DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS - 18.11.2026

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Director,
Department of Employment and Training.

TamilNadu Highlights

Tamil Nadu Declared a Fully Literate State

Context

- The **Union Ministry of Education** announced on **social media** that **Tamil Nadu's literacy** has reached **100%**, based on this year's **literacy assessment test**.

Background

- The **Tamil Nadu School Education Department** has run several efforts to **identify and teach non-literate adults**.
- **Implementing Agency:** The **Directorate of Non-Formal and Adult Education, Tamil Nadu**.
- **Schemes Used:**
  - **New India Literacy Programme (ULLAS)**, **Central**.
  - **"Karpom Ezhuthuvom" ("Let's Learn, Let's Write")**, **State**.

How the Programme Works

- **Survey:**
  - **Teachers**, **volunteers** and **Illam Thedi Kalvi workers** go **door to door** to identify **non-literate people**.
  - **College students** and **volunteers** were also involved.
- **Classes:**
  - Held in the **evenings** at nearby **schools** or **community halls**.
  - About **200 hours of teaching a year**.
- **Syllabus:**
  - **Basic Tamil letters**.
  - **Numbers** and **daily-life arithmetic**.
  - **Smartphone use**.
  - **Filling bank forms**.
- **This Year:** About **4.31 lakh people** were taught **basic literacy**.

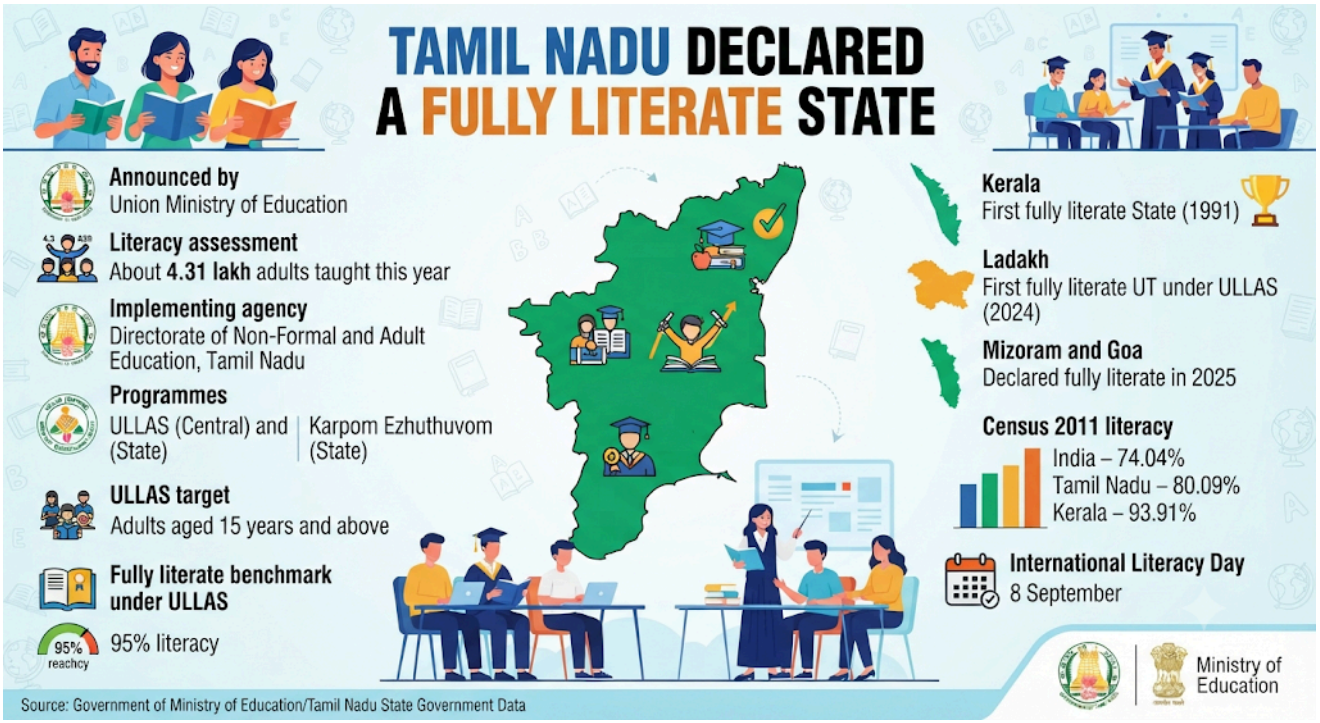
Significance

- A **"silent, positive change"** in **Tamil Nadu**.
- Helps adults handle **banking**, **digital services** and **daily transactions** on their own.
- Supports **women's empowerment** and **financial inclusion**.

About ULLAS

- **Full Form: Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society**.
- **Also Called:** The **New India Literacy Programme (Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram)**.

- **Type:** A **Centrally Sponsored Scheme**, aligned with the **National Education Policy 2020**.
- **Target Group: Adults aged 15 years and above** who missed **formal schooling**.
- **Covers:**
  - **Foundational literacy and numeracy**.
  - **Critical life skills**.
  - Encouraging **continued education**.
- **Aim:** Make learning available **beyond school age** and help adults become **independent in daily life**.



Do You Know?

