

### 1. Gujarat Passes Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill 2026

- The **Uniform Civil Code (UCC)** establishes a common legal framework across all religions for marriage, divorce, and succession, governed by Article 44 of the Constitution.
- **Goa** has continuously maintained a UCC, while **Uttarakhand** was the first state in India to pass the bill previously.
- **Gujarat** officially became the second state in India to pass the **Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill 2026**.
- The newly passed law explicitly excludes **Scheduled Tribes** from its purview.
- The legislation mandates the legal registration of live-in relationships.
- The law strictly prohibits bigamy within the state.
- It enforces stringent penalties for violations, including three months in jail or a **₹10,000** fine.

### 2. Lok Sabha Passes Finance Bill 2026

- The **Finance Bill 2026** was successfully passed by the **Lok Sabha**, maintaining unchanged income tax slabs under the new income tax law.
- The bill encompasses **32 distinct amendments**.
- The **Minimum Alternate Tax (MAT)** was officially reduced from **15%** to **14%**.
- Total government expenditure is projected at **₹53.47 lakh crore**, with capital expenditure set at **₹12.2 lakh crore**.
- The "Startup Tax Holiday" eligibility criteria were expanded, enabling companies with turnovers up to **₹500 crore** (previously **₹100 crore**) to claim the exemption.
- These financial adjustments aim to actively reduce the fiscal deficit to **4.3%** of the **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** for the **Financial Year (FY) 26-27**.

### 3. Government Extends Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)

- Launched in **2020** by the **Department of Fisheries** (under the **Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying**) with a **₹20,000 crore** investment, targeting workers in the fisheries sector.
- Rooted in the "**Blue Revolution**", the initial target was to increase fish production from **137 lakh tons** to **220 lakh tons** by **2024-25**.
- The scheme previously introduced the **Kisan Credit Card** for the sector, granting asset-backed loans with a **3%** interest subvention.
- The scheme has been officially extended to the year **2025-26**.
- Actual fish production successfully reached **197.75 lakh tons**, representing a **38%** increase from **2019-20**.

### 4. Government Extends Revamped UDAN Aviation Scheme

- The scheme is formally known as "**Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik**" (**UDAN**), designed to boost regional air connectivity across India.
- The government extended the **UDAN** scheme for the **2027-2036** period.
- A massive financial allocation of **₹28,000 crore** has been assigned for this extended phase.
- The ambitious targets of this revamped phase include covering **120** new destinations.
- It plans for the development of **100** new airports and the construction of **200** helipads to expand infrastructure.

### 5. NITI Aayog Sanctions Funding for RISE Center in Andhra Pradesh

- **NITI Aayog** replaced the **Planning Commission** on **January 1, 2015**, functioning as an advisory think tank (neither constitutional nor statutory) using a bottom-up approach to foster cooperative federalism.
- It is led by the **Prime Minister** (Chairperson), Vice-Chairperson **Suman K. Bery**, CEO **B.V.R. Subrahmanyam**, and a Governing Council known as "**Team India**".
- **NITI Aayog** sanctioned **₹1.55 crore** for the **Rural Innovation Incubation Skilling and Entrepreneurship (RISE)** center.
- The center is located in **Ibrahimpatnam, NTR district, Andhra Pradesh**.

### 6. Launch of Real-Time Rural Governance Audit Portal

- The newly launched portal was created by the **National Informatics Centre (NIC)**.
- Union Minister of Rural Development, **Shivraj Singh Chouhan**, launched a real-time internal audit portal (**ruralaudit.gov.in**).

### 7. Ministry of Tribal Affairs Introduces "Risa" Signature Brand

- The brand is inspired by traditional **Tripura** handwoven shawls and was formulated by the **National Institute of Design, Haryana**.
- It is built upon four pillars: design intervention, capacity building, infrastructure development, and premium packaging.
- Union Minister **Jual Oram** introduced "**Risa - a timeless tribal**", a premium signature brand.
- The first phase focuses heavily on **10 distinct clusters** across various states.

### 8. DPIIT Signs MoU with Blue Star Limited for Startup Promotion

- The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with **Blue Star Limited**.

### 9. Ministry of Railways Unveils "Railway Reform Express" Initiatives

- The reforms are part of the comprehensive "**52 reforms in 52 weeks**" initiative.
- Currently, the railway sector's share in passenger vehicle transportation stands at **24%**.
- Union Minister **Ashwini Vaishnaw** unveiled five new reforms, bringing the **2026** reform count to nine.
- **Ticket Cancellation:** No-refund window expanded from 4 to **8 hours** prior; flat fees apply **72 hours** in advance; **25%** charge levied between 72-24 hours; **50%** refund issued for 24-8 hours.
- **Boarding:** Passengers can digitally alter boarding stations up to **30 minutes** before departure.
- **Prime Minister Modi** flagged off India's inaugural overnight sleeper **Vande Bharat** train on the **Howrah-Guwahati** route.
- The **Ministry of Railways** authorized **₹647.58 crore** for infrastructure development in **Gujarat** and **Bihar**.

