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Current Affairs Today — August 26, 2026

26 August 2026 ·

POLITY

CURATED & WRITTEN BY

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Current Affairs Today — August 26, 2026

26 August 2026 · 11 min read ·

✓ Every fact web-verified against primary sources

A consolidated roundup of all current affairs for August 26, 2026, covering governance, defence, transport, social justice and culture, with Prelims-ready facts for each item.

INDIA POST LAUNCHES UPGRADED DAK SEWA AND DAK MITRA APPS

Union Minister for Communications **Jyotiraditya M. Scindia**, with Minister of State **Dr Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani**, launched upgraded versions of the **Dak Sewa** and **Dak MITRA** applications on **August 24, 2026**, and inaugurated **14 renovated post office buildings**.

Key Data

APP	AUDIENC E	DETAIL
Dak Sewa	Citizens	Doorstep booking of speed post, parcel and money order; available in 23 Indian languages via BHASHINI ; payment by UPI, internet banking and cards
Dak MITRA	Postal staff	Digital delivery tools; operational across 1.4 lakh branch post offices

Since its **June 2025** pilot, Dak Sewa has recorded nearly **10 lakh downloads** and **91.34 lakh** mail and parcel bookings. Dak MITRA, since **May 2025**, has facilitated **2.45 crore** domestic speed post and parcel bookings and supported delivery of **15.09 crore** postal articles.

Background

India Post functions under the **Department of Posts, Ministry of Communications**. It operates the **world's largest postal network**, with about **1.65 lakh post offices**, roughly **90 per cent** of them rural. The governing statute is now the **Post Office Act, 2023**, which repealed the colonial **Indian Post Office Act, 1898**. **PIN codes** were introduced in **1972** by **Shriram Bhikaji Velankar**; a PIN has **six digits** and India has **nine PIN zones**, with zone **9** reserved for the **Army Postal Service**.

UPSC Angle

★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

India Post under the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communications; Post Office Act, 2023 repealed the Indian Post Office Act, 1898

About 1.65 lakh post offices, the largest network in the world; roughly 90 per cent rural

Dak Sewa in 23 languages via BHASHINI; Dak MITRA across 1.4 lakh branch post offices

PIN codes introduced 1972 by Shriram Bhikaji Velankar; six digits, nine zones, zone 9 for the Army Postal Service

India Post Payments Bank launched September 1, 2018, 100 per cent Government of India owned

BHASHINI is a MeitY initiative (2022) under the National Language Translation Mission

ICAT ISSUES INDIA'S FIRST COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATE FOR A 15-METRE MULTI-AXLE SLEEPER BUS

The International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT), Manesar, issued its first compliance certificate for a 15-metre multi-axle sleeper bus on August 26, 2026.

Key Data

The certificate went to **Synaty Automotive Pvt. Ltd.** for its **LaVie+** sleeper coach, handed over by ICAT Director **Saurabh Dalela** to Managing Director **Naresh Yadav**. Configurations: **42 berths** in the fully sleeper variant, or **21 berths plus 42 seats** in the hybrid.

Standards applied were **AIS-119** and **AIS-153**, read with the **Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989** framed under the **Motor Vehicles Act, 1988**.

Background

ICAT is a division of **NATrIP** (National Automotive Testing and R&D Infrastructure Project) under the **Ministry of Heavy Industries**. **AIS**, meaning **Automotive Industry Standards**, are drafted by **ARAI** for the Automotive Industry Standards Committee and notified by **MoRTH**. At **15 metres**, the vehicle exceeds the conventional maximum length for a rigid two-axle bus in India, which is why a multi-axle configuration and a specific compliance pathway were required. This effectively creates a new intercity coach category.

UPSC Angle

★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGE PEDIA

ICAT is at Manesar, Haryana, a division of NATRiP under the Ministry of Heavy Industries

Standards: AIS-119 and AIS-153, with the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988

AIS standards drafted by ARAI for the AISC, notified by MoRTH

Other agencies: ARAI Pune, CIRT Pune, NATRAX Indore (Asia's longest high-speed test track), GARC Chennai

Bharat NCAP launched 2023; BS-VI norms have applied nationwide since April 2020, skipping BS-V

NAVY ANNOUNCES COMMISSIONING OF DIVING SUPPORT VESSEL NIPUN

*The Indian Navy announced on **August 25, 2026** that the second Nistar-class Diving Support Vessel, **Nipun**, will be **commissioned on August 31, 2026** at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai.*

Read This Precisely

The vessel is not yet commissioned. What has occurred, as background, is **delivery to the Navy on July 30, 2026** and the **commissioning announcement on August 25**. Several aggregators render this as an accomplished commissioning, which it is not. Note also that it is correctly **DSV Nipun** until commissioning, becoming **INS Nipun** only thereafter.

