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# Current Affairs Today – February 9, 2026

9 February 2026

**SUBJECTS COVERED****IR****ECONOMY****SCIENCE & TECH****ENVIRONMENT****SOCIAL ISSUES****REPORTS & SCHEMES****CURATED & WRITTEN BY****Bharat Choudhary**

UPSC Educator &amp; Content Creator •

[linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)

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## WHY IN NEWS

India-Malaysia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership was operationalised with 11 agreements; India faced US pressure over Russian oil purchases as India-Russia trade reached USD 68.72 billion; RBI doubled MSME collateral-free loan limits and launched Mission SAKSHAM; and the Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses advanced with Rs 11,440 crore outlay targeting 350 lakh tonnes by 2030-31.

## INDIA-MALAYSIA COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

India and Malaysia operationalised a **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership** with **11 agreements** signed during the PM's visit to Kuala Lumpur. Key outcomes: **Malaysia-India Digital Council (MIDC)** formally established; **INR-MYR local currency settlement** agreed; Malaysia acceded to the **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)**; **Thiruvalluvar Chair** operationalised at Universiti Malaya.

Key facts:

Bilateral trade: **USD 19.86 billion** (2024-25); Malaysia = India's **3rd largest ASEAN trading partner**

Indian diaspora in Malaysia: **~2.7 million PIOs**

Joint exercises: **Harimau Shakti** (Army), **Samudra Lakshmana** (Navy), **Udara Shakti** (Air Force)

Malaysia's Malayan tiger: critically endangered; **<200 individuals**

Historical ties: **Chola period** (9th–13th century CE)

## UPSC RELEVANCE

MIDC, INR-MYR settlement, IBCA, Thiruvalluvar Chair (Universiti Malaya), three joint exercises, bilateral trade USD 19.86 billion, Malaysian diaspora 2.7M PIOs.

## MAINS GS-2:

Act East Policy; ASEAN; India-Malaysia bilateral relations.

## INDIA-RUSSIA-US: BALANCING ACT UNDER PRESSURE

The US claimed India agreed to stop buying Russian oil as part of India-US trade negotiations — India did not confirm this publicly. India-Russia trade: **USD 68.72 billion** (2024-25), with imports of **USD 63.84 billion** (mostly crude oil) and exports of **USD 4.88 billion**.

Key facts:

~**60%** of India's military inventory is of Russian origin (Su-30 MKI, T-90 Bhisma, S-400)

**BrahMos** cruise missile (~2.8 Mach): India-Russia JV

**Kudankulam NPP** (Tamil Nadu): ROSATOM-built; Units 1-2 operational; 6 units planned (6,000 MW)

**CAATSA (2017)**: US law mandating sanctions for significant Russian defence purchases; India received waivers for S-400

Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation: **1971**; Strategic Partnership: **2000**; Special and Privileged: **2010**

### UPSC RELEVANCE

India-Russia trade (USD 68.72B), CAATSA 2017, Su-30 MKI, T-90, S-400, BrahMos (2.8 Mach), Kudankulam (ROSATOM, Tamil Nadu, 6,000 MW), Treaty 1971.

### MAINS GS-2:

Strategic autonomy; multi-alignment; India-Russia-US triangle.

## RBI CREDIT AND CONSUMER PROTECTION REFORMS

RBI announced several reforms: collateral-free loan limit for **MSMEs doubled** from Rs 10 lakh to **Rs 20 lakh**; banks permitted to extend finance to listed **REITs** (previously only InvITs); consumer fraud compensation up to **Rs 25,000** for small-value fraudulent digital transactions; harmonised rules for loan recovery agents; new guidelines against mis-selling of insurance/MFs by banks.

Key facts:

**Mission SAKSHAM** (Sahakari Bank Kshamta Nirman): Launched for Urban Cooperative Banks; ~**1.40 lakh** participants; training in regional languages; sector-wide capacity building and certification

**REIT vs. InvIT**: REITs = commercial real estate (≥80% completed properties); InvITs = infrastructure (highways, power, renewables, up to 70% debt)

### UPSC RELEVANCE

MSME collateral-free limit (Rs 20 lakh), Mission SAKSHAM (full form, 1.40 lakh participants), REIT/InvIT distinction, Rs 25,000 digital fraud compensation.

