

Daily Current Affairs

Date : 05 February, 2026



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Impact of the India-US Trade Agreement 2026 on Rajasthan



Why in News?

- The India-US Trade Agreement 2026, concluded on February 2, 2026 (which reduced tariffs from 50% to 18%), is historic for Rajasthan, providing significant relief to the gems and jewelry, handicrafts, marble, and textile industries in the US market.
- This agreement increases exports in centers like Jaipur, Bhilwara, Pali, and Balotra, revitalizing local MSMEs, and creating employment in sectors like transportation, banking, and packaging.



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Key Points:

Key Impacts on Rajasthan:

- **Increased Exports:** The US is a major market for Rajasthan's textiles, handicrafts, and handlooms (blue pottery, woodwork), gems and jewelry, and marble carvings (dimension stone). The reduction in tariffs will make these products competitive and create new employment opportunities.
- The Rajasthan Export Promotion Policy, 2024, aims to increase exports to ₹1.50 lakh crore over the next five years.
- **MSME and Employment:** The state's MSME sector will receive support, creating new jobs in the manufacturing sector.
- **Competitive Advantage:** The 18% duty positions Rajasthan's products in the US market in a better position than those from Vietnam, Bangladesh (20%), and China (30-35%).
- **Regional Impact:** Districts such as Bhilwara (textiles), Jaipur (gems/jewelry), and Jalore/Rajsamand (marble), which are dependent on US orders, will benefit the most, and this agreement will provide access to the US market to textile manufacturing hubs like Bhilwara, Pali, Balotra, and Jaipur.
- **Economic Strength:** This agreement will accelerate Rajasthan's economy towards its goal of achieving a \$350 billion economy by 2029. Because more than 60% of the state's exports are to the US. It is also in line with the vision of "Amrit Kaalkhand - Developed Rajasthan @ 2047."

Other important points:

- In the last financial year, gems and jewellery worth ₹18,000 crore were exported from Rajasthan. Of this, the US accounted for approximately 40%, or ₹7,000 crore.
- After the US increased tariffs in August 2025, gem and jewellery exports from India to the US declined by approximately 44% between April and December 2025. Now, with the tariff reduction, exports are expected to increase by 20%.

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Key features of the India-US Trade Agreement, 2026:

- Tariff Reduction:** The US has reduced the reciprocal tariff on Indian imports from 25% to 18%.
 - NOTE:** The additional 25% punitive tariff (imposed in August 2025 and due to Russian oil purchases) has been effectively removed, reducing the total effective tariff from 50% to 18%.
- India's Commitments:**
 - Market Tariff:** India is expected to reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers imposed on the United States to zero.
 - Energy/Fuel Purchases:** Under the agreement, India has agreed to significantly reduce its purchases of Russian oil.
 - 'Buy American' Policy:** India has committed to 'Buy American' for government and industrial purchases.

India-US Bilateral Trade Relations:

- Total bilateral trade:** \$132 billion in 2025.
- Total Surplus:** India's trade surplus with the United States was \$40.82 billion in 2025.

Imports and Exports:

Financial Year 2025	
Imports from America	Exports to the United States
1. Mineral fuels and oils	1. Electrical machinery
2. Precious and semi-precious stones and metals	2. Precious and semi-precious stones and metals
3. Nuclear reactors and machinery	3. Pharmaceutical products
4. Electrical equipment	4. Machinery and mechanical appliances
	5. Mineral fuels
	6. Iron and steel articles

- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI):** The United States is the third largest investor in India, having made a total FDI of \$70.65 billion between 2000 and 2025.

Rajasthan Semiconductor Policy, 2025

Why in News?

- Under the Rajasthan Semiconductor Policy, the Jodhpur-Pali-Marwar and Kankani Industrial Areas will be declared priority semiconductor corridors. Here, investors will be provided with fast-track land allotment, utility coordination, single-window registration, and all necessary facilities on a single platform.



