

DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS - 24.10.2026

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**Director,
Department of Employment and Training.**

Tamil Nadu Highlights

Kashi Tamil Sangamam 5.0 Registration Portal Launched

- Launched By: Union Education Minister.
- Edition: 5th – KTS 5.0.
- Theme: “Thirukkural Payilvom – Let Us Learn the Thirukkural”.

About Kashi Tamil Sangamam

- Celebrates the civilisational bond between **Tamil Nadu** and **Kashi (Varanasi)** – two ancient seats of learning.
- Promotes **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat**.
- **1st Edition: 2022** – by the **Ministry of Education** with the **Uttar Pradesh** government.

About Thirukkural

- Classical **Tamil** work on **ethics, philosophy, conduct, governance**.
- **Author: Thiruvalluvar**.
- **Structure:**
 - **1,330 couplets (kurals)**.
 - **133 chapters × 10 couplets each**.
- **Three Parts:**
 - **Aram – Virtue (38 chapters)**.
 - **Porul – Wealth (70 chapters)**.
 - **Inbam / Kamam – Love (25 chapters)**.
 - Together they lead to **Veedu** (liberation).



Do You Know?

- Thirukkural is called “**Ulaga Podhu Marai**” (universal scripture) and has been translated into **40+ languages**.
- The **133-feet Thiruvalluvar Statue** at **Kanniyakumari** (2000) represents the **133 chapters**; a glass bridge connecting it to **Vivekananda Rock** opened in **2024**.
- **Thiruvalluvar Day** is celebrated in Tamil Nadu in **January** (Thai month).
- Related events: **Saurashtra Tamil Sangamam** (Gujarat, 2023), **Kashi Telugu Sangamam**.

Topic: Science & Technology

Shamonda Virus: First Human Case Reported in France

Key Highlights

- French health authorities reported the **first known human case** of **Shamonda** infection.

About Shamonda Virus

- Midge-borne animal virus from the **Simbu serogroup** of **orthobunyaviruses**.
 - Same group: **Schmallenberg** and **Akabane** viruses.
- **Hosts:** Mainly **cattle**.
- **Symptoms in Cattle:** **Fever, diarrhoea, drop in milk yield**.
- **First Detected:** **Nigeria, mid-1960s**.
- **Earlier Reports:** Sporadic in **West, East, Southern Africa** and **Japan**.
- **Vector:** **Culicoides** midges (also spread **bluetongue** and **epizootic haemorrhagic disease**).

eMudhra Exits Global Website Certificate Business After Browser Ban

Context

- eMudhra is exiting its global business of issuing **website security certificates** (including for **India's tax portal**) after major **browser makers blocked** them over vulnerabilities.

About eMudhra

- Bengaluru-based **Certificate Authority (CA)**.
- **Founded:** **2008**.
- **Licensed By:** **Controller of Certifying Authorities (CCA)** under the **IT Act, 2000**.
- **India's first eSign Service Provider (2015)**.
- Issued **60 million+** certificates by **2022–23**.
- Also offers **document signing, Public Key Infrastructure (PKI)** and identity solutions.

