



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

21 AUGUST 2025



NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1. PM Modi Inaugurates Two Major National Highway Projects Worth ₹11,000 Crore in Delhi.



On August 17, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated two significant National Highway projects in Delhi, collectively valued at approximately ₹11,000 crore. The inauguration ceremony took place in Rohini, marking a substantial milestone in the government's infrastructure development efforts aimed at decongesting the national capital and enhancing connectivity within the National Capital Region (NCR).

- The two projects inaugurated include the Delhi section of the Dwarka Expressway and the Urban Extension Road-II (UER-II). The Dwarka Expressway's Delhi stretch spans 10.1 kilometers and was constructed at an estimated cost of ₹5,360 crore.

- It comprises two segments: a 5.9 km section from Shiv Murti to Dwarka Sector-21 Road Under Bridge (RUB), and a 4.2 km stretch extending to the Delhi-Haryana border, providing direct connectivity to UER-II. This expressway is expected to significantly reduce travel time between Delhi and Gurugram, easing traffic congestion on key routes.

- The UER-II project involves the development of a 22.5 km corridor connecting Alipur to Dichaon Kalan, with newly developed links to Bahadurgarh and Sonipat. Constructed at an estimated cost of ₹5,580 crore, UER-II aims to alleviate traffic pressure on Delhi's Inner and Outer Ring Roads, particularly at congested junctions such as Mukarba Chowk, Dhaula Kuan, and Madhuban Chowk. This project is anticipated to enhance connectivity to Indira Gandhi International Airport and improve access to industrial hubs in the NCR.

Key Points:-

(i) The inauguration ceremony was attended by Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, and Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini. Prior to the event, Prime Minister Modi engaged with construction workers involved in the projects, acknowledging their contributions to the successful completion of these infrastructure developments. The event also coincided with the festive spirit of Janmashtami, adding cultural significance to the occasion.

(ii) These infrastructure projects are part of the government's broader strategy to decongest Delhi and enhance connectivity within the NCR. The Dwarka Expressway and UER-II are expected to streamline traffic flow, reduce travel time, and improve overall transportation efficiency in the region. Additionally, the projects are designed to support multi-modal connectivity, linking metro lines, a new railway station, and a bus depot, thereby promoting integrated urban mobility solutions.

(iii) The development of these highways reflects the government's commitment to

creating world-class infrastructure that enhances the ease of living for citizens. By improving connectivity and reducing congestion, these projects aim to contribute to the economic growth and sustainable development of Delhi and its surrounding areas. The successful completion and inauguration of the Dwarka Expressway and UER-II signify a significant step towards realizing the vision of a modern and well-connected national capital.

2. IIT Madras Signs Rs 1 Crore Licensing Deal with Indrarka Quantum Technologies for India's First Silicon Photonics-Based High-Speed QRNG.



In August 2025, the Technology Transfer Office (TTO) of the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT-M) signed a licensing agreement worth Rs 1 crore with Indrarka Quantum Technologies Pvt. Limited to transfer India's first indigenously developed silicon (Si) photonics-based high-speed Quantum Random Number Generator (QRNG) technology for commercial deployment.

- The licensing agreement is a significant step in advancing India's quantum innovation ecosystem. It allows Indrarka Quantum Technologies Pvt. Limited to commercially

deploy the QRNG technology, which was indigenously developed at IIT-M's Centre for Programmable Photonic Integrated Circuits and Systems (CPPICS). This collaboration aims to accelerate the adoption of cutting-edge quantum solutions in India.

- The project was led by Professor Bijoy Krishna D's from the Department of Electrical Engineering at IIT-M, who also serves as the chief investigator at CPPICS.

- The team successfully designed and tested the silicon photonics-based QRNG module, ensuring high-speed and secure generation of quantum random numbers, a critical requirement for advanced cryptographic and computational applications.

Key Points:-

(i) Previous prototypes of the QRNG module were delivered to the Defence Research and Development Organisation's (DRDO) Young Scientist Laboratory-Quantum Technologies (DYSL-QT). Later, advanced versions were deployed at the Society for Electronic Transactions and Security (SETS) in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, for practical quantum security applications, demonstrating its readiness for real-world deployment.

(ii) The QRNG technology has wide-ranging applications across defence, financial transactions, scientific simulations, and cryptographic algorithms. By leveraging silicon photonics, the technology ensures scalable, high-speed, and secure random number generation, enabling India to compete in global quantum technology research and development.

