MONTHLY BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY NEWSLETTER

INDIA PULSE

ISSUE 001 | JANUARY 2026 | EMBASSY OF INDIA-KUWAIT

सत्यमेव जयते

India aims to land astronauts on the Moon by 2040: Former ISRO chief

- India aims to land astronauts on the Moon and return them safely by 2040.
- Plans are underway to build an Indian space station by the same year.
- Upcoming missions include a follow-on to Chandrayaan and a joint lander-rover mission with Japan.
- Opportunities will expand for academic institutions, engineering colleges, and private companies in India's space exploration efforts.

Former ISRO chief A S Kiran Kumar revealed at the fifth Astronomical Society of India Symposium that between now and 2040, India has a wide range of space missions planned. "So, 2040 is a plan where we want to land Indians on the Moon and bring them back safely. India is also working towards building a space station by 2040," Kumar said. He highlighted that the growing mission pipeline will not only advance government-led projects but also create avenues for academia and private sector contributions to the country's space exploration journey.

"Indian Pharmacopoeia is now recognised in 19 countries of the global south."

Indian economy to grow 6.9% in FY27 amid global headwinds: Ind-Ra

India's economy is projected to grow by 6.9 per cent in FY27, marginally lower than the estimated 7.4 per cent in FY26, according to Indian Ratings & Research (Ind-Ra), which expects domestic reforms and trade agreements to help cushion global uncertainties driven by US tariffs. Ind-Ra Chief Economist Devendra Kumar Pant said key headwinds include the El Niño pattern from mid-2026, weak capital flows, sluggish global trade, the base effect of strong FY26 growth, slower net tax growth due to GST rationalisation, and the emerging impact of artificial intelligence, while noting that risks to FY27 growth are "evenly balanced." He added that "a faster Indo-US trade deal and favourable Indian Ocean Dipole may help minimise the impact of the likely El Niño pattern," though weaker-than-expected demand revival could drag growth. On consumption, rural demand remains resilient amid sustained agricultural growth and easing inflation, while urban demand lags and government consumption stays muted due to fiscal consolidation. Ind-Ra said the inflation outlook for FY26 and FY27 is benign, supporting positive real wage growth and sustained consumption, reinforced by income tax cuts and GST rationalisation.

Key Highlights:

- GDP Growth: Projected at 6.9% in FY27, slightly lower than 7.4% in FY26.
- Domestic Reforms Supporting Growth: Income tax cuts, GST rationalisation.
- Trade Agreements: New deals with Oman, UK, and New Zealand to bolster trade resilience.
- Consumption Trends: Rural demand resilient; urban demand is weaker.
- Inflation Outlook: Benign for FY26 and FY27, supporting real wage growth and sustained consumption.

Indian Pharmacopoeia 2026 expands coverage of Anti-TB, Anti-Diabetic and Anti Cancer medicines with 121 new monographs

India marked a major milestone in pharmaceutical regulation with the release of the 10th edition of the Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP 2026), unveiled on January 2, 2026, by Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda in New Delhi. The edition, attended by senior officials and industry experts, expands India's drug quality framework with 121 new monographs, bringing the total to 3,340, covering key areas like anti-tubercular, anti-diabetic, and anti-cancer medicines, as well as micronutrient supplements. Highlighting its growing global impact, Shri Nadda noted that the Indian Pharmacopoeia is now recognized in 19 countries, reflecting international confidence in India's regulatory and scientific capabilities and reinforcing the nation's role as the *"Pharmacy of the World."*

Release of IP 2026, 02 January 2026

UNION BUDGET 2026

The Union Budget 2026-27 emphasizes a people-centric, growth-oriented approach to make India a Viksit Bharat. The budget envisions high GDP growth rate of around 7%, strengthened domestic manufacturing, reduced import dependency, energy security, and robust public investment.

