

1. Government Launches RELIEF Scheme for Exporters

- The **Government of India** launched the scheme to support **Indian exporters** impacted by **West Asia geopolitical tensions**.
- The intervention specifically addresses **natural gas import disruptions** caused by the **Strait of Hormuz blockade**.
- The **Resilience and Logistics Intervention for Export Facilitation (RELIEF)** scheme was introduced with a **₹497 crore** budget.
- It supports exporters affected by **West Asia maritime/logistics disruptions**. **ECGC Ltd.** is nodal agency.
- The scheme waives **port and storage charges** and offers procedural relaxations.
- it provides **up to 100% additional risk cover for eligible already-insured shipments** and **up to 95% for eligible upcoming consignments**
- MSME reimbursement is **up to 50%** subject to ceilings **up to ₹50 lakh**.

2. Progress of SVAMITVA Scheme for Rural Land Mapping

- The **Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas (SVAMITVA)** scheme was launched in **2020** by the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj**.
- The initiative aims to issue official **"Property Cards"** to rural landowners to resolve disputes and enable bank loans.
- The program heavily relies on **drone mapping** for precise land measurement.
- As of **March 11, 2026**, **3.29 lakh** out of the targeted **3.44 lakh** villages have been successfully surveyed. • **3.10 crore** property cards have been generated, with **2.65 crore** cards already distributed.
- Focuses extensively on six major states: **Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh (MP), Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh (UP), and Uttarakhand**.
- **Uttar Pradesh (UP)** alone accounts for **1.15 crore** generated property cards.
- The scheme assigns a **14-digit Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN)**, also known as a **"Bhu-ID"**, which functions as a land equivalent to **Aadhaar**.

3. Cabinet Approves Bhavya Yojana for Industrial Parks

- The **Cabinet** approved **₹33,660 crore** for the **Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana (Bhavya Yojana)**.
- Aims to build **100 plug-and-play industrial parks**, with each spanning **100 to 1,000 acres**.
- The project is spearheaded by the **National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation (NICDC)**.
- Offers **₹1 crore per acre** for core infrastructure development, such as roads and **Information and Communication Technology (ICT)**.
- The scheme provides up to **25%** financial support for external project costs.

4. Punjab Initiates Phase 2 of Sikhya Kranti Education Reform

- **Punjab** recently achieved recognition as a top performer in the **PARAKH Rashtriya Survekshan** for classes **3, 6, and 9**.
- **Punjab** initiated **Phase 2** of its education revolution with a massive **₹3,500 crore** investment.
- The funding comprises a **₹2,500 crore** loan from the **World Bank** and **₹1,000 crore** from state funds.
- The **6-year initiative** aims to upgrade state schools to global standards.

5. Jal Jeevan Mission Mandates 10-Year Maintenance Contracts

- The **Jal Jeevan Mission** was originally launched in **2019** to ensure tap water connectivity to rural households.
- The overarching mission timeline has been officially extended to **2028**.
- The **Jal Jeevan Mission** currently holds a massive **₹8.69 lakh crore** financial allocation.

6. Government Launches Fare se Fursat Scheme for Affordable Flying

- The government introduced the **'Fare Se Fursat – One Route One Fare'** initiative concept to make air travel affordable and accessible for the general public.
- Launched by the **Union Minister of Civil Aviation, Rammohan Naidu**, and **Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister, Mohan Yadav**.
- The scheme fixes airfares across six specific **Alliance Air** routes (e.g., **Delhi-Rewa, Rewa-Raipur, Delhi-Jaipur, Chennai-Hyderabad**).

