

Weekly Current Affairs 5th July to 11th July 2026

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IMPORTANT ONE LINERS

NATIONAL

Government Notice to Meta over Child Sexual Abuse Material in Instagram Ads

In the News: The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology issued a stern notice to Meta after reports alleged that paid Instagram advertisements were facilitating access to child sexual exploitation and abuse material. Meta has been asked to remove such content and give a detailed response within seven days. The matter is linked to platform accountability, online child safety and intermediary due diligence under Indian law.

Key Points:

- **Notice by MeitY:** The notice was issued by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, the nodal ministry for digital governance and intermediary regulation in India. It asked Meta to explain how such advertisements were approved and what safeguards will be adopted to prevent recurrence.
- **Legal Provisions Involved:** The government indicated possible action under the Information Technology Act and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012. Section 67B of the IT Act deals with electronic material involving children in sexually explicit act
- **Intermediary Responsibility:** The issue is significant because the alleged material appeared through paid advertisements, not merely user-generated content. This raises questions about advertisement approval systems, algorithmic recommendation and commercial responsibility of platforms.
- **Child Safety Framework:** The case brings focus to stronger content moderation, takedown mechanisms and reporting duties of digital platforms. It also reflects the growing legal scrutiny of social media companies in cases involving child protection and harmful online content.

Manipur SIR: 19.34 lakh voters in draft electoral roll, says CEO

In the News: Manipur published its draft electoral roll after the first enumeration phase of the Special Intensive Revision. Chief Electoral Officer Arun Kumar Sinha said forms were collected and digitised for 19,34,399 electors, which is 92.42% of the pre-draft electorate. The exercise took place amid ethnic conflict, displacement and poor connectivity in several hill areas.

Key Points:

- **Draft Roll Figures:** The draft roll contains 19,34,399 voters, including 9,40,446 male electors, 9,93,660 female electors and 293 third-gender electors. The total number of polling stations in the state has been reported as 3,041.
- **Uncollected Forms:** Forms for 1,58,677 electors could not be collected. The reasons included death, permanent migration, duplication, untraceability and refusal to submit enumeration forms.
- **Claims and Objections:** Eligible persons left out of the draft roll can apply through Form 6. Objections may be filed through Form 7, while corrections and shifting requests can be made through Form 8.
- **Timeline:** Claims and objections can be filed from July 5 to August 4. The notice phase and disposal of claims will continue till September 2, and the final electoral roll is scheduled for publication on September 6.

Madhya Pradesh CM, Scindia lay foundation stone for Adani Group's defence manufacturing unit

In the News: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia laid the foundation stone for Adani Defence and Aerospace's ₹2,500-crore missile manufacturing facility in Shivpuri. The project has been described as South Asia's largest private-sector missile ecosystem. It is expected to add a major defence manufacturing base to the Shivpuri-Guna region.

Key Points:

- **Location and Investment:** The facility will come up in Shivpuri district of Madhya Pradesh with an estimated investment of ₹2,500 crore. It is expected to generate employment and expand the state's industrial base.
- **Manufacturing Scope:** The proposed unit will manufacture ammunition, sophisticated weapons, mission-ready missiles and high-tech defence equipment. It will also combine system integration with production of critical materials at one location.
- **Private Sector Role:** The plant represents a major private-sector entry into advanced defence manufacturing. It is designed to support multiple missile programmes through automated production systems and benchmarked safety standards.
- **Strategic Supply Chain:** The project aims to reduce gaps in India's defence supply chain by bringing missile system integration and critical material production together. It is also intended to serve the Indian Armed Forces and selected international partners.

The right to belong beyond official documentation

In the News: The debate over whether an Indian passport is conclusive proof of citizenship has revived questions about identity, citizenship and documentation. The discussion gained attention after the Ministry of External Affairs clarified that a passport is primarily a travel document, not a standalone citizenship document. The issue is important because citizenship determines political rights, legal protection and a person's formal membership of the state.

Key Points:

- **Passports Act, 1967:** Under Section 6 of the Passports Act, a passport authority shall refuse a passport if the applicant is not a citizen of India. However, Section 20 allows the Central Government to issue a passport or travel document to a non-citizen if it considers it necessary in public interest.
- **Citizenship Law:** Indian citizenship is governed mainly by the Citizenship Act, 1955. The Act provides for acquisition of citizenship by birth, descent, registration, naturalisation and incorporation of territory.
- **Passport and Citizenship Distinction:** A passport may be strong evidence of nationality because it is issued after official verification. Still, citizenship as a legal status is determined under citizenship law, not merely by possession of an identity or travel document.
- **Burden of Proof:** Section 9 of the Foreigners Act, 1946 places the burden on a person to prove that he or she is not a foreigner when such a question arises. This makes reliable root documents important in citizenship disputes.

Can the ED attach a firms assets after it enters insolvency?

In the News: The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal held that insolvency proceedings cannot be used to shield assets alleged to be proceeds of crime. The ruling came in matters involving Siddhi Vinayak Logistics Ltd. and actions taken by the Enforcement Directorate under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act. The judgment clarifies the boundary between insolvency resolution and anti-money laundering enforcement.

Key Points:

- **Core Holding:** NCLAT ruled that the IBC moratorium cannot prevent ED action over assets alleged to be proceeds of crime. The tribunal held that PMLA's adjudicatory mechanism has jurisdiction over such attached assets.
- **IBC and PMLA Domains:** The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code deals with resolution or liquidation of a corporate debtor using legitimate assets. The PMLA deals with identification, attachment and confiscation of property linked to money laundering.
- **Case Background:** The ruling involved Siddhi Vinayak Logistics Ltd., which faced allegations of bank fraud and diversion of loan funds exceeding ₹1,600 crore. ED had attached company assets, and the liquidator sought release of the assets during insolvency proceedings.
- **Tribunal Jurisdiction:** NCLAT said that IBC tribunals are not the proper forums to challenge ED action under PMLA. Such disputes must be pursued before authorities and courts within the PMLA framework.

Eastern India Leads GI Registrations, Madhya Pradesh Tops India in 2025–26

In the News: India registered 125 new Geographical Indications in 2025–26, taking the reported national total to 822. Madhya Pradesh recorded the highest number of new GI registrations with 26 tags, while eastern Indian states such as West Bengal and Jharkhand also showed strong performance. West Bengal added 24 registrations and Jharkhand added 11, highlighting the growing use of GI protection for traditional crafts, foods, textiles and agricultural products.

Key Points:

- **Madhya Pradesh at the Top:** Madhya Pradesh led the 2025–26 GI registration list with 26 new products. Reported examples include Khajuraho Stone Craft, Sitahi Kutki, Nagdaman Kutki and Baigani Arhar, showing a mix of craft and tribal agricultural heritage.
- **Eastern India's Strong Presence:** West Bengal secured 24 registrations, while Jharkhand secured 11. West Bengal's additions included sweets, crafts and textiles, whereas Jharkhand's list focused heavily on tribal crafts, handloom products and traditional art forms.
- **Important Legal Linkage:** GI registration in India is governed by the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999. GI tags protect products whose quality, reputation or characteristics are linked to a specific geographical origin.
- **Category Pattern:** Handicrafts formed the largest share of India's GI registrations, followed by agricultural products. This pattern is important because GI protection often supports artisans, farmers, tribal communities and traditional producer groups.
- **Institutional Role:** GI registration is linked with intellectual property administration under the DPIIT framework. State agencies, academic bodies and craft organisations have played an important role in identifying products, filing applications and protecting local heritage.

Madhya Pradesh Missile Manufacturing Plant Launched in Shivpuri

In the News: Adani Defence & Aerospace broke ground on a ₹2,500-crore missile manufacturing project in Shivpuri, Madhya Pradesh, on July 5, 2026. The project has been described as South Asia's largest private-sector missile ecosystem. It will include missile system integration along with composite propellant and Trinitrotoluene production at one location.

Key Points:

- **Project Location and Investment:** The facility is coming up in Shivpuri district of Madhya Pradesh with a proposed investment of ₹2,500 crore. The project is expected to strengthen Madhya Pradesh's position as an emerging defence manufacturing destination.
- **Private-Sector Missile Ecosystem:** The plant will combine missile system integration with production of key materials used in missile systems. According to the company, this will create India's first backward-integrated private-sector capability of this kind.
- **Employment and Industry Impact:** The project is expected to generate around 5,000 direct and indirect skilled jobs. It may also create opportunities for MSMEs linked to components, materials, engineering services and defence supply chains.
- **Defence Manufacturing Linkage:** The facility is expected to support indigenous missile systems and serial production after successful trials. It also reflects the growing role of private industry in India's defence manufacturing landscape.
- **Associated Personalities:** Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia were associated with the launch event. The project has been presented as a major industrial development for the Shivpuri-Guna region.

