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Goa Becomes 2nd State in India to Publish State-level Bird Atlas

- In February 2026, the Government of Goa published the “Bird Atlas of Goa” during the 9th Bird Festival of Goa held at Valpoi, Goa.
- Goa became the second state in India after Kerala to publish a comprehensive state-level bird atlas.
- The Bird Atlas of Goa is a citizen science–driven initiative completed within one year.
- The atlas covers an area of 370 square kilometres.
- Bird surveys were conducted across nearly 1,400 km of transect distance.
- The Bird Festival of Goa was formally inaugurated by C. Candavelou, Chief Secretary and Principal Secretary (Forests), Government of Goa.
- The festival was organised with the theme “Majestic Mhadei”, emphasising the ecological importance of the Mhadei river basin.
- A key publication released during the festival was “Birds of Goa: Konkani Nomenclature – Olakh Suknayanachi”.
- The publication focuses on documentation and popularisation of bird species in the Konkani language.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Goa Forest Department and ResQ Charitable Trust.
- The MoU aims to improve coordination for wildlife rescue and rehabilitation across Goa.



Delhi Tops World's Most Affordable Student Cities Ranking: QS Best Student Cities 2026



- Delhi has emerged as the most affordable city in the world for international students, securing the 1st global rank.
- The ranking is based on a joint study by Knight Frank, Deloitte India, and QS.
- The report, titled “India’s 155 Million Student Mandate”, was released in February 2026.
- The findings are part of the QS Best Student Cities 2026 rankings.
- Mumbai achieved the 11th position, while Bengaluru was placed 15th globally.
- The assessment evaluated 150 cities worldwide.
- Cities were ranked using six equally weighted indicators.
- These indicators include affordability, employer activity, university rankings, city desirability, student voice, and student mix.
- Indian cities performed particularly well on the cost-effectiveness parameter.

- The study highlighted affordability as a key decision factor for students and their families.
- Education fees, cost of living, and purchasing power in India are significantly lower than in major global education hubs.
- Indian cities compare favourably with destinations in the UK, USA, Europe, and Australia.
- Lower education-related expenses help in minimising student debt.
- Strong employment prospects improve the overall return on educational investment.
- International universities increasingly view India as both a student-sending nation and a study destination.
- India has the largest global population in the 18–23 age group, numbering about 155 million.
- The country is transitioning from a primarily outbound education market to a preferred location for foreign university campuses.
- Knight Frank India noted that India is becoming a strategically important hub for global higher education growth.
- Factors such as policy reforms, demographic strength, and urban infrastructure readiness are driving this transformation.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla Launched NeVA at Bihar Assembly

- In February 2026, Om Birla, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, launched the National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA) at the Central Hall of the Bihar State Legislature Assembly, Patna.
- It is a cloud-based digital platform developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) which works under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY).
- The event coincided with Bihar Assembly's 105th Foundation Day celebrations.
- The newly launched app will enable the paperless conduct of legislative business.
- It allows legislators to access important documents such as rules of procedure, list of business, notices, and bulletins on electronic devices.
- The launch ceremony was attended by Prem Kumar, Speaker of Bihar Assembly; Harivansh Narayan Singh, Chairman of Rajya Sabha (the Upper House of the Parliament); and Union Minister Kiren Rijiju, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs (MoPA), among others.



Alwar Becomes First District in India to Attain Complete Insurance Coverage

- Alwar district of Rajasthan has become the first district in India to attain complete insurance coverage under the “Insurance for All by 2047” initiative.
- The achievement supports the national vision of building a “Secure India – Insured India” by reaching citizens at the grassroots level.
- The programme is being implemented through a collaborative effort of the Government of India and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), which functions under the Ministry of Finance.
- Through structured door-to-door surveys, 1,367 individuals above the age of 10, who were earlier uninsured, were enrolled, resulting in total insurance saturation in the district.
- Nine villages—Bhulla Ka Bas, Bichpuri, Palankheda, Antapada, Hanumanta, Kalyanpura, Morodkhurd, Kodalka, and Lalpur—were officially recognised as fully insured villages.
- Insurance documents were distributed to beneficiaries during a formal event presided over by Additional District Collector Bina Mahawar.
- To ensure inclusiveness, insurance premiums for all eligible adults in these villages were paid by a Non-Government Organisation (NGO), removing any financial burden on residents.
- The insurance coverage was provided through policies issued by United India Insurance Company Limited (UIIC).

