



# Daily Current Affairs

29<sup>th</sup> January 2026



**BANKING, FINANCE & BUSINESS**

**Reserve Bank of India and European Securities and Markets Authority Sign Memorandum of Understanding to Cooperate on Central Counterparties Regulation**

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** and the **European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA)** signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** on **January 27, 2026**, for cooperation and information exchange related to **Central Counterparties (CCPs)** regulated by RBI.
- This MoU replaces the earlier agreement signed on **28 February 2017**, which had lapsed, updating the framework for **supervisory cooperation** between the two authorities.
- The agreement enables **RBI and ESMA** to cooperate on oversight of **CCPs** in accordance with their respective **legal and regulatory frameworks**, resolving a long-standing impasse.
- The MoU establishes a framework for **ESMA to rely on RBI's regulatory and supervisory activities** for Indian clearing houses (like **CCIL**), while safeguarding **EU financial stability**.
- The agreement strengthens **India–EU financial market linkages** and reinforces **global coordination** in the regulation of critical **financial market infrastructures**.
- The MoU was signed by **Vivek Deep**, Executive Director of **RBI**, and **Verena Ross**, Chair of **ESMA**.
- The agreement demonstrates the importance of **cross-border cooperation** to facilitate **international clearing activities**, potentially reducing capital charges for European banks operating in India.



**Securities and Exchange Board of India Survey Shows Only 9.5% of Indian Households Invest in Securities Markets**

- A survey by the **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** revealed that out of **33.72 crore** Indian households, only **3.21 crore households (9.5%)** invested in securities markets such as **equities, mutual funds, and corporate bonds**.
- Nearly **30.51 crore households** remained outside the securities market, indicating significant **under-penetration** despite strong market growth over the past decade.
- Household awareness was highest for **mutual funds (53%)** and **ETFs (49%)**, while participation in complex instruments like **corporate bonds, derivatives, REITs, InvITs, and AIFs** remained extremely limited.
- About **6.7%** of households reported holding **mutual funds or ETFs**, while only **5.3%** held **direct equities**, showing restricted participation even in market-linked products.
- **Geographic disparities** were evident, with **urban households** reporting **74% awareness** of at least one securities product, compared to **56% in rural areas**.

**SEBI survey: Why just 3.21 cr Indian households invest in securities markets**

**Week View**  
 Mumbai, January 28  
 Only 9.5% of India's 33.72 crore households, or 3.21 crore, have invested in securities markets such as equities, mutual funds, and corporate bonds, according to an investor survey by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). The survey shows that the low penetration of securities markets is due to a lack of awareness and a preference for traditional savings instruments like bank deposits and insurance. The survey also highlights the need for SEBI to focus on financial literacy and awareness campaigns to encourage more households to invest in securities markets.

about 6.7% of Indian households reported holding mutual funds or ETFs, while only 5.3% held direct equities, showing restricted participation even in market-linked products.

**Geographic disparities** were evident, with **urban households** reporting **74% awareness** of at least one securities product, compared to **56% in rural areas**.

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- Among states and regions, **Delhi** led with **21% participation**, followed by **Maharashtra (17%)**, **Goa (16%)**, and **Gujarat (15%)**, while **Nagaland (3%)**, **Uttarakhand**, and **Meghalaya (4.5%)** recorded the lowest participation.

**Recent News :**

- In Dec 2025, The **SEBI** has decided to **exclude Zero Coupon Zero Principal (ZCZP) bonds** and **delisted securities** from the **valuation threshold** used to determine **Basic Services Demat Account (BSDA) eligibility**.

**About SEBI :**

- Established : 12 April 1988 as an executive body and was given statutory powers on 30 January 1992 through the SEBI Act, 1992
- Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- Chairman : Tuhin Kanta Pandey
- SEBI is the regulatory body for securities and commodity markets in India under the ownership of the Ministry of Finance (MoF), GoI.

**Bharti AXA Life Launches “Swabhimaan Retirement” Deferred Annuity Plan to Ensure Lifelong Guaranteed Income**

- **Bharti AXA Life Insurance** has launched a **non-linked, non-participating individual deferred annuity plan** named **“Swabhimaan Retirement”** to help customers lock in current annuity rates and secure **guaranteed lifelong income**.
- The plan offers **lifetime annuity payouts** on a **monthly, quarterly, half-yearly, or annual** basis, with a **joint-life option** to ensure continued income for the surviving spouse.
- The plan provides **Premium Payment Term (PPT)** options of **2, 3, and 5 years**, with **deferral periods** of up to **7 years** under select annuity options.
- The plan allows **partial withdrawal of surrender value** after completion of premium payments, subject to policy terms and conditions.
- The plan includes an **Atmanirbhar option**, allowing customers to **withdraw funds in case of emergency**.
- **Bharti AXA Life Insurance** is a prominent Indian private life insurer, established in **2006**, functioning as a joint venture between **Bharti Enterprises (74% stake)** and France-based **AXA Group (26% stake)**.
- The plan enables customers to **plan early, lock in annuity rates** at current levels, and ensure **guaranteed income security** for life for the policyholder or spouse.



**Reserve Bank of India Issues Priority Sector Lending Amendment Directions 2026 to Align Framework with Updated 2025 Norms**

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** issued the **Priority Sector Lending (PSL) (Targets and Classification) Amendment Directions, 2026**, to align the **Priority**

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**Priority sector loans purchased via 'securitisation notes' under lens**

**Our Bureau** Mumbai

To ascertain the priority sector status of the underlying portfolio purchased via 'securitisation notes', banks may rely on a combination of external auditors' certification provided by the originating entity such as a non-banking finance company (NBFC), and conduct of sample check by their own staff or by an auditor for the purpose.

The aforementioned norms may be specified in banks' internal policy, per Reserve Bank of India (Priority Sector Lending - Targets and Classification) (Amendment) Directions, 2026.

These norms come in the wake of the recent quality of PSL-originated loans on much better than that purchased via the securitisation direct assignment route.

**PRIORITY SECTOR** Investments by banks in securitisation notes, representing loans to various priority sector categories, except 'others' category, are eligible for classification under the respective categories depending on the underlying assets, subject to certain conditions.

Investment by banks in securitisation notes with loans against gold jewellery origin, as per RBI's underlying norms, are not eligible for priority sector status.

