



EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JULY 15, 2026

INTERNATIONAL

India Hosts 12th BRICS Labour Ministers' Meeting in Hyderabad

- India is hosting the 12th BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting (LEMM).
- The meeting is being held in Hyderabad on 15-16 July 2026.
- It is chaired by Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya.
- The theme is "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability (BRICS)."
- Discussions focus on labour market formalisation and social security.
- Women's workforce participation and skill development are major agenda items.
- Digital Public Infrastructure for worker welfare, especially gig workers, is also discussed.
- The meeting follows the Third BRICS Employment Working Group held on 13-14 July.
- Member countries finalized a draft declaration for future labour cooperation.

India-UK CETA Comes Into Force to Boost Bilateral Trade

- The India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) came into force on 15 July 2026.
- The agreement aims to increase bilateral trade to USD 100 billion by 2030.
- Current two-way trade stands at approximately USD 55-60 billion.

- CETA provides zero-duty market access for several Indian exports.
- Major beneficiary sectors include textiles, apparel, leather, footwear, jewellery, and plastics.
- The agreement safeguards India's automobile sector through protective measures.
- It also covers EVs, hybrid vehicles, and hydrogen-powered vehicles.
- The India-UK Double Contribution Convention (DCC) benefits over 75,000 Indian professionals.
- Businesses are expected to save over USD 600 million annually through reduced social security contributions.

NATIONAL

Chennai's representative at WEF summit returns with new vision for youth

- Returning from the Global Shapers Annual Summit, an initiative of the World Economic Forum (WEF) held in Geneva earlier this month, Abhinaya Ravee Shankar, 28, says the experience has inspired her to create more opportunities for Chennai's youth, primarily to interact with decision-makers and leaders from different sectors.
- The three-day summit brought together 450 representatives from 140 countries with Ms. Shankar representing the Global Shapers Chennai Hub.
- "After my summit time at the WEF, my key learning was understanding the trends shaping our world today and the role young leaders play in responding to them," says Ms. Shankar. Among the initiatives, she hopes to launch a 'Meet the Leaders' series where young people in the city could directly interact with leaders across sectors.
- "I want to build Chennai into a youth representative voice where our perspectives are represented across local and national spaces, not just consulted after the fact," she adds. Ms. Shankar says young people from Chennai have the potential to contribute on global platforms if they build on connections and trust.
- "We already have a few projects moving at the Chennai hub especially on financial literacy, mentoring young women, and a community-driven thrift

sales project. There are plans to expand such efforts to create more avenues for young people to lead,” she adds.

STATE

T.N. Medical Services Corporation invites bids for scheme to gift gold rings to babies born in government hospitals

- The Tamil Nadu Medical Services Corporation (TNMSC) has floated a tender to x the contract rate for supply of one gram gold rings for babies born in government hospitals across the State under the Thaimaman Thanga Mothiram Thittam.
- Last month, the State government had announced that Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay will inaugurate the scheme on September 15, the birth anniversary of former Chief Minister C.N. Annadurai and a Government Order was issued. According to the order, gold rings would be procured for 4,41,667 deliveries at a total cost of 755.83 crore – 17,000 each – along with 5 crore towards administration costs.
- The scheme elicited mixed responses, with concerns raised by public health professionals and political parties, including how the funds could be better spent on strengthening healthcare. One of the contentious aspects of the scheme was the decision to entrust the TNMSC, an agency that was established in 1994-95 to ensure the availability of essential medicines in government hospitals, with the procurement of gold rings. The TNMSC has now gone ahead and floated the tender.
- As per the notification, it proposes to x a rate contract for a period of one year for supply of approximately 4,41,667 one gram gold rings (22 carat) per year. It has provided the tentative annual requirement for each hospital across all districts. The Government Medical College Hospital, Tiruvannamalai, recorded the highest projected annual requirement at 14,409, followed by the Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Hospital for Women and Children, Egmore, with 14,197 and the Government Rajaji Hospital, Madurai, with 14,149.
- For the purpose of financial bid evaluation, the benchmark gold rate for one gram of 22 carat (916) gold is fixed as 13,000, the document said.

- The ornament will be a smooth-edged baby ring suitable for newborns. The design, dimensions, and engraving pattern (if any) will be approved and finalised by the purchaser (TNMSC) prior to commencement of bulk production.
- Each ring will be securely packed in a transparent polycarbonate blister card with a tamper-evident seal. Each unit will bear a unique serial number corresponding to the batch/lot number, hallmark unique identification, and BIS Hallmark/Assay Certificate details to ensure complete traceability, the document said.
- The front side of the blister card must be embossed/printed with the Government of Tamil Nadu logo, a portrait of the Chief Minister, and the name of the scheme, it stated.

CM launches Nalam TN portal for medical funding

- Strengthening Tamil Nadu's public healthcare infrastructure and workforce, Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Tuesday launched the 'Nalam TN' portal to mobilise corporate and philanthropic funding for government hospitals, inaugurated medical infrastructure and advanced equipment worth Rs 139.47 crore, and handed over appointment orders to 2,144 healthcare personnel selected through the Medical Services Recruitment Board (MRB).
- The Chief Minister launched the digital platform at a function organised by the Health and Family Welfare Department at the Presidency College campus in the city. Designed under the Tamil Nadu Health Foundation, the portal seeks to channel Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds and voluntary contributions from charitable organisations, government medical colleges' alum and individual donors to upgrade infrastructure and medical facilities in government hospitals across the state. The platform allows donors to make secure and transparent contributions directly to hospitals of their choice.
- The initiative received its first major contributions on the day of the launch, with Caplin Point Laboratories and Apollo Hospitals committing Rs 1 crore each under their CSR programmes, while Titan Engineering and Automation contributed Rs 60 lakh towards hospital infrastructure. In a symbolic gesture, S Sathya of Chennai donated Rs 1,000 through the portal's QR-code facility to the Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Government Hospital for Women and Children, Egmore, expressing gratitude for the care she and her newborn daughter received during childbirth two years ago.

- Vijay also inaugurated new medical buildings and sophisticated healthcare equipment developed at a cost of Rs 139.47 crore. The projects include a four-storey expansion housing a 30-bed Intensive Care Unit and 180-bed general
- The initiative received its first major contributions, with Apollo Hospitals and Caplin Point Laboratories committing Rs 1 crore
- medicine wards at Government Kilpauk Medical College and Hospital, a new block at the Government Headquarters Hospital in Paramakudi, additional facilities in government hospitals at Avudaiyarkoil, Nilakkottai, Batlagundu, Pattiveeranpatti and Kariapatti, 78 newly constructed Primary Health Centres and Health Sub-Centres across the state, and advanced medical equipment procured for the Paramakudi hospital.
- On the recruitment front, the CM distributed appointment orders to 751 Assistant Surgeons, completing the latest phase of appointments to strengthen staffing at Primary Health Centres and Urban Primary Health Centres. He also issued appointment orders to 1,393 Grade-II Health Inspectors, who will serve on the frontline of the State's public health system, undertaking disease surveillance, outbreak investigations, vector control measures, environmental sanitation, drinking water quality monitoring, implementation of national health programmes and public health awareness campaigns.
- Health Minister KG Arunraj, Chief Secretary M Sai Kumar, Health Secretary Darez Ahamed, Tamil Nadu Health Systems Project Director S Uma, National Health Mission Director Aneesh Sekhar, MRB Chairperson R Alagumeena and other senior officials attended the event.

AWARD

Nandini Azad honoured with 'Bharat Samman-2026'

- Nandini Azad, president of the Working Women's Forum (India) (WWF-I) and the Indian Cooperative Network for Women (ICNW), was honoured with the 'Bharat Samman-2026' award for her outstanding contribution to women empowerment and uplift of economically disadvantaged women.
- The International Institute of Education and Management and the Economic Growth Foundation New Delhi, presented the award to her on June 21 at Dehradun, according to a press release. The WWF-I and ICNW are women-

led grassroots movements that bring together more than six lakh members in four southern States, the release said.

- Both organisations have received global recognition as models for inclusive development, with their 'gender and equity model' addressing barriers such as caste, class, and gender discrimination. They help poor women turn self-reliant with nancial inclusion, collective action, entrepreneurship, and social empowerment, the release added.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

Vice-President Releases Book on Justice B.R. Gavai's Constitutional Vision

- Vice-President C. P. Radhakrishnan released the book "The Voice of Justice: Justice Gavai Speaks."
- The event was held at Uprashtrapati Bhavan on 14 July 2026.
- The book is edited by Prof. (Dr.) S. Sivakumar.
- It is published by Thomson Reuters in collaboration with the Commonwealth Legal Education Association (CLEA).
- The book compiles speeches and reflections of former Chief Justice Justice B.R. Gavai.
- It discusses constitutional governance, judicial philosophy, social justice, and the rule of law.
- The Vice-President described the Constitution as a living document protecting democracy and citizens' rights.
- He emphasized the judiciary's role in safeguarding constitutional values.
- He also encouraged legal professionals to expand pro bono legal services for greater access to justice.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Youth Skills Day 2026

- World Youth Skills Day 2026 is observed on 15 July 2026 across the world.
- The 2026 theme is "Skills for a Shared Future."
- The day is observed under the leadership of the United Nations (UN).
- It emphasizes equipping youth with technical, digital, vocational, and life skills.

- The theme promotes lifelong learning, inclusive education, and global collaboration.
- The observance highlights the importance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).
- It encourages entrepreneurship, employability, innovation, and sustainable development.
- Special focus is given to Artificial Intelligence (AI), digital transformation, green economy skills, and soft skills.
- The day also supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through youth empowerment.

