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PM Surya Sarovar Yojana

August 2026



NATIONAL

EXPANSION OF KHELO INDIA SCHEME

The **Union Cabinet** has approved the expanded ‘**Khelo India Scheme**’ and the enhanced ‘Assistance to National Sports Federations’ (ANSF) with a combined financial outlay of **₹36,441 crore** from **FY27 to FY31**.

For the first time, a **comprehensive athlete development pathway** has been established to support sportspersons. The government has introduced two new initiatives: ‘Khelo India Feeder Schools’ (KIFS) and ‘Khelo India Utkrishta Vidyalayas’ (KIUV), to **integrate sports with mainstream education** and **nurture talented children**.

The **strengthened ANSF scheme** will support Indian athletes and teams by providing funding for **coaching, sports science, modern equipment, international exposure, coaching camps, engagement of foreign experts, and participation in major international competitions**.

UNION CABINET APPROVES SAMUDRA MANTHAN

The Union Cabinet has approved ‘**Samudra Manthan**’, the **National Offshore Exploration Scheme**, a **Central Sector Scheme** under the **Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MoPNG)**.

The scheme has an approved outlay of **₹84,084 crore** and will be implemented **until the FY31**. It is expected to catalyse reserve accretion of **over 600 Million Metric Tons of Oil Equivalent (MMTOE)**.

VIZHINJAM PORT APPROVED FOR CARGO OPERATIONS

The **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)** has granted **final approval** to the **Vizhinjam International Seaport** to commence **Export-Import (EXIM) cargo operations**, effective from **August 18, 2026**.

Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC):

Chairperson – Vivek Chaturvedi

Established in – 1964

Secretariat – New Delhi

APPROVAL FOR ANHYDROUS AMMONIA FERTILIZER USE

The **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW)** has permitted the manufacture and agricultural use of **Anhydrous Ammonia fertilizer** for a period of **3 years**.

The authorisation is granted under **Clause 20A** of the ‘**Fertiliser (Inorganic, Organic or Mixed) (Control) Order, 1985**’. The fertilizer must contain a minimum **nitrogen content of 82%**, with the objective of **reducing the dependence of India on imported urea**.

PM SURYA SAROVAR YOJANA

The Union Cabinet has approved the **PM Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY)** with a financial outlay of **₹5,070 crore** to develop **Floating Solar Photovoltaic (FSPV)** projects integrated with **Energy Storage Systems (ESS)**. The scheme aims to develop **5,000 MW of FSPV capacity** with co-located ESS having a **minimum 2-hour storage capacity** of **10,000 MWh**.

Projects under the scheme will be sanctioned between **FY27 and FY31**, with financial support provided until **FY33**. This initiative aligns with the assessment by the **National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE)** which identified a **floating solar potential of 102.18 GWp** across reservoirs and inland water bodies in India.

The government will provide **Central Financial Assistance (CFA)** of **₹1 crore per MW** upon commissioning, along with up to **₹50 lakh per project** for conducting feasibility studies.

PM-KISAN SCHEME EXTENDED

The **Union Cabinet**, chaired by PM Narendra Modi, has approved the continuation of the **PM Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)** scheme for the period from **FY27 to FY31**. The government has sanctioned a financial outlay of **₹3.15 lakh crore** for this period.

Under the scheme, eligible farmer families receive **income support** through the **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** system. The extension aims to **enhance the investment capacity of farmers**, improve **agricultural productivity**, mitigate agricultural risks, and **strengthen the rural economy**.

PM LAUNCHES NASHA MUKT YUVA CAMPAIGN

PM Narendra Modi has launched the ‘**Nasha Mukta Yuva for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan**’, a **100-week nationwide campaign** to **eradicate substance abuse among the youth**.

The initiative includes a ‘**Jan Bhagidari**’ (**people participation**) drive to engage the community. To raise awareness, the campaign will conduct **weekly activities every Sunday**, such as **sports, meditation, and cultural events**.

20TH FOUNDATION DAY

The **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)** celebrated its **20th Foundation Day** at Prithvi Bhawan in **New Delhi**, presided over by Dr. N Kalaiselvi, MoES Secretary. The **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** established **13 Centres of Excellence (CoEs)** for **specialized meteorological research** and **upgraded the Thiruvananthapuram Cyclone Warning Centre** into an **Area Cyclone Warning Centre (ACWC)**.

It also launched ‘**IMD NOVA**’ for **thunderstorm nowcast monitoring** and signed an **MoU** with the **Indian Council of Agricultural Research-National Institute of Veterinary Epidemiology and Disease Informatics (ICAR-NIVEDI)** to establish the ‘**Weather Driven Animal Disease Risk Forecasting Unit (WAADRU)**’ for **district-level livestock disease forecasting**.

The **National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF)** introduced the ‘**WINGS**’ mobile application for **numerical weather prediction and real-time analysis**, launched the **National Doppler Weather Radar Reflectivity Mosaic** to **monitor severe weather**, and upgraded its **Open Data Portal**.

The **National Centre for Seismology (NCS)** released the ‘**Compendium of Monthly Seismological Bulletins**’ for 2023 and 2024, and the ‘**Strong Motion Atlas of India (2010-2020)**’ for **earthquake engineering and hazard assessment**.

The **Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology (CMLRE)** released **taxonomic manuals** covering **100 Tintinnid ciliate species** and **225 seamount-associated species**, and issued **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)** for the **collection, preservation, and analysis of marine biological samples**.

NEW RE-ENTRY GUIDELINES

The **Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe)** has released guidelines titled “**Norms, Guidelines and Procedures for Implementation of Indian Space Policy-2023** in respect of **Authorisation for Undertaking Planned Re-entry of Space Objects**”.

Under these guidelines, **entities of India** must **obtain approval from IN-SPACe** for the **planned re-entry of space objects**. **Foreign entities** intending to perform re-entry must **apply through an entity incorporated in India**. Entities are required to maintain a **casualty risk of less than 1 in 10,000** and must **submit trajectory and risk assessments** for approval.

GLAW LAKE AS RAMSAR SITE

Union Minister Bhupender Yadav has announced **Glaw Lake** as the **first Ramsar Site in Arunachal Pradesh**. The lake is situated in the **Lohit district** of Arunachal Pradesh, within the **Kamlang Tiger Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary** in the **Eastern Himalayas**.

With this addition, the **total number of Ramsar sites in India has reached 101**, maintaining its position as the country with the **highest number of Ramsar wetlands in Asia**.

COE FOR HANDLOOM TECHNOLOGY

Union Minister Giriraj Singh has inaugurated the **Centre of Excellence for Handloom Technology (CoE-HT)** at the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi**.

During the event, **5 flagship initiatives** were launched: ‘**Handloom 4.0 Mobile App**’, ‘**Handloom e-Vidya**’, ‘**HandloomX**’, ‘**Kalagriha Handloom Studio**’ (GenZ Design Studio), and ‘**Threads of Valour**’.

ROAD SURVEY INITIATIVE BY CSIR-CRRI

The **CSIR-Central Road Research Institute (CSIR-CRRI)** has flagged off an **indigenous Network Survey Vehicle (NSV)** to **conduct a comprehensive road condition survey** across the **Delhi-NCR region**.

This event marks the commencement of field surveys under the project titled “**Implementation of the Standard Framework for Paving and Greening of Urban Roads in Delhi NCR**.”

CCI CELEBRATES 56TH FOUNDATION DAY

Union Minister Giriraj Singh has presided over the **56th Foundation Day** celebration of the **Cotton Corporation of India (CCI)** in **Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, Maharashtra**.

During the event, the ‘**Kapas Darshan Bulletin**’ was launched, and modern farm equipment was distributed. The minister also announced the implementation roadmap for the **₹5,659-crore ‘Cotton Productivity Mission-Kapas Kanti’**. Additionally, **4 MoUs** were signed during the proceedings.

COMMEMORATIVE STAMP FOR SATISH GUJRAL

Union Minister **Jyotiraditya M Scindia** has released a **commemorative postage stamp worth ₹5** at Bikaner House, New Delhi, to mark the **birth centenary of Satish Gujral**.

The stamp, issued by the **Department of Posts (DoP)**, honours his **outstanding contributions to Indian art, architecture, and culture**. The stamp was designed by **Anuj Kumar**, based on a proposal by **Raseel Gujral Ansal**. It is to be noted that **Satish Gujral** was a recipient of the **Padma Vibhushan**, awarded in **1999**.

PM MODI INAUGURATES DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

PM Narendra Modi has visited **Andhra Pradesh** and **Karnataka** to inaugurate and lay the foundation stones for various **development projects**.

In **Andhra Pradesh**, he inaugurated and laid the foundation stones for projects worth over **₹17,900 crore**. This includes the inauguration of the **Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport** at **Bhogapuram** in the **Vizianagaram district**, developed at a cost of over **₹5,640 crore** by **GMR Visakhapatnam International Airport Ltd (GVIAL)**.

In **Karnataka**, he inaugurated the **Swami Vivekananda Cultural Youth Centre**, also known as **Viveka Smaraka**, in **Mysuru** to commemorate **Swami Vivekananda’s historic visit** to the city in **1892**.

PITHORA PAINTING GETS GI TAG

The **Geographical Indications Registry (GIR)**, under the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** of the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I)**, has granted the **Geographical Indication (GI) tag** to the **centuries-old Pithora Painting** tradition of **Gujarat**.

These paintings are traditionally created by **Lakharas** on the inner walls and verandahs of **tribal homes**.

GOBARDHAN SCHEME

The **Union Cabinet** has approved ‘**GOBARdhan**’, the **National Circular Bioenergy Scheme**, with a total financial outlay of **₹23,731 crore**. The scheme will be implemented from **FY27 to FY36** to establish **Compressed Biogas (CBG)** as a key component of **India’s energy mix**.

The scheme introduces a **CBG Offtake Assurance framework** with **mandatory obligations** for **City Gas Distribution entities** at **3% in FY27, 4% in FY28**, and **5% from FY29 onwards** in the Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and Piped Natural Gas (PNG) segments. An **administered CBG price** of **₹2,110 per Metric Million British Thermal Unit (MMBTU)** has been introduced for a **10-year period**.

Eligible **greenfield CBG projects** will receive **capital assistance of up to ₹2 crore per ton per day (TPD)** of installed capacity. The scheme also supports **pipeline infrastructure**, a **Credit Guarantee mechanism** for **MSME-based projects**, and a ‘**CBG Ecosystem Challenge Fund**’ to **accelerate district-level implementation**.

HERITAGE SITES AS PROTECTED

The administration of the **Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh**, with the approval of **Lt Gov Vinai Kumar Saxena**, has notified **23 heritage sites** as **Protected Monuments**. The designated monuments are distributed across the regions of **Leh, Sham, Nubra, Zaskar, and Kargil**.

GUWAHATI-TEZPUR HIGHWAY CORRIDOR
APPROVED

The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)** has approved the development of the **135.8 km, 4-lane access-controlled Guwahati-Tezpur Corridor** of **NH-15** in **Assam**.

The project will be developed on a **Built-Operate-Transfer (BOT) Toll Mode** at a total capital cost of **₹8,970.2 crore** under the **National Highways (Original) (NH(O))** scheme.

NUCLEAR TRAINING PROGRAMME

IIT Hyderabad, in collaboration with **Crimson Energy Experts India Pvt Ltd (CEEPL)**, has launched ‘**ANUGYAN**’ - **Nuclear Technology Orientation Programme (NTOPI)**. This is **India’s first industry-academia programme in nuclear technology**.

The **3-month residential programme** aims to develop **skilled nuclear professionals** to support India’s goal of expanding its **nuclear power capacity** from **8.8 GW** to **100 GW by 2047**.

SC EXTENDS VEHICLE INSURANCE PERIOD

The **Supreme Court of India (SCI)** bench, comprising **Justice Sanjay Karol** and **Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra**, has **extended the mandatory third-party insurance period** for newly purchased vehicles by **one year** to strengthen compliance with the **Motor Vehicles Act (MVA), 1988**.

Under the **revised mandate**, new cars are now required to have **4 years** of **third-party insurance coverage**, while two-wheelers are mandated to have **6 years** of coverage.

PRAKRITI GYAN DHAM INAUGURATED

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh has dedicated the **first Eco-Educational Hub of India, ‘Prakriti Gyan Dham’**, to the nation. Located at the **Maharishi Parashar Bioresource Centre (MPBC), Banthra Campus** in **Lucknow**, the hub was developed by the **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Botanical Research Institute (CSIR-NBRI)**.

The facility serves as a **living repository of the botanical diversity** of the country, aiming to promote **hands-on experiential learning, biodiversity conservation, and public outreach**.

WILDLIFE SAFARI IN LADAKH

The **Government of India (GoI)** is launching its **first-ever high-altitude wildlife safari** in the Union Territory of **Ladakh**. This initiative aims to **promote sustainable eco-tourism, curb illegal off-roading, and safeguard the rare wildlife** of the region, including the **snow leopard**.

The safari will cover multiple wildlife-rich sanctuary landscapes, specifically including the **Hemis National Park** (the **largest national park in South Asia**), the **Changthang Wildlife Sanctuary**, and the **Karakoram Wildlife Sanctuary**.

ASIATIC LION POPULATION

According to the data released by the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)**, the **Asiatic lion population** in India has grown by **over 70%** in the **last decade**. The population of the **Asiatic lion (Panthera leo persica)** has increased from **523 in 2015** to **891 in 2025**.

It is to be noted that **India is the exclusive habitat** for the wild Asiatic lion, which is **localized within the Gir National Park** and its surrounding landscape across **11 districts of Gujarat**. **Project Lion**, launched in **2020** to ensure the **long-term conservation of the species**, has led to an **expansion of the lion range** from **30,000 sq km** in 2020 to **nearly 35,000 sq km**.

PM VIKSIT BHARAT ROJGAR YOJANA

The **PM Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojana (PM-VBRY)** has completed **one year** of implementation, during which more than **72 lakh first-time employees** have joined the **formal workforce**. The scheme is implemented by the **Ministry of Labour & Employment (MoL&E)** through the **Employees’ Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)**.

The scheme, scheduled to run from **August 2025 to July 2027**, has a total financial outlay of **₹99,446 crore**. It consists of two components: an **employee-focused part** that provides **financial assistance** to first-time formal workforce entrants, and an **employer-focused part** that offers **incentives** to establishments for generating additional employment.

Employee’s Provident Fund Organization (EPFO):
CEO – Ramesh Krishnamurthi
Headquarters – New Delhi
Established in – 1952

NEW PORTS FOR E-VISAS

The central government has notified **11 additional international ports** (9 land ports and 2 airports) to allow entry for **e-Visa holders**.

With this, the **total number of designated e-Visa entry ports** in India has increased to **88**, which includes **37 airports, 38 seaports, and 13 land ports**. It is to be noted that India processes **95% of e-Visa applications** in **less than 72 hours**.

SCHEME FOR MOBILE FOOD TESTING LABS

The **National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL)**, a constituent board of the **Quality Council of India (QCI)**, has launched the **first Accreditation Scheme for Mobile Food Testing Laboratories** in India under the **Integrated Assessment Programme**.

The scheme was launched during the ‘**Gunvatta Samanvaya – A Multilateral MoU Exchange Ceremony**’ held in **New Delhi**. Developed by NABL, it establishes a framework for **mobile food testing laboratories** to deliver reliable, quality-assured, and internationally benchmarked testing services closer to communities.

GLOBAL SOUTH FILM FESTIVAL

India is set to host the **inaugural Global South Film Festival** in **2027** to **promote international cooperation in the entertainment sector**. **Brazil, Russia, and Vietnam** will serve as the key partner countries for the festival.

The announcement was made on the sidelines of the **Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) World Audio Visual & Entertainment Summit (WAVES) Bazaar** in **Mumbai**.

VOC PORT ACHIEVES NEW MILESTONE

The **VO Chidambaranar (VOC) Port Authority** in **Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu**, has become the **first major port in India** to achieve ‘**Scope-2 emission-free**’ status. The status was conferred by global certification body **Bureau Veritas**.

The port has also secured the **ISO 50001:2018 certification** for its **Energy Management System**, awarded by the **Indian Register Quality Systems (IRQS)**.

HAR GHAR TIRANGA YATRA FLAGGED OFF

Union Minister Amit Shah has flagged off the ‘**Har Ghar Tiranga Yatra**’ campaign at Murugaa Theatre Signal in **Puducherry**. The special focus of the campaign this year is the **commemoration of 150 years of “Vande Mataram”**.

It is to be noted that the ‘**Har Ghar Tiranga initiative**’ was **launched by PM Narendra Modi** in **2022** under ‘**Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav**’. The campaign encourages citizens to celebrate the Tricolour as a symbol of national unity, sovereignty, and identity.

27 PLACES IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH STANDARDISED

The **central government** has officially standardized the names of **27 prominent geographical locations and features** in **Arunachal Pradesh** on official **Survey of India (Sol)** maps.

The 27 standardized features include **21 land areas and settlements, 4 strategic mountain passes**, 1 lake named **Sambho Sarovar**, and 1 war memorial named **Sher-e-Thapa Memorial**.

GRAMIN GYAN SETU APP LAUNCHED

Union Minister Amit Shah has launched the ‘**Gramin Gyan Setu**’, an mobile application, via video conferencing to **interconnect libraries** across the **Gandhinagar constituency** in **Gujarat**.

The objective of the initiative is to **establish a library in every village** to encourage reading habits among children.

10TH FOUNDATION DAY OF GEM

Union Minister Piyush Goyal has felicitated top buyers and leading sellers during the **10th foundation day** celebration of the **Government e Marketplace (GeM)** held at **Bharat Mandapam** in New Delhi.

During the event, GeM launched a nationwide **5-digit short code helpdesk number '14550'** to improve its support services. A customized ‘**My Stamp**’ and a **commemorative film** showcasing the 10-year journey of GeM were also launched.

GeM (Government e-Marketplace):

CEO – Mihir Kumar

Established in – 2016

TIMELINES FOR AMBULANCES

The **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** has mandated **specific response timelines and financial penalties** for **ambulances deployed on national highways**.

Ambulances must reach accident sites **within 10 minutes** if the crash occurs within a **10 km radius**, failing which an **automated penalty** of **₹10,000** will be imposed. They are also required to transport victims to the nearest hospital **within 1 hour**, with a fine of **₹10,000** for failing to meet the deadline.

National Highways Authority of India (NHAI):

Chairman – Santosh Kumar Yadav

Headquarters – New Delhi

Established in – 1988

VIHAAN SOC BY AHEESA DIGITAL

Chennai-based Aheesa Digital Innovations, a **fabless semiconductor startup**, has achieved first-pass silicon success with ‘**VIHAAN**’, the **first domestically designed broadband networking System-on-Chip (SoC)** in India.

The development of ‘VIHAAN’ is supported under the **Design Linked Incentive (DLI) scheme** of the central government. It is built using the **indigenous 64-bit VEGA microprocessor** developed by the **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)**, offering a **royalty-free RISC-V architecture**.

Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC):

Director General – Magesh Ethirajan

Established in – 1988

FIRST DESERT NIGHT SAFARI

The **Central Zoo Authority (CZA)** has approved the proposal to establish **Asia’s first desert zoological park and desert-themed night safari** at **Juna Deesa** in the **Banaskantha district of Gujarat**.

The project, with an estimated budget of **₹542.14 crore**, spans across **103 hectares** of contiguous government land. It will be developed as a **100% eco-friendly space** utilizing **solar energy, rainwater harvesting, and advanced sewage treatment systems**.

RECOGNITION FOR PARICHHA WEIR

The **140-year-old ‘Parichha Weir’** in **Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh**, has been designated as a **World Heritage Irrigation Structure (WHIS)** by the **International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID)**.

It is to be noted that the weir was originally proposed in **1855** by **Captain Strachey** to serve the **Bundelkhand region**.

CBDC-BASED DBT LAUNCHED

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi has launched a **Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)-based Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) pilot initiative** under the **PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY)** in the Union Territories (UTs) of **Chandigarh** and **Dadra & Nagar Haveli**.

Under the new mechanism, **food subsidies** will be transferred directly into the **Digital Rupee wallets** of beneficiaries instead of conventional bank accounts.

DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN RAJASTHAN

Union Minister Amit Shah has inaugurated and laid foundation stones for **944 development projects** worth **₹5,755 crore** across **15 districts** of **Rajasthan**.

