DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 26-07-2025

NATIONAL NEWS

Film and Television Institute of India Partnered with Maharashtra Government

The Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), Pune, and the Maharashtra Film, Stage and Cultural Development Corporation Limited (MFSCDCL), Mumbai signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance skill development in film, media, and entertainment sectors across Maharashtra, marking a strategic step toward nurturing India's creative economy.

The agreement was exchanged between Smt. Swati Mhase-Patil (MFSCDCL) and Shri Dhiraj Singh (FTII), in the presence of key dignitaries including Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis, Minister Adv. Ashish Shelar, and FTII Chairman R. Madhavan.

Objective is to promote short-term courses in filmmaking, television production, and technical fields using FTII's academic expertise and MFSCDCL's infrastructure.

Inclusive Skill Development courses to be conducted at MFSCDCL centres in Goregaon, Kolhapur, Prabhadevi, and Karjat.

It is aimed at empowering students from rural areas with formal training and certified career pathways.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

United States Announces Withdrawal from UNESCO

The United States (US) has announced its decision to withdraw from UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) again, citing misalignment with national interests and alleged anti-Israel rhetoric.

The withdrawal comes two years after rejoining in 2023 under President Joe Biden, following an earlier exit in 2018 during Donald Trump's presidency.

According to State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce, the decision is due to UNESCO's push to "advance divisive social and cultural agendas."

A major concern for the U.S. was UNESCO's recognition of the "State of Palestine" as a member,

which it views as contrary to U.S. foreign policy and as promoting anti-Israel narratives.

This will be the third U.S. withdrawal from UNESCO, and the second during Donald Trump's leadership. The exit will be implemented by December 2026.

UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay expressed regret over the decision and rejected accusations of anti-Israel bias, citing UNESCO's work on Holocaust education and combating anti-Semitism.

The U.S. withdrawal may significantly affect UNESCO financially, as the U.S. has been a major contributor, but UNESCO has stated it is prepared for the consequences.

BANKING

Hong Kong Monetary Authority Fines Indian Overseas Bank's Hong Kong Branch

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) penalised the Hong Kong branch of Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) for money laundering and counter-terrorist financing violations.

The penalty amount is HK$850,000 (around ₹9.3 crore).

IOB was directed to review transaction alerts generated by its transaction monitoring system.

IOB must submit a remedial plan to address the violations.

Shriram Life Insurance Collaborates with ESAF Small Finance Bank

Shriram Life Insurance Company (SLIC) has partnered with ESAF Small Finance Bank to expand the reach of life insurance products.

Under the partnership, ESAF Bank will act as a corporate agent for Shriram Life, distributing insurance through its branch network.

The focus is on first-time insurance buyers, low-income families, and rural households.

ESAF Small Finance Bank received its banking licence from RBI in November 2016 and started operations on March 10, 2017.

DEFENCE

Indian Army Receives First Batch of Apache Helicopters

from the United States

The Indian Army received the first batch of Apache AH-64E attack helicopters from the United States on July 22, 2025, at Hindon Airbase.

This batch includes three advanced combat helicopters, part of a $600 million deal signed in 2020 for six Apache helicopters.

The helicopters will be deployed in Jodhpur with the Army Aviation Corps.

Prior to deployment, the helicopters will undergo a Joint Receipt Inspection.

The Apache helicopters will enhance operational effectiveness, especially along the Western Border and in challenging terrains.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh called it a milestone moment and reaffirmed commitment to modernising the Armed Forces.

The delivery came after a 15-month delay from the original schedule of May 2024, due to supply chain disruptions.

The next batch of three helicopters is expected by November 2025.

The delivery follows a phone call between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and U.S. Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth, discussing ongoing and future defence cooperation.

RANKS, INDICES & REPORTS

India to Overtake China as World’s Top Cotton Producer by 2034

According to the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2025–2034, India’s cotton production is set to surpass China’s by 2034, driven by significant productivity improvements rather than expansion of cultivated area.

India’s cotton output is projected to grow at around 2 % per year through 2034, outpacing the global average of 1.3 %.

Total world cotton production is expected to reach 29.5 million tonnes by 2034.

The 2024–25 season cotton output is estimated at 25.68 million tonnes (International Cotton Advisory Committee).

India will account for 30 % of the global increase in cotton production over the next decade, with Brazil (27 %) and the United States (23 %) following.

AWARDS & PRIZES

International Mathematical Olympiad

Alphabet's Google and OpenAI AI models won gold medals at the International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO), marking a significant breakthrough in AI math capabilities.

This is the first time AI systems crossed the gold-medal scoring threshold at the IMO, a prestigious global competition for high-school students.

Both AI models solved 5 out of 6 problems using general-purpose reasoning models that interpret mathematical concepts in natural language, unlike previous AI approaches.

OpenAI's model used a new experimental approach involving massively scaling up test-time compute, allowing the AI to think longer and use parallel processing to explore multiple lines of reasoning simultaneously.

OpenAI described this as a very expensive computational process.

Google's model, called Gemini Deep Think, operated entirely in natural language and solved problems within the official 4.5-hour time limit.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Chairman of Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation

Ashok Chaudhary has been elected as the new Chairman of the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), which owns the Amul

Gordhan Dhameliya has been elected as the new Vice-Chairman of GCMMF.

Ashok Chaudhary is also the Chairman of Mehsana District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union Ltd (Dudhsagar Dairy).

Gordhan Dhameliya is the Chairman of Rajkot District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union Ltd.

Ashok Chaudhary replaces Shamal Patel, and Dhameliya replaces Valamji Humbal.

The election was held in Anand, Gujarat, and attended by heads of 18 district cooperative milk unions.

Both positions were filled unanimously for a term of 2.5 years.

SPORTS

FISU World University Games 2025

India achieved a significant milestone at the FISU World University Games 2025 in Berlin, Germany, by winning its first-ever badminton medal — a bronze in the mixed team event.

In a parallel success, Indian swimmer Srihari Nataraj broke a long-standing national record in the men's 100m freestyle

India secured bronze in the mixed team badminton event after a 3-1 semifinal defeat against Chinese Taipei.

Devika Sihag earned India's only point in the tie by defeating Huang Ching Ping in the women's singles.

In the quarterfinal, the Indian team, led by Sathish Kumar Karunakaran, beat Malaysia 3-2, ensuring a historic podium finish.

In swimming, Srihari Nataraj clocked 49.46 seconds in the men's 100m freestyle, qualifying for the semifinals.

He broke the 16-year-old Indian record of 49.47 seconds, previously held by Virdhawal Khade at the 2008 Guangzhou Asian Games.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Drowning Prevention Day

Observed annually on 25 July, World Drowning Prevention Day is a United Nations-recognized observance aimed at raising awareness about drowning, a neglected but preventable public health issue.

Drowning leads to an estimated 236,000 deaths every year, with children, adolescents, and individuals in low- and middle-income countries being the most affected.

The United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution A/RES/75/273 in April 2021, officially designating July 25 as World Drowning Prevention Day.

The declaration was prompted by the WHO's Global Report on Drowning, which highlighted drowning as one of the top 10 causes of death among children aged 5–14 years.