

**ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY**

1

World Lake Day: Only the Second Observance

August 27 is **World Lake Day**, and **2026** is only the second annual observance.

- World Lake Day: **August 27**; designated by UNGA resolution **A/RES/79/142** of **December 12, 2024**; marks the World Lake Conference first held in...
- Ramsar Convention signed **1971** at **Ramsar, Iran**; India has Asia's largest network of Ramsar sites
- Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, **2017**; National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems; Amrit Sarovar Mission
- Eutrophication**: nutrient enrichment causing algal blooms and oxygen depletion
- World Water Week** is organised annually by the **Stockholm International Water Institute**



Full article

ECONOMY & DEVELOPMENT

2

Regional Rural Banks Post Record Net Profit of ₹10,176 Crore

At an annual review meeting on **August 25, 2026**, chaired by the **Secretary, Department of Financial Services**, it was reported that consolidated **Regional Rural Bank** net profit reached an all-time high of **₹10,176 crore** in **FY 2025-26**.

- Regional Rural Banks Act, **1976**, following the **Narasimham Working Group (1975)**
- First RRB: **Prathama Bank, October 2, 1975**
- Shareholding: Centre **50 per cent**, sponsor bank **35 per cent**, State Government **15 per cent**
- Regulated by the **RBI**, supervised by **NABARD**
- "One State, One RRB", introduced in 2025, reduced the number to **28**, effective May 1, 2025
- FY 2025-26: net profit **₹10,176 crore** (from ₹6,820 crore); business over **₹13.5 lakh crore**; GNPA **5.3 per cent**, NNPA **2.1 per cent**



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CURRENT AFFAIRS

3

PM Addresses the Khelo India Dialogue

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the "**Khelo India Dialogue**" by video conferencing on **August 27, 2026**, reaching more than **1,500 locations** nationwide, organised by **Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat)** at two colleges in every district, ahead...

- National Sports Day: **August 29**, birth anniversary of **Major Dhyan Chand (b. 1905)**
- Dhyan Chand's Olympic hockey golds: **1928, 1932, 1936**
- Khelo India** launched **2018**; **TOPS** = Target Olympic Podium Scheme; **KIRTI** = Khelo India Rising Talent Identification
- India's Olympic hosting target year: **2036**
- Highest sporting honour: the **Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award**, renamed in **2021**
- Fit India Movement** launched **August 29, 2019**



Full article

SECURITY & DEFENCE

4

Defence Minister Lays Foundation for a ₹472 Crore Tank Overhaul Facility at...

Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** laid the foundation stone on **August 27, 2026** for a **₹472 crore** facility to overhaul **T-72** and **T-90** battle tanks at **Vehicle Factory Jabalpur**, Madhya Pradesh.

- ₹472 crore** facility at Vehicle Factory Jabalpur; **80 tanks** overhauled annually
- Operates under **Armoured Vehicles Nigam Limited (AVNL)**
- AVNL is one of the **seven DPSUs** formed from the Ordnance Factory Board corporatisation in **2021**
- T-72 = Ajeya**; **T-90 = Bhishma**



Full article

SECURITY & DEFENCE

5

Goa Shipyard Hands Over ICGS Ajit to the Indian Coast Guard

Goa Shipyard Limited formally handed over the indigenously designed and built Fast Patrol Vessel **ICGS Ajit** to the Indian Coast Guard on **August 25, 2026**.

- Indian Coast Guard raised **February 1, 1977**, formally constituted under the **Coast Guard Act, 1978**; under the Ministry of Defence; motto...
- Goa Shipyard Limited** is a Ministry of Defence DPSU
- ICGS Ajit: 51.43 m, 330 tonnes, over 27 knots, 1,500 nm endurance, over 65 per cent indigenous
- Adamya-class: eight FPVs, GSL in-house design; **CPP** = controllable pitch propeller



Full article

CURRENT AFFAIRS

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Hindalco Commissions India's First Superfine PPT ATH Plant

Hindalco Industries commissioned a greenfield **Superfine Precipitated Alumina Trihydrate (PPT ATH)** plant at **Belagavi, Karnataka**, announced on **August 27, 2026**, bringing domestic production of this specialty alumina to India for the first...