On the occasion of the **8th death anniversary** of former PM **Atal Bihari Vajpayee**, he unveiled a **21-foot-tall statue** of Vajpayee in **Chittorgarh district** installed at a cost of over **₹1.5 crore**.

PM MODI INAUGURATES PARAM PRAGYA

PM Narendra Modi has inaugurated ‘**Param Pragya**’, an **AI-enabled high-performance supercomputing facility** at the **Sonipat (Haryana)** campus of the **IIT Delhi**. The inauguration took place during the **57th convocation** of IIT Delhi, where he attended as the Chief Guest.

PM E-DRIVE SCHEME AMENDED

The **Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI)** has amended the **Prime Minister’s Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement (PM E-DRIVE) Scheme**. Under the amendment, the incentive for **electric two-wheelers (e-2Ws)** has been reduced to **₹2,500 per kilowatt-hour (kWh)** (capped at **₹5,000 per vehicle**) for the period from **April 2025 to March 2028**.

Notified in **2024**, the PM E-DRIVE Scheme was initially launched for a 2-year period, with its implementation subsequently extended up to **March 31, 2028**. The scheme has a total financial outlay of **₹11,900 crore**.

FIRST GUIDE TO GRASSLANDS

India has launched its inaugural “**Guide to Grasslands and Other Open Natural Ecosystems (ONEs) of India**” at the **17th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP17)** to the **United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)** in **Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia**.

IIHT SUTRA 2026

Union Minister Giriraj Singh has inaugurated ‘**IIHT SUTRA 2026**’, the **first national conclave** of the **Indian Institutes of Handloom Technology (IIHTs)**, at the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre (DAIC) in **New Delhi**.

The conclave was organised by the **Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms)** under the **Ministry of Textiles (MoT)** under the theme “**IIHTs: Weaving the Future of the Indian Handloom Sector – Educate. Innovate**”. The Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms) also organised a special gathering titled ‘**Srijan: Voices from the Loom**’ to **celebrate women in the handloom sector**.

During the event, **3 strategic MoUs** were signed with **Grasim Industries Ltd, Northern India Textile Research Association (NITRA), and Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Sambalpur**. The MoT released a publication titled “**Handloom Change Makers**”, highlighting the achievements of prominent IIHT alumni, and launched a film titled “**Weaving India’s Handloom Future**”.

MEITY APPROVES PROPOSALS UNDER ECMS

The **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** has approved **31 new manufacturing proposals** worth **₹7,877 crore** under the **fifth tranche** of the **Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS)**.

This approval brings the cumulative total of approved applications to **106 projects** across **15 states**. The total committed investments under ECMS have reached **₹69,548 crore** (as of **August 2026**), exceeding the original target of **₹59,350 crore**.

SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS FOR AGRICULTURE STUDENTS

Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has released scholarship and fellowship funds for agriculture students through the **National Scholarship Portal (NSP)** at the **Indian Council of Agricultural Research – Indian Agricultural Research Institute (ICAR-IARI), Pusa, New Delhi**.

Under the initiative, **₹21.35 crore** was disbursed via **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** directly to the bank accounts of **over 6,000 students**.

RSVC AMRIT PLATFORM

Prof. Ajay Kumar Sood, the **Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India**, has launched the ‘**RSVC AMRIT**’ (**Accelerated Medium for Rural Innovations and Technologies**) platform.

The platform has been developed by the **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)** in collaboration with the **Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (OPSA)**. It is designed to serve as a digital backbone to **foster rural innovations and bridge the gap between advanced scientific innovations and grassroots rural needs**.

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD):

Chairman – Shaji KV

Headquarters – Mumbai

Established in – 1982

AGREEMENT SIGNED FOR BHARATNET

The **Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN)** under the **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** has signed an agreement with the **Chhattisgarh government, Chhattisgarh State BharatNet Infrastructure Ltd (CSBIL), BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd), and Chhattisgarh Infotech Promotion Society (CHIPS)** to implement the “**Amended BharatNet Program**” in **Chhattisgarh**.

A financial support of **₹3,942 crore** has been approved for the rollout of the program in the state.

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL):

CEO – A Robert J Ravi

Headquarters – New Delhi

Established in – 2000

AMIT SHAH INAUGURATES NUCFDC PREMISES

Union Minister Amit Shah has inaugurated the new premises of the **National Urban Cooperative Finance and Development Corporation (NUCFDC)** at **Sharada Sadan in Fort, Mumbai**, during the **“Sahkar Nav-Kranti”** programme.

During the event, he released the book **“Operational Risk Management – A Practical Guide to Urban Co-operative Banks”**, authored by **former RBI Deputy General Manager (DGM) GP Mistry**.

Additionally, NUCFDC has launched **“Bank in a Box”**, an integrated technology platform designed to provide **Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs)** with access to multiple banking and technology services. An MoU was also exchanged between NUCFDC and the **National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU)**.

GE AEROSPACE APPROVAL

Hyderabad-based **Mishra Dhatu Nigam Ltd (MIDHANI)** has become the **first company in India** to secure the **‘Independent and International Metallic Material Laboratory (S400)’** approval from **GE Aerospace**, an American aerospace corporation.

The **S400 certification** authorizes the company to perform a comprehensive range of **chemical, mechanical, and metallurgical testing** on high-performance metallic materials and aerospace alloys.

BRICS MEETINGS

The **BRICS Youth Council Meeting** and **BRICS Youth Summit 2026** were held in **Gandhinagar, Gujarat**. The events were organised by the **Department of Youth Affairs** under the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports**.

The **Ministry of Tourism** also hosted the **second BRICS 2026 Tourism Working Group (TWG) meeting** in **Jaipur, Rajasthan**, chaired by **Bhuvnesh Kumar**, the Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism.

LEGAL PROTECTION FOR VANDE MATARAM

President Droupadi Murmu has granted assent to the **Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026**, which amends **Section 3** of the **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971**.

The amendment **criminalises the intentional disruption or prevention of the singing** of the **national song, “Vande Mataram”**. It is to be noted that this legislation extends the **same legal protection** to the national song, “Vande Mataram”, as is currently afforded to the **national anthem, “Jana Gana Mana”**.

JOINT WORKING GROUP MEETING

The **2nd Joint Working Group (JWG) meeting** between **India and Malaysia** on cooperation in the field of **Public Administration and Governance Reforms** was held in **New Delhi**.

During the JWG meeting, both countries reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen bilateral **cooperation in public administration, governance reforms, capacity building, and the exchange of best practices**.

DIABETES DIGITAL PORTAL

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh has virtually inaugurated the **Research Society for the Study of Diabetes in India (RSSDI) Diabetes Rural Outreach Digital Portal** and launched the **Video Information and Health Education for Awareness and Self-Management (VISHWAS) Diabetes Awareness Video Library**.

The digital portal is designed by **RSSDI** to support its **rural outreach initiative**, under which its members **adopt villages** to improve **diabetes diagnosis, follow-up care, and early prevention**. The **VISHWAS video library** will serve as a dedicated digital repository to **enhance health literacy and self-management** directly among diabetes patients and local caregivers.

CYBER KUSHTI 2026

The **National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT)**, under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)**, has launched a **national-level hackathon** named **“Cyber Kushti 2026”**. The hackathon focuses on the fields of **cybersecurity and AI**.

The initiative was introduced during the **3rd National Conference on Cyber Security, Digital Forensics and Intelligence (NCCDFI 2026)** held at the **Dr. Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi**.

PROGRESS OF JAL JEEVAN MISSION

The **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)**, launched by **PM Narendra Modi in 2019** under the **Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS)**, has completed seven years of implementation. The **Union Cabinet** has **extended the implementation deadline** for the mission to **December 2028**.

The primary objective of the JJM is to provide a **Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC)** to **every rural household**, ensuring a supply of **55 litres** of water per person per day. It is to be noted that **rural tap-water coverage** under the mission has increased to over **15.91 crore households**, and more than 2 lakh villages have been officially declared **‘Har Ghar Jal’ certified**.

INDIA-NEPAL JWG MEETING

The **14th meeting** of the **India-Nepal Joint Working Group (JWG)** was held in **Dehradun, Uttarakhand**. During the meeting, delegations from both countries reviewed bilateral cooperation concerning **border management and security**.

INDIA HOSTS BRICS MEETINGS

The **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)** has organised the **8th meeting of the BRICS Working Group on Ocean Polar Science and Technology (OPST)** in **Goa**, hosted by the **National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR)**.

India also hosted the **13th BRICS Education Ministers’ Meeting** and the **3rd BRICS Senior Officials’ Meeting (SOM)** in **Bhubaneswar, Odisha**, chaired by **Union Minister Pralhad Joshi** of the **Ministry of Education (MoE)**. The session concluded with the adoption of the **13th BRICS Education Ministers’ Declaration**, which outlines **5 priority areas** under the BRICS Education Track.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS AT PARADIP PORT

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal has inaugurated **7 major infrastructure projects** at the **Paradip Port Authority (PPA)** in **Odisha**, with a total outlay of **₹427.8 crore**. The projects are intended to **strengthen the capacity and operational efficiency** of the port.

The **PPA** has attained an **18.5-metre deep-draft capability**, enabling the **handling of larger cargo vessels**. Furthermore, concession agreements for **3 mechanisation projects** were signed with a cumulative investment of **₹1,580.36 crore**. The port also reached an environmental milestone by completing its **one-millionth tree plantation**.

INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS

PM Narendra Modi addressed the nation from the Red Fort on the **80th Independence Day** of India, marking his **13th consecutive address**.

It is to be noted that this is the second-highest after the **17 consecutive speeches of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru**. The celebration featured two themes: the **150 years of the national song “Vande Mataram”** and **“Yuva Shakti-Leading the Journey to Viksit Bharat@ 2047”**.

The **Indian Army (IA)** served as the **coordinating service** for the event. The Guard of Honour comprised 25 personnel each from the IA, Indian Air Force (IAF), and Delhi Police. **Captain Sonia Singh Chauhan** of the IA assisted the PM in hoisting the national flag, followed by the **first-ever performance of “Vande Mataram”** at the Red Fort by the Army band.

PM Modi unveiled **“Shakti Ki Saptadhara”**, a **seven-pronged strategy** focusing on manufacturing, agriculture, technology, infrastructure, defence, the green and blue economy, and soft power.

He highlighted that **1 crore young Indians** will be trained in **AI skills** over the next year and announced a target of **6 crore “Lakhpati Didis”**. India also aims to reach **100 Giga-Watt (GW)** of **nuclear power capacity** by **2047**, with **5 new nuclear reactors** starting within the current decade.

A total of **1,057 personnel** were awarded **Gallantry and Service Medals**, including 301 Medals of Gallantry (GM) and 92 President’s Medals for Distinguished Service. President Droupadi Murmu approved **78 Gallantry Awards** for the Armed Forces and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) personnel, with **13 posthumous honours**.

ASSENT TO TAX AND PAYMENT LAWS

President Droupadi Murmu has granted **assent** to the **‘Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Act, 2026’** and a legislation amending the **‘Payment and Settlement Systems (PSS) Act, 2007’**.

The ‘**Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Act, 2026**’ replaces the ‘**Income-tax (IT) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026**’. The Act provides **exemptions from income tax** on **interest and capital gains** (arising from the sale, exchange, or transfer) to **Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs)** and the **Bank for International Settlements (BIS)** for their **investments in government securities**.

Bank for International Settlements (BIS):
General Manager – Pablo Hernandez de Cos
Headquarters – Basel, Switzerland
Established in – 1930

INCENTIVE SCHEME FOR PNG CONNECTIONS

The central government has approved the “**Incentive Scheme for Promotion of Domestic Piped Natural Gas (PNG) Connections**”, effective from **September 1, 2026**. The scheme aims to **expand household PNG connections** and provide clean and affordable cooking fuel.

Under the incentive mechanism, eligible **City Gas Distribution (CGD) entities** will receive an additional **200 Standard Cubic Metres (SCM)** of lower-priced domestically produced **Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM) gas** for every new billed connection.

The incentive will be provided above a **threshold level** set for each **Geographical Area (GA)** and implemented in **two tranches over a period of 6 months**. It is to be noted that India currently has **1.74 crore** domestic PNG connections.

JAPAN MINISTER VISITS INDIA

Shinjiro Koizumi, the **Defence Minister of Japan**, has conducted his **inaugural visit** to **India** to **strengthen bilateral defence ties and maritime security cooperation**. In New Delhi, he inspected a ceremonial Guard of Honour at the **Manekshaw Centre** in the presence of **Union Minister Rajnath Singh**.

During the visit to Mumbai, the minister inspected a Guard of Honour at the **Western Naval Command (WNC)** and laid a wreath at the **Gaurav Stambh** at the **Naval Dockyard**. He also visited the **Indian Naval Ship (INS) Chennai**, which is an **indigenous stealth destroyer**.

YASHODA AI PROGRAMME

The **National Commission for Women (NCW)** has organised the “**Yashoda AI – Women’s Path to AI Empowerment**” programme at **Lovely Professional University (LPU) in Jalandhar, Punjab**.

The initiative aims to **promote AI literacy, digital empowerment, and cyber safety** to ensure a secure digital environment.

GARBHINI MITRA COURSE

The **All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA)**, New Delhi, an autonomous premier institution under the **Ministry of Ayush**, has introduced the ‘**Garbhini Mitra Course**’ for the **2026–2027 academic session**.

The initiative is a **structured healthcare skill-development programme** designed to train personnel to provide health education, lifestyle guidance, and community-level support to **women during pregnancy and the postnatal period**.

NON-GMO POPCORN MAIZE HYBRID LAUNCHED

Vice President CP Radhakrishnan has launched the **first non-Genetically Modified Organism (non-GMO), high-expansion popcorn maize hybrid seed** of India at **Musunuru in Eluru district of Andhra Pradesh**.

PERMANENT HIGH COURT BENCH

The **Union Cabinet** has approved the establishment of a **permanent bench** of the **High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh** in the **Union Territory of Ladakh**. The initiative aims to **enhance access to justice** for people residing in the remote regions of the UT.

SOIL TEXTURE MAP OF INDIA

The **National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning (NBSS&LUP)** has launched the first ‘**Soil Texture Map**’ of India during its **50th Foundation Day** in **Nagpur, Maharashtra**.

It is to be noted that **soil texture** refers to the **relative proportion of sand, silt, and clay** in the soil, which determines critical properties including **water-holding capacity, drainage, aeration, and crop suitability**.

PNGRB AUTHORISES NEW LPG PIPELINES

The **Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB)** has authorized the development of **1,800 km** of new **Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) pipeline infrastructure**, with an estimated capital investment of **₹7,000 crore**.

The **3 authorized LPG pipeline projects** will be developed by **GAIL (India) Ltd** across **5 states: Telangana, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Karnataka**. It is to be noted that this development will expand the PNGRB-approved common-carrier LPG pipeline network from **7,700 km to 9,500 km**.

Gas Authority of India (GAIL):

CMD – Deepak Gupta

Headquarters – New Delhi

Established in – 1984

PRIVATISATION OF AIRPORTS

The **Public Private Partnership Appraisal Committee (PPPAC)**, chaired by **Anuradha Thakur**, Secretary of the **Department of Economic Affairs (DEA)**, has approved the **third round of privatization** of **11 airports** across **5 airport bundles**.

The total investment by the private concessionaires to take over the operations of these airports is estimated at **₹8,622 crore**. Under the **PPP model**, these airports will be leased for a concession period of **50 years**. The private concessionaires are required to retain **60% of the employees** of the **Airports Authority of India (AAI)** for a maximum period of **3 years**.

Airports Authority of India (AAI):

Chairman – Vipin Kumar

Headquarters – New Delhi

Established in – 1995

CCEA APPROVES INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)** has approved key infrastructure projects valued at **₹13,041 crore**.

The approved initiatives include **four multi-tracking railway projects** with an estimated cost of **₹9,450 crore**. Additionally, the CCEA has approved the **four-laning of National Highway-22 (NH-22) in Bihar** at an estimated cost of **₹3,590.73 crore**.

GENESIS EIR 3.0

The **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)**, through the **MeitY Startup Hub (MSH)**, has launched the **third cohort** of the **Gen-Next Support for Innovative Startups (GENESIS) Entrepreneur-in-Residence (EIR)** programme.

The **GENESIS EIR 3.0** was officially launched at the **GENESIS NextGen Startup Summit (Coimbatore Edition)** held at **Rathinam Global University in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu**. The programme is a national initiative designed to **support aspiring entrepreneurs, innovators, researchers, students, and early-stage startup founders**.

It is a component of the broader **GENESIS scheme**, which is a flagship initiative of the MSH with a total budget outlay of **₹490 crore**. Under the EIR component of the GENESIS scheme, selected innovators will receive a **maximum financial assistance** of **₹10 lakh** through participating GENESIS incubators.

INDIA-KUWAIT DEFENCE MEETING

The **inaugural meeting** of the **India-Kuwait Joint Defence Committee (JDC)** was held in **New Delhi**.

During the meeting, both nations agreed to strengthen **bilateral defence cooperation** across various sectors, including **training, military exercises, military medicine, staff talks, defence industry, and Research & Development (R&D)**.

IIMA HOSTS HEALTHCARE SUMMIT

The **3rd Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) Healthcare Summit 2026**, themed **“Advancing AI in Healthcare”**, was held in **Ahmedabad, Gujarat**. The summit, addressed by **Union Minister of State (MoS) Anupriya Patel**, focused on transitioning India from the **“Pharmacy of the World” to the “Laboratory of the World”**.

During the event, the **‘India Pharma Archives’**, a digital initiative by the **Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA)** in collaboration with the **IIMA Archives**, was launched. Additionally, a **book documenting the development journey of the COVID-19 vaccine of India** was released.

PM-SETU INDUSTRY CONCLAVE

The **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)**, in collaboration with the **Uttar Pradesh government**, has organised the **PM-SETU Industry Conclave** in **Lucknow**. The conclave was attended by **Union Minister Rajnath Singh**.

MALHAR 2026

Vice President CP Radhakrishnan has inaugurated ‘**MALHAR 2026**’ in **New Delhi**, a **youth-centric** and **monsoon-themed celebration of Indian classical music**. The cultural programme was organised by **Antar Hriday Connect** to showcase the classical music traditions of India.

It is to be noted that the celebration is centered around the ‘**Malhar Raga**’, a classical music tradition associated with the **monsoon season (Varsha Ritu)** and linked to the legendary 16th-century court musician **Tansen**.

ECONOMY

FDI POLICY RELAXATION FOR E-COMMERCE

The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**, under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I)**, has **relaxed the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy**.

This allows **foreign-funded e-commerce entities** to use an **inventory-based model** to **export goods manufactured or produced in India**. This move aims to **boost exports** by enabling **foreign-invested e-commerce platforms** to **procure, store, and export domestically manufactured products**.

GDP AND INFLATION OUTLOOK BY SBI

According to the report titled “**Prelude to Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) Meeting: August 3–5, 2026 Peace in a piecemeal manner**” released by the **Economic Research Department of the SBI**, **India’s GDP growth for Q1 FY27** is projected at **7%**.

The report stated that **inflation** stood at **3.9%** during **Q1 FY27**. It further projects that the **Consumer Price Inflation (CPI)** will remain **above 5%** during the next two quarters of **FY27**, with an **overall inflation projection of 5%** for the full financial year.

LOAN FOR INDIA URBAN REFORM

The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has approved a **\$1 billion loan** to the **Government of India (GoI)** to support the **urban reform agenda of India**. This programme is designed to support the implementation of the **Urban Challenge Fund (UCF)**.

Additionally, the **ADB** has sanctioned **\$3 million in technical assistance** to the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** for the effective implementation of the programme.

GEM CROSSES 20 TRILLION GMV

The **Government e-Marketplace (GeM)** has achieved a **cumulative Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) of ₹20 trillion**. The platform was launched in **2016**.

Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) accounted for **45.6% of the total procurement value** on the portal, which has facilitated over **3.78 crore orders**.

GeM (Government e-Marketplace):
Under – Ministry of Commerce and Industry
CEO – Mihir Kumar
Established in – 2016

GDP FORECAST BY IND-RA

According to a report by **India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra)**, the **real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth forecast of India for FY27** is upgraded to **6.8%**, from the **6.7% estimated in May 2026**.