### MAINS GS-3:

Banking regulation; financial inclusion; MSME credit; consumer protection.

## MISSION FOR AATMANIRBHARTA IN PULSES

**Rs 11,440 crore** mission (2025-26 to 2030-31) targets **350 lakh tonnes** of Tur, Urad, Masoor by 2030-31 – up from 252.38 lakh tonnes (2024-25). **1,000 pulse mills** to be established (Rs 25 lakh subsidy each). **SATHI Portal** for seed authentication. **100% assured MSP procurement** for 4 years via **NAFED and NCCF** under PM-AASHA.

Key facts:

Imports (2023-24): **47.38 lakh tonnes** – India is largest producer yet imports due to demand-supply gap

India's global position: **Largest producer AND consumer** (~25% of global production)

Pulses' share in foodgrain: fell from **16% (1950) to ~8% (2022-23)**

Protein contribution: **20–25%** of Indian dietary protein; ICMR recommended: **85 g/day**

Area target: +35 lakh ha → **310 lakh hectares** total

Farmer incentive: **Rs 10,000/hectare** for model farming

### UPSC RELEVANCE

Rs 11,440 crore, target crops (Tur/Urad/Masoor), 350 lakh tonnes by 2030-31, SATHI Portal, NAFED, NCCF, PM-AASHA, 1,000 mills, Rs 25 lakh/mill, 16% → 8% foodgrain share, 85g/day ICMR, Leguminosae family.

### MAINS GS-3:

Food security; agricultural self-sufficiency; pulse price inflation.

## INDIA'S SPACE/ASTRONOMY BUDGET

Union Budget 2026-27 allocated **Rs 13,416.20 crore** to the Department of Space. Investments include the **National Large Optical-Infrared Telescope (NLOT)** (under development) and the **National Large Solar Telescope (NLST)** — planned near **Pangong Lake, Ladakh**.

### UPSC RELEVANCE

Space budget Rs 13,416.20 crore, NLOT, NLST (Pangong Lake, Ladakh).

### MAINS GS-3:

Space science infrastructure; India's space policy.

## MENTAL HEALTH — SECOND NIMHANS ANNOUNCED

Union Budget 2026-27 announced a **second NIMHANS** (National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences) to be set up in **north India**. Existing institutions at **Ranchi** (Central Institute of Psychiatry) and **Tezpur** (Lokopriya Gopinath Bordoloi Regional Institute of Mental Health) to be upgraded.

Key facts:

First NIMHANS: **Bengaluru, Karnataka** (autonomous institution under MoHFW)

Economic Survey 2025-26 flagged rising **digital addiction and screen-related mental health** problems among children

### UPSC RELEVANCE

NIMHANS (Bengaluru), second NIMHANS (north India), Central Institute of Psychiatry (Ranchi), LGBRIMH Tezpur.

### MAINS GS-2:

Public health; mental health policy; digital addiction.

## INDIA-CANADA SECURITY TALKS

NSA **Ajit Doval** held security talks in Ottawa, Canada, signalling diplomatic normalisation after relations strained since the **June 2023 Nijjar killing allegation** by PM Trudeau. Canada had suspended **CEPA** (India-Canada Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement) negotiations in response.

### UPSC RELEVANCE

Ajit Doval (NSA), CEPA, Hardeep Singh Nijjar, Khalistan issue.

### MAINS GS-2:

India-Canada relations; diaspora-linked diplomatic tensions.

## TREESCAPES 2026 — SOUTH ASIA AGROFORESTRY CONGRESS

The first **South Asian Agroforestry and Trees Outside Forests (AF-TOF) Congress** — named **Treescaples 2026** — was held, providing the first regional platform for advancing agroforestry across South Asia. Key challenges: access to finance, policy gaps, low farmer awareness.