For NRIs

- Buyers purchasing property from NRIs will no longer need to obtain a TAN (Tax Deduction and Collection Account Number). Instead, TDS can be deposited using PAN (Permanent Account Number), simplifying property transactions involving NRIs.
- A one-time six-month window has been introduced for NRIs and returning Indians to declare previously undisclosed foreign assets with reduced penalties under the Black Money Act.
- Returning NRIs who meet specified conditions may receive tax exemption on foreign income earned for up to five years after returning to India. Investment rules for overseas investors have been liberalised, with higher individual and aggregate limits for investment in Indian listed companies.
- Multiple tax provisions applicable to NRIs have been consolidated into a simplified and clearer tax framework, improving ease of compliance.

Services Sector and Tax Incentives

- Establishment of five medical value tourism hubs in partnership with the private sector, 3 new All India Institutes of Ayurveda, upgrading AYUSH pharmacies and Drug Testing Labs for higher standards of certification ecosystem, & upgrading the WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre.
- New safe harbour provisions for IT/ITES with higher threshold and competitive margin
- Facilitation of professional services, AVGC, and digital content creation with targeted tax incentives.
- Profit linked deduction to IFSC units for approved business is extended to a period of 20 consecutive years out of 25 years.
- Tax holiday to any foreign company till 2047 who provides cloud services globally using data centre services in India. Safe harbour in case the resident company providing data centre services is a related entity.

Manufacturing and MSME Sector

- Expansion of schemes like Biopharma SHAKTI, Electronics Components Manufacturing, Textiles, and Container Manufacturing.
- Launch of India Semiconductor Mission 2.0 and initiatives for rare earth permanent magnets and sports goods manufacturing.
- Scheme for Revival of 200 legacy industrial clusters.
- Income tax exemption for five years for non-residents providing capital goods to toll manufacturers in bonded zones.
- Deferred duty payments for trusted manufacturers.
- Duty-free imports extended for seafood, leather, and footwear exports.
- Customs duty exemptions for microwave oven parts, aircraft components, and defense materials.
- Special concessional duty measures for SEZ manufacturing units selling domestically.

"Union Budget 2026–27 is a visionary step towards building a self-reliant and Viksit Bharat by 2047."

Air cargo to anchor India's bid to shape global logistics by 2040: FAII's Vandana Singh

- India's air cargo volumes are projected to more than triple by 2040.
- India's domestic air cargo market is currently growing at 8–10 per cent CAGR, consistently outperforming global averages.

India is set to transition from seeking a place in global logistics networks to actively shaping them by 2040, according to Vandana Singh, Chairperson of Aviation Cargo at the Federation of India Airlines (FAII), who said air cargo is evolving from a support function into a strategic national capability. She described the next 15 years as a structural reset for global supply chains, where preparedness will determine competitiveness, noting that India's air cargo volumes are projected to more than triple by 2040 and the domestic market is growing at an 8–10 per cent CAGR, outperforming global averages. Singh stressed that ambitions must extend beyond scale to cost efficiency, arguing that logistics costs of 13–14 per cent of GDP must be reduced to around 8 per cent, with air cargo playing a central role. Outlining the Vision 2040 roadmap, she called for a shift from capacity expansion to capability building through cargo-first airports, speed-focused freighter terminals, integrated multimodal cargo zones, and time-definite, temperature-controlled infrastructure, emphasising that "in air cargo, time is not just money. Time is trust." She added that technology and digitisation—through paperless cargo systems, AI-driven forecasting, and blockchain-enabled documentation—will underpin modern air cargo hubs, accelerating movement while improving reliability, transparency, and cost efficiency.