Bank credit to the National Co-operative Development Corporation (NCDC) for co-lending to cooperative societies will be eligible for classification as priority sector loans, subject to the condition that the loan is not under 'banking' or 'non-banking' category. RBI said no loan-related charges (including guarantee fees of credit guarantee schemes), and of Ac term-in charges (inspection charges), can be levied on priority sector loans up to ₹50,000. In the case of eligible priority sector loans as self-help group/positional liability groups, this limit will be applicable per member and not to the group as a whole.

Banks credit to housing finance companies, approved by the National Housing Bank for their refinancing, for on-lending for the purpose of purchase of construction, reconstruction of individual dwelling units or for slum clearance and rehabilitation of slum dwellers, will be eligible for classification as PSL, subject to an aggregate limit of ₹20 lakh per borrower, under 'banking' or 'non-banking' category.

**Sector Lending (PSL)** framework with updated capital adequacy, credit risk transfer, securitisation, and regulatory norms notified in 2025.

### Key Highlights :

- **PSL targets** remain unchanged for most banks, with **Domestic Commercial Banks** and **Foreign Banks (20+ branches)** required to lend **40% of ANBC/CEOBSE**, Foreign Banks with **fewer than 20 branches** also at **40%** (with **export credit capped at 32%**), and **Regional Rural Banks (RRBs)** at **75%**, subject to a **15% cap** for **Medium Enterprises, Social Infrastructure, and Renewable Energy**.
- **Small Finance Banks (SFBs)** PSL target has been revised to **60% of ANBC or CEOBSE** (whichever is higher), replacing the earlier **75% requirement**.
- The **National Co-operative Development Corporation (NCDC)** has been included as an **eligible on-lending entity** for PSL, subject to **quarterly certification** by a **CAG-empanelled auditor**, applicable to loans sanctioned after **19 January 2026**.
- **On-lending to NBFCs, MFIs, HFCs, and NCDC** is capped at **5%** of a bank's total PSL of the previous financial year, calculated on a **four-quarter average**, with **mandatory auditor certification** to prevent **double counting**.
- **Health Infrastructure Loans** up to **₹12 crore per borrower** for setting up healthcare facilities in **Tier II to Tier VI centres** are eligible for PSL; for **Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs)**, this applies to **Category 'D' centres** with population below **1 lakh**.
- There are **four kinds of Priority Sector Lending Certificates (PSLCs)**:
- **PSLC Agriculture** – counts towards **total agriculture** lending target.
- **PSLC SF/MF** – counts towards sub-target for **Small and Marginal Farmers**.
- **PSLC Micro Enterprises** – counts towards sub-target for **Micro Enterprises**.
- **PSLC General** – counts towards **overall priority sector** target.
- Banks may issue **PSLCs** up to **50%** of the previous year's PSL achievement **without underlying assets**, provided they meet targets at year-end; all PSLCs **expire on 31 March**.
- Bank credit to **NHB-approved HFCs** for refinance, on-lending, slum clearance, or rehabilitation of slum dwellers qualifies as PSL under **Housing**, subject to an aggregate loan cap of **₹20 lakh per borrower**.
- For **Self-Help Groups (SHGs)** and **Joint Liability Groups (JLGs)**, the **₹50,000 limit** applies **per individual member**, not at the group level.
- Certain districts in **Rajasthan** have been removed from priority sector annexures, including **Neem Ka Thana (Annex IA)** and **Gangapur City, Jodhpur Rural, and Sanchore (Annex IB)**.
- The Directions apply to all **Commercial Banks** [including **RRBs, SFBs, Local Area Banks (LABs)**] and **Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks (UCBs)**, except **Salary Earners' Banks**.
- The **priority sector** includes **Agriculture, MSMEs, Export Credit, Education, Housing, Social Infrastructure, Renewable Energy, and Others**.
- Banks can issue **unsecured, rupee-denominated bonds** with minimum maturity of **7 years**, which are **excluded from CRR and SLR requirements**.

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- Banks (excluding UCBs under all-inclusive directions) that fall short of prescribed PSL targets or sub-targets must contribute specified amounts to **RIDF** and other funds with **NABARD, NHB, SIDBI, or MUDRA Ltd.**, on terms decided by RBI.
- The **interest rate** on deposits made by banks into **RIDF** and other funds depends on the extent of shortfall, ranging from **Bank Rate minus 2%** to **Bank Rate minus 4%**.

### Reserve Bank of India Notifies Revised Integrated Ombudsman Scheme to Strengthen Complaint Resolution from 1 July 2026

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** issued the revised **Integrated Ombudsman Scheme**, which will come into effect from **1 July 2026**, to strengthen the **RBI Ombudsman framework** and improve efficiency in **complaint resolution**.
- The Scheme is issued under **Section 35A** of the **Banking Regulation Act, 1949**, **Section 45L** of the **RBI Act, 1934**, **Section 18** of the **Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007**, and **Section 11** of the **Credit Information Companies (Regulation) Act, 2005**.

#### Key Highlights :

- The Scheme applies to all **Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), State Co-operative Banks, Central Co-operative Banks, and Scheduled/Non-Scheduled Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks** with a **deposit size of ₹50 crore or more**, as per the last audited balance sheet.
- It covers **Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs)** authorised to **accept deposits**, excluding **HFCs, CICs, IDFC-NBFCs, NBFC-IFCs, NOFHCs, Primary Dealers, and Mortgage Guarantee Companies**.
- The Scheme also applies to **NBFCs** with a **customer interface** and an **asset size of ₹100 crore or above**, as per the previous year's audited balance sheet.
- All **non-bank Prepaid Payment Instrument (PPI) issuers** and **Credit Information Companies (CICs)** fall under the scope of the Scheme.
- The **RBI** may appoint one or more officers as **RBI Ombudsman** and **RBI Deputy Ombudsman** for a tenure of generally **three years** to perform functions under the Scheme.
- The **RBI** shall establish **Centralised Receipt and Processing Centres** at one or more locations to receive and process complaints filed under the Scheme.
- There is **no monetary limit** on the value of **disputes** that can be taken up under the Scheme.
- The **RBI Ombudsman** can award compensation up to **₹30 lakh** for **consequential losses** suffered by the complainant.
- Additionally, compensation up to **₹3 lakh** may be granted for **loss of time, expenses, harassment, or mental anguish**.
- The **RBI** will publish an **annual report** on the functioning and performance of the Ombudsman Scheme in the **public interest**.

