

Monthly Policy Review

August 2025

Highlights of this Issue

[Monsoon session of Parliament concludes \(p. 2\)](#)

The monsoon session of Parliament concluded on August 21, 2025. The session had 21 sittings. 13 Bills were introduced during this session, 14 were passed, and five were referred to Committees.

[Repo rate kept unchanged at 5.5% \(p. 2\)](#)

RBI's Monetary Policy Committee voted to maintain the repo rate at 5.5%. The standing deposit facility rate, marginal standing facility rate and bank rate were also kept unchanged.

[GDP grows at 7.8% in first quarter of 2025-26 \(p.2\)](#)

Public services sector registered the highest growth in the first quarter of 2025-26 (9.8%), followed by financial, real estate and professional services (9.5%), and trade, hotels, transport, and communication (8.6%).

[The Income-Tax \(No.2\) Bill, 2025 passed by Parliament \(p.3\)](#)

The Bill replaces the Income-Tax Act, 1961. It retains most of the provisions of the Act. It mainly simplifies the language and removes redundant provisions.

[The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code \(Amendment\) Bill, 2025 introduced \(p. 3\)](#)

The Bill introduces a creditor-initiated insolvency resolution process for corporate debtors, with an out-of-court initiation process. It also provides for group insolvency and cross-border insolvency resolution.

[The Constitution \(130th\) Bill, 2025 introduced \(p. 6\)](#)

The Bill seeks to provide for removal of the Prime Minister, a Chief Minister, or any other Minister if he is detained in custody for 30 consecutive days for an offence punishable with imprisonment of five years or more.

[The Jan Vishwas \(Amendment of Provisions\) Bill, 2025 introduced \(p. 6\)](#)

The Bill amends 17 central Acts to decriminalise or rationalise certain offences and penalties. It provides for warning, censure, or improvement notices for the first offence in certain cases.

[Four Bills related to shipping and ports passed by Parliament \(p. 8\)](#)

These Bills replace the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, the Indian Ports Act, 1908, and the Carriage of Goods by Sea Act, 1925. Most of the earlier provisions are being retained.

[The Mines and Minerals \(Development and Regulation\) Amendment Bill passed \(p. 8\)](#)

Inclusion of other minerals in a mining lease will be permitted. Scope of the National Mineral Exploration Trust will be expanded to also fund development of mines, and projects in offshore areas and outside India.

[The National Sports Governance Bill, 2025 passed by Parliament \(p. 10\)](#)

The Bill sets up the National Sports Board which will recognise national sports governing bodies. It also sets up the National Sports Tribunal to adjudicate sports-related disputes.

[Bill to prohibit online money gaming passed by Parliament \(p. 11\)](#)

The Bill prohibits online money gaming and related services. The prohibition pertains to games that involve users paying money or other stakes in expectation of receiving monetary or other enrichment.

[Standing Committees of Parliament submitted reports](#)

Standing Committees of Parliament submitted various reports. These include issues related to cyber-crime, safety in civil aviation, steel scrap recycling, reservation in higher education, and food processing.

September 1, 2025

Parliament

Atri Prasad Rout (atri@prsindia.org)

Monsoon Session 2025 concludes

The Monsoon Session of Parliament was held from July 21, 2025 to August 21, 2025, with 21 sittings. During the session, 13 Bills were introduced, and 14 Bills were passed.

Three Bills were together referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses. These Bills provide for the removal of the Prime Minister, Chief Minister, and other Ministers in case of arrest and detention for serious criminal offences. Two Bills were referred to Select Committees of Lok Sabha. These are the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2025, and the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2025.

Eight Bills were introduced and passed during this session. These include: (i) the Income-Tax (No.2) Bill, 2025, (ii) the National Sports Governance Bill, 2025, (iii) the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025, (iv) the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2025, and (v) the National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill, 2025. The Income-Tax Bill, 2025, introduced during the Budget session, was withdrawn, and was replaced by the Income-Tax (No.2) Bill, 2025.

Five Bills related to ports and shipping, and a Bill to reserve seats in the Goa Legislative Assembly for scheduled tribes, which were pending from previous sessions, were also passed during this session.

For more details on the legislative business taken up during the session, see [here](#).

For details on the functioning of Parliament during the session, see [here](#).

Macroeconomic Development

Shania Ali (shania@prsindia.org)

Repo rate kept unchanged at 5.5%

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) voted to maintain the policy repo rate (the rate at which RBI lends money to banks) at 5.5%.¹ Other decisions of the MPC include:

- The standing deposit facility rate (the rate at which RBI borrows from banks without giving collateral) was kept unchanged at 5.25%.
- The marginal standing facility rate (rate at which banks borrow additional money from RBI) and the bank rate (rate at which RBI buys bills of exchange) were kept unchanged at 5.25% and 5.75%, respectively.
- The MPC decided to continue with its neutral stance.

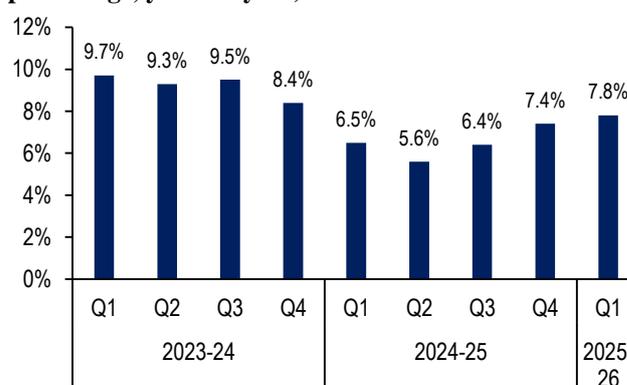
- Projection for real GDP growth for 2025-26 was retained at 6.5%.

GDP grows at 7.8% in first quarter of 2025-26

Gross Domestic Product (at constant prices) grew at 7.8% in the first quarter (April-June) of 2025-26, over the corresponding period in 2024-25.² In the first quarter of 2024-25, GDP grew by 6.5%. In the fourth quarter (January-March) of 2024-25, GDP is estimated to grow at 7.4%. Nominal GDP grows at 8.8% during the quarter, implying inflation of about 1%.

GDP across economic sectors is measured in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA). Public services sector registered the highest growth in the first quarter of 2025-26 (9.8%), followed by financial, real estate and professional services (9.5%), and trade, hotels, transport, and communication services (8.6%).

Figure 1: GDP growth at constant 2011-12 prices (in percentage, year-on-year)



Sources: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation; PRS.

Table 1: Growth in GVA across sectors in the first quarter of 2025-26, (in %, year-on-year)

Sector	Quarter 1		
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Agriculture	5.7%	1.5%	3.7%
Mining	4.1%	6.6%	-3.1%
Manufacturing	7.3%	7.6%	7.7%
Electricity	4.1%	10.2%	0.5%
Construction	9.2%	10.1%	7.6%
Trade	11.0%	5.4%	8.6%
Financial Services	15.0%	6.6%	9.5%
Public Services	9.3%	9.0%	9.8%
GVA	9.9%	6.5%	7.6%
GDP	9.7%	6.5%	7.8%

Sources: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation; PRS.

