



# **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**26 JULY 2025**

## NATIONAL AFFAIRS

### 1. Amit Shah Unveils National Cooperative Policy 2025 in New Delhi to Boost Rural Economy and Inclusive Growth.



On 24 July 2025, Union Home and Co-operation Minister Amit Shah officially launched the National Cooperative Policy 2025 at Atal Akshay Urja Bhawan, New Delhi. Developed by a 48-member national committee chaired by former Union Minister Suresh Prabhu, the policy sets a 20-year roadmap (2025–45) to modernise India's cooperative sector and support the vision of "Sahkar Se Samridhi" and Viksit Bharat 2047.

- The new policy replaces the previous one framed in 2002, updating its framework to meet the demands of globalisation, technological advancements, and India's evolving economic landscape. It aims to rejuvenate cooperative institutions, making them more inclusive, professional, transparent, and future-ready, supporting livelihoods across rural and urban India.

- Drafted over 17 meetings and four regional workshops in Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Gurugram, and Patna, the committee incorporated 648 stakeholder suggestions from

cooperatives, academia, government bodies like NABARD, RBI, and state governments.

- The policy emphasises six strategic pillars: strengthening foundations; promoting vibrancy; preparing for future disruptions; expanding inclusivity and reach; entering new sectors like taxi services, tourism, insurance, real estate, and green energy; and engaging youth in cooperative development.

#### Key Points:-

(i) One key goal is to establish at least one cooperative institution in every village, with a target to set up 2 lakh new multipurpose Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) by 2029. States are directed to draft their own cooperative policies by 31 January 2026.

(ii) The launch event was attended by dignitaries including Minister of State for Cooperation Krishan Pal Gurjar, Minister of State (MoS) for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol, Secretary of Ministry of Cooperation Dr. Ashish Kumar Bhutani, and former Union Minister Suresh Prabhu. Also present were heads of the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC), National Council for Cooperative Training (NCCT), and Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Cooperative Management (VAMNICOM).

(iii) If successfully implemented, the policy could triple the cooperative sector's GDP contribution by 2034, expand economic activity in rural India, and empower women, youth, and marginalized communities through employment, financial inclusion, and local ownership. It aims to transform cooperatives into drivers of equitable and sustainable growth.



## 2. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Presides Over 166th Income Tax Day Celebrations in New Delhi.



On 25 July 2025, Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman presided over the 166th Income Tax Day celebrations, organized by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) at New Delhi. The event recognized the Department's journey from manual processes to AI-driven tax administration, underscoring major achievements in taxpayer services and voluntary compliance.

- During the ceremony, Sitharaman honored outstanding Income Tax officers for their decades-long contributions—particularly Chief Commissioner Surbhi Ahluwalia, who pioneered CBDT's structured social media engagement, and Chief Commissioner Anurag Sahai, instrumental in setting up the Central Processing Centre in Bengaluru.

- Her address highlighted the Income Tax Department's transition to technology-led systems—from faceless assessments and e-filing to AI analytics—credited with achieving the highest-ever tax collections without raising tax rates.

- Finance Minister emphasized the department's focus on three pillars: Return processing, Refund issuance, and Redressal of grievances—a framework aimed at improving taxpayer experience and building trust in the tax system.

### Key Points:-

(i) Nirmala Sitharaman commended the nudge campaign initiative by CBDT, designed to boost voluntary disclosures concerning foreign assets. The campaign earned recognition for its success in enhancing compliance without coercion.

(ii) The event was attended by key dignitaries, including Union Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary, Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra, CBDT Chairman Ravi Agrawal, and other senior officials of the Department.

(iii) Union Minister lauded first-time taxpayers, noting that 58.57 lakh individuals filed returns for the first time in Assessment Year 2024-25, signalling a growing formalisation of India's economy and enhanced voluntary participation.

## 3. India Signs DoP-NIPL Pact to Enable Global Inward Remittances via UPI-UPU Integration.



In a significant move to strengthen India's global remittance infrastructure, the Department of Posts (DoP), under the Ministry of Communications, signed a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) with NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) on July 24, 2025.

