

IN BRIEF



Translate NCERT books into Tamil, T.N. varsity told

CHENNAI
The Tamil Nadu Information Commission directed the Tamil University, Thanjavur, to translate into Tamil the Physics, Chemistry, History, Geography, Economics and Mathematics books published by the NCERT from 6th to 12th standards. In a plea, R. Chander of Chennai had said that most competitive exams were based on NCERT syllabus, books for which were available only in English and Hindi.

12 killed in tempo-truck collision in Gujarat

VADODARA
Twelve people were killed and four others were injured in a collision between a truck and a tempo near Mahuvad village in Vadodara district of Gujarat on Saturday night, police said. The injured were shifted to SSG Hospital in Vadodara, said District Superintendent of Police Sudhir Desai. PTI

9 dead as vehicle falls into gorge in Kathua

JAMMU
Nine people, including three women and as many children, were killed and five others injured on Saturday when a passenger vehicle skidded off the road and fell into a deep gorge in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, officials said. The accident took place when the driver lost control over the vehicle, which then rolled into the 300 feet-deep gorge. PTI

Thieves steal ATM machine with ₹19 lakh

AMBALA
Thieves decamped with an Automated Teller Machine (ATM) of Central Bank of India containing over ₹19 lakh here, police said on Saturday. The thieves sprayed paint on CCTV cameras fitted inside the ATM booth and stole the machine. Police said an investigation is on and footage of CCTV cameras installed in nearby areas had been collected. PTI

Monsoon in Sunderbans likely to get longer, warn climate experts

A fact sheet has called for long-term coastal planning to preserve important intertidal habitats in the region

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLKATA

The monsoon in Sunderbans is likely to last longer and get more intense, according to a fact sheet titled *The Sunderbans and Climate Change*, which was made public during the ongoing Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals.

"Climate specialists have predicted that as climate change progresses, monsoon seasons in the Sunderbans will become longer and more intense. Conversely, drought conditions will also become

more pronounced, presenting further challenges for agricultural producers in particular and ecosystems in general," said the document released during the Conference of Parties being held at Gujarat.

Natural habitats

The document highlights the need for "long term coastal planning to ensure that these critically important intertidal habitats with their unique flora and fauna and local inhabitants have a space to retreat inland". The paper also points out that the habi-

tat of the Bengal tiger (*Panthera tigris tigris*) in the Sunderbans is also affected by the storm due to a decline in the availability of prey.

While the fact sheet puts the rise in the sea level at 3.2 mm per year currently, it states that an estimated rise of 28 cm above the sea levels registered in the year 2000 would result in a 96% decline of the habitat of the Bengal tiger in Bangladesh.

Discussions were also held on the Transboundary Conservation of Threatened Freshwater Fauna, including species like Indian River Ter-



Mounting concern: The paper also highlights a rising threat to the habitat of the Bengal tiger. ■ FILE PHOTO

rapin (*Batagur baska*), Hilsa (*Tenulosa ilisha*) and Ganges River Dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*).

The forum comprised scientists from the Wildlife Institute of India, World Wildlife Fund for Nature, Wildlife Trust of India, Turtle Survival Alliance (TSA) and

the member secretary of Central Zoo Authority.

Risk of flooding

"There is clear evidence of the habitat of all the three species extending to the Sunderbans in both India and Bangladesh. We are hopeful that the points that were raised are going to be well received by the CMS and there will be some concerted action for the conservation of the freshwater species that migrate across the Sunderbans," said Shailendra Singh, director, TSA.

The fact sheet points out that large parts of Sunderbans, which are designated as 'Ramsar Sites', are highly susceptible to flooding.

"Due to this, any swelling of ocean water is going to dramatically affect the area. Although mangroves are somewhat resistant to submer- sion in water, they can die when tidal inundation occurs too frequently or lasts too long," the document stated.

Apart from the frequent storms and the rise of sea level, another concern is the rise of salinity both in water and soil. "Excess levels of soil salinity can be incredibly damaging to ecosystems as salts can accumulate in the soil and hinder plant growth. It also threatens the health of freshwater aquatic life such as fish and giant prawns," the document adds.

Govt. eyes public-private fund to give R&D a shot in the arm

Target of ₹40 cr. is currently on the anvil

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI

In an effort to stimulate investment in research and development (R&D), the Department of Science and Technology is mooting a fund that will match the contributions made by private companies in R&D.

Ashutosh Sharma, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology, told *The Hindu* that discussions were on with certain "large, private sector" companies and currently, a ₹40 crore target was on the anvil. "The idea is to pool funds from a group of companies willing to invest in fundamental research, such as quantum computers or artificial intelligence, and whatever is invested government will match that," he added.

