

## International

### Myanmar Declares 7-Day National Mourning as Death Toll in Friday's Earthquake Crosses 2,000

The death toll in last week's devastating earthquake in Myanmar has crossed 2,000. A massive 7.7 magnitude earthquake, followed by a 6.4 magnitude aftershock minutes later, struck the country's Mandalay region, causing massive casualties and damage in multiple countries. Strong tremors were felt in Thailand, Vietnam, Laos and southwest China.

Myanmar's military leadership said over 2,056 people have lost their lives in the powerful earthquake so far, while more than 3,900 people have been injured, with 270 still missing.

### Masaki Kashiwara Awarded 2025 Abel Prize

Masaki Kashiwara is the first Japanese national and the first person based outside North America, Europe or Israel to win the 2025 Abel Prize, which is one of the highest honours for a mathematician. He co-founded a new field of mathematics called algebraic analysis. Kashiwara is known for building bridges across seemingly distant branches of mathematics. In particular, he developed algebraic tools to solve tough problems such as differential equations, and he greatly extended the scope of the mathematical theory of symmetry known as representation theory.

### Dalai Lama Presented With a Gold Mercury Award 2025

The Dalai Lama was presented with a Gold Mercury Award 2025 in recognition of his lifelong commitment to peace, compassion, education and human rights at his residence in Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh.

Nicolas De Santis, President and Secretary General of Gold Mercury International, presented the Gold Mercury Award for Peace to the Dalai Lama.

## National

### Operation Brahma: India Sends Aid to Myanmar via IAF, Navy, Army

External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar has said that under Operation Brahma, an Indian Air Force C-130J aircraft departed for Mandalay from Delhi this morning, carrying 16 tonnes of essential humanitarian aid, rice and essential food items. He said a ship of the Indian Navy, INS Ghariyal, departed from

Vishakhapatnam with 442 metric tonnes of essential food items.

### 14th Indo-Russian Naval EX INDRA 2025 Commences at Chennai

The 14th edition of the biennial India-Russia joint naval exercise Indra commenced off the Chennai coast in the Bay of Bengal. The Indra maritime exercise 2025 will take place in two phases from 28th March to 2nd April 2025. The port of Chennai in southern India hosted an opening ceremony of the joint exercise.

The exercise, which originally started in 2003, epitomizes the long-term strategic relationship between the two naval forces.

### NITI Aayog Develops Portal on Finances of States

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will launch a website developed by the NITI Aayog and the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) on state finances. According to the NITI Aayog, the portal will be a comprehensive repository of data on social, economic and fiscal parameters, research reports, papers, and expert commentary on the finances of states for about 30 years from 1990-91 to 2022-23.

The portal will facilitate an understanding of macro, fiscal, demographic and socio-economic trends in the form of easily accessible data and user-friendly format, and will also address the ongoing need for consolidated sectoral data in one place.

### Indian Army Successfully Tests Kamikaze Drone With Anti-Tank Munition

In a first-of-its-kind project, the Indian Army's Fleur-De-Lis Brigade has successfully tested a First Person View (FPV) drone equipped with an impact-based, kamikaze-role anti-tank munition. The test was carried out in the general area of Pathankot in Punjab.

The FPV drone was entirely assembled in-house at the Rising Star Drone Battle School, which has fabricated over 100 drones as of March 2025.

## Business and Economy

### Centre to Increase Stake in Vodafone Idea to 48.99%

Ministry of Communications will inject ₹36,950 crore in Vodafone Idea, raising its

stake to 48.99% as the telecom company's spectrum auction dues have been converted to equity shares. The share purchase will come into effect within thirty days after regulatory approvals from the Securities and Exchange Board of India.

### **ITC to Acquire Pulp and Paper Undertaking of Aditya Birla Real Estate for ₹3,498 Crore**

The Board of Directors of Aditya Birla Real Estate Ltd. (ABREL) have approved the sale of the company's pulp and paper undertaking in Lalkuan, Uttarakhand, to ITC Ltd. in an all-cash deal of ₹3,498 crore. Century Pulp and Paper (CPP), situated in Lalkuan, Uttarakhand, will be divested and sold to ITC as a value unlocking exercise for its shareholders.

### **Renault to Acquire Nissan's 51% Stake in Indian JV**

Renault Group of France and Nissan of Japan have signed a framework agreement by which Renault Group would control 100% equity in Renault Nissan Automotive India Private Ltd (RNAIPL) by acquiring a 51% stake owned by Nissan in the joint venture that has its manufacturing facility in Chennai.

An operational agreement has been signed to continue the current projects between Renault Group and Nissan, and to define the future relationship of Renault Group and Nissan in India.

### **N Chandrasekaran Joins IMF Advisory Council**

N Chandrasekaran, chairman of Tata Sons, has joined the International Monetary Fund (IMF) managing director's Advisory Council on Entrepreneurship and Growth. The IMF managing director's Advisory Council will meet approximately once every three months in structured discussions under Chatham House rules.

