



Daily Current Affairs

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BANKING, FINANCE & BUSINESS

Reserve Bank of India's Gold Purchases Plunge to 4 Tonnes in 2025 from 73 Tonnes in 2024 Due to High Prices

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) bought only **4 tonnes of gold in 2025**, significantly lower than **73 tonnes in 2024**, mainly due to **very high gold prices**.
- In 2025, RBI's **quarterly gold purchases** were: **3.4 tonnes in Q1, 0.4 tonnes in Q2, 0.2 tonnes in Q3, and 0 tonnes in Q4**, showing a **sharp slowdown** in buying.
- In comparison, RBI had purchased **16 tonnes in 2023** and **77 tonnes in 2021**, making **2025 one of the lowest purchase years**.
- According to the **World Gold Council (WGC)**, global **central banks** bought a total of **328 tonnes** of gold in 2025, slightly lower than **345 tonnes in 2024**.
- **Poland** was the **largest gold buyer in 2025**, adding **102 tonnes**, followed by **Kazakhstan (57 tonnes)** and **Azerbaijan (53 tonnes)**.
- Other major buyers included **Brazil (43 tonnes)**, **China (27 tonnes)**, and **Turkey (27 tonnes)**, showing continued interest in gold reserves worldwide.
- The largest **net gold sellers** in 2025 were **Singapore (26 tonnes)**, **Ghana (12 tonnes)**, and **Russia (6 tonnes)**.
- In **December 2025**, central banks bought **19 tonnes**, taking the full-year net purchases to **328 tonnes**.
- **China** extended its monthly gold buying streak to **14 consecutive months**, while countries like **Kyrgyz Republic, Czech Republic, Mongolia, and Indonesia** also added to their reserves.
- **Singapore** was the **largest seller in December 2025**, reducing reserves by **11 tonnes**.

Reserve Bank buys 4 T gold in 2025, high prices dent buying

HEDGE FORMULA

RBI buys 3.4 tonnes in Q1, 0.4 tonnes in Q2, 0.2 tonnes in Q3, 0 tonnes in Q4.

Globally, the net purchases of central banks reported to be 328 tonnes in 2025, a tad lower than the net purchases in 2024. RBI purchased 3.4 tonnes in first quarter, 0.4 tonnes in second quarter, 0.2 tonnes in third quarter and zero tonnes in fourth quarter, as per World Gold Council (WGC).

In 2025, RBI had purchased 73 tonnes and 16 tonnes were bought in 2024. In 2021, it had purchased 77 tonnes.

Globally, central banks bought 19 tonnes of gold in December, taking the net purchases for the full year of 2025 to 328 tonnes. This is lower than the 345 tonnes in 2024.

The National Bank of Poland was the largest reported net buyer in 2025, adding 102 tonnes to its gold reserves. Kazakhstan 57 tonnes, State Oil Fund of Azerbaijan 53 tonnes, Brazil 43 tonnes, China 27 tonnes and Turkey 27 tonnes were the other significant buyers during the year.

The largest net sellers for 2025 were Singapore 26 tonnes, Ghana 12 tonnes and Russia 6 tonnes.

The Central Bank of Uzbekistan was largest buyer in December with 10 tonnes. The National Bank of Kazakhstan 8 tonnes and the National Bank of Poland 7 tonnes were also significant buyers during the month.

China extended its monthly buying to 14 consecutive months, while Kyrgyz Republic, Czech Republic, Mongolia, and Indonesia also added. Singapore was largest reported seller during the month, reducing reserves by 11 tonnes.

China extended its monthly buying to 14 consecutive months.



Recent News :

- In Jan 2026, **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** issued the **Foreign Exchange Management (Export and Import of Goods and Services) Regulations, 2026** under **FEMA, 1999**, introducing **uniform timelines** and **enhanced monitoring** for trade-related foreign exchange transactions.

100% Foreign Direct Investment in Insurance Sector Allowed as Insurance Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025 Comes into Force from 5 February 2026

- The **Insurance Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025** came into force on **5 February 2026**, allowing **100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** in the insurance sector.
- The notification of the Act was issued by the **Ministry of Finance**, while **Section 25** will be enforced later through a separate notification.
- Under the new Act, **foreign companies** can now **fully own** insurance companies in India, but top leadership positions such as **Chairman, Managing Director, or CEO** must be **Indian citizens**.
- The legislation amends **three existing laws: Insurance Act, 1938, Life Insurance Corporation Act, 1956, and Insurance**

New insurance Act allowing 100% FDI comes into force

The government has notified the Insurance Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025, which allows 100% FDI in the insurance sector. The Act is effective from February 5, 2026.

WHAT'S NEW

The new Act allows 100% FDI in the insurance sector. It also amends the Insurance Act, 1938, the Life Insurance Corporation Act, 1956, and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999.

The Act is effective from February 5, 2026.

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Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999.

- The **FDI limit** in insurance was earlier **26%** initially, then **49% in 2015**, **74% in 2021**, and is now **100%**.
- The Act allows **merger** of a **non-insurance company** with an insurance company.
- Prior **regulatory approval** for transfer of share capital by insurers has been increased from **1% to 5%**.
- The **Net Owned Fund (NOF)** requirement for **Foreign Reinsurance Branches** has been reduced from **₹5,000 crore to ₹1,000 crore**.
- **LIC** is granted **autonomy** to open **Zonal offices** in India and align foreign offices with laws and regulations.
- A dedicated **Policyholders' Education and Protection Fund** will be set up to spread awareness and protect the interests of policyholders.
- The reform aims to **attract more foreign capital**, enhance competition, and **boost insurance penetration**, currently around **3.7% of India's GDP**.

About IRDAI :

- **IRDAI** (Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India) is a **statutory body** for protecting policyholders' interests and regulating, promoting, and ensuring orderly growth of the insurance industry.
- **Headquarters : Hyderabad**
- **Chairman : Ajay Seth**

SBI Mutual Fund Launches InvesTap Nxt, AI-Powered Next-Generation Digital Investment Platform

- **SBI Mutual Fund (SBIMF)** launched **InvesTap Nxt**, a next-generation **digital investment platform** designed to make investing simpler and smarter.
- **InvesTap Nxt** is an **AI-powered platform** featuring a **personal AI assistant** that allows investors to ask questions, explore investment options, and track portfolios through **conversational interactions**.
- The platform integrates SBIMF's **SmartAssist**, an **AI-powered WhatsApp chat companion**, into InvesTap Nxt for enhanced investment management.
- InvesTap Nxt uses **advanced AI**, conversational investment journeys, and **Wealth Index** via **Account Aggregator (AA)** integration to provide a personalised view of financial portfolios.
- The platform offers easy-to-understand insights, enabling users to access **consolidated financial information** across products and institutions within a **secure, consent-based framework**.
- The **conversational interface** of InvesTap Nxt interprets **user intent**, analyses portfolio data, and delivers timely insights aligned with individual financial goals.
- **SBI Mutual Fund**, incorporated in **1987**, is an Indian private asset management company promoted by the **State Bank of India**, with its head office in **Mumbai**.