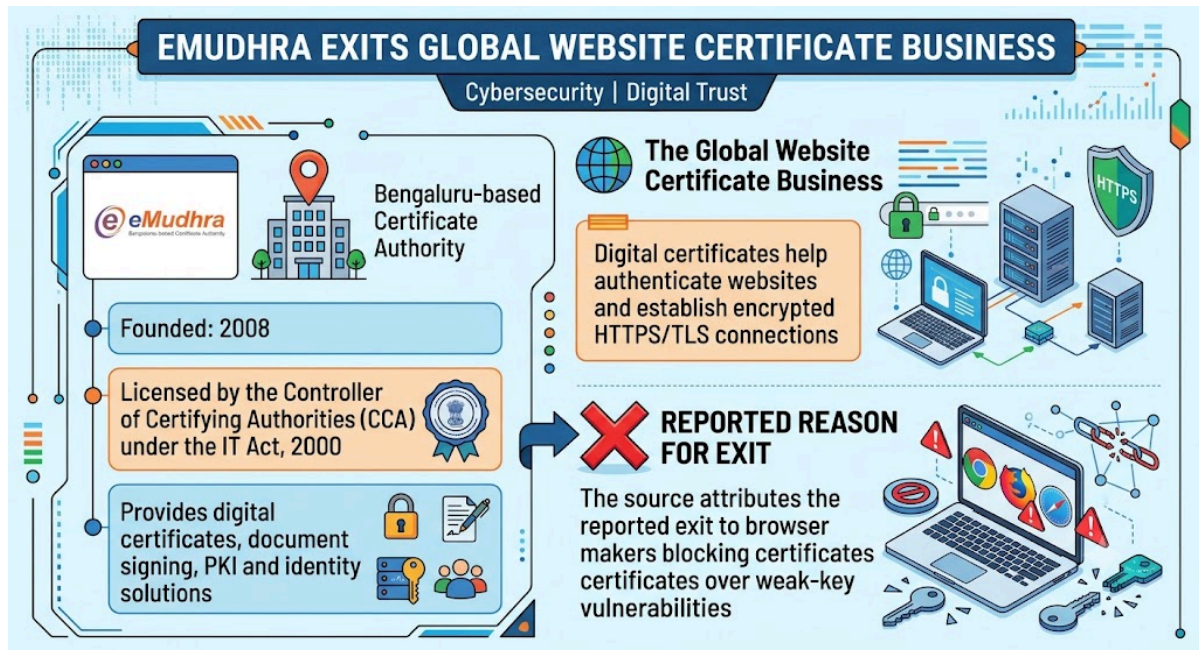
Role of Digital Certificates

- Prove a **website or software publisher is genuine**.
- Browsers use them to set up **encrypted HTTPS/TLS** connections.
- **Code-signing certificates** confirm software is untampered.

Reason for Blocking

- **Eight intermediate certificates** created in a **key-generation ceremony** on **30 April 2025**.

- A flaw in a **key wrap/unwrap** step produced a second set of **weak keys**, which were published to browser root stores.
- All eight used **P-384 private keys** with values **smaller than 256** – recoverable by testing just **256 numbers**.
- **Risk:** Anyone could sign valid certificates for **any website** → **fake sites, man-in-the-middle attacks, signed malware**.



Topic: Environment

CAQM Invokes GRAP Stage I in Delhi-NCR as Air Quality Turns “Poor”

Context

- The **Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM)** invoked **Stage I** of the **Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)** across **Delhi-NCR**.
- **Reason:** The region’s **Air Quality Index (AQI)** deteriorated sharply into the **“Poor”** category.

About GRAP Stage I

- The **first tier** of GRAP – an **incremental emergency response framework**.
- **Triggered automatically** across the **National Capital Region (NCR)** when AQI enters the **Poor** range (201–300).

Background of GRAP

- **Origin:** Supreme Court directions in **M.C. Mehta v. Union of India** (December 2016).
- **Notified:** **12 January 2017** by the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)**.

- **Initially Enforced By: Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA).**
- **Now Implemented By: CAQM, through pollution control boards, municipal bodies, transport departments and traffic police.**

Four Stages of GRAP

- **Stage I – Poor: AQI 201–300.**
- **Stage II – Very Poor: AQI 301–400.**
- **Stage III – Severe: AQI 401–450.**
- **Stage IV – Severe+: AQI above 450.**

Purpose

- **A graded institutional response** to worsening air pollution.
- **Progressively stricter** measures as AQI rises.

Key Measures under Stage I

- **Mechanised Dust Control:**
 - **Mechanised road sweeping, water sprinkling.**
 - **Anti-smog guns** at construction sites.
 - **Scientific disposal** of collected road dust.
- **Construction and Demolition (C&D) Rules:**
 - Dust-control measures; **covered** materials and transport vehicles.
 - **Mandatory online registration** for projects of **500 sq m or more.**
- **Vehicular Pollution Control:**
 - Stricter **Pollution Under Control (PUC)** checks.
 - Traffic management; action against **visibly polluting vehicles.**
 - Regulate non-compliant **buses**; divert **non-destination trucks.**
- **Ban on Open Burning:**
 - No open burning of **biomass** and **municipal waste.**
 - Better **landfill monitoring.**
 - **Environmental penalties** as per **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** guidelines.
- **Industrial Emissions:**
 - Only **approved clean fuels**; strict emission compliance.
 - **Diesel generator (DG)** set restrictions.

