01-07-2026

1. Santhal Hul of 1855:

Context: The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi paid tribute to all those brave warriors like Sido-Kanhu, Chand-Bhairav, and Phulo-Jhano, who stood firm against the injustice of foreign rule, on the occasion of Hul Divas. Hul Diwas (observed annually on June 30) commemorates the historic 1855 Santhal Rebellion. It honors the brave tribal leaders who launched an armed uprising against British colonial rule, unfair taxation, and exploitative landlords to fight for indigenous rights

About Santhal Hul of 1855:

- Santhal Hul (1855) was one of the earliest major tribal-peasant revolts against British rule.
- It began on 30 June 1855 at Bhognadih (present-day Jharkhand).
- The revolt was led by Sidho Murmu, Kanho Murmu, Chand Murmu, Bhairav Murmu, along with Phulo Murmu and Jhano Murmu.
- The uprising targeted the British, zamindars, moneylenders, darogas, and upper castes, collectively called "Diku" (outsiders/exploiters).
- Its objective was to protect the economic, cultural, religious, and land rights of the Santhal community.
- In 1832, the British created Santhal Pargana (Damin-i-Koh) for displaced Santhals.
- Damin-i-Koh comprises present-day Sahibganj, Godda, Dumka, Deoghar, Pakur, and parts of Jamtara in Jharkhand.
- British promises of land settlement turned into land alienation, exploitation, and bonded labour (begari).
- The Kamioti system required labour until the loan was repaid.

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- The Harwahi system required personal service and compulsory ploughing of the lender's fields.
- Harsh loan conditions made debt repayment virtually impossible, creating debt bondage.
- Around 60,000 Santhals fought the East India Company using guerrilla warfare.
- The revolt lasted about six months before being suppressed in January 1856.
- Over 15,000 Santhals were killed and 10,000+ villages were destroyed.
- The Santhal Hul became a lasting symbol of tribal resistance and anti-colonial struggle.
- The revolt influenced the enactment of the Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act, 1876.
- The SPT Act (1876) prohibits transfer of Adivasi land to non-Adivasis.
- The Act permits land inheritance only within the tribal community.
- The SPT Act also safeguards the Santhals' traditional rights over land and self-governance.

About Santhals:

- The Santhal are the third-largest Scheduled Tribe in India after the Gond and Bhil.
- The Santhals are known for their calm and peaceful nature.
- They were originally nomadic before settling in the Chota Nagpur Plateau.
- They later migrated to the Santhal Parganas region of present-day Jharkhand, Bihar, and Odisha.
- The Santhals are mainly concentrated in Jharkhand, Odisha, and West Bengal.
- Their major occupations include agriculture, industrial labour, mining, and quarrying.
- They follow the Sarna (nature-based) tribal religion and worship nature in sacred groves.
- Their language is Santhali.
- The Ol Chiki script is used to write Santhali.
- Santhali is included in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution.
- The Phuta Katcha pattern saree and dress are famous Santhal art forms.
- The Santhals celebrate numerous agricultural and nature-worship festivals.
- Traditional Santhal houses, called "Olah", are large, neat, and decorated with colourful wall paintings

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2. Electronic Overseas Citizen of India (e-OCI) Card:

Context: Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah launches e-OCI Card.

About Electronic Overseas Citizen of India (e-OCI) Card:

- The Electronic Overseas Citizen of India (e-OCI) Card is a major citizen-centric initiative aimed at transforming OCI services for the global Indian diaspora through a fully digital system.
- Under this system, applicants can complete the entire OCI process online - from submitting the application and uploading supporting documents to downloading the digitally generated card after approval.
- Existing cardholders can also obtain their e-OCI Card digitally in most cases without needing a fresh application or physical verification.
- Under the new arrangement, the requirement to re-issue the OCI booklet upon receiving a new passport after the age of 20 years has been eliminated.
- However, cardholders will need to update their passport-related details online whenever a new passport is issued.

About Overseas Citizen of India:

- OCI Scheme was introduced in 2005 through an amendment to the Citizenship Act, 1955.
- In 2015, the PIO (Person of Indian Origin) and OCI schemes were merged into a single OCI category.
- Foreign nationals (except citizens of Pakistan and Bangladesh) with eligible Indian ancestry can apply for an OCI card.
- Eligibility includes persons who were Indian citizens on or after 26 January 1950, were eligible to become citizens on that date, or belonged to territories that later became part of India.

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- Children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and eligible minor children of such persons are also eligible for OCI registration.
- A foreign-origin spouse of an Indian citizen or OCI cardholder is eligible if the marriage is registered and has subsisted continuously for at least two years before the application.
- Foreign military personnel (serving or retired) are not eligible for OCI status.
- OCI cardholders receive a multiple-entry, multi-purpose, lifelong visa for travel to India.
- OCI cardholders enjoy parity with NRIs in specified financial, economic, and educational matters, except in purchasing agricultural/plantation land and certain inter-country adoption matters.
- An OCI cardholder can apply for Indian citizenship under Section 5(1)(g) of the Citizenship Act, 1955 after 5 years of OCI status, provided they have resided in India for at least one year immediately before applying.
- OCI cardholders are eligible to join the National Pension System (NPS) on par with NRIs.
- OCI is not dual citizenship and does not confer political rights, including the right to vote.
- OCI cardholders cannot hold constitutional or elected public offices, are generally ineligible for public employment (Article 16) unless specifically permitted by the Central Government, and require special permission for research, mountaineering, missionary work, journalism, and visits to Restricted/Protected Areas.

3. IndiaSkills Competition 2026–27:

Context: Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and Minister of State for Education, Government of India, Shri Jayant Chaudhary launched the IndiaSkills Competition 2026–27.

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About IndiaSkills Competition 2026–27:

- It is the country's flagship skill competition that seeks to identify, nurture and showcase India's most talented youth across 63 industry-relevant skill categories.
- Organised under the aegis of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and supported by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) as the knowledge and implementation partner.
- The competition will provide a national platform for young skilled professionals to compete against the highest standards of excellence and earn the opportunity to represent India on the global stage.
- Since its inception in 2016, IndiaSkills has evolved into India's largest skill competition ecosystem.
- Participation has grown exponentially from around 5,000 registrations across 20 skills in 2016 to over 3.5 lakh registrations across 63 skills in the recently concluded IndiaSkills Competition 2025–26, with participation from all 36 States and Union Territories.

4. Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN):

Context: Myanmar's authorities have denied a request for ASEAN's special envoy to meet its deposed and detained democratic leader Aung San Suu Kyi, an administration spokesperson said on Tuesday. The military plunged Myanmar into civil war in 2021 when it staged a coup ousting the Nobel Peace Prize laureate and ending a decade-long experiment with democracy.

About Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN):

- Association of Southeast Asian Nations is a regional organization established to promote political stability, economic growth, and regional cooperation in Southeast Asia.
- ASEAN was established on 8 August 1967 through the Bangkok Declaration, and 8 August is observed as ASEAN Day.

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- ASEAN's headquarters (Secretariat) is located in Jakarta, and its motto is "One Vision, One Identity, One Community."
- The five founding members were Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand; the organization now includes Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Timor-Leste.
- Major milestones include the ASEAN Vision 2020 (1997), Bali Concord II (2003), Cebu Declaration (2007), ASEAN Charter (2008), and the launch of the ASEAN Community in 2015.
- The ASEAN Community is built on three pillars: Political-Security Community, Economic Community, and Socio-Cultural Community.
- ASEAN's key objectives are to accelerate economic growth, social progress, cultural development, and regional peace and stability in accordance with the United Nations Charter.
- ASEAN promotes economic integration, trade, agriculture, industry, connectivity, scientific and technical cooperation, and Southeast Asian studies among member states.

5. India Semiconductor Mission 2.0:

Context: The expenditure department under the Finance Ministry has cleared a Budget proposal entailing an allocation of ₹1.25 lakh crore for India Semiconductor Mission 2.0, as the country looks to advance global chip-making ambitions and cement its position as a semiconductor destination for the world, according to sources. The approval is significant as it is higher than the outlay of ₹76,000 crore earmarked for ISM 1.0. Sources said that the Expenditure Finance Committee has greenlit the ₹1.25 lakh crore outlay for ISM 2.0, and that the same will be placed before the Union Cabinet.

About India Semiconductor Mission 2.0:

- **Launch:** Approved in 2021 to strengthen India's position in the global electronics value chain.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Operates under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

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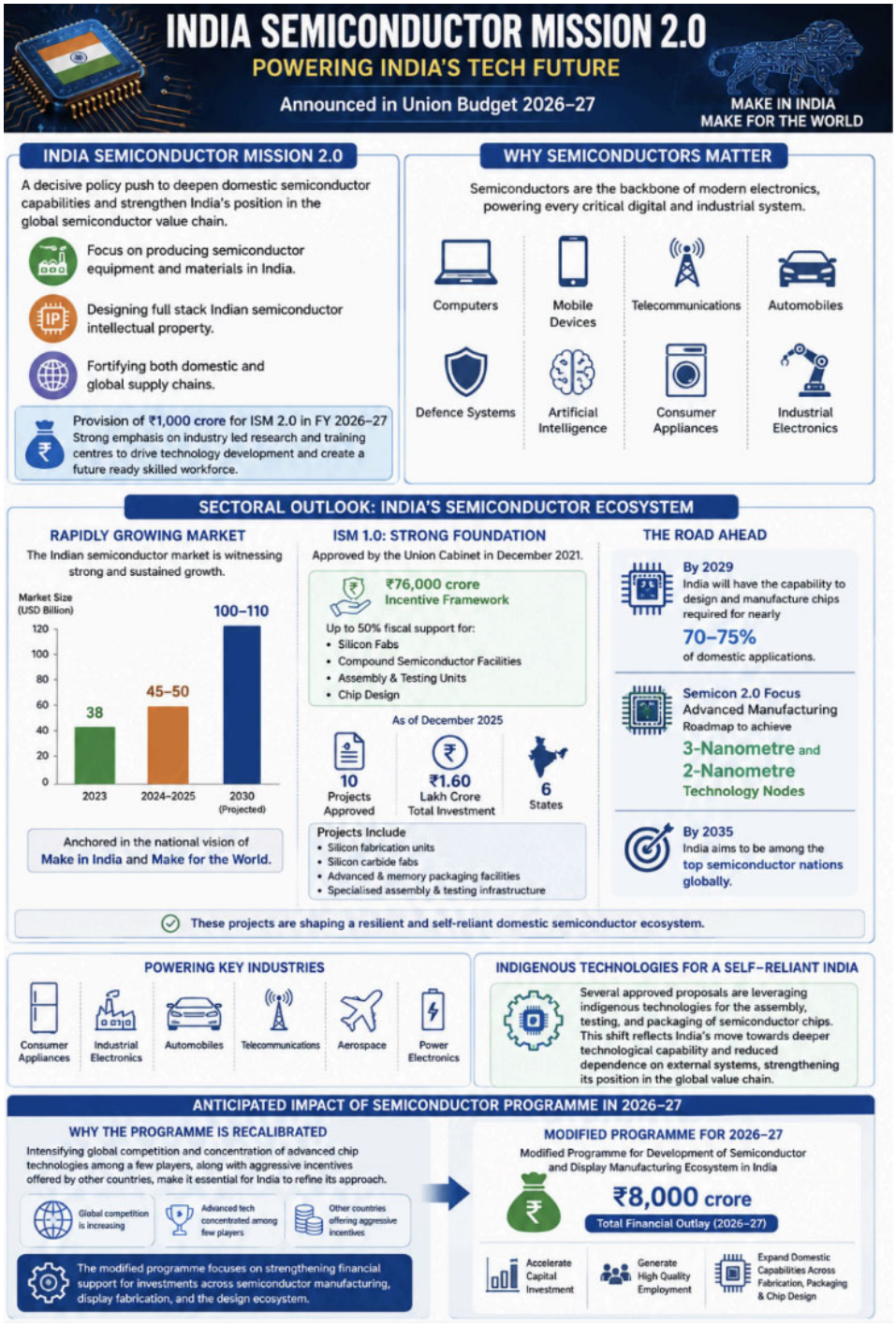

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- **Objective:** Promote chip design startups, indigenous IP, R&D, and reduce semiconductor import dependence.
- **Focus Areas:** Establish chip fabs, packaging/testing units (ATMP/OSAT), support startups, and train skilled talent.
- **Investment Goal:** Attract global semiconductor manufacturers and investors to India.
- **Semiconductor Fabs Scheme:** Offers up to 50% fiscal support for semiconductor wafer fabrication units.
- **Display Fabs Scheme:** Provides up to 50% assistance for AMOLED and LCD display fabrication.

6. Interoperable Criminal Justice System (ICJS):

Context: From January 1, 2027, procedures related to all investigations and trials under the new criminal laws will be recorded digitally, a senior Home Ministry official said.

About Interoperable Criminal Justice System (ICJS):

- It integrates police, courts, prisons, forensics, and prosecution on a single platform – is expected to be completed soon, with emphasis on end-to-end digital workflow.
- The data will be stored in the government-owned cloud platform MeghRaj.
- The Crime and Criminal Tracking and Network Systems, the platform which is used to file FIRs across 16,000 police stations in the country, has an option to register cases in 23 languages and the Bhashini App can translate the zero-FIR to the language used in the jurisdiction concerned
- Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System is a national digital platform that integrates the major IT systems of India's criminal justice system.
- It aims to enable seamless sharing of data and information among the five pillars of the criminal justice system.
- The five pillars are Police, Courts, Jails, Prosecution, and Forensic Science Laboratories (FSLs).

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- The project provides a secure cloud-based infrastructure with high-speed connectivity for real-time information exchange.
- The National Crime Records Bureau is the implementing agency, in association with the National Informatics Centre.
- The ICJS project is implemented in collaboration with all States and Union Territories to improve the efficiency, transparency, and coordination of the criminal justice system.

7. 709 new species and 353 taxa added to fauna, flora database:

- India added 709 animal species to its faunal records in 2025.
- The additions include 483 species new to science and 226 species recorded for the first time in India.
- India also added 353 plant taxa to its floral records, including 14 infraspecific taxa.
- The discoveries were documented by the Zoological Survey of India and Botanical Survey of India.
- The findings were released by Bhupender Yadav.
- India's total recorded faunal biodiversity has reached 1,05,953 species.
- Kerala recorded the highest number of new animal species (98).
- West Bengal (76), Karnataka (67), and Arunachal Pradesh (65) followed in new faunal discoveries.
- Hymenoptera contributed the highest number of faunal additions (106 species).
- Other major faunal groups added were Lepidoptera (65), Diptera (64), Arachnida (64), Coleoptera (55), and Pisces (50).
- Notable faunal discoveries include Myotis himalaicus, Ptyctolaemus mamdaphaensis, Ptyctolaemus siangensis, and Lycodon irwini.
- Of the 353 plant taxa, 221 are new to science and 132 are new records for India.

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- Arunachal Pradesh led plant discoveries with 49 taxa, followed by Uttarakhand (39) and Kerala (37).
- Plant discoveries include 154 angiosperms, 3 pteridophytes, 13 bryophytes, 62 lichens, 93 fungi, 22 algae, and 6 microbes. Important plant discoveries include wild relatives of Begonia, Impatiens (balsams), legumes, and orchids. Around 43% of the newly described plant taxa are vascular plants. The discoveries reinforce India's status as one of the world's megadiverse countries.

Quick Bites:

- The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu graced the first convocation ceremony of the Central Tribal University of Andhra Pradesh at Vizianagaram, Andhra Pradesh today (June 30, 2026).
- General Dhiraj Seth, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, took over as the 31st Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) from General Upendra Dwivedi, PVSM, AVSM, who superannuated after more than four decades of distinguished service to the nation on 30 Jun 2026.
- The Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG) and the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), in collaboration with the State Government of Rajasthan, are organising the 29th National Conference on e-Governance (NCeG) 2026 on July 1-2, 2026, in Jaipur, Rajasthan. The theme for this year's conference is 'Viksit Bharat 2047: AI-enabled, Data-driven & Secure Digital Governance.'
- The Ministry of Tourism, in collaboration with NITI Aayog, today launched the report titled Unlocking Growth in Tourism and Hospitality Sector at a National Workshop in New Delhi. The report presents a comprehensive roadmap to simplify regulations, improve ease of doing business, attract investments and accelerate sustainable growth in India's tourism and hospitality sector.
- The Ministry of Tourism today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Google India Pvt. Ltd. to strengthen the digital promotion of India's tourism destinations through the use of digital technologies, artificial intelligence, data-driven insights and capacity building.

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- India and Saudi Arabia signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 29 June 2026 for cooperation in water resource management. The pact was formalised during the inaugural Saudi Water Week conference in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.
- The Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2026 exercise is the 30th edition of the world's largest biennial multinational maritime exercise, conducted from 24 June to 31 July 2026 in and around the Hawaiian Islands. Led by the United States Pacific Fleet, it brings together 30 participating nations, around 30 surface ships, 5 submarines, 15 national land forces, over 206 aircraft, and 30,000+ personnel. The exercise aims to enhance interoperability, maritime security, and cooperation through coordinated naval, air, and land operations in the Pacific region.

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02-07-2026

1. Build–Operate–Transfer BOT (Toll) Mode:

Context: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, today has approved the construction of 117.7 km Kanpur–Kabrai Access-Controlled Greenfield Highway, a four-lane access-controlled corridor with structures designed for future six-laning, forming a key segment of the Bhopal–Kanpur Economic Corridor under the National Highways (O) Programme. With an estimated total capital cost of Rs.7145.14 crore, the project will be implemented by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) on BOT (Toll) mode, together with the operation and maintenance of the existing Kanpur-Kabrai section of NH-34.

About Build–Operate–Transfer BOT (Toll) Mode:

- **BOT** stands for Build–Operate–Transfer, a type of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model used for infrastructure development.
- **Meaning:** A private company builds the infrastructure, operates it for a fixed concession period, and finally transfers it to the government.
- **Funding:** The private developer arranges most or all of the project financing through equity and loans.
- **Revenue Source (Toll Mode):** The developer collects toll directly from users during the concession period to recover investment and earn profits.
- **Traffic Risk:** The private concessionaire bears the traffic and revenue risk. If traffic is lower than expected, losses are borne by the developer.
- **Ownership:** The asset generally remains with the government, while the private company has the right to operate and collect tolls during the concession period.
- **Concession Period:** Typically ranges from 15–30 years, depending on project cost and expected revenue.
- **Government Role:** The government provides land, approvals, and regulatory oversight but does not guarantee revenue in BOT (Toll) projects.

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2. Justice Prakash Prabhakar Navlekar committee:

Context: The High Level Committee on Demographic Changes called upon the Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah at his Residence in New Delhi and had a Courtesy meeting.

About Justice Prakash Prabhakar Navlekar committee:

- The Government of India has constituted a High-Level Committee on Demographic Change in May 2026..
- The Committee is chaired by Justice Prakash Prabhakar Navlekar (Retired).
- Members include the Census Commissioner, Shri Durga Shankar Mishra (Retd. IAS), Shri Balaji Srivastava (Retd. IPS), and Dr. Shamika Ravi.
- The Joint Secretary (Foreigners-I), Ministry of Home Affairs, will serve as the Member Secretary.
- The Committee was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 15 August 2025.
- Union Home Minister Amit Shah stated that illegal infiltration and unnatural demographic change pose challenges to sovereignty, national security, and social stability.
- The Committee will scientifically assess demographic changes caused by illegal immigration and other abnormal reasons.
- It will analyse demographic shifts among religious and social communities, especially where trends significantly differ from national patterns.
- The Committee will study causes such as cross-border activities, illegal immigration, economic opportunities, and socio-environmental factors.
- It will identify factors behind abnormal settlement patterns and orchestrated migration.
- The Committee will recommend legal, fair, and time-bound mechanisms for identification, detention, and deportation of illegal immigrants.
- It will suggest institutional mechanisms for stronger border management, population stabilization, and monitoring systems.
- The Committee will propose a policy framework to improve coordination between the Central and State Governments on issues related to illegal immigration and demographic imbalance.
- The Committee may recommend additional measures necessary to address demographic challenges in the country.

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- The Committee has been asked to submit its report within one year, with a possible extension of up to six months by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

3. MECON Limited (Metallurgical & Engineering Consultants (India) Limited):

Context: The Ministry of Steel has approved the grant of Miniratna Category-I status to MECON Limited, a Schedule 'A' Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) under the administrative control of the Ministry of Steel. The Miniratna Category-I status provides enhanced financial and operational autonomy to the Board of MECON Limited. The enhanced delegation of powers will enable the Company to undertake investments, modernization initiatives, technological upgradation and business expansion projects with greater flexibility and speed, thereby supporting its future growth trajectory.

About MECON Limited:

- MECON Limited, established in 1959 and headquartered in Ranchi, is one of India's premier engineering, consultancy, project management and contracting organizations.
- The Company has made significant contributions to the development of the country's steel sector and has diversified its operations across mining, infrastructure, power, oil & gas and other core sectors of the economy.
- The Company has reported continuous profits during the last three financial years, recording a Profit Before Tax (PBT) of Rs. 77.62 crore in FY 2023-24 (restated), Rs. 32.08 crore in FY 2024-25 (restated), and Rs. 104.53 crore in FY 2025-26.
- The Company also reported a positive net worth of Rs. 535.42 crore as on 31 March 2026, thereby fulfilling the eligibility criteria prescribed by the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) for grant of Miniratna Category-I status.

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Criteria for Maharatna Status	Criteria for Navratna Status	Criteria for Miniratna Status
1. Shall have Navratna status	1. Miniratna Category–I or Schedule 'A' CPSEs	**Miniratna Category-I status** • Made profit in the last 3 years continuously • Pre-tax profit is ₹ 30 crore or more in at least 1 of the 3 years
2. Listed on 'the Indian stock exchange with prescribed public shareholding	2. Obtained **'Excellent' or 'Very Good' rating** in 3 of the last 5 years	
3. Average annual turnover > ₹25,000 crore (last 3 years)	3. Composite score of **60 or above** in 6 performa-mce indicators including Net Profit to Net Worth Cost of Services, Earnings per Share, etc.	**Miniratna Category-II status** • Made profit for the last 3 years continuously • Having positive net worth status • Not defaulted in the repayment of loans/interest payment on any loans due to Govemment
4. Average annual net worth > ₹15,000 crore (last 3 years)		
6. Significant global presence/interna-tional operations		

4. Bharat Life Sciences Award (BLSA) 2026:

Context: Applications Open for Bharat Life Sciences Award 2026.

About Bharat Life Sciences Award (BLSA) 2026:

- It aims to recognise excellence in scientific research, innovation, and public health impact across India's life sciences ecosystem.
- Backed by Rs 7 crore in grant support, the Award is instituted to recognise outstanding scientists, research institutions, universities, startups, and ecosystem leaders advancing healthcare and life sciences.
- This initiative is organised by FICCI with Lilly and supported by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, Department of Pharmaceuticals, Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) & Invest India.

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- The Award comprises six honours across five categories, covering individual excellence, collaborative innovation, institutional excellence, healthcare and life sciences startups and scientific ecosystem development.
- While four categories carry grant support, two categories recognise outstanding contributions to innovation and ecosystem building.

5. SHE-LEAPS:

Context: SHE-LEAPS stands for Self-Help Entrepreneur-Livelihoods and Enterprise Application for Prosperity and Sustainability. SHE-LEAPS was launched on June 29, 2026, at the Rashtriya Gramin Vikas Sammelan held in New Delhi. This two-day conference, themed 'Gramodaya Se Rashtrodaya', reviewed the implementation and progress of major rural development schemes. The focus was on formulating strategies to translate the government's vision of 'Viksit Gram - Viksit Bharat'.

About SHE-LEAPS:

- It is a digital platform for empowering women associated with Self-Help Groups (SHGs) across rural India.
- This is being accomplished through a unified platform for enterprise creation and performance tracking.
- SHE-LEAPS supports livelihood creation, enterprise growth, and financial inclusion for rural women.
- It supports both farm and non-farm rural enterprises, aiming to build a stronger and more sustainable rural economy.
- The SHE-LEAPS mobile application has been developed by the Digital India Corporation, and implemented under the LokOS platform.
- LokOS is a digital system designed to capture the activities of community-based organizations (CBOs) across India. These include SHGs, Village Organizations, and Cluster Lever Federations.
- LokOS helps in digitizing CBO activities like maintaining member records, financial transactions, and livelihood records, and tracking convergence initiatives.

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6. Climate Change Action Plan [CCAP]:

Context: Following disapproval from the U.S. administration, the World Bank Group (WBG) has indicated that it would do away with its funding target for climate-centric projects. It will retire the 45% climate co-benefits target and the 35% target in the Climate Change Action Plan [CCAP], World Bank said.

About Climate Change Action Plan [CCAP]:

- Launched in 2020 and over a five-year period ending 2026, the CCAP mandated the WBG to allocate 35% of its total financing for projects that reduced emissions or helped communities adapt to climate change. The goal was increased to 45% in 2023.
- The World Bank Group's Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) is a five-year strategy aligning the bank's investments with the Paris Agreement.
- It helps developing countries lower emissions (mitigation) and build defenses against extreme weather (adaptation).
- **Align with the Paris Agreement:** Ensures all financial flows support low-carbon, climate-resilient development.
- **Integrate Climate and Development:** Merges poverty reduction with climate action.
- **Leverage Private Capital:** Unlocks private funds for green projects in developing countries

7. Road map 'VIJAY':

Context: Chief of the Army Staff General Dhiraj Seth on Wednesday unveiled a road map titled "VIJAY", outlining his vision for transforming the Indian Army into a technology-enabled, future-ready force capable of operating across multiple domains. The road map, inspired by the Defence Minister's vision for the Decade of Transformation, was unveiled a day after he assumed charge as the 31st Chief of the Army Staff.

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8. Civil Registration Data, CRS 2024:

Context: India's latest civil registration data, CRS 2024, released on Wednesday, suggest that registration is improving across the country, and that sex ratio at birth is improving in some places, but progress remains uneven across the States and Union Territories.

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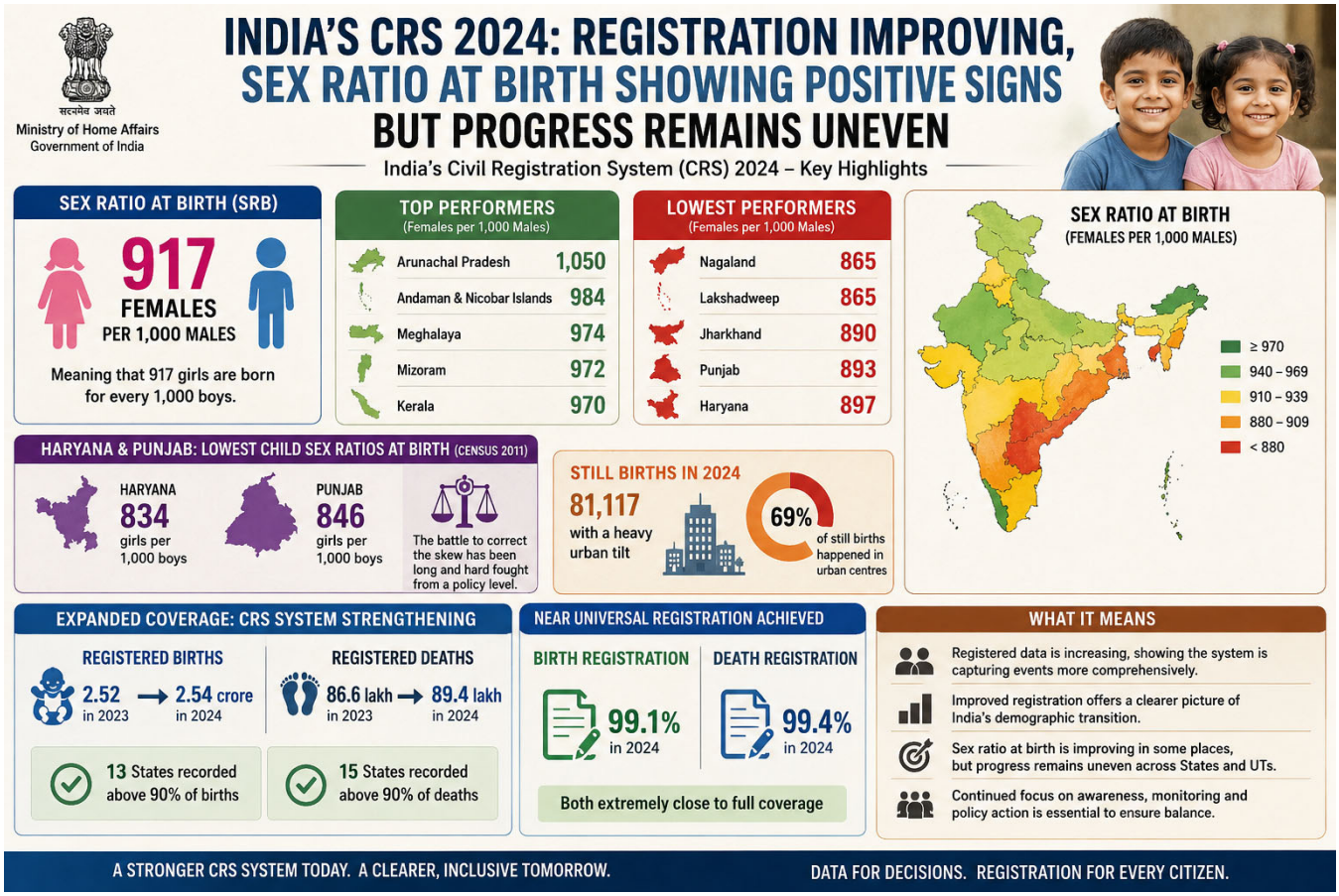
Highlights of Civil Registration Data, CRS 2024:



Quick Bites:

- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Government of India, and the Agriculture Department, Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture and Blue Economy, Republic of Seychelles, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) during the official visit of the Prime Minister to the Republic of Seychelles to strengthen bilateral cooperation in agricultural research and education.
- Under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, an advanced Common Incubation Center (CIC) established at the College of Food Technology, Vasantrao Naik Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth

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(VNMKV), Parbhani, with financial assistance from the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), Government of India, New Delhi, and in collaboration with Vasantrao Naik Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth, Parbhani and the State-Level Nodal Agency of the Agriculture Department, Government of Maharashtra, was inaugurated on June 28, 2026 by Union Minister for Food Processing Industries, Shri Chirag Paswan.

- Celebrating 90 years of Akashvani and in the run-up to the centenary of Radio Broadcasting in India in 2027, Akashvani today inaugurated 'Swar Prerna Veethika', a dedicated photo gallery celebrating the enduring bond between Akashvani and India's legendary musicians. The gallery was inaugurated by Padma Vibhushan Pt. Hariprasad Chaurasia at the Akashvani Rang Bhavan Auditorium, Akashvani Bhavan, New Delhi.
- India and South Korea have expanded defence cooperation through the K9 Vajra-T self-propelled howitzer programme. The K9 Vajra-T is an Indian variant of the South Korean K9 Thunder 155 mm self-propelled tracked artillery gun.
- The Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) and the Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR) are digital systems linked to India's higher education framework under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The ABC is a Ministry of Education platform regulated
- by the University Grants Commission (UGC), while APAAR is a 12-digit student identification number under the "One Nation, One Student ID" initiative.
- India's Technology Development Board (TDB), under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), provided financial assistance to Puretronics India Private Limited on 30 June 2026 for the commercialisation of its Load Magnetic Overload (LMO) Sensor. The company describes the LMO Sensor as India's first fully contactless programmable load measurement system.
- Agnikul Cosmos, an Indian private space transportation company, and ICEYE, a Finnish Synthetic Aperture Radar satellite company, signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 30 June 2026 and 1 July 2026 to explore building, launching and operating SAR earth observation systems from India. The MoU was signed at Bharat Innovates in Nice, France.

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03-07-2026

1. Oryza rufipogon:

Context: The National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA), under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, has achieved a significant milestone in the conservation of India's wild rice genetic resources through its funded project titled "In-situ Conservation and Management of Wild Rice (Oryza rufipogon) in Sonitpur District of Assam." The project has been implemented since 2022 by the ICAR–National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (ICAR-NBPGR), New Delhi, in collaboration with the Assam State Biodiversity Board.

About Oryza rufipogon:

- **Wild Ancestor:** It is the wild progenitor (ancestor) of cultivated Asian rice, Oryza sativa, making it an important genetic resource for crop improvement.
- **Family:** Belongs to the Poaceae (Grass) family and the genus Oryza.
- **Habitat:** Naturally grows in marshes, swamps, wetlands, floodplains, and shallow freshwater bodies, especially in tropical and subtropical Asia.
- **Distribution in India:** Found in states such as Assam, West Bengal, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala, mainly in natural wetlands.
- **Importance:** It possesses valuable genes for disease resistance, pest resistance, flood tolerance, drought tolerance, salinity tolerance, and climate resilience, which are used in rice breeding programmes.
- **Conservation Status:** Wild populations are declining due to wetland destruction, urbanisation, agricultural expansion, and genetic contamination from cultivated rice. Hence, it is conserved in situ (natural habitats) and ex situ (gene banks).

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2. Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY):

Context: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved a landmark reform to improve the quality of rice supplied under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) and Other Welfare Schemes. For the first time in nearly three decades, the Government has revised the quality specifications of rice supplied under the Public Distribution System ensuring that beneficiaries receive rice with substantially lower broken grain content while maintaining their existing entitlements.

About Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY):

- **Launched:** 2020, to provide free food grains and ensure food security for poor, migrant, and vulnerable households during crisis periods.
- **Beneficiaries:** Covers Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households and Priority Households (PHH) under the National Food Security Act, 2013.
- **Benefit:** Provides 35 kg of food grains per month per AAY household and 5 kg per person per month for PHH beneficiaries, free of cost.
- **Implementation:** Food grains are distributed through the Public Distribution System (PDS) to strengthen food security.
- **Launch:** Introduced in April 2020 by the Government of India as a relief measure during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Objective:** To ensure food security and provide financial support to poor and vulnerable households affected by the pandemic.
- **Part of:** Implemented under the broader Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP).
- **Food Grain Benefit:** Provided 5 kg of free food grains per person per month, over and above the subsidised ration under the National Food Security Act, 2013.
- **Cash Assistance:** Included cash transfers to vulnerable groups such as women and senior citizens under the PM Garib Kalyan Package.

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- **Beneficiaries:** Covered Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households and Priority Households (PHH) under the NFSA.
- **PHH Identification:** State Governments/UT Administrations identify PHH beneficiaries based on their own prescribed criteria.
- **AAY Eligibility:** Includes households headed by widows, disabled persons, terminally ill persons, elderly (60+ years), and single persons with no assured means of livelihood or social support.
- **Other Eligible Groups:** Covers primitive tribal households, landless agricultural labourers, marginal farmers, rural artisans, slum dwellers, and informal sector workers (e.g., porters, coolies, rickshaw pullers, handcart pullers).
- **BPL Coverage:** Primarily benefits Below Poverty Line (BPL) families covered under the NFSA.
- **Distribution Mechanism:** Food grains are distributed through the Public Distribution System (PDS) across the country.
- **Significance:** Strengthened food security, reduced hunger during the pandemic, and protected vulnerable sections from the economic impact of COVID-19.

Recent reforms by cabinet:

- Raw rice supplied under PMGKAY will contain up to 10% broken grains, replacing the existing specification of up to 25%.
- Parboiled rice will contain up to 5% broken grains, replacing the existing specification of up to 16%.
- Under the revised specifications, the broken rice generated during milling will be separated and utilised productively for other purposes . This will ensure that superior edible rice reaches beneficiaries under PMGKAY.
- The reform also envisages QR-code tagging of rice bags to enable end-to-end traceability across the supply chain, strengthening transparency, accountability and inventory management in the Public Distribution System, effectively plugging any scope for leakages.

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3. Kala Sanskriti Vikas Yojana (KSVY):

Context: The Ministry of Culture has invited applications for various components of the Kala Sanskriti Vikas Yojana (KSVY) Scheme for the Grant Year 2026–27. Eligible Cultural Organisations, NGOs, Artists, Researchers and Institutions across the country can submit applications within the prescribed timelines under the respective scheme components.

About Kala Sanskriti Vikas Yojana (KSVY):

- Ministry: A Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Culture for the promotion and preservation of India's art and cultural heritage.
- Objective: Provides financial assistance to artists, cultural organisations, NGOs, researchers, and institutions engaged in cultural activities.
- Buddhist & Tibetan Support: Offers grants to voluntary Buddhist and Tibetan organisations, including monasteries, for preserving and promoting Buddhist/Tibetan culture and traditions.
- Funding: Provides up to ₹30 lakh per organisation per year for eligible Buddhist and Tibetan organisations.
- Nature: Functions as an umbrella scheme, covering multiple cultural promotion and preservation initiatives.
- Art Promotion: Includes the Scheme of Financial Assistance for Promotion of Art and Culture.
- Infrastructure: Supports the Scheme of Financial Assistance for Creation of Cultural Infrastructure.
- Intangible Heritage: Includes the Scheme for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage, focusing on India's 13 UNESCO-recognised intangible cultural heritage elements.

4. Viksit Bharat – G Ram G Yojana:

Context: The nationwide launch of 'Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Yojana' took place today from Mukkavaripalli village in Tirupati district of Andhra

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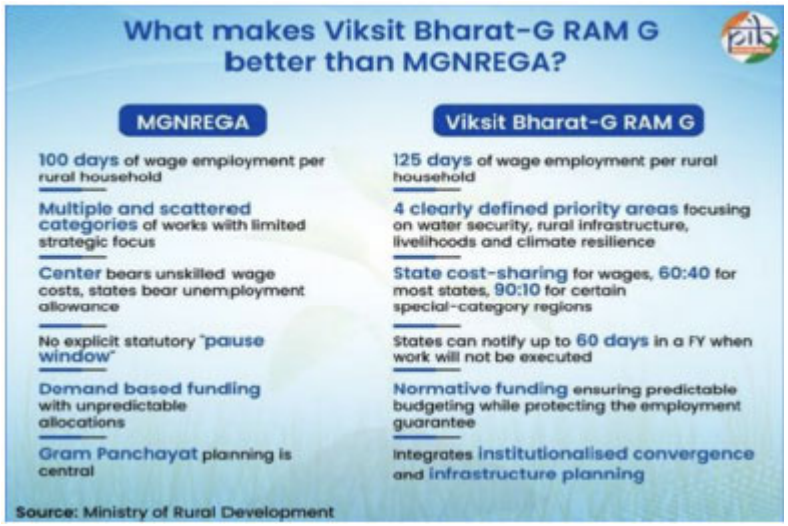
Pradesh. Union Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan spoke in detail about the financial aspects of the scheme and said that in the very first year of the 'Viksit Bharat – G Ram G Yojana', the Centre's share will be more than Rs. 95,000 crore and adding the states' 40 per cent share, the annual expenditure will reach around Rs. 1.51 lakh crore.

About Viksit Bharat – G Ram G Yojana:



- The Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, 2025 replaces and comprehensively reforms MGNREGA, marking a major shift in rural employment policy.
- The Act aligns rural employment with the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision by improving accountability, strengthening infrastructure creation, and enhancing income security in rural areas.
- Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission Gramin Act guarantees 125 days of wage employment per rural household annually (increased from 100 days).
- Employment is provided to adult members willing to undertake unskilled manual work, strengthening rural income security.
- A 60-day no-work period is built in to ensure availability of agricultural labour during peak sowing and harvesting seasons.

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- Workers can still complete 125 days of employment within the remaining 305 days of the year.
- The design aims to balance the needs of farmers and rural labourers.
- Wages are to be paid weekly, and in any case within a fortnight of work completion.

5. Bharat Tex 2026:

Context: Bharat Tex 2026, India's largest global textile event, is set to be held from 14th- 17th July 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, showcasing the complete breadth and depth of India's textile ecosystem on a unified global platform.

About Bharat Tex 2026:

- Organised by the Bharat Tex Trade Federation, a consortium of Textile Export Promotion Councils and Industry Bodies, with the support of the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, the event showcases growing India's global leadership in textiles, fashion, sustainability, technology, innovation, investment and international trade.
- Inspired by the Prime Minister's 5F Vision - Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign, Bharat Tex 2026 has evolved into a premier global platform for business, investment, sourcing, innovation, policy dialogue and strategic partnerships across the textile value chain.
- The event brings together manufacturers, exporters, global buyers, brands, sourcing consultants, investors, policymakers, States, international delegations, designers, artisans, start-ups and technology providers.
- Bharat Tex 2026 is also host the CITI Textile Sustainability Awards 2026, structured around seven core focus areas of Resource Efficiency, Energy & Emissions, Circular Economy, Sustainable Materials, Social Responsibility, Responsible Business and Industry Collaboration, reflecting the full spectrum of sustainable and responsible practices across the textile value chain

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6. MANAS (Madak Padarth Nishedh Asoochna Kendra):

Context: The Government of India has identified substance abuse and drug trafficking as major social and public health concerns. Beyond individuals, these issues affect families, communities, and public safety.

About MANAS (Madak Padarth Nishedh Asoochna Kendra):

- It was build under the aegis of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, in collaboration with the Digital India Corporation (DIC).
- Built as a secure, technology-driven platform, MANAS enables citizens to report drug-related activities, seek counselling, and access rehabilitation support at any time.
- MANAS brings together the vision of Digital India and the mission of a Nasha Mukt Bharat.
- The platform is accessible through the national helpline number 1933, the official portal, email and the UMANG app.
- By making support available through these platforms, MANAS empowers citizens to actively participate in the fight against drug abuse instead of remaining silent bystanders.
- MANAS is designed around citizen needs, combining reporting, counselling, and awareness within a single architecture.

Did You Know?

India's first comprehensive report on Magnitude of Substance Abuse of India (2019) revealed the true scale of the drug abuse problem.

- Around 16 crore people consume alcohol, out of these over 5.7 crore are severely affected.
- 3.1 crore use cannabis, 2.26 crore use opioids, and about 1.18 crore use sedatives.
- Roughly 2.8 crore people depend on opioids alone, including about 28 lakh needing urgent treatment.

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7. Van Mahotsav:

Context: Van Mahotsav is India's annual week-long tree plantation festival observed from 1 July to 7 July. The campaign began in 1950 under K.M. Munshi, then Union Minister for Agriculture and Food, to promote tree planting and tree protection.

About Van Mahotsav:

- **Also Known As:** Popularly called the "Festival of Forests" in India.
- **Objective:** Promotes tree plantation, afforestation, environmental conservation, and public awareness.
- **Celebration:** Observed annually across States and Union Territories through plantation drives, awareness campaigns, and sapling distribution.
- **2026 Observance:** Celebrated from 1–7 July 2026.
- **Manipur Initiative:** Target of 15 lakh saplings under the Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam 3.0 campaign.
- **Assam Initiative:** State-wide Van Mahotsav campaign launched on 1 July 2026.
- **Delhi Initiative:** Planned 70 lakh sapling plantation through a phased drive with live telecasts from 50 locations starting 7 July 2026.
- **Forest Cover:** As per the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023, India's forest and tree cover is 25.17% of its geographical area.
- **Coverage:** Total forest and tree cover stands at 827,357 sq km, an increase of 1,445 sq km since 2021.

8. Point-in-Space (PinS) Instrument Approach:

Context: India approved its first Private Point-in-Space (PinS) Instrument Approach Procedure for helicopter operations on 1 July 2026. The procedure was approved for Undavalli Heliport in Andhra Pradesh and was developed by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) before clearance by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

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About Point-in-Space (PinS) Instrument Approach:

- A PinS Instrument Approach Procedure is a satellite-based helicopter approach procedure
- It uses instrument flight rules and navigation data to guide helicopters to a defined point near the heliport.
- The procedure is designed for helicopter operations in low-visibility conditions and in locations where ground-based navigation aids are unavailable.
- It is part of modern aviation navigation systems that use global navigation satellite system technology.
- The PinS procedure for Undavalli Heliport was designed in accordance with DGCA regulations and the International Civil Aviation Organization's Standards and Recommended Practices.
- The DGCA is India's civil aviation regulator, and the AAI manages civil aviation infrastructure and air navigation services in the country.
- Instrument approach procedures are standardised flight procedures used by aircraft to descend and land using cockpit instruments.
- PinS procedures are used in emergency medical services, disaster relief, tourism, offshore operations, and regional connectivity. Such procedures are relevant for all-weather access because they support operations in adverse weather conditions.
- The Undavalli Heliport approval is the first such clearance for helicopter operations in India.

9. I-2SEA system:

Context: I-2SEA is a new submarine cable system unveiled on 2 July 2026 for connectivity between Singapore, India and Malaysia. The consortium includes Lightstorm, Microsoft, Singtel and Tata Communications, and the system supplier is NEC Corporation.

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About I-2SEA system:

- The I-2SEA system is estimated to span 3,600 kilometres from Singapore to Machilipatnam in India.
- It will also have a second landing at South Chennai, giving the project two Indian landing points.
- Machilipatnam is planned as the landing point with the shortest subsea access to Hyderabad.
- South Chennai is a major coastal landing location for several undersea communication systems in India.
- NEC Corporation has been appointed as the system supplier for the cable project.
- ASEAN Cableship, based in Singapore, will serve as the marine installation partner for the I-2SEA system.
- Lightstorm is the majority owner of I-2SEA. The companies involved have not disclosed the investment size for the project.
- Submarine cables are fibre-optic communication lines laid on the seabed for international data transmission. These cables carry internet traffic, cloud services and enterprise data across continents and island regions.

10. Vikram-1:

Context: Skyroot Aerospace has announced a launch window for Vikram-1 from 12 July to 4 August 2026. The mission, named Mission Aagaman, is planned from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre-SHAR in Sriharikota and involves India's first privately built orbital rocket.

About Vikram-1:

- **Developer:** Developed by Hyderabad-based Skyroot Aerospace.
- **Type:** A seven-storey, multi-stage orbital launch vehicle with an all-carbon composite structure.
- **Capacity:** Designed to carry small satellites up to 350 kg to Low Earth Orbit (LEO).

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- **Mission Aagaman:** Aims to collect real-time flight performance data and validate design parameters for future launch vehicles.
- **Launch Readiness:** As of 1 July 2026, all stages were integrated and stacked at the launch pad.
- **Unveiling:** The flight-ready Vikram-1 was unveiled by Narendra Modi in November 2025.
- **Earlier Milestone:** Vikram-S became India's first privately built rocket to reach space on 18 November 2022.
- **Payloads:** The maiden Vikram-1 mission will carry domestic and international customer payloads in a partially commercial configuration.

11. Gulf of Aden:

Context: The Indian Navy successfully responded to a piracy attempt on the merchant vessel MV Golden Arsenal in the Gulf of Aden, with stealth frigate INS Trikand swiftly intercepting and securing the ship after the attack.

About Gulf of Aden:



- **Location:** An extension of the Indian Ocean situated between the Arabian Peninsula (north) and the Horn of Africa (south).
- **Connections:** Connects the Red Sea to the Arabian Sea through the Bab el-Mandeb.
- **Name:** Named after Aden, the historic port city on Yemen's southern coast.
- **Dimensions:** Approximately 900 km long and 500 km wide.

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- **Boundaries:** Bounded by Yemen (north), Somalia and the Socotra Islands (south), Arabian Sea (east), and Djibouti (west).
- **Other Connections:** Linked to the Somali Sea through the Guardafui Channel and narrows westward into the Gulf of Tadjoura near Djibouti.
- **Relief Feature:** The Sheba Ridge, an extension of the Indian Ocean Ridge System, runs through the middle of the gulf.
- **Oceanography:** Influenced by southwest and northeast monsoon-driven upwelling, bringing cool, nutrient-rich waters.
- **Salinity:** Has lower salinity than the neighbouring Red Sea.
- **Islands:** Contains numerous islands belonging mainly to Yemen and Somalia, including the Socotra Islands.
- **Major Ports:** Important ports include Aden (Yemen), Berbera (Somalia), and Bosaso (Somalia).
- **Major Coastal Cities:** Key cities include Aden, Mukalla, Balhaf, Berbera, Bosaso, and Djibouti City.
- **Strategic Importance:** A vital global shipping route, forming part of the Suez Canal–Red Sea–Indian Ocean maritime corridor connecting Europe and Asia.

12. Nord Stream pipeline:

Context: German prosecutors said on Thursday that the Ukrainian state ordered a 2022 bomb attack on the Nord Stream gas pipelines, complicating relations between Kyiv and its key military backer Berlin. The sabotage, never claimed by any actor, destroyed three of the four Baltic seafloor pipelines of the major energy link from Russia to Germany and released huge amounts of methane into the atmosphere.

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About Nord Stream pipeline:



- **Type:** An undersea natural gas pipeline system connecting Russia and Germany through the Baltic Sea.
- **Objective:** Transports Russian natural gas to Europe while bypassing traditional transit countries, especially Ukraine.
- **Nord Stream 1:** Consists of two parallel pipelines completed in 2011 and 2012.
- **Route (NS1):** Runs 1,224 km from Vyborg to Lubmin via the Baltic Sea.
- **Nord Stream 2:** Extends from Ust-Luga to Lubmin, Germany.
- **Capacity (NS2):** Designed to transport 55 billion cubic metres (bcm) of natural gas annually.
- **Significance:** A major energy corridor supplying Russian natural gas to Europe.
- **Strategic Importance:** Central to European energy security and Russia–Europe geopolitical relations.

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Quick Bites:

- The grand finale of the second edition of the National Skill Olympiad on Seafood Value Addition was eld during Seafood Expo Bharat 2026 in Kochi on Wednesday. An initiative of the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), the Olympiad brought together ten trained seafood processing professionals, who demonstrated their culinary skills and technical expertise in preparing value-added seafood products. In a closely contested finale, P. Surya Bhaskar of Devi Fisheries Ltd., Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh, emerged as the winner.
- Indian Naval Ship Trikand, a mission-deployed stealth frigate of the Indian Navy operating in the Gulf of Aden, responded swiftly to a piracy attempt on MV Golden Arsenal, a St. Vincent and the Grenadines-flagged bulk carrier, on 01 Jul 26. The merchant vessel, while transiting from Aden, Yemen, reported an attempted pirate attack approximately 300 nautical miles east-northeast of Djibouti. The piracy incident was reported in coordination with the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), following which INS Trikand, mission deployed in the region, was directed to intercept the merchant vessel.
- Mount Erebus is an active volcano on Ross Island in East Antarctica, about 1,350 kilometres from the South Pole. It is the southernmost active volcano on Earth and has been continuously erupting since 1972. The volcano releases microscopic crystals of elemental gold into the atmosphere, and the crystals can travel up to 1,000 kilometres from the volcano. The volcano is reported to emit about 80 grams of gold each day.
- The Arul Mihu Navasakthi Vinayagar Temple is a Hindu temple in Victoria, the capital of Seychelles. It was constructed in 1992 by the Hindu community and is dedicated to Lord Vinayagar, also known as Lord Ganesha.
- The Southern Birdwing, scientifically named Troides minos, was recorded in Telangana's Amrabad Tiger Reserve on 27 June 2026. The species is endemic to South India and is associated mainly with the Western Ghats. The Southern Birdwing belongs to the family Papilionidae, which

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includes swallowtail butterflies. It is known as the Sahyadri Birdwing and occurs in forested habitats of the Western Ghats in Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and parts of Maharashtra.

- On 28 June 2026, Union Minister for Food Processing Industries Chirag Paswan inaugurated an advanced Common Incubation Centre at the College of Food Technology, Vasantrao Naik Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth, in Parbhani, Maharashtra. The facility was set up under the Ministry of Food Processing Industries and the Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme.
- India and Japan signed their first defence co-development agreement on 2 July 2026 during the 16th India-Japan Annual Summit in New Delhi. The pact covers the co-development of the Naval Radio Antenna 'Unicorn', also called the UNICORN mast, for naval platforms. The UNICORN mast stands for Unified Complex Radio Antenna. It is designed to improve the stealth characteristics of naval platforms by integrating multiple antennas into a single structure. The system is used on warships for communication, radar, and electronic systems.
- NATO plans to replace its ageing fleet of AWACS aircraft with GlobalEye surveillance planes from Sweden's Saab, four sources said, a move that could test uneasy relations with U.S. President Donald Trump.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi on Thursday inaugurated Maruti Suzuki's fourth vehicle manufacturing facility at Kharkhoda in Haryana. Two-thirds of Suzuki's cars are made in India and exported to more than 100 countries from New Delhi, Mr. Modi said during the launch at the India-Japan Joint Economic Forum.

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04-07-2026

1. District Mineral Foundation (DMF):

Context: The Ministry of Mines, Government of India, will organise the National District Mineral Foundation (DMF) Summit 2026 on 23–24 March 2026 at the SCOPE Convention Centre, New Delhi. The Summit, titled "Effective Utilization of District Mineral Funds for ADP/ABP Areas". The Summit aims to strengthen inter-governmental coordination and identify policy reforms for improving the effective and outcome-oriented utilisation of DMF funds in mining-affected districts, particularly in Aspirational District Programme (ADP) and Aspirational Block Programme (ABP) areas.