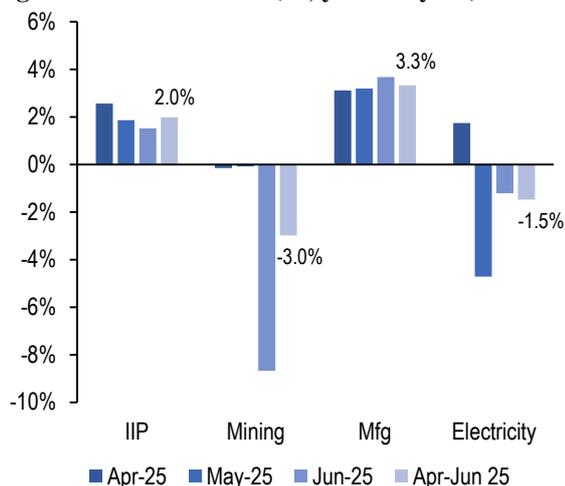
Industrial production grows by 2% in the first quarter of 2025-26

The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) grew by 2.0% in the first quarter (April-June) of 2025-26, lower than the same period in 2024-25 (an increase of 5.5%).³⁴ Note that manufacturing (78%) has the highest

weightage in the calculation of the IIP, followed by mining (14%) and electricity (8%).

Manufacturing increased by 3.3% in the first quarter of 2025-26. Both electricity and mining registered a decrease. Mining decreased by 3.0% in the first quarter of 2025-26. In the corresponding quarter of 2024-25, mining had increased by 7.9%. Electricity registered a decrease of 1.5%.

Figure 2: Growth in IIP (% , year-on-year)



Sources: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation; PRS.

Finance

The Income-Tax (No.2) Bill, 2025 passed by Parliament

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The Income-Tax (No.2) Bill, 2025 was passed by Parliament.⁵ It replaces the Income-Tax Act, 1961. This Bill was brought in place of the Income-Tax Bill, 2025 introduced in February 2025. The earlier Bill was referred to a Select Committee of Lok Sabha (Chair: Mr. Bajjayant Panda), and was subsequently withdrawn. The Income-Tax (No.2) Bill, 2025 incorporates the recommendations of the Select Committee. The Bill retains most of the provisions of the 1961 Act. It primarily aims to simplify the language and remove redundant provisions. Tax rates and regimes for individuals and corporations remain unchanged. Most definitions have been retained. There are no changes in offences and penalties. The Bill also retains the tax administration structure. The Bill proposes April 1, 2026 as the date of its commencement. Key changes include:

- **Power to frame schemes:** The Act provides for faceless collection of information and assessment of tax cases. The Bill retains these provisions. The Act also has specific provisions for faceless mechanism for areas such as: (i) inquiry or valuation, (ii) revision of orders, and (iii) collection and recovery of tax. The Bill replaces

these provisions with general powers for the central government to frame new schemes for greater efficiency, transparency, and accountability. This may be done by: (i) eliminating the interface with the assessee through technology, or (ii) optimising resource utilisation through economies of scale and functional specialisation. Such schemes must be laid before Parliament.

- **Virtual digital space:** The Act allows income tax authorities to enter and search buildings and break open locks. This can be done if certain documents or books of accounts are not produced by a person for whom a summon has been issued under the Act. The Act also empowers the authorities to inspect electronic documents. The Bill retains these provisions and also allows authorities to gain access of a virtual digital space during search and seizure proceedings. The authorities will have power to gain access by overriding any required access code. The Bill defines virtual digital space as an environment, area, or realm that is constructed and experienced through computer technology. It includes email servers, social media accounts, online investment and trading accounts, and websites for storing details of asset ownership.

For a PRS summary of the Bill, see [here](#).

The Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2025 passed by Parliament

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The Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was passed by Parliament.⁶ The Bill amends the Income-Tax Act, 1961, and the Finance Act, 2025.⁷

- **Exemptions for the Unified Pension Scheme:** The 1961 Act exempts certain payments by the National Pension System Trust from income tax. The Bill extends this exemption to the Unified Pension Scheme, which has been introduced as an option to central government employees.
- **Exemptions for the Public Investment Fund of Saudi Arabia:** The Act provides for tax exemptions on income from investments made in India by certain sovereign wealth funds. This has been extended to the fund of Government of Saudi Arabia.

For a PRS summary of the Bill, see [here](#).

The IBC (Amendment) Bill, 2025 introduced in Lok Sabha

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The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was introduced in the Lok Sabha to amend the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (IBC).^{8,9} The Code provides a time-bound process for resolving

insolvency among companies and individuals. The Bill has been referred to a Select Committee of Lok Sabha. Key changes under the Bill include:

- **Creditor-initiated insolvency resolution process (CIIRP):** The Bill provides for a CIIRP for certain categories of corporate debtors notified by the government. CIIRP may be initiated by a specified financial creditor with approval of at least 51% of financial creditors (by value of debt). The creditor initiating CIIRP must inform the debtor, and allow him at least 30 days to make representation. The debtor may also file objections before the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) against the commencement of the process. During CIIRP, management of the company will remain with the debtor, subject to oversight by a Resolution Professional.
- **Group insolvency:** The Bill empowers the central government to prescribe rules for insolvency proceedings against two or more corporate debtors that form part of a group.
- **Cross-border insolvency:** The Bill empowers the central government to prescribe the manner and conditions for administering and conducting cross-border insolvency resolution proceedings.
- **Admission of Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process:** The Bill makes it mandatory for NCLT to admit an application if the default is proven, the application is complete, and no disciplinary proceedings are pending against proposed Resolution Professional. NCLT must pass the order within 14 days of receiving the application. The Bill specifies that: (i) NCLT must record reasons in writing if no order is passed within 14 days, and (ii) records from financial institutions will be sufficient proof of default.

For a PRS summary of the Bill, see [here](#).

RBI releases a discussion paper on monetary policy framework

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The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released a discussion paper on review of the monetary policy framework.¹⁰ In May 2016, the RBI Act, 1934 was amended to mandate a flexible inflation-targeting regime, under which the central government sets a consumer price index (CPI) inflation target every five years in consultation with the RBI. In August 2016, a target of 4% inflation with a $\pm 2\%$ tolerance band was notified for 2016–21. In March 2021, the same target was retained for another five-year term ending in March 2026. A review is due by the end of March 2026. Key issues discussed by the paper include:

- **Targeting headline or core inflation:** RBI noted arguments for excluding food and fuel from inflation targeting due to their volatile nature and weak response to monetary policy. However, it

cautioned that targeting only core inflation (which excludes food and fuel prices) could erode credibility. It highlighted that almost all inflation-targeting countries focus on headline inflation.

- **Retaining or revising the 4% target:** RBI noted that 4% is the desirable inflation rate for optimal macroeconomic conditions. It observed that raising the target can be interpreted by global investors as a dilution of the framework, thereby weakening policy credibility.
- **Appropriateness of the tolerance band:** RBI suggested using threshold inflation for setting upper tolerance level. Threshold inflation is the rate above which growth is adversely impacted by inflation. The rate below which inflation can disincentivise production can determine the lower level. Many developing economies target 3–4% inflation with a 1–1.5% tolerance band.
- **Fixed target vs range-based targeting:** RBI noted that transitioning from a fixed target to range-based targeting (4–6% or 3–6%) may undermine policy credibility and diminish fiscal policy discipline.

Comments are invited by September 18, 2025.

For a PRS summary of the discussion paper, see [here](#).

