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National

1. Notary Portal Launched to Modernise Services

The Government of India has launched the Notary Portal to modernize services under the Notaries Act, 1952, and Notaries Rules, 1956. This digital platform offers a streamlined, online interface for notaries appointed by the Central Government. It allows for the online submission of applications for appointment and renewal of licenses, as well as verification of eligibility. The portal is a significant step towards digitizing legal services, replacing traditional paper-based processes with an efficient and transparent digital system, thereby improving convenience for both the government and legal professionals.

2. Indian Railways Launches 20% Return Fare Rebate for Round Trip Festival Package

In an effort to manage the high volume of passengers during the upcoming festive season, Indian Railways has introduced a new experimental scheme called the 'Round Trip Package for Festival Rush.' This initiative offers a 20% rebate on the base fare of the return journey for passengers who book both their onward and return tickets together. The scheme aims to encourage passengers to plan their travel in advance, which will help in distributing the traffic more evenly and optimizing train utilization. The offer is valid for all classes of travel, including special trains, but excludes trains with flexi-fares.

3. PM's Mann Ki Baat Programme Earns Over ₹34 Crore Since 2014

A recent government report revealed that the Prime Minister's popular radio programme, 'Mann Ki Baat', has generated revenue of over ₹34 crore since its inception in 2014. The programme, which is broadcast on All India Radio and Doordarshan, has become a major platform for

the government to communicate directly with citizens on various social and national issues. The revenue is primarily from advertisements and sponsorships, highlighting the programme's significant commercial as well as social impact.

4. PM Marks 100th Birth Anniversary of M.S. Swaminathan with Global Conference Launch

On August 7, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the M.S. Swaminathan Centenary International Conference at ICAR-Pusa, New Delhi, marking the 100th birth anniversary of the "Father of India's Green Revolution". The three-day event (August 7-9) themed "Evergreen Revolution – The Pathway to Bio-Happiness" brings together scientists, policymakers, and stakeholders to advance principles like sustainable biodiversity, climate-resilient agriculture, and inclusive livelihoods. The PM also released a commemorative coin and stamp, and announced the M.S. Swaminathan Award for Food and Peace, honouring pioneering efforts in food security and climate justice.



5. RBI Approves AU Small Finance Bank's Transition to Universal Bank – First Such Nod in 10 Years

On August 7, 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) granted in-principle approval to AU Small Finance Bank (AU SFB) to transition into a universal bank, marking the first such licence granted in almost 11 years. Final approval hinges on the promoter, Sanjay Agarwal, transferring his 22% stake into a non-operative financial holding company (NOFHC) within the next 18 months. Following this nod, AU SFB also announced a shift

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of its corporate headquarters from Jaipur to Mumbai.

6. Parliamentary Panel on Coal, Mines & Steel Submits Findings on SSRP Sharing Mechanism

On August 4, 2025, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Coal, Mines & Steel — chaired by Shri Anurag Singh Thakur — tabled its Eighth Report on the Steel Scrap Recycling Policy (SSRP) in Lok Sabha. The report identified significant gaps in existing frameworks, calling for an exclusive online scrap database, formalisation of informal markets, and the designation of the Ministry of Steel as the nodal agency for all scrap-related data and coordination. It also proposed granting 'industry status' to the recycling sector, launching skills certification programs, and integrating advanced technologies to enhance transparency, safety, and efficiency in scrap handling.

7. Rural Development Standing Committee Tables Report on PMGSY Implementation

On July 27, 2025, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj tabled its Action Taken Report (ATR) in the Lok Sabha regarding the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). The report sharply criticised ongoing issues—such as poor-quality construction, low bids, subletting to unqualified contractors, and environmental risks from plastic road use—and found that the government's remedial measures were insufficient. The panel reiterated its call for stricter supervision, improved materials standards, and a clear, enforceable monitoring framework.



8. RBI Revises Co-Lending Guidelines to Strengthen Risk Distribution and Transparency in Lending

On August 6–7, 2025, the Reserve Bank of India unveiled the final Co-Lending Arrangements (CLA) Directions, 2025, effective January 1, 2026, with early adoption permitted. The revamped framework extends beyond priority sector lending and mandates that each regulated entity (RE) retain at least 10% of every loan to ensure genuine skin-in-the-game. It also imposes a default loss guarantee limit of 5%, requires borrower-level asset classification with near-real-time sharing, escrow-based flow of funds, and clear role disclosures to borrowers—bolstering risk sharing and transparency.

9. India's First Smart Intelligent Village

The village of Satnavri, located in rural Nagpur, Maharashtra, is set to become a model for India's digital rural transformation. Selected under a state-backed pilot project, it aims to be the nation's first smart intelligent village. The project integrates advanced technology solutions, including the Internet of Things (IoT), data analytics, and digital infrastructure, to enhance public services such as water management, electricity, and sanitation. The initiative is a key step towards bridging the urban-rural digital divide and creating sustainable, data-driven communities.

