

September 25, 2026 – Dinamani Newspaper – Tit bits

1. Pune has been granted permission to host the 2032 UCI Road World Championships. With this, a global cycling competition will be held in India for the first time.

(i) The event is being organised as a joint initiative of the Maharashtra Government and the Cycling Federation of India (CFI), with the support of the Central Government.

(ii) The 2032 UCI Road World Championships will provide a new experience for Indian male and female athletes. The Road World Championships will provide an opportunity to showcase India's sporting ambitions, cycling talent, and emerging capabilities.

2. 20th Asian Games – Aichi-Nagoya, 2026

(i) In Wushu, a Chinese martial art, Nava-rem Roshibina Devi won a silver medal. This is her third consecutive medal at the Asian Games.

(ii) In rowing, the duo of Satnam Singh and Salman Khan finished third in the men's doubles event and won India's first-ever medal in this category. It is noteworthy that this is India's first medal in the men's double sculls event in the history of the Asian Games.

(iii) Similarly, in shooting, Anantjeet Singh Naruka and Parinaaz Dhaliwal won a bronze medal for India in the mixed skeet team event, marking India's first medal in this event.

3. India has been importing an average of 1.8 million barrels of crude oil per day from Russia during September.

(i) According to data released by Kpler, India imported an average of 2.82 million barrels per day from Russia in July and 2.08 million barrels per day in August. The data further stated the following regarding India's daily crude oil imports:

- In August, India imported 347,000 barrels of crude oil per day from Saudi Arabia, which increased to 576,000 barrels per day in September.
- India imported 546,000 barrels per day from the United Arab Emirates in August and 522,000 barrels per day in September.
- India imported 163,000 barrels per day from Iraq in August, which increased to 505,000 barrels per day in September.
- Thus, it was reported that after July, India reduced its crude oil imports from Russia and increased imports from Middle Eastern countries to compensate for the reduction.

(ii) Commenting on this, Nikhil Dubey, Senior Analyst at Kpler, said, "India reduced its imports of Russian crude oil in August due to disruptions in export infrastructure."

(iii) If the US order imposing a 100% tariff on countries importing crude oil from Russia and Iran comes into effect, India's imports of Russian crude oil are likely to decline further.

(iv) However, if India decides to significantly reduce its purchases, competition among Asian and other

refineries for alternative supplies will increase. This could lead to an increase in crude oil prices, he said.

4.Kancheepuram district has secured the first position in Tamil Nadu's overall exports. Krishnagiri district has overtaken Chennai and secured second place.

- The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has released statistics on Tamil Nadu's exports for the first six months of 2026, from January to July 2026. According to the data, Kancheepuram secured the first position, Krishnagiri the second, and Chennai the third.

(i) Despite the war situation this year, Tamil Nadu exported vehicles, electronics, and various other products worth ₹1,41,959 crore during the first six months. Kancheepuram district exported electronics, mobile phones, automobile engineering products, etc., worth ₹62,233 crore, securing first place in the State. This accounted for 43.84% of the exports.

(ii) Krishnagiri district exported electronics, mobile phones, two-wheelers, four-wheelers, granite, and various other products worth ₹18,514 crore, securing second place in the State. This accounted for 13.04% of exports.

(iii) Chennai district secured third place with exports worth ₹16,962 crore, accounting for 11.95%.

(iv) Tiruppur district, which exports ready-made garments, secured fourth place with exports worth ₹10,122 crore, accounting for 7.13%. Coimbatore district was pushed down to fifth place, with exports worth ₹8,720 crore, accounting for 6.14%.

(v) Krishnagiri district recorded a significant achievement by exporting more than twice as much as Coimbatore during the past six months.

(vi) The subsequent positions were occupied by Tiruvallur in sixth place, Vellore in seventh, Erode in eighth, Thoothukudi in ninth, and Karur in tenth place.

(vii) In the previous year (2024–25), Kancheepuram had secured first place, Chennai second, Tiruppur third, Coimbatore fourth, Tiruvallur fifth, and Krishnagiri sixth place.

(viii) Within six months, Krishnagiri, which had been in sixth place, overtook Chennai to secure second place in exports, marking a significant achievement.

5.Leading technology company Microsoft has opened its new data centre in Telangana.

(i) Microsoft's India South Central Data Centre has been established at Chandanvelly in Ranga Reddy district. It was inaugurated by Telangana Information Technology Minister D. Sridhar Babu.

(ii) Speaking on the occasion, he said that Telangana has set a target of achieving 5 GW of data-centre capacity by 2029 and that an investment of ₹2.87 lakh crore (US\$30 billion) is expected to be made to create an AI and digital infrastructure ecosystem.