- This agreement aims to leverage the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and the Universal Postal Union's (UPU) interconnection platform to establish a seamless, secure, and affordable channel for inward remittances to India.
- The NDA was formally exchanged between L.K. Dash, Deputy Director General (International Relations and Global Business), Department of Posts, and Ritesh Shukla, CEO of NIPL. This initiative marks a milestone in India's ambition to expand the global reach of UPI and offer cost-effective remittance services to the Indian diaspora worldwide.
- The collaboration integrates India's UPI framework with UPU's Interconnection Platform (IP), enabling a two-way interoperable network between India's digital payment systems and global postal financial networks. This will allow Indians residing abroad to send money directly to beneficiaries in India using secure and real-time digital methods through trusted channels.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) The Government of India (GoI) has already expanded UPI's presence in several countries, including the United Arab Emirates (UAE), France, Bhutan, Nepal, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, and Singapore. The inclusion of UPU's vast 192-member country network is expected to exponentially grow India's digital payments footprint, further enabling cross-border financial inclusion.
- (ii) The partnership promises affordable

remittances by eliminating traditional intermediaries and banking charges through direct integration of the UPI-UPU-IP ecosystem. It reduces remittance transaction costs and enhances access for Indian workers, especially in regions with limited banking infrastructure.

(iii) The system also ensures secure and fraud-resistant transactions using two-factor UPI authentication combined with postal verification networks. Moreover, its dynamic architecture facilitates wider reach, making it possible for Indian citizens in remote or rural regions to receive real-time money transfers—thus transforming the landscape of inward remittances to India.

#### 4. India Successfully Tests First Hydrogen-Powered Train Coach at ICF Chennai.



In a landmark stride towards sustainable rail transport, India has successfully tested its first hydrogen-powered train coach at the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) in Chennai on 25 July 2025. Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw revealed the breakthrough on social media platform X, emphasizing India's emergence among global leaders in hydrogen train technology.

- The hydrogen-powered coach, also known as the Driving Power Car, is part of Indian Railways' ambitious 'Hydrogen for Heritage' program. Designed by RDSO (Research Design and Standards Organisation), the engine delivers 1,200 horsepower, making it significantly more powerful than comparable hydrogen trains in Germany, France, Sweden, and China, which typically operate with 500–600 HP.

- Compared to diesel locomotives, the hydrogen train offers a 60% reduction in noise levels, ensuring a quieter and more comfortable passenger experience. With zero carbon emissions—the only by-products being water vapour and heat—it aligns perfectly with India's goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2030 across its rail network.

- The Indian Railways has allocated approximately ₹2,800 crore for the development of 35 hydrogen fuel cell-based trains, with infrastructure set to incur an additional ₹70 crore per route. Each hydrogen train is estimated to cost around ₹80 crore. A dedicated pilot retrofit project worth ₹111.83 crore is underway to convert existing DEMU coaches with hydrogen fuel cells, targeting the Jind–Sonipat test route.

#### Key Points:-

(i) Following the successful Chennai trial, trial runs are planned on the Jind–Sonipat section in Haryana, covering approximately 89 km at a top speed of 110 km/h.

(ii) This pilot will help fine-tune performance parameters and safety requirements before expanding deployment to heritage and mountainous routes such as the Kalka–Shimla, Darjeeling Himalayan, and Nilgiri Mountain Railways.

(iii) Railway Minister Vaishnaw emphasized

that this indigenous innovation leverages local talent and international-grade engineering, positioning India among the global forerunners in hydrogen-powered rail systems. The initiative reinforces India's commitment to green mobility, future-ready infrastructure, and energy-efficient public transport innovation.

## INTERNATIONAL

### 1. India and Maldives Mark 60 Years of Diplomatic Ties with Release of Commemorative Stamps.



On 25 July 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu jointly released commemorative postage stamps during Modi's state visit to Malé. The stamps were unveiled to commemorate the 60th anniversary of India-Maldives diplomatic relations, symbolizing the enduring friendship and maritime heritage that bind the two nations.

- The commemorative stamps feature two traditional maritime vessels: the Indian Uru, a large wooden dhow built in Kerala's historic Beypore boatyards, and the Maldivian Vadhu Dhoni, used for reef and coastal fishing. These vessels represent centuries-old Indian Ocean



trade and cultural linkages between the two nations.

- India was among the first countries to formally establish diplomatic relations with the Maldives in 1965, following the island nation's independence. The stamp-release ceremony reaffirms this longstanding partnership that has continued through political changes and regional turbulence.

