

(18<sup>th</sup> May 2026)

## INTERNATIONAL

### **DRONE STRIKE TRIGGERS FIRE AT UAE'S NUCLEAR POWER PLANT**

In the United Arab Emirates, a drone strike triggered a fire outside the Barakah Nuclear Power Plant in Abu Dhabi. The strike is being seen as the first known attack targeting the four-reactor Barakah nuclear facility during the ongoing Iran conflict.

Barakah Nuclear Power Plant is the first commercial nuclear power station in the Arab World and the Arabian Peninsula.

#### **More about the UAE:**

President: *Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan*;  
Prime Minister: *Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum*;  
Capital: *Abu Dhabi*;  
Currency: *United Arab Emirates Dirham*

### **WHO DECLARES EBOLA OUTBREAK IN CONGO & UGANDA**

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda a public health emergency of international concern. WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus announced the decision after more than 300 suspected cases and 88 reported deaths. The outbreak is linked to the rare Bundibugyo strain of the Ebola virus, for which there are currently no approved vaccines or treatments.

*Ebola disease* is a rare but severe and often fatal viral haemorrhagic fever that affects humans and other primates. It spreads through contact with bodily fluids and can cause severe and often fatal illness.

#### **More about the Democratic Republic of the Congo:**

President: *Felix Tshisekedi*;  
Capital: *Kinshasa*;  
Currency: *Congolese Franc*

#### **More about Uganda:**

President: *Yoweri K. Museveni*;  
Prime Minister: *Robinah Nabbanja*;  
Capital: *Kampala*;  
Currency: *Ugandan Shilling*

### **ANDRIS KULBERGS IS LATIVA'S NEXT PM**

Latvian President Edgars Rinkevics nominated opposition MP Andris Kulbergs as the country's next Prime Minister. Kulbergs, a member of parliament from the opposition United List Party, has been asked to form a new government. Prime Minister-designate Andris Kulbergs is expected to show significant progress in government formation by the 25th of May.

#### **More about Latvia:**

President: *Edgars Rinkevics*;  
Capital: *Riga*;  
Currency: *Euro (€)*

### **MODI RECEIVES SWEDEN'S ROYAL ORDER OF POLAR STAR**

Sweden conferred the Royal Order of Polar Star, Commander Grand Cross upon Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Royal Order of Polar Star, Commander Grand Cross is considered Sweden's highest honour bestowed upon foreign leaders and heads of government. This is the 31st global honour for PM Narendra Modi.

#### **More about Sweden:**

King: *Carl XVI Gustaf*;  
Prime Minister: *Ulf Kristersson*;  
Capital: *Stockholm*;  
Currency: *Swedish krona*

### **THAILAND DECLARES HANTAVIRUS "DANGEROUS COMMUNICABLE DISEASE"**

Thailand government declared Hantavirus a "dangerous communicable disease" amid growing global concern over its spread. The country's National Communicable Disease Committee approved strict measures, including reporting suspected cases within three hours, disease investigations within 12 hours and a 42-day quarantine for high-risk contacts.

*Hantavirus* is primarily spread through contact with infected rodents, their urine, saliva or droppings, while human-to-human transmission remains rare.

#### **More about Thailand:**

King: *Maha Vajiralongkorn*;  
Prime Minister: *Anutin Charnvirakul*;  
Capital: *Bangkok*;  
Currency: *Thai Baht*

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## **ISRAEL & LEBANON EXTEND CEASEFIRE FOR 45 DAYS**

Israel and Lebanon agreed to a 45-day extension of their ceasefire after another round of talks in Washington. The April 16 cessation of hostilities will be extended by 45 days to enable further progress after America hosted two days of highly productive talks between Israel and Lebanon. The US State Department will host the next political round of talks on June 2 and 3.

### **More about Israel:**

President: *Isaac Herzog*;  
Prime Minister: *Benjamin Netanyahu*;  
Capital: *Jerusalem*;  
Currency: *Israeli shekel*

### **More about Lebanon:**

President: *Joseph Aoun*;  
Prime Minister: *Nawaf Salam*;  
Capital: *Beirut*;  
Currency: *Lebanese pound*

## **NATIONAL**

### **INDIA & NETHERLANDS ELEVATE TIES TO STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

India and the Netherlands agreed to elevate their bilateral relationship to the level of a strategic partnership following wide-ranging discussions between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Dutch Prime Minister Rob Jetten in The Hague.

