



EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAY 17, 2026

NATIONAL

Netherlands returns 21 copper plates with Tamil inscription belonging to Chola era

- The Netherlands on Saturday handed back 11th-century Chola dynasty copper plates to India, in an event attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, signifying the strengthening of ties between the two countries.
- PM Modi arrived in the Netherlands on Friday, after a brief stopover in the UAE, on the second leg of his five-nation tour that also includes Sweden, Norway and Italy.
- India has been pursuing the return of the Anaimangalam Copper Plates, known in the Netherlands as the Leiden Plates, since 2012. The 21 copper plates are considered the most significant surviving records of the Chola dynasty and are among the important artefacts of Tamil heritage held anywhere outside India.
- The copper plates, belonging to the times of Rajaraja Chola I, weigh approximately 30 kg and are bound together by a bronze ring bearing the royal seal of the Chola dynasty.
- The 24th session of the Intergovernmental Committee on Return and Restitution found that India's claim as the nation of origin for the plates was valid.
- The committee encouraged the Netherlands to engage in constructive bilateral dialogue with India regarding the return of the plates, and the

Netherlands subsequently decided to hand over the plates during the PM's visit.

IN-SPACe and India's Space Sector

- The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) led a delegation of nine Indian space-tech companies to Space Meetings Veneto 2026 in Venice, Italy, on 16-17 May 2026. The delegation was headed by Dr. P.K. Jain, Director of the Programme Management and Authorisation Directorate at IN-SPACe.
- **Agreements Signed in Venice**
 - Astrobase Space Technologies signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Italy's Impulso Space on 16 May 2026. The agreement covers customer access, integrated mission management, and launch service networks. Kepler Aerospace signed a framework agreement with Apogeo Space around 16 May 2026. The agreement covers Ground Station as a Service infrastructure, satellite collaboration between India and Europe, CubeSat systems, payload technologies, and mission operations. VyomIC announced a collaboration on navigation and resilient infrastructure technologies during the same event in Venice.
- **India-Italy Space Cooperation**
 - The visit was linked to the 2025-2029 India-Italy Joint Strategic Action Plan. The plan was announced during the G20 Summit in 2024 and covers cooperation in strategic sectors, including space. An Italian aerospace delegation had visited India in 2025. India's private space sector includes satellite manufacturing, launch services, ground stations, and mission operations.

SPORTS NEWS

3rd HCL National Doubles Squash Championships

- Top seeds Velavan Senthilkumar and Joshna Chinappa produced a superb display to clinch the mixed doubles title at the 3rd HCL National Doubles Squash Championships here on Saturday.
- The top-seeded pair defeated the second-seeded duo of Abhay Singh and Rathika Seelan 11-7, 11-9 in a closely fought final at the Indian Squash Academy in Chennai. Earlier in the tournament, both Senthilkumar and Joshna had also captured the men's and women's doubles crowns respectively with their partners.
- Senthilkumar teamed up with Abhay to secure the men's doubles title for a third consecutive year after beating second seeds Rahul Baitha and Suraj Kumar Chand 11-8, 11-5 in the final. Joshna and Rathika outclassed Janet Vidhi and Pooja Arthi 11-8, 11-4 to lift the women's title.

