

International

Slovenian Town of Bled Named World's Best Tourism Village 2025 by UN

The United Nations Tourism Agency has named Bled, a scenic Slovenian town, among the Best Tourism Villages 2025, honouring its dedication to sustainable and community-driven tourism.

Known for its glacial lake, island church, and medieval clifftop castle, Bled joins a global network promoting responsible rural tourism and heritage preservation.

It is the fourth Slovenian village to receive this accolade, after Solcava, Radovljica, and Bohinj. Announced in Huzhou, China, the recognition highlights 52 villages chosen from 270 applicants across 65 countries for fostering inclusive and sustainable rural growth.

Pakistan and Afghanistan Announce Immediate Ceasefire After Qatar-Mediated Talks

Pakistan and Afghanistan have reached an immediate ceasefire agreement following Doha negotiations mediated by Qatar and Turkey.

Qatar's Foreign Ministry confirmed that both nations committed to follow-up meetings to ensure the ceasefire's sustainability and verification.

The truce comes after one of the deadliest escalations since the Taliban's 2021 return to power, which left dozens dead and hundreds injured.

Thousands Rally Nationwide in 'No Kings' Protests Against Trump Administration

Across the United States, thousands of demonstrators participated in the 'No Kings' protests, a nationwide movement denouncing President Donald Trump's administration and its policies. Over 2,500 events were held across all 50 states, with major turnouts in New York, Los Angeles, and Atlanta. Protesters rallied against authoritarianism, harsh immigration measures, federal troop deployments, and cuts to public programs like healthcare.

Science and Technology

Chandrayaan-2 Records First-Ever Effects of Solar Eruptions on the Moon

In a historic scientific milestone, ISRO announced that Chandrayaan-2's orbiter has made the first-ever observation of the Sun's Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs) affecting the Moon's exosphere.

Using the CHACE-2 instrument, scientists detected a sharp rise in neutral atom density after CMEs struck the Moon on May 10, 2024, confirming long-standing theories about solar interactions.

The findings, published in Geophysical Research Letters, offer crucial insights into lunar space weather and will guide future Moon missions and habitat design. Chandrayaan-2 continues to operate successfully in lunar orbit.

National

MEIT and WHO Invite Global Abstracts on AI Innovations in Health

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), has launched a global call for abstracts showcasing impactful and scalable artificial intelligence (AI) applications in healthcare systems. Selected submissions will be featured in a Casebook on AI in Health, highlighting use cases from the Global South. The publication aims to serve as a reference for policymakers, researchers, and innovators to replicate and expand proven AI health solutions. Researchers, institutions, and innovators are invited to submit their abstracts by October 31.

India Develops First Indigenous Antibiotic 'Nafithromycin'

Union Science and Technology Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh announced the development of India's first indigenous antibiotic, Nafithromycin, marking a major step toward pharmaceutical self-reliance. Effective against resistant respiratory infections, it will particularly benefit cancer and diabetic patients. Dr Singh also cited a breakthrough gene

therapy trial for haemophilia at CMC Vellore, showing a 60–70% correction rate with zero bleeding episodes.

India Becomes World's Second-Largest 5G Network, Says Minister Vaishnaw

Electronics and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced that India now hosts the world's second-largest 5G network, with 90% of the country covered by high-speed connectivity. Speaking at a World Summit in New Delhi, he said the rapid rollout of 5G has impressed the global community, extending access even to remote and rural regions. Addressing concerns over deepfakes, the Minister added that the government is preparing regulations to curb the spread of AI-generated misinformation and ensure digital safety.

Business and Economy

HDFC Bank Q2 Net Profit Rises 11% to ₹18,641 Crore

HDFC Bank Ltd, India's largest private sector lender, reported a 10.8% year-on-year (YoY) rise in standalone net profit to ₹18,641 crore for the quarter ended September 30, 2025 (Q2FY26).

Net revenue grew 10.3% to ₹45,900 crore, while net interest income (NII) increased 4.8% to ₹31,551.5 crore.

