



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

> 16 AUGUST 2025

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1. Union Minister H. D. Kumaraswamy Unveils Logo, Brochure, and Website for Upcoming “Bharat Steel 2026” Summit in New Delhi.



At a high-profile event held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on August 14, 2025, Union Minister H. D. Kumaraswamy officially unveiled the logo, brochure, and the digital platform for “Bharat Steel 2026.” The announcement marks a key step in promoting India’s flagship steel industry summit under the aegis of the Ministry of Steel.

- In the months since assuming the charge of the Ministry of Steel (in addition to Heavy Industries) on June 10, 2024, Union Minister H. D. Kumaraswamy—known officially as Haradanahalli Devegowda Kumaraswamy—has taken decisive steps to bolster the steel sector by embracing digital innovation and event-driven outreach. His earlier launch of the revamped Ministry of Steel website at Udyog Bhawan on May 16, 2025 demonstrated a commitment to transparency, accessibility, and stakeholder engagement through multilingual access, cybersecurity upgrades, and compliance with the Guidelines for Indian Government Websites (GIGW).

- “Bharat Steel 2026” is slated for April 16–17, 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, Pragati Maidan in New Delhi—an iconic venue with excellent metro connectivity and easy access for national and international delegates. The recently unveiled branding and brochure offer a polished preview of the event’s focus on innovation, sustainability, and global networking—positioning India as a lead architect in the global steel industry.

- Key figures featured as speakers include Union Minister H. D. Kumaraswamy himself, Minister of State for Steel Shri Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma, Secretary of the Ministry of Steel Shri Sandeep Poundrik, Additional Secretary and Financial Advisor Shri Ashish Chatterjee, along with heads of major public-sector steel enterprises—CMDs of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), NMDC, MSTC, MECON—and more. Their inclusion underscores the summit’s cross-sectoral coordination and alignment with top-tier leadership.

Key Points:-

- (i) Coming on the heels of earlier digital transformation efforts, this branding launch continues the Ministry’s strategy to enhance policy visibility and market engagement. The Ministry of Steel, which operates under the Government of India and aims to make India a global leader in steel by driving innovation, policymaking, and capacity expansion, benefits from such promotional platforms.
- (ii) With robust sponsorship from leading industry houses such as JSW Steel, Jindal Steel & Power (JSPL), ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India, and Jindal Stainless (JSL), and backing from key industry associations—including the All India Induction Furnaces Association and Sponge Iron Manufacturers Association—the event also highlights a

collaborative ecosystem approach. It's positioned as a must-attend forum for steel producers, global buyers, infrastructure developers, tech innovators (through sessions like "Smart Steel Technologies"), and government stakeholders.

(iii) Broadly, the launch of the logo, brochure, and website for Bharat Steel 2026 reflects a convergence of India's strategic industrial vision and modern communication methods. By combining traditional leadership engagement with digital outreach and well-branded event infrastructure, the Ministry continues to lay the groundwork for India's rising prominence in the global steel industry.

2. India Achieves Landmark 100 GW Solar PV Module Manufacturing Capacity under Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM).



In August 2025, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), announced that India has achieved a historic milestone of 100 Giga Watt (GW) solar photovoltaic (PV) module manufacturing capacity under the Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM), a major leap from 2.3 GW in 2014.

- In his announcement, Pralhad Joshi emphasised that this achievement reflects India's rapid progress in renewable energy manufacturing capabilities and aligns with the Government of India's Atmanirbhar Bharat vision. The increase from 2.3 GW in 2014 to 100 GW in 2025 showcases a decade of consistent policy support and industry growth.

- This development strengthens India's commitment to its clean energy targets, particularly the goal of achieving 500 GW non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030. The ALMM framework has been a central tool for ensuring quality and reliability in solar PV manufacturing while promoting domestic industry growth.

- The Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM) for solar PV modules was introduced by MNRE through the ALMM Order 2019, effective from January 2, 2019. The first ALMM list was issued in March 2021, enlisting manufacturers with an initial combined capacity of around 8.2 GW.

