

Daily Current Affairs

Date : 16 February, 2026



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Rajasthan's Status in the 'PM Surya Ghar: Bijli Yojana'

Why in News?

- Currently, an average of approximately 14,000 rooftop solar power plants are being installed each month in Rajasthan under the PM Solar Home Free Electricity Scheme.



Key Points:

- The goal is to double this by 2027.
- Rajasthan is the fifth-leading state in the country in the 'PM Surya Ghar: Bijli Yojana'. More than 142,000 rooftop solar panels have been installed in the state so far.
- Target:** Under this scheme, Rajasthan has set a target of connecting 500,000 homes to solar energy by 2027.

Pradhan Mantri Surya Ghar Yojana:

- **Full name:** PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana.
- **Launched:** February 13, 2024, by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- **Objective:** To provide free electricity to households by facilitating the installation of rooftop solar panels.
- **Target:** To provide solar power to 10 million households by March 2027.
- The state government has issued the 'Integrated Clean Energy Policy-2024' to promote renewable energy, which provides for net metering, gross metering, virtual net metering, and group net metering to promote rooftop solar.

Facts for Prelims:

Rajasthan Integrated Clean Energy Policy 2024:

- The state government issued a notification for this policy on December 4, 2024.
- **Policy Duration:** This policy is effective from the date of notification and will remain in force until March 29, 2029, or until replaced by another policy.

Target:

- The policy aims to achieve the target of 125,000 MW (125 GW) of renewable energy projects in the state by 2029-30.

Breakdown of 125 GW:

Sequence of Generation Type Targeted Capacity

1. Solar- 90,000 MW
2. By Wind & Hybrid- 25,000 MW
3. By Hydro, Pumped Storage Plant (PSP) and Battery Energy Storage System - 10,000 MW

Note: Rajasthan aims to achieve a target of over 54,000 MW of power capacity from conventional and renewable energy sources by 2031-32.

Manini Kaushik's Sporting Achievements

Why in News?

- **Manini Kaushik won the gold medal in the 50m rifle prone team event at the Asian Rifle Pistol Championship - 2026 held at the Karni Singh Shooting Range in New Delhi.**



Key Points:

- **Other players in the team:** Sifat Kaur and Tejaswini Sawant.
- Jaipur shooter Manini Kaushik won a silver and bronze medal at the 2025 Asian Championship held in Shymkent, Kazakhstan.
- Manini is a professional air rifle shooter from Rajasthan.

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Achievements:

- **Asian Games (2022-23):** Silver medal in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions team event.
- **Asian Shooting Championship (2025):** Won her first individual international medal (bronze) in the 50m rifle prone.
- **World University Games (2023):** Won the gold medal in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions team event at the FISU World University Games in Chengdu, China.
- **ISSF World Championships (2018):** Won the gold medal in the 10m air rifle junior team event.

Records:

- **National Selection Trials (2026):** Won first place in the 50m rifle prone selection trial 1 at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range in January 2026.
- **National Championships:** Won gold in the 50m rifle prone women's event at the 23rd Kumar Surendra Singh Memorial Shooting Championship in 2025.
- **State Champion:** Won her fourth consecutive gold medal in the 50m rifle 3P event at the Rajasthan State Shooting Championship in August 2025.

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NEWS IN SHORTS

S. No.	News
1.	<p>Cultural Diaries - "Anhad Series"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Organized by: Vidushi Sunanda Sharma (Classical Vocalist)■ Venue: Jawahar Kala Kendra, Jaipur.
2.	<p>Shri Nimbeshwar Mahadev Cattle Fair - Sanderao (Pali)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Recently, Zoraram Kumawat, Cabinet Minister for Animal Husbandry, Cattle Rearing, Dairying and Devasthan Department, inaugurated the Shri Nimbeshwar Mahadev Cattle Fair.■ Event Period – From February 13 to 17, 2026■ This cattle fair also featured an exhibition of the finest animals from Punganur, Gir, Kankrej, Thar, and crossbred breeds.



Seva Tirtha

Why in News?

- The Prime Minister inaugurated the Seva Tirtha complex as well as Kartavya Bhawan-1 and 2 in New Delhi.

