

January 23, 2026 – Friday

Economy

India, World Economic Forum to launch Skills Accelerator to bridge workforce gaps

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, in collaboration with the World Economic Forum (WEF), will launch and implement a Skills Accelerator in India, a platform aimed at identifying, scaling and accelerating innovative solutions and public-private partnerships to address critical skills gaps in the workforce.The Accelerator will support efforts to strengthen India's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) ecosystem by ensuring closer alignment between skilling initiatives and the evolving demands of industry and the global economy, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship said.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/policy/india-world-economic-forum-to-launch-skills-accelerator-to-bridge-workforce-gaps/article70539941.ece

Budget Expectations

Budget 2026 must prioritise job creation, support to exports: FICCI's Industry Survey

The Union Budget must accord priority to measures to boost job creation and a stronger support to exports, given the rising global trade frictions, India Inc said in a FICCI Survey released on Thursday, with a majority of respondents expressing confidence in the country's growth prospects. About half of the participants expect GDP growth to remain in the 7-8 per cent range in FY 2026-27, while 80 per cent expressed optimism on the country's growth prospects, reaffirming faith in India's medium-term fundamentals despite persistent global uncertainties.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/budget-2026-must-prioritise-job-creation-support-to-exports-ficcis-industry-survey/articleshow/127147982.cms

Govt may target 4.2-4.3% fiscal deficit in FY27: CareEdge

The upcoming Budget is expected to stay on the fiscal consolidation path, with the FY27 fiscal deficit likely budgeted around 4.2-4.3% of GDP, balancing growth needs and debt sustainability, CareEdge Ratings said on Thursday. Measures are expected to improve tax buoyancy in FY27 amid weaker FY26 collections while avoiding major rate hikes, the rating agency said in its report. The Central government capital expenditure is projected to grow around 10% in FY27 to around Rs 12.3 lakh crore, maintaining a healthy capex-to-revenue expenditure ratio. “We expect gross borrowing to be in the range of Rs 16-17 lakh crore in FY27; Net borrowing likely at Rs 11.5-12 lakh crore,” it said.
https://www.financialexpress.com/business/news/govt-may-target-4-2-43-fiscal-deficit-in-fy27-careedge/4116419/

Budget 2026: Exporters seek tax, tariff relief on February 1

Indian exporters are calling for government support in the upcoming Union Budget 2026-27. They seek tax, tariff, and financing measures to combat global protectionism and revive export growth. Key demands include correcting inverted customs duty structures and developing Indian shipping lines. These steps aim to reduce costs, boost competitiveness, and strengthen India's position in international trade.

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/budget-2026-exporters-seek-tax-tariff-relief-on-february-1/articleshow/127148586.cms

Union Budget 2026: Industry leaders urge govt to double infra spending to Rs 3 lakh crore

Industry leaders urged the government to double the allocation for various infrastructure projects to Rs 3 lakh crore in the forthcoming general Budget to boost overall economic growth. Ahead of the general Budget, industry leaders from various sectors, including logistics, also demanded major infrastructure reforms and heavy budget allocation across diverse sectors, according to a statement by the Logistics Sector Skill Council (LSC).
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/infrastructure/union-budget-2026-industry-leaders-urge-govt-to-double-infra-spending-to-rs-3-lakh-crore/articleshow/127140682.cms

Budget 2026: Industry leaders seek funding framework for innovation, R&D in pharma, MedTech

Industry leaders are calling for a structured funding framework in the upcoming Union Budget. This aims to boost innovation and R&D in India's pharmaceutical and MedTech sectors. The goal is to drive advanced research and achieve the Viksit Bharat vision. Companies seek support for complex therapies and improved patient access.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/pharmaceuticals/budget-2026-industry-leaders-seek-funding-framework-for-innovation-rd-in-pharma-medtech/articleshow/127143471.cms

Budget 2026: Nasscom urges cloud tax clarity, ESOP deferment for startups

Industry body Nasscom hopes that the Union Budget will extend Employee Stock Option Plan (ESOP) tax deferment to more startups and bring suitable clarifications to address concerns around the tax treatment of foreign cloud use of Indian data centres. The association - whose members include IT companies and tech players across-the-spectrum, of varying size and scale - wants the Budget to clarify that procuring hosting or co-location services from an Indian data centre operator would not create a business connection or permanent establishment for the foreign cloud service provider, as the arm's length payments to the Indian player fully cover India-based functions.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/budget-2026-nasscom-urges-cloud-tax-clarity-esop-deferment-for-startups-126012200415_1.html