India energy storage market surges in 2025 with BESS tender boom

India's energy storage market surged in 2025, driven by a boom in battery energy storage system (BESS) tenders and strong policy support, according to the India Energy Storage Market Report 2025. ESS tendering reached 102 GWh, with BESS tenders alone rising to 60 GWh, up from 24 GWh in 2024, supported by falling global battery costs and the viability gap funding (VGF) scheme. Around 50 new developers entered the market, though only 28.6 GWh had been awarded and 5.7 GWh was under execution by year-end. Operational BESS capacity stood at 0.7 GWh in 2025, expected to reach 2 GWh by the end of 2026. Policy momentum remained strong, including support for 30 GWh of standalone BESS under the second VGF tranche, ISTS waivers extended to 2028, and the Electricity Amendment Rules 2025 formally defining ESS as an asset class. The report described 2025 as the "year of standalone BESS" and projected India's total ESS capacity to reach 336 GWh by 2029–30 and over 400 GWh by 2031–32, with the sector expected to grow fivefold between 2026 and 2032, backed by an estimated INR 479 thousand crore of investment.

India's core sectors' growth accelerates to 4-month high of 3.7% in December

India's eight core infrastructure sectors grew by 3.7 per cent in December 2025, easing from 5.1 per cent a year earlier but rebounding from 2.1 per cent in November, government data showed, marking a four-month high and signalling a sequential pickup in industrial momentum. Growth was driven mainly by steel and cement, with cement output surging 13.5 per cent and steel production rising 6.9 per cent, while electricity, fertilisers and coal also posted positive growth. The Index of Eight Core Industries, which accounts for 40.27 per cent of the IIP, recorded 2.6 per cent cumulative growth during April–December 2025-26, weighed down by continued weakness in hydrocarbons. Crude oil and natural gas output declined 5.6 per cent and 4.4 per cent year-on-year in December, respectively, and refinery production slipped 1.0 per cent, underscoring persistent structural challenges in oil and gas even as construction- and infrastructure-linked segments showed resilience.

- Sequential improvement in core sectors: India's eight core industries grew 3.7% in December 2025, marking a four-month high and a clear rebound from November's 2.1%, indicating improving industrial momentum.

- Strength in infrastructure-linked segments: Strong growth in cement (13.5%) and steel (6.9%), along with gains in electricity, fertilisers and coal, highlighted resilience in construction and infrastructure-related demand.

GAIL finishes 694-km Mumbai–Nagpur gas pipeline along Samruddhi Mahamarg

GAIL (India) Ltd has completed the 694-km Mumbai-Nagpur Natural Gas Pipeline (MNPL), India's first major high-capacity pipeline integrated within a dense transport corridor under the PM-GatiShakti framework. Stretching almost entirely along a 3-metre-wide utility strip on Maharashtra's Samruddhi Mahamarg expressway, the project overcame unprecedented engineering and logistical challenges, including steep terrain in the Western Ghats. With a capacity of 16.5 million standard cubic metres per day and bi-directional flow, the pipeline will expand natural gas access across 16 districts, supply fuel to over 1,700 CNG stations, and enable piped connections for 95 lakh households. Supporting power, fertilisers, chemicals, manufacturing, and cleaner fuel adoption, the MNPL also promotes regional economic growth, new commercial zones, and logistics hubs. Officials note that the project demonstrates how expressways can double as utility corridors, providing a blueprint for future gas and infrastructure networks under India's GatiShakti framework.

Coal Ministry proposes massive ₹35,000 crore incentive booster for coal gasification

India is set to unveil a ₹35,000+ crore incentive package for coal gasification projects, a fourfold increase from the existing ₹8,500 crore corpus, aimed at de-risking high-capital investments and boosting the commercial viability of clean coal technologies. The package is expected to help achieve the National Coal Gasification Mission's target of 100 million tonnes by 2030, promoting a domestic ecosystem for ammonia, methanol, and urea while reducing reliance on imported natural gas and fertilizers. Key beneficiaries include Coal India, BHEL, NTPC, NLC India, and SAIL, with projects ranging from coal-to-chemicals ventures to syngas-based power and steel production. The scheme could potentially cut India's annual import bill by $15 billion and offers a cleaner alternative to traditional coal combustion, enabling carbon capture and supporting the nation's net-zero goals. The 2026 package builds on the 2024 framework, expanding categories to incentivize high-value derivatives and revive stranded gas-based power plants.

