CURRENT AFFAIRS PULSE

August 2026

UPSC EDITION

Monthly PIB Compilation

Compiled from Press Information Bureau releases, Government of India

108	14	31
KEY ARTICLES	CATEGORIES	DAYS COVERED

INSIDE THIS EDITION

National	5
International	1
Economy	21
Banking & Finance	6
Polity & Governance	10
Defence	2
Science & Tech	15
Environment	9
Schemes & Committees	29
Summits & Conferences	3
Ranks & Reports	3
Important Days	1
State News	1
History & Culture	2

HIGHLIGHTS

NATIONAL — 01 Aug | p. 3
India Declared Free of LWE-Affected Districts as Naxal Violence Falls to Record Low

ECONOMY — 03 Aug | p. 8
Samudra Manthan: Rs 84,084 Crore National Offshore Exploration Scheme Targets 600 MMTOE

BANKING & FINANCE — 14 Aug | p. 22
CBDC-based food subsidy transfer launched under PMGKAY in Chandigarh and Dadra & Nagar Haveli

POLITY & GOVERNANCE — 31 Aug | p. 30
Bihar and Jharkhand sign Sone river water-sharing MoU, ending 25-year dispute

DEFENCE — 14 Aug | p. 32
Defence production hits Rs 1.78 lakh crore, exports Rs 38,424 crore in FY 2025-26

SCIENCE & TECH — 13 Aug | p. 38
Semicon 2.0 and IndiaAI Mission Drive India's Chip-to-AI Build-Out

Contents

#	Category	Articles	Page
1	National	5 articles	3
2	International	1 article	7
3	Economy	21 articles	8
4	Banking & Finance	6 articles	21
5	Polity & Governance	10 articles	25
6	Defence	2 articles	32
7	Science & Tech	15 articles	34
8	Environment	9 articles	44
9	Schemes & Committees	29 articles	50
10	Summits & Conferences	3 articles	68
11	Ranks & Reports	3 articles	71
12	Important Days	1 article	73
13	State News	1 article	74
14	History & Culture	2 articles	75

Tap a category to jump to it.

1. National

5 articles

India Declared Free of LWE-Affected Districts as Naxal Violence Falls to Record Low

01 Aug

- India became effectively free of Left Wing Extremism-affected districts on 31 March 2026 — a target set on 24 August 2024 and achieved on schedule, per a PIB Backgrounder released 1 August 2026.
- LWE-affected districts fell from 126 in 2014 to zero in 2026; the 'most-affected' category fell from 35 districts to zero over the same period.
- Naxal-related violent incidents fell from 870 (2014) to 33 (as on 29 July 2026); fatalities fell from 310 to 11 over the same period.
- The transformation combined security operations (SAMADHAN doctrine, elite forces), infrastructure expansion (roads, mobile towers, banking), and welfare/rehabilitation for surrendered cadres.

QUICK FACTS

Coordinating ministry	Ministry of Home Affairs, guided since 2015 by the National Policy and Action Plan on LWE
LWE-affected districts	126 (2014) -> 0 (2026); most-affected districts: 35 -> 0
Naxal violent incidents	870 (2014) -> 33 (29 July 2026); fatalities: 310 -> 11

- India declared free of LWE-affected districts on 31 March 2026
- SAMADHAN doctrine (2017) is the current operational counter-LWE strategy
- 37 districts remain classified Legacy/Thrust Districts and 1 as District of Concern for continued monitoring

India Records 20,138 Organ Transplants in 2025; NOTTO Launches e-Pratyaropan Platform

03 Aug

- The 16th Indian Organ Donation Day was observed on 3 August 2026 at a national event organised by the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in New Delhi.
- The NOTTO Annual Report 2025-26 records 20,138 organ transplants in 2025 — the highest ever in a single year, a fourfold rise from 4,990 in 2013 and 6.5 per cent above the 18,911 recorded in 2024.
- India ranks third worldwide in total organ transplants after the United States and China, and retains first position globally in living donor transplants; deceased donor transplants rose more than fourfold from 837 in 2013 to 3,526 in 2025.
- The occasion saw the launch of the Jug Jug Jiyo Abhiyaan awareness campaign, the e-Pratyaropan unified digital platform and the NOTTO mobile application, and the release of the National Brain Stem Death Certification Guidelines and the National Guidelines on Swap Transplantation.
- Aadhaar-verified organ donation pledges have crossed five lakh since the national digital pledge portal was launched in 2023, with over 2.58 lakh citizens pledging during the year.

QUICK FACTS

Occasion	16th Indian Organ Donation Day, observed on 3 August 2026, organised by NOTTO under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in New Delhi
Why 3 August	the day commemorates the first successful heart transplant in India, performed on 3 August 1994 at AIIMS, New Delhi, after the promulgation of the Transplantation of Human Organs Act, 1994
Transplants in 2025	20,138 — the highest ever in a single year, against 18,911 in 2024 and 4,990 in 2013
Deceased donor transplants	3,526 in 2025, up from 837 in 2013
Global position	third in total organ transplants after the United States and China; first in living donor organ transplants
Institutional network	NOTTO, 5 ROTTOs, 26 SOTTOs and around 1,200 registered hospitals, spanning 31 States and Union Territories
Aadhaar-verified pledges	over 5 lakh since the national digital pledge portal launched in 2023, including over 2.58 lakh during the year
Launched on the day	Jug Jug Jiyo Abhiyaan, the e-Pratyaropan digital platform and the NOTTO mobile application
Guidelines released	National Brain Stem Death Certification Guidelines and National Guidelines on Swap Transplantation

80th Independence Day to mark 150 years of Vande Mataram, sung from Red Fort for first time

10 Aug

- India will mark its 80th Independence Day on 15 August 2026, with the Prime Minister leading celebrations from the Red Fort, Defence Secretary Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh announced at a press conference on 10 August 2026.
- As 2026 marks 150 years of 'Vande Mataram', the National Song will be sung from the ramparts of the Red Fort for the first time, on the Prime Minister's arrival, before he unfurls the National Flag and addresses the nation.
- The celebrations carry two themes — '150 Years of Vande Mataram' and 'Yuva Shakti for Viksit Bharat@2047'; 2,500 NCC cadets and MY Bharat volunteers will form on Gyanpath opposite the rampart, and an Indian Air Force Mi-17 will carry a commemorative banner and shower flower petals.
- Approximately 5,000 Special Guests have been invited across categories ranging from PM Internship Scheme interns and Startup India Seed Fund startups to PM SVANidhi street vendors, PM Vishwakarma artisans and urban sanitation workers, along with over 1,500 Delhi-based people in traditional attire from various States and UTs.
- Band performances by the Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, NCC and central armed police forces are being held at 343 locations pan-India from 8 to 15 August 2026, and the seating enclosures have been named after major lakes of India — after Republic Day 2026 named them after rivers.

QUICK FACTS

80th Independence Day	15 August 2026, at the Red Fort, Delhi
Themes	'150 Years of Vande Mataram' and 'Yuva Shakti for Viksit Bharat@2047'

- 2026 marks 150 years of 'Vande Mataram'; it will be sung from the Red Fort ramparts for the first time
- 2,500 NCC boy and girl cadets and MY Bharat volunteers will form on Gyanpath opposite the rampart
- An Indian Air Force Mi-17 helicopter will carry a 150-years commemorative banner and shower flower petals
- Band performances at 343 locations pan-India from 8 to 15 August 2026, open to the public
- Approximately 5,000 Special Guests invited, plus over 1,500 Delhi-based people from various States/UTs in traditional attire
- 19 medallists of the International Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Mathematical Olympiads 2026 will be seated on the rampart
- Around 600 winners of MyGov quizzes and competitions will attend
- Seating enclosures named after major lakes of India; Republic Day 2026 had named them after rivers
- Invitation cards showcase 'Seva Teerth', with the Dharm Chakra symbolising righteous duty and selfless action

PM's 80th Independence Day Address Sets 'Sapt Dhara' Roadmap for Viksit Bharat 2047

15 Aug

- Addressing the nation from the Red Fort on the 80th Independence Day, the Prime Minister set out a seven-part framework called 'Sapt Dhara' — seven streams of strength meant to drive India towards a developed nation by 2047.
- The seven streams are manufacturing power, agriculture and food production, technology and innovation, Gati Shakti connectivity, defence power, the green and blue economy, and India's soft power.
- The address carried a 12-year performance ledger: defence production up nearly 4 times, electronics manufacturing 7 times, railway coach production 21 times, mobile phone production 35 times and digital transactions about 100 times.
- Ambition targets were framed for the private sector too — 50 Indian companies in the Fortune 500 within a decade, one Indian bank among the world's top five, and one or two Indian pharmaceutical firms among the world's five largest.
- The Prime Minister appealed to all political parties to implement the 33 per cent women's reservation, and Vande Mataram was sung from the ramparts of the Red Fort on Independence Day for the first time, in the year marking 150 years of the National Song.

QUICK FACTS

Occasion	80th Independence Day, 15 August 2026; address delivered from the ramparts of the Red Fort, New Delhi.
Central framework announced	'Sapt Dhara' — seven streams of strength for the next five to seven years.
Goal restated	Viksit Bharat (Developed India) by 2047, the centenary of Independence.
Nuclear target restated	100 GW of nuclear power capacity by 2047, enabled by the SHANTI Act.

- The address stated that 25 crore citizens have moved out of poverty and that India, once counted among the 'Fragile Five', is now the fastest-growing major economy.
- Vande Mataram was sung from the Red Fort on 15 August for the first time since Independence; the year marks 150 years of the National Song.
- Social security coverage cited as rising from about 25 crore people before 2014 to about 100 crore.
- Fresh appeal made for implementation of 33 per cent reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.

Delhi Master Plan 2047 unveiled with 40 lakh new affordable homes and TOD focus

20 Aug

- Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs and Power Manohar Lal unveiled the Delhi Master Plan 2047 (MPD-2047) on 20 August 2026, in the presence of Lieutenant Governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu and Chief Minister Rekha Gupta.
- The plan envisages around 40 lakh new affordable housing units, including about 18 lakh along metro corridors in Transit-Oriented Development zones and about 7 lakh from relaxed redevelopment norms.
- The Land Pooling Policy is commissioned for nearly 200 sq km of planned urban expansion creating around 12 lakh new homes and a 600 km road network, with DDA building 30-metre and wider roads upfront.
- MPD-2047 uses two approaches — area-based redevelopment for brownfield areas and Right-of-Way-based planning for greenfield areas — and regularises residential buildings in 1,511 unauthorised colonies on an 'as is where is' basis, covering around 45 lakh residents.
- It also provides for conservation of about 1,500 heritage assets with a first-ever 50 TDR heritage incentive, restoration of nearly 1,700 hectares of Yamuna floodplain through 13 projects, and a Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority for integrated transport planning.

QUICK FACTS

Document	Delhi Master Plan 2047 (MPD-2047), unveiled 20 August 2026 by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
Also present	Secretary, Department of Capital Development, MoHUA, Ms D. Thara; Chief Secretary, Government of NCT of Delhi, Shri Rajeev Verma; Vice Chairman, Delhi Development Authority, Shri N. Saravana Kumar
Headline housing target	around 40 lakh new affordable housing units
Two planning approaches	area-based redevelopment for existing brownfield areas; Right-of-Way (RoW)-based planning for greenfield areas
Land Pooling	nearly 200 sq km of planned urban expansion, around 12 lakh new homes, 600 km road network
Heritage	about 1,500 heritage assets to get Cultural Resource Management Plans; a Heritage Incentive of 50 TDR is introduced for the first time
Green-blue	about 1,700 hectares of Yamuna floodplain to be restored through 13 major projects, with a 52 km cycle track along the floodplain
Regulatory simplification	133 use premises reduced to 45, with a negative-list approach for residential, commercial and industrial use zones

- Unveiled by Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs and Power Shri Manohar Lal, with Lieutenant Governor of Delhi Shri Taranjit Singh Sandhu and Chief Minister Smt. Rekha Gupta
- First notified land pooling sector ready for implementation: Sector 8B, Zone P-II, in the villages of Gadi Khasro and Ibrahimpur
- Regularisation of residential buildings in 1,511 unauthorised colonies on an 'as is where is' basis, without layout plans, giving ownership security to around 45 lakh residents
- Delhi's master plans are prepared under the Delhi Development Act, 1957; the first was promulgated in 1962 and the plan in force before this one, MPD-2021, was notified in February 2007

2. International

1 article

India-Uzbekistan ties elevated to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership; $5 billion trade target by 2030

30 Aug

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid a State Visit to Uzbekistan on 29-30 August 2026 at the invitation of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev; it was his fourth visit to the country.
- In the 15th year of the bilateral Strategic Partnership, the two sides elevated it to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.
- Bilateral trade, which has crossed USD 1 billion, is now targeted at USD 5 billion by 2030, backed by a Foreign Ministers-led oversight mechanism and an Inter-Governmental Commission raised to ministerial level.
- Eleven agreements were exchanged, including a Letter of Intent to conserve the Buddhist sites of Fayaz Tepa and Kara Tepa at Termez, and a Gujarat-Samarkand sister-region pact.
- Announcements included a USD 1 million grant for Aral Sea afforestation, 100 Lal Bahadur Shastri Hindi scholarships, an ICCR Sanskrit Chair at Tashkent, and a UPI-UZQR payments tie-up; the Prime Minister was conferred the 'Oliy Darajali Do'stlik' Order, Uzbekistan's highest honour for foreign leaders.

QUICK FACTS

Visit	State Visit to Uzbekistan, 29-30 August 2026; talks at Kuksaroy Presidential Palace, Tashkent.
Status upgrade	Strategic Partnership (15 years old) elevated to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.
Trade	crossed USD 1 billion; new target USD 5 billion by 2030. A Joint Feasibility Study on an India-Uzbekistan Preferential Trade Agreement has been concluded and ministries were directed to take next steps in a time-bound manner.
New machinery	a Foreign Ministers-led mechanism to oversee implementation; the Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation raised to ministerial level; a Joint Working Group on non-tariff and investment barriers.
Honour	'Oliy Darajali Do'stlik' Order (Order of Highest Friendship) conferred on the Prime Minister — Uzbekistan's highest honour for foreign leaders.
Defence	Joint military exercise 'Dustlik', latest edition held in Namangan Region, Uzbekistan, in April 2026; Joint Working Groups on Military Cooperation and on Counter Terrorism continue.
Energy	progress noted on the long-term arrangement for supply of uranium from Uzbekistan to India; cooperation agreed on critical and strategic minerals, geology, mining and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

– Uzbekistan marked the 35th anniversary of its independence two days after the visit (Independence Day, 1 September).

3. Economy

21 articles

Samudra Manthan: Rs 84,084 Crore National Offshore Exploration Scheme Targets 600 MMTOE

03 Aug

- Samudra Manthan, the National Offshore Exploration Scheme, was approved on 31 July 2026 with a Phase-I outlay of Rs 84,084 crore up to FY 2030-31 to open up India's deepwater and ultra-deepwater hydrocarbon basins.
- It works through four components: Rs 28,534 crore for 2D and 3D seismic data acquisition and AI-assisted reprocessing, Rs 43,200 crore to drill 60 deepwater and ultra-deepwater wells on a risk-sharing basis, Rs 10,000 crore for shared offshore infrastructure and Rs 2,000 crore for an Oil and Gas Manufacturing and Services Zone.
- The scheme targets an addition of over 600 MMTOE of reserves, taking the resource base from 1.6 billion to 2.2 billion tonnes of oil equivalent, and raising annual domestic production from about 62 MMTOE to 80 MMTOE.
- It follows a decade of licensing reform — HELP and OALP in 2016, the shift from production sharing to revenue sharing contracts, and the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Amendment Act, 2025 — and the opening of over one million sq km of the Exclusive Economic Zone after more than 99 per cent of 'No-Go' areas were removed.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Samudra Manthan — National Offshore Exploration Scheme, approved on 31 July 2026
Phase-I outlay	Rs 84,084 crore up to FY 2030-31
Sector ministry	Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas
Reserve target	addition of over 600 MMTOE, lifting the resource base from 1.6 billion to 2.2 billion tonnes of oil equivalent
Production target	annual output up from around 62 MMTOE to 80 MMTOE, with incremental production of 10-15 MMTOE and peak potential of 20 MMTOE
Drilling support	up to 50 per cent of eligible drilling cost or Rs 675 crore per well, whichever is lower, for 60 deepwater and ultra-deepwater wells, open to both public and private E&P operators

- India is the world's third-largest consumer of crude oil, with an annual import bill of nearly USD 144 billion (about Rs 13 lakh crore)
- First appraisal well in the Mahanadi Offshore Basin — MN-DWN18-1-HD — was spudded on 25 July 2026, the first of four planned deepwater wells

India Crosses 800 GI Products; Uttar Pradesh Leads With 81 Registrations

04 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder reviews India's Geographical Indication ecosystem: the country now has over 800 registered GI products, of which 607 have been granted since 2014.
- Registration and protection run under the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999, administered by the GI Registry at Chennai, which has all-India jurisdiction.
- Uttar Pradesh leads with 81 GI-tagged products as of December 2025, followed by Tamil Nadu with 76 and Maharashtra with 55.
- Authorised users have risen from 365 to 29,000 in the last ten years (as of January 2025), and a 2025 amendment to the GI Rules cut filing fees by 80 per cent and the renewal fee from Rs 3,000 to Rs 500.
- The Government has set a target of 10,000 GI registrations by 2030.

QUICK FACTS

Governing law	Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999, with Rules notified in 2002
GI Registry	located at Chennai, with all-India jurisdiction
First GI in India	Darjeeling Tea from West Bengal, with protection extended to both the product and its logo
Other early registrations	Aranmula Kannadi (Kerala) and Pochampalli Ikat (Telangana)
Total registered GI products	over 800, of which 607 have been granted since 2014
Validity of a GI registration	ten years, renewable from time to time
Authorised users	up from 365 to 29,000 in the last ten years (as of January 2025)
Leading states as of December 2025	Uttar Pradesh (81), Tamil Nadu (76), Maharashtra (55)
Income effect	a GI tag can raise rural artisans' incomes by 20-30 per cent, as per the Ministry of Textiles
Target	10,000 GI registrations by 2030

– Framework became operational in 2003; GI registrations commenced in 2004-05

India's EV Sales Grow 46 Times Since 2016; Adoption Reaches 8.26 Per Cent

05 Aug

- India's EV sales grew about 46 times between 2016 and 2025 - from roughly 50,000 units to 2.3 million - outpacing global growth of about 20 times over a comparable period.
- EV adoption rose from 0.08 per cent in FY 2015-16 to 8.26 per cent in FY 2025-26, with registrations growing at a CAGR of over 62 per cent.
- EV exports rose from USD 1.2 million in 2020 to USD 84 million in 2024, with Nepal, Indonesia and Japan the top destinations.
- India had 52,718 public charging stations as of July 2026, of which 16,561 offer fast charging, per Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited.
- NITI Aayog launched the India Electric Mobility Index in August 2025, ranking States on 16 indicators across three pillars; Delhi, Maharashtra and Chandigarh emerged as Frontrunners.

QUICK FACTS

Source	PIB Backgrounder, 'Roads Reimagined: The Rise of India's Electric Vehicles Ecosystem'
EV sales	about 50,000 units in 2016 to 2.3 million in 2025 - roughly 46 times growth
Global comparison	918,000 units in 2016 to 18.78 million in 2024 - about 20 times growth
EV adoption share	0.08 per cent in FY 2015-16 to 8.26 per cent in FY 2025-26
Registration growth	CAGR of over 62 per cent over the past decade
Exports	USD 1.2 million (2020) to USD 84 million (2024); top destinations Nepal, Indonesia and Japan
Charging network	52,718 public charging stations as of July 2026, of which 16,561 are fast-charging (BHEL data)
EV startups operating in India	about 400
India's EV penetration relative to global	one-fifth in 2020, rising to over two-fifths in 2024

– Transport sector share of India's total emissions: about 9 per cent

PLFS April-June 2026: overall LFPR 54.6%, urban unemployment 6.7%, 56.6 crore workers

10 Aug

- The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation released the Periodic Labour Force Survey Quarterly Bulletin for April-June 2026 — the fifth bulletin in the series to cover both rural and urban areas.
- For persons aged 15 years and above under the Current Weekly Status, the overall Labour Force Participation Rate was 54.6% (down from 55.5% in the previous quarter), while the urban LFPR was unchanged at 50.2% and the urban male LFPR rose to 75.3% from 75.0%.

- The urban Worker Population Ratio was stable at 46.8% and the urban Unemployment Rate was broadly stable at 6.7%; the rural unemployment rate edged up to 4.8% from 4.3%.
- The share of regular wage/salaried employees rose in both rural (15.5% to 16.1%) and urban (48.9% to 49.3%) areas, and secondary sector employment increased in both.
- An estimated 56.6 crore persons aged 15 and above were employed on average during the quarter — 40.2 crore male and 16.4 crore female — based on responses from 5,59,673 persons surveyed.

QUICK FACTS

Survey	Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), conducted by the National Statistical Office (NSO) under MoSPI
Bulletin	Quarterly Bulletin for April-June 2026, the fifth in the series covering both rural and urban areas
Overall LFPR (15+)	54.6% (previous quarter 55.5%); rural 56.9%, urban unchanged at 50.2%
Overall female LFPR	33.2%, down from 34.7% in the previous quarter
Overall WPR (15+)	51.7% (previous quarter 52.8%); urban WPR stable at 46.8%
Urban UR (15+)	6.7% (previous quarter 6.6%); rural UR 4.8% (previous quarter 4.3%); urban female UR fell to 8.7% from 9.1%
Estimated employed persons aged 15+	56.6 crore on average during the quarter (40.2 crore male, 16.4 crore female)
Sample	5,59,673 persons — 3,18,792 in rural areas and 2,40,881 in urban areas

- Reference framework for quarterly and monthly estimates: Current Weekly Status (CWS)

Power sector framework: RDSS outlay Rs 3.03 lakh crore; rural supply up to 22.6 hours

10 Aug

- The Ministry of Power told the Rajya Sabha that electricity tariffs are determined by the Appropriate Electricity Regulatory Commissions under the Electricity Act, 2003, guided by the National Tariff Policy, with State Governments free to subsidise any class of consumers.
- The Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme, launched in July 2021, has an outlay of Rs 3,03,758 crore with Gross Budgetary Support of Rs 97,631 crore; projects worth Rs 1.53 lakh crore for loss-reduction infrastructure and Rs 1.31 lakh crore for smart metering have been sanctioned.
- RDSS smart metering works cover 19.79 crore consumers, 2.05 lakh feeders and 52.53 lakh distribution transformers across 28 States and 45 distribution utilities; Rs 47,124 crore has been released under RDSS since FY2023.
- Average hours of supply in rural areas rose from 12.5 hours in FY14 to 22.6 hours in FY26, and in urban areas from 22.1 hours to 23.4 hours over the same period.
- The Draft National Electricity Policy, 2026 proposes Resource Adequacy Plans, progressive recovery of fixed costs through demand charges, automatic monthly Fuel and Power Purchase Cost Adjustment, a stabilisation fund, single-digit AT&C losses and the establishment of Distribution System Operators.

QUICK FACTS

Governing law	the Electricity Act, 2003; the framework also comprises the National Electricity Policy, the Tariff Policy and subordinate legislation of the Appropriate Government, the Central Electricity Authority and the Electricity Regulatory Commissions
RDSS sanctions	Rs 1.53 lakh crore for loss-reduction infrastructure, Rs 1.31 lakh crore for smart metering
Smart metering coverage sanctioned	19.79 crore consumers, 2.05 lakh feeders, 52.53 lakh distribution transformers
Average supply hours	rural 12.5 (FY14) -> 22.6 (FY26); urban 22.1 (FY14) -> 23.4 (FY26)
Earlier schemes	DDUGJY, IPDS (December 2014), SAUBHAGYA, and the National Smart Grid Mission (2015, closed March 2024); IPDS closed March 2022

- Retail tariffs are set by State Electricity Regulatory Commissions considering power procurement, transmission, wheeling and supply costs
- State Governments may provide subsidy to any class of consumers within the tariff determined by the State Commission
- RDSS launched July 2021; outlay Rs 3,03,758 crore with Gross Budgetary Support of Rs 97,631 crore

- SCADA/DMS works sanctioned for 394 towns worth Rs 2,627 crore; IT/OT works worth Rs 3,999 crore; smart distribution works worth Rs 8,608 crore for seven cities
- Rs 47,124 crore released under RDSS since FY2023, including Rs 2,733 crore for smart metering
- Reply given by the Minister of State in the Ministry of Power, Shri Shripad Naik

Container Manufacturing Assistance Scheme: Rs 10,000 Crore to End India's Dependence on Imported Containers

11 Aug

- The Government has announced a Rs 10,000 crore Container Manufacturing Assistance Scheme (CMAS), proposed in the Union Budget 2026-27, to build a domestic shipping container industry.
- India currently imports nearly 2 million empty containers every year, leaving container availability exposed to global freight volatility.
- CMAS targets annual domestic capacity of up to 7.5 lakh TEUs — around ten times existing capacity — over five years.
- It is expected to create about 3,000 direct and more than 50,000 indirect jobs.
- It sits alongside the Bharat Container Shipping Line, a Rs 99,149 crore initiative for 51 container vessels and domestic container procurement.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Container Manufacturing Assistance Scheme (CMAS), announced in the Union Budget 2026-27
Nodal ministry	Ports, Shipping and Waterways
Outlay	Rs 10,000 crore over five years
Target	annual domestic capacity of up to 7.5 lakh Twenty-foot Equivalent Units (TEUs) — about ten times existing capacity
Problem addressed	India imports nearly 2 million empty containers a year for domestic demand and repositioning
Employment expected	about 3,000 direct jobs and more than 50,000 indirect jobs
Ancillary industries catalysed	corner castings, wooden frames and corten steel

India Becomes the World's Leading Ship Recycling Nation with 35.4% Global Share

11 Aug

- India became the world's leading ship recycling nation in 2025, according to UNCTAD.
- India's global market share rose from 30.1% in 2024 to 35.4% in 2025.
- Recycling volume grew from 1.86 million gross tonnes to 2.99 million gross tonnes, close to 60% growth.
- The Maritime India Vision 2030 target of becoming the world's leading ship recycling nation was achieved five years ahead of schedule.
- The Alang-Sosiya cluster in Gujarat accounts for about 98% of India's ship recycling activity.

QUICK FACTS

Global market share	30.1% in 2024 to 35.4% in 2025
Volume	1.86 million gross tonnes (2024) to 2.99 million gross tonnes (2025) — nearly 60% growth
Other Indian yards	Amar Iron Udyog, Kolkata; Steel Industrials Kerala Limited (SILK), Kerala

- India ranked first globally in ship recycling in 2025, per the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- Maritime India Vision 2030 target met five years early
- Alang-Sosiya, Gujarat — the world's largest ship recycling hub, about 98% of India's activity
- Directorate General of Shipping is the National Authority for ship recycling

MSMED (Amendment) Bill, 2026: Turnover Added to Classification, TReDS Made Mandatory for CPSEs

11 Aug

- Parliament passed the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026 in August 2026, amending the MSMED Act, 2006.
- MSME classification will now rest on both investment in plant, machinery or equipment and on turnover.
- All Central Public Sector Enterprises must settle MSME invoices through the TReDS platform.
- Fixed timelines are introduced — mediation within 90 days and an arbitral award within 90 days of completion of pleadings.
- A mediated settlement or arbitral award can now be recovered as arrears of land revenue through the District Collector.

