

Highlights of 20 August 2026 Current Affairs

- The **Census of India 2027** marks a major demographic milestone as **India's 16th Census overall** and the **8th Census since Independence**. Conducted under the Census Act, 1948 by the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner (Ministry of Home Affairs), it is the first complete population enumeration exercise following the 2011 Census.
 - **Digital Transformation:** India's first paperless census, leveraging custom mobile applications for enumerators to collect and upload data in real time.
 - **Self-Enumeration Portal:** Allows citizens to fill out household details online prior to official field visits.
 - **Caste Enumeration:** Incorporates caste-based data collection for the first time in post-independence decennial censuses (the last detailed caste census under British rule occurred in 1931).
 - **Two-Phase Execution:**
 - *Phase 1:* Houselisting and Housing Census (assessing living conditions and assets).
 - *Phase 2:* Population Enumeration (capturing demographic, economic, and socio-cultural details).
- **Lakshmanan Meyyappan** has been officially recognized by **Guinness World Records** as the world's youngest male Chartered Accountant. India-born and Dubai-based, Meyyappan completed his professional finance qualification through the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) at the age of **16 years and 170 days**.
- Cases of H1N1 influenza (swine flu) have recorded a significant surge in urban centers across India, with Delhi logging **1,449 cases through mid-August 2026** compared to 229 cases reported in the corresponding period in 2025 according to National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) data.
- India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) revised India's **FY27 real GDP growth forecast upward to 6.8%** (from its earlier projection of 6.7%), primarily citing lower global crude oil prices. Despite the upgrade, the projected growth remains below the National Statistical Office's (NSO) provisional estimate of 7.6% recorded for FY26.
- While **Kerala** has the largest area dedicated to coconut cultivation, **Tamil Nadu** is the largest producer of coconuts in India, and **Andhra Pradesh** leads the country in coconut yield per hectare (productivity).
- An evaluation of **India's domestic solar manufacturing ecosystem in 2026** highlights significant growth across solar PV modules, solar cells, and integrated upstream components (wafers, ingots, and polysilicon). Driven by government policies such as the **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme** (total outlay of ₹24,000 crore) and the **Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM)** framework, India's cumulative solar module manufacturing capacity reached **~210 GW**, while solar cell capacity expanded to **~27 GW**.
- The government of Maharashtra has officially declared **snakebite a notifiable disease**, making it mandatory for all hospitals, medical colleges, and health facilities across the state to immediately report suspected and confirmed snakebite cases and casualties. Effective **August 18, 2026**, this directive was prompted by a tragedy in Gadchiroli

district where three tribal schoolgirls died following a venomous snakebite at a residential school.

- A total of **210 Indian peacekeepers** serving with the **United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)** were awarded the prestigious UN Medal during a ceremony in Juba. The recognition highlights the Blue Helmets' dedication, operational bravery, and humanitarian assistance in complex security and medical emergency situations.
- The **Tamil Nadu Government** has announced a major policy shift regarding maternity leave benefits for state government employees, extending maternity leave to **365 days for women having a third child** (up from the previous allowance of 12 weeks).
- **Sadbhavana Diwas** (Harmony Day) is commemorated annually across India on **August 20** to mark the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister **Rajiv Gandhi**. The observance promotes national integration, communal harmony, peace, and goodwill among citizens of all religions and regions.
- **Indian Akshay Urja Day** (also known as **Renewable Energy Day**) is observed annually across the country on **August 20**. Established in **2004** by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), the campaign aims to raise public awareness about the development, adoption, and significance of inexhaustible energy sources like solar, wind, hydro, biomass, and geothermal energy. The date coincides with the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister **Rajiv Gandhi**, honoring his vision for scientific advancement, technological innovation, and sustainable modernization in India.
- The **Viksit Bharat Quiz 2026** hosted on the MyGov Quiz Platform provides citizens an opportunity to test their knowledge regarding India's development journey and the national vision for a developed nation by **2047** (the centenary year of Indian independence). Organized in coordination with the **Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue (VBYLD)**, the quiz covers major government initiatives across digital infrastructure, healthcare, education, green energy, and social welfare.
- **World Mosquito Day** is observed annually on **August 20** to raise awareness about the threats posed by mosquito-borne diseases and to commemorate the landmark medical discovery made in 1897 by British-Indian physician **Sir Ronald Ross**.