

February 3, 2026 – Dinamani Newspaper – Tit bits

1. The US President Donald Trump approved the trade agreement with India.

(i) Trump stated that he would reduce the 25 percent tariff imposed on Indian goods to 18 percent.

(ii) Following this, Donald Trump expressed his expectation that India would agree to reduce its tariff and non-tariff barriers against the US to zero.

2. The Chief Minister M.K. Stalin announced that a Special Area Development Authority would be established in Mamallapuram, and world-class infrastructure facilities would be created at a cost of Rs.100 crore. Speaking after inaugurating the Global Tourism Summit 2026 held in Mamallapuram, Chengalpattu district, Chief Minister Stalin said:

(i) In Tamil Nadu, folk dances such as Karagattam, Kavadiyattam, Oyilattam, Mayilattam, Therukoothu, Thappattam, Bharatanatyam, and sports like Jallikattu, which are symbols of our culture, have attracted the attention of tourists. The tourism sector has the power to take these arts, artists, and our culture to the global stage.

(ii) The achievements of the Tamil Nadu Tourism Department include numerous projects such as the Keezhadi Museum, the Porunai Museum, the Kalaingar Centenary Jallikattu Arena, and the glass bridge to the Thiruvalluvar statue in Kanyakumari. In the last five years, Rs.612.18 crore has been allocated for the development of the tourism sector.

(iii) In the last five years, 128.97 crore domestic tourists and approximately 45 lakh foreign tourists have visited Tamil Nadu.

(iv) Three announcements:

* To place Tamil Nadu on the world tourism map as a destination for art and cultural tourism, a grand event will be held for the first time in January next year.

* To improve basic facilities for tourists, a 'Special Area Development Authority' will be established in Mamallapuram, through which modern, world-class tourism infrastructure facilities will be created at an estimated cost of Rs.100 crore.

* Based on the 2023 Tourism Policy announcement, SIPCOT will identify tourist destinations, attract investments, and create new tourism facilities.

* As a first phase, four special tourist destinations have been identified in Kanyakumari, Kallakurichi, Erode, and Thoothukudi districts, and Expressions of Interest have been invited to attract investments.

* Subsequently, in the second phase, 31 locations have been selected across Tamil Nadu. These have been categorized into urban tourism, special experience tourism, and large tourism centers, where accommodations, theme parks, camping sites, and nature-based accommodations will be established. This will create employment opportunities for several lakhs of people across Tamil Nadu, said Chief Minister Stalin.

(v) 127 Agreements worth ₹22,794 Crores :-

* At the Tamil Nadu Global Tourism Summit, 127 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) were signed in the presence of the Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, representing committed investments of ₹22,794.78 crores and assured employment for 65,937 people.

* These agreements will be implemented across various tourism sectors such as heritage tourism, adventure tourism, MICE tourism, and eco-tourism.

* Furthermore, the Chief Minister Stalin inaugurated three completed tourism development projects worth a total of ₹40.25 crores in Poompuhar (Mayiladuthurai district), Chidambaram (Cuddalore district), and Mamallapuram (Chengalpattu district) for public use.

* The Chief Minister Stalin also laid the foundation stone for new projects worth a total of ₹8 crores, including the construction of 'Hotel Tamil Nadu' by the Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation at Thirukkadaiyur in Mayiladuthurai district at a cost of ₹5 crore, and tourism development works in Tharangambadi at a cost of ₹3 crore, which include a walkway, parking area, ticket counter, electrical room, and sanitation facilities.

3. The Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw stated that Rs. 7,611 crore has been allocated for Tamil Nadu railway projects in the Union Budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

(i) According to the budget proposals, two new bullet train corridor projects are to be launched in Tamil Nadu. One corridor will be between Chennai and Bengaluru, and the second between Chennai and Hyderabad.

(ii) These will be designed to operate at a maximum speed of 350 kilometers per hour. These corridors will be elevated rail lines, similar to the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train corridor. The bullet train corridor projects will commence after the detailed project report is finalized.

(iii) The travel time between Chennai and Bengaluru will be 1 hour and 13 minutes, and between Chennai and Hyderabad, it will be 2 hours and 55 minutes. This will be a major economic corridor.

4. The Chief Minister M.K. Stalin will launch the 'My Dream - My Future' scheme in Tindivanam, Villupuram district, on Wednesday (February 4).