- Coal India (CIL): Diversifying into coal-to-chemicals, with joint ventures like the ₹13,000 crore project with GAIL in West Bengal set to be fast-tracked.
- BHEL: Developing indigenous gasifiers and deploying Pressurised Fluidised Bed Gasification technology at commercial scale, including recent orders from BCGCL.
- Fertiliser & Steel Majors (NTPC, NLC India, SAIL): Exploring syngas for direct reduced iron (DRI) and power generation, benefiting from the revised incentives.

India Targets 350 Airports by 2047 in Massive Aviation Expansion

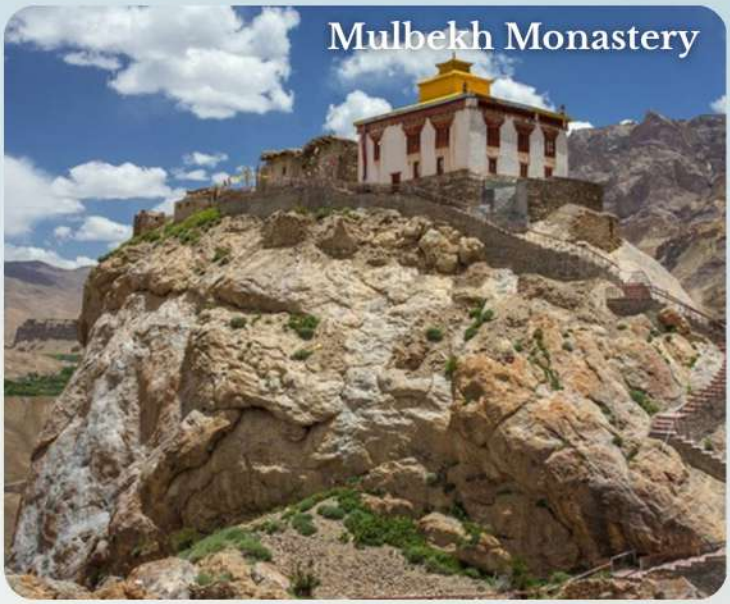
Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu

India aims to nearly triple its operational airports by 2047, with Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu outlining a plan to build 50 new airports in the next five years as part of the nation's broader development vision. Supported by strategic policy, capital investment, and rising regional connectivity, the country has become the world's third-largest domestic aviation market, with carriers placing orders for around 1,700 aircraft and the sector growing 10–12% annually. International collaboration and state-level engagements with investors and institutions like JBIC are fostering sustainable, technology-driven development, positioning India's aviation expansion as a key driver for economic growth, tourism, and logistics over the coming decades.

The Enchanting Tale of Ladakh

In the northern embrace of India, Ladakh unfolds as a breathtaking spectacle, a high-altitude desert boasting rugged, awe-inspiring vistas, a treasury of vibrant cultural heritage, and an array of unparalleled adventures waiting to be explored. Renowned as "Little Tibet," it echoes the timeless rhythms of the Tibetan Plateau, weaving a captivating narrative of cultural affinity and shared mystique, inviting travellers to embark on an unforgettable journey through its storied landscapes and soul-stirring wonders.

Enchanting travellers from far and wide, Ladakh stands as an irresistible haven adorned with majestic mountains, lush forests, tranquil rivers, pristine lakes, and captivating deserts, offering an invitation to delve into a nature lover's utopia. Within this breathtaking realm, the iconic Pangong Lake reigns supreme, a spellbinding endorheic marvel nestled at an altitude of 4,350 meters, while the sprawling Tso Moriri Lake emerges as India's largest high-altitude gem, glistening at a height of 4,595 meters. Amidst the scenic embrace of Ladakh Valley, the enchanting Tso Kar unveils its ever-changing salt lake, adorning the picturesque Rupshu Plateau. Discover the secluded allure of Yarab Tso Lake in the Nubra Valley, an uninhabited sanctuary boasting crystal clear waters that reflect the untouched beauty of Ladakh's unbridled wilderness.



