CURRENT AFFAIRS PULSE

July 2026

UPSC EDITION

Monthly PIB Compilation

Compiled from Press Information Bureau releases, Government of India

93	15	31
KEY ARTICLES	CATEGORIES	DAYS COVERED

INSIDE THIS EDITION

National	1
International	4
Economy	14
Banking & Finance	4
Polity & Governance	8
Defence	1
Science & Tech	15
Environment	8
Schemes & Committees	26
Agreements & MoUs	3
Ranks & Reports	4
Awards & Honours	1
Sports	2
Important Days	1
History & Culture	1

HIGHLIGHTS

NATIONAL — 29 Jul | p. 3
India Reports Zero Left Wing Extremism-Affected Districts After Decades of Insurgency

INTERNATIONAL — 02 Jul | p. 4
16th India-Japan Annual Summit: Economic Security Declaration, 16 Outcomes on Takaichi's First Visit

ECONOMY — 07 Jul | p. 7
Kamarajar Port Becomes Second Major Port with 18-Metre Draft, Can Handle Laden Capesize Ships

BANKING & FINANCE — 16 Jul | p. 17
Rural Credit Backgrounder: GLC Target Rs 32.50 Lakh Crore, 28 RRBs, KCC Interest-Subvention Limit Now Rs 5 Lakh

POLITY & GOVERNANCE — 03 Jul | p. 20
16th Finance Commission: Rs 4.35 lakh crore for Rural Local Bodies, 2026-31

DEFENCE — 23 Jul | p. 24
DRDO Successfully Conducts Maiden Flight-Test of 'Kusha' Long-Range Surface-to-Air Missile

Contents

#	Category	Articles	Page
1	National	1 article	3
2	International	4 articles	4
3	Economy	14 articles	7
4	Banking & Finance	4 articles	17
5	Polity & Governance	8 articles	20
6	Defence	1 article	24
7	Science & Tech	15 articles	25
8	Environment	8 articles	34
9	Schemes & Committees	26 articles	39
10	Agreements & MoUs	3 articles	52
11	Ranks & Reports	4 articles	54
12	Awards & Honours	1 article	57
13	Sports	2 articles	61
14	Important Days	1 article	62
15	History & Culture	1 article	63

Tap a category to jump to it.

1. National

1 article

India Reports Zero Left Wing Extremism-Affected Districts After Decades of Insurgency

29 Jul

- No district in India is currently categorised as LWE-affected; the count fell from 126 districts to 90 (April 2018), 70 (July 2021), 38 (April 2024), 8 (December 2025) and to zero (March/April 2026).
- 37 districts are now classed 'Legacy & Thrust' districts requiring continued support, and 1 remains a 'District of Concern'.
- The decline is attributed to the 'National Policy and Action Plan to Address LWE' (2015) and the SAMADHAN doctrine (2017), combining security, development and community-rights measures.
- Rs 3,805.04 crore has been released to LWE-affected states since 2014-15 under the Security Related Expenditure (SRE) Scheme.
- Information was given by MoS Home Nityanand Rai in a written Rajya Sabha reply.

QUICK FACTS

- LWE-affected districts fell from 126 to 90 (Apr 2018) -> 70 (Jul 2021) -> 38 (Apr 2024) -> 8 (Dec 2025) -> zero (Mar/Apr 2026)
- 37 districts now classed 'Legacy & Thrust'; 1 district classed 'District of Concern'
- National Policy and Action Plan to Address LWE approved in 2015; SAMADHAN doctrine launched in 2017
- Rs 3,805.04 crore released to states since 2014-15 under the Security Related Expenditure (SRE) Scheme
- 663 Fortified Police Stations built; 15,189 km of roads constructed under LWE-specific road schemes

2. International

4 articles

16th India-Japan Annual Summit: Economic Security Declaration, 16 Outcomes on Takaichi's First Visit

02 Jul

- The 16th India-Japan Annual Summit was held in New Delhi during Japanese PM Sanae Takaichi's first official visit to India (1-3 July 2026) and produced 16 outcomes, headed by an India-Japan Joint Declaration on Economic Security Cooperation.
- 2027, the 75th anniversary of India-Japan diplomatic relations, will be celebrated as the India-Japan Year of Shared Horizons.
- Memoranda of Cooperation covered biogas (1,000 plants through dairy cooperatives under the Cooperative Biogas for Growth Initiative), batteries, pharmaceuticals and medical devices, mineral exploration and the Next Generation Mobility Partnership.
- Defence: agreement in principle on the UNICORN naval radio antenna, the first India-Japan defence co-development project; the 4th 2+2 Ministerial Meeting is to be held in Tokyo by end-2026.
- Japan backed India's membership of the International Energy Agency and India's bid to host the 4th UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2030.

QUICK FACTS

Edition	16th India-Japan Annual Summit; the 15th was held in Tokyo on 29-30 August 2025 with then PM Shigeru Ishiba.
Sanae Takaichi	Japan's first woman Prime Minister, in office since 21 October 2025; born in Nara Prefecture.
Nara	Japan's capital (Heijo-kyo) from 710; its temples, including Todai-ji with the bronze Great Buddha, are the UNESCO World Heritage site 'Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara' (1998).
Relationship upgrades	Global Partnership (2000), Strategic and Global Partnership (2006), Special Strategic and Global Partnership (September 2014, Modi-Abe summit in Tokyo). Annual summits held since 2006.
Three priority areas agreed	defence and security; economic partnership (economic security, energy resilience, technology, innovation); people-to-people exchanges.
Investment goal	10 trillion yen of Japanese private investment over ten years (set at the 15th Summit) and double the number of Japanese companies in India.
UN	both are G4 members backing each other for permanent UNSC seats; mutual support agreed for non-permanent seat bids for the 2028-29 and 2033-34 terms.

– Visitors between the two countries crossed 540,000 in 2025.

India-Indonesia State Visit: BrahMos Pact, IIM Bangalore Campus, ONDC-Based Network

07 Jul

- Indonesia conferred the Bintang Adipurna, its highest civilian honour, on PM Modi during his State Visit (6-8 July 2026); Modi also became the first Indian PM to address the Indonesian Parliament.
- 14 MoUs/agreements were exchanged, including Cooperation on the BrahMos Missile System, an Air-to-Air Missile Cooperation Agreement and a SAIL-Krakatau Steel stainless-steel slab joint venture.
- IIM Bangalore will set up its first international campus at Singhasari SEZ, Malang; Indonesia Open Network (ION) was launched on India's ONDC architecture.
- 2026-27 declared the 'Tagore-Dewantara Year', marking the centenary of Tagore's 1927 visit to Indonesia; India will restore the Prambanan Temple Compounds.

QUICK FACTS

Visit	State Visit to Indonesia, 6-8 July 2026, at the invitation of President Prabowo Subianto; official talks at Istana Merdeka, Jakarta, on 7 July.
Previous leg	Prabowo was Chief Guest at India's 76th Republic Day (State Visit, 23-26 January 2025).
Outcome count	14 MoUs/agreements and 6 announcements.
Honour	Bintang Adipurna — Indonesia's highest civilian honour, instituted 1959; highest class of the Star of the Republic of Indonesia. Reported as Modi's 33rd international honour; he is the second Indian PM to receive it, after Jawaharlal Nehru.

- First Indian PM to address the Indonesian Parliament (Speaker of the House: Puan Maharani).
- Modi proposed a 'Ganga-Mahakam Vision' for ties; Viksit Bharat 2047 paired with 'Indonesia Emas 2045'.
- Indonesia backed India's BRICS Presidency 2026; Modi cited India's MAHASAGAR vision for the Indian Ocean.
- Indonesia intends to join India's International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA).

Third India-Australia Annual Summit in Melbourne yields 18 outcomes, uranium deal operationalised

09 Jul

- The Third India-Australia Annual Summit was held in Melbourne on 9 July 2026 between PM Narendra Modi and PM Anthony Albanese, producing 18 listed outcomes.
- The Administrative Arrangement under the 2014 India-Australia Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement was finalised, enabling long-term Australian uranium exports to India under IAEA safeguards.
- Both sides adopted a Joint Declaration on Defence and Security Cooperation (replacing the 2009 declaration), a Joint Statement on Energy Security and the PACTS technology partnership.
- UGC issued a Letter of Intent to Flinders University (Bengaluru campus) and a Letter of Approval to Victoria University (Gurugram campus); three Tamil Nadu antiquities are to be returned.
- Leaders reaffirmed an early conclusion of the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA), building on the 2022 ECTA.

QUICK FACTS

Event	Third India-Australia Annual Summit, Melbourne, 9 July 2026 (PM Modi's visit: 8-10 July 2026)
Leaders	PM Narendra Modi and Australian PM Anthony Albanese; PM also met Governor-General Sam Mostyn
Earlier summits	1st in New Delhi (10 March 2023); 2nd on the margins of the G20, Rio de Janeiro (19 November 2024)
Outcomes	18, spanning defence, maritime security, civil nuclear, energy, technology, skills, education and culture
New mechanism	an Annual Defence Ministers' Dialogue

- Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) completed six years; it was set up at the 4 June 2020 Leaders' Virtual Summit
- Australia to give $10 million for the Centre for Australia-India Relations' Maitri grants
- Indian community is now Australia's largest overseas-born group (about a million people of Indian origin)

India and New Zealand Become Strategic Partners, Adopt Roadmap to 2030

11 Jul

- India and New Zealand elevated their ties to a 'Strategic Partnership' and endorsed the 'Roadmap to 2030' during PM Narendra Modi's visit to Auckland on 10-11 July 2026 — the first by an Indian Prime Minister in 40 years.
- The two sides set a goal of doubling two-way trade in goods and services to NZ$7 billion (about Rs 35,000 crore) by 2030, and agreed to bring the India-New Zealand FTA (signed 27 April 2026) into force early.
- Ten documents were signed, including a Maritime Cooperation Arrangement, a Mutual Logistics Support Arrangement and an arrangement setting up a Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism.
- New Zealand joined the Global Biofuels Alliance and chose Maritime Security, focused on IUU fishing, as its priority pillar under India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative.

QUICK FACTS

Visit	PM Modi in Auckland, 10-11 July 2026, hosted by NZ Prime Minister Christopher Luxon.
Trade target	NZ$7 billion (Rs 35,000 crore) two-way trade by 2030, double the current level.
India-NZ FTA	talks launched 16 March 2025 during Luxon's India visit, concluded 22 December 2025, signed 27 April 2026.
New mechanisms	a regular Foreign Ministers' Dialogue, an annual Maritime Security Dialogue (MEA with NZ's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade) and a JWG on Counter-Terrorism.

- The last Indian PM to visit New Zealand before this was Rajiv Gandhi (October 1986); Indira Gandhi visited in 1968.
- Relationship upgraded to a Strategic Partnership; the Roadmap to 2030 has six pillars and creates no financial or legally binding obligations.
- Under the FTA's Agricultural Productivity Partnership: a Kiwifruit Action Plan and two kiwifruit Centres of Excellence, in Nagaland and Uttarakhand.
- New Zealand reaffirmed support for India's permanent seat on a reformed UN Security Council and acknowledged the value of India joining the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

OUTCOMES OF THE VISIT

Outcome	Parties / what it does
Documents signed (10)	
Memorandum of Arrangement on Maritime Cooperation	MoD India and NZ Defence Force; dialogue, information exchange, joint activities in the Indo-Pacific
Implementation Arrangement on Hydrography and Nautical Cartography	Joint navigational charts, hydrographic data sharing, training
Mutual Logistics Support Arrangement	Indian Navy and NZ Defence Force; reciprocal logistics during approved activities
Arrangement on a Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism	Led by MEA and NZ MFAT
Memorandum of Cooperation on disaster management	NDMA (India) and National Emergency Management Agency (NZ); earthquake, tsunami, coastal hazards
Memorandum of Cooperation on Animal Husbandry and Dairying	Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying and NZ Ministry for Primary Industries
Memorandum of Arrangement on Tourism	Ministry of Tourism and NZ Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
India-New Zealand Joint Action Plan on Sport	Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and Sport New Zealand
Memorandum of Arrangement on NMHC, Lothal	National Maritime Heritage Complex and New Zealand Maritime Museum
Arrangement on Cultural Cooperation	Ministry of Culture and NZ Ministry for Culture and Heritage
Announcements (8)	
Strategic Partnership and Roadmap to 2030	Six pillars, reviewed by ministers and senior officials
Trade target	NZ$7 billion (Rs 35,000 crore) by 2030
Maritime Security Dialogue	Annual, MEA and NZ MFAT
IPOI pillar	NZ nominates Maritime Security, focused on IUU fishing
Global Biofuels Alliance	New Zealand joins
Kiwifruit Action Plan	Two Centres of Excellence, Nagaland and Uttarakhand
NCPOR (Goa) and University of Canterbury MoU	Antarctic research collaboration
NIFTEM-Kundli and Massey University MoU	Food-technology research and student mobility

Source: PIB, List of Outcomes (PRID 2283528). Complete list.

3. Economy

14 articles

Kamarajar Port Becomes Second Major Port with 18-Metre Draft, Can Handle Laden Capesize Ships

07 Jul

- Kamarajar Port (Ennore, Tamil Nadu) is now India's second Major Port with an 18-metre draft, after Visakhapatnam, following completion of Capital Dredging Phase VI.
- The Rs 440 crore project deepened the outer approach channel from 20 m to 23 m and the inner entrance channel from 19 m to 22 m.
- The port can now take fully laden Capesize vessels with cargo parcels of up to 1,70,000 DWT, making it 'Cape Compliant'.
- Kamarajar Port Limited is India's only corporatised Major Port, run as a company and a subsidiary of Chennai Port.

QUICK FACTS

Benefits cited	larger ships, lower freight per tonne through economies of scale, and more bulk cargo capacity for EXIM trade.

- Kamarajar Port, formerly Ennore Port, lies on the Coromandel Coast about 18 km north of Chennai Port. It is India's 12th Major Port.
- Declared a Major Port under the Indian Ports Act, 1908 in March 1999, and incorporated as Ennore Port Limited under the Companies Act, 1956 in October 1999.
- It is the only corporatised Major Port. Chennai Port acquired the Centre's stake in March 2020, making KPL its subsidiary.
- New operational draft is 18.0 m. The port was the first Major Port with 18 m draft after Visakhapatnam.
- It can now handle fully laden Capesize vessels of up to 1,70,000 DWT.

Letters of Authorisation open high-seas fishing to Indian vessels; Odisha Deep Sea Fishing Mission launched

09 Jul

- Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan launched the national programme of Letters of Authorisation (LoA) for high-seas fishing by Indian-flagged vessels at Bhubaneswar on 9 July 2026, and released the Odisha Deep Sea Fishing Mission (2026-2036) document.
- The LoA is mandatory under the Guidelines for Sustainable Harnessing of Fisheries in the High Seas by Indian-Flagged Fishing Vessels, 2025; it is vessel-specific, non-transferable and issued online through the ReALCraft portal.
- First LoAs went to fisheries cooperatives including National Cooperative Exports Limited (NCEL) and to FFPOs; cooperatives and FFPOs get priority under the framework.
- LoA vessels must follow the conservation measures of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs), such as the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, including catch limits and FAD management.
- Seafood exports hit a record Rs 73,891 crore in 2025-26; the Union Budget 2026-27 made EEZ and high-seas catch by Indian vessels duty-free and treats foreign-port landings as exports.

QUICK FACTS

Event	national launch of Letters of Authorisation (LoA) for Sustainable Harnessing of Fisheries in the High Seas, Bhubaneswar, 9 July 2026
Launched by	Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan; organised by the Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying
Legal basis	LoA is mandatory under the High Seas Fisheries Guidelines, 2025 (notified 9 December 2025)
LoA features	vessel-specific, non-transferable, fully online, real-time tracking, linked to the ReALCraft registration portal
Recipients	cooperatives incl. NCEL, Paradeep Marine Primary Fish Production & Marketing Co-op, Malpe Fishermen's Primary Co-op, Thengapattanam Deep Sea Fish Producers Co-op, plus FFPOs and vessel owners
Target resource	tuna and tuna-like species
Budget link	Union Budget 2025-26 announced the EEZ and High Seas framework
India	over 11,000 km coastline, EEZ of nearly 24 lakh sq km, world's second-largest fish producer (~8% of global output), ~3 crore fishers and fish farmers

CPI Inflation Rises to 4.38% in June 2026; Food Inflation at 5.32%

13 Jul

- All-India CPI inflation (base 2024=100) for June 2026 was 4.38% (provisional), up from 3.93% in May; rural 4.74%, urban 3.92%
- Food inflation measured by the Consumer Food Price Index (CFPI) rose to 5.32% (rural 5.45%, urban 5.09%); housing inflation was 2.10%
- Headline inflation has risen every month of 2026, from 2.74% in January, but stays inside the RBI's 2-6% tolerance band around the 4% target
- Telangana (6.36%) had the highest inflation among major states; silver jewellery (133.21%) and potato (-20.34%) were the extreme items
- Released by the National Statistics Office (NSO), MoSPI; July 2026 CPI is due on 12 August 2026

QUICK FACTS

June 2026 CPI inflation	4.38% combined (provisional); rural 4.74%, urban 3.92%
May 2026 (final)	3.93% combined; rural 4.25%, urban 3.53%
CFPI (food) inflation	5.32% in June vs 4.78% in May
Housing inflation	2.10% (rural 2.66%, urban 1.90%)
All-India CPI (General) index for June 2026	107.00 (2024=100)
CFPI	released for rural, urban and combined sectors since May 2014

- Released by the National Statistics Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation, on 13 July 2026
- Prices from 1,407 urban markets (including online) and 1,465 villages, collected by the Field Operations Division of NSO; response rate 100%
- Petrol, diesel and LPG prices are taken as on the 15th of each month
- State and item-wise indices are published on MoSPI's eSankhyiki portal

STATE/UT-WISE CPI INFLATION, JUNE 2026 (PROVISIONAL)

State/UT	Rural	Urban	Combined
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	6.42	3.67	5.08
Andhra Pradesh	5.71	4.89	5.39
Arunachal Pradesh	2.33	2.87	2.47
Assam	3.93	2.26	3.59
Bihar	3.38	2.67	3.28
Chandigarh	-	4.26	4.26
Chhattisgarh	4.44	2.89	3.91
Goa	2.58	3.39	3.10

State/UT	Rural	Urban	Combined
Gujarat	4.39	3.74	4.01
Haryana	4.12	3.49	3.81
Himachal Pradesh	3.12	4.48	3.33
Jammu and Kashmir	3.50	3.38	3.47
Jharkhand	4.65	3.59	4.29
Karnataka	5.25	4.34	4.80
Kerala	5.07	3.74	4.34
Ladakh	4.16	3.64	4.03
Lakshadweep	2.65	3.39	3.19
Madhya Pradesh	5.26	4.82	5.09
Maharashtra	4.79	3.18	3.81
Manipur	3.23	2.33	2.94
Meghalaya	2.70	2.46	2.64
Mizoram	1.88	1.43	1.63
Nagaland	2.87	2.76	2.83
NCT of Delhi	3.92	2.94	2.96
Odisha	5.40	4.47	5.15
Puducherry	6.05	5.10	5.39
Punjab	4.25	3.34	3.83
Rajasthan	5.09	3.98	4.70
Sikkim	4.61	4.27	4.49
Tamil Nadu	5.49	5.05	5.24
Telangana	6.94	5.94	6.36
Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	4.68	4.11	4.25
Tripura	1.46	2.27	1.65
Uttar Pradesh	4.94	3.75	4.56
Uttarakhand	4.60	3.32	4.13
West Bengal	4.38	3.42	3.95
All India	4.74	3.92	4.38

Source: MoSPI release, Annexure III. Chandigarh has no rural market. Top five among states with population above 50 lakh (Census 2011): Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh. Lowest: Mizoram 1.63%, Tripura 1.65%.

MoSPI Releases India's First Index of Services Production for 19 Sub-Sectors

14 Jul

- MoSPI released India's first Index of Services Production (ISP), a trial sub-sectoral index with base year 2024-25, for April 2026. It covers 19 sub-sectors, about 60% of the services sector.
- It is India's first high-frequency indicator dedicated to services output. It will be released on the 29th of every month with a lag of about 60 days; an overall ISP will follow later.
- In April 2026, 14 of the 19 sub-sectors grew in double digits. Accommodation and food led (37.2%), followed by retail trade (30.8%); air transport (-13.9%) and railway transport (-0.4%) contracted.
- The index covers formal-sector enterprises only and uses GST data for statistics for the first time, along with administrative data and ASISSE weights.

