

## Current Affairs Capsule (03/July/2026)

### National News

#### Coal imports fell 12.95% in April 2026, domestic supply rises

India's coal imports declined by 12.95% in April 2026, falling from 24.27 million tonnes (MT) in April 2025 to 21.13 MT, reflecting stronger domestic production and the Government's import substitution strategy. Power sector imports dropped 24.89% to 3.51 MT, while Imported Coal-Based (ICB) plants recorded the sharpest decline of 27.45%, from 3.97 MT to 2.88 MT. Imports for blending by Domestic Coal-Based (DCB) plants fell 11.26% to 0.63 MT. Coal imports as a share of total consumption declined from 21.69% to 19.68%, indicating reduced import dependence. Meanwhile, coking coal imports increased marginally by 1.34% to 6.01 MT, driven by steel industry demand. Improved domestic production, better logistics, enhanced first-mile connectivity, and stronger coordination have ensured adequate coal supplies while reducing reliance on imports.

#### MANAS helpline launched for drug reporting, counselling, rehabilitation support

MANAS (Madak Padarth Nishedh Asoochna Kendra) is India's National Narcotics Helpline, launched on 18 July 2024 by the Ministry of Home Affairs under the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) in collaboration with the Digital India Corporation (DIC). It supports the vision of a Nasha Mukta Bharat by enabling citizens to anonymously report drug trafficking, peddling, and illegal cultivation through the 24x7 helpline (1933), web portal, UMANG app, and email. The platform also provides counselling and rehabilitation support by linking addiction-related calls to the de-addiction helpline 14446. Featuring digital ticketing, multilingual support, Smart IVRS, and chatbot integration, MANAS improves law enforcement coordination with 30 NCB Zonal Units and 36 State/UT Anti-Narcotics Task Forces, while promoting public participation, awareness, transparency, and technology-driven governance in combating drug abuse.

#### Union Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan launches nationwide 'Viksit Bharat - G-Ram G Act' from Andhra Pradesh

Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched the nationwide Viksit Bharat – G-RAM G Act from Mukkavaripalli village, Andhra Pradesh, in the presence of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan. The scheme legally guarantees 125 days of wage employment annually to every eligible rural household, replacing the previous 100-day guarantee under MGNREGA, with unemployment allowance if work is not provided on time. The Centre will contribute over ₹95,000 crore in the first year, with total expenditure of ₹1.51 lakh crore, and plans to invest ₹7.5 lakh crore over the coming years. Gram Sabhas will lead local development planning. Andhra Pradesh received ₹7,707 crore, 74,212 PMAY-G houses, and 146 roads plus 19 bridges worth over ₹422 crore under PMGSY-IV.

#### NITI Aayog releases roadmap for globalisation of Ayurveda 2047 plan.

NITI Aayog, in collaboration with PwC, released the report "Strategic Roadmap for Making Ayurveda Global" on 2 July 2026, outlining a phased plan up to 2047 to position Ayurveda as an evidence-based global healthcare system. The roadmap highlights Ayurveda's formal recognition in nearly 30 countries and proposes multi-country clinical trials, annual safety and evidence reports, and modernisation of the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) to protect traditional knowledge. It also recommends a patent-watch system and stronger scientific validation of formulations. On the economic front, it aims to boost Ayush exports, which rose from \$1.09 billion (2014) to \$2.16 billion (2023), and promote regulated global market access. Key proposals include Ayurveda medical value travel zones, international treatment hubs, and global Ayurveda centres in cities like Geneva, New York, and Tokyo, along with institutional governance under a Mission Steering Group chaired by the Minister of Ayush.

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## What Is the Username Issue Around WhatsApp, Telegram and Signal Apps? Explained

On 2 July 2026, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) issued notices to Telegram and Signal over their username features, following a similar notice to WhatsApp on 1 July 2026 regarding its proposed username system. Usernames allow people to connect without sharing phone numbers, but the government has raised concerns that anonymous contact features may facilitate fraud, phishing, impersonation, and digital arrest scams. MeitY has asked both platforms to explain their username mechanisms, security safeguards, and measures to prevent misuse, with responses required within three days. The government also questioned Telegram on continuing the feature. Meanwhile, Zoho-backed Arattai announced it would disable its username-based accounts. Telegram had recently faced a week-long ban in India, lifted on 22 June 2026, over concerns related to the NEET-UG re-examination.