SBI Mutual Fund launches 'InvesTap Nxt' an AI powered next gen investment platform

MUMBAI: SBI Mutual Fund on Tuesday announced the launch of 'InvesTap Nxt', the next generation of its digital investment platform, marking a stronger push towards AI-driven investing.

Powered by advanced artificial intelligence, conversational investment journeys and a Wealth Index enabled through Account Aggregator (AA) integration, InvesTap Nxt aims to provide investors with a clearer and more personalised view of their financial portfolios.

A more intuitive and friendly investing experience with a personal AI assistant InvesTap Nxt offers a conversational interface that allows

investors to ask questions, explore investment options and track portfolio performance in a simple and intuitive way. Its AI engine interprets user intent, analyses portfolio data and delivers timely insights aligned with individual financial goals. The platform gives investors greater clarity and confidence to make smarter investment decisions.

Guided investment journeys powered by conversational AI

The platform supports guided journeys for product discovery using natural language capabilities. From onboarding and fund discovery to investing and portfolio manage-

ment, investors can complete key actions through simple conversations instead of navigating complex menus.

Users can raise basic queries to understand performance, asset allocation and diversification, making the experience accessible to both new and seasoned investors. These AI-led interactions adapt to user behaviour and preferences, delivering personalised insights throughout the investment lifecycle.

Complete portfolio view through Account Aggregator

A key feature of InvesTap Nxt is its integration with India's Account Aggregator ecosystem. With user consent, the platform

securely aggregates financial information across institutions, including bank accounts and investments, to provide a 360-degree view of financial health through the 'Wealth Index'. This consolidated view helps investors plan better, assess risk and understand asset allocation while retaining full control over their data.

Secure, inclusive, and future ready

Developed with a strong focus on security, privacy and regulatory compliance, InvesTap Nxt is available on Android and iOS, positioning itself as a 24x7 intelligent investment companion for planning, investing and portfolio tracking. #991

State Bank of India Secures \$1 Billion Social Loan from Japan's MUFG

- **State Bank of India (SBI)** raised a **\$1 billion (₹7,100 crore)** **social loan** from Japan's **Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG)**.
- This is the **first social loan** raised by an **Indian bank**, marking a landmark deal in India's banking and social finance space.

- The loan was raised through **MUFG's GIFT City (IFSC)** branch, with MUFG as the **sole lender**, though it may be syndicated later.
- The loan has a **five-year maturity** and includes a **green shoe option of \$500 million**, allowing SBI to raise additional funds if required.
- The **interest rate** on the loan is **90 basis points** above the **three-month SOFR** (Secured Overnight Financing Rate), considered competitively priced compared to similar overseas borrowings.
- The funds will be used to support **women-led enterprises** and businesses owned or managed by women, promoting **women's economic empowerment** and **gender equality**.

About State Bank of India (SBI):

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

Axis Bank Introduces "Rooftop Solar Finance" to Support Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises in Adopting Solar Energy Systems

- **Axis Bank** launched "**Rooftop Solar Finance**", a new financing product aimed at helping Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (**MSMEs**) adopt solar energy systems on their commercial rooftops.
- The product offers **collateral-free loans** ranging from **₹10 lakhs to ₹2 crores**, available through Axis Bank's branch network across India.
- The **repayment tenure is 4–7 years**, providing flexible repayment options aligned with business **cash flows**.
- The financing supports solar adoption, enabling firms to install rooftop solar systems, **reduce long-term energy costs**, and lower dependence on grid electricity.
- Axis Bank has partnered with **Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs)** and a **technology partner** to ensure **cost transparency** for businesses.

About Axis Bank:

- Founded Year: 1993
- Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra, India
- CEO: Amitabh Chaudhry
- Slogan: "Badhti Ka Naam Zindagi" (A Life of Progress)

Alwar Becomes First District in India to Attain Complete Insurance Coverage

- **Alwar district** in Rajasthan became the **first district in India** to achieve **100% insurance coverage** under the "**Insurance for All by 2047**" initiative.

TO BACK WOMEN-LED ENTERPRISES SBI Raises \$1-b Social Loan from MUFG

Joel Rebello

Mumbai: State Bank of India (SBI), the country's largest lender by assets, has raised \$1 billion (₹3,100 crore) through a five-year loan from Japan's largest lender Mitsubishi UFG Financial Group (MUFG) in the first of its kind social loan raised by a bank in India.

The public-sector lender plans to deploy the proceeds from this loan to lend to women or businesses helmed by women, documents accessed by ET showed. Social loans are either raised for specific purposes or the liabilities raised are matched to loans already given for specific purposes.

"The five-year loan was raised through the GIFT City branch of MUFG and priced at 90 basis points above the three-month SOFR (Secured Overnight Financing Rate) which is a tighter pricing compared with what SBI's peer HDFC Bank received through a similar loan deal in December. MUFG is the sole bank in this deal but this loan will be syndicated to a wider section of lenders," said a person familiar with the details. HDFC had raised \$1 billion through a three-and-a-half-year loan priced at 94 basis points above the three-month SOFR in December.

A MUFG spokesperson confirmed that the Japanese lender has been mandated by SBI for a \$1 billion five-year loan, which includes a green shoe option of \$500 million. "SBI intends to deploy the proceeds from this facility towards women's economic empowerment loans to help support gender equality," she said.



The five-year loan includes a green shoe option of \$500 million



- The roadmap aligns with the vision of a **'Secure India–Insured India'** at the grassroots level.
- The initiative is a joint effort of the **Government of India (GoI)** and the **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)**, a statutory body under the **Ministry of Finance**.
- **1,367 previously uninsured people** aged over 10 were brought under coverage through systematic **door-to-door surveys**, achieving full saturation in the district.
- **Nine villages** have been formally declared **fully insured**: Bhulla Ka Bas, Bichpuri, Palankheda, Antapada, Hanumanta, Kalyanpura, Morodkhurd, Kodalka, and Lalpur.
- The insurance policies were formally handed over to beneficiaries in a programme chaired by **Additional District Collector Bina Mahawar**.
- **Premiums** for all eligible adults in these villages were **funded by a Non-Government Organization (NGO)**, ensuring coverage without financial burden.
- The insurance policies were issued by **United India Insurance Company Limited (UIIC)**.



