

## **National**

### **1. Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Launches First Overseas Atal Innovation Centre During UAE Visit**

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurated India's first overseas Atal Innovation Centre at the IIT Delhi-Abu Dhabi campus during his two-day official visit to the United Arab Emirates. The visit, taking place on September 10-11, aims to deepen bilateral cooperation in education, foster academic excellence and innovation, and explore new avenues of partnership.

At the inaugural ceremony, Minister Pradhan also launched two key academic programs: a Ph.D. program in Energy and Sustainability and a B.Tech program in Chemical Engineering. He commended the collaborative efforts behind the project and engaged with students and faculty during his campus tour.

The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), under which the new centre has been established, is a flagship initiative to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in India. AIM serves as an umbrella framework to drive entrepreneurial policies, programs, and collaborative platforms across multiple sectors.

Minister Pradhan's itinerary also includes attending the first anniversary celebration of Symbiosis University's Dubai campus, further underscoring the growing footprint of Indian educational institutions in the region and strengthening India-UAE educational ties.

## **International**

### **1. Australia approves world-first vaccine to save koalas from chlamydia**

A regulator has approved a world-first vaccine to protect koalas from chlamydia infections, which are causing infertility and death in the iconic native species that is listed as endangered in parts of Australia.

The single-dose vaccine was developed by the University of the Sunshine Coast in Queensland state after more than a decade of research led by professor of microbiology Peter Timms.

The research showed the vaccine reduced the likelihood of koalas developing symptoms of chlamydia during breeding age and decreased mortality from the disease in wild populations by at least 65%.

The recent approval by Australia's veterinary medicine regulator means the vaccine can now be used in wildlife hospitals, veterinary clinics and in the field to protect the nation's most at-risk koalas, Timms said.

Deborah Tabart, chair of the conservation charity Australian Koala Foundation, said resources being spent on vaccinating koalas should be redirected at saving koala habitat.

Tabart's foundation estimates there are fewer than 100,000 koalas in the wild. The government-backed National Koala Monitoring Programme estimated last year there were between 224,000 and 524,000 koalas.

Koalas are listed as endangered species in the states of Queensland and New South Wales and in the Australian Capital Territory, with habitat loss due to wildfires and urban expansion as the major threats. Chlamydia can cause urinary tract infections, infertility, blindness and death.

## **Sports**

### **1. ICC unveils 'Will to Win' campaign for ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2025**

The International Cricket Council unveiled its flagship 'Will to Win' campaign for the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2025.

Built on the core concept of determination and perseverance leading to glory, the campaign celebrates the journey of resilience, belief and transformation that defines women's cricket.

While India's 12 year wait to host the mega tournament also gets a brush, the idea of cricket enabling a million dreams by empowering women from adversity to triumph, takes centre stage.

The ICC brings in the spotlight to several star cricketers including India's Smriti Mandhana and Harmanpreet Kaur, Sri Lanka's Chamari Athapaththu, Australia's Ellyse Perry,

South Africa's Marizanne Kapp, Pakistan's Muneeba Ali, Bangladesh's Nigar Sultana Joty, New Zealand's Amelia Kerr and England's Nat Sciver-Brunt through the campaign.

The visual representation weaves an emotional connect with audiences by showcasing not just the players' present-day brilliance but also their early dreams and relentless journeys.

## **Agreements & MoUs**

### **1. Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) signs MoU with Punjab National Bank (PNB)**

Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL), a Government of India Enterprise under the Ministry of Communications, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Punjab National Bank (PNB), one of India's leading public sector banks, on 03 September 2025, to strengthen PNB's IT infrastructure and fast-track its technology transformation journey,

enabling faster, more reliable, and customer-centric digital services.

Under the MoU, TCIL will provide specialized expertise in IT consultancy, project management, and turnkey execution of complex technology initiatives.

The collaboration aims to deliver robust, secure, and regulatory-compliant solutions that will reinforce PNB's digital backbone, improve operational resilience, and support innovation in customer services.

