

Part 1: National & International News

Q1. To secure India's critical energy supply lines amid the escalating West Asian conflict, the Indian Navy successfully deployed warships to escort Indian-flagged merchant vessels. Which two commercial LPG carriers did they safely escort across the volatile Strait of Hormuz into a Gujarat port by March 17, 2026?

- A) INS Vikrant and INS Vikramaditya
- B) MV Shivalik and MV Nanda Devi
- C) MT New Diamond and MT Shenlong
- D) MV Jag Laadki and MV Brahmaputra

Answer: B) MV Shivalik and MV Nanda Devi

Explanation:

Amid structural closures and heightened maritime warfare risks in the **Strait of Hormuz** (prompted by military friction involving Iran, Israel, and the US), the Indian Navy executed a tactical escort operation. On March 16 and 17, 2026, Indian naval warships safely escorted India's high-capacity LPG carriers—**MV Shivalik** and **MV Nanda Devi**—carrying thousands of metric tonnes of liquefied petroleum gas out of the Gulf of Oman into domestic ports like Mundra and Vadinar in Gujarat.

Q2. On March 17, 2026, a five-member expert committee officially submitted its final drafted report to Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel for implementing the Uniform Civil Code (UCC). Which state is set to implement this code next?

- A) Uttarakhand
- B) Gujarat
- C) Assam
- D) Madhya Pradesh

Answer: B) Gujarat

Explanation:

Following extensive structural evaluations, public feedbacks, and consultations, a high-level **five-member committee** appointed by the Gujarat government officially submitted its final draft on the **Uniform Civil Code (UCC)** to Chief Minister **Bhupendra Patel**. This positions Gujarat to follow Uttarakhand's legal precedent, aiming to unify personal laws covering marriage, divorce, inheritance, and adoption across all religious communities under Article 44 of the Indian Constitution.

Q3. In mid-March 2026, the socio-political groupings of the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) called a total shutdown and held mass protest rallies at the Leh Polo Ground. What are their core four-point demands?

- A) Direct inclusion into the European Trade Route and high-altitude farming subsidies
- B) Statehood status, inclusion in the Sixth Schedule, job reservations for local youth, and separate Lok Sabha seats for Leh and Kargil
- C) Merging Ladakh back into Jammu & Kashmir and constructing international airports
- D) Absolute corporate exemption from income tax and setting up nuclear testing facilities

Answer: B) Statehood status, inclusion in the Sixth Schedule, job reservations for local youth, and separate Lok Sabha seats for Leh and Kargil

Explanation:

The **Leh Apex Body (LAB)** and **Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA)** mobilized mass public protests across the Union Territory of Ladakh. Their unified four-point agitation demands formal **Statehood for Ladakh, constitutional protections under the Sixth Schedule** (to shield tribal land, culture, and ecology), the creation of a separate Public

Service Commission for local youth employment reservations, and two separate Lok Sabha constituencies to represent Leh and Kargil independently.

Q4. Which South Asian nation announced an exceptional four-day working week—officially declaring Wednesdays off for government institutions, schools, and universities—to conserve fuel during the 2026 West Asian energy crisis?

- A) Maldives
- B) Bangladesh
- C) Sri Lanka
- D) Nepal

Answer: C) Sri Lanka

Explanation:

Bracing for severe energy supply disruptions caused by the effective blockage of regional oil corridors like the Strait of Hormuz, the Government of Sri Lanka announced a mandatory four-day working week, declaring Wednesdays as an official holiday for state institutions, public schools, and universities. The Commissioner General of Essential Services urged the private sector to follow suit to lower domestic fuel and power consumption.

Q5. A specialized study on the vulnerability of India's energy supply chains highlighted that nearly what percentage of India's Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) imports pass through the volatile maritime chokepoint of the Strait of Hormuz?

- A) 25%
- B) 50%
- C) 75%
- D) 90%

Answer: D) 90%

Explanation:

Energy analysis reports published on March 17, 2026, flagged a massive concentration risk for India: nearly 90% of India's LPG imports are structurally dependent on passage through the Strait of Hormuz. This makes the country highly vulnerable to West Asian geopolitical conflicts. Furthermore, the report pointed out that India possesses only a two-day national buffer stock for LPG (approx. 1.4 lakh tonnes) compared to its resilient 74-day combined national reserve for crude oil.

