

Daily Current Affairs

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Increase in the Amount of 'Social Security Pension'

Why in News?

- Recently, the Rajasthan government has announced an increase in the amount of 'Social Security Pension'. This increase will be effective from January 1, 2026, but will be payable from February 2026.

Increase in the amount of 'Social Security Pension'



Key Points:

- It is worth noting that the amount of ₹1,250 provided by the state government under various social security schemes has been increased to ₹1,300.
- Beneficiary categories:** The elderly, widows or single women, persons with disabilities, and small and marginal farmers.

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Other Important Points:

- **Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme:** Under this scheme, members of Below Poverty Line (BPL) families aged 60 years and above are provided a pension of ₹1,250 (currently updated to ₹1,300) per month.
- Under this scheme, the Central Government contributes ₹200 per month to beneficiaries below 80 years of age and ₹500 per month to beneficiaries aged 80 years and above, while the remaining amount is borne by the State Government.
- **Chief Minister Old Age Samman Pension Scheme:** Under this scheme, women aged 55 years and above and men aged 58 years and above, whose annual family income from all sources is less than ₹48,000, are provided ₹1,250 per month (currently updated to ₹1,300) as old age honor pension.
- **Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme:** Under this scheme, financial assistance is provided to widows aged 40 years and above from BPL families. Widows above 40 years of age but below 75 years of age are provided ₹1,250 per month (currently updated to ₹1300) and widows aged 75 years and above are provided ₹1,500 per month.
- The Central Government contributes ₹300 for beneficiaries below 80 years of age and ₹500 for those above 80 years of age, and the remaining amount is borne by the State Government.
- **Mukhyamantri Ekal Nari Samman Pension Yojana:** Under this scheme, widows, divorced and abandoned women above 18 years of age but below 75 years of age are provided ₹1,250 per month (currently ₹1300) and women aged 75 years and above are provided ₹1,500 per month. Eligibility for this scheme is based on a family's annual income being less than ₹48,000.

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- **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maandhan Yojana (PMKMY)**
- **Amount:** ₹1,250 (currently ₹1,300) per month.
- **Eligibility:** Small and marginal farmers (women: 55 years of age or older) (men: 58 years of age or older).



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'Next Generation Citizen Service Reforms' in Rajasthan

Why in News?

- Finance Minister Diya Kumari announced the 'Next Generation Citizen Service Reforms' in the Rajasthan Budget 2026-27 to ensure quick and effective services to the state's residents.



बजट 2026-27 में
प्रदेशवासियों को त्वरित एवं प्रभावी
सुविधाएं सुनिश्चित करने के क्रम में

नेक्स्ट जनरेशन सिटीजन
सर्विस रिफॉर्म्स की घोषणा

इसके अंतर्गत बन्स ओनली प्रिंसिपल
को किया जा रहा है लागू

- इसमें नागरिकों एवं उद्यमियों से सिर्फ एक बार ही दस्तावेज लिया जाएगा, जिसे विभाग आपस में साझा करेंगे
- इसी प्रकार, लोक कल्याणकारी योजनाओं की पात्रता निर्धारण को बेहतर बनाने के लिए जनाधार डेटाबेस को विभिन्न विभागों के मापदंडों और पोर्टल्स से जोड़ने का प्रावधान

इससे पात्र नागरिकों को सेवाएं
समय पर हो सकेंगी उपलब्ध



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Key Points:

- Under this, the Rajasthan government is implementing the 'Once Only Principle'. Documents will be collected from citizens and entrepreneurs only once, which will be shared among departments.
- Similarly, to improve eligibility for public welfare schemes, a provision has been made to link the Janadhaar database with various departmental parameters and portals. This will ensure timely delivery of services to eligible citizens.
- The state government has announced an Information and Technology Policy to achieve the goal of Digital Rajasthan.
- A "Digital Infrastructure Facilitation Policy" has been announced to provide various services of the State Data Center to startups, MSMEs, and citizens at affordable rates.
- A "Geo-Spatial Policy" has been announced to enhance decision-making in disaster management, urban planning, agriculture, and environmental monitoring.
- The "Rajasthan Public Trust Act 2.0" has been announced in Budget 2026-27 to promote good governance and public participation.
- **Next Generation Technology Techno Hub:** The Rajasthan Budget 2026-27 has announced the establishment of a Next Generation Technology Techno Hub in Kota for the development of cutting-edge technologies.
- **CM-PRAMAN:** A CM-PRAMAN (Policy, Research, and Analytics for Measurable Action and Nexus) unit will be established to develop result-oriented public welfare schemes and evidence-based policymaking in the state.
- **RITI:** The Rajasthan Institute for Transformation and Innovation (RITI) has been established, modeled after the NITI Aayog.

