

### Maharashtra State News

#### Maharashtra government likely to table bill for 10-12% Maratha quota on Feb 20

- The MH government is set to introduce a bill proposing a **10-12% reservation for the Maratha community in government jobs and educational institutions** during a special assembly session on February 20.
- This move comes **after the State Backward Class Commission (SBCN) submitted a report recognizing the Marathas as a Socially and Educationally Backward Class (SEBC).**

#### Maharashtra reports lower than expected farm finance

- **State Level Banking Conference (SLBC)**, the apex body of bankers in the state, reported **lower than expected farm credit reaching farmers.**
- **Banks were given a target of Rs 1,68,481 crores to be disbursed as loan for agriculture for the 2023-24 fiscal.**
- **But till September 2023, only Rs 88,881 crores was disbursed, which roughly estimates to 53 per cent of the target.**
- Thus, only **53% of its targeted farm credit for 2023-24 as of September 2023**
- This represents a **decrease from 57% achieved in the previous year.**
- In contrast, loan disbursal to **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) reached 68% of the target, exceeding the previous year's 62%.**

#### 'Without by Ashaya' Startup

- Founded by **Anish Malpani**, 'Without by Ashaya' tackles **two critical challenges - plastic waste and poverty** - through innovative recycling and social impact.

#### About:

- They create premium products like **sunglasses, using a unique technology to recycle "impossible-to-recycle" multi-layered plastic (MLP) waste, primarily from chip packets.**

- It **diverts MLP waste from landfills and oceans, giving it a new life.**
- It **provides dignified work and income opportunities** to waste pickers, uplifting them from poverty.

#### Did you Know?

- **They are World's first recycled sunglasses that are made from chip packets.**

#### Country's First Swachh Bharat Academy to Come Up in Thane

- In a significant move towards **addressing the crucial need for skilled professionals in the sanitation sector**, India's first **Swachh Bharat Academy** is set to be established in Thane, Maharashtra.

#### About:

- This initiative is **spearheaded by the Maharashtra State Skill University and BVG - India Development Group**
- It aims to **bridge the gap in skilled manpower and empower youth** with the necessary training and employment opportunities in the sanitation field.

#### 1946 Naval uprising

- The **Royal Indian Navy mutiny** or revolt, is also called the **February 18, 1946 Naval Uprising.**
- It was a **failed insurrection of Indian naval ratings, soldiers, police personnel and civilians against the British government in India**

#### About:

- The **Royal Indian Navy (RIN)** was part of the **British Raj** and comprised primarily **Indian enlisted men with British officers.**
- During **World War II**, the **RIN expanded rapidly**, leading to poor living conditions, discrimination, and broken promises of demobilization.
- The strike quickly escalated into a **full-fledged mutiny**, spreading to other ports and involving over **78 ships and 20,000 sailors.**

#### World Day of Social Justice

- **World Day of Social Justice** is an international day recognizing the need to

promote social justice and is celebrated annually on 20th February

- The International Labour Organization (ILO) marks the occasion this year with a series of six events held in major cities around the globe.
- It includes efforts to tackle issues such as poverty, exclusion, gender inequality, unemployment, human rights, and social protections
- The theme of World Day of Social Justice 2024 is "Bridging Gaps, Building Alliances".

Did you Know?

- In 2008, ILO declared 20 Feb as the World Day of Social Justice.

### MH cabinet approves draft bill to extend 10% reservation to Marathas

- The Maharashtra Cabinet approved the draft of a bill proposing a 10% reservation for the Maratha community in education and government jobs, reigniting the long-standing debate on caste-based quotas in the state

About:

- The quota will increase reservations to 62%, facing legal challenges.
- The OBC community fears dilution of its quota.
- Muslim leaders demand 5% reservation.

### Supriya Sule Receives Sansad Maharatna Award From President

- Supriya Sule, the Member of Parliament (MP) representing Baramati in Maharashtra, has been conferred with the prestigious Sansad Ratna Award by President Droupadi Murmu.
- This distinguished honor recognizes her outstanding contributions to the Indian Parliament, particularly during the first year of the 17th Lok Sabha (2019-2020).
- Previously, Sule was honored with the Parliament Excellence Maharatna Award for Best Journalism by Prime Point Foundation and E Magazine in Chennai.

