

1. Supreme Court Ruling on Scheduled Caste (SC) Status

- A Supreme Court bench comprising **Justices Prashant Kumar Mishra** and **Manmohan** ruled that any person professing a religion other than Hinduism, Buddhism, or Sikhism cannot be considered a member of the **Scheduled Caste (SC)** community.
- Conversion to Christianity or Islam leads to the immediate and complete loss of SC status and its statutory benefits.
- **Scheduled Tribes (ST) Exception:** The 1950 Order holds no religion-based restrictions for STs; an ST individual converting to Christianity or Islam retains tribal status, provided they maintain tribal customs and identity.

2. Ministry of Home Affairs Allocates ₹450 Crores for Modernization of State Police Force (MPF)

- The budget allocation for FY 2026-27 is **₹450 crores**, revised from an estimated **₹540 crores** in FY 2025-26.

3. Government Launches Nasha Mukta Vidyalaya Initiative

- The initiative was jointly issued by the **Ministry of Education** (Minister **Dharmendra Pradhan**) and the **Ministry of Home Affairs** (Minister **Amit Shah**).
- It mandates the creation of strict drug-free zones within a **500-meter radius** of all government and private schools.

4. Five-Year Extension of the IVFRT Scheme

- The **Immigration Visa Foreigners Registration and Tracking (IVFRT)** scheme is an existing framework for managing immigration and tracking foreigners.
- The IVFRT scheme has been officially extended for five years (from **April 1 to March 31**).
- The extension comes with an approved budget outlay of **₹1800 crores**.

5. Department of Post and TRIFED Launch Tribal E-Commerce Network

- The **Department of Post (Ministry of Communication)** partnered with **TRIFED (Ministry of Tribal Affairs)** to develop a reliable logistics network.

6. National Housing Bank (NHB) Launches Griha Sugam Portal

- **Housing Finance Companies:** Require a minimum capital of **₹20 crores**, are regulated by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**, and are supervised by the NHB.

7. SEBI Introduces 'Verified App Label' and Announces Key Appointment

- The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** Chairman launched the '**Verified App Label**' initiative under the message "**First Verify, Then Invest**".
- In separate news, **Compela Venkat Ramana Murthy** was appointed as a whole-time member of SEBI for a three-year term.
- **SEBI Static Data:** Established in **1992**, headquartered in **Mumbai**, with the Chairman listed as **Tuhin Kanta Pandey**.

8. OECD Projects India's GDP and Highlights Global Economic Trends

- The **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** projects India's GDP to grow at **7.6%** for FY25-26 and **6.1%** for FY26-27 (FY27).
- Inflation is projected at **5.1%** for FY27 (2026-27) and **4.1%** for FY28.
- **OECD Static Data:** Founded in **1961**, headquartered in **Paris**, and headed by **Mathias Cormann**.

9. PFRDA Introduces Digital Innovations and Policy Extensions

- The **Digital India Bhashini Division (DIBD)** and **PFRDA** signed an MoU for "**Bhashini for Seva Sanchalan (Bhashini Sahayogi Program)**" to provide multilingual capabilities (voice/AI in 22 languages) to pension services.
- PFRDA set up a panel under **Narayan Ramachandran** to modernize the **National Pension System (NPS)** investment framework.
- PFRDA extended the **Atal Pension Yojana (APY)** to **2030-31**.
- **PFRDA Static:** Established in **2003**, headquartered in **New Delhi**.
- **APY Static:** Launched on **May 9, 2015**, the scheme guarantees a **₹1000–₹5000** pension for unorganized workers aged **18–40**.

10. NCW and Truecaller Partner for Women's Digital Safety

- The **National Commission for Women (NCW)** and **Truecaller** launched the "**Women's Digital Safety Awareness Initiative**" and the "**True Cyber Sakhi**" toolkit.
- The initiative was driven by **Rishi Jhunjunwala** (CEO of Truecaller) and **Vijaya Kishore Rahatkar** (Chairperson of NCW).

11. Indian Armed Forces Launch Operations and Indigenization Projects

- **Operation Uja Suraka:** Launched by the **Indian Navy** to secure India-bound energy vessels (LNG, LPG, crude oil) traversing the Strait of Hormuz.
- **Vayu Ban Project:** The **Indian Air Force** launched India's first helicopter-dropped drone project.
- **Indigenization MoU:** The **Indian Army's Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineering** signed an MoU with **IIT Madras Pravartak Technologies Foundation** to accelerate indigenous arms manufacturing.
- **India-UK Defense Meeting:** Indian Navy Chief **Admiral Dinesh Tripathi** met the UK's First Sea Lord, **Sir Har Smith**, discussing maritime/aerospace security, energy challenges, and interoperability.
- It is noted that India is currently the **2nd largest arms importer** globally, behind Ukraine.

