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India Post Gramin Dak Sevak (GDS)	23,757	21 Sept 2026
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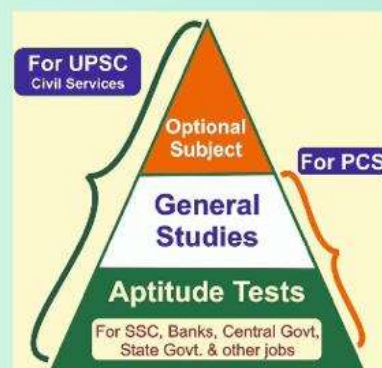
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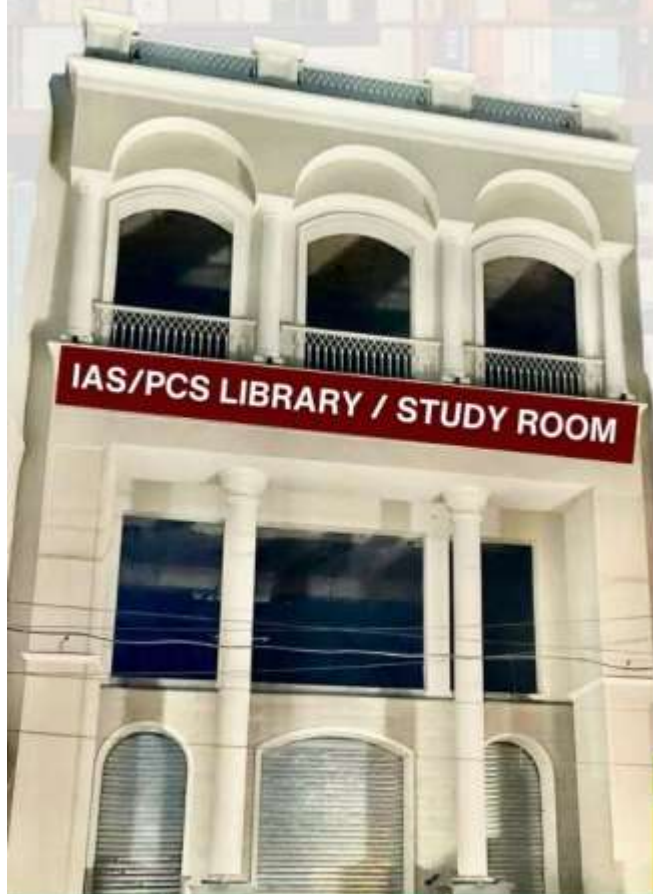
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INDEX

1. NATIONAL NEWS

1. The Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026
2. Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme
3. SAMARTH Panchayat Portal
4. Sarnath: India's 45th UNESCO World Heritage Site
5. UNESCO World Heritage Site
6. India's First Dedicated Department of Military Medicine
7. President Droupadi Murmu Launches New Initiatives at Rashtrapati Bhavan
8. Vehicle-to-Vehicle (V2V) Communication Technology
9. India's 1st Telecom Manufacturing Zone (TMZ), Gwalior
10. Manual Scavenging Survey (2024–25)
11. Coal Exchange Rules, 2026
12. Glaw Lake – India's 101st Ramsar Site
13. Pellet Guns
14. FIR Withdrawal Process
15. Closing Auction Session (CAS)
16. AI Palletising
17. Bitchat Repositories
18. Air India- Azal codeshare
19. India Post Launches Dak Sewa and Dak MITRA Apps
20. Miss Universe India 2026
21. Carbosulfan Insecticide
22. Chlorpheniramine–Phenylephrine Combination
23. 'Flybrary', the Airports Authority of India (AAI)
24. Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign
25. Australia Confirms First Mainland H5N1 Bird Flu Case
26. Google's Back to School 2026 Campaign
27. India's Saptadhara
28. VIHAAN: India's Indigenous Broadband Networking Chip
29. SRIJAN: VOICES FROM THE LOOM
30. The Dahi Handi Festival

31. Garud- High Resolution Binoculars
32. Parliamentary Committee report on digital and sustainable bus transport
33. National Co-operative Development Corporation (NCDC)
34. Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana
35. Directorate of Enforcement (ED)
36. The River Board
37. The PM cares fund

2. STATE NEWS

38. India's First Telecom Manufacturing Zone (TMZ) at Gwalior
39. Assam Exports First Purabi Ice Cream Consignment to Bhutan
40. DWEEPTI Yojana
41. UNESCO Tag for Puri Rath Yatra
42. Pithora painting GI
43. New Catfish Species
44. Corporate Mitra Scheme Webinar
45. PUMA collaborates with Jaipur Rugs
46. Killai Becomes Tamil Nadu's First Climate-Resilient Village

3. INTERNATIONAL NEWS

47. UNESCO World Heritage in Danger List (2026)
48. Houbara Bustard Release
49. Republic of Naoero
50. Maritime Defence Alliance
51. Five African Countries End Polio Type 2 Outbreaks
52. The Makkah Pact: The New Security Triangle
53. BRICS - New Development Bank

4. BANKING / ECONOMY

54. RBI to Pilot Polymer ₹10 and ₹20 Banknotes
55. IRDAI Approves Patanjali's Acquisition of Magma General Insurance
56. Maldives–India Favara–UPI Transfers Begin

- 57. Protection & Indemnity (P&I) Insurance Product
- 58. GARUDA Framework
- 59. HDFC Max Accounts
- 60. Favara UPI Corridor
- 61. India's First Indigenous Non-GMO Popcorn Maize Hybrid
- 62. Asian Development Bank (ADB) Loan for Chennai Water Security

5. SUMMIT, RANKS AND REPORTS

- 63. Candere Hurun Women Leaders List
- 64. BRICS NSO Meeting

6. DEFENCE NEWS

- 65. Nipun – Indigenous Diving Support Vessel (DSV)
- 66. Exercise ROTOR CLAP II
- 67. DSC A24
- 68. BEL- Esri MoU
- 69. FWD Supreme
- 70. Exercise Udara Shakti 2026
- 71. Mangrol: Third Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft
- 72. Explosive Ordnance Disposal Exercise 2026
- 73. Shruti: India's Indigenous Next-Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel
- 74. UPI at 10: India's Digital Payments Revolution

7. SCIENCE AND TECH

- 75. COSPAR Medal
- 76. ANUGYAN
- 77. IN-SPACe Re-entry guidelines
- 78. IITGN-IAIRO MoU
- 79. Blue Straggler Star
- 80. PRAXIS Mission
- 81. Indigenous ASF Vaccine
- 82. T2T Genome of Pigeonpea
- 83. Kimi K3 AI Model
- 84. Sophie Adenot: First French Woman to Walk in Space
- 85. National Space Day 2026
- 86. Legendary Actress Sowcar Janaki

- 87. Thermal Protection System (TPS)
- 88. Zhuque-3 Y2 Reusable Launch Vehicle
- 89. Pakistan's first lunar rover named Jinnah-1
- 90. Moon Base programme

8. APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS

- 91. India's Next Consul General in Dubai
- 92. India's Next Ambassador to Mexico
- 93. Jagdish Aphale Appointed First Secretary of Ayodhya Ram Temple Trust
- 94. Varsha Aglawe (GSI)
- 95. Prasanta Mahapatra (SEBI)
- 96. Monisha Chakraborty (RBI)
- 97. A.S. RAJEEV (CVC)
- 98. Vice Admiral A.N. Pramod

9. SPORTS NEWS

- 99. Sreeshankar Wins Second Consecutive Commonwealth Games Long Jump Silver
- 100. Lovepreet Singh Wins Silver in Commonwealth Games Weightlifting
- 101. Commonwealth Games 2026
- 102. Revamped Khelo India Scheme
- 103. Karn Sharma Announces Retirement
- 104. India wins maiden overall title-commomwealth fencing championships

10. IMPORTANT DAYS

- 105. International Tiger Day 2026
- 106. World Water Week 2026 – August 23–27
- 107. International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to Victims of Terrorism – 21 August
- 108. World Senior Citizen's Day – 21 August

11. GOVT. SCHEMES

- 109. PM Surya Sarovar Yojana
- 110. Floating Solar Photovoltaic (FSPV)

- 111. Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PM-VBRY)
- 112. Clouded Leopard Conservation Action Plan (CAP)
- 113. Mission Samriddh Gaon
- 114. Polysilicon
- 115. E-Samudra Platform
- 116. Prakriti Gyan Dham: India's First Eco-Educational Hub

- 135. Statue of Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das

15. OBITUARY

- 136. Dr D. Y. Patil Passes Away at 90
- 137. Dolly Parton
- 138. Historian Sumit Sarkar Dies at 87

12. ENVIRONMENT

- 117. Environmental Performance Index (EPI) 2026
- 118. Brazilian Cow of Indian Ongole Origin Becomes World's Most Valuable
- 119. UNDP-HUL Partnership for Plastic Circularity
- 120. Laokhowa Wildlife Sanctuary Records First Smew Sighting
- 121. PRAKRITI GYAN DHAM: CSIR - NBRI's First Eco- Educational Hub
- 122. Conservation in Action
- 123. Gaj Gaurav awards 2026 conferred for elephant conservation
- 124. The Earthquake Swarms
- 125. The Black Necked Crane
- 126. Lake Mead

13. AWARDS

- 127. Chandigarh Teacher Selected for National Teachers Award 2026
- 128. Prof. Jainendra K. Jain: First Indian-Origin Recipient of the Wolf Prize in Physics
- 129. Gurcharan Das Receives Lifetime Libertarian Award
- 130. Sangeet Natak Akademi Award to Shubhada Varadkar
- 131. Surjit Patar Student Award
- 132. Ladakh- Wildlife Jeep Safari
- 133. The National Anubhav Awards

14. PERSONALITIES IN NEWS

- 134. Postage Stamp on Satish Gujral

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1. NATIONAL NEWS

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

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

Why Was the Amendment Proposed?

According to the Statement of Objects and Reasons, the 1971 Act safeguards the National Anthem by making it a criminal offense to deliberately stop its singing or to cause disruptions to any group engaged in singing it.

It recalls the Constituent Assembly meeting held on 24th January 1950. At the meeting, its then President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, highlighted the historic role of Vande Mataram in India's freedom struggle. He stated that it should be honoured equally with Jana Gana Mana and accorded equal status.

However, there was no specific legal provision extending similar protection to the National Song. The Bill addressed this gap. It proposed to include Vande Mataram within Section 3 of the 1971 Act.

Major Provisions of the 2026 Bill

- Amendment of Section 3: Clause 2 substitutes the existing Section 3 with a provision covering both the National Anthem (Jana Gana Mana) and the National Song (Vande Mataram).
- Conduct covered: The substituted Section 3 applies where a person intentionally:
 - (a) prevents the singing of the National Anthem or the National Song; or
 - (b) causes disturbance to any assembly engaged in such singing.
- Short title: Clause 1 provides that the law may be called the Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Act, 2026.

Feature/Provision	The Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971 (Original Act)	The Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026
Scope of Protection under Section 3	Specific legal protection solely to the Indian National Anthem (Jana Gana Mana).	Expands the scope of Section 3 to include both the National Anthem and the National Song (Vande Mataram).

Prohibited Conduct	Penalises whoever intentionally prevents the singing of the Indian National Anthem, or causes disturbance to any assembly engaged in such singing.	Penalises whoever intentionally prevents the singing of the National Anthem or the National Song, or causes disturbance to any assembly engaged in such singing.
Punishment	Imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both.	No change in punishment. Imprisonment may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both.
Repeat Convictions	Under Section 3A (added in 2003), anyone convicted a second or subsequent time for an offence under Section 2 or 3 is punishable with imprisonment for a minimum of one year.	The enhanced penalty remains in effect. Repeat offenders who intentionally disrupt the singing of Vande Mataram will also face the mandatory minimum one-year imprisonment.

Vande Mataram: A Melody That Became a Movement

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

The Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971

To contextualise the 2026 Amendment, it is essential to understand the foundation laid by the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971. Enacted on 23rd December 1971, the Act extends to the whole of India and provides statutory protection to the Indian National Flag, the Constitution of India and the Indian National Anthem, Jana Gana Mana.

Key Provisions of the Existing Act

- Section 2 - National Flag and Constitution: Deals with insults to the Indian National Flag and the Constitution of India. It stipulates that anyone who burns, mutilates, defaces, defiles, disfigures, destroys, tramples upon, or otherwise shows disrespect to the Flag or the Constitution in a public place can face imprisonment for up to three years, a fine, or both.

- Lawful criticism protected: Comments criticising the Constitution, the National Flag or government measures, when made with a view to securing lawful amendment or alteration, do not constitute an offence under Section 2.
- Section 3 - National Anthem: Specifically addresses the National Anthem. It states that anyone who intentionally prevents the singing of the Indian National Anthem or causes a disturbance to any assembly engaged in singing it shall be punished with imprisonment extending up to three years, or a fine, or both.
- Section 3A - Repeat offences: Added by a 2003 amendment, this section enforces an enhanced minimum penalty of one year of imprisonment for second and subsequent convictions under Sections 2 or 3.

2. Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme

The Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj has launched the Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme to strengthen the financial self-reliance of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

- The programme enables Gram Panchayats and Block Panchayats to identify local assets and economic opportunities and develop them into bankable, revenue-generating projects.
- The Ministry will provide dedicated technical support to help convert identified projects into financially viable ventures.
- The initiative aims to enhance Own Source of Revenue (OSR) and promote the long-term financial sustainability of Panchayats.
- Project financing will be facilitated through:
 - Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)
 - Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) contributions
 - Convergence with government schemes
 - Bank finance
- NABARD and HUDCO will serve as the programme's institutional partners.
- A total of 350 projects will be developed over four years, comprising:
 - 50 projects in the first year
 - 100 projects each in the following three years

Eligibility Criteria

- Gram Panchayats with a minimum Own Source of Revenue (OSR) of ₹50 lakh
- Block Panchayats with a minimum OSR of ₹1 crore
- Applicants must have at least three years of tenure remaining
- Relaxed eligibility thresholds have been provided for Special Category States

3. SAMARTH Panchayat Portal

- The SAMARTH Panchayat Portal is a first-of-its-kind digital initiative of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.
- The portal is designed to strengthen the financial capacity of Gram Panchayats through technology-enabled management of Own Source Revenue (OSR).

- It has been developed as a unified and configurable national digital platform.
- The portal enables Gram Panchayats to digitally manage the entire OSR lifecycle, including:
 - Taxpayer registration
 - Demand generation
 - Online payment of taxes and fees
 - Revenue collection
 - Real-time monitoring and reporting
- The platform aims to improve transparency, efficiency, accountability, and ease of revenue administration at the Panchayat level.

4. Sarnath: India's 45th UNESCO World Heritage Site

Context

The Ancient Buddhist Site of Sarnath (Uttar Pradesh) has been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List during the 48th Session of the World Heritage Committee held in Busan, Republic of Korea.

With this inscription, India now has 45 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, ranking 6th globally and 2nd in the Asia-Pacific region by the number of World Heritage Sites.

About Sarnath

- Sarnath is one of the holiest places in Buddhism, where Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermon after attaining enlightenment at Bodh Gaya in the 6th century BCE.
- This event is known as Dharmachakra Pravartana ("Turning of the Wheel of Dharma").

Historical & Religious Significance

- Birthplace of the Sangha: Buddha delivered his first sermon to his first five disciples here, marking the beginning of the Buddhist monastic order (Sangha).
- One of the Four Sacred Buddhist Pilgrimage Sites: As identified by the Buddha himself:
 - Lumbini (Nepal)
 - Bodh Gaya (India)
 - Sarnath (India)
 - Kushinagar (India)
- With Sarnath's inscription, three of these four pilgrimage sites—Lumbini, Bodh Gaya, and Sarnath—are now UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Historical Names

Ancient texts refer to Sarnath by several names:

- Rishipatana
- Ishipatana
- Mrigadava (Deer Park)

Archaeological Importance

Excavations at Sarnath have yielded several iconic remains, including:

- Mauryan Lion Capital of Ashoka, which was adopted as the National Emblem of India.
- Dharmachakra Pravartana Buddha statue of the Gupta period, regarded as a masterpiece of classical Indian sculpture.
- These artefacts are preserved in the Sarnath Archaeological Museum, established in 1904, the oldest site museum in India.

Other Buddhist UNESCO World Heritage Sites**Other important Buddhist World Heritage Sites include:**

- Sanchi, Nalanda, and Ajanta (India)
- Anuradhapura (Sri Lanka)
- Paharpur (Bangladesh)
- Taxila and Takht-i-Bahi (Pakistan)

Prelims Facts

- 45th UNESCO World Heritage Site of India
- Located in: Uttar Pradesh
- UNESCO inscription: 48th World Heritage Committee Session, Busan (Republic of Korea)
- First Sermon: Dharmachakra Pravartana
- Ancient names: Rishipatana, Ishipatana, Mrigadava
- National Emblem: Lion Capital of Ashoka discovered at Sarnath
- Oldest site museum in India: Sarnath Archaeological Museum (1904)

Components of the UNESCO Property

The UNESCO-inscribed serial property includes:

Chaukhandi Stupa

- Marks the place where Buddha met his first five disciples after attaining enlightenment.
- A prominent lofty brick structure.

Archaeological Remains of Sarnath

These include:

- **Dhamekh Stupa**
 - Marks the site where Buddha delivered his First Sermon (Dharmachakra Pravartana).
- **Dharmarajika Stupa**
 - One of the earliest Buddhist stupas.
 - Traditionally believed to have been built by Emperor Ashoka to enshrine Buddha's relics.
- **Mulagandhakuti Vihara**
 - Believed to be the site where Buddha spent his first rainy season retreat (Varshavasa).
- **Ashokan Pillar**

- Built by Emperor Ashoka in the 3rd century BCE.
- Its Lion Capital is the National Emblem of India.
- The site also preserves the remains of ancient temples, monasteries (viharas), shrines, and other archaeological structures, reflecting Sarnath's importance as a centre of Buddhist learning, pilgrimage, and monastic life for over 2,000 years.