Reserve Bank ombudsman can clear compensation up to ₹30 lakh

Our Bureau  
Mumbai

There will be no limit on the amount over a dispute that can be brought by a complainant against a regulated entity before an RBI ombudsman, for which the ombudsman or his Deputy can facilitate a settlement or pass an Award, according to the Reserve Bank-Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RI-IOIS), 2026.

However, for any consequential loss suffered by the complainant, the RBI ombudsman will have the power to provide a compensation of up to ₹30 lakh.

Additionally, the RBI ombudsman will also have the power to provide a compensation of up to ₹3 lakh for the loss of the complainant's time, expenses incurred, harassment/mental anguish suffered, etc., if any, by the complainant.

**REVISED RULES**  
The revised RI-IOIS, which will be applicable to all banks, non-banking financial companies, non-bank prepaid payment instrument issuers, and credit information companies, that will come into force from July 1, 2026.

The Central bank can appoint one or more of its officers as RBI ombudsman and Deputy ombudsman, to carry out the functions entrusted to them under the Scheme. The appointment

- Any customer aggrieved by **deficiency in service** due to an act or omission of a **Regulated Entity** may file a complaint directly with the **RBI Ombudsman**, either personally or through an **authorised representative** (except an **advocate**, unless the advocate is the aggrieved person).
- The complaint must **first be lodged** with the concerned **Regulated Entity** and can be taken to the **RBI Ombudsman** only if **no reply** is received within **30 days** or if the reply is **unsatisfactory**.
- Complaints must be filed with the **RBI Ombudsman** within **90 days** from the expiry of the response timeline or from the last communication received from the **Regulated Entity**, whichever is later.
- Upon receipt of acceptance, the **Regulated Entity** must **comply** with the **Award** or file an appeal with the **Appellate Authority** within **30 days**.
- Each **Regulated Entity** is required to appoint a **Principal Nodal Officer (PNO)** at its Head Office, not below the rank of **General Manager** or equivalent, to represent the entity and furnish information on complaints.

### SMFG India Credit Partners with Google Pay to Provide Collateral-Free Personal Loans Nationwide

- **SMFG India Credit (SMICC)** has partnered with **Google Pay** to offer **collateral-free personal loans** to users across India.
- **Eligible Google Pay users** can now apply for personal loans **directly within the app**, enabling **quick and seamless digital loan disbursement** (often within minutes).
- The collaboration aims to expand access to **formal credit**, especially for **underserved and emerging customer segments**, supporting the vision of a **digitally inclusive economy**.
- The **digital lending process** is designed to be **fast, safe, and flexible**, catering to India's increasingly **digital-savvy population**.
- The initiative promotes **financial inclusion** by providing **formal credit facilities** to individuals who may have previously lacked access to traditional banking.
- The partnership strengthens **SMICC's position** in the **digital ecosystem**, leveraging **innovative technology** to increase **social impact**.
- **Google Pay** is a **mobile payment service** developed by **Google** that supports **in-app, online, and in-person contactless transactions** on mobile devices.



### Reserve Bank of India Notifies Foreign Exchange Management Regulations 2026, Replacing 2015 Rules Effective 1 October, 2026

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has notified the **Foreign Exchange Management (Export and Import of Goods and Services) Regulations, 2026**, replacing the 2015 regulations, effective from **1 October 2026**.
- Exporters of **goods** must submit an **Export Declaration Form (EDF)** at the **time of export**, while



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exporters of **services** must submit the EDF within **30 days** from the end of the month of invoicing, with flexibility for consolidated or delayed submissions subject to **Authorised Dealer** approval.

- Export proceeds must generally be **realised and repatriated** within **15 months**, extended to **18 months** for **INR-invoiced exports**, with **Authorised Dealer** banks empowered to grant extensions on valid grounds.
- **Authorised Dealers** are required to formulate comprehensive **internal policies and SOPs**, ensure transparent charges, proper delegation of powers, grievance redressal mechanisms, and **public disclosure** of procedures on their websites.
- **Simplified closure** of **EDPMS** (Export Data Processing and Monitoring System) and **IDPMS** (Import Data Processing and Monitoring System) entries is allowed for transactions up to **₹10 lakh** based on **exporter/importer self-declarations**.
- **RBI** stated that the directions have been issued under the provisions of the **Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999**.

### Reserve Bank of India Proposes Changes to Banks' FX Exposure Framework and Capital Requirements for FX Risk

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has proposed changes to the framework for calculating banks' **net foreign exchange (FX) exposure** and the **capital requirements** for **FX risk**.
- The objective of the proposals is to align India's **FX risk norms** with **global standards** (Basel Committee) and ensure **uniform implementation** across all **regulated entities**.
- Under the proposed framework, banks must maintain a **minimum capital charge of 9%** on their **net open foreign exchange positions**.
- The revised rules mandate that **FX risk capital** be maintained at the **close of each business day**, thereby strengthening **daily risk management**.
- The **RBI** has invited **public feedback** on the proposals, which are proposed to come into effect from **1 April 2027**.



### NATIONAL AND STATE NEWS

#### Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati Develops Technique to Predict Glacial Hazards in Eastern Himalayas

- Researchers from **Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati** have developed a new scientific framework to **predict glacial hazards** in the **Eastern Himalayan region**.
- The study has identified **492 potential future glacial lake formation sites**, which may pose risks of **Glacial Lake Outburst Floods**.
- The findings were published in the international journal **Scientific Reports**, highlighting emerging



Researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati have developed a predictive framework that has identified 492 locations where glacial lakes are likely to form in the Eastern Himalayan mountains.

The research conducted using high-resolution Google Earth images and digital elevation models also provides crucial insights for hazard management and water resource planning in high-mountain regions.

The models helped capture complex landscape features and estimate uncertainty in the predictions, making the forecasts more realistic and reliable.

With the developed framework, the research team identified 492 locations in the Eastern Himalayas where new glacial lakes are likely to form, thereby indicating areas that require careful monitoring and preventive measures.

climate-related risks in fragile mountain ecosystems.