QUICK FACTS

Bill	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026, passed by Parliament in August 2026
Amends	the MSMED Act, 2006, notified in 2006
Nodal ministry	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
Economic Survey 2025-26	MSMEs contribute 31.1% of GDP, 35.4% of manufacturing output and 48.58% of exports
Online Dispute Resolution portal launched	June 2025

- MSMEs on the Udyam platform as of August 2026: 9.16 crore, employing more than 40 crore people
- MSEFCs established across States and Union Territories: 161

National Waterways Carry 218 Million Tonnes; Coastal Cargo Promotion Scheme Targets 12% Modal Share by 2047

11 Aug

- Cargo movement on National Waterways reached 218 million metric tonnes in FY 2025-26.
- The Union Budget 2026-27 announced a Coastal Cargo Promotion Scheme to raise the combined modal share of coastal shipping and inland waterways from 6% to 12% by 2047.
- The Jalvahak scheme gives a 35% incentive to cargo owners and introduces scheduled services on NW-1, NW-2 and NW-16.
- Average turnaround time at Major Ports improved to 48.84 hours in 2025-26 from 52.87 hours in 2021-22.
- Jawaharlal Nehru Port ranked 22nd in the World Bank's Container Port Performance Index 2025.

QUICK FACTS

Cargo on National Waterways, FY 2025-26	218 million metric tonnes
Major Ports average turnaround time	48.84 hours in 2025-26, from 52.87 hours in 2021-22
Container Port Performance Index 2025	Jawaharlal Nehru Port 22nd, against Singapore 21st, Shanghai 23rd and Hong Kong 9th
Jalvahak scheme	35% incentive to cargo owners, with scheduled services on NW-1, NW-2 and NW-16

- Coastal Cargo Promotion Scheme announced in Union Budget 2026-27 — target modal share 6% to 12% by 2047
- Sagarmala impact evaluation carried out by the National Productivity Council
- Sagarmala Startup and Innovation Initiative (S2I2) launched on 19 March 2025

India's Power Capacity Touches 552 GW; Non-Fossil Share Crosses 54 Percent

13 Aug

- India's total installed power capacity stood at around 552 GW in July 2026, up from 249 GW in 2014, with non-fossil capacity at 300.50 GW as on 31 July 2026 — over 54% of the total.

- Solar leads the renewable mix at 164.59 GW (31 July 2026), followed by wind at 58.14 GW, hydro at 57.24 GW, bio-power at 11.75 GW and nuclear at 8.78 GW.
- Four large approvals in 2026 reshape the pipeline: a Rs 37,500 crore surface coal/lignite gasification scheme (May 2026), the Rs 5,070 crore Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana and the Rs 84,084 crore 'Samudra Manthan' offshore exploration scheme (both 31 July 2026), and the Rs 23,731 crore GOBARdhan circular bioenergy scheme (6 August 2026).
- The 500 MWe Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor at Kalpakkam achieved first criticality on 6 April 2026, and India targets 100 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047 with Rs 20,000 crore earmarked for Small Modular Reactors.
- Coal still meets nearly 55% of primary energy needs and over 70% of electricity generation; production was 1,040.08 MT in FY2025-26 against 609.18 MT in FY2014-15, while thermal plants' coal imports fell about 27.4% to 45.4 MT.

QUICK FACTS

Total installed power capacity	about 552 GW (July 2026), against 249 GW in 2014
Non-fossil capacity	300.50 GW as on 31 July 2026 — over 54% of the total
Solar	164.59 GW (31 July 2026), up from 2.8 GW in 2014; India was the world's second-largest solar growth market in 2025, adding over 37 GW against the United States' 34 GW
Wind	58.14 GW; 6.05 GW added in FY2025-26, the highest-ever annual addition and 46% above FY2024-25
Hydro	57.24 GW cumulative (large and small); bio-power: 11.75 GW
Nuclear	8.78 GW, projected to reach 22.38 GW by 2031-32 and targeted at 100 GW by 2047
Coal reserves	about 4,00,715 million tonnes; India is the world's second-largest coal producer and consumer
CBG ecosystem	1,929 CBG/Bio-CNG plants registered as on 13 August 2026, of which 217 commissioned and 357 under construction

- India ranks third globally in renewable energy installed capacity and fourth in installed wind capacity
- India is the world's fourth-largest crude refiner, with 258.1 MTPA capacity across 22 operational refineries
- LPG coverage rose from 55.9% in 2014 to 107.2% in 2026; consumers rose from 14.51 crore to 33.18 crore

Manufacturing at 16-17% of GDP; Semicon 2.0 gets Rs 1,27,500 crore outlay

14 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder issued for the 80th Independence Day puts manufacturing at about 16-17% of GDP with over 27 million workers, and manufacturing GVA growing at a CAGR of 10.88% between 2022-23 and 2025-26 at constant prices on the revised 2022-23 base.
- Semicon India Programme 2.0 was approved in July 2026 with an outlay of Rs 1,27,500 crore, building on Semicon 1.0's Rs 76,000 crore approved in December 2021; twelve units with investments above Rs 1.64 lakh crore have been approved and Micron, Kaynes and CG Semi are already in commercial production.
- Electronics production rose 15.8% to Rs 13.11 lakh crore in FY 2025-26, 99.2% of mobile phones used in India are made domestically, and smartphones became India's top individual exported commodity in FY 2025-26, surpassing petroleum and gems and jewellery.
- A Rs 62,500 crore Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme was approved on 15 July 2026 for FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31, with incentives of 2.25% to 5%.
- Sectoral packages span shipbuilding (Rs 69,725 crore announced in September 2025), containers (Rs 10,000 crore CMAS in Budget 2026-27), pharmaceuticals (three PLI schemes worth Rs 25,360 crore) and solar PV (Rs 24,000 crore across two PLI tranches).

QUICK FACTS

Manufacturing share of GDP	about 16-17%; employment over 27 million workers
Merchandise exports, July 2026	USD 44.24 billion, against USD 36.98 billion a year earlier
Manufacturing output growth, June 2026	7.8%
Electronics production	Rs 11.32 lakh crore (FY 2024-25) -> Rs 13.11 lakh crore (FY 2025-26), up 15.8%
Semicon India Programme	1.0 approved December 2021 with Rs 76,000 crore; 2.0 approved July 2026 with Rs 1,27,500 crore
Mobile phones	99.2% of those used in India are made domestically; India is the world's second-largest manufacturer by volume and a net exporter since 2014
Pharmaceuticals	India ranks 3rd in volume and 11th in value globally and supplies 20% of the world's generic medicines; sector turnover Rs 4.72 lakh crore in 2024-25
Textiles and apparel	second-largest employer after agriculture with over 45 million livelihoods; ~2% of GDP, 11% of manufacturing GVA and 9% of merchandise exports; sixth-largest exporter with 4.1% of global trade
Automobiles	world's largest market for two- and three-wheelers and third-largest for passenger and commercial vehicles; production up from 22.65 million units in FY21 to 31.03 million in FY25
Solar	ALMM-listed module capacity reached 100 GW in August 2025 (from about 2.3 GW in 2014); cell capacity 25 GW in March 2025 (from under 1.2 GW in 2014)

- Manufacturing GVA CAGR at constant prices (2022-23 base), 2022-23 to 2025-26: 10.88%
- Twelve semiconductor units approved with investments exceeding Rs 1.64 lakh crore — one silicon fab, one silicon carbide fab, one integrated Gallium Nitride Micro LED display fab and nine packaging units

ECMS crosses 106 approved projects worth Rs 69,548 crore; 38 plants in production

17 Aug

- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology approved 31 more proposals under the Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS) on 17 August 2026, taking the cumulative total to 106 approved projects.
- Cumulative approved investment now stands at Rs 69,548 crore, against the Rs 59,350 crore originally envisaged for the scheme, with projected production of Rs 5,34,101 crore and 74,628 direct jobs across 15 States.
- Of the 106 approved projects, 38 plants have begun manufacturing and 16 more are at advanced stages of construction or machinery installation.
- The new approvals bring the first-ever domestic manufacturing of filters, coils and speakers, and of raw materials such as acetylene black and electrolyte additives used in lithium-ion cells.
- Capacity in several segments now exceeds domestic demand — optical transceiver-SFP at about 350%, relays at 200% and anode material at about 110%.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS), implemented by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)
Tenure	six years, with an optional one-year gestation period
Original targets	Rs 59,350 crore investment, Rs 4,56,500 crore production and 91,600 direct jobs over the scheme's tenure
Position on 17 August 2026	106 projects approved, Rs 69,548 crore investment, Rs 5,34,101 crore projected production, 74,628 direct jobs, 30 products, 15 States
Approvals of 17 August 2026	31 proposals, Rs 6,844 crore, plus Rs 1,033 crore additional investment by an existing approved applicant
Event partner	the Electronic Industries Association of India (ELCINA), established in 1967 as India's first electronics hardware industry association
Coverage of the scheme	printed circuit boards, passive components, electro-mechanical components, sub-assemblies, camera modules, optical transceivers and capital goods

- Approved by the Union Cabinet on 28 March 2025 and notified on 8 April 2025, with an outlay of Rs 22,919 crore

MMDR Amendment Act, 2026 Bars Fresh State Levies on Mineral Rights

18 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder explains the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2026, which amends the MMDR Act, 1957 to create a uniform fiscal framework for minerals by barring State Governments from imposing fresh taxes, cesses or levies on mineral rights and mineral-bearing lands except on conditions prescribed by the Central Government.
- The change is made through a new Section 9D. Section 13 is simultaneously amended so that the Central Government can frame the rules laying down those conditions and restrictions.
- Levies not paid or collected by a State before the amendment takes effect become invalid, but amounts already deposited or recovered are not refundable.
- States are stated to retain nearly 90 percent of mining-sector revenue, which reached about Rs 1,14,549.28 crore in 2025-26, and the roughly 50 minor minerals such as sand, gravel, granite and marble stay entirely under State control.
- The Backgrounder situates the Act in a decade of mineral-sector reform: auctions since 2015, the National Critical Mineral Mission with a Rs 16,300 crore outlay, 656 District Mineral Foundations and a nearly 200-fold rise in exploration activity.

QUICK FACTS

Parent law amended	the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, India's principal mining statute, administered by the Ministry of Mines.
Key provision	new Section 9D bars any tax, cess or other levy by a State Government on mineral rights or mineral-bearing lands, whether computed on mineral quantity, mineral value, royalty or any other basis.
Escape valve	such levies are permitted only in accordance with conditions or restrictions prescribed by the Central Government, for which Section 13 of the MMDR Act has been amended to give the Centre rule-making power.
Past demands	levies not paid or collected before commencement are treated as invalid; sums already deposited or recovered are not liable to be refunded.
Untouched	nearly 50 minor minerals, including sand, gravel, clay, silica, granite, marble, gypsum and laterite, remain completely under State Government control.
Untouched	royalty, auction premium and District Mineral Foundation collections continue as before.
Scale of the levy problem cited	States impose around 14 taxes, charges and fees on mining, and some had begun taxing mineral-bearing lands at rates as high as 20 percent.

– Parliament passed the Bill in August 2026 — Lok Sabha on 12 August and Rajya Sabha on 13 August 2026 — and President Droupadi Murmu gave her assent.

India's Trade Agreements in Use: FTA Export Gains and Rising Origin Certification

18 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder reports that India's trade-agreement strategy has moved from signing new pacts to using the market access they created, measured by export growth to partner markets, rising preferential Certificate of Origin issuance and a wider range of products shipped.
- India's combined merchandise and services exports reached a record US$ 863.1 billion in FY 2025-26, of which merchandise was US$ 441.8 billion and services US$ 421.3 billion; April-June 2026 exports were estimated at US$ 232.73 billion, up 11.37 percent year on year.
- The UAE was India's largest single FTA export destination in FY 2025-26 at US$ 37,359.11 million, followed among FTA groupings by ASEAN at US$ 38,416.33 million and SAFTA at US$ 25,774.68 million.
- Newer agreements are already generating origin certification: 7,885 preferential Certificates of Origin under the India-EFTA TEPA since October 2025 and 783 under the India-Oman CEPA since June 2026, helped by e-CoO 2.0, self-declaration of origin and the Trade Connect platform.
- Around ten further agreements are under discussion, including negotiations with the Eurasian Economic Union, Peru, Chile, Israel, Canada and the Maldives, while the India-Korea CEPA and India-Sri Lanka ETCA are being upgraded.

QUICK FACTS

India's exports, FY 2025-26	US$ 863.1 billion combined merchandise and services — merchandise US$ 441.8 billion, services US$ 421.3 billion.
April-June 2026	combined exports estimated at US$ 232.73 billion, an 11.37 percent rise over the same quarter of the previous year.
Largest single FTA export market, FY 2025-26	the UAE, at US$ 37,359.11 million.
Largest FTA grouping market	ASEAN at US$ 38,416.33 million; SAFTA followed at US$ 25,774.68 million.
Preferential Certificates of Origin	7,885 issued under the India-EFTA TEPA since it took effect in October 2025 and 783 under the India-Oman CEPA since June 2026.
Duty-free coverage	nearly 99 percent of Indian exports under the India-UK CETA, 99 percent under the India-UAE CEPA, 99.6 percent under the India-EFTA TEPA and 100 percent of Australian tariff lines under the India-Australia ECTA.
Pipeline	about ten agreements under discussion, including with the Eurasian Economic Union, Peru, Chile, Israel, Canada and the Maldives.

– Services account for nearly 30 percent of India's employment, which is why recent agreements bargain hard on professional mobility.

India's Coconut Sector: World's Top Producer, Record Exports and a New Promotion Scheme

18 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder maps India's coconut sector, on which about 30 million people including roughly 10 million farmers depend, and which the release describes as moving from a cultural symbol to a globally prominent industry.
- India ranks first in world coconut production with 31.24 percent of the global total and third in area with 17.90 percent; output in 2024-25 was 20,301.22 million nuts from 2.19 million hectares, at an average productivity of 9,249 nuts per hectare.
- Kerala has the largest area under coconut at nearly 7.54 lakh hectares, Tamil Nadu leads production, and Andhra Pradesh records the highest productivity, followed by West Bengal and Tamil Nadu.
- Coconut product exports reached Rs 7,038.35 crore, or US$ 794.70 million, in 2025-26 — a 62 percent jump over Rs 4,349.03 crore the previous year, against just Rs 25.3 crore in 2001-02 — with activated carbon dominating export volumes.
- The Union Budget 2026-27 announced a Coconut Promotion Scheme to tackle pest outbreaks, root wilt disease and ageing plantations, as part of a wider Rs 350 crore allocation for high-value agriculture that also covers cashew and cocoa.

QUICK FACTS

Dependence	about 30 million people, including roughly 10 million farmers, mostly small and marginal cultivators.
Global standing	first in production (31.24 percent of the world total) and third in area (17.90 percent).
State leaders	Kerala in area (about 7.54 lakh hectares, producing 5,149.87 million nuts), Tamil Nadu in production, Andhra Pradesh in productivity.
Exports 2025-26	Rs 7,038.35 crore (US$ 794.70 million), up 62 percent from Rs 4,349.03 crore; the figure was Rs 25.3 crore in 2001-02.
Nodal institution	the Coconut Development Board, set up on 12 January 1981 under the Coconut Development Board Act, 1979, headquartered at Kochi under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, working across 22 States and Union Territories; Rs 147.21 crore released for its activities in 2025-26.
MSP for the 2026 season	milling copra Rs 12,027 per quintal (up Rs 445) and ball copra Rs 12,500 per quintal (up Rs 400); NAFED and NCCF are the central nodal procurement agencies.
New scheme	the Coconut Promotion Scheme announced in the Union Budget 2026-27, within a Rs 350 crore allocation for high-value agriculture covering coconut, cashew and cocoa.

– Production 2024-25, as per Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare statistics: 20,301.22 million nuts from 2.19 million hectares; productivity 9,249 nuts per hectare.

Makhana Sector: National Board, Rs 476 Crore Scheme and Record Output

19 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder released on 19 August 2026 sets out the status of India's makhana (fox nut) sector, which is anchored by the National Makhana Board announced in the Union Budget 2025-26 and formally launched in Bihar on 15 September 2025.
- A Central Sector Scheme for the Development of Makhana carries an outlay of Rs 476.03 crore for 2025-26 to 2030-31, with Rs 30 crore approved for 2025-26 and Rs 90 crore for 2026-27.
- India's makhana output is placed at 63,910 MT in 2024-25 (final estimate) and 80,590 MT in 2025-26 (Second Advance Estimates); Bihar alone produced 60,000 MT in 2025-26.
- Bihar accounts for nearly three-fourths of Indian production and about 80-85 per cent of global supply, concentrated in the Kosi basin districts of Supaul, Saharsa and Madhepura.
- The Directorate General of Foreign Trade created a separate HSN code for popped makhana in 2025; India exported 7,264.89 MT worth Rs 19,296.08 lakh in 2025-26.

QUICK FACTS

Crop	makhana or fox nut, botanically Euryale ferox, an aquatic crop of shallow ponds, lakes and wetlands; the edible part is the seed, which is roasted and popped
Growing states named in the release	Bihar, West Bengal and Assam; India is the world's largest producer
National Makhana Board	announced in the Union Budget 2025-26, formally launched in Bihar on 15 September 2025, headquartered at Purnea
Annual tranches approved	Rs 30 crore for 2025-26 and Rs 90 crore for 2026-27
Production 2025-26 (Second Advance Estimates)	80,590 MT at 2.34 MT per hectare
Bihar 2025-26	60,000 MT at 2.00 MT per hectare — nearly three-fourths of Indian output and 80-85 per cent of global supply
Improved varieties named	Swarna Vaidehi and Sabour Makhana-1
Exports 2025-26	7,264.89 MT valued at Rs 19,296.08 lakh; about 40 per cent of output is exported

- Central Sector Scheme for the Development of Makhana: Rs 476.03 crore for 2025-26 to 2030-31
- Production 2024-25 (final estimate, Horticulture Statistics Unit, DA&FW): 63,910 MT at 2.03 MT per hectare

MMDR Amendment Act 2026: Centre Curbs State Levies on Mineral Rights

19 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder issued on 19 August 2026 explains the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2026, which restricts state levies on mineral rights and mineral-bearing lands in order to create a uniform and predictable fiscal regime for major minerals.
- The government's position is that states currently impose about 14 kinds of taxes, charges, fees and levies on mining — some taxes on mineral-bearing lands running as high as 20 per cent — and that this cascades into the cost of steel, cement, power and infrastructure.
- The Act is stated not to reduce state revenue: states continue to receive royalty, auction premium, District Mineral Foundation payments and their share of GST, and roughly 90 per cent of mining revenue keeps accruing to them.
- Minor minerals — nearly 50 of them, including sand, gravel, clay, silica, granite, marble, gypsum and laterite — remain entirely with the states, whose regulatory and taxing powers over them are untouched.
- The backgrounder also compiles a decade of mineral-sector data: 723 major mineral blocks auctioned across 17 states since 2015, a record 212 in FY 2025-26, and India ranking second globally in limestone, third in zinc, fourth in iron ore and fifth in bauxite.

QUICK FACTS

Parent law	the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, amended by the MMDR Amendment Act, 2026
Core change	states are barred from imposing tax, cess or other levy on mineral rights or mineral-bearing lands except as prescribed by the Centre, through a newly inserted provision (Section 9D)
State levies at present	around 14 types, including royalty, auction premium, dead rent, District Mineral Foundation payments, GST and transit fees; some state taxes on mineral-bearing lands run as high as 20 per cent
Revenue position stated by the government	about 90 per cent of mining-sector revenue accrues to states, and this continues after the amendment
Retrospective element	a tax, cess or levy not paid or collected by a state before the amendment commenced is treated as invalid

- The Amendment Bill was passed by both Houses of Parliament on 13 August 2026
- States' share in total mineral revenue (coal and non-coal) reached around Rs 1,14,549.28 crore in 2025-26, up by roughly 28 percentage points over the decade
- State mineral revenue is stated to have risen about 354 per cent over the last decade to around Rs 82,366 crore in 2025-26
- Since the 2015 auction regime began, states have received more than Rs 7 lakh crore from the mining sector including coal
- Minor minerals — nearly 50, including sand, gravel, clay, silica, granite, marble, gypsum and laterite — are NOT affected; states retain full regulatory and taxing power over them

Rs 62,500 Crore Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme Notified to Succeed Electronics PLI

21 Aug

- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology notified the Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS) on 21 August 2026 with a budgetary outlay of Rs 62,500 crore.
- It succeeds the Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Large Scale Electronics Manufacturing, whose tenure ended on 31 March 2026, and runs for five years from FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31.
- The scheme has two target segments: TS1 incentivises mobile phone manufacturing generally at 2.25 to 5 per cent, while TS2 supports Indian-owned brands at 5 per cent with an additional 3 per cent for Indian design and R&D.
- An extra incentive of up to 1.5 per cent is available in both segments for domestic sourcing of key components, provided such components are localised for at least 25 per cent of the units made in a financial year.
- Expected outcomes are cumulative production of about Rs 39 lakh crore over the scheme period and around 60,000 direct jobs.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS), notified by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)
Outlay	Rs 62,500 crore
Tenure	five years, FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31; TS2 applicants may be granted a gestation period of one year
Two target segments	TS1 - incentivising mobile phone manufacturing; TS2 - supporting Indian mobile phone brands
Incentive rates	2.25 to 5 per cent under TS1; 5 per cent for Indian brands under TS2 plus 3 per cent for Indian design and R&D
Additional incentive	up to 1.5 per cent for domestic sourcing of key components and sub-assemblies in both segments
Who can apply	mobile phone manufacturers, including Electronics Manufacturing Services (EMS) providers, registered in India; sales and incentives are computed brand-wise
Stated outcomes	cumulative production of about Rs 39 lakh crore and around 60,000 direct jobs

National Shipping Board's First Sagar Samvad Proposes 100 New Ships in Five Years

25 Aug

- The National Shipping Board (NSB) held its first 'Sagar Samvad' in New Delhi, themed 'Charting the Roadmap Towards Maritime India Vision 2030 and Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047'.
- Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal chaired the inaugural edition, launched the Board's first official website and received its annual report for 2025-26 from NSB Chairperson Sameer Kumar Khare.
- An NSB panel proposed a five-pillar roadmap — fiscal reform, assured cargo support, access to competitive financing, regulatory streamlining and ease of doing business — which it argued could add 100 ships to India's fleet within five years.
- Minister of State Shantanu Thakur said India pays close to $75 billion a year in freight to foreign shipping lines to move cargo including crude oil, gas, coal and urea; panellists said flying the Indian flag is 16 to 20 per cent costlier than operating under a foreign one.
- Sonowal said port capacity is being quadrupled to 10,000 million tonnes a year by 2047, and acknowledged the Rs 10,000 crore Container Manufacturing Assistance Scheme, under which Maersk is now ordering containers built in India.

QUICK FACTS

Event	the inaugural 'Sagar Samvad' (meaning 'ocean dialogue') of the National Shipping Board, held at the Civil Services Officers Institute, Vinay Marg, New Delhi.
Theme	'Charting the Roadmap Towards Maritime India Vision 2030 and Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047'.
NSB motto used as the theme line	'Wisdom in the Ocean, Progress in the Nation'.
Chaired by	Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, who launched the Board's first official website.
NSB Chairperson	Sameer Kumar Khare, who submitted the Board's annual report for 2025-26 and its subcommittee reports; the Board was reconstituted in May 2025.
Also present	Vijay Kumar, Secretary, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
Sessions	'Maritime Labour Force: Opportunities and Challenges', chaired by Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Labour and Employment and Youth Affairs and Sports; and 'Augmentation of Indian Tonnage: Opportunities and Challenges', presided over by Shantanu Thakur, Minister of State for Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
Its mandate	advise the government on shipping policy, tonnage, seafarer welfare and port-linked maritime development.
Five-pillar roadmap proposed	fiscal reform, assured cargo support, access to competitive financing, regulatory streamlining, and ease of doing business.
Target attached to the roadmap	100 additional ships in India's fleet within five years.
Annual freight paid to foreign shipping lines	close to $75 billion, for cargo including crude oil, gas, coal and urea.
Cost gap	operating under the Indian flag is 16 to 20 per cent costlier than under a foreign flag.
Container Manufacturing Assistance Scheme	Rs 10,000 crore; Maersk is now ordering containers built in India.
Port capacity target	10,000 million tonnes a year by 2047, a quadrupling.

– The NSB is a statutory advisory body first constituted in 1958 and now functioning under the Merchant Shipping Act, 2025 and the new National Shipping Board Rules.

Sugar Prices Jump 15.6% in a Month; Centre Caps Dealer Stocks

26 Aug

- Retail sugar prices rose from Rs 48.18 per kg on 20 July 2026 to Rs 55.70 per kg on 20 August 2026 — about 15.6% in a month — against a long-run rise of only about 3% a year between August 2024 and July 2026.
- Sugar production in the current season is now expected at around 306 lakh metric tonnes against an initial estimate of about 343 LMT, hit by Red Rot and Top Borer disease and by waterlogging from excess rainfall.
- The Centre has imposed a 400-tonne stock limit on sugar dealers from 1 August to 30 November 2026, capped bulk consumers at 15 days of consumption from 1 September 2026, and allowed duty-free import of 10 lakh MT of raw sugar.

- Mills and states have been advised to start crushing from 15 October 2026, which should lift October output from the usual 3-4 lakh MT to more than 10 lakh MT.
- The government rejects ethanol diversion as the cause: sugar diverted to ethanol fell from about 12% in 2022-23 to about 9% in 2025-26, and nearly three-fourths of India's ethanol now comes from grains, mainly maize.

