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Current Affairs Today – February 22, 2026

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INDIA AI IMPACT SUMMIT 2026 — 88 NATIONS ENDORSE NEW DELHI AI DECLARATION

88 countries — including the USA, UK, China, Brazil, Australia, Canada, Austria, and Switzerland — endorsed the **New Delhi Declaration on AI Impact** at the **India AI Impact Summit 2026** held in New Delhi on February 22, 2026.

The Declaration is built on **seven pillars (“Chakras”)**:

Democratising AI resources — widening access to foundational AI tools

Promoting economic growth and social good — ensuring AI development creates broad-based benefit

Ensuring secure and trusted AI — safety standards and responsible governance

Advancing AI for science — scientific research applications

Expanding access for social empowerment — bridging AI divides

Strengthening human capital development — AI workforce training

Building resilient, efficient and innovative AI systems — infrastructure and sustainability

A **Charter for the Democratic Diffusion of AI** was also introduced, establishing a framework to widen access to foundational AI resources and promote local innovation. The Declaration takes a **voluntary and non-binding approach**, emphasising multistakeholder engagement and national sovereignty. It is philosophically grounded in India’s principles of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” (“World is One Family”) and “Sarvajana Hitaya, Sarvajana Sukhaya.”

UPSC angle: India AI Mission (Rs 10,372 crore, approved 2024), Global AI governance landscape (Bletchley Park AI Safety Summit 2023, Seoul AI Summit 2024, now New Delhi 2026), IndiaAI Mission, GPAI (Global Partnership on AI), MeitY as nodal ministry, AI Act (EU 2024 — world’s first binding AI law), responsible AI principles.

AIMA MANAGING INDIA AWARDS 2026 — KARAN ADANI, BUSINESS LEADER OF THE YEAR

Karan Adani, Managing Director of **Adani Ports & SEZ Ltd** and **Adani Cement Ltd**, was named **Business Leader of the Year** at the **2026 Managing India Awards** organised by the **All India Management Association (AIMA)** on February 22, 2026, during its **20th National Management Day** and **Platinum Jubilee (70th Foundation Day)** celebrations at Taj Palace Hotel, New Delhi.

Other notable winners:

Entrepreneur of the Year: Aravind Sanka, Pavan Guntupalli & SR Rishikesh (Rapido — India's bike taxi and auto aggregator)

Outstanding PSU of the Year: **Cochin Shipyard Limited**

Business Leader of the Decade: Sunil Bharti Mittal (Bharti Enterprises / Airtel)

MNC in India of the Year: Micron Technology Operations India LLP

Indian MNC of the Year: Motherson Group

Lifetime Contribution: Vineet Jain, Harsh Mariwala

Young Business Leader: Ananya Birla

UPSC angle: AIMA (management education body), Adani Ports & SEZ (largest port operator in India, handles ~30% of India's port cargo), Cochin Shipyard (PSU under Ministry of Ports — India's largest shipbuilding and ship repair yard), Micron India (Sanand, Gujarat semiconductor ATMP unit under India Semiconductor Mission).

ELLYSE PERRY — FIRST AUSTRALIAN CRICKETER IN 350 INTERNATIONAL MATCHES

Ellyse Perry became the **first Australian cricketer** to feature in **350 international matches** across all formats, achieving the milestone during the **third T20I against India in Adelaide**. She debuted for Australia in July 2007, aged 16, against New Zealand.

Career highlights: 14 Tests (930 runs @ avg 58; 39 wickets); 165 ODIs (4,505 runs @ avg 48; 166 wickets); 171 T20Is (2,200 runs; 126 wickets). She ranks third globally in total international appearances, behind only **Harmanpreet Kaur** (India) and **Suzie Bates** (New Zealand).

First Australian woman to appear in **World Cups in two different sports** — cricket and football (FIFA Women's World Cup 2011). Has won **8 ICC world titles** with Australia.

UPSC angle: Women in sports milestones, India-Australia cricket relations (Border-Gavaskar Trophy — men's counterpart), ICC tournaments, Australia Women's cricket team dominance, BCCI vs. Cricket Australia governance models, sports administration in India (BCCI).

HIMACHAL PRADESH EXPANDS INDIRA GANDHI SUKH SHIKSHA YOJANA

Himachal Pradesh expanded the **Indira Gandhi Sukh Shiksha Yojana** to support **daughters of widows** pursuing higher education. The expanded scheme provides **Rs 3,000 per month** financial assistance for professional courses at government institutions outside the state. Age eligibility: 18–27 years.

The scheme is part of HP's broader social welfare architecture targeting economically vulnerable women, particularly from households where the male breadwinner has died.

UPSC angle: State social welfare schemes for women, Directive Principles of State Policy (Articles 39, 41, 45), constitutional mandate for free and compulsory education, HP's social sector spending, centrally sponsored vs. state schemes, NEP 2020 and higher education access.

POLAND WITHDRAWS FROM THE OTTAWA CONVENTION

Poland announced its withdrawal from the **Ottawa Convention** (Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines), citing security concerns along its **eastern borders** with Russia and Belarus. Poland seeks to deploy **anti-personnel landmines** in border zones — a move that reflects broader European re-evaluation of Cold War disarmament commitments in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war.