- ATH = aluminium trihydroxide, $\text{Al}(\text{OH})_3$, a **halogen-free flame retardant** acting by endothermic decomposition
- Plant at **Belagavi, Karnataka**; **30,000 tpa**, expandable to 60,000 tpa
- Hindalco is the metals flagship of the **Aditya Birla Group**
- India is the world's **second-largest aluminium producer**; **Odisha** is the largest bauxite-producing state
- Bayer process** yields alumina from bauxite; **Hall-Heroult process** yields aluminium



Full article

UNDP and HUL Scale Plastics Circular Economy to 50 Cities

UNDP India and **Hindustan Unilever Limited** announced on **August 24, 2026** a new phase of their partnership to support **50,000 Safai Mitras** and strengthen waste-management systems across **50 cities by 2028**.

- **Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016; EPR Guidelines** notified **2022**, with recycling targets and certificates on the CPCB portal
- Ban on identified **single-use plastics** in force since 2022, effective **July 1, 2022**
- **Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016** mandate source segregation
- **NAMASTE** = National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem, jointly MoSJE and MoHUA
- **SBM-Urban 2.0** launched 2021; **UNEA resolution 5/14 (2022)** mandated the global plastics treaty negotiation
- Project Utthaan was launched in **2020**



Full article

Tamil Nadu Scraps the Parandur Airport and Announces Two Welfare Schemes

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister **C. Joseph Vijay** announced in the Assembly on **August 24, 2026** the cancellation of the **Parandur greenfield airport** project, and two welfare schemes.

- Tamil Nadu CM: **C. Joseph Vijay (TVK)**, in office since 2026, sworn in **May 10, 2026**; TVK won **108 of 234** seats
- Parandur: proposed 2022, about ₹27,000 crore, about 5,369 acres, scrapped August 24, 2026
- Annapoorani Super 6: 3 free LPG cylinders a year, income cap ₹2.5 lakh, from Pongal 2027, about 1.30 crore families
- Vetri Payanam expansion from **October 2, 2026**, no income ceiling, about ₹6,000 crore a year
- **RFCTLARR Act, 2013** consent thresholds: **70 per cent PPP, 80 per cent private**
- **Greenfield Airports Policy, 2008** governs new airport site approval



Full article

Scheduled, Not Yet Done

- **IFEP** = Integrated Full Electric Propulsion; **LPD** = Landing Platform Dock, an amphibious ship with a well deck
- Background: India-UK Statement of Intent on electric propulsion signed at **Portsmouth, November 28, 2024**
- Indian Navy's stated long-term goal: a **200-ship fleet by 2047**
- **SAHYOG-HOPTAC** is the ICG-Vietnam Coast Guard joint exercise, under the **2015 MoU**



Full article

UN Racial Discrimination Committee Issues Findings on India; India Rejects Them

UNCERD issued its concluding observations on India on August 25, 2026. India rejected them on August 26 as politically motivated and highly malicious.

- Document symbol: **CERD/C/IND/CO/20-21**, the concluding observations on India's **combined twentieth and twenty-first periodic reports**
- Background: the review sitting was held in Geneva on **August 11 and 12, 2026**, in the Committee's **118th session (August 10 to 25, 2026)**
- ICERD adopted 1965, in force 1969; India signed 1967, ratified 1968
- CERD has 18 independent experts; it is the oldest UN human rights treaty body
- Article 14 is the optional individual-complaints procedure; India has NOT made this declaration
- India is NOT a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or the 1967 Protocol
- Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955; SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989
- Forest Rights Act, 2006; Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 (NHRC)



Full article

Bhote Koshi Flash Flood Destroys Rasuwagadhi Border Post; Indian Pilgrims Among...

