

International

Jay Bhattacharya confirmed as Head of US Health Agency.

The US Senate has confirmed the appointment of Indian-origin Jay Bhattacharya, a professor at Stanford School of Medicine, as the Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Mr Bhattacharya won the vote 53-47 during the first session of the roll call vote in the 119th Congress. Mr Bhattacharya is a professor of health policy at Stanford University.

Russia developing privileged strategic partnership with India: Sergey Lavrov.

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has said that the country is developing a privileged strategic partnership with India. He also said that Russia is actively expanding ties with the majority of global states, including China, India, Iran, and North Korea, as well as Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries.

S. Korean Court reinstates impeached PM Han Duck-soo as acting President.

South Korea's Constitutional Court has overturned the impeachment of Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, reinstating him as the acting President. Meanwhile, the court has yet to decide on the impeachment of former President Yoon Suk Yeol. In a 7-1 ruling, the court's eight justices dismissed Mr Han's impeachment, with two additional justices opposing the impeachment motion entirely.

Bangladesh to observe Genocide Day to mark the brutal killing of millions in 1971.

Bangladesh to observe the Genocide Day on March 25 to mark the brutal killing of millions of Bangladeshis of the then East Pakistan on this day in 1971. The Pakistani army launched 'Operation Searchlight' on 25 March all over East Pakistan which culminated in untold miseries for the people of Bangladesh. The day marks one of the darkest chapters in Bangladesh's history, as unarmed Bengalis, including students, teachers, and police personnel, were massacred across the country, particularly in Dhaka, by the Pakistan army.

India's social security coverage doubled from 24.4 % in 2021 to 48.8 % in 2024:ILO.

According to International Labour Organization (ILO), India's social security coverage has doubled from 24.4 percent in 2021 to 48.8 percent in 2024. Citing the ILO World Social Security Report 2024-26, Union Minister for Labour and Employment Mansukh Mandaviya highlighted the progress made in expanding social security benefits across the workforce.

He said, the unemployment rate has declined from 6 percent in 2017-18 to 3.2 percent in 2023-24

National

Former cabinet secretary Rajiv Gauba appointed as full-time member of NITI Aayog.

Former cabinet secretary Rajiv Gauba has been appointed full-time member of the NITI Aayog. A 1982-batch IAS officer of the Jharkhand cadre, Mr Gauba served as the top bureaucrat of the country for five years from 2019 to August 2024. He played a crucial role in steering major policy decisions, including India's COVID-19 response and economic recovery strategies. Mr Gauba has also served as Union home secretary, secretary in the Ministry of Urban Development.

Asian Yogasana Sports Championship rescheduled to April 25-27 in Delhi.

The second edition of the Asian Yogasana Sports Championship has been rescheduled and will now take place from April 25 to 27, 2025, in the national capital Delhi. Originally planned for March 29-31, the revised dates reflect considerations for requests from international teams seeking additional preparation time and also align with the observance of the holy month of Ramadan.

Organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, in collaboration with the Sports Authority of India (SAI) and Yogasana Bharat, the championship aims to bring together top Yogasana athletes from across Asia.

A minimum of 16 countries will be participating, with more expected to join, in the championship that aims to promote Yogasana as a sport on an international platform.

Parliament passes Disaster Management (Amendment) Bill 2024.

The Parliament has passed the Disaster Management (Amendment) Bill 2024, with the Rajya Sabha approving it. The Lok Sabha had passed it in December last year. The Bill amends the Disaster Management Act, 2005 and intends to strengthen the efficient working of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMA).

The bill empowers the NDMA and SDMA to prepare the disaster plan at the national and state levels instead of the National Executive Committee and the State Executive Committee. The Bill also empowers the state government to constitute a separate Urban Disaster Management Authority for state capitals and cities with a municipal corporation. The Bill will provide for the creation of a disaster database at the national and state levels.

India & African nations to hold 1st joint naval exercise AIKEYME in Indian Ocean.

To consolidate the Indian Navy's stature as the 'preferred security partner' and 'first responder' in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), India will conduct its first major naval exercise, AIKEYME (Africa-India key maritime engagement), with 10 African nations next month. This initiative is part of India's ongoing military outreach to the continent, where China has made significant strategic inroads.