The **Wholesale Price Index (WPI) inflation** is projected at **8.5% in FY27** from **0.4% in FY26**. The **Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation** is estimated to average **4.9% in FY27**, with **retail inflation expected to peak at 5.9% in Q3FY27** before moderating to 5% in Q4FY27.

GDP FORECAST BY SBI

According to the “**Ecowrap**” report released by the **Economic Research Department (ERD) of the State Bank of India (SBI)**, the **Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of India** is projected to rebound to **8%** in the **first quarter (Q1: April to June) of the FY27**.

TRADE DATA FOR JULY

According to data by the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI)**, the **total exports of India** (merchandise and services) grew by **13.31% year-on-year (y-o-y)** to **\$80.14 billion** in **July 2026**. The **total imports** of the nation increased by **15.83%** to **\$95.16 billion** during the same period.

The **total trade deficit** for **July 2026** was recorded at **\$15.03 billion**, which is an increase from the \$11.43 billion deficit registered in **July 2025**.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

According to the **“Monthly Bulletin of the Periodic Labour Force Survey” (PLFS)** for July 2026 released by the **National Statistics Office (NSO)** under the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)**, the **unemployment rate (UR) of India declined** to **5.1%** in **July 2026** from **5.5% recorded in June 2026**.

GDP FORECAST BY ICRA

According to a report by **ICRA Ltd**, the **real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth** of India for **Q1 FY27** is estimated at **7%**, marking a **four-quarter low** compared to the **7.8% growth in Q4 FY26**.

The agency maintained the **real GDP growth forecast** for the **full FY27** at **6.7%**, while the **nominal GDP growth** is expected to reach **13%**.

International Credit Rating Agency (ICRA):

MD & Group CEO – Ramnath Krishnan

Established in – Gurgaon, Haryana

RUPEE EXPORT RULES EASED

The **Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)**, functioning under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI)**, has **relaxed regulations** for **rupee-based export transactions** to provide Indian exporters with **greater flexibility**.

Rupee-denominated payments for exports to any country, **except Nepal and Bhutan**, will qualify for benefits under the **Foreign Trade Policy (FTP)** and count toward the fulfillment of **export obligations**. The DGFT also specified that exports financed through the **Export-Import Bank of India (EXIM Bank) or Government of India (GoI) lines of credit** may be invoiced in **INR**.

Exim Bank:

CEO – Harsha Bangari

Headquarters – Mumbai

Established in – 1982

BANKING

ADB LOAN FOR PM SURYA GHAR YOJANA

The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has approved a **loan of \$850 million** to support the **‘PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana’ (PMSG-MBY)** of the **Government of India (GoI)**. The financial assistance aims to **accelerate the adoption of rooftop solar energy** across the country.

EDELWEISS LAUNCHES REITS INDEX FUND

Edelweiss Mutual Fund (MF) has launched the **“Edelweiss Nifty REITs & Realty Index Fund,”** which is the first open-ended passive index fund in India oriented towards **Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs)**.

The fund tracks the **Nifty REITs & Realty Total Return Index (TRI)** to provide **low-cost, long-term capital appreciation** via **diversified exposure** to listed REITs and real estate companies. The Nifty REITs & Realty TRI currently allocates 60% of its portfolio to listed REITs and **40% to listed real estate companies**, with the REIT allocation expected to increase as more entities are listed.

UPI INTEGRATION WITH MALDIVES

The **Maldives Monetary Authority (MMA)** has integrated the **Maldives instant payment system, ‘Favara’**, with the **UPI of India**.

This enables **real-time fund transfers** from the **Maldives** to **UPI-enabled bank accounts in India** through mobile banking applications. It is to be noted that **UPI** is currently accepted in **9 other countries**, including **Cambodia, Singapore, the UAE, France, Mauritius, Nepal, Bhutan, Qatar, and Sri Lanka**.

OMNICARD LAUNCHES BENEFITS BASKET ON UPI

Eroute Technologies Pvt Ltd has launched **India’s first ‘Flexi Benefits Basket’** on the **UPI** via its **OmniCard platform**.

It is an **employee-controlled digital wallet** designed for **tax-efficient spending** across multiple benefit categories. The platform is built on a **RBI-licensed Prepaid Payment Instrument (PPI)** infrastructure and is accepted at **60 million UPI-enabled merchant outlets**.

VIYONA FINTECH RECEIVES BBPS APPROVAL

Hyderabad-based **VIYONA Fintech**, a **fintech infrastructure startup**, has received approval from the **Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS)**, now rebranded as **Bharat Connect**, to operate as a **Customer Operating Unit (COU)**.

This authorization enables the startup to provide **interoperable digital bill payment services** across **India**.

NCDEX LAUNCHES MF PLATFORM

The **National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange Limited (NCDEX)** has launched a **mutual fund (MF) transaction platform** named '**NCDEX Nidhi**'.

The platform aims to **increase MF penetration in rural and semi-rural India** by leveraging its network of **800 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs)** and **certified local MF distributors**. It has initially onboarded **6 Asset Management Companies (AMCs)**.

FIELD TRIALS FOR POLYMER NOTES

The **Government of India** has approved the **RBI** proposal to conduct **field trials** of **polymer banknotes** in **₹10 and ₹20 denominations**. The trial involves introducing **100 crore banknotes of each denomination**, amounting to a total value of **₹3,000 crore**.

This proposal was submitted by the RBI, upon the recommendation of its Central Board, in accordance with **Section 25 of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934**. It is to be noted that **polymer banknotes** are printed on **non-fibrous and non-porous polymer material**.

NEW CREDIT CARD BY SBI AND GOOGLE PAY

SBI Cards and Payment Services Ltd has partnered with **Google Pay** to launch a **co-branded credit card** named '**Google Pay Flex SBI Card**'. The card is designed to make **daily spending** more rewarding for users.

RBI DELAYS IMPLEMENTATION

The **RBI** has **deferred the implementation** of the **revised Basel Pillar III disclosure framework** for banks by **6 months**, setting the **new effective date for April 1, 2027**. The decision was taken in response to **implementation challenges** raised by stakeholders.

The revised framework, applicable to **Commercial Banks (CB), Small Finance Banks (SFB), and Payments Banks (PB)**, was initially scheduled for implementation by the quarter ending September 30, 2026. The **RBI** has aligned these disclosure requirements with the **Expected Credit Loss (ECL) framework** for **capital charge for credit risk** under the standardised approach, which is also effective from **April 2027**.

UPDATES ON DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY AND AIF

The **SEBI** has **extended the deadline** for **Regulated Entities (RE)** to complete the **Accessibility Audit** of digital platforms and the remediation of audit findings under its **Digital Accessibility framework** to **October 31, 2026**.

SEBI has also launched the **GARUDA framework** to **simplify and accelerate the filing process** for **Alternative Investment Fund (AIF) schemes**.

LAUNCH OF SOVEREIGN BACKED INSURANCE PRODUCT

The **Department of Financial Services (DFS)** under the **Ministry of Finance (MoF)** has launched **India's first sovereign-backed Protection & Indemnity (P&I) insurance product** under the **Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMIP)** in **New Delhi**.

The insurance product provides **third-party liability coverage** of up to **\$1.5 billion**.

SBI LIFE PARTNERS WITH J&K BANK

SBI Life Insurance has signed a **strategic corporate agency agreement** with the **Jammu & Kashmir Bank (J&K Bank)** to distribute **comprehensive life insurance products** across India.

The partnership will offer solutions including **protection, savings, retirement, and child plans** through a network of **over 1,000 J&K Bank branches**. This collaboration aligns with the **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** vision of '**Insurance for All by 2047**'.

SBI Life Insurance:

MD & CEO – Amit Jhingran

Headquarters – Mumbai, Maharashtra

NEW SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

HDFC Bank has launched two new savings account variants, “Max for Seniors”, for senior citizens. and “Max for Her”, for women, to offer customized benefits.

The “Max for Seniors” variant offers cyber insurance coverage of up to ₹25,000 and a debit card-linked accidental death cover of up to ₹3.19 crore. The “Max for Her” variant provides an Auto Sweep facility for higher returns on surplus savings, along with a debit card-linked accidental death cover of up to ₹3.19 crore and an additional accident cover of up to ₹10 lakh.

NEW APPOINTMENT IN RBI

The RBI has appointed Monisha Chakraborty as an Executive Director (ED), effective from August 3, 2026. In her new role, she will oversee the Foreign Exchange Department (FED) and the Financial Markets Regulation Department (FMRD).

STANDARD CHARTERED GETS APPROVAL

Standard Chartered Bank has received approval from the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) to offer wealth management products and services through its branch at the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA):

Chairman – K Rajaraman

Headquarters – GIFT City, Gujarat

Established in – 2020

NEW RBI LICENCES

RBI has granted Authorised Dealer Category II (AD II) licences to Niyo Forex (via Kanji Forex Pvt Ltd) and GlobalPay (WSFx Global Pay Ltd).

While Niyo Forex received a perpetual licence, GlobalPay secured an expanded perpetual licence under the updated Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) 2026. It is to be noted that these licences facilitate inward and outward trade remittances up to a limit of ₹25 lakh.

BAJAJ SIGNS MOU WITH SWISS RE

Bajaj General Insurance has signed an MoU with Swiss Re Corporate Solutions, the commercial insurance arm of the Swiss Re Group based in Zurich, Switzerland, to explore opportunities in the commercial insurance segment in India.

RBI KEEPS REPO RATE UNCHANGED

The 62nd and 3rd Bi-monthly Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting of FY27 was held under the chairmanship of Sanjay Malhotra, Governor of the RBI.

The MPC voted unanimously to keep the policy repo rate under the Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF) unchanged at 5.25%, while maintaining a “Neutral” stance. The Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) rate remains at 5%, and both the Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate are maintained at 5.5%.

The RBI has revised the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth forecast of India for FY27 upward to 6.7% from its previous projection of 6.6%. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation for FY27 is projected at 5%.

INDEL REMIT GETS RBI LICENCE

Indel Remit, the foreign exchange division of Indel Money Ltd, has secured a perpetual Authorised Dealer-II (AD-II) licence from the RBI to offer trade remittance services.

Under RBI directions, the company is restricted from processing gifts, donations, and transactions exceeding ₹25 lakh.

UNIFIED MSME PORTAL

Indian Bank approved nearly ₹500 crore in Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) loans to 128 beneficiaries during a Credit Outreach Programme in New Delhi.

Credit proposals worth nearly ₹1,250 crore were mobilised during the event, which was held as part of the 120th Foundation Day Fortnight Celebrations of the bank. The programme also marked the launch of the Unified MSME Portal, a digital platform designed to provide seamless and integrated lending services for MSME customers.

RBI UPDATES NBFC UPPER LAYER LIST

The **RBI** has identified **17 Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs)** for inclusion in the **Upper Layer (NBFC-UL)** for **FY27**, based on their financial position as of March 31, 2026.

Tata Sons continues to be categorized under the upper-layer list. The **new entities added to the list** include **Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) Ltd, Power Finance Corporation (PFC) Ltd, Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) Ltd**, and **Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) Ltd**.

CREDIT CARD LAUNCHED

IndusInd Bank and dining platform **EazyDiner** have jointly launched a **lifetime-free co-branded credit card** named '**EazyDiner IndusInd Bank Platinum RuPay Credit Card**'. The card offers dining discounts, entertainment benefits, and **UPI payment functionality**.

IndusInd Bank:
MD & CEO – Rajiv Anand
Headquarters – Mumbai

RBI EXTENDS TIMELINE

The **RBI** has extended the implementation timeline of its **revised framework governing loan recovery and engagement of recovery agents** from **October 1, 2026** to **January 1, 2027**.

Under the revised directions, existing recovery agents who were not previously covered are granted a **1-year transition window** to obtain certification from the **Indian Institute of Banking and Finance (IIBF)** or an affiliated institute.

FOREX LICENCE FOR MUTHOOT FINCORP

Muthoot FinCorp Ltd, a **Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC)**, has secured a **perpetual Authorised Dealer Category-II (AD-II) foreign exchange (Forex) licence** from the **RBI**. The licence enables the NBFC to offer a wider range of regulated forex services.

GDP FORECAST BY RBI SURVEY

According to the **101st Survey of Professional Forecasters (SPF)** released by the **RBI**, the **real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of India** is projected at **6.6%** for **FY27** (up from **6.5%** estimated in the **100th SPF**) and **7.0%** for **FY28**.

The panellists placed the overall real GDP growth forecasts in the **range of 6.0–7.2% for FY27** and **6.5–7.8% for FY28**. The **quarterly real GDP growth** is projected at **6.8%** (year-on-year) during **Q1 FY27**, and is expected to remain within the range of 6.4–7.0% over the subsequent four quarters.

RAZORPAY LAUNCHES VULCAN

Bengaluru-based Razorpay, a payments technology company, has launched an **AI model** named "**Vulcan**" to **improve payment success rates and detect fraudulent activities**. The model has been trained on a dataset of **4 billion transactions** to identify patterns and mitigate risks.

Razorpay:
Founders – Harshil Mathur and Shashank Kumar
CEO – Harshil Mathur
Headquarters – Bengaluru
Established in – 2014

PMS BAZAAR PARTNERS WITH NDML

PMS Bazaar, an **alternative investments platform**, has partnered with **NSDL Database Management Ltd (NDML)** to facilitate the **SEBI Accredited Investor certification process** for eligible investors and entities.

INVESTMENT BANKING LICENSE

The **International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA)** has granted an **Investment Banking licence** to **Nexent Capital IFSC Pvt Ltd** to operate from the **Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City)** in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA):
Chairman – K Rajaraman
Headquarters – GIFT City, Gujarat
Established in – 2020

POSTAL REMITTANCE SERVICE LAUNCHED

The **Qatar-India Postal Remittance Service**, utilizing **PosTransfer** powered by the **UPI**, has been operationalized in **Doha, Qatar** to facilitate faster, secure, and cost-effective **cross-border remittance services** between both countries.

RBI PENALISES INDUSIND BANK

The **RBI** has imposed a **monetary penalty** of **₹59.2 lakh** on **IndusInd Bank Ltd** for non-compliance with regulatory directions regarding ‘**Interest Rate on Deposits**’ and ‘**Securitisation of Standard Assets**’.

IndusInd Bank:

MD & CEO – Rajiv Anand

Headquarters – Mumbai

NEW APPOINTMENTS IN RBI

Somanath Panicker, the **former Chairman of the ISRO**, has been appointed as a **part-time, non-official director** on the **Central Board of the RBI** for **4 years**, starting **August 20, 2026**. **Anand Mahindra** has also been re-appointed to the board for another 4 years.

It is to be noted that other **non-official directors** on the board include **Venu Srinivasan** (Chairman Emeritus of TVS Motor Company), **Pankaj Ramanbhai Patel** (Chairman of Zydus Lifesciences), and **Dr Ravindra H Dholakia**.

J&K BANK PARTNERS WITH HDFC LIFE

Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) Bank has entered into a **Corporate Agency Agreement (CAA)** with **HDFC Life Insurance Company Ltd (HDFC Life)** to offer a range of **customer-centric insurance products**.

CO-BRANDED PARTNERSHIP

Paramotor Digital Technology Ltd has entered into a **co-branded partnership** with **NSDL Payments Bank Ltd** to launch **co-branded prepaid cards across India**.

The collaboration integrates the **technological capabilities of Paramotor** with the **banking infrastructure and issuance services** of the latter to provide secure and compliant **prepaid payment solutions** to consumers.

WOMEN-FOCUSED CREDIT CARD

YES Bank has launched a **lifestyle and rewards-oriented credit card** named “**YES Essence Credit Card**” **specifically for women**. The card aims to address the evolving **healthcare and lifestyle requirements** of segments including young professionals, salaried employees, and digital-savvy women.

YES Bank:

MD & CEO – Prashant Kumar

Headquarters – Mumbai

Established in – 2004

Tagline – Experience Our Expertise

FINO PAYMENTS BANK EXTENDS CEO TENURE

Fino Payments Bank has approved the extension of the tenure of **Ketan Merchant** as the **interim CEO** for **3 months**, effective from **August 27, 2026**.

NEW DIRECTORS FOR RBI CENTRAL BOARD

The **Central Government** has appointed **Annie George Mathew** (former bureaucrat), **Janmejaya Sinha** (economist), and **Syed Akbaruddin** (former diplomat) as **part-time, non-official directors** on the **Central Board of the RBI** for a **4-year term**.

The appointments will be effective from **August 24, 2026**. It is to be noted that currently, the **Central Board of the RBI has 14 members**.

MAIDEN BOND ISSUANCE

IDFC First Bank has executed its **maiden \$500 million bond issuance** through its **International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) Banking Unit (IBU)** at **Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City)**, Gandhinagar, Gujarat. This transaction marks the **official debut of the bank in the global debt capital markets**.

IDFC First Bank:

MD & CEO – V Vaidyanathan

Headquarters – Mumbai

Established in – 2015

SEBI PROPOSES CREDIT RISK-O-METER

The **SEBI** has released a consultation paper proposing a mandatory, colour-coded “**Credit Risk-o-Meter**” for **debt securities** to help investors assess and compare credit risks. This mechanism is based on the existing “**Risk-o-Meter**” **framework for Mutual Funds (MFs)**, which classifies investment risk into **six levels from “Low” to “Very High”**.

The new meter will map the **conventional credit rating scale (AAA to D)** into **six visual categories**: Lowest credit risk, Very low credit risk, Low credit risk, Moderate credit risk, Moderate risk of default, and High to very high risk of default.

SEBI LAUNCHES CYBERSECURITY PORTALS

The **SEBI** has launched two new web portals, “**SEBI Incident Reporting**” and “**Cyber Suraksha**”, to **strengthen cybersecurity and information sharing** in the **securities market ecosystem**.

The “**SEBI Incident Reporting**” portal is an **updated version** of the existing system designed for **structured, timely, and actionable reporting of cyber-incidents**. The “**Cyber Suraksha**” portal will serve as a **centralized hub** for **sharing cybersecurity information**, including vulnerability warnings, policy measures, and incident insights.

MULTI-CURRENCY ACCOUNT

Razorpay, an **omnichannel payments platform**, has partnered with **RBL Bank** to launch a **Multi-Currency Exchange Earners’ Foreign Currency (EEFC) account**.

The account enables **exporters and international businesses** to **retain their earnings in foreign currencies** and manage global payments efficiently without immediate conversion into Indian Rupees (INR).

Razorpay:

Founders – Harshil Mathur and Shashank Kumar
CEO – Harshil Mathur
Headquarters – Bengaluru
Established in – 2014

PNB SIGNS MOU WITH INDIAN ARMY

Punjab National Bank has signed an **MoU** with the **Indian Army** to offer **two credit cards**, namely the “**PNB LUXURA Metal Credit Card**” and the “**PNB Parakram Credit Card**”.

SILVER LOANS LAUNCHED

Paul Merchants Finance Pvt Ltd (PMFPL), a **diversified Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC)** and a part of the Paul Merchants Group, has launched a “**Loan Against Silver**” product, becoming the **first NBFC in India** to establish **exclusive branches dedicated to silver loans**.

The NBFC has initiated its silver loan operations from the Union Territory of **Chandigarh**. Under this credit facility, eligible customers can secure loans ranging from **₹2,000 to ₹15 lakh**.

WIZZMONI PARTNERS WITH OMAN AIR

Wizzmoni Financial Services Limited (formerly **Unimoni**), an Indian **Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC)**, has partnered with **Oman Air** to launch a co-branded, **AI-powered travel card** named “**Wizz Voyager Multi-Currency Card**” that supports multiple global currencies.

CITIGROUP PARTNERS WITH AXIS BANK

Citigroup Inc. has partnered with **Axis Bank** to provide **financing support to Non-Resident Indians (NRIs)** investing in **Foreign Currency Non-Resident (FCNR) deposits**. Axis Bank offers FCNR deposit **interest rates of up to 6.40%**.

Axis Bank:

MD & CEO – Amitabh Chaudhry
Headquarters – Mumbai
Established in – 1993

RBI APPROVES LIC STAKE IN HDFC BANK

The **RBI** has approved the **LIC (Life Insurance Corporation of India)** to acquire up to **9.99% of the paid-up share capital** or voting rights in **HDFC Bank**. It is to be noted that LIC currently holds a **4.11% stake** in the bank.

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC):

CMD – R Doraiswamy
MDs – Ratnakar Patnaik, Dinesh Pant, Sat Pal Bhanoo, and Ramakrishnan Chander
Headquarters – Mumbai
Established in – 1956

UPI COMPLETES 10 YEARS

The **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)**, launched by the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)**, has completed **10 years of operations**.

