DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS - 21.11.2026

Highlights of the Day

TamilNadu Highlights..... 1
Tamil Nadu Targets 10 GW Battery Storage Capacity by 2029..... 1
Topic: Reports and Indices..... 2
QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2027 – IIT Delhi in Top 200; Lund University Retains Top Spot..... 2
Topic: Social Issues..... 4
Transgender Persons Amendment Act, 2026 – Rights and Healthcare Concerns..... 4
Topic: Personality in News..... 5
Indira Gandhi – 109th Birth Anniversary (19 November)..... 5
Topic: Environment..... 7
2026 UN Water Conference..... 7
Topic: Sports..... 8
Manu Bhaker Elected to ISSF Athletes Committee (2026–2030)..... 8
Topic: Science & Technology..... 9
IN-SPACe Funds Three Firms for 3D Mapping of Human Settlements..... 9
Topic: Defence..... 10
Israel's Rafael Unveils "SUPER ICE" Long-Range Cruise Missile..... 10
Topic: Important Days..... 11
World Cervical Cancer Elimination Day – 17 November..... 11
International Highlights..... 12
APEC Summit 2026 – Shenzhen, China..... 12

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Director,
Department of Employment and Training.

TamilNadu Highlights

Tamil Nadu Targets 10 GW Battery Storage Capacity by 2029

Context

- **Minister for Energy Resources and Law, C.T.R. Nirmal Kumar**, announced that **Tamil Nadu** aims to build **10 GW of battery energy storage capacity by 2029**.
- **Target: 10 GW of battery energy storage by 2029**.
- **Aim:** Store **surplus daytime solar power** and use it to meet higher **night-time demand**.

Battery Storage Plan

- **Policy Preparation:** The government worked on a **battery energy storage policy** for **six months**.
- **Applications:** Projects totalling over **1,000 MW** have been received and are being **scrutinised**.
- **The Problem:** About **3,000 MW** of **surplus electricity** generated during the day **goes unused every day**.
- **The Solution: Battery storage** will conserve **surplus solar** for use at **night**, when **demand rises**.
- **Timeline:** At least **three years** to become **fully operational**.

Generation – Public-Private Partnership Model

- A new **thermal power station** would cost about **₹20,000–30,000 crore**.
- **Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (Tangedco)** already carries **debt of nearly ₹2.5 lakh crore**, which makes **new loans** difficult.
- **Public-Private Partnership: Private firms** will build **power plants**, and the State will buy power at **predetermined rates**.