PM Modi Receives Indonesia's Highest Civilian Honour 'Bintang Adipurna' During Jakarta Visit

In the News: Prime Minister Narendra Modi received Indonesia's highest civilian honour, the Bintang Adipurna of the Republic of Indonesia, during his Jakarta visit. The award was presented by Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto on 7 July 2026. The honour was linked to India-Indonesia friendship and the strengthening of bilateral cooperation.

Key Points:

- **Award and Venue:** The Bintang Adipurna was conferred at Istana Merdeka, the Presidential Palace in Jakarta. It is Indonesia's highest civilian award and is given as a mark of exceptional recognition. The ceremony formed part of PM Modi's official state visit to Indonesia from 6 to 8 July 2026.
- **Bilateral Context:** India and Indonesia share civilisational links, maritime interests and cooperation across the Indo-Pacific region. During the visit, both sides discussed areas such as trade, energy, defence, maritime security and technology. The award therefore carried both symbolic and diplomatic significance.
- **Strategic Dimension:** The visit also saw major defence-related developments, including Indonesia's move to acquire BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles and Astra air-to-air missiles from India. This marked an important expansion of India's defence exports and strategic ties with Southeast Asia's largest economy.
- **India-Indonesia Link:** Indonesia is a key ASEAN country and an important partner in India's Act East Policy and Indo-Pacific vision. Cooperation between the two countries covers security, trade, culture, education and regional connectivity. The honour reinforced the growing diplomatic warmth between New Delhi and Jakarta.

Sirsa Kinnow Receives GI Tag, Becomes Haryana's First Fruit with Geographical Indication Recognition

In the News: Sirsa Kinnow has received a Geographical Indication tag, becoming the first fruit from Haryana to get GI recognition. The GI Registry in Chennai issued the registration certificate on 28 March 2026, while the development gained wider attention in July 2026. The tag gives legal recognition to the fruit's regional identity and distinct qualities.

Key Points:

- **Registered GI Details:** The GI Registry records Sirsa Kinnow under application number 1101 with the status shown as registered. The Form GI-1 was filed on 16 June 2023, and the certificate of registration was issued on 28 March 2026. The registered applicant is linked to Kharisureran Farmer Producer Company Limited in Sirsa district.
- **About the Product:** Sirsa Kinnow is a citrus fruit grown in Haryana's Sirsa district. It is known for its high juice content, sweetness, size and market demand. The GI tag helps distinguish it from kinnow grown in other regions and supports branding in domestic and export markets.
- **Haryana's First Fruit GI:** The recognition is significant because it makes Sirsa Kinnow Haryana's first fruit with a GI tag. It strengthens the state's horticulture profile and gives farmers a stronger identity-based market advantage. Such recognition can also help prevent misuse of the Sirsa Kinnow name by non-origin producers.
- **Agriculture Link:** Sirsa is a major kinnow-producing region in Haryana, and the state has also been considering fruit processing infrastructure for kinnow value addition. Processing units, branding and GI recognition together can improve price realisation for farmers. The development is important for questions on GI tags, horticulture and regional agricultural branding.

Yogi Government Renames Jalalabad Town as Parashurampuri

In the News: The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet approved the renaming of Jalalabad in Shahjahanpur district as Parshurampuri, also reported in current-affairs notes as Parashurampuri. The Jalalabad Nagar Palika Parishad will also be known as Parshurampuri Nagar Palika Parishad. The decision was announced in July 2026.

Key Points:

- **Location and Administrative Change:** Jalalabad is a town in Shahjahanpur district of Uttar Pradesh. The renaming applies not only to the town but also to the municipal council. This makes the change relevant for state-level geography, administration and current affairs.
- **Cultural Reason Cited:** The renaming has been associated with the belief that the area is linked to Lord Parashuram. Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak referred to a long-standing demand from local residents for the new name. Such renaming decisions often combine cultural claims with administrative notification procedures.

- **Central Approval Background:** Earlier reports stated that the Union Home Ministry had approved the renaming of Jalalabad to Parshurampuri in August 2025. For changing names of towns, states usually seek clearances from central agencies before final notification. The latest cabinet approval brought the issue back into the news.
- **Pattern in Uttar Pradesh:** Uttar Pradesh has seen several place-name changes in recent years, often justified on historical, cultural or religious grounds. Such decisions matter for questions on state administration, urban local bodies and the process of official name changes. The renamed municipal body is especially important because local government records must reflect the new name.

Natural History Museum in Aizawl Becomes India's 21st Repository

In the News: The Natural History Museum at Mizoram University, Aizawl, has been notified as India's 21st Designated Repository under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002. The notification was issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on the recommendation of the National Biodiversity Authority. The Central Government notified it as a Designated Repository on 19 June 2026.

Key Points:

- **Legal Provision:** The designation was made under Section 39 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002. Designated Repositories preserve authenticated biological specimens accessed under the Act. These repositories are important for species identification, traceability, research and long-term conservation.
- **Specimens to Be Preserved:** The museum will maintain voucher specimens of selected flora and fauna, including pteridophytes, macrofungi, reptiles, amphibians, fishes, moths, beetles and butterflies. It will also serve as a depository for type specimens of newly discovered species from the region. This strengthens documentation of India's biological resources.
- **Northeast Biodiversity Context:** The museum is located within the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot, one of the world's important biodiversity regions. Mizoram and the wider North-East are home to more than 7,500 species of flowering plants and over 2,000 faunal species. The repository helps preserve specimens closer to their source.

Why the Ram Temple Trust is changing — and how it differs from India's other major temple bodies

In the News: The Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust is undergoing a major administrative change after a controversy over alleged theft of temple donations. General Secretary Champat Rai and trustee Anil Mishra resigned, and the Trust decided to create a Chief Executive Officer post. This is the biggest governance overhaul since the Trust was created in 2020.

Key Points:

- **Reason for the Change:** The immediate trigger was the alleged theft of donations by people involved in counting offerings. Reuters reported that nearly ₹8 million had been recovered after arrests, while the temple had received ₹5.82 billion in offerings by 31 March. The controversy raised questions about professional oversight, recruitment and donation handling.
- **CEO-Based Administration:** The Trust is considering appointing a CEO to oversee day-to-day administration. This would reduce direct operational control by trustees and bring a more professional management structure. Treasurer Govind Dev Giri said the absence of professional supervision contributed to administrative lapses.
- **How It Differs from Other Temples:** Unlike Tirupati, Jagannath, Vaishno Devi or Kashi Vishwanath, the Ram Temple is not governed by a dedicated statute enacted by a state legislature. Its legal foundation comes from the Supreme Court's 2019 judgment, the 1993 Ayodhya Acquisition Act, the Centre's scheme and notification, and the Trust deed.
- **Transparency and Rulebook Issue:** Much of the Ram Temple Trust's internal rulebook remains outside the public domain. The Central Information Commission has held that the Trust is not a public authority under the RTI Act. In contrast, major statutory temple bodies have publicly available governing laws, rules and administrative structures.

India, Indonesia Seal BrahMos and Astra Missile Deals, Sign 14 Strategic Agreements

In the News: India and Indonesia signed key defence agreements covering the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile system and the Astra beyond-visual-range air-to-air missile. The agreements were finalised during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Indonesia and his talks with President Prabowo Subianto. The two countries also signed 14 agreements across defence, maritime security, critical minerals, agriculture, digital payments, telecommunications and other sectors.

Key Points:

- **Defence Cooperation:** The defence agreements include cooperation on the BrahMos missile system and Astra air-to-air missile. BrahMos is a supersonic cruise missile, while Astra is an indigenous beyond-visual-range air-to-air missile. These agreements mark a major expansion of India's defence partnership with Indonesia.
- **Indo-Pacific Context:** India and Indonesia reaffirmed their support for a free, open, transparent, rules-based and inclusive Indo-Pacific region. Both countries are important maritime partners with shared interests in regional stability and sea-lane security. Their cooperation is also connected with the 2018 Shared Vision on Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.
- **Strategic Agreements:** The 14 agreements covered critical minerals, steel supply chains, maritime security, medicines, education, outer space, research, innovation, telecommunications and food security. Cooperation in critical minerals is important for manufacturing, clean energy technologies and supply-chain stability. The agreements broaden the partnership beyond defence alone.
- **Economic and Digital Cooperation:** The two sides welcomed progress on Local Currency Transactions between the Reserve Bank of India and Bank Indonesia. They also discussed cross-border QR payment linkage and digital network cooperation based on India's ONDC framework. These measures can support trade, tourism, MSMEs and financial connectivity.
- **Maritime Linkages:** Indonesia welcomed India's interest in the integrated development of Sabang Port. Both sides discussed connectivity between India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Indonesia's Sumatra region. The cooperation also covers cruise tourism, shipbuilding, marine industries and offshore energy services.

