WEEKLY PIB COMPILATION

22 Jul – 31 Jul 2026

SSC · BANKING · RAILWAY EDITION

65 key articles · 15 categories · 10 days

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Tap a category to jump to it.

1. Sports

3 articles

PM Hails Anahat Singh's Historic World Junior Squash Championship Gold

26 Jul

- PM Modi congratulated Anahat Singh for winning the 2026 World Junior Squash Championship gold — the first Indian to achieve this feat
- The 18-year-old from Delhi defeated Egypt's Ruqayya Salem 3-0 in the final at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Canada
- Squash will make its Olympic debut at the LA 2028 Games, approved by the IOC in October 2023

Weightlifter Rishikanta Singh Chanambam Wins Silver at CWG 2026 Glasgow

26 Jul

- PM Modi congratulated Indian Navy weightlifter Rishikanta Singh Chanambam for winning a silver medal at the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow
- Chanambam competed in the men's 60 kg category, achieving a personal-best total of 264 kg with a CWG-record snatch of 121 kg
- The 23rd Commonwealth Games are being held in Glasgow, Scotland (July 23 – August 2, 2026) across 10 sports

Mirabai Chanu Wins 4th CWG Medal with Gold in 48 kg Weightlifting at Glasgow 2026

26 Jul

- PM Modi congratulated Saikhom Mirabai Chanu for winning gold in the women's 48 kg weightlifting at the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow
- This is Chanu's 4th CWG medal overall (silver 2014 Glasgow, gold 2018 Gold Coast, gold 2022 Birmingham, gold 2026 Glasgow) and third consecutive gold
- Chanu is also the Tokyo 2020 Olympic silver medallist (49 kg) and a recipient of the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award (2018)

2. Appointments

3 articles

Air Marshal Sandeep Thareja Appointed Next DGAFMS

31 Jul

- Air Marshal Sandeep Thareja, currently Director General Medical Services (Air), has been appointed the next Director General Armed Forces Medical Services (DGAFMS), succeeding Surgeon Vice Admiral Arti Sarin on her retirement on 31 August 2026.
- An AFMC Pune alumnus commissioned in December 1986, he holds an MD in Medicine (1997) and a DM in Gastroenterology from AIIMS New Delhi (2005), and has held key posts including Commandant of AFMC Pune.
- As DG Medical Services (Air), he strengthened medical preparedness for the Gaganyaan Human Spaceflight Mission and operationalised the BHISHM Cube for rapid medical response.

Varsha Ashok Aglawe Becomes First Woman Director General of Geological Survey of India

31 Jul

- Smt. Varsha Ashok Aglawe has become the 54th Director General of the Geological Survey of India (GSI) and the first woman to head the 176-year-old institution, succeeding Shri Asit Saha.
- A GSI veteran since 1992 with prior service at the Indian Bureau of Mines, she is a palaeontology/palynology expert who identified the Salbardi-Ghorpend area as a new Central Indian dinosaur nesting site and established a Palynology Laboratory at GSI's Lucknow office.
- She has flagged critical mineral exploration, offshore mineral exploration, and deep-seated/concealed deposit exploration as priorities aligned with the Government's mineral-security agenda.

Pralhad Joshi Gets Education Ministry as Dharmendra Pradhan Resigns

25 Jul

- Dharmendra Pradhan has resigned from the Union Council of Ministers.
- His resignation was accepted by the President under Article 75(2) of the Constitution.
- Pralhad Joshi has been assigned the additional charge of the Ministry of Education.

3. 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.

4. Ranks & Reports

2 articles

PIB: India Climbs to 57th in Competere Foundation's Market Distortions Performance Index

30 Jul

- India rose 25 places, from 82nd to 57th, in the Competere Foundation's Market Distortions Performance Index, per the report 'India's Next Growth Frontier', assessing reform progress from 2010 to 2023.
- The report credits reforms including GST, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), regulatory-environment improvements and trade-facilitation modernisation, evaluated across three pillars — property rights protection, domestic competition and international competition.

