



UPSC &amp; STATE PCS CURRENT AFFAIRS · UJIYARI.COM

**DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS**

# Current Affairs Today — February 14, 2026

14 February 2026

**SUBJECTS COVERED**

POLITY

ECONOMY

ENVIRONMENT

SCIENCE &amp; TECH

IR

SECURITY &amp; DEFENCE

REPORTS &amp; SCHEMES

SOCIAL ISSUES

GEOGRAPHY

**CURATED & WRITTEN BY****Bharat Choudhary**

UPSC Educator &amp; Content Creator •

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

Free UPSC &amp; State PCS Resources

[ujiyari.com](http://ujiyari.com)

# Current Affairs Today — February 14, 2026

14 February 2026

## WHY IN NEWS

The Union Cabinet approved India's first underwater Brahmaputra rail-road tunnel (Rs 18,662 crore); the DAC cleared High-Altitude Pseudo-Satellites (HAPS) for the IAF; Opposition filed a notice to remove Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla; and new radiocarbon dating suggests the Indus Valley Civilisation began ~8,000 years ago.

## POLITY & GOVERNANCE

### Notice for Removal of Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla

Over **100 Opposition MPs** submitted a notice seeking the removal of Lok Sabha Speaker **Om Birla**, citing "partisan conduct" and denial of speaking rights to the Leader of Opposition.

#### Constitutional and procedural framework:

**Article 94©:** A Speaker or Deputy Speaker "shall vacate his office if he is removed by a resolution of the House of the People passed by a majority of all the then members of the House" — this requires an **effective majority** (majority of total membership, not just present and voting)

**14-day advance notice** is mandatory before such a resolution can be moved

**Admissibility threshold:** At least **50 members** must sign the notice for it to be admitted

**Speaker's rights during removal proceedings:** The Speaker may participate in the debate and exercise a casting vote in case of a tie — but cannot exercise their regular vote

**Rule 186 of Lok Sabha Rules** governs the procedure for removal motions

**Historical context:** No Lok Sabha Speaker has ever been successfully removed. Failed attempts include 1954 (G.V. Mavalankar), 1966 (Hukam Singh), and 1987 (Balram Jakhar). The high threshold (effective majority) makes removal procedurally very difficult.

## INFRASTRUCTURE & CONNECTIVITY

### Brahmaputra Rail-Road Twin Tunnel — Cabinet Approval

The Union Cabinet approved India's **first underwater rail-cum-road tunnel** beneath the Brahmaputra river in Assam.

### Key specifications:

Parameter	Details
Route	Gohpur (NH-15) to Numaligarh (NH-715), Assam
Total corridor length	33.7 km
Main tunnel	15.79 km twin-tube (one rail tube + one 4-lane highway tube)
Additional	1.26 km road cut-and-cover + 4 km rail cut-and-cover
Cost	Rs 18,662 crore (EPC mode)
Travel time	Reduces 240 km/6-hour journey via Kaliabhomora Bridge to a direct connection

### Significance:

Will be only the **second such underwater structure globally** on completion

Reduces North Bank-South Bank travel time in Assam dramatically

**Employment:** ~80 lakh person-days during construction

Connects: Numaligarh, Tezpur, Gohpur, Dibrugarh, Itanagar

Provides access to 4 railway stations, 2 airports, and 2 inland waterway terminals

Strategic for **Kaziranga National Park** access and northeast military logistics

## Northeast's First Emergency Landing Facility — Assam

PM Modi inaugurated the **Northeast's first Emergency Landing Facility (ELF)** at **Moran**, Dibrugarh district, Assam, on the Moran Bypass stretch of **NH-15**. ELFs are specially strengthened sections of national highways designed for emergency use and take-off/landing by military aircraft. They are critical for defence logistics in border areas where conventional airfields may not be accessible.

## DEFENCE & SECURITY

### HAPS for IAF — DAC Approval

The **Defence Acquisition Council (DAC)** granted **Acceptance of Necessity (AoN)** for **Air-Ship Based High-Altitude Pseudo-Satellite (AS-HAPS)** systems for the **Indian Air Force** — part of a broader Rs 3.60 lakh crore DAC package.

### HAPS — Key Features:

Solar-powered unmanned aerial platforms operating in the **stratosphere at 18–20 km altitude**

Can stay airborne for **months** (replacing the gap between satellites and conventional UAVs)

Equipped with **optical and infrared sensors** for persistent **ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance)**

Approximate HAPS component: **~Rs 15,000 crore**

**Strategic context:** Addresses surveillance and communication gaps identified during the **2017 Doklam standoff** with China. HAPS can provide continuous wide-area surveillance of the Himalayan border region without satellite costs.

