

(15<sup>th</sup> February 2026)

## International

### US deploys aircraft carrier to Middle East amid Iran tensions.

US President Donald Trump has confirmed the deployment of the world's largest aircraft carrier, USS Gerald R. Ford, from the Caribbean to the Middle East to bolster American military presence.

The move comes amid heightened tensions with Iran, even as Washington signals openness to talks.

### UNICEF warns of sharp rise in child recruitment by gangs in Haiti.

A UNICEF report has revealed that recruitment of children by armed groups in Haiti tripled last year amid worsening poverty and violence.

Gang conflict has displaced about 1.4 million people, over half of them children, leaving many highly vulnerable.

UNICEF estimates that 30 to 50 percent of gang members are children, some as young as nine, highlighting a deepening humanitarian crisis.

## Important Days

### International Childhood Cancer Day:15<sup>th</sup> February.

International Childhood Cancer Day is being observed on 15<sup>th</sup> February to raise awareness and support children with cancer, survivors and their families.

On this occasion, AIIMS and the Indian Revenue Service Ladies Association organised a walkathon at India Gate in New Delhi.

## National

### PM Modi launches PM RAHAT scheme for road accident victims.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the launch of the PM RAHAT Scheme to provide cashless treatment to road accident victims across India.

Under the scheme, eligible victims will receive free medical care up to ₹1.5 lakh for seven days from the date of the accident.

Funded through the Motor Vehicle Accident Fund, the initiative aims to prevent avoidable deaths by ensuring timely medical assistance during the critical first hour after accidents.

### CCEA approves major rail and highway infrastructure projects.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved key rail and road infrastructure projects worth over ₹48,000 crore to boost connectivity and logistics efficiency.

Three railway multitracking projects spanning 389 km across four states will enhance capacity and create large-scale employment.

The CCEA also cleared major highway projects in Assam, Telangana, Maharashtra and Gujarat, aimed at improving multimodal integration, reducing logistics costs, supporting sustainable transport and driving regional economic growth.

### BIRAC RDI fund launched to boost deep-tech biotechnology innovation.

Science and Technology Minister Dr Jitendra Singh has launched the BIRAC–Research, Development and Innovation Fund in New Delhi to promote deep-tech innovations and indigenous manufacturing in biotechnology and allied areas.

He noted that India's bioeconomy has expanded sharply from \$8 billion in 2014 and highlighted the growth of biotech startups to nearly 11,000, reflecting India's readiness to play a larger global role in innovation.

## Business and Economy

### Uday Kotak appointed Chairman of GIFT City.

The Gujarat government has appointed banker Uday Kotak as the new Chairman of Gujarat International Finance Tec (GIFT) City, with immediate effect.

He succeeds former bureaucrat Hasmukh Adhia, who served as non-executive chairman since June 2023.

Founder of Kotak Mahindra Bank, Uday Kotak led the institution as Managing Director and CEO until September 2023 and has played a pivotal role in building the Kotak Mahindra group over four decades.

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## **BSE gets Sebi nod to launch derivatives on focused midcap index.**

The Bombay Stock Exchange has received Sebi's approval to introduce derivative contracts on the BSE focused midcap index, expanding its derivatives basket beyond Sensex and Bankex.

The exchange will offer cash-settled monthly index futures and options, expiring on the last Thursday of the contract month.

The Focused Midcap Index tracks the top 20 midcap stocks by free-float market capitalisation.

While NSE offers derivatives on five indices, Sebi norms restrict weekly expiries to one benchmark index per exchange to curb excessive speculation.

## **KLA to invest \$400 million in Chennai R&D campus.**

KLA Corporation has signed an MoU with the Tamil Nadu government to set up a major R&D and innovation campus in Chennai.

The company plans to invest up to \$400 million over the next decade.

Spread across 12 acres, the campus will focus on semiconductor, software and AI-led innovation and is expected to create up to 4,000 jobs.

## **Credit growth picks up to 14.6% in Late January: RBI data.**

Bank credit growth accelerated to 14.6% year-on-year in the fortnight ended January 31, 2026, while deposit growth remained strong at 12.5%, RBI data showed.

Total bank credit stood at ₹204.75 trillion and deposits at ₹248.81 trillion.

The pickup was supported by GST rationalisation, RBI rate cuts and rising wholesale credit demand.

Credit growth is expected to gain further momentum toward the end of FY26, led by corporate and MSME lending.

## **BIRAC invites first proposals under ₹1 Lakh crore RDI fund.**

The Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) has announced the first call for proposals under the Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Fund.

BIRAC and the Technology Development Board have been designated as second-level fund managers for the ₹1 lakh crore fund, with BIRAC focusing on biotechnology and allied areas, and TDB covering sunrise and strategic sectors.

## **Sports**

### **Pramod Bhagat wins SL3 gold at BWF Para World Championships.**

India's Pramod Bhagat clinched the men's SL3 gold medal at the BWF Para World Championships in Bahrain with a straight-games win over Indonesia's Muhammad Al Imran.

The 37-year-old triumphed 21-12, 21-18 to secure his fourth consecutive singles world title and sixth overall.

With this feat, Bhagat became the most decorated singles champion in world championship history, surpassing Lin Dan's record.

### **Kemboi Kevin Kiprono, Renu Singh win Aizawl International Half Marathon.**

Kenya's Kemboi Kevin Kiprono clinched the men's 21-km title, while Renu Singh won the women's race at the second Aizawl International Half Marathon 2026.

Nearly 3,000 runners took part in the event, which was flagged off by Mizoram Governor V. K. Singh.

Featuring elite athletes from several countries, the marathon saw participation almost double from last year, highlighting Mizoram's rising profile in sports hosting.