

Date : 2026-02-15

Weekly Current Affairs

English

National

RBI Raises Limit on Collateral-Free Loans for Micro and Small Businesses

The Reserve Bank of India has doubled the collateral-free loan limit for micro and small enterprises from 10 lakh to 20 lakh rupees, effective for loans sanctioned or renewed from April 1, 2026. This change aims to improve access to formal credit and support entrepreneurial activity by strengthening last-mile lending for businesses that struggle to provide security. The revision also aligns loan thresholds with inflation and broader financial inclusion goals to enhance growth and employment opportunities.



First Indian State Introduces Separate Budget for Senior Citizens in FY27

Kerala has become the first Indian state to unveil a dedicated Elderly Budget for the financial year 2027, allocating substantial resources to address the needs of its growing senior citizen population. The separate allocation focuses on pensions, social security, healthcare, and elderly welfare schemes as part of the overall state budget. Criteria for fund devolution to local bodies will now include the share of senior citizens, enabling more targeted community services and age-friendly planning across districts.

Government extends Startup India recognition period to twenty years

The Government of India has revised the Startup India framework, formally introducing a distinct category for deep-technology startups and extending their recognition period from 10 years to 20 years from the date of incorporation. This change, notified by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, aims to better support research and innovation-intensive firms with long development cycles and significant technical challenges. The move also raises turnover limits for deep-tech firms, encouraging investment and growth in high-end technology sectors and strengthening the nation's innovation ecosystem.

Delhi Police launches Operation Shastra to curb digital intimidation

The Delhi Police launched Operation Shastra, a coordinated city-wide crackdown aimed at countering online intimidation and the glorification of weapons on social media platforms. The operation focused on profiling individuals posting pictures with firearms or using abusive language to create fear. More than 500 police teams and over 2 000 personnel examined thousands of social media accounts, leading to the registration of multiple FIRs and the arrest of numerous accused individuals, including minors. Authorities also seized illegal weapons and ammunition as part of enforcement efforts.

FASTag annual pass crosses fifty lakh users within six months

The FASTag Annual Pass has crossed 50 lakh users within six months of its launch, marking strong adoption on national highways and expressways across India. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways reported that the pass facilitated over 26 crore transactions, indicating increased preference for seamless electronic toll payments. Regional data show high usage in several states and union territories, with certain toll plazas leading in annual pass crossings. The pass aims to enhance ease of commuting and reduce delays at toll points.

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Rajasthan district becomes India's first fully insured region

Alwar district in Rajasthan has become the first district in India to achieve complete insurance coverage under the national Insurance for All by 2047 roadmap. The programme, a joint effort of the Government of India and insurance regulators, aimed to deliver universal insurance access to all eligible residents. A door-to-door survey identified uninsured individuals across nine villages, and all were enrolled under formal insurance schemes. This success story at grassroots level offers a model for other districts looking to ensure financial protection for their citizens.

Andhra Pradesh announces launch of Amaravati Quantum Valley initiative

Andhra Pradesh has officially launched the Amaravati Quantum Valley initiative, a major science and technology effort to establish a quantum technology ecosystem in the Amaravati capital region. The foundation stone laying was attended by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and a union science minister as part of building research, innovation, talent development and industry collaboration in quantum computing and related deep-tech areas. The initiative involves collaborations with major technology companies and aims to boost research capacity and attract investment in advanced technology fields.

Indian Railways announces major update for UTS ticketing users

Indian Railways has announced that its Unreserved Ticketing System (UTS) mobile app will be discontinued from March 1, 2026, as part of a shift to a unified digital platform called RailOne. The move merges multiple railway services, including unreserved ticketing, into a single integrated application to simplify booking and enhance user experience. Passengers can transfer existing UTS credentials to RailOne and will receive a three percent discount on unreserved ticket bookings via digital payments until mid-2026.



Banks to adopt risk-based deposit insurance premiums from April 2026

From April 1, 2026, India's banking sector will shift from a uniform flat-rate deposit insurance premium to a risk-based framework set by the Reserve Bank of India and implemented by the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation. Under the new system, banks will be categorised by financial strength, asset quality, governance and supervisory ratings, with safer banks paying lower premiums and riskier institutions higher ones. The aim is to encourage prudent risk management and strengthen financial stability without changing depositor protection coverage.

