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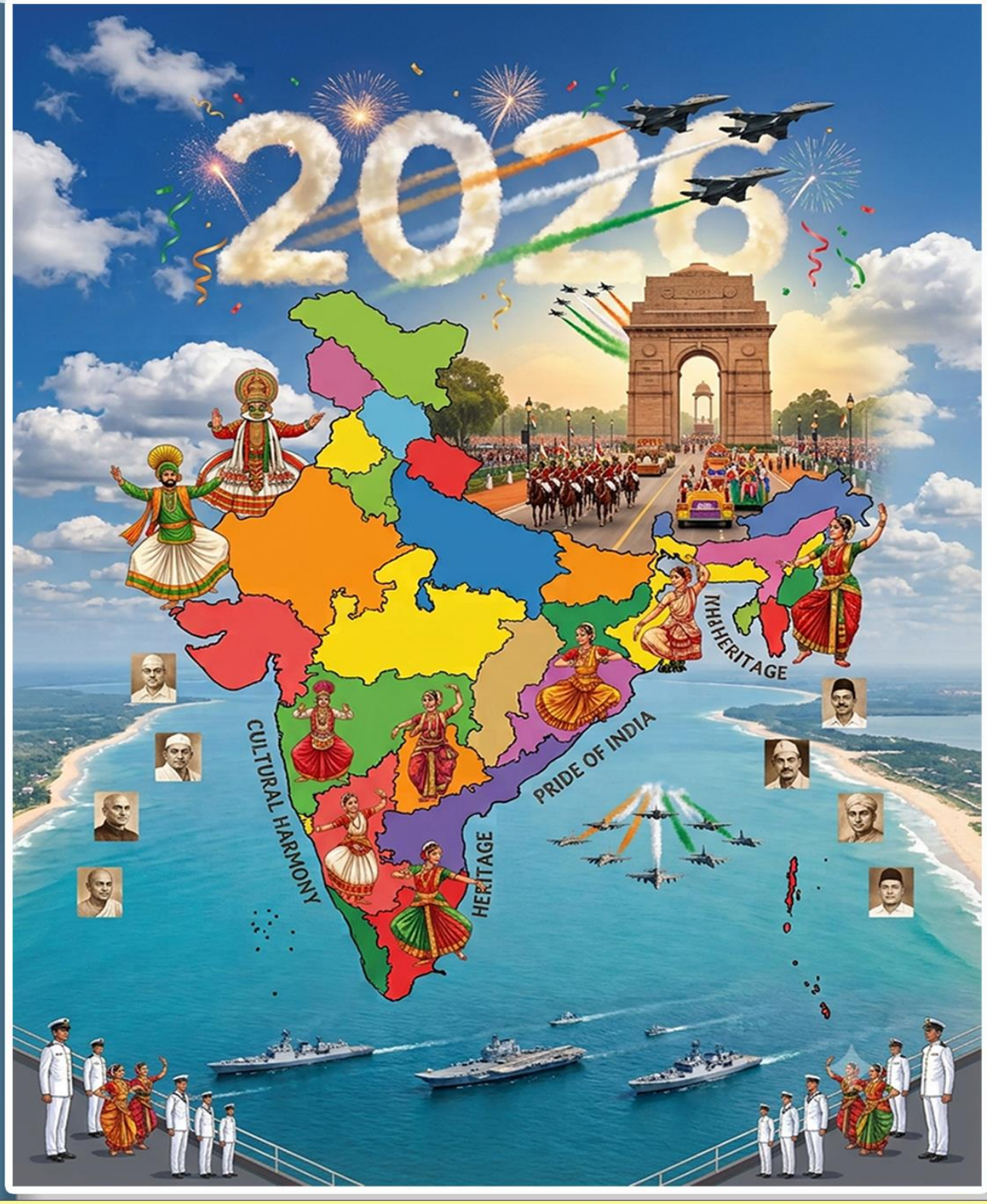

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TNPSC BITS

- India's Murali Sree shankar won the silver medal in the men's long jump at the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland.
- Dr. Gunther von Hagens, the inventor of plastination and creator of BODY WORLDS exhibitions, passed away at the age of 81 on 24 July 2026.
  - Plastination replaces body fluids and fats with polymers, helping preserve anatomical specimens for long-term study.
- The United States (US) deployed the Dark Eagle Hypersonic Missile system in Guam for the first time.
  - The Dark Eagle, also known as Long Range Hypersonic Weapon (LRHW), is a non-nuclear, ground-launched hypersonic missile system developed for the US Army.
- The Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science (IACS) completed 150 years of its establishment on July 29, 2026.
  - IACS was established in 1876 by Mahendralal Sircar in Kolkata as India's first national institution dedicated to scientific research by Indians.
- Assam exported its first international consignment of Purabi Ice Cream to Bhutan, marking a milestone for the state's dairy sector.
- OmniCard has launched India's first Unified Payments Interface (UPI)-based Flexi Benefits Wallet for tax-efficient employee benefits.
  - The wallet is built on a Reserve Bank of India (RBI)-licensed Prepaid Payment Instrument (PPI) platform and supports UPI Scan-and-Pay transactions.
- India and Nepal jointly inaugurated the restored Shree Gusthal Mahavihar and Agam of Prathamshree Mahavihar in Lalitpur, Nepal.
  - Shree Gusthal Mahavihar and Agam of Prathamshree Mahavihar are ancient Buddhist heritage structures located in Guita Tole, Patan (Lalitpur), in the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal.
- World Breastfeeding Week is observed from 1–7 August 2026 to promote breastfeeding and improve the health of mothers and babies.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is "Breastfeeding for a Sustainable Start in Life: Strengthen What Works."
- World Wide Web Day is observed every year on August 01 to celebrate the invention of the World Wide Web (WWW) and its impact on global communication.
  - The World Wide Web (WWW) was invented by Sir Tim Berners-Lee in 1989, and it became publicly available in 1991.
- India and the Maldives have launched the Favara–Unified Payments Interface (UPI) cross-border payment corridor for real-time money transfers.

- The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) facilitated the first-ever air shipment of Neelam and Totapuri mangoes from Karnataka to the Maldives.
- Prime Minister of India has inaugurated the Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport at Bhogapuram, Vizianagaram district, Andhra Pradesh.
  - It is Andhra Pradesh's first Greenfield International Airport after the 2014 bifurcation of the state.
- Asmita Dey (women's 48 kg category) and Harsh Singh (men's 60 kg category) won India's first-ever judo gold medals at the 2026 Commonwealth Games held in Glasgow, Scotland.
- World Ranger Day is observed every year on 31 July to honour rangers who lost their lives or were injured while protecting nature and cultural heritage.
  - The theme for the year 2026 "Rangers: Guardians of a Changing Planet."
- Tejaswin Shankar won India's first-ever Commonwealth Games medal in decathlon by securing bronze at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2026.
- The Vizhinjam International Transshipment Seaport, Kerala, has been notified as a Customs Port by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), enabling Export-Import (EXIM) cargo operations.
  - The port, which started operations in July 2024, earlier functioned only as an international transshipment hub for transferring containers between ships.
- The Indian Navy launched the fifth Diving Support Craft (DSC A24) at Titagarh Rail Systems Limited (TRSL), Kolkata.
  - Diving Support Crafts (DSCs) are specialised vessels used for underwater diving operations, inspections, repairs, and salvage activities in coastal and harbour areas.
- The Prime Minister launched the 'Nasha Mukt Yuva for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan' from Kashi (Varanasi), Uttar Pradesh, as a 100-week nationwide anti-drug awareness campaign.
  - The campaign was first launched as a pilot in Kashi and later expanded across India under the Kashi Declaration (2025).
- World Fintech Day is observed every year on 1 August to highlight innovations and progress in financial technology (FinTech) worldwide.
- Scientists discovered a new species of blind, blood-red eel named Rakthamichthys anchi in underground aquifers connected to dug-out wells in Goalpara district, Assam.
  - The species belongs to the Rakthamichthys genus, a group of subterranean swamp eel's endemic to India.

- Varsha Ashok Aglawe, a palaeontologist, became the first woman Director General (DG) of the Geological Survey of India (GSI) in its 176-year history, assuming charge as the 54th DG and succeeding Asit Saha.
- More than 13,000 tribal women and girl students performed Dhimsa dance at Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport, Bhogapuram, Andhra Pradesh, creating a Guinness World Record for the largest Dhimsa dance.
- India's distributed solar capacity increased to 31.5 Gigawatt (GW) in Financial Year (FY) 2026, rising over 17 times from 1.8 GW in FY 2018.
    - Rooftop solar capacity increased from 1.1 GW (FY 2018) to 25.7 GW (FY 2026), while solar pumps under PM-KUSUM reached 5.8 GW.
- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) - National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (NIHSAD), Bhopal developed India's first indigenous MA-104 cell line-based Live Attenuated African Swine Fever (ASF) Vaccine for pigs.
    - African Swine Fever (ASF) is a highly infectious viral disease caused by the African Swine Fever Virus (ASFV), affecting domestic and wild pigs with mortality rates that may reach 100%.
- The Indian Air Force (IAF) concluded Exercise ROTOR CLAP III at the Pokhran Field Firing Range, Jaisalmer district, Rajasthan.
- The Indian Army introduced Xtreme Weather Grade (XWG) Diesel; an indigenous fuel designed to operate in extreme cold conditions up to –42°C.
- A snow leopard (Panthera uncia) was spotted for the first time in the Dhauladhar Wildlife Sanctuary, Kangra district, Himachal Pradesh.
- Nathan Thomas, an 18-year-old engineering educator from the United States of America (USA), became the world's youngest male professor at the age of 18 years and 346 days, breaking a 306-year-old Guinness World Record.
- Felix Gerald has been appointed as the Chairman of the Tamil Nadu State Minorities Commission by the Tamil Nadu Government.
- A new species of stream-loving catfish, Pseudecheneis likimroensis, has been discovered in the fast-flowing Likimro River in Nagaland and named after the river.
- IIT Bombay Associate Professor Karthikeyan Lanka was selected for the National Academy of Sciences, India (NASI) Young Scientist Award 2026, which will be presented during the 96th NASI Annual Session at Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in December 2026.
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Moderna's mFlusiva, the first mRNA-based seasonal influenza vaccine.
- Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati developed "E-Eye", a low-cost portable optical sensing device for rapid detection of toxicants and cancer-causing heavy metals.

- The Ministry of Railways approved reforms to the Model Concession Agreement (MCA) for Container Train Operators (CTOs).
  - A single All-India Licence will replace route-specific restrictions, allowing CTOs to operate across the Indian railway network.
- National Javelin Day is observed every year on August 7 in India, as the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) chose the date in 2021 to mark Neeraj Chopra's Olympic javelin gold.
  - On August 7, 2021, Neeraj Chopra won the Tokyo Olympics men's javelin throw gold with 87.58 metres, becoming the first Indian athlete to win an Olympic gold in athletics.
- India successfully test-fired the nuclear-capable Agni-4 Medium-Range Ballistic Missile (MRBM) from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur, Odisha, under the Strategic Forces Command (SFC).
  - Agni-4 is a two-stage, solid-fuel missile with a range of around 4,000 km and a payload capacity of about 1,000 kg.
- The 13th BRICS Education Ministers' Meeting was held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, under India's BRICS Chairship 2026.
  - The meeting focused on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), skill development, research and innovation, mutual recognition of qualifications, and academic leadership.
- The elusive Himalayan serow (Capricornis thar) was recorded in Dalhousie Forest Division, Himachal Pradesh, after nearly 20 years.
  - The IUCN lists it as Near Threatened due to habitat degradation, fragmentation and hunting.
- IIT Hyderabad and Crimson Energy Experts Pvt. Ltd. launched ANUGYAN (Nuclear Technology Orientation Programme), a three-month residential programme and India's first industry-academia course for civil nuclear energy professionals.
- Bengaluru-based Astrobase Space Technologies unveiled EVEREST, India's first privately built 800-kilonewton (kN) Full-Flow Staged Combustion (FFSC) rocket engine.
- Indian squash player Suraj Kumar Chand became the first Indian to win the individual gold medal at the FISU (International University Sports Federation) World University Squash Championship, held at Somaiya Vidyavihar University, Maharashtra.
- The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) facilitated the first-ever commercial sea export of GI-tagged Mithila Makhana from Bihar to Australia.

- Mithila Makhana, an aquatic fox nut, received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2022 and is mainly produced in Bihar's Mithila region.

❖ The 11th BRICS Culture Ministers' Meeting concluded in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, with the adoption of the Bhopal Declaration.

- The Bhopal Declaration records the common commitments of BRICS countries on culture and creative sectors.

❖ The E-Samudra digital platform was launched in Mumbai to digitise maritime governance in India.

- It works as a single digital window for seafarers, shipping companies and ports, integrating more than 72 services.

❖ Prakriti Gyan Dham, the first eco-educational centre of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research–National Botanical Research Institute (CSIR-NBRI), was inaugurated in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

- It was developed at the Maharishi Parashar Bioresource Centre, Banthra, to promote biodiversity conservation, environmental education and India's botanical heritage.

❖ Scientists have identified Russula griseopurpurata, a new mushroom species at Jirang in Ri Bhoi district, Meghalaya.

❖ Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation launched 'Bank in a Box' in Mumbai, Maharashtra, to help Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs) adopt modern banking technology.

- It is an integrated technology platform offering core banking, digital payments, cloud services and regulatory compliance, enabling even small and single-branch UCBs to provide modern banking services without heavy technology investments.

❖ The 8th Indian Navy–United States Navy (IN-USN) Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Exercise 2026 is being held at the Southern Naval Command in Kochi, Kerala.

❖ Tripura made its first-ever export of mustard honey, with 1 metric tonne shipped to Dubai, facilitated by the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA).

❖ The India Meteorological Department (IMD) will commission an X-Band Doppler Weather Radar at Pulpally, Wayanad, Kerala, by December 2026.

❖ A 7.4-magnitude earthquake struck near San José del Palmar, Chocó, Colombia, killing at least 164 people and causing major damage in Cali and Pereira.

❖ V.O. Chidambaranar Port in Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu, became India's first major port to achieve Scope-2 Emission-Free status.

- Renewable energy met 93.89% of its electricity needs in 2025–26, and the port became the first Indian major port to receive ISO 50001:2018 Energy Management System certification.

❖ Prime Minister of India inaugurated Param Pragya, an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered high-performance computing facility at the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi) Sonipat Campus.

❖ Pteris madhusoodananii, a new fern species belonging to the genus Pteris and family Pteridaceae, was discovered in Kolli Hills, Tamil Nadu.

❖ World Steelpan Day is observed every year on 11 August to promote the cultural heritage of the steelpan, a musical instrument originating in Trinidad and Tobago and also known as a steel drum.

- The theme for the year 2026 is "Rhythm and Rise: Youth. Discipline. Culture. Community."

❖ India won one gold, three bronze medals and one Honourable Mention at the 23rd International Linguistics Olympiad (IOL) 2026 held in Bucharest, Romania.

- Shrilakshmi Venkatraman won the individual gold medal, while Aarav Anil Rao, Nishanth Shankar Lakshmanan and Advay Misra won bronze medals.

❖ Yard 3037 Shruti, an indigenously designed and built Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel (NGOPV) of the Shachi class, was launched for the Indian Navy at Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata.

❖ Scientists have discovered three new cascade frog species in Northeast India after over 15 years of research: Ammachi's Cascade Frog (Amolops ammachi) from Tripura, Sendenyu Cascade Frog (Amolops sendenyu) from Nagaland and Beautiful Cascade Frog (Amolops bella) from West Bengal.

- The study also recorded five cascade frog species in India for the first time, expanding the known diversity of the genus Amolops.

❖ The rare solitary Himalayan bee Colletes bhutanicus was recorded in India for the first time in Tawang district, Arunachal Pradesh.

❖ India's first private, branded train, the Lucknow–Delhi Tejas Express, will run as the 'Sprite' Tejas Express from August 19 to November 11, 2026.

❖ Prime Minister of India released former President Ram Nath Kovind's autobiography, "Triumph of the Indian Republic: My Life, My Struggles," at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi, covering his life journey, struggles and public service.

❖ International Youth Day is observed every year on 12 August to raise awareness about issues faced by youth.

- The theme for the year 2026 is "Different Contexts, Common Aspirations."

❖ CSIR-IICT (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research–Indian Institute of Chemical Technology), Hyderabad, developed a plant-based Investigational New Drug (IND)-ready candidate using Gymnema sylvestre for diabetic foot ulcers.

- K. Jayalakshmi, a 58-year-old woman from Chennai, became the first woman with a disability from Tamil Nadu to reach the Mount Everest Base Camp.
- The Perseid meteor shower peaked around 12 August 2026, with the new moon providing dark skies for better visibility; it is caused by debris from Comet 109P/Swift-Tuttle and appears to radiate from the Perseus constellation.
- International Left-Handers Day is observed every year on August 13 to celebrate left-handed people and raise awareness of the challenges they face.
- World Organ Donation Day is observed every year on August 13 to raise awareness about the importance of organ donation, clear misconceptions and encourage people to donate organs to help save lives.
- A new freshwater crab species, Ghatiana karnataka, has been scientifically described from Mookambika Wildlife Sanctuary, Karnataka.
    - Ghatiana karnataka is the 15th species of the Ghatiana genus recorded from the Western Ghats and is among the species endemic to Karnataka.
- India Optel Limited (IOL), under the Department of Defence Production, has launched indigenous GARUD High-Resolution Binoculars for the civil market, developed and manufactured by Ordnance Factory, Dehradun.
- Larsen & Toubro (L&T) has secured a ₹10,000–15,000 crore order to build India's largest single-cluster Artificial Intelligence (AI) infrastructure facility in Chennai, featuring an NVIDIA B300-based AI Factory for United States-based Together AI.
- Three India-based skydivers—Jamsheer Thanalot (Kerala), Abhishek Rawat (Uttar Pradesh) and Isha Raj (Bihar)—joined 65 skydivers from 38 nationalities in a Guinness World Record skydive over Benghazi, Libya.
- Chennai-based Aheesa Digital Innovations has achieved first-pass silicon success for its indigenous broadband System-on-Chip (SoC) VIHAAN, built on RISC-V (Reduced Instruction Set Computer–V) architecture and powered by the 64-bit VEGA processor developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC).
- India's first virtual zoo has been opened at the Indore Zoo in Madhya Pradesh, along with a 14-D cinema and a virtual jungle safari.
- The National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT) launched CYBER KUSHTI 2026 Hackathon on 15 August 2026 to promote cybersecurity and artificial intelligence skills.
    - NIELIT is an autonomous scientific society under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has flagged off the NCC (National Cadet Corps) 'Aparajita – Parang La 2026', a 250-km trek with 28 girl cadets crossing the 5,578-metre Parang La Pass between Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh.

- Parang La Pass is a high-altitude pass in the Trans-Himalayan region and is an important geographical feature connecting Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh.

❖ 16-year-old Lakshmanan Meyyappan from Dubai became the world's youngest male Chartered Accountant at the age of 16 years and 141 days, according to Guinness World Records.

❖ Tamil Nadu will develop the Vetri Paathai app at a cost of ₹20 lakh for students preparing for competitive examinations.

- The app will cover examinations conducted by the Staff Selection Commission (SSC), Railway Recruitment Board (RRB), Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS) and Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission (TNPSC).

❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay has announced official vehicles and a monthly ₹1 lakh allowance for Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), including ₹75,000 for fuel, driver and vehicle expenses.

- The remaining ₹25,000 will be provided to hire a personal assistant for constituency work.

❖ Indian scientists developed RK-251, a "smart" cancer drug designed to activate mainly inside cancer cells, potentially reducing damage to healthy cells.

- The drug, developed by scientists from Institute of Advanced Study in Science and Technology (IASST) and Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IIT-Guwahati), is activated by high Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS) levels in cancer cells and releases the anticancer compound NBDHEX.

❖ China's private space company LandSpace successfully recovered the first stage of its Zhuque-3 orbital rocket.

❖ Ecuadorian diplomat Ivonne Baki has been nominated by Tonga as a candidate for the next United Nations (UN) Secretary-General.

❖ World Photography Day is observed on August 19 every year to recognise photographers and the role of photography in preserving important moments.

- The theme for the year 2026 is "HOME."

❖ International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism is observed every year on August 21 to honour, remember and pay tribute to victims of terrorism and promote their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

- The theme for the year 2026 is "Healing through Memory."

❖ Two Tamil Nadu teachers, M Thangaraj of Tenkasi and J Amudha, Headmistress of Kendriya Vidyalaya No. 2, Madurai, have been selected for the National Teachers' Award 2026 by the Union Government.

- Thangaraj improved school infrastructure and introduced activity-based learning, while Amudha has promoted education and National Cadet Corps (NCC) activities during her service in Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS).

- The Territorial Army (TA) of the Indian Army, in collaboration with CyberPeace, launched the 3rd edition of Terrier Cyber Quest (TCQ 3.0), a national-level defence hackathon to develop indigenous cybersecurity solutions and strengthen India's cyber defence.
- Aisha Wahab won a special election in California and became the first Afghan-American elected to the United States (US) Congress.
- Pakistan has proposed Mumbai-based Parsi doctors Dr. Jal Ratanji Patel (physician) and Dr. Jal Dhaybho-Koo (radiologist) for the Nishan-e-Imtiaz, Pakistan's highest civilian honour, for their role in examining Muhammad Ali Jinnah in 1946.
- World Senior Citizens Day is observed every year on August 21 to recognise the contributions of older people and raise awareness about their dignity, well-being and rights.
- The International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief is observed every year on 22 August to remember victims of violence based on religion or belief, protect their human rights, and promote tolerance, interfaith dialogue and peaceful coexistence.
- India's 19-year-old Grandmaster Pranesh M won the Kanizsa Open 2026 in Nagykanizsa, Hungary.
- The National Security Guard (NSG) launched India's first Mahila Commando Conversion Course (MCCC) at its Training Academy in Manesar, Haryana, under the theme "She Who Dares, Leads."
- Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir was sworn in as the 23rd President of Bangladesh on August 21, 2026.
- Somanath Sreedhara Panicker was appointed, and Anand Gopal Mahindra was re-appointed as part-time Non-Official Directors on the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Central Board for four years from August 20, 2026.
- Google launched its Back-to-School 2026 campaign with Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered learning tools across Google Search, Gemini and Google Classroom.
    - Eligible college students outside the United States can get 12 months of free Google AI Plus with higher Gemini limits and 400 GB storage.
- European Space Agency (ESA) astronaut Sophie Adenot became the first French woman to conduct a spacewalk.
- The Union government launched Kanda Express to transport onions from Nashik, Maharashtra, to major consuming centres such as Delhi, Chennai, Kochi and Guwahati, after onion prices rose sharply.

- Lasalgaon, Nashik, is a major onion trading hub, while NAFED (National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India) and NCCF (National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India) procured about 1.2 lakh tonnes for buffer stock to control price fluctuations.

- Kaziah Liz Mejo of Kerala was crowned Miss Universe India 2026 in Jaipur, Rajasthan.
- The International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition is observed every year on 23 August to remember the tragedy of the slave trade and the struggle for its abolition.
- National Sports Day is observed every year on August 29 in India to commemorate the birth anniversary of legendary hockey player Major Dhyan Chand.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is "Khelega Bharat, Jeetega Bharat."
- The International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT) issued its first compliance certificate for a 15-metre multi-axle sleeper bus.
- The Suru Summer Festival is being held in Suru Valley, Kargil, Ladakh, promoting eco-tourism and sustainable tourism while showcasing the valley's natural and cultural heritage.
- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully tested the indigenous Military Combat Parachute System (MCPS) at 22,000 feet and around −15°C at the Nyoma-Mudh Drop Zone in Leh district, one of the world's highest-altitude drop zones.
- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister inaugurated the world's first Pinhole Pupilloplasty Centre at Dr Agarwal's Eye Hospital in Alwarpet, Chennai.
  - Pinhole Pupilloplasty (PPP) is a microsurgical technique developed by Dr. Amar Agarwal to improve vision in selected patients with corneal scars, irregular corneas and other optical problems.
- The government restricted the manufacturing, sale and distribution of fixed-dose combinations (FDCs) containing Chlorpheniramine Maleate and Phenylephrine Hydrochloride for children below four years.
  - These combinations may pose health risks to young children, and the government stated that safer alternatives are available.
- World Water Week 2026 is being observed from August 23–27 to highlight water cooperation, peace and security.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is "Water for People & Progress."
- The Indian and Vietnamese Coast Guards concluded the second edition of the joint maritime exercise 'SAHYOG HOP-TAC' off the Chennai coast.
- U.S. President Donald Trump signed an executive order renaming Lake Ontario as "Lake America" for the U.S. geographic naming service.

- Lake Ontario is one of the five Great Lakes and is shared by the United States and Canada.

❖ Norway's King Harald V died at the age of 89; he became king in 1991 and served as the country's ceremonial head of state for over three decades.

- King Haakon VIII has inherited the Norwegian throne after the death of his father, Harald V.

❖ The first Kanda Express, carrying over 450 tonnes of onions from Nashik, Maharashtra, reached Delhi as part of an initiative to transport buffer-stock onions from producing regions to major consumption centres.

❖ The International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances is observed every year on August 30 to raise awareness about enforced disappearances and protect victims' rights.

- 2026 marks the 20th anniversary of the Convention, with the slogan "Victims first. Actions now."

❖ R. Praggnanandhaa became the first Indian to win the Grand Chess Tour (GCT) after defeating Fabiano Caruana (USA) 15–13 in the final at St. Louis, USA.

❖ India's first 100% indigenous AK-203 'Sher' assault rifle was successfully manufactured and test-fired at the Korwa Ordnance Facility in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh.

- The rifle is manufactured by Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited (IRRPL), an India-Russia joint venture established in 2019.

❖ IIT Madras successfully tested India's first indigenous 5 kN air-breathing Rotating Detonation Engine (RDE) with an aerospike nozzle, achieving stable 5 kN thrust through sustained pressure-gain combustion.

- CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories (CSIR-NAL) unveiled three indigenous micro and small gas turbine engines in New Delhi — NJ-05 (5 kg thrust), NJ-50 (50 kg thrust), and NJ-100 (100 kg thrust).

❖ Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan launched 'Gnani Artha', a sovereign Artificial Intelligence (AI) stack developed by GNANI AI, in New Delhi.

- It comprises Evon 3.3, a Large Language Model (LLM), and Plexus, a platform connecting AI intelligence with real-world work and institutions.

❖ Andhra Pradesh is set to become India's third international subsea cable gateway after Mumbai and Chennai, supported by new data centre investments.

❖ World Sanskrit Day is observed every year on Shravana Purnima; in 2026, it was observed on August 28 to promote and preserve the Sanskrit language and its cultural heritage.

- Sanskrit Day was officially observed in India from 1969, following notifications issued by the Union Ministry of Education.

TAMIL NADU

Patient Safety Governance Framework

- Tamil Nadu has approved a comprehensive governance framework to improve patient safety and patient experience in government health facilities.
- The framework integrates existing quality initiatives under a single governance mechanism to improve coordination and monitoring.
- It is based on recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO), National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) and the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH).
- The framework is built on six pillars: Navigation and Accessibility, Environmental Hygiene, Support Services, Patient Safety and Infection Prevention, Patient Experience, and Monitoring with Data Analytics and Quality Improvement.
- The government will establish State, District and Hospital-level committees, including a State Apex Committee chaired by the Health Secretary.

Expert Advisory Committee on El Niño

- Tamil Nadu has formed an Expert Advisory Committee to monitor and assess the possible impact of the El Niño weather phenomenon during 2026–27 and 2027–28.
- The committee will scientifically assess the impact of El Niño and recommend preparedness and disaster mitigation measures.
- It will monitor rainfall and drought conditions, identify vulnerable areas, and support early warning systems.
- The committee will advise the Tamil Nadu Disaster Risk Reduction Agency (TNDRRA) on drought and flood preparedness.
- It is chaired by the Additional Chief Secretary and Commissioner of Revenue Administration and includes experts from Anna University, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras, World Resources Institute (WRI) India, and other institutions.

Tamil Nadu Kuruvai Paddy Area Declines

- Kuruvai paddy cultivation in Tamil Nadu's Cauvery delta has declined by over one lakh acres due to a shortage of Cauvery River water.
- As of 27 July 2026, Kuruvai cultivation covered 3.87 lakh acres, compared with 5.05 lakh acres during the same period in 2025.

- Thanjavur recorded the highest cultivation area (1.29 lakh acres), followed by Mayiladuthurai (97,000 acres) and Tiruvarur (88,700 acres).
- Tamil Nadu received only 3.57 thousand million cubic feet (tmc ft) of Cauvery water from 1 June to 28 July, resulting in a shortfall of about 34 tmc ft.
- If water inflow does not improve, Samba-Thaladi paddy cultivation may cover less than half of the normal 12 lakh acres.

Cauvery Water Dispute Update

- The Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) upheld the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC) order directing Karnataka to release Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu.
- Karnataka has been directed to release 3,500 cusecs of water per day for 15 days from 29 July 2026.
- Karnataka appealed against the order, citing drought, low reservoir inflows, and concerns over drinking water needs.
- Tamil Nadu requested a higher release of 7,000 cusecs per day, citing severe water shortage in the Cauvery delta.
- The CWMA stated that improved inflows into Karnataka's reservoirs would allow the release without affecting its drinking water requirements.

Tamil Nadu Singapengal Entrepreneurship Credit Scheme

- Tamil Nadu has decided to expand the Singapengal Entrepreneurship Credit Scheme by increasing cooperative lending and widening beneficiary coverage.
- The State Government has directed officials to increase loans under the scheme by 25% through cooperative banks and credit societies.
- The scheme will now cover youth and marginalised sections, in addition to Self-Help Groups (SHGs), to promote entrepreneurship.
- Officials have been instructed to ensure that at least 30% of loans in all categories are provided to new members.
- The scheme aims to improve access to credit through the cooperative sector and strengthen entrepreneurship across the State.

Rename of Thayumanavar Scheme

- Tamil Nadu has dropped the name "Chief Minister's Thayumanavar Scheme" from its official communications.

- The scheme is now officially referred to as the doorstep delivery of Public Distribution System (PDS) (ration) commodities for senior citizens and persons with disabilities.
- The scheme provides doorstep delivery of essential ration items to senior citizens aged above 65 years and persons with disabilities.
- The State Government has also appointed Guru to head the Tamil Nadu Fact Check Unit.
- The Fact Check Unit is learnt to have been renamed the Information Integrity Desk, though no official government notification has been issued yet.

Best State Award for Organ Donation - Tamil Nadu

- Tamil Nadu received the 'Best State' Award for organ donation at the 16th Indian Organ Donation Day event held in New Delhi.
- The award was presented by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in recognition of the State's outstanding performance in deceased organ donation.
- In 2025, Tamil Nadu recorded 266 deceased donors and 1,476 organs were successfully utilised for transplantation.
- The Transplant Authority of Tamil Nadu (TRANSTAN) has been regulating and promoting organ transplantation in the State since 2008.
- Tamil Nadu ranks first in India in heart and lung transplants.
- And it has honoured 798 brain-dead donors with State honours from September 2023 to July 2026.
- From October 2008 to July 2026, Tamil Nadu facilitated organ donation from 2,490 deceased donors, resulting in the transplantation of 14,532 organs.

50-Year Low

- Tamil Nadu received its lowest July share of Cauvery water in the last 50 years during July 2026.
- The State received only 0.698 thousand million cubic feet (tmcft) of water at Biligundulu, against its allocated 31.24 tmcft for July.
- As of 2 August 2026, the total Cauvery water received at Biligundulu was 3.687 tmcft (June: 2.915 tmcft, July: 0.698 tmcft, August: 0.074 tmcft).
- Under the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal award (modified by the Supreme Court), Tamil Nadu should have received 40.43 tmcft during June and July.
- Biligundulu, located on the Karnataka–Tamil Nadu border, has been the official Cauvery water measuring point since 2013.

Tamil Nadu Budget 2026–27 - Key Highlights

Budget Overview & Fiscal Position

- Tamil Nadu Finance Minister N. Marie Wilson presented the TVK-led government's first Budget for 2026–27 in the Legislative Assembly on 5 August 2026.
- The Budget focused on women, students, youth, senior citizens, healthcare, education, industries, infrastructure, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and welfare schemes.
- Tamil Nadu's State Own Tax Revenue (SOTR) is projected to grow by 9.78%.
- The state's outstanding debt is estimated at ₹10.99 lakh crore.
- ₹708 crore allocated for renovation works, consecration of 3,000 temples, and restoration of 84 temple cars.

Education, Youth & Skill Development

- Vetri Laptop Scheme received ₹2,000 crore for providing laptops to students.
- Puthiya Payanam, Puthiya Vegam scheme will provide bicycles with helmets and water bottles to 5.3 lakh Class XI students with ₹277 crore allocation.
- Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Model Schools will provide free education, food, accommodation, uniforms, books, and healthcare with ₹125 crore allocation.
- Super Clean, Super Campus Scheme will improve cleanliness, drinking water, toilets, and security facilities in 10,000 schools with ₹139 crore allocation.
- School Education Department received ₹44,527 crore, while Higher Education Department received ₹8,393 crore.
- Vetrithiran Training Scheme received ₹150 crore for skill training, employment opportunities for 1 lakh job seekers, and youth internships.
- Five new Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) will be established with ₹90 crore, and 10 Olympic Centres of Excellence will be created with ₹50 crore.
- Student Hostels and Infrastructure Corporation will develop 200 hostels with 1 lakh accommodation facilities.

Welfare Schemes, Women & Social Justice

- Annan Seer Thittam will provide eligible brides with an 8-gram (one-sovereign) gold coin and silk saree with ₹812 crore allocation.
- Thai Maaman Thanga Mothiram Thittam will provide a 1-gram gold ring for every child born in government hospitals with ₹560 crore allocation.
- Thai Care Centres will support pregnant women through food, medical care, and health monitoring with ₹23 crore allocation.
- Vetri Veedu Thittam will provide houses for families living in kutcha huts.

- Aran shelter homes will support transgender persons in five districts.
- Nambikkai Illam centres will be established for children with intellectual disabilities with ₹4 crore allocation.
- Haj subsidy increased from ₹25,000 to ₹35,000.
- Differently-abled Welfare Department received ₹1,485 crore.

Technology, Industry & Infrastructure Development

- Arivagam, India's first Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Innovation City, will include an AI university, semiconductor testing lab, skill centre, and innovation hubs; feasibility study with ₹5 crore allocation.
- Tamil Nadu AI Mission will introduce AI-based services in healthcare, agriculture, education, and citizen services.
- Tamil Nadu Institute of Design will be established with ₹60 crore to support artisans and design education.
- A Space Industrial Investment Zone will be created in Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi near the Kulasekarapattinam spaceport.
- 1,000 electric air-conditioned MTC buses will be purchased with ₹500 crore allocation.
- 20,000 Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations will be developed in five years with ₹50 crore allocation.
- Coimbatore–Ariyalur 765 Kilovolt (kV) transmission line project will be implemented through Public-Private Partnership (PPP) at an estimated cost of ₹4,000 crore.
- Third Chennai Master Plan (2027–2046) will be prepared with ₹25 crore allocation.

Energy, Environment & Natural Resource Conservation

- Rooftop Solar Subsidy Scheme will provide up to ₹1 lakh subsidy for domestic consumers installing solar panels.
- Smart meters will be installed for Chennai consumers and 50 lakh industrial and commercial consumers across Tamil Nadu.
- TN-SHORE Project will restore mangroves across 2,500 hectares with ₹322 crore allocation.
- Human–wildlife conflict mitigation programme will cover 100 villages with ₹20 crore allocation.
- Tamil Nadu Palmyra Development Corporation will be established with ₹16 crore to promote palm-based products.

Agriculture, Fisheries, Healthcare & Rural Development

- Cauvery–Vaigai–Gundar River Linking Project will begin with an initial allocation of ₹150 crore.
- Traditional fishermen will receive increased lean-period assistance of ₹7,000 per family, benefiting 1.93 lakh families with ₹135 crore allocation.
- Mannin Magal Scheme received ₹20 crore to help Adi Dravidar and Tribal agricultural labourers become landowners.
- Ayothidas Pandithar Habitat Development Scheme received ₹300 crore for Adi Dravidar habitations.
- Aandror Development Scheme received ₹250 crore for tribal habitations.
- Mobile Geriatric Treatment Centres will provide free health check-ups and medicines for senior citizens with ₹33 crore allocation.

Namakkal Kavignar Maaligai - CM New Office

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister has decided to shift his Chief Minister's Office (CMO) to the 10th floor of Namakkal Kavignar Maaligai at Fort St. George, Chennai, due to space constraints.
- Namakkal Kavignar Maaligai is a 10-storeyed government building constructed in 1975 inside the Fort St. George campus and houses several government departments and senior officials.
- The need for a larger Secretariat building emerged in the late 1950s due to increasing government staff; in 1973, the Tamil Nadu government decided to construct a 10-storeyed building within the Fort St. George campus with a plinth area of 24,750 square metres.
- The building was declared open on August 14, 1975, by Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi in the presence of Public Works Minister P.U. Shanmugam.
- It was named Namakkal Kavignar Maaligai after Tamil poet Namakkal Kavignar V. Ramalingam Pillai.
- The building was renovated 12 years ago at a cost of ₹28 crore and was inaugurated by former Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa.
- At present, CM functions from the main block of the 17th-century Fort St. George structure.
- Fort St. George is a protected historical monument established by the British East India Company in 1644 and later became the administrative centre of the Madras Presidency.
- The shift aims to provide more administrative space while continuing operations from the historic campus.

Gajasamharamurti Chola Sculptures

- Chola-period Gajasamharamurti sculptures in Tamil Nadu highlight the artistic excellence of ancient bronze and stone sculpture traditions.
- Vazhuvur in Mayiladuthurai district is one of the Ashta Veerattanams (eight sacred Shiva temples) where Lord Shiva is believed to have displayed his heroic acts.
- The Veeratteswarar Temple, Vazhuvur, houses a famous bronze idol of Gajasamharamurti, depicting Lord Shiva after defeating the elephant demon Gajasura; the idol is generally dated to the reign of Rajaraja I (Chola dynasty).
- Gajasamharamurti represents the fierce form of Lord Shiva, known in Tamil as Yanai Uritha Thevar (the Lord who flayed the elephant demon's skin), unlike Nataraja, which represents Shiva as the Cosmic Dancer.
- Another important Gajasamharamurti sculpture is found at Brahmapuriswarar Temple, Pullamangai, Thanjavur district, while a stone sculpture from Darasuram Temple is preserved in the Thanjavur Maratha Palace campus art gallery.

Tamil Nadu's First Mangrove Conservation Centre

- Tamil Nadu's first Mangrove Conservation Centre is being established at Muzhukuthurai near Killai in Cuddalore district under the Tamil Nadu Shoreline Restoration Initiative (TN-SHORE).
- The project has an estimated cost of ₹26.50 crore and aims to support mangrove conservation, ecological restoration, scientific research, biodiversity protection, and environmental awareness.
- The centre will act as a hub for the conservation and sustainable management of mangrove ecosystems and promote climate resilience and coastal ecosystem protection.
- The project is located near Pichavaram Mangrove Forest, one of the largest and ecologically important mangrove forests in India, and aims to improve conservation education and sustainable eco-tourism facilities.
- The centre will support Ramsar Convention commitments on wetland conservation and provide livelihood opportunities through sustainable eco-tourism while involving local communities.

India's First AI City - Arivagam

- Tamil Nadu announced India's first dedicated Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Innovation City, named 'Arivagam', in the 2026–27 State Budget.

- A feasibility study for the project will be carried out at an estimated cost of ₹5 crore.
- Arivagam will include an Artificial Intelligence (AI) University, an International Skill Development Centre, a Semiconductor Hardware Testing Laboratory, multi-domain innovation incubators, and residential facilities.
- The project aims to promote Artificial Intelligence (AI), deep-tech research, innovation, startups, and skilled workforce development.
- Tamil Nadu will also introduce Guidance 3.0, an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered investment service system, and upgrade the Tamil Nadu Single Window Portal 3.0 to provide all industrial approvals through a single platform.

Tamil Nadu Agriculture Budget 2026–27

- Tamil Nadu Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister R. Vinoth presented the Agriculture Budget for 2026–27 in the Legislative Assembly.
- The budget focused on farmers' welfare, modern technology, irrigation, crop protection, and sustainable agriculture.
- Farm mechanisation initiative will support 24,000 farmers with subsidised agricultural machinery through an allocation of ₹227.2 crore.
- The Farmers AI Scheme will use Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) tools for weather updates, soil health monitoring, and market information with an allocation of ₹2 crore.
- The free electricity scheme for farmers will receive ₹7,432 crore for the financial year 2026–27.
- Soil fertility improvement measures will be implemented with ₹600 crore to enhance nutrient levels in agricultural lands.
- Soil Health Cards will be provided to 1 lakh farmers to encourage efficient fertiliser use with an allocation of ₹4 crore.
- Velan Kadugal Thittam will promote agroforestry by encouraging tree plantation around agricultural fields with ₹17.7 crore.
- Crop protection measures against wild boars and elephants will be strengthened with ₹7.35 crore to reduce human-wildlife conflict impacts.
- Annal Ambedkar Velan Udhavi Thittam will provide support to small and marginal Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) farmers with ₹56.7 crore.
- The Tamil Nadu Millet Mission will expand millet cultivation and productivity with ₹63.81 crore.