Amidst the captivating landscape of Ladakh, ancient Buddhist monasteries, perched on serene hillocks near villages, beckon travellers into a realm of profound tranquillity. These timeless sanctuaries, including Hemis Monastery, Thiksey Monastery, and Alchi Monastery, unveil the region's Buddhist legacy, offering an immersive exploration into its spiritual heritage. Venture to the enchanting Nubra Valley, renowned for its undulating sand dunes, iconic Bactrian camels, and the revered Diskit Monastery, where spiritual solace embraces the soul.

You are surrounded by a stunning panorama of snow-capped peaks, vibrant valleys, and flowing rivers as you stand atop Tiger Hill in Kargil, Ladakh. It looks like something from a dream, calling out to you to discover its mysteries and unearth its hidden gems. Be mesmerised by the breath-taking scenery that unfolds before your eyes as you ascend Tiger Hill's slopes. Nature's beauty is all around you, with rocky mountains, lush meadows and sparkling streams creating the perfect backdrop for any photograph. The scent of wildflowers and pine trees fills your lungs as the crisp, energising air fills your lungs.

"It looks like something from a dream, calling out to you to discover its mysteries and unearth its hidden gems"

Upcoming Business Expos in India

AI Impact Summit 2026

19 – 20 February, 2026 | Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi |
Website: https://impact.indiaai.gov.in/

The AI Impact Summit 2026 will serve as a major platform for discussions on the growing role of artificial intelligence across key sectors of the economy. The summit will bring together policymakers, industry leaders, technology companies, startups, and researchers to examine how AI is reshaping governance, business, manufacturing, healthcare, and digital infrastructure. The event will focus on practical applications of AI, regulatory and ethical considerations, investment opportunities, and India's long-term strategy in becoming a global AI hub.

Bharat Electricity Summit

19 - 22 March, 2026 |Yashobhoomi, New Delhi |
Website: https://www.bharatelectricitysummit.com/

The Bharat Electricity Summit 2026 will be held as a high-level platform bringing together policymakers, power sector regulators, utilities, grid operators, equipment manufacturers, technology providers, and investors to address key issues facing India's electricity sector. The summit will focus on power generation, transmission and distribution reforms, grid modernization, renewable energy integration, energy storage, electric mobility, and the digital transformation of power infrastructure. Discussions will also cover regulatory frameworks, financing requirements, and investment opportunities needed to support India's rising power demand and long-term energy security objectives

INDIASOFT 2026

23 – 25 March, 2026 | New Delhi |
Website: https://indiasoft.org/delegates-registration/

INDIASOFT 2026 will bring together Indian and international technology companies, buyers, startups, and public sector stakeholders as a key business platform for the software and IT services industry. The event will cover a wide range of segments including software products, IT services, SaaS, fintech, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and enterprise digital transformation. It will focus on strengthening B2B engagement, supporting technology partnerships, and expanding export and market access opportunities for Indian firms

Bharat International Rice Conference (BIRC) 2026

23 – 25 October, 2026 | Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi |
Website: https://iref.net/

The Bharat International Rice Conference (BIRC) 2026 will assemble industry leaders, government representatives, exporters, millers, and technology providers to address developments across the rice sector. Key topics will include production techniques, processing, storage solutions, supply chain optimization, trade policies, sustainability, and quality enhancement through technology. The conference will also examine market dynamics, export opportunities, and regulatory considerations, fostering collaboration between public and private stakeholders to reinforce India's competitiveness in the global rice industry.

For any Queries
Embassy of India, Kuwait
Diplomatic Enclave, Safat, Arabian Gulf St, Kuwait City 13015
Email: com.kuwait@mea.gov.in
Website: https://indembkwt.gov.in
Telephone : 22571193