Kotak Mahindra Bank receives India first fully digital FPI licence

Kotak Mahindra Bank has become the first custodian bank in India to issue a foreign portfolio investor (FPI) licence and complete the entire onboarding and account-opening process using electronic signatures, following the Securities and Exchange Board of India's rollout of a unified digital workflow for such licences. The bank has already issued two fully digital FPI licences, representing a significant milestone for digital ease in overseas investor registration and reinforcing India's push for paper-less financial market processes.



RBI approves Blackstone strategic stake in Federal Bank

The Reserve Bank of India has approved a strategic investment by Blackstone's affiliate Asia II Topco XIII Pte Ltd to acquire up to nine point nine nine per cent stake in Federal Bank, making it the largest shareholder in the private sector lender. The roughly seven hundred million dollar investment, previously cleared by the Competition Commission of India, will allow Blackstone to nominate a non-executive director to the bank's board and bolster capital for growth and expansion in India's banking sector.

AAI, Bharat Taxi Launch Surge-Free Airport Cabs

The Airports Authority of India signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Bharat Taxi to introduce regulated, surge-free taxi services at select airports, as reported on February 9, 2026. The initiative strengthens last-mile connectivity, particularly in regional and tier-2 cities. Operated as India's first driver-owned cooperative, Bharat Taxi ensures transparent fares, predictable pricing, and improved passenger trust while advancing cooperative economics and national development visions nationwide.



Himachal Launches 'Padhai with AI' Initiative

The Himachal Pradesh government launched 'Padhai with AI' on February 9, 2026, at Barthin in Bilaspur district, led by Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu. The district-level, AI-based education programme aims to support competitive exam aspirants through digital learning content, personalised support, and continuous counselling. Implemented by the Bilaspur administration with support from NTPC, it seeks to ensure equal access and modernise public education delivery.

India Launches Nationwide Pulses Revolution from Amlaha

India launched a nationwide pulses revolution from Amlaha in Sehore district of Madhya Pradesh on February 7, 2026, marking the rollout of the Self-Reliance in Pulses Mission. Led by Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, the initiative aims to end India's dependence on imported pulses. Focusing on seeds, clusters, processing mills, and markets, the mission seeks to boost farmer incomes, nutrition security, and make India a global pulses exporter.

India Ranks Second in Global LEED Buildings

India emerged as a global leader in sustainable real estate by ranking second worldwide (outside the US) in LEED-certified green building space in 2025, according to the US Green Building Council. With over 7,500 LEED-certified projects globally and 16 million gross square metres of certified space in India, the data highlights sustainability.

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becoming central to India's real estate strategy, driven by energy efficiency, climate goals, and large-scale adoption across sectors.



India Named BIOFACH 2026 Country of Year

India was designated Country of the Year at BIOFACH 2026, the world's largest organic products exhibition, scheduled from February 10–13, 2026, in Nuremberg, Germany. Led by APEDA, India will showcase organic rice, spices, oilseeds, herbs, and value-added foods from over 20 States and Union Territories. The recognition highlights India's leadership in sustainable agriculture and global organic food supply chains.

MeitY Launches SATYA Portal for STQC Labs

Union Minister Jitin Prasada inaugurated the STQC Lab Automation Portal – SATYA on February 9, 2026, under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. The digital platform integrates testing, certification, and quality assurance services of the Standardization Testing and Quality Certification Directorate into a single system. The initiative enhances transparency, reduces delays, and supports startups, MSMEs, and industry, aligning with Digital India and ease of doing business goals.

India–Seychelles Unveil SESEL Strategic Vision

India and Seychelles announced the SESEL Joint Vision on February 9, 2026, during President Patrick Herminie's State Visit to India. Unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the roadmap focuses on sustainability, economic growth,

and security through enhanced linkages. It covers development assistance, maritime security, digital public infrastructure, climate action, health cooperation, and trade, reinforcing India's strategic role in the Indian Ocean Region.

MHA Revises Protocol for National Song and Anthem Order

The Union Home Ministry has issued new guidelines mandating that all six stanzas of Vande Mataram be sung before the National Anthem at official events when both are performed together. The directive establishes a formal protocol regarding order, duration, and decorum, requiring audiences to stand in attention. Specific occasions, including flag unfurling and presidential events, are listed. Schools must begin activities with Vande Mataram. The move coincides with the song's 150th anniversary celebrations in 2026.

