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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 26-02-2026

NATIONAL NEWS

South African Cheetah Gamini Gives Birth to Three Cubs at Kuno National Park

Female cheetah Gamini, translocated from South Africa, gave birth to three cubs at Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh, marking the 9th successful cheetah litter at the park.

With the new births, India's cheetah population increased to 38, including 27 India-born cubs and 11 translocated adult cheetahs from Namibia and South Africa.

Earlier, Namibian cheetah Aasha gave birth to five cubs, showing increasing reproductive success under Project Cheetah.

Three adult cheetahs were also relocated to Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary, Madhya Pradesh, expanding cheetah habitat beyond Kuno National Park.

Project Cheetah was launched on 17 September 2022 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the release of eight Namibian cheetahs to reintroduce the species that became extinct in India in 1952.

Since the programme began, 21 cheetahs (adults and cubs) have died, highlighting the challenges of wildlife reintroduction despite recent conservation successes.

The project supports biodiversity restoration, wildlife conservation, and ecosystem balance in India's protected reserves.

Vice President Releases Tamil and Gujarati Editions of Constitution of India

Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan released the updated Tamil and Gujarati editions of the Constitution of India along with the 8th Edition of the Legal Glossary (English–Hindi) at Uprashtrapati Bhavan.

The initiative aims to enhance constitutional awareness and linguistic inclusivity.

Release made on the occasion of International Mother Language Day (21 February).

Objective is to promote access to constitutional provisions in regional languages.

India has 22 officially recognised languages under the Eighth Schedule.

Constitution now available in multiple Indian languages including Bodo, Dogri, Santhali and Nepali.

Initiative strengthens democratic participation and inclusive governance.
8th Edition of Legal Glossary (English–Hindi) aims to simplify legal terminology.

Glossary will benefit lawmakers, judicial officers, students and researchers.

Transition reflects India’s commitment to multilingual governance and cultural preservation.

Tamil recognised as one of the oldest classical languages in the world.
Move enhances awareness of constitutional rights and duties at the grassroots level.

BANKING

ICICI Prudential Launches India’s First NPS-Based Swasthya Pension Scheme

ICICI Prudential Pension Funds Management Company Limited launched India’s first Swasthya Scheme named “ICICI PF NPS Swasthya Equity Plus”, integrating retirement planning with healthcare benefits under the National Pension System (NPS).

The scheme is launched as a Proof of Concept (POC) under the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) Regulatory Sandbox Framework.

The scheme was developed in collaboration with Apollo HealthCo Limited (healthcare network partner) and KFin Technologies Limited (digital technology partner).

Subscribers can make multiple withdrawals up to 25% of their own contributions specifically for medical expenses.

The scheme aims to promote financial discipline by protecting long-term retirement savings while providing healthcare financial flexibility.

The product is designed to complement health insurance rather than replace it and may be linked to existing health insurance coverage in the future to strengthen its supplementary role.

The scheme is primarily a retirement savings product with healthcare-linked withdrawal flexibility.

During the POC phase, the scheme offers higher equity exposure to support long-term retirement wealth creation.

In medical emergencies, if expenses exceed 70% of the corpus, premature closure is allowed, with payments made directly to healthcare providers and remaining funds transferred to the regular pension scheme.

Compared to a regular NPS account, which allows only four partial withdrawals, this scheme provides greater liquidity for medical needs.

WB Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency Issues USD 197.67 Million Guarantee to Support SBI Rooftop Solar Refinancing

The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), the guarantee arm of the World Bank Group (WBG), issued a USD 197.67 million guarantee for five years to Citibank N.A. for its non-shareholder loan to the State Bank of India (SBI).

The guarantee supports the refinancing of investments in India's Grid-connected Rooftop Solar Photovoltaic (GRPV)

The GRPV systems programme was launched by SBI in 2016 with financing from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), part of the World Bank Group.

The facility allows refinancing of the remaining principal of the USD 500 million IBRD loan for the GRPV systems.

By transferring exposure to Citibank's balance sheet, the transaction frees lending capacity for additional World Bank financing to the Government of India (GoI).

The guarantee protects Citibank against the risk of non-honoring of financial obligations by a state-owned enterprise.

The project promotes clean energy by providing grid-connected rooftop solar installations, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and displacing carbon-intensive thermal generation.

The loan supports a national programme to deliver GRPV systems to commercial and industrial customers across India.

Reserve Bank of India Establishes High-Security Data Centre in Odisha

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has launched its second high-security Data Centre in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, to strengthen the safety, resilience, and continuity of critical financial infrastructure.

The greenfield facility is built on an 18.55-acre campus at Info Valley-II, Khordha (Odisha) and will host the RBI's core computing systems.

The centre will manage currency (cash) supply operations, digital inter-bank payments, payment and settlement systems, and regulatory financial data monitoring.

The facility has achieved Tier IV design certification, meeting the highest global standards of reliability, uptime, redundancy, and operational performance.

It is designed with in-built fault tolerance, layered physical and cyber safeguards, high redundancy, and resilience architecture to ensure uninterrupted functioning of core systems.

The new centre is strategically located away from cross-border threat zones and high seismic-risk regions, enhancing national financial security.

The Primary Data Centre of RBI is located at Kharghar, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra, which hosts

core applications, databases, and software systems.

