



Daily Current Affairs

4th Feb 2026



BANKING, FINANCE & BUSINESS

Government Notifies Baggage Rules 2026, New Customs Regulations, and Master Circular

- The **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)** has notified the **Baggage Rules, 2026**, along with **Customs Baggage (Declaration and Processing) Regulations, 2026** and a **Master Circular** to simplify **international passenger clearance**.
- The new rules aim to **enhance passenger facilitation**, introduce **electronic and advanced declarations**, improve **transparency**, and align **customs procedures** with **rising travel volumes** and **modern travel needs**.

Government notifies Baggage Rules, 2026. New Customs Baggage (Declaration and Processing) Regulations, 2026 and also issues a Master Circular

New Rules will simplify procedures, enhance transparency, enable electronic and advance declarations and ensure smooth clearance

New changes will allow enhanced general free allowance; transfer of residence benefits; special allowances for jewellery; new provisions for temporary import/re-import; duty-free import of one laptop (for passengers above 18 years) and pets; and enhanced passenger Facilitation

Posted On: 02 FEB 2026 9:58PM by PIB Delhi

The Central Government has notified the Baggage Rules, 2026, New Customs Baggage (Declaration and Processing) Regulations, 2026 and a Master Circular have also been issued. These measures reflect facilitative and revised provisions for international passengers and in line with new economic conditions, rising travel volumes and passenger expectations. The changes have been made at its consultation with stakeholders including Ministries, airport operators, and feedback from passengers, etc. These Rules will simplify procedures, enhance transparency, enable electronic and advance declarations and ensure smooth clearance.

Subject Features

1. Enhanced general free allowance:

1. The revised rules enhance duty-free allowances in line with present-day travel realities, by revising entitlements for different passenger categories, as under- (in rupees)

Key Highlights :

- The **general duty-free allowance** has been increased as follows: **₹75,000** for **residents, Indian-origin tourists**, and **foreigners with valid non-tourist visas**, **₹25,000** for **foreign tourists**, and **₹2,500** for **crew members**.
- **Passengers arriving through land borders** are **not entitled** to any **general duty-free allowance** under the new rules.
- **Transfer of residence benefits** have been **simplified** with **value limits** of **₹1.5 lakh** (up to 12 months abroad), **₹3 lakh** (1–2 years), and **₹7.5 lakh** (above 2 years).
- **Jewellery allowance** has been **modernised** by **removing value caps** and allowing **duty-free jewellery** based on **weight**: up to **40 grams** for **female passengers** and **20 grams** for **others**.
- The rules **consolidate earlier provisions**, allow **one duty-free laptop** (for passengers above 18 years) and **pets**, and replace **35 old circulars**, making **India** a more **tourism-friendly destination**.
- New provisions for **temporary import/re-import** include issuance of **temporary baggage import or export certificates** to avoid **unnecessary detention of goods**.
- The **revised framework** focuses on **higher duty-free limits**, **reduced detention**, **digital and simplified processes**, and **uniform implementation** across **Customs formations** to enhance **passenger convenience** and strengthen **India's global tourism position**.

About CBIC :

- The **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)**, formerly known as the **Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC)**, is constituted under the **Central Boards of Revenue Act, 1963**.
- **CBIC** is the **apex body** under the **Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance**, responsible for **administering indirect taxes** in India.
- It is tasked with **formulation of policy** concerning **levy and collection of Customs, Central Excise duties, Central Goods & Services Tax (CGST), and Integrated GST (IGST)**.
- The **CBIC** is headed by a **Chairman** and has **six members** in addition to the **Chairman**.
- Formed : 26 January 1944
- Headquarter : New Delhi, India
- Chairperson : Vivek Chaturvedi

Secretary, Department of Financial Services Delivers Keynote at PSB Alliance Annual Strategy Meet 2026 in New Delhi

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- The **PSB Alliance Annual Strategy Meet 2026** was held in **New Delhi**, where the **Secretary, Department of Financial Services (DFS)** highlighted that **PSB Alliance** has evolved into a **strategic partner** by combining **technology, data, and purpose** to build an **inclusive and innovative banking sector**.
- The **Secretary, DFS** launched the **BAANKNET (Bank Assets Auction Network) mobile app** and the **Digital Balance Confirmation Platform (DBCP)** during the event.
- The **BAANKNET mobile app** will provide **nationwide access to verified bank auction properties**, enhance **transparency**, empower **citizens**, and support **banks** in achieving **faster loan recoveries**.
- The **Digital Balance Confirmation Platform (DBCP)** will improve **efficiency and transparency in audits** and aims to **eliminate manual balance confirmation certificates**.
- The **Secretary, DFS** advised that **PSB Alliance** should **expand shared services** beyond **public sector banks**.
- **Shri M. Nagaraju (IAS)** is the **Secretary of the Department of Financial Services (DFS)** under the **Ministry of Finance**, Government of India, as of early **2026**.

Secretary, DFS delivers keynote address at PSB Alliance Annual Strategy Meet 2026 at New Delhi today

Secretary, DFS Launches BAANKNET (Bank Assets Auction Network) Mobile App and Digital Balance Confirmation Platform (DBCP)

Posted On: 02 FEB 2026 8:23PM by PIB Delhi

The PSB Alliance Annual Strategy Meet 2026 was held at New Delhi today. The Secretary, DFS speaking on the occasion highlighted the transformation of PSB Alliance into a strategic partner, with a focus on the convergence of technology, data, and purpose to build an inclusive and innovative banking sector. The role of PSB Alliance in contributing positively to the Net Interest Margin (NIM) and Cost to Income Ratio of banks was also emphasized.

Secretary, DFS launched BAANKNET (Bank Assets Auction Network) mobile app and Digital Balance Confirmation Platform (DBCP) during the event.



What is BAANKNET?

- **BAANKNET** is a newly launched **e-auction portal** that consolidates information about **properties put up for auction** by **Public Sector Banks (PSBs)**.
- It serves as a **one-stop destination** for **buyers and investors**, providing access to a **wide range of properties**, including **residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural assets**.
- The **portal** aims to **enhance transparency, accessibility, and efficiency** in the **bank property auction process**.

Union Government to Table Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2025 in Budget Session from March, 2026

- The **Union government** plans to introduce the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2025** in the **second half of the Budget session** of Parliament beginning **March 9, 2026**.
- The move aims to **strengthen India's insolvency framework** by **improving efficiency, reducing delays**, and aligning the regime with **global best practices**.



Key Highlights :

- **Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman**, who also holds charge of the **Corporate Affairs Ministry**, stated that the Bill is ready to be tabled as the **parliamentary committee** examining the amendments has **submitted its report**.
- The **proposed amendments** aim to **enhance timelines and effectiveness** of insolvency proceedings, bring India's insolvency regime closer to **international standards**, and ensure **faster admission of cases, improved resolution outcomes**, and **greater predictability** for creditors and investors.

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- The **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC)**, enacted in **2016**, has undergone **six amendments**, with the last amendment in **2021**. The upcoming Bill will be the **seventh amendment** to the law.
- The **IBC** fundamentally altered the **debtor-creditor relationship** in India, introducing **strict consequences for default**, creating a **deterrent effect** among companies and promoters.
- A **Bill to amend the IBC** was earlier introduced in the **Lok Sabha on August 12, 2025**, proposing **reduction in time** for admitting insolvency resolution applications, and was referred to a **select committee**, which submitted its report in **December 2025**.
- Incorporating the **committee's suggestions**, the government now expects to table the **revised amendment Bill** in the **latter half of the Budget session** starting **March 9, 2026**.

About Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code :

- The **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC)** was introduced in **2016** to overhaul India's **corporate distress resolution regime** and consolidate previously available laws into a **comprehensive, time-bound mechanism**.
- Before IBC, **insolvency resolution** in India took an average of **4.3 years**, whereas countries like the **UK and USA** completed it in **1 year and 1.5 years**, respectively.
- The **IBC 2016** was implemented through an **act of Parliament** and aims to **promote entrepreneurship**, improve **credit availability**, and **balance the interests** of all stakeholders.
- Under IBC, when **insolvency is triggered**, there can be **two outcomes: resolution or liquidation**.
- The **timeframe** for completing insolvency proceedings under IBC is **180 days**, which may be extended if creditors do not raise objections.
- For **smaller companies and startups** with an annual turnover of **Rs 1 crore**, the insolvency exercise must be completed within **90 days**.
- The **IBBI** consists of **10 members** drawn from the **Finance Ministry, Law Ministry, and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**.

Central Bank of India Partners with HSBC Asset Management to Offer Mutual Fund Products to Customers

- **Central Bank of India (CBI)**, a leading **Public Sector Bank (PSB)**, signed a **distribution agreement with HSBC Asset Management (India) Private Limited** to offer **Mutual Fund (MF) products** to its customers.
- The **partnership** aims to expand **CBI's wealth management offerings** across its customer base.
- Under the agreement, **CBI** will distribute **HSBC AMC's MF schemes** including **equity, debt, and hybrid funds** through its **bank branches and digital platforms**.
- **HSBC Asset Management (India)** will provide **professionally managed mutual fund investment solutions** to CBI customers.
- The **collaboration** is expected to help customers **unlock the value of their savings** through **diversified investment products** aligned with **long-term financial goals**.



About Central Bank of India :

- **Founded : 21 December 1911**

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- Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra, India
- MD & CEO : Kalyan Kumar

Matrixport Secures In-Principle Regulatory Approval to Operate Financial Services in Bhutan's GMC

- **Matrixport**, a leading **digital asset financial services platform**, received **In-Principle Approval (IPA)** for its Bhutan-based entity **Matrix Bhutan Pte Ltd** from the **Gelephu Financial Services Office (GFSO)**.
- The approval allows **Matrix Bhutan Pte Ltd** to operate **regulated financial services** within or from **Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC), Bhutan**.
- Under the **proposed licence**, **Matrixport** can offer **regulated money services, deal in investments** as a **matched principal**, and provide **custody services** for assets.
- **No regulated financial services** will commence until all **licensing conditions** are fulfilled and **final approval** is granted by the **GFSO**.
- The planned operations in **Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC)** will function under a **robust Supervision, Compliance, and Governance framework**, ensuring **regulatory oversight** and **operational integrity**.



National Statistical Office to Launch NHIS and ASISSE from April 2026 to Strengthen India's Statistical System

- The **National Statistical Office (NSO)** under the **Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** will launch two major national surveys—the **National Household Income Survey (NHIS)** and the **Annual Survey of Incorporated Services Sector Enterprises (ASISSE)**—from **April 2026** to strengthen India's statistical system.
- These surveys aim to **fill long-standing data gaps**, particularly in **household income** and the **services sector**, using **robust scientific design, expert guidance**, and **extensive field trials**.
- The **NHIS** will generate **comprehensive data** on **living conditions, income distribution, and income sources**, enabling **inter-household and inter-regional comparisons** and providing insights into **patterns of income generation**.
- The **ASISSE** will comprehensively cover the **incorporated services sector** using **Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN)** datasets, producing **State- and industry-level estimates** on **Gross Value Added (GVA), fixed capital, capital formation, employment, and wages/emoluments**.
- Both surveys will be conducted in **digital mode (CAPI)** across India, except for **remote villages of Andaman & Nicobar Islands**, with a strong focus on **data quality, field supervision, and building respondent trust**.
- The surveys are expected to **support policy formulation**, enable **assessment of household well-being**, and provide a **comprehensive database** on the **corporate services sector** for **economic planning and interventions**.
- The **All-India Workshop of Trainers (AIWOT)** held in **Chennai** on **28–29 January 2026** trained around **300 officials** from zonal, regional, and sub-regional offices to

All India Workshop of Trainers (AIWOT) for National Household Income Survey (NHIS) and Annual Survey of Incorporated Services Sector Enterprises (ASISSE) conducted by NSO (FOD) on 28th and 29th January 2026 at Chennai.

Pushed On: 29 JAN 2026 6:21PM by PIB Delhi

The National Statistical Office (NSO) Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation is set to launch two major national surveys—the **National Household Income Survey (NHIS)** and the **Annual Survey of Incorporated Services Sector Enterprises (ASISSE)**—from April 2026 to strengthen the country's statistical system. These surveys, supported by robust scientific design, expert advisory groups, and extensive field trials, aim to address long-standing data gaps, particularly in household income and the services sector. In this context, a two-day All-India Workshop of Trainers (AIWOT) for the NHIS and ASISSE was held at Le Royal Meridien, Chennai during 28th-29th January 2026. Around 300 participants from 6 Zonal, 13 Regional and 116 Sub-Regional offices of Field Operations Division (FOD) including the officials from Coordination & Quality Control Division (CQCD), Household Survey Division (HSD) and Enterprise Survey Division (ESD) attended the workshop.

The workshop was inaugurated by **Smt. Geeta Singh Rathore**, Director General, National Sample Survey (NSS). In her inaugural address, she highlighted that NHIS and ASISSE are the two new surveys to be conducted over a period of one year beginning from April 2026 and will mark a significant milestone in strengthening statistical system and addressing long-standing data gaps in India's economic planning. She mentioned that NHIS will generate comprehensive information on people's living conditions and income distribution enabling inter-household and inter-regional comparisons and providing insights into sources and patterns of income generation. She further noted that ASISSE is designed to comprehensively cover the incorporated services sector using Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN) datasets and will generate State- and industry-level estimates on key economic indicators such as Gross Value Added (GVA), fixed capital, capital formation, employment, and emoluments. Emphasizing the importance of data quality, she urged trainers to ensure uniform understanding of concepts and definitions and to effectively translate the learning from training to field for successful implementation of the surveys.



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ensure **uniform understanding of concepts** and **successful field implementation**.

- The surveys will cover the **entire Indian Union**, generating data to **strengthen India's statistical system** and facilitate **evidence-based economic planning**.

Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation Revises Consumer Price Index Base Year to 2024, Lowers Food & Beverages Weight to 36.75%

- The **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** has revised the **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** base year to **2024**, reducing the weight of **Food & Beverages** from **45.86% to 36.75%**.
- The revision is based on the **Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) 2023–24**, reflecting changing **consumption patterns** in India.
- The weight of **Housing** increases sharply from **10.07% to 17.66%**, with **improved rent measurement methods**, which may push **housing inflation** upward.
- The revised **CPI basket** includes **358 items** (up from **299**) and adopts **reclassified categories**, including **Education** as a standalone group.
- **Price data** will be collected from **1,465 rural markets** and **1,395 urban markets** across **434 towns**.
- **12 online markets** in cities with a population over **2.5 million** will be added to capture prices from **e-commerce platforms** weekly.
- The revised **CPI series**, called **CPI 2024**, will adopt the **Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose (COICOP) 2018** framework to enhance **international comparability**.
- To ensure **continuity**, a **linking factor** between **CPI 2012** and **CPI 2024** will be released for **all-India, rural, and urban indices**, with the first **CPI-2024 data** scheduled on **12 February 2026**.