- **ULLAS – Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society (New India Literacy Programme):**
  - A **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** for **2022–27**, for **adults aged 15+**.
  - A State is declared **"fully literate"** at about **95% literacy** under **ULLAS**.
- **Other Fully Literate States/Union Territories under ULLAS:**
  - **Ladakh – first Union Territory (2024)**.
  - **Mizoram (2025)**.
  - **Goa (2025)**.
- **Kerala** was declared **India's first fully literate State** in **1991** (under the earlier **Total Literacy Campaign**).

- **Census 2011 Literacy:**
  - **India: 74.04%**.
  - **Kerala: 93.91% (highest)**.
  - **Tamil Nadu: 80.09%**.
- **Illam Thedi Kalvi (2021): Tamil Nadu's volunteer-led scheme** to fill **COVID-19 learning gaps**.
- **International Literacy Day: 8 September**.

Topic: Polity

Forest Rights Act, 2006 – National FRA Digital Platform Launched

Context

- The **Ministry of Tribal Affairs** launched the **National FRA Digital Platform** during **Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada 2026**, to **digitise claims** and **title issuance**.
- **As of August 2026: 25.42 lakh titles** covering **238 lakh acres** had been distributed.

About the Act

- **Full Name:** The **Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006**.
- **Enacted: December 2006. In force: 31 December 2007**.
- **Aim:** Undo **historical injustice** by recognising **forest dwellers' land, livelihood and conservation rights**.
- **Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Tribal Affairs**.

Who Is Eligible?

- **Forest-Dwelling Scheduled Tribes:** Living in and depending on forests before **13 December 2005**.
- **Other Traditional Forest Dwellers:** Living in and depending on forests for **three generations (75 years)** before **13 December 2005**.

Types of Rights

- **Individual Forest Rights:**
  - **Heritable titles** for **cultivation** and **habitation**, up to **4 hectares per family**.
  - Registered **jointly** in the names of **both spouses**.
- **Community Forest Rights:** Village rights over **grazing land**, **water bodies**, **fishing areas**, and ownership of **minor forest produce** (**bamboo**, **honey**, **medicinal plants**).
- **Community Forest Resource Rights:** The **Gram Sabha** can **protect, regenerate and manage forests** within its **customary boundary**.
- **Habitat Rights for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups:**
  - Protect their **customary habitat**, even inside **reserved or protected forests**.

  - Granted so far to **11 such groups** in **Odisha**, **Chhattisgarh** and **Madhya Pradesh**.
- **Diversion for Public Utilities:** Up to **1 hectare** of forest land per project for **basic village amenities**, on **Gram Sabha recommendation (Section 3(2))**.

Three-Tier Claims Process

- **Gram Sabha:**
  - Elects a **10–15 member Forest Rights Committee** (at least **two-thirds Scheduled Tribes** and **one-third women**).
  - **Verifies claims** and passes a **resolution**.
- **Sub-Divisional Level Committee:**
  - Examines resolutions and hears **appeals within 60 days**.
  - Prepares the **draft record**.
- **District Level Committee:**
  - Chaired by the **District Collector**.
  - Gives the **final decision** and **issues titles**.

Progress

- **Claims: 54 lakh** received; **43.56 lakh** disposed.
- **Titles: 25.42 lakh** covering **238 lakh acres**.
- **Top States: Chhattisgarh**, **Odisha**, **Madhya Pradesh**.
- **National FRA Digital Platform:**
  - **End-to-end digitisation**.
  - **GIS boundary mapping**.
  - **Digitally signed titles**.
- **Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan:**
  - Supports **State and district FRA cells**.
  - **₹25 lakh per State** for **forest mapping**.
  - **₹15 lakh per Gram Sabha** for **community forest management plans**.
- **Linking Titles to Welfare:**
  - **Maharashtra: Village Forms 7E and 12E** link titles to **crop loans**, **Kisan Credit Cards** and **PM-KISAN**.
  - **Andhra Pradesh and Telangana: Giribhumi** and **BhuBharathi** portals linked to **revenue and bank records**.