Background

ATTRIBUTE	DETAIL
Class	Nistar-class Diving Support Vessels; DSV Nistar is first of class
Builder	Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL), Visakhapatnam, a Ministry of Defence shipyard
Indigenous content	About 75 per cent
Role	Deep-sea saturation diving, submarine rescue, underwater salvage

Nipun serves as the **mother ship for the Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRV)**. India operates two DSRVs, inducted in **2018** and **2019**, based at Mumbai and Visakhapatnam, placing India among a small group of nations with operational submarine rescue capability. The original **INS Nistar** was a Soviet-origin submarine rescue vessel commissioned in **1971**, which participated in the salvage of INS Khukri after the 1971 war.

UPSC Angle

Submarine rescue is the least visible and most consequential naval capability. The losses of Argentina's **ARA San Juan (2017)** and Indonesia's **KRI Nanggala-402 (2021)** showed that fleets can operate submarines for decades without a credible rescue chain. A dedicated mother ship converts a paper DSRV capability into a time-bound one, since submarine rescue is governed by a survivability clock measured in days.

★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

DSV Nipun: second Nistar-class DSV, built by Hindustan Shipyard Limited, Visakhapatnam; about 75 per cent indigenous

Historical background: delivered July 30, 2026; commissioning scheduled August 31, 2026 at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai

India's two DSRVs were inducted in 2018 and 2019

The original INS Nistar was commissioned in 1971

Naval DPSU shipyards: MDL Mumbai, GRSE Kolkata, Goa Shipyard, Cochin Shipyard, HSL Visakhapatnam

SAGAR articulated 2015; MAHASAGAR is its 2025 successor formulation

AK-203 "SHER" COMPLETES FIRING TRIALS AT KORWA

*The fully indigenised **AK-203 "Sher"** rifle completed firing trials at Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited, Korwa, Amethi, on **August 26, 2026**, following the first firing of the 100 per cent indigenous rifle on **August 23**.*

This is a follow-up to the milestone covered in the **August 23 edition**. **Army user trials are scheduled for September 2026 and have not yet taken place.**

★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

IRRPL: joint venture at Korwa, Amethi, Uttar Pradesh; Indian partners AWEIL and MIL, Russian partners Rosoboronexport and Kalashnikov Concern

AK-203 fires 7.62 x 39 mm, replacing the 5.56 x 45 mm INSAS; effective range about 800 m

Contract: 6,01,427 rifles for about ₹5,200 crore, deliveries to December 2030

AWEIL and MIL are among the seven DPSUs formed from the Ordnance Factory Board corporatisation in October 2021

ODISHA LAUNCHES BIDESH SIKHYABRUTI OVERSEAS SCHOLARSHIP

The Government of Odisha launched **Bidesh Sikhyabruti**, an overseas scholarship for **Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe** students, on **August 23, 2026**.

Key Data

PARAMETER	DETAIL
Quantum	Up to ₹25 lakh per annum
Beneficiaries	50 students annually
Institutions	Must rank in the QS World University Rankings Top 200
Family income ceiling	₹12 lakh
Tenure	Once only, for either postgraduate study or a PhD

UPSC Angle

Constitutional basis rests on **Article 46** (Directive Principle on educational and economic interests of SCs, STs and weaker sections), **Articles 15(4) and 15(5)**, and **Article 275(1)** grants-in-aid. The Centre's comparator is the **National Overseas Scholarship** of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

The design question worth raising: the **QS Top-200 filter is self-limiting**, since students from under-resourced schooling rarely clear admission to such institutions without bridging support. Without a preparatory pipeline, the scheme risks under-subscription or capture by the already-advantaged sub-strata within SC and ST, which is the creamy-layer critique now extended by **State of Punjab v. Davinder Singh (2024)** on sub-classification within Scheduled Castes.

★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

Bidesh Sikhyabruti: Odisha; ₹25 lakh per annum; 50 students; QS Top 200; income ceiling ₹12 lakh

Article 46: Directive Principle on SC/ST and weaker sections; Article 338A (NCST) inserted by the 89th Amendment Act, 2003

Odisha has 62 Scheduled Tribes and 13 PVTGs, the highest PVTG count of any State; STs are about 22.85 per cent of its population (Census 2011)

The Fifth Schedule governs Scheduled Areas outside the North-East; the Sixth Schedule applies to Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram

OBSERVANCES ON AUGUST 26, 2026

Thiruvonam, the tenth and main day of **Onam**, Kerala's harvest festival, fell on August 26. Onam begins with **Atham** and runs ten days, commemorating the annual homecoming of the mythical king **Mahabali**, associated with the **Vamana** avatar. Its elements include **Pookalam** (floral carpet), **Onasadya** (feast on a banana leaf), **Vallam Kali** (snake-boat race, of which the **Nehru Trophy Boat Race** at Punnamada Lake, Alappuzha is best known), **Pulikali** and **Thiruvathira Kali**. Onam is Kerala's official State festival.

