Synopsis of the main developments reported in leading newspapers
February 28, 2026 – March 6, 2026
Key Developments

Bengal to upgrade leather MSMEs, tanneries under World Bank project

In a decisive push to sharpen the competitiveness of Bengal's leather industry, the West Bengal government has launched a focused capacity-building drive for MSMEs and tanneries in and around Kolkata under the World Bank-supported Raising and Accelerating MSME Productivity (RAMP) programme. Importantly, the programme will go beyond classroom sessions. Post-training evaluations will assess knowledge retention, and the top 10 per cent performers may be linked to advanced mentorship or specialised guidance, officials said. The entire intervention is scheduled to be completed within four months, with clear milestones tied to assessment, content development and delivery of sessions.

https://www.millenniumpost.in/bengal/bengal-to-upgrade-leather-msmes-tanneries-under-world-bank-project-650367

2.5 hours to 45 minutes: How new signal-free Kalyani Expressway is transforming commuting in Kolkata

The gruelling two-and-a-half-hour commute between Kolkata and the industrial hub of Kalyani has officially come to an end. In a landmark infrastructure milestone for West Bengal, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee inaugurated the upgraded 44.2-km Kalyani Expressway on March 2, transforming a notorious traffic bottleneck into a seamless, high-speed corridor. What was once a slow crawl through the congested stretches of North 24 Parganas is now a swift 40 to 45-minute journey, offering a massive reprieve for daily commuters, commercial freight, and medical emergency vehicles.

https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/kolkata/kalyani-expressway-inauguration-mamata-banerjee-kolkata-kalyani-travel-time-10564522/

Bengal to upgrade schools & ICDS centres, to tie up with ADB for Rs 4,648-cr projects

The Bengal government is partnering with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for projects worth Rs 4,648 crore to upgrade secondary schools and ICDS centres in the state. The plan, under which ADB will provide 70% of the funding, was approved by the state cabinet on Thursday. State education minister mentioned that the schools will undergo upgrade and modernisation to make them more attractive for young students. The cabinet decided to upgrade one school from each block and two schools from each of the 87 backward blocks, targeting a total of 430 state-aided schools. The state will bear 30% of the total project cost.

https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/bengal-to-upgrade-schools-icds-centres-to-tie-up-with-adb-for-rs-4648-cr-projects/articleshow/128825509.cms

Himadri Speciality Chemical Ltd. Expands Hooghly Plant to 2.5 Lakh MTPA

Himadri Speciality Chemical Ltd. has commissioned a new 70,000 metric tonnes per annum (MTPA) carbon black line at its plant, increasing the company's total carbon black production capacity to 2,50,000 MTPA. The expansion is part of the company's strategy to strengthen its presence in the specialty carbon black and advanced materials segment. With the newly commissioned line, the company's total carbon black capacity has risen from 1,80,000 MTPA to 2,50,000 MTPA. The facility is expected to cater to growing demand from tyre, rubber, and industrial applications.

https://manufacturing.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/chemicals/himadri-speciality-commissions-70000-mtpa-carbon-black-line-total-capacity-rises-to-2-5-lakh-mtpa/128772634

HPL chairman reviews Rs 6k cr phenol project

Haldia Petrochemicals Limited (HPL) chairman visited the company's upcoming phenol and acetone plant, which is nearing its official commissioning, to review its final phase of construction in Haldia. The facility, being developed under HPL's subsidiary Adplus Polymers & Chemicals Pvt Ltd, represents an investment of approximately Rs 6,000 crore. It is set to house two landmark milestones, including India's first on-purpose propylene plant based on Olefin Conversion Technology (OCT) and India's largest phenol production unit.

https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/hpl-chairman-reviews-rs-6k-cr-phenol-project/articleshow/128863963.cms

India's tea exports could suffer if US-Iran war drags on, experts fear

Industry experts believe that if the ongoing conflict between the US and Iran continues for a few more weeks, India's tea exports could take a hit. India's tea exports reached an all-time high of 281 million kg in 2025. But there are fears that the current situation could halt that growth. According to industry sources, about 60 percent of India's total tea exports go to West Asia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region. A large portion of these exports are transported by sea through the Strait of Hormuz. Currently, many ships are stranded in the vital sea route due to unrest, which could impact trade.

https://eisamay.com/business/business-news/experts-warns-indian-tea-export-may-hit-if-iran-us-war-prolonged/200482878.cms

The cost of doing business in Kolkata is much lower, claim the business community

The cost of doing business is much lower than other cities in the country, and there are several exceptional talents in Kolkata - this is what a section of the business community mentioned in West Bengal. According to them, the city is also becoming increasingly important on the map of India's Global Capability Center (GCC) ecosystem. For which Kolkata is also becoming an emerging market.

https://eisamay.com/business/business-news/cost-of-doing-business-kolkata-is-much-lower-claim-traders-community/200482418.cms

Initiative to launch 'Water Metro' on Ganga, Kolkata Municipality to meet with Kochi-based company soon to start service

The state government has taken the initiative to launch a 'water metro' on the Ganga to make waterway transport more modern and faster. The state is exploring the possibility of implementing this project with the help of a company from Kochi, Kerala. If everything goes well, an important meeting on this issue is scheduled to be held in the Kolkata Municipal Corporation next week. There, the delegation of the Kochi Water Metro project will give details about their plans.

https://www.anandabazar.com/west-bengal/kolkata/initiative-to-launch-water-metro-on-the-ganga-kolkata-municipal-corporation-to-hold-meeting-with-kochi-agency-soon-to-start-service-dgtl/cid/1672248

Srijan Group enters fashion retail with 500 cr investment

City-based real estate developer Srijan Group has forayed into the fashion retail segment under a new brand, 'Srijan Style', with an initial investment of Rs 500 crore. The company has decided to come up with about 10 stores in Kolkata in the first quarter. The plan is to open about 50 stores in Bengal by the end of FY 2026–27. While the flagship store was planned at Gariahat, other stores will come up at Bandel, Madhyamgram, Serampore, Bagnan, Sodepur, Murarai in Birbhum and Asansol. All these stores will be company-owned as there is no mulling over a franchise model at this moment. The group will invest about Rs 2,000 crore in the next 10 years or so, as it has a long-term plan for expansion across the country.

https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/srijan-group-enters-fashion-retail-with-500-cr-investment/articleshow/128762626.cms