RBI releases a report on framework to guide use of AI in the financial sector

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The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released the report of the Committee (Chair: Dr. Pushpak Bhattacharyya) on Developing a Framework for Responsible and Ethical Enablement of Artificial Intelligence (FREE-AI) in the financial sector.¹¹ Key recommendations include:

- **Fostering innovation:** The Committee made following key recommendations to encourage innovation: (i) establishing shared infrastructure to democratise access to data, (ii) development of indigenous financial sector-specific AI models, (iii) formulation of an AI policy to provide necessary regulatory guidance, (iv) sharing of best practices and learnings across the sector, and (v) developing a more tolerant approach to compliance for low-risk AI solutions.
- **Mitigating AI risks:** The Committee recommended implementation of a risk mitigation and AI deployment framework. It recommended: (i) expansion of approval processes for AI-enabled products, (ii) developing consumer protection frameworks and inclusion of AI-related aspects in audits, (iii) improving cybersecurity practices and incident reporting frameworks, (iv) establishment of governance frameworks across the AI lifecycle, and (v) improving consumer awareness regarding safe AI usage and consumer rights.

SEBI issues consultation papers on various subjects

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The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) released consultation papers on amendments proposed to: (i) minimum public offers (MPO) and minimum public shareholding (MPS) requirements under the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Rules of 1957, (ii) provisions on Related Party Transactions (RPT) under SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 and associated circulars, and (iii) stock broker regulations under SEBI (Stock Brokers) Regulations, 1992.^{12,13,14} Key changes proposed are:

- **MPO and MPS requirements:** MPO refers to the minimum portion of shares a company must offer to the public at the time of listing. MPS refers to the minimum level of public shareholding that must be maintained post-listing. SEBI has proposed revised market capitalisation thresholds. It has also proposed lowering MPO requirements for very large issuers. MPS timelines have also been eased, allowing up to 10 years for some large companies to reach 25% public shareholding, instead of the current five years. The 35% retail quota in IPOs will remain unchanged.
- **Related party transactions:** The proposed amendments seek to revise thresholds for determining material RPTs undertaken by listed entities and their subsidiaries. They also seek to provide relaxation in the information to be furnished to the Audit Committee and shareholders for the approval of RPTs. Amendments provide for codifying validity periods for omnibus approvals by shareholders. Omnibus approvals, in the context of RPTs, are standing approvals granted for a class of transactions that are repetitive or cannot be foreseen at the time of approval. Through these, companies can avoid the need for seeking individual approvals for each transaction. Amendments also clarify applicability of RPT provisions for certain kinds of transactions.
- **Stock broker regulations:** The proposed changes are the outcome of a working group comprising representatives from stock exchanges, brokers, legal experts, academicians, and investor associations. Key changes proposed are: (i) addition of new definitions like algorithmic trading and amendments to a few existing definitions, (ii) introducing the requirements for seeking SEBI approval for change in control and intimation of material changes besides change in control, (iii) enhanced obligations for qualified stock brokers, (iv) insertion of obligations and responsibilities of stock brokers, (v) insertion of activities restricted for stock brokers, and (vi) amendments to procedure for action in case of default and other provisions to remove inconsistency, omit

regulations that are redundant and bring parity with sub-regulations. Qualified stock brokers are large, systematically important stock brokers designated by SEBI based on their trading volumes, client numbers, assets, market impact, and governance standards. The proposed changes aim to simplify compliance, align with modern market practices, harmonise with Companies Act, 2013 and other regulations, and enhance investor protection.

Comments are invited until September 8, 2025.

Standing Committee submits report on roadmap for economic growth

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The Standing Committee on Finance (Chair: Mr. Bhartruhari Mahtab) submitted report on ‘Roadmap for Indian Economic Growth in Light of Global Economic and Geopolitical Circumstances’.¹⁵ The Committee identified 12 catalysts for growth. These include manufacturing and trade, MSMEs, agriculture, price stability, credit availability, infrastructure, and energy transition. Key recommendations made by the Committee to accelerate growth include: (i) expanding support for high-technology sectors under Production Linked Incentive schemes, (ii) diversifying investor base and promoting strategic sectors to attract FDI, (iii) deepening credit penetration for MSMEs in underserved regions, (iv) encouraging private sector participation in agri-tech, and (v) boosting deposit mobilisation through digital initiatives.

For a PRS summary of the report, see [here](#).

Standing Committee submits report on evolving role of CCI

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The Standing Committee on Finance (Chair: Mr. Bhartruhari Mahtab) submitted report on ‘Evolving Role of Competition Commission of India (CCI) in the Economy, Particularly the Digital Landscape’.¹⁶ The Committee made recommendations to enhance CCI’s effectiveness in addressing anti-competitive practices in the digital sector. Key recommendations include: (i) refining thresholds under the Draft Digital Competition Bill to avoid inadvertently regulating fast-growing domestic firms, (ii) implementing the National Competition Policy, (iii) formalising agreements for cooperation with sectoral regulators and establishing protocols for information sharing and joint action, (iv) increasing the sanctioned strength of CCI and expertise of staff in emerging technologies, and (v) considering non-price parameters such as service quality, privacy, and entry barriers to markets.

For a PRS summary of the report, see [here](#).

Law and Justice

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The Constitution (130th) Amendment Bill, 2025 introduced in Lok Sabha

The Constitution (One Hundred and Thirtieth Amendment) Bill, 2025 was introduced in Lok Sabha.¹⁷ It seeks to provide for removal of the Prime Minister, a Chief Minister of a state, or any other Minister, if he is arrested and detained in custody on account of serious criminal offences. The Bill also applies these provisions to the Union Territory (UT) of Delhi. Along with the Constitution Amendment Bill, two more Bills have been introduced to apply these provisions to UTs of Puducherry, and Jammu and Kashmir. These are: (i) the Government of Union Territories (Amendment) Bill, 2025 and (ii) the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2025.^{18,19} These three Bills have been referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee. Key features of the Bills include:

- **Grounds for removal:** The Prime Minister, a Chief Minister, or a Minister will be removed from office if: (i) he is accused of an offence punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to five years or more, and (ii) he has been arrested and detained in custody for 30 consecutive days.
- **No bar on re-appointments:** A Minister who is removed from office under these provisions, may be re-appointed after being released from custody.

For a PRS summary of the Constitutional Amendment Bill, see [here](#).

For a PRS summary of Bills applying these provisions to the UTs of Puducherry, and Jammu and Kashmir, see [here](#) and [here](#).

Bill to reserve seats for scheduled tribes in Goa Assembly passed by Parliament

The Readjustment of Representation of Scheduled Tribes in Assembly Constituencies of the State of Goa Bill, 2024 was passed by Parliament.²⁰ The Bill reserves seats in the Goa Legislative Assembly for Scheduled Tribes in proportion to the population.

For a PRS summary of the Bill, see [here](#).

Standing Committee on Home Affairs submits report on cybercrime

The Standing Committee on Home Affairs (Chair: Dr. Radha Mohan Das Agrawal) submitted its report on ‘Cyber Crime: Ramifications, Protection and Prevention’ on August 20, 2025.²¹ Cybercrime refers to an unlawful act involving the use of technology and digital systems to commit or facilitate a crime. These include crimes in the cyber space such as theft, fraud, forgery, defamation, hacking, malware distribution, and cyber terrorism. The Committee highlighted following key issues: (i) lack of a comprehensive cybercrime law,

(ii) increasing use of AI to generate misleading content, (iii) increase in mule accounts, and (iv) rise in complaints against unregistered telemarketers.

Key recommendations of the Committee include: (i) developing a cybercrime legislation which defines cyber offences and provides strong penal provisions, (ii) requiring intermediaries to compensate victims in certain cases, (iii) establishing a framework which mandates all AI-generated content to be watermarked, (iv) developing real time detection mechanisms to block unregistered telemarketers, and (v) establishing State Cybercrime Coordination Centres in all states/UTs.

For a PRS summary of the report, see [here](#).