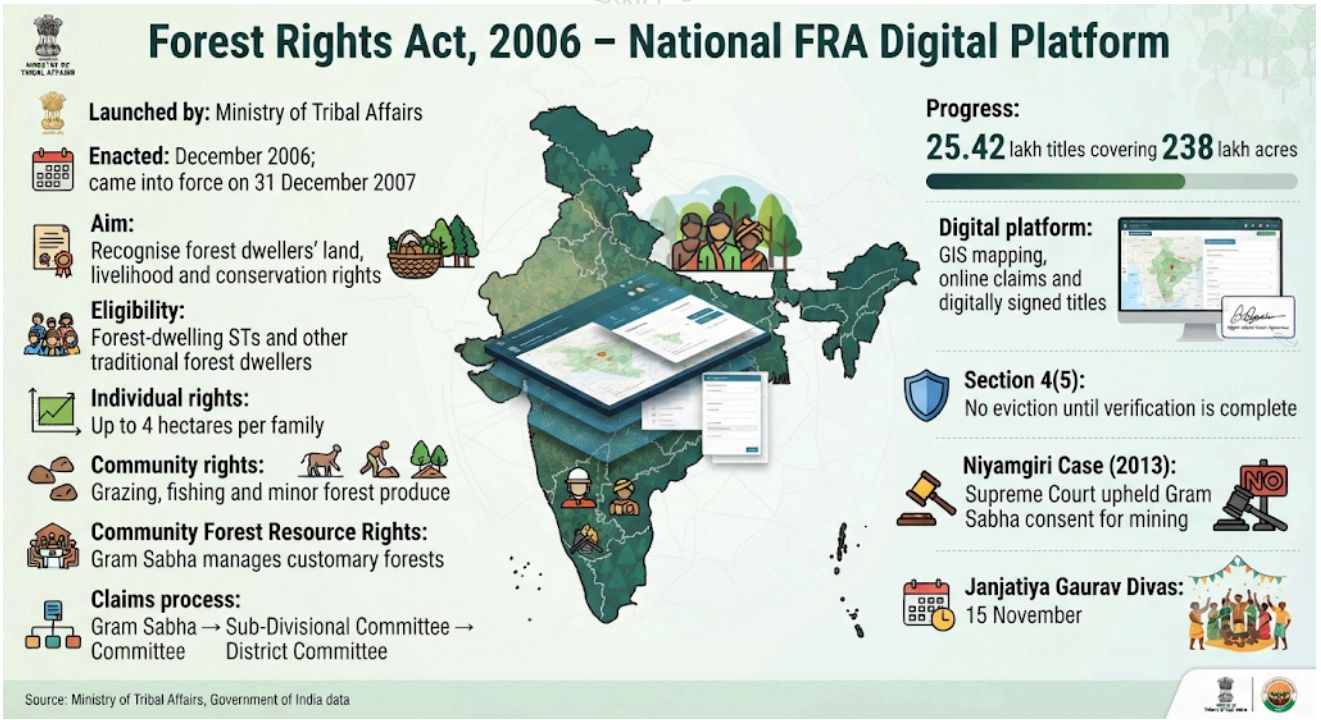
Challenges

- **Arbitrary Rejections: No reasoned orders**. **Other Traditional Forest Dwellers** struggle to prove **75 years of residence**.

- **Delayed Land Record Updates:** Title holders can't get **Kisan Credit Cards** or **crop insurance**.
- **Few Community Titles:** Less than **5%** of all titles. **Gram Sabha plans** clash with **Forest Department working plans**.
- **Protected Area Conflicts: Relocation pressure** in **tiger reserves** and **national parks**, despite safeguards in **Section 4(5)**.

Do You Know?

- **Section 4(5): No eviction** until **verification is complete**.
- **Niyamgiri Case (Orissa Mining Corporation v. Ministry of Environment and Forests, 2013):** The **Supreme Court** upheld **Gram Sabha consent** over **mining**. The **Dongria Kondh** rejected **Vedanta's bauxite mining**.
- **Forest Conservation (Amendment) Act, 2023** – renamed **Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam**.
- **Janjatiya Gaurav Divas: 15 November** (**Birsa Munda's birth anniversary**).
- **Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu** has **6 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups**, all in the **Nilgiris**:
  - **Todas**.
  - **Kotas**.
  - **Kurumbas**.
  - **Irulas**.
  - **Paniyans**.
  - **Kattunayakans**.



National Highlights

10 Years of RERA – Achievements, Challenges and Reforms

Context

- **10 years** after the **Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016**, the **Cabinet Secretariat** began **high-level consultations** with the homebuyers' body **Forum for People's Collective Efforts**.

About the Act

- **Enacted: 2016**; **fully notified: May 2017**.
- Sets up **State Real Estate Regulatory Authorities** and **Appellate Tribunals**.
- **Dual Aim: Protect consumers** and **promote the industry**.
- **Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**.

Key Safeguards

- **Mandatory Registration:** Projects over **500 sq m** or **8 apartments** must **register** before **advertising or selling**.
- **70% Escrow Rule: 70% of buyers' money** goes into a **separate account**, withdrawn only in line with **certified progress**.
- **Carpet Area:** Prices must be based on **net usable carpet area**, not **"super built-up" area**.
- **Buyer Protection:**
  - **Five-year structural defect liability** for builders.
  - **Section 18:** Buyers can **withdraw with a full refund and interest**, or claim **monthly interest for delays**.

Functions of the Authority (Section 34)

- **Register projects and agents**.
- Maintain an **online database**.
- **Enforce compliance**, including the **escrow rule**.
- **Resolve complaints**.
- Issue **regulations and directions**.

Challenges After 10 Years

- **Conflict of Interest:** The **Housing Ministry** both **promotes** real estate and **regulates** it. **Developer-friendly State rules** dilute protections.
- **Inconsistent Rulings and Tribunal Vacancies: Different judgments** across States; **delays in appeals**.
- **Weak Agreement for Sale:** The **model agreement** is in **subordinate rules**, so builders add **one-sided clauses**.

- **No Hardship Exit and No Automatic Compensation:** Buyers must **litigate individually**, so builders treat **compensation** as a **business cost**.

Do You Know?

- **SWAMIH Fund (2019) – Special Window for Affordable and Mid-Income Housing**, for **stalled projects**.
- **Supreme Court** in **Newtech Promoters v. State of Uttar Pradesh (2021):** Upheld the **Authority's power to order refunds**.
- **Homebuyers** are treated as **financial creditors** under the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (2018 amendment)**.
- **Tamil Nadu Real Estate Regulatory Authority** – based in **Chennai**.

