

January 02, 2026 – Friday

Economy

Govt to conduct nationwide Adult Skills Survey to assess skills level

The government is planning to launch a nationwide Adult Skills Survey in 2026 to evaluate competencies among citizens who are aged 18 or above, Moneycontrol reported. The survey is expected to be conducted after the first quarter of 2026. It aims to assess skill levels across basic, intermediate, and advanced categories, providing policymakers with a clearer understanding of employability and the state of workforce readiness.
https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/govt-nationwide-adult-skills-survey-assess-workforce-skills-2026-126010100361_1.html

Government plans next phase of skilling reforms with outcome-based approach

Union Minister Jayant Chaudhary on Thursday chaired the concluding session of the week-long Kaushal Manthan, where deliberations were held on reforms like outcome-based grading mechanisms for ITIs to drive quality improvement and strengthening of Sector Skill Councils. Chaudhary, the Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and Minister of State for Education, presided over the discussions focussed on identifying priority reforms and initiatives, aligned with national priorities.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/government-plans-next-phase-of-skilling-reforms-with-outcome-based-approach/article70461473.ece

MGNREGS work demand drops 28% in December after law change

About 18.44 million people sought the typically unskilled work under the MGNREGS in December, down 28.4% from 25.77 million a year earlier. In November, however, only 14.66 million people had demanded work.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/mgnregs-work-demand-drops-28-in-december-after-law-change/articleshow/126292741.cms

Finance

Treasury income under pressure for banks in Q3 as yields stay elevated

Banks are unlikely to book any treasury gains during the third quarter (October–December) of the current financial year (2025–26/FY26), as government bond yields across tenors remained elevated despite the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) policy repo rate cut and liquidity infusion. While the yield on the benchmark 10-year government bond rose marginally by 1 basis point (bp) during the quarter, yields on five-year and 15-year government bonds hardened by 11 bps. The three-year bond yield rose by 14 bps, and the yield on the 30-year bond increased by 6 bps over the same period.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/banking/banks-unlikely-see-treasury-gains-q3-bond-yields-stay-high-126010100879_1.html

RBI reiterates cautious stance on crypto assets, stablecoins for stability

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reiterated its cautious stance on crypto assets, including stablecoins, saying that central bank money must remain the ultimate settlement asset and the anchor of trust in the monetary system. The central bank also strongly advocated that countries should prioritise central bank digital currencies (CBDCs) over stablecoins to preserve trust in money and maintain financial stability.
https://www.business-standard.com/finance/news/rbi-reiterates-cautious-stance-on-crypto-assets-stablecoins-for-stability-126010101094_1.html

RBI relaxes risk-weight rules for NBFC infra loans, revises thresholds

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday eased its proposed risk-weight framework for infrastructure lending by non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) following industry feedback, as it retained key lender protection norms. It has broadened the definition of “high-quality” infrastructure projects eligible for lower risk weights to include those where revenues arise from concessions or contracts granted by the Centre, state governments, public sector entities, or statutory and regulatory bodies.
https://www.business-standard.com/finance/news/rbi-relaxes-risk-weight-rules-for-nbfc-infrastructure-loans-126010100808_1.html

NHB flags PMAY 2.0 disbursal lag, urges housing finance companies to step up

The National Housing Bank (NHB) is pushing for deeper adoption of PMAY 2.0, flagging slower-than-expected disbursements under the interest subsidy scheme, sources aware of the discussions between home financiers and their regulator told ET. During a review meeting with chief executives of leading housing finance companies (HFCs) last week, the NHB chief said disbursements were "not up to the mark" and urged lenders to sharpen their focus on the programme, officials familiar with the discussions said.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/nhb-flags-pmay-2-0-disbursal-lag-urges-housing-finance-companies-to-step-up/articleshow/126293277.cms