मंत्रिमंडल की बैठक के महत्वपूर्ण निर्णय
21 जनवरी 2026

राजस्थान सेमीकंडक्टर पॉलिसी 2025 को मंजूरी

- यह नीति राज्य को सेमीकंडक्टर विनिर्माण, डिजाइन, पैकेजिंग तथा संबद्ध इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स के क्षेत्र में देश का प्रमुख गंतव्य बनाने की दिशा में एक महत्वपूर्ण कदम है।
- इस नीति का प्रमुख उद्देश्य सेमीकंडक्टर और सेंसर के क्षेत्रों में निवेश को आकर्षित करना, विश्व-स्तरीय सेमीकंडक्टर पार्कों का विकास करना तथा फैबलेस डिजाइन पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र को सशक्त बनाना है।
- इस नीति के अंतर्गत लगने वाली पात्र इकाइयों का सिंगल विंडो प्रणाली के माध्यम से समयबद्ध क्रियान्वयन सुनिश्चित किया जाएगा।



डॉ. प्रेमचंद बैरवा
उपमुख्यमंत्री
राजस्थान सरकार
DrPremBairwaOfficial DrPremBairwa

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Key Points:

Rajasthan Semiconductor Policy, 2025

- **Approval:** January 21, 2026 (Rajasthan's first semiconductor policy.)
- **Objective:** To make Rajasthan a leading destination in the country for semiconductor manufacturing, design, packaging, and related electronics.
- Also, to attract anchor investments in the semiconductor and sensor sectors, develop world-class semiconductor parks, and strengthen the fabless design ecosystem.
- **Nodal Department:** Department of Industries and Commerce
- **Policy Implementation:** Two committees—the State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC) and the State Empowered Committee—will be constituted for the implementation of the Rajasthan Semiconductor Policy.
- **Government's Main Focus:** The government's main focus will be on attracting investment in Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test (OSAT) and Assembly, Testing, Marking and Packaging (ATMP) units.

Provisions:

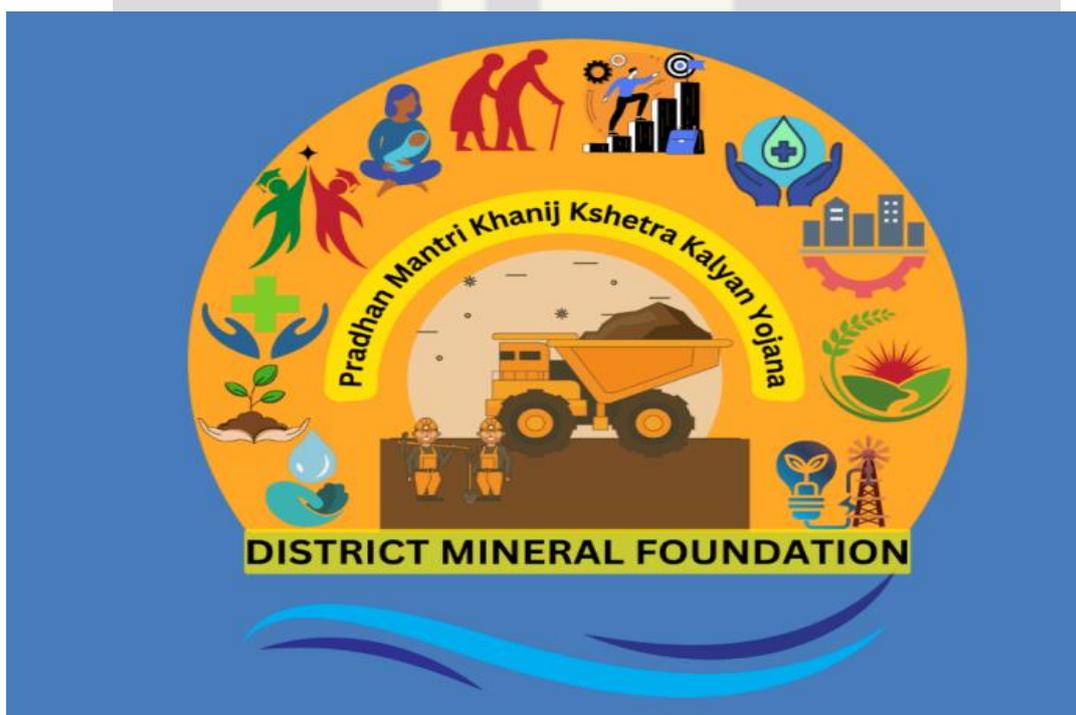
1. The policy will promote technology and skill enhancement, research and development, and technology transfer in the semiconductor sector.
2. The policy will place special emphasis on encouraging green manufacturing in semiconductor parks through renewable energy, water efficiency, recycling, and circular economy initiatives.
3. Investors in the state will have to apply through the RajNivesh portal for setting up semiconductor units.
4. The policy includes 100% exemption from electricity duty for seven years, 75% exemption from stamp duty and land conversion charges, and a 25% reimbursement.
5. A capital grant equivalent to 60 percent of the capital subsidy approved under the 'India Semiconductor Mission' will be provided by the state government.
6. To encourage capital investment, the state government will provide a 5 percent interest subsidy on term loans taken from banks/financial institutions.
7. Reimbursement of up to 50 percent of the project cost for environmental projects.
8. 100 percent exemption from electricity duty for captive power plants for a period of 7 years.