NATIONAL AND STATE NEWS

Pariksha Pe Charcha 2026 Held at New Delhi

- **Pariksha Pe Charcha (PPC) 2026**, the **9th edition** of the annual interaction programme, was held at **Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi**.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacted with a **record 4.5 crore students, teachers, and parents** across the country.
- The programme focused on **reducing exam stress, building confidence, nurturing curiosity, and promoting emotional well-being** among students, popularly referred to as **"exam warriors"**.
- The Prime Minister urged students to treat **examinations as milestones in life, not final judgments of their future**.
- **Pariksha Pe Charcha** was **launched in 2018** as an annual initiative.
- It enables the Prime Minister to **directly engage with students**, while also involving **teachers and parents as key stakeholders**.
- The programme aims to address **exam-related anxiety, pressure, and fear of failure**.
- It promotes a **holistic education approach**, encouraging **learning, self-growth, and emotional balance**, especially during **board and competitive examination periods**.
- PPC 2026 witnessed unprecedented participation.
- **More than 4.19 crore students** and **24.84 lakh teachers** registered on the **MyGov portal**.
- This exceeded the **previous Guinness World Record of 3.53 crore registrations**.

Launched in 2018, Pariksha Pe Charcha (PPC) is an annual nationwide interactive initiative where the Prime Minister engages with students, teachers and parents on examinations, life skills and well-being.

PPC promotes stress-free examinations, emotional resilience, and holistic development, aligning with National Education Policy 2020's experiential and conceptual learning framework.

PPC encourages students to view exams positively, promoting confidence, disciplined preparation, and resilience through the 'Be a Warrior, Not a Worrier' mindset.

2025 Benchmark: PPC 2025 recorded over 5 crore participants and achieved a Guinness World Record with 3.53 crore registrations, marking its largest global engagement milestone.

Pan-India Expansion 2026: PPC 2026 introduced multi-city interactions across five regions, with interactive sessions held at Devmogra, Coimbatore, Raipur, Guwahati and 7 Lok Kalyan Marg, Delhi, strengthening inclusivity and regional representation.

- The event was **telecast live on Doordarshan** and streamed through **digital and social media platforms**, ensuring wide accessibility, including **remote and rural areas**.
- The large-scale participation highlighted the **growing credibility of PPC as a national platform for student guidance**.

NCDC Implements Yuva Sahakar Scheme and Swayamshakti Sahakar Yojana

- The **National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC)** is implementing **Yuva Sahakar Scheme** and **Swayamshakti Sahakar Yojana** to promote **innovation, inclusivity, youth entrepreneurship, and women empowerment** in India's cooperative sector.
- Both schemes are **fully funded by NCDC**, a **statutory body under the Ministry of Cooperation**, and align with the Government of India's vision of **cooperative-led grassroots development and employment generation**.
- NCDC provides **financial assistance, institutional support, and capacity building** to cooperatives across sectors such as **agriculture, dairy, fisheries, handloom, cottage industries, and services**, strengthening their economic viability.
- **Yuva Sahakar Scheme** aims to encourage **newly formed and youth-led cooperative societies** by supporting **innovative and start-up-oriented ideas**.
 - Focuses on cooperatives facing **initial capital constraints**.
 - Encourages **locally relevant and sustainable business models**.
 - Provides **financial assistance** to help youth-driven cooperatives scale up and become **economically self-reliant**.
- **Swayamshakti Sahakar Yojana** focuses on **financial inclusion and livelihood generation**, especially for **women and economically weaker sections**.
 - Supports **women Self Help Groups (SHGs)** through access to **affordable bank credit**.
 - Promotes **collective income-generating activities** and **women-led cooperative enterprises**.
 - Aims to enhance **women's participation in the economy** and decision-making in cooperatives.
- Both schemes address key priorities such as **youth employment, women empowerment, and strengthening cooperative-based economic models** through **collective ownership and sustainable growth**.
- Details of **financial assistance released under both schemes for FY 2022–23, 2023–24, and 2024–25** were shared in **Parliament** by **Amit Shah, Union Minister for Home and Cooperation**, in a **written reply in the Rajya Sabha**, highlighting the government's commitment to **transparent and cooperative-led development**.



Karnataka Introduces Automatic Property Mutation System

- The **Karnataka government** announced the rollout of an **automatic property mutation system** to speed up **land and property transactions** and improve transparency in revenue administration.
- **Property mutation** refers to updating **ownership details in land revenue**



The Karnataka government is set to roll out an auto-mutation system that will automatically update property ownership records following land and property transactions, officials announced on Wednesday. The move is part of a wider effort to digitise land records and reduce delays in mutation formalities.

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- records** after transfer through **sale, gift, inheritance, or other legal means.**
- Mutation is essential for **legal ownership, property tax assessment, and avoiding land disputes.**
 - Earlier, buyers had to apply **separately** for mutation after registration, causing **delays and procedural hurdles.**
 - Under the **existing manual system:**
 - Buyers filed a mutation application with the revenue department.
 - A **mandatory notice period** applied:
 - **7 days** for registrable instruments
 - Up to **15 days** for non-registrable cases
 - This often delayed updating of ownership records.
 - Under the **new automatic mutation system:**
 - **Ownership details will be updated automatically** once property registration is completed at the **sub-registrar's office.**
 - Eliminates the need for:
 - Separate mutation applications
 - Additional verification visits to revenue offices
 - Direct digital linkage between **property registration and land revenue records.**
 - The reform is integrated with Karnataka's **digital land records framework.**
 - Platforms like the **Bhoomi Portal** already allow citizens to:
 - View **Record of Rights, Tenancy and Crops (RTC)**
 - Track mutation status online
 - Registration offices will now be **digitally integrated** with land record databases for **real-time updates.**

RECENT NEWS

- The Karnataka government has taken an important step to modernise land governance in the Kodagu region. Through a recent amendment to the land revenue law, the state aims to resolve long-pending documentation problems related to Jamma Bane lands.

About Karnataka:

- Capital: Bengaluru
- Chief Minister: Siddaramaiah
- Governor: Thaawarchand Gehlot
- National Parks: Bandipur National Park, Nagarhole National Park, Kudremukh National Park, Anshi (Kali) National Park, Bannerghatta National Park
- Wildlife Sanctuaries: Dandeli Wildlife Sanctuary, Bhadra Wildlife Sanctuary, Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary, Brahmagiri Wildlife Sanctuary, Pushpagiri Wildlife Sanctuary, Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary

Kerala Becomes First State to Announce Elderly Budget for FY27

- **Kerala** has become the **first Indian state** to announce a **dedicated Elderly Budget** in its **Financial Year 2026–27 (FY27) State Budget**, drawing national attention to ageing-related policy challenges.
- The **Elderly Budget** was announced by **Kerala Finance Minister K. N. Balagopal** as part of the FY27 Budget, making it the **first-ever separate budget statement for senior citizens in India.**

Kerala Finance Minister K N Balagopal recently announced an 'Elderly Budget' as part of the overall Budget, making his state the first to do so in the country. The initiative allocates ₹46,236.52 crore for senior citizens in FY27 Budget estimates, representing 19.07 per cent of the state's total Budget size. However, 68 per cent of the Budget allocation for the elderly is projected to be accounted for by retired government employees' pension, which the state has to pay anyway.

