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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 26-03-2026

NATIONAL NEWS

National District Mineral Foundation Summit 2026

The National District Mineral Foundation Summit 2026 was scheduled to be held on 23–24 March 2026 at SCOPE Convention Centre, New Delhi.

The summit was organized by the Ministry of Mines.

The summit focused on improving the utilisation of District Mineral Foundation funds in mining-affected regions.

It brought together policy makers, administrators and experts to ensure better planning, coordination and transparency in the use of District Mineral Foundation funds.

The summit emphasised efficient utilisation of District Mineral Foundation funds to improve the socio-economic conditions of people living in mining-affected areas.

It highlighted the need for better coordination between Central Government, State Governments and District authorities.

The summit aimed to identify policy reforms for ensuring proper planning and timely implementation of development projects funded through District Mineral Foundation resources.

It focused on achieving measurable outcomes so that funds directly benefit local communities and improve living standards.

The summit included participation from representatives of Central Ministries, State Governments and District administrations.

The discussions were based on extensive consultations conducted since January 2026 to incorporate diverse stakeholder inputs for improving fund utilisation.

These thematic discussions aimed to improve accountability and effectiveness in fund utilisation across States.

The summit gave special focus to the Aspirational District Programme and Aspirational Block Programme for accelerating development in underdeveloped regions.

The District Mineral Foundation is a statutory body created under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957.

District Mineral Foundation funds are financed through contributions from mining companies.

These funds are utilised for the welfare of people affected by mining-related activities.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India and Italy Hold 9th Foreign Office Consultations in New Delhi

The 9th India–Italy Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) were held in New Delhi on 20 March 2026 to review bilateral relations and discuss regional and global issues.

The consultations were held in the backdrop of high-level engagements, including meetings between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Italian PM Giorgia Meloni at the G20 Summit 2025 (Johannesburg), and between Dr. S. Jaishankar and Antonio Tajani in December 2025.

Both sides reviewed progress of the Joint Strategic Action Plan (JSAP) 2025–29, covering sectors like trade & economy, technology, space, defence and security, renewable energy, education, research & innovation, and people-to-people ties.

India and Italy agreed to expedite the Joint Initiative to Counter Financing of Terrorism (CFT), reaffirming commitment to combat terrorism.

Both countries are working towards holding the first Maritime Security Dialogue (MSD) to enhance maritime cooperation and security.

The discussions highlighted the strengthening of the India–EU Strategic Partnership, including progress on the India–EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA), Security and Defence Partnership, and Mobility Cooperation Framework.

Key regional issues discussed included developments in the Indo-Pacific and West Asia.

Both sides emphasized enhancing cooperation in the skilling, mobility, and healthcare sector under the Migration and Mobility Agreement.

India–Italy relations are on an upward trajectory, marked by regular high-level interactions, ministerial dialogues, and private sector engagement.

Both countries agreed to continue strengthening institutional mechanisms in trade, defence, and science & technology for effective implementation of JSAP.

India and Indonesia Partner to Restore Prambanan Temple Complex in Yogyakarta

India and Indonesia announced a collaborative initiative to restore the Prambanan Temple complex in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, strengthening cultural diplomacy and heritage conservation.

The discussion took place on March 16, 2026, during a meeting between Indonesia’s Culture Minister Fadli Zon and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) team in Jakarta.

Prambanan Temple is the largest Hindu temple complex in Indonesia, located in Sleman near Yogyakarta (Java), and is locally known as Roro Jonggrang.

The temple complex was built in the 9th century by the Sanjaya dynasty and is dedicated to the Hindu Trimurti—Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma.

Prambanan was recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1991, highlighting its global cultural significance.

The architecture reflects a blend of indigenous Javanese styles and South Indian Pallava influences.

The complex consists of 240 temples featuring intricate carvings from the Ramayana and other Hindu epics.

BANKING

BoB Launches UPI-Based Overdraft Facility for Women SHG Members

Bank of Baroda (BoB) has launched an Overdraft (OD) facility on Credit Line via UPI for verified women Self-Help Group (SHG) members holding Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY)

BoB becomes the first bank in India to introduce such a UPI-based digital credit solution.