About District Mineral Foundation (DMF):

- Statutory Body: District Mineral Foundation (DMF) is a statutory, non-profit trust established by State Governments.
- Legal Basis: Constituted under Section 9B of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, inserted through the MMDR Amendment Act, 2015.
- Establishment: State Governments establish a DMF in every mining-affected district through a notification.
- Objective: To work for the welfare and development of mining-affected people and areas.
- Jurisdiction: DMFs function under the respective State Governments, which prescribe their composition and functions.
- Funding Source: Financed through mandatory contributions from holders of major and minor mineral leases.
- Contribution Rate (Pre-12 Jan 2015 Leases): 30% of the royalty payable by miners.
- Contribution Rate (Post-12 Jan 2015 Leases): 10% of the royalty payable by miners.

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- Utilisation of Funds: Used for the overall development of mining-affected areas as per the Annual Action Plan.
- Infrastructure Development: Supports the creation of local socio-economic infrastructure and community assets.
- Community Welfare: Funds are used to provide, maintain, and upgrade public services in mining-affected regions.
- Skill Development: Supports training, capacity building, employment, and self-employment programmes for local communities.

Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY):

- **Launch:** Launched by the Ministry of Mines in 2015 for the welfare of mining-affected areas and people.
- **Funding:** Implemented using funds collected under the District Mineral Foundation (DMF).
- **Objective:** To implement developmental and welfare projects in mining-affected districts, complementing Central and State Government schemes.
- **Environmental & Social Focus:** Aims to minimise the adverse environmental, health, and socio-economic impacts of mining.
- **Sustainable Livelihoods:** Promotes long-term sustainable livelihoods for communities affected by mining.
- **High-Priority Allocation:** At least 60% of PMKKKY funds must be spent on drinking water, healthcare, education, environment preservation, sanitation, and welfare measures.
- **Other Priority Areas:** Up to 40% of funds can be utilised for physical infrastructure, irrigation, energy, watershed development, and other development projects.

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2. 7th National Water Awards:

Context: The Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation (DoWR, RD & GR), Ministry of Jal Shakti has launched the 7th National Water Awards on the Rashtriya Puraskar portal of Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

About National Water Awards:

- Any State, District, Urban Local Body, Dam Own Agencies, & Industry who have done good work in the field of water conservation and management is eligible.
- Each winner would be provided a Trophy with a Citation.
- All applications received for 7th National Water Awards are scrutinized/shortlisted by a Screening Committee & shortlisted applications are placed before the Jury Committee which is constituted by the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- The National Water Awards (NWAs) were introduced to recognize and encourage exemplary work and efforts made by States, Districts, individuals, organizations etc. across the country in accomplishing the government's vision 'Jal Samridh Bharat'.
- It aims to sensitize the public about the importance of water and motivate them to adopt the best water usage practices.
- The objective of the National Water Awards is to encourage the stakeholders to adopt a holistic approach toward water resource management in the country as surface water and groundwater play a significant role in the water cycle.
- The first edition of the National Water Awards was introduced in the year 2018 by the Department and 6 editions of the Awards have been successfully organised by the Department.

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3. One Health Approach:

Context: A two-day national conference and table-top simulation exercise on "One Health: Integrating Health Security and Biosecurity" began on 2 July 2026 in Chennai. The event was organised by the Deccan Centre for International Relations in collaboration with the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation and LEAD at IFMR/KREA University.

About One Health Approach:

- Definition: One Health is an integrated approach linking human, animal, and environmental health.
- Purpose: Promotes collaborative action to address interconnected health challenges.
- Focus Areas: Used for the control of zoonotic diseases, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and environmental surveillance.
- National One Health Mission: India's framework for multi-sectoral coordination across health, veterinary, environment, and science sectors.
- Coverage: Focuses on zoonotic disease control, antimicrobial resistance, biosecurity, and pandemic preparedness.
- Goal: Strengthens early detection, prevention, and coordinated response to emerging public health threats.

4. Green methanol:

Context: India Signs First Global Green Methanol Supply Deal. ACME Green Molecules Business, part of India's ACME Group, signed a binding long-term Purchase and Sale Agreement with Mitsubishi Gas Chemical Company on 3 July 2026. The agreement covers the supply of 100,000 tonnes per annum of green methanol and has an estimated value of about USD 1 billion. The green methanol will be produced at ACME's facility in Paradip, Odisha.

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About Green methanol:

- Definition: Green methanol is renewably produced methanol with minimal or no polluting emissions, often using green hydrogen.
- Production: Produced from biomass gasification or renewable electricity combined with captured CO_2.
- Nature: It is a low-carbon, renewable liquid fuel.
- Applications: Used as an alternative to fossil fuels, especially in maritime transport and other hard-to-decarbonise sectors.
- Environmental Benefit: Helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions and supports decarbonisation.
- Grey Methanol: Produced from natural gas or coal without carbon capture; non-renewable and highly polluting.
- Blue Methanol: Produced from natural gas with carbon capture and storage (CCS), making it less polluting than grey methanol.

5. Global Biofuel Alliance:

Context: The Global Biofuels Alliance inducted 15 early-career researchers as the first cohort of Global Biofuel Champion Fellows on 30 June 2026 at the India Habitat Centre in New Delhi. Each fellow will receive a research grant of up to US$15,000 and will serve as a GBA Ambassador for two years.

About Global Biofuel Alliance:

- Nature: A multi-stakeholder alliance comprising governments, international organizations, and industries.
- Initiative: Launched by India to bring together major biofuel producers and consumers.
- Launch: Unveiled on the sidelines of the G20 Summit 2023 in New Delhi.

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- Objective: To promote biofuels as a key component of the global energy transition and support economic growth and job creation.
- Focus Areas: Strengthens global biofuel markets, trade, policy cooperation, and technical support for national biofuel programmes.
- Capacity Building: Promotes technology transfer, value-chain development, and wider adoption of sustainable biofuels.
- Standards & Knowledge: Facilitates international standards, sustainability principles, regulations, and serves as a global knowledge and expert hub.
- The Global Biofuels Alliance is a coalition of 34 member countries and 14 international organisations.
- The Global Biofuel Champion Fellowship is a programme for early-career researchers in biofuels. It aims to support biofuel innovation, research-driven solutions, and leadership development in the biofuels sector.

6. Indus Waters Treaty (IWT):

Context: India on Friday said the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) will remain in "abeyance" till Pakistan "credibly and irrevocably" stops supporting cross-border terrorism. Official spokesperson of the External Affairs Ministry Randhir Jaiswal made the remark in the context of a recent international conference held in Pakistan where it called for the restoration of the treaty. The Cabinet Committee on Security had put the treaty in abeyance a day after the Pahalgam terror attack on April 22, 2025, killed 26 civilians and injured dozens. The attack led to India's strikes on terror targets inside Pakistan under Operation Sindoor.

About Indus Waters Treaty (IWT):

- It was signed in 1960 as a water-distribution arrangement between India and Pakistan.
- It develops plans to utilize the Indus and its tributaries as a source of water.

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- The World Bank mediated the agreement.
- Under the treaty signed between India and Pakistan in 1960, all the waters of three rivers, namely Ravi, Sutlej, and Beas (Eastern Rivers) were allocated to India for exclusive use.
- While, the waters of Western rivers – Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab were allocated to Pakistan except for specified domestic, non-consumptive, and agricultural use permitted to India as provided in the Treaty.

7. Lonar lake:

Context: Recently, rising water levels in Lonar Lake have submerged parts of nearby temples, including the Kamalja Devi Temple.

About Lonar lake:

- **Location:** Situated in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra, in Buldhana district.
- **Origin:** Formed about 50,000–52,000 years ago by a meteorite impact on the basaltic Deccan Plateau.
- **Type:** One of the world's largest meteorite impact crater lakes.
- **Conservation Status:** Recognised as a Wildlife Sanctuary, National Geo-Heritage Site, and Ramsar Site.
- **Unique Water:** Has two distinct water layers—an outer freshwater layer and an inner alkaline-saline layer, supporting unique microorganisms.
- **Endorheic Basin:** It is a closed drainage basin with no natural outlet.
- **Scientific Importance:** The lake's minerals resemble those found in Moon rocks, making it an important site for geological and planetary research.

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8. Biodiversity Heritage Sites:

Context: Borjuli Wetland, located in Sonitpur district of Assam, has been notified as a Biodiversity Heritage Site. It is renowned for conserving Oryza rufipogon, the wild ancestor of cultivated rice (Oryza sativa). This wild rice is valued for its natural resistance to diseases and pests and its ability to withstand flooding and saline conditions, making it an important genetic resource for developing climate-resilient rice varieties.

About Biodiversity Heritage Sites:

- These are areas that are unique, ecologically fragile ecosystems having rich biodiversity.
- Under section 37 of the Biological Diversity Act, the State Governments are empowered to notify in the official gazette, in consultation with 'local bodies.
- Under sub section (2) of Section 37 of the BD Act, the State Government in consultation with the Central Government may frame rules for the management and conservation of BHS.
- Total number as of 2026: 46
- In 2007, Karnataka declared Nallur Tamarind Grove in Bengaluru as the country's first Biodiversity Heritage Site.
- Tripura and Maharashtra have 5 sites, and Karnataka and West Bengal have 4 sites.

Quick Bites:

➢ 7th edition of Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh Memorial Hockey Tournament was conducted from 23 Jun to 03 Jul 26 at Amit Singh Bakshi Hockey Stadium, Air Force Station Jalahalli. A total of 16 teams participated in this tournament. The final match of the tournament was played between Indian Air Force and Indian Navy. Indian Air Force Hockey team won the final match by 2-1 goals. Sgt Anand Lakra (Air Force) and AGV (S) Agyapal (Air Force) were declared as Man of the match and player of the tournament respectively.

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- The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), under the chairmanship of Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh on July 03, 2026, accorded Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) i.e., in-principle administrative approval to various acquisition proposals for the Defence Forces at an estimated cost of about Rs 52,000 crore. For the Indian Army, approval of granted for the procurement of Anti-Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) Electronic Warfare System 'AKASH TARANG', Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM) Systems, Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) Weapon System, Very Short Range Air Defence System (V-SHORADS), Active Protection System for Tanks and Jet Based Kamikaze Drone System.
- The Department of Legal Affairs and the Legislative Department, Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India, will jointly organise 'Reforms Utsav & Chintan Shivir 2026' on 4–5 July 2026 at Gyan Sarovar, Brahma Kumaris Headquarters, Mount Abu, Rajasthan. The two-day programme is being organised to review the Ministry's key achievements, highlight important legal and institutional reforms, and discuss the future roadmap for building a modern, efficient and citizen-centric legal system in line with the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047.
- A banyan tree in Munger, Bihar, estimated to be around 700 years old, has been identified as the oldest accurately dated banyan tree, Ficus benghalensis, using radiocarbon dating, a method that relies exclusively on scientific evidence rather than historical records or local lore.
- In a major milestone for India's maritime and manufacturing sectors, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, today unveiled the first export-import (EXIM) shipping container manufactured in India for global shipping major A.P. Moller–Maersk at the Maersk-CONCOR Inland Container Depot in Dadri, Uttar Pradesh.
- NITI Aayog released a report titled Strategic Roadmap for Making Ayurveda Global on 2 July 2026 in collaboration with PwC. The roadmap sets a phased plan up to 2047 for Ayurveda as an evidence-based healthcare system with wider international recognition.
- Hokato Hotozhe Sema is an Indian para-athlete from Nagaland and a Subedar in the 9 Assam Regiment of the Indian Army. He became World No. 1 in the men's Shot Put F57 category on 2

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July 2026. He won a bronze medal in the men's Shot Put F57 event at the Paris 2024 Paralympics with a personal best throw of 14.65 metres at the Stade de France.

- Project SAMARTH, or the Silicon and Advanced Semiconductor Manufacturing Research and Training Hub, is being established at IIT Gandhinagar in Gujarat with a total budget of ₹190 crore.
- India's first commercially produced matcha tea was sold at the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre by an Assam tea estate. Matcha is made from Camellia sinensis leaves that are shade-grown for 3–4 weeks before harvest, blocking about 90% of sunlight, which increases chlorophyll and amino acid content, giving the tea its characteristic bright green colour, rich flavour, and high nutritional value. This marks a significant diversification of India's tea industry beyond conventional tea production.

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05-07-2026

1. e-Jagriti:

Context: The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has shared an article written by Union Minister Shri Pralhad Joshi on how e-Jagriti addresses multiple challenges by digitising the entire lifecycle of a consumer complaint.

About e-Jagriti:

- **Flagship Initiative:** Launched by the Department of Consumer Affairs under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.
- **Launch:** Introduced on 1 January 2025.
- **Objective:** To strengthen and digitize the consumer dispute redressal system across India.
- **Unified Platform:** Integrates four legacy systems—OCMS, e-Daakhil, NCDRC CMS, and CONFONET—into a single AI-enabled, paperless platform.
- **AI Features:** Offers AI-powered smart search, metadata & keyword generation, and voice-to-text conversion of judgments and case records.
- **Online Services:** Enables e-filing of complaints, online fee payment, case tracking, and digital access to judgments.
- **Global Access:** Allows NRIs and citizens worldwide to file and monitor cases with end-to-end encryption and role-based access control.
- **Inclusive Design:** Supports multilingual interfaces and accessibility features for diverse users.
- **Key Benefit:** Provides a simple, fast, transparent, paperless, and cost-effective consumer dispute resolution system at all levels.

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2. UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik):

Context: In a major boost to India's civil aviation sector, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today launched the next phase of UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) and inaugurated the New Terminal Building (NTB) at Jodhpur Airport, reaffirming the Government's commitment to expanding regional air connectivity and developing world-class aviation infrastructure.

About UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik):

- **Launch:** The UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) Scheme was launched in October 2016 under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) to improve regional air connectivity.
- **Objectives:** To connect Tier-2 & Tier-3 cities, make air travel affordable, promote balanced regional development, and utilize underused airports.
- **Key Features:** Airlines are selected through competitive bidding, with Viability Gap Funding (VGF) to operate commercially unviable routes.
- **Affordable Airfare:** Around 50% of seats on UDAN flights are offered at a capped fare of about ₹2,500 per hour of flight.
- **Focus Areas:** Prioritizes connectivity to remote, hilly, tribal, island, underserved, and unserved regions.
- **Funding:** Initially financed through the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) levy collected from flights on major routes to subsidize regional operations.
- **Achievements (till 2026):** Operationalised 669 routes, connected 95 airports, heliports, and water aerodromes, benefiting over 1.66 crore passengers.
- **Modified UDAN (2026):** Approved by the Union Cabinet on 25 March 2026 with an outlay of about ₹29,000 crore for the next 10 years to promote aviation-led development under Viksit Bharat 2047.

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- **Infrastructure Expansion:** Aims to develop 100 aerodromes from unserved airstrips (₹12,159 crore), 200 modern helipads (₹3,661 crore), and provide ₹2,577 crore for airport Operations & Maintenance.
- **Regional Aviation Support:** Continues Viability Gap Funding (₹10,043 crore) and promotes indigenous aircraft and helicopters (e.g., HAL Dhruv and Dornier) under Atmanirbhar Bharat for connectivity in remote regions.

3. LokOS:

Context: LokOS (Lok = People, OS = Operating System) is a web and mobile platform under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) for end-to-end digitization of Self-Help Groups and their federations.

About LokOS:

- **About:** LokOS (Lok Operating System) is a web and mobile digital platform under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana–National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM).
- **DAY-NRLM:** It is a flagship poverty alleviation programme aimed at promoting self-employment, skilled jobs, and sustainable livelihoods for poor rural households.
- **Objective:** To provide end-to-end digitization of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and their federations for efficient governance and financial management.
- **Coverage:** Digitizes records of SHGs, Village Organizations (VOs), Cluster Level Federations (CLFs), and their members.
- **Digital Financial Management:** Records member profiles, savings, loans, repayments, financial transactions, livelihoods, and convergence activities.
- **Transparency & Efficiency:** Reduces manual record-keeping, enables real-time transaction tracking, and improves transparency, accountability, and operational efficiency.
- Financial Scale: Digitally captures SHG financial transactions worth about ₹2 lakh crore annually.

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- **Web Application:** Supports administrators, E-bookkeepers, and approvers in creating, approving, and managing SHGs, VOs, CLFs, and members.
- **Mobile Application:** Enables field-level recording and management of Community-Based Organization (CBO) activities and supports data-driven decision-making.
- **Key Features:** Provides Aadhaar- and bank-linked digital IDs, digital financial records, livelihood profiling, role-based administration, real-time dashboards, and one-click reports.
- **Nationwide Reach:** Covers 34 States/UTs, 762 districts, 7,241 blocks, 2.57 lakh Gram Panchayats, and 5.92 lakh villages.
- **Support to Lakhpati Didi**: Facilitates beneficiary tracking and monitoring through 6,611 Master Trainers, 4.09 lakh Community Resource Persons (CRPs), and 3.87 crore Potential Lakhpati Didis (PLDs).
- **Digital Livelihood Database:** Maintains 18.50 crore Digital Aajeevika Registers (DARs), strengthening livelihood planning, monitoring, and implementation across the country.

4. Vizhinjam Port:

Context: Leader of the Opposition in Kerala Pinarayi Vijayan on Saturday alleged that the proposed transfer of a 49% stake of the Adani Vizhinjam Port Private Limited (AVPPL), the concessionaire and operating company for the Vizhinjam International Seaport, by the Adani Group to Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) violates the concession agreement and raises serious questions over the government's handling of the issue.

About Vizhinjam Port:

- It is a transshipment deepwater multipurpose seaport project is being built by Adani Ports and SEZ Private Limited in Vizhinjam near Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
- Vizhinjam port is India's first international deepwater transshipment port.
- The port is designed to handle container transshipment, multi-purpose, and break-bulk cargo.

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- It is strategically located just ten nautical miles from the international shipping route.
- The port has minimal littoral drift and requires minimal maintenance dredging, reducing operational costs.
- The port boasts a natural depth of more than 18 meters, which can be further scaled up to 20 meters.



5. CAR T-cell therapy:

Context: Researchers have developed a promising new CAR T-cell therapy for rare solid tumours, including alveolar soft-part sarcoma (ASPS) and certain kidney cancers.

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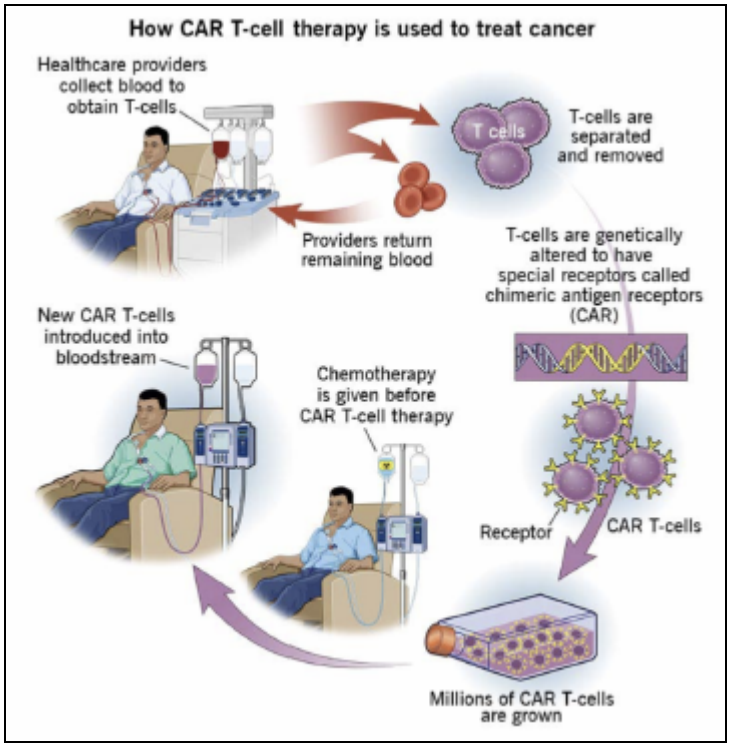
About CAR T-cell therapy:



- Unlike chemotherapy or immunotherapy, which requires mass-produced injectable or oral medication, CAR T-cell therapies use a patient's own cells.
- They are modified in the laboratory to activate T-cells, a component of immune cells, to attack tumours.
- These modified cells are then infused back into the patient's bloodstream after conditioning them to multiply more effectively.
- As of today, CAR T-cell therapy has been approved for leukaemias (cancers arising from the cells that produce white blood cells) and lymphomas (arising from the lymphatic system).
- Modification in the cellular structure allows CAR T-cells to effectively bind to the tumour and destroy it.
- The final step in the tumour's destruction involves its clearance by the patient's immune system.

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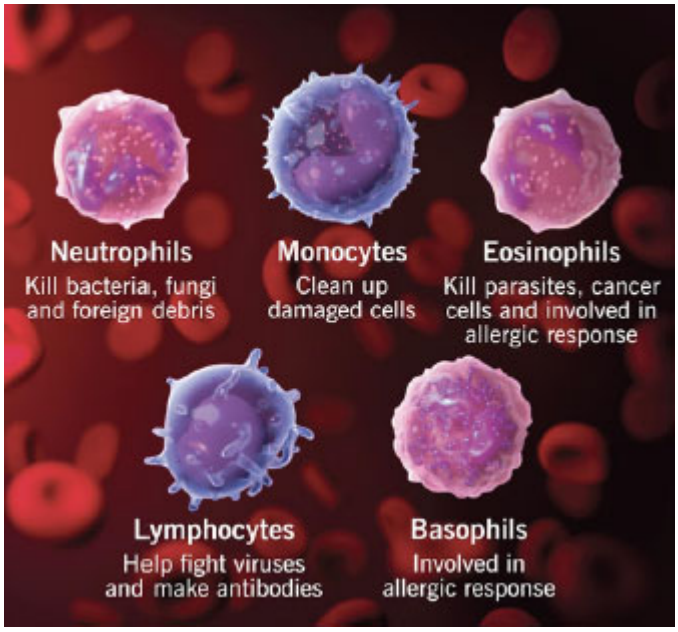
About T-Cells:

- T cell is a type of white blood cell.
- It is also called T lymphocyte and thymocyte.
- T cells are part of the immune system and develop from stem cells in the bone marrow.
- They help protect the body from infection and may help fight cancer.
- Rather than generically attack any antigens, T cells circulate until they encounter their specific antigen.



- There are two main types: Cytotoxic T-cells: Destroy infected cells and Helper T-cells: Send signals that direct other immune cells to fight infection.

6. European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN):

Context: The heatwave sapping Europe this June did not spare CERN — the European Organisation for Nuclear Research — whose dull grey buildings give little hint of the underground that sets the lab apart from any other hive of colossal engineering on earth. Here, in tunnels

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beneath the Franco-Swiss border, physicists drive protons — among the particles at the heart of every atom — to a sliver below the speed of light and smash them together, reading the debris for clues to how the universe is built. The machine that does this is called the Large Hadron Collider (LHC).

About European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN):

- CERN (European Organization for Nuclear Research) was established in 1954 as a leading global centre for particle physics research.
- It is located near Geneva, on the Switzerland–France border.
- CERN's core mission is to study the fundamental building blocks and forces of the universe.
- It focuses on research beyond the Standard Model, including dark matter and dark energy, with future projects like the Future Circular Collider.
- CERN conducts advanced particle physics research to understand matter, antimatter, and the origin of the universe.
- It operates the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), the world's largest and most powerful particle accelerator.
- CERN confirmed the discovery of the Higgs boson in 2012, strengthening the Standard Model of physics.
- It promotes international scientific cooperation with 23 member states and worldwide collaborators.
- CERN has driven major technological innovations, including the invention of the World Wide Web.
- It actively supports education and training through fellowships, internships, and outreach programmes.

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Quick Bites:

- The Bilateral Investment Agreement (BIA) between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Israel signed on 8th September 2025 in New Delhi, enters into force with effect from today, i.e., 04 July 2026.
- Jalbhara sweet from Chandannagar in Hooghly district, West Bengal, received the Geographical Indication tag on 26 June 2026. The sweet is also known as Jalbhora Sandesh and has a recorded legacy of more than 220 years in Bengal's confectionery tradition.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated India's first greenfield integrated refinery-cum-petrochemical complex at Pachpadra in Balotra district, Rajasthan, on 4 July 2026. The project is a joint venture between Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited and the Government of Rajasthan, with equity shares of 74% and 26% respectively.
- Indian Navy's P-8i maritime patrol aircraft is in Hawaii to participate in the Rim of the Pacific Exercise – the world's largest naval exercise hosted by the U.S. Pacific Fleet.
- Following the devastating earthquake in Venezuela, which claimed over 1,700 lives, India deployed an Indian Army field hospital at the La Rinconada Racetrack under its humanitarian assistance mission. Two Boeing C-17 Globemaster III aircraft transported 66 tonnes of relief material, including medicines, medical equipment, relief supplies, the field hospital, and two BHISHM Cubes. During his visit, Yvan Gil thanked India for its timely humanitarian assistance. BHISHM – Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog, Hita and Maitri. Bharat – India, Health Initiative – Focused on emergency medical assistance, Sahyog – Cooperation, Hita – Welfare, Maitri – Friendship

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06-07-2026

1. United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD):

Context: India will chair the Ninth Session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts (IGE) on Consumer Protection Law and Policy, organised by the United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD) at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, from 06 to 08 July 2026.

About United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD):

- Establishment: Permanent intergovernmental body established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1964 to promote trade and development.
- Status: Functions as part of the UN Secretariat, reporting to the UN General Assembly and ECOSOC, while maintaining its own membership, leadership, and budget.
- Headquarters: Located in Geneva.
- Membership: Comprises 195 member countries, including India.
- Objective: Supports developing countries in benefiting more fairly and effectively from globalization through inclusive and sustainable development.
- Key Functions: Conducts trade and economic analysis, facilitates intergovernmental consensus-building, and provides technical assistance on trade, investment, finance, and technology.
- Development Support: Assists countries in addressing macroeconomic challenges, integrating into the global trading system, diversifying economies, and reducing vulnerability to commodity dependence, financial volatility, and debt.
- Major Publications: Publishes flagship reports such as the Trade and Development Report, World Investment Report, and The Least Developed Countries Report.

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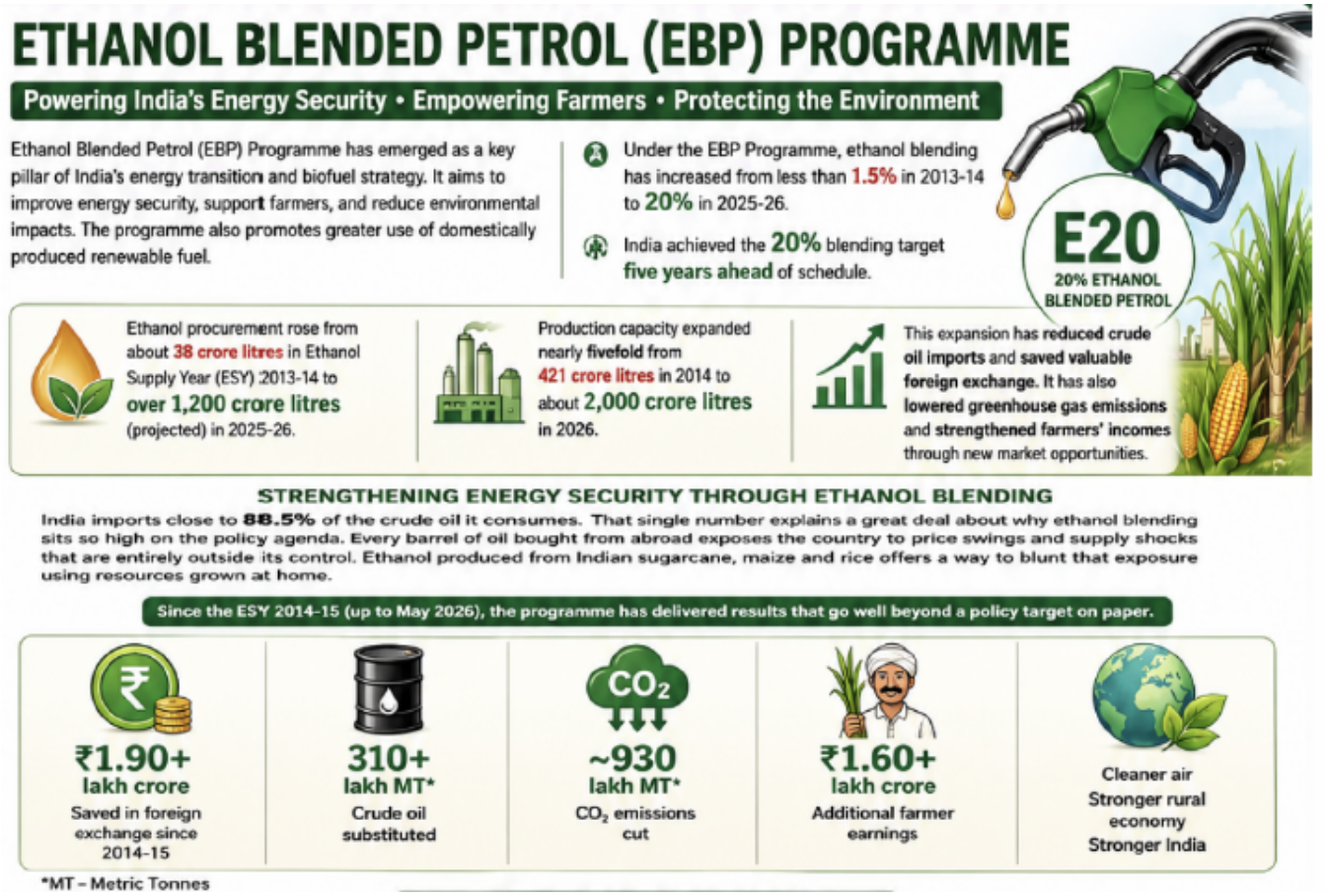
2. Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme:

Context: Under the EBP Programme, ethanol blending has increased from less than 1.5 percent in 2013-14 to 20 percent in 2025-26. India achieved the 20 percent blending target five years ahead of schedule.

About Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme:



- Ethanol (C_2H_5OH), considered a renewable fuel, is an anhydrous ethyl alcohol produced from sugarcane, maize, wheat, and other crops with high starch content.

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- It is naturally produced by the fermentation of sugars by yeasts or via petrochemical processes such as ethylene hydration.
- **Launch:** Started in 2003 to promote ethanol blending in petrol.
- **Definition:** Mixing ethanol with petrol to make fuel cleaner and more sustainable.
- **Blending Types:** E10 (10% ethanol), E20 (20%), E85 (85%).
- **E20 Benefits:** Better acceleration, improved ride quality, and 30% lower carbon emissions vs. E10.
- **Target:** 20% ethanol blending in petrol by 2025-26 (advanced from 2030).
- **Achievement:** Ethanol production rose from 38 crore liters (2014) to 660+ crore liters (2025).

3. National SC-ST Hub (NSSH) Scheme:

Context: The National SC-ST Hub (NSSH) Scheme is a focused initiative designed to empower entrepreneurs from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

About National SC-ST Hub (NSSH) Scheme:

- **Launch:** Launched in 2016 under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).
- **Implementing Agency:** Implemented by the National Small Industries Corporation.
- **Objective:** Provides professional support and capacity-building to SC/ST entrepreneurs to strengthen their businesses.
- **Procurement Support:** Helps SC/ST-owned MSEs benefit from the 4% procurement sub-target under the Central Government Public Procurement Policy for MSEs, 2012.
- **Entrepreneurship Promotion:** Encourages adoption of best business practices and leverages opportunities under the Stand-Up India initiative.

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4. Maritime Investment Fund (MIF):

Context: Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW) convened an industry consultation on the Maritime Investment Fund (MIF), currently being established under Maritime Development Fund (MDF).

About Maritime Investment Fund (MIF):

- **Establishment:** Set up in September 2025 with a ₹25,000 crore corpus to meet the long-term financing needs of India's maritime sector.
- **Objective:** Provides financial support to boost maritime infrastructure, shipping, ports, and other strategic maritime projects.
- **Maritime Investment Fund (MIF):** Allocated ₹20,000 crore, with the Government of India contributing 49% and the remaining funds mobilized from institutional, public sector, and private investors.
- **Interest Incentivization Fund (IIF):** Allocated ₹5,000 crore, fully financed through Government of India budgetary support.
- **Significance:** Aims to catalyse private investment and strengthen the growth and competitiveness of India's maritime economy.

5. GNI (Gross National Income) per capita:

Context: World Bank (WB) elevated Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Jordan, and Micronesia to upper-middle income status. India remains a Lower-Middle-Income Economy.

About GNI (Gross National Income) per capita:

- GNI per capita= {Mid-year Population/Gross National Income (GNI)}
- **Gross National Income (GNI)** is the total income earned by a country's residents and businesses, regardless of whether the income is generated within the country or abroad.

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- **Methodology:** The World Bank classifies countries based on GNI per capita (in US dollars) using the Atlas Method, which smooths exchange rate fluctuations.
- **Low-Income Economies**: GNI per capita of $1,175 or less.
- **Lower-Middle-Income Economies:** GNI per capita between $1,176 and $4,635.
- **Upper-Middle-Income Economies:** GNI per capita between $4,636 and $14,375.
- **High-Income Economies:** GNI per capita above $14,375.
- **Update & Significance**: The World Bank updates these classifications every year on July 1 using estimates from the previous calendar year. The classifications determine countries' eligibility for concessional loans, development assistance, and other international financing.

6. Syama Prasad Mookerjee:

Context: The Ministry of Culture, in association with the Government of West Bengal, will organise a special commemorative programme on tomorrow (6th July 2026) at Milan Mela Prangan, Kolkata, as part of the two year official commemoration of the 125th Birth Anniversary of Bharat Kesari Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee.

About Syama Prasad Mookerjee:

- **Birth & Family:** Born in Calcutta (now Kolkata), he was the son of Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee, the renowned educationist and former Vice-Chancellor of University of Calcutta.
- **Academic Excellence:** Represented the University of Calcutta at the Conference of the Universities of the British Empire and became its youngest Vice-Chancellor at the age of 33 in 1934.
- **Journalism:** Founded the Bengali journal Bang Wani (1922) and later started The Nationalist newspaper in the 1940s.
- **Political Career:** Initially joined the Indian National Congress, later joined the Hindu Mahasabha, and served as Finance Minister in the Progressive Coalition Government of Bengal (1937).

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- **National Leadership:** Became the acting President of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1940 and strongly advocated complete independence for India.
- **Founder of Bharatiya Jan Sangh:** Founded the Bharatiya Jana Sangh in 1951, which later evolved into the Bharatiya Janata Party.
- **Post-Independence Contributions:** Served as Minister for Industry and Supply and played a key role in establishing institutions such as the Chittaranjan Locomotive Factory, Sindri Fertilizer Corporation, and Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation.
- **Ideology:** Advocated nationalism, cultural unity, and a strong integrated India; strongly opposed Article 370 and the linguistic reorganisation of states.
- **Legacy:** Arrested during a protest against the special status of Jammu and Kashmir and died in 1953 under controversial circumstances; remembered as the "Lion of Parliament" for his powerful speeches and debates.

7. Pandavani:

Context: Teejan Bai, an artist who took the ancient Chhattisgarhi folk tradition of Pandavani, the musical narration of the Mahabharata, to the world, died at 70 at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Raipur on Sunday after a prolonged illness. Teejan Bai shattered stereotypes by taking up an art form traditionally performed by men, and performed with her lively voice throughout India and across the globe for decades. She was conferred the Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Vibhushan, India's second-highest civilian honour.

About Pandavani:

- **Definition:** Pandavani is a traditional folk-narrative and musical performance art of Chhattisgarh based on the Mahabharata.
- **Meaning:** The term Pandavani means "the story/voice of the Pandavas", derived from Pandava (the five brothers) and Vani (voice or narration).

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- **Origin:** It originated from the oral traditions of central India, particularly Chhattisgarh, with influence in Madhya Pradesh and Odisha.
- **Historical Background:** It evolved during the 16th–17th centuries, influenced by the Bhakti Movement, to make the Mahabharata accessible to common people.
- **Nature of Performance:** It is a solo storytelling performance accompanied by musicians, combining narration, music, singing, acting, gestures, and improvisation.
- **Themes:** The performances focus on episodes from the Mahabharata, especially the lives of Bhima, Arjuna, Draupadi, and Krishna, highlighting values such as dharma, truth, courage, loyalty, and sacrifice.
- **Vedamati Style:** A traditional and restrained style in which the performer sits and narrates the story with emphasis on devotional storytelling.
- **Kapalik Style:** A dramatic and theatrical style in which the performer stands, enacts different characters, interacts with the audience, and uses expressive movements.
- **Famous Exponent:** Teejan Bai popularised the Kapalik style and brought Pandavani to national and international recognition.
- **Social Relevance:** Performers often incorporate contemporary social issues such as gender equality, corruption, and communal harmony into the traditional narrative.
- **Cultural Significance:** Pandavani preserves India's oral storytelling tradition, promotes the values of the Mahabharata, and remains an important part of the cultural heritage of central India.

8. Gaganyaan mission:

Context: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully carried out the first ground test of the solid motor-based Sub-Orbital Launch Vehicle for Experiments (SOLVE) at its Static Test Facility at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota. The SOLVE solid motor is a key component for conducting Gaganyaan test missions and the first ground test was carried out on July 3. The ISRO is developing a solid motor-based SOLVE as a test platform to carry out Integrated Parachute Tests for validation of deceleration system of Gaganyaan's crew module under various test conditions.

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About Gaganyaan mission:

- It is India's ongoing project to send a 3-day manned mission to the Low Earth Orbit (LEO) with a crew of 4 members and bring them safely back to Earth.
- It will circle Earth at a low-earth-orbit at an altitude of 300-400 km from earth for 5-7 days.
- Its immediate aim is to demonstrate indigenous capability to undertake human space flights.
- **Launch Vehicle Mark 3 (LVM-3):** It is a 3-stage space launch vehicle operated by the ISRO to launch satellites and other space objects into Geosynchronous Transfer Orbits.
- The third stage of this vehicle uses a Cryogenic engine, which uses liquefied oxygen and hydrogen as fuel. It has been designed for launching communication satellites.
- GSLV delivers satellites into a higher elliptical orbit - GTO.
- **Test Vehicle Abort Mission-1 (TV-D1):**Test Vehicle Abort Mission-1 (TV-D1) will evaluate the crew module's readiness for the Gaganyaan mission. It is a single-stage liquid rocket developed specifically for this abort mission.
- The payloads consist of the Crew Module (CM) and Crew Escape Systems (CES).
- This flight will simulate the abort condition during the ascent trajectory.
- Crew Escape System is engineered to automatically function across various altitudes should the onboard computer detect any malfunctions.

Quick Bites:

- Indian Naval Sail Training Ship INS Sudarshini sailed into New York Port on 4 Jul 2026 to represent India at the United States International Naval Review 250 and Sail4th 250 celebrations. The visit is part of the ship's 10-month transoceanic expedition, Lokayan 2026, which reflects the Indian Navy's commitment to strengthening maritime cooperation, building international goodwill and deepening engagement with partner navies.
- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)'s flagship initiative, ICMR-MINDS, a National Health Research Priority project, has been conferred the Gold Award under Category 2 —

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Innovation by Use of AI and Other New Age Technologies for Providing Citizen-Centric Services — at the National Awards for e-Governance, instituted by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions. ICMR-MINDS is an implementation research study on the integration of screening and management of mental and substance use disorders with other non-communicable diseases. Its Clinical Decision Support System (CDSS) enables task-shifting of standardised mental health screening, assessment, follow-up, and routine management from specialists to trained non-specialist frontline healthcare providers, backed by evidence-based digital decision support.

- India will host BRICS Heads of Anti-Drug Agencies Meeting on 6–7 July 2026 in Guwahati, Assam. The meeting will bring together the Heads of Anti-Drug Agencies and senior officials from BRICS member countries to strengthen institutional continuity and foster deeper operational cooperation among grouping drug control agencies.
- Union Minister for Rural Development Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan today reviewed the implementation of the Viksit Bharat–Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) [VB-G-RAM-G] through a video conference with Rural Development Ministers of all States and Union Territories. During the meeting, he released the first installment (Mother Sanction) of ₹25,863 crore to the States for implementation of the scheme.
- India will host the BRICS Women Working Group (WWG) Meeting on 6-7 July 2026 in Kochi, Kerala, under its BRICS Chairship this year. Guided by India's BRICS Chairship theme, "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability", reflecting a people-centric and humanity-first approach, the BRICS Women Track has focused on four priority areas: women in governance and leadership; women's digital and financial inclusion; women's entrepreneurship and skill development; and women's role in climate action, food security and nutrition.
- ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (ICAR-CMFRI), Kochi has discovered a new deep-sea fish ‘Cyttopsis indica’ (Indian dory) from the Arabian Sea off Kerala.

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07-07-2026

1. Mahendragiri (F38):

Context: The Indian Navy is set to commission its sixth Project 17A indigenous stealth frigate, Mahendragiri (F38), at Visakhapatnam on 11 Jul 2026.

About Mahendragiri (F38):

- Named after the majestic Mahendragiri mountain range in the Eastern Ghats, the frigate embodies resilience, strength, and unwavering resolve.
- As the first Indian Naval warship to bear this name, Mahendragiri is truly sui generis.
- Designed in-house by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau (WDB) and built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai, Mahendragiri, the sixth Project 17A stealth frigate, exemplifies India's growing expertise in indigenous warship design and construction.
- Incorporating advanced stealth features, enhanced survivability, reduced radar signature, and a high degree of automation, the frigate is powered by a modern Combined Diesel or Gas (CODOG) propulsion system, enabling high-speed operations with exceptional endurance across the full spectrum of maritime missions.
- With over 75 percent indigenous content, Mahendragiri exemplifies the Government of India's Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative.
- The frigate is equipped with an advanced suite of indigenous and state-of-the-art weapons and sensors, including surface-to-surface and surface-to-air missile systems, sophisticated electronic warfare capabilities, comprehensive anti-submarine warfare systems, and an integrated Combat Management System.

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- Capable of undertaking anti-air, anti-surface, and anti-submarine operations, Mahendragiri is equally suited for maritime security, power projection, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), Search and Rescue (SAR), and sustained presence missions.
- As the Indian Navy continues to strengthen its maritime capabilities through indigenous warships, Mahendragiri, as a mission primed unit, stands ready to serve the nation with distinction, living up to her motto, 'Mighty–Majestic–Matchless'.

About Project 17A Programme:

- Project 17A is an Indian Navy programme to build seven advanced stealth guided-missile frigates to enhance maritime combat capability.
- It is the follow-on project to the Project 17 (Shivalik-class) frigates, incorporating improved stealth, automation, and advanced weapon systems.
- The project is being executed by two Indian shipyards: Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (Mumbai) – 4 frigates and Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (Kolkata) – 3 frigates
- The frigates belong to the Nilgiri-class and are designed with reduced radar, infrared, acoustic, and magnetic signatures, making them difficult to detect.
- They are equipped with BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles, surface-to-air missiles, torpedoes, anti-submarine rockets, modern sensors, and advanced electronic warfare systems.
- The ships are built using Integrated Construction (block construction) and Integrated Platform Management Systems (IPMS), reducing construction time and improving operational efficiency.
- The programme significantly promotes Aatmanirbhar Bharat through high indigenous content, supporting India's domestic defence manufacturing ecosystem.
- Strategic Importance: Project 17A strengthens the Indian Navy's capability for air defence, anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, and long-range maritime operations in the Indian Ocean Region.

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2. TribeX:

Context: The Ministry of Tribal Affairs will organise a two-day National Workshop on Strengthening Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs) on 7–8 July 2026 in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. A major highlight of the event will be the launch of TribeX.

About TribeX:

- TribeX is India's first digital learning platform dedicated to tribal heritage.
- It focuses on tribal arts, culture, languages, traditional knowledge, and skill development.
- The platform aims to preserve, document, and disseminate India's rich tribal heritage.
- It provides structured digital courses, digital repositories, and technology-enabled knowledge sharing.
- It promotes research, cultural exchange, and wider awareness of tribal traditions.
- It also seeks to create sustainable livelihood opportunities for tribal communities through skill development and digital outreach.

3. Atal Innovation Mission (AIM):

Context: Atal Innovation Mission Strengthens Eastern India Innovation Ecosystem at Regional AIM SUMVAAD-East Chapter 2026. AIM SUMVAAD is a regional stakeholder engagement initiative of the Atal Innovation Mission under NITI Aayog. It serves as a collaborative platform bringing together government, industry, academia, incubators, investors, startups, and innovation ecosystem partners. Its objective is to strengthen regional innovation ecosystems by promoting dialogue, partnerships, and knowledge sharing.

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About Atal Innovation Mission (AIM):

- It is the Government of India's flagship initiative to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the country
- It was set up in 2016.
- It aims to create and promote an ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship across the country at school, university, research institutions, MSME and industry levels.
- All the initiatives of AIM are currently monitored and implemented by NITI Aayog.
- Atal Tinkering Labs are state-of-the-art space established in a school with a goal to foster curiosity and innovation in young minds, between grade 6th to 12th across the country.

4. Global Passport Index (GPI) 2026:

Context: India's ranking in the Global Passport Index (GPI) has fallen one rank from last year to 125th spot.

About Global Passport Index (GPI) 2026:

- The Global Passport Index is published by Global Citizen Solutions and evaluates the overall strength of passports across 200 countries.
- It assesses how effectively a passport enables citizens to travel internationally, invest, live securely, and access global opportunities.
- The index is based on three core pillars—Enhanced Mobility, Investment Potential, and Quality of Life—using 15 indicators to measure passport strength.
- Sweden followed by Switzerland topped the rankings.

5. North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO):

Context: North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) military alliance's annual summit, scheduled to be held from July 7-8 in Turkiye's capital Ankara.

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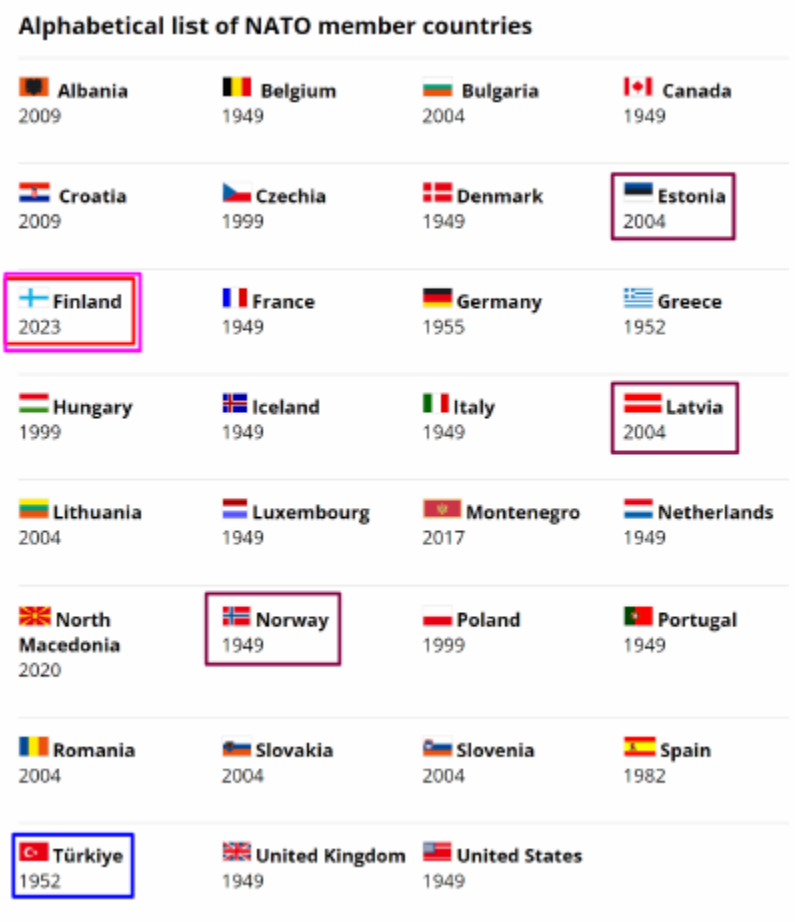
About North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO):



- It was formed in 1949 with the signing of the Washington Treaty.
- It is a security alliance of 32 countries from North America and Europe.
- It is headquartered at Brussels, Belgium.
- NATO's fundamental goal is to safeguard the Allies' freedom and security by political and military means.
- It is a system of collective defence where independent member states agree for mutual defence in case of any attack by an external party.
- Article 5 of the Washington Treaty states that an attack against one Ally is an attack against all.

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6. UN Security Council(UNSC):

Context: India on July 13 will launch the official campaign for a non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council during 2028-29. While India has received support from countries such as Fiji, United States, Austria and Sri Lanka, it will have to do considerable diplomatic heavy lifting as Tajikistan has already secured the support of the OIC bloc that consists of 57 member-states of the United Nations. That apart, both countries are members of the SCO that will hold the next summit meeting in Kyrgyzstan, adding a special significance to the summit from the point of view of UNSC ambitions of India and Tajikistan.

About UN Security Council(UNSC):



- **Genesis:** Established in 1945 through the UN Charter as one of the 6 principal organs of the UN.
- **Purpose:** Maintaining international peace and security.
- **Members:** 5 permanent members (P5) and 10 non-permanent members.

Quick Bites:

➢ World Zoonoses Day is observed on July 6 to raise awareness about diseases that spread between animals and humans, like rabies or COVID-19. The 2026 theme is "One World, One Health:

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Prevent Zoonoses". It is guided by the slogan: "Zoonoses Are Rising – Shared Responsibility, Shared Space".

- Hayabusa2 is Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency's asteroid sample-return mission, launched on 3 December 2014. It explored the carbon-rich asteroid Ryugu, becoming the first mission to deploy rovers on an asteroid, and successfully returned asteroid samples to Earth on 6 December 2020. The spacecraft is now on an extended mission and is expected to reach the asteroid 1998 KY26 in July 2031. Asteroids are small rocky or metallic bodies orbiting the Sun, mostly found in the Asteroid Belt between Mars and Jupiter.
- The Himalayan pangolin has been confirmed as a distinct species, separate from the Chinese pangolin, with scientists attributing their divergence to climate change during the early Pleistocene Epoch (~1.8 million years ago). It is found in the southern Himalayan foothills (Nepal, South Tibet, and Northeast India) and is larger than the Chinese pangolin but has smaller ears and a shorter, broader nasal bone. Pangolins are scaly, nocturnal mammals that rely heavily on their sense of smell to feed on ants and termites and curl into a ball for defence. Globally, there are eight pangolin species, including the Indian pangolin, and they face major threats from poaching, illegal wildlife trade, and habitat-related pressures.
- The Changpa are a semi-nomadic pastoral community inhabiting the Changthang Plateau, mainly within the Changthang Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary. They are renowned for rearing the indigenous Changthangi (Changra) goats, which produce the world-famous Pashmina (cashmere) wool, and also rear yaks and sheep while practising seasonal transhumance. Recognised as a Scheduled Tribe (ST), the Changpa are the custodians of Ladakh's fragile high-altitude pastoral ecosystem and its traditional Pashmina heritage.
- Scientists Discover Earth-Like Exoplanet GJ 3378b GJ 3378b is an exoplanet orbiting the red dwarf star Gliese 3378, which lies about 25 light-years from the Solar System in the northern constellation Camelopardalis.

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- India is participating in the inaugural United Nations Global Dialogue on AI Governance in Geneva, Switzerland, on 6-7 July 2026. The Indian delegation is led by Minister of State for External Affairs and Environment, Forest and Climate Change Kirti Vardhan Singh. The dialogue is the first universal, multi-stakeholder forum on AI governance under the United Nations system.
- Adani Defence & Aerospace laid the foundation stone for a ₹2,500 crore missile manufacturing facility in Pali, Shivpuri district, Madhya Pradesh, on 5 July 2026. The project is planned as a private-sector missile ecosystem for medium and long-range missile systems.
- Officials of the Fisheries department sounded alarm about the outbreak of White Gut Disease (WDG), also known as White Feces Disease (WFD), in shrimp ponds in Andhra Pradesh. Explaining the symptoms of the disease, scientists appealed to the shrimp farmers to take measures to prevent the spread of the disease.
- A diamond jewellery creation mounted on an aluminium base plate and a miniaturised artwork cast in the shape of a rocket using 18K gold are among the payloads which will be launched by India's first privately developed orbital-class rocket, Vikram-1. It is expected to be launched some time between July 12 and August 4. Skyroot Aerospace on Monday announced that the orbital launch vehicle will carry six payloads. The rocket will carry technology demonstration payloads from Graaha Space, Dcubed, and Skyroot's own SCOPE. Also aboard will be the Embrace payload, developed by Cosmoserve Space. During the mission, the robotic arm will remain attached to Vikram-1's payload deck while carrying out its planned demonstration.
- As on March 31, non-fossil installed capacity reached 283.46 GW — 150.26 GW of solar, 56.09 GW of wind, 51.41 GW of large hydro and 8.78 GW of nuclear — after a record 44.6 GW of solar and 6 GW of wind were added in 2025-26. Coal remains the largest single source of power, at about 42% of installed capacity, though coal generation fell 3.69% over the year. Peak demand touched 270.82 GW on May 21, according to official data.