The **Ottawa Convention** entered into force on **March 1, 1999**, and has 164 state parties. It prohibits the use, production, stockpiling, and transfer of anti-personnel mines, requiring stockpile destruction within 4 years and mine clearance within 10 years. Major non-signatories include USA, Russia, China, India, and Pakistan.

UPSC angle: Ottawa Convention (Mine Ban Treaty, 1999), anti-personnel vs. anti-tank mines distinction, humanitarian disarmament treaties (also CWC, BWC, TPNW), Poland's NATO membership, Russia-Ukraine war's effect on European security architecture, India's non-signatory status and reasons.

BHAVANI RIVER — POLLUTION CONCERNS

The **Bhavani River**, a major **tributary of the Cauvery River**, came into news in early 2026 due to **pollution concerns** in stretches flowing through industrial areas. The Bhavani originates in the **Nilgiri Hills**, flows through **Silent Valley National Park** (Kerala) and into Tamil Nadu, merging with the Cauvery at **Bhavani town** in Erode district — making it Tamil Nadu's second-largest river.

UPSC angle: Cauvery river system (headwaters in Coorg/Brahmagiri Hills, flows through Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, drains into Bay of Bengal), Silent Valley National Park (Kerala — preserved as a result of Silent Valley movement, one of India's first major environmental campaigns, 1970s), Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve (UNESCO), river pollution governance (CPCB, SPCBs), NGT jurisdiction.

EXERCISE VAJRA PRAHAR — 16TH EDITION AT BAKLOH

The **16th edition of Exercise Vajra Prahar**, India's joint **Special Forces exercise with the USA**, was conducted at the **Special Forces Training School, Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh**. The exercise enhances interoperability between Indian Army Special Forces and US Army Special Forces (Green Berets), with focus on counter-terrorism and unconventional warfare. "Vajra Prahar" means "Thunderous Strike."

UPSC angle: India-USA defence exercises, LEMOA/COMCASA/BECA agreements enabling interoperability, Special Forces Training School Bakloh (Himachal Pradesh), US Army Special Forces (Green Berets), India's Special Forces (PARA SF, MARCOS, Garud Commando Force).

ARISAEMA SIAHAENSE — NEW COBRA LILY DISCOVERED IN MIZORAM

A new species of **Cobra Lily** named *Arisaema siahaense* was discovered in **Siaha District, Mizoram** — the southernmost district bordering Myanmar. The evergreen herb grows up to 1.08 metres with a distinct long spadix appendix. It belongs to the genus *Arisaema*, family **Araceae**.

UPSC angle: Northeast India's biodiversity (Eastern Himalayas biodiversity hotspot), BSI (Botanical Survey of India) — discovers/catalogues plant species, genus *Arisaema* (jack-in-the-pulpit family), Mizoram geography and border with Myanmar, endemic species and WPA protection.

MUMBAI SELECTED TO HOST EARTHSHOT PRIZE 2026

Mumbai was selected as the host city for the **Earthshot Prize 2026**, to be held during Mumbai's inaugural **Climate Week**. The Earthshot Prize was founded by **Prince William** and annually recognises **5 global environmental innovators**, each receiving **£1 million** to scale solutions across five challenge categories: Clean Air, Revive Our Oceans, Protect and Restore Nature, Build a Waste-Free World, and Fix Our Climate.

UPSC angle: International environmental prizes, climate finance mechanisms, India as an emerging hub for green innovation, India's Climate Week, Prince William's environmental diplomacy.

INDO-FRENCH CENTRE FOR AI IN HEALTH (IF-CAIH) — AIIMS DELHI

The **Indo-French Centre for AI in Health (IF-CAIH)** was inaugurated at **AIIMS, New Delhi**, under India-France bilateral collaboration through the **RUSH 2026** meetings. The centre focuses on **healthcare AI applications, brain health, neuroscience**, and clinical decision-support systems. It promotes **sovereign AI** capabilities and responsible health data usage under India's **DPDP Act, 2023**.

UPSC angle: India-France strategic partnership, AI in healthcare (GS-3 S&T), AIIMS as a national health institution, data sovereignty (DPDP Act 2023), Digital Health Mission.

RELIANCE ANNOUNCES ₹10 TRILLION SOVEREIGN AI INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

Reliance Industries announced a **₹10 trillion investment** in sovereign AI compute infrastructure over 7 years. Plans include a major AI data centre at **Jamnagar** and multi-gigawatt AI data centres with edge-compute networks nationwide. Objectives: reduce dependence on foreign cloud providers, ensure data security, and enable affordable AI services — supported by Reliance’s green energy projects.

UPSC angle: Sovereign AI infrastructure, India Semiconductor Mission, data localisation, green energy for AI compute, Digital India, private sector role in strategic technology.

SANAE TAKAICHI — JAPAN’S FIRST WOMAN PRIME MINISTER

Sanae Takaichi was (re)appointed as **Japan’s Prime Minister** — making her **Japan’s first woman Prime Minister** — after her party secured a two-thirds majority in the lower house in the snap election of **February 8, 2026**. Her agenda includes constitutional reforms, national defence strengthening, creation of a National Intelligence Agency, fiscal reforms (including food consumption tax suspension), and continued **Free and Open Indo-Pacific** strategy.

