

International

US House passes bill to fund government.

The US House of Representatives passed a spending bill narrowly avoiding a consequential government shutdown just few hours before the deadline came to end. The Democrats joined Republican lawmakers to advance the bill to keep the federal government funded until mid-March next year. The bill passed with 366 votes in favor compared to 34 against with more Democrats voting to support it than Republicans.

India demonstrates remarkable progress in malaria reduction: WHO.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) in its World Malaria Report 2024 has stated that India has demonstrated remarkable progress in reducing malaria cases and associated mortality in the country, particularly in its high-endemic states. According to the report, nationwide, the number of estimated malaria cases in India has reduced from 6.4 million in 2017 to around 2 million cases in 2023, which is a remarkable 69 per cent decrease. Similarly, the estimated malaria deaths decreased from 11,100 to 3,500 during the same period which is a 68 per cent decrease.

India dispatches 1,000 MT of humanitarian aid to Lesotho.

India has extended humanitarian assistance to Lesotho, a country in Southern Africa. In a social media post, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said that a consignment of one thousand metric tonnes has departed from Nhava Sheva Port for Lesotho. He also said that the consignment would help in addressing food security and nutritional requirements of the people of that country.

National

Two indigenously-built warships Nilgiri & Surat delivered to Indian Navy.

The Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDL) has delivered two Capital warships, Nilgiri and

Surat to the Indian Navy. Nilgiri is the First Stealth Frigate of Project 17A Class Ship while Surat is the Fourth Stealth Destroyer of Project 15B Class Guided Missile Destroyer. The warships will now undergo sea trials.

Both warships have been designed by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau, constructed by MDL and overseen by the Warship Overseeing Team, Mumbai.

Lower House refers two bills on One Nation, One Election to Joint Committee of Parliament

The two bills related to the One Nation One Election have been referred to the Joint Committee of Parliament. The committee has 27 Members from Lok Sabha and 12 Members from the Rajya Sabha. The Committee will submit its report to the House by the first day of the last week of the next Parliament session.

Former Haryana CM Om Prakash Chautala passes away.

Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) supremo and former Haryana Chief Minister for five times Om Prakash Chautala passed away in Gurugram at the age of 89. Om Prakash Chautala, was the son of former Deputy Prime Minister of India Chaudhary Devi Lal.

26 countries in world provide visa-free entry & 40 countries provide visa-on-arrival facilities to Indian passport holders.

The Centre said that 26 countries in the world provide visa-free entry and 40 countries provide visa-on-arrival facilities to Indian passport holders. In a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha, Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh informed that India provides visa-free entry to citizens of Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives.

He added that in the case of Maldives, their citizens intending to visit India for tourism, medical and business purposes are exempted from the requirement of a prior visa if their period of stay in India is less than 90 days in the preceding six months.

Culture ministry started financial assistance for veteran artists & scholars over 60 years.

The Centre said that for veteran artists and scholars aged over 60 years, the culture ministry has started a financial assistance scheme. In a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha, Union Culture and Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat informed that the objective of this scheme is to provide financial assistance of a maximum of six thousand rupees per month to the old artists and scholars aged 60 years and above, having an annual income not exceeding 72,000 rupees. He added that assistance is being given to persons who have contributed significantly in their specialised fields of arts and letters. Mr Shekhawat said that in the event of the death of the beneficiary, the financial assistance is transferred to his or her spouse.

First-ever World Meditation Day to be observed on Dec 21.

The first-ever World Meditation Day is set to be observed on December 21, marking a global initiative to promote well-being, peace and mindfulness across nations. Earlier this month, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution, co-sponsored by India, to designate the 21st of December as World Meditation Day. This historic event marks the beginning of an annual global celebration of this age-old practice, revered for its benefits to both physical and mental health, and overall well-being.

Business and Economy

Centre, ADB sign \$350 million loan agreement to strengthen India's logistics ecosystem.

The Centre and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed a 350-million-dollar policy-based loan agreement. This loan is part of the second subprogram of the Strengthening Multimodal and Integrated Logistics Ecosystem (SMILE) program. The government is undertaking the program to bring in wide-ranging reforms in the country's logistics sector.

It includes two subprograms aimed at boosting manufacturing and improving supply chain resilience.

Share of gender budget in Union budget increased to 6.8% from 5.3% in 2023-24

The Central government has allocated 3.27 lakh crore rupees for women and girls in the current financial year, which is an increase of over 37 percent over the allocation in the last financial year. Minister of State for Women and Child development, Savitri Thakur said. She said that the share of the gender budget in the Union budget has increased to 6.8 per cent in the current financial year from 5.3 per cent in 2023-24, which is the highest since inception.

Indian economy to grow 6.6% in FY26: Ind-Ra

India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) has projected the Indian economy to grow at 6.6% in 2025-26, up from 6.4% in the current fiscal year. Ind-Ra believes investments will be a key growth driver for the Indian economy in FY26, like in FY22 and FY24.

India signs \$42 million loan agreement with ADB to strengthen coastal resilience in Maharashtra.

The Central government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a 42 million dollar loan to strengthen coastal protection to help boost community resilience in Maharashtra. The ADB will help build the capacity of the Maharashtra Maritime Board in shore management planning, including the establishment of a coastal infrastructure management unit. It said the project will support capacity building of stakeholders on gender equality and social inclusion, coastal management, and livelihood activities.

Amaravati development: World Bank approves \$800 million loan.

In a major boost to the development of Amaravati, the greenfield capital city of Andhra Pradesh (A.P.), the World Bank (WB) has approved the \$800 million loan for the

Amaravati Integrated Urban Development Program (AIUDP). The AIUDP was aimed at establishing the capital city as a well-managed, climate-resilient growth centre in Andhra Pradesh that would generate jobs and improve the lives of its current and future residents, especially the most vulnerable.

Centre sets June '26 deadline for solar firms to adopt India-made solar cells.

In a step towards discouraging foreign imports of components used in solar panel manufacturing, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has set a deadline of June '26, after which solar companies must use only India-made solar photovoltaic cells in their panels to participate in government procurement programmes.

With installed capacity of solar PV cells in the country expected to increase substantially next year, it has been proposed to issue List-II of solar PV cells under ALMM, which shall be effective from 1st June 2026.

RBL Bank re-appoints R Subramaniakumar as MD & CEO

RBL Bank said its board of directors has reappointed R Subramaniakumar, the current managing director and chief executive officer (MD and CEO) of the bank, for a period of three years, effective June 23, 2025. The reappointment is, however, subject to approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Subramaniakumar was initially appointed for a period of three years as the MD and CEO of the bank in June 2022, making him the second public sector banker after Prashant Kumar to head a private sector bank.

Sports

India awarded the hosting rights for the World Boxing Cup Final 2025 .

India was awarded the hosting rights for the World Boxing Cup Final 2025. The ranking tournament, scheduled to be held in November next year, will mark the culmination of three World Boxing Cups held earlier in 2025. This elite event will bring together the world's best boxers to compete for top honours or solidify their global rankings.

Simultaneously, the World Boxing Congress 2025, also set to be held in India, will host stakeholders, officials, and dignitaries from the global boxing community

Football: German Super Cup to be named after Franz Beckenbauer from 2025.

The German Super Cup will bear the name of Franz Beckenbauer, who died earlier this year, from 2025. Beckenbauer, nicknamed 'Der Kaiser' for his dominant style on the field, was one of the greatest players of all time and died in January, aged 78.

He won the Bundesliga five times as a player and the German Cup four times.