



DEPARTMENT OF
EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

DAILY
CURRENT
AFFAIRS

21.04.2025



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Director,
Department of Employment and Training.

TamilNadu Highlights

Tamil Nadu Team at 42nd Weifang International Kite Festival, China

- Held from **April 18–20, 2025** in **Weifang**, Shandong Province — known as the '**Kite Capital of the World**'.
- **Team Skyters** from Tamil Nadu, supported by **TN Tourism**, represented India.
- Showcased a **giant inflatable Jallikattu Bull Kite**, symbolizing the **power, pride, and tradition** of Tamil Nadu.
- Flew a kite inscribed with '**Vazhga Tamil**' (**Long Live Tamil**).
- The Weifang festival blends tradition, artistry, and global cultural unity through kite flying.
- The same kites will be featured at the upcoming **Tamil Nadu International Kite Festival 2025** in **Mamallapuram** this May.



Ban on 28 Plastic Products Across the Western Ghats – Madras High Court

- **Court Order:** The Madras High Court has banned **28 plastic products** across the Western Ghats region in Tamil Nadu — spanning from **Nilgiris to Agasthiyar Biosphere** in Kanyakumari district.
- **Scope of Ban:** The ban covers **all hill stations, wildlife sanctuaries, and tiger reserves** in the Western Ghats region.
- **Banned Items:** Includes **single-use plastic bottles, plastic sheets, cling films, plastic plates and cups, thermocol cups, plastic straws, water pouches, plastic flags, and earbuds with plastic sticks**.
- **Additional Items Banned:** Also includes **plastic forks, spoons, knives, wrapping films** (around sweets, invites, cigarettes), **plastic stirrers, PVC banners <100 microns, trays, and carry bags of all sizes and thicknesses**.
- **Previous Actions:** Tamil Nadu had already imposed a **blanket ban on single-use plastics in 2018** and specific bans in **Nilgiris and Kodaikanal in 2019**.
- **Enforcement Measures:** The court directed the state government to use **Motor Vehicles Act, 2019** to enforce the ban effectively.
- **Strict Cleanliness Rule:** **No plastic wrappers, sachets, or packaging materials** should be seen strewn across the Western Ghats — especially in **Nilgiris and Kodaikanal**.

Eco-tourism & Infrastructure Development in Tamil Nadu

- Projects worth **₹200+ crore** announced in the Tamil Nadu Assembly during the **demand for grants** session.
- **₹100 crore for Religious Tourism Modernisation**
 - **Mamallapuram – ₹30 crore**

- **Tiruchendur** – ₹30 crore
- **Kanniyakumari** – ₹20 crore
- **Velankanni & Nagore (Nagapattinam district)** – ₹20 crore
- **Cultural Heritage Centres**
 - To showcase Tamil Nadu's **Buddhist & Jain legacies**:
 - **Kancheepuram** – Buddhist Heritage
 - **Madurai** – Jain Heritage
- **Nature & Infrastructure Development**
 - Key eco-tourist sites to be enhanced:
 - **Kalvarayan Hills** (Kallakurichi district)
 - **Gomuki & Manimuktha Dams**
 - **Karumandurai Farm Lake** (Salem district)



National Highlights

Topic: Summit/Conferences/Meeting

India at GITEX Africa 2025 – Showcasing Digital Leadership

India participated in **GITEX Africa 2025**, the continent's largest tech and startup event, held in **Marrakesh, Morocco**. The event convened global policymakers, innovators, and industry leaders to foster partnerships for **inclusive and equitable economic growth**.

The Indian delegation was led by **Minister of State Jayant Chaudhary**, who engaged in bilateral meetings, panel discussions, and interactions with Indian startups. He showcased India's robust **Digital Public Infrastructure**, including:

- **Aadhaar**
- **UPI (Unified Payments Interface)**
- **ONDC (Open Network for Digital Commerce)**
- **Digital healthcare solutions**



He also emphasized the success of the **Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH)**, which has registered **over 1 crore users in just 18 months**, and India's rapidly expanding **AI talent pool**, with a **33.39% increase in AI hiring**, as reported in the **AI Stanford Index 2025**.

India's participation reaffirmed its global leadership in **digital innovation and skill development**, with flagship initiatives like:

- **Digital India**
- **Skill India**
- **DIKSHA**

- **DigiLocker**

These are now being recognized as **global benchmarks** in building inclusive digital ecosystems.