- **Glacial hazards** mainly arise due to the formation and sudden bursting of glacial lakes, known as **Glacial Lake Outburst Floods**.
- **Glacial Lake Outburst Floods** release massive volumes of water, ice, and debris in a short time, causing destruction to **villages, roads, hydropower projects, and agricultural land**.
- Rapid **glacier retreat due to climate change** is accelerating the formation of new glacial lakes, especially across the **Himalayan region**.
- Predicting the locations of future glacial lakes is critical for **early warning systems, disaster preparedness, long-term water management, and climate-resilient planning**.
- The research used **high-resolution Google Earth satellite imagery** combined with **Digital Elevation Models** to analyse terrain characteristics in detail.
- Unlike earlier studies that focused mainly on **glacier size or temperature trends**, the new framework emphasised **landscape structure and terrain features**.
- Key terrain parameters analysed included **slope, surface shape, cirques, and proximity to existing lakes**.
- The framework also incorporated **uncertainty estimation**, improving the realism and reliability of predictions in complex high-altitude terrains.
- Three predictive techniques were tested: **Logistic Regression, Artificial Neural Networks, and Bayesian Neural Networks**.
- **Bayesian Neural Networks** emerged as the most accurate model due to their ability to handle uncertainty in terrain and climate data.
- The model identified **retreating glaciers, gentle slopes, cirques, and nearby lakes** as the most significant predictors of future glacial lake formation.
- The identification of **492 high-risk locations** provides actionable inputs for **disaster management authorities, infrastructure planners, and policy makers** in Himalayan states.
- According to **Professor Ajay Dashora**, Assistant Professor at Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, the framework can guide **early warning systems, hydropower project planning, road alignment, and safe settlement planning**.

### RECENT NEWS

- The India International Science Festival (IISF) 2024, India's largest science celebration, will take place at IIT Guwahati, Assam, from November 30 to December 3, 2024. Organized under the aegis of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

### Uttarakhand Implements Uniform Civil Code (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026

- The **Government of Uttarakhand** has implemented the **Uniform Civil Code (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026** after receiving approval from the **Governor of Uttarakhand**, giving the ordinance immediate legal effect.



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The Uttarakhand Government has implemented the Uniform Civil Code (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026, to introduce necessary amendments to the UCC Act, 2004, following the approval of the Governor.

- The ordinance has been promulgated under **Article 213 of the Constitution of India**, which empowers the Governor *to issue ordinances when the State Legislature is not in session*.
- The **Uniform Civil Code (UCC)** was originally implemented in Uttarakhand on **27 January 2025**, making it the first state in India to enforce a comprehensive Uniform Civil Code.
- The amendment ordinance introduces **procedural, administrative and penal reforms** to strengthen the implementation of the existing **Uniform Civil Code Act, 2024**.
- The key objective of the amendments is to **remove ambiguities**, improve **clarity of provisions**, and ensure **effective enforcement** of the Uniform Civil Code across the state.
- The ordinance aligns penal provisions of the UCC with the **new Indian criminal laws**, ensuring legal consistency and updated punishment mechanisms.
- A major focus of the amendment is on **women's empowerment, protection of children's rights**, and **equality in civil laws** applicable to all communities.
- The amendments strengthen **registration-related powers**, improve the **appellate mechanism**, and enhance administrative authority for better implementation.
- The Uniform Civil Code has significantly advanced **digital governance**, especially in **marriage registration**, by shifting processes from physical offices to online platforms.
- Under the UCC framework, nearly **100 percent marriage registrations** are now conducted online through document uploads and video-based verification of couples and witnesses.
- Within one year of UCC implementation, **more than five lakh marriages** have been registered digitally, with marriage certificates issued within an average of **five days**.
- Prior to UCC implementation, marriage registration in the state was governed by the **Uttarakhand Compulsory Registration of Marriages Act, 2010**, which required physical presence at sub-registrar offices.
- The state is observing "**Uniform Civil Code Day**" on completion of one year of UCC implementation to highlight its social, legal and administrative impact.

### RECENT NEWS

- The Uttarakhand government has taken an important step to strengthen healthcare facilities in border areas. On Thursday, the state government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) under a new initiative called 'Swasth Seema Abhiyan'.

### About Uttarakhand:

- **Chief Minister:** Pushkar Singh Dhami
- **Governor:** Gurmit Singh
- **Capital:** Dehradun
- **National Parks:** Jim Corbett National Park, Nanda Devi National Park, Rajaji National Park, Gangotri National Park, Valley of Flowers National Park

- **Wildlife Sanctuaries:** Kedarnath Wildlife Sanctuary, Askot Wildlife Sanctuary, Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary, Govind Wildlife Sanctuary, Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary, Nandi Devi Wildlife Sanctuary

### Gujarat Government Announces Financial Assistance under Namu Laxmi Scheme

- The **Government of Gujarat** has announced **Indian Rupees 1,250 crore** financial assistance under the **Namu Laxmi Scheme** for the **2025–26 academic year**.
- The initiative will benefit **more than 12 lakh girl students** studying in **Classes 9 to 12**.
- The scheme aims to **prevent school dropouts**, improve **nutrition and health**, and promote **secondary and higher secondary education** among girls.
- The **Namu Laxmi Scheme** is a **state-sponsored initiative** to support the education of girls at the **secondary and higher secondary levels**.
- Launched under the guidance of **Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel**, the scheme ensures that **financial constraints do not interrupt education after primary schooling**.
- It links **education support with health, nutrition, and long-term empowerment** of girl students.
- Under the scheme, each eligible girl receives **Indian Rupees 50,000 over four years** from **Class 9 to Class 12**.
- For **Classes 9 and 10**, students receive **Indian Rupees 20,000**, including **monthly assistance** and a **lump sum after clearing the Class 10 board examination**.
- For **Classes 11 and 12**, the assistance amounts to **Indian Rupees 30,000**, provided through **monthly instalments** and a **completion-based payout after Class 12**.
- This structure encourages **continuity and successful completion of schooling**.
- The scheme applies to girls enrolled in schools recognised by the **Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board** or the **Central Board of Secondary Education**.
- Students must have completed **Classes 1 to 8 in government or aided schools**, under the **Right to Education Act**, or **Class 8 in a private school**.
- The **annual family income** should not exceed **Indian Rupees 6 lakh**.
- Girls already receiving **other scholarships** are also eligible, as this scheme provides **additional financial support**.
- The **Namu Laxmi Scheme** also focuses on improving **nutrition and health** of adolescent girls.
- Regular financial assistance helps families ensure **better food intake and healthcare**, leading to improved **attendance, learning outcomes, and overall well-being**.
- The initiative builds on Gujarat's earlier education programmes such as **Shala Praveshotsav**, which strengthened **school enrolment and retention**.



