

Around The WORLD

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USA

Delay in return

Indian-American astronaut Sunita Williams embarked on the maiden test crew flight of the Boeing Starliner, launched by NASA on June 5, 2024. Initially planned for 45 days, the mission has been extended to 90 days due to issues including a helium leak and thruster failures. Williams and her crewmate Butch Wilmore remain in space as Boeing's engineers work to identify and resolve the problems. Tests are being conducted to ensure their safe return.



UK

Entertainment excels

Tubi, the popular American OTT content and service streaming platform, announced its launch in the United Kingdom on July 2, 2024. CEO Anjali Sud revealed that starting July 15, the users in the United Kingdom will have access to over 20,000 on-demand TV shows and movies. The platform will also feature a curated content library consisting of productions from popular global distributors like Lionsgate, Disney+, and Sony, along with many of its original series. The streamers will also enjoy access to 250 live sports and news channels.



JAPAN

Tourist tax for visitors

Japan has mandated a fee of 2000 JPY for climbers ascending Mount Fuji, starting July 1, 2024. This comes as a measure to combat over-tourism at the iconic 13 km landmark following numerous complaints about littering, overcrowding and poor management. The number of per day entries have been capped at 4000 people to preserve the World Heritage Site and minimise environmental impact. The funds generated will further aid in the formation of infrastructure and other facilities at the scenic spot.



SOUTH AFRICA

Alliance in cabinet

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has announced a new coalition cabinet after the African National Congress (ANC) saw a 40% drop in vote share, losing its parliamentary majority. The cabinet now includes 11 parties, with the ANC holding 20 of 32 ministerial seats and the Democratic Alliance (DA) holding six seats. The remaining seats were distributed among other alliance parties.



SAUDI ARABIA

Mandatory health insurance

The Saudi Council of Health Insurance and the Insurance Authority have implemented a policy mandating compulsory insurance for domestic workers employed in households with more than four staff members. The policy covers primary care, emergency cases, hospitalisation without cost-sharing, emergency treatment, and various other health benefits, providing comprehensive care and boosting services.



INDIA

New laws in effect

On July 1, 2024, India enacted three new criminal laws - the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam. These laws will replace the colonial-era Code of Criminal Procedure, Indian Penal Code and Indian Evidence Act. The move aims to strengthen the judicial system, improve court management, and ensure speedy justice process.



AUSTRALIA

New visa regulations

Australia introduced new visa regulations on July 1, 2024, restricting Temporary Graduate visa holders and other specified visa holders from applying for student visas while in the country. As stated by the government, upon expiration of the visa, the applications must be submitted from abroad. Additionally, visitors on a Visitor visa can study for three months, but extensions require application from abroad.

News Flash

► **France:** With 34.5% of votes, the National Rally Party claims victory in the first round of parliamentary elections ► **Canada:** 100,000 travellers impacted as Canadian Airline Mechanics go on strike