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- An **Elderly Budget** is a policy tool that **consolidates all government expenditure related to senior citizens** into a single statement, including **pensions, healthcare, social security, and welfare schemes**.
- While it does **not necessarily imply additional spending**, it improves **transparency**, helps assess the **fiscal impact of an ageing population**, and supports **long-term planning**, a practice increasingly used by countries undergoing **demographic transition**.
- The **total allocation** under Kerala's Elderly Budget is **₹46,236.52 crore**, which accounts for **19.07% of the state's total Budget size**.
- A major feature of the allocation is that **nearly 68% of the total amount is spent on pensions for retired government employees**.
- These pension payments are **statutory obligations** and would have been incurred even without a separate Elderly Budget, leading to debate over whether the move introduces **new welfare measures** or largely **repackages existing expenditure**.
- The Kerala government has clarified that presenting elderly-related spending separately helps **citizens and policymakers clearly understand the scale of expenditure** on the ageing population.
- The Elderly Budget reflects **Kerala's rapid demographic ageing**, with the **elderly population projected to increase by 47% between 2011 and 2026**, compared to the **all-India growth rate of 36%**.
- Since 2011, Kerala's **share of elderly population has consistently remained 4–8 percentage points higher than the national average**.
- This ageing trend is driven by **low fertility rates, high life expectancy, and improved healthcare**, making ageing a **long-term policy challenge** for the state.
- The Elderly Budget also highlights **growing fiscal pressure**, as increasing numbers of senior citizens lead to **rising pension and healthcare costs**.
- With a significant portion of expenditure tied to **mandatory pension payments**, the state has **limited fiscal flexibility** to introduce new elderly-focused schemes.
- Experts view the Elderly Budget as a **data-driven step** that exposes the **scale of future liabilities** and signals the need for **pension reforms, expansion of elderly healthcare services, and community-based care models**.
- Beyond Kerala, the initiative is significant for **other Indian states**, many of which are also moving toward an **ageing society**, though at a slower pace.
- Kerala's model may encourage states to **track elderly-related expenditure separately**, supporting **evidence-based policymaking, better targeting of welfare schemes, and long-term fiscal and social planning**, making it highly relevant for **exam preparation and policy debates**.

RECENT NEWS

- Kerala has taken a unique and science-driven step by officially recognizing a microorganism as part of its state identity. In a first-of-its-kind initiative in India, the State government has highlighted the importance of microbes in everyday life, ranging from human health to agriculture and environmental sustainability.

About Kerala:

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

Amit Shah Launches Bharat Taxi, India's First Cooperative-Based Ride-Hailing Platform

- Union Minister of Home Affairs and Cooperation **Amit Shah** launched **Bharat Taxi**, India's first cooperative-based ride-hailing platform, at **Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi**.
- The initiative is aligned with the Government of India's vision of "**Sahkar se Samridhhi**", which focuses on **prosperity through cooperation**, and aims to strengthen the **cooperative sector** while promoting **inclusive and citizen-centric mobility solutions**.
- Bharat Taxi was conceptualised by the **Ministry of Cooperation** to address issues faced by drivers on aggregator-based platforms such as **high commissions, surge pricing pressure, and lack of social security**.
- Bharat Taxi is registered under the **Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002** and was **formally established on 6 June 2025**.
- It is designed as an **indigenous, driver-owned and driver-centric alternative** to foreign investment-based ride-hailing platforms, focusing on **fairness, transparency, and shared prosperity**.
- A key feature is its **zero-commission and surge-free pricing model**, where drivers, known as **Sarathis**, do **not pay commission per ride**, and **profits are directly distributed to drivers**.
- The platform follows the principle "**Sarathi Hi Malik**", placing drivers at the centre of **ownership, operations, and value creation**, while allowing them the **freedom to work on other platforms** without exclusivity restrictions.
- During the launch, the **top six performing Sarathis** were honoured and given **share certificates**, reinforcing their ownership rights.
- Each honoured Sarathi received **₹5 lakh personal accident insurance** and **₹5 lakh family health insurance**.
- **Nine Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs)** were exchanged with public and private stakeholders to enhance **digital integration, safety, service delivery, and operational efficiency**.
- Bharat Taxi provides strong **social security and welfare measures**, including **health insurance, accident insurance, retirement savings support, and dedicated driver support systems**.
- **Support centres** are operational at **seven locations in Delhi**, offering **emergency assistance, verified ride data, and grievance redressal**.
- **Women empowerment** is promoted through the "**Bike Didi**" initiative, under which **over 150 women drivers** have joined the platform.
- Since inception, Bharat Taxi has emerged as the **world's first and largest cooperative-based ride-hailing platform** and the **largest driver-owned mobility platform globally**.
- Current reach includes **around 4 lakh drivers onboarded, over 10 lakh registered users, and nearly ₹10 crore directly distributed to drivers**, indicating growing trust in the cooperative-based model.



RECENT NEWS

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the National Improvised Explosive Device Data Management System (NIDMS). This is India's first platform that records details of all bomb blasts in the country from 1999. The system will help police and security agencies investigate terrorist incidents more effectively

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Queen Mother of Bhutan Honoured with 22nd Upendra Nath Brahma ‘Soldier of Humanity’ Award 2025

