

ALL IN ONE

CURRENT AFFAIRS BOOSTER

INCLUDING

GA ESI FINANCE SCHEMES

REPORTS RBI NOTIFICATIONS

August 2026 – 1st to 7th



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1. GA IN NEWS

PIB IN NEWS

FIRST IN NEWS

S.No	News	Key Facts
1.	First woman to head the Geological Survey of India in the organisation's 176-year history	- Varsha Ashok Aglawe assumed charge as the 54th Director General of the Kolkata based Geological Survey of India (GSI). - Varsha Aglawe succeeded Asit Saha.
2.	India's first live donor heart by train	- The life-saving organ was transported from Surat to Ahmedabad aboard Mumbai Central-Gandhinagar Capital Vande Bharat Express. - It safely reached the U.N. Mehta Institute of Cardiology & Research Centre in Ahmedabad for an immediate transplant operation.
3.	India's first fully annotated telomere-to-telomere (T2T) reference genome of pigeonpea	- Developed by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). - Developed for pigeonpea variety 'Asha' (Cajanus cajan), commonly known as Arhar or Tur. - The ICAR-developed sequence has been approved as the global reference genome of pigeonpea. - The breakthrough was achieved by the ICAR–National Institute for Plant Biotechnology (ICAR-NIPB), New Delhi.

		Additional Information - In 2011, ICAR-NIPB had published the world's first draft genome of a pulse crop, also using pigeonpea variety 'Asha'. - The 2011 pigeonpea genome was also the first crop genome sequenced entirely in India; an improved version was subsequently published in 2017.
4.	India's First Indigenous African Swine Fever Vaccine For Pigs	- Developed by ICAR-National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (ICAR-NIHSAD). The vaccine is an MA-104 cell line-based live attenuated vaccine developed against African Swine Fever Virus (ASFV) Genotype II.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

S.No	Initiative	Key Facts
1.	Global Live Events Leadership	- To facilitate the sustainable growth of the sector and position India as a global hub for live events by 2030, the Live Events Development Cell (LEDC) was constituted in July 2025. LEDC is chaired by Secretary (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting).
2.	Multi-Lane Free Flow Tolling	- National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) launched the Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) Tolling System at Shahjahanpur Toll Plaza. Shahjahanpur becomes the third toll plaza after Daulatpura and Manoharpura to become barrier-free on the busy Delhi-Jaipur Section of NH-48 in Rajasthan. - MLFF enables vehicles to pass through toll points without stopping, with minimal human intervention. - The system combines Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology with FASTag-based Electronic Toll Collection.
3.	e-Zero FIR System	- More than 12,000 e-Zero FIRs (12,257) have been registered across 18 States and Union Territories since the system's rollout. Delhi topped the list with 6,115 e-Zero FIRs, followed by Chandigarh with 4,174. Additional Information - A technology-driven platform in India designed to automatically register a Zero FIR for high-value cyber financial crimes. - Led by the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C) under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). - First implemented in Delhi in May 2025. - Cyber-fraud complaints meeting the financial-loss threshold prescribed by the respective State/UT and reported through the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (NCRP) or helpline 1930 can automatically generate an e-Zero FIR. - The system has now been implemented in 18 States/UTs.

4.	<u>SoFTeL scheme (Strengthening of Food Testing System in the Country including provision of Mobile Food Testing Labs)</u>	- Initiative of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). Objective: To upgrade state food labs, set up microbiology facilities, and deploys mobile food testing vans. - Under this scheme, 47 State Food Testing Laboratories have been structurally upgraded with advanced analytical equipment.
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SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES

S.No	Summit/Conference	Key Outcomes
1.	<u>GI & Beyond 2.0 Summit</u>	- Held at New Delhi. - Organised by the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms), Ministry of Textiles, in association with the Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC). Objective: To promote India's Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged handloom and handicraft products in domestic and international markets. - The summit featured the launch of the Digital Handloom Atlas, carrying the tagline "One Platform. Endless Markets". - The Digital Handloom Atlas aims to showcase Indian handloom products, including GI products, and connect artisans with global markets. - The Diamond Jubilee Logo of the Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC) was also unveiled.
2.	<u>3rd India International FinTech Festival</u>	- Organised by Associated Chambers of Commerce & Industry of India (ASSOCHAM). - Held in New Delhi. Theme: "FinTech: Building Profitable, Scalable and Trusted Digital Finance for India's Next Phase of Economic Growth"

MOUs AND AGREEMENTS

S.No	Signing Entities	Key Facts
1.	<u>Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) & CSIR-National Botanical Research Institute (CSIR-NBRI)</u>	Objective: To establish a sustained, synergetic linkage to promote research and development for the conservation and ethnobotanical assessment of tribal bioresources across India. - The partnership focuses on the conservation of Rare, Endangered, and Threatened (RET) medicinal plant species through advanced interventions.
2.	<u>Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT), IISc Bengaluru and the Foundation for Science Innovation and Development (FSID)</u>	- Under the MoU, a C-DOT Centre of Excellence (CoE) has been established at FSID, IISc Bengaluru. - The CoE aims to promote indigenous research, innovation, capacity building and commercialisation of advanced communication technologies.

		With this initiative, C-DOT has now established five Centres of Excellence, following similar collaborations with IIT Hyderabad, IIT Kanpur, IIT Gandhinagar, and IIT Roorkee.
3.	Pawan Hans Limited (PHL) & Noemi Aerospace (Elfly AS) (Norway)	Objective: To explore opportunities for collaboration in next-generation sustainable aviation technologies, including electric seaplane solutions.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

S.No	Technology in News	Key Facts
1.	Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS)	India's first indigenous space station comprising of five modules, targeted to be established by 2035. 1st module of BAS (BAS-01) to be launched by 2028.
2.	Nuclear Energy Mission (NEM)	Outlined in the Union Budget 2025-26. - The Mission seeks to provide a reliable alternative to fossil fuels, including replacing retiring thermal power plants, supporting energy-intensive industries, and supplying power to remote and off-grid locations. - Key Target: 100 GW of nuclear power generation capacity by 2047 to increase the share of nuclear energy as reliable base load energy in India's energy mix. - The 100 GW target is considered important for achieving India's Net Zero emissions goal by 2070. The present nuclear power capacity of 8.78 GW is expected to reach about 22 GW by 2031-32. - Another 32 GW of nuclear power capacity is envisaged to be set up beyond 2032 by Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL). Objectives: Expand India's nuclear capacity from the current ~8.78 GW to 100 GW by 2047. Develop, test, and operationalise at least five indigenous Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) by 2033. Funding - An initial budgetary provision of ₹20,000 crore is allocated specifically for the research, development, and deployment of SMRs. Two Pronged Strategy to fast-track capacity additions Large-Scale Expansion: Rapidly deploying massive 700 MWe indigenous Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) alongside imported Light Water Reactors (LWRs) at greenfield locations. Small Modular Fleet: Rolling out localized, easily transportable, and flexible SMR units designed by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC). - Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) is currently engineering three flagship demonstration reactor concepts ✓ BSMR-200 (220 MWe): An indigenous Pressurized Water Reactor slated for site construction at Tarapur, Maharashtra.

		✓ SMR-55 (55 MWe): A compact modular design also approved for engineering and deployment at the Tarapur site. ✓ HTGCR (5 MWth): A High-Temperature Gas-Cooled Reactor designed primarily to support clean hydrogen generation. • Private Participation & The SHANTI Act, 2025 ○ The SHANTI Act, 2025 — Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India Act — modernised the nuclear legal framework and enabled limited private participation under regulatory oversight. ○ SHANTI Act, 2025 enacted by the Ministry of Law and Justice.
		Additional Information • The present installed nuclear power capacity in the country is 8,780 MW comprising of 24 nuclear power plants, contributing about 3.1% in 2025-26 in total electricity generation. • A 500 MW Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor commissioned by BHAVINI at Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu. • Towards the expansion of Fast Breeder Reactors, Government of India has approved the pre-project activities of 2 x 500 MW FBR 1 & 2 at Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu.
3.	<u>ISRO Collision Avoidance Manoeuvres (CAMs)</u>	• The satellites operating in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) (less than 2000 km altitude) are more vulnerable to collision risks due to denser space object population in this region. • IN-SPACE has formulated a policy framework addressing India's liability for third-party damage caused by Indian space objects, including liability and insurance aspects; it is presently under consideration. • India announced its Debris Free Space Mission (DFSM) initiative in 2024. • Under DFSM, ISRO aims to achieve zero debris from Indian space actors—government as well as private—in the foreseeable future. • The Multi-Object Tracking Radar (MOTR) at Sriharikota is capable of tracking large objects in Low Earth Orbit. • Under ISRO's NETRA (Network for Space Object Tracking and Analysis) Project, an optical telescope is being established at Hanle, Ladakh. • The Hanle telescope will be capable of tracking space objects of 30 cm or larger at Geostationary Earth Orbit (GEO) altitude.
4.	<u>U3O8 uranium resources across India</u>	• The Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD) has established about 4,42,800 tonnes of in-situ U3O8 uranium resources across multiple Indian states viz, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Maharashtra.
5.	<u>TRAI MyCall</u>	• The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) launched a revamped version of the 'TRAI MyCall' mobile application. • The app enables telecom users to directly assess and report their voice-calling experience.

DEFENCE EXERCISES/ INITIATIVES/ TECHNOLOGY

S.No	Exercise/Technology	Key Facts
1.	Exercise Pitch Black 2026	- The Royal Australian Air Force's (RAAF) premier biennial multinational air combat exercise. - Venue: Exercise primarily operated from RAAF Base Darwin and RAAF Base Tindal in the Northern Territory and RAAF Base Amberley in Queensland. - In the exercise's 45-year long history, this edition features large quantum of participating forces, bringing together military personnel for complex Large Force Employment and multinational air combat operations. Total Participants: 21 countries India participated through the Indian Air Force (IAF), deploying Rafale fighter aircraft, supported by C-17 Globemaster III transport aircraft and IL-78 air-to-air refuelling aircraft. - IAF has previously participated in the 2018, 2022 and 2024 editions
2.	DSC A24 (Yard 329)	- The fifth and final ship of the Indian Navy's five-ship Diving Support Craft (DSC) Project. - Launched at Titagarh, Kolkata, West Bengal. - Constructed by Titagarh Rail Systems Limited (TRSL), Kolkata.
3.	NIPUN	Second Diving Support Vessel (DSV), built by Hindustan Shipyard Limited. - Delivered to Indian Navy. Additional Information INS Nistar is the first indigenously designed and constructed Diving Support Vessel (DSV) of the Indian Navy.
4.	Agni-4	Successfully test-fired from the Integrated Test Range, Chandipur in Odisha under the aegis of the Strategic Forces Command..

ENVIRONMENT

S.No	News	Key Facts
1.	Impact of El Niño on Indian Monsoon	- The India Meteorological Department (IMD) predicted the development of El Niño conditions during the 2026 Southwest Monsoon season. - The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and IMD do not officially recognise a category called "Super El Niño." - Operationally, El Niño events are classified as weak, moderate, strong and very strong, based mainly on sea-surface temperature anomalies in the equatorial central Pacific Ocean. About El Nino

		- The warm phase of the El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) climate cycle. - It is characterised by unusually warm sea-surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean. About La Nina La Niña is the cool phase of ENSO and is broadly opposite to El Niño. - It is characterised by cooler-than-normal sea-surface temperatures in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean
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AWARDS

S.No	Award/Milestone	Key Facts
1.	Lokmanya Tilak National Award 2026	- Awarded to Ajit Doval, the longest-serving National Security Advisor of India. - Awarded by the Lokmanya Tilak Smarak Trust in Pune. - The 2026 presentation coincided with the 106th death anniversary of Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak. - The honour recognised Doval's contribution to national service and strengthening India's security apparatus.
2.	Sarvottam Jeevan Raksha Padak	- Awarded to 12 rat miners for their exceptional courage and selfless service during the Silkyara Tunnel rescue operation in Uttarakhand. India's highest civilian life-saving honour. - Awarded to individuals who display conspicuous courage while saving a life under circumstances of extreme personal risk and immediate danger. - Administered by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

PERSONS IN NEWS

S.No	Person in News	Key Facts
1.	Aasha Malviya	- A noted solo cyclist, endurance athlete and mountaineer, completed an 8,500-km solo cycling expedition across India. - Her expedition started from the westernmost part of India and concluded at Kibithu in Arunachal Pradesh. - The expedition carried the message of women's empowerment, patriotism and indomitable courage.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

S.No	Fair/Festival Name	Key Facts
1.	Bastar Pandum	A massive tribal cultural festival organized by the Government of Chhattisgarh to showcase, preserve, and promote the rich heritage, folk arts, and ancient lifestyle of the tribal communities in the Bastar region.

