

Current Affairs Capsule (04/July/2026)

National News

UIDAI Launches Free Email Update Service in Aadhaar App: Everything You Need to Know

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has launched a new digital service that allows Aadhaar holders to add or update their email ID directly through the official Aadhaar App, eliminating the need to visit an Aadhaar Seva Kendra. Available free from 1 July 2026 for six months, the feature enhances convenience and encourages users to keep their Aadhaar details updated. Linking an email ID enables real-time notifications for every Aadhaar authentication request, improving security and transparency. Within two days of launch, over 2.5 lakh users updated their email IDs. The Aadhaar App also supports updates to mobile numbers, addresses, and other eligible services, with over 40 lakh mobile number updates and 10 lakh address updates completed so far, highlighting the growing adoption of digital citizen services.

ACME Signs \$1 Billion Green Methanol Deal with Japan, Boosting India's Green Fuel Ambitions

ACME Group has signed a nearly US\$1 billion long-term agreement with Japan's Mitsubishi Gas Chemical (MGC) to supply 100,000 tonnes of green methanol annually from its upcoming Paradip, Odisha facility. Announced alongside the 16th India-Japan Annual Summit, the deal is one of India's largest green fuel export projects and strengthens bilateral cooperation in clean energy. Green methanol, produced using green hydrogen and captured carbon dioxide, is a low-carbon fuel that can be transported and stored using existing infrastructure, making it ideal for the shipping industry. The fuel will primarily serve Japan's maritime sector and comply with EU Renewable Fuels of Non-Biological Origin (RFNBO) standards and future IMO regulations. The agreement also supports India's National Green Hydrogen Mission by securing a long-term international buyer and boosting India-Japan collaboration in clean energy, supply chains, and sustainable development.

India Launches e-OCI Card: How OCI Cardholders Can Download and Use the New Digital OCI Card

The Government of India has launched the Electronic Overseas Citizen of India (e-OCI) Card, enabling eligible OCI cardholders to carry a secure digital version of their OCI card on their smartphones. Available through the OCI Services Portal, the e-OCI card can be generated, downloaded, and used as proof of OCI status during travel for verification by immigration authorities and airline staff. The initiative enhances travel convenience, offers instant access, reduces the risk of losing physical documents, and supports India's digital governance efforts. The government has clarified that the physical OCI booklet remains fully valid, and the e-OCI card is an optional digital alternative, not a replacement. Existing OCI cardholders with valid credentials linked to their OCI application can access the service online, making travel documentation easier and more accessible for millions of Overseas Citizens of India worldwide.

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal unveils first India-made export-import shipping container

Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal unveiled India's first export-import shipping container manufactured for global shipping company A.P. Moller-Maersk at Dadri, Uttar Pradesh. The milestone supports the government's Atmanirbhar Bharat, Make in India, and Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 initiatives. During the event, A.P. Moller-Maersk placed an additional order for 1,000 India-made shipping containers with the DCM Shriram Group, marking the start of a long-term commercial partnership. The development aligns with the ₹10,000 crore Container Manufacturing Promotion Scheme (CMPS), which aims to increase India's container manufacturing capacity tenfold through capital support, operational incentives, research, testing, and technology development. The initiative is expected to boost domestic manufacturing, employment, technology transfer, supply-chain resilience, and position India as a global hub for high-quality shipping container exports.

PM Modi inaugurates the first greenfield integrated refinery-cum-petrochemical complex at Pachpadra in Rajasthan

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated India's first greenfield integrated refinery-cum-petrochemical complex at Pachpadra in Balotra district, Rajasthan, on 4 July 2026. Developed by HPCL Rajasthan Refinery Limited (HRRL)—a joint venture between Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and the Government of Rajasthan—the project marks a major milestone in India's energy and petrochemical sector. The refinery has a crude processing capacity of 9 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA) and has been established with an investment of over ₹79,450 crore. It is India's first greenfield refinery integrated with a petrochemical complex, designed to strengthen energy security, enhance petrochemical self-sufficiency, and produce cleaner fuels and value-added petrochemical products.

Japan Backs Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train Target

Japan has reaffirmed its support for commencing commercial operations on the priority sections of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR) project by 2027. Launched in 2017, the 508-km corridor is India's first bullet train project, connecting Mumbai and Ahmedabad using Japan's Shinkansen technology, with E10 trains planned for operation. The first operational stretch, likely between Surat-Bilimora or Surat-Vapi in Gujarat, is targeted to open by 15 August 2027. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is financing 81% of the project's estimated US\$17 billion cost through a 50-year loan at 0.1% interest. As of 9 October 2025, significant construction had been completed, including 323 km of viaducts, 399 km of piers, and 211 km of track beds. The full corridor is expected to become operational by 2029.

