

International

Myanmar earthquake: Death toll in Myanmar crosses 1,000.

At least 1,000 people are dead after a 7.7-magnitude earthquake struck near Mandalay in Myanmar and rocked neighbouring Thailand. The quake was the largest to hit Myanmar in more than a century. Most of the fatalities are in Mandalay, Myanmar's second largest city, and the region closest to the earthquake's epicentre. Strong tremors were also felt in Thailand, killing at least ten persons and injuring nine.

Casualties are expected to rise as search and rescue efforts are underway across Myanmar and Thailand,

Australian PM announces general elections on May 3.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has announced that the country will hold general polls on the 3rd of May this year for general elections. The major fight in polls will be between Prime Minister Albanese's centre-left Labour Party, which is seeking a second three-year term, and his key opposition leader, Peter Dutton's conservative coalition. The key issues in Australia are high costs of living, shortage of housing and increased interest rates.

PM Modi to visit Thailand to participate in 6th BIMSTEC Summit.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will embark on a two-day visit to Thailand on the 3rd of April to participate in the 6th BIMSTEC Summit. The theme of the 6th BIMSTEC Summit is "BIMSTEC – Prosperous, Resilient and Open."

The Summit on the 4th of April will be preceded by the BIMSTEC Ministerial Conference and Senior Officials' Meeting.

Thailand is the third-largest economy in ASEAN and India's fourth-largest trading partner after Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia in the ASEAN region.

Thailand's bilateral trade with India is almost 15 billion dollars, with India's exports to Thailand around 5 billion and imports from Thailand about 10 billion dollars.

Rana Dasgupta wins \$175,000 Windham-Campbell Prize

Yale University has announced the eight recipients of the 2025 Windham-Campbell Prizes. The recipients will each receive \$175,000 to support their work.

Rana Dasgupta, a British author of Indian origin, has been awarded the Prize for his nonfiction.

The other recipients are, in fiction, Sigrid Nunez (United States) and Anne Enright (Ireland); in nonfiction, Patricia J Williams; in drama, Roy Williams (United Kingdom) and Matilda Feyişayo Ibini (United Kingdom); and in poetry, Anthony V Capildeo (Scotland/Trinidad and Tobago) and Tongo Eisen-Martin (United States).

SpaceX launches 'Nila' satellite

Thiruvananthapuram-based space startup HEX20 has achieved a significant breakthrough with the successful launch of its first satellite, 'Nila,' aboard SpaceX's Transporter 13 mission through Berlin-based satellite deployer Exolaunch. The satellite, named after Kerala's longest river, is designed to control the movement of critical components such as solar arrays and antennas in space missions.

U.S. halts WTO contributions.

The United States has halted its contributions to the World Trade Organization (WTO) as part of a broader effort by President Donald Trump's administration to cut government spending. The move is in line with Trump's "America First" economic policies, which have led to reduced U.S. engagement with global institutions.

The WTO had an annual budget of 205 million Swiss francs in 2024, with the U.S. responsible for about 11 per cent.

National

HAL to supply 156 LCHs to Indian Army & Air Force.

The Defence Ministry has signed two contracts with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the supply of 156 Light Combat Helicopters, Prachand, along with training and other associated equipment worth 62 thousand 700 crore rupees. The first contract is for the supply

of 66 Light Combat Helicopters to the Indian Air Force, and the second is for the supply of 90 Light Combat Helicopters to the Indian Army. This will involve over 250 domestic companies, mostly MSMEs, and will generate over 8,500 direct and indirect jobs.

Indian Army set to upgrade its artillery.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) signed contracts for the procurement of 155mm/52 Calibre Advanced Towed Artillery Gun Systems and High Mobility Vehicle 6×6 Gun Towing Vehicles to enhance the Indian Army's operational readiness. The contracts were signed with Bharat Forge Limited and Tata Advanced System Limited at a total cost of about 6 thousand 900 crore rupees.

The 155 mm/52 Calibre ATAGS will replace the vintage and smaller calibre guns and enhance the artillery capabilities of the Indian Army.

Airtel brings 2Africa Pearls cable with over 100 Tbps international capacity to India.

Telecom operator Bharti Airtel has brought submarine cable system 2Africa Pearls to Indian shores, connecting the country's communication network with Africa, Europe, and the Middle East.

2Africa Pearls cable system will bring over 100 tbps (terabits per second) of international capacity to India.

SpaDeX mission: ISRO successfully completes rolling experiment

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has completed the Rolling experiment as part of its Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) mission. The "Rolling" or "Rotating" experiment involves circumnavigation of one of the satellites to verify control over satellite manoeuvring. The experiment will help ISRO understand what it takes to bring an object to a desired spot from different orientations for docking. It will also help ISRO learn whether docking could be done vertically and so on.

Centre to launch "Sahkar" taxi, cooperative-based service.

Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah has announced that the government will

launch the 'Sahkar' taxi, a cooperative-run ride-hailing service modeled after Uber and Ola. The initiative is in line with Sahkar Se Samriddhi (Prosperity through Cooperatives).

He also stated that a cooperative insurance company is soon going to be formed, which will handle insurance within the cooperative system of the country.

Business and Economy

Hurun Global Rich List 2025: Elon Musk tops the list again.

As per the 2025 Hurun Global Rich List, Elon Musk has retained his position as the wealthiest person in the world for the fourth time in five years, becoming the first individual to surpass the \$400 billion threshold. He is followed by Amazon's Jeff Bezos.

