

Pakistan President dissolves National Assembly on PM Imran Khan's advice



In Pakistan, President Arif Alvi had dissolved the National Assembly following Prime Minister Imran Khan's advice. Imran also advised the President to call for fresh elections. Meanwhile, Pakistan Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib said that fresh elections will be held in the country within 90 days. Meanwhile, the Opposition has filed a petition to the country's Supreme Court.

Serbia's Aleksandar Vucic cruises to reelection



Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic cruised to a second term in an election on Sunday. Vucic was projected to win almost 60 percent of the vote in the presidential poll with some 40 points ahead of his nearest challenger, according to a pollster. He will now come under renewed scrutiny over his equivocal stance on Russia's war in Ukraine. While Serbia has said it supports Ukraine, but it has refused to impose sanctions on Moscow, its long time ally. Serbia is almost entirely dependent on Russian gas, while its army maintains ties with Russia's military.

Sri Lanka: Govt restricts access to social media platforms amid unprecedented economic crisis



In Sri Lanka, the government has restricted access to major social media platforms including Facebook and Twitter to tackle growing unrest amid an unprecedented economic crisis. The restrictions come after the government implemented a countrywide curfew as protests against the government's handling of the economic crisis turned violent. Police said, hundreds of people have defied the curfew and gathered in several suburban towns.

Meanwhile, India recently announced that it will extend a one billion US Dollar line of credit to Colombo as part of its financial assistance to the country. India also delivered a consignment of 40,000 metric tonnes of diesel to Sri Lanka. This is the fourth such assistance from New Delhi to mitigate the spike in power cuts in the island nation.

Hungary PM Viktor Orban Wins Fourth Term With Comfortable Victory



Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban's Fidesz party had won a fourth term in office by a much greater margin than pre-election polls had suggested, after a campaign overshadowed by the war in neighbouring Ukraine. Fidesz was on 53 percent compared to 35 percent for the opposition coalition, according to results from the national election office.

Viktor Orban is already the longest-serving head of government in the EU, was challenged by six united opposition parties seeking to roll back the "illiberal" revolution Orban's Fidesz party has pursued during 12 consecutive years in office.

Taliban order ban on poppy cultivation



The Taliban announced a ban on the cultivation of narcotics in Afghanistan, the world's biggest opium producer. As per the decree of the supreme leader of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan Haibatullah Akhundzada, all Afghans are informed that from now on, cultivation of poppy has been strictly prohibited across the country. The order also said the production, use or transport of other narcotics was also banned.

Drug control has been one major demand of the international community to the Taliban, which took over the country in August and is seeking formal international recognition in order to wind back sanctions that are severely hampering banking, business and development.

WHO pauses Covaxin supply via UN bodies



The World Health Organization has confirmed it has suspended the supply of Covaxin, produced by Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech, through UN procurement agencies and recommended to countries that received the Covid vaccine to take actions as appropriate. The suspension is in response to the outcomes of its post emergency use authorisation inspection held from March 14-22, 2022 and the need to conduct process and facility upgrade to address recently identified good manufacturing practice deficiencies.

UN chief names an Indian in climate team



Arunabha Ghosh, CEO of the Delhi-based Council for Energy Environment and Water, has been appointed a member of a high-level group constituted by United Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, to bolster action against global warming. Mr. Ghosh is among three Asians, and the only South Asian, serving on the expert group.

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurates 4 NH Projects worth Rs 1466 Cr in Maharashtra's Raigad



Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated four National Highway Projects worth 1466 Crore rupees in Raigad district of Maharashtra. While addressing the ceremony, Mr Gadkari said that the Mumbai-Goa National Highway is a heartline project and his ministry has been giving special emphasis for the timely completion of the project.

To give a major boost to the blue economy of Konkan, the union minister also suggested use of advance trawlers for the fishermen in Konkan so that they can cover 100 nautical miles and do fishing.

NTAGI panel nod for Covovax for 12-17 group



The COVID-19 working group of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI) has recommended the inclusion of Covovax, the Serum Institute's COVID-19 vaccine, in the national vaccination programme for use in the 12-17 age group. India began inoculating children aged 12-14 from March 16. Biological E's Corbevax is being used to inoculate them.

Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur launches new rare chemical Reference Materials to strengthen anti-doping testing



Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur launched six new and rare Reference Materials (RMs) developed by the National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL). Mr. Thakur said that this development will make India self-reliant in anti-doping science. The NDTL said that these RMs are indigenous and purest forms of chemicals required for anti-doping analysis in all WADA-accredited laboratories across the world. It said that these RMs have been developed in less than a year by NDTL in association with the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research and the CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine.

Exports cross 418-billion-dollar mark in 2021-22



Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has said that the country's goods exports have now crossed 418 billion US dollar mark. He said that exports have exceeded 40 billion dollars in March alone, which has created the history of highest exports in a month. He said, India's diversified export portfolio in 2021-22 show India's manufacturing abilities as well as growth in hi-tech goods, electronics and agricultural products.

HDFC Bank reports robust 20.9% growth led by commercial, rural banking



Private sector lender HDFC Bank reported a robust growth of 20.9 per cent in advances as of March 31, 2022 on a year-on-year basis, led by over 30 per cent growth in commercial and rural banking. HDFC Bank said its advances aggregated to about ₹13,69,000 crore as of March 31, 2022, a growth of around 20.9 per cent over ₹11,32,800 crore as of March 31, 2021. It grew about 8.6 per cent over ₹12,60,900 crore as of December 31, 2021.

Ukraine's economy could contract 40% in 2022, ministry says



Ukraine's economy shrank 16% year-on-year in the first quarter of this year and could contract 40% in 2022 as a result of Russia's invasion, the economy ministry said in a statement, citing preliminary estimates. The war campaign has deeply disrupted the Ukrainian economy. It has forced the country's central bank in Kyiv to limit the exchangeability of its hryvnia currency in order to preserve its reserve of dollars and euros.

Spiralling energy bills and disruptions caused by the war in Ukraine caused consumer prices in the eurozone to surge by a new record of 7.5 per cent. Europe has found itself caught in an oil and gas crunch due to tensions with Russia over its invasion of Ukraine.

ICC Women's World Cup: Australia lift title for seventh time after beating England by 71 runs



Australia has lifted the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup defeating England in the final by 71 runs at Hagley Oval in Christchurch. Chasing the target of 357, England Women were all out for 285 in 43.4 overs. Earlier, Put into bat first by England, Australia posted 356 for 5 in 50 overs Australia women have won the world cup for a record 7th time.

Alyssa Healy was declared Player of the Match and also the Player of the tournament.

Indian shuttler Mithun Manjunath settles for Silver medal in Men's Singles of Orleans Masters 2022 Badminton tournament



In badminton, Indian shuttler Mithun Manjunath had to settle for a silver medal after losing to home favorite Toma Junior Popov in the men's singles final of the Orleans Masters 2022 badminton tournament in Orleans, France. Playing in his maiden BWF final, the 79th ranked Indian shuttler lost 11-21, 19-21 to world number 32 Frenchman at the Palais des Sports Arena.

India defeat Germany 2-1 to enter quarterfinals of Women's Junior Hockey World Cup



In Hockey, the Indian women's team stunned formidable Germany 2-1 to register its second consecutive win in the pool stages and assure its place in the quarterfinals of the FIH Junior World Cup. The Indians will finish off their pool engagements against Malaysia on April 5 before the quarterfinal round, which starts on April 8.