

International

India UK agree to resume free trade negotiations.

India and the UK have agreed to resume free trade negotiations between the two countries. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said this while addressing the joint press conference along with the UK Secretary of State for Business and Trade Jonathan Reynolds in New Delhi. He said that the talks on FTA were stalled due to elections in the UK.

India receives top global award for enhancing road safety standards.

The Government of India has been honoured with the Prince Michael Decade of Action Road Safety Award, the highest accolade in the field, for its efforts in enhancing vehicle safety standards over the past ten years. This recognition acknowledges key advancements, such as the introduction of a new car safety assessment programme and the mandate for anti-lock braking systems (ABS) in all new two-wheelers. India shared this honour with Morocco, which was also recognised for its contributions to road safety.

The awards were presented at the 4th Ministerial Conference on Road Safety, held in Marrakech, where leaders from various nations convened to strategize on reducing "global road fatalities by 50 per cent by 2030".

Japan, Philippines strengthen defence ties

Japan and the Philippines are strengthening their defence ties amid growing concerns over China's aggressive actions in the region. Both nations have initiated discussions on expanding joint training, port visits, and sharing military information. Both countries, key allies of the United States, have been vocal critics of China's actions in the South China Sea and East China Sea.

Solar Powered Tricycle wins award at BRICS Industrial Innovation Contest

Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone's (AMTZ) Solar Powered Tricycle has won the Outstanding Project Award at the BRICS Industrial Innovation Contest 2024. This breakthrough mobility solution was developed

by the Assistive Technology Centre (ATC) at AMTZ.

The cycle was officially launched by Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, in August 2024. The award was presented by BRICS Partner Innovation Center and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology.

Microsoft unveils its first quantum chip Majorana 1

Microsoft introduced Majorana 1, the world's first quantum chip powered by a new Topological Core architecture that it expects will realize quantum computers capable of solving meaningful, industrial-scale problems in years, not decades.

It leverages the world's first topoconductor, a breakthrough type of material which can observe and control Majorana particles to produce more reliable and scalable qubits, which are the building blocks for quantum computers.

National

ILO chief lauds India's social security network.

Citing the "World Social Protection Report 2024-26", Director-General of the International Labour Organization, Gilbert F. Houngbo, said that the proportion of India's population covered under at least one branch of social protection has increased from 24% to 49%, almost doubling in a very short time.

Speaking at the 'Regional Dialogue on Social Justice' in New Delhi, Houngbo described this as a "remarkable achievement", crediting India's strong partnership with the ILO and the government's decisive actions in expanding social protection over the past few years.

USAID funded seven projects in India in FY24 but not related to 'voter turnout': Finance Ministry report.

Amid a raging political controversy over the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s alleged role in influencing Indian elections, the latest annual report of the Finance Ministry has disclosed that the agency funded seven projects worth \$750 million in 2023-24. The report said funds

were committed for Sustainable Forests and Climate Adaptation Program and Energy Efficiency Technology Commercialization and Innovation Project.

Odissi dancer Mayadhar Raut dies

Guru Mayadhar Raut, the last of the pillars of Odissi dance passed away. Raut is considered the "Father of Odissi dance", having steered the revival of Odissi in 1950s with Shastra-based knowledge.

Mayadhar Raut was honoured with many awards, such as the Padma Shri (2010), Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1985), Sahitya Kala Parishad Award (1984) and the Odissi Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1977).

Namita Gokhale talks about revisiting her stories with Life on Mars.

Namita Gokhale's latest collection, Life on Mars: Collected Stories, assembles stories both old and new, some of which she revised with the help of longtime collaborator Ravi Singh.

The book revisits her literary journey with 15 short stories exploring love, fate, and mythology. Divided into two sections, the book blends past works with new narratives.

Business and Economy

RBI launches Financial Literacy Week 2025 to focus on women's prosperity.

The Reserve Bank of India has launched the Financial Literacy Week 2025. It is an annual initiative aimed at promoting financial awareness among the people. This year, the campaign runs from February 24 to 28, under the theme "Financial Literacy – Women's Prosperity". As part of the campaign, banks have been instructed to spread awareness by displaying RBI-developed posters on their websites, ATMs, mobile applications, and display boards at their branches.

IndusInd Bank partners with Professional Golf Tour of India as its Official Banking Partner.

IndusInd Bank has announced its partnership with the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) as its official Banking Partner.

As an exclusive Banking Partner, the bank will actively support PGTI events throughout the tournament, contributing to spread the reach of the sport and strengthening India's professional golfing landscape.

Sports

GM Iniyar finishes runner-up in La Grande International Open Chess Tournament.

Indian Grandmaster P. Iniyar finished runner-up in the 41st Cappelle La Grande International Open Tournament after losing to IM Mahel of France in the tiebreaks in Dunkirk. The fifth seed Indian scored 7.5 points, with six wins and 3 draws to be tied first alongside Mahel after nine rounds. The result has helped Iniyar gain 16 rating points and his live rating now is 2566.

Champions Trophy: New Zealand beat Bangladesh by 5 wickets.

In the ICC Men's Champions Trophy Cricket, New Zealand defeated Bangladesh by five wickets in a Group A match in Rawalpindi. Earlier, after being sent into bat, Bangladesh scored 236 for nine in their allotted 50 overs. In response, New Zealand chased down the target with ease, finishing at 240 for 5 in 46.1 overs.

Dubai Tennis Championships 2025: Mirra Andreeva, 17, becomes youngest player to win a WTA 1000 event

Russia's Mirra Andreeva became the youngest player to win a WTA 1000 title when the 17-year-old beat Clara Tauson 7-6(1), 6-1 in the Dubai Tennis Championships final. She beat three Grand Slam champions -- Marketa Vondrousova, Iga Swiatek and Elena Rybakina to reach the final.

Andreeva has also become the first 17-year-old to be ranked in the Top 10 since Nicole Pietrangeli in 2007. She moved up five places to occupy the ninth spot.