Q6. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) issued a strong statement "unequivocally" condemning cross-border military airstrikes executed on the Omid Addiction Treatment Hospital located in which capital city?

- A) Damascus, Syria
- B) Kabul, Afghanistan
- C) Sana'a, Yemen
- D) Beirut, Lebanon

Answer: B) Kabul, Afghanistan

Explanation:

India issued a sharp diplomatic condemnation against Pakistan's cross-border airstrikes hitting the Omid Addiction Treatment Hospital in Kabul, Afghanistan. The MEA labeled the operation a "cowardly and unconscionable act of violence," stating that targeting a civilian medical recovery facility cannot be justified as a military operation and urging regional compliance with international humanitarian laws.

Part 2: Economics & Banking

Q7. According to global macroeconomic update reports released by Fitch Ratings on March 17,

2026, what is India's revised Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth forecast for the Financial Year 2026-2027 (FY27)?

- A) 6.1%
- B) 6.4%
- C) 6.7%
- D) 7.2%

Answer: C) 6.7%

Explanation:

In its latest Global Economic Outlook briefing, **Fitch Ratings revised India's FY27 GDP growth projection upward to 6.7%**, up from its previous estimate of 6.4% made in December 2025. Fitch attributed this positive adjustment to resilient domestic demand, sustained public infrastructure investments, and robust corporate balance sheets. It also projected global GDP growth to hover around 2.6% for 2026.

Q8. The Ministry of Finance released official economic data showing that India's Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation rate climbed to an 11-month high in March 2026. What was the recorded WPI inflation figure?

- A) 1.05%
- B) 2.13%
- C) 3.45%
- D) 4.20%

Answer: B) 2.13%

Explanation:

India's **Wholesale Price Index (WPI) inflation hit an 11-month high of 2.13%**, driven primarily by a spike in global crude oil prices and increased transport logistics costs stemming from the maritime blockades in West Asia. Higher input costs for manufacturing raw materials and

primary food articles also added upward pressure to the index.

Q9. The Ministry of Corporate Affairs adjusted the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Rules, 1957. Under these updated guidelines, what is the modified Minimum Public Shareholding (MPS) percentage required for major corporate entities at the exact time of listing?

- A) Reduced from 5% to 2.5%
- B) Increased from 10% to 15%
- C) Fixed uniformly at 25% for all companies
- D) Reduced to 0% for public sector undertakings

Answer: A) Reduced from 5% to 2.5%

Explanation:

To ease primary capital market listings and streamline multi-stage disinvestment processes, the government amended the **Securities Contracts (Regulation) Rules**, lowering the mandatory **Minimum Public Shareholding (MPS) at the time of initial listing from 5% to 2.5%** for large issuers. This regulatory relief gives mega-corporations and state-backed entities more flexibility when structuring their Initial Public Offerings (IPOs).

Q10. National multi-industry manufacturer DCM Limited announced that its newly developed corporate "Sustainability-Linked Framework" received formal third-party validation. Which specialized credit subsidiary executed this ESG validation?

- A) CRISIL Green Ratings
- B) CareEdge ESG
- C) ICRA Carbon Advisory
- D) India Ratings & Research

Answer: B) CareEdge ESG

Explanation:

DCM Limited's green financing and sustainability-linked operating framework was independently verified and validated by **CareEdge ESG**, a specialized environmental, social, and governance subsidiary of CARE Ratings. This certification ensures high transparency for green bond compliance, validating the company's targets for carbon reduction and energy efficiency.

Q11. Which premier Indian financial infrastructure institution moved forward with its highly anticipated Initial Public Offering (IPO) by completing the selection of key intermediaries and legal advisers for its upcoming market listing?

