

THIS WEEK IN POLICY

# Weekly Policy Digest

06

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THIS WEEK  
AT A GLANCE



GOVERNANCE



SUSTAINABILITY



ECONOMY



FOREIGN POLICY



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UNION GOVERNMENT & NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

# At the Centre

01

NITI AAYOG

## NITI Aayog releases the first Investment Friendliness Index

NITI Aayog released the Investment Friendliness Index 2026, the first assessment of its kind, ranking all 28 states and eight union territories across eight pillars and 84 indicators covering infrastructure, business climate, resources, government policy, regulatory ease, institutional environment, financial health and environmental resilience. Gujarat led with a score of 56.6, followed by Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Goa and Odisha. The index was announced in the Union Budget 2025-26 and prepared by Crisil under NITI Aayog’s research scheme.

**CPRG INSIGHT**

The scores cluster tightly at the top, with barely four points separating Gujarat from Odisha in fifth place, which points to a highly competitive field that the rankings do not directly reflect. What stands out more is that no state crosses 60 out of 100 on NITI's own scale, leaving even the best performers short of the benchmark the index sets for itself.

02

DEPARTMENT OF  
SPACE / INDIAN  
NATIONAL SPACE  
PROMOTION AND  
AUTHORISATION  
CENTRE

## Vikram-1 completes maiden orbital flight

Vikram-1, developed by an Indian private launch company, completed its maiden orbital flight. The vehicle is configured for the small satellite segment and represents an end-to-end privately developed launch capability, from propulsion and structures through to mission integration.

**CPRG INSIGHT**

A privately built orbital launch vehicle moves India’s space liberalisation from policy architecture to demonstrated capability, which is the transition the 2020 reforms were designed to enable. The commercial test now shifts to launch cadence and cost per kilogram, in a small-satellite market that is both crowded and acutely price-sensitive.

## 03

MINISTRY OF  
YOUTH AFFAIRS  
AND SPORTS

## National Anti-Doping Act, 2022 and Amendment Act, 2025 brought into force

The government notified the commencement of the National Anti-Doping Act, 2022 together with the National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Act, 2025, giving statutory backing to testing, results management, education, intelligence and investigations across all sports. The framework aligns India with the World Anti-Doping Code and its obligations under the UNESCO Convention against doping, and the 2025 amendment strengthens the institutional independence of the anti-doping bodies.

### CPRG INSIGHT

The delayed enforcement of the 2022 Act was tied to global concerns over governmental influence in its original governance design, which the 2025 amendment addressed by hardening institutional autonomy, so this notification completes a compliance loop rather than merely starting a law. The timing follows from that, since no country is awarded a major multi-sport event without a WADA-compliant law on the books and Ahmedabad 2030 and the 2036 bid both ride on it.

## 04

DEPARTMENT OF  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS / MINISTRY OF  
COMMUNICATIONS

## Draft Telecommunications (Television and Radio Broadcasting Services) Rules, 2026 released for consultation

The draft rules issued under the Telecommunications Act, 2023 govern authorisation for television and radio broadcasting services, covering registration conditions, obligations on service providers, and the migration of existing licences into the new authorisation regime. Public comments have been invited on the draft.

### CPRG INSIGHT

This completes the migration of broadcast carriage out of the licensing architecture inherited from the Indian Telegraph Act and into the authorisation framework of the 2023 Act.

05

OFFICE OF THE  
ECONOMIC ADVISER /  
DEPARTMENT FOR  
PROMOTION OF  
INDUSTRY AND  
INTERNAL TRADE

## Index of Core Industries rebased to 2022-23 with iron ore added as a ninth sector

A revised Index of Core Industries series with 2022-23 as the base year was released on 20 July, replacing the 2011-12 series. Iron ore has been added as a ninth core industry, taking the basket beyond the existing eight. Weights are derived from the Index of Industrial Production 2022-23 series and redistributed on a pro rata basis. The release carries provisional data for June 2026 alongside a back series covering 38 months from April 2023.

**CPRG INSIGHT**

The old 2011-12 base had the index weighting sectors by a production structure that no longer exists, and 2022-23 brings it back in step with the rebased IIP. Iron ore fills the gap upstream of steel, while gross steel output and raw coal only stop the same tonnage entering the index twice

DIPLOMACY & EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

# India & the World

06

## India and Panama sign maritime cooperation agreement

Minister Sarbananda Sonowal held bilateral talks with Panama's Foreign Minister Javier Martínez-Acha Vásquez on 22 July. Panama identified maritime security, technical cooperation between the DG Shipping and the Panama Maritime Authority, maritime skilling and digital port systems as priorities, while India pressed for faster movement on a bilateral agreement on maritime transport and port development, along with green ship recycling and seafarer welfare.

**CPRG INSIGHT**

Panama is a transit node rather than a market, so the gain sits with exporters whose cargo passes through it such as engineering goods, auto components, pharma, textiles and organic chemicals bound for the US East Coast and consumer goods entering Latin America through the Colón Free Zone. Canal transit itself is not open to bilateral bargaining, which leaves green ship recycling as the item with real weight, given Panama's share of world tonnage and Alang's exposure to it.



07

## President undertakes state visits to Moldova and North Macedonia

The President undertook state visits to Moldova and North Macedonia, the first visits at that level from India to either country. Agreements and memoranda were signed covering economic cooperation, culture, education and institutional exchange, alongside discussions on coordination in multilateral forums.