### EPF Scheme 2026 introduces 25% minimum balance, UPI withdrawals.

The Central Government has notified the EPF Scheme 2026, effective 29 June 2026, introducing revised partial withdrawal rules and new digital services for EPFO members. A key change requires subscribers to maintain at least 25% of their EPF balance, including both employee and employer contributions, before making partial withdrawals. The scheme expands withdrawal purposes to include housing, medical treatment, higher education, marriage, home loan repayment, and home repairs, with up to 100% of the eligible balance allowed in specified cases. Members can now make partial withdrawals after 12 months of service, with simplified claim procedures. EPFO will also launch UPI-based PF withdrawals for faster settlements and WhatsApp services, enabling members to check balances, view recent transactions, track claims, and access services in regional languages.

### State News

#### Gujarat Police launch Operation Surakshit Cyberspace cyber awareness campaign.

Gujarat Police has launched Operation Surakshit Cyberspace, a 28-day statewide campaign running from 1–28 July 2026 to enhance online safety for women and children. Led by DGP G.S. Malik and coordinated by the CID Crime–Women Cell, the initiative combines intelligence-led policing, cyber awareness, victim outreach, and technology-driven enforcement. It targets cyberstalking, online harassment, identity theft, financial fraud, and digital privacy violations. Key measures include identifying potential victims, verifying cyber alerts, counselling at-risk individuals, facilitating reporting through the National Cyber Helpline, and ensuring prompt complaint registration and investigation. The campaign, in collaboration with banks, telecom providers, schools, colleges, NGOs, and RWAs, aims to educate 25 lakh citizens, engage 20 lakh students, cover 10,000 schools and 1,500 colleges, reach 1 lakh adolescent girls, and ensure police action within 24 hours of complaints involving women and children.

#### Gujarat sets up SAMARTH semiconductor training hub at IIT Gandhinagar.

Gujarat has established a semiconductor training and research hub named Project SAMARTH (Silicon and Advanced Semiconductor Manufacturing Research and Training Hub) at IIT Gandhinagar, with a budget of ₹190 crore. Work on the facility began on 2 March 2026. The initiative is jointly supported by the Ministry of Electronics and IT, Government of Gujarat (DST), and IIT Gandhinagar. SAMARTH aims to develop a skilled workforce for semiconductor manufacturing by training 10,000 people over five years, including students, technicians, and short-term trainees. It will also support research, indigenous chip-related technologies, and practical fab training to make engineers industry-ready. The centre involves collaboration with L&T Semiconductor Technologies and other institutions through MoUs with engineering colleges. The project strengthens India's semiconductor ecosystem by combining skill development, research, and industry partnership in a high-tech manufacturing sector.

## What Is the BAT-BMS App? Why the Government Ordered Its Removal

On 2 July 2026, the Delhi Transport Minister directed the Transport Department to investigate the BAT-BMS mobile app after videos allegedly showed it being used to remotely disable e-rickshaws via Bluetooth. Developed by Shenzhen Grenergy Technology, the app is linked to Battery Management Systems (BMS) used in lithium-ion batteries to monitor charge, voltage, and temperature. Reports claimed that some Bluetooth-enabled BMS units, with weak or no authentication, allowed unauthorised users within a 15-metre range to switch off battery discharge, immobilising vehicles. The Delhi Government declared such misuse illegal and warned of police action. As of 3 July 2026, the app had been removed from Apple's App Store but remained available on Google Play. The incident highlights cybersecurity risks associated with connected vehicle battery systems and weak digital security measures.

### International News

#### India–Japan deepen ties via AI, energy, defence roadmap.

India and Japan strengthened their Special Strategic and Global Partnership during Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's visit to India on 2 July 2026, unveiling a comprehensive roadmap focused on economic security, energy resilience, artificial intelligence (AI), technology, and defence cooperation. Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted the deep trust and shared values between the two nations. Three landmark agreements were signed on Economic Security, AI Cooperation, and Energy Resilience. Both countries launched a roadmap covering semiconductors, quantum technologies, critical minerals, advanced materials, and resilient supply chains. They also announced an AI partnership promoting responsible innovation and a plan to establish around 1,000 biogas and organic fertiliser plants under the GOBARdhan initiative. Defence ties will deepen through expanded naval exercises, defence technology collaboration, and enhanced Indo-Pacific maritime cooperation aligned with Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) vision.

