

International

Ukrainian President signs landmark defence cooperation agreement with Saudi Arabia.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has signed a landmark defence cooperation agreement with Saudi Arabia focused on counter-drone technology and air defence systems. The agreement aims to exchange technical know-how and operational experience in drone defence, an area where Ukraine has developed extensive battlefield expertise since Russia's full-scale invasion began in 2022.

US President Donald Trump's signature to appear on dollar bills for first time in history.

US President Donald Trump's signature is set to feature on US paper currency soon, a first for a sitting President since the introduction of dollar bills in 1861.

In celebration of America's 250th anniversary, President Donald J Trump's signature alongside Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent's will soon appear on US currency, marking a first in history.

Earlier this month, a federal arts commission approved the final design for a 24-karat gold commemorative coin bearing Trump's image to help celebrate the 250th anniversary of American Independence.

Balendra Shah takes oath as Nepal Prime Minister.

Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) leader Balendra Shah was sworn in as the Prime Minister of Nepal. The swearing-in ceremony was held at the President's Office in Sheetal Niwas in Kathmandu. Balendra Shah was elected as the leader of the RSP Parliamentary party, paving his way to become Nepal's youngest elected prime minister. His party, RSP, secured a landslide victory in the March 5 parliamentary poll.

PM Modi tops global popularity rankings with 68% approval.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has once again been ranked the world's most popular leader, securing a 68% approval rating in the latest global survey conducted by US-based data analytics firm Morning Consult. The survey, carried out between March 2 and 8, shows PM Modi maintaining a significant lead over other global leaders. Switzerland's President Guy Parmelin and South Korea's President Lee Jae-myung are in the second position, both with 62% approval ratings. Leaders from the Czech Republic and Argentina follow with 57% and 56% approval, respectively.

In contrast, US President Donald Trump recorded a 39% approval rating and did not feature among the top ten.

European lawmakers approve easier setup of migrant detention centers outside EU.

European lawmakers have approved a measure making it easier to establish migrant detention centers outside the European Union. Under the new framework, individual EU countries or small coalitions can strike their own agreements to send migrants denied asylum to facilities located outside the 27-member bloc, rather than returning them to their countries of origin. Several countries, including Greece, Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, and Denmark, are already in talks with governments, largely in Africa, to host such centers.

National

Indian Navy launches 'Operation Urja Suraksha' to secure energy lifelines through Strait of Hormuz.

Amid rising tensions in West Asia, the Indian Navy has launched an operation named "Urja Suraksha" to escort, guide, and safeguard India-bound energy shipments through the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz, which has been

blockaded by Iran. The operation is being conducted with calibrated precision and minimal publicity to ensure the uninterrupted and secure movement of Indian-flagged vessels carrying critical energy supplies.

All India-bound ships transporting liquefied natural gas (LNG), liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), and crude oil have been identified for protected transit.

IAF rolls out 'Vayu Baan', India's first helicopter-dropped drone project.

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has set in motion 'Vayu Baan', its first helicopter-dropped drone project. At its core, Vayu Baan will be a small drone deployed from helicopters to navigate autonomously towards its target. Once airborne, it will transmit real-time video to operators and, if required, carry out a precision strike using a small onboard warhead.

The drone is expected to have a range of over 50 km and an endurance of around 30 minutes. Equipped with electro-optical and infrared sensors, it will be capable of surveillance as well as target identification.

Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal leads India at WTO meet, calls for inclusive reforms.

Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal led the Indian delegation at the 14th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) currently underway in Cameroon. The conference, which commenced yesterday, will continue until the 29th of this month.

On the sidelines of the conference, Mr. Goyal met with the Prime Minister of Cameroon, Joseph Dion Ngute. The discussions focused on bilateral and multilateral issues, with both sides exploring ways to further strengthen cooperation between India and Cameroon.

Defence Ministry signs contracts worth 858 crore for procurement of Tunguska Air Defence Missile System.

Defence Ministry signed contracts worth 858 crore rupees for the procurement of Tunguska Air Defence Missile System and Inspection (Depot Level) of the P8I Long-Range Maritime Reconnaissance Aircraft. The contract for the procurement of Tunguska Air Defence Missile Systems, valued at 445 crore rupees, for the Indian Army was signed with JSC Rosoboronexport, Russia

Indian naval ship Sudarshini arrives at Sète, France, as part of ongoing landmark transoceanic expedition Lokayan-26.