QUICK FACTS

Released by	Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI); first data for April 2026
Coverage	19 sub-sectors, about 60% of services, formal-sector enterprises only. Scope follows Sections G to V of NIC 2025
Frequency	monthly, released on the 29th (or the next working day), lag of about 60 days
Status	trial, experimental series; the Railways, Banking and Insurance indices are revised annually
Framework	Technical Advisory Committee on ISP (TAC-ISP), constituted May 2025, chaired by Debjani Ghosh (Distinguished Fellow, NITI Aayog); its report was released on 7 July 2026
International reference	OECD Compilation Manual for ISP (2007); Eurostat
Excluded	public administration and defence, government health and education, central-bank and other non-bank financial activities, household employers, gambling and other non-market or informal activities

– Base year 2024-25, aligned with the new CPI series (base 2024)

FIRST ISP: APRIL 2026 OVER APRIL 2025

Sub-sector	Apr 2025	Apr 2026	Growth
Accommodation and food	100.7	138.14	37.2%
Retail trade	105.1	137.50	30.8%
Administrative and support services	93.6	120.37	28.7%
Real estate	93.8	119.76	27.7%
Telecommunications	96.9	118.94	22.8%
Repair services	100.6	119.93	19.2%
Road transport	93.1	110.34	18.5%
Warehousing and transport support	95.6	112.97	18.2%
Professional, scientific and technical (incl. R&D)	91.2	106.26	16.5%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	109.6	127.53	16.4%
Insurance	95.9	110.88	15.6%
Wholesale trade	104.0	119.87	15.3%
IT and computer-related services	97.4	112.16	15.2%
Banking	106.9	119.88	12.2%
Water transport	99.2	104.87	5.7%
Postal and courier	96.1	99.25	3.3%
Information and broadcasting	111.2	113.95	2.5%
Railway transport	100.0	99.59	-0.4%
Air transport	104.5	89.90	-13.9%

Source: MoSPI release, 14 July 2026. For 2025-26 as a whole, the fastest-growing sub-sectors were accommodation and food (35.6%), retail trade (30.5%), repair services (25.1%), wholesale trade (23.6%) and road transport (22.6%).

CCEA Approves National Investment Policy for Urea-2026 (NIPU-2026), Successor to NIP-2012

15 Jul

- The CCEA approved the National Investment Policy for Urea-2026 for Atmanirbhar Bharat (NIPU-2026), proposed by the Department of Fertilizers, to attract investment in new gas-based urea plants.
- NIPU-2026 separates fixed and variable costs, sets a Return on Equity band of 12% to 16%, and converts fixed cost into rupees after four years to cut foreign-exchange risk.
- The changes are estimated to save over Rs 250 crore per plant compared with NIP-2012.
- NIP-2012 produced 6 new urea units (4 PSU joint ventures, 2 private); its investment window closed in October 2019.
- India has 33 operating urea units with 269.42 LMT capacity, and imports cover the gap between output and demand.

QUICK FACTS

Approved by	Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by the Prime Minister, 15 July 2026.
Proposal of	Department of Fertilizers, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.
Covers	all new gas-based urea manufacturing units set up from now on.
RoE band	floor 12%, ceiling 16%.
Currency risk	fixed cost converted into INR after four years at the prevailing exchange rate.
Estimated saving	over Rs 250 crore per plant versus NIP-2012.
Existing base	33 operational urea units, reassessed/installed capacity 269.42 LMT.

- Urea price to farmers is statutorily fixed at Rs 242 per 45 kg bag (excluding neem-coating charges and taxes).

Index of Core Industries Rebased to 2022-23; Iron Ore Added as Ninth Industry

20 Jul

- The Index of Core Industries (ICI) has moved to base year 2022-23 from 2011-12, and iron ore has been added — core industries now number nine, not eight.
- Electricity carries the highest weight in the new series (30.932), followed by refinery products (22.572) and steel (17.584).
- ICI grew 5.0% in June 2026 (provisional), led by iron ore (43.9%); April-June 2026 growth was 3.6%.
- The old 2011-12 series is discontinued; the index will now be released on the 20th of the following month.

QUICK FACTS

Compiled by	Office of Economic Adviser (OEA), Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce & Industry
New base year	2022-23 (replaces 2011-12); back series available from April 2023
New entrant	iron ore — core industries rise from 8 to 9
Coal	only raw coal retained; washed coal and coal middlings dropped to avoid double counting
Linking factor (old to new, overall index)	1.47
Release date	20th of the following month (old series: last working day of the next month); July 2026 data due 20 August 2026

- Steel index now uses gross production (earlier net), matching the IIP
- Weights derived from the IIP 2022-23 item weights, rescaled to 100

WEIGHTS: OLD VS NEW SERIES

Sector	Weight, base 2011-12 (%)	Weight, base 2022-23 (%)	June 2026 YoY growth (%)
Electricity	19.85	30.932	9.8
Refinery products	28.04	22.572	-4.7
Steel	17.92	17.584	4.6
Crude oil	8.98	7.43	-4.2
Coal	10.33	5.596	1.4
Iron ore	not included	4.905	43.9
Cement	5.37	4.41	9.8
Natural gas	6.88	3.841	-7.4
Fertilizers	2.63	2.731	-3.3
Overall	100	100	5.0

Source: PIB release of 20 July 2026 (new weights and June 2026 growth); old weights from the OEA 2011-12 series. June 2026 figures are provisional.

India's Cotton Sector: 290.91 Lakh Bales in 2025-26, Mission Targets 498 Lakh by 2031

20 Jul

- India's cotton output was 290.91 lakh bales (4.95 million tonnes) in 2025-26 (provisional), against domestic consumption of 328 lakh bales.
- The Mission for Cotton Productivity (Rs 5,659.22 crore, 2026-27 to 2030-31) targets 498 lakh bales by 2031, covering 140 districts in 14 states.
- MSP for 2026-27 is Rs 8,267/quintal (medium staple) and Rs 8,667/quintal (long staple); CCI bought 105.09 lakh bales at MSP in 2025-26.
- India is the only country growing all four cultivated cotton species and ranks first in cotton area.

QUICK FACTS

India	1st in cotton area (114.84 lakh ha, ~38% of world), 2nd in production and consumption
Only country cultivating all four species	G. arboreum and G. herbaceum (Asian/desi), G. barbadense (Egyptian), G. hirsutum (American upland)
Production 2024-25	297.24 lakh bales; 2025-26 (provisional): 290.91 lakh bales
Zones	North (Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan), Central (Gujarat, Maharashtra, MP), South (Telangana, AP, Karnataka)

- G. hirsutum accounts for ~90% of hybrid cotton; all Bt hybrids in India belong to it
- About 62% of cotton is rain-fed; 1 bale = 170 kg
- Cotton season runs October to September
- Ahmedabad is called the 'Manchester of India'

Maritime India Vision 2030 progress: waterway targets beaten, port capacity at 2,818 MTPA; no Major Port privatised

21 Jul

- Port capacity reached 2,818 million tonnes and cargo throughput 1,668 MT in 2025-26, against Maritime India Vision (MIV) 2030 targets of 3,500 and 2,200.
- Two MIV 2030 targets are already surpassed — 32 operational National Waterways (target 16) and 218.24 MT inland waterway throughput (target 200); India stays 1st in ship recycling.
- Sagarmala, a central sector scheme with five pillars, has completed 79 projects (Rs 5,374.5 crore) with 54 under implementation; Maharashtra leads with 21 completed.
- No Major Port has been privatised: 11 of the 12 are governed by the Major Port Authorities Act, 2021; Kamarajar Port is a Companies Act company wholly owned by Chennai Port Authority.
- JNPA, Mundra and Pipavav rank in the top 30 of the World Bank's Container Port Performance Index 2025.

QUICK FACTS

Source	three Rajya Sabha written replies by Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, 21 July 2026
Major Ports' cargo via PPP	~44% (2013-14) -> 66% (2025-26); MIV target 85%
Renewable energy share at Major Ports	<1% -> 28%; target 60%
Infrastructure status notified 19 Sept 2025	Indian-flagged vessels of 10,000 GT+, India-built vessels of 1,500 GT+
Ship recycling	115 HKC-compliant yards at Alang, Gujarat; Rs 53.5 crore from the Ferrous Scrap Development Fund to 109 yards
Shipbreaking Credit Note	40% of scrap value, usable for up to 5% of a new India-built ship's price
Cruise	terminals at Visakhapatnam (2023), Mumbai (2025), Chennai (2026); cabotage waived for foreign cruise ships; e-Group Visit Visa
Port connectivity	294 rail-road projects — 84 done, 66 under way, 144 at planning
Skilling	92,697 trained in three years; Indian Ship Technology Centre set up as a Section 8 company; skilling pact with Korea's KOICA

- Fleet acquisition plan of 400+ vessels to give Indian shipyards order visibility
- Coastal Cargo Promotion Scheme (Budget 2026-27): raise inland waterway + coastal shipping share from 6% to 12% by 2047

MIV 2030 — ACHIEVEMENT VS TARGET

Parameter	2013-14	2025-26	Target 2030
Port capacity (MTPA)	1,400	2,818	3,500
Cargo throughput (MMT)	972	1,668	2,200
% Major Port cargo via PPP	~44%	66%	85%
Operational National Waterways	3	32	16
Inland waterway throughput (MT)	18	218.24	200
Cruise calls	102	224	1,000
Ship recycling rank	1st	1st	1st
Renewable energy share at Major Ports	<1%	28%	60%

Source: MoPSW Rajya Sabha reply, 21 July 2026 (Table I).

THE 12 MAJOR PORTS

Major Port	State	Revenue FY26 (Rs crore)
Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority	Maharashtra	4,356.34
Deendayal Port Authority (Kandla)	Gujarat	3,437.25
Mumbai Port Authority	Maharashtra	3,318.74
Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port Authority (Kolkata)	West Bengal	3,126.43
Paradip Port Authority	Odisha	2,893.62
Visakhapatnam Port Authority	Andhra Pradesh	2,585.85
Chennai Port Authority	Tamil Nadu	1,516.47
Kamarajar Port Limited (Ennore)	Tamil Nadu	1,272.13
V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority (Thoothukudi)	Tamil Nadu	1,254.96
New Mangalore Port Authority	Karnataka	1,121.88
Cochin Port Authority	Kerala	1,091.15
Mormugao Port Authority	Goa	607.95
Total	—	26,582.77

Revenue from MoPSW reply (Annexure-B); total rose from Rs 17,671.49 crore in FY 2021-22. Kamarajar is the only Major Port run as a company.

Indian Railways Commissions Kavach 4.0; Major Safety Upgrades Slash Accidents

22 Jul

- Indian Railways has successfully commissioned the advanced Kavach 4.0 system on 2,490 route kilometers along the Delhi-Mumbai and Delhi-Howrah corridors.
- Consequential train accidents have dropped dramatically by 88%, from 135 in 2014-15 to just 16 in 2025-26.
- Major infrastructure upgrades include the elimination of all unmanned level crossings on broad gauge and the extensive rollout of LHB coaches.

QUICK FACTS

Technology	Kavach 4.0 (Indigenously developed Automatic Train Protection system)
Certification	SIL-4 (highest level of Safety Integrity Level certification)
Approval Date	Kavach 4.0 approved by RDSO on 16.07.2024
Budget Allocation (2026-27)	Rs. 2,066.24 crore for Kavach works
Electronic Interlocking	Provided at 6,671 stations (as of June 2026)
LHB Coach Production	Increased 21 times, reaching 49,366 coaches manufactured during 2014-26

Grid Storage Push: India's BESS, PSP Capacity Targets Under National Electricity Plan

27 Jul

- The Minister of State for Power told the Rajya Sabha that India's Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) capacity requirement is projected to rise from 8.68 GW/34 GWh by 2026-27 to 47.24 GW/236 GWh by 2031-32, per the National Electricity Plan (Generation) notified in May 2023, entailing an estimated investment of about Rs 3.49 lakh crore by 2031-32.
- Pumped Storage Plant (PSP) capacity requirement is projected to rise from 7.45 GW/47 GWh by 2026-27 to 26.69 GW/175 GWh by 2031-32, with an estimated investment of about Rs 1.29 lakh crore by 2031-32.
- The reply listed 18 policy, regulatory, demand-side and supply-side measures taken since 2022 to promote energy storage — including ISTS charge waivers, CERC-enabled ancillary-services access for storage, and the Rs 18,100-crore PLI scheme for Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) battery manufacturing.

QUICK FACTS

PSP capacity requirement	7.45 GW/47 GWh by 2026-27 -> 26.69 GW/175 GWh by 2031-32; estimated investment ~Rs 1.29 lakh crore by 2031-32
Nodal ministry	Ministry of Power; technical planning body: Central Electricity Authority (CEA); regulator: Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC)
NITI Aayog's 'Sectoral Insights	Power (Vol. 7)', released February 2026, flagged energy storage as critical for managing renewable energy (RE) integration variability

- BESS capacity requirement (National Electricity Plan-Generation, notified May 2023): 8.68 GW/34 GWh by 2026-27 -> 47.24 GW/236 GWh by 2031-32; estimated investment ~Rs 3.49 lakh crore by 2031-32
- National Framework for Promotion of Energy Storage Systems notified by the Ministry of Power in September 2023
- PLI Scheme for Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage: Rs 18,100 crore outlay, approved May 2021 by the Ministry of Heavy Industries, targeting 50 GWh of domestic manufacturing capacity
- Information given by the Minister of State in the Ministry of Power, Shri Shripad Naik, in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha

IIP Growth Accelerates to 7.3% in June 2026, Led by Electrical Equipment and Auto

28 Jul

- India's Index of Industrial Production (IIP) grew 7.3% year-on-year in June 2026 (Quick Estimate), up from 5.1% in May 2026, driven by 7.8% growth in Manufacturing and 10.6% in Electricity & Gas Supply.
- The IIP stands at 123.1 (Base 2022-23=100), against 114.7 in June 2025; Mining & Quarrying grew a modest 1.0%, while Water Supply/Sewerage/Waste Management grew 6.1%.
- 19 of 23 NIC-2-digit manufacturing industry groups recorded positive growth; the top contributors were Electrical Equipment (34.0%), Motor Vehicles/Trailers (17.5%), and Food Products (10.8%).
- By Use-Based Classification, Capital Goods led growth at 14.2%, followed by Intermediate Goods (9.3%) and Consumer Durables (7.7%); the next IIP release (July 2026 data) is due 28 August 2026.

QUICK FACTS

IIP June 2026	7.3% YoY growth (Quick Estimate); index level 123.1 (Base 2022-23=100), vs 114.7 in June 2025
Sectoral growth	Manufacturing 7.8%, Electricity & Gas Supply 10.6%, Water Supply/Sewerage/Waste Mgmt 6.1%, Mining & Quarrying 1.0%

- IIP is released on the 28th of every month (or next working day), compiled by MoSPI from source-agency data on factories/establishments
- New IIP series with base year 2022-23 covers 1,042 items in 463 item groups; Manufacturing weight 76.062%, Mining 11.053%, Electricity & Gas 10.865%, Water Supply etc. 2.020%

India's Exports Scale Record $863.1 Billion in FY2025-26 on FTA Trade

28 Jul

- India recorded highest-ever exports in FY2025-26 at $863.1 billion — merchandise $441.8bn + services $421.3bn — driven by strong FTA-partner trade with UAE, UK and Australia.
- Under India-UAE CEPA (in force since 1 May 2022), 4.45 lakh Certificates of Origin have been issued; tariff lines exported to UAE rose from 7,546 (FY2021-22) to 8,053 (FY2025-26), worth $37.3 billion.
- Under India-Australia ECTA (in force since 29 December 2022), Certificate of Origin issuance rose from 1,482 (FY2020-21) to an average of ~45,527/year; tariff lines rose from 5,396 to 5,668, worth $7.2 billion.
- India-UK CETA entered into force on 15 July 2026, granting duty-free access to 99% of Indian exports to the UK; India-Oman CEPA (in force 1 June 2026) grants duty-free access to 99.38% of Indian export value.

QUICK FACTS

FY2025-26 exports	$863.1 billion (merchandise $441.8bn + services $421.3bn) — highest-ever
India-UAE CEPA	in force 1 May 2022; UAE merchandise exports FY25-26: $37,359.11 million (highest among all FTA partners)
India-Australia ECTA	in force 29 December 2022; exports FY25-26: $7,284.17 million
India-UK CETA	in force 15 July 2026; exports FY25-26 (partial period): $13,444.19 million

32 Operational National Waterways Span 5,155 km; Cargo Movement Nearly Doubles in FY26

28 Jul

- India has 32 operational National Waterways spanning 5,155 km; year-wise NW development funding rose from Rs 425.43 crore (2021-22) to Rs 1,074.48 crore (2025-26, unaudited).
- Cargo movement on National Waterways nearly doubled to 218.24 million tonnes in 2025-26 from 108.79 MMT in 2021-22, with NW-1 (Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly) alone carrying 84.78 MMT.
- Passenger traffic on NWs rose from 7.64 crore (2024-25) to 10.56 crore (2025-26); ferry services operate on 23 of the 32 waterways.
- Policy measures include the Jalvahak Scheme (35% cargo incentive on NW-1/2/16), extension of the tonnage tax scheme to inland vessels, and new National Waterways (Construction of Jetties/Terminals) Regulations 2025 opening the sector to private investment.

QUICK FACTS

NW development funding	Rs 425.43 crore (2021-22) -> Rs 1,074.48 crore (2025-26, unaudited)

- 32 operational National Waterways, 5,155 km navigable length
- National Waterways Act, 2016 in effect from 12 April 2016; declared 111 waterways (5 pre-existing + 106 new) as National Waterways
- IWAI (Inland Waterways Authority of India) established 1986 under the IWAI Act, 1985; regulates/develops National Waterways

PIB Explainer: How India Is Building a Globally Competitive Tourism Economy

31 Jul

- India recorded 2.9 billion domestic tourist visits in 2024 and 2.02 crore International Tourist Arrivals in 2025, with tourism contributing Rs 15.73 lakh crore (5.22% of GDP) in FY 2023-24.
- Swadesh Darshan (76 projects, Rs 5,295.24 crore, 75 completed) and Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (53 projects, Rs 2,207.08 crore) are building destination-centric tourism infrastructure across 14 thematic circuits.
- The e-Tourist Visa now covers nationals of 175 countries through 33 airports, 19 seaports and 4 land ports; the NIDHI+ platform digitises registration of tourism service providers.
- India climbed to 39th of 119 countries (score 4.25/7) in the WEF Travel & Tourism Development Index 2024, up from 54th in the 2021 edition.

QUICK FACTS

Domestic tourist visits	2.9 billion in 2024 (above pre-pandemic levels)
International Tourist Arrivals	~2.02 crore in 2025
Tourism's GDP contribution	Rs 15.73 lakh crore, 5.22% of GDP in FY 2023-24
Jobs supported	84.6 million in tourism and hospitality (2023-24)
International tourism receipts	~USD 31.7 billion in 2025
WEF Travel & Tourism Development Index 2024	India ranked 39th of 119 countries, score 4.25/7

– 44 UNESCO World Heritage Sites; 106 National Parks; 18 Biosphere Reserves

4. Banking & Finance

4 articles

Rural Credit Backgrounder: GLC Target Rs 32.50 Lakh Crore, 28 RRBs, KCC Interest-Subvention Limit Now Rs 5 Lakh

16 Jul

- A PIB backgrounder put the FY 2025-26 Ground Level Credit target for agriculture at Rs 32.50 lakh crore, more than four times the Rs 8 lakh crore of FY 2014-15.
- As on 8 July 2026, KCC applications stood at over 1,178 lakh in cooperative banks, about 739 lakh in commercial banks and over 365 lakh in RRBs. The loan limit under MISS is now Rs 5 lakh.
- India has 28 RRBs after the 'One State, One RRB' merger and 11 small finance banks. 61,842 PACS have moved to common ERP software.
- NABARD's May 2026 RECSS found 77.2% of rural households reporting higher consumption, and about 51% borrowing only from formal sources.

QUICK FACTS

Source	PIB Backgrounder 'Strengthening Rural Credit for Inclusive Growth in India', 16 July 2026.
GLC target for agriculture, FY 2025-26	Rs 32.50 lakh crore, including a Rs 5 lakh crore sub-target for animal husbandry, dairying and fisheries. The FY 2014-15 target was Rs 8 lakh crore.
KCC applications (8 July 2026)	cooperative banks 1,178+ lakh, commercial banks ~739 lakh, RRBs 365+ lakh.
RRBs	28, with 22,000+ branches in 700 districts. Small Finance Banks: 11. Scheduled Commercial Banks: around 120.
Cooperative network	1,458 Urban Cooperative Banks, 34 State Cooperative Banks and 352 DCCBs.
NABARD RECSS (May 2026)	77.2% of rural households report higher consumption. About 51% use only formal credit, and over 27% use both formal and informal.

- Agricultural credit disbursement grew by more than 13% a year over FY15-FY24.
- Rural SCB branches rose from 41,464 in 2014 to 56,193 in July 2025, an increase of over 35%.

UPI Crosses 55.49 Crore Users; FY26 Transactions Hit Rs 314 Lakh Crore

20 Jul

- UPI had 55.49 crore users onboarded as of June 2026, the Ministry of Finance told the Lok Sabha on 20 July 2026, citing NPCI.
- In FY 2025-26, UPI processed 24,161.69 crore transactions worth Rs 314.23 lakh crore, against 4,595.61 crore worth Rs 84.16 lakh crore in FY 2021-22.
- UPI now runs in 12 live corridors; the latest are Greece (P2P, May 2026), Nepal (P2P, June 2026) and Cambodia (P2M, June 2026).
- Security measures include risk-based transaction limits, NPCI's Comprehensive UPI Information Security Framework (CUISF) 2025 and the Mobile Application Security Framework.