In **FY26**, the share of UPI in the **digital payments of India** is recorded at **84%**, the annual transaction volume of UPI reached **24,162 crore transactions**, with the total transaction value estimated at **₹314 lakh crore**.

IT RESILIENCE INDEX

The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has introduced the ‘**IT Resilience Index’ (ITRI) Framework** for **Market Infrastructure Institutions (MIIs)** to **evaluate the robustness and operational resilience of their critical Information Technology (IT) systems**.

The ITRI will assess the technology systems of MIs using **nine parameters**. Within the framework, **availability and security** are assigned the **highest weightage of 20% each**. Integrity, governance, reliability and monitoring, business continuity, and modularity and flexibility each carry a **10% weightage**, while scalability is allocated **5%**.

The **Early Warning System (EWS)** and **Real Time Monitoring of Service Delivery** must be operationalised by **February 2027**, with the inaugural ITRI computation covering the half-year ending **March 2027**.

VINFAST INDIA PARTNERS WITH FEDERAL BANK

VinFast India has signed an **MoU** with **Federal Bank** to provide **customized inventory financing solutions** for the Authorised Dealer (AD) network of the company.

Federal Bank:

MD & CEO – KVS Manian

Headquarters – Aluva, Kerala

Established in – 1931

Tagline – Your Perfect Banking Partner

AGREEMENTS

MOU WITH INDIGO

The **Ministry of Tourism** has signed a **strategic, non-exclusive, and non-financial MoU** with **InterGlobe Aviation Ltd (IndiGo)** to **promote India as a preferred global tourism destination**.

Under this agreement, both will jointly undertake a **global communication initiative** titled **“Incredible India by IndiGo”**.

IBM PARTNERS WITH SARVAM AI

IBM have partnered with **Sarvam**, **Indian AI firm**, to accelerate the development and adoption of **sovereign AI technologies** for the **government and regulated enterprises in India**.

Under the partnership, the **‘IBM Sovereign Core’** software, designed to enable control over data and governance, will be integrated with latter’s **sovereign AI stack**.

International Business Machines (IBM):

Chairman and CEO – Arvind Krishna

Headquarters – New York, USA

Established in – 1911

MOU WITH MINISTRY OF AYUSH

IndiaAI, under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)**, has signed an **MoU** with the **Ministry of AYUSH** to **accelerate the adoption of AI in the traditional medicine ecosystem of India**.

The collaboration aims to integrate **AYUSH health research artifacts** into **‘AIKosh’**, the **sovereign AI repository of India**.

DOT AND MP SIGN MOU

The **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** under the **Ministry of Communications** has signed an **MoU** with the **Madhya Pradesh government** to establish **India’s first Telecom Manufacturing Zone (TMZ) Phase-I** in **Gwalior**. The agreement was signed at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

A **Special Purpose Company (SPC)** will be established to implement the project, which is designed on a **‘plug-and-play’** system.

CUK SIGNS MOU WITH INDIAN NAVY

The **Central University of Kerala (CUK)** has signed an **MoU** with the **Indian Navy** to strengthen collaboration in the fields of **maritime studies, defence research, innovation, and strategic knowledge development**.

IIT GANDHINAGAR SIGNS MOU WITH IAIRO

The **IIT Gandhinagar** in **Gujarat** has signed an **MoU** with the **Indian Artificial Intelligence Research Organisation (IAIRO)** to **promote research, education, innovation, and talent development in the field of AI**.

NSDC PARTNERS WITH AVPL

The **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)** has partnered with **AVPL International** to establish **350 Advanced Skill Centres (ASCs)** for **drone technology** across India. The initiative will be implemented over the **next 3 years**.

In the **first year, 75 ASCs** will be set up in **private universities and engineering colleges**. These facilities will function as **industry-operated Centres of Excellence (CoEs)**.

C-DAC SIGNS MOU WITH GSI

The **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)** under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** has signed an **umbrella MoU** with the **Geological Survey of India (GSI)** to strengthen collaboration in the fields of **geoscience, mineral exploration, and disaster management**.

ASSOCHAM SIGNS MOUS FOR TRADE COLLABORATION

The **Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM)** has signed two **MoUs** with **Business France** and the **India & Arab Countries Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (IACCIA)** to **foster trade, investment, and technology collaboration** between **India, France, and Arab countries**.

REC AND PFC TO FINANCE POWER PROJECT

REC Ltd and **Power Finance Corporation (PFC) Ltd** have signed a **common loan agreement** worth **₹26,850 crore** with **Meja Urja Nigam Pvt Ltd (MUNPL)** to finance a **2400 MW thermal power expansion project** in **Uttar Pradesh (UP)**. The **total cost of the project** is estimated at **₹38,357.81 crore**.

AIR INDIA PARTNERS WITH AZERBAIJAN AIRLINES

Air India has signed a **codeshare partnership** with **Azerbaijan Airlines (AZAL)**, a subsidiary of **AZCON Holding**, to **improve air connectivity between India and Azerbaijan**.

Air India:

CEO & MD – Campbell Wilson

Headquarters – New Delhi

Established in – 1932

GVMC SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH MOSCOW

The **Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC)** in **Andhra Pradesh** has signed a **Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC)** with the **Moscow government** in **Russia** to collaborate on **smart mobility, sustainable urban transport, digital innovation, and technology transfer**.

The agreement aims to develop a **modern urban transportation system** in **Visakhapatnam**. It is to be noted that the agreement was signed during the **5th International Transport Summit** held in **Moscow**.

BEL SIGNS MOU WITH ESRI INDIA

Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) has signed an **MoU** with **Esri India** to develop advanced **Geographic Information System (GIS), Location Intelligence, and Geospatial Artificial Intelligence (GeoAI)** solutions for the **Indian defence sector**.

Under the collaboration, the latter will provide training to BEL to build in-house capabilities in GIS and GeoAI using its '**Indo ArcGIS**' platform.

DPIIT SIGNS MOUS TO SUPPORT STARTUPS

The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry** has signed multiple MoUs with various industry leaders to **strengthen the startup ecosystem in India**.

The department has partnered with **Cashfree Payments** to provide **digital infrastructure support**, **Vultr India Pvt Ltd** for **cloud infrastructure support**, and **Darwin Dynamics LLP** to **foster entrepreneurship development**. Additionally, it has signed agreements with **Cars24 Services Pvt Ltd** to **promote AI-driven mobility innovation** and the **Council for Startup India (CSI)** to **enhance the growth and global competitiveness of Indian startups**.

NEGD PARTNERS WITH AAERI

The **National e-Governance Division (NeGD)** under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** has partnered with the **Association of Australian Education Representatives in India (AAERI)** to launch the '**AAERI Verify**' platform.

Integrated with **DigiLocker**, the platform facilitates **secure, paperless, and consent-based verification** of academic, identity, and financial documents for **students applying to Australian universities**. It was unveiled during the **AAERI Annual Convention in New Delhi**.

PHL SIGNS MOU WITH NOEMI AEROSPACE

Pawan Hans Ltd (PHL), an enterprise under the **Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA)**, has signed a non-binding **MoU** with the **Norway-based Noemi Aerospace (Elfly AS)** in **New Delhi**.

The collaboration aims to explore **next-generation sustainable aviation technologies**, including **electric seaplane solutions**.

Pawan Hans Ltd:

Chairman & MD – Sunil Kumar Nagdawne

Headquarters – Noida, Uttar Pradesh

Established in – 1985

LASPL SIGNS MOU WITH MASSIVIT

Lohia Aerospace Systems Pvt Ltd (LASPL) has signed an MoU with Israel-based Massivit to establish the first commercial large-format additive manufacturing facility in India.

The proposed facility will be established at the LASPL plant in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh (UP). The project involves an estimated investment of \$8-10 million over the next 1-2 years.

MINISTRY OF MSME SIGNS MOU WITH DPIIT

The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) has signed an MoU with the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) to accelerate the commercialisation and global market access of the Geographical Indication (GI) products of India.

Under the initiative, the ‘Bharat GI’ banner was launched to integrate regional GI products onto digital platforms.

MOUS FOR RESEARCH STUDIES

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has signed two MoUs with the Institute of Data Engineering, Analytics and Science Foundation (IDEAS), Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), Kolkata to undertake research studies.

The collaboration aims to deep dive into various statistics released by MoSPI and provide harmonisation with other data sources.

DIBD SIGNS SOI WITH NITI AAYOG

The Digital India BHASHINI Division (DIBD) under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has signed a Statement of Intent (Sol) with NITI Aayog to advance multilingual, voice-first AI solutions under the ‘BASHINI for Seva/Sanchalan’ initiative.

LAUNCH AGREEMENT WITH SPACEX

VinSpace, the aerospace unit of Vietnam-based Vingroup, has signed a launch agreement with SpaceX to deploy its first satellites in 2027 via the Transporter Rideshare Mission of the latter.

CCRAS SIGNS MOU WITH BIS

The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) under the Ministry of AYUSH has signed an MoU with the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) in New Delhi to promote quality standards, conformity assessment, scientific research, and capacity building in the AYUSH sector.

It is to be noted that this marks the 100th MoU signed by the BIS and its first with an AYUSH organisation.

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS):

Director General – Sanjay Garg

Headquarters – New Delhi

Established in – 1987

INDIA SIGNS TOR WITH SACU

India has signed the Terms of Reference (ToR) with the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) for negotiations towards a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA).

The negotiations cover 8 chapters, including trade in goods, market access for goods, and rules of origin. Through this cooperation, India can support affordable medicines, Information Technology (IT) talent, and global supply chain integration in the SACU region.

SKYROOT SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH HEX20

Skyroot Aerospace Pvt Ltd has signed a Multi-Launch Agreement (MLA) with HEX20 for 3 dedicated Vikram-series missions.

The launches will support the Earth Observation constellation, in-orbit payload demonstration missions, and rideshare capacity for third-party spacecraft of the latter.

Skyroot Aerospace:

Co-Founder and CEO – Pawan Kumar Chandan

Headquarters – Hyderabad

Established in – 2018

NIIMH SIGNS MOU WITH SEMIRI

The **National Institute of Indian Medical Heritage (NIIMH)**, **Hyderabad**, under the **Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS)** of the **Ministry of Ayush**, has signed an MoU with the **Kottayam (Kerala)-based Sevadhi Museum & Indological Research Institute (SEMIRI)** for the **systematic digitization and preparation of a descriptive catalogue for the medical manuscript collection** of the latter.

MCX SIGNS MOU WITH NISM

The **Multi Commodity Exchange of India Ltd (MCX)** has signed an **MoU** with the **National Institute of Securities Markets (NISM)** to launch the **Commodity Markets Research Centre (CMRC)** to **promote academic excellence, policy research, and investor awareness** in the commodities sector.

JSW NEO ENERGY SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH DGPC

JSW Neo Energy Ltd (JSWNEL), a subsidiary of JSW Energy, has signed an agreement with the **Druk Green Power Corporation Ltd (DGPC)** of **Bhutan** to jointly develop the **920 Megawatt (MW) Punatsangchhu-III Hydroelectric Project**. The project is located on the **Punatsangchhu River** in the **Wangdue Phodrang District** of Bhutan.

The development will be executed through a Joint Venture (JV) company on a **Build-Own-Operate-Transfer (BOOT)** basis. Under the agreement, DGPC will hold a **51% stake** in the JV, while JSWNEL will hold the remaining **49% stake**.

MOU FOR ONE HERB ONE STANDARD

The **Pharmacopoeia Commission for Indian Medicine & Homoeopathy (PCIM&H)** under the **Ministry of AYUSH** has renewed its MoU with the **Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC)** under the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW)** to strengthen the **scientific standardisation of medicinal plants** under the **“One Herb, One Standard” initiative**.

The MoU, **originally signed in 2022**, has been extended for **3 years** to establish uniform quality standards for medicinal plants.

INDIA AND JAPAN SIGN MOA

Union Minister **Rajnath Singh** and his **Japanese counterpart Shinjiro Koizumi** held bilateral discussions to strengthen the **defence relations between India and Japan**. Both nations signed a **Memorandum of Arrangement (MoA)** on **Maritime Security Cooperation** to **enhance strategic engagement in the maritime domain**.

INDIA SIGNS MOUS WITH NEPAL

India and **Nepal** have signed MoUs for the implementation of **8 High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs)** in Nepal.

The projects, focusing on the sectors of **education, health, and agriculture**, will be supported through grant assistance worth **NPR 803 million** from the Government of India.

MEITY SIGNS MOU WITH PHONEPE

The **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** has signed an MoU with **PhonePe** to leverage insights from the **enterprise data intelligence platform** of the latter, **PhonePe PulsePro**, to support the **PM GatiShakti mission**.

Under the partnership, the metrics of the platform will be **integrated** into the **PM GatiShakti National Master Plan** portal, which is **managed in collaboration** with the **Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG-N)**.

DPIIT SIGNS MOUS

The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry** has signed MoUs with **PhonePe** and **Shell India Pvt Ltd** to **bolster the support infrastructure** for **DPIIT-recognised startups** and to **accelerate innovation** across strategic sectors of the Indian economy.

BSE AND PHDCCI SIGN MOU FOR MSMES

Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) has signed an MoU with the **PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI)** to **facilitate equity financing** for **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)** through **capital markets**.

Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE):
Chairman – Prof. Subhasis Chaudhuri
MD and CEO – Sundararaman Ramamurthy
Headquarters – Dalal Street, Mumbai
Established in – 1875

MOU FOR TELECOM COOPERATION

India has signed an **MoU** with **Brazil** to enhance **bilateral cooperation** in the fields of **Telecommunications and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)**.

The agreement was signed by **Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia** and the counterpart **Frederico de Filho** on the sidelines of the **BRICS ICT Track Meeting** held in **Pune, Maharashtra**.

LOAN FOR CHENNAI PROJECT

The **Government of India** has signed a **\$230 million** loan agreement with the **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** for the “**Chennai Climate-Resilient Water Security and Sewerage Project**”.

The initiative aims to **modernize water supply and sanitation infrastructure** in **Chennai** to **strengthen the resilience of the city against climate change**. The project also seeks to **improve public health and quality of life** by establishing a more efficient and financially sustainable urban water system.

OIL AND GAS AGREEMENT

India has signed a **Government-to-Government (G2G) agreement** with **Mauritius** for cooperation in the **oil and gas sector**. The agreement aims to ensure a **reliable and consistent supply of petroleum products** (including petrol, diesel, and jet fuel) to the latter.

AI SKILLING INITIATIVE

The **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)** under the **Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** has partnered with **Cultus Education** and **Amazon Web Services (AWS)** to launch a **nationwide cloud and AI skilling initiative**.

The program aims to provide **foundational AI and cloud literacy** to **1.5 lakh learners** using the digital training content of AWS.

RESEARCH AGREEMENT

Tata Power Company Ltd has signed a **Master Research Agreement (MRA)** with the **IIT Bombay** to **accelerate the development, scaling, and commercialisation** of **next-generation energy technologies and clean energy solutions**.

AGREEMENT FOR EO CONSTELLATION

The **Indian Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACE)** has approved an agreement for the development of the **first indigenous and fully commercial Earth Observation (EO) constellation** of India under the **Public Private Partnership (PPP) model**.

The agreement is signed with a private consortium, **Allied Orbits Pvt Ltd**, which is led by **PixxelSpace India Pvt Ltd** and includes **Dhruva Space Pvt Ltd, PierSight Space Pvt Ltd, and Satsure Analytics India Pvt Ltd**.

The consortium will be responsible for the design, construction, ownership, and operation of the **12-satellite constellation**. It is to be noted that the consortium will invest over **₹1,200 crore** for the project, which is expected to be developed and operationalized by **2029**.

Pixxel:
CEO – Awais Ahmed
Headquarters – Bengaluru
Established in – 2019

CBN AND PHARMEXCIL SIGN MOU

The **Central Bureau of Narcotics (CBN)** has signed an MoU with the **Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India (PHARMEXCIL)** to **balance the promotion of Indian pharmaceutical exports with effective regulatory oversight**.

It is to be noted that **PHARMEXCIL** was established by the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry** to support the development and export of the Indian pharmaceutical industry.

UNHCR SIGNS MOU WITH SICCI

The **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** has signed an **MoU** with the **Southern India Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI)** and the **Ethiraj College for Women** in **Chennai** to **promote the self-reliance and inclusion of refugees in India**.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):

High Commissioner for Refugees – Filippo Grandi

Headquarters – Geneva, Switzerland

Established in – 1950

JINDAL STEEL SIGNS MOU WITH IIT HYDERABAD

Jindal Steel Ltd (JSL) has signed an MoU with the IIT Hyderabad to establish a first-of-its-kind Jindal Steel Centre of Excellence (CoE) at the IIT campus.

The CoE will focus on the research and development of high-strength, value-added, and value-engineered steel products and solutions.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AGREEMENTS

The Naval Science & Technological Laboratory (NSTL), a laboratory of the DRDO in Visakhapatnam has signed two Licensing Agreements for Transfer of Technology (LAToT) to strengthen indigenous defence manufacturing capabilities.

Under the first agreement, the Submarine Fired Decoy (SFD) ‘Mohini’ technology will be transferred to Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL). The second agreement covers the technology for the fabrication, installation, and commissioning of the LM2500 Gas Turbine to the Hyderabad-based Vertex Engineering Systems Pvt Ltd.

INDIA AND SINGAPORE SIGN MOUS

India and Singapore have reinforced their Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) during the fourth India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable (ISMR) held in Singapore. It is to be noted that the roundtable also witnessed the exchange of two MoUs and one Letter of Intent (LoI) to strengthen bilateral ties.

DOT SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH C-DOT

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) under the Ministry of Communications has signed a strategic 5-year agreement with the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) to establish an “End-to-End Optical Network Test Bed” at the C-DOT campus in New Delhi.

TATA CAPITAL SIGNS MOU WITH RESONA BANK

Tata Capital Ltd (TCL) has signed an MoU with Japan-based Resona Bank, the core banking subsidiary of Resona Holdings, to assist Japanese companies in exploring and accessing financial solutions and business opportunities in India.

UNDP INDIA PARTNERS WITH HUL

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India has partnered with Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) to launch the next phase of their 7-year partnership to strengthen an inclusive circular economy for plastics in India.

The initiative aims to support 50,000 “Safai Mitras” (waste workers) and enhance waste management systems across 50 cities and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) by 2028.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP):

Administrator (acting) – Haoliang Xu

Headquarters – New York, US

Established in – 1966

MOUS UNDER PM GATISHAKTI

The Chhattisgarh government has signed MoUs with the Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG-N), and the National Logistics Data Services Limited (NLDSL) to enhance the utilization of geospatial technology and integrated logistics data under the PM GatiShakti framework.

IICT PARTNERS WITH NETFLIX

The Indian Institute of Creative Technologies (IICT) has partnered with Netflix to launch a scholarship initiative targeting 100 students and working professionals across India.

The initiative will provide up to 80% financial support for six professional programmes within the Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics (AVGC) ecosystem.

REPORTS

REPORT ON INDIA'S REFORM PROGRESS

According to a report titled “**India’s Next Growth Frontier: Reducing Anti-Competitive Market Distortions to Build on India’s 2010–2023 Reform Progress**” released by the **Competere Foundation**, India has improved its global ranking from **82nd to 57th** between **2010 and 2023**.

The report evaluates market distortions based on **three pillars: property rights protection, domestic competition, and international competition**.

REPORT BY BIMCO

According to the “**BIMCO–ICS Seafarer Workforce Report 2026**” released by the **Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO)** and the **International Chamber of Shipping (ICS)**, **India has emerged as the world’s second-largest supplier of seafarers**, with **3.1 lakh professionals** accounting for **12.16% of the global workforce**.

The Philippines ranks top in seafarer supply, followed by **India, China, Russia, and Indonesia**.

DATA ON E-ZERO CYBER FRAUD FIRS

Union Minister of State Bandi Sanjay Kumar, in a written reply to the Lok Sabha, stated that over **12,000 e-Zero First Information Reports (FIRs)** were registered against **cyber financial fraud** across **18 states and Union Territories (UTs)** in 2025.

Delhi recorded the **highest number of e-Zero FIRs** with **6,115**, followed by **Chandigarh, Uttarakhand, Goa, and Rajasthan**.

