



DEPARTMENT OF
EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

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11.04.2025



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Director,
Department of Employment and Training.

TamilNadu Highlights

Nilgiri Tahr Census and Conservation: A Step Towards Protecting Tamil Nadu's State Animal

- The Nilgiri Tahr, or Nilgiri Ibex, is an endangered mountain ungulate native to the Western Ghats, and is Tamil Nadu's state animal.
- Known for the grey "saddleback" patch on adult males, the species holds cultural value and is mentioned in ancient Tamil texts.
- **A joint census will be held from April 24–27, covering 89 blocks in Kerala and 176 blocks in Tamil Nadu, marking 50 years of Eravikulam National Park.**
- Forest officials and volunteers will use camera traps and pellet sampling to estimate population through the 'bounded count' method.
- The Nilgiri Tahr thrives in Shola forests, montane grasslands, and rocky hills, with the largest population in **Eravikulam National Park**.
- It is listed as Endangered by the IUCN and under Schedule-I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, receiving the highest legal protection.
- Population declines have been linked to habitat loss and hunting; a 2015 **WWF report estimated only around 3,122 wild individuals.**
- Tamil Nadu launched **Project Nilgiri Tahr in 2022** with a ₹25.14 crore budget to restore habitats, conduct studies, and protect the species.



Author S. Ramakrishnan to Receive Bharatiya Bhasha Award – 2025

Renowned Tamil author **S. Ramakrishnan** has been selected for the prestigious **Bharatiya Bhasha Award** for the year 2025, a national-level literary honour.

The award is presented by **Bharatiya Bhasha Parishad**, a literary organization based in Kolkata, which annually recognizes outstanding writers across Indian languages. S.

Ramakrishnan has been chosen for his **lifetime contribution to literature**. The award carries a **cash prize of ₹1 lakh** and a **citation**.



Notable Achievements:

- Author of **over 100 books**
- Won the **Sahitya Akademi Award** in 2018 for his acclaimed novel '*Sanchaaram*'
- Other major awards include:
 - **Tagore Literary Award**
 - **Iyal Award**

- Maxim Gorky Award
- Gnanavani Award
- Kalaignar Porkizhi Award
- Kodisya Lifetime Achievement Award
- Tamil Nadu State Awards
- Ilakkiya Vel Award
- His works have been translated into **English, French, German, Hindi, Malayalam, Bengali, Telugu, Kannada, Arabic, Spanish**, and several other languages.

National Highlights

National Tribal Youth Festival Celebrates Cultural Diversity in Mizoram

- The National Tribal Youth Festival is being held at the State Tribal Resource Centre, Kelsih, near **Aizawl, Mizoram**.
- The four-day festival began on April 8 and concludes on April 11.
- It marks the 150th birth anniversary of tribal freedom fighter Birsa Munda.
- The event celebrates the legacy of tribal freedom fighters and aims to instill patriotism in youth and the public.
- Top Mizo artists and members of Mizo Zaimi Insuikhawm (MZI) are showcasing performances.
- Cultural presentations are led by the Mizo Cultural Organisation and other groups.
- The festival is themed as a **“Mosaic of Cultures.”**

Apricot Blossom Festival 2025 – Ladakh

- **Festival Dates:** Begins **April 10** across **Leh and Kargil** regions; **April 11** launch in **Sanjak (Kargil)** and **May 4** finale at **Tar village**.
- **Objective:** Promote **eco-tourism** and turn **April** into a key tourism month in **Ladakh**, traditionally a May–September destination.
- **Inspiration:** Modeled after **Meghalaya’s Cherry Blossom Festival** and **Japan’s cherry blossom tourism**.
- **Background:** Started in **2020**, expanded after the **success of earlier editions** in select villages.
- **New Villages Included:** This year, **more villages** added to celebrate Ladakh’s **apricot-producing heritage**.
- **Tar Village Recognition:** **Tar village** won the **Best Tourism Village 2024 (Responsible Tourism)** award from the **Union Tourism Ministry**.
- **Visual Delight:** **Apricot blossoms** cover the landscape in **shades of pink and white**, celebrating **spring's arrival**.
- **Economic Boost:** Aims to support **local communities**, showcase **rural heritage**, and diversify **tourist attractions**.
- **Major Apricot Producer:** Ladakh is among **India’s top apricot-growing regions**, making it ideal for such a seasonal event.

