursuing justice. The documentary portrays his long struggle, loneliness and determination in the face of an uncertain future.

Tribal communities have been the guardians of biodiversity: Dr Jitendra Singh

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, the Department of Atomic Energy and the Department of Space, Dr Jitendra Singh, today called for tribal communities to be partners and leaders in India's scientific and innovation journey.

Dr Jitendra Singh was addressing a programme marking Janjatiya Gaurav Divas, commemorating the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda. The programme was organised by the Department of Science and Technology's (DST) SEED Division and the North East Centre for Technology Application and Reach (NECTAR). A technology compendium and a booklet on science, technology and innovation for tribal empowerment were released on the occasion.



Dr Jitendra Singh said Bhagwan Birsa Munda remains one of the greatest icons of India's freedom struggle and a symbol of courage, self-respect and the aspirations of tribal communities. His life and contribution, the Minister said, continue to inspire efforts towards social justice, equality and inclusive development.

The Minister described tribal communities as guardians of biodiversity, living in harmony with forests, rivers and mountains. Dr Jitendra Singh said tribal knowledge and practices continue to inspire modern science, while digital education and STEM training can help tribal youth lead India's scientific journey. The Minister called for technology-based enterprises, supported by skills, mentoring, finance and market linkages, to create livelihoods and strengthen local economies, particularly in the North Eastern Region.

The Minister said that the empowerment of tribal communities, particularly those living in remote and geographically challenging regions, is essential to achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047.

The Union Minister emphasised the need for affordable, accessible technologies suited to local conditions and easy to operate and maintain. Citing sickle cell anaemia, Dr. Singh referred to a multi-institutional CRISPR-Cas9 gene therapy effort involving CSIR-IGIB, AIIMS New Delhi, CSIR-IICT Hyderabad, NII Mumbai and other institutions.

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION MUST EXTEND FROM PANCHAYATS TO PARLIAMENT

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 OF IMPLEMENTATION OF NARI SHAKTI VANDAN ADHINIYAM: LOK SABHA SPEAKER.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla today emphasized the need for greater representation of women across all democratic institutions. Birla noted that women must have an effective role not merely as participants but also in leadership, policymaking and law-making. Referring to the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam enacted in 2023, he expressed hope that the provision for 33 per cent representation of women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies would move towards implementation, enabling women's leadership to extend from Panchayats to Parliament. He noted that several States have already provided for 50 per cent representation of women in Panchayats and Municipalities. Greater participation of women in legislative institutions and decision-making processes would contribute to building a stronger, more sensitive and accountable democracy. Women bring sensitivity, commitment and a strong sense of responsibility to public life, qualities that are particularly important in addressing the aspirations and challenges of society. Highlighting the pivotal role of women in strengthening democratic institutions, Birla mentioned that greater participation of women in policymaking, legislation and decision-making would make democracy more responsive, inclusive and accountable. Birla made these observations while inaugurating the First Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) India Region Conference at Bengaluru.

Noting that Artificial Intelligence (AI) and technology are transforming every sphere of social life and, when used responsibly and accountably, he observed that AI can bring significant improvements in governance. He emphasised that public representatives must leverage technology and e-governance to strengthen their engagement with citizens, understand their problems and ensure timely and effective solutions. Technology can play a vital role in establishing transparent, accountable and efficient systems of governance.

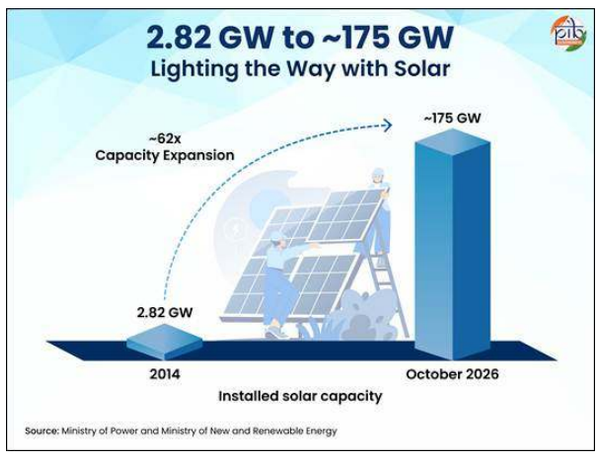
Observing that Parliamentary Committees function as 'Mini Parliaments', the Speaker said that these committees have made valuable contributions towards addressing the socio-economic challenges faced by women and have made important recommendations to the Government. AI and technology can further strengthen their monitoring and oversight functions and make their work more effective. He indicated that a dedicated session on AI and technology would be organised to enhance the understanding and capacities of women Members of Parliament and legislators in this regard.

India's Solar Growth Enters a New Era

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 India's solar energy sector has expanded significantly over the past decade, emerging as a key driver of the country's energy transition. Growth in installed capacity, domestic manufacturing and distributed solar adoption reflects the sector's expanding reach. Policy support, infrastructure development and citizen participation are accelerating this transformation. Solar power is strengthening energy security, supporting economic development and advancing climate action. These developments formed part of the broader discussions at the Bharat Renewable Energy Summit & Expo (BRESE) 2026, held in New Delhi from 2–5 November.

