

## Current Affairs Capsule (20/June/2026)

### National News

#### Supreme Court Declares Right to Walk Safely a Fundamental Right

The Supreme Court of India delivered a landmark judgment declaring that the right to walk on safe and demarcated footpaths is a fundamental right under the Constitution. A bench comprising Justice P. S. Narasimha and Justice Atul S. Chandurkar held that the right to walk is intrinsically connected to the freedoms guaranteed under Articles 19(1)(a), 19(1)(b), 19(1)(c), 19(1)(d), and Article 21. The ruling came while hearing a motor accident case involving the death of a five-year-old child who was struck by a tanker while walking to school on a road without a footpath or pedestrian crossing. The Court restored and enhanced compensation to ₹11.44 lakh, emphasized pedestrian rights in urban planning, directed authorities to maintain safe and encroachment-free footpaths, and urged the government to enact a dedicated law protecting the right to walk.

#### India's First Commercial-Scale Coal-to-Ammonium Nitrate Project Launched in Odisha

Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of India's first commercial-scale coal-to-ammonium nitrate project at Lakhanpur in Odisha's Jharsuguda district. The ₹25,016-crore project will be developed by Bharat Coal Gasification and Chemicals Limited, a joint venture between Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited and Coal India Limited. Using indigenous coal gasification technology, the plant will convert coal into syngas and produce 2,000 tonnes of ammonium nitrate daily. Spread across 350 acres, the project has received ₹1,350 crore support under the Ministry of Coal's incentive scheme. It aims to reduce dependence on imported chemicals, increase value addition from domestic coal reserves, strengthen energy security, and create employment opportunities while supporting the government's coal gasification strategy and Aatmanirbhar Bharat objectives.

#### NHAI Introduces Rajasthan's First Multi-Lane Free Flow Tolling System

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has introduced Rajasthan's first Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) tolling system at Daulatpura Toll Plaza on the Delhi-Jaipur section of NH-48. The barrier-less system combines Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology with FASTag-based electronic toll collection, allowing vehicles to pass through toll plazas without stopping. High-resolution cameras capture vehicle registration numbers and automatically deduct toll charges from linked FASTag accounts. The initiative is expected to reduce traffic congestion, save travel time, improve fuel efficiency, lower emissions, and enhance commuter convenience. Following the successful implementation at Daulatpura, NHAI plans to expand MLFF technology to Shahjahanpur and Manoharpur toll plazas, further promoting seamless and technology-driven highway travel across one of India's busiest transport corridors.

#### India to Develop New Strategic Petroleum Reserve at Mangaluru

India is set to strengthen its energy security through the development of a new Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) facility at Mangaluru. The project has been entrusted to ONGC, which will construct an underground crude oil storage cavern with a capacity of 1.75 million metric tonnes at an estimated cost of ₹15,000 crore. Strategic Petroleum Reserves are emergency stockpiles maintained to address supply disruptions caused by geopolitical tensions, natural disasters, or market volatility. India currently operates SPR facilities at Visakhapatnam, Mangaluru, and Padur with a combined capacity of 5.33 MMT. The new facility will significantly increase storage capacity and improve India's preparedness against global energy uncertainties. Around ₹5,000 crore will be spent on infrastructure development, while ₹10,000 crore will be used for crude oil procurement and storage.

### State News

#### ₹1,246-Crore Development Projects Launched in Meghalaya

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman laid the foundation stone for development projects worth ₹1,246 crore in Meghalaya in the presence of Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma. The projects span critical sectors such as road connectivity, logistics, tourism infrastructure, education, and livelihood development. A flagship initiative, the Meghalaya Logistics and Connectivity Improvement Project, seeks to strengthen transportation networks, improve rural connectivity, reduce logistics costs, and enhance market access for farmers. Additional investments in roads are expected to improve access to remote areas, facilitate trade, and support tourism. Tourism-focused projects will promote eco-tourism and create opportunities for local enterprises, while investments in education and livelihood programmes will strengthen human capital, encourage entrepreneurship, and generate employment. The initiative is expected to significantly contribute to Meghalaya's long-term economic and social development.