Topic: Polity

India Votes Against the United Nations General Assembly Resolution on a Death Penalty Moratorium

Context

- **India** voted **against** a **United Nations General Assembly draft resolution** calling for a **global moratorium on the death penalty**.
- **Introduced by: Mexico**.
- **Vote: 133 in favour**, **33 against**, **16 abstentions**.

India's Position

- **No international consensus** against **capital punishment**.
- Every **sovereign State** has the right to decide its own **legal system and penalties**.
- The **death penalty** is kept for **exceptionally grave cases** where **life imprisonment is inadequate**.

Death Penalty in India – Key Facts

- **Method: "Hanging by the neck until death."**
- **Last Execution: 2020**, in the **Nirbhaya case**.
- **Project 39A (National Law University Delhi):** In **2024**, for the **second year in a row**, the **Supreme Court** confirmed **no death sentence**.
- **Global Divide:**
  - **Moving towards abolition: Portugal**, **Netherlands**, **France**, **Australia**.
  - **Retain it: United States**, **Iran**, **China**, **India**.

Legal Provisions

- **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 – Section 4:** Lists **death** as a **punishment**.
- **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023:**

- **Section 407:** A **High Court** must **confirm** a death sentence passed by a **Sessions Court**.
- **Section 393(3):** Courts must record **special reasons** for awarding death.

Key Judgments

- **Bachan Singh v. State of Punjab (1980):** Upheld the **death penalty** but limited it to the **"rarest of rare"** cases.
- **Machhi Singh v. State of Punjab (1983):** Set out **five categories** where death may be justified:
  - **Manner** – extremely brutal murder.
  - **Motive** – showing total depravity.
  - **Socially abhorrent nature** – for example, targeting a minority community.
  - **Magnitude** of the crime.
  - **Vulnerable victim** – a child, woman or elderly person.
- **Manoj v. State of Madhya Pradesh (2022):** Requires **mental health evaluation**, **conduct-in-jail reports** and a **probation officer's report** before sentencing.

Arguments For Retention

- **Retributive justice** for the **gravest crimes**.
- **Deterrence**.
- **National security** – for example, **terrorism**.

Concerns

- **Wrongful convictions** cannot be undone.
- **No conclusive proof** that it **deters crime** better than **life imprisonment**.
- **Psychological suffering** from long years on **death row**.

Global Framework

- **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 6:** Allows the **death penalty** in **limited cases** but encourages **abolition**.
- **United Nations Economic and Social Council Safeguards (1984):** Protect the rights of those facing death.
- **Second Optional Protocol (1989):** Aims at **abolition**. Ratifying States **cannot execute** anyone. **India has not signed**.
- **United Nations General Assembly Resolutions (2007–2018):** Urged States to **restrict the death penalty** and reduce the crimes it covers.

Do You Know?

- **Article 72** – **President's power to pardon**, including **death sentences**.
- **Article 161** – **Governor's pardoning power**. A **Governor** can pardon a **death sentence** (**Supreme Court, 2021**).

- **Shatrughan Chauhan v. Union of India (2014): Unexplained delay** in deciding **mercy petitions** can be a ground to **commute** a death sentence.
- **Law Commission, 262nd Report (2015):** Recommended **abolition** except for **terrorism** and **waging war**.
- **World Day Against the Death Penalty: 10 October**.



Topic: Reports and Indices

Fall in Out-of-Pocket Expenditure on Healthcare – National Health Accounts 2023–24

Context

- According to the **National Health Accounts 2023–24**, **out-of-pocket expenditure** fell from **64.2% (2013–14)** to **42.7% (2023–24)** of **total health spending**.

About Out-of-Pocket Expenditure

- Money people pay **directly from their own pocket** for **doctors**, **medicines** and **hospital stays**.
- It can push families into **poverty** and **debt** and cut spending on **food** and **education**.

Key Findings

Indicator	2013–14	2023–24
Out-of-pocket expenditure (% of total)	64.2%	**42.7%**
Government health expenditure	₹1,29,778 crore	**₹4,14,196 crore (3×)**

Per capita government spending	₹1,042	**₹2,959 (2.8×)**
Social security spending on health (% of total)	6%	**11%**
Private health insurance (% of total)	3.4%	**10.2%**

- **Primary Healthcare:** Government spending of about **₹1.53 lakh crore**.

Significance

- **Financial security** for households.
- Moves India towards **Universal Health Coverage**.
- Better **human capital** and **productivity**.

Key Government Schemes

- **Ayushman Bharat – PM Jan Arogya Yojana:**
  - **₹5 lakh per family per year** for **secondary and tertiary care**.
  - All citizens aged **70+** are covered, **regardless of income**.
- **Ayushman Arogya Mandirs: Primary healthcare centres**.
- **PM Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana: Low-cost generic medicines**.
- **AMRIT Pharmacies: Discounted drugs and implants**.
- **Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana:** Insurance cover of **₹30,000** for **Below Poverty Line families**.
- **eSanjeevani: Telemedicine**.
- **PM Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan: Free antenatal care** on the **9th of every month**.
- **Disease Programmes:**
  - **National TB Elimination Programme**.
  - **National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission** – target **2047**.
  - **PM National Dialysis Programme – free dialysis**.

