

# Daily Current Affairs

Date : 24 February, 2026



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## RAJASTHAN



### Chief Minister Youth Self-Employment Scheme



#### Why in News?

- Applications were invited from January 22, 2026, under the 'Chief Minister Youth Self-Employment Scheme', run by the Rajasthan Department of Industry and Commerce. The scheme aims to benefit 10,000 young entrepreneurs in the financial year 2026-27.

उद्योग एवं वाणिज्य विभाग द्वारा  
मुख्यमंत्री युवा स्वरोजगार योजना की  
**गाइडलाइन जारी**  
मुख्यमंत्री श्री भजनलाल शर्मा ने  
12 जनवरी को किया योजना का शुभारंभ

10 लाख  
रुपये तक  
का ब्याज मुक्त ऋण मिलेगा

योजना का उद्देश्य प्रदेश के  
**एक लाख युवाओं को  
उद्यमी बनाना**  
- उद्योग एवं वाणिज्य मंत्री



#### Key Points:

- Launched on the occasion of National Youth Day 2026, the top three districts with the highest number of applicants as of February 2026, include Jaipur (1,358 applications), Churu (1,172), and Bikaner (1,028).

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## Chief Minister Youth Self-Employment Scheme:

- **Launched:** January 12, 2026, by Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma from Jaipur.
- **Scheme Duration:** Until March 31, 2029.
- **Target:** Under the scheme, 1 lakh youth will be prepared as micro entrepreneurs by providing interest-free loans.
- **Eligibility:** Must be a permanent resident of Rajasthan and between 18 and 45 years of age.
- 100% interest subsidy, CGTMSE fees paid by the state government.
- Maximum loan period – 5 years.

## Benefits payable under the scheme (as per educational qualification):

Applicants who have passed class 8th to 12th		
Area	Maximum Loan	Subsidy (Margin Money)
Services and Trade	₹3.5 lakh	Maximum ₹35,000 (10 percent)
manufacturing sector	₹7.5 lakh	10 percent
Applicants with Graduation, ITI and above educational qualification		
Area	Maximum Loan	Subsidy (Margin Money)
Services and Trade	₹5 lakh	₹50,000 (10 percent)
manufacturing sector	₹10 lakh	10 percent

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## International Mother Language Day Awards Ceremony

### Why in News?

- On the occasion of International Mother Language Day (February 21), a literary conference was organized at the Desert Research Institute, Sridungargarh (Bikaner).

### Key Points:

- The main theme of the conference: 'Rajasthani - Folk Sun Like Tain'.
- During the conference, the Desert Research Institute, Sridungargarh, honored various literary figures from Rajasthan.
- Pt. Mukhram Sikhwal Memorial Rajasthani Literature Creation Award:** To Dr. Krishna Kumari, an academic and literary figure from Kota, for her poetry work, 'Asyo Chhai Mhaaro Gaon'.
- Shri Surya Prakash Bissa Memorial Rajasthani Women's Writing Award:** To Premlata Soni of Jaipur, for her novel, 'Khadda Parking'.
- Kala-Dungar Kalyani Smriti Rajasthani Children's Literature Award:** To Puran Sharma 'Pooran' of Hanumangarh for 'Bol Mhari Machhi Kitto Pani'.
- Maharana Pratap Rajasthani Literature Creation Award:** To Tej Singh Jodha, a learned poet and critic from Bikaner.

### Facts for Prelims:

- International Mother Language Day:** International Mother Language Day is celebrated worldwide every year on February 21st. This day honors the sacrifice of Bangladeshi students who were martyred in the language movement of 1952.
- Theme for 2026:** "Youth Voices on Multilingual Education"