- The report was launched at a discussion organised by the Centre for Trade and Investment Law (CTIL), IIFT New Delhi, with the Competere Foundation, at the India Habitat Centre.

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.

5. Summits & Conferences

2 articles

India Hosts 3rd BRICS Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction in New Delhi

24 Jul

- India hosted the 3rd BRICS Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in New Delhi on 24 July 2026.
- The meeting was organised by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) under India's BRICS Chairship for 2026.
- Chaired by Minister of State for Home Affairs Shri Nityanand Rai, the meet concluded with the adoption of the 'BRICS Joint Statement on Disaster Risk Reduction'.
- Member nations reaffirmed their commitment to the BRICS Disaster Risk Reduction Work Plan (2025–2028).
- India emphasised five strategic priorities, including early warning systems, resilient infrastructure and nature-based solutions.

16th BRICS Health Ministers' Meeting Adopts Declaration in Chandigarh

24 Jul

- The 16th BRICS Health Ministers' Meeting was held in Chandigarh from 22 to 24 July 2026 under India's BRICS Chairship.
- Chaired by Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda, the meeting concluded with the unanimous adoption of the 16th BRICS Health Ministerial Declaration.
- Key discussions focused on strengthening health security, pandemic preparedness, digital health and tuberculosis research.
- India's NIMHANS, Bengaluru, was designated to coordinate the newly proposed BRICS Network of Centres of Excellence on Mental Wellness.

- A high-level side event was also held on the integration of digital health and artificial intelligence in healthcare.

6. Schemes & Committees

10 articles

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.

VB-G RAM G Act in Force: 125-Day Rural Employment Guarantee Replaces MGNREGA's 100 Days

31 Jul

- The VB-G RAM G Act, 2025 came into force from 1 July 2026, replacing MGNREGA's 100-day guarantee with a statutory 125-day guaranteed wage-employment framework, alongside unemployment allowance and wage-delay compensation rights.
- For FY2026-27, the Centre has provided Rs 95,692.31 crore — the largest-ever Budget Estimate allocation for rural employment — with total programme outlay (including state share) expected to exceed Rs 1.51 lakh crore.
- All States/UTs have notified the scheme; Rs 25,844.97 crore has been issued as first-instalment mother sanctions, with no dues pending to any State/UT as of the release date.

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

DAANVEER Platform Launched for Citizens to Donate Computers to Gram Panchayats

29 Jul

- DAANVEER, launched 29 July 2026 by MoPR Secretary Vivek Bharadwaj, lets citizens and organisations voluntarily donate verified computer bundles to Gram Panchayats through the Meri Panchayat app.

- Developed by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj with the National Informatics Centre (NIC) and integrated with the DigiHaat marketplace, it offers end-to-end digital tracking from dispatch to installation.
- It builds on MoPR's existing digital ecosystem — e-GramSwaraj, Meri Panchayat, Sabha Saar, AuditOnline, Gram Manchitra — to bridge the computer gap across India's nearly 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats.

100-Week Youth Anti-Drug Movement to Launch 2 August, Led by MY Bharat

29 Jul

- PM Modi will launch the 'Nasha Mukta Yuva for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyaan' on 2 August 2026 — a 100-week youth-led Jan Bhagidari movement against substance abuse, led by MY Bharat
- Over 1 crore youth are expected to take the Nasha Mukti Pledge simultaneously at nearly 10,000 locations across the country
- The campaign complements the existing Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyan (launched 2020, now covering all districts) and runs through MY Bharat, the autonomous youth-development body launched in October 2023

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.

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).

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.

