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1. Tamil Nadu moves Supreme Court seeking implementation of Cauvery Water Management Authority's order

The Government of Tamil Nadu has filed a petition in the Supreme Court seeking directions to the Karnataka Government to implement the order of the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) regarding the release of Cauvery water.

The Tamil Nadu Government stated in its petition:

- i. The final award of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal dated 5 February 2007 was modified by the Supreme Court in its judgment dated 16 February 2018. According to the judgment, Karnataka must ensure a total annual flow of 167.25 TMC (thousand million cubic feet) of water at Biligundlu for Tamil Nadu.
- ii. In addition, 10 TMC has been earmarked annually to meet environmental flow requirements, taking the total to 177.25 TMC. To implement the Supreme Court judgment, the Central Government constituted the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) as a statutory body.
- iii. Tamil Nadu has approached the Supreme Court seeking urgent directions against Karnataka for failing to comply with the CWMA's binding decision issued on 30 July.

2. Tamil Nadu challenges Centre's Cauvery Basin guidelines in Supreme Court

Tamil Nadu has also filed another petition in the Supreme Court seeking to quash the Guidelines for Evaluation of Water Resource Projects in the Cauvery Basin, issued by the Central Government on 3 December 2025.

The petition states:

- The guidelines violate:
 - The Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal's award (5 February 2007),
 - The Supreme Court judgment (16 February 2018), and
 - The Cauvery Water Management Scheme, 2018, framed under Section 6A of the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956, which was notified on 1 June 2018.

- Considering any new project in the Cauvery Basin under these guidelines amounts to interfering with the Supreme Court's judgment.
- At a time when the Cauvery Basin faces water scarcity, the guidelines permit separate norms for major and medium irrigation projects, multipurpose projects, drinking water projects, hydropower projects, and river water storage schemes. Tamil Nadu argues that these guidelines directly violate both the Tribunal's final award and the Supreme Court's judgment.

3. Ghana passes Bill to protect cocoa farms

The Parliament of Ghana, a West African nation, has passed a new Bill providing for up to 20 years' imprisonment for converting cocoa farmlands to other uses without prior government approval.

- (i) The Bill also prescribes 10 to 20 years' imprisonment for illegal gold mining in cocoa-growing areas, along with fines for every cocoa tree damaged.
- (ii) Cocoa beans account for nearly 15% of Ghana's export earnings and provide livelihoods to millions of farmers. The Bill grants protected status to cocoa plantations and criminalizes unauthorized land conversion.
- (iii) However, due to strong opposition from farmers and agricultural organizations, President John Mahama has not yet given his assent to the Bill.

4. Chennai faces shortage of office space

- (i) The demand for office space in Chennai has increased significantly due to the rapid establishment of Global Capability Centres (GCCs) by multinational companies. As a result, office vacancy rates have fallen from 15.8% in 2023 to around 10%.
- (ii) According to a report titled "Chennai: Asia's Detroit; Growth Through Innovation" released by real estate analytics firm CRE Matrix, Chennai's infrastructure, IT talent, and commercial office market continue to strengthen.
- (iii) Chennai currently has 120 million sq. ft. of Grade A and Grade A+ office space, with another 42 million sq. ft. under construction.
- (iv) Office vacancy rates declined from 15.8% in 2023 to 9.9% by the end of June this year. Demand for office space is 1.8 times greater than new supply.

(v) Compared with other major Indian cities, Chennai offers high-quality office space at much lower rentals:

- Delhi – ₹182 per sq. ft.
- Mumbai – ₹175 per sq. ft.
- Gurugram – ₹106 per sq. ft.
- Bengaluru – ₹92 per sq. ft.
- Chennai – ₹75 per sq. ft.

Chennai also has one of the lowest employee attrition rates in the IT sector, enabling companies to reduce operating costs by 20–60% without compromising infrastructure or talent.

(vi) According to Abhishek Kiran Gupta, Co-founder of CRE Matrix, Chennai now hosts over 400 Global Capability Centres and more than 200,000 IT professionals, making it one of India's fastest-growing business hubs, with growth nearly twice the national average.

5. SEBI introduces new closing price mechanism

- (i) The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has introduced a new method called the Closing Auction Session (CAS) to determine the final closing price of listed shares.
- (ii) Earlier, the closing price was calculated based on the average traded price during the last 30 minutes of trading. Under the new system, buy and sell orders placed in the final minutes are pooled together and matched through a single auction, resulting in a common and fair closing price.
- (iii) Following the implementation of the new auction mechanism, institutional investors placed large orders during the final minutes of Monday's trading. Consequently, heavy investments flowed into Nifty stocks, causing the index to rise sharply and creating a wider gap between the performance of the Nifty and the Sensex.

