

THE HINDU REVIEW

- **Monthly** capsule
- **Current Affairs**
(हिन्दी)

Economy | Appointment | Awards | Ranking
Government Scheme | Summit | Partnership | GDP
Banking & Financial | Defence | Sports |
Book and Author | Science and technology



The Hindu Review (March 2026)

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Chapter 1: Appointment (National, International)

(National)

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Person</u>
Appointed as the Head of the Fino Payments Bank to oversee day-to-day operations	Ketan Merchant (Updated 5 March)
The Derma Co. has appointed as the brand ambassador for its skincare category	Sania Mirza (Updated 5 March)
Assumed charge as Director General of Naval Armament (DGONA) at Naval Headquarters, New Delhi	Shri B.P. Singh (Updated 6 March)
Appointed as Governor of Telangana	Shiv Pratap Shukla (Updated 6 March)
Appointed as Governor of Maharashtra	Jishnu Dev Varma (Updated 6 March)
Appointed as Governor of Nagaland	Nand Kishore Yadav (Updated 6 March)
Appointed as Governor of Bihar	Lieutenant General (Retired) Syed Ata Hasnain (Updated 6 March)
Appointed as the Governor of West Bengal	RN Ravi (Updated 6 March)
Appointed as Governor of Himachal Pradesh <i>About Himachal Pradesh</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Capital – Shimla (Summer), Dharamshala (Winter)</i> 	Kavinder Gupta (Updated 6 March)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Chief Minister – Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu</i> • <i>Deputy Chief Minister - Mukesh Agnihotri</i> <p><i>Governor – Kavinder Gupta</i></p>	
Appointed as Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh	Vinai Kumar Saxena (Updated 6 March)
Appointed as Lieutenant Governor of Delhi	Taranjit Singh Sandhu (Updated 6 March)
Stepped down as the CEO of IndiGo	Pieter Elbers (Updated 13 March)
InterGlobe Aviation Ltd, the parent company of IndiGo, announced that Managing Director will temporarily oversee IndiGo airline's management	Rahul Bhatia (Updated 13 March)
HDFC ERGO General Insurance Board has approved the appointment of as the new Managing Director & CEO	Parthanil Ghosh (Updated 14 March)
Joined Yes Bank as Managing Director (MD) and CEO-designate, with his appointment approved by the Reserve Bank of India	Vinay Muralidhar Tonse (Updated 17 March)
Lieutenant General of the Indian Army, took oath as the Governor of Bihar	Syed Ata Hasnain (Updated 17 March)
The Government has appointed as Whole-Time Member (WTM) of the Securities and Exchange Board of India for a three-year term	Kompella Venkata Ramana Murty (Updated 18 March)
Uniqlo has appointed as its brand ambassador for India.	Jasprit Bumrah (Updated 18 March)
Resigned as part-time chairman and independent director of HDFC Bank	Atanu Chakraborty

<p>About HDFC Bank</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Founded</i> – August 1994 • <i>Founder</i> - Hasmukhbhai Parekh • <i>Headquarters</i> - Mumbai, Maharashtra • <i>Tagline</i> - We understand your world 	(Updated 20 March)
<p>Appointed as interim part-time chairman for 3 months from March 19, 2026</p> <p>About HDFC Bank</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Founded</i> – August 1994 • <i>Founder</i> - Hasmukhbhai Parekh • <i>Headquarters</i> - Mumbai, Maharashtra • <i>Tagline</i> - We understand your world 	<p>Keki Mistry</p> <p>(Updated 20 March)</p>
<p>Appointed as India's next Ambassador to China</p>	<p>Vikram K. Doraiswami</p> <p>(Updated 22 March)</p>
<p>Taken charge as Director (Personnel) at NMDC Limited, India's largest iron ore producer</p>	<p>Krishna Kumar Thakur</p> <p>(Updated 26 March)</p>
<p>Appointed as the Brand Ambassador for Census 2027 by the Ministry of Home Affairs</p>	<p>Sudarshan Pattnaik</p> <p>(Updated 30 March)</p>

(International)

<u>Organization / Country</u>	<u>Person</u>
<p>Appointed as the President of the Main Competition Jury at the 79th Cannes Film Festival</p>	<p>Acclaimed South Korean director Park Chan-wook</p> <p>(Updated 5 March)</p>
<p>Iran has appointed as the President and the Head of the Judiciary</p> <p>About Iran</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Capital</i> – Tehran • <i>Currency</i> – Rial 	<p>Ayatollah Alireza Arafii</p> <p>(Updated 5 March)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>President – Masoud Pezeshkian</i> • <i>Supreme Leader - Ayatollah Alireza Arafī</i> 	
<p>Appointed as the third Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran</p> <p>About Iran</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Capital – Tehran</i> • <i>Currency – Rial</i> • <i>Supreme Leader - Mojtaba Khamenei</i> 	<p>Mojtaba Khamenei</p> <p>(Updated 12 March)</p>
<p>Re-elected as the Prime Minister of Thailand</p>	<p>Anutin Charnvirakul</p> <p>(Updated 22 March)</p>
<p>Appointed as India’s next High Commissioner to the United Kingdom</p>	<p>Periasamy Kumaran</p> <p>(Updated 29 March)</p>
<p>Became Nepal’s youngest Prime Minister at 35</p> <p>About Nepal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Capital- Kathmandu</i> • <i>Currency- Nepalese rupee</i> • <i>President- Ram Chandra Paudel</i> • <i>Prime minister- Balendra “Balen” Shah</i> 	<p>Balendra Shah</p> <p>(Updated 30 March)</p>

Chapter 2: Awards (National, International)

(National)

<u>Award</u>	<u>Person/Organization</u>	<u>Purpose/ Field</u>
The 2026 META Lifetime Achievement Award	Veteran actor-filmmaker Amol Palekar	For his decades-long influence in Indian theatre and cinema
Naman Awards 2026 The Col. C. K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement	Roger Binny and Rahul Dravid	-

Award, the highest honour of the BCCI.		
The BCCI Lifetime Achievement Award for Women	Mithali Raj	For her outstanding contribution to women's cricket.
The Sahitya Akademi Awards 2025	Karhi Khelar Sadhu (Assamese) (Novel) Authored by Devabrat Das	The award includes an engraved copper plaque designed by Satyajit Ray , a ceremonial shawl , and a cash prize of ₹1,00,000.
The 'National Award for Outstanding Performance in SHG Bank Linkage 2024-25'	Karnataka Grameena Bank	The award recognises the bank's contribution to rural economic empowerment through Self-Help Groups (SHGs)
The 35th Saraswati Samman for 2025	Bengali novel Hara Parbati Katha by Ramkumar Mukhopadhyay	-
The Lifetime Achievement Award at the International Film Festival of Delhi 2026	Nandamuri Balakrishna	Recognising his 50-year-long film career and significant impact on Telugu cinema

(International)

<u>Award</u>	<u>Person/Organization</u>	<u>Purpose/ Field</u>
The 98th Academy Awards (Oscars 2026) Best Picture	One Battle After Another	
An honorary knighthood by the United Kingdom The title of Knight Commander of the	N. Chandrasekaran, Chairman of Tata Group	For strengthening India-UK business ties.

Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (KBE)		
The 2026 Stockholm Water Prize	Kaveh Madani	Kaveh Madani, Director of the United Nations University Institute for Water Environment and Health, got one of the most prestigious awards in the field of water
The Women Empowerment Award for Art and Culture at the House of Commons	Rituparna Sengupta	For her contributions to art and culture.
“Women Empowerment Trailblazer Award” at the BRICS CCI WE Annual Women Summit and Felicitations 2026	Jharkhand MLA Kalpana Soren	She highlighted the need to amplify voices of marginalised women and promote their access to opportunities, noting that women in Jharkhand are increasingly becoming entrepreneurs and agents of change.

Awards 2026: Complete winners list

Naman Awards 2026: BCCI to honour Rahul Dravid, Mithali Raj, Roger Binny with Lifetime Achievement Awards

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India hosted the Naman Awards 2026 in New Delhi to honour excellence across international, domestic, and age-group cricket.
- Roger Binny and Rahul Dravid received the Col. C. K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award, the highest honour of the BCCI.
- Mithali Raj was honoured with the BCCI Lifetime Achievement Award for Women for her outstanding contribution to women's cricket.
- Shubman Gill and Smriti Mandhana received the Best International Cricketer (Men & Women) awards for the 2024–25 season.

- The awards also recognised top domestic performers like Ira Jadhav, Shafali Verma, Ayush Mhatre, and Harsh Dubey, along with the Mumbai Cricket Association for best performance.

“One Battle After Another” Dominates Oscars 2026 with Six Awards; Michael B. Jordan Wins Best Actor

- The **98th Academy Awards (Oscars 2026)** were held at the **Dolby Theatre in Hollywood, Los Angeles, USA, celebrating the best films of 2025.**
- The ceremony was hosted by comedian **Conan O’Brien.**
- **One Battle After Another** emerged as the biggest winner, securing six awards, while **Michael B. Jordan** won his first **Best Actor Oscar** for **Sinners.**
- Presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), the Oscars remain the most prestigious film awards globally, first held in 1929.

Major Winners

- **Best Picture:** One Battle After Another
- **Best Director:** Paul Thomas Anderson - One Battle After Another
- **Best Actor:** Michael B. Jordan - Sinners
- **Best Actress:** Jessie Buckley - Hamnet
- **Best Supporting Actor:** Sean Penn - One Battle After Another
- **Best Supporting Actress:** Amy Madigan - Weapons

Sahitya Akademi Announces Sahitya Akademi Awards 2025 Honouring Excellence in 24 Languages

- Sahitya Akademi, under the Ministry of Culture, announced the **Sahitya Akademi Awards 2025** to honour excellence in Indian literature.
- The awards recognise outstanding literary works in **24 Indian languages**, promoting linguistic and cultural diversity.
- 8 books of poetry, 4 novels, 6 books of short stories, 2 essays, 1 literary criticism, 1 autobiography and 2 memoirs have won the Sahitya Akademi Awards 2025.
- The award includes an engraved copper plaque designed by Satyajit Ray, a ceremonial shawl, and a cash prize of ₹1,00,000.