### Lokmat Maharashtra of the Year Awards 2024

- Lokmat Maharashtra of the Year aims to celebrate the outstanding achievements of

individuals who have left an indelible mark on Maharashtra and beyond.

- Over the years, Piyush Goyal, Nitin Gadkari, Sushil Kumar Shinde, and Nita Ambani have been a part of the jury panel.
- The selection process for the LMOTY awards involves editorial meetings, public voting, and evaluation by a jury.
- In addition to the main awards, LMOTY also gives special honors on individuals who have made exceptional contributions to society.

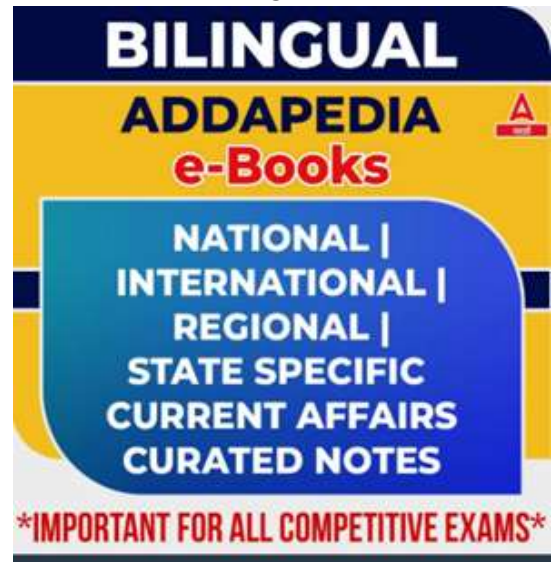
List of Awardees 2024:

SPECIAL AWARDS:

1. Isha Ambani.
2. Abhay Bhutada.
3. Jaishing Chavan -Special Award for Overcoming Disability and Empowering Others

MAIN AWARDS:

1. Actor (Male)- Ranbir Kapoor.
  2. IPS (Promising) - Somay Munde.
  3. IAS (Promising) - Bhushan Gagrani.
  4. Influential Politician - Deepak Kesarkar.
  5. Influential Politician - Atul Salve.
  6. Lok Seva - Harishchandra Sude
  7. Politics - (Promising) - Kunal Patil
  8. Sports - (Promising) - Ojas Deotale.
  9. Medical - Dr. Abhishek Mangeshikar.
  10. Medical - Dr. Meraj Kadri.
- BKT - Innovator in Agriculture - Savita Nana Pawra.
  - Tech-Savvy Teacher - Anand Anemwad.
  - Industry and Business Category - Sudhir Mehta and Vishal Chordia.



## 11 state varsities to get Rs 540 crore grant under PM-USHA; Rs 100 crore for SNDT

- The GOI has allocated Rs. 540 crore to 11 state universities in Maharashtra under the Pradhan Mantri Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA) scheme.
- This initiative aims to improve the infrastructure and academic development of higher education institutions.
- Four universities, including SNDT Women's University, received a substantial grant of Rs. 100 crore each, while the remaining seven universities will receive Rs. 20 crore each.

### About:

- PM-USHA, or Pradhan Mantri Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan, is a centrally sponsored scheme by the Indian government aimed at transforming and uplifting the higher education system in the country.
- It was launched in 2021, building upon the previous Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) scheme, and aligns with the goals of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

## International Mother language Day

- International Mother Language Day (IMLD), annually celebrated on February 21st, serves as a crucial reminder of the importance of linguistic and cultural diversity.
- It was initiated by Bangladesh and formally recognized by UNESCO in 1999, aiming to:
  1. **Promote awareness:** Highlight the value of linguistic and cultural diversity for sustainable societies.
  2. **Preserve languages:** Encourage the protection and revitalization of endangered languages.
  3. **Promote multilingualism:** Advocate for using and learning multiple languages for individual and societal benefits.

### Theme for 2024:

- "Multilingual education is a pillar of intergenerational learning."
- This theme emphasizes the role of mother tongue-based education in fostering learning, literacy, and the transmission of traditional knowledge across generations.

