

THEIAS AKADEMIA • MORNING EDITION • 08:00 IST

ANTIM ASSURED 100+

PART I • HEADLINES TO ECONOMY

Sunday, 26 July 2026

"The Topper's Last Read. Every Morning."

§1 · TOP 10 HEADLINES — 26 JULY 2026

1. **Kargil Vijay Diwas — 27th anniversary of Operation Vijay** — Nation pays tribute at Dras War Memorial; Shaurya Vijay Yatra (Delhi to Dras, 1,900 km) concludes today. **GS1-GS3**
2. **Assam floods: toll rises to 66** — Over 7 lakh affected across 12 districts; Sivasagar worst-hit; Central inter-ministerial team assesses damage; PM reviews situation. **GS1-GS3**
3. **PM Modi interacts with Viksit Vibrant Village Programme youth** — 400+ participants from 74 border villages across Ladakh, HP, Uttarakhand join video conference. **GS2-GS3**
4. **Supreme Court bars Navi Mumbai mall demolition** — K. Raheja Corp v. State of Maharashtra; regularisation allowed on cost payment instead of demolition. **GS2**
5. **BRICS Heads of Space Agencies meeting concludes in Bengaluru** — India's Chairship; agreement to expand Remote Sensing Satellite Constellation; BRICS Space Council discussed. **GS2-GS3**
6. **DRDO charts roadmap for ISRO's Kulasekarapattinam spaceport** — India's 2nd spaceport (Tamil Nadu) targeted for December 2026; dedicated to SSLV launches. **GS3**
7. **RBI's July 2026 Bulletin flags economic resilience** — GDP growth forecast raised to 7.6%; FDI, FPI and exports show healthy Q1 FY27 momentum. **GS3**
8. **World Mangrove Day observed** — Mangrove Society of India's 2026 theme "Inspired by Nature for Climate and Future"; Nandgaon, Maharashtra photo wins global award. **ENV**
9. **Parliament to resume Monday** — Monsoon Session Day 7 to take up pending legislative business after weekend break. **GS2**
10. **Global Eco Watch flags four India species extinctions** — Down To Earth's weekly roundup notes historical extinctions in India over past centuries. **ENV**

SAHYOG A lighter legislative Sunday but a dense GS1-GS3 news day. Sahyog Mentorship structures daily current affairs into PYQ-mapped answer banks — theiasakademia.com.

§2 · POLITY & GOVERNANCE

GS2

Judiciary · Urban Planning Law

25 July 2026 · New Delhi · Source: Supreme Court of India / PIB

Supreme Court Bars Navi Mumbai Mall Demolition — Regularisation Allowed on Cost Payment; Public Interest Test Applied

Why in News: The Supreme Court on July 25, 2026 ruled in *K. Raheja Corp. Pvt. Ltd. v. State of Maharashtra & Ors.* that demolishing a shopping mall and hotel built on a plot allotted through an irregular process would be against public interest, and instead permitted regularisation on payment of costs.

Background: The dispute concerned land use irregularities in the allotment process for the commercial complex in Navi Mumbai. Courts in India have increasingly balanced strict enforcement of planning law against the disproportionate economic and public costs of demolishing large, functioning commercial structures — a recurring tension in Indian urban-planning jurisprudence.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Case: *K. Raheja Corp. Pvt. Ltd. v. State of Maharashtra & Ors.*, 2026 LiveLaw (SC) 575.
- Core holding: demolition of an operating shopping mall/hotel built via an irregular allotment process is disproportionate and against public interest; regularisation on cost payment is the appropriate remedy.

- Legal principle applied: proportionality — courts weigh the gravity of the original illegality against the scale of disruption (jobs, public assets, third-party interests) that strict demolition would cause.
- Precedent context: contrasts with cases where the Supreme Court has ordered demolition for illegal construction (e.g., coastal zone or environmentally sensitive violations), showing courts calibrate remedies to context rather than applying a blanket rule.

🔗 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: remember the "proportionality ladder" in Indian demolition jurisprudence — (1) minor irregularity + high public cost of demolition → regularisation with penalty (this case); (2) serious environmental/safety violation + low third-party cost → demolition ordered. The same Court can reach opposite remedies depending on where a case sits on this ladder — a common Mains GS2 analytical framing.