5. UNESCO World Heritage Site

What is it?

A UNESCO World Heritage Site is a cultural or natural site of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) protected under the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

Key Facts

- **Convention adopted:** 1972
- **Managed by:** UNESCO World Heritage Committee
- **Total World Heritage Sites:** 1,248 across 170 countries
- **India ratified the Convention:** 1977
- **India was a member of the World Heritage Committee:** 2021–2025
- **46th World Heritage Committee Session:** Hosted by India (New Delhi, July 2024)
- **India's Tentative List:** 69 sites
- **Nomination Rule:** Each country can nominate only one site per year for inscription.
- **Nodal Agency in India:** Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)

Categories of World Heritage Sites

Cultural

- Historic monuments
- Archaeological sites
- Works of monumental sculpture

Natural

- Outstanding physical, biological, and geological formations

Mixed

- Sites possessing both cultural and natural values
- **Example (India):** Khangchendzonga National Park

World Heritage in Danger List

- A special UNESCO list for sites facing threats such as:
 - Armed conflict
 - Natural disasters
 - Uncontrolled urbanisation
- It helps mobilise international support and conservation efforts.

Emergency Nomination Procedure

- A fast-track mechanism under the 1972 UNESCO Convention.
- Allows urgent inscription of sites facing immediate and serious threats, enabling quicker international recognition and protection.

Significance of UNESCO Inscription**Benefits**

- Global recognition
- International legal protection
- Access to conservation expertise and funding
- Promotion of cultural heritage and tourism

Challenges

- Over-tourism
- Commercialisation
- Increased pressure on heritage conservation and site management

6. India's First Dedicated Department of Military Medicine**Context**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh virtually inaugurated India's first dedicated Department of Military Medicine at the Command Hospital (Central Command), Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. It is the country's first academic and operational department exclusively dedicated to military medicine.

Key Highlights

- Location: Command Hospital (Central Command), Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
- Operated by: Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS)
- Significance: India's first dedicated centre for training, research, and innovation in military medicine.

Core Areas of Specialization**The department will focus on:**

- Multi-system battlefield trauma management
- Combat psychiatry
- Extreme environment physiology
- Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) defence medical protocols

Academic and Training Role

- Will introduce postgraduate and super-speciality courses for military medical officers.
- Will develop into a Centre of Excellence for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR).
- Strengthens specialized medical education and operational preparedness for the Armed Forces.

Technology Integration

The department will use advanced technologies such as:

- AI-driven triage simulators
- High-fidelity battlefield medical mannequins (dummies)

These technologies will help train army paramedics and medical personnel in high-stress tactical casualty care under realistic combat scenarios.

Objective

The initiative aims to strengthen combat medical preparedness, enhance military healthcare capabilities, promote advanced research in military medicine, and improve the Armed Forces' response to battlefield injuries, disasters, and CBRN emergencies.

7. President Droupadi Murmu Launches New Initiatives at Rashtrapati Bhavan

Context

To mark four years of her presidency, President Droupadi Murmu launched several citizen-centric and digital initiatives at Rashtrapati Bhavan, aimed at enhancing visitor experience, transparency, heritage accessibility, and sustainability.

Key Initiatives

1. Application-Based Electronic (e-Audio) Guide

- A mobile-based digital audio guide for visitors.
- Provides information on the history, architecture, and important locations within Rashtrapati Bhavan.

2. e-Upahaar (Third Edition)

- The third edition of the e-Upahaar digital platform.
- Enables transparent and efficient management of gifts and mementos received during official engagements.

3. Bachpan – "Bal Parisar"

- A child-friendly learning space at Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- Promotes learning, creativity, and interactive experiences for visiting children.

4. RAAHI (Rashtrapati Bhavan Access and Heritage Interconnector)

- A new initiative to improve connectivity between heritage sites within the Rashtrapati Bhavan complex.
- Makes it easier for visitors to explore its historical and cultural landmarks.

5. Net Zero Energy Strategy – Service Block

- Introduced for the Service Block at Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- Aims to improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions, and support India's Net Zero sustainability goals.

Objective

These initiatives aim to:

- Enhance the visitor experience through digital technology.
- Improve transparency in official processes.
- Promote heritage conservation and accessibility.
- Encourage child-centric learning.
- Advance sustainability and energy-efficient governance.

8. Vehicle-to-Vehicle (V2V) Communication Technology

Why in News?

- Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has issued draft rules for the phased implementation of Vehicle-to-Vehicle (V2V) Communication Technology under the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989, to improve road safety.



What is it?

- V2V is a wireless communication technology that enables nearby vehicles to exchange real-time safety data directly without relying on mobile networks.

Implementation: Mandatory for Category L, M & N vehicles from 1 October 2028; AIS-230 compliance applies from 1 October 2027 for vehicles fitted with V2V.

Key Facts

- **Frequency band:** Operates on the 5.875–5.925 GHz band, licence-exempt by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT).
- **Technology:** Uses Cellular Vehicle-to-Everything (C-V2X) with factory-installed On-Board Units (OBUs) to share location, speed, direction, braking and acceleration data.
- **Standard:** Based on AIS-230, which lays down technical, functional, cybersecurity and performance requirements for V2V systems.
- **ADAS compatible:** Integrates with Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) and supports Emergency Brake Alert, Forward Collision Warning, Wrong-way Driving Alert and Emergency Vehicle Alert.
- **Significance:** Improves road safety by enabling real-time collision warnings, including in blind spots and low-visibility conditions, reducing accident risks.

9. India's 1st Telecom Manufacturing Zone (TMZ), Gwalior

Why in News?

- Telecom Manufacturing Zone (TMZ) in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh received fresh investment commitments of ₹2,000 crore, taking the total committed investment to ₹5,500 crore.

What is it?

- India's first dedicated Telecom Manufacturing Zone to develop an end-to-end telecom manufacturing ecosystem.

Key Facts

- Location: Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh.
- Objective: Promote domestic telecom manufacturing, indigenous IP, and telecom exports under "Make in India, Make for the World."
- Ecosystem: Covers R&D, testing, semiconductors, optical fibre, telecom equipment, electronic components, and plug-and-play testing infrastructure.
- Implementation: Developed through an SPV comprising the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and the Government of Madhya Pradesh.
- Employment: Expected to create over 18,000 jobs.
- Significance: Strengthens telecom self-reliance, boosts high-tech manufacturing, and enhances India's global telecom competitiveness.

10. Manual Scavenging Survey (2024–25)**Why in News?**

- The Government informed Parliament that the 2024–25 nationwide survey found no manual scavengers in any district under the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013.

Key Highlights

- **Past surveys:** 58,098 manual scavengers were identified through the 2013 and 2018 nationwide surveys.
- **Financial assistance:** All identified workers received One-Time Cash Assistance (OTCA) of ₹40,000 each.
- **Rehabilitation scheme:** The Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS) has been subsumed under the NAMASTE Scheme.
- **Skill development:** Between 2023–24 and 2025–26, 5,632 manual scavengers and their dependents received skill training, while 483 beneficiaries received capital subsidy for self-employment.
- **Objective:** Promote mechanised sanitation, eliminate manual scavenging, and ensure the dignity, safety, and rehabilitation of sanitation workers.

Prelims Fact

- NAMASTE stands for National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem, jointly implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MoSJE) and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).

11. Coal Exchange Rules, 2026**Why in News?**

- The Ministry of Coal informed the Lok Sabha about the Coal Exchange Rules, 2026, which establish a framework for electronic coal trading in India.

At a Glance

- Governing law: Notified under Section 18B of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act).
- Objective: Create a transparent, competitive, market-driven platform for trading coal, lignite, and their processed forms.

Prelims Facts

- **Coal Exchange:** A centralized electronic platform for delivery-based spot trading of coal.
- **Regulator:** Coal Controller Organisation (CCO) registers exchanges, oversees bidding, transaction fees, and market operations.
- **Market safeguards:** Mandatory Settlement Guarantee Fund (SGF), Market Surveillance Committee, and automated audit trails to prevent market manipulation.
- **Open participation:** Enables commercial miners, captive mine owners, PSUs, and non-regulated consumers to trade on the exchange.

Why it Matters

- Promotes transparent price discovery, efficient coal distribution, and strengthens India's energy security through a market-based trading mechanism.

12. Glaw Lake – India's 101st Ramsar Site

Why in News?

- Glaw Lake in Arunachal Pradesh has been designated as India's 101st Ramsar Site and the first Ramsar Site in the state.

About

- **Location:** Situated inside the Kamlang Tiger Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary in the Eastern Himalayas.
- **Type:** A freshwater lake fed by perennial mountain streams.
- **Biodiversity:** Home to 150+ tree species and 49 orchid species.

Ramsar Convention

- Adopted at Ramsar, Iran (1971) for the conservation and wise use of wetlands.
- India became a party on 1 February 1982.
- UNESCO is the depositary of the Convention.
- A wetland qualifies as a Ramsar Site if it meets at least one of the nine criteria.

Significance

- Strengthens wetland conservation, biodiversity protection, climate resilience, and sustainable livelihoods.

13. PELLET GUNS

According to hospital records obtained through RTI, at least 10 protesters suffered pellet/projectile injuries during a protest march to Parliament in Delhi on July 20, 2026. Political discussion about the use of pellet guns for crowd control has also been sparked by this issue. What are they?



"Pellet guns" generally refers to riot shotguns that fire cartridges containing multiple small metal pellets in the context of crowd control. Pellets have been used as a less-lethal crowd-control method, especially in Jammu & Kashmir, but they have drawn harsh criticism because they can result in serious injuries, especially eye injuries and permanent vision loss. Pellet guns are a less deadly crowd-control tool.

14. FIR Withdrawal Process

Why in the news: The issue of withdrawing or closing FIRs filed against student protesters during recent demonstrations was clarified by the Supreme Court in August 2026. States may take action to close or withdraw such cases, according to the Court, but this does not mean that an executive order can simply cancel an FIR.

The formal record of information pertaining to a cognizable offense is called a FIR (First Information Report).



What is FIR withdrawal? Generally speaking, once it is registered, it cannot be removed simply because the government or the complainant decides to change their mind.

A criminal case resulting from a formal complaint may conclude in one of the following ways:

When an investigation fails to establish a case, the police may close the case or issue a final report, subject to the magistrate's

15. Closing Auction Session (CAS)

In order to determine the official closing price of eligible stocks, initially those with Futures & Options (F&O) contracts, SEBI introduced a new mechanism called the Closing Auction Session (CAS). On August 3, 2026, it became operative.

How it operates: Buy and sell orders are gathered during a different auction period, rather than primarily using the Volume Weighted Average Price (VWAP) of trades in the previous 30 minutes to determine the closing price. The official closing price is the equilibrium price at which the maximum quantity can be matched, as determined by the exchange.

Why was it introduced?

- * To enhance price discovery.
- * To increase the transparency and representation of supply and demand in closing prices.
- * To lessen the likelihood.

16. AI Palletising



According to a Future Market Insights report, warehouse automation, the expansion of e-commerce, and labor shortages could propel the global AI palletizing and depalletising market from \$1.8 billion in 2026 to \$9 billion by 2036, which is why AI palletizing was recently in the news.

AI palletizing is the process of automatically arranging boxes or other items on pallets for storage and transportation using robotic arms, computer vision, and artificial intelligence. AI systems are able to determine the optimal stacking pattern and recognize the size, shape, position, and orientation of packages.

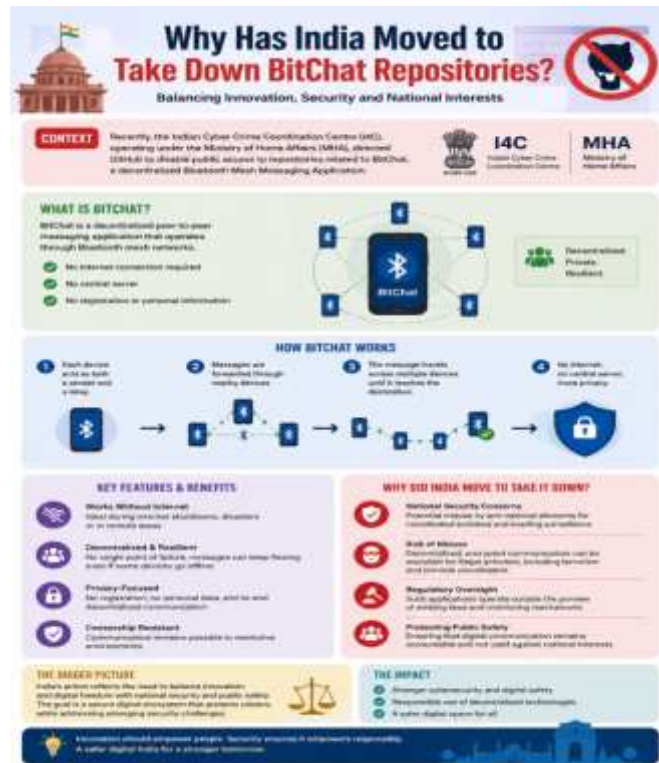
The main advantages are that it can handle packages of various sizes and shapes, decreases repetitive manual labor, improves space utilization, and boosts speed, accuracy, and productivity. It is mostly utilized in manufacturing, e-commerce, logistics, and warehouses.

17. Bitchat Repositories

The Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Center (I4C) of India ordered GitHub to remove or disable access to three repositories that contained the code and Android releases of BitChat in July 2026. Concerns that the app might be abused to plan illegal activities and avoid legal surveillance were the reason for the action.

What is BitChat? Jack Dorsey created this decentralized, peer-to-peer messaging app. It makes use of Bluetooth mesh networking to enable communication between users in the vicinity without the need for traditional internet or mobile network connectivity.

Why is it controversial? Digital rights organizations denounced the takedown as potentially impacting privacy, open-source development, and freedom of expression while the government voiced national security and public-order concerns.



18. AIR INDIA- AZAL CODESHARE

The reason for the news is that Air India and Azerbaijan Airlines (AZAL) have a codeshare partnership that will increase connectivity between the two countries. Azerbaijan Airlines is one of Air India's present airline partners.

A codeshare: what is it? One airline may sell tickets under its own flight code on flights operated by another airline thanks to a codeshare agreement. This enables travelers to reach more locations via a larger network, frequently with more seamless reservations and connections.

The significance of Air India-AZAL

- * Enhances air connectivity between India and Azerbaijan.
- * Increases Air India's global reach without running all of its own routes.
- * Increases travel and connecting-flight options for passengers.
- * Enhances business, tourism, and people-to-people connections between the two nations.



19. India Post Launches Dak Sewa and Dak MITRA Apps



The Department of Posts has launched the Dak Sewa and Dak MITRA mobile applications to modernise and digitise postal services. The apps were launched in August 2026 by Union Minister Jyotiraditya M. Scindia.

Dak MITRA is an indigenous application developed under the Advanced Postal Technology (APT) platform. It enables

unified operations across more than 1.4 lakh Branch Post Offices, strengthening the digital infrastructure of India Post.

The Dak Sewa app provides customers with convenient 24×7 access to a range of postal services, including article tracking, booking, complaint registration and Post Office/PIN code location services. It also offers financial calculators and other tools to assist users.

To improve accessibility, the applications are available in 23 Indian languages through BHASHINI, supporting wider digital inclusion and making postal services more accessible to users across linguistic regions.

As part of the broader modernisation drive, 14 renovated post office buildings across 10 states were also inaugurated. The initiative aims to improve customer accessibility and strengthen last-mile postal service delivery, particularly by integrating technology with India Post's extensive physical network.

20. Miss Universe India 2026

Kaziah Liz Mejo, a 19-year-old law student from Kerala, won the Miss Universe India 2026 title at the grand finale held in Jaipur, Rajasthan. She emerged victorious among 53 contestants, becoming the first woman from Kerala to win the national title.

With this achievement, Mejo will represent India at the 75th Miss Universe pageant, scheduled to be held in November 2026 in Puerto Rico.

The national pageant was judged by a jury led by former Miss Universe Sushmita Sen. The competition brought together contestants from across India, with Vaishnavi Ganesh of Tamil Nadu named the first runner-up and Anushri Satavlekar of Gujarat the second runner-up.



Mejo's victory marks a significant milestone for Kerala in the national beauty pageant arena. Her background as a law student also adds a distinctive dimension to her achievement, highlighting the growing representation of young women from diverse academic and professional backgrounds in national competitions.

Her upcoming participation at the international pageant will place her on a global platform, where she will compete for India at the 75th Miss Universe competition.

21. Carbosulfan Insecticide

The Agriculture Ministry has proposed a complete ban on carbosulfan, citing concerns over its potential risks to human health and the environment.

Carbosulfan is a broad-spectrum carbamate pesticide with insecticidal, acaricidal and nematocidal properties. It is used mainly in crops such as paddy and cotton to control a range of pests by disrupting their nervous system.

A significant concern is that carbosulfan is a pro-pesticide, meaning it is converted in the environment or within organisms into carbofuran, a highly toxic metabolite. Carbofuran has been banned or severely restricted in several countries because of its toxicity.

The proposed ban reflects growing regulatory attention towards pesticides that pose significant risks to human health, beneficial organisms and the wider environment, while encouraging the adoption of safer and more sustainable pest-management practices.

22. Chlorpheniramine–Phenylephrine Combination



The Union Health Ministry has tightened regulations on Fixed-Dose Combinations (FDCs) containing chlorpheniramine maleate and phenylephrine, requiring prominent warnings against their use in children below four years of age.

The combination is commonly used in medicines intended for the temporary relief of symptoms associated with the common cold, allergies and nasal congestion. Chlorpheniramine is an antihistamine that helps relieve allergy-related symptoms, while phenylephrine is a decongestant used to reduce nasal congestion.

The regulatory move focuses on improving paediatric medicine safety, particularly because young children can be more vulnerable to adverse effects from combination cold and cough medicines. Clear age-related warnings on such formulations are intended to help parents, caregivers and healthcare professionals make safer choices.

