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NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1. Ministry of Jal Shakti releases Sujalam Bharat DPI Policy.

[24 AUG 2026] -



Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation under Ministry of Jal Shakti released the policy on Data Sharing, Interoperability and Stakeholder Access under Sujalam Bharat Digital Public Infrastructure on 20 August 2026. The policy establishes a secure and accountable framework for sharing rural drinking-water data among governments and authorised stakeholders.

Key Highlights:

- DDWS released Sujalam Bharat DPI Policy on 20 August 2026.
- The policy covers data sharing, interoperability and stakeholder access.
- It seeks a secure, federated and accountable framework for rural drinking-water data sharing.
- States, Union Territories, Gram Panchayats and authorised stakeholders can use the framework.
- The policy uses common identifiers, standardised metadata and interoperable registries.
- It provides tiered data access for purpose-limited use and protection of sensitive infrastructure data.
- It includes privacy, personal-data protection and cybersecurity provisions.
- It enables AI analytics and Digital Twins for water utility governance.
- It supports predictive maintenance, geospatial planning and decision-support systems.

Additional Information:

- Ministry of Jal Shakti was created in May 2019.
- It was formed by merging Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation with Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation.
- It implements Jal Jeevan Mission and Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen.
- Ministry of Jal Shakti headquarters is in New Delhi.

- Prominent Indian DPI examples are Aadhaar, UPI and DigiLocker.

2. PM Modi chairs 3rd high-level meeting with Secretaries.

[24 AUG 2026] -



Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired third high-level meeting with Secretaries to Government of India on 20 August 2026. The meeting reviewed future action agendas for infrastructure, connectivity, security, external affairs and governance, with focus on data, technology, maritime development and defence innovation.

Key Highlights:

- PM Narendra Modi chaired third high-level meeting with Government of India Secretaries.
- Deliberations covered Infrastructure and Connectivity, Security, External Affairs and Governance.
- Maritime sector focus was shifting from port development to port-led development.
- Meeting reviewed objectives after shipbuilding sector received Infrastructure Status.
- It called for maritime infrastructure integration with manufacturing and export-oriented units.
- It promoted AI combined with human intervention and judgment.
- Data was emphasised as national asset and strategic future resource.
- Interoperability was stressed to remove departmental silos in data management.
- Defence sector focus included global competitiveness, research, innovation and specialised courses.

Additional Information:

- Cabinet Secretary is head of Cabinet Secretariat and highest-ranking civil servant in India.
- Cabinet Secretary is ex-officio Chairman of Civil Services Board.
- Cabinet Secretariat functions directly under charge of Prime Minister.

- Purchasing Managers Index above 50 indicates expansion, while below 50 indicates contraction.
- Asian Development Bank was established in 1966 and is headquartered in Mandaluyong, Philippines.

3. Cabinet approves permanent High Court bench in Ladakh.

[24 AUG 2026] -



Union Cabinet approved establishment of permanent bench of High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh in Ladakh on 21 August 2026. The bench will improve access to justice for people in remote areas, reduce travel and time needed for legal services and strengthen constitutional safeguards in the Union Territory.

Key Highlights:

- Union Cabinet approved permanent bench of High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh in Ladakh.
- The decision aims to improve access to justice in remote areas.
- It will reduce travel and time required to access legal services.
- The bench will facilitate constitutional safeguards for local population.
- Decision supports all-round development and legal empowerment of Ladakh.

Additional Information:

- High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh was originally established in 1928 by Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir.
- It is common High Court for Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.
- The High Court was renamed from High Court of Jammu and Kashmir in July 2021.
- Ladakh became a Union Territory on 31 October 2019 under Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019.
- Ladakh is Union Territory without a legislature and is administered by Lieutenant Governor.

4. NCW launches Yashoda AI Initiative in Jalandhar.

[24 AUG 2026] -



National Commission for Women Chairperson Vijaya Rahatkar launched the Yashoda AI Initiative in Jalandhar, Punjab on 18 August 2026. The initiative is an AI literacy programme designed to strengthen digital empowerment, digital inclusion and participation of women in emerging technologies.