QUICK FACTS

UPI users onboarded	55.49 crore (June 2026), per NPCI
FY 2025-26 volume	24,161.69 crore transactions; value Rs 314.23 lakh crore
First overseas UPI acceptance	Bhutan, with RMA Bhutan (P2M), July 2021
Newest (2026)	Greece with Eurobank S.A. (P2P, May), Nepal with Nepal Clearing House Ltd (P2P, June), Cambodia with Acleda Bank PLC (P2M, June)
Security	NPCI's Comprehensive UPI Information Security Framework (CUISF) 2025 and the Mobile Application Security Framework mandate advanced controls

- UPI is operated by NPCI and authorised under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007
- NIPL, NPCI's wholly owned international arm, was incorporated in April 2020 to take UPI and RuPay abroad
- 12 live international arrangements across 11 countries (Singapore and Nepal each have separate P2M and P2P links)
- Reply given by MoS Finance Pankaj Chaudhary in a written Lok Sabha answer

UPI IN FIVE FINANCIAL YEARS

Financial Year	Volume (crore)	Value (Rs lakh crore)
2021-22	4,595.61	84.16
2022-23	8,371.44	139.15
2023-24	13,112.95	199.95
2024-25	18,586.60	260.56
2025-26	24,161.69	314.23

Source: Ministry of Finance Lok Sabha reply, 20 July 2026. FY26 over FY25 works out to about 30% volume growth and about 21% value growth; volume is about 5.3 times the FY22 level.

WHERE UPI IS LIVE ABROAD

Country	Live for	Partner institution	Live since
Bhutan	P2M	RMA Bhutan	July 2021
Singapore	P2M	NETS Singapore; HitPay Payment Solutions; LiquidPay Group	August 2021
UAE	P2M	Mashreq Bank (NeoPay); Network International; Magnati	April 2022
Singapore	P2P	BCS PayNow	February 2023
France	P2M	LYRA Network	February 2024
Mauritius	P2M	Bank of Mauritius	February 2024
Sri Lanka	P2M	Lanka Pay Pvt. Ltd.	February 2024
Nepal	P2M	FonePay Payment Services Ltd.	March 2024
Qatar	P2M	Qatar National Bank	September 2025
Greece	P2P	Eurobank S.A.	May 2026
Nepal	P2P	Nepal Clearing House Limited (NCHL)	June 2026
Cambodia	P2M	Acleda Bank PLC	June 2026

Source: Ministry of Finance Lok Sabha reply, 20 July 2026. P2P = person-to-person remittance; P2M = person-to-merchant payment.

Financial inclusion status: 58.63 crore Jan Dhan accounts; PMSBY 58.78 crore, APY 9.29 crore enrolments

21 Jul

- Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) had 58.63 crore accounts holding Rs 3,08,333 crore on 1 July 2026; 55.74% belong to women and 77.80% are in rural and semi-urban areas.
- Insurance enrolments on 1 July 2026: PMJJBY (life) 27.84 crore and PMSBY (accident) 58.78 crore; Atal Pension Yojana had 9.29 crore subscribers on 30 June 2026.
- PM MUDRA Yojana has sanctioned 59.14 crore loans worth Rs 41.71 lakh crore (26 June 2026); Stand-Up India 2.75 lakh loans worth Rs 62,790 crore (31 March 2025).
- The figures were given by MoS Finance Pankaj Chaudhary in a written Rajya Sabha reply.

QUICK FACTS

Source	written Rajya Sabha reply, MoS Finance Pankaj Chaudhary, 21 July 2026
NMFI's three principles	banking the unbanked, securing the unsecured, funding the unfunded
PMJDY	58.63 crore accounts, Rs 3,08,333 crore deposits (1.7.2026)

- PMJDY is the National Mission for Financial Inclusion (NMFI), launched August 2014
- Women hold 32.68 crore Jan Dhan accounts (55.74%); 45.62 crore (77.80%) are rural/semi-urban
- PMJJBY and PMSBY each give Rs 2 lakh cover; PMSBY also pays Rs 1 lakh for permanent partial disability
- MUDRA loans are collateral-free, up to Rs 20 lakh, for non-farm micro/small units, including activities allied to agriculture

PSB Gross NPA Hits Historic Low of 1.9%, RRBs Post Record Rs 10,177-Crore Profit in FY26

28 Jul

- Gross NPAs of Public Sector Banks (PSBs) fell to a historic low of 1.9% as of 31.3.2026, from 7.3% in FY2022, while net profit rose to a record Rs 1.98 lakh crore and aggregate business crossed Rs 283 lakh crore, the Finance Ministry told the Rajya Sabha.
- MSME loans grew 19.6% and retail loans 19.8% year-on-year in FY2025-26, with Capital Adequacy (CRAR) improving to 16.6%.
- Separately, Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) posted their highest-ever consolidated net profit of Rs 10,177 crore in FY2025-26, with total deposits of Rs 7,68,621 crore and CRAR of 15.0%, per NABARD data placed before Rajya Sabha the same day.
- The Government launched ECLGS 5.0 in May 2026 with Rs 2,55,000 crore guarantee coverage (including Rs 5,000 crore for scheduled passenger airlines) to ease liquidity stress from the West Asia Crisis.

QUICK FACTS

PSB GNPA	1.9% as of 31.3.2026 (down from 7.3% in FY2022) — a historic/multi-decadal low
PSB net profit	Rs 1.98 lakh crore FY2025-26 (highest-ever); aggregate business Rs 283.3 lakh crore
PSB CRAR	16.6% as of 31.3.2026 (above the RBI/Basel III minimum of 11.5% including CCB)
RRB net profit	Rs 10,177 crore FY2025-26 (highest-ever); RRB GNPA 5.3%, CRAR 15.0%
ECLGS 5.0 launched May 2026	Rs 2,55,000 crore guarantee coverage, incl. Rs 5,000 crore for airlines

5. Polity & Governance

8 articles

16th Finance Commission: Rs 4.35 lakh crore for Rural Local Bodies, 2026-31

03 Jul

- The 16th Finance Commission has recommended Rs 4,35,236 crore for Rural Local Bodies for 2026-27 to 2030-31, about 84% more than the comparable Rs 2,36,805 crore under the 15th FC.
- Basic Grants of Rs 3,48,188 crore are split equally into tied and untied halves; Performance Grants of Rs 87,048 crore are split equally between RLB and State performance grants.
- Per capita allocation to Rural Local Bodies rises to Rs 953, the highest so far, against Rs 176 under the 13th FC.
- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj held a national workshop of State ministers on the Department of Expenditure's Operational Guidelines for these grants and is preparing a Model Own Source Revenue (OSR) Rules Framework.

QUICK FACTS

Award period	16th Finance Commission, 2026-27 to 2030-31; chaired by Dr Arvind Panagariya.
Rural Local Body grants	Rs 4,35,236 crore, up about 84% on the 15th FC's comparable Rs 2,36,805 crore.
Per capita RLB allocation	Rs 176 (13th FC, 2010-15) to Rs 953 (16th FC), the highest so far.
15th FC period	Rs 2,82,632 crore released of Rs 2,97,555 crore allocated (about 95%), the highest release share by any FC for local bodies.

- Basic Grants Rs 3,48,188 crore = Tied Rs 1,74,094 crore + Untied Rs 1,74,094 crore.
- Tied grants are for sanitation, solid waste management and water management.
- Performance Grants Rs 87,048 crore, shared equally between RLB Performance Grants and State Performance Grants.
- Operational Guidelines for the grants are issued by the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance.

Rajya Sabha Panel on Subordinate Legislation Reviews CCI Settlement, Commitment and Penalty Rules

21 Jul

- The Rajya Sabha Committee on Subordinate Legislation, chaired by Milind Murli Deora, presented its 257th Report on 21 July 2026.
- It scrutinised four CCI instruments of 2024: the Commitment, Settlement and Turnover/Income Regulations and the Monetary Penalty Guidelines.
- It noted CCI recovers over 98% of legally realisable penalties, but that many penalties are stayed or quashed on appeal, and asked for stronger investigations.
- It asked CCI to treat repeat offences as an aggravating factor, show its penalty arithmetic in each order, and sign MoUs with sectoral regulators under the 2023 Amendment.

QUICK FACTS

Report	257th Report of the Committee on Subordinate Legislation, Rajya Sabha; presented 21 July 2026
Chairman	Milind Murli Deora, MP
Instruments examined	CCI (Commitment) Regulations 2024; CCI (Settlement) Regulations 2024; CCI (Determination of Turnover or Income) Regulations 2024; CCI (Determination of Monetary Penalty) Guidelines 2024
Witnesses heard	Ministry of Corporate Affairs and the Competition Commission of India
The Committee's job	check whether powers to make rules, regulations and bye-laws delegated by Parliament are being properly exercised

- The four instruments were notified by CCI on 6 March 2024 under the Competition (Amendment) Act, 2023

Government Proposes New FCRA Amendments to Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

22 Jul

- The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026 was introduced in Lok Sabha on March 25, 2026.
- The bill proposes the provisional vesting of foreign-funded assets in a Designated Authority upon cancellation of FCRA registration.
- The 2026 rules mandate that renewing NGOs must demonstrate utilisation of at least Rs 10 lakh in foreign contributions over the prior two years.

QUICK FACTS

Law	Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 (replaced the 1976 Act)
Ministry	Ministry of Home Affairs
2026 Bill Introduced	25 March 2026 in Lok Sabha
2026 Rules Notified	22 June 2026
Designated Bank	State Bank of India, New Delhi Main Branch (since 2020 amendment)
Admin Expense Limit	20% of annual foreign contribution (reduced from 50% in 2020)

Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026 Introduced in Lok Sabha

27 Jul

- Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh introduced the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026 in the Lok Sabha, to strengthen the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 with fast-tracked investigation, Special Fast Track Courts, Special Public Prosecutors and stricter penalties.
- For individuals: minimum imprisonment raised from 3 to 5 years (max up to 10 years, from 5); maximum fine raised from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 50 lakh.
- For service providers: maximum fine raised from Rs 1 crore to Rs 5 crore; debarment period from conducting exams extended from 4 to 8 years. For organised crime: minimum imprisonment raised from 5 to 7 years; maximum fine raised from Rs 1 crore to Rs 10 crore.
- New Section 12A mandates investigation completion within 2 months and trial completion within 3 months of chargesheet filing, before Special Fast Track Courts; new Section 12B allows appeal to the High Court within 30 days, to be disposed of within 3 months.
- The Bill also empowers the Central Government to refer investigation to a Special Task Force.

QUICK FACTS

Bill introduced by	Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union MoS (Independent Charge) Science & Technology, Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space
Amends	Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 — enacted 12 February 2024, in force from 21 June 2024
Individual offender punishment	imprisonment raised to 5-10 years (from 3-5 years); fine raised to max Rs 50 lakh (from Rs 10 lakh)
Service provider penalty	fine raised to max Rs 5 crore (from Rs 1 crore); debarment extended to 8 years (from 4 years)
Organised crime punishment	imprisonment raised to 7-10 years (from 5-10 years minimum-max); fine raised to max Rs 10 crore (from Rs 1 crore)
New Section 12A	investigation in 2 months, trial in 3 months of chargesheet, via Special Fast Track Courts with Special Public Prosecutors
New Section 12B	appeal to High Court within 30 days, disposal targeted within 3 months

Home Ministry Details Justice-Centric Provisions of the New Criminal Law Sanhitas

28 Jul

- A Lok Sabha reply from the Home Ministry sets out the 'justice-centric' provisions of the three new criminal-law Sanhitas — the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA), all 2023, in force since 1 July 2024.
- Victim-centric changes include Zero FIR, a free copy of the FIR, mandatory case-progress updates within 90 days, and document supply to both victim and accused within 14 days.
- New reformative measures include community service as punishment for minor offences, an expanded scope for summary trials, and trial in absentia for proclaimed offenders.
- Strict statutory timelines now bind investigation (90 days), charge-framing (60 days) and judgment pronouncement (45 days after trial conclusion).

QUICK FACTS

Zero FIR	a complainant can file an FIR at any police station irrespective of jurisdiction

- Three new criminal law codes — BNS, BNSS, BSA (2023) — came into force on 1 July 2024, replacing the IPC (1860), CrPC (1973) and Indian Evidence Act (1872) respectively
- All three Sanhitas received Presidential assent on 25 December 2023
- Community service introduced for the first time as a form of punishment, for minor offences
- Rape of a minor is punishable up to the death sentence under the BNS; gang rape of a minor is punishable with life imprisonment or death

VB-G RAM G Act Replaces MGNREGA, Guarantees 125 Days of Rural Employment

28 Jul

- The Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Act, 2025 came into force on 1 July 2026 across rural India, replacing the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), 2005; all States/UTs have notified and begun implementing the scheme.
- The Act preserves the statutory, demand-driven right to 125 days of guaranteed wage employment per rural household per year (up from MGNREGA's 100 days) and to unemployment allowance, while adding sustainable livelihood, durable-asset, water-security, climate-resilience and technology-governance goals.
- From 1 July 2026, over 99.5% of workers who demanded employment have been offered it; 5.20 crore persondays generated across 8.46 lakh worksites as on 22.07.2026.
- Under Section 16, every Gram Panchayat must prepare a Viksit Gram Panchayat Plan (VGPP) via participatory Gram Sabha planning, supported by the GIS-based Yuktdhara tool; under Section 21, States must provide Rozgar Sahayaks and Computer Operators for implementation.

QUICK FACTS

Guaranteed employment	125 days/household/year (up from MGNREGA's 100 days)
Section 16	Viksit Gram Panchayat Plan (VGPP) via Gram Sabha participatory planning, supported by the Yuktdhara GIS tool

- VB-G RAM G Act, 2025 in force from 1 July 2026, replacing MGNREGA, 2005
- 5.20 crore persondays generated across 8.46 lakh worksites (as on 22.07.2026); 99.5%+ of employment demand met

Public Examinations Amendment Bill 2026 Doubles Jail Term, Raises Fines for Cheating

28 Jul

- The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026, introduced in the Lok Sabha, proposes to raise the punishment for individuals resorting to unfair means from 3-5 years' imprisonment to 5-10 years, and the maximum fine from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 50 lakh.

- For service providers, the maximum fine rises from Rs 1 crore to Rs 5 crore and the debarment period from 4 to 8 years; punishment for their directors/senior management rises to 5-10 years (from 3-10 years), with fines up to Rs 5 crore (from Rs 1 crore).
- Punishment for organised examination crime rises from 5-10 years to 7-10 years' imprisonment, with the maximum fine increased from Rs 1 crore to Rs 10 crore.
- The Bill provides for Special Fast Track Courts, mandating investigation completion within two months and trial within three months of chargesheet filing, and empowers the Centre to refer cases to a Special Task Force.

QUICK FACTS

Organised crime punishment raised	5-10 yrs -> 7-10 yrs; fine: Rs 1 crore -> Rs 10 crore

- Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 — India's first comprehensive law against exam malpractice; enacted 12 Feb 2024, in force from 21 June 2024
- The 2024 Act covers UPSC, SSC, RRBs, IBPS and NTA exams; offences are cognizable, non-bailable and non-compoundable
- Amendment Bill 2026 raises individual punishment: 3-5 yrs -> 5-10 yrs; fine: Rs 10 lakh -> Rs 50 lakh

PIB Explainer: How India's Anti-Paper-Leak Law Gets Tougher in 2026

31 Jul

- Government has introduced the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026 in the Lok Sabha, sharply raising penalties under the 2024 Act.
- Individual-offender jail terms rise from 3-5 years to 5-10 years, and fines from up to Rs 10 lakh to up to Rs 50 lakh; organised-syndicate fines rise to at least Rs 10 crore.
- Every State/UT must now designate a Court of Session as a Special Fast Track Court, bound to a 3-month trial after chargesheet.
- Investigations get a first-ever 2-month deadline, and the Centre can now set up a dedicated Special Task Force for a case.

QUICK FACTS

Parent law	Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 — India's first dedicated central law against exam cheating and paper leaks
Amendment	Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026, introduced in the Lok Sabha
Individual offender penalty	raised from 3-5 years/Rs 10 lakh fine to 5-10 years/Rs 50 lakh fine
Organised syndicate penalty	raised from 5-10 years/min Rs 1 crore fine to 7-10 years/min Rs 10 crore fine
New trial forum	a Court of Session in every State/UT designated as a Special Fast Track Court
Investigation deadline	2 months from FIR/referral; trial deadline: 3 months from chargesheet
Appeal	to a 2-judge High Court bench, normally within 30 days, never beyond 90 days

6. Defence

1 article

DRDO Successfully Conducts Maiden Flight-Test of 'Kusha' Long-Range Surface-to-Air Missile

23 Jul

- DRDO successfully conducted the maiden flight-test of the 'Kusha' Long-Range Surface-to-Air Missile.
- The test was carried out from the APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha against an electronic target.
- The 'Kusha' system can neutralize various aerial threats including fighter jets, missiles, and UAVs, significantly boosting India's air defence.

QUICK FACTS

Type	Long-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (LR-SAM).
Developed By	Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) and Industry partners.
Test Location	APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha.
Capability	Can intercept and neutralize high-speed, high-altitude aerial threats including fighter jets, large enemy aircraft, and UAVs.
Significance	Eliminates import dependency for long-range surface-to-air missile systems.

7. Science & Tech

15 articles

India Approves First PinS Helicopter Approach; GAGAN Backs Satellite-Guided Landings

01 Jul

- India's first Private Point-in-Space (PinS) Instrument Approach Procedure for helicopters was approved on 1 July 2026 at Undavalli Heliport, Andhra Pradesh — developed by the Airports Authority of India and approved by DGCA.
- PinS uses satellite navigation to let helicopters fly instrument approaches to heliports that have no conventional landing aids.
- The same day, a PIB backgrounder explained GAGAN, India's Satellite-Based Augmentation System built by ISRO and AAI, days after it guided India's first satellite-based approach by a commercial jet (27 June 2026, Udaipur).
- GAGAN uses 15 reference stations, 2 master control centres, 3 uplink stations and 3 geostationary satellites (GSAT-8, GSAT-10, GSAT-15).

QUICK FACTS

Type	Satellite-Based Augmentation System (SBAS) — corrects GPS and adds integrity alerts; it is not a separate constellation.
DGCA certification	en-route RNP 0.1 on 30 Dec 2013; approach with vertical guidance (APV-1) on 21 Apr 2015 — third SBAS in the world to reach APV-1 and the first serving the equatorial region.
27 June 2026	an IndiGo Airbus A320 flew an LPV approach using GAGAN at Maharana Pratap Airport, Udaipur, under DGCA supervision — India's first satellite-based approach by a commercial jet.
1 July 2026	first PinS instrument approach procedure approved at Undavalli Heliport, near Amaravati in Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh; designed to DGCA rules and ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices.
Minister of Civil Aviation	Ram Mohan Naidu.

- GAGAN = GPS Aided GEO Augmented Navigation; developed jointly by ISRO and the Airports Authority of India (AAI).
- Fully operational since 2015; serves the Indian Flight Information Region.
- PinS allows Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) helicopter operations to heliports without conventional instrument landing infrastructure; uses include air ambulance, disaster relief, offshore, pilgrimage and regional connectivity.

NITI Aayog Bioeconomy Roadmap: $691 Billion by 2035, Six National BioMissions, Rs 50,000 Crore Fund

16 Jul

- NITI Aayog released the 'Roadmap for Building India as a Leading Bioeconomy Powerhouse by 2035', targeting $691 billion by 2035 and $2.6 trillion by 2047, up from $195.3 billion (4.8% of GDP) in 2025.
- It proposes six National BioMissions: GeneIndia, AgriBio 2.0, BioX Foundry, One Health Grid, Marine Biotechnology and BioPharmaNext.
- A Rs 50,000 crore BioEconomy Growth Fund is proposed, carved out of the existing Rs 1 lakh crore RDI framework.
- At the launch, Dr Jitendra Singh announced India's first Engineering Biology graduation course. The roadmap builds on the BioE3 Policy of 2024.

QUICK FACTS

Document	'Roadmap for Building India as a Leading Bioeconomy Powerhouse by 2035', launched by NITI Aayog in New Delhi on 16 July 2026.
Launched by	Dr Jitendra Singh, Minister of State (Independent Charge), Science & Technology.
Prepared by	NITI Frontier Tech Hub, in consultation with the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), ABLE, industry and academia.
Size so far	from $10 billion in 2014 to $195.3 billion in 2025, which is 4.8% of GDP.
Targets	$691 billion by 2035 and $2.6 trillion by 2047, with over 30 million high-value jobs.
Execution	six National BioMissions. Finance: a proposed Rs 50,000 crore BioEconomy Growth Fund taken from the Rs 1 lakh crore RDI framework.
Skills	India's first Engineering Biology graduation course announced. IITs have begun proposing interdisciplinary programmes with medical institutions.
Policy anchor	the BioE3 Policy, approved by the Union Cabinet in August 2024.

THE SIX PROPOSED NATIONAL BIOMISSIONS

BioMission	Focus
GeneIndia	Health: affordable cell and gene therapies
AgriBio 2.0	Agriculture: climate-resilient crops and bio-inputs
BioX Foundry	Industrial biotechnology: AI-enabled biofoundries
One Health Grid	Pandemic preparedness: integrated disease surveillance
Marine Biotechnology	Blue economy: marine bio-products
BioPharmaNext	Next-generation biopharma: biologics, biosimilars, vaccines, advanced therapeutics

Source: NITI Aayog release, PRID 2285858

India's First Hydrogen Train Flagged Off on 90 km Jind–Sonipat Route in Haryana

17 Jul

- India's first hydrogen-powered train was flagged off by the Prime Minister at Jind, Haryana on 17 July 2026, running the 90 km Jind–Sonipat route.
- The 10-coach, roughly 3,200 hp (2,400 kW) trainset was built by the Integral Coach Factory, Chennai — the PM called it the world's most powerful and longest hydrogen train.
- It is the first of the 35 trains Indian Railways plans under 'Hydrogen for Heritage' for heritage and hill routes.
- The same event dedicated or laid foundations for projects worth about Rs 14,700 crore, including the Haryana section of the Delhi–Amritsar–Katra Expressway and two medical colleges.
- The PM said railway electrification rose from about 30% (1925–2014) to nearly 99%, and cited Khelo Bharat Niti, Khelo India and TOPS ahead of the 2030 Commonwealth Games.