A flash flood down the Bhote Koshi gorge on August 26, 2026 destroyed the Rasuwagadhi border post, hydropower plants and the only road to Tibet.

- Flash flood down the Bhote Koshi gorge in Rasuwa district, morning of August 26, 2026
- Toll rose fast and figures diverged: at least **157 killed** per Nepal Police (Bloomberg, August 27), with around **353** carried in later August...
- **288 Indian nationals uncontactable** per the MEA on August 27, which set up a control room and released state-wise details; **21 Indians...**
- Indians affected include **Trishuli-1 hydropower project workers**, Kailash Mansarovar pilgrims, and 32 travellers from West Bengal at Timure
- **TWO Nepali rivers are called Bhote Koshi**. The name means "river from Tibet" and is not unique
- Districts hit: **Rasuwa, Nuwakot, Dhading**, all in the Gandaki basin
- The same corridor flooded in July 2025
- Water rose **9 m at Galchhi** and **7 m at Malekhu** within 30 minutes



Full article

Centre Moves Supreme Court on the OBC Creamy Layer Verdict

The Union government filed a modification application on August 24, 2026 against the Supreme Court's creamy layer ruling, with a hearing set for August 31.

- Case: **Union of India v. Rohith Nathan and Others**
- Union government modification application filed August 24, 2026; hearing listed August 31, 2026
- Operative prayer: allow service allocation of the **958 candidates recommended by the UPSC for CSE-2025**
- Concerns nearly 100 OBC candidates selected through the Civil Services Examination since 2016
- Nine-judge bench; upheld 27 per cent OBC reservation
- Current income ceiling: ₹8 lakh per annum, EXCLUDING salary and agricultural income
- Article 338B: NCBC, constitutional status via the 102nd Amendment, 2018
- Article 342A: specification of SEBCs; 105th Amendment, 2021 restored States' power to identify SEBCs



Full article

India Calls for Community-Led Rangeland Restoration at UNCCD COP17

At UNCCD COP17 in Ulaanbaatar, India urged community-led rangeland restoration recognising pastoralists as custodians, not beneficiaries.

- Adopted 1994, entered into force 1996; secretariat at Bonn, Germany
- Held at Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 2026
- USD 1.3 billion package launched for restoring the world's rangelands
- Land restoration pledge raised at COP14 to **26 million hectares by 2030**
- Roughly **10 million hectares** of permanent pastures and grazing lands
- Land Degradation Neutrality is **SDG target 15.3**
- **2026** is the UN **International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists**
- The Forest Rights Act, 2006 provides for Community Forest Resource rights



Full article

Foundation Stone Laid for the Panchayatan Temple at Ekatma Dham, Omkareshwar

MP CM Mohan Yadav laid the foundation of a Panchayatan-style temple at Ekatma Dham, Omkareshwar, on August 27, 2026, with shila-pujan of 45 stones.

- Foundation stone of the Panchayatan Temple laid at Ekatma Dham, Omkareshwar, Khandwa district, on August 27, 2026 by CM Dr Mohan Yadav
- Shila-pujan of 45 sacred stones; saints of the Shad-darshan Sant Mandal participated
- An Ekatma Yatra announced ahead of Simhastha 2028
- Nagara style; 26-foot-diameter dome over the main mandapa; 100 carved pillars; 121 kalashas
- About 80,000 cubic feet of carved pink sandstone from Bansi Paharpur, Rajasthan; 16-foot jagati platform
- Omkareshwar is on Mandhata island in the Narmada, one of the 12 Jyotirlingas
- Simhastha Kumbh at Ujjain is scheduled for 2028
- Article 27 bars taxes for the promotion of any particular religion; Article 290A provides for the Travancore and Cochin Devaswom Funds



Full article

India to Host the 18th BRICS Summit in New Delhi in September

India announced on August 27, 2026 that the 18th BRICS Summit will be held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi on September 12 and 13, 2026.

