

Current Affairs Capsule (10/July/2026)

National News

India Introduces LoA Regime to Boost Sustainable Sea Fishing

India has launched the new Letter of Authorisation (LoA) regime to promote sustainable high-seas fishing, unlock marine resources, and strengthen the country's Blue Economy. Introduced by Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, the initiative allows Indian fishing vessels to operate beyond coastal waters in a regulated and sustainable manner, improving fishermen's incomes and expanding India's global seafood market presence. The LoA system provides a simplified and transparent framework for fishing activities in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and open seas, helping reduce pressure on overexploited coastal fisheries while enabling access to high-value marine species. With over 11,000 km of coastline and an EEZ covering nearly 24 lakh sq km, India has significant deep-sea fishing potential that remains underutilized. The programme aims to promote sustainable fishing, support cooperatives and Fish Farmer Producer Organizations (FFPOs), increase premium seafood exports, and strengthen marine resource management. India, the world's second-largest fish producer, contributes around 8% of global fish production and supports nearly 30 million fishermen and fish farmers. Alongside the LoA launch, Odisha introduced its Deep Sea Fishing Mission 2026–2036 with an investment of ₹2,295.45 crore to develop deep-sea infrastructure, aquaparks, modern markets, and export-oriented fisheries, further supporting India's marine economy.

GSI Discovers Thorium Deposits in Karnataka's Gundlupet Taluk

The Geological Survey of India (GSI) has discovered thorium-bearing mineral deposits in Gundlupet taluk of Chamarajanagar district, Karnataka, marking a significant development for India's strategic mineral resources. The deposits, identified on 9 July 2026, extend across nearly 700 acres in Koothanur and nearby villages, with 20 acres designated as the core area for excavation and future mining auctions. Thorium, a naturally occurring radioactive actinide element with atomic number 90, is considered a promising nuclear fuel because it can be converted into uranium-233 for use in advanced nuclear reactors. The deposits are associated with monazite, a phosphate mineral that contains rare earth elements along with thorium and uranium. India possesses some of the world's largest thorium reserves, primarily found in monazite-rich coastal sands of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Odisha. Operating under the Ministry of Mines, the GSI is responsible for geological mapping and mineral exploration across the country. The Gundlupet discovery, following earlier findings in the Chikkammathayi Hills, could strengthen India's long-term nuclear energy programme and support future resource assessment and strategic mineral development.

ICMR to Establish India's First High-Altitude Medicine Centre

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is establishing India's first dedicated Centre for High Altitude Medicine and Public Health Research at Keylong in Lahaul and Spiti district, Himachal Pradesh, by upgrading its existing field station into a multidisciplinary research hub. Located in the western Himalayas, the centre will function under ICMR as a national facility for research, innovation, and capacity building in high-altitude medicine. It will focus on altitude physiology, acclimatisation, mountain medicine, climate-sensitive diseases, infectious and non-communicable diseases, maternal and child health, nutrition, mental health, occupational health, and disaster medicine. The centre will also deploy digital health platforms, telemedicine, drone-based delivery of medicines and diagnostics, and real-time disease surveillance to improve healthcare access in remote mountainous regions. It will collaborate with the Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS), Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the Himachal Pradesh Government, and academic institutions. Located above 2,500 metres, Keylong offers an ideal setting for long-term research on altitude-related conditions such as acute mountain sickness, high-altitude pulmonary oedema (HAPE), and high-altitude cerebral oedema (HACE), while strengthening healthcare and emergency response in India's border and high-altitude regions.

AISHE Reports Show Record Growth in Higher Education Enrolment

The Ministry of Education has released the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) Reports 2022–23 and 2023–24, revealing that total higher education enrolment has reached a record 4.5 crore students, a 31.5% increase from 3.42 crore in 2014–15. AISHE is the Government of India's annual web-based survey that collects data on student enrolment, faculty, infrastructure, examinations, academic programmes, and institutional facilities to guide higher education policymaking. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) increased to 30 in 2023–24 from 29.5 in 2022–23 and 23.7 in 2014–15. Female enrolment rose to 2.24 crore, with the female GER reaching 31.2, while the Gender Parity Index (GPI) remained above 1 at 1.08, indicating higher female participation than males for the seventh consecutive year. Enrolment among SC, ST, and OBC students also increased significantly, while STEM enrolment crossed the one-crore mark for the first time, with women accounting for 44% of STEM students. Faculty strength reached 17.32 lakh, including 7.78 lakh women, reflecting continued progress toward an inclusive and quality-driven higher education system aligned with the objectives of NEP 2020.