New dragonfly species *Lyriothemis keralensis* discovered in Kerala

Scientists have identified a new dragonfly species, *Lyriothemis keralensis*, in Kerala's Western Ghats. Endemic to the region, it inhabits shaded plantation pools and appears mainly during the monsoon. The species shows clear differences between males and females and was distinguished through detailed anatomical analysis. Its presence in human-modified landscapes highlights overlooked biodiversity and raises conservation concerns. The discovery strengthens the Western Ghats' status as a global biodiversity hotspot and underscores the need for ecological monitoring.

Assam to boost disaster management with USD 182 million ADB support

The Asian Development Bank has approved an additional USD 182 million loan to strengthen flood and riverbank erosion management in Assam, supplementing a USD 200 million project launched in 2023. The initiative targets recurring floods along the Brahmaputra River by improving embankments, early warning systems, and climate-resilient infrastructure. It aims to reduce rural poverty, protect livelihoods, and enhance disaster preparedness. The funding

reflects a long-term, climate-focused strategy to improve resilience and support sustainable development in flood-prone regions.



Mumbai launches India's first musical road on the Coastal Road

Mumbai has launched India's first melody road, a unique stretch on the Coastal Road that plays "Jai Ho" as vehicles pass at a steady speed. Inaugurated by Devendra Fadnavis, the road uses precisely carved rumble strips that create vibrations, producing musical notes audible even inside closed cars. Located between Nariman Point and Worli, the Rs. 6.21-crore project was implemented by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation. Inspired by global examples, the initiative blends engineering with culture, enhances driving experience, and may improve traffic flow by encouraging uniform speed.

India's farm exports to the US may grow as 75% items face zero duty

India's agricultural exports to the United States are set to rise significantly, with nearly 75% of items gaining zero-tariff access, according to a report by the State Bank of India. Products worth over USD 1.3 billion will benefit, strengthening India's existing USD 1.3 billion agri-trade surplus. Major gains are expected in rice, fisheries, tea, coffee, and spices, where tariff relief will improve price competitiveness and volumes. Overall, the revised tariff regime enhances market access, boosts farmer incomes, supports export diversification, and reinforces India's position in global agricultural trade.

Global's biggest cooperative grain storage plan launched

India is implementing the World's Largest Grain Storage Plan in the Cooperative Sector (WLGSP) to strengthen village-level storage, cut post-harvest losses, and raise farmer incomes. Announced by Amit Shah in the Rajya Sabha, the scheme integrates multiple agriculture programmes at the PACS level. A pilot in Madhya Pradesh's Balaghat district saw a 500 MT godown inaugurated by Narendra Modi. With higher subsidies, easier loans, and local storage, WLGSP improves price realisation, reduces distress sales, and enhances national food security.

Adani Power sets up nuclear arm as India opens the sector to private firms

Adani Power has announced the creation of a new subsidiary, Adani Atomic Energy Ltd, signalling an early private-sector entry into India's newly opened nuclear power space. The move aligns with the government's policy shift to allow private participation to meet rising electricity demand, cut carbon emissions, and strengthen energy security. Currently, nuclear generation is dominated by Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited with 8.8 GW capacity. Interest from major utilities, including Tata Power, suggests faster investment, technology adoption, and expansion of clean, reliable baseload power.

International

India and Gulf Cooperation Council Finalise Terms of Reference for Free Trade Talks

India and the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have signed the Terms of Reference (ToR) to formally launch negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA). This step defines the scope and framework for future talks on reducing trade barriers and expanding economic cooperation. The GCC includes Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain. Strengthening trade ties with this bloc could boost bilateral trade and investment flows, enhance market access and diversify energy and industrial partnerships.



World Bank showcases Karnataka fiscal model for replication by other states

The World Bank has highlighted the Karnataka fiscal model as an example for other Indian states to replicate in order to improve their financial reporting and budgetary control. A recent report recommended that including public sector undertakings and special-purpose vehicle borrowings in the state's official liabilities enhances transparency and reduces hidden debt. Karnataka amended its fiscal legislation in 2014 to broaden the definition of liabilities, prompting more realistic accounting of state finances and curbing off-budget borrowings. Other states could adopt similar reforms to strengthen fiscal discipline.



United States removes additional 25 percent tariff following India Russian oil commitment

The United States has revoked an additional twenty-five percent tariff on Indian products that was imposed as a penalty for India's purchases of Russian oil. The removal, effective February 7, 2026, followed India's commitment to

halt direct and indirect Russian oil imports and to increase purchases of American energy products under an interim trade framework agreement. This action eases trade tensions, could bolster Indian exports to the US, and reflects evolving economic cooperation, though the tariffs might be reinstated if India resumes Russian oil imports.