Language	Title & Genre	Author
Assamese	Karhi Khelar Sadhu (Novel)	Devabrat Das
Bengali	Shrestha Kabita (Poetry)	Prasun Bandyopadhyay
Bodo	Dwngnwi Lama Mwnse Gathwn (Novel)	Sahaisuli Brahma
Dogri	Thakur Satsayie (Poetry, Couplets)	Khajur Singh Thakur
English	Crimson Spring (Novel)	Navtej Sarna

Language	Title & Genre	Author
Gujarati	Bhattkhadaki (Poetry)	Yogesh Vaidya
Hindi	Jeete Jee Allahabad (Memoir)	Mamta Kalia
Kannada	Dada Seerisu Tande (Short Stories)	Amaresh Nugadoni
Kashmiri	Najdavanek'y Pot Aalav (Poetry)	Ali Shaida
Konkani	Konkani Kavyem: Rupani Ani Rupakam (Essays)	Henry Mendonca (H.M. Pernal)
Maithili	Dhatri Paat San Gaam (Memoir)	Mahendra
Malayalam	Maayaamanushyar (Novel)	N. Prabhakaran
Manipuri	Kanglamdriba Eephut (Short Stories)	Haobam Nalini
Marathi	Kalyanilya Resha (Autobiography)	Raju Baviskar
Nepali	Nepali Paramparik Sanskriti Ra Sabhyata Ko Dukuti (Essays)	Prakash Bhattarai
Odia	Padapurana (Poetry)	Girijakumar Baliyar Singh
Punjabi	Safety Kit (Stories)	Jinder
Rajasthani	Bharkhama (Stories)	Jitender Kumar Soni
Sanskrit	Prasthanacatustaye Brahmaghosah (Poetry)	Mahamahopadhyaya Sadhu Bhadreshdas
Santali	Mid Birna Chenne Saon Inag Sagai (Short Stories)	Sumitra Soren
Sindhi	Waghoo (Stories)	Bhagwan Atlani
Tamil	Thamiz Sirukathaiyin Thadangal (Literary Criticism)	Sa. Tamilselvan
Telugu	Animesha (Poetry)	Nandini Sidha Reddy
Urdu	Safar Jaari Hai (Poetry)	Pritpal Singh Betab

Chapter 3: Government Scheme/ campaign

SCHEME	PURPOSE
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<p>The Delhi Lakhpati Bitiya Yojana (Delhi)</p>	<p>Replacing and expanding the earlier Ladli Scheme.</p> <p>The scheme is applicable to Delhi-resident families (minimum 3 years) with annual income up to ₹1.20 lakh, and is inspired by the vision of Narendra Modi to promote daughters' education, dignity, and self-reliance.</p>
<p>Four women-centric schemes in Delhi: Lakhpati Bitiya Scheme, Saheli Pink Smart Card, Meri Poonji Mera Adhikaar, and the Free LPG Cylinder Scheme (Delhi)</p>	<p>Delhi Lakhpati Bitiya Yojana replaces the Delhi Ladli Scheme; eligible girl children will receive ₹61,000 in instalments, which will grow to over ₹1 lakh by the age of 21 with interest.</p> <p>Saheli Pink National Common Mobility Card will provide free travel for women in Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) buses, replacing the earlier pink ticket system.</p> <p>Meri Poonji Mera Adhikaar scheme ensures that funds from the old Ladli Scheme are transferred directly to the bank accounts of eligible girl beneficiaries.</p> <p>Under the Free LPG Cylinder Scheme, ration card-holding families will receive money in their bank accounts to purchase LPG cylinders twice a year—during Holi and Diwali.</p>
<p>'Divyang Shakti' Scheme (Andhra Pradesh)</p>	<p>Persons with 40% or more disability will be eligible for free travel in APSRTC buses, including express services.</p>
<p>Gaudham Yojana (Chhattisgarh)</p>	<p>In the first phase, 29 Gaudhams in 11 districts were virtually inaugurated and named "Surabhi Gaudham."</p>
<p>The Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojna (BHAVYA)</p>	<p>The Union Cabinet has approved the Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojna (BHAVYA) with an outlay of ₹33,660 crore to boost industrial development in India.</p>

Chapter 4: Summit/ Conference

Summit/Conference	Location	About
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The India AI Impact Summit 2026	-	Underscoring India's commitment to inclusive, ethical, and gender-responsive artificial intelligence development
The Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2026	Barcelona, Spain	The Minister will also visit the booth of Tejas Networks for the launch of the T31600-D3 Hyper-scalable DCI Platform, a Data Center Interconnect (DCI) technology used to connect multiple data centers with ultra high-speed networks.
The 11th Raisina Dialogue 2026	New Delhi	The theme for 2026 is " Samskāra: Assertion, Accommodation, Advancement ", with Dr Alexander Stubb attending as the Chief Guest .
The Bharat Steel 2026 summit	New Delhi	The summit aims to promote sustainable industrial growth and showcase India's strength in the global steel sector.
The International Malaria Conference 2026	New Delhi	The conference focused on accelerating global efforts for malaria control and elimination, with the theme: " Discovery, Development and Delivery: Driving Malaria Elimination and Beyond. "
The G7 Summit	France	External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot on the sidelines of the G7 Foreign Ministers' meeting during his two-day visit to France.
The 14th Ministerial Conference (MC-14) of the World Trade Organisation (WTO)	Yaoundé, Cameroon	Key issues under discussion include WTO reforms, agriculture, e-commerce, and investment facilitation , which are crucial for shaping the future of global trade.
The first BRICS Youth Coordination Meeting 2026	India	Theme- "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability"

Chapter 5: Partnership/ Agreement

Partnership/ Agreement	Aim
The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has partnered with Google	To display authorised Aadhaar Centres on Google Maps , improving accessibility, transparency, and convenience for residents across India

Central Bank of India has signed a Distribution Agreement with Canara Robeco Asset Management Company Limited	To offer its mutual fund products to the bank's customers.
Narendra Modi and Mark Carney finalised key pacts on uranium and critical minerals supplies	Agreed to work towards a comprehensive economic partnership, aiming to raise bilateral trade to USD 50 billion by 2030.
NITI Aayog partnered with Tata Electronics Private Limited	To promote the growth of electronics manufacturing in India , supporting the country's industrial development goals.
Donald Trump, President of the United States, announced a \$300 billion partnership with Reliance Industries	To establish a new oil refinery project called " America First Refining. "
State Bank of India (SBI) and Japan's MUFG Bank signed a strategic partnership agreement	To enhance bilateral financial collaboration and strengthen the India-Japan economic corridor.
The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has partnered with the "Coalition of the Willing"	To support persons with hearing impairment.
Coursera has collaborated with Mission Karmayogi	To upskill civil servants and government officials in India.
The WHO Foundation and Novo Nordisk have partnered	To raise awareness and strengthen prevention efforts against childhood obesity in India.
The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with IIT Kanpur	Launched the SATHEE (Self-Assessment Test and Help for Entrance Exams) app , a free digital learning platform to help students prepare for major competitive exams
Axis Bank has partnered with the DP World Professional Golf Tour of India as its official banking partner	The collaboration aims to promote the growth of professional golf in India and strengthen sporting excellence and community engagement.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India has partnered with Google	To curb the misleading activities of financial influencers (finfluencers) and protect investors.
Paisalo Digital Limited has been appointed as a Business Correspondent (BC) partner	For Indian Overseas Bank , expanding its Banking-as-a-Service (BaaS) platform , which already includes State Bank of India and Bank of India.
The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry signed an agreement with KRAFTON India Pvt. Ltd.	To support startups, innovators, and entrepreneurs across India.
The National Commission for Women (NCW) has partnered with Truecaller	To launch a digital safety initiative for women

Chapter 6: Ranking Index

Index	Index released by	India's Rank	1st Rank
The second edition of the "Fiscal Health Index (FHI) 2026"	NITI Aayog	-	Odisha (Score- 73.1)
The World Happiness Report 2026	The Wellbeing Research Centre in partnership with Gallup and the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network.	116th	Finland

Chapter 7: Mergers and Acquisitions

Merger Company	About
Tata Steel has approved the merger of Neelachal Ispat Nigam Ltd (NINL),	The company has also approved an investment of up to \$2 billion (₹18,488 crore) in its Singapore-based arm T Steel Holdings Pte Ltd (TSHP).

its wholly-owned subsidiary, with itself.	
A consortium led by the Aditya Birla Group has acquired 100% stake in Royal Challengers Bengaluru for ₹16,706 crore from United Spirits Limited.	The deal covers both the men's IPL team and the women's WPL team , operated under Royal Challengers Sports Private Limited (RCSPL) .
Svatantra Microfin Private Limited has completed its merger with Chaitanya India Fin Credit Private Limited and Svatantra Holding Private Limited, after approvals from the National Company Law Tribunal, Reserve Bank of India, Competition Commission of India, and BSE Limited, making it the second-largest NBFC-MFI in India	The merged entity now has a consolidated AUM of around ₹22,000 crore, operates through 2,200 branches across 20 states, employs 25,000 people , and serves nearly 5 million customers, mainly in microfinance and unbanked segments .
Rajasthan Royals has been acquired with 100% ownership by a consortium led by Kal Somani at a valuation of \$1.63 billion (₹15,286 crore), signaling a major boost in IPL franchise value ahead of 2026	The consortium includes key investors like Rob Walton and the Hamp family (owners of the Detroit Lions) , making it one of the largest private equity investments in Indian sports history.

Chapter 8: Loan

Organization/Bank	Loan Amount	To which country	Purpose
The Asian Development Bank	\$300 million loan	IIFL Home Finance	The loan proceeds will be on-lent as mortgages primarily to women in low-income communities across peri-urban, urban, and lagging states, promoting financial inclusion and women's empowerment .
The World Bank	\$300 million loan	Uttar Pradesh	The Uttar Pradesh Clean Air Management Program aims to reduce pollution across sectors like transport, agriculture, and industry, while promoting environmental sustainability and employment generation.

Chapter 9: App/Website/Portal

App/ Website/Portal	Company / Department	Purpose
“SHINE” (Sexual Harassment Incident Notification for Empowerment)	Indian Railways	To help women employees report sexual harassment complaints at the workplace.
The PRISM-SG Portal in New Delhi	The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways	To improve efficiency, coordination, and transparency in the construction of Road Over Bridges (ROBs) and railway bridges.

