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Nomura cuts India FY27 GDP forecast to 7% amid West Asia conflict



- Nomura has revised India's GDP growth forecast for FY 2026-27 to 7.0%, down from its earlier projection of 7.1%, due to rising geopolitical tensions in West Asia.
- The Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation forecast for India in FY27 has been raised to 4.5%, up by 0.7 percentage points from the earlier estimate.
- Nomura has projected India's Current Account Deficit (CAD) to widen to 1.6% of GDP, an increase of 0.4 percentage points compared with previous forecasts.
- The upward revisions in inflation and CAD forecasts are largely attributed to higher energy prices and supply pressures resulting from the ongoing West Asia geopolitical conflict.
- Nomura noted that sustained geopolitical tensions could challenge India's "Goldilocks economic balance" — i.e., maintaining strong growth with stable inflation.

UIDAI Launches First Structured Bug Bounty Programme To Strengthen Aadhaar System Security:

- The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) launched a Bug Bounty Programme to strengthen the security of the Aadhaar system.
- The programme was announced by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- Aim is to invite cybersecurity experts and ethical hackers to detect vulnerabilities in UIDAI platforms and enhance Aadhaar's digital security.
- 20 selected security researchers will participate to identify hidden risks in the system.
- Platforms included for testing: UIDAI official website, myAadhaar portal, and Secure QR Code application.
- Significance: Improves cybersecurity, data protection, and ensures secure digital services for residents and stakeholders.

About UIDAI:

- Established: 28 January 2009
- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Chairperson: Neelkanth Mishra
- CEO: Bhuvnesh Kumar
- UIDAI is a statutory authority established under the Aadhaar Act, 2016, functioning under MeitY.
- UIDAI issues Aadhaar, a 12-digit biometric identification number, providing digital identity to residents of India.
- UIDAI's composition includes a Chairperson, two part-time Members, and a CEO who also acts as Member-Secretary.
- 'Udai' is the official resident-friendly mascot of Aadhaar.

RM Nachammai becomes first woman to head operations at an Indian Nuclear Power Plant



- R. M. Nachammai became the first woman to head operations of a functional nuclear power plant in India under Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited.
- She was appointed Chief Superintendent of Units 3 & 4 at Kaiga Generating Station, effective 15 March 2026. She will replace K. N. Vyas.
- Kaiga Nuclear Power Station in Karnataka operates 4 Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) with a total installed capacity of 880 MW.
- She joined NPCIL in 1991 and received the Vikram Sarabhai Award for topping the engineer trainees batch.
- Her appointment is significant as India aims to expand nuclear power capacity to 100 GW by 2047.

International Malaria Conference 2026:

- International Malaria Conference 2026 was held in New Delhi.
- The conference was organised by ICMR–National Institute of Malaria Research under the Indian Council of Medical Research.

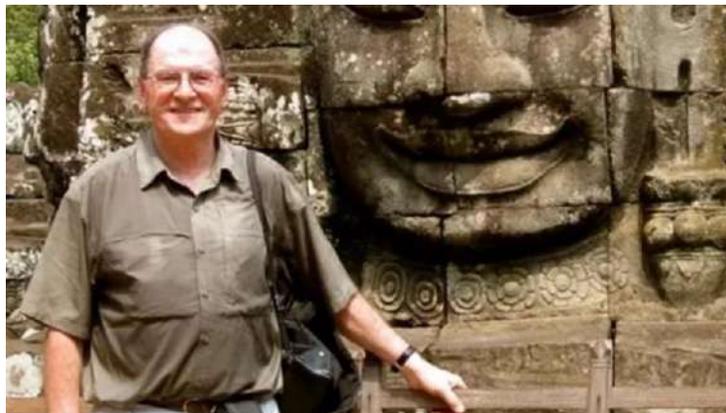
- Theme: “Discovery, Development and Delivery: Driving Malaria Elimination and Beyond.”
- The conference focused on scientific innovation, research collaboration, and improved strategies for malaria elimination.
- It brought together scientists, researchers, policymakers, and public health experts from several countries to discuss global malaria control efforts.
- India aims to eliminate malaria by 2030 under the National Framework for Malaria Elimination.

