

# Daily Current Affairs

## 18 February 2025

### PM Modi To Hold Bilateral Talks With Qatar's Amir

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold **talks with the Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani**, in New Delhi. The talks between the Prime Minister and the Amir will focus on various aspects of bilateral relations between India and Qatar. **Sheikh Tamim will be accorded a ceremonial** welcome at the forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhawan.



- During his visit, the Amir will hold discussions with President Droupadi Murmu, who will also host a banquet in his honour. Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani reached New Delhi yesterday on a **two-day official visit**. Prime Minister Modi received him at the airport.
- The Amir was accompanied by a **high-level delegation**, including ministers, senior officials, and a business delegation. Trade, investment, energy, and technology collaboration will be the top agenda during the visit of the Amir of Qatar.

- **India and Qatar share a strong economic partnership**, with bilateral trade expanding across various sectors. Qatari firms have made significant investments in the country's technology, infrastructure, and manufacturing industries, while Indian companies have established a strong presence in Qatar.



- As India consolidates its position as a **global manufacturing and technology hub**, several sectors are offering a promising scope for expansion of bilateral trade in the fields of logistics, ports, airports, railways and highways, semiconductors, food security, tech and innovation, electric vehicles, and renewable energy.

## PM-AASHA Scheme

- Government has approved the continuation of the integrated **Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan** – PM-AASHA Scheme during the 15th Finance Commission Cycle up to 2025-26. With this decision, the Government has also allowed the **procurement of Tur, Urad and Masur pulses** under the price support scheme, equivalent to 100 per cent of the production of the State for the procurement year 2024-25.



- It will help in farmers' contribution to the enhancement of domestic production of pulses and to reduce the dependence on imports. Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Shivraj Singh Chouhan has also approved the procurement of Tur pulse in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh under the Price Support Scheme for the Kharif 2024-25 Season for a total quantity consolidating to 13.22 LMT.

## ENSURING REMUNERATIVE PRICES TO FARMERS

Cabinet approves Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay SanraksHan Abhiyan

**PRICE SUPPORT SCHEME (PSS)**  
Physical procurement of pulses, oilseeds & Copra by Centre Nodal Agencies. Central Government to bear procurement expenditure and losses due to procurement.

**PRICE DEFICIENCY PAYMENT SCHEME (PDPS)**  
To cover all oilseeds for which MSP is notified. Farmers to get direct payment to the difference between MSP & selling price

**PILOT OF PRIVATE PROCUREMENT & STOCKIST SCHEME (PPPS)**  
Private sector participations in procurement operation to be piloted. For oilseeds, states have the option to roll out PPPS on pilot basis



- The Ministry informed that the procurement has already started in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Telangana and a total quantity of 0.15 LMT of Tur pulse has been procured in these States till the 15th of this month, **benefitting over 12 thousand farmers.**
- The Government has also made an announcement in Budget 2025 that procurement of Tur, Urad and Masur pulses up to 100 percent of the production of the **State will be continued for another four years**, through Central Nodal Agencies to achieve self-sufficiency in pulses in the country.

## NAKSHA Program

- Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will inaugurate **the National Geospatial Knowledge-based Land Survey of Urban Habitations (NAKSHA)** in 152 urban local bodies across 26 States and three Union Territories in Madhya Pradesh.



- The programme aims to **create and update land records in urban areas** to ensure accurate and reliable documentation of land ownership. The Ministry said, this initiative will empower citizens, improve ease of living, enhance urban planning, and reduce land-related disputes. The IT-based system for property record **administration will foster transparency**, efficiency and support sustainable development.

## Brazil To Host BRICS Summit In Rio De Janeiro

- Brazil will host the **BRICS leaders' summit in Rio de Janeiro on July 6 and 7, 2025**. Brazil took over the rotating presidency of BRICS on Jan. 1 and is leading working groups to **prepare the agenda and topics for the summit**, which will bring together heads of state and government.
- BRICS was established in **2009 by Brazil, Russia, India, and China, with South Africa joining in 2010 as a counterbalance to the Group of Seven leading industrialized nations**.



- **Last year, the bloc expanded by adding Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the United Arab Emirates**. Saudi Arabia has also been invited to join. Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Malaysia have formally applied for membership, and several other countries have expressed interest.



- In a related development, U.S. President Donald Trump has issued a stern warning to BRICS nations, **cautioning that they could face 100% tariffs** from the United States if they establish a new currency or payment system that challenges **the U.S. dollar's dominance in global trade**.

