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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 27-02-2026

NATIONAL NEWS

Union Finance Minister Launches NMP 2.0 Asset Monetisation Pipeline

Nirmala Sitharaman, Union Minister of Finance (MoF), launched the second phase of the National Monetisation Pipeline called National Monetisation Pipeline 2.0 (NMP 2.0) in New Delhi.

NMP 2.0 focuses on asset monetisation, which means using under-utilised or existing infrastructure assets to generate government revenue and attract fresh investments for economic development.

The pipeline was formulated by NITI Aayog in consultation with infrastructure ministries, aligned with the Asset Monetisation Plan 2025–30 announced in the Union Budget 2025–26.

The NMP 2.0 target estimates an aggregate monetisation potential of ₹16.72 lakh crore, including private sector investment of ₹5.8 lakh crore, during FY 2025–26 to FY 2029–30.

The target under NMP 2.0 is 2.6 times higher than the target under NMP 1.0.

The Finance Minister stated that NMP 1.0 achieved nearly 90% of its ₹6 lakh crore target, demonstrating successful implementation of asset monetisation reforms.

The initiative supports the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047 by promoting accelerated infrastructure development and economic growth momentum.

Asset monetisation helps in recycling productive public assets, enabling capital expenditure (CAPEX) funding while reducing budgetary pressure on the government.

The policy aims to mobilise funds for new infrastructure projects and support sustainable economic expansion through public asset value unlocking.

"Badhna Hai Toh Yahan Judna Hai" Campaign Launched

The Government of India launched a nationwide awareness campaign titled "Badhna Hai Toh Yahan Judna Hai" to expand participation in the Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH).

The campaign was launched by Union Minister of State (I/C) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Jayant Chaudhary on the sidelines of the India AI Impact Summit 2026.

The campaign aims to accelerate progress towards Viksit Bharat by strengthening India's digital skilling ecosystem.

Legendary actor Amitabh Bachchan has been roped in to promote awareness and boost nationwide participation in SIDH.

Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH) is India's integrated digital platform for skilling, employment and lifelong learning.

SIDH has onboarded over 1.5 crore registered candidates, making it one of the country's largest unified digital skilling platforms.

The platform is mobile-first and AI-enabled, offering industry-aligned and future-ready courses with personalised recommendations.

SIDH integrates multiple government skilling initiatives into a single digital ecosystem, reducing fragmentation and improving access.

Key features include LMS-enabled central learning hub, digitally verified credentials, QR-code enabled digital CVs, Aadhaar-based eKYC registration and OTP-enabled mobile access.

The platform is available in more than 21 Indian languages, ensuring inclusivity and wide accessibility.

SIDH caters to students, graduates, working professionals and aspiring entrepreneurs, supporting upskilling and reskilling needs.

The campaign will be rolled out across digital platforms, social media and QR-enabled touchpoints to enable seamless registration.

The initiative promotes the vision of "Lifelong Learning for Prosperity – for anyone, anytime, anywhere", aligning with India's goal of becoming a global skill capital.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Prime Minister to Address Israeli Parliament During Historic Israel Visit 2026

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will become the first Indian Prime Minister to address the plenary session of the Knesset during his two-day official visit to Israel.

The visit has been described as historic by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and marks a significant milestone in India Israel bilateral relations.

Prime Minister Modi will also hold high-level discussions with President Isaac Herzog.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the Knesset plenary session becoming the first Indian Prime Minister to do so. Addressing the Israeli Parliament is regarded as a high diplomatic honour and reflects the elevation of bilateral ties.

This will be his second visit to Israel, following his landmark 2017 visit that strengthened cooperation and elevated India Israel relations to a strategic partnership level.

During the visit, he will hold bilateral talks with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Isaac Herzog, focusing on defence cooperation, innovation, security collaboration, agricultural technology, water management and regional stability.

The official programme at the Israeli Parliament will begin with a ceremonial welcome at the Weil Courtyard, followed by signing of the guestbook in the Chagall State Hall and a joint photograph session.

