CURRENTLY - FROM NEWS TO NOTES

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

The Hindu & The Indian express

Headline	Source
New H-1B visa fee won't apply for change of status: U.S. govt.	The Hindu, p.1 | India-U.S. Relations / Economy
Net FDI fell 159% in August: RBI data	The Hindu, p.1 | Economy
RBI sold $7.7 bn in August to check rupee volatility	The Hindu, Economy, pg 13 | Forex

Headline	Source
India faces specialty fertilizer price jump	The Hindu, p.13 | Agriculture
CPI's fears not misplaced on PM-SHRI	The Hindu, p.5 | Schemes in news
Chaman border crossing partially reopens after Pak.-Afghan ceasefire	The Hindu, p.14 | Locations in news
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New H-1B visa fee will not apply for change of status: U.S. govt.

Fee will not apply to existing visa holders granted an amendment, change of status, or extension of stay, says the USCIS guidelines; the cut-off date is set at September 21, and current H-1B visa holders can travel freely to and from the U.S.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In a further relaxation of its rules relating to the new $100,000 fee on H-1B visas, the United States government said on Monday that the fee will not apply to applications for a change of status or an extension of stay in the U.S.

On September 19, U.S. President Donald Trump had signed a proclamation imposing a $100,000 fee on H-1B visas. Hours later, his government clarified that this would be a one-time fee and would only apply to new applications.

Guidelines issued by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services Department on Monday reiterated this, saying that the proclamation "does not apply to any previously issued and currently valid H-1B visas, or any petitions submitted prior to 12:01 a.m. eastern daylight time on September 21, 2025".

"The Proclamation also does not apply to a petition filed at or after 12:01 a.m. eastern daylight time on September 21, 2025, that is requesting an amendment, change of status, or extension of stay for an alien inside the United States where the alien is granted such amendment, change, or extension," the guidelines added.

Notably, they also said that the proclamation does not prevent any holder of a current H-1B visa from travelling to and from the U.S.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce had filed a lawsuit last week challenging the $100,000 fee, saying it overrides existing provisions in current laws that apply to the H-1B programme, including provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Indian interests

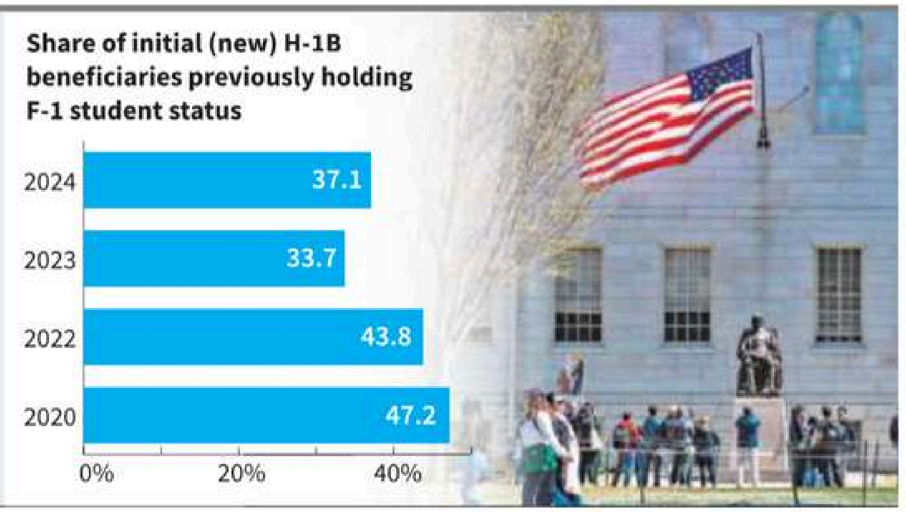
The H-1B visa, and any related fees, are of particular interest to Indians since they are the largest beneficiaries of this visa programme.

While the U.S. government does not share data on the number of H-1B visa holders currently located in the U.S., other sources – such as FWD.us, an immigration and criminal justice reform advocacy body co-founded by Meta chief executive officer Mark Zuckerberg – say that there were 7.3 lakh H-1B visa-holders in the U.S. as of January of this year. Of these, about 70% were Indian citizens.