State News

Tamil Nadu Tops India in Higher Education GER

Tamil Nadu has emerged as the top-performing state in higher education by recording a Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 52.3% for the 2023–24 academic year, according to the latest All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) released by the Union Government. The state's GER is significantly higher than the national average of 30% and has steadily increased from 47.0% in 2021–22 and 49.1% in 2022–23, reflecting sustained growth in higher education participation. GER measures the percentage of students enrolled in higher education relative to the 18–23 years age group. Tamil Nadu also recorded a female GER of 53.1%, exceeding the male GER of 51.6% for the third consecutive year, highlighting strong female participation. During 2023–24, 35.8 lakh of the state's 68.4 lakh youth aged 18–23 were enrolled in higher education. Additionally, Tamil Nadu had 2,18,656 faculty members, accounting for 12.6% of India's total higher education teaching workforce. The achievement reinforces Tamil Nadu's leadership in expanding access to quality higher education and promoting inclusive educational development.

Srikakulam to Get New Airport Under UDAN Scheme

The Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh is set to get a new greenfield airport under the UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagarik) scheme to strengthen regional air connectivity. The proposed airport will be developed in Mandasa mandal of the Uddanam region, while Palasa has been identified for a domestic airport spanning 1,261 acres. An agreement between the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and the Andhra Pradesh Airport Development Corporation (APADC) was signed on 15 November 2025, and the feasibility study has already been completed. The airport will be developed over 1,383 acres in two phases, with land acquisition underway for 680 acres in Phase I and 536 acres in Phase II. Under the modified UDAN Scheme (2026–2036), which has a financial outlay of ₹28,840 crore, the government aims to develop 100 new airports across India through viability gap funding and regional connectivity support. The project will complement the nearly completed Bhogapuram International Airport in Vizianagaram district, enhancing connectivity in north coastal Andhra Pradesh. However, the proposal has faced opposition from the CPI(M) over concerns regarding the impact on the agriculturally significant Uddanam region, known for its extensive coconut cultivation.

Gujarat Launches New Data Centre Policy to Boost Investments

The Gujarat Government has launched the Viksit Gujarat – Data Centre Policy 2026–29 to establish the state as a leading hub for hyperscale data centres, artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure, cloud computing, and digital services. Unveiled by Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel in Gandhinagar, the policy aims to attract domestic and global investments through a combination of fiscal and non-fiscal incentives. It recognizes data centres as strategic infrastructure essential for supporting digital payments, AI applications, cloud services, e-governance, and modern businesses. The policy offers capital and interest subsidies, power tariff support, SGST and electricity duty reimbursements, stamp duty exemptions, and assistance for desalination plants, while also simplifying approvals for investors. Gujarat's

strong infrastructure, including 69 GW of installed power capacity, nearly 47 GW from renewable sources, and industrial ecosystems such as Dholera SIR, GIFT City, and advanced logistics corridors, strengthens its investment appeal. The initiative also addresses India's growing digital infrastructure needs, as the country generates nearly 20% of global data but accounts for only 3% of worldwide data centre capacity, positioning Gujarat as a key driver of India's digital economy.

International News

India, Kyrgyzstan Inaugurate Centre for Civilizational Studies in Bishkek

India and Kyrgyzstan have strengthened their cultural and academic partnership with the inauguration of the International Centre for Civilizational Studies "Manas and Mahabharata" in Bishkek. Established by the Manas National Academy in collaboration with the Centre for Studies of International Relations (CSIR), New Delhi, the centre aims to promote comparative civilizational research, cultural diplomacy, and academic exchanges. It will focus on the study of the Mahabharata and the Kyrgyz epic Manas, encouraging interdisciplinary research in history, literature, philosophy, international relations, and Eurasian cultural studies while fostering humanitarian diplomacy and researcher training. The event also witnessed the signing of trilateral cooperation agreements between the Manas National Academy, CSIR, and seven leading Kyrgyz universities, including Kyrgyz National University, Bishkek State University, American University of Central Asia, and Ala-Too International University, to facilitate joint research, faculty exchanges, and educational programmes. Another major highlight was the release of the first Hindi translation of the Kyrgyz epic Manas, covering Manas, Semetey, and Seitek, prepared by Professors Hem Chandra Pande and Ramakant Dwivedi, further strengthening cultural understanding and the long-standing civilizational ties between India and Kyrgyzstan.