QUICK FACTS

Sugar exports	8 lakh MT in 2025-26, against 0.47 lakh MT in 2016-17; main destinations Sri Lanka, West Asia and East Africa

- India is the world's second-largest sugarcane producer
- The sector supports nearly 5 crore farmers and around 5 lakh workers in sugar factories and allied industries
- Sugarcane production reached 500 MMT in 2025-26 (Third Advance Estimate, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare) — about 43.5% higher than the 348.44 MMT of 2015-16
- Area under sugarcane rose from 49.27 lakh hectares in 2015-16 to 58.87 lakh hectares in 2025-26
- Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra are the top sugarcane-producing states
- FRP for sugar season 2026-27 (October-September): Rs 365 per quintal at a basic recovery rate of 10.25% — up Rs 135 from the Rs 230 per quintal at 9.5% recovery fixed for 2016-17
- Annual sugar production averages 300-340 lakh MT; domestic consumption is 280-290 lakh MT
- 97% of 2025-26 season cane dues had been paid to farmers as of 20 August 2026
- Global sugar deficit for 2026-27 estimated at about 33 lakh MT

India's Real GDP Grows 7.8% in Q1 FY 2026-27; Nominal Growth at 10.3%

31 Aug

- MoSPI released the Quarterly Estimates of GDP for Q1 (April-June) of FY 2026-27, the first quarterly release compiled fully on the new base year 2022-23.
- Real GDP is estimated at Rs 81.36 lakh crore against Rs 75.46 lakh crore a year earlier — growth of 7.8%; nominal GDP is Rs 88.27 lakh crore against Rs 80.00 lakh crore, growth of 10.3%.
- Real Gross Value Added grew faster than GDP, at 8.2%, reaching Rs 73.82 lakh crore; nominal GVA grew 11.5% to Rs 80.53 lakh crore.
- The new series uses the double deflation approach for manufacturing GVA, deflating output and intermediate consumption separately with Producer Price Indices.
- The Prime Minister called the 7.8% growth a 'herculean feat' achieved despite oil price shocks and supply chain disruptions; the Q2 estimates are due on 30 November 2026.

QUICK FACTS

Release	Quarterly Estimates of GDP for Q1 (April-June), FY 2026-27, by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
Real GDP (constant 2022-23 prices)	Rs 81.36 lakh crore, against Rs 75.46 lakh crore in Q1 FY 2025-26 — growth 7.8%
Nominal GDP (current prices)	Rs 88.27 lakh crore, against Rs 80.00 lakh crore — growth 10.3%
Real GVA	Rs 73.82 lakh crore, against Rs 68.21 lakh crore — growth 8.2%
Nominal GVA	Rs 80.53 lakh crore, against Rs 72.24 lakh crore — growth 11.5%
Method	Benchmark-Indicator methodology, following the IMF's Quarterly National Accounts Manual, 2017
Next release	Q2 (July-September) FY 2026-27 estimates on 30 November 2026

- New series of annual and quarterly GDP with base year 2022-23 was released on 27 February 2026; Provisional Estimates for 2025-26 followed on 5 June 2026
- Manufacturing GVA now uses double deflation — output and intermediate consumption deflated separately using PPIs
- 'Sources and Methods', the full methodology volume for the new series, is scheduled for release by September 2026

4. Banking & Finance

6 articles

ISEC Assessment: Every Rupee Under KCC-MISS Adds Rs 2.30 to Farm Value Addition

03 Aug

- A third-party assessment of the Kisan Credit Card-Modified Interest Subvention Scheme conducted through the Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru, finds that every Rs 1 invested under KCC-MISS contributes Rs 2.30 to net value addition in the agriculture and allied sector.
- The estimated subsidy outlay under MISS since inception up to 2024-25 stands at Rs 1.87 lakh crore.
- The assessment reports higher cropping intensity, more diversified crop portfolios, better timeliness of input use, and improved credit discipline among farmers receiving the Prompt Repayment Incentive.
- The collateral-free loan limit under KCC was raised from Rs 1.6 lakh to Rs 2 lakh with effect from 1 January 2025, and digital interventions such as the Kisan Rin Portal, Jan Samarth portal, e-KCC and KRISHIKA have been introduced to streamline credit delivery.
- State-wise data tabled in the Lok Sabha show 7.28 crore operative KCC accounts with Rs 10,08,256 crore outstanding in 2025-26, alongside a sharp rise in KCCs issued for animal husbandry and fisheries.

QUICK FACTS

Assessing institution	Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bengaluru; findings reported by the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
Headline finding	every Rs 1 invested under KCC-MISS contributes Rs 2.30 to net value addition in agriculture and allied activities
Operative KCC accounts in 2025-26	7,28,27,884 with Rs 10,08,256 crore outstanding
Digital interventions cited	Kisan Rin Portal, Jan Samarth portal, e-KCC and KRISHIKA
Awareness machinery	Union and State Governments, RBI, NABARD, State Level Bankers' Committees and banks run KCC saturation campaigns

- Reply tabled in the Lok Sabha on 3 August 2026 by the Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance, Shri Pankaj Chaudhary, answering Un-Starred Question No. 2423
- MISS subsidy outlay since inception to 2024-25: an estimated Rs 1.87 lakh crore
- Collateral-free KCC loan limit raised from Rs 1.6 lakh to Rs 2 lakh with effect from 1 January 2025

Amit Shah Launches Cyber Security Centre and 'Bank in a Box' for Urban Cooperative Banks

08 Aug

- Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah inaugurated NUCFDC's new premises in Mumbai and addressed the 'Sahkar Nav-Kranti' programme at the BSE International Convention Centre.
- He launched a Security Operations Centre for cyber surveillance of Urban Cooperative Banks, along with 'Bank in a Box' providing core banking, digital payments, cloud and compliance services at affordable rates.
- An MoU was exchanged between the National Forensic Sciences University and NUCFDC to extend forensic science support to the online banking operations of even the smallest UCBs.
- NUCFDC will supply UCBs with technical support, systems aligned with RBI guidelines, employee training and software such as MuleHunter.
- Capital of Rs 300 crore has been mobilised for the umbrella organisation, which aims to connect nearly 1,400 Urban Cooperative Banks.

QUICK FACTS

Event	'Sahkar Nav-Kranti' programme, held at the BSE International Convention Centre, Mumbai
Chief Guest	Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah
Inaugurated	NUCFDC's new premises in Mumbai
Launched	Security Operations Centre (SOC) for Urban Cooperative Banks
Launched	'Bank in a Box' — core banking, digital payments, cloud and compliance services in one package
MoU	between the National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU) and NUCFDC
Target coverage	nearly 1,400 Urban Cooperative Banks
Stated objective	NUCFDC is not to earn profit but to streamline UCBs and enable them to compete nationally and globally

- Capital mobilised for the umbrella organisation: Rs 300 crore

Finance Ministry Rules Out UPI Charges for Users; MDR Only Above a Threshold

08 Aug

- The Government stated categorically that consumers making UPI payments will face no transaction charges and that all Person-to-Person transactions will remain free.
- Any Merchant Discount Rate, when introduced, will apply only to a limited set of merchant transactions above a threshold, at a nominal rate far lower than debit or credit card MDRs.
- The Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026 proposes to amend Section 10A of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007 as an enabling provision.
- Once Parliament passes the Bill, the 'UPI and Services Steering Committee' headed by NPCI will decide on the MDR, if any.
- UPI processed 2,366 crore transactions worth Rs 29.9 lakh crore in July 2026 alone and is live in 11 foreign countries.

QUICK FACTS

No charges for users	consumers making payments will not face any transaction charges
Enabling law	the Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026 amending Section 10A of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007
Deciding body once the Bill is passed	the 'UPI and Services Steering Committee' headed by NPCI

- All Person-to-Person (P2P) transactions continue to be free of charge
- MDR, if and when introduced, will be threshold-based and not levied blanketly on all merchants
- Any MDR will be at a nominal rate, far lower than debit or credit card MDRs
- UPI has been free of charge for both merchants and citizens since January 2020
- UPI was introduced in 2016

CBDC-based food subsidy transfer launched under PMGKAY in Chandigarh and Dadra & Nagar Haveli

14 Aug

- The Government launched Central Bank Digital Currency-based Direct Benefit Transfer under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana in the Union Territories of Chandigarh and Dadra & Nagar Haveli on 14 August 2026.
- Food subsidy is credited as programmable Digital Rupee tokens into a beneficiary's CBDC wallet instead of a conventional bank account, and can then be spent only at empanelled merchants on foodgrains — smartphone users paying by QR code and feature-phone users through an OTP-based mechanism.
- The two UTs become the first in the country to operationalise food subsidy transfers to all eligible PMGKAY beneficiaries in CBDC form; earlier pilots ran in Gujarat from 15 February 2026 and Puducherry from 26 February 2026.

- The launch was led by Union Minister Pralhad Joshi with Punjab Governor and Chandigarh Administrator Gulab Chand Kataria and Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan; the government describes it as the first large-scale application of CBDC in a Central Government welfare programme.
- Supporting figures cited: DBT has saved over Rs 4 lakh crore by reducing leakages; more than 59 crore Jan Dhan accounts hold deposits exceeding Rs 3.10 lakh crore; and UPI processed over 2,400 crore transactions worth more than Rs 30 lakh crore in July 2026, accounting for nearly 49% of global real-time digital payment transactions.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), providing free ration to more than 80 crore beneficiaries
Mechanism	food subsidy credited as programmable CBDC (Digital Rupee) tokens into the beneficiary's CBDC wallet instead of a bank account
Access	QR code payment for smartphone users; OTP-based mechanism for feature-phone users
Earlier pilots	Gujarat from 15 February 2026 and Puducherry from 26 February 2026
Stated benefits	instant transfer, purpose-bound use, digital transaction records, less cash handling, better monitoring, easier merchant payments
DBT savings cited	over Rs 4 lakh crore through reduced leakages
Jan Dhan	more than 59 crore accounts with deposits exceeding Rs 3.10 lakh crore
UPI, July 2026	over 2,400 crore transactions worth more than Rs 30 lakh crore, nearly 49% of all real-time digital payment transactions globally

- Launched in the Union Territories of Chandigarh and Dadra & Nagar Haveli, at Tagore Theatre, Chandigarh
- Spending is purpose-bound — usable only at empanelled merchants for foodgrains and other permitted essential food items
- First State/UT to operationalise CBDC food subsidy transfers for all eligible PMGKAY beneficiaries
- ASHA, an AI solution, makes 20 lakh calls to beneficiaries for feedback on foodgrain quality and receipt of entitlements, with complaints routed to States and UTs

UPI completes ten years: 24,162 crore transactions in FY 2025-26, live in 11 countries

24 Aug

- The Unified Payments Interface completed ten years of operation, with the Ministry of Finance dating the decade from its public launch on 25 August 2016; it was first run as a pilot in April 2016 with 21 member banks.
- Annual transaction volume grew from 1.78 crore in FY 2016-17 to over 24,162 crore in FY 2025-26 — an almost 13,000-fold rise at a CAGR of 188 per cent — while annual value rose from Rs 0.07 lakh crore to about Rs 314 lakh crore, a more than 4,000-fold rise at a CAGR of 155 per cent.
- July 2026 was UPI's largest month on record: 2,366 crore transactions worth Rs 29.88 lakh crore, with 741 banks live on the platform.
- UPI accounted for 84 per cent of India's digital payment transactions in FY 2025-26 and about 49 per cent of global real-time payment volume in 2025, a share the IMF recorded in its June 2025 report on retail digital payments.
- UPI is now live in 11 foreign countries for acceptance and/or cross-border remittances, Greece and the Maldives being the most recent additions.

QUICK FACTS

Pilot launch	April 2016 with 21 member banks. Public rollout: August 2016, when participating banks put UPI-enabled apps on the Google Play Store. The Ministry of Finance dates the tenth anniversary to 25 August 2016.
First month of public operation (August 2016)	about 90,000 transactions. FY 2025-26: 24,162 crore transactions.
Daily average in 2026	about 66 crore transactions.
Banks live on UPI	21 at the April 2016 launch, 44 in FY 2016-17, 703 by FY 2025-26 and 741 as on July 2026 — covering public sector, private, small finance, payments and cooperative banks.
Countries where UPI is live	United Arab Emirates, France, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Singapore, Mauritius, Qatar, Cambodia, Greece and Maldives.

- UPI is a real-time retail payment system built and operated by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), under the regulatory oversight of the Reserve Bank of India.
- It lets a single mobile application operate multiple bank accounts, works round the clock, and uses two-factor authentication with end-to-end encryption.
- Each participating bank acts as a Remitter PSP (outgoing transactions) and/or Beneficiary PSP (incoming), with NPCI monitoring performance metrics.
- Person-to-merchant (P2M) payments make up 63 per cent of transaction volume; person-to-person (P2P) transfers make up 71 per cent of transaction value.
- 86 per cent of P2M transactions and 59 per cent of P2P transactions are below Rs 500.

PMJDY at 12: 59.09 Crore Accounts, Rs 3.17 Lakh Crore Deposits, 41.29 Crore RuPay Cards

27 Aug

- The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana completed 12 years, having been launched on 28 August 2014 as India's National Mission for Financial Inclusion under the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance.
- As on 19 August 2026 the scheme had 59.09 crore accounts holding deposits of Rs 3,16,514 crore — an average of Rs 5,356 per account — against 14.72 crore accounts in 2015.
- Women hold 32.92 crore accounts (55.7%) and 45.95 crore accounts (77.8%) are in rural and semi-urban areas; 13.14 crore are urban and metropolitan.
- 41.29 crore free RuPay debit cards have been issued to account holders, each carrying an inbuilt accident cover whose premium is borne by the National Payments Corporation of India.
- The scheme anchors the JAM (Jan Dhan–Aadhaar–Mobile) trinity that routes Direct Benefit Transfers, and doubles as the gateway to PMJJBY, PMSBY, Atal Pension Yojana and MUDRA credit.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), described by the Government as the National Mission for Financial Inclusion
Launched	28 August 2014; announced by the Prime Minister in the Independence Day address of 15 August 2014
Nodal ministry	Ministry of Finance; implementing department: Department of Financial Services
Accounts as on 19 August 2026	59.09 crore (14.72 crore in 2015)
Deposits as on 19 August 2026	Rs 3,16,514 crore (Rs 15,670 crore in March 2015)
Average deposit per account	Rs 5,356, up 3.4 times over 12 years
Women account holders	32.92 crore (55.7%); rural and semi-urban accounts: 45.95 crore (77.8%); urban and metropolitan: 13.14 crore
RuPay cards issued to PMJDY holders	41.29 crore
Account type	Basic Savings Bank Deposit Account with no minimum balance requirement and no maintenance charge
Overdraft	up to Rs 10,000 to one account holder per household, after six months of satisfactory operation

- Guinness World Records recognised 1,80,96,130 accounts opened in a single week during the launch drive
- Minister of State for Finance Shri Pankaj Chaudhary marked the anniversary; the scheme now enters its 13th year

5. Polity & Governance

10 articles

Government Tightens IT Rules on AI Deepfakes and Synthetically Generated Information

06 Aug

- The Government has set out the full statutory framework used against AI-generated deepfakes, spanning the Information Technology Act 2000, the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023 and the IT Rules 2021.
- The IT Rules, 2021 were amended on 10 February 2026 to specifically address synthetically generated information (SGI), including deepfakes and AI-generated content.
- The amendment mandates clear labelling and traceable metadata for permissible AI-generated content so users can identify synthetic material.
- Compliance timelines were sharply cut: removal of unlawful information on valid intimation falls from 36 hours to 3 hours, and grievance redressal from 72 hours to 36 hours, with sensitive categories such as nudity or impersonation cut from 24 hours to 2 hours.
- Intermediaries that fail these obligations lose their exemption from liability for third-party content under Section 79 of the IT Act.

QUICK FACTS

Amendment date	10 February 2026, to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021
Subject	synthetically generated information (SGI) - deepfakes and AI-generated audio, video and text
Ministry	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)
Grievance redressal timeline	reduced from 72 hours to 36 hours; sensitive categories such as nudity and impersonation reduced from 24 hours to 2 hours
Penalty for non-compliance	loss of safe harbour under Section 79 of the IT Act, exposing the intermediary to prosecution

- Significant Social Media Intermediary (SSMI) threshold: 50 lakh or more registered users in India
- Takedown timeline on valid reasoned intimation from the Appropriate Government or a court order: reduced from 36 hours to 3 hours
- Appeals against Grievance Officer decisions lie to the Grievance Appellate Committee, online at gac.gov.in

Commerce Committee Tables 200th Report on India-US Trade Relations and Tariffs

06 Aug

- The Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce, chaired by Ms Dola Sen, MP (Rajya Sabha), presented its 200th Report on 'Evaluation of India-US Trade Relations' to both Houses on 6 August 2026.
- The Committee examined the challenges arising from US tariff measures across marine products, leather, automotive, textiles, gems and jewellery, chemicals, steel and agriculture.
- It recommends concluding the proposed India-US Bilateral Trade Agreement at the earliest and a time-bound roadmap for the Mission 500 initiative and the TRUST technology framework.
- The report records that India's services exports to the US stood at USD 51.20 billion growing at 11.58 per cent CAGR since 2020, while services imports from the US reached USD 47.32 billion at a faster 18.68 per cent CAGR.
- It asks the Government to negotiate complete exemption for generic medicines, critical minerals and smartphones from future US tariff increases, and for the DGFT to run a fast-acting watch desk tracking US customs audits in real time.

QUICK FACTS

Committee	Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce - a Rajya Sabha committee
Chairperson	Ms Dola Sen, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha
Report number and subject	200th Report, 'Evaluation of India-US Trade Relations'
Presented to both Houses of Parliament	6 August 2026; draft adopted 5 August 2026
Process	four meetings spanning 7 hours and 50 minutes
Ministries and bodies examined	Commerce, Financial Services, Fisheries, External Affairs, Heavy Industries, MSME, Textiles, Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Skill Development, plus APEDA, FIEO, CII, FICCI and banks

– Full report available on the Rajya Sabha website under Committees > DRPSC-RS > Commerce

e-Courts Phase III: 753 Crore Pages Digitised, 4.18 Crore Virtual Hearings Held

07 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder reviews the e-Courts Mission Mode Project, launched in 2007 to move India's paper-based judiciary to a digital, trackable system; it is now in Phase III (2023-2027) with an outlay of Rs 7,210 crore.
- Over 753 crore pages of court records have been digitised, and courts have conducted more than 4.18 crore remote hearings through video conferencing.
- Video conferencing now covers 7,553 establishments including courts, jails and hospitals; e-filing is available in 4,519 courts and NSTEP in 6,895 courts.
- The National Judicial Data Grid, launched under Phase II, is the public dashboard that made case pendency visible for the first time, with separate dashboards for the Supreme Court, High Courts and District Courts.
- Of the Rs 7,210 crore Phase III outlay, Rs 53.57 crore is earmarked for artificial intelligence and machine learning in High Courts through 2027.

QUICK FACTS

Project	e-Courts Integrated Mission Mode Project, launched in 2007
Phase I	2011-2015 — over 14,000 courts computerised
Phase II	2015-2023 — introduced the National Judicial Data Grid, e-Filing and e-Sewa Kendras
Phase III	2023-2027, outlay Rs 7,210 crore
Court records digitised	over 753 crore pages
Remote hearings conducted	over 4.18 crore
Live-streaming of proceedings	operational in 11 High Courts
Virtual Courts for traffic challans	31 established; 11.33 crore challans handled, worth Rs 1,135.79 crore
AI and ML component of Phase III	Rs 53.57 crore earmarked through 2027

– Implemented jointly by the Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice and the e-Committee, Supreme Court of India, in a decentralised manner through the High Courts

CPGRAMS Cuts Grievance Disposal Time from 157 Days in 2014 to 14 Days in 2026

09 Aug

- CPGRAMS is the Government's flagship 24x7 digital grievance redressal platform, connecting all Central Ministries, Departments, States and Union Territories through a single portal.
- Grievances handled annually rose nearly nine-fold from about 3.01 lakh in 2014 to around 27 lakh in 2024, while Grievance Redressal Officers grew from 10,232 to more than 1.11 lakh by 2025.
- Average disposal time in Central Ministries and Departments fell from 157 days in 2014 to 15 days in 2025, and stood at 14 days in 2026.

- Guidelines issued in August 2024 rationalised the redressal timeline from 30 days to 21 days and mandated dedicated grievance cells and root cause analysis.
- An AI-enabled voice chatbot, 'Samadhan Didi', was launched on 30 May 2026, letting citizens register grievances by speaking in their preferred language.

QUICK FACTS

Full form	Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System
Nature	the Government's flagship digital grievance redressal platform, available 24x7
Coverage	a single portal connected to all Central Ministries, Departments, State Governments and Union Territories
Portal	https://pgportal.gov.in/, with a mobile app also integrated with UMANG
Offline access	through more than 5 lakh Common Service Centres associated with 2.5 lakh Village Level Entrepreneurs; postal grievances are digitised and uploaded
Redressal timeline	21 days, rationalised from 30 days by guidelines issued in August 2024
Appeal	to a Nodal Appellate Authority, which must resolve the appeal within 30 days
Administered by	the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG)

NEP 2020 rollout: NCrF adopted by 700+ universities, GER at 30, NCERT made deemed university

10 Aug

- In written replies in the Lok Sabha, the Ministry of Education set out the state of National Education Policy 2020 implementation across school and higher education.
- As reported in AISHE 2023-24, more than 700 universities and over 7,500 affiliated colleges have adopted the National Credit Framework, which permits up to 50% of a programme's total credits to be earned through skill-based courses.
- India's Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education rose from 23.7 in 2014-15 to 30 in 2023-24, with female GER rising from 22.9 to 31.2 and total enrolment from 3.42 crore to 4.50 crore.
- NCERT, New Delhi was declared an Institution Deemed to be University under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956 by a Ministry of Education notification dated 30 March 2026, subject to its commencing research, doctoral and innovative academic programmes.
- NCERT released the National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage on 20 October 2022 and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education on 23 August 2023, after consultations engaging over 13 lakh citizens nationally and more than 1,550 district-level consultations across 32 States and UTs.

QUICK FACTS

NCrF adoption as reported in AISHE 2023-24	more than 700 universities and over 7,500 affiliated colleges
Higher education GER	23.7 (2014-15) -> 30 (2023-24); female GER 22.9 -> 31.2; enrolment 3.42 crore -> 4.50 crore, an addition of over 1.08 crore students
SWAYAM Plus	more than 500 courses curated from 89 industry partners across 17 sectors, with over 6,00,000 student registrations
Online and distance learning	126 HEIs offering about 802 online programmes; 121 HEIs offering around 1,699 ODL programmes

- NEP 2020 was approved by the Union Cabinet on 29 July 2020, replacing the National Policy on Education, 1986; the drafting committee was chaired by Dr K. Kasturirangan, former ISRO Chairman
- Education is in the Concurrent List, so the Centre and States implement NEP jointly
- NCF for Foundational Stage (NCF-FS) released 20 October 2022; NCF for School Education (NCF-SE) released 23 August 2023
- National Credit Framework covers elementary, school, higher and skill education; UGC's SOP allows up to 50% of programme credits from skill-based courses
- NCERT declared an Institution Deemed to be University under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956 by notification dated 30 March 2026

- PM-USHA launched June 2023 as the third phase of RUSA, outlay Rs 12,926.10 crore including committed liabilities of earlier RUSA phases

Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026 Creates Judiciary-Led National Tribunals Commission for 16 Tribunals

12 Aug

- Parliament passed the Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026 in August 2026, repealing the Tribunals Reforms Act, 2021.
- The Bill sets up a National Tribunals Commission (NTC) with a judicial majority to select members and oversee the working of 16 tribunals.
- It follows the Supreme Court's Madras Bar Association ruling, which struck down provisions of the 2021 Act and directed the creation of an independent commission.
- Tribunal members will serve five-year terms up to age 67; NTC members serve five years up to age 70.
- The Comptroller and Auditor-General will audit the Commission, and its audit report will be laid before both Houses of Parliament.

QUICK FACTS

Legislation	The Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026, passed by Parliament in August 2026 (Rajya Sabha cleared it on 11 August 2026 after the Lok Sabha)
New body created	National Tribunals Commission (NTC), to be headquartered in New Delhi
Coverage	16 tribunals, appellate tribunals and authorities listed in the Bill, each with its parent enactment
Composition of the NTC	a Chairperson plus four Members — two Judicial and two Technical
Trigger	Madras Bar Association v. Union of India [(2026) 2 SCC 1], decided 19 November 2025, which struck down provisions of the 2021 Act and directed an independent commission
Tenure	NTC Chairperson/Member — 5 years or age 70, whichever is earlier; Tribunal Member — 5 years or age 67
Audit	the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India audits the Commission's accounts; the report is laid before both Houses

- It repeals the Tribunals Reforms Act, 2021

Monsoon Session Ends With 12 Bills Passed and 19% Lok Sabha Productivity

13 Aug

- The Monsoon Session 2026, which began on 20 July 2026, was adjourned sine die on 13 August 2026 after 19 sittings spread over 25 days — the 8th Session of the 18th Lok Sabha and the 271st Session of the Rajya Sabha.
- Eleven Bills were introduced in the Lok Sabha and two in the Rajya Sabha; 12 were passed by each House, and 12 were passed by both Houses in all.
- Two Bills replaced Ordinances promulgated before the Session — the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance, 2026 and the Income-Tax (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026.
- Productivity was about 19% in the Lok Sabha and about 39% in the Rajya Sabha, which sat for only 37 hours and 49 minutes and took up 16 of 285 Starred Questions.
- The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026 was referred to a Joint Committee of the Houses; major Bills passed included the Tribunals Reforms Bill, the Kerala (Alteration of Name) Bill and the MMDR Amendment Bill.

QUICK FACTS

Session dates	commenced 20 July 2026, adjourned sine die 13 August 2026; 19 sittings over 25 days
Bills introduced	11 in Lok Sabha, 2 in Rajya Sabha; 12 passed by each House; 12 passed by both Houses
Two Ordinance-replacing Bills	Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment and Income-Tax (Amendment)
Productivity	about 19% in the Lok Sabha, about 39% in the Rajya Sabha

- 8th Session of the 18th Lok Sabha; 271st Session of the Rajya Sabha
- Demands for Excess Grants for 2022-23 taken up; the Appropriation Bill passed by Lok Sabha on 4 August 2026 and returned by Rajya Sabha on 6 August 2026

- Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026 referred to a Joint Committee of the Houses
- Rajya Sabha sat for 37 hours and 49 minutes; 16 of 285 Starred Questions, 52 of 380 Zero Hour Submissions and 93 of 380 Special Mentions were taken up
- An orientation programme for newly elected and nominated Rajya Sabha Members was held over two days, attended by 35 Members
- 'Vani Setu' introduced AI-based language translation letting Members hear proceedings in a language of their choice; 'Sadasya Setu' is the app for attendance and parliamentary transactions

e-Courts Phase III Digitises 753 Crore Pages as India Code Portal Gets AI Search

13 Aug

- Under e-Courts Phase III (2023-27), 753.60 crore pages of court records have been digitised, 1,806 eSewa Kendras established and e-filing implemented in 4,519 courts.
- Video conferencing facilities exist in 7,553 establishments including courts, jails and hospitals; 11 High Courts have live audio-visual streaming and all High Courts have implemented the Interoperable Criminal Justice System.
- As of March 2026, 452 ADR Centres and 1,394 Mediation Centres function across the country, with 4,681 judicial officers, 10,124 lawyers and 753 other mediators trained and deployed.
- Section 12A of the Commercial Courts Act, 2015 makes pre-institution mediation mandatory in commercial disputes of specified value except where urgent relief is sought, and the Mediation Act, 2023 provides for a Mediation Council of India under Section 43.
- The revamped India Code Portal was launched on 13 August 2026 at Kartavya Bhavan 2, New Delhi, adding AI-assisted and semantic search, speech-based access, e-Gazette integration and multilingual access in all 22 Eighth Schedule languages.