12. International Maritime Exercises and Port Calls by India

- **Sri Lanka:** Indian Coast Guard ships **Varaha** and **Atulya** arrived at **Colombo Port**. (Bilateral exercises: **SLINEX** and **Mitra Shakti**).
- **Thailand:** Indian Navy's First Training Squadron (**Tir, Shardul, Sujata**, and Coast Guard ship **Sarathi**) called at **Phuket Deep Sea Port**. (Bilateral exercises: **Ayutthaya, Maitree, CORPAT**, and **SITMEX**).
- **Bangladesh:** India conducts the **Sampriti, Bongo Sagar**, and **CORPAT** exercises with Bangladesh.
- **BIMSTEC Secretariat** is in **Dhaka**.

13. Geopolitics: G7 Summit and Global Political Developments

- **G7 Foreign Ministers Meeting:** EAM **S. Jaishankar** met his German and Canadian counterparts in France, advocating for UNSC reforms.
- **G7 Summit Details:** Hosted in **Evian, France**, in June. Members include France, US, Japan, Italy, UK, Germany, Canada (Russia removed in 2014). Guests include **India, South Korea, Brazil, and Kenya; China is explicitly excluded**.
- **Nepal Election:** **Balen (Balendra) Shah** (35), former rapper and **Rastriya Swatantra Party** leader, became Nepal's youngest PM after securing 182 out of 275 seats following Gen-Z protests against KP Sharma Oli. Cabinet: **Sudan Gurung** (Home), **Swarnim Wagle** (Finance), **Shishir Khanal** (Foreign Affairs).
- **US Currency Signature:** Marking 250 years of independence, US President **Donald Trump** announced that signatures of himself and Treasury Secretary **Scott Bessent** will replace the US Treasurer's signature starting in June; "**In God We Trust**" remains mandatory.
- **World Youth Parliament 2026:** **Shruti Pradhan** from Sikkim was selected to represent India on global challenges like climate change.

14. Key Diplomatic Appointments and Obituaries

- **Vikram Doraiswami:** Appointed India's next Ambassador to **China**, succeeding Pradeep Kumar Rawat.
- **P. Kumaran:** Appointed as India's next High Commissioner to the **UK**, taking over Vikram Doraiswami's former position.
- **Obituary - Begum Khaleda Zia:** First female PM of Bangladesh passed away (EAM S. Jaishankar attended the funeral).
- **Obituary - William Mark Tully:** Veteran journalist and former BBC Delhi Bureau Chief passed away.
- **Obituary - Kabindra Purkayastha:** Former Union Minister and MP from Silchar, Assam, passed away.

15. Major Sports Tournaments, Policies, and Retirements

- **Olympics Policy:** The **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** announced a "protection of the female/women's category in Olympic sports" policy, effective for **Los Angeles 2028**.
- **Asian Games:** 20th Asian Games (2026) to be held in **Aichi-Nagoya, Japan** (Mascot: "**Honohon**"). Future hosts: **Qatar** (2030), **Saudi Arabia** (2034).
- **Khelo India Beach Games (2nd Edition):** Held in **Diu** (Mascot: "**Pearl the Dolphin**"). **Karnataka** topped with 11 medals (3G, 2S, 6B), followed by Tamil Nadu, Manipur, MP, Haryana. Demo sports: **Mallakhamb** and **Tug of War**.
- **Pro Wrestling League 2026 Auction:** Japan's **Yui Susaki** (Haryana Thunders, **₹60 lakh**) and Poland's **Robert Baran** (Maharashtra Kesari, **₹55 lakh**) were the most expensive female and male players, respectively.
- **National Volleyball Tournament (72nd):** Inaugurated by PM Modi in **Varanasi, UP**. Men's winner: **Indian Railway** (defeated Kerala); Women's winner: **Kerala** (defeated Indian Railway).
- **Cricket:** **Scotland** replaced Bangladesh in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup; Australian **Usman Khawaja** retired; **Deepti Sharma** became the highest wicket-taker in Women's T20 cricket.
- **Football:** **Amalia Valverde** appointed head coach of the Senior Indian Women's Football team by AIFF.
- **Tennis:** 2026 Australian Open prize pool increased 16% to **\$1.5 million**.
- **Squash:** **Anahat Singh** won Silver at the British Junior Open, losing to France's **Lauren Baltayan**.
- **Chess:** **Nihal Sarin** won the open rapid section of Tata Steel Chess India 2026 in Kolkata.
- **Retirements:** Badminton champion **Carolina Marin** (32) retired after a 3rd knee injury; Kerala athlete **Jinson Johnson** retired.