A major beneficiary of such private sector funds,

Research bill

In 2017, the global R&D spend was estimated to be \$1.7 trillion in PPP terms, with the United States, China and Japan being the top spenders. India's share was around 2.8%

India's top three R&D spenders in 2017-18	
1. Department of Atomic Energy	1. SAP Labs India Private Limited
2. Department of Space	2. Mphasis Limited
3. Department of Science and Technology	3. Olympia Tech Park Private Limited

Source: R&D Expenditure Ecosystem, EAC-PM

Mr. Sharma noted, could be the Indian Institutes of Technology.

The scheme will be coordinated through the department's Science and Engineering Research Board, which funds a variety of basic science projects in several universities.

Though India is among the top five countries in terms of its output of scientific publications, it doesn't match up in investments.

The total expenditure on R&D has tripled in the last decade in nominal (revenue sans inflation) terms - from ₹24,117 crore in 2004-05 to an estimated ₹1,04,864 crore in 2016-17. However as a fraction of GDP, public expenditures on R&D has been stagnant - between 0.6-0.7% of GDP - over the past two decades. It is well below that in major nations such as the U.S. (2.8), China (2.1), Israel (4.3) and Korea (4.2), accord-

ing to a 2019 report by the Economic Advisory Council (EAC) to the Prime Minister.

Public sector institutions form the lion's share of India's investment in R&D. In 2004-2005, private sector accounted for 28% of India's research spend and in 2016-17 this increased to 40%. In most advanced economies, private R&D accounts for the bulk of investment in R&D.

Moreover, while the government is the major source of funds for R&D, it's also the major user - in terms of money consumed by public sector enterprises or Central institutions.

"As a lower middle-income country, it is not surprising that India's spending on R&D lags upper-middle income and high-income countries such as China, Israel, and the U.S. However, it currently underspends even relative to its income level... In fact, in 2015, there was a sizeable decline in R&D spending even as GDP per capita continued to rise," the EAC report notes.

5 rhinos dead of suspected anthrax

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

At least five rhinos died within four days in northern West Bengal's Jaldapara National Park suspectedly due to anthrax.

Wildlife officials investigated the blood smears from the carcasses and the samples have been sent to a laboratory in Kolkata. "The rhinos were found dead between February 18 and 21. We have found no signs of foul play. The veterinarians think anthrax could be the killer but our department is not saying anything as of now," said Ujjwal Ghosh, North Bengal's Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife).

Anthrax is a rare but serious bacterial illness that mainly attacks animals. The eastern and north-eastern parts of India have registered odd cases of anthrax, said officials.

The 216.51 sq. km national park in Alipurduar has around 250 one-horned rhinos. Another 50 rhinos are in the Gorumara National Park in Jalpaiguri.

GSI denies reports on gold deposits in U.P.

'Claim on 3,000 tonnes of possible deposits is wrong'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA/SONBHADRA

The Geological Survey of India (GSI) on Saturday said there has been no discovery of gold deposits estimated to be around 3,000 tonnes in Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh, as was claimed by a district mining official on Friday.

"Such data was not given by anybody from GSI... GSI has not estimated such kind of vast resource of gold deposits in Sonbhadra district," GSI Director General (DG) M. Sridhar told PTI in Kolkata on Saturday.

"We share our findings regarding any resources of ore after conducting survey with the State units," said Mr. Sridhar.

He further added: "We (GSI, Northern Region) had carried out work in that region in 1998-99 and 1999-2000. The report was shared with the UP DGM for information and further action."

The exploration works of the GSI for gold was not satisfactory and the results were not encouraging to come up with major resources for gold in Sonbhadra district, he said.

Sonbhadra district mining officer K.K. Rai had said on Friday that the gold deposits were found in Son Pahadi and Hardi areas of the district.



The GSI official cited exploration work done in the region in 1998-99.

The deposits in Son Pahadi were estimated to be around 2,943.26 tonnes, while that in Hardi block were around 646.16 kilogram, the official had said.

"Tentative in nature" Rejecting the claim, Mr. Sridhar said that in its report after the exploration in the district, the GSI had "estimated a probable category resource of 52,806.25 tonnes of ore with 3.03 grams per tonne gold (average grade) for a strike length of 170m in Sub-Block-H, Son Pahadi of Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh."

"The mineralised zone, having an average grade of 3.03 grams per tonne of gold is tentative in nature and the total gold which can be extracted from the total resource of 52,806.25 tonnes of ore is approximately 160 kg and not 3,350 tonnes as mentioned in the media," the DG clarified.

