



THIS WEEK IN POLICY

Weekly Policy Digest

 VOLUME 04

 3 JULY TO 9 JULY 2026

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**THIS WEEK
AT A GLANCE**



GOVERNANCE



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At the Centre

01

MINISTRY OF HEALTH
& FAMILY WELFARE

Revised draft National Pharmacy Commission Bill, 2026 opened for public comments

The Health Ministry released the revised (second) draft National Pharmacy Commission Bill, 2026, which would repeal the Pharmacy Act, 1948 and create a modern regulator with four specialised boards. It introduces a National Exit Test (NExT) as mandatory for licensure of D.Pharm and B.Pharm graduates and a live online National Register. Public and stakeholder comments are open until 31 July 2026.

CPRG INSIGHT

Replacing a 1948-vintage law with a competency-linked exit test and a digital register is an overdue modernisation, and the open, iterative consultation is the right way to build a durable framework before Parliament.

02

MINISTRY OF CIVIL
AVIATION

Prime Minister launches Viksit UDAN, the next decade of the regional connectivity scheme

The Prime Minister launched Viksit UDAN at Jodhpur and inaugurated the airport's new terminal building, rolling out the Modified UDAN Scheme cleared by the Cabinet in March 2026 (outlay of Rs 28,840 crore over ten years). It funds 100 new aerodromes from unserved airstrips, 200 helipads, O&M support for around 441 airports and continued Viability Gap Funding, and promotes indigenous aircraft such as HAL Dhruv and Dornier.

CPRG INSIGHT

By adding airport, helipad, O&M and indigenous-aircraft support to route subsidies, the scheme fixes the route-discontinuation problem of earlier rounds, turning connectivity into a durable decade-long commitment.

03

MINISTRY OF HOME
AFFAIRS

Four States settle long-pending Narmada Award payment disputes

Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh reached a landmark settlement of long-outstanding payment issues among the Narmada Award beneficiary States, centred on cost-sharing for the Sardar Sarovar Project. The one-time settlement resolves decades-old inter-state fiscal disputes over resource allocation, rehabilitation liabilities and compensatory mechanisms.

CPRG INSIGHT

Converting a decades-old zero-sum river dispute into an agreed settlement is a practical win for cooperative federalism and de-risks operations on a major multi-state project.

04

MINISTRY OF
SOCIAL JUSTICE &
EMPOWERMENT

JEEVAN mobile app and SHATAYU dashboard launched for senior-citizen welfare

Under the Atal Vayo Abhyudaya Yojana (AVYAY), the Ministry launched the JEEVAN (Joint Elderly Empowerment & Virtual Assistance Network) app and the SHATAYU care dashboard, and added 30 more “gap” districts, extending Senior Citizen Homes coverage to 435 districts to strengthen the welfare-care system for the elderly.

CPRG INSIGHT

By combining a citizen-facing access platform with an administrative monitoring dashboard, the initiative attempts to link service delivery with real-time oversight. Its impact will ultimately depend on digital accessibility for elderly users and consistent district-level adoption of the new systems.

DIPLOMACY & EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

India & the World

05

MINISTRY OF
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Prime Minister's State Visit to Indonesia: Ganga-Mahakam Vision, defence and heritage outcomes

During the State Visit to Jakarta and Yogyakarta, the two leaders announced a five-pillar Ganga-Mahakam Vision and concluded around 20 outcomes covering critical minerals, maritime security, agriculture and health regulation. Defence ties deepened with contracts for BrahMos and an intent on Astra missiles, joint development of Sabang Port was agreed, and a Prambanan Temple conservation project and Tagore-Dewantara cultural year were launched.

CPRG INSIGHT

Pairing Sabang with India's Great Nicobar project gives the two partners complementary positions astride a critical Indo-Pacific chokepoint, a rare instance of aligned rather than competing infrastructure.

06

MINISTRY OF
SOCIAL JUSTICE &
EMPOWERMENT

Third India-Australia Annual Summit in Melbourne yields 18 outcomes

The two Prime Ministers expanded the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with 18 outcomes: a Joint Declaration on Defence and Security Cooperation with an Annual Defence Ministers' Dialogue, a Maritime Security Collaboration Roadmap, a Joint Statement on Energy Security, an administrative arrangement enabling Australian uranium supply under the Civil Nuclear Agreement, a new Cyber, Critical Technologies and Supply Chains partnership, and a decision to accelerate the CECA. Australia also agreed to repatriate three Tamil Nadu-origin artefacts.

CPRG INSIGHT

The uranium arrangement, defence declaration and CECA push mark a qualitative deepening.

