



DEPARTMENT OF
EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

DAILY
CURRENT
AFFAIRS

18.06.2026



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Director,
Department of Employment and Training.

TamilNadu Highlights

Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme Expanded up to Class VIII

Context: The Tamil Nadu Government has announced the expansion of the **Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme** to students of **Classes VI to VIII** from **17 September 2026**, the birth anniversary of Periyar E.V. Ramasamy.

About the Scheme

- Launched by the Government of Tamil Nadu to provide **nutritious breakfast** to school children.
- Implemented in **Government and Government-aided Schools**.
- Aims to improve:
 - Student attendance
 - Classroom concentration
 - Nutritional status
 - Learning outcomes

New Announcement

- The scheme, which currently covers **Classes I to V**, will be extended to **Classes VI to VIII**.
- The expansion will come into effect from **17 September 2026**.

CHIEF MINISTER'S BREAKFAST SCHEME

Launched by the Government of Tamil Nadu on **15 SEPTEMBER 2022.**

Aims to provide FREE BREAKFAST to students in GOVERNMENT and GOVERNMENT-AIDED SCHOOLS.

OBJECTIVE: Reduce malnutrition, anaemia, and classroom hunger while improving attendance.

BENEFITS OVER 30 LAKH STUDENTS in nearly 35,000 SCHOOLS.

EXPANDED to include CLASSES VI-VIII from 17 SEPTEMBER 2026.

IMPROVES NUTRITION **REDUCES ANAEMIA** **BETTER ATTENDANCE** **ENHANCES ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

NOURISHING CHILDREN BUILDING A HEALTHY TAMIL NADU

A STEP TOWARDS A HUNGER-FREE AND HEALTHY FUTURE FOR OUR CHILDREN!

Objectives

- Reduce classroom hunger among children.
- Improve enrollment and retention in schools.
- Address malnutrition and nutritional deficiencies.
- Promote equitable access to education.

National Highlights

Drone-Based Mail Service in Himachal Pradesh

Context: India Post launched its first drone-based mail and parcel delivery service between Mandi Head Post Office and Rehardhar Branch Post Office in Himachal Pradesh.

- Launched by the **Department of Posts (DoP)** under the Ministry of Communications.
- Aims to improve last-mile connectivity in remote and difficult terrains.
- Introduced based on feedback from **Gramin Dak Sevaks (GDS)** and Postal Assistants.

Key Features

- Connects **Mandi Head Post Office** and **Rehardhar Branch Post Office**.
- Reduces delivery time from over **2 hours to about 7 minutes**.
- Enables real-time tracking of mail and parcels.
- Provides an eco-friendly transportation solution.

Significance

- Enhances postal connectivity in hilly and inaccessible regions.
- Improves efficiency and reliability of mail services.
- Supports technology-driven public service delivery.
- Promotes the use of drones in logistics and governance.

Future Expansion

- India Post plans to expand drone-based delivery to around **150 routes** in **Himachal Pradesh and Assam**.

Topic: Science and Technology

Cervavac and HPV Vaccination

Context: India's indigenous HPV vaccine **Cervavac** is likely to be included in the National Immunisation Programme after 2027, subject to successful completion of ongoing single-dose clinical trials.

About Cervavac

- India's first indigenous **Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine**.

