Daily Current Affairs – 18 June 2026

Banking, Finance & Business

IndusInd Bank Launches 'Indus Solitaire' Program for Diamond Industry

Key Highlight: IndusInd Bank launched a premium banking program called **'Indus Solitaire'** on **18 June 2026**, specifically designed for the **diamond industry**.

The program provides 24/7 access to **vault services** in key hubs like **Surat** and **Mumbai**.

It offers specialized **current accounts** with zero cross-currency markup on foreign transactions.

The initiative includes **complimentary personal accident insurance** worth **₹50 lakh** for business owners.

It targets **diamond merchants**, brokers, and exporters to streamline international trade finance.

About IndusInd Bank

Established: 1994

Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra

Head: Sumant Kathpalia (MD & CEO)

Nvidia Overtakes Microsoft to Become World’s Most Valuable Company

Key Highlight: Nvidia became the world's most valuable public company on **18 June 2026**, surpassing **Microsoft** and **Apple** in market capitalization.

The company’s market cap reached approximately **$3.34 trillion** following a **3.5%** surge in stock price.

The rally is driven by the unprecedented demand for **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** chips.

Nvidia now controls about **80%** of the market for AI chips used in data centers.

Company shares have risen over **170%** since the start of **2026**.

SEBI Launches 'Saa₹thi 2.0' Mobile App for Investors

Key Highlight: The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** launched the **Saa₹thi 2.0** mobile app to enhance investor education and awareness.

The app features **financial calculators** and modules on **KYC processes** and **grievance redressal**.

It is designed to protect investors from **mis-selling** and fraudulent schemes.

Available in **Hindi** and **English**, with plans to expand to **regional languages**.

The update includes a simplified UI for better accessibility for **first-time investors**.

About SEBI

Established: 1992

Headquarters: Mumbai

Head: Madhabi Puri Buch (Chairperson)

HDFC Bank to Sell 100% Stake in HDFC Education

Key Highlight: HDFC Bank announced its plan to divest its entire **100% stake** in **HDFC Education and Development Services**.

The transaction will be conducted via the **Swiss Challenge method** to ensure transparency.

The base bid for the stake has been set at **₹192 crore**.

This move follows the **HDFC-HDFC Bank merger** to align with regulatory norms.

The sale is expected to be completed by **September 2026**.

National & State News

PM Modi Releases 17th Installment of PM-KISAN Scheme in Varanasi

Key Highlight: Prime Minister Narendra Modi released the **17th installment** of the **PM-KISAN** scheme on **18 June 2026** during his visit to **Varanasi**.

A total of **₹20,000 crore** was transferred to more than **9.26 crore** beneficiary farmers.

The PM also granted certificates to over **30,000 Krishi Sakhis** trained as para-extension workers.

This was the PM's first visit to his constituency after being sworn in for the **third term**.

Total funds disbursed under **PM-KISAN** have now exceeded **₹3.45 lakh crore**.

Government Constitutes High-Level Committee for NTA Reforms

Key Highlight: The **Ministry of Education** formed a high-level committee to suggest reforms in the **National Testing Agency (NTA)** exam processes.

The committee is chaired by **Dr. K. Radhakrishnan**, former Chairman of **ISRO**.

The goal is to ensure **transparent and fair** conduct of examinations like **NEET** and **NET**.

It will recommend improvements in **data security** and exam center protocols.

The report is expected to be submitted within **two months**.

Bihar Announces Heatwave Compensation for Affected Families

Key Highlight: The **Government of Bihar** announced a compensation of **₹4 lakh** each to the kin of those who died due to the severe **heatwave** in June 2026.

Temperatures in districts like **Aurangabad** and **Gaya** crossed **47°C**.

The **State Disaster Management Department** is monitoring the distribution of ex-gratia.

Water tankers and **ORR centers** have been deployed in high-risk zones.

Schools and colleges remained closed as per **IMD** red alerts.

International News

Cyril Ramaphosa Re-elected as President of South Africa

Key Highlight: Cyril Ramaphosa has been re-elected as the **President of South Africa** for a second consecutive term on **18 June 2026**.

He secured **283 votes** in the 400-member **National Assembly**.

His re-election followed a historic **Government of National Unity** deal between the **ANC** and **Democratic Alliance**.

The inauguration ceremony was held at the **Union Buildings** in **Pretoria**.

Ramaphosa pledged to focus on **economic growth** and **unemployment**.

About South Africa

Capitals: Pretoria, Cape Town, Bloemfontein

Currency: South African Rand

President: Cyril Ramaphosa

SIPRI Yearbook 2024: India's Nuclear Warhead Count Rises

Key Highlight: The **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)** released its **Yearbook 2024**, highlighting changes in global nuclear arsenals.

India's nuclear warhead count increased from **164 in 2023** to **172 in 2024/2026 context**.

China is reportedly expanding its nuclear arsenal faster than any other country.

The report notes that **90%** of all nuclear weapons are held by **Russia** and the **USA**.

Global military spending reached a record high of **$2.44 trillion**.