Commerce and Industry

The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2025 introduced in Lok Sabha

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The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2025 was introduced in Lok Sabha.²² It seeks to amend 17 central Acts to mainly decriminalise or rationalise certain offences and penalties. The Bill has been referred to a Select Committee of Lok Sabha. Key changes include:

- **Decriminalising offences:** The Bill decriminalises several offences. For example, under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, driving by a person who is mentally or physically unfit to drive, is punishable with a fine. The Bill replaces the fine with a monetary penalty.
- **Removal of imprisonment term:** In some cases, the Bill removes the imprisonment for an offence. Under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009, if an owner of a government-approved test centre wilfully stamps any weight or measure in contravention of the Act, he will be liable for imprisonment up to one year, a fine, or both. The Bill removes the imprisonment term and retains fine.
- **Revision of fines and penalties:** The Bill also revises the monetary value of fines and penalties for several offences and specifies an increase by 10% of the respective minimum amount every three years.
- **Removal of penalties for first instance of an offence:** The Bill amends some Acts to provide for warnings in the first instance of an offence. For example, the Central Silk Board Act, 1948 penalises providing false information with imprisonment, a fine, or both. The Bill provides for a warning in case of the first offence.
- **Improvement notices:** Under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009, several offences, such as

manufacturing, using, or selling non-standard weights and measures, are punishable with fines. The Bill instead provides that an improvement notice may be issued in case of the first offence. Such notices require rectifying non-compliance within a specified time. Subsequent offences will be punishable with a fine.

- **Property tax and advertisement tax in New Delhi municipal area:** The Bill amends the New Delhi Municipal Council Act, 1994. The Act provides for the levy of property tax. The Bill specifies that property tax will consist of a building tax and a vacant land tax. It establishes a Municipal Valuation Committee to recommend base value for vacant lands and buildings, and manner of determining and revising property tax. It removes provisions for advertisement tax.

For a PRS summary of the Bill, see [here](#).

Cabinet approves extension of PM-SVANidhi scheme until March 2030

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The Cabinet approved the restructuring and extension of the lending period of the PM SVANidhi Scheme until March 31, 2030.²³ The scheme was announced in June 2020 to provide working capital loans at a subsidised interest rate to street vendors.²⁴ In addition to statutory towns, the scheme will now also cover street vendors in census towns and peri-urban areas. The total outlay under the scheme is expected to be Rs 7,332 crore. It aims to benefit 50 lakh new beneficiaries. Key changes include:

- **Enhanced loan amount:** Under the scheme, loans are provided in three tranches. Beneficiaries are eligible for the next loan on timely or early repayment of the previous loans. Currently, the initial working capital loan is capped at Rs 10,000. This amount has been increased to Rs 15,000. The limit for second loan has been increased from Rs 20,000 to Rs 25,000. The limit for the third tranche of loan remains unchanged at Rs 50,000.
- **UPI-linked credit card:** Beneficiaries who have repaid the second tranche of loan will be eligible to receive a UPI-linked RUPAY credit card.
- **Training:** The scheme will also focus on capacity building of street vendors through trainings on financial literacy, digital skills, marketing, entrepreneurship, and food safety and hygiene.

The PM E-DRIVE scheme extended until March 2028

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The Ministry of Heavy Industries notified the extension of the duration of PM E-drive scheme by another two years.²⁵ The scheme was notified in 2024 with an outlay of Rs 10,900 crore and was to be implemented

until March 2026. It will now be implemented until March 2028 with no additional outlay. The scheme aims to: (i) support adoption of electric vehicles, (ii) establish charging infrastructure, and (iii) build EV manufacturing ecosystem. This extension is provided primarily for e-buses, e-trucks, and testing agencies. The duration for incentives on e-two wheelers, e-rickshaws, and e-three wheelers has not been extended.

Standing Committee on Coal, Mines and Steel submits report on Steel Scrap Recycling Policy

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The Standing Committee on Coal, Mines and Steel (Chair: Mr. Anurag Singh Thakur) submitted its report on ‘Steel Scrap Recycling Policy’. The Committee recommended granting industry status to the steel scrap sector to attract investment, create jobs, and enable access to loans. It also noted limited scrap availability as a key barrier, and recommended formalising informal markets and dismantling unused vehicles to increase availability of scrap material. It highlighted the need for certification courses on scrap handling under the National Skill Development Mission. The Committee further highlighted the steel industry’s high emission intensity and recommended faster transition to scrap-based production. It recommended giving temporary preference to scrap-based steel in procurement and factoring emissions into production costs. It also recommended creating a centralised scrap database with the Ministry of Steel as nodal agency.

For a PRS summary of the report, see [here](#).

Standing Committee on Commerce submits report on Indian Leather Industry

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The Standing Committee on Commerce (Chair: Ms. Dola Sen) submitted its report on the ‘Indian Leather Industry: Current Analysis and Future Prospects’. The Committee observed some challenges in the leather industry such as shortage of quality raw materials, fragmented nature of the industry, and lack of eco-friendly leather alternatives. Key recommendations include: (i) improving leather collection and processing infrastructure, (ii) establishing central portals to organise the sector and track upskilling training, (iii) providing financial assistance to MSMEs, (iv) leveraging existing FTAs and negotiating new FTAs with potential markets such as EU and USA, and (v) establishing more treatment plants and spread awareness of processes banned in other countries.

For a PRS summary of the report, see [here](#).

Standing Committee on Commerce submits report on Commodity Boards

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The Standing Committee on Commerce (Chair: Ms. Dola Sen) submitted its report on the ‘Performance Evaluation and Review of some Commodity Boards’. It observed some issues across the Commodity Boards of Coffee, Tea, Rubber, and Spices. These include: (i) export challenges due to unreasonable standards set by importing countries and high freight charges, (ii) climate risks associated with certain kinds of plantation such as rubber, (iii) budgetary allocation not meeting the sectors’ needs and underutilisation of sanctioned funds, and (iv) low yields.

Key recommendations by the Committee include: (i) duty free import of machinery used for coffee processing, (ii) providing transport and marketing assistance for coffee and spices, (iii) establishing minimum import price for compound rubber and spices, (iv) introducing carbon credits for rubber plantation, (v) including the spices sector under the Product Linked Incentive scheme, (vi) government supported replantation programs, and (vii) ensuring sufficient funding across Boards.

Mining

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The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2025 passed by Parliament

The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2025 was passed by Parliament.²⁶ The Bill amends the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957.²⁷ Key changes include:

- **Inclusion of other minerals in a mining lease:** Under the Act, a mining lease is granted for a specific mineral. The Bill provides that lease holders may apply to the state government for adding other minerals to an existing lease. For inclusion of critical and strategic minerals, and other specified minerals, no additional amount need to be paid. For inclusion of other minerals, the lease holder must pay an amount equivalent to the royalty for that mineral. In case of auctioned mines, the lease holder must additionally pay the auction premium for the included mineral.
- **Expanding scope of National Mineral Exploration Trust:** The Act establishes the National Mineral Exploration Trust to fund mineral exploration in the country. The Bill widens the scope of the Trust to also fund development of mines and minerals. Further, it allows the usage of funds in the Trust for

exploration and development in offshore areas and outside India. Under the Act, all lessees are required to pay two percent of royalty into the Trust. The Bill increases this to three percent.

- **Removal of limit on sale for captive mines:** Under the Act, captive mines are allowed to sell up to 50% of minerals produced in a year, after meeting end-use requirements. The Bill removes the limit on sale of minerals.

For a PRS summary of the Bill, see [here](#).

