

The Hindu Simplified

Daily News Highlights & Updates | February 17, 2026



Breaking down the complex columns into simple stories.



ENVIRONMENT & DEFENSE

The Big Story: Great Nicobar Project Gets the Green Light

Development meets Defense, but Nature watches closely.

The Gist: A tribunal has allowed a massive construction project on an island key to India's defense, despite environmental worries.



The Approval: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) cleared the ₹72,000-crore project.



The Plan: Building a port, airport, power plant, and township.



The Concern: Risks to Coral Reefs, Leatherback turtles, and Tribal rights.



The Defense: Govt says 'adequate safeguards' are in place.



India & The World: Friends & Partners

French President Emmanuel Macron visits India.

Tag INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- **The Visit:** President Macron is in Mumbai and Delhi to strengthen the 'Strategic Partnership'.



1. **Defense:** "10-year plan for military equipment cooperation."



2. **Innovation:** "Agreements on tech and research."



3. **AI Summit:** "Attending a major Artificial Intelligence summit together."



4. **Diplomacy:** "Cementing ties between the two nations."

The Neighborhood Watch

Bangladesh: Stable Ties

- **The BNP** party won the election.
- **Updates:** A senior leader confirmed that former PM Sheikh Hasina's presence in India **will not** damage the relationship.
- **Goal:** Continued development partnership.

Japan vs. China: Tensions Rise

- **The Conflict:** A Chinese diplomat accused Japan of trying to revive 'militarism' (military rule).
- **The Response:** Japan protested strongly, calling the claims 'factually incorrect'.

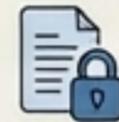
Courtroom Highlights

Three key updates from the Supreme Court.



Sabarimala Temple

Hearing set for April 7 regarding petitions on women entering the temple.



Data Protection vs. RTI

Debate: Does the new Data Protection Law hide too much info? Critics fear it weakens the Right to Information (RTI).



Hate Speech Ruling

The Court directed petitioners to the High Court regarding complaints against the Assam CM.

Planet & Travel: Tourism & Green Energy

Jammu & Kashmir



- **Tourism Returns:** 17 spots reopened after 10 months of closure.
- **Water Strategy:** Plans to use more water from the Ravi river while the treaty with Pakistan is paused.

Kerala (Vaikom)



- **Going Green:** Vaikom boat station is becoming 'energy-neutral'.
- **The Shift:** Switching to 100% solar-powered boats to reduce pollution.

Domestic Tragedy: Rajasthan Fire

SAFETY ALERT



- **The Incident:** A massive fire at a factory in Bhiwadi, Rajasthan.
- **The Toll:** Seven lives lost.
- **The Cause:** Illegal manufacturing of firecrackers inside a garment factory.
- **Action:** Strict government investigation ordered.