New CPI series may push inflation prints higher

HIMANSHU BHARDWAJ
New Delhi, 30 January

The recalibrated weights for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) components under the new series to be released on February 12, are expected to push up India's headline inflation readings modestly, with the share of core items rising around 10 percentage points and volatile food prices getting a lower say, according to economic estimates.

With the weight of food and beverages proposed to be sharply reduced by nearly one-fifth of its current weightage of 45.86 per cent of the CPI to 36.75 per cent in the new series with 2024 as base year, economists reckon the relatively higher core inflation recorded in recent months could raise the headline retail inflation at the margin. Core inflation is calculated by excluding the volatile components of CPI like food and energy, and was estimated to be around 4.6 per cent in December 2025, when overall retail inflation was 3 per cent.

On the plus side, there is an expectation that the new series will make the Reserve Bank of India's inflation targeting mandate easier to meet, and a reasonable rise in the inflation print will bolster nominal GDP growth.

Canara Bank Chief Economist Mad-

What they expect

Institution	Estimated impact of new CPI series on inflation rate
Bank of Baroda	Upward bias of 25-40 bps
SBI Research	Upward bias of 20-30 bps
Nomura	Near-term upside of 50 bps
Canara Bank	Expected to move closer to 4%
ICICI First Bank	Likely to increase by 40-50 bps in FY26, and 10 bps in FY27
India Ratings	Expected to rise

Note: One basis point (bp) equals 0.01 percentage point

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India's foreign exchange reserves hit fresh high of \$709.4 billion

havankumy G said that the new CPI series will be more representative, not just in terms of the revised base year, but also due to the better representation of the consumption basket. "Overall, it will help reflect true price trends in the economy, and add predictability. We expect retail inflation to move closer to 4 per cent, which will help nominal GDP growth revert to the mean rate of 30-40.5 per cent which augurs well for a healthy fiscal position," he said. Turn to Page 10

NATIONAL AND STATE NEWS

Assam Govt Announces ₹50 Crore Grant to Preserve Koch Dynasty Heritage

- **Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma** announced a **₹50 crore grant** to preserve and restore the heritage of the **Darrang kings of the Koch dynasty** during **Mahabir Chilarai Divas** celebrations in **Darrang district**.
- The grant aims to **restore royal sites, monuments and cultural landmarks** associated with the **Darrang kingdom** of the Koch dynasty.
- The **Darrang district administration** and **Public Works Department (PWD)** were directed to begin restoration work immediately.
- The project seeks to **honour indigenous rulers**, protect Assam's historical legacy and **develop the region as a major cultural tourism hub**.
- The **Koch dynasty** was one of the most powerful medieval dynasties of Assam, emerging after the decline of the **Pal dynasty of ancient Kamarupa**.
- The dynasty was founded by **Biswa Singha in 1515** and reached its peak under **Maharaj Naranarayan (1540–1586)**.



Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, on Sunday, announced a grant of ₹50 crore for the preservation of heritage of the Darrang kings, declaring that the royal legacy of the Koch dynasty would be restored and developed as a major centre of tourism.

- The Koch rulers played a major role in shaping **Assam's political boundaries, military strength and cultural identity**.
- The Koch dynasty followed a **hereditary monarchy**, used **Narayani currency**, and adopted **Hinduism through Sanskritisation**, while also accommodating local ethnic traditions.
- **Mahabir Chilarai**, brother of Maharaj Naranarayan, is remembered as one of Assam's **greatest military commanders**.
- He earned the title "**Chilarai**" due to his **lightning-fast military campaigns**.
- He built a strong **land and naval force** and expanded Koch influence across **Ahom, Kachari, Jaintia, Tripura and Sylhet regions**.
- The historic **Gohain Kamal Ali Road** reflects his strategic and administrative vision.
- Under **Naranarayan and Chilarai**, Assam witnessed a **cultural and religious revival**.
- Important temples such as **Kamakhya** and **Hayagriva Madhav** were reconstructed, strengthening Assam's **spiritual and cultural heritage**.
- The Koch rulers acted not only as political leaders but also as **patrons of culture and religion**, shaping Assamese identity.
- Additional announcements included the **unveiling of a statue of Maharaj Krishnanarayan** of the Darrang kingdom.
- **Chilarai Bhawans** were inaugurated at **Mangaldoi and Golaghat**.
- The government also announced **land allotment and construction of an office** for the **All Assam Koch Rajbongshi Sanmilani** at **Amingaon**, reinforcing commitment to indigenous heritage.
- Historically, the Koch kingdom later split into **Koch Bihar (west)** and **Koch Hajo (east)** after Naranarayan's death in **1587**.
- **Darrang** functioned as a **vassal state under the Ahoms**, ruled by Koch lineage rulers like **Balinarayan, Mahendra Narayan and Chandra Narayan**.
- **Koch Bihar** became a **British princely state in 1775** and was finally **merged with India in 1949–1956**.
- The ₹50 crore heritage project reflects Assam's broader strategy of **linking history, cultural pride and tourism-driven development**, while preserving the legacy of one of the state's most influential dynasties.

About Assam:

- Chief Minister: Himanta Biswa Sarma
- Governor: Lakshman Prasad Acharya
- Capital: Dispur
- National Parks: Kaziranga National Park, Manas National Park, Dibru-Saikhowa National Park
- Wildlife Sanctuaries: Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, Orang National Park, Bura-Chapori Wildlife Sanctuary, Nameri Wildlife Sanctuary

RECENT NEWS

- In a major boost to higher education and research, the Assam government has announced a new financial assistance scheme for research scholars. The initiative aims to ease financial stress, promote innovation, and build a strong academic ecosystem, positioning Assam as a growing hub of knowledge and research-driven development.

National Statistics Office to Conduct Nationwide Survey on Migration (2026–27)

- The **National Statistics Office (NSO)** has announced a **nationwide Survey on Migration**, scheduled to be conducted from **July 2026 to June 2027**.

