



POLITY & GOVERNANCE

1

President Creates a Ladakh High Court Bench Using Article 240, a Power That...

On August 27, 2026, the President promulgated Regulation No. 10 of 2026 under Article 240 permitting the J&K and Ladakh High Court to sit in Ladakh, bypassing the usual route for creating a bench.

- **Regulation No. 10 of 2026**, promulgated **27 August 2026**, published in the **Gazette of India Extraordinary** the same day.
- Full name: **Union Territory of Ladakh (Sitting of Bench of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh in Ladakh) Regulation, 2026**.
- Made under **Article 240** read with **Section 58(2), Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019**.
- **Delhi is excluded**, being governed by **Article 239AA**, and **Jammu and Kashmir**, having a legislature, is outside Article 240.
- **Section 58(2)** of that Act provides for a **common High Court** for both.
- The court is styled the **High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh** (renamed in 2021).
- **Article 214**: a High Court for each State. **Article 231**: Parliament may establish a **common High Court for two or more States** (and Union...).
- The **Jaswant Singh Commission (1981)** laid down the working criteria for establishing High Court benches.



Full article

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

2

Mediation Council of India Notified Three Years After the Act That Created It

The Centre notified establishment of the Mediation Council of India on August 27, 2026, under Section 31(1) of the Mediation Act, 2023, the regulator without which the Act's core machinery could not run.

- Dated **27 August 2026**, by the **Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice**.
- Made under **Section 31(1)** of the **Mediation Act, 2023 (Act No. 32 of 2023)**.
- The parent Act received assent in **September 2023**; the Council was constituted roughly **three years** later.
- India signed the **Singapore Convention on Mediation (United Nations Convention on International Settlement Agreements Resulting from...**
- **Arbitration**: a third party hears both sides and delivers a **binding award**. Governed by the **Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996**.
- **Article 39A**: equal justice and free legal aid, a Directive Principle inserted by the **42nd Amendment, 1976**.
- **NALSA**, the National Legal Services Authority, is constituted under the **Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987**; its **Patron-in-Chief is the...**
- The **Mediation Council of India** is a **statutory body** created by the 2023 Act, not a constitutional body and not a court.



Full article

SECURITY & DEFENCE

3

Defence Export Rules Rewritten: OGEL Extended From 41 Countries to Nearly All

On August 28, 2026, the Department of Defence Production consolidated three OGEL procedures into one, raised validity to three years and extended coverage beyond 41 countries to all but sanctioned destinations.

- Notified **28 August 2026** by the **Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence**. Raksha Mantri: **Rajnath Singh**.
- **OGEL validity: 2 years to 3 years**.
- **Country coverage: 41 countries to all countries**, barring negative and sensitive nations and those under **UNSC sanctions or arms embargoes**.
- **Defence production, FY 2025-26: Rs 1.78 lakh crore**, an all-time high.
- **Defence exports, FY 2025-26: Rs 38,424 crore**, a record; target **Rs 50,000 crore by 2029**.
- About **145 Indian firms** export defence products to **more than 80 countries**.
- **Defence Industrial Corridors: two**, in **Uttar Pradesh** and **Tamil Nadu**, announced in the **2018-19 Budget**.
- **iDEX (Innovations for Defence Excellence)** was launched in **2018** to fund defence innovation by startups and MSMEs.



Full article

ECONOMY & DEVELOPMENT

4

Jan Dhan at Twelve: 59.09 Crore Accounts, and the Constraint Shifts From Access...

PMJDY completed twelve years on August 28, 2026, with 59.09 crore accounts and deposits of Rs 3.17 lakh crore, up nearly thirteen times, but an average balance of Rs 5,356 per account.

- Launched **28 August 2014** as the **National Mission on Financial Inclusion**.
- **Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)**: life cover, ages 18-50, annual premium.
- **Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY)**: accident cover, ages 18-70.
- **Atal Pension Yojana (APY)**: guaranteed pension, administered by **PFRDA**.
- Account holders are eligible for **MUDRA** loans under the Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (Shishu, Kishore, Tarun categories).
- PMJJBY and PMSBY together are referred to as the **Jan Suraksha** schemes, launched in **2015**.
- **TRAI, July 2026**: rural teledensity **61.05 per cent**, urban **154.12 per cent**, the weak leg of the JAM chain.
- **DBT** (Direct Benefit Transfer) was launched in **2013**; the **DBT Mission** sits in the **Cabinet Secretariat**.