Shipping and Ports

The Merchant Shipping Bill, 2024 passed by Parliament

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The Merchant Shipping Bill, 2024 was passed by Parliament.²⁸ It replaces the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958.²⁹ Key features of the Bill include:

- **Mandatory registration of vessels:** Under the Act, all sea going Indian vessels must be registered, except certain vessels which are: (i) not mechanically propelled, or (ii) weighing below 15 tons and used only for navigating Indian coasts. The Act defines vessels to include any ships, boats, sailing vessels, or other vessels used in navigation. The Bill instead requires all vessels to be registered regardless of type of propulsion or weight.
- **Ownership of Indian vessels:** The Act specifies criteria for ownership of Indian vessels. Under the Act, an Indian vessel means a vessel wholly owned by a: (i) citizen of India, (ii) company or body established by or under Indian laws with its principal place of business in India, or (iii) registered co-operative society. The Bill relaxes the criteria to also include: (i) vessels which are partly owned by above persons, and (ii) vessels wholly or partly owned by Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs).
- **Registration of certain foreign vessels:** The Bill adds that a foreign vessel chartered by an Indian person may be registered as an Indian vessel. This will apply where the ownership is intended to be transferred to the charterer after a specified period.
- **Authorities for regulation of shipping:** The Act empowers the central government to appoint the Director-General of Shipping. The government may delegate its powers and functions under the Act to the Director-General. The Act establishes Boards to advise the central government: (i) the National Shipping Board for matters related to shipping, and (ii) the National Welfare Board for Seafarers, to advise on welfare of seafarers. The Bill retains these provisions.

For a PRS summary of the Bill, see [here](#).

The Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024 passed by Parliament

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The Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024 was passed by Parliament.³⁰ The Bill regulates vessels engaged in trade within Indian coastal waters. It repeals Part XIV of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, which regulates ships other than sailing vessels engaged in trade within coastal waters.²⁹ Key features include:

- **Services to be covered under coasting trade:** Under the Act, coasting trade refers to the carriage of goods and passengers from one place or port in India to another. The Bill expands this definition to include provision of services. Services include exploration, research, and any other commercial activity, except fishing.
- **Licence for coasting trade and other purposes:** The Act requires licence for all vessels engaging in coasting trade. The Bill states that vessels wholly owned by Indian persons will not need a licence. For purposes other than coasting trade, the Bill requires licence for vessels that are not wholly owned by Indian persons. These are vessels that: (i) are hired by Indian persons, non-resident Indians or overseas citizens of India (OCIs), and (ii) are operating between Indian and international ports, or between international ports.
- **Revision of penalties:** Under the Act, engaging in coasting trade or taking a vessel to sea without a licence is punishable with imprisonment of up to six months, a fine of up to Rs 1,000, or both. The Bill increases the maximum fine to Rs 15 lakh or four times the gains from an unlicensed voyage, whichever is higher.

For a PRS summary of the Bill, see [here](#).

The Indian Ports Bill, 2025 passed by Parliament

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The Indian Ports Bill, 2025 was passed by Parliament.³¹ This Bill replaces the Indian Ports Act, 1908.³² The Act outlines the powers of the central and state governments with respect to: (i) altering port limits, (ii) safety and conservation of ports, and (iii) levy of fees and other charges. Key changes include:

- **Maritime State Development Council:** The Bill requires the central government to establish the Maritime State Development Council. The Council will issue guidelines in consultation with central and state governments on: (i) data or information to be collected by ports along with the manner of collection, updating, storage and submission to the Council, (ii) dissemination of data or information

related to ports, and (iii) ensuring transparency of port tariff. It will also make recommendations on matters related to legislative adequacy, efficiency of ports and connectivity to ports.

- **State Maritime Boards:** The Bill provides recognition to state maritime boards specified in the schedule to the Bill. Functions of the State Maritime Boards include: (i) exercising licensing functions for port infrastructure, (ii) supervision of all port works, (iii) fixing port tariff, and (iv) regulation of navigation within port limits.
- **Dispute Resolution Committee:** The Bill requires every state government to constitute a dispute resolution committee. The committee will adjudicate disputes arising between non-major ports, port concessionaires, port users, and port service providers within the state. Appeals against orders of the Committee may be made to the High Court within 60 days.
- **Tariffs:** Ports are classified as either major or non-major ports. Under the Bill, the tariff for a major port will be fixed by the: (i) Board of Major Port Authority, or (ii) Board of Directors of a port registered as a company. For non-major ports, the State Maritime Board or an authorised concessionaire will fix tariffs.

For a PRS analysis of the Bill, see [here](#).

The Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, 2024 passed by Parliament

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The Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, 2024 was passed by Parliament.³³ The Bill replaces the Indian Carriage of Goods by Sea Act, 1925.³⁴ The Act establishes the responsibilities, liabilities, rights, and immunities in case of goods carried from a port in India to another port in India or any other port in the world. The Bill retains all provisions of the Act.

For a PRS summary of the Bill, see [here](#).

External Affairs

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Prime Minister visits Japan for bilateral talks

Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi visited Japan for bilateral talks. India and Japan have developed a joint vision for the next decade.^{35,36} Key areas of cooperation agreed during the visit include:

- **Economic cooperation:** India and Japan set a target of private investment worth JPY 10 trillion in India. They also decided to: (i) review implementation of the India-Japan Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement, (ii) enhance

collaboration on payment systems, including local currency transactions, (iii) launch an India-Japan economic security initiative for strengthening supply chains in areas such as semiconductors and critical minerals, and (iv) strengthen collaboration between Indian and Japanese SMEs.³⁷

- **Security cooperation:** Both countries will enhance interoperability and synergy between their armed forces.³⁸ This includes bilateral and multilateral exercises and collaboration between special operation units. They will also strengthen co-production of defence equipment. Further, both countries will build cyber resilience and expand use of space technologies for national security.
- **Mobility and sustainability:** India and Japan will establish the Next Generation Mobility Partnership (NGMP). It aims to enhance cooperation in high-speed rail systems, decarbonisation, automobiles, and cold-chain logistics. Both countries also aim to strengthen the clean energy partnership.
- **Technology and innovation:** The two countries will promote collaboration of start-ups on open-innovation, advanced technology, data usage, and finance. They will also promote cooperation in information and communication technology through a joint working group.
- **Human resource exchange:** The two countries have set a target of five lakh personnel exchange in five years, including 50,000 skilled workers from India to Japan.

Prime Minister holds bilateral meeting with Chinese President

Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi had a bilateral meeting with Chinese President Mr Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).³⁹ Both countries emphasised on the need to develop a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution to the boundary issue for stable bilateral relations. They also highlighted the need to strengthen people-to-people ties through direct flights and visa facilitation. Further, they aim to expand bilateral trade and investment ties, and reduce trade deficit. Both countries also emphasised on expanding common ground on global issues such as terrorism and fair trade in multilateral platforms.

India and the Eurasian Economic Union sign terms of reference for a free trade agreement

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India and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) signed terms of reference to launch negotiations on Free Trade Agreement (FTA).⁴⁰ EAEU comprises Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, and the Russian Federation. The terms of reference lay down the scope and procedure for the FTA negotiations. The bilateral trade between India and

EAEU was about USD 69 billion in 2024. The proposed negotiations seek to: (i) expand market access for Indian exporters, (ii) support diversification into new sectors and geographies, and (iii) ensure benefits to MSMEs.