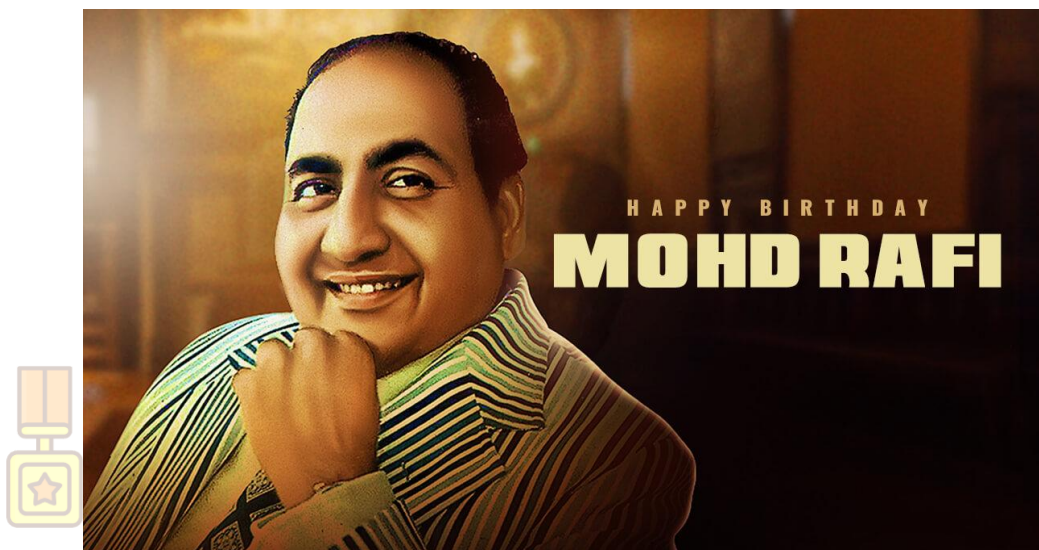


- This threat adds an **extra layer of complexity to the summit discussions**, highlighting the ongoing tensions between the U.S. and the BRICS bloc over financial sovereignty. Trump's comments reflect concerns within the U.S. administration about the growing financial influence of BRICS, especially if these nations push for alternatives to the dollar-based global system.
- The U.S. has long held a **dominant position in the world's financial markets**, with the dollar serving as the primary currency for international trade and reserves. However, as **BRICS nations explore alternative currency systems**, the U.S. is keen to protect its economic interests. This could lead to a tense standoff at the summit, where **BRICS countries will likely have to weigh** their aspirations for financial independence against the threat of retaliatory tariffs from one of the world's largest economies.



## Rafi Saab To Be Face Of New ₹100 Commemorative Coin

- To mark birth centenary of legendary playback singer late Mohammed Rafi, Government has decided to issue a commemorative coin with the denomination of ₹100.
- Though commemorative coins are considered legal tender, they are not released for general circulation. One can source them from the specified agencies. According to a notification, shape will be circular with outside diameter of 44 millimeters.



- The number of serrations will be 200. The metal composition will be a quaternary alloy with a composition of silver (50 per cent), copper (40 per cent), nickel (05 per cent) and zinc (05 per cent). The face of both the coins will bear the lion capital of Ashoka Pillar in the centre with the legend 'Satyamev Jayate' inscribed below, flanked on the left periphery with the word 'Bharat' in Devnagri script and on the right periphery with the word 'India' in English.
- Rafi (born December 24, 1924, Kotla Sultan Singh, near Amritsar, Punjab—died July 31, 1980, Bombay aka Mumbai) was a legendary Indian playback singer who recorded more than 25,000 film songs in a career spanning almost 40 years.

## World's Largest 10-Tonne Propellant Mixer

- In a major technological breakthrough, India has developed the world's largest 10-tonne propellant mixer for solid rocket motors. The mixer was designed by ISRO's Satish Dhawan Space Centre in collaboration with the Central Manufacturing Technology Institute in Bengaluru.

- **The mixer weighs 150 tonnes and stands 8.7 meters tall**, with a length of 5.4 meters and a breadth of 3.3 meters. It ensures precise and safe mixing of solid propellant ingredients, essential for rocket launch.
- ISRO called it a symbol of India's growing self-reliance in space technology under **the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat in Space' initiative**. The advanced system promises improved productivity, quality, and safety in solid motor production. Equipped with **remote-controlled operations, the mixer was** handed over to ISRO last week, marking another milestone in India's space journey.

