TestCoach

Powered By **S CHAND**

Weekly Current Affairs

(15th JULY - 21st JULY)

NEW APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

1. Sanjay Kaul Appointed as New MD & CEO of GIFT City

- **IAS officer Sanjay Kaul (2001-batch, Kerala cadre)** has been appointed as the **Managing Director & CEO of GIFT City, Gandhinagar**, for a **three-year tenure**
  What is GIFT City?
- **Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City)** is India's first *greenfield smart city* and fully operational *International Financial Services Centre (IFSC)*, located between Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar on the Sabarmati River
- Conceived in **2007** under Chief Minister Narendra Modi, its foundation stone was laid in **2011**, with phased completion over the following decade.
- It offers **tax incentives**, **single-window clearance**, and regulatory flexibility to bridge Indian and global markets

2. R. Doraiswamy Appointed as LIC's First Full-Term MD & CEO Under New Framework

- **R. Doraiswamy has assumed office as the full-term Managing Director & CEO of LIC** effective 14–15 July 2025, following a government notification, and succeeds interim CEO Sat Pal Bhanoo
- **Doraiswamy is the first to hold the unified CEO & MD position under the revised LIC Act**, integrating the roles of chairman and MD, supported by the FSIB's recommendation
- **His three-year tenure will extend until 28 August 2028** or until he reaches the retirement age of 62, whichever is earlier
  About Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC):
- **LIC, India's largest life insurer**, was founded on **1 September 1956** through nationalisation, merging over **245 private insurers**; it is fully **government-owned** and headquartered in **Mumbai**.
- It manages **₹52+ trillion in assets** and serves around **290 million policyholders**, offering a wide range of products like **term plans, ULIPs, pensions**, and has subsidiaries like **LIC Housing Finance and LIC Mutual Fund**.
- LIC reported a **38% YoY rise in Q4 FY25 profit** (₹19,013 crore) and remains a **top institutional investor**, with strong stock ratings and a mission of *"Yogakshemam Vahamyaham"* (Your welfare is our responsibility).

3. Major Gubernatorial Reshuffle: New Governors Appointed for Haryana, Goa & Ladakh

- **President Droupadi Murmu has appointed three new leaders** to key gubernatorial roles: **Prof. Ashim Kumar Ghosh** as Governor of Haryana, **Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju** as Governor of Goa, and **Kavinder Gupta** as Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, following the resignation of B.D. Mishra

- **Under Article 155** The Governor of a State is appointed by the President through a warrant under his hand and seal.
- **Under Article 239** Union Territories are administered by the President through an Administrator appointed by him.

4. Sonali Mishra Becomes First Woman DG of RPF

- Sonali Mishra, a 1993-batch IPS officer from Madhya Pradesh, has been appointed as the **first-ever woman Director General of the Railway Protection Force (RPF)**, marking a historic breakthrough in the 145-year history of the force
- Her appointment, effective until her superannuation on **31 October 2026**, was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet, with current DG Manoj Yadava set to retire on 31 July 2025.
  About RPF:
- **The Railway Protection Force (RPF)** is a central armed police force under the **Ministry of Railways**, Government of India, responsible for **protecting railway passengers, passenger areas, and railway property**.
- It was established under the **Railway Protection Force Act, 1957**, and granted the power to arrest, investigate, and prosecute crimes related to Indian Railways.
- With a sanctioned strength of over **75,000 personnel**, RPF is one of India's largest security forces and works alongside Government Railway Police (GRP) to ensure **passenger safety, anti-trafficking operations, and prevention of thefts and smuggling**.

5. Dr. Abhijat Sheth Appointed as New NMC Chairperson Amid Medical Education Reforms

- **Dr. Abhijat Sheth, a renowned cardiothoracic surgeon and President of NBEMS, has been appointed as the new Chairperson of the National Medical Commission (NMC)** by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet, replacing Dr. B.N. Gangadhar and taking over a role left vacant for months.
- **Sheth will initially hold dual leadership roles**, continuing to head NBEMS while preparing to assume full responsibility at the NMC and reform regulatory oversight of medical education.
  About National Medical Commission (NMC):
- **The NMC, established under the National Medical Commission Act, 2019**, replaced the Medical Council of India in September 2020 to regulate medical education, professional standards, and medical practice in India
- It comprises a **chairperson and 33 members**, including four autonomous boards for undergraduate/postgraduate education, ethics, and college accreditation, and is headquartered in **New Delhi** under the Health Ministry
- Key functions include **framing quality standards for medical education**, **conducting NEET/NExT exams**, **accrediting institutions**, and **registering medical practitioners**, aiming to enhance transparency and ethics in the sector