Key Points:-

(i) Over the years, the list has expanded significantly, with the number of enlisted manufacturers increasing from just a handful to 100 in the early years and now standing at 123 in 2025. This expansion reflects the growing investment and industrial capacity within India's solar manufacturing ecosystem.

(ii) In December 2024, MNRE amended the ALMM Order 2019 to include ALMM List-II for solar PV cells, extending the framework beyond modules. This inclusion further strengthens the quality assurance process across the entire solar value chain, reinforcing India's leadership in the renewable energy sector.

3. President Droupadi Murmu Highlights Operation Sindoor and Self-Reliance in Powerful Independence Day Eve Address.



On the eve of India's 79th Independence Day, President Droupadi Murmu delivered a poignant address, reflecting on the country's resilience, democratic values, and economic self-reliance. She lauded the decisive response in Operation Sindoor, emphasized inclusive development, and reminded citizens of the enduring principles of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity.

- President Murmu described Operation Sindoor—India's targeted military response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack—as a powerful demonstration of national resolve and readiness. Conducted on May 7, the operation neutralized over 100 terrorists in nine camps across Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Highlighting India's strategic restraint, she praised the use of indigenous Akash and BrahMos missile systems and the nation's successful defense against retaliatory missile and drone strikes.

- The President underscored Operation Sindoor as a “test case” for the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative in defense, affirming India's growing

technological self-sufficiency. She conveyed how the nation's use of homegrown defense systems bolstered its global strategic credibility.

Key Points:-

(i) President Murmu spoke of India's robust economic health, highlighting a GDP growth rate of 6.5%, controlled inflation, and rising exports. She emphasized that development must reach all sections, including equitable access to healthcare, education, and opportunities—grounded in the ideals of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity.

(ii) Reflecting confidence in India's trajectory, the President urged citizens to embrace self-reliance by supporting local production and innovation. She emphasized this cultural shift as integral to India's democratic and developmental ethos.

(iii) President Murmu reaffirmed the nation's commitment to its constitutional pillars. She reminded citizens never to forget the sacrifices of independence and to cherish the Constitution and democracy. The enduring values of dignity, solidarity, and equitable opportunity must guide India's future.

4. Prime Minister Modi Launches ₹99,446 Crore Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana, Aims to Create 3.5 Crore Jobs.



On August 15, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PM-VBRY)—an employment-linked incentive scheme with an outlay of ₹99,446 crore. The ambitious program targets creation of 3.5 crore new formal sector jobs over two years, supporting first-time job entrants and incentivising employers.

- **PM-VBRY replaces the earlier Employment Linked Incentive (ELI) Scheme and will be in effect from August 1, 2025, to July 31, 2027—a two-year implementation period aimed at formalizing and boosting employment growth.**

- **The scheme is backed with a budget of ₹99,446 crore, and aims to generate over 3.5 crore formal jobs, of which approximately 1.92 crore are intended for first-time workforce entrants—particularly youth.**

Key Points:-

(i) New employees registered with the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), earning up to ₹1 lakh/month, will receive an incentive equivalent to one month's EPF wage (capped at ₹15,000). This is disbursed in two installments—after 6 and 12 months of continuous employment, along with a mandatory financial literacy program. A portion of the amount is

allocated into a savings instrument to promote financial planning.

(ii) Under the scheme, employers registered with the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) who hire additional employees will receive monthly incentives per new hire—₹1,000 for employees earning up to ₹10,000; ₹2,000 for those earning between ₹10,001 and ₹20,000; and ₹3,000 for those earning between ₹20,001 and ₹1 lakh—with the manufacturing sector receiving these benefits for an extended period of up to 4 years.

(iii) This scheme emphasizes formalizing employment, improving job retention, and leveraging India's demographic dividend. It covers all sectors—with special focus on manufacturing—and is part of the broader "Viksit Bharat" mission. Implementation includes Direct Benefit Transfer via Aadhaar- and PAN-linked bank accounts, and has been rolled out with awareness sessions across regions, including EPFO-led seminars to guide both employers and new employees.