- The survey is being launched in the context of **rapid urbanisation, rising labour mobility, inter-state movement, and seasonal migration** across India.
- The objective is to generate **updated, comprehensive and reliable data on migration patterns**, which is currently limited and outdated.
- The findings are expected to support policy decisions related to urban planning, employment, housing, transport systems, skill development, and social protection, making the survey important from a current affairs and competitive exam perspective.
- The proposed survey aims to collect **fresh and detailed information on internal migration** across the country.
- It will cover **rural–urban migration, inter-state migration, seasonal migration, circular migration, and return migration**.
- The survey will also record the **reasons for migration**, including employment, education, marriage, and other socio-economic factors.
- Unlike routine labour surveys, this will be a **dedicated migration survey**, designed to provide a **holistic picture of population mobility**, covering social, economic, and employment-related dimensions.
- The survey will examine the **extent and nature of migration**, focusing on **who migrates, where they migrate, and why they migrate**.
- It will study the **employment profile of migrants**, helping assess the link between migration and job opportunities.
- **Temporary, circular, and seasonal migration** will receive special attention, as these forms are often **underreported** but play a **critical role in India's informal economy**.
- According to the government, the data generated will enable **evidence-based policymaking**.
- It will help address pressures on **urban infrastructure, housing demand, transport networks, and public services**.
- Accurate migration data is essential for **balanced regional development**, especially as cities face increasing population inflows and labour mobility continues to rise.
- Earlier migration-related data mainly came from the **Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2020–21** and the **Multiple Indicator Survey 2020–21**.
- As per **PLFS 2020–21**, India's **overall migration rate was 28.9%**, highlighting the large scale of internal migration.
- These estimates now require updating due to **post-pandemic economic shifts and changes in employment patterns**.
- Previous data highlighted a strong **gender dimension** in migration.
- The migration rate among **males was 10.7%**, while it was significantly higher among **females at 47.9%**.
- Among women, **marriage was the dominant reason**, accounting for **86.8% of female migration**.
- For men, **employment and better job opportunities** were the primary drivers, accounting for **22.8% of male migration**.
- The upcoming NSO survey is expected to **reassess these patterns** and examine whether migration drivers and gender trends are changing in recent years.



The National Statistics Office (NSO), under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), will conduct a Survey on Migration across the country during July 2026 to June 2027, aimed at generating comprehensive and updated data on migration patterns in India.

According to a written reply shared by Union Minister Rao Inderjit Singh in the Rajya Sabha on Monday, the proposed survey will capture detailed information on the extent and nature of migration, including rural–urban and inter–state movement, reasons for migration, return and seasonal migration, and the employment profiles of migrants.

Andhra Pradesh Launches Pilloo AI Voice-Based Billing and Accounting App

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- **Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu** launched **Piloo AI**, a **voice-based billing and accounting application** in Andhra Pradesh.
- Piloo AI is an **AI-powered digital accounting agent** designed to simplify **financial management for small businesses**.
- The application allows users to **create invoices, record sales and payments, generate balance sheets, and track receivables and payables** simply by **speaking in their native language**.
- Users are not required to have **any prior accounting knowledge**, making the app especially useful for **micro and small enterprises, shopkeepers and first-time entrepreneurs**.
- The app supports **five Indian languages**, ensuring wider accessibility and ease of use.
- Piloo AI enables users to **record daily transactions, generate financial reports, and automate data entry**.
- Users can upload **bills and bank statements**, which are processed instantly using **AI-based data extraction**.
- This automation **reduces manual effort, saves time, and minimizes errors** in bookkeeping.
- By eliminating dependence on **professional accountants and expensive accounting software**, the app **lowers the entry barrier to formal accounting**.
- Piloo AI helps improve **financial discipline, transparency and record-keeping accuracy** among MSMEs.
- Proper digital records enhance **credit readiness**, helping small businesses access **bank loans and government schemes** more easily.
- The initiative aligns with **Andhra Pradesh's vision of using technology to simplify business operations**, promote **digital inclusion**, and strengthen the **MSME ecosystem**.
- Piloo AI also supports **India's broader national push for MSME digitisation and transparent financial practices**.



Chandrababu Naidu launching Piloo AI, a next-gen billing and accounting system, at the Secretariat on Monday.

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Monday launched Piloo AI, a next-generation voice-based billing and accounting agent designed to empower small and medium business owners, at the Secretariat. The launch marks a significant step toward bringing advanced AI solutions to everyday business operations.

About Andhra Pradesh:

- Chief Minister: N. Chandrababu Naidu
- Governor: S. Abdul Nazeer
- Capital: Amaravati
- National Parks: Sri Venkateswara National Park, Papikonda National Park
- Wildlife Sanctuaries: Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary, Pulicat Lake Bird Sanctuary, Kambalakonda Wildlife Sanctuary, Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary, Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary

RECENT NEWS

- India's space infrastructure is set to expand further with Andhra Pradesh announcing a new spaceport. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu confirmed that Hope Island will host a launch facility primarily for private missions, marking a significant step in supporting commercial space activities and strengthening India's position in the global space economy.

India Emerges as a Major Engine of Global Urban Growth in 2025: UN Report

- A **United Nations report (2025)** states that **around 45% of the global population lives in urban areas**, a sharp rise from **20% in 1950**.
- **India has emerged as one of the biggest drivers of global urban growth**, placing it at the centre of worldwide urbanisation trends.
- India currently has **five megacities**, each with a population of **more than 10 million**.
- **New Delhi**, with a population of **over 30 million**, is among the **four largest cities in the world**, alongside **Jakarta, Dhaka and Tokyo**.
- Major Indian cities such as **Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai and Kolkata** continue to attract **migration, jobs and investment**.
- The 2025 UN report introduced the **“Degree of Urbanization” method**, which classifies cities based on **population size and density**, not just administrative boundaries.
- Under this method, **densely populated urban areas outside official city limits** are also counted as cities.
- Due to this revised methodology, **population estimates of many Indian and Asian cities have increased**, offering a **more accurate picture of urban living patterns**.
- **Asia dominates global urbanisation**, hosting **9 of the world’s 10 largest cities** and nearly **60% of all megacities**.
- **India plays a central role in Asia’s urban growth**, supported by its **young population, internal migration and expanding service and manufacturing sectors**.
- While megacities receive attention, the report highlights that **most urban growth is occurring in small and medium-sized cities**.
- Nearly **96% of cities globally have populations below 1 million**.
- In India, **smaller cities are growing faster than large metros** due to **improved road connectivity, digital infrastructure and emerging local industries**.
- Cities such as **Kozhikode**, with a population exceeding **5 million**, highlight the **shift away from metro-centric urban development**.

India is home to some of the world’s fastest-growing and largest cities, reflecting a broader global shift towards urban living, according to the United Nations’ World’s Cities in 2025 report. As of 2025, cities house about 45 per cent of the global population, up from just 20 per cent in 1950, highlighting how urban areas have become central to economic growth and social change.

India stands out in this global picture. The country has five “megacities”, cities with a population of more than 10 million, placing it among the top contributors to global urban growth. New Delhi, with an estimated population of over 30 million in 2025, ranks among the world’s four largest cities, alongside Jakarta, Dhaka and Tokyo. Kolkata also features in the global top 10, while Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai remain key urban hubs.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Shri Hari Shankar Verma Assumes Charge as Member (Operations & Business Development) of Railway Board

- **Shri Hari Shankar Verma**, a **1987 batch Indian Railway Traffic Service (IRTS) officer**, has assumed charge as **Member (Operations and Business Development), Railway Board**, and **Ex-officio Secretary to the Government of India**.
- Prior to this appointment, he served as **Director General, Safety, Railway Board**, where he played a key role in **strengthening railway safety standards**.
- During his tenure as **Director General, Safety**, Indian Railways’ **safety record improved significantly**, with a **drastic reduction in consequential accidents** through **process improvements**.
- In his career with **Indian Railways**, Shri Verma has held several important positions including **Additional Divisional Railway Manager, Central Railway (Mumbai)** and **Divisional Railway Manager, Salem Division, Southern Railway**.

