

Django News Aggregator – Finish Plan

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What we just did

- Fixed template errors ({% with %} blocks) and restored topic chips.
- Improved cards to show source_name + image_url.
- Made image_url safe (blank=True, null=True, default="") + migrated.
- Cleaned up migrations and slug/index issues.
- Hid login/logout from the UI (kept app public for now).
- Started prod prep (requirements, Procfile, WhiteNoise, DATABASE_URL).

What's left to ship a solid portfolio app

1) Polish the core UX (quick wins)

- Add a favicon + better <title> per page.
- Show a loading/empty-state message if no articles after a fetch run.
- Link topic chips by slug (done) and highlight active chip (done).
- Ensure search works on both home + topic pages (done earlier, just re-check).

2) Data freshness

- Schedule 'python manage.py fetch_articles' hourly on your host (Render/Railway cron).
- In the command: skip duplicates (already via get_or_create) and guard against missing fields (done).
- Optional: add a '--topic' arg to fetch a single topic faster.

3) API (already added basic list)

- Keep /api/articles/ paginated + filter by topic and q.
- Add CORS only if you'll use a separate frontend later (else skip).

4) Deployment

- Host app (Render/Railway). Set env vars: SECRET_KEY, NEWSAPI_KEY, DEBUG=False, ALLOWED_HOSTS, CSRF_TRUSTED_ORIGINS, DATABASE_URL.
- Run on Gunicorn + WhiteNoise.
- 'collectstatic' in build; run 'migrate' on boot or via console; create superuser.
- Optional: switch to Postgres locally using DATABASE_URL for parity.

5) Security & hygiene

- .gitignore includes .env, db.sqlite3, venv/, __pycache__/, /staticfiles/.
- Rotate the leaked secret if it ever hit GitHub (history already cleaned).
- Set SECURE_* headers later if you add HTTPS custom domain.