

# THE HINDU REVIEW

• **Current Affairs**  • **Monthly Capsule**

**FEBRUARY 2026**



- Union Budget 2026** •
- BAFTA Awards 2026** •
- WPL 2026** •
- Grammy Awards 2026** •
- ICC U-19 World Cup title** •

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## Most Important Article of the Month

### UNION BUDGET 2026-27

Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman tabled the Union Budget 2026-27 in Parliament. This first Budget prepared in Kartavya Bhawan is inspired by three core principles that aim to drive India's economic growth, empower citizens, and ensure inclusive development.

#### Budget Estimates at a Glance

- **Non-debt receipts:** ₹36.5 lakh crore
- **Total expenditure:** ₹53.5 lakh crore
- **Centre's net tax receipts:** ₹28.7 lakh crore
- **Gross market borrowings:** ₹17.2 lakh crore
- **Fiscal deficit:** 4.3% of GDP (BE 2026-27)
- **Debt-to-GDP ratio:** 55.6% of GDP
- **Public capital expenditure:** ₹12.2 lakh crore

#### THREE KARTAVYAS: The Foundation

The budget is structured around three key principles designed to steer India's development:

- **First Kartavya:** Accelerate and sustain economic growth by enhancing productivity, competitiveness, and building resilience to global dynamics.
- **Second Kartavya:** Fulfil people's aspirations and build their capacity to become strong partners in India's prosperity.
- **Third Kartavya:** Aligned with "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas," ensuring every family, community, region, and sector has equitable access to resources and opportunities.

#### FIRST KARTAVYA: ACCELERATING ECONOMIC GROWTH

##### 1. Scaling Up Manufacturing in Strategic Sectors

###### Biopharma SHAKTI Initiative

- ₹10,000 crore outlay over 5 years to develop India as a global biopharma manufacturing hub
- Three new National Institutes of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER) to be established
- Seven existing NIPERs to be upgraded
- Network of 1,000+ accredited clinical trial sites to be created

###### India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0

- Focus on producing equipment, materials, and designing full-stack Indian intellectual property
- Industry-led research and training centers to develop skilled workforce

###### Other Manufacturing Initiatives

- Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme outlay increased to ₹40,000 crore
- Dedicated Rare Earth Corridors in Odisha, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu
- Three dedicated Chemical Parks through challenge route
- Hi-Tech Tool Rooms by CPSEs at two locations for precision manufacturing

- Scheme for Enhancement of Construction and Infrastructure Equipment
- Container Manufacturing Scheme with ₹10,000+ crore allocation over 5 years

#### Integrated Textile Sector Programme

- National Fibre Scheme for self-reliance in natural and man-made fibres
- Textile Expansion and Employment Scheme to modernize traditional clusters
- Mega Textile Parks to enhance value addition
- Mahatma Gandhi Gram Swaraj initiative for khadi, handloom, and handicrafts

#### 2. Rejuvenating Legacy Industrial Sectors

- Scheme to revive 200 legacy industrial clusters through infrastructure and technology upgradation to improve cost competitiveness and efficiency

#### 3. Creating "Champion SMEs" and Supporting Micro Enterprises

- ₹10,000 crore SME Growth Fund to create future Champions
- Self-Reliant India Fund supplemented with additional ₹2,000 crore
- Professional Institutions (ICAI, ICSI, ICMAI) to design short-term courses for 'Corporate Mitras' in Tier-II and Tier-III towns

#### 4. Delivering Powerful Infrastructure Push

##### Capital Expenditure

- Public capital expenditure increased to ₹12.2 lakh crore in FY 2026-27
- Infrastructure Risk Guarantee Fund to strengthen private developer confidence
- REITs for recycling significant real estate assets of CPSEs

##### Transportation & Logistics

- New Dedicated Freight Corridors connecting Dankuni (East) to Surat (West)
- 20 new National Waterways to be operationalised over 5 years
- Training institutes as Regional Centres of Excellence for manpower development
- Ship repair ecosystem at Varanasi and Patna for inland waterways
- Coastal Cargo Promotion Scheme to increase inland waterways and coastal shipping share from 6% to 12% by 2047
- Seaplane VGF Scheme for incentivising seaplane manufacturing and operations

#### 5. Ensuring Long-Term Energy Security

- ₹20,000 crore outlay over 5 years for Carbon Capture Utilization and Storage (CCUS) technologies

**6. Developing City Economic Regions**

- ₹5,000 crore allocation per city economic region over 5 years through challenge mode
- Seven High-Speed Rail corridors as growth connectors:
  1. Mumbai-Pune
  2. Pune-Hyderabad
  3. Hyderabad-Bengaluru
  4. Hyderabad-Chennai
  5. Chennai-Bengaluru
  6. Delhi-Varanasi
  7. Varanasi-Siliguri

**Financial Sector Reforms**

- High Level Committee on Banking for Viksit Bharat to review and align banking sector
- Restructuring of Power Finance Corporation and Rural Electrification Corporation
- Comprehensive review of Foreign Exchange Management (Non-debt Instruments) Rules
- Municipal Bond incentives of ₹100 crore for single issuances exceeding ₹1,000 crore

**SECOND KARTAVYA: FULFILLING ASPIRATIONS & BUILDING CAPACITY**

**Creating Professionals for Viksit Bharat**

**Allied Health Professionals**

- Upgrade existing Allied Health Professional (AHP) institutions
- Establish new AHP institutions in private and government sectors
- Target: 100,000 additional Allied Health Professionals over 5 years

**Medical Hubs & AYUSH**

- Five Regional Medical Hubs to promote India as a medical tourism hub
- Three new All India Institutes of Ayurveda

**Animal Husbandry**

- Scale up veterinary professionals by 20,000+
- Loan-linked capital subsidy scheme for veterinary colleges, hospitals, diagnostic labs, and breeding facilities



**Orange Economy (Creative Technologies)**

- Indian Institute of Creative Technologies, Mumbai to establish Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics (AVGC) Content Creator Labs in 15,000 secondary schools and 500 colleges

**Education**

- Five University Townships in major industrial and logistic corridors through challenge route
- One girls' hostel per district through VGF/capital support
- High-Powered 'Education to Employment and Enterprise' Standing Committee

**Tourism & Heritage**

- National Council for Hotel Management upgraded to National Institute of Hospitality
- Pilot scheme for upskilling 10,000 guides in 20 tourist sites
- National Destination Digital Knowledge Grid for documenting cultural and heritage sites
- 15 archaeological sites (including Lothal, Dholavira, Rakhigarhi, Adichanallur, Sarnath, Hastinapur, and Leh Palace) to be developed into cultural destinations

**Sports**

- Khelo India Mission to transform the Sports sector over the next decade

**THIRD KARTAVYA: INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT (SABKA SAATH, SABKA VIKAS)**

**1. Increasing Farmer Incomes**

- Integrated development of 500 reservoirs and Amrit Sarovars
- High Value Agriculture support for coconut, sandalwood, cocoa, and cashew in coastal areas
- Coconut Promotion Scheme to increase production and productivity
- **Bharat-VISTAAR:** Multilingual AI tool integrating AgriStack portals with ICAR agricultural practices

**2. Empowering Divyangjan**

- Divyangjan Kaushal Yojana offering task-oriented roles in IT, AVGC, Hospitality, and Food & Beverage sectors

**3. Mental Health & Trauma Care Commitment**

- NIMHANS-2 to be established in North India
- National Mental Health Institutes in Ranchi and Tezpur to be upgraded as Regional Apex Institutions

**4. Focus on Purvodaya States & North-East Region**

- Integrated East Coast Industrial Corridor with node at Durgapur
- Five tourism destinations in Purvodaya States
- 4,000 e-buses deployment
- Buddhist Circuits development in Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, and Tripura

**5. Finance Commission Grants**

- ₹1.4 lakh crore provided to States for FY 2026-27 as recommended by 16th Finance Commission

**DIRECT TAX REFORMS**

**New Income Tax Act**

- New Income Tax Act, 2025 to come into effect from April 2026
- Simplified forms redesigned for easy compliance by ordinary citizens

**Ease of Living Measures**

- Interest awarded by Motor Accident Claims Tribunal exempt from Income Tax
- TCS rate on overseas tour packages reduced to 2% (from 2-20%)
- TCS rate on LRS remittances for education and medical reduced to 2% (from 5%)
- Simplified TDS provisions for manpower supply
- Single window filing with depositories for Form 15G/15H
- Tax return filing timeline extended from December 31 to March 31 with nominal fees
- Staggered tax return filing timeline
- 6-month foreign asset disclosure scheme for small taxpayers

**Penalty & Prosecution Rationalization**

- IT assessment and penalty proceedings integrated
- Taxpayers allowed to update returns even after reassessment (at 10% additional tax)
- Immunity for income misreporting with additional tax payment
- Decriminalization of non-production of books and TDS non-payment in kind
- Immunity from prosecution for non-disclosure of foreign assets below ₹20 lakh (retrospective from October 1, 2024)

**Support for IT Sector**

- Software development, IT-enabled services, and contract R&D services clubbed under single "Information Technology Services" category with 15.5% safe harbour margin
- Safe harbour threshold enhanced from ₹300 crore to ₹2,000 crore
- 5-year continuation of safe harbour through automated process
- Fast-tracked Unilateral Advanced Pricing Agreement (APA) process within 2 years

**Attracting Global Business & Investment**

- Tax holiday till 2047 for foreign cloud service companies using Indian data centers
- 15% safe harbour for related entity data center services
- 2% safe harbour for non-resident component warehousing in bonded warehouses
- 5-year exemption for non-residents providing capital goods to toll manufacturers
- 5-year exemption for non-resident experts' global income
- MAT exemption for non-residents paying presumptive tax

**Cooperatives**

- Extended deductions for cooperative societies supplying cattle feed and cotton seed
- Inter-cooperative dividend income deductible in new tax regime
- 3-year dividend exemption for notified national cooperative federations

**Other Direct Tax Proposals**

- Buyback taxation as capital gains for all shareholders; additional tax for promoters (22% corporate, 30% non-corporate)
- TCS rationalization on alcoholic liquor, scrap, minerals (2%), and tendu leaves (2%)
- STT on Futures raised to 0.05% (from 0.02%)
- STT on options raised to 0.15% (from 0.1-0.125%)
- MAT made final tax at 14% (from 15%) with no further credit accumulation from April 1, 2026

**INDIRECT TAX REFORMS**

**Tariff Simplification**

**Marine, Leather & Textile Products**

- Duty-free import limit for seafood processing inputs increased from 1% to 3% of FOB value
- Duty-free imports permitted for leather/synthetic footwear exports

**Energy Transition & Security**

- Extended basic customs duty exemption for Lithium-Ion Cell manufacturing
- Exemption on sodium antimonate for solar glass manufacture

**Nuclear Power & Critical Minerals**

- Existing exemptions on nuclear power project imports extended till 2035
- Exemption on capital goods for critical mineral processing

**Biogas & Aviation**

- Biogas value excluded from Central Excise on biogas-blended CNG
- Basic customs duty exempted on civilian, training aircraft components and defence sector aircraft parts

**Electronics**

- Exemption on microwave oven components

**Special Economic Zones**

- One-time concessional duty rates for DTA sales by eligible manufacturing units

**Ease of Living (Customs)**

- Tariff rate on dutiable goods for personal use reduced from 20% to 10%
- 17 drugs/medicines exempted from basic customs duty
- Duty-free personal import for drugs/medicines and food for 7 rare diseases
- Revised baggage clearance provisions during international travel

**Customs Process Simplification**

**Trust-Based Systems**

- AEO duty deferral enhanced from 15 to 30 days for Tier 2-3
- Advance ruling validity extended from 3 to 5 years
- Auto-notification of goods arrival for clearance completion
- Warehouse framework transformed to operator-centric system with self-declarations

**Ease of Doing Business**

- Single digital window for seamless cargo clearance approvals by end of FY
- Food, drugs, and wildlife product clearance operationalized by April 2026
- Immediate Customs clearance for compliance-free goods
- Customs Integrated System (CIS) rollout in 2 years
- Non-intrusive scanning with AI technology expansion for container inspection

**New Export Opportunities**

- Fish catch in Exclusive Economic Zone/High Seas made duty-free; foreign port landing treated as export
- Complete removal of ₹10 lakh value cap on courier exports

**Dispute Settlement**

- Honest taxpayers can settle disputes by paying additional amount in lieu of penalty

**Grammy Awards 2026 Full Winners List**

Here Is The Full List Of Winners 2026

**General/Major Categories**

- **Song of the Year:** Billie Eilish – Wildflower
- **Best New Artist:** Olivia Dean
- **Producer of the Year:** Cirkut
- **Songwriter of the Year:** Amy Allen

**Pop**

- **Best Pop Solo Performance:** Lola Young – Messy
- **Best Pop Vocal Album:** Lady Gaga – Mayhem
- **Best Pop Duo/Group Performance:** Cynthia Erivo & Ariana Grande – Defying Gravity
- **Best Dance-Pop Recording:** Lady Gaga – Abracadabra

**Country**

- **Best Contemporary Country Album:** Jelly Roll – Beautifully Broken
- **Best Country Solo Performance:** Chris Stapleton – Bad As I Used to Be
- **Best Traditional Country Album:** Zach Top – Ain’t In It for My Health
- **Best Country Song:** Tyler Childers – Bitin’ List

**Rap/Hip-Hop**

- **Best Rap Album:** Kendrick Lamar – GNX
- **Best Rap Performance:** Clipse – Chains & Whips (ft. Kendrick Lamar & Pharrell Williams)

- **Best Rap Song:** Kendrick Lamar ft Lefty Gunplay – TV Off
- **Best Melodic Rap Performance:** Kendrick Lamar with SZA – Luther

**R&B/Soul**

- **Best R&B Album:** Leon Thomas – Mutt
- **Best R&B Performance:** Kehlani – Folded
- **Best Traditional R&B Performance:** Leon Thomas – Vibes Don’t Lie
- **Best R&B Song:** Kehlani – Folded

**Rock/Metal/Alternative**

- **Best Rock Album:** Turnstile – Never Enough
- **Best Rock Performance:** Yungblud – Changes (Live from Villa Park, Back to the Beginning)
- **Best Rock Song:** Nine Inch Nails – As Alive as You Need Me to Be
- **Best Metal Performance:** Turnstile – Birds
- **Best Alternative Music Album:** The Cure – Songs of a Lost World
- **Best Alternative Music Performance:** The Cure – Alone

**Dance/Electronic**

- **Best Dance/Electronic Album:** FKA twigs – Euseuxia
- **Best Dance/Electronic Recording:** Tame Impala – End of Summer

**Latin/Global**

- **Best Música Urbana Album:** Bad Bunny – Debí Tirar Más Fotos
- **Best Global Music Performance:** Tyla – PUSH 2 START

**Folk/Jazz/Classical**

- **Best Folk Album:** I’m With Her – Wild and Clear and Blue
- **Best Jazz Performance:** Chick Corea, Christian McBride & Brian Blade – Windows (live)
- **Best Orchestral Performance:** Andris Nelsons, conductor (Boston Symphony Orchestra) – Messiaen: Turangalîla-Symphonie

**Visual Media/Soundtracks**

- **Best Compilation Soundtrack for Visual Media:** Sinners
- **Best Song Written for Visual Media:** Huntr/x – Golden (from KPop: Demon Hunters)
- **Best Music Video:** Doechii – Anxiety

**Other Categories**

- **Best Audio Book, Narration, and Storytelling Recording:** “Meditations: The Reflections Of His Holiness The Dalai Lama,” Dalai Lama
- **Best Comedy Album:** Your Friend, Nate Bargatze,
- **Best Children’s Music Album** – Harmony by FYÜTCH & Aura V
- **Best Contemporary Instrumental Album:** Brightside,” ARKAI

- **Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance:** Dennehy: Land Of Winter
- **Best Choral Performance:** "Ortiz: Yanga"

**WPL Titles in 2026**

The **Women's Premier League 2026** final delivered one of the greatest matches in women's T20 history. **Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB)** chased down a massive 204-run target, the highest successful chase ever in the WPL, to defeat Delhi Capitals (DC) by six wickets at Vadodara. Powered by a breathtaking partnership between Smriti Mandhana and Georgia Voll, the match went down to the final over, sealing **RCB's second WPL title** and extending Delhi Capitals painful run of final defeats.

**Key Highlights Of WPL Final 2026**

- **Delhi Capitals Post a Huge Total:** Batting first, Delhi Capitals put up a formidable 203 for 4, the **second-highest first-innings score in any women's T20 final**. Jemimah Rodrigues anchored the innings with a fluent 57, while Laura Wolvaardt contributed 44.
- **Mandhana-Voll Partnership Rewrites Records:** RCB's chase looked daunting after losing an early wicket at 9 for 1, but Smriti Mandhana and Georgia Voll turned the final on its head. The duo added a sensational **165 runs off just 92 balls, the highest partnership for any wicket in WPL history**.
- **Late Drama Keeps the Final Alive:** Just when the chase seemed under control, DC struck back. Voll was dismissed for 79, followed by quick wickets of Richa Ghosh and Mandhana, leaving RCB under pressure in the final overs. From a near-certain win, the equation suddenly tightened, setting up a dramatic finish that had fans on the edge of their seats.

**Player Of the Match In WPL Final 2026**

- Smriti Mandhana was deservedly adjudged the Player of the Match for her sublime knock that anchored RCB's historic chase in the WPL 2026 final.
- Walking in after an early setback, the RCB skipper played with a perfect blend of composure and aggression, smashing 87 off just 41 balls, laced with 12 fours and three sixes.
- Her innings not only set the tempo in the record 204-run chase the highest ever in a WPL or IPL final but also dismantled Delhi Capitals' bowling under immense pressure.

**WPL 2026 Winners (Category wise) & Prize Money**

**Team Awards**

- **Winner:** Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) – ₹6 Crore
- **Runner-up:** Delhi Capitals (DC) – ₹3 Crore

**Individual Awards**

- **Orange Cap (Most Runs):** Smriti Mandhana – ₹5 Lakh
- **Purple Cap (Most Wickets):** Sophie Devine – ₹5 Lakh
- **Most Valuable Player (MVP):** Sophie Devine – ₹5 Lakh
- **Emerging Player:** Nandini Sharma – ₹5 Lakh

**Australian Open 2026**

**Australian Open 2026 Winners in Each Category**

- **Men's Singles Champion:** Carlos Alcaraz
- **Women's Singles Champion:** Rybakina
- **Men's Doubles Champion:** Neal Skupski & Christian Harrison
- **Women's Doubles Champion:** Elise Mertens and Zhang Shuai
- **Mix Doubles Champion:** Gadecki and Peers

**16th Finance Commission**

The balance of money between the **Centre and the States** has entered a new phase. The 16th Finance Commission, whose recommendations will apply from 2026-27 to 2030-31, has decided to retain the States' share at 41% of the divisible tax pool but has significantly altered how that share is distributed. By introducing GDP contribution as a new criterion and ending revenue deficit grants, the Commission has signalled a shift towards efficiency, growth and fiscal discipline, making this a high-importance topic for competitive exams.

**41% Tax Devolution Retained: What It Means**

- **Despite demands from 18 states to raise their share to 50%, the Commission retained the 41% devolution rate.**
- 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**, while signalling that fiscal federalism will now focus more on quality of spending rather than only higher transfers.

**GDP Contribution Added**

- A major innovation is the **introduction of State GDP contribution as a new parameter** in the **horizontal devolution formula, with a 10% weight**.
- This criterion recognizes states that contribute more to national economic growth.
- The Commission clarified that this is a directional change, not a radical shift, to balance efficiency with equity.

**Changes in Horizontal Devolution Formula**

- Along with GDP contribution, the Commission made several adjustments.
- It removed the **2.5% weight for tax effort, increased the population weight by 2.5 percentage points**, and 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.
- This redistribution has major political and economic implications.

No Revenue Deficit Grants

- **For the first time, the Commission recommended zero Revenue Deficit Grants (RDGs).**
- It argued that RDGs weaken incentives for fiscal reform by encouraging dependency.
- States, it said, have sufficient scope to increase revenues and rationalise expenditure.
- This is a major departure from earlier Finance Commissions and reflects a strong push towards self-reliance and fiscal responsibility at the state level.

Local Bodies and Disaster Management Funding

- 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.
- This shows a preference for functional, purpose-linked grants rather than general fiscal support.

**RBI MPC February 2026**

The **RBI MPC February 2026 meeting** is important for banks, borrowers, investors, and common people. In this meeting, the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** decided to **keep the repo rate unchanged at 5.25%** and continue with a **neutral monetary policy stance**.

The decision was taken during the **59th meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** held from **February 4 to 6, 2026**, under the chairmanship of **Sanjay Malhotra**, Governor of RBI.

This policy decision reflects RBI’s balanced approach towards **controlling inflation** while **supporting economic growth**.

Why RBI MPC February 2026 Is in News?

The **RBI MPC February 2026** meeting is in news because:

- The **repo rate was kept unchanged at 5.25%**
- RBI continued its **neutral stance**
- Updated **growth and inflation projections** were released

These decisions directly affect **loan EMIs, fixed deposits, bank interest rates, and inflation expectations**.

Key Decisions of RBI Monetary Policy February 2026

After reviewing global and domestic economic conditions, the MPC **unanimously voted** to keep policy rates unchanged.

Current Policy Rates

- **Repo Rate:** 5.25%
- **Standing Deposit Facility (SDF):** 5.00%
- **Marginal Standing Facility (MSF):** 5.50%
- **Bank Rate:** 5.50%

The MPC also decided to **maintain a neutral stance**, meaning RBI will take future actions based on economic data.

What Does “Neutral Stance” Mean?

A **neutral stance** means RBI is **not committed** to either:

- Increasing interest rates, or
- Cutting interest rates

RBI will closely monitor **inflation, growth, and global conditions** before taking the next step. This gives flexibility to respond to future risks.

Global Economic Outlook

Globally, the economy showed **resilience in 2025**, supported by:

- Government spending
- Trade activity
- Supportive monetary policies

However, challenges remain:

- Geopolitical tensions
- Volatility in financial markets
- High interest rates in advanced economies

Despite these risks, global equity markets remained supported by strong investments in technology sectors.

India’s Growth Outlook

India’s economy continues to perform well despite global uncertainty.

GDP Growth Estimates

- **2025–26 GDP growth:** 7.4%
- Driven by:
  1. Strong private consumption
  2. Rising investment
  3. A strong services sector

Manufacturing activity has shown improvement, while agriculture remained resilient due to good crop output.