(iii) He said that significant investments are being made in hyperscale and AI infrastructure in Telangana, while international innovation centres and international skill-development centres are also continuing to grow.

(iv) Rajeev Kumar, President and Managing Director of Microsoft's India Development Centre, said that Hyderabad has been an important part of Microsoft's journey in India for more than 20 years.

6. Let's follow Singapore

(i) Economic Structure and High Import Dependency

- Singapore is a small nation heavily dependent on foreign trade for its economic sustenance.
- The total value of Singapore's export and import trade is more than three times its Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
- Out of every 1 Singapore Dollar spent nationally, approximately 40 cents goes toward purchasing imported goods.
- Because of its heavy reliance on imports, global price increases in petroleum, machinery, and food items force Singapore to import these essential commodities at elevated costs.

(ii) Impact and Risk of "Imported Inflation"

- Surging global market prices increase domestic inflation, reducing the purchasing power of citizens.
- Price hikes in imported raw materials, fuel, and machinery directly drive up the manufacturing costs of goods produced within Singapore.
- Higher domestic prices and costlier export goods risk undermining Singapore's competitive advantage in international markets.
- Domestic inflation triggered by price surges in imported goods from foreign markets is defined as imported inflation.

(iii) Geopolitical Risks and Strategic Monetary Response

- Escalating US–Iran war tensions drive up global crude oil and natural gas prices, impacting fuel, transportation, manufacturing, and general import costs.
- These global price shocks create downward pressure on the exchange rate value of the Singapore Dollar.
- To counter imported inflation, Singapore's Central Bank—the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS)—uses the exchange rate as its primary monetary policy tool rather than interest rates.

(iv) Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER) Framework

- MAS manages currency policy through the Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER) index.
- The NEER measures the Singapore Dollar's value against a composite basket of currencies from its key international trading partners.
- The currency of each trading partner is assigned a specific weightage based on the volume and importance of Singapore's trade with that country.

(v) Policy Control Band and Value Benchmarking

- The base value of the NEER index is set at 100 for a designated benchmark year.
- A NEER index above 100 indicates that the Singapore Dollar has strengthened overall against partner currencies, whereas an index below 100 indicates relative weakness.

- MAS establishes a specific target policy band (control range) within which market forces allow the exchange rate to fluctuate naturally.

(vi) Central Bank Intervention & Inflation Mitigation

- When extreme market volatility occurs or market dynamics impede inflation control, MAS directly intervenes in foreign exchange markets.
- To curb current projected inflation pressures, MAS allows a controlled appreciation of the Singapore Dollar.
- MAS sells foreign currency reserves (such as US Dollars) and buys Singapore Dollars, raising demand and pushing up the local currency's value.
- A stronger Singapore Dollar makes foreign-denominated imported goods cheaper in local currency terms, requiring fewer Singapore Dollars for purchases.
- Strengthening the local currency directly prevents imported inflation from spreading across the domestic economy.
- MAS actively conducts money market operations to manage commercial bank liquidity, dollar shortages, and interest rate pressures.

(vii) Lesson for Developing Nations

- Developing nations that rely heavily on imports can adopt and follow Singapore's unique, exchange-rate-focused monetary policy to effectively control imported inflation.

7. Artificial Intelligence

(i) Indian Government Stand and AI Applications in India

- The Ministry of Information Technology announced that India does not need to delay its AI development, as the technology will simplify public services.
- Most AI efforts in India focus on practical applications created for public utility rather than building ultra-powerful "frontier AI" models.
- India primarily utilizes small and large language-based AI models—combining domestic and international frameworks—across healthcare, Government services, entertainment, and service sectors.

(ii) Global Warnings and Risks of Advanced "Frontier AI"

- Researchers and safety experts at leading AI firms, including OpenAI and Anthropic, have warned that advanced "frontier AI" models could pose severe risks to humanity, calling for temporary bans or limits on continuous AI research.
- While AI is celebrated as a major technological revolution, experts argue that strict control and oversight are necessary to prevent systems from acting beyond human command boundaries.

(iii) Recognized Dangers and Regulatory Oversight

- Major concerns regarding AI expansion include the spread of misinformation, financial fraud, privacy violations, systemic misuse, and autonomous operation beyond human control.
- Rules are already in place requiring AI developers to report technical errors or risks during

development to appropriate authorities.