A special plenary session will be held in honour of the visiting Prime Minister, where key Israeli leaders including the Speaker and Opposition representatives will deliver remarks.

Diplomatic relations between India and Israel were established in 1992, and cooperation has since expanded in defence, agriculture, water management, science and technology. India is one of Israel's major defence partners, while Israel supports India with advanced agricultural and irrigation technologies.

The visit highlights India's balanced West Asia policy, maintaining strong relations with Israel while also engaging constructively with Arab nations. It further strengthens political trust and strategic collaboration between the two democracies.

BANKING

New India Co-operative Bank Limited removed from Second Schedule of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 from February 2026

New India Co-operative Bank Limited., Mumbai,Maharashtra has been removed from the Second Schedule of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, which lists scheduled banks in India, effective from February 2026.

Removal from the Second Schedule means the bank loses its status as a scheduled bank, along with privileges such as access to RBI refinance facilities and participation in monetary policy operations and liquidity support mechanisms.

Scheduled bank status is granted under Section 42 of the RBI Act, 1934, subject to fulfilment of requirements such as minimum capital, reserve maintenance, and regulatory compliance norms.

Exclusion from the schedule follows the bank's voluntary amalgamation with Saraswat Co-operative Bank Ltd., which was approved in August 2025 to ensure stability after a significant misappropriation scam.

The action highlights RBI's strict regulatory supervision to ensure financial system stability and depositors' protection in the banking sector during institutional transitions.

RBI Issues Regulatory Guidelines for Bank Lending to Real

Estate Investment Trusts

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released draft amendment directions across five regulatory frameworks covering commercial banks, small finance banks (SFBs), and All India Financial Institutions (AIFIs) regarding credit facilities, concentration risk management, and financial disclosure norms.

The draft allows regulated entities to provide finance to Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) subject to prudential safeguards, risk management standards, and exposure limits.

Banks may lend to SEBI-registered REITs in India, while overseas branches may lend to foreign REITs only in jurisdictions having a strong insolvency or bankruptcy legal framework.

Banks can lend only to listed REITs that have been operational for at least 3 years, have positive net distributable cash flows for the last 2 years, and have no adverse regulatory action in the past 3 years.

Lending is permitted only if Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) under the REIT structure are not under financial stress.

Banks must follow a Board-approved lending policy, ensure continuous monitoring of end-use of funds, and confirm that trust deeds permit borrowing.

The aggregate bank exposure to a REIT and its SPVs/holding companies (Holdcos) cannot exceed 49% of the REIT asset value, unless the Board prescribes stricter limits.

Banks must carefully evaluate cash flow stability and debt servicing capacity before extending credit to REIT entities.

The framework strengthens prudential regulation, financial stability, and safe infrastructure financing channels in the banking system.

Reserve Bank Of India Issues Revised Kisan Credit Card Guidelines

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued draft revised guidelines for Kisan Credit Card (KCC) to expand coverage, improve agricultural financing, and streamline loan operations.

The revised KCC framework applies to commercial banks, Small Finance Banks (SFBs), Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), and rural cooperative banks to ensure uniform implementation across India.

The guidelines apply to new KCC loans and existing loans during renewal or review cycles.

Crop seasons have been standardized as 12 months for short-duration crops and 18 months for long-duration crops to ensure uniform repayment and loan planning cycles.

Marginal farmers are defined as farmers owning up to 1 hectare of land, while small farmers own more than 1 hectare but up to 2 hectares of land.

The KCC loan tenure has been extended to 6 years to better match long agricultural crop cycles.

Drawing limits will now be based on scale of finance per crop season, ensuring credit reflects actual

cultivation and input costs.

Farmers can use an additional 20% credit limit for technology-driven agriculture practices such as soil testing, weather forecasting, and organic certification.

A flexible KCC credit limit of ₹10,000 – ₹50,000 is available for marginal farmers based on landholding size and crop type.