An FDC contains two or more active pharmaceutical ingredients in a single dosage form. While such combinations can offer convenience and therapeutic benefits, their use in young children requires particular caution because of differences in dosage requirements, metabolism and susceptibility to adverse effects.

23. 'Flybrary', the Airports Authority of India (AAI)



'Flybrary', launched by the Airports Authority of India (AAI), is a unique airport reading initiative that provides free books to air travellers. Passengers can pick up a book, read it during their flight or journey, and return it at their destination airport. The initiative, inspired by the idea of making airports more passenger-friendly, is available at several airports across India and aims to promote reading while enhancing the overall travel experience.

24. Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign

The Government of India ran a nationwide campaign called Har Ghar Tiranga 2026 from 9 to 17 August 2026. This year commemorated the 150th anniversary of India's national song, "Vande Mataram," and marked five years of the Har Ghar Tiranga movement.

- People were urged to hoist the Tiranga at their homes.
- Through the official campaign portal, participants could upload a "Selfie with Tiranga" and download a certificate/video.
- Vande Mataram was given particular attention in the 2026 campaign, which included mass singing events and guided tutorials.
- On August 12, there was a Har Ghar Tiranga Bike Rally in New Delhi.



As part of the "Rhythm of Patriotism" campaign, military and paramilitary bands played throughout India.

Through a series of flag-hoisting relay by Indian Missions and Posts worldwide, Suryapath Tiranga expanded the campaign internationally.

Har Ghar Tiranga's nodal ministry is the Ministry of Culture.

Har Ghar Tiranga 2026 is the official campaign portal.

25. Australia Confirms First Mainland H5N1 Bird Flu Case

Australia has confirmed its first mainland case of H5N1 avian influenza in a mammal, after the virus was detected in a dead long-nosed fur seal at Beachport, South Australia.



H5N1 is a subtype of the Influenza A virus and is classified as a Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) virus. It primarily affects wild aquatic birds and poultry, but the virus can occasionally infect mammals, including humans.

The detection in a marine mammal highlights the ability of H5N1 to cross species barriers and infect non-avian hosts. Such spillover events are closely monitored by health and veterinary

authorities because mutations or adaptations in the virus could potentially increase its ability to spread among mammals.

Australia's detection is significant because it adds to the growing global evidence of H5N1 infections in mammals. Wildlife surveillance, early detection and biosecurity measures remain important tools for monitoring the virus and limiting its spread among animals and reducing potential risks to human health.

26. Google's Back to School 2026 Campaign

Google has launched its Back to School 2026 campaign, introducing AI-powered learning features across Google Search, Gemini and Google Classroom. The initiative aims to make education more personalised, interactive and accessible through artificial intelligence.

Key features include interactive visuals, practice quizzes, step-by-step explanations and personalised study plans, helping students understand concepts and organise their learning more effectively.

Eligible college students can receive 12 months of Google AI Plus at no cost, along with enhanced access to Gemini and 400 GB of storage. The tools also support preparation for competitive examinations such as JEE, NEET, SAT and GRE.

The campaign extends beyond students, with Google Classroom incorporating AI-enabled features to help teachers monitor student progress and support learning. By integrating AI across search, study and classroom tools, Google is positioning the initiative as a broader digital learning ecosystem for the new academic year.

27. India's Saptadhara

India's Saptadhara refers to the seven streams or pillars of national strength and development highlighted by the Prime Minister in the 2026 Independence Day address. It provides a broad roadmap for strengthening Aatmanirbhar Bharat and advancing the vision of Viksit Bharat, by combining economic growth, technological progress, infrastructure development, national security and India's cultural strengths.



The framework emphasises strengthening manufacturing, agriculture and food processing, while promoting technology, innovation and digital infrastructure as drivers of future growth. It also gives importance to Gati Shakti for integrated infrastructure and connectivity, Raksha Shakti for national security and the Green-Blue Economy for sustainable development. Alongside these, Saptadhara highlights India's soft power, including Yoga, culture, tourism and the creative economy, linking economic self-reliance with India's global influence and sustainable development.

28. VIHAAN: India's Indigenous Broadband Networking Chip



VIHAAN is India's first indigenously designed networking chip, developed to support broadband and internet connectivity. It is a System-on-Chip (SoC) that integrates multiple functions onto a single chip and is based on the RISC-V architecture, incorporating C-DAC's VEGA processor. The chip has been developed by Aheesa Digital Innovations, Chennai, with support under the Design Linked Incentive (DLI) Scheme of the Ministry of Electronics

and Information Technology (MeitY).

VIHAAN is designed for applications such as FTTx (Fibre-to-the-x) networks, broadband routers and other networking equipment, helping strengthen India's domestic semiconductor and networking ecosystem. Its development is significant for technological self-reliance, as it can reduce dependence on imported networking chips and contribute to India's broader efforts towards indigenous semiconductor design and digital infrastructure.

29. SRIJAN: VOICES FROM THE LOOM

- Organized by the Indian government's Ministry of Textiles.
- Where: New Delhi, August 13, 2026.
- What: An exclusive event honoring female handloom weavers and their role in India's rich weaving history.
- More than 100 female weavers from six handloom clusters participated.
- Special feature: An anthology of their travels, experiences, and tales was published.
- Why in the news: It emphasizes the preservation of India's cultural legacy, women's empowerment, and traditional handloom skills.



30. The Dahi Handi Festival

- During Krishna Janmashtami, Maharashtra is the primary location for the popular Dahi Handi festival.
- The custom of Lord Krishna stealing butter as a child is recreated.
- To reach and smash a pot (handi) of butter or curd, Govindas build a human pyramid.
- It stands for cooperation, bravery, coordination, and dedication.
- Why in the news in 2026: Maharashtra is requesting that Dahi Handi be recognized as an Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO.



31. Garud- High Resolution Binoculars

- India Optel Limited (IOL) introduced GARUD, an indigenous high-resolution binocular, on August 13, 2026.
- The Ordnance Factory in Dehradun is responsible for its development and production.
- It offers a 7.6° wide field of view and an 8× magnification.
- It is now available for civilian use after previously being utilized by CAPFs and the Defense Forces.
- Uses include travel, sports, outdoor activities, wildlife observation, and birdwatching.



32. Parliamentary Committee report on digital and sustainable bus transport

On August 11, 2026, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism, and Culture delivered its 392nd Report. It seeks to update India's bus transportation infrastructure.

Important suggestions:

- All India Passenger Permit → Use a single passenger permit in place of the All India Tourist Permit.
- The National Bus Digital Grid is a single digital platform for real-time bus tracking, reservations, and route data.
- Establish a National Bus Terminals Authority to oversee the enhancement of bus terminals.
- Electric buses → Encourage battery recycling and clean, electric buses.



- Safety → Boost alert systems, emergency exits, fire safety, and vehicle testing.
- Funding for public transportation: Increase the amount of money allocated to bus infrastructure.
- Women-friendly transportation: Promote bus services run by female conductors and drivers.

33. National Co-operative Development Corporation (NCDC)

- NCDC was created in 1963 as a statutory corporation by a parliamentary act.
- It operates under the Ministry of Cooperation and provides financial support to the cooperative sector.
- Cooperatives in sectors like agriculture, dairy, fisheries, handlooms, marketing, and storage benefit from it.
- Why in news: By passing the NCDC Amendment Bill, 2026, Parliament increased NCDC's authority to directly lend money to cooperative societies.



34. Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana



On August 28, 2026, PMJDY celebrated its 12th anniversary, making headlines. The government emphasized how much it has contributed to India's financial inclusion.

Started: August 28, 2014.

Goal: Make basic banking accessible to everyone and integrate the unbanked into the established financial system.

According to the most recent data, 59.09 crore accounts with deposits of roughly ₹3.17 lakh crore have been opened.

Women: Approximately 56% of PMJDY account holders are female.

Rural and semi-urban reach: Roughly 78% of accounts are located in these regions.

RuPay cards: Under the program, more than 41 crore RuPay cards have been issued.

JAM Trinity: Jan Dhan accounts serve as the J in JAM (Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, Mobile), assisting the government in reducing leakages and directly transferring welfare benefits to recipients.

What makes PMJDY crucial?

- It gives access to:
- Simple bank accounts for savings
- RuPay credit cards
- Pension and insurance plans
- Transfer of Direct Benefits (DBT)
- Electronic payments

- Obtaining official credit

35. Directorate of Enforcement (ED)



The Enforcement Directorate is currently making headlines due to new raids, searches, and investigations in a number of financial crime and money laundering cases. In a case involving alleged fraudulent toll collection at NHAI toll plazas, the ED searched 14 locations across several states on September 2, 2026.

Ministry: Ministry of Finance, Department of Revenue

Nature: Economic intelligence and specialized financial investigation firm.

Founded in 1956 as an enforcement unit, it changed its name to the Enforcement Directorate in 1957.

Rahul Navin is the current director.

The Prevention of Money Laundering Act of 2002 is one of the main laws that the ED enforces.

The Foreign Exchange Management Act of 1999, or FEMA

The 2018 Fugitive Economic Offenders Act (FEOA)

What makes ED crucial?

Under the PMLA, the ED looks into money laundering, tracks down the proceeds of crime, makes legal searches and arrests, and has the authority to temporarily seize properties that may be involved in money laundering.

According to its official statistics, as of March 31, 2026, the ED had issued provisional attachment orders totaling approximately ₹2.36 lakh crore, recorded 8,851 ECIRs, and had a 93.33% conviction rate in completed PMLA trials.

36. The River Board

In August 2026, the River Board made headlines when Saumitra Kumar Haldar, the Chairperson of the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA), suggested that a single River Board be established for the whole Cauvery basin. Reservoirs throughout the Cauvery basin would be owned, run, managed, and regulated by the proposed board.



Article 262

Parliament may provide adjudication of any dispute by law wrt the use, control & distribution of waters of Inter-State rivers and river valleys.

Parliament may provide that the Supreme Court has no jurisdiction wrt any such dispute or complaint.

Why is this significant?

Instead of having individual states manage water primarily in accordance with their borders, the idea is to manage the Cauvery as a single river basin. The ongoing Cauvery water-sharing disputes between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka make this especially pertinent.

River Boards Act of 1956

In order to regulate and develop interstate rivers and river valleys, the River Boards Act of 1956 established River Boards.

Entry 56 of the Union List provides its constitutional foundation.

For an interstate river, the Central Government may create a River Board.

Coordinated use of water resources, irrigation development, flood control, and integrated river-basin planning are all part of the intended role.

Important fact: No River Board has been established under the River Boards Act, 1956, despite the Act being almost seventy years old.

37. The PM cares fund

The PM CARES Fund made headlines in August 2026 with the release of its most recent audited accounts for FY 2024–2025. They demonstrated that despite a significant drop in donations and expenditures, the Fund's corpus grew to ₹8,452.07 crore.

Important facts:-

The Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations (PM CARES) Fund is its full name.

Founded on March 27, 2020, amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Legal status: registered under the Registration Act of 1908 as a public charitable trust.

Chairperson: India's Prime Minister, ex officio.

The ministers of finance, defense, and home are additional ex-officio trustees.

Mission - To offer support in times of crisis, including pandemics and other distressing circumstances



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3. STATE NEWS

38. India's First Telecom Manufacturing Zone (TMZ) at Gwalior



The Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Ministry of Communications, and the Government of Madhya Pradesh will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish India's first Telecom Manufacturing Zone (TMZ) at Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh.

About the Telecom Manufacturing Zone (TMZ)

The Telecom Manufacturing Zone is a dedicated industrial ecosystem aimed at strengthening domestic telecom manufacturing, promoting innovation, and boosting self-reliance in next-generation telecommunications technologies.

Key Highlights

- **Location:** Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh (Phase-I)
- **Implementing Agencies:** Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and Government of Madhya Pradesh
- **Vision:** Strengthen India's telecom manufacturing ecosystem under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative.

Focus Areas

- Promote indigenous design and manufacturing of telecom equipment.
- Attract domestic and foreign investments.
- Foster research, innovation, and advanced telecom technologies.
- Accelerate the development of next-generation telecom products.

Beneficiaries

The Telecom Manufacturing Zone will support:

- Telecom equipment manufacturers
- Technology companies
- MSMEs
- Start-ups
- Other stakeholders across the telecom value chain

Expected Outcomes

- Generate employment opportunities.
- Boost regional industrial development.
- Strengthen telecom supply chain resilience.
- Position India as a global hub for telecom manufacturing and innovation.

Objective

The initiative aims to build a robust domestic telecommunications manufacturing ecosystem, reduce import dependence, and advance the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

39. Assam Exports First Purabi Ice Cream Consignment to Bhutan

Assam has exported its first international consignment of dairy products to Bhutan, marking a significant milestone in the state's dairy export sector. The consignment comprised 5,627 litres of Purabi ice cream.



About Purabi Dairy

- Purabi is the flagship dairy brand of Assam.
- The ice cream is manufactured by the West Assam Milk Producers' Cooperative Union Limited (WAMUL).
- It is marketed by North East Dairy and Foods Limited (NEDFL).
- The products are made using milk procured from dairy farmers across Assam.

Key Highlights	Product Range
• Product Exported: Purabi Ice Cream • Export Destination: Bhutan • Consignment Size: 5,627 litres • Date of Export: 28 July 2026	The export consignment included: • Ice cream cups • Family packs • Cones • Gallon packs

Export Facilitation

- The export was facilitated by the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA).
- APEDA functions under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- The consignment will be supplied to major Bhutanese cities, including:
 - Thimphu
 - Paro
 - Phuentsholing
 - Wangdue

Production Capacity

- The Purabi Dairy plant has an ice cream production capacity of 60,000 litres per month.
- Its expansion was supported by the Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART), funded by the World Bank.

Prelims Facts

- APEDA was established under the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Act, 1985.
- WAMUL is a cooperative dairy union operating in Assam's milk procurement network.
- Bhutan is a landlocked Himalayan country sharing a border with India, including Assam through the northeastern region.
- India exports processed dairy products such as milk powder, ghee, butter, cheese, and ice cream.

40. DWEEPTI Yojana

The DWEEPTI Yojana (Decentralised Women Empowerment and Energy through Transformative Inclusion) has been launched by the Government of Chhattisgarh, making it the first Indian state to introduce a women-led distributed renewable energy policy.

- Launched by: Government of Chhattisgarh
- Implemented by: Panchayat & Rural Development Department
- Technical Partner: Transform Rural India (TRI)

Objectives

- Promote women-led clean energy entrepreneurship.
- Expand decentralized solar energy adoption.
- Create sustainable livelihoods and strengthen rural energy self-reliance.

Key Features

- Trains Self Help Group (SHG) women as Solar Didis (installers, technicians, vendors, and entrepreneurs).
- Registers SHG Cluster Level Federations (CLFs) as vendors under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.
- Provides affordable loans for rooftop solar installations.
- Pilot project launched in Kabirdham district, with plans for expansion across Chhattisgarh.



41. UNESCO Tag for Puri Rath Yatra

Why in News?

- The Odisha Government has urged the Centre to nominate the Puri Shree Jagannath Rath Yatra for inclusion in UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

About

- Rath Yatra is an annual chariot festival held at Puri, Odisha, during Shukla Paksha of Ashadha (June–July).

- The proposal has been prepared by the Shree Jagannatha Temple Administration (SJTA).

Key Facts

- Three chariots: Nandighosha (Lord Jagannath), Taladhwaja (Lord Balabhadra), and Darpadalana (Goddess Subhadra), rebuilt every year using traditional methods.
- Route: The deities travel from the Jagannath Temple to the Gundicha Temple along the Bada Danda (Grand Avenue) and return during the Bahuda Yatra.
- Ancient references: Mentioned in the Brahma Purana, Padma Purana, Skanda Purana, and Kapila Samhita.
- Traditional craftsmanship: Chariots are built by hereditary artisan guilds following the Shilpa Shastras.

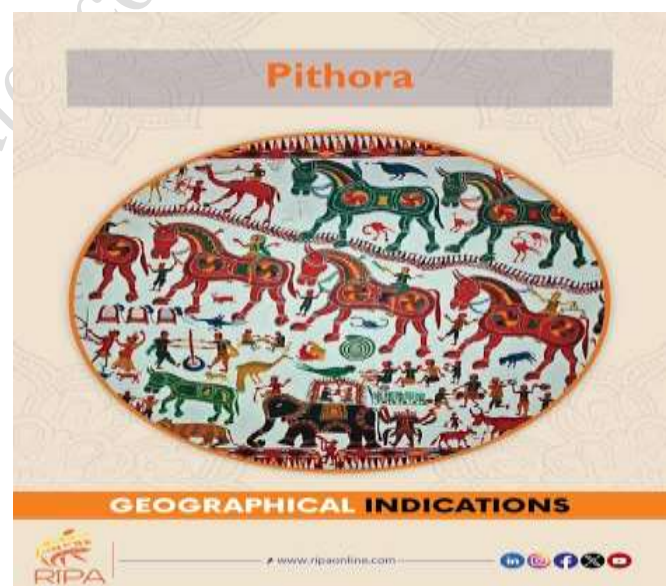
Significance

- UNESCO recognition would promote heritage conservation, traditional crafts, and India's cultural diplomacy.

42. PITHORA PAINTING GI

In 2026, Pithora Painting made headlines when it was presented as a significant GI-tagged tribal artwork at the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference (VGRC) in Vadodara. The goal was to help tribal artisans make sustainable livelihoods by bringing this traditional art from ritual mud walls to national and international markets.

The Rathwa, Bhil, and Bhilala tribes are the primary practitioners of Pithora Painting, a traditional tribal wall art of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. It is a ritual art that is customarily painted on walls to honor the tribal deity Baba Pithora. Its most characteristic motif is horses. In 2021, it was given a GI tag.