Future Growth Projections

- **Q1 2026–27:** 6.9%
- **Q2 2026–27:** 7.0%

RBI stated that growth risks are **evenly balanced**.

Inflation Outlook in RBI MPC February 2026

Inflation remained **very low** towards the end of 2025.

- CPI inflation was **0.7% in November** and **1.3% in December 2025**
- Food prices stayed in deflation
- Core inflation remained under control

Inflation Projections

- **2025–26:** 2.1%
- **Q4 2025–26:** 3.2%
- **Q1 2026–27:** 4.0%
- **Q2 2026–27:** 4.2%

RBI noted that inflation risks are also **evenly balanced**.

Impact of RBI MPC February 2026 on Loans and EMIs

Since the **repo rate is unchanged**:

- Home loan EMIs are **unlikely to increase**
- Personal and car loan interest rates remain stable
- Banks are not expected to change lending rates immediately

This provides **relief to borrowers**.

Impact on Fixed Deposits and Banks

For depositors:

- Fixed deposit rates may **remain stable**
- No major increase in FD returns in the short term

For banks:

- Stable interest rate environment
- Better planning for credit growth

What This Decision Means for Common People

- No sudden increase in loan burden
- Inflation remains under control
- Economic growth continues steadily

This policy supports **financial stability** while protecting consumer interests.

What's Next?

- **MPC meeting minutes:** February 20, 2026
- **Next RBI MPC meeting:** April 6–8, 2026

RBI will review new GDP and CPI data before future decisions.

### India AI Impact Summit 2026

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated** the [India AI Impact Summit 2026](#) at [Bharat Mandapam](#) in New Delhi, describing Artificial Intelligence as a transformative chapter in human history. Addressing leaders from over 100 countries, he emphasized that India sees AI not just as an opportunity, but as the blueprint of tomorrow. The summit, themed "**Sarvajan Hitaya, Sarvajan Sukhaya**" (Welfare for All, Happiness for All), aims to promote human-centric, inclusive, and responsible AI for global progress.

India AI Impact Summit 2026: Global AI Leadership on Display

The India AI Impact Summit 2026 brought together,

- Representatives from 100+ countries
- Over 20 Heads of State and Government
- Around 60 Ministers and Vice Ministers
- 500+ global AI leaders and CEOs

Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated that hosting the world's largest AI summit is a moment of pride for India and the Global South.

Artificial Intelligence: A Turning Point in Human Civilization

- PM Modi compared AI's emergence to historic milestones like the invention of **fire**, **writing** and **wireless communication**.
- He said Artificial Intelligence represents a transformation of similar magnitude.
- He stressed that while machines are becoming intelligent, AI's real power lies in multiplying human capability.
- However, he cautioned that the direction **humanity chooses today will shape AI's long-term impact**.
- The Prime Minister emphasized that AI must remain human-centric, sensitive, and responsible.

The M.A.N.A.V Vision for AI

At the summit, PM Modi unveiled India's M.A.N.A.V framework for Artificial Intelligence governance.

- **M** – Moral and Ethical Systems
- **A** – Accountable Governance
- **N** – National Sovereignty (Data ownership rights)
- **A** – Accessible and Inclusive AI
- **V** – Valid and Legitimate AI systems

This M.A.N.A.V vision positions India as a leader advocating ethical AI standards globally.

Democratizing AI for the Global South

- The Prime Minister underlined the need to democratize AI so that it becomes a tool for inclusion and empowerment, particularly for developing nations.
- He said **AI must not become a monopoly of a few countries or corporations**.
- Instead, open code, shared development, and global collaboration should guide AI's future.
- India believes AI must evolve as a Global Common Good, ensuring benefits reach all sections of society.

AI and the Future of Work

PM Modi highlighted that AI will redefine the future of work. He described a new era where humans and intelligent systems,

- Co-create
- Co-work
- Co-evolve

He emphasized that AI will make work smarter, more efficient, and impactful. However, **skilling, reskilling** and **lifelong learning** must become a mass movement to prepare youth for emerging roles.

Addressing Risks: Deepfakes, Trust & Global Standards

The Prime Minister warned about the growing challenge of deepfakes and fabricated content. He proposed,

- Authenticity labels for digital content
- Watermarking AI-generated material
- Clear global standards for safe and trusted AI

He emphasized that transparency is essential and quoted, "**Sunlight is the best disinfectant.**"

India's AI Ecosystem and Global Invitation

India is building a strong AI ecosystem through,

- Semiconductor and chip-making initiatives
- Secure data centers
- Quantum computing research
- A thriving startup ecosystem

PM Modi extended a global invitation "**Design and Develop in India. Deliver to the World. Deliver to Humanity.**"

He noted that any AI model that succeeds in India's diverse environment can scale globally.

About the India AI Impact Summit

- The summit is structured around **three pillars People, Planet, and Progress**.

- And seven working groups covering Economic Growth, Democratizing AI Resources, Social Inclusion, Safe and Trusted AI, Human Capital, Science, and Resilience.
- It aims to position India as a leader in responsible AI governance while strengthening collaboration between governments, industry, and academia.

**BAFTA 2026: Check Full List of Winners**

BAFTA Film Awards 2026 – Winners List

**Major Awards**

- **Best Film** – One Battle After Another
- **Outstanding British Film** – Hamnet
- **Outstanding Debut by a British Writer, Director or Producer** – My Father’s Shadow
- **Film Not in the English Language** – Sentimental Value
- **Documentary** – Mr. Nobody Against Putin
- **Animated Film** – Zootropolis 2 (Zootopia 2)
- **Children’s & Family Film** – Boong

**Direction & Writing**

- **Director** – Paul Thomas Anderson (One Battle After Another)
- **Original Screenplay** – Ryan Coogler (Sinners)
- **Adapted Screenplay** – Paul Thomas Anderson (One Battle After Another)

**Acting Awards**

- **Leading Actress** – Jessie Buckley (Hamnet)
- **Leading Actor** – Robert Aramayo (I Swear)
- **Supporting Actress** – Wunmi Mosaku (Sinners)
- **Supporting Actor** – Sean Penn (One Battle After Another)

- **EE Rising Star Award** – Robert Aramayo

**Technical Awards**

- **Casting** – I Swear (Lauren Evans)
- **Cinematography** – One Battle After Another (Michael Bauman)
- **Editing** – One Battle After Another (Andy Jurgensen)
- **Costume Design** – Frankenstein (Kate Hawley)
- **Make Up & Hair** – Frankenstein
- **Original Score** – Sinners (Ludwig Göransson)
- **Production Design** – Frankenstein
- **Sound** – F1
- **Special Visual Effects** – Avatar: Fire And Ash

**Short Films**

- **British Short Animation** – Two Black Boys In Paradise
- **British Short Film** – This Is Endometriosis

**Special Honours**

- **BAFTA Fellowship:** Donna Langley
- **Outstanding British Contribution to Cinema:** Clare Binns

**About BAFTA**

- The British Academy Film Awards (BAFTAs) is an annual award ceremony honoring excellence in British and international films.
- Presented by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA).
- First held on 29 May 1949 in the United Kingdom.
- Officially known as the EE British Academy Film Awards since 2013.
- Broadcast by the BBC since 1956.

**Most Important Article of the Month**

Cabinet Approvals

- On **13 February 2026**, the Hon’ble Prime Minister dedicated the new **Prime Minister’s Office**, now named ‘**Seva Teerth**’, marking a historic shift from the colonial-era **South Block**. The transition symbolizes India’s movement from a legacy of colonial governance to a culture of **service-oriented administration** aligned with the vision of **Viksit Bharat @2047**. The Union Cabinet also resolved to convert **North and South Blocks** into the “**Yuge Yugeen Bharat National Museum**”, celebrating India’s civilizational heritage.
- The Cabinet approved the establishment of the **Startup India Fund of Funds 2.0 (FoF 2.0)** with a corpus of **₹10,000 crore** to mobilize long-term domestic capital and strengthen India’s venture capital ecosystem. Building upon the success of **FFS 1.0**, which supported **145 AIFs** and enabled investments of over **₹25,500 crore in 1,370+ startups**, FoF

- 2.0 will prioritize **deep-tech, innovative manufacturing, early-stage founders, and nationwide inclusion**. The initiative aligns with India’s innovation-led growth strategy and aims to generate high-quality jobs while enhancing economic resilience.
- The Cabinet also approved the launch of the **Urban Challenge Fund (UCF)** with **₹1 lakh crore Central Assistance**, expected to catalyze total investments of **₹4 lakh crore** over five years. Operational from **FY 2025–26 to FY 2030–31**, the Fund mandates at least **50% market-based financing**, encouraging municipal bonds, PPPs, and private investment. With a dedicated **₹5,000 crore Credit Repayment Guarantee Scheme** for smaller and northeastern cities, UCF focuses on **Cities as Growth Hubs, Creative Redevelopment, and Water & Sanitation**, promoting climate-responsive and outcome-based urban infrastructure.

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved multiple national highway projects to enhance connectivity and economic growth. In **Maharashtra**, the **Ghoti–Trimbak–Jawhar–Manor–Palghar (NH-160A)** corridor of **154.635 km** was sanctioned at a cost of **₹3,320.38 crore (EPC mode)**, connecting major expressways including the **Delhi–Mumbai Expressway** and generating nearly **44.84 lakh person-days of employment**. In **Gujarat**, construction of **107.67 km of NH-56** at **₹4,583.64 crore (HAM mode)** will improve tribal connectivity and reduce travel time by **40%**. In **Telangana**, widening of **NH-167 (80.01 km)** at **₹3,175.08 crore (HAM mode)** will enhance freight efficiency and regional integration.
- A landmark infrastructure project was approved in **Assam**, involving a **33.7 km 4-lane greenfield corridor** from **Gohpur to Numaligarh**, including a **15.79 km twin-tube underwater road-cum-rail tunnel under the Brahmaputra River**, at a cost of **₹18,662 crore (EPC mode)**. This will be India's **first underwater road-cum-rail tunnel** and is expected to generate **80 lakh man-days of employment**, significantly improving connectivity in the Northeast.
- Additionally, three major **railway multi-tracking projects—Kasara–Manmad, Delhi–Ambala, and Ballari–Hosapete—**were approved at a total cost of **₹18,509 crore**, adding **389 km** to the rail network across **Delhi, Haryana, Maharashtra, and Karnataka**. These projects will improve freight capacity by **96 MTPA**, reduce logistics costs, save **22 crore litres of fuel**, and lower **CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 111 crore kg**, contributing to India's climate goals and enhancing connectivity to key industrial and tourist hubs.
- The **Union Cabinet**, chaired by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, approved the proposal to change the name of the State of **“Kerala” to “Keralam”** under **Article 3 of the Constitution of India**. After Cabinet approval, the **President of India** will refer the **Kerala (Alteration of Name) Bill, 2026** to the **Kerala Legislative Assembly** for expressing its views. Once the Assembly's views are received, the Bill will be introduced in **Parliament** with the President's recommendation. The Kerala Legislative Assembly had earlier passed a unanimous resolution on **24 June 2024** requesting the name change, stating that **“Keralam”** reflects the state's linguistic identity. As per **Article 3**, Parliament has the authority to alter the name of a state, but such a Bill must be referred to the concerned State Legislature before introduction.
- The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)** approved enhanced delegation of powers to **POWERGRID**, increasing its permissible equity investment limit from **₹5,000 crore to ₹7,500 crore per subsidiary**, while retaining the cap of **15% of net worth**. This approval enables POWERGRID to participate in large transmission projects such as **UHVAC and HVDC networks**, support evacuation of renewable energy, and help achieve India's target of **500 GW non-fossil capacity**. It also strengthens competition under **Tariff Based Competitive Bidding (TBCB)**, ensuring better price discovery and affordable clean energy.
- The CCEA also approved the development of a new **Civil Enclave at Srinagar International Airport** at an estimated cost of **₹1,677 crore**. The project, spread over **73.18 acres**, will include a modern terminal building of **71,500 sq. meters**, designed to handle **10 million passengers per annum (MPPA)** and 2,900 peak-hour passengers. The expanded apron will accommodate **15 aircraft bays**, including one widebody (Code E). The project aims for a **5-star GRIHA rating** and will enhance tourism and connectivity in the Kashmir Valley.
- Further, the CCEA approved **three Railway projects** costing **₹9,072 crore**, namely **Gondia–Jabalpur Doubling, Punarakh–Kiul 3rd & 4th line, and Gamharia–Chandil 3rd & 4th line**. These projects will add approximately **307 km** to the railway network, improve connectivity to **5,407 villages (98 lakh population)**, and enhance freight capacity by **52 MTPA**. The expansion will reduce oil imports by **6 crore litres** and cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by **30 crore kg**, aligning with the **PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan**.
- The CCEA also approved the **Minimum Support Price (MSP) of Raw Jute (TD-3 grade)** for the **Marketing Season 2026–27** at **₹5,925 per quintal**, ensuring a **61.8% return over cost of production**. This represents an increase of **₹275 per quintal** over the previous season. Since 2014–15, MSP for jute has increased from **₹2,400 to ₹5,925 per quintal**. The **Jute Corporation of India (JCI)** will continue as the nodal agency for price support operations.
- Additionally, the Union Cabinet approved the **Ahmedabad Metro extension from GIFT City to Shahpur**, spanning **3.33 km with three elevated stations**, at a cost of **₹1,067.35 crore**. The project will be implemented by **Gujarat Metro Rail Corporation Limited (GMRC)**, a 50:50 joint venture between the Centre and the Gujarat Government. The extension is expected to benefit **23,702 passengers by 2029** and **58,059 passengers by 2041**, strengthening connectivity between Ahmedabad and GIFT City.



State-wise February Month Important Events● **ANDHRA PRADESH**

1. Andhra Pradesh CM N. Chandrababu Naidu launched **Piloo AI**, a multilingual voice-based billing platform designed to support MSMEs in digital transactions.
2. The foundation stone of **Amaravati Quantum Valley**, India's first quantum technology hub, was laid to promote quantum computing, research, and innovation.
3. NTPC Green Energy Ltd signed an MoU to establish **India's first large-scale Green Urea production facility** at Pudimadaka in Visakhapatnam.
4. **Waaree Energies** announced a ₹8,175 crore 16 GWh lithium-ion battery gigafactory at Rambilli, expected to generate around 3,000 jobs.

● **ARUNACHAL PRADESH**

5. **Kabak Yano of Arunachal Pradesh** successfully summited Mount Aconcagua in Argentina as part of the 7-Summit Expedition.
6. **Arunachal Pradesh celebrates its Foundation Day on 20 February**, attaining statehood in 1987 as India's 24th state.

● **ASSAM**

7. The Asian Development Bank approved a **USD 182 million loan** to enhance flood and erosion resilience along the Brahmaputra River in Assam.
8. Assam Cabinet approved **3% reservation in Class I and II government jobs** for Tea Tribes and Adivasis.
9. **Kumar Bhaskar Varma Setu**, a 2.86 km extradosed bridge over the Brahmaputra, was inaugurated to reduce travel time significantly.
10. **Northeast India's first Emergency Landing Facility** was developed on Moran Bypass in Dibrugarh for Indian Air Force operations.
11. Union Home Minister **Amit Shah** laid the foundation stone of Assam Police's 10th Battalion Headquarters in Kamrup district.

● **BIHAR**

12. Bihar Cabinet approved the development of **Sonepur International Airport** with a 4,200-metre runway to enhance trade, tourism, and connectivity by 2030.

● **DELHI**

13. Delhi Government launched the '**Lakhpati Bitiya Yojana**' providing financial support for girls with a maturity value exceeding ₹1 lakh.
14. **The Chief Minister Skill Development Scheme** aims to train 3,728 artisans with stipend support and digital market onboarding.

15. Delhi Police launched '**Operation Shastra**' to curb online fear-mongering by monitoring over 6,000 social media profiles.
16. Delhi implemented the **Bhu-Aadhaar system** under ULPIN, assigning a 14-digit unique ID to every land parcel.
17. Delhi approved a **20% reservation for ex-Agniveers** in Delhi Police constable posts with age relaxation benefits.
18. Under the **Rah-Veer Scheme**, helpers of road accident victims within the golden hour receive ₹25,000 incentive and legal protection.

● **GOA**

19. **Goa** became the second Indian state after Kerala to publish a comprehensive state-level Bird Atlas for biodiversity conservation.

● **GUJARAT**

20. **Gujarat** emerged as India's largest renewable energy contributor with 42.583 GW installed capacity.
21. **The second mountain tunnel (MT-6)** of the Mumbai–Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail project was completed in Gujarat.
22. Gujarat signed a Letter of Intent with **Starlink** to expand satellite internet services to remote and border regions.
23. **Uday Kotak** was appointed Chairman of **GIFT City, India's International Financial Services Centre**.
24. **Gujarat** signed an MoU with L&T Vyoma to study a 250 MW green AI data centre at Dholera SIR.
25. Gujarat presented its largest-ever **₹4.08 lakh crore Budget for 2026–27** focusing on tourism, green transport, and sports infrastructure.

● **HARYANA**

26. Haryana announced **CM Shri Schools** based on the PM Shri model with CBSE curriculum and 25% RTE reservation.

● **HIMACHAL PRADESH**

27. **Himachal Pradesh** launched '**Padhai with AI**' initiative to promote personalized digital education.
28. **Losar Festival 2026 (Fire Horse Year)** was celebrated in McLeod Ganj in the presence of the Dalai Lama.

● **JHARKHAND**

29. **Jharkhand** presented its **₹1.58 lakh crore "Abua Dishom" Budget for 2026–27** with significant gender and social sector allocations.

● **KERALA**

30. Kerala launched the '**Sthree Suraksha**' scheme providing ₹1,000 monthly pension to eligible women and transgender beneficiaries.
31. **Kerala** announced **India's first comprehensive Graphene Policy** and set up a ₹87 crore Graphene Innovation Centre in Kochi.

32. **Aralam Wildlife Sanctuary in Kannur** was renamed as Aralam Butterfly Sanctuary.

**MADHYA PRADESH**

33. **Madhya Pradesh** presented a ₹4.38 trillion Budget under the GYANII model with major allocations for women welfare and Simhastha 2028.

**MAHARASHTRA**

34. **Sunetra Pawar** became Maharashtra's first woman Deputy Chief Minister.

35. Mumbai inaugurated **India's first melody road** that plays the tune of "Jai Ho" at regulated speeds.

36. **Mumbai Climate Week 2026** focused on Global South climate solutions and renewable energy transition.

**MANIPUR**

37. **Yumnam Khemchand Singh** was elected **Chief Minister of Manipur** following President's Rule.

**MEGHALAYA**

38. **Meghalaya** presented a ₹32,023 crore Budget for 2026–27 with increased capital expenditure and growth targets.

**MIZORAM**

39. **Mizoram** celebrated its **39th Foundation Day on 20 February** marking its statehood in 1987.

**NAGALAND**

40. **The Sangtam Naga** community passed a resolution banning pangolin hunting and trade in Nagaland.

41. A tripartite agreement was signed to establish the Frontier Nagaland Territorial Authority.

**PUNJAB**

42. **Punjab** launched the 'Meri Rasoi' scheme providing free food kits to nearly 40 lakh families.

43. Prime Minister Narendra Modi renamed **Adampur Airport as Sri Guru Ravidass Maharaj Ji Airport and inaugurated Halwara Airport's civil terminal.**

**RAJASTHAN**

44. **Rajasthan** became **India's largest wool producer** contributing 47.5% of national output.

45. **Alwar district became India's first fully insured district** achieving 100% insurance coverage.

46. **Rajasthan** presented a ₹6.11 lakh crore Budget for 2026–27 with major infrastructure and water projects.

47. **Rajasthan** introduced a Homestay Scheme 2026 to promote rural tourism and livelihood generation.

**TAMIL NADU**

48. **V.O. Chidambaranar Port** became **India's first major port** to receive IGBC Platinum Rating and install an Anti-Drone System.

**UTTAR PRADESH**

49. **Uttar Pradesh** presented a ₹9.13 trillion Budget for FY27 aiming to achieve a \$1 trillion economy target.

50. IBM inaugurated an AI GovTech Innovation Centre in Lucknow to develop AI-based governance solutions.

**ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS (UT)**

51. A mud volcano eruption was reported near **Diglipur**, while India's only known mud volcano is located on Baratang Island.

**February Month Launches & Inaugurations:**

1. Indian Railways operationalized India's first **LNG–Diesel Dual-Fuel DEMU Train** at **Sabarmati, Ahmedabad**, enabling **40% diesel substitution** and estimated annual savings of ₹23.9 lakh per 8-coach train, promoting green rail transport.
2. Union Minister **Dr. Jitendra Singh** inaugurated the ₹32 crore **CSIR-NIO Regional Centre** at **Visakhapatnam** to strengthen India's capabilities in **marine geological surveys, deep-sea exploration, and monsoon research.**
3. The **Ministry of Minority Affairs** launched the **Survey Module and Waqf Property Lease Management Module** on the **UMEED Portal** to ensure transparency and digitization in Waqf asset administration.
4. The **Odisha Government**, in partnership with **BonV Aero**, established India's first **National UAV Test & Innovation Corridor** at **Rangeilunda Airport**, allowing drone testing up to **1,000 metres altitude.**
5. **Indian Oil Corporation (IOCL)** signed a Letter of Intent with **Akasa Air** during **Wings India 2026** to explore supply and usage of **Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF)** in India's aviation sector.
6. India hosted the **2nd India–Arab Foreign Ministers Meeting** in **New Delhi**, attended by **22 Arab League countries**, culminating in the adoption of the **New Delhi Declaration** for enhanced cooperation.
7. The **Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS)** signed a **2-year MoU** with **Berhampur University** to digitize and preserve **rare Ayurvedic manuscripts.**
8. **Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL)** launched the national creative campaign "**SAIL-e-BRATION**" on the **MyGov platform** to encourage citizen participation through short videos.
9. The **Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs** unveiled the upgraded **NYPs 2.0 Portal**, expanding Youth Parliament participation to **95,319 participants across 660 sittings** nationwide.
10. **Axis Bank** launched "**Rooftop Solar Finance**", offering **collateral-free loans up to ₹2 crore** for MSMEs to install rooftop solar systems and promote clean energy adoption.