Challenges

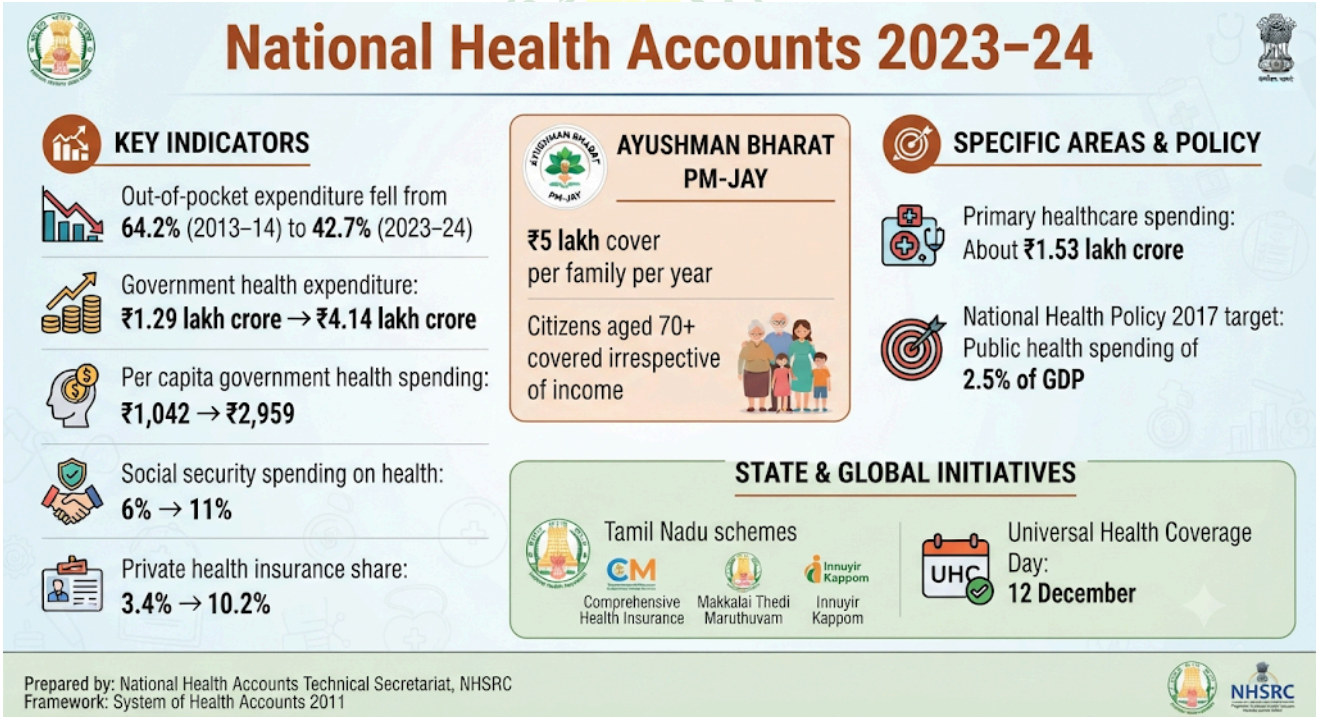
- **Diagnostics** concentrated in **cities**.
- **Public health spending** still below **2% of GDP**, short of the **National Health Policy 2017** target of **2.5%**.
- **Shortage of hospitals** in **rural areas**.
- **Shortage of Staff:** Only **0.7 doctors per 1,000 people**, against the **World Health Organization** average of **2.5**.

About National Health Accounts

- **Prepared by:** The **National Health Accounts Technical Secretariat**, at the **National Health Systems Resource Centre**, under the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**.
- **Released: Annually**.
- **Framework: System of Health Accounts 2011 (OECD, Eurostat, World Health Organization)**, adapted through the **National Health Accounts Guidelines for India, 2016**.

Do You Know?

- **Tamil Nadu link:**
  - **Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme – ₹5 lakh cover**, merged with **PM-JAY**.
  - **Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam (2021) – doorstep healthcare**.
  - **Innuyir Kappom – Nammai Kaakkum 48 – free emergency care** for **road accident victims** in the **first 48 hours**.
- **National Health Policy 2017** – targets **public health spending of 2.5% of GDP by 2025**.
- **Universal Health Coverage Day: 12 December**.



Topic: Science and Technology

San Francisco Declaration – Secure AI Supply Chains (Pax Silica)

Context

- **India** joined the **United States** and **eight others** in signing the **San Francisco Declaration on the Secure Foundations of Enduring Prosperity**.

- **Aim:** Jointly protect **critical artificial intelligence infrastructure** and **supply chains**.

About

- A **plurilateral economic security agreement**.
- Treats the **hardware**, **raw materials**, **energy grids** and **logistics** behind **artificial intelligence** (called **"Super Intelligence"** by the **United States**) as **shared security assets**.
- **Adopted at:** The **Pax Silica Founders' Retreat**, led by **United States Under Secretary Jacob Helberg**.
- **Pax Silica:** A **United States-led initiative**, launched in **December 2025**.

Signatories (10)

- **United States**, **Australia**, **India**, **Israel**, **Japan**.
- **South Korea**, **Qatar**, **Singapore**, **United Arab Emirates**, **United Kingdom**.

Aim

- **Secure, resilient artificial intelligence supply chains**.
- Reduce **economic coercion** and dependence on **vulnerable suppliers**.