Kamarajar Port Becomes India's Second Major Port with 18-Metre Draft Capability

In the News: Kamarajar Port Limited has become India's second major port, after Visakhapatnam Port, to offer an operational draft of 18 metres. The milestone was achieved after completion of the ₹440 crore Capital Dredging Phase VI project. The upgraded draft capability will allow the port to handle fully laden Capesize vessels and strengthen India's maritime logistics capacity.

Key Points:

- **Major Port Milestone:** Kamarajar Port has become the second major port in India to provide an 18-metre operational draft. Visakhapatnam Port was the first major port to achieve this capability. The enhanced draft allows larger vessels to safely enter and operate at the port.
- **Capesize Vessel Handling:** The new draft capability enables Kamarajar Port to handle fully laden Capesize vessels. These vessels are large bulk carriers generally used for transporting coal, iron ore and other heavy cargo. This improves the port's ability to manage high-volume maritime trade.
- **Dredging Project:** The Capital Dredging Phase VI project involved deepening the outer approach channel, inner entrance channel, harbour basin and berth-side areas. These works were required to support safe navigation for larger vessels. The project was completed at an estimated cost of ₹440 crore.
- **Economic Importance:** Larger vessels help reduce logistics costs through economies of scale. The upgrade can improve cargo-handling efficiency and increase the overall capacity of the port. This is important for India's export-import trade and bulk cargo movement.
- **Maritime Infrastructure Push:** The development aligns with India's broader focus on port modernisation and maritime infrastructure. It supports the objectives of Maritime India Vision 2030 and Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047. The upgrade strengthens India's competitiveness in global shipping and port-led development.

Indian Contingent to Showcase Sustainable Jute Apparel at Commonwealth Games 2026

In the News: The Indian contingent at the Commonwealth Games 2026 will wear jute-viscose blended apparel developed by the National Jute Board under the Ministry of Textiles. The Games will be held in Glasgow, Scotland, from July 23 to August 2, 2026. The official kit unveiling and send-off ceremony was held in New Delhi on July 2026.

Key Points:

- **Jute-Based Apparel:** The Indian contingent will wear apparel made from jute-viscose blended fabric. The fabric has been developed by the National Jute Board under the Ministry of Textiles. This gives national and international visibility to jute as a sustainable textile material.
- **Institutions Involved:** The fabric was developed by the National Jute Board with support from Gloster Jute Mills, Kolkata. The apparel was designed by the National Institute of Fashion Technology, New Delhi. The initiative brings together textile institutions, industry and sports representation.
- **Sustainability Feature:** The jute-viscose blended fabric is biodegradable and promotes the use of natural fibres. It reflects India's focus on sustainable textiles and eco-friendly alternatives. The initiative also highlights the potential of jute beyond traditional packaging and household products.
- **First-Time Milestone:** This will be the first time jute-based apparel is showcased at an international multi-sport event. The apparel was earlier displayed during the National Jute Board Foundation Day celebrations in Patna on April 1, 2026. The Indian Olympic Association later approved its use by the Indian contingent.
- **Commonwealth Games 2026:** The Commonwealth Games 2026 will be held in Glasgow, Scotland. India will be represented by a 124-member contingent, including 78 male and 46 female athletes. The use of jute apparel links India's sports presence with sustainable textile promotion and jute-sector diversification.

PRAGATI Project: Key Features, Benefits and Impact on Indian Agriculture

In the News: Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched the PRAGATI initiative in New Delhi in July 2026. The nationwide programme seeks to create 20,000 new agri-entrepreneurs and improve the livelihoods of nearly 20 lakh small and marginal farmers. It combines rural entrepreneurship with regenerative agriculture, technology-based services, financial inclusion and market access.

Key Points:

- **Meaning and Objective:** PRAGATI stands for Promotion of Regenerative Agriculture through Gender-inclusive Agri-entrepreneurship, Rural Transformation and Positive Impact. Its primary objective is to establish village-level agricultural enterprises capable of providing farmers with timely inputs, advice, technology and commercial services.
- **Agri-Entrepreneur Network:** The initiative will add 20,000 agri-entrepreneurs to an existing network of more than 26,000 entrepreneurs that already supports about 26 lakh farmers. These entrepreneurs will operate as local service providers, connecting farmers with soil testing, mechanisation, crop advisory, credit, insurance and government welfare schemes.
- **Coverage and Target States:** PRAGATI will initially operate in Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. The focus will remain on regions with large populations of smallholders and considerable scope for improving last-mile agricultural services.
- **Income and Productivity Targets:** The programme aims to increase farmers' incomes by at least 30 per cent and raise the yields of paddy, maize and potato by around 15 to 20 per cent. It also seeks to encourage at least 20 per cent of participating farmers to adopt regenerative farming and diversified livelihood activities.
- **Institutional Partnership:** The programme is supported by organisations including the PepsiCo Foundation, SBI Foundation, Gates Foundation, IDH, Heifer International, Environmental Defense Fund, AEGF and Transform Rural India Foundation. This partnership model brings together finance, technical expertise, training systems and grassroots implementation capacity.

India Launches LoA Regime for High-Seas Fishing to Boost Seafood Exports and Strengthen the Blue Economy

In the News: India launched the Letter of Authorisation regime for the sustainable use of high-seas fisheries on 9 July 2026 in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Vice-President C. P. Radhakrishnan issued the first authorisations to fisheries cooperatives and vessel owners. He also launched the Odisha Deep Sea Fishing Mission Document during the programme.

Key Pointers:

- **Background of the Initiative:** The Union Budget 2025–26 announced a framework for the sustainable use of fisheries resources in India's Exclusive Economic Zone and the high seas. The initiative has been implemented through the EEZ Rules, 2025 and the Guidelines for Sustainable Harnessing of Fisheries in the High Seas by Indian-Flagged Fishing Vessels, 2025.
- **Nature of the LoA:** A Letter of Authorisation is compulsory for an Indian-flagged vessel undertaking fishing or fishing-related activities in the high seas. It is vessel-specific, non-transferable and integrated with the ReALCraft Fishing Vessel Registration Portal for improved monitoring and traceability.
- **Conservation Requirements:** Authorised vessels must follow the conservation and management measures prescribed by the relevant Regional Fisheries Management Organisations. These include catch limits, gear regulations, bycatch reduction, management of fish-aggregating devices and voyage reporting.
- **Benefits for Fishing Communities:** Fisheries cooperatives and Fish Farmer Producer Organisations have been given importance under the framework. Access to high-value marine resources such as tuna and tuna-like species is expected to improve fisher incomes, create employment and strengthen the seafood value chain.
- **Odisha Deep Sea Fishing Mission:** The Odisha Deep Sea Fishing Mission will operate from 2026 to 2036. It seeks to develop fishing infrastructure, processing facilities, scientific fisheries management and export linkages, with the objective of establishing Odisha as an important deep-sea fishing and marine export centre.

AISHE Report 2023-24: India's Higher Education Enrolment Hits Record 4.5 Crore

In the News: The Union Ministry of Education released the All India Survey on Higher Education reports for 2022–23 and 2023–24 on 8 July 2026. Total enrolment in higher education reached a record 4.50 crore in 2023–24, compared with 4.46 crore in 2022–23. The report also recorded improvements in female participation, Gross Enrolment Ratio and STEM enrolment.

Key Pointers:

- **About AISHE:** AISHE is conducted by the Department of Higher Education under the Ministry of Education. It collects information from higher education institutions on student enrolment, teachers, infrastructure, courses, examination results and other institutional indicators through a web-based Data Capture Format.
- **Growth in Enrolment:** Higher education enrolment increased from 3.42 crore in 2014–15 to 4.50 crore in 2023–24, representing a growth of 31.5%. Female enrolment increased from 1.57 crore to 2.24 crore during the same period, recording a rise of 42.2%.
- **Gross Enrolment Ratio:** Gross Enrolment Ratio measures higher education enrolment as a proportion of the population in the 18–23 age group. India's GER increased from 23.7 in 2014–15 to 30 in 2023–24, while female GER reached 31.2.
- **Gender and Social Inclusion:** The Gender Parity Index stood at 1.08 and remained above 1 for the seventh consecutive year, indicating greater female participation. Enrolment reached 69.72 lakh among Scheduled Castes, 28.83 lakh among Scheduled Tribes and 1.80 crore among Other Backward Classes.
- **STEM and Faculty Strength:** Enrolment in science, technology, engineering and mathematics increased from 91.5 lakh in 2014–15 to 1.02 crore in 2023–24. Women constituted 44% of STEM enrolment, while the total number of faculty members in higher education institutions reached 17.32 lakh.