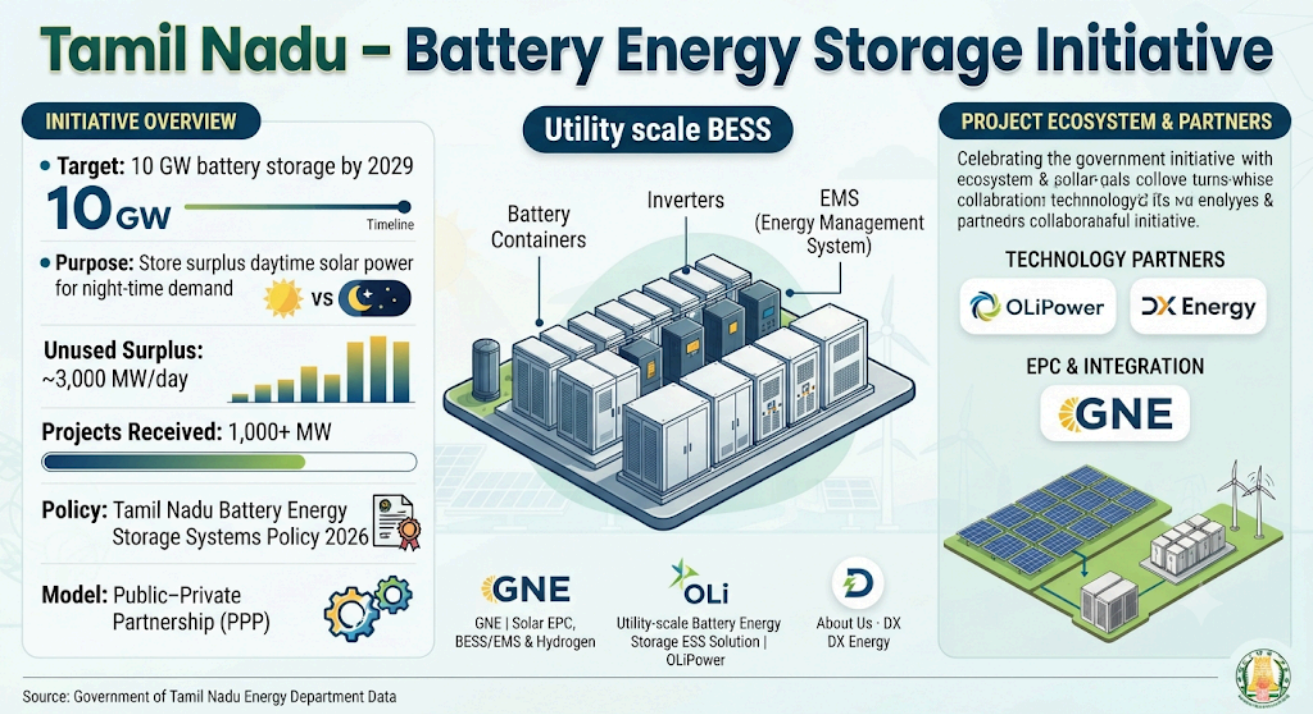
Significance

- Cuts **wastage of solar power** and improves **grid stability**.
- **Public-private partnership** reduces the **debt burden** on the **power utility**.
- **Modern substations** improve **supply reliability**.

Do You Know?

- **Tangedco Restructuring (2024):** Split into the **Tamil Nadu Power Generation Corporation**, the **Tamil Nadu Power Distribution Corporation** and the **Tamil Nadu Green Energy Corporation**.
- **Thoothukudi Thermal Power Station: 1,050 MW (5 × 210 MW)**, commissioned from **1979**.
- **Tamil Nadu Battery Energy Storage Systems Policy, 2026** (covered in **October**): **Mandatory storage** for new **renewable projects** of **1 MW and above**; **wheeling and transmission charge waiver**.
- **Viability Gap Funding for battery storage** – the **Centre's support scheme** for **grid-scale storage** (covered on **6 November**).

- **Tamil Nadu** is a leader in **wind (Muppandal, Kanyakumari)** and **solar (Kamuthi, Ramanathapuram)** power.



Topic: Reports and Indices

QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2027 – IIT Delhi in Top 200; Lund University Retains Top Spot

Context

- **Quacquarelli Symonds (QS)** released the **5th edition** of the **QS World University Rankings: Sustainability** in **November 2026**.

Global Top 10

Rank	University	Country	Score
1	**Lund University**	Sweden	**100**
2	**ETH Zurich**	Switzerland	**99.8**
3	**University of Toronto**	Canada	**99.2**
4	**University of British Columbia (Vancouver)**	Canada	—
5	**University of New South Wales (Sydney)**	Australia	—
6	**Stanford University**	United States	—

7	**University of Cambridge**	United Kingdom	—
8	**University of California, Berkeley**	United States	—
9 (tie)	**University College London** and **University of Melbourne**	United Kingdom / Australia	—

- **Lund University** topped for the **2nd consecutive year**.

Parameters

- **Environmental Impact – 45%**.
- **Social Impact – 45%**.
- **Governance – 10%**.

Most Represented Countries

- **United States – 214 universities**.
- **Mainland China – 149**.
- **United Kingdom – 105**.

India's Performance

- **IIT Delhi – 194th (score 86.5)**, up from **205th**. It is the **only Indian institution** in the **top 200**.
- **India** has **99 universities** (down from **103**), placing it among the **top 5 countries** by number of institutions, behind the **United States**, **China** and **United Kingdom**.
- **42 Indian universities** are in the **top 1,000**, **joint 3rd** with **mainland China**.



Do You Know?

- **QS** – a **London-based education analytics firm**. The main **QS World University Rankings** started in **2004**.
- **QS World University Rankings 2026: IIT Delhi** was **India's top institution (123rd)**.
- **National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF, 2015)** – India's own ranking by the **Ministry of Education**. **IIT Madras** has topped **"Overall"** for several years.
- **Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu** has the **most NIRF-ranked institutions** among States; **IIT Madras** is a **sustainability leader**.