PLACES IN NEWS

S.No	Place in News	Key Facts
1.	<u>Centre of Excellence for Handloom Technology (CoE-HT)</u>	- Set up by Ministry of Textiles at Indian Institute of Technology Delhi. - Five flagship initiatives launched during the inauguration Handloom 4.0- A digital companion for every loom and help weavers assess their productivity and sustainability. Handloom e-Vidya- A problem-linked digital learning and knowledge platform for weavers, students and other stakeholders. HandloomX- An accelerator and incubation platform for startups and innovations across the handloom value chain. Kalagriha Handloom Studio (GenZ Design Studio)- Aimed at connecting handloom with next-generation consumers through digital visualization, customization and product authentication. Threads of Valour, an initiative promoting circularity by transforming recycled defence textiles into premium handloom products.
2.	<u>Ujh Multipurpose Project (MPP)</u>	- Located in Kathua district, Jammu & Kashmir. - Developed on the Ujh River, a major tributary of the Ravi River. - Being implemented by WAPCOS Ltd., a Government of India undertaking under the Ministry of Jal Shakti.

DAYS IN NEWS

S.No	Day in News	Key Facts
1.	<u>World Breastfeeding Week 2026 (1st to 7th August)</u>	Theme: Breastfeeding for a Sustainable Start in Life: Strengthen What Works.
2.	<u>12th National Handloom Day (August 7)</u>	National celebrations held at Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre (RBCC), New Delhi. - Observed every year on 7 August to commemorate the Swadeshi Movement launched on 7 August 1905. - First observed in 2015. - The Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms), Ministry of Textiles the 'Weaves of India' Festival at the Central Cottage Industries Emporium (CCIE), Janpath, New Delhi as a part of the celebrations. Four commemorative postage stamps celebrating India's rich and diverse handloom weaving traditions were also released on the occasion.
3.	<u>72nd Foundation Day of Lalit Kala Akademi (August 5)</u>	Lalit Kala Akademi is the National Academy of Art under the Ministry of Culture. - The Akademi was established in 1954 to promote and nurture visual arts in India.

MISCELLANEOUS

S.No	News	Key Facts
1.	Seventh anniversary of the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35(A)	2026 anniversary assumes even greater significance as the nation commemorates the 125th birth anniversary of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee. Articles 370 and 35(A) was abrogated on August 5, 2019. Article 370: Enacted in 1949, it allowed Jammu and Kashmir to have its own separate constitution, a state flag, and independent internal administration. Article 35(A): Introduced via a 1954 Presidential Order under Article 370, it empowered the state legislature to define "permanent residents" of Jammu and Kashmir. Only these residents could purchase land, secure government jobs, or receive state scholarships.
2.	India as a Tourism Hub	2.9 billion domestic tourist visits in 2024, exceeding pre-pandemic levels. - Around 2.02 crore International Tourist Arrivals 2025. ₹15.73 lakh crore contribution to India's GDP in FY 2023-24, accounting for 5.22% of the economy. - India is home to 45 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, 106 National Parks and 18 Biosphere Reserves. - India is emerging as a leading destination for Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) tourism.
3.	Xtreme Weather Grade (XWG) Diesel	- Developed jointly by the Indian Army and Oil Marketing Companies. - The specialised fuel will enhance the mobility, safety and operational availability of combat and logistics vehicles in extreme climatic conditions.
4.	Coal Sector- Milestones	India holds the world's fifth largest coal resource, assessed at about 4,00,715 Million Tonnes (MT), and ranks as the second largest producer and consumer of coal. Domestic coal production has crossed one billion tonnes for two consecutive years, at 1047.52 MT in FY 2024-25 and 1040.08 MT in FY 2025-26.
5.	Mahanadi Water Dispute	- The Mahanadi Water Dispute is primarily between Odisha and Chhattisgarh over sharing and utilisation of Mahanadi river water.. About Mahanadi river - A major east-flowing peninsular river of India. - Originates in the Sihawa Hills of Dhamtari district, Chhattisgarh.

- The famous **Hirakud Dam**, located near **Sambalpur in Odisha**, is built across the Mahanadi.

OTHER NEWS

FIRST IN NEWS

S.No	News	Key Facts																																				
1.	2026 Commonwealth Games (23rd Commonwealth Games) 	Host & Mascot Details - Hosted at Glasgow, Scotland. Originally awarded to Victoria, Australia, the hosting rights shifted after Victoria withdrew due to escalating cost projections. - This marked the fourth time Scotland has hosted the Games, following previous events in Edinburgh (1970, 1986) and Glasgow (2014). Four Venues: Scotstoun Stadium, Tollcross International Swimming Centre, Glasgow International Arena and the Scottish Event Campus (SEC). Mascot: Finnie, a Glaswegian unicorn (Scotland's national animal). Official Attire of Indian Squad: The squad made headlines by sporting sustainable, environmentally responsible, "Make in India" jute-apparel designed by NIFT New Delhi. Events 10 sports, including six integrated para-sports. Ceremonial Flag Bearers for India Opening Ceremony Flag Bearer: Mirabai Chanu (Weightlifting) Opening Ceremony Baton Bearer: Lovlina Borgohain (Boxing) Closing Ceremony Flag Bearer: Jaismine Lamboria Final Medal Tally <table><tr><th>Rank</th><th>Country</th><th>Gold</th><th>Silver</th><th>Bronze</th><th>Total</th></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>Australia</td><td>70</td><td>45</td><td>56</td><td>171</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>England</td><td>29</td><td>45</td><td>36</td><td>110</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>Canada</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>23</td><td>62</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>India</td><td>13</td><td>17</td><td>9</td><td>39</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>Scotland</td><td>13</td><td>9</td><td>17</td><td>39</td></tr></table> Boxing emerged as the backbone of India's 2026 campaign. Indian boxers clinched 10 medals, including 7 golds—the highest gold medal tally ever achieved by a single nation in boxing at one Commonwealth Games edition.	Rank	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total	1	Australia	70	45	56	171	2	England	29	45	36	110	3	Canada	19	20	23	62	4	India	13	17	9	39	5	Scotland	13	9	17	39
Rank	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total																																	
1	Australia	70	45	56	171																																	
2	England	29	45	36	110																																	
3	Canada	19	20	23	62																																	
4	India	13	17	9	39																																	
5	Scotland	13	9	17	39																																	

- The contingent also produced **three double podium finishes** across the **men's 100m T47** and the **men's and women's shot put F57 events**.

Indian Gold Medal Winners

- **Mirabai Chanu (Manipur) – Women's 48 kg, Weightlifting**
 - **India's first Gold Medal at CWG 2026.**
 - Won her **third consecutive Commonwealth Games gold medal**.
 - **She had earlier won gold in 2018 and 2022; Glasgow 2026 completed the hat-trick.**
 - Mirabai Chanu became only the **second Indian athlete to win three successive individual gold medals at the Commonwealth Games after Vinesh Phogat.**
 - She set **new Commonwealth Games records by lifting 85 kilograms in the snatch and 105 kilograms in the clean and jerk.**
 - **The only Indian gold medallist at CWG 2026 who was not a first-time CWG gold winner.**
- **Sharmila Dhankar (Haryana) – Women's Shot Put F57, Para Athletics**
 - **India's first Commonwealth Games gold medallist in para athletics.**
 - **Shilpa K. Shyla won bronze in the same event (shot put F57).**
 - **Shilpa K. Shyla is Karnataka's first para-athlete to win a Commonwealth Games medal.**
 - **India's first-ever double podium in a CWG para-athletics event.**
- **Dilip Gavit (Maharashtra) – Men's 100 m T47, Para Athletics**
 - Became the **first Indian to win CWG gold in Men's 100 m T47 and set a Games Record of 10.71 seconds.**
 - **Mohammed Basil Morssinganakathi (Kerala) won silver in the event.**
- **Asmita Dey (Tripura) – Women's -48 kg, Judo**
 - **First Indian judoka to win a Commonwealth Games gold medal and the first Indian woman to achieve the feat.**
- **Harsh Singh (Delhi) – Men's -60 kg, Judo**
 - Became the **first Indian male judoka to win a Commonwealth Games gold medal.**
- **Preeti Pawar (Haryana) – Women's 54 kg, Boxing**
- **Jaismine Lamboria (Haryana) – Women's 57 kg, Boxing**
 - She had earlier won **bronze at Birmingham 2022.**
- **Soman Rana (Bihar) – Men's Shot Put F57, Para Athletics**
 - **Shubham Juyal (Uttarakhand) took silver in the same event.**
- **Sakshi Chaudhary (Haryana) – Women's 51 kg, Boxing**
- **Priya Ghanghas (Haryana) – Women's 60 kg, Boxing**
- **Arundhati Choudhary (Rajasthan) – Women's 70 kg, Boxing**
- **Sachin Siwach (Haryana) – Men's 60 kg, Boxing.**
- **Ankush Panghal (Haryana) – Men's 80 kg, Boxing.**

Important Silver Medal Winners

- **Chanambam Rishikanta Singh (Manipur) – Men’s 60 kg, Weightlifting**
 - India’s first silver medallist at the Commonwealth Games 2026.
 - Manipur’s first male CWG medallist in weightlifting and also produced a CWG record in the snatch.
 - **Neeraj Chopra (Haryana) – Men’s Javelin Throw, Athletics**
 - Won his second CWG medal—after gold at Gold Coast 2018.
 - **Murali Sreeshankar (Kerala) – Men’s Long Jump, Athletics**
 - Second consecutive CWG silver medal, repeating his Birmingham 2022 result.
 - **Praveen Chithravel (Tamil Nadu) – Men’s Triple Jump, Athletics—maiden CWG medal.**
 - **Sarvesh Anil Kushare (Maharashtra) – Men’s High Jump, Athletics**
 - The first Indian to win a CWG silver medal in men’s high jump.
 - **Gulveer Singh (Uttar Pradesh) – Men’s 10,000 m, Athletics**
 - Became the first Indian to win a CWG medal in the men’s 10,000 m.
 - He later won 5,000 m bronze.
 - The first Indian athlete—male or female—to win a Commonwealth Games medal in the 5,000m event.
 - First Indian track-and-field athlete to win two individual medals at a single CWG edition.
 - The only Indian athlete to win two medals at Glasgow 2026.
 - **Raja Muthupandi (Tamil Nadu) – Men’s 65 kg, Weightlifting, Commonwealth Games debut.**
 - **Valluri Ajaya Babu (Andhra Pradesh) – Men’s 79 kg, Weightlifting.**
 - Joined his father **Valluri Srinivasa Rao**, a 2010 CWG bronze medallist, as one of the rare father-son CWG medal-winning combinations.
 - **Harjinder Kaur (Punjab) – Women’s 69 kg, Weightlifting**
 - Won her second consecutive CWG medal, upgrading her Birmingham 2022 bronze to silver in 2026.
 - **Lovepreet Singh (Punjab) – Men’s +110 kg, Weightlifting**
 - Upgraded his 2022 CWG bronze to silver and set a CWG snatch record of 176 kg.
 - **Lovlina Borgohain (Assam) – Women’s 75 kg, Boxing**
 - The Olympic medallist secured her first Commonwealth Games medal, finishing with silver at Glasgow 2026.
 - **Yamini Mourya (Madhya Pradesh) – Women’s -57 kg, Judo**
 - Won silver as part of India’s historic judo campaign, in which India also secured its first-ever CWG judo gold medals.
- Important Bronze Medal Winners**
- **Jhandu Kumar (Bihar) – Men’s Heavyweight, Para Powerlifting**
 - Won India’s first medal of CWG 2026. It was his maiden Commonwealth Games medal.
 - **Tejaswin Shankar (Delhi) – Men’s Decathlon, Athletics**

- **The first Indian ever to win a Commonwealth Games medal in decathlon.**
- **His second CWG bronze, after his historic high-jump bronze in 2022.**
- **Yash Vir Singh (Rajasthan) – Men's Javelin Throw, Athletics, Maiden CWG Medal.**
- **Selva Prabhu Thirumaran (Tamil Nadu) – Men's Triple Jump, Athletics, Maiden CWG Medal.**
- **Unnati Sharma (Uttarakhand) – Women's -63 kg, Judo, maiden Commonwealth Games medal.**

Maximum number of Commonwealth Games medals in history

- Record held by **South African swimmer Chad le Clos with an astonishing 21 medals.**
- He won **Bronze** in the **Men's 4x100m medley relay to achieve this milestone.**

Commonwealth Games 2030

- **Ahmedabad (Amdavad), Gujarat will host the 2030 Commonwealth Games.**
- The 2030 edition will be the **Centenary Commonwealth Games, marking 100 years** since the inaugural Games held in **Hamilton, Canada, in 1930.**
- The CWG flag and baton were received on behalf of India by **Neeraj Chopra, Indian Olympic Association President P. T. Usha.**
- India will host the **Commonwealth Games for the second time, after Delhi 2010.**

India at CWG Games

- India made their Commonwealth Games debut in **1934.**
- Pistol shooter Jaspal Rana is **India's all-time Commonwealth Games winners list with 15 medals - nine gold, four silver and two bronze.**
- **India's best-ever performance** came in **New Delhi 2010**, where the hosts won **101 medals - 39 gold, 26 silver and 36 bronze - to finish second on the CWG medals table, their highest position at any edition.**
- New Delhi 2010 was the **only time India crossed 100 medals at the Commonwealth Games.**
- India also finished **fourth at Birmingham 2022** with **61 medals including 22 gold.**