- The Cotton Revolution Movement will support cotton farmers through a five-year programme with ₹27.2 crore.
- Storage facilities for small onions (shallots) will be established with a capacity of 57,000 metric tonnes through an allocation of ₹22 crore.
- Under Vetri Vanmagal Thittam, 500 farmers will be trained in drone technology, including 100 women farmers, with ₹4 crore allocated.
- Agricultural exports from Tamil Nadu will be promoted through an allocation of ₹8.4 crore.
- The state government aims to increase annual foodgrain production to 131 lakh metric tonnes within the next five years.

Environmental and Social Welfare Cess on Liquor

- Tamil Nadu introduced a Bill, proposing an Environmental and Social Welfare Cess on the sale of alcoholic liquor.
- The cess will fund recycling, safe disposal and reuse of liquor bottles and containers.
- The revenue will support rehabilitation and de-addiction programmes and livelihood assistance for families affected by alcohol addiction.
- It will also fund public awareness campaigns on alcohol-related harm and improper disposal of liquor containers.
- The funds will be used for the protection and restoration of forests, wildlife and ecology.
- The Bill proposes to amend the Tamil Nadu Value Added Tax (VAT) Act, 2006.

500-Year-Old Vishnu Idol Found

- A Vishnu idol believed to be around 500 years old was unearthed from the dry Palar riverbed at Puliyankannu village in Ranipet, Tamil Nadu.
- The granite idol, about 2 feet tall and 1.5 feet wide.
- Local historians believe it may belong to the Vijayanagara period, when temple construction expanded in the region.
- The idol's head was slightly damaged, while two arms, including the one holding the chakra, remained intact.
- Under the Indian Treasure Trove Act, 1878, treasure found buried below one foot is treated as government property and must be handed over to the authorities.

Tamil Nadu – Law Commission

- Tamil Nadu has appointed former Manipur High Court Chief Justice D. Krishnakumar as Chairman of the reconstituted Tamil Nadu State Law Commission.
- Justice R.M.T. Teekaa Raman, T.K. Ramachandran and A. Arunagiri were appointed full-time members, while P. Mohan Doss and R. Govindarajan were appointed part-time members.
- The Tamil Nadu State Law Commission is a State-level body that examines existing laws and suggests changes to improve the legal system.
- Its work includes identifying loopholes in existing laws and recommending suitable amendments or new legal measures.
- The Commission can also suggest social and economic legislative measures for Tamil Nadu.
- The previous State Law Commission's tenure had also been extended for three years from June 19, 2020, showing that the Commission functions through fixed-term reconstitutions.

T.N. Anti-Narcotics Task Force

- Tamil Nadu has created an Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) with ₹264 crore to strengthen action against drug-related crimes across the State.
- 65 ANTF units will be established across Tamil Nadu, with dedicated police stations headed by Police Inspectors.
- The force will be headed by an officer in the rank of Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) and will have intelligence, cyber surveillance, financial investigation and prosecution teams.
- A 24/7 control room will be established at the ANTF headquarters in Chennai for statewide coordination and intelligence sharing.
- The force will focus on drug smuggling, illegal sale and abuse of narcotic drugs, along with awareness, rehabilitation and human-wildlife—correction: drug prevention activities.

NEET Exemption Resolution 2026

- The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly adopted a resolution seeking exemption from the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) for undergraduate medical courses.
- Health Minister K.G. Arunraj urged the Union government to amend the relevant Central laws to provide the exemption.

- The resolution sought changes to the National Medical Commission Act, 2019, National Commission for Indian System of Medicine Act, 2020, National Commission for Homoeopathy Act, 2020, and other relevant laws.
- The lone Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA, M. Bhojarajan, opposed the resolution and walked out before the voting.
- In 2021, the Assembly passed the Tamil Nadu Admission to Undergraduate Medical Degree Courses Bill (L.A. Bill No. 43 of 2021) seeking NEET exemption.
- The 2021 Bill was reserved for the President's consideration, but presidential assent has been withheld.

State's power to provide quota to Muslim converts

- Tamil Nadu govt. defends State's power to provide quota to Muslim converts from backward classes.
- The Supreme Court agreed to pronounce judgment on a Tamil Nadu government appeal seeking confirmation of the State's power to frame and implement policy to provide reservation benefits to members of backward classes, most backward classes, Denotified communities and Scheduled Castes who convert to Islam.
- The object behind its government order of March 9, 2024 was to ensure that "persons belonging to socially and educationally backward communities are not deprived of reservation benefits solely on account of conversion to Islam and thereby create a level playing field by preserving affirmative action benefits despite change of religion".
- The Madras High Court judgment of June 25 had held that "a person who embraces Islam cannot claim the status of backward class (Muslim)".
- Justice Mishra orally observed that a 1951 judgment of the Madras High Court in G. Michael versus S. Venkateswaran, regarding a Scheduled Caste member who converted to Christianity and wanted to contest in a reserved seat, had held the fort for 75 years by upholding the constitutional validity of Paragraph 3 of the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950.
- Paragraph 3 of the 1950 order stipulated that no person who professed a religion different from Hinduism (later amended to include Sikhism and Buddhism) should be deemed to get the benefits of a Scheduled Caste member.
- The State, however, contended that the 1951 judgment did not disable the State from classifying a convert who was previously socially and educationally backward as a backward Muslim under Articles 15(4) and 16(4) of the Constitution.
- It said the March 24 order applied to the "wholly distinct category of backward class notification, which contains no religion-based exclusion".

- The High Court had held that a Hindu, on conversion to Islam, did not carry forward the benefits of the Hindu caste or sub-caste.
- The convert's status in Islam was not decided by the caste he was part of prior to the conversion.
- The High Court had noted that Christian missionaries as well as Islamic preachers maintained that their religions offered social equality unlike Hinduism, which had a caste hierarchy.

Resolution for 'Tamil Thai Vazhthu'

- The Tamil Nadu Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution for Tamil Thai Vazhthu to be mandatorily sung first before the commencement of programmes in all educational institutions, universities, government offices, public sector undertakings, and other public institutions in the State.
- This comes on the heels of the Union Home Ministry, in a letter dated July 9, 2026, making certain observations on the rendering of the State song and directing the State government to render Vande Mataram at the beginning of State functions.
- Tamil Thai Vazhthu was taken from Manonmaniam, written by Manonmaniam Sundaranar in 1891.
- The resolution said the government order stipulating that it should be sung first at government functions came into effect on November 23, 1970.
- Subsequently, the DMK government, on December 12, 2021, issued an order according recognition to it as the State song.
- The State government's resolution accords priority to Tamil Thai Vazhthu.

Tamil Thaai Vaazhthu

- The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly unanimously adopted a special resolution reaffirming that "Tamil Thaai Vaazhthu" must be sung first at all functions in the state.
- The resolution was placing the state invocation song to be placed ahead of the national song Vande Mataram and the national anthem, Jana Gana Mana.
- The opposition DMK in Tamil Nadu urged the state government to introduce a legislation to accord statutory status to Tamil Thai Vaazhthu.
- The DMK maintained that a mere resolution is not enough to make it legally binding on dignitaries such as the Governor or central authorities.
- A resolution and a law are completely different things.
- A mere resolution will not bind the Governor or central government authorities.

- To ensure that Tamil Thaai Vazhthu is accorded top priority across the state, it requires statutory recognition through a proper Bill passed in this Assembly session itself.
- Rejecting the Assembly Speaker's view that a resolution alone is sufficient, the DMK leader contended that without a legislative enactment, there are possibilities of the invocation song being bypassed or relegated to a secondary position during official functions attended by high dignitaries like the Governor.
- While a resolution might work in schools or basic settings, full official adherence across all institutions requires legal status.

Centre on Tamil Thai Vazhthu

- The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has not insisted that the State song Tamil Thai Vazhthu should be sung only at the last, after the rendition of the national song Vande Mataram and the national anthem, during official events.
- Additional Solicitor General (ASG) AR.L. Sundaresan told the Madras High Court.
- The first Division Bench of Chief Justice bench at Madras High Court was hearing of a public interest litigation petition in this regard.
- The case had become infructuous since it had challenged a January 28, 2026 notification of the MHA whereas it had been replaced by a new notification issued on July 9, 2026.
- The ASG said that if the national song and the national anthem had to be sung together, then in which order should they be sung.
- The national song must be sung first followed by national anthem when they both have to be sung together.
- There is no directive issued by the Union with respect to the order in which the State song should be sung.

FCRA Bill Withdrawal - TN

- The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly unanimously passed a resolution urging the Union Government to withdraw the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026 in its present form.
- The resolution raised concerns over provisions allowing the Government to take over, manage, dispose of or sell assets of charitable organisations after FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act) registration expires, is not renewed, is cancelled or surrendered.
- It urged the Centre to hold comprehensive consultations with State governments and charitable, religious, educational, medical and social organisations.

- The Assembly said any amendment should protect natural justice, proportionality, property rights, legitimate expectation and federalism, while ensuring transparency and accountability in foreign contributions.
- The resolution also stated that the Bill could affect the autonomy of charitable organisations, including educational and social welfare institutions run by minorities.

Sangam-age Irrigation Structure in Tiruchi

- A possible Sangam-age irrigation structure was found on the Kollidam River near Koogur in Tiruchi district, Tamil Nadu.
- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) inspected the brick and stone structures and identified them as a possible Early Historic period (3rd–4th century CE) inlet channel.
- Two structures were found, including a semi-circular brick wall and two submerged parallel walls that may have formed a channel opening.
- The exposed structure is about 2 feet high and 4 feet wide and may have been used as a sluice or inlet/outlet channel for water management.
- The large bricks and construction style are similar to an ancient water-management structure found at Vanagiri near Kaveripattinam (Poompuhar).

Fifteen new judges

- The Madras High Court Chief Justice Sushrut Arvind Dharmadhikari administered the oath of office to 15 new judges.
- With this the working strength of the High Court has increased to 66 against its sanctioned strength of 75 judges.
- While the first five out of the eight elevated from the Bar had been appointed directly as permanent judges of the High Court, the rest had been appointed as additional judges for a fixed tenure.
- It is a matter of pride for all of us that this High Court has 13 women judges, the highest among all high courts in the country.
- Today the strength is 75.
- Even when the sanctioned strength was 18, it has never achieved a full strength.

Historic hike in special incentives for paddy and sugarcane

- Tamil Nadu CM Vijay announces ‘historic hike’ in special incentives for paddy and sugarcane.

- He said paddy procurement would begin in September and the government would offer an incentive of ₹289 per quintal for fine varieties, in addition to the MSP.
- The incentive for the common variety would be ₹159 per quintal.
- With the incentive, the total price would be ₹2,750 per quintal for fine varieties and ₹2,600 per quintal for the common category.
- For the first time in history, the State government has increased the incentive price by ₹156 in a year.
- For sugarcane farmers who had registered with sugar factories for 2025-26, the Chief Minister said the special incentive would be ₹709.50 per tonne, in addition to the ₹3,290.50 per tonne fixed by the Union government.
- The announcement would take the total price to ₹4,000 per tonne for sugarcane farmers. For the first time, the special incentive for sugarcane is being increased beyond ₹134.
- The CM was making a suo motu statement in the Assembly under rule no 110.
- Assembly Speaker J.C.D. Prabhakar made it clear there would be no debate on statement made under Rule 110 of the Assembly.
- In the past, members of political parties were allowed to "thank" the government for its announcements.

Delimitation Change – TN

- The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly passed a resolution urging the Union government to keep the Lok Sabha strength at 543 seats and retain the existing inter-State distribution of seats.
- The resolution also sought to maintain the current Lok Sabha–Rajya Sabha ratio of 2.2:1.
- It urged implementation of 33% reservation for women in the 2029 Lok Sabha election using the existing 543 seats, followed by reservation in State Assembly elections without delay.
- The 106th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2023 provides one-third reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies after the Census and delimitation exercise.
- Tamil Nadu's share of Lok Sabha seats is currently 7.18%; Union Home Minister Amit Shah had stated that this proportion would not be reduced even if the total number of seats increases.
- Women's representation in the Tamil Nadu Assembly has increased from 12 out of 234 Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) in the previous Assembly to 23.

Tamil Nadu MLACDS 2026–27

- The Tamil Nadu government has allocated ₹828.36 crore for the Member of Legislative Assembly Constituency Development Scheme (MLACDS) for 2026–27.
- The amount will fund the approved list of development works under the scheme across all 234 Assembly constituencies.
- Each constituency will receive ₹3.54 crore, including ₹54 lakh as Goods and Services Tax (GST).
- The Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department issued the Government Order for the allocation.
- The government has released detailed MLACDS guidelines for 2026–27 to 2030–31.
- MLAs can submit their proposals to the District Collectors or, in Chennai, to the Greater Chennai Corporation Commissioner.
- The Commissioner of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj will release the funds to the respective Collectors and the Greater Chennai Corporation Commissioner.

Unanimous resolution on fair share of Central tax devolution

- The Tamil Nadu Assembly unanimously adopted a government resolution.
- Moving the resolution, Finance Minister N. Marie Wilson called upon the Centre to adopt a transparent, objective, and equitable methodology for the devolution of Union taxes.
- It urged the Union government to ensure the State receives its due share of financial devolution from the taxes contributed to the Centre, in accordance with the constitutional principles of fiscal federalism, equity, and fairness.

Tamil Thai Vazhthu – TN Government Order

- The Tamil Nadu Government has issued an order making the rendition of 'Tamil Thai Vazhthu' (Invocation to Mother Tamil) mandatory at the beginning of programmes.
- The order applies to educational institutions, universities, government offices, public sector undertakings and other public institutions across Tamil Nadu.
- The move follows a July 9 letter from the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, asking States and Union Ministries to follow its January 28 directive to play 'Vande Mataram' before the National Anthem at official events.
- The G.O. stated that 'Tamil Thai Vazhthu' must be rendered according to the guidelines issued in 2021, when it was declared the State song.

- The order was issued by Chief Secretary M. Sai Kumar after the Tamil Nadu Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution moved by Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay on August 10.
- The resolution mandated the rendition of 'Tamil Thai Vazhthu' at the beginning of official events in Tamil Nadu.

Tamil Nadu Investment Conclave 2026

- Tamil Nadu signed 97 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) worth over ₹67,542 crore at the State's first major investment conclave.
- The projects are expected to be implemented within six months to one year and are expected to generate investment and employment across the State.
- Titan will invest ₹1,000 crore in Hosur to expand watch, jewellery and electronics automation facilities, creating about 1,200 jobs.
- Hinduja Group will invest ₹2,500 crore, including a 200-megawatt renewable energy project using solar, wind and battery technologies.
- Saint-Gobain will invest ₹2,000 crore in a new plant in Krishnagiri and expand its facility in Kancheepuram.
- Agnikul Cosmos and Skyroot Aerospace will invest ₹400 crore and ₹250 crore, respectively, in space-sector facilities in Thoothukudi.

Digital Property Registration

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister launched compulsory 'Presence-less Registration' for the first-time registration of housing plots and apartments.
- Buyers, sellers and witnesses can submit documents online without visiting the Registrar's Office.
- Aadhaar cards of the buyer, seller and witnesses will be uploaded and verified online.
- Registrars must register the documents within 24 hours, or send them for correction or reject them.
- Each page will have a Quick Response (QR) code, and a changing five-colour endorsement will help prevent fake documents.
- After registration, the digital document will be available in the beneficiary's login, while certified copies can be collected after 60 days.

Legal Status for Tamirabharani

- The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court has declared Tamil Nadu's Tamirabharani (Porunai) River a deity, giving it the status of a legal person to protect it from pollution.
- The ruling was made in the Sivanupandian v. District Collector, Tirunelveli case in July 2026.
- The case highlighted pollution caused by funeral rites and waste dumping along the riverbanks.
- In just three weeks, authorities collected around 90 tonnes of clothes, 2 tonnes of ash and 3 tonnes of other waste from the river.
- The court directed State officials to ensure that specific protective conditions are followed to prevent further pollution.
- The decision is linked to the principle of Earth Jurisprudence, which gives greater legal importance to the rights and protection of nature.
- Earlier, the Uttarakhand High Court had declared the Ganga and Yamuna legal persons in 2017, but the Supreme Court later stayed the order because of practical and administrative difficulties.
- In 2023, the Supreme Court held that extending legal personality to non-human and non-living entities was not possible in the case discussed in the article.
- The Tamirabharani ruling therefore takes a different legal route by recognising the river as a deity while seeking to protect it from pollution.

Tamil Nadu Budget 2026 – Health Department

- Tamil Nadu will launch the Chief Minister's Elderly Health Insurance Scheme, covering nearly 38 lakh senior citizens aged 70 and above.
- The scheme will provide free medical treatment at empanelled government and private hospitals, including cancer care packages, advanced cardiac surgeries, organ transplants and high-end diagnostic services, with no income ceiling.
- The 87-year-old Tamil Nadu Public Health Act, 1939 will be replaced with a modern, comprehensive Act to address contemporary and future health challenges.
- A new provision will make unsupervised home births outside hospitals a punishable offence.
- Tamil Nadu, known as the country's health capital, will establish TN Medicity, a world-class integrated medical hub covering clinical services, research, medical tourism and AYUSH.

- Nalam 360 – Annual Free Health Check-up for All will be rolled out, providing everyone aged 30 and above with 14 basic tests annually, free of cost, across 1,257 government health facilities.
- The tests will include blood pressure, ECG, haemoglobin, complete haemogram, random blood sugar, urea, creatinine, total cholesterol, serum bilirubin, urine albumin and VIA screening.
- For the first time in the State, Home-Based Diagnostic Services will provide sample collection and testing in metropolitan areas through a public-private partnership model.
- The Health Department will introduce a Positive Health Policy to promote holistic health and wellbeing at the community, family and individual levels, supported by the Nalam 360 mobile application.
- A new TN Institutions of State Importance in Health Care Act will be introduced to create institutions of state importance providing world-class medical services.
- For the first time, Tamil Nadu will formulate a Peri-Menopausal Care Policy for early identification of the physical and mental health needs of women in the peri-menopausal age group, along with screening, counselling and treatment services.
- Under the policy, weekly camps will be conducted on a specific day at all Primary Health Centres and Urban Primary Health Centres for symptomatic assessment, basic tests, counselling and referrals to district headquarters hospitals and government medical college hospitals.
- Bluetooth-enabled blood pressure monitors will be introduced to track BP in pregnant women, with real-time transmission of data to facilitate timely intervention.
- Children under 18 with Type 1 diabetes will receive a free year-round supply of insulin in government hospitals.
- Irumbu Kanmani – School Anaemia Prevention will be launched at a cost of ₹6.37 crore.
- Tamil Nadu will launch rare genetic disease screening for newborns, with nearly 4.5 lakh babies delivered in government hospitals screened for seven rare genetic diseases through a hub-and-spoke model.
- The newborn screening will include congenital hypothyroidism, congenital adrenal hyperplasia, galactosemia and biotinidase deficiency, along with three other rare genetic diseases.

New Maternity Leave Rule

- Tamil Nadu has announced 365 days of maternity leave for women government employees for their third child, replacing the earlier 12-week limit.

- The earlier rule limited maternity leave to 12 weeks for women government employees with two or more surviving children.
- The new decision restores 365 days of maternity leave for the third child.
- The earlier 12-week rule was introduced after an amendment to Fundamental Rule 101(A) in March 2026.
- The change follows Tamil Nadu's concern over its declining fertility rate and ageing population.

Tamil Nadu Health Insurance Expansion

- Tamil Nadu increased the coverage under the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme from ₹5 lakh to ₹25 lakh.
- Medical services and surgeries for transgender women will be provided at Stanley Medical College, Chennai and selected medical college hospitals.
- The hospitals are in Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi, Chengalpattu, Tiruvarur, Dharmapuri and Kanniyakumari.
- A 400-bed multi-super-speciality hospital will be built in Perambur at a cost of ₹300 crore.
- The Chief Minister's Cancer Care Mission will be upgraded with ₹673.44 crore.
- Seven nursing colleges and additional seats in nursing, pharmacy and paramedical courses will be created at a cost of ₹351 crore.

Tamil Nadu Road Safety Mission

- Tamil Nadu will launch the Chief Minister's Road Safety Mission at a cost of ₹500 crore per year to reduce road accident deaths.
- Tamil Nadu was reported to have the highest number of road accidents among States in India.
- Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras will be installed on State and National Highways to detect speeding and traffic violations.
- Under the Corridor Accident Response and Emergency programme, 25 government hospitals and Primary Health Centres (PHCs) will be upgraded as emergency response centres.
- 25 accident-prone locations will be monitored and linked with these medical facilities.

Tamil Nadu Talent Research Wing

- Tamil Nadu will set up a Talent Research Wing to identify and train young sports talents for future Olympic competitions.

- The wing will be established under the Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu (SDAT) at a cost of ₹5 crore.
- It will identify talented boys and girls aged 8 to 18 years and provide training.
- 10 Olympic Centres of Excellence will be established at a cost of ₹15 crore.
- A Paralympic Centre of Excellence and an SDAT Olympic House will also be established in Chennai.
- The cash award for Tamil Nadu Olympic and Paralympic gold medallists will increase from ₹3 crore to ₹5 crore.

Raised Crop Loan Waiver in Tamilnadu

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister announced a revised crop loan waiver, increasing the limit for marginal, small and other farmers from ₹50,000 to ₹75,000.
- Loans between ₹75,000 and ₹1 lakh will receive a maximum waiver of ₹75,000.
- For loans above ₹1 lakh, the maximum waiver will be ₹35,000.
- The government will provide a total crop loan waiver of ₹6,220 crore to about 13.34 lakh farmers.
- Of the earlier waiver amount of ₹5,932.23 crore, ₹5,267 crore had already been credited to 13.34 lakh farmers.
- The additional waiver will cost the government about ₹953.06 crore and was announced under Rule 110 of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly.

Increased Excavation Funding in Tamilnadu

- Tamil Nadu has increased the annual allocation for archaeological surveys, excavations and underwater explorations from ₹7 crore to ₹10 crore.
- A modern archaeological laboratory will be established at a cost of ₹2 crore to scientifically analyse artefacts and excavation samples.
- Under the Tamil Heritage Conservation Mission, 76 protected monuments and archaeological sites will be renovated in the first phase over five years.
- A digital database using Artificial Intelligence (AI) will be created to help people understand ancient Tamil inscriptions.
- ₹3 crore will be spent on three-year research to document ancient Tamil maritime trade links and ancient ports.
- The State will also identify and notify 15 historically important sites as protected archaeological sites.

Southern Zonal Council Meeting 2026

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired the 31st meeting of the Southern Zonal Council in Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu.
- The council included Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana, along with Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep.
- The meeting discussed issues requiring coordination between the Centre and southern States and Union Territories (UTs).
- The Southern Zonal Council was established under Sections 15 to 22 of the States Reorganisation Act, 1956, as a forum for Centre-State and inter-State discussions.
- It served as an advisory body to address regional issues, coordinate development projects and promote cooperation.

TN Cooperative Sector Reforms

- Tamil Nadu Minister for Cooperation V. Gandhiraj announced several measures for the Cooperation Department in the 2026 State Budget, including a new State Cooperative Policy and welfare and business initiatives.
- Tamil Nadu will formulate a State Cooperative Policy to make cooperative institutions people-centric, transparent, economically sustainable and competitive.
- The Singa Pengal Loan Scheme will be implemented through cooperative banks with an allocation of ₹7,015 crore to promote women as entrepreneurs.
- Rural business loans will be provided to farmers at 9% interest to start agriculture-allied businesses, with ₹5,000 crore allocated for the initiative.
- A common business brand called 'Vettri' will be introduced to improve the quality, marketing, market share and profits of products manufactured by cooperatives.
- 150 permanent buildings will be constructed for Public Distribution System (PDS) outlets functioning in rented premises at a cost of ₹15 crore.
- A new agricultural produce auction centre will be established on 5,084 sq. ft. of land at Aykudi village in Koothanallur taluk of Tiruvarur district, at a cost of ₹53 lakh.
- Petrol, diesel and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) filling stations will be established at cooperative society premises in Mayiladuthurai and Dindigul districts, at a cost of ₹50 lakh.
- E-auction systems will be introduced in 80 cooperative producers' cooperative marketing societies at an estimated cost of ₹25 lakh.

- Women will be given priority in the appointment of salespersons for 105 newly established fair-price shops.
- The sale of fertilisers and seeds supplied to farmers through the Tamil Nadu Cooperative Marketing Federation (TANFED) will be increased from the current ₹898 crore to ₹2,500 crore.
- To improve transparency, Light Emitting Diode (LED) boards will be installed in 100 fair-price shops in the first phase at an estimated cost of ₹20 lakh to display stock details.
- A real-time vehicle tracking system will be introduced for vehicles transporting essential commodities at a cost of ₹2 crore.

Chief Minister's Elderly Health Insurance Scheme

- The Tamil Nadu government will launch the Chief Minister's Elderly Health Insurance Scheme for nearly 38 lakh senior citizens aged 70 years and above.
- The scheme will provide free medical treatment at empanelled government and private hospitals, irrespective of the beneficiary's income.
- It will cover major treatments including cancer care, advanced cardiac surgeries, organ transplants and high-end diagnostic services.
- Senior citizens aged 70 years and above will be enrolled under the scheme without any income eligibility condition.
- The scheme is expected to be integrated with the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).
- In 2024, the Union government expanded AB-PMJAY to provide health coverage to all senior citizens aged 70 years and above, irrespective of their income.
- Tamil Nadu's Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme (CMCHIS) was integrated with AB-PMJAY in 2018.
- The new scheme aims to strengthen healthcare access for the elderly as India's ageing population continues to increase.
- By 2050, nearly one in five people in India is projected to be aged 60 years or above.

Southern Zonal Council meeting update

- The 31st Southern Zonal Council meeting was held at Mamallapuram, Tamil Nadu, and was chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah.
- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister said southern States contribute over 30% of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and called for fair and equitable treatment in fiscal devolution.

- He said the next Finance Commission should consider both the needs and performance of States, including development, fiscal discipline and demographic transition.
- He called for greater flexibility for States in taxation after the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and referred to Article 279A(4)(e) of the Constitution.
- On inter-State rivers, he stressed protecting the rights of lower-riparian States and implementing Supreme Court judgments, tribunal awards and statutory mechanisms; he also highlighted the Cauvery and Mullai Periyar issues.
- He proposed common economic and logistics clusters among southern States, citing the proposed Bengaluru Metro extension from Bommasandra to Hosur, and called for greater focus on the maritime economy and Blue Economy.

Tamil Nadu Cyber Crime Centre

- Tamil Nadu has designated the Cyber Crime Wing Headquarters as the Tamil Nadu State Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (TN-S4C) at Chennai.
- The centre will serve as the State nodal agency for coordination between Union and State law enforcement agencies in cyber crime matters.
- It will support prevention, detection and investigation of cyber crimes, along with prosecution support and coordinated responses.
- The move follows a Supreme Court suo motu writ petition order of December 1, 2025, particularly concerning coordination on “Digital Arrest” cases.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) had directed States and Union Territories to establish such centres as State-level nodal agencies.
- TN-S4C will facilitate inter-agency cooperation, intelligence sharing, capacity building and cyber forensic support.

Tamil Nadu Vision 2031

- Tamil Nadu has announced Vision 2031 to increase the State’s renewable energy share to 50% by 2031.
- The plan includes establishing 20,000 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, with priority for major city corridors.
- Tamil Nadu had 5.50 lakh registered EVs and 2,425 charging stations as of April 2026.
- The State will establish 1,000 megawatt-hour (MWh) battery energy storage systems (BESS) through six stations to support renewable energy integration.

- Under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS), ₹8,929.86 crore has been approved for measures to reduce aggregate technical and commercial losses to 10%, including smart meters.

ADB-Chennai Water Project

- The Government of India and Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a $230 million loan to modernise Chennai's water supply and sanitation infrastructure.
- The Chennai Climate-Resilient Water Security and Sewerage Project will improve access to safe and reliable water and sanitation services.
- More than 170 km of water supply and sewer pipes will be constructed.
- Seven water pumping stations and 38 sewer pumping stations will be upgraded.
- The project will strengthen water utility management through performance-based contracts.
- It aims to improve climate resilience, public health and quality of life while making Chennai's water system more efficient and financially sustainable.

Madras Day 2026

- Madras Day is observed every year on August 22, and in 2026 it marks the 387th anniversary of the founding of Madras in 1639.
- The day commemorates the 1639 land grant through which the English East India Company acquired land at Madraspatnam from local rulers.
- Fort St. George was later established and became the centre around which Madras developed as a trading settlement.
- Madras Day was first celebrated in 2004 and marks the city's history, heritage, culture and evolution into modern Chennai.
- Madras State was officially renamed Tamil Nadu on January 14, 1969, while Madras city was officially renamed Chennai on July 17, 1996.

Hydropower Modernisation in TN

- Tamil Nadu is upgrading hydropower projects and expanding battery storage to meet rising electricity demand and improve grid reliability.
- For 2026–27, Tamil Nadu Green Energy Corporation Limited (TNGECL) has a hydro generation target of 4,776 million units (MU).
- TNGECL operates 47 hydropower stations with 107 machines and a total installed capacity of 2,325.90 megawatts (MW).

- Renovation, Modernisation and Uprating (RMU) works are being carried out at old stations, including Moyar and Kodayar.
- The state is establishing 1,000 megawatt-hours (MWh) of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) at six substations, targeted for commissioning by December 2026.
- Another 1,500 MWh of BESS is planned at 11 substations, with commissioning targeted by September 2027.

Fifth-Century Hero Stones

- A 5th-century hero stone inscription from the Sangam period has been unearthed at Malayadipatti village, Tenkasi district, Tamil Nadu.
- The discovery was made during excavations by the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology (TNSDA).
- The stone was found inside a stepped brick well that was in use during the Sangam period and was later filled with stones and bricks.
- The hero stone is 1 metre long and 0.30 metre wide and has four lines of inscription.
- Its script represents a transitional stage from Tamil-Brahmi to Vattezhuthu.
- The inscription mentions Karukkan, Sulagan, Nannang and Kodiyan and indicates that it commemorates Nannang Kodiyan, son of Karukkan Sulagan.
- Archaeologists said hero stones of the Sangam and post-Sangam periods generally did not have warrior figures, and this stone also has no warrior depiction.
- Other Sangam-period hero stones without warrior figures have been found at Pulimankombai, Aappanur and Mallikapuram.
- Excavations at Malayadipatti have also recovered artefacts that provide information about the life, occupations and trade of people during the Sangam period.

Fort St. George Heritage Restoration

- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has announced plans to restore the 230-year-old Exchange Building at Fort St. George in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- The building also houses a colonial-era museum, which will be renovated along with the restoration work.
- The Exchange Building was completed in 1795 and originally housed the Madras Bank; its upper hall served as the Public Exchange Hall.

- The museum contains colonial-period weapons, coins, medals, uniforms, documents and other historical artefacts from India and Europe.
- Fort St. George, established by the English East India Company in the 17th century, is an important historical landmark of Chennai.

Madras HC - Bypoll Restraint

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) told the Madras High Court that it will not conduct by-elections in five Tamil Nadu Assembly constituencies until the related election petitions are decided.
- The constituencies are Tiruchi East, Perundurai, Ambasamudram, Viralimalai and Karur.
- Election petitions were filed in all five constituencies, with petitioners also seeking to be declared as the elected candidates.
- The ECI cited Section 84 and Section 151-A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, along with Supreme Court rulings.
- The Madras High Court extended its interim order restraining the ECI from notifying the bypolls until September 8, 2026.
- The five seats became vacant after the elected candidates resigned following the May 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly election.

Tamil Nadu Assembly Notice Rule

- The Tamil Nadu Assembly Speaker has barred members and the media from publicising notices submitted under Rule 55 and Rule 56 before they are admitted.
- Rule 55 deals with issues raised for discussion, while Rule 56 covers motions for adjournment.
- The Speaker said members were sharing such notices with the media and on social media before approval.
- Rule 36(5) states that a notice cannot be publicised until it is admitted by the Speaker and circulated to Assembly members.
- The Speaker also asked the media not to publish such notices before they receive approval.

Annapoorani Super Six LPG Scheme

- Tamil Nadu announced the Annapoorani Super Six Scheme in the State Assembly on August 24, 2026, with the scheme planned to begin on Pongal Day in January 2027.

- The scheme will reimburse eligible families for domestic Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinders, with the amount transferred directly to beneficiaries' bank accounts through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).
- Families with an annual income below ₹2.5 lakh, middle and marginal farmers, and families of persons with disabilities are eligible.
- The scheme is estimated to have an annual financial outlay of ₹4,000 crore.
- It is linked to Tamil Nadu's public distribution and welfare framework and aims to reduce household cooking-fuel expenses.

Expansion of Free Bus Travel Tamil Nadu

- Tamil Nadu announced the expansion of the Vettri Payanam Scheme to provide free bus travel for women on more types of buses from October 2, 2026 (Gandhi Jayanti).
- Women can travel free on express, Limited Stop Service (LSS), deluxe and mofussil buses under the expanded scheme.
- Earlier, free travel was available mainly on ordinary buses in cities and municipal areas and on hill routes up to 40 km.
- There is no income ceiling or other restriction, and transgender persons can also use the scheme.
- The expansion is expected to cost the Tamil Nadu Government about ₹6,000 crore annually.

Parandur Airport Plan

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister announced that the proposed Parandur airport project would be dropped.
- The State will identify alternative sites for Chennai's second airport after studying technical feasibility and the impact on farmland and human settlements.
- A new Terminal 5 will be developed at the existing Chennai Airport, Meenambakkam, with an approach road and flyover in collaboration with the Airports Authority of India (AAI).
- Chennai Airport currently handles about 30 million passengers a year; capacity is expected to rise to 35 million after Terminal 3 and 55 million after Terminal 5.
- The Parandur project was dropped mainly because of its potential impact on farmland and human settlements.

TN-ARIVU Curriculum

- Tamil Nadu will introduce the TN-ARIVU (Analytical Thinking, Reasoning, Innovation, Venture and Entrepreneurship, Upskilling) curriculum with Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies from the 2027–28 academic year.
- The curriculum will have ARIVU Foundation for Classes I–V, ARIVU Discovery for Classes VI–VIII and ARIVU Edge for Classes IX–XII.
- The School Education Department will implement 31 initiatives with a total estimated outlay of ₹44,527 crore, focusing mainly on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and sports.
- The Mathichudar Scheme will be implemented in 2026–27 for Classes VI–XII, while the Vetripathai Scheme will provide coaching, mock tests and guidance for national-level entrance examinations in 172 government higher secondary schools.
- Under the PLAY (Physical activity, Learning, Arts and Youth) initiative, students will get daily time for sports, arts and other co-curricular activities; 50 government schools will be developed as Sports Plus schools.

HC on Rosewood Removal

- The Madras High Court stopped authorities from allowing the felling or removal of rosewood trees on private lands until the related case is decided.
- The court kept G.O. No. 88 in abeyance, which accepted a proposal to repeal the Tamil Nadu Rosewood Trees (Conservation) Act, 1994 and its 1995 Rules.
- The court said the recommendation to repeal the Act defied logic, as rosewood is a rare species native to southern India and is difficult to regenerate naturally.
- The case challenges the government order dated June 9, 2025, concerning the repeal of the 1994 Act and 1995 Rules.
- Until the writ petition is disposed of, authorities cannot grant permission to fell or remove rosewood trees from private lands.

TET Rule Exemption

- The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution seeking exemption from the Teachers Eligibility Test (TET) for teachers appointed before August 23, 2010.
- The resolution seeks an amendment to Section 23 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009.
- The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) had made TET compulsory for teachers from August 23, 2010.

- About 3,28,701 teachers who have served for 15–20 years could be affected by the TET requirement for promotion and continuation in service.
- The Supreme Court has directed these teachers to clear TET by August 31, 2028.
- The resolution urges the Union Government to take legal steps and issue a notification through NCTE.

Thaimaman Thanga Mothiram Scheme

- Tamil Nadu is preparing to launch the 'Thaimaman Thanga Mothiram Thittam' on September 15, 2026, under which eligible newborns will receive a 1-gram gold ring.
- The scheme will cover eligible babies born in Government health institutions, and newborns born on or after June 22, 2026 will also be covered.
- Around 4.4 lakh newborns are expected to benefit annually, with an estimated annual allocation of about ₹755.83 crore.
- The ring will be 1 gram of gold and is reported to be BIS-hallmarked; the scheme covers eligible newborns irrespective of gender or birth order.
- The rings will be distributed through 107 high-load Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (CEmONC) centres, where secure storage facilities are being created.

Finance Panel Funds - TN ULBs

- The 16th Finance Commission (FC) has recommended more than ₹27,000 crore for Tamil Nadu's Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) for 2026–31, apart from special infrastructure and urbanisation grants.
- A basic grant of ₹20,054 crore will be released from 2026–27.
- ₹2,507.50 crore each has been recommended as ULB performance grant and State performance grant, with releases from 2027–28 subject to conditions.
- Coimbatore and Madurai Municipal Corporations can take up projects worth up to ₹3,500 crore each under the special infrastructure component.
- A one-time urbanisation premium of ₹2,000 crore has also been recommended for Tamil Nadu, based on 2011 Census population; it will support urbanisation by merging peri-urban villages with adjoining ULBs.
- The Commission has also recommended a ₹791 crore special grant for climate-resilient infrastructure in selected cities, according to the report shown in the source material.

Jewish Trade Links in Tamil Nadu

- A 13th-century Tamil stone inscription found at the Thanthondreeswarar Temple in Anandur, near Pochampally, Krishnagiri district, reveals that four Jewish merchant guilds financed the construction of a hall at the Lord Shiva temple.
- The inscription provides evidence of the presence and economic role of Jewish trading communities in medieval Tamil Nadu.
- Historians say the record highlights the trade and cultural interactions between Jewish merchants and local communities in 13th-century South India.
- The discovery is significant because it shows that foreign merchant groups participated in financing Hindu religious architecture during the medieval period.
- The inscription is written in Tamil and was discovered on the premises of the Thanthondreeswarar Temple, a Shiva shrine.

Tamil Nadu Mineral Corporation

- Tamil Nadu will establish Tamil Nadu Mineral Resources Development Corporation Limited, a new Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) under the Companies Act, 2013.
- The new PSU will undertake mining, mineral extraction, quality enhancement, import, value addition, marketing and sale of minerals.
- An Integrated Command and Control Centre with modern digital infrastructure will monitor mineral-related activities in real time.
- A monitoring unit using Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and satellite technology will identify areas involved in illegal mining.
- A plant fossil park will be established at Gunduperumbedu and Vellarai lakes, which are believed to be about 60 crore years old.
- The State will prepare a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for mining tourism centres in abandoned mines and quarries under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model.

Tamil Nadu Industrial Parks

- Tamil Nadu announced new industrial parks and worker accommodation projects in the State Assembly.
- ₹130 crore will be spent on housing for over 2,500 workers at the SIPCOT (State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu) Industrial Park, Gangaikondan.
- A new 2,570-acre clean and renewable energy industrial park will be developed at Mudivaithanendhal, Thoothukudi, at ₹1,390 crore.

- A 1,294-acre electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing park will be established at Sillanatham, Thoothukudi, at ₹774 crore.
- Mini-textile parks will be developed at Avudaiyarkoil, Pudukkottai, while industrial parks will come up at Omandur, Villupuram, and Lathuvadi, Namakkal.
- A Quantum Safe State study and a Sivakasi Pyrotechnics Common Facility Centre were also announced.

Amendment to PSTM Quota Law

- Tamil Nadu amended the law to protect government appointments made under the Persons Studied in Tamil Medium (PSTM) quota over the past 15 years.
- The amendment follows a 2025 Madras High Court ruling involving 84 serving government employees who claimed the 20% PSTM preference.
- The 2010 law reserves 20% of vacancies filled through direct recruitment for candidates who studied in Tamil medium.
- The amendment validates PSTM notifications, selections and appointments made from September 7, 2010, and protects related subsequent actions.
- In future, those who have already used the PSTM preference can use it again only for posts carrying a higher level of pay.
- Governor R V Arlekar gave assent to the Bill on August 6, 2026, after which it was notified in the Tamil Nadu Government Gazette.

