

July 15, 2026 – Wednesday

Key Developments

India bans import of goods made with forced labour

India has amended its foreign trade policy to prohibit the import of goods produced using forced labour amid a US investigation into forced labour practices in 60 countries, including India. The US is in the process of releasing its final decision on the Section 301 tariffs where it has proposed a 12.5% tariff on India. India is engaged with the US on the issue as both sides are negotiating a bilateral trade agreement (BTA).
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-bans-import-of-goods-made-with-forced-labour/articleshow/132400386.cms

Economy

India's Purple Economy could add $150 billion to growth

India's Purple Economy is estimated to present a total addressable market opportunity of about USD 150 billion across disability-linked products and services, according to a report unveiled on Tuesday. The Purple Economy is an economic framework that recognises persons with disabilities as customers, workers, entrepreneurs, innovators, taxpayers and contributors to growth, and treats accessibility and inclusion as drivers of market creation, productivity, dignity and shared prosperity.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/indias-purple-economy-could-add-150-billion-to-growth/articleshow/132392992.cms

Wholesale inflation hits record 9.9% in June on fuel, food prices

India's wholesale inflation rose to a record 9.9% year-on-year in June, driven by an increase in fuel and food prices amid continued impact of the West Asia conflict. Fuel and power remained the largest contributor, with prices in the category rising 27.4% year-on-year, although the pace eased from 30.3% in May, official data released on Tuesday showed. Wholesale inflation in May stood at 9.7%.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/wholesale-inflation-hits-record-9-9-in-june-on-fuel-food-prices/articleshow/132400557.cms

New Services Index out; 14 sub-sectors grow strongly

The government on Tuesday unveiled the trial Index of Services Production (ISP), a new high-frequency indicator that showed formal services activity remained resilient in April despite the West Asia conflict, with 14 of the 19 tracked sub-sectors recording double-digit growth over the previous year. The inaugural monthly series, with 2024-25 as the base year, covers 19 sub-sectors, including wholesale and retail trade, accommodation and food services, road and air transport, telecommunications and banking, which together account for around 60 per cent of India's services sector. The services sector contributes more than half of the country's gross value added (GVA). With the launch of the ISP, all three broad sectors of the economy, services, industry and agriculture, will now have regular monthly or quarterly production indicators.

https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/government-unveils-trial-services-production-index-april-data-show-resilience-despite-west-asia-conflict/article71221894.ece

India's social protection coverage expands from 19% in 2015 to over 1 billion people in 2026: Mandaviya

India's social protection coverage has increased from 19 per cent in 2015 to 64.3 per cent in 2025, covering nearly 940 million people, Minister for Labour and Employment Mansukh Mandaviya said on Tuesday, adding that preliminary estimates for 2026 indicate that it has crossed one billion citizens.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/indias-social-protection-coverage-expands-from-19-in-2015-to-over-1-billion-people-in-2026-mandaviya/article71221701.ece

Finance

Input tax credit relief for companies on staff cars, insurance likely

Companies may soon be allowed to claim input tax credit (ITC) on vehicles purchased in the company's name for employees' use and on group health and life insurance policies bought for employees. The law committee under the GST Council last week proposed changes to existing provisions to allow companies to claim ITC on such expenses when they are incurred for employees, according to people aware of the matter.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/input-tax-credit-relief-for-companies-on-staff-cars-insurance-likely/articleshow/132400388.cms

IRDAI mandates independent validation of insurers' preparedness for implementing Ind AS

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has mandated an independent validation of insurers' preparedness for implementing Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS), requiring an external review of governance, systems and transition processes during the first year of adoption. In a circular providing additional information and clarifications on the IRDAI (Actuarial, Finance and Investment Functions of Insurers) Regulations, 2024, the insurance regulator said every insurer would have to obtain an independent validation of its Ind AS implementation process.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/money-and-banking/irdai-mandates-independent-validation-of-insurers-preparedness-for-implementing-ind-as/article71222103.ece

Direct tax collection jumps 16% to ₹6.5 lakh crore

Driven by a robust surge in corporate tax, India's net direct tax collections grew by more than 16 per cent between April 1 and July 16, the Income Tax Department announced on Tuesday. The strong momentum has raised expectations that the government will meet or exceed its fiscal targets as outlined in the budget estimates. For the current fiscal year (FY27), the government has set a direct tax collection target of ₹26.97 lakh crore, representing a 15 per cent growth projection over the ₹23.40 lakh crore collected in FY26.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/direct-tax-collection-jumps-16-to-65-lakh-cr/article71221693.ece

Industry

India orders real-time tracking of seafarers amid West Asia maritime security crisis