Key Highlights:

- NCW launched Yashoda AI Initiative in Jalandhar, Punjab.
- NCW Chairperson Vijaya Rahatkar launched the initiative.
- Yashoda AI is an Artificial Intelligence literacy programme.
- It aims to promote digital empowerment of women.
- It seeks to increase women participation in emerging technologies.
- The initiative provides training in cyber security, digital privacy and safe online practices.
- It equips women with tools for modern technology landscape.
- Yashoda AI initiative was originally started by NCW in 2025.
- NCW also launched She Serves programme at a women college to encourage careers in Armed Forces.
- A high-level meeting with Jalandhar district officials reviewed women safety and protection measures.

Additional Information:

- NCW was established as statutory body in January 1992.
- NCW was constituted under National Commission for Women Act, 1990.
- NCW headquarters is in New Delhi.
- Jayanti Patnaik was first Chairperson of NCW.

5. UNHCR, SICCI and Ethiraj College partner for refugee inclusion.

[24 AUG 2026] -



UNHCR, Southern India Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Ethiraj College for Women signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 21 August 2026 to promote refugee self-reliance and socio-economic inclusion in India. The partnership will particularly support Sri Lankan refugees residing in Tamil Nadu.

Key Highlights:

- UNHCR, SICCI and Ethiraj College signed MoU for refugee inclusion.
- The MoU promotes refugee self-reliance and socio-economic inclusion.
- Collaboration covers education, research and community engagement.
- It focuses specifically on Sri Lankan refugees in Tamil Nadu.
- Department of Social Work at Ethiraj College will be nodal department.
- Activities will be coordinated through SICCI-UNHCR Partnership Forum.
- Key signatories included P Ganapathi, V M Muralidharan and S Uma Gowrie.

Additional Information:

- UNHCR was established in 1950.
- UNHCR headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland.
- UNHCR leads and coordinates global action for protection of refugees.
- SICCI was established in 1909 and is headquartered in Chennai.
- Ethiraj College for Women was founded in 1948 by V L Ethiraj.
- Ethiraj College is located in Chennai and has autonomous status under University of Madras.

6. Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir elected President of Bangladesh.

[24 AUG 2026] -



Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir was elected as the new President of Bangladesh on 20 August 2026. He represents the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and assumed the office of Head of State at the age of 78 years.

Key Highlights:

- Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir was elected President of Bangladesh.
- He represents Bangladesh Nationalist Party.
- He assumed the presidential office at the age of 78 years.
- He was elected after election process concluded in August 2026.
- President of Bangladesh is ceremonial Head of State under parliamentary system.
- Bangabhaban is official residence and workplace of Bangladesh President.
- President is elected by members of National Parliament for five-year term.

Additional Information:

- Capital of Bangladesh is Dhaka.
- Currency of Bangladesh is Bangladeshi Taka.
- Bangladesh shares longest land border with India, around 4,096 km.
- National Parliament of Bangladesh is called Jatiya Sangsad.
- Bangladesh national anthem Amar Sonar Bangla was composed by Rabindranath Tagore.

ECONOMY & BUSINESS

1. CCI approves Prudential equity-stake acquisition in Bharti Life Insurance.

[24 AUG 2026] -



Competition Commission of India approved acquisition of equity shareholding in Bharti Life Insurance Company by Prudential Corporation of India on 19 August 2026. The approval allows Prudential Corporation of India to acquire specified equity stake in the insurance company, subject to applicable regulatory conditions.

Key Highlights:

- CCI approved Prudential Corporation of India equity-share acquisition in Bharti Life Insurance Company.
- Prudential Corporation of India is the acquirer in the transaction.
- Bharti Life Insurance Company is the target entity.
- Transaction involves acquisition of specified equity shareholding.
- Approval was granted by Competition Commission of India.

Additional Information:

- CCI was established under Competition Act, 2002.
- CCI headquarters is in New Delhi.
- CCI functions under Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
- CCI enforces Competition Act and prevents anti-competitive practices.
- IRDAI was established under IRDAI Act, 1999.
- IRDAI headquarters is in Hyderabad.
- IRDAI regulates and licenses insurance and reinsurance industries in India.