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Prime Minister's Mineral Area Development Scheme (PM-KKKY) and Rajasthan

Why in News?

- The NITI Aayog of the Government of India has emphasized the effective implementation of the Prime Minister's Mineral Area Development Scheme in 5 aspirational districts and 27 aspirational blocks of the state.



Key Points:

- **5 Aspirational Districts identified by NITI Aayog:** Sirohi, Jaisalmer, Baran, Karauli and Dholpur.
- **27 Aspirational Blocks identified by NITI Aayog:** Neemrana, Sajjangarh, Kishanganj, Ramsar, Vair, Kotri, Kolayat, Nimbahera, Rajgarh, Ramgarh Pachwara, Baseri, Jothri, Sangaria, Fatehgarh, Ahor, Khanpur, Shergarh, Masalpur, Jayal, Rani Station, Piplakhoont, Bhim, Gangapur City, Abu Road, Piplu and Khairwara.

Other Important Points:

Prime Minister's Mineral Area Development Scheme

- **Launched:** 2015
- **Effective:** January 12, 2015
- **Basis:** Under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957.
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Mines
- **Objective:** To ensure the welfare of areas and people affected by mining activities.

Main Objectives:

- Implementing various developmental and welfare projects by District Mineral Foundations (DMF) in mining-affected areas.
- Minimizing the adverse effects of mining.
- Ensuring long-term sustainable livelihoods for the affected people.
- **Implementation:** The Prime Minister's Mineral Area Development Scheme (PMKKKY) is implemented by the District Mineral Foundations (DMF) of the concerned districts using the funds deposited in the DMF.
- **Keeping in mind development, socio-economic status and long-term prospects, the Prime Minister's Mineral Area Development Scheme has three objectives:**
 1. Implementation of various developmental and welfare projects/programs in mining-affected areas that are in line with existing schemes/projects of the state and central governments.
 2. Eliminating the adverse effects on the environment, health, and the socio-economic status of people in mining areas.

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3. To ensure long-term sustainable livelihoods for people affected by the mining sector.
- Under the scheme, 60 percent of the funds will be spent in high-priority areas and 40 percent in other priority areas.

High-priority sectors (at least 60% of PM-KKLY funds to be utilized)	Other priority areas (at least 40% of PM-KKLY funds to be utilized)
Drinking water supply	Physical protection
Environmental protection and pollution control measures	
Healthcare	Watershed and energy development
Education	
Women and Child Welfare	Irrigation
Welfare of the elderly and disabled	
Skill development	Improving environmental quality through other measures.
Cleanliness	

- To date, District Mineral Foundations (DMFs) have been established in 307 districts. These include 12 major mining states: Goa, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Telangana.

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Ramashray Ward Initiative

Why in News?

- According to the Medical and Health Department, as of February 3, 2026, approximately 3.2 million elderly people have benefited from this humanitarian innovation through the Ramashray Ward (Geriatric Ward and Geriatric Clinic).



The infographic features a portrait of a man in a red turban and pink shirt on the left. The title 'रामाश्रय वार्ड' is written in large, bold, teal letters. Below the title, the text 'बुजुर्गों के लिए स्वास्थ्य और सम्मान का संकल्प' is displayed. Two bullet points describe the initiative: 'जिला अस्पतालों में समर्पित जीरियाट्रिक सुविधाएं, सहज उपचार और विशेष देखभाल' and 'प्रदेशभर में अब तक करीब 32 लाख वृद्धजन हुए लाभान्वित'. Two photographs show medical staff attending to elderly patients in a hospital ward. At the bottom, there are logos for the Government of Rajasthan and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, along with social media icons and the text 'RajGovOfficial'.