QUICK FACTS

Flagged off	17 July 2026, Jind (Haryana), by PM Narendra Modi; route Jind–Sonipat, 90 km (Northern Railway, Delhi Division).
Rake	10 coaches — 2 hydrogen driving power cars + 8 trailer coaches; capacity about 2,600 passengers.
Power	1,200 kW per power car, 2,400 kW total (3,200 hp); foreign hydrogen trains typically run 3-4 coaches.
Builder	Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai; designed by Indian engineers, built by an Indian company (Make in India).
Fuel supply	Jind hydrogen plant with a 1 MW PEM electrolyser (~430 kg hydrogen/day) and 3,000 kg storage.
Programme	first train of Indian RailwaysHydrogen for Heritage' plan — 35 hydrogen trains on heritage and hill routes.
Package	projects worth about Rs 14,700 crore across rail, highways, health and heritage.
Electrification	began 1925; ~30% of network by 2014; nearly 99% now; Haryana 100%.

Skyroot's Vikram-1 Reaches Orbit: India's First Privately Developed Orbital Rocket

18 Jul

- Vikram-1, built by Hyderabad-based Skyroot Aerospace, reached Low Earth Orbit on 18 July 2026 from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. It is India's first privately developed orbital launch vehicle, and Skyroot is the first Indian private company to make an orbital launch from Indian soil
- The mission is called Mission Aagaman. Vikram-1 is a four-stage rocket that can place 350 kg in LEO. It has an all-carbon-composite structure and a 100% 3D-printed liquid engine on its Orbital Adjustment Module
- It follows Skyroot's suborbital Vikram-S (Mission Prarambh, November 2022), which was India's first private rocket and the first private launch authorised by IN-SPACe
- The reforms behind it: Indian Space Policy 2023, IN-SPACe as the single-window authoriser, NSIL as ISRO's commercial arm, and the 2024 FDI caps of 74% (satellites), 49% (launch vehicles) and 100% (components) under the automatic route
- India's space economy is about USD 8.4 billion and is projected at USD 40-45 billion by 2030 and USD 100 billion by 2040. Space startups grew from 1 in 2014 to over 400 in 2026

QUICK FACTS

Vehicle	Vikram-1, India's first privately developed orbital launch vehicle, built by Skyroot Aerospace (founded 12 June 2018, Hyderabad, by former ISRO scientists Pawan Kumar Chandana and Bharath Daka)
Mission name	Mission Aagaman. Maiden orbital flight on 18 July 2026 from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota
Capacity	up to 350 kg to Low Earth Orbit. Four stages. About 22 m tall
Firsts claimed by DoS	India's first all-carbon-composite orbital rocket, a 100% 3D-printed liquid engine on the Orbital Adjustment Module, and one of India's longest monolithic carbon-composite stages
Payload manifest (PIB backgrounder)	Skyroot's SCOPE satellite, DCUBED's technology demonstrator, Grahaa Space's SOLARAS S3, and Cosmoserve Space's Embrace, a robotic arm to capture orbital debris. Target orbit 450 km
Symbolic payloads	'Cosmic Bloom' artwork and an 18-karat gold micro-rocket with micro-sculptures of C. V. Raman, Vikram Sarabhai and A. P. J. Abdul Kalam

– Satish Dhawan Space Centre SHAR is in Tirupati district, Andhra Pradesh. It became operational on 9 October 1971 with a Rohini-125 sounding rocket and was renamed after Prof. Satish Dhawan on 5 September 2002

CDSCO Approves Qdenga, India's First Dengue Vaccine, for Ages 4 to 60

21 Jul

- CDSCO granted marketing authorisation to Qdenga, Takeda's live-attenuated tetravalent dengue vaccine — the first dengue vaccine approved in India.
- It is approved for people aged 4 to 60 in two 0.5 ml subcutaneous doses given three months apart (0 and 3 months).
- Qdenga is made by Takeda GmbH, Germany, and will be imported by Takeda Biopharmaceuticals India; a pivotal Phase III study was run in Indians aged 4-60.
- The vaccine is approved in 42 countries including the EU and UK, carries WHO prequalification, and over 24 million doses have been distributed worldwide.
- The vaccine adds to the vector control, surveillance and case management already run under the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme.

QUICK FACTS

Product	Dengue Tetravalent Vaccine (Live, Attenuated) — brand Qdenga, research code TAK-003
Approving regulator	Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
Legal basis of approval	Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and Drugs Rules, 1945
Manufacturer	Takeda GmbH, Germany; importer: Takeda Biopharmaceuticals India Pvt. Ltd.; parent Takeda is headquartered in Tokyo, Japan
Age band	4 to 60 years; schedule: two doses of 0.5 ml at 0 and 3 months, subcutaneous
Global footprint	approved in 42 countries; WHO prequalified on 10 May 2024; 24 million+ doses distributed
Dengue burden	2,33,519 cases and 297 deaths in India in 2024 (NCVBDC)
National Dengue Day	16 May

Government Details Nuclear Energy Mission 2047 and Indigenous SMR Development

22 Jul

- The Nuclear Energy Mission aims to achieve 100 GWe nuclear power capacity by 2047, up from the current 8.78 GW.
- The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) is developing the 220 MWe Bharat Small Modular Reactor (BSMR-200) and the 55 MWe SMR-55.
- The SHANTI Act 2025 opens the nuclear energy sector to private participation and establishes the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board as a statutory body.

QUICK FACTS

Mission	Nuclear Energy Mission
Target Capacity	100 GWe by 2047
Current Capacity	8.78 GW (expected 22 GW by 2031-32)
SMR Target	5 indigenous Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) by 2033
Key Law	SHANTI Act, 2025
Approved Site for SMRs	Tarapur, Maharashtra

Progress of Nuclear Energy Mission and SHANTI Act 2025

23 Jul

- The Nuclear Energy Mission aims to achieve 100 GWe of nuclear power generation capacity by 2047.
- Parliament enacted the SHANTI Act, 2025, which opens the nuclear energy sector to private participation and grants statutory status to the AERB.
- The Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) achieved its first criticality in April 2026, marking the entry into the second stage of India's nuclear programme.

QUICK FACTS

Target Capacity	100 GWe by 2047 (current capacity: 8.78 GW)
SMR Target	Operationalise at least five Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) by 2033
Enabling Law	SHANTI Act, 2025 (allows private sector entry)
Nodal Department	Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)
Key Milestone	PFBR attained first criticality on April 6, 2026
Global First	IGCAR demonstrated clean hydrogen production using nuclear heat on June 26, 2026

IndiaAI Mission's Safe & Trusted AI Pillar: 13 Responsible AI Projects, AI Safety Institute

27 Jul

- The IndiaAI Mission, approved by the Union Cabinet in March 2024 with a five-year outlay of Rs 10,371 crore, comprises seven pillars — IndiaAI Compute, Foundation Models, AIKosh, IndiaAI Application Development Initiative, FutureSkills, Startup Financing and Safe & Trusted AI — Electronics & IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw informed Rajya Sabha on 24 July 2026.

- Under the Safe & Trusted AI pillar, 13 Responsible AI projects have been approved across institutions like IIT Jodhpur, IIT Madras, IIT Delhi, IIT Kharagpur, NIT Raipur and DIAT, covering bias mitigation, machine unlearning, privacy-preserving AI, explainability and deepfake detection.

- The AI Safety Institute (AISI), announced in January 2025, oversees these projects through a hub-and-spoke model and anchors India's risk-based AI Governance Guidelines, which propose institutional mechanisms — AIGEG, TPEC and AISI itself.

- Mission-wide progress so far: 58 AI Centres of Excellence, 27 India Data & AI Labs (2,500+ students trained, 188 more underway), 686 fellowships across 178 institutions, over 26 lakh YUVA AI for All completions, and 93 lakh GPU hours sanctioned across 237 compute projects.

- As Chair of the India AI Impact Summit 2026 in New Delhi, India produced the New Delhi Frontier AI Impact Commitments, a Guidance Note on AI Governance, and the Trusted AI Commons repository, while continuing to engage GPAI, G20 and the UN on global AI governance.

QUICK FACTS

IndiaAI Mission approved	March 2024, by the Union Cabinet; outlay Rs 10,371 crore over 5 years; nodal ministry: Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY)
Seven pillars	IndiaAI Compute, Foundation Models, AIKosh, IndiaAI Application Development Initiative, FutureSkills, Startup Financing, Safe & Trusted AI
Safe & Trusted AI pillar	13 Responsible AI projects approved (bias mitigation, machine unlearning, privacy-preserving AI, explainability, deepfake detection, AI risk assessment)
AI Safety Institute (AISI)	announced January 2025; oversees Safe & Trusted AI EoI-selected projects via a hub-and-spoke model
Compute support	15 empanelled providers, 237 projects supported, 93 lakh GPU hours sanctioned

- 20 sovereign AI model proposals identified for support (12 LLMs + 8 SLMs), incl. Sarvam AI (30bn & 105bn parameter models), Gnani.AI, BharatGen, Avataar AI
- 58 AI Centres of Excellence across States/UTs; 27 India Data & AI Labs (2,500+ students trained); 686 fellowships across 178 institutions; 26 lakh+ YUVA AI for All completions
- Reply given by Union Minister for Electronics & IT Ashwini Vaishnaw in Rajya Sabha on 24 July 2026

Nuclear Energy Mission: 100 GW by 2047 Target, 8,780 MW Installed, SHANTI Act in Force

29 Jul

- India's installed nuclear capacity stands at 8,780 MW across 24 reactors — 3.1% of electricity generation in 2025-26 — with a Nuclear Energy Mission target of 100 GW by 2047

- The roadmap projects ~22 GW by 2031-32 under NPCIL, a further 32 GW under NPCIL post-2032 (PHWR/LWR), and the balance ~45 GW via other PSEs, private players and joint ventures

- The SHANTI Act, 2025 (in force since 21 December 2025) repealed the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010, gave AERB full statutory status, and caps private/foreign equity in civilian nuclear projects at 49%

- PFBR (500 MWe), India's first fast breeder reactor at Kalpakkam, attained first criticality on 6 April 2026; 10 more reactors (8,000 MW) are under construction across Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Haryana and Karnataka

QUICK FACTS

Installed nuclear capacity	8,780 MW across 24 reactors — 3.1% of India's electricity generation in 2025-26
Nuclear Energy Mission target	100 GW nuclear capacity by 2047, under the Viksit Bharat vision
Roadmap	~22 GW by 2031-32 under NPCIL; +32 GW under NPCIL post-2032 (indigenous PHWR/LWR); balance ~45 GW via other PSEs, private sector and JVs

- SHANTI Act, 2025 (in force from 21 December 2025) repealed the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010; opens the sector to states, industries and research institutions once rules are framed
- PFBR (500 MWe), Kalpakkam, attained first criticality on 6 April 2026 — India's first fast breeder reactor
- 10 reactors (8,000 MW) currently under construction/commissioning across Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Haryana and Karnataka

Kavach 4.0 Commissioned on 2,569 Route Km as Train Accidents Fall to Record Low

29 Jul

- Indian Railways reported only 2 consequential train accidents in 2026-27 (up to June), against 135 in 2014-15 — a steep decline aided by technology, infrastructure and maintenance upgrades.
- Kavach Version 4.0, the SIL-4 certified indigenous Automatic Train Protection system, has been commissioned on 2,569 route km, covering the high-density Delhi-Mumbai and Delhi-Howrah corridors as on 20 July 2026.
- Railway safety expenditure has risen more than three-fold, from Rs 39,200 crore in 2013-14 to a budgeted Rs 1,20,389 crore in 2026-27.
- The data was given by Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw in a written reply in the Lok Sabha.

QUICK FACTS

- Only 2 consequential train accidents in 2026-27 (up to June 2026), down from 135 in 2014-15
- Consequential Accident Index fell from 0.11 (2014-15) to 0.01 (2025-26) — a 91% decline
- Safety expenditure rose from Rs 39,200 crore (2013-14) to Rs 1,20,389 crore (2026-27)
- Kavach 4.0 commissioned on 2,569 route km as on 20.07.2026, covering Delhi-Mumbai (1,423 Rkm) and Delhi-Howrah (1,146 Rkm)
- Kavach adopted as India's National ATP system in July 2020; Version 4.0 approved by RDSO on 16.07.2024

144 Crore Aadhaar IDs, 55 Crore UPI Users Power India's Digital Public Infrastructure

29 Jul

- India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) now spans 144+ crore Aadhaar IDs, 55.49 crore UPI users across 731 banks, and 71.66 crore DigiLocker users with 936.03 crore documents issued.
- Common Service Centres have grown from 83,950 (May 2014) to 5.01 lakh (May 2026), covering 2.56 lakh Gram Panchayats and handling 4,854 lakh transactions in 2025-26 alone.
- BharatNet has made 2.21 lakh Gram Panchayats service-ready, and Aadhaar-linked Direct Benefit Transfer has moved over Rs 52 lakh crore across 318 schemes of 56 Ministries.
- Digital India (launched July 2015) built on the foundation of the National e-Governance Plan (approved May 2006), which created State Data Centres, SWANs, SSDGs and the original CSC scheme.
- Data was given by MeitY Ministers Jitin Prasada and Ashwini Vaishnaw in the Lok Sabha on 29.07.2026.

QUICK FACTS

DigiLocker	71.66 crore users, 936.03 crore documents issued by 2,822 issuers
BharatNet	2.21 lakh Gram Panchayats service-ready as of June 2026; Aadhaar-linked DBT has moved Rs 52 lakh crore+ across 318 schemes of 56 Ministries

- 144+ crore Aadhaar IDs generated; UPI serves 55.49 crore users, 6.5 crore merchants, 731 banks — 85% of India's digital payments
- CSCs grew from 83,950 (May 2014) to 5,01,731 (May 2026), covering 2.56 lakh Gram Panchayats; 4,854.03 lakh transactions in FY 2025-26
- Digital India (July 2015) subsumed the National e-Governance Plan (approved May 2006)

Ocean Observation Network and Climate Monitoring: MoES Parliament Replies

30 Jul

- Four Rajya Sabha replies from the Ministry of Earth Sciences (30 July 2026) together detail India's ocean-observation network (19 subsurface moorings, 302 Argo floats since 2014, tsunami buoys and tide gauges under INCOIS), the Mission Mausam-driven modernisation of weather forecasting, Brahmaputra flood-forecasting infrastructure, and the 2026 El Nino outlook.
- Wave-forecast accuracy has improved about 43% since 2014, and INCOIS's coastal forecast system now reaches roughly 70% accuracy; tsunami advisories are issued within the international 10-minute benchmark.
- Under Mission Mausam, the Bharat Forecasting System (BharatFS) delivers 6 km-resolution forecasts down to Gram Panchayat clusters, accessible via e-Gramswaraj, Meri Panchayat and Mausamgram.
- El Nino conditions, weak in June 2026, intensified to moderate by July 2026 and are forecast to strengthen further (potentially to 'very strong') by October-December 2026 — though there is no WMO/IMD-recognised 'Super El Nino' category.

QUICK FACTS

Ocean observation	19 subsurface moorings (16 in India's EEZ, 3 in the equatorial Indian Ocean); Indian Tsunami Early Warning System uses 17 seismic stations, 7 deep-ocean tsunami buoys, 36 coastal tide gauges and 35 GNSS receivers
INCOIS deep-sea/autonomous fleet	302 Argo profiling floats deployed 2014-2025, 12 deep-sea glider missions, 45 drifting buoys, 64 wave drifters
Mission Mausam	Cabinet-approved 11 September 2024, outlay Rs 2,000 crore over two years, implemented by IMD, IITM and NCMRWF under the Ministry of Earth Sciences
Bharat Forecasting System (BharatFS)	6 km resolution, forecasts down to Panchayat-cluster level; global models GFS (IMD) and Mithuna-FS (NCMRWF, Noida) run at 12 km resolution
El Nino (2026)	weak in June, moderate by July, forecast to intensify further (potentially 'very strong') in Oct-Dec 2026 per ONI thresholds — WMO/IMD do not recognise a formal 'Super El Nino' category

- CWC maintains 32 flood-forecast stations on the Brahmaputra and Barak river systems in Assam, issuing forecasts up to 24 hours ahead

Gaganyaan and Bharatiya Antariksh Station Progress; Dept of Space Budget Trend

30 Jul

- Two Rajya Sabha replies together cover the Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS) — India's planned five-module indigenous space station targeted for 2035, with the first module BAS-01 approved in October 2024 for launch by 2028 — and the Department of Space's budget trend since 2021.
- Gaganyaan precursor missions TV-D1, IADT-01 and IADT-02 are complete, with the first uncrewed mission (G1) in advanced preparation; docking-system and refuelling-mechanism concept demonstrations have succeeded.
- Department of Space's budget has stayed roughly flat in nominal terms (Rs 13,949 crore in 2021-22 to Rs 13,416 crore in 2025-26) even as its share of the Union Budget and of GDP has declined; ISRO passed 100 launches from Sriharikota and demonstrated autonomous docking via SPADEX (India the 4th country to do so).
- Government reforms via IN-SPACe and NSIL have opened commercial launch services to private players — cited examples include Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-1 and Agnikul Cosmos's 3D-printed-engine Agnibaan SOrTeD mission.

QUICK FACTS

Human-Rated Launch Vehicle	HLVM3 (a human-rated variant of LVM3), with a dedicated Crew Escape System
Dept of Space budget	Rs 13,949.09 crore (2021-22) -> Rs 13,416.20 crore (2025-26); its share of the Union Budget fell from 0.40% to 0.26%, and of GDP from 0.05% to 0.03%, over the same period

- BAS-01 (first BAS module) Cabinet-approved October 2024, targeted launch by 2028; full 5-module BAS targeted by 2035
- Gaganyaan approved by the Government in December 2018; original outlay ~Rs 9,023 crore, expanded to ~Rs 20,193 crore after 2024 approvals covering BAS-01
- ISRO achieved 100 launches from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota; SPADEX made India the 4th country to demonstrate autonomous space docking/undocking

- NSIL (NewSpace India Limited) — ISRO's commercial arm, a CPSE under Dept of Space, established 6 March 2019; IN-SPACe is the autonomous nodal body authorising and promoting private-sector space activity

India's Roadmap to 100 GW Nuclear Power by 2047: Reactor Fleet and SMR Plans

30 Jul

- Three Rajya Sabha replies detail India's roadmap to 100 GW nuclear capacity by 2047 (announced under the Nuclear Energy Mission, Union Budget 2025-26): present capacity of 8.78 GW to reach ~22 GW by 2031-32, NPCIL's share rising to ~54 GW by 2047, with the balance 46 GW from other PSEs, private sector and joint ventures.
- The strategy combines indigenous 700 MWe PHWRs and imported large reactors at greenfield sites with Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) for brownfield use — BARC has designed the 220 MWe Bharat Small Modular Reactor (BSMR-200, Rs 5,960 crore), the 55 MWe SMR-55 (twin-unit, Rs 7,000 crore) and a hydrogen-capable High Temperature Gas Cooled Reactor, targeting at least 5 indigenous SMRs operational by 2033.
- 24 reactors are currently in commercial operation (8,780 MW); 10 more reactors are under construction (including Kudankulam-3&4&5&6 and the Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor) and 10 in pre-project activities, all under continuous safety oversight by the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB, constituted 1983).

QUICK FACTS

Present capacity	8.78 GW (24 reactors in commercial operation) -> ~22 GW by 2031-32 -> NPCIL alone to reach ~54 GW by 2047 (balance 46 GW from other PSEs/private sector/JVs)
SMR target	at least 5 indigenous Small Modular Reactors operational by 2033; construction time 60-72 months from financial approval
BSMR-200 (220 MWe)	Rs 5,960 crore; twin-unit SMR-55 (55 MWe): Rs 7,000 crore; HTGCR (up to 5 MWth, hydrogen-capable): Rs 320 crore

- Nuclear Energy Mission announced in Union Budget 2025-26: target of 100 GW nuclear capacity by 2047, supporting Net Zero by 2070
- 10 reactors under construction (incl. Kudankulam-3&4, Kudankulam-5&6, PFBR, Gorakhpur GHAVP-1&2, Kaiga-5&6); 10 more in pre-project activities
- AERB (Atomic Energy Regulatory Board) constituted 15 November 1983 under the Atomic Energy Act, 1962, to oversee nuclear/radiation safety

Government's Deepfake Legal Framework and CERT-In's AI-Threat Countermeasures

30 Jul

- A Lok Sabha reply lays out India's deepfake legal architecture: IT Act 2000 provisions (identity theft S.66C, impersonation S.66D, obscene content S.67/67A, blocking orders S.69A), BNS 2023 (public mischief S.353, organised cybercrime S.111), and IT Rules 2021 obligating intermediaries to prevent deepfake/impersonation content.
- A 10 February 2026 IT Rules amendment mandates clear labelling/traceable metadata for AI-generated content and slashes takedown timelines — from 36 hours to 3 hours for unlawful content on valid intimation, and to as little as 2 hours for sensitive categories like non-consensual intimate imagery.
- 13 Responsible AI projects approved for deepfake detection (e.g. 'Saakshya' by IIT Jodhpur & IIT Madras) under the IndiaAI Mission's Safe & Trusted AI pillar; CERT-In ran 10 AI-threat cyber exercises (June-July 2026, 1,470 participants from 345 organisations) and ISEA awareness workshops reached 11.37 lakh+ people via 6,650 sessions.