2. RIL proposes India first underground coal gasification complex in Andhra Pradesh.

[24 AUG 2026] -



Reliance Industries Limited proposed investment of ₹2.73 lakh crore to develop India first integrated Underground Coal Gasification complex in Andhra Pradesh on 20 August 2026. The project will cover Chintalapudi and Recherla coal blocks in Eluru district and will convert deep coal into synthesis gas through in-situ gasification technology.

Key Highlights:

- RIL proposed ₹2.73 lakh crore investment for underground coal gasification complex.
- It will be India first integrated Underground Coal Gasification complex.
- Project is proposed in Eluru district, Andhra Pradesh.
- It covers Chintalapudi and Recherla coal blocks.
- Phase 1 from 2026-27 includes exploration and pilot phase with ₹3,000 crore outlay.
- Phase 2 from 2028-30 includes development phase with ₹1.20 lakh crore investment.
- Phase 3 from 2030 onwards includes production phase with ₹1.50 lakh crore allocation.
- Total coal reserve is estimated at 3,130.61 million tonnes.
- UCG converts coal located at depth exceeding 600 metres into synthesis gas in-situ.
- Project may generate 3,000-5,000 direct jobs and 20,000-35,000 indirect livelihoods.

Additional Information:

- RIL was founded by Dhirubhai Ambani in 1958 as Reliance Commercial Corporation.
- RIL headquarters is in Mumbai.
- National Coal Gasification Mission is under Ministry of Coal.
- Mission targets gasification of 100 million tonnes of coal by 2030.
- Mission aims to reduce crude-oil import dependence and use stranded deep coal reserves.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

1. Dr Eluri Sreedhar appointed Honorary Advisor to BRICS CCI.

[24 AUG 2026] -



Dr Eluri Sreedhar was appointed Honorary Advisor to BRICS Chamber of Commerce and Industry on 17 August 2026. He will advise the organisation on economic collaboration, strategic partnerships, inclusive development, self-employment and livelihood creation initiatives.

Key Highlights:

- Dr Eluri Sreedhar was appointed Honorary Advisor to BRICS CCI.
- The appointment letter was presented by BRICS CCI Chairman Sameep Shastri.
- He will advise on economic collaboration and strategic partnerships.
- He will support initiatives linked with inclusive development and social empowerment.
- His focus includes sustainable self-employment and livelihood opportunities.
- He will promote entrepreneurship and community empowerment at national and international levels.

Additional Information:

- BRICS CCI was established in 2012.
- BRICS CCI headquarters is in New Delhi.
- It is a non-profit organisation promoting trade, commerce and industry among BRICS countries and emerging economies.
- BRICS refers to Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa along with newer members.
- BRICS CCI functions as parent association of BRICS business network.

2. RBI appoints Somanath Panicker and reappoints Anand Mahindra as directors.

[24 AUG 2026] -



Central Government appointed Somanath Sreedhara Panicker and reappointed Anand Gopal Mahindra as part-time non-official directors on Central Board of Reserve Bank of India on 20 August 2026. Both appointments are for four-year term beginning from 20 August 2026.

Key Highlights:

- Somanath Sreedhara Panicker was appointed part-time non-official director on RBI Central Board.
- Anand Gopal Mahindra was reappointed part-time non-official director on RBI Central Board.
- Both appointments have four-year tenure from 20 August 2026.
- Somanath Panicker is former Chairman of ISRO.

- He led Chandrayaan-3 mission.
- Chandrayaan-3 made India first country to land near lunar south pole.
- India became fourth country to achieve soft landing on Moon through Chandrayaan-3.
- Anand Gopal Mahindra is Chairman of Mahindra Group.
- Mahindra Group operates in logistics, aftermarket, retail and industrial equipment sectors.

Additional Information:

- RBI was established on 1 April 1935 under RBI Act, 1934.
- RBI headquarters is in Mumbai.
- RBI was nationalised on 1 January 1949.