6. President Murmu Appoints Four Eminent Personalities to Rajya Sabha

- **President Droupadi Murmu has nominated four distinguished individuals to Rajya Sabha**
1. Ujjwal Nikam (prominent lawyer)
2. Harsh Vardhan Shringla (retired Foreign Secretary),
3. C. Sadanandan Master (social worker from Kerala)
4. Dr. Meenakshi Jain (Padma Shri-historian)

The **constitutional provision** for **nominating members to the Rajya Sabha** is found under:

Article 80(1) (a):

"The Council of States (Rajya Sabha) shall consist of **not more than 12 members** to be **nominated by the President**, having **special knowledge or practical experience** in the fields of:

- Literature
- Science
- Art
- Social service"

Article 80 (3):

"The members to be nominated shall be persons having special knowledge or practical experience in respect of such matters as the following, namely: **literature, science, art, and social service**."

7. Yuliia Svyrydenko Takes Helm as Ukraine's Prime Minister in Major Wartime Cabinet Overhaul

- **Ukraine's parliament has approved Yuliia Svyrydenko (39) as the new Prime Minister**, with 262 of 450 lawmakers backing her—a major reshuffle endorsed by President Zelenskiy, marking Ukraine's first new head of government since the 2022 invasion

  About Ukraine's geographical location:
- **Ukraine is located in Eastern Europe**, bordered by **Russia to the east**, **Belarus to the north**, **Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary to the west**, and **Romania and Moldova to the southwest**.
- It has a strategic coastline along the **Black Sea and the Sea of Azov** in the south, providing vital maritime access to Europe and Asia.
- Ukraine is the **second-largest country in Europe by area** (after Russia), covering approximately **603,000 square kilometers**, making it a key transit hub between Europe and Asia.

8. Dr. J. Ravishankar Takes Over as BMRCL MD Ahead of Yellow Line Launch

- **Dr. J. Ravishankar**, a 2001-batch IAS officer, has been appointed as the new Managing Director of **Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL)** by the Karnataka government, replacing Maheshwar Rao who had held the role on additional charge

About Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL)

- BMRCL is a **special purpose vehicle**, jointly owned by the **Government of India and the Government of Karnataka**, established in **2011** to implement, operate, and expand the **Namma Metro** network in Bengaluru
- Namma Metro is **India's second-longest metro network**, stretching about **77 km** with **68 operational stations**, serving roughly **640,000–760,000 passengers daily**

9. Centre Notifies Repatriation & Transfer of 18 High Court Judges Under Article 222

- **The Union Government has officially notified the transfer and repatriation of 18 High Court judges**, following the Supreme Court Collegium's recommendations made on **26 May 2025**, aimed at maintaining judicial efficiency and impartiality across courts.
- **Article 222(1)** empowers the President to transfer a High Court judge to another High Court after consulting the Chief Justice of India.
- Such transfers aim to maintain judicial impartiality and balanced distribution of judges across the country.
  Collegium System in India
  What is it?
  The **Collegium System** is a mechanism used in **India for the appointment and transfer of judges** in the higher judiciary (i.e., the **Supreme Court and High Courts**).
  Who forms the Collegium?
- For **Supreme Court appointments**: Chief Justice of India (CJI) + 4 senior-most SC judges
- For **High Court appointments**: Chief Justice of that High Court + 2 senior-most judges of that High Court
  Origin:
- **Not mentioned in the Constitution**.
- Evolved through **Supreme Court judgments**, especially the **Three Judges Cases**:
1. **First Judges Case (1981)** – Executive had primacy.
2. **Second Judges Case (1993)** – Gave primacy to the judiciary; Collegium system established.
3. **Third Judges Case (1998)** – Clarified the Collegium structure.
   Process:
1. The Collegium recommends names for appointment.
2. The Central Government may send it back once for reconsideration.
3. If the Collegium reiterates, the **President is bound** to accept it.