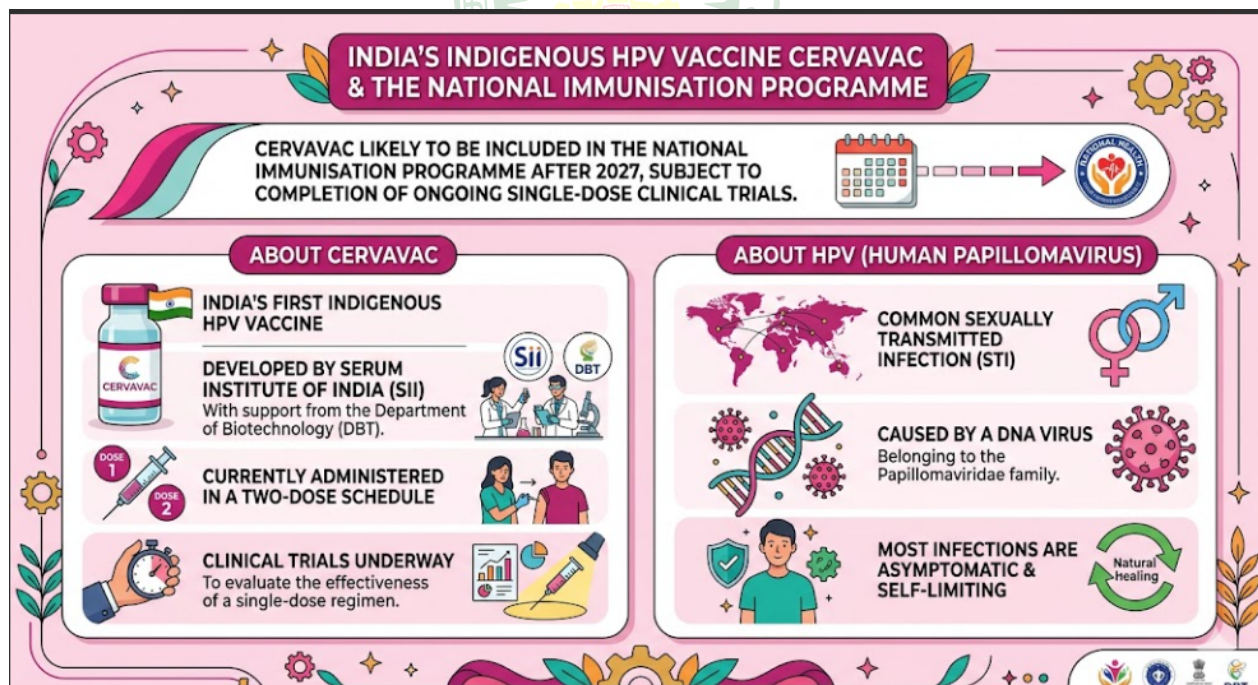
- Developed by the **Serum Institute of India (SII)** with support from the **Department of Biotechnology (DBT)**.
- Currently administered in a **two-dose schedule**.
- Clinical trials are underway to evaluate the effectiveness of a **single-dose regimen**.

About HPV (Human Papillomavirus)

- A common **sexually transmitted infection (STI)**.
- Caused by a **DNA virus** belonging to the **Papillomaviridae** family.
- Most infections are asymptomatic and self-limiting.

Diseases Caused by HPV

- **Cervical cancer** (over 95% of cases linked to HPV).
- Anal cancer.
- Vaginal cancer.
- Vulvar cancer.
- Penile cancer.
- Oropharyngeal cancer.
- Genital warts.



High-Risk and Low-Risk HPV Types

- **High-risk types:** HPV 16 and HPV 18

- Responsible for the majority of cervical cancer cases.
- Account for over 80% of cervical cancer cases in India.
- **Low-risk types:** HPV 6 and HPV 11
 - Mainly cause genital warts.

HPV Vaccination

- Prevents infection from cancer-causing HPV strains.
- Most effective when administered before exposure to the virus.
- Recommended age group: **9–14 years**.
- India's current HPV vaccination campaign targets **14-year-old girls**.

Topic: Reports and Indices

Global Peace Index (GPI) 2026

Context: The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) released the 20th edition of the Global Peace Index 2026.

About

- Published annually by the **Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP)**.
- Measures the level of peacefulness across countries.
- Covers **163 independent states and territories**, representing 99.7% of the world's population.

Assessment Parameters

- Societal Safety and Security.
- Ongoing Domestic and International Conflict.
- Degree of Militarisation.

Top 5 Most Peaceful Countries (2026)

1. Iceland
2. New Zealand
3. Switzerland
4. Slovenia
5. Ireland

Bottom 5 Countries (2026)

- Russia (163rd)
- Sudan
- Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

- Ukraine
- Israel

India's Performance

- Rank: **127th** (2026)
- Rank: **115th** (2025)
- Overall Score: **2.409**
- Recorded a decline of **2.9%** compared to the previous year.