TN to Get Social Justice Welfare Board

- Tamil Nadu announced the establishment of a Social Justice Welfare Board for the welfare of Dalits.
- The Board will provide financial assistance for education, medical care and marriages.
- The State announced 67 measures under the Social Justice Department.
- 150 social justice hostels will be constructed at a cost of ₹160 crore.
- A Tribal Cultural Centre will be established in the Nilgiris to expand tribal research activities.

Thaimaman Thanga Mothiram Thittam

- Tamil Nadu government will launch the Thaimaman Thanga Mothiram Thittam, providing a one-gram, 22-carat gold ring to babies born in government hospitals.

- The scheme is scheduled to be inaugurated on 15 September 2026, the birth anniversary of former Chief Minister C.N. Annadurai.
- Tamil Nadu residents delivering in government institutions are eligible, and the scheme covers all new borns regardless of birth order.
- Pregnant women must be registered under Pregnancy and Infant Cohort Monitoring and Evaluation (PICME) and have a Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) ID.
- The scheme will cover about 4,41,667 government hospital deliveries annually, with an estimated annual allocation of ₹755.83 crore.
- The Tamil Nadu Medical Services Corporation (TNMSC) will procure the rings, which will be distributed through designated government hospitals under a hub-and-spoke model.
- The scheme will be applicable retrospectively from 22 June 2026, making babies born in government hospitals from that date eligible.

Chennai's Industrial Map

- It was Madras — a city whose business story was already taking shape several centuries ago.
- The industrial development of the Madras Presidency was a matter of serious concern and in 1899.
- Alfred Chatterton, who was then with the College of Engineering in Guindy, was appointed to stimulate industrial technical education in the region.
- From Fort St. George in 1639, Madras shipped rather than made — cotton piece goods, indigo, hides.
- The artificial harbour of the 1880s turned an open roadstead into a working port.
- Binny's Buckingham Mill in 1876 and the Carnatic Mill in 1881 employed tens of thousands at Perambur.
- Simpson began coach building in 1840.
- Long before Chennai became known as the Detroit of India, Madras was already laying the foundations for the automotive sector.
- The first car to arrive in Madras was in the early 1900s. Simpson's, the city's famed coach builders then, played a role in this.
- In 1948, Madras had become home to automotive pioneers such as Standard Motor Products of India and Ashok Leyland (Ashok Motors).
- While Enfield India began two-wheeler manufacturing in 1956.
- Tractors and Farm Equipment Ltd (TAFE), headquartered in Chennai, is the second largest tractor manufacturer.

- The Madras Rubber Factory, known as MRF, began its journey in Madras as a small toy-balloon manufacturer and went on to become one of India's largest tyre makers.
- Indian Bank began its journey in Madras in 1907, followed by Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) in 1937.
- In 1958, Madras opened the Guindy Industrial Estate, one of India's first industrial estates alongside Delhi's Okhla.
- In 2030 Chennai is still an automotive, electronics, and services city, and GCCs remain its highest-wage employer.
- Madras laid the foundation and Chennai is building what comes next.

Shelter to affected couples

- The Tamil Nadu government has decided to set up a 'safe house' in every district so as to provide security to individuals and families vulnerable to and affected by 'honour' killings or caste killings and related violence.
- Minister for Social Justice Vanni Arasu said the decision was in line with the judgment of the Supreme Court in the Shakti Vahini vs. Union of India case and followed representations from survivors of 'honour' killings and activists.
- From the perspective of women, this shelter home was an absolute lifeline.
- Tamil Nadu had established special cells with a 24-hour helpline to receive complaints of harassment or threats to couples in inter-caste marriages as early as 2018.

Advisory Board for Preventive Detention

- T.N. government reconstitutes Advisory Board for Preventive Detention.
- A Government Order to this effect was issued by the Home, Prohibition, and Excise Department.
- The Tamil Nadu government has recently reconstituted the Advisory Board of the Tamil Nadu Preventive Detention Act, 1982, and appointed retired Madras High Court judge Justice V. Bharathidasan as its Chairman.
- According to the order, P. Kalaiyarasan and V. Parthiban, both retired judges of the Madras High Court, were appointed as members.
- An Advisory Board is a constitutional body of judges that reviews whether sufficient cause exists to detain a person beyond three months under a preventive detention law.
- An Advisory Board is the constitutional safeguard that limits the executive's power of preventive detention in India, anchored in Article 22(4) of the Constitution.

- Preventive detention—confinement without trial to forestall a future apprehended act, as distinct from punitive detention for a proven offence—was deliberately retained by the framers despite its illiberal character, but hedged with procedural checks.
- Article 22(4) provides that no law authorizing preventive detention may permit detention beyond three months unless an Advisory Board, constituted in accordance with the recommendations of the Chief Justice of the appropriate High Court, has reported before the expiry of that period that there is in its opinion sufficient cause for such detention.
- The composition of the Advisory Board is itself a safeguard.
- As amended after the 44th Constitutional Amendment debate, the prevailing statutory position requires the Board to consist of three persons who are, or have been, or are qualified to be appointed as, judges of a High Court.
- The Chairman must be a sitting judge of a High Court.
- The Board is constituted on the recommendation of the appropriate Chief Justice, insulating it from direct executive selection.
- The 44th Amendment of 1978 sought to reduce the period of detention permissible without Board reference from three months to two and to add a retired-judge composition requirement, but the relevant provisions were never brought into force, so the three-month constitutional floor of Article 22(4) continues to govern.

NATIONAL

Western Ghats Eco-Sensitive Zone Notification

- The Central Government has reissued the draft notification for the Western Ghats Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA) after the previous draft expired without a final decision.
- The proposed Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA) covers 56,825.7 square kilometres across Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu.
- The draft will remain open for public objections for 60 days before the Centre considers issuing the final notification.
- If notified, it will prohibit mining, quarrying, sand mining, new thermal power plants, certain industries, and large construction projects within the ESA.
- The proposal has remained pending since 2011 due to differences with the six States over the areas to be included and concerns about farming, infrastructure, and development activities.

Anti-Paper Leak Bill

- The Union Cabinet, headed by the Prime Minister, approved a draft legislation that seeks to significantly tighten punishment for paper leak offences.
- Under the proposed amendments, individuals found guilty of paper leaks could face a minimum prison term of five years along with a financial penalty.
- Cases involving organized paper leak rackets would attract a maximum punishment of 10 years in jail and fines of up to Rs 10 crore.
- The draft legislation also introduces provisions for time-bound investigations and mandatory fast-track court trials.
- As per the proposal, investigations into paper leak cases must be completed within three months.
- The existing law prescribes imprisonment of three to five years for individuals involved in paper leaks.
- Organised offences currently carry jail terms ranging from five to 10 years, along with a minimum fine of Rs 1 crore.
- The amendments are intended to deter organised criminal networks and institutions that profit from examination fraud, while ensuring that candidates are not penalised under the law.
- It aims to amend the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, strengthening the legal framework against examination fraud.
- The 2024 Act covers recruitment examinations conducted by agencies such as the UPSC and SSC, as well as major entrance examinations including NEET, JEE and CUET.
- The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 was the first central law specifically enacted to address paper leaks and organised examination malpractice after widespread concern over repeated exam irregularities.

Expansion of India's Digital Platforms

- 24 countries have partnered with India to adopt India Stack, strengthening India's global Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) initiatives.
- India Stack includes Unified Payments Interface (UPI), DigiLocker, Aadhaar, electronic Know Your Customer (e-KYC), electronic Sign (eSign), and the Account Aggregator framework.
- DigiLocker has begun implementation in Kenya and Cuba, while UPI merchant payments are available in 10 international markets.
- India is also in discussions with countries such as Laos, Seychelles, Armenia, Fiji, Guyana, Colombia, and Venezuela to expand its digital governance platforms.

- The initiative aims to promote digital governance, financial inclusion, paperless public services, and international digital cooperation.

Television Rating Policy, 2026

- It was notified by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.
- It replaces the 2014 guidelines.
- The major reforms introduced under the Policy include:
  - Reduction of net worth criteria from Rs. 20 Crores to Rs. 5 Crores;
  - Technology-neutral audience measurement across multiple platforms including connected TVs and TV channels available on OTT Platforms;
  - Increased sample size by expansion of metered homes from 50,000 to 80,000;
  - Periodic establishment surveys every three years;
  - Exclusion of landing page in computation of viewership data;
  - Annual independent audits; and
  - A graded penalty framework for non-compliance.
- The Television Ratings Policy, 2026 places no restriction on the number of agencies that may be registered to provide TV rating services.

MSME Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026

- The Rajya Sabha has introduced the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026 to amend the MSME Development Act, 2006.
- The Bill empowers the Central Government to classify MSMEs based on investment and annual turnover and provides for voluntary digital registration.
- It mandates Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) to use the Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) for timely payment of MSME invoices.
- The Bill sets fixed timelines for mediation and arbitration to ensure faster dispute resolution and allows court challenges with specified deposit conditions.
- It decriminalises certain offences by replacing prosecution with warnings and graded monetary penalties, while the Development Commissioner will serve as the adjudicating officer.

Samudra Manthan Scheme

- The Union Cabinet approved 'Samudra Manthan' – National Offshore Exploration Scheme for implementation up to Financial Year (FY) 2030-31.

- It is a Central Sector Scheme under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas with a financial outlay of ₹84,084 crore for deepwater and ultra-deepwater exploration.
- The scheme aims to explore offshore hydrocarbon resources and target 600 million Metric Tonnes of Oil Equivalent (MMTOE) reserves to strengthen India's energy security.
- It focuses on 3D seismic surveys, offshore drilling infrastructure, and setting up an Oil and Gas Manufacturing and Services Zone for domestic production.
- India's offshore basins, including Krishna-Godavari, Cauvery, Mahanadi, and Andaman regions, hold significant untapped oil and gas potential.

Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana

- The Union Cabinet approved the Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY) to develop Floating Solar Photovoltaic (FSPV) projects with energy storage systems.
- It is a Central Sector Scheme with an outlay of ₹5,070 crore and aims to develop 5,000 Megawatt (MW) floating solar capacity by 2030-31.
- The scheme supports solar projects on reservoirs and inland water bodies and provides Central Financial Assistance (CFA) of ₹1 crore per MW after project commissioning.
- It includes Energy Storage Systems (ESS) with a minimum storage capacity of two hours (10,000 Megawatt-hour - MWh) to ensure power availability.
- The scheme will be implemented by the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) and is expected to attract around ₹28,500 crore in investment.

PM-KISAN Scheme Extension

- The Union Cabinet approved the continuation of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) Scheme from 2026-27 to 2030-31 with a financial outlay of ₹3.15 lakh crore.
- The scheme, launched in February 2019, PM-KISAN is a Central Sector Scheme under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare that provides income support to land-holding farmer families.
- The scheme provides ₹6,000 per year to eligible farmers in three equal instalments of ₹2,000 each through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system.
- The scheme uses Aadhaar-based authentication and digital verification to ensure transparent and direct transfer of benefits to farmers' bank accounts.

- So far, more than ₹4.47 lakh crore has been transferred to farmers through 23 instalments, helping them meet expenses on seeds, fertilizers, irrigation, and agricultural machinery.
- The assistance helps farmers meet agricultural expenses such as seeds, fertilizers, irrigation, and farm machinery.

DAANVEER Initiative

- DAANVEER is a platform designed not just to close the immediate computer gap in the Gram Panchayats but to evolve into a long-term, citizen-powered ecosystem for strengthening local institutions.
- It is a transparent, end-to-end digital and verifiable platform that enables citizens and organisations to contribute towards the identified technology and infrastructure needs of Gram Panchayats in India.
- Under this, every Gram Panchayat is digitally equipped, connected and future-ready.
- The initiative provides citizens across the globe with an opportunity to reconnect with their roots by contributing meaningfully to the development of their native villages.
- It enables individuals and organisations to contribute standardized, quality-verified computer bundles directly to eligible Gram Panchayats.
- It was launched by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in New Delhi.
- It has been developed in collaboration with the National Informatics Centre (NIC) and Digi Haat.

Vande Mataram Bill in Rajya Sabha

- Rajya Sabha has passed the Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026.
- The bill will further amend the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971.
- The proposed legislation seeks to give Vande Mataram the same statutory protection as the national anthem, Jana Gana Mana.
- These offences are punishable with imprisonment up to three years, a fine, or both.
- The Bill also mandates that all six stanzas of Vande Mataram be sung.
- The proposal comes after the Union Home Ministry directed states to play or sing the national song at official functions, particularly those where the national anthem is performed.

- When the national song and the national anthem are sung or played, the national song will be sung or played first.
- The National Song Vande Mataram was composed in 1875 by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay.
- In 1937, when Jawaharlal Nehru became the President of the Congress, he limited Vande Mataram to only two stanzas.
- On the other hand, in 1928, when Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was Congress President, he requested Timir Baran Banerjee to prepare a complete and dignified musical version of the song.
- On 15th August 1947, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel had asked Pandit Omkarnath Thakur to render the complete Vande Mataram on All India Radio at 6:30 in the morning, marking the beginning of the first Independence Day.
- On 24th January 1950, Dr. Rajendra Prasad stated in the Constituent Assembly that Vande Mataram would be accorded the same respect as Jana Gana Mana.

Revamp of India's Sports Mission

- The Union Cabinet approved the revamped Khelo India Scheme and enhanced Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSFs) scheme to strengthen India's sports ecosystem.
- The scheme will be implemented from Financial Year (FY) 2026–27 to FY 2030–31 with a total financial outlay of ₹36,441 crore.
- Khelo India Scheme, launched in 2016–17 by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, aims to promote grassroots sports, identify talent, and develop sports infrastructure.
- It introduces Emerging Khelo India Athletes (E-KIAs), Khelo India Feeder Schools (KIFS), and Khelo India Utkrishta Vidyalayas (KIUV) for early talent identification and athlete development.
- The scheme strengthens training centres including National Centres of Excellence (NCOEs), Khelo India State Centres of Excellence (KISCEs), and Sports Authority of India (SAI) Training Centres (STCs).
- It also establishes the National Coach Accreditation Board (NCAB) and a unified digital sports platform to improve coaching standards, athlete tracking, and sports funding management.

SC on green clearances

- The Supreme Court quashes the Centre's 2021 Office Memorandum on ex post facto environmental clearance.

- It ruled that any future amnesty under the Environment (Protection) Act must flow from a statutory notification, not an administrative order, and be confined to projects of supervening public interest under the EIA framework of 2006.
- An administrative order cannot create a perpetual and parallel regime to grant retrospective authorisation to big-ticket infrastructure projects commenced without prior, valid environmental clearance.
- However, the court has not barred retrospective ECs totally.
- It has, in fact, adopted a note of reconciliation and called for "measured regularisation".
- The court held that ex post facto environmental regularisation must be restricted to "a narrow, time-bound, reasoned and supervised window", and done only in projects of "supervening public interest".
- The judgment will apply prospectively, thus saving projects that got retrospective environment clearances (ECs) from demolition and other punitive measures.
- The Supreme Court was using its power under Article 142, which aims to do complete justice in appropriate cases.
- It said the office memorandum does not satisfy the test of proportionality and reasonableness and is violative of Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution.
- India's EIA framework is built around a simple principle: projects requiring environmental clearance (EC) must obtain it before construction or operations begin.
- The 2006 EIA Notification explicitly mandates "prior environmental clearance", allowing regulators to evaluate ecological impacts, hear public objections and prescribe safeguards before irreversible environmental damage occurs.
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) comes under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

Registration of Births and Deaths Bill, 2026

- It was introduced in the Lok Sabha by Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai.
- It amends the 1969 Registration of Births and Deaths Act (as amended in 2023) to establish stricter regulations and a tiered approval process for delayed registrations.
- Under the Act, an order is required to register a birth or death for which information is given to the Registrar after one year of its occurrence.
- Such an order may be issued by: (i) a district magistrate, (ii) a sub divisional magistrate, or (iii) an executive magistrate authorised by the district magistrate.

- The order may be issued after verifying the correctness and on the payment of a prescribed fee.
- The Bill instead provides that for a delay of more than two years, the order may be issued only by a Judicial Magistrate of the First Class.
- The proposed legislation introduces a two-tier approval mechanism based on the duration of the delay.
- As per the existing Act, registration of births and deaths is mandatory, and the certificate issued under the Act provides legal identity to an individual.
- The new Bill has been brought to make provisions for delayed registration more stringent and to encourage timely reporting of births and deaths.

One Entitled Officer, One Official Car policy

- The Ministry of Finance has introduced a strict "One Officer, One Official Car" policy.
- It was a move aimed at cutting wasteful spending and preventing misuse of official resources.
- The revised rules make it clear that eligible officers cannot be allotted more than one government vehicle, even if they are handling additional responsibilities in another ministry, department, public sector undertaking (PSU) or autonomous body.
- The new instructions have been issued by the Department of Expenditure through an Office Memorandum.
- These are meant to ensure that government vehicles are used only for official purposes.
- Under the revised norms, an officer who is already entitled to a government staff car will continue using the same vehicle, even if they take charge of another office or organisation.
- Ministries and departments have been directed not to sanction an additional official vehicle in such cases.
- The government has also barred Central government officers from using vehicles belonging to PSUs, autonomous bodies or quasi-government organisations, except while travelling on authorised official duty or tours.
- Departments have been told to ensure that unused or surplus vehicles remain in safe custody instead of being put to unofficial use.
- The objective is to improve administrative efficiency, avoid duplication and promote better management of government resources.

- The renewed emphasis is intended to strengthen fiscal discipline and ensure that taxpayer-funded resources are used responsibly across the Central government.

Release of Sub-Sectoral Trial Index of Services Production (ISP)

- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has released the country's first trial Index of Services Production (ISP) for 19 sub-sectors.
- It will be the counterpart to the existing Index of Industrial Production (IIP)
- It provides, for the first time, a monthly measure of short-term activity in the formal services sector.
- The inaugural index, with 2024-25 as the base year, covers April 2026 and accounts for nearly 60 per cent of India's services sector.
- It aims to improve the measurement of India's services sector and strengthen the country's statistical system.
- It said the comprehensive overall Index of Services Production will be introduced after evaluating the stability of the trial series and expanding its coverage-the first set of data points to broad-based growth in the services sector.
- The coverage of the index would expand over time, with the addition of sectors such as health services and ownership of dwelling businesses.
- That will take the coverage to around 85 to 90 per cent of formal services sector contribution in the economy.
- Fourteen of the 19 sub-sectors recorded double-digit growth in April this year compared to the corresponding month last year, while almost all remaining sectors also registered positive growth.
- The fastest-growing sectors are accommodation and food services with 37.2 per cent and Retail Trade with 30.8 per cent.
- The index has been developed entirely using administrative data, including inputs from government ministries and GST records, without imposing any additional compliance burden on industries or businesses.
- If GST data is not available, a combination of administrative data and the Annual Survey of Incorporated Services Sector Enterprises (ASISSE)
- The ISP is an output indicator and should not be equated with the Gross Value Added (GVA) used in GDP estimation.
- The ISP currently covers only formal sector enterprises because it is based on GST and administrative data.
- Accordingly, services which are not covered in ISP are those which are either related to core government activities or are dominated by non-market activities and the informal sector.

- Hence, it excludes non-market government activities, personal services, and the informal sector.
- The services sector contributes more than half of the country's gross value added (GVA).
- With the launch of the ISP, all three broad sectors of the economy, services, industry and agriculture, will now have regular monthly or quarterly production indicators.

Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026

- The Lok Sabha passed the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026 to increase the sanctioned strength of Supreme Court judges from 34 to 38.
- The Bill raises the number of judges to 37 judges excluding the Chief Justice of India (CJI).
- The Bill was introduced by Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal on 20 July 2026 and replaces the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance, 2026.
- The increase aims to improve judicial capacity and address the growing number of pending cases in the Supreme Court.
- Parliament has the power to change the number of Supreme Court judges through legislation.

India's Organ Donation Milestone

- India observed the 16th Indian Organ Donation Day, highlighting record organ transplant achievements and launching new initiatives to strengthen organ donation.
- India performed a record 20,138 organ transplants in 2025, the highest ever in a single year, compared with 4,990 transplants in 2013.
- India has crossed 5 lakh Aadhaar-verified organ donation pledges since the launch of the National Digital Pledge Portal in 2023.
- India ranks 3rd globally in the total number of organ transplants, after the United States and China, and remains the global leader in living donor organ transplants.
- The government launched the 'Jug Jug Jiyo Abhiyaan', the e-Pratyaropan digital platform, and the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO) mobile application to strengthen the organ donation ecosystem.
- The government also released the National Brain Stem Death Certification Guidelines and the National Guidelines on Swap Transplantation to standardise organ transplant practices across India.

India's First Telecom Manufacturing Zone

- India's First Telecom Manufacturing Zone will be established in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh.
- It will be done by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Ministry of Communications.
- India aims to connect 100 crore (1 billion) people to 5G technology by 2030, doubling its current base of nearly 50 crore users.
- Union Minister of Communications Unveils Theme for 10th Edition of India Mobile Congress 2026 ('Scale without boundaries').
- It is the landmark edition of Asia's largest digital technology forum to be held in New Delhi.
- The 10th edition of India Mobile Congress (IMC) 2026 is anchored around four key pillars.
- It reflects India's vision of building a digitally empowered, secure and growth-oriented future.
- Srishti – Building the Future, which will focus on fostering innovation, emerging technologies and solutions that shape the next generation of digital infrastructure.
- Suraksha – Strengthening Trust, which will underscore the importance of secure, resilient and trusted digital ecosystems.
- Sashakt – Expanding Opportunities, aimed at leveraging technology to empower citizens, businesses, startups and communities while ensuring inclusive access to digital opportunities.
- Samvardhan – Fuelling Growth, which will highlight the role of digital technologies in driving economic growth, investment, entrepreneurship, job creation and India's emergence as a global technology leader.

One Nation, One Fertilizer Initiative

- The 'One Nation, One Fertilizer' initiative has improved fertilizer availability and distribution across India during the Kharif 2026 season.
- The initiative was launched under the Pradhanmantri Bhartiya Janurvarak Pariyojana (PMBJP) from August 24, 2022, and requires all fertilizer companies to sell subsidized fertilizers under the common "BHARAT" brand.
- Subsidized fertilizers, including Urea, Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP), Muriate of Potash (MOP), and NPKS (Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Potassium and Sulphur) fertilizers are marketed under the Bharat brand.

- The scheme aims to remove confusion among farmers due to multiple brands, improve transparency, reduce unfair practices, and ensure equal access to fertilizers across states.
- Fertilizer movement is monitored through the Integrated Fertilizer Management System (iFMS), a web-based platform that tracks supply chains and helps maintain real-time availability.

India's Indigenous Diving Support Vessel (DSV) – NPIUN

- Recently, India's 2nd diving support vessel was delivered to the Navy.
- Its builder was Hindustan Shipyard Ltd. was delivered at Visakhapatnam.
- It is a specialised DSV for deep-sea dive operations and submarine rescue operations.
- Its goals are advanced dynamic positioning, saturation diving systems and deployment gear for remotely operated vehicles.
- It serves as a mother ship for the Deep Submergence Rescue Vessel (DSRV).
- It is the second indigenously built DSV after INS Nistar (2025)
- Its indigenous Content will be 75%, aligned with Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

India's 1st Dedicated Department of Military Medicine

- It was inaugurated at Command Hospital, Central Command, Lucknow
- It was under – Directorate General of Medical Services (Army).
- Its focus will be Combat medical readiness, battlefield trauma, psychiatry, environmental medicine, and medical logistics.
- The facility will first start with academic programmes, then expand into Centres of Excellence for HADR and CBRNE defence.
- HADR – Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief;
- CBRNE – Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High-Yield Explosives
- Centres of Excellence and Global Military Medicine Centre are under Raksha Strategy Vision 2026-30.
- It strengthens indigenous doctrines, AI-enabled health monitoring, resilience and innovation in battlefield medicine.

Machilipatnam ASW Warship

- Indian Navy launched Machilipatnam Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Watercraft (ASW SWC)

- It was built by – Cochin Shipyard Ltd.
- Historic port city Machilipatnam (Andhra Pradesh) is reflecting the city's rich maritime heritage.
- Coastal/littoral operations – underwater surveillance, anti-submarine warfare, mine warfare, low-intensity ops are its objectives.

IASV Triveni Team

- The Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Honours IASV Triveni Team for Landmark All-Women Sailing Expedition.
- The nine women officers of the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force have successfully completed the country's first-ever Tri-Service all-women circumnavigation sailing expedition — 'Samudra Pradakshina'.
- They sailed nearly 25,500 nautical miles across four oceans.
- The voyage fulfilled all internationally recognised criteria for circumnavigation by crossing all meridians of longitude, crossing the Equator twice, traversing the International Date Line and rounding the three Great Capes — Cape Leeuwin, Cape Horn, and the Cape of Good Hope.
- The crew also successfully navigated the Drake Passage, earning membership of the prestigious fraternity of Cape Horners.

Operation Trishul

- Operation Trishul has helped India bring back 274 fugitives from 36 countries since 2019.
- The operation tracks fugitives involved in cases related to terrorism, organised crime, narco-terrorism, financial fraud, murder, sexual offences, and human trafficking.
- It uses satellite imagery, surveillance inputs, and digital footprints to locate fugitives hiding abroad.
- The operation involves coordination among the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Intelligence Bureau (IB), Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), state police forces, and Interpol.
- India brought back 70 fugitives in 2025 and 45 fugitives by July 2026 under international cooperation mechanisms.

e-zero FIRs in 2025

- Delhi recorded the highest number of e-zero FIRs.

- The e-Zero FIR system was launched in 2025 May last year.
- It was done by the Ministry of Home Affairs via the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C).
- It operates under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023.
- 12 thousand cases have been registered under e-Zero FIRs
- Delhi has registered 6,115 e-Zero FIRs, followed by Chandigarh.
- MHA introduces e-Zero FIR system for cybercrime cases in 18 states and UTs.
- It allows victims of cyber financial fraud to report the crime either directly online or through a helpline, which ensures that the victims are able to file a Zero FIR without any constraints.
- It will automatically be converted into an e-Zero FIR at the designated state or Union Territory e-Crime Police Station.
- However, to convert an e-Zero FIR into a regular FIR, the complainant has to visit their respective jurisdictional cyber-crimes police station within three days of filing the complaint.
- Zero FIR under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) allows any police station to register an FIR for a cognizable offence regardless of where the incident happened.
- Key items include mandatory registration, a zero-serial number, and subsequent transfer.
- Section 173 BNSS: Gives formal statutory backing to the Zero FIR process, replacing older administrative guidelines.
- No Territorial Refusal: Police officers cannot reject a complaint about a cognizable crime using the excuse of jurisdiction.
- Serial Number "0": The initial station assigns a "0" number because it will not retain or investigate the core case.
- The victim or complainant gives oral or electronic information at any convenient police station - either orally or in writing or by electronic communication, at any police station.
- Immediate Action: The local station takes urgent steps like medical aid or evidence preservation if needed right away.
- Transfer of Case: The files are sent promptly to the correct jurisdictional police station, which converts it into a regular numbered FIR and starts the main investigation.
- A significant reform in India’s criminal justice system that allows any police station to register an FIR for a cognizable offence, regardless of jurisdiction.
- It ensures prompt action without delay due to territorial boundaries.

GI and Beyond 2.0 Summit

- The GI & Beyond 2.0 Summit was held in New Delhi to promote India's Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged handloom and handicraft products.
- The Digital Handloom Atlas – "One Platform. Endless Markets" was launched to improve the visibility and market access of Indian handloom products.
- New GI certificates were presented for Ladakh Nambu Textile, Ladakh Pashmina Textile, Himachal Gudma and Himachal Lingchay.
- GI certificates were also presented for Jharkhand Bamboo Craft, Jharkhand Tussar Silk Saree & Fabrics, Munda Jewellery of Jharkhand and Bareilly Terracotta.
- The summit showcased more than 100 GI-registered handloom and handicraft products and included live demonstrations by artisans and weavers.
- The Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC) unveiled its Diamond Jubilee Logo, marking 60 years of promoting India's handloom exports.

Indian Statistical Institute Bill, 2026

- The Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) Bill, 2026 was introduced in the Lok Sabha to replace the Indian Statistical Institute Act, 1959 and change its governance structure.
- ISI was founded by P.C. Mahalanobis in 1931 and was declared an Institution of National Importance under the 1959 Act.
- The Bill proposes to convert ISI from a society into a statutory body corporate and create an 11-member Board of Governors as its main policy-making body.
- The President of India will be the Visitor, while an Academic Council will manage academic matters such as courses and examinations.
- The Bill also proposes changes in the appointment and review of the Director and transfers the existing institute's assets, liabilities, employees and academic programmes to the new statutory body.
- Indian Statistical Institute was founded in Kolkata and has centres in Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai and Tezpur.

PM Vidyalaxmi Scheme update

- PM Vidyalaxmi Scheme expands access to higher education with collateral-free loans, interest support.
- It is an initiative of the Ministry of Education to provide collateral-free and guarantor-free education loans.

- These loans can be accessed by all students admitted on merit to any designated Quality Higher Education Institution (QHEI) in India.
- The scheme was launched to support the objectives of the National Education Policy, 2020 and Sustainable Development Goal 4, with its focus on inclusive and equitable access to quality education.
- India's higher education enrolment ratio has seen a remarkable increase from 23.7% in 2014-15 to 30% in 2023-24.
- PM Vidyalaxmi covers higher education institutions in the top 100 of the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) in the overall, category-specific and domain-specific categories.
- The education loans available under PM Vidyalaxmi do not have any upper limit, and the sanctioned amount depends on the course fee and other approved educational expenses.
- The loan could cover tuition and institutional fees, hostel and mess charges, refundable and non-refundable fees charged by the institution, laptop and living expenses during the course.
- The loans disbursed under PM Vidyalaxmi are provided through Scheduled Banks, Regional Rural Banks and Cooperative Banks.
- The government also provides a 75% credit guarantee on loans up to Rs 7.5 lakhs.
- Borrowers can also claim tax benefits on the interest that is paid under Section 80E.
- PM Vidyalaxmi is not an isolated scheme and complements the existing Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Protsahan Central Sector Interest Subsidy Scheme, or PM-USP CSIS.
- The PM-USP CSIS covers loans for students with an annual family income of Rs 4.5 lakhs and may receive 100% interest subvention.

Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMIP)

- It was India's first sovereign-backed maritime insurance and risk-sharing mechanism.
- It was launched by the Ministry of Finance's Department of Financial Services (DFS).
- The war risk premium rates have decreased approximately by 35-40 percent - levels observed at the height of the West Asia conflict.
- It ensures the continuity of maritime war risk insurance coverage.
- It fosters the development of domestic underwriting capacity and enhances confidence among India's shipping and trade stakeholders.

Bankers' Books Evidence Bill 2026

- The Lok Sabha passed the Bankers' Books Evidence Bill, 2026 on 5 August 2026 by voice vote.
- The Bill seeks to replace the Bankers' Books Evidence Act, 1891, which was enacted during the colonial period.
- The existing law allows certified copies of bank records, including ledgers, cash books and account books, to be used as evidence in legal proceedings.
- The Bill updates the legal framework to reflect modern banking practices and electronic records.
- It provides a legal framework for the use of bank records as evidence in courts and other legal proceedings.

Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission - WHO

- The World Health Organization (WHO) recognised the Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC) as a South-East Asia Regional Centre of Excellence in Pharmacovigilance and a Technical Centre for Quality of Medicines.
- The recognition was announced during the 10th anniversary meeting of the South-East Asia Regulatory Network (SEARN) held in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- SEARN was established by the WHO South-East Asia Regional Office (SEARO) in 2016 to strengthen medicine regulatory systems among member countries.
- The recognition acknowledges IPC's work in medicine safety monitoring, pharmaceutical quality standards and regulatory capacity-building across the region.

Commercial coal mining in India

- Domestic coal production has crossed one billion tonnes for two consecutive years, and private sector participation has expanded significantly since the launch of commercial coal auctions in 2020.
- Coal meets nearly 55 per cent of the country's primary energy requirements and contributes more than 70 per cent of electricity generation.
- India possesses the world's fifth-largest coal resources and is the second-largest producer and consumer of coal globally.
- Around five lakh mine workers are engaged in coal production across more than 350 mines.
- The Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015 subsequently established a statutory framework for the reallocation of coal blocks through transparent auctions.

- In 2020, commercial coal mining was launched.
- The reform allowed companies to sell coal freely to any consumer at market-determined prices, removing the earlier restriction that coal could only be used for captive purposes.
- The new regime also replaced the fixed per-tonne payment system with a revenue-sharing model under which successful bidders pay the government a percentage of their revenue linked to the National Coal Index.
- It also allows 100 per cent foreign direct investment through the automatic route.

India's Polysilicon PLI Plan

- The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) is preparing a separate Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for polysilicon manufacturing.
- India currently has almost no polysilicon production capacity and depends heavily on imports, mainly from China.
- The proposed scheme aims to support more than 10 GW of domestic polysilicon manufacturing capacity.
- Polysilicon is the starting material for making solar cells and is also important for the semiconductor industry.
- The move aims to strengthen India's upstream solar supply chain, reduce import dependence and increase domestic value addition.

India – Lesotho relations 2026

- India and Lesotho reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral cooperation during the recently held Joint Bilateral Commission for Cooperation in Delhi.
- India and Lesotho enjoy close ties of friendship and cooperation across diverse sectors, rooted in their shared commitment to enhancing South-South cooperation.
- Both countries agreed that the next meeting of the Joint Bilateral Commission for Cooperation will be held in Maseru in 2027
- Lesotho is a landlocked Country surrounded by South Africa.
- It is also known as the "Kingdom in the Sky" or "Mountain Kingdom".
- It is the only country in the world entirely above 1400 m elevation.
- Lesotho is located in the Maloti Mountains, with the highest peak in southern Africa.
- Its major Ranges are the Drakensberg and Maloti Mountains.
- Over 80% of the country lies above 1,800 metres (5,906 ft).

- Lesotho is the southernmost landlocked country in the world.
- It is the largest of the world's three independent states surrounded by the territory of another country, with Vatican City and San Marino being the other two.
- It is the only such state outside the Italian peninsula and Europe, as well as the only one that is not a microstate.

Supreme Court on CAPF Act

- More than 3,000 Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) Group A cadre officers have moved the Supreme Court to challenge the Central Armed Police Force (General Administration) Act, 2026.
- The petitioners have contended that the Act brought in after this judgment is unconstitutional and violative of Articles 14, 16, and 21 of the Constitution.
- The Act will make it harder for CAPF cadre officers to be promoted through the ranks to leadership positions.
- The legislation was enacted to effectively negate a May 2025 Supreme Court ruling that directed the exact opposite action: to reduce Indian Police Service (IPS) officers in the CAPF leadership and make it easier for CAPF officers to reach top positions.
- The law states that in all CAPFs, 50% of the total posts in the rank of Inspector General, at least 67% of the posts in the rank of Additional Director General, and all posts in the rank of Special Director General and Director General must be filled by IPS officers on deputation.
- Until now, such postings were done based on executive orders.
- The practice of reserving 50% of Deputy Inspector General (DIG) posts for Group A CAPF officers also finds no place in the Act.
- Thus, it is paving the way for a higher percentage of IPS deputed officers filling those posts.
- The petitioners have sought directions for the implementation of the Supreme Court's judgment dated May 23, 2025, in Sanjay Prakash v. Union of India.
- And a declaration that Higher Administrative Grade (HAG) posts in all CAPFs be filled from among eligible executive cadre officers of the respective forces, rather than exclusively through deputation, along with any other relief.
- On May 23, 2025, the Supreme Court had ruled that Group "A" Executive Cadre officers of CAPFs are organized Group A Services for all purposes.
- Besides progressively reducing the IPS deputation in CAPFs up to the level of I-Gs in the next two years, the court asked for a time bound review of cadre and service rules within six months.

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) challenged the judgment, but on October 28, 2025, the court dismissed the review petition, making the ruling final.
- The CAPF is classified into three groups: Border Guarding Forces (Assam Rifles, Border Security Force, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, and Sashastra Seema Bal), Forces for Internal Security (Central Industrial Security Force and Central Reserve Police Force), and Special Task Force (National Security Guard).
- The plea contended that the Act has the effect of negating the Supreme Court judgment using legislative means.
- That step is in violation of the doctrine of separation of powers.

SC on third party insurance

- The Supreme Court extended the mandatory third-party motor insurance coverage of new vehicles by a year.
- New cars will now have four years of coverage and two-wheelers six years.
- The court observed that despite the statutory mandate, a "shocking" number of vehicles continued to ply on Indian roads without third-party insurance.
- It was forcing accident victims and their families to "run from pillar to post" to secure compensation.
- The court proposed a system in which vehicles without valid insurance can be denied fuel at petrol pumps.
- It also directed that Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras, deployed on highways and roads to detect traffic violations, be integrated with insurance data maintained by the Insurance Information Bureau of India (IIB) and vehicle registration data available on the VAHAN portal.
- In its 2018 judgment in the S. Rajaseekaran v. Union of India case, the apex court had required purchasers of new vehicles to obtain three-year third-party insurance for cars and five-year cover for two-wheelers at the time of purchase or registration.

SC on live-in relationships

- The Supreme Court extends domestic cruelty offence to live-in relationships.
- The Supreme Court said the criminal offence of domestic cruelty would extend to live-in relationships between consenting adults that qualify as "relationships in the nature of marriage".
- The judgment came while dealing with a question whether a man who is in a live-in relationship can be prosecuted under Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code, 1860.

- Section 498A (domestic cruelty) of the Indian Penal Code, now replaced by Sections 85 and 86 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, should not be limited to married relationships alone.
- Live-in relationships were a reality in modern, urban life.
- The court said the marital status of a woman, in the present day, did not have a proximate link to the objective of Section 498A, which was to prevent cruelty in a household setting.
- The court reasoned those relationships in the nature of marriage and which show the requisite intent to marry were the "closest to marriage itself".

Supreme Court Gender-Sensitive Judgment Report

- The Supreme Court of India released 'Judgments and Gender: Sensitivity and Compassion in Writing Judgments', replacing the 2023 Handbook on Combating Gender Stereotypes.
- The report recommends replacing the term 'prosecutrix' with neutral terms such as victim, survivor or complainant.
- It asks courts to avoid moralistic language, victim-blaming and irrelevant questions about a survivor's past sexual history.
- It recommends a trauma-informed approach, respectful treatment of witnesses and protection of survivors' dignity and privacy.
- It also promotes the Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Expression and Sex Characteristics (SOGIESC) framework for inclusive judicial language.

Rules on Digital Arrest Scams

- The Supreme Court of India directed the RBI to frame SOPs for mule accounts and ordered nationwide adoption of e-Zero FIRs and victim compensation frameworks to tackle escalating digital arrest scams.
- It passed the directions after considering the fourth status report submitted by the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) under the Union Home Ministry.
- It also asked the Centre to examine the feasibility of introducing a shared liability and victim compensation framework for people who fall prey to digital arrest scams.
- Among its key directions, the court asked the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to frame within four weeks a standard operating procedure (SOP) for dealing with mule bank accounts used to launder proceeds of cyber fraud.

50 lakh rooftop solar installations

- Union Minister of New and Renewable Energy Pralhad Joshi said that the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana has crossed 50 lakh beneficiary households in India.
- This scheme seeks to provide free electricity to households by facilitating the installation of rooftop solar panels.
- It aims to provide up to 300 units of free monthly electricity and direct financial subsidies of up to ₹78,000 for residential households to install rooftop solar panels.
- The scheme closes on March 31, 2027.
- It is the world's largest domestic rooftop solar initiative.
- It is a central sector scheme, implemented by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and launched in 2024.
- India added non-fossil capacity of more than 300 gigawatts (GW) a decade ago.
- India is well on the path to achieve the target of 500 gigawatts by 2030.
- India's installed solar power capacity stood at 162.15 GW as of June 30.
- It is inclusive of 125.6 GW of utility scale projects, 30.11 GW of rooftop projects and 6.43 GW of off-grid projects.
- India is the world's second-largest steel producer.

NCDC Amendment Bill

- The Lok Sabha passed the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) Amendment Bill, 2026.
- The Bill allows NCDC to give loans and grants directly to cooperative societies and entities working for cooperative development.
- With Central Government approval, NCDC can also participate in the share capital of cooperatives and related entities.
- NCDC was established in 1963 under the National Cooperative Development Corporation Act, 1962.
- The Bill expands the definition of foodstuffs and removes geographical restrictions on assistance for industrial goods.
- These changes aim to provide faster and more flexible financial support for the cooperative sector.