(iv) Data Center Infrastructure and Land Footprint

- Queries sent to AI systems are processed and stored in distant, specialized data centers rather than remaining on local user devices.
- Global and Local Land Requirements:
 - Expanding AI infrastructure globally is estimated to require approximately 15,000 sq. km of land for data centers.
 - In Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), nearly 3,500 acres of land have already been allocated across three major data center projects, with land demand expected to increase further.

(v) Electricity and Freshwater Resource Consumption

- Thousands of computers operating in data centers generate intense heat, requiring immense amounts of electricity and fresh water for cooling.
- Over the next 5 to 6 years, data centers in India alone will require approximately 26.3 GW of electricity (1 GW = 1,000 MW), representing 6.7% of India's total national power demand.
- Freshwater and Groundwater Depletion:
 - Globally, the freshwater required to cool data center systems will soon match the water needs of 130 crore (1.3 billion) people.
 - Planned data centers around Visakhapatnam will require 2 to 3 TMC of fresh water annually, leading to groundwater depletion where surface water is unavailable.

(vi) Developmental Outlook and Natural Resource Conservation

- Technology is essential for national progress, and AI adoption can no longer be avoided.
- Policy decisions must carefully evaluate what natural assets are lost in exchange for technological advancement, ensuring irreplaceable resources like groundwater and land are protected.

8. Recycling is a gold mine!

(i) Birth Rate Trends and Newborn Gold Scheme

- Declining Birth Rate: A decade ago, around 11 lakh (1.1 million) babies were born annually in Tamil Nadu, whereas the current figure has fallen to under 10 lakh babies per year.
- Chief Minister Joseph Vijay announced the 'Thaimaman Thanga Mothiram' scheme, providing a 1-gram gold ring to newborns in Government hospitals.
- Extending this benefit to private hospital births as well would require over 5 lakh grams (500 kg) of gold annually.

(ii) E-Waste Volumes and Gold Potential – Urban Mining

- Refining 1 ton of gold ore from South African mines yields about 5 grams of gold, whereas 1 ton of discarded smartphones yields approximately 35 poun (~280 grams) of gold.
- According to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data, India is the 3rd largest e-waste generator globally, producing around 14 lakh metric tons annually.

- In FY 2024–25, Tamil Nadu generated approximately 4.65 lakh tons of e-waste across nearly 140 device categories (laptops, phones, smartwatches, TVs, modems, set-top boxes, hearing aids, etc.).
- High-value e-waste in Tamil Nadu (smartphones and printed circuit boards/PCBs) accounts for 35,000 tons, containing an estimated 10 tons (1 crore grams) of gold alongside silver, copper, and palladium.

(iii) Four-Stage E-Waste Management Framework

Under the E-Waste Management Rules 2022, handling electronic waste comprises four distinct stages:

- Stage 1 (Collection & Data Security Fears): Device manufacturers and volunteers collect waste, but citizens hesitate to hand over old devices due to data privacy concerns regarding memory cards. For devices with broken screens, collection agents should destroy memory data in the owner's presence.
- Stage 2 (Dismantling & Informal Sector Mismanagement): Currently, 70% to 90% of dismantling is controlled by informal entities that smash devices, conduct acid washing, burn plastics, and dump toxic residues near water bodies for quick profits.
- Stage 3 (High-Tech Refining & Extraction): Extracting precious metals requires advanced chemical and metallurgical technologies with heavy initial capital costs; hence, state-run infrastructure is needed to ensure quality and generate green employment.
- Stage 4 (Safe Disposal & Environmental Monitoring): Non-recyclable toxic remnants must be disposed of under the strict supervision of the Pollution Control Board without polluting soil, water, or air.

(iv) Recycling Capacity Disparities: Tamil Nadu vs. Uttar Pradesh

- India has over 300 registered recycling entities with a combined annual capacity of 22 lakh tons.
- State-Level Comparison:
 - Uttar Pradesh: Houses over 100 registered units with an annual recycling capacity of 10.6 lakh tons.
 - Tamil Nadu: Operates only 30 registered units with an annual capacity of 91,000 tons.
- Over 90% of Tamil Nadu's e-waste flows to unauthorized recyclers, resulting in low recovery efficiency and thousands of crores in lost metal wealth.

(v) Environmental Hazards and Future Roadmap

- Dumping e-waste releases lead, cadmium, mercury, and chromium, which render soil infertile and contaminate groundwater, rivers, lakes, and drinking water supplies.
- Unchecked e-waste poses an environmental threat even more severe than plastic pollution.
- Establishing state-backed refining facilities and creating dedicated Urban Mining Hubs or Industrial Parks can convert e-waste into a sustainable resource, creating jobs and establishing Tamil Nadu as a national leader in green industry.