MSME Ministry Launches Online Dispute Resolution Portal for Fast Payment Recovery

24 Jul

- The Ministry of MSME launched the Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) Portal to help micro and small enterprises recover delayed payments faster.
- The portal offers a pre-MSEFC negotiation mechanism and a Digital Guided Pathway to resolve disputes through negotiation and mediation.
- The initiative operates under the World Bank-assisted RAMP Programme and leverages the MSMED Act, 2006.

VB-G RAM G Act 2025 Replaces MGNREGS With 125 Days Guarantee

24 Jul

- Government operationalized the Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, 2025 from July 1, 2026.
- The new Act enhances statutory employment guarantee to 125 days per rural household from the earlier 100 days under MGNREGA.
- Budget allocation for 2026-27 is a record Rs 95,692.31 crore for the scheme.

7. Defence

10 articles

COAS Launches Indigenous Xtreme Weather Grade (XWG) Diesel for -42°C Operations

31 Jul

- Chief of the Army Staff Gen Dhiraj Seth launched indigenously developed Xtreme Weather Grade (XWG) Diesel in New Delhi, jointly developed by the Indian Army and Oil Marketing Companies.
- XWG Diesel remains effective down to -42°C, is BS-VI compliant and meets IS 1460:2025 specifications, and needs no engine modification in existing Army vehicles.
- The fuel was developed within a year and also has civilian applications in high-altitude and severe-winter regions.

PIB: INS Nipun, India's Second Indigenous Diving Support Vessel, Delivered at ~75% Indigenous Content

30 Jul

- 'Nipun', India's SECOND indigenous Diving Support Vessel (DSV), built by Hindustan Shipyard Limited (a Ministry of Defence PSU, Visakhapatnam), was delivered to the Indian Navy on 30 July 2026 at Visakhapatnam, built to Indian Register of Shipping (IRS) classification rules.
- The vessel is capable of Deep Sea Saturation Diving, carries Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs) for salvage/diver monitoring, and will serve as the Mother Ship for the Deep Submergence Rescue Vessel (DSRV) for submarine-emergency personnel evacuation.
- Nipun's delivery achieved nearly 75% indigenous content, following the first-of-class DSV 'Nistar' (delivered 2025) — both part of the Navy's push for indigenous deep-sea rescue/salvage capability under Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

PIB: Raksha Mantri Felicitates IASV Triveni Crew for First All-Women Tri-Services Circumnavigation

30 Jul

- Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh felicitated nine women officers of the Army, Navy and Air Force who completed 'Samudra Pradakshina' — the first-ever all-women Tri-services circumnavigation — aboard the Indian Army Sailing Vessel (IASV) Triveni: a 314-day, ~25,500 nautical-mile voyage across four oceans.
- The expedition met all internationally recognised circumnavigation criteria: crossing all longitude meridians, the Equator twice, the International Date Line, and rounding the Three Great Capes (Leeuwin, Horn, Good Hope) — earning the crew membership in the 'Cape Horners' fraternity.
- Flagged off 11 September 2025 and flagged-in 22 July 2026 (Mumbai), felicitated in New Delhi on 30 July 2026.

Machilipatnam, Seventh Mahe-Class Anti-Submarine Warship, Launched by Cochin Shipyard

29 Jul

- Machilipatnam (BY 529), the seventh of eight Mahe-class Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC) being built by Cochin Shipyard Limited for the Indian Navy, was launched on 29 July 2026.
- Named after the historic Andhra Pradesh port city, the ship is fitted for underwater surveillance, ASW operations, Low Intensity Maritime Operations and mine warfare, with indigenous content exceeding 80%.
- It is part of a 16-ship ASW SWC programme contracted in April 2019 — 8 Mahe-class by CSL and 8 Arnala-class by GRSE — whose lead ship, INS Mahe, was commissioned in November 2025.