10. Ajay Kumar Shrivastava Appointed Director (Engineering & R&D) at HAL

- **Ajay Kumar Shrivastava** has been appointed as Director (Engineering and R&D) at **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)** effective **15 July 2025**.
- His term will continue until November 30, 2026 (superannuation) or as directed by the Ministry of Defence, whichever is earlier.
  About Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)

- **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)** is a premier **state-owned aerospace and defence company** headquartered in **Bengaluru, India**.
- Established in **1940**, it operates under the **Ministry of Defence** and plays a crucial role in the design, manufacture, and maintenance of **aircraft, helicopters, engines, avionics, and related systems**.
- HAL is the backbone of India's defence aviation sector, producing iconic aircraft like **Tejas (LCA)**, **Sukhoi-30 MKI (under license)**, and **Dhruv (ALH)**, and contributing to **Atmanirbhar Bharat** in defence production.

11. Appointment of New CEO's in news

- **Sabyasachi Couture**, the luxury fashion label majority-owned by **Aditya Birla Group**, has named **Manish Chopra** — formerly a senior leader at **Shein India** — as its new **Chief Executive Officer**, effective in mid-July 2025
- **Hemant Rupani** has been appointed as the new **CEO of Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages,** effective September 8, 2025
- **Raghavendra S. Bhat** has been named interim **MD & CEO of Karnataka Bank** effective July 16, 2025, for a three-month term following the previous CEO's resignation

SPORTS UPDATES

1. 2025 FIFA Club World Cup final

- Chelsea emerged victorious, defeating Paris Saint-Germain **3–0** in the final of the inaugural 2025 FIFA Club World Cup.
- The **2025 FIFA Club World Cup final** was hosted at **MetLife Stadium**, located in **East Rutherford, New Jersey**, USA—just outside of New York City.

Awards & honors
- **Golden Ball / Player of the Tournament**: Cole Palmer, for his 2 goals and 1 assist
- **Golden Glove**: Robert Sánchez for outstanding goalkeeping

2. 2025 Major League Cricket (MLC)
Final Result
- **Champion**: MI New York
- **Runner-up**: Washington Freedom
- **Margin**: MI New York won by **5 runs**
- **Man of the Match**: **Rushil Ugarkar** for his last-over brilliance
- **Venue**: Grand Prairie Stadium in Grand Prairie, Texas (Dallas metro area)

3. Poligras Magic Skill Award

- **Deepika Sehrawat** became the **first-ever Indian** to receive the *Poligras Magic Skill Award* for the 2024–25 FIH Hockey Pro League.
- **Victor Wegnez (**Belgium) was awarded for his midfield brilliance and a stunning scooped goal in the shoot-out against Australiain the Mens Cateogry

What is the Poligras Magic Skill Award?

- The **Poligras Magic Skill Award** is a prestigious, fan-voted honor introduced during the FIH Hockey Pro League season, recognizing the most creative and technically magical moments on the field.
- **Presented by** Poligras (part of the Sport Group, alongside Polytan and AstroTurf) and officially endorsed by the International Hockey Federation (FIH)

4. World University Games 2025

- **Name**: XXXII Summer World University Games (FISU Games 2025)
- **Duration**: July 16–27, 2025
- **Host**: Germany
- **Host Cities**: Rhine-Ruhr region (Bochum, Duisburg, Essen, Mülheim, Hagen) and Berlin (for select events like swimming, diving, and volleyball
- **Participants**: Approximately 8,500 athletes
- **Countries**: Around 150 nations
- **Sports Disciplines**: 18 sports and 234 medal events

5. 10th Junior National Rugby 7s Championship 2025

- Bihar won the **U-18 boys' title** at the **10th Junior National Rugby 7s Championship 2025** held in **Dehradun, Uttarakhand**.
- Bihar defeated **Odisha 17–15** in a thrilling final, scoring in the dying seconds.
- This marks **Bihar's first-ever boys' rugby title** at the junior national level.
- The win came just days after Bihar's **U-18 girls' team also clinched the title**, marking a double triumph.
- Bihar's performance reflects strong grassroots development in junior rugby across both boys and girls categories.

MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING (MOUS) & AGREEMENTS

1. "Bougival Accord: New Caledonia Declared a 'State' with Enhanced Autonomy"

- France and New Caledonia reached the **Bougival Accord** (July 12–13, 2025), creating a **"State of New Caledonia" within the French Republic**, enshrined in the French Constitution, without full independence.
- The agreement introduces **dual nationality**: both French and Caledonian citizenship, and opens door for future reforms to the territory's name, flag, and anthem
- **Sovereignty shift**: New Caledonia to assume some powers over foreign affairs, security, justice, and public order—among the most significant transfers since the Nouméa Accord
- **Electoral reform**: Local voting rights extended to residents with **10+ years of continuous residency**, aiming to resolve triggers of the violent unrest from May–Dec 2024.
- Implementation next includes: **French parliamentary approval** in autumn 2025, followed by a **referendum in February 2026** for local ratification

2. NCDEX & IMD Collaborate to Boost Climate Resilience

- On June 26, 2025, NCDEX (National Commodity & Derivatives Exchange) and IMD formalized a partnership to launch India's first **parametric weather derivatives**

- The initiative aims to provide **climate risk hedging tools** for farmers, agri-traders, logistics, and tourism sectors using real-time and historical IMD data.

- It promotes a **climate-resilient rural economy** through market-based risk management, with joint training and awareness for stakeholders like FPOs and analysts.

- **Pilot products** will align with monsoon cycles and undergo testing before seeking **regulatory approval** for full market launch.

3. NIEPID & Jai Vakeel Foundation Partner to Roll Out Structured Education for Children with Intellectual Disabilities

- On **18 July 2025**, NIEPID and Jai Vakeel Foundation (JVF) signed an MoU in Mumbai to introduce a **uniform, structured curriculum (DISHA)** for children with intellectual disabilities across India

  Core Components – Features include:

- **IEP-based learning** supported by the DISHA Assessment Checklist
- A **multisensory VAKT curriculum**
- A **digital portal** for tracking progress
- Extensive **teacher training and support systems**

  Scale & Reach – Building on DISHA's success in Maharashtra (453 schools, ~18,000 students, ~2,600 educators), the program will expand nationally, making **print/digital materials** (under DALM Scheme) available in multiple regional languages and offering **CRE-certified teacher training**

  Strategic Impact – Aligns with **SDG 4** (Quality Education) and **SDG 10** (Reduced Inequalities), pushing India's vision for inclusive "Viksit Bharat" by empowering educators, standardizing resources, and supporting neurodiversity

AWARDS & HONOURS

1. President Murmu Presents Kalinga Ratna Award 2024 to Dharmendra Pradhan

- On **15 July 2025**, President **Droupadi Murmu** conferred the prestigious **Kalinga Ratna Award 2024** upon **Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan** during the birth anniversary celebrations of the 15th-century Odia poet **Adikabi Sarala Das** in **Cuttack**, Odisha

- The event was organized by **Sarala Sahitya Sansad** at Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium, commemorating Sarala Das's contributions to Odia literature, most notably rendering the **Mahabharata** in Odia

- The Kalinga Ratna Award, instituted in 2007, recognizes individuals of Odia origin for substantial contributions at national or international levels. Its conferment on the Education Minister underscores the government's commitment to **regional language promotion and cultural preservation**

2. Sudanese-Scottish Author Leila Aboulela Wins 2025 PEN Pinter Prize

- **Award Winner**: Leila Aboulela, Sudanese-born and Aberdeen-based author, has won the **2025 PEN Pinter Prize**, awarded to writers who demonstrate an "unflinching, unswerving gaze" on the world.

- **Literary Contributions**: Celebrated for her nuanced exploration of **migration, faith, and the interior lives of Muslim women** in acclaimed works like *The Translator*, *Minaret*, and *River Spirit*

- **Recognition Ceremony**: Announced at English PEN's summer party in London on **9 July 2025**, with readings from her work by actors Khalid Abdalla and Amira Ghazalla.

- **Upcoming Events**: Aboulela will officially receive the prize on **10 October 2025** at the British Library, where she will also select and honor the **Writer of Courage** awardee

3. Former Chief Justice Kalyan Shrestha Honoured with Hem Bahadur Malla Award 2080

- **Award & Recipient**: Former Chief Justice of Nepal, **Kalyan Shrestha**, has been awarded the prestigious **Hem Bahadur Malla Award 2080 BS**, in recognition of his distinguished service in judicial leadership and institutional development

- **Presentation**: The award was presented by **Chief Justice Prakashman Singh Raut** at a joint event organized by the **Nepal Public Administration Association (PAAN)** and Salt Trading Corporation (STC) in **Kathmandu**, on **10 July 2025**.