- A) Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE)
- B) National Stock Exchange of India (NSE)
- C) Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX)
- D) National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL)

Answer: B) National Stock Exchange of India (NSE)

Explanation:

The **National Stock Exchange of India (NSE)** cleared a major regulatory hurdle for its long-awaited corporate IPO by finalising its syndicate of investment banks, merchant bankers, and legal intermediaries. This step positions the world's largest derivatives exchange by volume to launch one of India's most significant capital market listings.

Part 3: Technology, Science & Environment

Q12. To accelerate the country's transformation into an innovation-led economy, the Union Budget confirmed a dedicated financial layout of

₹20,000 crore to back deep-tech startups. Which major legislative act was passed to allow private patents for peaceful nuclear technologies?

- A) ATOM Act, 2024
- B) SHANTI Act, 2025
- C) Viksit Urja Rules, 2026
- D) Bhabha Innovation Framework

Answer: B) SHANTI Act, 2025

Explanation:

Under the broader deep-tech and industrial push highlighted in March 2026, the landmark **SHANTI Act, 2025** was enacted. This legislation allows private research entities and technology developers to hold **private patents for peaceful nuclear technologies**, ending the state's historical monopoly over nuclear research. This policy shift aims to draw venture capital into advanced atomic energy applications and small modular reactors (SMRs).

Q13. A breakthrough botanical survey paper documented the discovery of a rare new perennial erect shrub species named *Osbeckia zubeengargiana*. In which state was this plant species discovered?

- A) Baksa district, Assam
- B) Western Ghats, Kerala
- C) Jhanding Reserve, Sikkim
- D) Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh

Answer: A) Baksa district, Assam

Explanation:

Botanical taxonomists documenting regional flora discovered a new plant species, ***Osbeckia zubeengargiana***, in the **Baksa district of Assam**. The plant is a perennial erect shrub that grows up to 3.5 meters high and produces distinctive



pink tetramerous flowers between September and January. It was named in honor of Assam's well-known cultural figure and singer, Zubeen Garg.

Q14. India's national electricity grid managers raised alerts over "Coal Plant Inflexibility." What primary environmental challenge does this operational stiffness present for India's clean energy push?

A) Coal plants are using solar energy to wash raw minerals.

B) Inflexible baseline coal operations make it difficult to absorb surplus daytime solar power, risking grid frequency spikes unless solar generation is curtailed.

C) Coal plants are shutting down completely during monsoon months.

D) The grid cannot carry power through standard aluminum cables.

Answer: B) Inflexible baseline coal operations make it difficult to absorb surplus daytime solar power, risking grid frequency spikes unless solar generation is curtailed.

Explanation:

Data from India's electricity grid operations shows that the national grid must maintain a precise frequency between 49.900–50.050 Hz. However, traditional coal plants face technical limitations when trying to scale down their generation loads below 55% during peak daytime hours. This inflexibility makes it difficult to absorb **surplus solar power**, leading to grid frequency spikes and forcing operators to curtail clean renewable generation to maintain grid stability.

Part 4: Defence News & National Security

Q15. On March 17, 2026, Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz announced the "elimination" of a high-profile adversary in an overnight targeted strike. Who was the individual killed?

A) Yahya Sinwar

B) Ali Larijani

C) Ismail Haniyeh

D) Hassan Nasrallah

Answer: B) Ali Larijani

Explanation:

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz confirmed that **Iran's National Security Chief, Ali Larijani**, was killed in a targeted overnight airstrike, alongside senior commanders of the Basij paramilitary force. This high-profile assassination further intensified the West Asian conflict and led Iran to reclassify the operational boundaries of its maritime defense zones.

Q16. As part of its strategy to build indigenous naval manufacturing capabilities, the central government announced plans to establish an advanced "Autonomous Maritime Shipbuilding Centre." What technologies will this facility integrate?

A) Traditional wooden hull crafting and diesel mechanics

B) Robotics and Artificial Intelligence (AI) into key production lines

C) Steam turbine reverse engineering

D) Satellite laser welding exclusively from orbit

Answer: B) Robotics and Artificial Intelligence (AI) into key production lines

Explanation:

The proposed **Autonomous Maritime Shipbuilding Centre** will serve as an advanced

naval shipyard designed to integrate **robotics and AI workflows** into ship assembly and manufacturing. The campus will feature automated hull units, specialized testing facilities, an R&D wing, and maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) yards to improve manufacturing speed and self-reliance in naval production.

