

THE DAILY GK DOSE

INDIAN OVERSEAS BANK INTRODUCES DIGITAL DEATH CLAIM PORTAL

- **15-Day Guaranteed Timeline:** IOB has committed to a strict, time-bound processing window, ensuring that all death claims submitted through the portal are settled within 15 days, significantly reducing the waiting period for bereaved families.
- **No Third-Party Surety for Claims up to ₹15 Lakh:** To ease the financial and administrative burden on claimants, the bank has waived the requirement for a third-party surety for claims amounting to ₹15 lakh or less, making the process more accessible and less procedural.
- **Real-Time Digital Tracking:** The portal allows claimants to initiate the entire process from home by uploading documents digitally. It features a real-time tracking system, enabling users to monitor the status of their application at every stage without needing to visit a physical branch repeatedly.

UNION MINISTER INAUGURATES MOUNTAIN FIRE CONTROL RADAR & BEL'S AI POLICY

- **Mountain Fire Control Radar Unveiled:** This is a compact, indigenous radar system designed specifically for high-altitude, mountainous terrain. It enables the automatic detection and tracking of hostile projectiles (like mortars and rockets) and provides precise fire control to neutralize threats in difficult geographical conditions.
- **Launch of BEL's AI Policy:** The Minister formally launched BEL's first Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy. This strategic framework is designed to integrate AI into defense manufacturing and R&D, focusing on "threat prediction, early warning, and response

mechanisms" to enhance the operational confidence of soldiers.

- **Establishment of CoE-AI:** Alongside the policy, a Centre of Excellence for Artificial Intelligence (CoE-AI) was remotely inaugurated in Pune. This center will serve as the hub for developing next-generation autonomous systems, cyber defense, and real-time decision-making tools to modernize India's battlefield dynamics.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DAM SAFETY 2026 HELD



- **Dam Safety as a National Security Imperative:** Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, while inaugurating the event, emphasized that dam safety must be treated as a national security issue. He highlighted that nearly 70% of India's 6,000+ large dams are over 25 years old, necessitating urgent modernisation for cross-border water governance.
- **Launch of "DAMCHAT" AI Platform:** A major highlight was the launch of DAMCHAT, an AI-powered platform developed by the International Centre of Excellence for Dams (ICED) at IIT Roorkee. It serves as a real-time decision-support tool, allowing dam owners and engineers to query technical and regulatory documents instantly.
- **Digital & Data-Driven Governance:** The Union Ministry of Jal Shakti unveiled the Jal Shakti Data Management Platform (developed by the National Water Informatics Centre). This platform integrates remote sensing, real-time instrumentation, and structural health monitoring.

IMPORTANT FACTS

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES OF INDIA

- *National Forest Policy – 1952*
- *Wildlife Protection Act – 1972*
- *Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act – 1974 & 1977*
- *Forest Conservation Act – 1980*
- *Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act – 1981*
- *Environment Protection Act – 1986*
- *National Water Policy – 2002*
- *Forest Rights Act – 2006*

NITI AAYOG'S VICE CHAIRMAN RELEASED 6TH EDITION OF TWQ

- **Robust Export Growth:** India's total exports (merchandise and services combined) recorded a strong growth of approximately 8.5%, significantly outpacing import growth. The report highlights that services continue to outperform goods globally, and India's trade is increasingly aligning with the "Global South rebalancing".
- **Electronics as a Major Export Pillar:** The thematic focus of this edition was the electronics sector, which has now emerged as the second-largest item in India's export basket.
- **E-commerce as a Future Catalyst:** The report projects that e-commerce exports could contribute 20–30% of India's total merchandise exports by 2030. With India currently ranked among the top six global e-commerce markets, the report identifies digital trade as a key driver for MSME participation in global value chains.

INDIA'S TEJASWIN SHANKAR STRIKES GOLD IN MEN'S HEPTATHLON

- **New National and Championship Record:** Shankar clinched the gold with a total of 5,993 points, shattering his own previous national indoor record of 5,650 points (set in 2021). This performance also established a new Asian Indoor Athletics Championship record.
- **India's Only Gold Medal:** His victory was the sole gold medal won by India during the 2026 championships. His dominant performance across the seven events—including a towering 2.23m high jump—helped India finish 6th in the overall medal tally.
- **Ending a 16-Year Drought:** This win ended India's long wait for a medal in the heptathlon at this event, marking the first time an Indian has stood on the podium for this multi-event discipline since P.J. Vinod won bronze in 2010.

MAGNUS CARLSEN WON FIDE CHESS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP 2026

- **Historic 21st World Title:** With this win, Carlsen secured his 21st official world title across all chess formats. His tally now includes 5 Classical, 6 Rapid, 9 Blitz, and his first-ever Freestyle Chess (Chess960) world title.
- **Dramatic Comeback against Caruana:** Carlsen defeated American Grandmaster Fabiano Caruana with a final match score of 2.5–1.5. The turning point was Game 3, where Carlsen pulled off a stunning win from a "dead lost" position after Caruana failed to

convert a winning advantage under time pressure.

- **First FIDE-Recognized Freestyle Event:** This tournament marked the first time the Freestyle format (where starting piece positions are randomized to eliminate opening theory) was officially recognized as a World Championship by FIDE. The victory also earned Carlsen the top prize of \$100,000 and automatic qualification for the 2027 edition.

SADHGURU JAGGI VASUDEV INAUGURATED BHAVYA BHARAT BHUSHAN AWARD



- **Launch of a New National Honour:** The award was instituted by the Isha Foundation as a national-level recognition to celebrate "extraordinary nation-builders." It aims to honour individuals whose dedication and commitment have significantly strengthened India's social, cultural, and technological fabric across seven key categories, including Science, Arts, Sports, and National Security.
- **Felicitations by Union Defence Minister:** While Sadhguru launched the initiative, Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh attended as the Chief Guest and presented the inaugural awards. He specifically highlighted that the

honour bridges the gap between culture and science, acknowledging stalwarts like former ISRO Chairman S. Kiran Kumar and scientist Nambi Narayanan.

- **Diverse First-Edition Recipients:** The inaugural ceremony saw high-profile achievers being honoured, including Olympic medalist Saina Nehwal (Sports), legendary violinist N. Rajam (Arts), and historian Vikram Sampath (Literature).

VETERAN ACTRESS PRAVINA DESHPANDE PASSED AWAY

- **Prolific Career Across Mediums:** Deshpande was a versatile performer known for her impactful supporting roles in major Bollywood films such as "Ready" (alongside Salman Khan), "Ek Villain", and "Parmanu: The Story of Pokhran". She was also a staple of Indian television, featuring in popular shows like Ghar Ek Mandir, Kumkum, Karam Apnaa Apnaa, and Kulfi Kumar Bajewala.
- **A Long Battle with Cancer:** Her family confirmed that she passed away following a long and resilient battle with multiple myeloma (a type of blood cancer), a diagnosis she had been fighting since 2019. Despite her illness, she continued to work, demonstrating immense dedication to her craft.
- **Final Screen Appearance:** Her last professional contribution was in the OTT series "Taskaree", starring Emraan Hashmi, which premiered shortly before her demise. The Cine & TV Artists' Association (CINTAA), of which she had been a member since 2008, led the industry in paying tribute to her professional grace and talent.

WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

18.02.2026 / WEDNESDAY

- **1946: The Royal Indian Navy mutiny began in Bombay**
- **2001 – NASA launches the NEAR Shoemaker spacecraft**