

THIS WEEK IN POLICY

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THIS WEEK
AT A
GLANCE



GOVERNANCE



SUSTAINABILITY



ECONOMY



FOREIGN POLICY



TECHNOLOGY

At the Centre

01

MOSPI Unveils Modernised Framework for National Accounts for Strengthening GDP Measurement and Economic Analysis

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has released "Sources and Methods for the Compilation of National Accounts Statistics", detailing the methodology behind India's revised national accounts series, rebased to 2022–23 from 2011–12. The updated framework draws on richer data sources, including corporate filings, GST records, and the ASUSE and PLFS surveys, while aligning with international statistical standards. It strengthens estimates across the corporate, financial, government, and household sectors and improves quarterly GDP, consumption, regional accounts, and supply-use tables. Developed through extensive expert consultation, the publication reflects the Ministry's commitment to more transparent, accurate economic measurement.

CPRG INSIGHT

India’s revised national accounts framework marks a significant shift toward measuring the economy through more comprehensive data. By incorporating GST records, corporate filings, administrative databases, and updated surveys, the system can better capture formalization, emerging businesses, and changing consumption patterns that older methods have missed. The new 2022–23 base year also offers a more relevant picture of today’s economic structure. Beyond improving GDP accuracy, the framework can strengthen policymaking, fiscal planning, and investor confidence.

02

Health Ministry Launches 7th National Formulary 2026 and Biovigilance Programme

Union MoS Health Smt Anupriya Patel launched the 7th National Formulary of India (NFI 2026), a key guide for rational, evidence-based prescribing covering 653 drugs, and announced the government's approval of the Biovigilance Programme of India to monitor adverse events in organ and tissue transplantation. She highlighted India’s rise from 123rd to 8th globally in WHO patient-safety database contributions, with ~1,150 ADR reporting centres now operational and plans to expand to primary healthcare. New digital tools, including NFI Online and the ADR-PvPI 2.0 app, aim to strengthen pharmacovigilance, device safety, and patient participation in reporting

CPRG INSIGHT

India's latest health push goes beyond "more reporting" to a systemic safety upgrade. The 7th NFI 2026 standardizes rational prescribing for 653 drugs, while the approved Biovigilance Programme extends surveillance to organ and tissue transplants. With ~1,150 ADR centers, expansion to primary care, and new digital tools, the system is shifting safety monitoring closer to where care actually happens. For clinicians, hospitals, and health-tech players, the new standard signals a future where prescribing, device use, and transplant outcomes are continuously informed by real-world safety data, and patients are active participants in that loop.

03

Modified UDAN: Centre Signs 21 MoUs to Expand Regional Air Connectivity

Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu launched the next phase of the UDAN scheme, signing 21 MoUs with states and union territories to strengthen aviation infrastructure and connect underserved regions. The initiative introduces a Challenge Mode portal for nominating airstrips and helipads, alongside transparent route bidding for airlines. Modified UDAN targets 120 new destinations and four crore additional passengers over the next decade. Since its launch, UDAN has operationalised 687 routes and 95 aerodromes, serving around 1.71 crore passengers. The programme focuses on affordable travel, sustainable operations, indigenous manufacturing and stronger Centre-State cooperation to drive regional growth.

CPRG INSIGHT

Modified UDAN marks a shift from subsidising individual flight routes to strategically designing India's regional aviation network. By allowing States and Union Territories to nominate underserved airstrips and helipads, the scheme places local connectivity needs at the centre of planning. This scheme could transform tourism, trade, healthcare access and employment in smaller cities. The programme's greatest significance lies in making aviation an instrument of balanced regional development rather than a service concentrated in major metropolitan centres.

04

Biometric Aadhaar Authentication made mandatory for subsidised domestic LPG refills

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has made Biometric Aadhaar Authentication mandatory for domestic LPG consumers seeking refills at the regulated retail price with applicable subsidy from 1 October 2026. Consumers can complete authentication during cylinder delivery, at distributor showrooms or through OMC mobile applications. Those who do not authenticate can continue purchasing LPG, but at market price without subsidy. Around 27.43 crore consumers, or 89.9% of active domestic LPG users, have already completed authentication.

CPRG INSIGHT

The key change is that biometric authentication is no longer just encouraged; it becomes necessary to receive subsidised LPG. PAHAL has already linked LPG subsidies to bank accounts and Aadhaar, but biometric verification adds another layer to confirm that the connection is being used by the intended consumer. This can help reduce duplicate or ineligible connections and diversion of subsidised cylinders, while consumers who are not authenticated can still buy LPG at market price.