Standing Committee on External Affairs submits report on India's Indian ocean strategy

The Standing Committee on External Affairs (Chair: Dr. Shashi Tharoor) submitted its report on 'Evaluation of India's Indian Ocean Strategy'.⁴¹ The Indian Ocean is the third-largest oceanic division in the world. The Committee has highlighted India's strategic responsibility in the Indian Ocean Region. It noted issues such as: (i) lack of a unified Indian Ocean strategy, (ii) multiple security threats in the region, (iii) scattered engagement with littoral states of the Indian ocean region, and (iv) a fragmented approach towards bilateral and multilateral diplomacy. Key recommendations include: (i) creating a comprehensive and unified Indian ocean strategy, (ii) engaging with all 35 littoral states while catering to each country's needs and priorities, and (iii) establishing an inter-ministerial task force for improved coordination.

For a PRS summary of the report, see [here](#).

Sports and Gaming

The National Sports Governance Bill, 2025 passed by Parliament

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The National Sports Governance Bill, 2025 was passed by Parliament.⁴² The Bill provides for recognition of national sports bodies and regulate their functioning. Key features of the Bill include:

- **Governing Bodies for Sports:** The Bill provides for establishing: (i) National Olympic Committee, (ii) National Paralympic Committee, and (iii) National and Regional Sports Federations for each sport. The Bill requires these bodies to establish: (i) certain committees for their functioning, (ii) a code of ethics to govern conduct of persons such as members, affiliates, athletes, coaches, and sponsors, and (iii) a grievance redressal mechanism for complaints from such persons. The Bill specifies certain conditions such as age limit for members of executive committee of these bodies, and term limit for office bearers such as the President, the Secretary General, and the Treasurer. The Bill states that the international charters and statutes will primarily govern these bodies. In the event of a conflict with the Bill, the central government may issue clarifications.
- **National Sports Board:** The Bill empowers the central government to establish a National Sports

Board. This Board will grant recognition to national sports bodies, inquire into the welfare of sportspersons, and issue guidelines on ethics and compliance with international rules.

- **National Sports Tribunal:** The Bill provides for a National Sports Tribunal to address disputes related to sports. Appeals against its decisions will lie before the Supreme Court, except where international charters or bye-laws require appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Switzerland.
- **Elections to Sports Bodies:** The central government will establish a national panel of electoral officers to oversee elections of national sports bodies.

For a PRS summary of the Bill, see [here](#).

The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025 passed by Parliament

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The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025 was passed by Parliament.⁴³ The Bill prohibits online money games, and promotes certain other online games. Key features of the Bill include:

- **Prohibition on online money games:** The Bill prohibits offering or aiding online money games and related services. An online money game is defined as an online game that involves a user paying money or other stakes in expectation of receiving monetary or other enrichment. This is irrespective of whether the game is based on skill, chance, or both. The Bill also prohibits advertising, and facilitating financial transactions for such games. It also empowers the central government to block any information related to online money gaming services.
- **Promotion of e-sports and online social games:** The Bill empowers the central government to take steps for recognition and development of e-sports and online social games. E-sport is defined as an online game that: (i) is played as part of multisport events, (ii) is recognised under the National Sports Governance Act, 2025, (iii) has outcome determined solely by factors such as physical dexterity, mental agility, strategic thinking, or similar skills, and (iv) involves organised competitive events conducted in multiplayer format and governed by pre-defined rules. It may involve payment of registration fees and prize money. However, it must not involve placing of bets or other stakes, or expectation of any winning out of such stakes. An online social game means an online game offered solely for recreation, entertainment, or skill development. It may involve payment of subscription or one-time access fees but must not involve any stakes or monetary gains.
- **Authority on Gaming:** The central government may constitute an Authority to: (i) determine

whether an online game qualifies as an online money game, and (ii) recognise, categorise, and register online games. The central government will prescribe the composition, and terms and conditions for appointments to the Authority. It may also designate existing authorities with these powers.

For a PRS summary of the Bill, see [here](#).

The National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill, 2025 passed by Parliament

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The National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was passed by Parliament.⁴⁴ It amends the National Anti-Doping Act, 2022 which prohibits doping in sports.⁴⁵ Doping is the consumption of certain prohibited substances by athletes to enhance performance. The Act establishes: (i) the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) to enforce anti-doping rules, and (ii) the National Board to oversee NADA and advise the central government on anti-doping regulations. Key features of the Bill include:

- **Government to constitute the Appeal Panel:** The Act requires the National Board to constitute: (i) a Disciplinary Panel to determine consequences of anti-doping violations, and (ii) an Appeal Panel to hear appeals against decisions of the Disciplinary Panel. The Bill transfers the power to constitute the Appeal Panel from the Board to the central government, and empowers it to specify the manner of filing and hearing of appeals.
- **Autonomy of Anti-Doping Bodies:** The Act empowers the Board to obtain any information or issue directions to the Disciplinary Panel and Appeal Panel. The Bill removes these powers. It adds that the Director General and other members of NADA will have operational independence from: (i) any national or international sports federation, (ii) Olympic or Paralympic Committee, (iii) any government department, and (iv) any agency responsible for sports or anti-doping.
- **Only specified bodies to file appeal to CAS:** The Act allows any person to file an appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in Switzerland, against a decision of the Appeal Panel. The Bill specifies the entities that may file an appeal to CAS. These include bodies such as the World Anti-Doping Agency, the International Olympic Committee, the International Paralympic Committee, and international sports federations.

For a PRS summary of the Bill, see [here](#).

Standing Committee on Sports submits report on Sports Authority of India and Khelo India

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The Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth, and Sports (Chair: Mr. Digvijaya

Singh) submitted its report on the ‘Review of functioning and performance of Sports Authority of India (SAI) and Khelo India’.⁴⁶ SAI is the apex body responsible for promoting sports and sports excellence in the country. Khelo India is the national program for development of sports. The Committee highlighted low budget, vacancies in SAI, and a lack of infrastructure as key challenges. Key recommendations of the Committee include: (i) setting up SAI as a statutory body, (ii) targeting sports where India has the potential to win medals, and (iii) integrating sports with education from school level to higher education.

For a PRS summary of the report, see [here](#).

Energy

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Cabinet approves continuation of subsidy under Ujjwala Yojana for 2025-26

The Union Cabinet approved continuation of LPG subsidy for beneficiaries of the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) for 2025-26.⁴⁷ This scheme was launched in 2016 to provide deposit-free LPG connections to women from poor households. Beneficiaries receive a cylinder, a pressure regulator, and installation at no cost. The subsidy for LPG cylinder refills was introduced in 2022. It aims to support continued use of LPG by PMUY households by protecting them from fluctuations in international prices. Subsidy was initially set at Rs 200 per cylinder for up to 12 refills a year. It was raised to Rs 300 per cylinder in 2023. For 2025-26, the subsidy of Rs 300 per cylinder will continue, but limited to nine refills per year. The total outlay for 2025-26 is estimated at Rs 12,000 crore.

Power Ministry withdraws the uniform renewable energy tariff mechanism

The Ministry of Power has withdrawn the Uniform Renewable Energy Tariff mechanism (URET).⁴⁸ URET was introduced in 2024 for a duration of three years. This mechanism pertains to the price paid by a buyer (such as a distribution company) to the developer. These tariffs are usually decided through competitive bidding. The Ministry noted that Renewable Energy Implementing Agencies (such as NTPC) and developers have expressed concerns over procurers’ reluctance to sign power purchase agreements under URET. This was due to uncertainty about tariffs over the implementation period.

Under the URET mechanism, renewable energy projects were pooled together, and buyers would pay a uniform tariff instead of project-specific tariff.⁴⁹ The different pools included solar power pool and solar-wind hybrid pool. The mechanism aimed to address

potential impact on procurers in the context of declining bid-discovered prices.