(iii) This licensing marks a key milestone for IIT-M and India's quantum technology sector. By transferring cutting-edge QRNG

technology for commercial use, the collaboration strengthens the bridge between academic research and industrial application, fostering innovation, security, and economic growth in quantum-enabled technologies.

3. Cabinet Approves ₹1,507 Crore Greenfield Airport at Kota-Bundi, Rajasthan.



On August 19, 2025, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the construction of a Greenfield Airport at Kota-Bundi in Rajasthan. The Airports Authority of India (AAI) will develop the new facility to handle 2 million passengers annually with modern infrastructure and robust regional connectivity.

- The project, estimated at ₹1,507 crore, was approved by the Union Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs under PM Modi. The CCEA's nod marks a significant investment aimed at enhancing air connectivity in southern Rajasthan, a region known for its booming education and industrial sectors.

- The Rajasthan government has allotted 440.06 hectares (approximately 1,089 acres) of land free of cost to the AAI. This land allocation

enables the development of a full-service airport capable of supporting Airbus A-321 class aircraft and managing up to 2 million passengers per annum (MPPA).

- The airport will feature a 20,000-square-metre terminal building, a 3,200-metre runway, apron space, taxiways, and other essential facilities. The terminal is designed to handle 1,000 peak-hour passengers (PHP) and will enable commercial aircraft operations.

Key Points:-

(i) Union Information & Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced that the Airports Authority of India (AAI) will fund the project using its internal accruals. Vaishnaw emphasized that the new airport would boost regional infrastructure and improve connectivity.

(ii) Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla praised the approval, highlighting how the project will enhance connectivity for the Hadauti region, drive tourism, trade, investment, and employment. He acknowledged the contribution of the earlier Rajasthan government for transferring the land.

(iii) Beyond improving air connectivity, the new airport is expected to transform Kota's image as an educational hub by facilitating easier access for lakhs of students and visitors. It will also support industrial logistics and boost tourism in nearby heritage and natural sites.

4. West Bengal Launches 'Shramshree' Scheme to Support Returning Bengali Migrant Workers.



The Government of West Bengal has launched the 'Shramshree' Scheme to provide financial and social support to Bengali migrant workers returning to the state. The scheme aims to create livelihood opportunities and ensure rehabilitation for workers impacted by job losses outside the state.

- The Shramshree Scheme is targeted at migrant workers who had been employed in other Indian states but were compelled to return to West Bengal due to economic challenges, layoffs, or social reasons. The scheme will ensure both skill development and immediate financial assistance to help workers re-establish themselves.

- The initiative will be implemented under the Labour Department of West Bengal, with active monitoring by the state government. Returning workers will be registered under a special state portal, and beneficiaries will receive direct benefit transfers (DBTs) in their bank accounts.

Key Points:-

(i) A one-time financial grant will be provided to each eligible worker along with access to state welfare schemes, housing assistance, and employment linkages in local industries, MSMEs (Micro, Small & Medium

Enterprises), and agriculture. The state also plans to integrate vocational training programs.

(ii) West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced that the scheme will not only provide relief but also reduce the vulnerability of workers migrating outside the state. She emphasized that the scheme aims to transform migration challenges into opportunities for localized growth.

(iii) The scheme is expected to benefit lakhs of returning migrant workers, particularly from districts such as Murshidabad, Malda, North 24 Parganas, and South Dinajpur, which have traditionally been high out-migration regions of West Bengal.

INTERNATIONAL

1. WHO Declares Rubella Eliminated as a Public Health Problem in Nepal.

WHO Declares Rubella Eliminated as a Public Health Problem in Nepal



In August 2025, the World Health Organisation (WHO) South East Asian Region (SEAR) office officially recognized Nepal for eliminating Rubella as a public health problem. This milestone places Nepal among the leading countries in the region to successfully control this contagious viral disease.

- Rubella, also known as German Measles, is a highly contagious viral infection that typically causes mild fever and red rashes on the body. Although often considered a mild disease in children and adults, its prevention remains a critical public health objective due to its potential complications.

- Rubella poses significant risks for pregnant women. Infection during pregnancy can result in miscarriage, stillbirth, or severe congenital defects in newborns. This makes vaccination and surveillance crucial to protecting maternal and child health in the country.