### **Tamil Nadu Approves Five Dedicated Renewable Energy Zones**

The Tamil Nadu government approved the creation of five dedicated Renewable Energy Zones under Tamil Nadu Green Energy Corporation Limited to accelerate renewable energy development across the state. The zones will be headquartered in Chennai, Tiruchirappalli, Tirunelveli, Coimbatore, and Madurai, and will oversee renewable energy projects within designated electricity distribution circles. The initiative aims to streamline project approvals, improve coordination among stakeholders, strengthen infrastructure, and facilitate the integration of renewable energy into the power grid. Each zone will be managed by Assistant Executive Engineers responsible for administration, power evacuation systems, and operational oversight. The zones will support the expansion of wind and solar energy projects and promote hybrid renewable energy systems combining wind, solar, and storage technologies. The move reinforces Tamil Nadu's leadership in renewable energy and commitment to sustainable development.

### **Centre Reaffirms Article 371 Safeguards for Ladakh: What It Means**

The Government of India has discussed constitutional safeguards for Ladakh under Article 371 in talks with the MHA, Ladakh Apex Body, and Kargil Democratic Alliance (May 22, 2026). The focus is on a customized governance model ensuring local participation, cultural protection, land rights, and administrative accountability. Options include an elected UT-level body with limited powers, while the Sixth Schedule demand remains under consideration but not accepted. Article 371 provisions in other states guide these discussions to balance regional autonomy with national interests.

### **International News**

### **Professor Dr. Bimal Patel Elected Judge of ITLOS**

Professor Dr. Bimal Patel has been elected as a Judge of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), marking a significant achievement for India's international legal diplomacy. Established under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), ITLOS is an independent judicial body headquartered in Hamburg, Germany, that adjudicates disputes related to maritime boundaries, navigation rights, marine resources, fisheries, environmental protection, and detained vessels. Patel's election reflects international recognition of India's expertise in global legal affairs and commitment to multilateralism. He currently serves as Vice-Chancellor of Rashtriya Raksha University, is a member of the United Nations International Law Commission, and serves on India's National Security Advisory Board. His election further strengthens India's role in global maritime governance and international law.

### **Jonathan Becomes World's Oldest Known Terrestrial Animal at 194**

Jonathan, a Seychelles giant tortoise living on the South Atlantic island of Saint Helena, has been officially recognized as the world's oldest known terrestrial animal and the oldest turtle ever recorded. Estimated to have been born around 1832, Jonathan is approximately 194 years old. Throughout his extraordinary lifespan, he has witnessed major historical developments, including the Victorian era, the construction of iconic landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower, the

advent of automobiles and airplanes, and the rise of computers, the internet, and space exploration. Despite his advanced age, Jonathan remains relatively healthy and active. Scientists attribute his longevity to factors such as a slow metabolism, low-stress environment, favorable genetics, and efficient biological systems. Researchers are studying his DNA to gain insights into aging, disease prevention, and longevity-related medical advancements.

## Banking & Financial News

### Vivek Aggarwal Becomes First Indian FATF Vice President

India achieved a historic milestone with the election of Vivek Aggarwal as Vice President of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), making him the first Indian official to hold the position. Elected at the FATF Plenary meeting in Paris, he will serve from July 2026 to June 2027. A 1994-batch IAS officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre, Aggarwal currently serves as Union Culture Secretary and has extensive experience in financial intelligence, regulatory affairs, and international cooperation. He previously served as Director of the Financial Intelligence Unit-India, Additional Secretary in the Finance Ministry, and head of India's FATF delegation. Established in 1989, FATF develops global standards to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. His election reflects India's growing influence in global financial governance and international regulatory cooperation.