Topic: Social Issues

Transgender Persons Amendment Act, 2026 – Rights and Healthcare Concerns

Context

- **Public health** and **human rights advocates** criticised the **Transgender Persons Amendment Act, 2026**.
- **Main Concern:** It replaces **self-identification** with **mandatory medical evaluation** and **District Magistrate certification**.

What the Amendment Does



- Amends the **Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019**.
- Replaces **self-perceived gender identity** with **medical board evaluation** and **District Magistrate certification**.
- Narrows the **definition of transgender** to specific **biological variations** and select **socio-cultural identities**.

Key Shifts

- **End of Self-Identification:** The basis moves from **personal autonomy (2019 Act and NALSA, 2014)** to **medical and administrative gatekeeping**.
- **Medical Board and District Magistrate Certification:** Applicants need a **medical board recommendation**, must choose from **set categories** and get **District Magistrate certification**.
- **Narrower Definition:** Removes **trans men**, **trans women** and **genderqueer persons** as categories.
- **No Appeal:** There is **no independent review or appeal** against **rejection or delay**, though **certification** controls access to **welfare**, **education** and **jobs**.

Constitutional and Health Implications

- **Conflict with Law and Global Standards:**
  - Contradicts **NALSA v. Union of India (2014)**, which held **gender identity** is part of **dignity and autonomy** under **Article 21**, with **no medical requirement**.

- Diverges from **WHO ICD-11** and **WPATH Standards of Care (Version 8)**.
- Clashes with the **National Human Rights Commission's 2026 Advisory**, which backed **self-identification** and **grievance mechanisms**.

- **Health Consequences:**
  - **Grey Markets:** Doctors **delay or withdraw gender-affirming care**, pushing people to **unqualified providers**, **self-medication** and **unsafe surgeries**.
  - **Mental Health:** Rising **anxiety**, **depression** and **suicidal thoughts**.
  - **Exclusion from Routine Care: Stigma**, **privacy breaches** and **poor clinical awareness** in treating conditions such as **diabetes**, **hypertension** and **emergencies**.

Existing Gaps

- **Medical Curriculum:** The **Madras High Court's Sushma verdict (2021)** ordered **LGBTQIA+ sensitivity training**, but **National Medical Commission curricula** still lack **transgender health**.
- **No Complaints Officers:** Most **hospitals** haven't appointed one, as the **2019 Act** requires.
- **Rigid Records: Hospital forms** rarely record **preferred name** and **gender identity**.

Conclusion

- Replacing **self-identification** with **gatekeeping** undermines both **constitutional autonomy** and **public health**. **Legal recognition** must not come at the cost of **bodily dignity** or **safe healthcare**.

Do You Know?

- **NALSA v. Union of India (2014):** Recognised **transgender persons** as the **"third gender."**
- **Navtej Singh Johar (2018): Decriminalised homosexuality** (read down **Section 377 IPC**).
- **Supriyo v. Union of India (2023):** The **Supreme Court** declined to **legalise same-sex marriage**.
- **National Council for Transgender Persons** – set up under the **2019 Act**.
- **Tamil Nadu link:**
  - **First State** to set up a **Transgender Welfare Board (2008)**.
  - **15 April** is observed as **Transgender Day** in **Tamil Nadu**.
  - The **Sushma (2021)** case came from the **Madras High Court**.

Topic: Personality in News

Indira Gandhi – 109th Birth Anniversary (19 November)

Context

- The **Prime Minister** paid tribute to **Indira Gandhi** on her **109th birth anniversary**.
- **India's first and only woman Prime Minister**, and its **3rd Prime Minister**.
- **Terms: January 1966 – March 1977** and **January 1980 – October 1984**.