QUICK FACTS

IT Rules 2021 amendment (10 Feb 2026)	mandatory labelling/metadata for AI-generated content; unlawful-content removal timeline cut from 36 to 3 hours; grievance redressal cut from 72 -> 36 hours (general) and 24 -> 2 hours (sensitive categories like nudity/impersonation)
BNS 2023	Section 353 (public mischief via false statements/rumours), Section 111 (organised cybercrime, applicable to deepfake-enabled organised crime)

- 13 Responsible AI projects approved for deepfake detection under IndiaAI Mission's Safe & Trusted AI pillar, including Saakshya (IIT Jodhpur & IIT Madras), AI Vishleshak, and IIT Kharagpur's Real-Time Voice Deepfake Detection System
- CERT-In conducted 10 cyber security exercises on 'Building Resilience against Frontier AI-driven Cyber Threats' (June-July 2026), 1,470 participants from 345 organisations across Power, Telecom, BFSI, Transport, Education, Health, Space
- ISEA (Information Security Education and Awareness): 6,650 workshops conducted, 11.37 lakh+ participants
- Non-compliance with IT Rules due diligence obligations makes intermediaries lose their Section 79 'safe harbour' exemption

8. Environment

8 articles

PMO Reviews El Nino Preparedness: Contingency Plans for 262 Districts, ICAR SOP for KVKs

07 Jul

- IMD told a PMO review (7 July 2026) that a weak-to-moderate El Nino is expected in July-August 2026; the all-India monsoon deficit had narrowed to -12% by 7 July.
- District Agriculture Contingency Plans were updated for 262 vulnerable districts, and ICAR issued an SOP, 'Managing El Nino Risks in Indian Agriculture', for Krishi Vigyan Kendras.
- Saturation campaigns for PM Fasal Bima Yojana and Kisan Credit Card were started in vulnerable states; the Crop Weather Watch Group now meets weekly with the states.
- Works under VB-G RAM G, in force from 1 July 2026, had generated 1 crore person-days by the date of the review.

QUICK FACTS

IMD's caution	an El Nino year does not necessarily produce below-normal rainfall.

- Review chaired by Dr P.K. Mishra, Principal Secretary to the PM, on 7 July 2026; more than 15 ministries/departments attended.
- Monsoon onset was delayed by about 10 days in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra.
- The all-India rainfall deficit fell to -12% by 7 July 2026, after above-normal rain in the first week of July.
- July brings more than 30% of the monsoon season's rainfall, so it is the month to watch.
- Foodgrain output has held up in past deficient years because of climate-resilient varieties and technologies.
- Consumer Affairs reported adequate buffers of rice, wheat and pulses; Fertilizers reported sufficient stock and a likely opening balance for Rabi.

NTCA's 29th meeting releases STRIDES 2026; wildlife board adds Pygmy Hog to recovery programme

09 Jul

- At the 29th NTCA meeting in Coimbatore on 9 July 2026, Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav released STRIDES 2026, a status report on tiger reserves, and 'Roadmap to Rescue', a plan for rescue-rehab-release facilities in tiger landscapes.
- The Authority discussed the 6th cycle of the Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) of Tiger Reserves, a Tiger Conclave to raise funds through Tiger Conservation Foundations, and a STRIPES research symposium.
- The same day, the 91st Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife recommended adding the Pygmy Hog to the Species Recovery Programme.
- SC-NBWL also discussed a long-term rhino conservation strategy built on the Rhino DNA Indexing System and a future strategy for the Great Indian Bustard, and considered over 100 development proposals needing wildlife clearance.

QUICK FACTS

29th NTCA meeting and 91st SC-NBWL meeting	9 July 2026, Central Academy for State Forest Service (CASFOS), Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu
Publications	STRIDES 2026 (Status of Tiger Reserves: Infrastructure, Development, Ecology & Social Parameters) and 'Roadmap to Rescue'
Proposed	6th MEE cycle, a Tiger Conclave (corporate/philanthropic funding via Tiger Conservation Foundations), and STRIPES (Symposium on Tiger Research, Innovation, Policy, Ecology & Sustainability)
SC-NBWL	Pygmy Hog proposed for the Species Recovery Programme; publications released on rhinoceros, sloth bear and Great Indian Bustard

- Both chaired by Bhupender Yadav, Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- NTCA approved its Annual Report 2024-25 and the Action Taken Report on its 28th meeting

- SC-NBWL took up 100+ proposals (roads, defence, power lines, mining, renewables etc.) needing clearance under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972

National CAMPA Governing Body Approves Dolphin, Snow Leopard, Rhino and Wild Buffalo Projects; Extends MISHTI

10 Jul

- The 7th meeting of the Governing Body of National CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority), chaired by Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav at CASFOS, Coimbatore on 10 July 2026, approved four new species projects: river dolphins, Project Snow Leopard Phase-II, the Indian rhinoceros and a pan-India plan for the wild water buffalo, plus continued support for Manipur's Sangai.
- MISHTI (mangroves) got a three-year extension to 2029 with an extra Rs 500 crore, taking its outlay to Rs 600 crore; Rs 88.40 crore had been released so far across six States/UTs.
- From the 2026-27 cycle, States/UTs must submit their Annual Plans of Operation only through the online Digital APO; a GIS Lab and the Harit-SANKALP nursery-traceability portal (built with FAO-India) were also reviewed.
- Nagar Van Yojana: 652 Nagar Vans/Vatikas developed with Rs 571.50 crore released; Rs 7.28 crore released to ICFRE under the Green Credit scheme.

QUICK FACTS

Meeting	7th Governing Body (GB) meeting of National CAMPA, 10 July 2026, CASFOS (Central Academy for State Forest Service), Coimbatore
Chair	Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav — the Environment Minister chairs the GB by design
Continued support	Manipur's brow-antlered deer (Sangai)
Accounts	C&AG certification audit of National Authority CAMPA's FY 2024-25 accounts gave a 'true and fair' view

- New projects (recommended by the Executive Committee): river dolphin conservation and recovery plan; Project Snow Leopard Phase-II with a second population-estimation cycle; conservation action plan for the Indian rhinoceros; pan-India approach for the wild water buffalo
- Digital APO mandatory for States/UTs from FY 2026-27; five zonal orientation workshops held before rollout
- Harit-SANKALP = System for Accreditation, Nursery Knowledge for Afforestation Linkage Platform — QR-code traceability of seed sources, nurseries and planting material, developed with FAO-India

THE SPECIES IN THE NEW PROJECTS

Species	IUCN status	Key facts
Gangetic river dolphin	Endangered	National aquatic animal since 5 Oct 2009 (1st NGRBA meeting); first survey under Project Dolphin (launched 2020), released March 2025: 6,327 river dolphins — 6,324 Gangetic, 3 Indus; UP 2,397, Bihar 2,220, WB 815, Assam 635
Snow leopard	Vulnerable	Project Snow Leopard launched January 2009; SPAI (2019-2023, released 30 Jan 2024, WII national coordinator) estimated 718 — Ladakh 477, Uttarakhand 124, HP 51, Arunachal 36, Sikkim 21, J&K 9
Indian (greater one-horned) rhinoceros	Vulnerable	National Conservation Strategy for the Greater One-Horned Rhinoceros adopted February 2019; about 4,075 individuals (March 2025 estimate)
Wild water buffalo	Endangered	Schedule I; state animal of Chhattisgarh (2001); fewer than 4,000 worldwide, about 99% in Assam — Kaziranga ~2,500; translocation from Kaziranga to Kanha (MP) begun 2026
Sangai (brow-antlered deer)	Endangered	Schedule I; state animal of Manipur; single wild population in Keibul Lamjao NP (1977), the floating park on Loktak Lake

Source: PIB release (projects); population and status figures web-verified from MoEFCC/WII survey releases and IUCN listings.

PARIVARTAN Guidelines Approved: Rs 9,585 Crore Scheme to Replace Old Trucks and Buses in Delhi-NCR

16 Jul

- MoHUA approved the operational guidelines for the Rs 9,585 crore PARIVARTAN scheme, which the Cabinet approved on 3 June 2026. The scheme replaces old trucks and buses in NCR with BS-VI or electric vehicles.
- MoRTH implements the scheme, with funds routed through the NCRPB. Incentives include MV tax concession, registration-fee waiver, 5% interest subvention, a minimum 8% OEM discount, fuel vouchers and one-time assistance for EVs.
- Rajasthan, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi have notified 10-year MV tax concessions. 11 OEMs holding over 95% of the commercial-vehicle market signed MoUs.
- Benefits will flow through one digital platform linked to VAHAN, V-Scrap, DigiELV and PFMS.

QUICK FACTS

Aim	replace older, highly polluting trucks and buses in the National Capital Region with BS-VI-compliant or electric vehicles.
Outlay	Rs 9,585 crore, including Rs 5,041 crore in Central budgetary support. Union Cabinet approval: 3 June 2026.
Implementing ministry	MoRTH. Funding channel: the National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB).
Target fleet	vehicles meeting BS-IV or earlier norms, about 2.07 lakh in all (1.91 lakh trucks and 16,329 buses) by the Cabinet's estimate.

- PARIVARTAN stands for Programme for Accelerated Renewal and Incentivization of Vehicle Assets for Reducing Transport Air Pollution and Network Emissions.
- Guidelines approved on 16 July 2026 by the Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs, which makes the scheme ready to operationalise.
- Rajasthan, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi notified a 10-year MV tax concession and a registration-fee waiver for new vehicles bought under the scheme.
- 11 OEMs, together holding more than 95% of the commercial-vehicle market, signed MoUs with MoRTH to give the discount.

Five new lichen species of genus Allographa described from the Western Ghats by ARI Pune

21 Jul

- MACS-Agharkar Research Institute (ARI), Pune described five new lichen-forming fungi of genus Allographa from the Western Ghats: A. keralensis, A. nayakae, A. paraconsanguinea, A. persistinspersa and A. semicarbonisata.
- It is the first comprehensive molecular phylogenetic study of Allographa from the Western Ghats, using three DNA markers (mtSSU, nrLSU, RPB2); published in Mycological Progress.
- Allographa (family Graphidaceae, 200+ species) are 'script lichens' whose sensitivity to pollution and habitat change makes them indicators of forest health.
- A. keralensis is named after Kerala; A. nayakae honours Indian lichenologist Dr Sanjeeva Nayaka.

QUICK FACTS

Discovery	five new Allographa species from tropical forests of the Western Ghats
Institution	MACS-Agharkar Research Institute, Pune — autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology
Method	morphology and chemistry combined with multi-locus DNA sequencing (mtSSU, nrLSU, RPB2)
Finding	species that look alike are not always closely related — morphology alone misleads
Output	updated checklist of Western Ghats Allographa, a baseline for conservation planning
Journal	Mycological Progress (Springer)

- New molecular data also generated for known species A. calcea, A. macella, A. aquilonia, A. rimulosa and A. effusosoredica

India's NDC Progress: 37.38% Emissions-Intensity Cut, 54.18% Non-Fossil Power Capacity

27 Jul

- India achieved a 37.38% reduction in GDP emissions intensity by 2022 (from 2005 levels), against its NDC goal of a 45% reduction by 2030.
- Non-fossil fuel-based power capacity crossed 50% of installed capacity in June 2025 — five years ahead of the 2030 NDC target — and reached 54.18% as of 30 June 2026.
- India created an additional carbon sink of 2.44 billion tonnes of CO2-equivalent during 2005-2022, against a 2030 target of 2.5-3.0 billion tonnes.
- India's enhanced 2035 NDC targets: a 47% emissions-intensity cut, 60% non-fossil power capacity, and a 3.5-4.0 billion tonne carbon sink (from the 2005 baseline).
- Three institutional bodies — the PM's Council on Climate Change (PMCCC), Executive Committee on Climate Change (ECCC) and Apex Committee for Implementation of the Paris Agreement (AIPA) — oversee progress toward the 2070 net-zero goal.

QUICK FACTS

India's NDC has 3 quantitative targets	emissions-intensity reduction, non-fossil power-capacity share, and additional carbon sink
Non-fossil power capacity	54.18% as of 30 June 2026 (crossed 50% in June 2025, 5 years ahead of the 2030 target)
Additional carbon sink	2.44 billion tonnes CO2-eq (2005-2022) against a 2.5-3.0 billion tonne 2030 target
Enhanced 2035 NDC	47% emissions-intensity cut, 60% non-fossil capacity, 3.5-4.0 billion tonne carbon sink
India's long-term goal	net-zero emissions by 2070

- Emissions intensity of GDP cut by 37.38% (2022, from 2005 level) against a 45%-by-2030 goal

PIB Backgrounder: India's Tiger Conservation Leadership Ahead of International Tiger Day

28 Jul

- PIB released a Backgrounder ahead of International Tiger Day (29 July) highlighting India's status as home to nearly 70% of the world's wild tigers.
- India's tiger population, per the All India Tiger Estimation (AITE) 2022, stands at 3,682 across 58 tiger reserves in 18 states covering ~84,500 sq km (2.56% of India's area).
- The backgrounder details India's institutional architecture (Project Tiger, NTCA), tech-driven monitoring (M-STrIPES, AI camera-trap tools) and global partnerships (Global Tiger Forum, International Big Cat Alliance, ITHCP).
- International Tiger Day traces to the 2010 St. Petersburg Tiger Summit's Tx2 goal to double wild tiger numbers by 2022; global tiger numbers have risen from ~3,200 in 2010 to an estimated 5,711 today, a 78% increase.

QUICK FACTS

International Tiger Day	observed every 29 July
India's tiger population (AITE 2022)	3,682 — nearly 70% of the world's wild tigers
Global wild tiger estimate	~5,711 today vs ~3,200 in 2010, a 78% rise since the Tx2 goal was set

- 58 tiger reserves across 18 states, ~84,500 sq km (2.56% of India's geographical area)
- AITE 2022 covered 20 states and surveyed over 6.41 lakh km on foot — the world's largest biodiversity survey
- NTCA's camera-trap survey holds a Guinness World Record for the largest camera-trap wildlife survey

Environmental Clearances in Protected Areas and NCAP Air-Quality Compliance: MoEFCC Replies

30 Jul

- Infrastructure projects touching Tiger Reserves or other Protected Areas must clear a dual-track process: Environmental Clearance (EC) under the EIA Notification, 2006, from the Expert Appraisal Committee (Category A, Centre) or SEAC (Category B, State), AND Wildlife Clearance under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, via the State Chief Wildlife Warden and the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife (SCNBWL) — 20 such projects were cleared in FY2024-25 and 2025-26.

- The PARIVESH portal's new Decision Support System (DSS) is a GIS-enabled tool for automated proximity analysis of projects against Protected Areas, Eco-Sensitive Zones, forests and wetlands.

- Under NCAP, City-Specific Clean Air Action Plans cover 130 cities; Rs 16,423.55 crore has been sanctioned (2019-20 to 2025-26) of which Rs 11,575.54 crore (70.5%) is utilised; 108 cities showed PM10 reductions in 2025-26 vs 2017-18, and 14 cities now meet National Ambient Air Quality Standards (up from 6 in 2017-18).

QUICK FACTS

- EIA Notification, 2006 issued under Section 3(1) and 3(2)(v) of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
- Category A projects appraised by the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) at Centre; Category B by the State/UT Expert Appraisal Committee (SEAC)
- Wildlife Clearance requires State Chief Wildlife Warden -> State Board for Wildlife -> Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife (SCNBWL), under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972
- 20 infrastructure projects in/near Protected Areas or Eco-Sensitive Zones granted Environmental Clearance during FY2024-25 and 2025-26
- NCAP covers 130 cities with City-Specific Clean Air Action Plans; Rs 16,423.55 crore sanctioned (2019-20 to 2025-26), 70.5% utilised; funded via XVth Finance Commission's Million-Plus Cities Challenge Fund (48 cities) and the Central Sector Scheme 'Control of Pollution' (82 non-attainment cities)
- 11,108 industries in NCAP cities have transitioned to cleaner fuels (natural gas/PNG/LNG/LPG/biogas)

9. Schemes & Committees

26 articles

VB-G RAM G Act Takes Effect: 125 Days' Work Guarantee, Rs 300 Wage Floor

01 Jul

- The Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) [VB-G RAM G] Act, 2025 came into force across India on 1 July 2026, giving eligible rural households a statutory right to 125 days of wage employment a year.
- It replaces MGNREGA (2005), which guaranteed 100 days.
- Revised wage rates were notified the same day: no notified daily wage is below Rs 300, and the national average rose from Rs 298.8 to Rs 327.4 (over 10%).
- The Centre released an interim allocation of Rs 95,692.31 crore to States/UTs; the national launch was set for 2 July 2026 in Tirupati district, Andhra Pradesh.

QUICK FACTS

Full name	Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, 2025 (VB-G RAM G).
Nodal ministry	Ministry of Rural Development.
Legislative path	introduced in Lok Sabha 16 Dec 2025; passed by both Houses 18 Dec 2025; Presidential assent 20 Dec 2025; in force nationwide 1 July 2026.
Guarantee	125 days of wage employment per rural household per financial year (MGNREGA: 100 days).
Largest wage increases (15-25%)	Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh.
Interim allocation released before day one	Rs 95,692.31 crore.
Entitlement document	Rural Employment Guarantee Card, distributed at the national launch on 2 July 2026 at Mukkavaripalle village, Tirupati district, Andhra Pradesh, alongside a VB-G RAM G software platform.

- Wage floor after the 1 July 2026 notification: Rs 300/day; national average notified wage Rs 327.4 (was Rs 298.8).

CCEA Cuts Broken-Grain Limit in PMGKAY Rice to 10% Raw, 5% Parboiled

02 Jul

- The CCEA revised PMGKAY rice norms for the first time in nearly three decades: broken grains capped at 10% in raw rice (from 25%) and 5% in parboiled rice (from 16%).
- Procurement of the new-grade rice starts at once and covers all procuring States in phases by Kharif Marketing Season 2027-28; distribution also shifts in phases.
- Broken rice will be separated at the mill and auctioned from millers' premises, saving an estimated Rs 2,161 crore a year on transport, storage and packaging.
- Rice bags will carry QR codes for end-to-end traceability; entitlements of over 80 crore beneficiaries stay unchanged.

QUICK FACTS

Deciding body	Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA); announced by Union Food Minister Pralhad Joshi on 1 July 2026, PIB release 2 July 2026.

- Applies to rice under PMGKAY and Other Welfare Schemes; the first revision of PDS rice quality specifications in about 30 years.
- Pilot already run in Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Odisha, Telangana and Chhattisgarh; pilot rice will now be distributed.
- Broken rice to go into HDPE bags, cutting jute bag demand; its sale adds revenue and trims the food subsidy.
- Broken rice from milling is to be put to industrial uses.
- QR-code tagging of rice bags for supply-chain traceability and plugging leakages.

Modified UDAN Launched From Jodhpur: Rs 28,840 Crore for 100 Airstrips, 200 Helipads

04 Jul

- PM Modi launched the Modified UDAN (Viksit UDAN) scheme from Jodhpur on 4 July 2026 — about Rs 29,000 crore (Cabinet figure Rs 28,840 crore) over ten years, FY 2026-27 to FY 2035-36.
- It funds 100 aerodromes from unserved airstrips (Rs 12,159 crore), 200 helipads (Rs 3,661 crore), O&M support for regional airports (Rs 2,577 crore) and continued Viability Gap Funding (Rs 10,043 crore).
- The scheme pushes indigenous platforms — HAL Dhruv helicopters and Dornier aircraft — for remote routes.
- Since October 2016, UDAN has operationalised 669 routes and connected 95 airports, heliports and water aerodromes, carrying over 1.66 crore passengers.
- AAI's new Rs 480 crore terminal at Jodhpur (20 lakh passengers a year, targeting 5-Star GRIHA) was inaugurated the same day.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Regional Connectivity Scheme – Modified UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik); launched by PM at Jodhpur, 4 July 2026.
Nodal ministry	Ministry of Civil Aviation.
UDAN so far	669 routes, 95 airports/heliports/water aerodromes, 1.66 crore+ passengers.
Indigenous platforms promoted	HAL Dhruv (helicopter) and Dornier 228 (19-seat turboprop licence-built by HAL at Kanpur).
Jodhpur New Terminal Building	built by Airports Authority of India, Rs 480 crore, 23,342 sq m, 20 lakh passengers a year (old terminal ~4 lakh), 6 aerobridges.
Original UDAN fare cap	Rs 2,500 for a one-hour fixed-wing flight on at least 50% of seats.

- Approved by the Union Cabinet on 25 March 2026: Rs 28,840 crore, FY 2026-27 to FY 2035-36 (release rounds it to ~Rs 29,000 crore).
- Original UDAN launched 21 October 2016 under the National Civil Aviation Policy 2016; first flight Shimla–Delhi, 27 April 2017.

Ministry of Cooperation Turns Five: 50,000 e-PACS, Gomay Cooperative Launched, Sahakar CBS Unveiled

06 Jul

- The Ministry of Cooperation, created on 6 July 2021, marked its 5th Foundation Day on 6 July 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, with 50,000 PACS declared e-PACS.
- Gomay Cooperative Society Multi-State Limited was launched to run a dairy circular economy — cattle feed, animal health, artificial insemination, dung management, organic manure and renewable energy.
- NUCFDC unveiled Sahakar CBS, a centralised core banking platform for Urban Cooperative Banks, and Sahakar Sahyogi, a conversational-AI service platform; NDDB's Milk Supply Review Dashboard also went live.
- The national cooperative database now holds 8.58 lakh societies across 30 sectors with 32 crore members; nine national-level cooperative societies now operate, three of them newly created.
- Urban Cooperative Banks' gross NPA fell from 12.8% to 6.2% and net NPA from 5.1% to 0.7% over five years, as stated by the Minister.