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- **Rajkisan Sathi Portal:** The Rajkisan Sathi Portal has been launched to facilitate ease of farming for farmers in the state. Through this single-window platform, various government schemes and subsidies related to agriculture, horticulture, and animal husbandry can be availed directly through digital channels.
- **Public Information and Contact Portal:** The Rajasthan Sampark Portal (181 Helpline) and the Public Information Portal are ensuring online grievance redressal and transparent availability of information.
- The state government has launched Rajasthan Sampark 2.0, enhancing the digital governance framework.

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NEWS IN SHORTS

S. No.	News
1.	<p>Nirmal Goyal - Print Shree Award 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Print Shree Award for the year 2025 from the Offset Printers Association will be given to Nirmal Goyal of Popular Printers, a resident of Jaipur.
2.	<p>Surya Kiran and Sarang Aerobatic Show: Jaipur</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Event: February 20 and 22, 2026Organizer: Surya Kiran and Sarang Aerobatic Teams of the Indian Air Force.Venue: Jal Mahal Ki Paal, Jaipur.
3.	<p>Hathnikund Barrage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Water supply will be provided through an alignment of three parallel pipelines, approximately 265 kilometers long, from Hathnikund Barrage in Haryana to Hasiyawas (Churu).A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the governments of Rajasthan and Haryana on February 17, 2024, paving the way for resolving the 32-year-old water dispute.A provision of ₹32,000 crore has been made in the Rajasthan Budget 2026-27 for this mega project. Under this, Rajasthan will receive 577 MCM (million cubic meters) of water during the monsoon season (July to October).
4.	<p>Comprehensive Mobility Plan (CMP) for Jaipur City</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Recently, the Jaipur Development Authority (JDA) prepared a draft Comprehensive Mobility Plan (CMP) for Jaipur City.This important plan aims to develop a smooth, safe, inclusive, and sustainable transportation system in the city.

5.

Rajasthan represented at the 'Sahakar Manthan' meeting

- On February 17, 2026, the 'Sahakar Manthan' meeting was held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, under the chairmanship of Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah.
- Rajasthan was represented at this meeting by Gautam Kumar Dak, Minister of State for Cooperation (Independent Charge).

6.

Rajasthan Mental Awareness, Mentoring and Treatment for All (Raj-MAMTA) Program

- The Rajasthan government announced the "Rajasthan Mental Awareness, Mentoring and Treatment for All (Raj-MAMTA)" program in the state budget 2026-27 to prevent depression, anxiety, and suicide.
- Counseling and telemedicine facilities will be provided under this program. A "Center of Excellence in Mental Health" will also be established in Jaipur.

7.

Dr. Tarkeshwar Jain - Chairman of the National Commission for Homeopathy (NCH)

