

22.10.2026 NEWS

CYCLONE TO BE NAMED 'MURASU'

- A cyclone is likely to be named 'Murasu', a Tamil word proposed by India.
- The India Meteorological Department (IMD) is responsible for naming cyclones that form over the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea in the northern Indian Ocean.
- A total of 13 countries — Bangladesh, India, Iran, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen — jointly prepare the list of cyclone names.
- The names suggested by each country are used in sequence. In ancient times, the Murasu was a traditional leather percussion instrument used by kings to communicate their messages, announcements and declarations of war to the public.
- Although it primarily served as a means of communication, the Murasu was also used to warn people during natural disasters and emergencies. It is noteworthy that the Murasu, along with the sceptre and flag, was considered one of the important symbols of royal authority.

CHANGES IN GST RULES

- A recommendation has been made to remove Section 69 of the GST Act, 2017.
- The minimum financial threshold for initiating criminal proceedings has been increased from Rs.1 crore to Rs.5 crore.

TAMIL NADU AMONG THE STATES REPORTING THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF SUBSTANDARD MEDICINES

- According to the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), 45% of the substandard medicines reported were identified in the states of Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka.
- Continuous inspections and tests are conducted to ensure the quality of medicines and tablets sold across the country.
- On the one hand, the Central Government collects medicine samples from pharmacies, warehouses and distribution centres and sends them for laboratory testing. On the other hand, State Drug Control Departments also carry out similar inspections.
- Details of substandard medicines identified through these tests are sent to the Central Government every month.

- The Central Government publishes this information online for public awareness. During inspections conducted in August, a total of 220 medicines across the country were found to be substandard.
- Quality deficiencies were reported in medicines manufactured by leading pharmaceutical companies, including antibiotics and drugs used to treat high blood pressure.
- Of these, 45%, or 100 medicines, were identified in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh.
- In August, 38 substandard medicines each were identified in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh, while 24 were identified in Karnataka.

THE THREAT OF RISING SEA LEVELS

- Around 770 million people worldwide live very close to the sea. These populations will be the first to be affected as sea-level rise intensifies. Between 1993 and 2011, the average annual rate of sea-level rise was 2.65 millimetres. However, between 2012 and 2025, this rate increased to 4.75 millimetres per year, representing an increase of nearly two times.
- If carbon emissions continue to increase at their current rate, the global sea level is projected to rise by as much as 1.01 metres by 2100.

» A Warning for India

- As far as India is concerned, sea-level rise is a more serious problem than it is for many other countries. This is because the Indian Ocean is warming faster than other major oceans.
- In particular, studies have confirmed that the Indian coastlines along the Bay of Bengal are highly vulnerable. A research paper published in 2026 states that the effects of sea-level rise have already begun to appear in places such as Ahmedabad, Chennai, Amaravati, Kochi, Kakinada and Kolkata.
- In Chennai, the sea level has been rising at a rate of 2.72 millimetres per year. An important research paper on sea-level rise in Chennai was published in the journal Nature in 2026. The study discussed not only sea-level rise but also land subsidence. Researchers point out that the effects of sea-level rise are more pronounced in areas where the land is gradually sinking.
- The research paper warns that areas such as Sholinganallur, Chitlapakkam, Adyar and Tondiarpet could face increased flooding due to the combined effects of sea-level rise and land subsidence.

» A Common Global Problem

- A United Nations declaration begins with a powerful statement : "Sea-level rise is no longer a distant or invisible problem. It has become a reality of everyday life for many people." The declaration recognises sea-level rise as a common challenge facing humanity.
- It addresses four major aspects : Scientific data and information systems related to sea-level rise, Adaptation measures and financial allocations, Resilience, loss of livelihoods and cultural heritage, Legal dimensions associated with sea-level rise.
- The declaration emphasises that future changes caused by rising sea levels must be considered when developing ports, energy-related infrastructure and other facilities in coastal areas.
- It also presents several important recommendations concerning the rights of small island nations. According to the rules of international law formulated in 1933, a territory must satisfy four conditions to be recognised as an independent state : A permanent population, A clearly defined territory, An effective government, The capacity to establish relations with other countries.

TUTICORIN 99445 11344 | TIRUNELVELI 98942 41422 | RAMANATHAPURAM 75503 52916 | MADURAI 98431 10566 | CHENNAI 97555 52003 | COVAI 90433 10773 | TENKASI 98840 51717 | SALEM 95147 89102

- As climate change intensifies and rising sea levels threaten to submerge land areas, small island nations have become increasingly concerned about how these legal conditions would apply to them.
- If an island nation's entire land area becomes submerged, or if its people are forced to live elsewhere temporarily because of disasters, the country may no longer satisfy some of these conditions.
- This raises an important question : However, the declaration clearly emphasises that even if island nations suffer severe consequences from sea-level rise, their recognition and legal status as independent states will continue.
- Surangel Whipps Jr., President of Palau and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States, welcomed this position.
- He stated : "Rising sea levels may threaten our coastal regions, homes and ways of life. However, they cannot take away our legal rights or our existence as a nation."

» Important Questions

- This is only a declaration and not a legally binding instrument. Statements such as the need to provide financial assistance to countries affected by sea-level rise remain recommendations.
- The document has been prepared in a general manner without specifically identifying any particular country. Financial assistance is also mentioned only in broad terms. Since these provisions remain recommendations, countries are not legally obligated to implement them.
- Decisions concerning marine mineral resources are already controversial. Against this background, another question arises: What happens to the maritime rights of island nations when their territories become submerged?
- There are also no clear legal definitions regarding the rights of people who become climate refugees when island nations are submerged.
- The declaration merely recommends that such people may be resettled in other countries with the consent of the countries concerned. It also calls for international cooperation to assist them. However, the rights of climate refugees have not been strongly addressed.

» Towards Change

- There have been growing calls across the world for the United Nations to adopt a stronger approach to problems such as the policies of US President Donald Trump, ongoing wars and economic decline.
- Experts are also seriously examining whether the United Nations is beginning to lose its influence.
- It is against this background that the declaration, which lacks legally binding provisions, must be examined.
- On the other hand, climate activists argue that reaching a common understanding among countries on the issue of sea-level rise is itself a major achievement.
- Despite certain uncertainties and unanswered questions, there is no disagreement that this declaration represents an important first step.
- Environmentalists hope that discussions at forthcoming international summits will transform these recommendations into legally binding laws and agreements.
- Representatives of island nations continue to strongly assert their rights.
- It is hoped that their sustained efforts will bring meaningful changes to the international community.