Japan PM Takaichi Secures Historic 2026 Mandate

Japan Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi won a historic landslide in the general election held on February 8, 2026, leading the Liberal Democratic Party to a two-thirds supermajority in the lower house. With 316 seats in the 465-member House of Representatives, the LDP achieved its best result since 1955. The mandate strengthens Takaichi's authority to pursue economic reforms, defence expansion, and security policy shifts.

UAE Emerges Top Gulf Destination for Indians

The United Arab Emirates emerged as the top overseas destination for Indian blue-collar workers in 2025, overtaking Saudi Arabia. The shift reflects changing labour migration dynamics within the Gulf Cooperation Council. Higher wages—around 15–30% more than comparable Gulf jobs—along with tax-free income have increased savings and remittances. Non-economic factors such as geographic proximity, safer living conditions, and better urban infrastructure have further strengthened the UAE's attractiveness for Indian migrant workers.

Global billionaire wealth climbs to USD 15.8 trillion

Global billionaire wealth climbed to a record USD 15.8 trillion in 2025, rising 13% within a year, as the total number of billionaires approached 3,000. The United States led with 924 billionaires and USD 6.89 trillion in wealth, followed by China with 470 billionaires. India ranked third with 188 billionaires, though its total wealth slightly declined to USD 888.2 billion. Innovation and large-scale inheritance drove growth, reshaping the global billionaire landscape.

Cyclone Gezani strikes Madagascar

Tropical Cyclone Gezani has caused severe devastation in Madagascar after making landfall at Toamasina, with wind speeds exceeding 195 km/h. At least 20 people were killed,

dozens were injured, and around 2,700 residents were displaced as floods, landslides, and power outages disrupted normal life. Nearly three-fourths of Toamasina's infrastructure suffered damage, prompting large-scale rescue and relief operations. A red alert was issued by weather authorities, warning of further risks inland. President Michael Randrianirina reviewed relief measures as the cyclone deepened Madagascar's ongoing climate-related humanitarian crisis.

Ranks/Reports/Indices

NITI Aayog Prepares Roadmap to Develop a State as Clean Energy Hub by 2035

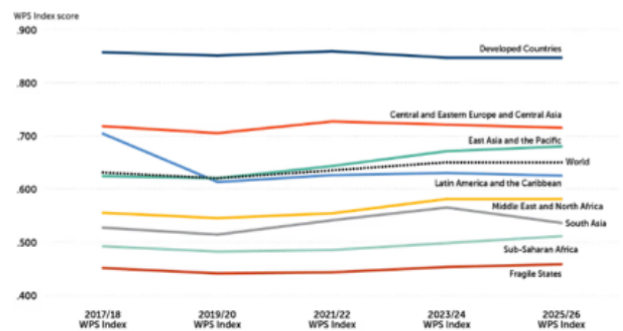
NITI Aayog has drawn up a draft Energy Transition Blueprint under its Accelerating Sustainable State Energy Transition platform to transform Andhra Pradesh into one of India's top renewable energy hubs by 2035. The plan outlines expanding solar, wind and energy storage capacity to meet domestic demand and to develop export-oriented clean power projects. It proposes total investments of approximately 7.5 lakh crore rupees, mostly from the private sector, and aims to lower power costs while creating new jobs and boosting energy reliability.



Denmark Leads, Afghanistan Ranks Last: India and US Positions in Women, Peace & Security Index 2025/26

The Women, Peace and Security Index 2025/26 assesses 181 countries on women's inclusion, justice, and security. It reports that 676 million women experienced conflict exposure, a sharp rise since 2010.

rankings, followed by other Nordic nations, while Afghanistan remains last. India stands at 131st, reflecting gradual but uneven progress, and the United States ranks 31st. The report notes global stagnation overall, though some fragile states have shown measurable improvement through reforms.



Summits/MoUs/Conferences/Agreement

Prime Minister Engages With 4.5 Crore Students During Pariksha Pe Charcha

Prime Minister Narendra Modi conducted the ninth-edition of Pariksha Pe Charcha 2026, interacting with over 4.5 crore students, teachers and parents nationwide ahead of board exams. The live session focused on strategies to manage exam stress, build strong fundamentals, encourage time management and promote student wellbeing. Modi shared practical tips for confidence, holistic development and balanced study routines. The event was broadcast across television, radio and digital platforms, making the guidance accessible to learners in remote areas.