10. India's Longest-Route Vande Bharat Express Launched on Nagpur-Pune Corridor

Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently inaugurated India's longest-route Vande Bharat Express, connecting the cities of Nagpur and Pune. Covering a distance of 881 kilometers, this new service surpasses all other Vande Bharat Express trains in terms of route length. The train is designed to significantly reduce travel time, completing the journey in approximately 12 hours, and is expected to boost connectivity and economic activity between central and western Maharashtra. This launch is a key part of Indian

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Railways' ongoing effort to modernize its fleet and improve the passenger experience.



11. Retail Inflation Hits 8-Year Low at 1.55% in July 2025

In July 2025, India's retail (CPI) inflation dropped to 1.55%, marking the lowest level in eight years and the second-lowest since June 2017. This sharp easing from June's 2.10% was largely driven by a steep contraction in food prices, which fell by 1.76%. While this benign inflation provides room for potential policy easing, the Reserve Bank of India opted to maintain its neutral stance, keeping the repo rate steady. Lower inflation offers relief to consumers but may limit nominal growth metrics.

12. Security Forces Launch 'Operation Alert' Along Rajasthan Border Ahead of Independence Day

The Border Security Force (BSF) has launched a week-long Operation Alert along the Rajasthan-Pakistan frontier from August 11 to August 17, 2025, in the run-up to Independence Day. Enhancing vigilance, the operation involves round-the-clock monitoring, increased foot and camel patrols, more checkpoints, and improved drills and SOP reviews. Additional personnel have been deployed to sensitive zones like Sriganganagar and Bikaner. The initiative also includes outreach to border communities and leverages modern surveillance tools to counter infiltration, drone smuggling, and other potential threats.

13. Supreme Court Issues Guidelines to Address Stray Dog Concerns in NCR

On August 11, 2025, India's Supreme Court ordered immediate removal of all stray dogs from public spaces across Delhi-NCR within eight weeks, citing a serious threat of rabies and dog-bite incidents. Authorities in Delhi, Noida, Gurugram, and Ghaziabad must ensure shelters are built with CCTV monitoring, sterilization, immunization services, and a helpline for bite reports. The court emphasised public safety—especially for children and the elderly—and warned of legal action against individuals or organizations obstructing the effort. The ruling overrides prior "release-back" norms.

14. Mines and Minerals (Amendment) Bill 2025 Tabled in Lok Sabha

On August 11, 2025, the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2025 was introduced in the Lok Sabha, and by August 12, it was passed amid Opposition protests. The legislation expands the National Mineral Exploration Trust—renamed the National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust—to include offshore and international mining development and raises lessee contributions from 2% to 3% of royalty. It also facilitates lease extensions for deep-seated minerals, allows surplus and dump sales, and paves the way for regulated mineral exchanges.

15. RBI Eases Rules for Setting Up Special Vostro Rupee Accounts

On August 5, 2025, the Reserve Bank of India significantly eased guidelines for Special Rupee Vostro Accounts (SRVAs) by permitting Category-I Authorised Dealer (AD) banks to open these accounts for foreign correspondent banks without prior RBI approval. Introduced in July 2022 to enable trade settlements in INR, SRVAs now benefit from faster onboarding, helping streamline rupee-based cross-border trade. The RBI emphasized that all existing regulatory norms—like FEMA, KYC, and AML—

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remain in force. This move aligns with India's broader strategy to internationalise the rupee.

16. MERITE unveiled with ₹4,200 cr to reform education

The Union Cabinet has approved the ₹4,200 crore MERITE (Multidisciplinary Education and Research Improvement in Technical Education) scheme for 275 government technical institutions—including 175 engineering colleges and 100 polytechnics—spanning 2025-26 to 2029-30. Half of the funding, ₹2,100 crore, will come as a World Bank loan. The initiative, aligned with NEP2020 and supported by entities like IITs, IIMs, AICTE, and NBA, aims to enhance research, innovation, employability, quality assurance, multidisciplinary learning, and benefit around 7.5 lakh students.

17. India Unveils National Mission for Sustainable Natural Farming

The Union Cabinet approved the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF) with a ₹2,481 crore outlay to promote sustainable, chemical-free agriculture until 2025-26. Building on earlier organic farming schemes, NMNF aims to cover 7.5 lakh hectares, train over one crore farmers, and establish 10,000 Bio-Input Resource Centres. The mission integrates traditional practices with scientific methods, offering incentives and certification. With rapid implementation across 33 states, NMNF supports a nationwide transition to eco-friendly farming, enhancing soil health and climate resilience.

