TNPSC THERVUPETTAGAM
CURRENT AFFAIRS FEBRUARY 2026
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TNPSC BITS

- Roshini, a Class 9 student from Ranipet, won a gold medal at the 29th All India National Championship 2026 for Traditional Martial Arts, held in Goa.

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin unveiled the foundation for an integrated Multi-Modal Facility Complex (MMFC) with Kuralagam at Broadway, Chennai.

- Uttar Pradesh made Aadhaar-based authentication mandatory for property registration from 1 February 2026.

- Uttarakhand has won the national award for Best State for Promotion of Aviation and Ecosystem at WINGS INDIA 2026.

- The State government has notified the Tamil Nadu Anand Marriage Registration Rules, 2026.
  - Anand Marriages are solemnised according to Sikh marriage ceremonies, commonly known as Anand Karaj.

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin announced that the Thiruvottiyur highway in Chennai would henceforth be called 'Vallalar Nedunchalai'.

- The DMK government plans to install a 125-foot statue of Chola king Raja Raja Chola at the Grand Chola Museum in Thanjavur.

- Captain Hansja Sharma became the first woman officer of the Indian Army qualified to fly the Rudra Armed Helicopter.

- India has launched its first AI-enabled university pilot at Chaudhary Charan Singh University (CCSU), Meerut, Uttar Pradesh.

- International Development Week observed in the first full week of February since 1991 to highlight Canada's contributions to international development worldwide.

- International Zebra Day was observed on 31 January to spread awareness about zebra conservation and the threats of habitat loss, poaching, and population decline.

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin inaugurated the renovated Poompuhar tourism complex at Poompuhar, Mayiladuthurai district, Tamil Nadu.

- Carlos Alcaraz of Spain defeated Novak Djokovic of Serbia in the 2026 Australian Open men's singles final.
  - Novak Djokovic became the oldest man in the Open Era to reach an Australian Open final.

- Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan clinched her second Grand Slam title by defeating world No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus in the 2026 Australian Open women's singles final.

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- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin inaugurated an eco-park at Navalur Lake in SIPCOT (State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu Limited), Siruseri, Chengalpattu district.

- Ministry of Civil Aviation, Airports Authority of India (AAI), and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) was organized a major civil aviation conference and exhibition named Wings India 2026 in Hyderabad.

- Indian Army and Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) conducted the "Agni Pariksha" joint exercise at Sigar in East Siang, Arunachal Pradesh.
  - The exercise focused on training non-artillery personnel in artillery procedures and marked the first integrated firepower drill between the two forces.

- The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) restored road connectivity and conducted a rescue operation at Chatergala Pass in January 2026 after heavy snowfall.
  - The operation was carried out under Project Sampark at Chatergala Pass (10,500 feet) in Jammu and Kashmir.

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister will inaugurate Ranipet's first car manufacturing, at the State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu (SIPCOT) complex in Panapakkam.
  - It will be the first facility in India to manufacture luxury Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) car models, a brand owned by Tata Motors that specialises in electric vehicles.

- Eminent educationist S.S. Rajagopalan passed away recently.
  - He was a member of the committee that formulated Samacheer Kalvi and served on the technical committee of the All-India Forum for Right Education.

- Paradip Port Authority of Odisha was named Cleanest Port of the Year and won the First Prize at the Swachhata Pakhwada Awards 2025.

- Elon Musk became the first person in history to cross a net worth of $800 billion, according to Forbes, following the merger of SpaceX and the xAI company.

- The SAKSHAM (Sanrakshan Kshamata Mahotsav) 2026 fuel-conservation campaign was launched in Chandigarh and is observed from February 1 to February 15, 2026.

- Union Government signed an agreement with various stakeholders to establish the Bharat Container Shipping Line (BCSL) to strengthen maritime logistics.

- India and China recorded a historic bilateral trade of USD 155.6 billion in 2025, growing by about 12% during the year.
  - Indian exports to China increased by 9.7% in 2025.

- World Interfaith Harmony Week (WIHW) 2026 is observed from February 1 to 7 worldwide to promote peace, tolerance, non-violence, and interfaith understanding.

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- The Tamil Nadu State Council for Science and Technology (TNSCST) won the first prize at the 38th Kerala State Science Congress.

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister unveiled the statue of the late actor 'Kalaivanar' N.S. Krishnan in Chennai.

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister inaugurated the State's first glow garden in Mamallapuram.

- The 13th India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Military Exercise KHANJAR-XIII is scheduled in Misamari, Assam.

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) will conduct its largest day-and-night air power exercise, Vayu Shakti-2026, in Rajasthan.

- The Union Ministry for Railways announced the completion of second Mountain Tunnel MT-6 in Palghar, Maharashtra, for the Mumbai–Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR) project.

- Indian teacher Rouble Nagi has won the Global Teacher Prize 2026, a one-million-dollar award, at the World Government Summit in Dubai.

- Soraya Aghaei Hajiagha, an Iranian badminton player, was elected as the first female member from Iran to the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

- Gyalyum Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck, Queen Mother of Bhutan, received the 22nd Upendra Nath Brahma 'Soldier of Humanity' Award 2025.

- The 25th edition of Bharat Rang Mahotsav, the world's largest international theatre festival, will be held in Rohtak, Haryana.

- Volcán de Fuego (Volcano of Fire), one of the most active volcanoes in Central America, erupted recently in Guatemala.

- India's first dedicated Glass Museum is being developed in Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh, known as the "Glass City of India".

- Tripura Gramin Bank (TGB) launched India's first Regional Rural Bank (RRB) co-branded RuPay credit card to expand digital banking services and financial inclusion in rural and semi-urban areas.

- Walmart became the first retailer in the world to reach a market capitalisation of $1 trillion in February 2026.

- NTPC Green Energy Limited (NGEL) is going to develop India's first large-scale green urea production ecosystem at the Pudimadaka Green Hydrogen Hub near Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin unveiled Tamil Nadu's first statue of German philosopher and communist leader Karl Marx at the Egmore Museum complex in Chennai.

- V.O. Chidambaranar (VOC) Port Authority has become the first port in India to deploy an Anti-Drone System.

- DRDO successfully test-fired the nuclear-capable Agni-3 ballistic missile (surface-to-surface missile) off the Odisha coast.
- India's foreign exchange reserves reached an all-time high of $723.8 billion as of January 30, 2026.
- India won the ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup 2026, defeating England in the final at Harare, Zimbabwe.
- Samrat Rana and Suruchi Singh won a silver medal in the 10m air pistol mixed team event at the Asian Shooting Championship 2026 held in New Delhi.
- Alwar district (Rajasthan) became the first district in India to achieve 100% insurance coverage under the "Insurance for All by 2047" roadmap.
- Indian Railways has launched India's first LNG-Diesel dual-fuel DEMU (Diesel Electric Multiple Unit) train at Sabarmati in Ahmedabad.
- A two-year-old, Jude Owens from Manchester (UK), set two Guinness World Records by becoming the youngest player to make a bank shot in pool and a double-pot shot in snooker.
- The Vande Mataram Coastal Cyclothon-2026, organised by the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), entered Andhra Pradesh to mark 150 years of the national song "Vande Mataram."
- The book Red Lines Redrawn: Operation Sindoor and India's New Normal, authored by Major General Bipin Bakshi (Retd), Air Marshal Rajesh Kumar (Retd), Ambassador Anil Trigunayat, and Brigadier Akhelesh Bhargava (Retd), details India's Operation Sindoor.
- An explosion in an illegal rat-hole coal mine killed 18 miners in East Jaintia Hills, Meghalaya.
  o Rat-hole mining is a coal-extraction method using narrow tunnels (about 4–5 feet deep), and it was banned by the NGT (National Green Tribunal) in 2014 due to safety and environmental risks.
- The First Women-Led Industrial Park was inaugurated at Gowribidanur, Karnataka, by FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO) Bangalore.
- Arun Ice-creams made a Guinness World Records in Hyderabad by organising the world's largest ice cream social party.
- Kotak Mahindra Bank became the first bank in India to issue a fully digital Foreign Portfolio Investor (FPI) licence.
- Airbus inaugurated a Centre of Excellence (CoE) at Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV) in Vadodara, Gujarat, to promote sustainable aviation research, innovation, and skill development in the aerospace sector.
- China commissioned the world's largest compressed-air energy storage (CAES) power plant in Jiangsu province, with a storage capacity of 2,400 megawatt hours (MWh) and a power generation capacity of 600 megawatts.

- The Chief Minister of Odisha inaugurated India's first Flat Rolled Products (FRP) aluminium manufacturing unit at the Aditya Aluminium complex in Sambalpur district.
- Indian mountaineer Kabak Yano from Arunachal Pradesh successfully summited Mount Aconcagua in Argentina.
- Uttar Pradesh received the "Most Proactive State" award under RCS–UDAN (Regional Connectivity Scheme – Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) in the Non-Priority Area category.
- Adampur Airport in Punjab was renamed Guru Ravidas Ji Maharaj Ji Airport, during Guru Ravidas' birth anniversary event in Jalandhar.
- Devika Sihag, a badminton player from Haryana, won her first Badminton World Federation (BWF) Super 300 title at the Thailand Masters 2026.
- India participated as a Partner Country at Gulfood 2026 in Dubai for the first time, with participation led by APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority).
- OpenAI announced that GPT-4o and related models will be retired on February 13, 2026, with GPT-5.2 becoming the new professional standard.
- The Indian Air Force's Pechora surface-to-air missile system has been fully digitised to improve air defence capability.
  - Pechora is a surface-to-air missile system inducted into the Indian Air Force in the 1970s.
- Cardinal Poola Anthony, Archbishop of Hyderabad, has been elected president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI).
  - He becomes the first Dalit prelate to lead India's nearly two crore Catholics.
- Meghana Sajjanar won individual bronze medal in the Asian Rifle and Pistol Shooting Championships 2026, held in New Delhi.
- Cochin International Airport (CIAL) in Kerala will become the first airport in India to operate hydrogen-powered buses for passenger transport to reduce emissions in airport transportation.
- Uttarakhand Chief Minister laid the foundation stone of the Sharda River Corridor Project at Tanakpur in Champawat district to promote tourism, infrastructure development, and employment generation.
- The 5th Rüsoma Orange Festival began at Rüsoma village near Kohima, Nagaland, promoting horticulture-led rural development and orange cultivation.
  - The festival is held under the theme "Abundance of Rüsoma."
- Colyttus bilineatus, a rare jumping spider belonging to the family Salticidae, was recorded for the first time in India in Assam.

- Aditya Pandya, 17 years, became India's youngest male analogue astronaut after completing a lunar-habitat simulation mission at Dholavira in the Rann of Kutch, Gujarat.

- Moltbook is an AI-only social networking platform created by Matt Schlicht, CEO of OctaneAI, designed for artificial intelligence (AI) agents to post, comment, and interact without human prompts or moderation.

- Kerala launched NeophyteID, an artificial intelligence (AI)-powered mobile application to detect invasive plant species.

- Indian archer Smaran Sarvesh won the gold medal in the Recurve Under-18 Men's category at the NIMES Archery Tournament 2026 held in France.

- Thanya Nathan C. became the first visually challenged woman in Kerala to top the Judicial Service disability merit list for Civil Judge Junior Division recruitment.
  - Her achievement follows a 2025 Supreme Court judgment allowing visually impaired candidates to be eligible for judicial service.

- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is developing an indigenous vaccine for Kyasanur Forest Disease (KFD).
  - KFD is a tick-borne viral haemorrhagic fever caused by the KFD flavivirus, and spreads through tick bites or contact with infected animals.

- The Winter Olympics 2026/ Milano Cortina 2026 will be held in February 2026 in Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy.

- Indian squash player Anahat Singh entered the world top 20 rankings after winning her first Professional Squash Association PSA Bronze title at the Squash on Fire Open 2026 in Washington, USA.

- Researchers discovered a new orchid species named Diplozentrum papillosum in the Idukki district of Kerala, belonging to the Diplozentrum genus endemic to the southern Western Ghats.

- Researchers from India – Australia have developed a flexible and economical biosensor capable of rapidly detecting myoglobin, a critical cardiac biomarker linked to the early stages of a heart attack.
  - Myoglobin is an early biomarker released after cardiac muscle injury.

- Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Russia's United Aircraft Corporation (UAC) signed an agreement to produce Superjet-100 (SJ-100) aircraft in India.

- Senior ophthalmologists Dr. Haripriya Aravind and Dr. R. Venkatesh from Puducherry have been selected for the Chang-Crandall Humanitarian Award 2026 for their contribution to reducing cataract-related blindness.

- India has been designated Country of the Year at BIOFACH 2026, the world's largest organic trade fair held in Nuremberg, Germany, from 10–13 February 2026.
- Nokia has inaugurated its largest global fixed networks R&D facility at SIPCOT (State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu), Siruseri, Chennai.
- Safer Internet Day is observed every year on the second Tuesday of February, and in 2026 it falls on February 10, 2026.
  - The theme of the year 2026 is "Smart Tech, Safe Choices: Exploring the Safe and Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)".
- The Tirunelveli district police launched a YouTube channel named "Tirunelveli District Police News" to improve transparency in policing, which was first in this kind in this state.
  - The Special posts will be created for students about the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) and safety issues.
- Mumbai Coastal Road introduced India's first musical road on the northbound lane from Nariman Point to Worli on the Mumbai Coastal Road.
- The Delhi Metro Rail's Magenta Line will become the longest corridor in the Delhi Metro network, stretching about 89 kilometres.
- World Radio Day was observed globally on 13 February 2026 to highlight the importance of radio as a mass communication medium.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is "Radio and Artificial Intelligence: AI is a tool, not a voice."
- Ophthalmologist Mohan Rajan received the Outstanding Service for Prevention of Blindness Award 2026 for his three decades of contribution to community ophthalmology and prevention of blindness in the Asia-Pacific region.
- A World Radio Day Conclave 2026 was hosted by Akashvani Raipur in collaboration with UNESCO in Chhattisgarh.
- The Indian Army will host the first-ever International Military Adventure Challenge Cup (IMACC – International Military Adventure Challenge Cup) 2026 in the Eastern Himalayas.
  - Military teams from Bhutan, Brazil, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Saudi Arabia will participate in the event.
- The Indian Air Force (IAF) is conducting a joint in-situ air exercise with the Royal Thai Air Force (RTAF) to enhance defence cooperation, operational coordination, and interoperability between the two forces.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved India's first underwater twin-tube road-cum-rail tunnel project in Assam.

- o The tunnel will be built under the Brahmaputra River, connecting Gohpur (NH-15) and Numaligarh (NH-715).
- ❖ Goa is set to release its first biodiversity and cultural features map, developed by WWF India (World Wide Fund for Nature India), to promote environmental awareness among students.
  - o The map highlights traditional art forms and 48 commonly found species, including birds, mammals, reptiles, marine animals, mangroves, and insects.
- ❖ The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched Kaushal Rath, a mobile Artificial Intelligence (AI) awareness initiative under the "Yuva AI for All" National AI Literacy Programme in February 2026.
- ❖ Cyclone Gezani made landfall in Toamasina, a major port city in Madagascar.
- ❖ India hosted the first BRICS Sherpa and Sous-Sherpa Meeting in New Delhi as part of its 2026 chairmanship of BRICS.
  - o The theme of India's chairmanship is "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability."
- ❖ Darwin Day is observed every year on 12 February to mark the birth anniversary of Charles Darwin, celebrating intellectual bravery, scientific thinking, curiosity, and the search for truth.
- ❖ The Indian Prime Minister inaugurated the first Emergency Landing Facility (ELF) in Northeast India at Moran Bypass in Dibrugarh, Assam.
- ❖ The Bharat Bodhan AI Conclave 2026, organised by the Ministry of Education in New Delhi, focused on using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to improve school education, including literacy, teaching, governance, and multilingual learning.
- ❖ India's first National Cow Culture Museum will be established in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly introduced an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based digital attendance system for Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) in 2026.
- ❖ Aalin Sherin Abraham, a 10-month-old baby, became Kerala's youngest organ donor after she died in accident.
  - o Her funeral was held with State honours in recognition of her parents decision to donate her organs and save lives.
- ❖ The United States (US) successfully transported a micro nuclear reactor by air for the first time using a military cargo aircraft.
  - o The Micro nuclear reactors are small, advanced nuclear systems that usually produce up to 10 megawatts of power.

- Magnus Carlsen won the 2026 Freestyle Chess World Championship, the first tournament officially recognised by FIDE (International Chess Federation), by defeating Fabiano Caruana in the final.

- Global Tourism Resilience Day is observed every year on 17 February to promote resilient and sustainable tourism development to handle crises and disruptions affecting the tourism sector.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is "Tourism Resilience in Action: From Crisis Response to Impactful Transformation".

- Lucas Pinheiro Braathen won Brazil's first-ever Winter Olympics gold medal in alpine skiing at the giant slalom event during the 2026 Winter Olympics.

- The Rajasthan desert city of Jaisalmer will host the country's first Jain Chadar Mahotsav from 6 to 8 March 2026.

- David J. Farber, known as the "Grandfather of the Internet" passed away at the age of 91 in Tokyo.
  - He was an American computer scientist who contributed to the development of early computer networking and the expansion of ARPANET, the precursor to the Internet.

- The foundation stone for the Rs 261-crore Global Sports City was laid by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin in Chennai.

- Bengaluru-based Sarvam AI has unveiled two Artificial Intelligence (AI) language models at the India AI Impact Summit 2026 in New Delhi
  - One model was referred to as "Vikram" during a demonstration, but its official name is yet to be announced.

- VoicERA, an open-source Voice Artificial Intelligence (AI) stack, was launched at the India AI Impact Summit 2026 on the BHASHINI National Language Infrastructure.
  - VoicERA is an end-to-end Voice AI execution system that supports multilingual speech recognition and conversational services.

- Larsen & Toubro (L&T) partnered with NVIDIA to build India's first sovereign gigawatt-scale Artificial Intelligence (AI) factory infrastructure.

- International Asperger Syndrome Day was observed on 18 February to create awareness about Asperger's Syndrome, which is part of autism spectrum disorder (ASD – autism spectrum disorder).
  - Asperger's Syndrome is a neurodevelopmental condition where people have normal or high intelligence but face social interaction difficulties.

- IIT Madras Global Research Foundation launched its first Applied Artificial Intelligence (AI) Innovation Centre at Dubai CommerCity, UAE.

- The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) facilitated the first export of 0.5 metric tonne (MT) of GI-tagged Salem Sago from Tamil Nadu to Canada.

- 'Bharat GI' is launched by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) to promote India's GI tagged products globally under the tagline "A World Exclusive."

- 13th edition of Exercise MILAN, a multilateral naval exercise hosted by the Indian Navy was inaugurated at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

- India has operationalised its first private-sector helicopter Final Assembly Line (FAL) for the H125 at Vemagal, Karnataka.

- India is hosting the inaugural United Nations Fellowship Training Programme on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Control for the Asia-Pacific region in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, for the first time in Asia.

- Prime Minister inaugurated the world's first commercial-scale Second-Generation (2G) bioethanol plant that uses bamboo as feedstock at Golaghat in Assam.

- The Bihar state cabinet approved the construction of a new international airport at Sonepur in Saran district.

- The 475-year-old Our Lady of Grace Cathedral in Vasai, Maharashtra, has won the Award of Merit at the 2025 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation.

- Japan's lower house reappointed Sanae Takaichi as Prime Minister, making her Japan's first woman PM after her landslide election win.

- Eight-year-old Ranvir Sachdeva became the youngest speaker at the India AI Impact Summit 2026.

- India's Tata Group has partnered with OpenAI to build the country's first large-scale AI data centre.

- The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) under NITI Aayog launched AI-Preneurs of India, a coffee table book documenting 45 AI startups across 30+ sectors supported by Atal Incubation Centres.

- Losar Festival 2026 is celebrated from 18–20 February in McLeod Ganj, Himachal Pradesh, marking the Tibetan New Year and the start of the Fire Horse Year.

- Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister released the fourth volume of the comparative etymological dictionary of Tamil and Indo-European languages in Chennai.

  o The fourth volume traces the historical development of words in Western Indo-European languages like Latin, Greek, German, French, English and Eastern languages like Sanskrit, Pali, and Sinhala from 19 Tamil root words.

- ❖ The Global AI Brain Race Report 2026 ranks the United States 1st in artificial intelligence (AI), followed by China (2nd) and Singapore (3rd).
  - o India ranks 6th, scoring 32/100, strong in talent readiness but weak in infrastructure and governance.
- ❖ Zomi National Day was celebrated on 20 February 2026 in the Churachandpur district of Manipur, marking its 78th celebration.
  - o The day aims to promote the unity and cultural identity of the Zomi community and was first observed in 1948 to mark the formation of the Zomi National Organization.
- ❖ The Indian Army conducted Exercise Vajra Ghaat at the Pokhran Field Firing Range in Rajasthan to demonstrate the operational readiness of the K9 Vajra self-propelled artillery system in desert warfare conditions.
- ❖ India and France have exchanged 21 agreements and documents across defence, energy, critical minerals, technology, and innovation, upgrading their relationship to a Special Global Strategic Partnership.
- ❖ The 1,750-megawatt (MW) Demwe Lower Hydel Project in Arunachal Pradesh has received an 11-year extension of environmental clearance till 2037.
  - o The project is located on the Lohit River and originally received environmental clearance in 2010.
- ❖ The 23rd edition of BioAsia 2026, an international life sciences summit, has started in Hyderabad with a focus on Artificial Intelligence (AI), automation, drug discovery, and biologics development.
  - o The theme of the summit is "TechBio Unleashed – Artificial Intelligence (AI), Automation, and Revolutionary Changes in Life Sciences."
- ❖ The Karnataka government will launch the 'Mobile Bidi Pustaka Hidi' campaign to reduce screen time and promote reading among schoolchildren.
  - o The campaign aims to develop a reading habit and improve concentration and academic performance among students.
- ❖ Bela Gram Panchayat from Bhandara district, Maharashtra, was showcased at Mumbai Climate Week 2026 as India's first net-zero Panchayat.
  - o Bela Gram received the Carbon Neutral Vishesh Panchayat Puraskar in 2024 for its climate efforts.
- ❖ The National Green Tribunal (NGT) directed the Uttar Pradesh government to change the Suav's status from "drain" to "river" in official records.
  - o Suav (also called Suwawan) is a tributary of the Rapti River in Balrampur district, Uttar Pradesh.

- ❖ The Indian Navy launched its first indigenously designed and built Cadet Training Ship (CTS) 'Krishna' at the L&T Shipyard in Kattupalli, Chennai.

- ❖ Vice-President C. P. Radhakrishnan has released the coffee table book 'Atal Bihari Vajpayee: The Eternal Statesman' in New Delhi to pay tribute to Atal Bihari Vajpayee and highlights his journey from the Member of Parliament to the Prime Minister.

- ❖ India's top cue sports player, Pankaj Advani, won the Liber Win Champions Cup 2026 and was named Indian Brand Ambassador for Liber Win.

- ❖ Addverb has launched Elixis-W, a Made-in-India wheeled humanoid robot, at LogiMAT India 2026 for logistics and warehouse operations.

- ❖ The Prime Minister of India inaugurated India's first Namo Bharat Rapid Rail Transit System (RRTS – Regional Rapid Transit System) on the Delhi–Meerut corridor connecting Delhi and Meerut in Uttar Pradesh.

  - o This is the first time in India that Namo Bharat and Metro trains operate from the same station and on the same track.

- ❖ The U.S. Department of Energy has removed the 'As Low As Reasonably Achievable' (ALARA) principle from its radiation safety rules.

  - o ALARA aims to reduce unnecessary exposure using engineering controls and encourages a safety culture.

- ❖ After the India AI Impact Summit 2026, plans were announced for the next global AI summits in Geneva (2027) and the UAE in 2028.

- ❖ Rob Jetten became the youngest Prime Minister of the Netherlands at the age of 38.

- ❖ Nidhi Chhibber has taken additional charge as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of NITI Aayog after BVR Subrahmanyam completed his three-year tenure on February 24, 2026.

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the first Indian Prime Minister to address the Knesset Plenum (Parliament of Israel) during his two-day visit to Israel.

- ❖ Amaravati in Andhra Pradesh will host India's first Quantum Valley under the National Quantum Mission.

- ❖ Vice-President C. P. Radhakrishnan has released the updated Tamil and Gujarati editions of the Constitution of India at Uprashtrapati Bhavan.

- ❖ The Indian Army and the United States Army are conducting the 16th edition of Exercise Vajra Prahar from 23 February to 15 March 2026 at Bakloh in Himachal Pradesh.

- ❖ The Government of India has launched the Access Pass for Fishing in India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ – Exclusive Economic Zone) at Veraval, Gujarat.

- NPCI extended the 'UPI One World' wallet service to visitors from over 40 countries attending the India AI Impact Summit 2026.
  - The facility allows foreign travellers to make Person-to-Merchant (P2M – Person to Merchant) payments using UPI without an Indian bank account.
- China is the largest producer of bell pepper (capsicum) in the world.
  - In India, Karnataka is one of the largest producers, especially in Kolar and Bengaluru Rural districts, and other major producing states in India include Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh.
- The World Health Organization has prequalified an additional Novel Oral Polio Vaccine Type 2 (nOPV2) to combat circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2).
- The Government of Tamil Nadu has appointed retired IAS officer Atulya Misra and retired IPS officer Abhay Kumar Singh as State Information Commissioners in the Tamil Nadu Information Commission.
  - The State government had increased the number of State Information Commissioners from six to eight in December last year.
- The Chief Minister inaugurated the statue of freedom fighter and Congress leader Ponnappa Nadar in Nagercoil.
  - The statue recognises his role, along with Marshall Nesamani, in the merger of Kanniyakumari district with Tamil Nadu.
- World Peace and Understanding Day is celebrated every year on 23 February to promote global peace, ethical leadership, and international cooperation, and it marks the first meeting of Rotary International held in Chicago in 1905.
- The Indian Navy will commission INS Anjadip at Chennai Port, and it is the third ship under the Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC) project.
  - INS Anjadip is called a "Dolphin Hunter" because it detects and destroys enemy submarines in coastal and shallow waters.
- India established its first government-supported National Biobank dedicated to Lysosomal Storage Disorders.
  - Lysosomal Storage Disorders are inherited metabolic diseases caused by a deficiency of specific enzymes.
- World NGO Day 2026 is observed on 27 February 2026 to recognize the contribution of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) worldwide.
  - The theme for the year 2026 is "Restoring Dignity Through Inclusion."

TAMIL NADU

Thozhi Hostels and Coastal Restoration

- ❖ The Economic Survey 2025–26 has highlighted Tamil Nadu's 'Thozhi' working women's hostels and Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission (TN-SHORE) coastal restoration mission.

- ❖ Thozhi hostels are run by the Tamil Nadu Working Women's Hostels Corporation through public-private partnership (PPP) (Public-Private Partnership) model.

- ❖ At present, 19 Thozhi hostels in 15 districts benefit 1,824 working women, and 14 more hostels costing ₹176.93 crore are under construction.

- ❖ Tamil Nadu has a 1,069-kilometre coastline across 14 districts, which is vulnerable to erosion, storm surges, and sea-level rise.

- ❖ The TN-SHORE is a ₹1,675-crore World Bank-funded project to improve coastal biodiversity, protection, and livelihoods.

- ❖ The survey also noted Climate Resilient Villages, with Killai village in Cuddalore district identified as Tamil Nadu's first such village.

Tamil Nadu's Knowledge City Initiative

- ❖ At the India Global Education Summit 2026 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu announced the Knowledge City project and multiple international education tie-ups.

- ❖ The 872-acre Knowledge City is planned in the Tiruvallur district as an integrated academic–industrial ecosystem.

- ❖ It will combine higher education, research, advanced manufacturing, clean technology, and entrepreneurship.

- ❖ The first phase of the project will be ready for allocation by the end of 2026.

- ❖ The project is expected to support over 25,000 students and researchers in the long term.

Use of AI in the Madras High Court

- ❖ In a first of its kind, the Madras High Court is set to use an artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted algorithm system called 'Super law Courts'.

- ❖ It is for filtering the required information from the case documents aimed at expeditious hearing, speedy disposal of cases and saving time and energy in the justice delivery system.

- ❖ The algorithm was designed to help legal professionals locate, organise, and understand information contained strictly within the documents placed before it for a particular matter.

- The algorithm was intended to reduce the time and effort involved in manual searching and cross-referencing of voluminous documents.
- It was, however, not intended to replace legal reasoning, judicial determination, or a counsel's professional judgement in a given matter.
- Superlaw Courts operate under controls analogous to those expected in court proceedings.
- It was also brought to the notice of the judge that the Superlaw Courts works exclusively on documents provided for the matter and that it does not consult external sources, general knowledge, or materials outside the record.
- If the record does not contain information in a traceable form, the system states that such information was not found in the documents provided.
- Rather than it will be generating an unsupported response, when documents are uploaded to Superlaw Courts.
- The system creates a dedicated digital workspace, comparable to a sealed record room in judicial chambers, and then the documents get processed to ensure they are workable.
- Scanned or image-based documents get converted into searchable text using Optical Character Recognition (OCR) so they can be searched.
- The AI partner's role was limited to re-expressing or summarising the retrieved excerpts in clear language.
- It would not introduce new facts, make assumptions, or apply legal reasoning.
- If the retrieved material does not support an answer, the system states so explicitly.
- Superlaw Courts functions as an exceptionally organised and cautious record assistant.

Statue of Ramasamy Reddiar

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin announced that a statue of former Premier (CM) of Madras presidency, Omandur Ramasamy Reddiyar would be installed on the campus of the Government Medical College, Omandurar Government Estate, Chennai.
- He served as the Premier of Madras Presidency from 23 March 1947 to 6 April 1949.
- Ramaswamy Reddiyar was a devotee of Vallalar.
- During his tenure, the Madras Temple Entry Authorization Act of 1947 was passed.

- This act was intended to give Dalits and other prohibited Hindus full and complete rights to enter Hindu temples.
- The Devadasi Dedication Abolition Act of 1947 put an end to the devadasi system.
- It was during his tenure that India achieved independence from the United Kingdom.
- In 1948, he ordered the purchase of a de Havilland Dove, the first aeroplane to be owned by the Government of Madras.
- He introduced for the first time in the country; a 14.29% quota was provided to Backward Classes in public services.
- A 29% reservation was also provided for Scheduled Castes and Tribes during his tenure.
- He also oversaw the Zamindari Abolition Act, 1947, aimed at empowering farmers.

Union Budget 2026 on Tamil Nadu

- Union Minister of Finance Nirmala Sitharaman announced the development of mountain trails, turtle trails and birdwatching trail.
- The Government will develop ecologically sustainable mountain trails in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Jammu Kashmir, Arakku Valley (Andhra Pradesh) in the Eastern Ghats and Podhigai Malai (Tamil Nadu - Kerala) in the Western Ghats.
- Further, it announced the establishment of turtle trails along key nesting sites in the coastal areas of Odisha, Karnataka and Kerala.
- A birdwatching trail along the Pulicat Lake in the Andhra Pradesh-Tamil Nadu border will be developed.

Archaeological investigations in Tamil Nadu

- Archaeological investigations have couched Tamil Nadu's rich and diverse heritage within a broader perspective.
- This is in alignment with the argument of David Shulman, Indologist and author of "Tamil: A Biography".
- Discoveries at Keeladi suggest that an urban and industrial civilisation once flourished there.
- Carbon dating of artefacts recovered from the site places them between the 6th century BCE and the 1st century CE.

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- Excavations here revealed Sangam-age characteristics and continuity of brick structures.

- Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS) dates from stratigraphical contexts show that Keeladi's inhabitants were literate as early as the 6th century BCE and lived in an urban civilisation along the Vaigai river.

- The Tamil Nadu government has also established an open-air site museum at Keeladi, located at Kondagai in Sivagangai District.

- The museum features organised galleries with informative panels and curated archaeological exhibits in six thematic sections: Vaigai and Keeladi; Agrarian and Water Management; Ceramic Industries; Weaving and Beads; Sea Trade; and Lifestyle.

- The museum has structural remains and cultural layers of a Sangam-age urban settlement along the Vaigai river basin.

- Excavated features include aligned burnt-brick walls, rectangular brick tanks identified as dyeing vats, covered drainage made of terracotta pipes and bricks and terracotta ring wells used for water management.

- The Porunai Museum showcases artefacts obtained from the excavations at Sivagalai, Korkai, and Adichanallur.

- It is located at Reddiarpatti in Tirunelveli district.

- It also displays underwater finds, including shipwreck materials, lead ingots, and Roman pottery, pointing to ancient trade links with Rome, China, and Southeast Asia.

- The museum at Gangaikonda Cholapuram in Ariyalur district is being developed to preserve and present the historical and cultural heritage of the Imperial Chola dynasty.

- It is located near the Brihadeesvara Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

- Gangaikonda Cholapuram was a city established by Rajendra Chola to mark his conquest of the north.

- Its Theme was Rajendra Chola I's imperial legacy, maritime trade, and diplomacy.

- It will display brick remains from the royal palace at Maligaimedu, war trophies, stone sculptures, inscriptions, architectural fragments, and archaeological artefacts from the region.

- Construction of the Grand Chola Museum is under way to establish the museum on the campus of Tamil University in Thanjavur.

- It will foreground the historical significance of the Chola dynasty.

- A centrepiece of the museum will be a 125-foot-tall statue of the Chola emperor Raja Raja Chola I.

- ❖ Naavai Museum's location will be Mandapam in Ramanathapuram district.

- ❖ Its theme will be Materials excavated at Alagankulam.

- ❖ Naavai means a large ship in ancient Tamil.

- ❖ The Chola conquest of the seas in the later period stands as clear evidence of a sustained naval policy pursued by Chola monarchs.

- ❖ Historian K.A. Nilakanta Sastri notes that the early Cholas of the Sangam age also played a significant role in maritime trade and seafaring activity in the Indian seas.

- ❖ The Pandyas, too, excelled in maritime commerce.

- ❖ The historical basis for this lies in the extensive archaeological finds from Alagankulam.

- ❖ It was an ancient port located at the confluence of the Vaigai River and the Bay of Bengal.

- ❖ Between the 2nd century BCE and the 5th century CE, the port functioned as a major Pandya trade hub, linking South India with Rome, Egypt, and Southeast Asia.

- ❖ Among the most striking exhibits will be the 'ship graffito' — a rare potsherd bearing the incised image of a three-masted sailing vessel — offering material evidence of advanced seafaring traditions.

- ❖ More than 13,000 antiquities recovered from the site, including Roman amphorae, Arretine ware, and a cross-inscribed seal, point to a cosmopolitan trading settlement with far-reaching connections.

- ❖ Noyyal Museum is located at Perundurai in the Erode district.

- ❖ Its theme will be the Materials excavated at Kodumanal.

- ❖ Kodumanal was referred to as Kodumanam in the Padhitrupathu of Sangam literature.

- ❖ Situated on the northern bank of the Noyyal River, Kodumanal functioned as a multi-industrial settlement between the 5th century BCE and the 3rd century CE.

- ❖ The site was a major centre for the production of semi-precious stone beads, with thousands of beads made of beryl, carnelian, agate, quartz, lapis lazuli, and sapphire.

- ❖ While beryl was sourced locally from nearby Padiyur, lapis lazuli originated in Afghanistan, pointing to extensive long-distance trade networks.

- ❖ Kodumanal has also yielded one of the largest collections of Tamil-Brahmi inscribed potsherds in Tamil Nadu.

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- ❖ In addition, the museum will present the region's megalithic burial culture, including menhirs and cist burials furnished with rich grave goods such as carnelian beads and iron swords.

- ❖ Known in ancient literature as Thirukadalmallai, Mamallapuram — the ancient port city of the Tamil country — has, for centuries, stood as a powerful symbol of maritime strength.

- ❖ Flourishing from the Sangam age and reaching its architectural zenith under the Pallavas between the 6th and 9th centuries CE, it functioned not merely as a centre of trade and travel but as a vital bridge linking the Tamil region with distant civilisations in Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, and beyond.

- ❖ The museum will be established at the Beach Resort Complex on the East Coast Road (ECR), owned by the Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation.

- ❖ The State government has proposed the establishment of the Dharmapuri Museum at Adhiyaman Kottai in the Dharmapuri district, with the theme of hero stones.

- ❖ The hero stone serves as an important archaeological artefact, providing insight into the social, historical, and artistic practices of ancient Tamil communities.

- ❖ The ongoing construction of the Courtallam Museum at Courtallam in the Tenkasi district will feature excavated materials from Tirumalapuram and Rajakalmangalam.

- ❖ Other proposed museums include the Tamil Cultural Museum at Tiruvannamalai and the Indus Gallery Museum in Egmore, Chennai.

President's Rule in Tamil Nadu (1976)

- ❖ 50 years ago, on February 1, 1976, the Tamil Nadu government was dismissed for the first time in history.

- ❖ President's Rule was imposed under Article 356 of the Constitution of India.

- ❖ The government was led by Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) party.

- ❖ The dismissal followed a report from Governor K. K. Shah stating that the state government could no longer function according to the Constitution.

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly was dissolved before completing its five-year term, which was due to end on March 21, 1976.

- ❖ The Governor has reported acts of maladministration, corruption, and misuse of power by the DMK government.

- ❖ The government was accused of encouraging secessionist activities under the guise of demanding more autonomy.

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❖ Prohibitory orders were imposed in Madras to ban meetings, demonstrations, and processions for 14 days.

❖ M. G. Ramachandran, leader of the ADMK (All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam), supported the dismissal and called for a commission of inquiry into corruption charges.

❖ The Centre appointed Justice R. S. Sarkaria of the Supreme Court as a one-man Commission of Inquiry to investigate allegations against Karunanidhi and some DMK ministers.

❖ Two central government advisers, P. K. Dave and R. V. Subramanian, were appointed to help the Governor administer the state.

❖ The imposition of President's Rule was expected to restore law and order and ensure proper administration in Tamil Nadu.

Budget 2026 - Adichanallur archaeological site

❖ The Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed the development of 15 archaeological sites across the country into vibrant and experiential cultural destinations.

❖ It will include Lothal, Dholavira, Rakhigarhi, Adichanallur, Sarnath, Hastinapur, and Leh Palace.

❖ Among the selected sites are Indus Valley Civilisation (IVC) sites such as Rakhigarhi in Haryana, and Dholavira and Lothal in Gujarat.