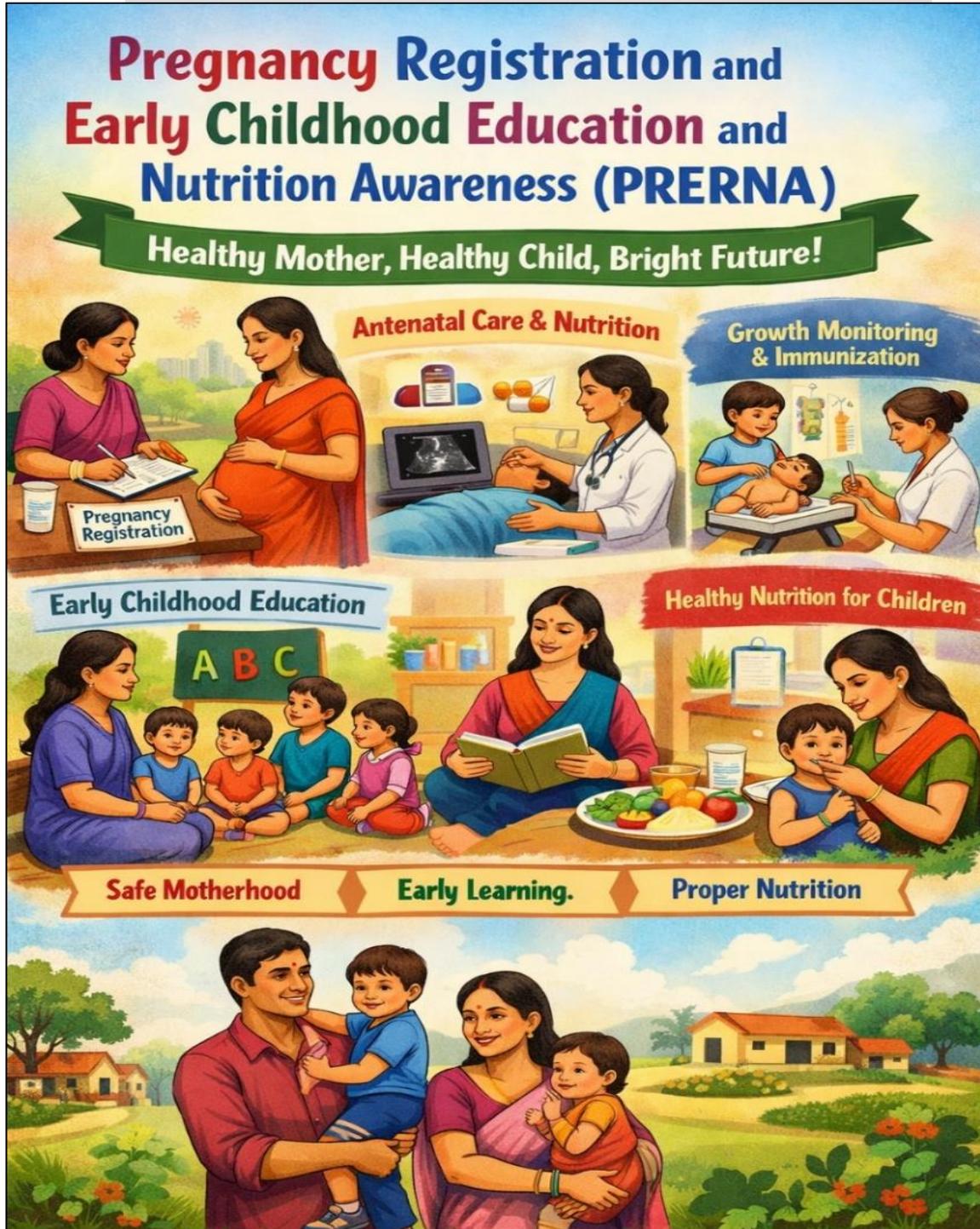


## Prerna Abhiyaan 2.0 (January 19 to February 19, 2026)



### Why in News?

- The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Directorate conducted the statewide 'Prerna Abhiyaan 2.0' from January 19 to February 19, 2026.