India's First Department of Military Medicine Inaugurated at Command Hospital, Lucknow

29 Jul

- Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh virtually inaugurated India's first dedicated Department of Military Medicine at Command Hospital (Central Command), Lucknow, on 29 July 2026
- Established under the Directorate General of Medical Services (Army), it will run postgraduate programmes in combat medicine/surgery/trauma care and build Centres of Excellence in HADR and CBRNe medicine
- It complements the proposed Global Military Medicine Centre under the Raksha Strategy Vision 2026-30, and sits alongside existing DRDO life-sciences labs (DIPAS, INMAS) that already research soldier physiology and CBRN medicine

Operation Southern Readiness 26-2 Concludes at Southern Naval Command

23 Jul

- Operation Southern Readiness 26-2, a multinational maritime security training engagement, concluded at the Southern Naval Command in Kochi.
- Conducted by the Indian Navy in partnership with the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), it saw participation from 276 personnel across 27 countries.
- The event focused on Maritime Domain Awareness, Counter-Narcotics, Asymmetric Threats, and Operational Sea Training.

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.

DRDO's GTRE Achieves Milestone with Indigenous Expendable Turbo Jet Engine

23 Jul

- The first indigenous Expendable Turbo Jet Engine of the 350 kg thrust class has been successfully developed in India.
- It was designed by DRDO's Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE) and manufactured by industry partner Azad Engineering.
- The successful delivery of the engine marks a significant milestone in India's aerospace and defence manufacturing capabilities.

Historic 'Samudra Pradakshina': First-Ever Tri-Service All-Women Sailing Expedition Flagged-In

22 Jul

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh flagged-in 'Samudra Pradakshina', the first-ever Tri-Service all-women circumnavigation sailing expedition.
- Nine women officers from the Army, Navy, and Air Force completed a grueling 314-day voyage covering nearly 25,500 nautical miles aboard the IASV Triveni.
- The expedition successfully crossed the Equator twice and rounded the Three Great Capes, earning the crew membership in the prestigious fraternity of Cape Horners.

Indian Navy Commissions INS Malvan to Boost Anti-Submarine Warfare Capabilities

22 Jul

- The Indian Navy commissioned INS Malvan, the second of the indigenously designed Mahe-class Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Crafts (ASW-SWC).
- Built by Cochin Shipyard Limited, the vessel features over 80% indigenous content, reinforcing the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' vision.
- The ship's crest features the 'Bagh Nakha' (Tiger's Claw), drawing inspiration from the maritime legacy of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.

8. Science & Tech

5 articles

IMC 2026 Theme 'Scale Without Boundaries' Unveiled Alongside Gwalior Telecom Manufacturing Zone

29 Jul

- Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia unveiled 'Scale without boundaries' as the theme for the 10th India Mobile Congress (IMC) 2026, to be held 7-10 October 2026 at Yashobhoomi, New Delhi.
- IMC 2026 is built around four pillars — Srishti, Suraksha, Sashakt and Samvardhan; IMC, launched in 2017, is jointly organised by DoT and COAI, and its 2025 edition drew 1.4 lakh+ visitors from 101 countries.
- Separately, DoT and the Madhya Pradesh Government will sign an MoU on 30 July 2026 to establish India's first Telecom Manufacturing Zone (TMZ), Phase-I, at Gwalior.
- The TMZ complements DoT's existing PLI Scheme for Telecom & Networking Products (Rs 12,195 crore outlay, launched 2021).

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.

India's First Hydrogen Train Completes Successful Trial

25 Jul

- India's first Hydrogen Train was flagged off between Jind and Sonipat on July 17, 2026.
- It has travelled over 1,200 km, saving more than 3,200 litres of diesel consumption.
- The train uses hydrogen fuel cell technology, producing only water vapour as a by-product.

India Hosts BRICS Senior Health Officials to Shape Consensus on Global Health Resilience

22 Jul

- As part of India's BRICS Chairship, the Senior Officials' Meeting for the BRICS Health Ministerial took place in Chandigarh.
- The meeting emphasized the theme 'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability', identifying nine priority areas for health sector collaboration.
- Key Indian initiatives highlighted included the 'BRICS Mission for Healthy Lifestyle' and the proposed 'BRICS Network of Centres of Excellence for Mental Health'.