Early Life



- **Born: 19 November 1917**, **Allahabad (Prayagraj)**.
- **Parents: Jawaharlal Nehru** and **Kamala Nehru**.
- **Education:**
  - **Visva-Bharati (Santiniketan)**.
  - **Ecole Nouvelle (Switzerland)**.
  - **Badminton School (Bristol)**.
  - **Somerville College, Oxford**.
- **Freedom Struggle:** Organised the **Bal Charkha Sangh** and the **Vanar Sena (children's brigade)** in **1930**, during the **Civil Disobedience Movement**.
- Married **Feroze Gandhi** on **26 March 1942**; sons **Rajiv** and **Sanjay**.

Political Career

- **Congress Working Committee: 1955**.
- **Congress President: 1959–60**.
- **Rajya Sabha** and **Minister for Information and Broadcasting: 1964**.
- **1969 Split:** Led **Congress (Requisitionists)** against the **"Syndicate."**
- **January 1978:** Founded the **Indian National Congress (Indira)**.

Contributions

- **1971 War and Bangladesh:** A **decisive victory**, and the **Indo-Soviet Treaty (1971)**.
- **Green Revolution: High-yielding seeds**, **irrigation**, **rural credit**.
- **Economic Measures:**
  - **Nationalised 14 banks (1969)** and **6 more (1980)**.
  - **Abolished Privy Purses (1971)**.
  - **"Garibi Hatao."**
- **Science:**
  - **Pokhran-I (1974)**.
  - **Department of Space (1972)**.
  - **Aryabhata (1975)**.
  - **Antarctic research (1981)**.
- **Environment and Constitution:**
  - **Wildlife Protection Act (1972)**.
  - **Project Tiger (1973)**.
  - **Sikkim integrated (1975)**.
- Criticised for the **Emergency (1975–77)** and the **42nd Amendment**.

Last Days

- **Operation Blue Star (1984): Military action** in the **Golden Temple**; it damaged the **Akal Takht** and caused **Sikh resentment**.
- **Assassinated: 31 October 1984**, by bodyguards **Beant Singh** and **Satwant Singh**, at **Safdarjung Road, New Delhi**.
- **Memorial: Shakti Sthal**.

Do You Know?

- **19 November** is observed as **National Integration Day** (**Indira Gandhi's birth anniversary**). **Quami Ekta Week** runs **19–25 November**.
- **31 October** is **Rashtriya Ekta Diwas** (**Sardar Patel's birth anniversary**) – also her **death anniversary**.
- **Bharat Ratna: 1971**.
- **Tamil Nadu link:** The **Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (Kalpakkam, Chengalpattu)** is named after her.

Topic: Environment

2026 UN Water Conference

Context

- The **UAE Embassy in New Delhi** hosted a **UAE–India Water Roundtable** on **12 November 2026**, ahead of the **UN Water Conference**.

About

- A **high-level United Nations summit** on **water scarcity**, **sanitation** and **water governance**.
- **Theme: "Delivering the Water Action Agenda: From Commitments to Action."**
- Only the **third UN Water Conference ever**.

History

Edition	Year	Venue	Outcome
1st	**1977**	**Mar del Plata, Argentina**	**Mar del Plata Action Plan**
2nd	**2023**	**New York** (co-hosts **Tajikistan**, **Netherlands**)	**Water Action Agenda** with **700+ commitments**
3rd	**8–10 December 2026**	**Abu Dhabi, UAE** (co-hosts **UAE**, **Senegal**)	**First co-hosted by two Global South nations**

- **Venue: Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre**.
- **Aim:** Achieve **SDG 6 by 2030** by turning **commitments** into **funded projects**.

Key Features

- **Six Thematic Dialogues:**
  - **Water for People**.
  - **Water for Prosperity**.
  - **Water for Planet**.
  - **Water for Cooperation**.
  - **Water in Multilateral Processes**.
  - **Investments for Water**.
- **Dual Zones:** The **UN Blue Zone (negotiations)** and the **UAE "Oasis" (innovation, youth)**.
- **South–South Cooperation:** The **UAE's desalination expertise** and **Senegal's transboundary water experience**.
- **Finance: Blended finance** and **public-private partnerships**.
- Integration with **climate (UNFCCC)**, **biodiversity (CBD)** and **desertification (UNCCD)** conventions.

Significance

- Puts **water scarcity**, **groundwater depletion** and **finance** at the centre of **global policy**.
- Opportunities to combine **India's watershed expertise** with **UAE investment**.

Do You Know?