Further, as per data from the USCIS, Tata Consultancy Services had 5,505 H-1B visas approved in 2025 as of the end of June, the second-highest number of H-1B visas granted to any company that year, after Amazon (10,044).

Relief for students

Typically, 33–47% of new H-1B beneficiaries were previously U.S. students on F-1 visas, a large share of them Indians. The new guidelines have brought relief to this group, as the revised fee does not apply to them



New H-1B visa fee won't apply for change of status: U.S. govt.

The Hindu | Page: 1 | GS Paper 2 - India-U.S. Relations

Why in News U.S. govt. relaxed rules on the new $100,000 H-1B visa fee, clarifying it won't apply to:

- Change of status,
- Extension of stay, or
- Amendment of existing valid H-1B visas.

Trump's 19 Sept Announcement On Sept 19, 2025, President Donald Trump announced a $100,000 one-time fee on new H-1B applications (to protect U.S. jobs), later clarified it applies only to new petitions, not to current holders or extensions.

Key Data

- 7.3 lakh H-1B holders in U.S. (Jan 2025) – 70% Indians.
- TCS got 5,505 visas in 2025 (2nd after Amazon – 10,044).

Net FDI fell 159% in August: RBI data

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

Net Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into India fell 159% in August, with more money leaving the country than entering it, according to official data. This is the second time this financial year that outflows have exceeded inflows.

However, the picture is reversed when looked at over a longer time period, with net FDI between April and August 2025 more than 121% higher than in the same five-month period of the previous year.

The Hindu's analysis of data released by the Reserve Bank of India shows that the repatriation and disinvestment by foreign firms in India and the investments done abroad by Indian companies – which add up to the total money leaving the country – were higher than the gross amount that was invested into India in August 2025.

Gross investments into India stood at $6,049 million in August 2025, 30.6% lower than their level in August last year and 45.5% lower than in July this year.

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Core sector growth slows to three-month low

NEW DELHI

Growth in activity in the eight core sectors slowed to a three-month low of 3% in September on contraction in the coal, crude oil, natural gas and refinery products, as well as a relatively sharp slowdown in fertilizers. » PAGE 13

Net FDI fell 159% in August:

RBI dataThe Hindu | Page 1 | Economy (Prelims & GS-3)

Why in news:

- Net FDI into India fell 159% (Aug 2025) – outflows > inflows (2nd time this FY).
- Yet, Apr-Aug 2025 FDI was 121% higher YoY.
- Gross inflows: $6.05 bn
- Data: RBI

Core Sector Update

- Eight core industries' growth slowed to 3% (3-month low, Sept 2025) on contraction in coal, crude, gas, refinery, & slowdown in fertilizers.

Eight Core Industries:Coal | Crude Oil | Natural Gas | Refinery Products | Fertilizers | Steel | Cement | Electricity

Measured by: Office of Economic Adviser, DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

INBRIEF

RBI sold $7.7 billion in August to check rupee volatility

The Reserve Bank sold $7.7 billion in August to check exchange rate volatility as well as to arrest the decline in value of the rupee against the American currency. The central bank's net sale of U.S. dollars was at $7.69 billion in August, nearly three times higher than in the preceding month, according to the data on sale/purchase of U.S. dollars published in the RBI's latest bulletin. The data also showed that the Reserve Bank did not purchase U.S. dollars in July and August. PTI

RBI sold $7.7 billion in August to check rupee volatilitySource:

The Hindu | Page: 13

Why in news:

RBI sold $7.7 billion (Aug 2025) to check rupee's fall and control exchange rate volatility; no dollar purchase in July-Aug 2025.

Why RBI Sells Dollars

- **To stabilize rupee value and prevent sharp depreciation.**
- **To control inflation by curbing import cost rise.**
- **To reduce forex market volatility and maintain confidence.**

Whom RBI Sells Dollars~To Indian commercial banks (authorized dealers) in the interbank forex market.

India faces specialty fertilizer price jump

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

India is preparing for higher fertilizer prices ahead of the crucial rabi (winter) crop season after China suspended exports of urea and specialty fertilizers from October 15, a senior industry official said.