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## Key Points:

- Before the campaign began, 2,91,696 lactating mothers were registered on the Nutrition Tracker. Since the campaign began on January 19, 2026, the number of registered lactating mothers has increased to 3,05,246 as of February 19, 2026.
- **Full name of the campaign:** Pregnancy Registration and Early Childhood Education and Nutrition Awareness - 2.0 (PRERNA - 2.0)
- **Organizer:** Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Directorate.
- **Program objective:** "Empowered Anganwadis, Well-nourished Childhoods."
- Under this campaign, all eligible beneficiaries deprived of ICDS services, including pregnant women (in the first three months), lactating women, children aged 0 to 6 years, and adolescent girls in aspirational districts, were registered. Registered beneficiaries were provided with ICDS benefits.
- **Targeted schemes:** Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, Chief Minister Maternity Nutrition Scheme, Supplementary Nutrition, Chief Minister Amrit Aahar Yojana, etc. Beneficiaries were targeted to benefit from these schemes through Anganwadi centers.
- Under this campaign, Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) were identified, similar to the Amma Program for malnutrition management.

## Facts for Prelims:

### Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS):

- **Launched:** October 2, 1975

### Objectives:

- To improve the nutritional and health status of children aged 0 to 6 years.
- To lay the foundation for the psychological, physical, and social development of children.
- To reduce mortality, disease, malnutrition, and school dropout rates.
- Currently, 363 child development projects are operating in Rajasthan under this program.

## NEWS IN SHORTS

S. No.	News
1.	<p><b>Exercise Khadag Shakti - 2026</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Recently, the Indian Army's Western Command conducted Exercise Khadag Shakti - 2026.</li><li><b>Venue:</b> Mahajan Field Firing Range (MFFR), Bikaner.</li><li><b>Organizer:</b> Western Command's Ambala-based 'Khadag Corps'.</li><li>Exercise Khadag Shakti is the Western Command's largest high-intensity exercise since Operation Sindoor.</li><li>It extensively tested drone warriors, swarm drones, loiter munitions, and artificial intelligence (AI)-based decision-making tools.</li></ul>
2.	<p><b>Terracotta Skill Center - Pokhran (Proposed)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Department of Skill, Planning and Entrepreneurship will open a Terracotta Skilling Center in Pokhran.</li><li>Terracotta or clay art (the art of baked clay) is an ancient and rich handicraft tradition. Its main center is Molela village in Rajsamand district, which is world-renowned for its unique 'clay art'.</li></ul>
3.	<p><b>Operation Shasyavisham</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Operation Shasyavisham is a special campaign against drug abuse launched by the Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) of the Rajasthan Police. In February 2026, this operation launched a major crackdown against illegal opium cultivation.</li><li>The main objective of this operation is to identify and destroy illegal drug cultivation, especially opium. 'Shasya' means crop, and this clandestine cultivation is tantamount to spreading 'vish' (poison) into society, hence the name 'Shasyavisham'.</li></ul>

4.

## “Gram Sansad” Program

- The “Gram Sansad – Rajasthan Sarpanch Samvad” program was organized in Jaipur on February 23, 2026.
- **Objective:** To discuss issues such as the role of Sarpanches in rural governance, women empowerment, better governance through technology, and youth participation.

5.

## “Fiat Justitia” National Moot Court Competition

- The University College of Law of Mohanlal Sukhadia University (MLSU), Udaipur, recently organized the “Fiat Justitia” National Moot Court Competition.
- **Winning University:** Jai Narain Vyas University (JNVU), Jodhpur.
- **Runner-up:** Symbiosis Law School, Pune.
- **Best Speaker:** Aniruddh Soni (Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur).
- **Best Researcher:** Manreet Kaur Sidhu (Rajiv Gandhi National Law University, Patiala).

6.

## First Edition of PrintPack Rajasthan Exhibition

- The first edition of PrintPack Rajasthan Exhibition was held in Jaipur from February 21 to 23, 2026.
- **Venue:** Jaipur Exhibition and Convention Centre (JECC), Sitapura, Jaipur.
- **Organizer:** Indian Printing Packaging and Allied Machinery Manufacturers Association (IPAMA).
- Jaipur industrialist Nirmal Goyal was honored with the 'Print Shree Award 2025' at the event.