#### Key Points:-

(i) The event was part of a broader two-day state visit (25–26 July 2025) by Prime Minister Modi, during which both leaders witnessed the signing of eight key agreements including a ₹4,850 crore Line of Credit (LoC), cooperation in fisheries, digital payments via UPI, and frameworks initiating a Free Trade Agreement.

(ii) Narendra Modi and Muizzu also inaugurated the new Ministry of Defence headquarters, financed by India, and attended ceremonies including youth-led performances, diaspora gatherings, and symbolic planting of mango saplings under India's "Ek Pedh Maa Ke Naam" and Maldives' five million tree pledge.

(iii) President Muizzu praised India-Maldives relations as "resilient and deep-rooted," and Modi reaffirmed Maldives' special place in India's 'Neighbourhood First' and Vision MAHASAGAR policies. The stamp release was described as a cultural gesture connected to shared maritime heritage and mutual trust.

## 2. USA to Exit UNESCO by December 2026 Citing 'Divisive Cultural Agendas', Says President Donald Trump.



In a major geopolitical development, the United States of America (USA) has decided to exit the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for the third time in history. The announcement was made by U.S. President Donald Trump in July 2025, with the withdrawal set to take effect from December 31, 2026. The move has reignited global concerns over ideological divides and the future of international cooperation in education and culture.

- The United States government cited significant ideological differences with UNESCO's policies and programs, specifically labeling them as "divisive social and cultural causes." The administration emphasized that these programs no longer align with U.S. national interests and sovereignty.

- The official reasons for withdrawal include objections to UNESCO's frameworks that promote Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), anti-racism curriculum, and gender-focused initiatives like "Transforming MEN'talities."

- Additionally, the U.S. opposed UNESCO's support for UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to climate change, LGBTQ+ inclusion, cultural diversity, and global equity frameworks.

### Key Points:-

(i) This will be the third instance of the USA pulling out of UNESCO. The first occurred in 1984 under President Ronald Reagan due to similar ideological disputes. After nearly two decades, the country rejoined in 2003 during the presidency of George W. Bush. The second withdrawal came in 2017 when President Trump cited anti-Israel bias and Palestine's inclusion as a full member. The U.S. rejoined again under President Joe Biden in July 2023.

(ii) The impact of the U.S. exit will be significant as it currently contributes over 8% of UNESCO's total budget. The financial shortfall may hinder UNESCO's educational and cultural programs worldwide. In addition, the withdrawal would reduce U.S. influence in shaping global standards in education, cultural heritage, and technology.

(iii) This announcement follows a similar move in January 2025 when the U.S. also withdrew from the World Health Organization (WHO), underscoring its ongoing disengagement from multilateral global bodies.



On 25 July 2025, Federal Bank introduced a groundbreaking innovation in digital payments by launching India's first biometric authentication feature for e-commerce card transactions. The initiative aims to enhance transaction security and reduce fraud in online shopping, aligning with India's push for secure digital transformation.

- **Federal Bank has become the first Indian bank to implement biometric authentication for card-not-present (CNP) transactions in the e-commerce space.**

- **This system utilizes fingerprint biometrics to authorize online card payments, offering a frictionless and secure alternative to traditional OTP (One-Time Password)-based systems.**

- **The biometric authentication system is powered by cutting-edge infrastructure compliant with the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) data protection guidelines. It leverages the Aadhaar-based fingerprint system and ensures end-to-end encryption during card verification to prevent data theft and unauthorized access during digital transactions.**

### Key Points:-

(i) The bank initially rolled out this feature for select users across major metro cities and aims to expand its availability nationwide

## BANKING & FINANCE

### 1. Federal Bank Introduces India's First Biometric Verification System for Online Card Payments.

within the next quarter. Customers can enable this feature via the FedMobile app or through their nearest branch, integrating seamlessly with Visa and Mastercard networks.

(ii) The biometric e-commerce security project is part of Federal Bank's broader digital transformation strategy. It aligns with the government's "Digital India" mission and supports the national fintech ecosystem by pioneering secure, user-friendly innovations that improve customer trust and financial inclusion.

## 2. RBI Withdraws Corrective Action Plan on Religare Finvest and Cancels Licence of Karwar Urban Co-op Bank in Major July 2025 Decisions.