11. Union Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** granted **Miniratna Category-I status** to **Yantra India Limited**, enabling independent capital expenditure approvals up to **₹500 crore**.
12. The **National Statistical Office (NSO)** launched the **Model Context Protocol (MCP) Server** on the **eSankhyiki Portal**, providing AI-enabled access to official datasets such as CPI and IIP.
13. Union Minister **Ashwini Vaishnaw** inaugurated **Zetwerk Electronics' manufacturing facility in Bengaluru** and launched **Qualcomm's 2nm semiconductor chip design**, boosting India's electronics ecosystem.
14. Union Minister **Shivraj Singh Chouhan** launched the **Nationwide Pulse Self-Reliance Mission in Sehore, Madhya Pradesh**, aiming to transform India into a global exporter of pulses.
15. Union Minister **Ashwini Vaishnaw** inaugurated **Siuri and Kumarpur Road Over Bridges** and flagged off the **Asansol-Bokaro train service** in West Bengal.
16. Union MoS **Jitin Prasada** inaugurated the **STQC Lab Automation Portal 'SATYA'**, digitizing certification lifecycles for electronics and IT products.
17. Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** inaugurated **'Seva Teerth'** on **Raisina Hill, New Delhi**, a sustainable governance complex housing the **PMO, Cabinet Secretariat, and NSCS under one roof**.

### Miscellaneous National News

- The **National Statistical Office (NSO)** announced India's first **National Household Income Survey (NHIS)** and **Annual Survey of Incorporated Service Sector Enterprises (ASISSE)** starting **April 2026**, using digital CAPI technology across all states (except A&N Islands).
- NSO also announced a comprehensive **Survey on Migration (July 2026–June 2027)** to capture internal migration patterns and socio-economic profiles.
- The **16th Finance Commission** retained **41% tax devolution to states** for the **2026–31 period**, ensuring cooperative federalism and fiscal stability.
- The Government of India and the **World Bank** announced an annual **USD 8–10 billion financing framework for 5 years** aligned with the *Viksit Bharat @2047* vision.
- The Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways established the **Bharat Container Shipping Line (BCSL)** through an MoU among SCI, CONCOR, and port authorities.
- The Government withdrew **18% Central Excise Duty on Unmanufactured Tobacco** from **1 February 2026**, providing relief to farmers.
- The **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** mandated a **two-year Central Deputation** for IPS officers to qualify for appointment as Inspector General of Police.

- **Alwar (Rajasthan)** became India's first district to achieve **100% insurance coverage** under the "Insurance for All by 2047" initiative.
- India joined the **BRICS Centre for Industrial Competencies (BCIC)** to strengthen manufacturing and Industry 4.0 capabilities.
- The **FASTag Annual Pass** crossed **50 lakh users**, enabling over **26.55 crore toll crossings** within six months.
- The **World Bank** praised **Karnataka's fiscal transparency**, highlighting inclusion of off-budget borrowings.
- The Government expanded **Startup India** to support **deep-tech startups for 20 years**, including AI and robotics.
- India and the **USA signed an Interim Trade Agreement (ITA)** with tariff reductions on agricultural products and projected USD 500 billion trade purchases over five years.
- The Department of Science & Technology launched the **India-Netherlands Hydrogen Fellowship Programme** to boost green hydrogen research.
- India signed MoUs with **23 countries** to share **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** models globally.
- **UPI** became operational in **eight countries**: UAE, Singapore, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, France, Mauritius, and Qatar.
- The **Department of Social Justice & Empowerment (DoSJE)** signed an MoU with **Physics Wallah Foundation** to provide free online coaching to 5,000 SC, OBC, and PM CARES beneficiaries.
- The Ministry of Mines notified the **Offshore Areas Mineral Rules, 2026**, regulating offshore mineral exploration.
- Lok Sabha Speaker **Om Birla** launched the **National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA)** at the Bihar Assembly to promote paperless legislative functioning.
- India launched **'iLive Connect'**, the world's first AI-powered home healthcare ecosystem.
- The Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC) signed MoUs to strengthen **drug safety and pharmacovigilance** mechanisms.
- The Department of Posts signed an MoU with the **National Stock Exchange (NSE)** to distribute Mutual Fund products through post offices.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs issued guidelines stating **'Vande Mataram' must be sung in full (six stanzas)** before the National Anthem.
- The Ministry of Cooperation launched **'White Revolution 2.0'**, targeting a **50% increase in milk procurement over five years**.
- The Government initiated feasibility assessments for **seven new Bullet Train Corridors** spanning nearly 4,000 km.

- India began implementing the **World’s Largest Grain Storage Plan** in the cooperative sector, starting with a pilot in Madhya Pradesh.
- The Ministry of Statistics revised base years: **GDP & IIP to 2022–23**, and **CPI to 2024 (100 base)**.
- India’s **Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI)** rose to **516.76 (September 2025)** from 493.22 in March 2025.
- The **WHO prequalified the novel Oral Polio Vaccine (nOPV2)** developed by **Biological E Limited, Hyderabad**.
- The National Statistical Systems Training Academy (NSSTA) celebrated its **18th Foundation Day**, emphasizing AI-enabled statistical systems.
- The **Uttar Pradesh Economic Survey** projected GSDP at **₹36 lakh crore (2025–26)**, targeting a \$1 trillion economy.
- NITI Aayog released the **Trade Watch Quarterly Report**, highlighting **8.5% export growth in Q2 FY26**, with electronics exports reaching USD 42.1 billion.
- The Finance Minister launched **Bharat-VISTAAR**, an AI platform integrating **AgriStack and ICAR packages**, accessible via toll-free number 155261.
- The Government amended **IT Rules 2021**, mandating labelling of AI-generated content from **20 February 2026**.
- The Cabinet approved the **Urban Challenge Fund (₹1 lakh crore)** for urban infrastructure development (FY26–31).
- The Government approved India’s first **Underwater Road-cum-Rail Tunnel under Brahmaputra (₹18,662 crore)** connecting Gohpur to Numaligarh.
- The Union Budget sanctioned **National Large Solar Telescope (NLST)** and **National Large Optical Telescope (NLOT)** in Ladakh.
- President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the **OI Chiki Script Centenary Celebrations**, marking 100 years since its invention in 1925.
- The Supreme Court declared **Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHH)** a Fundamental Right under **Article 21**.
- The Government mandated sale of **E20 Petrol (20% ethanol blend)** nationwide from **1 April 2026**.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs launched **PRAHAAR**, India’s National Counter-Terrorism Policy based on seven pillars.
- India removed the **Most Favoured Nation (MFN) clause** from the India–France Tax Treaty.
- The **Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH)** campaign was launched with Amitabh Bachchan as brand ambassador.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** became the first global leader to receive the **Speaker of the Knesset Medal** during his Israel visit.
- India joined the **Pax Silica Coalition**, a US-led initiative to secure semiconductor supply chains.
- The Food Corporation of India (FCI) signed a **5-year MoU with WFP** to supply 200,000 MT rice annually.
- Reliance Industries announced a **₹10 trillion AI investment plan** to build sovereign AI infrastructure in Jamnagar.
- The **Delhi–Meerut Namoo Bharat Corridor (82 km)** was inaugurated as India’s first Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS).
- ESIC celebrated its **75th Foundation Year**, expanding coverage to over 15 crore beneficiaries.
- India marked the **50th anniversary of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976**.

**GOVT SCHEMES**

**CENTRAL GOVERNMENT SCHEMES / NATIONAL INITIATIVES (DETAILED)**

Scheme / Initiative	Ministry / Organization	Year	Detailed Description
<b>National Household Income Survey (NHIS)</b>	National Statistical Office (MoSPI)	2026	India’s first dedicated household income survey to generate reliable income distribution data. Conducted using digital CAPI technology across all states (except A&N Islands). Aims to improve policymaking, welfare targeting, and poverty measurement accuracy.
<b>Annual Survey of Service Sector Enterprises (ASISSE)</b>	NSO (MoSPI)	2026	Designed to generate state-wise and industry-level Gross Value Added (GVA) estimates. Uses GSTN-based enterprise data to improve service sector contribution measurement in GDP calculations.
<b>Survey on Migration</b>	NSO (MoSPI)	2026–27	Comprehensive survey capturing internal migration flows, employment patterns, living conditions, and socio-economic mobility trends from July 2026 to June 2027.

Scheme / Initiative	Ministry / Organization	Year	Detailed Description
<b>PM-SETU Programme</b>	Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship	2026	Upgradation of 1,000 ITIs under PM-SETU with ₹60,000 crore allocation. Focus on modern equipment, global-standard curriculum, industry linkage, and employability enhancement.
<b>Insurance for All by 2047</b>	Government of India & IRDAI	Ongoing	National mission to achieve universal insurance penetration by 2047. Promotes life, health, crop, and general insurance inclusion, especially in rural and informal sectors.
<b>Bharat Container Shipping Line (BCSL)</b>	Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways	2026	New container shipping entity formed through MoU among SCI, CONCOR, and port authorities to reduce foreign shipping dependence and strengthen maritime logistics.
<b>National Youth Parliament Scheme (NYPS 2.0)</b>	Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs	2026	Upgraded portal expanding Youth Parliament awareness; covers 95,319+ participants across 660 sittings. Promotes constitutional literacy and parliamentary understanding.
<b>PMAY-U 2.0</b>	Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs	2026	Affordable housing scheme providing financial assistance for urban poor; 3.53 lakh houses approved in new phase. Focus on EWS/LIG beneficiaries.
<b>PM RAHAT</b>	Ministry of Road Transport & Highways	2026	Provides cashless treatment up to ₹1.5 lakh per accident victim for 7 days. Integrated with ERSS 112; reimbursement via Motor Vehicle Accident Fund (MVAFF). Police authentication within 24–48 hours.
<b>Startup India Fund of Funds (FoF) 2.0</b>	DPIIT	2026	₹10,000 crore corpus to support deep-tech, AI, robotics, semiconductor and clean energy startups via Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs). Extends support to Tier-II & Tier-III cities.
<b>Urban Challenge Fund (UCF)</b>	Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs	FY26–31	₹1 lakh crore urban infra fund. Centre contributes 25%, minimum 50% through market sources, remaining by States/ULBs. ₹5,000 crore creditworthiness corpus created for 4,223 cities.
<b>AgriStack / Digital Agriculture Mission</b>	Ministry of Agriculture	Approved 2024	Establishes Farmer Registry, Geo-referenced Village Maps, Crop Sown Registry. Provides Kisan Pehchaan Patra (digital ID for farmers) to streamline DBT and agri-services.
<b>BIRAC–RDI Fund</b>	Department of Biotechnology	2025	₹2,000 crore initial call under ₹1 lakh crore Research Development & Innovation initiative (6 years). Supports TRL 4–9 startups in biotech and deep-tech sectors.
<b>NHAI Bee Corridors Initiative</b>	NHAI	2026	Development of pollinator corridors along National Highways using native tree species at 500m–1km intervals. Target: 40 lakh trees by FY27 (60% under bee corridor).
<b>White Revolution 2.0</b>	Ministry of Cooperation	2026	Aims to increase milk procurement by 50% over five years, strengthen dairy cooperatives, and enhance rural incomes.
<b>E20 Petrol Mandate</b>	Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas	2026	Mandatory sale of E20 petrol (20% ethanol blend) nationwide from April 1, 2026 to reduce crude imports and carbon emissions.
<b>PRAHAAR – National Counter Terrorism Policy</b>	Ministry of Home Affairs	2026	Seven-pillar counter-terrorism strategy covering Prevention, Response, Human Rights compliance, Radicalization control, and Recovery.
<b>16th Finance Commission Recommendations</b>	Finance Commission	2026	Retained 41% tax devolution to states; ₹3.56 trillion grants to ULBs (230% increase). Introduced GDP contribution as new allocation criterion.

STATE GOVERNMENT / INSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVES (DETAILED)

Initiative	State / Organization	Year	Detailed Description
Mukhyamantri Gramotthan Yojana	Government of Gujarat	2026	Provides urban-level infrastructure in 114 Taluka headquarters including roads, water supply, drainage, and public services.
CHAKRA Initiative	State Bank of India	2026	₹100 trillion financing roadmap to support 8 sunrise sectors including renewable energy, EVs, and digital infrastructure.
SAIL-e-BRATION Challenge	Steel Authority of India Ltd	2026	National creative campaign promoting steel's role in nation-building through citizen participation on MyGov.
Rooftop Solar Finance	Axis Bank	2026	Provides collateral-free loans up to ₹2 crore for MSMEs to adopt rooftop solar systems, encouraging clean energy.
Chief Minister Skill Development Scheme	Delhi Government	2026	₹8.9 crore allocation to train 3,728 artisans; includes stipend (₹4,800), meal support, toolkits, and ONDC onboarding.
Rah-Veer Scheme	Delhi Government	2026	₹25,000 incentive for citizens helping accident victims during golden hour; legal protection under Motor Vehicles Act 2019.
RBI NBFC Amendment Directions 2026	Reserve Bank of India	2026	Introduced "Unregistered Type I NBFC" category (<₹1,000 crore assets); deregistration allowed via PRAVAAH portal.
DigiLocker Regulatory Committee	MeitY	2026	High-level committee chaired by Ajay Sawhney to harmonize DigiLocker framework; launched Blockchain India Challenge.
Guinness AI Pledge Record	India AI Mission	2026	2,50,946 responsible AI pledges collected in 24 hours at India AI Impact Summit 2026.
PM Surya Ghar Scheme	Ministry of New & Renewable Energy	2024	Rooftop solar scheme offering subsidy up to ₹78,000; promotes residential clean energy adoption.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- Walmart became the world's first retail company to cross **USD 1 trillion market capitalisation**, driven by 26% stock growth and AI-led business expansion.
- Elon Musk became the first individual to exceed **USD 800 billion net worth** following the SpaceX-xAI merger creating a USD 1.25 trillion entity.
- Spain imposed a nationwide **social media ban for children under 16 years**, becoming the first European country and second globally after Australia to do so.
- Italy hosted the **25th Winter Olympics (Milano Cortina 2026)** from 6-22 February 2026 featuring 16 winter sports, with India participating through two athletes.
- Iranian badminton player **Soraya Aghaei** was elected as the first-ever female IOC member from Iran during the 145th IOC Session in Milan.
- Digital asset firm Matrixport's Bhutan entity received **In-Principle Approval** from the Gelephu Financial Services Office for regulated operations.
- The India-USA trade deal reducing tariffs from 25% to 18% is projected to narrow India's Current Account Deficit by 0.25% of GDP.
- New Delhi emerged as the **world's most affordable student city** according to a joint report by Knight Frank, Deloitte, and QS.
- India and China recorded historic bilateral trade of **USD 155.6 billion in 2025**, with Indian exports growing by 9.7%.
- The US lifted additional tariffs on Indian goods after India pledged to stop Russian oil imports, resetting bilateral trade relations.
- PM Narendra Modi visited Malaysia, strengthening the **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership** and signing MoUs in semiconductors, Ayurveda, and digital payments.
- Seychelles President Dr. Patrick Herminie visited India, adopting the **'SESEL' Joint Vision**, with India announcing a USD 175 million economic package.
- India ranked **2nd globally in LEED-certified green building space** in the USGBC LEED List 2025, with China topping the list.
- Japan's Liberal Democratic Party, led by PM **Sanae Takaichi**, secured a landslide victory in snap elections, making her Japan's first female PM.
- Anutin Charnvirakul won Thailand's 2026 General Election, marking a leadership transition.
- Tarique Rahman became Bangladesh's 11th Prime Minister after BNP secured 212 of 299 seats in the 2026 elections.
- India and Greece signed a **Joint Declaration of Intent** to enhance defence industrial cooperation.

- India ranked **45th in the Network Readiness Index 2025**, with the USA topping the rankings.
- India chaired the first **BRICS Sherpas' Meeting 2026** in New Delhi under the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability."
- India ranked **7th globally in R&D spending (2024)** as per WIPO, with China ranking first.
- India ranked **91st (score 39)** in the Corruption Perceptions Index 2025, while Denmark retained the top position.
- India ranked **131st in the Women, Peace and Security Index**, with Denmark leading globally.
- India ranked **3rd globally in number of billionaires (188)**, with the USA leading.
- Tropical Cyclone **Gezani** caused major devastation in Madagascar.
- New York City joined the WHO's **Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN)** to strengthen global health surveillance.
- Barbados PM **Mia Amor Mottley** secured a historic third consecutive victory, with the Barbados Labour Party winning all 30 parliamentary seats.
- Reliance Industries received a US general license to import Venezuelan crude oil for its Jamnagar refinery complex.
- India and France upgraded ties to a **Special Global Strategic Partnership** during President Macron's February 2026 visit, launching the India-France Year of Innovation 2026.
- India formally joined the **Pax Silica Coalition** as its 12th member to strengthen semiconductor supply chains and critical mineral cooperation.
- India and Israel elevated relations to a **Special Strategic Partnership** during PM Modi's 2026 state visit.
- India-Israel FTA negotiations commenced in New Delhi (Feb 23-26, 2026) covering goods, services, IPR, and customs procedures.
- India and GCC signed a Joint Statement to begin negotiations for a comprehensive FTA, with bilateral trade valued at USD 178.56 billion (FY25).
- India and Kenya launched a **DigiLocker pilot project**, enabling secure digital document verification in Kenya.
- India and Sweden signed a Statement of Intent launching the **SITAC AI corridor** for bilateral AI cooperation.
- India and Nepal signed an MoU on environmental cooperation covering forests, biodiversity, and climate change management.
- Former South Korean President **Yoon Suk Yeol** was sentenced to life imprisonment over the 2024 martial law crisis.
- Saudi Arabia banned poultry imports from 40 countries, including India, due to avian influenza and Newcastle disease concerns.
- Brazilian President **Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva** visited India, setting a bilateral trade target of USD 30 billion by 2030.
- Rob Jetten became the Netherlands' youngest Prime Minister at age 38, leading a minority coalition government.
- Poland withdrew from the 1997 Ottawa Convention and announced plans to deploy landmines under its "Eastern Shield" defence strategy.
- Switzerland announced it will host the **2027 AI Summit** in Geneva, with UAE scheduled to host the 2028 edition.
- The European Union launched the **European Legal Migration Gateway Office** in New Delhi to facilitate legal migration pathways for Indian professionals.
- IPC lifted its ban on Russian athletes, allowing them to compete under national flags at the Milan-Cortina 2026 Winter Paralympics.
- US President Donald Trump imposed a 10% tariff on all imports after a Supreme Court setback, escalating global trade tensions.
- India's active smartphone base reached **740 million users**, making it the world's second-largest smartphone market after China.

## BANKING & FINANCE

### BANKING INITIATIVES & PARTNERSHIPS

1. **Axis Bank Rooftop Solar Finance** Axis Bank launched Rooftop Solar Finance scheme offering collateral-free loans up to **₹2 crores** for MSMEs to adopt rooftop solar systems.
2. **Kotak Mahindra Bank - GIFT City Leadership** Uday Kotak appointed GIFT City Chairman with banking assets of **\$100.14 billion** and **35 IFSC Banking Units** operational.
3. **IOCL & Akasa Air - Sustainable Aviation Fuel Partnership** Letter of Intent signed between IOCL and Akasa Air during **Wings India 2026** to jointly explore Sustainable Aviation Fuel supply.
4. **NSE & Department of Posts - Mutual Fund Distribution** MoU signed between NSE and Department of Posts enabling distribution of Mutual Fund products through post offices.

5. **Biological E Limited - nOPV2 Vaccine Production** Biological E Limited produced **WHO prequalified nOPV2 vaccine** in Hyderabad for global polio eradication.

### RBI REGULATORY UPDATES & GUIDELINES

6. **Digital Payments Index Surge** Digital Payments Index surged to **516.76** in September 2025 with UPI reaching **80% share**.
7. **UPI Global Expansion** UPI now operational in **8 countries**: UAE, Singapore, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, France, Mauritius, Qatar.
8. **Base Year Revision for Economic Data** National statistics revised to **2022-23 for GDP & IIP; 2024 for CPI**.
9. **FASTag Annual Pass Success** FASTag achieved **50 lakh users in six months** with **26.55 crore toll crossings**.

**10. Insurance for All by 2047 Initiative Alwar district, Rajasthan achieved 100% insurance coverage** – India's first fully insured district.

**11. RBI - NBFC DLG Restoration Default Loss Guarantees (DLGs, capped at 5%)** restored for NBFCs after reversing May 2025 provisioning norms.

**12. RBI - Bank Loans to NCDC as PSL Loans to National Cooperative Development Corporation** classified as Priority Sector Lending from **19 Jan 2026**.

**13. RBI - ECB Guidelines Revised** ECB limit raised from **\$750 mn to \$1 billion** with minimum average maturity of **3 years**.

**14. RBI - OTC Forex Derivatives Reporting** Mandatory reporting to CCIL: **70% in 12 months, 80% in 18 months, 90% in 24 months**.

**15. RBI - UTI for OTC Derivatives Unique Transaction Identifier (UTI) mandated from 1 January 2027** – up to 52 characters including LEI.

**16. RBI Penalties on 5 Institutions** RBI imposed **₹1.35 crore penalties**: CSB Bank (₹63.6L), BoM (₹32.5L), DCB Bank (₹29.6L), IIFL Finance (₹5.3L), Navi Finserv (₹3.8L).

**17. RBI - Airtel Money as NBFC Airtel Money granted Certificate of Registration as Type II NBFC-ND (ICC)** – restriction on public deposits.

**18. RBI - Acquisition Financing Limit Raised** Aggregate exposure limit raised from **10% to 20% of Tier-1 capital** – banks can finance up to **75% acquisition value**.

**19. RBI Issues NBFC Amendment Directions 2026 "Unregistered Type I NBFC" category introduced April 1, 2026** for entities with **<₹1,000 crore assets**.

**20. RBI Revised Lead Bank Scheme 3-tier structure introduced** with designated Lead Bank per district maintaining **60% CD Ratio** for rural/semi-urban branches.

**21. RBI Proposes Stricter Loan Recovery Agent Norms** Recovery agents required: **IIBF certification, valid ID, contact 8AM-7PM** – effective **July 1, 2026**.

**22. RBI Revises Kisan Credit Card Guidelines** KCC expanded: **crop seasons 12-18 months, loan tenure 6 years, 20% extra credit** for technology-driven agriculture.

**23. RBI Tightens Responsible Business Conduct Rules DSA/DMA** require **separate application forms** with full refund + compensation for mis-selling – effective **July 1, 2026**.

**24. RBI REIT Lending Guidelines** Banks permitted lending to **SEBI-registered REITs** with **3-year+ operational history**, aggregate exposure capped **49%**.

**25. RBI Releases Secure Data Centre in Odisha** RBI launched **Tier IV data centre in Bhubaneswar** at **Info Valley-II, Khordha** (18.55 acres); primary centre in **Kharghar, Navi Mumbai**.