NSE Launches Nifty500 Ahimsa Index

In the News: NSE Indices Limited launched the Nifty500 Ahimsa Index on 10 July 2026. The thematic index tracks companies from the Nifty 500 universe whose products, services and business practices follow the principle of *Ahimsa*, or non-violence. It was developed in collaboration with the Ahimsagain Foundation under its Ahimsa Investment Movement framework.

Key Points:

- **Selection of Companies:** The Ahimsagain Foundation classifies companies into Green, Orange and Red bands after evaluating their impact on animals. Only companies classified under the Green band are eligible, while those in the Orange and Red bands are excluded from the index.
- **Number of Constituents:** The index comprised 326 companies at the time of its launch. Its constituents are drawn from the Nifty 500, providing representation across sectors such as automobiles, capital goods, information technology, financial services and telecommunications.
- **Index Methodology:** Each constituent is weighted according to its free-float market capitalisation, which considers shares available for public trading. The index is calculated at the end of each trading day and is reconstituted on a semi-annual basis.
- **Base Details:** The index has a base date of 1 April 2016 and a base value of 1,000. It also has a Total Returns Index variant that takes dividend income into account while calculating overall returns.
- **Major Constituents and Uses:** Bharti Airtel was the largest constituent at launch, followed by Infosys, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Consultancy Services and Maruti Suzuki India. The index may be used for benchmarking and for developing exchange-traded funds, index funds and structured products.

INTERNATIONAL**India to Chair UNCTAD Consumer Protection Meeting in Geneva from July 6–8**

In the News: India was selected to chair the Ninth Session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy. The meeting is organised by United Nations Trade and Development at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, from July 6 to 8, 2026. India is represented by Nidhi Khare, Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs.

Key Points:

- **Session and Venue:** The Ninth Session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts is being held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. The meeting brings together member states, consumer protection authorities, international organisations, academics and other stakeholders.
- **India's Chairperson:** Nidhi Khare, Secretary in the Department of Consumer Affairs, has been invited to chair the three-day session. She will guide discussions on major global priorities in consumer protection law and policy.
- **Important UN Framework:** The Intergovernmental Group of Experts functions under the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection. It acts as a platform for cooperation, policy dialogue and review of consumer protection systems.
- **Main Discussion Areas:** The meeting will discuss consumer product safety, sustainable consumption, consumer information, education, enforcement of consumer laws and cross-border consumer protection mechanisms. It will also review legal and institutional developments among member states.
- **India's Domestic Linkage:** India's consumer protection framework includes the Consumer Protection Act, National Consumer Helpline and e-Jagriti platform. These systems are relevant because India has highlighted technology-based grievance redressal and cross-border consumer complaint handling.

India's Passport Ranked 125th in Global Passport Index 2026

In the News: India ranked 125th in the Global Passport Index 2026. The index evaluates passport strength using a broader framework than simple visa-free travel, covering mobility, investment and quality of living indicators. Sweden topped the 2026 ranking, while European countries dominated most of the top ten positions.

Key Points:

- **India's Rank:** India was placed 125th among around 200 countries in the Global Passport Index 2026. Its mobility rank was reported around 136th, while its quality-of-life position was reported at 118th.

- **Index Methodology:** The Global Passport Index uses three broad pillars: enhanced mobility, investment and quality of living. Mobility carries the highest weight, while investment and quality of living also influence the final ranking.
- **Difference from Henley Index:** The Global Passport Index is different from the Henley Passport Index. Henley focuses mainly on visa-free or visa-on-arrival access, while the Global Passport Index also includes broader living and investment-related indicators.
- **Top Performers:** Sweden led the Global Passport Index 2026. Switzerland, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Norway and Singapore also appeared among the strongest passports.

India Seeks Clarity on 'Climate Tipping Points' at Bonn Climate Conference 2026

In the News: At the Bonn Climate Change Conference 2026, India called for greater care and clarity in the use of the term "climate tipping points." The Bonn meetings were held from June 8 to 18, 2026, under the UNFCCC's Subsidiary Bodies process. The debate came amid wider discussions on climate finance, adaptation, fossil fuel transition and equity.

Key Points:

- **Meaning of Tipping Point:** The IPCC defines a tipping point as a critical threshold beyond which a system reorganises, often abruptly or irreversibly. In climate discussions, examples may include major changes in ice sheets, ocean circulation, coral reefs and forests.
- **India's Position:** India urged caution in using the term because unclear or oversimplified use may create confusion in negotiations. Its position focused on scientific clarity, accurate communication and avoiding new terminology without agreed understanding.
- **Bonn Conference Context:** The 2026 Bonn Climate Change Conference included meetings of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice. It served as an important mid-year negotiation platform before the next major climate conference.
- **Equity and Finance Linkage:** India also stated that climate negotiations should not add new issues or obligations beyond agreed mandates. It called for stronger attention to implementation, climate finance and Article 9.1 of the Paris Agreement.

India's Bid for UNSC Non-Permanent Seat for 2028-29

In the News: India is set to formally launch its campaign for a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council for the 2028-29 term. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's July 2026 visit to New York is linked with the launch of India's official campaign for the UNSC tenure. India had earlier declared its candidature in 2022 after completing its 2021-22 term as an elected member of the Council.

Key Points:

- **India's Candidature:** India is seeking election as a non-permanent member of the UNSC for the 2028-29 term. If elected, it would mark India's ninth term as an elected member of the Security Council. India last served on the Council during 2021-22, when it also held the monthly rotating presidency twice.
- **UNSC Composition:** The Security Council has 15 members, comprising five permanent members and ten non-permanent members. The permanent members are China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States. The ten elected members serve two-year terms and do not possess veto power.
- **Election Process:** Non-permanent members are elected by the United Nations General Assembly for a two-year term. A candidate requires a two-thirds majority of members present and voting. Elections are usually held before the term begins, and five of the ten non-permanent seats are filled every year.
- **Regional Group Factor:** UNSC non-permanent seats are distributed among regional groups. India contests from the Asia-Pacific Group, where diplomatic support from member states is crucial. Regional endorsement often plays an important role before the final vote in the General Assembly.
- **Reform Context:** India's campaign is also connected with its larger demand for UNSC reform. India has repeatedly argued that the Council's present structure does not reflect contemporary geopolitical realities. Its claim is strengthened by its population size, peacekeeping role, Global South outreach and growing economic profile.

World Bank Income Classification: India Remains Lower-Middle-Income

In the News: The World Bank's latest income classification for FY2027 has kept India in the lower-middle-income category. The classification was updated on July 1, 2026, using 2025 Gross National Income per capita data. India's GNI per capita under the Atlas method was listed at USD 2,760 for 2025, keeping it within the lower-middle-income range.

Key Points:

- **Basis of Classification:** The World Bank classifies economies into four income groups: low income, lower-middle income, upper-middle income and high income. The classification is updated every year on July 1. It is based on the previous calendar year's GNI per capita, calculated in U.S. dollars through the Atlas method.
- **India's Current Category:** For FY2027, lower-middle-income economies are those with GNI per capita between USD 1,176 and USD 4,635. India remains in this bracket with a GNI per capita of USD 2,760. This places India below the upper-middle-income threshold of USD 4,636.
- **Atlas Method:** The World Bank uses the Atlas method to reduce the impact of short-term exchange-rate fluctuations in cross-country income comparisons. It converts national income into U.S. dollars using an adjusted conversion factor. This makes GNI per capita more stable for international classification purposes.
- **Countries Moving Up:** In the 2026-27 update, six countries moved to a higher income category. Jordan, Micronesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam moved from lower-middle to upper-middle income, while Togo moved from low income to lower-middle income. No assessed country moved down in this update.

Geneva to Host Global AI Summit in June 2027, Switzerland Unveils Global Agenda

In the News: Switzerland announced that the next Global AI Summit will be held at Palexpo in Geneva on June 21 and 22, 2027. Swiss Federal Councillor Albert Rösti announced the dates during the AI for Good Global Summit 2026. The event will focus on international cooperation, inclusive technological progress and trustworthy artificial intelligence.