(i) The Ungaludan Stalin scheme, which was launched across Tamil Nadu in July 2025, was subsequently conducted in various areas. A total of 10,000 camps were held, and based on the petitions received at these camps, a ceremony to provide social security scheme benefits to 1.80 lakh beneficiaries, the launch of the 'My Dream - My Future' website, and the inauguration of completed projects and the laying of foundation stones for new projects in Villupuram district will take place on Wednesday (February 4).

5. In the Presidential election held in the Central American country of Costa Rica, the ruling party candidate, Laura Fernández, has secured a resounding victory with 48.9 percent of the votes.

(i) According to the country's law, 40 percent of the votes are sufficient for a Presidential candidate to win in the first round, thus avoiding the second round of elections that was scheduled for April. Her opponent, economist Álvaro Ramos, was defeated, securing 33 percent of the votes. He has accepted his defeat and announced that his party will act as a 'constructive' opposition to the new Government.

(ii) Laura Fernández, a staunch supporter of the current President Rodrigo Chaves, is 39 years old and has prior experience serving as the Minister of Planning and Presidential Affairs.

(iii) Along with the Presidential election, elections were also held for the country's 57-seat parliament. Laura Fernández's party secured 30 seats, gaining a majority.

(iv) However, to change the country's fundamental legal framework and create the 'third' republic she envisions, 38 seats (an absolute majority) are required. She will also need to seek the support of other parties in making powerful decisions such as appointing Supreme Court justices.

6. The Tibetan Buddhist leader, the Dalai Lama, has been awarded a Grammy Award in the Best Audiobook category.

(i) While China has criticized the award, calling it politically motivated, the Dalai Lama expressed his gratitude, stating that it is an acknowledgment of humanity's collective responsibility.

(ii) The Dalai Lama (Tenzin Gyatso) won his first Grammy Award at the 68th Annual Grammy Awards ceremony held in Los Angeles, USA.

(iii) The award was given in the 'Best Spoken Word Album' category for his audiobook, 'Meditations: The Reflections of His Holiness the Dalai Lama'.

7. India's Anahat Singh became the champion in the women's category at the 'Squash on Fire Open' squash tournament held in the United States.

8. The Tamil Nadu-born climate scientist Veerabhadran Ramanathan (82) has been awarded the prestigious Crafoord Prize for his research in Earth sciences in the United States. The prize was announced by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, which also awards the Nobel Prizes.

(i) The Crafoord Prize, considered the 'Nobel Prize for Earth Sciences,' has been awarded in recognition of Ramanathan's years of research on factors that warm the Earth much more intensely than carbon dioxide, and on atmospheric brown clouds.

(ii) In 1975, Ramanathan worked at NASA, the US space research organization. There, he discovered that Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) trap heat 10,000 times more effectively than carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. His research transformed the understanding of global warming.

(iii) Speaking to the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, he said, "Until 1975, we thought that carbon dioxide was the main cause of global warming. But after learning about CFCs, I was shocked to realize the power that humans and technology have in causing environmental change." His work on the Indian Ocean led to the discovery of brown clouds in the South Asian atmosphere. This research linked air pollution to reduced monsoon rainfall in India and the rapid melting of Himalayan glaciers.

(iv) His work formed the basis for important international agreements, including the Montreal Protocol, which aims to prevent billions of tons of harmful gases from entering the atmosphere.

9. The Central Government has stated that 1.31 crore tonnes of monazite mineral are present in 8 states, including Tamil Nadu.

(i) Monazite is a reddish-brown phosphate mineral. It is primarily obtained from mineral-rich coastal

sands and igneous rocks.

(ii) The Directorate of Atomic Minerals Exploration and Research (AMD) has estimated that 1.31 crore tonnes of monazite are present in the coastal sands of 8 states: Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Jharkhand, and West Bengal.

10. The Supreme Court ruled that the Central Government must constitute a tribunal within a month to resolve the Pennaiyar river water-sharing dispute between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

(i) Previously, the case concerning the sharing of Pennaiyar river water between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka has been ongoing in the Supreme Court for the past eight years. Tamil Nadu filed a case in the Supreme Court alleging that Karnataka was acting in violation of the rules in this matter.

(ii) Tamil Nadu argued that 'Karnataka is illegally undertaking construction work for a large dam across the Markandeya river, a tributary of the Pennaiyar river, near Yarkol village. This will completely deprive Tamil Nadu of its water resources and affect the livelihoods of its people.'