## SEBI REGULATORY ANNOUNCEMENTS

**26. Startup India Framework Expansion** Deep technology startups formally included for **20 years** effective 2026 onwards.

**27. DPI Cooperation - 23 Countries** SEBI signed MoUs with **23 countries** to share Digital Public Infrastructure and India Stack framework.

**28. GIFT City Expansion** GIFT City (Gujarat) operational with **35 IFSC Banking Units** managing banking assets of **\$100.14 billion**.

**29. FASTag Integration with RailOne** UTS app discontinued, shift to **RailOne super app on March 1, 2026** for unified digital ecosystem.

**30. NSE - Natural Gas Futures** SEBI approved NSE to launch **Indian Natural Gas Futures** with monthly contracts, up to 12 active.

**31. ASK Asset & Wealth Management - 52nd Fund House** SEBI approved ASK Asset & Wealth Management as **52nd fund house**; MF industry AUM: **₹81 lakh crore** (Jan 2026).

**32. NSE IX Global Access Platform** NSE IX launched **Global Access platform** for Indian retail investors to trade USA-listed stocks, debt, ETFs directly.

## KEY FINANCIAL INITIATIVES & SCHEMES

**33. Lakhpati Bitiya Yojana (Delhi)** Girls in Delhi eligible for maturity value over **Rs 1 lakh**.

**34. Sthree Suraksha Scheme (Kerala)** Unemployed Women & Transgender Women receive **Rs 1,000 monthly pension**.

**35. White Revolution 2.0** Ministry of Cooperation targeting **50% increase in milk procurement over 5 years** (2026-2031).

**36. Uttar Pradesh Budget 2026-27** UP Government allocated **Rs 9.12 trillion** (12.9% increase) for infrastructure & employment.

**37. Rajasthan Budget 2026-27** Rajasthan allocated **₹6.11 lakh crore** with **₹32,000 crore** for Yamuna water project.

## INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL PARTNERSHIPS

**38. World Bank Partnership Framework** Government of India & World Bank partnering with **USD 8-10 billion annual financing over 5 years**.

**39. India-USA Interim Trade Agreement** India & USA signed trade agreement with India to **buy USD 500 billion over 5 years**.

**40. DPI Cooperation - 23 Countries** India & 23 countries collaborating to share **Digital Public Infrastructure**.

**41. ADB Loan for Assam** ADB extended **USD 182 million loan** to Assam Government for flooding resilience.

**42. Starlink Partnership (Gujarat)** Gujarat Government & Starlink partnering to provide **high-speed satellite internet to remote areas**.

**43. India-Netherlands Hydrogen Fellowship** DST & Netherlands collaborating on **green hydrogen research** for PhD scholars.

**44. IRFC ECB from Japanese Banks** Indian Railway Finance Corporation signed **USD 400 million ECB** with Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation and MUFG Bank.

**FINTECH & DIGITAL PAYMENTS ECOSYSTEM**

**45. RuPay-UPI Incentive Scheme Report** Total outlay ₹8,276 crore (FY22–FY25); UPI preferred by **57% over cash**; digital transactions grew **11x**; UPI QR codes: 3 cr → **65.8 cr**.

**46. DBS × Visa - Intelligent Commerce** DBS became **1st Asia-Pacific issuer** to pilot **Visa Intelligent Commerce (VIC)** for agentic AI-driven payments.

**47. Mastercard - Agentic Commerce** India's **first fully authenticated agentic commerce transaction** at India AI Summit using **Model Context Protocol (MCP)**.

**48. In-Solutions Global (ISG) - Payment Aggregator** RBI granted **full three-category payment aggregator authorization**: PA-O, PA-P, PA-CB licenses.

**BANK-SPECIFIC ANNOUNCEMENTS & APPOINTMENTS**

**49. IDFC First Bank - Hello Cashback Card** FD-backed credit card launched with min FD ₹10,000; **3% cashback** on first ₹10,000; **5% beyond**.

**50. Axis Bank × IndiGo Co-branded Cards** Two cards launched: IndiGo Axis Bank Credit Card (₹799) and Premium (₹5,000).

**51. AU Small Finance Bank - MD Reappointment** Sanjay Agarwal **reappointed as MD & CEO for 3 years from 19 April 2026**; first SFB approved to transition to Universal Bank.

**52. Slice Small Finance Bank - Rajan Bajaj as MD & CEO** Founder Rajan Bajaj **appointed MD & CEO effective Feb 17, 2026**; serves **20+ million users**, raised **USD 250+ million**.

**53. New India Co-operative Bank Removal** New India Co-operative Bank removed from **RBI Act 1934 Second Schedule** effective **Feb 2026** after voluntary amalgamation with Saraswat Co-operative Bank.

**54. Bain Capital × Manappuram Finance** RBI approved Bain Capital's acquisition of **up to 41.66% stake** at ₹236/share.

**INSURANCE & WEALTH MANAGEMENT**

**55. ICICI Prudential - Swasthya Pension Scheme** ICICI Prudential launched **Swasthya Pension Scheme** blending retirement savings with healthcare access.

**56. FSIB Recommends Hitesh Joshi as GIC Re CMD** Hitesh Rameshchandra Joshi recommended for **Chairman-cum-Managing Director, General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC Re)**.

**MACROECONOMIC INDICATORS & ECONOMIC DATA**

**57. WPI Inflation Surge** WPI rose to **1.81%** in January 2026 (10-month high) from 0.83% in December 2025.

**58. 16th Finance Commission - Urban Grants** Urban Local Government grants increased **230% to ₹3.56 trillion**; record **45% share**.

**59. India Unemployment Rate PLFS: 5%** in January 2026 (3-month high); Urban: 7%, Rural: 4.2%.

**60. ICRA GDP Growth Projection** GDP growth easing to **7.2% in Q3 FY26** from 8.2% Q2; Services: 7.8%; Industrial: 8.3%.

**61. India Power Capacity Record** Record **52,537 MW** added in 10 months of FY26; total installed: **~521 GW**; non-fossil surpassed fossil fuel capacity.

**62. India Sugar Exports** **2,01,547 tonnes** exported till February (2025–26 marketing year); UAE top destination (**47,006 MT**).

**63. India Core Industries Growth** Eight core industries grew **4%** in January 2026; steel: **+9.9%**, cement: **+10.7%**; industrial output: **7.8% YoY**.

**64. India Merchandise Trade Indices Revision** DGCI&S revised base year from **2012-13 to 2022-23** for trade indices.

**GOVERNMENT POLICY & INITIATIVES**

**65. National Monetisation Pipeline 2.0 (NMP 2.0)** Union Finance Minister launched **NMP 2.0** targeting **₹16.72 lakh crore monetisation potential** (FY25-26 to FY29-30).

**66. Ministry of Finance - CPR Registration Revoked** Ministry of Home Affairs revoked **FCRA registration of Centre for Policy Research (New Delhi)** alleging FCRA violations.

**67. Ministry of Commerce - Merchandise Trade Indices** DGCI&S completed base year revision recommended by committee headed by **Nachiketa Chattopadhyay (ISI, Kolkata)**.

**ENERGY & INFRASTRUCTURE SECTOR**

**68. SING Submarine Cable Project** du (UAE) × Datawave Networks connecting: Kalba, Muscat, Mumbai, Chennai, Kedah, Singapore; **16 fibre pairs, 18 Tbps/pair**.

**69. Cochin Shipyard - CMA CGM Order** CMA CGM (France) ordered **6 LNG-fuelled 1,700 TEU vessels** for **USD 360 mn** – first-ever Made in India container ship order.

**70. Hindustan Oil Exploration Company CEO Transition** Baroruchi Mishra approved as new Chief Executive Officer effective **April 1, 2026**.

**GLOBAL CORPORATE MILESTONE**

**71. Amazon Becomes World's Largest by Revenue** Amazon surpassed Walmart with **FY2025 revenue of USD 717 billion** vs Walmart **USD 713.2 billion**; AWS cloud computing drives growth.

**INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL PARTNERSHIPS (CONTINUED)**

**72. Asian Development Bank USD 108 Million Financing** ADB signed senior secured debt financing package **USD 108 million** (₹983 crore) with Aavas Financiers Limited; **USD 8 million concessional debt** via CANPA.

## MoU's & AGREEMENTS

### INTERNATIONAL MoUs WITH COUNTRIES

1. **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) - Free Trade Agreement** Terms of Reference signed with India to restart **FTA negotiations** for trade expansion between GCC and India.
2. **Russia - Aircraft Manufacturing** Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL) partnering with Russia for production of **Superjet 100 regional aircraft** in India with long-term defense collaboration.
3. **Japan - Financial Services State Bank of India (SBI)** partnering with **Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation** for financing sunrise sectors including renewable energy.
4. **Japan - LNG Shipping GAIL India** signed long-term charter agreement for LNG carrier "**GAIL BHUWAN**" during India Energy Week 2026.
5. **Singapore - Space Technology (Digantara) Digantara Industries** developing **Space Situational Awareness tools** with Singapore for satellite protection and space security.
6. **Singapore - Space Infrastructure DSTA** partnering with Singapore for satellite and space infrastructure monitoring collaboration.
7. **Netherlands - Green Energy Research University of Groningen & 19 IITs** collaborating on **renewable energy and sustainable technologies** research.
8. **Netherlands - Green Technology Department of Science & Technology** with Netherlands for joint green technology research through IIT partnerships.
9. **Italy - Helicopter Manufacturing Adani Defence & Aerospace** partnering with **Leonardo** for fully integrated helicopter manufacturing ecosystem with technology transfer.
10. **Italy - Aerospace & Defense Leonardo** partnership with Italy for advanced manufacturing and aerospace defense technology transfer.
11. **United Kingdom - Social Security Agreement** India-UK agreement to prevent **double social security contributions** for cross-border workers.
12. **European Union - Digital Signatures MeitY** signed Administrative Arrangement with EU on **advanced electronic signatures** for cross-border digital trade.
13. **France - Critical Minerals Joint Declaration of Intent** between India and France on Critical Minerals Cooperation and Advanced Materials research.
14. **France - HAMMER Missiles India & France MoU** for joint manufacturing of **HAMMER precision missiles** signed during 6th India-France Annual Defence Dialogue.
15. **UK - Offshore Wind Taskforce Offshore Wind Taskforce** launched under India-UK Vision 2035 with zones identified: **Gujarat and Tamil Nadu**.
16. **UK - Military Training IAF QFIs to train British fast jet pilots** at RAF Valley (Anglesey) – first time ever on Hawk T2/Texan T1 trainers.

17. **Germany - Aerospace Education Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya** established **Airbus Centre of Excellence** for aerospace studies with **Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF)** research focus.

### NATIONAL INTER-STATE MoUs

18. **Tripura - Banking & RRB Credit Card Tripura Gramin Bank** with **Punjab National Bank (PNB)** launched **India's first RRB co-branded RuPay Credit Card** during Golden Jubilee year.
19. **Telangana - Aerospace Education Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya** inaugurated **Airbus Centre of Excellence** for aerospace studies and **SAF research** in Telangana.
20. **National - Highway Cybersecurity Indian Highways Management Company** partnering with **National Forensic Sciences University** for **cybersecurity** and digital infrastructure protection.

### INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL MoUs - ENERGY & OIL & GAS

21. **GAIL India - LNG Shipping GAIL India & Mitsui O.S.K. Lines** signed long-term charter agreement for LNG carrier "**GAIL BHUWAN**" during India Energy Week 2026.
22. **ONGC - Oil India Limited ONGC & Oil India Limited (OIL)** MoU to explore collaboration in **oil and gas exploration** and resource development.
23. **BPCL - Tata Motors BPCL & Tata Motors** joint development of **India's largest Mega EV Charging and Engagement Hubs** across the country.

### INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL MoUs - DEFENSE & AEROSPACE

24. **HAL - United Aircraft Corporation HAL (India) with United Aircraft Corporation (Russia)** for production of **Superjet 100 regional aircraft** in India.
25. **HAL - Pawan Hans HAL contracted by Pawan Hans** for supply of **10 Dhruv New Generation helicopters** worth **₹1,800 crore**.
26. **Adani Defence & Aerospace - Leonardo Adani Defence & Aerospace & Leonardo (Italy)** MoU for fully integrated helicopter manufacturing with **technology transfer** in India.
27. **BEML - IISc Research BEML, Indian Institute of Science (IISc) & FSID** signed **Tripartite Master Research Agreement** for advanced R&D collaboration.
28. **Indian Army - Agneevasthraa Indian Army** MoU with **Agneevasthraa** for supply of **advanced carbon fabrics and composite materials** for defense applications.
29. **Indian Army - IDFC FIRST Bank Indian Army** partnering with **IDFC FIRST Bank** for **specialized banking services** and financial inclusion for defense sector.
30. **GRSE - Hindustan Shipyard GRSE & Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL)** formed consortium for **national shipbuilding programme** and defense maritime expansion.

**INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL MoUs - BANKING & FINANCIAL SERVICES**

- 31. SBI - Sumitomo Mitsui Banking SBI MoU with Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (Japan)** for financing sunrise sectors including renewable energy and innovation.
- 32. Central Bank of India - HSBC Asset Management Central Bank of India & HSBC Asset Management** distribution agreement for Mutual Fund products and wealth management.
- 33. Equitas Small Finance Bank - Bharti AXA Life Insurance Equitas Small Finance Bank & Bharti AXA Life Insurance** partnership for life insurance reach expansion and financial services integration.
- 34. Tripura Gramin Bank - PNB Tripura Gramin Bank & Punjab National Bank** launched India's first RRB co-branded RuPay Credit Card.
- 35. NPCI International - PayNet Malaysia NPCI International & PayNet Malaysia** agreement enabling QR-based merchant payments between India and Malaysia; Phase 1: UPI apps at DuitNow QR points.
- 36. GIFT City - AJNIFM GIFT City MoU with Arun Jaitley National Institute of Financial Management (AJNIFM)** promoting postgraduate/executive programmes in international finance and FinTech.

**INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL MoUs - HEALTHCARE & INSURANCE**

- 37. AIIA - General Insurance Council All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) & General Insurance Council (GIC)** partnership for cashless Ayurvedic treatment across 32 insurance companies.
- 38. Indo-French AI Health Centre Union Health Minister & French President Macron** jointly inaugurated Indo-French Centre for Artificial Intelligence in Health at AIIMS New Delhi with IIT Delhi and Sorbonne University partnership.

**INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL MoUs - TECHNOLOGY & CYBERSECURITY**

- 39. IHMCL - National Forensic Sciences University IHMCL & NFSU** signed 3-year MoU for highway cybersecurity and digital infrastructure protection.
- 40. MeitY - EU DG CONNECT MeitY & EU DG CONNECT** Administrative Arrangement for advanced electronic signatures and cross-border digital trade facilitation.
- 41. National Test House - STQC-ERTL National Test House & STQC-ERTL (North)** Government-to-Government partnership for EMI/EMC testing of drones; quality assurance for aerospace.
- 42. DRDO - CSIR DRDO & CSIR** collaborative agreement for joint R&D activities in extreme environments; defense technology development.
- 43. TEC - IIT Kharagpur Telecommunication Engineering Centre & IIT-Kharagpur** MoU for advanced telecom research and global standardization; focus on 6G architecture, AI-based EMF monitoring, satellite systems.

**INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL MoUs - EDUCATION & RESEARCH**

- 44. DST - University of Groningen & 19 IITs Department of Science & Technology & University of Groningen** green energy research collaboration across 19 IIT ecosystem.
- 45. Airbus - Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya Airbus & Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV)** inauguration of Centre of Excellence for aerospace studies with SAF research focus.
- 46. INSA - CSIR-NIScPR Indian National Science Academy (INSA) & CSIR-NIScPR** MoU to strengthen science communication and policy research.
- 47. IIT Bombay - Columbia University IIT Bombay & Columbia University** MoU to establish Columbia-IIT Bombay Center of AI for Manufacturing at Bharat Mandapam.
- 48. IOB - IIM Kozhikode Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) & IIM Kozhikode** MoU signed on IOB's 90th Foundation Day for customized leadership training programmes.
- 49. NIELIT - Andhra Pradesh NIELIT & Andhra Pradesh government** signed MoU establishing India's first Quantum and AI University campus in Amaravati with focus on Quantum Computing, AI/ML, Quantum Communication & Cybersecurity.
- 50. ICIRA - NLU Jodhpur IIRIS Consulting & National Law University Jodhpur** MoU establishing India's first dedicated Chair in Information Security and Forensic Science at law university.
- 51. NDMA - AcSIR & CSIR-NIScPR NDMA, AcSIR & CSIR-NIScPR** signed MoU strengthening disaster management research; PhD programme launching in disaster risk reduction.
- 52. NIPER - Boehringer Ingelheim NIPER Raebareli & Boehringer Ingelheim India** MoU enhancing pharmaceutical education and research collaboration; AMRITVA Cohort 2 launched with 5 innovators.

**INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL MoUs - AVIATION & TRANSPORTATION**

- 53. AAI - Bharat Taxi Airports Authority of India (AAI) & Bharat Taxi** MoU to improve last-mile connectivity at airports; ground transportation integration.
- 54. Air India - Lufthansa Group Air India & Lufthansa Group** MoU to explore joint business partnership for enhanced India-Europe air connectivity; both Star Alliance members.
- 55. Kempegowda Airport - Frankfurt Airport Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru & Frankfurt Airport Germany** MoU strengthening air cargo connectivity; focus on digital cargo corridor and pharma integrity standards.
- 56. Embraer - Mahindra Embraer (Brazil) & Mahindra Group** collaboration for Maintenance, Repair & Overhaul (MRO) facility in India for C-390 Millennium military transport aircraft.

**INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL MoUs - FINTECH & INNOVATION**

- 57. GFTN - Startup Policy Forum Global Finance & Technology Network (GFTN) & Startup Policy Forum (SPF)** partnership to accelerate FinTech innovation; startup ecosystem support.
- 58. NABARD - NCDEX NABARD & NCDEX** Price Protection Scheme with put options in turmeric, jeera, coriander for FPOs in 7 states; covered 80 FPOs, 1.34 lakh farmers.

**INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL MoUs - INTERNATIONAL TRADE & COMMERCE**

**59. FCI - World Food Programme Food Corporation of India (FCI) & World Food Programme** signed 5-year MoU supplying 2 lakh metric tonnes rice annually (₹2,800/quintal till March 31, 2026).

**60. Reliance Consumer Products - TGI Group Reliance Consumer Products & TGI Group (Nigeria)** Majority-owned JV to introduce FMCG products in Nigeria using TGI's manufacturing and distribution network.

**61. CMA CGM - Cochin Shipyard CMA CGM (France) & Cochin Shipyard** USD 360 million deal for six 1,700 TEU LNG-fuelled container vessels – India's first 'Made in India' container ship order from global shipping major.

**62. GalaxEye - NSIL GalaxEye & NSIL (ISRO's commercial arm)** Data Reseller Partnership; NSIL to resell GalaxEye's SyncFused OptoSAR imagery globally; first private Indian satellite operator with NSIL.

**INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL MoUs - INFRASTRUCTURE & TECHNOLOGY**

**63. L&T Vyoma - Gujarat L&T Vyoma & Gujarat government** MoU for feasibility study on 250 MW green AI-ready data centre at

Dholera Special Investment Region (₹25,000 crore investment, operational 2028).

**INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL MoUs - TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER & RESEARCH**

**64. Tata Consumer - CSIR-NIIST Tata Consumer Products & CSIR-National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science & Technology** formalized transfer of two food technologies: "Smarter Rice" (nutritionally enhanced, lower GI) and "Coffee Crema Technology" (enhanced crema stability).

**MULTILATERAL & WORLD BANK PARTNERSHIPS**

**65. World Bank MIGA - SBI Solar Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (World Bank)** issued USD 197.67 million 5-year guarantee to Citibank for SBI non-shareholder loan refinancing for grid-connected rooftop solar systems.

**DEFENSE & STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS**

**66. India-Israel Defence MoU** India & Israel signed defence MoU for joint seminars, industrial collaboration, technology sharing; SIBAT facilitated B2B meetings between 30 Indian and 26 Israeli defence companies.

**APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS**

**GOVERNMENT & ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS**

**1. Sunetra Pawar - Deputy Chief Minister** Sunetra Pawar appointed as Maharashtra's first woman Deputy Chief Minister following political transition.

**2. Yumnam Khemchand Singh - Chief Minister** Yumnam Khemchand Singh elected as BJP legislature party leader as Chief Minister of Manipur, ending President's Rule.

**3. Nidhi Chhibber - NITI Aayog CEO** IAS officer Nidhi Chhibber given additional charge as Chief Executive Officer, NITI Aayog (Feb 24, 2026) following B.V.R. Subrahmanyam tenure completion.

**BANKING & FINANCIAL SECTOR APPOINTMENTS**

**4. Vinay Muralidhar Tonse - YES Bank MD & CEO** Vinay Muralidhar Tonse appointed as Managing Director & CEO, YES Bank with RBI approval.

**5. R. Vijay Anandh - City Union Bank MD & CEO** R. Vijay Anandh appointed as Managing Director & CEO, City Union Bank with RBI approval.

**6. Rohit Rishi - IIFCL Managing Director** Rohit Rishi appointed as Managing Director, IIFCL (Indian Infrastructure Finance Company Limited).

**DEFENSE & AEROSPACE SECTOR APPOINTMENTS**

**7. Divakar Jayant - Naval Armament Director General** Divakar Jayant took charge as Director General, Naval Armament in defense sector.

**8. Kota Ravi - HAL Chairman and Managing Director** Kota Ravi appointed as Chairman and Managing Director, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for aerospace & defense leadership.

**JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS**

**9. Thanya Nathan C. - Kerala High Court Judge** Thanya Nathan C. set to become Kerala's first visually challenged woman judge at Kerala High Court.

**10. Ramalingam Sudhakar - NCLT President Tenure Completion** Ramalingam Sudhakar demitted office as NCLT President; during tenure: ~54,800 cases instituted, 48,000+ disposed (85%+ resolution rate).



**PROFESSIONAL & INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS**

**11. CA Prasanna Kumar D - ICAI 74th President** CA Prasanna Kumar D elected as **74th President of ICAI** (from Visakhapatnam, AP); VP: CA Mangesh Pandurang Kinare.

**CENTRAL PUBLIC SECTOR UNDERTAKINGS**

**12. Deepak Gupta - GAIL CMD** Deepak Gupta (Director-Projects, GAIL) appointed **CMD from 1 March 2026 till 28 February 2029**, succeeding Sandeep Kumar Gupta.