On July 23, 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) made two major regulatory announcements — first, it officially withdrew the Corrective Action Plan (CAP) imposed on Religare Finvest Limited (RFL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Religare Enterprises Limited (REL), and second, it cancelled the banking licence of The Karwar Urban Co-operative Bank (UCB), Karnataka, due to non-compliance with capital and viability norms.

- The CAP on Religare Finvest Limited was originally imposed on January 18, 2018, due to regulatory irregularities detected during an inspection as of March 31, 2017. These included large-scale fund misappropriations and non-compliance with financial norms.

- At the time, the NBFC had accumulated losses amounting to ₹2,270 crore till March 2022. Despite the recent withdrawal of the CAP, RFL is still obligated to adhere to all applicable prudential regulations.

- Significant recovery measures were undertaken by the NBFC, including a one-time settlement with 16 lenders in March 2023. Through this settlement, RFL repaid nearly ₹9,000 crore to the banking system, which played a pivotal role in RBI's decision to remove the CAP restrictions. This financial restructuring marked a turning point in the company's compliance track record.

### Key Points:-

(i) In early 2025, the Burman family acquired a controlling stake in Religare Enterprises Limited (REL) through an open offer. This strategic acquisition effectively made the Burmans the promoters of REL, giving them a 25.16% shareholding. Their entry is expected to stabilize RFL's operations and governance structure in the long term.

(ii) In a separate development, the RBI cancelled the banking licence of The Karwar Urban Co-operative Bank (UCB), Karnataka, due to insufficient capital adequacy and weak earning prospects. This action was taken in accordance with Section 11(1) and Section 22(3)(d) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949. The cancellation took effect on July 23, 2025, and the bank is prohibited from conducting any further banking



activities.

(iii) The RBI has requested the Registrar of Cooperative Societies (RoCS), Karnataka, to initiate the winding-up process and appoint a liquidator. Depositors of Karwar UCB are eligible for insurance compensation up to ₹5 lakh under the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC). This move ensures financial protection for small depositors and upholds the integrity of the cooperative banking sector.

## APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

### 1. Prof. Uma Kanjilal Appointed as IGNOU's First Woman Vice-Chancellor in Historic First.



The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) made history on 25 July 2025 with the appointment of Professor Uma Kanjilal as its first-ever woman Vice-Chancellor. Her elevation to this prestigious position marks a milestone in the university's nearly four-decade legacy and reflects recognition of her deep-rooted experience in open and digital education.

- Professor Kanjilal brings over 36 years of dedicated service within the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system. She joined IGNOU administration in 1989, later advancing through

roles such as Pro Vice-Chancellor (Mar 2021–Jul 2024) and Acting VC from 25 July 2024, before receiving this full-time appointment.

- Recognized nationally for her contributions to digital education, she has led numerous academic and administrative bodies at IGNOU, including the Centre for Online Education, the Inter-University Consortium for Technology-Enabled Flexible Education, and the Advanced Centre for Informatics and Innovative Learning. She also holds the status of Professor of Library and Information Science since 2003.

### Key Points:-

(i) At the national level, she serves as the National Coordinator for the Ministry of Education's flagship initiatives, SWAYAM and SWAYAM PRABHA, and has steered major projects such as the National Virtual Library of India and NMEICT Phase-III at IGNOU.

(ii) Her international contributions include consultancy for UNRWA, the Commonwealth of Learning, and a Fulbright Fellowship at the University of Illinois. She has also received accolades such as the Manthan Award for e-Education, an Australia–India Council Grant, and a DANIDA Fellowship.

(iii) Her appointment as IGNOU's Vice-Chancellor is expected to drive further modernization of one of the world's largest universities, strengthening digital infrastructure, expanding access to flexible education, and reinforcing IGNOU's mission to deliver high-quality learning across India.

### 2. Nirmal Minda Appointed as Senior Vice President of ASSOCHAM for FY2025–26.



In July 2025, Nirmal K. Minda, Executive Chairman of Uno Minda Limited, was appointed as the Senior Vice President of the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) for the financial year 2025–26.

- The appointment was announced during the First Managing Committee Meeting of ASSOCHAM held in Mumbai, Maharashtra. He will serve alongside the upcoming President, Sanjay Nayar, Founder and Chairman of Sorin Investment Fund.