About Commonwealth Games

- A **quadrennial**, international multi-sport event bringing together athletes from the **Commonwealth of Nations.**
- Known globally as the "**Friendly Games.**"
- A total of **74 nations and territories participated in the most recent Commonwealth Games held in Glasgow, Scotland.**

Additional Information

- **India** has officially assumed the **Chair** of the **Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS)** for the **2026–2030 cycle.**

2.	<u>Andhra Pradesh's first greenfield international airport since the 2014 bifurcation</u>	- Name: Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport. - Location: Bhogapuram in Vizianagaram district, Andhra Pradesh. - Built by GMR Visakhapatnam International Airport Limited under a public-private partnership. More than 13,000 tribal women and student participants set a Guinness World Records title for the largest Dhimsa dance performance at the Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport. Additional Information Dhimsa is a traditional group folk dance associated with the tribal communities of Andhra Pradesh's Eastern Ghats region.
3.	<u>"Bringing the Cheetah Back to India: How Diplomacy Made Conservation's Big Mission Possible"</u>	- It is a book authored by veteran Indian diplomat Prashant Agrawal. - It chronicles the diplomatic negotiations and efforts behind the translocation of cheetahs from Namibia to India. About Project Cheetah - World's first intercontinental translocation of a large wild carnivore. Eight cheetahs from Namibia were released into Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh in 2022 Namibia was selected as a source country as it is regarded as the "cheetah capital of the world." - India has also received cheetahs from South Africa and Botswana, although the book mainly focuses on the Namibia-to-India translocation.
4.	<u>Tanzania's First ICC-Approved Cricket Arena</u>	Inaugurated at University of Dar es Salaam.
5.	<u>India's first industry-academia partnership specifically designed to train deployment-ready engineering talent for the civil nuclear energy sector</u>	- Name: ANUGYAN – Nuclear Technology Orientation Programme (NTO). - Jointly developed by the Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (IIT Hyderabad) and Pune-based private technology firm Crimson Energy Experts Pvt. Ltd. (CEEPL).
6.	<u>Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) Vikram Sarabhai Medal for 2026</u>	- Awarded to Prof. Annapurni Subramaniam, Director of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bengaluru. - She is the first Indian woman to win the award. - She is also the fourth Indian to win the award after U.R. Rao (1996), Gurbax Singh Lakhina (2014), and Anil Bhardwaj (2024). - The award recognises her work on stellar populations, blue straggler stars, UVIT/AstroSat, future telescopes, and Hanle Dark Sky Reserve (HDSR). - Awarded during the 46th COSPAR Scientific Assembly in Florence, Italy.

		About the Award - Awarded jointly by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and COSPAR every two years in honour of Vikram Sarabhai who is considered the father of the Indian space programme. - Awarded since 1990 for outstanding contributions to space research in developing countries. Additional Information Prof. Annapurni Subramaniam became the first woman Director of IIA in 2019. - The COSPAR was established in 1958 by the International Council for Scientific Unions (ICSU) and is headquartered in Paris, France.
7.	India's first rail-tech manufacturing park	To be set up in Odisha at the Sahaspur industrial estate in Khordha district.
8.	2026 Saint Louis Rapid & Blitz (Chess)	- Venue: Saint Louis Chess Club, Missouri, USA. - Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa won the title for the first time. Praggnanandhaa topped the rapid section with 12/18 points. Praggnanandhaa received US\$50,000 as the winner's prize. Javokhir Sindarov of Uzbekistan finished runner-up. - The event formed part of the 2026 Grand Chess Tour (GCT) and was its first U.S. leg.
9.	India's first commercial large-format additive manufacturing facility for composite tooling	- To be set up by Lohia Aerospace Systems with Israel-based Massivit. - The facility will be set up at Lohia Aerospace's plant in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh.
10.	First woman pilot in the Indian Air Force (IAF) to qualify as a Fighter Combat Leader (FCL)	- Name: Squadron Leader Bhawana Kanth. - She completed the prestigious Fighter Combat Leader Course at the Tactics and Air Combat Development Establishment (TACDE), Gwalior. Bhawana Kanth was among the first three women commissioned as fighter pilots in the IAF in June 2016, alongside Avani Chaturvedi and Mohana Singh. - In 2019, she became the first Indian woman fighter pilot qualified to undertake combat missions by day. - She became the first woman fighter pilot to participate in India's Republic Day Parade in 2021.
11.	India's First High-Altitude Wildlife Safari	- To be launched in Ladakh. - Potential safari routes will be explored across Hemis National Park, Changthang Wildlife Sanctuary and Karakoram Wildlife Sanctuary.

MOUs AND AGREEMENTS

S.No	Signing Entities	Key Facts
1.	National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) & AVPL International	Objective: To establish 350 Advanced Skill Centres (ASCs) for drone technology across India over the next three years. 75 centers targeted for the first year. - Located within universities and engineering colleges, these centers will offer specialized training in drone piloting, manufacturing, agriculture, and analytics to support the National Education Policy 2020.
2.	Tripura Government & National Stock Exchange (NSE)	Three MoUs were signed to strengthen financial literacy, scale MSME funding opportunities, and foster a robust investment ecosystem across the state.
3.	IBM and Sarvam	- Objective: To advance the development and adoption of sovereign AI technologies in India. - The partnership targets central and state governments, public sector organisations, and regulated enterprises across India. - It combines IBM Sovereign Core with Sarvam's Sovereign AI stack to operationalise full-stack sovereign AI.

BANKING AND FINANCE

S.No	Program/Initiative	Key Facts
1.	'Max for Seniors' and 'Max for Her'	HDFC Bank launched two new savings account variants — 'Max for Seniors' and 'Max for Her' — under its Savings Max portfolio. Max for Seniors is designed for senior citizens, while Max for Her is targeted at women customers.
2.	Standard Chartered to Offer Wealth Products from GIFT City	Standard Chartered Bank received in-principle approval to offer wealth management products from GIFT City, Gujarat. - GIFT City stands for Gujarat International Finance Tec-City and hosts India's first International Financial Services Centre (IFSC). Additional Information Standard Chartered became the first foreign bank to commence operations in GIFT City in 2020.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

S.No	Technology in News	Key Facts
1.	Microsoft's Largest India Data Centre Hub	Microsoft launched its largest data centre hub in India at Hyderabad, Telangana. - The new facility is part of Microsoft's India South Central cloud region. - Microsoft now operates four cloud regions in India.

		Microsoft's other Indian cloud regions are located in Pune, Chennai and Mumbai.
2.	Qwen3.8-Max	- Launched by Alibaba. Qwen3.8-Max has 2.4 trillion parameters, making it one of the largest publicly announced AI models. - Its size is close to Moonshot AI's Kimi K3, which has around 2.8 trillion parameters.

DEFENCE EXERCISES/ INITIATIVES/ TECHNOLOGY

S.No	Exercise/Technology	Key Facts
1.	Exercise ROTOR CLAP III	- Conducted by the Indian Air Force (IAF) at the Pokhran Field Firing Range in Jaisalmer district, Rajasthan. - Theme: "Counter-UAS" (Counter-Unmanned Aerial Systems).
2.	Multinational Maritime Defence Coalition	- Announced by Saudi Arabia and 13 other countries. Aim: To safeguard freedom of navigation, international trade routes and global energy supply lines. - Its priority maritime areas are the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. Saudi Arabia is the founding and leading state of the coalition and will host its permanent headquarters in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. 14 founding members are Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Pakistan, Türkiye, Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Sudan, Djibouti and Somalia.

ENVIRONMENT

S.No	News	Key Facts
1.	Himalayan Serow	- The rare Himalayan serow was recorded on camera in the Dalhousie catchment forests of Himachal Pradesh, after an absence of around two decades. - The sighting occurred in forests adjoining the Kalatop-Khajjiar Wildlife Sanctuary in Chamba district. - The serow is the State Animal of Mizoram. - The Himalayan serow receives the highest level of legal protection under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

SPORTS

S.No	Sport Event and Venue	Key Facts
1.	22nd Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships 2026	Official Mascot: Mayur. India dominated the tournament completely, capturing six out of the seven gold medals. Malaysia was the only country to prevent an Indian clean sweep by winning the men's doubles title

	Venue: Thyagraj Stadium in New Delhi	- Conducted parallel to the Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2026, where table tennis was not included in the sports programme. - The 2026 championships marked the event’s return after the previous edition held in Cuttack in 2019. - At the 2019 edition, India became only the third country in history to sweep all seven gold medals at the Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships. Best Player of the Tournament (Male): Manush Shah. Best Player of the Tournament (Female): Syndrela Das <table><tr><th>S. No.</th><th>Event</th><th>Winner(s)</th><th>Runner-Up(s)</th></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>Men’s Team</td><td>Manav Thakkar, Manush Shah, Sathiyar Gnanasekaran, Harmeet Desai and Payas Jain (India)</td><td>Malaysia Men’s Team</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>Women’s Team</td><td>Syndrela Das, Sreeja Akula, Yashaswini Ghorpade, Sutirtha Mukherjee and Swastika Ghosh (India)</td><td>Malaysia Women’s Team</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>Men’s Singles</td><td>Ankur Bhattacharjee (India)</td><td>Payas Jain (India)</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>Women’s Singles</td><td>Yashaswini Ghorpade (India)</td><td>Sreeja Akula (India)</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>Men’s Doubles</td><td>Wong Qi Shen and Choong Javen (Malaysia)</td><td>Manav Thakkar and Manush Shah (India)</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>Women’s Doubles</td><td>Sreeja Akula and Syndrela Das (India)</td><td>Yashaswini Ghorpade and Divyanshi Bhowmick (India)</td></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>Mixed Doubles</td><td>Manav Thakkar and Taneesha Kotecha (India)</td><td>Richard Yap Rui Zhe and Tee Ai Xin (Malaysia)</td></tr></table>	S. No.	Event	Winner(s)	Runner-Up(s)	1	Men’s Team	Manav Thakkar, Manush Shah, Sathiyar Gnanasekaran, Harmeet Desai and Payas Jain (India)	Malaysia Men’s Team	2	Women’s Team	Syndrela Das, Sreeja Akula, Yashaswini Ghorpade, Sutirtha Mukherjee and Swastika Ghosh (India)	Malaysia Women’s Team	3	Men’s Singles	Ankur Bhattacharjee (India)	Payas Jain (India)	4	Women’s Singles	Yashaswini Ghorpade (India)	Sreeja Akula (India)	5	Men’s Doubles	Wong Qi Shen and Choong Javen (Malaysia)	Manav Thakkar and Manush Shah (India)	6	Women’s Doubles	Sreeja Akula and Syndrela Das (India)	Yashaswini Ghorpade and Divyanshi Bhowmick (India)	7	Mixed Doubles	Manav Thakkar and Taneesha Kotecha (India)	Richard Yap Rui Zhe and Tee Ai Xin (Malaysia)
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2.	<u>Lanka Premier League (LPL)</u>	- Former Indian fast bowler Zaheer Khan became the co-owner of Jaffna Kings, a franchise in the Lanka Premier League (LPL). Anchor Sports AB, a Stockholm-based global sports ownership group, acquired the Jaffna Kings franchise. - Following the acquisition, the franchise was officially rebranded as “Anchor Jaffna Kings.” - Zaheer Khan joined Nagendra Siddoutam, owner of Anchor Sports, as co-owner of the franchise.																																

APPOINTMENT

S.No	Person in News	Key Facts
1.	Willie Walsh	- Assumed charge as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of IndiGo. - He succeeded Pieter Elbers. Additional Information IndiGo was named the “Best Airline in India and South Asia” at the Skytrax World Airline Awards 2025.
2.	Tewolde Gebremariam	- Appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director (MD) of Air India. - He succeeds Campbell Wilson. - Gebremariam is the former Group CEO of Ethiopian Airlines.
3.	A. S. Rajeev	- Assumed charge as the Acting Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC). He succeeded Praveen Kumar Srivastava. Additional Information - The Central Vigilance Commission is India’s apex statutory vigilance body, responsible for promoting integrity and overseeing vigilance administration in Central Government organisations.
4.	Prasanta Mahapatra	- Assumed charge as Executive Director (ED) of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). - He will oversee the Corporation Finance Investigation Department and the Recovery and Refund Department.
5.	Monisha Chakraborty	- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) appointed Monisha Chakraborty as Executive Director (ED). - She will oversee the Foreign Exchange Department and the Financial Markets Regulation Department.