98.41% of ₹2,000 banknotes withdrawn since May 2023 returned: RBI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday said 98.41 per cent of the ₹2000 banknotes in circulation have been returned. The RBI had announced the withdrawal of ₹2000 denomination banknotes from circulation on May 19, 2023. "The total value of ₹2000 banknotes in circulation, which was ₹3.56 lakh crore at the close of business on May 19, 2023, when the withdrawal of ₹2000 banknotes was announced, has declined to ₹5,669 crore at the close of business on December 31, 2025," it said.
https://www.business-standard.com/finance/news/rbi-says-98-41-pc-of-withdrawn-rs-2000-banknotes-returned-126010100818_1.html

SEBI may defer implementation of higher OTR penalties

SEBI may delay the implementation of a revised penalty structure for order-to-trade ratio (OTR) violations and take it up for further review at a later stage, according to sources aware of the discussions. The move follows industry feedback against the proposed increase in penalties, with the risk of higher trading costs and reduced liquidity in the options segment.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/markets/sebi-may-defer-implementation-of-higher-otr-penalties/article70460611.ece

Scheduled Commercial Banks can now become sponsors of Pension Funds: PFRDA

A scheduled commercial bank can now independently set up a pension fund to manage National Pension System (NPS), Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has said. PFRDA board has given in principal approval to the framework. This has been done “with the objective of strengthening the pension ecosystem, enhancing competition and safeguarding subscriber interests,” a statement by PFRDA said.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/money-and-banking/scheduled-commercial-banks-can-now-become-sponsors-of-pension-funds-pfrda/article70459588.ece

In second full month of GST 2.0, net collections increase 2.2%

Net revenues from the goods and services tax (GST) inched up 2.2 per cent year-on-year in December 2025 to ₹1.45 trillion, without factoring in GST comp-ensation cess receipts, marking the lowest receipts from the indirect tax since

December 2024. Sequentially, the net GST revenues in December, pertaining to transactions undertaken in November — the second full month of the restructured Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime — were 4.3 per cent lower than November's receipts, which in turn were 6.1 per cent lower month-on-month.
https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/in-second-full-month-of-gst-2-0-net-collections-increase-2-2-126010101111_1.html

Industry

Private role in new projects hits all-time high in Q3

The share of the private sector in new investment projects rose steadily for three quarters in a row to touch an all-time high of 92.2% in October-December period (Q3FY26), amid a sharp slowdown in government investments. The value of new investment projects, however, declined 6% on year to Rs 10 lakh crore in the period, data from Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy showed.
https://www.financialexpress.com/business/news/private-role-in-new-projects-hits-all-time-high-in-q3/4094833/

Govt relaxes KYC rules for company directors, allows easier voluntary closure of state-run firms

The corporate affairs ministry has eased compliance norms for company directors by allowing them to file know-your-customer details once every three years instead of annually, with the change effective from March 31. Directors who have already completed their latest KYC will now need to file again only by June 30, 2028, while those who have not complied must reactivate their director identification numbers by March 31.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/govt-relaxes-kyc-rules-for-company-directors-allows-easier-voluntary-closure-of-state-run-firms/articleshow/126290736.cms

New FASTag issuance for cars to skip KYV after February 1, says NHAI

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways on Thursday announced that the National Highways Authority of India has decided to discontinue the Know Your Vehicle process for cars for all new FASTag issuances with effect from February 1, 2026. The move is expected to enhance public convenience and eliminate post-activation harassment faced by highway users.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/auto/new-fastag-issuance-cars-skip-kyv-february-1-2026-126010100931_1.html

India poised to emerge as 'Office of the World', EY Report highlights strong long-term outlook

India is set to become a global growth powerhouse. Its IT sector, digital transformation, and young population will drive this expansion. Improved infrastructure and credit access will further boost the economy. Entrepreneurship will fuel innovation. This positions India for significant economic progress over the next two decades.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/infrastructure/india-poised-to-emerge-as-office-of-the-world-ey-report-highlights-strong-long-term-outlook/articleshow/126283152.cms

Hybrid model to define edtech's next phase

Hybrid learning models that combine physical centres with digital delivery are set to become the dominant operating format for the edtech sector in 2026, as companies recalibrate around profitability, predictable cash flows and student outcomes rather than scale at any cost. After three years of funding constraints and forced consolidation, the industry's next phase is likely to be shaped less by venture capital cycles and more by operating discipline.
https://www.financialexpress.com/business/news/hybrid-model-to-define-edtechs-next-phase/4094710/