The facility allows eligible women to access up to ₹5,000 overdraft, promoting financial inclusion and women-led economic empowerment.

The initiative was launched by Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan during the 25th Central Level Coordination Committee (CLCC) Meeting held in Hyderabad.

The scheme is implemented in collaboration with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), Indian Banks' Association (IBA), and Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM).

The facility enables digital access to credit through UPI-enabled apps, eliminating the need for branch visits, paperwork, and traditional borrowing barriers.

Eligible SHG members can link their OD account to UPI apps, make QR payments, repay loans, and track transactions digitally.

The initiative provides collateral-free, small-ticket credit to meet working capital and emergency financial needs of rural women.

It helps in building credit history, enabling SHG members to access higher-value loans in the future.

The system ensures transparency and traceability of fund flows, utilisation, and repayments.

The initiative is scalable nationwide for other financial inclusion and small-ticket lending

It aligns with major government initiatives like PMJDY, DAY-NRLM, and Digital India, strengthening the digital financial ecosystem.

The scheme represents a major step in integrating digital payments (UPI) with accessible credit delivery for underserved and rural communities.

RNFI Services Launches UPI QR-Based Cash Withdrawal Service Nationwide

RNFI Services, through its platform Relipay, has launched a nationwide UPI QR-based cash withdrawal service in partnership with Jio Payments Bank.

The service eliminates the need for ATM cards or biometric authentication, providing a simple and accessible assisted banking solution.

The facility offers a per transaction limit of ₹5,000, a daily limit of ₹10,000, and a monthly limit of ₹50,000.

The launch marks a significant expansion of RNFI's assisted digital banking offerings and strengthens its partnership with Jio Payments Bank.

RANKS, INDICES & REPORTS

China Becomes India's Third-Largest Export Destination in February 2026

China became India's third-largest export destination in February 2026, overtaking Netherlands.

India's exports to China increased by 32.4% to 1.67 billion United States dollars in February 2026.

At the same time, India's overall exports declined slightly by 0.81% year-on-year to 36.61 billion United States dollars during the month.

The change reflects a significant shift in India's trade dynamics and indicates growing economic engagement between India and China, despite geopolitical tensions between the two countries since 2020.

The increase in exports to China was mainly driven by higher shipments in electronics and marine products, which played a major role in boosting export performance.

These sectors are becoming increasingly important components of India's export strategy.

India's overall export decline of 0.81% suggests that global demand remained uncertain and uneven across regions in February 2026.

During the same period, India's exports to seven out of its top ten trading partners contracted, reflecting broader global trade challenges.

The rise in exports to China highlights new opportunities for India in large international markets, especially in high-demand sectors.

However, India–China trade relations remain complex, influenced by both economic cooperation and strategic competition.

Strengthening domestic industries and diversifying export markets remain important strategies for ensuring stable and sustainable export growth in the long term.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Part-Time Chairman of South Indian Bank

Jose Joseph Kattoor, appointed as non-executive part-time chairman (Independent Director) of South Indian Bank for three years, following RBI approval.

Kattoor succeeds V J Kurian, who retires on March 22, 2026, after serving as independent director since March 23, 2018.

Kattoor has been an independent director on the South Indian Bank board since July 18, 2024.

He has over 30 years of experience at Reserve Bank of India (RBI), serving from 1991 to 2023, including as Executive Director handling Enforcement, Corporate Strategy, Currency Management, and Human Resources.

In his new role, Kattoor will strengthen governance standards and support the bank’s long-term strategic vision.

Thomson Thomas was appointed as non-executive independent director for a three-year term, effective March 23, 2026.

Board approved elevation of senior management personnel, effective April 1, 2026, reflecting an internal succession strategy.

Anto George T promoted from Chief General Manager (CGM) and COO to Executive Vice President, continuing as Chief Operating Officer.

Senthil Kumar, previously Senior General Manager and Head of Credit, elevated to CGM and now serves as Chief Credit Officer.