CANDERE HURUN INDIA WOMEN LEADERS LIST

Candere, a luxury online jewellery brand by Kalyan Jewellers, in partnership with Hurun India, has released the **2nd edition** of the ‘**Candere Hurun India Women Leaders List 2026**’. The list recognizes **117 women achievers** across **12 categories**.

Meena Bindra, founder of BIBA, is **ranked top** on the overall leaderboard, followed by **Tushara Shankar** and **Rajni Bector**. **Paralympian Avani Lekhara** is the **youngest individual** to be featured in the **top 10 overall leaderboard**.

Roshni Nadar Malhotra, Chairperson of HCLTech, leads the ‘**Wealth Multipliers**’ segment, while **Priya Nair**, CMD) of Hindustan Unilever (HUL), **tops** the ‘**Professional CEOs**’ category. The 12 category leaders possess a **combined 464 years of active professional experience**. **Manju D. Gupta** (Lupin) and **Ritu Kumar** contributed **58 and 57 years of experience**, respectively.

ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE INDEX 2026

According to the “**Environmental Performance Index (EPI 2026)**” released by the **Yale University**, **India is ranked at 176th** out of **177 countries** with a **score of 22.46**.

Estonia is ranked first with a **score of 74.7**, followed by **Luxembourg**, the **United Kingdom (UK)**, **Finland**, and the **Netherlands**. **Laos is ranked lowest** in the index with a **score of 21.78**.

NITI AAYOG REPORT ON CAREGIVING

According to a report titled “**Reimagining Care: Strategies for Empowering Caregivers in Viksit Bharat@2047**” released by **NITI Aayog** in **New Delhi**, a comprehensive roadmap has been outlined to establish an **organized, professional, and future-ready caregiving ecosystem**.

The report recommends the formulation of a **National Policy on Caregiving (NPC)** and the establishment of a **National Caregiver Council (NCC)** to **regulate training, accreditation, certification, and quality standards**. It also suggests maintaining a **National Caregiver Registry** to **streamline professional development and institutional support** across the country.

NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India):

Chairman – Prime Minister Narendra Modi

CEO – Anurag Jain

Headquarters – New Delhi

Established in – 2015

CELEBRITY BRAND VALUATION

According to the **11th edition** of the report titled “**Kroll Celebrity Brand Valuation 2025**” released by the **US-based Kroll**, **Shah Rukh Khan**, Bollywood actor, has emerged as the **most valuable celebrity in India**, with a **brand value of \$177.9 million**.

He is followed in the rankings by **Ranveer Singh, Virat Kohli**, Sachin Tendulkar, and MS Dhoni. Actress **Alia Bhatt** secured the **sixth position**, emerging as the **most valued female celebrity** in the country.

DELHI METRO OUTSHINES

According to the international benchmarking data released by the **Community of Metros (COMET)**, the **Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC)** recorded a **train punctuality rate of 99.95%**.

It **outperformed several major global transit networks** in punctuality, including the **New York Subway, Paris Metro, and Hong Kong MTR**. It is to be noted that COMET is an **international consortium comprising 45 major global transit systems**.

REPORT BY HURUN INDIA

According to the **3rd edition** of the “**2026 Barclays Private Clients Hurun India Most Valuable Family Businesses List**” released by **Hurun India**, in partnership with Barclays Private Bank India, the **Ambani family**, led by **Mukesh Ambani**, emerged as the **richest business family in India** for the **3rd consecutive year** with a net worth of **₹25.8 lakh crore**.

The **1st-generation category** was led by the **Adani family**, headed by Gautam Adani, with a total valuation of **₹19.6 lakh crore**. **Hindustan Zinc**, led by **Priya Agarwal Hebbar**, emerged as the **most-valuable women-led business in India**.

PERIODIC LABOUR FORCE SURVEY

According to the Quarterly Bulletin of the **Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)** for **April-June 2026** released by the **National Statistical Office (NSO)**, the **Unemployment Rate (UR)** for **persons aged 15 years and above rose to 5.4%** in the April-June 2026 quarter.

The overall **Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)** for individuals aged 15 years and above **decreased to 54.6%** compared to 55.5% in the preceding quarter. The **rural LFPR declined to 56.9%** from 58.2% in the previous quarter, while the **urban LFPR remained unchanged at 50.2%**.

REPORT ON SERVICES SECTOR

The **NITI Aayog** has released the **third report under its Services Thematic series**, titled “**India’s Services Sector: Insights on Regulatory Regime in Professional Services**”.

According to the report, **professional services account for 25%** (nearly one-fourth) of the **total services exports of India**. The report proposes a **four-pronged strategy** to enhance the sector, which includes **harnessing emerging trends, elevating professional services in the wider value chain, adopting global best practices, and promoting continuous professional development**.

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REPORT ON MANUFACTURING HUB

According to a report titled “**Key Sectors to Position India as a Global Manufacturing Hub**” released by **NITI Aayog**, which provides a data-driven assessment of the manufacturing sector in India, **12 manufacturing sectors** have been identified to accelerate the transition of India into a **global manufacturing hub**.

Among the 12 key sectors, **four high-potential sectors** identified to drive manufacturing growth and strengthen the position of India in global value chains are **chemicals, textiles, telecom and networking equipment, and solar photovoltaic (PV) manufacturing**. The study conducted for the report followed a **4-phase methodology**.

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Established in – 2015

REPORT ON DEEP-SEA FISHERY RESOURCES

The **Centre for Marine Living Resources & Ecology (CMLRE)**, under the **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)**, has released the “**National Report on Deep-Sea and Distant-Water Fishery Resources of the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)**” to assess marine resources.

The publication was edited by **Dr VN Sanjeevan** (former Director of CMLRE) and **Dr Baban Ingole** (retired Scientist at the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO)), under the leadership of **Dr RS Maheshkumar** (Head of CMLRE). The assessment studies were largely supported by the flagship research vessel of India, the **Fishery and Oceanographic Research Vessel (FORV) 'Sagar Sampada'**.

INTERNATIONAL

VISIT TO MOLDOVA AND NORTH MACEDONIA

President Droupadi Murmu has visited **Moldova** and **North Macedonia** to promote bilateral relations in sectors including **trade, technology, and tourism**.

In Moldova, she received a ceremonial welcome and guard of honour at the Presidential Palace from **President Maia Sandu**. The **3Ts Roadmap (Trade, Technology, and Talent)** of India was unveiled to strengthen bilateral ties with Moldova.

The visit to North Macedonia marked the **first-ever state visit** by the President of India to that nation. She held bilateral discussions with **President Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova** and **PM Hristijan Mickoski**. She also addressed the Assembly of North Macedonia and the **India-North Macedonia Business Forum** in **Skopje**. Additionally, she jointly unveiled a **bust of Mahatma Gandhi** at the Museum of the City of Skopje.

INDIA HOSTS BRICS MEETINGS

The **2nd meeting** of the **BRICS Science Academies Forum 2026** was held at the **IIT Hyderabad** under the theme **“Harnessing Artificial Intelligence for Sustainable Development and Strengthening Global South Cooperation”**.

Additionally, **India** hosted the **BRICS Ministers of Interior Meeting** in **New Delhi**.

MIGRATION CRISIS IN SPAIN

Spain is currently facing a **migration crisis** in its **North African enclave of Ceuta**, following an unprecedented surge of **60,000 migrants** crossing from Morocco.

It is to be noted that the influx was primarily driven by **false social media campaigns** which propagated the claim that **“Spain is Open”**.

NAURU OFFICIALLY RENAMED NAOERO

The **Pacific island nation** of **Nauru**, the **third-smallest nation in the world**, has officially changed its name to the '**Republic of Naoero**'.

This name change is intended to **preserve its indigenous language**, '**dorerin Naoero**', which the **UNESCO** classifies as **severely endangered**.

VENEZUELA TO EXIT ROME STATUTE

Venezuela, under **Interim President Delcy Eoina Gomez**, has formally notified the **United Nations (UN)** of its **withdrawal from the Rome Statute**, initiating the process to **terminate its membership** in the **International Criminal Court (ICC)**.

The **withdrawal will take effect one year after the notification**. It is to be noted that the country originally become a **State Party to the Rome Statute in 2002**.

IPC PARTICIPATES IN SEARN MEETING

The **Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC)**, under the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare**, participated in the **10th Anniversary Meeting** of the **South-East Asia Regulatory Network (SEARN)** held in **Kathmandu, Nepal**.

During the meeting, the **IPC** is designated as the **Regional Centre of Excellence in Pharmacovigilance** and the **Technical Centre in Quality**. It is to be noted that the **SEARN** was **established in 2016** by the **World Health Organization (WHO) South-East Asia Regional Office (SEARO)** as a platform to **strengthen regulatory systems** across its member states.

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

The **48th session** of the **UNESCO World Heritage Committee (WHC)** was held at the **Busan Exhibition and Convention Center (BEXCO)** in **Busan, South Korea**, under the chairmanship of **Lee Byong Hyun**. During the session, **25 new sites** were inscribed, bringing the **total number of UNESCO World Heritage (WH) sites to 1,273** across 173 countries.

This session marked the **first-ever WH inscriptions** for three African nations: **Comoros, Sao Tome and Principe, and South Sudan**. The **Centre of Vienna (Austria)** was **removed from the list of World Heritage in Danger**, while **Mount Amel Castles (Lebanon)** and **Sebastia (State of Palestine)** were **included on an emergency basis**.

The “**Busan Declaration on World Heritage**” was adopted to protect vulnerable assets. It introduced “**collaboration**” as the **6th “C” of the strategic objectives**, joining the existing five: **conservation, credibility, capacity-building, communication, and communities**.

The committee adopted the “**World Heritage Strategy for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) 2026–2034**,” a roadmap supported by a **\$13 million budget**. It is to be noted that the **49th session** of the UNESCO WHC will be held in **Istanbul, Turkiye**, under the presidency of **Mustafa Yurdakul**.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO):
Director General – Khaled El
Headquarters – Paris, France
Established in – 1945

BRICS MEETINGS IN INDIA

The **16th BRICS Trade Ministers' Meeting** was held in **Jaipur, Rajasthan**, under **India's BRICS Chairship for 2026**. Chaired by **Union Minister Piyush Goyal**, the meeting was held under the theme “**Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability**”.

Additionally, the **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** hosted the **BRICS Heads of Competition Authorities meeting** in **Udaipur, Rajasthan**. The event featured a **collaborative study on the renewable energy sector**, presentations on recent enforcement initiatives, and strategic planning for the **2027 conference in Brazil**.

INDIA HOSTS BRICS MEETINGS

India hosted the **Meeting of Heads of National Statistical Offices (NSOs)** of **BRICS countries** in **Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh**, under the theme “**Quality Statistics as a Driver of Change**”.

India also hosted the **2nd BRICS Anti-Corruption Working Group (ACWG) Meeting** and the **2nd Meeting of the BRICS Expert Network on Asset Recovery** in **Hyderabad**. Under **India’s BRICS Presidency 2026**, the **3rd BRICS Culture Working Group (CWG) meetings** were conducted in **Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**. Additionally, the **BRICS Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BRICS CCI)** celebrated its **14th foundation day** in **New Delhi**.

NEW PRESIDENT FOR COLOMBIA

Abelardo de la Espriella has been appointed as the **President of Colombia**, succeeding **Gustavo Petro**.

TYPHOON DOLPHIN

Typhoon Dolphin has been identified as the **strongest tropical cyclone** to strike **China** in the current year, causing **widespread devastation and historic rainfall** across multiple provinces.

MECCA JOINT DEFENCE AGREEMENT

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Turkiye have signed a **mutual defence pact** named the “**Mecca Joint Defence Agreement**”.

Under the foundational principle of the agreement, **an armed attack against any one of the 3 signatory states will be treated as an attack against all three**.

LEBANON ABOLISHES DEATH PENALTY

Lebanon becomes the **first nation in the Arab world** to completely **abolish the death penalty**, replacing it with life imprisonment.

APPOINTMENT FOR GAUTAM RANGARAJAN

Gautam Rangarajan, an **Indian-origin strategist and media executive**, has been appointed to the newly created role of ‘**Expert Adviser on Structure and Process**’ by **UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham**.

INDIA DONATES PEACOCKS TO UN GENEVA

The **Government of India (GoI)**, through its **Permanent Mission to the United Nations (UN)**, has donated **5 peacocks** to the **United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG)** in **Geneva, Switzerland**.

The peacocks were officially handed over to **Tatiana Valovaya**, the **Director-General of UNOG**. This initiative **revives a historic tradition** associated with **Ariana Park** and UN heritage.

DY CHANDRACHUD AS ARBITRATOR

Russia has appointed **DY Chandrachud**, a **former Chief Justice of India (CJI)**, as its **designated arbitrator** in an **investment treaty dispute** initiated by **Oschadbank**, a **state-owned bank of Ukraine**.

MARITIME DEFENCE COALITION

Saudi Arabia, along with 13 other founding nations, has established the charter for the Multinational Maritime Defence Coalition (MMDC), a regionally anchored military alliance consisting of 14 member countries.

Led and hosted by Saudi Arabia, the coalition is designed to safeguard critical trade and energy corridors in the Middle East. It is to be noted that among the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states, the UAE and Oman are currently not part of the alliance.

NEW PRESIDENT FOR HUNGARY

The Hungarian Parliament has elected Andras Baka, former head of the Supreme Court of Hungary, as the new President of the country.

BRICS INDUSTRY MINISTERS MEETING

India has hosted the 10th BRICS Industry Ministers Meeting in Jaipur, Rajasthan. The meeting focused on the BRICS Partnership on New Industrial Revolution (PartNIR) initiatives and concluded with the adoption of a Joint Declaration.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB), through the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC), hosted the ‘BRICS WAVES Bazaar 2026’ in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The event featured the India-Russia co-production ‘KOROVA’, the launch of the BRICS Independent Producers Alliance (BIPA), and the signing of several agreements.

HAKAINDE HICHILEMA RE-ELECTED

Hakainde Hichilema, the leader of the United Party for National Development (UPND), has been re-elected as the President of Zambia for a second consecutive five-year term (2026–2031).

NEW PRESIDENT FOR BANGLADESH

Mirza Fakhrul Alamgir, a senior leader of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), has been elected as the 23rd President of Bangladesh for a 5-year term. He succeeds Mohammed Shahabuddin who resigned from the post.

BRICS MEETINGS

Under the 2026 BRICS Chairship of India, the 12th BRICS Environment Ministers Meeting was held in New Delhi, chaired by Union Minister Bhupender Yadav.

Additionally, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) under the Ministry of Communications organized the BRICS Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Track in Pune under the theme “Innovate, Cooperate and Transform (ICT) for a Resilient Future”.

DEFENCE

DSC A24 LAUNCHED

The 5th and final ship of the Diving Support Craft (DSC) Project, named ‘DSC A24’, has been launched in Titagarh, Kolkata. The vessel is constructed by Titagarh Rail Systems Ltd (TRSL).

It features a catamaran-hull design with a displacement of 300–400 tonnes. It is to be noted that 70% of the equipment used in these vessels is sourced from indigenous manufacturers.

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY MEDICINE INAUGURATED

Union Minister Rajnath Singh has virtually inaugurated the Department of Military Medicine at the Command Hospital (Central Command) in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

This is the first dedicated academic and operational department in India focused exclusively on military medicine, established under the Directorate General of Medical Services (DGMS) of the Indian Army.

MARITIME DEFENCE ALLIANCE

Saudi Arabia and 13 other nations have announced the formation of a Multinational Maritime Defence Alliance to protect shipping in key West Asian waterways and strengthen global maritime security.

The other members include Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, Nigeria, Sudan, Djibouti, Turkiye, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Somalia. Saudi Arabia has been designated as the founding and leading state of the alliance, serving as its permanent secretariat.

NIPUN INDUCTED INTO INDIAN NAVY

The **Indian Navy (IN)** has inducted ‘**Nipun**’, the **second Indigenous Diving Support Vessel (DSV)**, constructed by the **Hindustan Shipyard Ltd (HSL)** in **Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh (AP)**.

The vessel features **75% indigenous content** and adheres to the **Indian Register of Shipping (IRS)** classification rules.

Hindustan Shipyard Ltd (HSL):

CMD – Cmde Girideep Singh (Retd)

Headquarters – Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh

Established in – 1941

EXERCISE ROTOR CLAP-III

The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** has conducted the **3rd edition** of the **Counter-Unmanned Aerial Systems (Counter-UAS) exercise** named ‘**ROTOR CLAP-III**’ at the **Pokhran Field Firing Range** in **Jaisalmer, Rajasthan**.

SUCCESSFUL TEST OF AGNI 4 MISSILE

The **Medium Range Ballistic Missile (MRBM)** ‘**Agni-4**’ has been **successfully test-fired** from the **Integrated Test Range (ITR)** in **Chandipur, Odisha**.

The test, conducted under the aegis of the **Strategic Forces Command (SFC)**, has **successfully validated all operational and technical parameters** of the missile system.

INDO-US NAVY EOD EXERCISE

The **Indian Navy (IN)** and **United States Navy (USN) Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Exercise 2026** has commenced at the **Southern Naval Command** in **Kochi**.

The exercise comprises **Subject Matter Expert Exchanges (SMEEs)**, cross-training, equipment demonstrations, and scenario-based practical exercises. It is to be noted that the IN and USN have been conducting **joint Salvage and EOD exercises since 2005**.

MILESTONE FOR BHAWANA KANTH

Squadron Leader Bhawana Kanth has become the **first woman fighter pilot** of the **Indian Air Force (IAF)** to successfully complete the **Fighter Combat Leader (FCL)** course at the **Tactics and Air Combat Development Establishment (TACDE)** in **Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh**.

With this achievement, she became the **first woman graduate** of the elite ‘**Top Gun**’ school of the IAF, where only about **1% of pilots** are selected for the **20-week advanced combat programme**.

CONTRACTS FOR LOITER MUNITION SYSTEMS

The **Ministry of Defence** has signed contracts worth **₹1,577 crore** with **TATA Advanced Systems Ltd** and **NIBE Pvt Ltd** for the procurement of **Loiter Munition Systems**, along with munitions and accessories, for the **Indian Army**. The system is developed to enhance the operational capabilities of the **Artillery Regiments**.

MOD LEASES MQ-9B DRONES FOR NAVY

The **Ministry of Defence (MoD)** has signed a contract worth **₹1,943 crore** with **General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc (GA-ASI)** for the lease of two **MQ-9B Sea Guardian High-Altitude Long-Endurance (HALE) Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS)**.

The leased HALE RPAS will be deployed by the **Indian Navy** for an operational duration of **30 months**.

EXERCISE UDARA SHAKTI

The **3rd edition** of the bilateral air exercise between the **Indian Air Force (IAF)** and the **Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF)** named “**Exercise Udara Shakti**” has commenced at the **Subang Air Base** in **Selangor, Malaysia**.

The exercise aims to **enhance interoperability, operational coordination, and defence cooperation** between the IAF and RMAF.

INDIAN NAVY LAUNCHES SHRUTI

The **Indian Navy** has launched ‘**Shruti**’ (Yard 3037), which is the **second of four Next-Generation Offshore Patrol Vessels (NGOPVs)** being constructed by **Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) Ltd** in **Kolkata**.

It is to be noted that the **Ministry of Defence** signed a contract valued at **₹9,781 crore** for the NGOPV project, under which four vessels are assigned to be built by GRSE.

Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Ltd (GRSE):

Chairman & MD – Commodore PR Hari (Retd.)

Headquarters – Kolkata

Nationalised in – 1960

MAIDEN FLIGHT OF DIVYASTRA MK3

Kawa UAV Pvt Ltd (Hoverit) has successfully conducted the maiden flight of the first indigenous jet-powered loitering munition of India, named ‘Divyastra Mk3’. The test flight was carried out at the Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor (UPDIC) in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

The munition was developed with an indigenous jet engine by DG Propulsion, achieving this milestone within 1 year of the initiation of the programme.

NCC GIRLS TREK

Union Minister Rajnath Singh has flagged off the All India Girls High Altitude Long Trek “Aparajita – Parang La 2026”, a flagship adventure activity of the National Cadet Corps (NCC), in New Delhi.

The trek will traverse the Parang La Pass, which connects the Spiti Valley of Himachal Pradesh with the Changthang region of Ladakh. The expedition team, comprising 28 Girl Cadets with an average age of 19 years, will be led by three women officers representing the three defence services.