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Black Swan Summit India 2026 begins with keynote address by President Murmu

The Black Swan Summit India 2026 commenced in Bhubaneswar with a keynote address by President Droupadi Murmu, focusing on digital finance, financial inclusion, technology adoption, gender justice and future jobs. The summit brings together global leaders, policymakers, innovators and entrepreneurs to discuss artificial intelligence, FinTech, InsurTech and digital public infrastructure. President Murmu urged greater participation of women in the digital and financial ecosystem, emphasised responsible technology use, and called for digital and financial literacy to be integrated into education for inclusive growth.

Centre, Nagaland and ENPO sign historic agreement on FNTA issue

The Government of India, the Nagaland state government and the Eastern Nagaland Peoples' Organisation (ENPO) have signed a tripartite agreement to create the Frontier Nagaland Territorial Authority (FNTA), a new governance structure for six eastern districts. The pact devolves administrative powers and aims to accelerate socio-economic development, improve governance and address long-standing regional aspirations. While it does not grant separate statehood, the authority will have decision-making control over key areas and is seen as a major step towards peace and inclusive growth.



Rohit Kumar Singh Joins USISPF Leadership

Former Consumer Affairs Secretary Rohit Kumar Singh was appointed Chair of the Global Value Chains Committee of the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum on February 9, 2026. The appointment strengthens India-US cooperation on resilient and diversified supply chains amid global trade disruptions. A 1989-batch IAS officer, Singh brings deep regulatory and governance experience, reinforcing public-private collaboration, regulatory alignment, and strategic dialogue to enhance bilateral economic engagement between India and the United States.



Kerala Sets Judicial Inclusion Milestone

Thanya Nathan, a 24-year-old visually impaired lawyer from Kannur, topped the Civil Judge (Junior Division) examination merit list among candidates with benchmark disabilities in February 2026. Her achievement positions her to become Kerala's first woman judge with a visual disability. The milestone reflects India's growing commitment to an inclusive judiciary, enabled by assistive technologies, accessible education, and a 2025 Supreme Court ruling affirming that disability alone cannot bar judicial appointments.

AIIA inks MoU with General Insurance Council for cashless Ayurveda coverage

The All India Institute of Ayurveda signed an MoU with the General Insurance Council to enable cashless Ayurveda treatment under 32 general insurance companies. This step integrates Ayurveda into the mainstream health insurance

system, allowing policyholders to access insured traditional therapies without upfront payments. The initiative improves affordability, promotes holistic healthcare, and supports the Ministry of Ayush's goal of mainstreaming traditional medicine. A dedicated Ayush Health Insurance Helpline has also been launched to assist beneficiaries.

Science and tech/Space/Defence

India Showcases Indigenous Humanoid Robot at LogiMAT 2026 Exhibition

At the LogiMAT India 2026 exhibition in Mumbai, Indian robotics company Addverb unveiled its latest indigenous humanoid robot, Elixis-W, designed for industrial automation. This wheeled humanoid aims to bring AI-driven robotics solutions to factory and logistics floors, performing complex tasks safely and efficiently. The showcase highlighted domestic advancements in robotics technology and added momentum to India's quest for cutting-edge automation across sectors, blending innovation with practical industrial applications.

Southern Indian port installs country's first anti drone security system

V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority in southern India has become the first port in the country to deploy an advanced anti-drone security system to protect its maritime infrastructure from unauthorized unmanned aerial threats. The integrated system, combining radar and radio frequency technologies, offers 360-degree monitoring and the ability to detect, track, classify and neutralize drones within a five-kilometer range. The installation agreement was signed with Central Electronics Limited, and the project is expected to be completed within months, significantly enhancing coastal and port security capabilities.

NSO introduces MCP server to make government datasets AI compatible

The National Statistics Office (NSO) under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has launched a beta Model Context Protocol (MCP) server, making official government datasets usable by artificial intelligence tools and applications directly. Integrated with the eSankhyiki portal, this technology enables

verified statistical datasets in real time without having to download and process large files manually. The initial rollout includes datasets like labour force surveys, indices on prices and industries, with more expected to be added over time.