The Council unites experts from business, finance, academia, and policymaking to discuss how macroeconomic and financial policies can foster innovation, entrepreneurship, and productivity.

### **Ambuj Chandna Joins DBS Bank India as MD**

Kotak Mahindra Bank's Ambuj Chandna has joined DBS Bank India as the MD and Head of Consumer Banking group. Chandna was

earlier the President and Head of Consumer Bank (Products) at Kotak Mahindra Bank. He moved from Kotak Bank in March this year, after being associated with the bank for over 16 years.

Chandna joins the Indian subsidiary of Singapore's largest bank within weeks of Rajat Verma taking charge as the CEO, making it one of the first major leadership changes in the India unit.

### **SBI's CS Setty Elected as Chairman of Indian Banks' Association**

Challa Sreenivasulu Setty, Chairman of the State Bank of India (SBI), has been elected as the new Chairman of the Indian Banks' Association (IBA). Setty will lead the association until the next Annual General Meeting (AGM), representing the interests of India's banking sector. Setty replaces Sunil Mehta.

The IBA also elected three deputy chairmen to assist Setty in his role. A Manimekhalai, Union Bank of India's Managing Director and CEO; Swarup Kumar Saha, MD and CEO of Punjab & Sind Bank; and Madhav Nair, Country Head and India CEO of Bank of Bahrain & Kuwait, were elected as deputy chairmen.

### **NITI Aayog Launches Second Edition of "Trade Watch Quarterly" in New Delhi**

NITI Aayog released the second edition of the "Trade Watch Quarterly" publication for Quarter II of the financial year 2025 (July to September). The report highlights:

- India's total trade grew by 5.67 percent in April-September 2024 compared to the same period in 2023, with exports rising 5.23 percent and imports increasing 6.07 percent year on year.
- India's merchandise exports have remained stable, averaging 35.4 billion dollars per month over the past six months, while imports averaged 57.8 billion dollars, except for a surge in August.
- India ranks 6th in global textile exports, but its basket remains skewed towards natural fibers, with a strong presence in cotton and carpet threads.
- Regionally, North America and the EU continue to dominate India's exports, accounting for approximately 40%, while

Northeast Asia and West Asia remain key import sources.

### **RBI Raises Liquidity Limit for Standalone Primary Dealers to Rs 15,000 Cr**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) raised the aggregate limit available to Standalone Primary Dealers (SPDs) under the Standing Liquidity Facility at the prevailing repo rate, from Rs 10,000 crore to Rs 15,000 crore, effective from April 2, 2025. The limit for individual SPDs is being conveyed to them separately. All other terms and conditions of the facility shall remain unchanged.

Earlier in the week, the central bank allowed SPDs to participate in all repo operations, irrespective of the tenor, conducted by the RBI.

### **Federal Bank to Buy Additional 4% Stake in Ageas Federal Life Insurance**

Federal Bank has signed an agreement to acquire an additional 4 per cent stake in Ageas Federal Life Insurance Co. Ltd. (AFLIC) from Ageas Insurance International. With this, the stake of Federal Bank in Ageas Federal will rise from 26 per cent to 30 per cent.

### **Microsoft Turns 50**

Microsoft is now 50 years old. It celebrated its 50th anniversary on March 28, as it is looking to boost its fortunes by being a leader in the fast-developing field of artificial intelligence (AI). Microsoft is now worth \$2.9 trillion, making it the second most valuable company after Apple.

Microsoft was started in 1975 by two childhood friends, Bill Gates and Paul Allen. At first, they named the company "Micro-Soft." It became famous for making MS-DOS,

which later became Windows. Windows became the most used computer system in the world. Along with it, Microsoft Office programs like Word, Excel, and PowerPoint became important for offices and students everywhere.

Cloud computing is fuelling Microsoft's revenue with the help of its ubiquitous Office software, now hosted online and no longer released in boxes of floppy disks or CDs.

### **Sports**

### **Bihar to Host Men's Hockey Hero Asia Cup 2025**

Bihar will host the Men's Hockey Hero Asia Cup 2025 with the support of Hockey India. This will be the 12th Edition of the Asia Cup. A MoU was signed in Patna between Hockey India and Bihar State Sports Authority (BSSA) to hand over the baton of host. The event will be organised between 29th August and 7th September 2025. A total of eight teams, including Asia's top hockey-playing countries such as South Korea, India and Pakistan, will play in the tournament.

### **Miami Open Champion: Jakub Mensik Defeats Novak Djokovic in Finals**

Jakub Mensik has shattered Novak Djokovic's dream to win his 100th tour level title at the Miami Open tennis. The 19-year-old Czech beat the six-time Miami Open champion in the final of the men's singles in Florida, 7-6, 7-6. With this win, Mensik also became the second-youngest champion of the tournament behind Carlos Alcaraz, who lifted the trophy in 2022 as an 18-year-old.