- The inaugural flight under this scheme linked **Rewa and Raipur**.
 - In a related regional aviation development, a **₹100 crore** barracks for the **Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)** was inaugurated at **Khajuraho Airport**.
7. **Approval of Small Hydro Power (SHP) Development Scheme**
- A **₹2,584.60 crore** outlay was approved for the **Small Hydro Power (SHP) Development Scheme**.
 - The operational period covers **Financial Year (FY) 2026-27 to 2030-31**.
 - Targets the installation of **1,500 Megawatts (MW)** of capacity via smaller projects ranging from **1 to 25 MW**.
8. **Launch of Krishi Sakhi Program for Women Farmers**
- The initiative closely aligns with the **United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UN FAO)** designating **2026** as the **International Year of Women Farmers**.
 - The year-long **Krishi Sakhi Program** was officially launched.
 - It is executed by the **Agriculture Insurance Company of India (AIC)**, an organization originally formed in **2002**.
9. **Ministry of Ayush Launches Yoga 365 and Digital Partnerships**
- Launched the **"Yoga 365"** campaign to encourage continuous daily yoga practice.
 - Signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with the **Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)** to integrate **Yoga and Ayurveda** into the lives of personnel and their families.
 - **Ayush Excel** partnered with rapid delivery app **Zepto** for online product availability.
 - The **All India Institute of Ayurveda** partnered with **CAYEIT** for advancements in digital Ayurveda.
10. **India's First LPG ATM Launched in Gurugram**
- **Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL)** launched the **"Bharatgas Insta LPG"** ATM.
 - The automated facility is installed at **Central Park Flower Valley in Gurugram, Haryana**.
 - Provides **24/7 self-service** access to cooking gas cylinders for local residents.
 - The ATM seamlessly accepts digital payments and dispenses lightweight **15kg composite cylinders**.
 - The automated machine is capable of holding up to **10 cylinders** simultaneously.
11. **Chandigarh University Launches Healthcare Centre in Uttar Pradesh**
- **Chandigarh University** launched a **Centre of Excellence in Smart Healthcare** in **Uttar Pradesh (UP)**.
 - Will train **1.5 lakh youths** over a period of **five years**.
12. **Kalinjar Fort Declared National Geo-Heritage Site**
- A historically significant fort featuring cultural evidence from the **Gupta and Chandela** dynasties, along with the famous **Neelkanth Mahadev temple**.
 - The **Geological Survey of India (GSI)** officially declared the fort, located in the **Banda district of Uttar Pradesh (UP)**, as a **National Geo-Heritage Site**.
13. **President Droupadi Murmu's Visit and Odisha State Milestones**
- **President Droupadi Murmu** conducted an official visit to **Odisha** to inaugurate key skill and distance education programs.
 - Launched the **Ministry of Skill Development's "Skill the Nation AI Challenge"** (SOAR initiative).
 - Inaugurated an **Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)** center in **Rairangpur**.
 - Addressed the **Black Swan Summit** held in **Bhubaneswar**.
 - **Static Data on Odisha: Utkal Divas** is celebrated on **April 1st**.
 - State National Parks include **Bhitarkanika** and **Simlipal**; hosts the **Satkosia Tiger Reserve** and the **Nandankanan Zoological Park**.
14. **HDFC Bank Undergoes Major Leadership Changes**
- **HDFC Bank** remains India's largest private bank, ranks **73rd globally**, and is officially classified as a **Domestic Systemically Important Bank (D-SIB)**.
 - **Atanu Chakraborty** resigned as Chairman of the bank.
 - **Keki Mistry** was appointed as the interim part-time Chairman for a duration of **three months**.
15. **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Regulatory Updates and Approvals**

- Held its **622nd Central Board Meeting** in **Patna**, chaired by **Sanjay Malhotra**. The board approved the **FY 2026-27 budget** and launched the "**Utkarsh 3.0**" institutional roadmap (2026-2029).
 - Penalized **Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC)** with **₹31.80 lakh** for non-compliance regarding inoperative accounts.
 - Approved the amalgamation of two Gujarat cooperative banks: **Lalbaug Cooperative Bank (Vadodara)** and **Akhand Anand Cooperative Bank (Surat)**, effective **March 23**.
 - Approved **Bain Capital's** investment of **₹4,385 crore** into **Manappuram Finance** entities.
- 16. CEA Projects Doubling of India's Power Capacity by FY36**
- National power demand is currently growing at **6% annually**, and is heavily expected to reach **459 Gigawatts (GW)**.
 - The **Central Electricity Authority (CEA)** launched the midterm review of the **20th Electric Power Survey** at the **Bharat Electricity Summit 2026** in **New Delhi**.
 - Projected that India's power capacity will more than double from **520 GW** to **1,121 GW** by **Financial Year 2036 (FY36)**.
 - By FY36, solar energy will provide **509 GW**, coal **315 GW**, and wind **155 GW**.
 - Currently, non-fossil fuels account for **786 GW**, which represents **70% of capacity** but only **49% of generation share**.
- 17. National Economic Reports: Mining, Exports, and Core Sector Data**
- An **ASSOCHAM** and **ICRA** report at the **India Mines and Minerals Conclave 2026** declared **Odisha** as the top contributor to India's mining economy, followed by **Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh (MP)**.
 - The **February 2026 DPIIT NIRYAT** data reported total merchandise exports slightly contracted by **0.81% year-on-year**.
 - The **Combined Index of Eight Core Industries** (holding **40.27% IIP weightage**) grew by **2.3%** in February.
 - **Tamil Nadu** emerged as India's top textile exporter (**\$7,997 million, 21.84% share**), followed by **Gujarat** and **Maharashtra**.
 - The **United States (US)** remained India's largest export destination (despite a **13% decline**), followed by the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)**. **China** surpassed the **Netherlands** to become India's 3rd largest export destination (shipments up **32.4%**).
- 18. India's Position in Recent Global Rankings and Indices**
- India ranked **116th out of 147** countries in the **World Happiness Report 2026**, achieving a score of **4.536**.
 - In the **World Economic Forum's (WEF) "Rethinking AI Sovereignty"** white paper, India ranked **8th globally** for AI investment.
 - In the Happiness Report, **Finland** secured the first position, while **Afghanistan** ranked last.
- 20. Key Developments in Financial Markets, Regulations, and Commodities**
- The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)** approved **Minimum Support Price (MSP)** funding for the **Cotton Corporation of India (CCI)** for 2023-24 (disputed source figures report funding at **₹178.56 crore** and **₹1718.56 crore**).
 - Premature redemption for the **2019-20 Series IV Sovereign Gold Bonds (SGBs)** was fixed at **₹15,814** per unit.
 - **Edelweiss Asset Management Company (AMC)** launched India's first hybrid passive index fund, splitting **70%** into equities (**Nifty Large Midcap 250 Index**) and **30%** into 8 to 13-year **Government Securities (G-Secs)**.
 - **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)**, chaired by **Tuhin Kanta Pandey**, penalized **18 companies** for share manipulation, fake volume generation, and circular trading.
 - India produces **325.22 lakh bales** of cotton (**25% global output**), with MSP fixed at **₹620/quintal** (medium staple) and **₹720/quintal** (long staple).

- The **United States (US) Federal Reserve** (founded in **1913**, headed by **Jerome Powell**) held its benchmark rate steady at **3.5% to 3.75%**, posing a risk of foreign capital shifting from India to the US.
 - From **April 1st**, tax-free capital gains on **SGBs** apply only to original subscribers holding the full **8-year maturity**; secondary buyers face a **12.5% Long Term Capital Gains (LTCG) tax**.
20. **Global Economic, Trade, and Health Developments**
- **Elon Musk** topped the **Forbes Billionaires List** with **\$839 billion**, followed by **Larry Page, Sergey Brin, Jeff Bezos, and Mark Zuckerberg**.
 - **Meta** permanently shut down its Metaverse project after sinking a massive **\$80 billion** into its development.
 - The **World Trade Organization (WTO)** projected global merchandise trade growth for **2026** to sharply slow down to **1.9%** (down from **4.6% in 2025**).
 - **Argentina** officially withdrew from the **World Health Organization (WHO)** under the **Vienna Convention's** one-year notice period.
 - **Mukesh Ambani** emerged as India's wealthiest individual at **\$99.7 billion**.
21. **India's Diplomatic Engagements and Bilateral Pacts**
- Indian envoy **Santosh Jha** met Sri Lankan official **K.D. Lal Kantha** to discuss modern technology integration to boost agricultural yields.
 - The **Indian Army** constructed a **240-foot Bailey Bridge** on the **Chilodua road** in **Sri Lanka** as part of **Cyclone Diva** relief efforts.
 - India signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with **Bhutan** for **Postal Cooperation** to share digital and technological ecosystem best practices.
22. **National Defense Exercises and Technological Advancements**
- The **Indian Army's Southern Command** executed a 13-day bilateral/military exercise named "**Exercise Amogh Jwala**" (or Amogh Jala) at the **Babina Field Firing Ranges** in **Uttar Pradesh (UP)**.
 - The **Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO)** successfully test-fired the **Pinaka** long-range guided rocket and the **Agni-3 missile** from **Chandipur, Odisha**.
23. **Key National Appointments and Resignations**
- **Vikram K. Doraiswami** was appointed India's Ambassador to **China**, replacing **Pradeep Kumar Rawat** (who was previously High Commissioner to the UK).
 - **Yumnam Khemchand Singh** became the **13th Chief Minister of Manipur**, replacing **N. Biren Singh**.
 - **Vinay Murlidhar** was appointed **MD & CEO** of **YES Bank** for three years, replacing **Prashant Kumar**.
 - **R. Vijay Anand** was appointed **MD & CEO** of **City Union Bank** for three years, replacing **N. Kamakodi**, with cricketer **Ravindra Jadeja** named as brand ambassador.
 - **Kota Ravi** replaced **D.K. Sunil** as the **Chairman and Managing Director (CMD)** of the Bengaluru-headquartered **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)**.
 - **Sadhvi Niranjani Jyoti** was named Chairperson of the **National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)**, a 1993-formed statutory body that became constitutional in 2018 under the **Ministry of Social Justice**.
24. **Major International Appointments and Elections**
- **Anutin Charnvirakul** was re-elected as Prime Minister of **Thailand**.
 - **Mamady Doumbouya** was appointed President of **Guinea**.
 - **Shaya Mohsen Zindani** was appointed Prime Minister of **Yemen**.
 - **Yoweri Museveni** was appointed President of **Uganda**.
 - **Soraya Aghaei** became the first Iranian woman appointed to the Switzerland-based **International Olympic Committee (IOC)**.
 - **Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani** was named President of the Kuwait City-headquartered **Olympic Council of Asia**.

25. National Awards: Padma Awards 2026 and Honorary Knighthood

- A total of **131 Padma Awards 2026** were distributed, including **5 Padma Vibhushan, 13 Padma Bhushan, and 113 Padma Shri**.
- The honors included **19 women, 6 foreigners/Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), and 16 posthumous awardees**.
- Tata Group Chairman **N. Chandrasekaran** received an **Honorary Knighthood (KBE)** from the **United Kingdom (UK)** government.
- The prestigious **Padma Vibhushan** went to **Dharmendra Singh Deol (Art), N. Rajam (Art), K.T. Thomas (Public Affairs), V.S. Achuthanandan (Public Affairs, posthumous), and P. Narayanan (Literature & Education)**.

26. International Awards: Oscars, Water Prize, and French Legion of Honor

- The **98th Academy Awards (Oscars)** were distributed by **AMPAS** across 24 categories. **Paul Thomas Anderson's "One Battle After Another"** won **Best Picture and Best Director** (6 awards total).
- 44-year-old Iranian scientist **Professor Kaveh Madani** (Director of the UN University Institute for Water) won the **Stockholm Water Prize 2026** at UNESCO in Paris, becoming the youngest laureate in 35 years.
- Former Indian Envoy to Paris (2020-2024), **Jawed Ashraf**, received the **"Commandeur de la Légion d'Honneur"** (French Legion of Honor).
- At the Oscars, **Michael Jordan** won Best Actor for the film "Sinner" (which led with 16 nominations), **Jessie Buckley** won Best Actress ("Hamnet"), **Sean Penn** won Best Supporting Actor ("One Battle After Another"), and **Amy Madigan** won Best Supporting Actress.
- **Autumn Durald** ("Sinner") became the first woman of color to win **Best Cinematography**.

27. Developments in Cricket, Football, and Athletics

- At the **Naman Awards 2026** by the **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)**, **Shubman Gill** won the **Polly Umrigar Award**, and **Smriti Mandhana** won **Best Women's International Cricketer** for the 5th time. **Roger Binny** and **Rahul Dravid** won the **Col. CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award**, while **Mithali Raj** received the **Women's Lifetime Achievement Award**.
- The **BCCI** appointed **Mithun Manhas** as the new President following the passing of **Inderjit Singh Bindra**, and signed a **₹270 crore** deal with **Google's AI Gemini** for the **Indian Premier League (IPL)**.
- **Royal Challengers Bangalore** won the 4th season of the **Women's Premier League (WPL)** by defeating **Delhi Capitals**.
- Footballer **Lionel Messi** scored his 900th official goal at the **CONCACAF Champions Cup**, joining **Cristiano Ronaldo**.
- **Bhubaneswar, India** will host the **22nd World Indoor Athletics Championship in 2028** at the **Kalinga Stadium** (India becomes the 4th Asian host nation), while the **23rd edition** goes to **Astana, Kazakhstan**.
- **Malta** will host the **8th Commonwealth Youth Games** (Oct 29 - Nov 4, 2027) for 1,200 athletes, featuring the largest para-sport program ever.
- **Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)** fined the **Israeli Football Association** **\$190,700** over racist behavior by **Beitar Jerusalem FC**.
- Upcoming **Football World Cups** include **2026 (Canada/US/Mexico)**, **2030 (Morocco/Spain/Portugal)**, and **2034 (Saudi Arabia)**.

28. Important Days and Observances in March 2026

- **March 18:** Observed as **Global Recycling Day** with the theme **"Don't think waste, think opportunity"**.
- **March 20:** Observed as the **International Day of Happiness** with the theme **"Caring and sharing"**. It also marked **World Sparrow Day** (launched in 2010), **French Language Day**, **World Oral Health Day** (theme: **"A happy mouth is a happy mind"**), **Nowruz (Persian New Year)**, and **Gudi Padwa**.

- **March 21:** Observed as **World Forestry Day / International Day of Forests** with the theme "**Forests and Economies**".

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