**Indigenous development:** NAL (National Aerospace Laboratories) tested a prototype in **February 2024** at Challakere Aeronautical Test Range, Karnataka. Target: 30-metre wingspan HAPS at 23 km altitude by 2027, with participation from HAL and NewSpace Research and Technologies.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### New Astronomical Telescopes for Ladakh — Budget 2026-27

The Union Budget 2026-27 allocated funds for **three major astronomical facilities** at Ladakh's **Hanle Dark Sky Reserve** — the world's largest high-altitude dark sky reserve:

Telescope	Specifications	Location	Purpose
<b>NLST</b> (National Large Solar Telescope)	2-metre aperture	Merak region, Pangong Tso	Solar dynamics, magnetism, space weather
<b>NLOT</b> (National Large Optical-Near Infrared Telescope)	13.7-metre segmented mirror (90 hexagonal segments)	Hanle	Exoplanet research, stellar evolution, supernovae
<b>HCT Upgrade</b> (Himalayan Chandra Telescope)	2.01m → 3.7m segmented primary	Hanle	Multi-purpose optical astronomy

Timeline: NLST in 5–6 years; NLOT in ~1 decade. HCT is currently remotely operated from CREST facility, **Hosakote, Karnataka** (Indian Institute of Astrophysics).

### Indus Valley Civilisation May Date Back 8,000 Years

New **radiocarbon dating** of pottery fragments and animal remains from the **Bharrana archaeological site** in northern India suggests organised human settlement stretching back approximately **8,000 years** — well before the traditionally accepted Harappan chronology (2600–1900 BC). This would place the formative phase of Indus Valley Civilisation well before Egypt's earliest pharaohs and suggests gradual cultural evolution rather than a sudden urban emergence.

## ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

### Sangtam Tribe — Tribal Resolution for Pangolin Protection (Nagaland)

The **United Sangtam Likhum Pumji** (apex body of the Sangtam tribe, **Kiphire and Tuensang** districts, Nagaland) passed a formal tribal resolution to protect pangolins within their jurisdiction — a significant community-led conservation initiative.

#### Pangolin context:

Pangolins are described as the “**world’s most trafficked wild mammals**” (scales for traditional medicine, meat for bushmeat trade)

Two species in Northeast India: **Indian Pangolin** (*Manis crassicaudata*) and **Chinese Pangolin** (*Manis pentadactyla*)

The India-Myanmar border (~1,643 km) is a major corridor for pangolin smuggling to international markets

Initiative supported by: **Wildlife Trust of India** under the Countering Pangolin Trafficking Project (backed by Wildlife Conservation Network’s Pangolin Crisis Fund)

## ECONOMY & FINANCE

### NITI Aayog — Viksit Bharat + Net Zero Reports

NITI Aayog released **11 reports from 10 Inter-Ministerial Working Groups** outlining India’s roadmap for simultaneous achievement of **Viksit Bharat** (USD 30 trillion economy by 2047) and **Net Zero by 2070**. Key projections:

GDP: USD 4.18 trillion (2025) → **USD 30 trillion (2047)**

Electricity share in final energy demand: 21% (2025) → **60% (2070)**

Renewable capacity: ~164 GW (2025) → **6,000+ GW (2070)**

Nuclear power: 8 GW → **300+ GW by 2070**

Critical mineral demand increase: **51%** in Net Zero scenario

Total investment needed by 2070: **USD 22.7 trillion**; financing gap: **USD 6.5 trillion**

Green jobs in energy sector: **7 million by 2050**

Urban population: 37% (2023) → 51% (2047) → 65% (2070)

### DISCOM Reforms — AT&C Losses at Historic Low

India’s power distribution companies (**DISCOMs**) reported significant turnaround metrics:

**AT&C (Aggregate Technical and Commercial) losses** declined from **22.62% to 15.04%**

**DISCOM Profit After Tax: Rs 2,701 crore** (FY 2024-25) — first overall profitability in years

Legacy dues reduced from **Rs 1,39,947 crore** (June 2022) → **Rs 4,927 crore** (January 2026)

Key reform schemes: **UDAY (2015)** — states took over 75% of DISCOM liabilities; **RDSS (Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme)** — Rs 3,03,758 crore (FY 2021-22 to 2025-26); Late Payment Surcharge Rules; IPDS (Integrated Power Development Scheme).

## ACC-PLI Scheme — Battery Manufacturing

The **Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme**, launched in **October 2021** by the **Ministry of Heavy Industries**, targets **50 GWh** of domestic battery manufacturing capacity by 2026:

**Financial outlay:** Rs 18,100 crore

**Incentive:** Up to Rs 2,000 per kWh

Minimum investment threshold: Rs 1,100 crore per applicant

Domestic value-addition requirement: 25% (Year 2) → 60% (Year 5)

**Allotted so far:** 30 GWh capacity

Focus: Lithium-ion batteries for EVs and grid energy storage

## Reliance Industries — Venezuela Crude Oil Licence

**Reliance Industries Limited (RIL)** received a US government licence to directly import **Venezuelan crude oil** without violating **US sanctions** against Venezuela. The imports will be processed at **Jamnagar refinery** — the world's most complex refinery. Venezuela's heavy crude is valuable for complex refineries capable of processing high-sulphur, high-viscosity grades.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

### India-Seychelles — USD 175 Million Special Economic Package

During Seychelles President **Patrick Herminie's** visit to India, a **USD 175 million Special Economic Package** was announced. Coverage: social housing, e-mobility, health, vocational training, defence, maritime security. **7 MoUs** were signed covering digital transformation, meteorology, governance, and health.