### 10. PM Modi Forms Empowered Groups for West Asia Conflict Management

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** formed seven specific empowered committees to handle the crisis.
- **Group 1** (Strategic/Defense/External Affairs/Public Order) is led by **Vikram Mishri** (or **Misri**).
- **Group 2** (Economic/Finance/Trade/Supply Chain) is led by **Anuradha Thakur** (or **Anurag Thakur**).
- **Group 3** (Energy/Oil/LNG/LPG) is led by **Neeraj Mittal**.
- **Group 4** (Agriculture/Fertilizers) is led by **Rajat Kumar Mishra**.
- **Group 6** (Transport & Logistics Systems) is led by **Vijayakumar** (or **Vijay Kumar**).
- **Group 7** (Communication & Public Outreach) is led by **Sanjay Jaju**.
- **Group 5** (Price Stability/Essential Commodities), led by **Nidhi Hari**, is critically tasked with anticipating high inflation and preparing for crude oil prices potentially spiking to **\$200**.

### 11. Government and RBI Retain 4% Retail Inflation Target

- The inflation targeting framework was originally introduced in **2016** under Section 45ZA of the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Act, 1934**.
- The **Government of India** and the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** officially retained the retail inflation target at **4%**.
- This target is locked in for a five-year stretch from **April 1, 2026**, to **March 31, 2031**.
- This framework strictly keeps the **Consumer Price Index (CPI)**-based inflation tolerance band at a minimum of **2%** and a maximum of **6%**.

### 12. S&P Global and Goldman Sachs Revise India's GDP Forecasts

- **S&P Global** revised India's **FY 2026-27 Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** growth forecast downwards to **7.1%** (a 40-basis-point drop). (The previous economic growth estimate by **S&P Global** was set at **7.5%**.)
- **S&P** currently projects the **FY 2025-26** growth rate at **7.6%**.
- Separately, **Goldman Sachs** forecast India's GDP growth at **5.9%** for **FY 2026**.

### 13. SEBI Eases Regulatory Guidelines and Appoints New Board Member

- The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** was established in **1988** and functions as India's premier capital market regulator.
- The government appointed **K.V. Ramana Murthy** as a Whole-Time Member for a three-year term, bringing the board to its full complement of four whole-time members (alongside **Amarjit/Amarjeet Singh, Kamlesh Chandra/K.V. Varshney, and Sep/Sandeep Pradhan**).

- **SEBI** relaxed the "fit and proper" criteria, meaning criminal complaints, FIRs, or chargesheets no longer trigger automatic disqualification for market intermediaries.
- The non-consideration period for registration following a show-cause notice was lowered from **1 year to 6 months**.

• Minimum application size for **Social Impact Funds** was drastically reduced from **₹2 lakh to ₹1,000**.

### 14. RBI and CBIC Expand Digital Payment Innovations

- **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** was developed by the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** in **2016** (who also built the BHIM app featuring **MS Dhoni** as a brand ambassador).
- **Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS)** has a minimum **₹2 lakh** limit and instant transfers; **National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT)** has no limits and settles in 48 half-hour batches daily. Both function 24x7.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** plans to utilize **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** to engineer a digital payment platform automating grievance redressal for failed transactions.
- The **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)** expanded its **ICEGATE** payment aggregator to enable customs duty payments via **UPI**, Credit Cards, and Debit Cards.

### 15. CCI Clears Shriram Finance and MUFG Bank FDI Deal

- The **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** officially cleared a massive **\$4.4 billion** investment deal.
- Japan's **MUFG Bank** will acquire a **20%** stake in **Shriram Finance**.
- This marks one of the largest **Foreign Direct Investments (FDI)** ever recorded in India's financial services sector.

### 16. US Consortium Acquires IPL Franchise Rajasthan Royals

- A US-based consortium bought **100%** ownership of the IPL franchise **Rajasthan Royals**.
- The total acquisition deal was valued at **\$1.63 billion** (approx. **₹15,286 crores**).
- The consortium is commanded by tech-entrepreneur **Kal Somani**, an AI and data privacy founder, indicating a merge of tech ownership in sports.

### 17. JICA Inks ODA Loan Agreements with India

- The **Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)** sealed four **Official Development Assistance (ODA)** loan agreements with India.
- The total value of these agreements stands at **₹16,420 crore**.
- These funds are directly allocated towards healthcare in **Maharashtra**, horticulture in **Punjab**, and metro infrastructure expansions in **Bengaluru** and **Mumbai**.

### 18. Agnikul Cosmos Successfully Tests 3D-Printed Booster Engine

- Private aerospace firm **Agnikul Cosmos** successfully completed testing of the world's first fully 3D-printed booster engine.
- The revolutionary engine is named "**Agnite**".
- The successful test was conducted at their dedicated launchpad located in **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**.

### 19. Advancements in Maritime Security and Border Accreditations

- India currently holds the prestigious chairmanship of the **Indian Ocean Naval Symposium**.
- The second iteration of the Indian Ocean naval exercise, "**IOS Sagar**," was launched on **March 16th**.
- The **Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU)** and the **Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)** Academy executed an MoU to accredit specialized security courses.
- For **IOS Sagar**, personnel from **16** friendly foreign countries will receive joint operations training and maritime security education at the **Kochi** naval establishment.