Chapter 10: Important MoU

MoU	Between Which Countries
Signed an MoU to boost India’s blue economy and coastal livelihoods through technology-driven, sustainable fisheries and aquaculture practices.	India and Israel
Signed an initial pact to expand high-speed broadband connectivity across the state under 'Project Ganga'	The Uttar Pradesh government signed an initial pact with OneOTT Entertainment Ltd , a subsidiary of the Hinduja Group
Signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance commuting ease, safety, and efficiency for commercial vehicle drivers and fleet operators on National Highways in New Delhi	The National Highways Authority of India with commercial vehicle aggregator platforms
Signed an MoU to collaborate on research in space medicine.	All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) , New Delhi and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)
Signed an MoU to protect the fragile ecosystem and wildlife of Ladakh	The Indian Army and the Forest, Ecology and Environment Department of Ladakh
Signed an MoU to strengthen healthcare facilities at Community Health Centres (CHCs) and Primary Health Centres (PHCs) in Rajgarh	Oil India Limited with National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC) , a

district of Madhya Pradesh, an Aspirational District	Section 8 company under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in Noida
Signed an MoU to deploy AI technologies in public health programmes like tuberculosis control, maternal & child health, and primary healthcare.	The Government of Maharashtra with Wadhvani AI
Signed an MoU to strengthen the dairy sector and boost milk processing capacity	The Government of Himachal Pradesh with the National Dairy Development Board
Signed an MoU to promote preventive healthcare and wellness among personnel	The Ministry of Ayush with Central Industrial Security Force
Signed an MoU on Postal Cooperation to strengthen collaboration between India Post and Bhutan Post	India and Bhutan
Signed an MoU to strengthen national security training and bridge the gap between academic research and field requirements	Rashtriya Raksha University and Sashtra Seema Bal Academy
Signed an MoU under the initiative “BHASHINI for Seva / Sanchalan – A BHASHINI Sahayogi Program.”	The Digital India BHASHINI Division (DIBD) under MeitY and the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)
Sign a Reform-Linked MoU, emphasising outcome-based rural water supply	Meghalaya became the 12th state to sign a Reform-Linked MoU with the Union Government under Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0
Signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote India’s folk and tribal music on a global platform	Ministry of Culture with YouTube

Chapter 11: GDP Forecasting

CRISIL Forecasts 7.1% Economic Growth for India in FY27 Amid Global Trade and West Asia Risks

- CRISIL has projected 7.1% economic growth for India in FY2026–27, driven mainly by strong private consumption and a gradual rise in private investment.

- The outlook report titled “India Outlook: Wading through Squally Waters” states that India’s economy continues to show strong resilience despite global economic turbulence.

Fitch Ratings Raises India’s GDP Growth Forecast to 7.5% for FY26

- Fitch Ratings has raised India’s GDP growth forecast to 7.5% for FY2025–26 and 6.7% for FY2026–27.
- The revised projections were released in the Global Economic Outlook - March 2026.

S&P Global Raises India’s GDP Growth Forecast to 7.1% for FY27

- S&P Global Ratings has raised India’s GDP growth forecast for FY 2026–27 by 40 basis points to 7.1%, indicating a positive economic outlook.
- It has also revised the growth estimate for FY 2025–26 upward by 0.4 percentage points to 7.6%, reflecting stronger-than-expected economic performance.

OECD Cuts India’s FY 2026–27 Growth Forecast to 6.1%, FY 2025–26 Seen at 7.6%

- The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has revised India’s GDP growth forecast for FY 2026–27 downward by 10 basis points to 6.1% in its Economic Outlook Interim Report.
- However, India’s GDP growth for FY 2025–26 is estimated to remain strong at 7.6%, reflecting robust economic performance.

Chapter 12: Current Affairs (National)

Petroleum Ministry Mandates Nationwide Sale of E20 Petrol with Minimum RON 95 from April 2026

- The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has mandated the nationwide sale of E20 petrol (up to 20% ethanol blending) with a minimum Research Octane Number (RON) of 95 across all States and Union Territories from 1 April 2026 to enhance cleaner fuel usage.
- The Ethanol Blended Programme, launched in January 2003 with an initial 5% blending target, has gradually expanded to higher levels of blending to boost India’s energy security and support farmers and the agricultural economy.

ESIC Launches 75th Foundation Year Celebrations, Unveils Commemorative Coin and Swasthya Rath Initiative

- The Employees’ State Insurance Corporation commenced its 75th Foundation Year celebrations at Bharat Mandapam, marking over seven

decades of dedicated social security and healthcare service to workers and their families across India.

- Established in 1952 with about 1.2 lakh beneficiaries and a single dispensary, ESIC has expanded significantly and now serves over 15 crore beneficiaries through a network of 166 hospitals, 17 medical colleges, and nearly 1,600 dispensaries nationwide.

Ashwini Vaishnaw Launches Rail Tech Policy and e-RCT Digitisation Under Indian Railways' 52 Reforms Initiative

- **Ashwini Vaishnaw** launched the **Rail Tech Policy** and announced the complete digitisation of the Railway Claims Tribunal (RCT) under **Indian Railways' "52 Reforms in 52 Weeks" initiative**, promoting technology-driven governance and administrative reforms.
- The Rail Tech Policy aims to engage startups, innovators, industries, and institutions through a simplified selection process and a dedicated Rail Tech Portal, enabling single-stage proposal submissions to accelerate innovation in railways.

PM Narendra Modi Launches Nationwide Free HPV Vaccination Drive for 14-Year-Old Girls from Ajmer

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** launched the nationwide **Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination campaign from Ajmer to protect 14-year-old girls from cervical cancer**.
- The campaign will use **Gardasil**, a quadrivalent vaccine that protects against HPV types 16 & 18 (which cause cervical cancer) and types 6 & 11. The vaccination will be voluntary and free of cost at government health facilities, including **Ayushman Arogya Mandirs** and district hospitals.

President Droupadi Murmu Becomes First Indian President to Fly in Attack Helicopter Prachand

- **President Droupadi Murmu** became the **first Indian President to fly in an attack helicopter**, undertaking a 25-minute sortie in the indigenously developed Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) Prachand near the India-Pakistan border from Jaisalmer Air Force Station.
- During the historic flight, she acted as co-pilot, flew over the Pokhran firing range, and delivered a message praising the armed forces while emphasizing the significance of indigenous defence capabilities.

Sikkim's Pakyong Airport to Be Renamed After Freedom Fighter Trilochan Pokhrel

- **Sikkim's Pakyong Airport** will be renamed after freedom fighter **Trilochan Pokhrel**, the state's first independence activist, as announced by Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang.

- Trilochan Pokhrel, also known as “Gandhi Pokhrel”, actively participated in the Non-Cooperation, Civil Disobedience, and Quit India movements led by Mahatma Gandhi.

Over Rs. 275 Crore Released to Jharkhand under XV Finance Commission to Strengthen Rural Governance

- The Union Government released over Rs. 275 crore under the XV Finance Commission to strengthen Panchayati Raj Institutions and Rural Local Bodies in Jharkhand.
- The 2nd installment of Untied Grants for FY 2024–25 will benefit 24 District Panchayats, 253 Block Panchayats, and 4,342 Gram Panchayats across the state.

CGA Launches Government Bank Manual and Dashboard to Strengthen Governance and Efficiency

- CGA T.C.A. Kalyani launched the Government Bank Manual and Government Bank Dashboard to enhance governance and efficiency in banks handling government transactions.
- The Government Bank Manual provides standardised procedures, reporting obligations, reconciliation timelines, and compliance requirements to reduce ambiguity and operational risk.

PM Narendra Modi Inaugurates Micron’s ATMP Facility in Sanand

- PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the Semiconductor Assembly, Test and Packaging (ATMP) facility of Micron Technology in Sanand, marking the start of commercial production and shipment of India-made semiconductor memory modules.
- Under Semiconductor Mission 2.0, a pan-India semiconductor ecosystem is emerging—from Sanand to Noida and Assam—signaling India’s shift from software strength to hardware manufacturing leadership.

India Welcomes Nine Cheetahs from Botswana to Kuno National Park

- Bhupender Yadav announced the arrival of nine cheetahs (six females and three males) from Botswana to Kuno National Park.
- With this addition, India now has a total of 48 cheetahs, including 28 India-born cubs, indicating a growing and thriving population.

Larsen & Toubro Secures ₹1,000–2,500 Crore Contract to Build LIGO Observatory in Maharashtra

- Larsen & Toubro secured a contract from India’s Department of Atomic Energy to construct the Laser Interferometer Gravitational Wave Observatory (LIGO) in Aundha, Hingoli district, Maharashtra.

- The ₹1,000–2,500 crore project includes high-precision civil infrastructure, an 8 km ultra-high vacuum beam tube, and advanced vacuum equipment.

Tamil Nadu Launches First Dark Sky Park at Kolli Hills to Promote Stargazing Tourism

- The Tamil Nadu government has launched its first Dark Sky Park at Ariyur Shola Reserve Forest in Kolli Hills, aimed at promoting stargazing and astronomical tourism.
- A Dark Sky Park is a protected area with minimal artificial light pollution, and Kolli Hills' elevated terrain, dense forest cover, and low urban light disturbance make it ideal for night-sky preservation.

Dol Jatra Festival Celebrated Across Assam with Devotion and Colours

- Dol Jatra (Dol Utsav), a vibrant Vaishnavite festival, was celebrated across Assam with colours, music, and devotional activities.
- The festival symbolises the eternal love between Lord Krishna and Radha.

Rajasthan Government Renames Three Cities; Mount Abu to Be Called Abu Raj in Decolonisation Drive

- Bhajan Lal Sharma, Chief Minister of Rajasthan, announced the renaming of three historic cities as part of the state government's decolonisation drive.
- Mount Abu will be renamed Abu Raj, while Kaman and Jahazpur will be renamed Kamvan and Yagyapur, respectively.

Assam Flags Off First Export of GI-Tagged Karbi Anglong Ginger to London

- Atul Bora, Assam Agriculture Minister, flagged off the first export of GI-tagged Karbi Anglong Ginger to London at a programme held at Krishi Bhawan, Khanapara, Guwahati.
- Bora highlighted the high quality of ginger produced in the hilly regions of Karbi Anglong and expressed happiness over this milestone achievement, marking the first export of the region's GI-tagged ginger.

Jual Oram Inaugurates Tribes Art Fest (TAF) 2026 at Travancore Palace in New Delhi

- Jual Oram, Union Minister for Tribal Affairs, inaugurated the Tribes Art Fest (TAF) 2026 at Travancore Palace in New Delhi, celebrating India's rich tribal art traditions.
- The festival is organised by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in collaboration with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA)

NITI Aayog and JICA Sign Phase II Agreement to Strengthen SDG Implementation in Aspirational Districts and Blocks

- NITI Aayog and Japan International Cooperation Agency signed the Record of Discussions (RoD) for Phase II of the Japan-India Cooperative Actions towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on strengthening development interventions in Aspirational Districts and Blocks.
- The initiative aims to deepen India-Japan collaboration in achieving SDGs through institutional capacity-building, improved governance systems, and localising SDGs at the district and block levels under the Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP) and Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP).

Madurai Airport Declared as an International Airport by the Union Cabinet

- The **Union Cabinet**, chaired by Narendra Modi, approved the declaration of **Madurai Airport in Madurai, Tamil Nadu as an International Airport**.
- Madurai Airport, situated in the famous temple city of Madurai, is among the oldest airports in Tamil Nadu, enhancing its role in domestic and international connectivity.

SBI Named Strongest Indian Bank with AAA+ Brand Rating

- **State Bank of India (SBI)** has been named the **strongest Indian bank and the 16th strongest globally, earning the AAA+ brand strength rating**, highlighting its reputation, customer trust, and brand resilience in the global banking sector.
- HDFC Bank remains India's most valuable banking brand, valued at \$12.4 billion, despite a 7% YoY decline, and improved its global brand strength ranking, reflecting strong customer confidence and influence.