Key Features

- **Full-Stack Protection:**
  - **Critical minerals**.
  - **Semiconductors**.
  - **Computing**.
  - **Energy**.
  - **Logistics**.
- **Joint Response** to **coercion** and **market distortions**.
- **Five Working Groups:**
  - **Pro-innovation policies**.
  - **AI adoption** in key sectors.
  - **Supply-chain cooperation**.
  - **Safe harbours** and **security hubs**.
  - **AI security and resilience**.
- **Intelligence-sharing** and protection of **private investment** and **research**.

Significance

- Builds alternatives to **China's dominance** in **minerals** and **chips**.
- Makes **India** a key partner in **global AI governance** and **semiconductor supply chains**.

Do You Know?

- **Protests in Manila (17 November)** demanded the scrapping of **Pax Silica** (covered in the **Manila Summits** note).
- **India's AI and Chip Initiatives:**
  - **IndiaAI Mission (2024) – ₹10,372 crore**.
  - **India Semiconductor Mission**.
  - **India AI Impact Summit (New Delhi, February 2026)**.
- **Minerals Security Partnership (2022)** – a **United States-led** group; **India joined in 2023**.

Voyager 1 – One Light-Day from Earth

Context

- **NASA's Voyager 1**, the **farthest human-made object**, reaches **one light-day** from Earth (**25.9 billion km**) on **18 November 2026**.
- **Radio signals** now take **24 hours one way**.

About

- An **uncrewed deep-space probe** launched to study the **outer planets**; now humanity's **longest-running interstellar explorer**.
- **Operated by: NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory**, through the **Deep Space Network**.

History

- **Launch:**
  - **5 September 1977**, from **Cape Canaveral**.
  - **16 days after Voyager 2**, but on a **faster path**.
- **Planetary Flybys:**
  - Used a rare **175-year planetary alignment** and **gravity assists**.
  - **Jupiter (1979)** and **Saturn (1980)**.
- **Entered Interstellar Space: 25 August 2012**. It was the **first spacecraft** to cross the **heliopause**.

Key Features

- **Power:**
  - **Three Radioisotope Thermoelectric Generators**, using **plutonium-238**.
  - **Solar power** is useless at that distance.
- **Reprogrammable Computers: NASA** can fix **software remotely**.
- **Instruments:** Measure **cosmic rays**, **charged particles**, **magnetic fields** and **plasma waves**.
- **Communication:**

- **3.7-m high-gain antenna**.
- **Deep Space Network** stations in the **United States**, **Spain** and **Australia**.

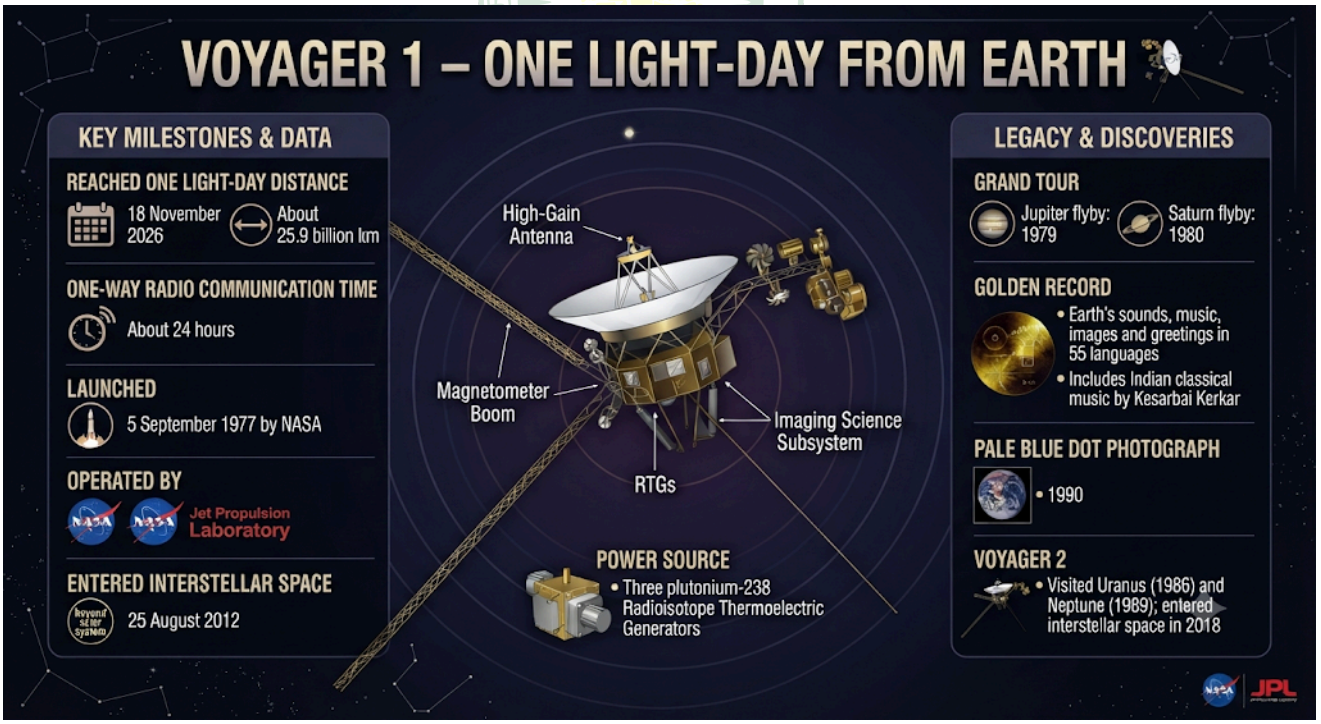
- **Golden Record:** Earth's **sounds**, **music**, **images** and **greetings in 55 languages**, curated by **Carl Sagan**.