Agni-III missile completes crucial test boosting precision strike readiness

India successfully test-fired the intermediate-range ballistic missile Agni-III from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur, Odisha on February 6, 2026. The launch was conducted under the Strategic Forces Command to validate operational and technical parameters of the system. Agni-III, a two-stage solid-fueled missile with a strike range of about three thousand to three thousand five hundred kilometres, is capable of carrying conventional or nuclear payloads. The test confirms the missile's readiness and contributes to strengthening defence deterrence and strategic capabilities.

Airbus sets up sustainable aviation centre of excellence in coastal Indian state

Airbus has inaugurated a Centre of Excellence for sustainable aviation at Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV) in Vadodara, Gujarat, to advance research and development in sustainable aviation fuel and aerospace innovation. The centre will focus on converting municipal solid waste into sustainable aviation fuel, support student-led research and applied training, and foster industry-academia collaboration. This initiative expands India's aerospace ecosystem, promotes sustainability in aviation technologies, and strengthens local capacity for future aerospace talent and green energy solutions.



India Unveils Qualcomm's 2 nm Chip

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw launched Qualcomm's 2 nanometre semiconductor chip in Bengaluru on February 7, 2026, marking a milestone in India's advanced chip design capabilities. The launch highlighted India's transition from backend IT services to high-end semiconductor engineering. Aligned with the India Semiconductor Mission, the move underscored progress in deep tech innovation, talent development, and building a complete semiconductor ecosystem to strengthen India's global role.

Gujarat Ties Up with Starlink for Rural Internet

Gujarat signed a Letter of Intent with Starlink, a subsidiary of SpaceX, on February 9, 2026, in Gandhinagar to provide satellite-based internet connectivity in remote and tribal regions. Aligned with Digital India and Viksit Bharat 2047, the initiative aims to strengthen e-governance, healthcare, education, disaster management, and last-mile digital inclusion across underserved areas of the state.

17-year-old Aditya Pandya becomes India's youngest male analog astronaut

Seventeen-year-old Aditya Pandya became India's youngest male analog astronaut after completing a lunar-simulation mission in Dholavira, Gujarat, conducted by AAKA Space Studio. The nine-day mission recreated Moon-like isolation and habitat conditions to test endurance, autonomous systems, and environmental controls. Aditya also led hardware and IoT integration, developing sensors, biometric monitoring, and a digital twin system for real-time tracking.

His achievement reflects growing youth involvement in space research and supports India's long-term human spaceflight ambitions.

DAC approves Rs. 3.25 lakh crore deal for 114 Rafale fighter jets

India has moved closer to a major enhancement of its air power as the Defence Acquisition Council, chaired by Rajnath Singh, approved the initial proposal to procure 114 Rafale fighter jets. Valued at about Rs. 3.25 lakh crore, the deal includes technology transfer and domestic production by Dassault Aviation, strengthening defence ties between India and France ahead of Emmanuel Macron's visit. The induction aims to counter the IAF's falling squadron strength, enhance deterrence, promote indigenisation, and boost domestic aerospace manufacturing, pending final clearance from the Cabinet Committee on Security.

IAF-RTAF hold joint air drill near Malacca Strait amid Saab's MRFA bid

The Indian Air Force conducted its first international air exercise of 2026 with the Royal Thai Air Force near the strategically crucial Strait of Malacca. The drills featured IAF's Su-30MKI and RTAF's Gripen fighters, focusing on aerial combat, surveillance, refuelling, and maritime awareness. The exercise underscored shared Indo-Pacific security interests and India's Act East Policy. It coincided with Saab AB promoting Gripen-E/F under the MRFA programme, highlighting India's evolving airpower diplomacy and defence partnerships in Southeast Asia.

Sports

Sooryavanshi Scores Historic 175 in Under-19 World Cup Final Against England

Fourteen-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi delivered an extraordinary batting performance in the ICC Under-19 World Cup final against England at Harare Sports Club, smashing a phenomenal 175 runs off just 80 balls. His knock featured 15 fours and 15 sixes, driving India to a massive 411 for nine after batting first. Sooryavanshi's innings surpassed all previous individual scores in U-19 World Cup finals, illustrating exceptional power and precision to give India a commanding position in the title match.