Full article

CAG and IIT Madras Launch a Certification for Auditing AI and Digital Public...

On August 27, 2026, the CAG launched the Certification on Audit of Digital Systems with IIT Madras, and said it will in time become mandatory for officers auditing digital systems.

- **27 August 2026**, at IIT Madras. CAG **K. Sanjay Murthy**; IIT Madras Director **Prof. V. Kamakoti**.
- **Certification on Audit of Digital Systems (CADS)**, delivered via **SWAYAM Plus**, designed jointly by **CAG, IIT Madras and IITM Pravartak**.
- Aligned with **NEP 2020** and the **National Credit Framework (NCrF)**.
- **Tenure: six years or until the age of 65, whichever is earlier.**
- Governed by the **CAG's (Duties, Powers and Conditions of Service) Act, 1971**.
- The CAG is **ineligible for further office** under the Government of India or of any State after ceasing to hold office.
- CAG reports are examined by the **Public Accounts Committee**, the **Committee on Public Undertakings** and the **Estimates Committee**.
- The **National Credit Framework (NCrF)** enables credit accumulation and transfer across general, vocational and skill education, under **NEP...**



Full article

Mahatma Ayyankali at 163: The Man Who Told Landlords Weeds Would Grow in Their...

August 28, 2026 marks the 163rd birth anniversary of Mahatma Ayyankali, the Pulayar leader whose 1893 cart ride and 1907 agricultural strike forced open Travancore's schools.

- Born **28 August 1863** at **Venganoor**, Travancore; died **18 June 1941**.
- **Villuvandi Yatra, 1893**: drove a bullock cart along a road reserved for caste Hindus at Venganoor, wearing clothing forbidden to his...
- **1904**: built a school for Dalit children himself; it was **destroyed by upper-caste men**.
- Founded the **Sadhu Jana Paripalana Sangham (SJPS)**, the Association for the Protection of the Poor, in **1907**.
- Nominated to the **Sree Moolam Praja Sabha**, the Travancore legislative assembly, in **1912**.
- **Mahatma Gandhi** met him in **1937** at Venganoor.
- **Ayyankali (1863-1941)**: Pulayar; direct action, parallel schooling, labour strike, SJPS.
- **Guruvayur Satyagraha, 1931-32**: led by **K. Kelappan**, with **A.K. Gopalan** as a volunteer captain.



Full article

IIP Grows 6.7 Per Cent With Mining in Contraction, as RBI Data Shows Corporate...

The NSO released July 2026 IIP at 6.7 per cent with mining down 0.9 per cent, a day after RBI data showed listed private corporate sales growth accelerating to 19.4 per cent in Q1 FY27.

- **Overall growth 6.7 per cent**, down from **7.3 per cent** in June 2026. Index **124.8** against **117.0** in July 2025.
- **Current base year: 2022-23 = 100** (revised from 2011-12).
- **Quick Estimates are released on the 28th of every month**, or the next working day, with a **six-week lag**.
- Release title: **"Performance of Private Corporate Business Sector during Q1:2026-27"**, dated **27 August 2026**.
- Sample: **3,247 listed non-government non-financial companies**; manufacturing sub-sample **1,827**.
- **Aggregate sales up 19.4 per cent** y-o-y, from **13.9 per cent** the previous quarter.
- **Interest Coverage Ratio = EBIT / interest expense**. A ratio **below 1** indicates the firm's operating earnings do not cover its interest...
- **IIP base year is 2022-23**, not 2011-12. Using the old base year dates an answer.



Full article

India Presents Snow Leopard Science in Moscow, and Tests Whether IBCA Can Be More...

At a Russia-India roundtable in Moscow on August 26, 2026, India presented advances in snow leopard population estimation, radio telemetry and genetic analysis under an Irbis-IBCA partnership.