QUICK FACTS

ADR infrastructure as of March 2026	452 ADR Centres, 1,394 Mediation Centres; 4,681 judicial officers, 10,124 lawyers and 753 other mediators trained

- e-Courts Phase III runs from 2023 to 2027 and targets digital, paperless and 'intelligent' courts using AI
- 753.60 crore pages of court records digitised; 1,806 eSewa Kendras established; 474 courts equipped for paperless working
- 538 courts equipped as Virtual Courts; e-filing in 4,519 courts; 6,895 courts have the NSTEP facility for electronic service of process
- 7,553 establishments have video conferencing, including courts, jails and hospitals; 11 High Courts have live audio-visual streaming
- 1,626 court complexes have solar facilities; 734 court websites migrated to the S3WAAS platform; 174 sites connected via SDWAN
- 18,380 courts received additional hardware in Phase II; 2,372 trainings held; all High Courts have implemented ICJS
- Case management runs on the Case Information System (CIS) 4.0 and the JustIS application
- A Centrally Sponsored Scheme for district and subordinate court infrastructure has run since 1993-94, covering court halls, residential units for judicial officers, lawyers' halls, toilet complexes and digital computer rooms
- The revamped India Code Portal was launched on 13 August 2026 by the Legislative Department with the National Informatics Centre

31st Southern Zonal Council at Mahabalipuram takes up water sharing and asset division

20 Aug

- Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah chaired the 31st meeting of the Southern Zonal Council at Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu on 20 August 2026.
- The meeting was attended by the Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala, the Deputy Chief Minister of Telangana, the Lieutenant Governors of Puducherry and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and the Administrator of Lakshadweep.

- The Home Minister said 70 Zonal Council meetings have been held since 2014 and 1,445 of 1,869 issues — about 80% — have been resolved, against an average of two and a half meetings a year in 2004-2014 and six a year now.
- The southern States agreed to resolve pending inter-State water disputes through mutual dialogue, with joint meetings involving the Ministry of Jal Shakti, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Inter-State Council; Andhra Pradesh and Telangana agreed to settle the division of assets and liabilities in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- Other agenda items were Fast Track Special Courts for rape and POCSO cases, the school dropout ratio — currently 9.5 nationally, against a target below 3 — malnutrition and stunting, and the Ministry of Home Affairs' three-year roadmap for a drug-free India.

QUICK FACTS

Event	31st meeting of the Southern Zonal Council, Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu, 20 August 2026
Chaired by	Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah, who is ex-officio Chairman of all five Zonal Councils
Five Zonal Councils exist	Northern, Central, Eastern, Western and Southern; the North Eastern Council is separate, created by the North Eastern Council Act, 1971
Southern Zonal Council members	Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and Telangana
Attendance	Chief Ministers C. Joseph Vijay (Tamil Nadu), Chandrababu Naidu (Andhra Pradesh), D. K. Shivakumar (Karnataka) and V. D. Satheesan (Kerala); Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu (Telangana); Lieutenant Governors K. Kailashnathan (Puducherry) and Admiral (Retd.) D. K. Joshi (Andaman and Nicobar Islands); Administrator Praful Patel (Lakshadweep)
Zonal Council record since 2014	70 meetings, 1,445 of 1,869 issues resolved (about 80%)
Meeting frequency	an average of 2.5 a year in 2004-2014, now six a year
North India water sharing	five of eight river water issues had persisted since the pre-British era; a final agreement was reached five months before this meeting
School dropout ratio	9.5 nationally, with the Home Minister setting a target below 3

- Zonal Councils are statutory bodies created by the States Reorganisation Act, 1956 — not constitutional bodies
- Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep are not members of any Zonal Council; they are special invitees to the Southern Zonal Council
- The Ministry of Home Affairs has prepared a three-year roadmap for a drug-free India

Bihar and Jharkhand sign Sone river water-sharing MoU, ending 25-year dispute

31 Aug

- Bihar and Jharkhand signed a Memorandum of Understanding on sharing the waters of the Sone river, in the presence of Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah, resolving a dispute the release describes as nearly 25 years old.
- Also present were Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren, Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, Union Jal Shakti Minister C.R. Patil, the Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar and the Union Home Secretary.
- The agreement is expected to secure irrigation and drinking water for the Bihar districts of Bhojpur, Buxar, Rohtas, Kaimur, Aurangabad, Arwal, Gaya and Patna, and for Palamu, Garhwa and adjoining areas of Jharkhand.
- This is the FOURTH inter-state water agreement of 2026 brokered through the Inter-State Council mechanism, after the Narmada Award dues settlement (7 July 2026), the Rajasthan-Haryana Yamuna Water Project agreement (29 June 2026) and the six-state Kishau Multipurpose Project consensus (16 June 2026).
- The significance for polity is the route taken: a negotiated MoU under the Inter-State Council (Article 263) rather than adjudication by a tribunal under the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956.

QUICK FACTS

What was signed	a Memorandum of Understanding between the Governments of Bihar and Jharkhand on the sharing of Sone river water.
Signed in the presence of	Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah. Also present - Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren, Bihar CM Samrat Choudhary, Union Minister for Jal Shakti C.R. Patil, the Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar and the Union Home Secretary.
Bihar districts named as beneficiaries	Bhojpur, Buxar, Rohtas, Kaimur, Aurangabad, Arwal, Gaya and Patna.
Jharkhand areas named as beneficiaries	Palamu, Garhwa and other regions.
Institutional route	the Inter-State Council, the Article 263 body whose Standing Committee is chaired by the Union Home Minister - not an Inter-State River Water Disputes Tribunal.
Count for the year	the fourth inter-state water agreement of 2026 reached through this route.
The Sone	rises in the Amarkantak plateau in Madhya Pradesh, runs about 784 km, and is the second-largest southern (right-bank) tributary of the Ganga after the Yamuna, joining the Ganga about 30 km upstream of Patna.

– Age of the dispute, as stated in the release: nearly 25 years - that is, dating to around the creation of Jharkhand out of Bihar in November 2000.

6. Defence

2 articles

Defence production hits Rs 1.78 lakh crore, exports Rs 38,424 crore in FY 2025-26

14 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder issued for the 80th Independence Day places India's defence production at a record Rs 1.78 lakh crore in FY 2025-26, with Defence PSUs and other public entities supplying about 76% and the private sector 24%.
- Defence exports rose from Rs 686 crore in FY 2013-14 to Rs 38,424 crore in FY 2025-26 — a 56-fold rise reaching more than 80 countries; DPSUs contributed Rs 21,071 crore (54.84%) and private firms Rs 17,353 crore (45.16%).
- The stated targets are Rs 3 lakh crore of annual defence production and Rs 50,000 crore of exports by 2029.
- Ten Positive Indigenisation Lists covering 5,521 items had been notified till May 2026 — five each by the Department of Military Affairs and the Department of Defence Production.
- In a parallel Akashvani address on the eve of Independence Day, Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh said the Defence Acquisition Council granted Acceptance of Necessity worth over Rs 8.75 lakh crore in the past year and that India now has 145 defence exporters.

QUICK FACTS

Defence production FY 2025-26	Rs 1.78 lakh crore (record) — public sector ~76%, private sector 24%
Defence exports FY 2025-26	Rs 38,424 crore, up from Rs 686 crore in FY 2013-14 (56-fold); exports reach 80+ countries
Export split FY 2025-26	DPSUs Rs 21,071 crore (54.84%); private sector Rs 17,353 crore (45.16%)
Targets for 2029	Rs 3 lakh crore annual production, Rs 50,000 crore annual exports
Defence budget	Rs 2.53 lakh crore (2013-14) -> Rs 7.85 lakh crore (2026-27), a 3.1-fold rise
Capital expenditure	Rs 94,587.95 crore (2014-15) -> Rs 2.19 lakh crore (2026-27), a 2.3-fold rise
Defence R&D allocation	Rs 13,716.14 crore (2014-15) -> Rs 29,100.25 crore (2026-27), an increase of over 112%; since 2022-23, 25% of the defence R&D budget is opened to industry, start-ups and academia
Positive Indigenisation Lists till May 2026	10 lists, five each of DMA and DDP, covering 5,521 items
FDI in defence	74% under the automatic route and up to 100% through the government route; inflows of Rs 6,670.59 crore by March 2026
Indian Army indigenisation	159 of 175 ammunition variants indigenised — roughly 91% self-sufficiency

– SRIJAN (Defence Equipment Empowerment Platform): 41,000+ vendors and 2.7 lakh products listed as of May 2026

India and Japan sign Memorandum of Arrangement on Maritime Security Cooperation

20 Aug

- Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh and Japan's Minister of Defense Shinjiro Koizumi held the Japan-India Defence Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi on 20 August 2026 and signed a Memorandum of Arrangement on Maritime Security Cooperation between the two defence ministries.
- The Memorandum frames cooperation between the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Indian Navy, including information sharing on Maritime Domain Awareness, search and rescue, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.
- The two sides agreed to explore joint development in naval shipbuilding and design, to use India's production capacity under Make in India, and to conclude a ship repair arrangement providing reciprocal repair facilities.
- The shipborne UNICORN integrated communications antenna system was described as the first defence equipment transfer project between the two countries; DRDO and Japan's ATLA will deepen R&D cooperation and a Defence Industry Forum is to be convened.

- A new Working Group at Director-General / Joint Secretary level was created to coordinate operational, intelligence, equipment, technology and industrial cooperation, and the two sides agreed to accelerate arrangements for the fourth Japan-India 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting in Tokyo this year.

QUICK FACTS

Event	Japan-India Defence Ministers' Meeting, New Delhi, 20 August 2026
Participants	Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh and Mr Shinjiro Koizumi, Minister of Defense of Japan
Document signed	Memorandum of Arrangement on Maritime Security Cooperation between the Ministry of Defense of Japan and the Ministry of Defence of India
Coverage of the Memorandum	Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and Indian Navy cooperation, Maritime Domain Awareness information sharing, Search and Rescue, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief
R&D partners named	DRDO on the Indian side and the Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Agency (ATLA) on the Japanese side; a Defence Industry Forum is to be convened
New mechanism	a Working Group headed at Director-General / Joint Secretary level for integrated coordination across operations, intelligence, equipment, technology and industry

- First defence equipment transfer project between the two countries: the shipborne UNICORN integrated communications antenna system
- Veer Guardian 26, the India-Japan air exercise, is scheduled this year and will for the first time bring Japan Air Self-Defence Force fighter aircraft to India
- The first trilateral naval PASSEX involving Japan, India and Indonesia was conducted in February 2026
- The second tabletop exercise of the Indo-Pacific Logistics Network (IPLN) is scheduled at Japan's Ministry of Defense in September this year
- The fourth Japan-India 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting is to be convened in Tokyo this year
- Koizumi laid a wreath at the National War Memorial, received a Tri-Service Guard of Honour, and visited the Western Naval Command at Mumbai and INS Chennai; he also called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi

7. Science & Tech

15 articles

Nuclear Energy Mission Allots Rs 20,000 Crore for Five Indigenous SMRs by 2033

05 Aug

- The Nuclear Energy Mission, announced in the Union Budget 2025-26, carries a budgetary provision of Rs 20,000 crore for the design, development and deployment of Small Modular Reactors.
- The Mission targets at least five indigenous SMRs operational by 2033 and a nuclear power capacity of 100 GW by 2047.
- BARC is developing three demonstration units - the 220 MWe Bharat Small Modular Reactor (BSMR-200), the 55 MWe SMR-55, and a High Temperature Gas Cooled Reactor of up to 5 MWth for hydrogen production.
- The Atomic Energy Commission has approved Tarapur, Maharashtra as the site for both BSMR-200 and SMR-55; the HTGCR is proposed at BARC, Visakhapatnam.
- The SHANTI Act, 2025, notified on 21 December 2025, opens the nuclear sector to private participation, accords statutory status to the AERB and reforms the liability regime with graded liability.

QUICK FACTS

Mission	Nuclear Energy Mission, announced in the Union Budget 2025-26
Budgetary provision	Rs 20,000 crore for design, development and deployment of Small Modular Reactors
Targets	at least five indigenous SMRs by 2033; 100 GW nuclear capacity by 2047
Developer	Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), a constituent unit of the Department of Atomic Energy
BSMR-200	220 MWe indigenous Pressurized Water Reactor; site approved at Tarapur, Maharashtra; augmentation to 300 MWe envisaged
SMR-55	55 MWe Pressurised Water Reactor; site also approved at Tarapur, Maharashtra
HTGCR	High Temperature Gas Cooled Reactor up to 5 MWth for process heat and hydrogen production; proposed at BARC, Visakhapatnam; siting consent received and MoEFCC Terms of Reference obtained
Build time	SMRs require 60 to 72 months after administrative and financial sanction
Indigenous material	ApuRVA - Advanced Purified Reactor Vessel Alloy - developed with Indian industry, along with reactor pressure vessel forgings and the control rod drive mechanism

– SHANTI Act, 2025 notified on 21 December 2025

Government Expands Sovereign AI Stack Through IndiaAI Mission and Semicon 2.0

06 Aug

- The Government set out progress on building technological sovereignty across the AI value chain through the IndiaAI Mission and the India Semiconductor Mission.
- The IndiaAI Mission was approved on 7 March 2024 with an outlay of Rs 10,371.92 crore over five years; 20 indigenous foundation model proposals have been selected from 506 applications.
- Compute support has reached 237 approved projects and 93.18 lakh sanctioned GPU hours, with a purchase order issued for a roughly 1.1 EFLOPS AI compute system at the NIC Data Centre, Shastri Park, Delhi.
- The Union Cabinet approved Semicon 2.0 on 15 July 2026 with an outlay of Rs 1,27,500 crore, building on 12 approved manufacturing projects worth Rs 1.64 lakh crore, three of which are already in commercial production.
- India joined the Pax Silica coalition at the India AI Impact Summit 2026 to help secure the global silicon supply chain.

QUICK FACTS

IndiaAI Mission	approved 7 March 2024, outlay Rs 10,371.92 crore over five years, under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
Foundation models	20 proposals selected from 506 applications - 12 Large Multimodal Models and 8 Small Language Models, with intellectual property retained by applicants
Compute	15 Compute Service Providers empanelled over four rounds; 237 projects approved; 93.18 lakh GPU hours sanctioned
Centres of Excellence	58 AI CoEs approved; 22 initiated across 13 States and UTs
Semicon India Programme	approved by the Union Cabinet on 15 December 2021 with an outlay of Rs 76,000 crore; PIB dates the programme's launch to January 2022
Semicon 2.0	approved 15 July 2026, outlay Rs 1,27,500 crore
NM-ICPS	National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems, outlay Rs 3,660 crore, 25 Technology Innovation Hubs

- High-Performance AI Compute System of about 1.1 EFLOPS ordered for the NIC Data Centre, Shastri Park, Delhi
- 12 semiconductor manufacturing projects approved so far, committed investment Rs 1.64 lakh crore; 3 in commercial production

Digital India at Ten: BharatNet Reaches 2.21 Lakh Gram Panchayats, UPI Serves 55 Crore

06 Aug

- The Government placed on record the decade-long progress of the Digital India programme, launched in July 2015 around digital infrastructure, digital service delivery and digital empowerment.
- About 2.21 lakh Gram Panchayats had been made service-ready under BharatNet as of June 2026, and 24,784 mobile towers commissioned under Digital Bharat Nidhi-funded schemes.
- Internet subscribers rose from 25.15 crore in March 2014 to 109.27 crore in March 2026, while telephone connections grew from 93.3 crore to over 133 crore.
- Data costs fell from Rs 269 per GB in 2014 to roughly Rs 8-10 per GB in 2025-26, among the cheapest in the world.
- UPI now serves over 55.49 crore individuals and 6.5 crore merchants across 731 banks, powering 85 per cent of India's digital payments and nearly half of global real-time digital payments.

QUICK FACTS

Programme	Digital India, launched July 2015
Three core goals	strengthening digital infrastructure, delivering government services digitally, empowering citizens through digital literacy and employment
BharatNet	about 2.21 lakh Gram Panchayats made service-ready as of June 2026
Digital Bharat Nidhi-funded mobile scheme	24,784 towers commissioned as on 30 June 2026
Aadhaar numbers generated	over 1.44 billion
Direct Benefit Transfer	318 schemes across 56 ministries; over Rs 52 lakh crore transferred
UPI	55.49 crore individuals, 6.5 crore merchants, 731 banks
Nodal ministry	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), with the Department of Telecommunications for connectivity

Nuclear Roadmap: 100 GWe by 2047, Five Indigenous SMRs by 2033 and the SHANTI Act Framework

12 Aug

- The Department of Atomic Energy told the Lok Sabha that India is targeting 100 GWe of nuclear capacity by 2047 under the Nuclear Energy Mission announced in the Union Budget 2025-26.
- At least five indigenous Small Modular Reactors are to be developed and operationalised by 2033, including the 220 MWe BSMR-200 and the 55 MWe SMR-55.

- The SHANTI Act, 2025 opens the nuclear sector to wider public and private participation and gives statutory status to the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board.
- BARC's Dhruva reactor supplies Mo-99, I-131 and Lu-177, which account for nearly 90% of nuclear medicine applications; a dedicated Isotope Production Reactor is expected to begin production around 2035 with 0.5 million curie capacity.
- The Atomic Minerals Directorate has established the Pudupuram-Cuddalore beach sand mineral deposit in Tamil Nadu with 1.912 million tonnes of total heavy minerals.

QUICK FACTS

Announced in	a written reply by Dr. Jitendra Singh, Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions and the Prime Minister's Office, in the Lok Sabha
Target	100 GWe of nuclear capacity by 2047 under the Nuclear Energy Mission announced in the Union Budget 2025-26, which carries a Rs 20,000 crore outlay
SMR goal	at least five indigenous Small Modular Reactors developed and operationalised by 2033
Indigenous SMR designs at BARC	220 MWe Bharat Small Modular Reactor (BSMR-200), 55 MWe SMR-55, and a High Temperature Gas Cooled Reactor of up to 5 MWth for hydrogen production
Enabling law	the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Act, 2025
Second-stage work	sodium cooled Fast Breeder Reactors and closed fuel-cycle facilities at IGCAR, Kalpakkam
Medical isotopes	Mo-99, I-131 and Lu-177 account for nearly 90% of all nuclear medicine applications and are produced in the Dhruva reactor at BARC

- The SHANTI Act gives statutory status to the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board, which was constituted on 15 November 1983 and is headquartered in Mumbai

Space Vision 2047: First Private Earth Observation Constellation Cleared, 440 Space Startups Registered

12 Aug

- The Department of Space set out the Space Vision 2047 roadmap in the Lok Sabha, covering Earth observation, satellite communication and NavIC navigation.
- IN-SPACe has signed India's first fully commercial Earth Observation constellation agreement under a PPP model with the Allied Orbits Private Limited consortium, led by PixxelSpace India.
- The 12-satellite constellation, with more than Rs 1,200 crore of consortium investment, is to be operational by 2029, built and launched entirely in India.
- Around 440 space technology startups are registered on the DPIIT Start-up India Portal, and IN-SPACe has granted 113 authorisations to 52 non-government entities.
- Cumulative investment in Indian space startups reached about USD 618.5 million as on 31 March 2026.

QUICK FACTS

Answered by	Dr. Jitendra Singh, Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, and Minister of State in the PMO, Department of Atomic Energy and Space, in the Lok Sabha
First commercial EO constellation under PPP	awarded to Allied Orbits Private Limited, a consortium led by PixxelSpace India with Dhruva Space, PierSight Space and Satsure Analytics India
Constellation size	12 satellites with panchromatic, multispectral, hyperspectral and Synthetic Aperture Radar capability, operational by 2029
Consortium investment	more than Rs 1,200 crore; all satellites manufactured in India and launched on Indian launch vehicles, with mission control in India
Space startups	about 440 registered on the DPIIT Start-up India Portal; IN-SPACe has granted 113 authorisations to 52 non-government entities, of which 18 are startups
Technology transfer	NSIL has signed 118 Technology Transfer Agreements covering 83 ISRO/Department of Space technologies
Free data rule	Indian Earth Observation data coarser than 5 m Ground Sampling Distance is open and free to all users under the Indian Space Policy-2023

- Cumulative investment in Indian space startups: about USD 618.5 million as on 31 March 2026

Mission Mausam: 50 Doppler Radars, AI Forecasting and a 2026 Monsoon Running 12% Below Normal

12 Aug

- Under Mission Mausam, IMD's observational network now has 50 Doppler Weather Radars, 1,008 Automatic Weather Stations and 6,885 rain gauge stations.
- IMD forecast the 2026 southwest monsoon at 92% of the Long Period Average in April and revised it to 90%; cumulative rainfall was 12% below normal as on 2 August 2026.
- Weak El Nino conditions formed over the equatorial Pacific in June 2026 and strengthened to moderate, suppressing monsoon circulation.
- The National Seismological Network has grown from 86 observatories in 2014 to 174, of which 89 are in high-risk Seismic Zones IV and V.
- AI/ML systems including meteoGAN, MausamVani and a CNN-based bias correction model for the Bharat Forecast System are being folded into operational forecasting.

QUICK FACTS

Answered by	Dr. Jitendra Singh, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Earth Sciences, in the Lok Sabha
Flood support	25 Flood Meteorological Offices issue daily 7-day Quantitative Precipitation Forecasts across 220 sub-basins for the Central Water Commission; integrated flood warning systems operate in Chennai and Mumbai
2026 monsoon	First Stage Long Range Forecast issued 13 April 2026 at 92% of LPA, revised to 90% in the Second Stage; cumulative rainfall 12% below LPA as on 2 August 2026
El Nino	weak conditions formed in June 2026 and intensified to moderate; the Indian Ocean Dipole remains neutral

- IMD observational network under Mission Mausam: 50 Doppler Weather Radars, 1,008 Automatic Weather Stations, 6,885 rain gauge stations
- Severe weather forecast accuracy has improved 40-50% over the past decade
- INCOIS is the designated Tsunami Service Provider for 28 Indian Ocean Rim nations; 26 coastal villages in Odisha are recognised under the UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme
- The new Bharat Forecast System (BharatFS) runs at 6 km resolution to serve block and panchayat level forecasting

India's Deep-Tech Mission Map: Rs 1 Lakh Crore RDI Fund, Quantum Mission Hubs and 25 Innovation Hubs

12 Aug

- The Ministry of Science and Technology tabled the outlays of India's six major emerging-technology missions in the Lok Sabha, led by the Rs 1 lakh crore Research, Development and Innovation Fund.
- The National Quantum Mission has four Thematic Hubs operational with 14 Technical Groups, 17 Project Teams and support to 17 quantum startups.
- NM-ICPS has established 25 Technology Innovation Hubs, four of which were upgraded to Technology Translation Research Parks in 2025-26.
- TIHs have produced more than 1,100 technologies and 1,300 technology products and incubated over 1,130 startups.
- India's Gross Expenditure on R&D rose from 0.64% of GDP in 2020-21 to 0.84% in 2023-24, reaching Rs 2,44,767.81 crore.

QUICK FACTS

Answered by	Dr. Jitendra Singh, Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science and Technology, in the Lok Sabha
Six flagship missions listed with outlays	RDI Fund Rs 1 lakh crore, India Semiconductor Mission Rs 76,000 crore, IndiaAI Mission Rs 10,371.92 crore, Bio-RIDE Rs 9,197 crore, National Quantum Mission Rs 6,003.65 crore, NM-ICPS Rs 3,660 crore
NM-ICPS	launched in 2018 by the Department of Science and Technology, Rs 3,660 crore over nine years, with 25 Technology Innovation Hubs
National Quantum Mission	approved by the Union Cabinet on 19 April 2023 at Rs 6,003.65 crore for eight years, with four Thematic Hubs
Quantum Thematic Hubs	Quantum Computing at IISc Bengaluru (with C-DAC), Quantum Communication at IIT Madras (with C-DOT), Quantum Sensing and Metrology at IIT Bombay, Quantum Materials and Devices at IIT Delhi
Gross Expenditure on R&D	0.84% of GDP in 2023-24, up from 0.64% in 2020-21; Rs 2,44,767.81 crore, more than triple the Rs 79,355.89 crore of 2013-14

- Four TIHs upgraded to Technology Translation Research Parks in 2025-26: IIT Kanpur (cybersecurity), IISc Bengaluru (robotics and AI systems), IIT (ISM) Dhanbad (mining) and IIT Indore (digital healthcare)
- 23 Quantum Teaching Laboratories are being set up nationwide, alongside AICTE-linked undergraduate minor and M.Tech programmes in quantum technologies

Semicon 2.0 and IndiaAI Mission Drive India's Chip-to-AI Build-Out

13 Aug

- Semicon India 2.0 was approved in July 2026 with a Rs 1,27,500 crore outlay, scaling up the Rs 76,000 crore Semicon 1.0 programme across six pillars — chip design, equipment and materials, fabrication, advanced packaging, R&D and talent.
- Twelve semiconductor projects have been approved across six states with investment commitments above Rs 1.64 lakh crore; three facilities have already begun commercial production.
- The IndiaAI Mission, with an outlay of about Rs 10,372 crore, had expanded shared compute to more than 45,000 GPUs as of June 2026, and 237 projects had used 93.18 lakh subsidised GPU hours by August 2026.
- Twenty indigenous foundation model proposals — 12 large multimodal models and 8 small language models — were selected from 506 applications; AI Kosh hosted over 14,000 datasets and 331 AI models as of July 2026.
- India was ranked third globally in the Stanford Global AI Vibrancy Report 2025 and joined the Pax Silica coalition on resilient silicon supply chains at the India AI Impact Summit 2026.

QUICK FACTS

Semicon 1.0 outlay	Rs 76,000 crore; Semicon 2.0 outlay: Rs 1,27,500 crore, approved July 2026
Chips to Startup (C2S)	EDA tools deployed in 320 academic institutions, over 68,000 students trained
Design Linked Incentive	24 semiconductor design projects and 105 startups/MSMEs supported with EDA tools
India AI Impact Summit 2026 (February 2026)	delegations from over 100 countries, declaration adopted by 92 countries and organisations

- 12 semiconductor projects approved across 6 states; commitments over Rs 1.64 lakh crore; 3 units in commercial production
- 211 chips taped out by 75 institutions by April 2026; 7 fabricated, including at the 12 nm node
- IndiaAI Mission outlay about Rs 10,372 crore; 45,000+ GPUs of shared compute as of June 2026
- 58 AI Centres of Excellence approved as of August 2026; 22 already initiated across 13 States/UTs
- 62 AI prototypes developed and 20 AI solutions deployed in public-sector institutions as of August 2026
- 13 Responsible AI projects approved under the Safe & Trusted AI pillar as of July 2026
- Data centre installed capacity grew from 375 MW in 2020 to about 1,575 MW

Parliament Told 8,000 MW of Nuclear Capacity Is Under Construction

13 Aug

- A written reply in the Rajya Sabha listed every nuclear project under construction with its location, capacity, original and revised commissioning dates and sanctioned and revised cost.