5. Union Minister Kirti Vardhan Singh Launched Forest Wildlife Crime Management System 'HAWK' in Tamil Nadu.

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Management System 'HAWK'
in Tamil Nadu**



In August 2025, Union Minister of State (MoS) Kirti Vardhan Singh, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), launched a customized version of the 'Hostile Activity Watch Kernel (HAWK)', a digital forest and wildlife crime management system, for Tamil Nadu (TN) to curb wildlife crimes. With this launch, TN became the 3rd state in India, after Kerala and Karnataka, to implement the system.

- **HAWK is designed to combat wildlife crimes by providing a centralized platform for forest departments to monitor, analyze, and act against illegal activities affecting flora and fauna. Its primary goal is to enhance forest surveillance and protect endangered species across TN.**

- **The system was developed by Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) in collaboration with Nippon Telegraph and Telephone (NTT) Data, a Japanese Information Technology (IT) services provider. This collaboration brings advanced technology and analytics to strengthen wildlife crime management.**

Key Points:-

(i) HAWK operates through four integrated modules: Peregrine, Shikra, Harrier, and Kestrel. Currently, only the Peregrine and Shikra modules have been implemented in Tamil Nadu, focusing on monitoring, reporting, and preventive measures against wildlife crime.

(ii) The system uses Named Entity Recognition (NER) to extract offender names, locations, and aliases. It also applies network analysis to map criminal relationships and predictive modeling to identify potential poaching hotspots using historical data, enabling proactive forest

management.

(iii) Before Tamil Nadu, HAWK was implemented in Kerala and Karnataka. The rollout in TN strengthens the state forest department's ability to curb wildlife crimes, enhance surveillance, and protect endangered species, setting a model for other Indian states to follow.

BANKING & FINANCE

1. RBI to Roll Out Continuous Clearing and Settlement in CTS Banking System in Two Phases.



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a transformative upgrade to the Cheque Truncation System (CTS), transitioning from batch processing to continuous clearing with on-realisation settlement. This two-phase rollout begins on October 4, 2025, aiming to drastically accelerate cheque processing across the banking sector.

- **The RBI will implement the continuous clearing mechanism in two distinct phases. Phase 1 starts on October 4, 2025, mandating that cheques presented are continuously scanned, transmitted, and lodged with the clearing house throughout business hours.**

Phase 2 begins on January 3, 2026, refining settlement timelines further to reduce cheque expiry to just a few hours.

- Instead of the conventional delayed batch processing, cheques will now be processed in real time. The new system ensures that once a cheque is presented, it is immediately scanned and forwarded. Drawee banks must confirm (honour or dishonour) by 7 PM the same day, or risk being deemed approved.

Key Points:-

- Under the existing framework, cheque clearing can take up to two working days. The revamped CTS will shrink this cycle to mere hours by implementing continual processing of cheque images and data.
- The move is expected to significantly improve customer experience by substantially reducing wait times for fund realization. It will also bolster banking efficiency, curb settlement risks, lower operational costs, and enhance liquidity—bringing cheque processing speeds closer to those of NEFT (National Electronic Funds Transfer) and RTGS (Real-Time Gross Settlement).
- The phased approach gives banks essential lead time to revamp infrastructure, fine-tune operations, and train personnel. Expect detailed implementation guidelines from the RBI soon to ensure seamless adoption of the new CTS protocols.

2. HDFC ERGO General Partners with PhonePe to Launch Affordable Health Insurance for the 'Missing Middle'.



On August 13, 2025, HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company Limited (a Joint Venture between Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited – HDFC Ltd and ERGO International AG) entered into a strategic partnership with PhonePe to roll out a low-cost health insurance plan aimed at expanding coverage for underserved citizens in India.

- The collaboration targets India's 'Missing Middle' segment—around 40 crore citizens aged between 18 and 30 years—who fall outside the scope of both government health schemes and existing private insurance plans.
- This initiative seeks to make healthcare protection more accessible and affordable to young adults in lower and middle-income categories.

Key Points:-

- Under the plan, premiums start at just ₹12 per day (₹4,380 annually) for a coverage sum insured of ₹3 lakh, ensuring that even first-time buyers from economically modest backgrounds can access quality healthcare coverage without significant financial strain.
- The health insurance can be seamlessly purchased, renewed, and managed directly via the PhonePe mobile application, allowing

users to conveniently handle policy documentation, claims, and benefits from their smartphones.