About Malaria:

- Malaria is a mosquito-borne infectious disease caused by Plasmodium parasites, mainly *P. falciparum*, *P. vivax*, *P. ovale*, *P. malariae*, and *P. knowlesi*.
- Transmitted through bites of infected female *Anopheles* mosquitoes.
- Symptoms: Fever, Chills, Headache, Fatigue

Hermann Kulke, Eminent Indologist and Odisha Historian, Passes Away at 87

- Hermann Kulke, a renowned German Indologist and historian known for his research on Odisha's history and culture, passed away at the age of 87.
- He was born in Berlin, Germany in 1938 and became one of the leading global scholars of Indian history and Indology.
- The Government of India honoured him with the Padma Shri in 2010 for his contribution to the study and promotion of Indian history and culture.
- He served as Professor of South and Southeast Asian History at Kiel University (1988–2003) and earlier taught for 21 years at the South Asia Institute of Heidelberg University.
- Kulke was a founding member of the Orissa Research Project (ORP), which promoted international academic research on Odisha history and culture.
- His research mainly focused on Odisha's regional history, the Jagannath Temple tradition, and the relationship between religion, kingship and state formation in medieval India.
- His well-known work includes A History of India, widely used as a reference book for Indian history.
- For his academic contributions he also received the Gold Medal of the Asiatic Society in 2005 and the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany in 2011.



Veteran Tamil filmmaker Thakkali Srinivasan dies at 72 in Bengaluru

- Thakkali Srinivasan, a veteran Tamil film director, screenwriter and musician, passed away in Bengaluru at the age of 72.
- He was widely known for directing the Tamil horror film Jenma Natchathiram, which gained cult popularity and was later dubbed into several Indian languages.
- Apart from filmmaking, he was also recognised as a music composer and lyricist in the Tamil film industry.
- Srinivasan had a career spanning several decades in Tamil cinema, contributing as a director, writer, and musician.



Nagauri Pan Methi gets PPVFRA patent under community farmers' variety

- Nagauri Pan Methi from Nagaur district was registered as a Community Farmers' Variety by the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority.
- The registration was published in the February 2026 issue of the Plant Variety Journal.
- The variety was registered under the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, 2001, granting statutory ownership and legal rights to the farmers of Nagaur.
- The farmers' community of Nagaur is recognised as the legal custodian of the crop, represented by Geeta Devi.
- Nagauri Pan Methi (scientific name: *Trigonella corniculata*) is a traditional fenugreek variety cultivated mainly in Nagaur district on over 7,000 hectares.
- Major cultivation areas include Mundwa, Nagaur, Merta City, Jayal, Degana, and Khinvsar in Rajasthan.
- The crop is a multi-cut leafy fenugreek variety, allowing multiple harvests of leaves in one season, and the leaves are sun-dried and used as a spice.
- The registration protects farmers from biopiracy and unauthorized commercial use and allows benefit-sharing if the crop's genetic resources are used in research or commercial products.
- The recognition is expected to support future Geographical Indication (GI) tagging and export opportunities for Nagauri Pan Methi.



HDFC ERGO General Insurance appoints Parthanil Ghosh as MD & CEO

- Parthanil Ghosh has been appointed Managing Director & CEO of HDFC ERGO General Insurance, effective 16 April 2026, subject to approval by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India.
- He will succeed Anuj Tyagi as MD & CEO.
- Prior to this appointment, he served as Executive Director and Director & Chief Business Officer at HDFC ERGO, overseeing retail and crop business, underwriting, claims, technology and digital functions.
- He has over 30 years of experience in insurance and financial services and joined HDFC ERGO in 2016 as Group Head – Retail Business, later becoming President (Motor Business) and subsequently Director & Chief Business Officer.
- Before joining HDFC ERGO, he worked with L&T General Insurance as General Manager – Retail Sales, later becoming Business Head (North) and National Head – Retail Sales.

HDFC ERGO General Insurance:

- Founded in 2002.
- Headquarters: Mumbai.
- It is a joint venture between HDFC Ltd. and ERGO International AG.



