

October 8, 2026 – Dinamani Newspaper – Tit bits

1.Prime Minister Narendra Modi completed 25 uninterrupted years as the head of a Government on Wednesday, having served first as the Chief Minister of Gujarat and later as the Prime Minister of India.

(i) Prime Minister Modi assumed office as the Chief Minister of Gujarat on October 7, 2001, and continued in that position until he became the Prime Minister of India in May 2014. Currently serving his third term as Prime Minister, he completed 25 years as the head of a government on October 7.

2.Two scientists, Henri P. Kagan of France and Kenzo Soai of Japan, have been selected for this year's Nobel Prize in Chemistry.

(i) The prestigious award has been announced for their research into the mysterious "mirror-image molecules" in chemistry and their efforts to solve the related scientific puzzle. Mirror-image molecules look identical but cannot be perfectly superimposed on one another. Both scientists have made significant contributions to research aimed at solving the mystery surrounding the chemical reactions of such molecules.

(ii) Heiner Linke, Chair of the Nobel Committee for Chemistry, said in this regard: "The research of Henri Kagan and Kenzo Soai has provided a solution to a chemical puzzle that existed for more than a century. In other words, their work has helped explain how chirality in molecules arises spontaneously. The chemical reactions developed by them are remarkable."

(iii) Henri P. Kagan, aged 95, was born in France and served as a professor at the University of Paris-Sud in Orsay, France. Kenzo Soai, who was born in Japan, served as a professor at the Tokyo University of Science.

(iv) Earlier, the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for this year was announced on Monday, followed by the Nobel Prize in Physics on Tuesday. The Nobel Prizes for Literature, Peace and Economic Sciences are scheduled to be announced subsequently.

3.A dedicated pavilion representing the Tamil Nadu Government has been opened at the international book fair being held in Germany.

(i) The world-famous Frankfurt International Book Fair began in Frankfurt, Germany, on Wednesday and will continue until October 11. At the book fair, the Tamil Nadu Textbook and Educational Services Corporation and the Directorate of Public Libraries have jointly established a dedicated pavilion showcasing the Chennai International Book Fair.

4.Myanmar President Min Aung Hlaing arrived in Malaysia to hold discussions with the Malaysian Prime Minister regarding the repatriation of refugees.

5.In recognition of his contribution to international peace, Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari honoured UN Secretary-General António Guterres with Pakistan's highest civilian award, the Nishan-e-Imtiaz.

6.Satellite communications company Starlink stated that its services have been specifically designed to fully meet India's security requirements and regulatory norms.

(i) The company further assured that appropriate controls have been put in place at every level and that the data of Indian users will be stored and protected within India.

(ii) Speaking at an Indian telecommunications event, Lauren Dreyer, Vice President of Commercial Operations at SpaceX's Starlink business, said that the company had already invested in developing the basic infrastructure required for the Indian market and was ready to provide services in the country. She stated that Starlink's operations had been specifically designed in accordance with India's security requirements.

(iii) The Central Government has already granted licences to three companies, including Starlink, to provide satellite-based internet services in India. However, these services can officially commence only after spectrum allocation and final security clearance are obtained.

7. Argentine football star Lionel Messi, who has retired from the national team, played his farewell match for Argentina on Wednesday. In the friendly match, Argentina defeated Benin 3–0.

8. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has called for India and Africa to work together to address common challenges.

(i) Jaishankar is on his first visit to Ghana, an African country. During the visit, he met Ghana's Foreign Minister Samuel Ablakwa and held discussions on bilateral issues. In the presence of both ministers, Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were subsequently signed in areas including agricultural research and education.

(ii) 15 African countries have jointly established the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), of which Ghana is a founding member. Ghana is also scheduled to assume the Chairmanship of the African Union next year. Prime Minister Narendra Modi made his first visit to Ghana in July last year.

(iii) This visit was significant as it made Prime Minister Modi the first Indian Prime Minister to visit Ghana in 30 years.

9. RBI hikes repo rate

(i) Key Policy Decision

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) raised the repo interest rate by 25 basis points (0.25%), increasing it from 5.25% to 5.50%.
- The repo rate is defined as the short-term interest rate at which the RBI provides loans to commercial banks.
- All 6 members of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) attended the meeting in Mumbai and unanimously approved the rate hike.
- The RBI last raised the repo rate by 0.25% in February 2023. It subsequently held rates steady for three and a half years before implementing successive rate cuts that brought the repo rate down to 5.25%.
- RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra assumed office in December 2024; this decision marks the first repo rate hike during his tenure.

(ii) Rationale & Impact on Borrowers

- The rate hike was implemented primarily to keep rising domestic inflation under control.
- Commercial banks are expected to raise interest rates on housing, vehicle, and other personal loans.
- For borrowers with loans linked directly to the repo rate, the rate increase will lead to either an extension in EMI repayment tenure or higher monthly interest costs.