#### AI Global Commission formed for responsible inclusive AI governance.

The AI for Good Global Commission, announced on 3 July 2026, is a global initiative led by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and Salesforce to promote responsible, inclusive, and sustainable use of artificial intelligence. Comprising over 40 leaders from governments, businesses, academia, and international organizations, the commission aims to improve AI governance, bridge the digital divide, and expand AI access worldwide. Four Indian business leaders—Mukesh Ambani, Sunil Bharti Mittal, Lakshmi N. Mittal, and Vishal Talwar—are founding members, highlighting India's growing role in global AI and digital innovation. Rwanda's President Paul Kagame serves as Co-Chair, with ITU Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin as Vice-Chair. The commission's first meeting will be held during the AI for Good Global Summit 2026 in Geneva (7–10 July 2026), where recommendations on global AI governance and cooperation will be discussed.

#### WHO approves Ebola Bundibugyo diagnostic test under emergency listing.

On 2 July 2026, the World Health Organization (WHO) added the first molecular diagnostic test for Bundibugyo Ebola virus to its Emergency Use Listing (EUL), enabling faster laboratory confirmation during outbreaks. The test detects viral genetic material (RNA) in blood samples and improves diagnostic capacity for a strain that differs from the more commonly targeted Zaire ebolavirus. Bundibugyo virus, first identified in Uganda in 2007, causes Ebola disease and has been linked to the largest recorded outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), with 1,406 confirmed cases and 438 deaths as of July 2026. The WHO had earlier declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). Testing capacity has expanded significantly across affected regions. The new diagnostic tool strengthens global preparedness and response for viral haemorrhagic fever outbreaks and enhances rapid detection in emergency health situations.

### Business News

#### Microsoft–Lightstorm build I-2SEA cable linking India Southeast Asia.

Microsoft and Singapore-based Lightstorm have partnered to develop the I-2SEA (India-2-Southeast Asia) undersea cable, a 3,600-km submarine fibre-optic network connecting India, Malaysia, and Singapore. The international consortium also includes Tata Communications, Singtel, ASEAN Cables, and NEC Corporation. One of the key landing stations will be at Machilipatnam, Andhra Pradesh, with the system expected to become operational in Q4 2029. The project aims to strengthen regional digital infrastructure, support AI, hyperscale cloud services, and data centres, and improve high-capacity, low-latency connectivity. Lightstorm expects to expand its connected AI and cloud zones in India from 19 to 29. India's operational data centre capacity of 1.4 GW is projected to double by 2027. Undersea cables carry about 95% of global internet traffic, making them critical digital infrastructure.

### Awards News

#### International Booker Prize renamed Bukhman Prize, doubles to £100,000.

From 2027, the International Booker Prize will be renamed the Bukhman International Booker Prize under a 10-year funding agreement (2027-2036) with Bukhman Philanthropies. The annual prize money will double to £100,000, making it one of the world's richest international literary awards, with the amount shared equally between the author and translator. Each shortlisted title will continue to receive £5,000, also shared equally. Founded by Daria and Dmitri Bukhman (co-founder of Playrix), the foundation supports literature, education, and healthcare initiatives. The prize has evolved from the Man Booker International Prize (2005) to the International Booker Prize (2019). The 2027 judging panel will be chaired by Katie Kitamura. Eligible translated fiction published in the UK or Ireland between 1 May 2026 and 30 April 2027 will compete.

### Appointments News

#### IAS officer Prashant Sitaram appointed Additional Secretary Home Ministry.

Lokhande Prashant Sitaram, a 2001-batch IAS officer of the AGMUT cadre, was appointed Additional Secretary in the Department of Home, Ministry of Home Affairs, on 2 July 2026. The appointment was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), with the order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT). As Additional Secretary, he will oversee key policy coordination and administrative functions in the Ministry. He will also continue to hold the additional charge of Chairperson of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) under the Ministry of Education until a regular appointment is made or further orders are issued. Earlier, he had been appointed full-time CBSE Chairperson in June 2026, but the revised notification redesignated the role as an additional charge alongside his new responsibilities in the Home Ministry.