SC Verdict on PepsiCo Potato

- The Supreme Court (SC) upheld PepsiCo India's registration of the FL 2027 (FC-5) potato variety used for Lay's chips.
- The Court said the registration cannot be revoked under Section 34(h) of the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPVFR) Act, 2001 merely because PepsiCo sued farmers.
- Farmers can still claim protection under Section 39(1)(iv) of the Act if PepsiCo takes legal action against them.
- PepsiCo had sued at least nine Gujarat farmers in 2018–19 for alleged infringement but withdrew all cases unconditionally in May 2019.
- The dispute began after PepsiCo's 2016 registration was revoked in 2021, a decision later overturned by the Delhi High Court in 2024.

GOBARdhan scheme

- GOBARdhan means Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan.
- It is India's National Unified Scheme for Compressed Biogas.
- It is the National Circular Bioenergy Scheme, with a total outlay of Rs.23,731 crore, to be in place until 2036.
- GOBARdhan is an integral component of Solid Waste Management (SWM) under Phase II of Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) for ensuring cleanliness in villages by converting cattle dung, kitchen leftovers, etc. into biogas and bio-slurry.
- It is coordinated primarily by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) under the Ministry of Jal Shakti as part of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen).
- However, as an expanded national initiative emphasizing compressed biogas (CBG) and waste-to-wealth, it operates on a whole-of-government approach coordinated closely with the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) alongside other ministries like New and Renewable Energy and Agriculture.
- Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G) Phase-II is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- The scheme aspires to increase domestic production of CBG ten-fold and mobilise large-scale private investment.
- It will transform the country's abundant agricultural residue, cattle dung, press mud, municipal organic waste and other biomass resources into clean fuel, organic manure, rural income and national economic value.
- It will establish Compressed Biogas as a major pillar of India's future energy mix.

- It seeks to increase domestic compressed biogas production nearly ten-fold through assured offtake, administered pricing, capital subsidies, pipeline infrastructure and easier access to finance.
- The scheme addresses three imperatives -- remunerative price, assured offtake and capital support -- sought by the industry.
- One of the most critical components is the development of the necessary pipeline infrastructure, which is essential for the widespread adoption of CBG, as it ensures reliable offtake and enables seamless integration with the broader gas grid.
- GOBARdhan further introduces a stable-administered price of ₹2,110 per Metric Million British Thermal Unit (MMBTU) for CBG.
- It reflects the Government's commitment to energy security, farmers and rural enterprises, waste-to-wealth, Atmanirbhar Bharat and the vision of Viksit Bharat.
- Nearly ten-fold growth in domestic CBG production, creating a new pillar of India's clean gas economy.
- Greater energy security through increased domestic production of renewable gaseous fuel and lower dependence on imported fossil fuels.
- A new wave of private investment supported by stronger project viability, stable pricing and improved access to institutional finance.
- Stronger rural livelihoods through new income opportunities for farmers, feedstock aggregators, cooperatives and rural entrepreneurs.
- Scientific waste management through productive use of agricultural residue, cattle dung, municipal organic waste and other biomass resources.
- Lower greenhouse gas emissions through replacement of fossil fuels and productive utilization of organic waste.
- A larger organic manure economy through greater production, value addition and utilization of FOM and LFOM.
- Faster and easier project implementation through one national framework, digital governance and simplified institutional arrangements.

Agarwood Export Roadmap

- The government has released a Roadmap for Agarwood Export Promotion from the North Eastern Region (NER) to increase India's agarwood and agarwood oil exports.
- The Northeast accounts for 96.6% of India's estimated 139.89 million agarwood trees, with Assam having the largest share.

- Assam and Tripura are the major resource centres; agarwood is used in perfumes, incense and premium oud products.
- The roadmap focuses on processing, advanced extraction, certification, traceability, branding and stronger global market links.
- An Agarwood Export Promotion Cell was formed in May 2026 to support exporters and international market development.
- Agarwood clusters are being developed in Assam and Tripura under the Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North East Region (PM-DevINE).

India's Lead in Ship Recycling

- India became the world's leading ship recycling nation, increasing its global share from 30.1% in 2024 to 35.4% in 2025.
- India recycled 2.99 million Gross Tonnes (GT) of ships in 2025, nearly 60% higher than 1.86 million GT in 2024.
- The Alang-Sosiya cluster in Gujarat accounts for about 98% of India's ship recycling, with an annual capacity of around 6 million GT.
- The Ship Recycling Act, 2019, Ship Recycling Rules, 2021 and Ship Recycling Regulations, 2026 strengthen safety, environmental protection and regulatory compliance.
- India aligned its framework with the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships, which entered into force in June 2025.
- India plans to increase recycling capacity to about 9 million Light Displacement Tonnes (LDT) and has provided ₹53.5 crore for yard modernisation.

Container Production Scheme

- The government has proposed a ₹10,000 crore Container Manufacturing Assistance Scheme (CMAS) to increase domestic container production and reduce import dependence.
- The scheme will run for five years and aims to raise India's annual container production capacity to about 7.5 lakh Twenty-foot Equivalent Units (TEUs).
- It will support new factories, expansion of existing units, testing infrastructure, skill development and capacity building.
- India currently imports nearly 2 million empty containers annually for domestic needs and repositioning.
- The scheme is expected to create about 3,000 direct and 50,000 indirect jobs in container manufacturing and related industries.

New Ganga Floodplain Rules 2026

- The Centre amended the River Ganga (Rejuvenation, Protection and Management) Authorities Order, 2016, redefining the Ganga's floodplain.
- The amendment removes the term "construction-free zone" and introduces active floodplain, regulatory zone and warning zone.
- The active floodplain is the area flooded by a 1-in-5-year flood.
- The regulatory zone covers 1-in-5 to 1-in-25-year floods, while the warning zone covers 1-in-25 to 1-in-100-year floods.
- The Ganga banks and floodplains must be maintained to reduce pollution and preserve natural groundwater recharge.

Creamy Layer for SC/ST

- A batch of petitions in the Supreme Court of India seek a creamy-layer exclusion within the reserved categories of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) as in the Other Backwards Classes (OBC).
- The Union government argued judicial precedents had clarified that the "principles of creamy layer do not apply to SCs and STs".
- The Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has further told the top court in an affidavit.
- In a "majority" of welfare and development schemes for SCs, STs, and OBCs, except reservation in educational institutes and services under the State, there is already a "means test which ensures that benefits of schemes percolate to those who actually deserve them".
- Modification of reservation policy, particularly to introduce income-based preferences within reserved categories, should be preceded by a holistic review and thorough empirical study, including socio-economic data of reserved category beneficiaries.
- The main objective of the reservation policy for SC, ST and OBC groups was to "achieve social equality and justice, overcome historical disadvantages and discrimination, ensure economic empowerment and upliftment for marginalized communities, and promote their inclusive participation in education, public services, and decision-making processes".
- The government has said that the current matter — that of seeking an income-based creamy layer for SCs/STs — neither raises a constitutional issue nor discloses the violation of any fundamental right under the Constitution.
- The Centre said that the judgment cited in the M. Nagaraj case had merely referred to the creamy layer concept, which appeared to be a "general observation" with regard to reservations for OBCs.

- The argument that a creamy layer concept for SC and ST reservations should be introduced picked up pace after the 2024 judgment by a seven-judge Bench in State of Punjab vs Davinder Singh.
- In that verdict, Justice (Retd.) B.R. Gavai had noted in his opinion that the government "must" find a way to identify a creamy layer for SCs and STs even if the criteria for this identification were different from that for OBCs.
- The 2024 judgment had given sanction to State governments to continue with their policy of sub-categorising SC and ST quotas.
- The Centre has stressed that only Parliament can add or remove communities from the SC and ST lists, and that this is not a domain for the court to enter.
- However, the Davinder Singh judgment had distinguished between Parliament's power to add or remove communities from the lists and the Executive's power to simply categorise within the existing lists.

Extension for One Herb, One Standard Initiative

- The Ministry of Ayush and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) have renewed the 'One Herb, One Standard' initiative for another three years.
- The initiative aims to establish common scientific standards for medicinal plants used in Ayurveda, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa, Unani and Homoeopathy.
- The Pharmacopoeia Commission for Indian Medicine & Homoeopathy (PCIM&H) and Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC) renewed their Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for three years.
- In the first phase, launched through a 2022 MoU, the two institutions developed 50 monographs on medicinal plants.
- The renewed initiative will expand standardisation and align Indian standards with international quality requirements to improve the reliability and global acceptance of traditional medicines.

300 GW Non-Fossil Fuel Power Capacity

- India has officially crossed 300 GW of installed non-fossil fuel-based electricity generation capacity, reaching 300.50 GW as of 2026.
- The clean energy now accounts for more than 54% of India's total electricity capacity (which stands at roughly 552 GW), pushing fossil-fuel-based power below the halfway mark.
- Capacity Breakdown as per Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)
  - Solar Power – 164.59 GW (up from 2.8 GW in 2014)
  - Wind Power – 58.14 GW

- Hydro Power (Large & Small) – 57.24 GW
- Bio-power – 11.75 GW
- Nuclear Power – 8.78 GW.

Mines and Minerals Amendment Bill 2026

- Parliament passed the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026, which restricts States' powers to levy taxes on mineral rights and mineral-rich lands.
- The Lok Sabha passed the Bill on August 12, while the Rajya Sabha cleared it on August 13, 2026; the government rejected demands to refer it to a Parliamentary Committee.
- The Bill seeks to regulate major minerals such as coal, limestone, iron ore, copper and manganese, while States will continue to have powers over 49 minor minerals.
- The Centre said the move aims to ensure uniform mineral rates across India and maintain central control over key minerals needed for industries.
- According to the government, States' share of overall mineral revenue has increased from 65% in 2014–15 to 85%, while their share of coal revenue rose from 51% to 96%.
- The government stated that the Centre receives about 11% of mineral revenue, while around 88% goes to States, and claimed that no State would suffer revenue loss due to the amendment.

India's Nuclear Energy Roadmap

- India aims to achieve 100 GWe (Gigawatt electric) nuclear capacity by 2047 under the Nuclear Energy Mission.
- The government plans to develop at least five indigenous Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) by 2033, supported by ₹20,000 crore.
- The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) is developing indigenous reactors, including the 220 MWe (Megawatt electric) Bharat SMR and 55 MWe SMR-55.
- The SHANTI Act (Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India Act) provides the legal framework for private participation and up to 49% foreign direct investment.
- BARC is transferring SMR technology to Indian industries to support domestic manufacturing.

FCRA Bill Under JPC Review

- The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026 was referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) by the Lok Sabha on August 12, 2026.
- A JPC includes members from both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and examines a specific Bill or issue in detail.
- It can call witnesses, examine documents and suggest changes, but its recommendations are not binding on the government.
- Parliamentary committees help examine complex legislation through detailed scrutiny and stakeholder consultation.
- About 60% of Bills were referred to committees in the 14th Lok Sabha (2004–09), but this fell to about 16% in the 17th Lok Sabha (2019–24).

India's Lead in Coal Pipeline

- Global coal mine proposals increased 11% to 2,521 million tonnes per annum (Mtpa) in 2025, according to the Global Coal Mine Tracker (GCMT) by Global Energy Monitor (GEM).
- India nearly doubled its proposed capacity from 329 Mtpa to 638 Mtpa, while China remained the largest with 1,321 Mtpa.
- China, India, Australia, Russia and South Africa together account for about 92% of the proposed global coal mining capacity.
- About 70% of proposed capacity is still at the pre-construction or approved-but-not-started stage, while only 113 Mtpa of new capacity became operational in 2025.
- India's proposed capacity is dominated by thermal coal, with about 603 Mtpa, accounting for 94% of its domestic pipeline.

India's largest supplier of LPG in 2026

- U.S. accounts for 67% of India's LPG imports.
- The shift follows an earlier government decision to source roughly 10% of India's LPG requirements from the U.S. as part of a broader effort to diversify energy supplies.
- Before the conflict broke out in West Asia, India imported nearly 60% of its requirement of the bottled hydrocarbon gas, of which approximately 90% came via the Strait of Hormuz.
- India has also increased domestic LPG production to offset lower imports from Gulf suppliers.

- India also expanded its crude supply sources from 27 to 41 countries.
- The government has also recently approved Rs 84,000 crore Samudra Manthan programme aimed at supporting deepwater oil and gas exploration.

National security guidelines

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has issued new national security guidelines.
- It was introducing a blanket ban on projects like solar, wind and hybrid renewable energy projects within 1 km of the international border and mandating security clearance for projects located up to 50 km away.
- The border areas include Line of Control (LoC), Line of Actual Control (LAC) and the International Border (IB).
- Projects proposed within 20 km of the LoC, LAC and IB will also require a separate No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Ministry of Defence.
- Applications for all renewable energy projects will be submitted only to the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).
- The guidelines impose restrictions on foreign participation and staffing.
- It was stating that the applicants should not engage engineers, staff, employees, labour from Pakistan, Bangladesh and China without the MHA's permission.
- Existing renewable energy projects near the LAC are mostly small-scale in nature, while those near the IB in Rajasthan and Gujarat are relatively large.
- In Jammu and Kashmir, along the LoC, most projects are solar rooftop installations, while Kargil and Ladakh have solar photovoltaic projects.

Sapta Dhara Framework

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has introduced the Sapta Dhara (Shakti Ki Sapta dhara) framework during his Independence Day address on 15 August 2026.
- It aims to achieve the goal of Viksit Bharat by 2047, covering seven major areas of national development.
- The seven areas are manufacturing; agriculture and food processing; technology and innovation; Gati Shakti; defence self-reliance; green and blue economy; and India's soft power.
- Under technology and innovation, the government plans to train 1 crore youth in Artificial Intelligence (AI) over the next year.
- India has set a target of 100 GW nuclear energy capacity by 2047, with five new nuclear reactors expected to become operational in the next 6–7 years.

Modern Civil Defence Volunteer Force

- The Prime Minister announced a "massive, modern" Civil Defence volunteer force on 15 August 2026 during the Independence Day address at the Red Fort, New Delhi.
- The proposed force will strengthen civilian protection during modern security challenges and emergency situations.
- India's Civil Defence system is governed by the Civil Defence Act and Rules, 1968.
- Civil Defence volunteers support warning systems, evacuation, rescue, first aid, fire-fighting and protection of critical infrastructure during emergencies.
- The new volunteer force will receive modern training and advanced emergency-response protocols.
- Home Guards are a related auxiliary force under State control and assist the police, civil administration and disaster-response teams.

AI Skilling of 1 Crore Youth

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced on 15 August 2026 that 1 crore (10 million) young Indians will be trained in Artificial Intelligence (AI) skills within one year.
- The initiative aims to equip youth with AI skills and prepare them for emerging technology opportunities.
- The announcement was made during the 80th Independence Day address from the Red Fort, New Delhi.
- It is part of the broader focus on technology and innovation under the Sapta Dhara framework.
- The government highlighted the rapid expansion of AI across different sectors.
- The initiative seeks to strengthen India's technology and innovation ecosystem and help youth participate in the global AI economy.

Census 2027: 40 Questions

- The Centre has notified 40 questions for the second phase of Census 2027, including caste, Aadhaar, voter ID, bank accounts and other details.
- For the first time in independent India, caste will be recorded for all communities, apart from Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs).
- The questionnaire includes 13 new questions compared with the 29 questions asked in Census 2011.
- New details include parents' particulars, spouse's name, nationality, digital literacy, permanent address and place of COVID-19 vaccination.

- It will also collect details on bank accounts, mobile number, Aadhaar, voter ID, passport and driving licence, where applicable.
- Population enumeration will begin in August/September 2026 in snow-bound areas and across most of India in February 2027.

Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026

- The Lok Sabha has passed the Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026.
- The bill aims to improve efficiency, ensure independence, transparency, and uniformity in the qualifications, appointment of service of Chairpersons and Members of various Tribunals, as well as the administration and functioning of the Tribunals.
- The legislation also proposes to establish a National Tribunals Commission (NTC).
- The NTC will consist of a chairperson and four members: Two judicial members and two technical members.
- It will be chaired by a former Judge of the Supreme Court or a former Chief Justice of a High Court.
- Headquartered in New Delhi, the NTC is designed to be an independent body tasked with conducting selection processes for tribunal vacancies, reviewing performance, and managing a new digital repository of case information.
- The Tribunals Reforms Bill seeks to bring uniformity and transparency to how tribunal leaders are chosen.
- Under the new framework, the NTC will constitute Search-cum-Selection Committees for each tribunal.
- These committees will include members of the commission, retired high court judges, and senior government secretaries.
- A unique addition is the empanelment of experts from relevant fields to assist these committees in assessing the suitability of candidates.
- Crucially, the bill mandates that the Central government must process these recommendations and make appointments within three months of receiving them, a move intended to reduce the chronic vacancy issues currently plaguing tribunals.
- To ensure stability and judicial independence, the bill standardises the terms of service across different tribunals.
- It proposes that chairpersons will hold office for five years or until they reach the age of 70.
- Plus, members will hold office for five years or until they reach the age of 67.
- Accountability is also a primary focus.

- The NTC will oversee the conduct of inquiries into complaints against tribunal chairpersons and members.
- While the Central government retains the power of removal for specific offenses – such as insolvency or moral turpitude – removal on grounds of misbehaviour or incapacity requires a formal inquiry by a committee headed by a Supreme Court judge.
- Reducing the data gap, the bill proposes the creation of the National Tribunals Data Grid.
- This portal will serve as a comprehensive repository of all case-related information for the tribunals specified in the bill, such as the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal and the National Green Tribunal.

Background

- The 2026 Bill is a legislative response to the Supreme Court's 2021 directive and is aimed at replacing the Tribunal Reforms Act, 2021.
- The Supreme Court earlier identified as "inefficiency and lack of independence" of India's 16 tribunals.
- In the same ruling, the SC struck down key provisions of the Tribunals Reforms (Rationalisation and Conditions of Service) Ordinance, 2021, ruling that short tenures, restrictive age criteria, and heavy executive control over appointments violated judicial independence and the separation of powers.
- The Tribunals Reforms Bill could reshape the functioning of quasi-judicial bodies in India.
- The government aims to "insulate tribunals from executive interference", which was the legal reasoning of the Supreme Court in the Madras Bar Association judgement.
- Even in the landmark seven-judge bench judgment of L. Chandra Kumar v. Union of India (1997), the Supreme Court conceptualised the need for a single, independent nodal agency to insulate tribunals from executive interference.
- Here, the top court ruled that the power of judicial review vested in the high courts (under Article 226/227) and the Supreme Court (under Article 32) is an indelible part of the basic structure of the Indian Constitution.
- The purpose of tribunals is not to replace courts but to function as complementary institutions in modern governance.
- They deal with specialized matters such as taxation, company law, environment, securities market, intellectual property, and other regulatory domains, with the objective of ensuring speedy and effective delivery of justice.

11 New International Ports

- The Union Ministry of Home Affairs under the Government of India notifies 11 more International Ports.
- It includes 09 land ports and 02 airports.
- The newly added land ports are Darranga, Gede, Ghojadanga, Haridaspur, Jaigaon, Dawki, Moreh, and Attari (Road), along with the airports in Bhopal and Tirupati.
- It will further enhance attractiveness and utility of electronic visa.
- India provides approximately 95% E-visas applications in less than 72 hours.
- Total number of International Ports for E-Visa holder foreigners' entry now goes up to 88.
- One significant step taken to liberalize and simplify the Indian Visa regime, especially the tourist visa regime, is the introduction of the e-Visa facility.
- E-visa facility, with Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA), was introduced in 2014 for nationals of 43 countries.
- This facility is presently available to nationals of 172 countries.
- India now issues about 78 per cent visas as electronic visas.
- E-visa is currently available under 17 sub-categories, including mountaineering and group visas for cruise.
- International travellers holding a Pakistani passport or of Pakistani origin must apply for a regular visa at an Indian Mission, as the e-visa facility is not available to them.

EV charging stations across India 2026

- Karnataka has emerged as one of India's leading States in electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure, with 6,805 electric vehicle charging stations (EVCS) installed as of July this year.
- It was the recent data according to data by the Ministry of Heavy Industries.
- Karnataka is marginally behind Maharashtra.
- Tamil Nadu has 3,839 charging stations, Telangana 3,739 and Kerala 3,399. Andhra Pradesh has 1,976 stations, while Goa has 314.
- Setting up EV charging stations is also an unlicenced activity, allowing private players to establish charging stations in accordance with the Ministry of Power's guidelines issued on September, 2024.
- The PM E-DRIVE Scheme, notified in 2024, is a key initiative of the Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI).

- Under the PM E-DRIVE scheme, Central ministries, Central Public Sector Enterprises, States and Union Territories and their PSUs are eligible to submit proposals for public charging stations.
- They can establish and operate the facilities themselves or engage charge point operators.
- National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP 2020) outlines a strategic roadmap to accelerate the adoption and domestic manufacturing of EVs in India.
- It has the twin objective of strengthening energy security and promoting clean, sustainable mobility.
- Under the NEMMP 2020 framework, the FAME India scheme was launched in 2015 to drive EV adoption.
- The scheme offered incentives to buyers, supports creation of charging infrastructure, and manufacturing. Phase I continued until March 2019, followed by Phase II, implemented over five years until April 2024.
- The e-Amrit tool helps locate charging station based on one's location.

India's First Accreditation Scheme for Mobile Food Testing Laboratories

- It was launched by National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL).
- The initiative aims to expand access to reliable, quality-assured and internationally benchmarked food testing services closer to communities.
- It establishes a framework for mobile food testing laboratories to provide reliable, quality-assured and internationally benchmarked testing services closer to communities.
- It is expected to strengthen food safety surveillance, improve access to quality testing, support faster regulatory interventions and enhance consumer confidence.
- NABL is a constituent board of the Quality Council of India (QCI), which is an autonomous body setup under Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India.
- It provides accreditation services to Conformity Assessment Bodies (Laboratories) in India.
- In India, NABL accreditation is usually the precursor to various government/ regulator/ statutory body recognitions.

Exercise Udara Shakti 2026

- The Indian Air Force and Royal Malaysian Air Force are conducting bilateral Exercise Udara Shakti 2026 at Subang Airbase, Malaysia.
- This year's exercise is notable for the debut appearance of Indian Rafale fighter jets.
- India and Malaysia have an additional Defence-industrial link through the Malaysian Su-30MKM fleet.
- Malaysia has also shown interest in the air-launched version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile.
- India has already exported the ground-based BrahMos system to the Philippines.

About this exercise

- It is the biennial exercise (held every two years).
- All editions have been hosted in Malaysia.

Exercise Maitree 2026

- The Indian Army will deploy a contingent to Thailand later this month for this year's edition of Exercise Maitree.
- Maitree is the bilateral exercise conducted alternately by India and Thailand.
- The previous, 14th edition was held at the Joint Training Node in Umroi, Meghalaya, in September last year.
- This year's exercise will be held in Thailand, marking the outbound leg of the alternating exercise.
- Maitree is one of India's long standing Army exercises with a Southeast Asian partner.

Cancer as Notifiable Disease

- The Supreme Court (SC) has directed 19 States and Union Territories (UTs) to declare cancer a notifiable disease for early detection and proper patient care.
- The direction came after the court was informed that 17 of 36 States and UTs have already notified cancer.
- The case was based on a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) seeking nationwide notification of cancer.
- As a notifiable disease, cancer cases would have to be reported to health authorities, helping improve data collection and surveillance.
- The Supreme Court also asked the Central Government why mandatory guidelines had not been issued for all States and UTs.

- The court stressed the need for a uniform policy on cancer notification across the country.
- Notifiable diseases commonly include Tuberculosis (TB), Dengue, Malaria, Cholera, Hepatitis, Measles, Leptospirosis and Polio.

Expansion of India's farm economy

- India's agriculture and allied sectors have witnessed significant expansion over the past decade, with higher agricultural production, increased farmer support, wider access to institutional credit and growing adoption of technology and sustainable farming practices.
- Agriculture remains the backbone of India's economy, providing livelihoods to approximately 46.1 percent of the workforce.
- Agriculture and allied-sector Gross Value-Added rose from Rs 20.94 lakh crore in 2014-15 to an estimated Rs 52.08 lakh crore in 2025-26.
- The budget allocation for the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare also increased from Rs 27,663 crore in 2013-14 to Rs 1,40,528.78 crore in 2026-27.

Harvesting Higher Production

- Foodgrain production increased from 265.05 million tonnes in 2013-14 to 376.56 million tonnes in 2025-26, according to the Third Advance Estimates.
- Horticulture production rose from 280.70 million tonnes to an estimated 377.78 million tonnes during the same period.
- While oilseeds production increased from 27.51 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 43.06 million tonnes in 2025-26.
- Direct support to farmers has also expanded through schemes such as PM-KISAN.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, more than 92.46 crore farmer applications have been insured since the scheme's launch in 2016-17.
- India holds the leading global position in milk production, accounting for nearly 25 percent of global output.
- Poultry and meat production have also expanded, with India ranking second in egg production and fourth in meat production globally.

NBA funds for Mustard Genetic Resources

- The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) has released funds from Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) proceeds from M/s. Pioneer Overseas Corporation.
- Pioneer Overseas Corporation developed ten commercial mustard (Brassica juncea) hybrid varieties using India's biological resources.

- The ABS share is calculated based on the area under mustard cultivation in each State.
- The mechanism is also aligned with the principle of fair and equitable benefit sharing under the Nagoya Protocol and Target 13 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
- Rajasthan accounts for nearly 42 per cent of India's mustard cultivation.
- It is receiving the highest benefit.
- It is followed by Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

8th BRICS Oceanic-Polar Science and Tech

- As part of India's BRICS Presidency 2026, the 8th Meeting of the BRICS Working Group on Ocean and Polar Science and Technology (OPST) was held in Goa.
- The meeting is being hosted by the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR) under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).
- The Delegates from 11 member countries are discussing a medium-term (5 year) roadmap for cooperation in marine sciences and polar exploration. The BRICS OPST Working Group was established in 2018 to promote scientific cooperation, knowledge exchange, capacity building and collaborative research among member countries.

Draft SHANTI Rules 2026

- The Department of Atomic Energy issued the draft Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy (SHANTI) Rules, 2026, on August 14, 2026.
- The draft rules set requirements for nuclear liability, insurance and financial security of nuclear installation operators.
- Operators will have strict, no-fault liability for nuclear damage, including damage during nuclear material transport.
- Financial security must remain valid until spent fuel is removed from storage pools.
- The rules also cover foreign reactor technology, captive power, hydrogen production, process heat and medical isotope production.

E-Auction for Mineral Blocks

- The Ministry of Mines held a roadshow in Patna, Bihar for the 8th tranche of Critical and Strategic Mineral Block Auctions.
- The tranche covers 20 mineral blocks across nine states, comprising 3 Mining Leases and 17 Composite Licences.

- Minerals include graphite, rare earth elements, lithium, vanadium, gallium, titanium and tungsten, crucial for high-tech and strategic industries.
- The auction was launched on 15 July 2026 through an e-auction mechanism under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957.
- A Mining Lease permits mineral extraction, while a Composite Licence combines prospecting rights with a mining lease for areas requiring further exploration.

Power Sector Cybersecurity Rules 2026

- The Central Electricity Authority (CEA) notified the Cyber Security in Power Sector Regulations, 2026 under the Electricity Act, 2003, effective from 1 April 2027.
- The rules cover power generators, captive plants and energy storage systems with 50 megawatts (MW) or more capacity, along with power exchanges and over-the-counter trading platforms.
- Computer Security Incident Response Team–Power (CSIRT-Power) is the nodal agency, and cyber incidents must also be reported to the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In).
- General cyber incidents must be reported within six hours, while cyber sabotage of critical systems must be reported within 24 hours.
- The rules require Operational Technology (OT) systems to be separated from Information Technology (IT) systems and sensitive power-sector data to be securely stored within India.

Har Ghar Jal Milestone

- More than 2 lakh villages have been declared 'Har Ghar Jal' certified under the Jal Jeevan Mission.
- The Jal Jeevan Mission was launched on 15 August 2019 to provide safe and adequate drinking water to every rural household.
- The number of rural households with tap-water connections has increased from 3.23 crore to 15.91 crore since the scheme began.
- More than 12.68 crore additional rural households have received tap-water connections under the mission.
- The coverage increased from 16.7% at launch to the present level, according to the Ministry of Jal Shakti.

Jal Jeevan Mission Progress

- The Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) has completed seven years, with rural household tap-water coverage rising from 16.72% in 2019 to 82.24% in 2026.
- More than 15.91 crore rural households now have tap-water connections, including over 12.68 crore new connections since 2019.
- 2.04 lakh villages have been certified as Har Ghar Jal (HGJ), along with 1.01 lakh Gram Panchayats.
- The mission has also provided tap-water connections to 9.34 lakh schools and 9.73 lakh Anganwadi centres.
- Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 will focus on regular service delivery, water-source sustainability, community participation and long-term functionality.
- The Union Government has extended the Jal Jeevan Mission until December 2028.

India's Buffalo Meat Exports

- India's buffalo meat exports rose 25.6% to $5.1 billion in 2025–26, making it the country's best-performing agricultural export item.
- Exports grew 66.6% in April–June 2026 to nearly $1.5 billion, while the average value rose to $4,392 per tonne.
- Export markets have diversified, with Egypt, Uzbekistan, Indonesia, Iraq and Russia becoming important buyers alongside Vietnam and Malaysia.
- India has 83 Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)-approved integrated abattoirs-cum-meat processing plants for exports.
- Buffalo meat exports also support the dairy sector by providing a market for old, infertile or low-milk-yielding buffaloes, helping farmers replace them with productive animals.

State of Karnataka and Anr. v. Prathik Parasrampuria

- The Supreme Court, in State of Karnataka & Anr. v. Prathik Parasrampuria, issued directions to curb the use of unaccounted money in elections.
- The case arose from the 2014 Lok Sabha bye-election in Bellary, Karnataka, where ₹20.48 lakh in cash and other materials were seized from Prathik Parasrampuria.
- The Court directed that election-related cash or asset seizures must be reported to the District Magistrate (DM), Additional District Magistrate (ADM) or competent court within 24 hours, with written reasons.

- Static Surveillance Teams (SSTs) detecting cash above ₹10 lakh must immediately inform the Income Tax authorities.
- Investigations into election-related offences should be completed within one year; delays must be recorded and reported to the Election Commission of India (ECI) through quarterly progress reports.
- High Court approval is mandatory before withdrawing election-related criminal cases against candidates, and High Courts were directed to designate special courts for speedy disposal of such cases.
- The ECI and State Governments were directed to submit compliance reports by November 18, 2026.

PNG Connection Incentive Scheme

- The Centre has approved an incentive scheme to accelerate domestic Piped Natural Gas (PNG) connections across India.
- The scheme will start from 1 September 2026 and aims to expand household PNG connections through City Gas Distribution (CGD) companies.
- India currently has 1.74 crore domestic PNG connections.
- Eligible CGD entities will get an additional 200 Standard Cubic Metres (SCM) of lower-priced domestic Administered Price Mechanism (APM) gas for each additional billed connection above the area-specific threshold.
- The scheme will run in two tranches for six months and is expected to reduce the investment payback period for PNG connections from about 10 years to around 3 years.
- Other measures include National PNG Drive 2.0, faster approvals, standardised Right-of-Way (RoW) charges and a unified digital portal for new PNG connections.

Census 2027 Disability Categories

- Disability rights groups have raised concerns that the Census 2027 questionnaire proposes only 9 broad disability categories, instead of individually recording all 21 disabilities recognised under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016.
- The proposed categories include seeing, hearing, speech, mobility, intellectual disability, mental illness, acid attack, chronic neurological disease and blood disorder.
- The 2011 Census recorded 2.68 crore persons with disabilities, accounting for 2.21% of India's population, based on six disability categories.

- The RPwD Act, 2016 expanded recognised disabilities from 7 to 21, including autism spectrum disorder, specific learning disability, dwarfism and multiple disabilities.
- The Office of the Registrar General of India (ORGI) said the nine categories are broader groups covering specific disabilities and that the questionnaire allows recording up to three disabilities based on severity.

SC Verdict on Death Penalty

- The Supreme Court upheld the constitutional validity of hanging as a mode of executing the death penalty, holding that it does not violate Article 21 or the right to dignity.
- The Court relied on the 1983 judgment in Deena v. Union of India, which had upheld hanging, and noted that Parliament retained hanging under Section 393(5) of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).
- The Court held that constitutional protection continues for prisoners sentenced to death, even during execution, and that the long-drop method must be carried out with decency and without brutality or degradation.
- The Law Commission's 187th Report (2003) had recommended lethal injection as an alternative method, but the Court noted that such recommendations are not binding on Parliament.
- The Court left the issue open for future reconsideration if new scientific or empirical evidence fundamentally changes the basis of the earlier Deena ruling.

Industry Definition - State of Uttar Pradesh vs Jai Bir Singh case

- The Supreme Court's nine-judge Constitution Bench, headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant, delivered a 5:4 verdict on the meaning of "industry" under labour law.
- The Court held that the broad interpretation in the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board v. R. Rajappa (1978) case will not govern future disputes under the Industrial Relations Code (IRC), 2020.
- The 1978 judgment had used a triple test—systematic activity, employer-employee cooperation, and production or distribution of goods or services—to identify an industry.
- The 1978 interpretation will continue for pending disputes under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, while future disputes under the IRC, 2020 will follow the new framework.
- The Court held that the definition of "industry" under the IRC, 2020 must be interpreted on a clean slate, without being based on the 1978 ruling.

- The Industrial Relations Code, 2020 is one of the four Labour Codes that consolidated 29 central labour laws.

New Defence Indigenisation List

- The Department of Defence Production (DDP) notified the 6th Positive Indigenisation List (PIL) covering 405 strategically important defence items, with an estimated business potential of ₹3,070 crore.
- 389 items are for Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs), and 16 items are for the Indian Coast Guard (ICG).
- The list includes Line Replaceable Units (LRUs), sub-systems, spares, components and raw materials used in platforms such as Su-30MKI, Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), T-72, T-90 and warships.
- The items will be indigenised through Make procedures and in-house Research and Development (R&D) and will then be procured from Indian vendors, especially Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and startups.
- The details and timelines are available on the SRIJAN Defence Portal, launched in August 2020 to promote import substitution and domestic defence manufacturing.

Ladakh Bench

- The Union Cabinet approved a permanent bench of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh in the Union Territory of Ladakh.
- The High Court currently has seats at Srinagar and Jammu; the Ladakh bench will become its third judicial location.
- The bench will improve access to justice for people in remote areas of Ladakh by reducing the need to travel to Jammu or Srinagar.
- As of 30 July 2026, the High Court had 44,557 pending cases, including more than 6,100 cases pending for over 10 years.
- Ladakh became a Union Territory on 31 October 2019 after the reorganisation of the former State of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh is a common High Court for the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.
- The Bombay High Court has its principal seat in Mumbai and benches at Nagpur, Aurangabad, Panaji and Kolhapur, making five locations in total.
- The Aurangabad Bench is officially known as the Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar Bench.

- The Panaji Bench serves the State of Goa, while the other locations serve different regions of Maharashtra.
- High Court benches are established to make justice more accessible to people living far from the principal seat.
- The Bombay High Court was established in 1862 under the Indian High Courts Act, 1861.

CAA Citizenship Processing

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has empowered District Collectors in eight States/Union Territories (UTs) to process pending citizenship applications under the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019.
- The eight jurisdictions are Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab, West Bengal, Assam (except tribal areas), Tripura (except tribal areas), Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.
- The Citizenship (Third Amendment) Rules, 2026, notified on August 19, 2026, allow Collectors to process applications under Section 6B of the Citizenship Act.
- The CAA covers Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian communities from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh who entered India on or before December 31, 2014.
- Collectors can verify documents, conduct enquiries, administer the Oath of Allegiance and grant citizenship to eligible applicants.
- Pending applications will be transferred from the earlier Empowered Committees/District Level Committees to the concerned Collectors.

Jal Shakti Data Sharing Policy

- The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation under the Ministry of Jal Shakti released the Policy on Data Sharing, Interoperability and Stakeholder Access in New Delhi.
- The policy creates a federated data-sharing framework for the Centre, States, Union Territories (UTs), Gram Panchayats and approved stakeholders in the rural drinking water sector.
- It uses common identifiers, standardised metadata, interoperable registries and secure digital services for safe and smooth data exchange.
- Gram Panchayats will have a greater role in asset monitoring, grievance redressal and service accountability.
- The policy supports Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based analytics, geospatial planning, water-quality monitoring and Digital Twins through purpose-based data access.

- It is part of the Sujalam Bharat Digital Public Infrastructure under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) 2.0, aimed at improving rural drinking water service delivery.

National Campaign on Entrepreneurship-II

- The Ministry of Rural Development launched the National Campaign on Entrepreneurship-II under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana–National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) to promote entrepreneurship among rural women.
- The three-month campaign will run from 21 August to 21 November 2026, focusing on women-led enterprises in farm and non-farm sectors.
- It aims to train 5 lakh Self-Help Group (SHG) women, formalise 50,000 rural enterprises, and orient 50,000 community cadres for enterprise promotion.
- The campaign also targets adding 2 lakh members to producer groups and enterprises and promoting sustainable agro-ecological practices among 20 lakh women.
- It plans to onboard 25,000 SHG members onto the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) and Government e-Marketplace (GeM); enterprise-support cadres will be recognised as "Udyam Sakhis."

10 Years of UPI

- The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) completed 10 years of digital payments in India on 25 August 2026.
- UPI was launched in 2016 by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- Annual UPI transactions increased from 1.78 crore in Financial Year (FY) 2016-17 to over 24,162 crores in FY 2025-26, a 13,000-fold rise.
- Transaction value increased from ₹0.07 lakh crore to about ₹314 lakh crore, a rise of over 4,000 times.
- UPI is currently operational in 11 countries: United Arab Emirates, France, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Singapore, Mauritius, Qatar, Cambodia, Greece and the Maldives.
- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has recognised UPI as the world's largest real-time payment system by transaction volume.

India's Solar PV Manufacturing Capacity

- India's solar photovoltaic (PV) module manufacturing capacity has reached 100 GW, but it remains highly dependent on imports for key upstream inputs.

- India's module capacity rose from 2.3 GW in 2014 to 100 GW by August 2025, while cell capacity reached 25 GW and wafer capacity about 2 GW by March 2025.
- India's import dependence remains close to 100% for polysilicon, over 90% for wafers, over 60% for cells and over 40% for modules, with China as the major source.
- The government is supporting domestic manufacturing through the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme, Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM) and Basic Customs Duty (BCD); the PLI scheme has awarded 48 GW of integrated PV manufacturing capacity.
- India had 106 GW of installed solar capacity by March 2025 and needs to add around 174 GW to achieve its 280 GW solar target by 2030.
- India's solar PV exports rose eightfold to $1.2 billion in FY2025, but 97% went to the United States, showing the need to diversify export markets.

Census 2027 Changes

- Census 2027 will not record beggars and vagrants as a separate category for the first time.
- They will instead be included under "others" in the non-economic activity category.
- Only about 3.8 lakh people identified themselves as beggars or vagrants in Census 2011, compared with 6.3 lakh in 2001 and 5.4 lakh in 1991.
- Census 2027 will also add natural calamities as a reason for migration.
- New fields will collect parents' date and place of birth and religion when they are not listed in the same household or are no longer alive.
- Details such as Aadhaar, voter ID and passport numbers, where available, may also be collected.

LPG Pipeline Network Expansion

- The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) approved about 1,800 km of LPG pipelines with an estimated investment of ₹7,000 crore.
- The pipelines will cover Telangana, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Karnataka and Goa.
- State-owned GAIL (India) Limited will develop the projects.
- The projects include Cherlapally–Nagpur (556 km), Jhansi–Sitarganj (611 km), and Shikrapur–Goa & Hubli (633 km) pipelines.
- The projects are expected to increase India's LPG pipeline network from about 7,700 km to 9,500 km, a rise of about 24%.

Digital Platform Workers

- India's Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2026 is likely to collect separate data on digital and platform workers for the first time.
- The survey will cover workers such as food delivery executives, drivers and home-service providers.
- Their earnings, working hours and working conditions will also be recorded.
- The data is being collected on an experimental basis, while such workers will remain under the broader self-employed category.
- The PLFS 2026 results are expected in March 2027.
- The data will help the government frame welfare policies and implement provisions of the Social Security Code.

Buckingham Canal Restoration

- The Tamil Nadu government is examining a ₹876.35-crore plan to make a 7.2-km central stretch of the Buckingham Canal navigable again.
- The Buckingham Canal runs for about 450 km along India's east coast, with 250 km in Andhra Pradesh and 200 km in Tamil Nadu.
- It was originally constructed in 1806 by Basil Cochrane and was initially known as Cochrane Canal.
- It was renamed Buckingham Canal in 1878 after the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, then Governor of Madras.
- The proposed navigable stretch would run from Napier Bridge to the Adyar River via Greenways Road, with passenger boats, floating restaurants and cargo movement proposed.
- The North Buckingham Canal (316 km) and South Buckingham Canal (110 km) were declared parts of National Waterway 4 in 2016.