Global Biofuels Alliance Selects First 15 Global Biofuel Champion Fellows to Boost Clean Energy Research

The Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA) inducted 15 early-career researchers as the first cohort of Global Biofuel Champion Fellows on 30 June 2026 at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. Each fellow will receive a research grant of up to US\$15,000 and serve as a GBA Ambassador for two years to promote biofuel innovation and leadership. Launched at the G20 Summit in New Delhi in September 2023, the Global Biofuels Alliance comprises 34 member countries and 14 international organizations. The fellows were selected through a multi-stage international evaluation process from applicants across 32 countries and represent leading institutions, including the University of Michigan, University of Manchester, Monash University, Polytechnique Montréal, University of Sheffield, Imperial College London, and IIT Madras. The fellowship aims to advance research-driven solutions in biofuels such as ethanol, biodiesel, and sustainable aviation fuel.

State News

West Bengal's Jalbhara Sandesh, Janai's Manohara and Balagarh's Traditional Boats Receive GI Tags

The Government of India has granted Geographical Indication (GI) tags to three traditional products from West Bengal's Hooghly district—Chandannagar's Jalbhara Sandesh, Janai's Manohara, and Balagarh's traditional wooden (Dingi) boats. The recognition protects their authenticity and strengthens their identity in domestic and international markets. Jalbhara Sandesh, created in the 19th century by confectioner Surya Modak, is renowned for its liquid, rose-flavoured syrup filling hidden inside a sandesh. Janai's Manohara is a popular Bengali sweet known for its sugar-coated exterior and soft chhena filling, while Balagarh's wooden boats represent a 500-year-old boat-building tradition linked to the historic Saptagram Port. The GI tags provide legal protection against imitation, enhance market recognition, promote exports, and support the livelihoods of local artisans and sweet makers while preserving West Bengal's rich cultural heritage.

Eight Traditional Himachal Products Secure GI Tags, Strengthening Heritage and Rural Economy

Himachal Pradesh has received Geographical Indication (GI) registration for eight traditional products, raising the state's total number of GI-tagged products to 17. The newly recognized products are Spiti Seabuckthorn (Chharma), Salooni Safed Makka (White Maize), Chamba Metal Art, Sirmauri Loiya, Kinnauri Topi, Sepuvadi of Mandi, Kinnauri Apple, and Kinnauri Jewellery, reflecting the state's rich agricultural and cultural heritage. A GI tag, granted under the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999, protects products with unique regional characteristics from imitation while enhancing their market value and export potential. The recognition is expected to benefit farmers, artisans, and rural entrepreneurs by improving livelihoods and promoting authentic local products. The state is also seeking GI registration for Bhot Jau, Chamba Chukh, Plectranthus Honey, and Sirmaur Ginger.

Assam Becomes the First Indian State to Commercially Produce Matcha Tea

Assam has become the first Indian state to commercially produce Matcha tea, with the inaugural batch manufactured on 3 July 2026 at the Chota Tingrai Tea Estate in Tinsukia district and sold through the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre (GTAC). Traditionally known for its premium black tea, Assam's entry into the high-value Matcha market marks a major diversification of its tea industry. Matcha, a finely powdered green tea originating in Japan, is produced from shade-grown tea leaves that are steamed, dried, and ground into a fine powder, offering high antioxidant content. The project was developed through nearly a decade of collaboration with Japanese tea experts and features a fully automated Japanese-style processing facility. The inaugural batch was auctioned by J. Thomas & Co. Pvt. Ltd. and purchased by Sheosons Chai Co., strengthening Assam's presence in the rapidly growing global specialty tea market.

International News

India and Mali Launch First Export Promotion Forum to Strengthen Trade and Investment Ties

India and Mali have launched the first India–Mali Forum for the Promotion of Exports in Bamako to institutionalize bilateral trade and investment cooperation. Held under the theme “Reinforcing Trade and Strategic Partnerships,” the forum brought together government officials and around 30 Indian business leaders. Bilateral trade reached US\$326.61 million in FY 2025–26, registering 55% year-on-year growth, supported by India’s Duty-Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) Scheme. Mali’s key exports to India include raw cotton, leather, cashew, sesame, lead, and gum arabic, while India exports pharmaceuticals, cotton fabrics, two- and three-wheelers, and bicycles. The forum featured B2B, B2G, and G2G meetings, identifying cooperation in textiles, mining, energy, agro-industry, pharmaceuticals, digital trade facilitation, and investment protection. Mali also announced an Investment Forum on 3–4 December 2026 to attract global investors.