Sony A elevated from SGM and Chief Information Officer to CGM, with expanded responsibilities including Strategic Alliances, Digital Business, Marketing, and Customer Experience.

The appointments and promotions aim to strengthen the bank’s operations, credit, digital transformation, and corporate banking functions.

Yamaha Music India Appoints AR Rahman as Brand Ambassador

A. R. Rahman has been appointed as the brand ambassador of Yamaha Music India Private Limited.

Yamaha Music India is the Indian subsidiary of Yamaha Corporation, Japan, engaged in manufacturing musical instruments and professional audio equipment.

The company operates a manufacturing facility in Chennai, a corporate office in Gurugram, and an experience centre in Bengaluru.

AR Rahman acknowledged Yamaha's products as an integral part of his musical journey and plans to include them in his music school in Chennai.

The appointment reflects Yamaha Music India's growth roadmap and strategic focus on brand promotion in India.

MoUs & Agreements

India and Bhutan Sign Memorandum of Understanding on Postal Cooperation

India and Bhutan signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Postal Cooperation to strengthen bilateral collaboration in the postal sector.

The Memorandum of Understanding provides a structured framework for cooperation between India Post and Bhutan Post.

The agreement was signed between the Ministry of Communications and Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport during the Bhutan visit of the Secretary of the Department of Posts.

The Memorandum of Understanding aims to enhance cooperation in key areas including:Postal operations, Technology development, Capacity building, Logistics connectivity, Philately and Knowledge exchange

Both countries agreed to strengthen collaboration in the technology domain, including sharing experience and best practices related to India Post's evolving technology ecosystem.

The agreement is expected to improve efficiency, connectivity and service delivery in postal networks between the two countries.

SPORTS

Khelo India Tribal Games 2026 Begins in Chhattisgarh from 25 March 2026

The Khelo India Tribal Games 2026 will be held from 25 March to 3 April 2026 in Chhattisgarh.

The Games will be hosted across Raipur, Jagdalpur and Surguja.

The event will bring together over 6,000 participants, including around 2,300 athletes from across the country.

The initiative aims to promote tribal sporting talent at the national level and preserve indigenous sports traditions.

The Khelo India Tribal Games is a national-level initiative focused on showcasing the talent of tribal athletes and celebrating India's tribal sporting heritage.

Chhattisgarh was selected as the host State due to its strong tribal cultural connection and the presence of over 32% tribal population.

The Games will feature major sports disciplines including Archery, Athletics, Football, Hockey, Swimming, Weightlifting and Wrestling.

Special focus will be given to indigenous sports such as Mallakhamb and Kabaddi.

The Games aim to provide a national platform for tribal athletes who often remain underrepresented in mainstream competitions.

The initiative will help in the promotion of indigenous sports traditions and cultural identity of tribal communities.

It will encourage youth participation in sports among tribal communities across India.

The Games will also promote cultural exchange among tribal communities from different States.

The event is expected to contribute to the overall development of sports infrastructure and talent identification among tribal athletes in India.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Tuberculosis Day 2026

World Tuberculosis Day 2026 was observed globally on 24 March 2026 to raise awareness about the global epidemic of Tuberculosis and efforts to eliminate the disease.

The theme for World Tuberculosis Day 2026 was "Yes! We can end Tuberculosis!".

The day is observed every year to highlight the health, social and economic consequences of Tuberculosis and to strengthen global efforts to end the Tuberculosis epidemic.

The date 24 March marks the announcement made in 1882 by Robert Koch regarding the discovery of Mycobacterium tuberculosis, the bacterium that causes Tuberculosis.

At the time of the discovery, Tuberculosis caused one out of every seven deaths in the United States of America and Europe.

The discovery of the Tuberculosis-causing bacterium was considered a major scientific breakthrough that laid the foundation for the control and elimination of the disease.

A century later, 24 March was officially designated as World Tuberculosis Day to educate the public about the impact of Tuberculosis worldwide and promote prevention and treatment efforts.

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