Piyush Goyal Inaugurates 40th AAHAR International Food and Hospitality Fair in New Delhi

- **Piyush Goyal**, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, **inaugurated the 40th edition of the AAHAR International Food and Hospitality Fair in New Delhi**.
- Italy is the Country Partner for the 40th AAHAR International Food and Hospitality Fair.

Kirti Vardhan Singh Represents India at Chile Presidential Inauguration as José Antonio Kast Takes Office

- **Kirti Vardhan Singh**, Minister of State for External Affairs, arrived in **Santiago, Chile to represent India at the Presidential Inauguration Ceremony**.
- During the visit, India aims to strengthen bilateral cooperation with Chile in areas such as trade, critical minerals, energy, and people-to-people ties.

Gujarat Launches 'Lake and Air Watch' Initiative to Monitor Urban Lakes and Air Quality in Real Time

- Gujarat has launched the 'Lake and Air Watch' initiative under the Gujarat Urban Development Mission (GUDM) to monitor lake health and air quality in real time across cities.
- The programme, introduced by the Urban Development and Urban Housing Department, aims to tackle urban environmental challenges such as polluted lakes, declining groundwater recharge and rising air pollution.

Assam Disburses ₹3,600 Crore to 40 Lakh Women Under Orunodoi 3.0 Through DBT

- The government of Assam transferred ₹9,000 each to 40 lakh women under Orunodoi 3.0, marking a major welfare initiative for women beneficiaries.
- Around ₹3,600 crore was disbursed through Direct Bank Transfer (DBT), making it one of the largest single-day welfare fund transfers in the state.

Kerala Police Launches 'Nirbhaya Nisha initiative' to Enhance Night Safety for Women in Kerala

- Kerala Police has launched the Nirbhaya Nisha initiative to enhance women's safety during night travel across Kerala.
- The initiative provides rapid police assistance between 9 PM and 5 AM to ensure timely support for women travelling at night.

Indian Orchid Festival 2026 Concludes in Pakyong District, Sikkim

- The Indian Orchid Festival 2026 concluded at Pakyong District, Sikkim.
- The festival was organised by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research – National Research Centre for Orchids (ICAR-NRCO).
- The theme of the festival was "Orchids for Beauty & Prosperity."

Union Minister Prataprao Jadhav Launches Dedicated AYUSH Store on Zepto

- Prataprao Jadhav inaugurated a dedicated AYUSH Store on the Zepto platform to boost the digital reach of traditional wellness products.
- The initiative is a collaboration between the AYUSH Export Promotion Council (AYUSHEXCIL) and Zepto to enhance the accessibility of authentic AYUSH products for consumers.

V.O. Chidambaranar Port Launches India's First Digital Twin Platform for Smart Port Management

- V. O. Chidambaranar Port Authority has become the first port in India to launch a Digital Twin initiative for advanced and technology-driven port management.
- The Digital Twin system creates a real-time replica of port infrastructure and operations, using technologies like IoT, GPS, LiDAR, drones, and CCTV to improve monitoring, predictive maintenance, and operational efficiency.

PM Modi Releases 22nd Instalment of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi from Guwahati

- PM Narendra Modi released the 22nd instalment of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi from Guwahati, Assam.
- With this instalment, the total amount transferred under PM-KISAN exceeded ₹4.27 lakh crore, while more than ₹4.09 lakh crore had already been distributed earlier.

India Launches Indigenous Small Modular Reactors Under ₹20,000 Crore Nuclear Energy Mission

- Under the Nuclear Energy Mission, the Government has allocated ₹20,000 crore for the research, design, development, and deployment of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) in India.
- The Department of Atomic Energy is developing indigenous reactors including 220 MWe Bharat Small Modular Reactor (BSMR-200), 55 MWe SMR-55, and a High-Temperature Gas-Cooled Reactor (HTGCR) for hydrogen generation.
- The lead units of BSMR-200 and SMR-55 are proposed to be set up at Tarapur Atomic Power Station, while the HTGCR will be built at Bhabha Atomic Research Centre in Visakhapatnam.

Government Approves 104 Projects Worth ₹271 Crore to Boost 6G Research in India

- The Government has approved 104 research and development projects worth ₹271 crore for 6G technology under the Telecom Technology Development Fund.
- The Bharat 6G Vision Document has been released, outlining the roadmap for research, development, spectrum planning, and deployment of 6G services in India.

Centre Approves Extension of Bhavantar Bhugtan Yojana for Mustard Procurement in Madhya Pradesh

- The Central Government has approved a proposal by the Madhya Pradesh government to extend the Bhavantar Bhugtan Yojana to mustard procurement, after its use for soybean in 2025.
- The scheme compensates farmers when market prices fall below government benchmark levels, helping protect them from price volatility while allowing sales in the open market.

GI-Tagged Joha Rice Exported from Assam to Europe for the First Time

- Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority facilitated the first export consignment of GI-tagged Joha Rice from Assam to Europe.

- The shipment included 25 metric tonnes of Joha rice, exported to the United Kingdom and Italy.

Rashtrapati Bhavan Hosts Purple Fest to Celebrate Talent and Aspirations of Divyangjan

- Rashtrapati Bhavan hosted the Purple Fest to celebrate the talent, achievements, and aspirations of Divyangjan (persons with disabilities).
- The event was organised by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to promote inclusion, awareness, and respect for persons with disabilities.

NHAI Revises FASTag Annual Pass Fee to ₹3,075 for FY 2026–27

- National Highways Authority of India has revised the FASTag Annual Pass fee from ₹3,000 to ₹3,075 for the financial year 2026–27, effective from 1 April 2026.
- The pass, launched on 15 August 2025, remains valid for one year or up to 200 toll plaza crossings (whichever is earlier) and can be purchased via the Rajmarg Yatra App or the National Highways Authority of India.

Centre Renames Tuticorin Airport as Thoothukudi Airport in Tamil Nadu

- The Central Government has approved the renaming of Tuticorin Airport as Thoothukudi Airport in Tamil Nadu.
- The renaming ceremony was formally inaugurated by Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu at the airport.

Chapchar Kut Celebrated with Traditional Fervour in Aizawl

- The spring festival Chapchar Kut was celebrated with traditional fervour in Aizawl. It is the largest traditional spring festival of the Mizo people, celebrated after clearing forests for jhum (shifting) cultivation, marking the arrival of spring.
- The week-long festival concluded with the theme “Zo Nun Ze Mawi: Inremna” (Mizo Ethics: Reconciliation) and witnessed a large gathering, including V. K. Singh and C. Lalsawivunga.

Arpita Patra Becomes Second Indian Woman to Scale Nevado Ojos del Salado

- Arpita Patra, a professor at the Indian Institute of Science, successfully climbed Nevado Ojos del Salado.
- She reached the 6,893-metre summit, becoming the second Indian woman to scale the peak.

Safdarjung Hospital Launches India's First Online Critical Care Follow-Up Clinic for ICU Patients

- Safdarjung Hospital will launch India's first online critical care follow-up clinic for ICU-discharged patients to receive medical guidance from home.

- The service will be available through the e-Sanjivani OPD portal every Tuesday and Thursday from 10 AM to 11 AM.

Department of Posts Launches '24 Speed Post' with Next-Day Guaranteed Delivery in Six Major Cities

- Department of Posts has launched the '24 Speed Post', offering next-day (D+1) guaranteed delivery for urgent consignments, inaugurated by Jyotiraditya M. Scindia.
- In the first phase, the service will be available in six major cities: **Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad**, enhancing fast logistics in metro regions.

PM Modi Inaugurates India's First Fully Automated Haldia Bulk Terminal at Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port

- PM Narendra Modi has inaugurated the **Haldia Bulk Terminal**, a fully automated dry bulk handling facility at the Haldia Dock Complex.
- The terminal is part of Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port and is India's first fully automated dry bulk cargo handling facility on the Hooghly River.

PM Modi Virtually Inaugurates 120 MW Lower Kopili Hydroelectric Project in Assam

- Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the **120 MW Lower Kopili Hydroelectric Project** in Assam, located in Dima Hasao and Karbi Anglong districts.
- The project is a run-of-river hydropower project built in the Kopili River basin, enhancing clean energy generation.

Arpita Patra Becomes Second Indian Woman to Summit Nevado Ojos del Salado

- Arpita Patra Becomes **Second Indian Woman to Summit Nevado Ojos del Salado, World's Highest Volcanic Peak** Arpita Patra, a professor at the Indian Institute of Science, became the second Indian woman to summit Nevado Ojos del Salado, the world's highest volcanic peak (6,893 m).
- She achieved this feat on March 6, marking a significant milestone in Indian mountaineering.

Omar Abdullah Inaugurates Asia's Largest Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden

- Omar Abdullah inaugurated the **Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden**, marking the start of the spring tourism season in the Valley.
- The garden, Asia's largest tulip garden, features over 1.8 million tulips across 70-75 varieties, along with other spring flowers like hyacinths and daffodils.

Government Expands ALMM Framework to Solar Ingots & Wafers to Boost Domestic Manufacturing

- The government has expanded the **Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM)** framework by introducing **ALMM List-III** for solar ingots and wafers, effective from **1 June 2028**.
- From this date, all solar projects (including net metering and open access) must use ALMM-listed wafers, making compliance mandatory.

Odisha's Kusunpur Becomes State's First 'Smart Village' Under CSIR Initiative

- **Kusunpur village** in Odisha's **Kendrapada district** has been selected as the state's first "Smart Village" under the CSIR initiative.
- The project, launched on March 16, aims at technology-driven rural transformation under the vision of "Viksit Bharat @2047".
- CSIR has identified six villages nationwide as "live laboratories" to implement innovations through a "Lab to Land" approach in areas like agriculture, infrastructure, and rural development.

NMDC Limited Becomes First Indian Mining Company to Produce 50 MT Iron Ore in a Year

- **National Mineral Development Corporation Limited (NMDC)**, India's largest iron ore producer, became the **first mining company in the country to produce 50 million tonnes (MT) of iron ore** in a single financial year (2025-26).
- Established in 1958, NMDC's production has grown from about 10 MT in 1978 to 50 MT, reflecting significant long-term expansion.

Bharat Tribes Fest 2026 Begins in New Delhi, Showcasing Tribal Culture and Entrepreneurship

- **Bharat Tribes Fest 2026** commenced in **New Delhi**, showcasing tribal artisans, entrepreneurs, and cultural performers from across India.
- The festival is organised by **Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED)** in collaboration with the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**.

Pushkar S Dhami Celebrates Phool Dei Festival Marking Arrival of Spring in Uttarakhand

- **Pushkar Singh Dhami** celebrated the **traditional folk festival Phool Dei** in Uttarakhand.
- The festival marks the arrival of the spring season and is considered a **Spring/Harvest Festival**. It is mainly celebrated in the **Garhwal and Kumaon regions**, reflecting the rich cultural traditions of the state.