- One of the most severe consequences of rubella is Congenital Rubella Syndrome (CRS), which can cause a range of birth defects in infants. CRS can lead to hearing impairment, cardiac defects, cataracts, and neurological disorders, emphasizing the need for sustained immunization programs.

Key Points:-

(i) Nepal's achievement was made possible through a combination of strategies, including attaining over 95% vaccination coverage among children, conducting multiple nationwide immunization campaigns, and implementing robust laboratory-based surveillance systems to monitor disease incidence.

(ii) With this recognition, Nepal becomes the sixth country in the WHO South East Asian Region to eliminate rubella, joining Bhutan, Democratic People's Republic (DPR) Korea, Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Timor-Leste.

(iii) This milestone highlights Nepal's effective public health interventions and commitment to safeguarding population health.

2. Dubai Launches 'One Freezone Passport' to Simplify Business Licensing and Boost Global Investment.



On July 22, 2025, Dubai introduced the One Freezone Passport, a new system that allows companies to operate in multiple free zones with just one license. This step will make business expansion faster, reduce paperwork, and attract more foreign investment.

- Earlier, businesses in Dubai had to take separate trade licenses for each free zone. Now, with the One Freezone Passport, they can expand into other participating free zones without repeating the long registration and approval process.

- The project was launched under the leadership of Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, First Deputy Ruler of Dubai and Chairman of the Dubai Free Zones Council (DFZC). This shows Dubai's focus on making business regulations easier.

- A big highlight was when Louis Vuitton, the global fashion brand, became the first company to use this passport. In just five days, it expanded from its warehouse in Jebel Ali Free Zone (JAFZA) to open an office in the Dubai

World Trade Centre Free Zone (DWTC Free Zone) using one license.

Key Points:-

- (i) The Dubai Free Zones Council also linked this initiative with the Dubai Economic Agenda D33, which targets doubling Dubai's GDP by 2033 through attracting global businesses and increasing trade.
- (ii) To make the process smooth, the government has launched a digital single-window platform. Companies can apply online, pay fees, and get approvals within five working days, thanks to technology integration.
- (iii) Major free zones like DMCC (Dubai Multi Commodities Centre), JAFZA, Dubai Silicon Oasis (DSO), and DIFC (Dubai International Financial Centre) are all part of this passport program, creating a unified system for licensing and compliance.

BANKING & FINANCE

1. SEBI Extended Timeline for Implementation of Margin Pledge-Repledge Framework to October 10, 2025.



In August 2025, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) announced the

extension of the implementation timeline for the margin pledge-repledge framework. The new date for compliance has been shifted from September 1, 2025 to October 10, 2025, providing additional time for market participants to adapt.

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) issued this revised deadline through a circular under powers granted by Section 11(1) of the SEBI Act, 1992, read with Regulation 30 of Chapter VII of SEBI (Stock Brokers) Regulations, 1992. The objective of this extension is to ensure smoother implementation, reduce misuse of client securities by brokers, and maintain a transparent transaction trail.

- The framework was originally introduced in June 2025, mandating that all margin obligations in equity and derivatives segments must be discharged exclusively through the depository system of pledges and re-pledges. This mechanism ensures client securities are not misused by brokers and provides a secure pay-in process.

- A major feature of the framework is automated invocation, under which once a client's margin-pledged securities are invoked, they are immediately blocked for early pay-in within the client's demat (dematerialised) account. This automation eliminates the risk of delay and ensures a clear audit trail in the transaction cycle.

Key Points:-

- (i) SEBI also introduced a new feature called Pledge Release for Pay-in, which allows pledged securities to be released instantly and the pay-in block to be set up in the demat account of the client. This reduces the need for multiple manual instructions and enables seamless compliance through

the depository system.

(ii) The move is expected to significantly reduce the misuse of pledged securities by brokers and improve investor confidence. Depositories have also been directed to create the required functionality for smooth execution of this process.

(iii) Once fully implemented, brokers will no longer be required to issue separate electronic instructions for un-pledging and delivery, as the system itself will validate and complete the transaction obligations automatically.

2. BoM and SBI Card Launch 'Bank of Maharashtra SBI Card' on RuPay and Visa.



In August 2025, the Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) in collaboration with SBI Cards & Payment Services Limited (SBICPSL), a subsidiary of the State Bank of India (SBI), launched a co-branded credit card named 'Bank of Maharashtra SBI Card'. The initiative aims to provide customers across India with enhanced value, convenience, and a rewarding shopping experience.