EXERCISE MAITREE-XV

The 15th edition of the annual joint military exercise between India and Thailand named “MAITREE-XV” is organised in Surat Thani, Thailand. The Indian Army contingent is represented by the personnel from the 9 Gorkha Rifles.

MANGROL DELIVERED TO INDIAN NAVY

Cochin Shipyard Ltd (CSL) has delivered the third Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC) named ‘Mangrol’ to the Indian Navy.

The vessel features over 80% indigenous content and is equipped for underwater surveillance, ASW operations in coastal waters, and Low-Intensity Maritime Operations (LIMO), including mine warfare.

MOU WITH ARMENIA

India has signed an MoU with Armenia to strengthen the bilateral defence industrial partnership.

MOD NOTIFIES POSITIVE INDIGENISATION LIST

The Ministry of Defence, through the Department of Defence Production (DDP), has notified the 6th Positive Indigenisation List (PIL) comprising 405 defence items. It includes 389 items from Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) and 16 from the Indian Coast Guard (ICG).

The PIL focuses on critical components, spares, and raw materials, carrying an estimated business potential of ₹3,070 crore. The initiative aims to boost domestic manufacturing and reduce reliance on imports.

MHA ORDERS ANTI-DRONE VEHICLES

The Ministry of Home Affairs has awarded a contract worth ₹155 crore to the Indrajaal-Sigma consortium for the procurement of the “Indrajaal Ranger Mobile Anti-Drone Patrol Vehicle” (ADPV).

The ADPV is the only mobile Counter-Unmanned Aircraft System (C-UAS) platform in India to receive approval from the Anti-Rogue Drone Technology Committee (ARDTC).

SAMARTHAK DELIVERED TO INDIAN NAVY

Larsen & Toubro Ltd (L&T) has delivered ‘Samarthak’, the first Multi-Purpose Vessel (MPV) to the Indian Navy (IN).

The vessel features over 75% indigenous content and is designed to serve as a versatile trial and evaluation platform..

ARMY CHIEF VISITS NEPAL

General Dhiraj Seth, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) of the Indian Army, has visited Nepal at the invitation of Ashok Raj Sigdel, COAS of the Nepal Army, to strengthen bilateral defence cooperation and military-to-military ties.

He was conferred the honorary rank of General of the Nepali Army by Ramchandra Paudel, the President of Nepal, during an investiture ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhawan (Sheetal Niwas) in Kathmandu.

AI PILOTED FIGHTER JET

Flying Wedge Defence & Aerospace Technologies Pvt Ltd (FWDA), an Indian defence startup, has unveiled the “FWD Supreme Lite”, marking the first AI-piloted fighter jet programme in India.

Designed and developed entirely in India, the fighter jet demonstrator weighs approximately **250 kg**, offering an **endurance of up to 30 hrs** and an **operational range of 3,000 km**. The aircraft is designed around the ‘**Mobbing Doctrine**’, a new warfare doctrine that proposes the **deployment of a larger number of AI-piloted fighter aircraft**.

TERRIER CYBER QUEST

The **Territorial Army**, in collaboration with **CyberPeace**, has launched a **national-level hackathon** named “**Terrier Cyber Quest 2026**” (TCQ 3.0).

The initiative aims to address **defence, cybersecurity, and information-domain challenges** by promoting indigenous solutions in **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**, threat mitigation, and digital awareness.

AIM-424 MALICE UNVEILED

The **US Navy** has unveiled a next-generation **Long Range Air-to-Air Missile (LRAAM)** named ‘**Air Intercept Missile (AIM)-424 Malice**’.

Developed by **Raytheon** (a subsidiary of **RTX Corporation**), the missile possesses an **operational strike range** exceeding **250 nautical miles (463 km)**.

BUSINESS

ACQUISITION OF MAGMA GENERAL INSURANCE

The **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** has approved the **acquisition of Magma General Insurance** from Sanoti Properties (owned by **Adar Poonawalla**) by **Patanjali Ayurved** and the **DS Group** for **₹4,500 crore**. Under the share purchase agreement (SPA), **Patanjali Ayurved** will acquire a **73.56% stake**, while the **DS Group** will acquire a **24.50% stake** in the company.

Separately, the **IRDAI** has granted a **licence** to **ProTec General Insurance**, a **joint venture (JV)** between the **M Pallonji Group** and **Divya Sehgal of True North**.

FSSAI ACTION AGAINST DABUR

The **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** has issued a **prohibition order** against **Dabur India Ltd** for marketing food products with **misleading claims** such as “**100% Pure**” and “**100% Natural**”.

These claims were found to be in violation of the **Food Safety and Standards (Advertising and Claims) Regulations, 2018**.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI):

Chairman – PS Srivastava

Headquarters – New Delhi

Established in – 2008

EISAI LAUNCHES LEQEMBI IN INDIA

Japan-based Eisai has launched ‘**Leqembi**’ (**lecanemab**) in India after receiving approval from the **Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO)**. It is the **first disease-modifying therapy** in the country for **early-stage Alzheimer’s disease**.

This launch addresses the rising dementia burden in India, which affected **8.8 million elderly individuals** in **2023** and is projected to double by **2036**.

Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO):

Drug Controller General of India – Dr Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi

Headquarters – New Delhi

Established in – 1940

CCI APPROVES MERGER OF HOTEL ENTITIES

The **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** has approved the **merger** of **AAPC India Hotel Management Pvt Ltd** (AAPC India), **Caddie Hotels Pvt Ltd** (Caddie), **Triguna Hospitality Ventures (India) Pvt Ltd** (Triguna), **Srilanand Mansions Pvt Ltd** (SMPL), **Techpark Hotels Pvt Ltd** (Techpark), and **Accent Hotels Pvt Ltd** (Accent) into **InterGlobe Hotels Pvt Ltd (IGH)**.

Competition Commission of India (CCI):

Chairperson – Ravneet Kaur

Headquarters – New Delhi

Established in – 2003

JUPITER WAGONS PARTNERS WITH ITALIAN FIRMS

Jupiter Wagons Ltd (JWL) has partnered with **Italy-based Lucchini RS Holding SpA** and **SIMEST (Italian Society for Enterprises Abroad) SpA** to set up **India’s first fully integrated private-sector railwheel manufacturing platform**, named **Jupiter Tatravagonka Railwheel Factory Pvt Ltd (JTRWF)**.

Under this deal, **Lucchini RS** and **SIMEST** will acquire a **combined 25% stake** in **JTRWF** for an investment of **₹307 crore (EUR 28 million)**.

FIRST PRIVATELY BRANDED TRAIN

The **Lucknow-Delhi-Lucknow Tejas Express**, operated by the **Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)**, is set to become **India’s first privately branded passenger train**.

The **semi-high-speed train** will be temporarily renamed as the **‘Sprite’ Tejas Express** for a duration of **6 months**.

NEW SUBSIDIARY BY AACL

Adani Airport City Ltd (AACL), a **step-down wholly-owned subsidiary of Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL)**, has incorporated **AACL Global IFSC Ltd** as a new wholly-owned subsidiary of **Adani Airport Holdings Ltd (AAHL)**.

IBM ESTABLISHES AI CENTERS

International Business Machines (IBM) Corporation and **Manipal Institute of Technology (MIT) Bengaluru** have inaugurated the **‘IBM-MIT AI Lab-MAHE’** at the **Bengaluru campus**.

Additionally, **IBM Corporation** and **CHRIST University** have announced the establishment of the **‘IBM Innovation Center for AI’** to **promote AI education, research, and innovation**.

International Business Machines (IBM):

Chairman and CEO – **Arvind Krishna**

Headquarters – **New York, USA**

Established in – **1911**

AIRTEL BUSINESS PARTNERS WITH ITI LTD

Airtel Business, the enterprise arm of **Bharti Airtel**, has partnered with **ITI Ltd** to **accelerate enterprise digital transformation and strengthen digital infrastructure in India**.

CCI APPROVES ACQUISITIONS

The **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** has approved the acquisition of a **23% equity shareholding** in **TM International Logistics Ltd** by **Tata Steel Ltd**.

Additionally, the **CCI** has approved the acquisition of a **specific equity shareholding** in **Bharti Life Insurance Company Ltd** by **Prudential Corporation Holdings Ltd**.

Competition Commission of India (CCI):

Chairperson – **Ravneet Kaur**

Headquarters – **New Delhi**

Established in – **2003**

BOFA PARTNERS WITH JIO FINANCIAL SERVICES

Bank of America Corporation (BofA) has entered into a **Joint Venture (JV) agreement** with **Jio Financial Services Ltd (JFSL)**. Under the JV, BofA will acquire up to a **49.9% stake** in **Jio Credit Ltd (JCL)**.

Jio:

Chairman – **Akash Ambani**

MD – **Pankaj M Pawar**

Headquarters – **Navi Mumbai**

Established in – **2007**

COCHIN SHIPYARD DELIVERS MS MARIA

Cochin Shipyard Ltd (CSL) has delivered **‘MS Maria’**, the **second of eight Multi-Purpose Vessels (MPVs)** in the **‘HS EcoFreighter’** series, to the **Germany-based** shipping firm **HS Schiffahrts UG & Co KG**.

The vessel was designed by the **Netherlands-based Groot Ship Design** and constructed by CSL in compliance with the classification rules of **Det Norske Veritas (DNV)**. It is a **7,000 Deadweight Tonnage (DWT)** ice-class vessel featuring a raked stem with the **‘Groot Crossbow’** design.

BHEL PARTNERS WITH HYSTAR AS

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has entered into a strategic collaboration with **Norway-based Hystar AS** for the **phased indigenisation and local manufacturing of Proton Exchange Membrane (PEM) electrolyser systems**.

The partnership aims to support **green hydrogen projects in India** by establishing **localized production capabilities** for the advanced electrolyser technology.

Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL):

CEO – **K Sadashiv Murthy**

Headquarters – **New Delhi**

Established in – **1964**

LARGEST AI FACTORY

Larsen & Toubro, through its AI infrastructure arm **Vyoma.AI**, has bagged a contract worth between **₹10,000 crore and ₹15,000 crore** from the **USA-based Together AI (Together Computer Inc)** to build the **largest single-cluster NVIDIA B300 AI factory in India**.

The facility will be established at the **L&T data centre campus in Chennai**, and is designed to deploy **10,000 NVIDIA B300 Graphics Processing Units (GPUs)**.

Larsen & Toubro (L&T):
MD & CEO – SN Subrahmanyam
Headquarters – Mumbai
Established in – 1946

DEAL WITH PORSCHE

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has acquired **Germany-based MHP Management- und IT-Beratung GmbH (MHP)**, a subsidiary of **Porsche AG**, for **€320 million**.

Additionally, **Porsche AG** has entered into a **5-year strategic agreement** with **TCS** valued at **€1.25 billion**.

GAS PROJECT CONTRACT

L&T Energy Hydrocarbon Onshore (LTEH Onshore) has secured a contract worth **over ₹15,000 crore** from a company based in **West Asia** for a **gas compression facilities project**. The project was bagged against a letter of award issued for the **FY26**.

GOOGLE ACQUIRES SPIRIT AIRLINES ASSETS

Google has emerged as the **successful bidder** in a **bankruptcy auction** to acquire **internal enterprise data and software assets** of **Spirit Airlines** for **\$10 million**. The company intends to use these assets for **product development and training AI models**.

RIL PARTNERS WITH ROLLS-ROYCE

Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) has partnered with **UK-based Rolls-Royce Ltd** to design, develop, and manufacture an **indigenous combat engine** for the **Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) programme** of India.

It is to be noted that the collaboration also aims to explore the establishment of a dedicated **Aerospace Gas Turbine Complex** in India, which will serve as a **Centre of Excellence (CoE)** for power and propulsion technology.

NIKA2 KISAN DRONE

AkinAnalytics, a **Hyderabad-based** women-led deep technology (DeepTech) and defence technology startup, has launched an indigenous drone named **“NIKA2” Kisan Medium Drone**.

The drone, unveiled by **Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan**, is designed to provide **technology-driven solutions for farmers and field-intensive industries**.

SCIENCE

SPACEX STARSHIP TEST FLIGHT COMPLETED

SpaceX has successfully completed the **13th integrated test flight** of its **Starship launch system** from **Starbase, Texas, USA**. The mission, marking the **second test flight** of **Starship Version 3 (V3)**, involved the **first-ever deployment** of **20 next-generation Starlink V3 satellites**.

The launch system concluded the flight with a **controlled splashdown** in the **Indian Ocean**. It is to be noted that the **NASA** monitored the mission to evaluate its suitability for **future ‘Artemis’ lunar missions**.

Space Exploration Technologies Corporation (SpaceX):
CEO, CTO, & Chairman – Elon Musk
Headquarters – Hawthorne, California, USA
Established in – 2002

CHEAP AI MODEL

DeepSeek has launched its **‘V4-Flash model’**, claimed to be the **most cost-effective AI model globally**.

The **Application Programming Interface (API)** of the model is priced at **\$0.14 per million input tokens** and **\$0.28 per million output tokens**.

ALIBABA UNVEILS NEW AI MODEL

Alibaba has unveiled its largest and most capable AI model named “Qwen3.8-Max”. The model features 2.4 trillion parameters. It is positioned behind Moonshot AI’s Kimi K3, which comprises 2.8 trillion parameters.

ZSI CATALOGUE OF BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has completed the first detailed Catalogue of Lepidoptera in India.

As per the catalogue, India hosts 13,703 species of Lepidoptera across 3,705 genera, which includes 1,417 species of butterflies and 12,286 species of moths. The project also includes a dedicated catalogue for the moth superfamily Geometroidea, identifying 2,205 species within the country.

This catalogue comprises 22 volumes and provides an updated taxonomic inventory of butterflies and moths. The final volume was authored by ZSI taxonomists Rahul Joshi and Navneet Singh and published in the international journal Zootaxa.

Zoological Survey of India (ZSI):
Director – Dr Dhriti Banerjee
Headquarters – Kolkata
Established in – 1890

AFRICAN SWINE FEVER VACCINE

Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has unveiled ‘MA-104’, India’s first indigenous live attenuated vaccine against African Swine Fever (ASF). The vaccine is developed by the ICAR-National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (ICAR-NIHSAD) in Bhopal.

It is to be noted that ASF is a highly contagious viral disease affecting both domestic and wild pigs, with a mortality rate of nearly 100%.

GENOME OF PIGEONPEA VARIETY

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has developed India’s first fully annotated Telomere-to-Telomere (T2T) reference genome of the pigeonpea (Cajanus cajan L. Millsp.) variety ‘Asha’.

This genome has been approved as the global reference genome to facilitate the development of climate-resilient, high-yielding, and nutritionally enriched pigeonpea varieties.

Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR):
Director – Dr. Mangi Lal Jat
Headquarters – New Delhi
Established in – 1929

SPACEWALK BY ANIL MENON

Anil Menon, an Indian-origin astronaut of the NASA, has successfully completed his inaugural spacewalk, designated as “US Spacewalk 96”, outside the International Space Station (ISS).

The Extravehicular Activity (EVA) lasted for 6 hours and 27 minutes, and was conducted alongside veteran NASA astronaut Jessica Meir. With this achievement, Menon joins Sunita Williams and Raja Chari in the group of Indian-origin astronauts who have performed spacewalks.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA):
Administrator (acting) – Sean Duffy
Headquarters – Washington DC, USA
Established in – 1958

NASA INVITES ISRO

NASA has invited ISRO to join its Moon Base programme, which aims to establish the first permanent human outpost near the lunar South Pole.

The invitation was extended during the 9th India-US Civil Space Joint Working Group (CSJWG) meeting held at the ISRO Headquarters in Bengaluru.

AI FRAMEWORK TO IDENTIFY CANCER CELLS

Indian researchers led by Dr Shubhasis Haldar have developed a deep-learning AI framework named “ACSCeND” to identify hidden cancer stem-like cells (CSCs).

The framework was developed through a collaboration between the SN Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences (SNBNCBS) and Ashoka University.

EVEREST ROCKET ENGINE BY ASTROBASE

Astrobase Space Technologies Pvt Ltd has unveiled “EVEREST”, the **first privately developed 800 kilonewton (kN) Full-Flow Staged Combustion (FFSC) rocket engine** of **India**, in **Bengaluru**. The engine is specifically designed for **reusable medium-lift launch vehicles and advanced orbital missions**.

It is to be noted that Astrobase completed **sub-scale and turbopump tests** during **2025-26**, with plans to produce around **20 engines** and conduct **full-scale hot-fire testing** in **2026**.

SRAVAANI LAUNCHED

The **SPIRE Lab of the IISc Bengaluru**, in collaboration with the **AI and Robotics Technology Park (ARTPARK)** and **Google**, has launched an **open-source speech AI model** named “**SraVaani**”.

The model is capable of recognizing **65 Indian languages and dialects**. It has been released under a **permissive Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) licence** on the **Hugging Face platform**.

CHATGPT FOR TEENS

OpenAI has introduced “**ChatGPT for Teens**”, a **specialized version** featuring **parental controls and enhanced security measures** to address risks associated with AI chatbots.

The platform **automatically activates** when a user is estimated to be **under 18 years of age** (or self-identifies their age as between **13 and 17 years**).

OpenAI:

CEO – **Sam Altman**

Headquarters – **California, USA**

Established in – **2015**

SPACEX SETS LAUNCH RECORD

SpaceX (Space Exploration Technologies Corporation) has launched **two Falcon 9 rockets**, setting a company record with the **shortest launch gap of 38.5 minutes**.

The first rocket carried **8 Globalstar satellites** and was launched from the **Canaveral Space Force Station** in Florida, USA. The second rocket carried the classified **United States Space Force (USSF)-366 mission** for the USSF and was launched from the **Vandenberg Space Force Base** in California, USA.

Space Exploration Technologies Corporation (SpaceX):

CEO, CTO, & Chairman – **Elon Musk**

Headquarters – **California, USA**

Established in – **2002**

LARGEST FUSION MAGNET

China has successfully completed the **full-parameter testing** of the **world’s largest superconducting fusion magnet**.

The magnet is designed to act as an “**invisible magnetic cage**” within the next-generation **Burning Plasma Experimental Superconducting Tokamak (BEST) reactor**.

INDIA UNVEILS JAL-YAAN

India has unveiled “**JAL-YAAN**”, the **first solar-integrated and self-powered mobile water purification van** of the country, in **Nagpur, Maharashtra**. The vehicle was jointly developed by the **CSIR-Central Salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute (CSIR-CSMCRI)** and **Rite Water Solutions**.

NEW PLANT SPECIES

Researchers **Bhakta Bahadur Raskoti** and **Rita Ale** have discovered a **new Himalayan plant species** named ‘**Impatiens nimspurjai**’ in the **Myagdi district of Nepal**.

The species is named to honour the **Nirmal Purja**, a **Nepali mountaineer**, for his contributions to mountaineering and high-altitude environmental conservation. It is to be noted that he achieved the distinction of **climbing all 14 of the 8,000-metre peaks** of the world in **2019**.

NEW MEGA-EARTH EXOPLANET FOUND

Astronomers have discovered a **170 million-year-old** giant **exoplanet** named “**GJ 523b**” (informally called “**mega-Earth**”). The planet, having a **mass 23 times that of Earth**, is over **2.5 times larger in size**.

It was initially detected by the **NASA Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS)**. It is to be noted that its existence was confirmed by **Max Krof** from the **Wisconsin Center for Origins Research (WiCOR)**.

FIRST INDIGENOUS RDE

D-Propulse Aerospace Pvt Ltd has successfully demonstrated the **first indigenously developed 5 kilo-Newton (kN) air-breathing Rotating Detonation Engine (RDE)** of India, integrated with an **aerospike nozzle**. The demonstration was held at the **DRDO test facility in Hyderabad**.

It is to be noted that the test validated the **Technology Readiness Level-5 (TRL-5)**, which marks a milestone in the **advanced propulsion capabilities** of the country.

FIRST FRENCH WOMAN

Sophie Adenot, an astronaut of the **European Space Agency (ESA)** from France, has conducted a mission to repair a communications system on the **International Space Station (ISS)**. With this, she becomes the **first French woman to perform a spacewalk**.

It is to be noted that she is also the **second European woman to walk in space**, following **Samantha Cristoforetti** of Italy who completed a spacewalk in **2022**.

