

## Highlights of 16 June 2026 Current Affairs

- Odisha celebrates the Raja Prabha Festival, one of its cherished festivals, dedicated to nature, agriculture, and the arrival of the monsoon.
- India's space economy currently stands at about \$8–9 billion and is projected to grow nearly five-fold to \$40–45 billion over the next decade, according to Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh. This growth is being driven by policy reforms, private sector participation, and the rise of over 400 space startups.
- The Bihar Government has established an Integrated Aqua Park worth ₹31.21 crore in Bhojpur and also set up an NFDB Regional Centre in Patna.
- India has officially joined the world's top five manufacturing economies in 2024, with a manufacturing value added (MVA) of about \$493 billion, according to World Bank data. This places India behind China, the U.S., Japan, and Germany, but ahead of countries like the UK and France.
- Union Minister of Environment Bhupender Yadav announced the addition of three new chicks to the Great Indian Bustard as part of ongoing efforts to save this critically endangered species. With these additions under the conservation breeding program, the population has now reached 94, showing encouraging progress in conservation.
- India has unveiled its first-of-its-kind tunnel hoods for the Mumbai–Ahmedabad bullet train project. These specially designed structures are installed at the entrances and exits of railway tunnels, acting as transition zones between the open atmosphere and the enclosed tunnel environment. The tunnel hoods help reduce the phenomenon known as 'tunnel boom,' which occurs when a high-speed train enters a tunnel and pushes a large volume of air ahead of it, creating intense pressure waves. Without proper management, these waves generate a booming sound, but the tunnel hoods effectively mitigate this issue.
- United Kingdom Prime Minister Keir Starmer has proposed banning social media access for users under the age of 16. The move aims to protect children from online harms such as cyberbullying, addictive platforms, and potential mental health issues.
- The 16<sup>th</sup> BRICS Agriculture Ministers' Meeting, chaired by India, concluded in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, and unanimously adopted a joint declaration aimed at strengthening food security, promoting sustainable agriculture, encouraging innovation, and enhancing farmer welfare across member nations.
- India and France have launched the Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL) Bridge, an initiative designed to connect young innovators from both countries.
- Lewis Hamilton won the Barcelona-Catalunya Grand Prix, marking his first Formula 1 victory with the Italian team. This race also made history as it was the first all-British podium in Formula 1 since 1968.
- The Government of Kerala has unveiled its Vision 2031, a roadmap to make Kerala India's most women-friendly state. The plan focuses on improving public transportation, preventing domestic violence, promoting gender-inclusive tourism, and strengthening gender-responsive budgeting.
- India Post has started drone-based mail transmission in remote areas of Himachal Pradesh, beginning from the Mandi Head Post Office to the Rehardhar Branch Post Office. This initiative drastically reduces delivery time in the difficult mountainous terrain.