Jharkhand Women Strike Gold at Para Throwball Nationals 2026

- Jharkhand's women's team won gold at the Para Throwball National Federation Cup 2026 after defeating Rajasthan 21–17 in the final.
- The women's final of the **Para Throwball National Federation Cup 2026** was a closely fought contest.
- Playing against the home team **Rajasthan, Jharkhand** showed composure and tactical discipline under pressure.
- The **21–17 scoreline** reflected a hard-earned victory, with Jharkhand maintaining consistency in attack and defense.
- Their structured gameplay throughout the tournament helped them emerge as champions, overcoming both crowd pressure and strong opposition in the final.

Men's Para Throwball National Cup:

- In the men's category of the Para Throwball National Federation Cup 2026,
- Andhra Pradesh emerged as champions.
- Telangana finished as runners-up, while Haryana secured the bronze medal.

Kotak Mahindra Bank Issues India's 1st Fully Digital FPI Licence

- In February 2026, Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited (KMBL) became the first custodian in India to issue a Foreign Portfolio Investor (FPI) licence entirely through electronic signatures (e-signatures).
- The bank also completed the entire FPI onboarding process digitally, marking a major step towards paperless and efficient financial services.
- In January 2026, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) implemented a unified digital workflow for the FPI registration process.
- This system enables the use of Digital Signature Certificates (DSCs) and electronic signatures through the FPI Common Application Form (CAF) portal.
- According to the guidelines issued by the Securities and Exchange Board of India, Digital Signature Certificates must be provided only by certifying authorities based in India and must fully comply with the provisions of the Information Technology Act, 2000.
- Earlier, KMBL issued its first two FPI licences using fully digitally signed documents, eliminating the need for physical paperwork and wet signatures.



India Joins BRICS Centre for Industrial Competencies to Boost Manufacturing and MSMEs

- India formally joined the BRICS Centre for Industrial Competencies (BCIC) in an event organised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry.
- The BRICS Centre for Industrial Competencies was launched in partnership with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization.
- The initiative aims to provide integrated support to manufacturing firms and MSMEs across BRICS nations.
- BCIC focuses on strengthening Industry 4.0 skills and advanced manufacturing practices.
- India's participation was formalized through a Trust Fund Agreement between DPIIT and UNIDO

About BRICS and BCIC

- BRICS is a major intergovernmental bloc originally consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- BRICS Centre for Industrial Competencies was launched in partnership with UNIDO to promote industrial cooperation across member countries, focusing on SMEs, digital transformation and smart manufacturing.
- The Centre aims to build Industry 4.0 competencies such as automation, digitalisation, AI integration, and advanced manufacturing skills which are critical for competitiveness in global manufacturing.



Toyota Motors Appoints Kenta Kon as its New President and CEO

- In February 2026, Toyota Motor Corporation (TMC) appointed Kenta Kon as its new President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
- His appointment will take effect from 1 April 2026.
- Kenta Kon was previously serving as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of TMC.
- He will succeed Koji Sato in the role of CEO.
- Koji Sato will take on the new roles of Vice Chairman and Chief Industry Officer (CIO) at TMC.
- Kenta Kon joined Toyota Motor Corporation in 1991.
- He is recognised for his strong financial discipline and cost-control expertise.
- He is also known for his close collaboration with Chairman Akio Toyoda.
- Before becoming CEO, he served as a director at Woven by Toyota, the company's technology arm.
- He also held a directorial position at Toyota Fudosan, Toyota's real estate unit.
- Following Kenta Kon's promotion, Yoichi Miyazaki, Executive Vice President, was appointed as the new Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of TMC.