IPC LAUNCHES REFERENCE STANDARDS

The **Indian Pharmacopeia Commission (IPC)**, operating under the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)**, has introduced **7 Indian Pharmacopoeia Nitrosamine Impurities Reference Standards** to enhance the **precise detection and quantification of carcinogenic impurities** in pharmaceutical products.

The 7 newly introduced reference standards comprise **N-Nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA)**, **N-Nitrosodiethylamine (NDEA)**, **N-Nitrosoethylisopropylamine (NEIPA)**, **N-Nitrosodibutylamine (NDBA)**, **N-Nitrosomethylphenylamine (NMPA)**, **N-Nitrosodiisopropylamine (NDIPA)**, and **N-Nitroso-N-methyl-4-aminobutyric acid (NMBA)**.

The reference standards were officially launched during an interactive meeting titled “**IP 2026: Perspectives, Suggestions, & Way Forward**” organized by the IPC in **Kolkata, West Bengal**. It is to be noted that **nitrosamines** are classified as **highly potent genotoxic and carcinogenic compounds**, which are substances capable of causing cancer or genetic mutations.

STATE

NEW SKILL TRAINING INSTITUTES

The **Bihar** government and the **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** have announced the establishment of a permanent **National Skill Training Institute for Women (NSTI-W)** in **Patna** and a **Skill India International Centre (SIIC)** in the state.

The **NSTI-W campus at Bihta** will be developed with an investment of **₹99.97 crore** to provide modern infrastructure and industry-aligned training. The **SIIC** will be established with an investment of **₹7 crore**.

ODISHA SIGNS MOUS WITH WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

The **Odisha** government has signed **13 MoUs** with **women entrepreneurs** across various sectors, securing **investment commitments worth ₹913.13 crore**.

The event was organised by the **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Indian Women Network (IWN)** in **Bhubaneswar** to foster a **women-led industrial ecosystem** in the state.

DELHI LAUNCHES LAKSHMI YOJANA

The **Delhi cabinet**, chaired by Chief Minister **Rekha Gupta**, has approved the ‘**Delhi Lakshmi Yojana**’ to provide a **monthly financial assistance of ₹2,500** to eligible women.

The scheme has a **budget outlay of ₹5,110 crore** for the **FY27**. Women **aged 21-60 years** with an **annual family income of up to ₹2.5 lakh** are eligible for the scheme.

TRIPURA GOVT SIGNS MOUS WITH NSE

The **Tripura** govt has signed **3 MoUs** with the **National Stock Exchange of India Ltd (NSE)** to promote **financial literacy, skill development, entrepreneurship, and investment awareness** in the state.

National Stock Exchange (NSE):

Chairman – Srinivas Injeti
MD & CEO – Ashishkumar Chauhan
Headquarters – Mumbai
Established in – 1992

TAMIL NADU GOVT SIGNS MOUS

The Tamil Nadu government has signed 4 MoUs with leading global companies to facilitate the establishment of Global Capability Centres (GCCs), Research & Development (R&D) centres, and a manufacturing facility.

As part of these agreements, the state government has also signed an MoU with the University of Western Australia (UWA) to establish its India campus in Velachery, Chennai, with an investment of ₹125 crore.

DWEEPTI YOJANA LAUNCHED

The Chhattisgarh government has launched the ‘Decentralised Women Empowerment on Energy and Policy for Transformative Inclusion (DWEEPTI) Yojana’.

It is India’s first women-led distributed Renewable Energy (RE) policy, designed to empower rural Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to function as solar entrepreneurs. With technical support from Tata, 35 women from SHGs have been trained in rooftop solar installation, forming the first cohort of ‘Solar Didis’.

ODISHA SIGNS MOU FOR BHARATNET

The Odisha government has signed a tripartite agreement with Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN) under the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) to implement the amended BharatNet programme in the state. The project has an outlay of ₹3,384.8 crore.

Additionally, the state government has also signed an MoU with the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) to collaborate in the field of emerging technologies.

FIRST GLASS BRIDGE

Bajrang Setu, North India’s first glass suspension bridge, has been constructed in Rishikesh, Uttarakhand, over the Ganga River. Replacing the iconic Lakshman Jhula, the 132-meter-long bridge connects Tapovan in Tehri Garhwal and Jonk in Pauri Garhwal.

FOOD PRODUCT BANS

The Tamil Nadu government has banned the manufacture, storage, distribution, and sale of artificially coloured appalams, vadams, and fryums in the state.

Separately, the Maharashtra government has enforced a one-year ban on the manufacturing, processing, storage, transportation, distribution, and sale of analogue (non-dairy or synthetic) paneer.

CARBON TRADING SCHEME

The Tamil Nadu government has introduced the Tamil Nadu Soil Conservation Mission and a carbon trading scheme for farmers in its Agriculture Budget 2026-27.

The Tamil Nadu Soil Conservation Mission has been allocated ₹600 crore. A demonstration phase for the carbon trading scheme has also been launched with an allocation of ₹60 lakh to cover 2,000 acres, aimed at establishing monitoring and verification protocols.

ANDHRA PRADESH AND AUSTRALIA SIGN MOUS

The Andhra Pradesh government and Australia have signed 4 MoUs in Amaravati to boost cooperation in sectors like clean energy, advanced manufacturing, inclusive education, student mental health, and skill development.

Under this partnership, the IIT Tirupati and the University of New South Wales (UNSW), Sydney, have agreed to establish a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Solar Manufacturing at the IIT Tirupati campus.

VIDYA VAHINI SCHEME

The Delhi government has launched the ‘Vidya Vahini’ scheme to empower female students in the national capital.

Under this initiative, the government provides free bicycles to Class 9 girl students enrolled in state-run government schools.

TAMIL NADU BUDGET FOR FY27

N Marie Wilson, the Finance Minister of Tamil Nadu, has presented the maiden budget of the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK)-led government for the FY27. The state government has set a target to achieve a \$1.5 trillion economy by 2031.

VETRI VAANMAGAL SCHEME

The **Tamil Nadu** government has launched the ‘**Vetri Vaanmagal**’ scheme to **train women farmers in drone operation**, promote **precision agriculture**, and create **high-tech employment opportunities** in the rural economy.

COES FOR NATURAL FARMING

The **Gujarat** government has approved an **allocation of ₹20 crore** for the **FY27** to establish **four Centres of Excellence (CoEs)** to expand **natural farming** practices across the state. The CoEs will be set up in the districts of **Navsari, Morbi, Bhavnagar, and Chhota Udepur**.

AB-PMJAY LAUNCHED IN WEST BENGAL

The **West Bengal** government has launched the **Ayushman Bharat – PM Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY)** along with the ‘**Mukhyamantri Swasthya Bima Yojana**’ to **expand healthcare coverage**.

It is to be noted that AB-PMJAY is a **centrally sponsored health assurance scheme** launched in **2018** under the Ayushman Bharat (AB) initiative. The scheme provides a health cover of up to **₹5 lakh** per family per annum for **secondary and tertiary care hospitalization** to eligible families.

SANDHYA KIRAN SCHEME

The **Karnataka** Cabinet has approved the ‘**Sandhya Kiran**’ scheme, a **contributory cashless healthcare initiative** under the **Ayushman Bharat-Arogya Karnataka (AB-ArK)** program.

The scheme is designed for **state pensioners below 70 years of age** and their families in **Bengaluru**. It will cover **4.93 lakh beneficiaries**, providing an **annual family health cover** of **₹5 lakh** along with standardized treatment packages and rates.

COE FOR ERI SILK

Meghalaya CM **Conrad K Sangma** has inaugurated a **Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Eri Silk Weaving** at the **Integrated Textile Tourism Complex (ITTC)** in **Ri Sai, Nongpoh**.

The inauguration was held on **August 7** as part of the **12th National Handloom Day** celebrations and the conclusion of **National Handloom Week**. It is to be noted that **Eri Silk**, also known as “**Ryndia**”, is a silk variety **indigenous to Meghalaya**.

AP SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH CSIR-NGRI

The **Andhra Pradesh** government has signed an agreement with the **Council of Scientific & Industrial Research-National Geophysical Research Institute (CSIR-NGRI)** for the **exploration of critical mineral resources**.

The collaboration focuses on identifying and assessing deposits of **Lithium (Li)** and **Gallium (Ga)** in the **Kadapa Basin**.

TAMIL NADU INVESTMENT CONCLAVE

The **Tamil Nadu** government has signed **97 MoUs** worth over **₹67,542 crore** during the **first major investment conclave** of the state. These projects are scheduled for **implementation within 6 months to 1 year**.

Key investments include **₹1,000 crore** by **Titan Company Ltd (Titan)** in **Hosur** and **₹2,500 crore** by the **Hinduja Group**, which includes a **200 megawatt (MW) solar, wind, and battery-based renewable energy project**.

VIDYARTHI SAHAYAHASTA LAUNCHED

The **Karnataka** government has launched the ‘**Vidyarthi Sahayahasta**’ scheme to provide **professional education opportunities** for rural students in the state.

Eligibility is restricted to students who studied from **Class 1 to 10** in **rural government schools**. The scheme provides a **7.5% reservation** within the **existing 15% rural quota** for admission to **professional courses** like medical and engineering.

HP GOVERNMENT SIGNS MOU WITH ISB

Himachal Pradesh government has signed a **5-year MoU** with the **Bharti Institute of Public Policy at the Indian School of Business (ISB-BIPP)** to unlock the **forest and pastoral economy** potential of the state, estimated at **₹22,600 crore**.

The initiative focuses on using **science and technology-enabled governance** for the management of natural resources.

UP-JAPAN INVESTMENT MEET

The **Uttar Pradesh** government have signed **five MoUs** with **Yamanashi Prefecture of Japan** to **enhance bilateral cooperation in skills, energy, tourism, industry, and institutional ties**. The agreements were signed during the **UP-Japan Investment Meet 2026** held in **Lucknow**.

MOU WITH GERMAN STATE OF HESSE

The **Maharashtra** government has signed an **MoU** with the **German State of Hesse** to **strengthen bilateral cooperation**. The partnership focuses on key sectors including **investment, industry, innovation, employment, and skill development**.

BIDESH SIKHYABRUTI SCHEME

The **Odisha** government has launched the ‘**Bidesh Sikhyabruti**’ scholarship scheme to provide **financial assistance of up to ₹25 lakh per year** to meritorious **Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST)** students pursuing **higher education abroad**.

PMGSY ROADS IN UDHAMPUR

Union Minister Jitendra Singh has laid the foundation stone for **road projects worth ₹1,503 crore** under the **PM Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)** in the **Udhampur Lok Sabha constituency**.

The project comprises **110 roads** under **PMGSY-Phase IV (Batch 1)** covering a total distance of **598.455 km**. The initiative aims to strengthen rural connectivity across the **Udhampur-Kathua-Doda-Kishtwar region**.

APPOINTMENTS

NEW APPOINTMENT AS DGAFMS

Air Marshal Sandeep Thareja has been appointed as the **Director General Armed Forces Medical Services (DGAFMS)**, effective from **August 31, 2026**. Currently serving as the **Director General Medical Services (Air)**, he succeeds **Vice Admiral Arti Sarin**.

IFSCA CHAIRMAN TENURE EXTENDED

The Government of India has extended the tenure of **K Rajaraman** as the **Chairman** of the **International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA)** until **October 2028**.

NEW CGDA

Alka Nangia Arora has assumed charge as the **Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA)**. She succeeds **Anugraha Narayana Das**.

APPOINTMENTS IN ARMED FORCES

Vice Admiral AN Pramod has **assumed charge** as the **Deputy Chief of Naval Staff**, succeeding **Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti**.

In other event, **Air Marshal Tejpal Singh** has **assumed the appointment** of **Deputy Chief of the Air Staff**, succeeding **Air Marshal Awadhesh Kumar Bharti**.

NEW AMBASSADOR TO IRAN

Vishwesh Negi has been appointed as the next **Ambassador of India to Iran**.

NEW APPOINTMENT IN INDIAN NAVY

Vice Admiral Manish Chadha has **assumed charge** as the **Director General Naval Operations (DGNO)**. He **succeeds Vice Admiral AN Pramod**.

NEW CEO OF INDIGO

Willie Walsh has assumed charge as the **CEO of IndiGo**. He succeeds **Pieter Elbers**.

Prior to this, he served as the **Director General** of the **International Air Transport Association (IATA)**.

NEW DG FOR GSI

Varsha Ashok Aglawe has assumed charge as the **54th Director General (DG)** of the **Geological Survey of India (GSI)**, an organization under the **Ministry of Mines (MoM)**.

She succeeds **Asit Saha**. It is to be noted that she is the **first woman to lead the GSI**.

NEW CEO FOR AIR INDIA

Air India has appointed **Tewolde Gebremariam** as its new **CEO and MD**. He succeeds **Campbell Wilson**.

KEY APPOINTMENTS

The **Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT)** under the **Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions (MoPP&P)** has approved the foreign postings of senior bureaucrats. **Rahul Jain** has been appointed as the **Senior Adviser to the Executive Director (India)** at the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** for **3 years**.

Baldeo Purushartha has been appointed as the **Senior Adviser to the Executive Director (ED)** at the **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** in **Manila, Philippines**, for **3 years**. **Satyajit Mohanty** has been appointed as the **Representative of India** in the Council of the **International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)** for **3 years**.

NEW AMBASSADOR TO ETHIOPIA

Devesh Uttam has been appointed as the new **Ambassador of India to Ethiopia**. He succeeds **Anil Kumar Rai**.

AS RAJEEV AS ACTING CVC

AS Rajeev, previously the **Vigilance Commissioner** in the **Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)**, has assumed charge as the **Acting Central Vigilance Commissioner** on **August 3, 2026**.

He **succeeds Praveen Kumar Srivastava**. Prior to joining the CVC, he served as the **MD and CEO of the Bank of Maharashtra**.

EXTENSION AS CABINET SECRETARY

The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)** has approved a **1-year extension** for **TV Somanathan** as the **Cabinet Secretary of India**. He is the **33rd Cabinet Secretary** and succeeded **Rajiv Gauba**.

EXTENSION FOR ED DIRECTOR

The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)** has approved a **one-year extension** for **Rahul Navin**, the Director of the **Enforcement Directorate (ED)**, until **August 13, 2027**.

NEW APPOINTMENT IN AIRTEL PAYMENTS BANK

Shabnam Sinha has been appointed as the **Chairperson** of **Airtel Payments Bank (APB)** for **3 years** starting from October 1, 2026.

She succeeds **Sunil Bharti Mittal** (**founder and Chairman of Bharti Enterprises**) who will exit the board of APB on September 30, 2026.

N CHANDRASEKARAN TO STEP DOWN

Natarajan Chandrasekaran will step down as the **Executive Chairman of Tata Sons** on **February 20, 2027**, upon the completion of his tenure.

It is to be noted that he first assumed the role of Chairman in **2017**, succeeding **Cyrus Mistry**, and was re-appointed for a second term in 2022.

NEW APPOINTMENTS IN BRICS CCI

The **Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BRICS CCI)** has appointed **Dr Eluri Sreedhar** as an **Honorary Advisor** and **Yogesh Sharma** as a **National Advisor**.

AWARDS

NASI YOUNG SCIENTIST AWARD

Professor Karthikeyan Lanka from the **IIT Bombay** has been selected for the **National Academy of Sciences, India (NASI) Young Scientist Award 2026**.

VIKRAM SARABHAI MEDAL

Dr. Annapurni Subramaniam, the Director of the **Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA)** in **Bengaluru**, has been awarded the **Vikram Sarabhai Medal 2026** by the **Committee on Space Research (COSPAR)**. The award was presented at the **46th COSPAR Scientific Assembly** in **Florence, Italy**.

She is the **first Indian woman scientist** and the **third woman globally** to receive this international honour. She is also the **fourth Indian recipient** of the medal, following **UR Rao (1996)**, **Gurbax Lakhina (2014)**, and **Anil Bhardwaj (2024)**.

DR MS SWAMINATHAN AWARD

P Pechiyammal and Govindhammal from **Tamil Nadu** have been jointly conferred the **“Dr. MS Swaminathan Award for Environment Protection 2026”**.

LIFETIME LIBERTARIAN AWARD

Gurcharan Das, an **Indian author**, has become the **first Indian** to be conferred with the **‘Lifetime Libertarian Award’** by the **US-based Liberty International**.

He received the award during the **40th Liberty International World Conference** held in **Kathmandu, Nepal**. It is to be noedt that he is the author of the best-selling book titled **“India Grows at Night”**.

DIRAC MEDAL FOR DEEPAK DHAR

Prof. Deepak Dhar has been awarded the 2026 Dirac Medal by the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) in Trieste, Italy. He shared the award with Bernard Derrida, Marc Mezard, and Haim Sompolinsky.

He is the second scientist working in India to receive the Dirac Medal, following Ashoke Sen who won it in 2012. It is to be noted that Professor Dhar was also the first Indian to be awarded the Boltzmann Medal in 2022.

LADAKH STATE AWARD

Dr Padma Gurmet has been conferred the Ladakh State Award for the year 2025 in recognition of his contributions to the preservation, promotion, and development of the Sowa-Rigpa system of medicine.

SANGEET NATAK AKADEMI AWARDS PRESENTED

President Droupadi Murmu has presented the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowships (Akademi Ratna) and Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards (Akademi Puraskar) for the years 2024 and 2025 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

A total of 115 eminent artists were conferred with the awards and fellowships during the investiture ceremony, including 7 artists who were awarded the Akademi Fellowship. It is to be noted that the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship is restricted to a maximum of 40 living individuals at any given time.

PMIS INDUSTRY AWARDS

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has organised the “PMIS Industry Awards 2026” in New Delhi to recognize partner companies participating in the Prime Minister Internship Scheme (PMIS). Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd was named the “Overall Industry Champion” during the ceremony.

HDFC Bank was conferred the “Pre-Internship Excellence Award”, and Shriram Finance Ltd received the “Internship Management Excellence Award”. Additionally, IBM India Pvt Ltd was recognized for “Innovation in Program Implementation”, while Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd (POWERGRID) was honoured for “Innovation in Exit Pathways”.

Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd:

CEO – Anish Shah
Headquarters – Mumbai
Established in – 1945

GAJ GAURAV AWARDS 2026

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has conferred the “Gaj Gaurav Awards 2026” during the national celebrations of World Elephant Day in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

7 Mahouts and Elephant Handlers from Jaldapara National Park in West Bengal were honoured with the award. They were recognised for their exceptional bravery during severe flash floods.

YOUNGEST MALE CA

Lakshmanan Meyyappan, an Indian-origin finance professional based in Dubai, has been recognized by the Guinness World Records as the youngest male Chartered Accountant (CA) in the world. He achieved this milestone at the age of 16 years and 141 days.

NATIONAL ANUBHAV AWARDS

Union Minister Jitendra Singh has presented the 9th National Anubhav Awards at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi. The awards were conferred alongside the 60th Pre-Retirement Counselling (PRC) Workshop.

A total of 15 awardees were honoured, including 5 Anubhav awardees and 10 Jury Certificate winners. The recipients of the National Anubhav Awards received a medal, a certificate, and a cash prize of ₹10,000. It is to be noted that the ‘Handbook on Pension Mitra’ and the operational guidelines for the ‘Nationwide Digital Life Certificate (DLC) Campaign-5’ were also released during the event.

NATIONAL SPORTS AWARDS 2025

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has announced the National Sports Awards 2025. The winners were selected based on the recommendations of a committee chaired by Arun Kumar Mishra, a former judge of the Supreme Court.

A total of **17 athletes** have been selected for the **Arjuna Award**, including **Tejaswin Shankar** (Athletics), **Divya Deshmukh** (Chess), **Treesa Jolly** (Badminton), and **Gayatri Gopichand** (Badminton). **I Arumainayagam**, a former footballer and 1962 Asian Games gold medallist, was honoured with the **Arjuna Award (Lifetime)** for his long-term contributions.

The **Dronacharya Award** (Regular) was presented to **Parveer Singh** (Athletics), **Chhote Lal Yadav** (Boxing), and **Neha Nandkumar Chavan** (Shooting), while the **Lifetime category** recognized **Dharmendra Singh Yadav** (Boxing) and **Virender Kumar** (Wrestling). Additionally, the **Army Paralympic Node** in Pune, received the **Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar**.

DOCTORS NOMINATED FOR PAKISTAN AWARD

Dr Jal Ratanji Patel (a physician) and **Dr Jal Dhaybho-Koo** (a radiologist), **Mumbai-based Parsi doctors**, have been nominated for the “**Nishan-e-Imtiaz**”, the **highest civilian award of Pakistan**.