7.

## Meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) of BRICS Countries: Jaipur

- The first meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) of BRICS Countries under India's 2026 BRICS chairmanship will be held in Jaipur.

## 8. **Ranjeev Shankar: Regional Director for Rajasthan**

- Recently, Ranjeev Shankar assumed charge as the Regional Director of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for Rajasthan.

## 9. **Special Project for Aravalli Conservation**

- In the 2026-27 budget, the Rajasthan government allocated ₹130 crore for the plantation, conservation, and better maintenance of the source rivers originating from the Aravalli Range.
- On June 5, 2025, Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma launched the special project for Aravalli Conservation.

## 10. **Kavi Shri Kag Bapu Folk Literature Award – 2026**

- Dr. Dhananjaya Amrawat, Head of the Rajasthani Department at Jai Narayan Vyas University (JNVU), Jodhpur, was honored with the prestigious 'Kavi Shri Kag Bapu Folk Literature Award 2026' for the year 2026.
- The award was presented to her during a ceremony held in Kagdham (Majdhar village), Gujarat.
- Dr. Amrawat was honored for her contributions to the conservation and promotion of Rajasthani Charan literature and her outstanding research work in this field.

## 11. **Ashok Bishnoi: Honored at the Joint Regional Official Language Conference**

- On February 20, 2026, the Joint Regional Official Language Conference was held in Agartala, the capital of Tripura. Ashok Bishnoi (IRS, CGST Jaipur) received second place in the Northern Region for his outstanding work in implementing the official language Hindi in his office.
- Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the conference.

## NATIONAL

### BAFTA Awards

#### Why in News?

- The Indian film *Boong* has won the Best Children's & Family Film award at the BAFTA Awards ceremony.



#### Key Points:

##### Film 'Boong'

- This is a Manipuri language film. Directed by Laxmipriya Devi.
- The film traces the emotional journey of a young boy as he tries to reunite his fragmented family amid the ongoing conflict in Manipur.

##### BAFTA Awards

- **Established:** 1947, United Kingdom
- This awards ceremony honors excellence in film, television, games, and children's media.
- **Awards ceremony:** Held annually in London by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA).

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## Economic Developments

### Namo Bharat Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS)

#### Why in News?

- The Prime Minister inaugurated India's first 'Namo Bharat Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS).'



#### Key Points:

- **Objective:** To revolutionize connectivity within the National Capital Region (NCR). This will enable commuters to easily commute between local city travel and direct transit services to Delhi.
- **Namo Bharat Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS)**
- It is a new rail-based, semi-high-speed (up to 180 km/h), and daily passenger transit system.
- **Unlike the metro:** It will facilitate long-distance travel with higher speeds and fewer stops.
- **Unlike conventional trains:** It will ensure point-to-point regional travel with higher frequency on a dedicated route.
- **Implementing agency:** National Capital Region Transport Corporation (a joint venture between the Central Government and the states of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, and Delhi).

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## Schemes and Policies

### SANKALP Scheme

#### Why in News?

- The Public Accounts Committee has highlighted several shortcomings in the "Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion" scheme.



#### Key Points:

- These include deficiencies in planning, underutilization of allocated funds, and lack of coordination between the central and state governments.
- **SANKALP Scheme**
- **Full form of SANKALP:** Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion.
- **Launched:** 2018
- **Objective:** To increase the quality and scope of short-term skill training by improving training institutions, aligning skill training with market demand, and connecting disadvantaged groups to training programs.
- **Ministry:** Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- **Funding:** Loan assistance from the World Bank.



## INTERNATIONAL



### Pax Silica Initiative



#### Why in News?

- India joined the Pax Silica Initiative. It also registered its membership in the initiative with a bilateral Joint Statement on India-United States AI Partnership.



#### Key Points:

##### Pax Silica Initiative (2025)

- 'Pax' is a historic term, symbolizing peace, stability, and prosperity.
- It is a U.S.-led initiative on artificial intelligence and supply chain security. It promotes a new economic security consensus among allies and trusted partners.