❖ It also includes Buddhist sites in Uttar Pradesh, such as Sarnath and Hastinapur.

❖ Adichanallur, one of India's oldest archaeological sites, is located in Tamil Nadu's Thoothukudi district along the banks of the Thamirabharani River.

❖ It offers insights into early Iron Age life and ancient Tamil Civilisation.

❖ It was the first site in India where the ASI installed walk-through ramps along the excavated area.

❖ Adichanallur is best known for its urn burials, large clay pots used to bury the dead, often accompanied by iron tools, ornaments, and pottery.

❖ These urns were first discovered in the late 19th century by British archaeologist Alexander Rea.

Tribunal for Pennaiyar river dispute

❖ The Supreme Court directs the Centre to constitute a tribunal to settle the Pennaiyar river dispute between T.N. and Karnataka.

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- ❖ It directed the Central government to issue a notification to constitute the inter-State water disputes tribunal within a month.

- ❖ Tamil Nadu argued that the flow of water of an inter-State River is a national asset and no single state can claim exclusive ownership of its water.

- ❖ The state also said than an 1892 agreement over the river water was "valid and binding" on the party States.

- ❖ The State further said that a river even included the stream, tributaries and other streams contributing water directly or indirectly into it.

- ❖ The major tributary, Markandeyanadhi, which has its catchment area both in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, cannot be considered to be out of the purview of the Agreement.

- ❖ The South Pennar River is known as Thenpennai, Ponnaiyar or Pennaiyar in Tamil.

- ❖ It is the second longest river in Tamil Nadu, with a length of 497 km, after the Kaveri.

- ❖ The river originates in the Nandi Hills in the Chikkaballapura district of Karnataka and flows through Tamil Nadu before emptying into the Bay of Bengal.

- ❖ The largest dam on this river is Sathanur Dam near Tiruvannamalai.

- ❖ It splits into a delta on which Cuddalore town is located.

Tamil Nadu Global Tourism Summit 2026

- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin announced that the Tamil Biennale will be held in January 2027 at the Tamil Nadu Global Tourism Summit 2026 in Chennai.

- ❖ The State government signed 127 MoUs worth ₹22,794 crore, expected to generate 65,937 jobs.

- ❖ A ₹100 crore Special Area Development Authority will be set up for Mamallapuram to create world-class tourism infrastructure.

- ❖ 31 locations across Tamil Nadu have been selected to develop theme parks, accommodation facilities, camping sites and nature-based resorts.

- ❖ Under the Tamil Nadu Tourism Policy 2023, SIPCOT (State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu) will identify tourist locations and develop facilities in districts like Kanniyakumari, Kallakurichi, Erode and Thoothukudi.

- ❖ In the last five years, Tamil Nadu invested ₹612.18 crore in tourism, attracting 128.97 crore domestic tourists and 45 lakh foreign tourists.

Tamilnadu and Union Budget 2026

- ❖ Tamil Nadu will receive 4.097% of the net proceeds of shareable Central taxes, as per the recommendations of the 16th Finance Commission.
- ❖ It will take effect on April 1, 2026.
- ❖ This is slightly higher when compared to the 4.079% of the net proceeds of shareable Central taxes recommended by the 15th Finance Commission.
- ❖ Thus, it is accounting for a rate of increase of 0.44%.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu is expected to receive ₹62,530.65 crore as net proceeds of sharable Central taxes as per the Budget Estimate for 2026-27.
- ❖ It is higher than the Revised Estimate for 2025-26 of ₹56,819.23 crore.
- ❖ Tamilnadu was followed by Telangana with a rise of 3.43% and Andhra Pradesh with 4.2%.
- ❖ Only Karnataka and Kerala have witnessed a double-digit rate of increase — 13.27% and 23.74%.
- ❖ At the all-India level, Kerala's degree of rise is only next to Haryana's 24.52%, while the third slot goes to Karnataka.
- ❖ The weights assigned to the criteria of area, demographic performance and per-capita GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product) have reduced affecting States like T.N and Kerala.
- ❖ Only the criterion of population has seen an increase in weight from 15% to 17.5%.
- ❖ However, it does not benefit the southern States including Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
- ❖ The rise in the vertical devolution for the south seems to have been achieved by decreasing the share of six northern States such as Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar, besides West Bengal.
- ❖ The combined share of the seven States, which stood at 51.20%, has been brought down to 49.93%.
- ❖ The 16th FC has dealt elaborately with the subject of subsidies, an area where the south has been a trendsetter.
- ❖ At ₹78,453 crore, Tamil Nadu had the highest absolute level of subsidy in 2023 24.
- ❖ It is followed by Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana at ₹70,149 crore, ₹63,951 crore and ₹62,847 crore respectively.
- ❖ The FC is pointing out that the absolute subsidy levels are "somewhat misleading" given the State's size.

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❖ The Commission names Telangana as one of the States wherein subsidy levels, as a proportion of respective GSDP, exceeded 5% during 2024-26, and Andhra Pradesh having the subsidy level standing between 3% and 5%.

❖ Even though the southern States had taken a similar stand on many issues, they differed among themselves over revenue deficit grants, meant for bridging the revenue gap.

❖ While Karnataka expressed scepticism, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu wanted the continuation of these grants.

❖ However, the 16th FC's recommendation was against the grants.

❖ The Union government maintained the status quo with respect to the vertical share of devolution to State from the divisible pool at 41%.

Economic Survey on Tamil Nadu schemes

❖ The Economic Survey highlighted Tamil Nadu's 'Thozhi' hostels for working women.

❖ 'Thozhi' working women's hostels provide affordable housing to working women.

❖ These hostels are run by the Tamil Nadu Working Women's Hostels Corporation through public-private partnerships.

❖ These are equipped with gender-responsive design, furnished rooms, crèches, kitchens, and shared space.

❖ They offer a practical blueprint for States seeking to expand women workforce.

❖ Tamil Nadu is a leading State in India in terms of women labour force.

❖ It has over 40% of the country's registered women workers in manufacturing.

❖ It has a female labor force participation rate of roughly 43-47%.

❖ So far, 19 'Thozhi' hostels, equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, have been established in 15 districts.

❖ The survey notes that Tamil Nadu has a coastline of 1,069 kilometres across 14 districts that are vulnerable to shoreline erosion, storm surges, and sea-level rise.

❖ The Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission (TN-SHORE) employs a multi-pronged approach to improve coastal biodiversity and protection, enhance livelihood, and mitigate pollution.

❖ TN-SHORE is a ₹1,675-crore World Bank-funded project.

❖ Of the total investment, around ₹1,000 crore will come from the World Bank and the State will contribute the rest.

❖ The survey also highlights Climate Resilient Villages, an initiative taken up in Tamil Nadu and in a few other States.

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❖ In Tamil Nadu, Killai near Pichavaram in Cuddalore district, known for its vast mangrove forests, was the first Climate Resilient Village.

❖ Tamil Nadu is among the few States that have not only enhanced their business environment by integrating sustainability measures.

❖ It has also reduced the time taken for environmental clearance through the Business Reform Action Plan.

❖ Tamil Nadu has enhanced the ease of doing business through single-window clearance, digitised approval, and land reforms, while promoting solar parks, district-level decarbonisation plans, and energy efficiency programmes.

Highlights of Tamil Nadu economy

❖ The Economic Survey of India (2025-26) reinforces Tamil Nadu's position as an investment-ready, industry-first State.

❖ Tamil Nadu stands out as the fastest-growing State economy, registering 11.19% real growth in 2024–25.

❖ As India's second-largest State economy, Tamil Nadu is also a major contributor to national growth.

❖ This performance is driven primarily by the secondary sector, which grew by 13.43%.

❖ Within this, manufacturing has emerged as a key growth engine, recording 14.74% real growth — more than three times the all-India average of 4.5%.

❖ Tamil Nadu also leads every State in four-year average real manufacturing growth (2021-22 to 2024-25) at 9.38%, while its overall GSDP grew by 8.63%.

❖ Headline CPI inflation declined to 2.45% in 2025-26 (till December).

❖ The State's merchandise exports have nearly doubled from $26.15 billion in 2020-21 to $52.07 billion in 2024-25.

❖ Tamil Nadu is among the few States where 85% of the cement industry is concentrated.

❖ It is also one of three States to receive final approval for financial assistance of ₹100 crore to establish a Medical Devices Park under the Scheme for Promotion of Medical Devices Parks.

❖ According to the Survey, Tamil Nadu contributes 15% of India's manufacturing employment.

❖ It is the highest among all States.

❖ Tamilnadu is surpassing Gujarat (13%), Maharashtra (13%), and Uttar Pradesh (8%).

- Under the Business Reforms Action Plan (BRAP) 2024, Tamil Nadu has enhanced ease of doing business through single-window clearances, digitised approvals and land reforms, while promoting solar parks, district-level decarbonisation plans and energy-efficiency programmes.

- Tamil Nadu has secured a pivotal role in India's green hydrogen economy with the designation of the V.O. Chidambaranar Port as one of only three green hydrogen hubs under the National Green Hydrogen Mission.

- This positions the State at the forefront of India's target to produce five million metric tonnes of green hydrogen annually by 2030.

- The Chennai-Vellore-Villupuram-Chengalpattu corridor has also been identified as a potential Regional Rapid Transit System route.

- The Survey takes note of the Tamil Nadu Sustainably Harnessing Ocean Resources and Blue Economy Project addressing climate vulnerabilities along the State's 1,076-kilometre coastline across 14 coastal districts.

- It further notes that Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Telangana together account for nearly 40% of India's services output.

- Tamil Nadu is also identified among high-performing States in groundnut productivity, alongside Gujarat and Karnataka, due to improved varieties, multiple crop cycles and sustained policy focus on oilseeds.

- Its achievements in banana cultivation are similarly recognised as region-specific success stories in horticulture.

- On urban development, the Survey highlights Chennai to be one of the world's largest urban agglomerations.

- Chennai's Metropolitan Area Parking Policy 2025 is cited as a national best practice.

- And Tamil Nadu ranks first in Civic Behaviour in the India Today Gross Domestic Behaviour Survey.

- In higher education, 17 institutions from Tamil Nadu feature in the NIRF 2025 Top 100 Overall Rankings — the highest among all States.

- The Skill Voucher Scheme launched in 2024 by the Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department is also acknowledged for supporting students from disadvantaged communities.

SC on Vice-Chancellor Appointments

- The Supreme Court stayed the Madras High Court interim order related to Vice-Chancellor appointments in Tamil Nadu State universities.

- The High Court had earlier stayed an amended provision allowing the Tamil Nadu government to appoint Vice-Chancellors.

- The Court said the State government must be given a reasonable opportunity to present its case.
- The Supreme Court asked the Madras High Court to decide the matter within six weeks.

Abolition of the Police Orderly System

- The Tamil Nadu government informed the Madras High Court that it issued a Government Order (G.O.) on January 21, 2026, to abolish the police orderly system.
- District-level committees headed by the District Collector have been formed in every district to monitor the abolition of the practice.
- The committees include the District Revenue Officer (DRO), Additional Superintendent of Police (AdSP), and other senior officials.
- These committees will collect complaints, gather information, and ensure police personnel are not used for household or personal work of senior officers.
- Reports on implementation must be sent to the Home Secretary every two months.
- The Director General of Police (DGP) and the State government will monitor compliance, and disciplinary action may be taken against officials who violate the order.

Palaeolithic Sites in Tamil Nadu

- Over 500 stone age tools have been discovered in Tiruchi, Pudukottai, and Namakkal districts, Tamil Nadu, suggesting Lower and Middle Palaeolithic habitation.
- Tools found include hand axes, cleavers, choppers, flakes, and multi-directional discoidal cores, mainly made of quartz.
- Sites were identified in Kurumbappati, Kallikudi, Valkaradu, Veeramalai, Nadukattupatti, Mullipatti, Malampatti, Sarugumalai, Sitharmalai, and Thalaimalai.
- Microlithic tools indicate a later prehistoric phase at these sites.

Tamil Nadu Urban Greening Policy 2026

- The Tamil Nadu government released the Tamil Nadu Urban Greening Policy 2026 under the Green Tamil Nadu Mission.
- The aim is to develop climate-resilient, sustainable, and liveable cities by increasing urban green cover.

- The policy focuses on integrating trees, urban forests, parks, wetlands, and blue-green infrastructure into city planning.
- Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) are expected to maintain at least 15% of urban areas under green cover.
- The Green Tamil Nadu Mission aims to increase forest and tree cover in the State to 33%.

Women's Education in Tamil Nadu

- Women's enrolment in higher education in Tamil Nadu has increased by 34% due to the Pudhumai Penn scheme.
- Under the scheme, ₹1,000 per month is provided to girl students studying in colleges.
- Around eight lakh girl students have benefited from the programme.
- A State Planning Commission study found that rural girl students benefited more than urban students.
- The Pudhumai Penn scheme aims to support girls' education and reduce dropouts after school education.
- The scheme is part of the Tamil Nadu government's initiatives to improve women's access to higher education.

Tamil Nadu Electronics Hub

- Tamil Nadu is projected to become a $150 billion electronics hub by 2030.
- The State had a 41 % share in India's total electronics exports in the Financial Year (FY) 2025, valued at $15 billion, and this is expected to rise to 45 % in FY2026.
- Tamil Nadu accounts for 28.6 % of India's electronics manufacturing gross sales value, ranking second in the country.
- Electronics exports from the State reached $14.65 billion, recording a 414 % increase since 2021–22.
- There are 191 electronics manufacturing units in the State, with major clusters in Chennai, Sriperumbudur, Hosur, Coimbatore, and Tiruchirappalli.
- India's electronics manufacturing industry aims to reach $500 billion by 2030.

Tamil Brahmi Inscriptions in Egypt

- Nearly 30 Tamil Brahmi inscriptions have been identified in Egypt's Valley of the Kings, dating between the 1st and 3rd Centuries C.E.

- The inscriptions were found in six tombs in the Theban Necropolis during studies conducted in 2024 and 2025.
- They include writings in Tamil Brahmi, Prakrit, and Sanskrit, indicating the presence of Indian visitors.
- The repeated name Cikai Korran was inscribed eight times across five tombs.
- The findings provide evidence of ancient trade links between Tamilagam and the Roman Empire.
- Similar Tamil names have also been found earlier at Berenike, a Red Sea port in Egypt.

Public Sector Innovation Policy

- Tamil Nadu has announced that it will formulate a State-level Public Sector Innovation Policy and a State Innovation Index.
- A delegation from the Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission (SPC) visited the UNICEF Office of Innovation and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Paris, France.
- Tamil Nadu became the first sub-national government in the world to enter a strategic partnership with international agencies to promote the public sector innovation.
- A Letter of Intent was exchanged between the Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission and the United Nations Children's Fund.
- The collaboration also involves the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development to develop innovation frameworks and monitoring systems.
- A sectoral working group of experts has been formed to guide policy formulation and implementation.

Conversion Conclave 2026

- During the Conversion Conclave 2026 held in Chennai, The Chief Minister M. K. Stalin has announced that 73.53 % of MoUs signed since mid-2021 have been converted into investment projects.
- A total of 1,179 MoUs worth ₹12.37 lakh crore were signed in the last five years, with the potential to create 36.52 lakh jobs.
- Out of these, 867 projects are in advanced stages of implementation, and 35.11 % of the projects are already operational.
- According to data from the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation, about 29.63 lakh jobs were created in the last four years in Tamil Nadu.

- The State government has organised 18 investment conclaves in Tamil Nadu and abroad, which resulted in 1,130 MoUs worth ₹10.43 lakh crore.
- New MoUs were signed with the Bharat Biotech for a bio-similar manufacturing project and with Hyundai Motor India Foundation for a skill development centre in Kancheepuram.
- Dabur India Ltd has also started construction of its first manufacturing plant in South India at Tindivanam.

Tamil Nadu's Economic and Development Performance

- Tamil Nadu recorded the highest per capita income growth in India, increasing from 0.07% in 2020–2021 to 11.19%.
- The per capita income of Tamil Nadu increased from ₹2,09,628 in 2020–2021 to ₹3,61,619, showing an increase of ₹1.76 lakh.
- The Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Tamil Nadu increased from ₹17.89 lakh crore in 2020–2021 to ₹31.19 lakh crore, recording about 16% growth and ranking first in India.
- The poverty rate in Tamil Nadu declined from 2.20% in 2020–2021 to 1.43%, showing a reduction of about 11.2%.
- The export value of Tamil Nadu increased from 64.93 billion US dollars in 2020–2021 to 80.89 billion US dollars, making the state one of the leading exporters in India.
- Tamil Nadu improved from 3rd place in 2020–2021 to 1st place in electronic goods exports in India.
- Tamil Nadu's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) index score increased from 74 points in 2020–2021 to 78.8 points, and the state ranked 3rd in India.

Strategic Roadmap for Soil Health

- Tamil Nadu is implementing a strategic roadmap to improve soil health and support sustainable agriculture in the State.
- The Government of Tamil Nadu is strengthening soil fertility through the Soil Health and Fertility Scheme with a budget of about ₹206 crore.
- The roadmap promotes green manure cultivation to improve soil nutrients and fertility across farmlands.
- Around 2 lakh acres of farmland are planned to be covered by spreading green manure seeds, benefiting more than 2 lakh farmers.
- A start-up fund of ₹20 crore was allocated to support soil-health improvement activities.

❖ Tamil Nadu has already distributed over 15.25 million Soil Health Cards (SHC) to farmers to provide information on soil nutrients and fertilizer use.

❖ The roadmap supports sustainable agriculture, climate resilience, and long-term food security in the State.

TN Welfare Program 2025–26

❖ The Tamil Nadu Government accorded administrative sanction of ₹3,500 crore to construct one lakh more houses under the Kalaignarin Kanavu Illam programme for 2025–26.

❖ The scheme aims to provide permanent houses to eligible beneficiaries across the State.

❖ The Chief Minister has launched the 'Thervukkalam' mobile application to help job aspirants prepare for competitive examinations.

❖ He also launched the Thiran 360 portal to support youth skill development.

❖ He laid the foundation stone for a ₹62.50 crore building in Shenoy Nagar, Chennai, which will function as a coaching centre for All India government services.

Museums and Memorial Projects in Tamil Nadu

❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. K. Stalin inaugurated several cultural projects and laid the foundation for multiple museums across the State.

❖ An open-air museum was inaugurated at Keeladi in Sivaganga district at a cost of ₹24 crore.

❖ Foundation stones were laid for the Noyyal Museum in Erode district, the Navai Museum in Mandapam, and the Grand Chola Museum in Thanjavur.

❖ New infrastructure and façade lighting were inaugurated at the Manora Memorial Pillar in Thanjavur district.

❖ A memorial hall for Keelapazhuvur Chinnasamy was inaugurated in Ariyalur district.

❖ He sacrificed his life for the protection of Tamil and fought against the imposition of Hindi at his home town.

❖ A bronze equestrian statue of freedom fighter Theeran Chinnamalai was unveiled in the Erode district.

❖ The CM also unveiled a statue of former Member of Parliament and former member of Cauvery Retrieval Committee C. Muthusamy.

- He worked for the rights of farmers and staged several protests, at Vairamadai near Karur.

- He released the book Rock Art of Tamil Nadu, authored by K. Rajan and R. Sivanandam.

- The Chief Minister virtually unveiled the bust of former Chief Minister of the then Madras Presidency P. Subbarayan, along with a memorial hall, constructed in Namakkal district.

- He also unveiled a statue of former MP C. Muthusamy in Karur district.

- The Chief Minister virtually inaugurated ELCOSEZ, set up by the Electronics Corporation of Tamil Nadu Limited in Sholinganallur in Chennai.

Baby Care Kit scheme

- The Government of Tamil Nadu launched a "Baby Care Kit" scheme to reduce the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) among low birth weight (LBW) babies.

- The scheme provides monthly kits with iron drops, multivitamin drops, Vitamin D3 drops, an infant medical card, and a booklet on 12 child development signs.

- Around 4.5 lakh deliveries take place yearly in government hospitals, and about 52,000 babies are born with low birth weight (less than 2.5 kg).

- The initiative, announced in the State Budget, is implemented at a cost of ₹8.07 crore.

- Tamil Nadu's IMR reduced from 8.2 (2023–24) to 7.7 (2024–25) per 1,000 live births.

- The Pregnancy and Infant Cohort Monitoring and Evaluation (PICME) mobile app "Thaimai" was also launched for monitoring antenatal care, immunisation, and high-risk alerts.

Vallalar Birth Anniversary

- The Government of Tamil Nadu has announced that the birth anniversary of Ramalinga Swamigal (Vallalar) will be celebrated for three days every year.

- The announcement was made by the Chief Minister M. K. Stalin during the International Vallalar Conference organised by the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) Department.

- A research centre on Vallalar will be established at the HR&CE Department headquarters in Chennai.

- Vallalar's book titled "Spiritual Alchemy" will be published by the HR&CE Department.

- ❖ Vallalar Annadhanam Centres will be established at Mettukuppam, Karunguzhi, and Marudhur.
- ❖ Thiruvottiyur High Road in north Chennai has been renamed Vallalar High Road.

Milk Production in Tamil Nadu

- ❖ Recent Basic Animal Husbandry (BAH) statistics show that milk production per crossbreed cow in Tamil Nadu has remained almost stagnant, mainly due to a shortage of feed and fodder.
- ❖ In Tamil Nadu, milk production per crossbreed cow has remained around 7.1 kg per day between 2018 and 2025.
- ❖ It ranged from 7.03 kg per day in 2023–24 to 7.84 kg per day in 2024–25, showing only a small improvement.
- ❖ The area under fodder crops in Tamil Nadu declined from 48,000 hectares (2018–19) to 35,000 hectares (2025).
- ❖ In Karnataka, fodder-crop coverage increased from 71,000 hectares to 90,000 hectares, and crossbred cattle produce about 10.71 kg of milk per day.
- ❖ Karnataka provides a milk subsidy of ₹5 per litre (recently increased to ₹7 per litre), while Tamil Nadu provides ₹3 per litre.
- ❖ Aavin currently procures about 30–35 lakh litres of milk per day, though its processing capacity is around 50 lakh litres per day.

Palayamkottai Tower Clock

- ❖ The historic tower clock at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Palayamkottai is being restored and is set to chime again.
- ❖ The clock was manufactured in 1854 and installed in 1855, which is earlier than Big Ben in London, which was installed in 1859.
- ❖ The year 1854 is engraved on the clock, and it was made by John Moore & Sons, a London-based clockmaking company.
- ❖ The cathedral was built in 1826 by Reverend Charles Theophilus Ewald Rhenius and recently celebrated its bicentenary.
- ❖ The clock is believed to be one of the oldest tower clocks in India.

Externment Order Violation in Chennai

- ❖ A history-sheeter was remanded in judicial custody for violating an externment order issued by the Greater Chennai City Police.
- ❖ The police invoked Section 51A of the Madras City Police Act 1888 to take action against the offender.

- ❖ This is the first time in nearly 25 years that provisions of the City Police Act have been used to jail a person for breaching an externment order.
- ❖ An externment order allows the Police Commissioner to direct the removal of individuals from the city if their activities may cause alarm, danger, harm to persons or property, or involve force or violence.
- ❖ The orders were issued as part of a crackdown on notorious rowdy elements entering Chennai and threatening public peace.
- ❖ The measure aims to rein in repeat offenders, safeguard public peace, maintain law and order, and prevent the recurrence of serious criminal activities.

Organ Donations in Tamil Nadu

- ❖ Tamil Nadu recorded its highest-ever monthly deceased organ donations with 33 donors in January 2026.
- ❖ Government Dharmapuri Medical College Hospital recorded the highest number of donors (5) and functions as a Non-Transplant Organ Retrieval Centre (NTORC).
- ❖ Government Rajaji Hospital of Madurai recorded 4 donors, while Government Kilpauk Medical College Hospital in Chennai and Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Government Hospital in Chennai recorded 2 donors each.
- ❖ Other hospitals in Coimbatore, Salem, Dindigul, Tirunelveli, Ramanathapuram, and Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital recorded one donor each.
- ❖ In 2025, Tamil Nadu recorded 266 brain-dead organ donors, and 42 donations were recorded in the first 43 days of 2026.
- ❖ The deceased donor organ transplantation programme is coordinated by the Transplant Authority of Tamil Nadu, and Government Order (GO) 331 issued in 2023 honours brain-dead donors with State respect.

Economic Survey 2025–26

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Economic Survey 2025–26 was prepared by the State Planning Commission.
- ❖ The Survey states that Tamil Nadu can achieve a one-trillion-dollar economy by 2031 if the State sustains a 16% nominal growth rate recorded in 2024–25.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) reached ₹31.19 lakh crore in 2024–25, with real growth of 11.2%, the highest among major States.
- ❖ Per capita income in 2024–25 was ₹3.62 lakh, which is 1.77 times higher than the national average of ₹2.05 lakh.
- ❖ The State contributed 9.4% to India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) despite having 4% of the land area and 6% of the population.

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❖ The manufacturing sector grew by 14.74% in 2024–25, while the services sector grew by 11.3%, showing strong sectoral performance.

❖ Merchandise exports increased from $26.15 billion in 2020–21 to $52.07 billion in 2024–25, with Tamil Nadu ranking first in electronics, textiles, and leather exports.

❖ Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows into Tamil Nadu increased to $3,681 million in 2024–25.

❖ The Survey notes that textile exports face challenges due to United States (U.S.) tariff increases, though trade agreements may provide relief.

❖ It highlights that several areas of the agriculture sector require immediate attention to sustain growth.

❖ The Survey also notes that consanguineous marriages remain prevalent in Tamil Nadu.

Union–State Relations Report

❖ Part I of the report by the Justice Kurian Joseph Committee on Union–State Relations was submitted to the Government of Tamil Nadu.

❖ The committee was constituted in 2025 and is chaired by Kurian Joseph, a retired Supreme Court of India judge.

❖ The report discusses decentralisation, State autonomy, amendment of the Constitution, territorial integrity of States, the role of the Governor, and delimitation.

❖ It aims to strengthen cooperative federalism within the constitutional framework and restore balance between the Union and the States.

❖ Two more parts of the report, each containing ten chapters, are under preparation.

❖ This committee is the fourth major national-level review of Union–State relations after the Rajamannar Committee, Sarkaria Commission, and Punchhi Commission.

Tamil Nadu Budget 2026

❖ The State's interim Budget for the financial year 2026-2027 was presented in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly by Finance Minister Thangam Thennarasu ahead of the Assembly elections due this year.

❖ Also, the interim Agriculture Budget was presented by the portfolio minister M.R.K. Panneerselvam.

- Tamil Nadu can achieve its trillion-dollar economy milestone by 2031 if it sustains the 2024-25 nominal growth rate of 16%.

- The finance minister will also present in the House the demand for advance grants for the year 2026-2027 and additional expenditure for 2025-2026 for its approval.

- Tamil Nadu recorded 11.3% economic growth in 2024–25.

- Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) reached ₹31.19 lakh crore, retaining its position as India's second-largest State economy.

- School Education was allocated ₹48,534 crore.

- Works of Periyar E.V. Ramasamy translated into 27 languages, including English, French, Arabic, Hindi, and Gujarati.

- In the Revised Estimates 2025-26, the outstanding debt of the State is estimated to be ₹9.52 lakh crore as against ₹9.29 lakh crore in the Budget Estimates 2025-26.

- The outstanding debt has been estimated to be ₹9.42 lakh crore in the Revised Estimates and ₹10.62 crore in the Interim Budget Estimates 2026-27.

- The State plans to borrow ₹1.79 lakh crore during 2026-27 and make repayment of ₹60,413.42 crore.

- The debt-to-GSDP ratio is estimated to be 26.12.

- According to the Interim Budget Estimates, the Revenue Deficit for 2026-27 is estimated at ₹48,696.32 crore.

- It was ₹69,219 crore in the Revised Estimates 2025-26 as against ₹41,635 crore in the Budget Estimates 2025-26.

- The Fiscal Deficit in the Interim Budget Estimates 2026-27 is estimated to be ₹1.21 lakh crore.

- It was ₹1.24 lakh crore, as per the Revised Estimates 2025-26.

- The Fiscal Deficit as a percentage of GSDP is estimated to reduce from 3.48% in the Revised Estimates 2025-26 to 3% in the Interim Budget Estimates 2026-27.

- 130 Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care Centres (CEmONC) are functioning across the State to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality.

- Tamil Nadu ranks first in the country in terms of the number of safe deliveries conducted in Government hospitals.

- Tamilnadu's Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) has dropped to 35 per lakh live births, and the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) stands at 12 per thousand live births.

- Both are significantly lower than the national average.

- Tamil Nadu remains India's second-largest state economy.

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Tamil Nadu Second Economic Survey Highlights

❖ Tamil Nadu Economic Survey was published for the first time in our state last year.

❖ The global economy grew at 3.3% in 2025.

❖ India's economy recorded 6.49% in 2024-25, but increased its growth performance to 7.4% in 2025-26.

❖ The State's textile exports account for a major share of Tamil Nadu's export.

❖ It is facing headwinds due to the recent 50% hike in the United States' tariffs.

❖ Nearly 30% of the State's textile exports are directed to the U.S. market.

❖ Tamil Nadu's per capita income growth has consistently outpaced the national average.

❖ In 2024-25, per capita income reached ₹3.62 lakh.

❖ It is 1.77 times higher than the national average of ₹2.05 lakh.

❖ It is making Tamil Nadu the third-largest State in terms of per capita income.

❖ Tamil Nadu government has consistently increased its expenditure on the social sector, rising from ₹1,13,268 crore in 2021-22 to ₹1,57,864 crore in 2025-26 (RE).

❖ Total capital expenditure between 2020-21 and 2025-26 amounts to ₹2.54 lakh crore, reflecting a decisive emphasis on asset creation.

❖ Its Gross State Domestic Product at current prices reached ₹31.19 lakh crore in 2024-25, reflecting a nominal growth rate of 16% and a real growth rate of 11.2% – the highest among major States.

❖ According to the Survey, urban inflation in Tamil Nadu declined from 5.2% in 2023-24 to 2.5 % in 2025-26, while rural inflation fell from 5.8% to 2.1%.

❖ Urban inflation remains the primary driver of overall inflation in the State.

❖ Among major categories, food inflation declined sharply to -0.003 % in 2025-26, while inflation in clothing and footwear moderated to 1.3%.

❖ The manufacturing sector recorded a real growth rate of 14.74% in 2024-25, more than three times the all-India average of 4.5%.

❖ Over the four-year period from 2021-22 to 2024-25, Tamil Nadu led the nation with an average manufacturing growth rate of 9.38%.

❖ The Economic Survey of India 2025-26 recognises Tamil Nadu as the foremost contributor to India's manufacturing employment, accounting for 15% of the nation's total factory workforce.

❖ In 2024-25, the primary sector contributed 13.4%.to the State's Gross State Value Added, the secondary sector 33.1% and the services sector contributed 53.6%.

- The services sector also registered strong performance, achieving a double-digit real growth rate of 11.3% in 2024-25.

- Tamil Nadu continues to rank among the top Indian States in attracting foreign direct investment.

- While India's overall FDI equity inflows declined from $46.03 billion in 2022-23 to $44.42 billion in 2023-24 amid global uncertainty and tighter financial conditions, Tamil Nadu defied the trend.

- The State's FDI inflows increased steadily from $2,169 million in 2022-23 to $2,436 million in 2023-24, and further to $3,681 million in 2024-25.

- Besides, the State consistently ranks first in exports of electronics, textiles, and leather products, and second in engineering exports.

Tamil Nadu Interim Agriculture Budget 2026–27 highlights

- The Interim Agriculture Budget 2026–27 of Tamil Nadu was presented in the State Assembly by the Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare M.R.K. Panneerselvam.

- Tamil Nadu has been presenting a separate agriculture budget since 2021–22, focusing on farmers' welfare and agricultural development.

Budget Allocation

- The total allocation for the Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Department is ₹47,248.24 crore.

- The agriculture budget allocation increased from ₹34,220 crore in 2021–22 to ₹47,248 crore in 2026–27.

- The total budget for agriculture and allied sectors is ₹45,661.44 crore (Capital: ₹8,352.19 crore; Revenue: ₹37,309.25 crore).

Growth and Performance

- The average Gross State Value Added (GSVA) in agriculture had risen from 1.36% during 2012-13 to 2020-21 to 3.03% during 2021-22 to 2024-25.

- The GSVA at constant (2011-12) prices increased by about 9.97% to ₹59,11,708 lakh in 2024-25 from ₹53,75,639 lakh.

- The gross cropped area increased from 146.77 lakh acres (2019–20) to 151 lakh acres (2023–24).

- The double-cropped area increased from 29.74 lakh acres (2019–20) to 33.60 lakh acres (2023–24).

- Food grain production reached 346.38 lakh metric tonnes during 2021–24.

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- ❖ Tamil Nadu ranks 1st in Ragi productivity, 2nd in Maize, Oilseeds, and Sugarcane productivity, and 3rd in Groundnut and Minor Millets productivity in India.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu stands first in area under tapioca and jasmine cultivation, first in the productivity of amla, cabbage, and radish, and second in the productivity of tapioca, jasmine, jackfruit, and guava at the national level.
- ❖ During 2024-25, the double-cropped area increased to 13.99 lakh hectares. This is an increase of about 2 lakh hectares compared to 2019-20.

Farmer Support Measures

- ❖ Since 2021–22, about 1.81 lakh free electricity connections have been provided to farmers for irrigation.
- ❖ Around 55,000 farmers received subsidized agricultural machinery, and 1,109 Custom Hiring Centres were established.

Water Resources and Agroforestry

- ❖ Over the last five years, 68,930 traditional waterbodies were renovated, 1 lakh irrigation canals were desilted, 29,800 check dams were constructed, and 31,325 groundwater recharge systems were created.
- ❖ A total of 3.24 crore saplings were distributed, and 2.24 lakh acres were brought under agroforestry.

New Schemes and Missions

- ❖ The government announced 1,000 Farmers Service Centres to provide agricultural inputs, expert guidance, and modern technologies.
- ❖ The Hill Farmers Development Scheme will support 63,000 hill farmers.
- ❖ A Village Outreach Campaign will provide technical advisories in 17,116 villages.
- ❖ The Millet Mission will promote millet cultivation through farmer groups and crop production packages.
- ❖ Natural Farming initiatives will promote eco-friendly farming, organic certification, and marketing support.
- ❖ Farmers are encouraged to cultivate alternative crops such as millets, pulses, and oilseeds that require less water.
- ❖ An amount of ₹250 crore was allocated for quality seed production and distribution.

Special Initiatives

- ❖ The Nutrition Farming Mission will promote vegetables, fruits, pulses, and minor millets for nutritional security.
- ❖ The Integrated Coconut Development Scheme will support coconut cultivation, pest control, and value addition.

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- ❖ The Micro Irrigation Scheme received ₹1,168 crore for drip and sprinkler irrigation systems.

- ❖ The timely opening of the Mettur dam had helped bring an additional 3.48 lakh hectares under irrigation in Tamil Nadu.

- ❖ An amount of ₹50 crore was allocated to establish 100 value-addition units for agricultural produce.

- ❖ The Crop Insurance Scheme received ₹841 crore to cover 35 lakh acres against natural calamities.

- ❖ The government's commitment is to increase tree and forest cover to 33% in Tamil Nadu.

- ❖ The agroforestry was being promoted extensively under the Green Tamil Nadu Mission to expand green cover outside forests.

- ❖ A total of 3.24 crore saplings were produced and distributed over the last five years, and 2.24 lakh acres have been brought under agroforestry.

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Rosewood Trees (Conservation) Act, 1994, has not been extended beyond February 13, 2025, to encourage the cultivation of rosewood trees.

Other Developments

- ❖ An amount of ₹68 crore was allocated for watershed development projects in six districts.

- ❖ Climate-resilient agriculture initiatives include climate-smart villages and model demonstration farms.

- ❖ Training programmes will support the rural youth in operating agricultural machinery and drones.

- ❖ Support is also provided for Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development, Fisheries, Rural Development, and women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs).

- ❖ An amount of ₹8,186 crore was allocated for free electricity supply to farmers.

Tamil Nadu Climate Summit 4.0

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government announced new climate action initiatives at the Tamil Nadu Climate Summit 4.0 held in Chennai.

- ❖ The State government said the Tamil Nadu State Budget will integrate climate action measures across all departments.

- ❖ Tamil Nadu will prepare State-level determined contributions (SDCs) to reduce carbon emissions by 2030, similar to NDCs (Nationally Determined Contributions) under the Paris Agreement.

- ❖ Stalin laid the foundation for the International Dugong Conservation Centre in Thanjavur.

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- ❖ About 5 lakh sandalwood saplings will be distributed to increase green cover in the State.

- ❖ The TN-SHORE (Tamil Nadu Sustainably Harnessing Ocean Resources and Blue Economy) scheme was launched, with ₹1.7 crore allocated to support 34 mangrove conservation committees.

- ❖ From this allocation, ₹5 lakh each was distributed to three mangrove forest protection committees from Killai, Cuddalore district.

- ❖ Further, under the Tamil Nadu Green Climate Fund, financial assistance was extended to Kannabiran Polymers Ltd (₹20 crores), Ooru Cabs (₹25 crores), and Esygo Power (₹25 crore) to promote environmentally sustainable industrial practices.

- ❖ A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between IIT Madras, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company for establishing a Centre for Circular Economy at IIT Madras.

Tamil Nadu Welfare Schemes update

- ❖ 'Anbu Karangal' scheme provides monthly financial assistance of Rs.2,000 to protect children who have lost their parents, and to ensure that they continue their schooling up to the age of 18 without dropping out.

- ❖ To alleviate the difficulties faced by the elderly, day-care centers called 'Anbu Cholai' have been set up for senior citizens in 25 locations.

- ❖ Necessary amendments have been brought to the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994, and the Tamil Nadu Urban Local Bodies Act, 1998, to nominate differently abled persons as members in local bodies.

- ❖ The Kalaignar Centenary Library was established in the historic city of Madurai.

- ❖ The 'Perunthalaivar Kamarajar College Development Scheme' is being implemented to improve the infrastructure in arts and science, engineering and polytechnic colleges.

- ❖ Tamil Nadu ranks first in the country with a higher education enrollment rate of 47 per cent, nearly double the national average.

- ❖ The 'Kalloori Kanavu' scheme is being implemented to guide students who have completed their school education in selecting higher education courses aligned with their interests.

- ❖ The 'Vetri Nichayam' scheme is implemented by the Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation, to equip youth with skill training and prepare them for employment.