India's Solar Rise

A decade ago, solar power occupied only a small place in India's electricity mix. Today, it forms the largest share of the country's renewable energy capacity. From an installed capacity of 2.82 GW in 2014, the sector has expanded approximately 62 fold, reaching ~ 175 GW till 31 October 2026.



This transformation is driven by policy support, infrastructure development, manufacturing expansion, and citizen participation. Initiatives such as solar parks, rooftop systems, and solarised agricultural pumps are accelerating deployment across the country. India's expanding renewable energy sector was in focus at the Bharat Renewable Energy Summit & Expo (BRESE) 2026. The event brought together global stakeholders to advance cooperation, investment and innovation in clean energy.

The Bharat Renewable Energy Summit & Expo (BRESE) 2026 was organised from 2–5 November at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. Held under the theme 'Invest. Innovate. Inspire.', it brought together participants from over 130 countries, including policymakers, industry leaders, investors and researchers. Co-located with the 9th International Solar Alliance (ISA) Assembly and the 4th International Conference on Green Hydrogen, the Summit hosted high-level discussions and ministerial meetings. It also facilitated business engagements and featured an exhibition involving over 400 organisations. 13 states participated as Partner States, showcasing their renewable energy potential and investment opportunities. The Summit also recognised winners of the Bharat Renewable Energy Hackathon 2026, featuring solutions to ten real-world renewable energy challenges.

India's solar momentum has translated into measurable outcomes. The country has added 37 GW of solar capacity in 2025, surpassing the United States in annual additions. India has also emerged as the world's second-largest solar growth market, underlining its growing role in the global clean energy transition.

A Decade of Solar Expansion

INDIAN NAVAL SHIP SAHYADRI PARTICIPATES IN BILATERAL NAVAL EXERCISE JAIMEX 2026 WITH JAPAN MARITIME SELF-DEFENCE FORCE

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 INDIAN NAVAL SHIP SAHYADRI PARTICIPATES IN BILATERAL NAVAL EXERCISE JAIMEX 2026 WITH JAPAN MARITIME SELF-DEFENCE FORCE.

Indian Naval Ship Sahyadri participated in the bilateral naval exercise JAIMEX 2026 with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) on 13–14 Nov 2026. The exercise provided an opportunity for both navies to undertake coordinated maritime engagements and strengthen operational cooperation.

During the exercise, INS Sahyadri operated alongside JMSDF Ship JS Ise, undertaking a series of maritime operational engagements. These included tactical manoeuvres, communication drills and cross-deck landings, providing valuable opportunities for both navies to practise coordinated operations and enhance their understanding of each other's procedures and capabilities.

The engagements focused on strengthening interoperability, improving operational coordination and fostering mutual understanding between the participating units.



The exercise also provided an opportunity to exchange professional experiences and reinforce established Navy-to-Navy cooperation.

The participation of INS Sahyadri in JAIMEX 2026 reflects the growing depth of the India–Japan maritime partnership and the continued engagement between the two navies. Such exercises contribute to strengthening mutual trust, enhancing operational familiarity and advancing cooperation in the maritime domain.

The exercise reaffirms the enduring India–Japan maritime partnership and the shared commitment of both navies to strengthening maritime cooperation, operational coordination and mutual understanding, contributing to a safe and stable Indo-Pacific.

India's Electronic Goods Exports Grow 44% to USD 31.97 Billion in April–September FY 2026-27

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 India's electronic goods exports registered strong growth of 44.0% during April–September FY 2026-27, increasing from USD 22.20 billion in the corresponding period of FY 2025-26 to USD 31.97 billion. While smartphones continued to account for the largest share of the electronics export basket, non-smartphone electronics recorded significantly faster growth, reflecting the broadening and diversification of India's electronics exports across components, printed circuit boards, communication equipment, memory products and storage devices.

Exports of smartphones (HS 85171300) increased by 35.8%, from USD 13.38 billion in April–September FY 2025-26 to USD 18.17 billion during April–September FY 2026-27. Smartphones continued to be the largest component of India's electronic goods exports. However, their share in total electronic goods exports moderated from 60.3% to 56.8%, amid faster growth in other electronics segments.

Non-smartphone electronics exports recorded a growth of 56.5%, increasing from USD 8.81 billion to USD 13.79 billion during the period. Consequently, the share of non-smartphone electronics in total electronic goods exports increased from 39.7% to 43.2%, indicating a broadening of India's electronics export basket.

Exports of parts and accessories comprising mounted printed circuit boards (HS 84733030) increased from USD 63.3 million to USD 2.10 billion, registering growth of 3,219%. Singapore was the leading destination, with exports reaching USD 1.87 billion, followed by China at USD 111.5 million.