**13. Uday Suresh Kotak - GIFT City Chairman** Uday Suresh Kotak (founder, Kotak Mahindra Bank) appointed **GIFT City Chairman** by Gujarat Government; awarded **Padma Bhushan 2026**.

**INTERNATIONAL APPOINTMENTS & GLOBAL POSITIONS**

**14. Tarique Rahman - Bangladesh Prime Minister** Tarique Rahman sworn in as **11th Prime Minister of Bangladesh** (BNP) with **212/299 seats**, ending Muhammad Yunus' 18-month interim government.

**15. Andrey Gyurov - Bulgaria Interim Prime Minister** Andrey Gyurov (Deputy Governor, Bulgarian National Bank) appointed **Interim PM**, following previous PM resignation after street protests; April 2026 elections planned.

**16. Mia Amor Mottley - Barbados Prime Minister** Mia Amor Mottley re-elected for **3rd term**; **BLP swept all 30 seats** (69.83%); defeated DLP leader Ralph Thorne.

**TECHNOLOGY & CORPORATE SECTOR APPOINTMENTS**

**17. Asha Sharma - Microsoft Gaming & Xbox CEO** Asha Sharma (Indian-origin) appointed **CEO of Microsoft Gaming & Xbox**, focusing on **AI integration** and **game innovation**; praised by Satya Nadella.

**POWER SECTOR APPOINTMENTS**

**18. Harsharan Kaur Trehan - PSPCL Director (Commercial)** Harsharan Kaur Trehan appointed as **first woman Director (Commercial)** at PSPCL, overseeing **transmission, substation planning, procurement operations**.

**SPORTS & GLOBAL AMBASSADORSHIPS**

**19. Shikhar Dhawan - Delhi Khel Mahakumbh Brand Ambassador** Shikhar Dhawan (former India cricketer, Arjuna Awardee) appointed as **Brand Ambassador of Delhi Khel Mahakumbh**.

**20. Sachin Tendulkar - UN Global Road Safety Champion** Sachin Tendulkar designated **Global Champion for Road Safety by United Nations**; released video under **UN-JCDecaux #MakeASafetyStatement** campaign with digital billboards in **New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru**.

**21. Abhinav Bindra - IOC Athletes Commission Completion** Abhinav Bindra (India's first individual Olympic gold medallist) completed **8-year tenure (2018-2026)** as **Vice-Chair, International Olympic Committee Athletes Commission**; succeeded by **Humphrey Kayange (Kenya)**; IOC membership continues till **2028**.

**ACADEMIC & RESEARCH APPOINTMENTS**

**22. Prof. B. Ravindran - UN AI Panel** Prof. B. Ravindran (IIT Madras) appointed to **United Nations Independent International Scientific Panel in Artificial Intelligence**; represents **India and Global South** among **40 global experts**; currently Head **Wadhvani School of Data Science & AI (WSAI)** with **30+ years AI experience**.

**DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION**

**23. Om Birla - Bangladesh Swearing-In Representation** Lok Sabha Speaker **Om Birla** represented India at **Tarique Rahman's oath-taking on 17 February 2026** in Bangladesh.

**AWARDS**

**ENVIRONMENTAL & CONSERVATION AWARDS**

**1. Patna Bird Sanctuary - Ramsar Site Designation** Patna Bird Sanctuary (**Uttar Pradesh**) designated as **India's 97th Ramsar wetland site**.

**2. Chhari-Dhand - Ramsar Site Designation** Chhari-Dhand (**Gujarat**) designated as **India's 98th Ramsar wetland site**.

**CORPORATE & ORGANIZATIONAL CERTIFICATIONS**

**3. SAIL - Great Place to Work Certification** Steel Authority of India Limited (**SAIL**) certified for **third consecutive year** by Great Place to Work.

**4. HMG Stone LLP - ISO & 5S Certification** HMG Stone LLP earned **ISO 9001:2015 & 5S Gold Grade** – first in Indian natural stone industry.

**5. VOC Port Authority - IGBC Platinum Rating** VOC Port Authority became **first Major Port with IGBC Platinum Rating**; also received **Shunya and Shunya Plus** certifications from BEE.

**6. Paradip Port Authority - Swachhata Award** Paradip Port Authority won **First Prize in Swachhata Pakhwada Award 2025**.

**INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC & RESEARCH AWARDS**

**7. Veerabhadran Ramanathan - Crafoord Prize** Veerabhadran Ramanathan awarded **Crafoord Prize in Geosciences 2026** for pioneering climate research.

**8. Oil India Limited - FIPI Award** Oil India Limited won **FIPI Award 2025** – '**Oil & Gas Production Company of the Year**' (>1 MTOE) at India Energy Week.

**HUMANITARIAN & SOCIAL IMPACT AWARDS**

**9. Dr. Haripriya Aravind & Dr. R. Venkatesh - Humanitarian Award** Dr. Haripriya Aravind & Dr. R. Venkatesh (Aravind Eye Care System, Puducherry) selected for **Chang-Crandall Humanitarian Award 2026**; **USD 100,000 grant** donated back to the system.

10. Gyalum Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck - Brahma Award Gyalum Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck awarded 22nd Upendra Nath Brahma Award 2025 – 'Soldier of Humanity' Award.

**EDUCATION & ACADEMIC RECOGNITION**

11. Rouble Nagi - Global Teacher Prize Rouble Nagi awarded Global Teacher Prize 2026.

12. Shashi Tharoor - Honorary Doctorate Shashi Tharoor (MP Thiruvananthapuram) conferred Honorary Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa) at St Xavier's University Kolkata 7th convocation; first honorary doctorate for former Xaverian.

**CULTURAL HERITAGE & UNESCO RECOGNITION**

13. Vasai Cathedral - UNESCO Asia-Pacific Award Our Lady of Grace Cathedral, Vasai (Maharashtra) (475 years old) received Award of Merit, UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation 2025; sole Indian religious site receiving recognition 2025 edition.

**FILM & ENTERTAINMENT AWARDS**

14. Boong - BAFTA Award Manipuri-language film "Boong" became first Indian film winning Best Children's & Family Film category at 79th BAFTA Awards (Royal Festival Hall, London); director Lakshmi Priya Devi production (Farhan Akhtar, Ritesh Sidhwani, Excel Entertainment).

15. Dalai Lama & Bad Bunny - Grammy Awards 2026 Dalai Lama won first Grammy Award; Bad Bunny won Album of the Year; K-Pop achieved first Grammy win.

**SPORTS & ATHLETIC AWARDS**

16. Elena Rybakina - Australian Open 2026 Elena Rybakina crowned Australian Open 2026 Women's Singles Champion.

17. India - Asian Shooting Championship India won 94 medals at Asian Shooting Championship 2026: 51 Gold, 23 Silver, 20 Bronze.

18. Stefanos Sakellaridis - Delhi Open 2026 Stefanos Sakellaridis (Greece, 21-year-old) won maiden ATP Challenger Singles title at Delhi Open 2026, defeating Oliver Crawford 7-5, 5-6, 7-6; Siddhant Banthia-Alexander Donski won doubles.

19. Smriti Mandhana - BBC Sportswoman Award Smriti Mandhana awarded BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year 2025; Divya Deshmukh – Emerging Player; Preethi Pal – Para-Sportswoman; Anjali Bhagwat – Lifetime Achievement.

20. Norway Winter Olympics 2026 Norway created history winning 17 gold medals (highest single Winter Games), breaking previous 16 gold record; Johannes Dale-Skjevdal achieved gold in men's 15-km biathlon mass start with perfect 20/20 shooting.

**INDUSTRY & SECTORAL AWARDS**

21. India - BIOFACH 2026 Country of the Year India awarded Country of the Year at BIOFACH 2026 (Organic trade fair, Germany).

22. Mangaluru Airport - ASQ Best Arrivals Award Mangaluru International Airport (Karnataka) honoured 2025 Airports Service Quality Customer Experience Award "Best Airport at Arrivals" category, second consecutive win; 4 Indian airports among 6 global winners in arrivals category.

**GLOBAL RANKINGS & RECOGNITION**

23. Delhi - Most Affordable Student City Delhi ranked 1st globally as Most Affordable Student City.

**SPECIAL HONORS & RECOGNITION**

24. Bhavya Bharat Bhushan Award 2026 Bhavya Bharat Bhushan Award 2026 launched by Isha Foundation (Sadhguru) with 7 categories; 2026 awardees: Nambi Narayanan, Saina Nehwal, Vikram Sampath, Alarmel Valli, N. Rajam, and Indian Armed Forces (Operation Sindoor).

25. Kabak Yano - Mountaineering Achievement Kabak Yano successfully summited Mount Aconcagua (Argentina).

**TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION RECORDS**

26. India - Guinness World Record (AI Pledges) India created Guinness World Record collecting 2,50,946 valid pledges for responsible Artificial Intelligence use within 24 hours (Feb 16-17, 2026) announced at India AI Impact Summit 2026 by Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw; campaign exceeded 5,000 initial target; 5+ lakh students and educational institutions participated.

**SUMMITS, EVENTS & CONFERENCE**

**MAJOR ENERGY & RENEWABLE SECTOR SUMMITS**

1. India Energy Week 2026 4th edition of India Energy Week held in Goa from 27–30 Jan 2026 focused on energy transition and renewable energy.

**AVIATION & AEROSPACE SUMMITS**

2. Wings India 2026 Asia's largest civil aviation event held in Hyderabad from 28–31 Jan 2026 focused on future aviation growth.

**INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMATIC SUMMITS**

3. 2nd India–Arab Foreign Ministers Meeting India hosted 2nd India–Arab Foreign Ministers Meeting in New Delhi with 22 Arab League nations; adopted New Delhi Declaration for deeper cooperation.

4. World Government Summit 2026 World Government Summit 2026 held in Dubai, UAE with 6,250+ participants including 60 Heads of State and 87 Nobel laureates.

5. 6th India-France Annual Defence Dialogue 6th India-France Annual Defence Dialogue held in Bengaluru on 17 Feb; Rajnath Singh co-chaired with Catherine Vautrin; HAMMER MoU signed; H125 helicopter assembly inaugurated virtually by PM Modi and President Macron.

6. Brazil President State Visit Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva visited India (Feb 18-22, 2026); President Droupadi Murmu received at Rashtrapati Bhavan; PM Modi held bilateral talks covering trade, technology, strategic cooperation; target increasing bilateral trade to USD 30 billion by 2030 (current USD 15.21 billion); multiple MoUs signed on MSMEs, pharmaceuticals, renewable energy, AI, critical minerals.

**ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE & TECHNOLOGY SUMMITS**

**7. India AI Impact Summit 2026 5-day AI Impact Summit 2026** held at Bharat Mandapam (16–20 Feb) – first AI summit in Global South; guided by 3 Sutras (People, Planet, Progress) and 7 Chakras (working groups); New Delhi Declaration endorsed by 89 countries; outlined seven pillars: democratizing AI resources, promoting economic growth/social good, ensuring secure trusted AI, advancing scientific research, expanding social empowerment, strengthening human capital, building resilient AI systems; youngest speaker: **8-year-old Ranvir Sachdeva**; **Sundar Pichai (Google CEO), Sam Altman (OpenAI CEO)** participated.

**8. Blockchain India Challenge (India AI Summit) MeitY launched Blockchain India Challenge** promoting startup-driven blockchain solutions for digital governance; implemented by C-DAC, Hyderabad; prize pool ₹8.80 crores: Prototype Stage ₹1.5 lakh (40 participants), MVP Stage ₹4 lakh (30 participants), Deployment Stage ₹10 lakh (20 participants); top 10 use case categories compete for ₹50 lakh/category ultimate prize; domains: e-procurement, supply chain, PDS, education, healthcare, agriculture, power, IoT, land records, environment.

**9. Bharat Bodhan AI Conclave 2026 Bharat Bodhan AI Conclave** held at Bharat Mandapam (12–13 Feb); Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched Bodhan AI CoE; IIT Madras to build Bharat EduAI Stack (DPI for education, like UPI).

**10. Black Swan Summit 2026 Black Swan Summit 2026** held in Odisha focused on fintech, AI, and digital finance; President Murmu stressed responsible innovation and skill development.

**BIOTECHNOLOGY & LIFE SCIENCES SUMMITS**

**11. BioAsia 2026 23rd edition of BioAsia** held in Hyderabad (17–18 Feb); theme: 'TechBio Unleashed – AI, Automation and the Biology Revolution'; CM Revanth Reddy inaugurated; Hyderabad recognized as Vaccine Capital of the World.

**ENVIRONMENTAL & CLIMATE SUMMITS**

**12. Mumbai Climate Week 2026 Mumbai Climate Week 2026** inaugurated by CM Devendra Fadnavis at Jio World Convention Centre; 3-day global conclave on climate solutions for Global South.

**INFRASTRUCTURE & SAFETY CONFERENCES**

**13. International Conference on Dam Safety (ICDS 2026) ICDS 2026** held at IISc Bengaluru (13–14 Feb); launched DAMCHAT (AI platform) and Jal Shakti Data Management Platform.

**RAILWAY SECURITY CONFERENCES**

**14. 7th All India GRP Chiefs Conference 7th All India Conference of Government Railway Police Chiefs** concluded at Vigyan Bhawan presided by Railway Protection Force Director General Sonali Mishra; attended by DGPs, ADGPs, senior GRP officers from states/UTs; objective: develop coordinated action plan to

strengthen railway passenger and infrastructure security; key concerns: organized crime, drug trafficking, vandalism/stone pelting, sabotage threats, crowd management; Narcotics Control Bureau presented narcotics smuggling curbing strategies; emphasized mock drills, scenario-based emergency training, enhanced State Police-RPF coordination.

**REGULATORY & POLICY SUMMITS**

**15. Chintan Shivir 2026 Chintan Shivir 2026** held in Coorg, Karnataka (13–14 Feb); DFS released UPI/RuPay impact analysis during summit.

**INTERNATIONAL INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITIONS**

**16. PLASTINDIA 2026 12th International Plastics Exhibition (PLASTINDIA 2026)** held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi (5–10 Feb 2026) with 2,000 international exhibitors; inaugurated by Delhi CM.

**SPORTS & INTERNATIONAL GAMES**

**17. Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics 25th Winter Olympics** scheduled in Italy from 6–22 Feb 2026; Norway created history winning 17 gold medals (highest single Winter Games), breaking previous 16 gold record; Johannes Dale-Skjevdal achieved gold in men's 15-km biathlon mass start with perfect 20/20 shooting.

**TRADITIONAL & WELLNESS SUMMITS**

**18. National Arogya Fair 2026 National Arogya Fair 2026** inaugurated by President Droupadi Murmu (Feb 25-28) in Shegaon, Buldhana district (Maharashtra) organized by Ministry of Ayush and All India Ayurvedic Congress; offered free consultations, health check-ups, medicines under Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa, Homoeopathy; special session "Ayurvedic Farming: Production, Value Addition, Marketing" (Feb 27) focused on medicinal plant cultivation, agroforestry, post-harvest management, market linkages; strengthens Vidarbha region farmer diversification into medicinal crops and Ayush supply chain.



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**RANKING**

**Top 10 Most Responsible Countries in the World 2026**

Rank	Country	Region	Score	Key Strength
#1	Singapore	Asia	0.6194	Only Asian in top 10
#2	Switzerland	Central Europe	0.5869	Ethical governance leader
#3	Denmark	Northern Europe	0.5837	Global accountability leader
#4	Cyprus	Eastern Mediterranean	0.5774	Strong social welfare systems
#5	Sweden	Northern Europe	0.5740	Environmental responsibility leader
#6	Czechia	Central Europe	0.5704	Balanced growth across pillars
#7	Belgium	Western Europe	0.5690	Strong governance systems
#8	Austria	Central Europe	0.5665	High social welfare standards
#9	Ireland	Western Europe	0.5634	People-centred governance
#10	Georgia	Caucasus	0.5581	Emerging responsibility leader

**Notable Rankings: Major Economies and Regional Powers**

Country	Rank	Score	Category
India	16th	0.5515	Rising developing nation
United States	66th	—	Major economy
China	68th	—	Major economy
Pakistan	90th	—	South Asian nation
Yemen	151st	—	Conflict-affected
Syria	153rd	—	Conflict-affected

**Top 10 Countries by R&D Spending (2024-25)**

Rank	Country	R&D Spending (USD)
1	China	\$785.9 billion
2	United States	\$781.8 billion
3	Japan	\$186.0 billion
4	Germany	\$132.2 billion
5	Republic of Korea	\$126.4 billion
6	United Kingdom	\$86.5 billion
7	India	\$75.7 billion
8	France	\$65.8 billion
9	Türkiye	\$43.2 billion
10	Brazil	\$38.4 billion

**What Is the Global Innovation Index?**

- The Global Innovation Index (GII) is an annual ranking published by the World Intellectual Property Organization.
- It evaluates countries based on innovation inputs like R&D spending, education, and institutions, as well as outputs such as patents and high-tech production.
- The index is widely used by governments and researchers to assess national innovation performance and policy effectiveness.

**Network Readiness Index 2025**

List of Category Wise Performers

**Category 1: Income Group wise Top 3 Countries**

**High Income**

- [USA](#) (Rank 1)
- [Finland](#) (Rank 2)
- [Singapore](#) (Rank 3)

**Upper-Middle Income**

- China (24)
- Malaysia (38)
- Thailand (44)

**Lower-Middle Income**

- Viet Nam (40)
- India (45)
- Philippines (66)

**Low Income**

- Rwanda (87)
- Uganda (112)
- Malawi (116)

Category 2: Region wise Top 3 Countries

- **Africa:** Mauritius (58), South Africa (69), Kenya (77)
- **Arab States:** UAE (26), Saudi Arabia (34), Bahrain (36)
- **Asia & Pacific:** Singapore (3), Republic of Korea (10), Japan (11)
- **CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States):** Russian Federation (56), Armenia (62), Kazakhstan (65)
- **Europe:** Finland (2), Denmark (4), Sweden (5)
- **Americas:** USA (1), Canada (12), Costa Rica (42)

Category 3: Overall Global Ranking (Top 5)

1. **USA** – Score 79.13
2. **Finland** – 75.82
3. **Singapore** – 75.46
4. **Denmark** – 75.14
5. **Sweden** – 75.09

**India's Improved Rank and Score in NRI 2025**

- **India's rise to the 45th rank in the Network Readiness Index 2025 reflects consistent improvement across multiple digital indicators.**
- **The country's score increased to 54.43 out of 100, signalling stronger digital foundations compared to the previous year.**
- **The report also notes that India's network readiness is higher than what would normally be expected at its income level, showing that digital progress is outpacing economic constraints.**

**Global Green Realty Spaces**

India Ranks Second in Global Green Realty Spaces

- According to the US Green Building Council (USGBC), India secured the second position globally (outside the US) in terms of total LEED-certified building space in 2025.
- **Only China ranked higher among non-US nations, while the United States continued to dominate overall.**
- India recorded 16 million GSM of LEED-certified space, reinforcing its position as one of the world's fastest-growing green real estate markets.

- This achievement reflects the country's increasing alignment with climate goals, energy efficiency, and sustainable urbanization.

Global LEED Rankings 2025: Where India Stands

- In the latest annual assessment by USGBC and Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI), the United States topped the global list with over 50 million GSM of LEED-certified space.
- China followed with 26 million GSM, while India placed second outside the US.
- A notable highlight was Vietnam, which entered the global top 10 for the first time, signalling expanding adoption of green building standards across emerging economies.

**Women, Peace and Security Index 2025/26**

Top 10 Best Countries in Women, Peace and Security Index 2025/26

In the Women, Peace and Security Index 2025/26, **Denmark ranks first for the third consecutive time with a score of 0.939.** It is followed by **Iceland and Norway. Notably, five Nordic countries are in the top five**, showing strong social welfare systems and gender equality policies.

**Top 10 Countries (WPS Index 2025)**

1. Denmark – 0.939
2. Iceland – 0.932
3. Norway – 0.924
4. Sweden – 0.924
5. Finland – 0.921
6. Luxembourg – 0.918
7. Belgium – 0.912
8. Netherlands – 0.905
9. Austria – 0.898
10. Australia – 0.898

These nations perform strongly in women's employment, parliamentary representation, legal rights, and low levels of violence.

Top 10 Worst Countries in Women, Peace and Security Index 2025/26

At the bottom of the Women, Peace and Security Index 2025/26 is Afghanistan with a score of 0.279. Most of the bottom 10 countries are affected by armed conflict, fragile governance, or humanitarian crises.

**Bottom 10 Countries (WPS Index 2025)**

- 181st Afghanistan – 0.279
- 180th Yemen – 0.323
- 179th Central African Republic – 0.362
- 178th Syria – 0.364
- 177th Sudan – 0.397
- 176th Haiti – 0.399

- 175th DR Congo – 0.405
- 174th Burundi – 0.407
- 173th South Sudan – 0.411
- 172nd Myanmar – 0.442

Nine out of these ten are classified as fragile or conflict-affected states, showing how instability directly affects women’s safety and rights.

Where Do India and the US Stand in Women, Peace and Security Index 2025/26?

- In the Women, Peace and Security Index 2025/26, **India ranks 131st with a score of 0.607.**
- This shows steady but uneven progress in women’s inclusion and safety.
- **India has improved in areas like financial inclusion and maternal health but still faces challenges such as gender-based violence and low female workforce participation.**
- The United States ranks 31st, moving up six places from last year.
- The improvement is mainly due to a decline in maternal mortality rates after nearly two decades. However, the US still faces challenges related to violence and gender inequality.

**Global Billionaire Wealth**

Top 10 Countries with the Most Billionaires in 2025

1. United States – Still the Global Leader
  - The United States remains the world’s billionaire capital, with **924 billionaires in 2025.**
  - **Total wealth:** \$6.89 trillion
  - **Wealth growth:** 18% YoY
  - **Share of global billionaire wealth:** 31.7%
  - The US added 89 new billionaires, reinforcing its dominance in technology and finance.
2. China – Fastest Wealth Expansion
  - The China ranks second with 470 billionaires.
  - **Total wealth:** \$1.77 trillion
  - **Wealth increase:** \$321.4 billion added
  - **New entrants:** 70 billionaires
  - China recorded the largest increase in billionaire wealth in absolute terms.
3. India – Among the Top 3 Billionaire Hubs
  - The India ranks third globally, with 188 billionaires in 2025.
  - **Total wealth:** \$888.2 billion
  - **Billionaire count growth:** From 185 to 188
  - **Wealth change:** -1.9% decline year-on-year
  - While the number of billionaires slightly increased, total wealth declined marginally due to fluctuations in the fortunes of India’s top wealth holders.

