

## International

### U.S. signs agreements with Guatemala and Honduras to take asylum-seekers.

Guatemala and Honduras have signed agreements with the United States to offer refuge to people from other countries who otherwise would seek asylum in the United States. The agreements expand the Trump administration's efforts to provide the U.S. government flexibility in returning migrants not only to their own countries, but also to third countries as it attempts to ramp up deportations.

### Congo, Rwanda sign peace deal aimed at ending decades of bloody conflict.

The Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda has signed a peace deal facilitated by the U.S. to help end the decades-long deadly fighting in eastern Congo while helping the U.S. government and American companies gain access to critical minerals in the region.

Eastern Congo has been plagued by conflict since the 1990s, with more than 100 armed groups operating in the region.

### Vietnam ends death penalty for eight crimes.

Vietnam has lifted the death penalty for eight crimes in legal reforms that may spare the life of a real estate tycoon imprisoned in the country's largest financial fraud case.

The legal reforms in Vietnam ended the death penalty for eight crimes, including trying to overthrow the government, damaging state infrastructure, making and selling fake medicine, starting wars, spying, drug trafficking, embezzlement, and taking bribes.

### Global energy CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reached record high last year.

As per the Energy Institute's annual statistical review of world energy, global carbon dioxide emissions from the energy sector hit a record high for the fourth year running last year as fossil fuel use kept rising even as renewable energy reached a record high. The report stated that the world saw a 2% annual rise in total energy supply in 2024, with all sources of energy such as oil, gas, coal, nuclear, hydro and renewable energy registering increases, which last occurred in 2006.

### World Bank Group, IAEA formalize partnership to collaborate on nuclear energy for development.

The World Bank Group and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have sealed an agreement to work together to support the safe, secure and responsible use of nuclear energy in developing countries. The partnership agreement, signed by World Bank Group President Ajay Banga and IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi, formalizes multiple engagements between the two institutions over the last year, and marks the World Bank Group's first concrete step to reengage with nuclear power in decades.

The agreement also reflects a new, broader approach by the World Bank Group to electrification—one that prioritizes accessibility, affordability, and reliability, while managing emissions responsibly.

### World's first jet-powered humanoid takes flight.

The Italian Institute of Technology (IIT) has achieved a major breakthrough in humanoid robotics by completing the first successful flight of iRonCub3, the world's first jet-powered flying humanoid robot built for real-world environments. The research team analyzed the robot's complex aerodynamics and created an advanced control system for managing its interconnected parts.

### Anna Wintour steps down as editor of U.S. Vogue after 37 years.

Magazine legend Anna Wintour is stepping down as editor of fashion bible U.S. Vogue after 37 years in the post. British-born Wintour, 75, has been one of the most influential and formidable figures in fashion and magazine journalism for decades, famous for her ever-present sunglasses and unchanging bob haircut.

### Indian chef Vijay Kumar wins James Beard Award.

Indian Chef Vijay Kumar from Madurai's Natham has won the prestigious James Beard Awards for best chef in New York State, one of the highest honours in the United States' culinary world. His unapologetically rural cooking, from Dindigul biryani to snail pirattal, is changing how the world sees Indian food.

## National

### Operation Chakra-V: CBI cracks down on cyber fraud network.

In continuation of the ongoing efforts to combat cybercrime and Digital Arrest Scams, CBI has launched nationwide searches at 42 locations in five states in connection with Mule Bank accounts being used in Cyber frauds. The drive was launched across five States – Rajasthan, Delhi, Haryana, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh under operation Chakra-5. The enquiry revealed that more than seven hundred branches of various banks across the country have opened around 8.5 lakh mule accounts.

### Kerala gets India's first butterfly sanctuary with 266+ species.

The Kerala State Wildlife Board has officially renamed the Aralam Wildlife Sanctuary in Kannur as the Aralam Butterfly Sanctuary, making it India's first protected forest dedicated entirely to butterflies. Spanning 55 square kilometres in the lush folds of tropical and semi-evergreen forest, the renamed sanctuary is one of the richest butterfly habitats in Kerala, with over 266 recorded species — more than 80 percent of all butterflies found in the state. Some of these are endangered, while others exist nowhere else on Earth.