(iii) Policy benefits include cashless hospitalization at a wide network of hospitals, outpatient department (OPD) consultations, coverage for specified consumables, personal accident insurance, and protection against vector-borne diseases, strengthening both preventive and curative healthcare access for the targeted demographic.

3. SBI Life Launches "Smart Shield Plus" Term Insurance Plan with Flexible Coverage Options.



On August 14, 2025, SBI Life Insurance Company Limited (SBI Life), a Joint Venture (JV) between State Bank of India (SBI) and BNP Paribas Cardif, introduced "SBI Life-Smart Shield Plus", a future-ready term insurance plan tailored to meet customers' evolving protection needs with flexible options and life stage benefits.

- SBI Life-Smart Shield Plus is an individual, non-linked, non-participating, pure risk term insurance plan. It has been designed to provide a high degree of adaptability, allowing customers to adjust coverage in response to

changes in their financial responsibilities and personal milestones.

- The plan offers three distinct coverage options: Level Cover, where the sum assured remains fixed throughout the policy term; Increasing Cover Benefit, where the sum assured grows at a simple rate of 5% annually (capped at 100% of the original sum assured); and Level Cover with Future Proofing Benefit, which allows coverage enhancement at specific life events such as marriage, childbirth, and home purchase.

Key Points:-

(i) Under the Level Cover with Future Proofing Benefit, policyholders can increase their coverage without undergoing additional medical underwriting at key life stages, ensuring continued protection as financial responsibilities expand over time.

(ii) The plan's life cover extends up to 100 years of age for the Whole Life option, providing lifelong protection, while other term options offer coverage up to 79 years of age. This flexibility enables customers to choose a duration that aligns with their long-term planning goals.

(iii) With its flexible design, varied coverage structures, and milestone-based benefits, SBI Life-Smart Shield Plus aims to provide customers with comprehensive term protection that evolves with their life journey, ensuring financial security for families during uncertain times.

MOUs and Agreement

1. IGNC A and BSIP Sign Historic MoU to Integrate India's Scientific and Cultural Heritage.



In August 2025, the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), under the Ministry of Culture, and the Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP), under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Ministry of Science & Technology (MoS&T), signed an MoU in New Delhi to promote science–culture integration.

- The MoU signing ceremony took place at IGNCA, New Delhi, marking the first national initiative aimed at creating a unified platform to present India’s scientific advancements alongside its rich cultural traditions to both domestic and international audiences. This aligns with the Government of India’s broader vision of fostering interdisciplinary collaboration between cultural institutions and scientific bodies.

- The agreement was formalised by Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi, Member Secretary of IGNCA, and Prof. Mahesh G. Thakkar, Director of BSIP. The collaboration will be coordinated by designated nodal officers—Dr. Achal Pandya, Head & Professor of the Conservation Division at IGNCA, and Dr. Shilpa Pandey, Senior Scientist at BSIP—ensuring smooth implementation of joint programmes.

Key Points:-

(i) One of the MoU’s major objectives is the preservation of India’s cultural–scientific heritage through joint research, documentation, and conservation projects. This includes safeguarding indigenous knowledge systems, studying archaeological evidence, and integrating palaeoscience findings with cultural narratives to create authentic and research-backed heritage content.

(ii) The partnership also places strong emphasis on public outreach through the creation of documentaries, exhibitions, and awareness campaigns aimed at protecting endangered traditions from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari. Such initiatives will help strengthen public understanding of the links between science, history, and culture.

(iii) A notable component of the agreement is the digitisation of cultural and scientific resources to make them widely accessible to researchers, students, and the public. The MoU will also actively support Project Mausam—an initiative examining the effects of climate change on India’s maritime history—by combining palaeoclimate research with cultural studies for a comprehensive understanding of heritage in the context of environmental change.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

1. H.E. Zeenat Kureshi Becomes First Indian Woman Appointed as GCC-India Trade Commissioner in Luxury Diplomacy.



In August 2025, Indian actor, producer, and investor H.E. Zeenat Kureshi made history by becoming the first Indian woman to be appointed as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)-India Trade Commissioner under the Global Chamber of Commerce, strengthening luxury diplomacy and fostering premium economic ties.