IMPORTANT DAYS

1. World Mosquito Day observed annually on 20 August.

[24 AUG 2026] -



World Mosquito Day is observed annually on 20 August to commemorate the 1897 discovery that female Anopheles mosquitoes transmit malaria. The breakthrough was made by British doctor Sir Ronald Ross during research conducted in Secunderabad, India.

Key Highlights:

- World Mosquito Day is observed each year on 20 August.
- It commemorates discovery that female Anopheles mosquitoes transmit malaria.
- British doctor Sir Ronald Ross made this discovery in 1897.
- The research was conducted in Secunderabad, India.
- Discovery shifted global health focus towards vector-control strategies.
- The day raises awareness about mosquito-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue, Zika and chikungunya.
- Sir Ronald Ross received Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1902.
- It was first Nobel Prize for a medical discovery linked to India.

Additional Information:

- Sir Ronald Ross was born in Almora, British India.
- He was the first British Nobel laureate.
- He identified malaria parasite in gastrointestinal tract of Anopheles mosquito.
- Malaria is caused by Plasmodium parasite.
- Malaria spreads through bite of female Anopheles mosquito.

2. World Senior Citizens Day observed annually on 21 August.

[24 AUG 2026] -



World Senior Citizens Day is observed annually on 21 August to recognise contributions of older adults and raise awareness about their health, well-being and quality of life. The observance was established by United States President Ronald Reagan through Proclamation 5847 in 1988.

Key Highlights:

- World Senior Citizens Day is observed annually on 21 August.
- The day recognises achievements and contributions of senior citizens.
- It raises awareness about health, well-being and quality of life of elderly people.
- US President Ronald Reagan established the observance through Proclamation 5847 on 19 August 1988.
- Proclamation followed House Joint Resolution 138 passed by US Congress.
- First National Senior Citizens Day was observed on 21 August 1988.
- The day began as US observance and later became recognised internationally as World Senior Citizens Day.

Additional Information:

- International Day of Older Persons is observed separately on 1 October.
- International Day of Older Persons was established by United Nations.
- World Senior Citizens Day and International Day of Older Persons are different observances.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. PhonePe integrates PulsePro platform with PM GatiShakti.

[24 AUG 2026] -



PhonePe signed Memorandum of Understanding with Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology on 21 August 2026 to integrate its PulsePro platform with PM GatiShakti framework. The integration will use aggregated and anonymised transaction data to provide hyperlocal market insights for data-driven infrastructure planning.

Key Highlights:

- PhonePe signed MoU with MeitY for PulsePro integration with PM GatiShakti.
- The partnership aims to improve data-driven infrastructure planning.
- PulsePro metrics will be integrated into PM GatiShakti National Master Plan portal.
- The portal is managed with Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics.
- PulsePro transforms aggregated and anonymised transaction data into market signals.
- The platform provides hyperlocal insights across geographies and categories.

Additional Information:

- PM GatiShakti National Master Plan was launched in October 2021.
- It is digital platform for integrated planning and coordinated implementation of connectivity infrastructure projects.
- BISAG-N is autonomous scientific society under MeitY.
- BISAG-N headquarters is in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- PhonePe is Indian digital payments and financial services company headquartered in Bengaluru.

GENERAL & OTHER NEWS

1. Himachal Pradesh bans sale of synthetic analogue paneer.

[24 AUG 2026] -



Himachal Pradesh government prohibited manufacture, storage and sale of non-dairy analogue paneer that is sold as genuine dairy paneer on 21 August 2026. The state became the fifth in India to impose a ban on sale of synthetic or analogue paneer.

Key Highlights:

- Himachal Pradesh banned manufacture, storage and sale of synthetic analogue paneer.
- The ban applies to non-dairy paneer sold as genuine dairy product.
- Himachal Pradesh became fifth Indian state to implement this ban.
- Order was issued under Section 30(2)(a) of Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.
- The Commissioner of Food Safety issued the order.
- Use of vegetable oils or non-dairy fats as substitute for milk fat in products sold as paneer is prohibited.
- Products without proper labels, invoices and traceability records cannot be sold.
- The ban applies to restaurants, hotels, cloud kitchens and caterers.
- The order is effective immediately for one year.
- Products must comply with Food Safety and Standards Labelling and Display Regulations, 2020.

