

International

New Zealand halts millions of funds to Cook Islands over its China ties.

New Zealand has halted millions of dollars in funding to the Cook Islands over the “breadth and content” of agreements the smaller Pacific nation made with China. New Zealand, which is the smaller Pacific nation's biggest funder, won't consider any new money for the Cook Islands until the relationship improves.

Cook Islands Prime Minister Mark Brown told lawmakers in Parliament that the funding was “not halted, it's paused,” and downplayed the significance of the amount frozen.

Violence against children in conflict reached 'unprecedented levels' in 2024: UN.

Violence against children caught in multiple and escalating conflicts reached “unprecedented levels” last year, with the highest number of violations in Gaza and the West Bank, Congo, Somalia, Nigeria and Haiti, according to a United Nations report. The report verified 41,370 grave violations against children in 2024 – including 36,221 committed in 2024. There was also a marked increase in the number of child victims of multiple violations to 22,495.

There is a staggering 25% surge in “grave violations” against children under the age of 18 from 2023, when the number of such violations rose by 21%.

U.S. News releases 2025-2026 Best Global Universities rankings.

U.S. News & World Report, the global authority in education rankings and consumer advice, published the 2025-2026 Best Global Universities rankings. The latest edition includes universities from more than 100 countries. The following countries have the most schools in the overall rankings:

China: 397

United States: 280

India: 118

Overall Best Global Universities – Top 10

1. Harvard University (U.S.)
2. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) (U.S.)
3. Stanford University (U.S.)

4. University of Oxford (U.K.)
5. University of Cambridge (U.K.)
6. University of California Berkeley (U.S.)
7. University College London (U.K.)
8. University of Washington Seattle (U.S.)
9. Yale University (U.S.)
10. Columbia University (U.S.)

National

Indo-French biennial joint military exercise commences in France.

The 8th edition of the biennial Indo-French joint military exercise SHAKTI commenced at La Cavalerie, France. The Indian Army contingent, comprising 90 personnel, is primarily represented by a battalion of the Jammu and Kashmir Rifles, along with personnel from other arms and services.

Exercise SHAKTI is a bilateral training engagement between the Indian and French Armies aimed at enhancing interoperability, operational coordination, and mutual understanding. The 2025 edition focuses on joint operations in a sub-conventional environment under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, with training conducted in semi-urban terrain.

Axiom Mission 4 launch delayed again, NASA to announce new date soon.

Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla's Axiom-4 mission to the International Space Station has again been postponed. The mission was earlier expected to be launched on the 22nd of June. In a statement, NASA said that the space agency needs additional time to continue evaluating International Space Station operations after recent repair work in the aft-most segment of the orbital laboratory's Zvezda service module.

India's hypersonic glide missile is in advanced stage': DRDO Chief.

India's hypersonic glide missile is in an advanced stage of development and could complete trials within the next two to three years, DRDO chief Dr Samir V Kamat has said. He confirmed that one development trial has already been conducted. Dr Kamat also revealed that India has successfully demonstrated scramjet propulsion for over 1,000 seconds — a key milestone toward developing hypersonic cruise missiles.

IYD to be celebrated at 100 tourist-based iconic destinations & 50 cultural sites.

The Ministry of Culture will mark the 11th International Day of Yoga by organizing yoga sessions at 100 tourist-based iconic destinations and 50 more cultural sites across the country. These events, scheduled for 21st June, will complement the main celebrations being organized by the Ministry of Ayush in Vishakhapatnam which will be attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Some of the iconic locations hosting the Yoga Day celebrations includes UNESCO World Heritage Sites such as Charaideo Maidam in Assam, Rani Ki Vav and Dholavira in Gujarat, Hampi and Pattadakal in Karnataka, Khajuraho Group of Monuments and Sanchi Stupa in Madhya Pradesh, Sun Temple at Konark in Odisha, Elephanta Caves in Maharashtra, and the Brihadisvara Temple at Thanjavur in Tamil Nadu.

MoTA & AIIMS to conduct competition for Sickle cell drug treatment.

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, in collaboration with the All India Institute of Medical Science, Delhi, will undertake a competition for drug development for the treatment of sickle cell disease, which disproportionately affects India's tribal populations. The selected proposal will be funded up to 10 cores rupees.

All efforts would be made to eradicate sickle cell disease from the country by the end of 2047.

Business and Economy

ADB, World Bank approve loans worth \$1.5 billion to Bangladesh.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank (WB) have approved loans worth \$1.5 billion to help Bangladesh reform its banking sector, fight climate change among other projects. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a \$900 million loan, of which \$500 million will support efforts to stabilise and reform the country's banking sector, while the remaining \$400 million will promote climate-resilient and inclusive development initiatives

NABARD to lend ₹10,000 cr in FY26 for green projects.

