



The budget shows a clear focus on health education and AI, with proposals for new institutes in pharmacy, mental health, and Ayurveda, along with AI enabled learning and skill development in areas such as sports, tourism, and for Divyangjan.



However, sustained research support in AI, deep tech, sustainability, space, and advanced fields is essential if Indian institutions are to compete confidently at the global level

—**Anshuman Jaswal** |
DIRECTOR, NMIMS INDORE

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Commenting on the broader education thrust, Dr Anshuman Jaswal, Director, **NMIMS** Indore Campus, noted that the Budget places strong emphasis on healthcare education and artificial intelligence. “New institutes for pharmacy, mental health, and Ayurveda, alongside AI-enabled education and skilling in areas such as sports, tourism, and education for Divyangjan, signal a diversified approach,” he said. He also highlighted plans for a National Institute of Hospitality, investments in astronomy-related research, and support for the Indian Institute of Creative Technologies to establish AV, gaming, and creative content labs across 15,000 secondary schools and 500 colleges.

However, Dr Jaswal cautioned that while these measures are significant, the moment calls for deeper investment in frontier research. He stressed the need for stronger government backing for universities working in AI, sustainability, quantum computing, robotics, space, defence technologies, drones, and deep tech, arguing that global competitiveness will depend on sustained research funding and industry collaboration.

However, Dr Jaswal cautioned that while these measures are significant, the moment calls for deeper investment in frontier research. He stressed the need for stronger government backing for universities working in AI, sustainability, quantum computing, robotics, space, defence technologies, drones, and deep tech, arguing that global competitiveness will depend on sustained research funding and industry collaboration.

ET Education

<https://education.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/industry/from-iit-labs-to-girls-hostels-education-takeaways-from-budget-202627/127835570>

February 2, 2026 09:37

Msme 

Stock market live updates: Narayani Ramachandran, Professor of Finance, Director, SVKM's NMIMS Bengaluru campus

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's Union Budget 2026 delivers a clear signal: India's next growth chapter will be built on the back of its 63 million MSMEs and a tech-driven agriculture sector. The announcements, taken together, are ambitious — but their true worth will hinge on how swiftly they reach the ground.

Bharat Vistar, the multilingual AI tool designed to integrate the agri-stack, is a welcome step toward closing the information gap that has long disadvantaged smallholder farmers. Similarly, She Marts promises grassroots economic empowerment for women entrepreneurs—an area that has historically received more rhetoric than action.

On the MSME front, the Rs 10,000 crore SME Growth Fund and the Rs 2,000 crore top-up to the Self-Reliant India Fund reflect a serious commitment to sustaining risk capital for micro-enterprises. The mandatory use of TReDS for CPSE purchases is a particularly smart structural move that could genuinely ease cash-flow bottlenecks plaguing small suppliers.

THE HINDUBUSINESS LINE

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/markets/stock-market-highlights-february-2-2026/article70580156.ece>



ಬಜೆಟ್ ಹಲವು ಅಂಶಗಳಿಗೆ ಒತ್ತು ನೀಡಿದೆ. ಎಐ ಸಾಧನವಾದ ಭಾರತ್ ವಿಸ್ತಾರ್ ಸಣ್ಣ ರೈತರೊಂದಿಗಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಅಂತರ ತಗ್ಗಿಸಲಿದೆ. 'ಶೀ ಮಾರ್ಕ್ಟ್' ಮಹಿಳಾ ಉದ್ಯಮಿಗಳಿಗೆ ತಳಮಟ್ಟದ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಸಬಲೀಕರಣದ ಭರವಸೆ ನೀಡಲಿದೆ. ಸ್ವಾವಲಂಬಿ ಭಾರತ ನಿಧಿಗೆ ₹ 2,000 ಕೋಟಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚುವರಿ ಅನುದಾನವು ಉದ್ಯಮಗಳಿಗೆ ಬಲ ನೀಡಬಹುದು.

- ನಾರಾಯಣಿ ರಾಮಚಂದ್ರನ್, ಅರ್ಥಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ ಪ್ರಾಧ್ಯಾಪಕಿ, ಎಸ್‌ವಿಕೆಂ, ಎನ್‌ಎಂಐಎಂಎಸ್, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು

PRAJAVANI

On the MSME front, the Rs 10,000 crore SME Growth Fund and the Rs 2,000 crore top-up to the Self-Reliant India Fund reflect a serious commitment to sustaining risk capital for micro-enterprises. The mandatory use of TReDS for CPSE purchases is a particularly smart structural move that could genuinely ease cash-flow bottlenecks plaguing small suppliers.