Framework: **Vision MAHASAGAR** — India's extended Indian Ocean outreach initiative.

## HEALTH

### WHO Prequalifies nOPV2 – Novel Oral Polio Vaccine

WHO prequalified **nOPV2 (novel Oral Polio Vaccine Type 2)** – genetically re-engineered to be more stable than earlier OPV2, targeting **circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2)**. The old OPV carried a rare risk of mutating and triggering outbreaks; nOPV2 reduces reversion risk while maintaining transmission-blocking capability. WHO prequalification enables UNICEF and UN agencies to procure it globally. Global leaders pledged **USD 1.9 billion** to accelerate polio eradication, targeting ~370 million children annually.

## AGRICULTURE

### Rajasthan – India's Largest Wool-Producing State

Rajasthan produced **16,013.50 thousand kg** of wool in FY24, contributing **47.53%** of India's national output (total: ~33.69 million kg). Key indigenous breeds: **Marwari** and **Chokla**. India ranks **9th globally** in wool production and **2nd in sheep population** globally.

## SPORTS

### IMACC 2026 – Eastern Himalayas

The **International Military Adventure Challenge Cup (IMACC) 2026** was held in the **Eastern Himalayas**, with participation from **7 countries**: Bhutan, Brazil, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia. IMACC promotes defence cooperation through adventure activities.

**★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA**
**BRAHMAPUTRA RAIL-ROAD TUNNEL:**

Route: Gohpur (NH-15) → Numaligarh (NH-715), Assam  
 Tunnel length: **15.79 km twin-tube** | Total corridor: 33.7 km  
 Cost: **Rs 18,662 crore** (EPC mode)  
 Employment: **~80 lakh person-days**  
 Global distinction: “Only the second such structure globally” on completion

**SPEAKER REMOVAL — ARTICLE 94©:**

Requires: **Effective majority** (majority of total membership)  
 Pre-condition: **14-day advance notice**  
 Threshold for admission: **50 members**  
 No Lok Sabha Speaker has ever been successfully removed  
 Previous failed attempts: 1954 (Mavalankar), 1966 (Hukam Singh), 1987 (Jakhar)

**HAPS FOR IAF:**

Altitude: **18–20 km** (stratosphere)  
 Duration: Can stay airborne for **months** (solar-powered)  
 Function: Persistent ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance)  
 Context: Addresses gaps from **2017 Doklam standoff**  
 Indigenous: NAL prototype tested at Challakere (Feb 2024)

**LADAKH TELESCOPES:**

NLST: **2-metre solar telescope**, Merak (Pangong Tso), **5-6 year** timeline  
 NLOT: **13.7-metre optical-NIR telescope**, Hanle, **~1 decade**  
 HCT upgrade: **2.01m → 3.7m**, Hanle; remote-operated from CREST, Hosakote  
 Location: **Hanle Dark Sky Reserve**, Ladakh (world’s largest high-altitude DSR)

**NITI AAYOG NET ZERO + VIKSIT BHARAT:**

GDP target: USD 4.18T (2025) → **USD 30 trillion (2047)**  
 Renewable target: 164 GW → **6,000+ GW (2070)**  
 Nuclear: 8 GW → **300+ GW (2070)**  
 Investment needed: **USD 22.7 trillion** by 2070; financing gap: **USD 6.5 trillion**

**PANGOLIN PROTECTION:**

Species in NE India: Indian Pangolin (*Manis crassicaudata*) + Chinese Pangolin (*Manis pentadactyla*)  
 Status: World’s most trafficked wild mammals  
 Sangtam tribe resolution: Kiphire and Tuensang districts, Nagaland  
 India-Myanmar border: **~1,643 km** (major trafficking route)

**OTHER RELEVANT FACTS:**

Bhirrana site (IVC): Radiocarbon dating suggests settlement **~8,000 years ago**; challenges traditional 2600 BC Harappan start  
 AT&C losses: **22.62% → 15.04%**; RDSS scheme: Rs **3,03,758 crore** (FY22–26)

ACC-PLI: Rs **18,100 crore**; 50 GWh target; min investment Rs 1,100 crore; incentive Rs 2,000/kWh

WHO nOPV2: Targets **cVDPV2** (circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2); USD 1.9 billion pledged globally

Rajasthan wool: **47.53%** national output; breeds: **Marwari + Chokla**; India 9th global, 2nd in sheep population

ELF (Emergency Landing Facility): Strengthened highway stretch for military aircraft; first in NE at **Moran, Dibrugarh**

Sources: Drishti IAS, GKToday, IndiaBix

---

CURATED & WRITTEN BY

# Bharat Choudhary

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

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

---

Published on [ujjari.com](http://ujjari.com) · Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs