

International

Spanish govt plans to ban social media for children below 16.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez has announced that his government plans to ban accessing social media platforms for children under the age of 16, citing concerns about online safety and harmful digital content. The proposed measure is expected to be approved by Spain's Council of Ministers next week and would amend a draft bill currently under discussion in the Parliament.

Another European nation, Denmark, has also announced plans to bar people under 15 from social media, while France is working toward implementing similar restrictions.

World Government Summit opens in Dubai.

The World Government Summit 2026 has opened in Dubai under the theme "Shaping Future Governments", bringing together global leaders, policymakers and business executives to examine how innovation, sustainability and technology are reshaping public policy.

Discussions at the summit are focused on strengthening government policies and boosting international cooperation to tackle economic, social and technological challenges.

World Cancer Day 2026 on Feb.4.

World Cancer Day is observed on the 4th of February every year to raise cancer awareness and encourage its prevention, detection, and treatment. This year, World Cancer Day is being observed under the theme – "United by Unique" to place people at the centre of care and their stories at the heart of the conversation. The theme is part of a three-year campaign, running since 2025, emphasising the significance of customised care, understanding that each person's cancer experience is unique.

Sri Lanka celebrates 78th National Day on Feb.4.

Sri Lanka is celebrating its 78th National Day on February 4. The official celebrations were held at Independence Square in Colombo, featuring a military parade, cultural performances, and a special address by President Anura Kumara Dissanayake.

The ceremony honoured those who fought for independence from British rule in 1948 and was attended by more than 4,500 members of the security forces, alongside around 400 invitees, including foreign diplomats.

Indian-origin Climate Scientist Veerabhadran Ramanathan wins Prestigious Crafoord Prize in US.

Indian-origin climate scientist Veerabhadran Ramanathan has been awarded the 2026 Crafoord Prize in Geosciences by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. Often described as the "Nobel of Geosciences," the prize recognises Ramanathan's decades of research on super-pollutants and atmospheric brown clouds, which have reshaped understanding of global warming. The Crafoord Prize carries a cash award of 8 million Swedish kronor (approximately \$900,000) and a gold medal.

Ramanathan made a landmark discovery in 1975 while working at NASA: chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), widely used in aerosols and refrigeration, trap heat in the atmosphere up to 10,000 times more effectively than carbon dioxide.

National

India and Kyrgyzstan's joint military exercise KHANJAR begins in Assam.

The 13th edition of the joint military Exercise KHANJAR between India and Kyrgyzstan begins at Misamari in Sonitpur district of Assam. The 14-day-long military

exercise aims to enhance interoperability between the Special Forces of both nations, with a focus on joint operations in urban warfare and counter-terrorism scenarios under the United Nations mandate.

India and Kyrgyzstan have been organising joint military exercises annually since 2011, with venues alternating between the countries to reflect deepening defence ties. The 12th edition was conducted in March 2025 in Kyrgyzstan.

Govt signs two MoUs to establish Bharat Container Shipping Line.

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways signed two MoUs for the formation of the Bharat Container Shipping Line and for financing the development of the Outer Harbour Development Project. The MoUs will help build domestic capacity, strengthen the maritime sector, and reduce dependence on foreign operators, making India self-sufficient in the shipping sector.

10 thousand crore rupees have been allocated in the Union Budget 2026-27 for the manufacture of shipping containers

India joins BRICS Centre for Industrial Competencies to support manufacturing and MSMEs.

India has joined the BRICS Centre for Industrial Competencies (BCIC) to provide integrated support services to manufacturing companies and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises across BRICS countries. The Commerce and Industry Ministry said that the National Productivity Council (NPC) has been designated as the India Centre for BRICS Industrial Competencies.

The BCIC, launched in partnership with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, aims to support industrial innovation, modernisation, and international cooperation across BRICS economies and beyond.

Business and Economy

World Bank approves \$830m programme to modernise India's Skills Training Institutes.

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors has approved an \$830 million financing programme to overhaul India's network of Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), with the aim of aligning skills training more closely with labour market needs and improving employment outcomes for young people.

The Supporting Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation Through Upgraded ITIs (PM-SETU) programme will revamp the national ITI system to produce more than one million better-skilled workers each year.

Prepared jointly with the Asian Development Bank, the programme will also mobilise at least \$680 million in private sector investment, bringing industry more directly into skills development.

Crypto market volatility triggers \$2.5 billion in bitcoin liquidations.

Bitcoin investors have liquidated \$2.56 billion in recent days, according to data provider CoinGlass, as cryptocurrencies slumped following a sell-off in other risk assets, including equities and precious metals.

The wipeouts in both short and long bitcoin positions are far below the record \$19 billion in crypto liquidations the market experienced after U.S. President Donald Trump announced new tariffs on China.

Tripura Gramin Bank launches first-ever co-branded 'RuPay Credit Card'.

Tripura Gramin Bank (TGB) has launched its first-ever co-branded 'RuPay Credit Card' in collaboration with its sponsor bank, Punjab National Bank (PNB). The initiative will enable customers—particularly in rural

and semi-urban areas—to access modern credit facilities seamlessly within the trusted RuPay ecosystem.

Tripura Gramin Bank, which operates through 150 full-fledged branches and 12 ultra-small branches across the state, is celebrating its Golden Jubilee year of establishment.

India, Nepal in talks to enable bulk Digital Transfers of Indian Rupee between banking systems.

The Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) are engaged in high-level talks to allow the unrestricted, bulk transfer of Indian currency (INR) between the banking systems of India and Nepal. When implemented, this initiative will modernize the transfer mechanism, moving beyond reliance on physical currency movement and allowing large-volume transfers via digital, interbank channels. This could be a big breakthrough to allow transfer of Indian money between banks in the two countries in Large volume, easing trade and tourism.

Former SBI Chief Dinesh Kumar Khara joins Truhome Finance.

Mortgage lender Truhome Finance has announced the appointment of former State Bank of India chairman Dinesh Kumar Khara as its chairperson for a five-year term. Khara played a pivotal role in leading the merger of five associate banks and the Bharatiya Mahila Bank with SBI, one of the largest banking consolidations globally.

Google Cloud, Liberty Global strike five-year AI partnership.

Google Cloud, one of Alphabet's fastest-growing businesses, and Liberty Global have agreed on a five-year strategic partnership to deploy Google's Gemini AI

models and other cloud tools across the cable group's European operations.

Liberty Global, which has about 80 million fixed and mobile connections across Europe, said the deal would support new consumer services, including AI-powered search and discovery on its Horizon TV platform, as well as customer-service automation.

Sports

England enter ICC U-19 World Cup Final after 27-run win over Australia.

In the ICC Under-19 ODI Cricket World Cup, England has reached the final, beating Australia by 27 runs in the first semi-final match at Bulawayo in Zimbabwe. Chasing a target of 278 runs, Australia were all out for 250 in 47.3 overs. Opting to bat first, England had scored 277 runs for seven wickets in the stipulated 50 overs.

6th Badminton Asia Team Championships begins in Qingdao, China.

The 6th edition of the Badminton Asia Team Championships is set to begin in Qingdao, China. The men's and women's national teams from Asia will compete in the tournament. Tanvi Sharma, Unnati Hooda, Malvika Bansod and a pair of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand are part of the Indian Women's team. The men's team has been drawn in Group C with fourth seeds Japan and Singapore. Lakshya Sen, HS Prannoy, Kidambi Srikanth and doubles pair Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty will lead the men's side.