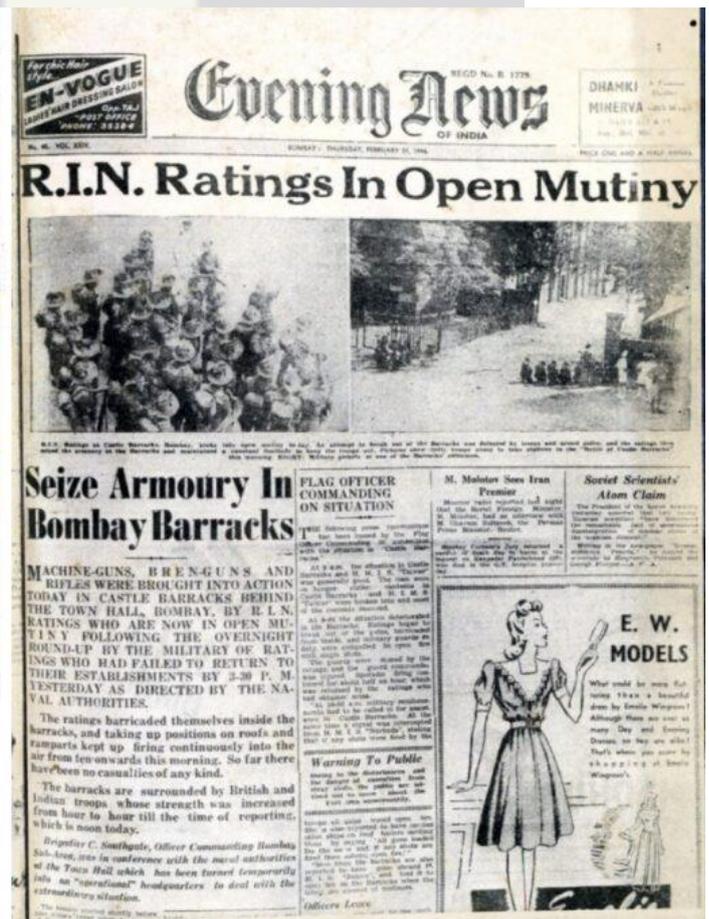
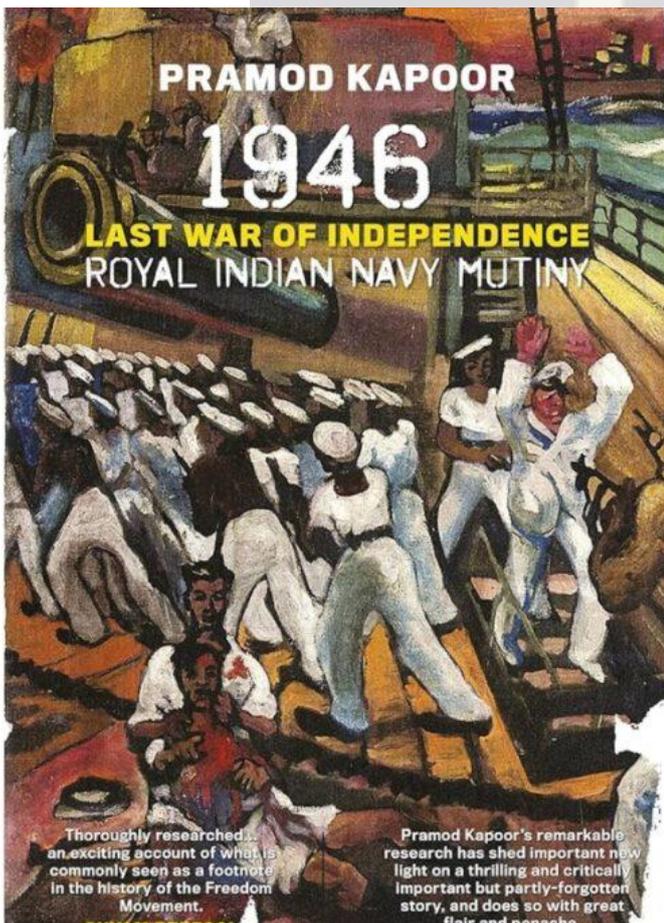
- The central government appointed Jaipur resident Dr. Tarkeshwar Jain as the Chairman of the National Commission for Homeopathy (NCH).

History and Culture

Royal Indian Navy (RIN) Mutiny: 80 Years

Why in News?

- February 18, 2026, marked the 80th anniversary of the 1946 mutiny of the Royal Indian Navy (RIN).



Key Points:

Royal Indian Navy Mutiny, 1946:

- Introduction:** The RIN Mutiny (1946) was a five-day armed rebellion (February 18 to 23, 1946) by 20,000 Indian sailors against racial discrimination and the INA trials.