The GSI is headquartered in Kolkata.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Sunday: Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning and gust (speed reaching 30-40 kmph) likely at isolated places over east Uttar Pradesh; lightning likely at isolated places over Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, east Madhya Pradesh, sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam and Meghalaya.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	
Agartala	...	33.0	...	14.0	Kozhikode	...	36.0	...
Ahmedabad	...	33.0	...	17.0	Kurnool	...	34.0	...
Aizawl	...	20.0	...	8.0	Lucknow	...	25.0	...
Allahabad	...	23.0	...	16.0	Madurai	...	35.0	...
Bangalore	...	32.0	...	18.0	Mangaluru	...	36.0	...
Bhopal	...	30.0	...	13.0	Mumbai	...	31.0	...
Bhubaneswar	...	33.0	...	18.0	Mysuru	...	32.0	...
Chandigarh	...	0.4	...	11.0	New Delhi	...	25.0	...
Chennai	...	32.0	...	25.0	Patna	...	1.3	...
Coimbatore	...	33.0	...	23.0	Port Blair	...	31.0	...
Dehradun	...	25.0	...	10.0	Puducherry	...	32.0	...
Gangtok	...	2.6	...	8.0	Pune	...	34.0	...
Goa	...	36.0	...	23.0	Raipur	...	31.0	...
Guwahati	...	26.0	...	13.0	Ranchi	...	30.0	...
Hubballi	...	34.0	...	19.0	Shillong	...	18.0	...
Hyderabad	...	32.0	...	19.0	Shimla	...	17.0	...
Imphal	...	24.0	...	10.0	Srinagar	...	9.0	...
Jaipur	...	26.0	...	12.0	Thiruvananthapuram	...	35.0	...
Kochi	...	34.0	...	25.0	Tiruchi	...	35.0	...
Kohima	...	18.0	...	10.0	Vijayawada	...	31.0	...
Kolkata	...	31.0	...	18.0	Visakhapatnam	...	30.0	...

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀	CODE
Ahmedabad	47	59	25	57	96	...
Bangalore	12	55	80	...	110	...
Chennai	15	14	76	...	114	...
Delhi	...	9	167	62	91	...
Hyderabad	...	5	50	17
Kolkata	...	4	59	31	308	209
Lucknow	...	15	25	65	94	...
Mumbai	...	17	75	39	114	177
Pune	...	78	29	83	147	114
Visakhapatnam	17	...

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM_{2.5} & PM₁₀: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

1,160 recruits inducted into CISF

STAFF REPORTER
RANIPET

As many as 1,160 personnel, including 84 women, were inducted into the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) after a passing out parade at the Regional Training Centre near Arakonam on Saturday. Union Minister of State for Home Affairs G. Kishan Reddy accepted the guard of honour and reviewed the parade.

The recruits were trained in weapon handling, industrial security, aviation security, VIP security, human rights, gender sensitisation, terrorism, insurgency and naxalism. Special attention was given to improve their soft skills to keep in line with CISF's fundamental principle - polite but firm on duty. In his address, Mr. Reddy said the CISF had successfully met new challenges

ED raids 12 locations to probe 'bike bot' scam

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The ED on Wednesday conducted searches at 12 locations in Delhi, Noida and Lucknow in connection with the "bike bot" scam, in which about 2.25 lakh investors were allegedly cheated on the pretext of huge returns.

The case pertains to a motorcycle taxi service scheme launched by a Greater Noida-based company, Garvit Innovative Promoters Limited. Following complaints from investors, the Uttar Pradesh Police registered over 60 cases in the alleged ₹3,000 crore scam and arrested several people, including the company's owner, Sanjay Bhati.

In 2018, the accused persons asked people to invest ₹62,100 per motorcycle for a monthly return. Investigation revealed that over 150 luxury cars were bought in the company's name and gifted, and of about 7,000 motorcycles, only 2,000 were registered with the transport authorities.

'My mother's views won't make govt. rethink move on ashrams'

There are no takers for Sanskrit tols: Himanta Biswa Sarma

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Assam Education Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has said his mother's unhappiness would not make the government reconsider its decision to shut down Sanskrit tols, along with madrasas.

Mr. Sarma on February 12 announced that government-aided madrasas, Islamic theological schools and tols or ashrams teaching Sanskrit and religious scriptures would be shut. He had said these centres would be converted into schools as it was "not the duty of the government to teach religion".

The decision received criticism, the sharpest being from his author-mother Mrinalini Devi, who was in January elected vice-president of the Assam Sahitya Sabha, the State's apex literary bo-



Himanta Biswa Sarma

dy. She will take charge in April. "I studied Sanskrit in school. I love the language that is the root of the Assamese tongue. The government should continue to teach Sanskrit even if the tols cease to exist," she said three days ago.