India Hosts BRICS Network University to Advance Academic Cooperation

22 Jul

- The Union Ministry of Education successfully convened the International Governing Board (IGB) meeting of the BRICS Network University (BRICS NU) virtually.

- The conference focused heavily on Traditional and Indigenous Knowledge Systems, proposing it as a new International Thematic Group under the BRICS NU framework.
- The meeting also reviewed the BRICS Network University Action Plan (2025-2028) and adopted a new International Governing Board Declaration.

9. Environment

6 articles

Global Tiger Day: NTCA Launches Eco-Tourism Webpage, India at 3,682 Tigers

29 Jul

- India's tiger count stands at 3,682 across 58 Tiger Reserves; NTCA launched a new Eco-tourism webpage integrating booking links for all reserves on Global Tiger Day 2026
- The Prime Minister noted India is home to almost 70% of the world's wild tiger population
- Global Tiger Day (29 July) marks the 2010 St Petersburg Tiger Summit's TX2 goal to double the world's wild tiger population

91.1% of India's Marine Fish Stocks Found Sustainable: ICAR-CMFRI

28 Jul

- ICAR-CMFRI's Marine Fish Stock Status of India (2022) publication found 91.1% of 135 assessed marine fish stocks in India's EEZ to be sustainable, with no palpable decline in trawl-based landings during 2021-2025.
- Fisheries is a State subject; coastal States enforce their own Marine Fishing Regulation Acts (MFRA) governing zoning, mesh-size, seasonal bans, and gear restrictions within 12 nautical miles.
- PMMSY supports Turtle Excluder Devices, sea ranching, artificial reefs, deep-sea vessel acquisition and mariculture/seaweed farming to protect traditional fishers and inshore stocks.

India Becomes World's Top Ship-Recycling Nation, Alang Yard Handles 35.4% Global Share

28 Jul

- In 2025, India became the world's leading ship-recycling nation with 35.4% of global volume; the Alang-Sosiya Yard (Gujarat, established 1982-83) handles 98% of India's ship recycling, with 128 operational plots and 4.5 million LDT/year capacity — over 8,900 ships (71+ million LDT) recycled since inception.
- The yard employs about 15,000 directly and supports 1.5 lakh+ people indirectly; a 35-bed Level III Trauma Centre run by the Indian Red Cross Society has treated 4.79 lakh+ patients as of June 2026.
- India has aligned domestic law with the Hong Kong Convention (entered into force June 2025) via the Recycling of Ships Act 2019, Rules 2021 and Regulations 2026; 115 Alang plots have achieved HKC compliance so far.
- A Shipbreaking Credit Note Scheme gives ship owners a credit note worth 40% of scrap value (usable toward up to 5% of a new Indian-built ship's contract value); Gujarat plans to expand Alang's capacity to 9 million LDT/year.

AAROH Report Released Highlighting India's Scientific Mine Closure Framework

24 Jul

- The AAROH Annual Report on Mine Closure was released, detailing India's journey in scientifically closing 42 mines.
- An Implementation Agreement was signed between the Ministry of Coal and GIZ (Germany) for technical cooperation.

- Coal NEER plants were inaugurated for productive utilisation of mine water.

Implementation of Solid Waste Management Rules 2026

23 Jul

- The Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026 came into force on April 1, 2026, superseding the 2016 rules.
- The rules mandate a four-stream segregation of solid waste at source and introduce Extended Bulk Waste Generator Responsibility.
- Special provisions have been included for waste management in hilly areas and islands, supported by the Swachh Bharat Mission.