India-Indonesia Launch Joint Restoration of Prambanan Temple in Yogyakarta

- **India and Indonesia** have launched a joint initiative to **restore the Prambanan Temple in Yogyakarta**, strengthening cultural cooperation.

- Prambanan Temple is the largest Hindu temple complex in Indonesia, located in Sleman near Yogyakarta, and is also known as Roro Jonggrang (“Temple of the Slender Virgin”).

Ministry of Ayush Launches “Yoga 365” Campaign to Promote Daily Yoga Practice

- **Ministry of Ayush** launched the “Yoga 365” campaign to promote yoga as a daily practice instead of a once-a-year activity, unveiled during Yoga Mahotsav–2026 at Vigyan Bhawan.
- The initiative aims to bridge the gap between high awareness (95% in rural and 96% in urban areas) and actual practice, promoting yoga for physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

GSI Declares Kalinjar Fort Hill a National Geo-Heritage Site

- The **Geological Survey of India** has declared the **hill region around Kalinjar Fort (Banda district of Uttar Pradesh)** as a National Geo-Heritage Site on 16 March 2026, recognising its geological, historical, and cultural importance.
- The site features the rare Eparchaeon Unconformity, where ~2.5 billion-year-old Bundelkhand granite is overlain by ~1.2 billion-year-old Kaimur sandstone, offering key insights into Earth’s geological evolution.

Punjab Launches ‘Sikhya Kranti 2.0’ with ₹3,500 Crore Investment to Transform School Education

- The **Punjab Government** has launched ‘Punjab Sikhya Kranti 2.0’ in collaboration with the **World Bank** to strengthen and modernize the state’s school education system.
- The programme aims to make Punjab’s education system globally competitive by improving quality, infrastructure, and learning outcomes.

K. Ram Mohan Naidu Announces ₹58 Crore Development Plan for Arasavalli Sri Surya Narayana Swamy Temple Under PRASAD Scheme

- **K. Ram Mohan Naidu** announced a comprehensive development plan for **Arasavalli Sri Surya Narayana Swamy Temple** under the **PRASAD Scheme** to enhance pilgrim facilities.
- A total of ₹58 crore development plan has been prepared, including modern kitchen, dining halls, accommodation, and better connectivity; ₹4 crore has already been sanctioned for the Indrapushkarini temple tank modernisation.

Manipur Launches ‘Ningol Van Initiative’ to Boost Forest Conservation & Women Participation

- The **Manipur Government** launched the “Ningol Van Initiative” on the occasion of International Day of Forests to strengthen forest conservation and promote community participation.

- The initiative focuses on enhancing women's participation in biodiversity protection and sustainable practices, with plans to expand similar programmes across all districts.

Government Expands MCGS to Boost Credit for MSMEs, Manufacturers and Exporters

- The Government has modified the **Mutual Credit Guarantee Scheme (MCGS) to support MSME manufacturers and exporters, in line with Budget 2025–26.**
- The scheme offers 60% guarantee coverage by National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC) for loans up to ₹100 crore to eligible MSMEs for purchasing machinery and equipment.

Bhupathiraju Anmish Varma Sets World Record for Fastest Ascent of Seven Volcanic Summits

- **Bhupathiraju Anmish Varma set a world record by climbing the Seven Volcanic Summits in just 92 days, 4 hours, and 45 minutes.**
- Seven Volcanic Summits Covered
 - Ojos del Salado - South America
 - Mount Kilimanjaro - Africa
 - Mount Elbrus - Europe
 - Mount Damavand - Asia
 - Pico de Orizaba - North America
 - Mount Giluwe - Oceania
 - Mount Sidley - Antarctica

9th PharmaMed 2026 to be Held in New Delhi with Focus on Healthcare Equity

- The Department of Pharmaceuticals under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, in **collaboration with the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry**, will organise the 9th **PharmaMed 2026 in New Delhi.**
- The event will be held under the theme “Healthcare Equity: Reaching Every Citizen of Viksit Bharat”, focusing on inclusive and accessible healthcare for all citizens.

Cabinet Approves Extension of IVFRT Scheme till 2031 to Strengthen Digital Immigration System

- **The Union Cabinet has approved the continuation of the Immigration, Visa, Foreigners Registration and Tracking (IVFRT) Scheme for five years (2026–2031) to strengthen India's immigration system.**
- The scheme provides a centralised, technology-driven platform for visa issuance, immigration, and foreigner registration, improving efficiency and security.

UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched 'Nivesh Mitra 3.0'

- **Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath** launched 'Nivesh Mitra 3.0', a digital platform to simplify and enhance the investor experience, along with new schemes like the UP Private Business Park Development Scheme-2025 and Plug-and-Play Industrial Sheds Scheme.
- The platform includes features like an AI-based chatbot, real-time SMS alerts, and a Dynamic Combined Application Form (CAF) to enable single-window clearances and reduce the need for multiple approvals.

Rajasthan Launches Industrial Park Promotion Policy 2026 to Boost Investment and Jobs

- The **Rajasthan government** has launched the **Industrial Park Promotion Policy-2026** under CM Bhajanlal Sharma to boost industrial growth, attract investments, and create employment opportunities.
- The policy aligns with national initiatives like Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat, aiming for balanced regional development and strengthening the state's industrial ecosystem.

NMDC Becomes First Indian Mining Company to Produce 50 Million Tonnes of Iron Ore in a Year

- **National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC)**, a Navratna CPSE under the Ministry of Steel, became the **first mining company in India to produce 50 million tonnes (MT) of iron ore in a single financial year (2025-26)**.
- Established in 1958, NMDC has shown massive growth, increasing production from about 10 MT in 1978 to 50 MT, becoming a key pillar of India's iron ore supply chain.

India Launches Operation Energy Security to Protect Oil Supply Routes in West Asia

- **Operation Energy Security** has been launched by India amid rising tensions in West Asia to safeguard energy supply routes near the **Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf of Oman**.
- The Indian Navy has deployed more than five frontline warships (destroyers and frigates) to protect India-bound ships carrying critical energy cargo like crude oil, LNG, and LPG.
- The mission ensured safe movement of multiple vessels, including the tanker 'Shenlong Suezmax' carrying over 135,000 metric tons of crude oil, highlighting efforts to secure India's energy security during regional conflict escalation.

Cabinet Approves Revamped UDAN Scheme to Boost Regional Connectivity with ₹28,840 Crore

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by Narendra Modi, has approved the revamped UDAN scheme to strengthen regional air connectivity across India.
- The scheme will be implemented for 10 years (FY 2026-27 to FY 2035-36) with a total budget allocation of ₹28,840 crore.

Education & Home Ministries Launch Nationwide School Drive Under Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan to Create Drug-Free Zones

- The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs, has issued a joint advisory to implement the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan in schools nationwide.
- The advisory has been sent to Chief Secretaries of all States and UTs for mission-mode implementation over a 3-year period to ensure effective execution.

IIM Ahmedabad Launches Krishnamurthy Tandon School of Artificial Intelligence

- Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad launched the Krishnamurthy Tandon School of Artificial Intelligence.
- The initiative is backed by a 100 crore endowment. The funding is provided by Chandrika Krishnamurthy Tandon and Ranjan Tandon.

Adani Ports Operationalises India's First Port of Refuge to Assist Ships in Distress

- Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd has operationalised India's first Port of Refuge to assist ships in distress, strengthening maritime safety infrastructure.
- Two ports identified are Dighi Port (West Coast – Arabian Sea & Persian Gulf routes) and Gopalpur Port (East Coast – Bay of Bengal & Malacca Strait routes).

Chapter 13: Current Affairs (International)

Denmark Becomes First EU Country to Eliminate Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV and Syphilis

- Denmark became the first European Union country to eliminate mother-to-child transmission (EMTCT) of HIV and syphilis, as certified by the World Health Organisation (WHO).
- The validation by WHO's Regional and Global committees confirmed Denmark met all targets from 2021–2024, including low transmission rates and high prenatal testing and treatment coverage.

UAE Launches World's First Sovereign Financial Cloud to Strengthen Secure Digital Finance

- The Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates (CBUAE) launched the world's first Sovereign Financial Cloud Services Infrastructure (SFCSI) to strengthen secure and regulated digital finance in the UAE.
- Developed in partnership with Core42 (a subsidiary of G42), the platform provides a secure, AI-powered cloud environment exclusively for the UAE's financial sector.

FATF Adds Kuwait and Papua New Guinea to Grey List

- Financial Action Task Force (FATF) added Kuwait and Papua New Guinea to its list of jurisdictions under increased monitoring, commonly known as the Grey List.
- With this addition, the total number of countries on the FATF Grey List increased to 22.

22-Year-Old Indian Americans Become World's Youngest Self-Made Billionaires

- Three 22-year-old Indian Americans — Brendan Foody, Adarsh Hiremath, and Surya Midha — became the world's youngest self-made billionaires by co-founding San Francisco-based AI hiring platform Mercor.
- Mercor raised \$350 million in Series C funding, valuing the startup at \$10 billion, surpassing Mark Zuckerberg's record of becoming a billionaire at 23.

Asia Africa Agri Alliance Formed to Boost Agricultural Trade, Investment and Cooperation

- Asia Africa Agri Alliance has been formed as a new institutional platform to enhance agricultural trade, cooperation, investment, and technology exchange between the two regions.
- Asia and Africa together contribute over 40% of global agricultural production, with bilateral agri-trade exceeding \$90 billion annually, highlighting the alliance's strategic importance.

Argentina Withdraws from World Health Organisation

- Argentina has officially withdrawn from the World Health Organisation, following a similar move by the United States.
- The withdrawal was initially announced in February last year and later formalised, with the US completing its exit in January.

Elon Musk Announces 'Terafab' Project to Build AI Chips with Terawatt-Scale Power Near Austin

- Elon Musk has launched the Terafab project to manufacture advanced chips for AI, robotics, and data centres, including future space-based applications. The facility will be located near Austin, Texas.
- The facility will be set up near Austin and aims to produce one terawatt of computing power annually.

World Bank Flags Bangladesh in 'Red Category' Amid Prolonged Food Inflation Crisis

- The World Bank has placed Bangladesh in the 'red category' due to consistently high food inflation over the past 10 months, signalling serious food security concerns.
- The red category indicates a high risk of food insecurity, meaning people may struggle to afford or access sufficient food.

Japan Launches World's First Freight-Only Shinkansen for High-Speed Cargo Transport

- Japan has launched the world's first dedicated freight-only Shinkansen, converting its bullet train into a high-speed cargo carrier to improve logistics efficiency and sustainability.
- The service runs on the Tohoku Shinkansen route between Morioka and Tokyo, covering the distance in just over 3 hours while optimising existing rail infrastructure without affecting passenger services.