**CPRG INSIGHT**

First-ever presidential visits to two smaller European states reflect a deliberate widening of India’s European footprint beyond the large economies it has traditionally prioritised. The near-term return lies in diplomatic groundwork and multilateral alignment rather than in trade volume, which will remain modest.

08

## India accepts the WTO Fisheries Subsidies Agreement and completes its Trade Policy Review

India deposited its instrument of acceptance for the World Trade Organization Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, which disciplines subsidies contributing to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and to overfished stocks. India also underwent its periodic Trade Policy Review at the WTO during the period.

**CPRG INSIGHT**

Because the Agreement reaches only marine wild capture, the aquaculture shrimp that accounts for the bulk of India's seafood exports falls outside it, and the EEZ Rules and high seas guidelines notified in 2025 had already put in place most of what compliance requires. The consequential negotiation is the unfinished second round on overcapacity and overfishing, which India will now enter as a party to the Agreement

## STATE POLICY &amp; GOVERNANCE

# Across the States

09

GOVERNMENT OF  
MADHYA PRADESH

## Madhya Pradesh Assembly passes Uniform Civil Code Bill

The Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly passed the Madhya Pradesh Uniform Civil Code Bill, 2026 by voice vote on 21 July, amid opposition protest and demands that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee. The Code bans polygamy, triple talaq and nikah halala, sets a uniform marriageable age of 21 for men and 18 for women, makes registration of marriage, divorce and live-in relationships compulsory, and requires divorce to proceed only through judicial process. Scheduled Tribes are exempted from its purview. The Bill awaits the Governor's assent.

**CPRG INSIGHT**

By adopting the Desai committee framework wholesale, Scheduled Tribe exemption included, Madhya Pradesh is extending a working template rather than testing a new one, which lowers both drafting and litigation risk. The variable it introduces is scale, since the code has so far been administered for a state of roughly a crore and will now have to hold across a population eight times that

10

GOVERNMENT OF  
NCT OF DELHI

## Delhi Cabinet approves PARIVARTAN scheme for commercial fleet modernisation

The Delhi Cabinet on 20 July approved implementation of the Centre's PARIVARTAN scheme, administered by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, to replace ageing commercial vehicles across Delhi-NCR. Owners scrapping BS-IV or older light goods vehicles and buying new electric ones receive full motor vehicle tax exemption for ten years, a complete registration fee waiver, a five percent interest subvention and an eight percent manufacturer discount. All replacement light goods vehicles must be electric, while buses may be BS-VI CNG or electric. About 2.07 lakh truck and bus owners are expected to benefit.

**CPRG INSIGHT**

Delhi's established instrument for removing old vehicles has been the court-mandated age cap, which extinguished asset value without compensation and pushed owners towards re-registration in neighbouring states rather than towards scrapping. PARIVARTAN pays for the transition instead and since every replacement light goods vehicle must be electric, the subsidy is tied to a fuel switch rather than left to the buyer's discretion.

11

GOVERNMENT OF  
MAHARASHTRA

## Maharashtra Cabinet approves Aspirational Taluka Programme for 177 talukas

The Maharashtra Cabinet on 21 July approved the Aspirational Taluka Programme on a pilot basis for 2026-27, covering 177 talukas across ten identified districts including Gadchiroli, Nandurbar, Palghar, Beed and Parbhani, with Rs 5 crore allocated to each taluka. Performance will be assessed against 39 indicators spanning health and nutrition, education, agriculture and allied services, basic infrastructure and social development. Incentive grants will follow in 2027-28, with awards for the best-performing talukas and monitoring committees at every administrative level.

**CPRG INSIGHT**

The programme carries over the design of the central Aspirational Districts framework, with performance measured against 39 indicators and incentive grants linked to ranking, while extending coverage well beyond the 27 blocks the Centre supports in the state. The pilot structure for 2026-27 allows the framework to be assessed before wider rollout.

12

GOVERNMENT OF  
PUNJAB

Punjab Cabinet approves Integrated Innovation and Startup Centre

The Punjab Cabinet approved the establishment of an Integrated Innovation and Startup Centre at Kalkat Bhawan in Mohali, modelled on South Korea’s Pangyo Techno Valley. The centre is intended to bring incubation, research, startup acceleration and industry collaboration together under a single roof. It follows the Punjab Startup and Industrial Policy 2026, under which seed grant assistance was raised from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 5 lakh and Rs 1.07 crore was disbursed to 31 startups in June.

CPRG INSIGHT

Pangyo worked because Gyeonggi province committed roughly a thousand crore rupees to its startup campus alone over a decade and secured anchor relocations from Nexon, Kakao and SoftBank; the co-location followed the capital rather than substituting for it. Punjab’s current support runs at Rs 3 to 5 lakh per startup and Rs 1.07 crore across 31 firms, which is two orders of magnitude short of what the reference model required, and a repurposed government building supplies premises rather than the anchor tenants that made Pangyo work.

13

GOVERNMENT OF  
GOA

Goa approves Anywhere Registration for property documents

The Goa Cabinet on 22 July approved the Anywhere Registration system under the Indian Registration Act, allowing sale deeds, mortgage agreements and other registrable documents to be executed at any sub-registrar office within the district in which the property is situated, rather than only at the office holding jurisdiction over the relevant taluka. The facility will operate across all three districts, North Goa, South Goa and the newly constituted Kushawati district.

CPRG INSIGHT

The operative mechanism here is competition rather than convenience: jurisdictional monopoly is what gives a sub-registrar leverage to raise objections, and allowing a choice of offices lets registrants move to whichever raises fewest. Success will depend upon digitisation and creating appropriate guard rails



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