- **SDG 6 – clean water and sanitation for all**.
- **World Water Day – 22 March**.
- **India:** About **18% of the world's population** but only **4% of its freshwater**.
- **Jal Jeevan Mission (2019) – tap water** to every **rural household**.
- **Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu** pioneered **mandatory rainwater harvesting (2001)**; **Chennai** has **desalination plants (Minjur, Nemmeli)**.

Topic: Sports

Manu Bhaker Elected to ISSF Athletes Committee (2026–2030)

Context

- **Double Olympic medallist Manu Bhaker** was elected to the **International Shooting Sport Federation Athletes Committee** for **2026–2030**.

About the Committee

- **Structure:**
  - **Six elected athletes – two each** from **Rifle**, **Pistol** and **Shotgun**.
  - The remaining members are **nominated** by the **ISSF Executive Committee**.

- **Role:** Represents **athletes' interests** in **competition rules**, **welfare** and **participation**.
- **Pistol Category: Manu Bhaker** was elected alongside **Christian Reitz (Germany)**.

About Manu Bhaker

- **Paris 2024: Two bronze medals – women's 10m Air Pistol** and **10m Air Pistol Mixed Team** (with **Sarabjot Singh**).
- **Youngest Indian** to win an **ISSF World Cup gold** – age **16**, in **2018**.
- **Awards:**
  - **Arjuna Award (2020)**.
  - **Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna (2024)**.

Do You Know?

- **Manu Bhaker** is the **first Indian** to win **two medals at a single Olympics** after **Independence**.
- She is from **Jhajjar, Haryana**.

Topic: Science & Technology

IN-SPACe Funds Three Firms for 3D Mapping of Human Settlements

Context

- **Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre** selected **three Indian space firms** under its **Seed Fund Scheme for Use Case Demonstration by Non-Government Entities**:
  - **SpacePixxel Technologies**.
  - **KaleidEO Space Systems**.
  - **Azista Industries**.
- **Funding: ₹1.46 crore** in total.
- **Purpose:** Develop **high-resolution Indian Human Settlement Layers**, using **satellite imagery** for **3D reconstruction** of India's **built environment**.

Key Details

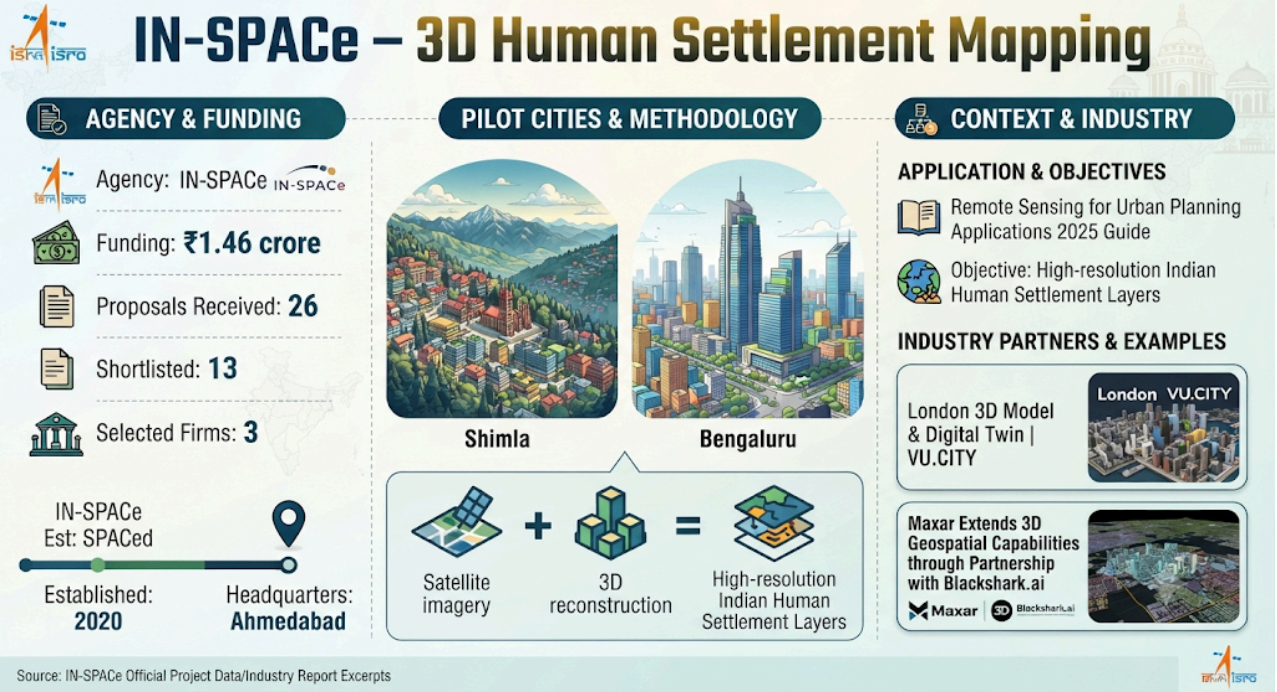
- **Selection: 26 proposals** received, **13 shortlisted**, **3 selected**.
- **Initiative:** Under the **Announcement of Opportunity for High-Resolution Indian Human Settlement Layers**, meeting **NITI Aayog's** need for **detailed geospatial data** on settlements.
- **Pilot Cities:**
  - **Shimla (Himachal Pradesh)** – a **hill city**.
  - **Bengaluru (Karnataka)** – a **large metro**.
- Data covers **two time periods**, to assess **urban growth** and changes in **built-up density**.