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- **Immediate Cause:** The mutiny was sparked by sailors serving on the ship HMIS Talwar in Bombay, protesting poor food quality, low wages, racial discrimination, mistreatment by superiors, and the arrest of a sailor for writing "Quit India" on the ship.
- **Associated Leaders:** B.C. Dutt, M.S. Khan, Madan Singh, Salil Shyam, and Rishi Dev.
- **Initial Phase:** Started with a hunger strike on February 18, 1946, at HMIS Talwar (Bombay) to protest poor food quality.
 - A Naval Central Strike Committee was formed, led by Pran and Kusum Nair, at Marine Drive in Mumbai, to coordinate actions and present demands.
- **Expansion:** It spread to naval bases in Karachi, Madras, Cochin, Visakhapatnam, Calcutta, and the Andaman Islands, involving 78 ships and 20 shore establishments.
 - **Public Support:** Hindu-Muslim unity was clearly visible with the flags of the Congress, Muslim League, and Communist Party being hoisted together.
 - **Congress Support:** At its Bombay session in September 1945, the Congress passed a strong resolution in support of the INA. The INA's defence was organized by Bhulabhai Desai, Tej Bahadur Sapru, Kailash Nath Katju, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Asaf Ali.
- **End of the Rebellion:** The rebellion ended on February 23, 1946, after Sardar Patel and Muhammad Ali Jinnah persuaded the rebels to surrender and assured them that the national parties would prevent any repression.

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Other Important Points:

Indian National Army (INA):

- **Introduction:** The INA was a military force formed by Indian prisoners of war (POWs) during World War II, with the aim of liberating India from British rule.
- **Formation:** Initially, soldiers were recruited by Mohan Singh with Japanese support. Later, Rashbehari Bose founded the Indian Independence League in Tokyo (1942).
- **Leadership by Subhas Chandra Bose:** Subhas Chandra Bose took command on August 25, 1943, and established the Provisional Government of Free India in Singapore (October 21, 1943), which was recognized by nine countries, including Japan and Germany.
- **Campaign:** Launched the 'Chalo Delhi' campaign, hoisting the flag at Moirang, Manipur.
- **Collapse:** The campaign collapsed after Japan's surrender (August 15, 1945) and Bose's alleged death in a plane crash in Taiwan (August 18, 1945).
- **INA Trials (Red Fort):** The first trial (November 1945) against Prem Kumar Sahgal (Hindu), Shah Nawaz Khan (Muslim), and Gurbaksh Singh Dhillon (Sikh) took place at the Red Fort—a symbol of unity. They were defended by Bhulabhai Desai, Tej Bahadur Sapru, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Asaf Ali.
- The prisoners were supported at the Bombay Congress session (September 1945).
- **Major rebellions (1945-46):** Three violent clashes took place on November 21, 1945 (Calcutta), February 11, 1946 (against Rashid Ali in Calcutta), and February 18, 1946 (Royal Indian Navy mutiny, Bombay) during 1945-46.

Geography and Geology

Great Nicobar Project

Why in News?

- Recently, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) approved the ₹81,000 crore Great Nicobar Project.

Key Points:

- A six-member special bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Prakash Srivastava concluded that the project is in vital national interest, which should be evaluated along with its environmental impacts.
- The bench comprised judicial members Dinesh Kumar Singh and Arun Kumar Tyagi, and expert members Senthil Vel, Afroz Ahmed, and Ishwar Singh.
- This ₹81,000 crore project, formally called the Comprehensive Development of the Great Nicobar Islands, spans 166 square kilometers of the island's lush tropical forest area. It includes the construction of an international cargo port, a gas and solar power plant, an airport for civilian and military use, and a sprawling township.

Environmental safeguards suggested by the National Environment Council (NGT):

- Binding nature of conditions:** The government must ensure that these are not violated at any stage of project implementation.
- Prevention of coastal erosion and protection of sandy beaches:** The NGT directed that the project should not cause erosion or adverse shoreline changes near the project area or along any island.

3. **Protection of coral reefs:** The NGT directed the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) to protect coral reefs and promote coral regeneration through scientific methods, and to relocate existing scattered corals as per the recommendations of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI).

4. **Protection of endangered species:** Specific conditions include protection of the Nicobar megapode, Nicobar macaque, leatherback sea turtle, saltwater crocodile, and other endemic bird species.