Key Points:

Seva Tirtha and Kartavya Bhawan-1 and 2

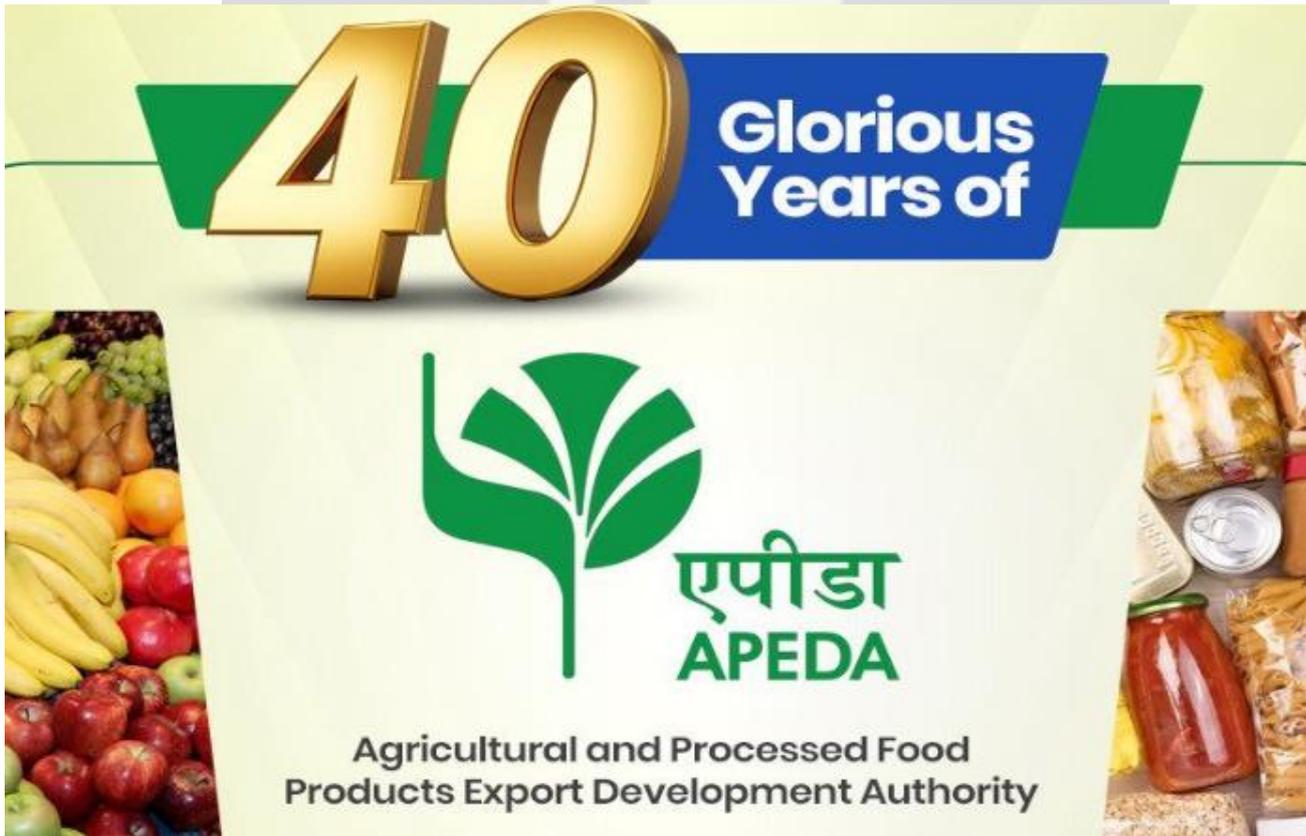
- Seva Tirtha houses the Prime Minister's Office, the National Security Council Secretariat, and the Cabinet Secretariat, which were previously located at different locations.
 - o It consolidates administrative functions within modern and future-ready facilities.
- Kartavya Bhawan-1 and 2 house several key ministries, including the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
 - o Both building complexes feature digitally integrated offices, structured public contact areas, and centralized reception facilities.

Economic Developments

Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)

Why in News?

- Recently, APEDA celebrated its 40th Foundation Day.



Key Points:

- Headquarters:** New Delhi
- APEDA is a statutory body established under the APEDA Act, 1985.
- Concerned Ministry:** The apex body for agricultural export promotion under the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- Chairman:** Appointed by the Government

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■ **Functions:**

- o Acts as the secretariat of the National Accreditation Board for implementing the accreditation of certification bodies.
- o Promotes agricultural exports.
- o Inspects and monitors the quality of meat products.

■ **Key Initiatives:**

- **National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP):** It sets standards for organic production, promotes organic farming, and encourages the marketing of organic products.
- **Bharati (2025):** Its objectives are to empower agri-food and agri-technology start-ups and promote agri-food exports.
- **Farmers Connect Portal:** It is a 24x7 online digital platform. It establishes direct contact between farmer producer organizations and exporters.

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Wheat Crop

Why in News?

- The central government has lifted the ban on wheat exports to ensure farmers receive a remunerative price for their produce. This ban was imposed four years ago.

Key Points:

Wheat Crop:

- **Crop Type:** Rabi Crop
- **Major Producing Areas:** Tropical and Subtropical Regions, Temperate (Cold) Regions.
- **Ideal Climate:** Cool and humid weather during wheat plant growth; dry and warm weather during grain setting and ripening.
 - o Ideal Temperature: 20–25°C
 - o Ideal Rainfall: 50–75 cm
- **India's Status:**
 - o Second largest wheat producer in the world (about 14% of global production)
 - o India has the largest agricultural area under wheat production.
- **Top Wheat Producing States:** Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Punjab.