With the rapid growth of digital transactions and real-time payment systems, secure data infrastructure is being treated as a cornerstone of financial stability.

The initiative aligns with global best practices, similar to secure facilities operated by the US Federal Reserve Bank, such as the East Rutherford Operations Center.

Other Indian institutions like the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and the State Bank of India (SBI) are also developing their own dedicated data centres.

As of 2025, RBI is also launching a pilot cloud facility with data centres in Mumbai and Hyderabad to provide sovereign local cloud storage solutions for financial institutions.

DEFENCE

INS Sudarshini Makes Historic Port Visit to Safaga, Egypt

Indian Navy's Sail Training Ship INS Sudarshini arrived at Safaga, Egypt as part of its Lokayan-26 deployment.

The ship covered a distance of 1,832 nautical miles in 16 days, sailing from Salalah to Safaga, demonstrating crew endurance, confidence, and operational resilience.

On arrival, the ship was welcomed by Egyptian Navy officials and Indian Embassy representatives, highlighting strong diplomatic maritime relations.

The Commanding Officer of INS Sudarshini met Rear Admiral Ramy Ahmed Ismail Mohamed, Base Commander, Red Sea and Safaga Naval Base, strengthening naval cooperation and interoperability.

During the port visit, the Indian Navy conducted professional exchanges, shared sail training best practices, and performed community outreach activities to promote bilateral goodwill.

The transit through the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea was a critical operational phase, requiring navigation through challenging weather conditions and dense shipping traffic, showcasing advanced seamanship skills.

The visit supports the "Bridges of Friendship" initiative, reinforcing India–Egypt maritime cooperation and strategic naval partnership.

The deployment reflects the Indian Navy's commitment to maritime diplomacy, training excellence, and international naval collaboration.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Slice Small Finance Bank

Slice Small Finance Bank (Slice SFB) appointed its founder Rajan Bajaj as Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

He succeeded Satish Kumar Kalra, marking the bank's transition from a fintech startup to a fully licensed Small Finance Bank (SFB).

The appointment was approved by the Board of Directors, shareholders, and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Rajan Bajaj founded Slice in 2016 and led its transformation into a regulated banking entity following its merger with North East Small Finance Bank (2024).

Slice has served over 20 million registered users, employs more than 3,000 people, and has raised over USD 250 million from investors such as Tiger Global, Insight Partners, and Advent International.

Bajaj previously worked on the product team at Flipkart and served as Executive Director (ED) of Slice before becoming MD & CEO.

In 2019, he established Quadrillion Finance, a wholly owned NBFC, which provided credit to retail customers and small businesses using technology-led underwriting and risk processes; it was later merged into Slice's banking entity.

SPORTS

Norway Sets Record with 17 Gold Medals at 2026 Winter Olympics

Norway created history at the Milan Cortina Winter Olympics by winning its 17th gold medal, the highest number of gold medals won by any nation at a single Winter Games.

The record was achieved after Johannes Dale-Skjevdal secured gold in the men's 15-kilometre biathlon mass start event.

Norway won 17 gold medals, breaking its previous record of 16 gold medals set at the Beijing Winter Olympics.

Johannes Dale-Skjevdal delivered a perfect 20 out of 20 shooting performance in the biathlon mass start.

Winning time: 39 minutes 17.1 seconds.

He took the lead after the first standing shooting round despite gusty winds and slow snow conditions.

Silver medal was won by Sturla Holm Laegreid, finishing 10.5 seconds behind and securing his fifth medal of the 2026 Games.

Bronze medal was claimed by Quentin Fillon Maillet, finishing 25.6 seconds behind the winner and earning his ninth Olympic medal overall.

The biathlon men's 15 kilometre mass start includes 30 athletes, five 3 kilometre ski loops and four shooting rounds (two prone and two standing) with penalty laps for missed targets.

Norway leads the all-time Winter Olympics medal tally with 405 medals.

Norway's medal tally: 148 Gold, 134 Silver, 123 Bronze (Total 405).

United States ranks second with 330 total medals (114 Gold, 121 Silver, 95 Bronze).

Germany ranks third with 267 total medals (105 Gold, 97 Silver, 65 Bronze).

The 17th gold medal at Milan Cortina 2026 reinforces Norway's dominance in Winter Olympics history, particularly in biathlon and Nordic skiing events.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

Vice President Releases Book Atal Bihari Vajpayee: The Eternal Statesman in New Delhi

Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan released the coffee table book Atal Bihari Vajpayee: The Eternal Statesman in New Delhi.

He described the publication as a fitting tribute to Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee, stating that the book is more than a collection of photographs and celebrates the life, leadership, and enduring legacy of one of India's tallest statesmen whose ideals continue to inspire the nation.

The book was released in New Delhi by Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan.

It highlights major milestones of Atal Bihari Vajpayee's political journey, covering both personal and political dimensions of his life.

The book portrays Vajpayee's commitment to dialogue, consensus-building, and democratic values throughout his political career.

Key leadership milestones highlighted include:

Pokhran Nuclear Tests (1998), which strengthened India's national security.

Visionary infrastructure initiatives such as the Delhi Metro project, symbolising development-oriented governance.

The Vice President observed that Vajpayee demonstrated how strength and sensitivity can coexist in leadership.

The publication underscores three core pillars that defined Vajpayee’s leadership:

Dialogue over confrontation

Democracy as a foundational value

Development as a national priority

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