Mills on edge as duty-free cotton imports window ends

Textile mills in the country are worried over the lack of communication from the Centre on extending duty-free import of cotton, which ended on December 31, 2025. This will likely support prices in the domestic market. The duty waiver, introduced in August and extended till December-end, was meant to augment supplies and ease pressure on textile units struggling with 50 per cent US tariffs.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/mills-on-edge-as-duty-free-cotton-imports-window-ends/article70461264.ece

80% capital acquisition outlay utilised amounting to nearly ₹1.2 lakh cr: MoD

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) signed capital acquisition contracts worth ₹1.82 lakh crore for the modernisation of the armed forces, while the Defence Acquisition Council approved capital procurement proposals with a total value exceeding ₹3.84 lakh crore during the last year.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/80-capital-acquisition-outlay-utilised-amounting-to-nearly-12-lakh-cr-mod/article70460768.ece

Tobacco Institute urges review of tax hike on cigarettes, tobacco products

The Tobacco Institute of India (TII) said in a statement that it is surprised by the unprecedented increase in duty announced on Wednesday on tobacco and related products. It noted, "…Given the statements made by the government on more than one occasion, that the overall impact of the transition of taxes will be revenue neutral."
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/tobacco-institute-urges-review-of-tax-hike-on-cigarettes-tobacco-products-126010100764_1.html

Agriculture

Egg prices spike 25-50% with spurt in demand

Retail prices of eggs have crossed Rs 800 per 100 units across several major urban centers including Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata on account of spike in demand because of winter months while production has not been able to match, trade sources said. Compared to August and September, egg prices have increased by 25% to 50% across several centres. Traders say that price would remain firm in the coming six to eight weeks as demand continues to rise in the winter months.
https://www.financialexpress.com/policy/economy/egg-prices-spike-25-50-with-spurt-in-demand/4094030/

Rice procurement up 7% in Oct-Dec as 72% of kharif target is completed

India's rice procurement is up 7 per cent in the first three months of the current kharif marketing season with 72 per cent of the target being met till now. However, the official purchase in three major contributing states Punjab, Chhattisgarh and Odisha has dropped. But there has been an unexpected rise in procurement of the cereal in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, besides a substantial jump in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. This has helped the Centre to procure more rice.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/rice-procurement-up-7-in-oct-dec-as-72-of-kharif-target-is-completed/article70460575.ece

Wheat sowing almost complete, prospects bright this rabi: Agri Commissioner

India has nearly completed wheat sowing for the current rabi season, with crop conditions looking promising, Agriculture Commissioner PK Singh said on Thursday. Wheat was sown across 32.26 million hectares as of December 29 in the ongoing 2025-26 rabi (winter) season compared to a total coverage of 32.8 million hectares in the previous year, Singh said. "Barring some parts of Bihar, wheat sowing has been completed across the country. The total acreage may reach last year's level," Singh told PTI.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/agriculture/wheat-sowing-completion-crop-outlook-positive-agri-commissioner-126010100474_1.html

Centre launches e-bill platform to process ₹2 lakh crore fertiliser subsidies

Union Fertilizers Minister Jagat Prakash Nadda on Thursday inaugurated an integrated e-bill system that will enable the government to process fertilizer subsidies worth approximately Rs 2 lakh crore. The system marks a shift from manual, paper-based processes to a fully digital workflow, eliminating the physical movement of bills, an official statement said.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/centre-launches-e-bill-platform-to-process-2-lakh-crore-fertiliser-subsidies/article70461478.ece

India's Nov tea output drops 16% on adverse weather

India's tea output during November 2025 declined by 16.29 per cent to 124.19 million kg (mkg) over 148.36 mkg a year ago. While major producing States Assam and West Bengal saw a decline during the period, Tamil Nadu, the

third largest producer nationally, bucked the trend. The overall decline is on account of a major fall in production in North India, where the output dropped by around 18.5 per cent to 104.68 mkg due to adverse climatic conditions.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/indias-nov-tea-output-drops-16-on-adverse-weather/article70459871.ece