Q17. To check rampant illegal sand mining that threatens the nesting habitats of the critically endangered Gharial and the Gangetic River Dolphin, which judicial apex body took *suo motu* cognisance to protect the National Chambal Sanctuary?

- A) National Green Tribunal (NGT)
- B) Supreme Court of India
- C) Delhi High Court
- D) Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)

Answer: B) Supreme Court of India

Explanation:

The **Supreme Court of India** took *suo motu* cognisance of illegal mechanized sand mining along the Chambal riverbed. The court noted that unauthorized sand extraction destroys the river beaches needed by **critically endangered Gharials** and freshwater turtles for egg-laying, while forcing **Gangetic River Dolphins** to abandon their natural habitats due to river siltation and water-level changes.

Part 5: Government Schemes & Initiatives

Q18. The Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas issued an official clarification regarding biometric Aadhaar authentication (eKYC) norms for Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) consumers. Who is mandatory eKYC authentication restricted to?

- A) All commercial LPG connections across metro cities only
- B) Strictly for unauthenticated LPG customers under subsidy categories, rather than the entire consumer base
- C) Every household consumer using piped natural gas (PNG)
- D) Foreign nationals residing on temporary visas in India

Answer: B) Strictly for unauthenticated LPG customers under subsidy categories, rather than the entire consumer base

Explanation:

To resolve public confusion and reduce long lines at distributor offices, the **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas** clarified that **LPG biometric Aadhaar eKYC is mandatory only for unauthenticated customers** (primarily those receiving benefits under welfare schemes like Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana). The policy does not require a blanket re-verification for all general non-subsidized commercial or domestic users.

Q19. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the comprehensive infrastructure connectivity project "Assam Mala 3.0" (AM 3.0). What is the total financial allocation and physical target of this road program?

- A) ₹500 crore to build 50 kilometers of walking pathways
- B) ₹3,200 crore to construct over 900 kilometers of roads and 37 bridges across 34 districts
- C) ₹15,000 crore to construct a bullet train corridor through Guwahati
- D) ₹1,200 crore to build rural ropeways in hills

Answer: B) ₹3,200 crore to construct over 900 kilometers of roads and 37 bridges across 34 districts

Explanation:

During his development visit to Assam, PM Narendra Modi launched infrastructure projects worth ₹47,600 crore. A key component is **Assam Mala 3.0 (AM 3.0)**, a road infrastructure program allocated ₹3,200 crore. The project will build over 900 kilometers of high-speed state highways and 37 major bridges across 34 districts to improve economic corridors and interstate connectivity throughout the Northeast.

Q20. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs hosted the "AMRUT Mitra Mahotsav 2026." What is the main objective of expanding the AMRUT Mitra model across 5,000 cities?

- A) Replacing municipal water engineers with private tech firms
- B) Empowering Women Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to manage urban water quality, monitor wastewater reuse, and run sustainable water economies
- C) Giving free water tankers to commercial multiplexes
- D) Changing city names based on historical water bodies

Answer: B) Empowering Women Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to manage urban water quality, monitor wastewater reuse, and run sustainable water economies

Explanation:

The AMRUT Mitra Mahotsav 2026 highlighted the role of women SHGs under the AMRUT 2.0 mission. The initiative trains and positions women as "AMRUT Mitras" to manage local water infrastructure, monitor water treatment

systems, and oversee wastewater reuse projects. This expansion to 5,000 cities aims to combine grassroots environmental resource management with livelihoods and leadership roles for women in urban governance.

Part 6: Sports, Appointments & Awards

Q21. The prestigious 98th Academy Awards (Oscars 2026) concluded in Los Angeles. Which film won the "Best Picture" award, and who won the "Best Director" honor?