Significance

- Better data for **urban planning**, **housing**, **disaster management** and **infrastructure**.
- Boosts **private participation** in **space applications**.

Do You Know?

- **IN-SPACe** – set up in **2020**; HQ **Ahmedabad**; a **single-window agency** for **private space activities**.
- **National Geospatial Policy, 2022 – liberalised geospatial data access**.
- **Azista Industries** – built **India's first private Earth-observation satellite**, launched in **2023**.
- **Tamil Nadu link: Agnikul Cosmos** (**IIT Madras incubated**, **Chennai**) is a leading **private launch firm**.



Topic: Defence

Israel's Rafael Unveils "SUPER ICE" Long-Range Cruise Missile

Context

- **Rafael Advanced Defense Systems (Israel)** unveiled **SUPER ICE**, a **long-range cruise missile**.

Key Features

- **Warhead: 1,000-pound (454 kg)**, **MK83-compatible** – **four times** the warhead of its **ICE BREAKER missile**.
- **Missile Family:**
  - Joins the **ICE BREAKER** and **SEA BREAKER** series.
  - **ICE BREAKER** is a **fifth-generation precision-guided missile** with a **250-pound warhead**.

- **Capabilities:**
  - **Long-range precision strikes** on **high-value targets**.
  - **Low-altitude terrain-following flight**.
  - **All-weather operation**.
- **Guidance: Autonomous navigation** and **electro-optical image-matching**.
- **Launch Platforms: Aircraft**, **ships** and **ground launchers**, with **minimal changes** for **aircraft integration**.

Do You Know?

- **India's cruise missiles:**
  - **BrahMos** (**India–Russia**; **supersonic**).
  - **Nirbhay / Indigenous Technology Cruise Missile** (**subsonic**, **DRDO**).
- **Rafael** also makes the **Spike anti-tank missile**, used by India, and co-developed **Iron Dome**.

Topic: Important Days

World Cervical Cancer Elimination Day – 17 November

About

- Observed every year on **17 November** by the **World Health Organization**.
- **Aim:** Speed up efforts to **eliminate cervical cancer** as a **public health problem**.
- **2026 Theme: "Together We Can Eliminate Cervical Cancer."**