(iii) Macroeconomic Forecasts & Digital Payments

- Despite ongoing global uncertainties, domestic economic activity remains unaffected.
- Real GDP Growth Projections:
 - Q1 FY2026–27: 7.1%
 - Q2 FY2026–27: 7.2%
 - Q3 FY2026–27: 6.9%
 - Q4 FY2026–27: 6.8%
 - Q1 FY2027–28: 7.1%
- The retail inflation forecast for the current financial year has been revised upward from 5% to 5.2%, driven by significant price increases in food items and oil.
- The small fee recently introduced via the Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) has not caused any significant impact on UPI transactions, with transaction volumes showing no drop to date.

10. The University of Colorado Denver, USA, has received a Letter of Intent from the University Grants Commission (UGC) to establish a new campus in Hyderabad.

(i) With this, the university has become the first US public university to receive approval to establish a campus in India offering degree programmes.

(ii) Last year, the Illinois Institute of Technology, based in Chicago, became the first US private university to establish a campus in India. Student admissions at its Mumbai campus commenced in September last year.

(iii) Meanwhile, the Hyderabad campus of the University of Colorado Denver will not only be the first campus of a US public university in India, but will also become the first foreign university campus to be established in Telangana.

11. Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasised the need to establish a free, transparent and rules-based global maritime order that promotes peace and progress for everyone. Reading out Prime Minister Modi's address at the "Sagarmanchan – The Ocean Dialogue" event, Shipping Secretary Vijay Kumar stated:

- India's position is that oceans should become a shared resource for all. Every country should have the right to express its views and have opportunities for development.
- India is approaching the oceans with a new vision and determination. The handling capacity of the country's major ports has nearly doubled. At the same time, the turnaround time of ships at ports has been reduced significantly. India has the second-largest number of seafarers in the world.
- India's relationship with the sea is ancient. The country's maritime heritage extends from the ancient port city of Lothal, through the Chola period, to the naval forces of Maratha ruler Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.

12. Lets get ready for Los Angeles

(i) Overall Performance and Medal Tally

- India retained its 4th position overall at the recent Asian Games held in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.
- The Indian contingent won 85 medals in total, comprising 21 Gold, 27 Silver, and 37 Bronze.
- India won 21 fewer medals than in the 2023 Hangzhou Asian Games, where it secured 106 medals (28 Gold, 38 Silver, and 40 Bronze).
- Out of 495 athletes, 310 were first-time competitors. Both the Indian men's and women's contingents won 38 medals each.

(ii) Historic Achievements and Notable Athletes

- The Indian women's hockey team won the gold medal after 44 years by defeating Paris Olympics silver-medalist China.
- Kumkum Mohot: The 17-year-old daughter of a sweet-wrapper seller became the first Indian woman to win gold in the Archery Recurve category.
- Neeru Dhanda: The daughter of a Haryana farmer became the first Indian woman to win gold in the individual trap shooting event. Her mother was purchasing BPL wheat at a ration shop when she won, and their home lacked even a TV or smartphone to watch her accomplishment.
- Vithya Ramraj: Hailing from Valukkuparai, Meenakshipuram near Coimbatore, the daughter of a lorry driver won 1 Gold, 1 Silver, and 1 Bronze, breaking P.T. Usha's 42-year-old national record in the 400m hurdles.
- Chikitha Sahil: The Telangana archer won 2 Gold medals after her father mortgaged his farm land and sold his paddy harvesting machine to support her training.
- Manpreet Kaur: The 36-year-old shot putter won a bronze medal in front of her 14-year-old daughter, overcoming poverty, a doping ban, a leg fracture, and a C-section childbirth.

(iii) Highlights from Tamil Nadu Athletes

- Gold Medalists: Vithya Ramraj (Women's 400m relay) and Ganesh Manirathnam (Men's Compound Archery Team) won gold medals. G. Kamalini (Women's Cricket) and Washington Sundar (Men's Cricket) were part of gold-winning teams.
- Silver Medalists: Vithya Ramraj and Vishal T.K. won silver in the mixed 400m relay.
- Historic Pole Vault Bronze: Baranika Elangovan won India's first-ever Asian Games medal in pole vault.
- Bronze Contributors: 9 other athletes from Tamil Nadu secured bronze medals across various disciplines.

(iv) Shortfalls and Disappointments

- A total of 137 athletes across 16 sports (including tennis) returned without winning a single medal.
- India returned without a tennis medal for the first time since 1986.
- Underperformance in Racquet Sports: In badminton and table tennis, 37 athletes managed only 2 bronze medals.
- Star performers P.V. Sindhu (badminton) and Manu Bhaker (shooting) failed to reach the medal list, while Neeraj Chopra missed the games due to injury.



- Greater effort and strategy are required in individual disciplines like swimming, gymnastics, and cycling.

(v) Government Expenditure & Future Roadmap

- The Central Government spent ₹703 crore over the past 4 years on training and preparation for these Asian Games.
- Over the next two years, India must build dominance in individual events like boxing and wrestling, as well as team sports like hockey—similar to China's dominance in table tennis, the US in swimming, Japan in judo, and South Korea in archery—before aspiring to host the Olympic Games.