Ministerial Dialogue on 'Accelerating Drought Resilience'

- India has called for a shift in global drought policy from reactive response to proactive, technology-enabled resilience at the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) COP17 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.
- It urged countries to strengthen early warning systems, watershed restoration and climate-resilient agriculture.
- It called for measures including watershed restoration, climate-resilient cropping and stronger early warning systems in drought-prone areas.

- It also said drought resilience should be supported by disaster funds earmarked for droughts, employment guarantees and emergency water supplies.
- Approximately 68 percent of India's total sown area is drought-prone
- It is guided by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, and the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- The drought warning system is also supported by space-based drought forecasting from the India Meteorological Department and the Mahalanobis National Crop Forecast Centre.

India's Non-Fossil Fuel Power Capacity 2026

- India's Non-Fossil Fuel Power Capacity Crosses 300 GW.
- It is 60 percent of its non-fossil fuel power generation capacity target of 500 GW.
- Non-fossil fuel capacity includes solar power, wind power, hydro power, bio-power and Nuclear Power.
- It was said by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
- In the total Non-Fossil Fuel Capacity of the country, solar energy has remained a key growth engine.

By sector wise

- Installed solar capacity has risen to 164.59 GW.
- Installed wind capacity has reached 58.14 GW
- Presently, hydropower accounts for 57.24 GW of capacity, while bio-power contributes 11.75 GW.
- Nuclear power accounts for another 8.78 GW.

Delay in Lok Sabha prorogation

- Ten days have gone by since the Lok Sabha was adjourned sine die in the Monsoon Session, but still there is no information on its prorogation (formal end).
- The Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha were adjourned sine die on August 13.
- The time gap between the adjournment of the Lok Sabha sine die and its prorogation (formal end) is generally two to four days.
- Although there are many instances when adjournment and prorogation have taken place on the very same day.
- It is true that the gap for the Monsoon session in 2015 was 28 days and in 2021 it was 20 days.

- Termination of a session of the House by an order made by the President under Article 85(2) is called prorogation.
- The President, in exercising the power to prorogue the House, acts on the advice of the Prime Minister.
- The Prime Minister may consult the Cabinet before the advice is submitted to the President.
- Prorogation of the House may take place any time, even while the House is sitting.
- Usually, however, prorogation follows the adjournment of the sitting of the House sine die.
- The period between prorogation of the House and its reassembly in a new session is termed as 'inter-session period'.
- The prorogation, not adjournment, formally closes a session and clears the way for the next one to be convened.

Indian Railways Four-Laning Plan

- Indian Railways plans to four-lane around 11,000 km of its High-Density Network (HDN) to increase train capacity and reduce congestion.
- The seven high-density routes together carry about 41% of total railway traffic, while accounting for only around 16% of the railway network.
- The seven routes are Delhi–Howrah, Howrah–Chennai, Chennai–Mumbai, Mumbai–Delhi, Delhi–Chennai, Mumbai–Howrah, and Delhi–Guwahati.
- Kavach 4.0, India's indigenously developed Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system, has been commissioned over 2,490 route km on the Delhi–Mumbai and Delhi–Howrah corridors.
- Kavach 4.0 includes improved train-location accuracy, better signal information in large railway yards and integration with existing Electronic Interlocking Systems.

India's Energy Demand by 2047

- Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said India's energy demand is expected to grow 2.5 times by 2047.
- India is expected to account for around 25% of the additional global energy demand by 2047.
- India is currently the world's third-largest consumer of energy and oil.

- India is also the third-largest refiner and the fourth-largest importer of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG).
- Over the past decade, India has diversified energy sources, strengthened domestic capabilities and expanded strategic energy partnerships.

Fastest Growing Container Port - Jawaharlal Nehru Port

- Jawaharlal Nehru Port ranked 21st globally and became the fastest-growing container port in the first half of 2026, according to Alphaliner.
- It handled 4.40 million TEUs (Twenty-foot Equivalent Units) from January to June 2026, compared with 3.87 million TEUs in the same period of 2025, recording 13.6% growth.
- Its global ranking improved by seven places, from 28th to 21st, bringing it close to Colombo Port, which ranked 20th.
- Mundra Port in Gujarat was the only other Indian port in the top 30, ranking 26th with around 2.4% growth.
- The growth at JN Port was supported by increased Indian export-import (EXIM) demand, higher terminal capacity and diversion of some West Asia-bound cargo to Indian ports.

Mangrol - Third Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft

- It is the Third of eight Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Crafts (ASW-SWC)
- State-run Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) delivered this
- It was named after the coastal port town of Mangrol in Junagadh district, Gujarat
- It was designed to detect, track, and engage enemy submarines operating in shallow, acoustically cluttered coastal waters
- It will be freeing frontline destroyers and frigates for blue-water operations.
- Operational Range will be Up to 200 nautical miles from the coast
- Speed & Endurance will be Max speed of 25 knots; 2-week operational endurance
- ASW-SWC Programme is designed to replace the four Soviet-origin Abhay-class corvettes.
- It strengthens India's coastal defense capabilities amid increasing Chinese underwater activity in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

Seven Drug Standards

- The Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC) launched seven nitrosamine impurity reference standards for the first time.
- The standards will help laboratories accurately detect and measure nitrosamine impurities in medicines.
- Nitrosamines are harmful compounds that may form during the manufacture, storage or packaging of medicines.
- These standards will improve pharmaceutical testing, quality assurance and regulatory compliance.
- IPC also held its first interactive meeting with the Central Drugs Laboratory (CDL), Kolkata, on drug quality and pharmacopoeial standards.

India's First Superfine ATH Plant

- Hindalco Industries commissioned India's first Superfine Precipitated Aluminium Trihydrate (PPT ATH) plant in Belagavi, Karnataka.
- The plant has an initial annual capacity of 30,000 tonnes, which can be expanded to 60,000 tonnes.
- PPT ATH is a halogen-free flame-retardant material used in cables, insulators, paints and thermal insulation.
- It reduces the spread of flames and smoke without releasing harmful halogen acid gases.
- The facility uses technology developed in-house and operates entirely on biomass, solar and wind energy.
- Domestic production will meet most of India's demand from the wire and cable industry and reduce imports.

India's First Sports Genomics Programme

- Gujarat launched India's first state-level Sports Genomics Programme through the Gujarat Biotechnology Research Centre (GBRC).
- It will study genetic and biological factors related to athletes' strength, endurance, recovery and injury risk.
- Gujarat plans to collect 2,000 samples annually and nearly 10,000 over five years.
- The programme will create the Gujarat Athlete Genome Database (G-AGD).
- It will support scientific talent identification and personalised training, nutrition and recovery plans.

INTERNATIONAL

Southeast Asia Blue Economy Crisis

- A report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) warned that Southeast Asia's blue economy is facing challenges due to funding shortages and environmental degradation.
- The region's ocean-based economy supports livelihoods through fisheries, aquaculture, shipping, tourism, and marine conservation activities.
- Overfishing, habitat destruction, pollution, and climate change are damaging marine ecosystems such as mangroves, coral reefs, and seagrass beds.
- Southeast Asia faces a financing gap of nearly $2.1 trillion by 2030 for sustainable ocean management and climate adaptation.
- OECD recommended expanding blended finance, including blue bonds, blue carbon markets, debt-for-nature swaps, and sustainability-linked loans to support the blue economy.

Global HIV Funding

- The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) reported that global Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) funding fell by US$1.5 billion in 2025, threatening the goal of ending acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) as a public health threat by 2030.
- International HIV funding declined from US$8.8 billion in 2024 to US$7.3 billion in 2025, the lowest level in nearly two decades.
- Low- and middle-income countries require US$21.9 billion annually for HIV programmes, but only US$17.6 billion was available in 2025, leaving a US$4.3 billion funding gap.
- Funding cuts disrupted HIV prevention, treatment, medicine supply chains, and community health services, especially in sub-Saharan Africa.
- The 2026 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS, adopted by 149 United Nations (UN) Member States, aims to expand treatment and prevention to help end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030.

IEA's Electricity Mid-Year Update 2026

- The IEA's Electricity Mid-Year Update 2026 says global electricity consumption is projected to rise from 28,600 terawatt hours in 2025 to 30,700 terawatt hours by 2027.
- It will be driven by industry, electric vehicles, cooling, appliances and data centres.

- The renewable electricity generation is set to overtake coal globally in 2026, after reaching near parity in 2025.
- Solar photovoltaic power remains the largest contributor to global electricity supply growth.
- Solar PV is to surpass wind power and become the world's second-largest renewable electricity source after hydropower.
- Global gas-fired electricity generation is forecast to remain broadly unchanged in 2026, breaking the growth trend seen through much of the past decade.
- Nuclear power generation is also expected to rise in 2026 and accelerate in 2027, supported by new reactors coming online in China and India, and strong output in the United States and France.
- India's electricity demand is forecast to rebound by 7% in 2026, supported by industrial activity, services growth and heatwave-driven cooling demand.
- India crossed 100 GW of variable renewable energy supply for the first time in July, even as rising evening peaks continue to strain the grid.
- The rapidly rising evening peak demand continues to require coal and gas-fired plants to increase generation.
- India's combined solar PV and wind generation rose by more than 25 per cent during the first half of 2026.
- Its share in total power supply reached 42.79 per cent, the highest recorded so far.
- Instantaneous ground-mounted variable renewable energy generation touched an all-time high of 103 GW.
- The renewable energy's share has ranged between 35 per cent and 42 per cent.
- When hydropower and nuclear power are included, non-fossil sources have accounted for nearly half of total electricity supply.
- International Energy Agency (IEA) is a Paris-based autonomous intergovernmental organization, established in 1974.
- It provides policy recommendations, analysis and data on the global energy sector.
- The 32 member countries and 13 association countries of the IEA represent 75% of global energy demand.
- It was set up under the framework of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in the aftermath of the 1973 oil crisis.
- Its publications include the annual World Energy Outlook, as well as the Net Zero by 2050 report.

- All IEA member countries have signed the Paris Agreement, which aims to limit warming to 1.5 °C, and two thirds of IEA member governments have made commitments to emission neutrality by 2050.
- But the United States has withdrawn twice.
- India officially declared its "Association" status with the International Energy Agency (IEA) on March 30, 2017.
- In July 2025, Brazil started the process to become a member country.
- Clean Energy Transitions Programme of the IEA has identified Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, and South Africa as priority countries.

Change of Nauru's Colonial Name

- Pacific island nation Nauru officially changed its name to the Republic of Naoero after a constitutional amendment approved by its Parliament in May 2026.
- The new name Naoero is the indigenous name of the island, replacing the colonial-era name Nauru.
- Naoero is located in Micronesia, in the Central Pacific Ocean, and is the third-smallest sovereign country in the world after Vatican City and Monaco.
- The country has an area of about 21 sq km, a population of around 12,000, and uses the Australian Dollar (AUD) as its currency.
- The indigenous language Dorerin Naoero (Nauruan language) is classified as severely endangered by UNESCO.

Venezuela and ICC

- Venezuela has formally notified the United Nations of its "irrevocable" decision to withdraw from the International Criminal Court.
- The ICC had been conducting a multi-year investigation into members of its armed forces and other officials.
- But the withdrawal does not affect investigations or legal proceedings that have already begun before the withdrawal takes effect.
- The ICC can continue its ongoing investigation into alleged crimes against humanity in Venezuela.
- The government justified the move by alleging a "geographical bias" within the court.
- It was claiming it disproportionately targets nations in the Global South, specifically across Africa and Latin America.
- Chad also announced plans to withdraw from the ICC.

- Chad's withdrawal follows similar moves by Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger last year.
- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is wanted by the ICC over alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza.
- The International Criminal Court (ICC) is an intergovernmental organisation and international tribunal seated in The Hague, Netherlands.
- It was established in 2002 under the multilateral Rome Statute.
- The court was established to prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and the crime of aggression when member states are unwilling or unable to do so themselves.
- The ICC is the first and only permanent international court with jurisdiction to prosecute individuals for international crimes.
- The ICC can generally exercise jurisdiction in cases where the accused is a national of a state party, the alleged crime took place on the territory of a state party, or a situation is referred to the Court by the United Nations Security Council.
- Countries that are not party to the Rome Statute and do not recognise the court's jurisdiction include China, India, Russia, and the United States.

Italy–Spain Border Controls

- Italy temporarily suspended Schengen free-movement rules with Spain from 1 August 2026 for one month after a large influx of irregular migrants into Ceuta.
- The Schengen Area allows passport-free travel between most participating European countries.
- Under the Schengen Borders Code, member countries can temporarily restore internal border checks for public security or internal security reasons.
- Ceuta is a Spanish enclave on the North African coast of Morocco and is a key migration route between Africa and Europe.
- The temporary checks mainly apply to third-country nationals arriving from Spain, while European Union (EU) citizens can continue regular travel.
- Italy said the measure was taken to strengthen border security and manage migration pressure.

Multinational Maritime Defence Alliance

- Recently, Saudi Arabia and 13 other countries have established a maritime defence coalition.
- It was launched by Saudi Arabia + 13 nations forming an alliance in Riyadh.

- Saudi Arabia is the founding and leading state of the coalition and serves as its permanent headquarters.
- It aims to enhance maritime security, protecting freedom of navigation, securing international trade routes and energy supply lines.
- Its focus is to safeguard shared maritime interests in the Bab El-Mandeb Strait, Red Sea, and Gulf of Aden.
- Founding Members are Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, Nigeria, Sudan, Djibouti, Somalia and others.
- Its nature will be purely defensive, compliant with international law and sovereignty.
- It does not target any state, alliance, or international organisation.

BRICS Anti-Corruption Meeting 2026

- India hosted the Second BRICS Anti-Corruption Working Group Meeting and Second BRICS Expert Network on Asset Recovery Meeting in Hyderabad.
- The meetings were organised by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) under India's BRICS Presidency 2026 to strengthen cooperation against cross-border corruption.
- BRICS countries discussed cooperation in tracing fugitive offenders, recovering illegal assets, and improving information sharing among enforcement agencies.
- Members agreed to continue discussions on creating a BRICS Network of Law-Enforcement Practitioners for corruption-related cases.
- The meeting focused on using Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), and digital systems to improve transparency and prevent corruption.

BRICS Trade Ministers' Meeting 2026

- The 16th BRICS Trade Ministers' Meeting concluded in Jaipur, Rajasthan under India's BRICS Chairship 2026.
- Members finalised the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership 2030 for submission to BRICS leaders at the upcoming summit in New Delhi.
- They endorsed the Global Value Chains Action Plan 2026–2030, including the BRICS Technical Council and BRICS Connect initiative.
- The meeting adopted Guiding Principles for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) credit, promoting cash-flow-based lending to help address the global trade finance gap of about $2.5 trillion.
- India highlighted food security, farmers' interests and Special and Differential Treatment (S&DT) for developing countries under the World Trade Organization (WTO) framework.

BRICS Industry Ministers' Meeting

- The 10th BRICS Industry Ministers' Meeting concluded in Jaipur, Rajasthan, under India's BRICS Chairship 2026.
- The meeting adopted a Joint Declaration to strengthen industrial cooperation in Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), photovoltaics, start-ups, innovation, transport and logistics.
- A Framework for Cooperation in the Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) Working Group was adopted to strengthen MSME ecosystems among BRICS countries.
- The Terms of Reference and Action Plan for the BRICS Working Group on Photovoltaic Industry were adopted to promote cooperation in solar energy.
- India proposed a BRICS Incubator Network and BRICS Startup Innovation Fund to support innovation-led growth and start-ups.
- The meeting was held under the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability" through the BRICS Partnership on New Industrial Revolution (PartNIR).

Danube River Crisis – Europe

- The Danube River in Europe has reached record-low levels due to prolonged heatwaves and below-average rainfall.
- The nearly 2,900-km-long river flows through or borders 10 countries and is an important route for transporting goods such as grain, steel and fuel.
- Low water levels have disrupted shipping, ferries and tourism, while exposing shipwrecks, wartime relics and other objects from the riverbed.
- Hungary's Paks Nuclear Power Plant has reduced operations because the warm and low Danube water affects its cooling system; Romania is also considering emergency measures for the Cernavodă Nuclear Power Plant.
- The crisis shows how extreme weather and drought can affect transport, energy, tourism and local livelihoods across Europe.

Birthright Citizenship - U.S.

- U.S. President Donald Trump signed two executive orders on August 6, 2026, to limit birth right citizenship in the United States.
- The orders target "birth tourism", where pregnant foreign nationals travel to the U.S. to give birth so their children can obtain U.S. citizenship.
- They also seek to limit citizenship rights for children born to foreign government employees and people classified as alien enemies.

- The move follows the U.S. Supreme Court's 6–3 ruling on June 30, 2026, which rejected Trump's earlier attempt to restrict birth right citizenship.
- Birth right citizenship is linked to the 14th Amendment, whose Citizenship Clause grants citizenship to persons born or naturalized in the U.S. and subject to its jurisdiction.

Lake Mead Water Level

- Lake Mead, the largest reservoir in the United States, reached its lowest-ever water level at about 1,040.3 feet (317.1 m) above sea level.
- Lake Mead is formed by the Hoover Dam on the Arizona–Nevada border and is a major water source for the American Southwest.
- The low level is linked to overuse of the Colorado River, rising temperatures and prolonged drought.
- Seven U.S. states, Native American tribes and two Mexican states depend on the Colorado River Basin for water, agriculture, industry and hydropower.
- Lake Mead is approaching the 1,035-foot operational threshold, below which some Hoover Dam turbines may shut down, and power generation capacity could fall sharply.
- The Colorado River Basin is also facing low levels at Lake Powell, increasing pressure on regional water supplies.

Death Penalty - Lebanon

- Lebanon's Parliament abolished the death penalty, making Lebanon the first Middle Eastern country to formally abolish capital punishment.
- The law replaces the death penalty with life imprisonment and aggravated hard labour for the most serious crimes.
- Lebanon had not carried out an execution since 2004, but death sentences were still being issued.
- The law follows years of efforts to abolish capital punishment and Lebanon's support for United Nations (UN) resolutions calling for a moratorium.
- At least 85 people were on death row in Lebanon as of January 2026, according to Amnesty International.

Mecca Joint defence agreement 2026

- Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Pakistan have signed a joint defence agreement.
- It was saying an attack on one of them would be seen as an attack on all three.

- It sees three of the world's most powerful Muslim nations come together to offer mutual defence guarantees.
- After the US and Israel attacked Iran on 28 February, Tehran and its allies struck targets in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states and disrupted traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, a major oil shipping channel, and the Red Sea.
- Pakistan, Turkey and Saudi Arabia are the three Sunni-majority powers.
- It is also called as Sunni NATO.
- Turkey has Nato's second-largest military.
- Saudi Arabia is the Gulf's leading military power and one of the world's biggest oil exporters.
- While Pakistan is the world's only nuclear-armed Muslim-majority country.
- Saudi Arabia and Pakistan had already announced a joint defence pact last year.
- Kuwait, another Gulf state, has also ratified a broad defence cooperation agreement with Pakistan in 2023.
- Turkey has sided with Pakistan in the Kashmir issue even after it has illegally occupied the area.
- Turkey has also helped the Islamic Republic during the four-day military retaliation by India against its sponsoring of terror in May 2025.
- Last month, Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels – who control much of the north-west of the country - announced a "maritime embargo" against Saudi Arabia and targeted Saudi airports, oil facilities and tankers in the Red Sea.

First Indian Gasoline Shipment – Russia

- Russia has imported gasoline from India for the first time as Ukrainian strikes on Russian oil refineries have reduced domestic fuel production.
- Ukrainian strikes have reduced Russia's refining capacity, forcing it to restrict fuel exports and seek gasoline from countries including India and Belarus.
- The first shipment of around 42,000 tonnes of gasoline was supplied by Nayara Energy from its Vadinar refinery in Gujarat and reached Russia.
- The fuel was transferred between tankers at Damietta, Egypt, before being transported to Russia.
- Russia's crude processing fell to about 3.6 million barrels per day in July, around one-third below its normal seasonal level.

Multinational Maritime Defence Coalition

- Saudi Arabia has launched the Multinational Maritime Defence Coalition (MMDC) to strengthen maritime security in the Red Sea, Bab al-Mandeb Strait and Gulf of Aden.

- The coalition was formed after attacks on commercial shipping and a regional summit held in Riyadh on 30 July 2026.
- 14 countries initially signed the declaration, including Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, Pakistan, Egypt, Bangladesh, Yemen, Somalia, Djibouti and Comoros.
- The MMDC is headquartered in Riyadh, with joint maritime operations and coordination centres.
- Saudi Rear Admiral Abdullah bin Salem Al-Shehri was appointed as its first commander.

US Transhipment Report

- The United States named India in a "shadow transhipment network" report released.
- Transhipment means goods are sent through an intermediate country before reaching the final destination.
- The US alleged that some Chinese goods entered the American market through third countries to avoid tariffs (taxes on imports).
- India was placed in Tier 1 – Diversified Scale Leaders in the US transhipment risk framework.
- The report identified the Pune–Gujarat–Chennai industrial corridor as a possible route for certain China-linked products.
- The US plans to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems to detect and track suspicious trade shipments.

Hormuz Shipping Route Agreement

- Iran and Oman reached an agreement on a shipping route map for traffic through the Strait of Hormuz.
- The Strait of Hormuz lies between Iran and Oman and connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.
- Iran and Oman began bilateral maritime negotiations on 18 June 2026 after signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on safe navigation routes.
- The technical plan involved Iranian defence, security and environmental authorities along with Omani representatives.
- The International Maritime Organization (IMO) reported 65 confirmed vessel incidents and 17 seafarer deaths in the Strait of Hormuz and the wider Middle East by 11 August 2026.
- The Strait is an important route for oil tankers and commercial vessels moving between the Persian Gulf and international waters.

BRICS ICT Meeting 2026

- Pune is hosting the 7th BRICS Working Group for Cooperation in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).
- The meeting is being held under India's 2026 BRICS Chairship and focuses on digital policy, telecommunications and emerging technologies.
- Discussions include Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), digital skills, ICT start-ups and inclusive digital environments.
- The BRICS Institute of Future Networks reviewed work on Artificial Intelligence (AI), next-generation communications and Industry 4.0 applications.
- The Digital BRICS Forum and Expo is scheduled for 20 August 2026, ahead of the 12th Communications Ministers Meeting.

EU Carbon Tax - BRICS

- The BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) Environment Ministers opposed the European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) at their 12th meeting in New Delhi.
- BRICS said such carbon-border measures could affect developing countries climate action and resilience efforts.
- CBAM covers carbon-intensive imports such as iron and steel, aluminium, cement, fertilisers, hydrogen and electricity.
- The ministers called for increased adaptation finance from developed countries to help developing nations deal with climate impacts.
- They urged developed countries to provide finance through grants and concessional finance without increasing developing countries' financial burden.
- They also called for developed countries to meet the commitment to triple adaptation finance by 2035.

Sahel Lithium Conflict

- Growing lithium extraction in Africa's Sahel region is creating opportunities for armed groups to profit from the mineral trade.
- Lithium is important for electric vehicle (EV) batteries, smartphones and renewable energy storage, increasing global demand for the mineral.
- Armed groups in Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Chad and Nigeria are exploiting weak governance, informal mining and cross-border smuggling to raise revenue.
- The study found that groups can tax miners, traders and transporters and control access to mining areas.
- Stronger mining regulation, mineral-tracking systems and domestic lithium processing are needed to prevent lithium revenues from financing conflicts.

BRICS Youth Energy Summit 2026

- India hosted the 8th BRICS Youth Energy Summit virtually under its BRICS Chairship.
- The summit focused on Energy Security and Sustainability, Energy Access and Equity, and Technology and Innovation.
- The theme was "Energy for All", with India's broader BRICS Chairship theme being "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability."
- Discussions covered energy diversification, resilient supply chains, innovative financing and digitalisation of energy systems.
- The summit was followed by the BRICS Youth Council Meeting and Youth Summit in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

BRICS Tourism Working Group Meeting

- The 2nd BRICS 2026 Tourism Working Group Meeting was held in Jaipur, Rajasthan under India's BRICS Chairship.
- The meeting was hosted by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.
- It focused on India's theme, "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability."
- Four priority areas were discussed: Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Tourism, Sustainable and Responsible Tourism, Tourism Skilling and Capacity Building, and Tourism Exchanges and Seamless Travel Facilitation.
- It followed the 1st BRICS 2026 Tourism Working Group Meeting, held virtually on 25 May 2026.
- The subsequent BRICS Tourism Ministers' Meeting adopted the BRICS Tourism Ministers' Communiqué 2026, known as the Jaipur Declaration, by consensus.
- The Jaipur Declaration provides a framework for cooperation in AI-enabled tourism, sustainable tourism, skill development and seamless travel, while also encouraging tourism investment, infrastructure and people-to-people exchanges.

India-Japan Maritime Security Pact

- India and Japan have signed a Memorandum of Arrangement (MoA) on Maritime Security Cooperation on 20 August 2026 to deepen defence and maritime security cooperation.
- The agreement covers Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), information sharing, Search and Rescue (SAR), Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) and protection of Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs).
- Both countries will strengthen naval exercises, reciprocal port visits, logistics support, ship repair and naval shipbuilding cooperation, including greater use of Indian shipyards under Make in India.

- India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Japan's Acquisition, Technology & Logistics Agency (ATLA) will expand cooperation in advanced defence technologies; UNICORN is the first defence equipment transfer project between the two countries.
- India and Japan also reaffirmed commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific and will expand exercises such as Dharma Guardian, JAIMEX and Veer Guardian 26.

Kuril Islands Dispute

- Russian President Vladimir Putin visited Iturup Island in the disputed Kuril Islands, prompting strong protests from Japan.
- The Kuril Islands are a volcanic archipelago of 56 islands, stretching about 1,200 km in the North Pacific.
- Japan claims four islands—Iturup, Kunashir, Shikotan and Habomai, known as the Northern Territories, while Russia administers them as part of the Sakhalin region.
- Russia took control of the islands after World War II, while Japan continues to claim sovereignty over the four islands.
- Russia cites post-war agreements such as the Yalta Agreement and Potsdam Declaration (1945), while Japan refers to earlier treaties including the Treaty of Shimoda (1855) and Treaty of St. Petersburg (1875).
- The dispute has prevented the signing of a formal Russia-Japan peace treaty since World War II.

SAVE America Act

- U.S. President Donald Trump cited India's voter identification system while seeking support for the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) America Act.
- Trump said India's recent general election saw over 646 million voters, with less than 1% voting by postal ballot, and highlighted the use of valid photo identification.
- The SAVE America Act proposes proof of citizenship for voter registration and a nationwide voter identification requirement in the U.S.
- It also seeks to restrict voting by mail and change other election-related rules.
- The White House has pointed to India and Brazil as countries that link voter identity cards with biometric databases, while the U.S. largely relies on voter self-attestation.
- The bill has faced divisions among Democrats and Republicans, and the U.S. Senate had not taken concrete steps to pass it before its five-week recess.

India–Brazil Digital Partnership

- India and Brazil signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on telecommunications and Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) in Pune.
- The agreement covers Artificial Intelligence (AI), 5G, 6G, Open Radio Access Network (Open RAN), Internet of Things (IoT) and cybersecurity.
- It also includes cooperation in Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), Direct-to-Device connectivity, spectrum management and Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites.
- The MoU was signed during the 12th BRICS Communications Ministers Meeting and BRICS ICT Track Meeting.
- It is the second bilateral agreement between the communications ministries of India and Brazil in 2026.

BRICS STI Meeting 2026

- The 16th BRICS Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) concluded in Chennai, ahead of the 14th BRICS STI Ministerial Meeting.
- The meeting was held under India's BRICS Chairship 2026 with the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability."
- The Department of Science and Technology (DST) coordinated the meeting, which was hosted by Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras).
- Discussions covered BRICS STI Working Groups, priority areas, the BRICS STI Framework Programme, and upcoming initiatives such as the BRICS Young Scientist Forum and Young Innovator's Prize.

India–Japan Cooperation on Critical Minerals

- India and Japan discussed strengthening cooperation on critical mineral supply chains and e-waste recycling in New Delhi.
- The talks focused on resource circulation to strengthen critical mineral supply chains and reduce dependence on limited primary resources.
- Both sides discussed advancing e-waste recycling, which can recover valuable materials from discarded electronic products.
- The cooperation aims to support a sustainable and circular economy while deepening India–Japan environmental cooperation.

Operation Economic Outcast

- The United States launched "Operation Economic Outcast" to economically isolate Iran by targeting its financial and commercial networks.

- The US is targeting digital assets, technology, gold, aviation and shipping linked to Iran.
- The first phase includes sanctions against more than 60 entities, individuals and vessels.
- Secondary sanctions may penalise foreign businesses and banks that facilitate prohibited transactions with Iran.
- China is a major test of the campaign as it bought more than 80% of Iran's shipped oil in 2025.

BRICS Ocean and Polar Science Meeting

- India hosted the 8th BRICS Working Group on Ocean and Polar Science and Technology (OPST) in Goa during its BRICS Presidency.
- The meeting was organised by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and hosted by the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR).
- Discussions focused on coastal resilience, the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), joint polar research, Antarctic expeditions and capacity building.
- BRICS countries agreed on initiatives for coastal resilience, joint polar ocean biodiversity studies, International Polar Year–5 milestones and training young researchers.
- India will coordinate the finalisation of the working group roadmap and short-term action plan during its BRICS Presidency.

BRICS Sports Ministers Joint Declaration

- The BRICS Sports Ministers' Meeting concluded in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, with the adoption of the BRICS Sports Joint Declaration by consensus.
- The meeting was held under India's BRICS Chairship 2026, focusing on youth development, inclusion, sports technology and cultural exchange.
- BRICS countries proposed a Working Group on Sports Technology to promote cooperation in sports science, Artificial Intelligence (AI), digital transformation and athlete performance.
- India's proposal for a BRICS Sports Manufacturing Conclave received broad support; the first conclave is proposed in Udaipur in November 2026.
- A BRICS Traditional and Indigenous Sports Demonstration Games is proposed in Ahmedabad in October 2026 to showcase the sporting heritage of BRICS countries.
- The meeting also promoted athlete and coach exchanges, joint competitions and knowledge sharing among BRICS countries.

M23 fighters 2026

- DR Congo and M23 fighters agree roadmap for peace talks.
- The Democratic Republic of Congo and the Rwanda-backed M23 armed group have agreed on a roadmap for peace talks
- The eastern DRC has been riven by decades of conflict, with multiple armed groups fighting over its mineral-rich territory.
- M23 has seized swathes of the region last year.
- The two sides signed a U.S.-brokered peace agreement late last year in the Qatari capital Doha, but fighting has continued.
- The talks also included representatives from the United States, Qatar, Switzerland, the African Union Commission and Togo, serving as African Union mediator.

About M23

- March 23 Movement is abbreviated as M23.
- It is also known as the Congolese Revolutionary Army.
- It is a predominantly Tutsi rebel group.
- It is a Rwandan-backed Congolese rebel paramilitary group.
- It is based in the eastern regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- It operates mainly in the provinces of North and South Kivu, which border Uganda and Rwanda.
- The 1994 Genocide: After Hutu extremists killed roughly 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus in Rwanda, a Tutsi-led rebel force took power.
- Rwanda (led by a Tutsi government) faces accusations from the UN and DRC of backing M23 troops and firepower.

Global Pastoralist Gathering and Conference 2026

- Mongolia hosted the Global Pastoralist Gathering and Conference under the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) 2026.
- The conference discussed sustainable pastoralism and rangeland management.
- The event was jointly organised by Mongolia's Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).
- Participants prepared the Global Pastoralists' Declaration, Women's Pastoralists' Declaration and Youth Pastoralists' Declaration.
- The outcomes will contribute to discussions at the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) COP17, which Mongolia is hosting in August 2026.

India–US Javelin Deal

- India signed a Letter of Offer and Acceptance (LOA) with the United States on to procure the Javelin anti-tank guided missile system through the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) process.
- The FGM-148 Javelin is a man-portable, fire-and-forget, medium-range anti-tank guided missile used against armoured vehicles and fortified positions.
- The Javelin is manufactured by the Javelin Joint Venture, involving RTX and Lockheed Martin.
- Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) signed an agreement with the Javelin Joint Venture in February 2025 to explore possible co-production in India.
- The US had approved the potential sale in November 2025, involving 100 Javelin missiles and 216 Excalibur artillery projectiles under separate cases.

U.S. on Palestine Action

- The United States designated the U.K.-based Palestine Action as a foreign terrorist organisation.
- Palestine Action, established in 2020, had already been banned by the United Kingdom and is challenging the ban.
- The U.S. also designated Autistici/Inventati (A/I Collective) of Italy and Masar Badil, a pro-Palestinian group, as terrorist organisations.
- The U.S. State Department described all three as violent far-left terrorist groups.
- Israel welcomed the designations, while Palestine Action's co-founder Huda Ammori criticised the measures.

7.5 trillion Cubic Feet Gas Reserve in Iran

- New natural gas field in Fars gas field in Iran with 7.5 trillion cubic feet of reserves was found.
- With 5.7 trillion cubic feet seen was recoverable.
- This distinction matters because not every molecule of gas found underground can necessarily be commercially extracted.
- The recoverable portion depends majorly on the geology of the field, the technology available and the economics of developing it.
- 5.7 trillion cubic feet recoverable figure is more useful than the headline 7.5 trillion cubic feet figure when thinking about its eventual economic impact.

- Newly discovered gas has also been described as "sweet gas", which generally contains relatively low levels of hydrogen sulphide.
- As a result, its processing is made easier than for gas with higher levels of impurities.
- Iran holds the world's second-largest proven natural gas reserves after Russia.

US Terror List 2026

- The United States has removed Syria from its State Sponsors of Terrorism (SSOT) list, following a 45-day congressional review.
- Syria had been on the list since 1979 over allegations of supporting armed groups opposed to Israel.
- The decision followed assurances from Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa that Syria would not support international terrorism in the future.
- The removal is expected to ease Syria's access to the US-led international financial system, trade and investment and support its reconstruction.
- With Syria's removal, Cuba, Iran and North Korea are the only countries remaining on the US SSOT list.
- Iran has been listed since 1984, Cuba since 1982 (restored in 2021), and North Korea since 2017 (restored after its earlier removal in 2008).

India-China Boundary Consensus

- India and China reached an eight-point consensus during the 25th Special Representatives' talks on the boundary question in Beijing.
- Both countries agreed to maintain peace and reduce tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), the de facto boundary between them.
- Two additional military meeting points and two new military hotlines will be established in the Eastern and Middle Sectors.
- The Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) will continue discussions on border management.
- The Expert Group on Boundary Delimitation will work on issues related to the boundary.
- The next Expert-Level Mechanism meeting on trans-border rivers and hydrological data sharing will be held in September 2026.

US-Venezuela Oil Deal

- The United States announced an agreement for majority control over more than 65 billion barrels of Venezuelan oil reserves.
- The reported deal covers 17 strategic oilfields and may grant the US access to the reserves for 100 years.
- The reserves represent about one-fifth of Venezuela's estimated 303 billion barrels of proven oil reserves.
- Venezuela estimated that the deal would attract $100 billion in investment and generate $209 billion in taxes.
- The deal was announced amid rising global oil prices and declining US oil reserves.

ECONOMY

Basel III AT-1 Perpetual Bonds - SBI

- State Bank of India (SBI) is set to become the first Indian bank in 2026 to issue Basel III-compliant Additional Tier-I (AT-1) Perpetual Bonds.
- SBI plans to raise ₹5,000 crore through these bonds as part of its ₹60,000 crore capital-raising programme for Financial Year (FY) 2026–27.
- AT-1 Perpetual Bonds are debt instruments that help banks strengthen their capital base, improve Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR), and meet Basel III norms.
- These bonds do not have a fixed maturity period but usually include a call option, allowing redemption after a specified period with regulatory approval.
- The issuance will support SBI's financial stability, future lending capacity, and compliance with banking regulations.

5Rs of Responsive Tax Governance

- The Union FM Sitharaman outlines 5Rs of responsive tax governance.
- The 5Rs of Responsive Tax Governance are Recognize, Respond, Redress, Reflect and Reform.
- The Union Finance Minister reiterates fair, efficient, transparent and taxpayer-centric administration.
- She was also calling for greater tax certainty and reduced litigation to strengthen taxpayer confidence and support India's economic growth.

- The Union Finance Minister also released six flagship publications of the Income Tax Department.
- These included:
  - Avlokan, the inaugural Annual Report of the FT&TR Division highlighting India's growing leadership in international taxation;
  - The Manual on Exchange of Information; the updated Guidance Note on FATCA & CRS;
  - India's first comprehensive Guidance Note on Crypto Asset Reporting Obligations for Crypto-Asset Service Providers;
  - The Annual Report of the APA Programme, showcasing the programme's progress; and
  - Re-engineering Tax Governance, tracing the Department's journey of transformation from paper-based processes to an integrated, technology-driven and taxpayer-centric digital ecosystem.

RBI Swap Scheme

- RBI's concessional swap facility attracted over $40.8 billion foreign exchange (forex) inflows by July 31, 2026.
- The facility was launched on June 5, 2026, to encourage foreign currency inflows and support domestic liquidity.
- Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) [FCNR(B)] deposits contributed the highest share with $36.725 billion, followed by Overseas Foreign Currency Borrowings (OFCBs) and External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs).
- The scheme aims to strengthen forex reserves, stabilise the Indian rupee, and improve foreign currency liquidity amid global economic pressures.
- FCNR(B) swap window will remain open until September 30, 2026, while the OFCB and ECB facility continues until December 31, 2026.

Revised base year of the Consumer Price Index

- Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) revised the base year of the Consumer Price Index from 2012=100 to 2024=100.
- It incorporated updated consumption weights from the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey 2023-24 and expanded market coverage.
- Under the CPI 2024 series, the inflation data is available from January, 2026 onwards.
- The inflation data of the CPI 2012 series is available up to December, 2025.

- A direct comparison of inflation under the new series with that of the previous series is not feasible on account of the changes in the item basket, weights, coverage of markets and methodology between the two series.
- The new series introduces rural house rent for the first time, significantly improving the coverage of rural housing consumption.
- Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures the change in retail prices of a fixed basket of goods and services consumed by households, and is India's headline retail inflation indicator (YoY % change in CPI).
- India's final CPI is made by mixing Rural CPI and Urban CPI in proportion to their share in total consumption (weights).
- CPI-based inflation is also the primary indicator for the Reserve Bank of India to help guide it in decisions such as interest rates and inflation control.

Insurer Ownership Rules – IRDAI

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) amended the IRDAI (Registration, Capital Structure, Transfer of Shares and Amalgamation of Insurers) Regulations, 2026.
- The new rules require prior approval from IRDAI for ownership changes when shareholding crosses 5%, 10%, 25%, 50% and 75% thresholds.
- Approval is also needed when an investor becomes the single largest shareholder of an insurance company.
- The amendments cover direct and indirect share transfers, promoter-group transfers, and dilution through fresh share issues.
- IRDAI was established under the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999, to regulate India's insurance sector.

Near-Universal Banking Coverage

- India has achieved near-universal banking coverage, with 99.92% of inhabited villages having a banking outlet within a 5-kilometre radius.
- Out of 6,01,328 inhabited villages, 6,00,868 villages are covered by a bank branch, Business Correspondent (BC), or India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) centre.
- The banking network includes over 1.81 lakh bank branches, 17.36 lakh Business Correspondents (BCs), and 1.65 lakh India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) centres.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), 58.77 crore bank accounts have been opened with deposits of ₹3,12,414 crore (as of 17 July 2026).

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) aims to provide a banking outlet within 5 km of every inhabited village and requires 25% of new branches to be opened in unbanked rural centres.

E-Commerce Export Framework

- The Government operationalised the Inventory-based Cross-border E-Commerce Export Framework under the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP), 2023.
- The framework allows e-commerce companies to hold goods in India exclusively to fulfil confirmed overseas export orders.
- Exports must be handled through an Exporter-on-Record (EOR), who procures goods from Sellers-on-Record (SORs) against confirmed overseas orders.
- The EOR handles customs, documentation, testing, packaging, labelling, logistics and compliance with destination-country requirements.
- The framework prevents speculative inventory and diversion to the domestic market, while helping Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), artisans and manufacturers access global e-commerce markets.

RBI's New NBFC List

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released the updated list of Upper Layer Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) for 2026–27.
- The list contains 17 NBFCs, up from 15 in the previous list.
- The RBI introduced an asset-size threshold of ₹1 lakh crore or more for identifying Upper Layer NBFCs in June 2026.
- REC Limited, Power Finance Corporation, Indian Railway Finance Corporation and Housing and Urban Development Corporation were added to the list.
- PNB Housing Finance and Sammaan Capital were excluded based on the revised asset-size criterion, but remain under enhanced regulation due to the five-year lock-in period.
- Tata Sons Private Limited continues to be examined regarding its application to surrender its Core Investment Company (CIC) registration.