- Nirmal Minda will play a key leadership role at ASSOCHAM, one of India's oldest apex industry chambers. His appointment reflects his decades-long contribution to India's manufacturing and auto component industry. As Senior Vice President, he will support policy advocacy, industrial dialogue, and strategic initiatives relevant to economic and business development in India.

- Nirmal Minda is a veteran industrialist with over 50 years of experience in the automotive component sector. He currently heads Uno Minda (formerly Minda Industries), which manufactures a wide array of products for two-wheelers and four-wheelers. Under his leadership, the company has grown into a global player, operating 73 facilities across the world

with products such as switching systems, lighting systems, acoustic systems, and more.

#### Key Points:-

(i) Nirmal Minda has previously served as the President of the Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA) for three consecutive years. His global leadership has helped shape policies and competitiveness in the auto components sector, especially in innovation and export capability. His work has been instrumental in building India's reputation as a global hub for quality automotive parts.

(ii) Over the years, Nirmal Minda has received several notable awards. These include the EY Entrepreneur of the Year (Manufacturing) award in 2019, the Haryana Ratna Award for his contribution to industry, and the prestigious Hurun Self-made Entrepreneur Award in 2023.

(iii) Amitabh Chaudhry, Managing Director and CEO of Axis Bank, has also been appointed as Vice-President (VP) of ASSOCHAM for FY2025–26. His appointment is subject to final approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

### 3. Rwandan President Paul Kagame Appoints Economist Justin Nsengiyumva as New Prime Minister.



On 24 July 2025, Rwandan President Paul Kagame appointed Dr. Justin Nsengiyumva as Rwanda's new Prime Minister, replacing Édouard Ngirente, who had held the position since 2017. The appointment was announced publicly via Rwanda's government spokesperson's office on social media platform X (formerly Twitter).

- **Justin Nsengiyumva, who previously served as Deputy Governor of the National Bank of Rwanda since February 2025, holds a PhD in Economics from the University of Leicester and brings over two decades of experience in economic policy and public administration.**

- **Before joining the central bank, Nsengiyumva held senior government roles in Rwanda's ministries—he served as Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, playing a key role in the country's English-language transition in schools and economic policy reforms.**

- **One notable aspect of his biography is a past corruption conviction during his tenure as permanent secretary in 2008. He was later pardoned by President Kagame in March 2023 alongside over 380 other individuals, according to state media.**

### Key Points:-

(i) Ngirente, who served as Prime Minister since 2017, expressed his gratitude on X, calling his tenure "deeply enriching." Under Rwanda's constitutional provisions, appointing a new Prime Minister triggers the resignation of the entire cabinet, mandating the formation of a new cabinet within 15 days.

(ii) Shortly after his appointment, Nsengiyumva met with President Kagame on 23 July 2025 at Village Urugwiro to discuss national priorities, including Rwanda's National Strategy for Transformation Phase 2 (NST2), development objectives, and governance reforms for the coming term.

(iii) Nsengiyumva inherits NST2, Rwanda's five-year socioeconomic blueprint (2024–2029), which aims to raise GDP per capita from USD 1,040 (2023) to USD 1,369, expand private investment, create 1.25 million jobs, boost agricultural output, and ensure universal access to clean water, health, and education services.

## SPORTS

### 1. India Secures First-Ever Gold in Archery at FISU World University Games 2025.





India achieved its first gold medal at the FISU World University Games 2025 when archers Parneet Kaur and Kushal Dalal clinched the mixed compound team title on 26 July 2025 in Essen, Germany. Their victory marked a historic moment for Indian archery at university-level international competition.

- In a thrilling final, Parneet and Kushal edged out South Korea with a score of 157–154, staging a dramatic comeback after trailing at halftime. Their composed performance, including a series of perfect “10s” and “X” shots in the latter stages, underscored their precision under pressure.

- This gold medal contributed to India’s total of three medals in archery that day. Alongside the mixed team gold, India claimed silver in the men’s compound team and bronze in the women’s compound team event, showcasing depth in the discipline.

### Key Points:-

(i) The FISU World University Games 2025, held from 16 to 27 July in the Rhine-Ruhr region across cities like Essen, featured over 300 Indian athletes competing in 18 sports. India finished 31st in the medal table, earning one gold and one bronze.