The coincidence is worth noting: Thiruvonam fell in the same week the State legally became **Keralam**.

Eid Milad-un-Nabi, also called Id-e-Milad or Barawafat, the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad, was observed on August 26 per the Government of India holiday calendar. It falls on **12 Rabi al-Awwal** in the Hijri calendar.

August 26 is also the birth anniversary of **Mother Teresa**, born **Anjezë Gonxhe Bojaxhiu** in **1910** at Skopje. She founded the **Missionaries of Charity** in Calcutta in **1950** and received the **Ramon Magsaysay Award (1962)**, **Padma Shri (1962)**, **Nobel Peace Prize (1979)** and **Bharat Ratna (1980)**. Note for the calendar: the **UN International Day of Charity** is **September 5**, chosen for the anniversary of her death, not her birth.

Looking ahead: August 29 is **National Sports Day**, the birth anniversary of **Major Dhyan Chand** (born 1905), who won Olympic hockey gold in **1928 Amsterdam**, **1932 Los Angeles** and **1936 Berlin**. August 29 is also the **International Day against Nuclear Tests**, designated by the UN in 2009.

IN BRIEF: TODAY'S DEEP-DIVE TOPICS

- **Kerala officially becomes Keralam** as the Centre notifies commencement of the Act.
- **e-Shram completes five years** with 31.89 crore registrations.
- **NITI Aayog's skilling report** finds 8.7 crore youth not in education, employment or training.
- **Mission Samriddh Gaon launched** with pilots in two Madhya Pradesh blocks.
- **ICAR-NBAGR registers 16 new breeds**, taking the national total to 262.
- **The Centre proposes a complete ban on Carbosulfan** through a draft order.
- **SEBI introduces an IT Resilience Index** for market infrastructure institutions.
- **The RBI August Bulletin** records a monsoon swing from deficit to surplus.

PERSONS IN NEWS

Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Union Minister for Rural Development and Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, launched Mission Samriddh Gaon on August 25.

Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, Union Minister for Communications and DoNER, with **Dr Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani**, launched the upgraded Dak apps on August 24.

Kaziah Liz Mejo, a 19-year-old law student from Mavelikkara, Alappuzha district, Kerala, born and raised in Abu Dhabi, was crowned **Miss Universe India 2026** at the Jaipur finale on **August 23**, the first woman from Kerala to win the national title.

UPSC RELEVANCE

GS Paper 1: Indian culture and festivals; Onam and its social significance.

GS Paper 2: E-governance and service delivery through India Post; welfare schemes for SCs and STs; regulatory bodies.

GS Paper 3: Defence [indigenisation](#) and submarine rescue capability; transport certification and road safety.

★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGE PEDIA

GOVERNANCE AND SERVICES:

India Post: about 1.65 lakh offices, world's largest network; Post Office Act, 2023 replaced the 1898 Act

Dak Sewa in 23 languages via BHASHINI; Dak MITRA across 1.4 lakh branch post offices

PIN codes: introduced 1972, six digits, nine zones, zone 9 for the Army Postal Service

DEFENCE:

DSV Nipun, background: delivered July 30, 2026; commissioning scheduled August 31, 2026; about 75 per cent indigenous; built by HSL Visakhapatnam

India's two DSRVs inducted 2018 and 2019; original INS Nistar commissioned 1971

AK-203 "Sher": 7.62 x 39 mm; 6,01,427 rifles for about ₹5,200 crore to December 2030; Army user trials scheduled September 2026

TRANSPORT:

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Certificate issued under AIS-119 and AIS-153 with the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989

NATRAX Indore has Asia's longest high-speed test track; Bharat NCAP launched 2023

SOCIAL JUSTICE:

Bidesh Sikhyabruti: Odisha, ₹25 lakh per annum, 50 students, QS Top 200, income ceiling ₹12 lakh

Article 46 Directive Principle; Article 338A via the 89th Amendment Act, 2003

Odisha: 62 Scheduled Tribes and 13 PVTGs, the highest PVTG count of any State

CULTURE AND OBSERVANCES:

Thiruvonam is the tenth and main day of Onam; Onam commemorates King Mahabali, linked to the Vamana avatar

Nehru Trophy Boat Race is held at Punnamada Lake, Alappuzha

Eid Milad-un-Nabi falls on 12 Rabi al-Awwal

Mother Teresa born August 26, 1910 at Skopje; Missionaries of Charity founded 1950; Nobel Peace Prize 1979; Bharat Ratna 1980

UN International Day of Charity is September 5, marking her death anniversary

National Sports Day is August 29, birth anniversary of Major Dhyan Chand

Sources: PIB, Business Standard, ThePrint

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