Chapter 14: Banking & Financial

IRFC Raises USD 400 Million Equivalent ECB from SMBC and MUFG via GIFT City Branches

- Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) has raised an External Commercial Borrowing (ECB) of JPY equivalent to USD 400 million by signing a loan agreement with a consortium of Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC) and MUFG Bank through their GIFT City branches.
- This marks IRFC's second ECB transaction in FY 2025-26, following its earlier USD 300 million equivalent borrowing in December 2025, strengthening its diversified global funding strategy.

NSE IX Soft Launches Global Access Platform to Enable Indian Investors to Trade in US and Global Markets

- The NSE International Exchange (NSE IX) has soft-launched a Global Access platform, enabling Indian investors to directly trade in international equities, debt instruments, and ETFs, thereby connecting domestic investors with global capital markets.
- The platform will initially provide access to the US markets, with plans to expand to nearly 30 international markets—including G-7 nations—over the next three to six months, offering broader global diversification opportunities.

Sri Lanka's First Blue Bond Listed on NSE IX at GIFT City

- Sri Lanka's first-ever Blue Bond, a LKR 3 billion issuance by DFCC Bank, has been dually listed on the NSE International Exchange (NSE IX) at GIFT City, marking the first blue bond admitted for trading within India's IFSC jurisdiction.
- The dual listing was enabled through an MoU between NSE IX and the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE), strengthening cross-border capital market collaboration and promoting innovative financial products across jurisdictions.

RBI Imposes Rs 11.50 Lakh Penalty on Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services

- Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services Limited was imposed a monetary penalty of Rs 11.50 lakh by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) due to violations found during the annual inspection for FY ending March 31, 2025.
- The company disclosed the penalty to the stock exchange under SEBI's Regulation 30 for material events, as per listing obligations.

India's Gross GST Collection Rises 8.1% to ₹1.83 Lakh Crore in February 2026

- India's gross GST collections rose by 8.1% year-on-year to over ₹1.83 lakh crore in February 2026, compared to ₹1.69 lakh crore in February 2025, showing steady revenue growth.
- The Central GST (CGST) collection stood at ₹37,473 crore, while State GST (SGST) collections reached ₹45,900 crore during February 2026.

Jio Finance Platform and Service Ltd Launches 'Finsider' App Powered by AI

- Jio Finance Platform and Service Ltd (a wholly-owned subsidiary of Jio Financial Services Ltd) has launched its new mobile app 'Finsider', along with an early access programme for users to test features and provide feedback.
- The app leverages Agentic AI and Neural Networks to deliver a hyper-personalised, instant, and always-on financial experience to customers.

RBI and Bank of Japan Sign Third Amendment to \$75 Billion BSA to Strengthen Financial Cooperation

- The Reserve Bank of India and the Bank of Japan, acting as agents for Japan's Finance Minister, signed the third Amendment and Restatement Agreement of the Bilateral Swap Arrangement (BSA) for up to USD 75 billion.
- Effective from February 28, 2026, the BSA is a two-way arrangement allowing both central banks to swap their local currencies in exchange for the US dollar.

EPFO Retains Employees' Provident Fund Interest Rate at 8.25% for FY 2025-26

- The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation has retained the interest rate on EPF deposits at 8.25% for the financial year 2025-26, the same rate as the previous year.
- The decision was taken at the 239th meeting of the Central Board of Trustees, chaired by Mansukh Mandaviya.

Unified Payments Interface Transactions Dip 6% in Volume and 5% in Value in February 2026

- Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions in February 2026 declined 6% in volume to 20.39 billion and 5% in value to ₹26.84 trillion compared to January's 21.70 billion transactions worth ₹28.33 trillion, mainly due to fewer days in February.
- Despite the monthly dip, average daily transactions increased to 728 million worth ₹95,865 crore, compared to 700 million transactions worth ₹91,403 crore in January.

PhonePe Limited Launches RuPay 'On-The-Go' Card to Promote Contactless Public Transport Payments

- PhonePe Limited launched the RuPay 'On-The-Go' Card, a National Common Mobility Card for contactless payments in public transport.
- The card supports the Government of India's "One Nation One Card" initiative, aiming to create a single interoperable transit payment system.

Nashik Municipal Corporation Becomes Maharashtra's First to List Green Municipal Bond on National Stock Exchange

- Nashik Municipal Corporation became Maharashtra's first urban local body to list its Green Municipal Bond public issue on the National Stock Exchange.
- Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis rang the ceremonial bell at the NSE in Mumbai to mark the occasion, celebrating this historic milestone in urban finance.

India's Retail Inflation Rises to 3.21% in February 2026: Consumer Price Index (CPI) Data

- India's retail inflation, based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), stood at 3.21% in February 2026, compared to 2.75% in January 2026, according to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- The rural inflation rate was 3.37%, while urban inflation stood at 3.02%, under the revised CPI series with 2024 as the base year.

RBI Launches Pilot 'Awareness Program on Digital Payments' in Maharashtra During Digital Payments Awareness Week

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) launched a pilot programme titled “Awareness Program on Digital Payments” to promote safe and wider adoption of digital payments across India.
- The pilot programme was conducted in Maharashtra in partnership with CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd during the Digital Payments Awareness Week (March 9–13, 2026).

Bank of Baroda Launches ‘bob Women Sapphire Savings Account’ with ₹10 Lakh Cancer Care Coverage for Women

- Bank of Baroda launched a special savings account for women named bob Women Sapphire Savings Account to promote financial inclusion and empowerment.
- The account is designed to provide exclusive banking benefits along with healthcare and lifestyle privileges for women customers.

Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority to Organise ‘Niveshak Shivir’ in Bhubaneswar

- Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, in collaboration with Securities and Exchange Board of India, will organise a ‘Niveshak Shivir’ in Bhubaneswar on 27 March 2026.
- The initiative aims to provide a one-stop facilitation platform to help investors resolve issues related to unclaimed dividends and shares, along with on-ground grievance redressal and investor services.

RBI Imposes ₹3.1 Lakh Penalty on Cashfree Payments India Private Ltd for Regulatory Violations

- Reserve Bank of India imposed a ₹3.1 lakh penalty on Cashfree Payments India Private Ltd for non-compliance with regulatory directions.
- The penalty was due to an impermissible debit from an escrow account, as identified by the RBI.

India’s WPI Inflation Rises to 2.13% in February 2026

- India’s Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation rose to 2.13% in February 2026, marking an 11-month high.
- It recorded the fourth consecutive monthly increase, rising from 1.81% in January 2026.

RBI Imposes ₹2.7 Lakh Penalty on Manappuram Finance for KMP Pay Rule Violation

- Reserve Bank of India imposed a penalty of ₹2.7 lakh on Manappuram Finance for violating guidelines related to compensation of Key Managerial Personnel (KMP).

- The violation involved paying full variable pay upfront without deferral, identified during RBI's inspection based on the company's financial position as of March 31, 2025.

NPCI International Payments Limited Expands UPI Acceptance in Sri Lanka via LankaQR Codes

- **NPCI International Payments Limited** plans to expand UPI merchant acceptance in Sri Lanka, allowing payments via LankaQR codes.
- The initiative aims to enhance cross-border payment convenience for Indian tourists and support Sri Lanka's growing digital economy.

Jio Payments Bank Launches UPI-Based Cardless Cash Withdrawal Facility to Boost Financial Inclusion

- **Jio Payments Bank** has introduced UPI-based cash withdrawal at business correspondent (BC) touchpoints to strengthen the digital payments ecosystem.
- The feature allows customers, especially in rural and semi-urban areas, to withdraw cash by scanning a UPI QR code without using debit cards or ATMs.

RBI Wins 'Initiative of the Year' Award for Launching ".bank.in" Domain to Boost Digital Banking Security

- **Reserve Bank of India** received the "Initiative of the Year" award from Central Banking for launching the ".bank.in" domain to enhance digital banking security in India.
- The initiative was implemented in coordination with multiple stakeholders, including the Government of India, National Internet Exchange of India, Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology, and various banks.

Banks Write Off ₹9.75 Lakh Crore Loans in 11 Years

- **Banks** have written off ₹9.75 lakh crore worth of loans over the last 11 financial years, as stated by MoS Finance Pankaj Chaudhary.
- Loan write-offs peaked at ₹1.59 lakh crore in FY20 and have gradually declined to ₹47,568 crore in FY25.

DCM Shriram Secures \$90 Million Investment from IFC for Sustainable Growth

- **DCM Shriram** has secured \$90 million funding from the **International Finance Corporation (IFC)** through sustainability-linked non-convertible debentures (NCDs).
- The funds will be used to expand its chemicals business and support agriculture-related capital expenditure, promoting sustainable growth.

Axis Bank to Infuse ₹1,500 Crore into Axis Finance to Boost Growth

- **Axis Bank** has approved an investment of ₹1,500 crore in its wholly owned subsidiary Axis Finance (AFL) through a rights issue, to be completed by March 31, 2027, after approval from the Reserve Bank of India.
- The bank will retain 100% shareholding in AFL both before and after the capital infusion, aimed at strengthening the NBFC's growth.

Core Industries Growth Rises to 2.3% in February 2026

- The **Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI)** grew by 2.3% (provisional) in February 2026 compared to February 2025.
- Cement, Steel, Fertilisers, Coal, and Electricity sectors recorded positive growth during February 2026.

RBI Imposes ₹31.80 Lakh Penalty on HSBC for Non-Compliance

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a ₹31.80 lakh penalty on HSBC for regulatory non-compliance.
- The penalty was due to violation of RBI guidelines related to "Inoperative Accounts / Unclaimed Deposits in Banks – Revised Instructions."

Government Retains 4% Inflation Target Framework for 2026–2031 Period

- The Ministry of Finance has decided to retain India's inflation targeting framework unchanged for another five-year period from April 1, 2026 to March 31, 2031.
- The inflation target remains at 4%, with a tolerance band of 2% to 6%, ensuring price stability while supporting economic growth.

CCI Approves MUFG's ₹39,618 Crore Investment in Shriram Finance

- The Competition Commission of India has approved Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group Bank's ₹39,618 crore investment in Shriram Finance Ltd, marking the largest FDI in India's NBFC sector.
- MUFG will acquire a 20% stake in Shriram Finance through this ₹39,618 crore (\$4.4 billion) deal, surpassing the previous record investment in RBL Bank by around 47%.

L&T Finance Joins UN Global Compact

- L&T Finance Ltd has become a signatory to the **United Nations Global Compact**, the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative, marking a major step in its sustainability journey.
- By joining UNGC, the company commits to integrating Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles into its core business strategy and operations.

CBIC Enables Payment Aggregator on ICEGATE

- The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs has enabled **payment aggregator as an authorised mode on the ICEGATE platform** to simplify customs duty payments.