- H.E. Zeenat Kureshi is the first and only Indian woman to represent a GCC-India diplomatic trade body, marking a pioneering achievement in international trade relations and women's representation in high-level economic diplomacy.

- As the GCC-India Trade Commissioner, she will focus on enhancing bilateral relations between India and GCC nations, particularly in high-value sectors, through strategic trade and cultural partnerships.

- Her work will center on building robust links between India's premium industries—such as fashion, jewelry, fine arts, hospitality, and luxury real estate—and the GCC's rapidly expanding luxury markets.

Key Points:-

(i) The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is a political and economic alliance established in 1981, comprising Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman,

Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). It promotes economic integration, political coordination, and trade collaboration among member states.

(ii) This appointment is a milestone in "luxury diplomacy," a niche field that combines cultural prestige with economic value, enabling India to position its premium brands and artisans in lucrative Gulf markets.

(iii) Her leadership is expected to pave the way for new trade agreements, investment opportunities, and joint ventures that can strengthen India's economic footprint in the GCC, benefiting both regions in the luxury and high-end sectors.

2. Himalayan Kingfisher Unveiled as Official Mascot for Inaugural Khelo India Water Sports Festival in Srinagar.



In August 2025, the Himalayan Kingfisher was unveiled as the mascot for the first-ever Khelo India Water Sports Festival, scheduled at Dal Lake in Srinagar from August 21–23. The event will bring over 400 athletes from across India to showcase water-sporting excellence.

- The vibrant Himalayan Kingfisher, in bright orange and blue, was introduced as the official mascot, symbolizing adventure, nature, and the competitive spirit of the festival. It also serves as an ambassador for eco-friendly sports, tourism, and youth engagement.

- The Khelo India Water Sports Festival will take place at the scenic Dal Lake, Srinagar, marking its debut from August 21 to 23, 2025—part of the government’s initiative to expand the Khelo India calendar.

- The festival includes five water-sport disciplines: rowing, canoeing & kayaking, water skiing, shikara racing, and dragon boat racing. In addition, demonstration events like water skiing and indigenous shikara races will add cultural appeal.

Key Points:-

(i) Over 400 athletes from 36 states and Union Territories will compete in this open-age national-level competition. Selection is handled by National Sports Federations through merit-based processes overseen by a technical conduct committee.

(ii) This festival marks a key milestone in India’s sports roadmap—representing the fifth major Khelo India event in 2025 after Winter Games, Para Games, Youth Games, and Beach Games. Organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports along with SAI and the J&K Sports Council, the event aims to position Dal Lake as a national water sports hub while advancing grassroots talent development.

SPORTS

1. S. Rohith Krishna Becomes India’s 89th Chess Grandmaster.



In August 2025, 19-year-old S. Rohith Krishna, an engineering student from Chennai, Tamil Nadu, achieved his final Grandmaster (GM) norm and officially became India’s 89th Chess Grandmaster. He attained a FIDE (Fédération Internationale des Échecs) rating of 2516 as of July 2025, marking a significant milestone in his chess career.

- S. Rohith Krishna secured his final GM norm at the Almaty Masters Qonayev Cup in Kazakhstan by scoring 6 points out of 9 and crossing the 2500 Elo rating mark. In the final round, he defeated Armenian International Master Artur Davtyan to clinch the prestigious title.

- His journey toward the GM title began in February 2025, when he achieved his first GM norm at the Hotel Stockholm North GM Round-Robin tournament with an unbeaten score of 6.5/9. He later secured his second GM norm at the 25th Dubai Open in June 2025, strengthening his path toward the grandmaster title.