- 18th BRICS Summit: Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, September 12 and 13, 2026
- Announced August 27, 2026; the summit itself is scheduled, not yet held
- India's fourth BRICS chairship began in 2026, assumed on January 1, 2026
- 2026 marks twenty years since BRICS was established
- "BRIC" coined in 2001 as an investment thesis
- First BRIC foreign ministers' meeting: 2006, on UN General Assembly sidelines
- Contingent Reserve Arrangement: corpus of USD 100 billion
- India is simultaneously a member of BRICS and the Quad, and participates in I2U2



Full article

NITI Aayog Report Maps the Obstacles to Doing Research and Development in India

A NITI Aayog report on Ease of Doing Research and Development maps obstacles from funding to governance, and urges raising GERD to 2 per cent of GDP.

- Headline recommendation: raise GERD from about **0.64 per cent** to at least **2 per cent of GDP over four to five years**
- The report finds close to **80 per cent of ANRF funding is concentrated in the IITs**
- India: about **0.64 to 0.7 per cent**; Israel and South Korea above 4 per cent; the United States and China above 2 per cent
- Anusandhan National Research Foundation, created by the **ANRF Act, 2023**
- Corpus **₹50,000 crore for 2023-28**, with about **₹36,000 crore** expected from non-government sources
- RDI scheme corpus: **₹1 lakh crore** for private-sector-led research
- **NEP 2020** recommended a National Research Foundation
- **NITI Aayog** was constituted by Cabinet resolution on January 1, 2015; it is neither constitutional nor statutory



Full article

45 Coal-Fired Power Plants Running on Critically Low Fuel Stocks

Government data as of August 25, 2026 shows 45 power plants at critically low coal stocks, up from 31 at end-July, after rain disrupted mining and rail.

- 45 power plants at critically low coal stocks as of August 25, 2026; 40 of them domestic-coal-fired
- Up from 31 plants at end-July
- Aggregate stock 30.95 million tonnes, about 10 days of requirement, down from 12 days in July; a drawdown of about 19 per cent
- "Critical" means stock below 25 per cent of required inventory, or under three days' generation
- SHAKTI: Scheme for Harnessing and Allocating Koyala Transparently in India
- Coal Bearing Areas (Acquisition and Development) Act, 1957
- Section 11, Electricity Act, 2003: power to direct generating companies in extraordinary circumstances
- India met its 50 per cent non-fossil **capacity** target early; capacity share and generation share are different measures



Full article

Bitter Harvest: Sugar Prices, Duty-Free Imports and the Ethanol Alibi

Business Standard argues the duty-free sugar import window is the right corrective to a 16 per cent price rise, and that blaming ethanol is misplaced.

- Retail sugar rose about **16 per cent in the month to 20 August**, from about ₹48.18/kg to about ₹55.70/kg.
- Output about **30.6 million tonnes** against an initial estimate of about **34.3 million tonnes**.
- Corrective: duty-free import window for **1 million tonnes of raw sugar to 31 October**; **stock limits**, for context, of **400 tonnes** for dealers...
- Causes: excess rain and waterlogging in **Maharashtra and Karnataka**; **red rot** and **top-borer** in **Uttar Pradesh**.
- **Red rot** is caused by *Colletotrichum falcatum*.
- **FRP** is fixed by the Centre on **CACP** advice under the **Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966**; **SAP** is declared by some States.
- A separate **Minimum Selling Price for sugar** sets an ex-mill floor.
- The **Ethanol Blended Petrol Programme** uses cane juice, B-heavy molasses, maize and damaged foodgrain; India met **20 per cent blending** ahead...



Full article

Nepal, Rishiganga and Dharali Are Signals of a Himalayan Crisis

Down To Earth argues these disasters share one mechanism: floods triggered by collapsing rock-ice masses rather than rainfall, which warnings miss.