### Did you Know?

- On 21st February 2000, the first International Mother language Day was observed.

## Maharashtra Water Crisis

- Maharashtra is facing a severe water crisis, with many reservoirs shrinking to critical levels in February 2024.
- This has raised concerns about water shortages for drinking, irrigation, and industrial use.

### About:

- Most of the dams in the state have reached the bottom, with an average of 21.61 percent less water stock left than last year.
- The state's 12 projects are currently in minus storage, with 15 dams having barely 10 percent storage.
- The situation in Marathwada is alarming. Marathwada has only 26 percent water stock left. Last year, it was 72 percent.
- The storage in 138 major dams in the state has come down to 50.37 percent from 74.34 percent last year.

## Nashik stands 3rd in Maha dist good governance index

- The Nashik district stood third in the recent District Good Governance Index (DGGI) of Maharashtra that encompasses 10 governance sectors with 161 indicators and over 300 data points.
- It is the first time that the department of administrative reforms and organization and methods carried out such an exercise.
- Maharashtra has become the fifth state in the country to implement such an exercise.

## MH has attracted highest FDI at 38.78 per cent of total investment in country

- Maharashtra has emerged as the top recipient of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the country
- The state has attracted highest FDI at Rs 65,500 crore, which accounts for 38.78 percent of total investment in country
- This achievement underscores the state's robust infrastructure, favorable business environment, and strategic initiatives to attract global investors.

- Maharashtra will achieve its **target of one-trillion-dollar economy by 2027-28**

### **Nutrition scheme for leprosy patients in the state**

- The **number of new leprosy patients is increasing** inspite of the efforts made by the health department to eradicate leprosy at various levels.
- In the past three years, the number of leprosy patients has been **continuously increasing in this research campaign** and Health Minister Tanaji Sawant has decided to **provide nutritional food to these leprosy patients** during treatment.
- **Rs 500 nutritional food will be given to leprosy patients.**

#### **About:**

- According to the information available from the **Department of Health (Leprosy and Tuberculosis)**, **14,520 leprosy patients were detected in 2021-22.** In **2022-23, this increased to 19,860 leprosy patients** and in the search campaign till December **2023-24, 20 thousand leprosy patients were found.**
- The proportion of **newly diagnosed patients is 9.55 percent, 11.14 percent and 15.58 percent respectively.**

### **World Thinking Day**

- **World Thinking Day, celebrated annually on February 22nd**
- It is a **day for Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (including associated Scout and Guide organizations)** across the globe to connect, reflect, and take action.
- It's a **day of International friendship, Global awareness, Advocacy, Raising awareness and taking action on critical issues affecting girls and communities.**

#### **About:**

- **Established in 1926, the day coincides with the birthdays of Lord Baden-Powell, founder of Scouting, and his wife, Lady Olave Baden-Powell, World Chief Guide. S**

#### **Theme:**

- **The 2024 theme is "Our World, Our Equal Future", focusing on gender equality and climate change.**

### **MH witnesses decline in child and infant mortality rates**

- **Maharashtra achieves significant reduction in child mortality rates.**
- **Infant mortality rate drops from 19 to 16 per 1000 live births.**
- **Neonatal mortality rate stands at 11, fulfilling SDG 2030 target.**
- **Special initiatives like SNCUs and NBSUs in district and sub-district hospitals have contributed to the progress, but improvement needed in rural and tribal areas.**

### **Mumbai centre of India economic ties, says Aus envoy**

- **Australian High Commissioner to India Philip Green said Mumbai sits at the centre of Australia's economic engagement with India.**
- He said that **Mumbai is often the first stop for Australian firms looking to explore opportunities in India's rapidly growing market**
- He also said the **Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) between Australia and India, signed in 2022, is already helping Maharashtra's exports of industrial goods (steel and other products) to Australia and is also benefiting state's wine and cotton industries.**

### **Finolex Cables signs MoU with MH government**

- **Finolex Cables, a leading Indian cable manufacturer, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Maharashtra government.**
- **The company will invest Rs 580 crore to expand its optic fiber cables (OFC) production capacity in the state.**
- **This expansion aims to meet the growing demand for OFC driven by 5G rollout and increasing fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) adoption.**

#### **About:**

- **The project includes setting up new fiber draw towers and implementing backward integration for glass preform production.**
- **This move aligns with the government's vision of providing last-mile fiber connectivity and the Make in India initiative.**



- The expansion will create over 400 direct and indirect employment opportunities.