Significance

- Provides insights into global peace and security trends.
- Helps policymakers assess conflict and stability challenges.



Topic: Awards and Honour

Sudarsan Pattnaik Wins Russia Grand Sand Master Cup 2026

Context: Sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik became the first Indian to win the Russia Grand Sand Master Cup 2026.

About the Award

- Presented at the **II International Festival of Sand Sculpture** held in **Kaliningrad, Russia**.
- Featured participation from internationally renowned sand sculptors.

Achievement

- First Indian to receive the prestigious award.
- Created a **3-metre-high sand sculpture** highlighting:
 - Climate change
 - Global warming
 - Environmental conservation
 - Afforestation

About Sudarsan Pattnaik

- Renowned sand artist from **Puri, Odisha**.
- Awarded the **Padma Shri** in 2014.



Other Major Recognitions

- People's Choice Award, Sand Sculpting World Cup (2014).
- Italian Sand Art Award (2019).
- Fred Darrington Sand Master Award, UK (2025).

Lt Vishal Kumar – Sword of Honour & President's Gold Medal

- **Lt Vishal Kumar** received the **Sword of Honour** and **President's Gold Medal** at the 158th Passing Out Parade of the **Indian Military Academy (IMA)**.
- Awards were presented by **Droupadi Murmu**.
- He secured **1st rank in the overall Order of Merit** and emerged as the best all-round officer cadet.
- Hails from **Patna, Bihar** and cleared the **NDA examination in his first attempt**.
- The **Sword of Honour** is awarded to the best all-round gentleman cadet of IMA.

Topic: Appointment

Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth Appointed Chief of Army Staff

Context: The Government of India appointed Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth as the next Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) with effect from June 30, 2026.

About

- Currently serving as **Vice Chief of the Army Staff (VCOAS)**.
- Will succeed **General Upendra Dwivedi**.

Military Career

- Commissioned into the **Armoured Corps** in December 1986.

- Graduate of the **National Defence Academy (NDA)**, Khadakwasla.
- Held commands at:
 - Armoured Regiment
 - Armoured Brigade
 - Counter-Insurgency Force
 - Sudarshan Chakra Corps
 - Delhi Area

Honours and Awards

- **Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM)** – 2025
- **Uttam Yudh Seva Medal (UYSM)** – 2026
- **Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM)** – 2022
- Multiple Army commendations

Topic: Economy

India's Merchandise Exports Reach Record High in May 2026

Context: According to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, India's merchandise exports reached a record **US\$ 45.2 billion** in May 2026, registering an 18% increase over May 2025.

- Merchandise exports increased from **US\$ 38.3 billion (May 2025)** to **US\$ 45.2 billion (May 2026)**.
- Services exports rose from **US\$ 32.46 billion** to **US\$ 36.76 billion**.
- Total exports (goods + services) reached **US\$ 81.96 billion**.
- Overall trade deficit widened to **US\$ 10.51 billion** due to faster growth in imports.
- FY 2025-26 total exports reached **US\$ 860.09 billion**, compared to **US\$ 825.26 billion** in FY 2024-25.

Major Export Destinations

- Singapore
- South Africa
- Tanzania
- Italy
- Sri Lanka

Reasons for Export Growth

- **Higher Petroleum Prices**
 - Increased value of petroleum product exports.

- Rise in global commodity prices boosted export earnings.
- **Strong Manufacturing Performance**
 - Growth in engineering goods exports.
 - Rapid expansion of electronics exports supported by PLI schemes.
- **Market Diversification**
 - Expansion into emerging markets such as Tanzania, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Vietnam.
 - Reduced dependence on traditional markets.
- **Improved Competitiveness**
 - Rupee depreciation enhanced export competitiveness.
 - Better logistics and supply-chain efficiency supported exports.

Significance

- Strengthens India's external sector and foreign exchange position.
- Promotes manufacturing-led growth and employment generation.
- Enhances integration with global value chains.
- Services exports continue to provide stability to the trade sector.

