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National News

PM-SETU Expanded Across 200 ITI Clusters with ₹1,237.58 Crore Investment

The Government of India approved the nationwide expansion of **PM-SETU** (Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs) across all **200 identified ITI clusters**, with strategic investment plans worth **₹1,237.58 crore**. The approval came at the 4th National Steering Committee meeting chaired by **Debashree Mukherjee**, Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, which also cleared five new ITI clusters across Odisha, Gujarat and Telangana with private-sector anchor partners.

Ministry of Education Releases UDISE+ 2025-26 Report

The Ministry of Education released the **UDISE+ (Unified District Information System for Education Plus) 2025-26** report on 7 July 2026. The number of teachers rose **8.3% to 1,02,73,020**; secondary-level Gross Enrolment Ratio improved to **71.7%** (from 68.5%), and dropout rates declined across all levels — secondary down to 7.0% from 8.2%.

Agriculture Minister Launches PRAGATI Initiative for 20 Lakh Farmers

Union Agriculture Minister **Shivraj Singh Chouhan** launched **PRAGATI** (Promoting Regenerative Agriculture Through Agri-Entrepreneurship Initiative) in New Delhi. It aims to empower **20,000 agri-entrepreneurs** and support **20 lakh smallholder farmers** across eight states, targeting at least a **30% rise in farmers' income** and 15–20% higher yields of major crops.

Tribal Affairs Ministry Launches 'Tribex' Digital Learning Platform

Union Tribal Affairs Minister **Jual Oram** launched **Tribex**, a first-of-its-kind digital learning platform for tribal arts, culture and traditional knowledge, at the National Workshop on Strengthening Tribal Research Institutes in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. It currently hosts **20 free certificate courses**, and an MoU with Sampurnanand Sanskrit University (Varanasi) will add UGC-recognised PG diploma programmes.

Mizoram's Natural History Museum Notified as India's 21st Designated Repository

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change notified the **Natural History Museum, Mizoram University, Aizawl** as India's **21st Designated Repository** under Section 39 of the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**. Located in the Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot, the museum preserves over 500 specimens and will document endemic species with BSI and ZSI.

Sirsa Kinnow Becomes Haryana's First Exclusive GI-Tagged Fruit

The Geographical Indication Registry granted a **GI tag to Sirsa Kinnow**, making it Haryana's first fruit with such recognition. India's total GI-tagged products now stand at **822**, with 125 registered between April 2025 and March 2026 — Madhya Pradesh leading with 26.

UP Cabinet Approves Renaming of Jalalabad as Parashurampuri

The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet, chaired by CM Yogi Adityanath, approved renaming **Jalalabad town** (Shahjahanpur district) as **Parashurampuri**, citing its significance as the believed birthplace of Lord Parashuram. The Cabinet also cleared the UP Startup Policy and a new Data Centre Policy.

International News

UNCTAD World Investment Report 2026: India 11th-Largest FDI Recipient

UNCTAD's **World Investment Report 2026** ("International Investment in a Turbulent Era") ranked India the world's **11th-largest FDI recipient**, up two places, with inflows surging about **44% to \$38.89 billion** in 2025. Global FDI rose 6% to **\$1.6 trillion**; the USA (\$277 bn), Singapore (\$151 bn) and Hong Kong (\$116 bn) led inflows. India also climbed to 18th among source economies with outflows of \$35.66 billion.

India Participates in Inaugural UN Global Dialogue on AI Governance in Geneva

Union MoS **Kirti Vardhan Singh** led the Indian delegation at the inaugural **UN Global Dialogue on AI Governance** in Geneva (6–7 July 2026), reaffirming India's '**AI for All**' vision. The forum, created under UNGA Resolution 79/325, was co-chaired by Rwandan President **Paul Kagame** and Salesforce CEO **Marc Benioff**, with ITU chief Doreen Bogdan-Martin as Vice-Chair.

UK Labour Leadership Contest Formally Opens

Nominations for the UK Labour Party leadership election **opened on 9 July 2026** and will close on 16 July, following Prime Minister **Keir Starmer's resignation** as party leader announced on 22 June 2026. The contest will decide Britain's seventh Prime Minister in a decade.

News Related to Indian Banking and Finance

RBI Approves Mahesh Muralidhar Pai as MD & CEO of South Indian Bank

The Reserve Bank of India approved the appointment of **Mahesh Muralidhar Pai**, currently Chief General Manager at Canara Bank, as **MD & CEO of South Indian Bank** for three years from **1 October 2026**. He succeeds **P. R. Seshadri**. RBI also approved the re-appointment of **N. S. Vishwanathan** as Non-Executive (Part-time) Chairman of **Axis Bank** for three years from 27 October 2026.

GIFT City Signs MoU with Vietnam's Da Nang Financial Centre

GIFT City, India's International Financial Services Centre, signed an MoU with the **Vietnam International Financial Center–Da Nang (VIFC-DN)** in New Delhi to promote cross-border investment, fintech cooperation and capacity building. GIFT City also signed MoUs with Tata Communications (for Global Capability Centres) and CEPT University.

Bank Credit Grows at Fastest Pace in Nearly Two Years

RBI data showed bank credit expanded **17.65% year-on-year** as of 31 May 2026 — the fastest in almost two years — while deposits grew 12.21%, widening the credit-deposit growth gap to **544 basis points**. Separately, RBI has temporarily withdrawn the interest-rate ceiling on fresh FCNR(B) deposits of 3–5 year tenors until 30 September 2026.

Adani's Kutch Copper Wins LME Certification

Kutch Copper Limited, an Adani Enterprises subsidiary, secured **London Metal Exchange (LME) certification** for its 'Adani Copper' Grade A cathodes, eligible for delivery against LME copper futures from **10 July 2026** — placing the brand among the world's leading copper brands.