### Grape harvest fest in Nashik on weekend

- The tourism department of the state govt has organized a two-day grape harvest festival beginning from Feb 24.

#### About:

- The grape harvest festival is a part of government efforts to promote the grape and wine industry of Nashik and attract tourists
- The event will have around 50 grape farmers showcasing different varieties of the fruit, along with 12 wineries
- As many as 4,000 tourists are expected to attend the festival.

### Shiv Sena MP bags Sansad Ratna award

- Dr Shrikant Eknath Shinde, Shiv Sena MP from Kalyan, received the Sansad Ratna award at Maharashtra Sadan in New Delhi for his active participation in 17th Lok Sabha proceedings.
- He raised 556 questions, participated in 67 discussions, and works tirelessly for the betterment of his constituency.

#### About:

- The Sansad Ratna Awards are presented annually to the top performing Parliamentarians based on their performance including raising questions on crucial issues including those related to their respective constituencies, participating in discussions, presence in the House, among others.

### 23/9 floods: State clears ₹204cr special package

- The state government has announced a special package of ₹204.72 crore to provide relief to the people affected by the recent floods that occurred on September 23.
- The floods caused widespread damage to property and infrastructure.
- The relief package will be used to provide financial assistance to the affected families, as well as to rebuild damaged homes and infrastructure.

### Maha to be first state to start digital health course

- Maharashtra University of Health Sciences (MUHS), which oversees 450 medical colleges and 40,000 medical students, will launch the country's first foundation course for digital health.

#### About:

- The course, developed along with not-for-profit Koita Foundation, will not only cover hospital management information systems, electronic medical records, but also the use of sensors and wearables in gathering health data.
- Modules on the use of artificial intelligence and machine learning in healthcare will also be covered.
- The digital health foundation course will be launched by governor Mahesh Bais medical education minister Hasan Mushrif.

### World Peace and Understanding Day

- World Peace and Understanding Day is observed on February 23 every year, promoting harmony and goodwill among individuals from different religions, cultures and geography
- The day commemorates the first meeting of Rotary International, an NGO dedicated to humanitarian service, peace, and goodwill across the world that took place in Chicago, US.
- Every year, this Special Day is observed to remind people of the ways that they can bring peace, harmony and goodwill to the world and contribute positively.

### Veteran actor Ashok Saraf presented Maharashtra Bhushan Award

- Veteran actor Ashok Saraf was presented with the prestigious Maharashtra Bhushan Award, the highest civilian honor bestowed by the Maharashtra state government.
- This recognition celebrates his remarkable contributions to the field of entertainment over a career spanning nearly five decades.
- He was joined by other distinguished honorees including Suresh Wadkar, Aruna Irani, Mithun Chakraborty, and many more, who were recognized for their contributions to the film industry.

## MH MSMEs to showcase niche products at Defence expo

- The **inaugural MH MSME Defence Expo**, currently underway in **Pune**, marks a significant moment for **India's aspirations towards self-reliance in the defense sector**.
- Over **200** micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) from the state are **showcasing their niche products and capabilities**, aiming to contribute to the nation's defense preparedness.

### About:

- MSMEs are exhibiting innovative solutions across diverse areas like aerospace, armaments, electronics, communication, and logistics.
- These include components for combat vehicles, communication equipment, drones, and specialized textiles.
- The expo fosters collaboration between MSMEs and established defense players like L&T, Mahindra, and Tata, opening doors for joint ventures and technology transfer.
- The expo aligns with the government's "Atma Nirbhar Bharat" initiative, promoting indigenous defense manufacturing and reducing reliance on foreign imports.

## Subsidy announced on solar panel installations

- The **Indian government** has announced a new **subsidy scheme** to make **rooftop solar panel installations more affordable**.