बुजुर्गों के लिए स्वास्थ्य और सम्मान का संकल्प

- जिला अस्पतालों में समर्पित जीरियाट्रिक सुविधाएं, सहज उपचार और विशेष देखभाल
- प्रदेशभर में अब तक करीब **32 लाख वृद्धजन** हुए लाभान्वित

RajGovOfficial

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Key Points:

Ramashray Ward (Geriatric Ward and Geriatric Clinic)

- **Launch:** Following the instructions of the Chief Minister and under the guidance of the Medical Minister, Shri Gajendra Singh Khimsar, Ramashray Wards were launched in district hospitals across the state on March 14, 2024.
- **Objective:** To provide dedicated, accessible, and respectful healthcare services to the elderly.

Features:

- Ramashray Wards have provided the elderly not only with treatment but also with respect, trust, and mental peace.
- Ramashray Wards have been designed to meet the needs of the elderly. Each ward has 10 reserved Fowler beds, with equal arrangements for male and female patients. Curtains are provided between each bed, and a nursing alarm system is available for emergencies. Separate toilets have been built for male and female patients, including assistive features such as grab bars.
- These wards have adequate physiotherapy facilities. Modern equipment such as shortwave diathermy, ultrasound therapy, cervical and pelvic traction, and transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulator are available.
- A nodal officer has been appointed for each Ramashray Ward, who manages all the ward's operations. Separate nursing staff and sanitation personnel have been deployed for patient care and cleanliness.
- Special geriatric clinics have been established for the elderly in government district and sub-district hospitals.

✂ NEWS IN SHORTS ⚡

S. No.	News
1.	<p>Thailand Princess Princess Sirivannavari Nariratana's Visit to Rajasthan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Princess Sirivannavari Nariratana of Thailand will be on a visit to Rajasthan from February 6 to 10, 2026.A review of the travel preparations was conducted at the State Secretariat with representatives from the Thai Embassy and the Ministry of External Affairs, including Ms. Chawanart Thangsumphant, Ambassador of the Royal Thai Embassy.
2.	<p>Viyan Malik</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">12-year-old Viyan Malik from Mount Abu, Sirohi, hoisted the tricolor flag at 'Uhuru Peak' (5,895 meters) of Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest peak in the African continent. <p>Mount Kilimanjaro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Located in Tanzania, Mount Kilimanjaro is the highest mountain in Africa with an altitude of approximately 5,895 meters.It is also the world's largest free-standing mountain range, meaning it is not part of a mountain range.Kilimanjaro is a stratovolcano or composite volcano (a term for a very large volcano made up of layers of ash, lava, and rock) and is composed of three cones: Kibo, Mawenzi, and Shira.In 1973, this mountain and its surrounding six forest corridors were designated as Kilimanjaro National Park to protect its unique environment.This park was declared a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1987.

3.

Rajasthan International Film Festival, 2026



- The 12th edition of the Rajasthan International Film Festival, 2026 (RIFF) will be held from January 31 to February 4, 2026, in Jodhpur, Rajasthan.
- **Venue:** Miraj Cinema, Blue City Mall, Circuit House Road, Jodhpur
- **Organizers:** Organized in collaboration with the Rajasthan Tourism Department and the Department of Art, Literature and Culture, Government of Rajasthan, and in partnership with the Stage OTT platform.
- **Theme:** “Cinemasthan – Your Lens, Our Rajasthan.”
- **Previous editions:** 11 editions (8 editions in Jaipur and 3 editions in Jodhpur).
- **RIFF** - Rajasthan International Film Festival is a non-profit organization initiated by the RIFF Film Club, a leading institution in the field of international cinema.

Economic Developments

Debt-to-GDP Ratio

Why in News?

- India is moving towards limiting its debt-to-GDP ratio to 50 ± 1 percent by 2030-31. The budget estimates for 2026-27 project this ratio at 55.6% of GDP.



Key Points:

- The debt-to-GDP ratio is now being increasingly used as a key policy target.