Amidst the escalating maritime security crisis in West Asia, the government on Tuesday asked the shipping authority to set up a dashboard for providing real-time information about Indian seafarers on each vessel operating in the region, irrespective of the ship's flag. Shipping Minister Sarbananda Sonowal asked the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) to establish a comprehensive vessel-by-vessel operational dashboard to account for every Indian on each vessel, irrespective of its flag, operating in the Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz and Gulf of Oman, according to an official statement. The dashboard will provide real-time information on vessel position, ownership, cargo, crew strength, crew welfare, threat assessment, intended voyage, next port of call and the availability of facilities, it said.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/logistics/india-orders-real-time-tracking-of-seafarers-amid-west-asia-maritime-security-crisis/article71222748.ece

India faces potential natural gas supply curtailments of up to 1.5 mt/month

The West Asia conflict has adversely affected the LNG market across Asia, leaving South Asian countries grappling with severe shortages. India alone is facing an estimated LNG shortfall of around 1.5 million tonnes (mt) per month. Wood Mackenzie, in its latest commentary, pointed out that Asia accounted for nearly 90 per cent of Qatari and the UAE LNG shipments transiting the Strait of Hormuz (SoH) in 2025. Within Asia, South Asia is among the most affected.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/markets/commodities/india-faces-potential-natural-gas-supply-curtailments-of-up-to-15-mtmonth/article71222035.ece

Agriculture

Two of Gujarat's leading Agricultural products, Unjha Cumin and Fennel, receive GI tag

Advancing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Vocal for Local' and 'Local to Global,' Gujarat continues to secure global recognition for its traditional agricultural products under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel. In another milestone for the state's agricultural sector, Unjha Cumin and Unjha Fennel, the renowned spice products of North Gujarat, have been awarded the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Government of India's GI Registry.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/two-of-gujarats-leading-agricultural-products-unjha-cumin-and-fennel-receive-gi-tag/articleshow/132379507.cms

June vegetable oil imports dip 29 per cent

India's vegetable oil imports declined 29% year-on-year to 11.47 lakh tonnes in June 2026 from 16.16 lakh tonnes in the same month last year. On a month-on-month basis, edible oil imports fell 17% from May 2026, indicating lower arrivals in the month. The decline was primarily driven by a sharp fall in palm oil imports, which dropped 10.5% from the previous month as the price gap between palm oil and other edible oils narrowed significantly. Soyabean oil imports also fell 23%.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/june-vegetable-oil-imports-dip-29-per-cent/articleshow/132400267.cms

El Niño effect: Telangana asks farmers to go for alternative crops

With El Niño casting a shadow on the Kharif season, the Telangana Government has asked farmers to look at alternative crops instead of paddy. It asked the farmers to go for millets or pulses, which require less water, instead of the water-guzzling crops. Telangana Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao said that the neighbouring States of Maharashtra and Karnataka, the two upper riparian States, also reported a fall in rain fall.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/el-nino-effect-telangana-asks-farmers-to-go-for-alternative-crops/article71221967.ece

India set to ban Paraquat herbicide, issues draft Order

The Indian government on Tuesday issued a draft order proposing a blanket ban on Paraquat Dichloride, citing its severe toxicity to humans and animals. The draft notification seeks to halt the manufacture, import, sale, and distribution of the widely used herbicide, giving stakeholders 30 days to submit feedback before a final ban is gazetted. Already outlawed in more than 70 countries, Paraquat Dichloride is linked to fatal poisoning, kidney failure, lung fibrosis, and Parkinson’s disease. However, the proposed ban faces a massive commercial footprint at home, where a vast agrochemical market includes more than 1,500 manufacturers holding licences for the chemical.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/india-set-to-ban-paraquat-herbicide-issues-draft-order/article71

External

US Senators unveil sweeping Russia sanctions bill; name India among nations facing possible tariffs

A bipartisan group of US senators has unveiled a long-awaited bill imposing sweeping sanctions on Russia, naming India among five countries that could face tariffs for continuing to buy Russian oil. The legislation, dubbed by some colleagues the "Lindsey Graham Russia Accountability Bill," was formally announced on Capitol Hill on Tuesday by

Senators Richard Blumenthal and Jeanne Shaheen, along with Republicans Roger Wicker, Katie Britt and more than a dozen other lawmakers from both parties.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/us-senators-unveil-sweeping-russia-sanctions-bill-name-india-among-nations-facing-possible-tariffs/articleshow/132403666.cms

Piyush Goyal holds key meetings with EU, Belgian leaders to deepen trade, clean energy, agriculture cooperation

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal on Tuesday held a series of high-level meetings with European Union Commissioners and Belgian Deputy Prime Minister David Clarinval, discussing ways to strengthen cooperation in agriculture, clean energy, trade, investment and sustainable industrial development as India and the European Union seek to deepen their strategic economic partnership.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/piyush-goyal-holds-key-meetings-with-eu-belgian-leaders-to-deepen-trade-clean-energy-agriculture-cooperation/articleshow/132403711.cms