The Gujarat government on Tuesday announced that under the Namu Laxmi Scheme, it will provide financial assistance of Rs 1,250 crore in the 2025-26 academic year to more than 12 lakh girls studying in secondary and higher secondary education.

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- Many such initiatives, launched during **Narendra Modi's tenure as Chief Minister of Gujarat**, later inspired **national-level programmes**.
- The **Namo Laxmi Scheme** continues this legacy by targeting **adolescent girls**, a group particularly vulnerable to **school dropouts**.

### About Gujarat:

- **Chief Minister:** Bhupendra Patel
- **Governor:** Acharya Devvrat
- **Capital:** Gandhinagar
- **National Parks:** Gir National Park, Blackbuck National Park, Vansda National Park, Marine National Park
- **Wildlife Sanctuaries:** Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary, Velavadar Blackbuck Sanctuary, Kutch Desert Wildlife Sanctuary, Barda Wildlife Sanctuary, Purna Wildlife Sanctuary

### Kerala Declares *Bacillus subtilis* as State Microbe

- **Kerala** has officially declared ***Bacillus subtilis*** as its **State Microbe**, becoming the **first Indian state** to accord formal recognition to a microorganism.
- The move highlights the importance of **microorganisms in human health, agriculture, and environmental sustainability**, marking a **science-driven initiative** in governance.
- ***Bacillus subtilis*** is a **beneficial probiotic bacterium** commonly found in **soil, fermented foods, and the human gut**.
- It is widely studied for its role in **improving gut health, boosting immunity, enhancing soil fertility, and controlling plant diseases**.
- Due to its **spore-forming ability and resilience**, it is extensively used in **pharmaceuticals, food processing, and sustainable agriculture**.
- Its recognition reflects Kerala's intent to highlight microbes as **silent contributors to human well-being and ecological balance**.
- The official declaration was made by **Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan** at a public function in **Thiruvananthapuram**.
- With this decision, Kerala has set a **national precedent** by formally acknowledging the role of **microorganisms in development and governance**.
- The move represents a shift from conventional state symbols to **scientific and knowledge-based identifiers**, aligning with Kerala's emphasis on **education and research**.
- The announcement coincided with the launch of the **Centre of Excellence in Microbiome**, a dedicated institution to advance **microbiome research**.

## Kerala declares *Bacillus subtilis* 'State microbe'

Kerala the first State in the country to officially declare its own State microbe. Chief Minister dedicates to the people Centre of Excellence in Microbiome, which will scientifically study the role of microorganisms in health and environment

### About Kerala:

- Chief Minister: Pinarayi Vijayan
- Governor: Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar

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- Capital: Thiruvananthapuram
- National Parks: Eravikulam National Park, Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary, Silent Valley National Park, Parambikulam Tiger Reserve
- Wildlife Sanctuaries: Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary, Idukki Wildlife Sanctuary, Chilika Lake Wildlife Sanctuary

### INTERNATIONAL NEWS

#### UNEP Report 2026 Highlights 30:1 Imbalance Between Nature-Negative Investments and Conservation Spending

- The **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** released the **4th edition** of the report titled “**State of Finances for Nature: Nature in the Red – Powering the Trillion Dollar Nature Transition Economy**”, based on global financial data of **2023**.
- The report highlights that for every **USD 1** invested in **protecting nature**, nearly **USD 30** is spent on **nature-negative activities**, indicating a **30:1 imbalance**.
- The report focuses on **fast-tracking the transition** away from nature-negative finance while scaling up investment in **Nature-based Solutions (NbS)**.
- In **2023**, global spending on activities **harmful to nature** amounted to around **USD 7.3 trillion**.
- Out of this amount, the **private sector** contributed **USD 4.9 trillion**, mainly from **energy, utilities, industrial manufacturing, and basic materials** sectors.
- In **2024**, private sector **nature-negative spending** increased to **USD 5.5 trillion**, registering a **12% rise**.
- The more than **30:1 ratio** in favour of nature-negative activities is fuelling the **triple planetary crisis** of **climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution**.
- Public and private finance for **Nature-based Solutions (NbS)** reached **USD 220 billion** in **2023**, marking a **5% increase** over 2022.
- **Public finance** of **USD 197 billion** remained the **largest source** of NbS investment, while **private finance** of **USD 23.4 billion** remained comparatively limited.
- **Asia** led government spending on NbS in 2023 with investments of **USD 93 billion**.
- **North America** recorded the **highest Year-on-Year (YoY) growth** in NbS spending, at more than **19%**.
- The report introduced the **Nature Transition X-Curve**, a new framework aimed at **reforming capital flows**, sequencing policy actions, and scaling up high-integrity **Nature-based Solutions (NbS)** across all sectors of the economy.



### APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

#### Veteran Indian sports administrator Randhir Singh Resigns Early as Olympic Council of Asia President

- Veteran **Indian** sports administrator and **5-time Olympic shooter Randhir Singh** announced his

Veteran Indian Sports Administrator Randhir Singh Steps Down As OCA President Due To Health Issues



premature resignation as **President of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA)** due to health reasons.

- After his resignation, **Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani**, President of the **Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC)**, was elected as the **new OCA President** during the **OCA General Assembly** held in **Tashkent, Uzbekistan**.
- In **September 2024**, **Randhir Singh** became the **first Indian** to be elected **President of OCA**, securing a **4-year term (till 2028)** at the **44th OCA General Assembly** in **New Delhi, India**.
- Before becoming OCA President, **Randhir Singh** served as **Acting President** of OCA since **2021**, replacing **Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah** of **Kuwait**, who was **banned for 15 years** due to **ethics violations**.
- In **Indian sports administration**, **Randhir Singh** served as **Secretary General** of the **Indian Olympic Association (IOA)** from **1987 to 2012**, making him one of the **longest-serving officials**.
- At the **global level**, **Randhir Singh** was a member of the **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** from **2001 to 2014** and later continued as an **Honorary Member** of the **IOC**.