India, Australia Launch PACTS to Strengthen Technology Cooperation

India and Australia have launched the Australia–India Partnership for Cyber, Critical Technologies and Supply Chains (PACTS) during the Third India–Australia Annual Summit in Melbourne, held in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. The strategic partnership aims to deepen cooperation in cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, semiconductors, critical minerals, digital resilience, defence research, and resilient supply chains by bringing together governments, private companies, universities, research institutions, and defence developers. PACTS focuses on five key pillars: supply chain diversification, critical technologies, cybersecurity, digital resilience, and defence research cooperation, with the objective of enhancing innovation, investment, and technology commercialization. The initiative comes amid global efforts to reduce dependence on single-country supply chains for semiconductors, battery materials, AI infrastructure, and critical minerals exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical tensions. Alongside PACTS, the two countries also announced the Australia–Canada–India Technology and Innovation Partnership (ACITI) through a Memorandum of Understanding, promoting trilateral collaboration in advanced technologies, joint research, innovation projects, and resource sharing, reflecting the growing commitment of like-minded nations to strengthen secure and resilient technology partnerships.

India, Australia Sign 18 Agreements to Expand Strategic Partnership

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Australia marked a major milestone in bilateral relations as India and Australia unveiled 18 agreements and initiatives during the Third Annual Summit, significantly expanding their Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. The outcomes span key sectors including defence, maritime security, clean energy, civil nuclear cooperation, cybersecurity, critical technologies, mining, education, research, skill development, and cultural heritage. Major initiatives include the Joint Declaration on Defence and Security Cooperation, Maritime Security Cooperation Roadmap, Joint Declaration on Energy Security, finalization of the India–Australia Civil Nuclear Agreement, the PACTS partnership on cyber and critical technologies, an MoU between the Indian Coast Guard and Australia's Maritime Border Command, collaboration in mining and geoscience, establishment of Flinders University in Bengaluru and Victoria University in Gurugram, research partnerships, a rooftop solar training academy, and the

restoration of three ancient Indian artefacts. Both countries reaffirmed their shared vision of a free, open, inclusive, and rules-based Indo-Pacific, with the agreements aimed at enhancing regional security, technological innovation, renewable energy cooperation, education, research, and long-term sustainable growth.

India, Australia Deepen Strategic Partnership at Third Annual Summit

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese held the third India–Australia Annual Summit in Melbourne, reaffirming their commitment to strengthening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) through enhanced cooperation in trade, defence, critical technologies, clean energy, education, and people-to-people ties. Prime Minister Modi received a ceremonial welcome at Government House before holding one-on-one and delegation-level talks reviewing progress since the CSP was launched in 2020. Both leaders pledged to conclude the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) to boost trade, investment, and business opportunities, while welcoming outcomes of the Australia–India CEOs Forum and Economic Roadmap Business Event. The summit also focused on expanding collaboration in defence, maritime security, cybersecurity, critical minerals, space, civil nuclear energy, and emerging technologies to promote a stable Indo-Pacific. Both countries agreed to strengthen partnerships in renewable energy, green technology, science, and education, with growing Australian university presence in India supporting research and student mobility. The leaders also acknowledged the Indian diaspora's contribution to Australia, while Australia announced the voluntary return of ancient Indian artefacts, including a Nandi sculpture, a Bhadrakali trident, and a Lord Kartikeya statue from Tamil Nadu.

Banking News

Federal Bank Receives First Global Investment Grade Rating

The Federal Bank has achieved a major milestone by receiving its first-ever international issuer credit rating from S&P Global Ratings, with a BBB-/Stable long-term rating and an A-3 short-term rating. The rating places the bank in the globally recognized investment-grade category, reflecting its strong financial position, effective risk management practices, stable business performance, and ability to meet financial obligations. A BBB- rating, which is the lowest level in the investment-grade category, indicates adequate financial strength, moderate credit risk, and a stable future outlook. S&P recognized Federal Bank's strong franchise, disciplined risk management, healthy capitalization, diversified funding profile, and consistent financial performance as key factors behind the rating. The achievement enhances the bank's global credibility and is expected to improve investor confidence, provide better access to international capital markets, strengthen stakeholder trust, and support its competitive position among globally recognized financial institutions. This milestone marks Federal Bank's growing presence in the international financial landscape.