STATE POLICY & GOVERNANCE

Across the States

05

Karnataka approves Sustainable Data Centre Policy 2026–31

The Karnataka government has approved the Sustainable Data Centre Policy 2026–31 with a proposed five-year outlay of ₹1,300.45 crore. It targets 1 GW of cumulative data-centre IT load and 10–12% of India's AI-ready data-centre capacity by 2031. The policy supports data-centre parks, edge centres and allied infrastructure while promoting renewable energy, advanced cooling, efficient water use and PUE/WUE monitoring. KITS will handle registration and implementation, while Karnataka Udyoga Mitra will provide single-window clearances

CPRG INSIGHT

The new policy represents a major scale-up from Karnataka's 2022–27 Data Centre Policy, which targeted more than 200 MW of capacity; the new target is 1 GW by 2031. More importantly, the focus is shifting from simply attracting data centres to managing the enormous electricity and water requirements that come with AI and cloud infrastructure. By linking expansion with renewable power, cooling efficiency and PUE/WUE monitoring, Karnataka is trying to ensure that rapid digital infrastructure growth does not become an equally rapid resource-management problem.

06

Bihar strengthens Ease of Doing Business framework with revamped Single Window Clearance Portal

The Bihar Industries Department has revamped its Single Window Clearance Portal by integrating 62 statutory and regulatory services across nine departments. Investors can identify required approvals, apply for licences, upload existing permits and track applications through a single platform. The “Know Your Approval” module maps clearances to pre-establishment and pre-operation stages, while additional features support investment intent registration, strategic partnerships and liaison with district and sector nodal officers before formal applications are submitted

CPRG INSIGHT

Bihar’s revamped portal brings its ease-of-doing-business system closer to the integrated models being developed by other states. Uttar Pradesh’s Nivesh Mitra 3.0, for instance, combines approvals, incentives, land information and grievance redressal while cutting application fields, documents and procedural steps; Odisha’s GO SWIFT similarly links clearances with land, inspections and incentives. Bihar’s integration of 62 services across nine departments is therefore an important step, but the larger opportunity is to move beyond putting approvals online towards simplifying the approvals themselves and making timelines more predictable for investors.

07

Maharashtra launches Global Circular Workforce Mobility Policy 2026

Maharashtra has introduced a five-year Global Circular Workforce Mobility Policy to facilitate safe and skilled overseas employment. The State aims to place one lakh workers abroad over five years, with women accounting for more than 25% of deployments by the fifth year. The framework provides for country-specific Skill Passports, demand-linked skilling, foreign-language training, certification, documentation support and pre-departure orientation. ITI and training curricula will be aligned with overseas labour-market requirements.

CPRG INSIGHT

Maharashtra’s approach marks a shift from generic skill development towards training people for specific overseas labour markets. A nurse, technician or construction worker seeking employment in Japan, Germany or the Gulf may need very different language skills, certifications and workplace knowledge. Country-specific Skill Passports can make this matching more systematic while safer recruitment and documentation support can reduce workers’ dependence on informal intermediaries. The inclusion of returning workers is equally important, as international experience and skills can be brought back into Maharashtra’s own industries rather than being permanently lost overseas.

08

Karnataka approves Marine Biotechnology Policy 2026–31

The Karnataka government has approved a ₹120-crore Marine Biotechnology Policy aimed at expanding the State's blue bioeconomy from about \$2 billion to \$6–8 billion by 2031. It provides for a Karnataka Institute of Marine Biotechnology and Blue Economy, dedicated Marine Biotechnology Zones, laboratories, biobanking and startup incubation. A Seaweed Value Addition production-linked incentive will support high-value products such as nutraceuticals, biofertilisers and bioplastics, while a Blue Carbon Certification Programme will cover eligible coastal ecosystems. The policy projects around 10,000 livelihood and technical opportunities.

CPRG INSIGHT

Karnataka is attempting to move its coastal economy beyond traditional activities such as fisheries and tourism by treating marine biological resources as a base for new industries. The combination of research institutions, biotechnology zones, seaweed incentives, startup support and blue-carbon certification connects scientific research directly with commercial applications. This is particularly relevant because products such as nutraceuticals, biofertilisers and bioplastics can generate substantially more value than selling marine resources in their raw form. The policy could therefore create higher-value coastal jobs while giving conservation an economic role

09

Delhi approves DURGA scheme for women and transgender e-auto ownership

The Delhi government has approved the DURGA scheme to enable women and transgender persons to own and operate electric autos for self-employment. The first phase provides 1,300 pink e-autos, including 1,170 for women and 130 for transgender applicants, with district-wise allocation. Women applicants must meet prescribed residence, age, driving-licence and family-income conditions. Vehicles will carry DURGA identification and be subject to a three-year lock-in period preventing sale or transfer, linking livelihood support with expansion of clean last-mile mobility

CPRG INSIGHT

Delhi has tried gender-focused e-auto allocation before: under its earlier EV programme, 33% of 4,261 e-auto permits were reserved for women, but the initial round attracted only 743 women applicants against 1,406 reserved permits. DURGA goes further by designing the entire 1,300-vehicle programme around women and transgender drivers rather than reserving a share within a broader scheme. Its significance therefore lies not only in electrification, but in addressing who owns and earns from last-mile transport. Access to finance, training and sustained demand will ultimately determine its employment impact

