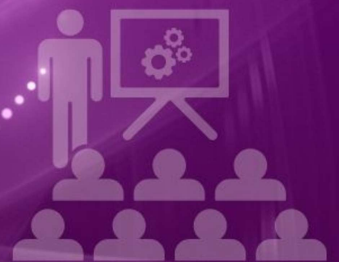




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Director,
Department of Employment and Training.

TamilNadu Highlights

‘Naan Mudhalvan’ Scheme Plays Key Role in UPSC Success

Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister **Udhayanidhi Stalin** praised the ‘**Naan Mudhalvan**’ scheme for its role in increasing the number of civil services exam qualifiers from the state.



Speaking in the **State Assembly**, he noted that the **number of UPSC qualifiers** had significantly dropped to **27 in 2021**, but the situation improved after implementing targeted support through the ‘**Naan Mudhalvan**’ scheme.

- The scheme, introduced under the **Special Programme Implementation Department**, provides **financial aid** for **UPSC prelims and mains coaching**.
- In **2024**, **47 students** from Tamil Nadu cleared the UPSC exam — a **30% increase** from the previous year.
- In **2025**, **57 students** cleared the exam, **50 of whom received support** under the scheme.

About Nan Mudhalvan Scheme:

- ‘**Naan Mudhalvan**’ scheme, aimed at empowering youth across the state.
- The initiative targets **10 lakh youth annually**, equipping them with skills to help them harness their talents for national development.
- The scheme focuses on identifying, training, and providing **career and academic guidance** to talented students in **government-run and State-aided educational institutions**.

Tamil Nadu to Introduce AI-Powered Driver Monitoring System on Buses

- The Tamil Nadu government will **pilot an AI-powered driver monitoring system** in **500 buses** to enhance **road safety** and improve **driver performance**.
- The system will track **driver facial expressions, eye gaze, and head movements**, alerting them if signs of fatigue or distraction are detected.
- Additionally, **360-degree cameras** will be installed in **4,000 buses** to eliminate blind spots and enhance pedestrian and cyclist visibility.
- Under the ‘**Accident Free Tamil Nadu**’ initiative, **100 critical accident-prone roads** will be prioritized for intervention.

National Highlights

India Suspends Indus Water Treaty (IWT)

Trigger: Pahalgam terror attack in J&K (April 23) — 26 killed, including tourists

Government's Stand: Treaty held "*in abeyance*" until Pakistan **credibly and irrevocably abjures support for cross-border terrorism**

About the Indus Water Treaty (IWT)

- **Signed in:** 1960
- **Mediated by:** World Bank
- **Between:** India (upper riparian) & Pakistan (lower riparian)
- **River System Involved:**
 - **Eastern rivers:** Ravi, Beas, Sutlej (allocated to India for full use — ~33 MAF/year)
 - **Western rivers:** Indus, Jhelum, Chenab (allocated mainly to Pakistan — ~135 MAF/year)
- **India's rights:** Limited use of western rivers for domestic, non-consumptive, irrigation, and hydroelectric generation (up to 3.6 MAF storage allowed)

Implications of Suspension

- **Reservoir flushing** (desilting) and **filling** can now be done **anytime**, not just in monsoon (August).
- India can **ignore objections** from Pakistan on design and operation of hydropower projects (e.g., Kishanganga, Ratle).
- **Design restrictions** on new hydroelectric and irrigation projects no longer apply.

Impact on Pakistan

- **Flood data sharing** can be stopped — crucial during monsoon season.
- **Filling reservoirs** in critical sowing periods can **hamper agriculture** in Pakistan's Punjab.
- **Tours and inspections** by Pakistani officials under the treaty can be stopped.

Legal Angle

- **No explicit abrogation clause** in IWT.
- However, **Article 62 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties** allows withdrawal in case of "**fundamental change in circumstances**".

Cruise Tourism Boost: Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal Flags Off Cruise Operations

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal flagged off cruise operations from the **Mumbai International Cruise Terminal (MICT)**.

- MICT, developed under the **Cruise Bharat Mission**, is built to global standards and will significantly enhance cruise tourism in India.

♦ Terminal Highlights

- MICT can handle **1 million passengers annually**, with a daily capacity of **approx. 10,000 passengers**.
- It complements existing international cruise terminals at **Visakhapatnam and Chennai**.

