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PART I · HEADLINES TO ECONOMY

Saturday, 01 August 2026

§1 · TOP 11 HEADLINES

1. President grants assent to Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Act, 2026 **GS2**
2. Supreme Court: PMLA bank-account freeze needs "reasons to believe," not mere suspicion **GS2**
3. Lok Sabha passes Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Bill, 2026 **GS2**
4. India and Bhutan sign ₹4,000 crore concessional Line of Credit agreement **GS2**
5. Engine Factory Avadi completes 500-hour endurance test of indigenous UTD-20 engine **GS3**
6. Indian Navy concludes participation in RIMPAC 2026, the world's largest maritime exercise **GS3**
7. Union Cabinet approves "Samudra Manthan" — ₹84,084 crore National Offshore Exploration Scheme **GS3**
8. India's Manufacturing PMI eases to 53.9 in July 2026 **GS3**
9. Species in News: the Dugong, India's rare marine grazer **ENV**
10. Places in News: Delhi, Thimphu, Avadi, Pearl Harbor, Kakinada and Gulf of Mannar feature today **ENV**
11. Rajya Sabha adjourned till August 3 amid Opposition protests over student-march police action **GS2**

§2 · POLITY & GOVERNANCE

GS2

Governance · Examination Reform

31 July 2026 · Source: PIB / Legacy IAS Academy PIB Summaries

President Grants Assent to Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Act, 2026

Why in News: The President of India granted assent on July 31, 2026 to the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Act, 2026, completing its enactment after both Houses of Parliament cleared it — the Bill now stands as law, introducing stricter penalties and Special Fast Track Courts for examination malpractice.

Background: The parent 2024 Act was enacted after a spate of high-profile paper leaks; the 2026 Amendment, passed by the Lok Sabha (July 29) and Rajya Sabha (July 30), had awaited Presidential assent as its final legislative step before commencement.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Presidential assent granted July 31, 2026 — the Bill is now a fully enacted Amendment Act.
- Mandates time-bound investigations and trials, and creates Special Fast Track Courts for exam-malpractice offences.
- Completes the three-stage legislative process: Lok Sabha (Jul 29) → Rajya Sabha (Jul 30) → Presidential assent (Jul 31).
- Amends the parent Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024.

💡 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: remember the "three-day, three-stage" sequence — Jul 29 (Lok Sabha) → Jul 30 (Rajya Sabha) → Jul 31 (assent) — a clean example of how a Bill becomes an Act within days once both Houses agree.

📄 **PYQ LINKAGE**

GS2 (recurring): "Legislative process — stages of a Bill becoming an Act; examination integrity reforms."

 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Act, 2026 received Presidential assent on: (a) July 29 (b) July 30 (c) July 31 (d) August 1. **Answer: (c).**

GS2

Public Examinations Act

Presidential Assent

Fast Track Courts

GS2

Money Laundering · Due Process

31 July 2026 · Source: LiveLaw

Supreme Court: PMLA Bank-Account Freeze Needs "Reasons to Believe," Not Mere Suspicion

Why in News: A bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Sheel Nagu dismissed the Enforcement Directorate's plea against a Delhi High Court ruling that an order freezing a bank account under Section 17(1A) of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 cannot rest on mere "suspicion" and must instead be backed by "reasons to believe."

Background: Section 17(1A) empowers PMLA authorities to freeze property/accounts during investigation; courts have periodically had to clarify the evidentiary threshold for such coercive action to prevent arbitrary or premature freezing of assets before any finding of guilt.

 KEY FACTS

- Bench: Justices Dipankar Datta and Sheel Nagu; ruling dated July 31, 2026, dismissing the ED's plea.
- Upheld the Delhi High Court's interpretation of Section 17(1A), Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA).
- Freeze orders require documented "reasons to believe," a higher evidentiary threshold than mere "suspicion."
- Reinforces procedural safeguards against arbitrary use of PMLA's coercive powers.

 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: remember "suspicion whispers, belief must show its work" — "reasons to believe" requires documented material justifying the freeze, unlike a bare, unrecorded "suspicion."

 PYQ LINKAGE

GS2 (recurring): "PMLA — safeguards against arbitrary enforcement action; judicial review of investigative powers."

 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. Section 17(1A) of the PMLA, 2002 concerns: (a) Arrest procedure (b) Freezing of property/bank accounts (c) Bail conditions (d) Appellate jurisdiction. **Answer: (b).**

GS2

PMLA

Enforcement Directorate

Due Process

GS2

Civil Registration · Governance

31 July 2026 · Source: India TV News

Lok Sabha Passes Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Bill, 2026

Why in News: The Lok Sabha passed the Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Bill, 2026 by voice vote on July 31, 2026, amid continuing Opposition protests over an unrelated matter, updating India's civil registration framework.