- **26 August 2026**, at the **A.N. Severtsov Institute of Ecology and Evolution**, Russian Academy of Sciences, **Moscow**.
- **Panthera uncia**. IUCN Red List: **Vulnerable**, downlisted from **Endangered** in **2017**.
- **Schedule I**, Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. **CITES Appendix I**. Listed on **CMS Appendix I** (Convention on Migratory Species).
- **India's Snow Leopard Population Assessment (SPAI)** is the national assessment framework, coordinated by the **Wildlife Institute of India**,...
- **Project Snow Leopard** was launched in **2009** by MoEFCC.
- **Wildlife Institute of India**, Dehradun, is an **autonomous institution** under MoEFCC, established in **1982**.
- **NTCA (National Tiger Conservation Authority)** is a **statutory body** under the Wild Life (Protection) Act; **WII is not**.
- The snow leopard is **Vulnerable**, not Endangered. It was **downlisted in 2017**, and the older classification is still widely repeated.



Full article

Skilling to Employment: 87 Million Young Indians Outside Work or Study

Business Standard reads a NITI Aayog report showing 87 million youth outside education, employment or training against a contracting unincorporated sector, and argues skilling alone cannot fix a demand problem.

- **NITI Aayog report:** about **87 million** people aged **15-29** are **NEET**, outside education, employment or training; only **8.25 per cent** of graduates...
- **NEET** here means **Not in Education, Employment or Training**, an internationally standard **ILO and OECD** indicator. It is **not** the medical...
- The **Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE)** and its quarterly bulletin cover **non-agricultural unincorporated** enterprises...
- **NITI Aayog** replaced the **Planning Commission** on **1 January 2015**. Chairperson: the **Prime Minister**. It is an **executive body**, created by a...
- The **Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)** is India's official labour force survey, conducted by the **NSO**; it moved to a **monthly** release of key...
- **Skill India Mission** was launched in **2015**; the nodal ministry is the **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship**, created in **2014**.
- **PMKVY** (Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana) is the flagship short-term skilling scheme; **NSDC** is a public-private partnership under the...
- The **National Credit Framework (NCrF)** and **NEP 2020** together seek to make vocational and general education credit-transferable, which is the...



Full article

Off With Offset Training Wheels: The End of India's Defence Offset Era

The Economic Times argues draft DAP 2026 ends defence offsets, and the real question is whether India's private defence industry can keep exporting without the pipeline offsets created.

- **PAC report, tabled July 2026:** as of **December 2025**, about **45 per cent** of offset obligations, roughly **4.5 of 9.9 billion dollars**, remain...
- **2007 to March 2018:** **90 per cent** of offset value was to be discharged through **direct purchases**.
- **First offset contract: 2007** with **Elta Systems (Israel)**; **56 contracts** since, worth **13.2 billion dollars** to Indian industry.
- **Offset thresholds raised nearly 7x in 2016;** **G2G** and **single-vendor deals exempted in 2020;** **no offset contract in the past five years**.
- **Draft DAP 2026** removes offsets and mandates **indigenous content of up to 30 per cent** on global buys.
- **Defence exports: Rs 38,424 crore in 2025-26**, a **56-fold** rise from 2013-14; target **Rs 50,000 crore by 2029**.
- About **145 Indian firms** export defence products to more than **80 countries**.
- **Watch the second trap: DPSU** (Defence Public Sector Undertaking) and **OFB** are not the same thing. The Ordnance Factory Board was **dissolved in 2021** and its units...



Full article

Do States Lose From the New Mining Law? The MMDR Amendment, 2026

A Hindustan Times op-ed argues the MMDR Amendment Act 2026 preserves state mining revenue while ending unpredictable levies, as Karnataka, Kerala and Telangana prepare to challenge it in the Supreme Court.

- **MMDR Amendment Act, 2026**, legislative background: introduced **10 August 2026**, passed by Lok Sabha **12 August**, Rajya Sabha **13 August**, assented...
- Parent statute: **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957**.
- **Entry 54, Union List:** regulation of mines and mineral development, to the extent declared by Parliament by law to be expedient in the...
- **Entry 23, State List:** regulation of mines and mineral development, subject to **Entry 54 of the Union List**.
- **Entry 50, State List:** taxes on mineral rights, **subject to limitations imposed by Parliament by law relating to mineral development**.
- **National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET)**, also from the 2015 amendment, funds exploration.
- Nearly **96 per cent** of mining company payments accrue to **state governments**; mining contributes over **2 per cent** of GDP.
- The **National Critical Mineral Mission** was announced in the **2024-25 Budget** and approved by the Cabinet in **January 2025**.