- Before this achievement, Rohith Krishna had already made his mark by earning the title of International Master (IM) in 2022. This early success demonstrated his consistency and potential in international chess circuits, which

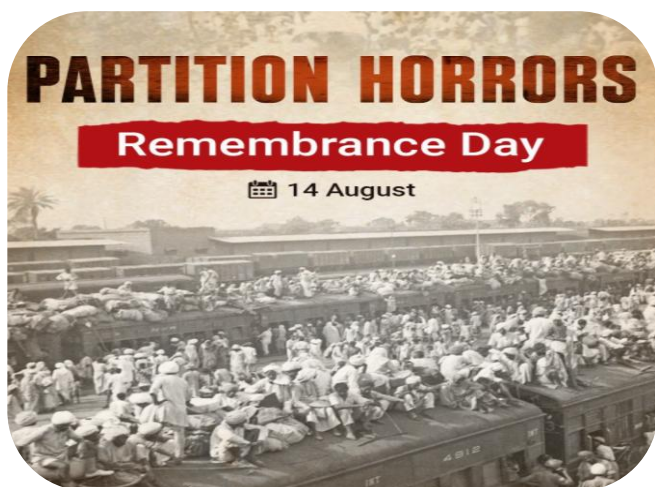
paved the way for his elevation to the highest chess title.

Key Points:-

- (i) According to the FIDE criteria for Grandmaster qualification, a player must secure three GM norms in official FIDE-rated events against strong titled players, along with crossing the 2500 Elo rating threshold. Rohith fulfilled these requirements successfully, marking him as one of the fastest rising stars in Indian chess.
- (ii) With this achievement, India now has 89 Chess Grandmasters, strengthening the country's presence in global chess.
- (iii) Rohith Krishna's success adds to India's growing reputation as a chess powerhouse, following the legacy of pioneers like Viswanathan Anand, while inspiring future generations of players.

IMPORTANT DAYS

1. Partition Horrors Remembrance Day Observed on August 14, 2025, Honoring 1947 Partition Victims.



Partition Horrors Remembrance Day (Hindi: Vibhajan Vibhishika Smriti Diwas) is observed annually in India on August 14 to

honor the victims of the 1947 Partition of British India. The day highlights the pain, suffering, courage, and resilience of those affected by one of the largest migrations in human history. In 2025, this day marks the 5th annual observance.

- **August 14, 2025, marks the 5th annual commemoration of Partition Horrors Remembrance Day in India. The day coincides with Pakistan's Independence Day and serves as a solemn occasion to reflect on the tragic events of 1947, paying tribute to the victims of communal violence and mass displacement during the Partition.**

- **The day was officially declared by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi in 2021. The first observance took place on August 14, 2021. Its purpose is to honor the victims of the Partition and acknowledge the profound impact it had on millions of lives across India and Pakistan.**

- **The Partition arose from factors such as the Muslim League's demands, British divide-and-rule policies, and Muhammad Ali Jinnah's communal stance. The division of British India led to the creation of India, with a Hindu majority, and Pakistan, with a Muslim majority, triggering widespread communal violence and large-scale migrations.**

Key Points:-

- (i) The Partition caused severe communal violence, mass displacement, and became one of the largest human migrations recorded in history. Data shows that approximately 20 million people were affected, with around 6 million non-Muslims leaving West Pakistan and about 6.5 million Muslims migrating from regions like Punjab and Delhi into West Pakistan.
- (ii) On June 3, 1947, Lord Mountbatten, the

last Viceroy of India, formally announced the Partition. The boundaries separating India and Pakistan were drawn by Cyril Radcliffe, resulting in massive displacement, loss of property, and human suffering across both nations.

(iii) In 2025, the Ministry of Culture, in partnership with the Ministry of Railways (MoR), organized nationwide exhibitions, particularly at railway stations, to depict the hardships endured during the Partition. These initiatives aim to educate citizens about the historical events and commemorate the resilience of the affected populations.

DEFENCE

1. PM Modi Launches 'Mission Sudarshan Chakra'—India's Indigenous Iron Dome-Style Defence Shield.



On August 15, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Mission Sudarshan Chakra, a sophisticated air-defence initiative inspired by Lord Krishna's mythical disc. Designed to safeguard strategic, civilian, and religious sites, the mission underscores India's ambition for self-reliance in defence technology.