### Science & Technology News

#### What is PinS Instrument Approach? India's first Procedure for Helicopter Operations

India has approved its first Private Point-in-Space (PinS) Instrument Approach Procedure for helicopter operations at Undavalli Heliport, Andhra Pradesh, marking a major milestone in modernising civil aviation. Developed by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and approved by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on 1 July 2026, the satellite-based system uses Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) technology to guide helicopters safely under Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) without requiring costly ground-based Instrument Landing Systems (ILS). The procedure improves flight safety, enables reliable all-weather operations, reduces pilot workload, and enhances connectivity to remote areas. Designed in line with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards, PinS also supports emergency medical services, disaster relief, offshore operations, and other critical missions while lowering infrastructure costs and advancing India's technology-driven aviation ecosystem.

#### Skyroot prepares Vikram-1 Mission Aagaman India's private orbital rocket.

Skyroot Aerospace is set to launch Vikram-1, India's first privately developed orbital launch vehicle, on its maiden mission Mission Agaman between 12 July and 4 August 2026 from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. Named after Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, the four-stage rocket is designed to launch small satellites, carrying up to 350 kg to Low Earth Orbit and 260 kg to Sun-Synchronous Orbit. Featuring an all-carbon composite structure, 3D-printed Kalam and Raman-I engines, and an indigenous guidance and navigation system, Vikram-1 aims to provide affordable and reliable commercial launch services. The mission will collect critical flight performance data, including stage separation and propulsion efficiency, while carrying payloads from Indian startups and international customers. Its success would mark a major milestone for India's growing private space sector and commercial launch capabilities.

### **Rubin Observatory launches 10-year LSST sky survey mission.**

The NSF-DOE Vera C. Rubin Observatory in Chile has launched its 10-year Legacy Survey of Space and Time (LSST), marking a major milestone in modern astronomy. Equipped with the world's largest 3,200-megapixel digital camera, it will scan the southern sky every 40 seconds, producing an unprecedented time-lapse map of the Universe. The mission, jointly funded by the U.S. NSF and DOE and operated by NSF NOIRLab, will generate around 10 TB of data nightly and up to 7 million alerts on cosmic changes. It aims to study 20 billion galaxies, supernovae, black holes, dark matter, and cosmic evolution. Scientists expect discoveries of over 10,000 gravitational lenses, helping measure the Universe's expansion. Indian researchers from IUCAA and NCRA-TIFR are contributing significantly. Named after astronomer Vera C. Rubin, the project is set to transform understanding of the dynamic Universe and fundamental cosmology.

### **Sports News**

### **Sema tops Shot Put F57 rankings after Paralympic success.**

Indian para-athlete Hokato Hotozhe Sema from Nagaland and a Subedar in the 9 Assam Regiment became World No. 1 in men's Shot Put F57 rankings on 2 July 2026. He is a Paralympic bronze medallist, having achieved a personal best throw of 14.65 metres at the Paris 2024 Paralympics, where he finished behind Yasin Khosravi (gold) and Thiago Paulino dos Santos (silver). The F57 classification includes athletes with lower-limb impairments competing in seated throwing events. Sema is the first Paralympian to receive the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal and is also an Arjuna Award recipient. His career includes medals at the 2022 Asian Para Games and international Grand Prix events. After losing his leg in a 2002 landmine blast during military service, he began para-athletics at age 32, emerging as one of India's leading para-sport champions.

### **Ronaldo becomes oldest World Cup knockout scorer against Croatia.**

Cristiano Ronaldo created FIFA World Cup history by becoming the oldest player ever to score in a men's World Cup knockout match at 41 years and 147 days, converting a penalty against Croatia in the Round of 32. His goal helped Portugal secure a 2-1 victory and advance to the Round of 16, where they are set to face Spain. The strike also marked his first-ever World Cup knockout goal despite multiple appearances since 2006. Ronaldo became the second-oldest scorer in World Cup history, behind Roger Milla (42 years, 39 days), and moved close to the appearance record held by Lothar Matthäus (27 matches), with 26 appearances. He also became the oldest outfield player to start a World Cup knockout match, alongside Luka Modrić, highlighting a historic game featuring two players over 40.