Defense News

Indian Navy Deploys P-8I Aircraft for RIMPAC 2026, Strengthening Indo-Pacific Maritime Cooperation

The Indian Navy has deployed a P-8I long-range maritime reconnaissance and anti-submarine warfare aircraft to Hawaii for RIMPAC 2026 (Rim of the Pacific Exercise), the world's largest multinational naval exercise. Hosted by the US Pacific Fleet, the 30th edition is being held at Joint Base Pearl Harbor–Hickam from 24 June to 31 July 2026, involving 30–31 countries, 30–40 warships, 5 submarines, 140–206 aircraft, and up to 30,000 personnel. The P-8I, based on the Boeing P-8 Poseidon platform, enhances maritime surveillance and anti-submarine warfare capabilities. India has participated in every RIMPAC since 2014, strengthening naval cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. RIMPAC 2026 is commanded by Vice Admiral Jeff Jablon of the US Navy and is themed “Partners: Integrated and Prepared”, emphasizing collective readiness, international partnerships, and a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Defence Acquisition Council Approves ₹52,000 Crore Defence Procurement to Strengthen India's Military Capabilities

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Schemes News

VB-G RAM G Act 2026 Explained: State-Wise Wage Rates, 125 Days Employment, Key Changes & Benefits

The Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) [VB-G RAM (G)] Act, 2025 came into effect on 1 July 2026, replacing MGNREGA to strengthen rural livelihoods and support the Viksit Bharat @2047 vision. The new law guarantees 125 days of wage employment per eligible rural household, up from 100 days under MGNREGA. It introduces a minimum daily wage of ₹300 nationwide, with an average wage of about ₹327.40, and mandates weekly wage payments. The Act prioritizes climate-resilient infrastructure, water conservation, agriculture-related assets, and Gram Panchayat-led development planning through a National Rural Infrastructure Stack integrated with PM Gati Shakti. It also allows states to pause works during peak agricultural seasons. The revised funding pattern is 90:10, 60:40, or 100% Central funding, depending on the state or Union Territory category.

UP Rashtriya Parivarik Labh Yojana 2026: Eligibility, Benefits, Online Application Process & Required Documents

The Uttar Pradesh Rashtriya Parivarik Labh Yojana (National Family Benefit Scheme) provides one-time financial assistance of ₹30,000 to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families that lose their sole earning member. The scheme aims to support families facing financial hardship after the death of the primary breadwinner. To be eligible, the deceased must have been 18–60 years old, the applicant must be a permanent resident of Uttar Pradesh, and the annual family income should not exceed ₹56,450 (urban) or ₹46,080 (rural). Applications are accepted only through the official online portal, with required documents including the death certificate, BPL ration card, Aadhaar, Aadhaar-linked bank account details, domicile certificate, age proof, photograph, and mobile number. After verification by the District Social Welfare Officer, the assistance is directly transferred to the beneficiary's Aadhaar-linked bank account.

Science & Technology News

Bihar's 700-Year-Old Munger Banyan Identified as the Oldest Scientifically Dated Banyan Tree

Researchers have scientifically confirmed that a banyan tree in Munger, Bihar is around 700 years old, making it the oldest accurately dated banyan tree (*Ficus benghalensis*). Announced by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), the discovery marks the first successful use of a scientifically validated protocol to determine the age of a banyan tree. Since banyans lack annual growth rings, researchers from the Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP) used Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS) radiocarbon dating on alpha-cellulose extracted from wood samples, with results calibrated using the IntCal20 curve and OxCal software. The findings also revise local history by showing the tree predates the nearby Burra Bunglow by several centuries, indicating it was part of an ancient natural forest rather than being planted during the Mughal–British period.

Important Days News

International Day of Cooperatives 2026: Date, Theme, History & Significance

The International Day of Cooperatives 2026 was observed globally on 4 July 2026 (first Saturday of July), highlighting the role of cooperatives in building inclusive and sustainable societies. The United Nations announced the theme “Cooperatives for a Peaceful World!”, emphasizing how cooperative enterprises promote social justice, democratic participation, economic inclusion, and global solidarity. The day is celebrated annually to recognize the contribution of cooperatives to economic and social development through shared ownership and people-centered governance. Cooperatives support employment, financial inclusion, rural development, women’s empowerment, and sustainable agriculture while prioritizing people over profit. Since its global recognition in 1995 alongside the UN, the observance—guided by bodies like the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) and COPAC—has served to align cooperative efforts with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and promote equitable, community-driven development worldwide.