- ❖ 'Ungal Thoguthiyil Muthalamaichar' scheme has been launched to fulfill ten priority demands arising from the long-standing grievances of people.

- Under the 'Dr. Kalaignar Sports Kit Distribution Scheme', 16,798 sports kits have been distributed to 12,525 Village Panchayats.

- At the State level, a sum of Rs.43 crore has been allocated for conducting the 'Chief Minister's Youth Sports Festival - Idhu Namma Aattam-2026' competitions.

- With the objective of constructing 8 lakh concrete houses by 2030 and transforming Tamil Nadu into a hut-free State, the 'Kalaignar Kanavu Illam' scheme was launched.

- Until 2021, 24 SIPCOT industrial parks were functioning in 15 districts, covering an extent of 32,525 acres.

- After this Government assumed office, new industrial parks have been established in 12 additional districts, and currently 54 industrial parks are operational across 49,468 acres.

- The initiatives of establishing the 'Tamil Nadu Knowledge City' and a 'Global City' spread over 2,000 acres near Chennai have been undertaken.

- At Sriperumbudur, India's largest workers' hostel with 18,720 beds has been constructed.

- New TIDEL Parks are being established at Tiruchirappalli, Madurai, and Hosur.

- TIDEL Neo Mini IT Parks have been inaugurated at Villupuram, Thanjavur, Salem, Thoothukudi, Tiruppur, Vellore, and Karaikudi.

- Further, Mini IT Parks are being set up at Namakkal, Tiruvannamalai, Virudhunagar, Tirunelveli, Kanyakumari, Erode, Nagapattinam, Karur, and Pudukkottai.

- The 'Tamil Nadu Semiconductor Mission-2030' is a strategic five-year roadmap being implemented at an estimated cost of Rs.500 crore.

- The 'Tamil Nadu Shipbuilding Policy' aimed at promoting investments in shipbuilding and marine ancillary manufacturing, is set to be released shortly.

- Tamil Nadu is poised to emerge as a global hub for the shipbuilding industry.

- SIPCOT, in association with the V.O. Chidambaranar (VOC) Port Authority, is establishing a new shipbuilding cluster at Thoothukudi.

- The first phase of works for a Gold Jewellery Park in Coimbatore district is being undertaken.

- The 'Kalaignar Kaivinai Thittam' was launched with the objective of providing financial assistance, skill training, and comprehensive infrastructure support for the development of artisans engaged in 25 categories of handicrafts.

- To provide high-speed broadband connectivity by linking all 12,525 Village Panchayats in Tamil Nadu through optical fibre cable, works are being implemented by the Tamil Nadu FibreNet Corporation (TANFINET).

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❖ Preliminary studies to establish a Pumped Storage Hydroelectric Project with a capacity of 1,000 MW in the Vellimalai area of Kanyakumari district at an investment of Rs.5,320 crore through Public-Private Partnership have been completed.

❖ A 'New Integrated Renewable Energy Policy' is set to be released soon to enhance renewable energy capacity in the State.

❖ The Government is undertaking mangrove restoration across 3,733 hectares under the 'Neithal Restoration Movement'.

❖ Under the 'Iyothee Thass Pandithar Habitation Development Scheme', infrastructure facilities in the Adi Dravidar and Tribal habitations is being improved.

❖ 'Tholkudi' scheme, is also being implemented at a cost of Rs.1,000 crore to enhance infrastructure facilities in tribal habitations.

❖ 'Annal Ambedkar Overseas Scholarship for Higher Education Scheme', was launched to reduce the financial burden on students pursuing postgraduate or research studies.

❖ The 'Chief Minister's Adi Dravidar and Tribal Socio-Economic Development Scheme' (CM ARISE) is being implemented with the objective of empowering persons belonging to the Adi Dravidars and Tribal communities as entrepreneurs.

❖ Subsidies of Rs.420 crore have been provided to 4,948 Adi Dravidar and Tribal entrepreneurs under the 'Annal Ambedkar Business Champions Scheme'.

❖ For the first time in India, a scheme to provide meals to 1,29,689 sanitation workers has been launched in Tamil Nadu.

❖ The Government has released a new 'Tourism Policy' to attract private sector investments and generate employment opportunities at the recently held Global Tourism Summit in Mamallapuram.

❖ The recently launched mobile app 'Chennai One' was India's first integrated ticketing application for multimodal journey planning.

❖ Government established the Mudhalvarin Mugavari Department immediately upon assuming office, enabling citizens to access Government administration with ease.

❖ Soon after assuming office, under the special scheme 'Makkaludan Mudhalvar', 4,835 camps were organized throughout the state, redressing over 23.50 lakh petition.

❖ Under a new initiative called 'Ungaludan Stalin',10,000 camps have been conducted across both urban and rural areas across all districts.

❖ To protect innocent and economically vulnerable victims from harassment by moneylenders and moneylending institutions, a new legislation titled the Tamil

Nadu Money Lending Entities (Prevention of Coercive Actions) Act, 2025 has been enacted and rules have been framed thereunder to provide an effective legal framework.

Veterinary Medicine Conference 2026

❖ A national conference on "Emerging Trends, Technologies, and Artificial Intelligence in Veterinary Medicine: Challenges and Opportunities" began in Chennai.

❖ The conference aims to promote the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and modern technologies for veterinary diagnosis, animal health care, and precision farming.

❖ The event is organised by the Indian Society for Veterinary Medicine (ISVM) and the Madras Veterinary College.

Women's Conditions in Tamil Nadu

❖ The Economic Survey 2025–26 of the State Planning Commission (SPC) highlights data on women's social and economic conditions in Tamil Nadu.

❖ Tamil Nadu reports the highest incidence of consanguineous marriages among peer States at 28%, according to estimates based on the National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5).

❖ The all-India average is 10.8%, followed by Karnataka (26.6%), Maharashtra (14.8%), Gujarat (6.4%), and Kerala (4.4%).

❖ Child marriage is any marriage where a person is under 18 years old.

❖ In Tamil Nadu, 15.2% of women in rural areas and 10.4% in urban areas were married before 18, making the State average 12.8%, compared to the all-India average of 23.3%.

❖ The median age at first marriage for women aged 25–29 in Tamil Nadu is 22 years, which is higher than the all-India median of 19.7 years.

❖ Female literacy (women aged 15–49) in Tamil Nadu is 84%, and 24.3% of women have completed 12 or more years of schooling.

❖ Only Kerala has higher figures (97% literacy and 30.4% schooling), while Maharashtra follows Tamil Nadu with 82.3% literacy and 20.9% schooling.

❖ The all-India averages are 71.5% literacy and 16.6% schooling.

❖ About 92% of women in Tamil Nadu have their own bank or savings account, which is higher than the national average and most peer States.

❖ Awareness of microcredit programmes is 74%, and 18% of women report taking loans from them.

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❖ Tamil Nadu has the highest television viewership among peer States (83.4%), but print media readership among women is only 14.5%.

❖ About 47% of women use the internet, and the rural–urban digital divide is visible, as 69% of rural women own a mobile phone and only 39% use the internet.

❖ Tamil Nadu reports the highest proportion of pregnancies ending in non-live births at 9.9%, compared to 6.5% in Kerala.

Tamil Nadu Finance Data 2026–27

❖ The financial figures were presented in the Interim Budget Estimates 2026–27 of the Government of Tamil Nadu.

❖ The outstanding debt of Tamil Nadu is estimated at ₹10.71 lakh crore in the Interim Budget Estimates 2026–27.

❖ In the Revised Estimates 2025–26, it is ₹9.52 lakh crore, compared to ₹9.29 lakh crore in the Budget Estimates 2025–26.

❖ The debt figure includes ₹9,523 crore related to the approval of Chennai Metro Rail Limited Phase-II as a Central Sector Project, which will later reflect in the Union Government accounts.

❖ Excluding this amount, the outstanding debt is ₹9.42 lakh crore (Revised Estimates 2025–26) and ₹10.62 lakh crore (Interim Budget Estimates 2026–27).

❖ The State plans to borrow ₹1.79 lakh crore in 2026–27 and repay ₹60,413.42 crore during the same period.

❖ The debt-to-GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product) ratio is estimated at 26.12%.

❖ The Revenue Deficit for 2026–27 is estimated at ₹48,696.32 crore.

❖ It was ₹69,219 crore in the Revised Estimates 2025–26 and ₹41,635 crore in the Budget Estimates 2025–26.

❖ The Fiscal Deficit for 2026–27 is estimated at ₹1.21 lakh crore, compared to ₹1.24 lakh crore in the Revised Estimates 2025–26.

❖ The Fiscal Deficit as a percentage of GSDP is expected to reduce from 3.48% (Revised Estimates 2025–26) to 3% (Interim Budget Estimates 2026–27).

❖ Since the 9th Finance Commission, Tamil Nadu's share in central tax devolution has reduced from 7.9% to 4.079%, resulting in a loss of ₹3.17 lakh crore, which is about 33% of the State's outstanding debt.

❖ In the 16th Finance Commission, Kerala and Karnataka received increases of 23.74% and 13.27% respectively, while Tamil Nadu received an increase of only 0.44%, the lowest among comparable States.

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ECI De-Registration Case 2026

❖ The Madras High Court refused to grant interim relief to political parties de-registered by the Election Commission of India (ECI).

❖ The ECI de-registered parties that had not contested Legislative Assembly or Parliamentary elections in the last six years.

❖ Parties such as Tamizhaga Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam, Manithaneya Makkal Katchi and Manithaneya Jananayaga Katchi filed writ petitions challenging the de-registration orders.

❖ The Court said granting a stay would allow the parties to contest the upcoming Tamil Nadu Assembly elections.

❖ The petitioners argued that Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, provides only for registration and not de-registration of political parties.

❖ They contended that Section 21 of the General Clauses Act, 1897 cannot be invoked to de-register parties and relied on the Supreme Court judgement in Indian National Congress vs Institute of Social Welfare (2002).

❖ In the 2002 judgement, the Supreme Court held that de-registration is permitted only in extreme cases such as fraud, forgery or loss of allegiance to the Constitution and its principles like socialism and secularism.

❖ The ECI stated that the 2002 judgement was delivered before it issued detailed guidelines in 2014 under Article 324 of the Constitution, requiring political parties to contest elections at least once in a six-year block period.

Champions of Tamil Nadu Sports Event 2026

❖ Tamil Nadu celebrated five years of sporting achievements at the 'Champions of Tamil Nadu' event in Chennai.

❖ Over 175 sportspersons received appointment orders under the 3% sports quota in government employment.

❖ 50 para-athletes are among those getting government job appointments.

❖ A total of ₹33.5 crore in incentives awarded to 1,172 sportspersons for their achievements.

❖ The foundation stone for the ₹261 crore International Sports City project in Chennai was laid at the event.

New Industrial Investments in Tamil Nadu

❖ The Tamil Nadu government signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) worth ₹5,980 crore to promote semiconductor and aerospace manufacturing.

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- ❖ MinebeaMitsumi will invest ₹1,980 crore to establish a manufacturing and research and development (R&D) centre in Tiruvallur district.

- ❖ The facility at Mahindra Origins Industrial Park will manufacture Insulated-Gate Bipolar Transistors (IGBT), Integrated Circuits (IC), motors, and sensors.

- ❖ Another MoU was signed with Aequs Group to support aerospace manufacturing in the State.

Kumittipathi Rock Art

- ❖ The 2,300-year-old rock paintings at Kumittipathi village in Coimbatore district remain without protection despite being declared a protected monument in 2025.

- ❖ The paintings are located inside two caves on Pathimalai hill near Madukkarai, close to the Kerala border.

- ❖ The artwork, drawn in white pigment, shows an elephant, a chariot, and human-like figures.

- ❖ In 2025, the site was notified as a protected monument under Section 3(1) of the Tamil Nadu Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1966.

Tamil Nadu Money Lending Entities Act, 2025 – First Case

- ❖ The first case under the Tamil Nadu Money Lending Entities (Prevention of Coercive Actions) Act, 2025, was registered in Villupuram district.

- ❖ The Act came into force on 9 June 2025 to prevent coercive loan recovery practices.

- ❖ The case was booked against a recovery agent for attempting to seize a vehicle without following legal procedures.

- ❖ The accused was arrested and charged under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Sections 20 and 21(ii) of the Act.

Greater Chennai Corporation Budget 2026–2027

- ❖ The Greater Chennai Corporation presented its ₹9,319 crore Budget for 2026–2027.

- ❖ The capital expenditure has reduced to ₹2,754 crore from ₹3,191 crore in 2025–2026 due to the completion of major flood mitigation projects.

- ❖ The revenue expenditure is estimated at ₹6,146 crore, and loan repayment is estimated at ₹111 crore for 2026–2027.

- The deficit has increased from ₹378 crore in 2025–2026 to ₹1,602 crore in 2026–2027.

- Funds are sourced from agencies such as ADB (Asian Development Bank) and KfW (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau – German Development Bank).

Justice Kurian Joseph Committee

- Justice Kurian Joseph, High-Level Committee on Union-State Relations – Part I of the report was presented in the Tamil Nadu Assembly.

- The committee was chaired by Justice Kurian Joseph, a former judge of the Supreme Court of India.

- The other members of the committee were K. Ashok Vardhan Shetty and Dr. M. Naganathan.

- The report recommended that the Governors of States should be divested of their role as Chancellors of State universities.

- It suggested that education be shifted back entirely to the State List from the Concurrent List.

- The report clarified that the objective is not to diminish the Union's role but to "right-size" it.

- It stated that federalism is the foundation of India's pluralistic character.

- The report emphasized that amendments strengthening federalism "will not weaken the Union of India."

- Earlier, the Justice Rajamannar Committee was appointed in 1969 by former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi.

- The Justice Rajamannar Committee members included A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar and P. Chandra Shetty.

- The Supreme Court's judgment in the S.R. Bommai case (1994) held that federalism is part of the basic structure of the Constitution.

Tamil Nadu Prisons (Release on Furlough) Rules, 2026

- The State government has notified new rules governing the release of convicts on furlough.

- Under the new rules, prisoners convicted for sedition/acts endangering the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of India are ineligible for furlough.

- Prisoners convicted of rape and convicted foreign prisoners are ineligible for release on furlough.

- Prisoners convicted under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, are not eligible for furlough.

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❖ Prisoners convicted under Sections 19, 20(ii)(c), 21(c), 22(c), 23(c), 24, and 27A of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985 are not eligible for furlough.

❖ Prisoners involved in prison offences such as assault, outbreak, riot, mutiny, and escape during the past five years are ineligible for furlough.

❖ The rules state that no convict prisoner shall claim furlough as a matter of right.

❖ A convict prisoner becomes eligible for furlough only after completing 10 years of imprisonment with satisfactory conduct.

❖ Eligibility for furlough will be assessed individually based on the nature of the offence, past criminal record, behaviour in prison, and compliance during earlier temporary release.

❖ The Director General of Prisons may grant furlough for a period not exceeding 60 days in a year.

❖ The State government may sanction an additional 60 days of furlough in a year for rehabilitation reasons, to be recorded in writing.

❖ The period spent on furlough shall be counted towards the sentence of the convict prisoner.

❖ The furlough period shall be reckoned for remission of sentence, premature release, and other statutory benefits wherever applicable.

❖ The convict prisoner shall remain under the supervision of police or probation officers during the furlough period.

❖ Furlough may be revoked at any time by the Director General or the government.

❖ In case of overstay or breach of conditions, the prisoner may be arrested without warrant and denied furlough in the future.

❖ The government may exempt any person from the provisions of these rules in cases of medical ailments, old age, or other recorded reasons.

Tamil Nadu Legislature – Coffee Table Book Release

❖ The book titled "Tamil Nadu Legislature – A Journey in Legislating & Policy Making" was released in Chennai.

❖ The book was released by Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Speaker M. Appavu.

❖ It covers major laws such as the Temple Entry Authorization Act (1939), Sales Tax Act (1939), Devadasi Abolition Act (1947), and the law granting equal property rights to women (1989).

❖ It also mentions welfare schemes like the Midday Meal Scheme, Breakfast Scheme, and Kalaignar Magalir Urimai Thittam.

❖ It recalls the 1967 resolution to rename Madras State as Tamil Nadu.

Private Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2025

❖ The Tamil Nadu government withdrew the Tamil Nadu Private Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

❖ The Bill proposed the conversion of existing private or government-aided colleges into "Brownfield Universities."

❖ It reduced the minimum land requirement from 100 acres to 25 acres in municipal corporation areas, 35 acres in municipal council or town panchayat areas, and 50 acres in other areas.

❖ Higher Education Minister earlier stated that the government would review and withdraw the Bill.

❖ The government also withdrew the Tamil Nadu Private Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2023.

❖ The Assembly passed the Tamil Nadu Appropriation (Vote on Account) Bill and the Tamil Nadu Fiscal Responsibility (Amendment) Bill during the same session.

Thomas Munro Bicentenary 2026

❖ The Nilgiri Documentation Centre (NDC) has requested the Tamil Nadu government to mark the 200th death anniversary of British Governor Sir Thomas Munro.

❖ Munro served as Governor from 1820 to 1827 and introduced the Ryotwari system of land administration in Tamil Nadu.

❖ He laid the foundations for modern administration, police, and education in the state and advocated a federal structure for India.

❖ Munro visited The Nilgiris in September 1826 to review John Sullivan's work in developing it as a hill station.

❖ He recommended making The Nilgiris a health resort on 28 May 1827 and passed away from cholera on 7 July 1827, the day the recommendation was accepted.

Tamil Nadu Assembly Session 2026

❖ The Tamil Nadu Assembly session was concluded on February 20, 2026.

❖ The final session of the current Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) government began on February 17, 2026.

❖ Finance Minister Thangam Thennarasu presented the interim Budget for the State.

❖ Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister M.R.K. Panneerselvam presented the interim Agriculture Budget.

❖ On February 20, the Assembly discussed the demand for advance grants for 2026–2027 and additional expenditure for 2025–2026.

❖ Tamil Nadu is scheduled to go to the polls in the summer of 2026.

TN Committee on Union–State Relations

❖ The T.N. Committee on Union–State Relations met in New Delhi to deliberate on Part II of its report.

❖ The committee was constituted by the Tamil Nadu Government in April 2025 as a non-partisan exercise and began its work on 1 June 2025.

❖ Part I of the report was submitted to Chief Minister M.K. Stalin and tabled in the Tamil Nadu Assembly on 16 February 2026 in Tamil and English.

❖ Part I covered 10 key topics, including language policy, the Governor, education, health, delimitation, elections, and GST.

❖ The Tamil version of Part I has been made open access, and the government has proposed translations in Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, and Telugu, and to make them open access.

TN Electoral Roll Update

❖ The Final electoral rolls of Tamil Nadu were published after the Special Intensive Revision (SIR).

❖ Tamil Nadu has more than 5.67 crore electors, as released by the Election Commission of India.

❖ The list includes 2,89,60,838 women, 2,77,38,925 men, and 7,617 third-gender electors.

❖ Sholinganallur in Chengalpattu district has the highest voters (5,36,991), and Harbour in Chennai district has the lowest (1,16,896).

❖ Chief Electoral Officer Archana Patnaik stated that there are 12.51 lakh electors aged 18–19, 4.63 lakh persons with disabilities, and 3.99 lakh senior citizens aged 85+.

❖ Appeals against the decision of the Electoral Registration Officer can be filed before the District Magistrate within 15 days under Section 24(a) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, read with Rule 27 of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960.

❖ The number of polling booths remains unchanged at 75,032.

State Level Steering Committee - HRH Strategy

❖ The Government of Tamil Nadu has constituted a State-level Steering Committee to develop a comprehensive Human Resources for Health (HRH) Strategy.

❖ The initiative is undertaken under the World Bank-supported Enhanced Health Service Delivery Program (EHSDP).

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- ❖ The committee is chaired by the Additional Chief Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, and the Mission Director of National Health Mission (NHM), Tamil Nadu, serves as the Member Secretary; the committee has 16 members.

- ❖ EHSDP follows the Program-for-Results model of the World Bank, where funds are released based on Disbursement-Linked Indicators (DLIs).

- ❖ The HRH Strategy aims to identify gaps in recruitment, capacity building, workforce distribution and retention in public health facilities.

- ❖ The Steering Committee will provide overall guidance and ensure coordination among departments such as Finance, Education, Labour Welfare, Skills Development and Law for effective implementation.

Double Century Jail Term

- ❖ The Sivagangai POCSO Court sentenced a 51-year-old astrologer to a cumulative 200 years of rigorous imprisonment for sexually assaulting two minor girls in 2021.

- ❖ A case was registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, and the accused was arrested in 2022.

- ❖ The court awarded 100 years of rigorous imprisonment for each victim (a total of 200 years), imposed a ₹2 lakh fine, and directed the government to provide ₹10 lakh compensation to each survivor.

- ❖ The judgment is believed to be the first instance of a court awarding a cumulative sentence of 200 years of rigorous imprisonment.

Tamil Nadu Model Schools

- ❖ 448 Government Model School students from Tamil Nadu qualified in the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Main 2026.

- ❖ The Government of Tamil Nadu has established 38 Model Schools, one in each district.

- ❖ The schools follow the "Dravidian Model" of education, inspired by reforms in Delhi government schools.

- ❖ The schools have advanced infrastructure such as laboratories, libraries, smart classrooms, and hostels.

- ❖ Model Schools provide special coaching for competitive examinations.

- ❖ The aim is to help students secure admission in premier higher educational institutions.

- ❖ The "Vetri" Schools initiative has also helped many students qualify for premier higher education institutions.

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77th Republic Day Parade of India – Highlights

- ❖ The parade was led by Parade Commander Lieutenant-General Bhavnish Kumar, General Officer Commanding of Delhi Area.

- ❖ For the first time, the Indian Army showcased a phased "battle array format", including its aerial component.

- ❖ The reconnaissance element featured the historic 61 Cavalry in active combat uniform, followed by high mobility reconnaissance vehicles.

- ❖ The Indian Navy tableau traced India's maritime journey from a 5th century stitched ship to modern indigenous platforms such as INS Vikrant and INS Udayagiri.

- ❖ The 77th Republic Day celebration also saw the parade debut of the newly-raised Bhairav Battalion.

- ❖ It is a specialised assault infantry unit aimed at bridging the capabilities of conventional infantry and special forces.

- ❖ In addition, a military contingent from the European Union, carrying its military staff flag and flags of Operations Atalanta and Aspides, and the naval operations of the grouping, also participated in the parade.

- ❖ It was the EU's first participation in such an event outside of Europe.

- ❖ A total of 30 tableaux -- 17 of States and Union Territories and 13 of various Ministries and Departments, rolled down the Kartavya Path.

- ❖ Showcasing India's first Water Metro, the Kerala's tableau depicted the State's achievement of 100% digital literacy and green mobility, rural prosperity and women-led digital empowerment.

- ❖ Chhattisgarh's tableau was themed "The Mantra of Freedom, Vande Mataram".

- ❖ It paid tribute to tribal freedom fighters and featured Veer Gundadhur of the 1910 Bhumkal Rebellion and Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh, the State's first martyr.

- ❖ This year, the enclosures for the parade were named after the rivers flowing across the nation.

Economic Survey 2025/26 - Key Highlights

- ❖ The Economic Survey 2025–26 was tabled in Parliament on 29 January 2026, ahead of the Union Budget 2026–27.

- ❖ India's potential growth rate has been revised upward to 7%, up from 6.5% in previous estimates.

- The economy is projected to grow at 6.8–7.2% in FY2026–27.

- India remains the fastest-growing major economy for the fourth consecutive year.

- The Survey warns of global economic uncertainty, estimating a 10–20% chance of a crisis worse than the 2008 global financial crisis in 2026.

- Even the best-case global scenario for 2026 is "business as in 2025", though conditions are increasingly fragile.

- India is described as an "oasis of economic performance" in a weak global environment.

- Inflation is tamed and anchored, with average Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation at 1.7% during April–December 2025, the lowest since the series began.

- Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE) grew by 7% in FY26, forming 61.5% of GDP, the highest share since FY23.

- The agriculture and services sectors remain the largest contributors to India's GDP.

- Food grain production in the Agriculture Year 2024–25 reached 3,577.3 lakh metric tonnes (LMT), an increase of 254.3 LMT over the previous year, driven by rice, wheat, maize, and coarse cereals.

- The Government of India's capital expenditure rose nearly 4.2 times, from ₹2.63 lakh crore in FY18 to ₹11.21 lakh crore in FY26 (Budget Estimates), while effective capital expenditure in FY26 is ₹15.48 lakh crore.

- The National Highway network expanded by 60%, from 91,287 km in FY14 to 1,46,572 km in FY26 (up to December).

- The operational High-Speed Corridors increased nearly ten-fold, from 550 km in FY14 to 5,364 km in FY26 (up to December).

- The railway network reached 69,439 route km as of March 2025, with 99.1% electrification achieved by October 2025.

- India became the world's third-largest domestic aviation market, with the number of airports increasing from 74 in 2014 to 164 in 2025.

- India achieved autonomous satellite docking (SpaDeX), becoming the fourth nation in the world to do so.

- Total exports reached a record $825.3 billion in FY25, registering a 6.1% year-on-year growth, driven mainly by services exports.

- The banking sector's asset quality improved, with Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPA) at 2.2% and Net NPA at 0.5% in September 2025.

- The fiscal deficit is on track at 4.4% of GDP for FY26.

- The Indian rupee underperformed in 2025, not reflecting the country's strong economic fundamentals.

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- ❖ India benefits from a large domestic market, strong foreign exchange reserves, and a credible degree of strategic autonomy, which provide buffers against financial volatility.

- ❖ The Survey supports Swadeshi as a legitimate policy instrument amid increasing export controls and global uncertainties.

- ❖ It emphasizes import substitution, strategic resilience, and strategic indispensability as long-term priorities.

- ❖ Agriculture, manufacturing, and services must grow together to sustain momentum.

- ❖ Labour Codes recognize gig and platform workers, expanding social security and benefits, and aim to improve formal employment.

- ❖ Climate finance remains a binding constraint, and climate action is now a core component of India's development strategy.

- ❖ The Survey recommends age-based limits for social media and reduced online teaching to prevent digital addiction among children.

- ❖ It also suggests a ban on advertisements of ultra-processed foods from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., highlighting rising childhood obesity.

- ❖ The RTI Act may need re-examination to align with global best practices while retaining its original intent.

- ❖ India's late entry into AI offers an advantage, enabling resource-efficient and inclusive adoption aligned with public objectives.

- ❖ The Survey includes 16 chapters, covering topics like urbanisation, AI, environment, infrastructure, industry, education, and strategic resilience.

Critical Mineral Status - Coking Coal

- ❖ The Government of India has notified Coking Coal as a Critical and Strategic Mineral under the MMDR Act, 1957 (Mines and Minerals Development and Regulation Act).

- ❖ The notification places coking coal in Part D of the First Schedule, giving it high priority for mining and development.

- ❖ This move aims to reduce India's 95% import dependence on coking coal used in steel production.

- ❖ Coking coal, also called Metallurgical Coal, is essential for making steel and cannot be replaced by thermal coal.

- ❖ The decision supports the National Steel Policy target of 300 million tonnes of steel production by 2030.

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❖ India has large coking coal reserves mainly in Jharkhand, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh, but it depends on imports due to quality issues.

India's Internet Users

❖ India now has 958 million active internet users, according to the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI).

❖ Rural areas account for 57% of users, about 548 million people, growing almost four times faster than urban regions.

❖ Artificial Intelligence (AI) is widely used, with 44% of users using AI features like voice search, chatbots, and image-based search.

❖ Multi-device usage is rising, with 193 million users owning more than one device.

❖ Still, 38% of India's population (around 579 million people) do not use the internet.

Census 2027 - Caste methodology

❖ The Census will be done in two phases, with the House listing and Housing Census (HLO) to be held from April to September 2026 and the PE in February 2027.

❖ The methodology to be followed for caste enumeration in the forthcoming Census is yet to be finalised.

❖ The Caste count will be held during the Population Enumeration (PE) phase, the second phase of the Census, in February 2027.

❖ Only in September 2027, the Population Enumeration phase kicks off in Ladakh and snow-bound areas of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

❖ This will be the 16th Census and the first in independent India to count all castes, other than the Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST).

❖ The 2011 Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) was done outside the purview of the Census.

❖ The caste will be enumerated this time in the second and final phase, giving it statutory backing.

❖ The SECC enumerated more than 46 lakh castes, while the total number of castes during the pre-Independence 1931 Census was 4,147.

❖ This will also be the first time that Census data is captured digitally, on smartphones and mobile apps.

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- ❖ And it will be the first time when citizens will be able to self-enumerate through the portal.

- ❖ The Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India notified 33 questions for the HLO phase on January 22.

- ❖ Question number 12 in the questionnaire was: "Whether the head of the household is Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe/Others.

- ❖ Question 12 does not explicitly involve Other Backward Classes (OBC) and General categories.

- ❖ The 2011 schedule or the questionnaire for the HLO phase also had the same question at serial number 15.

- ❖ The details of the SC/ST column were filled in the second phase through the Centrally approved list.

- ❖ While the OBC list can be maintained both by the State and the Centre, SC/ST names are only maintained by the Central government.

- ❖ According to the latest government data, there are about 2,650 Other Backward Classes (OBC) in the Central list, 1,170 in the Scheduled Caste category and 890 communities in the Scheduled Tribe (ST) list.

- ❖ Whether the "Other" column will have a merged Central and State OBC list or a list of unreserved categories of caste is yet to be decided.

India's Rare Earth Corridors

- ❖ Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed to support the mineral-rich states of Odisha, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu.

- ❖ It will establish the dedicated rare-earth corridors to push to secure India's supplies of rare earth magnets.

- ❖ The move comes as India looks to reduce its dependence on China for rare-earth minerals.

- ❖ In November 2025, the Union government approved a new "first-of-its-kind" scheme to manufacture Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPM) in India, with a financial outlay of ₹7,280 crore.

- ❖ The 'Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnets' aimed to establish 6,000 metric tonnes per annum (MTPA) of integrated Rare Earth Permanent Magnet (REPM) manufacturing in India.

Menstrual Health - Fundamental Right

- ❖ The Supreme Court has ruled that the right to menstrual hygiene is an integral part of the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution.

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- ❖ It was given in a landmark verdict Dr. Jaya Thakur vs Government of India.

- ❖ Inaccessibility of sanitary products affects the fundamental right to education under Article 21A and the Right to Education (RTE) Act.

- ❖ Inaccessibility of MH measures strips away the right to participate on equal terms in schools.

- ❖ It violates the Right to Equality under Article 14.

- ❖ The Court also directed the pan-India implementation of the Union's national policy, 'Menstrual Hygiene (MH) Policy for School-going Girls' in schools for adolescent girl children from Classes 6-12.

- ❖ All schools must provide Sensitisation of male teachers and students, gender-segregated toilets, free sanitary napkins (preferably through vending machines), and dedicated MHM corners.

Supreme Court on UGC Equity Regulations 2026

- ❖ The Supreme Court ordered that the University Grants Commission (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2026, be kept in abeyance.

- ❖ The court directed that the previous 2012 guidelines (UGC (Promotion of Equity in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2012) remain in force.

- ❖ Since the 2012 Regulations had been repealed, the Court was exercising its powers under Article 142.

- ❖ The bench examined the regulation through Article 15(4).

- ❖ That enables the State to make special provisions for the advancement of socially and educationally backward classes, including SCs and STs.

- ❖ The 2026 Regulations were formulated in response to the ongoing case Abeda Salim Tadvi v. Union of India (2019).

- ❖ The present petitions specifically challenged Section 3(1)(c).

- ❖ The section exclusively defines discrimination against SC, ST, and OBC members, thereby excluding the general category.

- ❖ Moreover, the 2026 Regulations contain no mechanism to penalize false complaints.

- ❖ The Supreme Court invoked the "principle of no-regression" from environmental and social justice law, questioning why the 2026 rules were less inclusive than the 2012 version.

Indigenous Suryastra rocket system in parade

- ❖ It was the first-ever display of the Universal Rocket Launcher System (URLLS) – Suryastra.
- ❖ It will be India's first indigenous universal multi-calibre rocket launcher.
- ❖ It is capable of precision surface-to-surface strikes.
- ❖ It will strike ranges of 150 km and 300 km.
- ❖ It can integrate multiple rocket and missile variants on a single platform.

AMRUT 2.0 update

- ❖ Tap water coverage in urban areas has increased by 64% since 2011 under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) and AMRUT 2.0.
- ❖ It is rising from 49% to about 77% in 2026.
- ❖ A total of 228 lakhs household tap connections and 20 lakh sewer connections have been provided across cities.
- ❖ The mission has rejuvenated 7,480 acres of water bodies and developed 2,704 acres of green space.
- ❖ Under AMRUT 2.0, nearly 9,000 projects worth Rs 1.89 lakh crore, including operations and maintenance, have been approved.
- ❖ AMRUT Mitra has engaged over 28,000 women self-help group members to support water management, quality monitoring, billing, and plant maintenance.

India's Union Budget 2026

- ❖ Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Budget on February 1, 2026.
- ❖ This was the first time in India's history that the Budget was given on a Sunday.
- ❖ The Budget aims to boost self-reliance, create employment, and enhance India's global competitiveness.
- ❖ The total amount of money in the Budget is ₹53.5 lakh crore.
- ❖ The plan focuses on three 'Kartavyas' (Duties): economic growth, helping people's dreams, and giving everyone equal chances.
- ❖ The Budget focuses on scaling up manufacturing in seven strategic and frontier sectors, including Biopharma SHAKTI, semiconductors, textiles, chemicals, rare earths, and sports goods.
- ❖ The government expects the Fiscal Deficit to be 4.3% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

- ❖ The government will spend ₹12.2 lakh crore on building big things like roads and bridges, which is called Capital Expenditure (Capex).
- ❖ Net market borrowing for the Financial Year 2026–27 has been fixed at ₹11.73 lakh crore

Money and Taxes

- ❖ A new law called the Income Tax Act 2025 will start on April 1, 2026.
- ❖ There are no changes to the current income tax slabs for people.
- ❖ Foreign companies that provide cloud services using Indian data centres will get a Tax Holiday (no tax) until the year 2047.
- ❖ The Securities Transaction Tax (STT) for trading in futures and options (stock market bets) has been increased.
- ❖ Customs Duty (tax on imported goods) was reduced for 17 cancer medicines to make them cheaper.
- ❖ Basic Customs Duty was removed for parts used to make lithium-ion batteries and airplanes.
- ❖ Soaps, detergents, and umbrellas might become more expensive due to tax changes.

Transport and Infrastructure

- ❖ The Indian Railways will get a record investment of ₹2.93 lakh crore.
- ❖ The government will build seven new High-Speed Rail (HSR) corridors, including routes like Mumbai-Pune and Chennai-Bengaluru.
- ❖ Twenty new waterways will be opened over the next five years.
- ❖ A new East Coast Industrial Corridor will be built with a special centre at Durgapur.
- ❖ Chennai will get two of the new high-speed rail corridors.

Science and Industry

- ❖ The India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0 was launched to help India make its own computer chips.
- ❖ The Biopharma SHAKTI (Strategic Health and Knowledge Tracking Initiative) scheme will get ₹10,000 crore to help make medicines.
- ❖ The Department of Space was given ₹13,705 crore for its missions.
- ❖ The government will help 200 old industrial areas (Legacy Clusters) become modern and better.
- ❖ A special project for "Sports Goods" was announced to help India make better sports equipment.

Health and Education

- ❖ The Health Ministry will receive ₹1.06 lakh crore.
- ❖ A second National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS-2) will be built in North India.
- ❖ The government will set up five regional medical hubs to bring more people to India for healthcare.
- ❖ New schools and colleges will get special labs to learn how to make cartoons and games (AVGC - Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics).
- ❖ A new National Institute of Design (NID) will be opened in Eastern India.

Farmers and Rural Development

- ❖ A new Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool called Bharat-VISTAAR (Versatile Information System for Targeted Agricultural Assistance and Resources) was launched to help farmers.
- ❖ The government will help farmers grow more coconuts, cashews, cocoa, and sandalwood.
- ❖ "SHE Marts" will be opened to help women business owners sell their products.
- ❖ The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) scheme for farmers was given ₹63,500 crore.

Safety and Others

- ❖ Defence spending (money for the army, navy, and air force) will rise by 15.3% to ₹7.84 lakh crore.
- ❖ The Home Ministry (MHA) will get ₹2.55 lakh crore to keep the country safe.
- ❖ The Khelo India Mission was launched to help young people become better at sports.
- ❖ Special "Rare-Earth Corridors" will be built in states like Odisha and Tamil Nadu to find special minerals used in technology.
- ❖ The Union Budget 2026–27 announced the establishment of five university townships to strengthen higher education and skill development.

Mahatma Gandhi Gram Swaraj Initiative

- ❖ The Mahatma Gandhi Gram Swaraj Initiative was announced in the Union Budget 2026–27 to strengthen khadi and handicrafts in India.
- ❖ The initiative aims to improve global market linkages and branding support for khadi and related products.
- ❖ It will streamline and support training, skill development, and quality of production for artisans and weavers.

❖ The scheme is expected to benefit weavers, village industries, the One District One Product (ODOP) programme, and rural youth.

❖ The initiative forms part of a broader integrated textile programme with five key components, including the National Fibre Scheme and Textile Expansion and Employment Scheme.

Integrated Textile Program – Union Budget 2026/27

❖ The Integrated Textile Programme focuses on strengthening India's labour-intensive textile and apparel sector.

❖ The textile sector received nearly 25% higher budget allocation compared to the previous year.

❖ A National Fibre Scheme was proposed to promote man-made fibres, silk, wool, and other fibres.

❖ Mega Textile Parks will be developed to support technical textiles and value addition.

❖ A Textile Expansion and Employment Scheme will modernise traditional clusters with support for machinery and technology upgradation.

❖ A National Handloom and Handicraft Programme will provide targeted support to weavers and artisans.

❖ The Mahatma Gandhi Gram Swaraj Initiative will strengthen khadi, handloom, and handicrafts.

❖ The Tex-Eco Initiative will promote sustainable and globally competitive textiles and apparel.

❖ SAMARTH 2.0 will upgrade the textile skilling ecosystem across the country.

Divyangjan Welfare Initiatives – 2026/27

❖ Two new schemes were announced to promote skill-based employment and assistive support for Divyangjans.