China, which had only recently resumed fertilizer exports from May 15 to October 15 with increased inspections, has now suspended the export window until further notice, affecting not just India but global markets as well.

The suspension covers specialty fertilizers like TMAP (Technical Monoammonium Phosphate) and Urea-solution products like AdBlue, as well as conventional fertilizers such as DAP and urea.

"China has closed the export window from October 15 not only for India but the entire world market," Soluble Fertilizer Industry Association (SFIA) President Rajib Chakraborty told PTI. "I believe the export suspension will be for the next 5-6 months."

India imports about 95% of specialty fertilizers, including phosphates like TMAP and emission-control fluids like AdBlue, from China.

India faces specialty fertilizer price jump The Hindu | Page: 13 | Category:

Economy & Agriculture (GS Paper 3)

Why in news:

- **China suspended exports of urea and specialty fertilizers from October 15, 2025, leading to fears of price rise in India ahead of the rabi crop season.**
- **China's export window (May 15-Oct 15) has been closed until further notice, impacting global and Indian fertilizer markets.**
- **India imports ~ 95% of its specialty fertilizers from China.**

Specialty Fertilizers – Meaning

High-efficiency, customized fertilizers that supply nutrients in controlled amounts to improve crop yield and reduce losses (used in modern precision farming).

Examples Mentioned in the Article

1. **TMAP – Technical Monoammonium Phosphate (phosphate-based fertilizer)**
2. **Urea-solution products – e.g., AdBlue (used for emission control and nitrogen supplementation)**

'CPI's fears not misplaced on PM-SHRI'

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) seems to have extended an olive branch to the Communist Party of India after ideological differences emerged between the two ruling front allies over the Left Democratic Front (LDF) government's controversial move to seek Prime Minister's Schools for Rising India (PM-SHRI) scheme funds for Kerala's "cash-strapped" general education sector.

The CPI is of the view that the PM-SHRI funds for States depend on adherence to the National Education Policy (NEP). Furthermore, the CPI, CPI(M), and other non-BJP-ruled States share the view that the NEP is the Centre's political tool to encroach on the jurisdictional authority of provincial governments.

CPI State secretary Binoy Viswam is apprehensive about signing up for the PM-SHRI funds as it could potentially sabotage the Left's "informed national line" against the NEP. He also notes that belatedly seeking the 2022 scheme benefits when they are due to expire in 2026-27 would bring Kerala scarce benefits since the PM-SHRI has no retrospective effect.

'Strive for consensus'

CPI(M) general secretary M.A. Baby told reporters in New Delhi that the CPI's apprehensions about the NEP were not misplaced. He said the LDF has unequivocally rejected the NEP. However, the State, he said, would seek the PM-SHRI funds without compromising on the NEP.

Mr. Baby said the LDF would strive to achieve a consensus among allies before taking a final "principled call." Mr. Baby said the Union government's bid to link the release of the States' share for general education is a backwash from the Emergency days.

Mr. Baby noted that the Congress-led State governments have signed up for PM-SHRI funds. Tamil Nadu has not rejected the PM-SHRI. But, it has recoiled from agreeing to the NEP.

'CPI's fears not misplaced on PM-SHRI'

The Hindu | Page: 5 | Category:

Education | Governance

Why in News

- **The CPI and CPI(M) differ over Kerala government's move to seek PM-SHRI funds for its cash-strapped education sector.**

PM Schools for Rising India (PM-SHRI)

Launch: 7th September 2022 (announced by PM Narendra Modi on Teachers' Day, 5 Sept 2022)

Objective:

- **To develop over 14,500 schools across India as model schools under the NEP 2020.**
- **Showcase best practices in inclusive, joyful, holistic, and tech-enabled learning.**

Implementing Ministry:Ministry of Education (MoE) – through its Department of School Education & Literacy.

Time Period:Five years (FY 2022-23 to 2026-27)

Coverage:

- **Schools managed by Central, State, UT, or local bodies.**
- **Each PM-SHRI school to act as a "lighthouse school" for surrounding institutions.**

Chaman border crossing partially reopens after Pak.-Afghan ceasefire

Press Trust of India
KARACHI

The Chaman border crossing between Pakistan and Afghanistan has partially reopened following a ceasefire between the two countries, after days of violent clashes along the border left several people dead on both sides.