Contributions

- Found **active volcanoes** on **Io (Jupiter's moon)**.
- Studied **Saturn's rings** and **Titan's nitrogen-rich atmosphere**.
- **Direct measurements** of **interstellar space**.
- Took the **"Pale Blue Dot"** photo of Earth (**1990**).

Do You Know?

- **Light-Day** – the distance **light travels in one day**, about **25.9 billion km**.
- **Heliosphere** – the **bubble** created by the **solar wind**. The **heliopause** is its **outer boundary**.
- **Voyager 2:**
  - The **only spacecraft** to visit **Uranus (1986)** and **Neptune (1989)**.
  - Entered **interstellar space** in **2018**.
- **Golden Record:** Includes **Indian classical music** – **Kesarbai Kerkar's "Jaat Kahan Ho"**.



Topic: Environment

Bhadra Wildlife Sanctuary and Tiger Reserve (Karnataka)

Context

- Amid protests over **human–elephant conflict** in **Hassan**, **Karnataka** plans to relocate **56 wild elephants** from **Belur taluk** to **Bhadra Wildlife Sanctuary** within a month.

About

- A **wildlife sanctuary** and **tiger reserve** in the **Western Ghats**.
- **Location: Chikkamagaluru** and **Shivamogga districts (Malnad region)**.
- **Tiger Reserve Area:** About **1,072 sq km**.

History

- **1951:** Notified as **Jagara Valley Game Sanctuary** by the **State of Mysore**.
- **1974:** Became **Bhadra Wildlife Sanctuary (492.46 sq km)**.
- **1998:** Brought under **Project Tiger**; notified as **Karnataka's fourth tiger reserve** in **2007**.
- **2002–2004:**
  - **India's first tiger reserve** to complete **voluntary village relocation**.
  - Over **400 families** moved to **M.C. Halli**.

Key Features

- **Saucer-Shaped Basin**, ringed by the **Mullayanagiri**, **Hebbegiri**, **Gangegiri** and **Baba Budan Giri** hills.
- **Bhadra River:**
  - A **tributary of the Tungabhadra**.
  - The **Bhadra Reservoir** is on its **western boundary**.
- **Forests:**
  - **Moist and dry deciduous**.
  - **Shola grasslands**.
  - **Teak**, **rosewood**, **bamboo**.
  - The **400-year-old Jagara Giant teak tree**.
- **Wildlife:**
  - **Tigers**, **elephants**, **leopards**, **gaur**, **dholes**, **sloth bears**.
  - **250+ bird species**, including **Malabar trogons** and **hornbills**.
- **Connectivity:** Part of the **Kudremukh–Bhadra–Shettihalli landscape**.

Significance

- A model of **voluntary relocation** helping **wildlife recovery**.
- Key habitat for **tigers** and **elephants**, but **conflict mitigation** remains a challenge.

Do You Know?

- **Tungabhadra:** Formed by the **Tunga** and **Bhadra** rivers at **Koodli**; a **tributary of the Krishna**.
- **Mullayanagiri** – **Karnataka's highest peak (1,930 m)**.
- **Baba Budan Giri** – where **coffee** was **first grown in India** (**17th century**, by **Baba Budan**).
- **Karnataka** has the **highest elephant population** in India.
- **Tamil Nadu link:** The **Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve** connects **Karnataka**, **Kerala** and **Tamil Nadu** elephant habitats (**Mudumalai**, **Bandipur**, **Wayanad**).

International Highlights

62nd Session of the International Coconut Community – Kochi

Context

- **India** is hosting the **62nd Session and Ministerial Meeting** of the **International Coconut Community**.
- **Dates: 17–20 November 2026**.
- **Venue: Kochi, Kerala**.
- **Organised by:** The **Coconut Development Board** and the **Community's Secretariat**.

About

- An **intergovernmental organisation** of **coconut-producing countries**.
- **HQ: Jakarta, Indonesia**.
- **21 member countries** across **Asia**, **Pacific**, **Africa** and the **Caribbean**.
- Members produce over **90%** of the world's **coconuts and exports**.

History

- **Founded: 2 September 1969**, under the **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**, as the **Asian Coconut Community**.
- **Renamed:**
  - **Asian and Pacific Coconut Community** in **1975**.
  - Later the **International Coconut Community**.
- **World Coconut Day: 2 September**, observed since **2009**.

Functions

- Tackle **ageing palms**, **climate risks** and **pests**.
- Promote **value addition**:

- **Virgin coconut oil**.
- **Coconut water**.
- **Coir**.
- **Activated carbon**.