Ministry of Coal Releases 'AAROH': First Comprehensive Report on Scientific Mine Closure

22 Jul

- The Ministry of Coal released 'AAROH', India's first report documenting the scientific closure and ecological repurposing of 42 coal mines.
- An Implementation Agreement was signed with Germany's GIZ to facilitate technical cooperation and knowledge exchange on sustainable mine closure.
- The event also featured the inauguration of 'Coal NEER' plants, transforming mine discharge water into safe bottled drinking water for local communities.

10. Banking & Finance

3 articles

Favara-UPI Corridor Goes Live: India's Newest Cross-Border UPI Linkage, With Maldives

31 Jul

- The Favara-UPI cross-border payment corridor went live between the Maldives and India on 30 July 2026, letting Maldivians send real-time payments to UPI-linked Indian bank accounts.
- Two Maldivian banks — Bank of Maldives Plc and Maldives Islamic Bank Plc — are live in the initial phase, transacting through their mobile banking apps.
- The corridor converts Maldivian Rufiyaa to Indian Rupees instantly; permitted uses are family-maintenance and gift remittances.
- It follows a NIPL-Maldives Monetary Authority agreement signed in July 2025 and extends UPI's cross-border footprint, alongside separate acceptance linkages the currency already has in nine other countries.

PIB: BMIP Launches Sovereign-Backed P&I Cover; War Risk Premiums Down 35-40%

30 Jul

- The Department of Financial Services (DFS) launched India's first sovereign-backed Protection & Indemnity (P&I) insurance product under the Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMIP), designed by New India Assurance, offering an indemnity limit of up to US$1.5 billion for third-party liabilities (crew/cargo, pollution, wreck removal).
- BMIP has operated since 12 May 2026 under a Rs 12,980 crore sovereign guarantee; war-risk premium rates have fallen 35-40% from their West Asia-conflict peak, and 1,608 Cargo/Hull War Risk policies had been issued as on 29 July 2026.

- The initiative supports Atmanirbhar Bharat by building domestic underwriting capacity and reducing dependence on foreign maritime insurance markets.

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.

11. Economy

10 articles

DPCO 2013 Amended: NPPA Eases Prior Price Approval, Caps Overcharging Liability

31 Jul

- The Department of Pharmaceuticals notified amendments to the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013 via S.O. 3516(E) dated 30 June 2026.
- Manufacturer liability for overcharging is now capped to the actual quantity of stock overcharged, instead of the entire consignment.
- Existing manufacturers can now adopt an NPPA-fixed retail price for a new formulation within 12 months, without seeking separate prior approval, by intimating NPPA on Form-1A.
- Records now need to be kept for only the preceding 7 financial years, and separate ceiling prices are allowed for the same drug where therapeutic rationale justifies it.

PIB: Inside India's First Telecom Manufacturing Zone — SPV Structure, Incentives and Anchor Investors

30 Jul

- DoT and the Government of Madhya Pradesh signed an MoU for India's first integrated Telecom Manufacturing Zone (TMZ) — a 350-acre plug-and-play cluster in Gwalior — via an SPV with 51% Madhya Pradesh equity and 49% DoT equity; the Centre funds 100% of Phase-I core infrastructure (Rs 493 crore).
- Madhya Pradesh is providing ~170 acres of land free of cost (combined value ~Rs 596 crore) plus fiscal incentives: 50% capital subsidy (capped Rs 200 crore), employment assistance of Rs 5,000/month/employee for 5 years, and a 50% export freight subsidy.
- Initial commitments stand at ~Rs 3,500-5,000 crore (Phase-I) against a projected Rs 12,000-15,000 crore total investment and ~14,000 direct jobs; anchor investors include Dixon Technologies, HFCL, Tejas Networks, VVDN and Syrma SGS, with synergies planned with ISM, ECMS and the Telecom Technology Development Fund.