Budget 2026: Developers demand targeted tax reforms to spur housing demand

Realtors have pitched for targeted tax reforms from the Centre in the upcoming Union Budget to revive housing demand and improve investor confidence in India’s real estate sector. In its pre-Budget memorandum, realtors’ body National Real Estate Development Council (Naredco), which works under the aegis of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, has called for increasing the limit for interest deductions on home loans and expanding the scope of the alternate tax regime.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/budget-2026-developers-demand-targeted-tax-reforms-to-spur-housing-demand-126012201444_1.html

Budget 2026 expectations: From tax cuts to cheaper healthcare, 5 things Indian consumers are hoping for

Ahead of Budget 2026, households expect measures to ease expenses and boost disposable income, including tax relief, GST rationalisation, food price control, housing affordability, and better healthcare, along with higher duty-free limits and improved electronics repair access.
https://www.financialexpress.com/budget/budget-2026-expectations-from-tax-cuts-to-cheaper-healthcare-5-things-indian-consumers-are-hoping-for-4115638/

Finance

Credit flows to commercial sector increase 15% in 2025

Non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) saw their lending grow by 22% in the period leading up to the end of December. This expansion was faster than that of bank advances, which reported a 14.4% growth during the same timeframe. NBFCs, excluding bank credit to these companies, had outstanding loans totaling Rs 35.8 lakh crore.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/credit-flows-to-commercial-sector-increase-15-in-2025/articleshow/127190588.cms

Indian gold, silver ETFs plunge as investors unwind positions

Indian gold and silver exchange-traded funds (ETFs) plunged on Thursday as investors unwound their positions following US President Donald Trump's softened stance against his NATO allies in Europe on the Greenland issue. Industry sources said silver, in particular, had soared on speculation that there would be a hike in import duty on the white precious metal and when it became clear that there was no such move, prices declined. On the other hand, silver prices in the Indian domestic market dropped below ₹3 lakh a kg on Thursday as the white precious metal cooled in the global markets, while gold ruled stable.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/markets/gold/indian-gold-silver-etfs-plunge-as-investors-unwind-positions/article70539067.ece

Record $32 billion raised in 2025 through overseas syndicated loans

Indian companies, including lenders, raised a record $32.5 billion overseas through syndicated loans last year, which were largely on account of sponsor financing, demand from financial firms, increased activities in the mid-market, and large acquisitions. People from industry said this was expected to continue this year. Activity in the bond market for dollars may pick up after a subdued 2025, amid the growing expectation of interest rates in the United States (US) coming down.
https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/record-32-billion-raised-in-2025-through-overseas-syndicated-loans-126012201496_1.html

AUM of gold-loan NBFCs to cross ₹4 trillion by end-FY27: Crisil Ratings

Assets under management (AUM) of non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) specialising in gold loans are projected to cross ₹4 trillion by March 2027, supported by elevated gold prices, a growing preference for secured credit and regulatory easing, according to a report by Crisil Ratings. According to the rating agency, gold-loan NBFCs are expected to post a robust compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of around 40 per cent between FY25 and FY27, sharply higher than the 27 per cent CAGR recorded between FY23 and FY25.
https://www.business-standard.com/finance/news/aum-of-gold-loan-nbfcs-to-cross-4-trillion-by-end-fy27-crisil-ratings-126012201254_1.html

Industry

Tobacco farmers meet FM, appeal for reduction in high taxation on tobacco products

A delegation of FCV (flue cured virginia) tobacco farmers has met Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and appealed to her to reduce the tax incidence on legal cigarettes. They expressed serious concerns over the recent tax hike and its likely adverse impact on the regulated FCV tobacco ecosystem and farmers' livelihoods.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/tobacco-farmers-meet-fm-appeal-for-reduction-in-high-taxation-on-tobacco-products/article70538411.ece

300 exhibitors from 30 nations likely to feature in India-AI expo

Spain has announced that the rectors of 80 Spanish universities will meet their counterparts from Indian universities during the World AI Summit that New Delhi will host on February 19 and 20. The India AI Impact Summit, the first global artificial intelligence (AI) summit to be hosted in the Global South, will be held from February 16 to 20 at Bharat Mandapam in the national capital. The event will cover policy, research, industry, and public engagement.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/spain-india-universities-ai-world-summit-new-delhi-126012201413_1.html

India's battery PLI lags on delivery, with just 2.8% capacity commissioned so far

More than four years after the Centre launched its flagship Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme to build a domestic battery manufacturing ecosystem, progress on the ground remains sharply behind stated ambitions, with just 2.8 per cent of the targeted capacity commissioned so far. The Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) PLI scheme, notified in October 2021 with an outlay of ₹18,100 crore, aimed to establish 50 GWh of battery cell manufacturing capacity in India by 2025 and reduce near-total dependence on imported lithium-ion cells. However, as of October 2025, only 1.4 GWh of capacity has been commissioned within the stipulated timeline — entirely by Ola Electric —

according to a new assessment by JMK Research and the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA).
https://www.financialexpress.com/business/news/indias-battery-pli-lags-on-delivery-with-just-2-8-capacity-commissioned-so-far/4115910/