❖ Divyangjan Kaushal Yojana will provide customised, industry-relevant training to Divyangjans in Information Technology (IT), AVGC (Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics), Hospitality, and Food & Beverages sectors.

❖ The scheme focuses on task-oriented and process-driven roles suitable for different categories of Divyangjans.

❖ Divyang Sahara Yojana aims to ensure timely access to high-quality assistive devices for eligible Divyangjans.

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❖ Under the scheme, Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO) will be supported to scale up production, research and development (R&D), and Artificial Intelligence (AI) integration.

❖ The Budget proposes to strengthen PM Divyasha Kendras and set up Assistive Technology Marts as modern retail-style centres for Divyangjans and senior citizens.

Significant of Union Budget 2026

❖ Nirmala Sitharaman was in 2019 appointed as India's first full-time woman finance minister when Prime Minister Narendra Modi won a decisive second term.

❖ After Modi came back to power in 2024 for the third time, Nirmala Sitharaman continued to retain her finance portfolio.

❖ Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday (February 1, 2026) presented her record ninth consecutive Union Budget for April 2026 to March 2027 in the Lok Sabha.

❖ It was presented on Sunday, a first in independent India's history.

❖ The finance minister also laid the 16th Finance Commission report for tax revenue devolution between the Centre and states for 2026-2031.

❖ With 9th Consecutive Budget, Nirmala Sitharaman Becomes Longest Serving Finance Minister.

❖ This will take Nirmala Sitharaman closer to the record of 10 budgets that were presented by former Prime Minister Morarji Desai over different time periods.

❖ Former prime minister Morarji Desai had presented the Union Budget on 10 occasions, while P Chidambaram presented the Budget nine times, but both are not for consecutive years.

❖ Desai presented six budgets during his tenure as finance minister from 1959 to 1964, and four budgets between 1967 and 1969.

❖ Former finance ministers P Chidambaram and Pranab Mukherjee had presented nine and eight budgets, respectively, under different prime ministers.

❖ The other longest-serving Finance Minister at a stretch was C D Deshmukh.

❖ He took charge of the Ministry on June 1, 1950, and remained in office for about six years and two months.

❖ Manmohan Singh, known for pushing economic liberalisation, was Finance Minister for about five years between June 21, 1990, and June 16, 1996.

❖ Later, as Prime Minister, Singh held the additional charge of the Finance portfolio for a brief period once in 2008 and again in 2012.

❖ The first Finance Minister of Independent India was R K Shanmukham Chetty.

- The first-ever Union Budget of independent India was presented on November 26, 1947.
- Yashwant Sinha, the Finance Minister of India in the NDA government led by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, changed the longstanding tradition by announcing the 1999 Union Budget at 11 AM.
- The budget was previously presented at 5 PM, a colonial practice designed to align with British morning time.
- Nirmala Sitharaman holds the record for the longest budget speech when her presentation on February 1, 2020, lasted two hours and 40 minutes.
- Hirubhai Mulljibhai Patel's interim Budget speech in 1977 is so far the shortest at just 800 words.
- The Budget presentation date was in 2017 changed to the 1st of February to allow the government to complete the Parliamentary approval process by March-end and allow implementation of the Budget from the start of the fiscal year on April 1.
- Presenting the Budget on February 28 meant that the implementation could not start before May/June, after accounting for 2-3 months of the parliamentary approval process.

Judicial Reservation in India

- According to a written reply in parliament by the Union Law Ministry under the BJP-led Centre, Tamil Nadu has the highest representation of SC, ST, and OBC judges in district and subordinate courts anywhere in India.
- The district and subordinate courts in the country have 14.15% Dalits, 5.12% tribals and 26.64% OBCs as judges.
- With statistics showing that diversity among them is higher in South India, with Tamil Nadu and Karnataka leading the spot compared to the rest of the country.
- It showed that the lower judiciary is more representative compared to the High Courts.
- The appointments since 2018 showed only 3.89% of 847 judges were Dalits, 2% tribals and 12.27% OBCs.
- States like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh have impressive representation in lower courts.
- While the statistics placed in Parliament showed "zero" SC, ST and OBC judges in lower courts in West Bengal and Andaman Nicobar Islands.
- Among the big States, Tamil Nadu has 97.65% (1,205 of 1,234) from these categories – SC 20.66% (255), ST 1.21% (15) and OBCs 75.76% (935).

- While only those persons who are recommended by the Supreme Court Collegium are appointed as Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts, the state governments, in consultation with the respective High Courts, frame the rules and regulations regarding the appointment and recruitment of judicial officers in the respective State Judicial Service.
- There is no reservation policy in the appointment of judges to district and subordinate courts.

30 lakh cyber incidents in 2025 - India

- The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) has emerged as India's frontline defence against cyber-attacks.
- It was established in 2004 under Section 70B of the Information Technology Act, 2000.
- CERT-In serves as the national agency for cyber incident response under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology.
- In 2025, CERT-In handled over 29.44 lakh cyber incidents.
- By 2025, internet connections in India crossed the milestone of 100 crore, reaching 100.29 crore, compared to 25.15 crore in March 2014.
- In the Global Cybersecurity Outlook 2025 published by the World Economic Forum (WEF), CERT-In has been highlighted for its deployment of AI-driven situational awareness systems.

Shift in India's Pharma and Medical Devices Sector

- India's pharmaceutical industry is sharpening its focus on complex generics, biosimilars and innovation.
- India is a global leader in low-cost vaccine supply.
- India currently ranks 11th globally in pharmaceutical exports by value, with a 3 per cent global share.
- India is the Third-largest by volume globally and meets around 20% of global generics demand, with exports to 191 countries in FY25.
- Over half of these exports are directed to highly regulated markets such as the United States and Europe.
- Beyond generic drugs, India is also providing a majority of the world's DPT, BCG and measles vaccines.
- India's medical devices sector is also rapidly becoming globally competitive, exporting to 187 countries in FY25.

Kavach 4.0

- ❖ Indian Railways commissioned 472.3 km of Kavach Version 4.0 safety system in a single day, the largest ever in the country.
- ❖ The rollout covers key sections across Western, Northern, and East Central Railways, taking total Kavach coverage beyond 1,300 km.
- ❖ Kavach 4.0 is India's indigenous Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system.
- ❖ The system prevents Signal Passing at Danger (SPAD), over speeding, and enhances operational reliability on high-density rail corridors.

Sampoornata Abhiyan 2.0

- ❖ NITI Aayog launched Sampoornata Abhiyan 2.0 as a 3-month campaign from 28 January to 14 April 2026.
- ❖ The campaign aims to achieve saturation of 5 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in 112 Aspirational Districts and 6 KPIs in 513 Aspirational Blocks across India.
- ❖ The focus areas include nutrition and health of children, functional facilities in Anganwadi Centres, girls' toilets in schools, and animal vaccination.
- ❖ Districts and Blocks will prepare 3-month action plans, conduct monthly progress tracking, and carry out field monitoring visits.
- ❖ The initiative builds on Sampoornata Abhiyan 2024 and supports the goals of the Aspirational Districts Programme (2018) and Aspirational Blocks Programme (2023).

High-speed rail corridors

- ❖ Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in the Union budget 2026, announced seven new high-speed rail (HSR) corridors, including two corridors from Chennai.
- ❖ Chennai is set to get two new routes of high-speed rail in the future.
- ❖ The seven HSR corridors are: Mumbai to Pune, Pune to Hyderabad, Chennai to Bengaluru, Chennai to Hyderabad, Hyderabad to Bengaluru, Delhi to Varanasi, and Varanasi to Siliguri.
- ❖ Three of the seven high-speed rail corridors announced in the Union Budget 2026-27, connect Hyderabad.
- ❖ The project would be executed by National High-Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL).
- ❖ The trains in the new high-speed rail corridor would be operated at a minimum speed of 230 km/h.

- While the bullet trains would be operated at a speed of 370 km/h.
- For the HSR corridor, new tracks, similar to international standards, similar to those of bullet trains, would be constructed.
- The HSR corridors would be operated between cities where most passengers undertake air travel.
- These corridors will be of 4000 km in length, and be developed at an outlay of ₹16 lakh crore.
- At present, the Chennai to Bengaluru travel time in trains, including the Vande Bharat, is around six hours, and more than 12 hours to Hyderabad.
- The corridors will reduce travel time between Chennai to Bengaluru to 1.5 hours, Bengaluru to Hyderabad to 2 hours, Hyderabad to Chennai to 2 hours and 55 minutes.
- The FM also announced a new dedicated freight corridor connecting Dankuni in West Bengal to Surat in Gujarat.

Union Budget Numbers 2026

- Gross market borrowings for 2026-27 are estimated at ₹17.2 lakh crore, with net borrowings at ₹11.7 lakh crore.
- It was compared to ₹14.8 lakh crore in FY26 and is 16% higher than FY26 Budget Estimates.
- For FY26 itself, the bond market struggled to absorb ₹14.82 lakh crore of borrowings.
- The fiscal deficit is projected at 4.3% of GDP, slightly lower than 4.4% in 2025-26.
- Revenue deficit in 2026-27 is targeted at 1.5% of GDP.
- While the debt-to-GDP ratio is expected to ease to 55.6% in BE 2026-27, compared to 56.1 percent of GDP in RE 2025-26.
- For 2026-27, non-debt receipts are projected at ₹36.5 lakh crore and total expenditure at ₹53.5 lakh crore, with net tax receipts estimated at ₹28.7 lakh crore.
- In comparison, 2025-26 revised estimates placed non-debt receipts at ₹34 lakh crore and net tax receipts at ₹26.7 lakh crore.
- While total expenditure stood at ₹49.6 lakh crore, including around ₹11 lakh crore in capital spending.
- Borrowings and other liabilities form the largest source of funds for this Budget, accounting for 24% of total inflows, unchanged from the previous year.

- Income tax is the second-largest contributor at 21% (down from 22% last year), followed by GST and other taxes at 15%, compared with 18% in 2025-26.

- Corporation tax also makes up a significant share at 18%.

- The remaining budgetary resources come from non-tax revenue, Union excise duties, customs duties, and non-debt capital receipts.

- In the Budget, 22% of expenditure (unchanged from last year) is allocated to States' share of taxes and duties, followed by interest payments at 20%.

- Interest payments account for 26% of the total expenditure, and 40% of revenue receipts.

- Central sector schemes account for 17% of total spending.

- Defence receives 11%, while Finance Commission and other transfers and centrally sponsored schemes get 8% and 7%, respectively.

- Pensions account for 2% of government expenditure, while the remaining 7% is spent on other items.

- The government has estimated a nominal GDP growth rate of 10% in 2026-27.

Higher allocation in Budget

- The Union Budget for 2026–27, with a total outlay of ₹53.5 lakh crore, is divided between sectoral and non-sectoral expenditure.

- The ministry of finance has received the largest allocation of Rs 19.72 lakh crore, including Rs 17.22 lakh crore for revenue expenditure and Rs 2.50 lakh crore for capital expenditure.

- The allocation reflects spending on interest payments, subsidies and transfers to states.

- In the Union Budget 2026–27, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced a record ₹7.85 lakh crore allocation for defence, the highest ever.

- It will be comprising Rs 5.54 lakh crore in revenue expenditure and Rs 2.31 lakh crore in capital outlay.

- The ministry of railways received Rs 2.93 lakh crore.

- Non-sectoral expenditure comprises mandatory commitments that are not attributed to individual ministries.

- This includes interest payments on past borrowings, pensions for defence and civil services personnel, and statutory transfers such as tax devolution and grants to states and Union Territories.

- The Government provided ₹1.4 lakh crore to the States for the FY 2026-27 as Finance Commission Grants as recommended by the 16th Finance Commission.

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World Seafood Congress 2026

- ❖ India will host the World Seafood Congress (WSC) 2026 for the first time in Chennai.

- ❖ World Seafood Congress is a biennial global forum on fisheries and aquaculture.

- ❖ WSC 2026 is jointly organised by the International Association of Fish Inspectors, PDA Ventures, and the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB).

- ❖ It is co-organised by the Department of Fisheries with support from the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Ministry of Earth Sciences, and NITI Aayog.

- ❖ The congress will focus on sustainable seafood trade, fisheries technology, food security, and global collaboration.

Buddhist Circuit in Northeast India

- ❖ Union Budget 2026–27 announced a new scheme to develop a Buddhist Circuit in the Northeast.

- ❖ The scheme aims to preserve and develop Buddhist temples and monasteries in the northeastern States.

- ❖ It focuses on improving tourism infrastructure and connectivity around Buddhist pilgrimage sites.

- ❖ The initiative is part of the government's plan to promote cultural heritage and regional development.

2026 Delhi Declaration

- ❖ The 2026 Delhi Declaration was adopted during the second India–Arab Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in New Delhi.

- ❖ The meeting marked 10 years since the first India–Arab Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in Bahrain.

- ❖ The Declaration was jointly issued by India and the League of Arab States.

- ❖ It supported the Arab Peace Initiative, 2002 for a peaceful resolution of the Israel–Palestine issue.

- ❖ It emphasised respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries such as Sudan, Libya, and Somalia.

- ❖ It condemned Houthi attacks in Yemen and supported Yemen's unity and stability.

Special Intensive Revision Case in SC

- ❖ West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee appeared in the Supreme Court regarding the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.
- ❖ Mamata Banerjee became the first sitting Chief Minister in India to appear personally before the Supreme Court to argue her own case.
- ❖ She sought permission from the Court to present arguments in person on a petition challenging the voter-list revision process conducted by the Election Commission of India (ECI).
- ❖ The case relates to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, which is carried out by the Election Commission of India (ECI).

Lung Cancer Care Guidelines

- ❖ India released its first national evidence-based lung cancer care guidelines titled "Lung Cancer Treatment and Palliation: Evidence-Based Guidelines".
- ❖ The document provides 15 recommendations covering diagnosis, treatment, and palliative care.
- ❖ The aim is to promote early diagnosis, standardise treatment, and reduce regional disparities in lung cancer care across India.
- ❖ The guidelines apply to both public and private healthcare systems.

National Waste-Pickers Database

- ❖ The Union Government released the first national data on waste-pickers under the NAMASTE (National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem) scheme.
- ❖ About 1.52 lakh waste-pickers have been profiled and validated by Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) across 35 States and Union Territories.
- ❖ Around 84.5% of waste-pickers belong to the Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC) communities.
- ❖ Nearly 48.7% are women, 51.3% men, and 12 transgender persons among the profiled workers.
- ❖ The NAMASTE scheme, implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, to recognise sanitation workers and eliminate deaths from hazardous sewer and septic-tank cleaning.

Supreme Court on death Penalty

- ❖ The Supreme Court has not confirmed a single death penalty in the past three years.
- ❖ It was according to an annual statistics report on death penalties in India.

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❖ It was published by the Square Circle Clinic, a criminal justice initiative at the NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad.

❖ In fact, in 2025, the top court acquitted 10 prisoners who had been on death row.

❖ It was the highest number of such acquittals in the past decade.

❖ The report examined death penalty trends across India over the past 10 years.

❖ It found that the sessions courts handed down 1,310 death sentences nationwide between 2016 and 2025.

❖ The lower courts sentenced 128 individuals to death in 2025 alone.

High rate of acquittals

❖ Of the 1,310 death sentences, 842 verdicts were handed down by the High Courts.

❖ Of which 70 — that is, just 8.31% — were confirmed.

❖ The High Court acquitted 285 people on death row.

❖ While 411 death sentences were commuted.

❖ The Supreme Court's stance has been even more restrictive, with no death sentence confirmed in the past three years.

❖ Also, in cases where sessions courts-imposed death sentences which were confirmed by the High Courts, not a single sentence has yet been affirmed by the Supreme Court.

❖ Of the 37 such death sentences which have been decided by the Supreme Court, 15 resulted in acquittal, and 14 were commuted.

❖ The report also showed that India had 574 prisoners — 550 men and 24 women — on death row as of December 31, 2025.

❖ The average time spent on death row before acquittal was over five years, with some prisoners languishing for nearly a decade before being exonerated.

❖ However, 138 individuals were also removed from death row during the year through acquittals, commutations, or remand orders.

❖ One of the report's most alarming findings concerns procedural violations at the sentencing stage.

❖ There were clear guidelines laid down by the Supreme Court in Manoj vs State of Madhya Pradesh.

❖ It mandates psychological evaluations, prison conduct reports, and mitigation hearings.

❖ They were elevated to a fair trial right requirement in Vasanta Sampat Dupare vs Union of India.

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❖ But in 2025, nearly 95% of death sentences in 2025 were imposed without compliance.

❖ Sentencing hearings were frequently conducted within days of conviction, leaving little scope for meaningful defence representation.

❖ Another emerging trend is the growing use of life imprisonment without remission as an alternative to the death penalty.

Motion of Thanks 2026

❖ The Lok Sabha had passed the Motion of Thanks by a voice vote, without Prime Minister's customary reply.

❖ After repeated disruptions from the morning, the Speaker took up the Motion of Thanks and put the amendments moved by the Opposition to vote.

❖ They were rejected.

❖ Mr. Birla then read out the Motion of Thanks to the President for her address to both Houses of Parliament on January 28

❖ It was passed by a voice vote, even as the Opposition sloganeering continued.

❖ The Prime Minister was not present in the House of People when the Motion was put to vote.

❖ Home Minister Amit Shah and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh were also not present.

❖ The last time that the Motion of Thanks to the President's address was passed without the PM's reply was in June 2004

❖ The then-Prime Minister Manmohan Singh could not deliver his reply to the debate in the Lok Sabha.

❖ The Rajya Sabha adopted a Motion to thank President Droupadi Murmu for her address to the Joint Session of Parliament.

❖ Here the PM's speech lasted 97 minutes.

❖ The amendments moved by Opposition MPs were defeated in a voice vote in their absence.

SC on Ad Hoc DGP

❖ The Supreme Court observed that States were avoiding appointment of regular Director-Generals of Police (DGPs) with a fixed tenure of two years.

❖ They are opting instead for "acting" police chiefs of their choice in violation of a 20-year-old top court judgment.

- The court, in a 2006 judgment in the Prakash Singh case, had made it clear that the office of DGP should be divorced from political or other external pressures and cautioned governments against mixing politics and law enforcement.
- It had invoked its extraordinary powers under Article 142 to direct that DGPs must be selected by State governments from among the three senior-most and meritorious officers empanelled by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).
- The court had thrown out the "concept" of acting DGPs.
- It had held that State police chiefs should have a minimum fixed tenure of two years.
- The State concerned shall send a proposal to the UPSC three months ahead of the retirement of the incumbent DGP.
- The UPSC would prepare a panel of suitable officers.
- The State would appoint one of the empanelled officers as DGP "immediately".
- The Bench was hearing the case of Telangana, where the UPSC said the last regular DGP retired about nine years ago, in November 2017.
- The State had not forwarded any proposals to initiate the appointment of a regular DGP.
- Instead, it was choosing to carry on with 'acting' DGPs at the helm of its police force.

Constitutional recognition - Denotified tribes

- Denotified tribes, nomadic tribes, semi-nomadic tribes seek 'separate column' in 2027 caste census.
- They are claiming they have been politically misclassified among SC, ST, OBC groups.
- They want sub-classification to highlight backwardness within grouping.
- Their demand is for constitutional recognition of the Denotified Tribes in a Schedule, on par with the existing classifications of Scheduled Castes and Tribes (SCs/STs) and other backward classes (OBCs).
- In February 2027, India will conduct a caste enumeration for the first time since 1931.
- Five years after that 1931 Census, the origins of the Scheduled Castes list came into being in the form of the Government of India (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1936.
- In 1871, a colonial law had classified entire communities, particularly nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes, as "criminals".
- After the law was repealed in 1952, these groups became known as "Denotified" tribes.

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- ❖ The Social Justice Ministry has now recommended to the Office of the Registrar General of India that these Denotified, nomadic, and semi-nomadic tribes be included in the upcoming Census.

- ❖ The Criminal Tribes Act was first enacted in 1871 and then amended in 1924, before being officially repealed on August 31, 1952.

- ❖ The 1871 Act said it was for the "registration, surveillance and control of certain criminal tribes and eunuchs".

- ❖ It was describing "criminal tribes" as "tribe, gang, or class of persons" that are "addicted" to committing non-bailable offences.

- ❖ After the Act was repealed in 1952, the communities notified as "criminal" under the law had become "denotified".

- ❖ Thus, they are coming to be known as the denotified, nomadic, and semi-nomadic tribes (DNTs).

- ❖ The last National Commission for DNTs, headed by Bhiku Ramji Idate, identified 1,200 such tribes.

- ❖ Most of them have been assimilated in the SC, ST, or OBC classifications over the last seven decades.

- ❖ In its 2017 report, however, the Idate Commission, also listed about 267 DNT communities that have not been classified as such.

- ❖ The scheme SEED is aimed for the welfare of these communities.

Yuva Sahakar and Swayamshakti Sahakar Schemes

- ❖ The National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) implements the Yuva Sahakar Scheme and Swayamshakti Sahakar Scheme.

- ❖ The Yuva Sahakar Scheme encourages newly formed cooperative societies with innovative ideas.

- ❖ Financial assistance under the Yuva Sahakar Scheme for 2024-25 was ₹165.91 lakh for 11,010 beneficiaries.

- ❖ Financial assistance under the Swayamshakti Sahakar Scheme for 2024-25 was ₹1,754.60 crore for 3,15,211 beneficiaries.

Key Changes in CSE 2026 - UPSC

- ❖ The Union Public Service Commission's (UPSC) CSE notification 2026 introduces 14 major changes in the Civil Services Examination.

- ❖ UPSC has introduced a four-stage online application system, including account creation, Universal Registration Number (URN), Common Application Form (CAF), and an exam-specific module.

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❖ Candidates must upload a live photograph and signature, Aadhaar verification, and no correction or withdrawal is allowed after submission.

❖ UPSC has also introduced mandatory face authentication at exam centres, online admit cards, and restrictions on service eligibility for IAS, IFS, and IPS candidates.

❖ Other changes include a reduced question paper representation window, centre allocation rules for PwBD candidates, and mandatory post-Prelims and post-Mains login.

Bharat Taxi Cooperative Cab Service

❖ Union Home and Cooperation Minister launched Bharat Taxi, India's first cooperative-based ride-hailing platform.

❖ It was registered under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002, and established on 6 June 2025.

❖ The platform places drivers, called sarathis (charioteers), at the centre of ownership and operations, removing dependence on exploitative aggregator models.

❖ Bharat Taxi operates on zero commission and surge-free pricing, distributing profits directly to drivers.

❖ The platform aims to expand across India within two years.

PLASTINDIA 2026

❖ PLASTINDIA 2026, one of the world's largest plastics exhibitions, is held in New Delhi.

❖ It aims to strengthen India's position as a global hub for plastics innovation, sustainable manufacturing, and economic growth, while promoting new technologies and international collaboration.

❖ The theme of this edition is "Bharat Next", supporting the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat and Viksit Bharat.

❖ The exhibition focuses on four pillars: Men, Material, Machine, and Markets, along with five strategic elements: Trade, Technology, Talent, Tradition, and Tourism.

❖ For the first time, PLASTINDIA 2026 is being organised as a Zero Waste exhibition, with all solid waste segregated, recycled, and reused.

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SabhaSaar Initiative

- ❖ The SabhaSaar Initiative is a new AI-based tool launched by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

- ❖ It aims to make Gram Sabha and Panchayat meetings easier to document by automatically converting audio and video recordings into text summaries.

- ❖ SabhaSaar works on AI and cloud technology under the India AI Mission and is available for all States and Union Territories.

- ❖ The tool helps generate structured minutes of meetings and ensures uniformity across the country.

- ❖ SabhaSaar is powered by Bhashini, the government's AI language platform, and supports major Indian languages like Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, Gujarati, and English.

- ❖ The initiative is significant because it streamlines documentation, helps administrative bodies, and empowers local communities by giving instant access to meeting insights.

SOP on Disaster Victim Identification

- ❖ The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) released India's first-ever Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

- ❖ It is titled as "Comprehensive Disaster Victim Identification and Management" for identifying victims in mass fatality incidents on Republic Day 2026.

- ❖ The SOP responds to major disasters in 2025, including the Air India crash (Ahmedabad), chemical factory explosion (Sangareddy, Telangana), Gambhira bridge collapse (Vadodara), flash floods (Dharali, Uttarakhand), and the Delhi car bomb blast.

- ❖ It prescribes a four-stage identification process: recovery of remains, post-mortem data collection, ante-mortem data from families, reconciliation and release.

- ❖ A National Dental Data Registry is recommended, as dental records survive disasters and help identify victims.

- ❖ The SOP integrates forensic disciplines like odontology and archaeology, emphasizes humanitarian forensics, and provides institutional coordination and operational guidelines to address gaps.

Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026

- ❖ The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) notified the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026, replacing the SWM Rules, 2016, under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

- The rules will come into force from 1 April 2026 across urban and rural local bodies.
- They mandate four-stream waste segregation at source — Wet, Dry, Sanitary, and Special-care waste.
- The rules apply the Polluter Pays Principle, with penalties enforced by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and State Pollution Control Boards.
- Bulk Waste Generators (BWG) include entities producing 100 kg of waste per day or more, or large buildings and institutions.
- A centralised online portal will track waste generation, collection, and disposal.
- Landfills will be limited to non-recyclable and inert waste, and biomining of legacy waste dumpsites is mandatory.

PAIMANA Portal

- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) launched the PAIMANA (Project Assessment, Infrastructure Monitoring and Analytics for Nation-building) portal.
- PAIMANA is a web-based platform to monitor Central Sector infrastructure projects worth ₹150 crore and above.
- It has replaced OCMS-2006 (Online Computerised Monitoring System) for better real-time monitoring.
- The portal is integrated with DPIIT (Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade)'s Integrated Project Monitoring Portal using APIs (Application Programming Interface).
- As of December 2025, 1,392 infrastructure projects were onboarded on the portal.
- The portal aims to improve transparency, data quality, and the timely completion of infrastructure projects.

Smart Fishing Harbour - Mayabunder

- The Union Department of Fisheries has sanctioned a Smart and Integrated Fishing Harbour at Mayabunder, Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- Mayabunder is a town in the North and Middle Andaman district and is a key hub for fisheries, tourism, and the local economy.
- The harbour will handle 9,900 tonnes of fish annually and provide berthing for 430 fishing vessels.
- It will use Internet of Things (IoT) technology for real-time monitoring and digital traceability.

- ❖ The project focuses on sustainable management, combating Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing.

Farmer Groups in India

- ❖ The Government of India has completed the formation of 10,000 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) under a central sector scheme.
- ❖ The scheme was launched on 29 February 2020 to support small and marginal farmers in collective production, marketing, and processing.
- ❖ A total of 21.96 lakh women farmers are included in these FPOs.
- ❖ Implementing agencies include Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC), National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC), and National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED).
- ❖ FPOs receive financial support, credit guarantees, market linkages, and structured training for better incomes.
- ❖ Evidence shows FPOs help farmers earn ~22% higher prices and reduce marketing costs by ~31%.

Deep Tech Startups in India

- ❖ The Government of India has issued an official definition of 'deep tech' startups.
- ❖ According to the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), a deep tech start-up develops solutions based on new knowledge or advancements in science or engineering.
- ❖ Such startups spend most of their funds on research and development (R&D), create significant intellectual property (IP), and take steps to commercialise it.
- ❖ Deep tech startups often face long development timelines, high capital requirements, and technical uncertainty.
- ❖ A company can qualify as a deep tech start-up for up to 20 years and with a turnover of up to ₹300 crore.
- ❖ Companies must apply to DPIIT for certification, which is reviewed by an Inter-Ministerial Board including representatives from the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the Department of Biotechnology.
- ❖ This initiative supports the Government's focus on technology-driven startups and is linked to the ₹1 lakh crore Research and Development Innovation (RDI) Fund to finance emerging technologies.

India's Wool Production 2026

- ❖ Rajasthan is the largest wool-producing state in India, contributing 16,013.50 thousand kg (47.53% of total production).

- ❖ Rajasthan's wool comes from Marwari and Chokla breeds, mainly used in carpets, rugs, and blankets.

- ❖ Jammu & Kashmir is second with 7,770 thousand kg, known for fine wool like Changthangi and Merino, used for shawls and apparel.

- ❖ Karnataka and Telangana are the third and fourth largest producers, mainly producing medium to coarse wool.

- ❖ India has a sheep population of 77.4 million, making it the second-largest globally.

- ❖ Types of wool in India include Carpet Grade (85%), Apparel Grade (5%), and Coarser Grade (10%).

- ❖ Punjab recorded the highest annual growth rate in wool production at 22.04%.

NPS Swasthya Pension Scheme

- ❖ The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) launched the National Pension System Swasthya Pension Scheme as a pilot project.

- ❖ It aims to integrate health-related financial benefits with the National Pension System (NPS).

- ❖ The scheme provides financial support for outpatient and inpatient medical expenses.

- ❖ It is a voluntary contributory scheme implemented under the Multiple Scheme Framework (MSF) of NPS.

Mission Aatmanirbharta in Pulses

- ❖ India launched the nationwide pulses revolution from Amlaha, Sehore district, Madhya Pradesh.

- ❖ The programme is called Mission for Aatmanirbharta (Self-Reliance) in Pulses.

- ❖ It aims to make India self-sufficient in pulses production and reduce imports.

- ❖ The mission was announced in the Union Budget 2025–26.

- ❖ The mission period is 2025–26 to 2030–31 with an outlay of ₹11,440 crore.

- ❖ The government plans to support seed development, cluster farming, processing mills, and markets.

eSankhyiki Portal

- ❖ The National Statistics Office (NSO) launched the beta version of the Model Context Protocol (MCP) server for the eSankhyiki portal.
- ❖ eSankhyiki is India's national portal for official statistics.
- ❖ MCP allows AI-based, real-time access to datasets without downloading files.
- ❖ The beta release includes datasets such as the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), Consumer Price Index (CPI), Index of Industrial Production (IIP), National Account Statistics, Wholesale Price Index (WPI), Annual Survey of Industries, and Environmental Statistics.
- ❖ The initiative supports data-driven governance and wider access to official statistics.

New Kailash Yatra Route - Shipki La pass

- ❖ India is in talks with China to explore opening an additional route for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, including Shipki La Pass in Himachal Pradesh.
- ❖ Existing routes for the yatra include Lipulekh Pass in Uttarakhand and Nathu La Pass in Sikkim.
- ❖ The 2025 yatra was successfully conducted from June to August, coordinated with state governments and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police.
- ❖ Shipki La Pass is located near the India–China border, but China has cited logistical difficulties for opening new corridors.

Sawalkote Hydropower Project

- ❖ The Sawalkote Hydropower Project is being fast-tracked after the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty following the 2025 Pahalgam terror attack.
- ❖ Sawalkote Hydropower Project is a 1,856 megawatt run-of-the-river hydroelectric project on the Chenab River in Ramban district, Jammu and Kashmir.
- ❖ The project was initiated in 1984 and later declared a project of national importance.
- ❖ The Chenab River is a western tributary of the Indus River under the Indus Waters Treaty (1960) signed between India and Pakistan with World Bank mediation.

Elephant Intrusion Detection System

- ❖ Indian Railways has deployed an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based system to prevent elephant deaths on railway tracks.

- Indian Railways introduced an AI-enabled Intrusion Detection System (IDS) to detect elephant movement near tracks.
- The system uses Distributed Acoustic Sensors (DAS) installed along optical fibre cables.
- It sends real-time alerts to loco pilots, station masters, and railway control rooms to slow or stop trains.
- The system is currently operational over 141 routes in the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR).
- The project is implemented with support from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

SATYA lab automation portal

- The SATYA Portal was launched under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- SATYA is a lab automation portal for the Standardization Testing and Quality Certification (STQC) Directorate.
- The portal provides digital testing, certification, and quality assurance services on a single platform.
- It aims to reduce delays, improve transparency, and support startups, MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises), and the industry.

Two Mega Telescopes in Ladakh

- The Union Budget 2026 approved two new telescopes and an upgrade of an existing telescope in Ladakh.
- The National Large Solar Telescope will be built in Merak near Pangong Tso in Ladakh to study the Sun and space weather.
- The National Large Optical–Near Infrared Telescope will be built in the Hanle Dark Sky Reserve to study exoplanets, stars, and the origin of the universe.
- The Himalayan Chandra Telescope in Hanle will be upgraded with a larger segmented mirror.

Reform Plan for Kimberley Process

- India has proposed reforms in the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme to improve the regulation of the global diamond trade.
- The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme is a global system that regulates trade in rough diamonds to prevent conflict diamonds.

- Only member countries of the Kimberley Process can trade rough diamonds with each other using certification.
- India is not a diamond-producing country, but imports about 40 % of global rough diamonds for cutting and polishing.
- Major diamond cutting and polishing centres in India are Surat and Mumbai.

Artificial Intelligence Adoption Hub

- A new report by Zscaler has ranked India second globally in enterprise Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning usage.
- The Zscaler ThreatLabz 2026 Artificial Intelligence Security Report analysed nearly one trillion Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning transactions in 2025.
- India has recorded 82.3 billion Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning transactions between June and December 2025.
- India accounts for 46.2 % of total Artificial Intelligence activity in the Asia-Pacific region.
- The Technology and Communication sector recorded the highest Artificial Intelligence usage, followed by Manufacturing and Finance.

India–AI Impact Summit 2026

- The Government of India will host the India–AI Impact Summit 2026, focusing on global cooperation in Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- The summit will be held in New Delhi and will be the first global Artificial Intelligence (AI) summit in the Global South.
- The summit is based on three Sutras — People, Planet, and Progress.
- Discussions will be organised around seven Chakras (themes): Human Capital; Inclusion for Social Empowerment; Safe and Trusted AI; Resilience, Innovation and Efficiency; Science; Democratizing AI Resources; Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Economic Growth and Social Good.
- It is supported by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, India Artificial Intelligence (AI) Mission, Software Technology Parks of India, and the Digital India Initiative.
- The summit aims to promote responsible AI adoption, strengthen global partnerships, and support inclusive development.

Substantive Motion in Lok Sabha

- ❖ Nishikant Dubey has moved a Substantive Motion against Rahul Gandhi in the Lok Sabha.
- ❖ A Substantive Motion is an independent and self-contained proposal placed before the Lok Sabha to seek a clear and binding decision of the House.
- ❖ It is complete in itself and is not linked to any other business under discussion in Parliament.
- ❖ When adopted, the motion represents the formal opinion or will of the House on a specific matter.
- ❖ Under the Rules of Procedure of the Lok Sabha, the motion can be admitted only with the approval of the Speaker, Om Birla, who has the discretion to accept or reject it.
- ❖ If admitted, the motion is debated in the House, put to a compulsory vote, and in some cases may be referred to a specially constituted committee for examination.
- ❖ Substantive motions are not commonly used in routine political disputes and provide a formal parliamentary mechanism to consider matters involving constitutional posts such as the Leader of the Opposition.

National Song and Anthem Guidelines 2026

- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) issued guidelines on the order of singing the National Song and National Anthem.
- ❖ The guidelines state that Vande Mataram must be sung or played before Jana Gana Mana when both are played together.
- ❖ The official version of the National Song is about 3 minutes and 10 seconds long, and the audience must stand at attention when it is played or sung.
- ❖ The song Vande Mataram was written by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee.
- ❖ It was adopted as the National Song by the Constituent Assembly on 24 January 1950.

IT Rules Amendment 2026

- ❖ The Indian government amended the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, effective 20 February 2026.
- ❖ Synthetically Generated Information (SGI) includes AI-created or AI-altered audio, video, or audio-visual content that appears real.
- ❖ All AI-generated content must have visible disclaimers or watermarks, and illegal content must be removed within 3 hours.

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❖ Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM), Non-Consensual Intimate Images (NCII), impersonations, and content threatening public safety are prohibited.

❖ Metadata and digital fingerprints are embedded for tracing the origin of AI content; routine edits and accessibility features are exempt.

Industrial Relations Code (Amendment) Bill, 2026

❖ The Lok Sabha has passed the Industrial Relations Code (Amendment) Bill, 2026, during the Budget session of Parliament.

❖ The Bill provides legal clarity and continuity for labour laws replaced by the Industrial Relations Code, 2020.

❖ The Industrial Relations Code, 2020, consolidated and repealed three major labour laws: the Trade Unions Act, 1926, the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946, and the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.

❖ The Amendment contains savings provisions under Section 104 to ensure that actions taken, rights accrued, and proceedings initiated under the repealed laws continue without legal disruption.

No-Confidence Motion against Speaker

❖ The Opposition has moved a No-Confidence Motion against Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla in February 2026.

❖ For the removal of the Speaker, Article 94 requires at least 50 members to give a written notice and a 14-day notice period before voting.

❖ The procedure is governed by Rules 200 A of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Lok Sabha.

❖ The Speaker cannot decide the admissibility of the resolution as there's charge against him.

❖ Deputy Speaker post is a mandatory provision by the Constitution as per Article 93.

❖ As there is no Deputy speaker on a resolution to remove the Speaker, the Speaker cannot chair the House.

❖ But the panel of chairs will preside when the Speaker or Deputy Speaker is not present.

❖ If passed by a majority of all the then members of the House, the Speaker must vacate office.

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Ex-Servicemen Rules 2026

❖ The Government of India amended the Ex-servicemen (Re-employment in Central Civil Services and Posts) Rules, 2026, to include personnel of the Military Nursing Service under the definition of ex-servicemen.

❖ The amendment was notified under Article 309 of the Constitution of India.

❖ It removes earlier confusion about the eligibility of Military Nursing Service (MNS) officers for re-employment benefits.

❖ MNS veterans are now eligible for 10% reservation in Group C posts and 20% reservation in Group D Central Government posts.

❖ They will also receive age relaxation equal to their years of military service plus three years.

Lymphatic Filariasis Elimination Campaign

❖ The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched the Annual Nationwide Mass Drug Administration (MDA) Campaign to eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis.

❖ Anti-filarial medicines such as Diethylcarbamazine, Albendazole, and Ivermectin are given to the eligible population.

❖ The campaign is being implemented in 12 endemic states, including Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Maharashtra, and Karnataka.

❖ Lymphatic Filariasis is a neglected tropical disease caused by parasitic worms and spread through mosquito bites.

❖ The disease can lead to elephantiasis, hydrocele, and long-term disability.

❖ India aims to eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis by 2027 under Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG-3).

State Cyber Crime Coordination Centre

❖ The State Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (S4C) dashboard of the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre was launched during a national conference on cyber-enabled frauds.