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08-07-2026

1. Durand Cup Tournament 2026:

Context: The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu unveiled and flagged off the Trophies of the Durand Cup Tournament 2026 at a function held at Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre.

About Durand Cup:

- Durand Cup is Asia's oldest and the world's third-oldest football tournament.
- It was first held in 1888 at Shimla and initially started as the Army Cup for British Indian Army troops.
- The tournament is named after its founder, Sir Henry Mortimer Durand.
- It was originally organized for departments and regiments of the Armed Forces and the princely states.
- Today, it features top Indian football clubs from across the country.
- Since Independence, Indian Armed Forces regimental teams continue to participate as guest invitees.
- The tournament is unique because the champion receives three trophies—the Durand Cup (Rolling Trophy and Original Prize), the Shimla Trophy (Rolling Trophy, instituted in 1904), and the President's Cup (Permanent Trophy).
- The President's Cup was first presented in 1956 by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of India.

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2. Rettamalai Srinivasan:

Context: Vice President Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan today paid floral tributes to eminent social reformer Rettamalai Srinivasan on the occasion of his birth anniversary at the Uprashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.

About Rettamalai Srinivasan:

- Diwan Bahadur Rettamalai Srinivasan (1860–1945) was a prominent Scheduled Caste (Paraiyar) activist, social reformer, and politician from the then Madras Presidency (present-day Tamil Nadu).
- He is regarded as one of the pioneers of the Scheduled Caste movement in India and an important icon of the Paraiyar community.
- In 1893, he founded the Adi Dravida Mahajana Sabha to promote the rights and welfare of the Depressed Classes.
- He was a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi and also worked with B. R. Ambedkar on issues concerning the Depressed Classes.
- Along with B. R. Ambedkar, he represented the Paraiyars at the First and Second Round Table Conferences held in London (1930 and 1931).
- In 1932, he briefly joined the Servants of Untouchables Society, founded by Mahatma Gandhi, along with B. R. Ambedkar and M. C. Rajah.
- In 1935–36, he differed from Ambedkar on the issue of religious conversion, arguing that the Depressed Classes were originally Dravidians and not part of the Hindu fold.
- In 1936, he founded the Madras Province Scheduled Castes' Party to advance the political representation of Scheduled Castes.
- The British Government conferred on him the title of "Diwan Bahadur" in 1936 in recognition of his services to the Depressed Classes.

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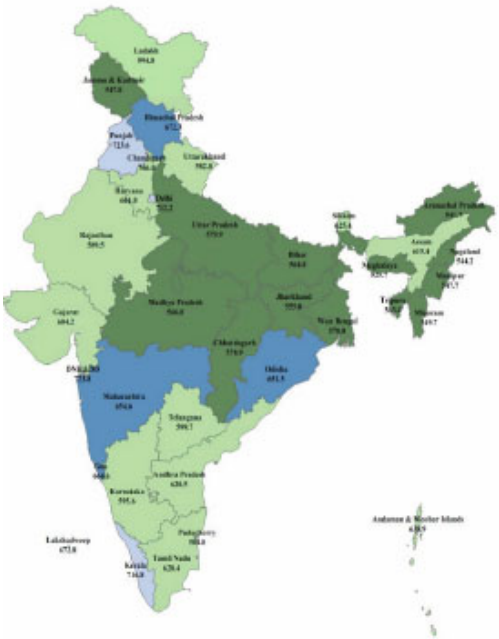
3. Performance Grading Index 2.0:

Context: Union Ministry of Education today released the Report on Performance Grading Index 2.0 for States/UTs (PGI-S) and Performance Grading Index for Districts (PGI-D) for 2025-26.

About Performance Grading Index 2.0:

- **Launch:** Introduced in 2017, revamped as PGI 2.0 in 2021.
- **Released by:** Ministry of Education.
- **Data Sources:** UDISE+, NAS, PM-POSHAN portal, PRABAND portal, Vidyanjali portal.
- **Purpose:** To holistically assess school education systems of States/UTs.
- **Structure:** 1000 points, 73 indicators, grouped under Outcome & Governance & Management.
- **Domains:** 6 domains – Learning Outcomes, Access, Infrastructure & Facilities, Equity, Governance Processes, Teacher Education & Training.
- **Evaluation:** States/UTs graded across 10 levels (Grades).



Grade Color	Grade Name	Grade Score	Number of States/UTs attaining the Grade
	Utkarsh	941-1000	NIL
	Uttam-1	881-940	NIL
	Uttam-2	821-880	NIL
	Uttam-3	761-820	1
	Prachesta -1	701-760	4
	Prachesta -2	641-700	5
	Prachesta -3	581-640	13
	Akanshi-1	521-580	13
	Akanshi-2	461-520	NIL
	Akanshi-3	401-460	NIL

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Grades attained by States/UTs - 2025-26

Scores (% of total points)	Score range	Grade	Names of States/ UTs attaining the respective Grades	Total number of States/UTs
91% to 100%	941-1000	Utkarsh	**None**	**NIL**
81% to 90%	881-940	Uttam-1	**None**	**NIL**
71% to 80%	821-880	Uttam-2	**None**	**NIL**
61% to 70%	761-820	Uttam-3	Chandigarh	**1**
51% to 60%	701-760	Prachesta -1	DNH&DD, Punjab, Kerala & Delhi	**4**
41% to 50%	641-700	Prachesta -2	Lakshadweep, Himachal Pradesh, Goa, Maharashtra & Odisha	**5**
31% to 40%	581-640	Prachesta -3	A&N Islands, Tamil Nadu, Sikkim, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Haryana, Telangana, Karnataka, Ladakh, Rajasthan, Puducherry & Uttarakhand	**13**
21% to 30%	521-580	Akanshi-1	Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Tripura, Jharkhand, Mizoram, Manipur, Jammu & Kashmir, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh & Meghalaya	**13**
11% to 20%	461-520	Akanshi-2	**None**	**NIL**
Up to 10%	401-460	Akanshi-3	**None**	**NIL**

4. Kamarajar Port (or) Ennore Port:

Context: Kamarajar Port Limited (KPL) has emerged as a deep-water port capable of handling Capesize vessels, with the successful completion of its Capital Dredging Phase VI project. With an operational draft of 18.0 metres, the Port can now accommodate vessels carrying cargo parcels of up to 1,70,000 DWT. With this achievement, Kamarajar Port becomes the second Major Port of the country, after Visakhapatnam Port, to offer a draft of 18 metres.

About Kamarajar Port:

- Kamarajar Port, formerly known as Ennore Port, is located on the Coromandel Coast in Chennai, about 18 km north of Chennai Port.
- It is the 12th Major Port of India.
- It is India's first corporatised major port, functioning as a public limited company.

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- Kamarajar Port Limited is the only corporatised major port in the country registered under the Companies Act.
- The port was envisaged as a satellite port to decongest Chennai Port and improve the environmental quality of the Chennai metropolitan area.
- It was designed as Asia's Energy Port, with a major focus on handling energy-related cargo while gradually evolving into a multi-cargo port.
- On 27 March 2020, Chennai Port Trust acquired the Government of India's 67% stake in Kamarajar Port Limited, increasing its ownership (the remaining stake was already held by Chennai Port Trust).
- The port is situated on the Eastern Coastal Plains, along the Bay of Bengal, about 2.6 km north of Ennore Creek.
- Today, Kamarajar Port handles a wide range of cargo, contributing significantly to the maritime trade and port infrastructure of southern India.

5. Index of Services Production (ISP):

Context: To guide the development of the ISP, MoSPI constituted a Technical Advisory Committee on Index of Services Production (TAC-ISP) in May 2025 under the Chairpersonship of Ms. Debjani Ghosh, Distinguished Fellow, NITI Aayog. The report of the TAC-ISP has now been finalised after extensive deliberations and discussions. It provides a comprehensive framework for compilation of monthly ISP for the formal sector of the economy.

About Index of Services Production (ISP):

- ISP will complement IIP and provide, for the first time, a comprehensive monthly measure of short-term movements in India's formal sector (Service sector) of the economy.
- It recommends a Laspeyres volume index with 2024–25 as the base year, compilation at the 2-digit NIC 2025 level, and aggregation using Gross Value Added (GVA) weights.

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- The National Industrial Classification (NIC), 2025, provides a comprehensive and contemporary classification for all economic activities undertaken in India's economy.
- The sectors covered under Sections G to Section V of NIC, 2025, form the part of Services Sector. Each of these sections is further divided into Divisions, Groups, Classes and sub – classes.

The sub-sectors are:

Sector	Sub Sector (10 sub sectors)	Methodology developed	Frequency
Transport Services Sector	Air Transport	Yes	Monthly
	Rail Transport	Yes	Monthly
	Road Transport	No	--
	Shipping Transport	No	--
Communication Services Sector	Postal	Yes	Annual
	Telecommunication	Yes	Quarterly
Social Services Sector	Health	No	--
	Education	Yes	Annual
Financial Services Sector	Banking	Yes	Quarterly
	Insurance	Yes	Quarterly

6. Norwegian Sea:

Context: UK fighter jets intercepted a Russian patrol aircraft over Norwegian Sea.

About Norwegian Sea:

- **Location:** A marginal sea of the Arctic Ocean, situated between Norway, Greenland, and Iceland.
- **Boundaries:** Bordered by the Barents Sea (northeast) and the Greenland Sea (north); separated from the Atlantic Ocean by the Greenland–Iceland–Faroe–Scotland Ridge and from the Greenland Sea by the Jan Mayen Ridge.

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- **Formation:** Formed about 250 million years ago due to the separation of the Eurasian and North American tectonic plates.
- **Warm Current:** The Norwegian Current carries warm Atlantic water, keeping the sea largely ice-free throughout the year.
- **Cold Current:** The East Iceland Current brings cold Arctic water into the region.
- **Significance:** The mixing of the warm Norwegian Current and cold East Iceland Current creates nutrient-rich waters, making the Norwegian Sea one of the world's most productive fishing grounds.

7. Mission Drishti:

Context: The Bengaluru-based space start-up GalaxEye has lost contact with Mission Drishti, the world's first OptoSAR satellite, as it encountered an anomaly following a geomagnetic solar storm, the company said.

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About Mission Drishti:

- Drishti is India's largest privately developed earth observation satellite weighing 190 kg.
- Drishti is the world's first operational satellite integrating both Electro-Optical (EO) and Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) sensors.
- The satellite provides all-weather, day-and-night imaging capabilities.
- Drishti can capture optical and radar images of the same location simultaneously.
- The technology used is called Opto-SAR technology.
- Optical images provide clear and intuitive visuals similar to normal photography.
- SAR imaging can penetrate clouds and function effectively during night and adverse weather.
- Combining EO and SAR overcomes limitations of standalone imaging systems.
- The satellite enables more reliable and continuous data acquisition.
- GalaxEye developed Drishti. GalaxEye was founded by alumni of Indian Institute of Technology Madras.
- Drishti was launched aboard Falcon 9 from Vandenberg Space Force Base.
- The satellite was launched as part of the CAS500-2 mission with 45 payloads.

Quick Bites:

- Prime Minister was today conferred the 'Bintang Adipurna of the Republic of Indonesia' medal of honour by the President of Indonesia, H.E. Mr. Prabowo Subianto. The award is the highest civilian honour of the Republic of Indonesia. It was conferred upon Prime Minister for his leadership and exceptional contribution to strengthening India-Indonesia relations.
- The 1st Meeting of the India-Costa Rica Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) was held virtually on 6-7 July 2026. The meeting was co-chaired by Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Shri Vimal Anand, from India and General Director of Foreign Trade, Ms. Adriana Castro, from the Republic of Costa Rica.

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- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today announced that Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) will establish its campus in Indonesia. The proposed Campus will be established at Singhasari Special Economic Zone (SEZ), Malang, Indonesia and is a landmark step towards the internationalisation of India's higher education ecosystem.
- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has designated the Natural History Museum (NHM), Mizoram University, Aizawl, as a Designated Repository under Section 39 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002. The Central Government notified the institution as a Designated Repository and NHM became India's 21st Designated Repository. Designated Repositories constitute an important component of India's biodiversity governance framework by preserving authenticated biological specimens accessed under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.
- India, under its BRICS Chairship 2026, will host the 3rd BRICS Transport Ministers Meeting in Nagpur, Maharashtra on 11th and 12th July 2026. The meeting will bring together Ministers and Senior Officials from BRICS member countries to deliberate on key priorities in the transport sector sustainability in infrastructure and mobility at the 3rd BRICS Transport Ministers' Meeting.
- Union Minister of Textiles, Shri Giriraj Singh will inaugurate 'Indie Haat – A Celebration of India's Rich Handloom and Handicraft Heritage' on 13 July 2026. Indie Haat 2026 is being held from 10–19 July 2026 at the National Crafts Museum & Hastkala Academy, New Delhi. The event is interwoven with Bharat Tex 2026, India's largest global textile event, which will be held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, from 14–17 July 2026.
- In a landmark initiative to promote sustainable textiles and showcase India's innovation in natural fibres, the National Jute Board (NJB), under the Ministry of Textiles, has developed jute-viscose blended apparel that will be worn by the Indian athletes and team members participating in the Commonwealth Games 2026, to be held in Glasgow, Scotland, from July 23 to August 2, 2026. This marks the first occasion on which jute-based apparel will be showcased at an international multi-sport event.

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- e-MERLIN (enhanced Multi-Element Remotely Linked Interferometer Network). e-MERLIN is the United Kingdom's national radio telescope interferometer, designed for high-resolution radio astronomy. It consists of a network of seven radio telescopes spread over 217 km across Great Britain, all connected by optical fibre to the Jodrell Bank Observatory. Operated by the University of Manchester, e-MERLIN combines signals from multiple telescopes to function as a single, powerful radio telescope, enabling astronomers to study distant galaxies, supermassive black holes, star formation, and other faint radio sources with exceptional detail.
- A new study focused on Microgastrinae found that Earth could hold 14.2 million to 20.3 million insect species. They belong to a subfamily of parasitoid wasps that live on the larvae of butterflies and moths.
- Thailand's Fine Arts Department announced the discovery of two Indian gold rings, each about 2,000 years old, at the Don Yai Thong archaeological site in Phetchaburi province in western Thailand. One ring carries an inscription in ancient Brahmi script, and the other ring is plain.
- The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet approved the renaming of Jalalabad town in Shahjahanpur district as Parshurampuri. Gujarat is constructing its first two air-filled rubber dams across the Heran River in Chhota Udepur district and the Ambika River in Tapi district.
- Girish Bharadwaj, a Padma Shri awardee known as the "Bridge Man of India", died at the age of 76. Girish Bharadwaj spent more than three decades building low-cost suspension bridges in India. He constructed more than 140 bridges, mainly in remote villages of Karnataka, Kerala,
- Telangana and Odisha. His bridge designs connected rural settlements with schools, hospitals, markets and government services. He built his first bridge in 1989 across the Payaswini river at Arambur in Dakshina Kannada.
- The Ugram is an indigenous 7.62×51mm assault rifle developed in India by the Armament Research and Development Establishment, a laboratory of the Defence Research and Development Organisation, and Dvipa Defence India Private Limited. It cleared the Indian Army's General Staff Qualitative Requirement trials and the Ministry of Home Affairs Board trials in July 2026.

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09-07-2026

1. Prambanan Temple Complex:

Context: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today visited the iconic UNESCO World Heritage site Prambanan Temple Complex in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

About Prambanan Temple Complex:

- Location: Prambanan is the largest Hindu temple complex in Indonesia, located in Sleman, Yogyakarta, Central Java (Southern Java).
- Local Name: It is popularly known as Roro Jonggrang, meaning "Temple of the Slender Virgin."
- Period of Construction: It was built in the 9th century CE by the Sanjaya Dynasty, a Hindu kingdom that ruled central Java.
- Dedication: The temple is dedicated to the Hindu Trimurti—Shiva (Destroyer), Vishnu (Preserver), and Brahma (Creator).
- UNESCO Status: It was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1991 for its outstanding cultural and architectural significance.
- Rediscovery: The temple remained buried and abandoned for centuries before being rediscovered and restored during the 19th century.
- Architectural Style: It reflects a blend of indigenous Javanese architecture and South Indian Pallava-style influences.
- Temple Complex: The complex originally consisted of 240 temples, showcasing the grandeur of ancient Hindu architecture.
- Central Compound: The main compound contains 8 principal temples and 8 smaller (minor) temples, built on a raised platform.

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- Main Temples: The three principal temples are dedicated to Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma, with each accompanied by a temple dedicated to their respective vahana (vehicle).
- Shiva Temple: The Shiva Temple is the largest and tallest (47 m), making it one of the tallest Hindu temples in Southeast Asia.
- Sculptures and Surroundings: The temple walls are adorned with intricate bas-reliefs depicting the Ramayana and other Hindu epics. Although primarily a Hindu complex, it is surrounded by Buddhist temples and shrines, reflecting the coexistence of Hinduism and Buddhism in ancient Java.

2. Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR):

Context: Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted a successful flight-test of Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR) at the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur on July 08, 2026.

About Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR):

- The Pinaka LRGR rocket is designed by Armament Research and Development Establishment in association with High Energy Materials Research Laboratory, with support from Defence Research and Development Laboratory and Research Centre Imarat.
- About: The Pinaka Missile System is an indigenously developed multi-barrel rocket launcher (MBRL) designed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) through its Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE). It is named after Lord Shiva's bow, Pinaka.
- Key Features: It is a high-precision, highly mobile, and quick-deployment artillery system capable of delivering intense and concentrated fire on enemy targets with high accuracy.
- Pinaka Mark I: The first operational variant has an effective range of about 40 km.

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- Pinaka Mark II: An upgraded version with a range of 70–80 km, which is planned to be extended to 120 km and eventually 300 km.
- Launch Capability: The system can fire 12 rockets in a single salvo from upgraded launchers, enabling rapid saturation of a target area.
- Significance: Pinaka strengthens India's indigenous defence capabilities, enhances long-range artillery firepower, and supports the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative in defence manufacturing.

3. Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs (PM-SETU):

Context: Centre approved the nationwide rollout of the Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs (PM-SETU).

About PM-SETU:

- PM-SETU, a flagship initiative of the Government of India with an outlay of ₹60,000 crore, aims to transform 1,000 Government ITIs through an industry-led Hub-and-Spoke model.
- The scheme seeks to modernise infrastructure, strengthen industry engagement, improve employability outcomes, and establish National Centres of Excellence (NCoEs) in high-growth sectors, building, through stronger government-industry partnerships — a future-ready workforce equipped for advanced manufacturing and emerging technologies.
- Component I – Upgradation of 1,000 Government ITIs (200 Hub ITIs and 800 Spoke ITIs) in a Hub and Spoke model wherein upgradation includes smart classrooms, modern labs, digital content, and new courses aligned to industry needs.
- Component II – Capacity Augmentation of five NSTIs located in Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kanpur, and Ludhiana, including setting-up sector-specific National Centres of Excellence for skilling, with focus on advanced training of trainers with global partnership.

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4. Haveli Sangeet:

Context: The Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar-2025 was announced for the years 2024-25 by the Sangeet Natak Akademi under the Union Ministry of Culture. Acharya Shri Ranchhodlalji Goswami, a Haveli Sangeet scholar from Ahmedabad, received the honour for the Pushtimarg Haveli Sangeet tradition.

More details:

- Haveli Sangeet is a devotional music tradition associated with the Pushtimarg sect and the temple culture of Gujarat and Rajasthan.
- It is performed as part of temple worship and incorporates devotional hymns (bhajans), vocal compositions, and Indian classical music.
- Acharya Shri Ranchhodlalji Goswami, the 16th Acharya of the historic Goswami Haveli, Kalupur (Ahmedabad), is a renowned exponent of Haveli Sangeet.
- At the age of 32, he has composed over 22,000 devotional hymns and authored eight books on devotional music and spirituality.
- He has been conferred the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar, an annual award recognizing outstanding young artists (below 40 years) in Indian performing arts.
- The Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar carries a cash prize of ₹25,000, along with a plaque and an angavastram, to encourage young talent in the performing arts.

5. Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing System (PABS):

Context: World Health Organisation (WHO) member states kicked off another attempt at finalising the missing piece of the pandemic treaty here on Monday, with the Ebola outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) injecting a fresh sense of urgency. Wealthy countries and developing nations are at loggerheads in talks at the WHO's headquarters over how the pandemic

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agreement, adopted last year, will work in practice. Though the treaty was agreed in May 2025, how its key mechanism would operate was left out to get the deal over the line.

About Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing System (PABS):

- **Definition:** The Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing System (PABS) is a global framework adopted by the World Health Organization in 2024 to ensure equitable sharing of pathogens and fair distribution of benefits arising from their use.
- **Purpose:** It balances rapid pathogen sharing for global health security with the principles of fairness, equity, and national sovereignty over biological resources.
- **Background:** The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of sharing pathogen samples and genetic data while exposing inequalities in access to vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics.
- **Legal Context:** The system addresses challenges posed by the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Nagoya Protocol, whose access procedures sometimes delayed outbreak response.
- **Adoption:** PABS was endorsed in May 2024 during the World Health Assembly as part of the WHO Pandemic Agreement negotiations.
- **Objective** – Pathogen Sharing: It promotes timely, transparent, and secure sharing of pathogen samples and genetic sequence data during public health emergencies.
- **Objective** – Benefit Sharing: It ensures fair and equitable access to vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics, technology transfer, training, and other benefits derived from shared pathogens.
- **Governance:** The system is administered by the WHO with participation from Member States, research institutions, industry partners, and international health organisations.
- **Access Component:** It uses WHO Pathogen Access Nodes (PANs), standardized material transfer agreements, and secure data-sharing mechanisms to facilitate responsible pathogen exchange.
- **Benefit-Sharing Component:** Benefits include financial contributions, technology transfer, capacity building, reserved medical supplies, and advance purchase commitments for participating countries during health emergencies.

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6. What is the right to be forgotten?

- Definition: The Right to be Forgotten (RTBF) is the right of an individual to have personal information erased or de-indexed from the public digital space when its continued availability causes harm and serves no overriding public interest.
- Origin: The concept originated from the 2014 Google Spain SL v. Agencia Española de Protección de Datos (Mario Costeja González) judgment and was later incorporated under Article 17 (Right to Erasure) of the General Data Protection Regulation act of the European Union.
- Constitutional Basis: In India, the RTBF flows from the Right to Privacy recognised as a fundamental right under Article 21 by the K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India.
- Earlier Position: Before 2026, Indian High Courts followed inconsistent approaches, with some allowing anonymisation while others prioritised the principle of open justice.
- Delhi HC Judgment: On 29 May 2026, the Laksh Vir Singh Yadav v. Union of India established a structured framework for implementing the Right to be Forgotten.
- Proportionality Test: The Court held that retention of information must serve a legitimate purpose, privacy harm must be balanced against public interest, and the least restrictive measure should be adopted.
- Preferred Remedy: Instead of deleting judgments, the Court directed masking/redaction of parties' names while retaining the facts and legal reasoning to preserve judicial records.
- Compliance Timeline: The Court directed legal databases to comply within two weeks by de-indexing or anonymising names wherever applicable.
- Constitutional Balance: RTBF must be balanced with Article 19(1)(a) (freedom of speech and expression), open justice, and the public's right to know, especially in matters involving serious crimes.
- Practical Challenges: Effective enforcement remains difficult because search engines, archives, mirror websites, and social media can continue to display old information despite court orders.

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- DPDP Act, 2023: The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 provides only a limited right to erasure based on consent and does not specifically cover judicial records or public archives.
- Institutional Mechanism: A tiered system has been suggested—routine requests by platforms, disputed cases by the Data Protection Board, and judicial record-related cases by courts.
- Significance: The Delhi High Court ruling marks a major step in protecting informational privacy, but comprehensive implementation requires Supreme Court guidance, an effective Data Protection Board, and platform compliance.

Quick Bites:

- India hosted the 13th ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) Joint Committee (JC) and related meetings at Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi, from July 6 to 10, 2026, to review the progress of negotiations under the AITIGA Review.
- In a significant step towards strengthening the pharmaceutical supply chain and facilitating ease of trade, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has enabled the import of drugs through the recently inaugurated Navi Mumbai Airport in Maharashtra. The amendment to Rule 43A of the Drugs Rules, 1945 now includes Navi Mumbai in the list of airports through which drugs may be imported into the country.
- The Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms), Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, has launched Handloom Hackathon 2026 – "Weaving Innovation", a national innovation challenge aimed at harnessing technology, design, entrepreneurship and sustainable solutions to strengthen India's handloom sector. The initiative is being organised as part of the celebrations of National Handloom Day 2026.
- The two-day National Workshop on Strengthening Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs), organised by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in collaboration with the Government of Odisha, concluded today in Bhubaneswar with the adoption of the Bhubaneswar Declaration, marking an important milestone in advancing the vision of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for Viksit Bharat@2047

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through stronger institutions that promote tribal knowledge, research, innovation and evidence-based policymaking.

- The Guwahati Declaration was adopted by BRICS nations to strengthen cooperation in combating transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking. It emphasizes enhanced intelligence sharing, exchange of information, data-driven approaches, and the use of innovative technologies to disrupt drug trafficking networks. The declaration also focuses on reducing drug demand through awareness campaigns, preventive measures, rehabilitation, and the promotion of healthy lifestyles, while fostering greater collaboration among BRICS countries to address the global drug menace.
- India added 52.5 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) of regasification capacity across eight terminals, as it surpassed Spain to become the fourth largest market for regasification capacity in 2025, according to the International Gas Union's (IGU) World LNG Report. Among operational LNG regasification terminals in India, Dahej LNG (17.5 mtpa), located at the Port of Dahej in the Bharuch district of Gujarat, stands out as the only ultra-large facility and ranks as the sixth largest globally.
- India currently has eight operational LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) import terminals: Dahej (Gujarat), Hazira (Gujarat), Mundra (Gujarat), Chhara (Gujarat), Dabhol (Maharashtra), Kochi (Kerala), Ennore (Tamil Nadu), and Dhamra (Odisha). Gujarat has the highest concentration with four terminals, making it India's leading LNG import hub, while Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Odisha each have one operational terminal.

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10-07-2026

1. Quality Council of India (QCI):

Context: The Quality Council of India (QCI) and the National Small Industries Corporation Limited (NSIC) today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a collaborative ecosystem aimed at strengthening quality, competitiveness and market access for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) across the country. The partnership brings together QCI's expertise in quality, accreditation and certification with NSIC's extensive MSME support ecosystem to accelerate the adoption of globally recognised quality standards and enhance the growth of Indian enterprises.

About Quality Council of India (QCI):

- **Established:** 1996 as national accreditation body.
- **Mission:** Lead nationwide quality movement.
- **Nature:** Non-Profit Organization under Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- **Model:** PPP – supported by GoI + industry bodies (ASSOCHAM, CII, FICCI).
- **Nodal Agency:** DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce.
- **Chairman:** Appointed by PM on industry recommendation.
- **Key Role:** Conducts Swachh Survekshan under Swachh Bharat Mission.

2. Samriddh Gram:

Context: The Department of Telecommunications (DoT), has been announced as the Global winner of the prestigious World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Prizes 2026 under Action Line C6 – Enabling Environment for its flagship project "Samriddh Gram: Integrated Phygital Service Delivery Model Enabled by BharatNet."

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More details:

- The award was presented during the WSIS Forum 2026 held in Geneva, recognising India's innovative approach towards leveraging digital public infrastructure and telecom connectivity for inclusive rural development.
- Instituted under the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process led by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the WSIS Prizes are among the world's most prestigious recognitions for projects harnessing Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to advance sustainable development.
- The WSIS Forum brings together governments, United Nations agencies, industry, academia, civil society and international organisations to promote people-centric, inclusive and development-oriented digital transformation.

About Samriddh Gram:

- Samriddh Gram is an integrated rural digital transformation initiative of the Department of Telecommunications built on the BharatNet backbone.
- At the heart of the initiative are Samriddhi Kendras, established as one-stop village-level hubs delivering integrated phygital services by combining reliable telecom connectivity, digital platforms and assisted physical service delivery.
- The Samriddh Gram initiative brings together a comprehensive range of citizen-centric services under one roof, spanning healthcare, education, agriculture, financial inclusion, skilling, e-Governance, and e-commerce.
- The Samriddh Gram Centre provides tele-consultation, diagnostic services through Health ATMs, and medicines through PM Jan Aushadhi Kendras; smart classrooms and AR/VR-based skill development; IoT-based soil testing, drone-enabled fertilizer and pesticide spraying, and mobile app-based smart irrigation solutions; CSC/e-Governance and Banking Correspondent services; e-commerce support for local products; FTTH and PM-WANI connectivity; CCTV-based village

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surveillance; and community-level digital facilitation, ensuring seamless access to essential services and promoting inclusive, technology-enabled rural development.

- The project demonstrates how BharatNet and last-mile telecom infrastructure can transform beyond connectivity into measurable socio-economic outcomes for rural citizens through an integrated service delivery model supported by local facilitation and community participation.

3. National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA):

Context: The 29th Meeting of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) was held today at the Central Academy for State Forest Service (CASFOS), Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.

More developments:

- **Minister released two important NTCA publications:** "Roadmap to Rescue: Strategic Roadmap for Establishment of Temporary/Transit Facilities for Rescue-Rehab-Release of Wild Animals in Tiger Landscapes" and "STRIDES 2026: Status of Tiger Reserves – Infrastructure, Development, Ecology & Social Parameters"
- The meeting also considered proposals for organising the Tiger Conclave as a national platform to mobilise financial resources for Tiger Reserves through Tiger Conservation Foundations by fostering partnerships with corporate entities, philanthropic organisations and other stakeholders.
- In addition, the Authority deliberated on organising STRIPES (Symposium on Tiger Research, Innovation, Policy, Ecology & Sustainability) as a national forum for disseminating research findings, sharing innovative management practices and facilitating knowledge exchange among Tiger Reserve managers, researchers and conservation practitioners to promote evidence-based management and replication of successful conservation interventions across Tiger Reserves.

About National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA):

- NTCA is a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), established in 2006 under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 (amended in 2006).

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- Establishment: Constituted in 2006 under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to strengthen tiger conservation in India.
- Project Tiger: Provides statutory backing to Project Tiger, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for in-situ conservation of tigers in designated tiger reserves.
- Primary Objective: Ensure effective protection of tigers and their habitats through legally enforceable conservation measures.
- Federal Coordination: Promotes Centre–State accountability in tiger reserve management through Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs).
- Parliamentary Oversight: Ensures transparency and accountability in tiger conservation through parliamentary oversight.
- Composition: Chaired by the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, with the Minister of State as Vice-Chairperson, along with Members of Parliament, the MoEFCC Secretary, and other members.
- Tiger Conservation Plans: Approves Tiger Conservation Plans prepared by State Governments for all tiger reserves.
- Habitat Protection: Evaluates ecological sustainability and discourages activities such as mining, industries, and other ecologically harmful projects within tiger reserves.
- Tourism & Human–Wildlife Conflict: Prescribes guidelines for tourism in core and buffer areas and promotes measures to mitigate human–wildlife conflicts.
- Research & Monitoring: Coordinates research, population estimation of tigers and prey, habitat monitoring, disease surveillance, patrolling, and scientific conservation programmes.
- Eco-development: Supports biodiversity conservation through eco-development, community participation, and capacity building of tiger reserve staff.
- Statutory Powers: Can issue binding directions to authorities and individuals for the protection of tigers and tiger reserves; also advises on diversion of tiger habitats, requiring approval of the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) where applicable.

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4. Central Zoo Authority (CZA):

Context: Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav, chaired the 46th Meeting of the Central Zoo Authority (CZA), today in Coimbatore.

About Central Zoo Authority (CZA):

- **Definition:** The Central Zoo Authority (CZA) is a statutory autonomous body under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).
- **Establishment:** It was established in 1992 under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- **Primary Objective:** To enforce minimum standards for the housing, upkeep, healthcare, and scientific management of animals in Indian zoos.
- **Zoo Recognition:** Every zoo in India must obtain mandatory recognition from the CZA to operate legally; recognition is granted based on prescribed standards.
- **Monitoring & Regulation:** Evaluates and monitors zoos, and has the authority to grant or withdraw recognition for non-compliance.
- **Conservation Role:** Identifies endangered species for captive breeding and assigns breeding programmes to suitable zoos.
- **Research & Capacity Building:** Promotes research in captive breeding, ex-situ conservation, biotechnology applications, and conducts training programmes for zoo personnel.
- **Technical & Financial Support:** Provides technical, scientific, and financial assistance for improved zoo management and conservation initiatives.
- **Key Achievement:** Has significantly improved zoo standards in India and closed down substandard zoos through strict enforcement of legal provisions.

5. Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM):

Context: To promote farm mechanization in India, the Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) was launched in 2014–15, completing 10 years.

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About Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM):

- It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY). SMAM aims to "reach the unreached" by extending the benefits of mechanization to underserved sections.
- It includes small and marginal farmers, including women, Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Farmer-Producer Organizations (FPOs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), and rural entrepreneurs.

Category	Size-Class
Marginal	Below 1.00 hectare
Small	1.00-2.00 hectare
Semi- Medium	2.00-4.00 hectare
Medium	4.00-10.00 hectare
Large	10.00 hectare and above

- The scheme promotes the establishment of Custom Hiring Centres (CHCs). These are units comprising a set of farm machinery, implements, and equipment meant for hiring by farmers.
- It also supports the development of hubs for hi-tech and high-value agricultural equipment, and the distribution of farm machinery.
- Awareness generation through demonstrations and capacity-building initiatives is also undertaken.

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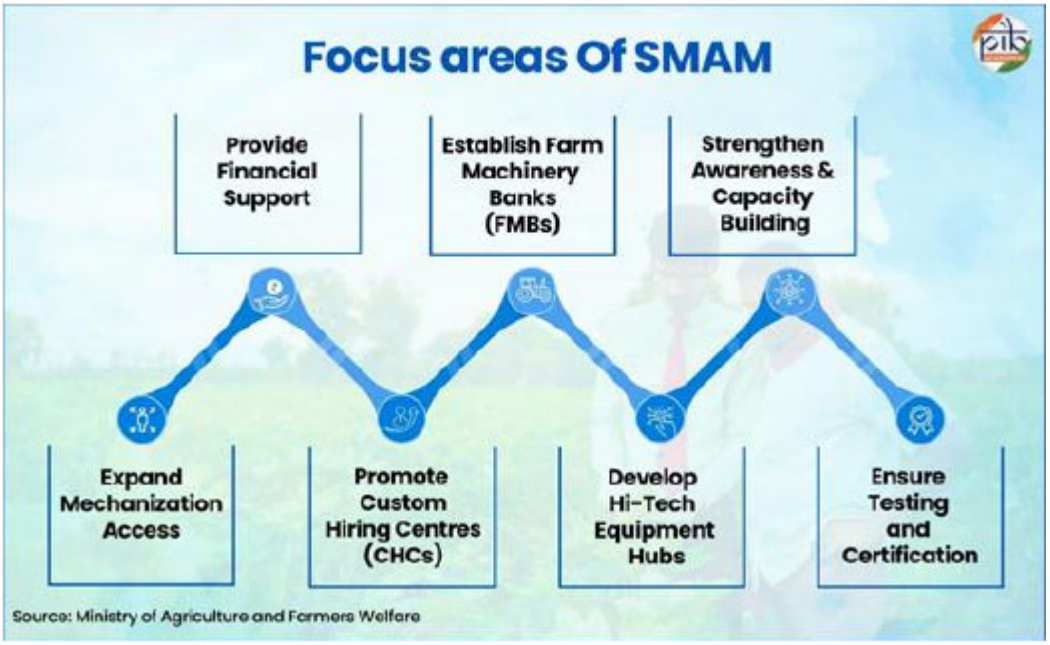
- Special focus is placed on regions with low farm power availability and on addressing structural constraints such as small landholdings and high capital costs through affordable rental services via CHCs.
- Additionally, SMAM supports the performance testing and certification of agricultural machinery. Targeted Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) activities are undertaken to enhance adoption among stakeholders.



The **Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY),** launched in 2007, is a flagship scheme that incentivizes states to increase public investment in agriculture and allied sectors. It provides states with **flexibility and autonomy to** design and implement projects tailored to local needs. The schemes encompass a broad range of interventions, including crop production, infrasturucture development, mechanization, and value addition. In 2017-18, the Scheme was restructured as the RKVY-**RAFTAR (Remunerative Approaches for Agriculture and Allied Sector Rejuvenation)**, with an increased focus on strengthening both pre-and post-harvest infrastructure.

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6. ASTRA missiles:

Context: Indonesia became the first country that signed a pact to import India's ASTRA missiles (Astra Mk 1).

About ASTRA missiles:

- It is Indigenous Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air missile (BVRAAM).
- The missile is designed to engage and destroy highly manoeuvring supersonic aircraft.
- Developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- The missile has all weather day and night capability.
- Its range exceeds 100 kms and is equipped with state-of-the art guidance and navigation systems.
- Capabilities: The missile can engage targets at an altitude of up to 20 km and travels at a maximum speed of Mach 4.5 (about 4.5 times the speed of sound).
- It is equipped with inertial navigation, mid-course guidance updates, and terminal active radar homing, enabling highly accurate target tracking and interception even against fast-moving aerial threats.

7. 'ULLAS' (Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society) scheme:

Context: Uttarakhand has become the sixth fully literate state under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the 'ULLAS' (Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society) scheme. Uttarakhand joins Mizoram, Goa, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim.

About 'ULLAS' (Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society) scheme:

- **Definition of Literates:** Literates are those with reading, writing, basic math, digital, and financial literacy skills.
- **Scheme Type:** It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme aligned with NEP 2020.

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- **Overall Target**: Aims to educate 5 crore adults (1 crore/year) using the Online Teaching, Learning and Assessment System (OTLAS) system.
- **Technology Backbone**: OTLAS is a digital platform developed by NIC for online teaching, learning, and assessment.
- **Duration:** The scheme runs from FY 2022–23 to 2026–27.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Implemented by the Ministry of Education.
- **Target Group:** Adults aged 15 and above who missed out on formal education.
- **Programme Components**: Includes literacy, numeracy, life skills, vocational skills, and continuing education.
- **Implementation Mode**: Driven by volunteerism to instil social responsibility (Kartavya Bodh).
- **Infrastructure:** Samajik Chetna Kendras are set up using existing community spaces with schools as base units.
- **Regional Access:** Content is accessible in regional languages via DIKSHA and ULLAS apps/portals.
- **Assessment:** (Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Test (FLNAT) is held twice a year or on-demand in local schools for evaluation and certification.

Quick Bites:

➢ Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda will lay the foundation stone of the ICMR Centre for High Altitude Medicine and Public Health Research at Keylong in Lahaul & Spiti district, Himachal Pradesh, on 11 July 2026. The Centre, being set up by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) under the Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, will upgrade ICMR's existing field station at Keylong into a full-fledged, multidisciplinary hub for research, innovation and capacity building focused on India's high-altitude and climate-sensitive regions.

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- The Global Status Report on Cancer 2026 released by World Health Organisation and International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), it is the first ever survey of people affected by cancer.
- **Sabang Port:** Sabang Port is located on Weh Island in Aceh Province, at the northern tip of Sumatra, Indonesia. It lies close to the Strait of Malacca, one of the world's busiest and most strategic maritime chokepoints connecting the Andaman Sea (Indian Ocean) with the South China Sea (Pacific Ocean). India and Indonesia have agreed to jointly develop the port to strengthen maritime cooperation, enhance India's strategic presence in the Indo-Pacific, improve connectivity with Southeast Asia, support regional security, and promote trade under India's Act East Policy and SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) vision.
- **Egyptian Vulture:** The Egyptian Vulture is the world's smallest and the only known tool-using vulture, found across southern Europe, northern and central Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Indian subcontinent. It breeds later than other vulture species, often rubs its body with ferric oxide-rich soil, and plays a vital ecological role by scavenging animal carcasses. Its population is declining due to threats such as diclofenac poisoning, electrocution from power lines, and habitat degradation. It has become locally extinct in the Nilgiris and is disappearing from much of Tamil Nadu. It is listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List and is protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories (CSIR-NAL) in Bengaluru completed the design phase of the Saras MkII on 8 July 2026. The Saras MkII is an indigenous 19-seater light transport aircraft developed for smaller airports and regional air connectivity in India.
- Switzerland will host a global AI summit in Geneva on June 21-22, 2027. The summit is linked to international discussions on artificial intelligence governance, trustworthy AI, and multilateral cooperation among governments, international organisations, scientists, businesses, and civil society.
- An Indian delegation visited Kyrgyzstan from 4 July to 7 July 2026 for the inauguration of the International Centre for Civilizational Studies “Manas and Mahabharata” in Bishkek. The centre

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was established through cooperation between the Manas National Academy in Kyrgyzstan and the Centre for Studies of International Relations (CSIR) in New Delhi.

- The Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways plans to centralise the National Bridge Health Monitoring Software by involving the Indian Institute of Technology Madras and the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing. The system is linked to the Bridge Health Monitoring System, which uses sensors for real-time monitoring of bridges on the national highway network.
- India launched Awiqli, the world's first once-weekly basal insulin, on 9 July 2026. The drug contains insulin icodec and is marketed by Danish pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk. In India, Awiqli is approved for adults with Type 1 diabetes and Type 2 diabetes.
- Srikakulam district in Andhra Pradesh will get a full-fledged airport under the UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagarik) scheme. The proposed airport is planned for Mandasa mandal in the Uddanam region, while Palasa has been earmarked for a domestic airport on 1,261 acres.

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11-07-2026

1. Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA):

Context: The 7th Meeting of the Governing Body of National CAMPA was held today at CASFOS, Coimbatore, under the chairmanship of Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change. The meeting reviewed the overall performance of National CAMPA and considered several new proposals and initiatives aimed at strengthening compensatory afforestation, forest conservation and wildlife protection across the country.

About Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA):

- CAMPA is a statutory body established at the Centre and in all States/UTs under the Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAF) Act, 2016.
- It manages and oversees funds collected for compensatory afforestation when forest land is diverted for non-forest purposes.
- CAMPA was originally constituted by the Supreme Court in 2002 in the T.N. Godavarman Thirumulpad vs Union of India case as an ad hoc body.
- It was created to address unutilized afforestation funds and ensure uniform and transparent fund management across States.
- The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 mandates compensatory afforestation and requires the user agency to bear the associated costs.
- The CAF Act, 2016 and CAF Rules, 2018 institutionalized the management and utilization of compensatory afforestation funds.
- CAMPA funds are maintained as National CAF (NCAF) and State CAF (SCAF) under the Public Accounts, and are interest-bearing and non-lapsable.

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- Ninety percent of CAMPA funds are released to States/UTs, while ten percent is retained by the Centre for oversight and capacity building.
- The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) annually audits both National and State CAMPA for financial accountability.
- CAMPA funds are utilized for afforestation, forest and wildlife management, natural regeneration, catchment area treatment, human–wildlife conflict mitigation, village relocation from protected areas, capacity building, and forest protection infrastructure.

More details of the meeting:

- Reviewing the major digital governance initiatives of National CAMPA, the Governing Body appreciated the operationalisation of the Digital Annual Plan of Operations (Digital APO) for the FY 2026-27 cycle, under which States and UTs are now required to prepare and submit their Annual Plans of Operation exclusively through an online, workflow-enabled system covering proposal creation, verification and approval, backed by integrated dashboards for fund utilisation and plantation performance.
- The Governing Body also reviewed the establishment of a dedicated Geospatial Monitoring & Evaluation System (GIS Lab) for National Authority CAMPA, a unified, technology-driven framework using satellite imagery, GIS platforms and field verification to enable transparent and scientific monitoring of Compensatory Afforestation, NPV-supported activities and ongoing CAMPA-funded schemes.
- Progress on the Harit-SANKALP Portal (System for Accreditation, Nursery Knowledge for Afforestation Linkage Platform), developed in consultation with FAO-India, was also presented. The portal provides unique identification and QR-code-based traceability for seed sources, nurseries and planting material
- On flagship afforestation and restoration schemes, the Governing Body noted that under MISHTI (Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes), an amount of Rs. 88.40 crore

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has so far been released for plantation and restoration of mangroves across six States/UTs, with the Governing Body approving a revised outlay and three-year extension of the programme (till 2029) with an additional Rs. 500 crore, taking the overall outlay to Rs. 600 crore under a landscape-based, multi-ecosystem approach to coastal restoration.

- Under the Nagar Van Yojana, 652 Nagar Vans/Vatikas have been developed with a release of Rs. 571.50 crore, while Rs. 7.28 crore has been released to ICFRE under the Green Credit Scheme to promote plantation-based green cover expansion. The Governing Body encouraged States and UTs to further scale up these initiatives.
- It approved the Aastha Van Sanrakshan Yojana, a new scheme with an initial corpus of Rs. 3,000 crore over five years (2026-27 to 2030-31) for the conservation and restoration of nearly 15,000 sacred groves (Aastha Vans) across the country, along with a new scheme for landscape restoration, combating land degradation and biodiversity loss, to be supported from the National Fund.

2. Financial Intelligence Unit–India (FIU-IND):

Context: The Financial Intelligence Unit–India (FIU-IND) has earned another significant international recognition with its case regarding a large-scale cyber fraud, securing the Runner-up position at the prestigious Best Egmont Case Award (BECA) 2026, presented during the Egmont Group Plenary held in Baku, Azerbaijan. The Best Egmont Case Award is one of the highest recognitions within the Egmont Group, acknowledging outstanding operational cases that demonstrate excellence in financial intelligence, international cooperation and contribution to combating money laundering and terrorist financing.

About Financial Intelligence Unit–India (FIU-IND):

- FIU-IND was established by the Government of India in November 2004.

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- It is the central national agency responsible for receiving, processing, analyzing, and disseminating information on suspect financial transactions.
- It plays a key role in combating money laundering and terrorist financing by coordinating intelligence and enforcement efforts.
- FIU-IND is an independent body that reports directly to the Economic Intelligence Council (EIC), headed by the Union Finance Minister.
- It receives various reports from reporting entities, including Cash Transaction Reports (CTRs), Suspicious Transaction Reports (STRs), Non-Profit Organisation Transaction Reports (NTRs), Cross Border Wire Transfer Reports (CBWTRs), and Immovable Property Reports (IPRs).
- It analyzes financial transaction data to identify suspicious patterns linked to money laundering and related offences.
- It shares financial intelligence with national law enforcement agencies, regulatory authorities, and foreign Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs).
- FIU-IND acts as the central repository of financial intelligence by maintaining a national database of transaction reports.
- It coordinates financial intelligence networks and conducts research on money laundering trends, typologies, and emerging threats to strengthen anti-money laundering (AML) efforts.

3. International Financial Services Centre (IFSC), GIFT City:

Context: In a major policy initiative aimed at strengthening India's maritime services ecosystem and enhancing the country's competitiveness in global shipping, the Government has exempted units established in the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC), GIFT City, Gandhinagar, from the licensing requirement under Section 11 of the Coastal Shipping Act, 2025 for chartering foreign vessels for EXIM and international trade operations.

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About International Financial Services Centre (IFSC), GIFT City:

- Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) is India's first International Financial Services Centre (IFSC), located in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- As India's first operational smart city, it represents the country's ambition to build a global hub for financial and technological services.
- Backed by strong government support, GIFT City is designed to blend world-class infrastructure with sustainable urban development.
- Established as India's first International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) under the SEZ Act, 2005.
- Located in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, spanning nearly 1000 acres and now being expanded to 3,300+ acres, the city is divided into two parts: the Domestic Tariff Area (DTA) and the Multi-service Special Economic Zone (GIFT SEZ).
- GIFT City is purposefully built to support both onshore and offshore financial operations, draw global investment, drive innovation, and generate high-quality jobs, contributing to India's vision for Viksit Bharat 2047.
- GIFT City is India's first International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) and a Multi-Services Special Economic Zone (SEZ).
- GIFT IFSC is governed by the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) with strong government policy support.
- Units operating in GIFT IFSC are treated as non-residents under the Foreign Exchange Management (FEMA) regulations.
- IFSCA was established under the IFSCA Act, 2019 and became operational in April 2020.
- IFSCA serves as a unified regulator, replacing the regulatory roles of RBI, SEBI, IRDAI, and PFRDA within GIFT IFSC.
- IFSCA regulates and develops financial products, institutions, and services while promoting ease of doing business and global best practices.

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- The India International Bullion Exchange (IIBX) was launched at GIFT IFSC in July 2022.
- IIBX provides a transparent platform for bullion imports, trading, investment products, and vaulting services.
- IIBX follows OECD due diligence guidelines to ensure responsible and conflict-free bullion sourcing.
- GIFT IFSC hosts banks, insurers, asset managers, fintech firms, and IIBX, with regular government–industry consultations to promote growth.

4. Global Liveability Index 2026:

Context: Recently, Global Liveability Index 2026 was released by EIU.

About Global Liveability Index 2026:

- The Global Liveability Index evaluates the quality of life and living conditions in cities worldwide.
- It is published annually by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
- The 2026 Index assessed 173 cities using over 30 qualitative and quantitative indicators.
- Cities are scored on a 1–100 scale across five parameters: Stability, Healthcare, Culture & Environment, Education, and Infrastructure.
- Copenhagen, Vienna, and Melbourne ranked as the top three most liveable cities globally in 2026.
- Among Indian cities, New Delhi (120th) ranked highest, followed by Mumbai (121st), Chennai (123rd), and Bengaluru (127th).

5. Proteolysis-targeting chimaera (PROTAC):

Context: U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved drug vepdegestrant, the world's first PROTAC-based therapy, for ESR1-mutated, ER-positive, HER2-negative advanced breast cancer, where it degrades the oestrogen receptor.

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About Proteolysis-targeting chimaera (PROTAC):

- PROTAC (Proteolysis Targeting Chimera) is a molecule that selectively degrades disease-causing proteins instead of merely inhibiting them.
- It works by bridging the target protein with an E3 ligase, triggering the cell's natural protein degradation pathway.
- PROTAC acts catalytically, allowing a single molecule to degrade multiple copies of the target protein, enabling lower-dose therapy.
- It can target previously "undruggable" proteins that are difficult for conventional drugs to inhibit.
- Major challenges include poor absorption due to large molecular size, reduced efficacy at high concentrations, and the potential development of resistance.

6. Mugger Crocodiles:

Context: A banned pesticide Aldrin led to deaths of mugger crocodiles (Crocodylus palustris) in the Chandraloi river of Rajasthan's Kota district. Aldrin is a banned organochlorine pesticide in India due to its persistent nature, soil and water contamination, bioaccumulation in the food chain, and toxic effects on the nervous system of humans and wildlife.

About Mugger Crocodiles:

- The Mugger Crocodile (Crocodylus palustris) is a medium-sized freshwater crocodile belonging to the genus Crocodylus.
- It has the broadest snout among living crocodiles, along with a powerful tail, webbed feet, and well-developed senses of sight, hearing, and smell.
- It inhabits freshwater ecosystems such as rivers, lakes, ponds, reservoirs, and marshes.
- Its distribution extends across the Indian subcontinent, including India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, and Iran.
- It is a hole-nesting species, laying eggs during the annual dry season.

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- It is primarily carnivorous, feeding mainly on fish, frogs, crustaceans, insects, reptiles, birds, and small mammals.
- Major threats include habitat destruction, illegal hunting for skin, and exploitation for the traditional medicine trade.
- IUCN Red List Status: Vulnerable.
- Protection Status: Listed in CITES Appendix I and Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972

7. Great Indian Bustard (Ardeotis nigriceps):

Context: The Great Indian Bustard (Ardeotis nigriceps) is a critically endangered bird species found mainly in the Thar desert of Rajasthan, with fewer than 150 birds left in the wild. A second chick produced through the "jumpstart" technique in Naliya, Kutch district, Gujarat, survived beyond the critical 40-day period after hatching on 21 May 2026.

About Great Indian Bustard (Ardeotis nigriceps):

- Ground bird with a height of about one metre.
- The body is brownish with a black patch spotted in white.
- It is protected under schedule-1 of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
- It is largest among the four-bustard species found in India and other three being MacQueen's bustard, lesser florican and the Bengal florican. They feed on insects, lizards, grass seeds etc.
- This bird, found mainly in Rajasthan and Gujarat.
- Its historic range included much of the Indian sub-continent but it has now shrunken to just 10 percent of it.
- Rajasthan initiated "Project Great Indian Bustard" on World Environment Day 2013.
- In 2015, the Central government launched the GIB species recovery programme.
- It is listed as critically endangered in IUCN list.