4 to 10: Other Major Billionaire Economies

- **Germany (4th)**– 156 billionaires, \$692 billion wealth
- **United Kingdom (5th)**– 91 billionaires, \$456 billion wealth
- **Switzerland (6th)**– 84 billionaires, \$518 billion wealth
- **Hong Kong SAR (7th)**– 76 billionaires
- **Italy (8th)** – 61 billionaires
- **Singapore (9th)**– 55 billionaires (highest % wealth growth at 66.4%)
- **Taiwan (10th)**– 51 billionaires

**NITI Aayog Releases Sixth Edition of “Trade Watch Quarterly”**

NITI Aayog has launched the sixth edition of its flagship publication “**Trade Watch Quarterly**” for **Quarter 2 of FY 2025–26 (July–September 2025)**. The report was released in New Delhi by Vice-Chairman **Suman Bery** in the presence of Member **Arvind Virmani**.

The publication provides a detailed assessment of global and domestic trade trends and includes a thematic focus on India’s electronics trade.

Key Findings: Trade Performance in Q2 FY26

- India’s exports (services + merchandise) grew by **~8.5%**.
- Export growth outpaced imports, sustaining trade expansion.
- Global trade growth moderated but remained positive.
- Services continued to outperform goods globally.

The report also highlights that trade among developing economies has expanded nearly **fourfold since 2005**, aligning with India’s growing integration with the Global South.

Thematic Focus: Electronics Trade

Electronics has emerged as the **second-largest item in India’s export basket**.

Key Highlights:

- India’s share in global electronics demand grew at a **CAGR of 17.2% (2015–2024)**, compared to global growth of 4.4%.
- Electronics exports increased nearly **fivefold between 2016 and 2024**, reaching **USD 42.1 billion**.
- Global electronics trade stands at **USD 4.6 trillion**.

Major export destinations:

- United States
- United Kingdom
- UAE

India has established strength in:

- Mobile phones
- Consumer electronics
- Communication equipment

Policy Support

The Union Budget has allocated **₹40,000 crore** under the Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme to boost domestic production and value addition.

Future growth areas include:

- Printed circuit board design
- Semiconductor assembly and testing
- Power electronics
- Embedded systems

Role of E-Commerce

India is among the **top six global e-commerce markets**, with electronics accounting for nearly half of online retail.

E-commerce exports, though currently modest, are projected to contribute **20–30% of India’s merchandise exports by 2030**, supported by:

- Logistics improvements
- Regulatory facilitation
- MSME participation

Significance

The report underscores that sustained competitiveness will depend on:

- Deeper integration into global value chains
- Tariff rationalisation
- Logistics efficiency
- Industry-aligned skill development

Electronics is positioned as a major driver of India’s manufacturing transformation, export growth, and technological advancement.

**Global Corruption Perceptions Index 2025**

The **Corruption Perceptions Index 2025** released by **Transparency International** presents a worrying picture. **The global average score has declined**, and fewer countries now fall into the **“very clean” category**. In the Corruption Perceptions Index 2025, Denmark once again leads, while conflict-affected nations dominate the bottom ranks.

Corruption Perceptions Index 2025: Global Trend Turns Negative

- The [Corruption Perceptions Index 2025](#) evaluated **182 countries based on perceived public sector corruption**.
- **Scores range from 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean)**.
- This year’s findings indicate a **global average score of 42**, the lowest in more than a decade.
- Notably, **122 countries scored below 50**, highlighting that corruption concerns remain widespread.
- Transparency International also observed that the number of countries scoring above 80 has sharply declined over the years.
- This signals governance challenges even in traditionally strong democracies.

Least Corrupt Countries in Corruption Perceptions Index 2025

According to the Corruption Perceptions Index 2025, Denmark retained the top rank with a score of 89, extending its impressive streak. The top performers include,

1. **Denmark** – 89 (Maintaining Its 8 Years Streak to Sit at Top)
2. **Finland** – 88
3. **Singapore** – 84
4. **New Zealand** – 81
5. **Norway** – 81

These countries are recognized for strong institutions, transparency, and low levels of public sector corruption.

However, the report clarifies that even high-scoring nations are not corruption-free, as **some have shown declining trends in recent years**.

Most Corrupt Countries in Corruption Perceptions Index 2025

At the bottom of the Corruption Perceptions Index 2025, countries facing conflict, instability, and weak governance structures dominate,

- **South Sudan** – Score 9 (Rank 181)
- **Somalia** – Score 9 (Rank 181)
- **Venezuela** – Score 10 (Rank 180)

Low scores typically reflect fragile state institutions, political instability, and restricted civil liberties. Such countries often struggle with rule of law and accountability mechanisms.

CPI 2025 India Rank: Where Does India Stand?

In the Corruption Perceptions Index 2025, **India ranked 91st globally**, securing a **CPI score of 39 out of 100**. This marks a slight improvement compared to the previous year. While India remains below the global average of 42, the ranking suggests incremental progress in governance and transparency reforms.

- **India Rank:** 91
- **India Score:** 39
- **Scale:** 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean)

Questions on India’s CPI rank frequently appear in SSC, Banking, UPSC, and State PCS exams.

Countries Showing Long-Term Improvement

Transparency International highlighted that around 31 countries have reduced corruption levels since 2012. Examples include,

- **Estonia** – Rank 12 (Score 76)
- **Bhutan** – Rank 18 (Score 71)
- **South Korea** – Rank 31 (Score 63)

These improvements are linked to consistent anti-corruption policies, digital governance, and institutional reforms.

**Top 10 Least Corrupt Countries – CPI 2025**

Rank	Country	CPI Score 2025
1	Denmark	89
2	Finland	88
3	Singapore	84
4	New Zealand	81
5	Norway	81
6	Sweden	80
7	Switzerland	80
8	Luxembourg	78
9	Netherlands	78
10	Germany/Iceland (Tied)	77

**Bottom 10 Most Corrupt Countries – CPI 2025**

Rank	Country	CPI Score 2025
181	South Sudan	9
180	Somalia	9
179	Venezuela	10
178	Yemen	13
177	Libya	13
176	Eritrea	13
175	Sudan	14
174	Nicaragua	14
173	Syria	15
172	North Korea	15

About Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)

- **Published by:** Transparency International
- **Measures:** Perceived public sector corruption
- **Data sources:** Expert assessments & business surveys
- **Score interpretation:** Higher score = cleaner governance

Other important Index and reports

**TRAVEL & PASSPORT RANKINGS**

**1. Henley Passport Index 2026** India ranked **75th** in Henley Passport Index 2026 (Feb) with access to **56 visa-free destinations**; lost Iran (fraud concerns) and Bolivia (e-visa system), added The Gambia; **Singapore tops globally with 192** visa-free destinations.

**AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION**

**2. Global Wool Production - India** India ranks **2nd** in global sheep population (77.4 million) and **9th** in global wool production; **FY24 total: 33.69 mn kg**; Rajasthan leads with **47.53%** share (16,013.5 thousand kg); Punjab recorded **highest growth at 22.04%**.

**TECHNOLOGY & SMARTPHONE MARKET**

**3. Global Smartphone Installed Base** India is **world's 2nd largest smartphone market** (Counterpoint Research 2025) with **740 mn**

**active smartphones**; China ranks **1st**; average retention: **42 months** (global average: 47 months).

**4. Global AI Brain Race 2026** US tops **Global AI Brain Race 2026**, followed by **China and Singapore**; **India ranks 6th**, excelling in **talent** but needing improvements in **digital infrastructure & governance**.

**POWER & RENEWABLE ENERGY SECTOR**

**5. India Power - Record Installed Capacity Record 52,537 MW added in 10 months of FY26**; total installed capacity: **~521 GW**; **non-fossil (271.9 GW) surpassed fossil fuel capacity for first time**; **renewables: 75.5%** of additions.

**TRADE & EXPORT PERFORMANCE**

**6. NITI Aayog Trade Watch Q2 FY26** India's exports (merchandise + services) grew **~8.5%** in Q2 FY26; **electronics: 2nd largest export** (USD 42.1 billion); **India in top 6 e-commerce markets**; **electronics comprise ~50%** of online retail.

**WOMEN'S ECONOMIC RIGHTS & LEGAL FRAMEWORKS**

**7. World Bank Women, Business Law 2026 Report** World Bank Group released **11th Women, Business Law (WBL) 2026 report** assessing legal frameworks in **190 economies** shaping women's economic opportunities; key findings: legal frameworks globally average **67/100**; enforcement perceptions **53** (women's rights partly held, no economy >90); supportive frameworks **47** (lowest pillar); even fully enforced laws, women access **2/3rds (66.66%)** of men's legal rights; only **4% women globally** live in economies providing nearly full legal equality.

**AVIATION & AIRPORT RANKINGS**

**8. Indira Gandhi International Airport - Asia-Pacific Ranking** Delhi Airport ranked **5th busiest in Asia-Pacific region 2025** with **46.18 million one-way departing seats** (OAG data), rising from **9th position in 2019** pre-COVID pandemic; surpassed **Singapore Changi (42.57M seats)**, **Suvarnabhumi (39.49M)**, **Incheon (43.40M)**; improvement reflects **structural shift in Asia-Pacific aviation post-pandemic with India emerging as high-growth aviation market**; **IndiGo expansion** (fleet size, new routes, connectivity) major growth contributor along with rising middle-class income, affordable fares, improved infrastructure, and enhanced tier-2/3 city connectivity.

**DEFENCE**

**MILITARY EXERCISES & OPERATIONS**

**1. Exercise KHANJAR-XIII** 13th joint military exercise KHANJAR-XIII conducted in Missamari, Assam (**4–17 Feb 2026**) between **India & Kyrgyzstan** to enhance **counter-terror cooperation**.

**2. India–Thailand Air Exercise** Joint in-situ air exercise between **IAF & Royal Thai Air Force** to strengthen **air combat coordination**.

**3. IMACC 2026 (Indian Military Adventure Challenge Cup)** First edition of **IMACC 2026** hosted by Indian Army in Eastern Himalayas (**18–23 Feb 2026**) with participation from **7 nations**: Bhutan, Brazil, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia; focused on **endurance and adventure tasks**.

**4. Exercise Vayushakti-26** IAF exercise **Vayushakti-26** conducted on **27 February 2026** at Pokhran Air-to-Ground Range, Jaisalmer with aircraft: **Tejas, Rafale, Jaguar, Mirage-2000, Su-30MKI, MiG-29, Hawk**; guided by **'Achook, Abhedya aur Sateek'**; demonstrated **Akash SAM, SpyDer ADS, SRLM, and CUAS** systems.

**5. Exercise MILAN 2026** Exercise **MILAN 2026** (biennial multilateral naval exercise) held at Visakhapatnam (**15–25 February, 19-25 Feb operations**) with **74 nations (largest ever)** participating; theme: **'Camaraderie, Cooperation, Collaboration'**; **MILAN Village inaugurated by Vice Admiral Sanjay Bhalla**; Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** inaugurated

alongside **International Fleet Review 2026** (Feb 18) presided by **President Droupadi Murmu**.

**6. 9th Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) 9th Indian Ocean Naval Symposium Conclave** held Feb 20 at Visakhapatnam during MILAN 2026; **India assuming IONS Chairmanship 2026-2028** (second tenure since 2008 forum launch); **Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi (Chief Naval Staff)** assumed chairmanship from Royal Thai Navy.

**7. Exercise DHARMA GUARDIAN 7th Edition 7th edition India-Japan Joint Military Exercise DHARMA GUARDIAN** commenced at Foreign Training Node, Chaubattia, Uttarakhand (**Feb 24-Mar 9, 2026**); **120-member contingent each: Indian Army (Ladakh Scouts) and Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (32nd Infantry Regiment)**; aimed to strengthen military cooperation in semi-urban environments.

**8. Exercise VAJRA PRAHAR 16th Edition 16th India-USA Joint Special Forces Exercise VAJRA PRAHAR** commenced at Special Forces Training School, Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh (**Feb 23-Mar 15, 2026**); **45 Indian special forces personnel and 12 Green Berets** exchanged **advanced special operations tactics**.

**9. Exercise Agni Varsha Exercise Agni Varsha** conducted by Indian Army's Southern Command at Pokhran Field Firing Ranges (**Feb 24, 2026**); validated **coordinated combined arms, precision long-range firepower, network-enabled command/control**; tested **T-90 Main Battle Tanks, Infantry Combat Vehicles, K-9 Vajra howitzers, Sharang/Bofors artillery, Apache attack helicopters, UAS/drones**.

**10. Kalari Leap Maritime Exercise Kalari Leap** high-tempo joint maritime exercise conducted by Southern Air Command in Lakshadweep/Minicoy archipelago validating **rapid force projection, joint operational planning, precision strikes** in complex maritime conditions; **120-member contingent: Armed Forces Special Operations Division, Indian Coast Guard, IAF** conducting **anti-ship strike drills and maritime SAR operations**.

**11. Strela-10 Air Defence System Test** Indian Army's Konark Corps conducted **high-intensity live firing test of Strela-10 Very Short Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS)** at Pokhran Field Firing Range (**Feb 2026**); successfully demonstrated **precision targeting aerial targets, enhanced crew coordination**, validated **6-10 km engagement range** against low-altitude threats (helicopters, UAVs).

**12. Bharat RanBhoomi Darshan Expedition** Army Chief **General Upendra Dwivedi** flagged in **Bharat RanBhoomi Darshan Expedition** starting National War Memorial, **3,400-km expedition** covering key battlefields from Dwarka, Gujarat to New Delhi; **35-member contingent: Regiment of Artillery, Indian Navy, Border Security Force** honoring war heroes and highlighting border infrastructure development.

#### MISSILE TESTING & WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT

**13. Agni-III (Agni-3) Missile Test** Agni-III Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM) tested in Odisha; **validated operational readiness and strengthened nuclear deterrence capability**.

**14. SFDR Technology (Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet) SFDR Technology** demonstrated by **Defence Research and Development Organisation** at ITR Chandipur, Odisha; places **India among elite nations with advanced ramjet propulsion capability**.

**15. DRDO Drogue Parachute Qualification Test DRDO successfully conducted qualification-level load test** of Drogue Parachute (Gaganyaan human spaceflight programme) at Rail Track Rocket Sled facility, Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory, Chandipur (**Feb 18, 2026**); test validated design safety margins; parachute to stabilize/decelerate crew module during re-entry for **3-member Indian crew Low Earth Orbit (400 km) 3-day mission**.

#### DEFENSE PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTS

**16. HAL-UAC Agreement (Superjet 100) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) & United Aircraft Corporation (Russia)** signed production agreement for **Superjet 100 aircraft**.

**17. DAC Approval - 114 Rafale Jets** Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) approved Acceptance of Necessity for **114 Rafale Jets** valued at **₹3.25 lakh crore (≈USD 40 bn)**; **18 fly-away + 96 Make in India**; total Rafale fleet → **176 jets**; **Dassault Aviation CEO: Eric Trappier**.

**18. BEML Research Partnership** Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML), Indian Institute of Science (IISc) & FSID signed Tripartite research agreement for defence and heavy equipment innovation.

**19. AMCA Shortlisted Firms** DRDO shortlisted **Tata Advanced Systems Ltd and L&T-Bharat Forge consortium** for **5th-generation stealth fighter prototype (AMCA)**; production target: **125+ jets**; **IAF induction ~2035**.

**20. MRFA Programme** Indian Air Force MRFA Programme procurement process progressing for **114 multirole fighter aircraft**.

**21. Amphibian Aircraft Order** Apogee Aerospace & AAI (Australia) order placed for **15 amphibian aircraft**.

#### NAVAL OPERATIONS & SHIP COMMISSIONING

**22. INS Tarangini - Fleet Review Participation** INS Tarangini (India's sail training ship, commissioned 1997, first to circumnavigate globe 2003-04) participating in **IFR 2026 and MILAN** at Visakhapatnam.

**23. CTS Krishna - Cadet Training Ship Launch** First indigenous **Cadet Training Ship (CTS Krishna)** launched at **L&T Kattupalli, Chennai**; **122m length, 4,700 tonnes, 20 knots speed, 60-day endurance**; named after **River Krishna** (India's 3rd longest river).

**24. INS Sudarshini - Historic Egypt Visit** Indian Navy's **Sail Training Ship INS Sudarshini** arrived Safaga, Egypt during **Lokayan-26 deployment** covering **1,832 nautical miles in 16 days**; welcomed by **Egyptian Navy officials**, met **Rear Admiral Ramy Ahmed Ismail Mohamed**, strengthening naval cooperation through professional exchanges and community outreach.

**25. INS Anjadip Commissioning Indian Navy to commission INS Anjadip (3rd Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft of 8-ship ASW-SWC project) on Feb 27, 2026 at Chennai Port presided by Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi (Chief Naval Staff); 77-metre vessel built by GRSE, Kolkata with water-jet propulsion (25 knots max speed), equipped with indigenous Hull Mounted Sonar Abhay, Lightweight Torpedoes, ASW Rockets.**

**26. Sagar Defence USVs Sagar Defence delivered first two AI-enabled Unmanned Surface Vessels (70% indigenous) to Indian Navy.**

**27. CTF-154 Command Indian Navy assumed command of Combined Task Force 154 under Combined Maritime Forces for the first time.**

#### COAST GUARD & MARITIME INFRASTRUCTURE

**28. MJP Waterjet Facility (Goa) ICG DG Paramesh Sivamani inaugurated MJP Waterjet Facility in Goa; India becomes world's 3rd country (after USA and South Korea) to host waterjet production & testing facility.**

#### ARMY, NAVY & AIR FORCE NEWS

**29. LNG-Diesel DEMU Train Indian Railways launched first dual-fuel DEMU train with 40% diesel substitution capability using LNG-Diesel hybrid technology.**

**30. Yantra India Miniratna Status Yantra India Limited granted Miniratna Category-I status by Defence Ministry.**

#### INTERNATIONAL MILITARY COOPERATION

**31. India-UK Military Training Program IAF Qualified Flying Instructors (QFIs) to train RAF fast jet pilots at RAF Valley (Anglesey) – first ever; Indian officers now in all 3 British military academies strengthening bilateral military cooperation.**

#### CIVILIAN SPACE & DEFENSE INITIATIVES

**32. US Micro Nuclear Reactor Airlift First air transport of Ward microreactor (Valar Atomics) by C-17 from California to Hill AFB, Utah; capacity: up to 5 MW.**

**33. CBDC-Based PDS Launch Union Minister Amit Shah launched India's first CBDC (₹) based Public Distribution System in Gujarat (Ahmedabad, Anand, Valsad, Surat) demonstrating digital currency integration in essential services.**

#### DEFENSE PERSONNEL & EVENTS

**34. Indian Navy Half Marathon 2nd edition Indian Navy Half Marathon held in New Delhi; flagged off by CNS with 10 km run by Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya; partner: IDFC First Bank.**

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

#### SPACE & SATELLITE PROGRAMS

**1. Chandrayaan-4 Landing Site Identified ISRO identified Mons Mouton-4 near the Moon's south pole as the landing site for Chandrayaan-4, supporting India's future lunar exploration mission.**

**2. IN-SPACe Satellite Bus Initiative IN-SPACe selected Astrome, Azista, and Dhruva Space under the 'Satellite Bus as a Service' initiative promoting private participation in space sector.**

**3. Digantara Industries - Space Situational Awareness Digantara Industries partnered with Singapore's DSTA to develop Space Situational Awareness (SSA) tools for satellite protection and monitoring technologies.**

**4. GalaxEye - First Private Operator Partnership GalaxEye became first private Indian satellite operator to formally partner with NSIL (ISRO's commercial arm); reselling SyncFused OptoSAR imagery (SAR-based Earth observation); CEO: Suyash Singh.**

**5. GalaxEye Mission Drishti Satellite GalaxEye announced Mission Drishti Satellite – AI-powered OptoSAR satellite integrating EO and SAR sensors with in-orbit NVIDIA Jetson processing.**

**6. ISRO Liquid Methane Plant ISRO planning liquid methane production plant at Mahendragiri Propulsion Complex, Tamil Nadu supporting Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV) with 8 MT/day capacity, enabling methalox propulsion systems (methane + liquid oxygen) for 30-tonne LEO payload capacity and human spaceflight support.**

**7. ISRO LVM3 Debris Recovery Payload fairing believed from LVM3-M6 (launched 18 Dec 2025 with BlueBird Block-2) found on Kunahandhoo island, Maldives.**

#### NATIONAL OBSERVATORIES & RESEARCH FACILITIES

**8. National Large Solar Telescope (NLST) NLST with 2-metre aperture launched near Pangong Tso Lake, Ladakh; observes visible and near-infrared wavelengths; India's 3rd solar observatory (after Kodaikanal 1899, Udaipur 1975).**

**9. National Large Optical-Near Infrared Telescope (NLOT) NLOT with 13.7m aperture featuring 90 hexagonal mirror segments at Hanle, Ladakh; among world's largest optical-infrared telescopes; focus on exoplanets, stellar evolution, supernovae.**

#### MISSILE & DEFENSE TECHNOLOGY

**10. DRDO Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) DRDO successfully demonstrated Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) technology; enhances India's advanced missile propulsion capability placing India among elite nations.**

**11. DRDO Gaganyaan Drogue Parachute Test DRDO successfully conducted qualification-level load test of Drogue Parachute for Gaganyaan human spaceflight programme at TBRL Chandipur (Feb 18, 2026); enhances astronaut safety.**

**12. AMCA Stealth Fighter Development Tata Advanced Systems and L&T-Bharat Forge consortium shortlisted for 5th-generation stealth AMCA prototype; would enable India to join elite F-35, J-20, Su-57 club.**

**DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE & AI GOVERNANCE**

**13. India AI Governance Framework** India's first comprehensive AI governance framework under IndiaAI Mission guided by 7 Sutras: Trust, People First, Innovation over Restraint, Fairness, Accountability, Understandable by Design, Safety.

**14. Bharat EduAI Stack** Bodhan AI (IIT Madras) to build DPI for education (like UPI); ₹500 crore initial budget; supports Indian languages, speech recognition, adaptive learning; covers pre-primary to higher secondary.

**15. UIDAI Biometric Deduplication Platform** UIDAI launched "Invisible Shield" – AI-enabled biometric deduplication and document verification platform; system performs crores high-speed computations using accelerated computing technology; developed indigenous AI models with IIIT, Hyderabad; runs NVIDIA DGX High-Performance Computing Infrastructure; enables Aadhaar authentication accuracy enhancement.

