**SHORTNEWS:**

**1.GLOBAL CAPABILITY CENTRES (GCCS)**

**Context:** Recently, the **Union Finance Minister at Confederation of Indian Industry's (CII's) event** said that the Global Capability Center (GCC) holds a huge opportunity in India.
**About Global Capability Center (GCC)**
- **Refers:** A **strategic unit** that **supports** an **organization's global operations** through **technology, talent**, and **innovation**.

- **Owned Offshore Unit**: Multinational Corporation (MNC) wholly-owned, integrated extension in another country.

- **Functions**: IT, engineering, R&D, finance, HR, data analytics, product development.

- **Evolution**: From cost-saving (back-office) to strategic (innovation, R&D).

**India's Emergence as a Global GCC Hub**
- Nearly **50% of Fortune 500 companies** have established their **GCCs in India**.

- India's **GCC workforce** currently employs around **2.16 million professionals**.

- **GCC employment** is expected to rise to **2.8 million by 2030**.

- The GCC sector in India has grown at a **CAGR of 11%** over the past five years.

- India hosts **32% of the world's GCC talent pool**.

    - **42.7% of STEM graduates** in India are **female**, among the **highest globally**

    - **Women constitute ~35%** of India's **GCC workforce**

- **GCCs contribute $68 billion** in **Gross Value Addition (GVA)**, about **1.6% of India's GDP**.

- By **2030**, GCCs in India could contribute **$150–200 billion** to the economy.

**India's Competitive Edge**
- **Cost Efficiency:** Operating **GCCs in India costs 30–50% less** than in the **US, UK, or Australia**.

- **Digital and Policy Readiness:** The **Government of India** is providing **policy and infrastructural support** to expand GCC presence with initiatives like Smart Cities, and Digital India.

- **Abundant Skilled and English-proficient Workforce**: India contributes **28% to the global STEM workforce**

    - **23% of global software engineering talent** is based in India

- Access to a **vast consumer market**

- **Global leadership Roles:** GCCs are set to grow from **6,500 to over 30,000 by 2030**.

    - On average, **1 new GCC** was established **per week in 2024**.

**Key Benefits**

- **Talent Access**: Taps skilled, scalable global talent pools.

- **Cost Efficiency**: Lower operational and labor costs.

- **Innovation Hub**: Drives new products, services, and digital transformation.

- **Control**: Full ownership ensures intellectual property (IP) and strategic alignment.

- **Scalability**: Rapidly expands/contracts operations.

- **Risk Mitigation**: Diversifies operations, enhances business continuity.


## 2.PM PROFESSORSHIPS SCHEME

**Context:** The **Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF)** has launched the **Prime Minister Professorship Scheme** to leverage the expertise of retired scientists and professionals to bolster research ecosystems, especially in **State universities** with limited R&D capacity.

**About the PM Professorship Scheme**

- **Objective:** To tap into the experience of **superannuated scientists**, industry experts, and **Professors of Practice** to mentor and strengthen research in emerging institutions.

- **Administering Body: ANRF**, India's new apex body for research funding, replacing the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB).

- **Key Features:**

    - **Fellowship**: ₹30 lakh per annum

    - **Research Grant**: ₹24 lakh per annum (for equipment, consumables, travel, etc.)

    - **Institutional Overhead**: ₹1 lakh annually

    - **Tenure**: Up to 5 years (performance-based)

    - **Eligibility**:

        - Retired scientists from reputed national/international institutions

        - Industry professionals & Professors of Practice with a strong research record

        - **NRIs, PIOs, and OCIs** are also eligible

    - **Requirement**: Full-time relocation to the host State university (no dual honorarium)

- **Comparison with Earlier Scheme:** Replaces the **SERB Distinguished Fellowship**, which offered lower fellowship (₹60,000/month) and a ₹20 lakh annual research grant.

- **Implementation via the PAIR Programme:** The scheme is embedded within ANRF's **Promoting Advanced and Inclusive Research (PAIR)** initiative that uses a **hub-and-spoke model** to link elite institutions with emerging ones.

