

International

Micheal Martin confirmed as new Irish PM.

Fianna Fail party leader Micheal Martin has been confirmed as the new Prime Minister after a vote in the Dail, the lower house of the Irish parliament. The lawmakers voted to elect Martin as the Prime Minister of Ireland for the second time by a coalition of the country's two large centre-right parties, Fine Gael and Fianna Fail, and independent lawmakers.

Martin was the Prime Minister of Ireland between 2020 and 2022 before handing the leadership to Fine Gael for the second half of the term. Under the deal between the two parties, outgoing Prime Minister Simon Harris is set to return as premier in late 2027.

US Senate confirms John Ratcliffe as CIA Director.

The United States Senate has voted to confirm former Director of National Intelligence (DNI) John Ratcliffe, as the next Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director under President Donald Trump. The Upper Chamber voted 74-25 to approve the nomination of Mr Ratcliffe, who served as Trump's DNI for the last eight months of his first term.

Abu Dhabi, Dubai to be connected by rail, reducing travel time to 30 minutes

A high-speed train project connecting Abu Dhabi and Dubai in just 30 minutes was announced by Etihad Rail. The train will travel at speeds of up to 350 km/h, dramatically reducing travel times and enhancing connectivity between the two emirates. Etihad Rail, which will oversee the development and operation of the project, estimates the initiative will contribute Dh145 billion to the UAE's GDP over the next 50 years.

National

Indian Navy completes hydrographic survey of 25,000 sq. nautical miles of Mauritius

The Indian Navy's INS Sarvekshak had completed the final phase of the hydrographic survey of Mauritius covering an extensive area of over 25,000 square nautical miles. The fair sheet of the hydrographic survey, along with newly prepared nautical charts and survey

equipment were formally handed over to Mauritius President Dharambeer Gokhool by High Commissioner of India to Mauritius Anurag Srivastava at a formal ceremony.

India's first flying taxi prototype 'Shunya' unveiled.

The Bengaluru-based Sarla Aviation, a new player in urban air mobility, has introduced its innovative electric flying taxi, Shunya, at the Bharat Mobility Global Expo. The startup revealed plans to bring its electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) vehicles to the skies by 2028, aiming to be India's first provider of urban air transportation.

The Shunya prototype is designed for short-distance commutes, capable of covering 20-30 km trips at speeds up to 250 km/h. With a capacity to carry six passengers and a maximum payload of 680 kg, it is currently touted as the eVTOL with the highest payload in its category.

Defence Minister flags off Battlefield Surveillance System SANJAY

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has flagged off Battlefield Surveillance System SANJAY in New Delhi, which will be inducted into the Indian Army in three phases starting from March this year. An automated system SANJAY integrates inputs from ground and aerial battlefield sensors and produces a common surveillance picture of the battlefield. SANJAY has been indigenously and jointly developed by the Indian Army and Bharat Electronics Limited. This system has been developed for two thousand 402 crore rupees.

Pralay missile to be unveiled at Republic Day Parade 2025.

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is set to showcase the indigenous short-range quasi-ballistic missile Pralay at this year's Republic Day parade. The missile, which is meant for the Army and Air Force, will be the first ballistic missile in India's missile arsenal meant for conventional strikes. With a range of 400 kilometres, Pralay adds to the BrahMos and Parahar missiles already in the inventory giving the Indian military an option for standoff missile strikes across the border. It is meant for deployment along both

the Line of Control (LoC) as well as the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

National Voters' Day being celebrated across the country

The 15th National Voters' Day is being celebrated across the country on January 25. This year's theme is, 'Nothing Like Voting, I Vote for Sure. It is a continuation of last year's theme emphasizing the importance of participation in the electoral process and encouraging voters to take pride in exercising their franchise.

Business and Economy

Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Goa among top-performing states in NITI Aayog's fiscal health index.

Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Goa and Jharkhand have emerged as top-performing 'achievers' among the States listed in NITI Aayog's first Fiscal Health Index (FHI) report. According to the report, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, and Kerala were the worst-performing states in Fiscal Health Index, each focusing significant fiscal challenges, and listed under 'aspirational' category.

The report titled 'Fiscal Health Index 2025' ranked States for 2022-23, covering 18 major states that drive the Indian economy in terms of their contribution to India's GDP, demography, total public expenditure, revenues, and overall fiscal stability.

India's foreign exchange declines by 1.8 billion dollars till 17th Jan

India's foreign exchange reserves declined by 1.8 billion dollars to 623.98 billion dollars in the week ending January 17, the latest data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) showed. In the previous week, the country's forex reserves had dropped by 8.7 billion dollars in the week ending January 10 and had settled at 625.87 billion dollars. The decline was primarily attributed to a significant dip in Foreign Currency Assets (FCA), a major component of the reserves. The FCA fell by 2.87 billion dollars to over 533 billion dollars during the week.

Bank of India Q3 net profit surges 35% to ₹2,517 crore.

Bank of India for the third quarter ended December 31, 2024 had reported 35% growth in net profit at ₹2,517 crore as compared with ₹1,870 crore in the year ago period. During the quarter the bank's Net Interest Income (NII) increased by 11% Year on Year (YoY) to ₹6,070 crore.

NCLAT stays CCI ban on WhatsApp-Meta data sharing.

The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) has stayed the five-year ban imposed by competition watchdog Competition Commission of India, CCI on data-sharing practices between WhatsApp and Meta for advertising purposes, offering a breather to the tech giant.

Meta Platforms, which operates Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp, had challenged the CCI's 18 November ruling barring WhatsApp from sharing user data collected on its platform with other Meta companies or products for advertising purposes.

Sports

Iniyan Panneerselvam wins Johor International Open chess tournament

Indian Grandmaster Iniyan Panneerselvam won the 9th Johor International Open chess tournament title in Malaysia with a dominating performance. Iniyan defeated Vietnamese GM Nguyen Van Huy in the final round in an impressive performance. He accumulated 8.5 points in nine rounds of the tournament.

Odisha Warriors become 1st team to qualify for inaugural women's HIL final

Odisha Warriors have become the first team to qualify for the final of the inaugural edition of the Women's Hockey India League (HIL). Despite the 3-2 shootout loss to Delhi SG Pipers at Ranchi in Jharkhand, the Odisha Warriors managed to seal their spot in the finals. Goals from Navneet Kaur and Yibbi Jansen saw both sides locked at 1-1 at the end of regulation time.