World Bank Approves \$890 Million for Rooftop Solar Programme

The World Bank has approved an \$890 million financing package for India's PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, the country's flagship residential rooftop solar programme, to accelerate clean energy adoption across rural and urban households. Approved on 9–10 July 2026, the package includes an \$820 million loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), a \$60 million concessional loan from the Clean Technology Fund, and a \$10 million grant from the Livable Planet Fund. The scheme aims to install rooftop solar systems on 10 million households, enabling grid-connected electricity generation while reducing household energy costs. The financing is expected to mobilise an additional \$4.2 billion in private investment through commercial lending and generate around 1.7 million jobs in manufacturing, installation, and renewable energy services. It will also strengthen the capacity of distribution companies (DISCOMs), banks, and vendors to support large-scale implementation. The initiative aligns with India's commitment to achieve net-zero emissions by 2070 and increase the share of non-fossil fuel-based energy to 60% of the electricity mix by 2035, advancing the country's clean energy transition and energy security.

Awards News



DoT's Samridh Gram Wins Prestigious WSIS Prize 2026

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has won the prestigious WSIS Prize 2026 for its flagship Samridh Gram: Integrated Phygital Service Delivery Model, powered by the BharatNet initiative. The award was presented at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum 2026 in Geneva under Action Line C6 – Enabling Environment. Samridh Gram is a rural digital transformation initiative that establishes Samridh Kendras, village-level "phygital" service hubs combining digital platforms with assisted physical services. These centers provide healthcare, education, skill development, agriculture support, financial inclusion, and governance services, ensuring easy access for citizens with limited digital literacy. The initiative is powered by BharatNet, one of the world's largest rural broadband projects, which has connected over 2.17 lakh Gram Panchayats. Recognized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the project demonstrated how digital infrastructure, public platforms, and community participation can improve rural service delivery. After evaluation by the WSIS Expert Committee and over 2.2 million global votes, Samridh Gram emerged as the Global Winner among 18 award categories, reinforcing India's leadership in Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI).

Defense News

CSIR-NAL Completes Design of Indigenous Saras MkII Aircraft

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research–National Aerospace Laboratories (CSIR-NAL) has completed the design phase of the Saras MkII on 8 July 2026, marking a significant milestone in India's indigenous aviation programme. Developed in Bengaluru, the Saras MkII is a 19-seater twin-turboprop light transport aircraft designed to improve regional connectivity by operating from smaller airports under the UDAN scheme. The aircraft features a pressurised cabin, digital avionics, glass cockpit, autopilot, and command-by-wire flight controls, placing it among modern light transport aircraft with advanced flight systems. Following the completion of the design phase, CSIR-NAL will begin prototype manufacturing and full-scale assembly, with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) supplying metallic components and supporting production. The maiden test flight is scheduled for December 2027, while the Indian Air Force (IAF) has projected an initial requirement of at least 15 aircraft, subject to successful trials. The Saras MkII is expected to strengthen India's indigenous aerospace capabilities, enhance regional air connectivity, and support both civil and defence transportation needs.

Sports News

Telangana to Host 8th Khelo India Youth Games 2026

Telangana will host the 8th Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) 2026, marking a significant step in promoting grassroots sports and nurturing young sporting talent in India. The announcement was made by Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, who said the Games will provide a national platform for emerging athletes to showcase their abilities. Organised under the Khelo India Programme by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, the multi-sport event aims to identify promising talent, offer high-level competitive exposure, and prepare athletes for international competitions. Telangana was selected in recognition of its growing sports infrastructure and organisational capacity. The Games are expected to attract thousands of athletes, coaches, and officials from across the country, encouraging greater youth participation in sports while promoting healthy competition. In addition to strengthening India's sporting ecosystem, the event is likely to boost sports tourism and generate economic activity in the state. The 2026 edition aligns with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of building a strong sporting culture by identifying, nurturing, and developing future champions, thereby enhancing India's long-term performance in global sporting events.

Sourav Ganguly Inducted into ICC Hall of Fame



Former Indian captain Sourav Ganguly was inducted into the prestigious ICC Hall of Fame on 8 July 2026, becoming the 12th Indian cricketer to receive one of world cricket's highest honours. Established by the International Cricket Council (ICC), the Hall of Fame recognizes retired players for their exceptional achievements, leadership, and lasting contribution to the sport. Popularly known as "Dada," Ganguly is widely credited with transforming Indian cricket through his fearless captaincy and aggressive approach, leading India to the 2003 ICC Cricket World Cup final and nurturing future stars such as MS Dhoni, Virender Sehwag, Yuvraj Singh, Harbhajan Singh, and Zaheer Khan. During his international career, he played 113 Test matches and 308 One-Day Internationals (ODIs). Ganguly now joins an elite group of Indian Hall of Famers, including Bishan Singh Bedi, Kapil Dev, Sunil Gavaskar, Anil Kumble, Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, Vinoo Mankad, Diana Edulji, Virender Sehwag, Neetu David, and MS Dhoni. His induction recognizes his enduring impact on Indian cricket and his role in building one of the country's most successful and competitive teams.