News Related to International Banking and Finance

US Fed Minutes: Rate Held at 3.5–3.75%, Nine Officials See a 2026 Hike

Minutes of the US Federal Reserve's June 16–17 FOMC meeting, released on **8 July 2026**, showed a unanimous **12-0 vote to hold the federal funds rate at 3.5%–3.75%**. The dot plot revealed **nine of 18 officials** expect at least one rate hike before end-2026. Chair **Kevin Warsh**, speaking earlier at the ECB Forum in Sintra, said inflation remains “too high”.

NPCI's Dilip Asbe Joins SWIFT Supervisory Board

Dilip Asbe, MD & CEO of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), was appointed to the **Supervisory Board of SWIFT** (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication) — a recognition of India's growing weight in global payments infrastructure.

International Sports Events

Wimbledon 2026: All-Czech Women's Final Set

In the women's semi-finals on 9 July, **Karolina Muchova** saved a match point to beat two-time Grand Slam champion **Coco Gauff 6-2, 1-6, 7-6(12-10)**, while 21-year-old **Linda Noskova** defeated Marta Kostyuk 6-4, 6-4 — guaranteeing a first-time champion in an **all-Czech final**. Men's semi-finals, featuring Alexander Zverev and surprise semi-finalist Arthur Fery, are on 10 July.

FIFA World Cup 2026: France Beat Morocco to Reach Semi-Finals

France defeated Morocco in the opening quarter-final at Gillette Stadium, Boston on 9 July, with Kylian Mbappé leading the side into the semi-finals. Remaining quarter-finals: **Belgium vs Spain** (10 July, SoFi Stadium), Norway vs England and Argentina vs Switzerland (11 July).

Former Afghanistan Pacer Shapoor Zadran Passes Away at 38

Shapoor Zadran, the left-arm fast bowler who took 80 international wickets (44 ODIs, 36 T20Is) and hit the winning runs in Afghanistan's first-ever World Cup victory (vs Scotland, 2015), passed away in New Delhi at the age of 38 on 7 July 2026.

Major National or International Appointments

Alok Kumar Mittal Appointed DG of BPR&D;

Alok Kumar Mittal, a 1993-batch IPS officer of Haryana cadre, was appointed **Director General of the Bureau of Police Research & Development (BPR&D)**, with tenure up to 30 June 2029.

Rear Admiral (Retd.) C. Raghuram Takes Charge as CMD of Hindustan Shipyard

Rear Admiral (Retd.) **Chadracharan Raghuram** assumed charge as **Chairman and Managing Director of Hindustan Shipyard Limited**, Visakhapatnam.

Sourav Ganguly Named Brand Ambassador of InsuranceDekho

Insurtech platform **InsuranceDekho** appointed former India captain and ex-BCCI President **Sourav Ganguly** as brand ambassador, launching its '**Khul Kar Khelo**' campaign to empower insurance advisors.

Resignation or Dismissal

P. R. Seshadri to Step Down as South Indian Bank MD & CEO

P. R. Seshadri will step down as MD & CEO of South Indian Bank, remaining in office until **30 September 2026**, after which RBI-approved successor Mahesh Muralidhar Pai takes charge.

Starmer's Exit Moves Forward: Labour Nominations Open

Following **Keir Starmer's resignation** as UK Labour leader, formal nominations for his successor opened on **9 July 2026** (closing 16 July). Earlier, Defence Secretary John Healey and Armed Forces Minister Al Carns had resigned over defence-spending disputes.

Major Inventions and Discoveries

ISRO Clears CE20 Cryogenic Engine Hot Test for LVM3-M7

ISRO successfully conducted the flight-acceptance **hot test of the CE20 cryogenic engine** for the **LVM3-M7** mission at IPRC Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu, on 6 July 2026. The engine ran at 19.5 tonnes thrust for 45 seconds and 22 tonnes for 25 seconds, and was tested for the first time with the new **Nozzle Protection System (NPS)**, which simplifies high-altitude testing.

AI Simulation Speeds Up Modelling of Neutron-Star Mergers

Researchers unveiled an **AI-based simulation** (reported 8 July 2026) that dramatically accelerates modelling of how **neutron-star mergers** forge many of the universe's heaviest elements — alongside progress on quantum detectors designed to probe fundamental cosmic mysteries.

Practice Questions (SSC / Bank PO Pattern)

Q1. The PRAGATI initiative launched by Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan aims to directly support how many smallholder farmers?

- (A) 10 lakh
- (B) 15 lakh
- (C) 20 lakh

(D) 25 lakh

Q2. Who has been approved by RBI as the new MD & CEO of South Indian Bank, effective 1 October 2026?

(A) P. R. Seshadri

(B) Mahesh Muralidhar Pai

(C) N. S. Vishwanathan

(D) Dilip Asbe

Q3. As per UNCTAD's World Investment Report 2026, India ranked at which position among global FDI recipients in 2025?

(A) 9th

(B) 10th

(C) 11th

(D) 13th

Q4. 'Sirsa Kinnow', which recently received a GI tag as the state's first exclusive fruit GI product, belongs to which state?

(A) Punjab

(B) Haryana

(C) Rajasthan

(D) Himachal Pradesh

Q5. The Wimbledon 2026 women's singles final will be contested between Karolina Muchova and Linda Noskova. Both players belong to which country?

(A) Poland

(B) Ukraine

(C) Slovakia

(D) Czech Republic

Answer Key — Q1: (C) 20 lakh | Q2: (B) Mahesh Muralidhar Pai | Q3: (C) 11th | Q4: (B) Haryana | Q5: (D) Czech Republic