- **Model Structure:**

- **Hub Institutions**: Ranked within the **top 25 of NIRF** or classified as Institutions of National Importance

    - Mentor up to **seven spoke institutions**

- **Spoke Institutions (Category A)**: State universities, select Central Universities, NITs, and IIITs

    - Must form **multi-departmental faculty teams** and ensure **regional diversity**

- **Professor's Role at Spoke Institutions**

    - Mentor faculty and students in research design and innovation

    - Facilitate industry and institutional collaborations

    - Promote interdisciplinary and globally competitive research

    - Guide infrastructure development and research facility setup

    - Enable internships at leading institutions

## Significance and Impact
- **Bridges research gaps** in under-resourced universities

- Strengthens India's **R&D ecosystem** by decentralizing excellence

- Encourages **international scientific participation** through diaspora inclusion

- Fosters a **culture of mentorship, collaboration, and innovation** in state institutions


## 3.AI APPRECIATION DAY

**Context: July 16, 2025** is **AI Appreciation Day**, celebrating India's rising global AI presence. From cities to villages, AI is revolutionizing **healthcare, education, agriculture, governance,** and **industry**.
- AI Appreciation Day was founded in May **2021** by **A.I. Heart LLC** to **honor the positive impact of artificial intelligence.**

## India's AI Journey: A Strategic Evolution
- **Vision & Strategy:** India's "AI for All" vision and the National Strategy for AI emphasize leveraging AI not just for economic prosperity but also for improving lives, fostering inclusion, and promoting equity.

- **Historical Milestones**:

    - **1960s**: Early computer science research marks the beginning.

    - **1986**: Launch of the **Knowledge-Based Computer Systems project**.

    - **1990s**: Organizations like **C-DAC** advance supercomputing and early AI work.

    - **2000s**: **Major IT companies (TCS, Infosys, Wipro) invest** in AI, universities build talent.

- **2015**: **Digital India** initiative provides a significant push.

- **2018**: **NITI Aayog's AI strategy** accelerates growth.

- **India's Growing Global AI Leadership- Key Strengths**:

  - Exceptional **software talent pool**.

  - Access to large, diverse datasets for **effective AI solution development.**

  - Diverse national needs provide **real-world testing grounds** (e.g., farming, healthcare, traffic control, public services).

## Government Initiatives for AI Growth
- **Skill Development**:

  - **Skill India AI Portal**.

  - **National AI Skilling Programme**.

  - **AI Youth Bootcamp**.

    - These initiatives offer training, certifications, and hands-on projects for students and workers, with vocational centers adopting AI tools for traditional industries.

- **Research & Collaboration**:

  - Investment in AI research through funding programs and new centers bridging academia and industry.

  - Partnerships with global tech giants (Google, Microsoft, IBM) to stay abreast of international developments.

## Responsible AI: A Core Principle
- As India celebrates AI Appreciation Day, there's also a significant focus on **using AI responsibly and ethically**. India's approach to AI transcends mere technological advancement, aiming fundamentally to make a tangible difference in people's lives.


## 4.SERVICES EXPORTS CUT INDIA'S TRADE DEFICIT BY 9.4% IN Q1

**Context:** India's **overall trade deficit** saw a significant contraction of **9.4% to $20.3 billion** in the first quarter (Q1) of the current financial year (April-June 2025). This positive development was primarily driven by a robust nearly **11% growth in services exports**.

**Overall Trade Performance (Q1 FY 2025-26)**
- **Total Exports**: Grew by approximately **6% to $210.3 billion** (up from $198.5 billion in Q1 FY 2024-25).

  - Both merchandise and services exports are in positive points, exceeding WTO's world trade expectations.

- *WTO expected a **-0.2% contraction** in merchandise trade in **2025** – down from +2.9% in 2024 – followed by a **2.5% increase in 2026** reflecting weaker global demand.*

- **Total Imports**: Grew **4.4% to $230.6 billion**.

- **Trade Deficit**: Contracted by **9.4% to $20.3 billion**.

- **Services Exports**: Rose nearly **11% to $98.1 billion** (from $88.5 billion in Q1 FY 2024-25).

- **Merchandise Exports**: Grew modestly by **2% to $112.2 billion**.

  - **Reason for slowdown**: Primarily attributed to falling petroleum prices.

  - **Non-petroleum exports**: Grew by a healthier **6%** during this period.

- **Previous Fiscal Year (FY 2024-25)**: India's total exports achieved an all-time high of **$825 billion**.