6. Nineteen-year-old Harshita Jakar became the first Indian cyclist to participate in the Tour de France Femmes, the prestigious international women's cycling race.

- (i) She was one of eight talented riders selected by the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI). The other cyclists were from Afghanistan, Algeria, Chile, Ethiopia (two riders), Namibia, and Uganda.

7. The Supreme Court has ruled that Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which deals with cruelty against women, can also apply to couples living together without marriage.
- (i) Section 498A criminalizes cruelty by a husband or his relatives against a woman. A petition sought clarification on whether this provision applies to partners in live-in relationships.
- (ii) The case was heard by a Bench comprising Justices Sanjay Karol and N. Kotiswar Singh.
- (iii) The Court ruled that:
- Section 498A applies to couples who are in a live-in relationship with the intention of marriage.
 - However, if allegations of cruelty arise in such relationships, the accused should not be arrested without a preliminary inquiry.
 - No one enters a relationship expecting injustice; couples begin relationships hoping for a meaningful and fulfilling life, though some relationships later deteriorate.
- (iv) The Court further observed that women in both marriage and live-in relationships can face cruelty. Restricting the protection of Section 498A only to legally married women would violate Article 14 of the Constitution, which guarantees equality before the law.
8. TRAI Chairman- Anil Kumar Lahoti
9. Nishikant Dubey, Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee, has demanded that Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg issue a personal apology over the removal of a video posted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Facebook.
10. The Lok Sabha passed a Bill replacing the ordinance issued by the Central Government to increase the sanctioned strength of Supreme Court judges to 38.
11. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman introduced the Bankers' Books Evidence Bill, 2026 in the Lok Sabha amid protests.
- The Bill aims to:
- Recognize electronic and virtual banking records as admissible evidence in courts.

- Replace the 125-year-old colonial-era law governing bankers' books and evidence.
- Modernize legal provisions to align with the digital banking ecosystem.

12. Transition of the medical profession from a service-oriented field to a profit-driven industry.

- (i) In Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, a 4-year-old girl who was sexually assaulted died because two private hospitals refused to provide emergency treatment while she was unconscious. She passed away while being transported to a government hospital.
- Chief Justice Surya Kant, while hearing a petition for a special investigation into the incident, remarked that doctors who fail in their basic duty are unfit to be called doctors.
- (ii) In Bilaspur district, a group orchestrated a ₹17.2 crore fraud by obtaining fake medical certificates. They claimed that 431 people, who actually died of natural causes or accidents, had died of snake bites to claim insurance. Seventeen individuals, including doctors and lawyers, were arrested for accepting bribes to issue these fake certificates.
- (iii) At a medical graduation ceremony in Coimbatore, the Tamil Nadu Health Minister noted that some private hospitals perform unnecessary surgeries, which tarnishes the reputation of the entire medical field.
- (iv) In a Government medical college in Anantnag, it was discovered that out of 103 heart surgeries performed last December, 55 patients were fitted with pacemakers or stents without any medical necessity. The malpractice came to light during a departmental audit.
- (v) Under the guise of "medical tourism," a racket in Ernakulam targeted poor individuals in financial distress, buying their organs for ₹5–15 lakhs and selling them to recipients for ₹20–35 lakhs. Several doctors were found to be involved in this illegal trade.
- (vi) Amidst these scandals, Dr. N. Thonan (85), a doctor from the Baduga tribe in Kotagiri treated patients at his Kudiyaitham hospital for a mere ₹3 to ₹10 and provided free treatment and medicine to the destitute. Following his death on July 17, the local community expressed deep grief, displaying posters across the town.
- (vii) When students spend crores of rupees on medical education, it becomes difficult for them to maintain a service-oriented mindset.
- (viii) The public often turns to private hospitals because Government facilities frequently

suffer from a lack of quality infrastructure, technology, and specialist availability.

(ix)(ix) While the WHO recommends 1 doctor per 1,000 people, India has 1 doctor per 811 people.

The perceived shortage is due to doctors concentrating in urban centers and private sectors, leaving rural areas underserved.

(x) While a service mindset cannot be mandated by law, the state must ensure that quality healthcare is available at a low cost to the underprivileged. It is essential to punish those committing fraud and protect common citizens from commercial exploitation.