- **No coal or firewood in restaurant tandoors.**

Significance

- **Early intervention** – controls sources **before winter temperature inversions** worsen smog.
- Targets **dust, vehicular and industrial** emissions **without** construction bans, school closures or major economic disruption.

Higher Stages – Key Measures

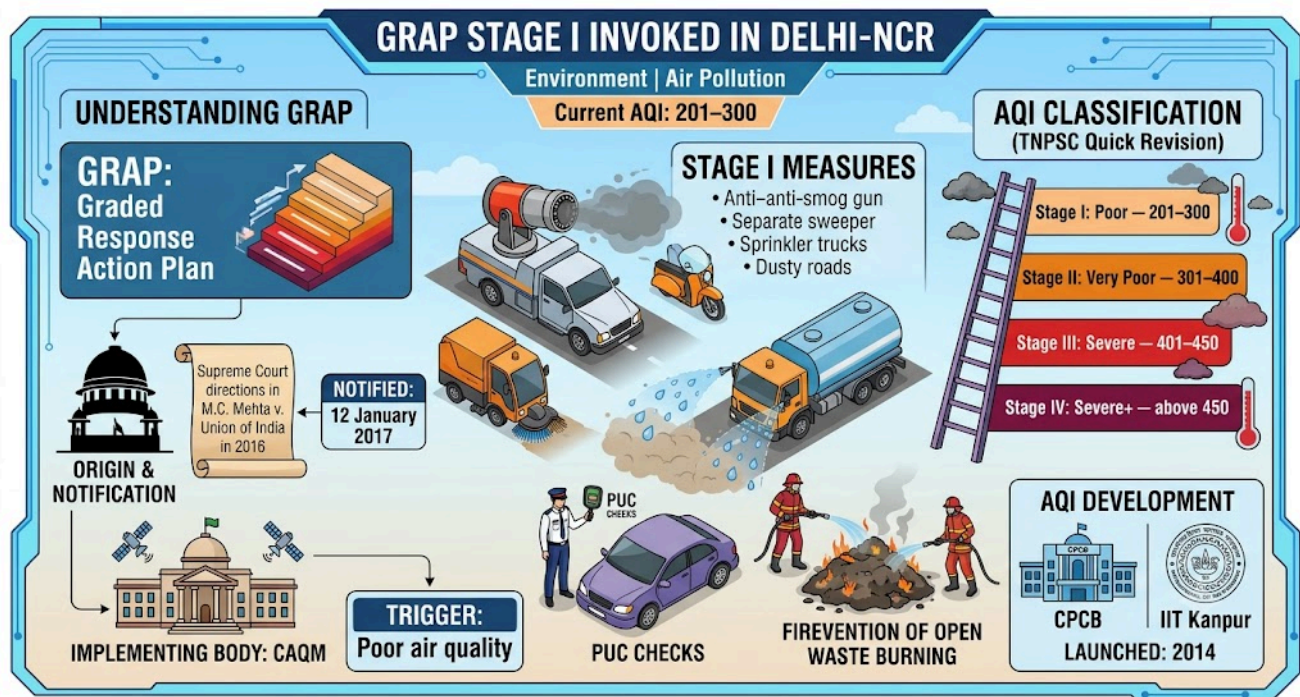
- **Stage II (Very Poor):** Higher **parking fees** to discourage private vehicles; more **CNG/electric bus** and **metro** services; **DG sets** restricted except for emergency services.
- **Stage III (Severe):** Ban on **non-essential construction and demolition**; restrictions on **BS-III petrol and BS-IV diesel** four-wheelers; **hybrid classes** for primary students.
- **Stage IV (Severe+):** **Entry ban on trucks** (except essential goods/CNG/electric); **all construction halted**, including public projects; **50% work-from-home** options; schools may shift **online**.