- **Merchandise Imports**: Grew **4.2%**.

- **Services Imports**: Grew **4.9%**.

**Sectoral Growth**
- **Exports:**

  - **Electronics**: Highest growth, up **47.1% to $12.4 billion**.

  - **Marine Products**: Grew over **19% to $1.9 billion**.

  - **Tobacco**: Around **19%** double-digit growth.

  - **Tea**: Around **16%** double-digit growth.

- **Imports:**

  - **Sulphur and unroasted iron pyrites**: Highest growth, **284%**.

  - **Silver**: Grew **216%**.

  - **Chemical materials and products**: Grew **142%**.

  - **Raw and waste cotton**: Grew **73%**.

**Top Trading Partners (Q1 FY 2025-26)**
- **Top Export Destinations**:

  1. **United States**: $25.5 billion (up 22.1%)

  2. **United Arab Emirates**: $9.04 billion

  3. **Netherlands**: $5.65 billion

  4. **China**: $4.4 billion

  5. **United Kingdom**: $3.3 billion

- **Top Import Sources**:

    1. **China**: $29.7 billion (up 16%)

    2. **UAE**: $16.8 billion

    3. **Russia**: $16.77 billion

    4. **U.S.**: $12.86 billion

    5. **Iraq**: $7.26 billion

## 5.FURLOUGH AND PAROLE

**Context:** Recently, the **Delhi High Court clarified that furlough and parole can be considered even if a convict's appeal is pending before the Supreme Court**, ending previous legal ambiguities.

### What are Furloughs?

- Furlough is a **temporary release of a prisoner without suspending the sentence**, primarily to reduce the adverse psychological effects of long-term imprisonment and **to maintain social and family ties**.

- **Legal Provisions:** Furlough is governed by **The Prisons Act, 1894** and detailed through **state-specific prison rules**. It is granted at the **discretion of prison authorities**, typically by the **Deputy Inspector General of Prisons**.

- **Conditions for Grant:** Furlough may be granted to **long-term convicts** with good conduct, usually **after serving a minimum period** of their sentence. No specific reason is required, but it can be denied if deemed **against public interest**

### How Furlough Differs from Parole?

- **Purpose and Nature of Release: Furlough** is aimed at breaking the monotony of jail life and is treated as a **remission of sentence**.

    - **Parole**, on the other hand, is granted for **specific exigencies** such as illness, death in the family, or court appearances, and involves **suspension of sentence**.

- **Right vs. Discretion:** Furlough is considered a **privilege for eligible prisoners** based on conduct and **cannot be claimed as a matter of right.**

    - Parole is also **not a right**, but **more readily granted** in genuine emergencies and **can be challenged in higher courts if denied.**

This judgment reinforces the **discretionary yet humanitarian role of furlough and parole** in prison administration, while ensuring they remain subject to judicial oversight and factual scrutiny.

## 6.E10 SHINKANSEN

**Context:** Recently Japan has agreed **to provide E10 Shinkansen trains** on the **Mumbai-Ahmedabad corridor**.

- The first section of the 21 km undersea tunnel between **Ghansoli and Shilphata** for the **Mumbai–Ahmedabad bullet train project** has been completed, marking a significant step in **India's first high-speed rail corridor.**

### About E10 Shinkansen

- The E10 Shinkansen, **Japan's next-generation bullet train model,** will debut simultaneously in India and Japan, symbolizing deepening technological collaboration between the two countries.

- E10 is the successor to the E5 Shinkansen and features **advanced aerodynamics, energy efficiency, and enhanced passenger comfort.**

- **Developed by:** East Japan Railway Company (JR East)

- **Unique Features**: It reflects Japan's latest innovations in **speed, safety, and reliability,** tailored for high-speed rail corridors.

  - **Blowerless Induction Motor:** Uses no cooling motor, making it quieter and energy-efficient.

  - **L-Shaped Vehicle Guides:** Designed to **prevent derailment during earthquakes**, enhancing seismic resilience.

**Significance of E10 Shinkansen for India**
- **Modernizing Indian Rail Infrastructure:** The 508 km **Mumbai–Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR) corridor,** powered entirely by **Japanese Shinkansen technology**, represents a major leap in infrastructure modernization.