### Subsidy:

- **₹30,000** per kilowatt for systems **up to 2 kW**
- **₹18,000** per additional kilowatt up to **3 kW**
- **Capped at ₹78,000** for larger systems **exceeding 3 kW**

### Benefits:

- Lower upfront cost of installation
- Reduced electricity bills
- Increased energy independence
- Environmentally friendly power generation

## Sonu Nigam receives Raj Kapoor Vishesh Yogdaan Puraskar

- **Sonu Nigam** was awarded the **Raj Kapoor Vishesh Yogdaan Puraskar** at a ceremony in **Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir**
- The award is given to individuals who have **made significant contributions** to the Indian film industry.

### About:

- **Nigam** has been a playback singer for over **25 years** and has sung songs for over **1,000** films in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Marathi, Bengali, Assamese, Gujarati, Punjabi, and Bhojpuri languages.
- He has **won numerous awards** for his singing, including **four National Film Awards** and **two Filmfare Awards**.

## JP Dutta, Vidhu Vinod Chopra feted with prestigious Raj Kapoor Awards

- **Two iconic figures** of Indian cinema, **JP Dutta** and **Vidhu Vinod Chopra**, were recognized for their exceptional contributions with prestigious **Raj Kapoor Awards**.
- This marks a **significant moment** for their careers and highlights their lasting impact on the industry.

### About:

- **JP Dutta**, known for crafting patriotic and historical epics like "Border", "LOC Kargil", and "Refugee", received the **Maharashtra Bhusan Raj Kapoor Award**.
- This award celebrates his dedication to showcasing themes of valor, sacrifice, and national pride through his powerful narratives.
- Dutta expressed immense gratitude, stating that the recognition from his home state held immense significance.
- **Vidhu Vinod Chopra**, acclaimed for films like "Lage Raho Munna Bhai", "Parinda", and "Munnabhai MBBS", was presented with the **Raj Kapoor Special Contribution Award**.
- This award **acknowledges his diverse filmography**, spanning genres and addressing social issues while entertaining audiences.
- Chopra's commitment to storytelling and exploration of complex themes has been widely appreciated.

## The Central Excise Day

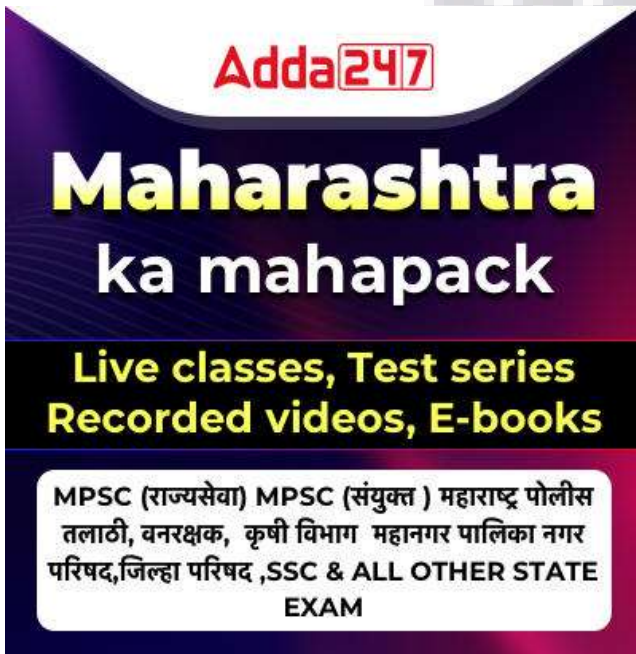
- The Central Excise Day commemorates the establishment of the Central Excise and Salt Act of 1944, which laid the foundation for India's indirect tax system.
- It celebrates the contributions of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) in mobilizing revenue for the nation's development.
- This act was a combination of 11 acts regarding excise duties, and it was passed to make changes in the law related to salt and central duties.

### About:

- On 24 February 1944, the Central Excise and Salt Act was passed, and Central Excise Day is celebrated to commemorate this legislation.
- In 1966, the act was renamed The Central Excise Act 1944, and Schedules 1 and 2 of the act were related to the values and rates of the duties

### Do you Know?

- The Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBIC) is responsible for administering indirect taxes in India.



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