- **Gyalyum Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck**, Queen Mother of Bhutan, was conferred the **22nd Upendra Nath Brahma ‘Soldier of Humanity’ Award 2025**.
- The **award ceremony** was held in **February 2026** at **Bodoland University, Kokrajhar, Assam**.
- The event was attended by **Lakshman Prasad Acharya, Governor of Assam**.
- The award recognised her **lifelong humanitarian service, compassionate leadership, social development efforts, and cultural preservation work**.
- The **Upendra Nath Brahma ‘Soldier of Humanity’ Award** was instituted in **2004** by the **Upendra Nath Brahma Trust**.
- The award is named after **Upendra Nath Brahma (Bodofa)**, a revered **Bodo leader and social reformer**.
- The award upholds the ideals of **sacrifice, courage, social justice, peace, and service to humanity**.
- It is conferred on individuals with **outstanding contributions to human welfare, peace, and inclusive development**.
- During the ceremony, the **Governor of Assam** highlighted the relevance of **Bodofa’s philosophy** in contemporary society.
- He also referred to the **Assam Government’s decision to declare 31 March as Chatra Divas (Students’ Day)** in honour of **Upendra Nath Brahma**, to inspire students and youth.
- The award presented to the Queen Mother included:
 - **Citation**
 - **Memento of Bodofa Upendra Nath Brahma**
 - **Traditional Bodo Aronai**
 - **Dokhna, Gwmgra, and Endi Sadar**
 - **Cash prize of ₹2 lakh**
- She was honoured particularly for her leadership of the **Tarayana Foundation**, which has contributed to:
 - **Rural development**
 - **Women’s empowerment**
 - **Education and healthcare initiatives**
 - **Preservation of Bhutan’s cultural heritage**
- Her initiatives have significantly benefited **vulnerable communities, women, and children in remote and rural regions of Bhutan**.
- The award reflects **shared humanitarian and cultural values between India and Bhutan**.
- It underscores the importance of **people-centric development, compassion, and inclusive growth**.
- The recognition further **strengthens India–Bhutan relations**, based on **mutual respect, cultural ties, and cooperation in social development**.



MOUS AND AGREEMENT

India–GCC Sign Terms of Reference for Free Trade Agreement

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- **India and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** signed the **Terms of Reference (ToR)** for the **India–GCC Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** at **Vaniya Bhawan, New Delhi**, formally initiating FTA negotiations.
- The ToR was signed by **Ajay Bhadoo (India)** and **Raja Al Marzouqi (GCC)** in the presence of **Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal**, **Minister of State Jitin Prasada**, and **Chief Negotiator Rajesh Agrawal**.
- The **Terms of Reference** define the **scope, structure, objectives, and negotiation framework** of the India–GCC FTA, ensuring **clarity, predictability, and transparency** during negotiations and helping avoid disputes at later stages.
- The India–GCC FTA aims to create a **balanced and mutually beneficial trade framework**, especially important amid **global trade uncertainty and supply chain disruptions**.
- The **GCC is one of India's largest trading partners**. In **FY 2024–25**, **India–GCC trade stood at USD 178.56 billion**, accounting for **15.42%** of India's total global trade.
- During **FY 2024–25**, **India's exports to GCC were USD 56.87 billion**, while **imports were USD 121.68 billion**, highlighting the strategic importance of the region for India.
- Over the **last five years**, India–GCC trade has grown at an **average annual rate of 15.3%**, and the FTA is expected to **further accelerate trade growth** by reducing tariffs and improving market access.
- **Key Indian exports to GCC** include **engineering goods, rice, textiles, machinery, and gems and jewellery**.
- **Key Indian imports from GCC** include **crude oil, liquefied natural gas (LNG), petrochemicals, and gold**, making the agreement crucial for **India's energy security**.
- The FTA is expected to expand cooperation beyond goods into **services, logistics, digital trade, and investment**, strengthening long-term economic integration.
- **GCC countries have invested over USD 31.14 billion in India till September 2025**, and the FTA is expected to **boost foreign direct investment, employment generation, and food and energy security**.
- The **GCC region has a combined GDP of about USD 2.3 trillion** and a **population of around 61.5 million**, enhancing its economic and strategic relevance for India.
- Nearly **10 million Indians live and work in GCC countries**, reinforcing **strong people-to-people ties** and adding to the strategic importance of the India–GCC FTA.
- The **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** was **established in 1981** as a **regional political and economic alliance** comprising **Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates**, with headquarters in **Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**.
- The India–GCC FTA aligns with **India's broader global trade strategy**, aimed at **diversifying markets, securing energy supplies, strengthening strategic partnerships, and enhancing India's role in global value chains**, making it highly relevant for **competitive exams**.



India and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have signed the Terms of Reference for a Free Trade Agreement in New Delhi today. Presiding over the ceremony, Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said India's agreement for a free trade agreement with the six GCC countries will open another major trade corridor. Mr Goyal noted that India will soon announce the first tranche of a trade deal agreed with the United States. He said that th

DEFENCE NEWS

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Sagar Defence Delivers First Batch of Unmanned Surface Vessels to Indian Navy

- **Sagar Defence Engineering Private Limited (Sagar Defence)**, based in Mumbai, Maharashtra, successfully delivered the **first two Unmanned Surface Vessels (USVs)** to the **Indian Navy (IN)**, marking its maiden batch delivery.
- The USVs are designed for **high-speed autonomous operations** with advanced payloads and feature **Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven navigation** and real-time communication systems.
- The vessels can exceed **50 knots** and incorporate **stealth features** to reduce radar signature.
- In terms of **combat capability**, the interceptor craft is equipped with a **12.7 mm gun** and has provisions for **short-range missiles** and **loitering munitions**.
- The USVs can counter small hostile boats, intercept fast targets, and conduct **precision strikes**, combining **patrol and offensive roles**.
- The platforms offer **multi-mission capabilities** including maritime surveillance, reconnaissance, and support to **anti-submarine warfare (ASW)** operations.
- The vessels are built with **over 70% indigenous content**, highlighting India's growing defence manufacturing capability.
- A **contract for 12 USVs** was signed between the Indian Navy and Sagar Defence on **8 January 2023** under the **indigenous autonomous boat swarm programme**.
- The delivery aligns with the Government of India's **Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative**, promoting self-reliance in defence technology.

SAGAR DEFENCE DELIVERS MAIDEN UNMANNED SURFACE VESSELS TO NAVY IN INDIGENOUS MILESTONE

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 02, 2026 BY INDIAN DEFENCE NEWS



Sagar Defence Engineering Pvt Ltd, a Mumbai-based firm specialising in advanced maritime systems, has achieved a significant milestone by dispatching the first two Unmanned Surface Vessels (USVs) to the Indian Navy.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Flags Off Joint Indian Expedition to Mount Aconcagua, Argentina – Tallest Peak Outside Asia

- **Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** flagged off a **joint Indian mountaineering expedition to Mount Aconcagua, Argentina**, the **highest peak in South America** and the tallest mountain **outside Asia** at about **6,960 metres (m)**, from New Delhi, Delhi.
- The expedition is organized by **Nehru Institute of Mountaineering (NIM)**, Uttarkashi, Uttarakhand, in collaboration with **Jawahar Institute of Mountaineering & Winter Sports (JIM & WS)**, Pahalgam, Jammu & Kashmir (J&K).
- The Indian mountaineering team comprises **six members**, led by **Colonel Hem Chandra Singh**, Principal of NIM.
- Other team members include **Capt G. Santhosh Kumar**, **Deep Bahadur Sahi**, **Vinod Gusain**, **Naib Subedar Bhupinder Singh**, and **Havildar Ramesh Kumar**.
- The expedition is scheduled to begin on **6 February 2026** and is expected to conclude by the end of **February 2026**.



SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Bharat Earth Movers Limited Signs Tripartite Master Research Agreement to Boost Collaborative Research Initiatives

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- **Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML)**, a **Public Sector Undertaking (PSU)** under the **Ministry of Defence (MoD)**, signed a **Tripartite Master Research Agreement (MRA)** to strengthen research collaboration.
- The agreement was signed with the **Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru** and the **Foundation for Science, Innovation and Development (FSID)**, the innovation arm of IISc.
- Signatories to the MRA included **Shantanu Roy (CMD, BEML Limited)**, **Govindan Rangarajan (Director, IISc)**, and **B. Gurumoorthy (Director, FSID)**.
- The purpose of the agreement is to jointly promote **next-generation research** and **technology development** across critical sectors.
- The partnership will accelerate **blue-sky research**, **applied research**, and **translational research** in high-technology domains.
- **Focus areas** include **aerospace and defence technologies**, **rail and metro systems**, **next-generation mobility**, **mining and construction equipment**, **maritime technologies**, **green technologies and sustainability**, and **advanced manufacturing systems**.
- BEML has committed **substantial investments** in **Research & Development (R&D)** to support and sustain the collaborative innovation programmes under this initiative.



About Bharat Earth Movers Limited :

- **Founded** : May 1964
- **Headquarters** : Bangalore, Karnataka, India
- **Chairman & MD** : Shantanu Roy
- **Owner** : Government of India (54.03%)

Digantara Signs Pact with Singapore's Defence Science and Technology Agency to Develop Satellite Protection and Space Situational Awareness Technologies

- **Digantara Industries**, a space technology firm based in **Bengaluru, Karnataka**, signed a partnership agreement with Singapore's **Defence Science and Technology Agency (DSTA)** to co-develop technologies for **satellite protection** and **Space Situational Awareness (SSA)**.
- The agreement was announced at the **Space Summit 2026** held in **Singapore**, marking a significant step in **India–Singapore space defence collaboration**.



Key Highlights :

- This is the **first formal partnership** between Singapore's defence research agency and an **Indian space technology company**.
- The pact aims to develop **advanced SSA tools** to monitor **orbital traffic** and track **space debris** that could threaten operational satellites.
- **SSA systems** help detect, track, and predict movement of satellites and debris, enabling **collision risk assessment** and **early warning alerts**.
- Under the agreement, tools will support **Singapore's National Space Agency** in strengthening **space domain awareness** capabilities.

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- Digantara will provide **sovereign deployable solutions**, allowing Singapore to **independently operate and manage** SSA systems within its own infrastructure.
- The partnership includes **flight dynamics services** and **conjunction screening**, which identify **close approaches** between satellites and debris.
- **Collision avoidance alerts** will be generated to help satellite operators take **preventive manoeuvres** when risks are detected.
- The tools will be used for **routine orbital monitoring** as well as specific **high-risk debris events**.
- The collaboration integrates Digantara's sensor data with **Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based analytics** for enhanced tracking accuracy.
- Singapore will participate in **assembly, integration, and testing** of Digantara's upcoming **space-based SSA sensor**.
- The **planned sensor** will contribute to **real-time satellite and debris tracking data** for Singapore's monitoring systems.
- Overall, the agreement strengthens **international cooperation** in **space safety, satellite security, and debris collision prevention** technologies.

Adani Defence Signs Memorandum of Understanding with Leonardo to Develop Helicopter Manufacturing Ecosystem in India

- **Adani Defence & Aerospace**, the defence arm of Adani Enterprises Limited (AEL), signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with **Leonardo**, an Italian aerospace, defence and security company.
- The partnership aims to develop a **fully integrated helicopter manufacturing ecosystem** in India.
- The MoU was signed by **Ashish Rajvanshi** (CEO, Adani Defence & Aerospace) and **Stefano Villanti** (SVP – Helicopters, Leonardo).
- The signing took place in the presence of **Rajesh Kumar Singh** (Defence Secretary) and **A. Anbarasu** (Director General – Acquisition, Ministry of Defence).
- The agreement covers **manufacturing and assembly** of helicopter platforms in India.
- It also includes setting up **Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO)** facilities to support lifecycle services.
- The partnership will establish **pilot training infrastructure** to strengthen domestic operational capabilities.
- It provides for **phased indigenisation** of helicopter components and systems over time.
- The collaboration will focus on Leonardo's helicopter platforms — **AW169M** and **AW109 TrekkerM**.
- The initiative aligns with the Government of India's flagship programmes "**Make in India**" and "**Aatmanirbhar Bharat**", promoting self-reliance in defence manufacturing.

Adani Group & Italian major Leonardo to set up helicopter manufacturing ecosystem in India

NEW DELHI: Adani Group and Italian major Leonardo on Tuesday announced a strategic partnership to establish an integrated helicopter manufacturing ecosystem in India as the diversified group strengthens its presence in the high-growth potential aerospace sector.

The announcement comes a week after Adani Defence & Aerospace and Brazilian major Embraer announced a strategic collaboration that aims to set up a regional aircraft manufacturing facility in the country.

Adani Defence & Aerospace and Leonardo on Tuesday inked a Memorandum of Understanding for the partnership at an event in the national capital.

The partnership will target the Indian Armed Forces' requirements, particularly for Leonardo's advanced AW169M and AW109 Trekker-M helicopters.

"The collaboration will deliver phased indigenisation, robust maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) capabilities, and comprehensive pilot training," a release said.

It will be a significant boost for the 'Make in India' efforts and to make the country more self-reliant.

India has a low helicopter penetration density of less than 250 helicopters for the country's population, and the country will need around 100 helicopters annually for the next 10 years.

Adani Defence & Aerospace Director Jeet Adani said it was laying the foundation for an aviation ecosystem that serves the nation across civil and defence needs.

The partnership with Leonardo is rooted not only in shared expertise but in shared purpose, he said.

"Together, we will build an ecosystem on Indian soil that brings manufacturing, assembly, training, and world-class support into one cohesive whole," he added.

Adani Defence & Aerospace CEO Ashish Rajvanshi said the two companies are working on the detailed business plan, including location and expected investment, and the degree of technology transfer is going to be aligned with the requirements of the Indian Armed Forces.