❖ The dashboard was launched by the Ministry of Home Affairs to strengthen coordination between states in tackling cybercrime.

❖ Around 62 banks and financial institutions have already been onboarded to the cybercrime coordination system.

❖ The government aims to onboard all banks, including cooperative banks, by December 2026.

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Right to Recall

- ❖ A Private Member Bill proposing the Right to Recall for elected representatives has been discussed in Parliament in the context of strengthening democratic accountability in India.

- ❖ Right to Recall is a democratic system that allows voters to remove an elected representative before the end of their term.

- ❖ The idea was proposed in India by M. N. Roy in 1944 and later supported by Jayaprakash Narayan in 1974.

- ❖ The Right to Recall is not available for Members of Parliament (MP) and Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) at the national level.

- ❖ Some states like Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh have implemented Right to Recall provisions in local bodies such as Panchayats and Municipalities.

- ❖ The Representation of the People Act (1951) allows the removal of representatives only for legal offences, not for public dissatisfaction.

Seva Teerth — New Prime Minister's Office Complex

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi shifted his official workspace to Seva Teerth, a newly built complex near Raisina Hill in New Delhi.

- ❖ This ended nearly eight decades of the Prime Minister's Office functioning from South Block.

- ❖ North Block and South Block were originally built for the British government and were taken over by independent India in 1947.

- ❖ They were designed by architect Herbert Baker, a contemporary of Edwin Lutyens.

- ❖ South Block earlier housed the Prime Minister's Office and the Union Ministries of External Affairs and Defence, while North Block housed the Ministries of Home Affairs and Finance.

- ❖ These buildings will now be converted into museums.

- ❖ The new Seva Teerth complex brings together the Prime Minister's Office, the Cabinet Secretariat, and the National Security Council Secretariat, which were previously located in different places, as part of the Central Vista Project.

- ❖ The architectural design includes an entrance inspired by Chalukyan temple stone screen-work from the 11th–13th centuries, and a carved stone plinth band inspired by the Chennakeshava Temple.

- ❖ The Union Cabinet passed a resolution naming the new Prime Minister's Office complex "Seva Teerth".

- ❖ The Prime Minister unveiled the plaque bearing the name in Devanagari script along with the motto "Nagrik Devo Bhava" (Citizen is akin to God).

- ❖ The shift took place on the day marking 95 years since the inauguration of New Delhi as India's modern capital in 1931.

- ❖ Earlier, the capital of British India had been shifted from Kolkata to Delhi in 1912.

- ❖ The Prime Minister's residence continues to be located on Lok Kalyan Marg, formerly known as Race Course Road.

PM RAHAT Scheme

- ❖ The Government launched PM RAHAT (Road Accident Victim Hospitalization and Assured Treatment).

- ❖ The scheme provides cashless treatment up to ₹1.5 lakh per road accident victim for 7 days from the date of the accident.

- ❖ Victims or bystanders can dial ERSS (Emergency Response Support System) 112 to reach the nearest designated hospital within the Golden Hour.

- ❖ The scheme is implemented through the integration of the eDAR (Electronic Detailed Accident Report) platform of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and the TMS (Transaction Management System) 2.0 of the National Health Authority.

Startup India Fund of Funds 2.0

- ❖ The Union Cabinet approved the Startup India Fund of Funds 2.0 (FoF 2.0) with a corpus of ₹10,000 crore.

- ❖ The fund aims to mobilise long-term domestic capital and strengthen India's startup and venture capital ecosystem.

- ❖ It follows Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS 1.0), launched in 2016 under the Startup India initiative.

- ❖ Under FFS 1.0, ₹10,000 crore was committed to 145 Alternative Investment Funds, which invested over ₹25,500 crore in more than 1,370 startups.

- ❖ FoF 2.0 will focus on deep technology, innovative manufacturing, early-stage founders and priority sectors across India.

- ❖ The scheme is implemented by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade and managed by the Small Industries Development Bank of India.

Complaints Against Judges in India

- ❖ The Union Government informed Lok Sabha that 8,630 complaints were received against sitting judges in the last 10 years.

- ❖ Complaints relate to corruption, sexual misconduct, and other serious impropriety against judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts.

- ❖ Complaints against judges are handled under the "in-house procedure" by the Chief Justice of India and the Chief Justices of High Courts.

- ❖ Complaints submitted through CPGRAMS (Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System) are forwarded to the concerned judicial authorities.

World's Second Largest Smartphone Market - India

- ❖ India became the second-largest active smartphone installed base globally in 2025, with over 740 million smartphones in use, after China.

- ❖ The active installed base refers to the total number of smartphones currently being used, not just yearly sales.

- ❖ More than 50% of India's population (about 1.45 billion) now uses smartphones.

- ❖ The average smartphone replacement cycle in India is about 42 months, slightly lower than the global average of 47 months.

World's Largest Grain Storage Plan

- ❖ Balaghat, Madhya Pradesh, has been selected as the pilot district under the World's Largest Grain Storage Plan in the Cooperative Sector.

- ❖ A 500 Metric Tonne (MT) godown was constructed at the Primary Agricultural Credit Society (PACS) level in Parswada.

- ❖ The project is implemented through the convergence of schemes like the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) and the Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure (AMI) Scheme.

- ❖ Under AIF, PACS receive interest subvention on loans for building storage infrastructure.

- ❖ The subsidy for PACS under AMI has been increased to 33.33 %.

- ❖ The initiative aims to reduce post-harvest losses and prevent distress sales by farmers through decentralised storage facilities.

Private Sectors in Nuclear Energy

- ❖ The Adani Group entered the nuclear power sector after the passage of the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Act, 2025.

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❖ Adani Power Limited has created a wholly owned subsidiary called Adani Atomic Energy Limited.

❖ The SHANTI Act allows private companies to operate nuclear power plants in India and collaborate with foreign technology partners.

❖ The law replaces the Atomic Energy Act and enables private participation in nuclear energy production.

❖ India currently has about 8.8 gigawatts (GW) of installed nuclear power capacity, contributing around 3 % of total electricity generation.

❖ The government aims to increase nuclear power capacity to 32 gigawatts in the next decade as part of the energy transition goal.

Lakhpati Didi Scheme Expansion

❖ The Government of India has doubled the target of the Lakhpati Didi Scheme to 6 crore women beneficiaries by March 2029 after achieving the earlier 3 crore target ahead of schedule.

❖ The scheme supports women in Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to earn at least ₹1 lakh annual income through livelihood activities.

❖ In the Union Budget 2026–27, the government announced the launch of "SHE-Marts" (Self Help Entrepreneur Marts).

❖ SHE-Marts will provide better marketing platforms for SHG products across the country.

❖ The initiative aims to increase income opportunities and promote rural women's entrepreneurship.

New Bullet Train Corridors in India

❖ The Government of India has started a viability assessment for seven new high-speed rail (bullet train) corridors announced in the Union Budget 2026–27.

❖ The project will be implemented by the National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL).

❖ The seven proposed corridors will cover about 4,000 kilometres across major cities in India.

❖ The total estimated cost of the project is about ₹16 trillion.

❖ The corridors include Mumbai–Pune, Pune–Hyderabad, Hyderabad–Bengaluru, Hyderabad–Chennai, Chennai–Bengaluru, Delhi–Varanasi, and Varanasi–Siliguri.

❖ India's first bullet train project, the Mumbai–Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Corridor, is currently under construction.

India's Ancient Civilisation

- ❖ New archaeological research from the Bhirrana site suggests the Indus Valley Civilisation may date back nearly 8,000 years.
- ❖ Radiocarbon dating of pottery and animal remains indicates that early human settlement and agrarian communities developed much earlier than previously believed.
- ❖ The Indus Valley Civilisation (also called the Harappan Civilisation) is traditionally dated between 2600 BCE and 1900 BCE.
- ❖ Major urban centres include Harappa, Mohenjo-daro, Dholavira, and Rakhigarhi.

Indigenous Dogs in the Armed Forces

- ❖ The Assam Rifles plans to induct indigenous Tangkhul Hui and Kombai dog breeds into its dog squad and phase out foreign breeds by 2050.
- ❖ The Assam Rifles, established in 1835, is India's oldest paramilitary force and functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs (administrative control) and the Ministry of Defence (operational control).
- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs issued a 2025 directive to promote Indian dog breeds in armed forces dog squads.
- ❖ The Tangkhul Hui breed is native to the Ukhrul district of Manipur and is known for disease resistance and hunting ability.
- ❖ The Kombai breed is native to Tamil Nadu and has been identified as suitable for guard and tracking duties.
- ❖ The force currently has 253 dogs, mainly Belgian Malinois, German Shepherd and Labrador, against a sanctioned strength of 344.

India's First Leadership of CTF-154

- ❖ The Indian Navy has assumed the command of Combined Task Force-154 (CTF-154) for the first time.
- ❖ CTF-154 is a multinational training task force under the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF).
- ❖ The change-of-command ceremony was held at CMF headquarters in Manama, Bahrain.
- ❖ CTF-154 was established in May 2023 to strengthen maritime security through training and capacity-building programmes.
- ❖ CMF is a 47-nation naval partnership working for security in the Indian Ocean Region and nearby waters.

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❖ The task force conducts Maritime Security Enhancement Training and exercises such as Compass Rose and Readiness exercises.

White Revolution 2.0

❖ The Government of India has launched White Revolution 2.0 to increase milk procurement by 50 % over the next five years.

❖ The initiative was announced by the Ministry of Cooperation.

❖ The target is to raise daily milk procurement to 1,007 lakh kilograms by 2028–29.

❖ Around 75,000 new Dairy Cooperative Societies will be formed, and 46,422 existing DCS will be strengthened.

❖ The programme is funded under the National Dairy Development Programme 2.0 of the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying.

❖ Women make up nearly 70% of India's dairy workforce, and the scheme focuses on bringing more women dairy farmers into cooperative systems.

❖ The programme aims to improve farmer income, rural employment, nutrition, and women's economic empowerment.

Urban Challenge Fund

❖ The Union Cabinet has approved the launch of the Urban Challenge Fund (UCF) with ₹1 lakh crore central assistance.

❖ The fund was first announced in the Union Budget 2025–26 and aims to mobilise a total investment of ₹4 lakh crore over five years.

❖ It will operate from Financial Year (FY) 2025–26 to FY 2030–31, with possible extension up to FY 2033–34.

❖ The scheme will cover cities with a population above 10 lakh, all State capitals, and major industrial cities with a population of over 1 lakh.

❖ It focuses on cities as growth hubs, creative redevelopment, and water and sanitation infrastructure.

❖ The Centre will provide 25% of the project cost, at least 50% must be raised from market sources, and the remaining 25% will be contributed by States or Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).

AI Governance Framework 2026

❖ India released its first Artificial Intelligence (AI) governance framework ahead of the AI Impact Summit 2026.

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❖ India adopted a principle-based AI governance model instead of introducing a separate AI law.

❖ The framework is based on seven guiding principles ("sutras"), including trust, accountability, transparency, safety, fairness, innovation, and sustainability.

❖ It proposes new institutions such as a national AI governance coordination group and an AI Safety Institute for testing standards and risk assessment.

❖ High-risk AI applications affecting safety, rights, or livelihoods will require human oversight and transparency reporting.

Yuge Yugeen Bharat National Museum

❖ The first gallery of the Yuge Yugeen Bharat National Museum is expected to open by the end of 2026.

❖ It is being developed by the Ministry of Culture under the Central Vista Redevelopment Project.

❖ It will replace the existing National Museum and will be located in the North Block and South Block buildings in New Delhi.

❖ The museum will showcase 5,000 years of Indian civilisation and display artefacts such as Indus Valley objects, Gupta-period sculptures, and Chola bronzes.

❖ India and France are jointly developing the museum, using France's expertise in museum design and management.

CBDC-Based Public Distribution System

❖ Union Home Minister has launched India's first Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)-based Public Distribution System (PDS) in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

❖ The pilot has been launched by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution in collaboration with the RBI and the Government of Gujarat.

❖ Under this system, beneficiaries receive programmable digital rupee (e₹) coupons in their digital wallets to purchase subsidised foodgrains from Fair Price Shops (FPS).

❖ The pilot has started in Ahmedabad, Anand, Valsad, and Surat districts of Gujarat and will be expanded to the Union Territories of Chandigarh, Puducherry, and Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu.

❖ The initiative integrates CBDC into PDS to enable secure, traceable, and real-time transactions.

International Conference on Dam Safety 2026

❖ The International Conference on Dam Safety (ICDS) 2026 concluded in Bengaluru.

❖ The conference was organised by the Ministry of Jal Shakti to discuss dam safety, climate resilience, and water infrastructure management.

❖ Discussions focused on the Dam Safety Act, 2021 and the Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP).

❖ Technical sessions covered ageing dams, sediment management, risk-informed decision-making, flood management, and dam safety monitoring systems.

❖ The conference highlighted the need for Emergency Action Plans (EAPs), real-time monitoring, reservoir sediment management, and coordinated reservoir operations.

Power Capacity in FY 2025–26

❖ The Ministry of Power announced that India added 52,537 megawatts (MW) of power generation capacity in the current financial year up to January 31, 2026.

❖ This is the highest ever annual capacity addition, surpassing the previous record of 34,054 MW in FY 2024–25.

❖ Out of the total addition, 39,657 MW came from renewable energy sources, including 34,955 MW from solar and 4,613 MW from wind.

❖ As of January 31, 2026, India's total installed power generation capacity stands at 5,20,510.95 MW.

❖ About 50.5% of the total capacity comes from renewable sources, 48% from fossil fuels, and 1.6% from nuclear energy.

Infrastructure Project - Great Nicobar Island

❖ The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has cleared the Great Nicobar Island infrastructure project while ensuring the strict compliance with environmental safeguards.

❖ The project includes an International Container Transshipment Terminal (ICTT), township development, and a 450 MVA gas- and solar-based power plant.

❖ The NGT noted the project's strategic importance near the Malacca Strait and its relevance to India's Act East policy and Indian Ocean presence.

❖ Coral protection measures include the translocation of over 16,000 coral colonies and monitoring, in line with the Island Coastal Regulation Zone (ICRZ) Notification, 2019.

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❖ The tribunal confirmed there is no major coral reef within the direct project area at Galathea Bay.

Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2026 – Judicial Diversity

❖ The Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament P. Wilson introduced a private member's Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2026, to provide reservation in judicial appointments.

❖ The Bill seeks to ensure representation for Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Other Backward Classes (OBC), religious minorities, and women in the Supreme Court and High Courts.

❖ It proposes that appointments should reflect their population proportion and sets a 90-day time limit for the Central Government to notify collegium recommendations.

❖ The Bill also proposes regional benches of the Supreme Court at New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, and Chennai to improve access to justice.

❖ At present, judges are appointed through the collegium system, which was created by the Supreme Court through the Second Judges Case (1993).

MANAV Vision on Artificial Intelligence

❖ The Prime Minister presented the M.A.N.A.V. framework at the India AI Impact Summit in New Delhi.

❖ M.A.N.A.V. stands for Moral and Ethical Systems, Accountable Governance, National Sovereignty, Accessible and Inclusive Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Valid and Legitimate Systems.

❖ It provides a five-pillar framework for the development and use of Artificial Intelligence in India.

❖ It focuses on fairness, transparency, accountability, data security, and public access to AI systems.

Delhi Declaration 2026

❖ The Delhi Declaration was formally adopted at the India AI Impact Summit 2026 held in New Delhi.

❖ The declaration outlines seven principles for Artificial Intelligence (AI) governance.

❖ It promotes trust, transparency, accountability, fairness, safety, sustainability, human dignity and innovation in AI systems.

- It supports data sovereignty, which means a country has control over data generated within its borders.

- It encourages integration of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) such as Aadhaar (Unique Identification Authority of India) and UPI (Unified Payments Interface).

- It also promotes Green AI, which focuses on reducing the energy consumption of AI systems.

Bharat VISTAAR initiative

- The Ministry of Agriculture has launched Phase-1 of Bharat VISTAAR in Jaipur, Rajasthan, during the AI Summit 2026.

- It is a multilingual Artificial Intelligence (AI) based conversational advisory system for farmers.

- Farmers can call the helpline number 155261 to receive instant answers.

- A Digital Farmer Identity Card will link services such as Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and the Soil Health Card Scheme.

- It provides the guidance on soil testing, seeds, fertilisers, irrigation, loans and insurance.

AI Summit Declaration outcomes

- 88 nations and international organisations endorsed the New Delhi AI Summit Declaration at the India AI Impact Summit 2026.

- The India AI Impact Summit 2026 secured over $250 billion in infrastructure investment commitments.

- India Inc announced deals exceeding $300 billion during the summit.

- The New Delhi Declaration on Artificial Intelligence (AI) describes commitments as voluntary and non-binding.

- The New Delhi Declaration supports the democratic diffusion of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) and proposes the Global AI Impact Commons as a database of AI use cases, along with the Trusted AI Commons as a repository of the tools, benchmarks, and best practices.

- $20 billion was committed for frontier deep technology research.

- Reliance Industries Ltd. announced ₹10 lakh crore investment in domestic Artificial Intelligence (AI).

- Google shared details of its $15 billion investment in data centre and Artificial Intelligence (AI) projects in India.

- OpenAI signed a pact with the Tata Group to lease 100 megawatts of data centre capacity.

- Anthropic signed an agreement with Infosys for Artificial Intelligence (AI) collaboration.

- Yotta Data Services announced a $2 billion investment in data centre infrastructure using Nvidia graphics processing units.

- Sarvam AI launched India's first domestically trained multi-billion parameter Large Language Model (LLM).

Indian Ocean Naval Symposium 2026

- India assumed the chairmanship of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) at the 9th Conclave of Chiefs held in Visakhapatnam.

- India took over the chair from Thailand after 16 years and will lead IONS for a two-year term.

- IONS was launched by the Indian Navy in 2008 to promote maritime cooperation among navies of the Indian Ocean Region.

- The Philippines was admitted as an Observer, and Oman joined the Working Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR).

- IONS currently has 25 member navies and 9 observer nations, and the chairmanship rotates every two years.

Rare-Earth Magnet Production

- The Union Minister for Mines announced that India will begin producing rare-earth permanent magnets in 2026 and will set up critical mineral parks in four States.

- The Union Cabinet approved a scheme in November 2025 to manufacture 6,000 metric tons per year with a financial outlay of ₹7,280 crore.

- Rare-earth permanent magnets are used in electric vehicles, renewable energy systems, electronics, aerospace and defence sectors.

- The government will establish critical mineral processing parks in Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Gujarat.

- The government also plans to recover critical minerals from old mobile phones and other electronic waste through recycling.

Bee Corridors Initiative

- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has launched India's first Bee Corridors initiative along National Highways.

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- ❖ The National Highways Authority of India will develop pollinator-friendly green corridors along highways.
- ❖ The project will plant native nectar-rich species such as Neem, Karanj, Mahua, Palash, Jamun and Siris.
- ❖ In 2026–27, NHAI plans to plant 40 lakh trees, with 60 per cent under the Bee Corridor initiative.
- ❖ The aim is to support pollination, increase biodiversity and promote sustainable infrastructure development.

SAHI and BODH Initiatives

- ❖ The union Health minister launched the Secure AI for Health Initiative (SAHI) and Benchmarking Open Data Platform for Health AI (BODH) at the India AI Impact Summit 2026 to strengthen India's health AI ecosystem.
- ❖ SAHI provides a national governance framework for responsible AI adoption in healthcare with a focus on accountability, privacy protection, and citizen-centric safeguards.
- ❖ BODH offers a structured platform to test, benchmark, and validate AI-based health solutions for safety, performance, and real-world readiness before deployment.
- ❖ The initiatives aim to ensure AI solutions are safe, reliable, evidence-based, and people-centric while strengthening public trust.
- ❖ They build on the National Health Policy 2017 and Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (2020) to create interoperable and scalable digital health infrastructure.

Rajaji Statue at Rashtrapati Bhavan

- ❖ The Prime Minister of India announced that the statue of Edwin Lutyens at Rashtrapati Bhavan will be replaced by that of C. Rajagopalachari.
- ❖ Chakravarti Rajagopalachari was the first and last Indian Governor-General of independent India.
- ❖ He was born on 10 December 1878 in Salem, Madras Province.
- ❖ He led the Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha in 1930 and authored the C.R. Formula in 1944 to address the constitutional deadlock.
- ❖ He was one of the first recipients of the Bharat Ratna in 1954.
- ❖ Edwin Lutyens was the British architect who designed Rashtrapati Bhavan and several major buildings in New Delhi.

Anti-Terror Policy 'PRAHAAR'

❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs has released India's first anti-terror policy, named PRAHAAR.

❖ PRAHAAR states that India faces terrorist threats through water, land, air, and cyber space.

❖ It highlights threats from cross-border terrorism, global groups like Al-Qaeda and Islamic State, and the misuse of drones and encrypted platforms.

❖ The policy covers protection of key sectors like power, railways, aviation, ports, defence, space, and atomic energy.

❖ It also focuses on legal action, de-radicalisation, cyber monitoring, and better coordination between States and central agencies.

Kerala (Alteration of Name) Bill, 2026

❖ The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal to change the name of Kerala to "Keralam."

❖ The proposal was based on a resolution passed unanimously by the Kerala Legislative Assembly.

❖ The President will refer the Kerala (Alteration of Name) Bill, 2026, to the State Legislature under Article 3 of the Constitution of India for its views.

❖ After receiving the views, the Union Government will seek the President's recommendation to introduce the Bill in Parliament.

❖ Article 3 of the Constitution empowers Parliament to alter the name of any existing State by law.

India's Russian Oil Imports – January 2026

❖ India remained the second-largest buyer of Russian fossil fuels in January 2026, according to data released by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA).

❖ India imported €2.2 billion ($2.59 billion) worth of Russian energy, with crude oil forming 78% of total purchases.

❖ India imported about 1.2 million barrels per day of Russian oil in January 2026.

❖ The European Union (EU) ban on oil products refined from Russian crude came into effect on January 21, 2026.

❖ Despite sanctions and price restrictions, Russia continued to remain a major supplier in India's energy basket, while China ranked as the largest buyer of Russian fossil fuels during the same period.

Mobile Highway Testing Labs

- ❖ The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has launched Mobile Quality Control Vans to monitor the quality of National Highways.

- ❖ The pilot project has started in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Karnataka, and Odisha.

- ❖ The Mobile Quality Control Vans are equipped with non-destructive testing tools such as ultrasonic pulse velocity meters and rebound hammers.

- ❖ The government is developing a National Highway Quality Monitoring Portal with real-time Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking.

- ❖ The initiative aims to improve the quality, safety, and durability of National Highway construction projects.

SUJVIKA - AI Biotech Data Portal

- ❖ The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) has launched "SUJVIKA", an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based Biotech Product Data Portal, on 25 February 2026, marking its 40th Foundation Day.

- ❖ It is a Trade Statistics Digital Intelligence Platform that provides structured data on biotechnology imports.

- ❖ The portal helps identify high-value and high-volume imports to support domestic biomanufacturing and reduce import dependency.

- ❖ The DBT was established in 1986 under the Ministry of Science and Technology.

- ❖ India's bioeconomy increased from nearly 10 billion United States Dollars (USD) in 2014 to about 165.7 billion USD in 2024.

INTERNATIONAL

Ban on Social Media for Under 15 – France

- ❖ France's National Assembly backed legislation to ban children under 15 years old from social media.

- ❖ If it is passed, young teenagers would not be able to use networks such as Snapchat, Instagram and TikTok.

- ❖ The French move is part of a growing trend of restricting social networks for children, triggered by increasing evidence of the damage they can cause to mental health.

- ❖ A similar law was passed in Australia late last year.

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4B Movement - South Korea

- ❖ Indians on the Internet rally to bring the 4B movement to India.
- ❖ 4B or "Four Nos" is a radical feminist movement that originated in South Korea.
- ❖ The name refers to its defining four tenets.
- ❖ All of which start with the Korean-language term bi, roughly meaning no.
- ❖ Its proponents do not date men, marry men, have sex with men, or have children with men.
- ❖ It has led to the lowest birth rate in the world and abstinence.
- ❖ The 4B movement is not a personal vendetta against the gender but a systemic opt-out from cultural norms, which prop up inequality.
- ❖ South Korea has the largest gender-based pay gap, nearly 31 per cent.

India–U.S. Trade Deal 2026

- ❖ India and the U.S. finalised a major trade understanding in 2026 to reduce tariffs and expand bilateral trade.
- ❖ India has agreed to import goods worth about 100 billion US dollars annually from the United States for the next five years.
- ❖ The United States has agreed to reduce tariffs on Indian goods from 50% to about 18%.
- ❖ Key imports from the United States will include energy products, aircraft and aircraft parts, technology goods, and selected agricultural products.
- ❖ India has kept sensitive sectors such as dairy, genetically modified (GM) crops, poultry, and cereals protected.
- ❖ The agreement aims to improve market access and strengthen economic and strategic ties between the two countries.

World Governments Summit 2026

- ❖ The World Governments Summit 2026 was held in Dubai, UAE.
- ❖ The theme of the Summit is "Global Governance and Effective Leadership."
- ❖ The summit aims to shape the future of governments by promoting international cooperation, innovation, and effective public administration.
- ❖ Focus areas include governance, artificial intelligence (AI), economy, healthcare, and public-sector innovation.

Social Media ban for Children Under 16

❖ Spain announced a nationwide ban on social media access for children under 16 years.

❖ Spain became the first country in Europe and the second country in the world, after Australia, to impose such a ban.

❖ The government will require mandatory age-verification systems on social media platforms.

BRICS Industrial Competency Centre

❖ India has joined the BRICS Centre for Industrial Competencies (BCIC) to strengthen manufacturing skills and industrial cooperation among BRICS countries.

❖ The initiative is implemented in partnership with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

❖ The National Productivity Council (NPC) has been designated as the India centre for BCIC activities.

❖ The aim is to promote Industry 4.0 skills, manufacturing productivity, and support Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

End of START treaty

❖ On February 5, the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) officially expired.

❖ It was marking the end of the last remaining bilateral agreement constraining the nuclear arsenals of the U.S. and Russia.

❖ The New START treaty emerged from a period of diplomatic reset between Washington and Moscow in the late 2000s.

❖ Its predecessor, START I, was signed in 1991 and expired in December 2009.

❖ Negotiations for a successor began in earnest in April 2009 after a meeting between then U.S. President Barack Obama and his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev in London.

❖ In April 2010, the two leaders signed the treaty in Prague.

❖ And, after a contentious ratification process in the U.S. Senate and approval by the Russian Federal Assembly, entered into force on February 5, 2011.

❖ The treaty was originally set to expire in 2021.

❖ Just days before the deadline, the Biden administration and the Kremlin agreed to a one-time, five-year extension, moving the expiration date to February 5, 2026.

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- ❖ It limited each side's nuclear arsenal to 1,550 deployed strategic warheads.

- ❖ And it was a reduction of nearly 30% from the previous limit set in 2002.

- ❖ Today, the legal constraints on the world's two largest nuclear arsenals have dissolved.

- ❖ For the first time since 1972, there are no legally binding limits on the number of strategic nuclear weapons the U.S. and Russia can deploy.

FORGE Initiative

- ❖ India backed the FORGE (Forum on Resource, Geostrategic Engagement) initiative at the Critical Minerals Ministerial in Washington DC.

- ❖ FORGE is a successor to the US-led Mineral Security Partnership and focuses on securing critical minerals.

- ❖ Discussions aimed to de-risk global supply chains and reduce overreliance on China for rare earths and minerals like lithium, cobalt, and nickel.

- ❖ India highlighted initiatives, including the National Critical Minerals Mission and Rare Earth Corridors.

UN 'Honour Roll' for 2026 - India

- ❖ India has paid $35.18 million to the United Nations (UN) Regular Budget for 2026.

- ❖ This makes India part of the 'honour roll' of 51 UN Member States who paid their dues in full and on time.

- ❖ The UN General Assembly approved a $3.45 billion regular budget for 2026.

- ❖ The UN Regular Budget covers core administrative costs, including the General Assembly, Security Council, Secretariat, and International Court of Justice.

- ❖ Member States' contributions are based on a formula considering economy size, income per capita, external debt, and development level.

- ❖ Countries owing two years of dues lose their vote in the UN General Assembly until payments are made.

Project Vault

- ❖ US President Donald Trump announced Project Vault, a $12-billion initiative to build a strategic stockpile of critical minerals.

- ❖ Project Vault is a public–private partnership to purchase and store critical minerals and rare earth elements.

- ❖ The programme includes $1.67 billion in private funding and up to $10 billion in support from the US Export-Import Bank.

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- ❖ Minerals targeted include cobalt, lithium, gallium, and rare earth elements, used in batteries, semiconductors, defence electronics, and jet engines.
- ❖ The initiative aims to reduce US dependence on China for mineral supply chains.

New Country Partnership Framework

- ❖ India and the World Bank Group announced the New Country Partnership Framework (NCPF) for 2026–2031 to support India's development aligned with the Viksit Bharat vision.
- ❖ The framework provides annual financing support of about $8–10 billion for five years.
- ❖ It focuses on sectors like infrastructure, energy, agribusiness, healthcare, tourism, and value-added manufacturing.
- ❖ It aims to create jobs, strengthen rural prosperity, urban development, and climate resilience.
- ❖ The partnership supports private-sector-led growth and skill development.

Global LEED Certifications

- ❖ India ranking second worldwide outside the United States in LEED-certified building space in 2025.
- ❖ The United States leads with over 50 million gross square metres (GSM) of certified space.
- ❖ China ranks first outside the US with 26 million GSM, followed by India with 16 million GSM.
- ❖ India showed higher growth in LEED Operations and Maintenance (O+M) certifications, focusing on improving the performance of existing buildings.
- ❖ LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design and is managed by the US Green Building Council (USGBC).

India–Seychelles Strategic Partnership

- ❖ India and Seychelles announced the SESEL Joint Vision during the visit of Seychelles President Patrick Herminie to India.
- ❖ SESEL stands for Sustainability, Economic Growth and Security through Enhanced Linkages.
- ❖ The vision focuses on maritime security, digital public infrastructure, climate action, trade, and development cooperation.

❖ India announced a USD 175 million economic package, including a Line of Credit and grant assistance.

❖ Seychelles supported India's permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

❖ Seychelles also agreed to join the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).

China's Panda Diplomacy Reversal

❖ China's giant pandas Xiao Xiao and Lei Lei were returned from Japan's Ueno Zoological Gardens to China in January 2026, ending over five decades of continuous panda presence in Japan.

❖ Their return marks the first time since 1972 that Japan has no giant pandas in the country.

❖ Xiao Xiao and Lei Lei were born in 2021 at Ueno Zoo but are owned by China under its long-standing panda diplomacy programme.

❖ The move was originally scheduled for February 2026 but was brought forward by agreement; pandas are usually sent back after the loan period ends.

❖ This departure ended a symbolic era of panda friendship between Japan and China and occurred amid strained bilateral relations.

India–UK Social Security Agreement 2026

❖ India and the United Kingdom signed a Social Security Agreement in New Delhi.

❖ The agreement aims to avoid double social security contributions for employees on temporary assignments in each other's country for up to 36 months.

❖ It supports the employee mobility and ensures continued social security coverage during short-term overseas postings.

❖ The agreement forms part of India's trade deal with the United Kingdom and will come into effect along with the Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA).

Arctic Sentry Mission

❖ The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) launched the "Arctic Sentry" mission to strengthen security in the Arctic region after tensions related to Greenland.

❖ The mission aims to coordinate the military activities of NATO countries in the Arctic under one command.

- Countries like Denmark, Germany, Finland, and the United Kingdom are contributing forces and defence support.
- The mission focuses on security concerns in the Arctic due to Russia's military activity and China's growing interest in the region.
- NATO countries are also discussing greater cooperation and a permanent security presence in the Arctic region.

Compact on Antimicrobial Resistance 2025

- The World Economic Forum launched the Davos Compact on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in 2025 to support global action against drug-resistant infections.
- The compact aims to mobilize public and private financing to reduce deaths caused by AMR.
- AMR occurs when bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites stop responding to antimicrobial medicines such as antibiotics and antivirals.
- The compact aims to help save more than 100 million lives globally by 2050.
- In India, about 6 lakh people die every year due to infections caused by antimicrobial resistance.

Bangladesh General Elections 2026

- Bangladesh held its 13th parliamentary election in February 2026, the first national election after the 2024 mass uprising that removed Sheikh Hasina's government.
- The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) won a landslide victory, securing a strong majority in Parliament.
- Tarique Rahman, chairman of the BNP and son of former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, is set to become Prime Minister after the election victory.
- Rahman will become the first male Prime Minister of Bangladesh in decades, following his mother Khaleda Zia, the country's first female PM
- She died in December 2025.
- His father, Gen Ziaur Rahman, took power in 1975 and became Bangladesh's President, before he was assassinated in 1981.
- The country had been governed by an interim administration led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus since the political crisis of 2024.
- In July 2025, Bangladesh approved a constitutional referendum known as the "July Charter."

- ❖ The referendum proposed major constitutional reforms to replace the 1972 Constitution framework.

- ❖ The Charter was drafted by the interim government's National Consensus Commission, drawing on recommendations from six reform commissions focused on the constitution, judiciary, electoral system, police, public administration and anti-corruption.

- ❖ Key charter reforms include increasing women's political representation, imposing prime ministerial term limits, enhancing presidential powers, expanding fundamental rights, and protecting judicial independence.

- ❖ The referendum will give people a chance to vote on reforms to state institutions.

- ❖ A referendum in direct democracy is a voting process where citizens directly accept or reject specific laws, constitutional amendments, or policies, rather than leaving decisions solely to elected representatives.

India–France Year of Innovation

- ❖ India and France launched the India-France Year of Innovation to promote cooperation in technology and research.

- ❖ The leaders discussed Artificial Intelligence (AI), defence cooperation, and digital technology partnerships.

- ❖ The programme encourages collaboration between start-ups, scientists, and technology companies of both countries.

- ❖ Defence cooperation includes the purchase of Rafale fighter jets made by Dassault Aviation.

- ❖ The India-France Strategic Partnership, started in 1998, continues to strengthen cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

- ❖ Both countries support safe, ethical, and human-centric Artificial Intelligence (AI) development.

UNEP FI Impact Centre

- ❖ The United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI) has launched the UNEP FI Impact Centre.

- ❖ The centre is a specialised platform to support impact management in financial institutions.

- ❖ The centre provides a holistic impact methodology and technical support tools to UNEP FI members.

- ❖ The initiative builds on UNEP FI's Positive Impact Finance framework introduced in 2017.

African Union Summit 2026

❖ The 39th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union was held in Addis Ababa, Capital of Ethiopia.

❖ Évariste Ndayishimiye, President of Burundi, was elected the Chairperson of the African Union for 2026, succeeding the outgoing Chairperson from Angola.

❖ The summit's theme for 2026 was "Ensuring sustainable water availability and safe sanitation systems to achieve the goals of Agenda 2063".

U.S. Supreme Court - Tariff Verdict

❖ The U.S. Supreme Court has struck down former President Donald Trump's earlier tariffs, after which a new 10% global import duty was announced.

❖ The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that the earlier tariffs exceeded presidential authority.

❖ A temporary 10% ad valorem import duty was imposed for 150 days from 24 February 2026.

❖ The duty was imposed under Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974.

❖ After this order, India's tariff rate was reduced from 18% to 10% under the Interim Trade Agreement framework.

❖ Some goods, such as critical minerals, energy products and pharmaceuticals, were exempted from the temporary duty.

India and France - Special Global Strategic Partnership

❖ India and France upgraded their ties to a "Special Global Strategic Partnership" during French President Emmanuel Macron's visit to India.

❖ India and France had earlier established a Strategic Partnership in 1998, which was India's first with a Western nation.

❖ The new framework covers defence, nuclear energy, space, climate, trade, technology and people-to-people relations.

❖ Both countries are implementing the Horizon 2047 Roadmap to align cooperation with 100 years of diplomatic relations.

❖ Civil nuclear cooperation includes the Jaitapur Nuclear Power Plant project in Maharashtra.

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Genocide Concerns of El-Fasher City

❖ The siege and capture of El-Fasher city in North Darfur, Sudan, has been reported to bear "hallmarks of genocide" following a United Nations-mandated independent fact-finding mission's investigation.

❖ El-Fasher was under an 18-month siege by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) during the ongoing Sudanese civil war, and the city fell to the RSF in late October 2025.

❖ The UN report documented systematic ethnically targeted killings, sexual violence and destruction of civilian infrastructure during and after the siege.

❖ The RSF is accused of targeting non-Arab ethnic groups such as the Zaghawa and Fur communities.

❖ Following the UN findings, the United States sanctioned three RSF commanders for their roles in atrocities linked to the siege and capture of El-Fasher.

Nigeria Mine Tragedy 2026

❖ At least 37 miners died from carbon monoxide poisoning at a mining site in the Kampani community, Wase area, Plateau State, central Nigeria.

❖ The incident occurred at a dormant lead mine where accumulated minerals and chemical residues in underground tunnels released lethal gases.

❖ Preliminary reports indicate a sudden release of toxic gases, including carbon monoxide, lead oxide, and sulphur compounds, in the poorly ventilated tunnels.

❖ These gases are colourless, odourless, and highly poisonous, causing miners to lose consciousness and die upon inhalation.

India–Brazil Strategic Partnership

❖ India and Brazil signed 10 agreements during the visit of Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva to New Delhi.

❖ India and Brazil decided to increase their trade to 20 billion US dollars within five years.

❖ Brazil is India's largest trading partner in Latin America.

❖ Both countries signed an agreement to cooperate in critical minerals and rare earth elements.

❖ They agreed to work together on Digital Public Infrastructure.

❖ They will cooperate in Artificial Intelligence and semiconductor technology.

❖ An agreement was signed in the field of health and pharmaceuticals.

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- ❖ Both countries agreed to support Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs – Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises).

- ❖ They agreed to share traditional knowledge systems.

- ❖ An agreement was signed for cooperation in mass communication and media.

- ❖ Both sides decided to strengthen defence cooperation and joint military exercises.

- ❖ India and Brazil work together in international groups such as BRICS, G20, International Solar Alliance, IBSA Dialogue Forum, and G4.

Poland's Exit from Ottawa Convention

- ❖ Poland withdrew from the Ottawa Convention (Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty).

- ❖ Poland has ratified the treaty in 2012 and destroyed its anti-personnel mine stockpiles in 2016.