About CAQM

- **Full Name:** Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas.
- **Legal Basis:** CAQM Act, 2021 (first set up by **Ordinance** in **October 2020**).
- **Replaced:** EPCA (which was dissolved in **2020**).
- **Jurisdiction:** Delhi-NCR and adjoining areas of **Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh**.
- **Statutory body** with power to issue directions and impose penalties.
- **Revised GRAP:** CAQM introduced an **AQI-based, forecast-driven GRAP** in **2022** – measures can be invoked **in advance** based on forecasts.

About National Air Quality Index (AQI)

- **Launched:** 2014 (under **Swachh Bharat Mission**).
- **Developed By:** CPCB with IIT Kanpur.
- **8 Pollutants:** PM10, PM2.5, NO₂, SO₂, CO, O₃, NH₃, Pb.
- **AQI Categories:**
 - **Good:** 0–50
 - **Satisfactory:** 51–100
 - **Moderate:** 101–200
 - **Poor:** 201–300
 - **Very Poor:** 301–400
 - **Severe:** 401–500



Blue Whale Strandings on India's Western Coast

Context

- A global database of blue whale strandings highlighted India's western coast, especially Gujarat, as an important region for recording strandings.

About Blue Whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*)

- Order: Cetacea (marine mammal).
- Largest animal ever known to have lived; adults ~24–28 m long.
- Distribution: All oceans except the Arctic.
- Five Subspecies:
 - Northern Blue Whale – North Atlantic and North Pacific.
 - Antarctic Blue Whale – Southern Ocean; largest subspecies.
 - Pygmy Blue Whale – Indian Ocean and South Pacific; smaller.
 - Northern Indian Ocean Blue Whale – Northern Indian Ocean.
 - Chilean Blue Whale – off Chile.
- Conservation Status:
 - IUCN: Endangered.
 - CMS: Appendix I.

About Cetaceans

- Infraorder Cetacea – whales, dolphins, porpoises.

- Breathe through **lungs**, **warm-blooded**, give birth to **live young**.
- About **30–35 cetacean species** plus the **dugong** are found in **Indian waters**.

International Whaling Commission (IWC)

- Set up under the **International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (1946)**.
- **Commercial whaling moratorium**: Adopted **1982**; in force **1986**.
- **HQ**: **Impington, United Kingdom**.
- **Three types of whaling recognised**: **Commercial**, **Aboriginal subsistence**, **Special permit (scientific)**.
- **Members**: **89 governments**.
- **India**: Member since **1981**.

Do You Know?

- The **dugong (sea cow)** is found in the **Gulf of Mannar** and **Palk Bay (Tamil Nadu)**; India's first **Dugong Conservation Reserve** was notified in **Palk Bay** in **2022**.

Topic: Defence

India–Singapore Maritime Exercise SIMBEX-2026 Begins in Visakhapatnam

- **Edition**: **33rd Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX-2026)**.
- **Venue**: **Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh**.
- **Dates**: **21–26 October 2026** (six days).
- **Participants**: **Indian Navy** and **Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN)**.

Aim

- Strengthen **maritime cooperation** and **interoperability**.
- Address **common maritime security** challenges.
- Promote **peace and stability** in the **Indo-Pacific**.

Key Details

- **Opening Ceremony**: Aboard **INS Nilgiri** and **INS Kamorta**; attended by the **Chief Staff Officer (Operations)**, **Eastern Naval Command** and the **RSN Fleet Commander**.
- **Singapore's Ship**: **RSS Supreme** – a **Formidable-class stealth frigate**.

Do You Know?

- **SIMBEX** began in **1994** (originally as anti-submarine warfare training) – one of India's **longest-running** naval exercises.
- **Eastern Naval Command** – **HQ Visakhapatnam**.

Topic: Awards and Honor

Sakharov Prize 2026 Awarded to the International Criminal Court

Key Highlights

- **Winner:** International Criminal Court (ICC).
- **Awarded By:** European Union (European Parliament).
- **Background:** Comes amid **US sanctions** targeting the Court.