Key areas of support include RFP lifecycle management, System Integration, IT Infrastructure Rollout, and Regulatory-Compliant Technology deployment.

## **2. Amazon Pay and ICICI Bank renews credit card partnership with reduced forex fees**

Amazon Pay and ICICI Bank have renewed their long-term partnership to enhance the Amazon Pay ICICI Bank Credit Card, India's most-adopted co-branded credit card, with over 5 million customers. Since its launch in 2018, the card has transformed digital payments by offering simple, transparent rewards along with seamless convenience.

The card will reduce the forex markup on international transactions to 1.99%, down from 3.5%, making it even more appealing for frequent travelers. Prime members will continue to enjoy 5% unlimited cashback on shopping and travel bookings via Amazon Pay, while Non-Prime members will receive 3% unlimited rewards,

further strengthening the card as both a rewarding everyday credit card and an ideal travel companion.

Key benefits that remain include no joining or annual fees, unlimited cashback on Amazon shopping and Amazon Pay transactions, always-on 3-month no-cost EMI on eligible Amazon purchases, and a 1% fuel surcharge waiver.

## **Important Days**

### **1. International Day for South-South Cooperation | 12 September**

In recognition of the continued importance of South-South cooperation, the United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution 58/220, endorsed the observation of the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation. 12 September marks the adoption of the 1978 Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA), a pivotal framework for technical cooperation among developing countries.

This year's theme; 'New Opportunities and Innovation through South-South and Triangular Cooperation', calls for turning promises into progress. It highlights the growing role of the Global South in tackling shared problems; from strengthening health systems and adapting to climate change to driving digital innovation and sustainable finance.

## **Insurance**

### **1. Insurance Surety Bonds for NHAI Contracts Crosses Rs. 10,000 Crore Landmark**

Achieving a major milestone, Insurance Surety Bonds (ISB) issued by the insurance companies for NHAI contracts has crossed Rs. 10,000 crore landmark.

Till July 2025, 12 insurance companies have issued around 1,600 ISBs as 'Bid Security' and 207 ISBs as 'Performance Security' valued at around Rs. 10,369 crores for NHAI contracts.

NHAI has been encouraging the use of Insurance Surety Bonds as an additional mode of submitting Bid Security and/or Performance Security Deposit.

In a bid to further promote wider adoption of Insurance Surety Bonds (ISB) and Electronic Bank Guarantee (eBG), a workshop was organized by NHAI in New Delhi.

Insurance Surety Bonds are instruments where insurance companies act as 'Surety' and provide the financial guarantee that the contractor will fulfil its obligation as per the agreed terms. The Ministry of Finance, Government of India has made e-BG and Insurance Surety Bonds at par with BGs for all Government procurements.

The Insurance Surety Bonds, when issued, would be cost effective and provide adequate security for NHAI projects.

As India is poised to become the world's third largest construction market, the requirement of Bank Guarantees in the Indian Infrastructure Sector is expected to grow by 6 to 8 percent Year on Year basis. Surety Bonds act as a viable alternative to Bank Guarantees.

## **India & World**

### **1. India pledges \$680 mn package for Mauritius to boost trade, security**

In its continuing efforts to sustain its influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) amid an expanding Chinese footprint, India pledged \$680 million special economic package for Mauritius, including \$25 million budgetary assistance for 2025-26 (FY26).

After the delegation-level talks between Indian and Mauritian officials, led by the prime ministers (PMs) of the two countries, PM Narendra Modi said the two nations are working to enable bilateral trade in local currencies following successful launch of UPI and RuPay cards in Mauritius.

- Indian and Mauritian delegations also signed seven agreements to strengthen bilateral ties after their talks led by the Indian PM and his Mauritian counterpart in Varanasi, the Lok Sabha constituency of Modi. Ramgoolam is on an eight-day state visit to India along with six of his cabinet ministers. The visit began on September 9.
- A key feature of India's assistance and economic package to Mauritius will be aimed at augmenting the latter's maritime security and defence preparedness to safeguard the waters around that country.
- India will also help Mauritius in the surveillance of the Chagos marine protected area. As a result of its recent treaty with the UK, Mauritius now

has a much larger EEZ to protect and secure its interest, and India is a preferred partner in this pursuit, India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said at a briefing later in the day.