- ❖ The decision is linked to security concerns near its borders with Russia (Kaliningrad) and Belarus after the Ukraine war.

- ❖ The Ottawa Convention (1997) bans the use, production, stockpiling, and transfer of anti-personnel mines.

- ❖ Anti-tank mines are regulated under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (1980), Amended Protocol II (1996).

- ❖ India, Russia, and the United States have not joined the Ottawa Convention.

Takeshima - Dokdo Island Dispute

- ❖ South Korea lodged a diplomatic protest against Japan's Takeshima Day event held on 22 February 2026 in Shimane Prefecture.

- ❖ The islands are known as Takeshima in Japan and Dokdo in South Korea.

- ❖ They are located in the Sea of Japan, which South Korea refers to as the East Sea.

- ❖ The territory consists of two main islets named Dongdo and Seodo, along with several smaller rocks.

- ❖ South Korea has maintained effective control over the islands since 1954 by deploying police personnel.

- ❖ Japan claims the islands as part of Shimane Prefecture and observes Takeshima Day every year on 22 February.

- ❖ The surrounding waters are rich in fisheries and are believed to contain significant reserves of gas hydrates.

ECONOMY

India–EU FTA

- ❖ The India-European Union free trade agreement (FTA) is widely termed as the "mother of all deals".

- ❖ India allowed European Union (EU) banks to open 15 branches in the country over a four-year period under the India–EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

- ❖ This agreement provides limited market access to EU banks while ensuring domestic financial stability.

- ❖ India allows 100 % foreign direct investment (FDI) in the insurance sector and 74 % FDI in banking services.

- ❖ The agreement includes safeguards for national security and measures to protect domestic industries from sudden import surges.

- ❖ India's intellectual property (IP) rights will remain unchanged under this agreement.

- ❖ A joint review of the agreement will be conducted every five years to monitor progress and make adjustments if needed.

RBI State of State Finances report – New update

- ❖ Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Puducherry consistently reduced their debt by up to 4 percentage points since 2021.

- ❖ These States reduced their outstanding liabilities as a share of GSDP while keeping development expenditure intact, signalling fiscal prudence without compromising on welfare.

- ❖ West Bengal has the highest share of debt in Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) at 39% as per the Fiscal 2025-26 Budget Estimates.

- ❖ Kerala cut its outstanding liabilities by 4.8 % points to an estimated 35.5% of its GSDP.

- ❖ Tamil Nadu's debt stood at 29.2% of the GSDP.

- ❖ Assam had a 28% of GSDP in debt, and Puducherry, a Union Territory, at 26% of GSDP in 2025-26.

- ❖ While the States reduced the share of debt in comparison with the size of their economies, the ratio continued to stay above the FRBM Act prescribed limit of 20%.

- ❖ The social sector and capital outlay in the five states either declined marginally or stayed consistently below the overall number.

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- ❖ All expenditures relating to revenue account, capital outlay and loans and advances are categorised into social services, economic services, and general services.

- ❖ While social and economic services constitute development expenditure, expenditure on general services is treated as non-development expenditure.

- ❖ Youthful States may harness their demographic dividend by strengthening human capital investments, intermediate States may balance growth priorities with early preparation for ageing, and ageing States may enhance revenue capacity alongside healthcare, pension and workforce policy reforms.

- ❖ While Kerala and Tamil Nadu have a fifth of the population above the age of 60.

SBI CHAKRA Initiative

- ❖ The SBI launched 'CHAKRA' on 31 January 2026 to strengthen financing of emerging industries.

- ❖ CHAKRA stands for Centre of Excellence for Sunrise Sectors.

- ❖ It aims to build institutional capability to assess and finance sunrise and high-technology sectors.

- ❖ SBI identified eight sunrise sectors, including renewable energy, electric mobility, green hydrogen, semiconductors, battery storage, decarbonisation, smart infrastructure, and data centres.

- ❖ These sectors are estimated to require ₹100 lakh crore capital over the next five years.

- ❖ CHAKRA will act as a knowledge and decision-support hub to convert complex technologies into bankable projects.

16th Finance Commission report

- ❖ The 16th Commission was chaired by Arvind Panagariya.

- ❖ The Finance Commission is a constitutional body (Article 280) that defines the financial relations between the Centre and the States.

- ❖ The 16th Finance Commission retained 41% tax devolution from the divisible pool to states.

- ❖ The divisible pool consists of gross tax revenue excluding the cost of collection, cesses, and surcharges

- ❖ Its recommendations will apply from 2026-27 to 2030-31.

- ❖ A major innovation is the introduction of State GDP contribution as a new parameter in the horizontal devolution formula, with a 10% weight.

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- ❖ It argued that states already account for over two-thirds of total non-debt public revenues, and increasing their share further would constrain the Union government's ability to meet national obligations.

- ❖ This decision reflects continuity with the 15th Finance Commission

- ❖ It removed the 2.5% weight for tax effort, increased the population weight by 2.5 percentage points.

- ❖ And it reduced the weights for area, demographic performance, and per capita GSDP distance.

- ❖ As a result, industrialized and faster-growing states like Karnataka, Kerala, Gujarat and Maharashtra gained higher shares, while more populous and poorer states such as Uttar Pradesh and Bihar saw relative declines.

- ❖ For the first time, the Commission recommended zero Revenue Deficit Grants (RDGs).

- ❖ While cutting RDGs, the Commission earmarked ₹7.91 trillion for rural and urban local bodies over five years, with a 60:40 rural–urban split, focusing on water, sanitation and urban infrastructure.

- ❖ It also recommended ₹2.04 trillion for State Disaster Response and Mitigation Funds and ₹79,000 crore for national disaster funds, using a revamped disaster risk index.

New Consumer Price Index Series

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released details of a new Consumer Price Index (CPI) series.

- ❖ The base year of CPI has been revised from 2011–12 to 2023–24.

- ❖ CPI means an index used to measure retail inflation based on changes in prices paid by consumers.

- ❖ The weight of food and beverages has been reduced from about 46% to about 37% in the new series.

- ❖ The revision is based on the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey 2023–24.

- ❖ CPI is the main inflation indicator used by the RBI for monetary policy decisions.

Nationwide Migration Survey

- ❖ The National Statistics Office (NSO) will conduct a nationwide Migration Survey from July 2026 to June 2027.

- ❖ The survey will be conducted by NSO under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

- The survey will collect data on rural–urban, inter-state, seasonal, and return migration, and reasons for migration.
- It will also cover the employment profile of migrants to support planning in housing, jobs, transport, and social security.
- Earlier migration data were collected through the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2020–21 and Multiple Indicator Survey 2020–21.

16th Finance Commission recommendations

Per Capita GSDP Distance (Income Distance)

- The 16th FC has defined income distance as the difference between the per capita GSDP of a state and the average of the per capita GSDP of the top three large states with the highest per capita GSDP.
- Per capita GSDP has been computed as the average over the period 2018-19 and 2023-24, excluding the pandemic year of 2020-21.
- States with a lower per capita GSDP will receive a higher share on this parameter, to maintain equity among states.

Population

- On this parameter, the share in devolution is determined based on the share in the population as per the 2011 Census.

Demographic Performance

- The 15th FC had introduced this parameter to award states for controlling population on the basis of Total Fertility Rate (TFR).
- The 16th FC has redefined this to account for population growth between 1971 and 2011 instead of relying on change in TFR.
- States with lower population growth will have a higher share under this parameter.

Forest

- The 16th FC has assigned weightage to both the share of a state in the overall forest area, and its share in the increase in overall forest area between 2015 and 2023.
- Further, it has also considered open forests in arriving at the total forest area.
- In contrast, the 15th FC had considered only dense and moderately dense forests, and defined the parameter only in terms of share in the overall forest area.

Contribution to GDP

- The 16th FC has introduced this parameter to account for the contribution to national GDP.

- ❖ This replaces the tax and fiscal efforts parameter used by the 15th FC which rewarded states with a higher tax collection efficiency.
- ❖ Contribution to GDP by a state is calculated as the squared root of its GSDP to the sum of squared root of GSDP of all states.
- ❖ GSDP of each state has been measured as the average nominal GSDP between 2018-19 and 2023-24 (excluding the pandemic year of 2020-21).

Grants-in-aid

- ❖ The 16th FC has recommended grants worth Rs 9.47 lakh crore over the five-year period.
- ❖ These comprise grants for:
  - o Urban and rural local bodies, and
  - o Disaster management.
- ❖ The 16th FC has discontinued the following grants recommended by the 15th FC:
  - o Revenue deficit grants,
  - o Sector-specific grants, and
  - o State -specific grants.

Grants for local bodies

- ❖ The 16th FC has recommended grants worth Rs 4.4 lakh crore and Rs 3.6 lakh crore for rural and urban local bodies, respectively.
- ❖ Total Local Body Grants will be ₹7,91,493 crore
- ❖ These grants are divided into basic (80%) and performance-based (20%) components.
- ❖ Special Infrastructure Grants and Urbanisation Premium Grants have also been recommended for urban local bodies.
- ❖ All local body grants will be made available upon fulfilment of three entry-level criteria:
  - o Constitution of the local bodies as per the Constitution,
  - o Publication of provisional and audited accounts of the local bodies in the public domain, and
  - o Timely constitution of the State Finance Commission.

Basic grants

- ❖ 50% of the basic grant will be untied and the rest 50% will be tied to:
  - o Sanitation and solid waste management, and/or
  - o Water management.

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Performance grants

- ❖ These grants for local bodies are further divided into state performance grants and local body performance grants.
- ❖ State performance grants will be made available upon meeting a minimum benchmark for transfers to local bodies from their own resources.
- ❖ Local body performance grants are linked to achievement of minimum targets specified by the Commission for own source revenue growth.

Special infrastructure grants

- ❖ This component will be tied to the development of a comprehensive wastewater management system in cities with population between 1040 lakh as per the 2011 census.
- ❖ Grants worth Rs 56,100 crore have been recommended over five years.

Urbanisation premium grant

- ❖ These will be released to states as a one-time grant for:
  - o Merger of peri-urban villages into adjoining urban local body areas and
  - o Formulation of a Rural to Urban Transition Policy. Rs 10,000 crore have been recommended under the urbanisation premium component.

Disaster management grants

- ❖ The Commission has recommended disaster management corpus of Rs 2,04,401 crore for State Disaster Relief and Management Funds (SDRF and SDMF).
- ❖ The cost-sharing pattern between the centre and states is recommended to be:
  - o 90:10 for north-eastern and Himalayan states, and
  - o 75:25 for all other states.
- ❖ Centre's share in total will be Rs 1,55,916 crore.
- ❖ It has recommended that heatwaves and lightning strikes be included in India's list of nationally notified disasters.
- ❖ Nationally Notified Disasters are specific disaster categories that are recognised under the Disaster Management Act, 2005.
- ❖ It is for the purpose of relief, response, and funding support from government disaster funds (State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF))
- ❖ Currently it includes cyclones, droughts, earthquakes, fires, floods, tsunamis, hailstorms, landslides, avalanches, cloudbursts, pest infestations, frost and cold waves.

Indian Labour Shift

- The United Arab Emirates (UAE) became the largest overseas destination for Indian blue-collar workers in 2025, surpassing Saudi Arabia.
- In 2025, 200,686 Indian workers migrated to the UAE, compared with 136,812 to Saudi Arabia.
- This reverses the earlier pattern when Saudi Arabia led with 167,598 workers in 2024.
- Overall, 449,110 Indian workers moved to 11 major labour-importing countries in 2025.
- Qatar saw a decline in Indian workers, while Oman recorded steady growth to 29,158 in 2025.
- The UAE's growth is driven by infrastructure projects, higher wages, tax-free income, and worker-friendly policies.

Decline in Bank NPAs

- India's gross NPAs (Non-Performing Assets) of scheduled commercial banks fell to a historic low of 2.15% in September 2025.
- NPAs are loans where repayment is overdue for more than 90 days.
- Public Sector Banks (PSBs) recorded 2.50% NPAs, while private sector banks recorded 1.73% NPAs.
- Foreign banks in India reported the lowest NPA level at 0.8%.

New GDP, CPI, and IIP Series

- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) announced a revision of the base year for key economic indicators.
- Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Index of Industrial Production (IIP) will have a new base year of 2022-23, while the Consumer Price Index (CPI) base year is revised to 2024.
- The updated series are scheduled for release as follows: CPI – 12 February 2026, GDP – 27 February 2026, IIP – 28 May 2026.
- The revision aims to improve the accuracy, transparency, relevance, and international comparability of India's official statistics.

New CPI Series based Retail Inflation

- India's retail inflation was recorded at 2.75% in January 2026 under the new Consumer Price Index (CPI) series (Base: 2024 = 100).

- The data was released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) and is the first inflation estimate under the revised CPI framework.
- The new CPI series replaces the earlier base year of 2012 and is based on the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (2023–24).
- The CPI basket now includes 358 weighted items (earlier 299), reflecting changing consumption patterns and the growing share of services.
- Newly added items include online streaming services, rural housing, cleaner fuels (CNG, PNG), exercise equipment, and value-added dairy products.

Base Year of Merchandise Trade Indices

- The Government of India revised the base year of India's merchandise trade indices from 2012–13 to 2022–23.
- The update was done by the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCI&S) to improve relevance, reliability, and analytical usefulness for policymakers, researchers, and industry stakeholders.
- The revision reflects structural changes in India's economy, including changes in commodity composition, export diversification, and new trade partnerships.
- The committee, chaired by Professor Nachiketa Chattopadhyay of the Indian Statistical Institute, recommended the update.
- The new indices include updated commodity coverage, revised weighting based on 2022–23 trade values, alignment with international trade classifications, and expanded terms of trade analysis (gross, net, and income terms).

India's Forex Reserves – February 2026

- India's foreign exchange reserves rose to a record 725.727 billion US dollars for the week ended 13 February 2026, according to data released by the Reserve Bank of India.
- The reserves increased by 8.663 billion US dollars in one week.
- Foreign Currency Assets (FCA) are the largest component at 573.603 billion US dollars.
- Gold reserves increased to 128.466 billion US dollars.
- Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) stood at 18.924 billion US dollars.
- FCA includes holdings in US Dollar, Euro, Japanese Yen, and British Pound.
- SDRs are international reserve assets created by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

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GSDP Rankings of Indian States FY 2025

❖ India's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) rankings for the financial year 2025 have been released, showing the richest and poorest states and Union Territories (UTs).

❖ GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product) measures the total economic output of a state or UT.

❖ Maharashtra is the richest state with a GSDP of ₹45.32 lakh crore, driven by finance, manufacturing, and services.

❖ Tamil Nadu is second with a GSDP of ₹31.19 lakh crore, led by automobiles, manufacturing, and information technology (IT).

❖ Uttar Pradesh is third with a GSDP of ₹29.78 lakh crore, supported by infrastructure, agriculture, and industry.

❖ Arunachal Pradesh has the smallest GSDP at ₹4,423 crore, followed by Tripura at ₹8,968 crore and Himachal Pradesh at ₹23,169 crore.

❖ Southern states dominate the top rankings, while northeastern states and smaller UTs have lower GSDP due to smaller populations and geography.

❖ India's overall real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is projected at 7.4% for FY 2024–25.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Doomsday Clock 2026 Update

❖ The Atomic Scientists set the Doomsday Clock at 85 seconds to midnight on January 27, 2026, the closest it has ever been.

❖ The clock symbolizes humanity's proximity to global catastrophe from nuclear war, climate change, and disruptive technologies like artificial intelligence (AI).

❖ The rising nuclear threats, record greenhouse gas emissions, and declining international cooperation are cited as major causes.

❖ The clock was first set in 1947 at seven minutes to midnight after World War II.

SFDR Missile Technology Test

❖ The DRDO successfully demonstrated Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) missile technology.

❖ SFDR (Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet) is a propulsion technology used in long-range air-to-air missiles.

❖ The missile first used a ground booster, and then the ramjet engine ignited during flight.

Artificial Intelligence Model - ExoMiner++

❖ The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) released ExoMiner++, an open-source artificial intelligence model to detect exoplanets.

❖ ExoMiner++ is a deep-learning model developed by NASA to identify planets outside the solar system.

❖ It works by analysing changes in a star's brightness when a planet passes in front of it.

❖ The model helps distinguish real planets from false signals such as binary stars or background objects.

Artificial Intelligence Tool - AlphaGenome

❖ Google DeepMind launched AlphaGenome, an artificial intelligence tool that predicts how genetic mutations affect gene regulation and human diseases.

❖ AlphaGenome analyses long DNA sequences to study the impact of genetic variations.

❖ It mainly focuses on non-coding DNA regions, which form about 98% of the human genome.

❖ The tool can analyse up to one million DNA base pairs at once.

❖ It helps scientists study gene expression, RNA splicing, and mutation-related diseases.

Solar Radiation Storm

❖ A rare red aurora was observed over Hanle, Ladakh, after a powerful solar flare triggered a geomagnetic storm.

❖ The event followed an X-class solar flare, the strongest type of solar eruption.

❖ The flare produced a Coronal Mass Ejection (CME) that struck Earth's magnetosphere, causing a G4-level geomagnetic storm (severe).

❖ The red aurora occurred due to excited oxygen atoms at very high altitudes (above 300 km).

❖ Data from the Aditya-L1 mission showed strong compression of Earth's magnetosphere during the storm.

❖ Solar radiation storms can disrupt satellites, GPS, communication systems, and power grids.

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MoM-z14

- ❖ The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) discovered the most distant galaxy named MoM-z14.
- ❖ MoM-z14 existed about 280 million years after the Big Bang.
- ❖ The galaxy's light travelled more than 13.5 billion years to reach Earth.
- ❖ Scientists found high nitrogen levels, indicating early star formation in the galaxy.

Helix Nebula

- ❖ The James Webb Space Telescope captured detailed images of the Helix Nebula in space.
- ❖ The telescope observes gas and dust around a dying star.
- ❖ The Helix Nebula formed when a star reached the final stage of its life and released material into space.
- ❖ A white dwarf, which is the remaining core of the dead star, lies at the centre of the nebula.
- ❖ The released gas, dust, and molecules may later help in the formation of new stars and planets.

AI Navigation Test on Mars

- ❖ NASA's Perseverance rover completed the first Mars drive planned using artificial intelligence.
- ❖ Artificial intelligence models analysed orbital images and terrain data to create safe driving routes.
- ❖ Route planning was traditionally done by engineers at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.
- ❖ The project shows how artificial intelligence can support future space exploration missions.

Orbital Tracking - Azista Satellite

- ❖ Azista Space achieved India's first in-orbit imaging ("in-orbit snooping") capability by capturing images of the International Space Station (ISS) using an indigenous satellite.
- ❖ The demonstration was done using the ABA First Runner (AFR) satellite.
- ❖ The satellite was launched in June 2023 on a Falcon 9 rocket by SpaceX.
- ❖ AFR is an 80-kg Earth observation satellite built by Azista Space.
- ❖ The imaging was done from about 250–300 km distance in Low Earth Orbit (LEO).

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Mons Mouton Mountain

- ❖ ISRO's Space Applications Centre identified a safe landing site near Mons Mouton on the Moon for Chandrayaan-4.
- ❖ Mons Mouton is a large, flat-topped mountain about 160 km from the Moon's south pole.
- ❖ It lies near the rim of the South Pole–Aitken (SPA) Basin, one of the largest and oldest impact basins.
- ❖ The mountain is 100 km wide and rises 6,000 m above the surrounding terrain with rugged craters and boulders.
- ❖ Some areas receive near-continuous sunlight while others remain in permanent shadow.

iLive Connect Healthcare Platform

- ❖ iLive Connect was introduced as the world's first doctor-led Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered home healthcare ecosystem.
- ❖ It combines medical consultation, remote patient monitoring, and home-based healthcare services on one digital platform.
- ❖ The ecosystem uses Artificial Intelligence to support doctors in diagnosis, health tracking, and personalized care planning.
- ❖ The platform focuses on continuous care for patients at home, especially elderly and chronic-disease patients.
- ❖ It aims to improve accessibility, early detection of health issues, and coordinated healthcare delivery.

Haven-1 Private Space Station

- ❖ Haven-1 is expected to become the world's first private space station, planned for launch in 2027.
- ❖ Haven-1 is being developed by Vast Space, a United States-based private space company.
- ❖ It will be launched into Low Earth Orbit (LEO) using the Falcon 9 rocket of SpaceX.
- ❖ This project supports the transition after the International Space Station (ISS) is planned to retire around 2030.

Single-Unit Solar Storage Technology

- ❖ Indian scientists developed a device that can capture and store solar energy in one unit.

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❖ It is a photo-rechargeable supercapacitor, which combines solar energy harvesting and storage in a single system.

❖ It uses nickel–cobalt oxide ($NiCo_2O_4$) nanowires grown on nickel foam to absorb sunlight and store electricity.

❖ The device provides about 1.2-volt stable output and retains around 88% capacitance after 1,000 cycles.

Copernicus Sentinel-2 Mission

❖ Recently, the European Space Agency (ESA) has released a high-resolution image of the 2026 Winter Olympic venues in northern Italy using the Copernicus Sentinel-2 mission.

❖ Copernicus Sentinel-2 is an Earth observation satellite mission developed by the ESA under the Copernicus Programme of the European Union (EU).

❖ The mission aims to monitor changes in land-surface conditions on Earth.

❖ It consists of two polar-orbiting satellites in a sun-synchronous orbit providing high-resolution multispectral images.

❖ The data is used for agriculture, ecosystem monitoring, disaster management, water-quality assessment, and climate-related studies.

Sansha Yongle Blue Hole

❖ Scientists released detailed findings on the Sansha Yongle Blue Hole in the South China Sea.

❖ The Sansha Yongle Blue Hole, also called Dragon Hole, has a confirmed depth of 301.19 metres.

❖ It was once the world's deepest blue hole before a deeper site was confirmed in Mexico.

❖ A remotely operated vehicle created its first complete three-dimensional map in 2017.

❖ Rock ledges inside the hole show past sea level changes during colder climatic periods.

❖ Oxygen levels drop sharply below about 100 metres, and hydrogen sulphide is present in deeper layers.

Global Map of Continental Mantle Earthquakes

❖ Scientists from Stanford University created the first global map of rare continental mantle earthquakes.

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❖ Mantle earthquakes occur deep inside the Earth's mantle, usually more than 80 kilometres below the crust.

❖ Researchers analysed data from over 46,000 earthquakes recorded since 1990 and identified 459 continental mantle earthquakes.

❖ These deep earthquakes were mainly found beneath the Himalayas and the Bering Strait.

❖ Scientists used Sn and Lg seismic waves to distinguish mantle earthquakes from crustal earthquakes.

BIRAC–RDI Fund for Biotechnology

❖ The Centre announced the first national call for the BIRAC–RDI (Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council–Research, Development and Innovation) Fund.

❖ The ₹2,000 crore fund is part of the ₹1 lakh crore RDI initiative approved by the Union Cabinet in July 2025 and launched in November 2025.

❖ It is implemented under the Anusandhan National Research Foundation and anchored by the Department of Science and Technology.

First Remote Ultrasound in Antarctica

❖ The AIIMS, New Delhi, conducted the first remote real-time ultrasound on a patient at India's Maitri research station in Antarctica.

❖ The tele-robotic system allows specialists to operate ultrasound equipment remotely.

❖ The tele-robotic system was first used during the Covid-19 pandemic and adapted for extreme Antarctic conditions.

India's Sovereign AI Models

❖ The Artificial Intelligence (AI) models were highlighted at the India AI Impact Summit 2026.

❖ SarvamAI, a Bengaluru-based startup, unveiled two AI language models designed for multilingual and voice-based use across 22 Indian languages.

❖ Gnani.ai has launched Vachana Text-to-Speech (TTS) and Speech-to-Text (STT) models, which are trained on more than one million hours of Indian voice data.

❖ BharatGen unveiled PARAM 2 17B, a 17-billion-parameter multilingual Mixture-of-Experts (MoE) foundational model.

AI Infrastructure Project

- ❖ Google has unveiled the America-India Connect project to strengthen digital and Artificial Intelligence (AI) infrastructure between the United States and India.

- ❖ The project is anchored by Google's five-year 15 billion US dollar investment in AI infrastructure in India.

- ❖ It includes a new international subsea cable gateway in Visakhapatnam and new subsea cable routes connecting India to Singapore, South Africa, and Australia.

- ❖ Four new fiber-optic routes will improve network connectivity between the United States, India, and countries in the Southern Hemisphere.

- ❖ The project will make Visakhapatnam a major global subsea hub and improve the resilience and reliability of India's digital network.

Global AI for Energy Mission

- ❖ The International Solar Alliance (ISA) launched the Global AI-for-Energy Mission at the India AI Impact Summit 2026 in New Delhi.

- ❖ The mission aims to integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI) into clean energy systems across more than 120 member countries.

- ❖ It is launched in partnership with India's Ministry of Power and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

- ❖ The objective is to improve grid stability, increase renewable energy use, and ensure affordable and reliable electricity access in developing countries.

X8.3 Solar Flare

- ❖ The Sun produced an X8.3 solar flare on 1 February 2026, the strongest solar flare recorded this year.

- ❖ Solar flares are sudden bursts of energy from the Sun caused by changes in its magnetic field.

- ❖ Flares are classified as A, B, C, M and X, with X being the most powerful category.

- ❖ The X8.3 flare disrupted radio communication over parts of the South Pacific, eastern Australia and New Zealand.

- ❖ The flare originated from a sunspot group named Region 4366, which is showing unstable magnetic activity.

Lead Free Photodetector

- ❖ Indian researchers have developed novel lead-free and eco-friendly photo detector in February 2026.

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❖ The device was developed by the International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials, Hyderabad, in collaboration with IIT Hyderabad under the Department of Science and Technology.

❖ It is based on a double perovskite material called Cs2AgBiBr6 and uses low-cost carbon electrodes.

❖ The photodetector is lead free, self-powered, and shows a strong response to visible light.

❖ It retains more than 90 % performance even after 60 days and is made using a one-step coating method at room temperature.

❖ It can be used in consumer electronics, security systems, industrial monitoring and biomedical imaging.

Organic Molecules in Interstellar Comet

❖ NASA's SPHEREx space telescope detected organic molecules in interstellar comet 3I/ATLAS.

❖ SPHEREx observed the comet in December 2025 using infrared wavelengths.

❖ Scientists detected organic molecules such as methanol, methane and cyanide.

❖ The comet showed increased brightness after passing closest to the Sun due to sublimation.

❖ Comet 3I/ATLAS was discovered in July 2025 and confirmed as an interstellar object.

❖ SPHEREx was launched in March 2025 to study the universe in 102 infrared wavelengths.

Phonon Heat Transport

❖ Recently, Indian researchers discovered a rare particle-to-wave-like phonon heat transport mechanism in Tl_2AgI_3.

❖ Tl_2AgI_3 is a zero-dimensional inorganic metal halide crystal made of Thallium (Tl), Silver (Ag), and Iodine (I).

❖ It was developed by the researchers at Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research.

❖ Due to Pauling's third rule–driven cation–cation repulsion, the structure becomes distorted and traps phonons.

❖ The material shows ultralow thermal conductivity and can be used in thermal insulators and thermoelectric materials.

Revision of Jupiter Size

- ❖ NASA revised Jupiter's size using data from the Juno mission.

- ❖ Jupiter's equatorial diameter is 88,841 miles (142,976 kilometres), about 5 miles smaller than earlier estimates.

- ❖ Its polar diameter is 83,067 miles (133,684 kilometres), about 15 miles smaller than previous data.

- ❖ The findings show Jupiter is about 7% wider at the equator than at the poles due to rapid rotation.

- ❖ Juno has been orbiting Jupiter since 2016 and provides precise data on its structure.

BioE3 Policy update

- ❖ Bio-based chemicals and enzymes have been identified as a priority area under the BioE3 Policy of the Department of Biotechnology.

- ❖ Bio-based chemicals are industrial chemicals produced from biological sources such as sugarcane, corn, starch, and biomass residues.

- ❖ Enzymes are biological catalysts used in industries such as detergents, food processing, pharmaceuticals, textiles, and paper.

- ❖ The BioE3 Policy (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment and Employment) promotes high-performance biomanufacturing in India.

- ❖ India imported about 479.8 million USD worth of acetic acid in 2023, indicating import dependence.

- ❖ The policy aims to reduce dependence on petrochemicals and promote sustainable industrial growth.

ENVIRONMENT

2 New Ramsar sites in India

- ❖ Patna Bird Sanctuary in Etah district, Uttar Pradesh and Chhari-Dhand in Kutch district of Gujarat have been added to India's Ramsar network.

- ❖ It will take India's total to 98.

- ❖ India is one of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands, known as the Ramsar Convention, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971.

- ❖ India became a signatory to the convention on 1st February 1982.

- ❖ Gujarat has the highest wetland area in India, holding over 20% of the country's total wetlands.

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- Tamil Nadu (20) boasts the highest number of Ramsar Sites.
- According to the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules of 2017, the Indian government's definition of wetlands does not include river channels, paddy fields, or other areas utilized for commercial activities.

Southward Polar Vortex – US

- A severe winter storm hit the eastern two-thirds of the United States in January 2026, spreading over 2,000 miles from New Mexico and Texas to New England.
- US President has approved federal emergency declarations for nearly 20 states and the District of Columbia.
- The storm was caused by the southward expansion of the polar vortex, bringing Arctic air and extreme cold, with wind chills reaching -50°F (-45°C).
- Heavy snowfall affected the Ohio Valley to the Northeast.
- Catastrophic ice accumulation hit the Lower Mississippi Valley, Southeast, and Mid-Atlantic regions.

Sunabeda Wildlife Sanctuary - Maoist free status

- Sunabeda Wildlife Sanctuary is located in Odisha's Nuapada district.
- It was recently declared Maoist-free status.
- It is also witnessing a significant rise in leopard presence.
- Officials claim that over 70 leopards may inhabit the sanctuary
- It is also a proposed tiger reserve.
- A 2016 state tiger census recorded four tigers.
- But the latest national report released in July last year found none.
- The sanctuary forms the catchment area of the Jonk River, a tributary of the Mahanadi.
- The sanctuary is also the source of the rivers of Sunder and Indra.

USA and Paris Climate Agreement

- The United States is officially out of the Paris Agreement under the administration of President Donald Trump.
- It was making it the only country to quit the historic climate pact twice.
- It makes the U.S. the only country to abandon the global pact, having previously rejoined in 2021 under President Biden after an initial 2017 withdrawal.

- ❖ The United States is the world's second biggest greenhouse gas emitter after China.
- ❖ The only other UN member states outside the Paris agreement are Iran, Libya and Yemen.
- ❖ The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty adopted in 2015 (COP21) by 195 parties to limit global warming to well below 2∘C —ideally 1.5∘C —above pre-industrial levels.
- ❖ It requires countries to submit increasingly ambitious, voluntary climate plans known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) every five years.
- ❖ The 1.5 °C target is generally accepted to refer to a 20-year average, rather than a single year.

Rare Snowfall in Saudi Arabia

- ❖ The Al-Jawf region of Saudi Arabia recorded snowfall in its interior desert areas for the first time in recorded history in late 2025.
- ❖ The snowfall occurred around November–December 2025 after heavy rain and hail.
- ❖ The event was caused by a cold weather system moving from the Mediterranean region.
- ❖ Temperatures dropped close to 0 degrees Celsius, allowing snow to settle on desert sand.
- ❖ Snow was reported in parts of Al-Jawf, Al-Nafūd desert, and areas near the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- ❖ Northern highland regions like Tabuk receive winter snow, but snowfall in Al-Jawf interior deserts is extremely rare.

Indian Peacock in Manali

- ❖ A pair of peacocks was spotted at about 6,000 ft near Manali in Himachal Pradesh, which is unusual for this species.
- ❖ Peacocks belong to the pheasant family (Phasianidae).
- ❖ The Indian or Blue Peacock (Pavo cristatus) is the National Bird of India.
- ❖ Peacocks usually live in warm forests, grasslands, and agricultural areas in plains and low hills, normally below about 1,000–1,500 metres.
- ❖ According to the IUCN, it is listed as Least Concern.

Faunal Survey in Karimpuzha Wildlife Sanctuary

❖ A faunal survey conducted in Karimpuzha Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala, recorded several new species in the sanctuary.

❖ The survey documented 171 bird species, 177 butterfly species, and 42 odonate species, with many recorded for the first time.

❖ With new additions, the sanctuary now has 247 bird species, 223 butterfly species, and 63 odonate species recorded.

❖ Karimpuzha Wildlife Sanctuary, declared in 2020 under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, on the western slopes of the Nilgiris.

❖ The sanctuary is named after the Karimpuzha River, a tributary of the Chaliyar River.

Population of Dugongs in Tamil Nadu

❖ The dugong population in Tamil Nadu has been estimated at 270 individuals.

❖ Palk Bay and the Gulf of Mannar now represent the largest viable dugong population in India.

❖ A survey conducted by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) in collaboration with the Tamil Nadu Forest Department.

❖ It found 158 dugongs in Palk Bay and 112 dugongs in the Gulf of Mannar.

❖ This increase is largely attributed to the Dugong Recovery Programme by WII, supported through the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA).

❖ The Dugong Conservation Reserve in Palk Bay, covering 448 square kilometres of core habitat, has also been notified.

❖ The survey was UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle)-based, following standardised protocols, and is the first systematic aerial population estimate in the region.

❖ Earlier estimates in 2012-2013, based on interviews, suggested about 175 dugongs.

❖ Surveys were conducted along fixed 3 km transects, limited by drone endurance, battery life, and coastal safety; some dugongs moving to deeper waters may not have been counted.

Sea Turtle Conservation Centre

❖ The foundation stone for Tamil Nadu's first Sea Turtle Conservation Centre was laid at Guindy in Chennai.

- The Centre of Excellence will be established under the World Bank-aided Tamil Nadu Sustainably Harnessing Ocean Resources and Blue Economy (TN-SHORE) project at a cost of ₹14.50 crore.

- The centre aims to strengthen scientific research, monitoring, training, and coordination for sea turtle conservation.

- Tamil Nadu is the only State in India that has five of the world's six sea turtle species.

- The coasts of Chennai, Tiruvallur, Chengalpattu, Nagapattinam, and Cuddalore witness major sea turtle nesting activity every year.

- The initiative focuses on protecting marine turtles, especially the endangered Olive Ridley sea turtle.

JALAJ Livelihood Centres

- The Union Minister of Jal Shakti inaugurated 25 JALAJ Livelihood Centres.

- These are a joint initiative of Namami Gange Mission, followed by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII).

- The initiative aims to link river conservation with sustainable livelihoods in the Ganga River basin.

- The centres are based on the circular economy model, training local people in biodiversity conservation and livelihood skills.

- The programme promotes community participation, women's involvement, and aquatic biodiversity conservation.

India's Second Comprehensive Bird Atlas

- Goa became the second Indian state, after Kerala, to publish a state-level Bird Atlas.

- The atlas was released during the 9th Bird Festival of Goa at Valpoi.

- It maps bird distribution using grid-based surveys and helps track changes in bird populations over time.

- The initiative supports biodiversity conservation, citizen science, and evidence-based policymaking.

- A companion publication, Birds of Goa: Konkani Nomenclature – Olakh Suknayanchi, documents bird names in the local Konkani language.

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Lonar Meteor Crater Lake Ecosystem

❖ Rising freshwater inflow is disturbing the ecological balance of Lonar Meteor Crater Lake in Maharashtra.

❖ Lonar Lake, in Buldhana district of Maharashtra, is India's only basaltic meteor impact crater lake.

❖ The lake was formed about 50,000 years ago when a meteorite struck the Deccan basalt region.

❖ It is a Ramsar Wetland known for its saline and alkaline water ecosystem.

❖ Rainfall and deep borewells nearby are increasing freshwater inflow, changing the lake's chemical composition.

❖ This is reducing salinity and affecting microorganisms and biodiversity in the lake.

New Mushroom Species

❖ Researchers discovered a new mushroom species named Hemileccinum indicum in the Indian Himalayas.

❖ The species was discovered in oak forests of Bageshwar district, Uttarakhand, in high-altitude Himalayan regions.

❖ It is the first recorded occurrence of the genus Hemileccinum in India.

❖ The mushroom is a bolete fungus that forms ectomycorrhizal (symbiotic association between fungi and plant roots) relationships with oak trees.

Glacier Hazard Prediction Study

❖ IIT Guwahati has developed a new method to predict glacial hazards in the Eastern Himalayas.

❖ The study identified 492 potential sites where glacial lakes may form in the future.

❖ These lakes can lead to Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs), which cause sudden flooding.

❖ The research helps improve early warning systems and disaster preparedness in the Himalayan regions.

New Marine Worm Species

❖ Researchers discovered two new marine worm species along the West Bengal coast in the northern Bay of Bengal.

❖ The species are Namalycastis solenotognatha and Nereis dhritiae.

- Nereis dhritiae is named after Dhriti Banerjee, Director of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI).

- These nereidid (polychaete) worms help in nutrient cycling and sediment aeration.

World's Longest Snake - Malayopython reticulatus

- A reticulated python was discovered in Sulawesi, Indonesia.

- It has been recognised by the Guinness World Records as the longest measured snake in the world.

- The snake Malayopython reticulatus measured 7.22 metres or 23 feet 8 inches.

- It is nicknamed Ibu Baron or The Baroness.

- The reticulated python is the world's longest snake species, native to Southeast Asia.

Rusty Spotted Cat - Rajasthan

- A Rusty-spotted Cat was recorded alive in Shergarh Sanctuary in Baran district of Rajasthan.

- The Rusty-spotted Cat is one of the smallest wild cat species in the world.

- The species is listed as Near Threatened by IUCN.

- It is a nocturnal and solitary wild animal found in parts of India.

Water Bird Count 2026

- The 16th Tamiraparani water bird survey recorded over 21,000 water birds in southern Tamil Nadu.

- A total of 21,091 water birds belonging to 69 species were counted across 68 irrigation tanks in Tirunelveli, Tenkasi, and Thoothukudi districts.

- Migratory birds formed about 36 % of the total count, including species from the Central Asian Flyway.

- The Thoothukudi district recorded the highest bird abundance and species diversity.

Flowering plant species - Dicliptera pakhalica

- A new flowering plant species, "Dicliptera pakhalica," has been discovered in Pakhal Wildlife Sanctuary, Telangana.

- The species belongs to the Acanthaceae family, a tropical flowering plant group.