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) plans to lend about ₹10,000 crore this year as part of its Green

Lending Facility. NABARD launched the facility in FY25 to fund projects of Central and State governments, government agencies and private entities aimed at meeting sustainable development goals. The minimum loan amount disbursed would be ₹100 crore and these are for projects such as ethanol plants and electric vehicles.

HAL wins ₹511-crore deal to build, own and commercialise SSLV launches.

The Hindustan Aeronautics Limited has won a Transfer of Technology (ToT) deal, valued at ₹511 crore, from the Indian Space Research Organisation, to build and operate Small Satellite Launch Vehicles (SSLVs).

The SSLV is a three-stage vehicle to launch satellites that weigh less than 500 kg into the Lower Earth Orbit (LEO). The deal will enable commercialisation of SSLV launches.

Core sectors grow at nine-month low of 0.7% in May.

Growth in the eight core sectors of the economy slowed to a nine-month low of 0.7% in May 2025, driven by contractions in the crude oil, natural gas, fertilisers, and electricity sectors.

The Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) for May 2025, released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, was last lower in August 2024, when it had contracted 1.4%. The growth rate in May also marks two consecutive months of slowing growth in the index.

Pakistan signs five-year syndicate financing facility for \$1 billion.

Pakistan has signed a five-year long-term syndicated financing facility for \$1 billion, indicating strong support from leading financiers amid the country's ongoing economic crisis.

The Dubai Islamic Bank acted as the Sole Islamic Global Coordinator while Standard Chartered Bank is the Mandated Lead Arranger and Book-runners.

Amazon to invest \$233 million in India to expand infrastructure, improve tech.

Amazon will invest more than 20 billion rupees (\$233 million) in India in 2025 to expand and update its operations infrastructure, develop new technology for its fulfilment network and improve delivery safety.

The investment builds on top of Amazon's prior investments for the creation of an operations network to deliver to all serviceable pin-codes in the country.

Tech firm LTIMindtree unveils new business unit 'BlueVerse' for AI ecosystem.

LTIMindtree, an L&T-owned technology firm, has unveiled a new business unit and a suite of AI services and solutions called BlueVerse. Designed as a complete AI ecosystem, BlueVerse will help enterprises accelerate AI concept-to-value journey.

Sale of listed private non-financial firms rose 7.1% in Q4FY25: RBI data.

According to data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), sales of listed private non-financial companies registered 7.1% growth (y-o-y) during Q42024-25 compared with 8% growth in the previous quarter and 6.9% in Q42023-24,

Aggregate sales growth (y-o-y) of 1,659 listed private manufacturing companies moderated to 6.6% during Q42024-25 from 7.7% during the previous quarter; even as major industries such as electrical machinery, chemicals, food products and pharmaceuticals industries recorded double-digit sales growth.

RBI issues project finance directions, banks to provide 1-1.25% for projects under construction.

The Reserve Bank (RBI) has issued RBI (Project Finance) Directions 2025 asking Regulated Entities (REs) to maintain general provision of 1.25% for under construction Commercial Real Estate (CRE) loans and 1% for infrastructure projects under construction. However, asset provisioning requirements will be reduced at the time of operational phase.

HDFC Bank CEO moves Bombay High Court over FIR by Lilavati Trust.

HDFC Bank's Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Sashidhar Jagdishan has moved the Bombay High Court, seeking quashing of the First Information Report (FIR) lodged against him by Prashant Mehta, a permanent trustee of the Lilavati Kirtilal Mehta Medical Trust, which oversees Lilavati Hospital. The FIR accused him of accepting a sum of ₹2.05 crore as a bribe to help the Chetan Mehta Group allegedly retain illegal control of the charitable trust.

Sports

Neeraj Chopra wins Gold at Paris Diamond League 2025.

India's javelin star Neeraj Chopra won the men's javelin throw competition of the Paris Diamond League 2025 at Stade Sébastien Charléty. Chopra won the title with a best effort of 88.16 meters achieved with his first throw. Germany's Julian Weber finished second with an 87.88 meter throw.

Delhi CM unveils logo & mascot of World Para Athletics Championship

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta unveiled the logo and mascot and flagged the off 100 days to go countdown the for New Delhi 2025 World Para Athletics Championship in the National Capital. The official mascot, called Viraaaj, is a young elephant with a blade prosthesis.

Over 100 countries and more than 2500 athletes are participating in the sporting event. India is hosting the event for the first time, and is the fourth Asian country to do so, after Doha 2015 in Qatar, Dubai 2019 in the United Arab Emirates and Kobe 2024 in Japan.

The sporting event will be held from 26th September to 5th October at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.