

1. Economy & Banking

World Bank Hikes India's FY26 Growth Forecast

The World Bank's **Global Economic Prospects** report has revised India's growth estimate for FY2025-26 to 7.2%, up from previous estimates.

- **Drivers:** Strong domestic demand despite global economic pressures.
- **Regional Impact:** India's resilience boosted South Asia's overall growth to 7.1% in 2025.
- **Future Outlook:** Growth is expected to moderate to 6.5% in FY27 before a recovery to 6.6% in FY28.

RBI Recognises FEDAI as SRO for Forex Dealers

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted **Self-Regulatory Organisation (SRO)** status to the **Foreign Exchange Dealers' Association of India (FEDAI)**.

- **Scope:** Covers all "Authorised Dealers" in the forex market.
- **Timeline:** FEDAI has one year to align its governance norms with RBI's Omnibus framework.

Karnataka Bank Bags IBA Award

Karnataka Bank was named the winner of the '**Best Fintech & DPI Adoption**' at the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) Technology Awards.

- **Other Accolades:** Runner-up for 'Best Tech Talent' and special mentions in Digital Banking and Inclusion.
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2. National Security & Defence

BEL and Garuda Aerospace Partner for Drones

Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) and **Garuda Aerospace** signed an MoU to supply indigenous **Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS)**.

- **Roles:** BEL will be the lead bidder; Garuda will handle design and manufacturing.

- **Vision:** Aligned with **Aatmanirbhar Bharat** for defence and internal security.

New Director General of NIA Appointed

Rakesh Aggarwal, a 1994-batch IPS officer (Himachal Pradesh cadre), has been appointed as the **Director General of the National Investigation Agency (NIA)**.

- **Tenure:** Up to August 31, 2028.
 - **Previous Experience:** Served as Special DG in NIA and Joint Director in CBI.
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3. Science, Environment & Agriculture

India Registers 'Karan Fries' Cow Breed

The **National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), Karnal**, has officially registered the **Karan Fries** synthetic breed.

- **Lineage:** Developed by crossbreeding **Holstein Friesian** (exotic) with **Tharparkar** (Indian zebu).
- **Productivity:** Yields approx. 3,550 kg of milk per lactation; peak daily output can hit 46.5 kg.

Crocodile Population Rises in Similipal

Odisha's **Similipal National Park** reported an increase in its crocodile count from 81 to 84.

- **Key Location:** The **Deo River** is the primary habitat, housing 60 of the 84 crocodiles.
- **Conservation:** Success is attributed to the **Ramatirtha breeding centre**.

FDA Approves First Menkes Disease Treatment

The US FDA approved **Zycubo (copper histidinate)**, the first-ever treatment for **Menkes disease**, a rare genetic disorder affecting copper absorption.

- **Treatment:** Injected to bypass faulty absorption; most effective if started within 4 weeks of birth.
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4. Infrastructure & Governance

NITI Aayog Releases Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2024

NITI Aayog released the 4th edition of the EPI to track states' readiness to achieve the **USD 1 trillion export goal by 2030**.

- **Structure:** 4 Pillars, 13 Sub-pillars, and 70 Indicators.
- **Background:** The first EPI was published in 2020.

NHAI Pilots Stray Cattle Alerts

In a first, NHAI and **Reliance Jio** launched a pilot on the **Jaipur-Agra** and **Jaipur-Rewari** highways to alert commuters about stray cattle.

- **Tech:** Flash SMS and voice alerts sent 10 km in advance to prevent accidents.
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5. International & Sports

Indian Passport Ranks 80th in Henley Index 2026

India's passport power improved, jumping 5 places to **80th rank** in the 2026 Henley Passport Index.

- **Access:** Indian citizens can now travel to **55 destinations** visa-free or with visa-on-arrival.
- **Top Ranker:** **Singapore** (1st), followed by Japan and South Korea.

Malaysia Airlines Partners with Mumbai Indians

Malaysia Airlines is now the **Associate Sponsor and Official Global Airline Partner** of Mumbai Indians.

- **Launch Event:** 100 **Wau Bulan** (Malaysian kites) were flown in Mumbai on Makar Sankranti.

Indian JV Strikes Oil in Abu Dhabi

Urja Bharat (a JV of Indian Oil and BPCL) discovered oil in **Abu Dhabi's Onshore Block 1**.

- **Significance:** Confirms unconventional oil resources in the **Shilaif** formation (Well XN-76) and **Habshan** reservoir (Well XN-79).

6. State Spotlight: Gujarat

Karuna Abhiyan 2026: CM Bhupendra Patel reviewed the state's massive wildlife rescue drive. Active since 2017, the initiative has saved over 1.12 lakh birds/animals injured by kite strings (*manja*) during the Uttarayan festival.