QUICK FACTS

Ministry of Cooperation	set up 6 July 2021; before that, cooperation was handled in the Ministry of Agriculture for 62 years. Minister: Amit Shah (also Home Minister).
Foundation Day 2026 venue	Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi; guiding motto 'Sahkar Se Samriddhi'.
Godowns	135 transferred, 85 dedicated, foundation stones for 47 more.
BBSSL tissue-culture facilities	bhoomi pujan at Barabanki (UP) and Jalgaon (Maharashtra); BBSSL-ICAR MoU on seed systems signed.
Cooperatives' share (per the Minister)	~20% of agricultural credit, 35% of fertiliser distribution, 31% of sugar production.
Announced next	a cooperative life insurance company and a Utility Aggregator Cooperative on the Bharat Taxi model.

- 50,000 PACS converted into e-PACS — their entire business now runs electronically, with e-audit.
- Gomay Cooperative Society Multi-State Limited — new national dairy circular-economy cooperative, launched 6 July 2026.
- Cooperative Milk Producers Organization Multi-State Limited inaugurated; NCD 3.0 and a geo-tag mobile app launched; model bye-laws for dairy cooperatives released.
- Over 152 major initiatives launched by the Ministry since 2021.

ABDM Links 104 Crore Health Records to 93 Crore ABHA Accounts; Aarogya Setu 2.0 Relaunched

06 Jul

- Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), launched September 2021, now links over 104 crore health records to over 93 crore ABHA accounts, per a PIB backgrounder of 6 July 2026.
- Aarogya Setu 2.0, the old COVID-19 contact-tracing app rebuilt as ABDM's citizen health app and Personal Health Record, was launched on 29 June 2026 by Health Minister J.P. Nadda.
- The Scan and Share QR service has issued 23.21 crore ABHA-linked tokens, and an IIHMR study found it cut OPD waiting from about an hour to 2-5 minutes.
- Under the Digital Health Incentive Scheme, hospitals have received Rs 107+ crore, labs and pharmacies Rs 2.95 crore and digital solution companies Rs 26+ crore (as of 18 June 2026).

QUICK FACTS

ABDM	launched 27 September 2021 by the PM; Cabinet outlay Rs 1,600 crore for five years (2021-22 to 2025-26); piloted first in six UTs.
Implementing agency	National Health Authority (NHA), under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
ABHA	14-digit unique health identifier that links a person's records across hospitals, labs, insurers and national programmes, with consent.
Milestone path	100 crore records linked to 90 crore ABHA in May 2026, and 104 crore to 93 crore by July 2026.
Privacy by design	records stay with whoever created them; there is no central government server, and sharing is consent-based, revocable and time-bound.
eSushrut@Clinic (launched June 2026)	lightweight HMIS for small clinics, built by C-DAC; 2,200+ facilities onboarded.

- New apps must clear a sandbox and a security audit before connecting to ABDM.
- SAHI and BODH were launched on 17 February 2026 at the India AI Impact Summit, Bharat Mandapam.

Cabinet Approves Semicon 2.0 with Rs 1,27,500 Crore Outlay

15 Jul

- The Union Cabinet approved Semicon 2.0 with a budget outlay of Rs 1,27,500 crore to build the full semiconductor value chain in India.
- It rests on six pillars: design, machines and materials, more fabs, ATMP/OSAT, R&D towards advanced nodes, and talent.
- Under Semicon 1.0, 12 units worth over Rs 1.64 lakh crore were approved; Micron, Kaynes and CG Semi have begun commercial production.
- India's first fab is due to be commissioned in 2028; the target is a USD 200 billion domestic semiconductor market by 2035.

QUICK FACTS

Decision	Union Cabinet (not CCEA), 15 July 2026; outlay Rs 1,27,500 crore.
Commercial production started	Micron ATMP, Kaynes Semicon, CG Power OSAT.
Current node range	28-110 nm; Semicon 2.0 targets more advanced nodes.
Target	USD 200 billion domestic semiconductor market by 2035.

- Successor to the Semicon India Programme (Semicon 1.0), approved 15 December 2021 with Rs 76,000 crore.

- Implemented through the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM), under MeitY.
- 12 units approved so far in six states: Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Assam, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh.
- First fab scheduled to be commissioned in 2028.

Cabinet Approves Rs 62,500 Crore Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS)

15 Jul

- The Union Cabinet approved the Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS) with an outlay of Rs 62,500 crore for FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31.
- It pays 2.25% to 5% on eligible sales, up to 1.5% extra for domestic sourcing of components, and 3% extra for design and R&D by Indian brands.
- MPMS follows the PLI Scheme for Large Scale Electronics Manufacturing, whose tenure ended on 31 March 2026.
- India is the world's second-largest mobile phone maker, and mobile phones became India's largest export item in FY 2025-26.

QUICK FACTS

Approved by	Union Cabinet, 15 July 2026; nodal ministry MeitY.
Outlay	Rs 62,500 crore; tenure 5 years, FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31.
Base incentive	2.25%-5% of eligible sales of phones made in India.
Domestic-sourcing top-up	up to 1.5% for local key components/sub-assemblies.
Indian-brand top-up	3% of eligible sales for design and R&D.
Expected	cumulative production of about Rs 39 lakh crore and around 60,000 direct jobs.

- 99.2% of phones used in India are made in India.
- Predecessor PLI-LSEM ended 31 March 2026.

World Youth Skills Day 2026: MSDE Unveils Skilling Initiatives, NCVET–ASQA Sign Letter of Intent

15 Jul

- World Youth Skills Day (15 July) 2026, theme 'Skills for a Shared Future': MSDE released IndiaSkills Competition 2026-27 Guidelines (63 skill categories), launched the WorldSkills India Champions Club and a multi-skilled caregiver programme under PMKVY.
- NCVET (India) and the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) signed a Letter of Intent on quality assurance in TVET, as an outcome of the Prime Minister's visit to Australia.
- A proposed Skills Outcomes Fund of about Rs 530 crore, housed in NSDC, will pay against verified certification, placement and retention outcomes for over 2 lakh youth.
- MSDE constituted a Committee on Gender Mainstreaming and extended the NAPS apprenticeship pilot in the North Eastern Region.
- A PIB backgrounder put PMKVY 4.0 at 28.17 lakh trained (30 June 2026) and NAPS at 54.41 lakh apprentices since 2016.

QUICK FACTS

World Youth Skills Day	15 July, declared by the UN General Assembly in 2014; 2026 theme 'Skills for a Shared Future'.
NCVET	India's vocational education regulator, set up 5 December 2018 by subsuming NCVT and NSDA; Chairperson Debashree Mukherjee (also Secretary, MSDE).
ASQA	Australia's national VET regulator, set up under the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011.
Skills Outcomes Fund	~Rs 530 crore, within NSDC; MoUs MSDE–NSDC and NSDC–British Asian India Foundation (India Skills Outcomes Platform).
Caregiver programme	Budget 2026-27 target 1.5 lakh multi-skilled caregivers, 1.3 lakh via the MSDE ecosystem.
Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH)	unified skilling platform launched 13 September 2023; IndiaSkills 2026-27 registrations run on it.
India Skills Report 2026	employability 56.4% (46% in 2020).
Demography	over 54% of Indians are below 25; 62%+ are aged 15-59.

- Skill India Mission was launched on World Youth Skills Day, 15 July 2015; MSDE itself was set up in November 2014.
- PM Internship Scheme (Ministry of Corporate Affairs): pilot launched October 2024; target 1 crore internships in top 500 companies over 5 years; pilot stipend Rs 5,000/month.

Modified UDAN: Rs 28,840 Crore for 100 Airports, 200 Helipads Over FY27-FY36

17 Jul

- Modified UDAN (Regional Connectivity Scheme) runs for 10 years, FY 2026-27 to FY 2035-36, with an outlay of Rs 28,840 crore — it plans 100 new airports from unserved airstrips and 200 modern helipads.
- Viability Gap Funding for airlines gets Rs 10,043 crore; support lasts up to five years, tapers from year three, and route exclusivity is capped at three years.
- Nine-year tally of UDAN (as of 15 July 2026): 679 routes, 95 airports/heliports/water aerodromes, 3.58 lakh flights and over 1.68 crore passengers.
- Operational airports in India rose from 74 in 2014 to 165 as of 15 July 2026.
- Alliance Air began Daman's first direct air link (Daman-Delhi) on 16 July 2026 from the new NAMO Airport, a civil terminal at Indian Coast Guard Air Station Daman.

QUICK FACTS

Modified UDAN	Cabinet approval March 2026; launched 4 July 2026; period FY 2026-27 to FY 2035-36; total outlay Rs 28,840 crore.
Targets	100 airports developed from existing unserved airstrips; 200 modern helipads at about Rs 15 crore each.
Funding innovation	the RCS levy — a small fee on selected categories of domestic flights funds regional connectivity from within the sector.
Indigenous aircraft	two HAL Dhruv helicopters for Pawan Hans and two HAL Dornier aircraft for Alliance Air.
Passenger facilities under UDAN	UDAN Yatri Cafés (affordable food), Flybrary (free books) and free Wi-Fi.

- UDAN = Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik; launched 21 October 2016 under the Ministry of Civil Aviation as the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS).
- UDAN was conceived under the National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) 2016; first UDAN flight: Shimla-Delhi, 27 April 2017, flown by Alliance Air.
- India is the third-largest domestic aviation market in the world.

Government Highlights PMKVY 4.0 Success and Skilling Reforms Under Skill India Mission

22 Jul

- The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship detailed the evolution and impact of the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) under the Skill India Mission.
- An independent evaluation of PMKVY 4.0 showed a significant 18.8 percentage point increase in employment outcomes for short-term training candidates.

- A new Skills Outcomes Fund, with a proposed corpus of Rs 530 crore, has been established by NSDC to focus on measurable employment and livelihood outcomes.

QUICK FACTS

Mission	Skill India Mission (Launched 2015)
Flagship Scheme	Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (currently in version 4.0)
Nodal Regulator	National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET)
New Financing Model	Skills Outcomes Fund (corpus of ~Rs 530 crore) anchored by NSDC
Digital Integration	Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH) launched to unify skilling, education, and employment ecosystems

Cabinet Approves BHAVYA Rasayan Scheme with Rs 3,030 Crore Outlay for Chemical Parks

24 Jul

- The Union Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi approved the Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana Rasayan (BHAVYA Rasayan) scheme on 24 July 2026.
- The scheme aims to establish three world-class, dedicated Chemical Parks across India to boost the chemical manufacturing ecosystem.
- It carries a total financial outlay of Rs 3,030 crore, for implementation over a five-year period from FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31.
- The Centre will provide a grant of up to Rs 1,000 crore per park, subject to the host state contributing a minimum of Rs 500 crore.
- Parks will be selected via a challenge method and require a minimum of 2,000 acres (8 sq. km.) of contiguous, encumbrance-free land.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme name	Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana Rasayan (BHAVYA Rasayan).
Approved by	Union Cabinet on 24 July 2026.
Total Outlay	Rs 3,030 crore.
Implementation Period	Five years (FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31).
Target	Establishment of three dedicated Chemical Parks.
Funding model	Central grant of up to Rs 1,000 crore per park; minimum state contribution of Rs 500 crore.

Poshan Tracker and Saksham Anganwadi Drive Nutritional Outcomes

24 Jul

- The 'Poshan Tracker' app is enabling real-time monitoring of Anganwadi Centres and beneficiaries under Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0.
- Over 99.88% of registered beneficiaries are Aadhaar verified, and a Nominee Module ensures uninterrupted Take-Home Ration delivery.
- Two lakh Anganwadi Centres have been approved for upgrade to Saksham Anganwadis with better infrastructure.
- The honorarium for Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) was enhanced to Rs 4,500/month by the Central Government.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0.
Ministry	Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD).
Key Tool	Poshan Tracker (real-time monitoring app).
Aadhaar Verification	99.88% of registered beneficiaries verified.
Honorarium	AWWs receive Rs 4,500/month (enhanced from Rs 3,000) from the Centre.
Upgrades	2 lakh Anganwadi Centres approved to be upgraded as Saksham Anganwadis.
Beneficiaries	Children (0-6 yrs), pregnant women, lactating mothers, adolescent girls (14-18 yrs in Aspirational/NE districts).

SVEP Supports Over 4.32 Lakh Enterprises; 99% Profitable

25 Jul

- SVEP has supported over 4.32 lakh rural enterprises by mid-June 2026.
- Around 86% of entrepreneurs belong to marginalized communities.
- The Quality Council of India evaluation found 99% of enterprises profitable.

QUICK FACTS

Programme	Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP).
Launch Year	2016.
Parent Scheme	Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM).
Nodal Ministry	Ministry of Rural Development.
Total Enterprises Supported	4.32 lakh (by June 2026).
Total Funding	Cumulative central share of Rs 942.09 crore up to February 2026.

Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme, SAMARTH Portal & Model OSR Rules Launched

27 Jul

- Union Minister of Panchayati Raj Rajiv Ranjan Singh launched the Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme, the SAMARTH Panchayat Portal, and released Model OSR (Own Source of Revenue) Rules for Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) at Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi.
- The Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme will develop 350 revenue-generating projects over four years (50 in year 1, 100 each in the following three years) from Gram/Block Panchayats' local assets, financed via PPP, CSR, scheme convergence and bank finance, with NABARD and HUDCO as institutional partners.
- The SAMARTH Portal, a unified national platform for digitally managing Panchayat OSR, has already onboarded Chhattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh — registering over 51 lakh taxpayers, generating Rs 95 crore in demand notices and collecting over Rs 27 crore.
- Model OSR Rules give States/UTs an advisory framework for transparent assessment, collection and management of Panchayat revenues such as property tax and user charges, building on Sixteenth Finance Commission recommendations.
- The Ministry also received a Gold Award at the National Awards for e-Governance (NAeG) 2026 for the Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) — one of 4 Panchayati Raj-related awards (3 Gold, 1 Silver) at the 29th National Conference on e-Governance (Jaipur, 1-2 July 2026).

QUICK FACTS

Three instruments launched together	Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme, SAMARTH Panchayat Portal, Model OSR Rules — all by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj
Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme	350 projects over 4 years (50 + 100 + 100 + 100); institutional financing partners NABARD & HUDCO
Eligibility	Gram Panchayats need minimum OSR Rs 50 lakh, Block Panchayats need minimum OSR Rs 1 crore (thresholds relaxed for special category States), each with at least 3 years' tenure remaining
SAMARTH Portal	live in Chhattisgarh & Himachal Pradesh; 51 lakh+ taxpayers registered, Rs 95 crore demand generated, Rs 27 crore+ collected; onboarding underway in Maharashtra, Mizoram, Assam,

Haryana, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh

- Launched by Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh (alias Lalan Singh); also present: MoS Prof. S.P. Singh Baghel, Secretary Vivek Bharadwaj
- Both initiatives explicitly build on the Sixteenth Finance Commission's recommendations on strengthening Panchayat Own Source Revenue (OSR)
- Ministry won Gold at NAeG 2026 for the Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI); 4 total PRI-related awards (3 Gold, 1 Silver) at the 29th National Conference on e-Governance, Jaipur, 1-2 July 2026

Jal Jeevan Mission: Tap Water Coverage at 82.09%, Scheme Extended to 2028 as JJM 2.0

27 Jul

- The Union Minister for Jal Shakti told the Rajya Sabha that rural tap water coverage under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) — Har Ghar Jal has risen from 16.71% (3.23 crore households) at launch in August 2019 to 82.09% (15.89 crore of 19.36 crore rural households) as on 18.07.2026.
- In March 2026, the Union Cabinet approved extending JJM to December 2028 as 'JJM 2.0', with the total outlay enhanced from Rs 3.60 lakh crore to Rs 8.69 lakh crore (central share up from Rs 2.08 lakh crore to Rs 3.59 lakh crore) and a Comprehensive Implementation and Reform Plan (CIRP) for each State/UT.
- A new 'Jal Arpan' community-led initiative, with a standardised Handbook on Community-Managed Piped Water Systems mandating a 15-day trial run, aims to ensure sustainable handover of completed schemes to Gram Panchayats/VWSCs/Pani Samitis.
- Drinking water remains a State subject — implementation, O&M and user-charge collection rest with States/UTs, with the Centre providing technical and financial support; every connection must meet the BIS:10500 quality standard at 55 litres per capita per day.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) — Har Ghar Jal; launched 15 August 2019; nodal: Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti
Goal	assured potable water at 55 litres per capita per day (lpcd), of BIS:10500-prescribed quality, via tap connection, to every rural household
Coverage	16.71% (3.23 crore households) at launch (15.08.2019) -> 82.09% (15.89 crore of 19.36 crore rural households) as on 18.07.2026; 12.66 crore additional households connected since launch
JJM 2.0	Union Cabinet approved extension to December 2028 in March 2026; total outlay Rs 3.60 lakh crore -> Rs 8.69 lakh crore (central share Rs 2.08 lakh crore -> Rs 3.59 lakh crore); additional central outlay Rs 1.51 lakh crore
Implementation tool	Comprehensive Implementation and Reform Plan (CIRP), to be prepared by each State/UT
'Jal Arpan'	community-led event plus a standardised Handbook on Community-Managed Piped Water Systems; mandates a 15-day trial run before scheme handover to GPs/VWSCs/Pani Samitis

- Drinking water is a State subject — planning, approval, implementation and O&M rest with States/UTs; the Centre gives technical and financial assistance only
- Information given by Union Minister for Jal Shakti Shri C.R. Patil in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha

PM E-DRIVE Incentivises 23.2 Lakh EVs; India's EV Penetration Rises to 8.2%

28 Jul

- Under the PM E-DRIVE Scheme (Rs 10,900 crore outlay, notified 29.09.2024), 23,22,878 EVs have been incentivised with Rs 2,281.94 crore reimbursed to OEMs, as on 22.07.2026; EV penetration has risen from 0.7% (FY2019-20) to 8.2% (FY2025-26).
- Its predecessor, FAME-II (2019-2024, Rs 11,500 crore outlay), supported about 16.72 lakh EVs and deployed 5,197 e-buses; the PLI-Auto Scheme (Rs 25,938 crore, approved 23.09.2021) has attracted Rs 44,326 crore investment and generated 67,820 jobs.
- The PLI Scheme for ACC Battery Storage (Rs 18,100 crore, 50 GWh target) has awarded 40 GWh capacity to four firms and established a 1.4 GWh Giga-scale plant; a new Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (Rs 7,280 crore, 6,000 MTPA target) had its RFP published 20 March 2026.

- Under PM E-DRIVE, Rs 2,000 crore is earmarked for EV public charging stations (6,562 chargers approved so far) and 14,000 e-buses have been allocated across seven metro cities and Jammu & Kashmir.

QUICK FACTS

PM E-DRIVE	Rs 10,900 crore outlay; notified 29.09.2024, effective 01.04.2024 (subsumed EMPS 2024); runs to 31.03.2028
FAME-II (2019-2024)	Rs 11,500 crore outlay; ~16.72 lakh EVs supported, 5,197 e-buses deployed
PLI-Auto	Rs 25,938 crore outlay, approved 23.09.2021; Rs 44,326 crore investment attracted, 67,820 jobs generated (till 31.03.2026)
EV penetration	0.7% (FY2019-20) -> 8.2% (FY2025-26)

PM-AJAY Continuation Proposed With Enhanced Outlay for 2026-31; Rs 4,277 Crore Released So Far

28 Jul

- The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment has proposed continuing PM-AJAY from 2026-27 to 2030-31 with an enhanced financial outlay; since its 2021-22 launch, the Centre has released Rs 4,276.62 crore (up to 2025-26) across 30 States/UTs, with Rs 1,100.09 crore released in 2025-26 alone.
- A NITI Aayog DMEO evaluation found PM-AJAY has significantly improved infrastructure, electricity, banking access, healthcare, education and livelihoods in SC-dominated areas.
- Under the Adarsh Gram component, 3,112 villages have been identified since 2018-19, with 3,111 declared Adarsh Gram in Tamil Nadu alone.
- Separately, the government is expanding NCC coverage in SC-concentrated/PM-AJAY areas: of 263 identified schools, only 25 already have NCC units, 8 are waitlisted, and 230 are yet to apply — no Maharashtra school features on the list.

QUICK FACTS

Three components	Adarsh Gram, Grants-in-Aid, Hostels
Released since launch	Rs 4,276.62 crore (up to 2025-26); utilised: Rs 3,185.07 crore; Rs 1,100.09 crore released in 2025-26 alone
Adarsh Gram	3,112 villages identified since 2018-19; 3,111 declared in Tamil Nadu

– PM-AJAY launched 2021-22; merges three erstwhile schemes: PMAGY, SCA to SCSP, and Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY)

India's AYUSH Exports Cross $1.25 Billion; Yoga Diplomacy Expands via 100+ MoUs

28 Jul

- Since the UN adopted 21 June as International Day of Yoga in 2014 (on India's proposal), the Ministry of AYUSH has signed 27 Country-to-Country MoUs, 16 Ayush Chair MoUs and 57 Institute-to-Institute MoUs to promote Yoga and AYUSH systems globally, offering 104 annual scholarship slots to foreign nationals.
- WHO and the Ministry of AYUSH jointly developed a Technical Report on Training in Yoga, setting international training standards; new MoUs were signed in 2025 (with Mongolia's Yoga Federation) and 2026 (with a Réunion-based cultural body) for academic collaboration.
- India's AYUSH product exports grew from $869.81 million (FY2020-21) to $1,251.25 million (FY2025-26) — a CAGR of 7.54% — led by Extracts ($593.06 million) and Medicinal & Aromatic Plants ($456.34 million).
- Research councils/institutes under the Ministry (CCRAS, CCRYN, CCRH, NIA, NIN, NEIAH, National Commission for Homeopathy, PCIM&H, ITRA) are running active research, capacity-building and employment-generating programmes across Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy and Homeopathy.