16. National Awards, Honors, and Institutional Rankings

- **Gallantry Awards (Republic Day 2026):** 70 personnel awarded (6 posthumously).
 - **Ashok Chakra:** Group Captain **Shubhanshu Shukla** (Axiom Mission 4 to **International Space Station (ISS)**).
 - **Kirti Chakra:** Major **Arshdeep Singh**, Naib Subedar **Doleshwar Subba**, Group Captain **Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair**.
 - **Shaurya Chakra:** 13 awarded, including female officers **Dilna K** and **Roopa**.
- **Padma Awards 2026:** 131 awards announced (5 Vibhushan, 13 Bhushan, 113 Shri) including 19 women, 16 posthumous, and 6 foreigners/NRIs.
 - **Padma Vibhushan Recipients:** **Dharmendra** (Art), **N. Rajam** (Art - Violinist), **K.T. Thomas** (Public Affairs), **V.S. Achuthanandan** (Public Affairs), **P. Narayanan** (Literature & Education).
- **Saraswati Samman:** Bengali novelist **Dr. Ramkumar Mukhopadhyay** awarded for his novel *Hara Parvati Katha* by the **KK Birla Foundation** (**₹15 lakh** prize, panel headed by Justice **Arjan Kumar Sikri**).
- **QS World University Rankings by Subject:** India ranks **4th** globally with **99** institutions. Top performers include **IIT ISM Dhanbad** (21st, Mining), **IIM Ahmedabad** (21st, Business), **IIT Kharagpur** (2nd, Mining), **IIT Delhi** (36th, Engg Tech), **IIT Bombay** (4th, Engg Tech). **VIT** ranked 86th; **ICAR-IARI** debuted in Agriculture & Forestry.
- **ICJS 2.0 Rankings:** **Uttarakhand Police** ranked 1st in implementing the **Inter-operable Criminal Justice System**, followed by Haryana and Assam.
- **Women Firsts:** **Simran Bala** became the first woman officer to lead an all-women CRPF contingent (77th Republic Day); **Kaamyaa Karthikeyan** (18) became the youngest Indian and 2nd youngest global woman to ski the South Pole.
- **Best Cities for Women Professionals:** **Bengaluru** ranked 1st by **Avtar Group**, followed by Chennai, Pune, Hyderabad, and Mumbai.
- **BRICS CCI WE Annual Women Summit (6th Edition, Delhi):** **Kalpana Soren** (Women Empowerment Trailblazer), **Shabana Azmi** (Trailblazer Living Legend), and **Debjani Ghosh** (Trailblazer Global Women Icon Lifetime Achievement).

17. State-Specific Developments, Summits, and Discoveries

- **Madhya Pradesh:** Declared 2026 the "**Year of Agriculture**". The state hosts the highest leopard population (3,907 of 13,874). A new **PM MITRA** textile park (**₹4,445 crores**) is developing in **Dhar**.
- **Assam:** Amit Shah inaugurated the largest multi-sports stadium in **Dibrugarh**. Assam became the 1st state to constitute the **8th State Pay Commission**. PM Modi flagged off the 1st Vande Bharat sleeper (**Guwahati to Howrah**).
- **Karnataka & Andhra Pradesh:** Karnataka spotted the 1st rare sandalwood leopard. AP's **Nagarjunasagar Srisailem** reserve holds the highest leopard density.
- **Uttarakhand:** Announced a regional cinema film policy offering a **₹2 crore** subsidy for films in Garhwali, Kumaoni, Jaunsari, or 8th Schedule languages.
- **Army Day:** The **78th** parade was held on January 15 in **Jaipur**, honoring **K.M. Cariappa**.
- **Bharat Electricity Summit:** The 1st edition was organized by the **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)** in New Delhi with the theme "**Electrifying Growth, Empowering Sustainability, and Connecting Globally**".
- **New Species:** A new cockroach species, **Neogopatra peninsularis**, was discovered in the Deccan Peninsula (**Pune**).

18. Important National and International Days (January & March 2026)

- **January Observances:** 1st (DRDO Day), 4th (World Braille), 9th (NRI), 12th (National Youth), 15th (Army Day), 25th (National Voters'), 26th (Republic Day & Int. Day of Clean Energy).
- **March Observances:**
 - 21st: World Puppetry Day.
 - 23rd: Shaheed Diwas (Martyrs' Day - honoring Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Sukhdev).
 - 24th: World TB Day.
 - 27th: World Theater Day (64th edition).
 - 28th: Earth Hour (8:30–9:30 PM, 20th edition).
 - 28th: National Triglycerides Day.
- **Themes and Specifics:**
 - World TB Day Theme: "**Yes! We can end TB**".
 - World Theater Day Theme: "**celebrating the global impact of the performing arts**".
 - National Triglycerides Day highlights that levels **<150 mg/dL** are considered healthy; Theme: "**Action through Awareness**".