- The newly launched credit card is introduced as part of a strategic partnership between BoM and SBICPSL to cater to diverse financial and

lifestyle needs. The card will enable both domestic and international acceptance through RuPay and Visa networks.

- The Bank of Maharashtra SBI Card will be available in three variants – ELITE, PRIME, and SimplySAVE – to serve customers from different income and lifestyle segments. Each variant comes with tailored features, reward programs, and spending benefits.

- The partnership emphasizes providing cardholders with multiple benefits such as accelerated reward points, surcharge waivers, discounts on travel and dining, utility bill payment facilities, and enhanced shopping offers. This ensures value addition to daily as well as premium spending categories.

Key Points:-

(i) By launching this co-branded card, both institutions are leveraging their financial expertise and wide customer base to expand the adoption of digital payments in India.

(ii) It also aligns with the government's broader goal of promoting cashless transactions and increasing the use of indigenous payment platforms like RuPay.

(iii) The initiative reflects BoM's commitment to strengthening customer engagement through innovative banking products, while SBICPSL continues to strengthen its position as a leading credit card issuer in India with strategic banking tie-ups.

SPORTS

1. Bhavina Patel Clinches Top Medals at ITTF World Para Events in USA, Becomes World No.1 in Women's Singles.



In August 2025, Indian para table tennis star Bhavina Hasmukhbhai Patel, who also serves as an Assistant Director at the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), Regional Office, Ahmedabad, secured remarkable victories at the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) World Para Events in Spokane, Washington, United States of America (USA). Her achievements brought global recognition to Indian para sports.

- At the ITTF World Para Future event, held between 6th to 8th August 2025, Bhavina Patel won the Silver Medal in the Women's Singles Class 4-5 category. This event featured upcoming para table tennis talents and provided an international platform for competitive excellence.
- She followed this with an outstanding performance at the ITTF World Para Elite event, conducted from 9th to 13th August 2025, also in Spokane. Competing against some of the strongest players in the world, Bhavina Patel clinched the Gold Medal in the Women's Singles Class 4-5 category, underlining her consistency and determination.
- These back-to-back victories allowed Bhavina Patel to rise to the World No. 1 position in the Women's Singles Class 1-5 category of para table

tennis. This is a historic achievement for India, highlighting the growing stature of Indian athletes in global para sports.

Key Points:-

- (i) Bhavina Patel has been one of India's most successful para table tennis players, earlier winning a Silver Medal at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics in the Women's Singles Class 4 event. Her recent triumphs further add to her legacy as a pioneer of Indian para sports at the global stage.
- (ii) Her dual role as an ESIC officer and international athlete also reflects the support extended by Indian institutions towards para athletes. Patel's journey emphasizes the importance of inclusivity, resilience, and government-backed support in nurturing world-class talent from India.

AWARDS

1. Manika Vishwakarma Crowned Miss Universe India 2025.



On 18th August 2025, Manika Vishwakarma from Sri Ganganagar, Rajasthan, was crowned Miss Universe India 2025 in a grand finale held in Jaipur. She will represent India at the 74th Miss Universe pageant scheduled for November 2025 in Thailand.

- Manika Vishwakarma received the crown from Rhea Singha, Miss Universe India 2024. Other winners included Tanya Sharma (Uttar Pradesh) as 1st Runner-up, Mehak Dhingra (Haryana) as 2nd Runner-up, and Amishi Kaushik (Haryana) as 3rd Runner-up.

- The event featured 48 contestants from across India, including states like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Odisha, West Bengal, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, and Delhi.

Key Points:-

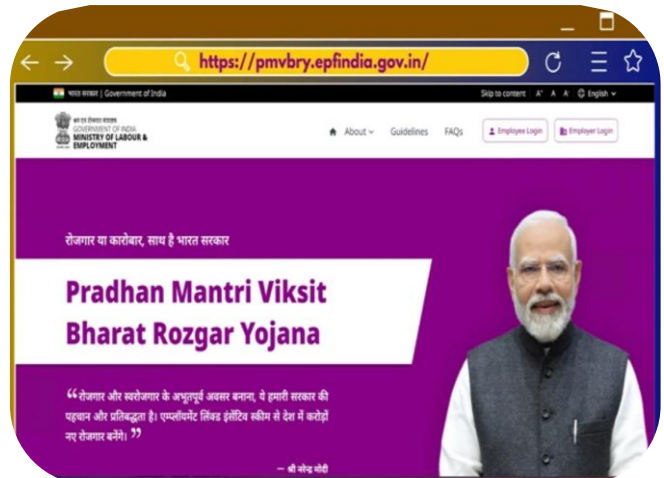
(i) The finale was judged by a distinguished panel including Nikhil Anand (Miss Universe India owner), actress Urvashi Rautela, Rhea Singha (Miss Universe India 2015), and filmmaker Farhad Samji, along with Rajiv K Srivastava, founder of Act Now Foundation.

(ii) Organized by the Glamanand Group, the competition also highlighted Manika's initiative, Neuronova, which focuses on spreading awareness about neurodivergence and disorders such as ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and Dyslexia.

(iii) A 22-year-old graduate in Political Science and Economics from New Delhi, Manika is also a trained classical dancer recognized by Lalit Kala Academy and JJ School of Arts, Mumbai. She previously won the Miss Universe Rajasthan 2024 title before achieving this national crown.

App and Web Portal

1. Government of India Launches PM-VBRY Portal to Boost Employment and Social Security.



On August 18, 2025, the Government of India (GoI) launched the dedicated PM-VBRY portal, an Employment-Linked Incentive (ELI) scheme, to streamline registrations for employees and employers and provide seamless access to financial and social security benefits under the program.

- The Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PM-VBRY) was approved by the Union Cabinet in July 2025 under Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi. With a budget of ₹99,446 crore, it formally rolled out on August 01, 2025, to boost employment and skill development.

- PM Narendra Modi announced PM-VBRY during his 79th Independence Day address on August 15, 2025, at Red Fort, New Delhi. He highlighted the scheme's significance in creating jobs, especially in the manufacturing sector, and enhancing social security across industries.

- Implemented as a Central Sector Scheme (CSS), PM-VBRY aims to generate new employment opportunities, enhance employability, and strengthen social security. The scheme emphasizes equitable growth, skill development, and inclusive employment in both urban and rural areas of India.

Key Points:-

(i) PM-VBRY targets the creation of over 3.5

crore new jobs from August 01, 2025, to July 31, 2027. Approximately 1.92 crore of these positions are for first-time employees, aiming to boost workforce participation and provide long-term financial security.

(ii) The Ministry of Labour & Employment (MoL&E) oversees PM-VBRY implementation through the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO). The ministry ensures registrations, monitors compliance, and manages distribution of Employment-Linked Incentives (ELI) for both employers and employees under the scheme.

(iii) The PM-VBRY portal (<https://pmvbry.epfindia.gov.in/> or <https://pmvbry.labour.gov.in/>) allows one-time registration for employers and access to scheme benefits. Part-A provides monthly support to first-time employees, while Part-B assists employers with provident fund contributions, ensuring worker social security.

Portal, a single-window online platform aimed at simplifying the registration process for newspapers and periodicals. The initiative seeks to improve transparency, accelerate approvals, and enhance ease of doing business for publishers across India.

- The Press Sewa Portal was introduced to address challenges faced by publishers, including lengthy registration processes and administrative bottlenecks. By providing a single-window solution, the portal ensures faster approvals and greater transparency in the registration process, helping newspapers and periodicals operate more efficiently.

- The announcement was made at a workshop titled 'Vartalap', organized by the Press Information Bureau (PIB), Hyderabad, under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB), Telangana. The event brought together stakeholders from the publishing sector to discuss improvements in the registration process and promote ease of compliance.

Key Points:-

2. PRGI Launched 'Press Sewa Portal' to Simplify Newspaper and Periodical Registration.



In August 2025, the Press Registrar General of India (PRGI), Yogesh Baweja, recently announced the launch of the Press Sewa

(i) During the event, Shruti Patil, Additional Director General (ADG) of PIB Hyderabad, highlighted that with the support of PIB Hyderabad and PRGI, a dedicated helpline will be launched for publishers. This helpline aims to provide real-time assistance and resolve queries related to the registration process efficiently.

(ii) PRGI Yogesh Baweja emphasized that the Press Sewa Portal is part of the government's broader effort to promote digital governance and reduce administrative hurdles. By leveraging technology, the portal is expected to significantly improve the experience for publishers while ensuring compliance with

legal and procedural requirements.