- Drawing inspiration from the Mahabharata's Sudarshan Chakra—used by Lord Krishna to block sunlight and aid Arjuna—this mission embodies both spiritual symbolism and advanced defence. Built on this potent imagery, the initiative aims to project strength, precision, and protection through futuristic indigenous technology.

- "Mission Sudarshan Chakra" envisions a powerful, multi-tiered air-defence shield akin to Israel's Iron Dome. Its objective: detect, neutralize, and retaliate against aerial threats to critical infrastructure—including hospitals, transport hubs, and places of worship.

- A significant feature is the mission's full reliance on Indian engineering and research. It aims to build, develop, and deploy the system wholly through domestic expertise, reinforcing India's push towards Aatmanirbharta (self-reliance) in defence.

Key Points:-

(i) Mission Sudarshan Chakra is a strategic component of the larger Rashtriya Suraksha Kavach (National Security Shield) framework. It falls within a suite of security upgrades announced during PM Modi's 79th Independence Day address, aimed at enhancing deterrence and technological independence.

(ii) With plans targeting completion by 2035, Mission Sudarshan Chakra sets the stage for India's long-term defence trajectory—a shift toward AI-enabled platforms, directed energy weapons, cyber-intercepts, and next-gen battlefield resilience. It signals a new era of military innovation and infrastructure rebuilding.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. China Launches Geely-04 Satellite Constellation to Boost IoT and Vehicle Communication Services.



In August 2025, China successfully launched the fourth batch of Geely-04 satellites under the Geely Future Mobility Constellation (GEESATCOM) to enhance global Internet of Things (IoT) connectivity, maritime operations, and inter-vehicle communication. The mission involved 11 Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites deployed via a Smart Dragon-3 (SD-3) rocket from an offshore platform near Rizhao, Shandong Province.

- The mission was executed by Geespace, the commercial aerospace subsidiary of Zhejiang Geely Holding Group, with satellite launch operations conducted from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center. Geespace has been operating its LEO constellation since 2018 with a focus on autonomous driving, high-precision positioning, and IoT services.

- With this launch, Geespace expanded its Geely-04 GEESATCOM IoT constellation from 30 to 41 satellites. The company aims to complete the deployment of a 72-satellite network by the end of 2025, enabling seamless global IoT coverage.

- The Smart Dragon-3 (SD-3) rocket, also known as the Jielong-3, served as the launch vehicle. Measuring 31 meters in length, 140 tonnes in weight, and using solid propellant, the SD-3 is capable of delivering payloads of up to 1,500 kilograms into a 500-kilometer Sun-Synchronous Orbit (SSO).

Key Points:-

(i) Developed by the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology (CALT), the SD-3 rocket is designed for rapid deployment and cost-effective space missions. This launch marked the sixth flight of the SD-3 series, further solidifying its reliability for commercial satellite missions.

(ii) The Geely LEO Satellite Programme supports various applications, including maritime monitoring, autonomous vehicle navigation, and remote sensing. These satellites enhance real-time data transfer between land, sea, and air-based systems, benefiting sectors like transportation, logistics, and public safety.

(iii) China's accelerated deployment of the Geely satellite constellation is part of its broader strategy to lead in global space-based IoT services. The initiative also strengthens China's commercial space sector, aligning with the country's long-term space and technology development goals.

2. Astrophel Aerospace & IN-SPACe Recently Signed MoU for Reusable Rocket Engine Development.

Astrophel Aerospace & IN-SPACE Recently Signed MoU for Reusable Rocket Engine Development

Astrophel Aerospace Private Limited has recently signed a framework Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACE) — the nodal body under the Department of Space (DoS) — to jointly develop reusable rocket engine technology. The agreement was formalized on 13 August 2025.

- The MoU was signed in the presence of Dr. Pawan Goenka, Chairman of IN-SPACE, and Dr. Prafulla Kumar Jain, Director of Program Management & Authorization at IN-SPACE, marking a significant milestone for India's private space sector.

- Astrophel Aerospace will gain access to Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) facilities for system-level testing, qualification support, and technical reviews, covering critical components such as turbopumps, engine modules, and other subsystems.