- RAPP-7 at Rawatbhata, Rajasthan (700 MW) commenced commercial operation on 15 April 2026 against an original commissioning date of June 2016; its twin RAPP-8 is in an advanced stage of commissioning.
- Kaiga-5 and Kaiga-6 in Karnataka have slipped from June 2026 and June 2027 to June 2031 and June 2032; the Kudankulam units 3 to 6 have moved to between June 2027 and March 2030.
- Cost revisions are steep: the RAPP-7 and 8 twin unit from Rs 12,320 crore to Rs 22,924 crore, KKNPP-3 and 4 from Rs 39,849 crore to Rs 68,893 crore, and KKNPP-5 and 6 from Rs 49,621 crore to Rs 69,437 crore.
- On progressive commissioning of the projects now under construction, a cumulative 8,000 MW will be added to the national grid.

QUICK FACTS

Light Water Reactors with foreign cooperation	KKNPP-3 to KKNPP-6 at Kudankulam, Tamil Nadu — 1,000 MW each
GHAVP-1 and 2	sanctioned cost Rs 20,594 crore, under revision; Kaiga-5 and 6: Rs 21,000 crore, under revision; PFBR: Rs 3,492 crore, under revision
Reasons cited for delay	post-Fukushima design changes, delayed supply of critical equipment, Covid-19, delayed Russian supplies for Kudankulam, contractor cash-flow problems, difficult site soil conditions at GHAVP, shortage of skilled contractor manpower, and the Russia-Ukraine and USA/Israel-Iran conflicts

- Capacity to be added on completion of projects under construction: 8,000 MW
- Indigenous Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors under construction: RAPP-7 and 8 (Rawatbhata, Rajasthan), GHAVP-1 and 2 (Gorakhpur, Haryana), Kaiga-5 and 6 (Karnataka) — 700 MW each
- Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor, Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu: 500 MW, original commissioning September 2010, revised to March 2027
- RAPP-7 commenced commercial operation on 15 April 2026; cost on a twin-unit basis rose from Rs 12,320 crore sanctioned to Rs 22,924 crore
- Equity released and utilised across projects rose from Rs 540 crore in 2021-22 to Rs 3,042 crore in 2025-26
- The reply was given by Dr Jitendra Singh, Minister of State (Independent Charge), in the Rajya Sabha

440 Space Startups, 113 IN-SPACe Authorisations and a Debris-Free Space Mission

13 Aug

- Around 440 space technology startups are registered on the DPIIT Start-up India portal, and IN-SPACe has granted 113 authorisations to 52 Non-Government Entities, of which 18 are startups.
- Indian private companies are expected to undertake two commercial rocket launches in FY 2026-27, with more than six anticipated in FY 2027-28 once the launch manifest is approved by IN-SPACe.
- The missions of the last three years listed in the reply are Chandrayaan-3, Aditya-L1, XPoSat, SPADEX, NISAR and GSAT-7R (CMS-03); upcoming missions are Gaganyaan, the Venus Orbiter Mission, Chandrayaan-4 and LUPEX/Chandrayaan-5 with JAXA.
- ISRO's Debris Free Space Mission is being pursued through Active Debris Removal and end-of-life disposal, as Low Earth Orbit satellite internet constellations raise collision risk.
- ISRO has been a member of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee — formed in 1993 — since 1996, and India also participates in UN-COPUOS working groups on long-term sustainability and space situational awareness.

QUICK FACTS

IN-SPACe authorisations	113 granted to 52 Non-Government Entities, of which 18 are startups

- About 440 space technology startups registered on the DPIIT Start-up India portal
- Commercial launches by Indian private companies: 2 planned in FY 2026-27; more than 6 expected in FY 2027-28
- Chandrayaan-3 launched 14 July 2023; soft landing near the Moon's south polar region on 23 August 2023, with sulphur detection and lunar soil temperature measurement
- Aditya-L1 launched 2 September 2023; placed in a halo orbit around the Sun-Earth L1 point in January 2024

- XPoSat launched 1 January 2024 — India's first dedicated X-ray polarimetry mission
- SPADEX launched 30 December 2024 — made India the fourth country to demonstrate space docking technology
- NISAR launched 30 July 2025 — the first dual-frequency (L and S band) radar Earth observation satellite, jointly developed by NASA and ISRO
- GSAT-7R (CMS-03) — India's most advanced indigenously developed military communications satellite, for the Indian Navy
- About 6.93 crore MGNREGA works and 6.89 lakh watershed activities geotagged using geospatial platforms
- Over 890 flood products issued and alerts for more than 11 major landslide events disseminated
- The Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee was formed in 1993; ISRO has been a member since 1996

GERD Rises to 0.84% of GDP as ANRF and Rs 1 Lakh Crore RDI Fund Anchor Research Push

13 Aug

- Gross expenditure on research and development rose from Rs 1,32,567.01 crore, or 0.66% of GDP, in 2019-20 to Rs 2,44,767.81 crore, or 0.84% of GDP, in 2023-24, as per the DST's Research & Development Statistics 2025-26.
- The Anusandhan National Research Foundation, established under the Department of Science and Technology, provides strategic direction for research across the sciences and runs the MAHA and PAIR programmes; a Research, Development and Innovation Fund with a Rs 1 lakh crore corpus over six years is to catalyse private investment in sunrise and strategic sectors.
- India has more than 2.40 lakh DPIIT-recognised startups, over half of them from Tier-II and Tier-III cities; it ranks third globally in scientific publications and sixth in patent filings.
- India's Global Innovation Index rank improved from 81st in 2015 to 38th in 2025.
- The INSPIRE Programme supported 49,805 students under INSPIRE-MANAK, 24,276 under INSPIRE-SHE, 3,364 INSPIRE Fellowships and 477 Faculty Fellowships in 2025-26; the government stated that INSPIRE-SHE has not been shelved but is under redesign.

QUICK FACTS

GERD	Rs 1,32,567.01 crore (0.66% of GDP) in 2019-20 -> Rs 2,44,767.81 crore (0.84% of GDP) in 2023-24
RDI Fund corpus	Rs 1 lakh crore over six years for sunrise and strategic sectors
DPIIT-recognised startups	more than 2.40 lakh, over half from Tier-II and Tier-III cities
Global Innovation Index	81st in 2015 -> 38th in 2025
ANRF programmes	MAHA (Mission for Advancement in High-Impact Areas) and PAIR (Partnerships for Accelerated Innovation and Research)
INSPIRE-SHE	12,000 scholarships a year, each Rs 80,000 per year, for students aged 17-22 in natural and basic sciences
INSPIRE Fellowship	Rs 37,000 per month as JRF, Rs 42,000 as SRF, HRA and Rs 20,000 annual contingency, for up to five years
INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship	Rs 1,25,000 per month with a Rs 2,000 annual increment and Rs 35 lakh research grant over five years

- India ranks third globally in scientific publications and sixth in patent filings
- National Quantum Mission has four Thematic Hubs — quantum computing, communication, sensing, and materials and devices
- Vigyan TECH held on National Technology Day, 11 May 2026, at BRIC-National Institute of Immunology, New Delhi — 14 ministries, 100+ technologies showcased, 'TECH-' compendium of nearly 300 technologies released
- CSIR has set up an Innovation Complex (CSIR-IC) at Mumbai to bridge translational gaps

PIB Backgrounder on Space: 440 Start-ups, $9 Billion Space Economy, Gaganyaan Crewed Flight by 2027

14 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder issued for the 80th Independence Day sets out India's space-sector reforms, mission record and forward programme in one document.
- Registered space start-ups have risen from 1 in 2014 to around 440 by August 2026, and the space economy is valued at USD 9 billion with a projection of USD 40-45 billion over the next decade.
- Private investment rose from USD 100.5 million in 2021-22 to USD 618.5 million by 31 March 2026; IN-SPACe had granted 113 authorisations to 52 non-government entities by mid-2026.
- The Gaganyaan programme, approved in January 2019 and expanded in September 2024 to a Rs 20,193 crore outlay covering eight missions, targets an uncrewed test flight in Q4 of 2026 and a crewed mission by 2027.
- The five-module Bharatiya Antariksh Station is targeted for operationalisation by 2035, with the first module BAS-01 planned for launch by 2028.

QUICK FACTS

Document type	PIB Backgrounder released 14 August 2026 for the 80th Independence Day.
Space start-ups	1 in 2014 to about 440 by August 2026. Space economy: USD 9 billion (August 2026), projected USD 40-45 billion in a decade.
Private investment	USD 100.5 million in 2021-22 to USD 618.5 million by 31 March 2026, including USD 187 million during 2026.
IN-SPACe authorisations	113 granted to 52 non-government entities by mid-2026, of which 18 are start-ups.
Foreign satellite launches by India	35 before 2014, 399 as of January 2026. Space cooperation: over 300 agreements across 61 countries and 5 multilateral organisations.
FDI, liberalised February 2024	up to 74 per cent automatic for satellite manufacturing and operations, 49 per cent for launch vehicles and spaceports, 100 per cent for satellite and ground-segment components.
Four operational indigenous launch vehicles	PSLV, GSLV, GSLV Mk III and SSLV. 12 launch vehicle missions between July 2023 and June 2026, carrying 11 national and 9 international satellites.
Gaganyaan	approved January 2019, revised September 2024 to Rs 20,193 crore and 8 missions; 3 astronauts to a 400 km orbit for three days; uncrewed test with the Vyommitra half-humanoid targeted in Q4 2026, crewed mission by 2027.
Bharatiya Antariksh Station	five modules, BAS-01 launch planned by 2028, full operationalisation targeted by 2035. Venus Orbiter Mission targeted for March 2028.

- NSIL revenue rose from Rs 321.77 crore in FY 2021-22 to over Rs 3,000 crore in FY 2024-25; it has signed 118 Technology Transfer Agreements covering 83 ISRO technologies.

India's nuclear programme: 24 reactors, 8.78 GW and a 100 GW target for 2047

28 Aug

- Two PIB Backgrounders issued on 28 August 2026 set out India's nuclear energy programme in full — the safety and regulatory architecture in one, the indigenous technology roadmap in the other.
- India operates 24 nuclear power reactors across seven sites with an installed capacity of 8.78 GW; nine reactors totalling 7.5 GW are under construction, preparations continue for 10 more units, and 10 indigenous PHWRs have been approved in fleet mode.
- The Nuclear Energy Mission for Viksit Bharat targets 100 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047; the Union Budget 2025-26 allocated Rs 20,000 crore for indigenous Small Modular Reactors, with at least five to be operational by 2033.
- The Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor at Kalpakkam attained first criticality in April 2026, formally opening the second stage of the three-stage programme Homi Bhabha proposed in 1954.
- Nuclear technology now also feeds healthcare, crop breeding, food irradiation, rare-earth analysis, semiconductor-grade materials and, since 2026, hydrogen production using nuclear process heat at Kalpakkam.

QUICK FACTS

AERB radiation dose limits	1 mSv per year for members of the public; for radiation workers, an average of 20 mSv per year over five years, a cumulative ceiling of 100 mSv and a maximum of 30 mSv in any single year.

- India operates 24 nuclear power reactors across seven sites, total installed capacity 8.78 GW (PIB Backgrounder, 28 August 2026).
- Nine reactors with a combined 7.5 GW are under construction; 10 indigenous Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors have been approved in fleet mode and pre-project work is on for two 500 MWe Fast Breeder Reactors.

- Nuclear power in India began with the Tarapur Atomic Power Station in 1969.
- The SHANTI Act, 2025 — Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India — received Presidential assent on 20 December 2025 and replaces both the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010.
- The Nuclear Energy Mission for Viksit Bharat targets 100 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047.
- Union Budget 2025-26 allocated Rs 20,000 crore for research, design, development and deployment of indigenous Small Modular Reactors; at least five are to be operational by 2033.
- India follows a closed nuclear fuel cycle — spent fuel is reprocessed and the residual high-level waste is immobilised, an approach dictated by the three-stage programme.
- Every nuclear power plant has a 16-kilometre Emergency Planning Zone and an Environmental Survey Laboratory monitoring air, water, soil, vegetation and food.

NM-ICPS: 25 Innovation Hubs and 4 Translation Research Parks Power India's Cyber-Physical Systems Push

31 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder set out the status of India's Cyber-Physical Systems ecosystem, built around the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS), implemented by the Department of Science and Technology.
- The Union Cabinet approved NM-ICPS in 2018 with an outlay of Rs 3,660 crore; 25 Technology Innovation Hubs have been set up as Section 8 companies inside premier academic institutions.
- In 2025 four high-performing hubs were upgraded to Technology Translation Research Parks — IIT Kanpur (cybersecurity), IISc Bengaluru (robotics and AI systems), IIT (ISM) Dhanbad (mining technologies) and IIT Indore (digital healthcare).
- As of August 2026 the Mission reports 1,146 technologies enabled, 1,329 technology products, 1,136 start-ups and spin-offs incubated, 5,824 CHANAKYA fellowships and 200 international collaborations.
- BharatGen, supported under NM-ICPS and led by IIT Bombay, adds a sovereign multilingual AI layer; its Param-2 foundation model has 17 billion parameters and covers all 22 Scheduled languages.

QUICK FACTS

Mission	National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS)
Implementing department	Department of Science and Technology (DST), Ministry of Science and Technology
Progress as of August 2026	1,146 technologies enabled, 1,329 technology products, 1,136 start-ups and spin-offs, over 24,000 jobs, 2.46 lakh professionals trained, 5,824 fellowships, 200 international collaborations
TIH mandate spans four areas	technology development; human resource and skill development; innovation, entrepreneurship and start-ups; international collaborations

- Approved by the Union Cabinet in 2018; outlay Rs 3,660 crore; the Mission's active period has been extended to December 2027 without additional financial implication
- 25 Technology Innovation Hubs (TIHs), each registered as a Section 8 (not-for-profit) company and hosted by a premier academic institution
- 4 Technology Translation Research Parks (TTRPs) selected in 2025: IIT Kanpur, IISc Bengaluru, IIT (ISM) Dhanbad, IIT Indore
- CHANAKYA = Comprehensive and Holistic Advancement of National Knowledge Yield and Analytics — the Mission's fellowship programme for UG, PG, PhD and post-doctoral researchers

Notifications Issued for All Six Pillars of the Semicon 2.0 Scheme

31 Aug

- Notifications for all six pillars of the Semicon 2.0 Scheme were issued, with Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw setting out the government's plan for the next phase of India's semiconductor ecosystem.

- The six pillars — Design; Machines and Materials; Setting up more Fabs; Strengthening the ATMP/OSAT industry; Research and Development; and Talent Development — cover 10 categories in all and extend fiscal and infrastructure support across the whole value chain.
- The India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) is the nodal agency: it will invite applications, carry out technical and financial appraisal, recommend applicants and oversee implementation, with C-DAC assisting on the design and deployment categories.
- Projects will generally run up to six years, the scheme stays open for applications for three years, and a mid-term assessment follows after three years of implementation.
- Vaishnaw said India met its target of 85,000 semiconductor engineers in four years against a ten-year timeline and has set a fresh target of one lakh more, that students from Tier-II and Tier-III cities have designed over 250 chips, and that the ecosystem is expected to create 50,000-60,000 direct jobs.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Semicon 2.0 — the successor to the Semicon India Programme, with notifications for all six pillars issued on 31 August 2026
Ministry	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), which makes the budgetary provisions for fiscal support
Nodal agency	India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) — invites applications, appraises them technically and financially, recommends applicants and oversees implementation; disbursement is done by the nodal agency
Implementation partner	C-DAC may assist ISM on the design and deployment categories
Structure	six pillars covering 10 categories
Project duration	generally up to six years
Application window	the scheme initially stays open for applications for three years
Review	a mid-term assessment after three years of implementation, or as required
New instrument	ISM may announce semiconductor deep-tech awards from 2026 to promote niche innovation
Stated purpose	economic growth and national security through semiconductor supply-chain resilience and technological leadership in critical sectors

8. Environment

9 articles

India Crosses 300 GW Non-Fossil Power Capacity, Over 60% of Its 2030 Target

09 Aug

- India crossed 300 GW of non-fossil fuel based installed electricity generation capacity as on 31 July 2026 — over 60% of the 500 GW targeted by 2030.
- The breakdown is solar 164.59 GW, wind 58.14 GW, hydro 57.24 GW, bio-power 11.75 GW and nuclear 8.78 GW, totalling 300.50 GW.
- Non-fossil sources now account for over 54% of India's total electricity generation capacity of around 552 GW.
- A record 55.29 GW of non-fossil capacity was installed during 2025-26, including 44.6 GW of solar and 6 GW of wind.
- Enlisted capacity under the ALMM for solar PV modules has crossed 200 GW, up from just 2.3 GW in 2014.

QUICK FACTS

Milestone	300 GW of non-fossil fuel based installed electricity generation capacity
As on	31 July 2026
Total non-fossil capacity	300.50 GW
Total installed electricity capacity in India	around 552 GW at present
Non-fossil share of total capacity	over 54%
Nodal ministry	Ministry of New and Renewable Energy

- Share of the 500 GW target for 2030: over 60%

Asiatic lion population rises from 523 in 2015 to 891 in 2025; range expands to 35,000 sq km

10 Aug

- Marking World Lion Day 2026, the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav, stated that the Asiatic Lion population has risen from 523 in 2015 to 891 in 2025.
- The lion range has expanded from around 30,000 sq km in 2020 to nearly 35,000 sq km.
- Project Lion was announced by the Prime Minister on 15 August 2020 for long-term conservation of the species.
- Project Lion follows a landscape-level approach covering habitat enhancement, disease monitoring and veterinary support, scientific population tracking, technology-aided interventions, biodiversity protection, benefit sharing and community involvement.
- The Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh, and the Prime Minister separately highlighted the role of forest officers, frontline workers and local communities in the recovery.

QUICK FACTS

Asiatic Lion population	523 in 2015 -> 891 in 2025
Lion range	about 30,000 sq km in 2020 -> nearly 35,000 sq km currently
Scientific name	Panthera leo — the Asiatic population was formerly assessed as the subspecies Panthera leo persica
Protection	Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and Appendix I of CITES

- Project Lion announced by the Prime Minister on 15 August 2020 (Independence Day address)
- World Lion Day is observed on 10 August every year
- The only wild population of the Asiatic lion in the world is in Gujarat, India
- The 16th Lion Population Estimation exercise was conducted in May 2025 across roughly 35,000 sq km, covering 58 talukas in 11 districts of Gujarat

Groundwater Assessment 2025: recharge 449 BCM, extraction 247 BCM, extraction stage 60.63%

10 Aug

- As per the Dynamic Ground Water Resources Assessment, 2025, India's total Annual Ground Water Recharge is 449 Billion Cubic Metres, Annual Extractable Ground Water Resource is 408 BCM, and Annual Ground Water Extraction for all uses is 247 BCM.
- Of the 247 BCM extracted, 215 BCM (87%) goes to irrigation, 28 BCM (11%) to domestic use including drinking water, and 4 BCM (2%) to industry.
- The national Stage of Ground Water Extraction — the ratio of annual extraction to annual extractable resource — is 60.63%, and nine States/UTs exceed the national average: Punjab, Rajasthan, Haryana, Delhi, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh and Karnataka. 281 districts are above the national average.
- The Central Water Commission's Assessment of Water Resources of India, 2024 put average annual per capita water availability for 2021 at 1,573.19 cubic metres.
- The Annual Ground Water Quality Report, 2025 finds groundwater generally potable, with nearly 99% of monitoring stations showing quality suitable for irrigation; in Bihar, of 584 samples analysed, electrical conductivity exceeded permissible limits in 5, fluoride in 39 and nitrate in 78.

QUICK FACTS

Annual Extractable Ground Water Resource	408 BCM
Annual Ground Water Extraction for all uses	247 BCM
States/UTs above the national average	Punjab, Rajasthan, Haryana, Delhi, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh and Karnataka — nine in all
Districts above the national average	281
Per capita water availability for 2021	1,573.19 cubic metres, per the Central Water Commission's Assessment of Water Resources of India, 2024

- The Dynamic Ground Water Resources Assessment is carried out by the Central Ground Water Board jointly with State Governments and UT Administrations
- Annual Ground Water Recharge (2025 assessment): 449 BCM
- Stage of Ground Water Extraction for the country: 60.63%
- The Assessment does not compute groundwater consumption on a per-capita basis — it measures the Stage of Extraction instead
- Reply given by the Minister of Jal Shakti, Shri C R Patil, in the Rajya Sabha

River interlinking: Ken-Betwa the only priority link under implementation among 30 projects

10 Aug

- The Ministry of Jal Shakti told the Rajya Sabha that 30 Interlinking of Rivers projects were identified under the National Perspective Plan for Inter-Basin Water Transfer — 16 under the Peninsular component and 14 under the Himalayan component — with the National Water Development Agency entrusted with the work.
- The Ken-Betwa Link Project is the only priority link project under the NPP to have entered the implementation stage, at an estimated cost of Rs 44,605 crore.
- KBLP is to provide irrigation to about 11.88 lakh hectares, drinking water to about 62 lakh people, 103 MW of hydropower and 27 MW of solar power.
- The Polavaram Irrigation Project, which incorporates the Godavari (Polavaram)-Krishna (Vijayawada) link, is classified as a National Project, executed by the Government of Andhra Pradesh and the Polavaram Project Authority, and has received cumulative Central Assistance of Rs 20,658 crore.

- Several links have been dropped or shelved — Kosi-Mechi due to international dimensions, Jogighopa-Tista-Farakka, and the Netravati-Hemavati link after Karnataka's Yettinahole project left no surplus water; Damanganga-Pinjal and Par-Tapi-Narmada were dropped from priority status.

QUICK FACTS

30 ILR projects identified	16 under the Peninsular component and 14 under the Himalayan component
Implementing agency	National Water Development Agency (NWDA), set up in July 1982 as an autonomous society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860
Ken-Betwa Link Project	the only priority NPP link in the implementation stage; estimated cost Rs 44,605 crore
KBLP benefits	irrigation to about 11.88 lakh hectares, drinking water to about 62 lakh people, 103 MW hydropower and 27 MW solar power
KBLP States	Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh; the project centres on the Daudhan Dam on the Ken river inside the Panna Tiger Reserve
Polavaram Irrigation Project	a National Project executed by the Government of Andhra Pradesh and the Polavaram Project Authority; cumulative Central Assistance Rs 20,658 crore
Polavaram benefits	irrigation to about 7.2 lakh acres, stabilisation of 23.5 lakh acres, diversion of 80 TMC of Godavari water to the Krishna basin, water supply to about 28.5 lakh people in 611 villages including Visakhapatnam, and 960 MW hydropower

- The National Perspective Plan for Inter-Basin Water Transfer was prepared in August 1980 by the then Ministry of Irrigation, now the Ministry of Jal Shakti
- An Environmental Impact Assessment is part of the Feasibility Report and DPR preparation for every ILR project; KBLP also has an Integrated Landscape Management Plan
- Reply given by the Minister of State for Jal Shakti, Shri Raj Bhushan Choudhary, in the Rajya Sabha

World Elephant Day 2026: India Counts 22,446 Wild Elephants Across 33 Reserves and 150 Corridors

12 Aug

- World Elephant Day is observed on 12 August; India holds nearly 60% of the world's wild Asian elephants.
- The DNA-based Synchronous All India Population Estimation of Elephants (SAIEE) 2021-25 puts India's wild elephant population at 22,446.
- India protects elephants through 33 Elephant Reserves covering 80,777 sq km across 14 States and 150 validated corridors.
- Railway mitigation has cut train-hit elephant deaths from 26 in 2013 to 12 in 2024.
- The Gajah Suchana app holds DNA profiles of registered captive elephants, and the Captive Elephant (Transfer or Transport) Rules, 2024 regulate their movement.

QUICK FACTS

Observance	World Elephant Day, 12 August every year
Population estimate	22,446, from the Synchronous All India Population Estimation of Elephants (SAIEE) 2021-25 — India's first DNA-based synchronised elephant census
Protected network	33 Elephant Reserves across 14 elephant-range States, covering 80,777 sq km, and 150 identified corridors
Project Elephant	launched in February 1992 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Legal status of the Asian elephant	Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972; Endangered on the IUCN Red List; Appendix I of CITES

- India's share of the world's wild Asian elephants: nearly 60%
- The elephant was declared India's National Heritage Animal in 2010
- Elephant home ranges span 100-3,000 sq km, making corridors essential

Mission Mausam Targets 5 km Forecasts and Household-Level Warnings by 2030

13 Aug

- Mission Mausam is a Central Sector umbrella scheme of the Ministry of Earth Sciences aimed at making India a 'Weather-ready and Climate-smart Nation'; it was approved by the Union Cabinet in 2024 with a Rs 2,000 crore outlay for 2024-25 and 2025-26 and launched by the Prime Minister on 14 January 2025.
- Its measurable outcomes are a 10-15% improvement in forecast accuracy by 2030, severe weather forecasting at 5 km x 5 km resolution, and last-mile dissemination of early warnings to every household by 2030.
- IMD's adoption of Multi-Model Ensemble forecasting has cut the average absolute error of the seasonal monsoon forecast from 7.8% of the Long Period Average in 2016-2020 to 3.1% for the first-stage and 2.2% for the second-stage forecast in 2021-2025.
- The observation network now comprises 50 Doppler Weather Radars, 1,008 Automatic Weather Stations and 6,885 rain gauge stations, and the National Seismological Network runs 174 observatories with an earthquake early warning system in the pilot phase.
- For 2026-31 the Mission is proposed to run through six verticals — OBSERVE_ALL, DEVELOP, Weather_MOD, ATCOMP, FRONTIER and NEAT — with a Budget Estimate of Rs 1,342.29 crore for 2026-27.

QUICK FACTS

Mission Mausam	Central Sector umbrella scheme of the Ministry of Earth Sciences; Cabinet approval 2024, Rs 2,000 crore for 2024-25 and 2025-26; launched by the Prime Minister on 14 January 2025
Budget Estimate 2026-27	Rs 1,342.29 crore — Rs 855.29 crore revenue and Rs 487.00 crore capital
Six verticals proposed for 2026-31	OBSERVE_ALL, DEVELOP, Weather_MOD, ATCOMP, FRONTIER and NEAT
Targets by 2030	10-15% improvement in forecast accuracy; 5 km x 5 km resolution for severe weather hazards; early warnings to every household
Seasonal forecast error	7.8% of Long Period Average (2016-2020) -> 3.1% first stage and 2.2% second stage (2021-2025)
Observation network	50 Doppler Weather Radars (including those operated by ISRO and IITM), 1,008 Automatic Weather Stations, 6,885 rain gauge stations
National Seismological Network	174 seismological observatories under the National Centre for Seismology
Dissemination apps	MAUSAM, Meghdoot, DAMINI, UMANG and SAMUDRA, plus the SACHET platform based on the Common Alerting Protocol
Agromet outreach	over 7,300 Farmers' Awareness Programmes across 373 districts, plus Krishi Sakhis and Pashu Sakhis

- INCOIS Coastal Vulnerability Index prepared at 1:100,000 for the entire coastline; Coastal Multi-Hazard Vulnerability Mapping at 1:25,000
- MoES has operationalised three AI-based global weather models; IMD runs the Multi-Hazard Early Warning Decision Support System, a Web-GIS platform

India launches first Guide to Grasslands and Open Natural Ecosystems at UNCCD COP17

17 Aug

- India launched its first-ever Guide to Grasslands and Other Open Natural Ecosystems (ONEs) of India on 17 August 2026 at the 17th Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.
- The Guide documents India's grasslands, savannas, deserts, scrublands, ravines, rocky plateaus and coastal open ecosystems, with thematic sections on pastoralism, fire ecology and carbon sequestration.
- It was published by the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE) under the aegis of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, with IUCN, the Centre of Excellence on Sustainable Land Management, ICFRE and ISRO's Space Applications Centre.

- Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav, in a video message, said grasslands, scrublands and ravines have long been judged by the absence of trees and dismissed as 'wasteland' despite sheltering endemic species and sustaining pastoral communities.
- Discussions linked restoration of these ecosystems to India's Land Degradation Neutrality targets and called for better land-degradation assessment and landscape-level planning.

QUICK FACTS

Document	Guide to Grasslands and Other Open Natural Ecosystems (ONEs) of India — the first of its kind
Launched	17 August 2026, at a UNCCD COP17 side event in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
Under the aegis of	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)
Published and organised by	Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE)
Collaborators	IUCN, Centre of Excellence on Sustainable Land Management (CoE-SLM), Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) and the Space Applications Centre (SAC), ISRO
Ecosystems covered	Himalayan and Terai grasslands, the Thar and Banni landscapes, Deccan savannas, rocky plateaus, ravines, scrublands, coastal ecosystems and desert landscapes
Thematic sections	pastoralism, fire ecology and carbon sequestration

– UNCCD COP17 ran from 17 to 28 August 2026 under the theme 'Restoring Land'

Ken-Betwa Link Project: Daudhan Dam, Rs 44,605 Crore Cost and 2030 Deadline

21 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder issued on 21 August 2026 sets out the status of the Ken-Betwa Link Project (KBLP), the first project under the National Perspective Plan for Interlinking of Rivers to reach the implementation stage.
- Water is transferred from the Ken basin to the Betwa basin through the 96.7-metre-high Daudhan Dam in Panna and Chhatarpur districts of Madhya Pradesh and a 216.465-km link canal ending at Barua Sagar near Jhansi.
- Total project cost is Rs 44,605 crore; the foundation stone was laid on 25 December 2024 and completion is scheduled for 2030.
- Stated benefits: irrigation for 10.62 lakh hectares, drinking water for about 62 lakh people, 103 MW of hydropower and 27 MW of solar power.
- The project carries a full set of statutory clearances - Wildlife (2016), Environmental (2017), Tribal Affairs (2017) and Forest (2023) - and an Integrated Landscape Management Plan for the Greater Panna Landscape prepared by the Wildlife Institute of India.

QUICK FACTS

Project	Ken-Betwa Link Project (KBLP), transferring water from the Ken basin to the Betwa basin
Status	first priority project under the National Perspective Plan for Interlinking of Rivers to enter implementation
Main structure	Daudhan Dam, 96.7 m high, on the Ken river in Panna and Chhatarpur districts of Madhya Pradesh, about 40 km from Khajuraho
Link canal	216.465 km long, taking off near Daudhan Dam and merging into Barua Sagar near Jhansi
Other components	Lower Orr Project, Kotha Barrage and Bina Complex Multipurpose Project
Total cost	Rs 44,605 crore
Foundation stone laid	25 December 2024; scheduled completion: 2030
Implementing vehicle	Ken-Betwa Link Project Authority (KBLPA), a special purpose vehicle set up after the tripartite Memorandum of Agreement of 22 March 2021 (World Water Day) between the Ministry of Jal Shakti and the governments of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh

India reports 21.76 mn ha restored in 2011-2020 at UNCCD COP17 in Ulaanbaatar

24 Aug

- At the 17th Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP17) in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav said India brought 21.76 million hectares under restoration during 2011-2020, generating about 1.22 billion person-days of employment.
- The figures come from India's Second Progress Report on the Bonn Challenge, covering 2011-2020; India's Bonn Challenge pledge, made in 2015 and later enhanced, stands at 26 million hectares by 2030.
- The next reporting cycle, for 2021-2025, is being carried out with the ICFRE Centre of Excellence on Sustainable Land Management and IUCN, and will measure area restored, financial flows and employment generated.
- At a separate ministerial dialogue on innovative financial mechanisms, India argued that land restoration finance must be diversified, adequate, predictable and sustained, and pointed to its blended green-finance framework, Sovereign Green Bonds, the Green Credit Programme and the compensatory afforestation regime.
- India's delivery vehicles named at COP17 were the Green India Mission, CAMPA-funded compensatory afforestation, the Nagar Van Yojana for urban greening, and watershed, agroforestry and soil and water conservation work.

QUICK FACTS

Event	17th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP17) to the UNCCD, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 17-28 August 2026, under the theme 'Restoring Land. Restoring Hope'.
Employment generated over that period	approximately 1.22 billion person-days.
India's Bonn Challenge commitment	made in 2015 and subsequently enhanced to 26 million hectares by 2030 — the figure the Prime Minister announced at UNCCD COP14 in New Delhi in 2019, raising it from 21 million hectares.
Next reporting cycle	2021-2025, with the ICFRE Centre of Excellence on Sustainable Land Management and IUCN, measuring area restored, financial flows and employment.

- India's Second Progress Report on the Bonn Challenge covers 2011-2020 and records 21.76 million hectares brought under restoration.
- The assessment counts restoration across forests, agriculture, soil and water conservation and other land-use systems, not forest area alone.
- The side event at which the figures were presented was organised by IUCN.
- Under the Green Credit Programme, credits are issued after five years of restoration and on achieving at least 40 per cent canopy density, and may be used once for compensatory afforestation, statutory plantation or CSR obligations.

9. Schemes & Committees

29 articles

PM-VBRY Completes One Year: Rs 99,446 Crore Scheme Adds 72 Lakh Formal Jobs

01 Aug

- PM-VBRY completed one year of implementation on 1 August 2026, with over 72 lakh first-time employees added to the formal workforce against a two-year target of 3.5 crore jobs.
- The EPFO-administered scheme runs from 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2027 with a total outlay of Rs 99,446 crore, incentivising both first-time employees (Part A) and employers (Part B).
- Nearly 30% of beneficiaries are women, and over 15 lakh workers have already received employment-linked incentive payments.

QUICK FACTS

Full name	Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojana (PM-VBRY)
Nodal ministry	Ministry of Labour and Employment; implemented through EPFO
Duration	1 August 2025 to 31 July 2027 (2-year scheme)
Outlay	Rs 99,446 crore
Target	over 3.5 crore jobs, including 1.92 crore first-time employees
First-year progress (as of 1 Aug 2026)	72 lakh+ first-time employees, ~30% women, 15 lakh+ paid incentives

PM Surya Sarovar Yojana Approved for 5,000 MW Floating Solar with Storage

02 Aug

- The Government approved the Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY) on 31 July 2026 to develop 5,000 MW of Floating Solar Photovoltaic capacity with co-located energy storage, at an outlay of Rs 5,070 crore.
- Each project must carry storage of at least two hours, adding up to 10,000 MWh, so that solar output can be shifted to peak demand hours; the scheme runs from FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31.
- The scheme rests on a National Institute of Solar Energy assessment putting India's floating solar potential at about 102.18 GWp across reservoirs and inland water bodies, against a current floating solar base of only about 700 MW.
- India's installed solar capacity reached 162.15 GW on 30 June 2026, up more than fiftyfold from about 3 GW in 2014, with 44.61 GW added in FY 2025-26 alone.
- Solar module manufacturing capacity rose from 2.3 GW in 2014 to about 172 GW as of 31 March 2026, and total non-fossil fuel capacity reached 283.46 GW.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY), approved 31 July 2026
Nodal ministry	Ministry of New and Renewable Energy; implementing agency: Solar Energy Corporation of India
Target	5,000 MW of Floating Solar Photovoltaic (FSPV) capacity with co-located Energy Storage Systems
Storage condition	minimum two hours per project, aggregating 10,000 MWh
Outlay	Rs 5,070 crore; projects sanctioned FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31, with financial support disbursed up to FY 2032-33
Basis	NISE assessment of about 102.18 GWp floating solar potential across India's reservoirs and inland water bodies
Expected benefits	roughly 10 million tonnes of CO2 avoided a year and 16,000-17,000 full-time equivalent jobs
India's solar capacity	162.15 GW as on 30 June 2026 (about 3 GW in 2014)

– All States and Union Territories are eligible; India's existing floating solar base is about 700 MW

PM Launches 100-Week Nasha Mukt Yuva for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan

02 Aug

- The Prime Minister launched the 'Nasha Mukt Yuva for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan' on 2 August 2026 by video conference, with more than one crore young people joining from over 28,000 locations.
- The campaign runs on a 100-Week Action Plan: every Sunday for 100 weeks carries activities around art, culture, sports, meditation, spirituality and service, taking the de-addiction message to new participants.
- It began as a pilot in Kashi (Varanasi) in 2025 and became a national project through the Kashi Declaration, drawn up with more than 125 spiritual organisations along with social organisations and NGOs.
- The campaign is anchored in the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and delivered through MY Bharat, which connects over 2.3 crore youth, along with NSS volunteers and educational institutions.
- The Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports and Labour and Employment, Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, the Minister of State Smt Raksha Nikhil Khadse, 26 Governors and the Chief Ministers of 11 States joined the launch.

QUICK FACTS

Campaign	Nasha Mukt Yuva for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan, launched 2 August 2026
Launched by	Prime Minister Narendra Modi, by nationwide video conference
Anchoring ministry	Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports; delivery platform: MY Bharat
Scale at launch	over one crore youth from more than 28,000 locations
Duration	a 100-Week Action Plan, with dedicated activities every Sunday
Origin	a pilot project in Kashi (Varanasi) in 2025, formalised through the Kashi Declaration
Partners in the Kashi Declaration	more than 125 spiritual organisations, plus social organisations and NGOs
Present at launch	Dr Mansukh Mandaviya (Union Minister, Youth Affairs and Sports and Labour and Employment), Smt Raksha Nikhil Khadse (Minister of State), 26 Governors and Chief Ministers of 11 States

– MY Bharat has connected over 2.3 crore youth across the country

Revamped Khelo India Scheme Gets Rs 36,441 Crore Outlay for 2026-27 to 2030-31

03 Aug

- The Union Cabinet has approved a revamped Khelo India Scheme which, together with an enhanced Assistance to National Sports Federations component, carries a combined outlay of Rs 36,441 crore for the period 2026-27 to 2030-31.
- The expanded design adds Khelo India Feeder Schools, Khelo India Utkrishta Vidyalayas, an Emerging Khelo India Athletes category that widens the structured athlete pool nearly ten-fold, a National Coach Accreditation Board and a unified digital platform for athlete, infrastructure and funding data.
- As of July 2026 the scheme had approved 349 sports infrastructure projects worth Rs 3,176 crore, set up 1,067 Khelo India Centres, supported 267 academies and backed 2,745 Khelo India Athletes.
- The scheme is aligned with Khelo Bharat Niti 2025 and the National Education Policy 2020, and is meant to support the 2030 Commonwealth Games, India's Olympic and Paralympic hosting ambitions and the goal of placing India among the world's leading sporting nations by 2036.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Khelo India Scheme (revamped), approved by the Union Cabinet; nodal ministry is the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
Combined outlay	Rs 36,441 crore for 2026-27 to 2030-31, covering the revamped Khelo India Scheme plus enhanced Assistance to National Sports Federations
Budget context	the Union Budget 2026-27 allocated Rs 4,479.88 crore to the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, against Rs 1,219 crore in 2013-14
New structures introduced	Khelo India Feeder Schools, Khelo India Utkrishta Vidyalayas, Emerging Khelo India Athletes category, National Coach Accreditation Board
Stated national goal	among the world's leading sporting nations by 2036; KIRTI targets a top-10 sporting nation by 2036 and top-5 by 2047
Policy alignment	Khelo Bharat Niti 2025 (the National Sports Policy that replaced the 2001 policy) and the National Education Policy 2020

- Khelo India was originally launched in 2017 by merging three earlier programmes — Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan, Urban Sports Infrastructure Scheme and National Sports Talent Search Scheme

Skill India: 1.65 Crore Trained Under PMKVY as LFPR Holds at 59.3 Per Cent

03 Aug

- Four Lok Sabha replies tabled on 3 August 2026 by the Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship set out the state of the Skill India Mission's training network, its ITI curriculum reform and its healthcare skilling.
- The Periodic Labour Force Survey shows India's Labour Force Participation Rate for persons aged 15 and above easing marginally from 59.6 per cent in 2024 to 59.3 per cent in 2025.
- Cumulative training numbers to 30 June 2026: 1,65,41,679 under PMKVY, 1,07,42,151 under the Craftsmen Training Scheme through ITIs, 52,98,397 under NAPS and 36,58,020 under Jan Shikshan Sansthan.
- An independent evaluation of PMKVY 4.0 by the Arun Jaitley National Institute of Financial Management found the combined share of employed and self-employed short-term-training respondents rising from 26.6 per cent before training to 45.4 per cent after — an 18.8 percentage point gain.
- The Directorate General of Training now offers 170 NSQF-compliant courses through ITIs, including 32 new-age courses in areas such as semiconductors, green hydrogen, drones and industrial robotics, with curricula revised every three years instead of five and 30 per cent of ITI seats reserved for women.

QUICK FACTS

Training centres as on 30 June 2026	13,633 PMKVY 4.0 centres, 294 JSS centres, 57,935 NAPS establishments, and 13,856 ITIs (3,328 government and 10,528 private)

- Replies tabled in the Lok Sabha on 3 August 2026 by Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
- Labour Force Participation Rate (15 years and above): 59.6 per cent in 2024, easing to 59.3 per cent in 2025, per the Periodic Labour Force Survey of the National Statistics Office
- The Skill India Mission delivers training through four schemes — PMKVY, Jan Shikshan Sansthan, the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme and the Craftsmen Training Scheme through ITIs
- NCVET has approved 10,209 qualifications, of which 2,975 are valid and active and 7,234 archived
- PM SETU aims to upgrade 1,000 Government ITIs — 200 Hub and 800 Spoke — and augment five NSTIs at Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kanpur and Ludhiana
- Two Indian Institutes of Skills have been established, at Ahmedabad and Mumbai, in PPP mode; 36 Sector Skill Councils are in place
- ITI curricula are now revised once every three years, down from once every five, following NEP 2020 and NCrF guidelines; 40 CTS course curricula have been revised so far

PM Surya Ghar Crosses 50 Lakh Rooftop Solar Installations; 14.8 GW Commissioned

04 Aug

- PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana has crossed 50.06 lakh households with rooftop solar installations, against 7.94 lakh installations recorded over the previous ten years.
- Cumulative commissioned capacity under the scheme stands at 14.8 GW, and Rs 28,024 crore has been released as subsidy directly to beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer.
- Nearly 19 lakh households now receive zero electricity bills, and more than 12 lakh households earned Rs 421 crore in FY 2024-25 by selling surplus power to the grid.
- The pace has risen 3.2 times in nine months, from 5,038 installations a day in October 2025 to nearly 16,328 a day in July 2026, with July 2026 the highest month at 5.06 lakh households.
- Government building solarisation has reached 1.06 lakh buildings, of which 25,255 are central government buildings totalling 872 MW.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, the flagship rooftop solar scheme of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy
Launched	13 February 2024
Outlay	Rs 75,021 crore
Original target	rooftop solar in one crore households, with up to 300 units of free electricity a month
Households benefited so far	over 50.06 lakh
Cumulative capacity commissioned	14.8 GW
Households receiving zero electricity bills	nearly 19 lakh
Current pace	one lakh households every six days; nearly 16,328 installations a day in July 2026
Registered vendors	34,219, of whom 29,469 are active; over 2.32 lakh people trained
Concessional loan rate	5.75 per cent, benchmarked to repo rate plus 50 basis points

– Subsidy released through Direct Benefit Transfer: Rs 28,024 crore

479 of 728 Eklavya Schools Functional; 4,172 Van Dhan Kendras Serve 12.48 Lakh Members

05 Aug

- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs listed thirteen major schemes for Scheduled Tribes, with five years of State-wise funds and outcomes.
- Against a target of 728 Eklavya Model Residential Schools, 479 are functional, with cumulative enrolment rising from 92,075 in 2020-21 to 1,38,336 in 2024-25.
- Under Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission, 4,172 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras have been sanctioned benefiting 12,48,067 members; a further 540 VDVKs under PM-JANMAN benefit 46,042 persons.
- PM-JANMAN, launched on 15 November 2023, targets saturation of basic facilities among the 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups through convergence of nine line ministries.
- DAJGUA, launched in 2024, subsumes PMAAGY and covers over 63,000 tribal-majority villages through 25 interventions across 17 ministries.

QUICK FACTS

Eklavya Model Residential Schools	479 functional against a target of 728; education up to Class XII, on par with Navodaya Vidyalayas
EMRS siting norm	one school for every block with more than 50 per cent ST population and at least 20,000 tribal persons
EMRS enrolment	92,075 in 2020-21 rising to 1,38,336 in 2024-25
PM-JANMAN	Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan, launched 15 November 2023 on Janjatiya Gaurav Divas
PM-JANMAN coverage	the 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups across 18 States and the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands
PM-JANMAN outlay	Rs 24,104 crore - Central share Rs 15,336 crore and State share Rs 8,768 crore, across 11 interventions
Van Dhan Vikas Kendras under PMJVM	4,172 sanctioned, benefiting 12,48,067 members
Van Dhan Vikas Kendras under PM-JANMAN	540 sanctioned, benefiting 46,042 persons
DAJGUA	launched 2024, subsuming PMAAGY, 25 interventions across 17 ministries, over 63,000 villages

– Odisha PVTG population captured through the PM Gati Shakti mobile application: 73,092 households and 3,12,654 persons

PMKVY Evaluation Shows Employment Rising From 26.6% to 45.4% After Training

05 Aug

- A third-party evaluation of PMKVY 4.0 by the Arun Jaitley National Institute of Financial Management found the combined employed and self-employed share of short-term training candidates rose from 26.6 per cent before training to 45.4 per cent after - an 18.8 percentage point gain.
- Across PMKVY 1.0 to 3.0, from FY 2015-16 to FY 2021-22, a total of 1.11 crore candidates were certified, of whom 24.38 lakh were reported placed under short-term training.
- A 2025 evaluation of the Jan Shikshan Sansthan scheme found 33.94 lakh enrolled, 32 lakh trained and 31.52 lakh certified - a 99 per cent success rate - with women forming 82 per cent of participants.
- The National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme, launched in August 2016 and continuing as NAPS-2 since 2022-23, pays apprentices a stipend of up to Rs 1,500 per month directly through DBT.
- NCVET, the overarching regulator for vocational education and training, has approved 10,209 qualifications, and 36 industry-led Sector Skill Councils have been set up.

QUICK FACTS

Umbrella	Skill India Mission (SIM), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)
Four principal schemes	PMKVY, Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS), National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) and the Craftsman Training Scheme delivered through Industrial Training Institutes
Emerging-sector focus	artificial intelligence, green energy, semiconductors, logistics and tourism
NAPS stipend	up to Rs 1,500 per month paid to apprentices directly through DBT - not to establishments
NCVET	notified 5 December 2018, formed by merging the National Council for Vocational Training and the National Skill Development Agency
Qualifications approved by NCVET	10,209
Sector Skill Councils	36, led by industry leaders in their sectors
Occupation mapping standard	National Classification of Occupations, 2015
ITIs	day-to-day administration and financial control rest with State Governments and UT Administrations

– NAPS launched August 2016; continues as NAPS-2 since 2022-23, under the Apprentices Act, 1961

54,707 PACS Now e-PACS as Cooperative Computerisation Crosses 51 Crore Transactions

05 Aug

- Under the PACS computerisation project with an outlay of Rs 2,925.39 crore, 79,630 Primary Agricultural Credit Societies have been sanctioned and 63,707 onboarded onto common ERP software.
- A total of 54,707 PACS have been declared e-PACS, with 51.58 crore transactions completed through the software as on 15 July 2026.
- Model Bye-laws allowing PACS to undertake more than 25 business activities have been adopted by 32 States and Union Territories.
- Since the plan was approved on 15 February 2023, 38,138 new PACS, dairy and fishery cooperatives have been registered and 21,292 dairy and fishery societies strengthened.
- PACS functioning as Jan Aushadhi Kendras receive a 30 per cent trade margin on MRP plus incentives, and can earn average annual income of over Rs 35,000.

QUICK FACTS

Initiative	Sahakar se Samriddhi, with more than 150 individual initiatives under the Ministry of Cooperation
Ministry of Cooperation	created on 6 July 2021
PACS computerisation outlay	Rs 2,925.39 crore
PACS sanctioned under the project	79,630 from 31 States and UTs
Onboarded on ERP software	63,707; hardware delivered: 65,875 units across 30 States and UTs
Declared e-PACS	54,707, with 51.58 crore transactions as on 15 July 2026
Model Bye-laws	enable PACS to undertake more than 25 business activities; adopted by 32 States and UTs
Registered since	38,138 new PACS, dairy and fishery cooperatives; 21,292 dairy and fishery societies strengthened, as on 15 July 2026
Policy framework	National Cooperation Policy, 2025

- New societies plan approved 15 February 2023, supported by NABARD, NDDB and NFDB

Four AI Centres of Excellence Funded; UGC Lists 32 Fake Universities

05 Aug

- Four Centres of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence are now funded - Agriculture at IIT Ropar, Sustainable Cities at IIT Kanpur and Healthcare at IISc Bengaluru with a combined outlay of Rs 990 crore, plus AI for Education at IIT Madras with Rs 500 crore.
- The Department of Higher Education's expenditure rose from Rs 34,006.39 crore in 2021-22 to Rs 50,747.66 crore in 2025-26.
- Gross Expenditure on Research and Development more than doubled from Rs 60,196.75 crore in 2010-11 to Rs 1,27,380.96 crore in 2020-21.
- The UGC's latest list, published in February 2026, identifies 32 institutions as fake universities, and an Anti-Mal-Practice Cell has been set up.
- The Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025, proposing technology-driven single-window regulation based on public self-disclosure, has been referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses.

QUICK FACTS

Department of Higher Education expenditure	Rs 34,006.39 crore (2021-22) rising to Rs 50,747.66 crore (2025-26)
PM-USHA	the third phase of Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan, launched June 2023, outlay Rs 12,926.10 crore for 2023-24 to 2025-26
UGC fake universities list, February 2026	32 institutions
Vidyanjali in the last year	1,27,884 schools, 32,581 volunteers and 1,126 CSR organisations, NGOs and institutions newly registered

- Education is in the Concurrent List, making expenditure a joint responsibility of the Centre and the States
- Sanctioned to IITs, NITs, IIITs, IISERs and IISc over FY 2020-21 to 2025-26: Rs 99,494.24 crore
- Three AI Centres of Excellence announced in Union Budget 2023-24 with a combined outlay of Rs 990 crore
- A fourth, AI for Education, announced in Union Budget 2025-26 with an outlay of Rs 500 crore, established at IIT Madras
- Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025 referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament

Cabinet Approves GOBARdhan Scheme with Rs 23,731 Crore Outlay for Compressed Biogas

06 Aug

- The Union Cabinet on 6 August 2026 approved GOBARdhan, the National Circular Bioenergy Scheme, with an outlay of Rs 23,731 crore for FY 2026-27 to FY 2035-36.
- The scheme is administered by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, consolidating a Compressed Biogas (CBG) ecosystem previously spread across four ministries.

- It fixes an administered CBG price of Rs 2,110 per MMBTU (about Rs 105 per kg) with a minimum ten-year horizon, and capital assistance of up to Rs 2 crore per tonne per day of installed capacity.
- A notified CBG Obligation trajectory requires City Gas Distribution entities to blend 3% in FY 2026-27, 4% in FY 2027-28 and 5% from FY 2028-29 in CNG (transport) and PNG (domestic) segments.
- The scheme targets a nearly ten-fold rise in domestic CBG output, forex savings of over Rs 40,000 crore and more than 1.5 lakh jobs over the decade.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	GOBARdhan - Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan, relaunched as the National Circular Bioenergy Scheme
Approved by	Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister, on 6 August 2026
Nodal ministry	Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG)
Outlay	Rs 23,731 crore; implementation period FY 2026-27 to FY 2035-36
Administered CBG price	Rs 2,110 per MMBTU, equivalent to about Rs 105 per kg
Capital assistance	up to Rs 2 crore per tonne per day (TPD) of installed CBG capacity, for greenfield and expanding brownfield projects
Credit guarantee cover	up to 85 per cent on eligible loans to MSME-based CBG projects
Registration portal	gobardhan.eil.co.in - 1,908 CBG/Bio-CNG plants registered as on 6 August 2026, of which 217 are commissioned (0.4 MMSCMD output) and 339 under construction
Original avatar	GOBARdhan was first launched in April 2018 under the Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen as part of its Solid and Liquid Waste Management component

Centre Releases Rs 6,155 Crore as Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 Gains Momentum

06 Aug

- The Centre has released a total of Rs 6,154.96 crore under Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 in FY 2026-27 - Rs 5,289.09 crore reimbursed as Central share to 10 States and Rs 865.87 crore through the SNA SPARSH platform across 13 States.
- JJM 2.0 was approved by the Union Cabinet on 10 March 2026, extending the Mission to December 2028 with a total outlay of Rs 8.69 lakh crore including Central assistance of Rs 3.59 lakh crore.
- The Mission shifts focus from infrastructure creation to assured service delivery through Gram Panchayat-led operation and maintenance, source sustainability and water quality surveillance.
- As on 18 July 2026, about 15.89 crore of 19.36 crore rural households (82.09 per cent) had tap water connections, against a baseline of 3.24 crore (16.72 per cent) when the Mission began.
- New reforms include Jal Arpan handover to Gram Panchayats, unique Sujalam Bharat IDs for water assets, geo-tagging on the PM Gati Shakti platform and community assessment through Jal Seva Aankalan.

