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133 Indians Among 400 Kailash Yatra Pilgrims Missing In Nepal Flash Floods, 95 Dead



Tibet / Kathmandu: At least 133 Indians are among the 400-odd pilgrims who have gone missing during Kailash Mansarovar Yatra to Tibet after a flash flood in the Bhothe Koshi River swept through Nepal's Nuwakot and Dhading districts. The death count in the flash floods has reached 98. The floodwater came from the Tibetan side of the border, causing extensive damage and washing away several villages in Nepal, according to news agency AFP. According to the authorities, at least 403 travellers, including 341 foreigners and 62 Nepali nationals, are reported miss-

ing from the flood-affected area. These include 203 men and 200 women. Among the foreigners, 133 are Indians and 47 are US citizens. They had gone for the yatra with various travel agencies. An official said that at least 26 Nepal Police personnel are still missing in Rasuwa district. The Armed Police Force also said that seven of its personnel are missing. The Nepal Army has deployed helicopters and disaster response personnel to the affected area. "The work of collecting details of the damage is underway," it said in a statement. A massive flood swept through Nepal's northern districts

on Wednesday, damaging roads and power infrastructure as authorities scrambled to assess the scale of the destruction. The Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) said at least six of its major hydropower and transmission facilities - Rasuwagadhi, Chilime, Trishuli 3A, Trishuli 3B Hub 220 kV Substation, Trishuli Hydropower Station, and Devghat Hydropower Station-- have been damaged in the flood. "The disaster has damaged the production, transmission, and distribution facilities of the Authority... resulting in disruption of electricity supply," it said. Several high-

ways in Nepal have also been closed, authorities said. Videos shared by Nepal Police and others on social media showed torrents of muddy water crashing through mountain valleys in the Himalayan nation's districts bordering Tibet. "We do not exactly know the extent of damage, but the flood is big, and it could have damaged many settlements," Nepal Police spokesman Abi Narayan Kafle told AFP. "We have alerted people who are staying near the riverside to relocate... and deployed all our resources," he said. Prime Minister Balendra Shah has meanwhile convened an emergency meeting of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority to take stock of the situation. "Work has started to take necessary steps in coordination with the medical team, scouts, and Red Cross," Shah said in a social media post. Monsoon rains from June to September regularly trigger deadly floods and landslides across South Asia. Scientists say climate change is increasing the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events in the region.

77 From Isha Foundation Missing In Nepal, Sadhguru "Ready" To Join Rescue Ops

New Delhi: At least 77 pilgrims from Sadhguru's Isha Foundation are missing after horrific flash floods hit Nepal this morning. The team was at the immigration office on its way back from Kailash Mansarovar in Tibet, the spiritual leader said in an online post. Visuals showed a massive wave surging in the Gyirong Port area in Tibet and collapsing on the immigration office before crossing into Rasuwa, causing destruction along the Bhothe Kosi River. Read: In Apocalyptic Video, People Engulfed By Flash Floods At China-Nepal Border



seems to have been flooded. "A terrible and tragic flash flood has taken place at Gyirong in Tibet - China, and one of our Kailash groups was caught in it. While on their way back, they were at the immigration office when the flood occurred, and the building and much of the town seems to have been flooded," Sadhguru said. There is no official word on the whereabouts of those who were at the immigration office, the spiritual leader lamented, adding that his volunteers and support teams are deeply an-

guished and are doing their utmost to assist in the rescue operation. "We are working with the authorities to see if we can get to the location and stand ready to be part of the rescue efforts, regardless of the risk involved," Sadhguru said. He also shared that of the 21 groups who were part of their sojourn, 495 people have already returned safely, while 743 are currently in Tibet and 148 are in Nepal. Three volunteers are in Timure, Nepal, he added. The 77 people who were at the immigration office are believed to be among the

105 Indian Kailash pilgrims reported missing by the Nepal Tourism Board. A statement noted that at least 384 travellers had been out of contact in the flood-affected area, including 291 foreigners and 93 Nepali nationals. "To the families and loved ones of those in our group and hundreds of others who are affected in the region, I share your pain and we are sparing no effort during this profoundly difficult time. I am personally in the region to ensure the best can be done in the given circumstances," read Sadhguru's post.