"You would expect that an ecosystem of this size is not going to be a small investment. It is going to be spread over a good 10 to 15 years, because this is the first time it is happening in the country."

"So, over a couple of weeks and we're going to come back and address some of these areas," he said.

With the Indian Armed Forces projecting demand for over 1,000 helicopters in the coming decade, he said this partnership realises the vision for sovereign manufacturing.

The global helicopter market is expected to be worth \$100 billion by 2033. Rajvanshi also said India's helicopter market, which accounts for 2 per cent of the global market, offers a significant growth opportunity across defence, civil and commercial segments.

Australia Approves Genetically Modified (GM) Purple Bliss Tomatoes for Direct Sale in Shops

- **Australia** has approved **Genetically Modified (GM) Purple Bliss** tomatoes for fresh sale, allowing them to be sold directly in shops.
- The **Purple Bliss** tomatoes were developed by **Norfolk Healthy Produce** and derive their purple colour from **snapdragon flower genes**.

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- In **January 2026**, **Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ)** approved the tomatoes for sale as fresh fruit and for use in processed foods like tomato pastes and sun-dried tomatoes.
- **Purple Bliss tomatoes** are the **second GM fresh food** approved in Australia; the first being a **GM banana**, which is not yet available in markets.
- **Genetically Modified (GM) crops** are plants whose DNA has been modified using **genetic engineering** methods for agricultural purposes.
- GM crops were first introduced in the **USA in 1994** with the **Flavr Savr tomato**.
- An array of GM crops such as **brinjal, tomato, maize, and chickpea** are in various stages of trials in **India**.
- **India** is one of the leading producers of GM crops in the world.
- **Bt-Cotton** is the **only approved GM crop** for commercial cultivation in India, introduced in **2002**.

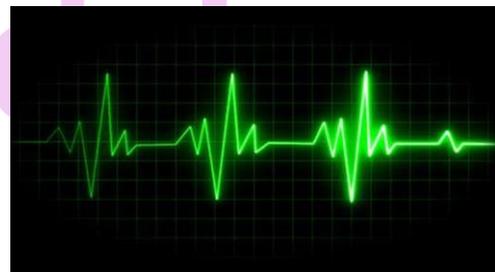


About Australia :

- Prime Minister : Anthony Albanese
- Capital : Canberra
- Currency : Australian dollar (\$)

Indian Researchers Develop Affordable Biosensor for Early Detection of Heart Attacks

- Researchers have developed a **flexible and economical biosensor** capable of rapidly detecting **myoglobin**, a critical **cardiac biomarker** linked to the early stages of a **heart attack**.
- The innovation is expected to significantly improve **early diagnosis**, particularly in **resource-limited healthcare settings**, by enabling faster and more accessible **cardiac screening**.
- The biosensor was developed by doctoral researcher **Mohsina Afrooz** through a **joint programme** between **BITS Pilani Hyderabad** and **RMIT University**, strengthening **Indo-Australian cooperation** in advanced healthcare technologies.
- The **graphene-based sensor** detects **myoglobin**, a protein released into the bloodstream soon after **cardiac muscle injury**, allowing physicians to diagnose cardiac events earlier than conventional methods.
- **Rapid detection of myoglobin** is crucial for timely medical intervention and improved patient outcomes.
- The biosensor is **lightweight, flexible, low-cost**, and suitable for **portable and point-of-care testing**, making it ideal for rural hospitals, emergency care units, and low-resource health facilities.
- An **Indian patent** has been filed for the technology, demonstrating its potential for **real-world deployment**.
- The research aims to make **heart attack detection faster, simpler, and scalable**.
- The findings have been published in the international journal “**IEEE Sensors Letters**”, highlighting the scientific credibility and **translational promise** of the innovation.



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APPS & PORTALS

National Biodiversity Authority Launches Digital Portal for Electronic Certificates of Origin for Cultivated Medicinal Plants

- The **National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)**, a statutory body under the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)**, has launched a **digital portal** for the electronic issuance of **Certificates of Origin (CoO)** for **cultivated medicinal plants**.
- The portal provides a **single-window, end-to-end online system** for submission, processing, and issuance of CoO, including **automated Form 12 generation** for eligible stakeholders.
- The portal supports **Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) exemption** applications for cultivated medicinal plants, simplifying compliance for **research institutions, AYUSH sector entities, and seed sector stakeholders**.
- The **Biological Diversity (Amendment) Act, 2023** was enacted by Parliament, passed by **Lok Sabha on 25 July 2023** and **Rajya Sabha on 1 August 2023**, and operationalised through MoEFCC notifications in 2024–2025.
- The digital CoO portal implements provisions under the **Biological Diversity Rules, 2024–2025**, enabling electronic generation of Certificates of Origin for cultivated medicinal plants.
- The **NBA**, established in **2003** under the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**, functions through the Authority, Secretariat, **State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs)**, **Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)**, and Expert Committees.
- The portal can be accessed at <https://absefiling.nbaindia.in/>, providing stakeholders with transparent and streamlined access to certificates required for **ABS exemptions**.

Government Launches Digital Portal for Issuance of Certificates of Origin for Cultivated Medicinal Plants

Posted On: 05 FEB 2026 9:07AM by PIB Delhi

The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, has developed and operationalised a digital portal to facilitate the electronic issuance of Certificates of Origin to stakeholders seeking Access and Benefit Sharing exemptions for cultivated medicinal plants.

The portal functions as a single-window, end-to-end online system for processing applications and issuing Certificates of Origin. It can be accessed at <https://absefiling.nbaindia.in/>.

The Biological Diversity (Amendment) Act, 2023 was enacted by Parliament with the passage of the Bill by the Lok Sabha on 25 July 2023 and the Rajya Sabha on 1 August 2023. MoEFCC notified the Biological Diversity Rules in 2024 and 2025.

To operationalise the provisions of the amended Act and address procedural requirements across stakeholder groups, including the AYUSH sector, seed sector and research institutions, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change notified the Biological Diversity Rules in 2024 and 2025.

The amended Rules provide for the electronic generation of Certificates of Origin for cultivated medicinal plants through a designated digital platform.

SPORTS NEWS

Royal Challengers Bengaluru Clinch Back-to-Back WPL Titles in 2026

- **Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB)** won the **Women's Premier League (WPL) 2026 title**, defeating **Delhi Capitals (DC)** by **6 wickets** in the final held at **Vadodara**.
- RCB successfully chased a **record target of 204 runs**, the **highest successful run chase in WPL history** and the highest chase in any women's T20 final.
- Batting first, **Delhi Capitals scored 203/4**, the **second-highest first-innings total in a women's T20 final**.
 - **Jemimah Rodrigues** scored **57 runs**.
 - **Laura Wolvaardt** contributed **44 runs**.
- RCB's chase suffered an early setback at **9/1**, after which **Smriti Mandhana and Georgia Voll** produced a match-winning partnership.
- The **Mandhana–Voll partnership added 165 runs off 92 balls**, the **highest partnership for any wicket in WPL history**, completely changing the momentum of the final.



