

## International

### US President unveils 175-billion dollar Golden Dome missile defence shield plan.

US President Donald Trump has announced a 175 billion Golden Dome missile defence shield programme for the United States. He has also named US Space Force General Michael Guetlein to head the ambitious program aimed at blocking threats from China and Russia. The Golden Dome will protect the US from long-range missiles, including those launched from space or other continents, and will integrate with current defence systems.

Golden Dome aims to create a network of satellites to detect, track and potentially intercept incoming missiles. The shield could deploy hundreds of satellites for missile detection and tracking.

### UK suspends trade talks with Israel amid Gaza situation.

The UK has suspended trade talks with Israel, summoned the Israeli ambassador, and imposed new sanctions on West Bank settlers over the worsening situation in Gaza. Meanwhile, EU Foreign Ministers, meeting in Brussels, have agreed to review their trade agreement with Israel. The European Union is Israel's largest trading partner, responsible for 32 per cent of its goods trade.

### Asim Munir becomes Pakistan's 2nd Field Marshal.

The Pakistani government has promoted its current army chief, General Asim Munir, to the rank of Field Marshal. This was only the second time in the country's history that the title was bestowed upon someone. The decision came in the aftermath of heightened tensions and a military standoff with India following the Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 people were killed.

Pakistan's first and only other Field Marshal Muhammad Ayub Khan rose to absolute power more than six decades ago.

## National

### India receives WHO certification for elimination of Trachoma as public health problem.

India has been awarded the Certificate of Elimination of Trachoma as a public health problem by the World Health Organisation (WHO) at the 78th World Health Assembly in Geneva. On October 8th last year, the WHO declared that the Government of India had eliminated Trachoma as a public health problem. India also became the third country in the Southeast Asia region to reach this public health milestone.

The Indian government has taken various steps under the National Programme for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment (NPCBVI) to eliminate Trachoma.

### Mizoram makes history as India's first fully literate state.

Mizoram became the first fully literate state under the ULLAS (Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society) initiative.

Mizoram's recognition as the first fully literate state was declared under the Ministry of Education's ULLAS initiative, which mandates a minimum literacy rate of 95% of the population. According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS 2023–2024), Mizoram has reached a literacy rate of 98.2%.

### GS1 to roll out next-generation barcodes by 2027 to boost transparency.

GS1, the non-profit standards organisation that develops barcodes, is preparing to replace the current system with next-generation formats such as QR Codes powered by GS1 and GS1 DataMatrix. The global rollout is expected by 2027 and aims to improve product traceability and supply chain transparency. The transition will enable businesses, consumers and regulators to access product-specific information—including expiry dates, sourcing data and recall notices—through a single scan. In India, GS1 standards are already used in national programmes such as FASTag, Ayushman Bharat and ROHINI (a hospital registry).

(22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025)

## **Indian Navy to induct 5th century-inspired stitched ship in Karnataka**

The Indian Navy will induct a traditionally built ancient, stitched ship at the Naval Base in Karnataka. The stitched ship is a recreation of a 5th-century ship, inspired by a painting from the Ajanta Caves. The construction of the Stitched Ship was carried out using entirely traditional methods and raw materials by artisans from Kerala, led by master shipwright Babu Sankaran, who executed thousands of hand-stitched joints.

Unlike any modern vessel, the stitched ship is equipped with square sails and steering oars, which are entirely alien to modern-day ships.

## **MR Srinivasan, architect Of Civil Nuclear Energy program, dies.**

Dr MR Srinivasan, eminent nuclear scientist and former Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, passed away in Tamil Nadu's Udthagamandalam. He was 95. He worked closely with Dr Homi Bhabha on the construction of Apsara, India's first nuclear research reactor, which attained criticality in August 1956. A key architect of India's civil nuclear energy programme, Dr Srinivasan's career in the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) spanned over five decades, beginning in September 1955. Dr Srinivasan was awarded the Padma Vibhushan, India's second-highest civilian honour.

## **Business and Economy**

### **EnKash launches India's 1st payment gateway built for SMBs and Startups**

EnKash, India's leading spend management and payments platform, has officially launched the EnKash Payment Gateway - a first-of-its-kind payment solution engineered for India's 63 million+ small to medium-sized and startup merchants. The EnKash Payment Gateway is engineered to deliver a frictionless experience for merchants across categories - from D2C (Direct-to-Consumer) brands, SaaS platforms, and B2B commerce to healthcare, hospitality, education, and logistics.

## **Nvidia plans to sell tech to speed AI chip communication.**

Nvidia will begin offering its advanced chip interconnect technology, NVLink Fusion, to other companies. This technology is designed to enhance chip-to-chip communication, a critical component in building and deploying artificial intelligence (AI) systems. The new version of NVLink, called NVLink Fusion, enables multiple chips to work together efficiently in custom-built AI hardware systems. Originally developed years ago, Nvidia's NVLink facilitates high-speed data exchange between chips. It is currently used in Nvidia's powerful GB200 system, which combines two Blackwell GPUs with a Grace CPU.

## **Myntra goes Global: Fashion E-commerce giant enters Singapore**

Flipkart-owned Myntra has launched operations in Singapore, with the island nation becoming its first international outpost. The move is targeted at the roughly 6.5 lakh-strong Indian diaspora based in the city-country, and will focus on Indian fashion initially.

## **HDFC Bank launches 'Biz+ Current Account'**

HDFC Bank has launched "Biz+ Current Accounts" to meet the evolving needs of Indian businesses. The Biz+ offering includes four variants tailored to different business growth phases: Biz Lite+ for setup, Biz Pro+ for growth, Biz Ultra+ for expansion, and Biz Elite+ for diversification.

Each Biz+ Current Account comes with core benefits, including cash handling services, seamless digital banking platforms and dedicated bank/relationship manager support along with bundled solutions that address the full spectrum of banking needs for businesses.

## **Karur Vysya Bank posts 12% increase in Q4 net profit to ₹513 crore.**

Karur Vysya Bank (KVB) has posted a 12.50% increase in its fourth quarter net profit to ₹513 crore, up from ₹456 crore in the corresponding period a year ago.

Net profit for the fiscal FY25 registered a growth of 20.99% and stood at ₹ 1,942 crore from ₹1,605 crore during corresponding previous year.

## **U.S. Senate advances legislation to regulate stablecoins, a form of cryptocurrency.**

The Senate has voted to move forward with legislation to regulate a form of cryptocurrency called stablecoins, two weeks after Democrats blocked the measure.

The 66-32 procedural vote keeps one of President Donald Trump's top legislative priorities on track for passage and highlights the growing political strength of the cryptocurrency industry, which spent heavily in last year's election and has amassed a large war chest for next year's midterms.

## **Sports**

### **India's Adriyan Karmakar wins silver medal at ISSF Junior World Cup in Suhl, Germany.**

Adriyan Karmakar opened India's medal account with a silver in the 50m rifle prone event at the ISSF Junior World Cup in Suhl, Germany. The 20-year-old shot a score of 626.7, just 0.3 points behind Sweden's Jesper Johansson, who won gold.