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Quick Bites:

- Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav today inaugurated the Centre of Excellence (CoE) on Human–Wildlife Conflict at Coimbatore.
- The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and IP Australia have entered into an Agreement on access to CSIR's Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (CSIR-TKDL) during the 3rd India–Australia Annual Summit held in Melbourne, Australia, on 9 July 2026.
- Australia–India Partnership on Cyber, Critical Technologies and Supply Chains (PACTS): PACTS is a bilateral agreement signed during the Indian Prime Minister's visit to Australia that replaces the 2020 Framework Arrangement on Cyber and Cyber Enabled Critical Technology Cooperation. It aims to strengthen cybersecurity, critical technologies, and resilient supply chains to enhance national security, improve global cyber resilience, and expand trusted digital choices. The partnership is jointly led by Australia's Deputy Secretary (International and Security Group) and India's Deputy National Security Advisor, with progress reviewed through annual Senior Officials' Meetings.
- World Intangible Investment Report 2026: Published annually by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and Italy's Luiss Business School (LBS), the report assesses investments in intangible assets across economies. The 2026 report reaffirms India's position as a global innovation powerhouse, recording the fastest growth in intangible investments among the world's 15 largest economies. It distinguishes tangible investments (physical assets such as factories, machinery, and buildings) from intangible investments, which include R&D, software, databases, organizational know-how, brands, design, and intellectual property (IP).
- Molluscs & Desert Rain Frog: The IUCN has warned that molluscs face increasing extinction risks from deep-sea mining, while the Desert Rain Frog (Breviceps macrops) is threatened by diamond mining. Molluscs are invertebrates with a mantle, breathing cavity, and nervous system, and include cephalopods, gastropods, and bivalves. The Desert Rain Frog is a fossorial (burrowing)

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species found in the sandy coastal dunes of South Africa and Namibia and is currently classified as Vulnerable by the IUCN.

- Cyananthus hookeri, a rare purple-blue alpine herb of the Campanulaceae family, was rediscovered in Arunachal Pradesh after 158 years. The first confirmed Indian record since 1867 was made in the Chuna Valley near Mago village in Tawang district at an altitude of about 3,600 metres.
- The Geological Survey of India (GSI) identified thorium-bearing mineral deposits in Gundlupet taluk of Chamarajanagar district, Karnataka, on 9 July 2026. The deposits were mapped across about 700 acres in Koothanur and nearby villages, and 20 acres were marked as a core area for excavation and mining auction preparation.
- Tamil Nadu Tops India in Higher Education GER Tamil Nadu recorded a Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of 52.3% in higher education for the 2023-24 academic year.
- The World Bank Board of Executive Directors approved an $890 million financing package for India's national rooftop solar programme on 9 and 10 July 2026. The package supports PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, a residential rooftop solar scheme for households in rural and urban India.
- ONGC Approves Strategic Crude Reserve Expansion Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) granted in-principle approval on 9 July 2026 for a 1.75 million metric tonnes Strategic Petroleum Reserve at Mangaluru in Karnataka. The project is a Phase-I extension and falls under India's strategic crude storage network, which is managed by Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd. (ISPRL).

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12-07-2026

1. Global Biofuels Alliance:

Context: New Zealand's joining of the Global Biofuels Alliance during the PM visit strengthens international cooperation to accelerate the development and adoption of sustainable biofuels for cleaner energy transition.

About Global Biofuels Alliance:

- Nature: A multi-stakeholder alliance comprising governments, international organizations, and industries.
- Initiative: Launched by India to bring together major biofuel producers and consumers.
- Launch: Unveiled on the sidelines of the G20 Summit 2023 in New Delhi.
- Objective: To promote biofuels as a key component of the global energy transition and support economic growth and job creation.
- Focus Areas: Strengthens global biofuel markets, trade, policy cooperation, and technical support for national biofuel programmes.
- Capacity Building: Promotes technology transfer, value-chain development, and wider adoption of sustainable biofuels.
- Standards & Knowledge: Facilitates international standards, sustainability principles, regulations, and serves as a global knowledge and expert hub.
- The Global Biofuels Alliance is a coalition of 34 member countries and 14 international organisations.
- The Global Biofuel Champion Fellowship is a programme for early-career researchers in biofuels. It aims to support biofuel innovation, research-driven solutions, and leadership development in the biofuels sector.

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2. INS Mahendragiri:

Context: The Indian Navy inducted the indigenously-built advanced stealth frigate 'INS Mahendragiri' into its Eastern Fleet during a ceremony presided over by Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh on July 11, 2026.

About INS Mahendragiri:

- 'INS Mahendragiri' is the sixth Project 17A indigenous stealth frigate to be inducted into the Indian Navy in a span of just 1.5 years. The first ship of the series 'INS Nilgiri' was commissioned in January 2025, followed by 'INS Udaygiri' & 'INS Himgiri' in August, 'INS Taragiri' in April this year and 'INS Dunagiri' last month.
- Designed by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau and built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai, the ship is capable of undertaking the full spectrum of maritime operations, including fleet air defence, anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, maritime interdiction, surveillance and humanitarian assistance & disaster relief (HADR).
- The warship, with over 75 percent indigenous content, has a displacement of approximately 6,670 tonnes and the capability to reach speeds of up to 28 knots.
- It is equipped with supersonic surface-to-surface missiles, medium-range surface-to-air missiles, anti-submarine warfare capabilities and an embarked multi-role helicopter, as well as advanced stealth features, modern sensors, network-centric combat systems and state-of-the-art weapon suites.
- "INS Mahendragiri can be equipped with the BrahMos surface-to-surface missile, one of the world's fastest and most lethal cruise missiles.
- It also features a combination of multifunction radar and Surface-to-Air Missiles capable of detecting and neutralising aerial threats at extended ranges.
- Its arsenal also includes an indigenous rocket launcher, torpedo launchers, an Integrated Anti-Submarine Defence System, an Electronic Warfare suite and a Close-In Weapon System.

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- Named after the Mahendragiri mountain range in the Eastern Ghats, INS Mahendragiri symbolises strength, steadfastness and indomitable resolve, and bears the motto 'Mighty, Majestic, Matchless'.
- Built through the contribution of more than 200 Indian industries, including numerous MSMEs, the ship reflects India's growing defence manufacturing capability.
- The frigate features advanced stealth characteristics, a Combined Diesel or Gas propulsion system, an Integrated Platform Management System and advanced indigenous combat systems.

3. PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi):

Context: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences, Dr. Jitendra Singh today disclosed the Government of India's decision to give approval for establishing a "Street Food Hub" at Lakhanpur in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir under the PM SVANidhi initiative.

About PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi):

- It was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on June 01, 2020.
- It aims to provide affordable Working Capital loans to street vendors to resume their livelihoods that have been adversely affected due to the Covid-19 lockdown.
- It is a micro-credit facility that provides street vendors with a collateral-free loan of Rs 10,000 with low rates of interest.
- The duration of the scheme initially was until March 2022. It has been extended till December 2030, with a focus on increased adoption of digital transactions and holistic socio- economic development of the Street Vendors.
- All vendors who have been vending from or before (March 24, 2020) and with a certificate of vending can avail the loan.

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- As per the Street Vendors Act 2014, the Town Vending Committees issue a certificate of vending after a survey has been conducted of all the vendors.
- Vendors can avail of a working capital loan of up to Rs. 10,000, which is repayable in monthly installments in the tenure of one year.
- On timely/ early repayment of the loan, an interest subsidy @ 7% per annum will be credited to the bank accounts of beneficiaries on a quarterly basis.
- The scheme promotes digital transactions through cash back incentives up to an amount of Rs. 100 per month.
- The vendors can avail the facility of escalation of the credit limit on timely/ early repayment of loan.
- Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) is the Implementation agency.
- Since its launch in June 2020, PM SVANidhi has emerged as a transformative initiative for street vendors which has facilitated access to formal credit and enabled beneficiaries to strengthen and expand their livelihoods.
- The scheme has also facilitated more than 1.05 crore loan sanctions amounting to over ₹17,800 crore, benefiting street vendors across the country.

4. Parrot bornavirus 4 (PaBV-4):

Context: A team of scientists has, for the first time in India, identified and genetically characterised a virus that often causes rapid death in captive psittacine birds, raising concerns about the health of exotic pets and conservation of threatened parrot species. Psittacine, which means relating to or resembling a parrot, describes the bird family Psittacidae and order Psittaciformes. It includes budgerigars, cockatiels, cockatoos, lovebirds, macaws, and parakeets. The team, led by Pankaj Deka and Sangeeta Das of the Assam Veterinary and Fishery University in Guwahati, found and characterised parrot bornavirus 4 (PaBV-4) circulating among captive psittacine birds in India.

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About Parrot bornavirus 4 (PaBV-4):

- Parrot Bornavirus-4 (PaBV-4) is a highly contagious single-stranded RNA virus belonging to the species Orthobornavirus alphapsittaciforme.
- It is the primary cause of Proventricular Dilatation Disease (PDD), a progressive and often fatal neurological and gastrointestinal disease affecting psittacine birds (parrots, macaws, parakeets, cockatiels, lovebirds, etc.).
- Global distribution: Reported in North America, Europe, Japan, South Korea, and Israel.
- India: Detected in captive aviculture centres in Assam, Bengaluru (Karnataka), and Kolkata (West Bengal); July 2026 marks the first official confirmation of its circulation in India.
- The association between avian bornaviruses and PDD was first established in 2008; earlier, the disease was known as Macaw Wasting Disease.
- The virus causes a persistent, non-cytolytic infection, with nerve damage resulting mainly from immune-mediated inflammation rather than direct destruction of infected cells.
- Transmission: Spreads through contaminated food, water, saliva, feces, and can also be transmitted from infected parents to eggs (vertical transmission).
- Diagnosis: Best detected by RT-PCR, using cloacal swabs in live birds and brain/proventriculus tissues in dead birds.
- Impact: Causes digestive nerve damage leading to enlarged proventriculus, poor digestion, weight loss, undigested food in droppings, and death; asymptomatic carriers enable silent spread, threatening captive breeding and conservation of endangered parrot species.

5. Interpol Notices:

Context: The J&K Police's special cell, State Investigation Agency (SIA), on Saturday secured an Interpol Red Corner Notice against designated Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist Imtiyaz Ahmad Kandoo alias Fayaz alias Sajad, who is accused in the 2013 Hygam terror attack in Sopore that claimed the lives of four Jammu and Kashmir Police personnel.

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About Interpol Notices:

- Interpol, formally known as the International Criminal Police Organization, is an intergovernmental organization with 194 member countries.
- It was established in 1923.
- Its primary objective is to facilitate international cooperation between national police forces in combating transnational crimes.
- It is headquartered in Lyon, France.
- Interpol notices are international requests for cooperation or alerts allowing police in member countries to share critical crime-related information.
- **Silver notice:** To identify and trace criminal assets.

Quick Bites:

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has expressed deep grief over the tragic boat accident involving Indian nationals near Phu Quoc, Vietnam.Fifteen Indian tourists were killed in Vietnam on Saturday when a sightseeing boat capsized off the coast of Phu Quoc, a major attraction known for its coral reefs and island-hopping excursions.
- Under the Agricultural Productivity Partnership between India and Newzealand, under the Free Trade Agreement, a Kiwifruit Action Plan is being launched along with the establishment of two Centres of Excellence in Nagaland and Uttarakhand, supported by collaboration in education, skills development, and agricultural innovation to boost productivity.
- Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah today inaugurated the Jayaprakash Narayan Library in New Delhi.
- The Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law & Justice, Government of India, in collaboration with the Bar Council of India (BCI), today organised a National Conference on "Strengthening Legal Education through Integration of Regional Languages" at the premises of the Bar Council of India, New Delhi.

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- The Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment will commemorate the 3rd NAMASTE Day on July 14, marking three years since the launch of the National Action for Mechanized Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) Scheme in 2023.
- Financial Stability Report (FSR): The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released the June 2026 edition of the Financial Stability Report (FSR), reaffirming the resilience of India's financial system. The report highlights that banks and NBFCs remain financially strong, supported by robust capital buffers, adequate liquidity, healthy profitability, low non-performing assets (NPAs), and sustained credit growth. Published half-yearly since 2010, the FSR assesses risks to financial stability and the resilience of the financial sector.
- Petroglyphs: Work has begun on India's first Petroglyph Conservation Park in Leh by relocating ancient rock carvings from vulnerable sites across Ladakh. Petroglyphs are rock carvings created by pecking directly onto rock surfaces using stone tools (unlike pictographs, which are rock paintings). They are threatened by natural weathering, infrastructure development, unregulated tourism, human interference, and lack of awareness.
- Aero India 2027 will be the 16th edition of Asia's largest airshow and will be held at Yelahanka Air Force Station in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- The Indian Air Force (IAF) was ranked third among military aviation powers by country in the World Directory of Modern Military Aircraft (WDMMA) 2026 Global Air Powers Rankings, behind the United States and Russia. In the same ranking, the IAF was placed sixth when individual service branches were assessed.
- The legendary playback singer S. Janaki, whose extraordinary voice dominated South Indian cinema for decades and whose songs continue to resonate across generations, died at the age of 88 in Mysuru, Karnataka.

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13-07-2026

1. Mannathu Padmanabhan:

Context: Vice President unveils statue of Social Reformer and Freedom Fighter Mannathu Padmanabhan, inaugurates the Mannam Smrithi Mandapam in New Delhi

About Mannathu Padmanabhan:

- Prominent social reformer and freedom fighter from Kerala who worked for social equality, dignity, and the eradication of caste discrimination; inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's ideals of Satyagraha.
- Founded the Nair Service Society (NSS) on 31 October 1914 to promote education, social reform, discipline, and community organization through grassroots Karayogams.
- Led legal reforms by helping secure the Nair Regulation (1924–25), which reformed the Marumakkathayam (matrilineal inheritance) system and modernized family law.
- Actively participated in anti-untouchability movements, supporting the Vaikom Satyagraha (1924–25) and Guruvayur Satyagraha (1931–32) for equal rights and temple access.
- Led the Savarnajatha (Savarna Jatha) movement, creating public support for temple entry of oppressed communities and contributing to social reforms in Travancore.
- Participated in India's freedom struggle through the Indian National Congress, joined the Civil Disobedience Movement, and was arrested in 1947 for political protests.
- Served as the first President of the Travancore Devaswom Board, improving temple administration and strengthening the management of religious institutions.
- Played an important political role as a member of the Travancore Legislative Assembly (1949) and was a key leader in the Vimochana Samaram (1959).

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- Helped establish the Kerala Congress in 1964, contributing to the rise of regional politics, and authored several important books and speeches documenting his ideas.
- Honoured with the Padma Bhushan (1966) and the title "Bharata Kesari"; his birth anniversary (2 January) is celebrated as Mannam Jayanti, and his memorial at Perunna, Changanassery commemorates his lasting contribution to Kerala's social and political history.

2. Miyawaki method:

Context: Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah extended his heartfelt congratulations to the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, more than 25,000 volunteers associated with the campaign, and the people of the Gandhinagar Lok Sabha constituency for creating a Guinness World Record by planting over 3. 61 lakh saplings in just one hour using the Miyawaki method.

About Miyawaki method:

- It was named after Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki.
- This method involves planting two to four different types of indigenous trees within every square metre.
- The methodology was developed in the 1970s, with the basic objective to densify green cover within a small parcel of land.
- In this method, the trees become self-sustaining and they grow to their full length within three years.
- The plants used in the Miyawaki method are mostly self-sustaining and don't require regular maintenance like manuring and watering.

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3. South China Sea:

Context: The South China Sea Arbitral Award completed 10 years on 12 July 2026. The award was issued on 12 July 2016 by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague under the dispute settlement framework linked to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

About South China Sea:



- It is an arm of the western Pacific Ocean that borders the Southeast Asian mainland.
- It is bordered by China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, and Vietnam.
- It is connected by the Taiwan Strait with the East China Sea and by the Luzon Strait with the Philippine Sea.
- The two major archipelagos are known as the Paracel Islands, controlled by China, and the Spratly Islands.

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- Busy international waterway, one of the main arteries of global trade worth more than $5 trillion and is growing year on year.
- It is a rich source of hydrocarbons and natural resources.
- There are 11 billion barrels of oil and 190 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in deposits.
- Rich fishing grounds and also important trade route
- UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) ruling: The Permanent Court of Arbitration ruled that Chinese claims over 90 percent of the South China Sea area are illegitimate.
- China out rightly rejected the ruling. It said, China prefers bilateral negotiations with the other parties.
- But many of its neighbors argue that China's relative size and clout give it an unfair advantage.

4. The July Revolt of 1931:

Context: Jammu and Kashmir authorities on Sunday barricaded the roads leading to Srinagar's Naqshband Sahib shrine, which houses the graves of 22 civilians killed during an uprising against the Dogra monarchy in 1931. Locals described July 13, 1931 as a historic watershed that ignited a mass movement against autocracy, oppression and injustice in the erstwhile princely State.

About July Revolt of 1931:

- **Background:** The July Revolt of 1931 was the first major mass political uprising against the autocratic rule of Maharaja Hari Singh in the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir.
- **Immediate Trigger:** Growing resentment over political exclusion, religious discrimination, economic hardships, and restrictions on civil liberties led to widespread public protests.
- **Catalyst:** The arrest and trial of Abdul Qadeer Khan (also known as Abdul Qadeer Ghazi) for delivering an inflammatory speech against the Maharaja's administration intensified public anger.
- **13 July 1931 Incident:** On 13 July 1931, the Maharaja's forces opened fire on demonstrators outside the Central Jail in Srinagar, killing 22 protesters, who later came to be regarded as martyrs.

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- **Nature of Revolt:** The movement marked the beginning of organised political mobilisation in Kashmir, demanding justice, representative government, and protection of civil rights.
- **Political Impact:** The uprising compelled the Maharaja to appoint the Glancy Commission (1931) to examine public grievances and recommend administrative and political reforms.
- **Rise of Political Leadership:** The revolt brought Sheikh Abdullah to prominence as a mass leader and accelerated organised political activity in the region.
- **Formation of Political Parties:** The events eventually led to the establishment of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference (1932), which was later reorganised as the National Conference (1939).
- **Historical Significance:** The July Revolt is regarded as a turning point in Kashmir's political history, laying the foundation for constitutional reforms, representative politics, and the later democratic movement in the region.

5. Kaziranga National Park:

Context: Pranab Doley and local communities have been protesting against the proposed luxury hotel and tourism infrastructure projects near Kaziranga National Park, arguing that they threaten the park's fragile ecosystem, wildlife habitats, and elephant corridors. They also allege that the projects could lead to environmental degradation and adversely affect the livelihoods and land rights of local communities.

About Kaziranga National Park:

- **Location:** Situated along the Brahmaputra River in Assam, with the Diphlu River flowing through the park and over 250 seasonal wetlands (beels).
- **Ecological Significance:** Annual floods of the Brahmaputra enrich the park with nutrients but also cause erosion and habitat loss.

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- **History:** Established as a Reserve Forest (1908), declared a Wildlife Sanctuary (1950), a National Park (1974), and a UNESCO World Heritage Site (1985).
- **Tiger Reserve:** Declared a Tiger Reserve in 2007 owing to its exceptionally high tiger density.
- **Flagship Fauna:** Famous for the Big Five—One-horned Rhinoceros, Bengal Tiger, Asian Elephant, Asiatic Wild Buffalo, and Eastern Swamp Deer.
- **Eastern Swamp Deer:** Supports almost the entire global population of the Eastern Swamp Deer (Barasingha).
- **Bird Diversity:** An important habitat for migratory birds, located at the junction of the Australasian and Indo-Asian Flyways.

Quick Bites:

- India's young physicists delivered an extraordinary performance at the 56th International Physics Olympiad (IPhO) 2026, held in Bucaramanga, Colombia, with all five members of the Indian team winning Gold Medals. With this exceptional performance, India secured the World No. 1 rank, jointly with China, Kazakhstan, Russia, South Korea and Taiwan, among 381 students from 87 countries. The Indian medal winners are: Kanishk Jain – Pune, Maharashtra, Riddhesh Anant Bendale – Indore, Madhya Pradesh, Rishit Garg – Dwarka, New Delhi, Shresth Suraiya – Mumbai, Maharashtra and Svarit Joshi – Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
- The 3rd BRICS Transport Ministers' Meeting concluded in Nagpur, Maharashtra, under India's BRICS Chairship 2026, marking a significant milestone in deepening transport cooperation among BRICS member countries. The Ministerial Meeting, held on 11th July 2026, was preceded by the 3rd BRICS Transport Working Group (TWG) Senior Officials' Meeting on 9–10 July 2026, during which senior officials finalised the agenda outcomes and Ministerial Declaration for adoption by the Ministers.
- Science Ministries gear up for nationwide coastal cleanliness campaign 'Swachh Sagar, Surakshit Sagar' from 10 to 19 September 2026.

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- The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) successfully conducted the first lift-off and landing test of its prototype RV-X reusable rocket on 11 July 2026 at the Noshiro Rocket Testing Center. The 40-second test demonstrated vertical take-off, controlled horizontal movement, and safe vertical landing, marking a significant step toward developing reusable launch vehicle technology, which aims to reduce space mission costs by enabling rockets to be recovered, refurbished, and flown multiple times.

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14-07-2026

1. SwaYaan initiative:

Context: The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), in collaboration with Drone Federation India (DFI), today launched the second edition of the National Innovation Challenge for Drone Application and Research (NIDAR 2.0, 2026-27) under the SwaYaan initiative. The first edition of NIDAR 2025-26 was launched in March 2025. It drew 3,448 students from 22 States, 4 Union Territories and 109 cities, who built autonomous drone solutions for Disaster Management and Precision Agriculture. Ninety-three teams reached the Grand Finale out which Twenty-four teams won prizes worth a total of Rs. 40 Lakh. NIDAR 2.0 raises the level of the challenge. It moves the focus from conventional airframes to autonomous systems, indigenous avionics and core drone components. The challenge runs across two tracks.

About SwaYaan initiative:

- The SwaYaan initiative, approved by MeitY in July 2022 with an outlay of about Rs 89.87 crore over five years, builds the skilled workforce needed for India's drone sector.
- It runs through a Hub-and-Spoke model of 30 premier institutions, including IISc, IITs, IIITs, NITs, C-DAC and NIELIT, across five work themes: Aeromechanics, Drone Electronics, GNC Algorithms and Simulation, Drone Applications, and Allied UAS Technologies.
- The project has trained more than 51,000 people so far. It has also supported M.Tech and minor degree programmes, retrofitting electives, online courses, research papers and patents in drone technology. NIDAR is its flagship innovation platform.

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2. Bureau of Port Security(BoPS):

Context: The Union Home Minister reviewed the establishment of the Bureau of Port Security and directed that only licensed private security guards trained by the CISF to be deployed at ports.

About Bureau of Port Security (BoPS):

- **Statutory Body:** Established under Section 13 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 2025.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Functions under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- **Primary Role:** Acts as the single statutory authority for maritime security of ships and port facilities in India.
- **Key Functions:** Enforces the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code across all Indian ports and coordinates security among the Indian Coast Guard, CISF, Indian Navy, and State Police.
- **Objective:** Strengthens maritime security and supports the goals of Maritime India Vision 2030.

3. Green Hydrogen Train:

Context: India's First Green Hydrogen-Powered Train: The Prime Minister will flag off India's first green hydrogen-powered train from Jind, Haryana, on 17 July 2026, marking a major step towards clean, zero-emission rail transport. The train is part of the "Hydrogen for Heritage" initiative launched by Indian Railways in 2023, which aims to introduce 35 hydrogen-powered trains on ecologically sensitive and heritage routes, with an estimated cost of ₹80 crore per train and ₹70 crore per route.

About Green Hydrogen train:

- **Hydrogen Fuel Cell Technology:** The train runs on hydrogen fuel cells instead of diesel or overhead electric wires.

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- **Electricity Generation:** Hydrogen reacts with oxygen inside the fuel cell to produce electricity, with water vapour as the only emission.
- **Continuous Power:** The fuel cell supplies a steady and continuous source of electricity to power the train.
- **Energy Storage:** Lithium Iron Phosphate ($LiFePO_4$) batteries store excess electricity generated during low power demand.
- **Peak Power Support:** During acceleration, the batteries supplement the fuel cell to meet higher energy requirements.
- **Regenerative Charging:** When the train slows down, surplus electricity recharges the batteries, improving energy efficiency.

4. Standing Deposit Facility (SDF):

Context: RBI absorbed ₹1.67 lakh crore from banks through the Standing Deposit Facility (SDF).

About Standing Deposit Facility (SDF):

- Introduced by Reserve Bank of India in April 2022 to manage liquidity.
- Used to absorb excess liquidity from commercial banks.
- No collateral required, unlike reverse repo (no government securities involved).
- Acts as the floor of the Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF) corridor, replacing reverse repo.
- Allows banks to park surplus funds with RBI and earn interest, especially during liquidity surplus

5. Gramodyam initiative:

Context: NABARD launched Gramodyam on 13 July 2026 on its 45th Foundation Day. Gramodyam is an entrepreneurship development programme for rural youth, and it is designed to support the creation of sustainable businesses in rural India.

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About Gramodyam initiative:

- Pilot Programme: Gramodyam is a 3-year pilot programme targeting around 4,000 rural entrepreneurs across India.
- Delivery Model: It follows a digital-first hybrid delivery model covering all States and Union Territories.
- Institutional Partnership: The programme is jointly implemented by NABARD and the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- Executing Agency: The Institute for Industrial Development (IID) is responsible for executing the programme.
- Training & Support: Participants receive psychometric assessments, counselling, entrepreneurship training, industry-specific skill development, mentoring, and enterprise setup support.

6. Removal of member of a Public Service Commission under Article 317:

Context: In a first in the history of the Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC), Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot on Monday suspended its Chairperson Shivashankarappa S. Sahukar, pending inquiry, for alleged misconduct linked to the illegal selection of his daughter through the KPSC recruitment process. The police had filed an FIR against his daughter for submitting a false income certificate and claiming a reserved post. The Governor has recommended to the President to make a reference to the Supreme Court under Article 317(1) of the Constitution for an inquiry into the allegations.

About Article 317:

- President removes the Chairman or members of a Public Service Commission only on the ground of misbehaviour after a Supreme Court inquiry.
- The Supreme Court conducts the inquiry under Article 145 and submits its report to the President.

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- The President (UPSC/Joint PSC) or the Governor (State PSC) may suspend the Chairman or member during the pendency of the Supreme Court inquiry.
- The President may remove a Chairman or member without a Supreme Court inquiry if the person is adjudged insolvent.
- The President may remove a Chairman or member without a Supreme Court inquiry if the person engages in paid employment outside official duties during the term of office.
- The President may remove a Chairman or member without a Supreme Court inquiry if the person is unfit due to infirmity of mind or body.
- A Chairman or member is deemed guilty of misbehaviour if he/she has an interest in or benefits from a government contract or agreement, except as a member of an incorporated company in common with other members.

7. 2+2 Dialogue:

Context: India, Japan review defence ties, prepare ground for 2+2 dialogue. India and Japan on Monday reviewed the entire spectrum of their expanding defence cooperation and agreed to deepen collaboration in emerging domains such as defence industry, cybersecurity, space and advanced technologies during the eighth India-Japan Defence Policy Dialogue held in Tokyo.

About 2+2 Dialogue:

- The 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue involves the Foreign Minister and Defence Minister of two countries meeting together.
- It aims to strengthen strategic, defence, foreign policy, and security cooperation between partner countries.
- The mechanism helps both sides better understand each other's strategic priorities, concerns, and political sensitivities.

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- It facilitates a more integrated and comprehensive strategic partnership in a changing global environment.
- The United States is India's oldest and most significant 2+2 dialogue partner.
- India also conducts 2+2 Ministerial Dialogues with Australia, Japan, the United Kingdom, and Russia.

8. Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance (UMANG):

Context: Multiple vulnerabilities in the UMANG, or Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance, portal that aggregates hundreds of public services offered by the Union and State governments are leaving data of potentially millions of Indians exposed across a variety of databases, including those from the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), according to two security researchers.

About UMANG App:

- UMANG is a Government of India all-in-one, unified, secure, multilingual, and multi-service mobile application for accessing government services.
- It provides access to 2,000+ Central and State Government services through a single platform.
- The app aims to promote mobile governance and improve the Ease of Living for citizens.
- UMANG offers services across sectors such as healthcare, finance, education, agriculture, transport, housing, energy, utilities, employment, and skill development.
- Major partner organisations include EPFO, ESIC, DBT departments, SSC, and Ministries of Health, Education, Agriculture, and Animal Husbandry.
- UMANG was developed by the National e-Governance Division (NeGD) under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- It is a flagship initiative under the Digital India Programme.

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- UMANG International was launched in 2020 to provide Government of India services to NRIs, Indian students, and tourists abroad while promoting Indian culture globally.
- UMANG received the 'Best m-Government Service' Award at the 6th World Government Summit, Dubai, in 2018.

Quick Bites:

- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), along with the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), the Computer Security Incident Response Team in Finance (CSIRT-Fin) and SISA, today released the second edition of the Digital Threat Report 2025–26 for the Banking, Financial Services and Insurance (BFSI) and payments ecosystem. The report provides financial institutions, regulators and cybersecurity leaders with an executive assessment of the threats reshaping banking, financial services, insurance and digital payments.
- In a major breakthrough against interstate synthetic drug trafficking syndicate, the Central Bureau of Narcotics (CBN), Madhya Pradesh Unit has dismantled a sophisticated Mephedrone (MD) manufacturing laboratory in Pune, Maharashtra, and arrested the two chief conspirators of the syndicate from Ujjain (Madhya Pradesh) and Jodhpur (Rajasthan) under Operation Vajra. Mephedrone, chemically known as 4-methylmethcathinone (4-MMC), is a powerful synthetic stimulant drug belonging to the amphetamine and cathinone classes. It is famously known by street names such as "meow meow," "M-Cat," "bubbles," and "miaow"
- Typhoon Bavi: A powerful tropical cyclone that formed in the North Pacific Ocean in early July 2026, Typhoon Bavi intensified to Category 5 on the Saffir–Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale, the highest category based solely on maximum sustained wind speed. It struck Japan's southern islands before moving towards China's east coast, bringing destructive winds, heavy rainfall, storm surges, and widespread disruption.
- The Paizhen Fault is an active tectonic fault in the eastern Himalayan region, formed due to the ongoing collision between the Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates. It has remained active since the

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Early Pleistocene (Ice Age) and continues to show significant movement during the Holocene epoch, making it highly prone to earthquakes. A recent study suggests that the fault lies beneath the proposed Brahmaputra hydropower project in Tibet, raising concerns about the project's long-term structural stability and seismic safety.

- Jodhpuri Mojari: The Jodhpuri Mojari is a nearly 200-year-old traditional handcrafted leather footwear from Jodhpur, Rajasthan, recently awarded a Geographical Indication (GI) tag. Renowned for its fine leather craftsmanship, intricate embroidery, decorative motifs, distinctive curved toe, and durability, it is primarily crafted by the Jinagar (Jingar) community, reflecting Rajasthan's rich artisanal and cultural heritage.
- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) completed drilling its second geothermal well, Puga-OEC-GT#03, in Puga Valley in Ladakh around July 2026. The well was drilled by the ONGC Energy Centre to a depth of 1,000 metres at an altitude of more than 14,000 feet.
- The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) is preparing India's first Indian Standard for the restoration of mangrove ecosystems. The draft standard, titled Restoration of Mangrove Ecosystem — Guidelines, was made public in March 2026 and received hundreds of inputs from stakeholders.
- The rhino population in Dudhwa Tiger Reserve in Uttar Pradesh has risen to 53 after the fourth rhino census conducted between 25 June and 27 June 2026. The census counted 17 adult males, 25 adult females, and 11 calves older than one year.
- The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) inaugurated the first edition of the ICAI Global Orbit Summit 2026 in New Delhi on 11 July 2026. The summit series is linked to Global Capability Centres (GCCs), which are also called captive centres or global in-house centres in corporate and professional usage.
- The United Nations released its first scientific assessment of artificial intelligence in July 2026 under the title Preliminary Report of the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI. The panel has 40 members and is co-chaired by Turing Award laureate Yoshua Bengio and Nobel laureate Maria Ressa.

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- The Defence, Security and Resilience Bank (DSRB) is a proposed multilateral financial institution for military, security, and supply chain projects across allied nations. It is planned to have its headquarters in Canada and a European hub in Luxembourg, with a target to raise up to £100 billion, or about $134 billion. The DSRB is designed to provide low-cost, long-term financing for defence-related procurement and industrial capacity. It uses the creditworthiness of sovereign shareholders to issue triple-A-rated bonds, which is a high credit rating used in international finance for low-risk debt instruments.

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15-07-2026

1. Codex Alimentarius Commission:

Context: India achieved significant milestones at the 49th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC49) held in Geneva, Switzerland from 6th to 10th July, 2026. The Commission adopted seven Codex standards and guidelines developed under India's chairmanship and co-chairmanship, reinforcing India's contribution to the development of science-based international food standards. In another major achievement, the Commission approved India's proposal to undertake new work for the development of a Codex Standard for Cashew Kernels.

About Codex Alimentarius Commission:

- Codex Alimentarius is a collection of internationally recognized standards, codes of practice, published by the Food and Agriculture Organization relating to food and food safety.
- Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) is an international food safety and quality standard-setting body.
- It was created by the World Health Organisation and Food and Agriculture Organization in May 1963.
- Objective: Protecting consumers health and ensuring fair practices in the food trade.

2. CapaCITIES project:

Context: Celebrating the progress made over a decade of the CapaCITIES programme an event 'Scaling Urban Climate Resilience: The CapaCITIES Legacy and Way Forward', organized by ICLEI South Asia and National Institute of Urban Affairs, was held at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, on 14 July 2026.

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About CapaCITIES project:

- Launched in 2016 and funded by the Embassy of Switzerland to India and Bhutan, the Capacity Building Project on Low Carbon and Climate Resilient City Development in India (CapaCITIES) programme has driven low-carbon, climate-resilient urban development.
- By directly strengthening local capabilities, the programme has supported India's 2070 net-zero emissions objective by aligning local action with national missions and state-level goals.
- The initiative was implemented through a collaborative partnership involving ICLEI South Asia, South Pole and econcept, with the National Institute of Urban Affairs as the knowledge partner.
- Cities of Coimbatore, Thiruchirappalli Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu, Ahmedabad, Rajkot, Vadodara, Udaipur and Siliguri and the state governments of Gujarat, Tamil Nadu received support from this project.

3. Bharat Tex 2026:

Context: Union Minister of Textiles, Shri Giriraj Singh, today inaugurated Bharat Tex 2026, India's flagship global textile event, at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, marking the commencement of the world's largest integrated textile value chain event with record international participation.

About Bharat Tex 2026:

- Organised by the Bharat Tex Trade Federation, a consortium of Textile Export Promotion Councils and Industry Bodies, with the support of the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, the event showcases growing India’s global leadership in textiles, fashion, sustainability, technology, innovation, investment and international trade.
- Inspired by the Prime Minister’s 5F Vision - Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign, Bharat Tex 2026 has evolved into a premier global platform for business, investment, sourcing, innovation, policy dialogue and strategic partnerships across the textile value chain.

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- The event brings together manufacturers, exporters, global buyers, brands, sourcing consultants, investors, policymakers, States, international delegations, designers, artisans, start-ups and technology providers.
- Bharat Tex 2026 is also host the CITI Textile Sustainability Awards 2026, structured around seven core focus areas of Resource Efficiency, Energy & Emissions, Circular Economy, Sustainable Materials, Social Responsibility, Responsible Business and Industry Collaboration, reflecting the full spectrum of sustainable and responsible practices across the textile value chain.

4. Index of Services Production (ISP):

Context: As part of the suite of macro – economic indicators, the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is commencing release of the ISPs of 19 sub – sectors, with base year 2024 -25. The first set of ISPs is being released for the month of April, 2026. Out of the 19 sub-sectors, 14 recorded double-digit growth in April, 2026 as compared to April, 2025. The yearly top 5 sub-sectors for 2025-26 include accommodation and food (35.6%), retail trade (30.5%), repair services (25.1%), wholesale trade (23.6%) and road transport (22.6%).

About Index of Services Production (ISP):

- **Base Year:** The base year of the Index of Services Production (ISP) is 2024–25, aligned with the new Consumer Price Index (CPI) series (2024=100).
- **Purpose:** ISP measures the volume of production/output in the services sector, similar to the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) for industries.
- **Key Users:** Used by National Accounts, economic ministries, government departments, researchers, and domain experts.
- **Release Frequency:** Monthly trial indices will be released with a time lag of about 60 days.
- **Release Date:** Data will be published on the 29th of every month or the next working day if the 29th is a holiday.

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- **Price Deflation Method:** ISP is compiled using different price deflators depending on the service sector.
- **Wholesale Trade:** The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) is used as the deflator for the wholesale trade sector.
- **Other Sectors:** The relevant Consumer Price Index (CPI) or the closest matching CPI is used for most other services.
- **Specific CPI Usage:** CPI–General is used for repair & maintenance, banking, and insurance sectors.
- **CPI–Services:** Used for service sectors where a specific CPI is unavailable.
- **Excluded Sectors:** ISP excludes public administration & defence, central bank and other non-banking financial services, social work without accommodation, membership organisations, personal services, private household employment, extraterritorial organisations, government health & education services, and gambling & betting activities.
- **Reason for Exclusion:** These sectors are core government functions, non-market activities, or are dominated by the informal sector, making production measurement difficult.
- **Data Sources:** ISP is compiled using three major data sources: Administrative/secondary data, GST data and ASISSE (Annual Survey of the Incorporated Services Sector Establishments)
- **Administrative Data:** Used for air transport, railway transport, banking, and insurance sectors.
- **ASISSE:** Launched in April 2026, ASISSE will provide data for private health and education services (excluding Government) and aims to create a comprehensive database of the incorporated services sector.

5. Securing Holistic Advancement through Norms, Trust and Integrity (SHANTI):

Context: India launched its official campaign on 13 July 2026 for a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council for the 2028-29 term. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar

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unveiled the campaign and India's SHANTI vision at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

What is SHANTI?

- SHANTI stands for Securing Holistic Advancement through Norms, Trust and Integrity. The framework covers peacekeeping operations, maritime security, terrorism and its financing, responsible use of artificial intelligence, sustainable development, and reforms in global institutions.
- The campaign links India's UNSC bid with support for the voice of the Global South and with consensus-building on international security and development issues.
- The SHANTI vision places emphasis on norms, trust, and integrity as guiding principles for multilateral cooperation.

About United Nations Security Council(UNSC):



- **Genesis:** Established in 1945 through the UN Charter as one of the 6 principal organs of the UN.
- **Purpose:** Maintaining international peace and security.
- **Members:** 5 permanent members (P5) and 10 non-permanent members.

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6. High Altitude Pseudo Satellites (HAPS):

Context: India has initiated the Airship-based High Altitude Pseudo Satellite (AS-HAPS) programme for indigenous stratospheric airships designed for long-endurance surveillance missions. The programme has an estimated outlay of ₹15,000 crore and is linked to border monitoring, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), and long-range communications.

About High Altitude Pseudo Satellites (HAPS):

- High Altitude Pseudo Satellites (HAPS) are lighter-than-air or fixed-wing platforms that operate in the stratosphere, usually at altitudes of 20 km to 30 km.
- These platforms remain below low-Earth orbit satellites, which generally operate between 500 km and 2,000 km, and above many high-altitude drones that fly at around 12 km.
- The airships are designed to remain aloft for months and to be steerable in flight.
- They can carry optical surveillance systems, electronic intelligence payloads, radars, electro-optical systems, and communication equipment for persistent observation over fixed or mobile areas.

7. Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPwD) 2016:

Context: The Union government informed the Supreme Court on Tuesday of amending the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPwD) of 2016 to extend the definition of "acid attack victim" to mean persons who have internal injuries caused by the ingestion of acid or any other similar corrosive substances. The amendment would have a retrospective effect, which would allow victims with internal injuries that occurred prior to May 22, 2026 to also claim benefits under the 2016 Act. The 2016 law had previously recognised only victims of acid-throwing, and not forcible acid ingestion. The Act had remained unchanged although the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), which replaced the Indian Penal Code, accepted both the act of acid-throwing and administration

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of acid as offences punishable from 10 years' imprisonment to a life sentence under Section 124 (voluntarily causing grievous hurt).

About Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPwD) 2016:

- It was enacted in the year 2016 and came into force on 19th April, 2017.
- It replaced the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights, and Full Participation) Act, 1995.
- The objective of the RPwD Act is to ensure that all persons with disabilities can lead their lives with dignity, without discrimination, and with equal opportunities.
- The Act lays down specific provisions to uphold such rights.
- The types of disabilities have been increased from existing 7 to 21, and the Central Government will have the power to add more types of disabilities.
- It increases the quantum of reservation for people suffering from disabilities from 3% to 4% in government jobs and from 3% to 5% in higher education institutes.
- Every child with benchmark disability between the age group of 6 and 18 years shall have the right to free education.
- Stress has been given to ensure accessibility in public buildings in a prescribed time frame along with Accessible India Campaign.
- The Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities and the State Commissioners will act as regulatory bodies and Grievance Redressal agencies, monitoring implementation of the Act.
- A separate National and State Fund be created to provide financial support to the persons with disabilities.
- The Act provides for the grant of guardianship by the District court or any authority designated by the State Government.
- The Act provides for penalties for offences committed against PwDs and also for violations of the provisions of the new law.

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- Any person who violates provisions of the Act, or any rule or regulation made under it, shall be punishable with imprisonment up to six months and/ or a fine of Rs 10,000, or both.
- For any subsequent violation, imprisonment of up to two years and/or a fine of Rs 50,000 to Rs five lakh can be awarded.
- Whoever intentionally insults or intimidates a PwD or sexually exploits a woman or child with a disability, shall be punishable with imprisonment between six months to five years and fine.
- Special Courts will be designated in each district to handle cases concerning violations of the rights of PwDs.

Quick Bites:

- As part of the nationwide observance of Kargil Vijay Diwas 2026, Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh, on July 14, 2026, flagged-off the 13-day 'Shaurya Vijay Yatra', a commemorative motorcycle expedition, from the National War Memorial, New Delhi to the Kargil War Memorial in Dras, Ladakh.
- Union Minister for Labour & Employment Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya today inaugurated the 15th BRICS Trade Union Forum (TUF) Summit 2026 in Hyderabad and called for building a worker-centric global order where technological advancement is guided by social justice, responsible innovation and human dignity.
- Unjha Cumin (Jeera) and Unjha Fennel (Variyali) from North Gujarat received Geographical Indication (GI) tags from the Geographical Indications Registry of India. The certificates were issued on 28 March 2026, and the registration was made in the name of the Unjha Agriculture Produce Market Committee (APMC), Unjha, under Class 30 for spices.
- Uttarakhand opened its first Geographical Indications (GI) Products Gallery at the Uttarakhand Forest Training Academy in Haldwani on 13 July 2026.
- Two new solitary bee species, Elaphropoda triangulata and Habropoda adi, were identified in Arunachal Pradesh on 11 July 2026. The discovery was made by researchers from the Ashoka

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Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE), Bengaluru, during the Siang Expedition.

- Karnataka announced a plan to establish India's first government-driven Artificial Intelligence University on 14 July 2026. The announcement was made in Bengaluru during the inauguration of Google I/O Connect India 2026, and the proposed institution is linked with an AI Hub for startups, researchers, and companies.
- On 13 July 2026, nine European countries and Ukraine formed an Integrated Anti-Ballistic Missile Coalition in Paris, France. The founding members are Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. The coalition has been set up to develop anti-ballistic capabilities and a shared missile defence architecture for Europe.
- Delhi unveiled Mayur as the mascot for the Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships 2026 on 14 July 2026. The 22nd edition of the championship will be held at Thyagaraj Stadium in Delhi from 27 July to 2 August 2026.
- The Centre has notified a ban on paraquat dichloride, a herbicide linked to thousands of deaths due to self-harm, homicides, and accidental deaths in India.
- NASA astronaut Anil Menon and two Russian cosmonauts on Tuesday lifted off onboard a Soyuz MS-29 spacecraft from Kazakhstan on an eight-month mission to the International Space Station. The Roscosmos spacecraft carrying Mr. Menon and Russian cosmonauts Pyotr Dubrov and Anna Kikina lifted off from the Baikonur cosmodrome.

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16-07-2026

1. Sushruta Jayanti:

Context: The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu inaugurated 'Saushrutam 2026' at the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), New Delhi today (July 15, 2026), on Sushruta Jayanti.

About Sushruta Jayanti:

- Sushruta was an ancient Indian surgeon (traditionally dated around the 7th century BCE) and is regarded as the Father of Surgery and Father of Plastic Surgery.
- He authored the Sushruta Samhita, one of the Great Trilogy of Ayurveda along with Charaka Samhita and Ashtanga Hridaya.
- The Sushruta Samhita is the foundational text of Ayurvedic surgery (Shalya Tantra) and contains detailed principles of medicine and surgery.
- The text describes over 100 surgical instruments, 300+ surgical procedures, 650 medicinal drugs, and covers anatomy, embryology, toxicology, and therapeutics.
- The Samhita is divided into five major sections: Sutrasthana – Basic medical principles and pharmacology, Nidanasthana – Pathology and diagnosis, Sarirasthana – Human anatomy and embryology, Chikitsasthana – Medical and surgical treatment and Kalpasthana – Toxicology
- Sushruta emphasized human dissection as an essential part of surgical training, making him one of the earliest anatomists.
- He made significant contributions to plastic surgery (rhinoplasty), reconstructive surgery, and cataract surgery, techniques that influenced modern medicine.
- He advocated the use of wine and herbal intoxicants (e.g., henbane) as early forms of anaesthesia during surgery.
- Sushruta explained the treatment of 12 types of fractures and 6 types of dislocations.

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- He described principles of traction, manipulation, reduction (apposition), immobilization (stabilization), and postoperative physiotherapy.
- His contributions extended beyond surgery to anatomy, embryology, obstetrics, gynaecology, paediatrics, internal medicine, and toxicology.
- He recommended methods for hair restoration and removal of unwanted hair, indicating knowledge of cosmetic procedures.
- Sushruta promoted ethical medical practice, cleanliness, proper surgical instruments, and systematic training of physicians.
- His work marked the Golden Age of Surgery in Ancient India and laid the foundation for later developments in Ayurveda and surgery.
- Significance: Sushruta's scientific approach, emphasis on anatomy, surgical precision, and reconstructive techniques make him one of the greatest physicians in the history of medicine and a pioneer of modern surgical science.

2. Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS):

Context: The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS) with a budgetary outlay of Rs 62,500 crore (Rupees Sixty-Two Thousand Five Hundred Crore Only).

About Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS):

- To further scale up the production, deepen domestic value addition, strengthen supply chain resilience, enhance global competitiveness, the Government has launched the Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS).
- MPMS scheme also aims at building Indian brands to achieve technological sovereignty, capture large economic value and create Indian patents in design and R&D. The scheme tenure shall be 5 Years i.e. from FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31.

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- The scheme provides incentive support on eligible sales for manufacturing of mobile phones in India at differentiated rates ranging from 2.25% to 5%.
- Scheme also provides additional incentive of up to 1.5% linked to domestic sourcing of key components/ sub-assemblies.
- For building Indian brands, an additional incentive @3% on Eligible Sales for design and R&D of the product.
- During the scheme tenure, the cumulative mobile phone production in the country is expected to reach approximately Rs 39,00,000 crore with significant increase in exports of mobile phones.
- The Scheme is also expected to generate around 60,000 direct jobs thereby contributing to economic growth, employment generation and strengthening India's position in global electronics manufacturing hub.

3. National Investment Policy for Urea-2026 for Atmanirbhar Bharat (NIPU-2026):

Context: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, today has approved the proposal of the Department of Fertilizers on National Investment Policy for Urea-2026 for Atmanirbhar Bharat (NIPU-2026).

About National Investment Policy for Urea-2026:

- To attract New Investments in the Urea sector, a policy for investments in the Urea sector was finalised by the Department of Fertilizers for Revamp, Expansion, Revival/Brownfield and Greenfield projects in 2012.
- Under New Investment Policy (NIP) – 2012, total 6 new Urea units have been set up which includes 4 urea units set up through Joint Venture Companies (JVC) of nominated PSUs and 2 urea units set up by the private companies. The period for new investment under NIP-2012 expired by October-2019.

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- At present, there are 33 operational Urea manufacturing units with total Reassessed/installed capacity of 269.42 LMT.
- There is a need to increase the indigenous production of Urea. There is a gap in the indigenous production and demand of urea in the country which is filled by the import of urea.
- The new policy will encourage new investments in the Urea sector for setting up the gas based Urea manufacturing units in the country. This will help in achieving the goal of self-sufficiency.
- Setting up of new Urea manufacturing units will be covered under the National Investment Policy for Urea-2026 for Atmanirbhar Bharat (NIPU-2026).

4. Kevda plant:

Context: Scientists, through regular investigations of the rich fossil flora of northeast India, chanced upon fossil leaves showing remarkable similarities to modern Kevda-- the fossil records of which are extremely rare worldwide. This led the scientists from Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences, (BSIP) Lucknow, an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) to trace the evolutionary history of this culturally important plant.

About Kevda plant:

- Fossil leaves recovered from a coalfield in the North East state of Assam have revealed that Kevda plant well known for the fragrant kewra essence, used in sweets, traditional medicine and also in temples has survived in the Indian subcontinent for at least 24 million years and is a living survivor from India's ancient tropical forests.
- The study helps in understanding the role of India as a refuge for ancient plant lineages, the evolution of biodiversity during periods of climate change as well as comprehending future ecosystem responses.
- Kevda (Kewda/Keora) (Pandanus odorifer) is a fragrant tropical plant belonging to the Pandanaceae family.

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- It is famous for its aromatic male flowers, which are used to produce kewda water and kewda attar (essential oil/perfume).
- The leaves are long (1–2 m), narrow, sword-shaped, bright green, with sharp spiny margins and a tough, fibrous texture.
- Leaves are spirally arranged around the stem, giving the plant a rosette-like appearance.
- Strong leaf fibres are used to make mats, baskets, hats, ropes, and other handicrafts.
- In some regions, the leaves are also used as natural food wrappers and for traditional decorations.
- The plant plays an important ecological role by stabilizing coastal sand dunes and acting as a windbreak.
- Kevda is commonly found in the coastal regions of Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

5. Shipbuilding Development Scheme (SbDS):

Context: Greenfield Shipbuilding Cluster to come up in Porbandar, Gujarat.

More details:

- The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) has accorded in-principle approval to two strategic maritime infrastructure projects, a Greenfield shipbuilding cluster in Porbandar district of Gujarat and a state-of-the-art ship repair facility at Vadinar in Gulf of Kutch, under the Shipbuilding Development Scheme (SbDS).
- The two projects have been granted in-principle approval under the Shipbuilding Development Scheme (SbDS), a key component of the Government of India's strategy to strengthen indigenous shipbuilding and ship repair capabilities under the Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047.
- The approvals cover the establishment of Greenfield Shipbuilding Cluster on the western coast and financial assistance for the development of one of the country's largest ship repair facilities.

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- The Greenfield Shipbuilding Cluster will be developed through the National Shipbuilding and Heavy Industries Park–Gujarat (NSHIP-Gujarat), a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) jointly promoted by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) and the Gujarat Maritime Board.
- Spread across nearly 2,000 acres at Kuchhadi in Gujarat's Porbandar district, the integrated maritime manufacturing cluster will comprise modern shipyards, ancillary manufacturing units, common infrastructure and capability development centres.
- The project is designed to build large commercial vessels with an annual production capacity of 1.2 to 1.5 million gross tonnage (GT), significantly expanding India's domestic shipbuilding capacity while positioning Gujarat as a major hub for heavy-tonnage vessel construction.
- The second project approved under the scheme is a ₹1,570-crore ship repair facility at Vadinar, to be jointly developed by Cochin Shipyard Ltd. (CSL) and Deendayal Port Authority (DPA). The project had earlier received approval from the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on May 5, 2026, and has now secured in-principle approval under the Shipbuilding Development Scheme for 25% financial assistance on eligible capital infrastructure.
- The brownfield expansion will include a 650-metre jetty, two large floating dry docks, workshops and supporting marine infrastructure.

6. BIMSTEC:

Context: India will host the 5th BIMSTEC National Security Advisers' Meeting in New Delhi on 16 July 2026. BIMSTEC is the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation, a regional grouping of seven member states in South and South-East Asia.