Wholesale Price Index (WPI) & Producer Price Index (PPI) – Base Year 2022–23

Context: The Office of the Economic Adviser, DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce & Industry released the revised series of WPI and introduced Producer Price Indices (PPI) with **2022–23 as the new base year**.

- The revised **WPI (Base Year 2022–23)** will replace the existing **2011–12 series**.
- Marks India's gradual transition from **Wholesale Price Index (WPI)** to **Producer Price Index (PPI)**.

Key Features

- Introduction of:
 - **Output Producer Price Index (OPPI)**
 - **Trial Input Producer Price Index (IPPI)**
 - **Service Producer Price Index (SPPI)**

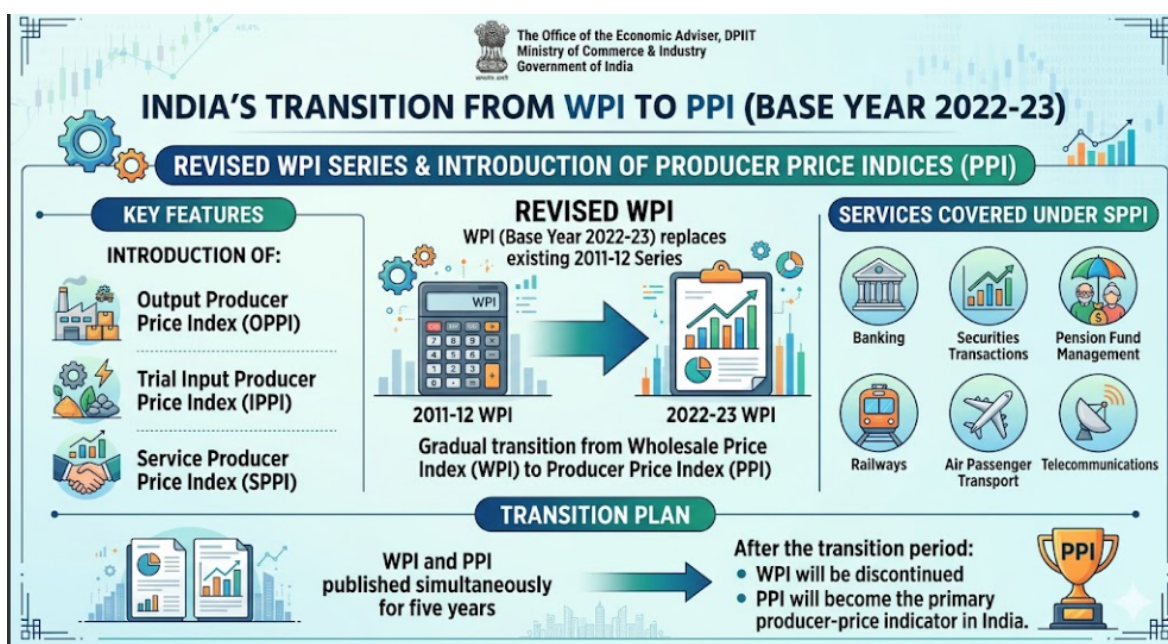
Services Covered under SPPI

- Banking
- Securities Transactions
- Insurance

- Pension Fund Management
- Railways
- Air Passenger Transport
- Telecommunications

Transition Plan

- WPI and PPI will be published simultaneously for **five years**.
- After the transition period:
 - **WPI will be discontinued**
 - **PPI will become the primary producer-price indicator** in India.



Significance

- Provides a more comprehensive measure of producer-level inflation.
- Covers both goods and services.
- Aligns India's inflation measurement framework with international best practices.
- Improves policy formulation and economic analysis.

Topic: Schemes and initiatives

WT-MARUT Portal

Context: Union Minister Pralhad Joshi launched **WT-MARUT (Wind Turbine Materials and Resources Utility Tracker)** during the Global Wind Day Conference 2026 in Goa.

- India's first dedicated **Wind Turbine Supply Chain Management Portal**.

- Developed by the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)** with support from the **Indian Wind Turbine Manufacturers Association (IWTMA)**.