**16. DigiLocker Integration Expansion** UIDAI partnering Google mapping 60,000+ authorized Aadhaar Centres nationwide improving citizen accessibility to digital services.

**17. India AI Governance Framework (New Delhi)** Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw unveiled inclusive and multilingual AI framework at AI Summit 2026 under "New Delhi Frontier AI Commitments".

**STARTUP & VENTURE ECOSYSTEM**

**18. IIT Madras Unicorn Fund** IIT Madras × UIV launched ₹600 crore IITM Unicorn Frontier Fund I (+ ₹400 crore greenhoe); 25+ startups (TRL 3–4) with initial investment ₹8–10 crore each; 10-year corpus.

**19. AuraML AuraSim Robotics Simulation** AuraML launched AuraSim, India's first multimodal world simulation model for robotics at India AI Impact Summit 2026; built on Nvidia Omniverse Cosmos infrastructure; supports simulations of humanoid robots, autonomous mobile robots (AMRs), robotic arms; reduces training time, cost for autonomous systems; launching Global Physical AI & Robotics Cohort with NVIDIA Inception.

**20. Sarvam AI Sovereign Models** Sarvam AI presented indigenous AI models at India AI Impact Summit 2026 after raising \$41 million funding.

**21. Fractal AI Vaidya 2.0 Healthcare AI** Fractal AI launched Vaidya 2.0, next-generation healthcare reasoning AI model integrating healthcare decision-making with raw clinical data; first AI model scoring above 50 on OpenAI's HealthBench (Hard) Benchmark (specifically 50.1), outperforming GPT-5, Gemini Pro 3.

**22. Tata-OpenAI Data Centre Partnership** Tata Group partnered OpenAI establishing India's first large-scale AI-ready data centre under global Stargate initiative; TCS HyperVault data centre: initially 100 MW capacity, scalable 1 GW; green energy powered, AI-optimised hardware; Tata investing USD 7 billion for 1 GW data centre capacity FY25-30; OpenAI expanding offices to Mumbai, Bengaluru in 2026.

**HEALTHCARE & BIOTECHNOLOGY**

**23. Union Health Minister Td Vaccine Launch** Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda launched India-made Td vaccine at Kasauli, replacing TT vaccine, boosting immunization coverage and supporting Atmanirbhar Bharat goals.

**24. ICMR KFD Vaccine Trials** ICMR advanced trials for the KFD (Kyasanur Forest Disease) vaccine, improving India's viral disease preparedness.

**25. SUJVIKA AI Biotech Data Portal** Union MoS Dr. Jitendra Singh launched SUJVIKA, AI-driven biotech product data portal (marking DBT's 40th foundation day Feb 24, 2026); developed in collaboration with ABLE (Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises); comprehensive searchable database of biotechnology products developed in India covering healthcare/biopharma, agricultural biotech, industrial biotech, environmental biotech.

**NETWORK & TELECOMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

**26. TRAI Apps Upgraded** TRAI DND (spam reporting, multilingual, dual-SIM support) and TRAI MySpeed (download/upload speed, latency, jitter) apps revamped with enhanced features.

**27. C-DOT × RRU MoU Centre for Development of Telematics (DoT) × Rashtriya Raksha University (MHA, Gandhinagar)** partnership focusing on Cybersecurity, Quantum, AI/ML, IoT, 5G, Mission Critical Services.

**EDUCATION & SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

**28. Teacher App 2.0 AI Integration** Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched Teacher App 2.0 powered by Artificial Intelligence, developed by Bharti Airtel Foundation in collaboration with CK-12 Foundation (California); integrates 45+ AI-enabled tools for lesson planning, personalized learning, pedagogy, classroom management; provides 2,500+ training hours; supports 2 lakh+ educators in India with free-for-life platform; plans integration of Indian Large Language Models (BharatGen, Sarvam).

**29. IBM AI GovTech Centre Lucknow** UP CM Yogi Adityanath inaugurated IBM's AI GovTech Innovation Centre in Lucknow; IBM signed MoUs with Department IT Electronics (AI applications for government) and Directorate School Education (AI literacy Classes 6-12); UP advancing AI, Robotics, Drone Technology, MedTech, Quantum Computing.

**TESTING & CERTIFICATION STANDARDS**

**28. National Test House - EMI/EMC Testing** National Test House (NTH) partnered with STQC-ERTL for EMI/EMC testing capability, strengthening drone certification and electronics testing standards.

**RESEARCH & INNOVATION**

**30. JNCASR Heat Transport Discovery** JNCASR discovered particle-to-wave crossover in phonon behavior in  $Tl_2AgI_3$  (crystalline material); thermal conductivity:  $\sim 0.18$  W/m·K; implications for thermoelectrics.

**31. ZSI New Species Discoveries** Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) discovered two new marine worm species in West Bengal; new dragonfly species *Lyriothemis keralensis* discovered in Kerala; first *Diplura* species (*Lepidocampa sikkimensis*) formally described by Indian team in Sikkim near Ravangla, published in *Zootaxa*.

**32. Andhra Pradesh AI Platform - Pilloo** Andhra Pradesh launched 'Pilloo', AI-powered voice-based accounting platform supporting five Indian languages, promoting digital financial inclusion.

#### GOVERNMENT DIGITAL INITIATIVES

**33. Statistics Ministry - CPI Data Expansion** Ministry of Statistics expanded CPI data collection to 2,860 markets and 434 towns, improving accuracy of inflation data.

**34. MeitY-EU Digital Signature Agreement** MeitY and European Union signed agreement on digital signature interoperability, enabling cross-border digital contract signing.

#### RENEWABLE ENERGY & GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

**35. VOC Port & CISF Barracks Certification** VOC Port Hospital and CISF Barracks achieved Shunya Plus Certification, becoming Net Positive Energy Buildings by generating more renewable energy than consumed.

#### AEROSPACE EXCELLENCE CENTER

**36. Airbus SAF Centre of Excellence** Airbus established Centre of Excellence at Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya, focusing on Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) research.

#### INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION & DEFENSE

**37. NATO Arctic Sentry Mission** NATO launched "Arctic Sentry" mission strengthening security, surveillance, military coordination in Arctic High North; integrates ongoing operations with multi-domain defence operations (land, sea, air, cyber, intelligence surveillance); initiative responds to geopolitical tensions, Greenland crisis, addressing concerns about strategic dominance, security interests against Russian, Chinese activity.

#### SPECIAL OPERATIONS & EXPEDITIONS

**38. Indian Mountaineers Summit Aconcagua** Six-member team from Nehru Institute of Mountaineering (NIM), Uttarkashi and Jawahar Institute of Mountaineering Winter Sports (JIM&WS), Pahalgam successfully summited Mount Aconcagua, Argentina (Feb 2026); expedition flagged off by Union Minister Rajnath Singh (Feb 5, 2026); led by Colonel Hem Chandra Singh; faced extreme weather (strong winds, -20 to -30°C temperatures); Aconcagua is highest South America, 2nd-highest world peak outside Asia (6,967.15m).

#### INTERNATIONAL INNOVATION

**39. South Africa FMD Vaccine** South Africa launched first indigenous Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccine, strengthening livestock health security and reducing import dependence.

#### IIT GLOBAL EXPANSION

**40. IIT Madras AI Centre Dubai** IIT Madras Global Research Foundation launched Applied AI Innovation Centre at Dubai CommerCity; initial: 6 startups with combined valuation ~USD 118 mn.

## SPORTS

#### CRICKET

**1. India U-19 World Cup Victory** India won its 6th ICC U-19 World Cup title defeating England in the final; Vaibhav Suryavanshi scored a record 175 runs, powering India to victory.

**2. Zimbabwe T20 World Cup Upset** Zimbabwe defeated Australia by 23 runs at ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026, marking one of the biggest surprises of the tournament.

**3. India vs Pakistan T20 World Cup** India (175/7) defeated Pakistan at R. Premadasa Stadium, Colombo during T20 World Cup 2026; Ishan Kishan scored 77 off 40 balls; Saim Ayub took 3/25 for Pakistan.

**4. Rashid Khan - 700 T20 Wickets** Afghanistan spinner Rashid Khan became first bowler to reach 700 T20 wickets (in 518 matches) during ICC Men's T20 WC 2026 vs UAE in Delhi; also holds 191 T20I wickets record.

**5. Smriti Mandhana - BBC Sportswoman Award** Smriti Mandhana awarded BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year 2025; scored fastest 50-over century (50 balls) by an Indian, playing key role in India's Women's WC 2025.

**6. Harmanpreet Kaur - Most-Capped Women's Cricket** India captain Harmanpreet Kaur created history becoming most-capped player in women's international cricket (356 matches), surpassing New Zealand's Suzie Bates (355 matches) during 2nd T20I vs Australia in Canberra; scoring: 4,409 ODI runs, 3,820 T20I runs; under her captaincy, India won 2025 ICC Women's Cricket World Cup.

**7. Paras Dogra - Fastest to 10,000 Ranji Trophy Runs** Paras Dogra reached 10,000 Ranji Trophy runs in 147 innings (vs Wasim Jaffer's 196 innings); 2nd highest all-time scorer with 33 centuries; J&K's first-ever Ranji semi-finalist.

**8. J&K Ranji Trophy Final** Jammu & Kashmir reached first-ever Ranji Trophy Final (in their 66th year) defeating Bengal in semi-finals.

#### TENNIS

**9. Carlos Alcaraz - Australian Open 2026 Men's Singles** Carlos Alcaraz (Spain) defeated Novak Djokovic to win Australian Open 2026 Men's Singles title, strengthening his dominance in men's tennis.

10. Elena Rybakina - Australian Open 2026 Women's Singles Elena Rybakina (Kazakhstan) defeated Aryna Sabalenka to win Australian Open 2026 Women's Singles title.

11. Stefanos Sakellariadis - Delhi Open 2026 Stefanos Sakellariadis (Greece, 21-year-old) won maiden ATP Challenger Singles title at Delhi Open 2026, defeating Oliver Crawford 7-5, 5-6, 7-6; Siddhant Banthia-Alexander Donski won doubles.

12. Olivia Gadecki & John Peers - Australian Open Mixed Doubles Australia's Olivia Gadecki & John Peers defended their Australian Open Mixed Doubles title; became first pair since 1989 to successfully defend the title.

13. Vaishnavi Adkar - ITF W100 Final Indian tennis player Vaishnavi Adkar (World No. 690) reached ITF W100 Bengaluru final; lost to Belgium's Hanne Vandewinkel 6-0, 6-1 but became first Indian woman since Sania Mirza (2009) reaching ITF W100 final, earning 65 ranking points, USD 8,147.

#### BADMINTON

14. Devika Sihag - BWF Super 300 Title Indian badminton player Devika Sihag won first BWF Super 300 title at Thailand Masters, marking major breakthrough in her international career.

#### ARCHERY & SHOOTING

15. India 2027 Asian Rifle/Pistol Championship Hosting India secured hosting rights for the 2027 Asian Rifle/Pistol Championship; event will serve as Olympic qualifier.

16. Asian Shooting Championship 2026 - Overall India topped Asian Shooting Championship 2026 with 94 medals (51 Gold, 23 Silver, 20 Bronze) at Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range, New Delhi; Kazakhstan 2nd with 26 medals; 17th edition with 300+ athletes, 20 countries.

17. Amanpreet Singh - 25m Centre Fire Pistol Indian shooter Amanpreet Singh won gold in 25m Centre Fire Pistol event with score 589-24x.

18. Suraj Sharma - 25m Pistol Junior Suraj Sharma secured gold in 25m Pistol Junior event with score 585-25x.

19. Sift Kaur Samra - 50m Rifle Prone Sift Kaur Samra won silver in 50m Rifle Prone Women Senior event.

20. Meghana Sajjanar - Pregnant Shooter Bronze Pregnant shooter Meghana Sajjanar won bronze, highlighting determination and excellence.

#### ATHLETICS & MULTI-SPORT

21. Tejaswin Shankar - Asian Indoor Athletics Tejaswin Shankar won gold in men's heptathlon at Asian Indoor Athletics Championships 2026, Tianjin, China; score: 5,993 points (national indoor record); India finished 6th overall with 5 medals.

22. India SAFF U-19 Women's Football India defeated Bangladesh 4-0 to win SAFF U-19 Women's Football Championship title.

23. Services - Santosh Trophy Services defeated Kerala 1-0 to win their 8th Santosh Trophy title.

24. Jharkhand Para Throwball - Gold Medals Jharkhand women's team won gold at Para Throwball Nationals 2026 and National Federation Cup Para Throwball Championship, highlighting growth in inclusive and grassroots sports.

#### WINTER OLYMPICS

25. Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics - Overview XXV Winter Olympic Games (Milano Cortina 2026) held Feb 6-22, 2026 in Lombardy, Northeast Italy (Milan, Cortina d'Ampezzo, Bormio, Val di Fiemme); first time two cities officially co-hosted; organized under IOC presidency of Kirsty Coventry (first woman in Olympics leadership); featured 16 winter sports; India fielded 2-member contingent: Arif Mohammad Khan (Alpine Skiing) and Stanzin Lundup (Cross-Country Skiing); no medal secured.

26. Winter Olympics Medal Tally Norway topped medal tally with 41 total (18 gold, 12 silver, 11 bronze); USA 2nd with 33 total (12 gold, 12 silver, 9 bronze); Netherlands 3rd with 20 total (10 gold, 7 silver, 3 bronze); Italy (host) 4th with 30 total (10 gold, 6 silver, 14 bronze) – best-ever Winter Olympic performance.

27. Lucas Pinheiro Braathen - Giant Slalom Gold Lucas Pinheiro Braathen (Brazil) won giant slalom gold at Milano Cortina 2026 – Brazil's first-ever Winter Olympics medal and South America's first Winter Games medal; beat Switzerland's Marco Odermatt by 0.58s.

28. Johannes Klæbo - 9th Winter Olympic Medal Johannes Klæbo won his 9th Winter Olympic medal (men's 4x7.5km relay gold) – most decorated Winter Olympian; Norway won with 22.2s ahead of France; Italy 3rd.

29. Johannes Dale-Skjevdal - Biathlon 15km Gold Johannes Dale-Skjevdal clinched biathlon 15km gold at Milano Cortina 2026; Norway won record 17th gold, breaking Beijing 2022 record of 16 gold medals.

30. Xandra Velzeboer - Short Track World Record Dutch short-track skater Xandra Velzeboer won gold in 500m, 1000m, setting world record in 500m semi-finals.

31. USA Women's Hockey - Olympic Gold USA women's hockey won 2026 Winter Olympics gold in Milan, defeating Canada 2-1 OT; Hilary Knight and Megan Keller secured historic victory.

32. India Alpine Skiing India participating in Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics with athletes competing in Alpine Skiing and Cross-Country Skiing.

#### CHESS

33. Magnus Carlsen - FIDE Freestyle Chess World Championship Magnus Carlsen won inaugural FIDE Freestyle Chess (Chess960) World Championship 2026 in Weissenhaus, Germany, defeating Fabiano Caruana 2.5–1.5; 21st world title; prize: USD 300,000 total (Carlsen: USD 100,000).

#### PARALYMPICS

34. Russia Winter Paralympics Quota Russia allotted six quota places for 2026 Winter Paralympics following IPC's decision.

## BOOKS &amp; AUTHORS

## BOOKS RELEASED

1. **E Mati Katha Kahe E Mati Katha Kahe** by Biswabhusan Harichandan – Odia book released by Odisha Governor highlighting cultural and historical themes.
2. **Buxi Jagabandhu: The Great Commander Buxi Jagabandhu: The Great Commander** by Biswabhusan Harichandan – English book based on life and contributions of freedom fighter Buxi Jagabandhu.
3. **Four Stars of Destiny Four Stars of Destiny** by Manoj Mukund Naravane – Autobiography of former Army Chief General M.M. Naravane reflecting on military career and leadership journey.

## CONSTITUTIONAL DOCUMENTS &amp; LEGAL PUBLICATIONS

4. **Indian Constitution - Tamil & Gujarati Editions** Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan released updated Tamil and Gujarati editions of Indian Constitution on International Mother Language Day (Feb 21, 2026) at Rashtrapati Bhavan;

Constitution now available in **Bodo, Dogri, Santhali, Nepali, and other languages**, empowering citizens to understand rights and duties in mother tongues.

5. **Legal Glossary - 8th Edition** 8th Edition Legal Glossary (English-Hindi) launched to simplify legal terminology, making constitutional knowledge more accessible.

## BIOGRAPHICAL &amp; COMMEMORATIVE PUBLICATIONS

6. **Atal Bihari Vajpayee: The Eternal Statesman** Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan released coffee table book "Atal Bihari Vajpayee: The Eternal Statesman" honoring Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee; publication covers political journey and personal dimensions, highlighting commitment to dialogue, consensus-building, and democratic values; three core pillars emphasized: dialogue over confrontation, democracy as foundation, development as priority.

## OBITUARY

## INDIAN CULTURAL &amp; ACADEMIC FIGURES

1. **Father Thomas V. Kunnunkal** Father Thomas V. Kunnunkal, former CBSE Chairman and Padma Shri awardee, passed away at age 99 in New Delhi.
2. **Hugh Gantzer** Hugh Gantzer, prominent travel writer and Padma Shri recipient, passed away at age 95 in Mussoorie.
3. **Andre Beteille** Andre Beteille, renowned Indian sociologist and Padma Bhushan recipient, passed away at age 91 in Delhi.
4. **Mani Shankar Mukhopadhyay (Shankar)** Renowned Bengali novelist Mani Shankar Mukhopadhyay (Shankar) passed away (Feb 20, 2026) at age 93 in Kolkata; born Dec 7, 1933 in Jessore (present Bangladesh); 2021 Sahitya Akademi Award for autobiographical work 'Eka Eka Ekashi'; wrote nearly 100 novels & stories including 'Chowringhee' (1962), 'Jana Aranya' (1975) – adapted in Satyajit Ray's Calcutta Trilogy films portraying urban struggles and moral compromises; 'Chowringhee' adapted as 1968 film starring Uttam Kumar.
5. **Joe Simon** - Kannada Filmmaker Veteran Kannada filmmaker Joe Simon, renowned director, actor, lyricist, and writer, age 80, passed away suffering sudden cardiac arrest during KFC meeting; left legacy of 100+ films including "Sahasa Simha" starring Vishnuvardhan and acclaimed works like "Mr. Vasu" and "Ravivarma".

## INDIAN POLITICAL FIGURES

6. **Mukul Roy** - Former Union Railway Minister Mukul Roy, former Union Minister and founding All India Trinamool Congress member, passed away (Feb 23, 2026) at age 71 in Kolkata; born April 17, 1954; served as 32nd Union Railway Minister (2012) under PM Manmohan Singh; earlier served Minister of State (MoS) Shipping (2009-2011) in UPA II

government; also served TMC Rajya Sabha Leader (2009-2012); political career challenged by Saradha chit fund case and Narada 2015 sting operation; won 2021 West Bengal Assembly Election from Krishnanagar Uttar for BJP; returned to TMC in June 2021.

7. **Ricky Andrew J Syngkon** - Shillong MP Ricky Andrew J Syngkon, Member Parliament (MP) Shillong Lok Sabha constituency (Meghalaya), passed away (Feb 23, 2026) at age 54 in Shillong; born Jan 6, 1972; previously served as Assistant Professor of Economics at North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU); began political career with Voice People Party (VPP), a Meghalaya-based regional party; won 2024 General Elections defeating Vincent H. Pala (INC); entered 18th Lok Sabha as first-time MP focusing on connectivity, tribal welfare, youth empowerment, inclusive governance.

8. **R Nallakannu** - CPI Leader Veteran Communist Party India leader R Nallakannu passed away (Feb 25, 2026) in Chennai at age 101.



**INDUSTRIAL & BUSINESS LEADERS**

**9. Jatinder Mehra - Steel Industry Veteran** Jatinder Mehra, Essar Group Vice Chairman Metals & Mining, steel industry veteran with 60+ years experience, passed away (Feb 25, 2026) at age 86 in New Delhi; born March 3, 1939 in Lahore (present Pakistan); served as Executive Director at Steel Authority India Limited (SAIL); became Chairman-Managing Director (CMD) at Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL); accelerated capacity expansion, improved operational productivity, implemented strategic modernization initiatives; 2022 Lifetime Achievement Award from Indian Steel Association (ISA).

**GLOBAL FIGURES - TECHNOLOGY & INTERNET**

**10. David J. Farber - Internet Pioneer** David J. Farber, "Grandfather of the Internet", died at 91 in Tokyo (heart failure); career at Bell Labs from mid-1950s; mentored Jonathan Postel (IP development); teaching at Keio University since 2018.

**GLOBAL FIGURES - ENTERTAINMENT & ARTS**

**11. James Van Der Beek - Hollywood Actor** James Van Der Beek, Hollywood actor known for "Dawson's Creek", passed away at age 48.

**12. Robert Duvall - Oscar-Winning Actor** Robert Duvall, Oscar-winning actor, died at age 95 in Middleburg; born 5 January 1931; won Best Actor for "Tender Mercies" (1983); received 7 Oscar nominations; known for "The Godfather" (as Tom Hagen) and "Apocalypse Now".

**13. Frederick Wiseman - Documentary Filmmaker** Frederick Wiseman, documentary filmmaker, died at age 96 in Massachusetts; born 1 January 1930; directed 40+ documentaries including "Titicut Follies" and "High School"; received Honorary Oscar (2016).