PERSONS IN NEWS

S.No	Person in News	Key Facts
1.	Nathan Thomas 	- Recognised by Guinness World Records as the world’s youngest male professor. - He achieved the record at the age of 18 years and 346 days when he joined Miami Dade College, Florida in the United States. - His achievement broke a 306-year-old record previously held by Scottish mathematician Colin Maclaurin, who became a professor at age 19. - Nathan Thomas was 16 days younger than Alia Sabur, who became the youngest female professor in 2008 at 18 years and 362 days

2.	Neeraj Chopra	- He became the co-owner of the UBS Athletics Kids Cup. - He had previously served as the programme's Ambassador for two seasons. - The UBS Athletics Kids Cup is a grassroots sports initiative aimed at introducing children to athletics through inclusive and accessible competitions. Neeraj Chopra is a legendary Indian javelin thrower and the first track and field athlete from independent India to win two individual Olympic medals. - He achieved his historic status by winning the gold medal at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and following it up with a silver medal at the Paris 2024 Olympics.
3.	Satish Gujral	- India Post released a ₹5 commemorative postage stamp to mark the birth centenary of Satish Gujral. - He was a noted painter, sculptor, muralist, architect and writer and was a prominent figure in modern Indian art. - He was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 1999, India's second-highest civilian award.
4.	Ajinkya Rahane	Announced his retirement from international cricket.

OBITUARIES

S.No	Person in News	Key Facts
1.	Nirmal "Nims" Purja	- Renowned British-Nepali mountaineer. - Died in an avalanche on Broad Peak in Pakistan. - Purja was attempting to move closer to becoming the first person to climb all 14 eight-thousanders twice without supplementary oxygen - The first Gurkha to climb Everest while serving in the British military. - Known for scaling the world's 14 highest peaks in just over six months. - He was awarded an MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire) in 2018 for his achievements in extreme high-altitude mountaineering. Broad Peak, located in Pakistan's Karakoram Range, is the 12th-highest mountain in the world.
2.	Kailash Chandra Pant	Noted Hindi writer and journalist. - Earlier in 2026, he was awarded with the Padma Shri for his immense contributions to Literature and Education.

PLACES IN NEWS

S.No	Place in News	Key Facts
1.	Nauru Renamed as Republic of Naoero 	Nauru, a Pacific island nation, has officially changed its name to the Republic of Naoero. Naoero is the country's traditional indigenous name and reflects the spelling and pronunciation used in its national language.

		- Citizens will now be referred to as “dei-Naoero” instead of Nauruans. Naoero is the world’s third-smallest country, after Vatican City and Monaco.
2.	Shipki La	India–China border trade through Shipki La resumed after a gap of six years. Shipki La is an ancient trade route connecting India with Tibet. - Shipki La is located in Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh.

DAYS IN NEWS

S.No	Day in News	Key Facts
1.	World Wide Web Day (August 1)	- The day highlights the role of the World Wide Web (WWW) in transforming communication, information sharing, education and digital connectivity. - The World Wide Web was invented by British computer scientist Sir Tim Berners-Lee in 1989 while he was working at CERN.
2.	Hiroshima and Nagasaki Day	Hiroshima Day is observed on 6 August every year to remember the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japan, on 6 August 1945. Nagasaki Day is observed on 9 August every year to commemorate the atomic bombing of Nagasaki. - In 2026, Hiroshima and Nagasaki marked the 81st anniversary of the atomic bombings. - he atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima was called “Little Boy” & tomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki was called “Fat Man”. - The two atomic bombs were dropped by the United States during World War II.

MISCELLANEOUS

S.No	News	Key Facts
1.	Massachusetts Declares August 15 as ‘India Day’	Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey declared 15 August 2026 as “India Day” to recognise the contributions of the Indian diaspora to the U.S. state. Boston Mayor Michelle Wu also issued a similar proclamation declaring 15 August as India Day. - The observance coincides with the 79th anniversary of India’s Independence from British rule in 1947.
2.	Venezuela Notifies UN of Withdrawal from ICC 	Venezuela formally notified the United Nations of its decision to withdraw from the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). - Under the Rome Statute, the exit will formally take effect exactly one year after the notification date. - Venezuela alleged that the ICC had become selective and politicised and showed bias against developing countries, particularly those of the Global South.

		About ICC • World's first permanent, treaty-based international criminal court. • The Rome Statute, adopted on 17 July 1998, is the treaty that established the International Criminal Court and entered into force on 1 July 2002. • HQ: The Hague, Netherlands. • As of August 2026, there are 125 countries that are States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). • Prosecutes individuals for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of aggression.
3.	Supreme Court Extends Third-Party Motor Insurance Cover	• The Supreme Court of India extended the mandatory third-party insurance period for newly purchased vehicles by one year. • For new private cars, mandatory third-party insurance has been increased from 3 years to 4 years. • For new two-wheelers, mandatory third-party insurance has been increased from 5 years to 6 years. • The Court also directed the development of technology-based mechanisms such as Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)-linked e-challans to identify vehicles without valid insurance.

2. GA + ESI

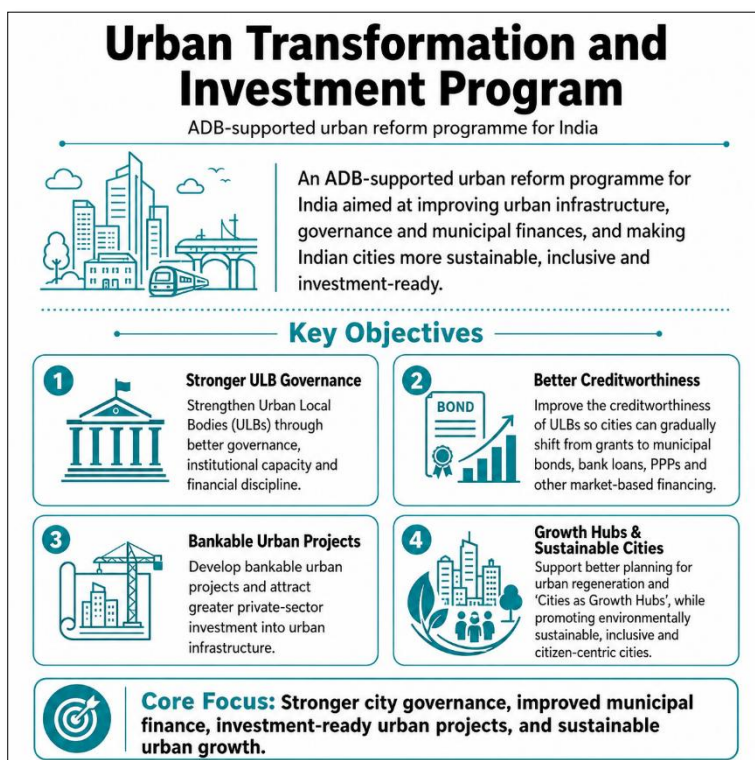
PIB IN NEWS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

2.1 ADB Approves \$1 Billion Loan to Support Sustainable and Resilient Urban Growth in India

Why in News?

- The **Asian Development Bank** approved a **\$1 billion loan** to support the Government of India's urban reform programme.
- The financing will support the **Urban Transformation and Investment Program**, which is linked to India's flagship **Urban Challenge Fund**.
- ADB will also include **\$3 million in technical assistance** to the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** for implementing the Urban Challenge Fund and preparing investment-ready urban projects.



Urban Challenge Fund

- Urban Challenge Fund (UCF)** is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** of the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** to develop **transformative and bankable urban infrastructure projects**.
- It was announced in the **Union Budget 2025–26** and approved by the Union Cabinet in **February 2026**.

Key Objectives

- Make cities **growth centres** and improve urban infrastructure.
- Shift urban financing from mainly **government grants to market-based financing**.
- Strengthen the financial capacity and **creditworthiness of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)**.
- Attract **private investment** through municipal bonds, bank loans and PPPs.

Funding Pattern

- Total Central Assistance: ₹1 lakh crore**

- Expected to generate about **₹4 lakh crore of total urban investment**.
- UCF provides up to **25% of project cost**.
- At least **50% of project cost must come from market sources** such as:
 - Municipal bonds
 - Bank loans
 - Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)
- Remaining amount can be provided by the **State/UT/ULB or other sources**.

Important Additional Provision

- A **₹5,000 crore Credit Repayment Guarantee Scheme** supports smaller ULBs and cities in **North-Eastern and hilly States/UTs** in accessing bank finance.
- For a first-time loan, the Central guarantee can cover up to **₹7 crore or 70% of the loan amount, whichever is lower**.
- Of the overall ₹1 lakh crore assistance, **₹90,000 crore is for projects, ₹5,000 crore for project preparation/capacity building, and ₹5,000 crore for the credit guarantee component**.

2.2 Glaw Lake in Arunachal Pradesh Becomes India's 101st Ramsar Site

Why in News?

- **Glaw Lake in Arunachal Pradesh** has been designated as **India's 101st Ramsar Site**, making it the **first Ramsar Site of Arunachal Pradesh**. Union Environment Minister Bhopender Yadav announced the development

About Glaw Lake

- **State:** Arunachal Pradesh
- **District:** Lohit
- **Type:** Natural **freshwater wetland**
- **Location:** Inside the **Kamlang Tiger Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary** in the **Eastern Himalayas**.
- It is also locally known as **Glaw Tuwi** and is fed by **perennial mountain streams**.
- The designated Ramsar Site covers around **129 hectares**. The Arunachal Pradesh Forest Department separately records the lake's waterbody at about **82 hectares**, at an elevation of roughly **1,168 metres**.

Ramsar Sites in India

Key facts, recent milestones, and notable classifications

1 CONVENTION SNAPSHOT



- The Ramsar Convention, formally known as the "Convention on Wetlands of International Importance", was adopted on February 2, 1971, in Ramsar, Iran.
- It came into force in 1975.
- India ratified the convention on February 1, 1982.

2 INDIA'S GLOBAL POSITION



- India has the highest number of Ramsar sites in Asia.
- India ranks 3rd globally.
- Only the United Kingdom (176 sites) and Mexico (144 sites) are ahead of India.

3 RAPID EXPANSION

India's Ramsar network expanded from 26 sites in 2014 to 100 sites in mid-2026.

26
(2014)



100
(mid-2026)

4 RECENT DESIGNATIONS



- 100th Site: Jai Prakash Narayan Bird Sanctuary (Surha Tal), Ballia, Uttar Pradesh – June 2026.
- 99th Site: Shekha Jheel Bird Sanctuary, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh – April 2026.
- 97th & 98th Sites: Patna Bird Sanctuary (Uttar Pradesh) and Chhari-Dhand (Gujarat) – added on the eve of World Wetlands Day 2026.

5 TOP STATES



Bihar includes Gogabeel Lake, Kabar Jheel, and the Nagi and Nakti bird sanctuaries.

6 NOTABLE SITES & CLASSIFICATIONS



Largest Site:
Sundarban Wetland,
West Bengal –
approx. 4,230
sq km.



Smallest Site:
Renuka Lake,
Himachal Pradesh –
20 hectares.



First Sites (1981):
Chilika Lake (Odisha)
and Keoladeo
National Park
(Rajasthan).



Montreux Record:
Tracks Ramsar sites facing
major ecological change.
Keoladeo National Park
remains on the record, while
Chilika Lake was removed
after successful ecological
restoration.



**Wetland City
Accreditation:**
Indore and Udaipur
are India's first
cities to receive
this recognition.



Key Takeaway: India's Ramsar network has expanded rapidly, with strong representation across states and major international recognition for wetland conservation.

2.3 Green Credit Programme

Why in News?

- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) provided an update in the Lok Sabha on **the Green Credit Programme (GCP)**.

About Green Credit Programme

- The Green Credit Programme (GCP)** was launched in **2023** by the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** as a core component of the **LIFE initiative (Lifestyle for Environment)**.
- It functions as a market-based mechanism designed to incentivize voluntary environmental actions by individuals, communities, and private sector industries
- Unlike carbon credits, which strictly target CO₂ reduction, GCP encompasses a broader spectrum of ecological benefits

Operational Methodology and Credit Issuance

The **Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE)** is the designated primary implementing agency for the programme. The methodology for earning credits, particularly for afforestation, involves strict criteria:

- Restoration Period:** Credits for forest restoration are awarded only after a **minimum of 5 years of work**.
- Ecological Benchmarks:** A tree plantation project must achieve a **minimum canopy density of 40% on degraded forest or wasteland to qualify for credits**.
- Credit Calculation:** **One green credit is equivalent to one new tree** that has survived for **at least five years**.

- **Verification:** Applicants must submit claim reports with a verification fee, and designated agencies **conduct third-party verification of tree survival and canopy status before issuing credits.**

Trading and Governance

GCP operates through a specialized digital platform that serves as a **unified gateway** for registration, verification, and issuance.

- **Non-Tradability:** Green credits are **non-tradable for multiple cycles** and generally cannot be transferred except between a company and its subsidiaries.
- **One-Time Exchange:** Credits may be **exchanged only once** for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) compliance, Compensatory Afforestation (CA), or project-linked obligations.
- **Prevention of Double-Counting:** Once exchanged, credits cannot be reused, ensuring the environmental benefit is not counted more than once.
- **Agency Obligations:** Implementing agencies must complete the plantation within **2 years** of receiving payment and maintain it for **the next 10 years.**

SOCIAL SECTOR IN INDIA - EDUCATION

2.4 Artificial Intelligence and Digital Education in Government Schools

Why in News?