Topic: Environment

IIT Kharagpur Study on Surface Ozone & Crop Losses

- **Study by IIT Kharagpur's CORAL Centre** led by Prof. Jayanarayanan Kuttipurath highlights the impact of **surface ozone pollution** on agriculture.
- **Surface ozone**, a powerful oxidant, **damages plant tissues**, reducing crop health and yield.
- **Wheat yields** could drop by up to **20%**, while **rice and maize** may see a **7% loss** under **high-emission scenarios** (based on CMIP6 data).
- The **Indo-Gangetic Plain** and **Central India** are **highly vulnerable**, with ozone levels exceeding **safe limits by six times**.
- Crop losses directly threaten India's progress toward **SDG 1 (No Poverty)** and **SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)** by **2030**.
- The **National Clean Air Programme** primarily targets **urban pollution**, ignoring **agricultural areas**.
- The study emphasizes the **need for urgent action** to monitor and control **ozone pollution** in **farming zones**.
- Researchers recommend **focused policy interventions** to protect food security and ensure **sustainable agriculture**.
- The study underlines how **air quality and agriculture are interlinked**, demanding an **integrated environmental approach**.

International Solar Alliance Boosts Solar Energy Access in Africa

- The **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**, **launched in 2015** by India and France, promotes solar energy in sun-rich countries, especially in Africa.
- With over 600 million Africans lacking electricity, ISA's initiatives aim to bridge this gap through decentralised solar solutions.
- The alliance is treaty-based with over 120 member nations and targets mobilising USD 1000 billion investments by 2030.
- It seeks to install 1000 GW of solar capacity and provide energy access to 1 billion people globally.
- Currently, **ISA is managing 30 solar projects in Africa, covering schools, health centres, cold storage, and agriculture**.
- Indian businesses are encouraged to lead these efforts, leveraging their experience in rural electrification.
- ISA views public-private partnerships as vital, with Indian companies showing increasing interest in African solar ventures.



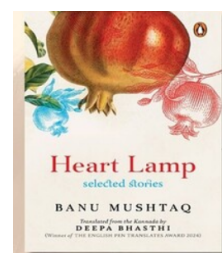
About International Solar Alliance (ISA):

- The ISA is a treaty-based international organization jointly launched by **India and France** in **2015**.
- It focuses on **combating climate change** by promoting solar energy solutions, especially in **solar-rich nations**.
- The alliance has **over 120 signatory countries** as members.
- ISA aims to **mobilise USD 1000 billion** in solar investments by **2030**.
- Its key objectives include:
 - **Providing energy access** to **1 billion people**, and
 - **Installing 1000 GW** of global solar energy capacity.

Topic: Books and Author

‘Heart Lamp’ – International Booker Prize 2025

- ‘Heart Lamp’ by Banu Mushtaq is the **first Kannada book** to be shortlisted for the **International Booker Prize 2025**.
- The book was **translated into English** by **Deepa Bhashthi**.
- It contains **12 short stories**, originally published between **1990 and 2023**.
- The stories explore **family and community tensions** with a **humorous and poignant style**.
- The **International Booker Prize** is awarded for **fiction translated into English** from any language.
- This marks a **historic moment** for Kannada literature on the **global stage**.



Topic: Reports and Indices

PLFS 2024 report

- The **unemployment rate** for persons aged 15+ declined slightly from **5.0% in 2023** to **4.9% in 2024**.
- In **rural areas**, unemployment fell marginally from **4.3% to 4.2%**.
- The **urban Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)** rose from **50.3% to over 51%**.
- **Overall LFPR** remained stable at **56.2%**, indicating steady workforce engagement.
- Under **PS+SS status**, LFPR dipped slightly from **59.8% to 59.6%**.
- The **Worker Population Ratio (WPR)** increased slightly from **53.4% to 53.5%**, and **urban WPR** rose from **47.0% to 47.6%**.
- A key reason for reduced **rural female participation** was the fall in **unpaid helpers** in household work (from **19.9% to 18.1%**).

- The report was released on **April 9, 2025**, by the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation**.
- It reflects a **slight improvement in employment indicators**, especially in urban areas.

Topic: Defence

The Centre has approved a ₹63,000-crore deal to procure 26 Rafale-Marine fighter jets

- On **April 9, 2025**, the **Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)** approved a **₹63,000-crore deal** for **26 Rafale-Marine jets** from **France**.
- The procurement includes **22 single-seater jets** (carrier-operable) and **4 twin-seater trainers** (non-carrier-operable).
- The deal was cleared under a **government-to-government framework** and awaits formal signing.
- Signing is expected during the **French Defence Minister's visit** to India later this month.
- Another major Indo-French deal for **3 Scorpene-class submarines** is awaiting CCS approval.
- Delivery of the jets will begin **3.5 years after the contract is signed**, and will be completed in **6.5 years**.
- The **Indian Air Force** already operates **36 Rafale jets**, bought under a ₹60,000-crore deal in **2016**.
- The Indian Navy currently operates **two aircraft carriers: INS Vikramaditya** (from Russia) and **INS Vikrant** (indigenously built).
- Rafale-M jets will **strengthen naval air power**, especially for carrier-based operations.