Topic: Science and Technology

50 Years of Aryabhata: India's First Satellite (1975–2025)

About Aryabhata Satellite:

- **Launched on:** April 19, 1975
- **Launch site:** Kapustin Yar, Soviet Union
- **Launch vehicle:** Kosmos-3M
- **Built by:** Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)
- **Named after:** Aryabhata, the 5th-century Indian mathematician and astronomer

Aryabhata marked **India's entry into the space age**, placing it among an elite group of 11 nations capable of launching satellites. The satellite conducted experiments in **solar physics and X-ray astronomy**, transmitting valuable scientific data despite a power failure after five days. It continued to operate briefly before falling silent. Aryabhata remained in orbit for **nearly 17 years**, re-entering Earth's atmosphere on **February 10, 1992**.

Legacy & Symbolism:

- The satellite was unnamed until just before launch. Then Prime Minister **Indira Gandhi** chose the name 'Aryabhata' from a shortlist, reflecting India's civilizational pride and diplomatic ideals.
- **India's Posts and Telegraphs Department** issued a commemorative postal stamp within hours of the launch.

The **Soviet Union** also released a stamp in 1976, honoring Indo-Soviet scientific cooperation.

India's First Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) – Nearing Commissioning

India's first **Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR)**, located in **Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu**, is likely to be **commissioned in 2026**, marking a major milestone in **Stage 2** of India's three-stage nuclear power programme.

Key Features of the PFBR:

- **Capacity:** 500 MWe
- **Type:** Sodium-cooled fast breeder reactor
- **Location:** Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu
- **Developed by:** BHAVINI (Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Ltd), under the **Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)**
- **Construction began:** 2004



- **Original target:** 2010 (delayed due to technical and regulatory challenges)

How it Works:

- **Coolant:** Liquid sodium (not water) – allows **higher operating temperatures** and greater efficiency.
- **Fuel:** Mixed Oxide Fuel (**MOX**) — a blend of **plutonium and uranium**.
- **Technology:** Uses **fast neutrons** instead of thermal neutrons, allowing the reactor to "**breed**" **more fissile material than it consumes**.
- **Efficiency:** Higher thermal efficiency and fuel utilization compared to conventional reactors.
- **Safety:** Features **robust containment structures** and **passive safety systems** to prevent overheating or radiation leakage.

India's Three-Stage Nuclear Power Programme:

India's visionary nuclear strategy aims to maximize energy generation using its vast thorium reserves.

1. **Stage 1 – Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs):**
 - Use **natural uranium** as fuel.
 - Produce **plutonium-239** as a by-product.
2. **Stage 2 – Fast Breeder Reactors (FBRs):**
 - Use **plutonium** recovered from spent PHWR fuel.
 - Breed **more plutonium and uranium-233** from fertile materials like thorium or uranium-238.
3. **Stage 3 – Advanced Heavy Water Reactors (AHWRs):**
 - Use **thorium-based fuels** to produce **uranium-233**.
 - Achieve a **closed fuel cycle**, offering long-term sustainability.

Why PFBR Matters:

- **Strategic autonomy:** Reduces dependency on imported fuel.
- **Sustainability:** Extends India's nuclear fuel resources dramatically.
- **Innovation:** Showcases indigenous R&D and technological prowess.
- **Clean Energy:** Plays a vital role in decarbonizing India's energy mix.

ISRO-NASA Mission 'NISAR' Likely to Launch in June

- **First-of-its-Kind:** NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar) is a joint Earth observation mission by ISRO and NASA.
- **Expected Launch:** ISRO Chairman V. Narayanan announced the mission is likely to launch in June 2025 on a GSLV rocket.

- **Precision Monitoring:** NISAR will detect surface changes as small as 1 cm, aiding studies on glaciers, vegetation, earthquakes, and volcanoes.
- **Climate & Hazard Insight:** It's set to enhance understanding of climate change and natural hazards through repeated global observations.
- **Delay & Testing:** Originally due in 2023, delays occurred due to upgrades to a 12-metre antenna, requiring return to the U.S.
- **Upcoming Launches:** ISRO will launch EOS-09 (high-res Earth imaging) and Gaganyaan's TV-D2 abort test in May.
- **Axiom-4 Update:** Narayanan also updated on Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla's May trip to the ISS on the Axiom-4 mission.
- **Significance:** Shukla will become only the second Indian in space, after Rakesh Sharma in 1984.