## **Summit & Conferences**

### **1. Union Minister Pralhad Joshi inaugurates 1st Green Hydrogen R&D Conference; launches '100 crore Call for Proposals for Start-ups**

Union Minister of New and Renewable Energy, Shri Pralhad Joshi inaugurated the 1st Annual Green Hydrogen R&D Conference organised by Ministry of New and Renewable Energy in New Delhi and launched a new '100 crore Call for Proposals to support start-ups in hydrogen innovation.

The scheme will provide up to '5 crore per project for pilot projects in innovative hydrogen production, storage, transport and utilisation technologies. At the conference, 25 start-ups are showcasing their innovations, ranging from electrolyser manufacturing to AI-driven optimisation and biological hydrogen solutions.

#### **R&D Progress Under NGHM**

- Highlighting progress in research and development, the Minister said that the dedicated R&D Scheme under NGHM, has already awarded 23 projects in the first round of Call for Proposals. These cover key areas such as Safety and Integration, Hydrogen Production from Biomass, Hydrogen Applications, and Non-Biomass Hydrogen Production routes. Leading IITs, IISERs, CSIR labs and industry partners are implementing these projects. The second round of R&D proposals, launched on 14 July 2025, remains open till 15 September 2025. Internationally too, collaboration is expanding under the EU-India Trade and Technology Council, with over 30 joint proposals received on hydrogen production from waste.

#### **Building a Green Hydrogen Ecosystem: From Vision to Action**

- Shri Joshi stressed that green hydrogen ecosystem in India is already moving from vision to action. India's first port-based Green Hydrogen Pilot Project has been launched at V.O. Chidambaranar Port in Tamil Nadu. In the steel sector, five pilot projects are demonstrating hydrogen-based decarbonisation. In shipping, vessels are being retrofitted and refuelling facilities are being developed at Tuticorin Port. In transport, hydrogen buses and refuelling stations are already operational. In fertilisers, India conducted its first-ever green ammonia auction, discovering a historic low price of '49.75 per kg, compared to '100.28 per kg in 2024, with supplies set to begin at Paradeep Phosphates in Odisha.

The 1st Annual Green Hydrogen R&D Conference 2025 organised by MNRE will be held on 11-12 September 2025, featuring expert sessions,

interactive roundtables, and a Start-up Expo with 25 pioneering companies driving India's green energy revolution.

## **Science & Technology**

### **1. India has secured nine major world records in space exploration and is on track to add 8 to 10 more in coming yrs: ISRO**

ISRO Chairman V. Narayanan has said that India has secured nine major world records in space exploration and is on track to add 8 to 10 more in the coming years.

Addressing an event in New Delhi, Mr Narayanan highlighted India's achievements from Chandrayaan missions to Mars Orbiter Mission and advancements in cryogenic technology.

He said, Mars Orbiter Mission in 2014 made India the first nation to reach Mars on its maiden attempt.

- In 2017, the PSLV-C37 created history by launching 104 satellites in a single mission. Mr Narayanan said, Chandrayaan-2 in 2019 placed the world's best orbiter camera around the Moon, while Chandrayaan-3, in 2023, made India the first country to land a spacecraft near the lunar South Pole.
- He said, between 2014 and 2017, India achieved three global records in cryogenic stage development, including the fastest maiden flight of LVM3 with a cryogenic stage in 28 months, compared with timelines ranging from 37 to 108 months in other nations.
- Mr Narayanan said, ISRO's cost-sensitive approach has been crucial in reducing launch expenses. The ISRO chief also noted that India has launched more than 4,000 rockets and 133 satellites so far, contributing to national security, economic growth, and the rise of space entrepreneurship.
- Looking ahead, Mr Narayanan said, ISRO plans to achieve 8-10 additional world records in space technology. He added that by 2040, India aims to land a human on the Moon, marking another milestone in the country's journey toward becoming a developed nation.