18. India's First SiC Fab Among New Projects

The Union Cabinet, led by PM Narendra Modi, approved ₹4,600 crore for four new semiconductor projects in Odisha, Punjab, and Andhra Pradesh under the India Semiconductor Mission. These projects, including India's first Silicon Carbide (SiC) fab, will boost chip production across telecom, automotive, defense, and more. With ten projects now approved,

investments total ₹1.60 lakh crore, creating over 2,000 skilled jobs and strengthening India's chip manufacturing ecosystem while reducing import dependence and promoting regional development.

19. UIDAI Partners ISI to Boost Aadhaar Security

UIDAI has signed a five-year R&D agreement with the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) to enhance Aadhaar's security, reliability, and technological strength. The collaboration, signed on August 12, 2025, will focus on advanced biometric liveness detection, fraud prevention, improved matching algorithms, and anomaly detection using AI and data science. This initiative aims to address growing digital threats and privacy concerns, ensuring Aadhaar remains a secure and trusted digital identity system for over 1.3 billion people across India.

20. India's Soybean Imports Surge 60% in 2024-25

India's soybean imports are projected to increase by 60% to a record 5.5 million tonnes in 2024-25, driven by lower prices relative to palm oil. In contrast, palm oil imports are expected to fall by 13.5% to 7.8 million tonnes, marking a five-year low. Sunflower oil imports may also decline by 20%. Overall, edible oil imports are anticipated to rise marginally by 1% to 16.1 million tonnes. This trend is likely to support global soybean prices while exerting downward pressure on palm oil markets.

21. 700 MW Tato-II Hydropower Plant Sanctioned for Arunachal Pradesh

The Cabinet approved the ₹8,146.21 crore Tato-II Hydro Electric Project in Arunachal Pradesh's Shi Yomi district, aiming to generate 700 MW of clean energy over 72 months. The joint venture between NEEPCO and the state will produce 2,738 million units annually, boost local power supply, and strengthen the national grid. The project supports local development with free power allocation, infrastructure upgrades,

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employment opportunities, and social facilities, enhancing socio-economic growth in one of India's remotest regions.

22. Solar PV Manufacturing Hits 100 GW Under ALMM

India has achieved a major milestone by reaching 100 GW solar photovoltaic (PV) module manufacturing capacity under the Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM), up from 2.3 GW in 2014. This growth, driven by government initiatives like the Production Linked Incentive scheme, supports India's Atmanirbhar Bharat vision and its 2030 clean energy target of 500 GW non-fossil fuel capacity. The expansion reflects a competitive, technologically advanced domestic solar manufacturing ecosystem, boosting energy security and export potential.

23. APAAR ID Now Required for CBSE Exam Registration

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has made it mandatory for students to submit their APAAR ID during board exam registration. APAAR, or Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry, is a 12-digit lifelong student ID introduced under the New Education Policy 2020. Linked to Aadhaar and stored in DigiLocker, it consolidates academic records, including degrees and awards. Generated via UDISE+, APAAR aims to enable smooth institution transfers, ensure standardized digital documentation, and support data-driven education policy across India.

24. India-Singapore Strengthen Strategic Partnership in New Delhi

India and Singapore strengthened their Comprehensive Strategic Partnership at the 3rd Ministerial Roundtable in New Delhi, focusing on digitalization, sustainability, connectivity, and six key cooperation pillars. Led by senior ministers from both countries, discussions emphasized fintech, skill development, green energy,

healthcare, advanced manufacturing, and people-to-people linkages. The roundtable reinforces shared goals under India's Act East Policy and Indo-Pacific strategy, enhancing trade, investment, and strategic alignment, with Singapore serving as a vital partner and gateway to ASEAN markets.

25. Gallantry, Service Awards Recognise National Heroes Contributions

Ahead of India's 79th Independence Day, the Ministry of Home Affairs announced gallantry and service medals for 1,090 personnel across Police, Fire, Civil Defence, Home Guard, and Correctional Services. This includes 233 Gallantry Medals for exceptional courage, with most recipients from Jammu & Kashmir and Left-Wing Extremism zones. Additionally, 99 personnel received the President's Medal for Distinguished Service, and 758 were honoured with the Medal for Meritorious Service, recognising their dedication, bravery, and significant contributions in maintaining public safety and order.

26. PM Modi Launches Mission Sudarshan Chakra for Security

On Independence Day 2025, PM Modi launched

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Mission Sudarshan Chakra, a decade-long initiative to protect India's critical establishments using indigenous technology. Inspired by the Mahabharata, the mission emphasizes self-reliance under Aatmanirbhar Bharat. It aims to integrate AI surveillance, cyber defence, and physical security into a unified shield. The plan involves collaboration with Indian R&D, defence PSUs, and private innovators to build a multi-layered, proactive security framework against modern hybrid threats, reducing reliance on foreign systems and enhancing national resilience.

27. Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana to Create 3.5 Crore Jobs

On Independence Day 2025, PM Modi launched the ₹1 lakh crore Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana to create 3.5 crore jobs, focusing on youth employment. The scheme offers ₹15,000 to first-time private-sector employees and incentives up to ₹3,000 monthly for employers hiring new staff. Implemented by the Ministry of Labour & Employment with EPFO oversight, it aims to boost formal sector jobs, especially in manufacturing, support inclusive growth, and empower youth under the Atmanirbhar Bharat vision.

28. Kargil Apricots Make Global Debut in Saudi Arabia

On August 15, 2025, Kargil apricots debuted in Saudi Arabia during India's Independence Day celebrations, marking a milestone for India's agricultural exports and the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative. Launched at Lulu Hypermarket in Riyadh, the event highlighted India-Saudi trade ties and showcased Ladakh's unique produce globally. Backed by APEDA and the Indian Embassy, this initiative supports rural economies, empowers farmers, and strengthens India's agri-brand internationally, opening doors for more regional products in global markets.

International

1. Great Barrier Reef Suffers Steepest Coral Decline

The Great Barrier Reef (GBR) has experienced its most severe loss of hard coral cover in nearly 40 years. This significant decline is a result of the 2024 mass coral bleaching event, which was part of the fourth global bleaching event. Driven by climate change-induced marine heatwaves, this event has affected all three sectors of the GBR for the first time—south, middle, and north. The mortality rate for some corals was estimated at over 80% in shallow waters, highlighting the devastating impact of rising ocean temperatures on this vital ecosystem.

2. Third UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries

The Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDC3) was recently convened in Awaza, Turkmenistan. The conference gathered global leaders and experts to address the unique challenges faced by 32 landlocked developing countries. These nations, lacking direct access to the sea, face significant hurdles in trade, connectivity, and development due to their reliance on transit nations. The conference aimed to forge new partnerships and explore solutions to help these countries overcome these obstacles and better integrate into the global economy.

3. Major Power Competition Poses Challenge to ASEAN's Central Role in Indo-Pacific Affairs

Rising U.S.-China strategic rivalry is increasingly challenging ASEAN's centrality in shaping Indo-Pacific regional architecture. Exclusive security partnerships like AUKUS and the Quad, along with deepened bilateral ties, siphon influence away from ASEAN's inclusive multilateralism. Internal divisions—stemming from pro-China and pro-U.S. alignments—weakens ASEAN's unity and consensus-driven approach, particularly on

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disputes like the South China Sea . Even as ASEAN experiments with security exercises and common platforms, the accelerating pace of great-power politics risks outstripping its capacity to remain the region's strategic fulcrum.

4. Dardanelles Strait Closed Due to Forest Fires

Turkey recently suspended all shipping traffic through the Dardanelles Strait, a crucial maritime route, due to extensive forest fires in its Çanakkale province. The Ministry of Transport announced the temporary closure to allow firefighting aircraft and vessels to operate safely and effectively. The strait, which connects the Aegean Sea to the Sea of Marmara, is a vital passage for global trade. The closure highlights the growing impact of climate-change-fueled natural disasters on critical international infrastructure and commerce.

5. FAO Food Price Index Increases in July 2025

The FAO Food Price Index (FFPI) increased to 130.1 points in July 2025, marking a rise of 1.6 percent from June. This upward trend was primarily driven by higher international prices for vegetable oils and dairy products, which offset a decline in sugar and cereal prices. The index, compiled by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, tracks the monthly changes in the international prices of a basket of commonly traded food commodities. The increase signals renewed pressure on global food markets, affecting consumer costs and food security.

6. Sea of Galilee Turns Red

The Sea of Galilee in Israel, also known as Lake Kinneret, recently displayed an unusual red hue, drawing significant public attention. Israeli authorities and environmental scientists investigated the phenomenon and confirmed it was a natural occurrence. The coloration was caused by a bloom of a specific type of

plankton. This event, while visually striking, is a known ecological process, and the authorities assured the public that the water remained safe for use and had no long-term ecological impact.

7. WMO Warns Extreme Heat Affecting Millions, Urges Early Warning Systems

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has issued a stark warning that extreme heat is affecting millions of people globally, with record-breaking temperatures and heatwaves becoming more frequent. The WMO emphasized the urgent need for countries to strengthen their heat-health early warning systems. This call is part of the 'Early Warnings for All' initiative, which aims to provide timely alerts to at-risk populations. The organization highlighted that such systems are crucial for preventing heat-related deaths and reducing the overall impact of climate-change-induced extreme weather events.