QUICK FACTS

Ministry of AYUSH	27 Country-to-Country MoUs, 16 Ayush Chair MoUs, 57 Institute-to-Institute MoUs for global Yoga/AYUSH promotion; 104 annual scholarship slots for foreign nationals
WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre (GCTM)	world's first and only such centre, established at Jamnagar, Gujarat; foundation laid by PM Modi with WHO DG Tedros, launched April 2022
AYUSH exports	$869.81 million (FY2020-21) -> $1,251.25 million (FY2025-26), CAGR 7.54%

– International Day of Yoga (21 June) adopted by UN General Assembly Resolution 69/131 on 11 December 2014, proposed by India, endorsed by 175 member states

PMMSY Approves Rs 21,461 Crore for Fisheries Development Over Six Years

28 Jul

- Over the last six years, the Department of Fisheries has approved PMMSY projects worth Rs 21,461 crore (Central share Rs 9,571 crore) across 34 States/UTs, releasing Rs 6,206 crore so far; fish production rose from 141.64 lakh tonnes (2019-20) to a record 197.75 lakh tonnes (2024-25).
- PMMSY, running since FY2020-21, has been continued till September 2026 in its existing form, with Rs 2,500 crore allocated for FY2026-27; NITI Aayog's evaluation recommended its continuation.
- Under the Group Accidental Insurance Scheme (GAIS), an average of 35.74 lakh active fishers are enrolled annually, with cover of Rs 5 lakh for death/total disability, Rs 2.5 lakh for partial disability and Rs 25,000 hospitalisation support — sharply higher than under the erstwhile Blue Revolution scheme.
- Under the Union Budget 2026-27's integrated development of reservoirs and Amrit Sarovars, 351 reservoirs and 100 Amrit Sarovars have been identified across states for fisheries infrastructure.

QUICK FACTS

6-year approvals	Rs 21,461 crore (Central share Rs 9,571 crore); Rs 6,206 crore released; continued till September 2026 as-is, Rs 2,500 crore allocated for FY2026-27
Fish production	141.64 lakh tonnes (2019-20) -> 197.75 lakh tonnes (2024-25, record); exports: Rs 46,663 crore (2019-20) -> Rs 73,890 crore (2025-26)

– PMMSY launched September 2020 (effective FY2020-21) as the flagship fisheries/aquaculture scheme; predecessor: Blue Revolution scheme (2015, Rs 3,000 crore outlay)

– 58 lakh direct and indirect jobs created in fisheries/aquaculture-related activities

Devolution Index 2024 Ranks States on Panchayat Empowerment; Rs 2.83 Lakh Crore Released Under 15th FC

28 Jul

- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj released 'Status of Devolution to Panchayats in States — An Indicative Evidence-Based Ranking, 2024' in February 2025, introducing a Devolution Index ranking States/UTs on six dimensions — Framework, Functions, Finances, Functionaries, Capacity Enhancement, and Accountability.
- During the 15th Finance Commission award period (FY2020-21 to FY2025-26), Rs 2,82,632 crore has been released against a total allocation of Rs 2,97,555 crore to Panchayati Raj Institutions.
- Under the Revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA, since FY2022-23), Rs 3,601.77 crore has been released over five years; 1.66 crore+ Elected Representatives trained; 90.73% of PRIs (2,40,435 of 2,64,998) generated audit reports in FY2024-25 via the eGramSwaraj-PFMS-AuditOnline digital ecosystem.
- New digital tools include the SAMARTH Panchayat portal (for Own Source Revenue collection) and the Atma Nirbhar Panchayat Special Award (ANPSA, launched 2025) to incentivise Panchayats' own-revenue growth.

QUICK FACTS

15th FC (FY2020-21 to FY2025-26)	Rs 2,82,632 crore released of Rs 2,97,555 crore allocated to PRIs

– 'Panchayat' is a State List subject (Seventh Schedule) under Part IX (Article 243) of the Constitution, added by the 73rd Constitutional Amendment, 1992 (in force 24 April 1993)

- Article 243G empowers States to devolve powers over the 29 subjects in the Eleventh Schedule to Panchayats — devolution is a State legislative choice, not automatic
- Devolution Index report released February 2025, based on six dimensions: Framework, Functions, Finances, Functionaries, Capacity Enhancement, Accountability

PM Vidyalaxmi Scheme: Collateral-Free Education Loans for QHEI Admissions

29 Jul

- PM Vidyalaxmi Scheme, approved by the Union Cabinet on 6 November 2024, provides collateral-free, guarantor-free education loans to meritorious students admitted to 1,425 designated Quality Higher Education Institutions (QHEIs), selected by NIRF ranking
- 3% interest subvention on loans up to Rs 10 lakh for families earning up to Rs 8 lakh/year, plus a 75% Government credit guarantee on loans up to Rs 7.5 lakh; budget of Rs 3,600 crore for 2024-25 to 2030-31, targeting 7 lakh students
- In FY 2025-26, 1,10,667 of 6,45,514 total loan applications on the portal were for PM-Vidyalaxmi; 70,852 loans sanctioned and 67,728 disbursed; subvention now paid via a Digital Rupee (CBDC) wallet — 35,777 active wallets, Rs 57.66 crore disbursed as of 22 July 2026

QUICK FACTS

Budget outlay	Rs 3,600 crore (2024-25 to 2030-31); target of 7 lakh fresh beneficiaries
FY 2025-26	1,10,667 PM-Vidyalaxmi applications of 6,45,514 total on the portal; 70,852 sanctioned, 67,728 disbursed

- Approved by the Union Cabinet on 6 November 2024; a mission-mode intervention of the Ministry of Education
- 1,425 Quality Higher Education Institutions (QHEIs) currently covered, shortlisted by latest NIRF ranking
- 3% interest subvention on loans up to Rs 10 lakh for family income up to Rs 8 lakh/year, during the moratorium period
- 75% credit guarantee by Government of India on loans up to Rs 7.5 lakh, to encourage bank lending
- Interest rate capped at bank's Externally Benchmarked Lending Rate (EBLR) + 0.5%; repayment up to 15 years excluding moratorium (course period + 1 year)
- Subvention credited via PM Vidyalaxmi Digital Rupee App (CBDC Wallet) — 35,777 active wallets, Rs 57.66 crore disbursed as of 22 July 2026

RDI Scheme: Rs 2,000cr Sanctioned to TDB & BIRAC, 30 Projects Approved So Far

29 Jul

- The Rs 1-lakh-crore Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Scheme, Cabinet-approved 1 July 2025 and launched by the PM on 3 November 2025, has sanctioned Rs 1,000 crore each to TDB and BIRAC (Rs 2,000 crore total); Rs 500 crore has been disbursed to TDB
- TDB has approved 22 projects worth Rs 4,744 crore (Rs 2,192 crore RDI support); BIRAC has shortlisted 8 projects worth Rs 390.35 crore
- The Scheme gives long-term, low-interest loans and equity — not grants — evaluated on innovation and commercialisation potential rather than collateral, and is pan-India with no state-wise earmarking
- It is operationalised through a Special Purpose Fund inside ANRF, channelling money to Second-Level Fund Managers — so far TDB and BIRAC, both Focused Research Organisations

QUICK FACTS

RDI Scheme	Rs 1 lakh crore outlay over 6 years; Cabinet-approved 1 July 2025, launched by the PM 3 November 2025
TDB	22 projects approved, Rs 4,744 crore total project cost, Rs 2,192 crore RDI Fund support
BIRAC	8 projects shortlisted, Rs 390.35 crore
Funding form	long-term, low-interest loans and equity/equity-linked instruments — explicitly NOT grants

- Rs 1,000 crore each sanctioned to TDB and BIRAC (Rs 2,000 crore total); Rs 500 crore disbursed to TDB in March 2026

- Supports projects at Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 4 and above; pan-India, no state/region earmarking

PMMSY Fisheries Infrastructure: Harbours, Aquaparks, Women's Blue Economy Push

30 Jul

- Four Rajya Sabha replies together detail PMMSY's fisheries-infrastructure push: Rs 20,750 crore total outlay (2020-21 onwards, Centre-State cost-sharing usually 60:40); of 1,547 notified Fish Landing Centres nationally, 423 have been covered under infrastructure development so far.
- ISRO has indigenously developed the Vessel Communication and Support System (VCSS, Rs 364 crore) with the 'Nabhmitra' app, to be rolled out to 1 lakh marine fishing vessels for safety, SOS alerts, geo-fencing and cyclone warnings.
- 12 Integrated Aquaparks approved nationally (Rs 713.80 crore total) as end-to-end fisheries value-chain hubs; women beneficiaries get enhanced 60% government financial assistance (vs 40% for general category) for fisheries activities including deep-sea vessel acquisition, seaweed cultivation and value addition.
- NFDB (National Fisheries Development Board) has conducted 4,041 training programmes benefiting 1,75,261 fishers nationally under PMMSY's capacity-building sub-component.

QUICK FACTS

Fishing Harbour/FLC infrastructure	usually 60:40 Centre-State cost-sharing; FIDF (Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund, since 2018-19) offers up to 3% interest subvention
Women beneficiaries	60% government financial assistance (vs 40% general category) for fisheries activities under PMMSY
NFDB (National Fisheries Development Board)	nodal agency for PMMSY training; conducted 4,041 training programmes, benefiting 1,75,261 fishers

- PMMSY (Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana) launched 10 September 2020; total outlay Rs 20,750 crore
- 1,547 notified marine Fish Landing Centres nationally; 423 covered under infrastructure development so far
- VCSS (Vessel Communication and Support System): ISRO-developed, Rs 364 crore, targets 1 lakh fishing vessels with free transponders and the 'Nabhmitra' regional-language app (SOS, geo-fencing, cyclone alerts, Potential Fishing Zone advisories)
- 12 Integrated Aquaparks approved nationally at Rs 713.80 crore total cost; cost-sharing 90:10 (NE/Himalayan States), 60:40 (other States), 100% Centre (UTs)

Cabinet's PM-SSY: Rs 5,070 Crore Push for Floating Solar with Storage

31 Jul

- Cabinet approved the Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY), a Rs 5,070 crore scheme to build 5,000 MW of Floating Solar PV with co-located Energy Storage Systems (minimum 2-hour/10,000 MWh storage).
- Central Financial Assistance: Rs 1 crore per MW after commissioning, plus up to Rs 50 lakh per project for feasibility studies such as bathymetry and hydrography.
- Projects will be sanctioned FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31, with disbursement continuing to FY 2032-33, based on NISE's estimate of ~102.18 GWp of floating solar potential nationwide.
- Expected to cut ~10 million tonnes of CO2 annually and create 16,000-17,000 full-time-equivalent jobs, scaling India's floating solar capacity from ~700 MW today.

QUICK FACTS

Scheme	Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY), approved by the Union Cabinet
Total outlay	Rs 5,070 crore
Target	5,000 MW Floating Solar PV with co-located Energy Storage Systems, up from ~700 MW today
Minimum storage	2 hours per project, aggregating to 10,000 MWh
CFA	Rs 1 crore/MW post-commissioning; up to Rs 50 lakh/project for feasibility studies
Timeline	sanctioning FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31; disbursement to FY 2032-33

- Estimated national floating solar potential (NISE): ~102.18 GWp

20,149 Jan Aushadhi Kendras Operational Nationwide, PACS Partnership Expands Rural Reach

31 Jul

- 20,149 Jan Aushadhi Kendras (JAKs) are operational nationwide as of 30 June 2026 under PMBJP, including 690 in Madhya Pradesh (7 in Khandwa) and 43 in Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu.
- FY2025-26 sales reached Rs 2,252.19 crore, saving citizens an estimated Rs 9,000 crore compared to branded-drug prices; district-wise sales data is not maintained by PMBI.
- A new partnership has opened 846 JAKs through Primary Agriculture Cooperative Credit Societies (PACS), with over 4,250 PACS given initial approval, extending the scheme's reach into rural cooperative networks.

QUICK FACTS

FY2025-26 sales	Rs 2,252.19 crore; estimated citizen savings: about Rs 9,000 crore
Supply chain	5 warehouses + 42 distributors; 400 fast-moving products monitored continuously; 200 top/fast-selling medicines incentivised for stocking since September 2024
PACS partnership	846 JAKs opened via Primary Agriculture Cooperative Credit Societies; over 4,250 PACS given initial approval

- PMBJP (Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana): launched November 2008; implementing agency PMBI (Pharmaceuticals & Medical Devices Bureau of India), established December 2008
- 20,149 JAKs operational nationwide as of 30.06.2026; target 25,000 JAKs by March 2027

Cabinet approves revamped Khelo India Scheme and enhanced ANSF, Rs 36,441 crore

31 Jul

- The Union Cabinet approved a revamped Khelo India Scheme and enhanced Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSF) with a combined outlay of Rs.36,441 crore for 2026-27 to 2030-31 — nearly eight times the previous Khelo India outlay
- New elements include the Emerging Khelo India Athletes (E-KIAs) category expanding the athlete pool nearly ten-fold, Khelo India Feeder Schools, Khelo India Utkrishta Vidyalayas and a National Coach Accreditation Board (NCAB)
- The scheme is aligned with Khelo Bharat Niti 2025 and targets the 2030 Commonwealth Games and India's Olympic/Paralympic hosting ambitions

QUICK FACTS

Combined outlay	Rs.36,441 crore for Khelo India + ANSF, 2026-27 to 2030-31
ANSF allocation	Rs.7,387 crore over five years
New institutions	National Centres of Excellence (NCOEs), Khelo India Centres of Excellence (KICoEs), SAI Training Centres, Khelo India Accredited Academies, Khelo India Centres, and Youth Sports Companies of the Armed Forces
New school-level initiatives	Khelo India Feeder Schools (KIFS) and Khelo India Utkrishta Vidyalayas (KIUV)

- Nearly 8x the previous Khelo India outlay (2021-22 to 2025-26: Rs.3,790.50 crore)
- Emerging Khelo India Athletes (E-KIAs) category expands the structured athlete development pool nearly ten-fold

10. Agreements & MoUs

3 articles

India-Australia Administrative Arrangement Operationalises 2014 Civil Nuclear Pact for Uranium Supply

14 Jul

- India and Australia finalised the Administrative Arrangement under their Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement at the Third India-Australia Annual Summit (Melbourne, 9 July 2026), enabling long-term Australian uranium exports to India.
- The parent agreement was signed in September 2014 and entered into force in November 2015; the Arrangement sets the procedures that make it work. All Australian uranium will stay under IAEA safeguards.
- Australia holds more than one-third of the world's uranium resources, and it exports uranium only to countries with a civil nuclear cooperation agreement.
- The supply backs India's 100 GW-by-2047 nuclear target, the SHANTI Act, 2025 (private participation) and the Nuclear Energy Mission for Small Modular Reactors. Australia also reaffirmed support for India's NSG membership.

QUICK FACTS

What	Administrative Arrangement under the India-Australia Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, finalised 9 July 2026 at the Third India-Australia Annual Summit, Melbourne
Effect	operationalises the Agreement. It sets the implementation procedures for long-term exports of Australian uranium to India, for peaceful purposes only
Parent agreement	announced on 5 September 2014 during PM Tony Abbott's visit to India; in force from November 2015
Safeguards	all Australian uranium supplied to India remains under IAEA safeguards
Australian policy	uranium goes only to countries covered by a civil nuclear cooperation agreement

- Australia's Parliament passed the Civil Nuclear Transfers to India Bill in December 2016
- Australia holds the world's largest uranium resources, more than one-third of the global total
- India has civil nuclear Inter-Governmental Agreements (IGAs) with 18 countries
- Australia reaffirmed its support for India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)

India-UK CETA and Double Contribution Convention Enter into Force

15 Jul

- The India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the Agreement on Social Security (Double Contribution Convention) entered into force on 15 July 2026.
- Indian goods get zero-duty access on about 99% of tariff lines, covering almost 100% of India's export value to the UK; India offers concessions on 89.5% of its tariff lines.
- The Double Contribution Convention exempts Indian professionals on temporary UK assignments from paying social security in both countries for up to five years.
- The first Certificates of Origin under CETA were issued on DGFT's eCoO 2.0 platform on a self-certification basis; over 50 consignments worth more than USD 140 million shipped on day one.
- The agreement was signed on 24 July 2025 at Chequers after 14 formal negotiating rounds that began in January 2022.

QUICK FACTS

In force	15 July 2026, CETA together with the Double Contribution Convention (DCC).
Signed	24 July 2025 at Chequers, UK, when both PMs also endorsed India-UK Vision 2035.
India's exports	zero duty on ~99% of tariff lines, ~100% of trade value.
UK's exports	India concedes on 89.5% of tariff lines covering 91% of UK exports; 24.5% of UK export value duty-free immediately.
DCC	no double social security contributions for Indian workers on temporary UK postings, for up to 5 years.
Day one	50+ consignments, over USD 140 million, from 20+ ports, airports, ICDs, SEZs and factories.
Nodal department	Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

- Negotiations launched 13 January 2022; 14 formal rounds and 800+ technical sessions.
- Operational date fixed by the two leaders on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in France, 30 days earlier.

India Becomes 123rd Party to WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies

20 Jul

- India became a Party to the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies (AFS) on 20 July 2026, the 123rd WTO Member to deposit its Instrument of Acceptance.
- The AFS was adopted at the 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12), Geneva, June 2022, and entered into force on 15 September 2025 after two-thirds of Members accepted it.
- It bans subsidies to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and to fishing of overfished stocks; aquaculture and inland fisheries are outside its scope.
- India cites its EEZ fisheries rules of 2025 and PMMSY as the domestic framework for implementing it.

QUICK FACTS

Date India became a Party	20 July 2026, Instrument of Acceptance handed to the WTO Director-General by Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal
India's position	123rd WTO Member to deposit acceptance
Adopted	by consensus at MC12, Geneva, June 2022
In force	15 September 2025, once two-thirds of WTO Members had accepted
Covers	marine wild-capture fishing and fishing-related activities at sea
Excludes	aquaculture and inland fisheries
Sunset clause (Article 12)	the agreement terminates if comprehensive disciplines are not adopted within four years of entry into force, unless the General Council decides otherwise

- First WTO agreement with an environmental sustainability objective

11. Ranks & Reports

4 articles

UDISE+ 2025-26: Secondary GER Rises to 71.7%, Teachers Cross 1.02 Crore

07 Jul

- Ministry of Education released the UDISE+ 2025-26 report: teachers rose to 1,02,73,020, up 8.3% over 2022-23.
- Secondary GER climbed from 68.5% to 71.7%; secondary dropout fell from 8.2% to 7.0% and secondary retention rose from 47.2% to 51.9%.
- Pupil-Teacher Ratio stands at 10 (Foundational), 12 (Preparatory), 17 (Middle) and 21 (Secondary).
- Zero-enrolment schools fell about 29% to 5,663; single-teacher schools fell about 3% to 1,00,843; women are 54.9% of teachers.

QUICK FACTS

Report	UDISE+ 2025-26 on School Education in India, released 7 July 2026 by the Ministry of Education (Department of School Education & Literacy), in both the existing and NEP-stage formats.
Teachers	1,02,73,020 in 2025-26 (94,83,294 in 2022-23).
Girls' share of enrolment	48.4%; female teachers: 54.9%.

- UDISE+ = Unified District Information System for Education Plus; online, school-level data system running since 2018-19, covering about 14.7 lakh schools.
- It succeeded UDISE (2012-13), which merged DISE (elementary) and SEMIS (secondary).
- Schools with computers 69.9%, internet 67.4%, electricity 95.0%, ramps with handrails 58.2%, rainwater harvesting 29.9%.

FOUR-YEAR TREND IN KEY INDICATORS

Indicator	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
PTR — Foundational	11	10	10	10
PTR — Preparatory	14	13	13	12
PTR — Middle	18	18	17	17
PTR — Secondary	23	21	21	21
Dropout % — Preparatory	8.7	3.7	2.3	1.8
Dropout % — Middle	8.1	5.2	3.5	3.6
Dropout % — Secondary	13.8	10.9	8.2	7.0
Retention % — Middle	75.8	78.0	82.8	83.7
Retention % — Secondary	44.1	45.6	47.2	51.9
GER % — Middle	90.0	89.5	90.3	89.6
GER % — Secondary	67.6	66.5	68.5	71.7
Transition % — Middle to Secondary	86.7	83.3	86.6	88.3
Single-teacher schools	1,18,190	1,10,971	1,04,125	1,00,843
Zero-enrolment schools	10,294	12,954	7,993	5,663
Schools with internet %	49.7	53.9	63.5	67.4

Source: Ministry of Education release on UDISE+ 2025-26, 7 July 2026. Middle-stage dropout rose slightly (3.5 to 3.6); Foundational and Preparatory retention dipped after three years of gains.