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About BIMSTEC:



- BIMSTEC is an economic bloc that came into being in June 1997 through the Bangkok Declaration.
- BIMSTEC was initially formed with four member states- Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Thailand on June 6, 1997.
- Its Permanent Secretariat is located in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- Its aim is to counter the onslaught of globalisation by accelerating regional growth through mutual cooperation by utilising regional resources and geographical advantages.
- It is sector-driven cooperative organisation in which, initially, 6 sectors had been included: Trade, Technology, Energy, Transport, Tourism and Fisheries
- As of now, BIMSTEC has 14 priority areas of cooperation.
- Climate change was added as the 14th priority area of cooperation in 2008.
- BIMSTEC was not having charter since many years.
- BIMSTEC charter was signed and adopted during the 5th summit of the grouping in Sri Lanka, in 2022.

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- With the endorsement of the charter by Nepal, all member states completed the ratification of the foundational document and the charter came into force on May 20, 2024.

7. 'Guidance on Regulatory Expectations for Data Governance':

Context: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued the 'Guidance on Regulatory Expectations for Data Governance' for banks and other Regulated Entities (REs) prescribing a comprehensive framework to strengthen governance of data across the banking system.

About 'Guidance on Regulatory Expectations for Data Governance':

- The RBI has released a draft Data Governance Framework (DGF) for Regulated Entities (REs).
- The framework aims to improve data quality, accountability, risk management, and data security.
- It seeks to ensure compliance with the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023, and other applicable laws.
- The initiative reflects the growing importance of data amid increasing digitalisation of the financial sector.
- The RBI emphasized that weak data governance can lead to financial, operational, compliance, and reputational risks.
- The DGF covers the entire data lifecycle, including governance, policies, processes, technology, and audit mechanisms.
- All Regulated Entities must establish a comprehensive DGF aligned with their overall risk management framework.
- The framework should be proportionate to the size, complexity, business model, and technology infrastructure of each RE.
- Banks are required to review and update the Data Governance Framework annually or whenever necessary.

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Quick Bites:

- The Digital India BHASHINI Division (DIBD), under the Digital India Corporation (DIC), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, and Punjab National Bank (PNB), have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on advancing multilingual AI solutions for inclusive banking and citizen-centric financial services through the BHASHINI for Seva/Sanchalan initiative.
- The Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI), an institute of the Biotechnology Research and Innovation Council (BRIC), Department of Biotechnology, Government of India, today successfully hosted its third annual industry business meet, SYNCHN 2026 (Synergistic Collaboration in Healthcare Innovation), at the NCR Biotech Science Cluster campus in Faridabad. The event brought together prominent global health leaders, biotechnology experts, venture capitalists, startups, and policymakers to address coordination gaps and build a concrete pipeline to transfer lab-bench science into commercial-scale patient solutions.
- The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) has accorded in-principle approval to two strategic maritime infrastructure projects, a Greenfield shipbuilding cluster in Porbandar district of Gujarat and a state-of-the-art ship repair facility at Vadinar in Gulf of Kutch, under the Shipbuilding Development Scheme (SbDS).
- Manohari Gold Tea is a rare speciality tea from the Manohari Tea Estate in Assam. It is made from tender tea buds of the P126 tea clone and is processed through hand-plucking, hand-rolling, and natural sun-drying during the second flush season in June.
- The Pichavaram mangrove forest in Cuddalore district, Tamil Nadu, has been assessed for ecosystem services at ₹2,485.38 crore, or about US$289 million. The valuation placed the total economic value at ₹1.83 crore per hectare and included carbon storage, fisheries support, tourism, coastal protection, biodiversity conservation, and local livelihoods.
- Indian scientists developed a portable, self-powered and wearable ammonia sensing device on 14 July 2026. The device was developed at the Centre for Nano and Soft Matter Sciences (CeNS),

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Bengaluru, an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), and it detects ammonia at concentrations as low as 319 parts per billion (ppb).

- Anushakti Vidhyut Nigam Limited (ASHVINI) is set to invite bids for a ₹28,000 crore Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) tender for the Mahi Banswara Rajasthan Atomic Power Project in Banswara district, Rajasthan. The package is named the Nuclear Island Mega EPC Package (NIMEP) and covers four 700 MWe Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor units with a combined capacity of 2,800 MWe. ASHVINI is a joint venture between Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) and NTPC Limited. The Mahi Banswara project is also known as the Mahi Banswara Rajasthan Atomic Power Project (MBRAPP).

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17-07-2026

1. Rath Yatra:

Context: The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, extended greetings to everyone on the sacred occasion of Rath Yatra. Shri Modi remarked that Rath Yatra is a radiant expression of India's timeless spiritual and cultural heritage, and embodies humility, collective participation and selfless service.

About Rath Yatra:

- The Rath Yatra, also known as the Chariot Festival, is a grand Hindu festival that takes place annually in Puri, Odisha, India.
- The festival dates back to at least the 12th century CE, when the Jagannath temple was built by King Anantavarman Chodaganga Deva.
- It is considered the oldest and largest chariot festival in the world.
- The festival is associated with the deity Jagannath, a form of Vishnu or Krishna.
- The three main deities involved are: Lord Jagannath, his brother-Balabhadra, his sister-Subhadra.
- The festival takes place on the chariot procession day, which falls on the second day of the bright fortnight of Ashadha (June or July in the Gregorian calendar).
- The three deities are taken in grand chariots to the Gundicha Temple, located about 3 kilometers from the main Jagannath Temple in Puri.
- The festival concludes nine days later, when the deities return to the Jagannath Temple in another procession.

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About Jagannath Puri Temple:

- The Jagannath Temple in Puri, Odisha, India is a Hindu temple dedicated to Jagannath, a form of Vishnu.
- This temple is known as the "White Pagoda" and is a part of Char Dham pilgrimages (Badrinath, Dwaraka, Puri, Rameswaram).
- The temple is a colossal structure built in the Kalinga style of architecture.
- It is enclosed by a high wall with four intricately carved gates.

2. REWARD program:

Context: The National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA), as a knowledge partner of Department of Land Resources (DoLR) organised a brainstorming workshop on "Satellite and Drone-based Survey for Watershed Planning & Monitoring" under the World Bank assisted REWARD program (Rejuvenating Watersheds for Agricultural Resilience through innovative Development) in Jaipur, Rajasthan

About REWARD program:

- REWARD stands for Rejuvenating Watersheds for Agricultural Resilience through Innovative Development.
- It is a watershed development programme implemented in the States of Karnataka and Odisha.
- The programme is being implemented during the 2021–2026 period.
- It aims to introduce modern and science-based watershed management practices in the Department of Land Resources and the participating States.
- The programme is assisted by the World Bank.
- It follows the Program for Results (PforR) financing model, under which the World Bank reimburses funds based on the achievement of Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs).

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- Its main objective is to strengthen national and state institutions, enhance farmers' climate resilience, and support value chains in selected watersheds.
- The programme focuses on two key result areas: (i) strengthening institutions and policy support for watershed development, and (ii) science-based watershed development for climate resilience and improved livelihoods.

3. INS Malvan:

Context: The Indian Navy will commission Malvan, the second of the Mahe-class Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC) on 22 July 26.

About INS Malvan:

- Built at Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), Kochi, Malvan epitomises India's Aatmanirbhar Bharat vision in modern naval shipbuilding and design.
- With over 80 percent indigenous content, the ship exemplifies India’s growing mastery in warship design, construction and integration.
- INS Malwan is the second of eight Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC) being built by Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), Kochi for the Indian Navy.
- It is indigenously designed and constructed by Cochin Shipyard Limited, strengthening India's indigenous shipbuilding capabilities.
- The ship is named after the historic coastal town of Malwan in Maharashtra and carries forward the legacy of the erstwhile INS Malwan, a minesweeper that served until 2003.
- It has a displacement of about 1,100 tonnes and is waterjet-propelled, enabling efficient operations in shallow coastal waters.
- It is armed with torpedoes, multi-functional anti-submarine rockets, and advanced radar and sonar systems for submarine detection and engagement.

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- The vessel is designed for underwater surveillance, Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) in coastal waters, and Low Intensity Maritime Operations (LIMO).
- Besides ASW roles, it also possesses mine warfare capabilities, enhancing the Indian Navy's coastal defence and maritime security.

4. C-phycocyanin:

Context: Strengthening India's capabilities in biotechnology-based sustainable manufacturing, the Technology Development Board (TDB), under the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India, has extended financial assistance to M/s K. N. Biosciences (India) Private Limited, Hyderabad, for the project titled "Production of C-Phycocyanin using Spirulina sp. as a Cell Factory."

About C-phycocyanin:

- C-Phycocyanin is a blue-coloured natural pigment-protein belonging to the phycobiliprotein family.
- It is primarily obtained from cyanobacteria (blue-green algae), especially Spirulina (Arthrospira).
- It acts as an accessory photosynthetic pigment, absorbing light and transferring energy to chlorophyll-a during photosynthesis.
- It is water-soluble, making it suitable as a natural blue food colourant.
- It possesses strong antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and immunomodulatory properties.
- It is widely used in the food, pharmaceutical, nutraceutical, and cosmetic industries.
- It also serves as a fluorescent biomarker in biotechnology and biomedical research due to its fluorescent properties.
- C-Phycocyanin is considered a safe and eco-friendly alternative to synthetic blue dyes.
- It has growing commercial importance because of increasing demand for natural colourants and health-promoting bioactive compounds.

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- Developed by IIT Guwahati, the technology uses an indigenous Spirulina strain (NCIM 5143) and has been transferred to industry through a Transfer of Technology (ToT) agreement for commercial production.
- It integrates optimized photoautotrophic cultivation with a green, solvent-free extraction and single-step purification process to produce high-purity C-phycocyanin.
- The process minimizes the use of chemicals, reduces processing complexity, and lowers environmental impact while producing food-grade and analytical-grade C-phycocyanin.
- The final product is a stable, water-soluble blue powder, benchmarked against international commercial standards and suitable for multiple industrial applications.
- The technology promotes bioeconomy, sustainable manufacturing, clean-label products, and Aatmanirbhar Bharat, while meeting the rising global demand for natural food ingredients.

5. Project INROAD:

Context: Project INROAD, or Indian Natural Rubber Operations for Assisted Development, is a plantation expansion initiative for natural rubber in North-East India and West Bengal. By 15-16 July 2026, the project had created 1.8 lakh hectares of new rubber plantations against a target of 2 lakh hectares across 113 districts.

About Project INROAD:

- Project INROAD was launched in 2021–22 with an estimated outlay of ₹1,100 crore to promote rubber cultivation.
- It is implemented by the Rubber Board of India with financial support from Apollo Tyres, CEAT, JK Tyre, and MRF through the Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA).
- The project focuses on plantation development, supply of quality planting material, and farmer support in rubber-growing regions.

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- Over 2 lakh beneficiaries, mainly small farmers, have received more than 8.3 crore high-quality planting materials under the programme.
- It promotes cultivation of natural rubber, obtained from the latex of Hevea brasiliensis.
- The North-East region has emerged as a major rubber-growing area due to its favourable rainfall, humidity, and temperature.
- More than 200 nurseries have been developed to supply improved rubber clones and replace low-yielding plantations.
- The project covers 113 districts across North-East India and West Bengal and has achieved nearly 90% of its plantation target.
- Its next phase, iSPEED (INROAD Skilling and Production Efficiency Enhancement Drive), with an outlay of ₹145 crore, aims to improve latex quality and productivity through model smokehouses, post-harvest infrastructure, and farmer training.

6. Cyclospora cayetanensis:

Context: Cyclospora Outbreak Sickens Thousands Across United States.

About Cyclospora cayetanensis:

- Cyclospora (Cyclospora cayetanensis) is a microscopic protozoan parasite that infects the small intestine.
- It causes cyclosporiasis, a foodborne intestinal disease.
- Infection spreads through contaminated food or water, especially fresh produce, containing oocysts.
- Common symptoms include watery diarrhoea, abdominal cramps, nausea, loss of appetite, weight loss, and fatigue.
- Without treatment, the illness may persist for several days to weeks.

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7. Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency-3 (CAFE-3) norms:

Context: The Centre on Thursday released the third draft of the fuel efficiency norms for passenger vehicles set to kick off from April 2027, proposing to recognise ethanol, compressed biogas (CBG) and other biofuels in compliance calculations by allowing manufacturers to claim specified reductions in declared tailpipe carbon dioxide emissions. For cars which are below the industry average weight of 1,229 kg also, targets will be easier. The fleet wide emission targets have been relaxed by about 21% compared to the original proposal of last year. Manufacturers will be required to progressively improve the fuel efficiency of their fleets. The target fuel consumption is proposed to be tightened from 3.996 litre per 100 km (94.76 gCO_2/km) in 2027-28 to 3.327 litres per 100 km (78.90 gCO_2/km) by 2031-32.

About Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency-3 (CAFE-3) norms:

- Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) regulations aim to improve fuel efficiency and reduce carbon emissions from vehicles.
- Global Presence: CAFE norms are implemented in many developed and developing countries, including India.
- Objective: Reduce fuel consumption and CO2 emissions, thereby lowering oil dependence and controlling pollution.
- Meaning of Corporate Average: Refers to the sales-volume weighted average emissions of vehicles produced by each manufacturer.
- Applicability: Covers petrol, diesel, LPG and CNG passenger vehicles.
- Implementation in India: Came into force from April 1, 2017.
- Emission Targets: Average corporate CO2 emissions must be below 130 g/km till 2022 and below 113 g/km thereafter.
- Comparison with BS6: CAFE focuses mainly on COx emissions, while BS6 regulates overall emissions including NOx and SOx.

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- Environmental Impact: Reduction in COx emissions lowers carbon footprint and improves fuel economy.

Quick Bites:

- Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, and New and Renewable Energy, Shri Pralhad Joshi, inaugurated the 'White Rabbit Technology'-based 'Indian Standard Time (IST) - Distribution Demonstration Network' today at the Regional Reference Standards Laboratory (RRSL) in Jakkur, Bengaluru. White Rabbit (WR) is a high-precision time synchronization technology that enables computers, instruments, and communication networks to maintain the same time with sub-nanosecond (less than one billionth of a second) accuracy over optical fibre networks.
- The Indian Navy will host Operation Southern Readiness 26-2 at the Southern Naval Command, Kochi, from 20 to 23 Jul 2026. The four-day multinational training engagement will be conducted in partnership with the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) under the aegis of the Indian Navy-led Combined Task Force 154 (CTF 154), CMF's dedicated Training Task Force.
- Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh today announced the introduction of India's first Engineering Biology graduation course, describing it as a significant step towards building an independent and sovereign biotechnology ecosystem capable of supporting the country's long-term scientific, healthcare and economic aspirations.
- Jharkhand received Geographical Indication tags for four traditional products in June 2026: Bhagaiya Silk, Kuchai Silk, Munda Jewellery, and Jharkhand Bamboo Craft.
- Agnikul Cosmos is preparing Mission 02, which is planned as India's first private-sector attempt at orbital-class rocket reusability. The mission involves the Agnibaan rocket, a launch vehicle developed for small satellite missions, and a first-stage booster recovery attempt through controlled descent and ocean recovery.

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- NITI Aayog has released the "Roadmap for Building India as a Leading Bioeconomy Powerhouse by 2035," proposing a ₹50,000-crore BioEconomy Growth Fund, a dedicated PLI scheme for biomanufacturing, and six National Biotechnology Missions. Building on the BioE3 Policy, the roadmap advocates mission-mode implementation with financing, regulatory, and governance reforms to expand India's bioeconomy from $195.3 billion in 2025 to $691 billion by 2035 and $2.6 trillion by 2047, while creating over 30 million high-value jobs.



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18-07-2026

1. Investment Friendliness Index:

Context: NITI Aayog has released the report titled "Investment Friendliness Index (IFI)", which presents a structured and data-driven framework for assessing how effectively States and Union Territories create, enable, and sustain an environment conducive to investments.

About Investment Friendliness Index:

- The Investment Friendliness Index covers all 28 states and 8 Union Territories and evaluates investment attractiveness across the following eight pillars:

Pillars		Parameters
Infrastructure	25%	Logistics | Energy | Digital infrastructure | Industrial infrastructure
Business climate	20%	Economic performance | Innovation ecosystem | Business facilitation
Resources	15%	Natural resources | Human resources
Government policy	10%	Incentives | Approvals
Regulatory ease	12%	Compliance | Legal
Financial health	7%	Fiscal position
Institutional environment	6%	Governance and rule of law
Environment resilience	5%	Geophysical | Weather-related

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- ❖ Infrastructure
- ❖ Business climate
- ❖ Resources
- ❖ Government policy
- ❖ Regulatory Ease
- ❖ Institutional Environment
- ❖ Financial Health; and
- ❖ Environmental Resilience

- **Comprehensive Framework:** The Index is based on 84 indicators, combining secondary data with investor perception-based survey data.
- **Objective:** It assesses the investment friendliness of States and Union Territories to promote a competitive and business-friendly environment.

Category	States/Union Territories
Top performers	Goa, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu
Frontrunners	Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh
Emerging performers	Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Puducherry, Punjab, West Bengal
Aspiring states	Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Ladakh, Lakshadweep, Manipur, Mizoram, Sikkim

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- **Performance Categories:** States/UTs are classified into four categories based on overall scores: Top Performers: Above 50, Frontrunners: 45–50, Emerging Performers: 40–45 and Aspiring States: Below 40
- **Top Performers Overall:** Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Goa, and Odisha emerged as the Top Performers.
- **Other Classifications:** The Index identified 15 Frontrunners, 8 Emerging Performers, and 8 Aspiring States/UTs.
- **Peer Group Assessment:** To ensure fair comparison, States/UTs were evaluated under three peer groups: Large States, Hilly & North-Eastern States and Union Territories & City States

Group	No. of states	List of states
Large states	17	Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal
Union territories and city states	7	Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Delhi, Goa, Lakshadweep and Puducherry
Hilly and northeastern states	12	Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura and Uttarakhand

- **Large States Ranking:** Gujarat ranked 1st, followed by Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.
- **Hilly & North-Eastern States Ranking:** Uttarakhand secured 1st, followed by Assam and Himachal Pradesh.
- **Union Territories & City States Ranking:** Goa ranked 1st, followed by Delhi and Chandigarh.

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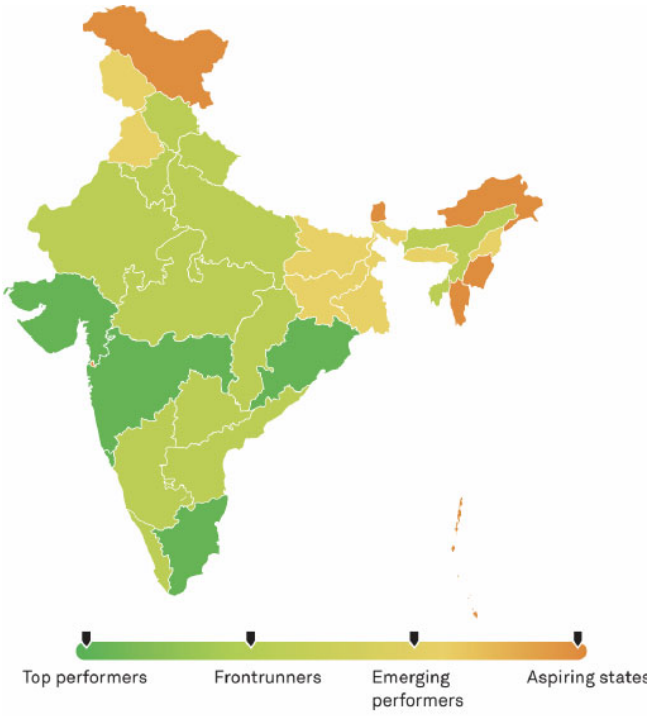
Rank	State/Union Territory	Overall score
1	Gujarat	56.6
2	Maharashtra	53.7
3	Tamil Nadu	53.3
4	Goa	53.1
5	Odisha	52.4
6	Delhi	49.9
7	Madhya Pradesh	48.9
8	Andhra Pradesh	48.7
9	Karnataka	48.7
10	Rajasthan	48.1
11	Uttarakhand	47.5
12	Chhattisgarh	47.5
13	Telangana	47.3
14	Assam	47.3
15	Haryana	47.1
16	Chandigarh	47.0
17	Kerala	46.6
18	Himachal Pradesh	46.1
19	Uttar Pradesh	45.0
20	Tripura	45.0
21	Puducherry	44.9
22	Punjab	44.7
23	Meghalaya	43.0
24	West Bengal	41.3
25	Jharkhand	41.3
26	Bihar	41.2
27	Nagaland	41.2
28	Jammu & Kashmir	40.2
29	Mizoram	39.9
30	Arunachal Pradesh	37.5
31	DNH & DD	37.1
32	Sikkim	36.6
33	Manipur	32.3
34	A & N Islands	30.2
35	Ladakh	27.0
36	Lakshadweep	24.5

- **Significance:** The peer-group approach accounts for geographical, economic, and administrative differences, ensuring more meaningful and equitable benchmarking across States and UTs.

Performance of states on Investmet Friendliness Index



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2. i-DRONE initiative:

Context: The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has tested drone-assisted transport of tuberculosis sputum samples under its i-DRONE initiative in Yadadri-Bhuvanagiri district of Telangana. The programme used a hub-and-spoke model to move samples from nearby health facilities to diagnostic centres and reduced the median turnaround time for TB diagnosis from 15 days to 5 days in a study involving 840 participants.

About i-DRONE initiative:

- i-DRONE connected 11 Primary Health Centres, 60 Sub-Centres, and 4 TB Units into a unified TB sample collection and transport network.
- The initiative enabled patients to submit sputum samples at nearby health facilities, reducing travel for diagnosis.
- It significantly improved access to TB diagnostic services, especially in remote areas.
- Average out-of-pocket expenditure for TB diagnosis dropped from ~₹9,451 to ~₹91.
- The cost reduction resulted from lower travel expenses, reduced wage loss, and decentralized sample collection.
- The drone-enabled system also enhanced the speed and efficiency of TB sample transportation and diagnosis.

3. Amrit Bharat Station Scheme:

Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to virtually inaugurate 75 redeveloped railway stations across 20 states on July 17, 2026, under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme. The main ceremony is anchored from Jalandhar Cantt station in Punjab, which has been redeveloped at a cost of ₹125 crore.

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About Amrit Bharat Station Scheme:

- Launched in February 2023 by the Ministry of Railways.
- It envisages the development of stations on a continuous basis with a long-term approach.
- The ABSS aims at enhancing the facilities beyond the Minimum Essential Amenities.
- It also aimed at construction of Roof Plazas and City Centres at the station.
- It caters for the introduction of new amenities as well as upgradation and replacement of existing amenities.
- The scheme follows the principle of "Virasat Bhi, Vikas Bhi", which combines local heritage with modern infrastructure.
- The redeveloped stations include wider circulation areas, improved entry and exit points, lifts, escalators, modern waiting halls, executive lounges, CCTV surveillance, free Wi-Fi, and facilities for persons with disabilities.

4. MH-60R Seahawk:

Context: The Indian Navy received another MH-60R Seahawk helicopter in Kochi in July 2026, taking the number inducted to 21 out of 24 ordered from the United States. The remaining helicopters are expected to be delivered by the end of 2026 under the original procurement programme.

About MH-60R Seahawk:

- MH-60R Seahawk is a multi-role maritime helicopter developed by Lockheed Martin for naval operations.
- It performs anti-submarine warfare (ASW), anti-surface warfare (ASuW), search and rescue (SAR), and special operations support.
- India signed a USD 2.6 billion contract for 24 MH-60R helicopters in February 2020 under the US Foreign Military Sales (FMS) programme.

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- The procurement aims to strengthen the Indian Navy's shipborne aviation and maritime combat capabilities.
- The Indian Navy inducted the MH-60R fleet into INAS 334 at INS Garuda, Kochi, in March 2024.
- In December 2025, India signed a ₹7,995 crore sustainment package for maintenance, spares, and operational readiness of the fleet.

5. AI Squatting:

Context: Cybersecurity researchers have sounded the alarm on AI Squatting, a dangerous new class of cyber threats where attackers weaponize predictable AI hallucinations rather than software bugs.

About AI Squatting:

- AI Squatting is a cyberattack that exploits AI hallucinations, where LLMs generate convincing but non-existent websites or software packages.
- Attackers register these fake domains or software packages to steal credentials, distribute malware, or compromise users.
- Phantom Squatting targets AI-hallucinated internet domains, using them for phishing, credential theft, and malware attacks.
- HalluSquatting targets AI-generated fake software libraries or repositories, tricking developers into installing malicious packages.
- The attack does not rely on software vulnerabilities or prompt injection, but exploits AI-generated misinformation.
- It is a highly scalable threat, as repeated AI hallucinations can mislead large numbers of users.
- AI Squatting is difficult to eliminate because hallucinations are inherent to the probabilistic nature of Large Language Models (LLMs).

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6. Vizhinjam port:

Context: Vizhinjam port has so far served only as an international trans-shipment hub where mother ships from abroad drop off containers and pick them up. But starting August, the port will be able to handle exim cargo from and for India.

About Vizhinjam port:

- It is a transshipment deepwater multipurpose seaport project built by Adani Ports and SEZ Private Limited in Vizhinjam near Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
- Vizhinjam port is India's first international deepwater transshipment port.
- The port is designed to handle container transshipment, multi-purpose, and break-bulk cargo.
- It is strategically located just ten nautical miles from the international shipping route.
- The port has minimal littoral drift and requires minimal maintenance dredging, reducing operational costs.
- The port boasts a natural depth of more than 18 meters, which can be further scaled up to 20 meters.
- It is India's first deep-water transshipment port, designed for container and multi-purpose cargo.
- The port is developed under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) on a Design, Build, Finance, Operate, and Transfer (DBFOT) basis.

7. Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR) project:

Context: India rejects former Japan Minister's remarks on bullet train project delay. The clarification comes in response to a recent critical social media post by a former Japanese Minister regarding the project, which will be India's first bullet train network. In the post, Hideki Makihara, a member of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party, had blamed New Delhi for the timeline delays. He had also flagged concerns over the Japanese side allegedly being "excluded from the

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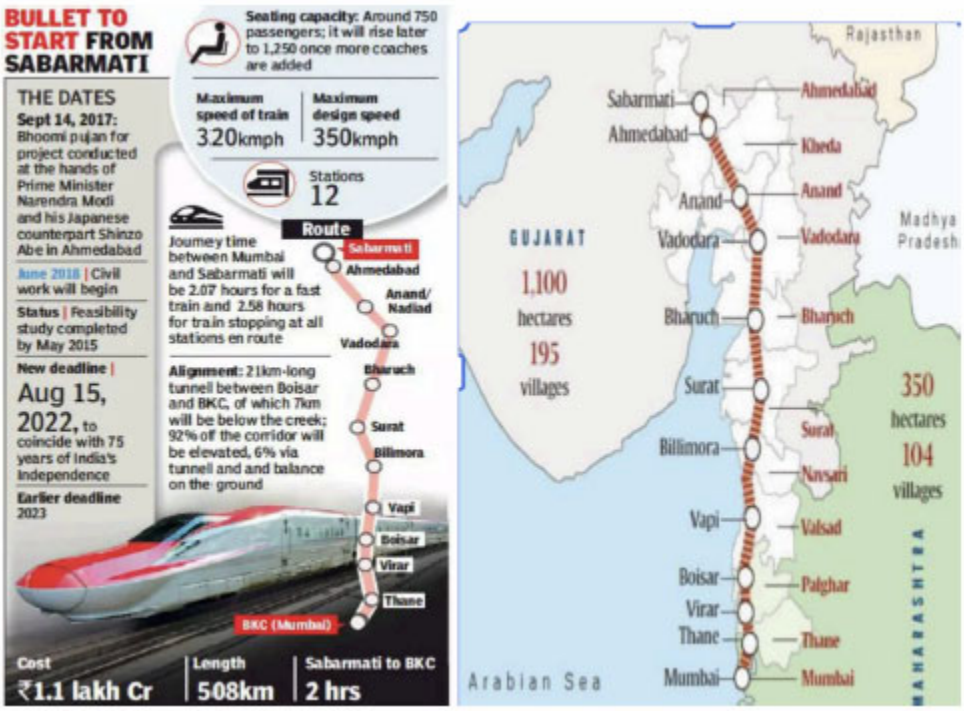
signalling system" of the high-speed network. The MEA clarified that the statement represented an "individual opinion" that stands at "considerable variance with facts."

About Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR) project:

- The Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail Corridor, often referred to as the Bullet Train project, is an ambitious infrastructure undertaking in India.
- It aims to connect the financial capital, Mumbai, with the industrial hub, Ahmedabad, through a high-speed rail network.
- The length of the project is 508 Km with 12 stations planned at Mumbai, Thane, Virar, Boisar, Vapi, Bilimora, Surat, Bharuch, Vadodara, Anand, Ahmedabad and Sabarmati.



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- The train is expected to take around 2 hours and 58 minutes to travel between Ahmedabad and Mumbai, covering eight stations in Gujarat and four in Maharashtra.
- The sanctioned cost of the project is ₹1,08,000 Crore.
- It passes through the States of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Union Territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli.
- The project utilizes Japanese Shinkansen technology, renowned for its speed, safety, and comfort.

8. Constitution (One Hundred and Thirtieth Amendment) Bill:

Context: The Joint Committee of Parliament reviewing the legislation on the removal of the Prime Minister and Chief Ministers on serious charges decided to defer the adoption of a draft report that had been circulated nearly a week ago, after voting had been completed on two of the five recommendations made by the panel at a meeting on Friday.

About Constitution (One Hundred and Thirtieth Amendment) Bill:

- Bill mandates removal of PM, CM, or Ministers if in custody for 30 consecutive days on serious criminal charges.
- Proposes amendments to Articles 75, 164, and 239AA of the Constitution.
- Government of Union Territories (Amendment) Bill, 2025 extends provisions to Puducherry, empowering the President.
- Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization (Amendment) Bill, 2025 empowers the LG to remove CM/Ministers under the same rule.

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- All three bills referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) for examination and debate.
- **Grounds for Removal:** PM, CM, or Ministers removed if in custody 30 consecutive days for an offense punishable with ≥5 years imprisonment.
- **Union Ministers:** President must act on PM's advice by 31st day; if no advice, Minister automatically loses office.
- **State Ministers:** Governor must act on CM's advice by 31st day; if no advice, Minister automatically loses office.
- **Delhi Ministers:** President acts on Delhi CM's advice; if no advice, Minister automatically ceases office.
- **PM/CMs:** Must resign by 31st day of custody, else automatically removed from the next day.
- Reappointment allowed after release from custody.

Quick Bites:

- In a landmark moment for the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and Daman and Diu, Union Minister of Civil Aviation, Shri Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarapu, along with Administrator of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and Daman and Diu, Shri Praful Patel, flagged off the inaugural flight on the Daman–Delhi–Daman route from the newly operational NAMO Airport, Daman on July 16, 2026. Government owned regional carrier Alliance Air launched the flight, marking Daman's first-ever direct air link.
- The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), under the Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India, has launched "VISHWAS, 2026", a one-time dispute resolution initiative to facilitate amicable settlement of disputes relating to levy of damages / penalty under Section 14B of the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 and Section 128 of the Code on Social Security, 2020.
- On 16 July 2026, the Centre for Trade and Investment Law at the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industry, launched a guidebook titled Going

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Global: A Practical Guide for Indian MSMEs in New Delhi. The guidebook is a practical resource for Indian Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises that covers export opportunities, market access requirements, trade intelligence tools, international standards, and sustainability norms.

- The Gandak River (also known as Gandaki, Sapt Gandaki, and Narayani) is an ancient transboundary river and one of the largest left-bank tributaries of the Ganga. It originates from the Nhubine Himal Glacier in Nepal's Mustang region near the Tibet border at an elevation of 6,268 m. Flowing as the Kali Gandaki through deep Himalayan gorges, it becomes the Narayani near Devghat before entering India at Triveni. It briefly forms the Uttar Pradesh–Bihar boundary, flows through West Champaran, Gopalganj, East Champaran, Muzaffarpur, Siwan, Saran, and Vaishali, and finally joins the Ganga at Hajipur, Bihar.
- The Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) approved Danish major Novo Nordisk's weight loss drug Wegovy (semaglutide injection 2.4 mg) for a new indication — fatty liver disease.
- SEBI has cautioned regulated entities and listed firms against a 'Boss Scam', wherein fraudsters impersonate as chief executives or senior officials to trick finance teams into transferring funds. "The communication through email/ WhatsApp/Microsoft Teams/other social media platforms with their subordinates or counterparts, directs them to carry out instructions given to them resulting in transfer of funds to fraudsters
- The Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) unveiled E-Commerce Council of India (ECCI), a 'first-of-its-kind' national platform to unify India's $120 billion digital commerce ecosystem. The ECCI would serve as a collaborative platform for industry stakeholders to engage with policymakers, generate research, develop best practices and contribute to policy discussions that shape the future of digital commerce in India, according to Subho Ray, president, IAMAI.

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19-07-2026

1. Vikram-1:

Context: As Skyroot Aerospace prepares to launch Vikram-1, India's first privately developed orbital rocket, the country's growing private space ecosystem is demonstrating the impact of these reforms under Mission Aagaman. The Indian Space Policy 2023 has opened the entire space value chain to private participation, fostering innovation, investment and enterprise across the space ecosystem. Indian industry is now participating in satellite manufacturing, launch services, space applications and downstream services.

About Vikram-1:

- Vikram-1, developed by Skyroot Aerospace, is India's first privately developed orbital launch vehicle, capable of placing 350 kg into Low Earth Orbit (LEO).
- Orbital launch vehicles deploy satellites into stable Earth orbits, supporting communication, navigation, Earth observation and scientific research.
- It is built with an all-carbon composite structure, reliable solid-fuel boosters and a 3D-printed liquid engine, Vikram-1 showcases India's growing private-sector launch capabilities.
- Vikram-1 is scheduled to launch under Mission Aagaman between 12 July and 4 August 2026. A successful mission will validate the country's indigenous commercial launch capability and the success of the Government of India's space sector reforms.
- The mission will deploy multiple customer payloads into LEO at an altitude of 450 kilometres (280 miles). These include Skyroot's SCOPE satellite, DCUBED's technology demonstration payload, Grahaa Space's SOLARAS S3 satellite, and Cosmoserve Space's Embrace, a robotic arm designed to capture orbital debris.

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- The maiden flight will also carry two symbolic payloads—"Cosmic Bloom", a floral-shaped artwork, and an 18-karat gold micro-rocket. The micro-rocket features microscopic sculptures of C. V. Raman, Vikram Sarabhai and A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, each smaller than a grain of rice, paying tribute to India's pioneering scientists.

2. Specified Non-Financial Assets (SNFAs):

Context: The Reserve Bank of India has introduced a prudential framework for Specified Non-Financial Assets (SNFAs) through amendments to the Resolution of Stressed Assets Directions, 2025. The framework applies to Regional Rural Banks, All India Financial Institutions, commercial banks, small finance banks, and non-banking financial companies, and it comes into force on 1 October 2026.

About Specified Non-Financial Assets (SNFAs):

- SNFAs are immovable non-banking assets acquired by banks in full or partial settlement of loans classified as NPAs.
- SNFAs are physical assets, not financial claims, taken over after borrower default.
- Banks must have a board-approved policy for the acquisition, recovery, valuation, and disposal of SNFAs.
- SNFAs must be disposed of within 7 years from the date of acquisition.
- Banks cannot sell SNFAs back to the original borrower or related parties.
- SNFAs are valued at the lower of the extinguished loan's net book value or the distress sale value.
- Distress sale value must be determined by at least two independent external valuers.
- SNFAs are not classified as Gross NPAs, Net NPAs, or stressed assets.
- SNFAs must be disclosed separately under specified heads in banks' balance sheets.
- Legacy SNFAs outstanding as of 30 September 2026 must comply with the new directions by 30 September 2027.

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3. Geothermal energy:

Context: India commissioned its first and deepest geothermal wells in the Puga Valley of Ladakh on 17 July 2026. Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh V.K. Saxena inaugurated two wells drilled to a depth of 1,000 metres each at an altitude of more than 14,000 feet.

About Geothermal energy:

- Geothermal energy is heat from the Earth's interior used for electricity generation and direct heating.
- India has identified major geothermal resource zones in Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- Puga Valley in Ladakh is one of India's key geothermal energy project sites.
- The ONGC Energy Centre is executing the geothermal drilling project at Puga Valley.
- The first geothermal well reached a depth of 1,000 metres on 22 May 2026.
- The second geothermal well was spudded on 3 June 2026 and completed on 8 July 2026.
- A maximum temperature of 135°C was recorded at a depth of 400 metres in the wells.
- Further testing is underway to evaluate deeper temperatures and reservoir conditions for geothermal power generation.

4. World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organisation (WAICO):

Context: China has launched the World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organisation (WAICO) in Shanghai, positioning it as a global AI governance platform for the Global South and developing countries.

About World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organisation (WAICO):

- WAICO (World AI Cooperation Organization) is a China-led international AI governance platform headquartered in Shanghai, China.

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- **Aim:** To promote inclusive AI development, international cooperation, AI capacity building, and a Global South-led AI governance framework.
- **Global South Focus:** Brings together 30 participating countries, mainly from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, to strengthen AI collaboration.
- **Capacity Building:** China will provide 5,000 AI training opportunities and establish joint AI cooperation centres with ASEAN, African Union, BRICS, SCO, League of Arab States, and CELAC.
- **Open-Source AI Promotion:** Encourages open-source AI models, technology sharing, and collaborative AI development.
- **Alternative AI Governance Model:** Advocates digital sovereignty, multilateral AI governance, and reduced dependence on Western AI platforms.

5. Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0:

Context: On July 15, the Union Cabinet cleared the second phase of the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM), and the Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS), with a ₹1.27 lakh crore and ₹62,500 crore outlay, respectively.

About Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0:

- ISM's first phase was approved in December 2021 with an outlay of ₹76,000 crore. Following an amendment in 2022, the programme was empowered to provide for up to 50% capital subsidy for big-ticket projects, such as Micron's memory chip packaging facility in Sanand, Gujarat.
- The expenditure department under the Finance Ministry has cleared a Budget proposal entailing an allocation of ₹1.25 lakh crore for India Semiconductor Mission 2.0.
- The funds were also directed to the Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme, which was designed to incentivise additional manufacturing of smaller electronics components.

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- The main change is that the ISM programme will now cover a larger part of the electronics manufacturing ecosystem, including areas that were partially addressed in the previous phase.
- These include encouraging chip design talent, capital machinery (the large equipment used in chip-making facilities), chemicals and gases that are of semiconductor-grade purity, and research and development efforts.
- The newer scheme will also trim capital subsidies to 30-40%, Mr. Sinha said, as the semiconductor industry is likely to get more attractive in India even with less incentives.
- The government is also less likely to offer land support, as State governments have shown increasing enthusiasm for hosting such projects by providing land at token prices and offering their own incentives on top of those provided by the Union government.

6. Solar storms:

Context: As countries electrify more of their economies and increasingly interconnect their power grids, understanding space weather has become crucial. One particularly adverse form of space weather is a geomagnetic storm: temporary disturbances in earth's magnetic field caused by charged particles from the sun. These storms produce beautiful aurorae but also induce strong yet short-lived currents in the grid. However, a new study in Space Weather has reported that these storms can also stress power grids in a hitherto unexpected way and that existing tools may not fully capture the effects.

What are Solar storms?

- **Definition:** Solar storms (geomagnetic storms) occur when large-scale magnetic eruptions on the Sun, often involving Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs) and associated solar flares, accelerate charged particles to very high speeds.
- **Movement to Earth:** These charged particles travel towards Earth at speeds of up to about 3 million miles per hour.

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- **Interaction with Magnetosphere:** When an Earth-directed CME or high-speed solar wind reaches Earth, it compresses and disturbs the magnetosphere, allowing energetic particles to enter the atmosphere near the poles.
- **Role of Magnetosphere:** Earth's magnetosphere, generated by its magnetic field, acts as a protective shield against most charged particles from the Sun.
- **Satellite Damage:** Energetic solar particles can penetrate satellites, damaging electronic circuits and disrupting satellite operations.
- **Risk to Humans in Space:** Solar radiation storms can damage biological DNA, posing health risks to astronauts.
- **Aviation Hazard:** During severe solar radiation storms, passengers and crew on high-altitude, high-latitude flights may face increased radiation exposure.
- **Auroras:** Geomagnetic storms produce spectacular Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights) and Aurora Australis (Southern Lights) near the polar regions.

7. Raimona National Park:

Context: Bishal Basumatary, a research scholar at Bodoland University, set out to document the butterflies and their nectar sources in Raimona National Park. One of the most significant findings is that Lantana camara, Chromolaena odorata, and Ziziphus mauritiana, which are generally regarded as invasive exotic species and are often excluded from forest management practices, serve as major nectar sources for a large number of butterfly species in the park.

About Raimona National Park:

- **Location:** Raimona National Park is located in the Gossaigaon subdivision of Kokrajhar district, Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), Assam, along the India–Bhutan border.
- **Biodiversity Hotspot:** It is a critical conservation area forming part of the Eastern Himalayan Foothills Biodiversity Hotspot.

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- **Transboundary Landscape:** The park is ecologically connected with Bhutan's Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary, Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park, and West Bengal's Buxa Tiger Reserve, together covering over 2,400 sq. km.
- **Topography:** Situated in the Eastern Himalayan foothills, the park has an altitude ranging from 85 m to 1,042 m.
- **Major Rivers:** It is bounded by the Sankosh River (west), Saralbhanga River (east), and Pekua River (south).
- **Vegetation:** The park supports about 380 plant species, including tropical forests, riverine grasslands, orchids, and moist deciduous and evergreen forests.
- **Flora:** Important plant species include Sal, Teak (Tectona grandis), Banyan, Assam Rosewood, Bambusa balcooa, and orchids such as Cymbidium and Dendrobium.
- **Fauna:** It is home to the endemic Golden Langur, Asian elephant, Royal Bengal tiger, clouded leopard, wild water buffalo, along with 170 bird species and 150 butterfly species.
- **Conservation Significance:** Raimona is a key Golden Langur conservation area and an important elephant corridor linking the Assam plains with the Bhutan hills.

Quick Bites:

- In another significant boost to the horticulture exports of Jammu & Kashmir, the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, facilitated the first export shipment of premium Areko Cherries (High-Density European Sweet Cherries) and Scentrose Plums from Shopian and Pulwama to Singapore. The milestone follows the successful export of fresh cherries and plums from the region to Abu Dhabi and Dubai in the UAE, further expanding the global footprint of Kashmir's premium temperate fruits.
- Shri Amit Shah will perform the Bhoomi Pujan of the world's largest curd production plant under the Amul Bengal Dairy Project at the New Town Convention Centre in Kolkata on 19 July 2026.

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- The fourth edition of the National Conference on Responsible Business Conduct (NCRBC) 2026, organised by the School of Business Environment (SBE) of the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA), an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India, concluded recently in New Delhi.
- The Supreme Court of India granted final approval on 16 July 2026 for the Kukrail Night Safari and Day Zoo project in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. The project is planned as India's first urban night safari and the world's fifth such facility after Singapore, Thailand, China and Indonesia.
- World Listening Day is observed every year on 18 July. The day was established in 2010 by the World Listening Project, a non-profit organisation founded in 2008. The date marks the birthday of Raymond Murray Schafer, a Canadian composer, author and environmentalist associated with acoustic ecology. The official theme for World Listening Day 2026 is "Listening as a Way of Knowing and Relating to the World Around Us."
- Gujarat has emerged as the country's leading investment destination after securing the top position among major States in NITI Aayog's first-ever Investment Friendliness Index 2026, according to the report released by the Chief Minister's Office.
- On July 17, Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off India's first train powered by hydrogen. It operates on an 89-km stretch between Jind and Sonipat in Haryana. Germany was the first country to introduce commercial hydrogen passenger trains, while France, Italy, China, Japan and others are pursuing pilot projects or limited deployments. However, these trains typically have two to four coaches and serve mainly regional routes.
- Last week, when prominent political parties and groups representing Sri Lanka's Tamil-speaking ethnic minorities launched a common platform, the move piqued the interest of many. Especially since the platform, or "medai", as the leaders called it, is neither a conventional political coalition nor an electoral alliance.

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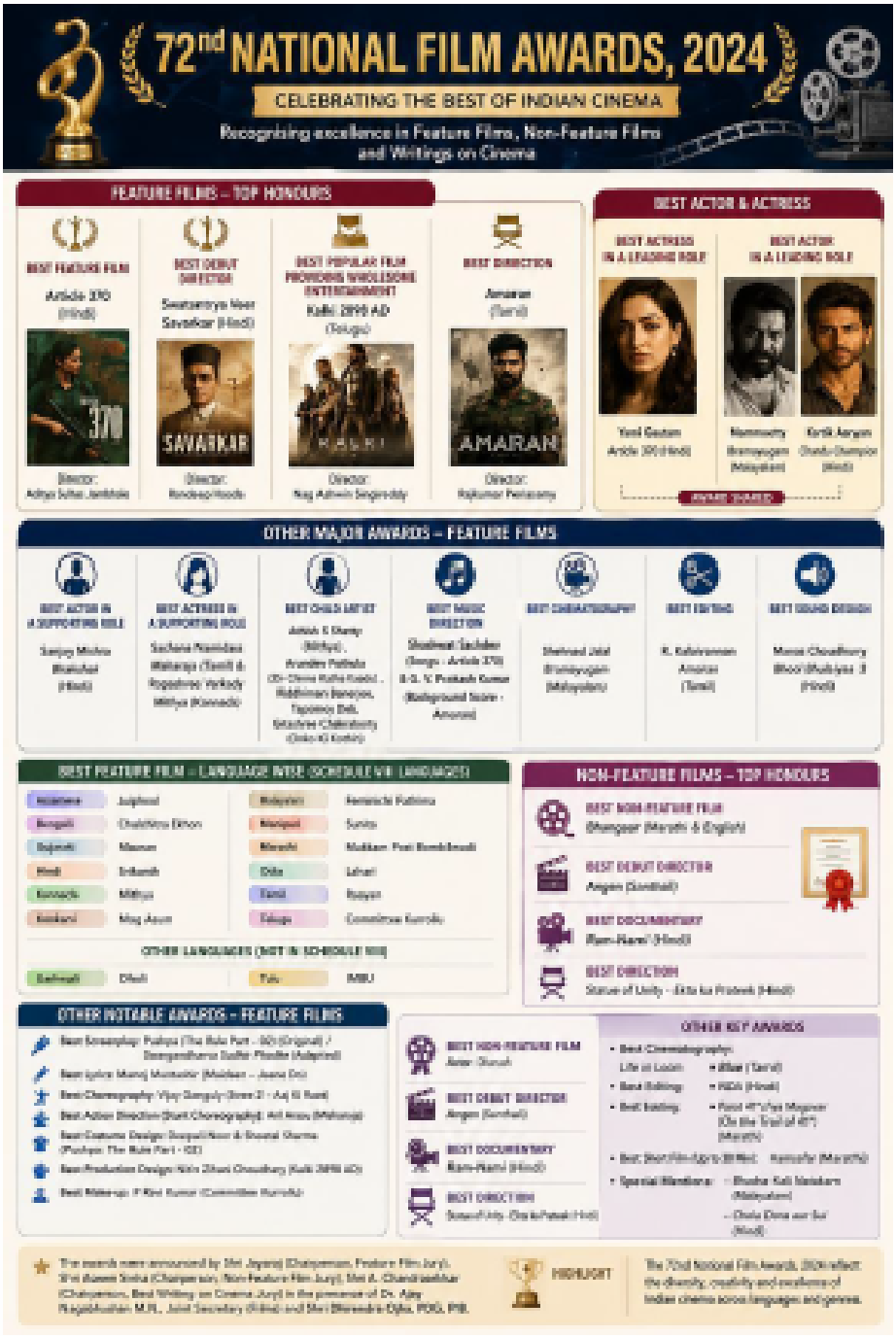

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20-07-2026

1. Mangal Pandey:

Context: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today, paid tributes to the great revolutionary Mangal Pandey ji on his birth anniversary.

About Mangal Pandey:

- Mangal Pandey is regarded as one of the earliest heroes of India's struggle against British rule and is closely associated with the Revolt of 1857 (First War of Independence/Sepoy Mutiny).
- He was born on 19 July 1827 near Faizabad (present-day Ayodhya district), Uttar Pradesh.
- In 1849, he joined the British East India Company's army as a sepoy in the 6th Company of the 34th Bengal Native Infantry at Barrackpore.
- The immediate cause of his revolt was the introduction of the Enfield rifle cartridges, believed to be greased with cow and pig fat, which offended the religious beliefs of both Hindu and Muslim soldiers.
- On 29 March 1857, Mangal Pandey openly rebelled at Barrackpore and fired at the British Sergeant-Major, marking one of the first acts of defiance against British authority.
- He was overpowered, arrested, and tried by Court Martial for mutiny.
- Mangal Pandey was hanged on 8 April 1857 at Lal Bagan, Barrackpore, becoming a martyr for India's freedom struggle.
- His regiment, the 34th Bengal Native Infantry, was later disbanded due to its sympathy for the rebellion, similar to the 19th Native Infantry at Berhampore.
- Pandey's actions inspired the Revolt of 1857, which spread across northern and central India and became the first large-scale uprising against British colonial rule.

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2. National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) scheme:

Context: The Government of India is implementing the National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) as a flagship initiative to ensure the safety, dignity and social security of sanitation workers while accelerating the transition towards mechanised sanitation across the country.

About NAMASTE scheme:

- NAMASTE (National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem) is jointly implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MoSJE) and the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
- The scheme aims to eliminate hazardous manual cleaning of sewers and septic tanks by promoting mechanised sanitation and ending direct human contact with hazardous waste.
- Its key objective is to ensure dignity, safety, social security, and zero fatalities for sanitation workers.
- The scheme identifies and profiles Sewer & Septic Tank Workers (SSTWs) and Waste Pickers to extend welfare benefits.
- Beneficiaries receive PPE kits, health insurance, Ayushman Bharat coverage, occupational safety training, and skill development.
- It provides financial assistance for self-employment, promotes entrepreneurship through SHGs, and facilitates access to modern mechanised sanitation equipment.
- The scheme strengthens Emergency Response Sanitation Units (ERSUs) with advanced safety devices for safer sanitation operations.
- It adopts a holistic approach integrating mechanisation, occupational safety, health protection, skill development, and entrepreneurship.
- Achievements: 89,915 SSTWs and 2,81,117 Waste Pickers validated; 2.71 lakh+ PPE kits and 1.81 lakh+ Health Cards distributed; 753 ERSUs equipped with modern safety devices.

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3. Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill:

Context: The Madhya Pradesh Cabinet on Sunday approved the draft Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill, proposing a prohibition on practices like polygamy and nikah halala, while introducing strict provisions for live-in relationships. The Bill, however, exempts the State's large tribal population.

About Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill:

- The Uniform Civil Code (UCC) refers to a single set of laws governing personal matters like marriage, divorce, adoption, inheritance, and succession for all citizens of India.
- It is mentioned in Article 44 of the Indian Constitution under the Directive Principles of State Policy, which directs the State to strive for a uniform civil code across India.
- Article 44 is not legally enforceable, meaning UCC is a guiding principle rather than a fundamental right.
- The idea of UCC originated in colonial India, initially aimed at legal uniformity while keeping Hindu and Muslim personal laws separate.
- The demand gained momentum in the early 20th century, especially from women reformers advocating equality and secularism.
- During the Constituent Assembly debates, leaders like B.R. Ambedkar supported UCC, but it was included as a non-binding Directive Principle as a compromise.
- After independence, India codified Hindu personal laws (1955–56), while Muslim, Christian, and other communities retained separate personal law systems.
- The Supreme Court revived the UCC debate in landmark cases like Shah Bano (1985), Sarla Mudgal (1995), and Shayara Bano (2017), repeatedly urging its consideration.
- India currently follows a plural legal system, including religious personal laws and secular laws like the Special Marriage Act, 1954, with some regional exceptions under Article 371.
- At present, while UCC remains debated nationally, Goa and Uttarakhand are cited as states with UCC-type provisions, and other states like Assam and Gujarat are exploring its implementation.

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4. Ken-Betwa river link:

Context: The Madhya Pradesh Police on Sunday cleared a two-week-long protest led by several tribals against the Ken-Betwa river link and other irrigation and development projects in Madhya Pradesh's Chhatarpur district, dispersing protesters and hospitalising protest leader Amit Bhatnagar, who had been on a hunger strike for 14 days.

About Ken-Betwa river link:

- Under the project, the transfer of excess water from the River Ken to the Betwa basin was envisaged.
- Both are tributaries of Yamuna river
- It aims to provide irrigation to the Bundelkhand region, which is one of the worst drought-affected areas in India.
- The project involves building a 77-metre tall and a 2-km wide Dhaudhan dam (to be built within Panna Tiger Reserve) and a 230-km canal.
- A Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Centre and the governments of U.P and M.P for the project.
- A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) called Ken-Betwa Link Project Authority (KBLPA) was set up to implement the project.