India's R&D Expenditure (GERD) Crosses Rs 2.44 Lakh Crore in 2023-24: Parliament Data

30 Jul

- Per DST's Research & Development Statistics 2025-26, India's Gross Expenditure on R&D (GERD) rose from Rs 1,32,567 crore in 2019-20 to Rs 2,44,767.81 crore in 2023-24, and GERD as a share of GDP rose from 0.66% to 0.84% over the same period.
- Private-sector R&D spend nearly tripled in the period (Rs 44,753.54 crore to Rs 1,26,906.60 crore) and, for the first time in the data shown, edged past government-sector R&D spend (Rs 1,26,906.60 crore vs Rs 1,17,861.21 crore) in 2023-24.
- India's Global Innovation Index (GII) rank, assessed by NITI Aayog, improved from 46th (2021) to 38th (2025); India ranks as the top performer in Central & South Asia and among lower-middle-income countries.

Coal Exchange Rules 2026 Create Regulated Online Trading Platform for Coal

29 Jul

- The Coal Exchange Rules, 2026, notified on 4 June 2026 under Section 18B of the MMDR Act, 1957, create an online, regulated platform for transparent coal, lignite and processed-coal trading.
- The Coal Controller Organisation (CCO) is the designated Authority to register and regulate Coal Exchanges, with powers over market oversight, inspection and dispute resolution.
- Every Coal Exchange must run a Settlement Guarantee Fund with at least 50% in safe/liquid instruments, and the online registration platform opened on 15 July 2026, with operationalisation expected within 12 months.
- Information was given by MoS Coal & Mines Satish Chandra Dubey in a written Lok Sabha reply.

India's GERD Hits 0.84% of GDP; Private Sector Overtakes Government in R&D Spend

29 Jul

- India's GERD rose from Rs 1,32,567 crore (2019-20, 0.66% of GDP) to Rs 2,44,768 crore (2023-24, 0.84% of GDP), per DST's 'Research & Development Statistics 2025-26' report
- The private sector's share of total R&D spending overtook the government's for the first time in 2023-24 — 51.8% private vs 48.2% government
- The government cites the Rs 1-lakh-crore RDI Scheme, ANRF's Rs 14,000-crore budgetary provision and missions like the National Quantum Mission and the India Semiconductor Mission as levers to push R&D spending higher

MoSPI Revises CPI Base Year from 2012=100 to 2024=100, Expands Item Basket to 358

29 Jul

- MoSPI revised the Consumer Price Index (CPI) base year from 2012=100 to 2024=100, with the new series released on 12 February 2026.
- Price collection now covers 1,465 rural and 1,395 urban markets across 434 towns, plus 12 online markets in large cities to capture e-commerce prices — and the weighted item basket has grown from 299 to 358 items.
- The new basket and weights are based on the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) 2023-24; provisional Combined inflation for June 2026 stood at 4.38%.
- Information was given by Minister of State Rao Inderjit Singh in the Lok Sabha.

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.

Coal Exchange Rules, 2026 Notified for Structured Price Discovery under MMDR Act

27 Jul

- The Ministry of Coal has notified the 'Coal Exchange Rules, 2026' (Gazette Notification G.S.R. 442(E), dated 4 June 2026) under Section 18B(3) of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 — a provision inserted by the MMDR Amendment Act, 2025.
- The Coal Controller Organisation (CCO) has been appointed (Notification S.O. 5730(E), 10 December 2025) as the authority to register and regulate Coal Exchange(s) to be set up in the country.
- Any entity, including captive and commercial coal miners, can transact and enter delivery-based contracts on the Exchange, with the CCO-approved bidding mechanism and quality-based price adjustment designed to prevent market manipulation.

India Achieves 20% Ethanol Blending Target Early

23 Jul

- India achieved its target of 20% ethanol blending in petrol (E20) five years ahead of schedule, with average blending reaching 20% by mid-2026.
- Scientific studies and field validations by agencies like ARAI and NITI Aayog confirm E20 fuel is safe and causes no abnormal engine wear.
- The program has saved over Rs 1.97 lakh crore in foreign exchange and reduced carbon emissions by approximately 952 lakh metric tonnes.