(ii) India’s archery performance in Essen reflects the rising stature of national university-level sport. Programs like Khelo India and focused grassroots coaching have nurtured the talents of archers like Parneet and Kushal, elevating India’s competitive presence on the global university stage.

## 2. Indian Olympic Association Ratifies Raghuram Iyer’s Appointment as CEO, Sets Up Athletes Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel.



On July 24, 2025, the Executive Council (EC) of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) officially ratified Raghuram Iyer’s appointment as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and simultaneously established the Athletes Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel (AADDP). These decisions aim to improve governance transparency and combat doping amid growing scrutiny from global sports authorities.

- Raghuram Iyer’s appointment comes after growing criticism from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) over IOA’s governance and compliance with international anti-doping norms. The decision strengthens the IOA’s internal structure and aims to address global concerns regarding India’s sporting administration.

- Raghuram Iyer brings a diverse leadership background, having served in executive roles at Sony Pictures Entertainment and Discovery Channel. In 2007, he joined Indian Premier League (IPL) franchise Rajasthan Royals as CEO and later worked with multiple sports franchises, including Rising Pune Supergiants (RPSG), Lucknow Super Giants (LSG), ATK Mohun Bagan, and UTT’s RPSG Mavericks.

- Iyer was unanimously selected in 2024 by a high-profile nomination committee comprising

P.T. Usha (President, IOA), Mary Kom (Athletes' Commission Chair), and Nita Ambani (IOC member from India). His appointment is seen as a step toward modernizing IOA's administrative leadership.

#### Key Points:-

(i) The newly formed Athletes Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel (AADDP) will address rising concerns over doping violations. The panel will be led by former tennis player Rohit Rajpal and includes notable members such as Dr. PSM Chandran (sports medicine), Aparna Popat (badminton), Dr. Anindya Chowdhury (legal expert), Maj. Gen. Dilawar Singh (sports governance), and Dr. Sudhir K. Jain (health sciences).

(ii) AADDP's core role is to ensure transparent and fair adjudication of doping-related cases and raise awareness among athletes, coaches, and stakeholders. The panel aligns with global anti-doping guidelines laid out by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and India's National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA).

(iii) India's anti-doping efforts remain under close watch, especially after recording a 3.8% doping positivity rate in 2023. The establishment of AADDP reflects IOA's commitment to maintaining clean sport and improving India's global sporting reputation.

## AWARDS

**1. ISRO Chief Dr. V. Narayanan Honoured with G.P. Birla Memorial Award for Contributions to India's Space Programme.**



On 25 July 2025, Dr. V. Narayanan, Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Secretary of the Department of Space, was conferred the esteemed G.P. Birla Memorial Award in Hyderabad. Presented by Nirmala Birla, Chairperson of the G.P. Birla Archaeological, Astronomical & Scientific Research Institute, the award honours his leadership in advancing India's cryogenic and space missions.

- Dr. Narayanan assumed office as ISRO Chairman and Secretary, Department of Space on 13 January 2025, succeeding Dr. S. Somanath. A veteran propulsion specialist with over four decades at ISRO, his expertise lies in cryogenic engineering and rocket technology.

- An alumnus of IIT Kharagpur, Dr. Narayanan holds an M.Tech in Cryogenic Engineering and a Ph.D. in Aerospace Engineering. Earlier, he served as Director of ISRO's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC) from 2018 to 2025, where he led the development of critical propulsion systems for missions like Chandrayaan-2, Chandrayaan-3, and Gaganyaan.

#### Key Points:-

(i) The G.P. Birla Memorial Award, formerly known as the Lifetime Achievement Award,

is reserved for eminent scientists and engineers whose work has significantly impacted science and technology. Past recipients include notable figures such as Nobel laureate Dr. Venkataraman Ramakrishnan, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, and former ISRO Chairman Dr. K. Kasturirangan.

(ii) During the ceremony in Hyderabad, Dr. Narayanan delivered the G.P. Birla Memorial Lecture on Indian Space Programme. He outlined India's vision to nearly triple the number of satellites in orbit—from around 55 to over 150—within three years, and reaffirmed ISRO's global ambitions in space technology.