Additional Information:

- FSSAI is statutory body under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- FSSAI was established under Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.
- FSSAI headquarters is in New Delhi.
- Himachal Pradesh attained full statehood on 25 January 1971.
- Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister is Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu.

2. Paul Merchants Finance launches India first dedicated silver-loan product.

[24 AUG 2026] -



Paul Merchants Finance Private Limited launched India first dedicated Loan Against Silver product on 18 August 2026. The company became first NBFC to establish exclusive branches for silver collateral, following RBI directions that recognise gold and silver as formal collateral for lending.

Key Highlights:

- PMFPL launched India first dedicated Loan Against Silver product.
- It is first Indian NBFC with exclusive branches for silver collateral.
- Product follows RBI Lending Against Gold and Silver Collateral Directions, 2025.
- Loans range from ₹2,000 to ₹15 lakh.
- Eligible collateral includes silver jewellery, ornaments and approved silver coins.
- The product targets individuals, proprietors and MSMEs requiring short-term liquidity.
- Operations started in Chandigarh.
- Specialised branches will expand to other locations in phases.
- The silver-loan product joins MSME Loans, Loan Against Property and Loan Against Shares in company secured lending portfolio.

Additional Information:

- PMFPL is a diversified Non-Banking Financial Company.
- It is subsidiary of Paul Merchants Group.
- PMFPL is regulated by RBI for secured-credit services.
- RBI regulates banking and many NBFC activities in India.

3. Paramotor Digital partners with NSDL Payments Bank for co-branded prepaid cards.

[24 AUG 2026] -



Fintech firm Paramotor Digital Technology Limited entered a co-branded partnership with NSDL Payments Bank on 21 August 2026 to launch prepaid cards across India. The partnership will use NSDL Payments Bank infrastructure to offer RBI-compliant payment solutions for consumers and enterprises.

Key Highlights:

- Paramotor Digital partnered with NSDL Payments Bank for prepaid cards.
- The partnership will issue industry-specific co-branded prepaid cards across India.
- Cards will serve enterprises and consumers through various payment networks.
- SpendPro platform supports consumer spend management.
- Yaiyy.shop is focused on digital gifting services.
- RewardOn supports rewards and loyalty platforms.
- Paramotor Digital will use NSDL Payments Bank banking infrastructure for card issuance.
- Payment solutions under partnership will be RBI-compliant and integrated with secure payment networks.

Additional Information:

- NSDL Payments Bank headquarters is in Mumbai.
- NSDL Payments Bank started operations in October 2018.
- It is subsidiary of National Securities Depository Limited.
- Payments Banks are based on Nachiket Mor Committee recommendations.
- Minimum paid-up equity capital for Payments Bank is ₹100 crore.
- Payments Banks cannot undertake lending or issue credit cards.
- Maximum deposit limit per individual customer is ₹2 lakh.

4. RBI approves LIC to raise stake in HDFC Bank up to 9.99 percent.

[24 AUG 2026] -



Reserve Bank of India granted approval to Life Insurance Corporation of India on 19 August 2026 to increase its shareholding in HDFC Bank up to 9.99 percent of paid-up share capital or voting rights. LIC held 4.11 percent stake in HDFC Bank as on 14 August 2026.

Key Highlights:

- RBI approved LIC to increase its HDFC Bank stake to maximum 9.99 percent.
- Approval applies to paid-up share capital or voting rights of HDFC Bank.
- LIC current stake was 4.11 percent as of 14 August 2026.
- Acquisition must follow RBI Master Directions for prior approval of share acquisition in private banks.
- LIC must comply with SEBI Substantial Acquisition of Shares and Takeovers Regulations.
- Stake increase aims to strengthen LIC investment exposure in Financial Services sector.