Indian Naval Ship Sudarshini arrived at Sète, France, as part of the ongoing landmark transoceanic expedition Lokayan-26. During its stay, INS Sudarshini will participate in the 'Escale à Sète', a gathering of traditional tall ships and seafaring communities in Europe. Prior to its arrival in Sète, INS Sudarshini successfully completed port calls in Oman, Egypt and Malta, covering five thousand five hundred nautical miles.

Telangana Culture Minister Jupally Krishna Rao honoured with Grand Prize for Contribution to World Peace.

Telangana's Tourism and Culture Minister, Jupally Krishna Rao, has been honoured with the prestigious Grand Prize for Contribution to World Peace at an International Buddhist Conference held in Hyderabad. Nearly 150 delegates and monks from 22 countries attended the event.

Business and Economy

RBI announces its 'Payments Vision 2028'.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced its 'Payments Vision 2028',

outlining a roadmap to strengthen and expand India's rapidly growing digital payments ecosystem. Anchored in the theme, 'Shaping India's Payment Frontier', the Vision document focuses on user empowerment, safeguards against fraud, improving the efficiency of cross-border payment frameworks, and promoting ease of doing business. Through its various initiatives, the Vision Document charts a course of action up to December 2028.

Among key initiatives, the RBI has proposed developing an interoperability framework for Trade Receivables Discounting Systems (TReDS) to create a more integrated and efficient receivables financing ecosystem.

It also plans to explore a "switch on/off" facility across all digital payment modes, similar to card controls, to help users manage transactions and reduce fraud risks. The central bank will review the cross-border payments ecosystem to enhance efficiency and streamline authorisation under the Payment and Settlement Systems (PSS) Act, 2007 and the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999.

A shared responsibility framework between issuing and beneficiary banks is also under consideration to address unauthorised digital transactions.

JP Morgan taps HSBC veteran Rahul Badhwar as India country officer.

US banking giant JP Morgan has appointed Rahul Badhwar as its senior country officer for India. He replaces Kaustubh Kulkarni who left JP Morgan for its US rival Citibank in September 2025.

SEBI calls-on tech players to fight finfluencers.

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) requested Google to leverage AI to take down rule-breaking finfluencers, said Chairperson Tuhin Kanta Pandey while launching the app label on 25, March 2026, in Mumbai.

The market watchdog launched a 'tick mark' in collaboration with Google which would appear next to applications of intermediaries. The verified badge is being rolled-out over apps of registered stockbrokers and Google Play Store. It had already been deployed for over 600 such apps. In due course, it will be extended to apps of other registered intermediaries as well.

Fino Payments Bank defers MD Rishi Gupta's reappointment.

Fino Payments Bank has paused the re-appointment of its Managing Director, Rishi Gupta. This decision comes as the Reserve Bank of India will reassess Gupta's fit and proper criteria. The bank board withdrew a shareholder vote notice for his reappointment. Gupta was recently granted bail after an arrest related to GST investigations.

India's banks face funding crunch as deposit growth falls behind credit.

India's banking system is seeing a growing funding strain as credit growth continues to outpace deposits, pushing lenders to increasingly rely on certificates of deposit (CDs) to bridge the gap. As of February 28, credit growth stood at 14.5%, significantly higher than deposit growth at 11.9%. This widening mismatch has driven banks to tap wholesale funding markets more aggressively, with CDs now accounting for 2.6% of total deposits - the highest share in a decade.

The surge has been sharp, with CDs expanding nearly 29% year-on-year, underscoring how lenders are turning to short-term instruments as traditional deposit mobilisation struggles to keep pace with loan demand.

Indian Railways approves ₹1,200 crore projects to upgrade communication and safety systems.

The Railways has approved projects worth over 1,200 crore rupees to upgrade its communication infrastructure and expand the Kavach automatic train protection system across multiple zones. The projects aim to strengthen the railway network through advanced fibre communication systems and enhanced safety mechanisms. The Ministry said two major projects have been approved to establish a robust dual-fibre communication network across all five divisions of Central Railway at a cost of more than 600 crore rupees.

DPIIT & MoCI sign agreement with KRAFTON India Pvt. Ltd to support startups, innovators & entrepreneurs across country.