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❖ The genus Dicliptera has over 220 species globally, with about 29 taxa recorded in India.

❖ The species is currently classified as "Data Deficient" under IUCN guidelines due to its limited known distribution.

❖ The name "Pakhalica" is derived from Pakhal Lake, after which the sanctuary is named.

Mangrove Clam Captive Breeding

❖ Recently, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)–Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) achieved captive breeding of the mangrove clam Geloina erosa.

❖ Mangrove clams are burrowing bivalves that live in muddy and brackish mangrove-swamp habitats.

❖ They are commonly called mud clams and are locally known as "Kandal Kakka" in northern Kerala.

❖ Mangrove clams are widely distributed in the Indo-Pacific region.

❖ They are filter feeders that recycle nutrients, stabilise sediments, and support mangrove ecosystems.

Thwaites Glacier

❖ Scientists recently warned that Thwaites Glacier is melting rapidly due to climate change caused by human activities.

❖ Thwaites Glacier is a large glacier located in West Antarctica, often called the "Doomsday Glacier."

❖ It is a wide, fast-flowing glacier about the size of Florida or Great Britain.

❖ The glacier contributes about 4% of global annual sea-level rise.

❖ Its collapse could destabilise the West Antarctic Ice Sheet and significantly raise global sea levels.

New dragonfly species - Lyriothemis keralensis

❖ Researchers have discovered a new dragonfly species named Lyriothemis keralensis in Kerala.

❖ The species was first observed in 2013 in the Varappetty area of Kothamangalam, Kerala.

❖ It was earlier mistaken for Lyriothemis acigastra, also known as Little Bloodtail.

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❖ Lyriothemis keralensis belongs to the family Libellulidae under the order Odonata and is endemic to Kerala.

❖ The species is commonly called the Slender Bombardier and is found in low-lying coastal and agricultural areas.

Terrestrial Bird Census 2026

❖ The Forest Department is conducting a two-day synchronised terrestrial bird census in the central region of Tamil Nadu.

❖ The census is being conducted in Tiruchi and Pudukottai districts.

❖ The survey including the counting of nocturnal terrestrial birds.

❖ The census aims to identify bird species, study their diversity and habitats, and support conservation measures.

Hair-Crested Drongo

❖ A Hair-crested Drongo was sighted for the first time at the foothills of Manjamalai near Palamedu in Madurai.

❖ The scientific name is Dicrurus hottentottus, and it belongs to the Dicruridae family.

❖ It lives in evergreen forests, moist deciduous forests, forest edges, scrublands and plantations.

❖ Its conservation status is Least Concern in the IUCN Red List, and it is listed under Schedule II of the Wildlife Protection Act 1972.

Lion-Tailed Macaque Conservation

❖ A recent study reported a rise in lion-tailed macaque populations in human-dominated landscapes of the Anamalai Hills in the Western Ghats.

❖ The lion-tailed macaque is an endemic primate species found only in the Western Ghats rainforest ecosystem.

❖ A 40-year study observed 37 groups of macaques across protected forests and human-dominated areas such as plantations and settlements.

❖ It is listed as Endangered in the IUCN Red List and included in Appendix I of the CITES.

❖ It is also protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act 1972.

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Pangolin Trade Ban

❖ The Sangtam tribal body in Nagaland passed a resolution to protect pangolins and stop illegal hunting and trade.

❖ The initiative covers Kiphire and Tuensang districts near the India–Myanmar border (about 1,643 km), a known wildlife-trafficking route.

❖ Pangolins are the most trafficked mammals in the world, hunted for their scales and meat.

❖ The Indian pangolin (Manis crassicaudata) and Chinese pangolin (Manis pentadactyla) are found in Northeast India.

❖ The Indian pangolin is listed as Endangered, while the Chinese pangolin is Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List.

❖ All eight pangolin species are listed under CITES Appendix I, which bans international commercial trade.

❖ The effort supports the Countering Pangolin Trafficking Project led by the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) with support from the Pangolin Crisis Fund.

Mud Volcano Eruption

❖ A mud volcano recently erupted in Diglipur in the Andaman Islands.

❖ A mud volcano is a mound of mud formed when mud, water, and gases erupt from beneath the Earth's surface.

❖ It is also called a sedimentary volcano or gas-oil volcano.

❖ Mud volcanoes usually form in oil-field regions or areas with hot-spring activity due to methane gas pressure and compaction of sediments.

❖ Around 1,000 mud volcanoes are found on land and shallow seas worldwide.

❖ In India, the only mud volcano is located at Baratang Island in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Indian Grey Hornbill – Bird of Tirupattur

❖ The Indian Grey Hornbill was voted as the 'Bird of Tirupattur' district in a public poll conducted by the Forest Department.

❖ The initiative aimed to create awareness about biodiversity conservation and forest protection among students and youth.

❖ A sizable population of Indian Grey Hornbill is found in Ambur and Singarapettai forest ranges and Yelagiri Hills in Tirupattur district.

❖ The Indian Grey Hornbill (Ocyceros birostris) is classified as Least Concern (LC) on the IUCN Red List.

Malabar Pied Hornbill

- ❖ The Chhattisgarh Forest Department has started six "hornbill restaurants" in Udanti Sitanadi Tiger Reserve for the Malabar Pied Hornbill.
- ❖ The Malabar Pied Hornbill (Anthracoceros coronatus), also called the lesser pied hornbill.
- ❖ It is found in the Western Ghats, north-eastern Himalayan foothills, Satpua Hills, Nepal and Sri Lanka.
- ❖ It is mainly frugivorous and is listed as Near Threatened by the IUCN.

Murshidabad Wetlands

- ❖ The wetlands in Murshidabad district, called the "kidneys of South Bengal," are shrinking quickly at about 2.1 % per year.
- ❖ This shrinkage rate is nearly three times the global average and about 1.5 times India's national average.
- ❖ A study found the total area of 14 major wetlands fell from 5,524.7 hectares (ha) in 1990 to 1,700.2 ha in 2025.
- ❖ The wetlands help regulate water flows, recharge groundwater, and support fisheries and agriculture.
- ❖ More than half of these wetlands are severely degraded due to invasive weeds, siltation and pollution.
- ❖ Only 4 out of 14 wetlands still have functional river connections, reducing water movement and ecosystem health.

Cheetah Population 2026

- ❖ Three new cubs were born at Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh, increasing India's total cheetah population to 38.
- ❖ The cubs were born to Gamini, a cheetah brought from South Africa under Project Cheetah.
- ❖ With this birth, the number of Indian-born cubs has reached 27.
- ❖ Project Cheetah started in 2022–23 with 20 cheetahs translocated from Namibia and South Africa.
- ❖ The cheetah became extinct in India in 1952 and was reintroduced after 70 years.

Philippine Eagle

- ❖ The Philippine eagle is one of the largest and rarest eagles in the world and is popularly known as the "monkey-eating bird."

- ❖ It is classified as Critically Endangered by the IUCN, with fewer than 500 mature individuals remaining in the wild.
- ❖ It acts as an apex predator and maintains ecological balance by feeding on monkeys, flying squirrels, civets, bats, snakes, birds, and reptiles.
- ❖ The species depends on primary dipterocarp forests in the Philippines, but its habitat is shrinking due to deforestation, logging, agriculture, and mining.
- ❖ It is the national bird of the Philippines and symbolises strength and resilience.

'Vanjeevi Didi' Initiative

- ❖ Palamu Tiger Reserve has launched the 'Vanjeevi Didi' initiative to promote community-based wildlife conservation.
- ❖ The initiative empowers 18 educated women from each of 17 villages to act as forest ambassadors and spread awareness against poaching and deforestation.
- ❖ It was launched on 17 February 2026 in the Garu range of Jharkhand.
- ❖ Each selected woman will receive a monthly incentive of ₹3,000.
- ❖ Palamu Tiger Reserve is part of Project Tiger, which was launched in 1973 to protect Bengal tigers.

Galapagos Giant Tortoise

- ❖ The Galapagos National Park released 158 hybrid giant tortoises on Floreana Island to restore the ecosystem.
- ❖ The tortoises carry 40–80% DNA of Chelonoidis niger, a species declared extinct in the 19th century.
- ❖ The Galapagos Islands are located in the Pacific Ocean, about 1,000 kilometre west of Ecuador, and were formed by volcanic activity.
- ❖ The islands inspired Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection and were declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1978.
- ❖ Giant tortoises are called ecological engineers because they spread seeds, control vegetation, and create habitats for other species.
- ❖ The genus Chelonoidis is generally listed as Endangered or Critically Endangered by the IUCN.

Olive Ridleys Nesting Patterns

- ❖ Radio-tagging of Olive Ridley sea turtle along the Chennai coast has provided early scientific evidence of nesting-site fidelity.

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- ❖ Tamil Nadu's first telemetry study, launched in January 2026 at the Besant Nagar turtle hatchery, uses flipper and satellite tagging to track migratory routes and feeding habitats in the Bay of Bengal.

- ❖ The study is being carried out by the Wildlife Institute of India and the Advanced Institute for Wildlife Conservation.

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Forest Department has set up 49 turtle hatcheries across 10 coastal districts.

- ❖ So far, 1,150 nests securing 1,35,304 eggs have been protected, and 477 hatchlings have safely reached the sea.

- ❖ However, 680 turtle mortalities have been recorded this season, with the highest number reported from Chennai Wildlife Division, followed by Chengalpattu.

Vaan Island Restoration

- ❖ A technical assessment reported a Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) of 2.34 for the restoration of Vaan Island.

- ❖ The assessment was conducted by the Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission, Suganthi Devadason Marine Research Foundation and the Indian Institute of Technology Madras.

- ❖ Vaan Island is one of 21 uninhabited coral islands in the Gulf of Mannar.

- ❖ The island had shrunk by 92% between 1969 and 2015 due to coral mining, reef degradation and sea-level rise.

- ❖ Artificial reef modules were deployed from 2015 to prevent erosion and restore the island.

- ❖ The project generated socio-ecological benefits worth ₹61.67 crore against a cost of ₹26.37 crore.

Smooth-Coated Otter

- ❖ Smooth-coated otters were officially recorded for the first time in Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary, Uttarakhand.

- ❖ Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary is located in the Nainital district of Uttarakhand between the Gola and Sharda rivers.

- ❖ The smooth-coated otter (Scientific name: Lutrogale perspicillata) is listed as Vulnerable by the IUCN.

- ❖ The species is a semi-aquatic mammal found in freshwater rivers, wetlands, and mangroves.

New Diplura Species - Lepidocampa sikkimensis

- ❖ Scientists of the Zoological Survey of India have discovered a new species of Diplura named Lepidocampa sikkimensis in the eastern Himalayas.

- ❖ Diplura are primitive hexapods under the class Hexapoda.

- ❖ They are soil-dwelling micro-arthropods.

- ❖ This is the first Diplura species formally described by an Indian research team.

- ❖ Earlier, 17 Diplura species had been recorded in India, all identified by foreign scientists.

- ❖ Researchers also rediscovered Lepidocampa juradii bengalensis, a rare subspecies not recorded for nearly 50 years.

REPORTS AND INDICATES

World Nuclear Outlook Report 2026

- ❖ The World Nuclear Association released the World Nuclear Outlook Report 2026.

- ❖ Global nuclear power capacity could reach 1,446-gigawatt electric (GWe) by 2050, exceeding the 1,200 GWe target under the Declaration to Triple Nuclear Energy.

- ❖ Five countries, China, France, India, Russia, and the United States, could produce 980 GWe, making up most of the global nuclear capacity.

- ❖ Nuclear energy is recommended for long-term decarbonization, reducing carbon dioxide emissions, and improving energy security worldwide.

- ❖ The report suggests reforms in electricity markets for equitable growth and emphasizes nuclear energy as a low-carbon complement to renewable energy sources.

Consumer Confidence Index

- ❖ India became the world's second most optimistic consumer market in January 2026.

- ❖ The LSEG–Ipsos Primary Consumer Sentiment Index (PCSI) gave India a score of 60.7.

- ❖ Indonesia ranked first with a score of 62.6.

- ❖ Economic and employment expectations in India rose sharply, indicating optimism about jobs and growth.

Water Bankruptcy Report 2026 - United Nations University (UNU-INWEH) report

- ❖ The United Nations published a landmark report on global water bankruptcy in January 2026.

- ❖ It was titled "Global Water Bankruptcy: Living Beyond Our Hydrological Means in the Post-Crisis Era.

- ❖ It defines 'water bankruptcy' as a condition in which repeated crises become chronic states, with persistent shortages or damages, meaning that many water systems can no longer return to their historical baselines.

- ❖ The report states that water bankruptcy is a condition "defined by both insolvency and irreversibility".

- ❖ Insolvency refers to withdrawing and polluting water beyond renewable inflows and safe depletion limits.

- ❖ Irreversibility refers to the damage to key parts of water-related natural capital, such as wetlands and lakes, that makes restoration of the system to its initial conditions infeasible.

- ❖ The UN argues that many countries have entered their 'water system overdrafts' through consistently overusing renewable water flows, which reduces the capacity of rivers and other watercourses to replenish themselves on normal timescales.

- ❖ More than half the world's large lakes have declined since the early 1990's, while around 35 per cent of natural wetlands have been lost since 1970.

- ❖ Nearly three-quarters of the world's population live in countries classified as water-insecure or critically water-insecure.

- ❖ Around four billion people experience severe water scarcity for at least one month each year.

- ❖ The world has lost roughly 410 million hectares of natural wetlands in the last five decades—an area almost the size of the European Union.

- ❖ India has only 4% of global freshwater resources.

- ❖ Per capita water availability has declined by 73% since 1951 in India.

- ❖ The Indo-Gangetic Plain is identified as a hotspot for severe groundwater depletion.

- ❖ Many Indian cities face "Day Zero" (total depletion) scenarios.

- ❖ 'Day zero' is a term that is commonly used to refer to the point at which a city or other location runs out of water entirely.

- ❖ It was popularised during the Cape Town water scarcity crisis in 2018

- ❖ Tehran in Iran is now in its sixth consecutive year of drought.

Global AI Investments

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) white paper reported that India ranks 8th among 11 countries in Artificial Intelligence (AI) investment as a share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

- India invested about 1.2%–1.8% of its 2024 GDP in AI during 2010–2024.

- The United States (US) and Singapore lead with the highest AI investment shares of GDP.

- The US and China together account for about 65% of global AI investments since 2010.

- Global AI infrastructure investments, including data centres, have crossed USD 600 billion since 2010.

- India is expected to receive over USD 67 billion in AI-related investments in the next three years.

Global Soft Power Index 2026

- The Global Soft Power Index 2026 was released by Brand Finance.

- India ranks 32nd globally with a score of 48.0.

- The top 3 countries are the United States, China, and Japan.

- The index measures a country's ability to influence others through culture, values, diplomacy, and innovation.

Panchayat Advancement Index 2.0

- Tripura secured the first position in the Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) 2.0.

- The PAI 2.0 was released by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India.

- Jugal Kishore Nagar Village Committee in Sepahijala district ranked first in India with a score of 88.44.

- South Nalchar gram panchayat ranked third (88.14), and Chesrimai gram panchayat ranked fourth (87.85).

- All 1,176 gram panchayats in Tripura achieved 100% data submission and verification for the year 2023–24.

- PAI measures the performance of gram panchayats on governance and service delivery.

IOM Global Appeal 2026 Report

- The International Organization for Migration (IOM) released the Global Appeal 2026 Report.

- It requesting USD 4.7 billion to assist 41 million people worldwide in 2026.

- The report aligns with the IOM Strategic Plan 2024–2028 to support displaced populations and promote safe migration.

- Internal displacement reached 83.4 million people in 2024, the highest ever recorded globally.

- Disaster-related displacement rose to 9.8 million in 2024, showing a 29% increase from the previous year.

- Migrants sent USD 905 billion in international remittances in 2024, supporting many economies.

- There are about 168 million migrant workers worldwide, filling labour shortages across sectors.

World Bank report on air pollution

- The World Bank released the 2025 report "A Breath of Change" on air pollution in the Indo-Gangetic Plains and Himalayan Foothills.

- The report covers 13 jurisdictions across Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, and Pakistan.

- Air pollution causes about 1 million premature deaths every year in the region.

- The economic loss due to pollution is about 10% of GDP annually in the region.

- The IGP-HF region has the highest air pollution levels in the world, with PM2.5 levels 8–20 times higher than WHO guidelines.

- The report supports the "35 by 35" target to reduce air pollution levels.

- It recommends solutions through the "4Is" framework — Information, Incentives, Institutions, and Infrastructure.

Global Biomass Energy Production Rankings 2026

- The United States ranked first in biomass energy production in the world in 2026.

- Biomass energy is produced from organic materials such as wood, agricultural waste, food waste, and animal dung.

- Brazil ranks second, mainly due to bioethanol production from sugarcane.

- Indonesia ranks third, followed by China.

- India is in fifth place in global biomass energy production.

- Biomass energy is a renewable source of energy because organic materials can be regenerated.

Global Innovation Index

- ❖ The Global Innovation Index (GII) is published by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and ranks countries by innovation inputs and outputs.
- ❖ China became the world's largest spender on research and development (R&D) in 2024.
- ❖ Global R&D spending reached $2.87 trillion in 2024, growing nearly 3% annually.
- ❖ China spent $785.9 billion, overtaking the United States ($781.8 billion).
- ❖ India ranked 7th, with $75.7 billion spent on R&D in 2024.
- ❖ Asia now accounts for about 45% of global R&D spending, showing a shift from Western dominance.

Electricity Report 2026

- ❖ The International Energy Agency (IEA) released the Electricity 2026 report on global electricity markets.
- ❖ Global electricity demand is expected to grow by 3.6% annually until 2030.
- ❖ The growth is driven by electric vehicles, data centres, and air conditioning use.
- ❖ Low-emission sources such as renewable energy and nuclear power are expected to meet most additional demand.
- ❖ These sources may account for nearly half of global electricity generation by 2030.
- ❖ Global power-sector carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions are expected to plateau.

Network Readiness Index 2025

- ❖ India ranked 45th in the Network Readiness Index (NRI) 2025, improving by four places.
- ❖ The NRI was released by the Portulans Institute.
- ❖ India ranked 2nd among lower-middle-income economies.
- ❖ India secured 1st rank globally in telecom investment, Artificial Intelligence (AI) publications, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) services exports, and e-commerce legislation.
- ❖ The index evaluates 127 economies based on Technology, People, Governance, and Impact.

Women, Peace and Security Index 2025–26

- ❖ The Women, Peace and Security Index 2025–26 was released by the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security and the Peace Research Institute Oslo.

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❖ Denmark ranks first with a score of 0.939, followed by Iceland and Norway.

❖ India ranks 131st with a score of 0.607, while the United States ranks 31st.

❖ Afghanistan ranks last at 181st with a score of 0.279 among 181 countries.

❖ The index was first launched in 2017 and is published every two years.

Corruption Perceptions Index 2025

❖ The index was released by Transparency International.

❖ The index score ranges from 0 for highly corrupt to 100 for very clean.

❖ Denmark ranks first with a score of 89, followed by Finland and Singapore.

❖ South Sudan and Somalia rank last at 181st, while Venezuela ranks 180th.

❖ India ranks 91st with a score of 39, and the United States ranks 29th.

❖ The global average score is 42, and 122 countries scored below 50.

❖ Among India's neighbours, Bhutan ranks 18th, China ranks 76th, Nepal ranks 110th, Sri Lanka ranks 115th, Pakistan ranks 140th, Bangladesh ranks 149th, and Myanmar ranks 172nd.

NITI Aayog report on Net Zero

❖ NITI Aayog released 11 reports on "Scenarios Towards Viksit Bharat and Net Zero."

❖ The reports present pathways for India to become a USD 30 trillion economy by 2047 and to achieve Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2070.

❖ India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is projected to increase from USD 4.18 trillion in 2025 to USD 30 trillion by 2047.

❖ The share of electricity in final energy demand is projected to rise from 21% in 2025 to 60% by 2070.

❖ Renewable energy capacity is projected to exceed 6,000 gigawatts (GW) by 2070.

❖ Nuclear power capacity is projected to increase from 8 GW to over 300 GW by 2070.

❖ The Net Zero pathway is estimated to require USD 22.7 trillion investment by 2070, with an annual investment need of about USD 500 billion.

Global Energy Monitor report

❖ A report by Global Energy Monitor stated that the global wind and utility-scale solar project pipeline reached a record 4.9 terawatts (TW) in 2025.

- The total pipeline increased by 11 per cent from 4.4 TW in 2024 to 4.9 TW in 2025.
- China leads with over 1.5 TW prospective capacity and 448 gigawatts (GW) under construction, while India has 125 GW under construction and more than 163 GW operating capacity.
- The G7 countries account for only 11 per cent of global prospective wind and solar capacity, with a combined pipeline of about 520 GW.
- Globally, 758 GW of projects are under construction, with nearly three-fourths located in China and India.
- The report noted that current progress is insufficient to meet the tripling of the renewable energy target by 2030 agreed at the COP28 summit.

Trade Watch Quarterly Report
- NITI Aayog released the sixth edition of "Trade Watch Quarterly" for Quarter 2 of FY 2025–26 (July–September 2025) in New Delhi.
- The report shows India's total exports grew by about 8.5% during the quarter.
- Electronics became the second-largest item in India's export basket, with exports reaching USD 42.1 billion by 2024.
- The Union Budget allocated ₹40,000 crore under the Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme to support domestic electronics production.
- E-commerce exports are projected to contribute 20–30% of India's merchandise exports by 2030.

NITI Aayog report on Apprenticeship 2026
- NITI Aayog released a report titled "Revitalising Apprenticeship Ecosystem: Insights, Challenges, Recommendations and Best Practices".
- The report provides a detailed analysis of India's apprenticeship system and identifies key challenges in implementation.
- It gives 20 action-oriented recommendations with a clear action plan, assigned responsibilities, and measurable performance indicators.
- The recommendations are grouped under five pillars: policy and systemic reforms, structural and regulatory strengthening, state and district-level interventions, industry engagement, and apprentice support mechanisms.
- It proposes a common digital platform, an Apprenticeship Engagement Index, stronger District Skill Committees, and higher participation of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through cluster-based models.

Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2026

❖ The Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2026 was released by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

❖ The report warns that the region is likely to miss 103 out of 117 measurable Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets by 2030.

❖ Only 14 targets are currently on track, indicating that nearly 88% of goals are projected to be missed if present trends continue.

❖ The report highlights severe regression in climate action, marine conservation, and biodiversity protection, which is undermining long-term economic and social progress.

❖ Environmental challenges such as rising emissions, ecosystem degradation, and ocean pollution are major obstacles to achieving the 2030 Agenda.

❖ However, the region shows relatively strong performance in industry, innovation, and infrastructure, particularly under SDG 9.

STATES

GenAI Hub - Karnataka

❖ The Economic Survey 2025–26 reported that Karnataka leads India's generative artificial intelligence startup ecosystem.

❖ Karnataka hosts 39% of India's GenAI (Generative Artificial Intelligence) startups, the highest share in the country.

❖ India recorded 890 GenAI startups in the first half of 2025, rising from 240 in the same period of 2024.

❖ India's startup ecosystem is ranked as the third-largest globally, as per the Economic Survey 2025–26.

❖ Karnataka has 43 State Public Universities, supporting skilled manpower for deep-tech and GenAI startups.

Indigenous Bridges of Meghalaya

❖ India nominated Meghalaya's living root bridges for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage List 2026–27.

❖ Living root bridges are natural bridges formed by training the roots of rubber fig trees across rivers and streams.

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❖ These bridges are traditionally built and maintained by the Khasi and Jaintia communities of Meghalaya.

❖ They are mainly located in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, including Nongriat village, which has a famous double-decker root bridge.

Free Education Policy 2026 - Kerala

❖ The Kerala Government has announced free education up to the graduate level for Arts and Science students in the State Budget 2026–27.

❖ Free education will now be provided for undergraduate (Bachelor's degree) courses in government and aided colleges.

❖ Earlier, free education in Kerala was available only up to Class 12.

❖ This is the first time that Kerala has extended free education beyond the higher secondary level.

❖ The policy aims to improve access to higher education and reduce the financial burden on students.

Buddhist Diamond Triangle

❖ Odisha's Buddhist Diamond Triangle has been added to India's UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre.

❖ The Buddhist Diamond Triangle consists of Lalitgiri, Udayagiri, and Ratnagiri, located in Odisha.

❖ These sites show 1,500 years of continuous Buddhist history, covering Theravada (Hinayana), Mahayana, and Vajrayana Buddhism.

❖ Lalitgiri is the oldest site, dating back to the 2nd–3rd century BCE, and has a stupa with sacred relic caskets.

❖ Udayagiri flourished between the 1st and 13th century CE and contains large monasteries and Buddhist sculptures.

❖ Ratnagiri was a major centre of Vajrayana (Tantric) Buddhism and is often compared to Nalanda.

Medical insurance for Kerala students

❖ The Kerala State becomes India's First to Provide Free Graduation Education and School Student Insurance.

❖ Kerala Budget 2026-27 announces Life, Accident Insurance Scheme for School Children.

❖ It will be India's first such kind of initiative.

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❖ The students from Classes I to XII in government, aided, and government-approved schools following the State syllabus will be covered by the scheme.

❖ No premium will have to be paid by the students or parents to maintain insurance coverage.

Chittoor Guinness records

❖ Chittoor district enters the Guinness World Records as CM Chandrababu Naidu of Andhra Pradesh distributes 5,555 e-cycles.

❖ It is for achieving the largest distribution of electric cycles within 24 hours.

❖ It was distributed in the Kuppam Assembly constituency.

PATHIK - Aadhaar Integration

❖ Ahmedabad City Crime Branch has become the first police force in India to integrate Aadhaar verification with PATHIK software.

❖ PATHIK is a guest monitoring software used by hotels, paying guest accommodations, and homestays to record visitor details for security purposes.

❖ With Aadhaar integration, visitors can be verified instantly using QR codes through the Aadhaar App.

❖ The system is consent-based and does not store Aadhaar numbers, using only digitally signed demographic details and photographs.

❖ The system has helped trace more than 50 missing persons and identify illegal immigrants.

Gig Workers' Welfare Board - Karnataka

❖ Karnataka has set up the Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers Welfare Development Board in January 2026.

❖ It was setup under the Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare Development) Act, 2025.

❖ It is headed by the Labour Minister as ex officio president and includes senior officials, four gig worker representatives, and four aggregator representatives (Zomato, Uber, Ola, Amazon).

❖ All aggregators and gig workers in Karnataka must register with the board, and each worker receives a unique ID for social security benefits.

❖ Karnataka levies a welfare fee of 1%–1.5% on aggregator platforms, adjustable up to 5% if funds are insufficient.

❖ Tamil Nadu created India's first gig workers' welfare board.

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Platform-Based Gig Workers Welfare Board was formally established in December 2023.
- ❖ It was set up under the Tamil Nadu Manual Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Work) Act, 1982, to provide basic social security benefits.

First Online Property Tax District - Dhamtari

- ❖ Dhamtari in Chhattisgarh became the first district in India to collect property tax through the SAMARTH Panchayat portal.
- ❖ The launch happened at Sankara Gram Panchayat in Nagri block using a UPI-enabled online payment system.
- ❖ Citizens can now pay property taxes from home, reducing manual work and delays.
- ❖ The system is rolled out across nearly 400-gram panchayats in Dhamtari and may expand to the whole state.
- ❖ SAMARTH portal improves transparency, revenue collection, and financial independence for panchayats.

India's top renewable energy state - Gujarat

- ❖ Gujarat has emerged as India's top renewable energy state with 42.58 GW capacity, contributing 16.5% of the national total.
- ❖ The state contributes 16.50% of India's total renewable capacity, reflecting its strong policy support and infrastructure readiness.
- ❖ Gujarat also ranks first in wind power capacity and second in solar power installations.
- ❖ Gujarat has emerged as a major solar energy hub with 25,529.40 MW installed solar capacity as of December 2025.

Year of Agriculture 2026 – Madhya Pradesh

- ❖ Madhya Pradesh will observe 2026 as the 'Year of Agriculture'.
- ❖ The theme for the year is "Prosperous Farmers – Prosperous State."
- ❖ The budget for agriculture and allied sectors increased from ₹600 crore in 2002–03 to over ₹27,000 crore in 2024–25.
- ❖ A digital e-Mandi (electronic market) system has been implemented to improve price transparency and fair trade for farmers.

Pilloo AI Accounting App

- ❖ Andhra Pradesh launched the Pilloo AI accounting and billing application.
- ❖ Pilloo AI is a voice-based accounting app designed for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
- ❖ It allows users to create invoices, record sales, payments, and expenses using spoken commands.
- ❖ The app supports five Indian languages for easy use by small traders and entrepreneurs.
- ❖ It uses artificial intelligence (AI) to automate data entry from bills and bank statements.

Matabari Tourism Circuit – Tripura

- ❖ A review meeting on the development of the Matabari Tourism Circuit in Tripura was chaired by the Union Minister of Communications and Development of North Eastern Region.
- ❖ The project aims to develop Tripura as a centre of cultural, spiritual, and eco-tourism.
- ❖ Key places included are Agartala, Neer Mahal, Sepahijala, Udaipur (Tripura Sundari Temple / Matabari), Chabimura, and Dumboor Lake.

Ancient Telugu Epigraphy

- ❖ A rare early 8th-century CE Telugu inscription has been discovered at Pitikayagulla in Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ The inscription is written in early Telugu script and shows the transition of Telugu from Prakrit influence to an independent language.
- ❖ It records the construction of a new embankment, known as nava katta.
- ❖ The work is attributed to Pranimilli Achari, who is believed to have been a sculptor or craftsman.
- ❖ The inscription is linked to the Renadu region, though the ruling king is not named.

New CM of Manipur - Yumnam Khemchand Singh

- ❖ President Droupadi Murmu revoked President's Rule (Article 356) in the State on February 4, 2026.
- ❖ President's Rule had been imposed on February 13, 2025, after the resignation of Chief Minister Nongthombam Biren Singh.

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- ❖ Yumnam Khemchand Singh took oath as the Chief Minister of Manipur on February 4, 2026.
- ❖ Nemcha Kipgen and Losii Dikho were sworn in as Deputy Chief Ministers.

Women Industrial Park Initiative

- ❖ Andhra Pradesh signed a MoU with FICCI-FLO to establish an exclusive women's industrial park.
- ❖ The industrial park will be developed on 30 acres for women-led industries, startups, and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).
- ❖ FICCI-FLO will provide mentoring, training, and business support.
- ❖ The initiative supports the "One Family, One Entrepreneur" vision of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu.
- ❖ It is also part of the state plan to develop 175 MSME parks in Andhra Pradesh.

Clean Energy Blueprint

- ❖ NITI Aayog released a draft plan to make Andhra Pradesh a clean energy hub by 2035.
- ❖ It focuses on renewable energy, energy storage, grid improvement, and affordable electricity.
- ❖ The blueprint is prepared under ASSET (Accelerating Sustainable State Energy Transition), an initiative of NITI Aayog.
- ❖ The blueprint will be finalized by March 2026, and implementation is expected to begin in 2026.

Elderly Budget FY27 - Kerala

- ❖ Kerala became the first Indian state to announce a dedicated Elderly Budget for FY27.
- ❖ The total allocation for the Elderly Budget is ₹46,236.52 crore, about 19.07% of the State Budget.
- ❖ Around 68% of the allocation is for pensions of retired government employees.
- ❖ The Elderly Budget combines spending on pensions, healthcare, social security, and welfare schemes for senior citizens.

FNTA Agreement

❖ The Centre signed a tripartite MoU to create the Frontier Nagaland Territorial Authority (FNTA).

❖ The agreement was signed between the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Nagaland Government, and the ENPO (Eastern Nagaland People's Organisation).

❖ The FNTA will cover six eastern districts of Nagaland — Tuensang, Mon, Kiphire, Longleng, Noklak, and Shamator.

❖ The authority will receive devolution of powers over 46 subjects and financial support for regional development.

❖ The ENPO represents eight recognised Naga tribes from eastern Nagaland, and the agreement aims to support the administrative and development needs of the region.

❖ The arrangement does not affect Article 371(A) of the Constitution of India, which gives special provisions to Nagaland.

Ballot System in Local Elections

❖ The Karnataka Cabinet approved the use of ballot papers and ballot boxes for the upcoming panchayat elections in February 2026.

❖ The decision moves away from Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) for local body elections.

❖ The government plans to introduce the Karnataka Gram Swaraj and Panchayat Raj (Amendment) Bill, 2026, to allow paper-ballot voting legally.

❖ Panchayat elections are conducted by the State Election Commission.

❖ Electronic Voting Machines are not constitutionally mandatory for local body elections.

Amaravati Quantum Valley Project

❖ Andhra Pradesh will formally launch the Amaravati Quantum Valley (AQV) project.

❖ AQV aims to make Andhra Pradesh a global hub for quantum research, innovation, and talent development.

❖ The project will integrate academic research with industry applications, including computing, secure communications, and advanced materials.

❖ Key initiatives include an IBM–TCS Quantum Innovation Centre, a Quantum Talent Hub, and a Quantum Reference Facility by SRM University.

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Black Swan Summit 2026

- ❖ The Black Swan Summit India 2026 was held in Bhubaneswar Odisha under the Bharat Netra initiative.
- ❖ The summit is organised in collaboration with the Global Finance & Technology Network (GFTN).
- ❖ It aims to build a future-ready workforce in FinTech, Insur Tech, and Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- ❖ A five-month hybrid training programme has been developed with the National University of Singapore's Asian Institute of Digital Finance (NUS-AIDF).

Karnataka's Fiscal Reform

- ❖ The World Bank highlighted Karnataka's 2014 fiscal reform as a model for other Indian states.
- ❖ Karnataka included borrowings of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) in state liabilities.
- ❖ The move improved fiscal transparency, reduced off-budget borrowing, and strengthened budgetary discipline.
- ❖ Off-budget borrowing is a concern as it hides true debt and weakens fiscal control in many states.
- ❖ It recommended a standardised reporting framework for off-budget borrowing, to be enforced by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India.

Mukhyamantri Gramotthan Yojana

- ❖ Gujarat Chief Minister launched the Mukhyamantri Gramotthan Yojana at Bhadran village in Anand district, Gujarat.
- ❖ It will provide Gram Panchayat buildings-cum-Talati residences in 2,666 villages.
- ❖ The scheme includes roads, water supply, sanitation, solar street lights, e-Gram (electronic village services), and community halls.
- ❖ The aim is to strengthen rural governance and infrastructure in villages.

India's Drone Testing Corridor

- ❖ Odisha announced the development of the National UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) Test and Innovation Corridor at Rangeilunda during Wings India 2026.
- ❖ The corridor will be developed at Rangeilunda Airport in Odisha.

- ❖ It will be India's first operational commercial airport converted into a live drone-testing facility.
- ❖ The project is aligned with the B-MAAN (Building Mobility and Advanced Air Mobility Network) scheme.

Mukhya Mantrir Eti Koli Duti Paat Scheme

- ❖ The Government of Assam launched the Mukhya Mantrir Eti Koli Duti Paat Scheme for tea garden workers in Tinsukia district, Assam.
- ❖ It provides one-time financial assistance of ₹5,000 to over six lakh tea garden workers.
- ❖ The scheme covers workers in 836 tea gardens across 27 districts.
- ❖ The initiative aims to support the tea tribe and the indigenous communities of Assam.
- ❖ Assam's tea industry has completed about 200 years of commercial production.

AI-Based Learning Platform - Padhai with AI

- ❖ Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister launched 'Padhai with AI' in Bilaspur district.
- ❖ The initiative uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) to provide digital learning, exam-oriented study material, and personalized support.
- ❖ It mainly benefits students preparing for government and competitive exams who lack access to quality coaching.
- ❖ The programme ensures equal access to education and provides continuous academic counselling to improve learning outcomes.

Uttar Pradesh Economic Survey 2025–26

- ❖ Uttar Pradesh presented its first Economic Survey 2025–26 in the State Legislative Assembly.
- ❖ The report shows the state's plan to become a 1 trillion US dollar economy through investment-led growth.
- ❖ The Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Uttar Pradesh is projected to reach ₹36 lakh crore in 2025–26.
- ❖ The government highlighted the Triple S model (Safety, Stability, Speed) to improve investment and business activity.

Vulture Conservation in Maharashtra

❖ Migratory griffon vultures were recently spotted in Melghat and Tadoba Tiger Reserves in Maharashtra after nearly ten years.

❖ A Himalayan Griffon Vulture was recorded in Melghat Tiger Reserve, and a Eurasian Griffon Vulture was recorded in Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve.

❖ The Maharashtra Forest Department and the Bombay Natural History Society started a Vulture Conservation Breeding Centre programme.

❖ In January 2026, captive-bred long-billed vultures were released into the wild after being fitted with Global System for Mobile communications and satellite transmitters.

❖ The Himalayan Griffon is classified as Near Threatened on the IUCN Red List.

❖ The Eurasian Griffon Vulture is generally listed as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List.

Lakhpati Bitiya Yojana

❖ The Delhi government announced the Lakhpati Bitiya Yojana to support girls' education and reduce school dropouts due to financial stress.

❖ The scheme will begin on 1 April 2026 and provides financial assistance totalling ₹56,000 during a girl's schooling and higher education, which is expected to grow to around ₹1 lakh with interest.

❖ Money will be credited to an Aadhaar-enabled bank account in the girl's name to ensure direct benefit transfer and better tracking.

❖ The final amount will be paid when the girl turns 21 years old or completes graduation or diploma, whichever is earlier.

❖ Payments are linked to schooling milestones, including at birth, Class 1, Class 6, Class 9, Class 10 and Class 12, with additional funds after graduation or diploma.

❖ The scheme is for girls born in Delhi whose families have lived in the city for at least three years and have an annual income of ₹1 lakh or less; benefits are limited to two daughters per family.

Odisha Dolphin Census 2026

❖ Odisha recorded its highest marine dolphin population in five years, with 765 dolphins counted in the 2026 census.

❖ A total of 765 dolphins were recorded across marine and estuarine areas of the state.

❖ Chilika Lake recorded 159 Irrawaddy dolphins, which is the largest single-area concentration.

- Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary recorded 474 humpback dolphins, the highest in the state.