Full article

Resilient, But the Risks Remain: Reading India's Q1 Momentum

The Indian Express finds broad-based domestic strength in the RBI's State of the Economy report but warns that El Nino, trade uncertainty and energy prices still cloud the outlook.

- **RBI's August 2026 Monetary Policy Committee** projected **7 per cent** growth for Q1, in line with **Crisil** and **ICRA**.
- **Index of Industrial Production up 5.8 per cent** in the quarter, aided by manufacturing.
- **Non-oil exports up 12.8 per cent** in the first four months of the year.
- **Central government capital expenditure up roughly 24 per cent** in the quarter.
- **GDP estimates are released by the National Statistics Office (NSO)**, under the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation**.
- The MPC's statutory inflation target is **4 per cent CPI**, with a **tolerance band of plus or minus 2 percentage points**, notified under the **RBI**...
- The **IIP base year is 2011-12**; its three sectoral components are **mining, manufacturing and electricity**, and manufacturing carries the...
- **E-way bills** are required under GST for the movement of goods above a threshold value, generated on the **GST e-way bill portal**.



Full article

The Mountains Are Warning Us: Shyam Saran on Himalayan Fragility

Writing in the Indian Express, former Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran argues the Nepal flood is the latest symptom of Himalayan degradation, and that India, Nepal, Bhutan and China need shared hydrological data.

- **26 August 2026:** avalanche about **20 km east of Rasuwagadhi**, down the **Lhende river**; flood spread from **Rasuwa** into **Dhading, Gorkha and Nuwakot**.
- **Rasuwigadhi** connects Nepal's **Rasuwa district** with **Gyirong county**, Tibet. It is a major India-Nepal-China trade and pilgrimage route.
- The author reports a possible trigger of a **magnitude 4.4 earthquake** minutes earlier; other assessments do not support a seismic trigger.
- The **Trishuli** joins the **Narayani**, which enters India as the **Gandak** and joins the **Ganga** near **Patna**.
- India-China **MoUs on hydrological data** cover the **Brahmaputra (Yarlung Tsangpo)** and the **Sutlej (Langqen Zangbo)**, during the flood season.
- **India-Nepal treaties: Koshi Agreement 1954, Gandak Agreement 1959, Mahakali Treaty 1996.**
- The **Hindu Kush Himalaya** is often called the **Third Pole** and the **Water Tower of Asia**; ten major river systems rise there.
- **GSLEP**, the **Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Programme**, covers **12 range countries** across the same mountain zone.



Full article

The Dark Forest of Katlekan: Why the Western Ghats Still Matter

An Indian Express column on North Kanara's Katlekan rainforest argues India's remaining primary forest is qualitatively different from plantation cover, and the Western Ghats need protection as an ecological system.

- The **Western Ghats** run about **1,600 km** across **six states**: Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu.
- **UNESCO World Heritage Site** since **2012**, inscribed as a **serial property of 39 component sites**.
- **Katlekan** lies in **Uttara Kannada (North Kanara) district, Karnataka**.
- Peninsular rivers rising in the Ghats: **Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri, Tungabhadra, Periyar, Bharathappuzha**.
- The Ghats are **older than the Himalaya** and are a **fault scarp** formed by the rifting of the Indian plate from Madagascar, not a folded...
- **Anamudi (2,695 m)** in Kerala is the highest peak in the Western Ghats and the highest in peninsular India.
- Density classes: **Very Dense Forest (above 70 per cent)**, **Moderately Dense Forest (40 to 70 per cent)**, **Open Forest (10 to 40 per cent)**.
- **Watch the third trap:** the hotspot is "**Western Ghats and Sri Lanka**" as a single unit. Counting them separately gets India's hotspot count wrong.



Full article

Why 543 Should Remain 543: Delimitation Without Enlargement

A Hindu lead article argues delimitation need not mean a bigger Lok Sabha, because constitutional design is not arithmetic alone and the House size is a separate question from seat redistribution.