## Appointments News

### Jainendra K. Jain Becomes First Indian-Origin Physicist to Win Wolf Prize

Indian-origin theoretical physicist Jainendra K. Jain became the first person of Indian origin to receive the prestigious Wolf Prize in Physics for discovering composite fermions, a breakthrough that transformed understanding of the fractional quantum Hall effect. The award was presented in Jerusalem by Isaac Herzog. In 1989, while at Yale University, Jain proposed that electrons could combine with quantum vortices to form composite fermions, providing a unified explanation for previously unexplained fractional conductivity states. His theory led to the prediction of the celebrated "Jain states" and became a cornerstone of condensed matter physics. The discovery has had a lasting impact on quantum computing, topological matter research, and advanced semiconductor technologies. Born in Sambhar, Rajasthan, Jain studied at IIT Kanpur and later earned a PhD from Stony Brook University.

## Defence News

### MoD Signs ₹425-Crore Contract for Marine Gas Turbine Generators

The Ministry of Defence signed a ₹425-crore contract with Bharat Forge Limited for the procurement of 12 sets of 1.25 MW Marine Gas Turbine Generators for the Indian Navy. Signed in New Delhi in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh, the agreement falls under the Buy (Indian) category and mandates more than 60% indigenous content. Marine Gas Turbine Generators are crucial onboard power-generation systems that supply electricity to combat management systems, radar and surveillance equipment, communication networks, electronic warfare systems, and advanced weapon platforms. The project will strengthen India's indigenous defence manufacturing ecosystem, reduce dependence on foreign suppliers, and support the Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India initiatives. It will also enhance the operational readiness and reliability of modern Indian naval warships.

### Indian Coast Guard Inducts First Indigenous Air Cushion Vehicle H-561

The Indian Coast Guard inducted H-561, India's first indigenously built Air Cushion Vehicle (ACV), on 18 June 2026. Developed by Chowgule & Company Private Limited in Goa, the hovercraft is the first of six ACVs ordered to strengthen coastal surveillance, security, and rapid-response operations. Unlike conventional vessels, H-561 operates on a cushion of air generated by lift fans, enabling movement over shallow waters, mudflats, beaches, marshlands, estuaries, and wetlands. Its ability to transition seamlessly between land and water makes it ideal for patrolling India's

diverse 7,500-kilometre coastline. Built under the Make in India initiative, the hovercraft enhances coastal monitoring capabilities, improves response times in vulnerable regions, and represents a significant achievement in indigenous maritime defence technology and coastal security infrastructure.

### **Indian Navy to Commission INS Dunagiri, INS Agray and INS Sanshodhak**

The Indian Navy will commission three indigenously built warships—INS Dunagiri, INS Agray, and INS Sanshodhak—on 21 June 2026 in Kolkata. Designed by the Indian Navy’s Warship Design Bureau and built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers, the vessels highlight India’s growing self-reliance in defence manufacturing. INS Dunagiri, a Project 17A stealth-guided missile frigate, is equipped for surface, air, and anti-submarine warfare and can deploy BrahMos missiles. INS Agray is designed for anti-submarine operations in shallow waters using advanced sonar, torpedoes, and anti-submarine rockets. INS Sanshodhak, the final ship of the Sandhayak-class programme, will conduct hydrographic surveys and seabed mapping using Autonomous Underwater Vehicles and Remotely Operated Vehicles. Together, they will strengthen India’s maritime security and naval capabilities.

### **Important Days News**

#### **World Refugee Day 2026: Honouring Courage, Resilience and the Right to Seek Safety**

World Refugee Day is observed annually on 20 June to honor millions of people displaced by conflict, persecution, violence, and human rights violations. The 2026 theme, “Until Everyone is Safe,” emphasizes that safety includes legal protection, shelter, healthcare, education, employment, social inclusion, and dignity. Established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2000, the day promotes awareness of refugee challenges and reinforces global commitments to their protection. It recognizes the resilience of refugees and encourages humanitarian support, inclusion, and opportunities for rebuilding lives in safety and dignity.