♦ Inauguration of Key Projects

- Sonowal also inaugurated the **renovated Fire Memorial** at Victoria Docks.
- Two heritage buildings — **Fort House Ballard Estate** and **Evelyn House in Colaba** — were also reopened.
- The **Sagar Upvan Garden** and **Shore to Ship Electric Supply** under the **Green Port Initiative** were launched.

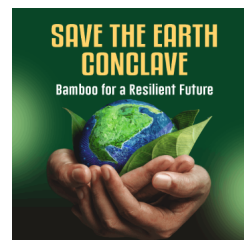
♦ About Cruise Bharat Mission

- **Launched on September 30, 2024**, at Mumbai Port.
- Aims to position India as a **top global cruise destination**.
- Based on **three pillars**: Ocean & Harbour Cruises, River & Inland Cruises, Island & Lighthouse Cruises.
- Key goals include:
 - **10 international sea cruise terminals**
 - **100 river cruise terminals**
 - **5 marinas along the coast**
 - Integration of **over 5000 km of waterways**.

Topic: Environment

Union Minister Amit Shah Inaugurates 'Save Earth Conclave'

- On Earth Day (April 22), Amit Shah inaugurated the **'Save Earth Conclave'** at NASC Complex, New Delhi.
- The conclave focused on leveraging bamboo to tackle climate change and promote sustainable economic growth.
- The **India Sustainability Awards 2025** were presented to 15 pioneers for outstanding contributions in climate action and green innovation.



- Earth Day was first celebrated in 1970, following its proposal at the 1969 UNESCO summit.

Topic: Awards

Poshan Tracker App Wins PM's Award for Excellence in Public Administration

♦ Award Recognition

- The **Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development** received the **Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration** in the **Innovation category** for the **Poshan Tracker app**.

♦ About the Poshan Tracker

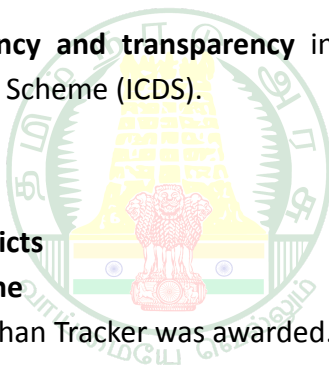
- It is a **mobile-based application** used by **Anganwadi workers** to collect and provide **real-time data** on nutrition and childcare services.
- Developed under the initiatives **Saksham Anganwadi** and **Mission Poshan 2.0**.

♦ Purpose and Impact

- Aims to improve the **efficiency and transparency** in the delivery of services under the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS).

♦ PM's Awards 2024 Categories

1. **Holistic Development of Districts**
2. **Aspirational Blocks Programme**
3. **Innovation** – under which Poshan Tracker was awarded.



Topic: Science and Technology

India Launches First-Ever Seed Germination Database for Ecological Restoration

- **Ecological Restoration Alliance-India (ERA-I)** has launched a **seed germination database** offering over **1,000 techniques** for **465 native plant species**.
- The **database** is designed to support **restoration practitioners, nursery managers, and native plant enthusiasts** in growing native plants for **ecological restoration**.
- It features species like **Aegle marmelos (wood apple)**, **Bauhinia racemosa (beedi leaf tree)**, and **Ficus benghalensis (banyan)**, which are essential for creating **climate-resilient ecosystems**.
- The initiative aims to make **germination protocols** more accessible, helping people to succeed in **growing native plants** for restoration projects.

- ERA-I's database supports **India's pledge under the Bonn Challenge**, aiming to **restore 26 million hectares** of **degraded land** by 2030.
- **Native plants** are key to ecological restoration as they are **adapted** to local soil and climatic conditions, requiring minimal human intervention once established.
- The **collaborative effort** involves 23 contributors from 11 institutions, sharing valuable **germination knowledge** to support **restoration projects** across India.

Topic: Summits/Conferences/Meetings

International Buddhist Conclave Inaugurated in Arunachal Pradesh

- ◆ **Inauguration:** Arunachal Pradesh Deputy CM **Chowna Mein** inaugurated the **International Conclave** in Namsai.
- ◆ **Theme:** '*Buddha Dhamma and North-East India's Cultural Heritage*'.
- ◆ **Organizers:** Hosted by the **International Buddhist Confederation** and the **Ministry of Culture, Government of India**.
- ◆ **Focus:** Explores **Buddhism's spiritual and cultural impact** in the North-East region.
- ◆ **International Participation:** **Bhutan's Consul General Jigme Thinley Namgyal** attended the inaugural session.
- ◆ **Duration:** The conclave is a **two-day event**.