Shri Hari Shankar Verma Takes Over Charge as Member (Operations and Business Development), Railway Board

Posted On: 02 FEB 2026 6:58PM by PIB Delhi

Shri Hari Shankar Verma, 1987 batch IRTS Officer, has taken over the charge of the post of Member (Operations and Business Development), Railway Board, and Ex-officio Secretary to the Government of India. Prior to this, he was Director General, Safety, Railway Board.



Photo: Shri. (Shankar Verma) - Shri Verma has successfully discharged various important responsibilities in Indian Railways as Additional Divisional Railway Manager, CR

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- He also served as **Chief Passenger Traffic Manager, Central Railway, Mumbai, Principal Chief Operations Manager, Hubli, South Western Railway, and Director General, Indian Railways Institute of Transport Management (IRITM), Lucknow.**
- Shri Verma has received the **Hon'ble Rail Minister Award twice** along with multiple **General Manager (GM) level awards** for his **outstanding contributions.**
- He has undergone **management training in Singapore, Malaysia, and Italy,** and is widely regarded as a **specialist in Railway Traffic and Management.**

About Ministry of Railways :

- Cabinet Minister : Ashwini Vaishnaw
- Minister of State : V. Somanna, Ravneet Singh Bittu
- Chairman & CEO, Railway Board : Satish Kumar

Shri Divakar Jayant Assumes Charge as Director General of Naval Armament

- **Shri Divakar Jayant, INAS,** took charge as **Director General of Naval Armament (DGONA) at Naval Headquarters, Ministry of Defence (MoD), on 02 Feb 2026,** succeeding **Shri P Upadhyay,** who superannuated on **31 Jan 2026.**
- **Shri Divakar Jayant** belongs to the **1991 batch** of the **Indian Naval Armament Service (INAS)** and joined the **Naval Armament Organisation** of the Indian Navy on **28 Dec 1992.**
- He has held **senior positions** including **Chief General Manager and General Manager/Principal Director** at **Naval Armament Depots in Mumbai, Visakhapatnam, and Alwaye,** as well as at **NHQ/MoD,** during **33 years of service.**
- An **Electrical Engineering graduate from IIT Delhi,** **Shri Divakar Jayant** specialises in **life-cycle management of Torpedoes** and **planning of explosive infrastructure projects,** with vast knowledge of **HR and administration.**
- The officer has also undergone the **prestigious APPPA course (2017–18),** enhancing his **expertise in naval armament management.**

SHRI DIVAKAR JAYANT, INAS, TAKES OVER AS DIRECTOR GENERAL OF NAVAL ARMAMENT

Posted On: 02 FEB 2026 2:50PM by PIB Delhi

Shri Divakar Jayant, INAS, has taken over as Director General of Naval Armament (DGONA) at Naval Headquarters, MoD, on 02 Feb 2026, succeeding Shri P Upadhyay, who superannuated on 31 Jan 2026.

Shri Divakar Jayant belongs to the 1991 batch of the Indian Naval Armament Service. He joined the Naval Armament Organisation of the Indian Navy on 28 Dec 1992 and has held various senior positions, including Chief General Manager and General Manager/Principal Director, at Naval Armament Depots at Mumbai, Visakhapatnam and Alwaye, and at NHQ/MoD, during a span of 33 years of service.

An Electrical Engineering graduate from IIT Delhi, the officer specialises in life-cycle management of Torpedoes and excels in planning of Explosive infrastructure projects besides having vast knowledge of HR and administration. The officer has also undergone the prestigious APPPA course (2017-18).



DEFENCE NEWS

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Grants Miniratna Category-I Status to Yantra India Limited

- **Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh** approved the grant of **Miniratna (Category-I) status to Yantra India Limited (YIL), a Defence Public Sector Undertaking (DPSU).**
- **Yantra India Limited (YIL)** successfully transformed from a **Government organisation** into a **profit-making corporate entity** within about **four years.**

Raksha Mantri approves grant of 'Miniratna' Category-I status to Yantra India Limited

Posted On: 02 FEB 2026 4:37PM by PIB Delhi

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh has approved the grant of 'Miniratna' Category-I status to Yantra India Limited (YIL). Congratulating the Defence Public Sector Undertaking (DPSU) for its transformation from a Government organisation to a profit-making corporate entity in a short span of about four years, Raksha Mantri expressed satisfaction over the initiatives taken by the management of the YIL to increase the turnover of the company, maximise indigenisation and meet other performance parameters for grant of Miniratna (Category-I) status.

The YIL has achieved significant milestones after inception, including stellar growth in sales from Rs 956.32 crore in 2021-22 (H2) to Rs 3,108.79 crore in FY 2024-25. On the export front, it has achieved a growth from NIL in FY 2021-22 (H2) to Rs 321.77 crore in FY 2024-25. The major products of YIL include Carbon Fiber Composites, assembly products for Medium and Large Calibre Ammunition, assembly products for Armoured Vehicles, assembly products for Artillery Guns and Main Battle Tanks (MBTs), Glass Composites, Aluminium Alloy, etc.

The Miniratna (Category-I) Status empowers the Board of the YIL to incur capital expenditure on new projects, modernisation, purchase of equipment, etc. up to Rs 500 crore without the Government approval. This will further empower the company to achieve accelerated growth trajectory and new heights in defence production and exports.

The Government had corporatised the erstwhile Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) into seven new DPSUs on October 01, 2021, with a view to enhance functional autonomy, efficiency and promote innovation & growth in the defence manufacturing sector. The YIL is one of the newly formed Schedule 'A' DPSUs functioning under the administrative control of the Department of Defence Production. In May 2025, Raksha Mantri had approved grant of Miniratna-I Status to three of the seven DPSUs - Mission India Limited, Armoured Vehicle Nigam Limited and India Optol Limited.

The decision underscores the Government's continued commitment to the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat, with a strong focus on building indigenous capabilities in defence manufacturing, research, and strategic technologies. It is in line with the broader defence reforms, which aim to reduce import dependence, promote domestic defence production, encourage participation of Indian industry, and position India as a global defence manufacturing hub.

Key Highlights :

- The **Miniratna (Category-I) status** was granted due to **YIL's efforts to increase turnover, maximise indigenisation,** and meet **key performance parameters.**
- **YIL sales** grew significantly from **₹956.32 crore** in **FY 2021-22 (H2)** to **₹3,108.79 crore** in **FY 2024-25.**

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- On the **export front**, YIL recorded growth from **NIL exports** in **FY 2021-22 (H2)** to **₹321.77 crore** in **FY 2024-25**.
- **Major products** of YIL include **Carbon Fibre Composites, Medium and Large Calibre Ammunition assemblies, Armoured Vehicle assemblies, Artillery Gun assemblies, Main Battle Tanks (MBTs), Glass Composites, and Aluminium Alloys**.
- **Miniratna (Category-I) status** empowers the **Board of Directors** of YIL to incur **capital expenditure** up to **₹500 crore** on **new projects, modernisation, and equipment purchase** without **Government approval**.
- The **enhanced financial autonomy** is expected to **accelerate growth** in **defence production and exports**.
- The **Ordnance Factory Board (OFB)** was **corporatised** into **seven new DPSUs** on **01 October 2021** to enhance **functional autonomy, efficiency, and promote innovation and growth** in the **defence manufacturing sector**.
- **Yantra India Limited (YIL)** is one of the **seven newly formed Schedule 'A' DPSUs** under the **administrative control** of the **Department of Defence Production**.
- In **May 2025**, **Miniratna-I status** was also approved for **Munitions India Limited, Armoured Vehicles Nigam Limited, and India Optel Limited**.
- The decision reflects the **Government's commitment** to **Aatmanirbhar Bharat** by strengthening **indigenous defence manufacturing, research, and strategic technologies**.
- The move aligns with **broader defence reforms** aimed at **reducing import dependence, promoting domestic defence production, encouraging Indian industry participation, and positioning India as a global defence manufacturing hub**.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Japan Achieves World-First Recovery of Rare Earth Minerals from Deep-Sea Sediments