- Government of India has taken steps to integrate **Computational Thinking (CT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI)** into school education, in line with the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** and the **National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023.**

Key Highlights

Computational Thinking and AI Curriculum

- **NCERT**, in collaboration with **CBSE**, has introduced a dedicated **Computational Thinking and Artificial Intelligence curriculum for Classes III to VIII** from the academic year **2026–27.**
- It also incorporates **responsible and ethical AI**, highlighting the importance of using AI appropriately.

Teacher Training and Learning Resources

- **Teacher Handbooks and Facilitator Guides** have been developed to support implementation of the AI and Computational Thinking curriculum.

SOAR – Skilling for AI Readiness

- The **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** has launched **SOAR (Skilling for AI Readiness)** as a national-level initiative to promote AI awareness and foundational skills.
- **Target groups:** School students of **Classes VI–XII**, Educators.
- **SOAR comprises:**
 - **AI to be Aware**
 - **AI to Acquire**
 - **AI to Aspire**
 - **AI for Educators**

EMPLOYMENT GENERATION IN INDIA

2.5 28 Urban Haats Operational Across India under Handloom and Handicrafts Development Programmes

Why in News?

- The Ministry of Textiles informed the **Rajya Sabha** that **28 Urban Haats** are currently operational across India, including **3 in Rajasthan**.

About Urban Haat

- An **Urban Haat** is a permanent marketing facility in towns/metropolitan cities where **handicraft artisans and handloom weavers can directly sell their products to consumers** throughout the year.
- Stalls are generally allotted to artisans/weavers on a **rotational basis at nominal charges**.

Urban Haats are jointly supported through:

- Office of Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) → National Handicrafts Development Programme (NHDP).**
- Office of Development Commissioner (Handlooms) → National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP).**

Financial Assistance

- Maximum financial ceiling: ₹8 crore per Urban Haat** for up to 80 stalls under the current handicrafts-side guidelines.
- Normal funding pattern:
 - 40% – DC (Handicrafts)**
 - 40% – DC (Handlooms)**
 - 20% – State implementing agency**
- Thus, the combined Central share is effectively **80%**, while the State/implementing agency contributes **20%**.
- For the **North-Eastern Region, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh**, the applicable handicrafts guidelines provide a **90:10 funding pattern**—45% each from DC (Handicrafts) and DC (Handlooms), and 10% from the implementing agency.

MEASUREMENT OF GROWTH

2.6 MoSPI Modernises India's Official Statistical System

Why in News?

- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) informed Parliament about major reforms to improve the **accuracy, timeliness, transparency and reliability of official statistics**.
- Major reforms include **digital National Sample Surveys, revision of base years of GDP/CPI/IIP, adoption of international statistical standards, and the PAIMANA infrastructure-monitoring platform**.

Key Highlights

- **National Sample Surveys have been digitised** using **Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI)** integrated with the **e-Sigma platform**. It includes validation checks, multilingual interfaces and an AI-enabled chatbot.
- Important new base years are:
 - **GDP: 2022-23** instead of 2011-12.
 - **CPI: 2024** instead of 2012.
 - **IIP: 2022-23** instead of 2011-12.
- The new **CPI series uses COICOP-2018**, while **National Industrial Classification (NIC) 2025** is aligned with **ISIC Revision 5**.
- MoSPI introduced the **Statistical Quality Assessment Framework (SQAf)** based on the **UN National Quality Assurance Framework, 2019**.
- **PAIMANA** has replaced the old **OCMS-2006** for monitoring Central Sector infrastructure projects.

International Standards Adopted by India

- **UNFPOS**: United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics; India adopted them in **May 2016**.
- **COICOP 2018**: Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose; used in the **CPI 2024 series**.
- **ISIC Rev. 5**: International Standard Industrial Classification; **NIC 2025** is aligned with it.
- **SNA 2008**: UN System of National Accounts; India's National Accounts methodology is aligned with it.
- **SDDS**: IMF's **Special Data Dissemination Standard**; India's CPI and GDP dissemination follows this framework.

Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) & e-SIGMA Platform

- **CAPI – Computer Assisted Personal Interview**: A digital survey method in which field investigators use **tablets/handheld devices instead of paper questionnaires** to interview respondents and enter responses directly into the system. It enables **real-time data entry, in-built validation checks, faster processing and fewer data-entry errors**.
- **e-SIGMA – e-Survey Instrument and Generalised Multimodal Application**: MoSPI's digital platform used to manage **survey data collection and processing**. CAPI operates as part of the e-SIGMA ecosystem.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

2.7 CARA Digitises End-to-End Adoption Process Through Mission Vatsalya Portal

Why in News?

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development informed the Rajya Sabha that the **Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)** has digitised the complete adoption process through the **Adoption Module of the Mission Vatsalya portal** to reduce delays and improve transparency.

- All **Specialised Adoption Agencies (SAAs)** have been mandatorily integrated with the **CARINGS–Mission Vatsalya** system.

CARINGS stands for **Child Adoption Resource Information and Guidance System** and serves as the digital platform for processing and monitoring adoptions. It is a web-based system that connects prospective adoptive parents, adoption agencies and government authorities

Laws Governing Adoption in India

Two important legal routes mentioned by the Government are:

1. Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

- Governs adoption through the institutional/CARA framework and covers eligible prospective parents irrespective of religion
- Nodal Ministry- **Ministry of Women and Child Development**

2. Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act (HAMA), 1956

- Separate personal-law route applicable to persons covered by HAMA
- It sets clear rules for how Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs adopt children and how family members get financial support (maintenance).
- Nodal Ministry- **Ministry of Law and Justice**

Central Adoption Resource Authority

- It is a **statutory body under the Ministry of Women and Child Development**, constituted under **Section 68 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015**.
- It is the nodal authority for regulating and monitoring:
 - **in-country adoptions**, and
 - **inter-country adoptions** of Indian children.
- CARA is also India's Central Authority under the Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption, 1993.
- The digital system covers the complete adoption process, including **referral of children, matching with prospective adoptive parents and documentation**.
- States/UTs have been advised to establish **at least one Specialised Adoption Agency in every district** under Sections **65 and 66 of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015**.
- **Mission Vatsalya provides financial support** for establishing and strengthening Specialised Adoption Agencies.
- A child can enter the adoption referral system only after being declared **Legally Free for Adoption (LFA)** by the **Child Welfare Committee (CWC)**.
- **Schedule XIV of the Adoption Regulations 2022** specifies timelines for different authorities and agencies involved in adoption.

Note- You can Mission Vatsalya from SchemeTap.

2.8 Government Clarifies Safeguards for Tribal Land Rights and Gram Sabha Role in Development Projects

Why in News?

- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs informed the Lok Sabha about legal safeguards governing **tribal land acquisition, forest-land diversion, rehabilitation and Gram Sabha participation** in development projects.

Key Highlights

- The **Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006**, protects the rights of forest-dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers.
- Under **Section 3(2) of FRA**, forest land of up to **1 hectare** can be diverted for specified government facilities for forest dwellers, but only with the **recommendation of the Gram Sabha**.
- For **minor mineral mining leases or concessions in Scheduled Areas**, the **prior recommendation of the Gram Sabha/Panchayat is mandatory** under PESA.
- Forest-land diversion proposals for non-forest purposes are processed through the **PARIVESH portal** and require compliance with applicable forest and tribal-rights laws.

Forest Rights Act, 2006

- Full name: **Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006**.
- It recognises individual and community forest rights of **forest-dwelling Scheduled Tribes (FDSTs)** and eligible **Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFDs)**.
- The **Ministry of Tribal Affairs** is the nodal Union ministry for matters relating to forest rights of forest-dwelling Scheduled Tribes.

INDIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

2.9 Government Clarifies Status of “National Smart Public Transport Mission”

Why in News?

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) clarified that **there is currently no separate “National Smart Public Transport Scheme”** covering integrated public transport, digital ticketing, non-motorised transport and last-mile connectivity.
- Instead, the Centre supports smart and sustainable urban mobility through existing initiatives such as **PM-eBus Sewa, PM E-DRIVE, metro projects and the National Common Mobility Card (NCMC)**.

Background

Urban transport planning

- Urban planning is a State subject.** State Governments are primarily responsible for planning and developing urban infrastructure and public transport projects.
- The Central Government provides policy guidance and financial assistance through frameworks such as:
 - National Urban Transport Policy (NUTP), 2006**
 - Metro Rail Policy, 2017.**

Key Highlights

National Common Mobility Card — NCMC

- NCMC follows the vision of **“One Nation, One Card”** and enables interoperable payment across different public transport systems.

- It is based on **qSPARC — quick Specification for Payment Application of RuPay Chip**, developed by **NPCI**.

Automatic Fare Collection

- **PM-eBus Sewa guidelines mandate NCMC-based Automatic Fare Collection System (AFCS)** for bus operations.

Planning support

- Under MoHUA's "**Transport Planning and Capacity Building in Urban Transport for Metro and Non-Metro Projects**" sub-scheme, Central Financial Assistance can support preparation of:
 - Integrated Mobility Plans;
 - Detailed Project Reports (DPRs); and
 - Multi-Modal Integration Plans.

2.10 Government Highlights Key Provisions and Implementation of RERA Act, 2016

Why in News?

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), highlighted measures being taken for effective implementation of the **Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 (RERA)**.
- The government emphasised **project registration, protection of homebuyers, financial discipline of developers, faster dispute resolution and stronger functioning of State RERA authorities**.

Key Highlights

Mandatory Registration of Projects

- A real estate project must be **registered with the concerned Real Estate Regulatory Authority before advertisement, marketing, booking or sale**.
- If a promoter violates this requirement, a penalty of up to **10% of the estimated project cost** may be imposed.
- Generally, projects exceeding **500 sq. metres of land area or more than 8 apartments** require registration.
- States can prescribe a lower threshold.

70% Separate Account Rule

- Promoters must deposit **70% of the amount realised from homebuyers** in a separate bank account.
- The amount can be used only for the **land cost and construction cost of that particular project**. This provision aims to prevent diversion of buyers' money to other projects.

Fast Dispute Resolution

- RERA provides for disposal of matters, as far as possible, within **60 days**, creating a faster grievance-redressal mechanism for homebuyers.

Recovery of Penalty/Compensation

- **Section 40 of RERA** provides for recovery of unpaid **interest, penalty or compensation** from promoters as **arrears of land revenue**.

- Orders can be issued by the Regulatory Authority, Adjudicating Officer or Appellate Tribunal, as applicable.

Committee on Project Registration

- MoHUA constituted a committee to examine difficulties faced in **registration of eligible real-estate projects across States/UTs**.
- Its report has been shared with Real Estate Regulatory Authorities for further action.

2.11 Ministry of Panchayati Raj Releases “51 Stories of Panchayats Bringing Change for Good Governance” Compendium

Why in News?

- Union Minister of State for Panchayati Raj **Prof. S. P. Singh Baghel** released the compendium “**51 Stories of Panchayats Bringing Change for Good Governance**” (**51 Kahaniyan Badlav Ki, Panchayat Suraj Ki**) in New Delhi.
- The compendium showcases **51 successful case studies of public grievances resolved through CPGRAMS at the Panchayat/grassroots level**, highlighting citizen-centric and accountable local governance

About CPGRAMS

- **CPGRAMS Full form- Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System.**
- It is a **24x7 online grievance-redressal platform** through which citizens can lodge complaints relating to delivery of public services.
- It is a **single portal connected with Central Ministries/Departments and States**, allowing grievances to be routed to the concerned authority.
- CPGRAMS is administered/monitored by the **Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG)** under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.
- Citizens receive a **unique registration ID** to track their grievance. If dissatisfied with the resolution, an **appeal facility** is also available.

Grievance Redressal Timeline

- Under the **Comprehensive Guidelines for Effective Redressal of Public Grievances, August 2024**, the prescribed grievance-resolution timeline was reduced from **30 days to 21 days**.
- If a grievance cannot be resolved within 21 days, an **interim reply explaining the delay** should be provided.
- An appeal by a dissatisfied citizen generally needs to be filed within **30 days**.

2.12 BNS 2023 Strengthens Legal Protection for Women and Children

Why in News?

- The Ministry of Home Affairs informed the Lok Sabha about important provisions under the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023** and the new criminal-law framework for protecting women and children.
- Under BNS, offences against **women and children have been placed together in Chapter V**, giving them greater prominence in the structure of the criminal law.



BNS 2023 Strengthens Legal Protection for Women and Children



Key safeguards and procedural reforms

1 Uniform Punishment for Gang Rape of Minors

Earlier IPC: separate punishments for girls below 12 years and below 16 years.

→ BNS 2023 removes this age distinction and creates a common provision for gang rape of a woman below 18 years.

Section 70(2): imprisonment for remainder of natural life and fine, or death

2 Section 69: Deceitful Means

Sexual intercourse obtained through deceitful means or a promise to marry made without any intention of fulfilling it, where the act does not amount to rape, is punishable with imprisonment up to 10 years and fine.

Deceitful means includes false promises of employment or promotion and marrying by suppressing identity.

— Up to 10 years + fine —

3 Procedural Safeguards

Victim statement can be recorded through audio-video electronic means.

Medical examination report must be sent to the investigating officer within **7 days**.

Summons may be left with an adult family member if the summoned person cannot be found.