<https://www.prajavani.net/business/budget/union-budget-political-reactions-karnataka-leaders-mb-patil-eshwar-khandre-3759043>

Pankaj Kapoor, Assistant Professor at School of Commerce, SVKM's NMIMS, Chandigarh, captures this sentiment well, "Measures aimed at simplifying compliance, rationalising penalties and reducing litigation promise tangible benefits for salaried employees, professionals and small businesses. For the middle class, long burdened by complex rules and procedural anxieties, these reforms may prove more meaningful than modest tax cuts."

SIMPLER ITR FORMS: FILING WITHOUT FEAR

Taxpayers can expect [redesigned income tax forms and simplified rules](#) soon, particularly for ITR-1 and ITR-2 filers. The Finance Minister said the new formats are being created so that most people can file returns without confusion or professional help, with adequate time to understand the changes.

In her Budget speech, the FM said that the simplified rules and forms will be notified shortly and that the redesign ensures ordinary citizens can comply without difficulty. For millions of salaried individuals, this could turn return filing from an annual ordeal into a more straightforward process.

NO CHANGE IN TAX RATES, BUT GREATER CERTAINTY

Budget 2026 leaves income tax slabs untouched under both the old and new regimes. Education cess and surcharge also remain unchanged. While some taxpayers had hoped for rate reductions to offset rising living costs, the absence of adverse changes provides a different kind of comfort: predictability.

In an environment marked by inflation and global uncertainty, stability itself becomes a form of relief. Households can plan finances without recalibrating tax strategies every year.

As Kapoor observes, "At a time when household finances are under pressure from inflation and high interest rates, predictability itself is a form of relief." The government's continued focus on fiscal discipline also strengthens its fight against inflation, often described as the most silent tax on middle-class households.

MORE BREATHING ROOM FOR FILING RETURNS

The Budget eases compliance pressure by revising return filing timelines. Individuals filing ITR-1 and ITR-2 will continue to meet the July 31 deadline, but non-audit business taxpayers and trusts will now have until August 31. The window to file revised returns has been extended to March 31 from December 31, subject to a nominal fee.

For small taxpayers, including students, young professionals, tech employees and relocated NRIs, a one-time six-month foreign asset disclosure scheme offers a chance to regularise minor overseas holdings without fear of harsh penalties.

INDIA TODAY

<https://www.indiatoday.in/business/story/think-budget-2026-ignored-the-middle-class-heres-what-you-missed-2864201-2026-02-09>

Academic take

Offering an academic assessment, Dr Hemangi Kelkar, Assistant Professor at NMIMS Navi Mumbai, described the Budget as cautious but purposeful. "It reflects policy continuity and predictable fiscal planning. With GDP growth projected at around 7.4% and fiscal deficit targeted at 4.3% by FY27, macroeconomic stability and investor confidence are reinforced," she said.

PUNE MIRROR

Education as an engine of Economic growth

Dr Minu Mehta, Dean and Professor at the Anil Surendra Modi School of Commerce (ASMSOC), SVKM's NMIMS, described Budget 2026 as a "bold step towards transforming India's economic landscape." She said the emphasis on infrastructure, sustainability and digital innovation makes the Budget a potential catalyst for growth and employment.

"With a ₹12.2 lakh crore capex allocation, high-speed rail corridors, and a boost to sectors like textiles, the Budget is a game-changer for job creation. The focus on green energy, AI and MSME support reflects a forward-thinking approach that balances economic progress with social welfare," she said, adding that initiatives supporting handlooms, tourism training and NRI participation in markets show attention to long-neglected areas.

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

<https://www.freepressjournal.in/education/union-budget-2026-experts-welcome-rs-139-lakh-crore-education-allocation-call-it-growth-oriented>

Employment-led growth and regulatory reforms

From an academic policy perspective, Dr Bharath Supra, Associate Professor at the School of Business Management, NMIMS Navi Mumbai, highlighted the Budget's strong emphasis on employment-led growth and regulatory rationalisation. He noted that instead of short-term relief, the Budget focuses on building sustainable economic capabilities across agriculture, MSMEs, investment and exports.

"The direct linkage between job creation and enterprise development is particularly encouraging. Changes in MSME definitions, enhanced credit guarantees and sector-specific manufacturing plans can benefit not just large firms but also startups, first-time entrepreneurs and small businesses," he said.

Dr. Supra also referred to the government's continued efforts towards simplified and trust-based regulation, which is essential for the translation of investment intent into economic activity.

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

<https://www.freepressjournal.in/education/union-budget-2026-experts-welcome-rs-139-lakh-crore-education-allocation-call-it-growth-oriented>

Education, health and AI focus

Dr Anshuman Jaswal, Director of NMIMS campus, said the recent Union Budget has focused heavily on health and AI when it comes to education. There will be new institutes for pharmacy, mental health, and Ayurveda. Similarly, there is emphasis on AI-enabled education and on skilling in sports, tourism, and for Divyangjan. A National Institute of Hospitality will be created. The government is also going to set up five university townships to support major industrial centres. Another significant initiative is the proposed support for the Indian Institute of Creative Technologies to set up AV, gaming and creative content labs in 15,000 secondary schools and 500 colleges. Investment is also being provided in astronomy-related research.