The two sides signed 17 agreements and memorandums of understanding (MOUs) in areas of “WAH” (water, agriculture, and health), renewable energy, critical minerals, and a semiconductor fabrication project between TATA Electronics and the Dutch company ASML.

### **More about the Netherlands:**

King: *Willem-Alexander*;  
Prime Minister: *Rob Jetten*;  
Capital: *Amsterdam*;  
Currency: *Euro (€)*

### **INS SAGARDHWANI DEPARTS FROM PORT KLANG, MALAYSIA**

The Indian Navy’s oceanographic research vessel INS Sagardhwani departed from Port Klang in Malaysia after concluding a successful engagement with the Royal Malaysian Navy. During the port call, personnel from both Navies held a series of

professional and scientific interactions focusing on modern hydrographic practices, marine environmental research and advancements in oceanographic technologies.

### **More about Malaysia:**

Prime Minister: *Anwar Ibrahim*  
National Capital: *Kuala Lumpur (seat of the legislature)*;  
Administrative Capital: *Putrajaya (seat of the federal government & Judiciary)*;  
Currency: *Malaysian Ringgit*

### **SOUTHWEST MONSOON LIKELY TO HIT KERALAM COAST ON 26 MAY**

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that the Southwest Monsoon is likely to set in over Keralam on the 26th of May, six days ahead of its normal date of June 1. It stated that conditions are favourable for the southwest monsoon to advance into more parts of the southeast Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal, Andaman Islands, and Andaman Sea over the next two to three days.

## **BUSINESS & ECONOMY**

### **INDIA DIRECTS STATE-RUN BANKS, INSURANCE FIRMS TO CUT COSTS**

India’s Finance Ministry directed State-run banks, insurers and financial institutions to implement cost-cutting measures, including sharp curbs on travel and a phased transition to electric vehicles. The order, part of a broader austerity push, will cover institutions like the State Bank of India, Bank of Baroda and Life Insurance Corp of India and millions of their employees across the country.

Under the new measures, all meetings, reviews and consultations must be conducted via video conferencing unless physical presence is deemed essential.

### **RBI LIFTS BOND-TRADING TARGET FOR PDS**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) raised the annual bond-trading targets for its 21 primary dealers (PDs) by 48% to a minimum of ₹4 trillion (\$41.8 billion) per entity. This mandate is part of the central bank’s operational guidelines for the current fiscal year, aimed at deepening liquidity in the sovereign debt market.

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The move underscores the RBI's push to deepen liquidity in sovereign debt, a priority Governor Sanjay Malhotra highlighted this month.

## **BRITISH INSURER PRUDENTIAL TO BUY 75% IN BHARTI LIFE**

British insurer Prudential agreed to acquire a 75% stake in Bharti Life Insurance for ₹3,500 crore to take management control of an Indian life insurance company for the first time.

Bharti Enterprises will pare its stake in the company to 25% from 85% while 360 One Asset Management will sell its entire 15% holding and exit the venture.

## **MUTHOOT FINCORP POST ₹73,448.82 CRORE AUM IN FY26**

The consolidated assets under management (AUM) of Muthoot FinCorp Limited (MFL) registered ₹73,448.82 crore in FY26, while profit after tax (PAT) reached ₹1,847.62 crore, and consolidated revenue stood at ₹11,227.80 crore.

The standalone performance of the company also remained strong, with AUM at ₹ 56,185.10 crore, PAT at ₹1,640.21 crore, and revenue at ₹8,364.28 crore as of March 2026.

## **SPORT**

### **THAILAND OPEN: SATWIKSAIRAJ & CHIRAG LOSE FINAL**

Indian pair Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty went down 12-21, 23-25 to Indonesia's Leo Rolly Carnando and Daniel Marthin in the men's doubles final of the Thailand Open in Bangkok. The Indian duo lost the BWF World Tour Super 500 summit clash in straight games in 52 minutes, extending their title drought to two years.

### **FOOTBALL: MANCHESTER CITY WINS FA CUP**

English football club Manchester City won the FA Cup for the eighth time after a 1-0 win against Chelsea at Wembley. Antoine Semenyo's brilliant backheel finish in the second half was the difference between the two sides.

### **BADMINTON: SHRIYANSHI VALISHETTY WINS SILVER**

India's Shriyanshi Valishetty won the silver medal in women's singles at the Baoji China Masters in China. She went down to An Qi Yuan in straight sets, 14-21, 6-21, in the summit clash of the Super 100 event at Baoji City Gymnasium.