- **Japan** announced it had successfully **recovered rare earth minerals** from **deep-sea sediments**, marking a **world-first achievement**.
- The recovery was conducted by the **deep-sea drilling vessel Chikyu**, which retrieved sediments from a depth of nearly **6,000 metres** near **Minamitorishima Island**.
- The initiative aims to **reduce Japan's dependence on China** for **rare earth elements** and other **critical minerals**.
- The move is part of **Japan's broader strategy** to build **resilient and secure supply chains** for critical minerals.
- **Rare earths**, comprising **17 metals** difficult to extract from the Earth's crust, are used in **electric vehicles, hard drives, wind turbines, and missiles**.

Japan makes 'world's first' rare earth recovery from sea

Japan said on Monday it has successfully drilled and retrieved deep-sea sediment containing rare earth minerals from the seabed, as the country seeks to reduce its reliance on China, AP/PTI reports from Tokyo.

The deep-sea drilling vessel Chikyu's successful gathered the sediment at a depth of nearly 6,000 km near the island of Minamitorishima, Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said on X. The test retrieval of the rare

earths from that depth is a world first, she added. "It is a first step toward industrialisation of domestically produced rare earth in Japan," Takaichi said. "We will make effort toward achieving resilient supply chains for rare earths and other critical minerals to avoid overdependence on a particular country." Japan has been working on research, development and feasibility studies of rare earths deposits around the island.

Recent News :

- In Jan 2026, Japan restarted **Reactor No. 6** at the **Kashiwazaki-Kariwa Nuclear Power Plant**, marking a major step in its gradual return to **nuclear energy**.

About Japan:

- Capital: Tokyo
- Currency: Japanese Yen (JPY)

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- Prime Minister: Shigeru Ishiba

New START, the Last Russia-U.S. Nuclear Arms Control Treaty, Set to Expire on February 5, 2026

- The last **Russia-U.S. nuclear arms control treaty**, known as **New START**, is due to expire on **February 5, 2026**.
- **New START** was signed in **2010** by U.S. President **Barack Obama** and **Dmitry Medvedev**, an ally of **Vladimir Putin**, who served a single term as Russia's president.
- The treaty sets limits on **strategic nuclear weapons**, which are used to strike the opponent's **political, military, and industrial centres** in the event of a nuclear war.
- It caps the number of **deployed strategic warheads** at **1,550** on each side, with no more than **700 deployed ground- or submarine-launched missiles** and **bomber planes**, and **800 launchers**.
- The treaty can be **extended only once**, which was done in **2021**; therefore, **no further formal extension** is possible under existing provisions.
- **Russia** proposed an **informal one-year adherence** to warhead limits, but former U.S. President **Donald Trump** has not formally accepted it.
- If the treaty **lapses without a replacement**, it would end over **50 years of US-Russia nuclear arms constraints**, increasing the risk of an **unregulated arms race**.
- Without a replacement deal, **Russia and the U.S.** would be **free to expand missile numbers** and deploy **hundreds of additional strategic warheads**.



Department of Science and Technology Scientists Develop Solar-Powered Device for Integrated Energy Capture and Storage

- **Indian scientists** at the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** have developed a **solar-powered energy storage device** that can both **capture and store energy in a single unit**, marking a major step towards **clean and self-sustaining power systems**.
- The **photo-rechargeable supercapacitor** was developed by researchers at the **Centre for Nano and Soft Matter Sciences (CNSMS), Bengaluru** under DST, **integrating energy harvesting and storage** in a single device, unlike conventional systems.
- The innovation **reduces energy losses, lowers costs, and minimizes system complexity**, enabling **efficient, low-cost, and eco-friendly power solutions** for **portable, wearable, and off-grid technologies**.
- **Conventional hybrid systems** required **additional power management electronics** to regulate **voltage and current mismatches** between the energy harvester and storage unit, which increased **device footprint and system complexity**, particularly for **miniaturized autonomous devices**.
- The device uses **binder-free nickel-cobalt oxide (NiCo₂O₄) nanowires**, uniformly grown on **nickel foam** via a simple **in situ hydrothermal process**, forming a



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porous and conductive 3D network for simultaneous sunlight absorption and charge storage.

- Testing results showed a **stable output voltage of 1.2 volts** and **88% capacitance retention** even after **1,000 photo-charging cycles**, demonstrating strong **mechanical and electrochemical stability**.
- The device operates efficiently under **varying sunlight conditions**, from **low indoor illumination** to **intense sunlight**, indicating suitability for **long-term real-world applications**.
- The **self-charging power system** can function anywhere **without access to electrical grids**, significantly **reducing dependence on fossil fuels** and conventional batteries.
- By **eliminating the need for complex power management electronics**, the innovation offers a **compact, efficient, and eco-friendly solution** for **next-generation autonomous devices** and **decentralized energy systems**.

MOUS AND AGREEMENT

IHMCL Signs MoU with National Forensic Sciences University to Strengthen Cyber Security in Highway Operations

- **Indian Highways Management Company Limited (IHMCL)** has signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with the **National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU)** to enhance **cyber security and data protection** in national highway operations.
- The agreement reflects the government's increasing focus on **securing digital infrastructure**, as highway management systems become more technology-driven.
- The MoU is valid for a **three-year period**, enabling sustained collaboration between highway infrastructure managers and forensic experts.
- The MoU focuses on **cyber forensics, digital evidence integrity, research, training, consultancy, and capacity building**.
- Its objective is to **protect sensitive highway-related data** and ensure the secure functioning of digital platforms used in highway management.
- The collaboration aims to strengthen preparedness against **cyber threats and digital disruptions** affecting national highways.
- Modern highways generate and process **large volumes of digital data**, including **vehicle movement records, toll payments, surveillance data, and traffic analytics**.
- With the rollout of **Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) tolling**, traditional toll booths are being replaced by **fully digital tolling systems**.
- Any cyber attack could lead to **traffic disruption, compromise of user data, and revenue losses**, making cyber security a **national priority**.
- The partnership covers key highway technologies such as **MLFF tolling systems, Advanced Traffic Management Systems (ATMS), and secure digital data storage platforms**.
- Integration of forensic expertise will support **early detection of cyber incidents, secure handling of digital evidence, and faster response to cyber threats** impacting highway operations.