Gender-neutral service of summons:

adult family member replaces adult male family member.

Overall Impact: stronger legal protection, greater procedural transparency, and more inclusive victim-sensitive processes under BNS 2023.

2.13 Parliament Passes MSME Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026

Why in News?

- The **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026** has been passed in both the houses of Parliament.
- It amends the **MSMED Act, 2006**.

Key Amendments

Provision	Earlier Framework	New Framework – MSMED Amendment Bill, 2026
MSME Classification	MSMED Act mainly provided investment-based criteria	Classification based on Investment + Turnover is incorporated in the Act
MSME Registration	Registration provisions differed across categories	Registration becomes digital, free and voluntary for all MSMEs through Udyam Registration .
Delayed Payment Disputes	Mediation mechanism existed, but no specific 90-day deadline	Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) introduced; mediation must finish within 90 days
Arbitration	Dispute moved to arbitration if mediation failed, without these specific timelines	Arbitration referral within 30 days ; award within 90 days after completion of pleadings
Challenge to Award	Buyer had to deposit 75% of the award to challenge it; court could release a reasonable part to the MSE	If challenge remains pending for more than 6 months , court must release at least 50% of the awarded amount to the MSE

Recovery of Dues	No specific provision to recover Section 18 awards as land revenue	Settlement/arbitral award can be recovered as arrears of land revenue
TReDS	MSMED Act did not mandate CPSE invoice settlement through TReDS	All CPSEs must settle MSME invoices through TReDS
Penalties	Certain violations attracted conviction and fines	Minor violations shifted to warnings and graded civil penalties

Current MSME Classification

The present classification, applicable from **1 April 2025**, uses both investment and turnover criteria:

Important: The 2026 Bill incorporates the **investment + turnover framework into the Act**; it does not itself announce a new set of numerical MSME limits.

Category	Investment Limit	Turnover Limit
Micro	≤ ₹2.5 crore	≤ ₹10 crore
Small	≤ ₹25 crore	≤ ₹100 crore
Medium	≤ ₹125 crore	≤ ₹500 crore

2.14 GeM Completes a Decade of Transforming Public

Why in News?

- The Government e Marketplace (GeM) completed ten years of operations on 9 August 2026.

Key Highlights:

Measures taken to Enhance Ease of Doing Business (EoDB):

- Reduction in Transaction Charges:** from 0.50% to 0.30%.
- Free Threshold Exemption:** Orders valued up to ₹10 Lakh are completely exempt from transaction charges.
- Transaction Fee Cap:** Maximum transaction fee capped at ₹3 Lakh.



Government Electronic Marketplace (GeM)

Key facts, procurement modes, and inclusion initiatives

1 Quick Snapshot

- Launch Date:** August 9, 2016
- Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- Operating Agency:** GeM SPV (Special Purpose Vehicle)
- Legal Entity Status:** 100% Government-owned, non-profit company under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013
- Replacing Body:** Replaced DGS&D (Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals)

2 Public Procurement Policy for MSEs

- 25%** Central Ministries and CPSEs must procure at least 25% of annual purchases from MSEs
- 4%** Sub-target: 4% from SC/ST MSEs
- 3%** Sub-target: 3% from women-owned MSEs
- GeM significantly supports achievement of these targets

Tiered Procurement Modes

- Up to ₹25,000**
Direct purchase from any listed seller meeting required quality/specification
- ₹25,000 to ₹5 lakh**
Direct purchase through L1 comparison among at least 3 distinct manufacturers/sellers
- Above ₹5 lakh**
Mandatory online competitive Bidding or Reverse Auction (RA)

4 SWAYATT & Womaniya

- SWAYATT** = Startups, Women and Youth Advantage Through e-Transactions
- Womaniya** and **SWAYATT** help onboard self-help groups (SHGs) and women entrepreneurs onto the national portal
- Emphasizes inclusion, entrepreneurship, and digital onboarding

Core Takeaway

GeM is a government-owned digital public procurement platform that improves transparency, standardizes buying, strengthens MSE participation, and promotes inclusive entrepreneurship.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

2.15 Cabinet Approves Revised Captive Policy for Port-Dependent Industries at Major Ports

Why in News?

- The Union Cabinet approved the revised **Policy for Award of Waterfront and Associated Land to Port Dependent Industries (PDIs) in Major Ports**, replacing/updating the **2016 Captive Policy**.

- The revised policy aims to attract **private investment through PPP**, enable expansion of captive port facilities, improve operational flexibility and promote port-led industrial development.

Key Highlights

1. Extension of Existing Concessions

- Major Port Authorities can **renew or extend concession agreements of existing PDIs for up to 30 years** without conducting a fresh tender.
- The renewed concession will be charged at:
 - the **prevailing market rate**, or
 - the **indexed revenue payable under the existing agreement**,
 - whichever is higher**.
- This provides long-term certainty to industries while protecting port revenues.

2. Expansion of Captive Facilities

Existing captive users can expand their facilities by developing additional berths, jetties, terminals and Single Buoy Moorings (SBMs).

3. Competitive Bidding + Right of First Refusal

- For additional capacity, the Major Port Authority will determine the price through **competitive bidding**.
- The existing concessionaire will receive a **Right of First Refusal (RoFR)**, allowing it to match the highest bid.
- Only eligible PDIs dealing with the **same cargo profile** can participate.

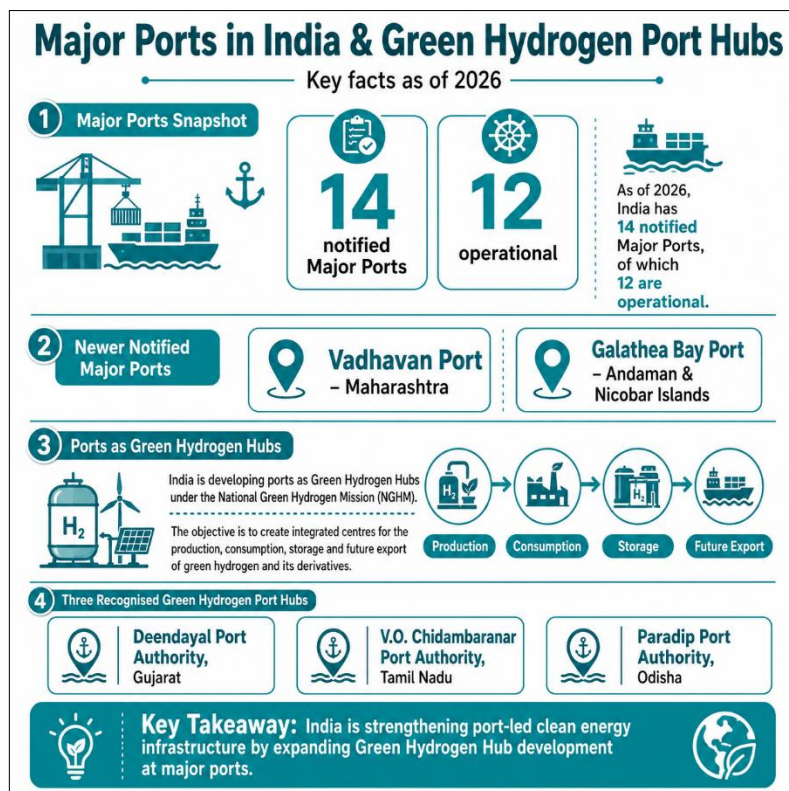
RoFR: A contractual right giving an existing party the first opportunity to accept/match an offer before the asset or right is awarded to another bidder.

4. No Indirect Extension of Concession

- The concession period of a newly added berth or terminal will be **co-terminus with the maximum permissible concession period of the existing facility**.
- Hence, expansion cannot be used simply to obtain an unjustified extension of the original concession.

5. Direct Waterfront Access for Government Entities

- For the **first time**, eligible government entities can receive waterfront and associated land **without competitive bidding**, subject to availability and safeguards.
- Eligible entities include:
 - Central and State Government departments;
 - statutory authorities;



- autonomous bodies;
- Central and State PSUs; and
- government-controlled joint ventures.
- Eligible sectors include **fertilisers, food, petroleum, oil & gas, coal and steel**, among others notified by MoPSW.
- Such concessions will be awarded at the **notified floor price**.

6. Flexibility for Changing Business Conditions

- The policy introduces provisions for **Change in Law** and **Unforeseen Events**.
- Business plans and cargo profiles can therefore be modified when regulatory changes or unexpected circumstances affect project viability.
- Changes in cargo profile are also permitted after the prescribed **lock-in period**, or immediately when necessitated by a change in law.

Port-Dependent Industry (PDI)

- A **Port-Dependent Industry** is an industry whose business substantially depends on a particular port for importing or exporting its captive cargo.
- Under the original **2016 Captive Policy**, a PDI was linked to dependence on the concerned Major Port for import/export of at least **70% of the designed capacity of the proposed facility** for captive cargo.

2.16 [Lok Sabha Passes Bankers' Books Evidence Bill, 2026 to Recognise Digital Bank Records as Legal Evidence](#)

Why in News?

- Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** introduced the **Bankers' Books Evidence Bill, 2026** in the **Lok Sabha**. It seeks to repeal and replace the colonial-era **Bankers' Books Evidence Act, 1891**.

Key Highlights

- The **Bankers' Books Evidence Bill, 2026** seeks to replace the **Bankers' Books Evidence Act, 1891**.
- It gives explicit legal recognition to **electronic, digital, virtual and cloud-based banking records**.
- Certified digital copies of bank records can be used as **evidence in courts**, subject to prescribed authentication and integrity safeguards.
- Bank records may be certified using **manual, digital or electronic signatures**.
- If a bank is **not a party to a case**, its officers generally need not appear in court or produce original records unless the court records a **special cause**.
- "Special cause" may include doubts about the **accuracy, authenticity or integrity of bank records**.
- The Central Government may extend the law to **other financial-sector entities** through notification.
- The Bill aligns banking evidence law with modern **digital banking and electronic record-keeping** practices.

2.17 Government Develops Industrial Townships under National Industrial Corridor Development Programme (NICDP)

Why in News?

- The Ministry of Commerce & Industry informed the Lok Sabha that the Government has approved **20 industrial nodes/projects** under the **National Industrial Corridor Development Programme (NICDP)**.

Key Highlights

- Industrial townships under NICDP are developed through **Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) jointly formed by the Centre and State Governments**.
- State Governments provide land**, while the Government of India provides financial support through **equity and/or debt**.
- The normal construction period for industrial nodes is around **36–48 months from appointment of the EPC contractor**.
- Internal infrastructure such as **roads, water supply, sewerage and power distribution** is developed through EPC contracts.
- External connectivity such as **roads, power, telecom and bulk water supply** is planned using the **PM GatiShakti National Master Plan**.

Four Completed Industrial Nodes

- Dholera Special Investment Region (DSIR)** – Gujarat
- Shendra-Bidkin Industrial Area (SBIA)** – Maharashtra
- Integrated Industrial Township, Greater Noida** – Uttar Pradesh
- Integrated Industrial Township, Vikram Udyogpuri** – Madhya Pradesh.

About NICDP

- NICDP Full form- National Industrial Corridor Development Programme.**
- It aims to develop modern industrial cities and manufacturing hubs with **world-class infrastructure, multimodal connectivity and ready-to-use industrial facilities**.
- It was created by expanding and renaming the earlier **DMIC Project Implementation Trust Fund** in December 2016.

2.18 Corporate Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026 Proposes Major Reforms in Companies Act and LLP Act

Why in News?

- The **Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC)** submitted its report on the **Corporate Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026** on **3 August 2026**, broadly supporting the proposed corporate-law reforms with some safeguards for investors.
- Its broad aim is to improve **ease of doing business, reduce unnecessary criminal liability, simplify mergers and compliance, strengthen audit oversight and improve investor protection**.

Key Highlights

Provision	Earlier Framework	Proposed New Framework
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Small Company – Paid-up Capital	Up to ₹10 crore	Up to ₹20 crore
Small Company – Turnover	Up to ₹100 crore	Up to ₹200 crore
CSR – Net Profit Threshold	CSR applicable if net profit is ₹5 crore or more	Threshold proposed to increase to ₹10 crore or more
CSR Committee Requirement	Separate CSR Committee generally required when annual CSR obligation exceeds ₹50 lakh	Threshold proposed to increase to ₹1 crore
Transfer of Unspent CSR Amount	Within 30 days for ongoing projects	Proposed to increase to 90 days
Fast-track Merger – Shareholder Approval	Around 90% threshold	Proposed 75% approval framework
Minor Compliance Defaults	Several defaults could attract criminal liability	Many minor procedural defaults proposed to shift to civil/monetary penalties
Annual General Meeting (AGM)	Physical meeting was the normal framework	Virtual/AV-mode AGMs permitted , but physical AGM required at least once every 3 years
NFRA Powers	Existing audit oversight and enforcement powers	Powers proposed to be expanded, including advisories, censures and warnings
Valuation Regulation	Registered valuers governed under the existing Companies Act framework	IBBI proposed as the Valuation Authority
Employee Stock-linked Benefits	Mainly focused on traditional ESOPs	Explicit recognition proposed for RSUs and Stock Appreciation Rights (SARs)
IFSC Companies/LLPs	Capital/accounts largely maintained under existing domestic currency framework	Permitted to maintain specified capital/contributions in permitted foreign currency
Trust to LLP Conversion	No broad enabling framework for specified regulated trusts	Certain SEBI/IFSCA-regulated trusts may be allowed to convert into LLPs, subject to investor approval

2.19 [DGFT Opens 'Source from India' Platform to DPIIT-Recognised Start-ups](#)

Why in News?