### All India Football Federation Appoints Amelia Valverde as Head Coach of India Women's Senior Football Team

- The **All India Football Federation (AIFF)** has officially appointed **Amelia Valverde** as the **Head Coach** of the **Indian Senior Women's National Football Team**.
- **Amelia Valverde**, aged **39 years**, joined the Indian training camp in **Antalya, Turkey**, where the **Blue Tigresses** are preparing for the **AFC Women's Asian Cup Australia 2026**, scheduled in **March 2026**.
- She is the **longest-serving head coach** in the history of the **Costa Rican Women's National Team**, leading **Las Ticas** from **2015 to 2023**.
- Under her guidance, **Costa Rica** qualified for the **FIFA Women's World Cup** in **2015 and 2023**, which are the only two World Cup appearances by the nation.
- Amelia Valverde secured several international podium finishes, including **Gold** at the **2017 Central American Games**, **Silver** at the **2018 Central American and Caribbean (CAC) Games**, and **Bronze** at the **2019 Pan American Games**.
- She was honoured as the **CONCACAF Female Coach of the Year 2016** for her outstanding coaching achievements.



#### About AIFF :

- The **All India Football Federation (AIFF)** is the governing body of **football, futsal, and beach soccer** in India.
- AIFF is affiliated with the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports**, Government of India, and was founded on **23 June 1937**.
- **President : Kalyan Chaubey**.

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## AWARDS AND HONOURS

### Taylor Swift to be Inducted into Songwriters Hall of Fame

- **Taylor Swift (aged 36)** will become the **second-youngest songwriter** to be inducted into the **Songwriters Hall of Fame**.
- She joins **Stevie Wonder**, who was inducted at the age of **33 in 1983**, as the youngest inductees in the Hall of Fame's history.
- The announcement was made by the **Songwriters Hall of Fame** and confirmed on **CBS Mornings**.
- Taylor Swift will be inducted alongside:
  - **Alanis Morissette**
  - **Kenny Loggins**
  - **Paul Stanley and Gene Simmons** (members of the band **Kiss**)
- The **induction ceremony** is scheduled to be held on **11 June 2026** at the **Marriott Marquis Hotel, New York City**.
- Established in **1969**, the **Songwriters Hall of Fame** requires that songwriters become eligible **20 years after the first commercial release of a song**, with a significant and influential catalogue.
- Taylor Swift is a **14-time Grammy Award winner**.
  - She has won the **Grammy Award for Album of the Year** four times, the most by any artist.
- Her latest album, "**The Life of a Showgirl**", recorded the **highest first-week sales in the modern era**, as reported by **Billboard**, based on data from **Luminate** (a music sales tracking firm).
- In **May 2025**, Taylor Swift **reacquired ownership of her music rights**, regaining control over **all her master recordings**, including her **first six albums**.
- Her **Eras Tour** became record-breaking and led to:
  - A **concert film**
  - A **six-part documentary series** released on **Disney Plus**
- Her **2024 album, "The Tortured Poets Department"**:
  - Debuted at **Number One on the Billboard 200 Album Chart**
  - Sold **8 million album-equivalent units in the United States**, according to **Luminate**

Taylor Swift was announced as a member of the 2026 Songwriters Hall of Fame inductees on Wednesday in her first year of eligibility, the organisation said, becoming the youngest woman ever to reach the milestone.



## MOUS AND AGREEMENT

### India and European Union Sign First-Ever Comprehensive Defence and Security Partnership

- **India** and the **European Union** signed their first comprehensive **Defence and Security Partnership**, alongside the conclusion of the **India–European Union Free Trade Agreement**.



**NEW DELHI:** Amidst the dramatic downturn in their relations with the Donald Trump-led US, India and the EU announced successful conclusion of the FTA negotiations and signed another deal to formalise their security and defence partnership at the India-EU summit that, PM Narendra Modi said, history will remember as a tide-turning moment and the beginning of a new era in relations.

Modi said India had concluded the largest free trade agreement in its history that will also boost investment between India and the EU, create new innovation

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partnerships and strengthen global supply chains, acting not just as a trade agreement but a new blueprint for shared prosperity.

- The agreement was signed during the visit of **European Union leaders to India** for the **77th Republic Day celebrations**, marking a historic expansion of bilateral ties beyond trade.
- This is the **first-ever overarching defence and security agreement** between India and the European Union, reflecting a major strategic milestone in bilateral relations.
- The partnership establishes a **formal and comprehensive framework** for cooperation in **maritime security, defence industry, defence technology, and space security**.
- The agreement signals that India and the European Union now view each other as **reliable and long-term security partners** in a volatile global security environment.
- Alongside the defence partnership, both sides launched negotiations on a **Security of Information Agreement**.
- The **Security of Information Agreement** will enable the **exchange of classified information** while ensuring legal safeguards for the protection of sensitive data.
- This agreement is a mandatory framework for the **European Union to share classified material with third countries** and is expected to strengthen **defence-industrial and strategic cooperation**.
- The partnership reflects shared concerns over **rising cross-regional security threats**, increasing focus on **Indo-Pacific maritime security**, and evolving global geopolitical tensions.
- The European Union's growing defence preparedness, particularly amid concerns related to **Russia and Ukraine**, aligns with India's push for **defence self-reliance** and diversification of strategic partners.
- Both sides acknowledged the need for closer cooperation to counter **terrorism, hybrid threats, and cyber insecurity**.
- India and the European Union also adopted the **"Towards 2030: India–European Union Joint Comprehensive Strategic Agenda"** to provide long-term direction to bilateral cooperation.
- The strategic agenda is based on five key pillars: **prosperity and sustainability, technology and innovation, security and defence, connectivity and global challenges, and enabling areas such as skills, mobility, business, and people-to-people ties**.
- The partnership creates opportunities for Indian defence manufacturers as the European Union enhances its defence capacity.
- The European Union launched the **ReArm Europe Plan / Readiness 2030** in **March 2025**, proposing over **€800 billion in defence spending**.
- European countries are increasingly sourcing **munitions and defence components from India**, strengthening India's role as a **trusted defence manufacturing hub**.

## RANKING AND INDEX

### Global Information Technology Services Brand Valuation Report 2026

- As per the **Brand Finance** report, the **total brand value of the world's top 25**

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India's information technology behemoths continue to dominate the global landscape, with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Infosys maintaining their positions as the world's second and third most valuable IT services brands, respectively, according to the latest IT Services 25 (2026)\* report by Brand Finance.