NHAI Signs MoU with NFSU to Strengthen Digital Security for National Highway Management

Collaboration will strengthen cyber security frameworks and forensic reliability in National Highway operations and digital platforms

Posted On: 02 FEB 2025 9:54PM by PIB Delhi

To strengthen digital security and data protection, Indian Highways Management Company Limited (IHMCL), a company promoted by NHAI signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU), a Government of India Institute of National Importance headquartered in Gandhinagar, Gujarat to foster collaboration in the fields of research, training and consultancy, particularly in cyber forensics, digital evidence integrity and advanced technological applications relevant to the National Highway management. The MoU was signed by Shri A.R. Chitambar, Chief Operating Officer, IHMCL and Dr. S.O. Joshi, Campus Director, NFSU. Guesting in presence of NHAI Chairman, Shri Sunish Kumar Yadav, Shri Vikal Chhabra, Chairman and Managing Director, IHMCL, and other senior officials from NHAI, IHMCL and NFSU.



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- **National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU)** will provide expertise in **cyber forensics, digital investigations, and data integrity management.**

India–European Union Sign Administrative Arrangement on Advanced Electronic Signatures and Seals

- **India and the European Union** signed an important **administrative arrangement** to enable **secure cross-border use of advanced electronic signatures and electronic seals.**
- The agreement was signed between the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** and the **Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CONNECT)** of the **European Commission.**
- The arrangement was formally signed by the **Secretary, MeitY,** and the **Director-General of DG CONNECT,** indicating **high-level institutional commitment** from both sides.
- The agreement aims to **boost cross-border digital trade,** promote **paperless transactions,** and strengthen **digital trust** between India and the European Union.
- It establishes a cooperation framework on **advanced electronic signatures, electronic seals, and Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) systems.**
- The core objective is to ensure **interoperability between India’s and the EU’s digital trust systems,** while remaining fully aligned with their **respective legal frameworks.**
- In India, implementation will be carried out through the **Controller of Certifying Authorities (CCA)** under the **Information Technology Act, 2000.**
- Under the framework, **trusted lists of recognized service providers** from India and the EU will be linked.
- This will enable **mutual validation of electronic signatures and seals** issued in either jurisdiction.
- As a result, **Indian exporters and EU businesses** can digitally sign **contracts, invoices, and compliance documents** with **legal validity,** without physical paperwork.
- The arrangement will **reduce transaction time, lower costs, minimize courier delays, and improve legal certainty** in cross-border trade.
- The agreement is particularly significant for **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs),** which often face **high compliance costs and procedural delays** in international trade.
- Trusted digital signatures will allow MSMEs to **complete export documentation faster and with greater confidence.**
- The move supports **India’s broader goal of digitally empowering MSMEs** and improving their **access to European markets.**
- The arrangement strengthens **India–EU digital cooperation** and aligns with **global digital trust and trade standards.**
- **DG CONNECT** is the European Commission body responsible for shaping Europe’s **digital ecosystem,** promoting **digital innovation, artificial intelligence leadership, data-driven growth, digital infrastructure, and digital skills development.**
- Overall, the pact marks a **major step towards seamless, secure, and trusted global digital trade** between India and the European Union.

MeitY signs Administrative Arrangement on Advanced Electronic Signatures and Seals with DG CONNECT of European Commission

Posted On: 02 FEB 2026 5:56PM by PIB Delhi

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, and the Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CONNECT) of the European Commission have signed an Administrative Arrangement on Advanced Electronic Signatures and Seals on 27 January 2026.

The arrangement was signed by the Secretary, MeitY, and the Director-General, DG CONNECT. The cooperation will be implemented by MeitY through the Controller of Certifying Authorities (CCA) in line with India’s legal and regulatory framework according to the applicable provisions of the Information Technology Act, 2008 within the established framework regulated by Controller of Certifying Authorities (CCA).

The arrangement provides a framework for cooperation on interoperability of electronic signatures, electronic seals, and Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) systems, consistent with the laws of India and European Union with the aim to strengthen India-EU digital cooperation by promoting the use of secure and trusted electronic signatures and seals in cross-border digital transactions and trade.

Under this cooperation, India and the European Union intend to link their respective trusted lists of recognized service providers thus helping in easier validation of electronic signatures and seals issued in India and the European Union for cross-border use. The arrangement lays the foundation for deeper cooperation in the future.

Indian exporters and EU buyers will be able to sign contracts, invoices, and compliance documents digitally using trusted electronic signatures without paper or extra delays.

This will reduce transaction time, cost, and verification effort for cross-border trade, especially for MSMEs. It will also increase trust and legal certainty in India-EU digital trade by enabling faster validation of documents on both sides.

SPORTS NEWS

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Devika Sihag Wins Maiden BWF Super 300 Title at Thailand Masters 2026

- Indian badminton player **Devika Sihag** won her **first BWF Super 300 title** at the **Thailand Masters 2026**, marking the **biggest achievement** of her career so far.
- The **women's singles final** ended when **Goh Jin Wei** of Malaysia retired due to a **hamstring injury**. At the time of retirement, **Devika Sihag** was leading **21–8, 6–3**.
- Devika displayed **aggressive stroke play, strong net control, and mental composure**, clearly dominating the final before it ended prematurely.
- This victory is Devika Sihag's **maiden Super 300-level title**, a significant milestone as **BWF Super 300 tournaments** are part of the **BWF World Tour** and offer **important ranking points and international exposure**.
- Winning the Thailand Masters will **boost her world ranking, confidence, and visibility**, enabling her to compete more regularly in **higher-tier tournaments** such as **Super 500 and Super 750 events**.
- **Goh Jin Wei**, ranked **World No. 68**, is a **two-time former World Junior Champion**, making Devika's dominant performance in the final even more notable despite the opponent's retirement.
- Devika Sihag, a **20-year-old shuttler from Haryana**, represents India's **emerging strength in women's singles badminton** beyond established players.



Haryana Thunders Win Pro Wrestling League (PWL) 2026 Title

- **Haryana Thunders** won the **Pro Wrestling League (PWL) 2026** title after defeating **Delhi Dangal Warriors** by **5–4** in a thrilling final held at **Noida Indoor Stadium**.
- The **PWL 2026 final** was decided in the **last bout**, making it one of the most dramatic finals in league history.
- After **eight bouts**, the score was tied at **4–4**, leading to a decisive final women's match.
- The title-sealing bout was the **women's 62 kg category**, where **Iryna Koliadenko** of Haryana Thunders clinched victory.
- **Iryna Koliadenko**, a **Paris Olympics silver medallist**, showcased technical superiority and composure under pressure to secure the winning point.
- Her win sealed a **5–4 victory** for Haryana Thunders and became the defining moment of the final.
- The final highlighted the **high competitiveness and growing popularity of league wrestling in India**.
- Both teams exchanged wins throughout the contest, keeping momentum evenly balanced.
- **Individual Performances in PWL 2026:**
 - **Turan Bayramov** (Delhi Dangal Warriors) was named **Player of the Tournament**, winning **all seven bouts** in the **men's 57 kg category** and scoring **59 points**.
 - **Chandermohan** (Punjab Royals) emerged as the **highest point scorer** of the tournament.



Awards from the Grand Final:

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- **Player of the Match: Neha Sangwan** (Haryana Thunders)
- **Fighter of the Match: Ronak** (Delhi Dangal Warriors, men's 125 kg)
- **Impact Player of the Match: Akshay Dhere** (men's 57 kg)
- Haryana Thunders' victory crowned them **PWL 2026 champions** and marked the season as **one of the most memorable editions** of the Pro Wrestling League, underlining India's rising strength in professional wrestling.