Appointments & Resignations

Ajith Kumar KK Takes Charge as MD & CEO of Dhanlaxmi Bank

Key Highlight: Ajith Kumar KK officially took charge as the **Managing Director and CEO** of **Dhanlaxmi Bank** on **18 June 2026**.
He has over **36 years** of experience in the banking sector, previously with **Federal Bank**.
His appointment was approved by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** for a period of **3 years**.
He succeeds **JK Shivan**, whose term ended recently.
His primary focus will be on **digital transformation** and **asset quality** improvement.

Defence News

Indian Army Participates in Multinational Exercise 'Khaan Quest 2024'

Key Highlight: An **Indian Army** contingent departed for **Mongolia** to participate in the multinational peacekeeping exercise **'Khaan Quest 2024'**.
The exercise involves military contingents from over **20 countries**.
It is being held at the **Five Hills Training Area** near **Ulaanbaatar**.
The focus is on **Peace Support Operations (PSO)** under **United Nations** mandates.
Indian participants belong to the **GARHWAL RIFLES** regiment.

Science & Technology

NASA and Boeing Update on Sunita Williams' Starliner Return

Key Highlight: NASA and **Boeing** have extended the stay of astronauts **Sunita Williams** and **Butch Wilmore** at the **International Space Station (ISS)**.
The return of the **Starliner** spacecraft was rescheduled to allow more time for **thruster data analysis**.
Engineers are investigating **helium leaks** and thruster performance issues.
The mission marks the first crewed flight of the **Boeing Starliner**.
Sunita Williams serves as the **Pilot** for the **Crew Flight Test (CFT)**.

Sports

Neeraj Chopra Wins Gold at Paavo Nurmi Games 2026

Key Highlight: India’s **Golden Boy Neeraj Chopra** clinched the **Gold Medal** at the **Paavo Nurmi Games** in **Turku, Finland**.
Chopra recorded a best throw of **85.97 meters** in his third attempt.
He defeated **Toni Kuusela** of Finland and **Oliver Helander**.
This was Chopra's first competition after a brief hiatus due to **adductor muscle** issues.
The Paavo Nurmi Games is a prestigious **World Athletics Continental Tour Gold** event.

Trent Boult Announces Retirement from T20 Internationals

Key Highlight: New Zealand’s premier fast bowler **Trent Boult** confirmed his retirement from **T20 Internationals** following the **2026 T20 World Cup**.
Boult represented **New Zealand** in **four T20 World Cups** since 2014.
He is the leading wicket-taker for the **Black Caps** in T20 World Cup history.
The announcement came after New Zealand’s final group match against **Papua New Guinea**.
He will continue to play in **franchise cricket** leagues globally.

Shruti Vora Becomes First Indian to Win Three-Star Dressage Event

Key Highlight: Shruti Vora made history by becoming the first Indian rider to win a **three-star Grand Prix** dressage event in **Slovenia**.
She achieved the feat at the **CDI-3* event** held in **Lipica**.
Vora scored **67.761 points** riding her horse **Magnanimous**.
She surpassed veteran riders from **Italy** and **Austria**.

This victory strengthens her bid for qualification in upcoming **Asian Games** and international events.

Important Days

Autistic Pride Day Observed on 18 June

Key Highlight: Autistic Pride Day is celebrated globally on **18 June 2026** to recognize the pride and potential of people with **autism**.

The day was first celebrated by **Aspies For Freedom (AFF)** in **2005**.

The theme for 2026 is **'Celebrating Neurodiversity'**.

It uses the **rainbow infinity symbol** to represent the diversity of the autism spectrum.

The focus is on moving away from 'treatment' toward **acceptance** and **inclusion**.

International Picnic Day 2026

Key Highlight: International Picnic Day is observed annually on **18 June** to encourage people to spend time outdoors with family and friends.

The day has its origins in the aftermath of the **French Revolution**.

It is recognized as a day to appreciate **nature** and local **parks**.

Various **charity events** and community picnics are organized worldwide.

The **Guinness World Record** for the largest picnic is held by **Portugal** (2009).

Rankings & Index

India Ranks 129th in Global Gender Gap Index 2024/26

Key Highlight: India has been ranked **129th** out of 146 countries in the **Global Gender Gap Index 2024** (updated report context).

The index is published annually by the **World Economic Forum (WEF)**.

Iceland maintained its top position as the most gender-equal country.

India showed improvements in **secondary education enrollment**.

However, it lags in **Economic Participation and Opportunity**.

Awards & Honours

NMDC Receives Prestigious 'Mines and Minerals' Award

Key Highlight: NMDC Limited was honored with the **'Mines and Minerals Award'** for its excellence in sustainable mining practices on **18 June 2026**.

The award was presented at the **National Conclave on Mines and Minerals**.

NMDC was recognized for its **digitalization** efforts in iron ore mines.

The company achieved its highest-ever **iron ore production** in the last fiscal.

The award highlights their **ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance)** initiatives.

Anshuman Gaekwad to be Honoured with C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award

Key Highlight: Former Indian cricketer and coach **Anshuman Gaekwad** has been nominated for the **C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award**.

The award is the highest honor bestowed by the **BCCI** on former players.

Gaekwad played **40 Tests** and **15 ODIs** for India.

He served as the **Head Coach** of the Indian team during the late 90s.

The ceremony is scheduled to take place in **Mumbai** later this month.