Key Points:

- **Venue and Schedule:** The summit will be organised at Palexpo, Geneva, on June 21 and 22, 2027. It will take place alongside the International Telecommunication Union's AI for Good Global Summit, allowing policymakers and technology experts to participate in closely connected discussions.
- **Major Priorities:** The Geneva summit will pursue two broad objectives. It will examine how artificial intelligence can promote prosperity and development while also encouraging the safe, responsible, inclusive and trustworthy use of AI systems.
- **Participants:** Governments, international organisations, scientific institutions, private companies, universities, researchers and civil society organisations are expected to participate. Their discussions will cover AI governance, ethical standards, public welfare applications and international coordination.
- **Evolution of the Summit Series:** International AI summits have previously been organised at Bletchley Park in 2023, Seoul in 2024, Paris in 2025 and New Delhi in 2026. The Geneva meeting will carry forward the policy discussions and commitments developed through these earlier conferences.
- **Importance of Geneva:** Geneva is a major centre of multilateral diplomacy and hosts several United Nations bodies, humanitarian agencies and international organisations. Its institutional ecosystem allows technology governance to be discussed alongside human rights, health, trade, telecommunications and sustainable development concerns.

PM Modi Visits UNESCO World Heritage Prambanan Temple in Indonesia

In the News: Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the Prambanan Temple Compounds during his July 2026 state visit to Indonesia. He and Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto inaugurated an India-supported restoration project at the complex. The Archaeological Survey of India will cooperate with Indonesian authorities in restoring parts of the historic site.

Key Points:

- **Location and Period:** Prambanan is situated near Yogyakarta on the island of Java, close to the boundary between Yogyakarta and Central Java. Its principal Hindu structures date to the ninth century and represent one of Southeast Asia's most important temple traditions.
- **UNESCO Recognition:** The Prambanan Temple Compounds are included on the UNESCO World Heritage List. UNESCO recognises the property under cultural criteria (i) and (iv) for its exceptional Shiva art, architecture and representation of Indonesia's classical religious traditions.
- **Composition of the Complex:** The heritage property includes Prambanan, Sewu, Buhrah and Lumbung temples. Prambanan itself contains around 240 temples, while the broader archaeological area includes both Hindu and Buddhist structures.
- **Religious and Artistic Features:** The principal temples are associated with Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma. Their walls contain elaborate stone reliefs illustrating the Indonesian version of the Ramayana, while the central Shiva temple rises to approximately 47 metres.
- **India's Restoration Role:** The Archaeological Survey of India will assist in conserving smaller temples within the complex. The cooperation reflects the historical spread of Hindu and Buddhist traditions across maritime Southeast Asia and strengthens cultural relations between India and Indonesia.

Delhi Ranks 120th in Global Liveability Index

In the News: New Delhi was placed 120th among 173 cities in the Economist Intelligence Unit's Global Liveability Index 2026. It was the highest-ranked Indian city in the report, followed by Mumbai, Chennai and Bengaluru. Copenhagen retained the position of the world's most liveable city for the second consecutive year.

Key Points:

- **Indian City Rankings:** New Delhi was ranked 120th, Mumbai 121st, Chennai 123rd and Bengaluru 127th. None of the four Indian cities assessed in the report entered the global top 100.
- **Publishing Institution:** The index is released by the Economist Intelligence Unit, the research and analysis division of The Economist Group. It is separate from India's domestic Ease of Living assessments conducted for evaluating Indian urban centres.
- **Assessment Framework:** The index examines living conditions across five categories: stability, healthcare, culture and environment, education, and infrastructure. These categories cover approximately 30 qualitative and quantitative indicators relating to urban quality of life.
- **Global Performance:** Copenhagen ranked first with an overall score of 98 out of 100 and received full marks in stability, education and infrastructure. The average global liveability score remained at 76.1, as gains in healthcare and education were offset by conflict and political instability.
- **Cities at the Bottom:** Damascus remained the least liveable city in the 2026 assessment. Tripoli and Dhaka were also among the lowest-ranked cities, largely because armed conflict, economic distress and institutional instability affected basic urban services.

Jaipur Ranked Among the World's Happiest Cities in Happy City Index 2026

In the News: Jaipur was ranked sixth in Time Out's list of the world's happiest cities for 2026, making it the only Indian city in the top ten. The ranking was based on responses collected from more than 24,000 residents across cities worldwide. Bath in the United Kingdom secured the first position.

Key Points:

- **Jaipur's Position:** Jaipur occupied sixth place after Bath, Panama City, Guadalajara, Medellín and Krakow. It was followed by Chicago, Cape Town, Shanghai and Gothenburg in the top ten.
- **Survey Method:** Respondents were asked whether their city made them happy, whether local people appeared positive and whether they found joy in daily urban experiences. Only the highest-ranked city from each country was included in the final list of 20 cities.

- **Factors Considered:** The survey considered residents' perceptions of community life, culture, food, nightlife, neighbourhoods, green spaces and everyday experiences. It therefore reflects public sentiment and differs from infrastructure-based urban assessments such as the EIU Global Liveability Index.
- **Historical Importance of Jaipur:** Jaipur was founded in 1727 by Sawai Jai Singh II and was developed according to a planned grid system. The walled city was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2019 during the World Heritage Committee's 43rd session.
- **Important Ranking Distinction:** Jaipur's sixth-place recognition came from Time Out's residents' survey, not from the official Happy City Index 2026. The separate Happy City Index assessed 251 cities across 64 indicators under citizens, governance, environment, economy, health and mobility, with Copenhagen ranked first.

Why a US Senate campaign ended by sexual assault allegations matters for national politics

In the News: Graham Platner, the Democratic nominee for the US Senate election in Maine, announced his withdrawal from the 2026 race after a former partner accused him of sexual assault. Platner denied the allegation and stated that his withdrawal was not an admission of guilt. His departure has disrupted Democratic plans in a closely watched Senate contest.

Key Points:

- **Candidate and Constituency:** Platner was a military veteran and oyster farmer who had won the Democratic primary on June 9, 2026. He was contesting against Republican Senator Susan Collins, who has represented Maine in the US Senate since 1997.
- **Nature of the Allegation:** A woman who had previously been in a relationship with Platner alleged that a 2021 sexual encounter was non-consensual. Platner rejected the allegation, but leading Democratic figures and organisations withdrew their endorsements and urged him to leave the race.
- **Replacement Procedure:** Maine law permits a political party to replace a nominee who withdraws within the prescribed period. Platner had to withdraw by July 13, while the state Democratic Party was required to select a replacement nominee by July 27.
- **Balance in the Senate:** Republicans held 53 seats and Democrats 47 in the 100-member Senate. Democrats therefore required a net gain of four seats to secure the 51 seats needed for a majority, making competitive states such as Maine important to national control of the chamber.
- **Constitutional Importance of the Senate:** The US Senate confirms federal judges, Supreme Court justices, Cabinet members and senior executive appointments. It also ratifies treaties and conducts trials following impeachment by the House of Representatives, making control of the chamber significant beyond ordinary legislation.

India and Kyrgyzstan Launch International Centre for Civilizational Studies 'Manas and Mahabharata'

In the News: The International Centre for Civilizational Studies, named "Manas and Mahabharata", was inaugurated in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on 6 July 2026. The programme also included the release of the first Hindi translation of the Kyrgyz epic *Manas*. The centre seeks to promote academic cooperation and the comparative study of Indian and Kyrgyz civilizational traditions.

Key Pointers:

- **Participating Institutions:** The centre has been established by Kyrgyzstan's Manas National Academy in cooperation with the Centre for Studies of International Relations, New Delhi. Cooperation agreements were also signed with seven universities in Kyrgyzstan to expand academic and institutional participation.
- **Academic Activities:** The centre will support research in comparative civilizational studies, epic traditions, history, culture and intercultural dialogue. It will also promote academic exchanges, joint research projects, conferences, translations and the training of researchers.
- **Hindi Translation of Manas:** The first Hindi translation covers the three parts of the Kyrgyz epic tradition—*Manas*, *Semetei* and *Seitek*. The publication is intended to introduce Indian readers to Kyrgyz literature and strengthen cooperation in epic and civilizational studies.

- **Importance of Manas:** *Manas* is closely associated with the identity, history and oral traditions of the Kyrgyz people. The manuscripts of the epic narrated by Sagymbay Orozbekov were included in UNESCO's Memory of the World International Register in 2023.
- **Bilateral Relations:** India and Kyrgyzstan elevated their bilateral relationship to a Strategic Partnership in June 2019. The relationship covers political cooperation, defence, security, trade, education and cultural exchanges, while both countries are also members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

India and Australia Launch PACTS to Strengthen Cyber, Critical Technology and Supply Chain Partnership

In the News: India and Australia announced the Australia-India Partnership on Cyber, Critical Technologies and Supply Chains, known as PACTS, on 9 July 2026. The announcement was made during the third India-Australia Annual Summit in Melbourne. The framework expands bilateral cooperation in cybersecurity, emerging technologies, supply chains, digital systems and defence research.