India stood toe-to-toe with the US in the global IT rankings, with both nations fielding eight firms each in the top 25 list.

The report, which tracks the brand value and strength of the world's leading IT firms, highlighted that Accenture (USD 43.2 billion brand value) has retained its position as the world's most valuable IT services brand for the eighth consecutive year.

According to the report, TCS the world's second most valuable IT Services brand for the fifth year in a row holds a brand value of USD 21.2 billion in 2026.

Infosys, with a brand value of USD 16.4 billion, was termed as the fastest growing IT Services brand over the past 6 years, with a brand value CAGR of 15 per cent.

- Information Technology services brands** reached **United States Dollar 167.2 billion in 2026**, recording a **modest growth of 2 per cent** compared to 2025.
- Continued **uncertainty in global technology spending** has impacted the **brand valuation growth** of the **Information Technology services sector**.
  - **Accenture** retained its position as the **world's most valuable Information Technology services brand** for the **eighth consecutive year**.
    - Accenture's brand value increased by **2 per cent** to **United States Dollar 42.3 billion in 2026**.
  - **Tata Consultancy Services** and **Infosys** retained their positions as the **second and third most valuable Information Technology services brands globally**.
  - **Eight Indian Information Technology services companies** together account for **36 per cent of total brand value**, amounting to **United States Dollar 60.4 billion** among the top 25 brands.
  - **Tata Consultancy Services**, with a brand value of **United States Dollar 21.2 billion**, is the **world's second most valuable Information Technology services brand** for the **fifth consecutive year**.
    - The valuation declined marginally from **United States Dollar 21.3 billion in 2025**.
  - **Infosys**, with a brand value of **United States Dollar 16.4 billion**, remains the **third most valuable Information Technology services brand globally**.
    - Infosys recorded the **fastest-growing compound annual growth rate of 15 per cent** in brand value over the last **six years**.
    - It achieved a **Brand Strength Index score of 86.8 out of 100**, making it the **third-strongest Information Technology services brand worldwide**.
  - **HCL Technologies** recorded a **1 per cent increase** in brand value to **United States Dollar 9 billion** and ranked **eighth**.
  - **Wipro** recorded a **4 per cent increase** in brand value to **United States Dollar 6.3 billion** and ranked **ninth** among the top 25 brands.
  - **Persistent Systems** emerged as the **fastest-growing Information Technology services brand of 2026**.
    - Its brand value rose by **22 per cent** to **United States Dollar 989 million**.
    - Growth was driven by **sustained revenue expansion, hyperscale partnerships, product engineering expertise, and Artificial Intelligence modernisation mandates**.
  - According to **Brand Finance**, the expansion from **seven to eight Indian brands** in the global top 25 highlights the **depth and maturity of India's Information Technology services ecosystem**.
  - Indian companies are increasingly moving beyond scale, with growth driven by **Artificial Intelligence, cloud computing, cybersecurity, specialised expertise, and long-term investment in next-generation technologies**.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### Japan Returns Its Last Two Giant Pandas to China, Ending Panda Presence Since 1972

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Japan To Return Twin Panda Cubs To China



- **Japan** decided to return its last two **giant panda cubs** to **China**, leaving the country **without any pandas** for the first time since **1972**.
- Thousands of people gathered at **Ueno Zoo** to see the pandas for the last time, with some waiting over **three and a half hours** during the final viewing days in **January 2026**.
- The panda twins, **Xiao Xiao** and **Lei Lei**, were born in **2021** and were in Japan under a **breeding research loan agreement**.
- Under China's **panda diplomacy** policy, **China retains ownership** of all pandas loaned abroad, with host countries typically paying around **USD 1 million per pair annually**.
- The departure of the pandas comes amid **tense Japan-China relations**, which deteriorated after Japanese PM **Sanae Takaichi** warned of **military involvement** if China attacked **Taiwan**.
- Visitors at the zoo were emotional, recalling the growth and milestones of the **panda twins** since their birth in **2021** and the return of their parents, **Shin Shin** and **Ri Ri**, in late **2024**.
- The prospects of a **new panda loan** to Japan remain **uncertain** amid the escalating **diplomatic row** and the expiration of the current bilateral lease agreements.

### Ola Electric Gets BIS Certification to Commercially Launch Residential Battery Energy Storage System

- **Ola Electric** has received **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)** certification to commercially launch its residential **Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)**, marking its entry into the **clean energy storage** segment.
- The approval covers the **Ola Shakti 6kW/9.1kWh** system, powered by indigenously developed **4680 Bharat Cells**, with deliveries scheduled to begin by **end-January 2026**.
- Ola Electric claims this is **India's first** fully **designed, engineered, and manufactured** residential BESS, supporting the country's goal of **energy self-reliance**.
- The system features an **IP67-rated, spill-proof battery**, capable of powering **high-load appliances** such as **air conditioners, refrigerators, induction cooktops**, and **farm pumps**.



### Embraer Partners with Adani Defence & Aerospace to Develop Made-in-India Regional Transport Aircraft

- **Brazilian** aerospace major **Embraer** has partnered with **Adani Defence & Aerospace** to develop a **made-in-India Regional Transport Aircraft (RTA)**.
- The proposed **RTA** is designed to seat around **90 passengers** with an operational range of **500–900 km**, catering to India's **regional and commuter aviation** needs.