Google Launches 7th-Gen AI Chip 'Ironwood'

- Developed by Google, headquartered in Mountain View, California, USA.
- Focuses on **inference computing**—key for real-time AI responses.
- Features **192 GB of High Bandwidth Memory (HBM)**.
- Achieves **7.2 Tbps memory bandwidth—4.5x faster than Trillium**.
- When scaled to **9,216 chips per pod**, Ironwood offers **42.5 exaflops**, outpacing El Capitan (2.79 exaflops).
- Utilizes **Tensor Processing Units (TPUs)**—core to Google's AI infrastructure.
- Currently used internally or via **Google Cloud**, strengthening its market position.

Topic: Defence

Indian Army Successfully Concludes ARMEX-24 High-Altitude Expedition

The **Indian Army (IA)** concluded **ARMEX-24**, a **28-day high-altitude adventure expedition**, on **April 14, 2025**, showcasing **operational readiness, endurance, leadership, and teamwork** in extreme conditions.

- **Distance Covered:** 146 km
- **Route:** From the **dense jungles of Northern West Bengal** to the **snow-covered heights of Sikkim, India**
- **Altitude Variation:** From **sub-tropical regions** to heights **above 14,000 feet**
- **Objective:** To demonstrate the IA's ability to operate in **harsh, high-altitude, and unpredictable environments**
- ◆ **Key Highlights:**
 - **Participants:** 20 specially selected military personnel

- Chosen for **physical fitness, mental resilience, and team spirit**
- **Operational Phase:** 18 days of trekking through:
 - **Steep gradients**
 - **Rugged and challenging terrain**
 - **Unpredictable weather patterns**
 - **Low-oxygen, high-stress conditions**



Significance:

- Reinforces the **IA's capabilities** in high-altitude warfare and adventure-based military preparedness.
- Demonstrates **adaptability** in transitioning from **jungle warfare** to **mountain warfare**.
- Promotes **camaraderie, endurance, and leadership under pressure**.

Topic: Awards

MacGregor Memorial Medal :

- Sergeant Jhumar Ram Poonia (IAF) and Colonel Ranvir Singh Jamwal (Director, NIMAS, Arunachal Pradesh) were among the 2024 awardees.
- **The MacGregor Memorial Medal was instituted on July 3, 1888, to honor Major General Sir Charles Metcalfe MacGregor, founder of USI.**
- Originally meant for military reconnaissance and exploration, its scope expanded in 1986 to include expeditions and adventure.
- It is open to all serving or retired personnel of the Armed Forces, TA, Reserve Forces, Rashtriya Rifles, and Assam Rifles.
- The medal is awarded in gold or silver, depending on USI rules for that year.
- A total of 127 medals have been awarded so far, including 103 before Independence.
The United Service Institution of India (USI), founded in 1870, is India's oldest tri-service defense think tank.
- It is headquartered in **New Delhi and led by Major General BK Sharma (Retd).**

Topic: Economy

BSE Ltd., Asia's oldest stock exchange, recently celebrated its 150th anniversary.

Founded on: July 9, 1875, near Town Hall, South Bombay.

➤ Initially began as informal trading under a **banyan tree** in 1855, mainly in **cotton**.

Major Milestones:

- **1865:** Surge in stock activity amid an unregulated boom.

- **1957:** BSE received **permanent recognition** under the **Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act**.
- **1986:** Launch of **S&P BSE SENSEX**, India's first equity index (base: 1000).
- **2017:** BSE became **India's first listed stock exchange**.

Global Ranking:

- BSE is the **4th largest stock exchange in the world** (by listed companies).

By 1865, Bombay housed:

- **31 banks, 62 joint-stock companies, 20 insurance firms, and 16 cotton pressing companies.**

International Highlights

Duro Macut Appointed Prime Minister of Serbia

- 61-year-old doctor and academic Duro Macut appointed PM by Serbia's Parliament.
- Secured 153 votes out of 199 participating MPs in the 250-seat Parliament.
- Succeeds Milos Vucevic, who resigned in January 2025 after a party-related controversy.
- Also a professor at the University of Belgrade Medical School; lectures in Athens and Skopje.
- Holds leadership roles in national and European endocrinology societies.
- Awarded the **Order of Karadorde Star** in 2024 for contributions to medicine.



About Serbia:

- President - Aleksandar Vucic
- Prime Minister (PM) - Duro Macut
- Capital - Belgrade
- Currency - Serbian Dinar (RSD)