No One Who Committed Wrongdoing in the ‘Axe Party’ Will Escape Punishment: Kollu Ravindra



From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, August, 26 : Andhra Pradesh Mines and Excise Minister Kollu Ravindra asserted that no one who committed wrongdoing in the "Axe Party"

would escape punishment. Speaking in the capital Amaravati on Wednesday, he criticised YSRCP chief and former Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, saying that while Jagan remained at home when the Assembly discussed El Niño, he was now holding press conferences and making baseless claims. Ravindra alleged that Jagan was avoiding the Assembly because the alleged misdeeds of his five-year rule would be exposed on the floor of the House. He strongly criticised the former Chief Minister for staying away from the Assembly. Minister Kollu

Ravindra accused Jagan Reddy of sacrificing the interests of the state to win the appreciation of former Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao (KCR). He alleged that irrigation projects were devastated due to Jagan's alleged corruption and greed for money. He questioned whether Jagan had not once spoken about scrapping the Pattiseema pumps. Ravindra pointed out that the same Pattiseema project was now helping the state during El Niño conditions. He said that due to Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's foresight and the storage of water in reser-

voirs, the state was able to withstand even difficult conditions. Ravindra said Jagan's remarks on water resources reflected a lack of understanding. The Minister criticised Jagan for allegedly betraying the interests of Rayalaseema and now pretending to have concern for the region. He said Jagan had cancelled 102 tenders in Rayalaseema for his political interests. Ravindra said the cost of the Polavaram project increased due to Jagan's negligence. He alleged that Jagan was holding a series of press conferences because he could not tolerate the good work being

done by the present government. He said Jagan, who allegedly did not want the BC community to prosper, had no moral right to speak about BCs. Ravindra alleged that while Jagan spent crores of rupees in public money on his own legal cases, he failed to address the reduction in BC reservations. Expressing his displeasure over Jagan's stand, Ravindra questioned whether Jagan would use the BC card for political gains when Karumuri had allegedly been caught by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with the liquor scam.

Amaravati Assembly to Get a New Design: Minister Manohar

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, August, 26 : Minister Nadendla Manohar said that Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's goal is to develop Amaravati into one of the most spectacular capitals in the world. As part of the capital's development, the Assembly building is being designed to meet future requirements, he said. Plans are being prepared to construct a tower on top of the Assembly building, from where the entire capital region can be viewed, the Minister revealed. He said discussions were held on the Assembly building designs keeping in mind the delimitation of constituencies that may take place in

the future. The building design is being prepared to accommodate 265 Assembly seats and 110 Legislative Council seats, he said. **Special Experience for Visitors** The Minister said it has been decided to establish a special Experience Centre to provide visitors to the Assembly with a memorable experience. He said the design is also being prepared to facilitate a Central Hall, where members of both the Assembly and Legislative Council can sit together when the Governor addresses the legislature. Minister Manohar said Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu had instructed that the area sur-



rounding the Assembly premises should be developed with abundant greenery, giving it the appearance of a garden. He added that the Assembly design is being developed with the objective of providing better facilities to ministers, whips, committee chairpersons, MLAs and MLCs.

Maoists surrender before OSD in Chinturu



Polavaram, August 26: Three Maoists surrendered at the Chinturu Police Station in the district. Police officials said they surrendered before Chinturu OSD Pankaj Kumar Meena. One of the surrendered Maoists is a woman. The surrendered persons have been identified as Muchika Lakshmi, Kaditi Venka, and Kaditi Laxayya. Police stated that they had been operating from Chhattisgarh and were allegedly involved in several violent activities in the past. Officials said multiple cases had also been registered

against them. Speaking on the occasion, Chinturu OSD Pankaj Kumar Meena said that they had chosen to abandon the path of violence and join the mainstream of society. He added that assistance under the government's rehabilitation policy for surrendered Maoists would be considered. The Central Government launched Operation Kagar with the objective of eliminating Maoism in the country by March 31 this year. Following the operation, hundreds of Maoists surrendered before the police, while several others were arrested.

Seven Missing Konaseema Fishermen Found Safe at Sea

From Our Staff Reporter Konaseema, August 26: The whereabouts of seven fishermen from Konaseema who had gone missing at sea have been traced. The crew of another boat located them near the West Bengal-Odisha border. Their families heaved a sigh of relief after receiving information that all seven fishermen were safe.