## Tamil Poet Thiruvalluvar

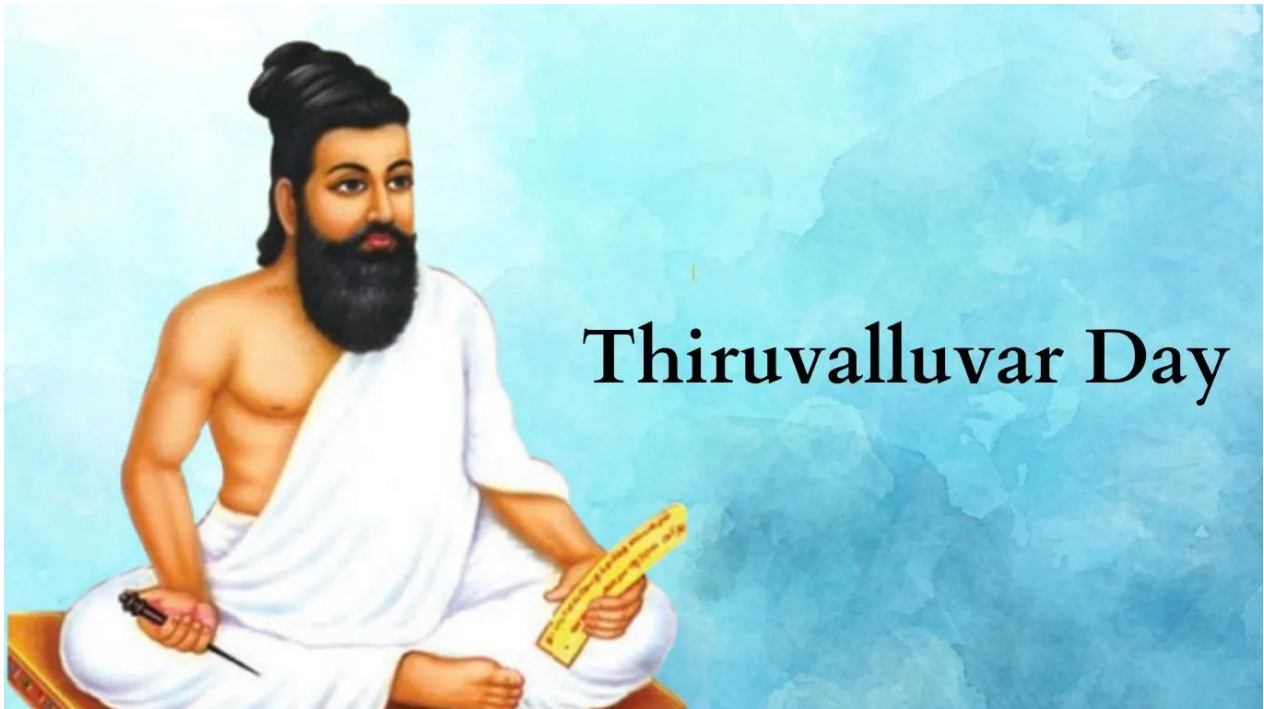
- A statue of **noted Tamil poet and philosopher Thiruvalluvar** has been unveiled in the Philippines. An official statement, it was unveiled at the **Gullas College of Medicine** in Cebu as part of the celebrations to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the Philippines.



- The statement said that **Indian Ambassador Harsh Kumar Jain** unveiled the statue and attended the Indo-Philippine Cultural and Educational Exchange Summit at the college.
- **Thiruvalluvar, also called Valluvar**, was a Tamil poet-saint. The period when he lived is debated, as is his religious identity. Some accounts place him in the 3rd or 4th century CE; others date him to around 500 years later, in the 8th or 9th century. He is thought to be linked to Jainism.