Background: The parent Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969 governs mandatory registration of births and deaths across India; periodic amendments have sought to digitise records and expand the uses of birth/death certificates as a single proof-of-date-of-birth document across government services.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Passed by Lok Sabha, July 31, 2026, by voice vote without extended debate.
- Amends the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969.
- Part of a broader push to digitise and standardise civil registration records nationally.
- Passed amid Opposition protests over alleged police action against students during a July 20 Parliament march — an unrelated procedural backdrop.

💡 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: remember "1969 Act registers the event, 2026 Amendment digitises the proof" — the original Act mandated registration; recent amendments focus on making that registration data usable as a single digital identity/date-of-birth proof.

📄 PYQ LINKAGE

GS2 (recurring): "Civil registration systems and their role in governance and welfare delivery."

🎯 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. The Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Bill, 2026 amends an Act originally enacted in: (a) 1955 (b) 1969 (c) 1972 (d) 1986.
Answer: (b).

GS2

Civil Registration

Parliament

Governance

§3 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

GS2

Neighbourhood · Development Cooperation

31 July 2026 · Source: MEA / Bilateral Press Release

India and Bhutan Sign ₹4,000 Crore Concessional Line of Credit Agreement

Why in News: India and Bhutan signed a concessional Line of Credit worth ₹4,000 crore (Nu 40 billion) on July 31, 2026, to support Bhutanese development projects in infrastructure, health and education under India's Neighbourhood First policy.

Background: India has been Bhutan's largest development partner and trading partner for decades, funding successive Five-Year Plans and major hydropower projects; Lines of Credit are a standard instrument through which India extends concessional financing for partner-country infrastructure.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Line of Credit signed July 31, 2026: ₹4,000 crore (Nu 40 billion).
- Targets infrastructure, health and education sector projects in Bhutan.
- India remains Bhutan's largest trade and development partner, with a long history of funding Bhutanese Five-Year Plans.
- Part of India's "Neighbourhood First" policy framework for South Asian development cooperation.

💡 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: remember "Bhutan gets grants and LoCs, others mostly get LoCs" — India's Bhutan partnership uniquely combines direct grant assistance with Lines of Credit, reflecting its historically closer bilateral relationship compared to other neighbours.

📄 PYQ LINKAGE

GS2 (recurring): "India's Neighbourhood First policy — Lines of Credit and development partnerships."

 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. The July 2026 India-Bhutan Line of Credit agreement was valued at: (a) ₹2,000 crore (b) ₹4,000 crore (c) ₹6,000 crore (d) ₹8,000 crore.

Answer: (b).

GS2

India-Bhutan

Line of Credit

Neighbourhood First

§4 · DEFENCE & SECURITY

GS3

Defence Indigenisation

31 July 2026 · Source: Indian Defence News

Engine Factory Avadi Completes 500-Hour Endurance Test of Indigenous UTD-20 Engine

Why in News: Engine Factory Avadi successfully completed a 500-hour endurance test of the indigenous UTD-20 engine on July 31, 2026, a milestone in India's self-reliance for infantry-fighting-vehicle propulsion systems.

Background: The UTD-20 is a six-cylinder, V-type, four-stroke high-speed diesel engine producing 300 hp at 2,600 rpm, originally used to power Soviet-designed infantry fighting vehicles such as the BMP-1 and BMP-2, which form the backbone of India's mechanised infantry.

KEY FACTS

- 500-hour endurance test completed July 31, 2026, at Engine Factory Avadi (Tamil Nadu).
- UTD-20: six-cylinder, V-type, four-stroke diesel engine, 300 hp at 2,600 rpm.
- Powers Soviet-designed BMP-1 and BMP-2 infantry fighting vehicles, long central to India's mechanised infantry.
- Reduces import dependence for a critical, previously import-reliant propulsion component.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: remember "500 hours proves the engine, not just the design" — an endurance test validates sustained real-world reliability, distinct from a one-off performance trial.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 (recurring): "Defence indigenisation — Ordnance Factory Board successors and platform propulsion self-reliance."

 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. The UTD-20 engine, indigenised at Engine Factory Avadi, powers which infantry fighting vehicles? (a) BMP-1/BMP-2 (b) T-90 tanks (c) Arjun tanks (d) K9 Vajra. **Answer: (a).**

GS3

Engine Factory Avadi

UTD-20

Defence Indigenisation

GS3

Joint Military Exercise

Concluded 31 July 2026 (ran June 24 - July 31) · Source: Indian Navy / Defence Press

Indian Navy Concludes Participation in RIMPAC 2026, World's Largest Maritime Exercise

Why in News: The Indian Navy concluded its participation in RIMPAC (Rim of the Pacific) 2026 on July 31, 2026, the world's largest multinational maritime warfare exercise, hosted by the US Navy at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, involving over 30 surface warships, 5 submarines, 206 aircraft and 30,000 personnel from 29 nations.