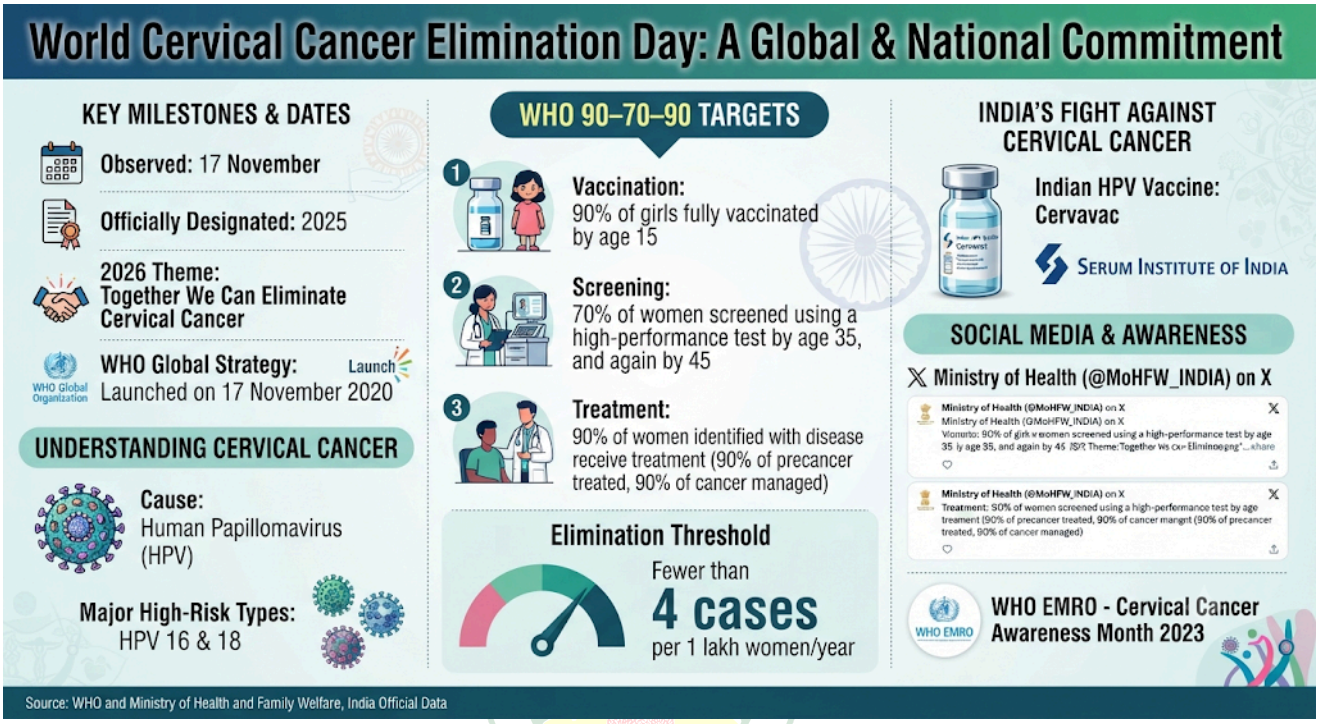
Background

- **May 2018: WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus** called for **global action** to eliminate **cervical cancer**.
- **17 November 2020: WHO** launched the **Global Strategy to Accelerate the Elimination of Cervical Cancer**, backed by **194 countries**.
- **May 2025:** The **78th World Health Assembly** adopted **Resolution WHA78.8**, designating **17 November** as the **official day**.
- **Led by: South Africa** and **Nigeria**, with **60+ co-sponsoring countries**.

Do You Know?

- **WHO "90-70-90" Targets by 2030:**
  - **90%** of girls **fully vaccinated against HPV** by age **15**.
  - **70%** of women **screened** with a **high-performance test** by **35** and again by **45**.
  - **90%** of women with **cervical disease treated**.
- **Elimination threshold:** Fewer than **4 cases per 1,00,000 women a year**.
- **Cause: Human Papillomavirus (HPV)**, mainly **types 16 and 18**.

- **India:**
  - **Cervical cancer** is the **second most common cancer** among **Indian women**.
  - **Cervavac** – India's **indigenous HPV vaccine** (**Serum Institute, 2022**).
  - **Quad Cancer Moonshot (2024)** – to eliminate **cervical cancer** in the **Indo-Pacific** (covered on **19 November**).



International Highlights

APEC Summit 2026 – Shenzhen, China

Context

- The **33rd APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting** was held in **Shenzhen, China**.
- **United States President Donald Trump** arrived in **Shenzhen** and was received at the airport by **President Xi Jinping**.
- **Dates:** The leaders met in **Shenzhen** on **18–19 November 2026**.
- **Theme: "Building an Asia-Pacific Community to Prosper Together."**
- **Host Record:** This is **China's third time** hosting the leaders' meeting, after **Shanghai (2001)** and **Beijing (2014)**.