8. WHO Declares Kenya Free of Sleeping Sickness

The World Health Organization (WHO) has certified Kenya as being free of human African trypanosomiasis, commonly known as sleeping sickness. This declaration marks a major public health victory for the country and makes Kenya the 10th country in Africa to achieve this milestone. The achievement is the result of years of dedicated efforts by the Kenyan government, health workers, and international partners to implement robust surveillance, diagnostic, and treatment programs. The elimination of this vector-borne parasitic disease is a significant step towards the global goal of eradicating neglected tropical diseases.

9. US Mediates Peace Accord Between Armenia and Azerbaijan

On August 8, 2025, Armenia and Azerbaijan—after nearly four decades of conflict—initiated a

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U.S.-mediated peace framework at the White House under President Trump. The agreement pledges mutual respect for territorial integrity, renouncing force and claims, and includes U.S. exclusive development rights for a strategic 'Trump Route' transit corridor linking Azerbaijan to its Nakhchivan exclave via Armenia for 99 years. The deal aims to normalize ties and reshape regional geopolitics but faces skepticism over unresolved issues like Nagorno-Karabakh and sovereignty concerns.

Sports

1. India Secures 27 Medals at Asian U19 and U22 Boxing Championships 2025

India concluded its campaign at the 2025 Asian U19 and U22 Boxing Championships in Bangkok with an impressive 27 medals—14 in the U19 category (3 gold, 7 silver, 4 bronze), and 13 in U22 (1 gold, 4 silver, 8 bronze). The U19 team secured second place overall, while the U22 contingent finished fourth. Notably, Ritika clinched the U22 gold in women's 80+kg, Nisha and Muskan won U19 women's gold, and Rahul Kundu triumphed in men's U19 75kg, showcasing India's rising youth boxing talent.

2. Namrata Batra Creates History for India at 2025 World Games

India's Namrata Batra made history by reaching the women's 52 kg Wushu final at the 2025 World Games in Chengdu, securing the nation's first-ever medal in the sport at this global event. After defeating the Philippines' Krizan Faith Collado 2-0, she guaranteed at least a silver medal and will now contest the gold against China's Mengyue Chen. Namrata's achievement highlights India's rising stature in martial arts and combat sports internationally.

3. Dal Lake to Host Inaugural Khelo India Water Sports Festival

The Khelo India Water Sports Festival 2025 will be held for the first time at Dal Lake in Srinagar from August 21 to 23, marking the inaugural water sports event under the Khelo India initiative. The Himalayan Kingfisher, symbolizing energy and ecological balance, was unveiled as the official mascot on August 14. Over 400 athletes from 36 states and union territories will compete in disciplines like rowing and kayaking. Organized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, the festival aims to enhance sports development, eco-tourism, and youth engagement in Jammu & Kashmir.

4. Olympic Medallist Dr. Vece Paes Passes Away at 80

Dr. Vece Paes, ex-Indian hockey player and 1972 Olympic bronze medallist, died at 80 after a battle with Parkinson's disease. Father of tennis legend Leander Paes, he was also a renowned sports physician and sports administrator, contributing significantly to Indian hockey, football, cricket, and rugby. He served as president of the Indian Rugby Football Union and chaired AIFF's medical committees. The sports community mourns his legacy of dedication and service to Indian sports.

5. Rohith Krishna Becomes India's 89th Chess Grandmaster

Rohith Krishna became India's 89th Grandmaster after winning against IM Artur Davtyan at the Almaty Masters Qonaev Cup in Kazakhstan on August 12, 2025. The 19-year-old SSN College student credited his school, college, and coach for their support in balancing academics and chess. With GM norms from tournaments in Stockholm and Dubai, he fulfilled a dream pursued since 2013. Rohith now focuses on future victories, beginning with the Abu Dhabi International, as he enters a new chapter in his chess journey.

Summits/MoUs/Conferences/Agreement

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1. SheLeads II Programme

The second edition of SheLeads, a flagship workshop by UN Women, was recently inaugurated in India. The programme, which follows the landmark Women's Reservation Act, 2023, is designed to advance gender equality in public and political leadership. It aims to equip women leaders with the skills and networks needed to contest upcoming Lok Sabha and State Assembly elections. Participants, including grassroots leaders and elected representatives, engage in sessions on electoral campaigning, governance, and media engagement, with the ultimate goal of bridging the gender representation gap in politics.

2. Coastal Shipping Bill Introduced to Boost Waterborne Trade

India's Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024, introduced in the Lok Sabha on December 2, 2024, and passed by both houses by August 2025, aims to transform waterborne trade across its 7,500 km coastline. It repeals outdated provisions in the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, streamlines licensing—removing requirements for Indian-flag vessels—and mandates a National Coastal & Inland Shipping Strategic Plan and database to boost efficiency, transparency, and domestic participation. The reforms are expected to reduce logistics costs, ease congestion on roads and rails, and increase coastal cargo traffic to 230 million tonnes by 2030.