Key Points:-

(i) Under this MoU, Astrophel will collaborate with ISRO experts through a Joint Project Implementation Plan (JPIP), which will facilitate project-specific design validation, subsystem development, and campaign testing for reusable rocket propulsion.

(ii) The collaboration focuses on developing vital subsystems — including valves, turbo pumps, and avionics systems — with dual-use potential in defence, clean energy, and industrial gas applications. This will enable Astrophel to innovate beyond the aerospace sector while enhancing indigenous capabilities.

(iii) The development comes after Astrophel successfully raised ₹6.84 crore in funding, with an additional USD 5 million planned. The company had earlier achieved a milestone on 15 August 2023, becoming one of the few Indian startups to successfully test-fire a semi-cryogenic engine without external capital support.

OBITUARY

1. Njattelya Sreedharan, Self-Taught Linguist and Dictionary Creator, Passed Away.



On August 13, 2025, renowned self-taught linguist Njattelya Sreedharan passed away at the age of 87 in Kannur, Kerala. Born in 1938 in Thalassery, Kerala, he was celebrated for compiling the landmark 860-page Chathur Dravida Bhasha Padhaparichayam, a dictionary uniting four Dravidian languages.

- Njattelya Sreedharan, without any formal linguistic training, dedicated over 25 years to lexicography. His magnum opus connected Malayalam, Kannada, Tamil, and Telugu, marking a rare contribution to Dravidian linguistic heritage.

- His career began as a blueprinting staffer in the Kerala Public Works Department (PWD) and later the Irrigation Department, before retiring in 1994. Post-retirement, he fully devoted himself to his dictionary project.

- The Chathur Dravida Bhasha Padhparichayam was first published in November 2020 by the Kerala Bhasha Institute. The first edition contained 500 copies priced at ₹4,000 each, which sold out quickly.

Key Points:-

(i) A revised and expanded second edition was released in May 2023 by the Kerala Language Institute, strengthening his legacy as a key figure in modern lexicography.

(ii) Apart from lexicography, he played a leadership role as Kannur Taluk President of the Purogamana Kala Sahitya Sangham (Progressive Arts and Literary Association) and was also a State Council member of the NGO Union.

(iii) His life and dedication were documented in the award-winning film Dreaming of Words, directed by Nandan, which received the 2021 National Film Award – Special Jury Mention. He was also honored with recognitions like the Dr. T.P. Sukumaran Master Award and the Dr. Hermann Gundert Award.

2. Indian Olympic Hockey Medalist Dr. Vece Paes Passed Away on August 14, 2025



On August 14, 2025, India mourned the demise of Dr. Vece Paes, former Indian Hockey Player and Olympic medalist, who passed away at the age of 80 in Kolkata, West Bengal. He was also the father of renowned Indian tennis player Leander Paes.

- Dr. Vece Paes was born on April 30, 1945, in Goa. He made his international debut for the Indian hockey team at the Hamburg International Cup in 1966, marking the beginning of a distinguished sports career.

- He won bronze medals at the 1971 Hockey World Cup held in Barcelona, Spain, and at the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich, West Germany, contributing significantly to India's international hockey success.

Key Points:-

(i) Dr. Paes served as a Doctor of Sports Medicine across the Asian Cricket Council, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), and the Indian Davis Cup tennis team, offering his expertise to multiple disciplines.

(ii) He held the position of President of the Indian Rugby Football Union from 1996 to 2002 and took on leadership roles at the prestigious Calcutta Cricket and Football Club, showcasing his versatility in sports

administration.

(iii) Beyond his personal achievements, Dr. Vece Paes is remembered for his contribution to Indian sports and as the father of Leander Paes, one of India's most celebrated tennis players, leaving a lasting legacy in both hockey and tennis.

Static GK

Ministry of Steel (MoS)	Union Minister: Shri H. D. Kumaraswamy	Headquarters: New Delhi
RBI	Governor : Sanjay Malhotra	Headquarter : Mumbai
China	Capital: Beijing	President: Xi Jinping
IN-SPACE	Chairman : Dr. Pawan Kumar Goenka	Headquarters: Ahmedabad
Tamil Nadu	Chief minister: M K Stalin	Governor: R. N. Ravi