PGI 2.0 for 2025-26: Chandigarh Sole Uttam-3, No State in Bottom Two Bands

07 Jul

- Chandigarh topped the Performance Grading Index 2.0 for 2025-26 with 766.0 of 1,000 points — the only State/UT to reach the Uttam-3 grade.
- Punjab, Kerala, Delhi and Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu formed the next band (Prachesta-1); Meghalaya scored lowest at 525.7.

- For the first time no State/UT fell in the bottom two bands (Akanshi-2 and Akanshi-3).
- The Ministry of Education also released PGI for Districts (PGI-D) 2025-26: 600 points, 70 indicators, 11 domains.

QUICK FACTS

Publisher	Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education; released 7 July 2026.
System size cited	14.67 lakh schools, 1.03 crore teachers, about 24.72 crore students.
Top	Chandigarh, 766.0 (Uttam-3). Bottom: Meghalaya, 525.7 (Akanshi-1).

- PGI grades States/UTs into bands rather than ranks, so several can share a band.
- PGI-States was first released for 2017-18; restructured as PGI 2.0 from 2021-22 to align with NEP 2020.
- The top grade band needs more than 940 points; no State/UT has reached it.
- The gap between the top and bottom scorer narrowed to 240.3 points.

2025-26 GRADE BANDS

Grade	States/UTs
Uttam-3	Chandigarh
Prachesta-1	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Punjab, Kerala, Delhi
Prachesta-2	Lakshadweep, Himachal Pradesh, Goa, Maharashtra, Odisha
Prachesta-3	Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Tamil Nadu, Sikkim, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Haryana, Telangana, Karnataka, Ladakh, Rajasthan, Puducherry, Uttarakhand
Akanshi-1	Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Tripura, Jharkhand, Mizoram, Manipur, Jammu & Kashmir, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya

Grades as reported in published analyses of the PGI 2.0 2025-26 report; the PIB release itself does not list them. All 36 States/UTs graded.

NITI Aayog's First Investment Friendliness Index: Gujarat Tops, Five States 'Top Performers'

17 Jul

- NITI Aayog released its first Investment Friendliness Index (IFI): Gujarat ranks first, and Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Goa and Odisha are the five 'Top Performers'.
- The index covers all 28 states and 8 UTs on 8 pillars and 84 indicators, mixing secondary data with an investor perception survey.
- Peer-group toppers: Gujarat (Large States), Uttarakhand (Hilly and North-Eastern States), Goa (UTs and City States).
- It was announced in the Union Budget 2025-26 after the PM asked NITI Aayog at the 9th Governing Council meeting (July 2024) to draft an Investment-Friendly Charter.

QUICK FACTS

Publisher	NITI Aayog. Edition: first ever (2026). Coverage: 28 states + 8 UTs.
Framework	8 pillars, 84 indicators; secondary data plus an investor perception survey.
Score bands	Top Performers (above 50), Frontrunners (45-50), Emerging Performers (40 to below 45), Aspiring (below 40).
Distribution	5 Top Performers, 15 Frontrunners, 8 Emerging Performers, 8 Aspiring.

- Gujarat scored 56.6, the highest; Odisha, the fifth Top Performer, scored 52.4.
- Announced in the Union Budget 2025-26 (1 February 2025) to further 'competitive cooperative federalism'.

RESULTS

Group	1st	2nd	3rd
Overall / Large States	Gujarat (56.6)	Maharashtra (53.7)	Tamil Nadu (53.3)
Hilly and North-Eastern States	Uttarakhand	Assam	Himachal Pradesh
UTs and City States	Goa	Delhi	Chandigarh

Source: PIB release of 17 July 2026 for ranks; scores from the NITI Aayog report as reported by ThePrint and Drishti IAS. Goa (53.1) and Odisha (52.4) complete the five Top Performers.

India Becomes World's 2nd-Largest Seafarer Supplier; Government Launches Mission 20%

28 Jul

- Per the BIMCO-ICS Seafarer Workforce Report 2026, India has become the world's second-largest supplier of seafarers with 311,936 professionals — 12.16% of the global seafaring workforce — up from fifth place and 5.2% in 2015, behind only the Philippines.
- Indian officers number 140,718 (13.41% of the world's officer workforce); Indian ratings number 171,218 (11.29% of global ratings); global seafarer supply stands at 2.57 million against demand of 2.55 million.
- The Government has launched 'Mission 20%' to raise India's global seafarer share from 12.16% to 20% — one in five seafarers worldwide — via expanded training capacity, industry-academia partnerships and greater opportunities for women.
- Separately, the Shipping Minister reviewed seafarer safety in conflict-sensitive regions (West Asia, Black Sea) with MEA, DG Shipping and Indian Missions in Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Russia and Ukraine; DG Shipping's 24x7 Seafarer Grievance and Assistance Cell is fully operational, alongside new pre-departure orientation and mental-health support measures.

QUICK FACTS

India	world's 2nd-largest seafarer supplier (2026) — 311,936 professionals, 12.16% of global workforce — up from 5th place/5.2% in 2015
Indian officers	140,718 (13.41% of global officer workforce); Indian ratings: 171,218 (11.29% of global ratings)
Global seafarer supply	2.57 million vs demand 2.55 million (BIMCO-ICS Seafarer Workforce Report 2026)
'Mission 20%'	target to raise India's seafarer share from 12.16% to 20%

12. Awards & Honours

1 article

72nd National Film Awards Announced: Article 370 Best Film; Mammootty, Kartik Aaryan Share Best Actor

18 Jul

- 72nd National Film Awards (for films of 2024) were announced on 18 July 2026. Article 370 (Hindi) won Best Feature Film, Bhangaar Best Non-Feature Film and Ram-Nami Best Documentary
- Best Actor was shared by Mammootty (Bramayugam, Malayalam) and Kartik Aaryan (Chandu Champion, Hindi). Yami Gautam won Best Actress for Article 370
- Randeep Hooda won Best Debut Film of a Director for Swatantrya Veer Savarkar. Amaran won Best Direction (Rajkumar Periasamy) and Kalki 2898 AD won Best Popular Film
- Top awards carry the Swarna Kamal (Golden Lotus) and Rs 3 lakh. Most craft and acting awards carry the Rajat Kamal (Silver Lotus) and Rs 2 lakh
- Jury chairs: Jayaraj (Feature), Aseem Sinha (Non-Feature), A. Chandrasekhar (Writing on Cinema)

QUICK FACTS

Edition	72nd National Film Awards, for films certified in 2024. Announced 18 July 2026 by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting
Three sections	Feature Films, Non-Feature Films, and Best Writing on Cinema
Best Feature Film	Article 370 (Hindi), directed by Aditya Suhas Jambhale, produced by Jio Studios and B62 Studios
Films with two or more awards	Article 370 (Best Film, Actress, Music-Songs), Amaran (Direction, Editing, Background Music), Kalki 2898 AD (Popular Film, Production Design), Pushpa: The Rule Part-02 (Screenplay, Costume) and Bramayugam (Actor, Cinematography)
Special Mention (certificate)	Dhanush for Captain Miller, and Suren G. (sound mix) for Meiyazhagan

- Language awards went to 12 Eighth Schedule languages plus two non-scheduled ones, Garhwali (Dholi) and Tulu (IMBU)
- The Non-Feature Best Debut went to Angen, a Santhali film. Santhali entered the Eighth Schedule in 2003 (92nd Amendment)

COMPLETE WINNERS LIST: 72ND NATIONAL FILM AWARDS (2024)

Award	Film (language)	Awardee	Medal
Feature Films			
Best Feature Film	Article 370 (Hindi)	Jio Studios & B62 Studios (producers); Aditya Suhas Jambhale (director)	Swarna Kamal
Best Debut Film of a Director	Swatantrya Veer Savarkar (Hindi)	Randeep Hooda	Swarna Kamal
Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment	Kalki 2898 AD (Telugu)	Vyjayanthi Movies; Nag Ashwin Singireddy	Swarna Kamal
Best Feature Film Promoting National, Social and Environmental Values	Captain Miller (Tamil)	Sathya Jyothi Films; Arun Matheswaran	Rajat Kamal
Best Children's Film	35 - Chinna Katha Kaadu (Telugu)	S Originals & Waltair Productions; Nanda Kishore Emani	Swarna Kamal
Best Direction	Amaran (Tamil)	Rajkumar Periasamy	Swarna Kamal
Best Actor in a Leading Role (shared)	Bramayugam (Malayalam) / Chandu Champion (Hindi)	Mammootty / Kartik Aaryan	Rajat Kamal
Best Actress in a Leading Role	Article 370 (Hindi)	Yami Gautam	Rajat Kamal
Best Actor in a Supporting Role	Bhakshak (Hindi)	Sanjay Mishra	Rajat Kamal
Best Actress in a Supporting Role (shared)	Maharaja (Tamil) / Mithya (Kannada)	Sachana Namidass / Ropashree Varkady	Rajat Kamal
Best Child Artist (shared)	Mithya (Kannada) / 35 - Chinna Katha Kaadu (Telugu) / Onko Ki Kothin (Bengali)	Athish S Shetty / Arundev Pothula / Riddhiman Banerjee, Tapomoy Deb, Gitashree Chakraborty	Rajat Kamal

Award	Film (language)	Awardee	Medal
Best Male Playback Singer	Gharat Ganpati (Marathi)	Abhay Jodhpurkar (Navasachi Gauri Mazi)	Rajat Kamal
Best Female Playback Singer	A. R. M (Malayalam)	Vaikom Vijayalakshmi (Angu Vaana Konilu)	Rajat Kamal
Best Cinematography	Bramayugam (Malayalam)	Shehnad Jalal	Rajat Kamal
Best Screenplay (Original)	Pushpa: The Rule Part-02 (Telugu)	Bandreddi Sukumar	Rajat Kamal
Best Screenplay (Adapted)	Swargandharva Sudhir Phadke (Marathi)	Yogesh Deshpande	Rajat Kamal
Best Screenplay (Dialogue)	Lucky Baskhar (Telugu)	Venky Atluri	Rajat Kamal
Best Sound Design	Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3 (Hindi)	Manas Choudhury	Rajat Kamal
Best Editing	Amaran (Tamil)	R. Kalaivannan	Rajat Kamal
Best Production Design	Kalki 2898 AD (Telugu)	Nitin Zihani Choudhary	Rajat Kamal
Best Costume Design	Pushpa: The Rule Part-02 (Telugu)	Deepali Noor & Sheetal Sharma	Rajat Kamal
Best Make-up	Committee Kurrollu (Telugu)	P Ravi Kumar	Rajat Kamal
Best Music Direction (Songs)	Article 370 (Hindi)	Shashwat Sachdev	Rajat Kamal
Best Music Direction (Background)	Amaran (Tamil)	G. V. Prakash Kumar	Rajat Kamal
Best Lyrics	Maidaan (Hindi)	Manoj Muntashir (Jaane Do)	Rajat Kamal
Best Choreography	Stree 2 (Hindi)	Vijay Ganguly (Aaj Ki Raat)	Rajat Kamal
Best Action Direction	Maharaja (Tamil)	Anl Arasu	Rajat Kamal
Special Mention	Captain Miller (Tamil) / Meiyazhagan (Tamil)	Dhanush (actor) / Suren G. (sound mix)	Certificate
Best Feature Film in Each Language			
Assamese	Juiphool	Jadumoni Dutta	Rajat Kamal
Bengali	Chalchitra Ekhon	Anjan Dutt	Rajat Kamal
Gujarati	Maaran	Cineman Productions; Abhishek Jain	Rajat Kamal
Hindi	Srikanth	Super Cassettes Industries & Chalk N Cheese Films; Tushar Hiranandani	Rajat Kamal
Kannada	Mithya	Paramvah Pictures & KRG Studios; Sumanth Bhat	Rajat Kamal
Konkani	Mog Asum	Radheshyam Pipalwa & Agnelo Angelo Braganza	Rajat Kamal
Malayalam	Feminichi Fathima	1001 Stories & AFD Cinemas; Fasil Muhammed	Rajat Kamal
Manipuri	Sunita	Yumnam Ajit Singh	Rajat Kamal
Marathi	Mukkam Post Bombilwadi	Vivek Films & Mayasabha Karamanuk Mandali; Paresh Mokashi	Rajat Kamal
Odia	Lahari	Jhilik Motion Pictures; Amartya Bhattacharyya	Rajat Kamal
Tamil	Raayan	Sun TV Network; Dhanush	Rajat Kamal
Telugu	Committee Kurrollu	Pink Elephant Pictures & Shree Radha	Rajat

Award	Film (language)	Awardee	Medal
		Damodara Studios; Yadhu Vamsee	Kamal
Garhwali (non-Eighth Schedule)	Dholi	SC Pharmachem; Dinesh P. Bhonsle	Rajat Kamal
Tulu (non-Eighth Schedule)	IMBU	Pichchar Studio; Shivadhwaj Shetty	Rajat Kamal
Non-Feature Films			
Best Non-Feature Film	Bhangaar (Marathi & English)	Sumira Roy	Swarna Kamal
Best Debut Film of a Director	Angen (Santhali)	Ravi Raj Murmu	Swarna Kamal
Best Biographical / Historical Reconstruction / Compilation Film	Kakori (Hindi)	KSR Brothers & Minti Mishra; Kamlesh K Mishra	Rajat Kamal
Best Arts / Culture Film	Main Nida (Hindi)	Sampreshan Multimedia; Atul Pandey	Rajat Kamal
Best Documentary	Ram-Nami (Hindi)	BBP Studio Virtual Bharat; Bharatbala Ganapathy	Rajat Kamal
Best Non-Feature Film Promoting Social and Environmental Values	Piplantri: A Tale of Eco Feminism (Hindi, Rajasthani & English)	Johnsons Suraj Films International; Suraj Kumar	Rajat Kamal
Best Animation Film	Touched as Water (Silent)	JB Productions; Joshy Benedict	Rajat Kamal
Best Short Film (up to 30 min)	Hamsafar (Marathi)	Anushka Motion Pictures; Abhijeet Arvind Dalvi	Rajat Kamal
Best Direction	Statue of Unity - Ekta ka Prateek (Hindi)	Aanand L Rai	Swarna Kamal
Best Cinematography	Life in Loom (English, Tamil, Hindi, Assamese & Bengali)	Edmond Ranson	Rajat Kamal
Best Sound Design	Blue (Tamil)	T S Hari Hara Sudhan	Rajat Kamal
Best Editing	NDA (Hindi)	Manvir Jasrotia	Rajat Kamal
Best Music Direction	Parat 41 degree-chya Magavar / On the Trail of 41 degree (Marathi)	Shivpal Singh Kang	Rajat Kamal
Best Narration / Voice Over	Little Planet: A Tale of Frogs (English)	Soundarya Jayachandran	Rajat Kamal
Best Script	Obur (Hindi & Kashmiri)	Faraz Ali	Rajat Kamal
Special Mention	Bhadra-Kali Natakam (Malayalam) / Chola Dora aur Sui (Hindi)	Ananda Jyothi (Jose Antony) / Jaymin Modi & Lokesh Ghai	Certificate
Best Writing on Cinema			
Best Book on Cinema	Naaniruvude Nimagaagi Naadiruvude Nanagaagi: Kannada Cinemada Thathva matthu Rajakeeya (Kannada)	Kenchanuru Pradeep Kumar Shetty (publisher: Mirror Pusthaka)	Swarna Kamal
Best Film Critic	Hindi	Sanjeev Shrivastava	Swarna Kamal

Source: PIB release PRID 2286143, 18 July 2026. Cash prizes: Swarna Kamal awards Rs 3,00,000 (Rs 1,00,000 for Writing on Cinema); Rajat Kamal awards Rs 2,00,000; shared awards split the prize.

HEADLINE WINNERS: 71ST VS 72ND EDITION

Category	71st (films of 2023)	72nd (films of 2024)
Best Feature Film	12th Fail	Article 370
Best Actor	Shah Rukh Khan (Jawan) and Vikrant Massey (12th Fail)	Mammootty (Bramayugam) and Kartik Aaryan (Chandu Champion)
Best Actress	Rani Mukerji (Mrs. Chatterjee Vs Norway)	Yami Gautam (Article 370)
Announced	1 August 2025	18 July 2026

71st edition: announced 1 August 2025, presented 23 September 2025. Its Dadasaheb Phalke Award (for 2023) went to Mohanlal.

13. Sports

2 articles

National Anti-Doping Act 2022 and 2025 Amendment Brought Into Force

17 Jul

- The Centre notified the commencement of the National Anti-Doping Act, 2022 and the National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Act, 2025, announced on 17 July 2026 — India's anti-doping regime now runs on statute.
- The Acts align India's framework with the World Anti-Doping Code and meet its obligations under the UNESCO International Convention against Doping in Sport.
- They give statutory backing to testing, results management, education, intelligence and investigations across all sports.
- The 2025 amendment was passed to meet WADA's objection to government control: it guarantees NADA's operational independence and strips the National Board of oversight over it.

QUICK FACTS

National Anti-Doping Act, 2022	Act No. 15 of 2022, received assent on 12 August 2022.
National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill, 2025	introduced in Lok Sabha on 23 July 2025; passed by Parliament on 12 August 2025, alongside the National Sports Governance Bill.
Why the 2022 Act sat unused	WADA objected that a government-controlled Board compromised NADA's autonomy.

- Commencement of both Acts notified by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (release of 17 July 2026).
- NADA was first set up on 24 November 2005 as a society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860; the 2022 Act makes it a statutory body headed by a Director General appointed by the Centre.
- All dope-testing laboratories in India must hold WADA accreditation.

PIB Backgrounder: Khelo India and India's Commonwealth Games 2026 Journey

27 Jul

- Khelo India, launched in 2017 by merging three earlier schemes, has approved 349 infrastructure projects (Rs 3,176 crore), set up 1,067 Khelo India Centres and supports 2,745 Khelo India Athletes as of July 2026.
- The Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports budget rose to a record Rs 4,479.88 crore in 2026-27, up from Rs 1,219 crore in 2013-14.
- At Commonwealth Games Glasgow 2026 (23 July-2 August), India's 124-member contingent had won 4 medals (1 gold, 2 silver, 1 bronze) as of 27 July 2026.
- TOPS, launched September 2014 and revamped April 2018, currently supports 51 Core, 52 Para Core and 130 Development athletes with monthly stipends.
- The KIRTI talent-identification initiative has completed 1,87,921 athlete assessments across 174 centres, aiming for India to be a top-10 sporting nation by 2036.

QUICK FACTS

India's CWG 2026 contingent	124 athletes (78 male, 46 female); 4 medals (1 gold, 2 silver, 1 bronze) as of 27 July 2026

- Khelo India launched in 2017, merging Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan, Urban Sports Infrastructure Scheme and National Sports Talent Search Scheme
- 349 infrastructure projects approved (Rs 3,176 crore); 1,067 Khelo India Centres; 267 academies; 2,745 Khelo India Athletes supported (as of July 2026)
- Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) launched September 2014, revamped April 2018
- National Sports Policy 2025 (Khelo Bharat Niti 2025) supersedes the National Sports Policy, 2001, targeting 2036 Olympics readiness

14. Important Days

1 article

Health Ministry Marks Eight Years of NVHCP on World Hepatitis Day 2026

28 Jul

- The Health Ministry observed World Hepatitis Day 2026 (theme 'Hepatitis: Let's Break It Down') on 28 July, marking eight years of the National Viral Hepatitis Control Programme (NVHCP), launched on World Hepatitis Day 2018 to eliminate viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030 (SDG Target 3.3).
- Since inception, NVHCP has screened over 21 crore beneficiaries and treated more than 6 lakh patients free of cost, and now runs 1,153 treatment centres including 70+ specialised sites — surpassing its one-treatment-centre-per-district target.
- Hepatitis B birth-dose coverage has crossed 92%, though only around 65% of pregnant women are currently screened for Hepatitis B — the Ministry has urged States/UTs to reach 100% screening. 7.64 crore pregnant women have been screened and 2.24 lakh newborns of Hepatitis B-positive mothers given HBIG.
- India is among the few countries offering free Hepatitis C treatment and Hepatitis B management, with medicine costs reduced to under one US dollar.

QUICK FACTS

World Hepatitis Day 2026 theme	'Hepatitis: Let's Break It Down'
Hepatitis B birth-dose coverage	92%+; pregnant-women Hepatitis B screening: ~65% (target 100%)

- NVHCP launched 28 July 2018 under the National Health Mission; targets elimination of viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030 (SDG Target 3.3)
- 21+ crore beneficiaries screened, 6+ lakh patients treated free, 1,153 treatment centres (incl. 70+ specialised sites) established to date

15. History & Culture

1 article

Sarnath Inscribed as India's 45th UNESCO World Heritage Site

25 Jul

- The "Ancient Buddhist Site of Sarnath" has been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.
- The decision was taken at the 48th Session of the World Heritage Committee in Busan, South Korea.
- Sarnath becomes India's 45th World Heritage Site, ranking India 6th globally.

QUICK FACTS

Site	Ancient Buddhist Site of Sarnath (Uttar Pradesh).
Status	India's 45th UNESCO World Heritage Site.
Recognition Body	UNESCO World Heritage Committee (48th Session at Busan, South Korea).
Historical Significance	Site of the Buddha's first sermon (Dharmachakra Pravartana) and formation of the first Sangha.
Key Monuments	Chaukhandi Stupa, Dhamekh Stupa, Dharmarajika Stupa, Mulagandhakuti Vihara, and Ashokan Pillar.
Nodal Agency in India	Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).