### ICG inducts 'Adamya' the first FPV out of the eight being built by GSL.

'Adamya' the first Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV) under the eight FPV Project at Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) was inducted into the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) in Goa. The FPV is the first ship in its class within the ICG fleet to feature Controllable Pitch Propellers (CPPs) and indigenously developed gearboxes, offering superior manoeuvrability, operational flexibility, and enhanced performance at sea. The vessel is equipped with state-of-the-art technology, including a 30mm CRN-91 gun, two 12.7mm stabilized remote-control guns with fire control systems, an Integrated Bridge System (IBS), an Integrated Platform Management System (IPMS), and an Automated Power Management System (APMS).

## Business and Economy

### Zou Jiayi elected as President of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

Zou Jiayi has been elected as the next President of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) by the Bank's Board of Governors. The election result was announced by the Chair of AIIB's Board of Governors during the Bank's 10th Annual Meeting.

Madam Zou's five-year term will begin January 16, 2026, the day after founding President Jin Liqun concludes his second five-year term.

### U.S. economy shrank 0.5% between January and March.

The U.S. economy shrank at a 0.5% annual pace from January through March as President Donald Trump's trade wars disrupted business, the Commerce Department said in a downgrade from its previous estimate.

First-quarter growth sank under a surge of imports as companies in the United States rushed to bring in foreign goods before Mr. Trump could impose tariffs on them. The Commerce Department previously estimated that the economy fell 0.2% in the first quarter.

### JSW paints to acquire 74% stake in Akzo Nobel India for ₹8,986 crore.

JSW Paints Ltd has entered into definitive agreements to acquire up to 74.76% stake in Akzo Nobel India Ltd (ANIL) from Akzo Nobel N.V. and its affiliates, for a maximum consideration under the Share Purchase Agreement of up to ₹8,986 crore.

ANIL is one of India's decorative and industrial paints players and part of Akzo Nobel, a global leader in decorative paints and industrial coatings headquartered in the Netherlands.

### India reports current account surplus of \$13.5 billion in Q4 FY25

India's current account balance recorded a surplus of \$ 13.5 billion (1.3% of GDP) in Q4 FY25 as compared with \$4.6 billion (0.5% of GDP) a year earlier and against a deficit of \$11.3 billion (1.1% of GDP) in Q3 FY25, according to data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). Merchandise trade deficit at \$59.5 billion in Q4 FY25 was higher than \$52

billion in Q4 FY24. However, it moderated from \$79.3 billion in Q3 FY25.

On annual basis, India had a current account deficit at \$23.3 billion (0.6% of GDP) during 2024-25, lower than \$26 billion (0.7% of GDP) during 2023-24, primarily due to higher net invisibles receipts.

### **DBS Bank India waives prepayment, foreclosure charges for registered MSMEs.**

DBS Bank India Ltd. (DBIL) has waived prepayment and foreclosure charges for all Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) borrowers registered with UDYAM, making it easier for businesses to access credit and manage cash flow.

The waiver is effective going forward and applies to both new and existing active borrowers.

### **Union Minister Sonowal inaugurates India's 1st maritime sector NBFC, Sagarmala Finance Corporation.**

Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, inaugurated India's first Non-Banking Financial Company-NBFC in the maritime sector, Sagarmala Finance Corporation Limited-SMFCL. SMFCL

will bridge crucial financing gaps and offer sector-specific financial solutions, empowering ports, MSMEs, startups, and institutions.

During the event, Mr. Sonowal launched the SAGAR SETU platform to boost operational efficiency and ease of doing business.

### **Sports**

### **Praggnanandhaa wins UzChess Cup Masters Title, becomes India's No.1**

R Praggnanandhaa reached a historic milestone when he became the No.1 ranked Indian chess player in the live rankings. He achieved the feat by beating Uzbekistan's Nodirbek Abdusattorov with Black pieces in the final round of the UzChess Cup Masters. With the win, Praggnanandhaa's live rating has jumped to 2778.3. This has made the Indian grandmaster No.4 on the rankings, the highest he has achieved in his career so far.

Arjun Erigaisi, who had been India's highest-ranked player until Thursday, has slipped from third to sixth in the live rankings. Magnus Carlsen continues to lead the way in the rankings with 2839.2 rating points, followed by Hikaru Nakamura (2807.0) and Fabiano Caruana (2784.2).