- **Selection & Prize**: A jury chaired by former Public Service Commission head **Umesh Mainali** selected Shrestha based on his contributions during transitional justice, inclusive democracy, and environmental adjudication. The award includes a **cash prize of NPR 200,000** and a certificate

- **Legacy**: Established in 2003 by STC to commemorate its founder Hem Bahadur Malla, the award recognizes national-level contributions. Shrestha, the 21st recipient, served as Nepal's **25th Chief Justice (2015–16)**, impacting key legal transitions

4. INCOIS Honoured with India's First National Geospatial Practitioner Award 2025

- The **Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)** received the prestigious **National Geospatial Practitioner Award 2025**, presented at a ceremony held at **IIT Bombay**

- INCOIS was awarded for its **innovative use of open-source geospatial technologies**—such as QGIS and web GIS—that enhanced ocean information delivery, including marine forecasts, tsunami warnings, coastal vulnerability mapping, and resource management tools

- These GIS-driven systems supply **real-time, location-based ocean data**—like high-wave zones, potential fishing zones, and sea-surface conditions—to **fisherfolk, port authorities, coastal communities, policymakers, and disaster responders**, improving decision-making and resilience

5. India Bags 4 Medals at 57th International Chemistry Olympiad 2025, Ranks 6th Globally

- **Medal Tally**: India secured **four medals**—2 Gold (Devesh Pankaj Bhaiya from Maharashtra; Sandeep Kuchi from Telangana) and 2 Silver (Debadatta Priyadarshi from Odisha; Ujjwal Kesari from Delhi)—at the IChO held in **Dubai, UAE**, from **5–14 July 2025**.

- **Global Ranking**: India finished **6th** among 90 participating countries, tying with Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Israel

- **Participation Stats**: The Olympiad featured **354 students** from 90 nations; this marks India's **26th consecutive participation**, with a historical medal distribution of about 30% Gold, 53% Silver, and 17% Bronze

6. Swachh Survekshan 2024-25 Awards
Key Highlights

- **Swachh Survekshan 2024–25**, 9th edition conducted by MoHUA (Apr 2024–Mar 2025); awards conferred at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi by President Murmu.

- **New "Super Swachh League"** category introduced to acknowledge consistent top performers (e.g., Indore with 7+ consecutive wins), keeping them separate from regular rankings.

- **Population-based city classification** (Very Small to Million-Plus) instituted to ensure fair benchmarking across urban local bodies.
Celebrity cities crowned:

- **Indore**: Cleanest city overall (Million-Plus) – 8th consecutive win

- **Surat**: 2nd in Million-Plus

- **Navi Mumbai**: 3rd in Million-Plus **Ahmedabad**: Cleanest in Big-city (3–10 lakh) category
Special recognitions:

- **Cleanest Ganga town**: Prayagraj (for Swachh Mahakumbh 2025 waste management)
Safaimitra Surakshit Shehar Awards: Visakhapatnam, Jabalpur, Gorakhpur

- **Cleanest cantonment board**: Secunderabad

- **Promising Swachh Shehar**: 35 cities (e.g., Bhubaneswar, Agra)
Sector-specific excellence:

- **Uttar Pradesh** wins cleanest state; 7 cities in Top 20 (Lucknow, Agra, Prayagraj, etc.)

- **Kerala**: Thiruvananthapuram achieves "Water Plus" certification for wastewater management

- **Panchkula**: Questioned for scoring full marks despite visible sanitation issues; criticism on-ground

- **Trichy**: Top city in Tamil Nadu (Big-city); loses rank due to poor toilet hygiene
Citizen participation: Over 14 crore people engaged via surveys, apps; evaluation based on 10 categories and 54 indicators with 78 awards across 4 main categories (including SSL), emphasizing 3R (Reduce–Reuse–Recycle) theme.