Eligible borrowers include owner cultivators, tenant farmers, sharecroppers, Self Help Groups (SHGs), and Joint Liability Groups (JLGs).

Farmers engaged in animal husbandry, fisheries, and allied agricultural activities are also eligible for working capital credit.

Banks shall waive collateral security and margin requirements for agricultural loans up to ₹2 lakh per borrower.

DEFENCE

7th Edition of Joint Military Exercise 'Dharma Guardian'

Dharma Guardian, the 7th edition of the India–Japan Joint Military Exercise, began at Chaubattia, Uttarakhand, from 24 February to 9 March 2026.

The exercise strengthens defence cooperation between India and Japan, particularly in semi-urban warfare and tactical coordination.

The exercise involves 120 personnel from each side, with Japan represented by the 32nd Infantry Regiment and India represented by the Ladakh Scouts.

The exercise is conducted alternately in India and Japan and serves as a key pillar of bilateral defence cooperation.

The main objective is to enhance interoperability, jointness, and synchronized tactical procedures for joint military operations in semi-urban environments under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

Training modules focus on high physical fitness, joint operational planning, and modern combat tactical drills using advanced technology.

Tactical activities include establishing Temporary Operating Bases, developing Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) grids, and setting up Mobile Vehicle Check Posts (VCPs).

Specialized mission training includes cordon and search operations, heliborne missions, and house intervention drills in hostile environments.

The exercise also focuses on physical conditioning and operational readiness in challenging terrains.

Previous editions: 6th edition held at East Fuji Training Area, Japan (2025) and 5th edition at

Rajasthan, India (2024).

Exercise Dharma Guardian is an annual exercise between the Indian Army and the Japanese Ground Self Defence Force conducted in 2018.

The exercise reflects a shared vision of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific”, strengthening regional stability, security cooperation, and rules-based international order.

AWARDS & PRIZES

Our Lady of Grace Cathedral Wins UNESCO Asia-Pacific Award of Merit 2025

The 475-year-old Our Lady of Grace Cathedral in Vasai, Maharashtra received the Award of Merit at the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation 2025.

It became the only religious site from India to receive recognition in the 2025 edition of the awards.

The announcement was made in Bangkok, Thailand, during the 25th anniversary ceremony of the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation.

A total of 10 projects from six countries were recognised in 2025, namely China, India, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal and Vanuatu.

The awards are presented under four categories: Award of Distinction (Highest Honour), Award of Merit, Award for New Design in Heritage Contexts and Special Recognition for Sustainable Development

The Award of Distinction (2025) was jointly conferred on:

Sihang Warehouse Conservation Project (China)

Iwami Ginzan Library Conservation Project (Japan)

Nepal secured two Awards of Merit in the 2025 edition.

A total of 90 entries from 16 countries were evaluated by a seven member international jury, marking the highest number of submissions in the award’s history.

The recognition highlights India’s growing global presence in cultural heritage conservation and restoration efforts under international platforms.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Rob Jetten Sworn In As Youngest Prime Minister Of The Netherlands

Rob Jetten (Rob Arnoldus Andreas Jetten) was sworn in as the youngest-ever Prime Minister of the Netherlands at the age of 38, becoming the first openly gay head of government in Dutch history.

He succeeded Dick Schoof, who had served as Prime Minister since 2024 and continued in a caretaker role after the government collapse in June 2025.

The oath ceremony was administered by King Willem-Alexander at Huis ten Bosch Palace, located in The Hague.

Rob Jetten leads a minority coalition government formed after the October 2025 general election.

His party, Democrats 66 (D66), a centrist and pro-European party, performed strongly in the election, securing 26 seats.

The coalition government includes the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) and the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD).

The coalition holds 66 out of 150 seats in the lower house of the Dutch Parliament (Tweede Kamer), requiring continuous support from opposition parties to pass legislation.

His appointment marks a historic milestone in inclusive leadership and Dutch politics.

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