Synopsis of the main developments reported in leading newspapers
January 31, 2026 – February 6, 2026
Key Developments

Industry bodies welcome West Bengal interim budget's thrust on urban infra

Industry bodies on Thursday largely welcomed the West Bengal interim budget, praising its focus on urban infrastructure and town modernisation. As per the stakeholders, the government's plan to modernise district towns was a positive step and would support balanced urban growth; prioritising road widening and regulation of encroachments would help unlock growth beyond major urban centres. In addition, the continued focus on industrial and economic corridors, logistics connectivity and MSME parks would strengthen the state's industrial ecosystem and investor confidence.

https://www.theweek.in/wire-updates/business/2026/02/05/industry-bodies-welcome-west-bengal-interim-budgets-thrust-on-urban-infra.amp.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Budget boost to state's MSMEs

Measures announced in Union Budget for MSMEs would help the 90-lakh strong segment in Bengal, but much more needs to be done in this regard, think experts. Hon'ble FM proposed introduction of a dedicated Rs 10,000-crore SME Growth Fund, incentivising enterprises based on select criteria, topping up the Self-Reliant India Fund set up with Rs 2,000 crore and liquidity support. According to the Budget, government will facilitate professional institutions, such as ICAI, ICSI and ICMAI, to design short-term, modular courses and practical tools to develop a cadre of "Corporate Mitras", especially in tier-II and tier-III cities. Bengal stands to gain significantly from the new Dankuni-Surat freight line, Durgapur's East Coast Corridor hub and the Varanasi-Siliguri express rail. These are set to cut transport expenses by 20%–30% for small business shippers and suppliers. Budget gave due importance to the MSME sector, to play a vital role in the supply chain with equity support, geographical expansion and addressing the receivables problem by mandating CPSUs transact through the TReDS platform.

https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/budget-boost-to-msmes-but-more-needs-to-be-done-experts/articleshow/127870750.cms

National Fibre Scheme a boost for jute, say mill owners

The National Fibre Scheme announced in Union Budget for self-reliance in natural fibres, such as jute, will help the struggling jute industry, according to leading jute mill owners. There are at present 88 jute mills in Bengal. As per stakeholders, recognising raw jute as a national fibre will help raw jute growers, the jute industry and generate more employment. In addition, the scheme aims to promote self-reliance in fibres, with a special focus on natural fibres such as silk, wool and jute, alongside man-made fibres. By strengthening the domestic fibre ecosystem, the initiative lays the foundation for a more resilient and competitive textile value chain that will help boost exports.

https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/national-fibre-scheme-a-boost-for-jute-say-mill-owners/articleshow/127870722.cms

West Bengal hikes Lakshmir Bhandar allowance, raises pay for ASHA, anganwadi workers

The West Bengal government increased the allowance under its flagship Lakshmir Bhandar scheme and announced higher honorariums for ASHA and anganwadi workers, as it presented an interim budget ahead of the Assembly elections. The government presented a ₹4.06-lakh-crore vote-on-account budget for 2026-27, pegging the state's economic growth at 7.6%. Hon'ble Finance Minister, West Bengal, announced that the monthly allowance under the Lakshmir Bhandar scheme would be

raised from ₹1,000 to ₹1,200 for women belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and from ₹500 to ₹600 for women from the general category. Among the key announcements was a decision to increase the honorarium for ASHA workers from ₹7,000 to ₹9,000 per month, and for anganwadi workers from ₹6,000 to ₹8,000 per month.

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/elections/assembly-elections/west-bengal/west-bengal-budget-2026-lakshmir-bhandar-scheme-social-workers-slaary-hike/articleshow/127933679.cms?utm_source=chatgpt.com&from=mdr

Kolkata gets 25 AC CNG buses, new green routes

Several new air-conditioned (AC) bus routes have been drawn up for the city as it is set to get a fleet of 200 CNG buses in the coming months. This comes days after the gradual introduction of 25 AC buses, as part of the green fleet, marking a significant step towards reducing pollution, enhancing commuter comfort and modernisation of the city's public transport infrastructure. The buses will be introduced in the city by the West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC).

https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/kolkata-gets-25-ac-cng-buses-new-green-routes/articleshow/127949222.cms?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Agro industrial park to come up at Singur

From providing annual support of ₹4,000 to landless agricultural labourers to increasing man-days for a 100-day work scheme, the Bengal budget aimed to bring more people from the agricultural sector into the social security net. The budget also mentioned an Agro-Industrial Park at Singur. The state budget stipulates that landless agricultural labourers will receive annual support of ₹4,000 each, paid in instalments of ₹2,000—one during the Rabi season and the other during the Kharif season.

https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/landless-farmers-to-get-4000-in-aid-agro-industrial-park-to-come-up-at-singur/articleshow/127953354.cms?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Bengal interim budget pegs 6.20 pc rise in tax revenue, led by SGST, excise

The West Bengal government has projected a 6.20 per cent rise in tax revenue in its interim budget for 2026-27, with growth driven mainly by State Goods and Services Tax (SGST) and state excise collections. According to budget estimates, the state's own tax revenue is expected to increase to ₹78,557 crore in 2026-27, compared with ₹73,975 crore in the revised estimates for 2025-26. SGST collections are projected to rise by 6.18 per cent to ₹47,578 crore, while state excise revenue is estimated to grow by 7.22 per cent to ₹15,859 crore in 2026-27.

https://www.thehansindia.com/business/bengal-interim-budget-pegs-620-pc-rise-in-tax-revenue-led-by-sgst-excise-1045847?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Merino Showcases an Integrated Laminate and Board Solution at Matecia 2026 East Edition

Merino, a global leader in interior and surface solutions, successfully participated in Matecia 2026 East Edition, held at Biswa Bangla Mela Prangan, Kolkata. The Matecia platform allowed Merino to engage directly with architects, interior designers, contractors, and channel partners from eastern India, strengthening industry relationships and exploring new business opportunities in the region. Speaking on the occasion, company representatives stated that eastern India continues to be a strategically important market for Merino due to increasing urbanization, infrastructure development, and rising demand for quality interior solutions.

https://www.business-standard.com/content/press-releases-ani/merino-showcases-an-integrated-laminate-and-board-solution-at-matecia-2026-east-edition-126020100011_1.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Kolkata to Kunming: Chinese Consul General pushes for more direct flights

The Chinese Consul General in Kolkata has called for an increase in direct flight connectivity between Kolkata and Kunming, highlighting the need to strengthen people-to-people contact, trade, tourism and cultural exchanges between eastern India and China's Yunnan province. Speaking at a recent interaction in the city, the Consul General said enhanced air connectivity would significantly boost business travel, tourism, education and trade linkages, and make Kolkata a key gateway for engagement between eastern India and south-western China.

https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/kolkata/kolkata-to-kunming-chinese-consul-general-pushes-for-more-direct-flights-10512243/

Essar Oil & Gas plans $100 million investment to boost Raniganj CBM production

Essar Oil & Gas Exploration & Production Ltd (EOGEPL) has announced plans to invest $100 million to ramp up production from its Raniganj coal bed methane (CBM) block in West Bengal. The Raniganj CBM block is among India's largest onshore CBM assets and holds an estimated 11 trillion cubic feet (tcf) of in-place gas. Essar's investment will focus on drilling additional wells, enhancing surface infrastructure and deploying advanced extraction technologies to increase output.

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/essar-oil-gas-plans-100-million-investment-to-boost-raniganj-cbm-production/articleshow/127796942.cms