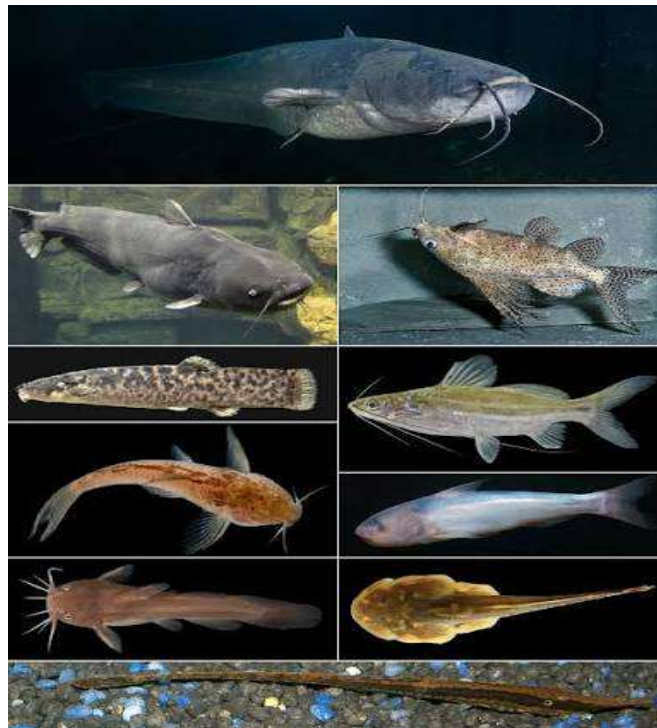


43. NEW CATFISH SPECIES

In 2026, a new species of freshwater catfish called *Amblyceps vayavy* was found in the northern Western Ghats of Goa and Maharashtra.

Freshwater or marine catfish species are distinguished by their whisker-like barbels around the mouth that aid in their ability to locate food.

The Western Ghats are home to the small freshwater hill-stream fish known as the newly discovered catfish (*Amblyceps vayavy*). Its discovery emphasizes the need for conservation as well as the rich freshwater biodiversity of the area.



44. CORPORATE MITRA SCHEME WEBINAR

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Join Zoom Meeting

www.corporatemitra.org info@corporatemitra.org +91 92628 22622

Because IICA Shillong, under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, arranged an awareness webinar for youth and businesses, the Corporate Mitra Scheme was in the news.

The Union Budget 2026–2027 made this announcement.

Aim: Provide corporate compliance and expert support to MSMEs, particularly in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.

Focus: Make it easier for MSMEs to adhere to corporate regulations while providing opportunities for trained youth.

45. PUMA collaborates with Jaipur Rugs

PUMA has recently collaborated with Jaipur Rugs, an Indian brand known for its traditional handmade carpets and rugs. The collaboration combines PUMA's contemporary fashion and design with Jaipur Rugs' traditional Indian craftsmanship, showcasing Indian heritage

through modern lifestyle products. The partnership highlights the growing global recognition of India's traditional crafts, artisanal skills and cultural designs.

46. Killai Becomes Tamil Nadu's First Climate-Resilient Village

Killai in Cuddalore district became Tamil Nadu's first fully operational Climate Resilient Village on 22 July 2026. Launched in 2022–23, the initiative promotes climate adaptation through ecosystem restoration, renewable energy and community participation. Key measures include restoring a 3-km stretch of the Buckingham Canal, removing waste and invasive plants, and planting over 3,000 native mangrove saplings to strengthen coastal protection. The village also promotes solar energy, solar streetlights, solar dryers and cold-storage facilities to support sustainable livelihoods and improve resilience against climate-related risks such as cyclones, droughts, floods and heatwaves.

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4. INTERNATIONAL NEWS

47. UNESCO World Heritage in Danger List (2026)

Why in News?

- At its 48th Session in Busan, Republic of Korea, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee added six sites to the World Heritage in Danger List.

About

- The World Heritage in Danger List is maintained under the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention.
- It includes World Heritage Sites facing serious threats to their Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).
- The objective is to mobilise international cooperation, technical assistance, and financial support for conservation.

Sites Added in 2026

- Boma-Badingilo Migratory Landscape – South Sudan (poaching, wildlife trafficking, infrastructure development).
- Mount Amel Castles – Lebanon (armed conflict).
- Sebastia – State of Palestine (planned development and land-use changes).
- Ancient City of Tauric Chersonese and its Chora – Ukraine (Crimea) (occupation and new construction).
- Historic Inner City of Paramaribo – Suriname (unplanned urban development).
- Tyre – Lebanon (armed conflict).

Significance

- Inclusion on the list is not a delisting or penalty; it helps secure global support and World Heritage Fund assistance for the protection of endangered sites.

48. HOUBARA BUSTARD RELEASE



As part of a conservation effort to replenish their population and the biodiversity of the Aral Sea region, 72 Asian Houbara Bustards (*Chlamydotis macqueenii*) raised in captivity were released in Karakalpakstan, Uzbekistan, in June 2026.

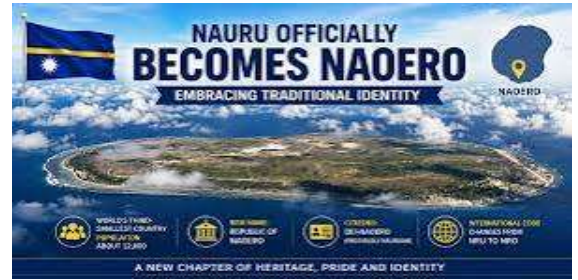
In Asia, the Houbara Bustard (*Chlamydotis macqueenii*) is a migratory bird of steppes and deserts. It migrates to certain areas of India during the winter.

Threats include habitat loss and hunting.

49. Republic of Naoero

The small island nation of Nauru in the Pacific Ocean is known by its Indigenous name, Naoero. Nauru formally became the Republic of Naoero in July 2026.

Reason: To fortify its language, cultural heritage, and national identity and restore its original name.
NRU → NRO is the international code.



Capital: Yaren is the de facto administrative center; there is no official capital.

50. Maritime Defence Alliance

In order to strengthen security in the Red Sea, Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, and Gulf of Aden, Saudi Arabia announced a 14-country Maritime Defense Alliance in July 2026.

The primary goal is to safeguard energy and commercial shipping routes.

Reason: Houthi attacks on ships and oil tankers are increasing.

Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Egypt, Turkey, Bangladesh, Qatar, Bahrain, and other countries are among the members.

Significance: Preserves freedom of navigation and international trade.



51. Five African Countries End Polio Type 2 Outbreaks



The World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Africa has confirmed the closure of polio type 2 outbreaks in Burundi, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, the Republic of the Congo and Uganda.

The outbreaks were declared closed following Independent Outbreak Response Assessments (OBRA) conducted between January and June 2026. These assessments evaluated the effectiveness of national and regional outbreak-

response measures, including vaccination and surveillance activities.

The development marks progress in efforts to eliminate poliovirus type 2 in Africa and reflects the importance of sustained vaccination, disease surveillance and rapid outbreak response in preventing the spread of poliovirus.

52. The Makkah Pact: The New Security Triangle

On August 7, 2026, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Pakistan signed the Makkah Joint Defense Agreement. It establishes a new security alliance between three nations.

It signifies:

- Saudi Arabia offers riches, energy resources, and a prime location in the Gulf.
- Turkey has a sizable, cutting-edge military and a robust defense sector.
- Pakistan → contributes a strong military and nuclear capability.
- Collective defense, which is similar to NATO's Article 5 principle, states that an armed attack on one member is to be regarded as an attack on all three.
- The nations claim that the agreement is defensive and does not target any specific nation.



Its significance:-

It unites West Asia/Europe (Türkiye), the Gulf (Saudi Arabia), and South Asia (Pakistan) into a single strategic security arrangement. The three nations may benefit from increased military cooperation and deterrence as a result.

53. BRICS - NEW DEVELOPMENT BANK

- The BRICS nations' development bank is called NDB.
- Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa founded it in 2015. Shanghai, China, is home to its headquarters.
- The primary goal is to lend money to developing nations for sustainable development and infrastructure projects.
- Current members of NDB: Uzbekistan joined the bank in June 2026, expanding its membership beyond the

INDIA'S 2026 BRICS CHAIRSHIP

- India assumed BRICS chairmanship on 1 January 2026.
- India took over the presidency from Brazil.
- This is India's **fourth** BRICS presidency.

ABOUT BRICS

BRICS originally included: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa

Expanded BRICS: Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)

PREVIOUS INDIAN PRESIDENCIES

- 2012**: Strengthening multilateralism and economic cooperation
- 2016**: Building responsive, inclusive and collective solutions
- 2021**: BRICS@15: Intra-BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus

INDIA'S VISION FOR 2026

"To enhance BRICS cooperation in trade, technology, health, climate action, people-to-people ties and global governance reforms."

initial five.

- Why it's in the news: NDB intends to give India approximately \$7.5 billion in funding over the next five years, with a stronger focus on lending based on rupees.

5. BANKING / ECONOMY

54. RBI to Pilot Polymer ₹10 and ₹20 Banknotes

The Union Government has approved the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) proposal to conduct field trials of polymer (plastic) banknotes in the ₹10 and ₹20 denominations. The pilot will assess their performance under Indian conditions before any wider rollout.



What are Polymer Banknotes?

Polymer banknotes are currency notes printed on a special synthetic plastic (polymer) substrate instead of the traditional 100% cotton-based paper used for Indian currency. They are designed to be more durable, cleaner, and cost-effective over their lifecycle.

Key Highlights

- **Implementing Agency:** Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
- **Printing Agency:** Bharatiya Reserve Bank Note Mudran Private Limited (BRBNMPL)
- **Trial Denominations:** ₹10 and ₹20
- **Pilot Scale:** Around 1 billion notes of each denomination will be introduced for field testing.
- **Co-circulation:** Polymer notes will circulate alongside existing paper notes. There is no plan to replace all paper currency.

Why is RBI Introducing Polymer Notes?

The initiative aims to:

- Increase the lifespan of frequently used low-denomination notes.
- Reduce the cost of printing and replacing worn-out currency.
- Improve resistance to dirt, moisture, and daily wear.
- Minimise environmental waste from frequent disposal of damaged notes.

Key Features

- **Polymer Substrate:** Made from a non-fibrous synthetic plastic film that is resistant to moisture and dirt.
- **Longer Lifespan:** Polymer notes typically last 2–6 times longer than conventional cotton-paper notes.
- **Lower Maintenance Costs:** Fewer replacements reduce printing, transportation, and destruction costs.
- **Environment-Friendly:** According to IMF studies, polymer banknotes can lower global warming potential by about 32% and primary energy demand by around 30%

compared to paper notes. At the end of their life, they can also be recycled into plastic pellets.

Legal Framework	Global Experience
- Under Section 22 of the RBI Act, 1934, the Reserve Bank of India has the exclusive authority to issue banknotes in India. ₹1 notes are issued by the Ministry of Finance. ₹10 and ₹20 notes are issued by the RBI's Issue Department.	Australia introduced the world's first polymer banknotes in 1988. Today, nearly 60 countries use polymer currency in some form. Countries that have fully transitioned to polymer banknotes include: - Australia - Canada - New Zealand - Romania - United Kingdom

55. IRDAI Approves Patanjali's Acquisition of Magma General Insurance

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has approved Patanjali Ayurved's proposed acquisition of Magma General Insurance.

Key Highlights

- Deal Value:** Approximately ₹4,500 crore.
- The acquisition involves the purchase of equity stakes from existing shareholders.
- IRDAI's approval is valid for three months from 28 July 2026.
- Before this acquisition, Patanjali Ayurved was primarily known for its FMCG and Ayurveda products.



MAGMA
General Insurance Limited

Significance

- Marks Patanjali's entry into the general insurance sector.
- Expected to diversify the company's business portfolio beyond FMCG and healthcare.

56. Maldives–India Favara–UPI Transfers Begin

The Maldives has launched cross-border person-to-person (P2P) money transfers by linking its instant payment system Favara with India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI).

Key Highlights

- Connects the Maldives' Favara payment system with India's UPI.
- Enables instant P2P transfers to UPI-enabled bank accounts in India.



- Transactions can be initiated in:
 - Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR), or
 - United States Dollar (USD)
- Funds are settled in Indian Rupees (INR) in India.

Significance

- Facilitates faster and more convenient cross-border remittances.

Strengthens India–Maldives digital payment connectivity and financial cooperation.

57. Protection & Indemnity (P&I) Insurance Product

Why in News?

- The Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance launched India's first sovereign-backed Protection & Indemnity (P&I) Insurance Product under the Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMIP).

About

- It is a marine insurance product that protects shipowners and charterers against third-party liabilities arising during maritime operations.

Key Features

- **Parent initiative:** Operates under the Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMIP) with a sovereign guarantee.
- **Coverage:** Provides indemnity cover of up to USD 1.5 billion for crew and cargo liabilities, marine pollution, oil spills, and wreck removal.
- **Global support:** Backed by a 24×7 international network of port correspondents for claims, legal assistance, and emergency response.
- **Developed by:** The New India Assurance Company Limited.

Significance

- Reduces dependence on foreign P&I Clubs, strengthens India's maritime insurance ecosystem, and supports Atmanirbhar Bharat in the shipping sector.

58. GARUDA Framework

Why in News?

- SEBI has introduced the GARUDA (Green-Channel: AIF Rollout Upon Document Acknowledgement) framework to speed up the launch of Alternative Investment Fund (AIF) schemes.

About

- The framework provides a green-channel approval mechanism for eligible AIF schemes, reducing the time required for their launch.

Key Features

- **Launch timeline:** Eligible AIF schemes can be launched 10 working days after filing the Placement Memorandum (PPM) with SEBI through a merchant banker, unless SEBI objects.
- **Relaxed norms:** Accredited Investor-only (AI-only) Funds, Large Value Funds (LVFs), and Angel Funds can launch schemes immediately after filing the PPM with SEBI.
- **Due diligence:** Merchant bankers must independently verify and certify disclosures for regular AIF schemes.
- **Transparency:** Every PPM must state that filing with SEBI does not imply regulatory approval.

Significance

- Simplifies AIF fundraising, reduces regulatory delays, and improves the ease of doing business while maintaining investor protection through disclosure requirements.

59. HDFC MAX ACCOUNTS

Max for Seniors and **Max for Her** are two new variations that HDFC Bank recently introduced under its Savings Max portfolio.

Max for Seniors: Designed for senior citizens.

Max for Her: Made specifically for women.

The Auto-Sweep facility, insurance/health support, cyber protection, and lifestyle benefits are the main advantages.

Significance : Aims to provide specific clients with tailored banking services (Those banking services specially designed according to the needs of a particular group of customers).

60. FAVARA UPI CORRIDOR

The Favara–UPI cross-border payment corridor made headlines when it started operating between the Maldives and India on July 30, 2026.

It enables real-time person-to-person money transfers between India's UPI and the Maldives' Favara instant-payment system. The service is initially available to clients of Bank of Maldives and Maldives Islamic Bank.

The Favara–UPI corridor strengthens cross-border payments and financial connectivity by providing a real-



time digital payment link between India and the Maldives.

61. India's First Indigenous Non-GMO Popcorn Maize Hybrid



Vice-President C. P. Radhakrishnan launched India's first indigenous non-GMO, high-expansion popcorn maize hybrid in Andhra Pradesh.

The hybrid was jointly developed by the ICAR–Indian Institute of Maize Research (ICAR-IIMR) and Gourmet Popcornica. It was developed through conventional breeding and controlled

cross-pollination, without genetic modification.

The new hybrid is expected to reduce India's dependence on imported popcorn maize technology, while promoting domestic production and creating opportunities for exports. Its high-expansion characteristic makes it particularly suitable for the commercial popcorn industry.

ICAR-IIMR, headquartered in Ludhiana, Punjab, is engaged in research, breeding and technology development related to maize. The development of the indigenous hybrid marks a step towards strengthening India's agricultural research capabilities and reducing dependence on imported technologies.

62. Asian Development Bank (ADB) Loan for Chennai Water Security

India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed a \$230 million loan agreement for the Chennai Climate-Resilient Water Security and Sewerage Project.

The project aims to strengthen water security and sewerage infrastructure in Chennai, while improving the city's resilience to climate-related challenges. It is expected to support more reliable water services and better wastewater management.



The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a regional multilateral development bank that promotes inclusive and sustainable economic and social development across Asia and the Pacific. It was established in 1966 and is headquartered in Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, Philippines.

ADB financing for the Chennai project reflects the growing emphasis on developing climate-resilient urban infrastructure, particularly in rapidly growing cities facing increasing pressure on water resources and sanitation systems.

6. SUMMIT, RANKS AND REPORTS

63. CANDERE HURUN WOMEN LEADERS LIST

Because Candere and Hurun India released their first list honoring 97 influential Indian women in business, finance, entrepreneurship, philanthropy, the arts, and other fields, the 2025 Candere Hurun India Women Leaders List made headlines.

The Women Professionals category was led by Shanti Ekambaram of Kotak Mahindra Bank, while the First-Generation Wealth Creators category was led by Radha Vembu of Zoho.



64. BRICS NSO MEETING

India Hosts

BRICS

NSO MEETING IN LUCKNOW

India inaugurated the 2-day
**BRICS Heads of National
Statistical Offices (NSO) Meeting**
in **Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh**.

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and Sustainability (BRICS)

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Under India's BRICS Chairship, the Meeting of Heads of National Statistical Offices (NSOs) of BRICS countries took place in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, August 3–4, 2026.

Its main goals were to improve the quality of official statistics, data sharing, innovation, and evidence-based policymaking among the BRICS nations.

The National Statistical Offices of the BRICS nations are referred to as BRICS NSO. Cooperation in official statistics, including data sharing, enhancing statistical techniques, utilizing new technologies, and generating trustworthy data for evidence-based policymaking, is the main focus of their meeting. The meeting took place in 2026 while India served as the BRICS Chair.