Objective

- Strengthen domestic wind manufacturing.
- Improve supply-chain transparency.
- Support India's target of **100 GW wind energy capacity by 2030**.

The infographic is a horizontal banner for the WT-MARUT portal. At the top left is the Government of India emblem and the text 'GOVERNMENT OF INDIA MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (MNRE)'. In the center, it says 'UNION MINISTER PRALHAD JOSHI LAUNCHED WT-MARUT (WIND TURBINE MATERIALS AND RESOURCES UTILITY TRACKER) DURING THE GLOBAL WIND DAY CONFERENCE 2026 IN GOA'. To the right is the 'GLOBAL WIND DAY 2026 GOA' logo. Below this is a green bar with the text 'INDIA'S FIRST DEDICATED WIND TURBINE SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT PORTAL'. The main body is divided into three sections: 'ABOUT WT-MARUT' on the left, a central image of the portal on a laptop and smartphone, and 'DEVELOPED BY' on the right. The 'ABOUT' section lists three points: 1. A comprehensive digital platform to strengthen and streamline India's wind energy supply chain. 2. Brings together manufacturers, suppliers, service providers, and project developers on a single platform. 3. Enhances transparency, efficiency, and self-reliance in the wind energy sector. The 'DEVELOPED BY' section lists: 1. Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) 2. With support from Indian Wind Turbine Manufacturers Association (IWTMA). The central image shows the portal interface with statistics: 120+ Manufacturers, 450+ Suppliers, 950+ Products & Materials, and 300+ Projects. Below this is a 'KEY FEATURES' section with five icons and descriptions: 1. Centralized database of wind energy components and materials. 2. Facilitates supplier discovery and business collaboration. 3. Real-time data on availability and capabilities. 4. Supports decision-making and policy planning. 5. Promotes 'Make in India' and Aatmanirbhar Bharat in wind energy. At the bottom is a large watermark of the Government of India emblem and the text 'வாழ்வுமே வெல்லும்'.

Key Features

- Component sourcing visibility.
- Supplier qualification mechanisms.
- Industry collaboration tools.
- Export-readiness support.
- Secure hosting of industry data within India.

Other Releases

- Wind Domestic Content Requirement (DCR) Portal.
- *Pawan Urja* Coffee Table Book.
- Knowledge Reports and State-wise Policy Reports on wind energy.

Topic: Environment

Expert Committee on Agrobiodiversity

Context: The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) has reconstituted the **Expert Committee on Agrobiodiversity** with **Padma Shri Dr. P. L. Gautam** as Chairperson.

- Reconstituted by the **National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)** under the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)**.
- Constituted under **Section 13(1) of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002**.
- Tenure of the committee: **One year**.

Composition

- **Chairperson:** Dr. P. L. Gautam
 - Former Chairperson of NBA and PPVFRA.
 - Renowned agricultural scientist and Padma Shri awardee.
- **Co-Chairperson:** Dr. Trilochan Mohapatra
 - Chairperson, Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority (PPVFRA).

Key Responsibilities

- Advise NBA on integrating biodiversity conservation into agriculture.
- Promote sustainable agricultural practices.
- Examine issues related to the seed sector under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.
- Review guidelines for international collaborative research involving biological resources.
- Recommend measures for conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity.

Significance

- Strengthens conservation of crop genetic diversity.
- Supports sustainable agriculture and food security.
- Promotes coordination between biodiversity conservation and agricultural development.

Topic: Defence

Peacekeeper (Agniveg) Jet-Powered Kamikaze Drone

Context: The Indian Army has received **106 Peacekeeper (Agniveg) jet-powered kamikaze drones** from SMPP Limited.

- A **turbojet-powered loitering munition (kamikaze drone)** designed for precision strikes.
- Developed through collaboration with **KB Indela (Belarus)** and partially localized in India.
- Delivered by **SMPP Limited**.

Key Features

- **Operational Range:** 180 km
- **Maximum Speed:** 450 km/h
- **Circular Error Probable (CEP):** Less than 5 metres
- Capable of operating in:
 - GPS-denied environments
 - Jammed environments
 - Spoofed environments