Ranks/Reports/Indices**1. India's Groundwater Pollution Crisis: 2024 CGWB Report**

A report by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) of 2024 reveals a severe groundwater pollution crisis in India. The report highlights widespread contamination of groundwater by various toxic substances. It notes that a significant percentage of samples across the

country contain high levels of nitrates, fluoride, arsenic, and uranium, among other pollutants. This contamination, often stemming from industrial discharge, agricultural runoff, and poorly managed waste disposal, poses serious public health risks and affects a vital resource for drinking and irrigation.

2. Over 29,000 Deaths in National Highway Accidents in First Half of 2025: Government Data

According to data presented by the government, a staggering 29,000 deaths were recorded in accidents on national highways during the first half of 2025. This alarming figure highlights a persistent road safety crisis in the country. The government is undertaking various measures, including road safety audits for high-density corridors and the installation of Advanced Traffic Management Systems (ATMS), to mitigate this issue. The data underscores the urgent need for more effective implementation of road safety regulations and infrastructure improvements to reduce the number of fatalities.

3. India Ranks 67th in 2025 Numbeo Safety Index

According to the mid-2025 Numbeo Safety Index, India ranked 67th globally with a safety score of 55.8. The index, which assesses the safety perceptions of residents in cities and countries worldwide, highlighted significant variations in safety standards. Globally, cities in the Middle East and East Asia dominated the top safety positions. Abu Dhabi was ranked as the safest city globally. The report provides a comparative overview of perceived crime levels and safety, offering insights for both residents and visitors.

Science and tech/Space/Defence**1. Quantum Magnetic Navigation System**

In the context of modern warfare, a quantum magnetic navigation system is a new, crucial technology. This system offers a solution for

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operating in environments where traditional satellite navigation (like GPS) is denied or jammed. It works by using ultra-sensitive quantum sensors to detect the Earth's natural magnetic field. By comparing these magnetic 'fingerprints' to a pre-loaded map, a vehicle can accurately pinpoint its position without emitting any signals. This passive nature makes the system immune to jamming and spoofing, offering a significant advantage in stealth and reliability for military and civilian applications.

2. Colorado River Water Crisis

The Colorado River is facing a severe water shortage due to prolonged drought and climate change, with demand consistently exceeding supply. Recently, the state of Arizona proposed a new and innovative method to allocate water. This proposal suggests that water should be distributed among the basin states based on actual river flows rather than the historic fixed apportionments set by the 1922 Colorado River Compact. The move marks a significant shift from the outdated legal framework and is seen as a more realistic and supply-driven approach to managing the river's resources.

3. CDS Unveils Joint Doctrines for Cyberspace and Amphibious Warfare Operations

On August 7, 2025, Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan formally released India's declassified Joint Doctrines for Cyberspace Operations and Amphibious Operations during the Chiefs of Staff Committee meeting in New Delhi. The Cyberspace Doctrine outlines a unified approach integrating offensive and defensive cyber capabilities, emphasising threat-informed planning, resilience building, real-time intelligence sharing, and public-private partnerships. The Amphibious Doctrine defines a framework for coordinated maritime, air, and land operations, focusing on interoperability and rapid response in joint missions. These doctrines aim to standardise

joint war-fighting concepts for policymakers and planners.

4. India Develops Quantum-Based Magnetic Navigation Technology

Indian startup QuBeats has clinched a ₹25 crore grant under the Defence Ministry's ADITI 2.0 Challenge to develop an indigenous Quantum Positioning System (QPS) for the Indian Navy. The system leverages quantum magnetometer technology to detect Earth's unique magnetic anomalies, enabling precise navigation even in GPS-denied or spoofed environments. Additionally, DRDO inaugurated its first Quantum Technology Research Centre (QTRC) in Delhi, featuring advanced platforms including atomic magnetometers, ultra-small atomic clocks, and experimental setups for quantum sensing and secure communications.

5. India Conducts First Drone-AI Assisted Artificial Rain Trial in Jaipur

On August 12, 2025, Rajasthan launched India's first drone-AI assisted artificial rain trial at Jaipur's Ramgarh Dam. Agriculture Minister Dr. Kirodi Lal Meena flagged off 60 drones managed by GenX AI to release rain-inducing chemicals like sodium chloride into moisture-rich clouds. The pilot, long awaited for drought-stricken Ramgarh, has been prepared under scientific supervision by IMD and DGCA, and conducted in collaboration with an American tech partner. If successful, this venture could revolutionise climate-resilient water management in arid regions.