Mukesh Ambani slipped out of the top 10 in the world's rich list but remains the richest person in Asia.

Roshni Nadar, Chairperson of HCL Technologies, has secured a position among the world's wealthiest women, ranking fifth in the Hurun Global Rich List 2025 with a net worth of Rs 3.5 lakh crore. She is also the first Indian woman to break into the global top 10 wealthiest women.

Alice Walton, daughter of Walmart's founder Sam Walton, is the richest woman in the world with a fortune of \$102 billion.

India ranks third with 284 billionaires followed by the U.K., Germany, and Switzerland.

Indonesia to join BRICS New Development Bank.

Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto has announced that Indonesia has decided to join the New Development Bank (NDB) following a meeting with NDB President Dilma Vana Rousseff at the Presidential Palace. Rousseff welcomed Indonesia's decision, describing the country as an important partner in the region and beyond.

New Development Bank, formerly referred to as the BRICS Development Bank, is a multilateral development bank established by the BRICS states.

Centre approves Rs 22,919-crore scheme to boost electronics manufacturing.

The Central government has approved the Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme to boost the manufacturing of electronic goods and strengthen the electronics supply chain. This scheme will generate direct employment of over 91 thousand and many indirect jobs.

This scheme aims to develop a robust component ecosystem by attracting large investments (global/domestic) in electronics component manufacturing ecosystem, increasing Domestic Value Addition (DVA) by developing capacity and capabilities, and integrating Indian companies with Global Value Chains (GVCs).

GIFT City tops GFCI rank in India

Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) has been ranked top in the country in the latest edition of Global Financial Centers Index (GFCI) 37, ahead of Mumbai and Delhi. In the overall rankings, GIFT City was ranked 46 in the GFCI 37, while Mumbai was at 52 and Delhi at 60. GIFT City has secured the top rank in Reputational Advantage, climbed from 45th to 40th in the FinTech ranking, and improved its overall ranking from the 52nd to 46th place. Overall, New York leads the index, with London second. Hong Kong retains third position ahead of Singapore.

The Global Financial Centres Index (GFCI), compiled by Z/Yen Group, evaluates financial hubs worldwide based on 140 instrumental factors provided by “third-party organisations such as the World Bank, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the United Nations

India becomes world's 2nd-largest exporter of tea in 2024.

India has achieved a significant milestone in the global tea industry, surpassing Sri Lanka to become the world's second-largest exporter of tea in 2024. According to data compiled by the Tea Board of India, the country exported an impressive 255 million kilograms of tea last year, marking a substantial growth in its export figures. While Kenya has retained the top spot. India saw a robust 10 percent growth in tea exports compared to 231.69 million kilograms recorded in 2023. India exports tea to more than

25 countries with the UAE, Iraq, Iran, Russia, USA and the UK as its major markets and is among the top five tea exporters in the world accounting for about 10 per cent of total world exports.

India's Assam, Darjeeling, and Nilgiri tea are considered one of the finest in the world. Whereas Black tea dominates exports, accounting for 96 percent of the country's tea exports.

Banks' loan growth slows for eighth straight month in February: RBI.

Loan growth at banks moderated for an eighth straight month in February, RBI data showed due to a drop in personal and credit card loans following tighter rules by the Reserve Bank of India.

As per the data, banks' credit increased by 12% year-on-year last month, slower than the 16.6% rise a year earlier, excluding the impact of HDFC Bank's merger with parent Housing Development Finance Corp.

Elon Musk sells X to xAI in \$33 Billion Deal.

Tech billionaire Elon Musk has sold social media site X to his own xAI artificial intelligence company in a 33 billion US dollars deal. The move will unlock immense potential by blending xAI's advanced AI capability and expertise with X's massive reach. He said the deal values xAI at 80 billion US dollars and X at 33 billion US dollar.

Musk, who serves as the CEO of Tesla and SpaceX as well as an advisor to President Donald Trump, bought the site then called Twitter for 44 billion dollar in 2022. He launched xAI a year later.

Larsen & Toubro bags order worth around ₹15,000 crore from QatarEnergy LNG.

India's Infrastructure major Larsen & Toubro has bagged an ultra-mega order from QatarEnergy LNG for its offshore hydrocarbon business. The company classifies contracts above ₹15,000 crore as 'ultra mega' orders. Under the contract, L&T will do engineering, procurement, fabrication, installation, and commissioning of two offshore compression complexes.

Sports

Asian Wrestling Championship: Manisha Bhanwala wins India's first gold medal.

In the Asian Wrestling Championship-2025, Manisha Bhanwala won India's first gold medal since 2021 edition, while Antim Panghal settled for a bronze at Amman in Jordan. In women's 62 kg category, Manisha defeated Korea's Ok J Kim by 8-7 to win the historic Amman in Jordan.

Indian wrestlers have now won one gold, one silver and six bronze medals, including two by Greco Roman wrestlers in the tournament.

Novak Djokovic becomes oldest man to reach ATP Masters 1000 semi-final

In Tennis, Novak Djokovic has become the oldest man to reach the semi-final of the ATP Masters 1000. The 37-year-old Serbian achieved this feat by defeating American Sebastian Korda with an impressive 6-3 7-6 win in the quarterfinals of the Miami Open.

He surpassed Roger Federer, who made the final four at Indian Wells and Miami open at the age of 37 years and seven months in 2019.