

International

Hungary Withdraws From ICC

Hungary's government has announced its withdrawal from the International Criminal Court (ICC), just before Prime Minister Viktor Orban received his Israeli counterpart, Benjamin Netanyahu, who faces an ICC arrest warrant. A state's withdrawal from the court takes effect only one year after the deposit of the withdrawal letter with the United Nations secretary-general's office. So far, only Burundi and the Philippines have withdrawn from the court.

South Korea's Constitutional Court Upholds President's Impeachment

South Korea's Constitutional Court upheld the impeachment of the country's President, Yoon Suk Yeol. In a nationally televised judgement, at least six out of eight judges ruled in favour of Yoon's removal. This means the South Korean leader is immediately removed from the office of the President. The court also said Yoon violated his duty as president with his December 3 martial law declaration, acting beyond his constitutional powers with actions that were a serious challenge to democracy. A Presidential election is now required to take place within 60 days.

Bangladesh Assumes Chairmanship of BIMSTEC for Next Two Years

Bangladesh has assumed the chairmanship of the regional grouping – Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) – for the next two years. Upon receiving the Chairmanship from the Prime Minister of Thailand, Chief Adviser of Interim Government of Bangladesh Muhammad Yunus made a statement of acceptance, underscoring an inclusive and action-oriented BIMSTEC.

The BIMSTEC comprises seven countries of the Bay of Bengal region – Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Quad Nations Pledge \$20 Million in Aid for Myanmar Earthquake Relief

Australia, India, Japan and the US have extended sympathies and condolences to the peoples of Myanmar and Thailand following the recent earthquake. The Quad partners have so far committed humanitarian assistance

estimated at a combined value of over 20 million dollars. Through funding and bilateral efforts, the Quad is delivering relief supplies, deploying emergency medical teams and supporting humanitarian partners working in Myanmar to provide care for those affected by the earthquake.

Russia Unveils Zircon Hypersonic Missile

Russia has officially unveiled the Zircon hypersonic missile, capable of reaching speeds of Mach 9—over 10,000 kph—at altitudes of 20 km. Zircon is a strategic weapon designed to strike land, sea, and air targets with extreme precision.

President Putin also announced naval expansion, including submarines designed to launch Zircon, reinforcing Russia's strategic defence.

National

India & Thailand Ink Six Agreements in Various Fields

India and Thailand have signed six agreements for cooperation in various fields, including IT, maritime, MSME, handicraft and handloom. The agreements were exchanged following bilateral talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Thai counterpart Paetongtarn Shinawatra in Bangkok. In his joint statement following the bilateral talks, Prime Minister Modi announced the decision to elevate the India-Thailand relationship to a Strategic Partnership.

He underlined that Thailand has a special place in India's 'Act East' policy and Indo-Pacific vision.

Parliament Passes Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2025 as Rajya Sabha Grants Approval

Parliament has passed the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, with the Rajya Sabha approving it. The Upper House cleared the Bill with 128 members voting in favour of it, while 95 members voted against the legislation.

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill of 2025 aims to streamline the management of Waqf properties, with provisions to safeguard heritage sites and promote social welfare. The legislation also aims to improve governance by enhancing transparency in property management, streamlining coordination between Waqf boards and local authorities and protecting stakeholders' rights.

The Bill also seeks to improve the economic and social status of Muslim women, particularly widows and divorced women.

Four Successful Flight Tests of Medium-Range Surface to Air Missile by DRDO and Army

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Indian Army have conducted four successful flight tests of the Army version of the Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile from Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha. The missiles intercepted the aerial targets and destroyed them, registering direct hits.

The flight tests were carried out with the weapon system in operational condition.

Sex Ratio at Birth Rises From 918 to 930

The Central Government has said that due to the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme, the sex ratio at birth has increased from 918 in 2014-15 to 930 in 2023-24 at the national level. Women and Child Development Minister Annpurna Devi said the scheme was launched in 2015 to address the declining Child Sex Ratio and related issues of the empowerment of girls and women.

The Minister said the gross enrollment ratio of girls in schools at the secondary level has increased from around 75 per cent in 2014-15 to 78 per cent in 2023-24.

Veteran Actor-Director Manoj Kumar Passes Away

Veteran actor and director Manoj Kumar passed away in Mumbai. He was 87. The legendary Bollywood actor was well-known by his nickname 'Bharat Kumar' for his patriotic films. He was a recipient of the prestigious Padma Shri and Dadasaheb Phalke Award for his immense contribution to Indian cinema for decades.

He has delivered classics like *Upkar* (1967), *Purab Aur Paschim* (1970), and *Kranti* (1981). Some of his other popular films are *Patthar Ke Sanam*, *Shor*, *Sanyasi*, and *Roti Kapda Aur Makan*.

Business and Economy

China Retaliates by Announcing 34% Additional Tariffs on US Goods

China announced additional tariffs of 34 per cent on U.S. goods, the most serious escalation

in a trade war with US President Donald Trump that has fed fears of a recession. In the standoff between the world's top two economies, China also announced controls on exports of some rare earth elements and filed a complaint at the World Trade Organisation. Nations from Canada to China have readied retaliation in a mounting trade war after Mr. Trump raised U.S. tariff barriers to their highest level in more than a century this week, leading to a plunge in world financial markets.