Great Nicobar Project:

■ **Introduction:** In line with Maritime India Vision 2030 and Amrit Kaal Vision 2047, the Great Nicobar Island (GNI) Project has been initiated to transform the southernmost island of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands into a strategic and economic hub, involving the development of Galathea Bay, Pemmaya Bay, and Nanjappa Bay, and a 10 km area of Galathea Bay National Park and Campbell Bay National Park.

■ **Approval by Ministry of Environment:** In November 2022 (Conceptualized by NITI Aayog in 2015).

■ **Project Implementation:** By NITI Aayog

■ **Nodal Agency:** Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation (ANIIDCO)

■ **Key Infrastructure Components:**

1. International Container Transshipment Terminal/ICTT (Development of the Global Maritime Economy)
2. Greenfield International Airport (Connectivity and Tourism)
3. Greenfield Township
4. Gas and Solar Power Plants

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5. Tribal Protection (Protection of tribal interests in consultation with the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes under Article 338A(9))
6. Environmental Protection Measures (8 Wildlife Corridors)

Other Key Points:

Great Nicobar Island:



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- **Andaman and Nicobar Islands:** It comprises 836 islands, geographically divided into the Andaman group in the north and the Nicobar group in the south by the Ten Degree Channel, which is approximately 150 km wide.
- **Great Nicobar Island:** It is the largest island in the Nicobar archipelago, covered primarily with tropical rainforest. Indira Point, India's southernmost point, is located here, just 90 nautical miles from Sumatra, Indonesia.
- **Ecological Importance:** The island is home to Campbell National Park and Galathea Bay National Park. It also includes the Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve, which was included in UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme in 2013.
- **Demographic Profile:** Shompen, Nicobarese, Onge, and Andamanese tribal communities.
- **Tribal Issues:** Approximately 964,000 trees, representing approximately 15% of the island's area, are threatened with felling.
- An earthquake (magnitude 9.2 on the Richter scale) struck the region in 2004.

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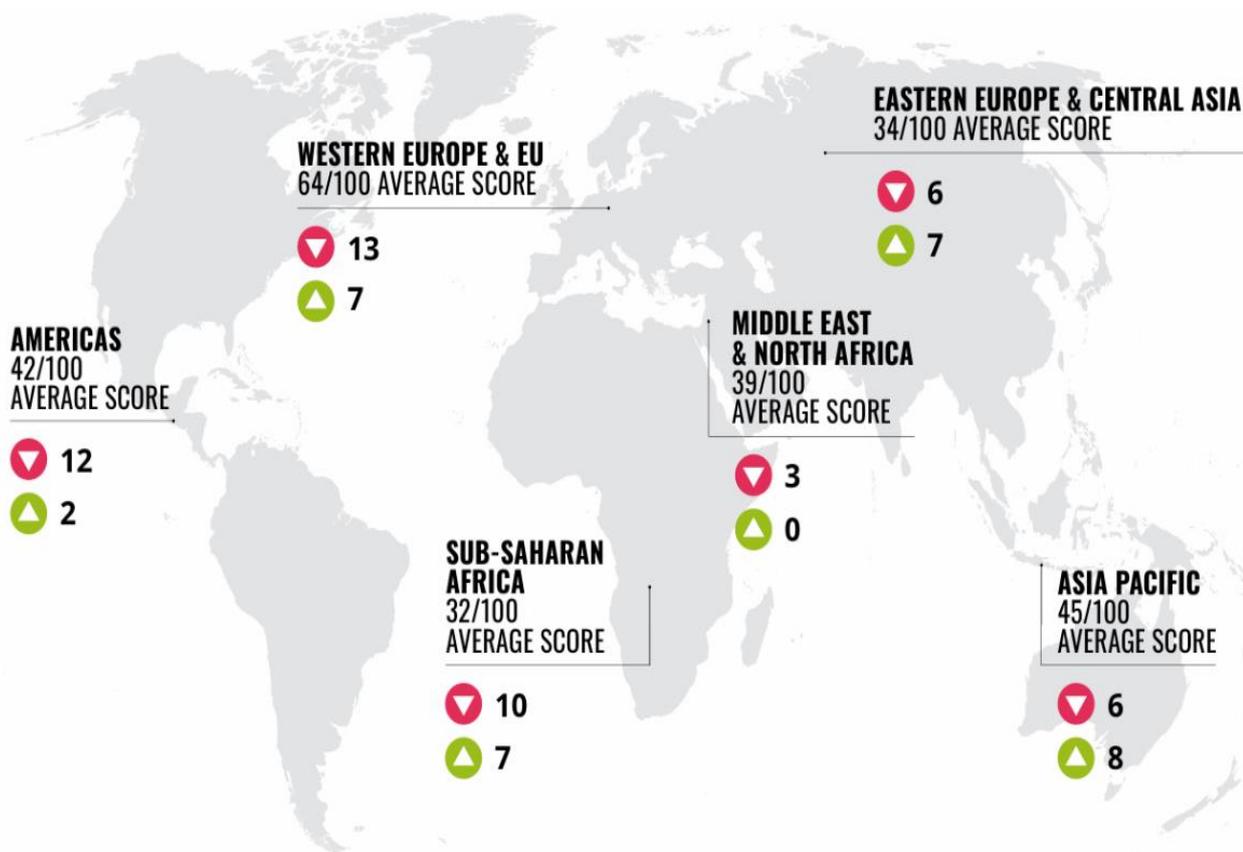
Public Administration