About the Sakharov Prize

- **Full Name:** Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought.
- **Established:** 1988.
- **Named After:** Andrei Sakharov – Soviet dissident and **Nobel Peace laureate (1975)**.
- **Honours:** Defenders of **human rights and fundamental freedoms**.
- **Selected By:** **Conference of Presidents** of the European Parliament.
- **Prize Money:** €50,000.
- **Ceremony:** European Parliament, **Strasbourg (France)**, each **December**.
- **Laureates who later won the Nobel Peace Prize:** Nelson Mandela, Malala Yousafzai, María Corina Machado.

About the ICC

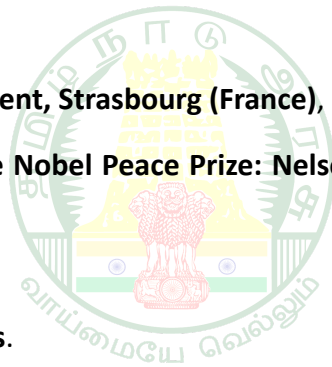
- **Seat:** The Hague, Netherlands.
- **Independent** of the UN.
- **Established:** **2002** under the **Rome Statute** (adopted 1998).
- **First permanent international criminal court.**
- **Crimes:** Genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, crime of aggression.
- **States Parties:** **125** – **Ukraine** latest.

ICC vs ICJ

- **ICC:** Prosecutes **individuals**; independent of UN.
- **ICJ:** **UN organ** (principal judicial organ); settles **disputes between States**; also in **The Hague**.

Do You Know?

- **India is not a party** to the **Rome Statute**.



Topic: Reports and indices

UNESCO Releases 2026 GEM Gender Report: “Gender Equity in Access to Education”

Context

- UNESCO released the **2026 Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Gender Report**.
- Title: “Gender equity in access to education”.
- Launch: Around **9 October 2026**, marking the **International Day of the Girl Child (11 October)**.
- **Companion Report**: Published alongside the main **2026 GEM Report – “Countdown to 2030: Access and equity”**.

About the Report

- **Data Source**: Global datasets plus local evidence from the **World Inequality Database on Education (WIDE)**.
- **Coverage**:
 - **Out-of-school** rates.
 - **Primary and secondary completion**.
 - **Post-secondary enrolment** and attainment.
- **Focus**: Persistent **barriers** and **regional progress** in girls’ education.

Key Findings – Global Progress

- **Gender Parity Achieved (2024)**: In **pre-primary, primary and secondary enrolment** globally.
- **Fewer Countries with Large Gaps (2000–2024)**: Share of countries with fewer than **9 girls per 10 boys** enrolled:
 - **Primary**: 15% → 2%.
 - **Upper-secondary**: 18% → 5%.
- **Success Stories**: **Nepal** and **Cambodia** made major **25-year gains** in completion rates.

Key Findings – Persistent Gaps

- **Completion Gap**: **45%** of young women globally **do not complete upper-secondary** school.
- **Digital Divide**: **9 in 10 adolescent girls** in **low-income countries** lack **internet access** for skill development.
- **Tertiary Education**: Disparities continue at higher levels and among **disadvantaged communities**.

Regional Disparities

- **Sub-Saharan Africa:**
 - Completion rate drops to about **25%**.
 - Barriers – **poverty, rural isolation, child marriage**.
 - **31%** of girls married **before 18**.
- **Global Exclusion:** About **133 million girls** are **out of school**.
- **Afghanistan:** Worst case – about **2.4 million girls** denied **secondary schooling** (Taliban ban since 2021).

Key Barriers to Girls' Education

- **Child marriage.**
- **Poverty.**
- **Geographical / rural isolation.**
- **Digital exclusion.**
- **Conflict and discriminatory policies** (e.g., Afghanistan).

Significance

- Shows **enrolment parity ≠ equity** – **completion** and **learning** gaps remain.
- Tracks progress on **SDG 4 (Quality Education)** and **SDG 5 (Gender Equality)** ahead of the **2030 deadline**.