Union Minister J P Nadda expands Intensified TB Elimination Campaign to all districts.

Union Health Minister J P Nadda has announced that the Intensified TB Elimination Campaign will now be expanded to all the districts in the country. Earlier, the campaign was implemented in 455 selected high-priority districts. Addressing the World TB Day 2025 summit in New Delhi, Mr Nadda said, nearly 13 crore people were screened for TB and more than seven lakh new cases were detected during the 100 Days intensified TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan.

TB treatment coverage in India has increased from 59 per cent to 85 per cent. The Minister highlighted that the global average decline rate

of TB is 8.3 per cent, and India's decline rate is more than double at 17.7 per cent.

Violinist RK Shriramkumar awarded Sangita Kalanidhi by the Music Academy.

Violinist RK Shriramkumar has been awarded Sangita Kalanidhi by the Music Academy in Chennai. Shriramkumar has been playing with generations of musicians for over three decades and learned the art of composition from Subbulakshmi and Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer among others.

Shriramkumar has accompanied generations of artistes including Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, MS Subbulakshmi, DK Pattammal, T Brinda and T Mukta, M Balamuralikrishna, and the current crop of significant artistes such as Sudha Ragunathan, Bombay Jayashri, and Krishna, among others.

Sanjay Mishra, Former ED Chief, Now Member of PM's Economic Advisory Council.

Sanjay Kumar Mishra, the former Enforcement Directorate (ED) chief, has been a full-time member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM). Sanjay Kumar Mishra is a 1984-batch Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer from Uttar Pradesh. He was first appointed as the director of the probe agency for a stipulated period of two years in 2018, but was given multiple extensions by the government.

Business and Economy

Centre launches BAANKNET to enhance PSU Bank E-Auctions for asset sales.

The Finance Ministry has launched a revamped e-auction portal 'BAANKNET' to enhance transparency and efficiency in disposing of banks' non-performing assets. The portal, designed to streamline the auction process, incorporates automated KYC tools and secure payment gateways. All 12 Public Sector Banks, and Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) are using the platform for listing and auction of properties across the country.

This information was given by Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance Shri Pankaj Chaudhary, in written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha

Dilma Rousseff to head BRICS Development Bank for five more years.

Brazil's Former President Dilma Rousseff was re-elected head of the New Development Bank (NDB), also known as the BRICS Bank. Her current term, which began in March 2023 and runs until July this year, was unanimously extended for another five-year period.

Both the presidency and vice-presidency of the NDB are rotated among BRICS founding members: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

The bank was officially established in 2015 and supports the financing of infrastructure and sustainable development projects in the group's member countries.

SEBI to constitute committee to decide on conflict of interest of board members.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) board at its meeting has decided to constitute a High-Level-Committee (HLC) to undertake a comprehensive review of the provisions relating to conflict of interest, disclosure pertaining to property, investment and liabilities and related matters in respect of SEBI members and officials of the board.

The HLC will comprise eminent persons and experts with relevant background and experience in constitutional/ statutory/ regulatory bodies, Government / public sector/ private sector and academia.

NSDC partners with PayPal to empower youth with industry-relevant skills

National Skill Development Corporation has partnered with PayPal to launch a skill development program that will empower youth, including women from low-income families, to pursue careers in India's banking, financial services and insurance sectors. As part of the partnership, NSDC and PayPal will offer high-quality training programs, with a special focus on women from low-income families.

Sports

Asian Wrestling Championship: Sunil Kumar wins bronze medal.

Indian wrestler Sunil Kumar won the bronze medal in the 87kg Greco Roman category of the Asian Wrestling Championship in Amman, Jordan. In the bronze medal match, Sunil beat China's Jiaxin Huang after losing in the semifinals of the 87kg bout in the continental tournament.

World Athletics Mandates cheek swabs for gender testing.

The international sports governing body, World Athletics, has approved the introduction of mandatory cheek swabbing to determine an athlete's gender. The organisation's President, Sebastian Coe, said a decision was made to protect the female category in the sport.