India Ranks 10th With \$1.4 Billion Private Investment in AI: UN

According to the 2025 Technology and Innovation Report issued by UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), India has been ranked 10th in the world with significant private investments in artificial intelligence (AI) in 2023. The report also stated that India ranked 36th in 2024 on the Readiness for Frontier Technologies Index, improving its position from 48th in 2022.

The report also notes that China, Germany, India, the UK, and the US show scientific strength in the field of AI. The US leads the world in terms of private investment in AI at 67 billion US dollars in 2023, or 70 percent of global AI private investment. China was in second position, with 7.8 billion US dollars.

Hanwha Aerospace Signs \$254 Million Deal to Supply K9 Howitzers to India

Hanwha Aerospace Co., a leading South Korean defense company, has signed a 370-billion-won (\$254 million) deal to supply K9 self-propelled howitzers to India. Hanwha Group will deliver the artillery systems to the Indian Ministry of Defense in collaboration with Indian engineering and manufacturing company Larsen & Toubro (L&T).

The deal follows a 770-billion-won contract in 2017, under which Hanwha supplied 100 units of the K9 howitzers to the Indian Army through 2020.

RBI to Issue ₹10, ₹500 Notes in New Series Bearing Gov. Malhotra's Signature

The Reserve Bank of India will issue ₹10 and ₹500 denomination banknotes in the Mahatma Gandhi (New) Series bearing the signature of the new RBI Governor, Sanjay Malhotra.

The design of these notes is similar in all respects to the ₹10 and ₹500 banknotes in the Mahatma Gandhi (New) Series, it said.

C.K. Birla Group Firm HIL Rebranded as BirlaNu

Home and building products and services company HIL (formerly known as Hyderabad Industries) has been rebranded as BirlaNu as part of a strategic transformation course the C.K. Birla Group entity has set on under which it plans to invest at least ₹1,200 crore in the next three years for accelerated growth.

Paras Defence Inks Pact with MicroCon for Drone Camera Supply

Paras Defence and Space Technologies has signed an initial pact with Israeli firms Controp and MicroCon Vision for drone camera technology supply in India. This collaboration aims to boost self-reliance with high indigenous content, reducing costs by 50-60 per cent for advanced surveillance technologies.

The Indian drone market, projected to grow approximately 17 per cent by 2029, driven by demand from defence, homeland security, disaster management, and industrial sectors, will benefit from this collaboration.

Citi , SBI Announce \$295 Million Social Loan Facility

Citi and State Bank of India (SBI) have announced a social loan facility of \$295 million, whereby the latter will utilize the facility to finance its Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loan portfolio, to help meet the credit requirements of the agricultural sector, and within this, smallholder farmers.

The financing (with Citi's Trade & Working Capital Solutions) will be specifically directed towards smallholder farmers in India, to support farmers to improve their agricultural productivity, enhancing their financial well-being.

Federal Bank Launches Fed StarBiz Credit Card for Business Customers

Federal Bank has introduced Fed StarBiz, a credit card designed specifically for business customers, in partnership with NPCI and Visa. Targeting small and medium businesses, the card offers features that enhance financial

management and convenience. This launch marks Federal Bank's entry into the industry and commercial card segment, reinforcing its commitment to supporting India's dynamic business ecosystem.

India's Service Sector Growth Eases Slightly in March

India's service sector activity eased slightly in March, weighed down by a marginal slowdown in sales amid softer demand conditions and easing inflationary pressures. The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Services PMI Business Activity Index fell from February's reading of 59.0 to 58.5 in March, but remained above its long-run average of 54.2.

Forbes Billionaires List 2025: Elon Musk Retains Top Spot

Elon Musk has retained his number-one position on the Forbes Billionaires List 2025. Musk is followed by Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg (top 2), having a net worth of \$216 billion, and Amazon's Jeff Bezos (top 3), whose net worth is \$215 billion, Meanwhile, India, with 205 billionaires overall, ranks third on Forbes' annual Billionaires List, following the United States and China. The combined wealth of Indian billionaires has increased to \$1.1 trillion.

KVGB Launches e-Bank Guarantee Services in Dharwad

Regional rural bank (RRB) Karnataka Vikas Gramin Bank (KVGB) launched its e-Bank Guarantee (e-BG) services in collaboration with the government's information utility provider National E-Governance Services Limited (NESL) in Dharwad.

Launching the services in Dharwad, bank Chairman Shrikant M. Bhandiwad said that KVG Bank is the first among the 43 regional rural banks in India to introduce the facility.

India Logged 93.23 Billion UPI Transactions Worth ₹130.19 Trillion During H2FY24

According to the 'India Digital Payments' study released by Worldline, India's UPI transaction volume grew 42% year-on-year during the second half of FY2024, reaching a total of 93.23 billion transactions.

During this period, the country's UPI transaction value surged 31% YoY to ₹130.19 trillion.

India Produced 1,681 Locomotives in FY25, Surpassing U.S., Europe

The Union Ministry of Railways said that India produced a record 1,681 locomotives across various categories in the financial year 2024-25, which is an increase of 209 locomotives, or 19%, compared to the 1,472 locomotives produced in 2023-24.

Sports

Hitesh Becomes 1st Indian Boxer to Reach Boxing World Cup 2025 Final

Hitesh has become the first Indian boxer to reach the Boxing World Cup 2025 finals in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil. He defeated Makan Traore of France 5-0 in the men's 70kg category in the semi-finals.

Meanwhile, other Indian boxers, including Jadumani Singh in the 50kg category, Sachin Siwach in 60kg, and Vishal in the 90kg category, won a bronze medal each.