Infrastructure

Centrally funded infra projects saw cost overruns swell to 22% in Nov

Aggregate costs of centrally funded infrastructure projects widened to 22.2 per cent in November as cost overruns pushed revised estimates to ₹29.55 trillion from ₹24.18 trillion across 823 ongoing projects, representing a marginal worsening from October, when cost overruns stood at 20.9 per cent. This reflects an absolute escalation of ₹5.37 trillion, up from ₹5.3 trillion a month earlier, data from the latest Flash Report on Central Sector Infrastructure Projects costing ₹150 crore and above by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (Mospi) showed.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/centrally-funded-infra-projects-saw-cost-overruns-swell-to-22-in-nov-126010101119_1.html

Energy

Fuel demand remained strong in Dec; petrol sales grew 6.7%, diesel up 5%

India's fuel consumption showed robust growth in December as petrol and diesel demand rose by 6.68 per cent and 4.98 per cent year-on-year (Y-o-Y) in the month, according to preliminary data from Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC). The strong fuel demand comes amid high travel demand during festival season and a boost in industrial and commercial activity amid the goods and services tax (GST) rate cut.
https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-s-fuel-demand-remains-strong-in-december-petrol-sales-up-6-7-126010100873_1.html

India can save $1 bn in crude imports by replacing 10% diesel with LNG

India could save $1 billion in crude oil imports annually if the country switches 10 per cent of its diesel usage in the transport sector to liquefied natural gas (LNG), according to a case study done by Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB). Drawing a strong case for boosting LNG usage in heavy-haul transport, the regulator said India holds the scope to switch 30-40 per cent of diesel vehicles to LNG in the next five-seven years by replacing intra-city or inter-city buses, heavy-haul mining machinery, and haul trucks.
https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-save-1-billion-crude-imports-diesel-lng-pngrb-126010100917_1.html

Power consumption rises 7% to 138.39 billion units in Dec amid cold wave

Power consumption grew nearly 7 per cent to 138.39 billion units (BU) in December from 129.39 BU a year ago, as the use of heating appliances like geysers and blowers increased on account of severe cold in North India. According to the government data, the peak power demand met or the highest supply during December also rose to 241.20 GW from 224.23 GW recorded in December 2024.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/power-consumption-grows-7-pc-to-138-39-billion-units-dec-126010100498_1.html

ATF prices cut 7.3% in January, commercial LPG cylinder hiked ₹111

Price of aviation turbine fuel (ATF), or jet fuel, was reduced by 7.3 per cent on Thursday, while commercial LPG rate was raised by ₹111 per cylinder, as state-owned oil marketing companies implemented their monthly price revisions aligned with global fuel benchmarks. ATF price in Delhi was cut by ₹7,353.75 per kilolitre, or 7.3 per cent, to ₹92,323.02 per kl, according to state-owned fuel retailers.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/atf-price-cut-by-steep-7-pc-commercial-lpg-rate-up-rs-111-per-cylinder-126010100828_1.html

States

Kashmir's handicraft exports slump on tariffs, weak festival orders and competition

Kashmir's handicraft exporters say demand for traditional products has weakened sharply, with industry representatives attributing the downturn to US tariff measures, the impact of global conflicts and rising competition from machine-made carpets. Exporters said the sector, known for hand-knotted rugs, papier-mâché, pashmina shawls and wood-carved products, continues to experience a downward trend.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/kashmirs-handicraft-exports-slump-on-tariffs-weak-festival-orders-and-competition/article70460557.ece

Maharashtra's new policy targets ₹70.5 lakh crore investment

The Maharashtra government has approved the Maharashtra Industries, Investment and Services Policy 2025, laying out an ambitious roadmap to enhance the State's competitiveness and position it as a global business destination. A Government Resolution (GR) announcing the policy was issued on Monday, following its approval by the State Cabinet earlier in December 2025.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/maharashtras-new-policy-targets-705-lakh-crore-investment/article70460402.ece