The nomination is given recognising their role in **maintaining the confidentiality of the terminal illness** of **Muhammad Ali Jinnah** prior to the **Partition of India in 1947**.

MISS UNIVERSE INDIA

Kaziah Liz Mejo, a **19-year-old from Kerala**, has won the **Miss Universe India 2026** title at an event organised by the **Glamanand Group** in **Jaipur, Rajasthan**. With this, she has become the **first woman from Kerala to secure the title**.

It is to be noted that she will officially represent India at the **75th Miss Universe pageant**, scheduled to be held in **November 2026** in **Puerto Rico**.

FEDERATION OF INDIAN PUBLISHERS AWARDS

The **Publications Division** under the **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB)** has won **seven awards for excellence in book production** at the **46th edition of the Federation of Indian Publishers (FIP) Awards 2026**.

The accolades secured by the division comprise **four Second Prizes and three Third Prizes** across various categories.

SPORTS

AJINKYA RAHANE RETIRES FROM CRICKET

Ajinkya Rahane, former Indian captain and veteran cricketer, has **announced his retirement from all formats of cricket**.

He **captained Mumbai to its 42nd Ranji Trophy title in the 2023-24 season** and **served as the captain of Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) for his final two seasons in the Indian Premier League (IPL)**. It is to be noted that he **holds the world record as the only fielder to take 8 catches in a single Test match**.

INDIA AT ISSF WORLD CUP

India secured the **3rd position** with a total of **4 medals**, including **1 gold, 1 silver, and 2 bronze medals** at the **International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup**, held at the **Fuyang Yinhu Sports Centre** in **Hangzhou, China**.

Esha Singh has won the **gold medal** in the **Women’s 25m Pistol event**. **China** topped the **medal tally** with **18 medals** (7 gold), followed by the **USA**.

International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF):
President – Luciano Rossi
Headquarters – Munich, Germany
Established in – 1907

COMMONWEALTH GAMES 2026

India finished **4th in the medal tally** at the **23rd Commonwealth Games (CWG)** held in **Glasgow, Scotland**, with a total of **39 medals** (**13 gold, 17 silver, and 9 bronze**). **Australia** topped the medal table with **171 medals (70 gold)**, followed by England and Canada, while Scotland finished 5th.

India secured **13 gold medals** across **boxing (7), para-athletics and athletics (3), judo (2), and weightlifting (1)**. In boxing, India set a record for the **most gold medals by any nation at a single CWG** with 7 wins by **Preeti Pawar, Sakshi Chaudhary, Jaismine Lamboria** (closing flag-bearer), **Priya Ghanghas, Arundhati Choudhary, Sachin Siwach, and Ankush Panghal**.

In Judo, **Asmita Dey and Harsh Singh** captured the nation’s **first-ever gold medals** in the sport. **Saikhom Mirabai Chanu** won gold in the **women’s 48kg weightlifting category**, achieving a **historic hat-trick of CWG titles** and becoming the second Indian athlete after **Vinesh Phogat** to accomplish this.

In para-athletics and athletics, **Sharmila Dhankar** (Women’s Shot Put F57), **Soman Rana** (Men’s Shot Put F57), and **Dilip Gavit** (Men’s 100m T47) won gold, with Gavit setting a **new CWG record**.

The 23rd CWG, held under the patronage of **King Charles III**, featured **10 sports and 6 integrated para-sports**, with Gabon and Togo making their debut, and **‘Finnie’** serving as the official mascot. Scotland’s **Melanie Woods** (Para-athletics) was honoured with the **David Dixon Award**.

It is to be noted that the **2030 CWG (Centenary Edition)** will be hosted in **Ahmedabad, Gujarat**, marking India’s second time hosting the event following the 2010 edition in New Delhi.

FIRST INDIAN WOMAN

Harshita Jakhar, a **19-year-old cyclist** from **Rajasthan**, becomes the **first Indian woman to feature in the Tour de France Femmes**.

She was **selected by the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI)** as **one of only 8 riders worldwide** for the **UCI World Cycling Talent Programme**.

WORLD JUNIOR SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIP

Anahat Singh has become the **first Indian to win the women’s singles title** at the **World Junior Squash Championships 2026**. She defeated **Ruqayya Salem** of **Egypt** with a score of **3-0** in the final held at **Niagara-on-the-Lake, Canada**.

Mohamad Zakaria of **Egypt** has **successfully defended his title in the men’s singles category**.

SAINT LOUIS RAPID AND BLITZ TITLE

R Praggnanandhaa, an **Indian Grandmaster (GM)**, has won his **maiden Saint Louis Rapid & Blitz title** in **Saint Louis, Missouri, USA**. He finished the tournament ahead of **Javokhir Sindarov** of **Uzbekistan**.

JOHN TURNER ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

John Turner, an **England fast bowler**, has **announced his retirement from professional cricket** at the **age of 25**.

GOLD FOR ARIHA PANGAMBAM

Ariha Pangambam from **Manipur** has won the **first-ever individual gold medal for India** at the **10th Senior Women’s individual event** in the **Aerobic Gymnastics Asian Championships** held in **Tagaytay City, Philippines**. She achieved the gold medal with a top score of **19.1 points**.

MYAS SUSPENDS RECOGNITION OF TTFI

The **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS)** has officially **suspended the recognition** of the **Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI)**.

The suspension was enforced due to the **failure of the TTFI** to **conduct organizational elections** within the mandated timeframe and severe **delays in adopting and uploading audited financial statements**.

ICC PLAYER OF THE MONTH

Justin Greaves and **Hayley Matthews** of **West Indies** have been named the **International Cricket Council (ICC) Men’s and Women’s Player of the Month** for **July 2026**, respectively.

International Cricket Council (ICC):

Chairman – **Jay Shah**

CEO – **Sanjog Gupta**

Headquarters – **Dubai, UAE**

Established in – **1909**

ESPORTS WORLD CUP CHESS

Magnus Carlsen, a **Norwegian Grandmaster (GM)** and world no. 1 representing **Team Liquid**, has won the **“Esports World Cup Chess” title 2026** for the **second consecutive year**. The tournament was held in **Paris, France**, and the winner was awarded a prize of **\$250,000**.

COMMONWEALTH CUE SPORTS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ahmedabad, Gujarat is set to host the **second edition** of the **Commonwealth Cue Sports Championships** in **October 2026** at the **Veer Savarkar Sports Complex**.

The tournament will feature athletes from **45 countries** competing across **5 disciplines** and **10 medal events** in both men and women categories.

NATIONAL COACH ACCREDITATION BOARD

The **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS)** has announced plans to establish the **National Coach Accreditation Board (NCAB)** to **standardize coaching quality and enhance the sports ecosystem in India.**

The initiative to establish the board was recommended by a **specialized task force** led by **Pullela Gopichand.**

DURAND CUP 2026

East Bengal has won the **135th edition** of the **Durand Cup** in **2026**, defeating **Mohun Bagan Super Giant** by **4-1** in the final match held at the **Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan** in **Kolkata.**

It is to be noted that the Durand Cup is recognized as the **oldest football competition in Asia.** The tournament is organized by the **Durand Football Tournament Society (DFTS)** in collaboration with the **All India Football Federation (AIFF)** and the **Indian Armed Forces.**

BWF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The **30th edition** of the **Badminton World Federation (BWF) World Championships (2026)** was hosted at the **Indira Gandhi Arena** in **New Delhi.** **Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand** won the **bronze medal** in the **women’s doubles category,** marking the **first medal for India in this segment since 2011.**

Alex Lanier became the **first French player** to win the **men’s singles title,** while **An Se-young** of **South Korea** secured her **second women’s singles title.**

Badminton World Federation (BWF):
President – K Patama Leeswadtrakul
Headquarters – Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Established in – 1934

BOOKS

COMMEMORATIVE BOOKS ON PRESIDENT MURMU

Vice President CP Radhakrishnan has released **5 commemorative books** documenting the **4-year tenure of President Droupadi Murmu.** These books are published by the **Publications Division** under the **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB).**

The series comprises **‘Rashtrapati Bhavan: Rashtra Ka Bhavan’** (First year), **‘Seva Aur Samvedana’** (Second year), **‘Samaveshi Sahbhagita’** (Third year), **‘Bharatiyata Ka Utsav’** (Fourth year), and **‘Ama Rashtrapati – Ama Gourav’**, a dedicated collection of articles in **Odia.**

BOOK ON CHEETAH CONSERVATION

The book titled **“Bringing the Cheetah Back to India: How Diplomacy Made Conservation’s Big Mission Possible”** authored by **Prashant Agrawal,** an **Indian Forest Service (IFS) officer,** was released.

Published by **Hachette India,** the book chronicles the journey of the ambitious initiative regarding the **reintroduction and conservation of cheetahs in India.**

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF RAM NATH KOVIND

PM Narendra Modi has released the **autobiography** of **Ram Nath Kovind,** the **14th President of India,** titled **“Triumph of the Indian Republic: My Life, My Struggles”** at **Vigyan Bhavan** in New Delhi.

NEW BOOK LAUNCHED

Vice President CP Radhakrishnan has released a book titled **“Sankalp Se Siddhi Ka Modi Yug”** at **Uprashtapati Bhavan** in New Delhi. The book is authored by **Ghanshyam Tiwari,** a **Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament.**

NEW BOOK ON KALIDASA

Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has launched a biographical novel on the renowned poet **Mahakavi Kalidasa,** titled **“Kaho Kalidasa!”** at an event in New Delhi. The novel is authored by **Yugul Joshi** and published by **Manjul Publishing House.**

OBITUARY

JUSTICE MANMOHAN SINGH LIBERHAN PASSED AWAY

Justice Manmohan Singh Liberhan, who headed the **one-man inquiry commission** into the **Babri Masjid demolition** at **Ayodhya,** passed away at the age of 87.

NIRMAL PURJA PASSED AWAY

Nirmal Purja, a **renowned Nepali-British mountaineer,** passed away at the age of 43.

In **2019**, he completed '**Project Possible 14/7**', becoming the **first person to climb all 14 of the world’s eight-thousanders**. He also holds the record as the **first individual to summit Mount Everest, Lhotse, and Makalu within a 48-hour timeframe**.

GLEN HANSARD PASSED AWAY

Glen Hansard, an **Irish singer-songwriter and actor**, passed away at the age of 56.

He was the **founder of the Irish rock band ‘The Frames’**. He, along with Marketa Irglova, won the **80th Academy Award (Oscar) for Best Original Song** in 2008 for the track “**Falling Slowly**” from the 2007 film '**Once**'.

DY PATIL PASSED AWAY

Dnyandeo Yashwantrao (DY) Patil, a veteran **Congress leader, educationist, and former Governor of Tripura and Bihar**, passed away at the age of 90.

He also held additional charge as the **Governor of West Bengal** and was a recipient of the **Padma Shri** in 1991.

KAILASH CHANDRA PANT PASSED AWAY

Kailash Chandra Pant, a renowned **Hindi writer**, passed away at the age of 90. He was conferred the **Padma Shri** in 2026 for his contributions to the field of **Literature and Education**.

DR MP PARAMESWARAN PASSED AWAY

MP Parameswaran, a renowned **Indian nuclear scientist and Marxist theorist**, passed away at the age of 92.

DONALD NELSON PASSED AWAY

Donald Nelson, a **former basketball player and coach** from USA who won 5 **National Basketball Association (NBA)** championships, passed away at the age of 86.

ZHU RONGJI PASSED AWAY

Zhu Rongji, **former Premier of China** who was known for spearheading **major economic reforms** and restructuring state-owned industries, passed away at the age of 97.

SUNIL KUMAR RAZDAN PASSED AWAY

Major General Sunil Kumar Razdan (Retd), a **Kirti Chakra** awardee and the **first wheelchair-borne General of the Indian Army**, passed away at the age of 70.

ESPN CO-FOUNDER PASSED AWAY

William F Rasmussen, the **co-founder of Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN)**, passed away at the age of 93. He launched the network in **1979** along with his son Scott Rasmussen.

RAJA SEN PASSED AWAY

Raja Sen, a veteran **Bengali filmmaker** distinguished for his contributions to **feature films, television, and documentaries**, passed away at the age of 71.

SOWCAR JANAKI PASSED AWAY

Sowcar Janaki, a **legendary South Indian actress**, passed away at the age of 94. She was a recipient of **Padma Shri** in **2022**.

FORMER MP SAJJAN KUMAR PASSED AWAY

Sajjan Kumar, a **former Indian National Congress (INC) Member of Parliament (MP)**, passed away at the age of 80. He served as an MP in the **Lok Sabha for 3 terms**.

DOLLY PARTON PASSED AWAY

Dolly Parton, a renowned **singer from USA** widely known as the '**Queen of Country Music**', passed away at the age of 80.

She was a recipient of **10 Grammy Awards** and was inducted into the **Country Music Hall of Fame** in 1999 and the **Rock & Roll Hall of Fame** in 2022.

KING HARALD V OF NORWAY PASSED AWAY

King Harald V of **Norway** passed away at the age of 89, leading to the immediate succession of his son as **King Haakon VIII**.

Following the succession, **Princess Ingrid Alexandra** has become the **official heir to the throne** of Norway.

DAYS

KARGIL VIJAY DIWAS

Day – July 26
Commemorating – India's victory over Pakistan in the Kargil War in 1999

CRPF FOUNDATION DAY

Day – July 27
Commemorating – To commemorate the establishment of the CRPF in 1939, the largest Central Armed Police Force (CAPF)

WORLD HEPATITIS DAY

Day – July 28
Theme 2026 – “Hepatitis: Let’s Break It Down”
Observed by – WHO
Observed since – 2008

INTERNATIONAL TIGER DAY

Day – July 29
Observed since – 2010

WORLD WIDE WEB DAY

Day – August 1
Observed since – 2010
Commemorating – The launch of the World Wide Web (www) to the public in 1991 (developed by Tim Berners-Lee)

INDIAN ORGAN DONATION DAY

Day – August 3
Observed by – National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO)
Observed since – 2010
Commemorating – To mark the anniversary of India’s 1st successful heart transplant, headed by Dr Panangipalli Venugopal in 1994

INTERNATIONAL CLOUDED LEOPARD DAY

Day – August 4
Observed since – 2018

NATIONAL HANDLOOM DAY

Day – August 07
Observed since – 2015
Commemorating – To commemorate the Swadeshi Movement, launched in 1905

NATIONAL JAVELIN DAY

Day – August 07
Observed since – 2022
Commemorating – Neeraj Chopra’s historic gold medal victory in the Men’s Javelin Throw event at the Tokyo Olympics 2020

WORLD BIOFUEL DAY

Day – August 10
Observed since – 2015
Commemorating – First run of diesel engine (invented by Rudolf Diesel) with peanut oil as fuel

QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT DAY

Day – August 08 and 09
Commemorating – Launch of Quit India Movement in 1942 during India’s independence struggle

WORLD ELEPHANT DAY

Day – August 12
Observed since – 2012

PARTITION HORRORS REMEMBRANCE DAY (VIBHAJAN VIBHISHIKA SMRITI DIWAS)

Day – August 14
Commemorating – The victims and sufferings of people during the partition of India in 1947

WORLD MOSQUITO DAY

Day – August 20
Commemorating – The discovery by Sir Ronald Ross in 1897 that female Anopheles mosquitoes transmit malaria between humans.

WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY DAY

Day – August 19

Theme 2026 – “HOME”

Commemorating – The invention of the daguerreotype process, the first practical photographic process developed by Louis Daguerre in 1837.

SADBHAVANA DIVAS (HARMONY DAY)

Day – August 20

Observed since – 1992

Commemorating – the birth anniversary of former PM Rajiv Gandhi (82nd)

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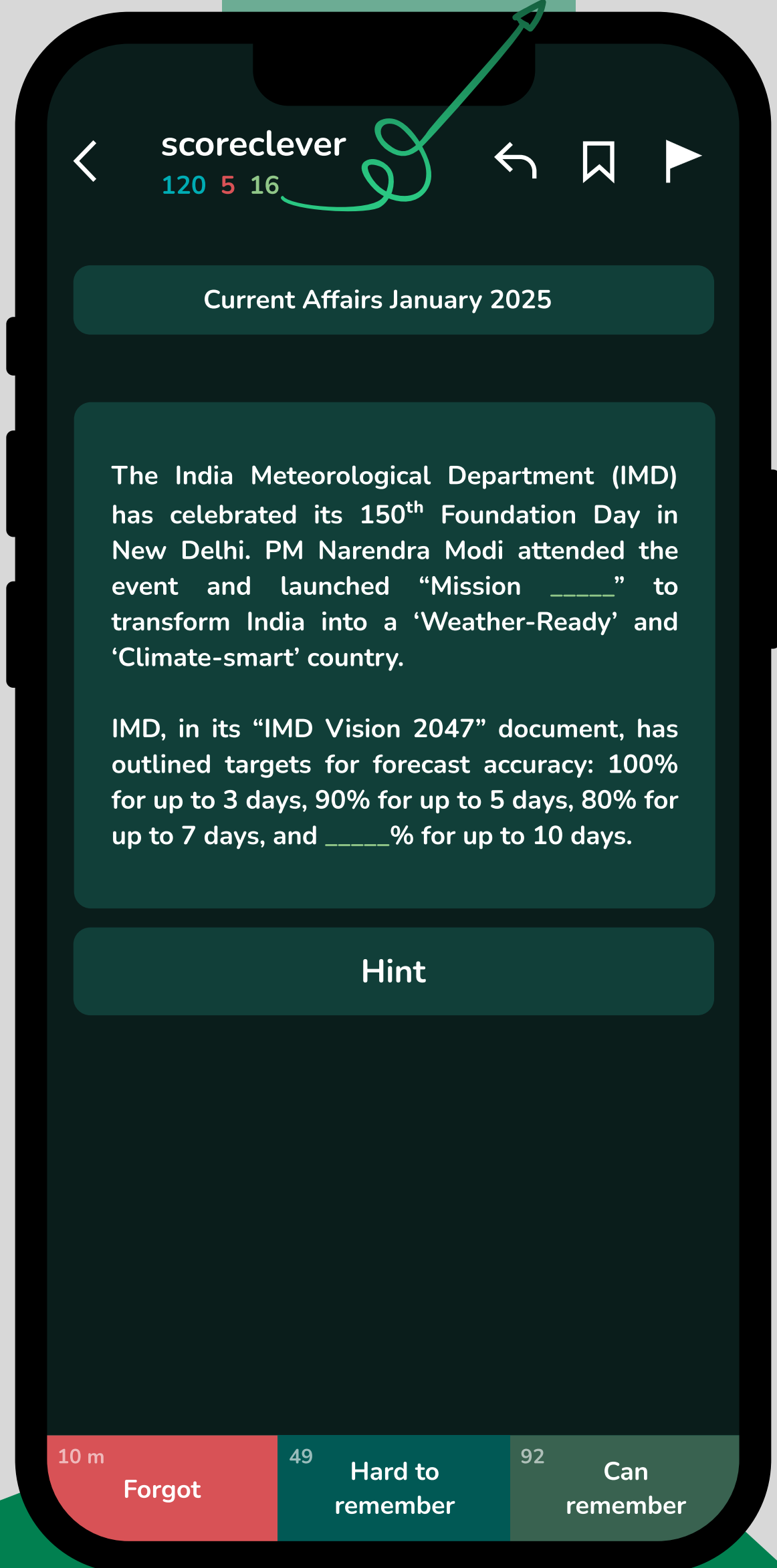
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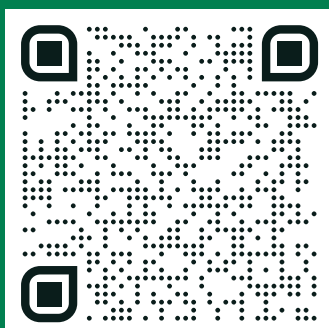
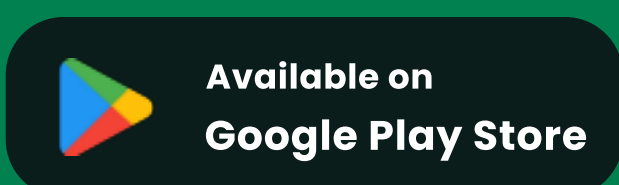
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