

13/08/2026 Daily Current News

1. *World Elephant Day:*

Context: World Elephant Day, observed annually on 12 August, highlights the need for sustained global action. India's conservation efforts address habitat loss, fragmentation, poaching, illegal wildlife trade and human-elephant conflict. The country combines legal protection, habitat conservation, scientific monitoring and community participation as part of its conservation efforts.

More details:

- ❖ India is home to nearly 60% of the world's wild Asian elephants, highlighting its vital role in global elephant conservation.
- ❖ The Synchronous All India Population Estimation of Elephants (SAIEE) 2021–25 estimates India's wild elephant population at 22,446. These elephants are protected across 33 Elephant Reserves and 150 identified corridors.
- ❖ They are migratory in nature, with home ranges spanning 100–3,000 km². As they move long distances, they create pathways and water holes that benefit other wildlife.
- ❖ Project Elephant is the Government of India's flagship initiative for elephant conservation. Implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), the programme provides financial and technical support to States for protecting elephant habitats, conserving captive elephants and mitigating human-elephant conflict.
- ❖ Under Project Elephant, the Government has identified and validated elephant corridors across 14 elephant-range states.
- ❖ According to Elephant Corridors of India, 2023, prepared with technical support from the Wildlife Institute of India, these corridors span across four regions.
- ❖ The East-Central region has 52 corridors, followed by the North-East (48), Southern (32) and Northern (18) regions. West Bengal has the highest number, with 26 corridors.
- ❖ The network includes 19 inter-state corridors and six transboundary corridors connecting India and Nepal.

2. *PRAHAAR:*

Context: The Ministry of Home Affairs has unveiled 'PRAHAAR' as India's first comprehensive National Counter Terrorism Policy & Strategy on 23rd February, 2026.

About PRAHAAR:

- ❖ PRAHAAR provides a national counter-terrorism framework for preventing and responding to terrorism and radicalization.
- ❖ It follows a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, shifting India from a reactive to a proactive, intelligence-led strategy.
- ❖ Its seven pillars focus on prevention, swift response, inter-agency coordination, human rights & rule of law, counter-radicalization, international cooperation, and recovery & resilience.
- ❖ It strengthens real-time intelligence sharing through the Multi Agency Centre (MAC) and improves coordination between State Police/agencies and specialised central forces such as NSG.

- ❖ The strategy emphasises critical infrastructure protection, technology integration, and coordinated command mechanisms for rapid response.
- ❖ It addresses the terror ecosystem and radicalization through community participation while ensuring human rights and rule-of-law-based processes.
- ❖ It targets terror financing through measures such as tracking crypto wallets, disrupting dark-web financing and asset seizure, aligned with FATF standards and international cooperation.
- ❖ Implementation is phased and continuously monitored, with the NIA's Annual Anti-Terror Conference (ATC) serving as a platform to review and strengthen counter-terrorism measures.

3. ***Kavach system:***

Context: Indian Railways has approved the provision of Kavach Version 4.0 on 660 Route Km of the Izzatnagar Division of North Eastern Railway (NER) at an estimated cost of ₹295 crore.

About Kavach system:

- ❖ Kavach is an indigenously developed Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system for Indian Railways.
- ❖ It assists the Loco Pilot in maintaining prescribed speed limits and automatically applies brakes if the pilot fails to do so.
- ❖ It enhances train safety, including during adverse/inclement weather conditions.
- ❖ Kavach is certified to Safety Integrity Level-4 (SIL-4), indicating a very high level of safety and reliability.
- ❖ It was adopted as the National ATP system in July 2020 and was developed by RDSO (Research Designs & Standards Organisation).
- ❖ Kavach Version 4.0 incorporates major improvements such as better location accuracy and improved information on signal aspects in large yards.
- ❖ Version 4.0 enables Station-to-Station Kavach communication through OFC and direct integration with existing Electronic Interlocking Systems.
- ❖ These improvements enable large-scale deployment of Kavach across the Indian Railways network, marking a major advancement in railway safety.

4. ***Compounded annual growth rate of Manufacturing GVA:***

Context: The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has revised the base year of the National Accounts Statistics from 2011–12 to 2022–23, and the revised series was released in February 2026.

More details:

- ❖ The compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of Manufacturing GVA at constant prices (2022-23 base) as per the revised series during 2022-23 to 2025-26 is 10.88%.
- ❖ As per the revised series (2022–23 base), the contribution of the Manufacturing sector to India's Gross Value Added (GVA) at current prices and the growth rate of Manufacturing GVA at constant prices during the period 2022–23 to 2025–26 are given below:

Indicator	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (FRE)	2025-26 (PE)
Share of Manufacturing in total GVA (in %)	14.7	14.7	14.5	14.8
Change over previous year (in %)	-	(+)12.7	(+)9.3	(+)10.7

5. *Mullaperiyar Dam:*

Context: The Tamil Nadu government has in the Supreme Court flagged Kerala's "obstructionist attitude", which has "stalled" the implementation of a 12-year-old top court judgment in the Mullaperiyar dam dispute allowing Tamil Nadu to raise the reservoir water level to 142 feet.