Corruption Perceptions Index, 2025

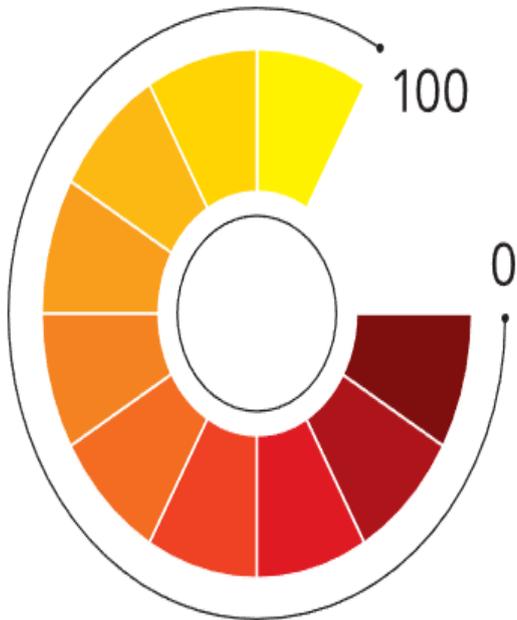
Why in News?

- Recently, India ranked 91st in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), 2025, released by Transparency International, with a score of 39/100, slightly improving from its 96th position in 2024.



Key Points:

- It evaluated 182 countries based on perceived corruption in the public sector, using a scale ranging from zero (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).



THE CPI USES A SCALE FROM 0 TO 100

100 is **very clean** and
0 is **highly corrupt**

Findings:

- **Declining Global Average:** For the first time in more than a decade, the global CPI average has dropped to just 42 out of 100. Most countries (122 out of 182) score below 50, reflecting serious corruption problems globally.
- **High-Performing Countries:** The number of countries scoring above 80 has declined from 12 a decade ago to just five this year (Denmark, Finland, Singapore, New Zealand, Norway).
- **Top and Lowest Performers:** Denmark (score – 89) holds the top spot for the eighth consecutive time, while Somalia and South Sudan (9) are at the bottom.

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Country Position

अंक		देश	रैंक
89	↓	डेनमार्क	1
88	=	फिनलैंड	2
84	=	सिंगापुर	3
81	↓	न्यूज़ीलैंड	4
81	=	नॉर्वे	4
80	=	स्वीडन	6
80	↓	स्विट्ज़रलैंड	6
78	↓	लक्समबर्ग	8
78	=	नीदरलैंड	8
77	↑	जर्मनी	10
77	=	आइसलैंड	10

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Assessment in the context of India:

- India (score 39, rank 91): Outperforms most South Asian neighbours but lags behind Bhutan (score 71, rank 18) and China (score 43, rank 76).
- India is tied with the Maldives (score 39, rank 91).
- Other countries ranked lower: Sri Lanka (score 35, rank 107), Nepal (score 34, rank 109), Pakistan (score 28, rank 136), Bangladesh (score 24, rank 150), Afghanistan and Myanmar (score 16, rank 169).
- **The report cites the causes of corruption as:** Weak judicial system and rule of law, undue influence on political decision-making, the curtailment of civil liberties and media freedom, and failures in public financial management.