He said these are all significant steps, but one does feel that more could have been done to encourage research and education in areas of AI, sustainability, space, deep tech and related technologies in the education sector. This is a crucial time for the Indian science and technology sector. It is important that universities get strong support from the government for their research in areas such as AI, computer hardware, quantum computing, robotics, space, defence, drones and related fields. Similarly, sustainability-related research is also highly relevant today. The current support is welcome, but more can be done if Indian universities and industry are to compete globally.

'Healthcare expansion, AI integration take centre stage'

Shreya Jachak
MUMBAI

The Union Budget has placed a sharp focus on healthcare expansion and the integration of artificial intelligence in education, with proposals for new institutes in pharmacy, mental health and Ayurveda, said Dr Anshuman Jaswal, director of the NMIMS campus. The Budget also underscores AI-enabled learning and enhanced skilling in sectors such as sports and tourism, along with targeted initiatives for Divyangjan.

A national institute of hospitality will be created. The government is also going to set up five university townships to support major industrial centres. Another significant initiative is the proposed support for Indian Institute of creative technologies to set up AV, gaming and creative content labs in 15,000 secondary schools and 500 colleges.



Investment is also being provided in Astronomy related research, he pointed out.

"These are all significant steps but one does feel that more could have been done to encourage research and education in areas of AI, sustainability, space, deep tech and related technologies in the education sector. This is a crucial time for Indian science and technology sector," Jaswal added.

I believe that the government has prioritised the service sector where employment generation will be easier to achieve for our country. This includes employment in rural areas, women, disabled, and others. Their approach is laudable, elaborated. "This is an opportunity for us to on-board large scale research by universities in these areas. Any expenditure that is incurred will also help boost education and creation of new courses and programs," he concluded.



The Union Budget, through the launch of the Biopharma SHAKTI Mission with a Rs10,000 crore, five-year outlay, marks a transformative step for India's pharmaceutical and biopharma ecosystem. The creation of over 1,000 accredited clinical trial sites and the strengthening of CDSCO with a dedicated scientific review cadre will further enhance India's global credibility in research and regulatory excellence.

Dr Supriya Shidhaye
Principal of Vivekanand Education Society College of Pharmacy

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

<https://www.freepressjournal.in/education/union-budget-2026-biopharma-shakti-and-education-reforms-signal-shift-towards-innovation-led-growth>

Budget Revolutionizes Education, Aligns Learning With Industry Needs

The new budget emphasizes holistic education, linking learning with industry through University Townships, promoting girls' safety with hostels, and prioritizing mental health via NIMHANS-2 and caregiver training. Innovation is encouraged through AI, AVGC Labs, and Atal Tinkering Labs, while challenges in teacher training, electricity, and digital access remain key for successful outcomes.

The budget is all-encompassing, addressing most of the facets and segment of education. It acknowledges the necessity for education to enhance employability and align with the demands of the corporate world and enterprises.

2. University Townships Initiative

The establishment of five University Townships adjacent to industrial corridors represents a brilliant strategy in spatial planning—effectively integrating the classroom within the workplace ecosystem.

3. Promoting Girls' Safety

The commitment to provide a girls' hostel in every district is a practical approach to addressing the issues of safety and logistics for female students, which have historically deterred them from pursuing higher education.

4. Mental Health Focus

Simultaneously, there is a significant emphasis on mental health, as evidenced by the creation of NIMHANS-2 in North India and the training of 150,000 caregivers in fields such as applied psychology and behavioural health, acknowledging that student well-being is crucial for academic success.

5. Innovation and Research

These initiatives are further supported by the introduction of modern fields such as AI centres of excellence, AVGC Labs, Atal Tinkering Labs, and provisions related to the astronomy and biopharmaceutical sectors, setting the stage for innovation and research while marking a transition towards a creative demographic dividend.

6. Challenges Ahead

Overall, the budget is forward-thinking and adaptable. Specific regulations concerning TCS Reduction for LRS and interest subvention are expected to enhance this sector. Nevertheless, simply implementing these initiatives will not suffice; true success hinges on tackling several additional challenges.

7. Focus on Implementation

While budgets have been allocated, achieving the desired results necessitates a greater focus on teacher training, increased tax incentives to promote research in universities, and addressing issues related to electricity provision and the gaps in internet access and the use of digital technology, particularly for females, which are essential for realizing the intended outcomes.

--- Dr.Esha Khanna, Assistant Professor, Sarla Anil Modi School of Economics, SVKM's NMIMS.

THE FREE PRESS JOURNAL

<https://www.freepressjournal.in/education/budget-revolutionizes-education-aligns-learning-with-industry-needs>