Daily Current Affairs
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International

NASA Astronauts return to Earth after 286 days in space.

Astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore of NASA who were on the International Space Station since June of last year, following the maiden crewed mission of the Boeing Starliner spacecraft, which encountered technical issues that rendered it unsuitable for their return journey, returned to Earth, aboard a SpaceX Crew Dragon Spacecraft on March 18. Their SpaceX capsule parachuted into the Gulf of Mexico. A splashdown occurred off the coast of Tallahassee in the Florida Panhandle, ending the nine-month ordeal of the two astronauts. The astronauts concluded their trip with SpaceX's Crew-9, a routine International Space Station, ISS staff rotation mission, alongside NASA's Nick Hague and Russian cosmonaut Aleksandr Gorbunov. The two astronauts spent 286 days in space – 278 days longer than anticipated.

State of Emergency declared in Peru

Dina Boluarte, Peru's President declared a state of emergency in the capital Lima. This decision comes amid widespread disturbances after the killing of a 39-year-old popular singer Paul Flores, of the cumbia band Armonia 10. His death has sparked widespread outrage and mourning, highlighting the growing concerns over violence in the capital. President Dina Boluarte's government published a decree saying that the state of emergency would last 30 days, and authorities would restrict some rights, including the freedom of assembly and movement.

Partial ceasefire in Russia-Ukraine war.

After a telephonic conversation with US President Donald Trump, Russian President Vladimir Putin has agreed to temporarily halt attacks on energy and infrastructure targets in Ukraine. The White House and the Kremlin both have confirmed this. The Trump administration looked to persuade the Russian leader to sign off on a 30-day ceasefire proposal with Ukraine as a possible pathway to end the war. The two leaders also discussed bilateral relations and the situation in West Asia. However, the plan agreed by them is yet to be affirmed by the Ukraine.

National

India AI Mission and Lok Sabha sign an MoU.

India AI Mission and Lok Sabha signed an MoU in New Delhi to create a data set called the AI Kosh, which will enable the translation of extensive debates in the Lok Sabha into any language. This will provide a facility for researchers, Members of Parliament and academia to access the detailed debates of the Parliament in any language for research purposes. This agreement aims to utilize AI technology to create an extensive AI-based linguistic repository.

New Zealand and India ink five agreements in Defence, Education, Sports, Horticulture, and Forestry.

New Zealand and India have signed five agreements in the fields of Defence, Education, Sports, Horticulture, and Forestry. The two sides also exchanged the Authorized Economic Operator Mutual Recognition Agreement. Both sides announced the launch of negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement and negotiations on an arrangement facilitating the mobility of professionals and skilled workers. New Zealand has joined the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative and has become a member of the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.

From Power Deficient to Power Sufficient

In a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha Minister of State for Power Shripad Naik has said that the government has addressed the critical issue of power deficiency by adding 234 GigaWatt of generation capacity since 2014. Mr Naik said the government has transformed the country from a power deficient to a power sufficient. Mr Naik said the government has proposed setting up an additional minimum 80 thousand megawatt-based capacity by 2031-32.

The 34th Monthly Report on Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System

The 34th Monthly Report on Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) of Central Ministries and Departments' performance for February, was released by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG).

Nearly one lakh 12 thousand grievances were redressed by central ministries and departments in February this year, with an average grievance disposal time of 15 days. The Department of Food and Public Distribution, Telecommunications, and Posts topped the Group 'A' category in the rankings, while the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Ayush, and the Department of Land Resources topped the Group 'B' category.

The 5G Innovation Hackathon 2025 Announced

The 5G Innovation Hackathon 2025, aimed at accelerating the development of innovative 5G-powered solutions to address societal and industrial challenges was announced by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT). This is a six-month initiative and is open to students, startups, and professionals.

A dedicated app for the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme (PMIS) to be launched.

A dedicated app for the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme (PMIS),
which, aims to enhance participation by facilitating easier registration for the second round of the scheme, was launched. The app seeks to address the challenge of limited computer access by leveraging the widespread use of mobile phones, which offer a user-friendly alternative for many applicants. In tandem with the app launch, a facilitation centre dedicated to PMIS will be established in Kolkata. This centre is a collaborative effort between the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

Economy/Business

Wholesale Price Index (WPI) inflation at 2.38 per cent in February

The data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry today revealed that the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) inflation slightly increased to 2.38 per cent in February primarily due to the price increase in manufactured food items like vegetable oil and beverages. The WPI inflation was at 2.31 per cent in January this year.

MoU to promote the use of local currencies for cross-border transactions

A Memorandum of Understanding to establish a framework promoting the use of local currencies for cross-border transactions was signed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Bank of Mauritius (BOM). The MoU is designed to facilitate the use of the Indian Rupee and the Mauritian Rupee in bilateral trade, covering all current account transactions and permissible capital account transactions.

GeM's rapid expansion as a primary tool for public procurement.

The Government e-Marketplace (GeM) crossed a significant milestone by surpassing Rs 5 lakh crore in Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) on its portal before the close of the financial year 2024-25. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in a statement, said that the leap from four lakh crore rupees to five lakh crore rupees was accomplished in less than 50 days since crossing the previous benchmark on the 23rd of January this year. This achievement highlights GeM's rapid expansion as a primary tool for public procurement, serving a buyer base of over 1.6 lakh government entities.

Alphabet to acquire cybersecurity startup Wiz for $32 billion.

Google owner Alphabet will buy cybersecurity startup Wiz for $32 billion. Wiz, a four-year-old startup headquartered in New York, makes security tools designed to shield the information stored in remote data centres from intruders. The all-cash deal is set to boost Alphabet's profile in the cloud computing market, a space currently led by Amazon and Microsoft.

Sports

Khelo India Para Games mascot Ujjwala is inspired by the house sparrow of Delhi.

Khelo India Para Games 2025 has unveiled its anthem, mascot and logo. The highly anticipated Para Games will take place from March 20th until the 27th of this month in the National Capital. The Khelo India Para games will see over 1300 athletes competing. Launched on the sidelines of the 'Fit India Carnival', the Khelo India Para Games mascot Ujjwala is inspired by the house sparrow of Delhi symbolising the pride and fighting spirit of the city.