MoSPI Revises Base Years for GDP, IIP, and CPI to Reflect Modern Economy

22 Jul

- MoSPI has revised the base year for GDP and IIP from 2011-12 to 2022-23 to better reflect the current structure of the Indian economy.
- The Consumer Price Index (CPI) base year has been updated from 2012=100 to 2024=100.
- National Sample Surveys have been modernized using digital platforms like Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) and e-SIGMA, drastically reducing data release times.

12. National

2 articles

Indian Railways Transports India's First Live Donor Heart by Train via Vande Bharat Express

31 Jul

- Indian Railways transported India's first live donor heart by train, carried aboard Train No. 20901 Mumbai Central-Gandhinagar Capital Vande Bharat Express from Surat to Ahmedabad for transplantation at the U.N. Mehta Institute of Cardiology & Research Centre.
- A dedicated Green Corridor from Ahmedabad Railway Station Platform 1 to the hospital was set up jointly by the Railway Protection Force and Gujarat Police to ensure uninterrupted, time-critical movement.
- The mission demonstrated Vande Bharat's speed and reliability for time-sensitive organ transplantation, expanding Indian Railways' role in emergency healthcare logistics.

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.

13. International

3 articles

First Direct Commercial Freight Train Links Kolkata Port to Nepal's Biratnagar

28 Jul

- Indian Railways operated its first-ever direct commercial container freight train — 40 wagons carrying canola — from Kolkata Port to Biratnagar Customs Yard, Nepal, under the revised India-Nepal Rail Transit Protocol, eliminating transshipment at the border.
- The service builds on the broad-gauge Jogbani (India)-Biratnagar (Nepal) rail link, jointly inaugurated by PM Modi and Nepal's PM in June 2023; the revised Rail Transit Protocol followed a Letter of Exchange signed in November 2025.
- Direct rail movement is expected to cut transit time, logistics costs and cargo handling for India-Nepal cross-border trade, benefiting exporters, importers and logistics operators.

16th BRICS Health Ministers' Declaration Adopted

23 Jul

- The 16th BRICS Health Ministerial Declaration was adopted to deepen health cooperation and strengthen resilient, equitable health systems.

- A dedicated Sub-Working Group on the BRICS Integrated Early Warning System was established for rapid response to mass infectious diseases.
- The BRICS Network of Centres of Excellence on Mental Wellness will be coordinated by India's NIMHANS.

India Hosts BRICS Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction

23 Jul

- Under India's BRICS Chairmanship in 2026, the NDMA is hosting the BRICS Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction in New Delhi.
- The meeting will accelerate the implementation of the BRICS DRR Work Plan (2025–2028).
- Ministers from the 10 BRICS member countries will adopt a Joint Statement reaffirming their commitment to disaster resilience.

14. Polity & Governance

4 articles

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).

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.

PM Constitutes Nilekani-Led Task Force on Examination Reforms and NTA Overhaul

26 Jul

- PM Modi announced the constitution of a high-powered task force on examination reforms chaired by Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani
- The six-member panel includes former ISRO Chairman S. Somanath, former IB Director Tapan Deka, IIT Madras Director V. Kamakoti, former Education Secretary Anita Karwal, and logistics expert Amrit Lal Meena
- The task force has a three-month mandate to overhaul the examination ecosystem — including NTA governance, technology-driven security, and prevention of paper leaks
- This follows the K. Radhakrishnan Committee (2024, 101 recommendations) and the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024

Nationwide Implementation of New Criminal Laws Underway

25 Jul

- The three new criminal laws—BNS, BNSS, and BSA—came into force across India on July 1, 2024.
- The Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) has trained over 83,740 officers from the five pillars of the criminal justice system.
- The Central Government is supplementing State efforts through the Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) 2.0 and modernization schemes.

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.