### UPSC RELEVANCE

Treescaples 2026, AF-TOF (Agroforestry and Trees Outside Forests).

### MAINS GS-3:

Agroforestry; climate-resilient farming; carbon sequestration; rural income diversification.

## THWAITES “DOOMSDAY GLACIER” — ACCELERATING MELT

The **Thwaites Glacier** in **West Antarctica** (part of the West Antarctic Ice Sheet; drains into the **Amundsen Sea**) continues to melt at accelerating rates. It is classified as one of **16 global climate tipping elements** and could cause catastrophic sea-level rise if fully destabilised.

### UPSC RELEVANCE

Thwaites Glacier location (West Antarctic Ice Sheet, Amundsen Sea), nickname “Doomsday Glacier”, 16 tipping elements.

### MAINS GS-3:

Climate change; sea-level rise; polar science; tipping points.

## AYUSH SECTOR

Union Budget 2026-27 expanded resource allocation for the **AYUSH** sector (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Homeopathy). Growing global demand for traditional medicine systems.

### UPSC RELEVANCE

AYUSH full form, components, Ministry of AYUSH (established November 2014).

### MAINS GS-2:

Health policy; India's soft power (AYUSH diplomacy).

**★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA**
**INDIA-MALAYSIA:**

Bilateral trade: **USD 19.86 billion** (2024-25); Malaysia = 3rd largest ASEAN partner

Indian diaspora: **~2.7 million PIOs**

11 agreements; MIDC established; INR-MYR settlement; Malaysia joined IBCA

Joint exercises: **Harimau Shakti (A)**, **Samudra Lakshmana (N)**, **Udara Shakti (AF)**

Thiruvalluvar Chair at **Universiti Malaya**; Malayan tiger: <200 individuals

**INDIA-RUSSIA TRADE:**

Total: **USD 68.72 billion** (2024-25); Imports: **USD 63.84 billion**; Exports: **USD 4.88 billion**

Military: **~60%** Russian origin; Su-30 MKI, T-90 Bhishma, S-400 (5 squadrons)

BrahMos: **~2.8 Mach**; Kudankulam: ROSATOM, **6,000 MW** planned

CAATSA: **2017**; Treaty of Friendship: **1971**; Special Partnership: **2010**

**RBI REFORMS:**

MSME collateral-free limit: **Rs 20 lakh** (doubled from Rs 10 lakh)

Digital fraud compensation: **Rs 25,000**

Mission SAKSHAM: Urban Cooperative Banks; **~1.40 lakh** participants

REITs: commercial real estate ( $\geq 80\%$  completed); InvITs: infrastructure ( $\leq 70\%$  debt)

**MISSION AATMANIRBHARTA IN PULSES:**

Outlay: **Rs 11,440 crore**; Crops: Tur, Urad, Masoor

Target: **350 lakh tonnes** by 2030-31; current: 252.38 MT; imports: 47.38 MT (2023-24)

SATHI Portal; NAFED + NCCF; 1,000 mills @ **Rs 25 lakh** each; Rs 10,000/ha

Foodgrain share: **16% (1950)** → **~8% (2022-23)**; ICMR: **85 g/day**

**SPACE BUDGET 2026-27:**

Dept. of Space: **Rs 13,416.20 crore**

NLOT (optical-infrared telescope, under development)

NLST: Near **Pangong Lake, Ladakh**

**MENTAL HEALTH:**

NIMHANS (first): **Bengaluru**

Second NIMHANS: **North India** (announced Budget 2026-27)

Central Institute of Psychiatry: **Ranchi**; LGBRIMH: **Tezpur**

**THWAITES GLACIER:**

Location: **West Antarctic Ice Sheet**; drains into **Amundsen Sea**

Nickname: **“Doomsday Glacier”**

One of **16** global climate tipping elements

Sources: Drishti IAS, Next IAS

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CURATED & WRITTEN BY

# Bharat Choudhary

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

 [linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)

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