- Importers can now pay duties using credit/debit cards, UPI, and internet banking, with the number of supported banks increasing from 23 to 41, alongside existing modes like NEFT/RTGS via Reserve Bank of India.

Japan Commits ₹16,420 Crore ODA Loan to India for Metro, Healthcare and Agriculture Projects

- The Government of Japan has committed an **Official Development Assistance (ODA) loan of JPY 275.858 billion (≈ ₹16,420 crore)** to India for four major projects in urban transport, healthcare, and agriculture.
- Key projects include Bengaluru Metro Phase 3, Mumbai Metro Line 11, healthcare and medical education strengthening in Maharashtra, and sustainable horticulture development in Punjab.

SEBI Launches 'Verified App Label' Initiative to Protect Investors from Fraudulent Apps

- **Tuhin Kanta Pandey**, Chairperson of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), launched the **'Verified App Label'** initiative to enhance investor safety in digital platforms.
- The initiative aims to protect investors from fraudulent mobile apps by promoting the principle "First verify, then invest" and ensuring safe digital investing.

Lakshya Asset Management Company Gets SEBI Approval to Launch Mutual Fund Business

- **Lakshya Asset Management Company** has received approval from the Securities and Exchange Board of India to launch its mutual fund business in India.
- Sponsored by Wealth First Portfolio Managers (listed on NSE and BSE), it will become the first Asset Management Company headquartered in Ahmedabad.

Chapter 15: Committee

Committee	Headed by	Purpose
The Committee of Privileges	Ravi Shankar Prasad	The panel examines cases of breach of parliamentary privilege referred by the Speaker and submits reports recommending appropriate action.

<p>The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs</p>	<p>Narendra Modi</p>	<p>To strengthen procurement, CCI has set up over 508 centres in 152 districts and introduced tech initiatives like Bale Identification and Traceability System (BITS) and the “Cott-Ally” mobile app for better transparency and farmer outreach.</p>
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Chapter 16: Defence News

Indian Air Force Showcases Full-Spectrum Combat Power in Exercise 'Vayushakti-26' at Pokhran Range

- The Indian Air Force conducted Exercise 'Vayushakti-26' at the Pokhran Field Firing Range, showcasing full-spectrum air combat capabilities, operational synergy, and advanced technological prowess in a simulated live combat theatre.
- For the first time, the exercise followed a defined operational storyline integrating offensive air strikes, air defence operations, special forces missions, and humanitarian assistance—highlighting the IAF's role as a multi-domain, integrated force and the nation's first responder.

INS Anjadip, Built with Indigenous SAIL Steel, Set to Join Indian Navy Fleet

- Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) supplied the entire quantity of approximately 3,500 tonnes of special-grade indigenous steel for INS Anjadip, built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Ltd (GRSE), strengthening India's defence manufacturing capabilities.
- INS Anjadip is the third Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC) corvette to join the Indian Navy, following INS Arnala and INS Androth in 2025, and is part of the indigenous programme to replace the ageing Abhay-class vessels.

Southern Air Command Conducts 'Kalari Leap' Joint Maritime Exercise in Lakshadweep Region

- The Southern Air Command of the Indian Air Force conducted a high-tempo joint maritime exercise named Kalari Leap in the Lakshadweep and Minicoy archipelago.

- The exercise aimed to validate joint operational planning, rapid force projection, and precise execution in complex maritime environments, strengthening coastal and island security preparedness.

Indian Navy Commissions Indigenous ASW Craft 'INS Anjadip' at Chennai to Boost Coastal Defence

- The Indian Navy commissioned its fourth indigenously built Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC), INS Anjadip, at Chennai Port, Tamil Nadu, to strengthen coastal anti-submarine warfare capabilities.
- The vessel was commissioned by Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi in the presence of senior naval officials.

Sagar Defence Lays Foundation of World's First Autonomous Shipbuilding Centre in Nellore

- Sagar Defence Engineering Pvt. Ltd. has laid the foundation of the world's first Autonomous Maritime Shipbuilding and Systems Centre in the Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh.
- The centre will operate as an advanced shipyard using Artificial Intelligence (AI) and robotics for modern shipbuilding processes.

Indian Navy to Commission INS Taragiri Stealth Frigate on April 3 in Visakhapatnam

- The Indian Navy will commission INS Taragiri, an indigenous stealth frigate, on April 3, 2026. The commissioning ceremony will be held in Visakhapatnam and will be presided over by Rajnath Singh.
- INS Taragiri is the fourth ship of the Nilgiri-class (Project 17A), showcasing India's advanced naval capabilities.

IAF Develops Vayu Baan: India's First Helicopter-Launched Drone System for Precision Strikes

- Vayu Baan is India's first helicopter-launched autonomous drone system, developed by the Indian Air Force to enhance modern aerial warfare capability.
- It is released mid-flight from a helicopter, after which it unfolds, activates propulsion, and operates as an ISR (surveillance) or precision-guided kamikaze drone for target engagement.

IAF Launches 'Vayu Baan': India's First Helicopter-Launched Drone System for Long-Range Stand-off Strikes

- The Indian Air Force launched 'Vayu Baan' in March 2026, marking India's first helicopter-launched drone project, strengthening indigenous defence innovation.

- With this development, India joins elite nations like the USA and China in advanced aerial drone-launch capabilities.

Defence Ministry Signs ₹858 Crore Deals for Air Defence Systems and P-8I Aircraft Maintenance

- The Ministry of Defence signed contracts worth ₹858 crore for procurement of the Tunguska Air Defence Missile System and maintenance of P-8I aircraft, boosting India's defence capabilities.
- A ₹445 crore deal with JSC Rosoboronexport will supply Tunguska systems to the Indian Army, strengthening multi-layered air defence against aircraft, drones, and cruise missiles while enhancing India-Russia defence ties.

Defence Exercise	Between	About
'Freedom Shield' Joint Military Exercise	United States and South Korea	Around 18,000 South Korean troops are participating in the exercise, which will continue until March 19, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff.
The U.S.-led multinational anti-submarine warfare exercise 'Sea Dragon 2026'	India and involves countries like Australia, Japan, and New Zealand	The Indian Navy is participating alongside the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) , which has deployed a P-8A Poseidon aircraft and around 50 personnel.

Chapter 17: Sports News

Jammu & Kashmir Clinch First-Ever Ranji Trophy Title

- Jammu and Kashmir's Ranji cricket team won their first-ever Ranji Trophy title, defeating eight-time champions Karnataka at Hubballi.
- The team ended a 67-year wait for the prestigious domestic First-Class cricket title with a dominant performance.
- Jammu and Kashmir secured the crown with a massive 291-run first-innings lead, extending their overall advantage to 633 runs to seal the historic victory.

Indian Army Clinches Khelo India Winter Games 2026 Team Title with 23 Medals

- The first three editions of the Khelo India Winter Games (KIWG) were hosted and won by Jammu and Kashmir in 2020, 2021, and 2023, showcasing its dominance in winter sports.
- The Indian Army won the KIWG 2026 team championship title with a total of 23 medals (9 Gold, 6 Silver, 8 Bronze).
- In the 2026 medal tally, Himachal Pradesh (14 medals), Haryana (7 medals), Maharashtra (12 medals), and Ladakh (13 medals) secured the next top positions after the Indian Army.

Mumbai Cricket Association to Name Stand at Wankhede Stadium After Ravi Shastri

- **Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA)** has decided to name a stand at Wankhede Stadium after former **India cricketer and coach Ravi Shastri** as a tribute to his contribution to Indian cricket.
- Wankhede Stadium is located in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

BCCI Announces Record ₹131 Crore Cash Reward for Suryakumar Yadav and India's T20 World Cup-Winning Team

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) announced a record ₹131 crore cash reward for **Suryakumar Yadav and the T20 World Cup-winning Indian team** following their historic triumph in Ahmedabad.
- This reward is the highest ever in Indian cricket, surpassing the ₹125 crore awarded to Rohit Sharma and his team after winning the T20 World Cup in Barbados two years ago.

Anant Rana Creates History by Completing Ironman New Zealand Triathlon in 11 Hours 50 Minutes

- **Anant Rana** created history by completing the **Ironman New Zealand triathlon in 11 hours and 50 minutes in Taupo**, becoming one of the notable Indian athletes to finish the challenging endurance event.
- The triathlon included 3.8 km swimming, 180 km cycling, and a 42 km marathon run, which he successfully completed within the 17-hour time limit.

Lakshya Sen Finishes Runner-Up at All England Open Badminton Championships After Loss to Lin Chun-Yi

- **India's Lakshya Sen** finished runner-up in the **Men's Singles at the All England Open Badminton Championships** after losing the final.
- He was defeated by Lin Chun-Yi of Chinese Taipei in straight games 15–21, 20–22.

Iran Withdraws from FIFA World Cup 2026

- **Iran** announced its **withdrawal from the FIFA World Cup 2026**, one of the biggest international football tournaments.

- The FIFA World Cup 2026 will be jointly hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

India to Host 2027 Asia Cup Archery Second Leg in Delhi After 22 Years

- India will host the **second leg of the Asia Cup Archery in 2027 in Delhi**, marking the return of a major international archery event after 22 years.
- India last hosted a major international archery tournament when the Asian Archery Championships were held in Delhi in 2005.

Mayank Chakraborty Becomes India's 94th Chess Grandmaster, First from Assam

- **Mayank Chakraborty** became India's **94th Grandmaster (GM) in chess**. He is the first chess Grandmaster from Assam, marking a historic milestone for the state.
- The Grandmaster (GM) title is awarded by the world chess governing body FIDE.

Armand Duplantis Sets New Pole Vault World Record of 6.31m at Mondo Classic

- **Armand Duplantis** set a new pole vault **world record of 6.31 metres at the Mondo Classic held in Uppsala**.
- This achievement marks the 15th time Duplantis has broken the pole vault world record, further strengthening his dominance in the sport.

Kimi Antonelli Wins Chinese Grand Prix, Becomes Second-Youngest F1 Race Winner

- **Kimi Antonelli**, aged 19, won his first Formula One race at the **Chinese Grand Prix**, becoming the **second-youngest race winner in F1 history**.
- The youngest F1 race winner remains Max Verstappen, who won a Grand Prix at the age of 18 in 2016.

Sarfraz Ahmed Announces Retirement from International Cricket

- **Sarfraz Ahmed**, the former Pakistan wicketkeeper-batter and captain, announced his **retirement from international cricket** after a notable career.
- He led Pakistan to victory in the 2006 ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup, becoming one of the few players to win an ICC title at the junior level as captain.

India Tops Medal Table with 208 Medals at World Para Athletics Grand Prix 2026, New Delhi

- India topped the **medal table at the World Para Athletics Grand Prix 2026** in New Delhi, winning a total of 208 medals — **75 gold, 69 silver, and 64 bronze**.
- Russia finished second with 35 medals, while Bosnia and Herzegovina placed third with three medals.