Global automotives coming to India for testing

In a notable shift, foreign automotive OEMs are now coming to India to test their vehicles. For many years, Indian automotive OEMs had to send their vehicles abroad for testing, but that trend is changing. The Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) has observed an increase in global automotive companies seeking its testing services. Domestically, ARAI is diversifying its focus beyond road mobility into other niche areas, including rail and metro, aerospace and defence, drones, white goods, mining machines, and construction equipment. The drone testing facilty has received government approval and will be operational soon.
https://www.financialexpress.com/business/news/global-automotives-coming-to-india-for-testing/4116174/

Meity may cut compliance timeline for key DPDP rules to 12 months

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (Meity) is likely to shorten the implementation timeline for certain provisions under the administrative rules of the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act for significant data fiduciaries (SDFs) to 12 months from the earlier 18 months, sources told Business Standard. The changes were proposed by the ministry during a stakeholder meeting on Thursday, the sources said. Big-tech companies and social media intermediaries, such as Meta, Google, Amazon, and Microsoft, along with most major banking, financial services and insurance institutions, will fall under the SDF category.
https://www.business-standard.com/technology/tech-news/meity-may-cut-compliance-timeline-for-key-dpdp-rules-to-12-months-126012201293_1.html

Agriculture

Centre likely to use digital farmer IDs to rationalise urea sales

With distribution of unique farmer identity documents (IDs) touching a critical mass, the government is working on a plan to integrate the sale of urea through the Agri Stack platform in a phased manner. Sources said the move, which is still being contemplated as a pilot, could be another attempt to rationalise the burgeoning fertiliser subsidy that has threatened to cross ₹1.91 trillion in 2025-26 (FY26) as against the Budget Estimate of ₹1.68 trillion.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/agriculture/centre-likely-to-use-digital-farmer-ids-to-rationalise-urea-sales-126012201210_1.html

Energy

Power transmission capacity hits 5 lakh circuit km; transformation capacity at 1,407 GVA

India's power transmission network has reached a significant milestone, exceeding five lakh circuit kilometres and 1,407 GVA transformation capacity. A new 765 kV line in Rajasthan has been commissioned, boosting renewable energy evacuation. Transmission lines and transformation capacity have seen substantial growth since 2014. Future projects will further strengthen the grid and support the nation's renewable energy goals.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/power/power-transmission-capacity-hits-5-lakh-circuit-km-transformation-capacity-at-1407-gva/articleshow/127185712.cms

India’s electricity network crosses 5 lakh circuit kilometres milestone

India’s electricity distribution network has crossed the milestone of five lakh circuit kilometres with the potential to carry high-voltage energy of 220 kilovolts and above and 1,407 gigavolt amperes of transformation capacity, the power ministry said on Thursday. The world’s largest synchronous national grid achieved this feat on January 14, with the commissioning of a 628-ckm (circuit kilometre) transmission line of 765 kV from Bhadla II to Sikar II substation for the evacuation of renewable energy from Rajasthan Renewable Energy Zone, the ministry said in a statement.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/indias-electricity-network-crosses-5-lakh-circuit-kilometres-milestone/article70537451.ece

Telecom

Govt de-licenses 500 MHz in 6 GHz band: A massive win for next-gen Wi-Fi

The government's decision to de-license 500 MHz of spectrum in the lower 6 GHz band has drawn strong endorsement from technology and electronics industry bodies, while underscoring the sharp divide with telecom operators who had lobbied against licence-free allocation of this high-demand airwave. The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) on Wednesday notified de-licensing of 500 megahertz (MHz) of spectrum in the lower frequency range of the 6 Ghz band, a move which is expected to boost Wi-Fi services in the country.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/govt-de-licenses-500-mhz-in-6-ghz-band-a-massive-win-for-next-gen-wi-fi/article70538489.ece

Trai's exclusive numbering mandate raises concern on debt collection

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) directive requiring banks and non-banking financial companies to shift to the '1600' numbering series for voice calls to curb spam and fraud is raising concern among lending players. A dedicated number series is likely to deter low-intent borrowers from engaging in calls, pushing lenders towards higher-intensity collection strategies such as expanded deployment of on-ground staff, greater use of official alternate channels such as WhatsApp, and a sharper focus on borrower education to keep delinquencies in check.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/trai-s-exclusive-numbering-mandate-raises-concern-on-debt-collection-126012201258_1.html