- However, **Hindus have also claimed that Thiruvalluvar belonged to Hinduism.** Many communities revere Valluvar as the 64th Nayanmar of the Shaivite tradition, **notably those in Mylapore and Tiruchuli.**



- **Dravidian groups also count him as a saint,** as he dismissed the caste system. **Thiruvalluvar Day was first celebrated on May 17 and 18 in 1935.** At present, it is usually observed either on January 15 or 16 in Tamil Nadu and is a part of Pongal celebrations.
- Thiruvalluvar's philosophy stresses the importance of ethics and emphasizes self-discipline, honesty, and equality. Thiruvalluvar is nowhere mentioned in thirukkural; he is named first in a later collection of verses known as 'Thiruvalluva Malai'.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

**1. World's Largest 10-Tonne Propellant Mixer Is Made By**

- A. JAXA
- B. NASA
- C. ISRO
- D. ESA

**ANSWER: C**

**2. Thiruvalluvar Is A Famous Poet Of Which Language**

- A. Odia
- B. Tamil
- C. Gujarati
- D. Bengali

**ANSWER: B**

**3. Some Of The Virtues Listed In Thirukkural Are**

- A. Abstention From Alcohol
- B. Vegetarianism & Social Equality
- C. Codes Of Friendship
- D. All Of The Above

**ANSWER: D**

**4. Rafi Saab To Be Face Of ₹ \_\_\_\_ Commemorative Coin**

- A. 100
- B. 200
- C. 500
- D. 1000

**ANSWER: A**

**5. Name Of The Initiative Launched By India And The USA For Underwater Domain Awareness**

- A. Indo-Pacific Maritime Partnership (IPMP)
- B. Blue Ocean Alliance (BOA)
- C. Autonomous Systems Industry Alliance (ASIA)
- D. Maritime Security Cooperation Initiative (MSCI)

**ANSWER: C**

**6. Which Country Has Approved The Construction Of A Deep-sea Research Facility In The South China Sea**

- A. India
- B. Japan
- C. Australia
- D. China

**ANSWER: D**

**7. Thiruparankundram Hill , Is Located In Which State**

- A. Kerala
- B. Karnataka
- C. Andhra Pradesh
- D. Tamil Nadu

**ANSWER: D**

**8. “Imagine A World With More Women In Science” Initiative Is Taken By**

- A. UNDP
- B. WTO
- C. UNESCO
- D. ISRO

**ANSWER: C**

**9. Which Two Countries Launched The TRUST Initiative To Boost Cooperation In Critical Minerals In February 2025**

- A. India and Russia
- B. India and United States
- C. Russia and China
- D. India and Japan

**ANSWER: B**

**10. Where Was The 8th Edition Of Indian Ocean Conference (IOC) Organized**

- A. Muscat, Oman
- B. Tamil Nadu, India
- C. Perth, Australia
- D. Jakarta, Indonesia

**ANSWER: A**



**11. Laokhowa Burhachapori Wildlife Sanctuary Is Located In Which City**

- A. Manipur
- B. Sikkim
- C. Assam
- D. Arunachal Pradesh

**ANSWER: C**

**12. Karunya Arogya Suraksha Padhathi Is An Initiative Of Which State**

- A. Maharashtra
- B. Gujarat
- C. Odisha
- D. Kerala

**ANSWER: D**

**13. Which Organization Launched Project Waterworth, World's Longest Undersea Cable System**

- A. Meta
- B. Microsoft
- C. Amazon
- D. Google

**ANSWER: A**

**14. Which Zoological Park Is Home To India's First 'Bio Bank'**

- A. Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park
- B. National Zoological Park
- C. Nandankanan Zoological Park
- D. Nehru Zoological Park

**ANSWER: A**

**15. Which State Is The Host Of World's Largest Jhumur Dance, Also Called Jhumoir**

- A. Tripura
- B. Sikkim
- C. Assam
- D. Nagaland

**ANSWER: C**

**16. What Is The Primary Objective Of PM-AJAY Scheme**

- A. Providing free education to SC students
- B. Reducing poverty and improving socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Castes
- C. Constructing new urban townships
- D. Promoting industrial development in rural areas

**ANSWER: B**

**17. What Is The Rank Of India In The Corruption Perceptions Index 2024**

- A. 75th
- B. 86th
- C. 96th
- D. 99th

**ANSWER: C**

**18. Which Country Activated World's First Hybrid Quantum Supercomputer Called Reimei**

- A. China
- B. Japan
- C. France
- D. Australia

**ANSWER: B**

**19. Kanjar Tribe Is Primarily Found In Which Regions**

- A. Bhutan and Nepal
- B. Sri Lanka and Myanmar
- C. Nepal and Afghanistan
- D. North India and Pakistan

**ANSWER: D**

**20. Name Of Barindra Ghosh Is Associated With Which Among The Following Newspapers**

- A. Indian Opinion
- B. Jugantar
- C. Ghadar
- D. Maharatta

**ANSWER: B**