## **Defence**

### **1. Raksha Mantri virtually flags-off 'Samudra Pradakshina', first ever Tri-service all-women circumnavigation sailing expedition**

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh, on September 11, 2025, virtually flagged-off a historic Tri-service all-women circumnavigation sailing expedition Samudra Pradakshina, the first ever in the world, from the Gateway of India in Mumbai.

Over the next nine months, 10 women officers will sail onboard the indigenously-built Indian Army Sailing Vessel (IASV) Triveni on an easterly route covering approximately 26,000 nautical miles. They will cross the Equator

twice, round the three great Capes - Leeuwin, Horn & Good Hope - covering all major oceans and some of the most dangerous waters, including the Southern Ocean & the Drake Passage. The team will also make four international port calls before returning to Mumbai in May 2026.

Shri Rajnath Singh termed Samudra Pradakshina as not only a voyage onboard a

About the crew

The 10-member crew includes Expedition Leader Lieutenant Colonel Anuja Varudkar, Deputy Expedition Leader Squadron Leader Shraddha P Raju, along with Major Karamjeet Kaur, Major Omita Dalvi, Captain Prajakta P Nikam, Captain Dauli Butola, Lieutenant Commander Priyanka Gusain, Wing Commander Vibha Singh, Squadron Leader Aruvi Jayadev and Vaishali Bhandari.

The circumnavigation will follow the strict norms of the World Sailing Speed Record Council, requiring the crossing of all longitudes, Equator crossings and completion of over 21,600 nautical miles under sail alone, without use of canals or powered transit. The most formidable phase will be the rounding of Cape Horn in the Southern Ocean during December 2025 - February 2026.

Sir Robin Knox-Johnston (UK) was the first to complete a solo non-stop circumnavigation in 1969. In India, Captain Dilip Donde (Retd) completed the first solo circumnavigation (2009'10) and Commander Abhilash Tomy (Retd) was the first Indian to circumnavigate non-stop in 2012'13. Navika Sagar Parikrama (2017'18) and Navika Sagar Parikrama-II (2024-25) by Indian Navy on INSV Tarini have been previous successful circumnavigation expeditions.

## **Ranks & Reports**

### **1. India's external debt rose at fastest pace in 7 years in FY25: Report**

India's external debt increased 10.1 per cent in 2024-25 (FY25) to \$736.3 billion, marking the fastest expansion in seven years in dollar terms. In rupee terms, the debt stock climbed to '63 trillion, reflecting a 13 per cent growth and an addition of '7.3 trillion, according to the External Debt Status Report 2024-2025 released by the Union Finance Ministry.

The dollar-terms growth significantly outpaced the 6.4 per cent uptick recorded in FY24, when external debt had touched \$663.8 billion. The FY25 external debt growth was the highest in seven years in rupee terms as well. In FY18, external debt had increased 12.6 per cent in rupee terms and 12.3 per cent in dollar terms.

- The Finance ministry noted that the US dollar-denominated debt continued to be the largest component at 54.2 per cent of India's total external debt stock as of end-March 2025. While dollar-denominated debt has consistently topped India's debt stock, with a share of over 50 per cent, the share of such debt in FY25 was the second highest in eight years, just shy of 54.6 per cent recorded in FY23. "Indian Rupee external debt occupied

second place after US Dollar external debt at end-March 2025, with the share of 31.1 per cent in total external debt, followed by yen (6.2 per cent), SDR (4.6 per cent) and euro (3.2 per cent),” the report said, adding that India’s external debt position is comfortable.

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in the foreword to the report, said that “India’s external debt remains sustainable and prudently managed” and relevant debt indicators are “in the comfort zone”. “Indian rupee-denominated debt, constituting 31.1 per cent of total external debt, also provides an element of comfort from a currency risk standpoint. The stability of the total external debt is further enhanced by the fact that the long term constitutes a significant proportion of the debt, and the short term debt is essentially incurred to finance imports,” she emphasised.