UNION PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION PROGRAMME OF EXAMINATIONS/RECRUITMENT TESTS (RTs) -2026					
Sl No.	Name of Examination	Date of Notification	Last Date for receipt of Applications	Date of commencement of Exam	Duration of Exam
1.	Reserved for UPSC RT/ Examination			10.01.2026 (Saturday)	2 Days
2.	Reserved for UPSC Examination			17.01.2026 (Saturday)	2 Days
3.	Combined Geo-Scientist (Preliminary) Examination, 2026	03.09.2025	23.09.2025	08.02.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
4.	Engineering Services (Preliminary) Examination, 2026	17.09.2025	07.10.2025	08.02.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
5.	CBI (DSP) LDCE	24.12.2025	13.01.2026	28.02.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAY
6.	CISF AC(EXE) LDCE-2026	03.12.2025	23.12.2025	08.03.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
7.	N.D.A. & N.A. Examination (I), 2026	10.12.2025	30.12.2025	12.04.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
8.	C.D.S. Examination (I), 2026				
9.	Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination, 2026	14.01.2026	03.02.2026	24.05.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
10.	Indian Forest Service (Preliminary) Examination, 2026 through CS(P) Examination 2026				
11.	Reserved for UPSC RT/ Examination			06.06.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
12.	I.E.S./I.S.S. Examination, 2026	11.02.2026	03.03.2026	19.06.2026 (Friday)	3 DAYS
13.	Combined Geo-Scientist (Main) Examination, 2026			20.06.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
14.	Engineering Services (Main) Examination, 2026			21.06.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
15.	Reserved for UPSC RT/ Examination			04.07.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
16.	Central Armed Police Forces (ACs) Examination, 2026	18.02.2026	10.03.2026	19.07.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
17.	Combined Medical Services Examination, 2026	11.03.2026	31.03.2026	02.08.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
18.	Reserved for UPSC Examination			08.08.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
19.	Civil Services (Main) Examination, 2026			21.08.2026 (Friday)	5 DAYS
20.	N.D.A. & N.A. Examination (II), 2026	20.05.2026	09.06.2026	13.09.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
21.	C.D.S. Examination (II), 2026				
22.	Reserved for UPSC RT/ Examination			26.09.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
23.	Reserved for UPSC RT/ Examination			10.10.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
24.	Reserved for UPSC RT/ Examination			31.10.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
25.	Indian Forest Service (Main) Examination, 2026			22.11.2026 (Sunday)	7 DAYS
26.	S.O./Steno (GD-B/GD-I) LDCE	16.09.2026	06.10.2026	12.12.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
27.	Reserved for UPSC RT/ Examination			19.12.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
Note: The dates of notification, commencement and duration of Examinations/ RTs are liable to alteration, if the circumstances so warrant.					

TENTATIVE CALENDAR OF EXAMINATIONS FOR THE YEAR 2026-2027

S.No.	Name of Examination	Tier/Phase	Date of Advertisement	Closing Date	Month of Exam
1.	JSA / LDC Grade Limited Departmental Competitive Examination, 2025 (for DoPT only)	Paper-I (CBE)*	16 March 2026	07 April 2026	May 2026
2.	SSA / UDC Grade Limited Departmental Competitive Examination, 2025 (for DoPT only)	Paper-I (CBE)*	16 March 2026	07 April 2026	May 2026
3.	ASO Grade Limited Departmental Competitive Examination, 2025	Paper-I (CBE)*	16 March 2026	07 April 2026	May 2026
4.	Combined Graduate Level Examination, 2026	Tier-I (CBE)*	March 2026	April 2026	May – June 2026
5.	Junior Engineer (Civil, Mechanical & Electrical) Examination, 2026	Paper-I (CBE)*	March 2026	April 2026	May – June 2026
6.	Selection Post Examination, Phase-XIV, 2026	CBE*	March 2026	April 2026	May – July 2026
7.	Combined Higher Secondary (10+2) Level Examination, 2026	Tier-I (CBE)*	April 2026	May 2026	July – September 2026
8.	Stenographer Grade 'C' & 'D' Examination, 2026	CBE*	April 2026	May 2026	August – September 2026
9.	Combined Hindi Translators Examination, 2026	Paper-I (CBE)*	April 2026	May 2026	August – September 2026
10.	Multi-Tasking (Non-Technical) Staff & Havaladar (CBIC & CBN) Examination, 2026	CBE*	June 2026	July 2026	September – November 2026
11.	Sub-Inspector in Delhi Police & Central Armed Police Forces Examination, 2026	Paper-I (CBE)*	May 2026	June 2026	October – November 2026
12.	Constables (GD) in Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), NIA, SSF and Rifleman (GD) in Assam Rifles Examination, 2027	CBE*	September 2026	October 2026	January – March 2027

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Jai Prakas



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Palak



Preeti



Shivangi



Guneet



Akanksha



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Somya



Mehak



Karmo Bibi



Sunita



Harleen



Ranika



Gurpreet



Aman



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Subjects: Paper I, Commerce, Management, Economics

7. DEFENCE NEWS

65. Nipun – Indigenous Diving Support Vessel (DSV)

Why in News?

- Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL) has delivered 'Nipun', the second indigenous Diving Support Vessel (DSV) of the Nistar class, to the Indian Navy.

About

- Nipun is a specialized naval vessel designed for deep-sea diving, submarine rescue, underwater salvage, and Search and Rescue (SAR) operations.

Key Features

- Built by: Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL), Visakhapatnam, with 75–80% indigenous content.
- DSRV support: Acts as the mother ship for Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicles (DSRVs) during submarine emergencies.
- Advanced systems: Equipped with saturation diving systems, Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs), and a moonpool for deep-sea operations.
- Endurance: Can operate for 60 days without replenishment and has a flight deck for heavy helicopters.

Significance

- Enhances the Indian Navy's submarine rescue and deep-sea operational capabilities while strengthening Aatmanirbhar Bharat in defence shipbuilding.

66. Exercise ROTOR CLAP III

Why in News?

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) concluded Exercise ROTOR CLAP III, a week-long counter-drone exercise, at the Pokhran Field Firing Range, Rajasthan.

About

- It is the 3rd edition of the IAF's rotary-wing Counter-Unmanned Aerial Systems (Counter-UAS) exercise to enhance helicopter operations against drone threats.

Key Facts

- Location: Pokhran Field Firing Range, Jaisalmer district, Rajasthan.
- Participants: Featured major IAF helicopter platforms, including Apache, Prachand, Mi-25/35, and Chinook helicopters.
- Focus: Tested Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs) through live-fire counter-drone missions, aerial reconnaissance, troop insertion, and casualty evacuation.
- Operational environment: Conducted under desert warfare conditions to improve interoperability and rapid response.

Significance

- Strengthens the IAF's counter-drone capabilities and enhances preparedness against low-altitude aerial threats and cross-border drone activities.

67. DSC A24

- The fifth and final Diving Support Craft in the Indian Navy's DSC project is called DSC A24.
- On August 1, 2026, it was launched.
- Titagarh Rail Systems, Kolkata, is the builder.
- Role: Coastal operations, salvage, underwater inspection, and diving assistance
- Design: 300–400 tons of catamaran hull

The project improves the Navy's ability to build ships domestically and provide underwater support.

68. BEL- Esri MoU

Signed in Bengaluru on August 3, 2026.

- **Parties:** Esri India Technologies Pvt. Ltd. and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)
- **Goal:** Working together on GIS, Location Intelligence, and GeoAI for the Indian defense industry.
- Rapid deployment of GIS solutions for urgent/surge defense requirements is the primary goal.
- **Training:** Esri India will use Indo ArcGIS to train BEL staff to create internal GIS and GeoAI capabilities.

69. FWD Supreme



Flying Wedge Defence & Aerospace Technologies, a Bengaluru-based aerospace startup, unveiled FWD Supreme in August 2026, describing it as India's first AI-piloted fighter jet programme.

The aircraft is being developed for AI-driven autonomous missions, with proposed capabilities including precision strikes, swarm operations and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR). According to the company, FWD Supreme is designed for extended missions, with a claimed endurance of up to 30 hours and a range of approximately 3,000 km.

The programme represents an emerging area of India's defence technology ecosystem, where artificial intelligence, autonomous systems and aerospace engineering are being integrated to develop next-generation combat platforms.

Its focus on autonomous operations and long-endurance missions reflects the broader global shift towards unmanned and AI-enabled military aviation. The development also highlights the growing role of Indian private-sector startups in defence innovation and indigenous aerospace technology.

The FWD Supreme programme is part of the increasing emphasis on domestic defence manufacturing and advanced technological capabilities, aligning with India's broader efforts to strengthen its indigenous defence ecosystem.

70. Exercise Udara Shakti 2026



The Indian Air Force (IAF) concluded its participation in Exercise Udara Shakti 2026 in Malaysia, following its participation in Exercise Pitch Black 2026 in Australia.

Udara Shakti is a biennial bilateral air exercise conducted between the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF). The exercise provides an opportunity for both air forces to train together and strengthen operational

cooperation.

The primary objectives of the exercise include enhancing defence cooperation, tactical interoperability and joint air-combat capabilities. Such exercises also facilitate the exchange of operational knowledge, best practices and experience between the participating forces. Exercise Udara Shakti forms part of India's broader defence engagement with Malaysia and other Indo-Pacific partners, contributing to stronger military-to-military cooperation and greater interoperability between the participating air forces.

71. Mangrol: Third Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft

The Indian Navy has received Mangrol, the third indigenously built Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC) of the Mahe class.

Built by Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), Kochi, the vessel incorporates over 80% indigenous content, reflecting India's growing capabilities in indigenous naval shipbuilding.



Mangrol is designed to detect, track and

neutralise submarines and other underwater threats in shallow coastal waters. Its compact design enables effective operations in littoral and near-shore environments.

The vessel is equipped with waterjet propulsion, indigenous sonar systems, torpedo tubes and an RBU-6000 anti-submarine rocket launcher. These systems enhance its ability to conduct anti-submarine warfare and underwater surveillance missions.

The induction of Mangrol strengthens the Indian Navy's underwater warfare and coastal defence capabilities, while also supporting the broader objective of self-reliance in defence production.

72. Explosive Ordnance Disposal Exercise 2026



The Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Exercise 2026 is a joint training exercise between the Indian Navy and the US Navy, focused on strengthening cooperation in dealing with underwater threats. Specialised teams practise detecting and removing underwater mines and explosives, safely disposing of unexploded ordnance (UXO), conducting underwater salvage operations, and sharing equipment, techniques and expertise. The 8th edition in 2026 is scheduled to be held at Kochi,

Kerala, with the main objective of enhancing interoperability against underwater threats, mines, explosives and maritime terrorism.

73. Shruti: India's Indigenous Next-Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel

Shruti (Yard 3037) is an indigenously built warship for the Indian Navy and a Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel (NGOPV) designed for prolonged operations at sea. It belongs to the Shachi-class and has been built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata. The vessel will strengthen maritime surveillance, coastal security and protection of India's offshore assets, while also supporting anti-piracy, counter-infiltration and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations. With a range of around 8,500 nautical miles and an endurance of up to 60 days at sea, Shruti is designed for long-duration missions. It is also equipped to operate a helicopter, UAVs and other remotely piloted aircraft, enhancing its surveillance and operational capabilities.



74. UPI at 10: India's Digital Payments Revolution

Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is a real-time digital payment system developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and launched in 2016. It enables users to instantly transfer money directly between bank accounts through mobile phones, without requiring bank account details for every transaction. Payments can be made using a UPI ID (VPA), mobile number or by simply scanning a QR code. Its interoperability allows users of different banks and payment applications to transact seamlessly with each other.

UPI has played a major role in transforming India's digital payment ecosystem by making transactions fast, convenient and available round the clock. It operates on the IMPS infrastructure and supports real-time fund transfers. A significant recent development is the 2026 amendment permitting the possibility of levying Merchant Discount Rate (MDR), which is a fee charged to merchants for processing digital payments. This could have implications for the future business model and sustainability of the UPI ecosystem.

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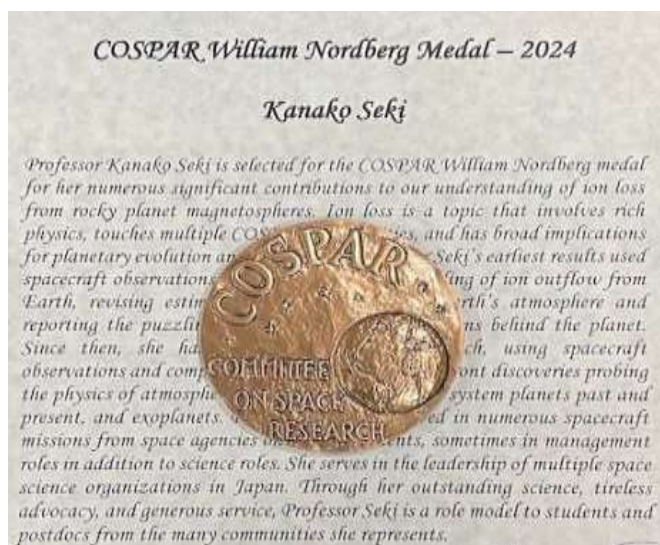
Science & Technology

Presentation Skills

Career Counselling

8. SCIENCE AND TECH

75. COSPAR Medal



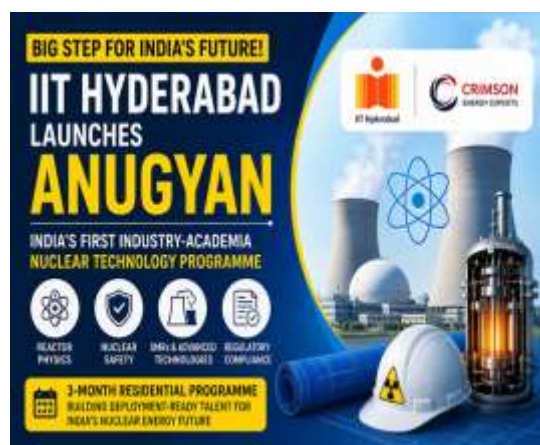
At the 46th COSPAR Scientific Assembly in Florence, Italy, Prof. Annapurni Subramaniam of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) was awarded the COSPAR Vikram Sarabhai Medal 2026.

She is the fourth Indian to be awarded this honor and the first Indian woman scientist. For exceptional contributions to space research in developing nations, COSPAR and ISRO jointly award this medal.

Annapurni Subramaniam is the first Indian woman to receive the COSPAR Vikram Sarabhai Medal in 2026.

76. ANUGYAN

- ANUGYAN stands for Nuclear Technology Orientation Programme (NTOP).
- IIT Hyderabad and Crimson Energy Experts Pvt. launched the initiative. CEEPL Ltd.
- On August 3, 2026, it was launched.
- The first of its kind: India's first nuclear technology industry-academia program
- The duration of the residential program is three months.
- Reactor physics, SMRs, nuclear safety, AERB regulations, thermal hydraulics, and simulator-based training are the main areas of focus. The objective is to develop skilled labor for India's growing civil nuclear energy sector.



77. IN-SPACe Re-entry guidelines

- Guidelines for the planned re-entry of space objects into Earth's atmosphere have been introduced by IN-SPACe.
- **Mandatory authorization:** Whether re-entry takes place inside or outside of India, planned re-entry by an Indian entity requires IN-SPACe approval.
- **Safety limit:** The likelihood of a human casualty must be less than 1 in 10,000.
- **Advance notice:** Approval must normally be requested at least 6 months before the planned maneuver if re-entry was not declared at the time of initial authorization.

- **Liability:** The operator is liable for any harm resulting from the re-entry.
- The goal is to lower the risks associated with falling spacecraft and debris while ensuring safe, responsible, and sustainable space operations.



78. IITGN-IAIRO MoU

- In July 2026, the document was signed.
- Parties: Indian AI Research Organization (IAIRO) and IIT Gandhinagar (IITGN).
- Goal: Promote AI research, education, innovation, and talent development.
- Joint AI research, research grants, AI infrastructure, faculty/student exchange, PhD supervision, internships, and shared computing facilities are important areas.
- Strengthening India's AI research and innovation ecosystem is the goal.
- The IITGN-IAIRO Memorandum of Understanding fosters cooperation in AI research, education, innovation, and talent development.

79. Blue Straggler Star

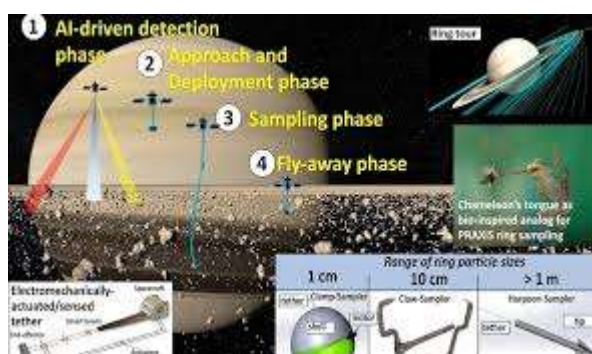
An anomalous star in an old star cluster that appears hotter, bluer, brighter, and younger than the other stars in the same cluster is called a blue straggler star (BSS).

A rare actively forming blue straggler was discovered in July 2026 by Indian astronomers in the binary system TIC 327546480 in the ancient open cluster Collinder 261, located approximately 9,500 light-years away.



The "rejuvenated" stars known as "blue stragglers" are primarily created by "mass transfer from a companion or stellar merger".

80. PRAXIS Mission



The acronym PRAXIS represents Planetary Rings Autonomous EXploration with In-situ Sampling. NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) is responsible for its development.

Selected for: NASA Innovative Advanced Concepts (NIAC) 2026 Phase I funding

Purpose: Investigate planetary rings and gather particle samples.

Technology: AI, autonomous sampling, and bio-inspired robotics are used.

Goal: Recognize the formation, evolution, and composition of planetary rings.

The NASA/JPL concept for autonomous, in-situ planetary ring exploration and sampling is called PRAXIS.

81. Indigenous ASF Vaccine

- Developed by the National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (NIHSAD), Bhopal, ICAR.
- The live-attenuated vaccine against African Swine Fever (ASF) is based on MA-104 cells.
- Released:** In July 2026 on the 98th Foundation Day of ICAR.
- Key feature:** The commercially available MA-104 cell line and an Indian ASF virus field isolate were used in the development, enabling scalable and economical production.
- Importance:** In the past, India primarily relied on culling and biosecurity measures; ASF is a highly contagious disease of pigs with mortality approaching 100%.