Polymer Currency Trial

- The government has approved the introduction of one billion polymer banknotes each of ₹10 and ₹20 for field trials.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) proposed the polymer notes, which will be issued alongside existing paper-based banknotes.

- The notes will first undergo field trials; regular issuance will depend on the successful completion of these trials.
- The procurement process is still at an initial stage, so the exact launch date and cost are not yet fixed.
- Polymer banknotes are being introduced to test an alternative to paper-based currency in the ₹10 and ₹20 denominations.
- The proposal was made under Section 25 of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.

Top position in IPOs

- India is retaining the top position globally in the number of Initial Public Offerings (IPO).
- It is also ranking third in funds raised after major primary markets of United States and Hong Kong (China).
- According to SEBI's Annual Report, the primary equity market remained strong even as corporate bond mobilisation declined by 8.4 per cent to 9.1 lakh crore rupees, marking the first fall in four years.
- SEBI also introduced a new Closing Auction Session (CAS) to improve price discovery and align India's markets with global standards.
- The report noted that foreign portfolio investor (FPI) ownership fell to a 15-year low, while domestic institutional investors (DII) reached a record 17 per cent equity holding by March 2026.
- Mutual fund participation continued to expand, driven largely by Tier-3 cities, with monthly SIP contributions touching a record average of over 16,400 crore rupees.
- It also said, 62 per cent of retail investors are influenced by financial influencers on social media, prompting stronger investor protection measures.

Second List of Upper Layer NBFCs by RBI

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released a list of 17 large (upper layer or UL) non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) for the year 2026-27.
- The list includes Tata Sons, subjecting them to enhanced regulatory requirements for at least five years and mandatory listing within three years of identification.
- Other companies that figure in the list are REC Ltd, Power Finance Corporation Ltd, Indian Railways Finance Corporation Ltd, Bajaj Finance, Shriram Finance, Tata Capital, LIC Housing Finance and Cholamandalam Investment & Finance, Muthoot Finance, Aditya Birla Capital, Housing & Urban Development

Corporation, Mahindra Financial Services, L&T Finance, Bajaj Housing Finance, HDB Financial Services and Piramal Finance.

- The central bank's framework categorises NBFCs in Base Layer (NBFC-BL), Middle Layer (NBFC-ML), Upper Layer (NBFC-UL) and Top Layer (NBFC-TL) and provides the criteria to identify the NBFCs in the Upper Layer.
- As per the RBI's framework of Scale Based Regulation, the UL will comprise those NBFCs that are specifically identified annually by it as warranting enhanced regulatory requirements as stringent as commercial banks.
- The UL consists of NBFCs having asset size of ₹1,00,000 crore and above as per the latest audited balance sheet for the financial year.
- In terms of the framework, once an NBFC is classified as NBFC-UL, it will be subject to enhanced regulatory requirements, at least for a period of five years from its classification in the layer, even in case it does not meet the criteria in the subsequent years.
- Non-Banking Financial Companies are financial institutions registered under the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.
- NBFC is a financial company that provides banking services like loans, credit, and investments.
- It does not hold a full bank license.
- They cannot accept demand deposits like banks or issue self-drawn cheques.
- Deposits with NBFCs are not insured by government backing like bank deposits.
- They are registered under the Companies Act and regulated by the Reserve Bank of India.

FAST-DS Scheme for Small Taxpayers

- The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has notified the Foreign Assets of Small Taxpayers–Disclosure Scheme (FAST-DS) Rules, 2026, which came into force on 16 August 2026.
- FAST-DS is a one-time voluntary disclosure scheme introduced under Chapter IV of the Finance Act, 2026.
- It allows eligible taxpayers to disclose certain undisclosed foreign assets, undisclosed foreign income, or undeclared foreign assets by paying the specified tax or fee.
- The scheme aims to provide a legal mechanism for eligible small taxpayers to disclose specified foreign holdings or income.
- Taxpayers can submit declarations under the scheme only until 31 December 2026; no declaration will be accepted after this date.

Regional Rural Banks Loan Growth

- Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) recorded a 10.3% year-on-year (YoY) rise in gross loans to ₹5.78 lakh crore in FY 2025–26, up from ₹5.24 lakh crore.
- Their average achievement under the Priority Sector Lending (PSL) target reached 91.7% of Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC), against the overall target of 75%.
- Agriculture and allied activities accounted for the largest share, with ₹3.78 lakh crore, forming 77% of total PSL.
- Credit to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) stood at ₹66,978 crore, with over 95% directed to micro enterprises.
- RRBs provided ₹3.49 lakh crore to weaker sections, supporting financial inclusion and access to institutional credit in rural areas.

15 Year High - India's FDI

- India attracted $30.7 billion in gross Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) during April–June 2026, the highest level in at least 15 years.
- Net FDI reached $7.8 billion in the April–June 2026 quarter, the highest since June 2022.
- In June 2026, gross FDI inflows stood at $9.3 billion, while total outflows were $7.9 billion, resulting in net FDI of $1.3 billion.
- Singapore, the Netherlands, the United States (U.S.), and Canada together accounted for around 74% of the FDI inflows.
- The manufacturing sector received the largest share of inflows, followed by electricity generation, computer services, and communication services.
- Gross FDI in April–June 2026 was nearly 46% higher than the previous quarter and about 15% higher than the April–June 2025 quarter.

India's Forex Reserve Growth

- India's foreign exchange reserves increased by $12.4 billion to a record $729.3 billion during the week ended August 21, 2026.
- The rise was mainly supported by Foreign Currency Assets (FCA), the largest component of India's reserves, which increased by $9.4 billion to $591.3 billion.
- Gold reserves increased by $2.8 billion to $114.2 billion during the week.
- Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) rose by $112 million to $18.8 billion.
- India's reserve position with the IMF increased by $26 million to about $4.9 billion.

Fiscal Revenue List 2024–25

- Delhi recorded the highest own revenue share among states and Union Territories at 93.2% in the Financial Year 2024–25 Budget Estimates (FY25 BE).
- Haryana ranked second with 80.4%, followed by Telangana at 78.4%.
- Karnataka ranked fourth with 77.3%, while Tamil Nadu ranked fifth with 75.5%.
- Manipur recorded the lowest own revenue share at 10%.
- Own revenue includes a state's tax and non-tax revenue as a share of its total revenue receipts.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

New Rules for Space Object Re-entry

- India introduced new Norms, Guidelines and Procedures for Authorisation for Undertaking Planned Re-entry of Space Objects on 23 July 2026 to regulate spacecraft re-entry activities.
- The guidelines were issued by the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) under the Department of Space.
- Prior approval from IN-SPACe is mandatory for planned re-entry by Indian entities and foreign operators conducting re-entry in Indian territory.
- Private operators will have full liability for damages caused by re-entering spacecraft or debris and must maintain third-party liability insurance.
- The rules require spacecraft re-entry missions to maintain human casualty risk below 1 in 10,000 and include measures for space debris mitigation.

Solar Rotation Breakthrough

- Scientists discovered that the Sun's upper atmosphere rotates faster than its visible surface, challenging the expected behaviour of classical physics.
- The study was conducted by Aryabhatta Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), Uttarakhand, Udaipur Solar Observatory (USO), Physical Research Laboratory (PRL) and Ahmednagar College.
- Researchers used data from the Nobeyama Radioheliograph, Japan and applied a 2D image-correlation method to measure solar atmospheric rotation.

- The study found that the Sun's rotation speed increases with height above the solar surface and slightly decreases during periods of high solar activity (more sunspots).
- The findings help improve understanding of solar activity and space weather, which can affect satellites, communication systems, navigation networks and power infrastructure.

Comet 10P/Tempel 2 - appearance in Bengaluru sky

- It was last visible from Earth five-and-a-half years ago.
- It was discovered in the year 1873.
- It completes one orbit around the Sun every 5.5 years. Its last sighting was in 2021.
- Comet 10P/Tempel 2 is a periodic comet.
- Although it returns every 5.5 years, it is not always easily visible from Earth.
- Its visibility depends on how close it comes to Earth during that return, and its position relative to the Sun in our sky.
- Depending on how bright it becomes during that apparition, some returns are excellent, while others are much less favourable.
- When the comet is closest to the Sun, the Sun's heat causes more ice to vaporise.
- This creates the comet's coma (the fuzzy cloud around the nucleus) and tail, making it brighter and easier to observe.
- It is best to observe the comet from a dark location away from city lights on a clear, moonless night.

New Alloy in Hiroshima Debris

- Researchers discovered a previously unknown metal alloy inside glass-like hiros himaites recovered from Hiroshima Bay, Japan, formed after the 1945 atomic bomb blast.
- The alloy was found as a tiny metallic grain inside the beads and contains iron, chromium, nickel, manganese, molybdenum, silicon, and aluminium.
- Scientists believe it formed due to ultrafast quenching, where the nuclear blast's extreme heat and rapid cooling created a unique structure.
- The alloy shows features similar to High-Entropy Alloys (HEAs) and quasicrystals, which are studied for their strength and stability.
- The discovery shows that nuclear explosion debris can preserve information about extreme physical and chemical conditions.

Hybrid Magneto-Rheometer - IIT Patna

- Scientists at IIT Patna (Bihar) developed a hybrid magneto-rheometer to advance research on magnetorheological (MR) fluids and smart material technologies.
- The device was developed with support from the Department of Science and Technology (DST).
- It can measure the flow, deformation, friction and wear properties of MR fluids under combined compression and shear conditions.
- MR fluids are smart materials that change viscosity when exposed to a magnetic field and are used in brakes, clutches, shock absorbers, dampers, actuators and medical devices.
- The technology helps design advanced applications in healthcare, aerospace, defence and industrial automation.

Diamond in Space

- World's first lab-grown diamond jewel was sent to space.
- Bengaluru start-up sends world's first lab-grown diamond jewel to space aboard Skyroot's Vikram-1.
- It was the Cosmos Bloom Diamond; lotus-shaped, handcrafted in gold, set with 16.9 carats lab grown diamonds.
- Skyroot's Vikram 1 is India's first private orbital rocket.

Neptune's Ancient Celestial Collision

- NASA's James Webb Space Telescope found evidence of an ancient catastrophic event that reshaped Neptune's moons and rings billions of years ago.
- The telescope detected clay minerals on Neptune's inner moons — Proteus, Larissa and Galatea — indicating material from a larger destroyed celestial body.
- Scientists suggest that Triton, Neptune's largest moon, was captured from the Kuiper Belt and caused collisions among Neptune's original moons.
- The debris from these collisions later formed Neptune's present inner moons and rings.
- Triton is the only large moon in the Solar System that orbits opposite to its planet's rotation, supporting the theory that it was captured.

WHO Cancer Agency's Drug Classification

- The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the cancer research agency of the World Health Organization (WHO), classified three commonly used medicines as "carcinogenic to humans" (Group 1).
- The medicines are Hydrochlorothiazide (used for high blood pressure), Voriconazole (used for fungal infections), and Tacrolimus (an immunosuppressant used to prevent organ transplant rejection).
- Hydrochlorothiazide and Voriconazole were associated with increased risk of squamous cell skin carcinoma, while Tacrolimus was linked with non-Hodgkin lymphoma and post-transplant lymphoproliferative disorders.
- The medicines are included in the World Health Organization (WHO) Model List of Essential Medicines and are used by millions worldwide.
- Experts clarified that patients should not stop these medicines without medical advice, as the classification identifies potential hazards and does not measure cancer risk at prescribed doses.

Hexavalent Vaccine Boost for India

- A study by the Union Health Ministry and global health organisations found that introducing the Hexavalent (six-in-one) vaccine in India's Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) could improve vaccination efficiency.
- The Hexavalent vaccine protects against six diseases — Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (whooping cough), Hepatitis B, Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib), and Polio.
- It can reduce the number of injections required for infants, decrease the workload of health workers, and reduce cold-chain management needs.
- India vaccinates around 26 million infants annually, and the current system requires multiple vaccine doses during visits.
- The study found that although the vaccine may have higher initial costs, reducing its price could result in overall savings for the government and households.
- The vaccine could simplify India's immunisation programme by replacing the existing Pentavalent vaccine and Fractional Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV) doses in future policy decisions.

25 years of the Himalayan Chandra Telescope in Hanle

- It is operated by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) under the Department of Science and Technology (DST).
- Hanle offers over 250 clear nights annually, making it ideal for optical and near-infrared astronomy.

- It has been remotely operated from Hosakote, Bengaluru using an INSAT-3B satellite link.
- It is named after Nobel laureate Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar and achieved its First Light on 26 September 2000.

Congo Ebola Outbreak

- The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has recorded 4,053 Ebola infections and 1,850 deaths in the current outbreak.
- The outbreak was officially declared on 15 May 2026, but researchers found that it may have started in January 2026 or earlier in Ituri Province.
- Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) is a severe viral disease that can cause fever, weakness, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhoea and bleeding.
- Ebola mainly spreads through direct contact with the blood or body fluids of infected people and through contact with infected bodies.
- The 2026 outbreak is the second-largest Ebola outbreak recorded, after the 2014–16 West Africa outbreak, which caused more than 28,000 cases.

Glueball Discovery

- Scientists using data from the BESIII experiment in Beijing found stronger evidence that X(2370) may be a glueball.
- A glueball is a composite particle made only of gluons, the particles that carry the strong force.
- Quantum Chromodynamics (QCD) is the theory that describes the strong interaction and allows gluons to attract each other and form glueballs.
- Scientists first identified X(2370) as a possible glueball candidate in 2011, based on its mass and decay properties.
- The new BESIII data revealed more properties supporting the possibility that X(2370) has a dominant glueball component.
- If confirmed, it could be the first evidence of matter made only from the carriers of a fundamental force.

India's Lunar Mission Partnership

- NASA has invited the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to join its Moon Base programme under the Artemis Accords.
- The invitation was discussed at the 9th India-U.S. Civil Space Joint Working Group (CSJWG) meeting in Bengaluru.

- India signed the Artemis Accords on June 21, 2023, supporting cooperation in peaceful lunar and deep-space exploration.
- NASA and ISRO also agreed to advance open scientific data sharing under their wider civil space cooperation.
- The cooperation follows the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) mission launched in July 2025.

New AI Cancer Framework

- Researchers from S. N. Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences (SNBNCBS) and Ashoka University have developed an Artificial Intelligence (AI) framework to identify hidden cancer stem-like cells.
- The new framework, ACSCeND (AI-based Cancer Stem-like Cell Profiler and Neoplasm Deconvoluter), identifies three developmental states: pluripotent-like, multipotent-like and unipotent-like.
- It can analyse conventional bulk tumour RNA (Ribonucleic Acid) sequencing data, allowing hidden cell populations to be studied across thousands of patient samples.
- Researchers applied ACSCeND to more than 25,000 tumour samples from databases including TCGA (The Cancer Genome Atlas) and PRECOG.
- Tumours with highly potent, pluripotent-like cancer stem cells were associated with poorer survival, higher tumour recurrence and reduced response to immunotherapy.
- The framework could help identify patients at higher risk of relapse and support the development of precision cancer therapies.

CO_2 Capture Process - IIT Guwahati

- IIT Guwahati has developed a two-stage microalgae process to capture carbon dioxide (CO_2), produce biomass and generate bioenergy.
- The first stage uses 15% CO_2 for rapid microalgal growth, while the second uses 5% CO_2 with calcium and phosphorus.
- The process achieved 25.7% higher biomass production and 35.4% higher CO_2 fixation than conventional methods.
- It also recorded 1.86 times higher lipid productivity and 37.65% higher bioenergy efficiency.
- Calcium promoted self-flocculation, helping recover 98.46% of the microalgal biomass with low energy use.

Maiden ISS Spacewalk - Anil Menon

- Indian-origin Nasa astronaut Anil Menon has completed his first spacewalk outside the International Space Station (ISS).
- It was marking a major milestone in his first mission in orbit.
- Menon and Nasa astronaut Jessica Meir completed US Spacewalk 96 after spending 6 hours and 27 minutes outside the orbital laboratory.
- The astronauts' main job was to prepare the station's 3B power channel for future upgrades.
- This work is important because it will enable the installation of additional International Space Station Roll-Out Solar Arrays (IROSA).
- These solar arrays will provide more electricity to the ageing orbital laboratory, helping power its systems and supporting its eventual safe and controlled deorbit.
- The astronauts completed their primary objectives, meaning the crucial work planned for the spacewalk was successfully carried out.
- A spacewalk is essentially an astronaut's most demanding maintenance shift.
- A spacewalk is any time an astronaut or cosmonaut leaves a spacecraft to operate outside in outer space.
- It is also called an EVA, which stands for extravehicular activity.
- Outside the ISS, astronauts work in the vacuum of space while relying entirely on their spacesuits for oxygen, temperature control and protection.
- They can repair satellites or spacecraft that are in space.
- By going on spacewalks, astronauts can fix things instead of bringing them back to Earth to fix.

Fiji HIV Outbreak

- Fiji is facing one of the fastest-growing Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) outbreaks in the world.
- Adult HIV prevalence has reached 1.6%, with only about one-third of people living with HIV knowing their status.
- New HIV infections are projected to triple by 2030, while substance use, needle sharing and stigma are major factors linked to the outbreak.
- Fiji declared an official outbreak in January 2025 and formed a National HIV Outbreak Cluster Response Task Force.
- Fiji is expanding Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and is set to receive Lenacapavir, a long-acting injectable HIV prevention drug, through the Global Fund.

Unusual Black Hole Discovery

- An international team of astronomers found an unusual black hole from when the universe was about 660 million years old, using the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST).
- The object is one of the Little Red Dots (LRDs) and appears to be a rapidly growing black hole surrounded by a huge cocoon of hydrogen gas.
- The observations suggest that the red colour may be caused by dense gas, rather than dust as previously thought.
- The gas cocoon may help explain how some black holes grew very rapidly in the early universe.
- The black hole is estimated to be surrounded by hydrogen gas with about 100 billion particles per cubic centimetre, extending several million kilometres around it.

India's First Commercial EO Constellation

- IN-SPACe approved India's first fully commercial indigenous Earth Observation (EO) satellite constellation under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model.
- Allied Orbits Private Limited, led by Pixxel Space India, includes Dhruva Space, PierSight Space and SatSure Analytics India.
- The consortium will invest over ₹1,200 crore to develop and operate 12 satellites by 2029.
- The satellites will provide panchromatic, multispectral, hyperspectral and Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) imaging.
- All satellites will be manufactured in India and launched using Indian launch vehicles.

Bacteria-Resistant Bone Implantation

- Researchers at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi developed a bio-inspired coating for three-dimensional (3D)-printed bone implants.
- The coating uses tiny hydroxyapatite structures that resemble sea urchins and can mechanically damage bacteria.
- The implants use polylactic acid (PLA), a biodegradable plastic, but its surface does not easily bond with bones.
- The new coating improves bone integration and helps reduce bacterial infection without relying on antibiotics or antibacterial chemicals.
- The technique involves treating the implant with an alkaline solution followed by hydrothermal treatment at 90°C, forming needle-like hydroxyapatite clusters.

Mega Earth GJ 523b

- Scientists have identified GJ 523b, an exoplanet classified as a "mega-Earth".
- It has a radius about 2.55 times Earth's, a mass of 23.5 Earth masses, and a density of about 7.8 g/cm^3.
- It orbits a mid-K dwarf star once every 17.75 days, with an estimated equilibrium temperature of 538 K.
- Its properties were determined using transit observations from NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) and radial velocity measurements from the NEID spectrograph on the WIYN 3.5-metre Telescope.
- A "mega-Earth" is a rocky exoplanet with a radius of at least 2.1 Earth radii and density of at least 5.5 g/cm^3.
- The planetary system is estimated to be 169 million years old; its unusually massive rocky nature challenges expectations that such a planet would develop a thick gas envelope.

Fastest Star in Milky Way - S301

- Scientists have identified S301 as the fastest-moving star on a confirmed orbit in the Milky Way.
- S301 reaches a maximum speed of about 25,000 km/s, nearly 8% of the speed of light.
- It follows a highly elliptical 8.7-year orbit around Sagittarius A*, the supermassive black hole at the centre of the Milky Way.
- At its closest approach, S301 comes within about 12 astronomical units (AU) of Sagittarius A*.
- The discovery used observations from the European Southern Observatory's Very Large Telescope Interferometer (VLTI) in Chile.

Swift Rescue Mission

- NASA abandoned its attempt to rescue the Neil Gehrels Swift Observatory after the rescue spacecraft LINK developed control problems.
- LINK, developed by Katalyst Space, was launched on 3 July 2026 to boost Swift's declining orbit.
- Some of LINK's reaction wheels failed, causing it to spin out of control; efforts to stabilise it with thrusters failed.
- Swift, launched in 2004, studies gamma-ray bursts and other high-energy cosmic events.

- Without an orbital boost, Swift is expected to re-enter Earth's atmosphere before the end of 2026.

Africa on Polio Control

- The World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed the end of poliovirus type 2 outbreaks in Burundi, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, the Republic of the Congo and Uganda after assessments conducted from January to June 2026.
- The assessments examined disease surveillance, laboratory evidence, population immunity and vaccination campaign performance.
- The five countries strengthened routine vaccination, disease detection, surveillance and targeted immunisation to stop virus transmission.
- Guinea-Bissau has reported no poliovirus detection since July 2021, while the Republic of the Congo recorded its last detection in December 2023.
- Poliovirus is a highly infectious virus that mainly affects the nervous system and can cause irreversible paralysis; however, polio is preventable through vaccination.

GISAT-1A Mission – ISRO

- ISRO plans to launch GISAT-1A (Geo Imaging Satellite-1A) in September 2026 after a recent pause in launches.
- GISAT-1A is the replacement for GISAT-1, also called EOS-03 (Earth Observation Satellite-03), which was lost during the GSLV-F10 (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle-F10) mission in August 2021.
- The 2021 mission failed when the cryogenic upper stage did not ignite because of a valve leak that reduced liquid-hydrogen pressure.
- GISAT-1A will be launched using GSLV Mk-II (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark-II) and will provide wide-area observations of India for monitoring floods, cyclones, agriculture and forests.
- The mission will test rocket reliability, orbital deployment and imaging performance and is important before the planned NVS-03 (Navigation Satellite-03) mission for NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation).

First module of the Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS)

- India is working towards establishing its own space station by 2035.
- The first module of the proposed Bharatiya Antariksha Station was already approved by ISRO.

- The first module of the station is known as BAS-01.
- It is planned as a 52-tonne space station in low-Earth orbit at an altitude of 400 to 450 kilometres.
- It is designed to support a crew of three to four astronauts for stays of three to six months.
- The proposed station will consist of five modules
- While the Gaganyaan mission is also in the pipeline.

FWD Supreme Lite

- Indian defence startup Flying Wedge Defence & Aerospace (FWDA) has unveiled FWD Supreme Lite, touted as India's first AI-piloted fighter aircraft programme.
- It is a 250-kg-class flight technology demonstrator designed to test technologies for future autonomous combat aircraft.
- The demonstrator is undergoing airframe development, system integration and ground testing, with its first flight targeted for Q3 2026.
- The programme is being developed by FWDA, a Bengaluru-based Indian defence startup, and is designed and developed in India.
- The wider FWD Supreme family is based on the company's "Mobbing Doctrine", focusing on AI-enabled autonomous combat operations.

ENVIRONMENT

Houbara Bustard Conservation Drive

- Uzbekistan released 672 Houbara bustards (Chlamydotis macqueenii) in Karakalpakstan to restore biodiversity in the Aral Sea region.
- The Houbara bustard is classified as Vulnerable under the IUCN Red List and is protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).
- The birds were captive-bred at a specialised centre in Kazakhstan and released under a joint conservation effort by Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- The Aral Sea has reduced to around 10% of its 1960s size due to diversion of water from the Amu Darya River for Soviet-era cotton cultivation.
- The conservation programme aims to restore habitats, protect migratory species and improve ecological stability in Central Asia.

Tigers Outside Tiger Reserves Initiative

- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has launched the Tigers Outside Tiger Reserves (TOTR) initiative to conserve tigers living outside protected areas and reduce human-tiger conflict.
- According to the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), 35–40% of India's tiger population now lives outside designated Tiger Reserves, making landscape-level conservation essential.
- The first phase will cover 40 forest divisions across nine States: Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and Assam.
- The initiative will strengthen early warning systems, rapid response teams, rescue infrastructure, camera traps, drones, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Global Positioning System (GPS)-based monitoring, community participation, and timely compensation.
- India has 58 Tiger Reserves covering 84,488 square kilometres, and the All-India Tiger Estimation (2022) recorded 3,682 tigers, accounting for over 70% of the world's wild tiger population.

Kawal Tiger Reserve

- The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) identified the Kawal Tiger Reserve in Telangana as a priority recipient site for tiger recovery.
- It currently lacks a resident breeding population despite having suitable dry deciduous forest habitat.
- Kawal has recorded no resident tiger in the All-India Tiger Estimation (AITE).
- Kawal Tiger Reserve connects the Central Indian Tiger Landscape with the Tadoba-Andhari (Maharashtra) and Indravati (Chhattisgarh) reserves.
- It is situated in northern Telangana along the Godavari and Kadam river basins.
- The recommendation is part of the 'Roadmap for Active Management of Tigers in India', released jointly by the NTCA and the Wildlife Institute of India.
- Kawal comprises tropical dry deciduous forests, teak-dominated woodlands, bamboo patches and riverine habitats.
- It occupies a strategic location between tiger populations in Central India and the Eastern Ghats.

World's top methane hotspots

- Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from paddy fields worldwide have doubled since the 1960s.

- The paddy fields around the world produced around 1.1 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide-equivalent (CO2-e) emissions every year — a 90.4% increase from the annual emissions between 1961 and 1980.
- India's rice fields now rank among the world's top methane hotspots.
- It was exceeding Germany's total yearly methane emissions.
- And paddy fields in eastern India were among the global methane hotspots.
- Apart from soil organic carbon, methane from paddy fields was also a significant driver of emissions.
- Flooded fields develop low-oxygen conditions where methane-producing microbes thrive.
- India tops the list of countries on rice production, delivering 154 million tonnes in 2025-26.
- The area under paddy cultivation has also increased by around 25% since the 1970s, and currently covers 55% of India's rainfed harvested area.

New Habitat for Nilgiri Tahr

- Varayattumudy in Idukki district, Kerala, has emerged as a major habitat for the endangered Nilgiri tahr, with its population increasing significantly.
- The Nilgiri tahr population has risen from around 50 in 2022 to nearly 150 after habitat restoration efforts.
- The Kerala Forest Department completed eco-restoration across 22.5 hectares by removing invasive exotic plants and restoring natural grasslands.
- The area's grasslands, shola forests, rocky cliffs, and cool climate provide a suitable habitat for the species.
- The Forest Department has strengthened protection measures and proposed an eco-tourism trekking programme to support conservation and provide sustainable livelihoods for local tribal communities.

Japan's Active Volcano - Kikai Caldera

- Scientists have observed that a magma reservoir beneath Japan's Kikai Caldera is filling again, providing insights into how large volcanoes recover after major eruptions.
- Kikai Caldera is a massive submarine caldera located in the East China Sea, south of Kyushu Island, Japan.
- The caldera has a diameter of about 19 kilometres and includes three small islands that rise above sea level.

- Around 7,300 years ago, it produced one of the largest volcanic eruptions of the Holocene Epoch, with about 150 cubic kilometres of ash released.
- The eruption had a Volcanic Explosivity Index (VEI) of 7, and the caldera remains volcanically active, with recent studies indicating new lava dome formation.

New Fruit Fly Species Discovery

- Scientists discovered two new fruit fly species, Zeugodacus umiam and Zeugodacus nasivittatus, during a three-year survey in Ri-Bhoi district, Meghalaya.
- Zeugodacus umiam was named after Umiam, Meghalaya, the place where it was discovered, and was found on the Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged Khasi mandarin.
- Zeugodacus nasivittatus, the second new species, was associated with sweet orange and Khasi mandarin crops.
- Researchers collected more than 35,000 fruit flies and documented 37 species across forests, fruit orchards, and vegetable ecosystems.
- Three species — Bactrocera abbreviata, Erectovena desperata, and Phorelliosoma hilaratum — were recorded for the first time in the Indian subcontinent.

New Catfish Species

- A new freshwater catfish species, Pseudolaguvia khairii, was discovered in the Budhabalanga River, Mayurbhanj district, Odisha.
- The species was named after Khairi, an orphaned Royal Bengal tigress associated with wildlife conservation in Odisha.
- Pseudolaguvia khairii belongs to the genus Pseudolaguvia and the order Siluriformes (catfish group).
- The species is a small hillstream catfish adapted to fast-flowing freshwater rivers and is identified by a unique fleshy protuberance at the base of its dorsal fin.
- Khairi was rescued from the Similipal forests, Odisha, in the 1970s and was raised by conservationist Saroj Raj Choudhury and Nihar Nalini Swain.

SBSTTA28 Meeting on Biodiversity

- The 28th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA28) under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) concluded in Nairobi, Kenya.
- The meeting was held ahead of the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP17) to the CBD, scheduled in Yerevan, Armenia.

- SBSTTA provides science-based advice for implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), which has 23 biodiversity targets for 2030.
- Countries discussed marine and coastal biodiversity, sustainable wildlife management, protected areas, and progress towards global biodiversity goals.
- A major discussion was on synthetic biology (use of genetic engineering to design or modify biological systems) and its potential benefits and ecological risks.
- Countries agreed that the draft Synthetic Biology Action Plan is a good basis but differed on issues like flexibility, expert groups, and technology-sharing mechanisms.

Pygmy Hog Conservation Initiative

- The Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife (SC-NBWL) recommended adding the pygmy hog to the critically endangered species list under a central conservation scheme.
- The pygmy hog (Porcula salvinia) is the world's smallest and rarest wild pig species, mainly found in the grasslands of Assam.
- The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List officially classifies the pygmy hog as Endangered.
- The recommendation will bring the species under the Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (IDWH) scheme for recovery and conservation support.
- The Wildlife Institute of India (WII) suggested expanding conservation efforts from Assam to suitable habitats like Jaldapara (West Bengal) and parts of Uttar Pradesh.

India's Tiger Population in 2026

- India is home to the world's largest wild tiger population, accounting for nearly 70% of all wild tigers globally.
- Rajasthan's tiger population has increased to 149 across its five tiger reserves, with Ranthambore housing 72 of them.
- Ranthambore is among India's most successful tiger reserves in terms of breeding and cub survival.
- Ranthambore's tiger survival rate is around 80 per cent, among the highest recorded for major tiger reserves in the country.
- When Sariska lost all its tigers in 2008, the reserve was repopulated using descendants of Machli from Ranthambore.

- Sariska Tiger Reserve achieved a historic milestone as the world's first successful scientific relocation of tigers.
- Sariska, where tigers had once become completely extinct, is now home to 53 tigers.
- It is claimed as the world's first successful scientific reintroduction of tigers.
- Madhya Pradesh, often called India's "Tiger State", has already reported 45 tiger deaths this year, about 40 per cent of the national total.
- Madhya Pradesh recorded the highest number of tigers at 785 in 2022.
- The All-India Tiger Estimation (2022) covered 20 States and places India's tiger population at 3,682.
- Project Tiger has established a network of 58 tiger reserves across 18 tiger-range States.
- These reserves cover around 84,500 square kilometres, which is about 2.56% of India's geographical area.

Tiger Reserve Report 2026

- The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) released the "Roadmap for Active Management of Tigers in India" report based on the 2022 All India Tiger Estimation.
- The report states that about two-thirds (38 of 58) of India's tiger reserves have a declining prey base, poor habitat quality, or both.
- Only 20 tiger reserves have both adequate prey and good habitat, while 36 reserves face prey shortages and 17 reserves have both poor habitat and inadequate prey.
- Nine tiger reserves have zero or critically low resident tiger populations, and 25 reserves have declining tiger numbers.
- India has an estimated 3,682 tigers, with 2,338 inside tiger reserves and 1,344 outside protected areas; about 75% of the world's wild tigers are found in India.
- The report recommends habitat restoration, prey recovery, anti-poaching measures, removal of invasive species, and protection of wildlife corridors to improve tiger conservation.

101st Ramsar Site - Glaw Lake

- Glaw Lake in Arunachal Pradesh has been designated as India's 101st Ramsar Site, becoming the state's first Ramsar Site.
- With this addition, India's total number of Ramsar Sites has increased to 101, up from 26 sites in 2014.

- Glaw Lake is a pristine freshwater lake located inside the Kamlang Tiger Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary in the Eastern Himalayas.
- The wetland is a biodiversity hotspot, supporting over 150 tree species and 49 orchid species in and around its catchment area.
- Ramsar Site designation promotes wetland conservation, biodiversity protection, water and climate security, and sustainable livelihoods.

Forest Rights Act (FRA) Issue

- A communication by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) on Community Forest Resource Management Plans (CFRMP) raised concerns over Gram Sabha powers.
- The letter asked states to align Community Forest Resource Management Plans with Forest Department Working Plans.
- The Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006 recognises Gram Sabha as the primary authority for determining and managing community forest rights.
- Under Section 5 of the FRA, 2006, Gram Sabhas have powers to protect, conserve and manage forests, wildlife and biodiversity.
- The FRA, 2006 aims to recognise the rights of Scheduled Tribes (STs) and other traditional forest dwellers and correct historical injustices.

Environmental Performance Index (EPI) 2026

- It is a data-driven global benchmark.
- It serves as a vital analytical tool for evaluating national progress toward achieving global sustainability targets, such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Climate Agreement objectives.
- It was developed by Institutes of Yale and Columbia University, along with support from the McCall MacBain Foundation.
- Its coverage will be 177 nations, 47 indicators, and 12 issue categories under three core objectives.
- Three core policy objectives are Environmental Health, Ecosystem Vitality, and Climate Change.

Environmental Health

- Air quality (measuring exposure to pollutants like PM2.5).
- Sanitation and drinking water.
- Heavy metals exposure.

Ecosystem Vitality

- Biodiversity and habitat protection.
- Forests and tree cover loss.
- Fisheries and fish stocks.
- Agriculture and sustainable practices.
- Water resources and wastewater treatment.

Climate Change

- Greenhouse gas emissions mitigation.
- CO2 emissions from various sectors.
- Clean energy transition and tracking carbon intensity.
- Top Ranks – Estonia (1st, score 74.79); followed by Luxembourg, UK, Finland, Netherlands (Top 5 – All from Europe).
- India is at 176th (score 22.46), the second lowest; severe air quality and biodiversity loss.
- India has remained among the five worst-performing countries in the EPI since 2022.
- India performed poorly in Environmental Health, Air Quality, and Biodiversity (ranked 174th in both Air Quality and Biodiversity).

Clouded Leopard Conservation Action Plan

- India launched the Clouded Leopard Conservation Action Plan (CAP) on International Clouded Leopard Day (August 4, 2026) to protect the rare wild cat in Northeast India.
- The Action Plan was prepared under the Government of India–Global Environment Facility (GEF)–United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) initiative and released during the 91st Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife (SCNBWL) meeting in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.
- The CAP identifies 14 priority conservation landscapes in Northeast India and focuses on habitat protection, forest corridor restoration, and landscape-level conservation.
- It includes scientific monitoring through camera traps, occupancy surveys, genetics, and environmental DNA (eDNA) methods.
- The species has been included under the Species Recovery Programme of the Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (IDWH) scheme to strengthen conservation efforts.

- The plan also focuses on anti-poaching measures, frontline staff training, community participation, sustainable livelihoods, and climate-resilient conservation.

Darwin's Theory in Carnivorous Plant

- Scientists confirmed Charles Darwin's 150-year-old prediction that the plant Saxifraga candelabrum is an insect-eating (carnivorous) plant.
- The study showed that the plant attracts and traps tiny insects using sticky hair-like structures called glandular trichomes.
- Researchers found that the plant uses an enzyme called phosphatase to digest trapped insects and absorb nutrients.
- Isotope labelling confirmed the transfer of nitrogen-15 from insects to the plant, proving nutrient absorption from prey.
- Saxifraga candelabrum grows at high altitudes (2,500–3,300 metres) in China's Qinghai–Tibet Plateau and Hengduan Mountains.

10-km Mining Buffer for Wetlands

- The Supreme Court ruled that a 10-km mining buffer applies to all notified wetland reserves, even when a separate buffer has not been notified.
- The ruling aims to protect ecologically fragile wetlands from the harmful effects of mining activities.
- Wetlands are regulated under the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017, framed under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
- The State Wetland Authority (SWA) is responsible for the conservation and management of notified wetlands in each State/Union Territory (UT).
- India is a party to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (1971), which promotes the conservation and wise use of wetlands.
- As of 2026, India has 91 Ramsar Sites.

Pigeonpea T2T Genome - ICAR

- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) developed India's first fully annotated Telomere-to-Telomere (T2T) reference genome of pigeonpea variety 'Asha'.
- The genome contains 752.65 million base pairs, 11 chromosomes, 11 centromeres and 22 telomeres.

- The annotated genome contains 36,557 genes and 48,008 mRNAs, with more than 99.9% read alignment accuracy.
- Pigeonpea, also called red gram or arhar, is a major pulse crop and belongs to the Fabaceae family.
- The genome can support the development of high-yielding and climate-resilient pigeonpea varieties.

National Catalogue of Butterflies and Moths

- Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change announced the completion of the National Catalogue of Lepidoptera (Butterflies and Moths), the final volume was published in Zoo Taxa.
- India Achieves Historic Milestone in Biodiversity Science.
- Indian Lepidoptera is 13,703 species across 3,705 genera, 240 subfamilies, 102 families, and 31 superfamilies.
- It represents approximately 8.25% of all known butterfly and moth species worldwide.
- India is a Global Hotspot for Geometroidea Moths.
- key milestone within this initiative is the groundbreaking catalogue dedicated to the moth superfamily Geometroidea.
- It is establishing India as a global sanctuary for nocturnal pollinators
- Geometroidea in India is 2,205 species across 479 genera, 13 subfamilies, and 4 families
- It accounts for 8.80% of the world's known species in this superfamily.
- India's starkly contrasting ecosystems range from the high-altitude, freezing Himalayan zones to the humid, lush tropical rainforests of the Western Ghats—serving as evolutionary sanctuaries.

Funds under the benefit-sharing mechanism

- The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) has released funds (₹8.22 crore) to three research institutions and 33 State Biodiversity Boards and Union Territory Biodiversity Councils.
- It is marking one of the largest single access and benefit-sharing (ABS) disbursements for rice.
- This disbursement reflects India's commitment to ensuring fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of the country's biological resources.

- The research institutions will utilise the funds to strengthen germplasm conservation, maintain seed collections and support research and training.
- The State Biodiversity Boards and Union Territory Biodiversity Councils will use their allocations for approved conservation activities, including protecting native crop diversity, restoring ecosystems, documenting traditional knowledge and supporting local farmers and knowledge holders.
- It supports Target 13 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which promotes fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.
- It also contributes to several Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), SDG 15 (Life on Land) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).
- NBA is a statutory body established under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- It regulates access to India's biological resources and associated traditional knowledge and implements the Nagoya Protocol's principle of fair and equitable benefit-sharing.

CBD

- The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is a global legal treaty from the 1992 Rio Earth Summit with three core goals - the conservation of biological diversity (or biodiversity); the sustainable use of its components; and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources.
- The United States is the only UN member state which has not ratified the Convention.
- It has two supplementary agreements, the Cartagena Protocol and the Nagoya Protocol.
- The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty governing the movements of living modified organisms (LMOs) resulting from modern biotechnology from one country to another.
- The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (ABS) to the Convention on Biological Diversity is another supplementary agreement to the CBD.

Super El Niño and Positive IOD

- The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) expects a strong Super El Niño to combine with a positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) between August and October 2026.

- El Niño is the unusual warming of sea-surface and subsurface waters in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, which weakens or reverses normal trade winds.
- It can cause reduced monsoon rainfall in India, higher global temperatures, heat waves, droughts, wildfires and marine heat waves.
- The 2026 El Niño was declared by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on June 11, 2026, and has been strengthening rapidly.
- Sea-surface temperature anomalies are forecast to exceed 2.9°C, making the event potentially one of the strongest on record.
- A positive IOD means warmer-than-normal waters in the western Indian Ocean and cooler waters in the eastern Indian Ocean, which can support rainfall over India and partly offset El Niño's effect.
- The combined impact may increase the risk of extreme heat, droughts, floods and wildfires in different parts of the world.

India's First Fish Removal Drive

- The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) has launched India's first fishermen-driven invasive fish removal and native-restocking programme at Maharashtra's Ujani Reservoir.
- The programme targets invasive suckermouth catfish, Tilapia and African catfish.
- These alien fish have affected native fish biodiversity and local fishermen's livelihoods.
- The initiative involves removing invasive fish and restoring native fish species in the reservoir.