5. Landslides:

Context: Landslides in at least 11 locations, triggered by heavy, incessant rainfall, killed eight people and injured 15 in Mon town in Nagaland on Sunday morning. The town, which is the headquarters of Mon district bordering Myanmar, is about 300 km northeast of the State's capital, Kohima. Mon Deputy Commissioner Wennyei Konyak said the landslides occurred around 6 a.m.

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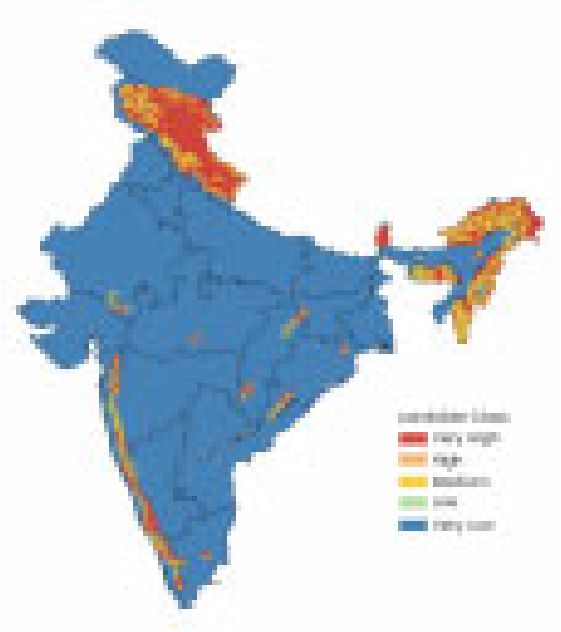
About Landslides in India:



- A landslide is the downslope movement of rock, soil, or debris under the influence of gravity.
- Steep slopes, heavy rainfall, earthquakes, and weak geological formations are the major natural factors triggering landslides.
- According to the India Landslide Susceptibility Map (ILSM), about 13.17% of India's area is landslide-prone, while 4.75% falls under the very high susceptibility category.
- Sikkim has the highest landslide-prone area (57.6%), while Kerala has 14% of its area under the very high susceptibility category outside the Himalayas.
- India accounts for around 8% of global fatalities caused by landslides.
- In the Himalayas, landslides are mainly caused by tectonic instability, earthquakes, loose sediments, hydropower projects, and infrastructure development such as road widening and construction.
- In the Western Ghats, the major causes include intense monsoon rainfall, neo-tectonic activity, deforestation, mining, human settlements, and construction activities.

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- The National Landslide Forecasting Centre (NLFC), established by the Geological Survey of India (GSI) in Kolkata, provides landslide forecasting and early warning.
- The Bhusanket Web Portal and Bhooskhalan Mobile App facilitate real-time dissemination of landslide forecasts and reporting of landslide events.
- The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has issued Guidelines on Management of Landslides and Snow Avalanches to strengthen preparedness and response.
- The Landslide Risk Mitigation Scheme (LRMS) provides financial and technical assistance to landslide-prone states for mitigation measures.
- The National Landslide Risk Management Strategy focuses on hazard mapping, monitoring, early warning systems, awareness, capacity building, policy support, and slope stabilization to reduce landslide risk.

Quick Bites:

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, today congratulated ace Indian shuttler PV Sindhu on winning the Japan Open 2026 title, becoming the first Indian to achieve this historic feat.
- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, today congratulated the Indian team for its remarkable performance at the 37th International Biology Olympiad held in Vilnius, Lithuania, where all four team members secured medals, including one Gold Medal.
- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, today congratulated the Indian team of Debadatta Priyadarshi, Harshit Singhal, Kabeer Chhillar and Sandeep Kuchi for securing four Gold Medals at the 58th International Chemistry Olympiad, marking India's best-ever performance at the prestigious global competition held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.
- The Indian Air Force (IAF) starts Ex Pitch Black 2026 tomorrow at the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Darwin. Scheduled from 20 July 26 to 07 August 26, Exercise Pitch Black is the RAAF's premier biennial multinational air combat exercise. The exercise derives its name from its emphasis on night flying over the vast un-populated areas of northern Australia.

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- Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah today inaugurated the first phase of the 'Museum of Word' in Kolkata. The 'Museum of Word' (Shabdalok) in Kolkata is India's first immersive language museum. Inaugurated on July 19, 2026, it explores the country's rich linguistic and storytelling traditions. The museum is located in the historic Belvedere House at the National Library campus.
- President Droupadi Murmu on Sunday embarked on state visits to Moldova, North Macedonia, and Romania to deepen India’s ties with the three European countries across a range of sectors, including trade and technology, and to boost people-to-people ties.

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21-07-2026

1. Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies (AFS):

Context: India has deposited its Instrument of Acceptance of the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies (AFS) on 20th July 2026, thereby becoming a Party to the Agreement.

About Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies (AFS):

- The WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, adopted by consensus at the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference in Geneva in June 2022, is the first multilateral WTO agreement with an environmental sustainability objective.
- It prohibits government support to illegal fishing activities and overexploitation of stocks, contributing to the protection of marine life.
- The Agreement entered into force on 15 September 2025 after acceptance by two-thirds of WTO Members.
- India is the 123rd Member of the WTO to deposit its Instrument of Acceptance. The Agreement focuses on subsidies related to marine wild capture fishing and fishing-related activities at sea.
- Importantly, aquaculture and inland fisheries remain outside the scope of this Agreement.
- The Agreement protects the livelihoods of traditional and small-scale fishers by promoting sustainable fisheries.
- It prohibits subsidies linked to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and fishing of overfished stocks, thereby addressing unsustainable fishing practices that threaten marine resources and safeguarding the long-term interests of traditional and small-scale fishing communities.

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About World Trade Organisation (WTO):

- It is an intergovernmental organization that regulates and facilitates international trade between nations.
- It officially commenced operations on 1 January 1995, pursuant to the 1994 Marrakesh Agreement, thus replacing the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) that had been established in 1948
- The WTO is the world's largest international economic organization, with 166 member states representing over 98% of global trade and global GDP.
- Ministerial Conference is the WTO's highest decision-making entity, convenes typically every two years. It puts together all of the WTO's members, which are either nations or customs unions.
- All decisions pertaining to any of the multilateral trade agreements must be made by the Ministerial Conference.

2. Index of Core Industries (ICI):

Context: The Office of Economic Adviser (OEA), Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) is releasing the revised series of Index of Core Industries (ICI) with Base Year 2022-23. The new series will replace the existing series of ICI with Base Year 2011- 12.

First lets understand Index of Industrial Production (IIP):

- The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) measures short-term changes in the volume of industrial production in India.
- It is an important indicator used to assess the growth or slowdown of industrial activity and overall economic performance.
- The IIP is published by the Central Statistics Office under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

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- The previous base year of the IIP is 2011–12, adopted to better reflect the modern industrial structure and production trends.
- The base year of the index has been revised periodically since earlier base years such as 1937, 1946, 1951, and 1956.
- The IIP is divided into three major sectors: Manufacturing – 77.63% weight, Mining – 14.37% weight and Electricity – 7.99% weight
- Manufacturing has the highest weight in the index with 809 items, followed by Mining with 29 items and electricity with 1 item.

About Index of Core Industries (ICI):

- The Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) is released by the Office of Economic Advisor under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- The ICI measures the production performance of eight (Now 9) core industries: Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement, and Electricity.
- These eight (now 9) industries together account for 40.27% weight in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), making them crucial indicators of industrial growth.

Key features of the new ICI series (Base Year 2022-23) are as follows:

- Owing to intensive use of Iron ore in the production process, and its contribution to industrial development, it has been included in the list of core industries as a new item in the revised series of ICI (Base Year 2022-23).
- Accordingly, the number of core industries have increased from eight to nine in the new series.
- Gross production data has been used for compilation of the Steel index in the new ICI series, replacing the use of net production data in ICI (2011-12) series, to make it consistent with Index of Industrial Production (IIP[1]).

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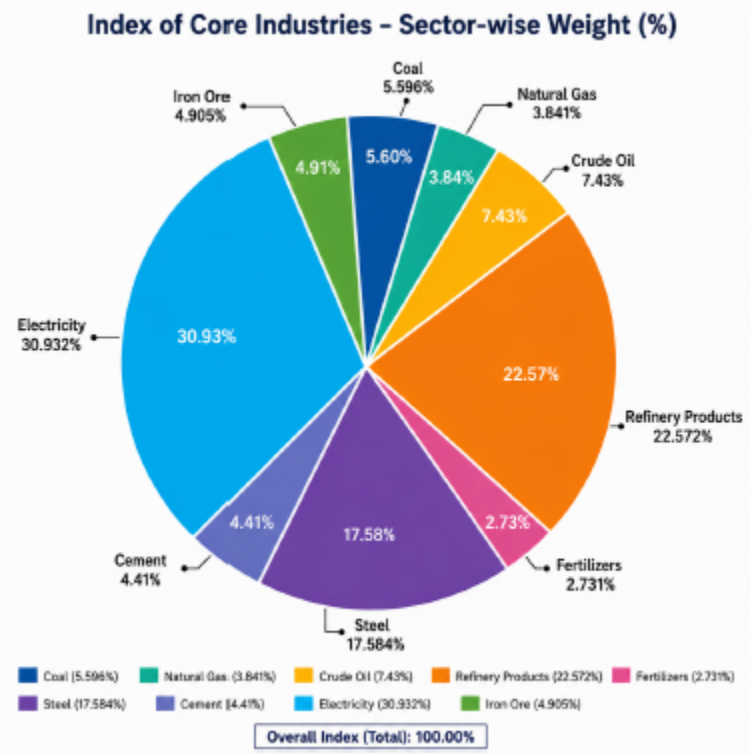
- Only Raw Coal has been retained in the new series of ICI, by excluding Coal Middling and Washed Coal in order to remove double counting, since Coal Middling and Washed Coal are made from Raw Coal.
- Following the earlier practice, the weights of the ICI (2022–23) series have been derived from the weights of the corresponding items of IIP (2022–23) series, which have been pro-rata distributed to 100.
- New weightage after introducing Iron Ore:



3. Kala Sanskriti Vikas Yojana (KSVY):

Context: The Ministry of Culture implements the Kala Sanskriti Vikas Yojana (KSVY), under which financial assistance is provided to eligible cultural organizations and individual artists including tribal and rural artists engaged in performing arts across the country, including the state of Assam and Himachal Pradesh.

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About Kala Sanskriti Vikas Yojana (KSVY):

- Being a Central Sector Scheme, funds to the eligible beneficiaries are released from Consolidated Funds of India through annual budget allocated under the KSVY.
- The Government promotes and preserves tribal art, folk traditions, music, dance, cultural festivals and cultural heritage through the Kala Sanskriti Vikas Yojana (KSVY).
- Further, to protect, promote and preserve various forms of folk/ tribal art & culture throughout the country, the Government of India has set up seven Zonal Cultural Centres (ZCCs) with headquarters at Patiala, Nagpur, Udaipur, Prayagraj, Kolkata, Dimapur and Thanjavur.
- These ZCCs organize various cultural activities and programmes on regular basis all over India for which annual grant-in-aid is provided to them.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Implemented by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.
- **Objective:** To preserve, promote, and propagate India's rich art, culture, heritage, and traditional performing and visual arts.
- **Financial Assistance:** Provides grants-in-aid to individuals, cultural organizations, NGOs, and institutions engaged in cultural activities.
- **Support to Artists:** Promotes the welfare of artists, artisans, folk performers, writers, scholars, and cultural practitioners by supporting cultural events, training, and preservation efforts.
- **Promotion of Cultural Heritage:** Encourages the documentation, conservation, research, and dissemination of India's tangible and intangible cultural heritage.
- **Umbrella Scheme:** KSVY serves as an umbrella scheme, under which several sub-schemes are implemented, such as: Financial Assistance for Promotion of Art and Culture, Scholarship to Young Artists, Guru-Shishya Parampara Scheme, Research Support to Voluntary Organizations and Cultural Function and Production Grants
- **Capacity Building:** Supports training workshops, seminars, exhibitions, festivals, and cultural exchange programmes to strengthen cultural institutions and nurture young talent.

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- **Expected Outcome:** Helps safeguard India's cultural diversity, revive endangered art forms, generate livelihoods for artists, and increase public participation in cultural activities.

4. Urban Heat Island (UHI):

Context: Urban planning is a State Government and Urban Local Body (ULB) responsibility under the 12th Schedule of the Constitution. The Government of India supports States by providing schematic interventions, advisories, guidelines, financial assistance, and technical support to strengthen urban planning. Measures to mitigate the Urban Heat Island effect include promoting green spaces, urban forests, cool roofs, reflective and permeable materials, water bodies, and climate-resilient urban planning to reduce heat stress and improve thermal comfort.

About Urban Heat Island (UHI):

- **Definition:** An Urban Heat Island (UHI) is a phenomenon where urban areas are significantly warmer than surrounding rural areas due to human activities and built-up surfaces.
- **Impervious Surfaces:** Materials like concrete, asphalt, and steel have low albedo, absorb large amounts of solar heat during the day, and release it slowly at night.
- **Loss of Green Cover:** Reduced vegetation and tree canopy decrease evapotranspiration, limiting natural cooling and increasing urban temperatures.
- **Anthropogenic Heat:** Heat released from vehicles, industries, buildings, and air conditioners further raises the temperature in cities.
- **Urban Morphology & Pollution:** Dense buildings, narrow streets (urban canyon effect), skyscrapers, and air pollutants such as black carbon trap heat and reduce air circulation.
- **Higher Energy Demand:** UHI increases the need for air conditioning, leading to higher electricity consumption, grid stress, and greater greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Health and Air Quality Impacts:** Higher temperatures promote ground-level ozone formation, worsening air pollution and increasing heatstroke, dehydration, and cardiovascular illnesses.

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- **Water Stress:** Elevated temperatures increase evaporation and water demand, reducing water availability in urban areas.
- **Environmental Impact:** UHI contributes to biodiversity loss, damages urban ecosystems, and threatens native plants and wildlife by creating excessively hot environments.

5. National Geospatial Knowledge-based Land Survey of Urban Habitations (NAKSHA) pilot project:

Context: The Department of Land Resources (DoLR), Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, in coordination with the Directorate of Settlement and Land Records (DSLR), Government of Goa, has issued an official clarification to dismantle groundless rumours regarding the National Geospatial Knowledge-based Land Survey of Urban Habitations (NAKSHA) pilot project. The government has firmly reiterated that all existing property titles, boundaries, and official land records remain completely secure and unaffected by the ongoing mapping exercise.

About NAKSHA pilot project:

- Executed under the national Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP), NAKSHA is a GIS-based urban land parcel mapping initiative designed to enhance town planning, modernize land administration, and optimize public utility layouts across multiple states and Union Territories.
- Physical absence during a survey visit does not put a property at risk or impact legal ownership rights.
- The programme framework integrates multiple verification stages and formally notified public viewing windows to ensure full legal protection for absent owners.
- NAKSHA is strictly a data-mapping exercise and is completely distinct from land acquisition frameworks.

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- The government is not taking over private land through this project, nor is the survey designed to increase local property taxes.
- It simply documents physical land parcels as they currently exist on the field, meaning ongoing legal and boundary disputes will remain unaffected and will continue to be managed by the appropriate judicial and administrative courts.

6. Cotton production in India:

Context: Cotton occupies a unique position in India's agricultural and industrial economy. India is the only country cultivating all four recognised cotton species.

More details:

- Cotton is one of the most important commercial crops cultivated in India. It accounts for around 23 percent of global fibre production.
- The crop supports the livelihoods of around 6 million cotton farmers. It also sustains employment for another 40-50 million people engaged in related activities such as cotton processing and trade.
- Beyond clothing, cotton plays a vital role in earning foreign exchange through exports of fibre, yarn, fabrics and garments.
- Due to its economic importance in India, it is also termed as "White-Gold".
- India is the only country that cultivates all four recognized cotton species. These include G. Arboreum and G. Herbaceum, commonly referred to as Asian cotton.
- The other species are G. Barbadense, known as Egyptian cotton, and G. Hirsutum, known as American upland cotton. Among these, G. Hirsutum accounts for nearly 90 percent of hybrid cotton production in India. All Bt cotton hybrids currently cultivated in the country belong to this species.
- Cotton production in India is largely concentrated in 9 major states, grouped into 3 distinct agro-ecological zones:

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- Northern Zone comprising Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan
- Central Zone comprising Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh
- Southern Zone comprising Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka In addition to these states, cotton is also grown in Odisha and Tamil Nadu.

- India ranks first in the world in cotton cultivation area (in hectares), with 114.84 lakh hectares devoted to the crop. This accounts for around 38 percent of the global cotton area of 304.08 lakh hectares.
- A large share of the country's cotton production depends on rainfall, with approximately 62 percent grown in rain-fed regions. The remaining 38 percent is cultivated under irrigated conditions.
- India ranks second globally in both cotton production and consumption. This shows the scale of its cultivation base and the strength of its textile industry.
- During the 2024-25 cotton season, cotton production pegged at 297.24 lakh bales (5.06 million tonnes). This accounts for nearly 20 percent of global cotton output.
- For 2025-26 (provisional), cotton production stood at 290.91 lakh bales (4.95 million tonnes).
- In 2024-25, the country exported an estimated 18 lakh bales, equivalent to 0.31 million metric tonnes. This accounts for about 3.37 percent of total world exports, amounting to 541.69 lakh bales (9.21 million metric tonnes).
- The United States of America emerged as the largest destination for Indian cotton fabrics and made-ups exports, accounting for 26.35 percent of cotton exports. This was followed by Bangladesh at 19.81 percent and Sri Lanka at 5.11 percent.

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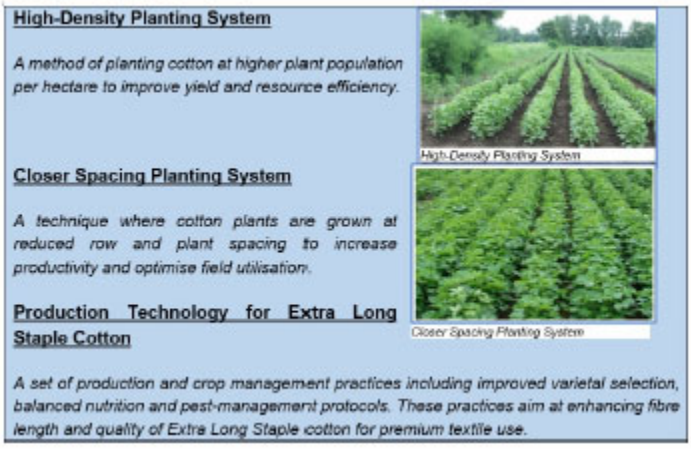

- Other important destinations included the United Kingdom, with a share of 2.38 percent, and the United Arab Emirates, at 2.32 percent.
- For 2025-26, the MSP for cotton was fixed at Rs. 7,710 per quintal for medium-staple cotton and Rs. 8,110 per quintal for long-staple cotton. For 2026-27, it was increased to Rs. 8,267 per quintal for medium-staple cotton and Rs. 8,667 per quintal for long-staple cotton. This marked an increase of Rs. 557 per quintal for both varieties.

7. FIFA world cup 2026:

Context: Spain defeated Argentina 1–0 in the FIFA World Cup 2026 Final at MetLife Stadium, New Jersey (USA) to win their second FIFA World Cup title, having previously won in 2010.

About FIFA world cup 2026:

- **Edition:** The FIFA World Cup 2026 is the 23rd edition of the men's FIFA World Cup.
- **Historic Hosting:** It is the first FIFA World Cup co-hosted by three sovereign nations—Canada, Mexico, and the United States.
- **Expanded Format:** The tournament features a record 48 teams (up from 32), divided into 12 groups of four teams.

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- **Golden Ball:** Rodri (Spain) won the Golden Ball as the tournament's best player.
- Golden Boot: Kylian Mbappé (France) secured the Golden Boot by scoring 10 goals.
- Other Major Awards: Unai Simón (Spain) won the Golden Glove, while Pau Cubarsí (Spain) received the FIFA Best Young Player Award.
- India's Participation: India qualified only once for the FIFA World Cup (1950, Brazil) but did not participate in the tournament.

8. Bab el-Mandeb strait:

Context: Deputy head of the Houthi media office, Nasruddin Amer, said on X that the Bab el-Mandeb strait will be closed in response to what he called Saudi Arabia's "unjust blockade on Yemenis for over 10 years."

About Bab el-Mandeb strait:



- Bab el-Mandeb, at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, is the gateway to the Red Sea through which around 12% of the world's trade passes.
- **Meaning:** Bab-el-Mandeb is an Arabic term meaning "Gate of Tears" or "Gate of Grief", reflecting the historical dangers of navigation.
- **Location:** It is a narrow maritime chokepoint between the Arabian Peninsula and the Horn of Africa, connecting the Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea/Indian Ocean.

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- **Bordering Countries:** It separates Yemen (Asia) from Djibouti and Eritrea (Africa).
- **Key Island:** The Perim Island (Yemen) divides the strait into two navigation channels.
- **Gateway to Suez Canal:** It is the only sea entrance to the Red Sea from the Indian Ocean and forms a vital Asia–Europe trade route via the Suez Canal.
- **Energy Chokepoint:** It is a crucial transit route for crude oil, petroleum products, and LNG from the Persian Gulf to Europe and global markets.
- **Global Trade Importance:** Around 10–12% of global trade and nearly 30% of global container traffic passes through the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait.
- **Strategic Impact:** Any disruption forces ships to reroute via the Cape of Good Hope (South Africa), adding 10–14 days to voyages and increasing freight costs, insurance premiums, and global inflation.
- The Houthis are an Iran-backed, heavily armed political and military organization that emerged from Yemen's Zaydi Shia Muslim minority. Officially known as Ansar Allah, they control northern Yemen and are a key member of Iran's "Axis of Resistance"

Quick Bites:

- National Coal Gasification Mission has set the ambitious target of achieving 100 Million Tonnes (MT) of coal gasification capacity by 2030. As on date, approximately 22.6 Million Tonnes Per Annum (MTPA) of coal gasification capacity is operational or under implementation, comprising: (i) Jindal Steel Limited (JSL): ~8 MTPA (operational) (ii) Talcher Fertilisers Limited (TFL): ~2.6 MTPA (under implementation) (iii) 8 Projects approved under the ₹8,500 crore Financial Incentive Scheme: ~12 MTPA (under implementation)
- The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India, has facilitated the first export of 24 Tonnes of Frozen French Fries from Kashipur in Udham Singh Nagar district of Uttarakhand to Iraq.

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- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is implementing the Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise (SMILE) Scheme to ensure the social and economic rehabilitation of vulnerable communities with dignity and sustainable livelihood opportunities. The umbrella scheme includes the Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Persons Engaged in the Act of Begging, which aims to transform lives through rehabilitation, skill development, education, healthcare, counselling and economic empowerment.
- The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is mandated to monitor the status of Ongoing Central Sector Infrastructure Projects costing Rs. 150 crore and above through online portal/ web monitoring system "Project Assessment Infrastructure Monitoring and Analytics for Nation-Building (PAIMANA)". All line Ministries/ Departments/ Implementing
- Agencies regularly update the information of projects on PAIMANA portal via APIs (Application Programming Interfaces) and data entry mode.
- Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is the nodal Ministry for monitoring the National Indicator Framework (NIF) for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which includes indicators covering health, education, gender equality, environmental sustainability and other aspects related to citizens' well-being. These indicators, along with data generated through various official statistical surveys, support evidence-based policy formulation and enable assessment of progress towards improving the overall well-being of citizens.
- Colobus Congoensis is a newly identified species of African colobus monkey, belonging to the genus Colobus and locally known as the "Likweli." It inhabits the tropical rainforests of the Congo Basin in Central Africa. The species is distinguished by its small size, a striking orange-cream patch around the mouth, and a white perianal patch, which is covered with fine white hairs in males but hairless (glabrous) in females. It is arboreal (tree-dwelling), diurnal (active during the day), and lives in social groups.
- The Sleemanabad Tunnel in Madhya Pradesh, a key component of the Bargi Diversion Project, is nearing completion. It is part of the 197-km-long Right Bank Main Canal and is India's longest

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underground water conveyance tunnel. The tunnel will transport Narmada River water from the Bargi Reservoir to the drought-prone Vindhya region and the Son basin through gravity flow, enhancing irrigation, water security, and agricultural development in the region.

- OpenAI appointed Indian-origin technology executive Uday Ruddaraju as Chief Technology Officer, Compute, on 19 July 2026.
- Bangladesh and the United States began the annual bilateral military exercise Tiger Lightning 2026 on 19 July 2026.
- India granted market authorisation to QDENGA (TAK-003) on 20 July 2026 through the Drug Controller General of India. QDENGA became India's first approved dengue vaccine and is approved for people aged 4 to 60 years. QDENGA is a live-attenuated tetravalent vaccine developed by Takeda Biopharmaceuticals of Japan. A tetravalent vaccine is designed to provide protection against all four dengue virus serotypes. QDENGA can be given to individuals with or without previous dengue exposure. This feature removes the need for pre-vaccination screening or testing before administration.
- Pakistan will host the 14th South Asian Federation Games, officially called the XIV South Asian Games, from 23 March to 31 March 2027. The multi-sport event will be held in Lahore, Islamabad, and Faisalabad, and more than 3,500 athletes from eight South Asian nations are expected to compete in 27 sports. The South Asian Games are a regional multi-sport event for countries of South Asia. The event is organised under the South Asian Olympic Council, which is the governing body for the Games. The participating countries are members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation sporting framework.
- Four Indian citizens were killed and one was critically injured in an attack on a merchant vessel near the Ukrainian port of Odessa on Sunday. India condemned the incident and called such attacks impeding freedom of navigation "deplorable".

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- The Indian Institute of Technology-Tirupati (IIT-Tirupati), in collaboration with its Navavishkar I-Hub Foundation (IITNiF), on Monday hosted the fifth meeting of the BRICS Working Group on 'Geospatial Technologies and its Applications' at its Yerpedu campus.
- The Philippine military accused China's coast guard of allegedly injuring a Filipino sailor during an incident in the disputed Second Thomas Shoal in the South China Sea. The military said Chinese coast guard personnel aboard a motorboat repeatedly struck the sailor on the head with a wooden baton, injuring him and damaging his smaller vessel. Second Thomas Shoal, also known as Ayungin Shoal, is a submerged reef in the Spratly Islands of the South China Sea, 105 nautical miles west of Palawan, Philippines. It is a disputed territory and claimed by multiple nations.

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22-07-2026

1. Mission Golden Spice:

Context: The Union Minister for Communications and Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER), Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, together with the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Meghalaya, Shri Conrad K. Sangma, today launched the "Mission Golden Spice – Integrated Lakadong Turmeric Value Chain Enhancement Project"

About Mission Golden Spice:

- It is a ₹175.45-crore convergence-led initiative for turmeric cultivation and value-chain development in the State of Meghalaya.
- The Mission is designed as a phased, five-year roadmap (2025–2030), to be implemented in two phases — Value Chain Strengthening (Phase 1) followed by Expansion & Scale-up (Phase 2) — for promotion of Meghalaya's Unique Selling Proposition (USP), the GI-tagged Lakadong Turmeric.
- Anchored by MDoNER and the North Eastern Council (NEC), the Mission builds upon convergence with schemes and interventions of the Ministries of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Food Processing Industries and Commerce, along with APEDA, the Spices Board, the National Turmeric Board, ICAR, MeitY, NABARD, SFAC and the Government of Meghalaya for establishing an integrated turmeric value-chain ecosystem in the State.

2. Qdenga Vaccine:

Context: In a Landmark step towards strengthening India's efforts for the prevention and control of dengue, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), under the Ministry of

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Health and Family Welfare, has granted marketing authorisation for the Dengue Tetravalent Vaccine (Live, Attenuated) – Qdenga.

About Qdenga Vaccine:

- It is manufactured by Takeda GmbH, Germany and to be imported by M/s Takeda Biopharmaceuticals India Pvt. Ltd.
- This is the first dengue vaccine approved in the country for the prevention of dengue disease.
- Qdenga® is a live, attenuated tetravalent dengue vaccine developed using recombinant DNA technology.
- The vaccine is produced in Vero cells, with genes encoding serotype-specific surface proteins engineered into a dengue virus type-2 backbone.
- The product contains genetically modified organisms (GMOs). It is supplied as a freeze-dried powder for reconstitution and is administered as a subcutaneous injection.
- The vaccine is indicated for the prevention of dengue disease in individuals 4 to 60 years of age.
- The recommended immunisation schedule consists of two doses of 0.5 ml each, administered at an interval of three months (0 and 3 months).
- The vaccine has already received regulatory approval in 42 countries, including the European Union, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, and has also received World Health Organization (WHO) prequalification.

3. PM Vishwakarma (PMV) scheme:

Context: In a significant step towards strengthening market access for traditional artisans, a PMV stall at Shaheed Bhagat Singh International Airport, Chandigarh, was inaugurated on 14th July 2026, marking the launch of second operational PMV stall at an airport. The stall has been set up with the support of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and a Self-Help Group (SHG).

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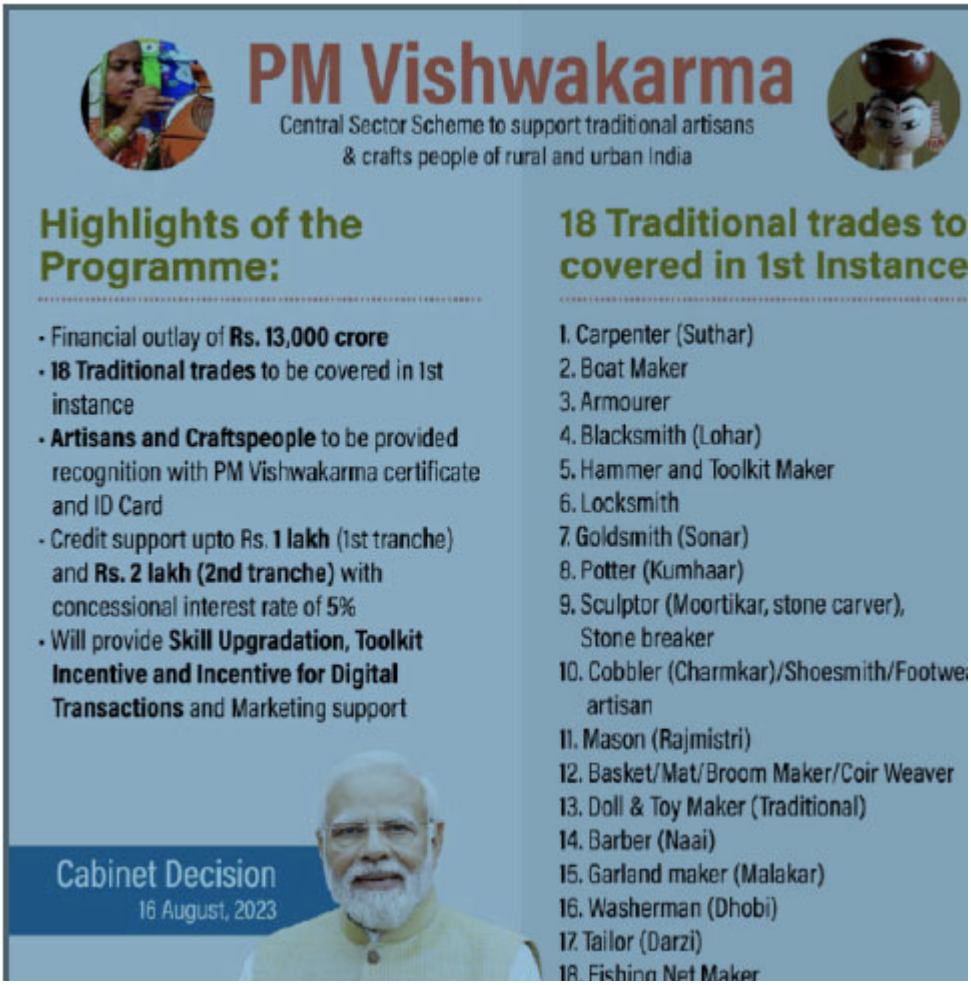
About PM Vishwakarma (PMV) scheme:



- PM Vishwakarma (PMV) is a flagship scheme of the Government, designed to support traditional artisans and craftspeople through the three pillars of Samman, Samarthya, and Samriddhi.
- It was launched on September 17, 2023 by the Ministry of MSME.
- It aims to strengthen the Guru-Shishya Parampara or family-based practice of traditional skills by artisans and craftspeople working with their hands and tools.
- The scheme also aims at improving the quality as well as the reach of products and services of artisans and craftspeople.

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4. India's Renewable Energy Installed Capacity:

Context: Renewable energy installed capacity in the country has increased form 76.38 GW in 2014 to 288.58 GW as on 30.06.2026. This information was submitted by the Union Minister of State for Ministry of New & Renewable Energy, Shri Shripad Yesso Naik in a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha today.

More details:

- So far, a total of 297.36 GW non-fossil fuel sources based electricity capacity has been installed in the country as on 30.06.2026. This includes 288.58 GW renewable energy capacity and 8.78 GW nuclear power capacity.

Source	Installed Capacity (GW)
Solar Power	162.15
Wind Power	57.44
Bio Power	11.75
Hydro Power	57.24
Total	288.58

5. Allographa:

Context: A team of researchers has unveiled five new species of lichen-forming fungi belonging to the genus Allographa, an important indicator of forest health and environmental quality because of their sensitivity to pollution and habitat changes, from the biodiversity-rich Western Ghats of India.

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About Allographa:

- Allographa is a genus of script lichens or lichen-forming fungi (a fungus that teams up with algae or cyanobacteria to create a lichen), with elongated fruiting bodies in the family Graphidaceae. It has more than 200 species.
- Molecular knowledge of Allographa species from India, is limited, particularly from the Western Ghats, where many species had been identified primarily on morphological grounds.
- Allographa is a genus of crustose lichens belonging to the family Graphidaceae.
- It is commonly known as a script lichen because the fruiting bodies resemble written characters or script-like lines on bark.
- The lichen body (thallus) is thin, crust-like, and closely attached to the substrate, so it cannot be removed without damaging the surface.
- It grows mainly on the bark of trees in humid tropical and subtropical forests, including many parts of India.
- Reproduction occurs through ascospores produced in elongated fruiting bodies called lirellae.
- Ecologically, Allographa is an important bioindicator of air quality, as lichens are highly sensitive to atmospheric pollutants, especially sulphur dioxide and heavy metals.

6. White-bellied heron:

Context: India's rarest heron faces a silent end as a new dam ignores its home. Kalai-II Hydropower Project is a proposed 1,200 MW run-of-river hydroelectric project with pondage (small storage capacity) on the Lohit River, a major tributary of the Brahmaputra, located in Anjaw district, Arunachal Pradesh. It is being developed by Tehri Hydro Development Corporation India Limited

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About White-bellied heron:

- White-bellied Heron (Ardea insignis) is the 2nd-largest heron in the world and belongs to the Ardeidae family.
- It inhabits free-flowing, fast-flowing eastern Himalayan rivers, feeding mainly on fish in river rapids.
- It has a long flexible neck, serrated bill, compact body, shorter legs, and extended toes, adapted for catching fish in turbulent waters.
- It is listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List and protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- Fewer than 60 individuals remain in the wild, with Bhutan hosting about 45% of the global population.
- In India, it is found mainly in Arunachal Pradesh, especially around Namdapha Tiger Reserve, Kamlang Tiger Reserve, and the Lohit River.
- It is solitary, gives deep croaking calls at dawn and dusk, and nests in tall trees.
- It is an important bio-indicator of Himalayan freshwater ecosystems, reflecting river health, fish abundance, and habitat quality.
- Major threats include hydropower dams, habitat loss, altered river flows, hunting, human disturbance, and a very small genetic population.

Quick Bites:

- Building on its sustained efforts to promote responsible mine closure practices, the Ministry of Coal is set to release 'AAROH – Annual Report on Mine Closure' in New Delhi on 22nd July 2026. For the first time since independence, 42 coal mines have been scientifically closed, in accordance with approved mine closure plans.
- The “Meri Samiti Mera Patal” is an initiative which has been independently conceptualized and launched by Regional Institute of Cooperative Management (RICM), Chandigarh under National

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Council for Cooperative Training (NCCT). The objective of the "Meri Samiti – Mera Patal" is to empower and modernize Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) by addressing their training needs, improving governance, and enhancing visibility.

- Operation Southern Readiness 26-2, a four-day multinational maritime security training engagement, commenced at Southern Naval Command, Kochi, on 20 Jul 2026. Hosted by the Southern Naval Command, the engagement is being conducted under the aegis of the Indian Navy-led Combined Task Force 154 (CTF 154), in partnership with Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), and has brought together 254 participants from 26 countries, supported by 74 facilitators and four International Organisations, and Subject Matter Experts.
- As part of its BRICS Chairship 2026, India is set to convene the Sixteenth BRICS Health Ministers' Meeting in Chandigarh from 22–24 July 2026, bringing together Health Ministers and senior health officials from BRICS member countries to deepen cooperation on health security, digital health, pandemic preparedness and equitable access to quality healthcare.
- As part of the Government's continued efforts to strengthen India's creative sector and promote the emerging Orange Economy, the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting today launched the Pilot Phase of the 'Gems of India' Challenge, a structured national initiative to identify, nurture and promote grassroots digital creators from across the country.
- The Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports invites online nominations for the Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award (TNNAA) 2025, India's highest national honour for outstanding achievements in the field of adventure.
- India has approved its first utility-scale 100 MWh Vanadium Redox Flow Battery Energy Storage System (VRFB BESS) for deployment at Khavda Solar Park in Gujarat. NTPC Renewable Energy Limited awarded the contract for the project on 20-21 July 2026, and the system is scheduled for deployment in 2027 with 10 years of operations and maintenance services. A vanadium redox flow battery is a type of rechargeable battery that stores energy in liquid electrolyte solutions containing vanadium ions.

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- Ethanol ATMs are proposed dispensing kiosks in India for selling ethanol in canisters for cooking use. The Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas is preparing a policy for wider use of ethanol as a mainstream cooking fuel, with a target timeline around September 2026. Ethanol is an alcohol-based biofuel that is commonly produced from sugarcane, maize, and other biomass feedstocks. It is already used in India as a blending component in petrol under the ethanol blending programme.
- A sudden release of suspected methane gas killed at least 20 workers inside an under-construction tunnel of the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC)'s Teesta State-VI Hydroelectric Project in Namchi district of Sikkim.

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23-07-2026

1. Bharat 6G Alliance (B6GA):

Context: The Bharat 6G Alliance (B6GA), an industry and academia-led society, has expanded to become a 90 member organisation as of 15th July 2026. These members represent a broad and diverse ecosystem comprising telecom service providers, telecom equipment manufacturers, startups, research and development institutions, academia and other stakeholders from the telecom sector.

About Bharat 6G Alliance (B6GA):

- Launched: Bharat 6G Alliance (B6GA) was launched on 3 July 2023 by the Union Minister of Communications.
- Vision: It was established to implement the Bharat 6G Vision, unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 22 March 2023.
- Nature: It is an industry-led, government-facilitated alliance promoting collaboration in India's telecom innovation ecosystem.
- Members: Brings together industry, startups, academia, research institutions, public/private companies, and Standards Development Organizations (SDOs).
- Purpose: Strengthens the domestic R&D, innovation, and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) ecosystem through industry–academia collaboration.
- Key Functions: Identifies technology gaps, develops advanced research projects, and creates 6G testbeds aligned with India's 6G Vision.
- Major Goal: Position India as a global leader and supplier of affordable 5G, 6G, and future telecom technologies, products, and intellectual property (IP).

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- 6G Features: Aims to deliver ultra-high speeds, ultra-low latency, high reliability, AI-enabled intelligent networks, and integrated wireless sensing & communication, surpassing 5G capabilities.
- Long-term Target: By 2030, deploy 6G as a force multiplier for India's digital economy while ensuring energy efficiency, sustainability, and reduced carbon footprint.

2. Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS):

Context: Union Minister of State for Tribal Affairs Shri Durgadas Uikey informed Rajya Sabha that in the State of Telangana, 23 EMRSs have been sanctioned and all are functional including one in alternative building.

About Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS):

- EMRS started in the year 1997-98.
- They aims to impart quality education to Scheduled Tribe children in remote areas to enable them to access the best opportunities in education.
- The National Education Society for Tribal Students (NESTS), an autonomous organization has been set up under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs to establish and manage EMRS across the country.
- EMRS are co-educational residential schools from Class VI to XII.
- Eklavya schools will be on par with Navodaya Vidyalayas and will have special facilities for preserving local art and culture besides providing training in sports and skill development.
- Each school has a capacity of 480 students with equal number of seats for boys and girls.
- Non-ST students can be admitted in these schools on seats up to 10% of the total seats.
- CBSE curriculum is followed in these schools, and education is completely free.

3. SMILE (Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise) Scheme:

Context: SMILE Scheme rehabilitates over 10,200 persons engaged in begging across 216 cities

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About SMILE Scheme:

- **Type:** A Central Sector Scheme of the Government of India.
- **Objective:** To provide comprehensive rehabilitation of persons engaged in begging through a dignity-based and livelihood-oriented approach.
- **Coverage:** Currently operational in 216 cities, with a target to expand to 295 cities and rehabilitate 35,000 persons by FY 2030–31.
- **Two Sub-Schemes:** Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Welfare of Transgender Persons and Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Persons Engaged in the Act of Begging.
- **Comprehensive Rehabilitation:** Includes identification, rescue, shelter, healthcare, counselling, and rehabilitation of beneficiaries.
- **Livelihood & Social Reintegration:** Provides skill development, education, sustainable employment, and supports mainstreaming beneficiaries with dignity and self-reliance.
- **Convergence-Based Implementation:** Implemented through coordination among the Central Government, States/UTs, District Administrations, with convergence with schemes such as DAY-NULM, NRLM, and Mission Vatsalya.
- **Digital Monitoring:** Uses the SMILE-Beggary National Portal for registration, monitoring, and tracking of rehabilitation centres and beneficiaries.

4. Kolleru Lake:

Context: The Supreme Court-appointed Central Empowered Committee (CEC) has issued directions over illegal fish ponds and environmental degradation in the Kolleru Lake.

About Kolleru Lake:

- Kolleru Lake is one of the largest freshwater lakes in India and the largest shallow freshwater lake in Asia.
- It is located in Andhra Pradesh between the Krishna and Godavari river deltas, near Eluru.

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- The lake acts as a natural flood-balancing reservoir for the Krishna and Godavari rivers.
- It has a core area of about 308 sq. km and expands to nearly 954 sq. km during peak floods.
- Kolleru is a shallow lake fed by Budameru, Ramileru, Tammileru, Errakalva, and several drains and canals.
- It drains into the Bay of Bengal through an outlet known as Upputeru.
- The lake is renowned as a "Bird Heaven" and "Peerless Fisherman's Paradise."
- It supports over 20 million resident and migratory birds annually, including pelicans, painted storks, and ibises.
- Migratory birds arrive from Siberia, Central Asia, and the Himalayan region during winter.
- The lake was notified as a Wildlife Sanctuary in 1999 under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
- It was designated a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance in 2002.
- The Ramsar designation allows traditional livelihoods such as fishing and aquaculture for local communities.
- Kolleru Lake sustains thousands of livelihoods dependent on fishing, duck farming, and paddy cultivation.

5. Amazon forests:

Context: Forest fires in the Brazilian Amazon fell to a historic low in 2025 after peaking the previous year, according to a report published on Tuesday. The data gathered by environmental monitoring network MapBiomas show that fires eased off across the country as well, with burned areas nationwide at their smallest since 2018.

About Amazon forests:

- **Location:** Largest tropical rainforest in the world, located in South America.
- **Area:** Covers about 6 million sq. km, nearly twice the size of India.

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- **Countries:** About 60% lies in Brazil, with the rest in Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana.
- **River Basin:** Occupies the Amazon River Basin, the world's largest river basin.
- **Natural Boundaries:** Bounded by the Guiana Highlands (North), Andes Mountains (West), Brazilian Plateau (South), and Atlantic Ocean (East).
- **Climate:** Characterised by high rainfall, high humidity, and uniformly warm temperatures.
- **Biodiversity:** Hosts about 10% of the world's known species, making it a global biodiversity hotspot.
- **Important Flora:** Includes rubber tree, Brazil nut tree, mahogany, cedar, rosewood, palm, acacia, myrtle, and laurel.
- **Important Fauna:** Home to jaguar, capybara, tapir, manatee, sloth, monkey, caiman, anaconda, tarantula, toucan, and macaw.
- **Protected Areas:** Includes Yasuní, Jaú, Tumucumaque, Pico da Neblina, Amacayacu, Manu, and Pacaya-Samiria protected areas.
- **Global Importance:** Called the "Lungs of the Earth", it is a major carbon sink and plays a key role in regulating the global climate.
- **Amazon River:** The world's largest river by discharge and second-longest after the Nile, originating in the Peruvian Andes and flowing into the Atlantic Ocean.
- **Major Tributaries:** Rio Negro, Madeira, and Xingu are among its principal tributaries.

Quick Bites:

- The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu, along with President Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova of North Macedonia, unveiled a bust of Mahatma Gandhi at the Museum of the City of Skopje.
- Shri Prataprao Jadhav, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Ayush and Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare, today inaugurated Prakriti Café at Ayush Bhawan,

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a first-of-its-kind workplace initiative of the Ministry of Ayush aimed at promoting healthy dietary practices inspired by Ayush Ahaar.

- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh flagged-in 'Samudra Pradakshina', the first ever Tri-service all-women circumnavigation sailing expedition through video conferencing on July 22, 2026. Aboard the Indian Army Sailing Vessel (IASV) Triveni, nine women officers of the three Services returned to Mumbai after successfully completing a 314-day voyage covering nearly 25,500 nautical miles across four oceans. The expedition was virtually flagged-off by Shri Rajnath Singh on September 11, 2025 from Mumbai.
- Government Approves 2 Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMCs) in Tamil Nadu at Manallur (474.3 Acres) & Pillapaikkam (379.3 Acres); Projects worth ₹1,012 Cr to Boost Electronics Manufacturing.
- As of 30 June 2026, India's total installed wind power capacity stood at 57,443 MW. Gujarat leads the country with 16,086 MW, followed by Tamil Nadu (12,273 MW), Karnataka (8,896 MW), Maharashtra (6,318 MW), Rajasthan (5,516 MW), Andhra Pradesh (4,461 MW), and Madhya Pradesh (3,686 MW). Other states have comparatively smaller capacities, including Telangana (128 MW), Kerala (71 MW), and Others (4 MW). Gujarat and Tamil Nadu together account for nearly half of India's total installed wind power capacity, highlighting their dominant role in the country's wind energy sector.
- India Emerges as Global Leader in Railway Electrification with 99.6% Broad Gauge Network Electrified, Second Only to Switzerland. By network coverage, Indian Railways is now among the most extensively electrified large railway systems in the world. Indian Railways had electrified 99.6% of its broad-gauge network, completing one of the world's largest infrastructure transformation programs in a decade.
- Scientists have achieved a significant breakthrough in sustainable lubrication by demonstrating, for the first time, the use of borophene, a two-dimensional (2D) nanomaterial, as a high-performance lubricant additive in castor oil. This research has the potential to transform the lubrication industry

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by advancing renewable energy systems, marine applications, green lubrication technologies, and sustainable manufacturing.

- The Segur Plateau, located in the Nilgiri district of Tamil Nadu, is an ecologically significant landscape that connects the Western Ghats with the Eastern Ghats, serving as a vital elephant corridor that supports elephant movement and maintains genetic diversity. It is bounded by the Nilgiri Hills to the southwest and the Moyar River Valley to the northeast. The plateau forms part of the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve and is an important component of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, a UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves site. Recognizing its ecological importance, the Supreme Court upheld the removal of all commercial activities in the area to protect the elephant corridor and conserve its rich biodiversity.
- Muga silk is one of the five major natural varieties of silk produced in India (Mulberry, Tropical Tasar, Oak Tasar, Eri, and Muga). It is produced by the semi-domesticated multivoltine silkworm Antheraea assamensis, which is endemic to Northeast India. Renowned as the world's only naturally golden silk, Muga became India's first GI-tagged silk in 2007. Assam contributes about 90% of the world's Muga silk production, making it the global hub of this premium silk. Recently, the Assam Government launched Mission Senehjori to convert GI-tagged Muga silk waste into high-value spun yarn, promoting value addition and sustainable livelihoods.
- France’s parliament approved a law on 21 July 2026 that bans social media access for children under 15 years of age.
- The National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS), Bengaluru, has compiled INvenTree-meta, a meta-dataset of tree inventory studies from India. The dataset covers 465 published studies conducted between 1991 and 2023 and includes forest data from more than 4,650 hectares across India’s major biomes.
- The Udmaroo Bridge over the Shayok River was inaugurated in the Nubra district of Ladakh on 21 July 2026. The bridge was built at a cost of ₹27.18 crore under the Union Territory

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Administration's Special Development Package and is designed to improve road connectivity in a remote border region.

- India's first AI-powered bird sanctuary has been announced for development at the Thane Creek Flamingo Sanctuary in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The project is named Bhandup Bird Park and has received administrative approval with an allocation of ₹45 crore from the District Planning Committee's special fund.
- EnKash, an Indian business payments and spend management platform, launched India's first meal card with Unified Payments Interface-based payments on 22 July 2026. The card allows employees to pay from their meal card balance by scanning eligible UPI QR codes at food and grocery merchants across India.

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24-07-2026

1. Expendable Turbo Jet Engine technology:

Context: The first indigenous Expendable Turbo Jet Engine of 350 kg thrust class, designed by DRDO's Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE), has been successfully developed. GTRE had identified Azad Engineering, Hyderabad as Industry partner for the manufacturing and assembly of the engine. On July 22, 2026, the engine was successfully realised and delivered to GTRE by Azad Engineering, a landmark achievement for India's aerospace and defence ecosystem.

About Expendable Turbo Jet Engine technology:

- Mastered by only a handful of nations, jet engine technology is widely regarded as one of the most sophisticated engineering disciplines in the world, demanding exceptional precision, advanced metallurgy, and uncompromising manufacturing standards.
- Definition: An Expendable Turbojet Engine (ETE) is a small, low-cost jet engine designed for one-time use, mainly in missiles and loitering munitions.
- Purpose: It provides continuous thrust to propel the missile over long distances at subsonic or low-supersonic speeds.
- Working Principle: Air enters the engine, is compressed, mixed with fuel, combusted, and expelled through a nozzle, producing thrust based on the turbojet principle.
- Applications: Used in cruise missiles, kamikaze (loitering) drones, target drones, and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) where engine recovery is unnecessary.
- Limitations: Since it is not reusable, it has a limited operational life and is less fuel-efficient than modern turbofan engines.

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- Importance for India: Indigenous ETE technology reduces dependence on imports, strengthens self-reliance under Atmanirbhar Bharat, and enhances India's long-range precision strike capability.

2. Kusha missile:

Context: DRDO conducts successful maiden flight-test of 'Kusha' Long-Range Surface-to-Air Missile

About Kusha missile:

- **Developed by:** Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO).
- **Maiden flight test:** Successfully conducted on 23 July 2026.
- **Test location:** APJ Abdul Kalam Island, off the coast of Odisha.
- **Target used:** An electronic target simulating a high-speed, high-altitude aerial threat.
- **Result:** The target was successfully intercepted.
- **Type:** Long-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (LR-SAM) system.
- **Capabilities:** Can neutralise fighter aircraft, missiles, UAVs, and large enemy aircraft.
- **Coverage:** Effective over a wide range and altitude envelope.
- **Indigenous components:** Missiles, radars, and command & control systems developed by DRDO laboratories and industry partners.
- **Significance:** Strengthens India's multi-layered air defence and Atmanirbhar Bharat in defence technology.

3. 'Clean Toilet Picture' scheme:

Context: With an objective to further enhance cleanliness and user experience at toilet facilities along the National Highways, NHAI has extended its citizen-centric initiative, the 'Clean Toilet Picture Challenge' till 30th June 2027.

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About 'Clean Toilet Picture' scheme:

- Launched by NHAI in September 2025 to encourage National Highway users to report unclean toilets at NHAI-managed toll plazas.
- Extended in 2026 to ensure continued public participation and improve cleanliness of highway toilet facilities.
- Participants must upload clear, geo-tagged, and time-stamped photographs of unclean toilets through the Rajmargyatra Mobile App, along with their name, location, Vehicle Registration Number (VRN), and mobile number.
- Eligible users receive a ₹1,000 FASTag recharge, credited to the linked VRN after successful verification.
- Each VRN is eligible for only one reward during the scheme period; the reward is non-transferable and cannot be redeemed for cash.
- If multiple reports are submitted for the same toilet on the same day, only the first valid submission is considered for the reward.
- The scheme applies only to toilets constructed, operated, or maintained by NHAI; toilets at fuel stations, dhabas, and other non-NHAI facilities are excluded.
- All submissions are verified through AI-assisted screening and manual validation; around 429 commuters have been rewarded with ₹1,000 FASTag recharges in 2026 so far.