Uttar Pradesh Budget 2026–27

- The government of Uttar Pradesh presented a Budget of ₹9.12 lakh crore for the financial year 2026–27 in the State Assembly.
- The Budget is about 12.9% higher than the previous year.
- Capital expenditure is set at 19.5% of the total Budget, with major spending on education, agriculture, healthcare, and infrastructure.
- The fiscal deficit has been kept at 3% of Gross State Domestic Product, following Finance Commission guidelines.
- The government increased funding for healthcare, medical colleges, police infrastructure, and technology missions such as Artificial Intelligence training programmes.

Sthree Suraksha Scheme

- The Kerala government launched the Sthree Suraksha Scheme to provide financial support to unemployed women and transwomen from economically weaker sections.
- It provides a monthly pension of ₹1,000 through direct bank transfer.
- Women aged 35 to 60 years who are not receiving other social welfare pensions are eligible.
- The first instalment was credited to over 10.18 lakh beneficiaries.

Regional Connectivity in Northeast India

- The Indian Prime Minister inaugurated the Kumar Bhaskar Varma Setu and the Northeast's first Emergency Landing Facility (ELF) in Assam.
- Kumar Bhaskar Varma Setu is a 2.86-km-long, six-lane extradosed bridge built over the Brahmaputra River in Guwahati at a cost of about ₹3,030 crore.
- The bridge connects Guwahati and North Guwahati and is the first extradosed bridge in Northeast India.
- The Emergency Landing Facility (ELF) has been developed on the Moran Bypass in Dibrugarh district in coordination with the Indian Air Force.
- The 4.2-km-long highway stretch can be used for emergency landing of fighter and transport aircraft, strengthening connectivity and strategic preparedness in the Northeast.

Urbanisation Policy Framework

❖ Kerala became the first State in India to approve a comprehensive Urban Policy.

❖ The State Cabinet approved the draft policy prepared by the Local Self-Government Department, which was announced in the 2023–24 State Budget.

❖ The Kerala Urban Policy Commission, formed in December 2023, submitted its report to the Chief Minister in March 2025.

❖ The policy will guide urban development in Kerala for the next 25 years, keeping in mind climate change and environmental concerns.

❖ According to the commission, about 80% of Kerala is expected to be urbanised by 2050.

❖ The policy is based on 10 pillars and promotes public, private and people's partnership for future development.

AI-Powered Remote E-Voting System

❖ Bihar presented an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered remote e-voting system at the India AI Impact Summit held in New Delhi.

❖ The system was developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) in collaboration with the Bihar State Election Commission.

❖ The mobile application "e-Voting SECBHR" enables remote voting through Android smartphones.

❖ Voter verification includes One-Time Password (OTP) authentication, Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based facial recognition, and matching with the Elector's Photo Identity Card (EPIC) database.

❖ Security features include dual encryption, liveness detection, blockchain-based storage, and audit trails similar to Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT).

❖ The system was first used in the 2025 urban local body elections and may be considered for future Assembly elections.

Tidal Flooding – State Specific Disaster

❖ The Kerala government has declared tidal flooding as a State-specific disaster.

❖ Tidal flooding, also called sunny day flooding or king tide flooding, is the temporary flooding of low-lying coastal areas during high tide.

❖ It occurs due to the combined effect of strong winds, offshore storms and full moon or new moon high tide events.

❖ It happens twice daily and becomes more severe during full moon and new moon phases.

- Along the Kerala coast, the Arabian Sea level rises above a fixed threshold and inundates low-lying areas for a short period.
- Kerala will provide financial assistance under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF), and it is the first State in India to classify tidal flooding as a State-specific disaster.

India's First Graphene Policy

- Kerala has approved India's first comprehensive Graphene Policy to promote research, development and manufacturing of graphene.
- Graphene is a single layer of carbon atoms arranged in a hexagonal lattice and is known for its high strength, electrical conductivity and thermal stability.
- The policy proposes a dedicated graphene industrial park in Palakkad and a Digital Innovation Centre with an investment of ₹200 crore.
- The Union Cabinet has approved the Graphene Park to support graphene-based innovation and manufacturing.
- Kerala will provide a 50% subsidy on lease payments for manufacturing units in government-managed parks.

AI-based CM Shri School Model

- Delhi Chief Minister inaugurated the CM Shri School at Sarojini Nagar, marking India's first AI-driven comprehensive education model.
- The government laid foundation stones for 75 CM Shri School projects across Delhi.
- The initiative follows the National Education Policy 2020 and aims to provide technology-integrated, high-quality public education.
- The schools will offer modern infrastructure, AI-enabled smart classrooms, and digital learning tools for personalized education.

Recent initiatives in Assam

- The Assam Cabinet has approved 3% reservation for tea tribes and Adivasi communities in Class I and II state government jobs.
- Earlier, the quota was limited to Grade III and IV posts, but now it includes higher posts like state civil services and professors.
- The Mukhyamantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyaan (MMUA) scheme has been expanded to include 1,07,532 additional women, adding to the 32 lakh beneficiaries who received ₹10,000 each.

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❖ The new measures aim to increase social mobility, improve employment opportunities, and strengthen rural entrepreneurship.

Muslim Reservation in Maharashtra

❖ The Maharashtra government, led by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, has revoked a decade-old 5% reservation for socially and educationally backward sections of the Muslim community.

❖ The quota was originally introduced in July 2014 by the Congress-NCP government through an ordinance, but was never converted into law and had lapsed in December 2014.

❖ The government cited constitutional concerns under Articles 15(1) and 16(2), which prohibit discrimination based solely on religion.

❖ Courts, including the Supreme Court of India, have consistently ruled that affirmative action cannot be based solely on religious identity.

❖ Following the revocation, the issuance of Special Backward Category-A (SBC-A) caste and validity certificates for Muslims has been stopped.

Tulbul Navigation Barrage Project

❖ The Jammu and Kashmir government is considering diversion of Ravi river water to the Jammu region and revival of the Tulbul Navigation Barrage Project after the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty (1960).

❖ The Ravi River diversion plan proposes transferring water from Punjab to the Jammu region.

❖ The Tulbul Navigation Barrage Project, also known as the Wullar Barrage, is located at the outlet of Wular Lake in Jammu and Kashmir.

❖ The project began in 1984 but was stopped due to objections under the Indus Waters Treaty (1960).

❖ It was designed to regulate water flow in the Jhelum River during the lean winter months.

❖ The project aims to improve navigation and support downstream hydropower generation.

Caste-Free Status - Saundala

❖ Saundala village in Maharashtra declared itself a caste-free village on 5 February 2026 through a Gram Sabha resolution.

❖ The resolution rejects caste-based discrimination and promotes equality under the motto "Aamchi jaat… manav" (My caste is humanity).

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- All public places, such as schools, temples, water bodies, and cremation grounds, will provide equal access to all residents.
- Caste-based discrimination is prohibited under Article 15 of the Indian Constitution.

Mandya Inscription

- A 12th-century multi-lingual Hoysala inscription was discovered at K. Bettahalli village in Mandya district, Karnataka.
- The inscription dates to the reign of Narasimha I of the Hoysala dynasty.
- It was found at the Sri Mahalakshmi Temple in Pandavapura taluk and is engraved on a white granite slab with nine lines of text.
- The inscription is written in Kannada script using Kannada, Tamil and Sanskrit languages.
- It records a land grant by Dandanayaka (military commander) Karikudi Tillai Koottandi for temple rituals at Sri Yadava Narayana temple (present-day Kere Tonnuru).

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

Republic Day Parade 2026

- The Government of India announced the winners of the Republic Day Parade 2026.
- The Indian Navy won the Best Marching Contingent among the three Services.
- The Delhi Police won the Best Marching Contingent among Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and other auxiliary forces.
- The top three Tableaux from States and Union Territories were Maharashtra (Ganeshotsav: A Symbol of Aatmanirbharta), Jammu & Kashmir (Handicrafts and Folk Dances), and Kerala (Water Metro and 100% Digital Literacy: Aatmanirbhar Kerala for Aatmanirbhar Bharat).
- The Ministry of Culture won the Best Tableau from Central Ministries and Departments (Vande Mataram – The Soul Cry of a Nation).
- Popular Choice winners from the online My Government (MyGov) poll were Assam Regiment (Services), CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force) (CAPFs), Gujarat (Mantra of Swadeshi – Self-Reliance – Freedom), and Department of School Education and Literacy (National Education Policy 2020: Rocketing Indian School Education on the Path to Viksit Bharat).

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Community Water Champions - WaSH Warriors

❖ The Ministry of Jal Shakti honoured WaSH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) Warriors for grassroots water leadership.

❖ The recognition was given at a Samvad Samaroh held in New Delhi.

❖ A total of 58 WaSH Warriors from States and Union Territories were honoured under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).

❖ They were selected from Swachh Sujal Gaon villages with Har Ghar Jal certification and ODF (Open Defecation Free) Plus Model status under Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen).

❖ A booklet titled "Peyjal: Jan Shakti Ki Abhivyakti – Volume II" was released during the event.

State Film Awards – 2016/2022

❖ The Tamil Nadu government has announced the State Film Awards for the years 2016 to 2022.

❖ Actors including Vijay Sethupathi, Keerthy Suresh, Karthi, Nayanthara, Dhanush, Jyothika, Suriya, Aparna Balamurali, Arya, Lijomol Jose, Vikram Prabhu, and Sai Pallavi have been selected for the best actor awards.

❖ Tamil films Maanagaram, Aram, Pariyerum Perumal, Asuran, Koozhangal, Jai Bhim, and Gargi have won the best film awards for the respective years.

❖ Directors such as Lokesh Kanagaraj, Pushkar–Gayathri, Mari Selvaraj, R. Parthiban, Sudha Kongara, T.J. Gnanavel, and Gautham Ramachandran have been chosen for the best director awards.

Sunetra Pawar

❖ She becomes the first Woman Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra.

❖ Sunetra Pawar, wife of the late Nationalist Congress Party (AP) chief Ajit Pawar, took oath as Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra.

❖ Governor Acharya Devvrat administered the oath in the presence of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde.

❖ Deputy CM is a political post, and it's not a constitutional post like the Vice President of India.

❖ In 1989, a writ petition was filed in the Supreme Court challenging the oath taken by Devi Lal, as the Deputy Prime Minister in Prime Minister V.P. Singh's Cabinet.

❖ The top court held that the person is just a Minister like other members of the Council of Ministers, though he has been described as Deputy Prime Minister;

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the description of him as Deputy Prime Minister does not confer on him any powers of the Prime Minister.

❖ The designation of Devi Lal as Deputy Prime Minister was only descriptive, and that for all purposes he would be considered only as a Minister since there was no constitutional sanction for the post of Deputy Prime Minister as such.

❖ In Tamil Nadu, a press release was issued by the Raj Bhavan in August 2017.

❖ It only states that the Governor had accepted the Chief Minister's recommendation to designate Mr. Panneerselvam as Deputy Chief Minister.

❖ And it does not indicate that he had also been administered the oath as Deputy Chief Minister.

❖ A deputy Chief minister is, first and foremost, a Minister in the Government of the State.

❖ The appellation of a deputy Chief minister does not breach the constitutional position, namely, that a person who holds the office of a Minister must, in any event, within a stipulated period, be a member of the legislature to qualify for appointment as a Minister.

President's Police Colour Award for Sikkim

❖ Sikkim Police has been awarded the prestigious President's Police Colour Award for distinguished service, professionalism, and discipline.

❖ Sikkim is the 15th state in India and the 3rd in the Northeast to receive this rare recognition.

❖ The President's Police Colour Award is popularly known as the Nishaan.

Padma Awards 2026 – Tamil Nadu

❖ The President of India has approved the conferment of Padma Awards for 2026 on 13 persons from Tamil Nadu.

❖ This year comprises two Padma Bhushan and 11 Padma Shri awards from Tamil Nadu.

❖ While S.K.M. Maeilanandhan will receive Padma Bhushan for social work, K.R. Palaniswamy will receive the award for distinguished service of a high order in the field of medicine.

❖ Maeilanandhan is the executive chairman of the Erode-based SKM Group of Companies.

❖ H.V. Hande, who was the Health Minister in AIADMK founder M.G. Ramachandran's Cabinet, was awarded Padma Shri.

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- ❖ Carnatic vocalists and sisters Ranjani-Gayathri were chosen for the Padma Shri award.

- ❖ Punniamurthy Natesan, retired professor at Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, has been selected for the Padma Shri in the field of medicine.

- ❖ Sculptor Rajastapathi Kaliappa Goundar has been chosen for the Padma Shri.

- ❖ V. Kamakoti, IIT-Madras Director, has been chosen for the Padma Shri in the field of Science and Engineering.

- ❖ The other Padma Shri awardees are K. Ramasamy for science and technology, Othuvaar Thiruthani Swaminathan for art, Thiruvaarur Bakthavathsalam for art and writer Sivasankari for literature and education.

Sir Mark Tully

- ❖ Sir Mark Tully, a former BBC journalist and long-time BBC India Bureau Chief, passed away in New Delhi.

- ❖ He served as BBC Chief of Bureau in India for 22 years and covered events such as the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War, Emergency (1975) and Operation Blue Star (1984).

- ❖ He authored books on India, including The Heart of India and India's Unending Journey.

- ❖ He was knighted in 2002 and awarded the Padma Bhushan in 2005.

Grammy Awards 2026

- ❖ The 68th Annual Grammy Awards were held in Los Angeles to honour outstanding achievements in the global music industry.

- ❖ The Dalai Lama won his first Grammy Award in the category of Best Audio Book, Narration and Storytelling Recording.

- ❖ Steven Spielberg won Best Music Film for Music for John Williams, completing his EGOT (Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, Tony) with his first Grammy Award.

- ❖ "Golden" from K-pop Demon Hunters won Song Written for Visual Media, becoming the first K-pop song to win a Grammy Award.

Living Craft Treasure Award

- ❖ The Living Craft Treasure award was presented to senior artisans by the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister at the Mega Handicrafts Exhibition-cum-Conference in Chennai.

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- ❖ The Living Craft Treasure Award honours traditional craft artisans for their lifetime contributions to handicrafts.

- ❖ This award was instituted in 2013-2014 by the Government of Tamil Nadu.

- ❖ It is given to artisans aged 65 years or above who have served their craft for many years.

- ❖ Each award includes a cash prize of ₹1,00,000, an 8-gram gold medal, a Thamirapattiram, and a certificate.

- ❖ Ten artisans are selected each year for this award by the state government.

Poompuhar State Awards 2025-26

- ❖ The Poompuhar State Awards were presented to 10 artisans by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin in Chennai.

- ❖ The awards honour artisans for excellence in traditional crafts in Tamil Nadu.

- ❖ Each award carries a cash prize of ₹50,000, a 4-gram gold medal, a Thamirapattiram, and a certificate.

- ❖ The 10 recipients for 2025-26 are K. Venkatesh, C. Sangeetha, A. Babu, K. Reeta, M. Shabana, S. Murugan, A. Raj, A. Gavvabeevi, T. Celine Mary, and M. Kumar.

Kalaignar Ninaivu Kalaithurai Vithagar Award

- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister announced the Kalaignar Ninaivu Kalaithurai Vithagar Award for 2024-2025.

- ❖ The awards will be conferred on veteran actor M.N. Rajam (2024) and veteran filmmaker S.P. Muthuraman (2025).

- ❖ The award recognises outstanding contributions to Tamil cinema and the arts.

- ❖ Each awardee will receive a cash prize of ₹10 lakh and a memento.

- ❖ The award is named in memory of former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Kalaignar M. Karunanidhi.

Franz Edelman Award 2026

- ❖ India's "Anna Chakra" digital logistics system has been selected as a finalist for the 2026 Franz Edelman Award.

- ❖ Anna Chakra is a decision-support system that improves food-grain movement under the Public Distribution System (PDS).

- ❖ It was developed by the Department of Food and Public Distribution (DFPD) with the World Food Programme (WFP) and IIT-Delhi.

- ❖ The system was launched nationally in December 2025.
- ❖ It supports over 81 crore Public Distribution System (PDS) beneficiaries in India.
- ❖ The Franz Edelman Award is a global award in operations research and analytics.

Wiley Research Heroes Prize 2025

- ❖ Dr. Chandrakant Lahariya, an Indian public health expert, won the Wiley Research Heroes Prize 2025 in the "Impact Beyond Academia" category.
- ❖ He became the first Indian to receive this global research recognition.
- ❖ The Wiley Research Heroes Prize honours researchers whose work influences public policy and society.
- ❖ Dr. Lahariya's research focuses on vaccination programmes, maternal and child health, and primary healthcare systems.
- ❖ He is a former World Health Organization (WHO – World Health Organization) official.
- ❖ The other Wiley Research Heroes Prize 2025 awardees are Dr. Namrata Pathak, Dr. Khulood Alsayegh, Dr. Nandita Garud, and Dr. Emmanuel Peprah.

Crafoord Prize 2026

- ❖ Indian-origin climate scientist Veerabhadran Ramanathan won the Crafoord Prize 2026 for his work on climate science.
- ❖ The Crafoord Prize is given by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.
- ❖ It is awarded in fields not covered by the Nobel Prize, such as geosciences and astronomy.
- ❖ Veerabhadran Ramanathan is known for research on greenhouse gases (GHGs) and global warming.
- ❖ He discovered the role of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and other pollutants in climate change.
- ❖ The award is often called the "Nobel Prize of Geosciences."

Mumbai Mayor - Ritu Tawde

- ❖ Ritu Tawde is becoming the first Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Mayor of Mumbai in 44 years.
- ❖ The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) is the largest and richest municipal corporation in India.
- ❖ The BMC presented a record budget of about ₹74,427 crore for 2025–26.
- ❖ This budget is larger than the budgets of several smaller Indian States.

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Earthshot Prize 2026

❖ Mumbai will host the Earthshot Prize 2026, founded by Prince William, for the first time during Mumbai Climate Week.

❖ The prize awards £1 million to five global innovators annually for solutions in climate action, biodiversity, clean energy, air quality, and ocean restoration.

❖ Prince William highlighted India's role in climate leadership and sustainable innovation as a reason for hosting the event.

❖ The initiative reinforces India's commitment to achieving net-zero emissions by 2070 and promoting green technology.

R. Nallakannu (1925–2026) Demise

❖ R. Nallakannu, senior leader of the Communist Party of India (CPI), passed away on 25 February 2026 in Chennai at the age of 101 and was accorded State honours.

❖ R. Nallakannu was a leader of the CPI and served as the Tamil Nadu State Secretary for three terms from 1992.

❖ He was born in 1925 in Srivaikundam, Thoothukudi district, Tamil Nadu, and joined the Indian freedom movement as a school student.

❖ In 1949, he was arrested in the Nellai Conspiracy Case, which alleged that Communist leaders planned to overthrow the Government led by Jawaharlal Nehru.

❖ He was sentenced to life imprisonment in the Nellai Conspiracy Case along with K. Balathandayutham, P. Manikkam, I. Mayandibharathi, and many others.

❖ He was released from prison in 1956.

❖ He lived underground when the Communist Party was banned by the British government and later by the Congress government led by Jawaharlal Nehru.

❖ In 1964, when the Communist movement in India split after the Indo-China War, he chose to remain with the CPI.

❖ In 1999, he contested the Lok Sabha election from Coimbatore as a CPI candidate and lost to C. P. Radhakrishnan of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

❖ He led a campaign against illegal sand mining in the Thamirabarani river basin and, in 2010, filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in the Madras High Court, where he personally argued the case and obtained a stay order against sand mining.

❖ On 15 August 2022, he received the 'Thagaisal Thamizhar' award from the Government of Tamil Nadu, presented by M. K. Stalin, and he donated ₹10 lakh along with ₹5,000 of his own money to the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund.

Parliamentary Friendship Group

- ❖ Shrikant Eknath Shinde is the youngest MP to be nominated as the President of the India–Indonesia Parliamentary Friendship Group.

- ❖ Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) MP Supriya Sule leads the India-Singapore Parliamentary Friendship Group.

- ❖ A total of 64 Parliamentary Friendship Groups have been formed in the 18th Lok Sabha.

- ❖ Shrikant Shinde is a three-term MP and the son of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde.

- ❖ He has previously led international parliamentary delegations to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sierra Leone, Liberia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in May 2025.

- ❖ The group will work to strengthen cultural, economic, and social relations between India and Indonesia.

SPORTS

Asian Rifle/Pistol Championship 2026

- ❖ India finished first in the medal table at the Asian Rifle/Pistol Championship 2026, held at Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range, New Delhi.

- ❖ The country won 94 medals, including 51 gold, 23 silver, and 20 bronzes.

- ❖ Indian shooters won the 25m Centre Fire Pistol podium with Amanpreet Singh (gold), Gurpreet Singh (silver), and Ankur Goel (bronze).

- ❖ In the 50m Rifle Prone Women's event, Sift Kaur Samra won silver, and Tejaswani Sawant won bronze; the team secured gold.

BBC Awards 2025

- ❖ Smriti Mandhana was named BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year 2025 at an award ceremony held in New Delhi.

- ❖ Divya Deshmukh received the Emerging Player of the Year award for winning the FIDE Women's World Cup.

- ❖ Preethi Pal was awarded Para-Sportswoman of the Year for winning two bronze medals at the 2024 Paris Paralympics.

- ❖ Anjali Bhagwat received the Lifetime Achievement Award for her career in shooting and for reaching an Olympic final.

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IMPORTANT DAYS

World Leprosy Day 2026 - January 25

❖ The day aims to promote early diagnosis and complete treatment of leprosy and to eliminate discrimination against affected persons.

❖ World Leprosy Day is observed every year on the last Sunday of January.

❖ In India, it is observed on 30 January every year, coinciding with the death anniversary of MK Gandhi.

❖ Leprosy is a bacterial disease caused by Mycobacterium leprae that mainly affects the skin and nerves.

❖ The theme for 2026 is "Leprosy is curable, the real challenge is stigma".

International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust 2026 – January 27

❖ It is observed to mark the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Nazi concentration and death camp in 1945.

❖ The Holocaust during the Second World War led to the killing of 6 million Jews and millions of other victims.

❖ The theme for 2026 is "Holocaust Remembrance for Dignity and Human Rights".

Indian Coast Guard Day 2026 - February 01

❖ The day is observed to honour the bravery, dedication, and service of the Indian Coast Guard.

❖ The aim is to recognise the role of the Indian Coast Guard in protecting India's coastline, maritime security, and marine environment.

❖ The day marks the formation of the Indian Coast Guard on 1 February 1977.

❖ The Indian Coast Guard protects India's territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and conducts search and rescue operations.

World Neglected Tropical Diseases Day 2026 – January 30

❖ The day aims to create awareness and accelerate efforts to control, eliminate, and eradicate Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs).

❖ The day was first observed in 2020 by the WHO.

❖ NTDs are a group of preventable and treatable infectious diseases affecting poor and vulnerable populations.

- ❖ About 1.4 billion people required NTD interventions in 2024, a 36% decline since 2010.
- ❖ As of 2026, 58 countries have eliminated at least one NTD, and the WHO targets 100 countries by 2030.
- ❖ The theme of 2026 is "Unite. Act. Eliminate".

World Wetlands Day 2026 - February 02

- ❖ The day is marked to raise awareness about the importance of wetlands for people and nature.
- ❖ Wetlands include marshes, lakes, rivers, mangroves, lagoons, and human-made wetlands like rice fields.
- ❖ On this day in 1971, the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention) adopted in Ramsar city, Iran
- ❖ The theme for 2026 is "Wetlands and Traditional Knowledge: Celebrating Cultural Heritage."

Rheumatoid Arthritis Awareness Day 2026 - February 02

- ❖ The day aims to create awareness about rheumatoid arthritis, early diagnosis and proper medical treatment.
- ❖ It is observed that rheumatoid arthritis is a chronic autoimmune disease and not just normal joint pain.
- ❖ Rheumatoid arthritis occurs when the immune system attacks healthy joint tissues, causing pain, swelling and stiffness.
- ❖ The disease can also affect organs like the heart, lungs and eyes, making it a systemic disorder.

India Energy Week 2026

- ❖ India Energy Week (IEW) 2026 was held in January 2026 in Goa.
- ❖ It aims to promote energy security, sustainability and global cooperation in the energy sector.
- ❖ IEW 2026 highlighted India's strategy of energy addition, focusing on both conventional and renewable energy sources.
- ❖ The event is organised under the patronage of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoP&NG).

World Cancer Day 2026 – February 04

❖ The day was observed to raise awareness about cancer prevention, early detection, and treatment.

❖ It was established following the World Summit Against Cancer for the New Millennium, held in Paris in 2000.

❖ The day is led by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC).

❖ The theme for the year 2026 is "United by Unique".

International Day of Human Fraternity 2026 – February 04

❖ The day is observed to promote peace, unity, and mutual respect among people of different religions and cultures.

❖ It was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2019.

❖ The observance is inspired by the Document on Human Fraternity, signed in Abu Dhabi in 2019.

❖ The theme for the year 2026 is "Dialogue Over Division."

International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation 2026 - February 06

❖ On 20 December 2012, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted a resolution and officially designated this international day.

❖ The concept of "Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation" was first introduced in 2003 by the Inter-African Committee (IAC).

❖ The aim is to create awareness and strengthen global efforts to eliminate Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

❖ The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) target aims to eliminate FGM by 2030.

❖ The theme for 2026 is "Towards 2030: No End To FGM Without Sustained Commitment and Investment".

International Epilepsy Day 2026 - February 10

❖ This day has been observed on the second Monday of February every year since 2015.

❖ The day aims to raise awareness about epilepsy and promote better treatment and support for patients.

❖ Epilepsy is a neurological disorder affecting about 50 million people worldwide.

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❖ In India, more than one crore people live with epilepsy, with higher prevalence in rural areas.

❖ The theme for the year 2026 is "#EpilepsyPledge".

National Deworming Day 2026 - February 10

❖ National Deworming Day is a public health programme launched in 2015 under the National Health Mission (NHM).

❖ The day aims to prevent intestinal worm infections in children and adolescents (1–19 years) by giving Albendazole tablets.

❖ The programme is implemented by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) through schools and Anganwadi centres.

❖ It targets soil-transmitted helminth (STH) infections such as roundworm, whipworm, and hookworm.

World Pulses Day 2026 - February 10

❖ The day highlights the importance of pulses for nutrition and food security.

❖ The day was declared by the UN in 2019, after the International Year of Pulses (2016).

❖ The day aims to promote the production and consumption of pulses such as lentils, chickpeas, beans, and peas.

❖ Pulses are rich in protein, fibre, iron, and vitamins, and are an important part of the Indian diet.

International Day of the Arabian Leopard 2026 – February 10

❖ The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) declared this day in June 2023 through a resolution.

❖ The Arabian leopard (Panthera pardus nimr) is a critically endangered subspecies found in the Arabian Peninsula.

❖ Fewer than 200 Arabian leopards are believed to remain in the wild in Saudi Arabia, Oman, Yemen, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

World Unani Day 2026 – February 11

❖ The day is observed to honour the birth anniversary of Hakim Ajmal Khan, a pioneer of Unani medicine in India.

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❖ The day aims to promote awareness about Unani medicine and its role in healthcare.

❖ It also encourages research, education, and integration of traditional Unani practices with modern medicine.

❖ The theme for 2026 is "Innovation and Evidence in Unani Practice."

International Day of Women and Girls in Science 2026 - February 11

❖ The day was observed under the leadership of the UN with the support of UNESCO.

❖ It was established by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2015, and first observed in 2016.

❖ The day aims to promote full and equal access to and participation of women and girls in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields.

❖ The theme for 2026 is "From Vision to Impact: Redefining STEM by Closing the Gender Gap."

❖ UNESCO data states that women account for 35 % of science graduates and one in three researchers worldwide.

International Day for the Prevention of Violent Extremism as and when Conducive to Terrorism 2026 – February 12

❖ The observance aims to raise awareness about violent extremism linked to terrorism and promote international cooperation.

❖ It was established by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2022.

❖ The Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism was presented by the UN Secretary-General in 2016.

❖ The theme for the year 2026 is "Preventing Violent Extremism in the Age of New and Emerging Technologies".

National Women's Day 2026 - February 13

❖ The day commemorates the birth anniversary of Sarojini Naidu.

❖ Sarojini Naidu was born on 13 February 1879 in Hyderabad and was a poet, freedom fighter, and political leader.

❖ She became the first Indian woman President of the Indian National Congress (INC) in 1925.

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❖ She later became the first woman Governor of the United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh) in 1947.

❖ She was known as the "Nightingale of India" for her patriotic poetry.

❖ The day aims to promote women's empowerment, gender equality, education, and leadership in society.

National Productivity Day 2026 – February 12

❖ The day is celebrated by the National Productivity Council (NPC), which was established in 1958 under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

❖ 2026 marks the 68th Foundation Day of the National Productivity Council, and National Productivity Week is observed from 12–18 February 2026 across India.

❖ The celebrations aim to improve competitiveness, quality, and productivity in all sectors of the Indian economy.

❖ The theme for the year 2026 is "Clusters as Growth Engine: Maximizing Productivity in MSMEs."

International Childhood Cancer Day 2026 – February 15

❖ It aims to raise awareness about childhood cancer and promote early detection and equal access to treatment.

❖ The day was first recognised in 2002 by the International Confederation of Childhood Cancer Parent Organizations (ICCCPO).

❖ Over 400,000 children and adolescents are diagnosed with cancer globally each year.

❖ It supports the goal of the WHO to increase the childhood cancer survival rate to at least 60% by 2030.

❖ The theme for the year 2026 is "Demonstrating Impact — From Challenge to Change."

Mizoram Foundation Day 2026

❖ Mizoram became a 23rd state on 20 February 1987 after the signing of the Mizoram Accord in 1986.

❖ The Mizoram Accord was signed between the Government of India and the Mizo National Front (MNF).

❖ Mizoram was earlier a Union Territory (UT) from 1972 under the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971.

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❖ Statehood was granted through the 53rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1986.

❖ Mizoram shares international borders with Myanmar and Bangladesh.

Arunachal Pradesh Foundation Day 2026

❖ Arunachal Pradesh attained statehood on 20 February 1987.

❖ It was earlier known as the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA).

❖ It became a Union Territory (UT) in 1972 and was renamed Arunachal Pradesh.

❖ Statehood was granted under the State of Arunachal Pradesh Act through the 55th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1986.

❖ The state shares international borders with Bhutan, China, and Myanmar.

World Day of Social Justice 2026 - February 20

❖ The day aims to spread awareness about poverty eradication, decent work opportunities, gender equality, and social inclusion in society.

❖ It was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2007.

❖ The day supports Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 1 (No Poverty), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and 10 (Reduced Inequalities).

❖ The 2026 theme is "Renewed Commitment to Social Development and Social Justice".

International Mother Language Day 2026 - February 21

❖ The day aims to promote linguistic diversity and multilingual education worldwide.

❖ It was first proclaimed in 1999 by UNESCO and later recognized in 2002 by the United Nations General Assembly.

❖ It commemorates the 1952 Language Movement in Bangladesh.

❖ The theme for the year 2026 is "Youth Voices on Multilingual Education."

World Pangolin Day 2026 - February 21

❖ The day aims to raise awareness about pangolin conservation and illegal wildlife trade.

❖ It was first celebrated in 2012 and is observed annually on the third Saturday of February.

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- ❖ All eight pangolin species are listed under Appendix I of the CITES.
- ❖ The Indian pangolin and Chinese pangolin are found in India.

100th World Thinking Day 2026 – February 22

- ❖ The day is observed by Girl Scouts and Girl Guides across the world.
- ❖ This day aims to promote friendship, unity, and leadership among girls and young women.
- ❖ It was first celebrated in 1926 after the 4th World Conference held in New York.
- ❖ The theme for 2026 is "Our Friendship", announced by the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

Central Excise Day 2026 - February 24

- ❖ It commemorates the Central Excise and Salt Act enacted on 24 February 1944, which unified 11 excise laws into one framework.
- ❖ Central Excise is an indirect tax levied on goods manufactured in India.
- ❖ After the introduction of Goods and Services Tax (GST) in 2017, excise duty continues mainly on petroleum and tobacco products.
- ❖ The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) administers Central Excise, Customs, and Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST).
- ❖ The CBIC functions under the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance.

National Science Day 2026 - February 28

- ❖ The day aims to promote scientific temper and encourage interest in science among people.
- ❖ It is celebrated to mark the discovery of the Raman Effect in 1928 by C. V. Raman.
- ❖ C. V. Raman received the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930 for this discovery.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is "Women in Science: Catalysing Viksit Bharat."

MISCELLANEOUS

QS Europe Rankings 2026

- ❖ The QS Europe Rankings 2026 have been released, listing the top universities across Europe.

- ❖ The University of Oxford secured the first position, rising from third place in the 2025 rankings.

- ❖ ETH Zurich ranked second, retaining its position as the highest-ranked university in continental Europe.

- ❖ Imperial College London and University College London (UCL) jointly secured the third rank.

- ❖ The rankings are based on indicators such as research quality, academic reputation, employability, and international engagement.

QS 2026 - Most Affordable City for International Students

- ❖ Delhi ranked as the world's most affordable city for international students in the QS Best Student Cities 2026 ranking.

- ❖ The report "India's 155 million Student Mandate" was prepared by Knight Frank, Deloitte India, and QS.

- ❖ Mumbai ranked 11th, and Bengaluru ranked 15th in the affordability list.

- ❖ The ranking evaluated 150 cities worldwide across six indicators, including affordability, employer activity, university rankings, and city desirability.

- ❖ India has about 155 million people in the 18–23 age group, making it one of the largest higher-education markets in the world.

Great Place to Work Certification - SAIL

- ❖ Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) received the "Great Place to Work" certification for February 2026–February 2027.

- ❖ It is the third consecutive year SAIL has earned this certification.

- ❖ The certification is awarded by the Great Place to Work Institute based on employee feedback and the Trust Index survey.

- ❖ SAIL is a Maharatna Public Sector Undertaking (PSU).

Devnimori Buddha Relics

❖ India sent the Devnimori Buddha relics to Sri Lanka for a public exposition in Colombo from February 4–10, 2026.

❖ The relics are preserved at The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda (MSU), Vadodara.

❖ They will be displayed at the Gangaramaya Temple in Colombo.

❖ The relics were discovered in 1957 at the Devnimori archaeological site in the Aravalli district, Gujarat.

❖ The relic casket has inscriptions in Brahmi script and Sanskrit.

50 Years of Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act

❖ India marked 50 years of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act (BLSA), 1976, which abolished bonded labour.

❖ The Act declared bonded labour illegal, cancelled bonded debts, and ordered the release of bonded labourers.

❖ District Magistrates and Vigilance Committees are responsible for identifying, releasing, and rehabilitating bonded labourers.

❖ The law provides rehabilitation support such as financial assistance, land, housing, and livelihood programmes.

❖ Articles 21, 23, and 24 of the Constitution of India protect people from forced labour and exploitation.

❖ Section 143 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, punishes trafficking and forced labour.

Ancient Egypt Tool

❖ A copper tool excavated in Egypt has been re-identified as a possible bow drill after fresh microscopic analysis.

❖ The artefact was originally classified as a simple awl when it was discovered in the 1920s.

❖ If confirmed, the finding could push back evidence of rotary drilling in Ancient Egypt by nearly 2,000 years.

❖ Rotary drilling was used in woodworking, bead production, and furniture-making in ancient civilisations.

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Iron Age Temple – Denmark

- ❖ Archaeologists discovered a 2,000-year-old Iron Age temple complex at Hedegaard in Denmark.
- ❖ The site is located near Ejstrupholm in the Jutland peninsula of northern Europe.
- ❖ The temple dates to around 0 AD (Anno Domini) during the Iron Age period.
- ❖ Excavations by Museum Midtjylland revealed a fortified settlement with religious, political, and economic structures.
- ❖ The Iron Age in northern Europe lasted roughly from 500 BC to 800 AD.

Ol Chiki Script – 100 Years Celebration

- ❖ The President of India inaugurated the Centenary Celebration of the Ol Chiki script in New Delhi to mark 100 years of its invention.
- ❖ The Ol Chiki script was invented in 1925 by Pandit Raghunath Murmu of Mayurbhanj, Odisha.
- ❖ It was created to provide a separate script for the Santhali language.
- ❖ The script consists of 30 letters and is completely phonetic in nature.
- ❖ The Santhali language was included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India by the 92nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003.
- ❖ In December 2025, the Constitution of India was translated into Santhali using the Ol Chiki script.

Royal Indian Navy Revolt 1946

- ❖ The 80th anniversary of the 1946 Royal Indian Navy (RIN) Revolt is observed on 18 February 2026.
- ❖ The revolt was a five-day uprising (18–23 February 1946) by Indian naval ratings against British colonial authority.
- ❖ It began as a protest over poor food, low wages, and racial discrimination, and spread to 78 ships and 20 shore establishments across India.
- ❖ Nearly 20,000 sailors participated, with workers, students, and civilians joining in solidarity, showing Hindu-Muslim unity.

Charax Spasinou City

- ❖ Charax Spasinou was an ancient city in southern Mesopotamia, near the Tigris River in present-day Iraq, recently rediscovered using advanced archaeological technology.

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- ❖ The city was founded in 324 BCE during the final years of Alexander the Great and was originally named Alexandria to secure control over key trade routes.

- ❖ It was later rebuilt and renamed Charax Spasinou, possibly under Seleucid or Characene rule, after floods and political instability damaged the original settlement.

- ❖ The city served as a major trade hub connecting riverine and overland routes, facilitating commerce between Arabia, Persia, and the Mediterranean region.

- ❖ Modern researchers used non-invasive tools such as drones and magnetometers to digitally map over 500 square kilometres, revealing buried walls and structures without large-scale excavation.

- ❖ The rediscovery highlights the importance of Hellenistic urban centres in Mesopotamia and reshapes understanding of post-Alexandrian trade and administration in the region.

Principle of Just Deserts

- ❖ The Principle of Just Deserts explains that people should receive rewards or punishments based on their actions.

- ❖ A person who does good deeds deserves rewards, while someone who commits a crime deserves punishment.

- ❖ Punishment should match the seriousness of the crime, based on fairness and proportionality.

- ❖ The principle has three main parts: Deserver (who deserves), Deserved Modes of Treatment (what is deserved), and Bases of Desert (why it is deserved).

- ❖ Deserved outcomes can be positive (rewards, respect) or negative (punishment, fines), depending on actions.

- ❖ The principle is based on retributive justice, where people are morally responsible for their choices.

- ❖ Philosophers like Immanuel Kant and Aristotle supported the idea that punishment or benefits should be fair and proportionate to merit.

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