(iii) The launch of the Press Sewa Portal represents a key step in modernizing India's publishing ecosystem. By streamlining the registration process and providing digital support, the portal strengthens transparency, efficiency, and accountability, thereby fostering growth and innovation in the media and publication sector.

IMPORTANT DAYS

1. World Mosquito Day is observed on 20 August 2025.



World Mosquito Day is observed annually on 20 August to honour the groundbreaking 1897 discovery by Sir Ronald Ross that malaria is transmitted through the bite of female *Anopheles* mosquitoes. The day focuses on raising awareness about mosquito-borne diseases that continue to threaten global public health.

● On 20 August 1897, working in Secunderabad, India, Sir Ronald Ross identified the malaria parasite within a mosquito's gut, definitively proving that mosquitoes carry and transmit human malaria. He later declared this date as "Mosquito Day"—the precursor to World Mosquito Day. The observance gained formal

global recognition starting in the 1930s as medical communities worldwide embraced Ross's discovery.

● The day serves as an annual reminder of the ongoing burden of mosquito-borne illnesses like dengue, chikungunya, Zika virus, Japanese encephalitis, and malaria. These diseases place immense pressure on healthcare systems, especially in monsoon-prone regions.

● Despite some progress, universal vaccines remain elusive, making prevention and awareness essential.

Key Points:-

(i) The global theme for World Mosquito Day 2025 is "Accelerating the Fight Against Malaria for a More Equitable World." This underscores the urgent need to ensure equitable access to malaria prevention, diagnosis, and treatment in underserved communities worldwide.

(ii) On this day, global health organizations, governments, and communities conduct education campaigns, clean-up drives, and awareness sessions. Emphasis is placed on protective measures—eliminating stagnant water, using repellents, wearing protective clothing, and installing window screens. The day helps turn scientific breakthroughs into tangible public health action.

(iii) In India, monsoon season fuels the surge of vector-borne infections, especially in densely populated urban and rural regions. Despite control efforts, outbreaks remain frequent, driven by warm, humid conditions that support large mosquito populations. The lack of widespread immunization further underscores the importance of awareness and grassroots intervention.

2. World Humanitarian Day 2025 observed on August 19.



World Humanitarian Day (WHD) 2025 was observed globally on 19 August 2025 to honor humanitarian workers, including those who lost their lives or were injured while helping vulnerable communities. The observance also marks the anniversary of the 2003 attack on the United Nations (UN) headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq.

- The 2025 observance marks the 22nd anniversary of the 2003 Baghdad attack, in which 22 people, including UN Special Representative Sérgio Vieira de Mello, lost their lives. The theme for 2025 is “Strengthening global solidarity and empowering local communities.”
- The campaign for World Humanitarian Day was launched in 2010 by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to highlight the contributions and sacrifices of humanitarian workers worldwide.

Key Points:-

(i) On 11 December 2008, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Resolution A/RES/63/139, officially

designating 19 August of every year as World Humanitarian Day.

(ii) The first official observance of World Humanitarian Day took place on 19 August 2009, establishing an annual global tradition of honoring humanitarian service and sacrifice.

3. World Photography Day is observed 19 August, 2025.



World Photography Day, also called World Photo Day, is observed every year on August 19 to celebrate the history, art, science, and impact of photography. It also commemorates the invention of early photographic processes and honors photographers worldwide.

- World Photography Day is celebrated as a tribute to the invention of the daguerreotype, the first practical photographic process developed by Louis Daguerre in 1837. The day highlights photography as a universal medium of communication.
- The official theme for 2025 is “My Favourite Photo”, encouraging people across the world to share their most cherished images and memories captured through photography.

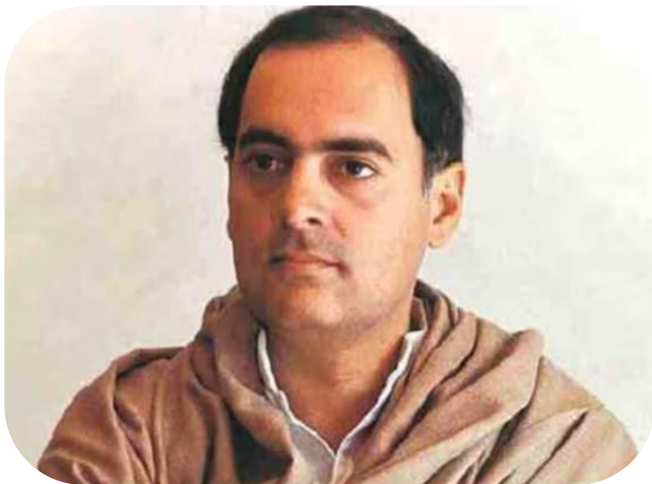
Key Points:-

(i) The term 'photography', meaning 'drawing with light', was first coined in 1839 by British scientist Sir John Herschel. That same year, the invention of the daguerreotype was officially announced by the French Academy of Sciences.