On August 3, the seven fishermen had ventured into the sea from the Odaleswaram Fishing Landing Centre in Konaseema district aboard the fishing boat IND - AP - E 8 - MO - 135 'Mutyalamma'. They subsequently went missing. Since then, officials had launched extensive search operations to trace them. Recently, the crew of another boat spotted the missing fishing boat near Digha in West Bengal. They confirmed that all seven fishermen aboard were safe. It is learnt that the fishermen had been stranded at sea for

some time because the engine of their boat had malfunctioned. The crew of the boat that located them reportedly tied the disabled boat to their own vessel and is towing it towards the shore. After nearly 23 days, news that the fishermen were safe brought immense relief and happiness to their families and relatives. **Fishermen's Safety and Welfare Top Priority: Minister Atchanna** Minister Atchannaidu announced that the seven Konaseema fishermen who had gone missing at sea were safe. He said the gov-

ernment machinery had worked in coordination to trace the fishermen. The Minister congratulated the District Collector, Commissioner, Joint Director of Fisheries and Fisheries Development Officer (FDO) for their efforts. He directed officials to take steps to bring the fishermen back to their native place and instructed them to travel to West Bengal. Atchannaidu stated that the government was giving the highest priority to the safety and welfare of fishermen and assured that the government would extend all possible support to their families.

Before Preaching to Others, Jagan Should Look at His Own Political History: Minister Satyakumar Yadav

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, August, 26 : Health Minister Satyakumar Yadav stated that YSRCP chief and former Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is the embodiment of "backstabbing politics." He said it was ironic for Jagan to make comments about political betrayals. Speaking in the capital Amaravati on Wednesday, the Minister took a swipe at Jagan, saying he should look at his own political history before preaching to others. He also lashed out at Jagan's stand on the issue of junior doctors' stipends. The Minister strongly criticised the YSRCP chief for allegedly misleading people on BC reservations. He said that merely announcing



reservations was not enough and that ensuring they withstand legal scrutiny was more important. He alleged that BC reservations faced legal hurdles during Jagan's tenure. The coalition government, he said, was committed to providing legally sustainable social justice to BCs. Satyakumar Yadav recalled that it was the Jagan government that treated BCs as a vote bank, while the coalition government was making BCs partners in

governance. He mocked Jagan, saying that concern over the outcome of the upcoming local body elections had already begun to trouble him and that Jagan was now trying to find reasons for his defeat. The Minister asserted that local body elections under the coalition government would be conducted fairly and impartially. He said Jagan's anxiety had once again made it clear that public support was firmly with the coalition government.

EDITORIAL

Superpower's Unilateral Approach to 'Trade'

Canada's last-minute withdrawal from trade talks after growing frustrated with US President Donald Trump's approach has intensified the trade war between the two countries. Trump recently announced that the US would impose 50% tariffs on goods worth Rs.20,000 crore imported from Canada, causing the Canadian dollar to fall sharply. Canada is now preparing to respond in kind. Canadian Prime Minister has already announced that his country will impose retaliatory tariffs on goods imported from the US from September 8.

Since returning to the presidency for a second term, Trump has been taking an increasingly confrontational approach towards Canada. His long-standing desire to make Canada the 51st US state is well known, and he has openly mentioned it on several occasions. His tariff policy has also added fuel to the dispute. Trump's decision to impose heavy tariffs on Canada without considering that it is a neighbouring country and America's largest trading partner has angered Canadians. People across Canada are organising protests and campaigns urging citizens to buy domestic products instead of American goods. Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, who was elected about a year and a half ago, is also taking a tough stance towards the US in line with public sentiment. Despite knowing that breaking the strong trade relationship between the two countries, which has existed for decades, would hurt Canada as well, his decision to ask his negotiating team to withdraw from the talks midway reflects his firm resolve to protect Canada's sovereignty. With annual trade between the US and Canada amounting to around \$900 billion, the tariff war will be damaging to both countries. Supply chains between the two nations are deeply integrated, ranging from automobiles and agriculture to energy and industrial products. If these supply chains are disrupted by the latest developments, producers as well as consumers will suffer. Even Americans are not happy with Trump's approach of using tariffs to force countries around the world to comply with US demands. Moreover, US courts have repeatedly criticised the steep tariffs imposed by the Trump administration. Courts have ordered the government to return tariffs collected from other countries. The US Supreme Court has also made it clear that the International Emergency Economic Powers Act does not give the President unlimited authority to impose tariffs. Yet it is surprising that Trump has not changed his approach. Whenever one law creates an obstacle, he seeks support from another law to continue imposing tariffs. As a result, America's relations with countries around the world are weakening. The use of the tariff stick even against allied nations is damaging America's credibility. It cannot be ignored that Trump's policies are hurting not only other countries but also the United States itself. At a time when India's trade negotiations with the US are reportedly reaching the final stage, the way Washington has dealt with Canada should serve as a warning for India. The allegations made by the Canadian Prime Minister—that the US introduced new conditions at the final stage of negotiations and attempted to restrict Canada's ability to conclude a trade agreement—cannot be dismissed lightly. At the same time, the episode has made it clear how Trump views countries that trade with the US. Trump's statement that the US has no need for Canada, while Canada needs America, and his claim that Canada conducts 95% of its trade with the US, reflect an authoritarian tendency. Trade agreements must be mutually beneficial; the notion that the other country participating in negotiations should simply submit to American demands is completely unacceptable. Instead of threatening countries around the world in the name of "America First," Trump should realise that aligning US national interests with global interests would ultimately benefit America itself.