India Wins Silver at Asian Shooting Championships 2026 Through Samrat Rana and Suruchi Singh

Indian shooters Samrat Rana and Suruchi Singh clinched the silver medal in the 10m air pistol mixed team event at the Asian Rifle and Pistol Championships 2026 held in New Delhi. The duo posted a competitive score to finish second behind the Uzbekistan pair in the finals, continuing India's strong performance on home soil. Their podium finish contributed to India's growing medal tally at the continental championship, showcasing depth and talent in the nation's shooting contingent.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru Secure Consecutive Women's Premier League Titles

Royal Challengers Bengaluru Women clinched their second Women's Premier League (WPL) championship by defeating the Delhi Capitals in the 2026 final at Vadodara. Chasing a target of 204, RCB achieved a thrilling six-wicket victory with two balls to spare, marking the highest successful run chase in any WPL final. Captain Smriti Mandhana scored a commanding 87 alongside Georgia Voll's 79, driving a 165-run partnership. This triumph reinforces RCB's consistency and sets them apart as a dominant franchise in women's T20 cricket.

India defeats England to win ICC Under Nineteen World Cup 2026 final

India's Under-19 cricket team won the ICC Under-19 World Cup 2026 by defeating England by 100 runs in the final at Harare Sports Club. India posted a massive total of 411, led by 14-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's brilliant 175, the highest individual score in a final. England responded with a

fighting century but were bowled out for 311. The victory secured India's record sixth Under-19 World Cup title and reinforced their dominance in global junior cricket.

Jharkhand women clinch gold at Para Throwball National Championship 2026

Jharkhand's women's team won the gold medal in the Women's Category at the Para Throwball National Federation Cup 2026, defeating hosts Rajasthan 21-17 in a competitive final held at Jhunjhunu. The tournament showcased high levels of competition and tactical play across participating teams. Jharkhand's disciplined approach and consistent performance throughout the event helped secure the top podium finish, reflecting growing standards and interest in para sports at the national level, while other states also delivered strong performances in various categories.

Shooter Meghana Wins Asian Bronze

Indian shooter Meghana Sajjanar scripted a historic sporting moment by winning a bronze medal at the Asian Shooting Championships 2026. On February 8, 2026, the eight-month pregnant athlete clinched her maiden individual Asian medal in the women's 10m air rifle. Her achievement highlighted extraordinary mental strength, balance, and resilience, while also contributing to India's gold medal in the women's team event.

BCCI Announces ₹7.5 Cr for U-19 Champions

The Board of Control for Cricket in India announced a ₹7.5 crore cash reward for India's ICC Under-19 Men's Cricket World Cup 2026 champions after a commanding 100-run win over England in the final at Harare. The award will be shared by players, support staff, and selectors. With this triumph, India clinched a record sixth U-19 world title, reaffirming its dominance and depth in age-group cricket development.



Manu Bhaker Wins 25m Pistol Silver

Indian shooter Manu Bhaker won the silver medal in the 25m pistol event at the Asian Shooting Championships 2026 held in New Delhi. The medal came five days after her seventh-place finish in the 10m air pistol, marking a strong comeback. Manu qualified with 584 points and finished with 35 in the final, losing gold after a double shoot-off, earning her first individual silver in the event.

Indian Shooters Excel at the Asian Rifle/Pistol Championship

India continued its dominance at the Asian Rifle/Pistol Championship 2026 in New Delhi, raising its gold tally to 39 and total medals to 66 after seven days. Prachi Gaikwad won gold in the junior women's 50m rifle three-position event, while the junior team also secured gold. In the senior category, Aakriti Dahiya claimed silver and Anjum Moudgil earned bronze. India leads the medal table comfortably, showcasing depth and consistency across junior and senior shooting events.

Miscellaneous

Bharat Taxi Introduced as India's First Cooperative-Based Ride-Hailing Service

India has launched Bharat Taxi, the country's first large-scale cooperative-based ride-hailing platform, offering taxis, auto rickshaws and bike taxis. The service is backed by major cooperatives and supported by the government's cooperation ministry, promoting a driver-centric business model where earnings and decision-making are shared

among members. After a successful pilot in regions including the National Capital Region and Gujarat, the platform is set to expand across all states and union territories over the next three years.

After Kerala, another coastal state releases India's second comprehensive bird atlas

Goa has become the second Indian state to publish a comprehensive bird atlas, following Kerala, with the release of the Bird Atlas of Goa as part of biodiversity documentation and conservation efforts. The atlas was compiled through collaborative work involving ornithologists, researchers and citizen scientists, mapping bird species distribution across the state. It will serve as an important resource for ecological monitoring, conservation planning and research, enhancing understanding of avian diversity and changes in habitat patterns across Goa's varied ecosystems.