(iii) This recognition underscores India's growing prowess in space exploration and innovation. Under Dr. Narayanan's leadership, ISRO plans to execute missions like NASA-ISRO NISAR, the completion of Gaganyaan's test flights, and pave the way for India's first space station module by 2028 and a full-fledged station by 2035.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### 1. World Mangrove Day Observed on 26 July 2025.



World Mangrove Day—officially known as the International Day for the Conservation of the

Mangrove Ecosystem—is celebrated on 26 July each year. Established by UNESCO in 2015, the day was first observed in July 2016 to raise global awareness about the ecological importance of mangrove forests.

- On 6 November 2015, during UNESCO's 38th General Conference in Paris, the International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem was formally approved through resolution 38 C/66 following a request from Ecuador.

- The date, 26 July, commemorates the late Greenpeace activist Hayhow Daniel Nanoto, who died on that day in 1998 while protesting for the restoration of mangrove wetlands in Ecuador.

- Mangrove forests are rare coastal ecosystems located in tropical and subtropical regions where land meets sea. Despite covering less than 1% of global tropical forests, they serve as biodiversity hotspots, protect shorelines from storms and erosion, and store up to five times more carbon than many land-based ecosystems, playing a critical role in the fight against climate change.

### Key Points:-

(i) Over the past four decades, mangrove coverage globally has declined by about 50%, with certain countries losing over 40% between 1980 and 2005. Accelerated threats such as coastal development, shrimp farming, pollution, and climate change have intensified their destruction. The day highlights the urgent need for conservation and sustainable management of mangrove ecosystems.

(ii) While UNESCO spearheads global awareness and protection, national initiatives also play a major role. For



instance, under India's MISHTI (Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes) scheme, Gujarat led mangrove cultivation in 2025, restoring 19,520 hectares, including 6,000 hectares in Kutch district. India's total mangrove cover spans approximately 4,992 sq km, with the Sundarbans region among the world's densest mangrove habitats.

## 2. World Drowning Prevention Day 2025 Observed Globally on 25 July.



On July 25, 2025, the United Nations (UN) observed the 5th edition of World Drowning Prevention Day across the globe to raise awareness about the alarming impact of drowning, promote safety measures, support life-saving initiatives, and catalyze urgent global action to prevent water-related fatalities.

- The day serves as a call for collective global effort toward reducing drowning deaths through better water safety education, training in life-saving skills, and stronger policies.
- The theme for 2025 was "Your Story Can Save a Life.", emphasizing the importance of survivor stories, safety awareness, and shared experiences in saving lives.

- World Drowning Prevention Day was first observed on 25 July 2021, after the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted a resolution on 28 April 2021 (A/RES/75/273), officially recognizing the urgent need to address the global public health challenge posed by drowning.

### Key Points:-

- The 2025 observance received wide participation from governments, NGOs, and global partners. The initiative aligns with the resolution passed during the 76th World Health Assembly in May 2023, titled "Accelerating Action on Global Drowning Prevention." It calls for stronger and continuous global partnerships for water safety and public health.
- The resolution was co-sponsored by Bangladesh and Ireland, gaining support from over 72 UN Member States, urging stakeholders to prioritize drowning prevention and escalate action plans through 2029.
- This collaboration continues to strengthen global efforts to prevent avoidable deaths and enhance safety measures in vulnerable communities worldwide.

## 3. World In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) Day 2025 Observed Globally on 25 July.



World In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) Day, also known as World Embryologist Day, was observed globally on 25 July 2025 to raise awareness about IVF technology and its role in treating infertility through Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART). The day celebrates a landmark event in medical history that transformed reproductive science.

- The day commemorates the birth of Louise Brown, who became the world's first baby conceived through IVF technology. Born on 25 July 1978 in the United Kingdom, her birth marked the success of years of medical experimentation aimed at helping infertile couples.

#### Key Points:-

- (i) The first successful IVF procedure was accomplished in the UK due to the pioneering efforts of Dr. Patrick Christopher Steptoe, Dr. Robert Geoffrey Edwards, and Jean Marian Purdy.
- (ii) Their coordinated work at Dr. Kershaw's Cottage Hospital helped Leslie Brown conceive her daughter Louise after more than 100 unsuccessful embryo transfer attempts.
- (iii) In recognition of these contributions, Dr.