Key Outcomes

- **Main Document – "2026 APEC Leaders' Shenzhen Outlook":** Adopted as the **joint leaders' framework** at the close of the summit. **China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi** described it as the **most significant achievement** in **APEC's history**.

- **Three Priorities: Openness**, **innovation** and **cooperation**, guided by the **APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040**, towards an **open, dynamic, resilient and peaceful Asia-Pacific community**.
- **Supply Chains:**
  - Leaders reaffirmed **supply chain resilience**, especially for **essential goods**.
  - They agreed to keep **trade corridors open**, including for **energy supplies**.
  - They welcomed the **final review** of the **Supply Chain Connectivity Framework Action Plan (Phase III, 2022–2026)**.
- **Digital and AI:**
  - Leaders commended the **APEC AI Initiative (2026–2030)**.
  - They adopted a statement on **emerging technologies** for **jobs and prosperity** in the region.
- **Business:** The **APEC CEO Summit** released a **"Shenzhen Initiative"**, calling for an **open regional economy**, **inclusive growth through innovation**, and stronger **regional cooperation**.
- **Three-Way Summit on the Sidelines: Xi**, **Trump** and **Putin** met in **Shenzhen** and issued a **joint declaration** that a **nuclear war cannot be won** and must **never be fought**.

Run-Up Meetings (2026)

- **Trade Ministers' Meeting:** Ended with a **joint statement** and approval of the **APEC Roadmap for Innovative, Competitive and Resilient Services**.
- **2026 Logo:** Inspired by **Shenzhen's nickname**, **"City of Peng,"** after a **legendary creature** that transforms from a **giant fish** into a **bird**.

About APEC

- A **regional economic forum** of **21 Pacific Rim member economies**, promoting **free trade**, **investment** and **economic cooperation**.
- **Proposed by: Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke (January 1989)**.
- **Founded: November 1989**, in **Canberra, Australia**, with **12 founding members**: **Australia**, **Brunei**, **Canada**, **Indonesia**, **Japan**, **South Korea**, **Malaysia**, **New Zealand**, **Philippines**, **Singapore**, **Thailand**, **United States**.
- **Expansion:**

Year	New Members
1991	China, Hong Kong, Chinese Taipei
1993	Mexico, Papua New Guinea
1994	Chile
1998	Peru, Russia, Vietnam

- **"Economies," Not Countries:** This lets **Hong Kong** and **Chinese Taipei (Taiwan)** take part.

- **Secretariat: Singapore (since 1992)**.
- **Annual Leaders' Meeting:** Started by **Bill Clinton** in **1993**.
- **Vision:** The **APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040**.
- **Three Pillars:**
  - **Trade and investment liberalisation**.
  - **Business facilitation**.
  - **Economic and technical cooperation (ECOTECH)**.
- **Business Input:** Through the **APEC Business Advisory Council** and the **CEO Summit**.
- **Decision-Making: Consensus-based**; commitments are **voluntary and non-binding**.
- **Share:** About **40% of world population**, **60% of GDP** and **45% of trade**.

India and APEC

- **India applied in 1991**.
- A **moratorium on new members** was introduced in **1997** and still continues **informally**.
- **Membership** needs **consensus**; India waits for that consensus to emerge.

Significance

- A platform for **United States–China dialogue** amid **trade tensions**.
- Shapes rules on **supply chains**, **AI** and the **digital economy** in the **Asia-Pacific**.
- For India, **membership** would deepen its **Indo-Pacific economic integration** and **Act East Policy**.

Do You Know?

- **Previous Summit (2025): Gyeongju, South Korea**, which adopted the **Gyeongju Declaration** and the **APEC AI Initiative (2026–30)**.
- **Shenzhen: China's first Special Economic Zone (1980)**.
- **Next Host (2027): Vietnam**.
- **Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific – APEC's long-term goal** of a **region-wide free trade area**.
- **India's Asia-Pacific Engagement: East Asia Summit**, **ASEAN–India Summit**, **Quad** (India opted out of the **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership** in **2019**).