Ozone Anomaly Over Bay of Bengal

- Scientists detected an unusually thick ozone layer at 21–23 km altitude over the North Bay of Bengal.
- The ozone concentration was much higher than normal over eastern India, and the layer remained for more than 24 hours.
- Scientists from ARIES (Aryabhatta Research Institute of Observational Sciences), Nainital, and other Indian institutions studied the event under the Phase-I NetRAD-ASMA campaign.
- The study used 206.5 MHz Stratosphere–Troposphere (ST) Radars, weather balloons, satellites and atmospheric models.
- Observations showed persistent downward air movement in the lower stratosphere and transport of ozone-rich air.

- Scientists concluded that horizontal ozone transport, downward movement and compression of air mainly caused the unusual ozone enhancement.

Global Ocean Temperatures – 2026 July

- Global sea surface temperatures (SST) outside the polar regions reached a record high in July 2026.
- The average SST between 60°N and 60°S was 20.96°C, surpassing the previous July record of 20.89°C in 2023.
- El Niño conditions in the Equatorial Pacific Ocean are strengthening rapidly and are contributing to the high ocean temperatures.
- July 2026 was the second-warmest globally, with an average surface air temperature of 16.90°C.
- Western Europe recorded its warmest June–July period, along with heatwaves, dry conditions and wildfires.
- Western Europe also recorded very low surface soil moisture, while drier conditions affected parts of Canada, the United States, Africa, Asia and South America.

Meghalaya's mission on Clouded Leopard

- Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma launched Mission Clouded Leopard.
- It aims to protect the state animal, the mainland clouded leopard (Neofelis nebulosa).
- It is distinct from the Sunda clouded leopard, which is found on the islands of Borneo and Sumatra.
- The mainland clouded leopard is listed as “vulnerable” on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List.
- It is protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- Its global range includes Bhutan, Myanmar, Thailand, Peninsular Malaysia, and parts of northeast India.
- In contrast, populations in Bangladesh, Vietnam, and large parts of China have undergone severe declines.
- It is locally extinct in Singapore and Taiwan.
- In India, it occurs in the states of Sikkim, northern West Bengal, Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur, Assam, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh, as well as in the Meghalaya subtropical forests.

Agasthyamalai Eviction Issue

- The Forest Department has issued eviction notices to thousands of households in Tamil Nadu's Agasthyamalai Biosphere Reserve (ABR) over alleged forest-land encroachments.
- The Supreme Court, based on the Central Empowered Committee (CEC) reports, ordered time-bound eviction of encroachments, rehabilitation where applicable and ecological restoration.
- The Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006 recognises forest rights of Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers who occupied forest land before 13 December 2005, subject to the prescribed verification process.
- The FRA requires claims to be verified through Gram Sabhas and does not require other traditional forest dwellers to prove three generations (75 years) of occupation before 2005.
- The CEC reported around 4,595 encroachers occupying 5,071.2 hectares in the Srivilliputhur-Megamalai Tiger Reserve, based on 2020 records.
- The ABR covers about 3,500 sq. km across Tamil Nadu and Kerala, including several tiger reserves and wildlife sanctuaries.

Blue Heart Lake – Ahmedabad

- A 72,600 sq. yard man-made lake, called Blue Heart, is being developed at By the Waters, a 100-acre residential estate about 35 km from Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
- The lake uses a closed-loop system involving groundwater, rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge and seasonal monsoon water capture.
- Witteveen+Bos, a Dutch engineering firm, designed the lake's hydrology, with automated water movement and sensor-based monitoring planned.
- The project includes a 1.5-km lakeside promenade and 2-km kayak trail; native plants are planned to help absorb nutrients and support biodiversity.
- The lake is near Thol Lake, a Ramsar-designated wetland, so ecological monitoring is being established to assess water, biodiversity and hydrological impacts.

16th Asiatic Lion Population Estimation 2026

- The 16th Lion population estimation (May 2025) recorded an increase in the Asiatic Lion population to 891 individuals across the Greater Gir landscape in Gujarat.
- It is with a growth of 32 per cent rise from 674 lions since 2020.

- It has risen to 891 in 2025 from 523 in 2015.
- It is marking an increase of more than 70 per cent in a decade.
- Historically, the Asiatic lion inhabited regions across Asia, spanning from Persia and Mesopotamia to the Indian subcontinent.
- Only around 40-60 lions remained in and around Gir in the early 1900s because of overhunting and habitat loss.
- India established the Gir Wildlife Sanctuary in 1965.
- The princely State of Junagadh was among the first to protect the species.
- The Government attributed the increase to strict legal protection, revival of the lions' prey base and a landscape-level conservation approach.
- Wild prey such as spotted deer, sambar, nilgai and wild pig now account for about 74 per cent of the lions' diet.
- The return of lions to Barda Wildlife Sanctuary in Gujarat has been a notable part of the expansion.
- As numbers rose, lions expanded into new territories, which prompted the creation of further protected zones, including Gir National Park and wildlife sanctuaries such as Girnar, Mitiyala, Pania, and Barda.
- Community participation has also been central to the conservation effort.
- Project Lion, launched in 2020, now covers about 60,000 sq km of Saurashtra.
- The Asiatic lion is a subspecies of lion scientifically known as Panthera leo persica.
- The lion (Panthera leo) is a large, powerful apex predator and the second-largest big cat species in the world, second only to the tiger
- It's only natural wild population survives in India, mainly in the Saurashtra region of Gujarat.
- The species is listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List.
- The global list of seven big cats includes the Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar, and Puma.
- India is home to 5 of the 7 major big cat species recognized globally by the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA), lacking only the Jaguar and the Puma.

Kaziranga ESZ Reduction

- The Assam government plans to reduce the Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) around Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNPTR) from 10 km to 1 km, in line with Supreme Court guidelines.

- The Supreme Court (SC) had ordered in June 2022 that an ESZ of at least 1 km should be declared around protected forests, national parks and wildlife sanctuaries.
- In April 2023, the SC modified the order, saying a uniform 1-km rule could affect local activities and increase human-wildlife conflict, but mining within 1 km of protected areas remained prohibited.
- The proposed reduction is intended to facilitate development activities around Kaziranga, including construction projects.
- Kaziranga National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and an important habitat of the endangered one-horned rhinoceros.
- The Assam government will send a proposal to the Central Government for reducing the ESZ to 1 km.

CBD SBI-7 Meeting

- The 7th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI 7) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 4–12 August 2026.
- SBI reviews progress in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), its protocols and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).
- The meeting considered the global midterm review of the GBF and prepared recommendations for the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP17).
- Key issues included resource mobilisation, capacity-building, synthetic biology, protected areas and participation of subnational governments.
- Its recommendations will help shape biodiversity negotiations at CBD COP17 in Yerevan, Armenia, in October 2026.

India's First High-Altitude Wildlife Safari

- Ladakh has announced India's first-ever Altitude Wildlife Safari in the region.
- The Snow Leopard and High-Altitude Nature (SHAN) Conservation Society, chaired by the lieutenant governor, is figuring out possible safari routes in the region.
- Hemis National Park, Changthang Valley, and Karakoram wildlife sanctuaries and landscapes such as Drass, Nubra, and Sham are included in the list.
- SHAN, formed on 16 June, is encouraging responsible and plastic-free tourism across Ladakh.

- With this step, the Ladakh government seeks to curb off roading incidents and disturbance to wildlife.
- It is the First govt model where local communities will be made equal partners in protecting and promoting Ladakh's wildlife and benefiting economically.
- India is home to 718 snow leopards, spread across the Himalayas.
- The mountains of Ladakh are home to 477 of them, followed by Uttarakhand (124) and Himachal Pradesh (51).

Notified Natural Calamities update

- India has added heatwaves and lightning to its list of notified natural disasters.
- The Union Ministry of Home Affairs issued operational guidelines for the administration of the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) for 2026-31.
- Thus, India officially recognizes 14 national disasters as notified.
- It is making states eligible for financial assistance under the Disaster Management Act, 2005.
- The decision follows recommendations by the 16th Finance Commission and comes amid rising concern over extreme weather linked to climate change.
- States can now draw on State Disaster Response Fund and mitigation funds for heatwave and lightning-related relief, with the National Disaster Response Fund available when state funds are inadequate.
- Until now, heatwaves were excluded from the Disaster Management Act's notified disaster list.
- That covered only 12 categories: cyclone, drought, earthquake, fire, flood, tsunami, hailstorm, landslide, avalanche, cloudburst, pest attack, and frost/cold wave.
- Earlier, states had to notify heatwaves at the state level and could spend only up to 10 per cent of their annual SDRF allocation for heatwave relief.
- Now, with the new notification, states can draw on the full state disaster response and mitigation funds and the national fund also becomes available when state funds are inadequate to deal with a disaster.
- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) is implementing heat-health interventions through the National Programme on Climate Change & Human Health (NPCCHH) in accordance with the National Action Plan on Heat-Related Illness (NAPHRI).

- Additionally, the National Heat-Related Illness and Death Surveillance (NHRIDS) has been activated for over 51,000 reporting units across the country, which includes all Primary Health Centres (PHCs) and higher-level hospitals.
- SDRF - States use the State Disaster Response Fund for fast, local help.
- NDRF - The central government gives extra money from the National Disaster Response Fund if local funds are not enough.
- Both are established under the Disaster Management Act, 2005, replacing the old National Calamity Contingency Fund in 2010.
- It is financed entirely by the Central Government, primarily through specific cesses and duties.
- It is kept in the Public Account of India under non-interest-bearing reserve funds, allowing quick access without extra parliamentary approval.
- The State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) is the primary fund available with State Governments for responses to notified disasters.
- The Central Government contributes 75% of SDRF allocation for general category States/UTs and 90% for special category States/UTs (NE States, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir).
- SDRF shall be used only for meeting the expenditure for providing immediate relief to the victims
- It does not act as property or crop loss compensation.
- The National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) supplements SDRF of a State, in case of a disaster of severe nature, provided adequate funds are not available in SDRF.

World's first-ever release of captive-bred slender-billed vultures

- Assam records world's first-ever release of captive-bred slender-billed vultures (Gyps tenuirostris).
- Five slender-billed vultures bred in captivity at the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)'s conservation facility in Assam.
- These were released at the Jatayu Soft Release Centre in the Biswanath Division of Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve.
- The population of Gyps vultures in India has declined by 99% over the last 20 years due to the use of veterinary painkillers.
- Although the Centre banned four such drugs—diclofenac, aceclofenac, ketoprofen, and nimesulide—pesticide poisoning remains a threat to vultures in Assam.

- The slender-billed vulture is an Old-World vulture species native to sub-Himalayan regions and Southeast Asia.
- It is Critically Endangered since 2002 as the population on the Indian subcontinent has declined rapidly.
- It is used to be the Indian vulture, under the name of "long-billed vulture".
- But, the Indian vulture is found only to the south of the Ganges and breeds on cliffs while the slender-billed vulture is found along and nests in trees.
- The slender-billed vulture is found in India from the Gangetic plain north, west to Himachal Pradesh, south potentially as far as northern Odisha, and east through Assam.
- They typically are sedentary birds, and do not tend to travel large distances nor migrate for any reason.
- Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), founded in 1883, is one of the largest non-governmental organisations in India engaged in conservation and biodiversity research.
- The Asian waterbird census is an annual exercise undertaken in India by Bombay Natural History Society in association with Wetlands International.
- The exercise is a part of 'International waterbird census', an international exercise.
- BNHS is the partner of BirdLife International in India.
- BirdLife International is a global partnership of non-governmental organizations that strives to conserve birds and their habitats.
- It is the official International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List authority for birds.
- BirdLife International has nine conservation programmes implemented across Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Central Asia, the Middle East and the Pacific.
- It includes the Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas Programme, Marine Programme, Preventing Extinctions Programme, and Flyways Programme.
- Wetlands International is a global organisation that works to sustain and restore wetlands and their resources for people and biodiversity.
- It is an independent, not-for-profit, global organisation, supported by government and NGO membership from around the world.

Black-Necked Crane Festival - Ladakh

- Ladakh is hosting its first-ever Black-necked Crane Festival to promote conservation of this threatened species.

- The festival is being held in Ladakh, where the Changthang Cold Wildlife Sanctuary is the only breeding ground of the Black-necked Crane in India.
- The cranes breed in Tso Kar and Hanle wetlands in the Changthang region of eastern Ladakh, at about 2,500–5,000 metres above sea level.
- The Black-necked Crane (Grus nigricollis) is the only high-altitude crane species in the world and is listed as Near Threatened (NT) on the IUCN Red List.
- It is the State Bird of Ladakh and is considered sacred in the region.
- Around 16,000 Black-necked Cranes are found across India, Bhutan, Nepal and China.

Asia's First Desert-Themed Night Safari

- The Central Zoo Authority (CZA) approved the proposal for the Desert Zoological Park and Night Safari at Deesa in Gujarat's Banaskantha district.
- It aims to develop Asia's first desert-themed drive-through night safari.
- The proposed park will also house species from other desert ecosystems.
- African species listed in the plan include Angolan giraffe, Grevy's zebra, scimitar oryx, African kudu, springbok, addra gazelle, black rhinoceros, chimpanzee, meerkat, African cheetah, African lion, fennec fox, bat-eared fox and ostrich.
- Kangaroos, emus and wallabies are among the Australian species planned for the park.
- The proposed Desert Zoological Park and Night Safari is located in Gujarat, while the well-known Desert National Park is located in Rajasthan.
- Desert National Park is a national park in the Indian state of Rajasthan, near the towns of Jaisalmer and Barmer.
- Sand dunes form around 44% of the park.

Blackbuck Conservation – Gujarat

- Twenty blackbucks (15 females, 5 males) were rewilded in Banni Grasslands, Kutch, Gujarat, after translocation from Vantara, Jamnagar.
- Blackbuck (Antilope cervicapra) is a South Asian grassland antelope, classified as Least Concern (LC) on the IUCN Red List.
- In India, it receives Schedule I protection under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- Banni Grasslands are a major arid and semi-arid ecosystem supporting native herbivores such as blackbuck, chinkara and nilgai.
- Gujarat's wider conservation programme aims to translocate 500 blackbucks and 100 chinkaras to restore native herbivore populations.

UNCCD COP17 – Mongolia

- The 17th Conference of Parties (COP17) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) began in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.
- Countries are discussing a global drought framework after failing to agree on a legally binding deal at COP16 in Riyadh.
- Countries have pledged to restore about 1 billion hectares of degraded land, while 1.5–2 billion hectares are estimated to be degraded globally.
- The conference is focusing on finance, technology and action to tackle drought and land degradation.
- Mongolia said 77% of its land is affected by desertification and land degradation.

India's First Grasslands Guide

- India launched its first-ever Guide to Grasslands and Other Open Natural Ecosystems of India at the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) COP17 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.
- The guide covers India's grasslands, savannas, deserts and other open natural ecosystems.
- It includes information on their geography, ecology, biodiversity and associated communities and tribes.
- The guide highlights the importance of conserving these ecosystems along with forests.
- It is intended for policymakers, researchers, conservation groups, development agencies and local communities.

New Himalayan Plant - Impatiens nimspurjai

- A new Himalayan flowering plant has been named Impatiens nimspurjai after Nepali mountaineer Nirmal "Nimsdai" Purja.
- The plant was first observed in 2011 in Nepal's western Myagdi district and was formally described after more than a decade of study.
- Impatiens nimspurjai belongs to the genus Impatiens and the family Balsaminaceae.
- It grows on humid slopes and forest margins at an altitude of about 2,800–2,900 metres in the Himalayas.
- The name honours Purja's mountaineering achievements and environmental work through the Nimsdai Foundation.

ICAR-NRCB - Two New Banana Varieties

- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research–National Research Centre for Banana (ICAR-NRCB) in Tiruchi, Tamil Nadu, released two new banana varieties — Kaveri Thangam and Kaveri Nadan.
- Kaveri Thangam is a premium variety with nearly 10 times higher vitamin A than conventional varieties, yellow pulp and a shelf life of 15 days.
- Kaveri Nadan is a high-yielding variety that can produce up to 75 tonnes per hectare, nearly double the yield of regular varieties.
- ICAR-NRCB is also promoting artificial intelligence (AI) and sensor-based irrigation to conserve water and help banana farmers manage climate-related challenges.
- The centre will provide technical support for exporting Nendran bananas to the Middle East, with four clusters planned for export-oriented farmer producer organisations.

Africa's Extreme Heat Crisis

- A study found that extreme heat is worsening health inequalities in African informal settlements.
- The systematic review examined 21 studies published between 2010 and 2024, selected from 96,608 records across 11 academic databases.
- Studies covered South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Cameroon, Egypt, Nigeria and Ghana; poor housing, overcrowding, limited water and weak infrastructure increased heat vulnerability.
- Heat-related effects included dehydration, heat exhaustion, heatstroke, headaches, sleep problems, respiratory illness, mental-health problems and other diseases.
- The study highlights the need for adaptation measures that address both extreme-heat exposure and underlying socioeconomic conditions in vulnerable communities.

Kerala's Second Indigenous Cattle Breed

- The ICAR-National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR) has officially registered the Periyar cow, also known as Periyar Kullan, as an indigenous cattle breed.
- Vechur cow is one of India's smallest cattle breeds and is native to Kerala.
- It is the second indigenous cattle breed from Kerala to receive national recognition, after the Vechur cow.

- Periyar Kullan is a small-to-medium-sized dwarf cattle breed native to the Western Ghats Forest fringes and plantation areas of central Kerala.
- It is mainly found in Ernakulam and Thrissur districts and is locally known as Kuttampuzha cattle and Andukanni.

Nepal Flash Floods 2026

- A massive flash flood struck Nepal on August 26, 2026, after a sudden surge from the Tibet side affected the Bhote Koshi–Trishuli river system, killing at least 157 people.
- Experts said an ice-rock avalanche/glacial collapse at high altitude likely triggered the flood, sending water, ice, rocks and debris downstream.
- The flood caused a rapid rise in the Bhote Koshi and Trishuli Rivers, severely affecting Rasuwa, Nuwakot and Dhading districts.
- The Bhote Koshi is part of the Koshi River system, while the Trishuli flows into the Narayani River.
- Increased flows were expected in the Koshi and Narayani river basins, while a possible flood wave in the Gandak River led to alerts in Bihar.
- The disaster damaged 19 motorable bridges and about 40 km of roads, besides affecting settlements and hydropower infrastructure.

Neelakurinji Conservation Plan

- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has urged the National Green Tribunal (NGT) to direct Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka to submit annual conservation plans for Neelakurinji.
- Neelakurinji (Strobilanthes kunthiana) is an endemic shrub of the Western Ghats and blooms once every 12 years.
- It has been recorded across 34 localities in 14 ecoregions, including the Nilgiri, Palani-Kodaikanal, Anamalai and Munnar-Idukki landscapes.
- The Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI), Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, proposed a species-specific conservation action plan.
- Major conservation measures include ecological monitoring, restoration of degraded montane grasslands, removal of invasive species and regulation of tourism.
- The conservation plan will be implemented mainly by the State governments under the Development of Wildlife Habitats scheme, with technical and financial support from the MoEFCC.

Tiger in Kishkindha Hills

- A tiger has been camera-trapped in the Kishkindha hills of Koppal district, Karnataka.
- It was last reported nearly after five decades in this forest area of the region.
- It might have moved here from the Srisailam wildlife corridor in Andhra Pradesh.

About Kishkindha hills

- This hill is located on the northern bank of the Tungabhadra River.
- The surrounding plateau is estimated to be roughly 3,000 million years old, making it one of the oldest surface features on Earth.
- It sits just across from the historic site of Hampi in Karnataka.

Dehing Patkai Butterfly Diversity

- A total of 165 butterfly species, including 37 endangered species, have been recorded in Dehing Patkai National Park, Assam.
- Dehing Patkai National Park covers 234.26 sq km across Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts of Assam.
- It is one of the remaining stretches of Assam Valley Tropical Wet Evergreen Forests.
- The Park forms the core of the 937 sq km Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve.

Global Drought Resilience Framework

- A new global drought resilience architecture was launched at the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) COP17.
- It includes the world's first Drought Resilience Index (DRI) to assess a country's capacity to anticipate, prepare for and withstand droughts.
- The DRI uses Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered analytics and vulnerability mapping to support data-based drought planning.
- The Drought Resilience Investment Facility (DRIF) is a global financing platform for scaling drought-resilience projects.
- DRIF aims to use public funds to reduce investment risks and attract private and institutional finance for water security, sustainable agriculture and land restoration.

India's First Soil Texture Map

- The National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning (NBSS&LUP) has developed India's first soil texture map.
- It provides digitised soil classification data at the hectare level across the country.
- It helps farmers identify best crops for specific plots, supports region-specific policies, crop planning, land-use strategies.
- Soil texture is determined by the proportion of sand, silt, and clay in soil.
- India's first soil depth map was developed and released one year before the soil texture map.
- The soil depth map was also released by NBSS&LUP.
- NBSS&LUP is a national institute under ICAR and is based in Nagpur, Maharashtra.

Madras Crocodile Bank – 50th year

- The Madras Crocodile Bank Trust (MCBT) in Chennai has completed 50 years of reptile conservation.
- It was established by Romulus 'Rom' Whitaker and Zai Whitaker to conserve crocodiles and other reptiles.
- The 8.5-acre centre houses over 400 crocodiles, including 47 gharials, along with turtles, snakes and lizards.
- MCBT conducts captive breeding, research, reptile education and snake-bite mitigation programmes.
- It also supports conservation initiatives such as the Andaman and Nicobar Environmental Team (ANET) and the Irula Snake Catchers' Industrial Cooperative Society.

Three Elephant Corridors in TN

- Tamil Nadu notified three new elephant corridors in the Cauvery North Wildlife Sanctuary, Hosur Forest Division.
- The corridors form part of the trans-Cauvery movement route used by Asian elephants between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.
- Jawalagiri–Ulibanda–Thaggatti: 18.50 km long; covers 3,241.53 hectares.
- Jawalagiri–Panai–Anchetty: 20.90 km long; covers 6,881.47 hectares.
- Bilikkal–Jawalagiri: 2.20 km long; covers 196 hectares.

- All three corridors are within reserved forest and sanctuary boundaries, with no private, public or revenue village land affected.

New Marine Species 2026

- Scientists from Pune discovered two new species of microscopic marine organisms, Psammophaga holzmannae and Psammophaga sinhai, in the intertidal sediments along Maharashtra's Konkan coast.
- They are single-celled marine protists belonging to the genus Psammophaga, a group of benthic foraminifera.
- They ingest microparticles and agglutinate sand grains to build protective shell-like structures called tests.
- Foraminifera are found from shallow intertidal areas to deep ocean trenches and can indicate changes in salinity, temperature, heavy metals and ocean acidification.
- Their fossilised shells are also used to reconstruct past ocean temperatures and sea-level changes.

Gujarat Wetland - Black-Necked Stork Breeding

- Khijadiya Bird Sanctuary in Gujarat was identified as a major breeding site for the Black-necked Stork.
- The Black-necked Stork is classified as Near Threatened on the IUCN Red List.
- Researchers recorded a peak population of 21–23 storks during surveys conducted from July 2024 to March 2025.
- Four active nests produced eight young birds during the October–December breeding season.
- All the nests were built on Neltuma juliflora, an invasive tree locally known as gando baval.
- Khijadiya Bird Sanctuary is a Ramsar wetland site in Jamnagar district, Gujarat.

REPORTS AND INDICATES

Market Distortions Performance Index

- India climbed from 82nd in 2010 to 57th in 2023 in the Market Distortions Performance Index, according to the Competere Foundation report.
- The report credits India's progress to reforms such as the Goods and Services Tax (GST), Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), regulatory reforms, and trade facilitation measures.
- The index evaluates countries based on protection of ownership rights, domestic competition, and international competition.
- The report highlights that these reforms have improved ease of doing business, market competition, and investor confidence.
- The report was released during a discussion organised by the Centre for Trade and Investment Law (CTIL) of the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) and the Competere Foundation in New Delhi.

ICMM report 2026

- Nearly two-thirds of the world's mining and metals facilities are exposed to at least one significant physical water risk.
- The study analyzed more than 12,000 facilities across 148 countries and regions.
- Baseline water stress is the most common threat, affecting 38% of facilities, while drought risk affects 27% globally.
- The report identifies compound water-risk hotspots in Chile, Peru, southern Africa, northern China, central India, western Australia and the western United States.
- It was the new report by the International Council on Mining and Metals.
- It was the first comprehensive cross-commodity analysis of water risks across the mining and metals sector.
- The assessment looks at five physical water risk indicators: floods, droughts, baseline water stress, baseline water depletion and interannual variability.
- Baseline water stress is the most common risk facing the mining and metals sector.
- Drought is the second most widespread water risk.
- Flood exposure is particularly pronounced for alumina, aluminium, steel and molybdenum production facilities.
- International Council on Mining and Metals was founded in 2001, as a CEO-led leadership organization, on the premise of improving sustainable development in the mining and metals industry.

UNEP Transition Report

- The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) released the report "No Transition Without Justice", highlighting the role of environmental rule of law in achieving a just transition.
- Just Transition means a fair, inclusive, and rights-based shift towards environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient economies, ensuring no one is left behind.
- The report stresses strong environmental laws, protection of environmental human rights defenders (EHRDs), public participation, accountability, and coordinated governance.
- It highlights fair management of transition finance, speedy dispute resolution, and protection of indigenous and vulnerable communities during the transition.
- The report recommends context-specific policies that balance environmental protection, social justice, and sustainable development.

Judicial Transparency Index Report 2026

- The Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy released the Judicial Transparency Index Report, assessing transparency of the Supreme Court and High Courts through their official websites.
- The index was developed by the JALDI (Justice, Access and Lowering Delays in India) Initiative in 2025.
- It evaluates transparency in three areas: judicial processes, institutional governance & administration, and judicial/administrative personnel.
- The report highlighted gaps such as non-disclosure of recusal criteria, lack of Supreme Court live-streaming guidelines, and limited budget and expenditure disclosures.
- No High Court has published complete asset disclosures of all judges; only a few judges in some High Courts publicly declare assets.
- The report aims to promote open, accessible and accountable judicial institutions.

FAO Peatland Emissions Report 2026

- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) released the Peat-Emit Report 2026 to improve the accuracy of greenhouse gas emission estimates from peatlands.
- The report introduced updated emission factors and identified data gaps to strengthen climate monitoring, especially in developing countries.

- Peatlands cover only 3–4% of Earth's land surface but store around 30% of global soil organic carbon (about 450–650 gigatonnes).
- Drained, degraded, or burnt peatlands release large amounts of Carbon Dioxide (CO_2), Methane (CH_4), and Nitrous Oxide (N_2O), contributing to climate change.
- The Peat-Emit project compiled 560 emissions and removal data points from developing countries, improving the evidence base for greenhouse gas assessments.

World Bank AI Report 2026

- The World Bank released the World Development Report 2026: The Promise of Artificial Intelligence (AI), highlighting AI's potential to reduce inequality in developing countries.
- The report stated that Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) could improve productivity in more than 16% of existing jobs in developing economies.
- It noted that jobs in high-income countries face higher automation risks (14.2%) compared to low- and middle-income countries (4.5%).
- The report warned that developing countries need basic facilities like reliable electricity, internet access, data systems, skills and strong institutions to benefit from AI.
- It highlighted that AI can support sectors like healthcare, agriculture, business and government services when supported by proper policies and infrastructure.

India's R and D Report 2025–26

- The Department of Science and Technology (DST) released the Research and Development (R&D) Statistics 2025–26 report.
- India ranked 3rd globally in scientific publications in 2022, after China and the United States (US), and filed 1.10 lakh patents in 2024–25.
- India's Gross Expenditure on Research and Development (GERD) rose to a record 0.84% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2023–24, from 0.64% in 2020–21.
- GERD increased more than three times to ₹2.45 lakh crore in 2023–24 from ₹79,356 crore in 2013–14.
- The private sector's share in R&D increased to 45.2%, while women formed 29% of India's R&D workforce in 2023–24.
- India had about 5 lakh full-time equivalent researchers, equal to 354 researchers per million population.

FAO Food Price Index – July 2026

- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Food Price Index rose to a 3-year high of 131.1 points in July 2026, the highest since January 2023.
- The rise was mainly driven by a 3.4% increase in cereal prices, including a 5.8% rise in wheat prices due to heat damage and concerns over Black Sea exports.
- Vegetable oil prices rose by 2%, while sugar prices increased by 5.6% due to weather concerns and stronger ethanol demand.
- Meat prices fell by 2.8% from their June record high, while dairy prices declined by 0.7%.
- The FAO linked the rise in food prices to extreme weather, heatwaves, drought and conflicts affecting food production and trade.

NITI Aayog School Education Index 2026

- Punjab has overtaken Kerala to rank No. 1 in the NITI Aayog School Education Quality Index 2026.
- It was developed by NITI Aayog to assess the performance of States and Union Territories in the school education sector.
- This index uses 30 indicators covering access, infrastructure, equity, governance, and learning outcomes.

Key Sectors to Position India as a Global Manufacturing Hub - NITI Aayog Report

- NITI Aayog has released the report titled “Key Sectors to Position India as a Global Manufacturing Hub”.
- It is a structured and data-driven framework identifies major sectors that can fuel India’s ambition to become global manufacturing powerhouse.

Objectives

- This report has extensively analyzed four sectors viz. Chemicals, Telecom & Networking Equipment, Textiles and Solar Photo Voltaic manufacturing.
- These are four high-potential sectors that could drive India’s manufacturing growth and strengthen its position in global value chains.

Textiles Sector

- It is one of the country’s most important manufacturing sectors, contributing approximately 2% to national GDP, 11% to manufacturing GVA, and 9% of merchandise exports.

- It is also the second-largest employer after agriculture, providing livelihoods to more than 45 million people and supporting widespread MSME-led industrial development.
- In fiscal 2025, India exported textile products worth USD 37.7 billion and accounted for 4.1% of global textile and apparel exports, making it the sixth-largest textile exporter globally.

Telecom & Networking Equipment Sector

- India is currently the world's second-largest telecommunications market with more than 1.2 billion subscribers, approximately 85% telecom penetration, and nearly 75% internet usage.
- Recognizing the sector's transformative potential, the National Telecom Policy 2025 (NTP-25) targets doubling the sector's contribution to GDP, doubling exports of telecom products and services, creating one million new jobs, and significantly increasing investment and R&D expenditure by 2030.

Solar PV Sector

- India had installed 106 GW of solar capacity by March 2025 and needs to add about 174 GW to meet the 2030 target of 280 GW solar capacity.
- It will be followed by assessments of eight more sectors.

Global Employment Trends for Youth 2026: Back to the future

- A new report by the UN's International Labour Organization (ILO) has warned that worldwide youth unemployment reduced after the COVID-19 pandemic but is now beginning to worsen again.
- It shows that youth unemployment, which reached a two-decade low in 2023, has begun to rise.
- Rates also increased across high-income, lower-middle-income and low-income economies.
- The Arab States and North Africa continue to record the world's highest youth unemployment rates.

NITI Aayog Report on Professional Services

- NITI Aayog released a report on India's regulatory framework for professional services.
- The report covers legal, accounting, architectural, engineering and healthcare services.
- It highlights regulatory fragmentation and restrictions that affect professional mobility and global competitiveness.

- India is the 7th-largest services exporter, with a 4.3% share of global services exports in 2024.
- NITI Aayog recommends regulatory harmonisation, wider Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs), Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and modern business structures.
- It also recommends using Artificial Intelligence (AI), automation and global best practices to improve high-value services exports.

Global HIV Population

- The Lancet HIV Commission on Ageing released its 2026 report on the growing number of older people living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).
- In 2025, about 11.5 million HIV-positive people were aged 50 years or older.
- This number is projected to reach 20.2 million by 2040, representing 51% of all people living with HIV.
- About 96% of these older adults are expected to live in low- and middle-income countries.
- Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) has helped people with HIV live longer.
- The report called for HIV care to be combined with services for age-related illnesses and mental health.

Global Gas Report 2026

- Global natural gas demand reached a record 4,202 billion cubic metres (bcm) in 2025, according to the Global Gas Report 2026.
- The report was released by the International Gas Union (IGU), Snam and Rystad Energy.
- Global gas demand is projected to fall by 7 bcm in 2026, mainly due to supply disruptions and higher prices linked to the Strait of Hormuz crisis.
- Global gas supply also reached a record 4,147 bcm in 2025, while liquefied natural gas (LNG) net imports reached 580 bcm.
- Asia and Africa were most affected by higher LNG prices, while North American gas demand is expected to increase by 10 bcm in 2026.
- In India, peak electricity demand reached a record 271 gigawatts (GW) in May 2026, increasing the use of natural gas-based power plants.

STATES

Visakhapatnam Port - Marine Exports

- Visakhapatnam Port, Andhra Pradesh, handled 50.87% of India's total marine product exports in FY 2024-25.
- Visakhapatnam Port is a major port located on the eastern coast of Andhra Pradesh and acts as a key gateway for cargo movement.
- India's marine exports include frozen shrimp, fish, cuttlefish, squid, crab and other seafood products.
- India's marine product exports reached ₹72,325.82 crore ($8.28 billion) in FY 2025-26, with a volume of 1.93 million tonnes.
- Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, supports seafood export promotion, quality control and market development.

First Rare Earth Minerals Exploration Licence – Rajasthan

- It spans the Balotra and Jodhpur districts in Rajasthan.
- It is awarded to the Central Mine Planning and Design Institute (CMPDI) under the national critical minerals framework.
- Geological studies indicate the presence of Lanthanum, Cerium, Praseodymium, and Neodymium in the exploration blocks.
- Rare Earth Elements are widely used in electric vehicles (EVs), renewable energy, defence, aerospace, semiconductors, electronics, and telecommunications.

Pithora Painting

- It is the centuries-old wall art tradition of Gujarat's Rathwa tribal community.
- It is mainly in Panch mahal and Chhota Udaipur.
- It dates back to around the 13th century - done by tribes such as the Rathwa, Bhil, and Bhilala.
- It was created on the walls of homes.
- The paintings were often commissioned during significant life events, such as weddings, births, and festivals.
- These were executed by specialist ritual painters known as Lakharas, under the guidance of a priest called Badwa.
- The walls are prepared by applying a mixture of cow dung and clay

- Artists use natural pigments derived from minerals, plants, and other organic materials to create the colours for their paintings
- Painters use a combination of bamboo sticks, cotton and wooden stencils.
- The paintings show tribal and Hindu deities, horses, animals, and scenes from daily life like farming, hunting, and dancing.
- Common colours include red, yellow, green, and blue, each derived from specific natural sources.
- Today's generation of Pithora painters use paper and canvas that they sell commercially.

Hoysala-Era Hero Stone Found

- A centuries-old Veeragallu (hero stone) with a Kannada inscription was discovered at Neeragunda, Karnataka, shedding light on Hoysala ruler Vishnu vardhana's death.
- The inscription records that soldier Boppa died soon after Vishnuvardhana's death at Bankapura and was commemorated by his wife Maravve.
- The inscription gives the date as Ekadashi of Pushya Masa, Durmathi Samvatsara, 1064, corresponding to December 11, 1141.
- Vishnuvardhana is believed to have died at Bankapura, but historians have differed between 1149 and 1152 for his death.
- The Veeragallu was found at the Lakshmi Narayana Swamy Temple in Neeragunda village, Hassan district, Karnataka.

Mising Tribe of Assam

- The Mising, Assam's second-largest plains tribe, was highlighted on the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (August 9) for its traditional adaptation to floods.
- The Mising mainly live-in riverine areas along the Brahmaputra and its tributaries, especially in Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Majuli, Jorhat and Sonitpur districts.
- They traditionally use Chang Ghar, houses built on bamboo stilts, which keep living spaces above floodwaters.
- Their traditional livelihoods include paddy cultivation, livestock rearing, fishing and handloom weaving, using locally available resources such as bamboo and thatch.
- The community celebrates Ali-Aye-Ligang, its traditional sowing festival, and traditionally follows Donyi-Poloism, associated with the Sun and Moon.

- Traditional Mising practices include seasonal farming, flood-adapted housing and local ecological knowledge used in flood-prone areas.

Ladakh's Census 2027

- Ladakh will begin the second phase of Census 2027 on August 17, 2026, and will be among the first areas to record caste details.
- The Census form is likely to have around 40 questions, including an open-ended column for respondents to state their caste.
- Ladakh will use paper schedules for some areas because defence structures near the Line of Actual Control (LAC) cannot be geo-tagged due to security concerns.
- Self-enumeration will be available from August 17 to 31, followed by house-to-house population enumeration.
- The caste data will be collected by recording the caste name as declared by the respondent.
- The snow-bound areas of Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand will conduct enumeration ahead of the rest of India.

Kerala (Alteration of Name) Bill, 2026

- The Kerala (Alteration of Name) Bill, 2026 was introduced by the Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai in Lok Sabha.
- The Bill seeks to change the name of the state of Kerala to "Keralam" in the First Schedule of the Constitution.
- A resolution in this regard was passed by Kerala Legislative Assembly in June 2024.
- Then, the Kerala government had forwarded to the Centre a resolution passed by the state's legislative assembly regarding the name change.
- Subsequently, the President of India referred a bill to the state legislature for expressing its views.
- The Kerala Legislative Assembly unanimously endorsed the President's reference on the proposal.
- The legislators unanimously endorsed all queries raised by the President on the Bill's 10 clauses, including approval of its title and its provisions.
- This was the first time a Presidential reference has been sent to the Kerala Legislative Assembly for its opinion.
- Noting that the First Schedule of the Constitution recorded the State's name as 'Kerala,' the Assembly had urged the Union government to adopt steps under Article 3 of the Constitution to officially rename the State as 'Keralam.'

- Once the present bill is passed by Parliament and notified, the State's official name will be changed from Kerala to Keralam.
- Amendments will be made in the First Schedule to the Constitution by modifying the name of state of 'Kerala' as 'Keralam' in accordance with article 3 of the Constitution.

Article 3 of the Constitution

- According to Article 3 of the Indian Constitution, Parliament may, by law, alter the name of any State.
- The article also states that no Bill for the purpose shall be introduced in either House of Parliament except on the recommendation of the President.
- And unless where the proposal contained in the bill affects the area, boundaries or name of any of the States, the Bill has been referred by the president to the legislature of that State for expressing its views thereon within such period as may be specified in the reference or within such further period as the president may allow and the period so specified or allowed has expired.
- This, in simpler terms, means that the State Assembly first passes a resolution for the change of the name and sends it to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
- It is then sent for the recommendation of the President to Parliament.
- Such a Bill can only be introduced in Parliament after the President recommends it.
- The next step is to send the Bill to the affected state's legislature to get their views within a set time.
- A crucial point to note is that the State's opinion is not binding. Parliament can move forward even if the State disagrees.
- The Bill is then introduced in either the Lok Sabha (Lower House) or Rajya Sabha (Upper House) and must be passed by a simple majority, i.e. more than 50% of the members must be present and voting in any of the houses.
- Once passed by Parliament, the Bill goes back to the President for final signature.
- Once signed, it becomes an Act, and the name is officially changed in the First and Fourth Schedules of the Constitution.
- The process of changing the name of the country is significantly more complex than changing the name of a State.
- As Article 3 deals exclusively with changing the name of States, changing India's name would require a formal Constitutional Amendment under Article 368.
- Article 1 of the Constitution, which defines the country as "India that is Bharat, shall be a Union of States…," would also need to be amended.

- In order to exclusively use just one name for the country, the amendment Bill must be passed by two-thirds of members present and voting in both houses of the Parliament.
- It also requires the support of more than 50% of the total strength of each House.
- The Supreme Court of India has twice (in 2016 and 2020) rejected pleas to rename India to Bharat.
- It was stating that both names are already official and the Constitution refers to both 'Bharat' and 'India,' signalling that they may be used interchangeably.

27 places in Arunachal Pradesh

- India officially updated the Survey of India map, to formally identify and mark 27 key locations and geographical features in Arunachal Pradesh with their standard Indian names.
- It was a move that comes amid repeated attempts by China to rename places in the border state.
- These are including land, passes, a lake and a monument.
- It also includes Long Ju located along the Line of Actual Control.
- It was one of the earliest flashpoints between India and China in 1959 when Chinese forces entered the area.
- The list also includes Bisa village, a strategically important high-altitude mountain pass in the region, Dzo La, Riza La, and Pukur La.
- One of the most strategically important high-altitude passes, Thag La, where one of the opening battles between Indian and Chinese forces took place in 1962, has also been formally identified on the official map.
- Jairampur, an important logistics hub in Changlang district, is known as the gateway to the eastern border region supporting movements of security forces towards eastern Arunachal and the Myanmar frontier.
- India has repeatedly described the Chinese renaming exercise as "vain and preposterous".
- And India asserted that it will not change the "undeniable" reality that Arunachal Pradesh "was, is, and will" remain an integral part of India.