- The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) announced that **DPIIT-recognised start-ups** can now use the **"Source from India"** feature of the **Trade Connect ePlatform** to showcase their products and services to international buyers.

Key Highlights

- DPIIT-recognised start-ups** can create their own digital **microsites** on **"Source from India"** to display their products, services and business credentials to global buyers.
 - '**Source from India**' is a flagship feature of Trade Connect that acts as an **official digital buyer-discovery platform**.
- Eligible start-ups will be marked with a **special "Start-up Badge"** for easy identification by international buyers.
- Early-stage start-ups** can also join even if they do not meet the normal export-performance criteria, provided they have:
 - an **active Importer Exporter Code (IEC)** and
 - Their IEC is **not on the Denied Entity List (DEL)** of DGFT. Their eligibility will be verified through the DGFT database.
- Start-ups already registered on Trade Connect with an eligible IEC will automatically get the option to create a **"Source from India"** microsite.
- The initiative aims to improve global visibility of Indian start-ups, promote innovation-led exports and diversify India's export basket.

ABOUT
IMPORTER EXPORTER CODE (IEC)



It is a key business identification number issued by **DGFT** and is generally mandatory for importing into or exporting from India, subject to specified exemptions.



After GST implementation, the IEC issued to a firm corresponds to its **PAN**, although it is still separately issued/activated through **DGFT**.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
DPIIT-RECOGNISED START-UPS



- Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (**DPIIT**), under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry.



- Under the revised 2026 startup-recognition framework, the normal turnover ceiling for recognition was increased from **₹100 crore** to **₹200 crore**.

SPECIAL DEEP TECH STARTUP CATEGORY

A special **Deep Tech Startup** category was introduced with:



AGE LIMIT
Up to 20 years



TURNOVER CEILING
Up to ₹300 crore

Trade Connect ePlatform

- Trade Connect ePlatform** is a single-window digital platform of the **Department of Commerce/DGFT** that provides exporters with trade-related information, market intelligence and access to government and institutional support.
- It was launched on **11 September 2024** by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry.
- It connects exporters with institutions such as **Indian Missions abroad, Export Promotion Councils, Department of Commerce, DGFT, EXIM Bank and other trade bodies**.

OTHER NEWS

GLOBALIZATION

2.20 India Extends & Imposes Anti-Dumping Duties to Safeguard Domestic Industries

Why in news?

- The **Ministry of Finance** has extended anti-dumping duties on **Untreated Fumed Silica, Arylides, Seamless Tubes, Pipes & Profiles, Normal Butanol, and imposed a fresh 5-year anti-dumping duty on Low Ash Metallurgical Coke imported from six key nations.**
- The official enforcement notifications were issued by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).

Anti-dumping Duty (ADD)

- An anti-dumping duty is a protectionist tariff that a government charges on imports when it finds those goods are priced below fair market value, causing material injury to local industries.
- Anti-dumping duty is regulated by World Trade Organisation (WTO).

[**Note:** Dumping itself is **not illegal** under WTO rules unless the importing nation can legally demonstrate that it is causing (or threatening to cause) **material injury** to its domestic industry. Also, ADD has a **Sunset Clause** which expires **5 years** from the date of its initial imposition]

Institutional Framework for India

- **Investigating Authority** - DGTR (Directorate General of Trade Remedies), Ministry of Commerce.
- **Notifying & Enforcing Authority** - CBIC (Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs), Dept of Revenue, Ministry of Finance.
- **Multilateral Governance Framework** - Imposed in compliance with Article VI of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT 1994) under the World Trade Organization (WTO) framework.

World Trade Organisation

- Established: January 1, 1995
- Predecessor: General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT, 1947)
- Headquarters: Centre William Rappard, Geneva, Switzerland
- Director-General: Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala (First woman and first African to lead the WTO)
- Membership: 166 Members (representing >98% of world trade)
- India's Status: Founding member of both GATT (1947) and the WTO (1995)
- **Core Structure & Governance**
 - A. Ministerial Conference:**
 - Highest decision-making body.
 - Meets at least **once every 2 years**.
 - B. General Council:**
 - Day-to-day decision-making body.
 - Converts into two distinct functional bodies:
 - **Dispute Settlement Body (DSB):** Resolves trade disputes between member nations.
 - **Trade Policy Review Body (TPRB):** Monitors national trade policies of member states.
- **Key Principles of WTO:** (1) Most-Favored Nation (2) National Treatment (3) Freer Trade (4) Predictability & Transparency (5) Fair Competition.

3. GA + FINANCE

PIB IN NEWS

FinTech

3.1 Favara–UPI Cross-Border Payment Corridor Goes Live Between Maldives and India

Why in News?

- The **Maldives Monetary Authority (MMA)** announced that integration of Maldives' instant payment system **Favara** with India's **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** went live.
- It is an important step in the **internationalisation of India's digital payment infrastructure** and in strengthening India–Maldives financial connectivity.

Key Highlights

- The linkage currently allows individuals in **Maldives to send money in real time to UPI-enabled bank accounts in India**.
- The transaction is initiated in **Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR)** and credited to the Indian beneficiary in **Indian Rupees (INR)**.
- The first phase has started with two Maldivian banks:
 - Bank of Maldives Plc
 - Maldives Islamic Bank Plc
- The linkage was implemented through cooperation among:
 - Maldives Monetary Authority (MMA)
 - Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
 - NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) participating banks and other stakeholders.

OTHER NEWS

Recent Development in Financial Sector

3.2 Government Opens Legal Route for Possible MDR on Select UPI Merchant Transactions

Why in News?

- The **Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026** proposes to amend **Section 10A of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007**, giving the Central Government flexibility to specify which electronic payment modes will continue to enjoy statutory protection from transaction charges.

Important: No MDR has yet been imposed on UPI. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has stated that **no MDR framework has been finalised** and UPI will remain free for consumers.

About Merchant Discount Rate

It is a **fee paid by a merchant for accepting a digital payment**.

The fee helps compensate different entities involved in processing the transaction, such as:

- acquiring bank;
- payer's bank;
- payment aggregator/payment app; and
- payment network.

UPI Zero-MDR

- Since **1 January 2020**, specified UPI and RuPay debit-card transactions have operated under a **zero-MDR regime** to encourage digital-payment adoption.
- Section **10A of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007** currently prohibits banks and payment-system providers from directly or indirectly charging persons making or receiving payments through specified electronic modes.

3.3 Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026

Why in News?

- Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** introduced the **Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026 in the Lok Sabha on 4 August 2026**.
- It aims to improve **tax certainty, ease of doing business and attractiveness of India for global investment**.

Key Highlights

- **Foreign investment funds:** Conditions for an eligible overseas investment fund to be managed from India without automatically creating a taxable **"business connection" in India** have been significantly simplified—from **13 conditions to 5 key fund-level conditions**.
- Important conditions removed include the earlier requirements of **minimum 25 investors, maximum 10% participation by one investor, minimum monthly average corpus of ₹100 crore, and maximum 25% investment in a single entity**.
- **Data centres:** Foreign cloud companies using eligible Indian data centres will no longer require separate Central Government notification to claim the existing tax exemption.
- An eligible Indian data-centre operator can now **either own or lease the data-centre facility**; earlier the framework was limited to facilities owned and operated by the Indian company.
- **Electronics manufacturing:** Tax exemption for foreign companies supplying **capital goods, equipment or tooling** to Indian contract manufacturers of specified electronic goods is extended from **2030-31 to 2040-41**.
- Foreign companies storing electronic components in **customs-bonded warehouses** for supply to Indian contract manufacturers will receive a tax exemption up to **31 March 2041**.
- Foreign companies dealing in **rough diamonds in notified special zones** will also receive a tax exemption up to **31 March 2041**, subject to prescribed conditions.

- The Bill also retains the Ordinance provision exempting eligible **FIIIs and the Bank for International Settlements (BIS)** from tax on interest and capital gains from specified Government securities, applicable to income arising from **1 April 2026**.

3.4 GlobalPay Gets RBI's Expanded Authorised Dealer Category-II Licence

Why in News?

- WSFx Global Pay Limited (GlobalPay)** has received an expanded **Authorised Dealer Category-II (AD-II) licence** from the Reserve Bank of India under the new **Foreign Exchange Management (Authorised Persons) Regulations, 2026**.
- The licence allows GlobalPay to provide a wider range of regulated **foreign-exchange and cross-border payment services**.

About Authorised Dealer

- Under **Section 10 of FEMA, 1999**, RBI can authorise specified entities to deal in **foreign exchange or foreign securities**.
- Such entities are called **Authorised Persons/Authorised Dealers**.

AD Category-I vs AD Category-II

Category	Permitted Activities
AD Category-I	Can undertake all permissible current-account and capital-account transactions under FEMA
AD Category-II	Can undertake permissible non-trade current-account transactions except gifts/donations , plus foreign trade transactions up to ₹25 lakh per transaction
AD Category-III	Can undertake only those forex activities specifically permitted in its RBI authorisation

- Regulator:** Reserve Bank of India
- Law:** Foreign Exchange Management Act (**FEMA**), 1999
- Relevant provision:** **Section 10** – authorisation to deal in foreign exchange.
- New Regulations:** Foreign Exchange Management (Authorised Persons) Regulations, **2026**
- Minimum net worth for AD-II: ₹10 crore**
- Non-bank AD-II entities must generally maintain minimum annual forex turnover of **₹50 crore** under the new framework.

4. RBI NOTIFICATIONS

RBI (Cybersecurity, Technology: Risk, Resilience and Assurance Framework) Directions, 2026

What's New ?

- The Reserve Bank of India issued **Cybersecurity, Technology: Risk, Resilience and Assurance Framework, 2026** to establish a comprehensive and uniform framework for managing technology and cybersecurity risks.

Key Highlights of the Direction

- **Board-Level Information Technology Strategy Committee**
 - Every bank must constitute this committee for strategic oversight of information technology, cybersecurity and related risks.
 - It must have at least **3 directors**, including an **independent-director Chairperson** with at least **7 years' experience** in managing information systems or leading or guiding technology and cybersecurity initiatives.
 - It must meet at least **quarterly**.
- **Information Security Committee**
 - Its composition will be decided by the Information Technology Strategy Committee and must include the **Chief Information Security Officer** and representatives from business, information technology and other relevant functions.
 - Its head must belong to the **risk-management vertical**, ensuring cybersecurity is treated as an enterprise-wide risk.
- **Chief Information Security Officer**
 - A senior executive, preferably a **General Manager or equivalent**, must be designated as the Chief Information Security Officer.
 - The officer must periodically assess cybersecurity risks, arrangements and preparedness and place a review before the **Board, Board-level Risk Management Committee or Information Technology Strategy Committee at least quarterly**, ensuring regular attention from the highest authorities.
- **Annual Security Review**
 - Security infrastructure and policies must be reviewed at least **annually** to remain effective and responsive to technological changes, emerging threats, regulatory expectations and business operations.
- **Vulnerability Assessment and Penetration Testing**
 - For critical information systems and customer-facing systems in the **demilitarised zone**, banks must conduct:
 - Vulnerability assessment at least every **6 months**; and
 - Penetration testing at least every **12 months**.
 - The closure status of identified issues must be reported to the Information Technology Strategy Committee and Information Security Committee at least **quarterly**.
- **Disaster-Recovery Preparedness**
 - Disaster-recovery drills for critical information systems must be conducted at least every **6 months**.
- **Cyber-Incident Reporting**
 - Cyber incidents must be reported through the Reserve Bank of India's **Advanced Supervisory Management System platform within 6 hours** of detection.
- **Internal Security Audit Policy**
 - Every bank must implement a policy covering audits of its cybersecurity and information-security arrangements.

- The **Board-level Audit Committee** must approve and review the policy at least **annually**.

Reserve Bank of India (Fraud Risk Management) Directions, 2026

- The Reserve Bank of India issued the **Reserve Bank of India (Commercial Banks – Fraud Risk Management) Directions, 2026**, effective immediately.
- **Applicability:** Commercial Banks, Small Finance Banks, Payments Banks, Urban Cooperative Banks, Local Area Banks, Rural Cooperative Banks, Regional Rural Banks, All India Financial Institutions and Non-Banking Financial Companies.