Exports of populated, loaded or stuffed printed circuit boards (HS 85177910) also registered significant growth of 304%, increasing from USD 213.7 million to USD 864.1 million. China was the leading destination at USD 789.2 million, while exports to Hong Kong increased from USD 5.9 million to USD 25.3 million.

Exports of network transmission and routing equipment (HS 85176290) nearly doubled, rising by 98% from USD 732.9 million to USD 1.45 billion. Hong Kong led the growth, with exports increasing from USD 264.7 million to USD 857.7 million. The United States and the Netherlands were also important destinations, with exports of USD 130.9 million and USD 124.4 million, respectively.

Exports of memory integrated circuits (HS 85423200) recorded growth of 2,333%, increasing from USD 23.1 million to USD 562.4 million. Malaysia emerged as the largest destination at USD 390.8 million, followed by Singapore at USD 102.4 million and Hong Kong at USD 25.2 million.

India's Horticulture Production Set to Reach Record 386.9 Million Tonnes in 2025-26: Shivraj Singh Chouhan Releases Third Advance Estimates

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 India's Horticulture Production Set to Reach Record 386.9 Million Tonnes in 2025-26: Shivraj Singh Chouhan Releases Third Advance Estimates.

Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare and Rural Development, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, today released the Third Advance Estimates of area and production of horticultural crops for 2025-26, bringing encouraging news for the country's farmers. According to the latest estimates, India's total horticulture production is expected to reach 3,869.15 lakh tonnes in 2025-26, an increase of 161.77 lakh tonnes, or 4.36%, over the 3,707.38 lakh tonnes recorded in 2024-25.

Expressing satisfaction over the projected growth, Chouhan said the significant increase in horticulture production reflects the hard work of India's farmers and the impact of the farmer-friendly policies of the government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Minister said that this record production would not only strengthen the country's nutritional security but also directly contribute to higher incomes for horticulture farmers. He congratulated farmers across the country for their efforts and said the growth reflects the dedication and hard work of India's farming community.

Chouhan observed that Indian agriculture is witnessing significant and encouraging diversification, with farmers increasingly moving beyond traditional crops towards the cultivation of fruits, vegetables, flowers, spices, plantation crops such as cashew, coconut and cocoa, as well as aromatic and medicinal plants. This growing interest in commercial and high-value crops is opening up new avenues of income for farmers while creating fresh opportunities for self-reliance and growth in the agricultural sector. According to the Minister, one of the most significant aspects of the latest estimates is the increase in production despite a reduction in the area under horticulture. The total area under horticultural crops in 2025-26 is estimated at approximately 297.21 lakh hectares, compared with 301.36 lakh hectares in 2024-25. Despite the decline in cultivated area, production is projected to increase across fruits, vegetables, flowers, plantation crops, and aromatic and medicinal plants.

The estimates, released by the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare on the basis of information received from States, Union Territories and other government agencies, reflect the sector's continued growth and improved productivity.

Fruit production projected to increase by 4.60%

India and Egypt reaffirm commitment to strengthen bilateral trade, investment and industrial cooperation

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal concluded his official visit to the Arab Republic of Egypt from 15 to 16 November 2026. The visit marked his first bilateral visit to an African country. During the visit, the Minister held a series of high-level bilateral meetings, co-chaired the 7th Session of the India–Egypt Joint Trade Committee (JTC), participated in business engagements and interacted with representatives of the Indian and Egyptian business communities.

India and Egypt share longstanding relations rooted in historical, civilizational and people-to-people ties, which have evolved into a multifaceted partnership encompassing political, economic, security and cultural cooperation. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India–Egypt relations have gained renewed momentum, culminating in the elevation of bilateral ties to a Strategic Partnership, with a shared commitment to enhanced cooperation in political, security, energy and economic fields.

The visit included the 7th Session of the India–Egypt JTC, the 6th India–Egypt Joint Business Council (JBC) Meeting and Business Forum, and the India–Egypt Startups Forum. During the visit, Piyush Goyal called on Prime Minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt Dr. Mostafa Madbouly, held bilateral meetings with Egyptian Ministers and met leading business representatives in Egypt.

The visit provided renewed momentum to the longstanding India–Egypt economic partnership, with both sides reaffirming their commitment to expanding bilateral trade, promoting investments, strengthening industrial cooperation and enhancing business-to-business linkages. Both sides agreed to constitute a Working Group to discuss the modalities and framework for the Terms of Reference for entering into a mutually beneficial PTA/FTA or CEPA, after evaluating the gains for both sides, covering trade in goods, services and investment.

The 7th Session of the India–Egypt Joint Trade Committee was co-chaired by Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal and Minister of Investment and Foreign Trade of Egypt Dr. Mohamed Farid Saleh on 15 November 2026. The JTC was elevated to the Ministerial level, reflecting the growing importance of economic and commercial engagement between the two countries.

Both sides reviewed developments in bilateral trade and agreed to work towards achieving a target of USD 12 billion in bilateral trade. They emphasised the importance of diversifying the trade basket, promoting higher value-added exports, strengthening market access and addressing trade-related challenges.