Background: RIMPAC is held biennially and hosted by the US Pacific Fleet, bringing together navies from across the Indo-Pacific and beyond to build interoperability in maritime security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief; India's participation reflects its deepening naval engagement in the wider Indo-Pacific security architecture.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- RIMPAC 2026 ran June 24 to July 31, 2026, hosted by the US Navy at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.
- Involved 30+ surface warships, 5 submarines, 206 aircraft and roughly 30,000 personnel from 29 nations.
- RIMPAC is the world's largest international maritime warfare exercise, held biennially.
- Indian Navy's participation reflects growing engagement in Indo-Pacific maritime security cooperation.

💡 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: remember "RIMPAC is biennial and Pacific-hosted" — held every two years by the US Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, distinguishing it from India's other bilateral exercises like Malabar or Varuna.

📄 PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 (recurring): "India's naval diplomacy — major multinational maritime exercises and Indo-Pacific engagement."

🎯 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. RIMPAC, the world's largest multinational maritime exercise, is hosted biennially by: (a) Royal Australian Navy (b) US Navy at Pearl Harbor (c) Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (d) Indian Navy. **Answer: (b).**

GS3

RIMPAC 2026

Indian Navy

Indo-Pacific

§5 · ECONOMY

GS3

Energy Security · Offshore Exploration

31 July 2026 · Source: PM India / PIB / The Tribune

Union Cabinet Approves "Samudra Manthan" — ₹84,084 Crore National Offshore Exploration Scheme

Why in News: The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister, approved "Samudra Manthan" — the National Offshore Exploration Scheme — with an outlay of ₹84,084 crore through FY 2030-31, aimed at accelerating offshore oil and gas exploration using modern technology.

Background: Named after the mythological "churning of the ocean," the scheme seeks to harness India's offshore hydrocarbon potential to reduce import dependence on crude oil and natural gas, building a globally competitive offshore energy ecosystem alongside existing basins like Krishna-Godavari and Mumbai High.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Cabinet approval dated July 31, 2026; outlay ₹84,084 crore through FY 2030-31.
- Expected to add over 600 million metric tonnes of oil equivalent (MMTOE) to India's hydrocarbon reserves.
- Aims to reduce import dependence on crude oil/natural gas and build a globally competitive offshore ecosystem.
- Named after the Samudra Manthan legend — the mythological "churning of the ocean."

💡 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: remember "84,084 crore for 600 MMTOE" — pair the outlay figure with the reserve-addition target to distinguish this scheme's numbers from other energy schemes in MCQs.

 PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 (recurring): "India's energy security strategy — offshore exploration and import-substitution in hydrocarbons."

 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. "Samudra Manthan," the National Offshore Exploration Scheme, has an approved outlay of: (a) ₹52,000 crore (b) ₹68,000 crore (c) ₹84,084 crore (d) ₹1,00,000 crore. **Answer: (c).**

GS3

Samudra Manthan

Offshore Exploration

Energy Security

GS3

Economic Indicators

Released 1 August 2026, for July 2026 · Source: S&P Global / HSBC

India's Manufacturing PMI Eases to 53.9 in July 2026

Why in News: The HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) eased to 53.9 in July 2026, down from June's 54.2, indicating a moderation in the pace of private-sector manufacturing growth alongside intensifying inflationary pressures.

Background: The PMI is a survey-based indicator where a reading above 50 signals expansion and below 50 signals contraction; it is compiled monthly by S&P Global (sponsored by HSBC for India) based on new orders, output, employment, and supplier delivery times, offering a timelier read on manufacturing activity than official IIP data.

 KEY FACTS

- July 2026 Manufacturing PMI: 53.9, down from 54.2 in June 2026 — still above the 50-point expansion threshold.
- PMI is compiled by S&P Global, sponsored in India by HSBC.
- A reading above 50 indicates expansion; below 50 indicates contraction in manufacturing activity.
- The moderation coincided with intensifying inflationary pressures per the same survey.

 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: remember "50 is the line, not zero" — PMI's neutral point is 50, not 0; anything above 50 is expansion even if the number is falling month-on-month, as in July 2026.

 PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 (recurring): "Purchasing Managers' Index — methodology and significance as a leading economic indicator."

 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. A Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) reading above 50 indicates: (a) Contraction (b) Expansion (c) Recession (d) Deflation. **Answer: (b).**

GS3

Manufacturing PMI

S&P Global

Economic Indicators

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