Fourth India Cloud Region in Hyderabad

- Microsoft opens its largest India data centre in Hyderabad.
- Azure cloud business is run by Microsoft.
- It was strengthening its AI infrastructure as it competes with Google and Amazon for a larger share of the country's fast-growing cloud market.

- The facility expands Microsoft's cloud footprint in India to four regions, alongside its existing data centres in Pune, Chennai and Mumbai.
- Thus, it was making it the country's largest cloud infrastructure provider.
- Cloud infrastructure has become the backbone of AI services.
- India's data centre sector is entering a more mature phase, driven by sustained cloud adoption, AI-led computing demand and rapid enterprise digitalisation.
- AWS, Microsoft and Oracle are expanding through owned cloud regions and colocation partnerships.

Parichha Weir - ICID Heritage Recognition

- A 140-year-old irrigation structure in Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh has secured a place on the global heritage map after the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID) selected the historic Parichha Weir as a World Heritage Irrigation Structure (WHIS).
- The Parichha Weir was constructed in 1886 across the Betwa River.
- The roots of the project go back to 1855, when Captain Strachey proposed a canal system for Bundelkhand.
- It forms the headworks of the Betwa Canal System.
- Betwa Canal System is an extensive irrigation network developed to bring water to the drought-prone areas of Bundelkhand.
- The heritage recognition will be formally presented in France in October during the 26th ICID International Congress and 77th International Executive Council meeting.
- In 2022, the Sukwa-Dukwan Weir in Jhansi was included in the ICID heritage list.

The WHIS Programme

- It recognizes irrigation structures that are more than 100 years old and continue to serve their original purpose.
- It will be given by the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID)
- ICID, established in 1950, is a global organization concerned with irrigation and drainage.
- It is a leading scientific, technical, and professional not-for-profit international organization working in the field of irrigation, drainage, and flood management to promote and achieve sustainable agriculture water management.

The Betwa River

- It is a 590-kilometer-long river in central and northern India.

- It is a key right-bank tributary of the Yamuna River.
- It rises in the Vindhya Range in the Raisen district of Madhya Pradesh and flows northeast through Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh before joining the Yamuna near Hamirpur.

Lithium and Gallium Exploration Pact

- The Andhra Pradesh government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the CSIR-National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) for extensive exploration of lithium and gallium deposits in the Vempalle area of Kadapa Basin.
- Lithium concentration is estimated to be as high as 1,000 parts per million (ppm), while gallium levels are estimated at up to 250 ppm.
- The National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) is a geoscientific research organization established in 1961 under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).
- CSIR is India's largest Research and Development organization.
- CSIR was established as an autonomous body in 1942 under the aegis of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India.
- The Kadapa Basin (historically known as the Cuddapah Basin) is a large, crescent-shaped sedimentary basin located in Andhra Pradesh, India, renowned for its massive mineral wealth and ancient Proterozoic rock formations.

CBDC-Based Food Subsidy Transfers

- Chandigarh and Dadra & Nagar Haveli have become the first Union Territories (UTs) to provide food subsidy transfers to eligible beneficiaries through Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)-based Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).
- The subsidy will be transferred directly to beneficiaries' Digital Rupee (e₹) wallets instead of conventional bank accounts.
- Payments can be made using Quick Response (QR) codes on smartphones or One-Time Passwords (OTPs) on feature phones.
- The initiative is the first large-scale use of CBDC in a Central Government welfare programme and follows pilot projects in Gujarat and Puducherry.
- CBDC (Central Bank Digital Currency) is a sovereign digital currency issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- The system aims to improve transparency, traceability and financial inclusion in food subsidy delivery under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY).

Ayushman Bharat Scheme - West Bengal

- West Bengal became the 36th and final State/Union Territory to implement the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), completing nationwide coverage.
- The scheme provides health cover of up to ₹5 lakh per family per year for eligible beneficiaries.
- The National Health Authority (NHA) and the West Bengal Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for implementation.
- More than 36,000 government and private hospitals are empanelled under the scheme.
- More than 44 crore Ayushman cards have been issued across the country.
- Since its launch, beneficiaries have received over 12 crore treatments, worth more than ₹1.82 lakh crore.

Eri Silk Weaving Centre

- Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma inaugurated a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Eri silk weaving at Nongpoh, Ri-Bhoi district, Meghalaya.
- The centre will help preserve and pass on the traditional skill of Eri silk weaving to future generations.
- Eri silk, also called Ryndia, is a traditional handwoven textile of Meghalaya.
- Eri silk is known for its handwoven colours, patterns and designs, which reflect Meghalaya's cultural identity and heritage.
- The Centre of Excellence will promote skill development and innovation in weaving and handloom activities.

Manuscript Digitization - Kerala

- The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS)-National Institute of Indian Medical Heritage (NIIMH) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Sevadhi Museum and Indological Research Institute (SEMIRI) in Kerala to digitise medical manuscripts.
- SEMIRI has preserved more than 30,000 manuscripts, including rare works on Ayurveda and traditional medical knowledge.
- CCRAS-NIIMH will provide technical and scholarly support to digitise hundreds of medical manuscripts and prepare a descriptive catalogue.
- The catalogue will include details such as title, author, subject, script, language, material, condition and origin of the manuscripts.

- The project will help preserve fragile manuscripts and make them accessible for research on Ayurveda and Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS).

Notifiable disease in Maharashtra - Snakebite

- Maharashtra declared snakebite a notifiable disease, making reporting of all suspected, probable and confirmed cases and deaths mandatory.
- Government and private hospitals, medical colleges and healthcare practitioners must report cases through the Health Management Information System (HMIS) and Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP).
- The notification requires details such as the bite date and location, patient age and gender, symptoms of envenomation, and the quantity of Anti-Snake Venom (ASV) administered.
- Maharashtra recorded around 1.29 lakh snakebite cases and 655 deaths between April 2023 and March 2026.
- The decision followed a 9 August 2026 snakebite incident at a government-aided residential school in Gadchiroli, where three tribal schoolgirls died, and three were hospitalised.

Tilapia Exports - Chhattisgarh

- Chhattisgarh became the first inland State in India to begin exporting value-added Tilapia fish products.
- The State exported 382 tonnes of Tilapia products to the United States.
- Chhattisgarh has invested nearly ₹900 crore in fisheries under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY).
- The State's fish production has reached about 10 lakh tonnes, using inland water resources such as ponds, reservoirs and tanks.
- A review meeting on the Tilapia cluster was held in Raipur, Chhattisgarh.
- Tilapia is a freshwater fish widely farmed through ponds, tanks, cages and other aquaculture systems.

Analogue Paneer Ban - Karnataka

- Karnataka has banned the manufacture, storage, distribution and sale of analogue paneer as "paneer" across the state for one year, from August 17, 2026 to August 17, 2027.
- Analogue paneer is a non-dairy product made using vegetable oil, vegetable fat or other non-dairy ingredients instead of milk fat or milk solids.

- The order was issued under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, mainly invoking Sections 30(2)(a), 18 and 29.
- The ban does not cover standardised products such as processed cheese, frozen desserts and mixed fat spreads, which have separate food categories.
- Karnataka joins Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh in restricting analogue paneer.

Glyphosate ban - Himachal Pradesh

- 44 social and environmental organisations, retired forest officials and scientists have urged the Himachal Pradesh government to ban the use of glyphosate-based herbicides on forest land.
- Glyphosate is reportedly being used to clear vegetation for illegal pea and hemp cultivation; the practice has been reported in high-altitude forest areas.
- The groups said such cultivation violates the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, Indian Forest Act, 1927, and Biological Diversity Act, 2002.
- They sought scientific testing of soil, water, vegetation and biodiversity, including chemical-residue testing, in areas where herbicide use is reported.
- The Forest Department has adopted a zero-tolerance approach and has destroyed pea cultivation in five small forest patches so far.

Mission Samriddh Gaon

- Union Minister for Rural Development launched Mission Samriddh Gaon, with pilot projects beginning in two blocks of Madhya Pradesh.
- The mission is an integrated rural development framework that brings together Central and State welfare schemes to improve basic amenities and livelihoods.
- The pilot will cover Budni block in Sehore district and Khategaon block in Dewas district of Madhya Pradesh.
- It promotes integrated farming systems, women farmers' enterprises, rural infrastructure, warehouses, cold chains and village-level processing.
- The mission aims to create self-reliant, poverty-free and economically vibrant villages and reduce distress-driven rural-to-urban migration.

Uranium Mining - Meghalaya

- The Meghalaya Assembly adopted a resolution opposing uranium mining and uranium ore-processing facilities in the State.
- Chief Minister of Meghalaya moved the resolution in the 60-member Assembly.

- The resolution referred to a 2019 Supreme Court order recognising the rights of private and community landowners over land and minerals beneath it.
- Meghalaya's Sixth Schedule framework protects community, clan and individual ownership of land and resources.
- Meghalaya has an estimated 9.22 million tonnes of uranium deposits, about 16% of India's total reserves, ranking third after Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh.

Gorkhaland Issue Committee

- The Centre has set up a committee to finalise a "permanent political solution" for the Gorkha issue in Darjeeling hills.
- The committee will be chaired by Pankaj Kumar Singh, former Deputy National Security Adviser and current interlocutor.
- The committee will address demands related to identity, self-rule and constitutional recognition of the Gorkha community.
- The Gorkhaland demand seeks a separate State comprising the Darjeeling hills and parts of the Terai and Dooars.
- The Centre had appointed Pankaj Kumar Singh as interlocutor in October 2025 to hold talks with Gorkha representatives.
- Darjeeling is strategically important because it is close to the Siliguri Corridor, the main land link between mainland India and the Northeast.

Australian Merino sheep - Himachal Pradesh

- Himachal Pradesh introduced Australian Merino sheep to improve wool quality and increase the state's wool production.
- The ₹6-crore programme began in 2021 under the National Livelihood Mission, with 240 Merino sheep imported from Australia.
- Merino and indigenous Gaddi sheep were crossbred through artificial insemination, producing 800 healthy lambs.
- The programme aims to reduce wool thickness from about 27 microns to 21–22 microns for producing finer, apparel-grade wool.
- Himachal Pradesh plans to increase its annual wool production from about 1,500 tonnes to 3,000 tonnes by 2027.

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

Fields Medal 2026

- The Fields Medal 2026, the highest honour in mathematics, was announced at the International Congress of Mathematicians (ICM) 2026 in Philadelphia, USA.
- The medal was awarded to Yu Deng (China), John Pardon (USA), Hong Wang (China), and Jacob Tsimerman (Canada) for major contributions to modern mathematics.
- Awarded every four years by the International Mathematical Union (IMU), it recognises mathematicians below 40 years of age.
- Hong Wang became the third woman to receive the Fields Medal after Maryam Mirzakhani (2014) and Maryna Viazovska (2022).
- The Fields Medal is popularly known as the "Nobel Prize of Mathematics" and carries a prize of 15,000 Canadian Dollars (CAD).

Pingali Venkayya's 150th Birth Anniversary

- India observed the 150th birth anniversary of Pingali Venkayya on 2 August 2026, and the Prime Minister paid tribute to him.
- Pingali Venkayya (1876–1963) was an Indian freedom fighter, educationist, geologist, author, and the designer of the initial version of the Indian National Flag (Tiranga).
- He was born at Bhatlapenumarru village, Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh.
- He presented his flag design to Mahatma Gandhi during the All-India Congress Committee (AICC) session at Vijayawada in 1921.
- On 13 April 1923, during a procession by local Congress volunteers in Nagpur commemorating the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, the Swaraj flag with the spinning wheel was hoisted.
- The present National Flag of India was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 22 July 1947, based on Venkayya's design with the Ashoka Chakra replacing the spinning wheel (Charkha).
- Then the spinning wheel was replaced with the navy blue 24-spoke Ashoka Chakra.

Justice M.S. Liberhan Demise

- Former Chief Justice of the Andhra Pradesh High Court and Madras High Court, Justice M. S. Liberhan, passed away at the age of 87 in Chandigarh.

- Justice Liberhan headed the Liberhan Commission, constituted to investigate the Babri Masjid demolition of December 6, 1992.
- The Liberhan Commission submitted its report after nearly 17 years, becoming one of India's longest-running commissions of inquiry.
- He was a former judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court and served as Chief Justice of the Andhra Pradesh and Madras High Courts.
- Justice Liberhan was known for his long judicial career and contribution to the rule of law and the Indian judiciary.

COSPAR Vikram Sarabhai Medal 2026

- Astrophysicist Annapurni Subramaniam received the COSPAR Vikram Sarabhai Medal 2026 for her contribution to space research.
- The Vikram Sarabhai Medal was instituted in 1990 in honour of Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, the father of India's space programme.
- The medal is jointly awarded by the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to scientists from developing countries.
- Annapurni Subramaniam became the 4th Indian and the first Indian woman scientist to receive this medal; she is also the third female recipient of the award.
- Other Indian recipients include U. R. Rao (1996), Gurbax Singh Lakhina (2014), and Anil Bharadwaj (2024).

Environment Protection Award 2026

- P. Pechiyammal and Govindhammal received the Dr. M.S. Swaminathan Award for Environment Protection 2026 in Chennai.
- The award recognises grassroots individuals and organisations for outstanding contributions to environment protection, biodiversity conservation, marine plastic cleanup, and sustainable agriculture.
- It is instituted by the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) in partnership with CavinKare Pvt. Ltd. and the Rotary Club of Madras East.
- P. Pechiyammal (Ramanathapuram) was honoured for removing abandoned fishing nets to protect marine life and coral reefs.
- Govindhammal (Villupuram) was honoured for promoting organic farming, climate-resilient agriculture, and strengthening Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs).

Sarvottam Jeevan Raksha Padak 2026

- Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways conferred the Sarvottam Jeevan Raksha Padak on 12 rat-hole miners in New Delhi for their bravery in saving lives.
- It is the highest category of the Jeevan Raksha Padak, a civilian life-saving award administered by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
- The award was instituted on 30 September 1961 and later organised into three levels: Sarvottam, Uttam and Jeevan Raksha Padak.
- It honours people who save human lives while facing extreme personal risk, including during mine collapses, fires, floods and other disasters.
- The award is open to all citizens and can also be given posthumously; recipients receive a ₹2 lakh monetary grant, medal and certificate.

Sant Kabir Handloom Awards 2025

- President Droupadi Murmu presented the Sant Kabir Handloom Awards and National Handloom Awards 2025 at Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre, New Delhi.
- A total of 22 awards were presented — 3 Sant Kabir Handloom Awards and 19 National Handloom Awards.
- The Sant Kabir awards went to Ram Meher (Odisha), Runima Chetiya Choudhury (Assam) and Shah Muhammad Ansari (Uttar Pradesh).
- The National Handloom Awards recognised traditional textiles including Kanchipuram Silk (Tamil Nadu), Ikat (Telangana) and Kani Shawls (Jammu and Kashmir).
- The President also released four commemorative postage stamps on India's weaving traditions.

Dirac Medal 2026

- Indian physicist Deepak Dhar has been named a co-recipient of the 2026 Dirac Medal, one of the highest honours in theoretical physics.
- The medal was instituted in 1985 by the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), Italy.
- Dhar became the first Indian to receive the Boltzmann Medal in 2022.
- He is now among only 10 people to have received both the Dirac and Boltzmann Medals.
- His research studies how simple interactions can produce complex behaviour in large systems.

A.S. Rajeev - Acting Central Vigilance Commissioner

- The President of India authorized Vigilance Commissioner A. S. Rajeev to act as the Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC).
- He succeeded Praveen Kumar Srivastava, whose tenure ended on that date.
- A notification from the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions was issued in this regard.
- Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) was set up as an executive body by the Government of India Resolution on 11 February 1964.
- It was on the recommendations of the Committee on Prevention of Corruption, headed by K. Santhanam.
- It aims to address governmental corruption.
- In 2003, the Parliament enacted a law conferring statutory status on the CVC. It has the status of an autonomous body, free of control from any executive authority.
- It was charged with monitoring all vigilance activity under the Central Government of India, advising various authorities in central Government organizations in planning, executing, reviewing, and reforming their vigilance work.
- The CVC is not an investigating agency: the only investigation carried out by the CVC is that of examining Civil Works of the Government.

Gaj Gaurav Awards 2026

- The Gaj Gaurav Awards 2026 were presented on 13 August 2026 during World Elephant Day celebrations in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.
- Seven mahouts from Jaldapara National Park, West Bengal, received the awards for elephant and wildlife rescue work.
- Bikash Kharia and Rajiv Oraon rescued 6 stranded captive elephants during severe floods.
- Ajibul Haque, Ajit Gabur, Momtaz Alam, Amasur Kharia and Dilip Munda guided 13 displaced wild rhinoceroses to safety.
- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change released “30 Giant Steps”, covering 30 achievements under Project Elephant (2020–2026).
- A ₹500 crore Regional Action Plan was launched to manage human–elephant conflict in Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

Thagaisal Thamizhar Award 2026

- Former Tamil Nadu Congress Committee (TNCC) president M. Krishnasamy was selected for the Thagaisal Thamizhar Award 2026.
- He represented the Vandavasi Lok Sabha constituency from 1991 to 1996 and the Arani Lok Sabha constituency from 2009 to 2014.
- The award was instituted in 2021 to honour eminent persons who contributed to the welfare of Tamil Nadu and the Tamil community.
- The award carries a ₹10 lakh cash prize and a citation.
- Previous awardees include N. Sankaraiah (2021), R. Nallakannu (2022), K. Veeramani (2023), Kumari Ananthan (2024) and K. M. Khader Mohideen (2025).

Sumit Sarkar Demise

- Eminent historian Sumit Sarkar, known for his work on modern Indian history, died at the age of 87.
- He taught at Delhi University from 1974 to 2004, and also taught at the University of Calcutta, University of Burdwan and Oxford.
- His book Modern India brought peasants, workers and ordinary people into the study of Indian history.
- His Swadeshi Movement in Bengal examined the 1905 Partition of Bengal using sources such as newspapers, plays, novels and pamphlets.
- He studied nationalism, caste, religion, labour and the experiences of marginalised groups through historical evidence.
- His other works include Modern Times and Khaki Shorts and Saffron Flags, which examined different aspects of Indian society and politics.

India's First Woman Fighter Combat Leader - Bhawana Kanth

- Indian Air Force Squadron Leader Bhawana Kanth makes history as IAF's 1st woman 'Top Gun' pilot.
- She was commissioned into the Indian Air Force in June 2016 as part of the country's first batch of women fighter pilots, alongside Avani Chaturvedi and Mohana Singh.
- In 2019, she became the first Indian woman cleared to undertake daytime fighter combat missions.
- She also became the first woman fighter pilot to participate in the Republic Day Parade in 2021 and later flew in the Republic Day fly-past in 2024.
- She is first woman fighter pilot to successfully complete the prestigious Fighter Combat Leader (FCL) course at the Tactics and Air Combat Development Establishment (TACDE) in Gwalior.

- It is considered comparable to the US Navy's "Top Gun," which is officially called the Strike Fighter Tactics Instructor programme.

Triumph of the Indian Republic - Book by Ramnath Govind

- "Triumph of the Indian Republic: My Life, My Struggles is the official autobiography of Ram Nath Kovind, the 14th President of India, who served from 2017 to 2022.
- The book was formally released by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi.
- Ramnath Govind is the first person from Uttar Pradesh as well as the first member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to become the President of India.

National Anubhav Awards 2026

- The National Anubhav Awards 2026 were conferred on 15 awardees in New Delhi for their contributions to nation-building.
- The awardees contributed to projects including Passport Seva Kendras, rule reforms, technological adaptation and government accounting.
- The Anubhav platform allows serving and retired Central Government employees, 12 Public Sector Banks and Central Public Sector Enterprises to share their work experiences.
- The Handbook on Pension Mitra and guidelines for the Nation-wide Digital Life Certificate Campaign-5 were also released.
- The government highlighted reforms to simplify pension procedures and strengthen family pension provisions.

PMIS Award 2026

- Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) has received the Prime Minister Internship Scheme (PMIS) Recognition of Partner Company Award for Innovation in Exit Pathways.
- POWERGRID, a Maharatna Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) under the Ministry of Power.
- The award recognised POWERGRID for uploading training details of all PMIS interns on the Rozgaar portal of the Power Sector Skill Council (PSSC) for employment and placement support.
- The PMIS was launched in December 2024 as a national internship initiative for youth and industry engagement.

- The Ministry of Corporate Affairs hosted the PMIS Industry Awards at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi.
- Mahindra & Mahindra Limited was named Overall Industry Champion, while IBM India Private Limited received the Innovation in Program Implementation Award.

UN Medal for Indian Personnel

- 210 Indian peacekeepers received the United Nations (UN) Medal in Juba, South Sudan.
- The recipients included six women and seven staff officers serving with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).
- India is the second-largest contributor of uniformed personnel to UN peacekeeping operations, with over 4,200 personnel deployed globally in 2026.
- India has contributed more than 2 lakh personnel to 49 of the 71 UN peacekeeping missions established since 1948.
- UNMISS was established in 2011 after South Sudan gained independence.
- It works on civilian protection, humanitarian assistance and the peace process.

Inaiya Tamil Chemmal Award 2026

- The Government of Tamil Nadu has introduced the Inaiya Tamil Chemmal Award to recognise Tamil language promotion in the digital space.
- It honours Tamil scholars and activists who promote and develop Tamil through websites, digital platforms and online research.
- The award carries the Inaiya Tamil Chemmal title and a cash prize of ₹25,000.
- It recognises efforts in digital Tamil services and Unicode promotion.
- The award extends recognition of Tamil language work into the digital era.

Nammazhvar Awards 2025-26

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister presented the Nammazhvar Awards for excellence in organic farming for 2025-26.
- The awards were given to C. Nallasivam (Namakkal), A. Subramanian (Pudukkottai), and Sadhana (Chengalpattu).
- Each award carries a cash prize of ₹2 lakh and a medal.
- The Chief Minister also presented the Sarvottam Jeevan Raksha Padak 2025 to Srisha, wife of late headmaster P.S. Gowrishankar Raja.
- The award was given posthumously to Gowrishankar Raja for his bravery in attempting to save an eight-year-old student from an agricultural farm pond.

SPORTS

ISSF World Cup 2026

- India finished the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup 2026 campaign with four medals (1 Gold, 1 Silver and 2 Bronze medals) in rifle, pistol and shotgun events.
- China topped the medal tally with the highest number of medals at the ISSF World Cup 2026.
- Esha Singh won Gold in the Women's 25m Pistol event.
- Sainyam Vij won Silver in the Women's 10m Air Pistol event, while Manu Bhaker won Bronze in the Women's 25m Pistol event.
- Sonam Maskar and Himanshu Dhillon won Bronze in the 10m Air Rifle Mixed Team event.

Commonwealth Games 2026

- India finished 4th at the Commonwealth Games (CWG) 2026 in Glasgow with 39 medals (13 Gold, 17 Silver, 9 Bronze).
- India recorded its lowest medal tally in 24 years since the 1998 Kuala Lumpur Commonwealth Games, but achieved a strong position despite a reduced event schedule.
- India performed strongly in boxing, judo, athletics, para-athletics, and weightlifting, with boxing contributing 10 medals, including 7 gold medals.
- Neeraj Chopra won silver in javelin throw, while Mirabai Chanu secured her third consecutive CWG gold medal in weightlifting.
- India finished behind Australia, England, and Canada, and secured 4th place ahead of host Scotland on a silver medal count tiebreaker.

National Sports Awards 2025

- The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports announced the National Sports Awards 2025.
- No athlete was selected for the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award for 2025.
- The Arjuna Award was given to 17 athletes, including Vidit Gujarathi and Divya Deshmukh (chess), Tejaswin Shankar (athletics), and Gayatri Gopichand and Treesa Jolly (badminton).
- I. Arumainayagam, a former football player and coach, received the Arjuna Award (Lifetime).

- The Dronacharya Award was given to Parveer Singh (athletics), Chhote Lal Yadav (boxing), Neha Nandkumar Chavan (shooting), Dharmendra Singh Yadav (boxing), and Virender Kumar (wrestling).
- The Army Paralympic Node, Pune, received the Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar for promoting sports.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Lung Cancer Day 2026 - August 01

- The day is observed to raise awareness about lung cancer and promote prevention, early detection, timely treatment, and patient support.
- Lung cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer-related deaths worldwide, but early diagnosis can significantly improve survival and treatment outcomes.
- The disease can affect both smokers and non-smokers and is associated with tobacco use, second-hand smoke, air pollution, radon gas, occupational exposure to harmful chemicals, and genetic factors.
- The day also highlights the importance of quitting tobacco, reducing exposure to air pollutants, maintaining healthy lungs, and ensuring equitable access to screening, diagnosis, and treatment.
- The theme for the year 2026 is "Together Through Lung Cancer."

International Day of Friendship 2026 - July 30

- International Day of Friendship was observed on 30 July 2026, while India celebrated Friendship Day on 2 August 2026 (the first Sunday of August).
- The United Nations (UN) declared 30 July as the International Day of Friendship in 2011 to promote friendship, peace, and understanding among people and nations.
- In India, Friendship Day is traditionally celebrated on the first Sunday of August, a practice followed for many years.
- The idea of a global Friendship Day was first proposed in 1958 by Dr. Ramón Artemio Bracho of Paraguay, leading to the World Friendship Crusade.
- The day encourages people to strengthen friendships, promote kindness, and build mutual understanding across communities and countries.

Indian Organ Donation Day 2026 – August 03

- The day aims to promote awareness about organ donation and encourage people to pledge their organs.
- The day commemorates India's first successful deceased-donor heart transplant, performed on August 3, 1994, at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi.
- Organ donation involves donating healthy organs (kidneys, liver, heart, lungs, pancreas and intestines) or tissues (corneas, skin, bone and heart valves) to save or improve lives.
- Organ donation in India is regulated under the Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Act (THOTA) and follows strict medical and legal procedures.
- According to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), India recorded over 5 lakh organ donation pledges in 2026, reflecting growing public awareness.

International Clouded Leopard Day 2026 - August 04

- The day aims to raise awareness about the conservation of clouded leopards.
- The clouded leopard is the smallest big cat and includes two species: Mainland Clouded Leopard (Neofelis nebulosa) and Sunda Clouded Leopard (Neofelis diardi).
- Both species are listed as Vulnerable on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List due to habitat loss, illegal wildlife trade, and human-wildlife conflict.
- India's Conservation Action Plan (CAP) focuses on 14 priority landscapes, habitat protection, scientific monitoring, anti-poaching measures, community participation, and climate-resilient conservation.

National Bone and Joint Day 2026 – August 4

- The day aims to promote awareness about bone, joint, spine, and musculoskeletal (bones, joints, muscles, and related tissues) health.
- The day was started by the Indian Orthopaedic Association (IOA) in 2012 with the slogan "Stronger Bones, Stronger India."
- It encourages early diagnosis, preventive care, and healthy lifestyle habits to reduce bone and joint disorders.
- Common bone and joint diseases include osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoporosis, gout, and back and spine disorders.
- The theme for the year 2026 is "Healthy Bones, Healthy Joints, Healthier India".

National Handloom Day 2026 - August 07

- The day aims to honour India's handloom weavers and promote the handloom sector.
- The day has been observed since 2015 to commemorate the launch of the Swadeshi Movement on 7 August 1905, which promoted the use of indigenous goods.
- According to the Fourth All India Handloom Census (2019–20), India has 35.22 lakh handloom weavers and allied workers, of whom over 72% are women.
- India has 28.20 lakh handlooms, with nearly 90% located in rural areas, supporting rural employment and livelihoods.
- As of June 2026, 106 handloom products have received Geographical Indication (GI) registration, and India's handloom exports reached about ₹1,330.96 crore in 2025–26.

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples 2026 - August 09

- The day aims to promote Indigenous rights, cultures, traditional knowledge, equality and well-being.
- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) established the day in 1994.
- August 9 marks the first meeting of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations held in 1982.
- The day promotes the protection of Indigenous cultures, languages, traditional knowledge, land rights and self-determination.
- The theme for the year 2026 is "Honouring Indigenous Midwives: Safeguarding Life and Well-being."

World Lion Day 2026 - August 10

- The day aims to raise awareness about lion conservation and threats such as habitat loss, poaching and human-wildlife conflict.
- Lions are apex predators that help control prey populations and maintain the balance of ecosystems.
- India is home to the world's remaining wild Asiatic lions, mainly found in the Gir landscape of Gujarat.
- India launched Project Lion in 2020 to conserve Asiatic lions through habitat management, population monitoring, research and human-wildlife conflict reduction.
- Barda Wildlife Sanctuary in Gujarat is being developed as an additional habitat to reduce the risk of having the lion population concentrated in one landscape.

World Biofuel Day 2026 – August 10

- The day aims to promote biofuels as renewable alternatives to fossil fuels and support cleaner transport and energy security.
- The day was first observed in India by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) in August 2015.
- It commemorates Sir Rudolf Diesel's successful use of peanut oil to run an engine on 9 August 1893.
- Biofuels are produced from biomass such as crops, agricultural waste, animal waste, algae and used cooking oil.
- Major types include bioethanol, biodiesel, bio-CNG (Compressed Natural Gas) and advanced biofuels.

World Elephant Day 2026 - August 12

- The day aims to promote elephant conservation and protection of their habitats and corridors.
- India is home to nearly 60% of the world's wild Asian elephants, with an estimated 22,446 elephants under the 2021–25 census.
- They are protected through 33 Elephant Reserves and 150 identified corridors across India.
- Project Elephant, launched in 1992, supports habitat protection, scientific monitoring and measures to reduce human-elephant conflict.
- India's first DNA-based synchronised elephant census used dung samples to identify individual elephants genetically.
- The theme for 2026 is "Bringing the world together to help elephants".

Partition Horrors Remembrance Day 2026 - August 14

- The day aims to remember the victims and survivors of the Partition of India in 1947.
- The Partition accompanied the end of British rule and led to the creation of India and Pakistan under the Indian Independence Act, 1947.
- Lord Mountbatten announced the Partition Plan on June 3, 1947, while the boundary between India and Pakistan was drawn by the Radcliffe Commission.
- Partition triggered one of the largest mass migrations in modern history, with millions of people moving across the newly created borders.

- The Government of India declared August 14 as Partition Horrors Remembrance Day in 2021.
- The 1947 Partition led to mass migration, communal violence, killings, abductions, property destruction and separation of families, especially in Punjab and Bengal.

World Mosquito Day – August 20

- The day aims to raise awareness about mosquito-borne diseases and their prevention.
- The day commemorates Sir Ronald Ross, who in 1897 discovered that female Anopheles mosquitoes transmit malaria parasites to humans.
- Sir Ronald Ross was a British-Indian physician and scientist who was born in 1857 in Almora, India.
- He received the 1902 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his work on malaria, becoming the first British Nobel laureate in medicine.
- Major mosquito-borne diseases include malaria, dengue, chikungunya, Japanese encephalitis and Zika virus disease.
- Malaria is mainly transmitted by infected female Anopheles mosquitoes, while dengue and chikungunya are mainly spread by Aedes mosquitoes.

National Space Day 2026 - August 23

- The observance commemorates India's Chandrayaan-3 mission.
- That mission successfully soft-landed the Vikram lander in the Moon's south polar region in 2023.
- In 2023, India became the fourth country to achieve a successful soft landing on the Moon and the first to land in the lunar south-polar region.
- The Government of India declared August 23 as National Space Day to celebrate the achievement and encourage interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).
- 2026 theme: "Towards Viksit Bharat – Innovating, Collaborating and Aspiring Global Space Leadership."
- The day also highlights India's upcoming space missions, including Gaganyaan and Chandrayaan-4.

World Lake Day 2026 - August 27

- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) designated the day, and it was first observed globally in 2025.
- The day aims to raise awareness about threats to lakes and encourage their conservation, restoration and sustainable management.
- Lakes are important for freshwater supply, biodiversity, climate regulation, livelihoods and flood management.
- Major threats include pollution, excessive water use, agricultural runoff, climate change and habitat degradation.
- Lake Baikal is the world's deepest freshwater lake, while Lake Superior is the largest freshwater lake by surface area.

International Day against Nuclear Tests 2026 - August 29

- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) designated the day in 2009.
- The day aims to raise awareness about the harmful effects of nuclear tests and promote their cessation.
- The day commemorates the closure of the Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site in Kazakhstan on August 29, 1991.
- The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) was adopted in 1996 to end all nuclear testing but has not yet entered into force.
- The day was first observed in 2010.

International Whale Shark Day 2026 - August 30

- The day aims to raise awareness about whale shark conservation.
- The Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) launched the 'Save the Whale Shark Campaign' along coastal Karnataka, Kerala and Lakshadweep.
- The whale shark (Rhincodon typus) is the largest fish on Earth and is a keystone species in marine ecosystems.
- In India, whale sharks occur along the entire coast, with the largest aggregation found along the Gujarat coast.
- It is listed as Endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List and under Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

MISCELLANEOUS

Europe Wildfire Crisis

- France and Spain are facing one of their worst wildfire emergencies in decades, with more than 325,000 people evacuated from affected areas.
- The wildfires have been intensified by extreme heatwaves, prolonged dry weather, strong winds, and the effects of climate change, which have lengthened the wildfire season.
- Since January 2026, around 69,500 hectares of land have burned in France and nearly 150,000 hectares in Spain, including protected forests and nature reserves.
- The fires have destroyed forests, homes, transport infrastructure, and threatened vineyards and wildlife habitats, while causing deaths, injuries, and large-scale evacuations.
- The wildfire crisis has also spread to Italy, Scotland, and other Mediterranean countries, highlighting the increasing frequency and intensity of climate-related disasters in Europe.

Harappan Civilization Decline

- A study by the Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP) found that a weak Indian Summer Monsoon (ISM) around 4,200 years Before Present (BP) contributed to the decline of the Harappan Civilization.
- Researchers analysed pollen records from Deoria Tal Lake, Garhwal Himalaya, to reconstruct past vegetation and climate changes.
- The study found that the 4.2 ka event caused a cooler and drier climate, weakening monsoon rainfall and affecting agriculture in the Indus and Ghaggar-Hakra river regions.
- Due to reduced river flooding and water availability, Harappan populations migrated towards the eastern Ganga plains.
- The study linked the climate shift to factors such as changes in the Inter Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ), El Niño, and Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD).

Border Trade via Nathu La Pass

- India–China border trade through Nathu La Pass, Sikkim, resumed on 1 August 2026 after a six-year suspension due to the COVID-19 pandemic and border tensions.
- Nathu La Pass is one of the designated border trading points between India and China and is part of the ancient Silk Route.

- The seasonal trade will operate from Monday to Thursday until November under the existing bilateral trade protocol.
- Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has implemented security arrangements, including the deployment of additional personnel and a women's platoon for the first time.
- Nathu La border trade was reopened in 2006 after being closed for over four decades following the 1962 India–China War.

81st Hiroshima Bomb Anniversary

- Japan observed the 81st anniversary of the Hiroshima atomic bombing on 6 August 2026.
- The United States (U.S.) dropped the world's first wartime atomic bomb, "Little Boy," on Hiroshima at on 6 August 1945, destroying most of the city and killing about 140,000 people by the end of 1945.
- A second atomic bomb, "Fat Man," was dropped on Nagasaki on 9 August 1945, causing about 70,000 deaths by the end of 1945.
- Japan surrendered on 15 August 1945, bringing World War II (WWII) to an end.
- The number of Hiroshima atomic bomb survivors (Hibakusha) has declined to 91,105, with their average age now over 86 years.

81st Nagasaki Bombing Anniversary

- Japan observed the 81st anniversary of the Nagasaki atomic bombing on August 9, 2026, remembering the victims of the 1945 attack.
- The United States dropped the atomic bomb "Fat Man" on Nagasaki on August 9, 1945, during World War II.
- Fat Man was a plutonium-based implosion-type nuclear bomb, while the bomb dropped on Hiroshima was the uranium-based "Little Boy."
- The Nagasaki bomb had an explosive power of about 21 kilotons of TNT and caused massive destruction and loss of life.
- Nuclear bombs release enormous energy through nuclear fission or fusion, producing a powerful blast, intense heat and radiation.

India Day Proclamation - August 15

- Massachusetts declared August 15, 2026, as India Day across the state, while Boston also issued a similar proclamation.
- The declaration was issued by Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey on August 1, 2026, coinciding with the 79th anniversary of India's Independence.

- Boston Mayor Michelle Wu also declared August 15 as India Day in the city and welcomed the opening of the new Indian Consulate in Boston.
- The Indian diaspora in the United States has more than 5 million people of Indian origin, with major contributions in medicine, science, technology, education, business and public service.
- The proclamation also mentioned the visit of INS Sudarshini, an Indian Navy sail training ship, to Boston for the SAILBOSTON-250 event.
- Massachusetts had earlier declared August 15 as India Day in 2025, following the 4th International India Day Parade held at Boston Harbor.

Quit India Movement Day 2026

- Quit India Movement Day is observed every year on August 8 to remember the launch of the Quit India Movement (Bharat Chhodo Andolan) in 1942.
- The movement was launched on August 8, 1942, at Gowalia Tank Maidan, Bombay (now Mumbai), during the All India Congress Committee (AICC) session.
- Mahatma Gandhi led the movement and gave the famous "Do or Die" call to demand an immediate end to British rule.
- The movement was mainly triggered by the failure of the Cripps Mission (1942) and growing opposition to British rule during World War II.
- Gandhi and other Congress leaders were arrested on August 9, 1942, but students, workers, farmers and women continued protests and underground activities.
- The movement was suppressed by the British but became an important turning point in India's freedom struggle and strengthened the path towards Independence in 1947.

18 Monuments Delisted from Protected List

- The Centre has delisted 18 monuments from the centrally protected list since 2021 after they ceased to be of national importance under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958.
- The 18 sites are Nicholson Statue and Platform, Bara Khamba Cemetery, Inchla Wali Gumti (Delhi); Kos Minar No. 13, Kos Minar (Haryana); Inscription in Fort of Bachhaun (Madhya Pradesh); 12th-century Temple, Inscription in Fort (Rajasthan); Kutumbari Area (Uttarakhand).
- In Uttar Pradesh, the sites are Ancient Banyan Grove, Closed Cemetery, Gunner Burkill's Tomb, Cemetery at Gaughat, Cemeteries at Jahraila Road, Tombs on Lucknow–Fyzabad Road, three small Linga temples at Ahugi, Telia Nala Buddhist Ruins and Tablet on the Treasury Building.

- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) now maintains 3,688 centrally protected monuments and sites; Section 35 of the AMASR Act provides for delisting monuments that cease to be of national importance.
- India has retrieved 662 historical artefacts from foreign countries up to June 2026, including 589 from the United States, 51 from Australia, 21 from the United Kingdom and 1 from the Netherlands.

Sadbhavana Divas 2026 – August 20

- Sadbhavana Diwas is observed to mark the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and promote national integration, communal harmony, peace and goodwill.
- Rajiv Gandhi was born on 20 August 1944 in Bombay (now Mumbai), Maharashtra.
- He was the son of Indira Gandhi and grandson of Jawaharlal Nehru.
- He became Prime Minister on 31 October 1984 after the assassination of Indira Gandhi and served until 2 December 1989.
- At the age of 40, Rajiv Gandhi became the youngest Prime Minister of India.
- Before entering politics, he worked as a commercial pilot with Indian Airlines.
- The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, was introduced during his tenure to improve access to and the quality of education.
- The Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) system was introduced in 1986 to provide quality education, particularly to talented students from rural areas.
- The 52nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1985 introduced the Anti-Defection Law and added the Tenth Schedule to the Constitution.
- The 61st Constitutional Amendment Act, 1988 reduced the voting age from 21 to 18 years, increasing the participation of young people in elections.
- Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) was established in 1986 during his tenure to provide telecommunications services in Delhi and Mumbai.
- He was assassinated on 21 May 1991 at Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu during an election campaign.
- He was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award, in 1991.
- Sadbhavana Diwas highlights the values of emotional unity, communal harmony, peaceful coexistence and resolving differences through dialogue and constitutional means.

Oldest Microbial Life Traces

- Researchers found evidence of microbial life dating back at least 3.5 billion years in a rock from eastern India.
- The rock, a carbon-bearing chert, was found at Bhitardari in the Singhbhum Craton, covering parts of Jharkhand and Odisha.
- Four of eight zircon crystals analysed gave an age of about 3,497 million years, helping establish the rock's age.
- Chemical evidence, including carbon isotope patterns and degraded organic matter, indicates that the carbon was produced by living organisms.
- The finding could represent the oldest directly dated rock with a confirmed biosignature, according to the researchers.
- The discovery suggests that microbial life existed relatively early in Earth's history, about 1 billion years after Earth formed.

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