- A) *Sinners* won Best Picture; Michael B. Jordan won Best Director
- B) *One Battle After Another* won Best Picture; Paul Thomas Anderson won Best Director
- C) *Hamnet* won Best Picture; Jessie Buckley won Best Director
- D) *Oppenheimer's Legacy* won Best Picture; Christopher Nolan won Best Director

Answer: B) *One Battle After Another* won Best Picture; Paul Thomas Anderson won Best Director

Explanation:

At the 98th Academy Awards (Oscars 2026), the dark comedy *One Battle After Another* captured the Best Picture trophy, and Paul Thomas Anderson won the Best Director award for his work on the film. Additionally, Michael B. Jordan won Best Actor for *Sinners*, and Jessie Buckley became the first Irish actress to win Best Actress for her role in *Hamnet*.

Q22. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences introduced a brand-new official competitive category at the 98th Academy Awards. Which award category made its debut?

- A) Best Artificial Intelligence Visual Generation
- B) Outstanding Achievement in Casting

- C) Best Stunt Choreography and Performance
D) Best Promotional Social Media Trailer

Answer: B) Outstanding Achievement in Casting

Explanation:

The 2026 Oscars marked the structural introduction of a new official category: **Achievement in Casting**. The inaugural award was won by casting director **Cassandra Kulukundis** for her work on the Best Picture-winning film *One Battle After Another*.

Q23. International sports bodies finalized the official scheduling and groupings for the Men's Hockey World Cup 2026. Which two historic rivals have been clubbed together in the exact same competitive pool?

- A) Australia and Germany
B) India and Pakistan
C) Netherlands and Argentina
D) India and Belgium

Answer: B) India and Pakistan

Explanation:

The International Hockey Federation (FIH) confirmed the official pools for the upcoming **Men's Hockey World Cup 2026**. In a highly anticipated group stage pairing, **India and Pakistan have been placed in the same pool**, ensuring a high-profile match between the two South Asian teams early in the tournament.

Q24. Who was appointed by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) for a three-year term as a key member of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC)?

- A) Dr. Partha Biswas
B) K.V. Ramana Murthy
C) Gyanesh Kumar

- D) Rathindra Bose

Answer: A) Dr. Partha Biswas

Explanation:

Dr. Partha Biswas officially took charge as a **Member of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC)** following formal approval from the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC). An alumnus of Jadavpur University and Kanpur University, his three-year tenure will focus on safeguarding constitutional rights and investigating welfare measures for Scheduled Caste populations under Article 338 of the Constitution.

Part 7: Important Days, Culture & Books

Q25. The 60th Jnanpith Award for the year 2025—India's highest literary honor—was officially awarded to which legendary writer?

- A) Navtej Sarna
B) Vairamuthu
C) Mamta Kalita
D) Sa Tamilselvan

Answer: B) Vairamuthu

Explanation:

The Jnanpith Selection Board selected renowned poet and lyricist **Vairamuthu (Vairamuthu Ramasamy)** for the **60th Jnanpith Award**. With this recognition, he becomes the **third Tamil writer to receive the country's highest literary honor**, following P. V. Akilandam (Akilan) in 1975 and Jayakanthan in 2002.

Q26. The Sahitya Akademi announced its prestigious annual awards for 2025. Which former Indian diplomat won the Sahitya Akademi Award in the English language category, and for which novel?

- A) Amitav Ghosh for *The Poppy Sea*
- B) Navtej Sarna for *Crimson Spring*
- C) Shashi Tharoor for *The Era of Darkness*
- D) Vikram Seth for *A Balanced Text*

Answer: B) Navtej Sarna for *Crimson Spring*

Explanation:

Following a brief administrative delay, the Sahitya Akademi released its official selection list. Former diplomat and author **Navtej Sarna won the Sahitya Akademi Award 2025 in English for his historical novel *Crimson Spring***, which explores the events and trauma surrounding the Jallianwala Bagh massacre.

Q27. Match the following Sahitya Akademi Award 2025 winners with their respective languages and literary genres:

- 1. Mamta Kalia — Hindi (Memoir: *Jeete Jee Allahabad*)
- 2. Sa Tamilselvan — Tamil (Literary Criticism: *Thamiz Sirukathaiyin Thadanga*)
- 3. Navtej Sarna — English (Novel: *Crimson Spring*)

Which of the pairings given above are correctly matched?