Key Highlights

- **Governance and Natural Justice**
 - Every bank must have a **Board-approved Fraud Risk Management Policy** covering prevention, early detection, investigation, staff accountability, monitoring, recovery and reporting.
 - The Board must review it **at least once every three years**, or more frequently if necessary.
 - Suspicious activity cannot directly result in fraud classification. The bank must issue a detailed **show-cause notice** specifying the relevant transactions, actions or events and allow the concerned person or entity **at least 21 days** to respond.
- **Special Committee of the Board for Monitoring and Follow-up of Cases of Frauds**
 - **Commercial Banks, Small Finance Banks, Payments Banks, Local Area Banks, Regional Rural Banks and AIFIs:** At least **3 Board members**, including **one whole-time director** and **two independent or non-executive directors**. An independent or non-executive director must chair the Committee.
 - **Urban Cooperative Banks and Rural Cooperative Banks:** The **Chief Executive Officer** and **two directors** with banking experience or professional qualifications in law, accountancy or finance. One of the two directors must head the Committee.
 - **Tier 1 or Tier 2 Urban Cooperative Banks and Rural Cooperative Banks with deposits below ₹1,000 crore:** May instead form a **Committee of Executives** with at least **three members**, including the **Chief Executive Officer**.
 - **NBFCs:** The **Chief Executive Officer**, or Managing Director if the Chief Executive Officer is not a whole-time director, and **two independent directors**. An independent director must chair the Committee.
 - **Middle Layer and Base Layer NBFCs:** May instead form a **Committee of Executives** with at least **three members**, including **one whole-time director or equivalent-ranking official**.
- The **Special Committee** must assess fraud-risk management, review fraud cases and root causes, identify detection or classification delays, and recommend stronger internal controls and risk management.
- A senior official of at least **General Manager or equivalent rank** must monitor and report frauds.
- **Early Warning Signals and Red-Flagging**

- Every bank must maintain a Board-approved framework for **Early Warning Signals** and **Red-Flagging of Accounts**, overseen by the **Risk Management Committee of the Board**.
- The Committee must approve indicators for monitoring loan accounts and other transactions and prescribe a time limit, preferably **30 days**, for examining each alert.
- The **30-day** provision is not prescribed for Urban Cooperative Banks, Rural Cooperative Banks and NBFCs.
- The framework applies to:
 - **Tier 3 and Tier 4 Urban Cooperative Banks;**
 - Rural Cooperative Banks with deposits **above ₹1,000 crore**; and
 - **Upper Layer and Middle Layer NBFCs**
- **Reporting and Resolution of Red-Flagged Accounts**
 - The bank must report the red-flagged status to the RBI's **Central Repository of Information on Large Credits within seven days**.
 - Accounts with aggregate fund-based and non-fund-based exposure of **₹3 crore or more** must also be reported through the Red-Flagged Account Return on this platform within **seven days**.
 - The **₹3 crore** requirement is not prescribed for Payments Banks, Regional Rural Banks, Urban Cooperative Banks, Rural Cooperative Banks and Non-Banking Financial Companies.
 - The bank must ordinarily classify the account as fraud or remove its red-flagged status within **180 days** of its first reporting. Cases exceeding **180 days** must be placed before the Special Committee with reasons.
 - The **180-day** requirement is not prescribed for Payments Banks, Urban Cooperative Banks, Rural Cooperative Banks and Non-Banking Financial Companies.
 - If a Law Enforcement Agency begins an investigation on its own, the bank must **immediately red-flag the borrower's account** and complete fraud classification within the prescribed period.
- **Staff Accountability and Penal Measures**
 - Public Sector Bank frauds involving **₹3 crore or more** must also be referred to the **Advisory Board for Banking and Financial Frauds**, which examines the role of serving and former officials at all levels, including whole-time directors.
 - This prohibition continues for **5 years after full repayment of the defrauded amount**. For compromise settlements, it begins upon payment of the agreed amount.
- **Reporting to Law Enforcement Agencies:** Confirmed fraud must be reported immediately:
 - **Private Sector Banks, Foreign Banks, Small Finance Banks, Payments Banks and Local Area Banks:**
 - **Below ₹1 crore:** State or Union Territory Police.
 - **₹1 crore or more:** State or Union Territory Police and the **Serious Fraud Investigation Office under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs**.
 - **Public Sector Banks, Regional Rural Banks and All India Financial Institutions:**
 - **Below ₹6 crore:** State or Union Territory Police.

- **₹6 crore or more: CBI**

- Private Sector and Foreign Banks must report frauds of **₹1 crore or more** to the **Serious Fraud Investigation Office** through the prescribed **Fraud Monitoring Return**.
- Banks must mandatorily report frauds of **₹1 lakh or more** to Law Enforcement Agencies.
- In consortium lending:
 - Members may file **separate complaints** when separate offences, unrelated to the same fraudulent transaction, are committed against them.
 - For fraud forming part of the same act or transaction, **one member may complain**, while the others must provide necessary information and documents to that bank and investigating agencies.
 - This consortium-complaint provision is absent from the Directions for Payments Banks, Urban Cooperative Banks, Rural Cooperative Banks and Non-Banking Financial Companies.
- **Reporting to the Reserve Bank of India and Fraud Registries**
 - Disputed, suspected or attempted payment-system frauds must be reported to the Reserve Bank of India's **Central Payments Fraud Information Registry**. Housing Finance Companies must report them to the **National Housing Bank**.
 - This requirement does not apply to Urban Cooperative Banks and Non-Banking Financial Companies.
 - If subsequently confirmed as fraud against the bank, the transaction must also be reported through the **Fraud Monitoring Return** for inclusion in the **Central Fraud Registry**.
 - A separate Fraud Monitoring Return must be filed for every fraud, **regardless of amount**, immediately and within **14 days of classification**.
 - Updates must be filed through the **Fraud Monitoring Return Update Application**.
 - Frauds in group entities not regulated or supervised by a financial-sector regulator must be separately reported to the Reserve Bank of India.
 - For an overseas banking-group entity of an Indian bank, the **Indian parent bank** must report the fraud.
- **Closure of Reported Fraud Cases**
 - For statistical and reporting purposes, a bank may close a fraud case of up to **₹1 crore** after examining staff accountability and completing required disciplinary action.
 - This applies only to **Commercial Banks, Small Finance Banks, Payments Banks, Local Area Banks and All India Financial Institutions**.
 - For **Non-Banking Financial Companies**, the limit is **₹25 lakh**.
 - Closure is permitted where:
 - investigation continues or no charge sheet is filed for over **three years from registration of the First Information Report**; or
 - a charge sheet is filed, but trial has not begun or remains pending for over **three years from registration of the First Information Report**.
- **Legal Audit of Large Loan Accounts**
 - Banks must periodically legally audit and reverify title deeds and related documents for credit facilities of:
 - **₹5 crore or more** in Commercial Banks and All India Financial Institutions; and

- **₹1 crore or more** in Small Finance Banks, Local Area Banks, Urban Cooperative Banks, Rural Cooperative Banks and applicable Non-Banking Financial Companies, including Housing Finance Companies.

5. GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

GOBARDHAN – NATIONAL CIRCULAR BIOENERGY SCHEME

- **Approval:** 6 August 2026, GOBARDhan was originally launched in **2018** under **Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen)**.
 - The 2026 framework brings various CBG-support initiatives under a **unified national scheme**.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG)
- **Tenure:** FY **2026-27 to FY 2035-36**
- **Total Outlay:** **₹23,731 crore**
- **Target:** Increase domestic CBG production by nearly **10 times**
- **OBJECTIVE AND AIM**
 - Increase **CBG production and consumption** to reduce natural gas imports and strengthen **energy security**.
 - Convert agricultural, organic and municipal waste into **CBG, organic manure and other value-added products**.
 - Promote a **circular bioeconomy**, scientific waste management and lower fossil-fuel use/emissions.
 - Enhance **farmers' income, rural employment and entrepreneurship** through biomass utilisation.
 - Attract **private investment** and strengthen the domestic CBG ecosystem.
- **ELIGIBILITY**
 - Eligible entities/projects primarily include **CBG/Bio-CNG plants** meeting the prescribed conditions under various components.
 - Anyone operating or proposing to establish a CBG/Bio-CNG plant can register on the **GOBARDhan Unified Registration Portal**.
 - A **GOBARDhan registration number** is required for accessing benefits/support provided by MoPNG.
 - The scheme provides opportunities for:
 - Private enterprises
 - MSMEs
 - Cooperatives
 - Rural enterprises
 - Women entrepreneurs
 - Other eligible project developers.
- **COMPONENTS**

- The scheme has **6 components**:
- 1. **Assured CBG Offtake**: Provides a guaranteed market through procurement by City Gas Distribution entities. Supports achievement of the mandatory **CBG Obligation**.
 - a. CBG Obligation for CGD entities in CNG-Transport and PNG-Domestic segments:
 - i. 3% in FY 2026-27
 - ii. 4% in FY 2027-28
 - iii. 5% from FY 2028-29 onwards
- 2. **Stable CBG Pricing**: Administered CBG price of **₹2,110/MMBTU (approx. ₹105/kg) with a minimum 10-year pricing horizon**.
- 3. **Capital Assistance**: Up to **₹2 crore per TPD** of installed capacity for eligible greenfield projects; support also covers **feedstock aggregation, manure processing, value addition and eligible brownfield expansion**.
- 4. **Pipeline Infrastructure Assistance** for cluster/standalone pipelines connecting CBG plants with **trunk pipelines and CGD networks**.
- 5. **Credit Guarantee Credit Guarantee**: Up to **85% of eligible loans** for eligible MSME-based CBG projects.
- 6. **CBG Ecosystem Challenge Fund** – supports feedstock mapping/aggregation, district planning, technology adoption, manure value addition, capacity building and awareness
 - Major feedstocks include **agricultural residue, cattle dung, press mud, municipal organic waste and other biomass/bio-waste**.
- **IMPLEMENTATION / MONITORING**
 - The **GOBARDhan Unified Registration Portal** serves as the common registration platform for CBG/Bio-CNG plants.
 - CBG produced under the scheme can be integrated into the existing **natural-gas and City Gas Distribution infrastructure**.
 - Government support covers the full ecosystem—from **feedstock aggregation and plant establishment to financing, pipeline connectivity and assured offtake**.
- The Union Cabinet approved **GOBARDhan – National Circular Bioenergy Scheme** with an outlay of **₹23,731 crore** for **FY 2026-27 to FY 2035-36**.

Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PM-VBRY)

- **Launch: 1 August 2025**
- **Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Labour & Employment**
- **Implementing Agency: Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)**
- **Tenure: 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2027**
- **Financial Outlay: ₹99,446 crore**, including **₹248 crore administrative expenditure**.
- No liability is to be created beyond the scheme period or after exhaustion of allocated funds.

- **OBJECTIVE AND AIM**

- Promote **employment generation and formalisation of the workforce**.
- Facilitate creation of **over 3.5 crore jobs**.
- Encourage **first-time employees** to enter the formal workforce.
- Incentivise employers to create **additional employment**, with special focus on the **manufacturing sector**.
- Improve youth employability through **financial literacy and skill development**.

- **ELIGIBILITY**

- **Employees**

- Gross monthly wage at the time of joining must be **below ₹1,00,000**.
 - For **Part-A**, the employee:
 - Must join between **1 August 2025 and 31 July 2027**.
 - Must **not have previously been a contributing EPF member**, either under EPFO or an exempted trust.
 - EPF contribution should be received **for the first time**.

- **Employers**

- Employer must generate **net additional employment above the prescribed baseline and threshold**.
- Establishments with:
 - **Less than 50 workers:** Minimum **2 additional employees**.
 - **More than 50 workers:** Minimum **5 additional employees**.
- New employee must remain employed for at least **6 months** for the employer incentive.
- Establishments facing **fraud/FIRs, pending inquiries or irregularities** are not eligible.

- **KEY FEATURES**

- The scheme has **two components**:
 - **Part-A: Employee Incentive – First-Time Employment Support**
 - Provides a **one-time incentive of up to ₹15,000** to first-time employees entering formal employment.
 - Paid in **two instalments**:
 - First instalment after completion of **6 months of service**.
 - Second instalment after completion of **12 months of service**.
 - Second instalment is released after completion of a **Financial Literacy Course**.
 - Payment is made through **DBT to the employee's Aadhaar-linked bank account**.
 - **Part-B: Employer Incentive**
 - Incentive is provided for **net additional employment over the baseline**.
 - Benefit period:

- **All sectors:** Up to **2 years**
- **Manufacturing sector:** Up to **4 years**
 - **Monthly incentive per additional employee:**
 - Wage up to ₹10,000: ₹1,000
 - Wage ₹10,001–₹20,000: ₹2,000
 - Wage ₹20,001–₹1,00,000: ₹3,000
 - Employer incentive is transferred to the **PAN-linked bank account**.
- Since **August 2025**, over **72 lakh first-time employees** have entered the formal workforce under PM-VBRY, with **women accounting for around 30% of beneficiaries**.
- More than **15 lakh beneficiaries** have received incentives under the scheme.

6. Reports

India Celebrity Brand Valuation 2025

- **Released by: Kroll India**

Important Rankings: India's most powerful celebrity brands

1. **Shah Rukh Khan** (was ranked 3rd in 2024)
2. Ranveer Singh
3. Virat Kohli (was ranked 1st in 2024)
4. Sachin Tendulkar
5. Mahendra Singh Dhoni