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INTERNATIONAL

India-France Relations

Why in News?

- From February 17 to 19, 2026, President Emmanuel Macron of the French Republic paid a formal visit to India. This was President Macron's fourth visit to India.



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Key Points:

Outcome of the Visit:

Subject/Topic	Related Area
Initiation of annual Foreign Minister-level talks to regularly review the implementation of the enhanced partnership and the 'Horizon 2047' roadmap (Horizon 2047 Roadmap: This plan, adopted in 2023, charts the course for the next 25 years, coinciding with India's 100th year of independence.)	Political and Diplomatic Relations
India-France Innovation Year launched	Technology and Innovation
India-France Innovation Network launched	
Inauguration of H125 helicopter assembly line in Vemgal, Karnataka; India's first private sector helicopter facility.	Defence and Security
Contract for purchase of 26 Rafale Marine fighter jets.	
A joint venture between BEL and Safran to manufacture Hammer missiles in India.	
Joint Declaration on Cooperation in Critical Minerals and Metals	Critical and emerging technologies, including the defence sector.
The Department of Science and Technology and the CNRS of France have agreed to establish a research center in the field of advanced materials.	
Amendment to the Protocol on Double Tax Avoidance Agreement between India and France	Economy, startups, science and technology, health, renewable energy, and skill development.
T-Hub and Nord France have signed Letter of Intent for strategic collaboration in startup ecosystem, innovation and technology	
Joint Declaration of Intent to establish an Indo-French Centre for Digital Science and Technology	
The Indo-French Center for AI in Healthcare has been launched at AIIMS, New Delhi.	

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Agreement has been signed to establish the Indo-French Center for Metabolic Health Sciences.

A letter of intent has been signed to establish a National Center of Excellence for Skill Development in Aeronautics.

Cooperation across the value chain, including the Jaitapur Nuclear Power Plant project, and India will participate in the International Space Summit (July 2026, France).

Target of attracting 30,000 Indian students in France by 2030 (from the current 10,000). The Yuge Yugeen Bharat National Museum will be developed in collaboration with France Museums Développement. Education and culture

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

SAHI and BODH Health AI Initiatives

Why in News?

- On February 17, 2026, at the India AI Summit, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Jagat Prakash Nadda, launched two important national initiatives – the Strategy for AI in Healthcare for India (SAHI) and the Benchmarking Open Data Platform for Health AI (BODH) – at the India AI Summit in Bharat Mandapam.



Key Points:

- These initiatives are based on the vision of the National Health Policy, 2017 and the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (2020).
- Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).

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- **Strategy for Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare (SAHI; Secure AI for Health Initiative):** A national guidance framework to enable the safe, ethical, evidence-based, and inclusive adoption of artificial intelligence in India's healthcare system.
 - o It aims to provide critical guidance on the governance, data management, validation, application, and monitoring of artificial intelligence solutions, and to support states and institutions in their responsible adoption in line with public health priorities.
- **Benchmarking Open Data Platform for Health Artificial Intelligence (BODH):** Developed by the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur in collaboration with the National Health Authority, the Benchmarking Open Data Platform for Health AI (BODH) is a privacy-preserving standard platform for AI in healthcare that enables accurate evaluation of AI models using diverse, real-world health data without sharing the underlying datasets.

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13th MILAN Exercise, 2026

Why in News?

- The Indian Navy unveiled the MILAN Village (Visakhapatnam) at the Eastern Naval Command on February 15, 2026, as part of its flagship international naval exercise, the 13th MILAN Exercise, 2026 (February 15 to 25, 2026).
- Exercise MILAN, 2026, has participation from over 70 countries, including first-time participants like Germany, the Philippines, and the United Arab Emirates.