6. Maharashtra and Assam to Host New Defence Industrial Hubs

The Indian government intends to set up two new Defence Industrial Corridors in Maharashtra and Assam to boost self-reliance in defence manufacturing and generate employment. Maharashtra's corridor will include industrial clusters in Sambhajinagar-Ahilyanagar-Pune,

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Nashik–Dhule, and Nagpur, capitalizing on the state’s manufacturing strengths. Meanwhile, Assam’s corridor, backed by the Assam Aerospace and Defence Manufacturing Policy 2025, will provide incentives such as land and capital subsidies, skill development programs, and production-linked benefits. These projects are designed to complement existing corridors and enhance India’s defence manufacturing capabilities.

7. Mumbai Hosts Largest-Ever IOAA with 64 Nations

Mumbai is hosting the 18th International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics (IOAA) 2025, the largest edition in its history, with 288 students from 64 countries, including 12 first-time participants and a record number of female contestants. Organized by HBCSE-TIFR, the 10-day event features theory, data analysis, and observational exams. It highlights science’s unifying power, with participation from war-affected nations. IOAA 2025 enhances India’s global standing in STEM education, encourages youth in astronomy, and fosters international scientific collaboration.

8. Burevestnik Missile Test Signals Russia’s Strategic Push

Russia is reportedly preparing new tests of its 9M730 Burevestnik, a nuclear-powered cruise missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead. Nicknamed “storm petrel,” the missile features a nuclear reactor for propulsion, allowing it to fly globally with a range of up to 14,000 miles. Its low-altitude flight makes it difficult to detect by radar. Introduced in 2018, Burevestnik, also known as NATO’s SSC-X-9 Skyfall, represents a unique and strategic addition to Russia’s arsenal.

9. IN-SPACe Enables Private Space Tech Development Partnership

Pune-based startup Astrophel Aerospace signed a framework MoU with IN-SPACe to access ISRO facilities for technical reviews, system testing, and qualification of semi-cryogenic propulsion systems. IN-SPACe, an autonomous agency under the Department of Space, promotes and facilitates private sector participation in India’s space activities. It acts as a single-window interface between ISRO and non-governmental entities, supporting launch vehicle and satellite development, sharing infrastructure, and enabling growth of space-based services across the country.

10. Trump Unveils \$175 Billion Golden Dome Defense System

U.S. President Donald Trump announced the Golden Dome missile defense system, a \$175 billion project designed to intercept enemy missiles during their boost phase using space-based sensors and multiple land-based intercept layers. Inspired by Israel’s Iron Dome and Reagan’s Strategic Defense Initiative, Golden Dome aims to protect the U.S. from ballistic and hypersonic threats. Key contractors include Lockheed Martin and L3Harris, but funding remains uncertain amid congressional challenges. The system promises advanced, multi-layered national missile defense.

11. Nelco and OneWeb Join Forces to Roll Out Satellite-Based Internet Services

Nelco, a subsidiary of the Tata Group, has joined hands with Eutelsat’s OneWeb India Communications to deliver low-earth orbit (LEO) satellite connectivity throughout India. This service is designed to provide secure, low-latency broadband access to remote locations, territorial waters, and border areas, benefiting both government and commercial sectors. OneWeb, which is supported by Bharti Enterprises, merged with Eutelsat in 2023 and has since become the world’s second-largest satellite operator. Operating 669 satellites in

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space, the partnership aims to strengthen India's digital infrastructure, enhance national security, and close connectivity gaps in underserved regions.

Miscellaneous

1. UPI Transaction Trends Highlight Tax Compliance Hurdles for Small Businesses

Emerging UPI transaction trends are spotlighting tax compliance challenges for India's small businesses. Authorities now mine UPI data to identify unregistered vendors exceeding GST thresholds, prompting notices across Karnataka that have broadly unsettled grassroots sellers. Reacting to the digital vigilance, many micro-entrepreneurs—particularly those selling exempt goods—are reverting to cash payments to avoid scrutiny. Experts and SBI warn that heavy-handed enforcement may reverse progress in financial formalisation. In response, tax officials are considering partial amnesty for affected vendors to ease the transition.

2. DSP Mutual Fund Launches Flexicap Quality Index Fund

DSP Mutual Fund has introduced a new passive investment product, the **DSP Nifty500 Flexicap Quality 30 Index Fund**. This fund is India's first low-cost flexicap strategy that combines a quality stock selection approach with dynamic market capitalization allocation. It is designed to invest in a portfolio of 30 high-quality stocks selected from the Nifty 500 index, providing investors with a diversified exposure to quality businesses across various market segments. The fund aims to offer a simplified and cost-effective way for investors to participate in the growth of top-tier Indian companies.

3. Zomato Signs Shah Rukh Khan as Brand Ambassador

On August 8, 2025, Zomato announced Bollywood megastar Shah Rukh Khan as its new brand ambassador, following his appearance in the "Fuel Your Hustle" campaign celebrating hard work and perseverance. Zomato's marketing head highlighted how Khan's journey—from humble beginnings to global icon—mirrors the brand's ethos. Khan echoed this view, saying Zomato's innovation and passion for food deeply resonates with him. He will appear across Zomato's multi-platform promotions, including television, digital, print, and outdoor activations.