Key Pointers:

- **Replacement of the 2020 Framework:** PACTS succeeds and replaces the 2020 Framework Arrangement on Cyber and Cyber-Enabled Critical Technology Cooperation. It operates under the India-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and brings different areas of technology cooperation under a common strategic framework.
- **Five Pillars of Cooperation:** The partnership is organised around supply-chain resilience and diversification, critical technologies, cybersecurity, digital resilience and defence research collaboration. Projects may involve government agencies, private companies, universities, research institutions and start-ups.
- **Critical Technologies:** India and Australia will cooperate in artificial intelligence, space technology, telecommunications, biotechnology and advanced materials. The framework also covers semiconductor supply chains, trusted vendors, undersea cables and secure critical-mineral supply chains.
- **Cybersecurity and Digital Resilience:** The two countries will work together against cybercrime and malicious cyber activity and improve the protection of critical infrastructure. They will also support the expansion of affordable and adaptable Digital Public Infrastructure solutions across the Indo-Pacific.
- **Defence Research and Governance:** PACTS will strengthen cooperation between India's Defence Research and Development Organisation and Australia's Defence Science and Technology Group. It will be jointly overseen by India's Deputy National Security Adviser and Australia's Deputy Secretary for the International and Security Group.

Indian Air Force Ranked World's 3rd Strongest Air Force in WDMMA 2026

In the News: The Indian Air Force was ranked the world's third-strongest national air force in the WDMMA Global Air Powers Ranking 2026, behind the air forces of the United States and Russia. It remained ahead of China's People's Liberation Army Air Force. When the aviation branches of armies, navies and marine forces are counted separately, the IAF occupies sixth position overall.

Key Points:

- **Overall Position:** The United States Air Force ranked first, followed by the United States Navy, Russian Air Force, United States Army and United States Marine Corps. The IAF ranked sixth among all individual military air services but third among independent national air forces.
- **Fleet Strength:** WDMMA recorded an active IAF inventory of 1,716 aircraft. This included 542 combat and attack aircraft, 800 general-support aircraft and 374 pilot and crew-training aircraft.
- **TruVal Rating:** The IAF received a TruVal Rating of 69.4, compared with 63.8 for the Chinese Air Force. China possessed a larger numerical fleet of 3,733 aircraft, but WDMMA placed the IAF higher because its assessment considers factors beyond fleet size.
- **Basis of Assessment:** The TruVal Rating considers modernisation, logistical support, attack and defence capabilities, special-mission aircraft, training platforms, inventory balance and domestic aerospace capacity. WDMMA does not currently include unmanned aerial vehicles because reporting methods differ among countries.

- **Future Procurement:** WDMMA listed 349 aircraft under future procurement for the IAF. The ranking covered 103 countries, 129 military air services and 48,082 aircraft, although it is an independent assessment rather than an official intergovernmental ranking.

One Million Women Lose Aid Access Due to Funding Cuts, UN Women Reports

In the News: UN Women released the report “Beyond the Breaking Point” in July 2026, stating that at least one million women and girls had lost access to humanitarian and other critical support during the preceding 18 months. The decline was attributed to severe reductions in international humanitarian and development assistance.

Key Points:

- **Coverage of the Survey:** The report was based on responses from 855 women-led and women’s rights organisations operating across 52 crisis- and conflict-affected countries. These organisations provide healthcare, shelter, food assistance, legal support and services for survivors of gender-based violence.
- **Increasing Demand:** Around 84% of the surveyed organisations reported that demand for their services had increased since January 2025. Nearly nine in ten stated that they were no longer able to meet the existing level of need because of insufficient funding.
- **Risk of Closure:** Two in five organisations surveyed expected to close temporarily or permanently within the following year. Around 60% were reaching fewer women and girls than before January 2025, despite the rise in demand for humanitarian support.
- **Reduction in Services:** More than three-fourths of the organisations had reduced staff positions, while 65% reported that employees were working without pay. Half had introduced waiting lists or were turning away women and girls who required immediate assistance.
- **Wider Humanitarian Situation:** Approximately 120 million women and girls worldwide required humanitarian assistance and protection. The report also stated that conflict-related sexual violence doubled in 2025, while 62% of organisations reported that safe spaces had been reduced or were no longer available.

India and New Zealand Sign 10 Agreements, Launch Strategic Partnership Roadmap to 2030

In the News: India and New Zealand elevated their bilateral relationship to a Strategic Partnership during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Auckland on 10-11 July 2026, marking the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to New Zealand in 40 years. Prime Minister Modi and New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon endorsed the India–New Zealand Strategic Partnership: Roadmap to 2030. The official outcomes included ten signed documents and eight major announcements.

Key Points:

- **Roadmap to 2030:** The roadmap provides a four-year framework for cooperation in political engagement, defence and security, trade and economy, culture and sports, education and technology, and regional and multilateral affairs. It does not create legally binding obligations or automatic financial commitments.
- **Defence and Maritime Cooperation:** The signed documents included arrangements on maritime cooperation, hydrography and nautical cartography, and mutual logistics support between the Indian Navy and the New Zealand Defence Force. The two countries also announced an annual Maritime Security Dialogue.
- **Counter-Terrorism and Disaster Management:** A Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism will promote information exchange and coordinated action against terrorism. India’s National Disaster Management Authority and New Zealand’s National Emergency Management Agency will cooperate on earthquake resilience, tsunami preparedness and emergency response.
- **Bilateral Trade Target:** The two countries set an aspirational target of doubling bilateral trade in goods and services to NZ\$7 billion, approximately ₹35,000 crore, by 2030. They also agreed to work towards the early entry into force and effective implementation of the India–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement.

- **Other Major Outcomes:** Cooperation was expanded in tourism, sports, culture, animal husbandry, dairying, Antarctic research and food technology. Two Centres of Excellence for kiwifruit will be established in Nagaland and Uttarakhand, while New Zealand also joined the Global Biofuels Alliance.

3rd India-Australia Annual Leaders' Summit 2026

In the News: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese held the 3rd India–Australia Annual Leaders' Summit in Melbourne on July 9, 2026. The summit took place during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Australia from July 8 to 10. Both leaders reviewed the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and announced initiatives covering defence, trade, energy, technology, education and maritime security.

Key Points:

- **Defence and Maritime Cooperation:** The two countries announced a Joint Declaration on Defence and Security Cooperation and established an Annual Defence Ministers' Dialogue. They also adopted the India–Australia Maritime Security Collaboration Roadmap and concluded an MoU between the Indian Coast Guard and Australia's Maritime Border Command.
- **Trade and Critical Minerals:** India and Australia agreed to continue negotiations for a balanced Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement, building on the Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement. Cooperation in critical minerals will focus on investment, long-term supply arrangements, processing facilities and resilient supply chains.
- **Technology and Space Partnership:** The leaders announced the Australia–India Partnership on Cyber, Critical Technologies and Supply Chains, known as PACTS. Australia also confirmed continued support for the Gaganyaan programme through a temporary space-tracking terminal on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.
- **Energy and Nuclear Cooperation:** An administrative arrangement was signed to enable long-term exports of Australian uranium to India exclusively for peaceful purposes under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. Australia also reiterated its support for India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group.
- **Education, Sports and People-to-People Relations:** Australia announced 10 million Australian dollars for Maitri grants, while Flinders University and Victoria University advanced plans for campuses in India. The India–Australia Sports Collaboration Roadmap was also welcomed ahead of the 2030 Commonwealth Games in Ahmedabad and the 2032 Brisbane Olympics.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Samriddh Gram Digital Inclusion Wins WSIS Prize

In the News: The Department of Telecommunications was declared the Global Winner of the WSIS Prizes 2026 for its Samriddh Gram Integrated Phygital Service Delivery Model. The project won under Action Line C6, Enabling Environment, at the WSIS Forum held in Geneva, Switzerland.