IMPORTANT DAYS & OBSERVANCES

S.No.	Important Days	Date	Extra Information
1.	**World Youth Skills Day**	**July 15, 2025**	**Theme** "Youth empowerment through AI and digital skills",
2.	**Nelson Mandela International Day**	**18 July 2025**	**Theme** "It's still in our hands to combat poverty and inequity"
3.	**World Day for International Justice**	**July 17, 2025**	**Theme:** "Accountability and Respect for Law"
4.	**World Snake Day**	**July 16, 2025**	**Theme**"Respect, Don't Fear: Protecting Nature's Silent Guardians",
5.	**AI Appreciation Day**	**July 16, 2025**	**Theme** ""Celebrating innovation and impact",
6.	**International Moon Day**	**July 20, 2025**	Theme ""**One Moon, One Vision, One Future**"
7.	**World Chess Day**	**20 July 2025**	Theme ""**Every Move Counts**"

REPORTS & INDEXES

1. WHO & UNICEF Release 2024 Global Immunization Coverage Report

- The **WHO–UNICEF Estimates of National Immunization Coverage (WUENIC 2024)** report was jointly released by the **World Health Organization** and **UNICEF**. It offers the most authoritative global data on immunization coverage across 195 countries
  Finding of the Report:

1. **Zero-Dose Children Halved**
   - India reduced the number of zero-dose children from **1.6 million (2023)** to **0.9 million (2024)** — a **43% improvement**, signaling strong progress in universal immunization.
2. **Record DTP3 Coverage in South Asia**
   - South Asia, led by India, achieved **92% coverage for DTP3 vaccines** in 2024 — the highest ever for the region.
3. **India's Global Share**
   - Despite progress, **India still accounts for 6.4%** of the world's zero-dose children, and nearly half within South Asia, highlighting the need for targeted outreach.
4. **Global Immunization Trends**
   - Worldwide, **14.3 million children** remained unvaccinated (zero-dose) in 2024; measles coverage still below 95%, risking outbreaks.

2. QS Best Student Cities 2026: Indian Metros Shine Globally

Report Issued by

- The **QS Best Student Cities 2026** report was released by **Quacquarelli Symonds (QS)**, evaluating 150 cities across 58 countries based on six parameters: affordability, desirability, student mix, student satisfaction, employer activity, and university presence.

Global Highlights

- **Seoul** (South Korea) ranked **#1** with a perfect score of 100, surpassing **Tokyo (#2)** and **London (#3)**.
India's Best Performers
- Four Indian cities made the global top 150: **Mumbai (#98)**, **Delhi (#104)**, **Bengaluru (#108)**, and **Chennai (#128)**
Key Insights
- Indian metros saw significant rank improvements: Mumbai re-entered the top 100; Delhi and Bengaluru climbed 7 and 22 places respectively—no doubt reflecting progress under **NEP 2020**

DEFENCE & SECURITY

1. Israel Launches Dror-1: Its First Fully State-Owned Next-Gen Communications Satellite

Historic Launch (13 July 2025)

Israel successfully launched **Dror-1**, its first fully **government-funded and domestically built** communications satellite, aboard a **SpaceX Falcon 9** rocket from Cape Canaveral, Florida

Satellite Capabilities & Specs

- Weighs approximately **4.5 tonnes**, spans **17.8 m**, and carries advanced digital payload with "smartphone-in-space" technology.
- Set for a **15-year mission** in geostationary orbit (~36,000 km) to provide secure communication over Israel
National Technological Milestone
- Dror-1 is the **most advanced Israeli communications satellite** to date and the first in a planned series of 10 state-backed satellites.
- Development began in 2018 with an estimated budget of **US $200 million**, involving over 500 IAI engineers

2. Prachand Shakti Exercise:

- The Indian Army's Ram Division conducted the "Prachand Shakti" exercise at the Kharga Corps Field Training Area in **Meerut, Uttar Pradesh**, as part of the 'Year of Tech Absorption' initiative.
- The drill showcased cutting-edge technologies like AI-enabled systems, swarm UAVs, loitering munitions, and autonomous platforms, highlighting India's growing emphasis on self-reliant and hybrid warfare preparedness.
- Part of the **"Year of Tech Absorption"** initiative aimed at integrating **civilian-developed, indigenous technologies** into military operations under **Aatmanirbhar Bharat**