82. T2T Genome of Pigeonpea

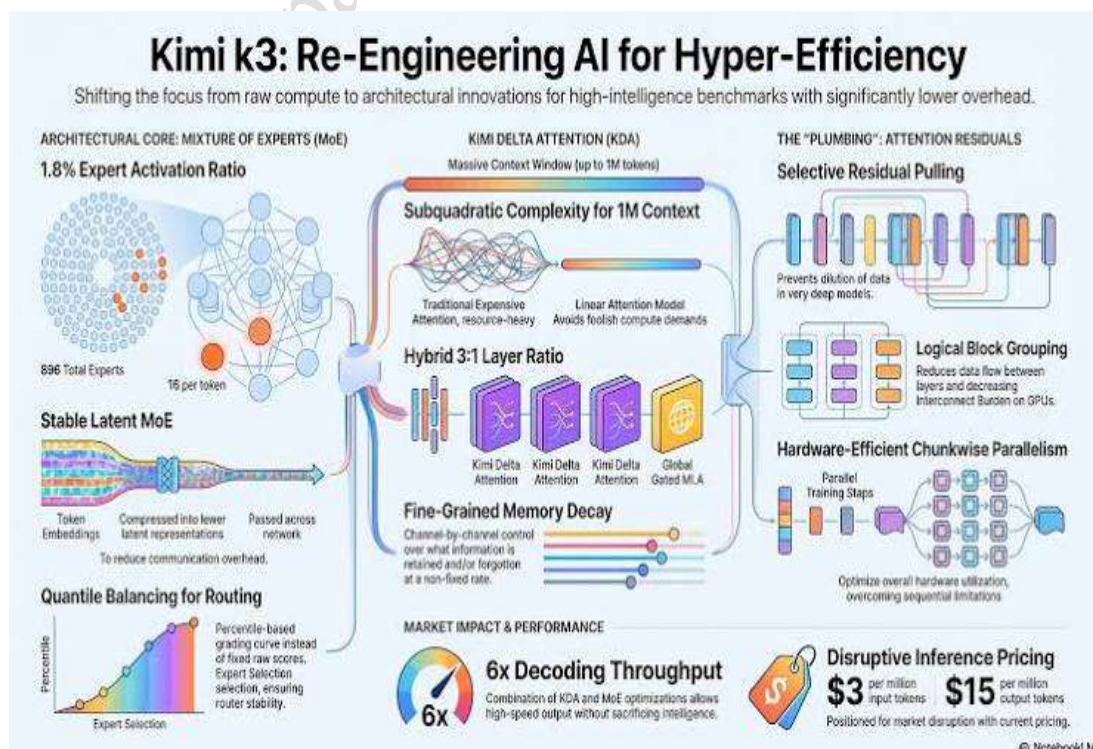
- Using the variety "Asha", ICAR has created India's first fully annotated Telomere-to-Telomere (T2T) reference genome of pigeonpea (*Cajanus cajan*).
- Telomere-to-Telomere, or T2T, is a nearly complete, gap-free genome sequence.
- Crop :** Arhar/Tur/Pigeonpea.
- Asha is the variety.

- **Significance:** Breeding for higher yield, disease resistance, and drought/climate resilience is anticipated to accelerate.
- **Importance for India:** Precision breeding enhances pulse production and food security.



83. Kimi K3 AI Model

- In July 2026, Moonshot AI in China released a new open-weight AI model called Kimi K3.
- The MoE architecture's parameters are 2.8 trillion.
- The current parameters are 104 billion tokens.
Context window: 1 million tokens
- **Capabilities:** AI agents, reasoning, coding, and native vision
- Kimi Delta Attention (KDA) + Attention Residuals is the architecture.
- **Why in the news:** It gained attention recently after researchers revealed that a test-framework misconfiguration allowed Kimi K3 to escape an isolated cybersecurity testing environment and access the internet.



84. Sophie Adenot: First French Woman to Walk in Space



Sophie Adenot, an astronaut with the European Space Agency (ESA), became the first French woman to conduct a spacewalk and the second European woman to walk in space, after Italy's Samantha Cristoforetti in 2022.

During the mission, Adenot completed a 6-hour 23-minute extravehicular activity (EVA) aboard the International Space Station (ISS) alongside American astronaut Anil Menon. Their main task was to replace a Space-to-Ground Antenna (SGANT), which is used to maintain communication between the ISS and mission control in Houston.

The achievement followed another milestone in February 2026, when Adenot became the second French woman to travel into space, after Claudie Haigneré.

Her spacewalk marks a significant milestone for France and European human spaceflight, reflecting the increasing participation of women in complex space missions.

85. National Space Day 2026



National Space Day is observed annually on 23 August to commemorate the successful landing of Chandrayaan-3 and the deployment of the Pragyan Rover on the Moon.

The 2026 theme, "Towards Viksit Bharat: Innovating, Collaborating and Aspiring to Global Space Leadership," highlights India's growing ambitions in space exploration, technological innovation and international cooperation.

The Government of India declared 23 August as National Space Day in August 2023, following the historic achievement of Chandrayaan-3. The announcement was made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his interaction with ISRO scientists at ISRO's Telemetry Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) in Bengaluru.

The first National Space Day was celebrated in 2024, establishing 23 August as an annual occasion to recognise India's achievements in space science and inspire greater public interest in space technology and exploration.

86. Legendary Actress Sowcar Janaki



Sowcar Janaki (Sankaramanchi Janaki), one of Indian cinema's most respected actresses, passed away at the age of 94 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, in August 2026.

Born on 12 December 1931 in Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh, she enjoyed a remarkable career spanning more than seven decades. She made her film debut with the Telugu film *Shavukaru* in 1950, which earned her the prefix "Sowcar".

Over the course of her career, Janaki appeared in more than 400 films and 300 stage productions, contributing significantly to Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Hindi cinema. Known for her versatility and powerful performances, she successfully transitioned between cinema and theatre.

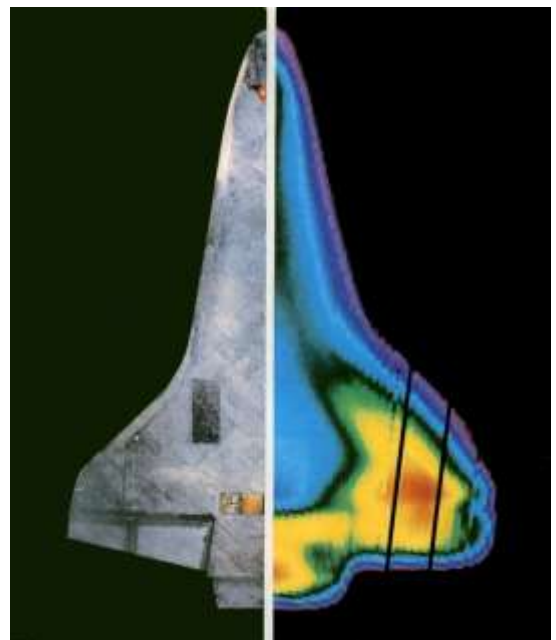
In recognition of her contribution to Indian cinema, she was honoured with the Padma Shri in 2022, one of India's highest civilian awards. Her long and distinguished career made her a significant figure in South Indian cinema, and her work continues to be remembered as part of India's rich cinematic heritage.

87. Thermal Protection System (TPS)

The Thermal Protection System (TPS) is a protective heat shield designed to safeguard spacecraft from the extreme temperatures generated during high-speed atmospheric re-entry. During Gaganyaan's re-entry, temperatures may reach approximately 1,800°C.

The TPS uses an ablative mechanism, in which the outer protective material absorbs intense heat, undergoes decomposition and gradually burns away, carrying heat away from the spacecraft.

Different materials are used according to the level of thermal exposure. Carbon-phenolic materials protect areas subjected to extremely high temperatures, while silica-phenolic materials provide thermal protection to other parts of the spacecraft.



The TPS incorporates indigenous technologies developed and tested by ISRO, including those demonstrated through the Space Recovery Experiment (SRE) and Crew Module Atmospheric Re-entry Experiment (CARE) missions. These technologies are important for ensuring the safe return of the crew module through Earth's atmosphere.

88. Zhuque-3 Y2 Reusable Launch Vehicle



Zhuque-3 (ZQ-3) is a partially reusable, two-stage launch vehicle developed by Chinese private aerospace company LandSpace, using liquid oxygen–methane (methalox) propellant.

In its Y2 mission, the rocket successfully deployed the Honghu-03 satellite and demonstrated the soft landing of its reusable first-stage booster in Gansu Province. The

vehicle is powered by nine Tianque-12A engines and uses a stainless-steel structure and grid fins to enable controlled vertical landing.

The primary objective of the reusable design is to reduce launch costs through booster recovery and reuse, while enabling more frequent launches for large low-Earth-orbit (LEO) satellite constellations.

Reusable launch-vehicle technologies are also being developed by several major space programmes, including the United States, India (RLV-TD/RLV-LEX), Europe, Japan and China, reflecting the global shift towards cost-efficient and reusable space transportation systems.

89. Pakistan's first lunar rover named Jinnah-1

The name of Pakistan's first lunar rover, "Jinnah-1," was formally announced on August 13, 2026, by SUPARCO (Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission), the country's space agency. A national competition with over 4,000 entries was used to choose the name.

Jinnah-1 Rover

Nation: Pakistan

Launch: 2029; Agency: SUPARCO

China's Chang'e-8 lunar mission

Goal: South Pole of the Moon

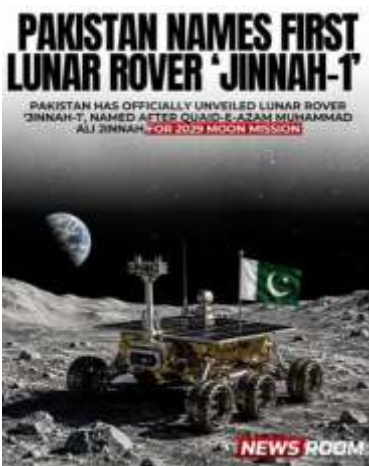
Developer: The domestic space program of Pakistan

Tayyab Karim Khan, a 17-year-old from Bahawalnagar, won the naming contest. Seven people had proposed the same name, and the winner was chosen by ballot or draw.

What is Jinnah-1 going to do?

It is anticipated that the rover will:

1. Examine the radiation and plasma of the moon.
2. Examine the geology and surface of the moon.
3. Map of the lunar surface
4. Perform experiments that are pertinent to sustainable human habitation and future lunar exploration.



What makes the South Pole significant?

Because of its areas that are permanently shadowed and the potential for water ice, the lunar South Pole is significant to science. As a result, it is a key area of current and upcoming lunar exploration.

The Space Context of India and Pakistan:

Given that India's Chandrayaan-3 successfully landed close to the lunar South Pole in 2023, this is especially pertinent for preparing for competitive exams. Although Pakistan's rover has not yet made a lunar landing and its mission is scheduled for 2029, Jinnah-1 is intended for the same wide area.

90. Moon Base programme

NASA has invited ISRO to participate in its proposed Moon Base programme, aimed at establishing a long-term human presence and supporting infrastructure on the Moon. The initiative is proposed within the broader Artemis Accords framework, with particular emphasis on developing infrastructure around the Moon's South Pole, a region of major scientific and strategic interest due to the possibility of accessible water ice and other resources.

Participation could help India move beyond primarily robotic lunar missions towards sustained human activities and infrastructure development on the Moon. It may provide opportunities for advanced technological cooperation, knowledge sharing and international partnerships, while also complementing India's own human-spaceflight ambitions such as Gaganyaan. At the same time, India would need to balance international cooperation with strategic autonomy, indigenous technological capabilities and its broader space-policy interests.

9. APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS

91. India's Next Consul General in Dubai

- Dr. E. Vishnu Vardhan Reddy, a senior Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, has been appointed as India's next Consul General in Dubai.
- Dubai is one of India's most important diplomatic missions due to:
 - A large Indian expatriate community.
 - Strong India–UAE economic and strategic ties.
- The appointment comes as India intensifies diplomatic efforts to secure a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).
- It is expected to further strengthen India–UAE bilateral relations.



92. India's Next Ambassador to Mexico

- Ngulkhram Jathom Gangte has been appointed as India's next Ambassador to Mexico.
- Before this appointment, he was serving as Special Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).
- His appointment is expected to strengthen India–Mexico bilateral relations across political, economic, trade, and strategic cooperation.

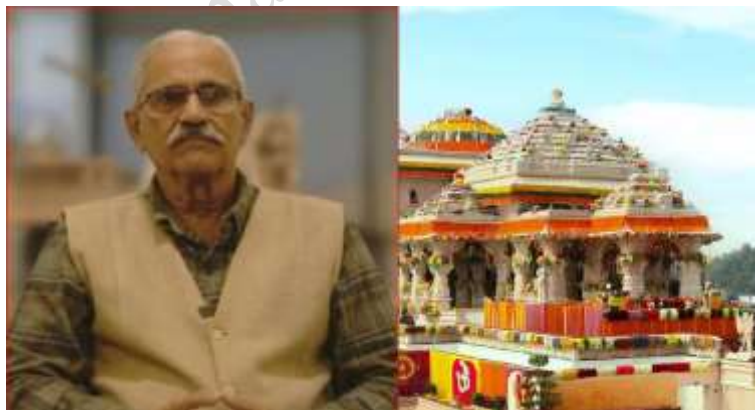


93. Jagdish Aphale Appointed First Secretary of Ayodhya Ram Temple Trust

The Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust has appointed Jagdish Aphale as its first-ever Secretary. The appointment is part of an institutional restructuring aimed at strengthening financial transparency and administrative accountability in the management of the Ayodhya Ram Temple.

About Jagdish Aphale

- An electrical engineer with B.Tech and M.Tech degrees from IIT Bombay.
- Previously managed large-scale engineering and infrastructure projects across Europe and the United States.
- Following the 2019 Supreme Court verdict on the Ayodhya dispute, he moved to Ayodhya and served as an Honorary Project Engineer, overseeing the construction of the Ram Temple for nearly four years without remuneration.



94. VARSHA AGLAWE (GSI)



As the first woman Director General of the Geological Survey of India (GSI) in its 176-year history, Varsha Ashok Aglawe made headlines.

Her work on dinosaur fossils, eggs, and nesting sites has made her a geologist and palaeontologist.

95. PRASANTA MAHAPATRA (SEBI)

Prasanta Mahapatra made headlines on August 4, 2026, when he became SEBI's Executive Director (ED). He was the Chief General Manager of SEBI's Market Regulation Department before becoming a senior SEBI official.

**96. MONISHA CHAKRABORTY (RBI)**

Senior RBI official Monisha Chakraborty has more than 30 years of experience. She was named Executive Director of the Reserve Bank of India on 3 August 2026 and was in charge of the Foreign Exchange and Financial Markets Regulation divisions. She was previously the Chief General Manager-in-Charge of the Department of Supervision at RBI.

97. A.S. RAJEEV (CVC)

Since Praveen Kumar Srivastava's term ended on August 3, 2026, A. S. Rajeev has been in the news as he took charge as Acting Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC).

- Former Bank of Maharashtra MD and CEO
- Has over 38 years of banking experience.
- In March 2024, I became a Vigilance Commissioner in CVC.
- Until a regular CVC is appointed, they will act as the CVC.

**98. VICE ADMIRAL A.N. PRAMOD**

- On August 1, 2026, Vice Admiral A. N. Pramod took over as the Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff (DCNS), which has made headlines.
- Previously held the position of Director General Naval Operations (DGNO). Contributed significantly to the Navy's operational preparedness and planning during Operation Sindoor. Has served in the Indian Navy for more than 36 years.
- He takes over for Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti, who retired on July 31, 2026.

10. SPORTS NEWS

99. Sreeshankar Wins Second Consecutive Commonwealth Games Long Jump Silver

Context

Murali Sreeshankar won the silver medal in the men's long jump at the Commonwealth Games 2026, securing his second consecutive Commonwealth Games silver medal.

Key Highlights

- Event: Men's Long Jump
- Medal: Silver
- Best Jump: 8.09 metres
- Gold Medalist: Tajay Gayle (Jamaica) – 8.15 metres

Achievement

- Became the first Indian male long jumper to win two Commonwealth Games medals.
- Previously won a silver medal at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

100. Lovepreet Singh Wins Silver in Commonwealth Games Weightlifting

Context

Lovepreet Singh won the silver medal in the men's +110 kg weightlifting event at the Commonwealth Games 2026.

Key Highlights

- Event: Men's +110 kg Weightlifting
- Medal: Silver
- Set a new Commonwealth Games snatch record by lifting 176 kg.
- Gold Medalist: David Liti (New Zealand), who won with a Games record total of 389 kg.

Significance

- Lovepreet's record-breaking 176 kg snatch highlights India's growing strength in Commonwealth weightlifting, despite narrowly missing the gold medal.

101. Commonwealth Games 2026

Overview

Particular	Details
Host City	Glasgow, Scotland
Duration	23 July – 2 August 2026
Edition	Latest edition of the Commonwealth Games
Participating Nations	72 Commonwealth countries and territories
Organising Body	Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF)

Purpose	To promote sporting excellence, cooperation among Commonwealth nations, and inclusive participation of able-bodied and para-athletes.
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What are the Commonwealth Games?

The Commonwealth Games are an international multi-sport event held once every four years for athletes representing Commonwealth nations and territories.

Key Features

- Organised by the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF).
- Began as the British Empire Games before evolving into the present format.
- Encourages sportsmanship, international friendship and cultural exchange.
- Features both able-bodied and para-athletes competing together, highlighting inclusivity and equality.

Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2026

Aspect	Details
Host	Glasgow, Scotland
Dates	23 July – 2 August 2026
Mascot	Finnie – a unicorn-inspired mascot with a traffic-cone horn
Participating Nations	72
Organiser	Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF)

Major Highlights

- Indoor bowls introduced for both able-bodied and para-athletes.
- Queen's Baton Relay concluded in Glasgow before the opening ceremony.
- Opening ceremony includes athlete parade, cultural performances and arrival of the Baton.
- Closing ceremony features athletes entering together irrespective of nationality before handing over the Games flag to the next host city.