Key Points:

- **About the Award:** The World Summit on the Information Society Prizes are organised under the WSIS process led by the International Telecommunication Union. They recognise projects that use information and communication technologies to advance inclusive and sustainable development.
- **Samriddh Gram Initiative:** Samriddh Gram is a rural digital transformation initiative developed by the Department of Telecommunications on the BharatNet backbone. It combines digital platforms, reliable connectivity and assisted physical delivery through village-level Samriddhi Kendras.
- **Services Provided:** Samriddhi Kendras function as one-stop service centres covering healthcare, education, agriculture, banking, skilling, e-governance and e-commerce. Facilities include teleconsultation, Health ATMs, smart classrooms, soil testing, banking correspondent services and digital connectivity.
- **Role of BharatNet:** BharatNet provides the telecom infrastructure required to deliver digital services in rural areas. More than 2.17 lakh Gram Panchayats have been made service-ready and connected under the rural broadband initiative.

- **Selection Process:** Samriddh Gram passed through international screening, global online voting, selection among the five Champion Projects and final assessment by the WSIS Expert Committee. More than 2.2 million votes were cast worldwide across the nominated projects during the voting stage.

APPOINTMENTS

Centre Appoints New Chiefs of BPR&D, NCRB and SVPNPA

In the News: The Government of India approved new appointments in three major police institutions under the Ministry of Home Affairs. Alok Kumar Mittal was appointed DG, BPR&D; Amit Garg was appointed Director, NCRB; and Sujeet Pandey was appointed Director, SVPNPA. The DoPT EO Division report listed the three officers under Home Affairs appointments dated 06/07/2026.

Key Points:

- **New Appointments:** Alok Kumar Mittal, IPS 1993, Haryana cadre, was appointed Director General of BPR&D up to June 30, 2029. Amit Garg, IPS 1993, Andhra Pradesh cadre, was appointed Director, NCRB up to October 31, 2027. Sujeet Pandey, IPS 1994, Uttar Pradesh cadre, was appointed Director, SVPNPA up to July 31, 2028.
- **BPR&D Role:** The Bureau of Police Research and Development was established on August 28, 1970 under the Ministry of Home Affairs. It works on police modernization, research, training, correctional administration and technology development. Its divisions are important for questions on police reforms and internal security institutions.
- **NCRB Role:** The National Crime Records Bureau was set up in 1986 as a repository of information on crime and criminals. It monitors and implements CCTNS, maintains crime databases, and publishes reports such as Crime in India, Accidental Deaths & Suicides and Prison Statistics.
- **SVPNPA Role:** The Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy is located in Hyderabad. It trains Indian Police Service officers selected through the Civil Services Examination before their field postings as Assistant Superintendents of Police.
- **Administrative Context:** These appointments are part of senior-level leadership changes in central police organisations. BPR&D, NCRB and SVPNPA are all important institutions under the wider policing and internal security framework of the Union Government.

ENVIRONMENT

India needs a second home for Asiatic lions

In the News: The need for a second home for Asiatic lions has again come into focus because the world's wild Asiatic lion population remains concentrated in Gujarat's Saurashtra landscape. Reports and earlier expert assessments have warned that a single population in one landscape is vulnerable to disease, natural disasters and habitat-level risks. The debate is linked to long-term species survival, reintroduction and landscape-level conservation.

Key Points:

- **Conservation Concern:** The Supreme Court in 2013 noted the need for a second home for Asiatic lions for their long-term survival. The judgment referred to Wildlife Institute of India studies that highlighted the need for an additional natural habitat.
- **Current Population:** The 2025 lion estimation recorded 891 Asiatic lions in Gujarat, up from 674 in 2020. The population increase is positive, but concentration in one broad landscape remains a conservation risk.
- **Possible Second Habitat:** Barda Wildlife Sanctuary in Gujarat has been described as an emerging second home for Asiatic lions. PIB noted that after natural migration in 2023, the lion population in Barda grew to 17, including adults and cubs.

- **Major Threats:** A single-landscape population can be affected by epidemics, forest fires, genetic stress and human-wildlife conflict. Conservation planning therefore requires habitat expansion, prey-base management, veterinary surveillance and safe corridors.

Four States Sign Narmada Project Payment Pact

In the News: Four states, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Maharashtra, signed an agreement in New Delhi on 7 July 2026 to settle pending payment issues linked to the Narmada Award and the Sardar Sarovar Project. The agreement was signed in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Union Jal Shakti Minister C. R. Patil. It aims to resolve long-running inter-state disputes over project cost-sharing and outstanding dues through a one-time settlement.

Key Points:

- **Agreement Signed by Four States:** The Chief Ministers of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh signed the agreement in New Delhi. The participating Chief Ministers were Devendra Fadnavis, Bhupendra Patel, Bhajan Lal Sharma and Dr. Mohan Yadav. Senior officials from the Centre and all four states were also present during the signing.
- **Link with Narmada Award:** The issue relates to the Narmada Award beneficiary states: Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Maharashtra. The Narmada Water Disputes Tribunal was constituted in 1969 and gave its Award in 1979. The Award dealt with the sharing of Narmada waters and the net power produced at Navagam power houses.
- **Nature of the Dispute:** The pending issues were mainly connected with cost-sharing arrangements for the construction of the Sardar Sarovar Project. Reports also refer to dues linked with resettlement and rehabilitation expenditure, compensation for submerged land and interest burden during construction. The new pact resolves these pending payment obligations through a final one-time settlement.
- **Importance of the Sardar Sarovar Project:** The Sardar Sarovar Project is one of the major river valley projects on the Narmada river. It has provided irrigation water, drinking water and electricity benefits to beneficiary states, especially Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. The agreement is significant because unresolved financial issues had continued even after several project benefits had started reaching the states.
- **Cooperative Federalism Angle:** The settlement is being seen as an example of Centre-state and inter-state coordination in the water sector. It follows recent efforts to settle other long-pending water-related matters, including the Rajasthan-Haryana water dispute and progress on the Kishau Multipurpose Project.

SCIENCE AND TECH

Gaganyaan mission: ISRO successfully conducts first SOLVE ground test

In the News: ISRO successfully conducted the first ground test of the solid motor for SOLVE, a new sub-orbital test vehicle linked to the Gaganyaan programme. The test was carried out on July 3, 2026 at the Static Test Facility, Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. SOLVE will support integrated parachute tests for validating the Gaganyaan Crew Module's deceleration system.

Key Points:

- **Full Form and Purpose:** SOLVE stands for Sub-Orbital Launch Vehicle for Experiments. It is being developed as a test platform for Integrated Parachute Tests of the Gaganyaan Crew Module.
- **Test Details:** The first ground test of the SOLVE solid motor was successful, and ISRO said the motor performance parameters were as expected. The test took place at the Static Test Facility of SDSC, Sriharikota at 10:00 a.m. on July 3, 2026.
- **Crew Module Recovery:** In future test missions, the Crew Module will be carried to an altitude of 10 to 17 km and then separated from the vehicle. A sequence of 10 parachutes will reduce its velocity before splashdown in the sea.
- **Technical Features:** The solid stage of SOLVE is derived from the PSLV strap-on motor with modifications. These include slow burn-rate propellant, a straight nozzle and secondary injection thrust vector control.

ISRO Conducts Ground Test of SOLVE Vehicle, Boosting India's Gaganyaan Human Spaceflight Mission

In the News: ISRO successfully conducted the first ground test of the SOLVE solid motor at the Static Test Facility, Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. The test was carried out at 10:00 hrs, and ISRO stated that the motor performance parameters were as expected. The vehicle is being developed to support Gaganyaan test missions under varied mission conditions.

Key Points:

- **SOLVE Vehicle:** SOLVE stands for Sub-Orbital Launch Vehicle for Experiments. It is a solid motor-based test vehicle being developed for experimental missions linked to Gaganyaan. Its role is to help ISRO test mission conditions before crewed operations.
- **Test Location:** The test was conducted at Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. SDSC is India's primary spaceport and is located in Andhra Pradesh. It is used for major ISRO launch and ground-test activities.
- **Gaganyaan Objective:** Gaganyaan aims to demonstrate India's human spaceflight capability. ISRO's official mission profile envisages launching a crew of three members to a 400 km orbit for a three-day mission and bringing them back safely to Indian sea waters.
- **Crew Safety Link:** SOLVE is part of a larger test chain for validating mission systems before human flight. Earlier, ISRO also conducted Integrated Air Drop Tests to validate parachute-based deceleration and recovery systems for the crew module.

DRDO Successfully Flight-Tests Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket, Boosting India's Precision Strike Capability

In the News: The Defence Research and Development Organisation successfully flight-tested the Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket at the Integrated Test Range in Chandipur, Odisha. The rocket was tested at a user-defined minimum range of 60 km and struck its designated target with high precision after completing the planned in-flight manoeuvres.