3. Talisman Sabre' Military Exercise

- India participated for the first time in **Exercise Talisman Sabre**, Australia's largest bilateral military drill, which began on **July 13, 2025**

- Led by India and Australia, the joint drill marks a deepening of bilateral defence relations and shared strategic interest in maintaining regional stability.
- **Exercise Talisman Sabre** is a biennial, multinational exercise featuring live-fire drills and combined operations across land, sea, and air domains. India joins other key partners—such as the U.S., Japan, and the U.K.—in reinforcing interoperability and deterrence capabilities in a shifting regional security landscape

4. Indian Army Successfully Tests Akash Prime Missile

India successfully test-fired the **Akash Prime** surface-to-air missile at an altitude of **15,000 feet in Ladakh**, showcasing its effectiveness in high-altitude, low-oxygen environments. Developed by **DRDO**, this upgraded version of the Akash missile intercepted and destroyed **high-speed aerial targets** during the trial. It is specifically tailored for **extreme weather and terrain**, making it ideal for deployment near the **India-China border**.

Key Features of Akash Prime:

- **Active RF Seeker** for precise terminal guidance (unlike the older command-guided version).
- **Optimized for high-altitude and cold conditions** (tested above 4,500 m).
- **Range**: ~30 km; **Altitude ceiling**: ~18 km.
- **Indigenously developed** by DRDO; manufactured by BDL and BEL.
- **Modular upgrades** with improved software, radar, and launch systems.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. Gujarat Launches India's First Tribal Genome Sequencing Project to Advance Precision Healthcare

- **First-of-its-kind in India**: Gujarat becomes the **first state** to launch a dedicated genome sequencing initiative focused solely on tribal communities.
- **Scale & scope**: The project, by GBRC in Gandhinagar, will sequence genomes of **2,000 healthy adults** (50% women) across **17 districts**, representing over **20 tribal groups** (e.g., Bhil, Warli, Sidi).
- **Health impact**: Aims to detect and analyze **genetic markers** for hereditary conditions like **sickle cell anemia, thalassemia, cancer**, and immunity traits—leading to early diagnosis and **personalized healthcare**.
- **Robust methodology**: Involves collecting biological samples (blood/trios of parent + child), using **cutting-edge sequencing and analysis** tech to build a **reference genome database**
- **Broader significance**: Fills a crucial **data gap** in tribal genomics, enhances public health policy, and serves as a model for **precision medicine** in indigenous populations

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES & INITIATIVES

1. Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY)

The Union Cabinet approved the **Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY)** on **July 16, 2025**, launching a **₹24,000 crore-per-year**, **six-year mission (FY 2025–26 to FY 2030–31)** to uplift 100 under-performing agricultural districts.

Key Aims & Mechanism

• Apply a **convergence-based model**, aligning 36 central schemes across 11 ministries (plus state and private partnerships) to boost farm productivity, diversify crops, improve irrigation and storage, and expand credit access

• Districts were chosen based on **low productivity, cropping intensity, and credit flow**, ensuring geographical balance by including at least one district per state.

• Implementation is driven locally via **District Dhan-Dhaanya Committees**, chaired by district collectors, in coordination with agricultural universities and NITI Aayog

Governance & Monitoring

• Employs a **three-tier governance** structure—district, state, and national committees—for coordinated execution

• Monthly progress on **117 Key Performance Indicators** will be tracked through a digital dashboard; farmers can access scheme benefits and updates via a dedicated mobile app and district ranking portal

2. SEBI's VCF Settlement Scheme 2025

- **Launch & Objective**: SEBI's "VCF Settlement Scheme 2025," announced on July 15, 2025, opens from **July 21, 2025** to **January 19, 2026**, offering a compliance window for Venture Capital Funds (VCFs) that haven't wound up expired schemes post-migration to the AIF framework

- **Eligibility Requirements**: Applies to VCFs with at least one scheme whose tenure has ended but remains active, and which have migrated to the Alternative Investment Fund (AIF) regime.

- **Fee & Settlement Structure**: Interested VCFs must file a settlement application with a non-refundable ₹25,000 (+18% GST). The base settlement for winding-up delays is ₹1 lakh for up to one year, plus ₹50,000 for each subsequent year, with total penalties ranging from ₹1 lakh to ₹6 lakh depending on unliquidated.