India and UK in talks on Britain's carbon tax rules: Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal

India and the UK are engaged in discussions on Britain's carbon tax regulation, commerce secretary Rajesh Agrawal said, assuring that India has been able to preserve market access for the domestic steel sector in the free trade agreement, which comes into force on Wednesday.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-and-uk-in-talks-on-britains-carbon-tax-rules-commerce-secretary-rajesh-agrawal/articleshow/132400156.cms

Govt issues norms to implement global outreach initiative for branding, labelling, export packaging

The government on Tuesday issued detailed operational and procedural guidelines for implementing a global outreach initiative for branding, labelling and export packaging. The initiative was announced under the Rs 25,060-crore export promotion mission.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/govt-issues-norms-to-implement-global-outreach-initiative-for-branding-labelling-export-packaging/articleshow/132396508.cms

India-UK trade pact comes into force on Wednesday; bilateral trade to hit USD 100 bn by 2030

India and the UK will implement a comprehensive economic and trade agreement (CETA) from July 15, with an aim to boost two-way commerce to USD 100 billion by 2030, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agarwal said on Tuesday. The bilateral trade in goods and services stands at about USD 55-60 billion at present. While goods trade was USD 25.12 billion in 2025-26, services trade stood at USD 35.44 billion in 2024.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-uk-trade-pact-comes-into-force-on-wednesday-bilateral-trade-to-hit-usd-100-bn-by-2030/articleshow/132394748.cms

Keeping watch on West Asia developments, will support exporters if needed: Official

The government is monitoring developments in the West Asia region and will do whatever is necessary on the ground to help domestic exporters continue trade as far as possible, an official said on Tuesday. An Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) set up to monitor the West Asia crisis and its impact on trade and energy supply chains is still functional, the official said.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/keeping-watch-on-west-asia-developments-will-support-exporters-if-needed-official/articleshow/132392718.cms

India, China trade rises to USD 91.72 bn in first 6-month, trade deficit widens to USD 67.1 bn

China's exports to India increased by 21.8 per cent in the first half of 2026 to USD 79.41 billion, while Indian exports to China rose 37.2 per cent to USD 12.31 billion, according to data released by Chinese customs on Tuesday. The bilateral trade in the six months rose to USD 91.72 billion, registering a 23.6 per cent increase, as trade volumes increased on both sides.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-china-trade-rises-to-usd-91-72-bn-in-first-6-month-trade-deficit-widens-to-usd-67-1-bn/articleshow/132391346.cms

India, Maldives conclude first round of FTA talks; make progress across key negotiating areas

India and the Maldives successfully concluded the first round of negotiations for a proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) on Tuesday, with both sides making substantive progress across eight technical negotiating sessions held virtually between June 29 and July 7.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-maldives-conclude-first-round-of-fta-talks-make-progress-across-key-negotiating-areas/articleshow/132390044.cms

US sees India emerging key buyer of its cotton this year

The US views India as a market with potential to purchase its cotton and will likely emerge as a key importer in 2026, said Gary Adams, President and CEO of the National Cotton Council and President of the US Cotton Trust Protocol. "If we look at India, it is an important market for US cotton. In fact, in this marketing year, we are just competing for India as the fourth largest market for US cotton," he told businessline in an online interaction. With the area under cotton down in India and concerns over the monsoon, it could be a "stronger" market in 2026.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/us-sees-india-emerging-key-buyer-of-its-cotton-this-year/article71222450.ece

Revised US Russia sanctions bill lowers proposed tariffs on China, India

Republican and Democratic U.S. senators on Tuesday unveiled an updated version of Russia sanctions legislation championed by the late Senator Lindsey Graham, seeking to impose sanctions on Russian officials and to use tariffs to pressure China and India to reduce their dependence on Russian oil and gas.The revised bill cuts proposed tariffs on major buyers of Russian energy to 100% from 500% and allows exemptions for countries reducing imports.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/markets/commodities/revised-us-russia-sanctions-bill-lowers-proposed-tariffs-on-china-india/article71223877.ece

India wins larger UK steel quota, paving way for $1 bn exports

India has secured a significantly higher duty-free quota for steel exports to the UK than several other exporting countries after re-negotiating market access under the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), a move that could help raise India's steel exports to Britain to around $1 billion in FY27, officials said. "We have been able to secure a higher quota compared to other countries," Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal told the media on Tuesday, adding that this fully took care of the country's concerns and would help increase exports. However, there has been no resolution on the proposed Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) levies, which take effect from January 1, 2027, and discussions are still on. "India and the UK are continuing discussions on the UK's proposed CBAM," the Commerce Secretary said.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/india-wins-larger-uk-steel-quota-paving-way-for-1-bn-exports/article71222326.ece