Kotak Issues India's First Digital FPI Licence

Kotak Mahindra Bank became India's first custodian to issue a fully digital Foreign Portfolio Investor (FPI) licence, operationalised in January 2026. The milestone followed a Securities and Exchange Board of India initiative introducing a unified digital workflow for FPI registration. The entire onboarding process was completed using e-signatures, with no physical paperwork. The reform strengthens ease of doing business, regulatory compliance, and digitisation of India's capital market ecosystem.

UP Unveils First Economic Survey Roadmap

Uttar Pradesh presented its first-ever Economic Survey 2025–26 in the State Assembly on February 10, 2026, marking a historic shift in state-level economic planning. Presented by Finance Minister Suresh Khanna, the survey outlines an investment-led growth strategy to achieve a \$1 trillion economy. It highlights strong GSDP growth, infrastructure expansion, industrial clustering, agricultural strength, and governance reforms aligned with the vision of Developed Uttar Pradesh 2047.

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India's Banks Record Historic Low NPAs

India's banking sector achieved a major milestone as gross NPAs declined to a historic low of 2.15% by September 2025, as informed to Parliament on February 9, 2026. The improvement reflects stronger asset quality across scheduled commercial banks, including public sector banks. Driven by RBI-led reforms, the government's 4R strategy, and recoveries through IBC, SARFAESI, and DRTs, the decline signals enhanced financial stability and a healthier banking system capable of supporting economic growth.

Goldman Sachs Upgrades India's 2026 Growth Outlook

Goldman Sachs raised India's 2026 GDP growth forecast to 6.9%, citing easing external pressures and lower US tariffs on Indian exports. The upgrade reflects improved trade conditions under an interim India-US framework, stable domestic demand, and strong macro fundamentals. The report also lowered India's current account deficit estimate and noted rupee resilience. With inflation contained and policy support steady, India's medium-term growth outlook has strengthened amid global uncertainty.

Delhi announces Rs. 1 lakh benefit scheme for daughters

The Delhi government has introduced the Lakhpati Bitiya Yojana to support girl children from birth through graduation. The scheme provides Rs. 56,000 in phased instalments linked to educational milestones, maturing to over Rs. 1 lakh after graduation. Fully digital and transparent, it eliminates the need for office visits. The initiative promotes gender equity, financial inclusion, and higher education for girls, aiming to reduce dropouts and ensure long-term economic and social empowerment.

International Day of Women and Girls in Science 2026

International Day of Women and Girls in Science is observed on 11 February to promote gender equality in STEM fields. Declared by the United Nations, it highlights persistent gaps in women's participation in research and leadership. The 2026 theme emphasises integrating AI, social science, STEM, and finance to



NPC observes its 68th Foundation Day with National Productivity Week 2026

The National Productivity Council will mark its 68th Foundation Day on 12 February 2026 and observe National Productivity Week from 12-18 February across India. The 2026 theme, "Clusters as Growth Engine: Maximising Productivity in MSMEs," stresses cluster-based development to enhance efficiency, technology adoption, and global competitiveness of MSMEs. NPC President Piyush Goyal highlighted the need to strengthen manufacturing and sustainable industrialisation. Established in 1958 under DPIIT, NPC provides consultancy, training, and research support. As a constituent of the Asian Productivity Organisation, NPC promotes productivity-led, sustainable economic growth.



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Weekly Current Affairs

English

Four Stars of Destiny, the autobiography of Manoj Mukund Naravane

Four Stars of Destiny is an inspiring memoir by Manoj Mukund Naravane, chronicling his journey from childhood to becoming the Chief of the Indian Army. Written in a simple, engaging style, the book offers rare insights into military life, leadership challenges, and decision-making at the highest levels. It explains the ethos, discipline, and functioning of the Indian Army while reflecting on modern security challenges. Beyond the uniform, the memoir shares universal lessons on integrity, resilience, teamwork, and work-life balance, making it valuable for both defence aspirants and general readers.

James Van Der Beek dies at 48 after battling cancer

Hollywood actor James Van Der Beek, best known for starring in *Dawson's Creek*, passed away at the age of 48 after a prolonged battle with colorectal cancer. He had revealed in November 2024 that he was diagnosed with stage three cancer, detected after early symptoms led to medical screening. Rising to fame in 1998 as Dawson Leery, Van Der Beek became a defining face of late-1990s youth television and later appeared in diverse film and TV roles. Beyond acting, he used his illness to advocate for cancer awareness and early detection. His death marks a significant loss for television audiences worldwide.