Chandrika Pujari Wins Gold as India Secures Five Medals at World Boxing Futures Cup

- India secured a total of **five medals (1 gold, 3 silver, 1 bronze)** at the **World Boxing Futures Cup**.
- Chandrika Pujari won the gold medal in the women's 51 kg category, defeating Uzbekistan's Mardonova Nazokat by a unanimous decision.

India to Host World Indoor Athletics Championships 2028 in Bhubaneswar

- India will host the **World Indoor Athletics Championships 2028 in Bhubaneswar**, Odisha, marking a major boost for India's global sports profile.
- The hosting rights were granted by the World Athletics Council, reflecting confidence in India's sporting infrastructure and organizational capacity.

Lionel Messi Becomes Second Footballer to Score 900 Career Goals

- **Lionel Messi** became only the **second men's footballer to score 900 official goals**, achieving the milestone for Inter Miami CF against Nashville SC in the CONCACAF Champions Cup.
- Messi reached 900 goals in 1,142 matches, faster than Ronaldo (1,236 games), while Pelé ranks third on the all-time list with 765 goals.

FIFA Fines Israeli FA \$190,700 Over Anti-Discrimination Violations

- FIFA imposed a **fine of \$190,700 on the Israeli Football Association** for breaching anti-discrimination rules.
- The action was taken due to failure to address racist behaviour associated with Beitar Jerusalem.

Anahat Singh and Abhay Singh Clinch Singles Titles at Indian Open Squash in Dominant Fashion

- **Anahat Singh** won the **Women's Singles title at the Indian Open Squash**, defeating Hana Moataz 3-1 to successfully defend her title.
- In Men's Singles, **Abhay Singh** defeated Veer Chotrani 3-0 in an all-Indian final to clinch the title convincingly.

Japan Clinch Third AFC Women's Asian Cup Title, Defeat Australia in Final

- **Japan** won their **third AFC Women's Asian Cup title**, defeating host Australia in the final of the 21st edition.
- **Maika Hamano** scored the only goal of the match, securing victory for Japan.

Sikkim to Host 49th Yonex Sunrise Junior National Badminton Championship 2026 for the First Time

- **Sikkim** has been selected to **host the 49th Yonex Sunrise Junior National Badminton Championship 2026 (U-19 category)**.
- The tournament will be held from November 14 to November 21, 2026, under the aegis of the Badminton Association of India.

Sahibzada Farhan and Arundhati Reddy Named ICC Players of the Month for February 2026

- **Sahibzada Farhan** was named ICC Men's Player of the Month for February 2026 for his outstanding performance in the T20 World Cup, where he surpassed a record held by Virat Kohli.
- **In the women's category, Arundhati Reddy** won the award for her impressive bowling in a T20I series in Australia, finishing as the leading wicket-taker.

Cricket Australia to Host 150th Anniversary Test at MCG in 2027

- **Cricket Australia** will celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first-ever Test match (1877) with an Australia vs England Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in March 2027.
- The first Test match at MCG in 1877 was won by Australia by 45 runs, and the 100-year anniversary in 1977 was also marked with a similar match at the same venue.

Omaxe to Name 'Pink Stand' After Harmanpreet Kaur at Dwarka Cricket Stadium

- **Omaxe Limited** will name a stand at its upcoming cricket stadium in Dwarka after Harmanpreet Kaur, honouring her contribution to Indian women's cricket.
- The stand, located in the North Pavilion Lower Bowl of the 30,000-seater stadium, will feature over 1,500 seats and be India's first dedicated "Pink Stand" designed for women and families.

Lokesh Satyanathan Becomes First Indian to Cross 8m in Indoor Long Jump

- **Lokesh Satyanathan** became the first Indian to cross the 8-meter mark in indoor long jump, recording 8.01 m at the Tyson Invitational 2026 in the USA.
- Competing for Tarleton State, he finished 8th among 16 athletes, while Cordell Tinch won the event with 8.29 m.

Virat Kohli Becomes First IPL Batter to Cross 4000 Runs in Run Chases

- **Virat Kohli** became the first player in Indian Premier League history to score 4000+ runs in run chases, achieving the milestone during IPL 2026.
- He reached this landmark in the match between Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Sunrisers Hyderabad at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bengaluru.

Gurjant Singh Announces Retirement from International Hockey After Decorated Career

- **Gurjant Singh** has announced his retirement from international hockey at the Hockey India Awards, ending a distinguished career of nearly a decade with 130 caps and 33 goals.

- He played a key role in India's success, including the 2016 Junior World Cup victory, and was part of the Olympic bronze medal-winning teams at Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024.

Carolina Marín Announces Retirement from Badminton After Historic Career

- Carolina Marín announced her retirement from professional badminton at the age of 32 due to a serious knee injury.
- She was an Spanish Olympic and World Champion, and one of the greatest badminton players.

Chapter 18: Book and Author

Book	Author
"Mahatma: A Great Communicator"	Released by Dr Mansukh Mandaviya Written by Dr Dhiraj Kakadia

Chapter 19: Important Day

Date	Day	Theme/Importance
1 March	World Civil Defence Day	Theme 2026 - Managing Environmental Risk for a Resilient Future: A Civil Defense Perspective
1 March	Zero Discrimination Day	The day was launched by UNAIDS to highlight the importance of inclusion, compassion, peace, and the right of every individual to live with dignity.
3 March	World Wildlife Day	Theme 2026 - Medicinal and Aromatic Plants: Conserving Health, Heritage and Livelihoods
3 March	World Hearing Day	Theme 2026 - From communities to classrooms: hearing care for all children
12 March	World Kidney Day	The theme for 2026 is " Kidney Health for All: Caring for People, Protecting the Planet. "
13 March	World Sleep Day	Theme 2026 - Sleep Well, Live Better

14 March	International Day of Mathematics	Theme 2026 - Mathematics and Hope
15 March	International Day to Combat Islamophobia	The day was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2022 to promote religious tolerance, dialogue, and respect for cultural diversity.
18 March	Ordnance Factories Day	The day highlights the role of Ordnance Factories in strengthening India's defence manufacturing and supplying arms, ammunition, and military equipment to the armed forces.
20 March	International Day of Happiness	It was proclaimed by the United Nations in 2012, recognizing the importance of happiness in public policy and development.
20 March	World Sparrow Day	It highlights the impact of urbanization, pollution, and habitat loss on sparrows and promotes efforts for their protection and conservation.
17 March	The 41st Raising Day of Narcotics Control Bureau	Nationwide youth mobilisation programmes for a Drug-Free India were held at around 40 locations, including Delhi, Lucknow, Mumbai, and Chennai.
20 March	World Sparrow Day	Theme 2026 - Creating Bird-Friendly Cities & Communities
21 March	World Forestry Day	Theme 2026 - Forests and Economies
21 March	World Poetry Day	Theme 2026 - Poetry as a Bridge for Peace and Inclusion
23 March	World Meteorological Day	Theme 2026 - Observing Today, Protecting Tomorrow
23 March	Martyrs' Day	It commemorates the martyrdom of Bhagat Singh, Shivaram Rajguru, and Sukhdev Thapar , who were executed by the British in 1931.

23 March	World Tuberculosis (TB) Day	Theme 2026 - Yes! We can end TB!
24 March	International Day of the Unborn Child	It highlights the importance of protecting life before birth and raising awareness about ethical and moral values.
24 March	International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims	The day honours victims of serious human rights violations and supports their right to truth and justice.
25 March	International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade	The day honours and remembers millions of Africans who suffered and died during the Transatlantic Slave Trade.
25 March	International Day of Solidarity with Detained and Missing Staff Members	The day highlights the risks faced by staff members of the United Nations and associated organizations working in difficult conditions.
25 March	International Day of Solidarity with Detained and Missing Staff Members	The day was proclaimed by the United Nations in 1993 and also marks the anniversary of the abduction of journalist Alec Collett.
26 March	Purple Day of Epilepsy	Theme 2026 - #EpilepsyPledge
27 March	World Theatre Day	Theme 2026 - Theatre and a Culture of Peace
30 March	Rajasthan Day	To mark the formation of Rajasthan in 1949.
30 March	International Day of Zero Waste	Theme 2026 - Tackling Food Waste Through Circular Economy Practices
31 March	Eiffel Tower Day	It is one of the most famous landmarks in the world and a symbol of Paris and French cultural heritage.

Chapter 20: Science & Technology

Gujarat Achieves Space Milestone with First Sounding Rocket Launch at Dholera

- Gujarat achieved a historic milestone in **space research with the successful launch of its first sounding rocket at Dholera**, reaching an altitude of approximately three kilometres.
- The single-stage sub-orbital rocket, developed by an Ahmedabad-based startup, carried a mini-satellite to collect essential weather data.

India Successfully Tests Indigenous Floating LiDAR Buoy System for Advanced Ocean and Wind Monitoring

- India successfully tested an **indigenously developed Floating LiDAR Buoy System**, marking a major milestone in ocean observation and atmospheric data collection, conducted off the coast of Muttom.
- The system, developed by the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), uses LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) technology to measure wind speed, direction, and variations over offshore environments.

Agnikul Successfully Test-Fires World's First 3D-Printed Rocket Booster Engine 'Agnite'

- Agnikul Cosmos Private Limited, an Indian private space startup, **successfully test-fired its 3D-printed rocket booster engine 'Agnite'**.
- The test was conducted at the Agnikul Launchpad (ALP-01) in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, marking a key milestone in India's private space sector.

Chapter 21: Obituary

Person	About
Veteran Steel Industry Leader Jatinder Mehra	As Vice Chairman of Essar Group's Metals and Mining Division , he provided strategic direction, expanded steelmaking capacity at Hazira, and strengthened the group's production and global competitiveness .
Ali Khamenei	He had served as Iran's Supreme Leader since 1989 — holding the highest political and religious authority in the country — was killed in joint US-Israeli airstrikes, as confirmed by Iranian state media and multiple reports amid the ongoing conflict.
Utsav Charan Das, the renowned Ghoda Nacha artist and Padma Shri awardee	Born in Mania village and raised in Choudwar , Das dedicated his life to Ghoda Nacha from Class VIII ,

	promoting the traditional folk dance nationally and internationally.
Veteran Tamil Filmmaker Thakkali Srinivasan	A respected figure in the Tamil film industry , he was known for his versatile roles as a producer, director, composer and actor , contributing to several notable films over decades.
Renowned German Historian and Indologist Hermann Kulke	Hermann Kulke was honoured with the Padma Shri in 2010 for his significant contributions to the study of Indian history and culture.
Robert S. Mueller III, former Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation	Robert S. Mueller III served as FBI Director for 12 years, beginning his tenure just a week before the September 11 attacks.
Veteran Malayalam Actor E.A. Rajendran	E.A. Rajendran was known for his versatile performances in films, television, and theatre , contributing significantly to the Malayalam entertainment industry.