NATO Launches 'Cold Response' Arctic Military Exercise

- Cold Response 2026 is a major NATO Arctic military exercise led by Norway.
- The exercise is conducted from 9–19 March 2026 in Northern Norway and parts of Finland, along with nearby sea areas.
- Around 25,000 troops from 14 NATO allied countries are participating in the exercise.
- The drill includes land, air, and naval forces and is conducted as a multi-domain military operation across land, maritime, air, cyber, and space domains.
- The exercise is hosted by the Norwegian Armed Forces and coordinated from a joint Norwegian–US headquarters at Reitan near Bodø in Norway.
- Cold Response is a biennial (every two years) winter military exercise designed to train allied forces in extreme Arctic and cold-weather conditions.
- The main objective is to strengthen NATO's collective defence, improve interoperability among allied forces, and enhance security in the Arctic and High North region.



Actor Amol Palekar to receive 2026 META Lifetime Achievement Award

- Amol Palekar has been selected for the META Lifetime Achievement Award 2026 for his lifetime contribution to Indian theatre, cinema and storytelling.
- The honour will be conferred during the 21st edition of the Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards held in New Delhi.
- The META theatre festival is scheduled from 19–25 March 2026.
- Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META) is among India's most prestigious theatre festivals, recognising excellence in stage productions, direction, acting, design and writing.
- The awards were instituted by the Mahindra Group and are produced by Teamwork Arts.
- Amol Palekar is widely known for his significant contributions to Indian theatre and parallel cinema, and has worked as an actor, director, and producer across theatre and films.
- The META Lifetime Achievement Award recognises individuals who have made exceptional and long-term contributions to Indian theatre and performing arts.



Razorpay launches world's first AI Agent Studio for payments

- Razorpay launched the world's first AI Agent Studio for payments, a platform that enables businesses to deploy autonomous AI agents to automate payment and financial operations.
- The platform was launched at FTX 2026.
- AI Agent Studio is built using the Claude Agent Software Development Kit (SDK) developed by Anthropic.
- The platform allows businesses to create and deploy AI agents without coding to automate payment workflows.
- AI agents can perform tasks such as failed payment recovery, subscription management, payment dispute resolution, transaction monitoring, and reconciliation.
- The system can also predict cash-flow patterns, detect transaction anomalies, and recover abandoned transactions.
- According to Harshil Mathur, the platform represents a shift towards AI-driven autonomous financial operations in the fintech sector.
- The platform integrates with business tools like Shopify, WhatsApp, and Tally Solutions for automated payment and accounting workflows.

About Razorpay:

- Founded: 2014
- Headquarters: Bengaluru
- Founders: Harshil Mathur and Shashank Kumar



IEA to Release Record 400 Million Barrels from Emergency Reserves

- International Energy Agency decided to release 400 million barrels of oil from emergency strategic reserves to stabilise global oil markets.
- The decision was taken unanimously by 32 member countries on 11 March 2026.
- It is the largest coordinated oil stock release in the history of the IEA.
- The move was taken to address global oil supply disruptions caused by tensions involving Iran in the Middle East.
- Disruptions affected oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global energy chokepoint.
- Around 20% of global seaborne oil trade passes through the Strait of Hormuz.
- The release is more than double the previous largest release (182 million barrels) made after the Russian invasion of Ukraine.
- The released oil volume is equivalent to about four days of global oil consumption.

About International Energy Agency (IEA):

- Established: 1974
- Headquarters: Paris, France
- Members: 32 countries
- Executive Director: Fatih Birol



World Kidney Day 2026

- World Kidney Day 2026 was observed on 12 March 2026. It is observed on the second Thursday of March every year.
- The theme for 2026 is “Kidney Health for All: Caring for People, Protecting the Planet”.
- The theme focuses on prevention and early detection of kidney disease.
- It highlights the link between kidney health and environmental health.
- World Kidney Day is a global awareness campaign on kidney function, disease prevention, and the importance of early screening.
- The campaign stresses that environmental factors like air pollution, dehydration, and heat stress increase the risk of kidney disease.
- It was initiated by the International Society of Nephrology and the International Federation of Kidney Foundations to reduce the global burden of kidney disease.