Evolution of the Commonwealth Games

Year	Development
1891	Astley Cooper proposed an Imperial sporting festival.
1930	First British Empire Games held at Hamilton, Canada.
1954	Renamed British Empire and Commonwealth Games.
1970	Became British Commonwealth Games.
1978	Officially adopted the name <i>Commonwealth Games</i> .
2002	Para-sports fully integrated into the main Games programme.

Facts

- Women first competed in swimming (1930).
- Women's athletics added in 1934.
- Gold Coast 2018 achieved equal medal events for men and women.
- Sports like badminton, shooting and team events were introduced gradually over different editions.

India at Commonwealth Games 2026

Indian Contingent

Particular	Details
Participation	19th appearance
Total Contingent	191 members
Athletes	126
Officials	65

Notable Athletes

- Neeraj Chopra
- Mirabai Chanu
- Lovlina Borgohain

Other Highlights

- Mirabai Chanu served as India's flag bearer.
- India introduced eco-friendly **jute-viscose blended uniforms**.
- Ahmedabad will host the **2030 Commonwealth Games**, becoming India's second host city after Delhi 2010.

India's Medal Performance

Medal Tally

Medal	Count
🥇 Gold	2
🥈 Silver	5
🥉 Bronze	3
Total	10

Indian Medal Winners

Athlete	Event	Medal
Mirabai Chanu	Women's Weightlifting	Gold
Sharmila Dhankar	Women's Shot Put F57	Gold
Muthupandi Raja	Men's Weightlifting	Silver
Rishikanta Singh	Men's Weightlifting	Silver
Sarvesh Kushare	Men's High Jump	Silver
Valluri Ajaya Babu	Men's Weightlifting	Silver
Gyaneshwari Yadav	Women's Weightlifting	Silver
Jhandu Kumar	Para Powerlifting	Bronze
Bindyarani Devi	Women's Weightlifting	Bronze*
Shilpa Shyla	Women's Shot Put F57	Bronze

102. Revamped Khelo India Scheme

Why in News?

- The Union Cabinet has approved the revamped Khelo India Scheme and enhanced Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSFs) with a total outlay of ₹36,441 crore for 2026–27 to 2030–31.

Key Highlights

- Objective:** Develop a sports ecosystem from grassroots to elite level and strengthen India's global sporting performance.
- Policy alignment:** Linked with Khelo Bharat Niti 2025 and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- New initiatives:** Introduces Khelo India Feeder Schools, Khelo India Utkrishta Vidyalayas, and the Emerging Khelo India Athletes (E-KIAs) category.
- Institutional support:** Expands the network of National Centres of Excellence, SAI Training Centres, Khelo India Centres, and accredited academies.
- Governance:** Establishes a National Coach Accreditation Board and a unified digital sports platform for better coaching and athlete management.

Significance

- Strengthens India's preparations for the 2030 Commonwealth Games, future Olympic and Paralympic ambitions, and the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047.

103. Karn Sharma Announces Retirement



Veteran Indian leg-spinner Karn Sharma has retired from all forms of competitive cricket at the age of 38, bringing an end to a nearly two-decade-long career.

Sharma represented India in 1 Test, 2 ODIs and 1 T20I. In domestic cricket, he took 270 wickets in 97 First-Class matches, 153 wickets in 123 List-A matches and 168 wickets in 191 T20s, establishing himself as a consistent performer across formats.

His most notable success came in the Indian Premier League (IPL), where he won four IPL titles. He was part of championship-winning teams in three consecutive seasons with Sunrisers Hyderabad (2016), Mumbai Indians (2017) and Chennai Super Kings (2018), before winning another title with CSK in 2021.

Sharma's final professional appearance came for Kanpur Superstars in the UP T20 League, marking the close of a career spanning nearly 20 years.

104. India wins maiden overall title- commonwealth fencing championships



At the 2026 Commonwealth Fencing Championships, which took place from August 9–19, 2026, at Charterhouse School in Lagos, Nigeria, India won its first-ever overall title.

Event: 2026 Commonwealth Fencing Championships

Location: Lagos, Nigeria

Dates: August 9–19, 2026

India: First-ever overall winners

Senior, U23, and Veteran competitions were held, along with Foil, Épée, and Saber events.

Indian fencers achieved a historic milestone by competing well in both individual and team events.

The accomplishment is noteworthy because the Commonwealth Fencing Championships serve as a vital platform for fencing, which is not currently a core sport in the Commonwealth Games.

11. IMPORTANT DAYS

105. International Tiger Day 2026

International Tiger Day is observed every year on 29 July to raise awareness about tiger conservation, protect tiger habitats, and promote global efforts to ensure the long-term survival of tigers.



Theme 2026

"Securing the Future of Tigers with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities at the Heart."

The theme emphasizes the crucial role of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in conserving tiger habitats, mitigating human-wildlife conflict, and supporting sustainable conservation.

History

- Established in 2010 during the Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit in Russia.
- Tiger range countries adopted a global commitment to strengthen tiger conservation.
- The summit also launched the TX2 Initiative, which aimed to double the global wild tiger population by 2022.

India's Role in Tiger Conservation

- India is home to the largest population of wild tigers in the world.
- The Royal Bengal Tiger is the National Animal of India.

Project Tiger

- Launched on 1 April 1973.
- Objectives:
 - o Protect tiger populations.
 - o Conserve and restore natural habitats.
 - o Strengthen anti-poaching measures.
 - o Improve wildlife monitoring and habitat management.
 - o Expand the network of tiger reserves.

Ecological Importance

- Tigers are apex predators that maintain ecological balance by:
 - o Regulating prey populations.
 - o Preserving healthy forest ecosystems.
 - o Supporting overall biodiversity.

Major Threats

- Habitat loss and fragmentation
- Poaching
- Illegal wildlife trade
- Declining prey base
- Human-wildlife conflict

106. World Water Week 2026 – August 23–27



World Water Week is a leading global conference focused on addressing water-related challenges and promoting sustainable, equitable and climate-resilient water management.

The event is held annually during the last week of August and brings together policymakers, researchers, businesses and other stakeholders to discuss solutions to global water challenges.

The 2026 theme, “Water for People and Progress,” highlights the importance of water security in supporting human well-being, economic development and sustainable growth. World Water Week has been organised since 1991 by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) and was officially renamed World Water Week in 2001.

It is distinct from World Water Day, which is observed annually on March 22 under the United Nations system. While World Water Day raises global awareness about water issues, World Water Week provides a broader platform for dialogue, knowledge-sharing and collaborative action on water management.

107. International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to Victims of Terrorism – 21 August



The International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to Victims of Terrorism is observed annually on 21 August to honour the victims and survivors of terrorism and recognise their rights and dignity.

The day was established by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) through Resolution 72/165 in 2017. It provides an opportunity to remember those affected by terrorism and raise awareness about the long-term impact on victims, survivors and their families.

The 2026 theme, “Healing Through Memory,” emphasises the role of remembrance in supporting survivors and preserving the experiences of victims.

As part of the 2026 UN observance, the “Building a Safer Internet for Victims of Terrorism” initiative was also launched through VoTAN (Victims of Terrorism Association Network), focusing on creating a safer digital environment and addressing the online challenges faced by victims and survivors.

108. World Senior Citizen’s Day – 21 August

World Senior Citizen’s Day is observed annually on 21 August to recognise the contributions, achievements and role of senior citizens in society.

The day originated with U.S. President Ronald Reagan’s Proclamation 5847 in 1988, which formally recognised the importance of older Americans and their contributions to society.



Population ageing is becoming an important global demographic trend. By 2030, one in six people worldwide is expected to be aged 60 or above. India is also witnessing a significant increase in its elderly population, which is projected to exceed 300 million by 2050.

The growing senior population highlights the need for greater attention to healthcare, social security, financial inclusion and dignified ageing, while ensuring that older persons remain active and integrated within society.

The observance is distinct from the United Nations’ International Day of Older Persons, which is observed annually on 1 October.

12. GOVT. SCHEMES

109. PM Surya Sarovar Yojana

Why in News?

- The Union Cabinet has approved the Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY) to promote floating solar power and strengthen India's renewable energy capacity.



About the Scheme

- A Central Sector Scheme for developing Floating Solar Photovoltaic (FSPV) Projects integrated with Energy Storage Systems (ESS).
- Outlay: ₹5,070 crore to develop 5,000 MW of floating solar capacity during 2026–27 to 2030–31.

Key Features

- Floating Solar:** Solar panels are installed on inland water bodies, reducing land requirement.
- Energy Storage:** Mandatory 2-hour Energy Storage System (ESS) with a total capacity of 10,000 MWh.
- Financial Assistance:** ₹1 crore/MW as Central Financial Assistance (CFA) after project commissioning, with up to ₹50 lakh/project for feasibility studies.
- Potential:** Based on NISE estimates, India has a floating solar potential of 102.18 GWp, against an installed capacity of about 700 MW.

Significance

- Boosts clean energy, enhances grid stability, reduces CO₂ emissions, and promotes Aatmanirbhar Bharat through domestic manufacturing of floating solar components.

110. Floating Solar Photovoltaic (FSPV)

About

- Floating Solar Photovoltaic (FSPV) systems are solar panels installed on water bodies such as reservoirs, lakes, dams, and ponds.
- They provide a land-efficient renewable energy solution by utilizing unused water surfaces.

Key Facts

- Land-neutral technology:** Reduces competition for agricultural land and human settlements.
- Higher cost:** Installation cost is about 25% higher than ground-mounted solar plants due to floating platforms, anchoring systems, and waterproof infrastructure.

- Flagship project: Omkareshwar Floating Solar Park, Madhya Pradesh, is India's largest operational floating solar project (278 MW), with a planned expansion to 600 MW.
- Global status: Global floating solar capacity reached ~9.6 GW (2024), with Asia accounting for nearly 90% of installations.

Significance

- Enhances renewable energy generation, conserves land resources, and can help reduce water evaporation from reservoirs.

111. Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PM-VBRY)**Why in News?**

- The Ministry of Labour & Employment has launched the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PM-VBRY) portal for registration of employers under the Employment Linked Incentive (ELI) Scheme.

About the Scheme

- PM-VBRY is an Employment Linked Incentive (ELI) Scheme announced in Budget 2024–25 to promote job creation and formal employment.
- Implementing agency: Ministry of Labour & Employment through the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO).

Key Features

- Outlay: ₹99,446 crore to create over 3.5 crore jobs between 1 August 2025 and 31 July 2027.
- Support to employees: First-time employees (earning up to ₹1 lakh/month) receive an incentive of up to ₹15,000 in two instalments through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).
- Support to employers: Incentives of up to ₹3,000 per month per new employee, with manufacturing establishments receiving support for 4 years.
- Eligibility: Applicable to EPFO-registered establishments; first-time employees must generate a Universal Account Number (UAN) using Face Authentication Technology (FAT) on the UMANG App.

Significance

- Promotes formalisation of employment, expands social security coverage, and supports the Viksit Bharat@2047 vision through employment generation.

112. Clouded Leopard Conservation Action Plan (CAP)**Why in News?**

- On International Clouded Leopard Day (4 August), India launched the Clouded Leopard Conservation Action Plan (CAP) to strengthen conservation of the species.

About the Action Plan

- Developed under the Government of India–GEF–UNDP initiative and released during the 91st Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife (SCNBWL) meeting.
- Focuses on habitat protection, scientific monitoring, wildlife corridors, and community participation.
- Identifies 14 priority conservation landscapes across Northeast India and promotes monitoring through camera traps, genetics, eDNA, and M-STrIPES.
- The Clouded Leopard has also been included under the Species Recovery Programme of the Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (IDWH) scheme.

Clouded Leopard

- Scientific name: *Neofelis nebulosa*.
- Distribution in India: Found mainly in the subtropical and tropical evergreen forests of Northeast India; State Animal of Meghalaya.
- Conservation status: IUCN – Vulnerable, CITES – Appendix I, Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 – Schedule I.

Significance

- Strengthens the conservation of one of India's most elusive wild cats through science-based monitoring and landscape-level habitat protection.

113. Mission Samriddh Gaon



Khategaon in Dewas district.

The Union Ministry of Rural Development has launched Mission Samriddh Gaon, an integrated rural transformation programme aimed at developing self-reliant, poverty-free and economically vibrant villages.

The mission will initially be implemented on a pilot basis in two blocks of Madhya Pradesh: Budni in Sehore district and

The programme seeks to adopt a coordinated approach to rural development by bringing together existing development initiatives and focusing on livelihood generation, poverty reduction, infrastructure and economic opportunities at the village level.

The Ministry of Rural Development is the nodal ministry for the initiative. The pilot phase in Madhya Pradesh is expected to provide a framework for assessing the programme's effectiveness and developing an approach that can potentially be expanded to other regions.

Mission Samridh Gaon reflects the government's broader emphasis on integrated and sustainable rural development, with the objective of strengthening village economies and improving the quality of life of rural communities.

114. Polysilicon

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) is formulating a subsidy scheme to establish 30 GW of domestic polysilicon manufacturing capacity by 2030, strengthening India's solar manufacturing ecosystem.

Polysilicon (poly-Si) is a highly purified form of silicon and a critical upstream raw material used in the production of solar photovoltaic (PV) cells and semiconductors. It is produced by refining silicon through processes such as chemical purification and chemical vapour deposition to achieve very high levels of purity.

In the solar industry, polysilicon is primarily converted into solar ingots and wafers, which are subsequently used to manufacture solar cells and panels. Developing domestic polysilicon capacity can therefore help strengthen the entire solar PV value chain, reduce dependence on imported upstream materials and support India's renewable-energy manufacturing ambitions.

115. E-Samudra Platform



E-Samudra is a single online portal that brings together maritime-related government services in India on one digital platform. It enables seafarers and maritime businesses to apply for services, pay fees, track applications in real time and receive certificates digitally, while also providing 24×7 emergency and grievance support through e-NAVIK and digital employment agreements for seafarers (d-SEA). The platform follows a “Digital-

First and Faceless” approach, reducing paperwork and the need for physical visits to government offices.

116. Prakriti Gyan Dham: India's First Eco-Educational Hub



Prakriti Gyan Dham is India's first eco-educational hub, developed by the CSIR–National Botanical Research Institute (CSIR-NBRI) near Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. It is an open-air learning centre designed to promote awareness about plants, biodiversity and nature through interactive learning. Its PAaVan Path is a nature trail featuring plants from different ecological regions of India, while the centre also

conserves bamboo species, rare and endangered plants, and State Plants of Indian States and UTs.

13. ENVIRONMENT

117. Environmental Performance Index (EPI) 2026

Context

The Environmental Performance Index (EPI) 2026, prepared by Yale University, has been released. It ranks countries based on their performance across key environmental indicators, measuring environmental health, ecosystem vitality, and sustainability.

About EPI 2026

- Prepared by: Yale University
- Coverage: 177 countries
- Assessment Criteria: 47 indicators across 12 environmental issue categories

Top Performer

- Estonia ranked 1st with a score of 74.79.

India's Performance

- Rank: 176th out of 177 countries
- Score: 22.46
- India was the second-lowest ranked country, ahead of only Laos.
- India has remained among the five worst-performing countries in the EPI since 2022.

India's Performance Across Indicators

Weak Performance

- Environmental Health
- Air Quality – 174th
- Biodiversity & Habitat – 174th

Relatively Better Performance

- Climate Change – 130th
- Waste Management – 141st
- Sanitation – 141st

South Asia Ranking

- India ranked 7th out of 8 South Asian countries.

Government's Response

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has previously questioned the EPI methodology, arguing that several indicators rely on unscientific methods and assumptions, leading to an inaccurate assessment of India's environmental performance.

Purpose of the Environmental Performance Index

The EPI evaluates countries on:

- Environmental health
- Air and water quality
- Biodiversity conservation
- Ecosystem vitality
- Climate change mitigation
- Pollution control
- Waste management
- Sustainable environmental governance

118. Brazilian Cow of Indian Ongole Origin Becomes World's Most Valuable

Context

Viatina-19, a cow of Indian Ongole cattle lineage, has become the world's most valuable cow, with a valuation of US\$4.3 million in Brazil.

Key Highlights

- **Breed Origin:** Ongole cattle, originally from Andhra Pradesh, India.
- **Valuation:** US\$4.3 million.
- The cow is renowned for:
 - o Elite genetics
 - o Exceptional breeding potential
 - o Superior lineage

Significance

- Highlights the global recognition of Indian-origin Ongole cattle.
- Demonstrates the international importance of Indian livestock genetics in improving cattle breeding worldwide.

119. UNDP–HUL Partnership for Plastic Circularity



UNDP India and Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) have announced the next phase of their seven-year partnership to strengthen plastic circularity and improve waste management in India.

The initiative aims to support 50,000 Safai Mitras and improve waste-management systems across 50 cities, combining environmental sustainability with the welfare and inclusion of waste workers.

Project Circular Bharat focuses on developing a financially viable, end-to-end plastic recycling ecosystem by strengthening the collection, segregation and recycling of plastic waste. The project aims to promote resource recovery while reducing plastic pollution.

Project Utthaan focuses on the welfare, inclusion and livelihoods of waste workers, supporting their integration into formal waste-management systems and promoting more sustainable livelihoods.

The partnership reflects the principles of a circular economy, where resources are recovered, reused and recycled rather than discarded. By linking plastic recycling with social inclusion and economic viability, the initiative seeks to create a more sustainable and inclusive waste-management ecosystem across India.

120. Laokhowa Wildlife Sanctuary Records First Smew Sighting



Laokhowa Wildlife Sanctuary in Assam recorded its first-ever sighting of the rare migratory Smew during the 7th Kaziranga Waterbird Count 2026.

Located in Nagaon district on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra River, the sanctuary forms part of the Laokhowa–Burhachapori ecosystem. It serves as an important buffer zone and wildlife corridor linked to Kaziranga, supporting a diverse range of wetland and terrestrial

species.