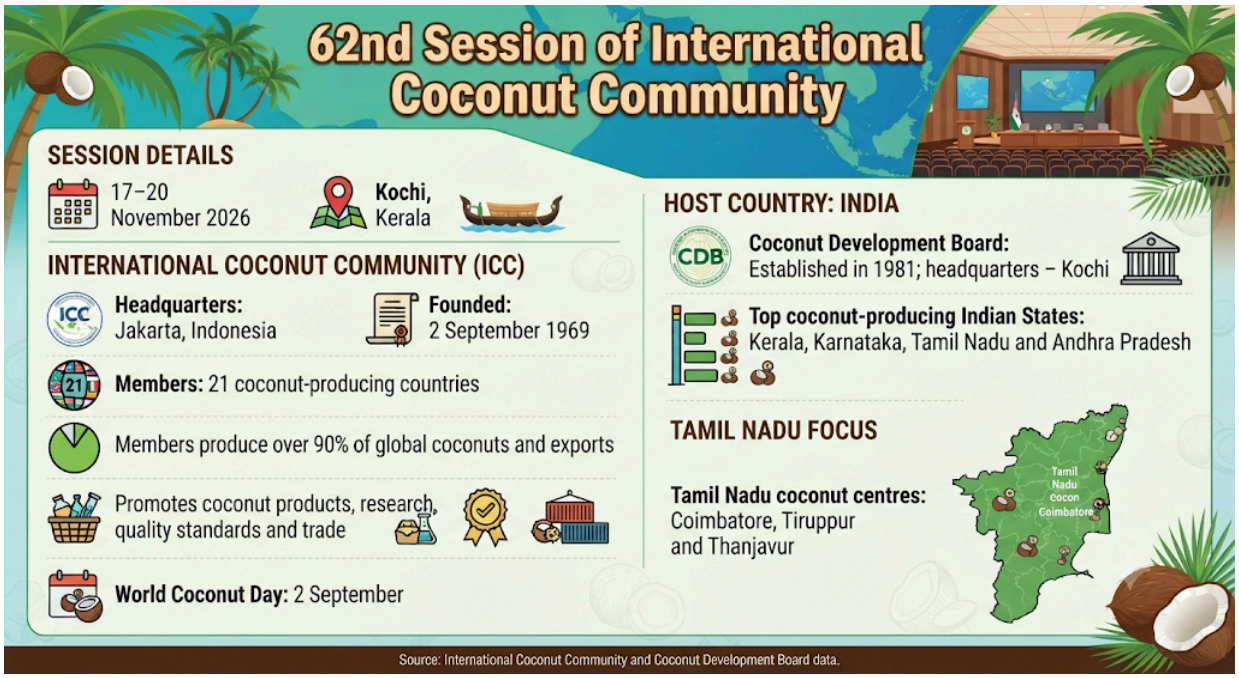
- **Price studies** and **market surveys**.
- **Quality standards** and **trade facilitation**.
- **Joint research** and **technology sharing**.

Significance

- Supports millions of **small coconut farmers** and **artisans**.
- Boosts India's **agricultural diplomacy** and **coconut exports**.

Do You Know?

- **India** is among the **top coconut producers**, along with **Indonesia** and the **Philippines**.
- **Top Coconut States in India:**
  - **Kerala**.
  - **Karnataka**.
  - **Tamil Nadu**.
  - **Andhra Pradesh**.
- **Coconut Development Board:** Set up in **1981**; HQ **Kochi**; under the **Ministry of Agriculture**.
- **Tamil Nadu link:**
  - **Tamil Nadu** has high **coconut productivity** (**Coimbatore**, **Tiruppur**, **Thanjavur**).
  - **Pollachi coconut** is a known variety.
- **Coir Board:** HQ **Kochi**; under the **Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises**.



India Re-elected to the International Telecommunication Union Council (2027–2030)

Context

- **India** was **re-elected** to the **48-member Council** of the **International Telecommunication Union** for **2027–2030**.
- **Venue:** The **Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-26)** in **Doha, Qatar**.

About the Union

- The **United Nations specialised agency** for **information and communication technologies**.
- **HQ: Geneva, Switzerland**.
- **Membership: 194 Member States** plus **1,000+ companies, universities and organisations**.
- **Founded: 17 May 1865** in **Paris** as the **International Telegraph Union** – the **oldest agency** in the **United Nations family**.
- **Renamed** in **1934**; became a **United Nations agency** in **1947**.
- **India:**
  - **Joined** in **1869**.
  - **Council member** since **1952**.
- **Aim:** Bridge the **digital divide**, connecting about **2.2 billion unconnected people**.

Functions

- **Radiocommunication Sector:** Manages **radio spectrum** and **satellite orbits**.
- **Standardisation Sector:** Sets **global standards** for **5G/6G**, **artificial intelligence**, **submarine cables**, **quantum communication**.
- **Development Sector:** Promotes **affordable broadband** and **rural connectivity**.
- **Plenipotentiary Conference:** The **supreme body**, held **every four years**.
- **Council: 48 members**; runs affairs between conferences.
- **Emergency telecoms**, **cybersecurity** and **child online protection**.

Significance

- A bigger say for India in **6G**, **satellite broadband** and **AI standards** (**Bharat 6G Vision**).
- Lets India promote **affordable connectivity** and **digital public infrastructure**.

Do You Know?

- **World Telecommunication and Information Society Day: 17 May**.
- **ITU World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly 2024** – held in **New Delhi**, the **first time in India** and the **Asia-Pacific**.
- **Bharat 6G Vision (2023)** – aims for India to be a **leading 6G provider by 2030**.