Additional Information:

- LIC was established on 1 September 1956 under LIC Act.
- LIC headquarters is in Mumbai.
- LIC is largest state-owned insurance and investment corporation in India.
- HDFC Bank was incorporated in August 1994.
- HDFC Bank headquarters is in Mumbai.
- RBI was established on 1 April 1935 and nationalised on 1 January 1949.

5. Chhattisgarh becomes first inland state to export value-added tilapia.

[24 AUG 2026] -



Chhattisgarh became the first inland state in India to initiate export of value-added tilapia products. The state exported 382 tonnes of value-added tilapia products to the United States under fisheries development efforts linked with Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana.

Key Highlights:

- Chhattisgarh became first inland state to export value-added tilapia products.
- The state exported 382 tonnes of tilapia products to United States.
- Department of Fisheries reviewed Tilapia Cluster progress in Raipur on 20 August 2026.
- India total fish production reached record 198 lakh tonnes in FY 2025-26.
- India seafood exports were valued at ₹73,890.46 crore in FY 2025-26.
- Tilapia exports reached 22,601 MT worth ₹189.73 crore.
- PMMSY investment in Chhattisgarh reached nearly ₹900 crore.
- Government is developing 34 fisheries production and processing clusters nationwide.
- Technology focus includes IoT, Biofloc and Recirculatory Aquaculture Systems.

Additional Information:

- PMMSY was launched in September 2020.
- PMMSY is implemented by Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.
- PMMSY has total investment target of ₹20,050 crore.
- MPEDA was established in 1972 and is headquartered in Kochi.
- ICAR was established on 16 July 1929 and is headquartered in New Delhi.

6. Former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar passes away at 80.

[24 AUG 2026] -



Former three-time Lok Sabha Member of Parliament Sajjan Kumar passed away at age 80 on 20 August 2026 at Safdarjung Hospital in New Delhi. He represented Outer Delhi constituency as a member of Indian National Congress and

had resigned from the party in 2018 after Delhi High Court conviction.

Key Highlights:

- Former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar passed away at age 80.
- He died at Safdarjung Hospital in New Delhi on 20 August 2026.
- He was a three-time Lok Sabha MP from Outer Delhi constituency.
- He represented Indian National Congress.
- Delhi High Court sentenced him to life imprisonment on 17 December 2018 in 1984 anti-Sikh riots case.
- He was convicted for killing of five Sikhs and burning of a gurdwara in Delhi.
- He received another life sentence in February 2025 in separate case involving killing of two Sikh men.
- He resigned from primary membership of Congress in 2018.

Additional Information:

- 1984 anti-Sikh riots followed assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on 31 October 1984.
- Riots took place after Operation Blue Star in June 1984.
- Safdarjung Hospital was established in 1942 as medical base for Allied Forces during World War II.
- Tihar Jail was established in 1957 and is located in Janakpuri, New Delhi.

7. Apollo Hospitals launches Always Open Always Here initiative.

[24 AUG 2026] -



Apollo Hospitals launched Always Open. Always Here. initiative on 21 August 2026 to provide routine and planned healthcare services across all seven days of the week. The initiative extends outpatient consultations, diagnostics, preventive health checks and scheduled procedures to Sundays.

Key Highlights:

- Apollo Hospitals launched Always Open. Always Here. initiative.

- Initiative provides routine and planned healthcare services seven days a week.
- Outpatient consultations will be available on Sundays.
- Diagnostics, preventive health checks and scheduled procedures are extended to Sundays.
- Apollo Prohealth is AI-powered risk prediction and analysis platform for early health intervention.
- Zen Health Program uses advanced assessments to detect early signs of disease before symptoms appear.
- Health of the Nation 2026 Report highlights rising obesity, hypertension and diabetes in India.
- Initiative aims to provide timely care to Indians and international patients from more than 150 countries.

Additional Information:

- Apollo Hospitals Group was founded in 1983 by Dr Prathap C Reddy.
- Apollo established South Asia first Proton Cancer Centre.
- Apollo pioneered preventive healthcare in India through Master Health Check programme.
- Apollo manages one of world busiest solid-organ transplant programmes.