- Present Lok Sabha strength: **543 elected members. Article 81** caps elected members at **530 from states** and **20 from Union Territories**.
- Historical note: the **nominated Anglo-Indian seats were abolished** by the **104th Amendment, 2019**, with effect from 25 January 2020. Do not...
- **42nd Amendment, 1976:** froze state-wise allocation on the **1971 Census** until after 2001.
- **84th Amendment, 2001:** extended the freeze until after the **first Census taken after 2026**.
- **87th Amendment, 2003:** permitted readjustment of boundaries **within states** on the **2001 Census**, without changing state totals.
- **Article 82:** readjustment after each Census, by an **Act of Parliament**.
- **Article 170:** parallel provision and parallel freeze for **State Legislative Assemblies**.
- **Delimitation Commissions** have been constituted **four times: 1952, 1963, 1973 and 2002**.



Full article

New-Age Fires: Why ICU Blazes Need a Category of Their Own

The Hindu argues India's fire-safety failures have migrated from factories to hospitals and homes, and that ICU fires need treating as a distinct category with their own protocols.

- **August 2026:** NICU fires at **Amravati (Maharashtra)** and **Chhindwara District Hospital (Madhya Pradesh)**; **three deaths** at Amravati, **three...**
- **Jhansi NICU fire, 2024: 18 newborns died.**
- The Amravati fire was **extinguished in 30 minutes**; the deaths were caused by **smoke**.
- Suspected causes: a **faulty ventilator** at Amravati, a **short circuit in a warmer** at Chhindwara.
- **Fire services are a State subject**, listed in the **State List** of the Seventh Schedule under public order and local government; there is no...
- **Health is also a State subject** (Entry 6, State List); public health and hospitals are administered by states.
- Hospital accreditation in India is through **NABH**, under the **Quality Council of India**. It is **voluntary** for most facilities.
- **Watch the second trap:** deaths in enclosed-space fires are usually caused by **smoke inhalation and toxic combustion products**, not by burns. Fire-safety design...



Full article

Danger From Above: What the Nepal Flood Says About Himalayan Risk

The Hindu argues satellite evidence points to a glacier collapse rather than rainfall behind Nepal's flash flood, and that India must monitor glacier health as development policy.

- Attributed by satellite analysis, **including by ISRO**, to a **glacier collapse or ice-rock avalanche in Tibet**, possibly with a temporary river...
- Infrastructure lost: **35 motorable bridges, 45 suspension bridges, about 40 km of roads.**
- India has about **15,000 glaciers** and nearly **7,500 glacial lakes**; field assessment is feasible mainly **July to September.**
- South Lhonak Lake GLOF, October 2023**, Sikkim: destroyed the **Teesta-III project at Chungthang**, Sikkim's largest hydropower project.
- A **Western Disturbance** is an **extratropical** storm system originating over the Mediterranean region and travelling east; it is the main source...
- The **Trishuli** is a tributary of the **Narayani**, which enters India as the **Gandak** and joins the Ganga near Patna. It belongs to the **Gandaki**...
- India's disaster framework: **Disaster Management Act, 2005**; **NDMA** chaired by the Prime Minister; **NDRF** as the specialist response force.
- Watch the trap: two different Nepali rivers are called Bhote Koshi.** The one in **Rasuwa** district, near the Rasuwagadhi border crossing, flows into the...



Full article

A Victim-Centric Shift: The Prajwala Judgment on Sex Trafficking

Writing in The Hindu, Sunitha Krishnan argues the Supreme Court's May 2026 Prajwala judgment makes rehabilitation a right rather than charity, and its Victim Protection Plan operates as law until Parliament legislates.

- Prajwala vs Union of India**, decided **May 2026** by Justice **J.B. Pardiwala** and Justice **R. Mahadevan**; petition filed in **2004**, a span of **22 years.**
- The judgment issues a **Victim Protection Plan** under **Articles 32 and 142**, which operates as **law until Parliament legislates.**
- Article 32** is the right to constitutional remedies, itself a Fundamental Right, called the "heart and soul of the Constitution" by **Dr B.R.**...
- Article 142** empowers the Supreme Court to pass any decree or order necessary for **complete justice.**
- Article 23** prohibits **traffic in human beings and forced labour**, and is enforceable against private persons as well as the state.
- The principal statute is the **Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956.** Trafficking is also an offence under **Section 143 of the Bharatiya**...
- NALSA**, the National Legal Services Authority, is constituted under the **Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987**; its patron-in-chief is the...
- Watch the second trap: Section 370 IPC no longer exists.** Trafficking of persons is now **Section 143 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023.** Citing the repealed...



Full article