

16.11.2026 NEWS

THE END OF EVERYTHING – BOOKER PRIZE 2026

- The shortlist of six novels for the 2026 Booker Prize was announced. The shortlisted works included The End of Everything by M. John Harrison, Black Bag by Ian McEwan, John of John by Douglas Stuart, May We Feed the King by Rebecca Perry, The Disappearers by Marlon James, and The Things We Never Say by Elizabeth Strout.
- Finally, at the award ceremony held on November 9, 2026, at the Old Billingsgate Hall in London, the novel The End of Everything, written by British author M. John Harrison, was unanimously announced as the winner of the 2026 Booker Prize.
- Although The End of Everything is a work of speculative fiction set in the future, it accurately reflects the psychological anxieties of our present world.
- Unlike conventional science-fiction novels, the purpose of this novel is not to describe futuristic technologies in detail or to imagine grand scientific explanations for them.
- Instead, it deeply explores the limits of human understanding and examines how language begins to fail when those limits are reached.
- The story is set along the eastern coast of England. It revolves around two central characters: Philip Tennant, who makes a living by collecting old objects washed ashore, and his elderly aunt, Marnie.
- Many years have passed since a devastating catastrophe completely transformed the region. However, the actual cause of the disaster and how it occurred remain unexplained mysteries.
- At present, numerous new and strange life forms are appearing in the sea. Under these unusual circumstances, Philip Tennant discovers a mysterious object in the ocean.
- The strange object continuously changes its form every second and begins issuing instructions to the humans who attempt to control it.
- Fearing that the object may have arrived to cause another catastrophe, Philip finds himself compelled to transport it inland before it destroys everything.
- Writing in Literary Review, critic Olivia Ho praised the novel, stating : "The fear that everyday life could collapse at any moment haunts everyone. In such circumstances, this novel reflects the anxieties of our present world with remarkable accuracy. It is a strangely beautiful literary work in which tenderness and horror are blended in equal measure."
- The novel also deeply examines how a catastrophe becomes something beyond human understanding when social norms collapse and established rules no longer serve any purpose.
- Through the imaginative lens of the future, M. John Harrison sheds light on the tensions of today's digital world and the political uncertainties of the post-war global order.

QUAD, INCLUDING INDIA

- The Philippines will chair the Asian alliance known as the "Quad," comprising 11 member countries, including India, this year.
- Leaders from India, the United States, Japan and Australia, which are members of the Quad alliance, will also participate in the event.

HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENT: SPACEX CATCHES RETURNING SPACECRAFT USING MECHANICAL ARMS

- For the first time in world history, a Starship rocket returning from space to Earth was precisely caught by the mechanical arms of a steel tower. With this achievement, SpaceX has created a new milestone in space technology.
- SpaceX's rocket launch facility is located at Starbase in the US state of Texas. Two steel towers, each measuring 479 feet in height and 44 feet in width, have been constructed at the facility.
- Starship rockets are launched from these towers. A 403-foot-long Starship rocket was launched into space from a steel tower at the Starbase facility in Texas.
- After entering space, the spacecraft separated from the rocket and successfully deployed 26 satellites one after another.
- After orbiting in space for approximately 22 hours, the Starship spacecraft returned to the steel tower.
- At that moment, the mechanical arms of the steel tower caught the returning spacecraft with remarkable precision.

EL NIÑO: A BENEFIT OR A CHALLENGE FOR TAMIL NADU'S RAINFALL?

» Why is the Northeast Monsoon Important?

- Tamil Nadu and Puducherry receive a significant portion of their annual rainfall during the Northeast Monsoon season, from October to December.
- Many districts in Tamil Nadu, including the delta districts, depend more on the Northeast Monsoon than on the Southwest Monsoon.
- The pattern of the Northeast Monsoon directly affects agriculture and water resource management in Tamil Nadu.
- Delays in rainfall, prolonged dry spells, or heavy rainfall within a short period can affect crop growth and water management in agricultural fields.
- In regions receiving insufficient rainfall, planning must consider the existing water reserves, irrigation requirements, and drinking water supply.
- On the other hand, areas experiencing heavy rainfall within a short period may face a sudden increase in water inflow into reservoirs, waterlogging in low-lying residential areas, and urban flooding.
- In cities such as Chennai, it is important to monitor not only the total amount of rainfall but also the intensity of rainfall within an hour, drainage facilities, and the condition of water bodies.

» What is El Niño? Does It Determine Monsoon Rainfall?

- El Niño refers to a climate phenomenon in which sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean rise above normal levels, causing changes in atmospheric circulation.
- Although El Niño can influence the Indian monsoon, its impact on Tamil Nadu's Northeast Monsoon cannot be determined solely by its strength or weakness.
- In the past, Tamil Nadu has experienced different rainfall patterns during El Niño years.

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- Therefore, it would be incorrect to conclude that the formation of El Niño will necessarily lead to either a decrease or an increase in rainfall in Tamil Nadu.