4. Net Direct Tax Collection Falls 3.9% to Rupees 6.64 Lakh Crore in FY26 Due to Higher Refunds

Between April 1 and August 11, 2025, India's net direct tax collections fell approximately 4% year-on-year, amounting to 6.64 trillion rupees, largely due to a surge in refunds reaching rupees 1.35 trillion—a 10% increase from last year. On a gross basis, direct tax receipts (covering corporate and personal taxes) dipped nearly 2% to 7.99 trillion Rupees. Experts attribute the decline to personal income tax cuts and extension of the filing deadline. With the projected full-year direct tax target set at rupees 25.2 trillion, a recovery in collections is expected in the latter half of the fiscal year.

5. Bibi Fatima Women's SHG Wins UNDP Equator Prize

The Bibi Fatima Women's Self-Help Group from Teertha village, Dharwad, received the UNDP Equator Prize 2025 in recognition of their work in sustainable farming, millet promotion, community seed banking, and women-led rural entrepreneurship. Selected among 700 global nominations, the group exemplifies nature-based solutions supporting sustainable development and climate action. Founded in 2018, they collaborate with institutions like IIMR and Selco Foundation, advancing rural entrepreneurship and sustainable agriculture while empowering women in Karnataka's rainfed farming regions.

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6. India's First SHRESTH Index Enhances Drug Regulatory Systems

The Union Health Ministry has introduced SHRESTH, India's inaugural State Health Regulatory Excellence Index, to evaluate and enhance drug regulatory systems across states. Administered by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), SHRESTH uses a transparent, data-based framework to assess states on aspects such as human resources, infrastructure, licensing, surveillance, and responsiveness. The mission is to elevate medicine quality, promote consistent regulatory practices, and strengthen public confidence. By fostering best practices and aligning state regulations with international standards, this initiative aims to boost India's pharmaceutical sector and improve drug safety nationwide.

7. RBI Launches FREE-AI Framework for Ethical AI Use

The RBI committee has unveiled the FREE-AI (Framework for Responsible and Ethical Enablement of Artificial Intelligence) Vision to balance innovation with risk in India's financial sector. It outlines seven guiding principles, supports AI innovation through shared infrastructure, sandboxes, and relaxed compliance for low-risk tools, and mandates robust governance and risk mitigation. With AI investment projected to hit ₹8 lakh crore by 2027, the framework aims to address emerging risks like bias, data privacy, and cybersecurity to safeguard consumer trust and market integrity.

8. Ravi Narayanan Appointed CEO of SMFG India Credit

Ravi Narayanan, former Axis Bank executive, has been appointed CEO of SMFG India Credit, marking the first major leadership change since Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group's full acquisition of Fullerton India Credit. His appointment signals a strategic shift from legacy leadership to a new, SMFG-driven

operational approach. Narayanan's extensive retail banking experience is expected to guide the company's integration and growth. This change follows the interim leadership committee formed after the previous CEO's resignation in June 2025.

9. RBI to Implement Real-Time Cheque Clearing System

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will shift the Cheque Truncation System (CTS) from batch processing to continuous clearing with settlement on realisation in two phases—starting October 4, 2025, and January 3, 2026. Banks must prepare and inform customers about the new system. CTS, an image-based digital cheque clearing platform, enhances speed, security, and efficiency by eliminating physical cheque movement. The upgrade will reduce the clearing cycle from two days to a few hours, ensuring faster realisation and improved customer convenience.

10. Indian Aquanauts Reach Record Depths in Atlantic Ocean

Indian aquanauts Raju Ramesh and Cdr. Jatinder Pal Singh (Retd) achieved record-setting deep-sea dives to 4,025 and 5,002 meters in the Atlantic Ocean in August, 2025. Conducted aboard the French submersible Nautille with IFREMER and NIOT, the expedition marks India's deepest ocean mission yet. This milestone supports the upcoming Samudrayan Mission, which aims for a 6,000-meter indigenous dive by 2027 using MATSYA-6000. It highlights India's growing capabilities in deep-sea exploration and its commitment to leading in the global blue economy.

11. Bank of Baroda Introduces Global UPI Services on bob ₹ Pay App

Bank of Baroda has launched global UPI services via its bob ₹ Pay app, enabling international payments and real-time inward remittances for

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Indians and NRIs. The app supports UPI Global Acceptance in eight countries, allowing users to pay international merchants by scanning QR codes. It also offers foreign inward remittance from Singapore, crediting Indian accounts instantly. NRIs with NRE/NRO accounts can now use UPI on the app. Transactions follow standard UPI limits, enhancing cross-border digital payments.