📄 PYQ LINKAGE

GS2 (recurring): "Judicial activism and its role in urban planning and environmental governance in India." | GS2: "Discuss the doctrine of proportionality as applied by Indian courts."

🎯 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. In *K. Raheja Corp. v. State of Maharashtra* (2026), the Supreme Court held that irregular allotment of a commercial plot should be remedied through: (a) Mandatory demolition (b) Regularisation on payment of costs (c) Criminal prosecution only (d) Transfer of ownership to the State. **Answer: (b).**

GS2 Judiciary Proportionality Urban Planning Law

GS2

Border Area Development · Youth Engagement

26 July 2026 · New Delhi (Video Conference) · Source: PIB / PMO

PM Modi Interacts with Viksit Vibrant Village Programme 2026 Participants — 74 Border Villages, 400+ Youth, MY Bharat Platform

Why in News: Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacted via video conference on July 26, 2026 with participants of the Viksit Vibrant Village Programme 2026, urging India's youth to connect with grassroots border realities as part of the journey towards Viksit Bharat, and stressing self-confidence and self-reliance among young citizens.

Background: Implemented through the MY Bharat platform, the programme treats India's border villages as the nation's "first villages" rather than its "last villages" — a conceptual reframing central to the Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP), launched to reverse depopulation and under-development in strategically located border settlements.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- 2026 edition ran in two phases (June 4-30), covering 74 vibrant villages across Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand.
- 400+ youth participants selected via a nationwide online quiz that drew 3 lakh+ entries, representing every State and Union Territory.
- Delivery platform: MY Bharat — the Centre's unified youth engagement and volunteering portal.
- Conceptual shift: border villages reframed as India's "first villages," not its "last villages" — central to the Vibrant Villages Programme's strategic and developmental rationale.

🔗 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: don't confuse the Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP — border-village infrastructure/tourism/livelihood scheme, launched 2023, covering Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh) with generic border-area schemes like BADP (Border Area Development Programme, much older, broader border-district coverage). VVP is specifically about the northern land border with China; BADP covers a wider set of international borders.

📄 PYQ LINKAGE

GS2/GS3 (recurring): "Border Area Development Programme and Vibrant Villages Programme — compare objectives and coverage." | GS3: "Strategic significance of developing border villages for national security."

 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. The Vibrant Villages Programme primarily targets villages along India's border with: (a) Pakistan (b) Bangladesh (c) China (d) Myanmar.
Answer: (c) China — covering Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Ladakh.

GS2

Vibrant Villages Programme

MY Bharat

Border Development

§3 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

GS2

BRICS · Space Diplomacy

25-26 July 2026 · Bengaluru · Source: ISRO / Department of Space (PIB)

BRICS Heads of Space Agencies 2026 Concludes in Bengaluru — Remote Sensing Constellation Expansion; BRICS Space Council Proposed

Why in News: The two-day BRICS Heads of Space Agencies (HOSA) Meeting 2026, hosted by ISRO under India's BRICS Chairship, concluded in Bengaluru with an agreement to expand the BRICS Remote Sensing Satellite Constellation to new member countries and forward movement on establishing a BRICS Space Council; Union Minister Jitendra Singh attended the valedictory session.

Background: The BRICS Remote Sensing Satellite Constellation pools Earth-observation data from member states' satellites for shared use in disaster management, climate monitoring, and socio-economic planning. India's hosting of HOSA 2026 continues its push to position itself as a space-diplomacy leader, following similar space-cooperation outreach in other multilateral formats.

 KEY FACTS

- Participants: space agency chiefs and senior officials from Brazil, Russia, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, UAE and India — 26 delegates from 10 countries.
- Key outcomes: expansion of the BRICS Remote Sensing Satellite Constellation to new members; discussions on a BRICS Space Council; focus on sustainable, debris-free space operations.
- Host institutions: ISRO, IN-SPaCe (India's private space-sector regulator), and the Department of Space.
- Applications highlighted: disaster management and climate-change monitoring using pooled remote-sensing data across member states.