UPSC angle: Japan’s political system (constitutional monarchy, Prime Minister as executive head, Diet = parliament), India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership, QUAD (India-USA-Japan-Australia), Free and Open Indo-Pacific, Japan’s defence policy shift.

📌 FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

India AI Impact Summit 2026 — New Delhi Declaration:

Endorsed by: **88 countries** (USA, UK, China, Brazil, Australia, Canada, Switzerland, Austria + 80 more)

7 pillars (“Chakras”): Democratise AI resources; Economic + social good; Secure and trusted AI; AI for science; Social empowerment; Human capital; Resilient AI systems

Charter: **Charter for Democratic Diffusion of AI** (widen access to foundational AI)

Approach: **Voluntary, non-binding**, multistakeholder

Philosophy: “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” and “Sarvajana Hitaya, Sarvajana Sukhaya”

Nodal ministry: **MeitY** (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology)

India AI Mission: Approved **2024** | Budget: **Rs 10,372 crore** | Duration: 5 years

Global AI Governance Timeline:

2023: Bletchley Park AI Safety Summit (UK) — first global AI safety summit; Frontier AI Safety Commitments

2024: Seoul AI Summit (South Korea) — AI safety institutes, frontier AI red-lining

2024: EU AI Act — world's first legally binding AI regulation; risk-based framework

2026: New Delhi AI Impact Summit — 88-nation New Delhi Declaration

AIMA and Key Award Winners:

AIMA: All India Management Association | Founded: **1957** | HQ: New Delhi

Business Leader of Year: **Karan Adani** (Adani Ports & SEZ + Adani Cement)

Outstanding PSU: **Cochin Shipyard Limited** (under Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways)

Business Leader of Decade: **Sunil Bharti Mittal** (Bharti Enterprises, Airtel)

MNC in India: **Micron Technology** (Sanand, Gujarat — semiconductor ATMP)

Ellyse Perry — Key Stats:

Country: Australia | Debut: July 2007 (age 16) vs New Zealand

350 international matches: First Australian ever; 3rd globally (behind Harmanpreet Kaur and Suzie Bates)

Tests: 14 (930 runs @ 58 avg, 39 wkts) | ODIs: 165 (4,505 runs @ 48 avg, 166 wkts) | T20Is: 171

Also played FIFA Women's World Cup 2011 (first Australian woman in World Cups in 2 sports)

8 ICC world titles with Australia

Ottawa Convention:

Full name: Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines

In force: **March 1, 1999** | Parties: 164

Non-signatories (major): USA, Russia, China, **India**, Pakistan, Israel

Requirement: Stockpile destruction within **4 years**; mine clearance within **10 years**

Poland withdrawal 2026: Eastern border security (Russia/Belarus) rationale

Cauvery-Bhavani River System:

Cauvery: Originates in Talakaveri, Coorg (Karnataka); flows through Tamil Nadu; Bay of Bengal

Bhavani: Tributary of Cauvery | Origin: **Nilgiri Hills** | Passes through: **Silent Valley NP** (Kerala) |

Merges with Cauvery at: **Bhavani town, Erode district, Tamil Nadu**

Silent Valley National Park: Kerala; protected due to Silent Valley Movement (1973-1985); Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve; habitat of Lion-tailed Macaque

Earthshot Prize 2026:

Host: **Mumbai** (during Mumbai's first Climate Week)

Founded by: **Prince William**

Winners per year: **5** | Prize: **£1 million each**

5 challenge categories: Clean Air, Revive Our Oceans, Protect and Restore Nature, Build a Waste-Free World, Fix Our Climate

IF-CAIH:

Full form: Indo-French Centre for AI in Health

Location: **AIIMS, New Delhi** | Framework: India-France RUSH 2026 meetings

Focus: Brain health, neuroscience, clinical AI, sovereign health data

Reliance Sovereign AI:

Investment: **₹10 trillion** over 7 years

Major data centre: **Jamnagar** | Energy: green energy projects

Objective: Reduce foreign cloud dependence; affordable AI services

Sanae Takaichi — Japan:

Role: Japan's **first woman Prime Minister**

Snap election: **February 8, 2026** (party won two-thirds majority)

Japan's parliament: **Diet** (Kokkai) — Lower House (House of Representatives) + Upper House (House of Councillors)

Japan-India: **Special Strategic and Global Partnership** (upgraded 2014)

Other Relevant Facts:

Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL): India's largest shipbuilding + repair yard; PSU under Ministry of Ports; recently commissioned India's first indigenously built aircraft carrier **INS Vikrant (2022)**; listed on NSE/BSE

Adani Ports & SEZ: Largest port operator in India; handles ~30% of India's sea-borne cargo; flagship: Mundra Port (Gujarat), largest container port in India

Special Forces Training School, Bakloh: In Himachal Pradesh; trains Indian Special Forces; established 1960s

Sources: GKToday, IndiaBix, PIB

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