### 20. State Budgets, Infrastructure, and Ecological Projects

- **Delhi Budget:** Chief Minister **Rekha Gupta** presented a **₹1.03 lakh crore** budget for FY27 (a 3.7% increase), allocating **₹12,645 crore** to healthcare, **₹19,000 crore** to education, and **₹7,800 crore** for urban development.
- **Uttar Pradesh:** Chief Minister **Yogi Adityanath** launched the "**Nivesh Mitra 3.0**" platform in Lucknow.
- **Ladakh:** Lieutenant Governor **Vinay Kumar Saxena** inaugurated the **Indus River Green Corridor** ecological project near **Leh**.

- **Water Access:** Andhra Pradesh and Odisha formally executed agreements with the Union Government under Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 to assure sustainable tap water access to households.
- Delhi's projected **Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP)** growth stands at **5.09%**.

### 21. Major Sports Milestones and Achievements

- **Cricket:** Omaxe India dedicated a specialized "Pink Stand" for women and families at the 30,000-seater Dwarka Stadium in New Delhi, named in honor of Indian Women's Cricket Team Captain, **Harmanpreet Kaur**.
- **Squash:** Anahat Singh defended her women's singles title at the **JSW Indian Open** in Mumbai against Egypt's **Hana Moataz**; **Abhay Singh** secured the men's title.
- **Basketball:** Los Angeles Lakers star **LeBron James** formally broke the historical record for most **National Basketball Association (NBA)** games played, appearing in his **1612th** game (usurping **Robert Parish's** long-standing record of **1611** games).
- **Mountaineering:** Indian mountaineer **Aritra Roy** successfully conquered **Mount Aconcagua**, located in **Argentina**.

### 22. Awards, Appointments, and International Tributes

- **Azim Premji**, Founder Chairman of **Wipro**, received the ISB Research Catalyst Award from the **Indian School of Business (ISB)** at its Mohali campus.
- **Puneet Gupta** was officially assigned as the Chairperson of the **Digital News Publishers Association (DNPA)**, succeeding **Mariam Mammen Mathew**.
- Former Prime Minister of France, **Lionel Jospin**, passed away.
- **Lionel Jospin**, who served from **1997 to 2002**, is historically recognized globally as the main architect of reducing France's workweek to **35 hours**.

### 23. Important Days and Observances (March 20 – March 26)

- **March 20:** World Day of Theater for Children and Young People (Theme: "**Staging the Rights of the Child to Arts and Culture**").
- **March 21:** International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (Commemorates the tragic **1960 Sharpeville** massacre in South Africa where **69** peaceful protesters were executed); World Poetry Day (declared by **UNESCO** in **1999**); World Puppetry Day; World Down Syndrome Day (Theme: "**Together against loneliness**").
- **UN World Day of Glaciers** (noted chronologically).
- **March 22:** World Water Day (Theme for 2026: "**Water and Gender**").
- **March 23:** Shaheed Diwas / Martyrs' Day (Pays homage to **Bhagat Singh, Shivaram Rajguru, and Sukhdev Thapar**, executed for the **1928 Lahore** conspiracy case); World Meteorological Day (Theme: "**Observing today protecting tomorrow**").
- **March 24:** World Tuberculosis Day (Theme: "**Yes! We can end TB**"); International Day for the Right to the Truth (Focuses on Gross Human Rights Violations and Dignity of Victims).
- **March 26:** Purple Day of Epilepsy (Theme: "**Epilepsy Awareness: You are not alone**").
- **Purple Day** aims to dismantle myths about epilepsy (a neurological disorder resulting in unprovoked seizures) and was originally instituted in **2008** by a 9-year-old Canadian girl, **Cassidy Megan**.

### 24. Aviation and Airport Infrastructure Updates

- The **Navi Mumbai International Airport** will be officially named after **DB Patil**.
- The **Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)** fined airline **Indigo ₹22.20 crore** for flight disruptions that occurred in **December 2025**.

**25.** The 9th edition of the **Pharma Med** event will take place in New Delhi on **March 27**, hosted by the **Department of Pharmaceuticals** and **PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry** (Theme: "**Healthcare Equity: Reaching of Every Citizen of Viksit Bharat**").

### 26. Regional Governance, Agriculture, and Education Developments

- **Bmanas Khankar** successfully achieved the status of **Rajasthan's** first fully organic certified Gram Panchayat.
- The **University of New South Wales (UNSW)** is slated to launch a Bengaluru campus in **August 2026**.

- **Ponduru Khadi**, hailing from **Andhra Pradesh**, was formally awarded a **Geographical Indication (GI)** tag.
- **Prime Minister Modi** inaugurated the elevated corridor project in **Kaziranga, Assam**.
- The **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** extended its "clean toilet picture challenge" to **June 30**.

#### **27. International Relations and Global Rankings**

- The **World Bank** categorized **Bangladesh** in its highly critical "Red Category".
- Bangladesh was grouped alongside **13** other nations (including **Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Angola**) due to severe food inflation (over **9%**) and high food insecurity persisting over **10 months**.