"The government has its own way of functioning and not on the basis of what parents think or feel. It takes decisions based on facts and

necessities of the people in general. Almost 80% of the Sanskrit tols have become meaningless today," he said. The Education Minister, who also holds the Finance and Health portfolios, asserted that the tols had become "meaningless" and were essentially "factories for mere matriculation (high school-leaving class 10 exam)".

He added: "Most tols this year had no candidates for the Class X exams. The government cannot waste its limited resources." The closure of the madrasas and tols is expected in the next academic session from April.

Assam has 614 government-run and recognised madrasas. Of over 900 tols, only 97 are government-aided, officials said.

TAMIL NADU HOUSING BOARD J.J.NAGAR DIVISION

SEALED OFFER - CUM - OPEN AUCTION NOTICE
Tamil Nadu Housing Board, J.J.Nagar Division, has proposed to sell the reserved plots of Commercial site, Convenience shop site, Daily market site, Public Purpose site, Religious purpose site, Cinema Theatre site, Community Hall site and Industrial site, (Total -102 Nos) in the following schemes of J.J.Nagar East Scheme, J.J.Nagar East Industrial Plot Scheme, J.J.Nagar East - Padi Industrial Plot Scheme, J.J.Nagar West Scheme, Nalambar Ph I Scheme, Ambattur Ph I & II Scheme, Ambattur Ph III Scheme, Ambattur Village, Thirumullaivoyal 120 MIG Flats Scheme, Avadi Site & Service Scheme through Sealed Offer - Cum - Open Auction. The details are as follows.

Sale of Application form From 24.02.2020 to the previous working day of auction between 11.00 A.M to 4.00 P.M

AUCTION DATE : 18.03.2020 & 19.03.2020

Please also visit www.tnhb.tn.gov.in website for the details regarding of Code No, Name of the scheme, Category of plot, Plot Number Plot Extent, Upset Price and Application Cost, 15% Cost of Plot along with Application, Period of sale of application, Allotment conditions etc., For, further details, kindly contact the following Address.

Office of the Executive Engineer & ADO, J.J.Nagar Division, Tamil Nadu Housing Board, 3rd Floor, TNHB Shopping Complex, Thirumangalam, Chennai-600 101, Phone No.044-26154577.

Executive Engineer & ADO, J.J.Nagar Division

All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Raipur
Tatibandh, G.E. Road, Raipur, C.G.-492099
Ref. No. AIIMS/RP/ Acad/2020/659 Date 22.02.2020

ADMISSION NOTICE
SPOT COUNSELING FOR PG COURSES - JAN 2020 SESSION
Spot Counseling for filling up vacant Postgraduate (MD/MSS) seats (Total Vacant Seats-12, UR-03, OBC-04, SC-02, ST-01, EWS-02) of AIIMS Raipur for January 2020 session (after Open Counseling) is to be held on Friday, 28.02.2020 at 12.00 noon at AIIMS Raipur. The details of vacant seats are-

- Dept. of Anatomy (Total Seats-03, UR-01, SC-01, ST-01)
- Dept. of Biochemistry (Total-03, UR-01, OBC-02)
- Dept. of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology (Total-01, EWS-01)
- Dept. of Microbiology (Total-02, OBC-01, EWS-01)
- Dept. of Pharmacology (Total-01, OBC-01)
- Dept. of Physiology (Total-02, UR-01, SC-01).

The revised and final updated list of all vacant seats available for spot counseling will be uploaded on the website www.aiimsraipur.edu.in by 2.00 PM on 27.02.2020. Those candidates who have secured 50 percentile or more in the entrance examination conducted by AIIMS New Delhi on 17.11.2019 and desirous of seeking admission in the spot counseling should register on or before 27.02.2020 (5 PM) by clicking on the given link <https://forms.gle/ZRCEVh6pnn776rQ7>. The link can also be copied and pasted on the address bar of the internet browser for submitting the required information. Registered candidates are required to remain physically present at AIIMS Raipur along with all original certificates/documents mandatorily. For essential eligibility conditions, other details and terms and conditions please visit the website of AIIMS Raipur www.aiimsraipur.edu.in

Director

KSEB KERALA STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LIMITED E-TENDER NOTICE
Office of the Chief Engineer, Transmission North - Kozhikode
Tender ID: 2020_KSEB_344324_1 * Design, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of two Nos. of 33kV 6 Panel Indoor Switch gear set at various substations * PAC
Rs. 1,58,00,000/- * Last Date : 28-02-2020, 4 PM
Visit www.etenders.kerala.gov.in and www.kseb.in
Ref: PR/MC/1E/183E-Tender/2020

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LET US KNOW YOU BETTER

Your feedback is valuable to us. Please scan the QR code or visit www.thehindu.com/feedback

You may call us at toll free 1800 102 1878 or write to us at customercare@thehindu.co.in