 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: distinguish India's three space-governance bodies — ISRO (national space agency, builds & operates missions), IN-SPaCe (regulator/facilitator for private space-sector participation, est. 2020), and NSIL (NewSpace India Limited, the commercial arm that markets ISRO's technologies and launch services). HOSA 2026 involved ISRO + IN-SPaCe + Department of Space — a three-way institutional combination worth memorising.

 PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 (recurring): "India's space diplomacy and multilateral cooperation — assess with recent examples." | GS2: "Significance of BRICS as a platform for South-South cooperation in science and technology."

 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. IN-SPaCe, which co-hosted the BRICS HOSA 2026 meeting, functions as India's: (a) National space agency (b) Private space-sector regulator and facilitator (c) Commercial satellite marketing arm (d) Defence space command. **Answer: (b).** ISRO is the national space agency; NSIL is the commercial arm; IN-SPaCe regulates and facilitates private-sector space activity.

ANTIM 2027 ANTIM 2027 Mains Programme covers India's multilateral engagement — BRICS, G20, SCO — with institution-by-institution PYQ mapping. theiasakademia.com.

§4 · DEFENCE & SECURITY

GS1

Military History · National Commemoration

26 July 2026 · Dras, Ladakh · Source: PIB / Ministry of Defence

Kargil Vijay Diwas — 27th Anniversary of Operation Vijay; Shaurya Vijay Yatra Concludes at Dras War Memorial

Why in News: India observed the 27th Kargil Vijay Diwas on July 26, 2026, commemorating the successful conclusion of Operation Vijay in 1999; the main ceremony was held at the Kargil War Memorial in Dras, Ladakh, coinciding with the conclusion of the 13-day, 1,900-km Shaurya Vijay Yatra motorcycle expedition from the National War Memorial, New Delhi, flagged off by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on July 14.

Background: The 1999 Kargil War was fought after Pakistani infiltrators occupied strategic high-altitude posts on the Indian side of the Line of Control in the Kargil sector of Jammu & Kashmir. Operation Vijay recaptured these positions over several months of high-altitude combat, concluding with a formal Indian declaration of victory on July 26, 1999.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Kargil War (1999): fought in the Kargil district, J&K, along the Line of Control; triggered by Pakistani infiltration into vacated high-altitude Indian posts during winter.
- Operation Vijay: Indian Army and Indian Air Force (Operation Safed Sagar) joint operation to recapture Tiger Hill, Tololing, and other peaks; concluded July 26, 1999 — now observed annually as Kargil Vijay Diwas.
- Shaurya Vijay Yatra 2026: 1,900-km motorcycle expedition, National War Memorial (New Delhi) to Kargil War Memorial (Dras); flagged off July 14 by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh; concluded July 26.
- Kargil War Memorial, Dras: maintained by the Indian Army; inscribed with the names of soldiers who laid down their lives; annual wreath-laying ceremony is the day's centrepiece event.

💡 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: three related "Vijay"/commemoration operations not to confuse — Operation Vijay (1961, Goa liberation) vs Operation Vijay (1999, Kargil War) vs Vijay Diwas (December 16, Bangladesh Liberation War 1971 victory). Same word "Vijay," three entirely different wars and dates — a classic Prelims trap.

📄 PYQ LINKAGE

GS1/GS3 (recurring): "Discuss the strategic lessons of the Kargil War for India's higher defence management." | GS3: "Significance of high-altitude warfare capability for India's border security."

🎯 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. Kargil Vijay Diwas, observed on July 26 every year, commemorates the conclusion of: (a) Operation Meghdoot (b) Operation Vijay, 1999 (c) Operation Parakram (d) Operation Safed Sagar alone. **Answer: (b)** — Operation Safed Sagar was the IAF's air component within the larger Operation Vijay.

GS1

Kargil War

Operation Vijay

Shaurya Vijay Yatra

§5 · SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

GS3

Space Infrastructure · SSLV

July 2026 · Kulasekarapattinam, Tamil Nadu · Source: ISRO / DRDO (PIB)

DRDO Charts Strategic Roadmap for ISRO's Kulasekarapattinam Spaceport — India's Second Launch Site, Targeted for December 2026

Why in News: DRDO has announced it is developing a strategic roadmap to utilise ISRO's upcoming Kulasekarapattinam spaceport in Tamil Nadu's Thoothukudi district, which is targeted to become fully operational by December 2026 as India's second spaceport, dedicated primarily to Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) missions.