Science & technology News

IIT Madras, C-DAC to Manage National Bridge Monitoring Software

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has decided to centralise the National Bridge Health Monitoring Software by assigning its management to IIT Madras and the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC). The software supports the Bridge Health Monitoring System (BHMS), which uses sensors to continuously monitor the structural health of bridges on the national highway network by tracking parameters such as stress, vibration, movement, and load. To standardise implementation, the ministry will separately tender the supply, installation, and maintenance of sensors through a new Model Request for Proposal (RFP), while projects where work has not yet begun will be re-tendered. Road-owning agencies, including the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL), Border Roads Organisation (BRO), and state Public Works Departments, have been directed to complete a nationwide digital bridge inventory by 30 September 2026. The initiative aims to enable centralized analysis of bridge data, improve structural safety, strengthen preventive maintenance, and enhance the long-term management of India's bridge infrastructure.

Novo Nordisk Launches World's First Weekly Diabetes Insulin

Novo Nordisk India has launched Awiqli (insulin icodec), the world's first once-weekly basal insulin for adults with Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes, marking a major advancement in diabetes care. The innovation reduces insulin injections from 365 per year to just 52, making treatment simpler and potentially improving patient adherence and comfort. Awiqli contains insulin icodec, designed to provide stable blood glucose control for an entire week through a single injection, and is administered using Novo Nordisk's FlexTouch injection device. The company believes the therapy can help overcome common barriers to insulin use, including fear of daily injections, pain, scheduling difficulties, hypoglycaemia, weight gain concerns, and dose adjustment challenges. Clinical findings from the ONWARDS-1 trial showed that Awiqli achieved greater reductions in HbA1c than daily insulin glargine U100, improved Time in Range, enabled more patients with Type 2 diabetes to reach HbA1c levels below 7% without hypoglycaemia, and ensured better overall glucose control. The launch is particularly significant for India, which has over 101 million people living with diabetes and around 136 million with prediabetes, highlighting the growing need for effective and convenient long-term diabetes management options.

Scientists Use AI to Decode Sperm Whale Communication

Scientists have used artificial intelligence (AI) to uncover structured communication patterns in sperm whales, identifying 156 distinct codas and repeated click sequences that resemble a phonetic-like communication system. The findings are part of Project CETI (Cetacean Translation Initiative), an international non-profit research initiative established in 2020 and based in Dominica, which brings together marine biologists, AI researchers, linguists, roboticists, and computer scientists. The study analysed vocalisations from around 400 sperm whales recorded in the Eastern Caribbean between 2005 and 2018, including data from at least 60 identified whales. Research published in



Nature Communications proposed a “sperm whale phonetic alphabet,” highlighting features such as rubato (variations in rhythm and tempo) and ornamentation (additional clicks within codas). Recent studies also identified distinct regional dialects among Mediterranean sperm whales. To advance research, Project CETI has developed open-source bio-loggers and autonomous underwater gliders capable of recording high-quality audio, behavioural, and environmental data. The breakthrough demonstrates how AI is transforming marine biology and improving scientific understanding of complex animal communication systems.

Schemes News

UP Nishulk Boring Yojana 2026 to Support Farmers

The Uttar Pradesh Government is set to implement the UP Nishulk Boring Yojana 2026 to improve irrigation facilities for small and marginal farmers by providing free agricultural borewell (boring) installation along with subsidised pump sets of up to 5 HP. Originally launched in 1985, the scheme aims to reduce farmers’ dependence on monsoon rainfall, improve access to groundwater, increase crop productivity, and strengthen rural livelihoods. Eligible beneficiaries include permanent residents of Uttar Pradesh with agricultural land in the state, small farmers owning up to 2 hectares, marginal farmers with up to 1 hectare, and SC/ST farmers, who are eligible irrespective of landholding limits under applicable provisions. Applicants must not already have an agricultural borewell and are required to submit documents such as an Aadhaar Card, Khasra/Khatauni, bank passbook, domicile certificate, caste certificate (if applicable), and passport-size photograph. Farmers can apply through the Uttar Pradesh Minor Irrigation Department's official website by completing the online application, uploading the required documents, and undergoing verification. The scheme is expected to enhance irrigation infrastructure, boost agricultural productivity, and reduce the financial burden on economically weaker farmers across the state.