» El Niño Is Not the Only Factor

- Several other factors, along with El Niño, play an important role in determining the pattern of the Northeast Monsoon in Tamil Nadu.
- Low-pressure systems forming over the Bay of Bengal, upper-air atmospheric circulations, wind direction and speed, and temperature conditions in the Indian Ocean can influence the amount of rainfall and the distribution of rain clouds.
- Ocean-atmosphere factors, including the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD), can also affect monsoon patterns.

» Role of Low-Pressure Systems in the Bay of Bengal

- Low-pressure systems and cyclones forming over the Bay of Bengal play an important role in determining Tamil Nadu's Northeast Monsoon rainfall.
- When such weather systems approach the Tamil Nadu coast, certain areas may experience very heavy rainfall over a few days.
- At the same time, if their movement or tracks change, rainfall may shift to other regions.
- Furthermore, atmospheric circulation patterns over the Indian Ocean influence both the intensity and geographical distribution of rainfall.
- Therefore, meteorologists believe that predicting Tamil Nadu's rainfall pattern based only on El Niño is not a scientifically reliable approach.
- This is because El Niño is a climate indicator, not a weather forecast.
- Variations in rainfall depend on several factors, including the strength of El Niño, its duration, conditions in the Indian Ocean, and weather systems developing over the Bay of Bengal.

» Importance of Weather Forecasts

- A seasonal weather forecast provides a data-based assessment of whether rainfall over the next few months is likely to be above normal, below normal, or near normal.
- However, a short-range weather forecast identifies which districts are likely to receive rainfall over the next 24 to 72 hours and where heavy rainfall may occur.
- Thus, seasonal forecasts are useful for understanding broader rainfall trends, while short-range forecasts help identify immediate weather conditions and potential rainfall risks.

» Impacts of El Niño

- **Drought and Water Scarcity :** In some regions, reduced rainfall may lead to a decline in water levels in reservoirs, lakes, and groundwater sources. Drinking water supply may also be affected.
- **Heavy Rainfall and Flooding :** Some parts of the world may experience above-normal rainfall. This can increase the risk of river flooding, landslides, and waterlogging in residential areas.
- **Impact on Agricultural Production** : Delayed rainfall, drought, or excessive rainfall may affect sowing, crop growth, and harvesting. As a result, food production and farmers' incomes may decline.
- **Increase in Temperature :** El Niño tends to increase the global average temperature.
- **Risk of Forest Fires :** In regions experiencing drought and extreme heat, vegetation may dry out, creating favourable conditions for forest fires.
- **Impact on Marine Resources and Fisheries :** Changes in sea temperatures and nutrient circulation may affect fish distribution, reproduction, and income from fishing activities.
- **Health Problems** : Flooding, stagnant water, heatwaves, and deterioration in drinking water quality may increase the risk of infectious diseases and heat-related health problems.

- **Economic Impacts :** Agricultural losses, disruptions to fishing activities, drinking water shortages, flood damage, and disaster recovery expenses may affect local economies.

» Major Weather Systems That Determine Rainfall

1. Low-Pressure Area

- A low-pressure area is a region in the atmosphere where air pressure is lower than in surrounding areas.
- Air converges towards this region and rises. When sufficient moisture is present, clouds may form and produce rainfall.
- Such systems developing over the Bay of Bengal are particularly important for rainfall in Tamil Nadu.

» 2. Cyclones and Depressions

- These weather systems have stronger wind circulation than ordinary low-pressure areas.
- Depending on their movement, track, and speed, they may cause heavy rainfall, very heavy rainfall, and flooding.

» 3. Upper-Air Cyclonic Circulation

- An upper-air cyclonic circulation develops at a particular altitude in the atmosphere.
- It can create favourable conditions for rising air and cloud formation.
- In some circumstances, it may also help strengthen a low-pressure system.

» 4. Wind Convergence Zone

- A wind convergence zone is an area where winds from different directions meet. When these winds converge, air rises upward.
- If sufficient moisture is available, thunderstorms and widespread rainfall may develop.

» 5. Low-Pressure Trough

- A low-pressure trough is an elongated region of relatively low atmospheric pressure.
- The distribution of rainfall varies depending on its location, movement, and associated wind circulation.
- Low-pressure troughs play an important role in India's Southwest Monsoon.

» 6. Convective Clouds

- When the Earth's surface becomes heated, warm and moist air rises rapidly, forming tall rain clouds.
- These clouds may produce heavy rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms.
- This is one of the reasons why some locations receive intense rainfall within a short period.

» 7. Easterly Waves

- Easterly waves are atmospheric disturbances that generally move from east to west across tropical regions.
- They can modify moisture distribution and upward air movement, contributing to rainfall over the Bay of Bengal and southern India.
- 8. Madden–Julian Oscillation (MJO)
- The Madden–Julian Oscillation is a large-scale tropical atmospheric phenomenon that influences cloud formation, wind patterns, and rainfall.
- Its cycle generally lasts about 30–60 days.
- When its active phase is favourable over the Indian Ocean region, rainfall activity may increase. During its suppressed phase, rainfall activity may decrease.

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