Background: India's sole existing spaceport, Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC-SHAR) at Sriharikota, faces a southward-launch constraint due to the need to avoid overflying Sri Lanka for polar/sun-synchronous orbit missions. Kulasekarapattinam's more southerly coastal location resolves this constraint, enabling more efficient SSLV launches for the growing small-satellite market.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Location: coastal hamlet near Tiruchendur, Thoothukudi (Tuticorin) district, Tamil Nadu; India's second spaceport after SDSC-SHAR, Sriharikota.
- Capacity: up to 24 satellite launches per year via a mobile launch structure (MLS); designed for SSLVs carrying payloads up to 500 kg to ~400 km altitude.
- Facilities: 35 planned installations including a launch pad, rocket integration facilities, ground range and checkout systems.
- DRDO's interest: potential dual-use tactical value for military and surveillance launches, given the site's more efficient southward trajectory access.

💡 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: remember why India needs a second spaceport — Sriharikota's launches toward polar/SSO orbits must "dog-leg" around Sri Lanka to avoid overflying it, wasting fuel. Kulasekarapattinam's more southerly coastal position removes this constraint — a frequently tested "why here, not there" geography-meets-space-tech question.

📄 PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 (recurring): "India's growing space infrastructure — assess the need for multiple launch sites." | GS3: "Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) — significance for India's commercial space sector."

🎯 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. ISRO's Kulasekarapattinam spaceport, targeted for operation by December 2026, is located in which state? (a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Kerala (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Odisha. **Answer: (c) Tamil Nadu** — Thoothukudi (Tuticorin) district.

GS3

Kulasekarapattinam

SSLV

ISRO

Space Infrastructure

LAKSHYAM AIR1

LAKSHYAM AIR1 tracks India's expanding space infrastructure — Sriharikota, Kulasekarapattinam, and the private launch ecosystem — for GS3. theiasakademia.com.

§6 · ECONOMY

GS3

Monetary Policy · Macroeconomic Indicators

July 2026 · Source: RBI Bulletin, July 2026

RBI's July 2026 Bulletin Flags Economic Resilience — GDP Forecast Raised to 7.6%; FDI, FPI, Exports All Firm

Why in News: The Reserve Bank of India's July 2026 Bulletin assessed that India's economy remains resilient despite global uncertainty, citing healthy domestic demand, strong industrial and services activity, and rising exports; the RBI had earlier raised its FY2025-26 GDP growth forecast to 7.6% from 7.4%, while keeping its key repo rate unchanged at 5.25% for a second straight meeting.

Background: The RBI Bulletin is a monthly publication distinct from Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) resolutions — it offers macroeconomic analysis and data commentary rather than policy decisions. This edition's assessment comes against a backdrop of global trade uncertainty, making India's steady growth and capital-flow trends a notable data point for GS3 economy answers.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- GDP growth forecast for FY2025-26 revised up to 7.6% (from 7.4%); inflation projected to stay below the RBI's 4% target.
- Repo rate held at 5.25% for the second consecutive MPC meeting, with a "neutral" policy stance maintained.
- FDI (April-May 2026) higher than the same period last year; FPI turned positive in June 2026 and remained positive into July.
- Both exports and imports recorded healthy growth in Q1 FY2026-27, per the Bulletin's trade data commentary.

💡 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: don't confuse the RBI Bulletin (monthly research/data publication, no policy decisions) with MPC Resolutions (bi-monthly, actual repo-rate decisions) or the Financial Stability Report (FSR, half-yearly, systemic risk focus). All three are RBI publications but serve entirely different functions — a frequent Prelims trap on "which RBI document does what."

📄 PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 (recurring): "Analyse the factors sustaining India's growth momentum amid global economic uncertainty." | GS3: "Role of FDI and FPI in India's external sector stability."

🎯 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. As per the RBI's July 2026 Bulletin, the key repo rate was: (a) Cut by 25 bps (b) Held unchanged at 5.25% for a second straight meeting (c) Raised by 50 bps (d) Linked to a new external benchmark. **Answer: (b).**

GS3

RBI Bulletin

GDP Forecast

FDI-FPI

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