Key Points:

- **Introduction:** MILAN is a biennial (once every two years) multilateral naval exercise hosted by the Indian Navy.

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- **Origin:** Started in 1995 under the Andaman and Nicobar Command with just four foreign navies participating: Indonesia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.
- **Main Objective:** MILAN 2026, one of the largest multilateral naval exercises to be held in the Indo-Pacific region, will bring together various navies from across the world to strengthen mutual cooperation, maritime domain awareness, and collective response capabilities.
- **Structured Phase:** It comprises two main phases: the harbour and sea phases of the exercise will focus on complex maritime operations, including anti-submarine warfare, air defence, search and rescue, and cooperative security operations, further strengthening the shared commitment to a free, open, inclusive, and rules-based maritime domain.
- **Significance:** Exercise MILAN 2026, along with the International Fleet Review (IFR) 2026 and the INS Conclave of Chiefs, will form a key pillar of India's historic maritime convergence.

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UN Fellowship Training Programme, 2026

Why in News?

- India is hosting the first UN Fellowship Training Programme on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Control for the Asia-Pacific region, a first in Asia.
- The programme is being organised under the auspices of the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Defence, from February 16 to March 6, 2026, at the College of Military Materials Management, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh.



Key Points:

- **Introduction:** The UN Fellowship Training Programme on Small Arms and Light Weapons Control is a three-week capacity-building programme aimed at strengthening government expertise in controlling the illicit trade and misuse of small arms and light weapons.

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- **Host:** Indian Army
- **Venue:** Military College of Materials Management, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh
- **Organizing Organizations:**
 - o United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)
 - o United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD)
- **Objective:** To enhance the capacity of government authorities to prevent the trafficking, misuse, and illicit flow of small arms (SALW).
- **Participants:** Representatives from 13 countries in the Asia-Pacific region are participating in the event.

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Sports

12th Asian Indoor Athletics Championships, 2026

Why in News?

- India finished sixth in the medal tally at the 2026 Asian Indoor Athletics Championships, held in Tianjin, China, from February 6 to 8, 2026.



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Key Points:

- **Top Position:** Host nation China topped the medal table with 34 medals, including 10 gold, 11 silver, and 13 bronze.
- **India's Performance:** India won five medals to finish sixth in the medal tally.
- **Indian Medal Winners:**

Players	Medal	Details
Tejaswin Shankar (heptathlon)	Gold	Tejaswin Shankar won India's only gold medal at the 2026 Asian Indoor Athletics Championships, breaking the national record in the heptathlon.
Tajinderpal Singh Toor (men's shot put)	Silver	He won the silver medal after losing to Chen Chengyu of China.
Pooja (women's high jump)	Silver	She also broke a national indoor record.
J. Adarsh Ram (men's high jump)	Bronze	He won India's first medal at the 2026 Asian Indoor Athletics Championships.
Ancy Sojan (women's long jump)	Bronze	She also won a silver medal at the Asian Athletics Championships last year.

- **Samardeep Gill, the second Indian to compete in the men's shot put, finished fifth with a best score of 18.97 in his final attempt.**

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✂ NEWS IN SHORTS ⚡

S. No.

News

1.

Milano Cortina Winter Olympics, 2026

- Brazilian skier Lucas Pinheiro Braathen won the gold medal in the giant slalom at the 2026 Milano Cortina Winter Olympics.



- He defeated defending champion Marco Odermatt of Switzerland by 0.58 seconds with a total time of 2 minutes 25 seconds.
- Giant slalom is a competitive discipline of alpine skiing and alpine snowboarding.
- India's Arif Mohammad Khan will compete in the slalom event of alpine skiing. Earlier, cross-country skier Stanzin Lundup finished 104th in the men's 10 km race.

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2.

Pramod Bhagat

- Pramod Bhagat won the gold medal in the men's SL-3 category at the World Para Badminton Championships in Bahrain.
- Pramod defeated Mohammed Al Imran in the final to win his fourth consecutive singles gold medal at the World Championships.
- Pramod now has a total of six world titles to his name. He surpassed China's Lin Dan to become the most successful player in men's singles badminton history.