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, signed an agreement with KRAFTON India Pvt. Ltd. to support startups, innovators, and entrepreneurs across the country. The collaboration aims to foster the growth of product startups working in areas such as digital entertainment, online gaming, e-sports, interactive media, and artificial intelligence-driven technologies.

As part of the initiative, startups will be provided access to mentorship, industry insights, knowledge exchange platforms, and curated engagement opportunities.

OECD Report: India remains world's fastest-growing major economy.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has pegged India's GDP growth rate at 7.6 percent for 2025-26, 6.1 percent for 2026-27 and 6.4 percent for 2027-28, with the country remaining the world's fastest-growing major economy.

The OECD's interim Economic Outlook report states that conflict in the Middle East

is testing the resilience of the global economy.

China's growth rate is anticipated to ease from 5.0 percent in 2025 to 4.4 percent in 2026 and 4.3 percent in 2027.

Global GDP growth is projected to remain broadly stable at 2.9 percent in 2026 before edging up to 3 percent in 2027.

India rapidly positioning itself as global electro-tech manufacturing hub: World Economic Forum.

India is rapidly positioning itself as a global electro-tech manufacturing hub by leveraging low-cost solar energy and battery technology, bypassing the fossil fuel-heavy growth model followed by Western economies and China, a report by the World Economic Forum said.

It said India's push for energy sovereignty could serve as a fast-track model for emerging economies, noting that solar accounts for about 9 percent of electricity, coal use per capita is far lower than China's at a similar stage, and oil demand remains modest and unlikely to rise significantly.

The report said that as India reaches about 1,500 kWh per capita electricity consumption, solar-plus-storage now costs roughly half as much as new coal, driving a manufacturing surge.

Meanwhile, India's electronics sector has grown six-fold to 130 billion dollars, supporting expansion into solar panels, batteries and EVs, while solar module capacity has reached 120 Giga Watt and solar cell capacity 18 Giga Watt.

Centre asks RBI to target retail inflation at 4% till Mar 2031.

The Union government has asked the Reserve Bank to target retail inflation at 4% with a margin of 2% on either side for another five years ending March 2031.

To control the price rise, the government in 2016 gave a mandate to the RBI to keep the retail inflation at 4% with a margin of 2% on either side for five years ending March 31, 2021. Subsequently, in March 2021, the

government maintained the same target. This is the second time the government has retained the inflation target.

Sports

Olympic and world badminton champion Carolina Marín of Spain retires.

Carolina Marín, one of the greatest ever badminton players, announced retirement after the Spaniard couldn't fully recover from a third serious knee injury. Marín is the only woman from outside Asia to win the Olympic singles when she won gold at Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

India wins 10 medals in archery at Asia Cup World Ranking Tournament Stage.

In archery, India won 10 medals as compound archers dominated with a mixed team gold and a clean sweep of the men's individual podium at the Asia Cup World Ranking Tournament Stage 1 in Bangkok today. India finished with two gold, four silver and four bronze medals, bettering their overall tally from the previous edition.

8th Hockey India Annual Awards.

Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, felicitated athletes at the 8th Hockey India Annual Awards in New Delhi.

Navneet Kaur and Hardik Singh were honoured with the coveted Hockey India Balbir Singh Sr. Award for Player of the Year 2025 in the men's and women's categories, respectively.

Zafar Iqbal, who played an integral part in India's Gold Medal win at the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games received the Major Dhyan Chand Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Hockey India Baljit Singh Award for Goalkeeper of the Year 2025 was awarded to Bichu Devi Kharibam.

Sumit won the Hockey India Ajit Pal Singh Award for Midfielder of the Year 2025.

The Hockey India Dhanraj Pillay Award for Forward of the Year 2025 was awarded to Sukhjeet Singh.

Gurjant Singh announced his retirement from International Hockey.

Indian men's team forward Gurjant Singh has announced his retirement from International Hockey. The 31-year-old striker brings to a close a decorated career spanning nearly a decade, 130 international caps, and 33 goals. His greatest achievements came on the Olympic stage, where he was a vital part of the bronze medal-winning teams at both Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024.

In 2021, he was honoured with the Arjuna Award, one of India's highest sporting honours.

IPL 2026 to begin in Bengaluru.

The 19th edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) Cricket will get underway in Bengaluru on March 28. In the opening match, defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru will face Sunrisers Hyderabad at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium. The two-month-long tournament will continue till 31st of May.