The projects that are already bid out and awarded will continue but each project will now be treated individually at its own tariff. Implementing agencies may proceed with signing power purchase agreements for these projects.

North-Eastern Region

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Cabinet approves special development schemes for Assam and Tripura

The Union Cabinet has approved four new components under the existing central sector scheme of Special Development Packages (SDPs) for Assam and Tripura.⁵⁰ The total estimated outlay on these components is Rs 4,250 crore. These include: (i) Rs 3,000 crore for development on infrastructure in Assam, (ii) another Rs 500 crore for development of infrastructure in villages inhabited by tribals in Assam, (iii) Rs 500 crore for development of infrastructure in the North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council area of Assam, and (iv) Rs 250 crore for development of tribals of Tripura. These components have been announced as per the memoranda of settlement signed between the central government, the state government, and respective ethnic groups. These components aim to: (i) improve socio-economic conditions of vulnerable and marginalised groups, (ii) boost employment opportunities, (iii) provide education and health services, and (iv) increase tourism. These will be implemented between 2025-26 and 2029-30.

Education

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Bill to establish IIM Guwahati passed by Parliament

The Indian Institutes of Management (IIM) (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was passed by Parliament.⁵¹ It seeks to amend the IIM Act, 2017 to provide for establishing an IIM in Guwahati, Assam.

For a PRS summary of the Bill, see [here](#).

Cabinet approves the MERITE scheme

The Union Cabinet has approved the Multidisciplinary Education and Research improvement in Technical Education (MERITE) Scheme.⁵² The scheme will provide support to around 275 government or government-aided engineering and polytechnic institutions for enhancing employability. Key

interventions under the scheme include: (i) offering internship opportunities, (ii) updating curricula to align with industry requirements, (iii) organising faculty development programs, and (iv) establishing research hubs. The scheme has been approved for the 2025-30 period with an estimated outlay of Rs 4,200 crore. It will be implemented as a central sector scheme.

UGC invites comments on the draft learning outcome-based curriculum framework for undergraduate courses

The University Grants Commission (UGC) released the draft learning outcome-based curriculum framework for undergraduate courses.⁵³ It aims to serve as a model curriculum that encourages flexibility and innovation in programme design and syllabus development. The framework has been prepared for nine subjects. These are: (i) anthropology, (ii) chemistry, (iii) commerce, (iv) geography, (v) economics, (vi) home science, (vii) mathematics, (viii) physical education, and (ix) political science. It seeks to align the curricula with the National Education Policy, 2020. It also seeks to integrate Indian cultural and scientific contributions and indigenous systems of knowledge in the curricula.

Comments are invited until September 20, 2025.

Standing Committee on Education submits report on reservation in higher education

The Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth, and Sports (Chair: Mr. Digvijaya Singh) submitted its report on the 'Implementation of Article 15(5) of Indian Constitution regarding special provision for reservation to SCs/STs and OBCs in educational institutions including private educational institutions'.⁵⁴ The Committee noted that number of students from OBC, SC, and ST communities in private higher educational institutions (HEIs) is considerably low. Key recommendations of the Committee include: (i) enacting a law for implementing reservation policies in private HEIs, (ii) providing reimbursement to private HEIs for implementing reservation, (iii) providing support to private HEIs for increasing seats, and (iv) strict enforcement of anti-discriminatory measures and constitution of grievance redressal mechanisms.

For a PRS summary of the report, see [here](#).

Standing Committee on Education submits report on teacher education and training

The Standing Committee on Education (Chair: Mr. Digvijaya Singh) submitted its report on the 'Review of functioning of National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and initiatives taken to support teacher education and capacity building of teachers'. The Committee observed issues such as: (i) vacancy of officers posts and faculty in training institutes and schools, (ii) fragmented exit options under the integrated teacher education program, (iii) self-financed

structure of courses leading to affordability challenges, and (iv) lack of infrastructure in district training institutes. Key recommendations include: (i) filling vacancies through permanent recruitment by March 2026, (ii) establishing at least one district training institute and one public teacher education institution in every district, and (iii) establishing that the minimum qualification to teach pre-primary children must be 12th plus a two-year diploma degree.

For a PRS summary of the report, see [here](#).

Labour and Employment

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Comments invited on the Draft Bill to regulate private placement agencies

The Ministry of Labour and Employment invited comments on the draft Private Placement Agency (Regulation) Bill, 2025.⁵⁵ It seeks to regulate the activities of private placement agencies in India and abroad to ensure transparency and fairness in recruitment practices. Key features include:

- **Registration:** All private placement agencies must register with the government. Existing agencies must register within 180 days from commencement of the Act. For providing placement services outside India, such agencies must also obtain necessary authorisation from the Ministry of External Affairs.
- **Obligations of placement agencies:** Key obligations of registered private placement agencies include: (i) ensuring that all jobseekers and employers are registered on a specified portal, (ii) maintaining a registry of jobseekers and employers, and (iii) coordinating with other agencies for facilitating skill development, career counselling and placement.
- **Placement Support Authorities:** The central government will constitute a Central Placement Support Authority. An officer of the rank of Additional Secretary or above, or the Director General of Employment under the Ministry will serve as the head of the Authority. Key functions of the Authority include: (i) registering private placement agencies operating in more than one state/UT, and (ii) maintaining a centralised database of jobseekers and employers. It may suspend or cancel the registration of an agency upon violation of provisions under the Bill.
- The state government may designate an authority under the Labour and Employment Department to function as the State Placement Support Authority. It will be headed by an officer of the rank of the Secretary or above. Key functions of the State Authority include: (i) registering private placement agencies, (ii) preventing fraudulent practices, (iii)

facilitating data collection and analysis using the portal, and (iv) grievance redressal.

- **Offences and Penalties:** Providing placement services without registering, and engaging in fraudulent activities will be punishable with imprisonment for up to three months with fine. Failing to provide necessary information regarding job placements and non-compliance with conditions of registration will be punishable with fine and temporary suspension of registration for up to six months.

Comments are invited until September 12, 2025.

Agriculture

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Standing Committee on Agriculture submits reports on several subjects

The Standing Committee on Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, and Food Processing (Chair: Mr. Charanjit Singh Channi) submitted reports on following subjects: (i) “Development and Modernisation of Fishing Harbours”, (ii) “Role of NDDB for Protection and Development of Indigenous Cattle Breeds”, and (iii) “Initiatives taken in the Food Processing Sector under ‘Make in India’ Program”.^{56, 57, 58} Key observations and recommendations include:

- **Fishing harbours:** The Committee noted that the fisheries sector in India is growing at a higher annual average rate than the overall agriculture and allied sector. To boost growth in the sector, the Committee made the following key recommendations: (i) accelerating development and modernisation of fishing harbours and fish landing centres, (ii) increasing financial assistance offered to fishermen during the lean and fishing ban period, (iii) increasing the fleet size of deep-sea vessels, and (iv) extending benefits such as those under PM-KISAN and free electricity to fishers and fish farmers.
- **Indigenous cattle breeds:** Key recommendations of the Committee include: (i) addressing shortfalls in target achievement under the Rashtriya Gokul Mission (a scheme for development and conservation of indigenous bovine breeds), (ii) making genomic selection of indigenous cow breeds more inclusive, (iii) focusing on increasing population of indigenous cow breeds with less than 50,000 populations, and (iv) increasing output and distribution of semen stations.
- **Food processing:** The Committee observed that the food processing industry has grown at a higher annual average growth rate than the manufacturing sector between 2013-14 and 2023-24. It identified lack of adequate cold chain and storage facilities as one of the main issues in the sector. Key

recommendations of the Committee include: (i) expediting FDI approval process to incentivise investment by foreign companies, (ii) increasing FSSAI’s efforts to enhance food safety compliance, (iii) exploring blacklisting of individuals in place of units and factories in case of adulteration and non-compliance under Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, (iv) promoting participation of MSMEs on e-commerce platforms in rural and semi-urban areas, and (v) conducting an updated study to assess post-harvest losses in India.