Debt-to-GDP Ratio:

- This is a financial indicator. It shows a country's total public debt relative to its GDP.
- It indicates the country's ability to repay its debt.
- The higher the debt-to-GDP ratio, the greater the risk associated with debt repayment and the higher the likelihood of default.

🎓 Indian Governance and State System 🎓

Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS)

📣 Why in News?

- Recently, a controversy has arisen regarding the utilization of MPLADS funds.



📌 Key Points:

- According to critics, its funds are being used inefficiently. The funds are being spent on purposes other than the intended ones. Additionally, there is inadequate monitoring, and therefore, the scheme should be discontinued.

Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme

- **Type:** Launched in 1993, it is a Central Sector Scheme.
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)
- **Objective:** This scheme enables Members of Parliament to recommend and get developmental works (such as drinking water, sanitation, etc.) completed.
- **Implementing Agency:** The Implementing District Authority (IDA) selects government departments, trusts, and cooperative societies to execute the works.
- **Fund Allocation:** Under this scheme, each MP is allocated ₹5 crore annually.
- Lok Sabha MPs can recommend works in their Lok Sabha constituency.
- Rajya Sabha MPs can recommend works in the state from which they have been elected.
- Nominated members of both Houses can recommend works in any part of the country.

Special Provisions for Scheduled Castes/Tribes

- Members of Parliament shall recommend that at least 15 percent of the MPLADS funds be spent in areas with Scheduled Caste population and at least 7.5 percent in areas with Scheduled Tribe population annually.
- **Exception:** If a Lok Sabha constituency has a low number of Scheduled Tribes (ST), the funds can be utilized in areas with Scheduled Caste (SC) population.
- Similarly, if an area has a very low Scheduled Caste (SC) population, the funds can be used for the development of areas with Scheduled Tribe (ST) population.
- **Non-lapsable funds:** The funds under MPLADS are non-lapsable. This means that the unspent allocated amount can be carried forward to the next year.

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- **Special Circumstances:** MPs can recommend works worth up to Rs. 25 lakh per year outside their constituency. In case of a disaster, MPs can recommend up to Rs. 1 crore for the affected district.

Judicial Stance

- **Supreme Court (2010):** In the Bhim Singh vs. Union of India case, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of MPLADS. It ruled that the "separation of powers" in India is not rigid and the scheme is valid as long as the MP's role is limited to "recommending" and the district authorities handle the "execution."
- **Accountability Mechanism:** The Supreme Court stated that mere misuse by a few individuals is not a ground for striking down the scheme, as accountability mechanisms such as CAG audits and parliamentary committees are in place.

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Schemes and Policies

Prime Minister's Heritage Promotion (PM VIKAS)

Why in News?

- PM VIKAS aims to train approximately 1.51 lakh beneficiaries through project implementing agencies in States and Union Territories.



Key Points:

PM VIKAS

- This is a Central Sector Scheme being implemented by the Ministry of Minority Affairs.
- Its objective is to focus on the socio-economic empowerment of the six notified minority communities through:
 - o Skill Development and Training
 - o Women's Leadership and Entrepreneurship
 - o Education (through the National Institute of Open Schooling)
 - o Infrastructure Development (through the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram)
- Minority Groups—Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, and Parsis (Zoroastrians)



Power Gap Index



Why in News?

- The Power Gap Index was mentioned in the Economic Survey 2025-26. It shows that India is operating below its full strategic potential.



Key Points:

Additional Information:

- This is a secondary analysis inspired by the Asia Power Index.
- The Asia Power Index is published annually by the Lowy Institute, an Australian think tank. It measures the relative power of Asian countries based on their resources and influence.
- 27 countries and territories are ranked based on 8 major themes and 131 indicators.
- According to the 2025 edition, India's Power Gap score is -4.0, indicating that India is not yet fully utilizing its strategic potential.

ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

Nationally Notified Disasters

Why in News?

- The 16th Finance Commission has recommended that heatwaves and lightning strikes be included in the list of nationally notified disasters in India.



Key Points:

Nationally Notified Disaster:

- These are specific disaster categories recognized under the Disaster Management Act, 2005.
- Assistance for such disasters is provided from the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF).
- Currently, the disasters included in this list are: cyclones, droughts, earthquakes, fires, floods, tsunamis, hailstorms, landslides, avalanches, cloudbursts, pest attacks, frost, and cold waves.

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