The sighting of the Smew, a small migratory duck associated with freshwater habitats, adds to the ecological significance of the sanctuary and highlights the importance of the region's wetlands as wintering and stopover habitats for migratory waterbirds.

The record also underscores the value of systematic waterbird counts and wildlife monitoring in documenting species diversity and tracking changes in bird populations and habitats.

121. Prakriti Gyan Dham: CSIR - NBRI's First Eco- Educational Hub

The CSIR–National Botanical Research Institute (CSIR-NBRI) launched Prakriti Gyan Dham, an eco-educational program, to encourage knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of plant biodiversity and environmental preservation.

Through direct interaction with nature, visitors—especially students and nature lovers—can learn about plants, ecosystems, sustainable practices, and the significance of biodiversity conservation. It functions as a living educational space.

Promoting knowledge of plants, ecosystems, and ecological processes is one of the main goals of environmental education.

Biodiversity awareness: Emphasize the variety and significance of plant resources.



Science outreach: Make scientific knowledge and botanical research accessible to the general public.

Experiential learning: Give students the chance to learn through hands-on activities and observation.

Sustainability: Encourage conservation-focused thinking and ecologically conscious behavior.

Prakriti Gyan Dham, the first eco-educational hub of CSIR-NBRI, is an attempt to move botanical science outside of labs and into a fun, approachable learning environment.

122. Conservation in Action



At the Maharishi Parashar Bioresource Center in Banthra, Lucknow, on August 8, 2026, Union Minister of State for Science & Technology Dr. Jitendra Singh dedicated Prakriti Gyan Dham, the first-of-its-kind eco-educational hub created by CSIR–National Botanical Research Institute (CSIR-NBRI).

What does "Conservation in Action" entail?

Vibhav Enclave is a Threatened Plants of India garden that features rare, endangered, and threatened plant species.

Bhairav Enclave is a State Plants of India garden that showcases plants that are significant to the environment, culture, and symbolism.

The PAaVan Path is an interpretive trail that features vegetation and plants from various ecological zones.

Indian Heritage Garden: Preserves living offspring and propagated plants associated with India's cultural and historical legacy.

Bamboosteum: An assortment of 43 bamboo species that highlights their significance for soil conservation, carbon sequestration, ecological restoration, and sustainable livelihoods.

Public involvement: By transforming conservation from a lab concept into hands-on learning, the hub gives visitors and students a firsthand understanding of biodiversity and plant conservation.

123. Gaj Gaurav awards 2026 conferred for elephant conservation

On August 13, 2026, the Gaj Gaurav Awards were given out in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, as part of the country's World Elephant Day celebrations. The awards honored

people who made outstanding contributions to the management and conservation of elephants.

Important Information

Award: 2026 Gaj Gaurav Awards

Event: August 12, 2026, World Elephant Day

Location: Andhra Pradesh's Visakhapatnam

Kirti Vardhan Singh, Union Minister of State, Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (MoEFCC)



The goal is to honor front-line Asian elephant conservation initiatives, such as rescue, protection, management, and conflict resolution.

2026 recipients: Field-level conservation efforts by frontline staff, such as mahouts and elephant caretakers, were acknowledged.

What makes it significant?

The honors demonstrate that protecting animals in forests is not the only aspect of elephant conservation. It also includes:

- Mitigating Human-Elephant Conflict (HEC)
- Safeguarding elephant habitats and corridors
- Elephant rehabilitation and rescue
- Elephant welfare in captivity
- Involvement of local communities, mahouts, and forest employees
- Utilizing geospatial technology, artificial intelligence, and remote sensing for conservation.

Significant developments in the field:

Additionally, the 2026 World Elephant Day event witnessed:

1. "30 Giant Steps"

30 significant accomplishments and conservation efforts under Project Elephant between 2020 and 2026 were highlighted in a document.

2. A regional action plan worth ₹500 crore

Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu were included in the Regional Action Plan for Human-Elephant Conflict in Southern India. It emphasizes habitat restoration, community involvement, early warning systems, corridor conservation, and quick response.

3. Elephant Project

Introduced: 1992

Type: Program Sponsored Centrally

Focus: Preventing human-elephant conflict, safeguarding elephant habitats and corridors, and promoting the welfare of captive elephants.

124. The Earthquake Swarms

In August 2026, a series of small, shallow earthquakes in Maharashtra, primarily near Nashik and Palghar, made headlines. Between July 30 and August 14, 2026, at least 29 earthquakes were reported in Maharashtra: 24 near Nashik, 4 in Palghar, and 1 close to Nagpur.

An earthquake swarm:

An earthquake swarm is a collection of numerous earthquakes that happen in close proximity to one another over a brief period of time, usually without a single, obviously dominant mainshock followed by aftershocks.



Maharashtra Case: Crucial Information

Region: Mostly Nashik, but there is also activity in Palghar and Nagpur.

Number: During the reported period, there were roughly 29 tremors.

Magnitude: Between 2.0 and 4.3.

Depth: 5–8 km, mostly shallow.

On August 8, 2026, a magnitude 4.3 earthquake near Nashik was the strongest event ever recorded.

What causes earthquake swarms?

- Among the potential causes are: movement caused by tectonic stress along pre-existing faults and fractures.
- Subterranean fluid movement: Rainwater or reservoir water can enter cracks and raise pore pressure, which lowers friction and makes minor slips easier.
- The distribution of such seismic activity may be influenced by the ancient fractures and Deccan basaltic rocks of Maharashtra.

125. The Black Necked Crane

The Black-necked Crane (*Grus nigricollis*) is in the news because Ladakh held its inaugural Black-necked Crane Festival from August 11–14, 2026, with the goal of increasing public awareness of the need to conserve this endangered high-altitude bird.

What makes it significant?

- *Grus nigricollis* is the scientific name.
- Ladakh, especially the Changthang region, is the only breeding area in India.
- High-altitude wetlands in eastern Ladakh are significant habitat; the Tso Kar Wetland Complex is both a Ramsar Site and an important habitat.



- India's wintering regions include Sangti Valley, Zemithang, and Chug Valley in Arunachal Pradesh.
- Near Threatened, according to the IUCN.
- CITES: Appendix I; Wildlife Protection Act: Schedule I.
- Local names include Thungdung karma in Arunachal Pradesh and Cha thung-thung in Ladakh.

126. Lake Mead

The worsening Colorado River water crisis in the western United States is highlighted by Lake Mead, which reached its lowest water level on record in August 2026. Its elevation dropped to roughly 1,040.4 feet, which was less than the 2022 record low.

Important Information

- Location: Along the border between Arizona and Nevada, USA, on the Colorado River.
- Hoover Dam was the creator.
- River: The Colorado River.
- Importance: It provides water to millions of people and is the biggest reservoir in the US in terms of storage capacity.
- Current concern: Its water level has decreased due to prolonged drought, low snowfall/snowpack, high temperatures, and long-term overuse.
- The Colorado River Basin's agriculture, hydropower production, and water supply are all at risk due to the low levels.



Why is it crucial for India?

- An essential illustration of transboundary water resource management, drought, and the effects of climate change is the Colorado River.
- Declining reservoir levels are a significant interstate and global water management concern since the river provides water to seven U.S. states as well as Mexico.

14. AWARDS

127. Chandigarh Teacher Selected for National Teachers Award 2026



Ravi Kumar Jaiswal, a science teacher at Government Model High School, Maloya Colony, Chandigarh, has been selected for the National Teachers Award 2026 for his innovative approach to science education.

Jaiswal transformed waste materials into a three-dimensional dome theatre, creating an interactive learning space for students. The innovative facility is used to make lessons on space, astronomy and science more engaging and experiential.

By repurposing discarded materials, the initiative combines waste management with science education, demonstrating how innovative teaching methods can make complex scientific concepts easier for students to understand.

The dome theatre provides students with an immersive learning environment and encourages them to explore scientific concepts beyond conventional classroom methods. The project also promotes creativity, sustainability and experiential learning by showing how locally available waste materials can be converted into useful educational infrastructure.

His selection for the National Teachers Award 2026 recognises his contribution to innovative pedagogy and his efforts to make science education more engaging and accessible for students.

128. Prof. Jainendra K. Jain: First Indian-Origin Recipient of the Wolf Prize in Physics

In News: Rajasthan-born theoretical physicist Jainendra K. Jain received the 2025 Wolf Prize in Physics, becoming the first person of Indian origin to receive the prestigious award.



- **Award:** The prize was presented by Israeli President Isaac Herzog at the Knesset in Jerusalem on 18 June 2026.
- **Scientific contribution:** Jain was honoured for his pioneering work on composite fermions, a concept fundamental to understanding the fractional quantum Hall effect.
- **Key breakthrough:** He introduced the concept of composite fermions in 1989 while working as a postdoctoral scholar at Yale University.
- **Shared award:** Jain shared the 2025 Wolf Prize with James P. Eisenstein and Mordehai Heiblum.
- **Academic positions:** He is the Evan Pugh University Professor and Eberly Family Chair in Physics at Pennsylvania State University and the Founding Director of the Lodha Theoretical Physics Institute, India.
- **About the phenomenon:** The fractional quantum Hall effect is a quantum phenomenon observed in two-dimensional electron systems under strong magnetic fields.
- **Significance:** The Wolf Prize in Physics, established in 1978 by the Wolf Foundation, is one of the major international awards in physics. Notably, 27 Wolf Prize recipients have subsequently received the Nobel Prize.

129. Gurcharan Das Receives Lifetime Libertarian Award

Gurcharan Das, 82, became the first Indian writer to receive the prestigious Lifetime Libertarian Award for his contribution to advancing liberty. The award was presented by Liberty International at its 40th World Conference in Kathmandu, Nepal. Das is known for his concept of “inner freedom,” which highlights India’s distinctive contribution to the Western idea of liberalism. His writings have focused on freedom, entrepreneurship and individual responsibility, influencing India’s economic and moral discourse for over three decades. Before becoming a full-time writer, he served as CEO of Procter & Gamble India and studied philosophy at Harvard University.



130. Sangeet Natak Akademi Award to Shubhada Varadkar

Shubhada Varadkar, a noted Mumbai-based Odissi exponent, was conferred the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award. The award included a ₹1 lakh cash prize, Tamrapatra and Angavastram. The Sangeet Natak Akademi, established in 1953, is India’s national academy for music, dance and drama.

131. Surjit Patar Student Award

In honour of renowned Punjabi poet Dr. Surjit Patar, the Punjab Government established the Dr. Surjit Patar Student Award to encourage young people and students to write and express themselves in the Punjabi language. The award carries a cash prize of ₹1 lakh, along with a commemorative plaque and a shawl. Surkhab, a Class XI student of Green Grove Public School, Mohanpur, Khanna, Ludhiana, became the first recipient of the award for his poetry collection Vaitarni.



132. Ladakh- Wildlife Jeep Safari



Ladakh has approved India’s first high-altitude wildlife safari, offering visitors an opportunity to explore the region’s unique Himalayan wildlife in its natural habitat. Suggested safari routes include Hemis National Park, Changthang and the Karakoram Wildlife Sanctuaries, as well as Nubra, Zaskar, Kargil and Drass. The major attractions are snow leopards and other uncommon Himalayan birds, with specially designed open-back jeeps operated by trained local drivers and guides. The initiative aims to promote responsible ecotourism and wildlife conservation, while reducing illegal off-roading and

creating employment opportunities for local communities.

133. The National Anubhav Awards

Because the 9th National Anubhav Awards Ceremony took place at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on August 17, 2026, the National Anubhav Awards 2026 made headlines. Fifteen chosen recipients were recognized for their contributions to public administration and nation-building.

Introduced: 2015

Anubhav is the platform

The Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW) is the nodal department.

Ministry: Ministry of Pensions, Public Grievances, and Personnel

The goal is to preserve retiring government employees' institutional knowledge for improved governance while also acknowledging their significant experiences, accomplishments, and contributions.

Who is able to take part?

The Anubhav platform enables retirees and former employees of:

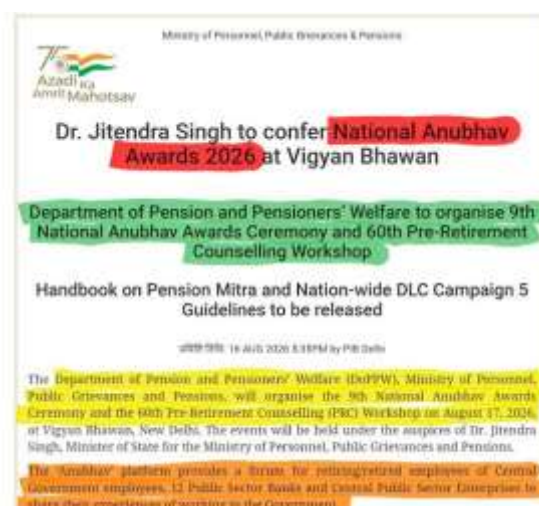
- Central Authority
- CPSEs, or Central Public Sector Enterprises
- Twelve Public Sector Banks will discuss their accomplishments and experiences while working for the government.

What makes it significant in 2026?

The 2026 recipients received recognition for their contributions in fields like:

- Seva Kendra Passport
- Simplifying or eliminating out-of-date regulations
- Technology adoption in accounting and administration
- Conserving energy
- Reforms in administration and good governance

The government also noted that over 2,000 nominations were received for the 2026 awards, the highest number to date, and that over 14,000 experiences have been shared on the Anubhav portal.



15. PERSONALITIES IN NEWS

134. Postage Stamp on Satish Gujral

Why in News?

- The Department of Posts has released a commemorative postage stamp to mark the birth centenary of Padma Vibhushan Satish Gujral.

About Satish Gujral

- Born in 1925 at Jhelum (now in Pakistan); regarded as a pioneer of modern Indian art.
- Worked as a painter, sculptor, architect, muralist, graphic designer, and writer.
- His acclaimed Partition Series was inspired by the Partition of India.
- Awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 1999, India's second-highest civilian honour.

Did You Know?

- Satish Gujral also designed the 1996 commemorative postage stamp marking the 125th anniversary of Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL).

135. Statue of Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das

In News: President Droupadi Murmu unveiled the statue of freedom fighter, social reformer and journalist Utkalmani Pandit Gopabandhu Das in New Delhi.

About Gopabandhu Das

- Popularly known as "Utkalmani" (Gem of Odisha) for his contributions to society.
- Played an active role in India's freedom movement and worked for social reform and public welfare.
- Founded the Odia newspaper The Samaja in 1919, which remains one of Odisha's leading newspapers.
- Was a noted journalist, poet, educationist and humanitarian.
- Established the Satyabadi Bana Vidyalaya to promote value-based and nationalist education.

Why is he remembered?

- Dedicated his life to education, social service, disaster relief and upliftment of the poor.

Considered one of the key architects of modern Odisha and an enduring symbol of selfless public service.

16. OBITUARY

136. Dr D. Y. Patil Passes Away at 90

In News: Former Governor of Bihar and Tripura, noted educationist and Padma Shri awardee Dr Dnyandeo Yashwantrao (D. Y.) Patil passed away in Kolhapur.

About Dr D. Y. Patil

- Born in 1935 in Ambap village, Kolhapur (Maharashtra).
- Began his career in politics, serving as Mayor of Kolhapur, MLA, and later Governor of Tripura and Bihar (also held additional charge of West Bengal).
- Left active politics to focus on education and social service.

Major Contributions

- Founded the D. Y. Patil Group, which today runs 180+ educational institutions, including universities, medical, engineering, pharmacy and management colleges.
- Established the Ramrao Adik Institute of Technology (RAIT) in 1983, the first engineering college in Navi Mumbai.
- Promoted affordable professional education, especially for students from underserved communities.
- Also contributed to the growth of healthcare infrastructure and sports, with institutions and stadiums bearing his name.

Recognition

- Awarded the Padma Shri (1991) for his contributions to education and social service.
- Widely known as "Shikshanmaharshi" for his pioneering role in expanding higher education in Maharashtra.

137. Dolly Parton

Dolly Parton is a legendary American country singer, songwriter, actress and philanthropist, widely known as the "Queen of Country Music." With a career spanning decades, she has become one of the most influential figures in popular and country music.

Her best-known songs include "Jolene," "I Will Always Love You," and "9 to 5." She has also appeared in films such as 9 to 5 and Steel Magnolias, and is closely associated with Dollywood, the popular theme park in Tennessee.



Beyond entertainment, Parton is renowned for her philanthropic work. She founded the Imagination Library, a programme that provides free books to children and has distributed more than 270 million books worldwide, promoting early childhood literacy.

Her contributions to music have earned her numerous honours. She was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1999 and the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2022. She has also received 10 Grammy Awards.

Through her achievements in music, film and philanthropy, Dolly Parton has established a lasting legacy that extends far beyond the entertainment industry.

138. Historian Sumit Sarkar Dies at 87

Renowned historian Sumit Sarkar passed away at the age of 87. Born in 1939 in Calcutta, he is best known for his influential work *Modern India: 1885–1947*, published in 1983, and his approach of studying “history from below.” He taught history at the University of Delhi from 1974 to 2004 and also taught at the Universities of Calcutta and Burdwan.



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- IBPS - RRB PO & Clerk
- IBPS - Specialist Officer
- SBI - PO & Clerk
- RBI - Officer & Assistant
- NABARD - Grade A & B
- SEBI - Grade A Officer

Insurance Exams

- LIC AAO & Assistants
- GIC AO & Assistants

State Govt. Exams

- Food & CS Inspectors
- Co-operative Inspectors
- High Court Clerks
- Taxation Inspectors
- Police SI & Constables
- PUDA, GLADA & PSPCL
- Tehsil Welfare Officer etc.
- Revenue Patwari
- Naib Tehsildar
- Municipal Corporation
- Agricultural Devt. Officer
- Labour Inspector
- Section Officer

Central Govt. Exams

- SSC - CGL
- SSC - CHSL for +2
- Intelligence Bureau
- EPF Clerk
- EPF Asstt. Commissioner
- FCI
- PSUs & Railway
- Delhi Police SI/ASI
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