About Mullaperiyar Dam:

- ❖ It is a masonry gravity dam situated on the Periyar River in Thekkady, Idukki district, in Kerala.
- ❖ It is located 881 m above sea level, on the Cardamom Hills of the Western Ghats.
- ❖ The dam is built at the confluence of the Mullayar and Periyar rivers.
- ❖ The dam's purpose was to divert the waters of the west-flowing River Periyar eastward to the arid rain shadow regions of the Theni, Madurai, Sivaganga, and Ramanathapuram districts of Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The Periyar National Park is located around the dam's reservoir.
- ❖ It is located in Idukki district of Kerala.
- ❖ It was given to British-ruled Madras Presidency on a 999-year lease in 1886 by the raja of travancore.
- ❖ The agreement granted full rights to the Tamil Nadu to construct irrigation projects on the land.
- ❖ After the independence, the Kerala government said that the earlier agreement signed between British Raj and Travancore was invalid and needed to be renewed.
- ❖ As a result, the agreement was renewed in the 1970s.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu was given rights to the land and the water from the dam as well as the authority to develop hydro-power projects at the site.
- ❖ Kerala received rent in return.

6. *Cloud Seeding:*

Context: To tackle the severe droughts and water shortages that plague the country, Kazakhstan has resorted to cloud seeding, a weather modification method previously unseen in Central Asia.

About Cloud Seeding:

- ❖ Definition: Cloud seeding is a weather modification technique used to enhance rainfall or snowfall from existing clouds.

- ❖ Seeding Agents: Substances such as silver iodide, potassium iodide, sodium chloride and dry ice are dispersed into clouds, usually using aircraft.
- ❖ Mechanism: These particles act as cloud condensation nuclei (CCN) or ice nuclei (IN), promoting the freezing of supercooled water droplets into ice crystals.
- ❖ Precipitation Formation: Ice crystals grow larger and heavier through coalescence, eventually falling to the ground as rain or snow.
- ❖ Key Limitation: Cloud seeding cannot create clouds; it requires naturally formed clouds with adequate moisture.

Quick Bites:

- ☐ Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today released the autobiography of former President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, titled “Triumph of the Indian Republic: My Life, My Struggles”, at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi.
- ☐ Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD), a constituent unit of Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), has carried out exploration in the coastal tracts of Cuddalore district, Tamil Nadu, for Beach Sand Minerals (BSM) and established a BSM deposit, viz. “Pudupuram-Cuddalore BSM deposit”, containing 1.912 Million tonnes (Mt) of Total Heavy Minerals (THM), including Monazite (0.005 Mt), Ilmenite (0.926 Mt) and Zircon (0.063 Mt).
- ☐ Molybdenum-99 (Mo-99), Iodine-131(I-131) and Lutetium-177 (Lu-177) are the most important reactor-produced medical radioisotopes, accounting for nearly 90% of all Nuclear Medicine applications. Owing to their relatively short half-lives, these medical radioisotopes are produced at regular intervals, typically on a weekly or fortnightly basis in the Dhruva reactor, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC).
- ☐ The Sanchar Mitra Scheme envisions to engage the Yuva Shakti- India’s youth, as catalysts for digital empowerment and societal outreach. The students nominated as Sanchar Mitra actively conduct awareness drives in communities, educational institutions, public spaces, etc., focusing on key telecom-related issues, like citizen-centric telecom services, prevention of telecom frauds and mobile security - promoting digital safety, and foster responsible telecom usage.
- ☐ The Government of India will launch the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)-based Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) in the Union Territories of Chandigarh and Dadra & Nagar Haveli on 14 August 2026.
- ☐ Bharat Taxi, a cooperative-led digital App mobility platform operated by Sahakar Taxi Cooperative Limited (STCL), a multistate cooperative society is officially launched in the cities of Delhi-NCR, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.
- ☐ The Startup Accelerator of MeitY for Product Innovation, Development, and Growth (SAMRIDH) programme, designed to accelerate around 300 Startups through existing and upcoming Accelerators in Health-tech, Ed-tech, Agri-tech, Consumer-tech, Fin-tech, Software as a Service (SaaS) and sustainability sectors. The programme successfully concluded on 31st January, 2026.
- ☐ The Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme is a four-year initiative aimed at making Panchayats financially self-sufficient by generating Own Source Revenue (OSR) through projects that utilize

unexplored local assets. Proposals are selected through a State and National level open challenge system, with 50 projects taken up in the first year and 100 each in the following three years.