QUICK FACTS

Mission	Jal Jeevan Mission - Har Ghar Jal, launched 15 August 2019
Implementing department	Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti
JJM 2.0 outlay	Rs 8.69 lakh crore, including Central assistance of Rs 3.59 lakh crore
Released in FY 2026-27	Rs 5,289.09 crore reimbursement to 10 States plus Rs 865.87 crore via SNA SPARSH to 13 States
Largest reimbursement	Uttar Pradesh, Rs 2,711.52 crore; largest SNA SPARSH release: Assam, Rs 669.92 crore
Coverage as on 18 July 2026	15.89 crore of 19.36 crore rural households (82.09 per cent)
Water quality benchmark	Bureau of Indian Standards IS 10500
Union Minister of Jal Shakti	Shri C.R. Patil

– JJM 2.0 approved by the Union Cabinet on 10 March 2026, extending the Mission to December 2028

PMAY-Urban Crosses 1.25 Crore Houses Sanctioned and 1 Crore Delivered

09 Aug

- Over 1.25 crore houses have been sanctioned under PMAY-U and PMAY-U 2.0 together, of which more than 1 crore have been completed and delivered.
- One crore houses have been allotted to women, in the name of the female head of household or in joint ownership.
- The 8th meeting of the Central Sanctioning and Monitoring Committee under PMAY-U 2.0 sanctioned over 2.09 lakh houses for EWS families across 16 States and UTs.
- Total sanctions under PMAY-U 2.0 have crossed 18.38 lakh houses across its four verticals.
- PMAY-U was launched in June 2015 with the vision of Housing for All; PMAY-U 2.0 targets an additional 1 crore EWS, LIG and MIG families.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban (PMAY-U) and its successor PMAY-U 2.0
Launched	June 2015, with the vision of Housing for All
Nodal ministry	Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
Houses completed and delivered	more than 1 crore
Houses allotted to women	1 crore, as female head of household or in joint ownership
8th CSMC meeting	held on 6 August 2026 at Sankalp Bhawan, New Delhi
Chaired by	Shri Satendra Singh, Secretary, Department of Urban Development, MoHUA
PMAY-U 2.0 coverage	an additional 1 crore eligible EWS, LIG and MIG families with annual income of up to Rs 9 lakh

- Houses sanctioned under PMAY-U and PMAY-U 2.0 together: over 1.25 crore

PMKVY 4.0 evaluation: employment share up 18.8 points; 5.44 lakh trained in new-age roles

10 Aug

- The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship set out the results of third-party evaluations of its schemes under the Skill India Mission, all conducted by the Arun Jaitley National Institute of Financial Management, an autonomous institution of the Ministry of Finance.
- For PMKVY 4.0, the combined share of employed and self-employed Short-Term Training respondents rose from 26.6% before training to 45.4% after — an increase of 18.8 percentage points; 41.4% of STT candidates and 48.9% of Recognition of Prior Learning candidates reported higher income.
- The Jan Shikshan Sansthan evaluation of 2025 found 33.94 lakh enrolled, 32 lakh trained and 31.52 lakh certified — a 99% success rate — with women at 82% of participants, 73% from marginalised sections, and average monthly income of beneficiaries rising four-fold.
- Under PMNAPS-2, 34.69 lakh apprentices were engaged against a cumulative target of 46 lakh from 2022-23 to November 2025, an achievement of about 75%.
- PMKVY 4.0 has introduced over 600 new-age and futuristic courses, with about 5.44 lakh candidates trained in such job roles as on 30 June 2026; the NAVYA programme for adolescent girls has trained 1,060 girls across 15 States/UTs and is being expanded to 100 aspirational districts with effect from 27 May 2026.

QUICK FACTS

AI-related training under PMKVY 4.0	53,449 candidates trained/oriented and 25,466 certified as on 30 June 2026
SOAR (Skilling for AI Readiness)	4,96,426 learners enrolled and 98,576 certified as on 22 July 2026 on the Skill India Digital Hub
NAVYA	1,060 girls trained across 15 States/UTs; expansion to 100 aspirational districts with effect from 27 May 2026

- Skill India Mission delivers training through PMKVY, Jan Shikshan Sansthan, the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme and the Craftsman Training Scheme through ITIs
- PMKVY has been running since 2015; PMKVY 4.0 has been under implementation since FY 2022-23

- Placements were tracked only in PMKVY 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0 (2015-16 to 2021-22): of 56.89 lakh certified in Short-Term Training, 24.37 lakh were placed — an overall placement rate of 42.8%
- Under PMKVY 4.0 the focus shifted from placement tracking to On-the-Job Training embedded in industry-relevant courses
- 600+ new-age and futuristic courses introduced; about 5.44 lakh candidates trained in such roles as on 30 June 2026
- NCVET ecosystem has 116 NSQF-aligned, NSQC-approved qualifications, National Occupational Standards and micro-credentials in AI and Machine Learning
- PMKVY 4.0 funds released over FY 2023-24 to FY 2026-27 (to 30 June 2026): Rs 2,392.37 crore against Budget Estimates of Rs 6,811.30 crore

20,149 Jan Aushadhi Kendras and Rs 37,200 Crore in Citizen Savings; Out-of-Pocket Health Spend Falls to 43.4%

11 Aug

- A total of 20,149 Jan Aushadhi Kendras had been opened across the country as on 30 June 2026 under the PMBJP.
- Sales of Rs 7,873.85 crore between 2021-22 and 2025-26 produced savings of about Rs 37,200 crore for citizens.
- The product basket covers 2,110 medicines and 315 surgicals, consumables and devices.
- Generic medicines at these kendras are typically 50% to 80% cheaper than branded equivalents.
- Out-of-pocket expenditure as a share of total health expenditure fell from 62.6% in 2014-15 to 43.4% in 2022-23.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP), under the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers
Implementing agency	Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Bureau of India (PMBI)
Kendras opened as on 30 June 2026	20,149 nationally; 1,833 in Kerala and 1,014 in West Bengal
Product basket	2,110 medicines and 315 surgicals, consumables and devices
Sales 2021-22 to 2025-26	Rs 7,873.85 crore; citizen savings about Rs 37,200 crore
Delivery model	franchise-like — individuals, NGOs, societies, trusts, firms and companies may apply through janaushadhi.gov.in
Supply chain	five warehouses and 42 distributors, with 400 fast-moving products monitored continuously

Cooperative Sector Goes Digital: 63,686 PACS on ERP, NCD Portal 3.0 and Bharat Taxi's 8.48 Lakh Drivers

12 Aug

- The Ministry of Cooperation told the Rajya Sabha that 63,686 PACS are onboarded on the ERP-based national software and 54,707 have been declared e-PACS.
- The PACS computerisation outlay has been raised from Rs 2,516 crore to Rs 2,925.39 crore.
- The National Cooperative Database now covers about 8.6 lakh cooperatives from 30 sectors with roughly 32 crore members; NCD Portal 3.0 was launched on 6 July 2026.
- Bharat Taxi, run by Sahakar Taxi Cooperative Limited on a zero-commission model, has 8.48 lakh registered drivers and 44.27 lakh customers.
- BBSSL has introduced 124 varieties across 18 crops under the 'Bharat Beej' brand and produced 75,535 tonnes of seed in 2025-26.

QUICK FACTS

Answered by	Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah, in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha
Guiding vision	'Sahkar Se Samriddhi' — prosperity through cooperation
National Cooperative Database	launched 8 March 2024; covers about 8.6 lakh cooperatives across 30 sectors with roughly 32 crore members. NCD Portal 3.0 and the NCD GeoTag mobile app were launched on 6 July 2026
Cooperative Ranking Framework	launched 24 January 2025, covering 12 sectors, scored out of 100 marks on five parameters

- PACS computerisation outlay raised from Rs 2,516 crore to Rs 2,925.39 crore
- 63,686 PACS onboarded on the ERP-based National Software; 54,707 declared e-PACS; over 51.58 crore digital transactions as on 15 July 2026
- The ePACS software has 22 ERP modules and is available in 20 languages
- National Cooperation Policy, 2025 has been formulated

Tribal Development Update: PM-JUGA Covers 63,843 Villages, 54 Lakh Forest Rights Claims Filed

12 Aug

- PM-JUGA, also called Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan, was launched on 2 October 2024 and covers 63,843 villages in 549 districts across 30 States and UTs.
- It runs 25 interventions through 17 line ministries and targets more than 5 crore tribal beneficiaries over five years.
- PM JANMAN targets 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group communities in 18 States and one UT through 11 interventions by nine ministries.
- Under the Forest Rights Act, 54.02 lakh claims have been received and 25.42 lakh titles distributed as on 30 June 2026; 18.13 lakh claims were rejected and 10.46 lakh remain pending.
- The Ministry funds 29 Tribal Research Institutes and has built the TribeX digital platform and the AI translation tool Adi Vaani.

QUICK FACTS

Answered by	Union Minister for Tribal Affairs Shri Durgadas Uikey, in written replies in the Rajya Sabha
PM JANMAN	Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan, launched 15 November 2023 with an outlay of Rs 24,104 crore; 11 interventions by 9 line ministries for 75 PVTG communities in 18 States and 1 UT
FRA status as on 30 June 2026	54,01,561 claims received, 25,42,359 titles distributed, 18,13,232 rejected, 10,45,970 pending

- PM-JUGA / Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan: launched 2 October 2024; 25 interventions, 17 line ministries, 63,843 villages, 549 districts, 2,911 blocks, 30 States/UTs, over 5 crore tribal beneficiaries, five-year horizon
- Forest Rights Act is implemented in 20 States and 1 Union Territory
- 29 Tribal Research Institutes receive financial assistance under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Support to Tribal Research Institutes'
- Adi Vaani is the Ministry's AI-based translation tool for tribal languages including Santhali and Mundari
- PVTG population and infrastructure gaps were mapped through habitation-level data collection using the PM Gati Shakti mobile application

EEZ Access Pass: 9,650 Issued as India Opens Deep-Sea Fishing to Traditional Fishers

12 Aug

- The Access Pass is a free digital pass issued through the ReALCRaft portal allowing fishing in India's Exclusive Economic Zone beyond 12 nautical miles.
- It is issued under the Sustainable Harnessing of Fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone Rules, 2025, notified on 4 November 2025.
- A total of 9,650 Access Passes have been issued as on 5 August 2026, led by Karnataka with 2,563 and Gujarat with 2,524.
- Traditional non-motorised and small artisanal craft are fully exempted; the pass is required for mechanised vessels and large motorised boats over 24 metres.
- Fish caught by Indian vessels in the EEZ or High Seas has been made duty-free through amendments to the Customs Act, 1962, following the Union Budget 2026-27 announcement.

QUICK FACTS

Answered by	Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh, Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, in the Rajya Sabha
Access Pass	a free digital pass issued via the ReALCRaft portal for fishing in the EEZ, the zone from 12 to 200 nautical miles
Legal basis	the Sustainable Harnessing of Fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) Rules, 2025, notified on 4 November 2025
Who needs it	mechanised fishing vessels and large motorised boats over 24 metres in length; traditional non-motorised and small artisanal craft are fully exempted
Passes issued	9,650 as on 5 August 2026
PMMSY total outlay	Rs 20,750 crore from 2020-21 to September 2026; PM-MKSSY outlay Rs 6,000 crore from 2023-24 to 2026-27

- Uniform annual fishing ban in the EEZ during the peak breeding season: 61 days
- The fisheries sector contributed about 7.43% of Agricultural Gross Value Added and about 1.09% of total GVA in 2023-24

PM-JANMAN Reports 4.82 Lakh PVTG Houses Sanctioned and 831 Mobile Medical Units

13 Aug

- As on 30 June 2026, PM-JANMAN had sanctioned 4,82,554 houses for PVTG households under PMAY-G, of which 3,05,860 were complete, and 7,991.93 km of PMGSY roads, of which 2,948 km were complete.
- Under the Jal Jeevan Mission component, 18,756 PVTG villages were sanctioned and 8,799 saturated; 831 Mobile Medical Units have been operationalised through the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- Under the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan, 474 Mobile Medical Units had been operationalised as of July 2026 and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has approved 15 Centres of Competence dedicated to Sickle Cell Disease treatment.
- PM-JANMAN covers 75 PVTG communities in 18 states and one union territory, delivering 11 interventions through nine line ministries.
- Phase-I of the Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan mobilised about 15 lakh Adi Karmayogis, developed over 210 State, 2,200 District and 11,000 Block Master Trainers, and saw 62,187 Tribal Village Vision 2030 plans approved through Gram Sabhas.

QUICK FACTS

Housing (PMAY-G)	4,82,554 houses sanctioned, 3,05,860 completed as on 30 June 2026
Roads (PMGSY)	7,991.93 km sanctioned, 2,948 km completed
Water (Jal Jeevan Mission)	18,756 villages sanctioned, 8,799 saturated
Health	831 Mobile Medical Units operationalised under PM-JANMAN; 474 more under DAJGUA as of July 2026
Chhattisgarh	191 Anganwadi Centres sanctioned under PM-JANMAN and all 191 operationalised
Maharashtra	17 districts have PVTG population as per the habitation-level mobile survey; Akola district has none
Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan Phase-I	about 15 lakh Adi Karmayogis mobilised across roughly one lakh tribal villages in 30 States/UTs

- PM-JANMAN covers 75 PVTG communities across 18 states and one union territory through 11 interventions implemented by 9 line ministries
- 15 Centres of Competence approved under DAJGUA for Sickle Cell Disease treatment
- 6,79,309 Adi Saathis and 4,03,306 Adi Sahyogis mobilised; 62,187 Tribal Village Vision 2030 plans approved by Gram Sabhas
- 54,324 Village Workbooks and 56,422 Adi Sewa Kendras recorded

728 Eklavya Schools Sanctioned, 508 Functional With 1.57 Lakh Students Enrolled

13 Aug

- 728 Eklavya Model Residential Schools have been approved, of which 508 are functional, with 1,56,593 students enrolled in the 2025-26 academic session.
- EMRSs are established in tribal-dominated blocks having more than 50% Scheduled Tribe population and at least 20,000 tribal persons, as per Census 2011.
- Each EMRS with classes up to Class XII and a full strength of 480 students has 31 sanctioned teaching posts and 21 non-teaching posts, of which 13 non-teaching posts are earmarked for outsourcing to promote local employment.
- Centralised recruitment through the EMRS Staff Selection Examination has recruited 9,111 teaching and non-teaching staff, with an examination held for a further batch of 7,267.
- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs runs five scholarship schemes for ST students — two Centrally Sponsored (Pre-Matric and Post Matric) and three Central Sector (Top Class, National Fellowship and National Overseas Scholarship), with income ceilings of Rs 2.50 lakh, Rs 6 lakh or none depending on the scheme.

QUICK FACTS

EMRS	728 approved, 508 functional, 1,56,593 students enrolled in academic session 2025-26
Eligibility for a new EMRS	block with more than 50% ST population and at least 20,000 tribal persons as per Census 2011
Telangana	23 EMRSs sanctioned, all functional, with 10,199 students enrolled in 2025-26
West Bengal	9 EMRSs approved and all functional; Odisha: 114 sanctioned, 47 functional
Staffing per school	31 teaching and 21 non-teaching posts for schools up to Class XII with 480 students; 13 of the 21 non-teaching posts earmarked for outsourcing
EMRS Staff Selection Examination (ESSE)	9,111 staff already recruited; examination conducted for another 7,267
Five ST scholarship schemes	Pre-Matric (Class IX-X), Post Matric (Class XI and above), National Scholarship for Higher Education (Top Class), National Fellowship (NFST) and National Overseas Scholarship (NOS)
Income ceilings	Rs 2.50 lakh for Pre-Matric and Post Matric; Rs 6.00 lakh for Top Class and NOS; no income limit for NFST
NFST	3,750 fellowships awarded over the last five years; merit list of 750 selected candidates each year; portal opens 1 July and closes 30 September

– NSTFDC extends concessional loans to ST persons with annual family income up to Rs 3 lakh in both rural and urban areas

PIB Backgrounder on Women's Schemes: PMMVY Pays Rs 20,571 Crore, KGBV Enrolment at 7.58 Lakh

14 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder titled 'Sashakt Nari, Sashakt Bharat', issued for the 80th Independence Day, consolidates the coverage figures of every major women-focused scheme across health, education, skills, finance and safety.
- Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana reports 5.13 crore beneficiaries enrolled and Rs 20,571 crore paid as on 31 July 2026; Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan has examined over 7.50 crore pregnant women.
- National Family Health Survey comparisons show institutional births rising from 78.9 per cent in NFHS-4 (2015-16) to 90.6 per cent in NFHS-6 (2023-24).
- On the economic side, women hold 32.68 crore of the 58.90 crore Jan Dhan accounts, and two-thirds of the 57.79 crore Mudra loans have gone to women entrepreneurs.
- The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023 - the 106th Constitutional Amendment - reserves 33 per cent of seats for women in the Lok Sabha, State Assemblies and the Delhi Assembly, to take effect after post-census delimitation.

QUICK FACTS

Document type	PIB Backgrounder 'Sashakt Nari, Sashakt Bharat', released 14 August 2026 for the 80th Independence Day.
PMMVY	Rs 5,000 in two instalments for the first living child and Rs 6,000 for a second child if a girl; 5.13 crore enrolled, 4.37 crore paid, Rs 20,571 crore disbursed as on 31 July 2026.
PMSMA	free antenatal check-ups on the 9th of every month; over 7.50 crore pregnant women examined, 22,000+ facilities, 1.03 crore high-risk pregnancies identified (13 August 2026).
JSSK	over 1.99 crore pregnant women and 16.85 lakh sick infants assisted in FY 2024-25; more than 18.05 crore beneficiaries since 2014-15.
NFHS-6 (2023-24) outcomes	institutional births 90.6 per cent (78.9 per cent in NFHS-4), first-trimester antenatal visits 76.2 per cent (58.6 per cent), four-plus antenatal visits 65.2 per cent (51.2 per cent).
School education 2025-26	14.67 lakh schools, 1.02 crore teachers, 24.72 crore students, 11.96 crore female enrolment. KGBV enrolment up from 6.07 lakh (2020-21) to 7.58 lakh (2025-26).
Higher education	female enrolment 2.18 crore in 2022-23, up about 60.32 lakh from 1.57 crore in 2014-15; women were over 53 per cent of UGC NET-JRF scholars in STEM in 2024-25.
Financial inclusion	58.90 crore Jan Dhan accounts (12 August 2026), of which 32.68 crore belong to women (1 July 2026); Sukanya Samriddhi deposits exceed Rs 3.33 lakh crore (December 2025) at 8.2 per cent tax-free interest.
Mudra	57.79 crore loans worth Rs 40.07 lakh crore disbursed as on 8 April 2026, two-thirds sanctioned to women.
Governance	47.15 crore of the 96.88 crore electors on the final roll (8 February 2026) are women; 14.5 lakh women are elected Panchayati Raj representatives, nearly 46 per cent of the total.

Bharat Taxi: India's first cooperative ride-hailing platform crosses 8 lakh drivers

17 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder issued on 17 August 2026 profiles Bharat Taxi, India's first cooperative-led ride-hailing platform, established on 6 June 2025 under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002.
- It was set up by eight national-level cooperative institutions — NCDC, IFFCO, NABARD, KRIBHCO, Amul (GCMMF), NAFED, NDDB and NCEL.
- The platform runs a zero-commission, surge-free model: drivers, called Sarathis, retain their full fare earnings and pay a subscription instead of a per-ride commission.
- As of 25 July 2026 it had nearly 8 lakh registered Sarathis and about 41 lakh registered customers across Delhi-NCR, Gujarat, Lucknow, Chandigarh, Mumbai, Jaipur, Kanpur and Pune, with a nationwide presence targeted by 2029.
- Sarathis become member-owners by buying shares of Rs 100 each — ownership rights come with shares worth Rs 500 — and have reserved seats on the Board of Directors.

QUICK FACTS

Established	6 June 2025
Registered under	the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002
Founded by	eight national-level cooperative institutions
Model	zero commission, no surge pricing, no platform or convenience fee; revenue comes from a driver subscription
Status as of 25 July 2026	nearly 8 lakh registered Sarathis, about 41 lakh registered customers
Target	nationwide presence by 2029
Policy vision it is placed under	'Sahkar se Samriddhi' (prosperity through cooperatives), the guiding vision of the Ministry of Cooperation

- Bharat Taxi — India's first cooperative-led ride-hailing platform
- Drivers are called 'Sarathis' and are member-owners, under the slogan 'Saarthi Hi Maalik'

PMJVM: 4,172 Van Dhan Kendras sanctioned, 12.48 lakh tribal gatherers linked

20 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder issued on 20 August 2026 sets out how the Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission (PMJVM) is restructuring the minor forest produce trade, on which India's 10.4 crore Scheduled Tribes depend for 20-40% of their annual income.
- Under PMJVM, 4,172 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras have been sanctioned and 2,911 are functional, reporting sales of about Rs 168 crore as on 31 July 2026; 12.48 lakh tribal members are linked to them.
- Minimum Support Price has been notified for 87 minor forest produce items; since 2013-14 State agencies have procured 2,67,954 metric tonnes of MFP worth Rs 693.98 crore.
- The legal backbone is the Forest Rights Act, 2006, which defines minor forest produce and grants collection and disposal rights, and the PESA Act, 1996, which vests ownership of minor forest produce in tribal Gram Panchayats in Scheduled Areas.
- TRIFED, the apex tribal marketing cooperative under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, procures at the notified MSP through State implementing agencies irrespective of the prevailing market price.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission (PMJVM), launched in 2021-22; nodal ministry is the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, implemented through TRIFED
Van Dhan Vikas Kendras sanctioned	4,172; functional: 2,911; reported sales about Rs 168 crore (as on 31 July 2026)
Tribal members linked to VDVKs	12.48 lakh
MFP procured by State agencies since 2013-14	2,67,954 metric tonnes worth Rs 693.98 crore

- Scheduled Tribes number 10.4 crore and draw 20-40% of annual income from Minor Forest Produce (MFP)
- MSP notified for 87 MFP items under the mission
- One VDVK = 15 Self Help Groups, roughly 300 tribal members; at least 60% of members must belong to Scheduled Tribe communities
- Van Dhan Yojana, launched on 14 April 2018, is the component of PMJVM that runs the VDVK model
- Over 5,000 haats (weekly markets) exist in tribal areas and are the primary MFP procurement points; they are being modernised in phases
- Working capital is arranged through banks, financial institutions and the National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC)

PM-AASHA Explained: Four Price-Support Components and Rs 7,200 Crore for 2026-27

21 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder of 21 August 2026 sets out the architecture of Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA), the umbrella framework for delivering the Minimum Support Price and curbing distress sales, launched in September 2018.
- PM-AASHA has four components - Price Support Scheme (PSS), Price Stabilization Fund (PSF), Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS) and Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) - each triggered by different crop and market conditions.
- Budget allocation has risen from an actual expenditure of Rs 5,437.99 crore in 2024-25 to Rs 6,941.36 crore in 2025-26 and Rs 7,200 crore in 2026-27.
- From the 2024-25 procurement year, PSS procurement of pulses, oilseeds and copra is allowed up to 25 per cent of a State or UT's production, but Tur, Urad and Masur may be procured up to 100 per cent of State production to cut import dependence.
- Procurement is executed by NAFED and NCCF with State governments, increasingly through PACS and FPOs, with biometric farmer authentication and pre-registration built into recent reforms.

QUICK FACTS

Full name	Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)
Launched	September 2018, by the Government of India, as an umbrella price-assurance framework
Objective	ensure remunerative prices for farmers while keeping prices stable for consumers, and reduce distress sales
Four components	Price Support Scheme (PSS), Price Stabilization Fund (PSF), Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS) and Market Intervention Scheme (MIS)
Budget allocation 2026-27	Rs 7,200 crore
Crops under PSS	pulses, oilseeds and copra
Central nodal agencies	NAFED and NCCF, acting on the request of State governments

– PSF, though merged into PM-AASHA, continues to be managed by the Department of Consumer Affairs

NADCP: 147.16 crore FMD doses given, outbreaks down from 132 to 40

22 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder dated 22 August 2026 reviewed the National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP), launched in September 2019 to control and eradicate Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis through nationwide vaccination and surveillance.
- Cumulative FMD vaccination under the programme has reached 147.16 crore doses benefiting 8.04 crore farmers; reported FMD outbreaks fell from 132 in 2019 to 40 in 2025 and Brucellosis outbreaks from 22 to 15 over the same period.
- NADCP targets 100% FMD vaccination of all susceptible livestock twice a year, and a single lifetime Brucellosis vaccination for female bovine calves aged 4-8 months.
- NADCP, the Livestock Health and Disease Control component and the Pashu Aushadhi initiative have been subsumed into one umbrella scheme, the Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme (LHDCP), whose budget outlay for 2026-27 is Rs 2,010 crore.
- Over 39.00 crore livestock had been registered on the Bharat Pashudhan Portal by July 2026, each animal carrying a unique 12-digit Tag ID.

QUICK FACTS

Programme	National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP), launched September 2019.
Diseases targeted	Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis, both of bovines and other livestock.
Nodal department	Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.
Vaccination norm	FMD - biannual mass vaccination of all susceptible bovines and small ruminants; Brucellosis - one-time lifetime dose to female bovine calves aged 4-8 months.
Cumulative FMD doses	147.16 crore, benefiting 8.04 crore farmers.
Vaccinator remuneration	minimum Rs 3 per vaccination dose.
FMD outbreaks	132 (2019) to 40 (2025). Brucellosis outbreaks: 22 (2019) to 15 (2025).
Umbrella scheme now	Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme (LHDCP); outlay for FY 2026-27 is Rs 2,010 crore.
Digital backbone	Bharat Pashudhan Portal under the National Digital Livestock Mission; 39.00 crore-plus animals registered by July 2026, each with a 12-digit Tag ID.
Field delivery	4,019 Mobile Veterinary Units across 29 States and UTs, reachable on toll-free 1962; 136 lakh farmers benefited and 276 lakh animals treated.
Livestock base	535.78 million animals including 302.79 million bovines, as per the 20th Livestock Census (2019).

– NSP antibody prevalence (a marker of field-virus circulation): 20.8% in 2019 to 8.1% in 2025.

– No FMD outbreak caused by serotype Asia-1 has been reported in India for the last three years (as of the August 2026 backgrounder).

PIB Backgrounder maps India's regenerative agriculture push: schemes, coverage and outlays

23 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder released on 23 August 2026 sets out how central schemes are pushing Indian farming towards regenerative practices - natural farming, agroforestry, micro-irrigation, integrated farming systems and scientific soil management.
- Natural farming clusters covered 8.80 lakh hectares with 18.19 lakh farmers enrolled, and 18,786 clusters had been formed as of 5 March 2026 under the National Mission on Natural Farming.
- Per Drop More Crop had covered about 109 lakh hectares as of May 2026 with Rs 26,325 crore of central assistance released, and 25.89 crore Soil Health Cards had been generated as of 13 March 2026.
- The document distinguishes regenerative agriculture from sustainable agriculture: sustainable farming aims to maintain existing conditions, regenerative farming aims to actively improve soil health, biodiversity and ecosystem resilience.
- Agriculture and allied sectors recorded decadal growth of 4.45 per cent during FY16-FY25, the highest of any recent decade, but the Backgrounder argues that sustaining it depends on rebuilding soil health.