Provisions and contingencies stood at ₹3,500 crore. Average deposits rose 15.1% YoY to ₹27.1 lakh crore, and average advances grew 9% to ₹27.9 lakh crore. Retail loans expanded 7.4%, SME loans 17%, and corporate/wholesale loans 6.4%.

Gross NPAs were stable at ₹34,289 crore, while net NPAs rose 11% YoY to ₹11,447 crore. On a consolidated basis, net profit increased 10% to ₹19,610 crore for Q2FY26.

Punjab National Bank Q2 Net Profit Rises 14% to ₹4,904 Crore

Punjab National Bank (PNB) reported a 14% year-on-year (YoY) increase in standalone net profit to ₹4,904 crore for the September quarter of FY26, compared to ₹4,303 crore a year

earlier. The bank's operating profit grew 5.46% YoY to ₹7,227 crore for Q2 and ₹14,308 crore for H1FY26.

Total income rose 5.1% YoY to ₹36,214 crore in Q2 and 10.3% to ₹73,445 crore for the half year. Net interest income (NII) in H1FY26 increased slightly to ₹21,047 crore from ₹20,993 crore last year. The bank's gross NPA ratio improved by 103 basis points, standing at 3.45% as of September 2025.

ICICI Bank Q2 Net Profit Rises 5.2% to ₹12,359 Crore

ICICI Bank Ltd, India's second-largest private sector lender, reported a 5.2% year-on-year (YoY) rise in standalone net profit to ₹12,359 crore for the September quarter (Q2FY26). Net interest income (NII) grew 7.4% to ₹21,529 crore, with a net interest margin (NIM) of 4.30%.

Provisions (excluding tax) dropped to ₹914 crore from ₹1,233 crore last year. Total advances increased 10.3% to ₹14.08 lakh crore, while average deposits rose 9.1% to ₹15.57 lakh crore. The retail loan portfolio, comprising 52.1% of total loans, grew 6.6%.

Asset quality improved, with gross NPA ratio declining to 1.58% (from 1.97%) and net NPA ratio to 0.39% (from 0.42%). The bank's total provisions stood at ₹22,620 crore, or 1.6% of loans.

Sports

Jyothi Surekha Creates History with Archery World Cup Bronze

Indian archer Jyothi Surekha Vennam made history by becoming the first Indian woman to win a medal at the Archery World Cup Final, securing bronze in Nanjing, China.

She outclassed Great Britain's Ella Gibson 150–145 with a flawless 15 perfect shots.

Earlier, Jyothi defeated Alexis Ruiz (USA) 143–140 before narrowly losing to world No. 1 Andrea Becerra (Mexico).

Her remarkable comeback delivered India's first-ever women's compound medal at the prestigious event.

Zoravar Singh Sandhu Clinches Historic Bronze at ISSF Shotgun Worlds 2025

Indian shooter Zoravar Singh Sandhu etched his name in history by winning the bronze medal in men's trap at the ISSF World Championship Shotgun 2025 held in Athens, Greece.

This marks India's third-ever men's trap medal, following Manavjeet Singh Sandhu's gold (2006) and Karni Singh's silver (1962).

Tanvi Sharma Enters Final at BWF World Junior Championships 2025

India's Tanvi Sharma advanced to the girls' singles final at the BWF World Junior Championships 2025 in Guwahati, defeating China's Liu Si Ya 15–11, 15–9 in a commanding semi-final performance.

The 16-year-old prodigy became only the fifth Indian ever to reach a World Junior final, joining the ranks of Aparna Popat (1996), Saina Nehwal (2006, 2008), Siril Verma (2015), and Sankar Muthusamy (2022).

India Secures Silver After Hard-Fought Final at Sultan of Johor Cup 2025

Team India claimed the silver medal after a close 2–1 defeat to Australia in the Sultan of Johor Cup 2025 final held in Malaysia.

This marks India's fifth runners-up finish at the event, following consecutive bronze wins in recent years, while Australia ended their streak of three final losses, including the 2022 defeat to India.