07

MINISTRY OF
FINANCE

India-Israel Bilateral Investment Agreement enters into force

The India-Israel Bilateral Investment Agreement, signed in New Delhi on 8 September 2025, entered into force on 4 July 2026. It provides a secure and predictable investment framework, protects investors while preserving each state's sovereign regulatory space, and aims to boost bilateral investment and economic cooperation.

CPRG INSIGHT

A ratified BIA gives investors treaty-grade certainty and could unlock greater two-way capital flows in high-potential sectors such as agritech, water technology, cybersecurity, defence, healthcare, clean energy and advanced manufacturing

STATE POLICY & GOVERNANCE

Across the States

08

GOVERNMENT OF
UTTAR PRADESH

Uttar Pradesh notifies Startup Policy/Mission 2026 and Data Centre Policy 2026

Clearing 27 proposals, the Cabinet approved a Startup Policy with a Rs 1,000 crore fund (AKTU contributing Rs 400 crore), capital assistance up to Rs 20 lakh, a raised Rs 20,000 monthly sustenance allowance, a Startup Mission Directorate and 20 Centres of Excellence in AI, robotics, quantum and space,

CPRG INSIGHT

It signals a shift from incentive-led startup promotion to institution-building, with dedicated capital, sectoral deep-tech focus and a formal Startup Mission framework aimed at positioning the state as an emerging innovation hub.

09

GOVERNMENT OF
GUJARAT

Gujarat rolls out Viksit Gujarat Data Centre Policy 2026-29

The Chief Minister unveiled a dedicated data centre policy in Gandhinagar offering capital subsidies, power-tariff support and non-fiscal incentives to attract hyperscale data centres, AI infrastructure and digital services, targeting up to 8 GW of capacity. It leans on the state's 69 GW installed power (47 GW renewable), hubs like Dholera and GIFT City, and planned cable landing stations

CPRG INSIGHT

With UP notifying its own data-centre policy the same week, the interstate race for AI-era digital infrastructure has intensified; Gujarat's key advantage will be its renewable-heavy grid, provided it can also assure the uninterrupted, high-quality electricity that hyperscale facilities require.

10

GOVERNMENT OF
MAHARASHTRA

Maharashtra passes Women Farmers Empowerment Bill, a first in India

The Assembly unanimously passed the Maharashtra Women Farmers Empowerment Bill, 2026, legally recognising women as independent farmers regardless of land ownership and granting equal access to schemes, subsidies and credit. "Women farmer certificates" issued via gram sabhas will cover landless women across dairy, fisheries, poultry and allied sectors, backed by a State Women Farmers' Fund and a digital database.

CPRG INSIGHT

With women over 80% of the state's farm workforce yet invisible to land-title-linked schemes, decoupling "farmer" status from land is a genuinely structural reform.

11

GOVERNMENT OF
MAHARASHTRA

Chhattisgarh approves first-in-India Ease of Doing Business Bill with deemed permissions

The Cabinet cleared the Chhattisgarh Ease of Doing Business (Simplification and Facilitation) Bill 2026, the first state to legislate deemed permissions, self-certification, third-party verification and risk-based inspections alongside an Industrial Investment Promotion Bill. A GST amendment streamlines exporter refunds, the VAT Commercial Tax Tribunal is abolished, and minor Water Act offences become monetary penalties.

CPRG INSIGHT

Statutory deemed approvals shift the cost of bureaucratic delay onto the state, and decriminalising minor environmental offences extends Jan Vishwas-style trust-based governance into state law.

12

GOVERNMENT OF
KARNATAKA

Karnataka drafts its first Coastal (Coastal-Malnad) Tourism Policy 2026

The Tourism Department is finalising a dedicated Coastal-Maland Tourism Policy covering the 320-km coastline and Malnad districts, focused on cruise tourism, Blue Flag beaches, CRZ barriers and curated circuits, to be placed before the Cabinet after stakeholder review.

CPRG INSIGHT

Cruise tourism's real value lies in shore-excursion spend, so port readiness and curated circuits matter more than headline cruise numbers.

13

GOVERNMENT OF
PUNJAB

Punjab links electoral-roll (SIR) enrolment to welfare benefits

The Chief Minister announced that inclusion in the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls will be a precondition for accessing certain welfare benefits, including the Rs 1,000-1,500 monthly women's support transfers and other schemes.

CPRG INSIGHT

Tying welfare eligibility to electoral-roll participation is an unusual administrative linkage that boosts enrolment but raises questions about excluding otherwise-eligible beneficiaries.

REFERENCES

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- | | | | |
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| 02 | PIB - PM Viksit Udan | 09 | Viksit Gujarat Data Centre Policy |
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