Chhattisgarh Auto Expo from Jan 20 with 50% road tax rebate to boost sales

The 9th Chhattisgarh Auto Expo will be held in the state capital from January 20 to February 5, with the state government providing a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the automobile buyers. "The Cabinet has taken a major decision to grant a 50 per cent rebate on lifetime road tax on vehicles sold during the 9th Auto Expo, scheduled to be held at the Science College Ground, Raipur," a state government spokesperson said after the cabinet meeting held on Wednesday.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/chhattisgarh-auto-expo-from-jan-20-with-50-road-tax-rebate-to-boost-sales-126010100847_1.html

Healthcare

India's hospital sector to sustain 11-12% growth, driven by insurance penetration and medical tourism: CareEdge

India's hospital sector is set for strong growth. Rising insurance and medical tourism are key drivers. Affordable treatment attracts global patients. Corporate hospitals show steady revenue gains. Bed capacity additions support future expansion. Financial health is improving with stable margins and reduced debt. This positive trend is expected to continue.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/healthcare/indias-hospital-sector-to-sustain-11-12-growth-driven-by-insurance-penetration-and-medical-tourism-careedge/articleshow/126284241.cms

Health insurance coverage rises in FY25 even as policy sales decline

The number of lives covered under health insurance by general and health insurers rose to 580 million in FY25 from 573 million in FY24, even as the number of policies sold declined to 26.5 million from 26.8 million, according to the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India's (Irdai) annual report. Premiums collected under the health insurance segment grew 9.12 per cent year-on-year to ₹1.17 trillion.
https://www.business-standard.com/finance/insurance/health-insurance-coverage-rises-in-fy25-even-as-policy-sales-decline-126010100831_1.html

External

India, Indonesia to revive trade working group meet after 5-years

In line with its strategy for trade diversification, India is set to hold the second meeting of the India–Indonesia Working Group on Trade and Investment (WGTI) next month after about five years amid a dip in bilateral trade over the last two financial years, sources said. "Indonesia is the second largest trade partner for India in the ASEAN, after Singapore, and is important as a variety of items are exported to the country. Both countries want strengthened trade and investment ties by addressing tariff and non-tariff barriers amid rising global uncertainties and US tariffs. The WGTI is aimed at achieving that," a source tracking the matter told businessline.

https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/world/india-indonesia-to-revive-trade-working-group-meet-after-5-years/article70461026.ece

India's exports may reach $950 billion in FY27 on West Asia trade pacts

India's export horizons are expanding rapidly, with projections hitting $840-850 billion in FY26 and climbing to $950 billion in FY27. The fostering of free trade agreements, particularly with nations in West Asia, alongside robust growth in sectors like services and electronics, are pivotal to this surge.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/indias-exports-may-reach-950-billion-in-fy27-on-west-asia-trade-pacts/articleshow/126292576.cms

Strong Russian buying lifts Indian coffee exports to record over $2 billion

India’s coffee exports for calendar year 2025 have crossed record $2 billion mark, registering a 22 per cent growth over the previous year on high prices and strong buying from the Russian Federation. Per the Coffee Board’s latest data, shipments, based on the permits issued, touched $2.058 billion during 2025 over previous year’s $1.679 billion. Overall volumes saw a decline around 4.5 per cent at 3.48 lakh tonnes (lt) over previous year’s 4.02 lt, despite an increase in shipments of Arabicas and instant coffees.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/strong-russian-buying-lifts-indian-coffee-exports-to-record-over-2-billion/article70460451.ece

Govt extends MEP of $1,400 per tonne on natural honey till March 2026

The government has extended the validity of the minimum export price (MEP) of $1,400 per tonne on natural honey till March 31, 2026. A notification by the Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said the MEP on natural honey shall remain at $1,400 per tonne till March 31, 2026. Earlier in August the government had reduced the MEP from $2,000 to $1,400 per tonne which was in effect till December 31, 2025, to enhance the competitiveness of the Indian honey exports.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/govt-extends-mep-of-1400-per-tonne-on-natural-honey-till-march-2026/article70459565.ece