- A) 1 and 2 only
- B) 2 and 3 only
- C) 1 and 3 only
- D) 1, 2, and 3

Answer: D) 1, 2, and 3

Explanation:

All three pairings are correct. The Sahitya Akademi announced its 2025 winners across 24 recognized regional languages. Notable awardees include **Mamta Kalia** in Hindi for her

memoir *Jeete Jee Allahabad*, **Sa Tamilselvan** in Tamil for his work of literary criticism *Thamiz Sirukathaiyin Thadanga*, and **Navtej Sarna** in English for his novel *Crimson Spring*.

Q28. BJP MLA Rathindra Bose, a professional Chartered Accountant from North Bengal, was officially elected to fill which significant legislative position on March 17, 2026?

- A) Pro-tem Speaker of Lok Sabha
- B) Speaker of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly
- C) Chairman of Public Accounts Committee
- D) Deputy Chief Minister of West Bengal

Answer: B) Speaker of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly

Explanation:

Following legislative voting sessions and party nominations, **BJP MLA Rathindra Bose was formally elected as the Speaker of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly**. A professional accountant turned political figure, his role involves managing assembly floor dynamics and enforcing legislative rules during upcoming assembly sessions.

Q29. Based on the judicial precedent established in the landmark *Prakash Singh vs Union of India (2006)* case, what transparent structural process must states follow when appointing a Director General of Police (DGP)?

- A) The state governor chooses any police officer directly based on political recommendations.
- B) The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) prepares a panel of three eligible senior IPS officers, and the state government selects one from this panel as Head of Police Force (HoPF).

C) The state legislative assembly conducts a public voting poll among all working IPS officers.

D) The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) designates the leader automatically.

Answer: B) The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) prepares a panel of three eligible senior IPS officers, and the state government selects one from this panel as Head of Police Force (HoPF).

Explanation:

Under the landmark **Supreme Court ruling in Prakash Singh vs Union of India (2006) on police reforms**, states cannot appoint acting or ad-hoc DGPs arbitrarily. The state must submit a list of senior officers to the UPSC, which evaluates their records and recommends a panel of three eligible officers. The state government then selects one officer from this panel to serve as DGP with a secured minimum tenure, a process designed to insulate police leadership from political interference.

Q30. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) issued an environmental alert regarding the ecosystem degradation of the Hajar Mountains due to rapid urban development. Where are the Hajar Mountains geographically located?

- A) Spanning the border of India and Myanmar
- B) Located along the eastern coast of the UAE and Oman, separating Fujairah from the rest of the emirates
- C) Located on the southern tip of the Sri Lankan island
- D) Spanning the high-altitude zones of Ladakh and Tibet

Answer: B) Located along the eastern coast of the UAE and Oman, separating Fujairah from the rest of the emirates

Explanation:

The Hajar Mountains are the highest mountain range in the eastern Arabian Peninsula, spanning parts of Oman and the United Arab Emirates. They separate the coastal emirate of Fujairah from the rest of the UAE. Recent reports highlight that these mountains face ecological pressure from urban expansion, infrastructure projects, and mining, threatening the region's unique desert-mountain biodiversity.

Quick Revision Matrix

Category	Key Headline / Event	Associated Entity / Persona
National Security	Escorting LPG ships across Strait of Hormuz	Indian Navy (MV Shivalik & MV Nanda Devi)
Polity / Law	Submission of final UCC draft report	Gujarat State Government (CM Bhupendra Patel)
Macro Economy	GDP Growth Forecast for FY27 upgraded to 6.7%	Fitch Ratings
Culture / Awards	60th Jnanpith Award (2025) announced	Legendary Tamil Poet Vairamuthu
Literature	Sahitya Akademi English Award for <i>Crimson Spring</i>	Former Diplomat Navtej Sarna
Global Cinema	<i>One Battle After Another</i> wins Best Picture	98th Academy Awards (Oscars 2026)