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- **Georgia Voll scored 79 runs**, while **Smriti Mandhana smashed 87 runs off 41 balls**, including **12 fours and 3 sixes**.
- Despite late wickets of **Georgia Voll, Richa Ghosh, and Smriti Mandhana**, RCB held their nerve to finish the chase in the **final over**, sealing a dramatic victory.
- **Smriti Mandhana** was named **Player of the Match** for her decisive knock that anchored the historic chase under pressure.
- With this victory, **RCB lifted their second WPL title**, winning **back-to-back championships (2024 and 2026)**, while **Delhi Capitals lost their fourth WPL final**.
- **Prize Money (WPL 2026)**:
 - **Winner**: Royal Challengers Bengaluru – ₹6 crore
 - **Runner-up**: Delhi Capitals – ₹3 crore
- **Individual Awards**:
 - **Orange Cap (Most Runs)**: Smriti Mandhana – ₹5 lakh
 - **Purple Cap (Most Wickets)**: Sophie Devine – ₹5 lakh
 - **Most Valuable Player (MVP)**: Sophie Devine – ₹5 lakh
 - **Emerging Player**: Nandini Sharma – ₹5 lakh
- **WPL Winners So Far**:
 - **2023** – Mumbai Indians (Runner-up: Delhi Capitals)
 - **2024** – Royal Challengers Bengaluru (Runner-up: Delhi Capitals)
 - **2025** – Mumbai Indians (Runner-up: Delhi Capitals)
 - **2026** – Royal Challengers Bengaluru (Runner-up: Delhi Capitals)
- Across **four WPL seasons**, only **Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bengaluru** have won the title, underlining their dominance and the continued runner-up finish pattern of **Delhi Capitals**.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Interfaith Harmony Week (WIHW) 2026 Observed from 1–7 February

- **World Interfaith Harmony Week (WIHW) 2026** is being observed globally from **1 February to 7 February 2026** under the leadership of the **United Nations (UN)**.
- The observance aims to promote **peace, tolerance, non-violence, dialogue, and mutual understanding** among people of **different religions and beliefs**, especially in a world facing **conflict, division, and religious intolerance**.
- The concept of WIHW is rooted in the **“A Common Word” initiative (2007)**, which brought together **Muslim and Christian leaders**.
 - The initiative highlighted shared ethical values such as **love for God and love for one’s neighbour**.
 - It emphasized that **common moral principles** can act as a foundation for **peaceful coexistence** among faiths.
- Growing global concerns over **religious intolerance and violence** led to the idea of dedicating a **specific global week** to interfaith harmony.
- The proposal for observing World Interfaith Harmony Week was presented at the **65th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** on **23 September 2010**.
- The proposal was put forward by:
 - **Abdullah II**, King of Jordan
 - **Ghazi bin Muhammad**, Prince of Jordan



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- They urged the international community to recognize the importance of **interfaith cooperation** for building **lasting peace** and reducing **religious conflict**.
- On **20 October 2010**, the United Nations officially adopted the proposal through **Resolution A/RES/65/5**.
 - The resolution designated **1–7 February every year** as **World Interfaith Harmony Week**.
- The **first World Interfaith Harmony Week** was observed from **1–7 February 2011**.

Daily CA One- Liner: February 7th

- **Pariksha Pe Charcha (PPC) 2026**, the **9th edition** of the annual interaction programme, was held at **Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi**.
- The **National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC)** is implementing **Yuva Sahakar Scheme** and **Swayamshakti Sahakar Yojana** to promote **innovation, inclusivity, youth entrepreneurship, and women empowerment** in India's cooperative sector.
- The **Karnataka government** announced the rollout of an **automatic property mutation system** to speed up **land and property transactions** and improve transparency in revenue administration
- **Kerala** has become the **first Indian state** to announce a **dedicated Elderly Budget** in its **Financial Year 2026–27 (FY27) State Budget**, drawing national attention to ageing-related policy challenges
- **Union Minister of Home Affairs and Cooperation Amit Shah** launched **Bharat Taxi**, India's **first cooperative-based ride-hailing platform**, at **Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi**
- **Gyalum Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck**, Queen Mother of Bhutan, was conferred the **22nd Upendra Nath Brahma 'Soldier of Humanity' Award 2025**
- **India and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** signed the **Terms of Reference (ToR)** for the **India–GCC Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** at **Vaniya Bhawan, New Delhi**, formally initiating FTA negotiations
- **Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB)** won the **Women's Premier League (WPL) 2026 title**, defeating **Delhi Capitals (DC)** by **6 wickets** in the final held at **Vadodara**
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** bought only **4 tonnes of gold in 2025**, significantly lower than **73 tonnes in 2024**, mainly due to **very high gold prices**.
- The **Insurance Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025** came into force on **5 February 2026**, allowing **100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** in the insurance sector.
- **SBI Mutual Fund (SBIMF)** launched **InvesTap Nxt**, a next-generation **digital investment platform** designed to make investing simpler and smarter.
- **State Bank of India (SBI)** raised a **\$1 billion (₹7,100 crore) social loan** from Japan's **Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG)**.
- **Axis Bank** launched "**Rooftop Solar Finance**", a new financing product aimed at helping Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (**MSMEs**) adopt solar energy systems on their commercial rooftops.
- **Alwar district** in Rajasthan became the **first district in India** to achieve **100% insurance coverage** under the "**Insurance for All by 2047**" initiative.
- **Sagar Defence Engineering Private Limited (Sagar Defence)**, based in Mumbai, Maharashtra, successfully delivered the **first two Unmanned Surface Vessels (USVs)** to the **Indian Navy (IN)**, marking its maiden batch delivery.
- **Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** flagged off a **joint Indian mountaineering expedition to Mount Aconcagua, Argentina**, the **highest peak in South America** and the tallest mountain **outside Asia** at about **6,960 metres (m)**, from New Delhi, Delhi.

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- **Adani Defence & Aerospace**, the defence arm of Adani Enterprises Limited (AEL), signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with **Leonardo**, an Italian aerospace, defence and security company.
- **Australia** has approved **Genetically Modified (GM) Purple Bliss tomatoes** for fresh sale, allowing them to be sold directly in shops.
- Researchers have developed a **flexible and economical biosensor** capable of rapidly detecting **myoglobin**, a critical **cardiac biomarker** linked to the early stages of a **heart attack**.
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