IRGC's New Boss Is No Ordinary Man. Meet Ahmad Vahidi, Iran's Ultimate Survivor

As a new Islamic Republic took hold in Tehran by late 1979, it became clear to many Iranians that the revolutionary moment offered an opportunity. In a nascent ideological system, being associated with the birth of its soon-to-be-established institutions would link individual and national pride and ensure a place in history. For some, this was a central motivation, while for others, this was simply an ancillary effect of devoting their energies to building a new state and system. Combined with the fact that Saddam Hussein's Iraq launched an invasion into Iran merely 10 months after the Islamic Republic's establishment, a strong nationalistic zeal combined with this energy for many. Ahmad Shahcheraghi of Shiraz, which is home to the "Shah Cheragh" (King of the Light) shrine, was fuelled by this impulse enough to join the newly formed Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in 1979. Joining this ideological paramilitary sworn to defending the Islamic Republic's nezam (rule), which would eventually grow into Iran's singular most powerful politico-military institution, Shahcheraghi changed his surname to "Vahidi", meaning 'The One/First'. This month, Vahidi was officially appointed as the Chief of the IRGC, under a new Supreme Leader, in the midst of an existential war with the United States and Israel, and when millions of Iranians are reminiscing the nationalistic zeal spawned by Iran's last existential war against Iraq 47 years ago. Vahidi himself, as the de facto IRGC Chief since early March, was instrumental in the accession of the new Supreme Leader, Mojtaba Khamenei. Between 1979 and 2026, Vahidi was part of many firsts. In a reasonably competitive environment for aspiring military leaders, Vahidi was appointed as the Intelligence Deputy to IRGC Chief Mohsen Rezaee in 1981, within two years of joining the force. By 1988, he had become the first Commander of the IRGC's Quds Force. Styled as a



liberation force for Jerusalem, the Quds Force became the spearhead for financing, equipping, and training armed "resistance" groups abroad. While the force reached its zenith under Vahidi's successor and the more popular Qassem Soleimani (1998-2020), it was Vahidi who established its initial operations and vision. He focused especially on Lebanon, where Iran's relationship with Hezbollah was still at a formative stage. Later, he became the first Cabinet Minister to be appointed with a live INTERPOL Red Notice against him when President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad appointed him Minister of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics in 2009. Notably, with the exception of a stint as Deputy for Planning in the Defense Ministry under Mohammad Khatami, Vahidi only served in government under conservative administrations; he was Chief Deputy Minister of Defense during Ahmedinejad's first term, and later Interior Minister from 2021 under President Ebrahim Raisi. Moreover, Vahidi was among the first targets for several sanctions regimes besides the INTERPOL Red Notice. This included European Union sanc-

tions since 2008, as well as US Sanctions for weapons proliferation from 2010 onwards. More importantly, however, Vahidi's career reflects complicated characteristics. He has been at the center of both neat victories for the Islamic Republic as well as challenges. And both have proven him to be a risk-taking General, with an ability to rise out of controversies.

A Complicated Tenure

Among the several developments that gave Ahmad Vahidi a certain prominence across his career, it was his tenure as the Quds Force chief that stood out. Apart from leveraging the erstwhile Shah's own apparatus for building ties with non-state groups in Yemen, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Lebanon, Vahidi was aware of the Quds Force's peculiar position in the early 1990s. At a time when Iran was rebuilding and socially nursing itself after a bloody and protracted ten-year war imposed on the nascent Islamic Republic by Iraq, Vahidi ensured that the Quds Force capitalised on the expeditionary fervour that was generated across the war years. Consequently, it was under Vahidi's leadership that the Quds Force embarked on its first major in-