## Key Objectives:

- Reducing dependency
- Building partnerships to secure global technology supply chains
- Expanding opportunities and addressing gaps in the AI supply chain and exploring joint investment opportunities
- Protecting sensitive technologies and building trusted digital infrastructure, etc.
- **Signatory countries:** India, Australia, Greece, Israel, Japan, Qatar, South Korea, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom.

## Strategic Importance of Pax Silica for India

- **Security of Critical Supply Chains:** For example, Australia is a leading exporter of lithium and also has significant rare earth mineral deposits.
- **Reducing Dependence on China:** China is a major supplier of rare earth minerals and has the ability to control the global flow of these resources. This initiative will reduce that dependence.
- **Boosting Domestic Manufacturing:** This membership will provide India with the opportunity to attract billions of dollars of investment in the AI and technology sectors. This will strengthen the domestic manufacturing industry.

## Brazilian President's Visit to India



### Why in News?

- The Brazilian President's state visit to India concluded successfully, and the two countries decided to increase their bilateral trade target from \$20 billion to \$30 billion by 2030.



### Key Points:

- Both countries emphasized expanding cooperation in various sectors, including space, renewable energy, and agriculture.



### Key Outcomes of the Visit

- **Strategic Memorandums of Understanding:** A total of 10 agreements were signed. These specifically cover rare earth elements and critical minerals, the postal sector, MSME entrepreneurship, and pharmaceutical regulations.
- **Digital Cooperation:** A joint declaration/action plan on 'Digital Partnership' for the future was adopted.
- **Visa Facilitation:** The validity of tourist and business visas was extended from 5 years to 10 years on a reciprocal basis.

### India-Brazil Relations

- **Diplomatic Relations:** Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1948, which were upgraded to a 'Strategic Partnership' in 2006.
- **Multilateral Cooperation:** The two countries cooperate closely in forums such as BRICS, BASIC, G-20, G-4, IBSA, and global bodies such as the United Nations, WTO, UNESCO, and WIPO.
- **Trade:** Both countries are active under the India-MERCOSUR Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA).
- **Renewable Energy:** Brazil became a co-founding member of the Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA).
- Brazil ratified the International Solar Alliance (ISA) agreement in 2022.

## 🕒 SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY 🕒

### Universal Immunization Program (UIP)

#### 📣 Why in News?

- The Union Health Minister launched the indigenously developed tetanus and adult diphtheria (Td) vaccine. It has been formally included under the Universal Immunization Program (UIP).

#### 📌 Key Points:

##### Indian Universal Immunization Program

- **Beginning:** Launched in 1978 as the Expanded Immunization Program. In 1985, it was renamed the Universal Immunization Program (UIP).
- **Coverage:** Free vaccination program against 12 diseases.
- **Nationwide (11 diseases covered):** diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, rubella, severe childhood tuberculosis, rotavirus diarrhea, hepatitis B, rhinitis and pneumonia caused by *Haemophilus influenzae* type B, and pneumococcal pneumonia.
- **Area-specific (1 disease):** Japanese encephalitis (only in affected districts)
- **Achievements:** Polio-free India (2014), neonatal tetanus eradication (2015)

##### Key Initiatives:

- **Intensified Mission Indradhanush 5.0 (IMI 5.0):** Special emphasis on measles and rubella vaccination coverage.
- U-WIN portal, etc.



## INDEXES AND REPORTS



### Merchandise Trade Indices



#### Why in News?

- The Merchandise Trade Index has been revised to better reflect the changing composition of India's trade and shifts in global trade patterns.



#### Key Points:

##### Merchandise Trade Index

- **Compiled and published by:** Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **Objective:** To measure changes in the unit values and volumes of India's exports and imports over time.
- **Base year revised:** Changed from fiscal year 2012–13 to fiscal year 2022–23.
- The Merchandise Trade Index comprises several indices, such as the Export Unit Value Index, Import Unit Value Index, Terms of Trade, etc.