Asian Rifle & Pistol Shooting Championships 2026 Begin in New Delhi

- The **Asian Rifle & Pistol Shooting Championships 2026** have officially begun at the **Dr Karni Singh Shooting Ranges, New Delhi**.

Asian Rifle and Pistol Shooting Championships 2026 have begun at Dr Karni Singh Shooting Ranges in New Delhi today. The event brings together elite athletes from across Asia for two weeks of exciting competition. Competitors will vie for victory in men's, women's, junior, and youth categories across 10m, 25m, and 50m rifle and pistol events. The competitions will include individual, team, and mixed team formats, showcasing a full range of shooting talent. Seventeen countries are participating in the Championship.
- The championship is being held over a **two-week period** and features **elite shooters from 17 Asian countries**.
- Athletes are competing in **rifle and pistol events** across **senior, junior, and youth categories**, covering men's and women's competitions.
- The Asian Rifle & Pistol Shooting Championships is one of the **most prestigious shooting tournaments in Asia**, bringing together the continent's **top shooters**.
- The event serves as a key platform for **testing skills, improving rankings, gaining international exposure**, and **identifying future Olympic and world-level contenders**.
- The 2026 edition highlights the **growing competitiveness of Asian shooting sports** and the depth of talent across different age groups.
- Competitions are being conducted in **10 metre, 25 metre, and 50 metre rifle and pistol events**.
- The championship includes **individual events, team events, and mixed team formats**, ensuring a comprehensive assessment of precision, consistency, and teamwork.
- Participation across **men's, women's, junior, and youth categories** ensures inclusivity and balanced representation of experienced shooters and emerging talent.
- The **Dr Karni Singh Shooting Ranges** is one of India's **premier shooting venues**, known for hosting several **national and international competitions**.
- The facility offers **world-class infrastructure, advanced shooting lanes, and modern technical support**, meeting global competition standards.
- Hosting the championship at this venue reinforces **India's capability to organise major international sporting events** and strengthens **New Delhi's position as a global shooting sports hub**.
- Participation from **17 Asian nations** reflects the **wide popularity of shooting sports across Asia**.
- The championship promotes **sportsmanship, cultural exchange, and regional cooperation** through competitive excellence.

IMPORATNT DAYS

World Cancer Day 2026 Observed on 4 February

- **World Cancer Day** is observed every year on **4 February** across the world.
- It is a **global uniting initiative** led by the **Union for International Cancer Control (UICC)**.
- The **World Cancer Day 2026 theme** is "**United by Unique**", highlighting people-centred cancer care.



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- **Cancer** is the **second leading cause of death globally**.
- Cancer refers to the **uncontrolled growth of a group of cells** in the body.
- It can occur **at any age**, and if **not detected early or treated properly**, it significantly increases the **risk of death**.
- World Cancer Day aims to **raise awareness, encourage prevention, promote early detection, and support effective treatment**.
- The observance originated in **2000** during the **first World Summit Against Cancer** held in **Paris**.
- It was founded by the **Union for International Cancer Control (UICC)**.
- The day supports the objectives of the **World Cancer Declaration**, which was written in **2008**.
- The **primary goal** of World Cancer Day is to **reduce illness and deaths caused by cancer** worldwide.
- The day is observed globally with support from the **World Health Organization (WHO)** to spread awareness about cancer and its treatment.
- During the Paris summit, leaders of **government agencies and cancer organisations** from across the world signed the **Charter of Paris Against Cancer**.

Daily CA One- Liner: February 4

- **Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma** announced a **₹50 crore grant** to preserve and restore the heritage of the **Darrang kings of the Koch dynasty** during **Mahabir Chilarai Divas** celebrations in **Darrang district**
- The **National Statistics Office (NSO)** has announced a **nationwide Survey on Migration**, scheduled to be conducted from **July 2026 to June 2027**
- **Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu** launched **Pilloo AI**, a **voice-based billing and accounting application** in Andhra Pradesh
- A **United Nations report (2025)** states that **around 45% of the global population lives in urban areas**, a sharp rise from **20% in 1950**
- **Indian Highways Management Company Limited (IHMCL)** has signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with the **National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU)** to enhance **cyber security and data protection** in national highway operations
- **India and the European Union** signed an important **administrative arrangement** to enable **secure cross-border use of advanced electronic signatures and electronic seals**
- **Indian badminton player Devika Sihag** won her **first BWF Super 300 title** at the **Thailand Masters 2026**, marking the **biggest achievement of her career** so far
- **Haryana Thunders** won the **Pro Wrestling League (PWL) 2026** title after defeating **Delhi Dangal Warriors** by **5–4** in a thrilling final held at **Noida Indoor Stadium**
- The **Asian Rifle & Pistol Shooting Championships 2026** have officially begun at the **Dr Karni Singh Shooting Ranges, New Delhi**.
- The **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)** has notified the **Baggage Rules, 2026**, along with **Customs Baggage (Declaration and Processing) Regulations, 2026** and a **Master Circular** to simplify **international passenger clearance**.
- The **PSB Alliance Annual Strategy Meet 2026** was held in **New Delhi**, where the **Secretary, Department of Financial Services (DFS)** highlighted that **PSB Alliance** has evolved into a **strategic partner** by combining **technology, data, and purpose** to build an **inclusive and innovative banking sector**.
- The **Union government** plans to introduce the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2025** in the **second half of the Budget session** of Parliament beginning **March 9, 2026**.

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- **Central Bank of India (CBI)**, a leading **Public Sector Bank (PSB)**, signed a **distribution agreement** with **HSBC Asset Management (India) Private Limited** to offer **Mutual Fund (MF) products** to its customers.
- **Matrixport**, a leading **digital asset financial services platform**, received **In-Principle Approval (IPA)** for its Bhutan-based entity **Matrix Bhutan Pte Ltd** from the **Gelephu Financial Services Office (GFSO)**.
- The **National Statistical Office (NSO)** under the **Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** will launch two major national surveys—the **National Household Income Survey (NHIS)** and the **Annual Survey of Incorporated Services Sector Enterprises (ASISSE)**—from **April 2026** to strengthen India's statistical system.
- The **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** has revised the **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** base year to **2024**, reducing the weight of **Food & Beverages** from **45.86% to 36.75%**.
- **Shri Hari Shankar Verma**, a **1987 batch Indian Railway Traffic Service (IRTS)** officer, has assumed charge as **Member (Operations and Business Development)**, **Railway Board**, and **Ex-officio Secretary** to the **Government of India**.
- **Shri Divakar Jayant, INAS**, took charge as **Director General of Naval Armament (DGONA)** at **Naval Headquarters, Ministry of Defence (MoD)**, on **02 Feb 2026**, succeeding **Shri P Upadhyay**, who superannuated on **31 Jan 2026**.
- **Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh** approved the grant of **Miniratna (Category-I)** status to **Yantra India Limited (YIL)**, a **Defence Public Sector Undertaking (DPSU)**.
- **Japan** announced it had successfully **recovered rare earth minerals** from **deep-sea sediments**, marking a **world-first achievement**.
- The last **Russia-U.S. nuclear arms control treaty**, known as **New START**, is due to expire on **February 5, 2026**.
- **Indian scientists** at the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** have developed a **solar-powered energy storage device** that can both **capture and store energy in a single unit**, marking a major step towards **clean and self-sustaining power systems**.
- **World Cancer Day** is observed every year on **4 February** across the world.