States

Uttar Pradesh readies to become chip hub

Uttar Pradesh has identified semiconductors as a cornerstone of its future industrial growth and made the sector a clear strategic priority. The state has rolled out focused policies to strengthen electronics, system design and manufacturing, with the aim of building the entire value chain within the state – from design and fabrication to testing. Working in sync with the Centre's India Semiconductor Mission, the state is focusing on land availability, world-class infrastructure, fast-track approvals and access to skilled talent. Established electronics manufacturing clusters in Noida and Greater Noida give the state a natural edge in attracting semiconductor investments.
https://www.financialexpress.com/business/news/uttar-pradesh-readies-to-become-chip-hub/4115305/

Tamil Nadu CM lays foundation stone for ₹2,293 crore desalination plant at Thoothukudi

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin on Thursday laid the foundation stone for a desalination plant at Thoothukudi with capacity of 60 MLD. The project will be taken under PPP (Hybrid Annuity) mode at a cost of ₹2,293 crore. This will help industries in SIPCOT to benefit on water usage, says a release. The Chennai-based Vishnusurya Projects and Infra Ltd, in consortium with JWIL Infra Ltd and IDE Technologies India Pvt Ltd, won the contract from the State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/tamil-nadu-cm-lays-foundation-stone-for-2293-crore-desalination-plant-at-thoothukudi/article70538995.ece

Telangana launches Aikam to build global AI workforce and startup ecosystem

The Telangana Government has launched Aikam,an autonomous organisation, to promote the AI ecosystem in the State. It would promote the development of a globally competitive AI workforce through mass upskilling, accelerate AI-first startups, offer compute infrastructure, and establish a dedicated AI Fund-of-Funds. "The organisation is aimed at positioning Telangana as a top-20 innovation hub in the world. As the world moves from AI pilots to deployment at scale, we invite global partners to establish their pilot and testing facilities in the State," Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has said, while announcing the launch of Aikam at the World Economic Forum (WEF) at Davos (Switzerland).
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/info-tech/telangana-launches-aikam-to-build-global-ai-workforce-and-startup-ecosystem/article70539055.ece

Rajasthan approves schemes to promote Pushkar as wedding destination

To promote Pushkar as a destination for weddings, the real estate regulator of Rajasthan along with district authorities has approved three schemes to develop the required infrastructure, including resorts, farmhouses and commercial establishments. The schemes were approved by the state's Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) and Ajmer Development Authority (ADA), a senior ADA official said. "These schemes involve the construction of mega resorts and farmhouses to provide facilities for destination weddings," said the official.
https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/rajasthan-approves-schemes-to-promote-pushkar-as-wedding-destination-126012201096_1.html

Healthcare

New drugs could reach market sooner as govt halves trial review timeline

The Indian government is shaking up the pharmaceutical sector by slashing the review period for manufacturing applications for new drugs to 45 days. Now, manufacturers can initiate clinical trials or bioequivalence studies with just a prior notification to the regulators, ditching the old requirement for express permission.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/pharmaceuticals/new-drugs-could-reach-market-sooner-as-govt-halves-trial-review-timeline/articleshow/127188457.cms

External

EU GSP suspension likely to hit India exports: GTRI

India faces a significant setback in the European Union market from January 1, 2026. The EU has suspended Generalised Scheme of Preferences benefits for 87 percent of Indian exports. This move will lead to higher import tariffs on goods like textiles. The suspension coincides with the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/eu-gsp-suspension-likely-to-hit-india-exports-gtri/articleshow/127144103.cms

Canada PM Mark Carney's likely India visit to boost Cepa trade talks

India and Canada are working to ensure that Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney visits New Delhi before the end of March, with both countries keen to spur the negotiations for a bilateral trade deal. The two sides are also looking for greater cooperation in the civilian nuclear sector, and India is exploring more investments from Canadian pension funds. On Tuesday, Carney told the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos that Canada had shifted its strategic posture and was working on new trade and security partnerships, including with India, Qatar, Thailand, the Philippines, and trade alliances, as well as groupings such as Mercosur and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.
https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/india-canada-mark-carney-visit-trade-talks-cepa-nuclear-pension-funds-126012201448_1.html

PM Modi speaks to Brazil's Lula, says close ties vital for Global South interests

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva on Thursday and asserted that close cooperation was vital for advancing the shared interests of the Global South. Modi received a call from the Brazilian president, and the two leaders underscored the importance of reformed multilateralism in addressing shared challenges, an official statement said. The prime minister also said he was looking forward to welcoming the Brazilian president to India soon.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/pm-modi-speaks-to-brazils-lula-says-close-ties-vital-for-global-south-interests/article70539937.ece