Topic: Defence

Surya Kiran Airshow in Patna Honours 1857 Hero Babu Kunwar Singh

- ◆ The **Indian Air Force's Surya Kiran aerobatic team** performed a stunning airshow over **Patna**.
- ◆ The event paid **tribute to Babu Kunwar Singh**, a prominent leader of the **1857 revolt** from Bihar's **Bhojpur** region.
- ◆ A **skydiver parachuted** from an IAF helicopter, unfurling the **Indian national flag** mid-air.
- ◆ The **two-day airshow** began with **aerial displays** celebrating courage and legacy.
- ◆ The **Surya Kiran squadron** demonstrated **precision flying** and **synchronized formations**. The show is part of **Valour Day Vijayotsav** commemorations.
- ◆ The event highlights **Babu Kunwar Singh's contributions** to India's first war of independence.

Topic: Important Days

National Panchayati Raj Day 2025: Celebrating Grassroots Democracy on 24 April

- **National Panchayati Raj Day** is observed every year on **24 April** to commemorate the day in **1993** when the **73rd Constitutional Amendment** came into effect, granting constitutional status to **Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)**.

- The **day was first celebrated in 2010** and reflects **Mahatma Gandhi's vision** of village-level self-governance or "Panchayati rule".
- In **2025, no specific theme** has been announced for the observance.
- For the **first time**, the national-level celebration is being held at **Lohna Uttar Gram Panchayat, Jhanjharpur Block, Madhubani district, Bihar**.
- The event will also witness the presentation of the **National Panchayat Awards 2025**, which recognize and encourage **top-performing PRIs**.
- These awards are based on states' nominations and are finalized by the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj**.
- Since **2022**, the awards have been aligned with the **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, localized into **nine broad themes** such as **poverty alleviation, health, education, and gender equality**.

International Highlights

Project SeaCURE: Enhancing Ocean-Based Carbon Capture in the UK

- ◆ **Ocean as a Carbon Sink:** The ocean absorbs nearly **25% of CO₂ emissions** from human activities, especially from **fossil fuels**.
- ◆ **Launch of Project SeaCURE:** Initiated in **Weymouth, England**, the project seeks to **boost the ocean's ability to absorb CO₂ by removing it directly from seawater**.
- ◆ **Innovative Technique:** SeaCURE **acidifies seawater** pumped from the **English Channel** to convert dissolved CO₂ into gas for capture.
- ◆ **Sustainable Materials:** The extracted CO₂ is concentrated using **eco-friendly materials**, such as **charred coconut husks**, and is then securely stored.
- ◆ **Closed-Loop System:** After CO₂ removal, the **neutralized seawater is returned** to the ocean, allowing it to **continue absorbing CO₂**.
- ◆ **Pilot Scale Impact:** Currently, SeaCURE captures about **100 metric tonnes of CO₂ annually**.
- ◆ **Challenges Ahead:**
 - **High energy demand** for extraction requires **renewable energy** to maintain sustainability.
 - **Ecological concerns** exist about the **impact on marine life**, like mussels and phytoplankton, from altered seawater.
- ◆ **Broader Initiative:** SeaCURE is part of the UK's **£3 million carbon capture program**, which funds **15 pilot projects** to explore **cost-effective, scalable climate solutions**.
- ◆ **Environmental Context:** The project also draws attention to **ocean acidification**, a growing threat to **marine biodiversity** and ecosystem health.

India–Norway Marine Pollution Initiative Aids Plastic Reduction in Yamuna

- The **India–Norway Marine Pollution Initiative (INMPI)** is a **bilateral initiative** launched in **2019** under the **India–Norway Ocean Dialogue**.
- It aims to tackle **marine litter and microplastics (MPs)**, particularly from **land-based sources**.
- INMPI has undertaken **multiple projects** to **reduce marine plastic pollution**.

♦ Recent Achievement:

INMPI has supported **Agra** in enhancing **waste circularity** and **reducing plastic leakage** into the **Yamuna River**.

- Successful **waste management interventions** targeted:
 - **Petha (local sweet) industry waste**
 - **Footwear manufacturing waste**