Robert Edwards, known as the "Father of IVF," was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 2010 for his groundbreaking work in the development of In Vitro Fertilization. Today, IVF has given hope to millions of families worldwide.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### 1. DRDO Successfully Conducts Flight Trials of Upgraded UAV-Launched Missile ULPGM-V3 in Andhra Pradesh.



In July 2025, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully carried out flight trials of the upgraded Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV)-Launched Precision Guided Missile (ULPGM)-V3 at the National Open Air Range (NOAR) located in Kurnool district, Andhra Pradesh (AP). This advanced missile is a next-generation variant designed for precision strikes with low collateral damage.

- The ULPGM-V3 is a fire-and-forget, precision-guided air-to-surface missile engineered for launch from UAV platforms. It is specifically built to neutralize both static and moving enemy targets while minimizing operational risk to personnel.

- This variant builds upon the previous ULPGM-V2, originally developed by DRDO's Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory (TBRL), and features improved accuracy, targeting, and control systems.

- The development of the ULPGM-V3 involved a strong partnership between DRDO and Indian defence industry players, including Development-cum-Production Partners (DcPPs), MSMEs, and indigenous start-ups. The missile was manufactured by Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) in collaboration with Adani Defence Systems, showcasing the success of public-private defence initiatives in India.

#### Key Points:-

(i) Technically, the ULPGM-V3 weighs 12.5 kg and uses a dual-thrust solid propulsion system, capable of targeting enemies up to 4 km during daylight and 2.5 km at night. It uses advanced Imaging Infrared (IIR) seeker technology to ensure accurate guidance even in low-light conditions and features tandem warheads optimized to defeat armour with Explosive Reactive Armour (ERA).

(ii) The missile's upgraded features include two-way communication links, enhanced imaging systems, and AI-enabled decision support to allow real-time changes in mission parameters.

(iii) ULPGM-V3 is compatible with multiple UAV platforms and provides India's defence forces with a versatile and indigenous solution for precision strike missions across diverse terrains and threat environments.



In July 2025, Turkey unveiled its first indigenously developed hypersonic ballistic missile, named Tayfun Block-4, during the 17th International Defence Industry Fair (IDF 2025) held in Istanbul. This marks Turkey's strategic entry into the global hypersonic missile domain, aiming to boost its long-range strike capabilities and strengthen its military deterrence.

- With the launch of Tayfun Block-4, Turkey has become the second NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) member, after the United States, to successfully develop an indigenous hypersonic missile. The launch positions Turkey alongside global hypersonic powers such as the USA, Russia, and China, further enhancing its defence posture.

- The Tayfun Block-4 missile has been developed by Roketsan, a prominent Turkish defense contractor. It is a long-range, hypersonic air-to-surface missile designed to evade modern air defense systems. It can achieve speeds exceeding Mach 5, making it a formidable tool for precision strikes on high-value strategic targets.

- The missile incorporates an advanced guidance system that blends Global Positioning System (GPS) and Global Navigation Satellite System (GLONASS) with Inertial Navigation

## 2. Turkey Unveils First Indigenous Hypersonic Ballistic Missile "Tayfun Block-4" at IDEF 2025.



**System (INS).** This integration provides high-accuracy targeting, with a maximum error constant of just 5 meters, making it highly reliable for tactical and strategic operations.

**Key Points:-**

(i) In terms of specifications, Tayfun Block-4 measures 6.5 meters in length, has a diameter of 938 mm, and weighs 2,300 kilograms. It has a maximum range of 800 kilometers and uses a multi-purpose warhead. It is launched using Mobile Transporter Erector Launchers (MTEL), allowing greater deployment flexibility across varied terrain.

(ii) The unveiling of Tayfun Block-4 reflects Turkey's evolving military-industrial base and strategic ambitions. The missile's speed, accuracy, and range establish a new benchmark in Turkey's defense technology and signal its emergence as a serious player in next-generation weapons development.

## Static GK

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<b>Maldives</b>	President: Mohamed Muizzu	Capital: Malé
<b>Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM)</b>	Headquarters : New Delhi	Established : 1920
<b>DRDO</b>	Chairman : Dr. Samir Venkatapati Kamat	Headquarters: New Delhi
<b>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)</b>	Director-General (DG) Audrey Azoulay	Headquarters : Paris, France
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