India Link

- India has achieved **gender parity** in school enrolment; **Gender Parity Index (GPI)** in higher education is above **1** (more women than men enrolled, as per AISHE).
- **Key Schemes:**
 - **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao** (2015).
 - **Samagra Shiksha** – Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalyayas (KGBVs).
 - **Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana** (2015).
 - **Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006**.
- **Tamil Nadu: Pudhumai Penn Scheme** – ₹1,000/month for girls from government schools pursuing higher education.

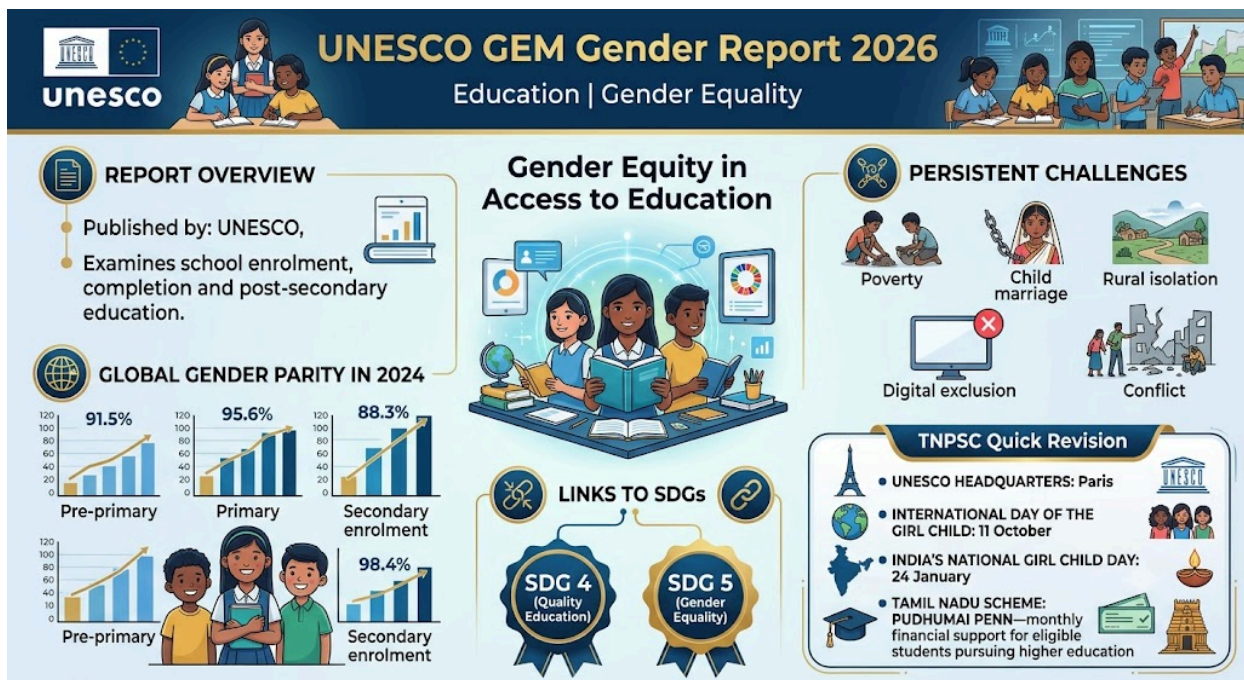
About GEM Report

- **Published By:** **UNESCO** (editorially independent team).
- **Mandate:** Monitor progress on **SDG 4** under the **Education 2030 Framework for Action**.

- Earlier known as the **EFA Global Monitoring Report** (from **2002**).

Do You Know?

- **International Day of the Girl Child:** Declared by **UNGA** in **2011**; first observed **11 October 2012**.
- **India's National Girl Child Day:** **24 January**.
- **UNESCO HQ:** **Paris**; India joined in **1946**.



Topic: Books & Authors

“The Evolution of TV News in India” by Harsaran Bir Kaur Pandey Released

- **Book:** “The Evolution of TV News in India: From Doordarshan to Digital Disruption – An Insider’s Account”.
- **Author:** **Harsaran Bir Kaur Pandey** – veteran broadcaster, former **Doordarshan** producer.
- **Released By:** **Surya Prakash**, former **Prasar Bharati** Chairman.