- **Compliance Deadline & Consequences**: Migration must be completed by **July 19, 2025**. VCFs that miss migration or fail to apply for the scheme risk enforcement action from SEBI after this deadline.

- **Strategic Impact**: This one-time mechanism aims to resolve regulatory lapses, promote orderly winding-up of legacy funds, protect investor interests, and strengthen lifecycle discipline in India's VC ecosystem

3. ADEETIE Scheme: Enhancing Energy Efficiency in MSMEs

- The Ministry of Power, via the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), has launched the **Assistance in Deploying Energy Efficient Technologies in Industries &**

Establishments (ADEETIE) scheme, marking a significant step towards greener industrial growth

Objectives

- **Boost industrial competitiveness** by lowering operational energy costs, making MSMEs more productive.
- **Spur job creation**, since deploying and maintaining upgraded technologies will require skilled personnel.
- **Support climate goals** by cutting energy consumption and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Timeline & Coverage

- **Duration**: FY 2025–26 to FY 2027–28 (3 years).
- **Sector focus**: 14 energy-intensive MSME sectors — including chemicals, textiles, food processing, and steel re-rolling — starting with 60 clusters in Phase I, expanding to 160.
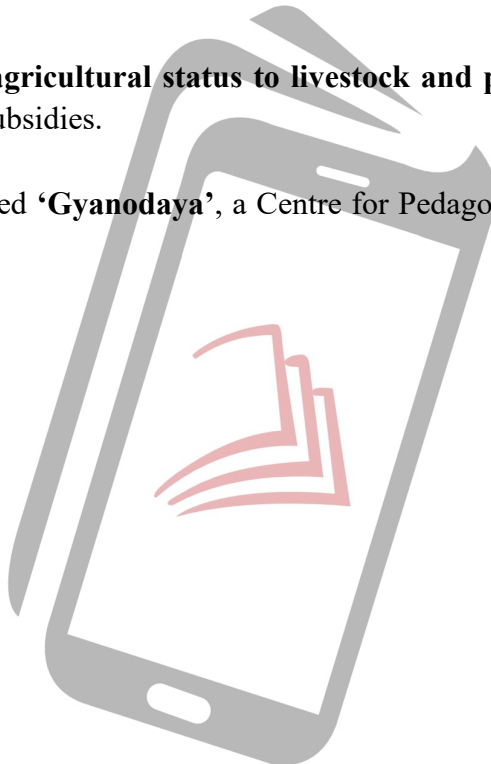
Financial & Technical Support

- **Interest subvention**: 5% for micro and small enterprises, 3% for medium enterprises on project loans
- **End-to-end handholding**: Includes investment-grade energy audits (IGEA), DPR preparation, deployment support, and post-implementation monitoring & verification.
- **Digital facilitation**: ADEETIE portal simplifies application, financing, and tracking processes

MISCELLANEOUS (ONE LINER CURRENT AFFAIRS)

1. **India's first Digital Nomad Village** was inaugurated in **Sikkim**, aiming to boost remote work tourism.

2. **Gujarat** has emerged as the **leading state in processed potato production** in India.

3. India launched the **world's first Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL)** to safeguard indigenous knowledge.

4. **China** developed the **lightest-ever mind-control device** to remotely control **bee movements** using light.

5. India's **second-longest cable-stayed bridge** was inaugurated in **Shivamogga, Karnataka**.

6. **Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma** launched **India's first Aqua Tech Park** to support aquaculture innovation.

7. **Meghalaya** celebrated its traditional **Behdeinkhlam Festival**, showcasing its rich spiritual and cultural heritage.

8. **ACKO Insurance** became **Tesla's official insurance partner in India**, marking Tesla's entry into Indian auto services.

9. **Fauja Singh**, the **world's oldest marathon runner**, passed away at the age of **114**.

10. A **new butterfly species** was discovered in the **Western Ghats of Kerala**, enriching India's biodiversity.

11. **Byrnihat (Meghalaya)** and **Delhi** were ranked the **most polluted cities** in the first half of **2025**.

12. **Maharashtra** granted **agricultural status to livestock and poultry farming**, enabling farmers to access agri-subsidies.

13. **IIM Kozhikode** launched **'Gyanodaya'**, a Centre for Pedagogical Innovation to reform teaching practices.