Topic: Schmes and Initiatives

National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM): Powering India's Clean Energy Future

Launched in 2025, the **National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM)** aims to build a resilient and self-reliant framework for India's critical mineral sector. As part of the initiative, the **Geological Survey of India (GSI)** has been assigned to undertake **1,200 exploration projects between 2024–25 and 2030–31**.

Why Critical Minerals Matter

Critical minerals are indispensable for the production of **clean energy technologies**, including solar panels, wind turbines, electric vehicles (EVs), and energy storage systems. Their global supply is limited and often concentrated in a few countries, exposing India to supply chain vulnerabilities. Ensuring access to these minerals is vital for both **economic development** and **national security**.

Key Applications of Critical Minerals

1. Solar Energy:

- Minerals: Silicon, Tellurium, Indium, Gallium
- Use: Manufacturing photovoltaic (PV) cells in solar panels
- Note: India's current solar capacity of **64 GW** relies heavily on these minerals.

2. Wind Energy:

- Minerals: Rare earth elements like Neodymium, Dysprosium
- Use: Permanent magnets in wind turbines
- Target: Expand wind energy capacity from **42 GW to 140 GW by 2030**

3. Electric Vehicles (EVs):

- Minerals: Lithium, Nickel, Cobalt
- Use: Lithium-ion batteries
- Goal: Under NEMMP, deploy **6–7 million EVs** by 2024

4. Energy Storage Systems:

- Minerals: Lithium, Cobalt, Nickel
- Use: Advanced lithium-ion battery storage systems

Objectives of NCMM

- **Secure Supply Chains:** Ensure availability of critical minerals from both **domestic and international** sources.
- **Strengthen Value Chains:** Enhance technology, regulatory frameworks, and financial systems to support **exploration, mining, processing, and recycling**.
- **Promote Innovation & Skills:** Foster **research, innovation, and skill development** to boost global competitiveness.

Topic: Summit/ Conferences/Meetings

Global Technology Summit (GTS) 2025 – Shaping the Future of Global Tech

Location: New Delhi, India

The **9th edition of the Global Technology Summit (GTS)**—India's premier platform for geo-technology dialogue—will be held from **April 10 to 12, 2025**, in **New Delhi**. Co-hosted by the **Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India**, and **Carnegie India**, this flagship summit

convenes thought leaders from across government, industry, academia, and civil society to shape global technology policy.

This year's theme, **"Sambhavna"** (meaning *possibilities*), captures the spirit of technological opportunity and inclusive innovation.

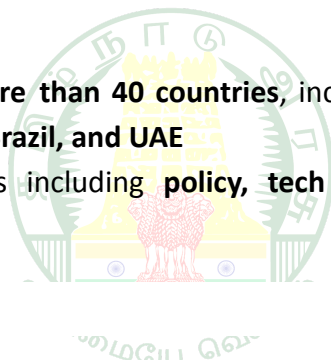
Key Highlights

♦ Theme: "Sambhavna" – Possibilities

- Explores how **emerging technologies** can drive **inclusive growth**, promote **sustainable development**, and **strengthen digital governance**.
- Focus areas include:
 - Digital infrastructure
 - Artificial Intelligence (AI) governance
 - Cybersecurity
 - Space security
 - International technology partnerships

♦ Scale and Participation

- **Over 150 speakers** from **more than 40 countries**, including the **United States, Japan, UK, Germany, France, Australia, Brazil, and UAE**
- Representation from sectors including **policy, tech innovation, diplomacy, and youth leadership**



Objectives of GTS 2025

- ✓ Facilitate **cross-border technology cooperation**
- ✓ Promote **inclusive and secure digital transformation**
- ✓ Create a platform for **youth and emerging voices** in tech policy
- ✓ Strengthen **India's leadership** in global tech governance

International Highlights

India and Russia Finalize Six Strategic Initiatives to Boost Investment Ties

- India and Russia concluded six strategic initiatives to strengthen their investment partnership.
- The announcement came during the 8th India-Russia Working Group meeting on Priority Investment Projects, held in New Delhi.
- The meeting focused on boosting economic collaboration and encouraging joint ventures in key sectors.
- The India-Russia Investment Forum took place alongside, with over 80 participants from both countries.

- Attendees included business leaders, startups, financial institutions, trade bodies, and government representatives.
- Russia continues to be a key defence partner for India, with cooperation in BRICS, SCO, and G20.
- The bilateral partnership was elevated to a “Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership” in December 2010.
- Sectors like pharmaceuticals, IT, aviation, steel, fertilizers, and infrastructure are targeted for deeper economic engagement.