Tech Trends: AI, Culture, & Safety



AI Summit in Delhi

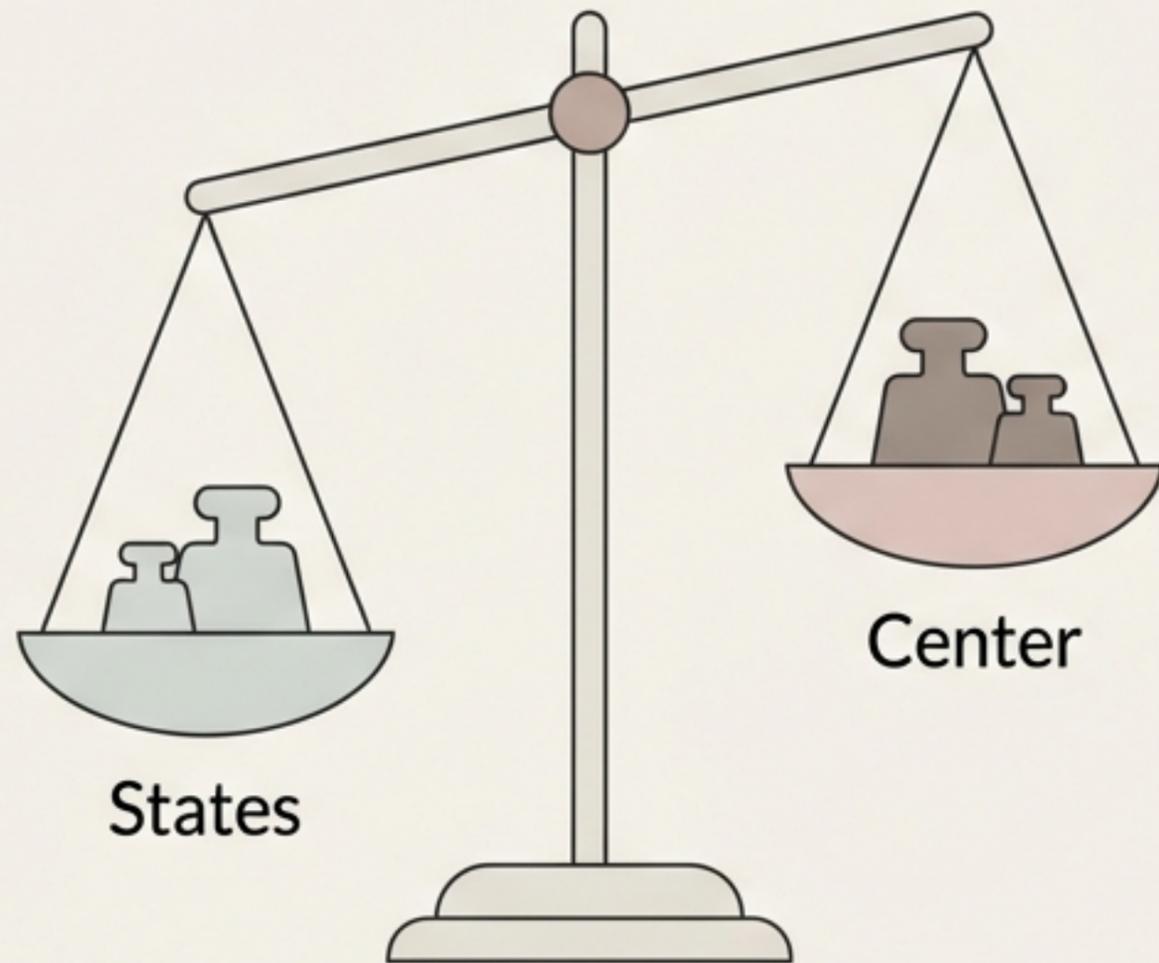
- **Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw's message:** Global AI tools and apps must respect Indian laws and culture.
- **Quote:** "Global platforms must respect local culture."

Global Safety (UK Update)

- **Protecting Kids:** The UK is considering banning social media for children under 16 to ensure online safety.

Viewpoint: States vs. The Center

Understanding 'Federalism' with Tamil Nadu CM M.K. Stalin.



The Argument: CM M.K. Stalin writes that the Central Government holds too much power.

Key Concept: Federalism

Definition: A system where power is shared between a central authority and individual states.

The Ask: A 'structural reset' to give States more autonomy over education and development.

Sports Highlights: Cricket



Sri Lanka

Pathum Nissanka plays a match-winning innings, powering Sri Lanka into the 'Super Eight'.

Afghanistan

Milestone Alert: Rashid Khan becomes the first bowler to take 700 T20 wickets.

Rivals

India proves 'too strong' for Pakistan in recent match-up.

In Other News... Fast Facts

Education

Exam Season: CBSE Class 10 Board exams have officially started. Best of luck to all students!

Economy

Jobs Data: Unemployment rose slightly to 5% in January.

Crime

Security Breach: Two Pakistani nationals escaped from a juvenile home in Jammu.

Governance

Local Polls: Reports of chaos during municipal elections in Telangana.

The Wrap Up

Key Takeaways from Today's News

1. **Development:** Great Nicobar project gets the go-ahead despite eco-worries.
2. **Diplomacy:** France and India tighten ties; Bangladesh remains a friendly neighbor.
3. **Rights:** Supreme Court sets dates for Sabarimala and Data Protection hearings.
4. **Safety:** Illegal factories prove deadly (Rajasthan fire); UK looks to ban social media for kids.
5. **Sports:** Rashid Khan hits 700 wickets; Sri Lanka advances in tournament.

See you tomorrow for more simplified news.