

Highlights of 18 September 2026 Current Affairs

- The Union Cabinet has approved a major revision to India's social security architecture, raising the **Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) wage ceiling for mandatory coverage from ₹15,000 to ₹25,000 per month.**
- Legendary actor **Anant Nag** has been named the recipient of the prestigious **Dadasaheb Phalke Award** (for 2024), India's highest recognition in cinema.
 - The award will be formally presented at the **72nd National Film Awards** ceremony in Kevadia, Gujarat.
 - This marks only the second time the Dadasaheb Phalke Award has been conferred on a representative of the Kannada film industry, coming 31 years after the legendary Dr. Rajkumar received the honor in 1995.
- The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has eased compliance burdens for small traders and micro-enterprises by exempting export consignments valued up to **₹3 lakh** from mandatory registration requirements.
 - The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) amended Paragraph 2.57 of the Foreign Trade Policy, officially removing the requirement for a **Registration-cum-Membership Certificate (RCMC)** or Certificate of Registration for shipments with a Free-on-Board (FOB) value of up to **₹3 lakh**.
 - Designed specifically to assist **MSMEs, artisans, small manufacturers, first-time entrepreneurs, and occasional exporters.**
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the reappointment of **Kamlesh Chandra Varshney** as a Whole-Time Member (WTM) of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
 - Varshney's term, which was originally set to conclude in September 2026, has been extended until **August 4, 2029** (the date he turns 65) or until further orders.
 - A 1990-batch Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer, Varshney previously served as Joint Secretary in the Tax Policy and Legislation division of the Department of Revenue before joining SEBI as a Whole-Time Member in September 2023.
- The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has announced a major commitment of **at least \$1 billion over the next two years** to expand global access to artificial intelligence and combat widening technological disparities. The pledge was unveiled alongside the foundation's 10th annual **Goalkeepers Report**, titled ***Make This Matter: AI, Equity, and the Choice We Can't Delay.***
- Residents of **Piddington**, a rural village of roughly 350 people in Oxfordshire, England, voted overwhelmingly in a non-binding local referendum to "leave" the United Kingdom. The tongue-in-cheek protest—dubbed the formation of the **"Principality of Piddington"**—was staged to voice fierce opposition to government plans for a nearby facility.
 - The protest was sparked by UK government proposals to transform a disused military site (the former Bicester base, located roughly half a mile from the village) into housing for up to **1,250 male asylum seekers.**
- European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has formally invited Canada to become the European Union's first **"associate member,"** marking a major geopolitical overture to deepen ties between Brussels and Ottawa. The proposal was announced

during her annual State of the Union address to the European Parliament in Strasbourg, with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney present as a guest.

- The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has officially reconstituted the **Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC)**, bringing in a fresh 18-member panel. This marks the first major structural overhaul of the censor board panel since 2017. The new board functions under the leadership of chairperson **Shashi Shekhar Vempati** and has been appointed for a term of **three years**.
 - The revamped board features a diverse mix of prominent actors, filmmakers, musicians, and industry veterans:
 - **Notable Film Personalities: Preity Zinta, Pankaj Tripathi, Suniel Shetty, Prosenjit Chatterjee, Manoj Joshi, Pallavi Joshi, and Rupali Ganguly.**
- The National Statistical Office (NSO) under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has released its 17th Monthly Bulletin of the **Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)** for August 2026. The data indicates a steady strengthening of India's labour market, led by rural expansion and increased female workforce engagement.
- Zimbabwean wicketkeeper-batter **Brendan Taylor** officially surpassed legendary Indian cricketer Sachin Tendulkar to claim the record for the **longest career in men's One Day International (ODI) history**. Taylor achieved the milestone during the opening match of Zimbabwe's three-match series against Australia at the Harare Sports Club.
 - Taylor's ODI career now spans **22 years and 148 days**, pushing past Sachin Tendulkar's long-standing benchmark of **22 years and 91 days**.
 - Tendulkar has slipped to second place on the all-time list, while former Sri Lankan captain Sanath Jayasuriya sits third with an ODI career spanning 21 years and 184 days.
- The flagship **PM Vishwakarma Scheme** marked its third anniversary, celebrating significant strides in empowering traditional artisans and craftspeople across India. Launched on September 17, 2023, the central sector initiative has successfully met its core registration milestones well ahead of its initial timeline.
- **Hyderabad Liberation Day** is observed annually on **September 17** to commemorate the historic integration of the erstwhile princely state of Hyderabad into the Indian Union in 1948. The day marks the end of autocratic Nizam rule and the culmination of a intense geopolitical and popular struggle.
- The **QS Global Full-Time MBA Rankings 2027** have been released, featuring three premier Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) within the world's top 100. While India's footprint on the global education map has expanded significantly—with **19 Indian institutions** now featuring in the rankings overall—the top three IIMs have experienced a dip in their positions compared to the previous year.