(ii) In 2009, the idea of observing World Photography Day annually was formally proposed to honor the art and science of photography. The first official global observance was held on 19th August 2010.

(iii) For 2025, a two-week long World Photography Week will be held from 12th to 26th August 2025, engaging photographers, institutions, and enthusiasts in exhibitions, campaigns, and educational programs worldwide.

4. Sadbhavana Diwas Observed Annually on 20 August to Honor Rajiv Gandhi's Legacy of Harmony.



Every year on 20 August, India observes Sadbhavana Diwas (also known as Harmony Day) to commemorate the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. This day reinforces his vision for peace, national integration, and communal harmony, while

calling citizens to uphold goodwill and unity across diverse communities.

- **Sadbhavana Diwas was first officially observed on 20 August 1992, a year after Rajiv Gandhi's assassination in 1991. The initiative was launched to honor his commitment to national cohesion and to perpetuate his ideals of peace and inclusivity.**

- The term "Sadbhavana" translates to "goodwill" or "good faith". Observing this day highlights the importance of fostering empathy, tolerance, and harmony among people of different faiths, cultures, and regions, aiming to strengthen India's social fabric.

- **Rajiv Gandhi, India's youngest Prime Minister (1984–1989), was known for his progressive outlook, emphasis on technological advancement, educational reform, and efforts to modernize governance. Sadbhavana Diwas reflects his enduring legacy of unity, systemic modernization, and nation-building.**

Key Points:-

(i) Sadbhavana Diwas is marked by a range of activities including interfaith prayers, cultural performances, seminars, tree-planting drives, and public pledges. These initiatives are organized across schools, colleges, and institutions to spread the message of peace and communal harmony.

(ii) Instituted in 1992 by the All India Congress Committee, the Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana Award honors individuals or organizations contributing significantly to communal harmony, peace, and national integration. The award carries a cash prize of ₹10 lakh along with a citation.

DEFENCE

1. India Approves ₹62,000 Crore Deal for 97 Tejas Mark 1A Jets to Strengthen IAF Fleet.



On August 19, 2025, India's Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved a ₹62,000 crore deal to procure 97 Tejas Mark 1A Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) for the Indian Air Force (IAF). The acquisition is poised to significantly bolster indigenous aerospace strength and phase out ageing MiG-21s.

- This approval marks the second major order for Tejas Mark 1A jets after an earlier deal for 83 aircraft worth approximately ₹48,000 crore in 2021. With this new purchase, IAF's total Tejas Mark 1A fleet will rise to 180 aircraft, reinforcing the domestic aerospace manufacturing ecosystem.

- The Tejas Mark 1A boasts over 65% indigenous content, involving more than 500 small and medium enterprises nationwide. Equipped with AESA radar, advanced avionics, EW systems, and in-flight refuelling capabilities, the aircraft exemplify India's growing self-reliance in defence technology.

Key Points:-

(i) This acquisition is strategically timed as the IAF plans to phase out its ageing MiG-21

fleet by September 2025. The new Tejas Mark 1A aircraft will take on crucial roles in air defence and precision strike, supporting India's regional security posture.

(ii) Following the announcement, defence-oriented stocks such as Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) rallied up to 3.5%, reflecting investor optimism. HAL, the principal manufacturer, is expected to ramp up production at its Nashik facility to meet delivery timelines between 2025 and 2032.

Static GK

WHO	Founded: 7 April 1948	Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland
National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)	Chairman : Santosh Kumar Yadav	Headquarters: New Delhi
Airports Authority of India	Chairman : Vipin Kumar	Headquarters: New Delhi
SEBI	Chairperson: Tuhin Kanta Pandey	Headquarter : Mumbai
Indian Air Force (IAF)	Deputy Chief of the Air Staff (DCAS): Air Marshal Awadhesh Kumar Bharti	Headquarters: New Delhi
West Bengal	Chief minister: Mamata Banerjee	Governor: C. V. Ananda Bose