About the Book

- Traces **five decades** of Indian TV journalism – from **Doordarshan** to **satellite TV**, **private news channels**, **24-hour news** and **digital media**.
- Covers TV coverage of the **Emergency (1975–77)**, **JP Movement**, **Operation Blue Star**, **assassination of Indira Gandhi**, **John Lennon’s death**, and **election broadcasting**.

Do You Know?

- **Doordarshan** began in **1959** in **Delhi**; **Prasar Bharati** was set up in **1997**.

Topic: Important Days

World Iodine Deficiency Day 2026 – 21 October

- Also called **Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD) Prevention Day**.
- Observed on **21 October** to raise awareness on **iodine deficiency** and adequate intake.

Background

- Global efforts gained momentum at the **World Summit for Children (1990)** with **WHO** and **UNICEF**.
- Formally declared as **WIDD** in **2002**.

About Iodine

- Essential **micronutrient** for producing **thyroid hormones – T3 (triiodothyronine) and T4 (thyroxine)**.
- Regulates **metabolism, growth, brain development**.
- **Deficiency Disorders: Goitre, cretinism, mental retardation, stillbirths.**



Do You Know?

- India launched the **National Goitre Control Programme (NGCP)** in **1962**; renamed **National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme (NIDDCP)** in **1992**.
- Iodised salt is recommended to have at least **15 ppm** iodine at consumer level.

International Highlights

India–Poland Ties: Polish PM’s Official Visit to India

Context

- The **Prime Minister of Poland (Donald Tusk)** paid an **official visit to India** and met **PM Narendra Modi**.

Key Outcomes of the Visit

- **Trade Target: Double bilateral trade by 2030** (currently about **\$6 billion**).
 - Both welcomed the conclusion of the **India–EU FTA** and called for early **signing, ratification and implementation**.
- **Defence:** PM Modi invited **Polish firms** for **co-development and co-production** in India.
- **Critical Minerals:** **MoU on geology, mining and critical minerals** under negotiation.

- Priority areas – **rare-earth processing** and **battery recycling**.
- **Technology and Innovation:**
 - **India–Poland Startup Bridge** and **technology hackathons** announced.
 - Cooperation in **AI, semiconductors, quantum technologies**.
- **Multilateral:** Poland supports India's candidature for **UNSC non-permanent seat (2028–29)** and a **permanent seat** in a reformed UNSC.

About Poland

- **Location:** Central Europe.
- **Seven Neighbours:** Germany, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Russia (Kaliningrad).
- **Member of:** NATO and European Union (EU).
- **Mountains:** Carpathians, Sudetes.
- **Rivers:** Vistula, Oder.
- **Capital:** Warsaw.



India–Poland Relations – Overview

- **Diplomatic Relations:** Established in **1954**; shared opposition to **colonialism, imperialism, racism**.
- **Strategic Partnership:** Elevated in **2024** during **PM Modi's visit to Poland**.
 - **Action Plan (2024–2028)** issued.
- **Historical Bond:** During **World War II**, the **Maharaja of Jamnagar** (Jam Saheb Digvijaysinhji) sheltered hundreds of **Polish women and children**; he is called the **“Good Maharaja”** in Poland.
- **Trade:** Grew **192%** – from **\$1.95 billion (2013)** to **\$6.36 billion (2025)**.
 - Poland is **India's largest trade and investment partner in Central and Eastern Europe**.
- **Tourism:** Polish arrivals rose from **~15,000 (2014)** to **43,316 (2024)**.

Significance of Poland for India

- **Gateway** to Central and Eastern Europe.
- Strengthens **India–EU** relations.
- **Defence technology** – joint R&D, co-production.
- **Cybersecurity** cooperation.
- Supports **UNSC reform**.
- **Frontline NATO state** – insight into **European security** and the **Ukraine war**.

Do You Know?

- **Kolhapur (Valivade camp)** in Maharashtra also hosted about **5,000 Polish refugees** during WWII.
- Warsaw has a **“Good Maharaja Square”** named after the Jam Saheb.

