

The Week from 20 July 2026 to 26 July 2026

Andy Burnham became the UK's new Prime Minister on 20 July 2026, succeeding Keir Starmer, who resigned amid Labour Party pressure. The former Mayor of Greater Manchester pledged a 10-year plan for national stability and economic revival, describing his administration as a "circuit breaker". He becomes the UK's seventh Prime Minister in ten years, highlighting the country's recent political turbulence.

Sarnath has been officially inscribed as India's 45th UNESCO World Heritage Site during the 48th session of the World Heritage Committee in Busan, South Korea, on 25 July 2026. Located near Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, the sacred Buddhist site marks the historic location where Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermon, known as Dharmachakra Pravartan.

India's Anahat Singh made history by becoming the country's first-ever World Junior Squash Champion. She defeated Egypt's Ruqayya Salem 11-3, 11-7, 11-9 in the girls' final at the World Junior Individual Championships in Ontario, adding the world title to the bronze medal she won the previous year.

On 21 July 2026, France's parliament approved a law prohibiting children under the age of 15 from accessing social media, making it the first EU member state to enforce such a nationwide restriction. The phased rollout begins in September 2026, requiring mandatory age verification while offering exemptions for educational and scientific platforms.

India launched its first indigenous hydrogen-powered train on the Jind-Sonapat section of Northern Railway. Developed under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, the 10-car train features a 1,200 kW hydrogen fuel-cell propulsion system and carries around 2,600 passengers, marking India's entry into green rail mobility.

On 22 July 2026, China successfully launched Gravity-1, the world's most powerful solid-fuel rocket, from a maritime platform in the East China Sea. Developed by private firm Orienspace, the rocket deployed nine satellites into orbit, marking its third successful flight in support of Earth observation and future satellite internet missions.

Pakistan will host the 14th South Asian Games from 23 to 31 March 2027, across Lahore, Islamabad, and Faisalabad. Over 3,500 athletes from eight nations will compete across 27 sports. This marks Pakistan's third time hosting the event—following 1989 and 2004—after multiple postponements since its originally scheduled 2023 edition.

Skyroot Aerospace successfully launched Vikram-1 under Mission Aagaman from Sriharikota, marking India's first privately developed orbital-class rocket launch. The mission deployed multiple technology payloads into a 450-km Low Earth Orbit, establishing India as the third country to achieve a private orbital launch and providing a major boost to its commercial space sector.



Compiled by
Seema Chari and
Kunal Savarkar



xpress minds