For a PRS Summary of the report, see [here](#).

Chemical and Fertilisers

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Standing Committee on Chemical and Fertilizers submits report on fertiliser PSUs

The Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilisers (Chair: Mr. Azad Kirti Jha) submitted its report on ‘Matters pertaining to Disinvestment of Fertiliser PSUs- a review’.⁵⁹ The Committee noted delays of several years in disinvestment of certain PSUs. It also highlighted that fertiliser PSUs have old infrastructure. Key recommendations of the Committee include: (i) ensuring a time-bound process for divestment of PSUs, (ii) providing financial support to PSUs such as lower interest rates on government loans, (iii) modernising their infrastructure with monetary support from the central government, and (iv) monetising their unused assets by leasing them.

For a PRS summary of the report, see [here](#).

Standing Committee on Chemical and Fertilizers submit report on food-grade plastics

The Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilisers (Chair: Mr. Azad Kirti Jha) submitted its report on ‘Health hazards due to use of compromised or substandard quality of food-grade plastics and their exposure to extreme Indian climatic conditions’.⁶⁰ Key recommendations of the Committee include: (i) specifying an authority to check plastic contamination in food during packaging and transportation, (ii) conducting studies on the effect of plastic contamination on food, and (iii) enhancing inspection framework for food packaging.

For a PRS summary of the report, see [here](#).

Transport

Atri Prasad Raut (atri@prsindia.org)

Standing Committee on Transport submits report on safety in civil aviation

The Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture (Chair: Mr. Sanjay Kumar Jha) submitted its report on ‘Overall Review of Safety in the Civil Aviation Sector’.⁶¹ The Committee examined capacity issues in regulatory institutions such as the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and challenges related to air traffic management and operations, and safety. The Committee recommended that DGCA should be given statutory and administrative autonomy, including that for recruitment. It observed that though the DGCA has been effective in detecting safety issues, it has not been that effective in rectifying them. This has led to accumulation of unresolved issues, including those related to aircraft fitness. In case of helicopters, it recommended creating uniform national frameworks for operations, and mandating terrain-specific training and certification for pilots.

The Committee highlighted a shortage in air traffic controllers and increase in their workload. It recommended implementing a fatigue risk management system and expanding training capacity. The Committee noted that aircraft induction in the country is outpacing airport development, creating capacity mismatches at major hubs. It recommended developing a National Capacity Alignment Plan to synchronise infrastructure development with fleet expansion.

For a PRS summary of the report, see [here](#).

Standing Committee on Railways submits report on rail tunnels and bridges

The Standing Committee on Railways (Chair: Mr. C M Ramesh) submitted its fourth report on ‘Construction and Maintenance of Rail Tunnels and Bridges including Road Over Bridges / Road Under Bridges’.⁶² The Committee examined the presence of bridge monitoring systems, underwater inspection capabilities, and measures taken for environmental sustainability. The Committee recommended the Ministry to develop a database of bridges in disaster-prone areas and ensure real-time monitoring for timely warnings and preventive action. It recommended expanding the use of remotely operated robotic vehicles for inspection of underwater bridge sub-structures.

For safety in tunnels, the Committee recommended examining the possibility of providing evacuation arrangements or escape tunnels for tunnels longer than three kilometres. Taking note of delay in construction of bridges, the Committee recommended that city-specific action plans should be prepared in collaboration with state and local authorities. It observed that the Ministry should strengthen coordination with state governments for timely consent and support for land acquisition. It also recommended

considering alternative funding models such as public private partnerships for these infrastructure projects.

Rural Development

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Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj submits four reports

The Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (Chair: Mr. Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka) submitted reports on: (i) Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, (ii) Clean and Green Villages, (iii) Effective Functioning of DISHA Committees, and (iv) Gram Urja Swaraj. Key observations and recommendations by the Committee include:

- **Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana:** The Committee reviewed implementation of PMGSY, which aims to provide all weather rural connectivity. It noted that contractors often quote bids 25-30% below minimum bidding amount and recommended security deposits to safeguard road quality. The Committee also noted poor construction standards and use of substandard materials. It observed that some roads are poorly maintained despite contractors’ responsibility to maintain them for five years post construction, and recommended strict enforcement and blacklisting of defaulters. It further recommended creating designated teams for mandatory physical inspections and regular video verification for better monitoring. The Committee also recommended ensuring that roads reach unconnected habitations, not just village peripheries. It also suggested increasing road thickness to withstand heavy loads.

For a PRS summary of the report, see [here](#).

- **Clean and Green Village:** Gram Panchayat Development Plans include a “Clean and Green Village” theme that covers sanitation. The Committee noted no dedicated scheme exists under the Ministry of Panchayati Raj for this theme. It recommended launching a sanitation focused scheme with adequate funding support for Panchayats. It further recommended that a ‘clean village fund’ should be created for direct fund transfers to Panchayats. The Committee observed that the financial assistance for household latrines remains fixed at Rs 12,000 despite rising construction costs. It recommended increasing this amount and allowing Panchayats to top up from own resources. It also recommended long-term maintenance contracts for community toilets, with regular cleaning and water supply.
- **Effective functioning of DISHA Committees:** The Committee reviewed the functioning of district and state-level District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committees (DISHA

Committees) which oversee implementation of 96 central schemes across 35 Ministries. It found gaps in regularity of meetings and recommended that district committees meet every quarter and state committees meet twice a year with timely circulation of agenda and action-taken reports. It also recommended improved use of the DISHA dashboard for real-time monitoring and coordination. The Committee also recommended timely reimbursement of meeting expenses and greater involvement of local representatives, including women.

- **Gram Urja Swaraj:** The Committee recommended creation of a new scheme “Gram Urja Swaraj” to promote renewable energy in rural areas. It further suggested establishing a dedicated Rural Renewable Energy Fund to finance such initiatives. To ensure reliability, the Committee recommended enhancing the quality and durability of solar films used in installations. It also highlighted the need for upgrading battery technology to improve storage and efficiency of renewable energy systems. The Committee recommended that Panchayats should act as producers of renewable energy and sell surplus power to generate revenue. Further, it recommended training local youth in installation and maintenance of solar panels.

¹ Resolution of the Monetary Policy Committee, August 4 to 6, 2025, Monetary Policy Statement 2025-26, Reserve Bank of India, August 6, 2025,

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Communications

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Standing Committee on Communications submits report on real estate management in the Department of Posts

The Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology (Chair: Dr. Nishikant Dubey) presented its report on ‘Real Estate Management in the Department of Posts’.⁶³ The Committee observed that 83% of post offices are housed in rented buildings. It noted an uneven regional distribution in the number of new buildings. The Department holds 1,460 vacant plots, of which 276 plots are encroached. The Committee further observed that the Department has not conducted any exercise to determine the potential for monetisation of its land assets.

Key recommendations of the Committee include: (i) building low-cost postal infrastructure to reduce dependence on rental properties, (ii) involving local administration and police to prevent illegal encroachments in vacant plots, (iii) developing monetisation strategy for postal assets, and (iv) renovating and reconstructing staff quarters.

For a PRS summary of the report, see [here](#).

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