Several Afghan families started crossing the south-western border in Balochistan province on Monday, while multiple Afghan-bound containers were also moved.

The Chaman border was sealed when the Pakistan and Afghanistan conflict started, leaving nearly 400 containers carrying goods from the Karachi port stranded at the border.

Small relief: Nearly 400 containers carrying goods from the Karachi port stranded at the border when the Chaman border closed. AFP

A similar situation was witnessed at the Spin Boldak border crossing in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province where containers coming into Pakistan were stranded.

The Chaman Chamber of Commerce and Industry president, Nafees Jan Achakzai, said since a ceasefire agreement was finalised between both countries in Doha, the border had been partially reopened since Monday evening.

Families move

"Some 400 containers coming from Karachi have slowly started crossing into Afghanistan while some 550 families of around 3,400 individuals have also crossed over," he said.

The families had come from Karachi after being given repatriation orders by authorities as they were found staying in Karachi without proper documentation, he said.

The Pakistani government recently launched a repatriation drive, citing security and economic concerns, prompting thousands of Afghans to return to their home country.

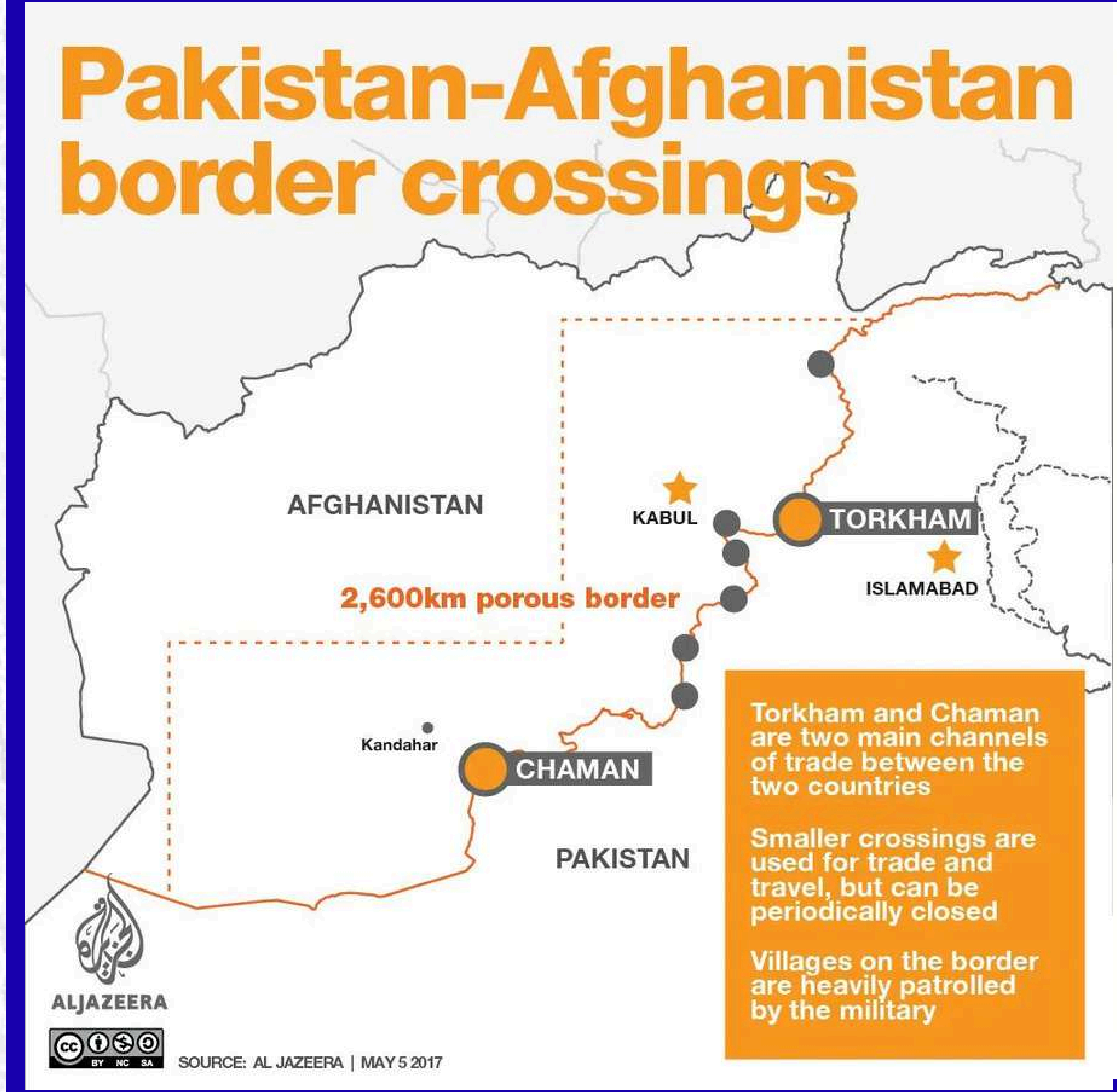
Chaman border crossing partially reopens after Pak.-Afghan ceasefireSource:

The Hindu | Page: 14

Locations in News (Border Crossings)

- **Chaman – in Balochistan province, Pakistan**
- **Spin Boldak – in Kandahar province, Afghanistan**

Why in NewsThe Chaman border between Pakistan and Afghanistan was partially reopened after a ceasefire ended violent clashes that had shut the crossing, stranding goods and Afghan families.



Afghanistan-Pakistan map showing the two major border crossings.

FATF may discuss state sponsorship of terrorism; Pakistan entities in focus

Devesh K. Pandey
NEW DELHI

The ongoing Financial Action Task Force (FATF) meetings in Paris are expected to deliberate on state sponsorship as a means to fund and support terrorism, including the financing of banned outfits and their proxies operating in Pakistan, said sources in law-enforcement agencies.

The FATF week started on Monday, and its Plenary will be held from Wednesday to Friday. Representatives of over 200 jurisdictions and observers are attending the meetings.

"Over 130 terror entities and individuals based in, or linked to, Pakistan are listed on the United Nations Security Council's ISIL/Al-Qaeda Sanctions List. The Resistance Force, a proxy of Pakistan-based banned outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba that carried out the gruesome killings in Pahalgam on April 22, has also been designated by the United States as a global terror outfit," an official said.

State sponsorship includes providing direct funding, logistics, materials, or training

In June, the FATF issued a statement condemning the Pahalgam terror attack, stating that it could not "occur without money and the means to move funds between terrorist supporters". In July, it released a report, "Comprehensive update on terrorist financing risks", which, for the first time, recognised state sponsorship as a long-standing terror-financing threat to global peace and security.

State sponsorship includes providing direct funding, logistics, materials, or training.

Indian security agencies have gathered inputs showing that the LeT, under the front of Jamaat-ud-Dawa, has raised funds to rebuild its headquarters in Muridke, which was destroyed by the Indian Air Force on May 7.

In May, the Pakistani government had announced that it would finance reconstruction of the LeT and Jaish-e-Mohammed facilities. It allocated four crore Pakistani rupees to the LeT for its headquarters Markaz Taiba, while the estimated cost of its complete reconstruction was likely to exceed 15 crore Pakistani rupees. Therefore, according to the agencies, the outfit raised funds on the pretext of "relief for flood victims".

FATF may discuss state sponsorship of terrorism; Pakistan entities in focusThe Hindu | Page: 12

International Affairs / Security

Why in News

- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) meetings in Paris are discussing state sponsorship of terrorism – focusing on Pakistan-based entities accused of financing banned outfits like LeT and JeM.
- In June 2025, FATF condemned the Pahalgam terror attack, linking it to terror financing networks.
- FATF's latest report for the first time recognised state sponsorship as a long-standing global terror-financing.

Financial Action Task Force

- Established: 1989 (by the G7 Summit in Paris)
- Headquarters: Paris, France
- Members: 39 members (37 countries + 2 regional organizations: European Commission & Gulf Cooperation Council)
- Objective: To set global standards and promote effective measures to combat money laundering, terror financing, and proliferation financing.