QUICK FACTS

Document	PIB Backgrounder, 'Rebuilding Farming Systems: Regenerative Agriculture for a Resilient India', 23 August 2026.
Natural farming clusters	18,786 formed, 8.80 lakh hectares, 18.19 lakh farmers enrolled (as of 5 March 2026).
Community Resource Persons trained under NMNF	33,676, at Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Agricultural Universities and local natural farming institutions.
Per Drop More Crop	about 109 lakh hectares covered (as of May 2026); Rs 26,325 crore central assistance released.
Soil Health Cards	25.89 crore generated since inception (as of 13 March 2026); 7.17 lakh demonstrations on balanced fertiliser use; 70,002 Krishi Sakhis trained.
Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana	16.90 lakh hectares covered since inception (as of 31 October 2025).
Rainfed Area Development	Rs 2,251.98 crore central assistance, 9.53 lakh hectares, 15.73 lakh farmers (as of December 2025).
Agroforestry component	Rs 78.31 crore sanctioned to 27 States/UTs during 2025-26 (as on 31 October 2025); 135 new nurseries; 176.59 lakh saplings raised in 614 existing nurseries, benefiting about 25,693 farmers.
SDG linkage stated in the document	SDG 13 (Climate Action), Target 13.1 on resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards.

- Six principles of regenerative agriculture listed: minimise soil disturbance, protect living roots of perennial crops, maintain soil cover, integrate livestock, limit chemical inputs, enhance biodiversity.
- Agriculture and allied sectors decadal growth, FY16-FY25: 4.45 per cent.

e-Shram Portal Completes Five Years With 31.89 Crore Registered Unorganised Workers

25 Aug

- The e-Shram portal, run by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, completes five years on 26 August 2026; it was launched on 26 August 2021 and built India's first Aadhaar-authenticated National Database of Unorganised Workers (NDUW).
- Every registered worker receives a unique 12-digit Universal Account Number (UAN). Registrations stood at 31.89 crore as on 18 August 2026, with women forming 54.28 per cent of registrants and men 45.72 per cent.
- The e-Shram One-Stop Solution, launched on 21 October 2024, converted the registry into a service-delivery platform that now carries 15 social security and welfare schemes, including PM-SYM, PMSBY, PMJJBY, NSAP, ONORC and PMAY-Gramin.
- Roughly 11.5 lakh gig and platform workers have registered, giving the government its first national roster of this workforce; multilingual access in 22 languages, powered by Bhashini, was added in 2025.

- Registration is free, one-time and open to any unorganised worker aged 16 and above who is not an income-tax payer and not a member of EPFO or ESIC.

QUICK FACTS

Portal	e-Shram, launched 26 August 2021 by the Ministry of Labour and Employment; developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC), which functions under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and was set up in 1976.
What it created	the National Database of Unorganised Workers (NDUW) — India's first Aadhaar-authenticated database of this workforce.
Identifier	a unique 12-digit Universal Account Number (UAN) for every registrant.
Registrations	31.89 crore as on 18 August 2026.
Gender split	women 54.28 per cent, men 45.72 per cent.
Age profile (as on 20 August 2026)	16-18 years 0.08 per cent; 18-40 years 55.21 per cent; 40-50 years 24.18 per cent; above 50 years 20.53 per cent.
Largest occupational groups	agriculture, domestic and household work, construction, and apparel.
States with the highest registrations	Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.
Eligibility	unorganised worker aged 16 or above, not an income-tax payer, and not a member of EPFO or ESIC.
Registration routes	the e-Shram portal itself, Common Service Centres (CSCs) or State Seva Kendras. Most registrations have come through CSCs, followed by self-registration. Registration is free of cost.
Documents needed	Aadhaar number (for Aadhaar eKYC) and a mobile number, preferably Aadhaar-linked.
e-Shram One-Stop Solution	launched 21 October 2024, aligned with the Union Budget 2024-25 vision of delivering labour services through a single digital platform; carries 15 welfare schemes.
Gig and platform workers registered	about 11.5 lakh.
Languages	22, enabled in 2025 through Bhashini, the National Language Translation Mission platform formed in July 2022 under MeitY.

Per Drop More Crop Covers 115 Lakh Hectares Under Micro Irrigation

29 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder issued on 29 August 2026 records that the Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) scheme has brought more than 115 lakh hectares under micro irrigation as of July 2026 — about 8.11% of India's net sown area.
- Central assistance of Rs 8,123.24 crore has been released under PDMC over the last three years. During 2025-26, Rs 8,957.72 crore was released or sanctioned for PM-RKVY, of which Rs 3,226.36 crore was dedicated to PDMC.
- Assistance covers up to five hectares per beneficiary — 55% for small and marginal farmers and 45% for other farmers — and the same land becomes eligible again after seven years.
- In 2025-26 the scheme benefited 12.30 lakh farmers, around 20% of them women; Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Rajasthan recorded the largest covered areas.
- Revised guidelines remove the earlier ceiling on spending for water storage and conservation works such as diggis and farm ponds under the scheme's 'Other Interventions' component.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) — a centrally sponsored scheme promoting micro irrigation at farm level.
Nodal ministry	Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
Coverage	over 115 lakh hectares under micro irrigation as of July 2026, roughly 8.11% of India's net sown area.
Subsidy pattern	55% financial assistance to small and marginal farmers, 45% to other farmers, for a maximum of five hectares per beneficiary.
Two supported systems	drip irrigation and sprinkler irrigation.
Context	over 80% of India's available water is used for irrigation, while only about 50% of net sown area has irrigation facilities.
Beneficiaries in 2025-26	12.30 lakh farmers, about 20% of them women.

- Implemented as a component of the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY) since 2022-23.

- Repeat assistance for the same parcel of land is allowed after seven years.
- Central funds released in the last three years: Rs 8,123.24 crore.

PMFBY Completes a Decade: 92.46 Crore Applications Insured, Rs 2.06 Lakh Crore Paid

29 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder issued on 29 August 2026 reports that from Kharif 2016 to Rabi 2025-26, more than 92.46 crore farmer applications have been insured under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and over 26.33 crore applications have received claims exceeding Rs 2.06 lakh crore.
- The Union Budget 2026-27 allocates Rs 12,200 crore to PMFBY, which is being implemented by 25 States and Union Territories in Kharif 2026.
- Farmers pay a maximum of 2% of the sum insured for kharif foodgrain and oilseed crops, 1.5% for rabi and 5% for commercial and horticultural crops; the balance premium is shared by the Centre and states 50:50, and 90:10 for North-Eastern and Himalayan States and UTs.
- As of 27 August 2026, Kharif 2026 enrolment stands at 241.38 lakh farmers covering 278.12 lakh hectares, already above the Kharif 2025 figures of 229.77 lakh farmers and 269.38 lakh hectares.
- West Bengal rejoined the scheme from Kharif 2026 and Bihar has decided to implement it from Rabi 2026-27, following Andhra Pradesh (Kharif 2022) and Jharkhand (Kharif 2024).

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), launched on 18 February 2016 and first implemented from the Kharif 2016 season.
Nodal ministry	Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
Budget 2026-27 allocation	Rs 12,200 crore.
Implementing States/UTs in Kharif 2026	25.
Farmer premium	2% (kharif foodgrains and oilseeds), 1.5% (rabi foodgrains and oilseeds), 5% (commercial and horticultural crops).
Premium subsidy sharing	Centre and state 50:50; 90:10 for North-Eastern and Himalayan States/UTs.
Coverage stages	prevented sowing, standing crop yield loss, mid-season adversity, localised calamities and post-harvest losses.
Post-harvest cover	crops in 'cut and spread' condition in the field are covered for up to 14 days after harvest against specified cyclonic and unseasonal rain events.

- Cumulative record (Kharif 2016 to Rabi 2025-26): 92.46 crore farmer applications insured; 26.33 crore applications paid claims of over Rs 2.06 lakh crore.
- Prevented sowing claims are capped at 25% of the sum insured.
- Both loanee and non-loanee farmers are covered; on average about 50% of enrolled farmers over the decade have been voluntary non-loanee farmers.
- Tenant farmers and sharecroppers are eligible; more than 1.44 crore such farmers have been enrolled cumulatively since 2018.

10. Summits & Conferences

3 articles

India Hosts BRICS Industry, Education and Creative Economy Meets Under 2026 Chairship

06 Aug

- India held three BRICS ministerial-track events on 6 August 2026 under its BRICS Chairship, themed 'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability'.
- The Tenth BRICS Industry Ministers' Meeting in Jaipur concluded with a Joint Declaration and adopted a Framework for Cooperation in the SME Working Group and Terms of Reference for a new Working Group on the Photovoltaic Industry.
- India proposed a BRICS Incubator Network and a BRICS Startup Innovation Fund to support innovation-led growth.
- BRICS WAVES Bazaar opened in Mumbai with over 500 delegates from BRICS member and partner countries, positioning the creative or 'Orange' economy as a cooperation area.
- The 3rd BRICS Senior Education Officials Meeting in Bhubaneswar finalised the draft Education Ministers' Declaration, including Guiding Principles on Traditional and Indigenous Knowledge Systems.

QUICK FACTS

Chairship theme	'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability'
Tenth BRICS Industry Ministers' Meeting	Jaipur, Rajasthan, 6 August 2026, chaired by Union Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal
16th BRICS Trade Ministers' Meeting	Jaipur, 7 August 2026, preceded by the Third Contact Group on Economic and Trade Issues (CGETI) in New Delhi on 3-4 August 2026
13th BRICS Education Ministers' Meeting	Bhubaneswar, Odisha, with Union Education Minister Shri Pralhad Joshi; the 3rd Senior Officials Meeting was held there on 5 August 2026
BRICS WAVES Bazaar	Mumbai, 6-7 August 2026, over 500 delegates from 21 BRICS member and partner countries
First BRICS Summit	Yekaterinburg, Russia, 2009

- India holds the BRICS Chairship for 2026; Brazil chaired in 2025
- Held under PartNIR - the BRICS Partnership on New Industrial Revolution
- BRICS Film Festival to be held alongside the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in November 2026

India's BRICS 2026 Chairship: Youth Summit, Energy and Tourism Tracks

19 Aug

- India held the BRICS Youth Council Meeting and BRICS Youth Summit at Gandhinagar, Gujarat on 19 August 2026 under its BRICS Chairship, organised by the Department of Youth Affairs, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
- India's BRICS Chairship 2026 runs under the theme 'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability' — an acronym that itself spells BRICS — with the Energy Track carrying the sub-theme ' ' (Energy for All).
- The Youth Council took up a Draft Joint Declaration and a BRICS Youth Cooperation Framework ahead of the BRICS Youth Ministers' Meeting at Visakhapatnam on 22 August 2026.
- The Eighth BRICS Youth Energy Summit was held virtually on 17 August 2026 with over 100 participants, joined by the BRICS Youth Energy Agency, SEforALL, the International Solar Alliance and IRENA.
- The 2nd BRICS Tourism Working Group met at Jaipur, and the Minister of State for Youth Affairs & Sports announced 'Friends of MY Bharat', a digital module connecting Indian-origin youth abroad to MY Bharat's programmes.

QUICK FACTS

India's BRICS Chairship 2026 theme	'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability'
Energy Track sub-theme	— Energy for All
Youth Summit thematic tracks	Education, Entrepreneurship & Future Readiness; Inclusive Development & Youth Wellbeing; Sustainability & Environmental Responsibility; People-to-People Cooperation & Youth Engagement
Next step	BRICS Youth Ministers' Meeting on 22 August 2026 at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh
Eighth BRICS Youth Energy Summit	held virtually on 17 August 2026 by the Ministry of Power, more than 100 participants, more than 20 youth panelists
Energy Summit priority areas	Energy Security and Sustainability; Energy Access and Equity; Technology and Innovation
Organisations that joined the Energy Summit	BRICS Youth Energy Agency, Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL), the International Solar Alliance and IRENA
2nd BRICS 2026 Tourism Working Group	Jaipur, Rajasthan, chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Tourism; the 1st TWG was held virtually on 25 May 2026
Tourism thematic priorities	Artificial Intelligence and Tourism; Sustainability and Responsible Tourism; Tourism Skilling and Capacity Building; Tourism Exchanges and Seamless Travel Facilitation
'Friends of MY Bharat'	a digital module for Indian-origin youth abroad, announced at the Gandhinagar Youth Summit, with a 'Know Your India' section

- BRICS Youth Council Meeting and BRICS Youth Summit: 19 August 2026, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, organised by the Department of Youth Affairs, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
- Youth Council deliberated a Draft Joint Declaration and a BRICS Youth Cooperation Framework
- BRICS Tourism Ministers' Meeting scheduled for 21 August 2026

BRICS Tourism Ministers Adopt Jaipur Declaration as India's 2026 Chairship Ministerials Converge

21 Aug

- The BRICS Tourism Ministers' Meeting under India's Chairship concluded in Jaipur on 21 August 2026 with the adoption by consensus of the BRICS Tourism Ministers' Communique 2026, known as the Jaipur Declaration.
- The same day saw the 12th BRICS Communications Ministers' Meeting in Pune and the 14th BRICS Science, Technology and Innovation Ministerial Meeting in Chennai, with the Youth and Sports Ministers' Meetings set for Visakhapatnam on 22 and 23 August.
- India and Brazil signed a Memorandum of Understanding on telecommunications and ICT cooperation on the sidelines of the BRICS ICT Track meeting in Pune.
- India's BRICS Chairship 2026 runs under the theme 'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability'.
- Eleven countries are now full BRICS members; the tourism meeting itself saw participation from nine member states.

QUICK FACTS

Outcome document	BRICS Tourism Ministers' Communique 2026, the Jaipur Declaration, adopted by consensus in Jaipur, Rajasthan
Chaired by	Union Minister for Culture and Tourism Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat
Participation	nine BRICS member states at the tourism meeting, with Tourism Ministers from Brazil, Iran, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates and Heads of Delegation from China, Ethiopia, Indonesia and Russia
Same-day ministerials	12th BRICS Communications Ministers' Meeting at Pune, chaired by Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia; 14th BRICS Science, Technology and Innovation Ministerial at Chennai, opened by Dr. Jitendra Singh
Upcoming	BRICS Youth Ministers' Meeting on 22 August and Sports Ministers' Meeting on 23 August 2026 at Visakhapatnam, chaired by Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, involving all 11 BRICS member countries
Bilateral outcome	India-Brazil MoU on telecommunications and ICTs, signed by Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia and Mr. Frederico de Siqueira Filho, Minister of Communications of Brazil
Chairship theme 2026	'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability'

- Four thematic priorities of the BRICS Tourism Working Group: Artificial Intelligence and Tourism; Sustainability and Responsible Tourism; Tourism Skilling and Capacity Building; and Tourism Exchanges and Seamless Travel Facilitation

11. Ranks & Reports

3 articles

UDISE+ 2025-26: 24.72 crore students, pupil-teacher ratio improves to 24:1

17 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder issued on 17 August 2026 decodes the UDISE+ 2025-26 report on Indian school education, which covers 14.67 lakh schools, 1.03 crore teachers and 24.72 crore enrolled students.
- The overall pupil-teacher ratio stands at 24:1, comfortably inside the 30:1 benchmark recommended by the National Education Policy 2020; stage-wise it ranges from 10:1 at the Foundational stage to 21:1 at the Secondary stage.
- Gross Enrolment Ratio at the Secondary stage improved to 71.7% while the Middle stage held at 89.6%; dropout fell to 1.8% (Preparatory) and 7.0% (Secondary), with the Middle stage rising marginally to 3.6%.
- Zero-enrolment schools fell 29% to 5,663 and single-teacher schools fell about 3% to 1,00,843, pointing to teacher rationalisation and school consolidation.
- Girls form 48.4% of enrolment and women 54.9% of the teaching workforce; 69.9% of schools now have computers and 67.4% have internet connectivity.

QUICK FACTS

Report	UDISE+ (Unified District Information System for Education Plus) 2025-26
Data platform run by	Department of School Education & Literacy (DoSE&L), Ministry of Education
Coverage in 2025-26	14.67 lakh schools, 1.03 crore teachers, 24.72 crore students
Average school	about 7 teachers and 169 students
Overall Pupil-Teacher Ratio	24:1, against the NEP 2020 benchmark of 30:1
Secondary stage GER	71.7%; Middle stage GER: 89.6%
Girls	48.4% of total enrolment; women: 54.9% of all teachers

- UDISE+ online data collection began in 2018-19, replacing the earlier manual UDISE system that ran from 2012-13
- The report is structured on the NEP 2020 5+3+3+4 stages, not the old primary/upper-primary classification

NITI Aayog Skilling Blueprint Clarifies 8.7 Crore NEET Youth Are Not Unemployed

25 Aug

- NITI Aayog released 'Reimagining Skilling for Viksit Bharat@2047', a blueprint for a skilling architecture aligned to the goals of a developed India by 2047.
- The report identifies five key segments of learners and workforce, one of which is NEET youth in the 15-29 age group — Not in Education, Employment or Training.
- NITI Aayog clarified that the report's figure of 8.7 crore NEET youth has been misread as a count of the unemployed. NEET refers to those NOT SEEKING employment; the unemployed form a separate category drawn from a different population base, so the figure cannot be added to the unemployment rate.
- The NEET estimate rests on the NSS 78th Round, collected in FY 2020-21 during the COVID-19 pandemic, when education and employment were disrupted; the youth NEET percentage is significantly lower in the most recent PLFS round (PLFS 2025).
- Ahead of the report's publication, the government had already begun implementing its key reforms through the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, including the Rs 600 crore Integrated Scheme in Skilling Architecture (ISSA) announced in the Union Budget 2026-27.

QUICK FACTS

Report	'Reimagining Skilling for Viksit Bharat@2047', released by NITI Aayog.
What it does	provides a blueprint for a skilling architecture aligned to the needs of Viksit Bharat.
Segments identified	five key segments of learners and workforce, including NEET youth aged 15-29.
The five NEET sub-categories used	engaged in voluntary work or a household enterprise; attending to domestic duties; unable to work due to a health condition; spending leisure time; and others.
Figure at issue	8.7 crore NEET youth — misinterpreted in some quarters as a measure of unemployment.
Data source	NSS 78th Round, collected during FY 2020-21, in the COVID-19 pandemic.
NITI Aayog's caveat	pandemic-year data may deviate from the normal trajectory; the youth NEET percentage is significantly lower in PLFS 2025.
Scheme announced ahead of the report	Integrated Scheme in Skilling Architecture (ISSA), Rs 600 crore, Union Budget 2026-27, implemented through the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
ISSA's purpose	strengthen convergence across education, skilling, employment and lifelong learning systems.
NITI Aayog	the National Institution for Transforming India, established on 1 January 2015, replacing the Planning Commission.
PLFS	introduced in 2017-18, replacing quinquennial NSSO Employment-Unemployment Surveys; from January 2025 its survey period shifted from the July-June cycle to the January-December calendar year.

– NEET expands to Not in Education, Employment or Training — and in this report covers those NOT SEEKING employment.

Higher education GER touches 30% in 2023-24; universities up 69.6% in a decade

30 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder issued on 30 August 2026 compiles a decade of All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) data, from 2014-15 to 2023-24.
- Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education rose from 23.7% in 2014-15 to 30% in 2023-24, against the National Education Policy 2020 target of 50% by 2035.
- Universities grew from 760 to 1,289 (69.6%) and total enrolment from 3.42 crore to 4.50 crore (31.5%).
- Gender Parity Index improved from 0.92 to 1.08, with female GER (31.2%) above male GER (28.9%) for the seventh consecutive year.
- OBC enrolment share rose the most among social categories, from 32.8% to 40.1%.

QUICK FACTS

Source	PIB Backgrounder, 30 August 2026, built on All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) data of the Ministry of Education.
Comparison period	2014-15 to 2023-24.
Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), higher education	23.7% (2014-15) -> 29.5% (2022-23) -> 30% (2023-24).
Universities	760 -> 1,289 (+69.6%). Colleges: 38,498 -> 48,246 (+25.3%). Standalone institutions: 12,276 -> 15,221 (about +24%).
Total enrolment	3.42 crore -> 4.50 crore (+31.5%). Teachers: 14.73 lakh -> 17.32 lakh (+2.59 lakh, about +17.6%).
NEP 2020 target	GER of 50% in higher education by 2035.

– AISHE has been conducted annually by the Ministry of Education since 2010-11; its first reference date was 30 September 2010.

12. Important Days

1 article

President to Present 22 Handloom Awards on 12th National Handloom Day

06 Aug

- The 12th National Handloom Day will be observed on 7 August 2026 at the Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre, New Delhi, with President Droupadi Murmu as Chief Guest.
- 22 awards will be conferred - 3 Sant Kabir Handloom Awards and 19 National Handloom Awards for 2025 - along with the release of four commemorative postage stamps.
- National Handloom Day was instituted in 2015 and is observed on 7 August to commemorate the launch of the Swadeshi Movement on that date in 1905.
- The Fourth All India Handloom Census 2019-20 counted 35.22 lakh handloom weavers and allied workers across 31.45 lakh households, of whom over 72 per cent are women.
- Support runs through the National Handloom Development Programme, whose interventions have raised weaver earnings sharply - electronic jacquards lifted average monthly income from Rs 9,600 to Rs 15,000.

QUICK FACTS

Occasion	12th National Handloom Day, 7 August 2026
Venue	Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre (RBCC), New Delhi
Chief Guest	President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu
Awards	22 in total - 3 Sant Kabir Handloom Awards and 19 National Handloom Awards for 2025
Union Minister of Textiles	Shri Giriraj Singh; Minister of State: Shri Pabitra Margherita
Secretary (Textiles)	Smt Neelam Shami Rao; Development Commissioner (Handlooms): Dr M. Beena
Also released	four commemorative postage stamps on India's handloom weaving traditions
Why 7 August	it marks the launch of the Swadeshi Movement in 1905; the Day itself was instituted in 2015

– Awards are instituted under the Handloom Marketing Assistance (HMA) component of the National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP)

13. State News

1 article

PM Inaugurates Rs 17,900 Crore AP Package: Airport, Semiconductor Plant, Coastal Corridor

01 Aug

- PM Modi laid the foundation stone, inaugurated and dedicated to the nation projects worth over Rs 17,900 crore in Bhogapuram, Vizianagaram district, Andhra Pradesh, on 1 August 2026, spanning aviation, semiconductors, ports and energy.
- The new Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport was inaugurated, named after the tribal freedom fighter who led the 1922-24 Rampa Rebellion in the same region; a semiconductor plant's foundation was laid in Visakhapatnam.
- The projects extend the Coastal Economic Corridor vision — modernising Visakhapatnam-to-Krishnapatnam ports and building new ports at Mulapeta and Ramayapatnam — alongside railway works worth roughly Rs 1 lakh crore in the region.

QUICK FACTS

Event	Bhogapuram, Vizianagaram district, Andhra Pradesh, 1 August 2026
Total project value	over Rs 17,900 crore (foundation-laying + inauguration + dedication combined)
New airport named	Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport, Bhogapuram
India's operational airport count	74 (2014) -> 166 (2026), per the PM's address

- Semiconductor plant foundation laid at Visakhapatnam
- Region-wide railway works underway worth ~Rs 1 lakh crore, with full electrification and 70+ station modernisation

14. History & Culture

2 articles

PIB Backgrounder Maps India's Heritage Push: 3,686 ASI Monuments, 45 UNESCO Sites

14 Aug

- A PIB Backgrounder issued for the 80th Independence Day consolidates the Government's heritage conservation record across archaeology, tourism circuits, museums, manuscripts and film preservation.
- The Archaeological Survey of India safeguards 3,686 centrally protected monuments through about 38 Circles, with Rs 374 crore allocated for conservation and maintenance in FY 2024-25.
- Tourism-side schemes report cumulative numbers: Swadesh Darshan 76 projects worth Rs 5,290.33 crore, Swadesh Darshan 2.0 53 projects worth Rs 2,208.31 crore, and PRASHAD 54 projects worth Rs 1,726.74 crore.
- 615 antiquities were retrieved from abroad in the last five years (up to 30 June 2026), and the Piprahwa relics of the Buddha returned in 2025 after 127 years.
- India now has 45 UNESCO World Heritage Sites; the Gyan Bharatam Mission for manuscripts carries an outlay of Rs 482.85 crore for 2024-31.

QUICK FACTS

Document type	PIB Backgrounder released on 14 August 2026, ahead of the 80th Independence Day.
Archaeological Survey of India	3,686 centrally protected monuments, about 38 Circles, Rs 374 crore conservation allocation in FY 2024-25, 121 archaeological project permissions issued in the last five years.
Adopt a Heritage 2.0	launched September 2023; 30 MoUs signed as of March 2026; 13.59 million visitor footfall at adopted monuments in FY 2024-25.
PRASHAD	54 projects sanctioned across 28 States and UTs (February 2026), 32 completed (December 2025), total cost Rs 1,726.74 crore.
Swadesh Darshan	15 thematic circuits, 76 projects sanctioned worth Rs 5,290.33 crore, 75 completed (March 2026).
Swadesh Darshan 2.0	destination-centric approach; 53 projects worth Rs 2,208.31 crore. Challenge Based Destination Development (introduced March 2024): 38 projects worth Rs 697.94 crore.
National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities	1.84 lakh monuments and 17.20 lakh antiquities documented as of March 2026.
Repatriation	615 antiquities retrieved in the last five years up to 30 June 2026; Piprahwa relics returned in 2025 after 127 years; Annapurna idol returned from Canada in 2021 after 108 years.
Gyan Bharatam Mission	launched 2025, outlay Rs 482.85 crore for 2024-31; National Manuscript Survey launched March 2026 has reported more than 1.19 crore manuscripts.

- India has 45 UNESCO World Heritage Sites and hosted the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee in New Delhi in 2024.

Sarnath Becomes India's 45th UNESCO World Heritage Site

26 Aug

- The Ancient Buddhist Site of Sarnath in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List on 25 July 2026 at the 48th Session of the World Heritage Committee held in Busan, South Korea.
- It is India's 45th World Heritage property, taking the country's tally to 37 cultural, 7 natural and 1 mixed site — sixth in the world and second in the Asia-Pacific region.
- The inscribed property has two components: the Chaukhandi Stupa, and the Archaeological Remains of Sarnath, which include the Dhamek Stupa, Dharmarajika Stupa, Mulagandhakuti Vihara and the Ashokan Pillar.
- Sarnath was nominated under criteria (iii) and (vi) — enduring spiritual significance as one of the four principal Buddhist pilgrimage destinations, and direct association with the Buddha's first sermon.
- The site had been on India's Tentative List since 1998; the nomination dossier went to the Committee in January 2025, followed by an eighteen-month process including an ICOMOS evaluation mission.

QUICK FACTS

Property inscribed	Ancient Buddhist Site of Sarnath, Varanasi district, Uttar Pradesh
Date and forum	25 July 2026, 48th Session of the World Heritage Committee, Busan, Republic of Korea
India's tally	45 properties — 37 cultural, 7 natural, 1 mixed
India's position	6th globally, 2nd in the Asia-Pacific region
Criteria used	(iii) and (vi) of the World Heritage Convention
Two components	Chaukhandi Stupa + Archaeological Remains of Sarnath
Advisory body that evaluated it	ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites)

- On India's Tentative List since 1998; nomination submitted January 2025
- World Heritage List size as of July 2026: 1,273 properties across 173 countries — 991 cultural, 240 natural, 42 mixed
- States Parties to the 1972 Convention as of October 2024: 196
- India's Tentative List now stands at 69 properties