4. The PM-YASASVI (Prime Minister Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India):

Context: Minister of State reaffirmed the Government's commitment to expanding educational opportunities for disadvantaged students through the PM-YASASVI scheme, highlighting scholarships and hostel support.

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About PM-YASASVI:

- PM-YASASVI is an umbrella scheme of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, implemented by the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment, providing scholarships and hostel facilities for socially and educationally backward students.
- It aims to promote educational empowerment of students belonging to OBC, EBC, and DNT communities by providing scholarships and hostel facilities, enabling them to overcome financial and geographical barriers and complete quality education.
- **Evolution:** The hostel component began in 1998–99, was revised in 2017–18, and later consolidated into the PM-YASASVI umbrella scheme.
- **Objective:** To remove financial and geographical barriers and ensure equitable access to secondary and higher education.
- **Beneficiaries:** Students belonging to OBCs, EBCs, and Denotified, Nomadic & Semi-Nomadic Tribes (DNTs); OBC applicants must belong to the Non-Creamy Layer.
- **Scholarship Components:** Covers Pre-Matric Scholarship, Post-Matric Scholarship, Top Class Education in Schools, and Top Class Education in Colleges.
- **Hostel Provisions:** Priority is given to rural post-matric and undergraduate students, with 5% reservation for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).
- **Hostel Construction Norms:** Per-seat cost is ₹3.50 lakh (North-East), ₹3.25 lakh (Himalayan States), and ₹3.00 lakh (Rest of India), with completion mandated within 18 months to 2 years.
- **Implementation Features:** Allows hostel construction on existing government campuses/projects, avoiding the need for new land acquisition.
- **Fund Release & Monitoring:** Central assistance is released in a 50:45:5 ratio, with the final installment linked to occupancy verification; 0.25% of the budget is earmarked for third-party quality audits and impact assessment.

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5. Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY):

Context: The Directorate of Monitoring and Appraisal under the Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS) has asked the Telangana government (Irrigation Department) to return the Central Assistance of ₹36.34 crore along with interest released, under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) for nine ongoing projects. The amount including interest totals ₹54.22 crore. In a letter, Director of M&A noted that the Telangana government had written to it in July 2023 for dropping the proposals submitted for 11 projects in the past and adjust the central assistance release to nine other projects.

About Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY):

- Launched in 2015 to provide assured irrigation and improve water use efficiency in agriculture.
- It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (Core Scheme) implemented by the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- Funding pattern: 75:25 between Centre and States; 90:10 for North-Eastern and Himalayan States.
- Vision: "Har Khet Ko Pani" (Water to Every Farm) and "More Crop Per Drop".
- It aims to expand cultivable area under assured irrigation and improve farmers' access to water.
- It promotes precision irrigation (drip and sprinkler systems) to maximize water-use efficiency.
- The scheme encourages groundwater recharge, rainwater harvesting, and sustainable water conservation practices.
- It focuses on the integrated development of rainfed areas through the watershed approach.
- It promotes soil and moisture conservation, runoff control, and natural resource management.
- It encourages extension activities on water harvesting, efficient water management, and crop planning for farmers.
- It also explores the reuse of treated municipal wastewater for peri-urban agriculture.
- The scheme comprises Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP), Har Khet Ko Pani (HKKP), and Watershed Development components.
- ❖ AIBP, launched in 1996, accelerates the completion of major and medium irrigation projects.

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- PMKSY was formed by integrating AIBP, Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), and On-Farm Water Management (OFWM).
- The scheme is implemented through State Irrigation Plans (SIPs) and District Irrigation Plans (DIPs), and since 2020, PMKSY assets are geo-tagged using a mobile application.

6. Taiwan Strait:

Context: China began two days of live-fire drills from Thursday in some parts off the Taiwan Strait near the shores of its province of Fujian. The news comes a day after talks between U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on a range of issues, including Taiwan, which China claims as its own territory.

\About Taiwan Strait:



- The Taiwan Strait separates continental Asia and the island of Taiwan
- It connects the South China Sea in the southwest with the East China Sea in the northeast
- It lies between Fujian Province of China and Taiwan
- It has an average width of about 180 km and narrows to around 130 km at its narrowest point

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- It lies on Asia's continental shelf and is relatively shallow
- Average depth is about 490 ft, with a minimum depth of 82 ft
- Major ports include Amoy (Xiamen) in China and Kaohsiung in Taiwan
- Rivers like Jiulong and Min from Fujian drain into the strait
- Important islands include Kinmen and Matsu near China's coast, and Penghu (Pescadores), Xiamen, and Pingtan
- Penghu is the largest and most populous island in the strait
- Xiamen and Pingtan are administered by China, while Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu are administered by Taiwan
- It is a major international navigation route with heavy cargo movement
- It is also an important fishing ground with rich marine biodiversity

Quick Bites:

- The 16th BRICS Health Ministers' Meeting concluded successfully today in Chandigarh under India's BRICS Chairship 2026, bringing together Health Ministers, Heads of Delegation, senior officials and public health experts from BRICS member countries to strengthen cooperation in addressing shared public health priorities and advancing a resilient global health architecture.
- The Bharat Renewable Energy Summit & Expo (BRESE) 2026 will be held from 2nd to 5th November 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi
- On 22 July 2026, the Centre appointed Anurag Jain as the Chief Executive Officer of NITI Aayog for a period of two years.
- Killai in Cuddalore district became Tamil Nadu's first fully operational Climate Resilient Village on 22 July 2026.
- China launched the Gravity-1 carrier rocket on 22 July 2026 and placed nine satellites into their designated orbits. The launch took place at 10:54 a.m. Beijing time from a maritime platform in the East China Sea, east of Shanghai. Gravity-1 is a solid-fuel carrier rocket developed by

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Orienspace, a private Chinese commercial launch company. The rocket is described as the world's most powerful solid-fuel rocket.

- China said on Thursday it tracked and drove away two Philippine vessels it accused of having "intruded into" waters near the disputed Scarborough Shoal despite warnings, the week's second incident in the South China Sea to involve both nations. A flashpoint that is one of Asia's most contested maritime sites, Scarborough Shoal is claimed by both the Philippines and China, which calls it "Huangyan Dao".

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25-07-2026

1. Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana Rasayan or BHAVYA:

Context: The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana Rasayan or BHAVYA - Rasayan Scheme for establishing three dedicated Chemical Parks in the country. The Scheme is part of Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana and will have a total financial outlay of Rs.3,030 crore, with Rs.3,000 crore towards meeting the cost of establishing the Common Infrastructure Facilities and Basic Utilities inside the park and Rs. 30 Crores as administrative expenditure. The scheme would run for a period of 5 years from FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31.

About Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana:

- The Scheme provides for development of 100 industrial parks over a period of six years from 2026-27 to 2031-32, with a total financial outlay of approximately ₹33,660 crore.
- In the first phase, up to 50 industrial parks will be taken up through a challenge-based competitive selection process.
- The scheme aims to develop world-class industrial infrastructure, unlocking manufacturing potential and driving India's growth story.
- Building on the success of Industrial Smart Cities developed under the National Industrial Corridor Development Programme (NICDP) framework, BHAVYA will be implemented in partnership with states and private sector players.
- Under the scheme, industrial parks ranging from 100 to 1000 acres will be taken up for development.

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- Financial support of up to Rs. One crore per acre will be provided for: Core infrastructure (internal roads, underground utilities, drainage, common treatment facilities, ICT and administrative systems), Value-added infrastructure (ready-built factory sheds, built-to-suit units, testing labs, warehousing), Social infrastructure (worker housing and support amenities)
- Support for external infrastructure will also be provided up to 25% of the project cost, ensuring seamless connectivity and integration with existing networks.

2. Weather Information Network and Data System (WINDS):

Context: WINDS has been adopted by 7 States/UTs (Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Odisha, Puducherry, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand) wherein as on date, 16,843 sites have been approved for installation, civil work has been completed in 1,188 site and 892 AWS/ ARGs have been installed.

About Weather Information Network and Data System (WINDS):

- It is an initiative of Government aimed at developing a national level network of Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) and Automatic Rain Gauges (ARGs) for generation of long term hyperlocal weather data for crop insurance, agriculture advisories and disaster risk resilience needs of different sectors.
- Objectives of WINDS: To support crop insurance, agricultural advisories, and disaster risk resilience through accurate local weather information.
- Implementation Status: WINDS has been adopted by 7 States/UTs, with 16,843 sites approved, 1,188 civil works completed, and 892 AWS/ARGs installed.
- YES-TECH (Yield Estimation System based on Technology) was introduced under PMFBY from Kharif 2023 to improve crop yield estimation using remote sensing technology.
- Coverage of YES-TECH: Introduced for Paddy and Wheat (Kharif 2023) and extended to Soybean (Kharif 2024), with 30% mandatory weightage to technology-based yield estimates.

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- Expansion of YES-TECH: Implemented in 12 States across 344 districts (2025–26); Madhya Pradesh (100%), Maharashtra & Uttar Pradesh (50%), and Odisha & Karnataka (40%) assigned higher weightage to technology-based yield.
- National Crop Insurance Portal (NCIP) acts as a single digital platform for farmer enrolment, subsidy management, crop data, and direct transfer of insurance claims.
- DigiClaim Module (operational since Kharif 2022) integrates NCIP, PFMS, and insurance companies' systems to ensure transparent and timely claim settlement.
- Penalty & Financial Discipline: A 12% penalty is imposed on insurance companies (from Kharif 2024) for delayed claims and on State Governments (from Kharif 2025) for delayed subsidy release. States must also maintain an Escrow Account from Kharif 2025.

3. National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-6:

Context: Government has undertaken a comprehensive analysis of key findings of the latest National Family Health Survey (NFHS).

The major key findings are as follows: [from NFHS-5 (2019-21) to NFHS-6 (2023-24)]:

- Institutional deliveries increased from 88.6% to 90.6%.
- ANC coverage increased from 92.6% to 95.9%, with mothers receiving at least four ANC visits rising from 58.5% to 65.2%.
- Births attended by skilled health personnel improved from 89.4% to 91.3%.
- Contraceptive Prevalence Rate increased from 66.7% to 69.1%.
- At the same time, total unmet need (the proportion of people who want to avoid or delay pregnancy but are not using any method) has reduced from 9.4% to 8.5%, a direct reflection of increased CPR.
- The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has remained stable at 2, across NFHS-5 and NFHS-6, which is below the replacement level of 2.1, indicating sustained low fertility.

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- Full immunization coverage among children aged 12-23 months improved from 83.8% to 87.1%. (based on information from vaccination card)
- Coverage of the second dose of measles-containing vaccine also increased significantly from 58.6% to 71.8%.
- The most striking gain is recorded for the rotavirus vaccine, where coverage has more than doubled, from 36.4% to 85.4% between NFHS-5 and NFHS-6.
- Stunting among children under five years declined from 35.5% to 29.3% and severe wasting declined from 7.7% to 5.2%.
- NFHS-6 also notes a rise in obesity - a key risk factor for chronic NCDs — with 30.7% of women and 27.3% of men aged 15–49 years reported as overweight or obese.
- Blood sugar level - high or very high (>140 mg/dl) or taking medicine to control blood sugar among adults in population more than 15 years of age has increased in both women (13.5% to 17.8%) and men (15.6% to 20.9%).
- Hypertension among Adults in population more than 15 years of age shows a decline in both women (21.3% to 19.4%) and men (24.0% to 22.1%).

4. Sujal Gram Samvad:

Context: The Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti, successfully organised the ninth edition of the multilingual 'Sujal Gram Samvad' today, reinforcing the government's commitment to community-led water governance under the Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0.

About Sujal Gram Samvad:

- Sujal Gram Samvad is a multilingual virtual dialogue initiative of the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti, conducted under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) 2.0 to promote community-led water governance.

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- **Objective:** To strengthen Jan Bhagidari (people's participation), local ownership, and Operation & Maintenance (O&M) of rural drinking water supply systems managed by Gram Panchayats.
- **Participants:** It brings together Gram Panchayats, Village Water & Sanitation Committees (VWSCs), Jal Sakhis, Jal Sahiyas, Jal Bahinis, Self-Help Groups, Anganwadi workers, teachers, students, and State/District officials on a common platform.
- **Knowledge-sharing platform:** Villages share best practices, innovations, and successful water management models in their local languages, promoting peer learning across States.
- **Focus Areas:** It emphasizes safe drinking water, source sustainability, water quality monitoring, community ownership, and efficient maintenance of rural water supply assets.
- **Support to Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0:** The initiative strengthens the long-term sustainability of Har Ghar Jal by encouraging communities to take responsibility for village water infrastructure after its creation.

About Jal Jeevan Mission:

- The Union Cabinet has extended the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) till December 2028 with a total outlay of ₹8.69 lakh crore to achieve universal rural tap water coverage.
- Central assistance has been enhanced to ₹3.59 lakh crore (from ₹2.08 lakh crore approved in 2019–20), including an additional ₹1.51 lakh crore.
- A national digital monitoring framework called "Sujalam Bharat" will be introduced to digitally monitor rural drinking water infrastructure.
- Each village will receive a unique "Sujal Gaon/Service Area ID", and the entire drinking water supply system from source to tap will be digitally mapped.
- Gram Panchayats (GPs) and Village Water & Sanitation Committees (VWSCs) will play a greater role in commissioning, operation, and maintenance of water supply schemes.
- "Jal Arpan" initiative will ensure the formal handover of completed water supply schemes to local

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communities for sustainable management.

- A Gram Panchayat must certify that water supply systems and O&M arrangements are functional before a village is declared "Har Ghar Jal."
- "Jal Utsav" will be organized annually as a community-led maintenance and review programme to promote ownership and sustainability of drinking water assets.
- Progress under JJM: Rural tap water coverage has increased from 3.23 crore households (17%) in 2019 to 15.80 crore households (81.61%), with 12.56 crore new tap connections provided.
- About JJM: Launched on 15 August 2019 under the Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, the mission aims to provide safe and adequate drinking water to every rural household through individual tap connections ("Har Ghar Jal"), with community contribution towards capital cost and operation & maintenance.

5. Kargil Vijay Diwas 2026:

Context: Kargil Vijay Diwas honours the courage, sacrifice, and unwavering resolve of the Bravehearts of Operation Vijay. This year, the nation marks the 27th Kargil Vijay Diwas with gratitude and reverence. It commemorates India's historic victory in 1999. Indian soldiers reclaimed the snow-covered heights of Kargil through extraordinary courage and unwavering resolve. On 26 July, the Tricolour once again flew proudly over the rugged mountains of Ladakh. It became a timeless symbol of sacrifice, valour, and India's unbreakable spirit.

About Kargil Vijay Diwas:

- Conflict Background: Triggered by Pakistani infiltrators crossing the Line of Control (LoC) and occupying high positions in Kargil, Ladakh. Initial reports identified infiltrators as jihadis, but the involvement of the Pakistani state became evident.
- The Indian Army began recapturing positions from mid-May to July, culminating in the withdrawal of Pakistani troops on July 26.

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- Official figures: Indian casualties were 527 dead, 1,363 wounded, and 1 prisoner of war (Fl Lt K Nachiketa).
- The Indian Army successfully freed Kargil's peaks from Pakistani intruders through combined efforts of daring maneuvers and overwhelming firepower.

6. Commonwealth Games 2026:

Context: The 2026 Commonwealth Games (officially the XXIII Commonwealth Games, commonly known as Glasgow 2026) run from July 23 to August 2, 2026.

About Commonwealth Games:

- The Commonwealth Games (CWG) is the world's second-largest multi-sport event after the Olympic Games.
- It brings together athletes from 71 Commonwealth nations and territories.
- The first CWG was held in 1930 at Hamilton in Canada as the British Empire Games.
- In 1954, the event was renamed the British Empire and Commonwealth Games. Since 1978, it has officially been known as the Commonwealth Games.
- The Commonwealth Games Federation governs and manages the Games.
- The Commonwealth Games are conducted once every four years. The event is popularly called the "Friendly Games." The Games are based on the values of Humanity, Equality, and Destiny.
- The CWG promotes sports, education, recreation, and Commonwealth cultural diversity.
- All 74 Commonwealth Games Associations are expected to participate in the 2026 Commonwealth Games.
- Gabon and Togo are expected to make their debuts since joining the Commonwealth of Nations in June 2022.

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- The 2026 Commonwealth Games will feature only 10 sports due to limited preparation time and urgency in organising the event. This is the first Commonwealth Games since 1994 to have such a reduced sports programme.
- For the first time, the Games will include only two compulsory sports. The two compulsory sports are Athletics and Swimming.

Quick Bites:

- Under India's BRICS Chairship 2026, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, successfully hosted the BRICS Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in New Delhi on 24 July 2026.
- Two Days of the BRICS Science Academies Forum Meeting 2026 successfully concluded at IIT Hyderabad with focus on AI for Sustainability and Global South Cooperation
- India's exports of textiles and apparel, including handicrafts, stood at ₹3,25,339 crore in 2025–26, registering a growth of 1.8 per cent over ₹3,19,573.2 crore in 2024–25 with export growth recorded in over 100 countries.
- The 2nd Bharat Green Hydrogen Summit 2026 was held on 23 July 2026 in New Delhi. The summit was organised by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry, and it focused on green hydrogen, hydrogen-based mobility, and export competitiveness in the energy sector.
- The National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT) has made the Semiconductor Laboratory's (SCL) indigenous 1.2-micrometre Process Design Kit (PDK) available through eChipHub. The PDK is linked to 1.2µm CMOS technology and is intended for integrated circuit design, prototyping, and semiconductor education in India. A Process Design Kit contains technical files, design rules, and device models for a specific semiconductor manufacturing process. Chip designers use a PDK to create integrated circuits that match the

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parameters of a fabrication technology. The 1.2-micrometre PDK is an open-source kit designed to work with open-source Electronic Design Automation toolchains.

TREND IN INDIA'S SERVICES EXPORTS (2021-22 TO 2025-26)

Strong and Consistent Growth Driven by Key Sectors

(Values in ₹ Billion)

Sectors	2021-22 (1)	2022-23 (2)	2023-24 (3)	2024-25 (4)	2025-26 (5)	Share in Total Services exports (FY26)
Total Services	254.5	325.3	341.1	387.5	421.3	100.0%
Sub-sectors contributing to major share of services exports						
Telecommunications, computer and information services	125.6	152.3	163.6	183.3	206.6	49.03%
Business services	58.9	80.3	88.6	107.2	124.2	29.5%

KEY HIGHLIGHTS (2021-22 TO 2025-26)

- Total Services exports rose from ₹254.5 billion in 2021-22 to ₹421.3 billion in 2025-26 (FY26).
- Telecommunications, computer and information services lead with 49.03% share in FY26.
- Business services are the second largest contributor with 29.5% share in FY26.
- India's services sector continues to show robust and consistent growth across all years.

Note: Figures may not add up due to rounding off.
Source: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) – Handbook of Statistics on Indian Economy (2025-26)

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26-07-2026

1. Sarnath:

Context: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today expressed that it is a proud moment for every Indian, sharing his delight that Sarnath in Uttar Pradesh has been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The "Ancient Buddhist Site of Sarnath" is nominated under criteria (iii) and (vi), recognizing enduring spiritual significance of Sarnath Cr. (iii), one of the four principal destinations of Buddhist pilgrimage, as demonstrated by the large number of religious buildings and other monuments that were built and rebuilt on-site during the many centuries of its existence and through Cr.(vi) direct and tangible way to the events in the life of the Buddha that are of outstanding significance to the Buddhist community – his first sermon and meeting of his first disciples.

About Sarnath:

- Sarnath, located near Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, is the place where Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermon (Dhammachakkappavattana/Turning of the Wheel of Dharma) after attaining enlightenment, marking the beginning of the Buddhist Sangha and the proclamation of the Noble Eightfold Path.
- Sarnath is one of the four holiest Buddhist pilgrimage sites, along with Lumbini (birth), Bodh Gaya (enlightenment), and Kushinagar (Mahaparinirvana/death), as identified by Buddha himself; his relics were enshrined in stupas at these sacred places.
- Sarnath was known by the ancient names Rishipatana (Ishipatana), Mrigadava, and Mrigadaya, while the modern name is believed to be derived from Saranganatha ("Lord of the Deer").

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- Sarnath developed through royal, monastic, and lay patronage, preserving monuments from the pre-Mauryan period (5th–4th century BCE) to the 12th century CE, representing a continuous cultural sequence of nearly 16 centuries.
- The site reflects the architectural evolution through the Mauryan, Kushan, Gupta, and Gahadavala periods, before declining after the 12th century CE and being rediscovered in the 18th century.
- The UNESCO serial property comprises two components—Chaukhandi Stupa and the Archaeological Remains of Sarnath, including Dhamek Stupa, Dharmarajika Stupa, Ashokan Pillar, Mulagandha Kuti Vihara, monasteries, temples, and numerous votive stupas.
- Chaukhandi Stupa, built around the 5th century CE, commemorates Buddha's visit to Sarnath and is a brick structure topped by an octagonal tower added in 1588 CE by Govardhan, son of Raja Todarmal, to commemorate Humayun's visit.
- Dhamek Stupa, built around 500 CE, marks the exact spot where Buddha delivered his first sermon.
- Dharmarajika Stupa was built by Emperor Ashoka in the 3rd century BCE to enshrine the relics of Buddha.
- The Ashokan Pillar, bearing one of Ashoka's edicts, was originally crowned by the Lion Capital, which was adopted as the State Emblem of India on 26 January 1950.
- Numerous monasteries, temples, and votive stupas were constructed at Sarnath between the 3rd century BCE and the 12th century CE.
- After the Kalinga War, Emperor Ashoka embraced Buddhism and promoted it by constructing stupas, monasteries, and the Ashokan Pillar at Sarnath.
- Sarnath flourished under the Kushan rulers, while the Gupta rulers renovated the monuments and added stone-carved floral and geometric decorations to the Dhamek Stupa.
- Harshavardhana restored Sarnath after the Huna invasions.
- The site suffered major destruction during the 11th-century raid of Mahmud of Ghazni, but was later restored by Mahipala of the Pala dynasty.

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- The Dharmachakra Jina Vihara, the last major monument at Sarnath, was built in the 11th century by Kumaradevi, wife of Govindachandra of the Gahadavala dynasty.
- The first scientific excavation of Sarnath was conducted by Sir Alexander Cunningham, the first Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), during 1834–36, while the Ashokan Lion Capital and pillar base were excavated in 1904–05 by Friedrich Oscar Oertel.
- The Sarnath Archaeological Museum preserves the original Lion Capital and numerous important sculptures and artefacts, while the Mulagandha Kuti Vihara, built by the Mahabodhi Society, contains famous frescoes depicting the life of Buddha.
- Sarnath is one of the most extensively excavated archaeological sites in India, preserving a stratified settlement spanning nearly 16 centuries (5th–4th century BCE to the 12th century CE).
- Sarnath symbolizes the origin of Buddhist teachings, the establishment of the Buddhist Sangha, and the spread of Buddhism (Dharma) from India to the world.
- After the declaration of Sarnath as the World Heritage Property, three of the four most significant Buddhist Pilgrim sites; i.e. Lumbini (Nepal), Mahabodhi Temple, Bodhgaya (Bihar) and now Sarnath (Uttar Pradesh) are now included in the World Heritage, along with several other important Buddhist sites such as Sanchi, Nalanda, Ajanta (all three in India), Anuradhapur (Sri Lanka) Paharpur (Bangladesh), Taxila and Takht-i-Bahi (both in present day Pakistan), etc.
- With 45 sites in the List, India ranks 6th globally and 2nd in Asia Pacific Region for the most number of World Heritage Sites. 196 nations have ratified the World Heritage Convention, 1972. India also has 69 sites in the Tentative List of the World Heritage, which is a mandatory threshold for any site to be considered as a World Heritage property in future.

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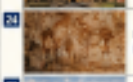
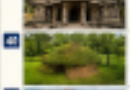
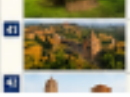
UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES OF INDIA

	Site		Location	Year	Description Summary
1		Ajanta Caves	Maharashtra	1983	Rock-cut cave monuments with ancient paintings, sculptures and religious art from different periods.
2		Ellora Caves	Maharashtra	1983	A remarkable complex of Buddhist, Hindu and Jain rock-cut temples and monasteries, including the Kailasa Temple.
3		Agra Fort	Uttar Pradesh	1983	Massive Mughal imperial fortress showcasing Indo-Islamic architecture, palaces, audience halls and mosques.
4		Taj Mahal	Uttar Pradesh	1983	Iconic white-marble Mughal mausoleum built by Shah Jahan in memory of Mumtaz Mahal.
5		Sun Temple, Konark	Odisha	1984	13th-century temple designed as the chariot of the Sun God, representing the excellence of Kalinga architecture.
6		Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram	Tamil Nadu	1984	Pallava-era rock-cut temples, reliefs, mandapas and monumental reliefs, including the Shore Temple.
7		Kaziranga National Park	Assam	1985	Biodiversity-rich floodplain ecosystem renowned for the Indian one-horned rhinoceros and other wildlife.
8		Manas Wildlife Sanctuary	Assam	1985	Himalayan foothill sanctuary with grasslands and forests supporting several endangered species and rich biodiversity.
9		Keoladeo National Park	Rajasthan	1985	Important man-made wetland and bird sanctuary supporting numerous resident and migratory waterbirds.
10		Churches and Convents of Goa	Goa	1986	Historic churches and convents of Old Goa reflecting Portuguese colonial architecture and Christian missionary influence.
11		Khajuraho Group of Monuments	Madhya Pradesh	1986	Group of Hindu and Jain temples renowned for Nagara architecture and richly detailed sculptures.
12		Group of Monuments at Hampi	Karnataka	1986	Ruins of the prosperous Vijayanagara capital, containing temples, palaces, civic structures and fortifications.
13		Fatehpur Sikri	Uttar Pradesh	1986	Former Mughal capital built under Akbar, noted for its grand palaces, mosques and distinctive Mughal architecture.
14		Group of Monuments at Pattadakal	Karnataka	1987	Chalukyan temple complex blending northern and southern Indian architectural traditions.
15		Elephanta Caves	Maharashtra	1987	Rock-cut cave temples on Elephanta Island, particularly famous for monumental sculptures dedicated to Shiva.
16		Great Living Chola Temples	Tamil Nadu	1987; extended 2004	Three major Chola temples representing the height of Dravidian temple architecture and Chola artistic achievement.
17		Sundarbans National Park	West Bengal	1987	Mangrove ecosystem in the Ganges–Brahmaputra delta, famous for Bengal tigers and rich biodiversity.
18		Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks	Uttarakhand	1988; extended 2005	High-altitude Himalayan landscapes containing alpine meadows, mountain ecosystems and rare flora and fauna.
19		Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi	Madhya Pradesh	1989	Important Buddhist complex featuring stupas, monasteries, temples and sculptural reliefs from ancient India.
20		Humayun's Tomb, Delhi	Delhi	1993	Monumental Mughal garden-tomb that influenced the development of later Mughal architecture, including the Taj Mahal.
21					Historic temples centred on

	Site		Location	Year	Description Summary
23		Mountain Railways of India	West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Himachal Pradesh	1999; extended 2005 and 2008	Historic mountain railway systems demonstrating innovative engineering in challenging Himalayan and hill environments.
23		Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya	Bihar	2002	Sacred Buddhist complex marking the place associated with Buddha's Enlightenment under the Bodhi tree.
24		Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka	Madhya Pradesh	2003	Prehistoric rock shelters containing ancient paintings and evidence of human habitation spanning long periods.
25		Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park	Gujarat	2004	Archaeological landscape containing prehistoric remains, forts, temples, mosques and historic urban structures.
26		Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus	Maharashtra	2004	Grand railway terminus combining Victorian Gothic Revival architecture with traditional Indian architectural elements.
27		Red Fort Complex	Delhi	2007	Mughal imperial palace-fort complex built by Shah Jahan and a major symbol of India's historical heritage.
28		Jantar Mantar, Jaipur	Rajasthan	2010	Astronomical observatory containing monumental instruments designed for precise astronomical observations.
29		Hill Forts of Rajasthan	Rajasthan	2013	Group of six monumental hill forts reflecting Rajput military architecture, political power and urban development.
30		Rani-ki-Vav	Gujarat	2014	Elaborately decorated stepwell showcasing exceptional craftsmanship and the architectural tradition of subterranean water structures.
31		Archaeological Site of Nalanda Mahavihara	Bihar	2016	Remains of the ancient Buddhist monastic and educational centre of Nalanda, a major institution of learning.
32		The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier	Chandigarh	2016	Chandigarh Capital Complex, part of a transnational UNESCO serial nomination, modernist architectural and urban planning principles.
33		Historic City of Ahmadabad	Gujarat	2017	Historic walled city known for its traditional pols, temples, mosques and tombs, Indo-Islamic architecture and heritage.
34		Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai	Maharashtra	2018	Architectural ensemble showcasing the transition from Victorian Gothic public buildings to Art Deco urban architecture.
35		Jaipur City, Rajasthan	Rajasthan	2019	Historic planned city founded in the 18th century, notable for its grid-based urban planning and distinctive architecture.
36		Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple	Telangana	2021	13th-century Kakatiya temple celebrated for its sophisticated architecture, sculpture and distinctive construction techniques.
37		Dholavira: a Harappan City	Gujarat	2021	Well-preserved Harappan urban settlement demonstrating advanced stonemasonry, water management and craft traditions.
38		Santiniketan	West Bengal	2023	Cultural and educational centre founded by Rabindranath Tagore, representing an innovative synthesis of education, art and culture.
39		Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas	Karnataka	2023	Three Hoysala temple complexes renowned for intricate sculpture, detailed ornamentation and distinctive temple architecture.
40		Moidams – the Mound-Burial System of the Ahom Dynasty	Assam	2024	Royal burial mounds of the Ahom dynasty, reflecting distinctive funerary traditions, architecture and cultural practices.
41		Maratha Military Landscapes of India	Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu	2025	Serial property comprising strategically located hill-fort military landscapes of the Maratha Empire.
42					A major Buddhist pilgrimage site

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2. Viksit Vibrant Village Programme 2026:

Context: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will interact with participants of the Viksit Vibrant Village Programme 2026 on 26 July 2026 at 4:30 PM via video conferencing.

About Viksit Vibrant Village Programme 2026:

- The Viksit Vibrant Village Programme, implemented through MY Bharat, has been conceptualised to realise Prime Minister's vision of treating India's border villages as the first villages of the nation and making them active partners in the journey towards Viksit Bharat.
- Vibrant Villages Programme-I (VVP-I) approved on 15 Feb 2023 for development of northern border villages.
- Covers 662 villages across 46 blocks in 19 districts of Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and Ladakh.
- Focus on livelihood generation including tourism, agriculture, skill development, and entrepreneurship.
- Provides infrastructure support like roads, health, education, energy, and telecom connectivity.
- Aims to reduce migration by creating incentives for people to stay in border villages.
- 2558 projects sanctioned under VVP-I with an outlay of ₹3431 crore.
- Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II) approved on 2 April 2025 as a Central Sector Scheme.
- Total outlay of ₹6839 crore till FY 2028–29.
- Expands coverage to strategic villages along other international borders beyond the northern region.
- Implemented across multiple states including Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, J&K, Ladkah and others

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3. Gajanan Maharaj:

Context: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Ayush, and Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare, Shri Prataprao Jadhav, has urged the Government of India to commemorate the 150th Prakat Din of the revered saint Shri Sant Gajanan Maharaj by issuing a ₹150 commemorative coin and a commemorative postage stamp.

About Gajanan Maharaj:

- Sant Gajanan Maharaj (23 February 1878* – 8 September 1910) was a revered Hindu saint, guru, and mystic, primarily associated with Shegaon, Buldhana district, Maharashtra (his birth date and early life remain uncertain; 23 February 1878 is traditionally regarded as his day of appearance).
- He is believed to have first appeared at Shegaon in February 1878 as a young ascetic, and his origins remain unknown.
- He attained Sanjeevana Samadhi (voluntary withdrawal from the physical body) on 8 September 1910, commemorated annually as Shree Punyatithi Utsav.
- His first appearance day is celebrated every year as Prakat Din Sohla.
- His teachings emphasized spirituality, devotion (Bhakti), compassion, selfless service (Seva), simplicity, and human welfare.
- His life and teachings are primarily recorded in Shri Gajanan Vijay, a revered devotional text written by Das Ganu, one of his prominent devotees.
- Another important biography is Shree Gajanan Maharaj Charitra-Kosh, written by Bhargavram (Dasbhargav) Yeodekar, which discusses various traditions regarding his mysterious origins.
- Shri Gajanan Maharaj Sansthan, Shegaon, inspired by his ideals, is renowned for its contributions to education, healthcare, rural development, social welfare, and humanitarian service.
- Gajanan Maharaj was popularly known by names such as Gin Gine Buwa, Ganpat Buwa, and Awaliya Baba.

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- Tradition holds that he visited Nashik and nearby pilgrimage centres, including Kapiltirtha, where he is believed to have stayed for several years.
- Numerous miracles are attributed to Gajanan Maharaj, and these are extensively described in Shri Gajanan Vijay and Gajanan Maharaj Charitra-Kosh.
- Shegaon has become one of Maharashtra's most important spiritual pilgrimage centres due to the life, teachings, and Samadhi of Sant Gajanan Maharaj.

4. Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme:

Context: The Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme supports non-farm enterprises through training, finance, mentoring, and community-led institutional support. By June 30, 2026, SVEP had supported 4.32 lakh rural enterprises across the country.

About Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme:

- Launched in 2016, SVEP is a sub-scheme of the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM).
- The programme supports Self Help Groups (SHGs) and their family members in establishing small enterprises in the non-farm sector.
- It provides financial assistance, institutional support, business management training, soft skill development, and business development services. This promotes sustainable livelihoods and self-employment opportunities in rural areas.
- SVEP also facilitates access to banking linkages and convergence with government schemes.
- The strategic focus has been on achieving long-term economic growth and wider social benefits.
- A key feature of SVEP has been community-based decision-making for funding and supporting enterprises locally.

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- The Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana–National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) is one of the world's largest livelihood initiatives. It mobilizes rural poor households into Self-Help Groups (SHGs), predominantly women.
- The focus is on providing them with sustainable livelihoods, access to financial services, and skill development. As of mid-June 2026, more than 10.29 crore rural households have been mobilized into SHGs under DAY-NRLM.

5. Son River:

Context: Bihar and Jharkhand are set to sign an agreement to resolve the Sone River water-sharing dispute pending since Jharkhand's creation in 2000.

About Son River:

- The Son River is a perennial, right-bank tributary of the Ganga, originating from the Amarkantak Hills of the Maikal Range in Madhya Pradesh.
- It flows through Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Bihar before joining the Ganga.
- Its major tributaries are Banas, Gopad, Rihand, Kanhar, and North Koel.
- It is popularly known as "Hiranyavaha" (Stream of Gold) due to its golden-coloured sand, traditionally believed to contain gold dust.
- The river has significant ecological value as it hosts the Son Gharial Sanctuary, established under Project Crocodile to conserve the critically endangered gharial and the mugger crocodile.
- The Bansagar Dam in Madhya Pradesh is the major dam constructed across the Son River.

6. Bhargavastra:

Context: Bhargavastra is an indigenous, vehicle-mounted, multi-layered Counter-Swarm Drone System developed by Solar Defence and Aerospace Ltd. (SDAL) for the Indian Army. It was demonstrated in Nagpur on 24 July 2026 during a Make-II programme status review.

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About Bhargavastra:

- Bhargavastra is an indigenous hard-kill counter-drone system designed to detect, track, and destroy hostile UAVs.
- It can detect small drones beyond 6 km and larger UAVs up to 10 km.
- The system can simultaneously detect, track, and engage up to 64 targets.
- It is designed for rapid deployment on mobile platforms.
- It uses guided micro-munitions for precise engagement of identified threats.
- It employs a dual-layer kill mechanism—unguided micro-rockets (20 m lethal radius) followed by precision-guided micro-missiles (up to 2.5 km interception range).
- It integrates radar, Electro-Optical/Infrared (EO/IR) sensors, and passive radio-frequency detectors for target detection and tracking.
- Counter-drone systems are designed to detect, track, identify, and neutralize hostile UAVs.
- Weaponized drones are UAVs equipped with explosives, sensors, or attack payloads.
- Loitering munitions are weapons that remain airborne before striking a target.
- Drone swarms are multiple drones operating in a coordinated manner.

Quick Bites:

➢ Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for Development of Infrastructure Facilities for the District and Subordinate Courts, a sum of Rs. 810 crore has been allocated in the union budget 2026 for judicial infrastructure. In addition, sum of Rs. 1200 crore has been allocated in the union budget 2026 for the eCourts Project Phase-III being implemented for digitisation of courts including necessary training and capacity building programmes.

➢ 775 Fast Track Special Courts Functional Across 29 States/UTs; Centre Extends FTSC Scheme Till September 2026. A Centrally Sponsored Scheme to set up Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs), including exclusive POCSO (ePOCSO) courts was launched in October 2019, for the expeditious

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trial and disposal of pending cases related to rape and offences under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012.

- The United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), established by the UN General Assembly in 1966, is the UN's core legal body responsible for harmonizing and modernizing international trade law to reduce legal barriers and facilitate cross-border trade. It has 70 member States, elected by the UN General Assembly for six-year terms. India, a founding member since 1966, is one of only eight countries to have enjoyed continuous membership since its inception. Recently, a conference was held in New Delhi to commemorate the 60th anniversary of UNCITRAL.
- The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has released its bi-monthly Rural Economic Conditions & Sentiments Survey, which highlights growing stress in rural India. About 52.6% of rural households reported no income growth, while only 27.7% experienced an increase, the lowest ever recorded. Households spent 66.5% of their monthly income on consumption, reducing their capacity to save, with financial savings falling to a record low of 17.8%. On the credit front, 51% of households relied on formal sources, whereas 23.6% depended exclusively on informal credit.
- The United States and Saudi Arabia have signed a 30-year peaceful civil nuclear cooperation agreement. Reportedly, deal would take effect only if Saudi Arabia joined the U.S.-brokered Abraham Accords under which several Arab states established ties with Israel. The agreement is based on a Section 123 Agreement under the US Atomic Energy Act.
- Biofouling is the accumulation of aquatic organisms—including microorganisms, plants, and animals—on surfaces and structures immersed in or exposed to water, such as ship hulls. It may also include pathogens and facilitates the spread of non-native invasive species to new ecosystems. Recently, concerns have arisen that the prolonged anchorage of vessels in the Persian Gulf is increasing biofouling, thereby raising the risk of invasive marine species spreading across regions.

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- India's first domestic benchmark-based natural gas futures contract will launch on 27 July 2026 on the National Stock Exchange. The contract has received approval from the Securities and Exchange Board of India and will trade under the ticker symbol NATGASIND.
- The Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C) under the Ministry of Home Affairs ordered GitHub to remove the Bluetooth-based chat application Bitchat on 23 July 2026. Bitchat is an open-source, peer-to-peer messaging application that uses Bluetooth Low Energy mesh networks. The app enables encrypted communication between nearby devices, usually within a range of 30 to 100 metres, without internet access, mobile networks, user registration, phone numbers, or central servers.
- Anahat Singh became the first Indian to be crowned World junior squash champion after she defeated Ruqayya Salem of Egypt in the summit clash at Ontario on Saturday.
- Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels said on Saturday they fired missiles and drones at Saudi Arabia in response to Saudi airstrikes on the strategic Red Sea city of Hodeida, in another escalation over vital shipping routes in West Asia while the U.S. and Iran vie for control of the Strait of Hormuz. Houthis said they targeted facilities in the Red Sea Saudi cities of Yanbu and Jizan that belong to Aramco, the world's largest oil company.
- Toxic gases, generated by a sudden explosive release of suspected methane trapped or embedded in rocks on July 20, claimed the lives of 25 workers in an under-construction Head Race Tunnel (HRT) of the NHPC's 500 MW Teesta Stage VI Hydropower Project at Samardung in Sikkim's Namchi district.

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CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS IN INDIA (2014 – 2023)

The Constitution of India was amended eight times during the last twelve years and the details of the said Constitution Amendment Bills, as enacted, are as under:

S. No.	Constitution Amendment Act	Year	Subject / Main Focus	Description (Summary)
1.	The Constitution (Ninety-Ninth Amendment) Act, 2014	2014	National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC)	To establish the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) to replace the collegium system for appointing judges to the Supreme Court and High Courts.
2.	The Constitution (One Hundredth Amendment) Act, 2015	2015	Land Boundary Agreement with Bangladesh	To give constitutional effect to the land boundary agreement between India and Bangladesh.
3.	The Constitution (One Hundred and First Amendment) Act, 2016	2016	Goods and Services Tax (GST)	To provide for the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in India.
4.	The Constitution (One Hundred and Second Amendment) Act, 2018	2018	National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)	To give constitutional status to the National Commission for Backward Classes.
5.	The Constitution (One Hundred and Third Amendment) Act, 2019	2019	Reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS)	To provide reservation for Economically Weaker Sections in Government jobs and educational institutions.
6.	The Constitution (One Hundred and Fourth Amendment) Act, 2019	2019	Extension of Reservation for SCs and STs	To extend the reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies for another ten years, until **January 25, 2030.**
7.	The Constitution (One Hundred and Fifth Amendment) Act, 2021	2021	Articles 342A, 338B and 366 (Consequential Amendments)	To make amendments in Article 342A and consequential amendments thereto in Articles 338B and 366 of the Constitution.
8.	The Constitution (One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023	2023	Reservation of Seats for Women	To provide reservation of seats for women in the House of People (Lok Sabha) and in the Legislative Assemblies of the States.

These amendments reflect India's commitment to strengthening democracy, promoting social justice, ensuring inclusive growth and adapting to the changing needs of the society.

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27-07-2026

1. Rome Declaration:

Context: The Declaration "Humanity at the Threshold: A Declaration on Artificial Intelligence and Nuclear Weapons" adopted by Participants of the Global Nobel Laureates Assembly. It calls for an international treaty to ban autonomous systems from accessing nuclear launches while emphasizing that the threat is also not so far-fetched.

About Rome Declaration:

- Objective: Calls for the responsible governance of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to prevent its misuse in nuclear weapons and safeguard global peace and security.
- Prevent AI Arms Race: Urges nations to avoid an AI-driven arms race by adopting restraint, international cooperation, and effective governance mechanisms.
- Responsible AI Development & Use: Emphasizes that AI should be developed and used in accordance with international law, human rights, and ethical principles, promoting human well-being while preventing malicious or reckless applications.
- Global AI Governance: Advocates shared international mechanisms for oversight, transparency, verification, and coordinated slowdowns in the development of high-risk frontier AI systems.
- Youth & Leadership: Encourages AI education, ethical leadership, and intergenerational partnerships, empowering young people to shape responsible AI governance.
- Nuclear Disarmament: Reaffirms the need for verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament, including reducing the operational readiness (alert levels) of nuclear arsenals.

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2. Chenab River:

Context: Heavy rain swells Chenab River as all gates of Salal Dam opened in Reasi.

About Chenab River:

- Ancient Name: Known as Asikni in the Rig Veda and also called Chandrabhaga in ancient texts.
- Origin: Formed by the confluence of the Chandra and Bhaga rivers at Tandi in Lahaul–Spiti district, Himachal Pradesh. Both source streams originate near Baralacha Pass.
- Course: Flows through Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, and Pakistan, where it joins the Sutlej as part of the Panjnad, which later merges with the Indus River.
- Indus Waters Treaty: Chenab is one of the three Western Rivers (along with the Indus and Jhelum) allocated primarily to Pakistan under the Indus Waters Treaty (1960), while India has limited rights for non-consumptive uses.
- Hydropower Potential: The river has significant hydroelectric potential, with major projects including Baglihar Dam, Salal Dam, Dul Hasti Hydroelectric Project, and Ratle Hydroelectric Project, all located in Jammu & Kashmir.

3. Black sea:

Context: The External Affairs Ministry on Sunday issued an advisory urging Indian seafarers to "carefully assess security risks" before accepting jobs on commercial ships that operate "in and around the Black Sea and adjoining maritime areas", citing increasing drone and missile attacks on ships in the region that remains highly volatile due to the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

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About Black sea:



- **Location:** The Black Sea is a large inland marginal sea of the Atlantic Ocean, situated at the junction of Europe and Asia in southeastern Europe.
- **Area:** It has a surface area of about 436,000 sq. km and is roughly oval-shaped.
- **Bordering Countries**: It is bordered by Ukraine (north), Russia (northeast), Georgia (east), Turkey (south), and Bulgaria and Romania (west). The Crimean Peninsula projects into the sea from the north.
- **Surrounding Physical Features:** It is bounded by the Balkan Peninsula (west), Caucasus Mountains (east), East European Plains (north), and Anatolia (south).
- **Connectivity**: Although almost landlocked, it is connected to the Atlantic Ocean through the Bosporus Strait → Sea of Marmara → Dardanelles Strait → Aegean Sea → Mediterranean Sea. The Kerch Strait connects it to the Sea of Azov.

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- **Major Rivers:** Important rivers draining into the Black Sea include the Danube, Dnieper, Dniester, Southern Bug, and Rioni.
- **Salinity:** The Black Sea has lower salinity than the world's oceans due to its limited exchange of water with the Mediterranean Sea.
- **Coastline & Islands:** Russia has the longest coastline, followed by Turkey and Ukraine. Ukraine possesses the largest number of islands, including Dzharylhach Island, the largest island in the Black Sea.
- **Economic Importance:** The Black Sea serves as a major maritime trade gateway, facilitating the export of goods from Eastern Europe to global markets and supporting significant shipping, fisheries, and energy transport.

4. Planetary Rings Autonomous EXploration with In-situ Sampling (PRAXIS):

Context: PRAXIS is an acronym of 'Planetary Rings Autonomous EXploration with In-situ Sampling'. NASA has just selected a mission concept called 'PRAXIS' for its Innovative Advanced Concepts (NIAC) 2026 phase I funding.

About PRAXIS:

- PRAXIS is a NASA concept mission selected under the NASA Innovative Advanced Concepts (NIAC) programme.
- It will deploy a bio-inspired robotic explorer powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- The mission aims to directly sample particles from planetary ring systems, a feat never attempted before.
- It seeks to answer key questions on how planetary rings form, evolve, and what their particles are made of.
- Instead of flying through the rings, the spacecraft will graze the ring plane to reduce collision risks.

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- It will use a long deployable boom to perform touch-and-go sampling of selected ring particles while maintaining a safe distance.
- The spacecraft will collect samples from different regions and gaps within the ring system.
- Onboard instruments and AI will analyze particle size, porosity, and composition, including free-floating particles.
- The mission addresses priorities identified in NASA's Planetary Science Decadal Survey regarding the study of planetary rings.

5. Inflation targeting in India:

Context: Inflation control remains RBI's foremost priority, says Governor.

About Inflation targeting in India:

- Inflation is the rate at which the average prices of goods and services rise over time, causing the value of money to fall.
- It is a monetary policy framework in which a country's central bank focuses solely on keeping inflation within a certain range.
- In India, the Monetary Policy Framework Agreement agreed between the RBI and the government in 2015 established inflation targeting.
- According to the provisions of the agreement, RBI's principal goal will be to preserve price stability while also pursuing growth.
- The RBI is mandated to maintain a rate of inflation of 4% with a 2-percentage-point deviation, i.e. inflation must be kept between 2% and 6%.
- The RBI Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is a statutory body constituted under the RBI Act of 1934 by the Central Government.
- The RBI Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) was established based on the recommendation of the Urjit Patel Committee.

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- It was formed with the objective of fixing the benchmark policy interest rate in order to keep inflation within a particular target level.
- The RBI Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is a 6 member committee.
- There are in total three internal members and three external experts.
- The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is required to meet at least four times a year.
- The quorum required for the meeting of the MPC is four members.
- Each member of the MPC has one vote, and in the event of an equality of votes, the Governor has a second or casting vote.
- Once every six months, the Reserve Bank is required to publish a document called the Monetary Policy Report.

Quick Bites:

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has congratulated weightlifter Mirabai Chanu on winning the Gold medal in the 48 kg category at the Commonwealth Games 2026.
- India's Chanambam Rishikanta Singh produced a record-breaking performance to bag the silver medal in the men's 60kg weightlifting event at the Commonwealth Games 2026 in Glasgow.
- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today announced that a high-powered task force on examination reforms under the leadership of Shri Nandan Nilekani has been constituted.
- INS Sudarshini, the sail training ship of the Indian Navy, departed Boston, USA on 25 Jul 2026, as part of ongoing Lokayan 26. During her stay, the ship proudly represented India at the prestigious SAIL 250 celebrations and the International Naval Review 250, showcasing India's rich maritime heritage while strengthening maritime partnerships through professional and cultural engagements.
- The NIFTY 500 Ahimsa Index, launched by the National Stock Exchange (NSE) in collaboration with the Ahimsagain Foundation, is a thematic ESG index that promotes ethical and animal-cruelty-free investing. It uses the Ahimsa Investment Movement (AIM) framework to classify companies into Green, Orange, and Red bands based on their animal welfare practices. The index

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includes only Green-band companies, representing businesses that fully comply with animal-cruelty-free criteria across sectors such as IT, automobiles, real estate, and healthcare. It enables investors to align their portfolios with ethical and sustainable investment principles.

- State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2026 Report: The SOFI 2026 report is the United Nations' flagship annual assessment of global trends in hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition. It provides evidence-based analysis to monitor progress towards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 – Zero Hunger. The report is jointly published by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD),
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Food Programme (WFP), and the World Health Organization (WHO).
- France fought an “unpredictable” wildfire close to Bordeaux on Sunday while Spain warned of “difficult hours” in its own fiery battle, with evacuations from danger zones in both countries mounting to well over 300,000 people.
- In a first, three chicks of the endangered Great Indian Bustard have been moved into a custom-built rewilding tunnel at the Godawan Conservation Centre in Ramdevra, Jaisalmer. The ₹9.25-crore facility prepares captive-bred birds for life in the wild by minimising human contact and copying their natural habitat. The Great Indian Bustard is the State bird of Rajasthan. The chicks will remain in the tunnel for about four months under CCTV surveillance. The food will be provided without direct human contact.

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28-07-2026

1. Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY):

Context: Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan today chaired a virtual review meeting to assess the utilisation of funds released under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) and to consider the issuance of the Second Installment (Second Mother Sanction) to the Government of Maharashtra. Maharashtra becomes the first State to qualify for the Second RKVY Installment.

About Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY):

- Launched: 2007–08 as a flagship Centrally Sponsored Scheme to boost agricultural growth through higher state investment.
- Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare.
- Main Objective: Incentivize states to increase public investment in agriculture and allied sectors.
- State Flexibility: Provides autonomy to states to design and implement agriculture projects based on local needs and agro-climatic conditions.
- Infrastructure Development: Supports creation of pre- and post-harvest infrastructure such as storage, markets, irrigation, and quality input facilities.
- Farmer Income: Promotes value-chain development, productivity enhancement, and value addition to increase farmers' income.
- Youth Empowerment: Encourages agri-startups, innovation, skill development, and agribusiness entrepreneurship.
- Funding Pattern: 90:10 (Northeastern & Himalayan States), 60:40 (Other States), and 100% Central Assistance for Union Territories.

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- Major Reform: Renamed as RKVY-RAFTAAR in 2017–18, emphasizing infrastructure, innovation, and agricultural entrepreneurship.
- Latest Restructuring: Reorganized as the RKVY Cafeteria Scheme from 2022–23, integrating and rationalizing multiple agriculture schemes.
- Implementation: Projects are approved by the State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC) headed by the Chief Secretary, after which funds are released.
- Key Components: Includes Soil Health Management, Rainfed Area Development, Agroforestry, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), Agricultural Mechanization (including Crop Residue Management), Per Drop More Crop (PDMC), Crop Diversification Programme, and Accelerator Fund for Agri-Startups, with special focus on small & marginal farmers, SCs, STs, women, and other weaker sections.

2. Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC):

Context: India's updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) targets for 2031–2035 feature a 47% reduction in GDP emissions intensity, 60% non-fossil electric capacity, and a 3.5 to 4.0 billion tonne carbon sink.

About Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC):

- Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are national climate action plans under the Paris Agreement, outlining targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, build climate resilience, and transition to clean energy. Submitted every five years, they reflect each country's individual progression and highest possible ambition.
- India has achieved a reduction of 37.38% in the emissions intensity of its GDP in 2022 from the 2005 level, against the NDC goal of reducing emissions intensity by 45% by 2030.
- The share of cumulative installed electric power capacity from non-fossil fuel-based sources crossed 50% in June 2025, thereby achieving the NDC goal five years ahead the committed

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timeline. As of 30th June 2026, non-fossil fuel-based energy resources accounted for 54.18% of the country's total installed electric power capacity.