Key Points:

- **Test Performance:** The Long Range Guided Rocket followed its predicted trajectory and successfully completed all planned manoeuvres during the flight. Range instruments deployed at the test site tracked the rocket throughout its journey to the designated target.
- **Development Agencies:** The rocket has been designed by the Armament Research and Development Establishment in association with the High Energy Materials Research Laboratory. The Defence Research and Development Laboratory and Research Centre Imarat also supported its development.
- **Testing Institutions:** The flight trial was coordinated by the Integrated Test Range and the Proof and Experimental Establishment. The Integrated Test Range at Chandipur in Odisha is one of India's principal facilities for testing missiles, rockets and other defence systems.
- **Launcher Compatibility:** The rocket was fired from an in-service Pinaka launcher, demonstrating that the existing launcher can operate Pinaka rocket variants of different ranges. This compatibility reduces the need for separate launching platforms for every new variant.
- **Earlier Maximum-Range Trial:** The maiden flight test of the Pinaka LRGR-120 was conducted on December 29, 2025, at Chandipur. During that trial, the rocket successfully demonstrated its maximum range of 120 km and struck the target with precision.

JAXA Launches and Lands Reusable Rocket

In the News: The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency successfully conducted the first flight test of its experimental reusable rocket, RV-X, on July 11, 2026. The prototype lifted off and landed vertically at the Noshiro Rocket Testing Center in Akita Prefecture. The test demonstrated technologies intended to reduce the cost of future Japanese space launches.

Key Points:

- **RV-X Flight Test:** The Reusable Vehicle eXperiment, known as RV-X, lifted off, hovered, moved horizontally and returned to the ground in an upright position. The entire experimental flight lasted less than one minute.

- **Flight Performance:** During the test, the rocket climbed to an altitude of approximately 11 metres and travelled horizontally for about 16 metres before landing safely. JAXA plans to conduct future tests at an altitude of around 100 metres.
- **Rocket Specifications:** RV-X is approximately 7.3 metres long and 1.8 metres in diameter. It has four shock-absorbing landing legs and a durable engine that had completed 165 combustion tests before the flight demonstration.
- **Development Partnership:** JAXA and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries are jointly developing the experimental vehicle. Japan is also cooperating with France and Germany on reusable rocket technologies intended for future space transportation systems.
- **Purpose of Reusable Technology:** Reusable launch vehicles allow major rocket components to be recovered and flown again, lowering manufacturing and launch costs. The RV-X programme may contribute to the development of a reusable and less expensive successor to Japan's expendable H3 launch vehicle.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Population Day 2026

In the News: World Population Day was observed globally on 11 July 2026. The theme for the year was "Realizing the hopes and aspirations of young people – today and for the future." The observance highlighted the conditions required for young people to make informed decisions regarding education, employment, relationships, health and family life.

Key Points:

- **Date and Purpose:** World Population Day is observed every year on 11 July to draw attention to population trends and their connection with health, development and human rights. The observance also promotes informed reproductive choices, gender equality and access to essential services.
- **Theme for 2026:** The 2026 theme places young people's aspirations at the centre of demographic policy. It recognises that economic insecurity, unequal access to education, inadequate healthcare and gender discrimination can prevent young people from shaping their preferred futures.
- **Demographic Futures Survey:** The theme was based on findings from the UNFPA Demographic Futures Survey. The survey covered more than 100,000 internet-connected people aged 18 to 39 across 73 countries and examined their partnership, reproductive and broader life aspirations.
- **Historical Background:** The observance developed from the "Day of Five Billion", marked on 11 July 1987 when the world population was estimated to have reached five billion. In 1989, the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme recommended the annual observance of World Population Day.
- **UNFPA and Population Outlook:** The United Nations Population Fund is the UN agency concerned with sexual and reproductive health and population matters. UN projections indicate that the world population may rise from 8.2 billion in 2024 to about 10.3 billion in the mid-2080s before declining slightly to around 10.2 billion by 2100.

STATIC

Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee 125th Birth Anniversary

In the News: India marked the 125th birth anniversary of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee. Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan paid floral tributes to him at the Uprashtrapati Bhawan. The commemoration highlighted Mookerjee's public life as an educationist, statesman, minister and founder of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh.

Key Points:

- **Birth and Education:** Syama Prasad Mookerjee was born in Calcutta on July 6, 1901. He studied at Presidency College, Calcutta and Lincoln's Inn, London. His early academic background is often linked with Bengal's intellectual and educational history.

- **Academic Career:** Mookerjee served as Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University from 1934 to 1938. He was also associated with the Senate and Syndicate of Calcutta University. His academic role preceded his later political career in provincial and national politics.
- **Public Offices:** He was a member of the Bengal Legislative Council and later became a member of the Constituent Assembly in 1946. After Independence, he served as Minister for Industry and Supply in the Government of India from 1947 to 1950. He resigned from the Cabinet in 1950 over differences related to the Nehru-Liaquat Pact.
- **Jana Sangh Connection:** Mookerjee was the founder-president of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh in 1951. The Jana Sangh later became an important political predecessor of the Bharatiya Janata Party. His political legacy is closely associated with debates on national integration and constitutional unity.
- **Kashmir and Legacy:** Mookerjee died in detention in Jammu and Kashmir in 1953. The Vice President described him as a champion of national unity and recalled his commitment to a single constitutional framework for citizens. His birth anniversary is observed as a major personality-based static topic in modern Indian political history.

SPORTS

The Balogun twist: How FIFA reversed a World Cup red card

In the News: FIFA suspended the automatic one-match ban of United States striker Folarin Balogun before the World Cup last-16 match against Belgium. The move followed reports of intervention by U.S. President Donald Trump, including calls to FIFA President Gianni Infantino. FIFA's move made Balogun eligible, but the red card itself remained on record for a one-year probationary period.

Key Points:

- **Nature of FIFA's Decision:** FIFA did not erase the red card from Balogun's record. It suspended the implementation of the automatic one-match suspension for a probationary period of one year. This distinction is important because the disciplinary record and the match-ban enforcement were treated separately.
- **Rules in Question:** The controversy involved Article 27 and Article 66.4 of the FIFA Disciplinary Code. Article 27 was cited for suspending enforcement of a disciplinary measure, while critics pointed to the automatic suspension rule following a red card. The Royal Belgian Football Association said the decision conflicted with normal World Cup disciplinary practice.
- **Political Angle:** President Trump called FIFA President Gianni Infantino regarding Balogun's red card and suspension. The U.S. government supplied additional evidence and that Trump-aligned lawyers and supporters were pulled into the effort to challenge the decision.
- **Reaction from Football Bodies:** UEFA criticised FIFA's decision and said it undermined certainty in sporting rules. The Belgian football federation expressed astonishment and explored appeal options. The issue became a major governance debate on sporting autonomy and political influence in international football.
- **Tournament Context:** Balogun had received the red card in the United States' round-of-32 win over Bosnia and Herzegovina. FIFA's decision allowed him to be available for the last-16 match against Belgium. The episode became one of the most discussed disciplinary controversies of the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Sourav Ganguly Joins ICC Hall of Fame: Complete List of Indian Cricketers Inducted Till 2026

In the News: Former Indian captain Sourav Ganguly was inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame on 8 July 2026, his 54th birthday. The decision was taken during the ICC Annual Conference held in Edinburgh. Ganguly became the 12th Indian cricketer and the tenth Indian male cricketer to receive the honour.

Key Points:

- **Induction Details:** Ganguly joined the Hall of Fame after a career that significantly influenced Indian cricket as a batter and captain. His inclusion increased India's representation in the Hall of Fame to 12 cricketers, including ten men and two women.

- **International Career:** Ganguly represented India in 113 Tests and scored 7,212 runs. He also played 311 One-Day Internationals and accumulated 11,363 runs, establishing himself as one of India's leading ODI batters and most influential captains.
- **ICC Hall of Fame:** The ICC Cricket Hall of Fame was launched on 2 January 2009 in association with the Federation of International Cricketers' Associations during the ICC's centenary year. Its original intake consisted of 55 players previously recognised by the FICA Hall of Fame.
- **Indian Inductees Till 2026:** Bishan Singh Bedi, Sunil Gavaskar and Kapil Dev were inducted in 2009; Anil Kumble in 2015; Rahul Dravid in 2018; Sachin Tendulkar in 2019; Vinoo Mankad in 2021; Diana Edulji and Virender Sehwag in 2023; Neetu David in 2024; MS Dhoni in 2025; and Sourav Ganguly in 2026.
- **Women and Eligibility Rule:** Diana Edulji became the first Indian woman inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2023, followed by Neetu David in 2024. Under the prevailing eligibility rule, a player can ordinarily be considered only after completing five years since their final international appearance.