- **GLOF**: Glacial Lake Outburst Flood. **LLOF**: Landslide Lake Outburst Flood. A **rock-ice avalanche** is a direct collapse of mixed rock and ice.
- **Permafrost** is perennially frozen ground; its thaw destabilises high-altitude rock masses.
- **ICIMOD** is headquartered in **Kathmandu** and covers the Hindu Kush Himalaya.
- **NDMA** was created under the **Disaster Management Act, 2005** and is chaired by the **Prime Minister**.
- The **Central Water Commission** handles flood forecasting; the **IMD** handles rainfall forecasting.
- **Two Nepali rivers are called Bhote Koshi**. The one that flooded on 26 August 2026 is the upper **Trishuli** in **Rasuwa**, fed by the **Lhende Khola**...
- **ICIMOD did not classify the 26 August event as a GLOF**, attributing it to a suspected **ice-rock avalanche** into the Lhende Khola; the **USGS**...
- The **Rishiganga** is a tributary of the Dhauliganga in **Chamoli district, Uttarakhand**.



Full article

Inclusive Lending: Alternative Data Can Widen Credit, If Judgement Is Not...

Business Standard argues AI and alternative data can assess thin-file borrowers, but need consent, bias testing and a right to human review.

- **Credit Information Companies (Regulation) Act, 2005** governs credit bureaus in India.
- **Account Aggregator** framework is RBI-regulated and provides consented, revocable, purpose-limited financial data sharing.
- **OCEN**, the Open Credit Enablement Network, is the protocol layer for digital lending.
- **DPDP Act, 2023** governs digital personal data; the **Data Protection Board of India** adjudicates.
- **India Stack** comprises Aadhaar e-KYC, UPI, DigiLocker and the Account Aggregator layer.
- **Priority Sector Lending** and **microfinance group liability** are the earlier instruments of credit expansion.
- ⚠️ **Watch the trap**: An **Account Aggregator does not store or see the data**; it is a consent-and-transfer intermediary between the financial information provider...



Full article

Making India's Food System Climate-Proof Cannot Wait

The Hindu argues India's Green Revolution-era food security architecture was built for production adequacy and must now be retrofitted for climate resilience.

- **MSP** is recommended by the **CACP** and announced by the **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs**; declared for **23 crops**.
- **National Food Security Act, 2013** covers up to **75 per cent of the rural** and **50 per cent of the urban** population.
- **Food Corporation of India** established **1965** under the Food Corporations Act, 1964.
- **2023** was the **International Year of Millets**, proposed by India; millets are designated **Shree Anna**.
- **One Nation One Ration Card** provides portability of PDS entitlements.
- **Decentralised procurement** allows States to procure, store and distribute on the Centre's behalf.
- A **normal monsoon** is 96 to 104 per cent of the Long Period Average.
- ⚠️ **Watch the trap**: **MSP** is announced for **23 crops** but **procurement at scale occurs mainly for rice and wheat**. Answers that treat **MSP coverage** as equivalent to...



Full article

The Boundary Talks Produced a Consensus. The Public Was Not Told What Is in It

The Hindu welcomes the eight-point consensus from the 25th Special Representatives talks but objects that delimitation lacks disclosure of scope.

- **Special Representatives mechanism** created **2003**; first SRs **Brajesh Mishra** and **Dai Bingguo**; India's SR is the **NSA**, China's the **Foreign...**
- **2005 Agreement on Political Parameters and Guiding Principles**: three stages, political parameters, framework, delineation and demarcation...
- **Article VII** safeguards settled populations in border areas.
- 25th round: **Beijing, 25 August 2026**, Doval and Wang Yi; an **eight-point consensus**.
- CBM architecture: **1993** Peace and Tranquillity Agreement; **1996** Military CBMs; **2005** Protocol on Modalities; **2012** WMCC; **2013** Border Defence...
- **LAC** as cited by India: about **3,488 km**, in three sectors, Western, Middle and Eastern.
- The Brahmaputra is the **Yarlung Tsangpo** in Tibet.
- ⚠️ **Watch the trap: Delimitation** and **demarcation** are not synonyms. Delimitation fixes the line by agreement, usually on a map; demarcation physically marks it...



Full article