- The **MoU** focuses on **local assembly** and deeper **indigenisation**, aiming to establish India's own **Final Assembly Line (FAL)** for regional aircraft.
- In aviation, the **Final Assembly Line (FAL)** is the last stage of aircraft manufacturing, where major components like the **fuselage, wings, engines, landing gear, avionics, and interiors** are assembled to build a complete aircraft.
- At the **FAL stage**, activities such as **systems integration, testing, painting, ground checks, flight trials**, and delivery preparations are conducted.
- The collaboration aims to build an **integrated RTA ecosystem** in India, including aircraft manufacturing, **supply chains, aftermarket services, and pilot training**.
- The partnership is aligned with India's **Aatmanirbhar Bharat** initiative and the **UDAN** regional connectivity scheme, supporting enhanced air connectivity to **Tier-II and Tier-III** cities.
- The industrial partnership will initially focus on establishing the **assembly line**, followed by a gradual increase in **indigenisation** to support India's **RTA programme**.
- **President and CEO of Adani Defence & Aerospace : Ashish Rajvanshi**

### ACQUISITIONS & MERGERS

#### State Bank of India Rises 6% in January, Surpasses ICICI Bank in Market Capitalisation After 6 Years

- **State Bank of India (SBI)** surpassed **ICICI Bank** to regain its position as the **second-most valuable bank** by market capitalization after a gap of more than **six years**.
- **SBI's market capitalisation** rose to **₹9.60 trillion**, slightly higher than **ICICI Bank's ₹9.57 trillion**, while **HDFC Bank** remained the **most valuable bank** with a market cap of **₹14.16 trillion**.
- **Rating agencies** such as **S&P Global Ratings** maintained a **stable outlook** on SBI, citing **robust asset quality**, profitability, liquidity, and **strong government support**.
- According to **SBI's shareholding pattern**, **Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs)** increased their holding in the bank to **10.34%** in the **December 2025 quarter**.



#### About State Bank of India (SBI):

- Founded Year: 1955
- Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra, India
- Chairman: Challa Sreenivasulu Setty
- Slogan: "The Banker to Every Indian"

### IMPORTANT DAYS

#### International Data Privacy Day 2026: January 28

- **International Data Privacy Day** is observed annually on **28 January** to

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- promote awareness about **personal data protection** and privacy in the digital age.
- The day was initiated in **2006** by the **Council of Europe** to commemorate the signing of **Convention 108**, the world's **first legally binding international treaty on data protection**.
  - The Government of India has highlighted key reforms, including the **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023**, **Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025**, and a **₹782 crore cybersecurity allocation** in the **Union Budget 2025–26**.
  - India is currently the **third-largest digitalised economy in the world**, with over **101.7 crore broadband users**.
  - Indian users spend nearly **1,000 minutes online daily**, supported by some of the **lowest data costs globally**.
  - Major platforms such as **Aadhaar**, **Unified Payments Interface**, **MyGov**, and **eSanjeevani** have transformed governance, payments, healthcare, and welfare delivery.
  - The **Information Technology Act, 2000** provides the foundational legal framework for **electronic governance**, **digital signatures**, and **cybersecurity oversight** in India.
  - The Act empowers institutions such as the **Indian Computer Emergency Response Team**, which functions as the national cyber incident response agency.
  - The **Information Technology Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code Rules, 2021** impose **due diligence obligations** on online platforms.
  - The **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023**, enacted on **11 August 2023**, marks a shift towards **citizen-centric data governance**.
  - The Act follows the **SARAL approach**, meaning **Simple, Accessible, Rational, and Actionable** regulation.
  - It recognises individuals as **Data Principals** and grants rights related to **consent**, **access**, **correction**, **erasure**, and **nomination**.
  - The Act establishes the **Data Protection Board of India** for enforcement, grievance redressal, and handling of personal data breaches.
  - The law aims to balance **privacy protection**, **innovation**, and **public interest requirements**.
  - The **Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025**, notified in **November 2025**, operationalise the Act by defining **procedures**, **timelines**, and **compliance mechanisms**.
  - The rules strengthen **consent frameworks**, **breach reporting norms**, and **responsibilities of data fiduciaries**.
  - In the **Union Budget 2025–26**, the Government allocated **₹782 crore** specifically for **cybersecurity strengthening**.

### Daily CA One- Liner: January 29

- Researchers from **Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati** have developed a new scientific framework to **predict glacial hazards** in the **Eastern Himalayan region**.

- The **Government of Uttarakhand** has implemented the **Uniform Civil Code (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026** after receiving approval from the **Governor of Uttarakhand**, giving the ordinance immediate legal effect
- The **Government of Gujarat** has announced **Indian Rupees 1,250 crore** financial assistance under the **Namo Laxmi Scheme** for the **2025–26 academic year**.
- **Kerala** has officially declared **Bacillus subtilis** as its **State Microbe**, becoming the **first Indian state** to accord formal recognition to a microorganism
- **Taylor Swift (aged 36)** will become the **second-youngest songwriter** to be inducted into the **Songwriters Hall of Fame**.
- **India** and the **European Union** signed their first comprehensive **Defence and Security Partnership**, alongside the conclusion of the **India–European Union Free Trade Agreement**.
- As per the **Brand Finance** report, the **total brand value of the world’s top 25 Information Technology services brands** reached **United States Dollar 167.2 billion in 2026**, recording a **modest growth of 2 per cent** compared to 2025.
- **International Data Privacy Day** is observed annually on **28 January** to promote awareness about **personal data protection** and privacy in the digital age.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** and the **European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA)** signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** on **January 27, 2026**, for **cooperation and information exchange** related to **Central Counterparties (CCPs)** regulated by RBI.
- A survey by the **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** revealed that out of **33.72 crore Indian households**, only **3.21 crore households (9.5%)** invested in securities markets such as **equities, mutual funds, and corporate bonds**.
- **Bharti AXA Life Insurance** has launched a **non-linked, non-participating individual deferred annuity plan** named “**Swabhimaan Retirement**” to help customers lock in current annuity rates and secure **guaranteed lifelong income**.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** issued the **Priority Sector Lending (PSL) (Targets and Classification) Amendment Directions, 2026**, to align the **Priority Sector Lending (PSL)** framework with updated capital adequacy, credit risk transfer, securitisation, and regulatory norms notified in 2025.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** issued the revised **Integrated Ombudsman Scheme**, which will come into effect from **1 July 2026**, to strengthen the **RBI Ombudsman framework** and improve efficiency in **complaint resolution**.
- **SMFG India Credit (SMICC)** has partnered with **Google Pay** to offer **collateral-free personal loans** to users across India.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has notified the **Foreign Exchange Management (Export and Import of Goods and Services) Regulations, 2026**, replacing the 2015 regulations, effective from **1 October 2026**.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has proposed changes to the framework for calculating banks’ **net foreign exchange (FX) exposure** and the **capital requirements** for FX risk.
- The **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** released the **4th edition** of the report titled “**State of Finances for Nature: Nature in the Red – Powering the**

**Trillion Dollar Nature Transition Economy**”, based on global financial data of **2023**.

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