Schemes and Policies

Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) Lending Target Doubled

Why in News?

- The Prime Minister announced an increase in the AIF's lending target from ₹1 lakh crore to ₹2 lakh crore.



📌 Key Points:

About the AIF

- **Objective:** It provides medium- to long-term loans for investment in viable projects for building infrastructure for post-harvest crop management and community farming assets. Interest subvention and credit guarantee support are also provided on these loans.
- **Type:** It is a central sector scheme.
- **Implementation Period:** From 2020-21 to 2029-30
- **Key Features:** Banks and financial institutions can provide loans up to ₹2 lakh crore under this scheme. Loans are provided with an interest subvention of 3% per annum and credit guarantee coverage is provided for loans up to ₹2 crore under CGTMSE.
 - **CGTMSE:** Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises.
- **Eligible Beneficiaries:**
 - **Primary Beneficiaries:** Such as farmers, Primary Agricultural Credit Societies, Farmer Producer Organizations, Self-Help Groups, etc.
 - **Government Agencies:** Such as Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs).
- **Eligible Projects**
 - **Post-harvest Management Projects:** Such as warehouses, cold chains, cold storage, and ripening chambers.
 - **Community Farming Assets:** Such as infrastructure for smart and precision agriculture (e.g., drones, sensors, AI, etc.).

PM Relief, FFS 2.0 and Lakhpati Didi Initiative: Revised Targets

Why in News?

- The Prime Minister approved key schemes for women, youth, and vulnerable citizens.

Key Points:

Launched PM Relief/PM RAHAT (Comprehensive Action for Road Accident Treatment) Scheme

- **Objective:** To prevent deaths due to lack of immediate medical assistance and cover the treatment costs of accident victims.
- **Coverage:** Cashless treatment up to ₹1.5 lakh.

Lakhpati Didi Initiative: Revised Targets

- The target is to create 6 crore 'Lakhpati Didis' by March 2029 (doubling the previous target).
- The previous target of creating 3 crore Lakhpati Didis has been achieved well ahead of the March 2027 deadline.

Lakhpati Didi Initiative (2023)

- **Objective:** To lift rural SHG (Self-Help Group) women out of poverty through skill development, financial inclusion, and market access, while also diversifying their livelihoods.
 - o Such as running small enterprises or managing livestock.
- **Definition:** A 'Lakhpati Didi' is an SHG member with an annual household income of ₹100,000 or more.

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- **Concerned Ministry: Ministry of Rural Development.**
 - This is not a separate scheme but has been launched under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission by the Ministry of Rural Development.
- **Start-up India Fund of Funds 2.0 (FFS 2.0) approved with initial corpus**
- **Announced in Budget 2025-26, FFS 2.0 primarily focuses on start-ups in the manufacturing and high-tech sectors that require long-term funding.**
- **Start-up India Fund of Funds (FFS):**
 - This is a flagship initiative of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the 'Start-up India Action Plan'.
 - **Management:** Operated by the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI).
 - It supports SEBI-registered alternative investment funds, which in turn invest in start-ups. This increases access to domestic risk capital and strengthens entrepreneurship.

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Urban Challenge Fund (UCF)

Why in News?

- The Union Cabinet approved the Urban Challenge Fund (UCF) of ₹1 lakh crore.

Key Points:

Urban Challenge Fund (UCF)

- **Announcement:** In Union Budget 2025–26
- **Key Focus Areas:**
 - o Developing cities as growth hubs.
 - o Constructive redevelopment of cities.
 - o Improving water and sanitation facilities.
- **Financing Mechanism**
 - o The Urban Challenge Fund will finance up to 25% of the total cost of any project.
 - o At least 50% of the financing will be required to be raised from market sources. These sources include municipal bonds, bank loans, and public-private partnerships.

Pradhan Mantri Dakshta and Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM-Daksh) Scheme

Why in News?

- According to data released in the Lok Sabha, less than half of the students trained under the PM-Daksh Scheme between 2021 and 2024 found employment.
- As per the rules, institutions offering short-term training courses are required to provide employment to at least 70% of the trainees.
- Failure to do so may result in the institution recovering 30% of the training cost per trainee.

Key Points:

PM-Daksh Scheme (2020–21)

- **Scheme Type:** Central Sector Scheme
- **Objective:** To provide free skill training to targeted groups and employment opportunities through quality institutions.
- **Target Groups:** Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes, Economically Weaker Sections, Denotified Tribes, Safai Karamcharis, Transgender Persons.
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
 - o Age Limit: 18 to 45 years
 - o OBC and EWS: Family annual income less than ₹3 lakh.
- **Important Facts:** The PM-DAKSH scheme has now been merged with the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana of the Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.