**IMPORTANT DAYS**

**FEBRUARY 2026 - DAYS & OBSERVANCES - COMPREHENSIVE TABLE**

Date	Day/Observance	Theme/Description	Key Details
1-7 Feb	World Interfaith Harmony Week	Peace and tolerance	Promotes peace, tolerance, and harmony among different religions
2 Feb	World Wetlands Day	"Wetlands and Traditional Knowledge: Celebrating Cultural Heritage"	Focus on cultural heritage and wetland conservation
4 Feb	International Day of Human Fraternity	Global solidarity	Promotes mutual understanding and global solidarity
4 Feb	World Cancer Day	"United by Unique"	Patient-centered cancer care awareness
9 Feb	International Epilepsy Day	"The Epilepsy Pledge"	Observed on 2nd Monday of February; Symbol: Lavender/Purple; First observed 9 Feb 2015
10 Feb	International Day of Arabian Leopard	Conservation awareness	Raises awareness about endangered Arabian leopard conservation
10 Feb	National Deworming Day (India)	Child health	Aims to eliminate intestinal worm infections among children
10 Feb	World Pulses Day	Nutritional benefits	Promotes nutritional and environmental benefits of pulses
10 Feb	Safer Internet Day	Digital safety	Encourages safe and responsible use of digital technology
10 Feb	International Epilepsy Day	Epilepsy awareness	Raises awareness about epilepsy and supports patients
11 Feb	International Day of Women and Girls in Science	STEM participation	Promotes equal participation of women in STEM fields
11 Feb	World Unani Day	Healthcare tradition	Celebrates contributions of Unani medicine in healthcare
11 Feb	World Day of the Sick	Care and support	Focuses on care and support for sick individuals
12 Feb	International Day for Prevention of Violent Extremism	Counter-radicalization	Promotes global efforts to prevent radicalization and extremism

Date	Day/Observance	Theme/Description	Key Details
12 Feb	National Productivity Day (India)	Sector improvement	Encourages productivity improvement across sectors
13 Feb	World Radio Day	Mass communication	Celebrates the power of radio as a mass communication medium
13 Feb	National Women's Day (India)	Sarojini Naidu	Birth anniversary of Sarojini Naidu ('Nightingale of India'); 147th birth anniversary in 2026; first woman President of INC (1925)
15 Feb	International Childhood Cancer Day	"Demonstrating Impact"	Established 2002 by Childhood Cancer International (CCI); Symbol: Gold Ribbon; 3-year initiative 2024–2026
17 Feb	Global Tourism Resilience Day	Tourism sustainability	Declared by UNGA (Resolution A/RES/77/269); First observed 17 Feb 2023; 4th GTRD Conference held in Nairobi, Kenya
18 Feb	International Asperger's Day	Neurodevelopmental awareness	Birth anniversary of Hans Asperger (Austrian pediatrician); Condition now included in ASD under DSM-5; Adopted by UNGA 2007
18–20 Feb	Losar Festival 2026	Tibetan New Year	Marks start of Fire Horse Year (once in 60 years in Tibetan zodiac); Celebrated in McLeod Ganj, Himachal Pradesh; Dalai Lama present
20 Feb	Arunachal Pradesh Foundation Day	Statehood anniversary	Statehood granted 20 February 1987 (24th state); NE's largest state by area; Borders: China, Bhutan, Myanmar, Assam, Nagaland
20 Feb	World Day of Social Justice	"Renewed Commitment to Social Development and Social Justice"	Observed since 2009 (proclaimed by UN 26 Nov 2007); Based on World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen 1995; ILO established 29 Oct 1919
21 Feb	International Mother Language Day	"Youth voices multilingual education"	27th IMLD observance in 2026; Promotes linguistic diversity and cultural heritage; UNESCO declared Feb 21 IMLD Nov 17, 1999; First observed Feb 21, 2000
21 Feb	World Pangolin Day	Wildlife conservation	Observed third Saturday of February; 15th observance in 2026; First celebrated 2012; 530,978 pangolins involved in 2,222 illegal trade seizures 2016–2024
22 Feb	World Scout Day	Youth service	Celebrates scouts worldwide; Baden-Powell founded Scouting 1907 at Brownsea Island; 1920 first global Scout Jamboree at Olympia, London; 3.3 million scouts worldwide by 1939
22 Feb	World Thinking Day	Girl Guides & Girl Scouts	Celebrated by 153 countries; Marks centenary (100th anniversary) of WTD in 2026; Theme: "Our Friendship"; Organized annually by WAGGGS
24 Feb	Central Excise Day	Tax administration	Commemorates Central Excise Act, 1944 (signed 24 Feb); Honors Central Board of Excise & Customs (CBEC); Central Excise Department one of oldest in India (established 1855); ~1000 excise duty items currently
27 Feb	National Protein Day (India)	Health & nutrition	7th National Protein Day observance in 2026; Launched 2020 with "Right Protein" (RTP) campaign; First observed Feb 27, 2020; Led by United States Soybean Export Council (USSEC)
27 Feb	World NGO Day	Civil society impact	Recognizing and celebrating contributions of independent organizations worldwide; Founded 2009 by Marcis Liors Skadmanis; First observed Feb 27, 2014; International recognition 2014 by EU and UN

## Miscellaneous

## BUDGET &amp; FINANCIAL ALLOCATIONS

1. Union Budget 2026-27 Presentation Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented ninth consecutive Union Budget on 1 February 2026.
2. DoT Budget Allocation Union Budget allocated ₹73,990.94 crore to Department of Telecommunications; announced SHE Marts for women entrepreneurs.
3. Ground-Based Astronomy Infrastructure Union Budget announced major expansion of astronomy infrastructure in Ladakh and southern India.
4. Biogas Excise Duty Exemption Budget proposed excise-duty exemption on biogas/compressed biogas component in blended CNG.
5. CPI Base Year Revision Ministry of Statistics changed CPI base year to 2024; reduced Food & Beverages weight from 45.86% to 36.75% in revised index.

## FINANCIAL SECTOR DEVELOPMENTS

6. IRDAI Reinsurance Advisory Committee IRDAI reconstituted Reinsurance Advisory Committee for three-year tenure.
7. Slice SFB New Products Slice Small Finance Bank introduced digital savings account, UPI-linked credit card, and digital FDs.
8. UAE Stablecoin Approval Central Bank of UAE approved country's first USD-backed stablecoin.
9. Paysharp Payment Aggregator License Fintech startup Paysharp received Payment Aggregator-Physical licence from RBI.

## TRANSPORTATION &amp; INFRASTRUCTURE

10. Railway Kavach 4.0 Rollout Indian Railways commissioned Kavach Version 4.0 over 472.3 route kilometres in single day.
11. Mumbai Bullet Train Bridge India completed 100-metre steel bridge for Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train Project.
12. Haven-1 Space Station Launch Vast Space's private space station Haven-1 set for 2027 SpaceX Falcon 9 launch.
13. Delhi Airport - Asia-Pacific Ranking Indira Gandhi International Airport ranked 5th busiest in Asia-Pacific region 2025 with 46.18 million one-way departing seats (OAG data); jumped from 9th position in 2019 pre-COVID; surpassed Singapore Changi (42.57M), Suvarnabhumi (39.49M), Incheon (43.40M); IndiGo expansion major growth contributor.
14. NHAI Bee Corridors Initiative First ecological initiative to develop pollinator corridors along national highways; native species: Neem, Karanj, Mahua, Palash, Jamun, Siris; 40 lakh trees target in FY27.
15. V.O. Chidambaranar Port Certification V.O. Chidambaranar Port (Tamil Nadu) became first Major Port with IGBC Platinum + Shunya Plus certification; 70%+ green cover, 100% renewable energy on campus.

## LEGAL &amp; POLICY REFORMS

16. Gujarat Shops Establishments Amendment Bill 2026 Gujarat Legislative Assembly unanimously passed Shops Establishments Amendment Bill 2026; allows night shifts for women (9pm-6am) with mandatory safety, welfare safeguards; increases daily working hours from 9 to 10 hours; raises overtime limit from 125 to 144 hours over 3-month period; overtime wages paid twice ordinary rate; written woman employee consent required; employers provide rest rooms, ladies toilets, night creche, harassment protection, workplace residence transportation.
17. Insolvency Code Amendment Bill Union government plans to introduce amendment bill in Parliament's second half session.
18. Supreme Court Menstrual Health Ruling Supreme Court declared menstrual health as integral part of Right to Life under Article 21.
19. Supreme Court Water Tribunal Order Supreme Court directed government to establish tribunal for Pennaiyar river water dispute.

## GOVERNMENT SCHEMES &amp; PROGRAMS

20. Mukhya Mantri Eti Koli Duti Paat (Assam) Assam government launched scheme providing one-time financial assistance to tea garden workers.
21. Bharat Taxi Launch Union Minister Amit Shah launched Bharat Taxi, India's first cooperative-based ride-hailing platform.
22. Seva Teerth Complex PMO shifted to new complex on Raisina Hill after 78 years.

## CULTURAL &amp; POSTAL INITIATIVES

23. DoP Stamps - 'Puppets of India' 8 commemorative postage stamps (₹5 denomination) released featuring Indian puppets: Kathputli (Rajasthan), Yakshagana (Karnataka), Benir Putul (West Bengal), Pavakathakali (Kerala), Ravanachhaya (Odisha), Tolu Bommalatta (Andhra Pradesh).
24. Tamil Nadu State Film Awards Government of Tamil Nadu announced long-pending State Film Awards for 2016 to 2022.
25. Mumbai Melody Road Mumbai inaugurated India's first melody road playing "Jai Ho".

## ENVIRONMENTAL &amp; CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

26. Demwe Lower Hydrel Project 1,750 MW project on Lohit River, Arunachal Pradesh; EC extended to 2037 (original clearance: February 2010); involves 162.12 m concrete gravity dam; 1,416 ha forest diverted.
27. Sangtam Naga Tribe - Pangolin Conservation USLP passed resolution banning pangolin hunting; part of Wildlife Trust of India's Countering Pangolin Trafficking Project; all 8 pangolin species under CITES Appendix I.

28. National Biobank for Lysosomal Storage Diseases National Biobank for LSDs (Lysosomal Storage Diseases) launched at FRIGE, Ahmedabad; collaboration with TIGS (Bengaluru); covers 530 patients over 17 years (2008–2025); LSDs are rare inherited metabolic diseases due to enzyme deficiencies.

**ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

29. India AI Governance Framework - M.A.N.A.V PM Modi launched M.A.N.A.V framework for ethical AI at India AI Impact Summit 2026.

30. India Guinness World Record - AI Pledges India created Guinness World Record collecting 2,50,946 valid responsible AI use pledges in 24-hour period (Feb 16-17, 2026); announced by Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw at India AI Impact Summit 2026; 5+ lakh students, educational institutions participated; campaign launched by India AI Mission with Intel India.

31. 8-Year-Old Ranvir Sachdeva - Youngest Summit Speaker 8-year-old Ranvir Sachdeva became youngest speaker at India AI Impact Summit 2026; started coding age 3, began studying machine learning models at young age; delivered keynote on inclusive, ethical Artificial Intelligence; emphasized AI

accessibility for common citizens, not limited to experts/corporations; interacted with Sundar Pichai (Google CEO), Sam Altman (OpenAI CEO).

**INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS & EVENTS**

32. NPCI International × PayNet Malaysia QR-based UPI payments enabled at DuitNow QR points in Malaysia for Indian travellers; Phase 2: Malaysian visitors will use DuitNow app at UPI QR codes in India.

33. Earthshot Prize 2026 Mumbai to host the Earthshot Prize founded by Prince William; awards £1 million each to 5 climate innovators.

34. India-France AI Governance Partnership PM Modi launched M.A.N.A.V framework for ethical AI in collaboration with France at India AI Impact Summit 2026.

**STATISTICAL & INSTITUTIONAL UPDATES**

35. NSSTA 18th Foundation Day National Sample Survey and Training Academy (NSSTA) celebrated 18th Foundation Day; theme: 'Reimagining Capacity Building for Official Statistics for Viksit Bharat@2047'; Dr Saurabh Garg (Secretary, MoSPI) emphasized: "data = 5th factor of production".

**Static Takeaways**

MASTER REFERENCE TABLE - COMPREHENSIVE ORGANIZATIONS, GOVERNMENTS & INSTITUTIONS

S.No	Entity Name	Type/Category	Key Person(s)	Location/Headquarters	Founded/Established	Key Details
1	World Health Organization (WHO)	International Organization	Director-General: Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus	Geneva, Switzerland	7 April 1948	Global health governance
2	World Bank	International Organization	President: Ajay Banga	Washington D.C., USA	1944	International development financing
3	United Nations (UN)	International Organization	Secretary-General: António Guterres	New York, USA	1945	Global governance
4	FAO (Food & Agriculture Organization)	International Organization	DG: Qu Dongyu	Rome, Italy	1945	Food security & agriculture
5	World Food Programme (WFP)	UN Agency	—	Rome, Italy	1961	Hunger relief & food assistance
6	WIPO (World Intellectual Property Org)	International Organization	DG: Daren Tang	Geneva, Switzerland	1967	IP protection & innovation
7	ADB (Asian Development Bank)	International Organization	President: Masato Kanda	Philippines	1966	Asian development financing

S.No	Entity Name	Type/Category	Key Person(s)	Location/Headquarters	Founded/Established	Key Details
8	ICC (International Cricket Council)	Sports Organization	CEO: Sanjog Gupta	Dubai, UAE	1909	Global cricket governance
9	UNAOC (UN Alliance of Civilizations)	International Organization	High Representative: Miguel Ángel Moratinos	New York, USA	2005	Interfaith dialogue & cooperation
10	NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)	Military Alliance	—	—	4 April 1949	Western military alliance
11	BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation)	Media Organization	Director-General: Timothy Douglas Davie	London, UK	1922	Global media broadcaster
12	State Bank of India (SBI)	Nationalised Bank	Chairman: Challa Sreenivasulu Setty	Mumbai, Maharashtra	1955	India's largest bank
13	Central Bank of India	Nationalised Bank	MD & CEO: Kalyan Kumar	Mumbai, Maharashtra	21 Dec 1911	Historic Indian bank
14	Punjab National Bank (PNB)	Nationalised Bank	MD & CEO: Ashok Chandra	New Delhi	1894	PSU bank, 130 years old
15	Indian Overseas Bank	Nationalised Bank	MD & CEO: Ajay Kumar Srivastava	Chennai, Tamil Nadu	1937	"A friend you can bank upon"
16	UCO Bank	Nationalised Bank	MD & CEO: Ashwani Kumar	Kolkata	—	State-owned bank
17	Axis Bank	Private Bank	CEO: Amitabh Chaudhry	Mumbai	1993	Leading private sector bank
18	YES Bank	Private Bank	—	Mumbai	2004	Retail banking focus
19	IDFC First Bank	Private Bank	MD & CEO: V. Vaidyanathan	Mumbai, Maharashtra	2015	Merged entity (IDFC + Capital First)
20	Equitas Small Finance Bank	Small Finance Bank	MD & CEO: P. N. Vasudevan	Chennai, Tamil Nadu	2007	Inclusive banking focus
21	Slice Small Finance Bank	Small Finance Bank	CEO: Rajan Bajaj	Guwahati, Assam	2016	Fintech-driven SFB
22	AU Small Finance Bank	Small Finance Bank	—	Jaipur, Rajasthan	2017 (as SFB)	First SFB to transition to Universal Bank
23	NABARD	Financial Institution	Chairman: Shaji K V	Mumbai, Maharashtra	12 July 1982	Rural development financing
24	SEBI	Regulatory Body	Chairman: Tuhin Kanta Pandey	Mumbai	12 April 1988	Securities market regulator

S.No	Entity Name	Type/Category	Key Person(s)	Location/Headquarters	Founded/Established	Key Details
25	<b>RBI (Reserve Bank of India)</b>	Central Bank	Governor: Sanjay Malhotra	Mumbai	1935	Central monetary authority
26	<b>IRDAI (Insurance Regulatory Authority)</b>	Regulatory Body	Chairman: Ajay Seth	Hyderabad, Telangana	1999	Insurance sector regulator
27	<b>CBIC (Central Board of Indirect Taxes)</b>	Government Board	Chairperson: Vivek Chaturvedi	New Delhi	26 Jan 1944	Excise & customs authority
28	<b>NSO (National Statistics Office)</b>	Statistical Body	DG: Narender Kumar Santoshi	New Delhi	2019	Economic statistics (merged CSO + NSSO)
29	<b>DRDO (Defence Research &amp; Dev Org)</b>	Defence Organization	Chairman: Dr. Samir V. Kamat	New Delhi	1958	Military technology development
30	<b>CCI (Competition Commission of India)</b>	Regulatory Body	Chairperson: Ravneet Kaur	New Delhi	14 October 2003	Competition law enforcement
31	<b>NGT (National Green Tribunal)</b>	Tribunal	—	New Delhi	18 October 2010	Environmental disputes tribunal
32	<b>DPIIT</b>	Department	—	New Delhi	1995 (Renamed 2019)	Startup & innovation promotion
33	<b>UIDAI (Unique Identification Authority)</b>	Statutory Body	Chairman: Neelkanth Mishra; CEO: Bhuvnesh Kumar	New Delhi	Aadhaar Act 2016	Biometric identity system
34	<b>NCDEX</b>	Commodity Exchange	MD & CEO: Dr. Arun Raste	—	—	Agricultural futures trading
35	<b>Indian Navy</b>	Defence Force	Chief of Naval Staff: Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi	New Delhi	1950	Naval warfare force
36	<b>Indian Coast Guard</b>	Defence Force	Director General: Paramesh Sivamani	New Delhi	1978	Maritime security force
37	<b>Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL)</b>	Maharatna PSU	—	New Delhi	1959	Energy & petroleum major
38	<b>Shipping Corporation of India (SCI)</b>	PSU	CMD: Captain Binesh Kumar Tyagi	Mumbai	1961	Maritime shipping operator
39	<b>GAIL (India) Limited</b>	PSU	—	New Delhi	1984	Natural gas transmission (51.8% govt)

S.No	Entity Name	Type/Category	Key Person(s)	Location/Headquarters	Founded/Established	Key Details
40	Power Finance Corporation Ltd (PFC)	PSU	CMD: Parminder Chopra	New Delhi	1986	Power sector financing
41	REC Limited	PSU	CMD: Jitendra Srivastava	—	1969	Power distribution financing
42	Food Corporation of India	PSU	—	—	1965	Food procurement & distribution
43	Ministry of Finance	Government Ministry	Cabinet Minister: Nirmala Sitharaman; MoS: Pankaj Chaudhary	New Delhi	—	Economic policy & budgets
44	Ministry of Railways	Government Ministry	Minister: Ashwini Vaishnaw	New Delhi	—	Rail transportation
45	Ministry of Corporate Affairs	Government Ministry	Union Minister: Nirmala Sitharaman; MoS: Harsh Malhotra	New Delhi	—	Corporate governance
46	Ministry of Statistics & Prog Implementation	Government Ministry	Minister of State: Rao Inderjit Singh	New Delhi	—	National statistics
47	Uttar Pradesh	Indian State	CM: Yogi Adityanath; Governor: Anandiben Patel	Lucknow	—	National Parks: Dudhwa; Wildlife sanctuaries: 8 major
48	Maharashtra	Indian State	CM: Devendra Fadnavis; Governor: Acharya Devvrat	Mumbai	—	National Parks: Tadoba, Sanjay Gandhi, Chandoli
49	Tamil Nadu	Indian State	CM: M. K. Stalin; Governor: R. N. Ravi	Chennai	—	National Parks: Mudumalai, Mukurthi, Gulf of Mannar Marine
50	Rajasthan	Indian State	CM: Bajan Lal Sharma; Governor: Haribhau Bagade	Jaipur	—	National Parks: Ranthambhore, Sariska, Keoladeo
51	Gujarat	Indian State	CM: Bhupendra Patel; Governor: Acharya Devvrat; Dy CM: Harsh Sanghvi	Gandhinagar	—	Major industrial & trade hub

S.No	Entity Name	Type/Category	Key Person(s)	Location/Headquarters	Founded/Established	Key Details
52	Madhya Pradesh	Indian State	CM: Mohan Yadav; Governor: Mangubhai Patel; Finance Minister: Jagdish Devda	Bhopal	—	Central Indian state
53	Assam	Indian State	CM: Himanta Biswa Sarma; Governor: Lakshman Prasad Acharya	Dispur	—	National Parks: Kaziranga, Manas, Dibru-Saikhowa
54	Punjab	Indian State	CM: Bhagwant Mann; Governor: Gulab Chand Kataria	Chandigarh	—	Granary of India
55	Kerala	Indian State	CM: Pinarayi Vijayan; Governor: Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar	Thiruvananthapuram	—	National Parks: Eravikulam, Silent Valley
56	Andhra Pradesh	Indian State	CM: N. Chandrababu Naidu; Governor: S. Abdul Nazeer	Amaravati	—	IT & industrial hub
57	Arunachal Pradesh	Indian State	CM: Pema Khandu; Governor: D. Mishra	Itanagar	—	National Parks: Namdapha, Mouling
58	Nagaland	Indian State	CM: Neiphiu Rio; Governor: La. Ganesan	Kohima	—	National Parks: Intanki
59	Jharkhand	Indian State	CM: Hemant Soren; Governor: Santosh Gangwar	Ranchi	—	Mineral-rich state
60	Delhi (UT)	Union Territory	CM: Rekha Gupta; LG: Vinai Kumar Saxena	New Delhi	—	National capital
61	United States of America	Country	President: Donald J. Trump	Washington D.C.	—	Currency: USD; Global superpower
62	Japan	Country	PM: Shigeru Ishiba	Tokyo	—	Currency: Japanese Yen; Tech leader
63	Spain	Country	PM: Pedro Sánchez	Madrid	—	Currency: Euro; EU member

S.No	Entity Name	Type/Category	Key Person(s)	Location/Headquarters	Founded/Established	Key Details
64	United Arab Emirates (UAE)	Country	President: Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan	Abu Dhabi	—	Currency: UAE Dirham; Regional hub
65	Kyrgyzstan	Country	President: Sadyr Japarov	Bishkek	—	Currency: Kyrgyzstani Som; Central Asia
66	Switzerland	Country	—	Bern	—	Currency: Swiss Franc; Neutral
67	Israel	Country	—	Jerusalem	—	Currency: Israeli New Shekel; Middle East
68	South Korea	Country	—	Seoul	—	Currency: Won; Tech hub
69	Kenya	Country	—	Nairobi	—	Currency: Kenyan Shilling; East Africa
70	Poland	Country	President: Karol Nawrocki; PM: Donald Tusk	Warsaw	—	Currency: Złoty; EU & NATO member
71	Netherlands	Country	—	Amsterdam	—	Currency: Euro; EU member
72	Saudi Arabia	Country	King: Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud	Riyadh	—	Currency: Saudi Riyal; Oil major
73	Bangladesh	Country	—	Dhaka	—	Currency: Bangladeshi Taka (BDT)
74	Bulgaria	Country	President: Iliana Iotova; PM: Rosen Zhelyazkov	Sofia	—	Currency: Euro; EU member
75	Australia	Country	PM: Anthony Albanese	Canberra	—	Currency: Australian Dollar; Asia-Pacific
76	Barbados	Country	—	Bridgetown	—	Currency: Barbadian Dollar (BBD)
77	Toyota Motor Corporation	Corporate Entity	Chairman: Akio Toyoda	Japan	1937	Global automotive giant
78	All India Sugar Trade Association (AISTA)	Industry Association	—	—	17 January 2016	Sugar industry unification