India & the World

10

India Pushes ‘Security, Connectivity, Opportunity’ Agenda at SCO Economic Ministers’ Meet in Tajikistan

India, represented by the Commerce Ministry, used the 25th SCO Ministers’ meeting in Dushanbe to call for deeper economic cooperation anchored in three pillars: security, connectivity, and opportunity, echoing Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s SCO vision. New Delhi urged lower trade costs, resilient supply chains, digitalized and paperless customs, and stronger multimodal links to boost intra-SCO trade. It also advocated collaboration in agriculture, critical minerals, pharma, manufacturing, electronics, energy security, and green hydrogen, while stressing support for MSMEs and start-ups via better digital and cross-border payments and trade finance. Ministers adopted a joint statement, a 2026–2030 action plan for SCO trade cooperation, and regulations for a Creative Economy working group, with the next meeting scheduled for 2027 in Uzbekistan

CPRG INSIGHT

India’s push at the SCO economic ministers’ meeting signals leveraging the forum to lock in lower trade costs, digital customs, and multimodal corridors that directly serve its “Act Central Asia” and supply-chain diversification goals. By foregrounding MSMEs, start-ups, green hydrogen, and critical minerals, India is aligning SCO cooperation with its domestic industrial and energy-transition priorities while reducing dependence on any single external market. The adoption of a five-year trade-cooperation action plan and rules for a Creative Economy working group gives India a structured, multi-year platform to shape norms on digital trade, payments, and logistics in Eurasia

11

India–New Zealand FTA to Take Effect October 20, Opening New Era of Trade and Investment

The India–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement will enter into force on October 20, 2026, eliminating tariffs on 100% of Indian exports to New Zealand and sharply reducing or removing duties on 95% of New Zealand’s exports to India. The pact is expected to boost textiles, leather, footwear, engineering goods, pharmaceuticals, and processed food exports while protecting India’s sensitive sectors, including dairy and key agricultural products. New Zealand has also committed to facilitating \$20 billion in investment in India. With expanded services access, worker mobility, and student opportunities, both nations aim to double bilateral trade to ₹35,000 crore.

CPRG INSIGHT

The India–New Zealand FTA is a strategic economic partnership designed to diversify markets, attract capital, and strengthen supply chains. Indian exporters in labor-intensive sectors stand to gain faster access to New Zealand, potentially supporting jobs and foreign-exchange earnings. Meanwhile, New Zealand’s investment commitment could accelerate projects in infrastructure, technology, food processing, and services. India’s protection of dairy and sensitive farm sectors shows that market opening has been carefully balanced against domestic concerns.

12

India, Visegrád Group Forge New Strategic Partnership at Historic First Meeting

India and the Visegrád Group, comprising the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia, held their first Foreign Ministers’ meeting on September 21, 2026, on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. Describing the occasion as “historic,” External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar announced plans for annual ministerial consultations and a dedicated business forum to deepen economic engagement. The countries also agreed to expand cooperation in defense, technology, innovation, research, education, space, connectivity, and people-to-people exchanges. Discussions covered global challenges, including the Ukraine conflict and Gulf developments, while reaffirming a shared commitment to multilateralism and stronger India–Central Europe ties

CPRG INSIGHT

The first V4 + India Foreign Ministers’ meeting signals India’s effort to build a more structured and practical partnership with Central Europe. The initiative connects trade, defense, technology, innovation, education, and mobility. The proposed annual business forum could convert political goodwill into investment, supply chain cooperation, and industrial partnerships. Renewed defense ties are particularly significant as Europe reassesses security priorities amid the Ukraine conflict and wider geopolitical uncertainty. For the Visegrád countries, India offers a major growth market and a strategic partner; for India, the grouping provides deeper access to Europe beyond its EU-wide relationship

13

India joins Partners for Multilateralism to push for more representative global governance

India has joined the newly launched Partners for Multilateralism, International Law, Peace and Prosperity (P4M) initiative as a co-sponsor. The platform brings together India, the European Union, Australia, Brazil, Barbados, Canada and Kenya to strengthen multilateral cooperation amid growing geopolitical fragmentation. P4M seeks to make global institutions more representative, effective and trusted, while promoting international law, transparent decision-making and cooperation on shared challenges. India has emphasised the need for broader participation in global governance and reform of institutions that no longer adequately reflect contemporary economic and political realities.

CPRG INSIGHT

For India, P4M adds another platform to push for reform of global institutions without tying itself to a fixed political bloc. India can work here with countries such as Brazil, Australia, Canada and European partners while continuing its engagements through forums such as BRICS and the G20. This gives New Delhi more space to build support for issues it has consistently raised, including greater representation for developing countries, more transparent decision-making and reform of institutions such as the UN.

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