- ☐ In accordance with the legal mandate under Section 162 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, the PM-RAHAT (Road Accident Victims' Hospitalisation and Assured Treatment) scheme was launched for nationwide implementation on 13.02.2026, with the primary objective of reducing fatalities due to road accidents by ensuring timely and uninterrupted medical care to road accident victims including during the critical Golden Hour i.e., the time period lasting one hour following a traumatic injury during which there is highest likelihood of preventing death by providing prompt medical care.
- ☐ The Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms), Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, will organise 'Srijan: Voices from the Loom', a special gathering celebrating the women behind India's handlooms and recognising their inspiring journeys, voices and contributions to the weaving heritage of the country. The programme will be held on 13 August 2026, at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi.
- ☐ The Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms), Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, today organised IIHT SUTRA 2026 – The Inaugural National Conclave of the Indian Institutes of Handloom Technology at Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi. Conceived as a first-of-its-kind national platform, IIHT SUTRA 2026 brought together policymakers, academia, industry leaders, research institutions, distinguished alumni and students to deliberate on the future of handloom education and its role in strengthening India's handloom ecosystem.
- ☐ India increased urea imports from Egypt, Algeria, Nigeria and Georgia in 2026 to support domestic fertiliser availability during supply disruptions linked to the West Asia war.
- ☐ The Indian Navy's second Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel (NGOPV), named Shruti and designated Yard 3037, was launched on 11 August 2026 by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Ltd (GRSE) in Kolkata, West Bengal. The NGOPV programme is an 11-ship Indian Navy project for offshore patrol duties. The Ministry of Defence signed the contract on 30 March 2023 for ₹9,781 crore, with seven ships assigned to Goa Shipyard Limited and four ships assigned to GRSE.
- ☐ *Colletes bhutanicus*, a rare solitary Himalayan bee, was recorded in India for the first time in Tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh on 12 August 2026. The species was documented by scientists from the Zoological Survey of India during a survey in the Eastern Himalayas, and its first Indian record expanded its known range beyond Bhutan and China.
- ☐ Russia began importing gasoline from India in 2026 for the first time in history amid a domestic fuel shortage caused by repeated Ukrainian drone strikes on Russian refineries. The first physical cargo of Indian gasoline reached Russia in August 2026, after a shipment loaded at the Vadinar refinery in Gujarat was routed through the Egyptian port of Damietta.
- ☐ India and the five-member Southern African Customs Union signed terms of reference on Wednesday to start talks on a preferential trade agreement, as New Delhi seeks lower tariffs on exports including cars, pharmaceuticals and industrial machinery. The move revives talks between India and SACU, comprising South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho and Eswatini, after five rounds of negotiations between 2002 and 2010 ended without a deal.
- ☐ India's first private branded train, the IRCTC Tejas Express operating between Lucknow and Delhi, will be branded as the 'Sprite Tejas Express' for six months after IRCTC awarded

train-branding advertisement rights to Sprite. The branding will be displayed at originating and en-route stations on both sides of the journey. Launched as India's first private train in December 2021, the fully air-conditioned superfast Tejas Express offers modern facilities, including on-board food, beverages and infotainment services.

Practice questions:

Objective questions:

What is the significance of the recently launched 'Sprite Tejas Express'?

- (a) India's first fully air-conditioned passenger train
- (b) India's first private, branded passenger train
- (c) India's first hydrogen-powered train
- (d) India's first semi-high-speed international train

The 'Sanchar Mitra Scheme' primarily seeks to:

- (a) Provide subsidised smartphones to rural households
- (b) Engage youth in promoting digital safety
- (c) Establish rural internet exchanges
- (d) Train youth in satellite communication

The recently recorded species *Colletes bhutanicus* is significant because it is:

- (a) A rare Himalayan orchid recorded in India for the first time
- (b) An endemic butterfly of Arunachal Pradesh
- (c) A newly discovered freshwater fish of the Eastern Himalayas
- (d) A rare solitary Himalayan bee recorded in India for the first time

Artificial way of causing rainfall to reduce air pollution makes use of (UPSC CSP 2025)

- (a) Silver iodide and potassium iodide
- (b) Silver nitrate and potassium iodide
- (c) Silver iodide and potassium nitrate
- (d) Silver nitrate and potassium chloride

Consider the following statements about Kavach, the automatic train protection system: (UPSC NDA-II)

1. It is designed and developed by Research Design and Standard Organisation (RDSO) in collaboration with Railway Technical Research Institute (RTRI), Japan

2. The trials of Kavach were facilitated by the Southern Railway
3. Kavach is a state-of-the-art electronic system with Safety Integrity Level-4 (SIL-4)

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 3 only
- (c) 1 and 2 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

With reference to the revised National Accounts Statistics series (2022–23 base), consider the following statements:

1. The manufacturing sector's share in total GVA remained unchanged between 2022–23 and 2023–24.
2. Manufacturing GVA at constant prices recorded a higher growth rate in 2025–26 than in 2024–25.
3. The manufacturing sector's share in total GVA increased continuously during 2022–23 to 2025–26.
4. The CAGR of manufacturing GVA at constant prices during 2022–23 to 2025–26 was higher than its growth rate in 2025–26.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All four

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