- India has created an additional carbon sink of 2.44 billion tonnes of CO_2 equivalent during 2005 to 2022, against the NDC goal of creating an additional carbon sink of 2.5–3.0 billion tonnes of CO_2 equivalent by 2030 through additional forest and tree cover.
- The NDC targets for the year 2035 have been enhanced, with quantitative targets to reduce the emissions intensity of GDP by 47% from the 2005 level, achieve 60% cumulative installed electricity capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources, and create carbon sink of 3.5 to 4.0 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent through forest and tree cover as compared to the baseline year of 2005.
- The NDC also includes five qualitative targets aimed at promoting sustainable lifestyles, adoption of climate friendly and cleaner path and enhancing adaptation capacity, etc. aligned with the goal of Viksit Bharat @2047.

3. Kosi–Mechi Intra-State Link Project:

Context: The Kosi–Mechi Intra-State Link Project has been included under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayi Yojana – Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (PMKSY-AIBP) for balance cost of works of Rs. 6,143.22 crore, with central assistance of Rs. 3,652.56 crore.

About Kosi–Mechi Intra-State Link Project:

- **Project:** Links the Kosi River with the Mechi River (a tributary of the Mahananda River) across Bihar and Nepal.
- **Implementing Agency:** Executed by the National Water Development Agency (NWDA) under the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- **Primary Objective:** Provide annual irrigation and improve water availability for agriculture and other uses.

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- **Irrigation Benefit:** Will irrigate 4.74 lakh hectares, including 2.99 lakh hectares in Bihar.
- **Water Supply:** Will provide 24 million cubic metres (MCM) of water for domestic and industrial purposes.
- **Additional Water Release:** Expected to release 5,247 cusecs of additional water from the Kosi Barrage.
- **Irrigation Focus:** Mainly designed to support 2.15 lakh hectares in the Mahananda basin during the Kharif season.
- **Major Concern:** The project is primarily an irrigation project, with no significant flood-control component.
- **Kosi River Facts:** Called the "Sorrow of Bihar"; originates in the Himalayas near the Everest–Kanchenjunga region, flows through China, Nepal, and India, and joins the Ganga at Kursela (Katihar, Bihar).
- **Formation & Tributaries of Kosi:** Formed by the confluence of Sun Kosi, Arun Kosi, and Tamur Kosi; important tributaries include Trijunga, Bhutahi Balan, Kamla Balan, and Bagmati.
- **Special Feature of Kosi:** A highly shifting river, having migrated about 112 km westward in the last 200 years, causing severe floods and erosion in north Bihar.
- **Mechi River Facts:** A transboundary perennial river originating in Nepal's Mahabharat Range, flowing through Nepal and Bihar, and joining the Mahananda River in Kishanganj district, Bihar.

4. Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026:

Context: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology; Earth Sciences and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh, today introduced the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026 in the Lok Sabha.

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Major highlights:

- **Objective:** Strengthens the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 to curb question paper leaks and organized examination malpractices.
- **Purpose:** Ensures greater accountability, stronger deterrence, and protection of the integrity and fairness of public examinations.
- **Enhanced Punishment:** Increases imprisonment for using unfair means from 3–5 years to 5–10 years.
- **Higher Fine for Individuals:** Raises the maximum fine for offenders from ₹10 lakh to ₹50 lakh.
- **Stricter Action Against Service Providers:** Increases the maximum fine from ₹1 crore to ₹5 crore and extends debarment from conducting public examinations from 4 years to 8 years.
- **Managerial Personnel Liable:** Managers of service providers involved in offences face 5–10 years' imprisonment and a maximum fine of ₹5 crore.
- **Organized Exam Crimes:** Increases punishment for organized examination-related offences to 7–10 years' imprisonment and raises the maximum fine from ₹1 crore to ₹10 crore.
- **Special Task Force (STF):** Empowers the Central Government to refer investigations of offences under the Act to a Special Task Force.
- **Time-bound Investigation:** Introduces Section 12A, requiring investigations to be completed within 2 months.
- **Fast-Track Trial:** Provides for Special Fast Track Courts, day-to-day hearings, completion of trials within 3 months of filing the charge sheet, and appointment of Special Public Prosecutors.
- **Time-bound Appeals**: Introduces Section 12B, allowing appeals to the High Court within 30 days, with disposal, as far as possible, within 3 months.
- **Overall Impact:** Aims to ensure swift investigation, speedy justice, stricter penalties, and greater credibility of public examinations across the country.

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5. Anhydrous ammonia:

Context: India approved the manufacture and use of anhydrous ammonia as a fertiliser for a three-year period on 23 July 2026.

About Anhydrous ammonia:

- Anhydrous ammonia (NH_3) is a gaseous nitrogen fertilizer containing 82% nitrogen, the highest among commercial nitrogen fertilizers.
- It is stored under pressure as a liquid and injected below the soil surface to minimize nitrogen loss.
- It serves as a direct source of nitrogen for crop growth and improves plant productivity.
- Application requires specialized injection equipment and airtight storage tanks.
- Due to its corrosive nature, it must be handled only by trained personnel with proper safety precautions.
- Exposure to anhydrous ammonia can cause severe skin burns, eye injuries, and respiratory irritation.

6. Amoebic meningoencephalitis:

Context: A 48-year-old man from Kozhikode died of amoebic meningoencephalitis on Monday. Biju, an autorickshaw driver from Naderi, had been undergoing treatment at the Kozhikode Government Medical College Hospital. He sought treatment for fever earlier this month, and amoebic meningoencephalitis was confirmed on July 22.

More details:

- Primary amebic meningoencephalitis (PAM) is a rare brain infection that is caused by Naegleria fowleri. It is a free-living amoeba or a single-celled living organism.
- Naegleria fowleri lives in warm fresh water and soil around the world, and infects people when it enters the body through the nose.

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- Naegleria fowleri enters the body through the nose, usually when people are swimming.
- It then travels up to the brain, where it destroys the brain tissue and causes swelling.
- In the recent case, it is being suspected that the victim was infected while swimming in a local river.
- Notably, people cannot get infected with Naegleria fowleri from drinking water contaminated with the amoeba. PAM is also non-communicable.
- In the initial stage, the symptoms include headache, fever, nausea and vomiting.
- Later on, the patient may have a stiff neck and experience confusion, seizures, hallucinations and slip into a state of coma.
- Scientists haven't been able to identify any effective treatments for the disease yet.

7. Fields Medals:

Context: The Fields Medal — one of the top honours in mathematics — for 2026 was awarded to Yu Deng, John Pardon, Jacob Tsimerman, and Hong Wang.Of this year's laureates, Wang has become the third woman to win the Medal in its 90-year history, after Maryam Mirzakhani (2014) and Maryna Viazovska (2022). Wang and Deng are also the first Chinese nationals to win since Shing-Tung Yau in 1982.

About Fields Medals:

- Fields Medal is the highest international award in mathematics, presented every four years to one or more mathematicians below 40 years of age.
- It is awarded during the International Congress of Mathematicians (ICM) organized by the International Mathematical Union (IMU).
- The IMU is an international, non-governmental, non-profit scientific organization that promotes international cooperation in mathematics.

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- The medal recognizes outstanding mathematical achievements as well as the recipient's potential for future contributions to mathematics.
- The Fields Medal Committee is appointed by the Executive Committee of the IMU and is usually chaired by the IMU President.
- **History:** The idea originated at the 1924 International Congress of Mathematicians (Toronto). It was funded by Canadian mathematician John Charles Fields and first awarded in 1936.
- Since 1966, the number of medals awarded at each Congress has been increased from two to a maximum of four, reflecting the growth of mathematical research.
- Indian-origin Fields Medalists: Manjul Bhargava (2014) and Akshay Venkatesh (2018)

8. Red Sea:

Context: Ship traffic through Bab el-Mandeb fell on Sunday after Yemeni Houthis attacked Saudi oil installations along the Red Sea coast, while transit through the Strait of Hormuz stayed low over the weekend. The Houthis is a Shia Islamist political and military organization that aim to govern all of Yemen and support external movements against the United States, Israel, and Saudi Arabia.

About Red Sea:

- Trade through the Red Sea accounts for 15% of total global sea trade, including vital supplies of grains, seaborn liquid natural gas and oil.
- Red Sea is a semi-enclosed inlet of the Indian Ocean, located between Africa and Asia.
- It is connected to the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean through the Gulf of Aden and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait in the south.
- The Sinai Peninsula divides its northern end into the Gulf of Aqaba and the Gulf of Suez; the Gulf of Suez is linked to the Mediterranean Sea through the Suez Canal.

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- Bordering countries: Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Sudan, Eritrea, and Djibouti.
- Geologically, it lies in a rift (fault) depression between the Arabian Plate and the African (North African) Plate.
- The sea is famous for its hot, highly saline waters, and its reddish appearance during seasonal blooms of certain algae (cyanobacteria).
- It is one of the world's busiest maritime trade routes, connecting Europe and Asia via the Suez Canal.
- The Red Sea region is rich in mineral resources, including petroleum, evaporites, sulfur, phosphates, and heavy-metal deposits.
- The Red Sea receives very little precipitation in any form and no major water enters the Red Sea from rivers.
- Important islands: Tiran Island (near the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba) and Shadwan Island (at the entrance of the Gulf of Suez).

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Quick Bites:

- India's Raja Muthupandi won the silver medal in men's 65kg weightlifting event at the Commonwealth Games 2026 in Glasgow.
- Ministry of Culture operates Museum Grant Scheme under which financial assistance is provided for setting up of New Museums/development of the existing museums/digitization of museum collections/setting up of virtual museums and training of museums professionals of museums managed by Central/State Governments, Societies, Autonomous bodies, Public sector Undertaking, local bodies, Academic Institutions and Trusts registered under the societies Act at the regional, State and District Level in the country.
- There are 57 Central Universities presently operational in the country, out of which 47 Central Universities, excluding Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), are under the administrative purview of the Ministry of Education.
- The Government of India launched the PM-Vidyalaxmi, as a new central sector scheme in November 2024. The main objective of the scheme is to ensure that no student is denied the opportunity to pursue higher education due to financial constraints. Under the scheme, collateral free and guarantor-free education loan is provided to all students who get merit-based admission in top Quality Higher Education Institutions (QHEIs) and who desire to avail the education loan.
- The One Nation One Subscription (ONOS) Scheme provides access to over 13,000 journals from 32 publishers to all eligible institutions. These journals cover a wide range of disciplines, including science, technology, medicine, arts and humanities.
- Under the Gyan Bharatam Mission, National Manuscript Survey was launched across all States and Union Territories of the country to identify and document manuscript holdings, repositories and custodians representing diverse languages and scripts.
- In March 2026, the Union Cabinet has approved the extension of Jal Jeevan Mission period up to December 2028 with enhanced outlay and restructured implementation focusing on structural reforms in rural drinking water supply sector under JJM 2.0. The total financial outlay of the

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Mission has now been enhanced from ₹ 3.60 lakh crore to ₹ 8.69 lakh crore with the central share increasing from ₹ 2.08 lakh crore to ₹ 3.59 lakh crore i.e. additional central outlay of Rs. 1.51 lakh Crore.

- As informed by the Government of Gujarat, the proposed Gulf of Khambhat (Kalpasar) Project is an ambitious water resources initiatives of the State Government. The project envisages the creation of one of the world's largest coastal freshwater reservoirs through the construction of a dam across the Gulf of Khambhat. Upon implementation, the project is expected to significantly augment the availability of freshwater and substantially mitigate water scarcity in the Saurashtra region by providing a dependable source of water for irrigation and other identified uses.
- Indian astronomers, along with their international collaborators, have reported the rare discovery of a Blue Straggler Star (BSS) caught in the act of formation, providing direct evidence of how such stars are created. Blue Straggler Stars (BSS) are a peculiar class of stars found in star clusters that appear hotter, brighter, and more massive than their peers, and have long puzzled astronomers seeking to understand their origin and evolution.
- The Ministry of Tourism today in New Delhi signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Air India Limited to establish a strategic framework to promote India as a preferred global tourism destination under the Incredible India brand.
- Kerala launched the Digital Square education initiative as part of its 100-day action plan for the education sector. Digital Square is designed to strengthen technology-based learning in primary schools across Kerala. The programme uses Free and Open-Source Software (FOSS)-based educational tools for classroom use. It also includes an edutainment package developed by KITE CEO K. Anvar Sadath.
- UNESCO added Mount Olympus in Greece and the D-Day Landing Beaches in northern France to the World Heritage List on 26 July 2026. The decision was taken at the 48th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in Busan, South Korea. Mount Olympus is Greece's highest

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mountain and rises to 2,918 metres. UNESCO inscribed it as a mixed cultural and natural heritage site, a category used for places with both natural and cultural value.

- Indian shooter Esha Singh won the gold medal in the women's 25m pistol event at the ISSF World Cup (Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun) in Hangzhou, China, on 27 July 2026. Manu Bhaker won the bronze medal in the same final, and India finished with three medals at the competition.
- Farmers from Rajasthan have opposed the proposed Geographical Indication (GI) registration of 'Unjha Jeera' and 'Unjha Fennel', arguing that Unjha is mainly a trading hub rather than the actual production area. Unjha, located in Gujarat, is one of Asia's largest agricultural markets for seed spices such as cumin (jeera), fennel (saunf), and isabgol. Since a significant share of the cumin and fennel traded through the Unjha APMC is produced in Rajasthan, farmers contend that granting a GI tag to "Unjha" would unfairly associate the products with a trading centre instead of their true geographical origin.
- Sudan's Army has regained control of a key highway linking the capital Khartoum with the flashpoint city of El-Obeid, military sources said on Monday. Their rival paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have for months amassed troops around El-Obeid, attempting to encircle it ahead of an apparent large-scale assault. They have now been pushed west, off the 400-kilometre highway that connects Khartoum with the largest city in the embattled Kordofan region.

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29-07-2026

1. Regional Rural Banks (RRBs):

Context: RRBs posted the highest ever consolidated net profit of Rs. 10,177 crores during FY 2025-26. RRBs have also shown consistent improvement in key financial parameters like Capital to Risk Weighted Asset Ratio (CRAR), deposits, advances, Non-Performing Asset (NPA), Credit-Deposit Ratio (CD ratio) etc.

About Regional Rural Banks (RRBs):

- Regional Rural Banks established to promote financial inclusion in rural areas.
- Formed jointly by Central Government, State Government, and sponsoring commercial banks.
- Aim to provide credit to small farmers, agricultural labourers, artisans, and weaker sections.
- Established under Regional Rural Banks Act 1976 on recommendation of Narasimham Committee on Rural Credit.
- First RRB was Prathama Grameen Bank, set up on 2 October 1975.
- Designed as hybrid institutions combining cooperative and commercial banking features.
- Mobilise deposits from rural/semi-urban areas and provide loans mainly to priority groups.
- Provide banking services in rural and semi-urban regions.
- Perform government functions like MGNREGA wage disbursement and pension payments.
- Offer para-banking services like ATM cards, mobile banking, UPI, lockers, etc.
- Reserve Bank of India mandates 75% PSL target for RRBs (higher than 40% for commercial banks).
- Ownership pattern: Centre (50%), State (15%), Sponsor Bank (35%).
- Operate in limited notified districts within a State.

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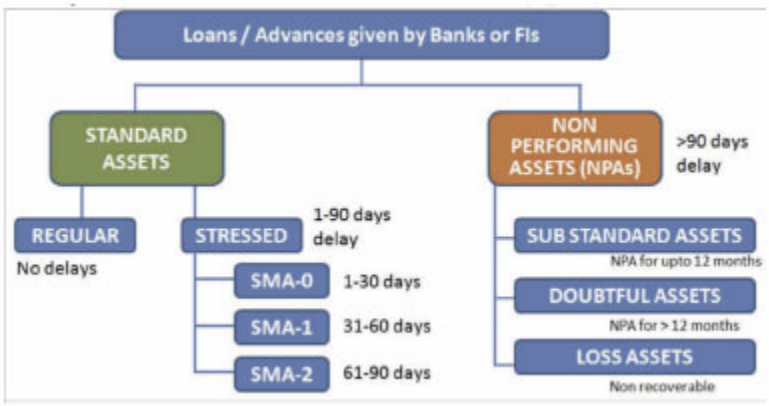
- Regulated by RBI and supervised by NABARD.
- Sources of funds include own capital, deposits, borrowings from NABARD, sponsor banks, SIDBI and National Housing Bank.

2. Non-Performing Assets (NPA):

Context: Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPA) of Public Sector Banks (PSBs) at historic low of 1.9% in FY 2025–26, achieve highest-ever net profit of ₹ 1.98 lakh crore; aggregate business reaches over ₹283 lakh crore.

About Non-Performing Assets (NPA):

- Non-Performing Assets (NPA) are loans and arrears lent by banks or financial institutions whose principal and interests are delayed beyond 90 days.
- In the case of agricultural loans, NPAs are declared if the interest and/or instalment or principal remain unpaid for two harvest seasons. However, this period should not be longer than two years.



3. Hepatitis:

Context: Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare today observed World Hepatitis Day 2026 under the global theme "Hepatitis: Let's Break It Down", marking eight years of the National Viral

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Hepatitis Control Programme (NVHCP). Launched on World Hepatitis Day in 2018 under the National Health Mission, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the programme reflects India's commitment to eliminating viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030, in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 3.3.

About Hepatitis:

- Hepatitis is inflammation of the liver— the irritation or swelling of the liver cells from any cause.
- Usually caused by a group of viruses known as the "hepatotropic" (liver directed) viruses, including A, B, C, D and E.

Types of Hepatitis

	TRANSMISSION	PREVENTION	TREATMENT
Hepatitis A	Eating contaminated food or drinking contaminated water	• Practicing good hygiene • Vaccine	No treatment
Hepatitis B	Through contact with the blood or bodily fluids of an infected person	• Practicing good hygiene • Vaccine • Blood screening	• Alpha interferon • Peginterferon
Hepatitis C	Blood-to-blood contact	• Practicing good hygiene • Avoid sharing needles, toothbrushes, razors or nail scissors	Direct-acting antiviral drugs
Hepatitis D	Contact with infected blood (only occurs in people already infected with hepatitis B)	• Hepatitis B vaccine • Avoid sharing needles, toothbrushes, razors or nail scissors	Interferon
Hepatitis E	Eating contaminated food or drinking contaminated water	• Practicing good hygiene • Avoid drinking water that has come from a potentially unsafe source	No treatment

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4. International Tiger Day:

Context: International Tiger Day, observed every year on 29 July, highlights the global importance of tiger conservation. International Tiger Day traces its origins to the Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit held in November 2010. Leaders from 13 tiger-range countries, including India, adopted the ambitious Tx2 goal to double the global wild tiger population by 2022. Today, it serves as a global platform to review conservation progress, strengthen international cooperation and raise awareness.

More details:



- The All India Tiger Estimation (2022) places India's tiger population at 3,682. The 2022 All India Tiger Estimation covered 20 States and surveyed over 6.41 lakh kilometres on foot.
- Project Tiger is a flagship Centrally Sponsored Scheme of the Government of India.
- It is implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).
- The scheme aims to secure viable tiger populations in their natural habitats. It provides financial and technical assistance to tiger range States for conservation efforts.

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- The programme combines habitat protection, scientific management and regular field based monitoring. This approach has strengthened conservation measures over time.
- NTCA oversees the implementation of Project Tiger and related conservation initiatives. NTCA provides scientific, technical and financial guidance to tiger range States. It approves Tiger Conservation Plans and issues standard operating procedures for reserve management.
- NTCA is chaired by the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change. It also includes Members of Parliament, senior government officials and experts.

5. Eco-Sensitive zones:

Context: The Union Environment Ministry has reissued, for the seventh time in over a decade, its draft notification proposing an ecologically sensitive area (ESA) across the Western Ghats, after the previous draft lapsed on July 27 without being finalised. The latest notification retains the proposed ESA at 56,825.7 sq. km, spread across the six States, with Karnataka accounting for 20,668 sq. km, Maharashtra 17,340 sq. km, Kerala 9,993.7 sq. km, Tamil Nadu 6,914 sq. km, Goa 1,461 sq. km and Gujarat 449 sq. km.

About Eco-Sensitive zones:

- ESZs are ecologically fragile areas around protected areas (PAs) designated so under the Environment Protection Act (EPA), 1986
- Land within 10 km of the boundaries of national parks and wildlife sanctuaries is to be notified as eco-fragile zones or Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZ).
- While the 10-km rule is implemented as a general principle, the extent of its application can vary.
- These were issued by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change under the National Wildlife Action Plan (2002-2016)
- Eco-Sensitive Zones are created as “shock absorbers” for the protected areas, to minimize the negative impact on the “fragile ecosystems” by certain human activities taking place nearby.

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- These areas are meant to act as a transition zone from areas requiring higher protection to those requiring lesser protection.
- They are not meant to hamper the daily activities of people living in the vicinity, but are meant to guard the protected areas and "refine the environment around them".
- Prohibited activities: Commercial mining, saw mills, commercial use of wood, etc., apart from regulated activities like felling of trees.
- Permitted activities: Ongoing agricultural or horticultural practices, rainwater harvesting, organic farming, among others.
- India has more than 600 Ecologically Sensitive Zones declared across different states.

6. PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana:

Context: During the year 2025-26, a total of 18. 71 lakh RTS systems have been installed with a cumulative installed solar capacity of 6.7 GW, benefitting 22.71 lakh households across the country, including the rural households under the PMSG: MBY. Under the PMSG: MBY, since its launch in February 2024, a total of 39,72,447 RTS systems have been installed, benefitting 48,02,717 households across the country including the households in rural areas, as on 22.07.2026.

About PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana:

- PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana was launched by Narendra Modi on 13 February 2024 with an outlay of ₹75,021 crore.
- The scheme aims to install rooftop solar systems and provide up to 300 units of free electricity per month to one crore households.
- It offers Central Financial Assistance (CFA) of 60% for systems up to 2 kW and 40% for additional capacity between 2–3 kW, capped at 3 kW.
- Beneficiaries can apply for subsidies through the National Portal and select approved vendors for installation.

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- Households can avail collateral-free loans at around 7% interest for residential rooftop solar systems up to 3 kW.
- The scheme includes a "Model Solar Village" component to establish one model village per district to promote rural solar adoption.
- ₹800 crore has been allocated for Model Solar Villages, with ₹1 crore awarded to each selected village to promote energy self-reliance.
- Launched on 13 February 2024 with an outlay of ₹75,021 crore, PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana has become the world's largest domestic rooftop solar programme.
- Over 1 crore households have registered on the National Portal, with more than 33 lakh rooftop systems installed as of May 2026, adding over 12 GW capacity.

Quick Bites:

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has congratulated Shilpa Kanchugarakoppalu Shyla on winning the Bronze medal in the Women's Shot Put F57 Final at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2026.
- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has congratulated Sarvesh Kushare on winning the Silver medal in the Men's High Jump event at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2026.
- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has congratulated Valluri Ajaya Babu on winning the Silver medal in the Men's 79 kg weightlifting event at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2026.
- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has congratulated Sharmila on winning the Gold medal in the Women's Shot Put F57 event at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2026.
- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has congratulated Weightlifter, Bindyarani Devi Sorokhaibam on winning the Bronze medal in the women's 58 kg weightlifting event at the Commonwealth Games 2026.
- The Ministry of Civil Aviation today inaugurated Hub & Spoke International Flight Operations from Amritsar, making it the second airport in the country to be integrated into India's pioneering

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Hub & Spoke framework for international passenger movement. The launch follows the successful commencement of India's first Hub & Spoke operations from Varanasi on 25 June 2026.

- India recorded highest-ever exports in FY 2025-26 reaching a record US$ 863.1 billion, with merchandise exports reaching US$ 441.8 billion and services exports expanding further to US$ 421.3 billion, reflecting the combined strength of India's merchandise and services sectors in driving export growth.
- Cell Broadcast Alert System for Disaster Warnings is operated through the Integrated Alert System based on the Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) implemented by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). The system integrates five Warning Generating Agencies, namely the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Central Water Commission (CWC), Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Defence Geoinformatics Research Establishment (DGRE) and Forest Survey of India (FSI), with the State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) of all States/UTs.
- Indian Railways has achieved a major milestone in strengthening India-Nepal freight connectivity with the successful operation of the first-ever direct commercial container freight train from Kolkata Port to Biratnagar Customs Yard, Nepal. The train, comprising 40 wagons carrying a consignment of canola, completed its journey under the revised India-Nepal Rail Transit Protocol, marking a new chapter in rail-based cross-border freight movement.
- The Government of India approved a proposal of the Reserve Bank of India to introduce one billion polymer banknotes each in the ₹10 and ₹20 denominations on 27 July 2026. The approval covers field trials, and regular issuance will begin only after successful trials. The proposal was placed under Section 25 of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, after a recommendation from the RBI Central Board. Polymer banknotes are currency notes printed on a plastic-based substrate instead of conventional paper pulp. Countries such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom have used polymer notes in different denominations. Polymer substrates are

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known for resistance to moisture, dirt, and tearing, and they generally have a longer circulation life than paper-substrate notes.

- A pyrocumulonimbus cloud, also called a fire cloud or pyroCb, formed over a wildfire near Saumos in the Gironde region of southwest France on 24 July 2026.
- India and China are set to resume border trade through the Nathu La Pass in East Sikkim from 1 August 2026. The trade route remained suspended from 2020 for six years because of the COVID-19 pandemic and border tensions.
- Kerala has begun integrating ANNAM.AI smart weather stations under its 100-day action plan for climate-smart agriculture as of 28 July 2026. The stations use artificial intelligence to provide hyper-local weather and farm data for decision-making at the field level.
- AstraZeneca India announced an Integrated Genomic Solutions Centre in Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh, on 28 July 2026. The centre is part of India's first Integrated Precision Oncology programme and focuses on genetic research for cancer diagnosis and therapy. Precision oncology is a cancer treatment approach that uses genetic and molecular information to match diagnosis and therapy with a patient's disease profile.
- Astronomers have used data collected by the Hubble Space Telescope to piece together the clearest yet map of star formation across most of the Andromeda Galaxy over the last 500 million years. The Andromeda is 2-2.5-times wider than the Milky Way, and the two galaxies have a coin-toss's chance of colliding within the next 10 billion years.

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30-07-2026

1. INS Machilipatnam (BY 529):

Context: Machilipatnam (BY 529), the seventh of eight Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC), being built by Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) for the Indian Navy, was launched on 29 Jul 2026.

About INS Machilipatnam (BY 529):

- The ship is equipped for Underwater Surveillance, Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) operations, and Low Intensity Maritime Operations (LIMO), along with Mine Warfare capability.
- With indigenous content exceeding 80 percent, the project showcases the growing capability of the Indian shipbuilding industry and will substantially enhance the Indian Navy's operational readiness for safeguarding the nation's maritime interests in the Indian Ocean Region.
- Machilipatnam carries deep historical and cultural significance as it derives its name from the historic port city of Machilipatnam, in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh, known for its rich maritime legacy and flourishing trade along India's eastern seaboard.

2. Himalayan Chandra Telescope (HCT):

Context: 25 years of the successful operations of the 2-m Himalayan Chandra Telescope (HCT) atop Hanle in Ladakh was celebrated with a conference highlighting its history, engineering challenges, scientific research, and the road ahead.

About Himalayan Chandra Telescope (HCT):

- Himalayan Chandra Telescope (HCT) is a 2-meter optical–infrared telescope, named after Nobel laureate Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar.

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- It is located at the Indian Astronomical Observatory, at Hanle in Ladakh, at an altitude of about 4,500 m, making it one of the highest optical telescopes in the world.
- The telescope is operated remotely from the Centre for Research & Education in Science & Technology (CREST) of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics>, Bengaluru, through a dedicated satellite communication link.
- It is designed for optical and near-infrared astronomical observations, enabling studies of distant stars, galaxies, nebulae, and other celestial objects.
- Its major instruments include a Faint Object Spectrograph, a near-infrared camera, and an optical CCD camera for imaging and spectroscopy.
- The HCT plays an important role in astronomical research, including the study of supernovae, exoplanets, variable stars, active galaxies, and gamma-ray burst afterglows.
- A unique feature of the telescope is that it has been operated remotely in real time from IIA's campus in Hosakote in Bengaluru, since June 2001, through a dedicated INSAT-3B satellite link from ISRO.

3. Consumer Price Index(CPI):

Context: The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) revised the base year of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) from 2012=100 to 2024=100. The revised series was released on 12th February, 2026.

About Consumer Price Index (CPI) and new changes:

- Consumer Price Index measures the average change over time in prices paid by consumers for a fixed basket of goods and services used for daily consumption (retail level).
- The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is the primary measure of retail inflation in India. It tracks changes in the prices of goods and services consumed by households and are used by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to frame monetary policy under the inflation-targeting framework.

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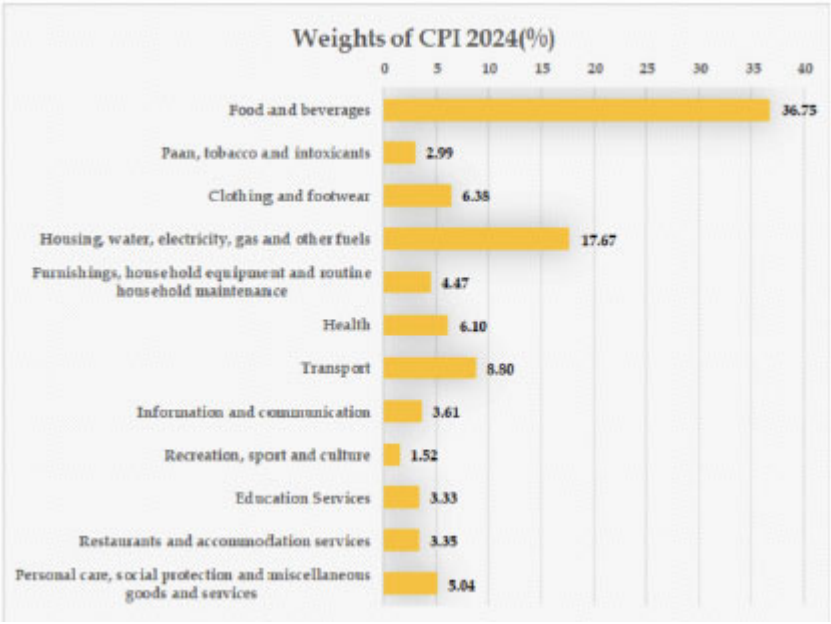
- CPI reflects the cost of living and directly affects interest rates, wages, pensions, and government welfare schemes.
- It is based on a "basket" of goods and services that represents typical household consumption patterns.



- **Increase in Items Covered:** Total items increased from 299 to 358; goods 259 → 308; services 40 → 50.
- **Wider Data Collection:** Price data now collected from 1,465 rural markets (earlier 1,181) and 1,395 urban markets (earlier 1,114); 12 online marketplaces included for the first time.
- **More Detailed Classification:** Items now grouped into 12 broad groups instead of 6, giving more granular inflation estimates.
- **Change in Food Weight:** Weight of food and beverages reduced to 36.75% from 45.86%, which may reduce volatility in headline inflation.
- **Housing and Utilities Combined:** Housing expanded to include water, electricity, gas and other fuels; combined weight increased to 17.67% (earlier housing alone 10.07%).

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- **New / Expanded Categories:** Furnishings and household maintenance (4.47%), Health (6.1%), Transport (8.8%), Information and communication (3.61%), Recreation, sports and culture (1.52%), Education services (3.33%), Restaurants and accommodation (3.35%), Personal care and miscellaneous (5.04%).
- **Other Weight Changes:** Paan, tobacco and intoxicants increased to 2.99% (from 2.38%); Clothing and footwear reduced to 2.38% (from 6.53%).

4. PM Vidyalaxmi Scheme:

Context: PM-Vidyalaxmi supplements the PM-USP CSIS (Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Protsahan Central Sector Interest Subsidy Scheme). Under PM-USP CSIS, students who are pursuing technical/ professional courses from approved NAAC accredited HEIs / NBA accredited courses and whose annual family income is up to ₹4.5 lakhs, shall be eligible for 100% interest subvention during moratorium period for education loan up to ₹ 10 lakhs.

About PM Vidyalaxmi Scheme:

- **Launched:** Approved by the Union Cabinet on 6 November 2024.
- **Objective:** To ensure that no meritorious student is deprived of quality higher education due to financial constraints.
- **NEP Link:** The scheme is based on the recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- **Coverage:** Applicable to students admitted on merit to 1,425 designated Quality Higher Educational Institutions (QHEIs) across India (public and private).
- **Exclusions:** Students admitted through Management Quota, NRI Quota, and similar categories are not eligible.
- **Education Loan:** Provides collateral-free and guarantor-free education loans.

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- **Loan Amount:** No upper limit on the education loan; amount depends on course fees and related educational expenses.
- **Eligible Expenses:** Covers tuition fees, hostel/mess charges, refundable and non-refundable institutional fees, a reasonable-quality laptop, and living expenses.
- **Credit Guarantee:** The Government provides a 75% credit guarantee for education loans up to ₹7.5 lakh to reduce banks' lending risk.
- **Interest Rate:** Interest is capped at the bank's Externally Benchmarked Lending Rate (EBLR) + 0.5%, making it lower than regular education loan rates.
- **Repayment Period:** Up to 15 years, excluding the moratorium period (course duration + 1 year).
- **Participating Banks:** Loans are provided through Scheduled Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), and Cooperative Banks.
- **3% Interest Subvention:** Students with annual family income up to ₹8 lakh receive 3% interest subvention on education loans up to ₹10 lakh during the moratorium period.
- **Existing CSIS Benefit Continues:** Students with family income up to ₹4.5 lakh remain eligible for 100% interest subvention under the PM-USP Central Sector Interest Subsidy Scheme (CSIS) for eligible technical/professional courses.
- **Higher Loan Amounts:** If the education loan exceeds ₹10 lakh, the 3% interest subvention is limited to the first ₹10 lakh of the loan.
- **Restriction:** Students already receiving any Central/State Government scholarship, fee reimbursement, or another interest subvention scheme are not eligible for interest subvention under PM-Vidyalaxmi or CSIS.

5. Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport:

Context: The Ministry of Civil Aviation has notified that all scheduled commercial flight operations will shift from the civil enclave at Visakhapatnam Airport (INS Dega) to Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport at Bhogapuram from 00:01 hours on August 17, 2026.

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About Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport:

- Also known as Bhogapuram Airport, is an upcoming greenfield airport at Bhogapuram in Vizianagaram district, Andhra Pradesh, India.
- It is intended to serve the Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region and is located off National Highway 16, about 45 km from Visakhapatnam.
- The airport is being developed by GMR Visakhapatnam International Airport Limited, a subsidiary of the GMR Group.
- It was named after the Indian revolutionary and freedom fighter Alluri Sitarama Raju in September 2024.
- The airport features a single 3,800-metre Code 4E runway designed to handle wide-body aircraft.
- The modern integrated passenger terminal has an initial capacity to handle 6 million passengers per annum (MPPA) in its first phase, with scalability to 40 MPPA in future phases.
- The facility also includes a dedicated cargo terminal to support exports in the pharmaceuticals, electronics, and seafood sectors.
- The airport was built with sustainability features, including renewable energy systems and rainwater harvesting.

Quick Bites:

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has congratulated Gulveer on winning the Silver medal in the Men's 10,000m event at the Commonwealth Games 2026 in Glasgow.
- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has congratulated Harjinder Kaur on winning the Silver medal in the Women's 69 kg weightlifting event at the Commonwealth Games 2026 in Glasgow.
- The YUVIKA 2026 programme was successfully conducted during May 11-22, 2026 at nine ISRO Centers. During the YUVIKA 2026 programme, the students got exposure to space science, technology, and applications through experiential learning and various activities such as

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interaction with senior scientists & Gaganyaatris, lectures on space science and ISRO achievements

- The present installed nuclear power capacity in the country is 8,780 MW comprising of 24 nuclear power plants, contributing about 3.1% in 2025-26 in total electricity generation. The Government has drawn up a roadmap for reaching the 100 GW nuclear power capacity by 2047, as announced in the Nuclear Energy Mission. As per the roadmap, the present nuclear power capacity of 8.78 GW is expected to reach about 22 GW by 2031-32.
- Marking a significant milestone for Assam's dairy sector and the North Eastern Region's processed food exports, the first international consignment of 5,627 litres of Purabi Ice Cream was exported from Assam to Bhutan, opening new avenues for value-added dairy exports from the region.
- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Ministry of Communications, Government of India, and the Government of Madhya Pradesh will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 30 July 2026 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, for the establishment of India's first Telecom Manufacturing Zone (TMZ), Phase-I, at Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. The initiative seeks to create a world-class manufacturing ecosystem for telecom equipment and allied technologies by attracting investments, fostering innovation, encouraging indigenous design and manufacturing, and accelerating the development of next-generation telecom products and solutions.
- As per the National Cooperative Database (NCD), as on 15.07.2026, there are 8,53,430 Cooperative Societies across the country. Sector-wise Primary Cooperative Societies: 1) Housing Cooperative Societies – 1,95,411, 2) Dairy Cooperatives – 1,58,216, 3) Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) – 1,06,126. State-wise Total Cooperative Societies: 1) Maharashtra – 2,27,177, 2) Gujarat – 88,119, 3) Telangana – 60,680.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs administers Swatantrata Sainik Samman Yojana, a scheme for grant of pension to Freedom Fighters and their eligible dependents. Central Samman Pension under the scheme is granted only to those Freedom Fighters who fulfill the eligibility criteria and evidentiary

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requirements prescribed under the Scheme and apply for the same through the concerned State Government.

- India became the world's second-largest supplier of seafarers as of 28 July 2026, with 311,936 maritime professionals in the global workforce. India accounted for 12.16% of the world's seafaring workforce and ranked behind the Philippines in the BIMCO-ICS Seafarer Workforce Report 2026.
- World Nature Conservation Day is observed annually on 28 July across the world. The National Zoological Park in Delhi marked the day on 28 July 2026 with awareness activities, a plastic removal drive, and visitor outreach on conservation themes.
- SHetA2 is an oral small-molecule therapy linked to Human Papillomavirus-related cervical disease. On 29 July 2026, the Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Cancer Prevention and Research validated the molecule for further development in India.
- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh virtually inaugurated the Department of Military Medicine at Command Hospital (Central Command), Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, on 29 July 2026. It is India's first dedicated academic and operational department exclusively focused on military medicine.

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31-07-2026

1. Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026:

Context: The Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026 amends Section 3 of the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971. It extends the same legal protection to the National Song, Vande Mataram that is currently afforded to the National Anthem, Jana Gana Mana. The amendment makes it an offence to intentionally prevent the singing of the National Song or to cause a disturbance to an assembly engaged in its singing.

Background:

- According to the Statement of Objects and Reasons, the 1971 Act safeguards the National Anthem by making it a criminal offense to deliberately stop its singing or to cause disruptions to any group engaged in singing it. It recalls the Constituent Assembly meeting held on 24th January 1950.
- At the meeting, its then President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, highlighted the historic role of Vande Mataram in India's freedom struggle. He stated that it should be honoured equally with Jana Gana Mana and accorded equal status.
- However, there was no specific legal provision extending similar protection to the National Song. The Bill addressed this gap. It proposed to include Vande Mataram within Section 3 of the 1971 Act.

About Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026:

- **Short Title:** The law is called the Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Act, 2026.

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- **Key Amendment:** Section 3 is substituted to protect both the National Anthem (Jana Gana Mana) and the National Song (Vande Mataram).
- **Earlier Scope:** The 1971 Act protected only the National Anthem under Section 3.
- **Expanded Scope:** The amended Section 3 extends legal protection to the National Song (Vande Mataram) as well.

Vande Mataram: A Melody That Became a Movement

- Vande Mataram, meaning "Mother, I Bow to Thee", was composed by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee.
- It was first published in the literary journal Bangadarshan on 7th November 1875. It was later included in the novel Anandamath, published in 1882.
- Rabindranath Tagore set it to music and first sang it at the 1896 session of the Indian National Congress in Calcutta.
- The song became a powerful symbol of resistance during the freedom struggle. It was first used as a political slogan on 7th August 1905 during the Swadeshi movement.
- On 24th January 1950, Constituent Assembly President Dr. Rajendra Prasad stated that Vande Mataram should be honoured equally with Jana Gana Mana and accorded equal status.

- **Prohibited Act 1:** Intentionally preventing the singing of the National Anthem or National Song is punishable.
- **Prohibited Act 2:** Intentionally causing disturbance to an assembly singing the National Anthem or National Song is punishable.
- **Punishment:** Up to 3 years' imprisonment, or fine, or both (unchanged).
- **Repeat Offenders:** A second or subsequent conviction attracts a minimum one-year imprisonment under Section 3A.

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- **New Impact:** Repeat offenders disrupting the singing of Vande Mataram will also face the mandatory minimum one-year jail term.
- **Objective:** To provide equal statutory protection to both the National Anthem and the National Song.

2. Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme:

Context: Government in Parliament said that the Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme has been implemented through a phased, scientifically validated and consultative process involving NITI Aayog, automobile manufacturers, Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI), Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), Indian Institute of Petroleum (IIP) and other technical institutions.

About Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme:

- Ethanol (C_2H_5OH), considered a renewable fuel, is an anhydrous ethyl alcohol produced from sugarcane, maize, wheat, and other crops with high starch content.
- It is naturally produced by the fermentation of sugars by yeasts or via petrochemical processes such as ethylene hydration.
- **Launch:** Started in 2003 to promote ethanol blending in petrol.
- **Definition:** Mixing ethanol with petrol to make fuel cleaner and more sustainable.
- **Blending Types:** E10 (10% ethanol), E20 (20%), E85 (85%).
- **E20 Benefits:** Better acceleration, improved ride quality, and 30% lower carbon emissions vs. E10.
- **Target:** 20% ethanol blending in petrol by 2025-26 (advanced from 2030).
- **Achievement:** Ethanol production rose from 38 crore liters (2014) to 660+ crore liters (2025).

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3. ILO Convention No. 193:

Context: A major diplomatic and labor debate emerged after India abstained from voting on ILO Convention No. 193 (Decent Work in the Platform Economy) at the 114th International Labour Conference in Geneva.

About ILO Convention No. 193:

- ILO Convention No. 193, adopted on 12 June 2026, is the first legally binding international treaty providing a universal minimum set of rights for platform and gig workers.
- **Coverage:** It protects gig workers such as ride-hailing drivers, delivery partners, warehouse pickers, and data labelers, irrespective of whether they are classified as employees or independent contractors.
- **Algorithmic Management:** It introduces the first global standards on algorithmic management, requiring platforms to disclose automated decisions, provide written reasons for account deactivation, and ensure human oversight.
- **India's Position:** India abstained from adopting the Convention, following its policy of ratifying ILO conventions only after domestic laws fully align with international obligations.
- **Reasons for Abstention:** India cited reliance on the Code on Social Security, 2020, concerns over labour being a Concurrent List subject, and the complexities of implementing binding international obligations across States.
- **Key Concern:** India was reluctant to accept provisions requiring reclassification of platform workers based on actual work conditions, as they may conflict with the country's existing independent aggregator business model.

4. DAANVEER initiative:

Context: Shri Vivek Bharadwaj, Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, launched the DAANVEER initiative in New Delhi.

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About DAANVEER initiative:

- DAANVEER is a digital platform that enables citizens, organizations, and the Indian diaspora to donate computers and other digital equipment directly to Gram Panchayats.
- **Nodal Ministry:** It is an initiative of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR), Government of India.
- **Objective:** To bridge the digital infrastructure gap in nearly 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats, making them digitally empowered and future-ready service delivery centres.
- **Meri Panchayat Integration:** Donors can contribute voluntarily through the Meri Panchayat mobile app, where Gram Panchayats list their technology requirements.
- **DigiHaat Integration:** The platform is linked with the DigiHaat marketplace, enabling donors to purchase and send pre-approved computer bundles directly to Panchayats.
- **Transparent Delivery:** DAANVEER provides end-to-end digital tracking, from dispatch to installation, ensuring transparency and accountability.
- **Digital Recognition:** Donors receive an officially verified digital certificate of appreciation after successful installation of the donated equipment.
- **Integration with Digital Governance:** The initiative works seamlessly with platforms such as e-GramSwaraj, Sabha Saar, AuditOnline, and Gram Manchitra, enabling immediate use of the donated digital infrastructure.

5. AI Palletising:

Context: According to Future Market Insights (FMI), the global AI palletising and depalletising market is projected to grow from $1.8 billion in 2026 to $9 billion by 2036

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About AI Palletising:

- AI palletising and depalletising is an advanced industrial automation technology that uses robotic arms, computer vision, machine learning, and AI to automatically stack or unload goods from pallets.
- How it differs: Unlike traditional robots, AI systems can handle mixed-size, irregular, and damaged packages without manual reprogramming.
- 3D Computer Vision: High-resolution cameras scan packages in real time to identify their size, orientation, and condition.
- AI-Based Planning: Machine learning algorithms determine the best gripping points and optimize stacking patterns for maximum stability and pallet utilization.
- **Adaptive Robotics:** Multi-axis robotic arms continuously adjust their movement, speed, and gripping force using real-time sensor feedback.
- **Mixed Load Handling:** The system efficiently manages multiple SKUs with different shapes, sizes, and weights on the same pallet.
- **Quality Inspection:** Built-in computer vision detects damaged or defective packages, reducing errors and preventing pallet collapse.
- **Continuous Learning:** AI models learn from operational data to improve stacking speed, gripping accuracy, and overall efficiency over time.

6. Doxxing:

Context: Following the protests at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi demanding the resignation of Dharmendra Pradhan as Union Education Minister, several women who took part in the movement have reported being subjected to online harassment. The Hindu has verified multiple such instances, including women facing doxxing (the circulation of personal information) and rape and death threats online.

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About Doxxing:

- The act of digitally publicising a person's private details is called doxxing.
- Doxxers generally publicise highly personal data such as other people's home addresses, phone numbers, private email IDs, medical conditions etc.
- Adjust social media settings, use strong passwords, report through National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal, etc., can be the measures taken to address doxxing.

7. Suez Canal:

Context: A drone strike on gas vessels in Egypt's Mediterranean port of Damietta signalled a potential new front in the U.S.-Iran war, raising the prospect of threats to navigation through the Suez Canal, a last remaining safe export route for Saudi oil.

About Suez Canal:



- The Suez Canal connects Port Said (Mediterranean Sea) to Suez (Red Sea) in northeastern Egypt.
- It links Europe and Asia without requiring ships to sail around the Cape of Good Hope (Africa).
- The canal is 193 km long and crosses the Isthmus of Suez, separating Africa from the Sinai Peninsula.
- Construction began under the Universal Suez Ship Canal Company (1858) and the canal opened in 1869.
- Britain controlled the canal until Egypt nationalized it in 1956 during the Suez Crisis.

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- Since 1957, the canal has been managed by the Suez Canal Authority and remains open for international navigation.
- The canal carries about 12% of global trade, 7% of world oil trade, and around 30% of global container traffic.
- It is a lock-free canal, allowing the passage of large vessels, including aircraft carriers.
- The Suez Canal significantly reduces travel distance, fuel consumption, transit time, and transportation costs, making it one of the world's most strategic maritime trade routes.
- The Suez Canal has only one bordering country: Egypt. It is entirely located within Egypt, running north-to-south across the Isthmus of Suez to connect the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea.

8. Pellet Guns:

Context: The Supreme Court on Thursday said the use of pellet guns by the police in "exceptional circumstances" was part of a graded approach to break civilian protests.

About Pellet Guns:

- **Definition:** Pellet guns are modified pump-action shotguns that fire cartridges containing hundreds of small metallic pellets.
- **Pellets:** The pellets are usually made of lead or other metals and may be spherical or irregular in shape.
- **Purpose:** They are classified as less-lethal weapons, intended to reduce fatalities compared to conventional firearms.
- **Working Mechanism:** Pulling the trigger ignites the propellant, generating high-pressure gases that propel the pellets through the barrel.
- **Spread Pattern:** Unlike a single bullet, the pellets scatter over a wide area, making individual impacts difficult to control.

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- **Range:** Depending on the weapon and ammunition, pellet guns can be effective up to about 500 yards.
- **Risks:** Despite being less-lethal, they can cause serious injuries, especially to the eyes, face, and head, and may lead to permanent disability.
- **India:** Pellet guns used by security forces have been associated with Ordnance Factory, Ishapore, for their production.

9. Mahanadi:

Context: Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Thursday expressed confidence that the long-standing Mahanadi river water dispute between Odisha and Chhattisgarh would be resolved within the next three months. An important meeting held in New Delhi was attended by Union Jal Shakti Minister C.R. Patil, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bishnu Deo Sai, Mr. Majhi, and senior officials from both States and the Centre.

About Mahanadi river:

- **Recent Update:** Odisha and Chhattisgarh have expressed willingness to resolve the Mahanadi water dispute amicably.
- **Dispute:** In 2016, Odisha alleged that Chhattisgarh's upstream barrages reduced downstream water flow during the non-monsoon season.
- **Tribunal:** The Mahanadi Water Disputes Tribunal (MWDT) was constituted in 2018 under the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956; the final award is still pending.
- **About the River:** The Mahanadi is the third-largest peninsular river (after Godavari and Krishna) and the largest river of Odisha.
- **Source & Basin:** It originates near Sihawa (Chhattisgarh) and drains parts of Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Maharashtra.
- **Major Tributaries:** Left bank – Seonath, Hasdeo, Mand, Ib; Right bank – Ong, Tel, Jonk.

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- **Major Projects:** Important projects include Hirakud Dam (India's longest dam), Ravishankar Sagar, Dudhawa, Sondur, Hasdeo Bango, and Tandula.
- **Major Cities:** The river basin includes important urban centres such as Raipur, Durg, and Cuttack.
- **Economic Importance:** The basin supports iron & steel (Bhilai), aluminium (Hirakud, Korba), paper, cement, sugar, textiles, and coal, iron, and manganese mining, making it a major industrial region.

Quick Bites:

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has congratulated Dilip Mahadu Gavit on winning the Gold medal in the Men's 100m T47 event at the Commonwealth Games 2026.
- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has congratulated Mohammed Basil Morssinganakath on winning the Silver medal in the Men's para 100m T47 event at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2026.
- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has congratulated Sreeshankar on winning the Silver in long jump medal at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2026.
- APEDA Facilitates First-Ever Sea Shipment of Value-Added Flavoured Makhana from Bihar to Canada.
- India has advanced 25 places in the global rankings, from 82nd to 57th, reflecting significant progress in structural and pro-competitive reforms between 2010 and 2023, according to the report India's Next Growth Frontier: Reducing Anti-Competitive Market Distortions to Build on India's 2010–2023 Reform Progress, released by the Competere Foundation. The report assesses India's performance under its Market Distortions Performance Index, examining the country's reform trajectory between 2010 and 2023
- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh, on July 30, 2026, felicitated the nine women officers of the three Services, who returned home after successfully completing the first-ever Tri-service all-

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women circumnavigation sailing expedition 'Samudra Pradakshina' onboard the Indian Army Sailing Vessel (IASV) Triveni.

- In a major step towards building a technology-driven, future-ready handloom ecosystem, the Union Minister of Textiles Shri Giriraj Singh will inaugurate the Centre of Excellence for Handloom Technology (CoE-HT) at IIT Delhi on 3 August 2026.
- Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and the UAE released 672 captive-bred Houbara Bustards (Chlamydotis macqueenii) into Karakalpakstan's Aral Sea region. Houbara Bustard (Chlamydotis macqueenii): The Asian Houbara Bustard is a medium-to-large migratory, ground-dwelling bird of the bustard family (Otididae), specially adapted to arid and semi-arid desert ecosystems. It inhabits sandy deserts, gravel plains, dry steppes, and shrublands across Central Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, and parts of South Asia, including the Thar Desert and Rann of Kutch. It is renowned for its elusive nature and remarkable adaptation to harsh desert environments.
- The Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration issued a compliance order on 28 July 2026 to regulate the sale, advertisement, and free distribution of High Fat, Sugar, and Salt food items near schools. The order applies within 50 metres of school premises and covers children from 22 months of age up to Class 12 students in Maharashtra.
- India and Nepal jointly inaugurated the restored Shree Gusthal Mahavihar and Agam of Prathamshree Mahavihar at Guita Tole in Patan, Lalitpur, on 28 July 2026. The project was funded by a Government of India grant of about NPR 12 crores and was executed by Nepal's Central Level Project Implementation Unit under the Department of Urban Development and Building Construction
- Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL) delivered Nipun, a state-of-the-art Diving Support Vessel (DSV), to the Indian Navy. Nipun boasts an indigenous content exceeding 80 per cent. The vessel features advanced dynamic positioning systems, saturation diving equipment, submarine rescue machinery, and deep-sea intervention tools.

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