

October 16, 2026 – Dinamani Newspaper – Tit bits

1. A new bridge built across the Yalu River to connect China and North Korea was opened after a prolonged delay of 12 years.

- The 3-km-long bridge connects Dandong in northeastern China with Sinuiju in North Korea.
- The bridge has been opened to strengthen bilateral trade and improve relations between the two countries.
- Although construction on the Chinese side was completed as early as 2014, work on the North Korean side remained unfinished for several years due to various reasons, delaying the opening of the bridge.

2. A joint military exercise involving the armies of China and Pakistan commenced in China's Xinjiang province for the first time in this format.

(i) Named 'Karakoram 2026,' the exercise is being conducted with China providing all the equipment, including weapons and firearms, required for the drills.

(ii) The primary objective of the exercise is to conduct counter-terrorism operations in high-altitude plateaus under border conditions resembling those of the Himalayan region.

3. Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated that India remains determined to host the Olympic Games in 2036.

(i) Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Indian athletes who won medals at the Asian Games held in Japan and congratulated them at Major Dhyan Chand Stadium in New Delhi.

4. The Central Government signed contracts with two companies on Thursday for procuring a communication satellite for the Indian Air Force and underwater torpedoes for the Indian Navy, at a total cost of ₹4,106 crore.

(i) India has been undertaking various measures to continuously modernise and strengthen its three armed services. As part of these efforts, the Ministry of Defence decided to procure a satellite for the Air Force and underwater torpedoes for the Navy at a total cost of ₹4,106 crore. According to a statement issued by the Ministry of Defence:

- The Ministry of Defence signed a contract with NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), based in Bengaluru, for the procurement of the GSAT-7C communication satellite for the Indian Air Force at a cost of ₹2,563 crore.
- Similarly, the Ministry of Defence decided to procure Varunastra torpedoes, which travel underwater to identify and destroy enemy targets, for the Indian Navy at a cost of ₹1,543 crore. A contract was signed with Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), based in Hyderabad, for this purpose.
- Both contracts were signed in New Delhi in the presence of A. Anbarasu, Additional Secretary and Director General (Acquisition) in the Ministry of Defence.
- The Varunastra torpedo was indigenously designed by the Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL). It is a ship-launched anti-submarine torpedo. According to the Ministry of Defence, its advanced technology enables it to detect and destroy enemy submarines at long

ranges.

5. There are approximately 4.3 million Indians living in the UAE.

- People from Kerala constitute the largest group among the Indian expatriate population in the UAE.
- Indians from Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana rank next in terms of population.

6. The Union Ministry of AYUSH was established in 2014.

- Through this ministry, various initiatives have been undertaken to expand research, education and healthcare services related to traditional systems of medicine.

(i) As a result, collaboration has increased between the Ministry of AYUSH and Central institutions such as the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).

7. Warnings should not be ignored

(i) Pacific Ocean Warming and the Amplified El Niño Effect

- Abnormally high sea surface temperatures in the northeastern Pacific Ocean generate dense cloud systems capable of releasing nearly 6,000 crore cubic feet (approx. 12 TMC) of rainfall in a single day.
- Increased Impact of El Niño: A 2019 study revealed that while El Niño historically impacted monsoon rainfall by about 40%, global-warming-driven shifts now cause it to affect rainfall by over 60%, severely disturbing global cloud formation.
- According to the Climate Change Research Center, extreme rainfall events that traditionally occurred once every 50 years have significantly increased in frequency over the last 20 years.

(ii) Historical Disaster Loss Statistics in Tamil Nadu

- 2004 Vulnerability Mapping: Tamil Nadu identified 8,000 disaster-prone areas, incurring losses worth ₹380.64 crore.
- 2011 Cyclone Thane: Affected over 45,000 people, destroyed 6,000 hectares of agricultural land, and caused economic losses of ₹2,000 crore.
- 2015 Chennai Floods: Impacted 40 lakh (4 million) people, inundated 1.16 lakh hectares of farmland, caused direct damage of ₹500 crore, and resulted in total relief and rehabilitation losses of ₹14,000 crore.
- 2018 Cyclone Gaja: Destroyed 3.3 lakh electric poles and 1,655 transformers, leading to losses of ₹3,500 crore.

(iii) Deficit in Southwest Monsoon (Current Year)

- Tamil Nadu's Southwest Monsoon ended with a 24.3% deficit below the normal expected rainfall of 322 mm.
- This recorded rainfall is the 2nd lowest in the last 10 years for Tamil Nadu, and the 4th lowest since 1901.

(iv) Extreme Weather Events Across India

- Against an expected average rainfall of 253.8 mm, certain cloudburst-hit regions across India received over 5,500 mm of rain, triggering massive landslides in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, and Assam.
- September 26 Uttar Pradesh Deluge: Single-day rainfall exceeded 200 mm across multiple UP districts—representing over 130 times the normal daily rainfall:
 - Lucknow: 227 mm
 - Kanpur: 224 mm
 - Fatehpur: 217 mm
 - Hardoi: 214 mm
 - Pratapgarh: 210 mm
 - Sultanpur: 204 mm

(v) Northeast Monsoon Warnings & Civic Preparedness

- The Chennai Meteorological Centre issued heavy rainfall warnings for Chennai and surrounding districts ahead of the Northeast Monsoon.
- The Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) cleared and desilted over 4,000 waterways and drainage channels to handle storm runoff.
- Civic authorities must maintain stormwater drains, clear encroachments from water bodies, desilt lakes, and deploy dewatering pumps on roads.

(vi) The authorities must be urged not to ignore weather warnings and to take immediate preventive action.

8. Threatening Technology

(i) Rapid Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- Technology has evolved from basic tools to advanced automation and Artificial Intelligence (AI), fundamentally reshaping every sphere of human society.
- Unlike previous technological tools, modern AI systems possess self-learning capabilities, automation power, and language processing skills that enable them to operate autonomously.

(ii) Warnings from World-Renowned Scientists and Thinkers

- Renowned physicist Stephen Hawking famously warned that the development of full artificial intelligence could spell the end of the human race.
- Geoffrey Hinton, widely recognized as the "Godfather of AI," resigned from his position at Google in 2023 to speak freely about the catastrophic risks and existential dangers posed by unregulated AI development.
- Historian and author Yuval Noah Harari highlighted that AI is the first technology in history capable of making decisions, mastering human language, and potentially manipulating culture, human thought, and democratic systems.

(iii) Key Threats

- The rapid expansion of AI automation and generative tools threatens millions of jobs across IT, manufacturing, finance, healthcare, and customer services.
- AI-driven deepfake video generation, voice cloning, and synthetic media pose severe threats to individual privacy, election integrity, social stability, and financial security through identity theft and scams.
- AI algorithms are increasingly exploited for sophisticated automated cyberattacks, data breaches, and invasive mass surveillance.
- Over-reliance on digital devices and AI algorithms reduces human critical thinking, creativity, and genuine social connections, while causing mental health challenges among younger generations.

(iv) Policy Imperatives and Regulatory Solutions

- Technological growth is rapidly outpacing existing legal frameworks, leaving global societies vulnerable to unregulated tech deployment.
- International Governments, ethicists, and technology leaders to urgently implement strict legal regulations, safety guardrails, and ethical standards for AI development.
- Technology must always remain a tool under human control to serve human welfare, rather than allowing humanity to become a victim of its own inventions.