tervention - in the Bosnian civil war, in favour of President Alija Izetbegovic. While this represented a deepening of what the author Aarash Azizi terms the "Tehran-Sarajevo" alliance, it became evident that the Quds Force was too unnatural a partner for a conflict-scape that featured a motley of fighting groups, dominated to an extent by Al Qaeda. The latter's well-known revulsion towards Shia Muslims, despite occasional tactical cooperation in Bosnia, combined with Bosnian broad disinterest, meant that Bosnia never saw the Quds Force success that Lebanon saw across the 1980s, and which Afghanistan was to see under Soleimani as Quds Force Chief (such as through Iran's partnership with the Northern Alliance under the Taliban). To contrast the Bosnia experience further, note that Soleimani guided Iran's (brief) cooperation with the US against the Taliban in Afghanistan, in exchange for the US helping Iran with intelligence vis-a-vis Al Qaeda cells.

However, despite the Bosnian failure, Vahidi remained actively involved on the Lebanon front, nourishing the operational relationship with Hezbollah. In 2006, Ar-

gentina formally charged Ahmad Vahidi, among others, with being the mastermind of a Hezbollah attack against the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires in 1994. While this would become an enduring bone of contention between Iran and Argentina (including a botched attempt at jointly investigating the attack, in 2013), it did not fundamentally alter Vahidi's prominence within the IRGC. In fact, the 1994 bombing was also linked to both Rafsanjani and Mohsen Rezaee, based especially on the testimony of Ahmed Rezaee - Mohsen's eldest son, who defected to the United States in 1998 (a year after his father demitted office as IRGC Chief). This only meant that international charges against figures like Vahidi were seen as proof of external, malignant, conspiracies rather than as obstacles for Iran's partnerships.

Commitment to Missiles

During his time in the Defense Ministry, Vahidi's public utterances showed that he was always a believer in missiles and drones as the principal instruments of "resistance" warfare.

Why Is India Cooler As The World Burns? A Heatwave 'Mystery'

Europe has experienced its worst heatwave on record this year. Summer 2026 is on course to be the UK's hottest since records began, according to Britain's Met Office. Neighbouring France was the most "abnormally" hot country in the world between May and July, according to Finnish climate scientist Mika Rantanen. There was an unprecedented agricultural collapse. Nuclear reactors had to be shut down, the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre Museum closed early, and hundreds of schools closed or shortened their hours because of the unbearable heat. Several European countries recorded their highest-ever temperatures. In June, Spain recorded 45.1 degrees (Celsius), France 44.3 degrees, and Germany 41.7 degrees. In Western Europe, more than 32,000 excess deaths have been reported up to last week. Half of these excess deaths occurred during a heatwave in just one week in June. Death tolls from heatwaves are always revised upwards for months afterwards, once excess-mortality data is analysed. Even worse figures are expected.

Europe, which is warming at more than twice the global average, is now bracing for even worse climate impacts from the coming El Nino, predicted to be the strongest in living memory. Heat has killed an estimated 200,000 people across Europe over the past four years, according to the World Health Organisation, which has described the situation as a "health emergency." Europe's three-trillion-dollar tourism industry has taken a big hit, with many people cancelling their holidays to the continent this

summer. Most scientists agree that the frequency, duration, and severity of heatwaves are driven by climate change.

A 'Miracle'?

India is not immune to heatwaves; we have just been more accustomed to them. Two years ago, Delhi recorded India's highest-ever temperature: 52.3 degrees. On April 27 this year, all 50 of the world's hottest cities were in India. But if Europe is this hot, India's situation should be much worse. But the fact is, India didn't even reach 50 degrees this summer. This has baffled climate scientists. India's climate trend is not following the same path as the rest of the world, according to Harvard Professor Daniel Schrag, a world authority on climate change and environmental science. He was the keynote speaker at last year's international climate conference in Delhi.

"It is true that India is warming more slowly than most other continental regions," Professor Schrag told this author. "There are two explanations - and I expect the truth to be some combination of these. One is the extensive irrigation, which has increased evaporation, kept the land temperatures cooler, and also increased relative humidity. The other is air pollution, which has reflected some sunlight and cooled the region. Both are probably important - the irrigation for sure, and the pollution seems a likely co-contributor. But I don't think we know how much is due to each mechanism," he added.

But Schrag warned that neither factor will help India in the future. "Irrigation cannot be sustained because of groundwater shortages. And pollution

needs to decrease because of health concerns. So if I had to bet, I would expect India to warm over the next two decades slightly faster than the rest of the world. And that is bad news for heat waves," he said.

Bizarre Factors

Recent research confirms that India is warming more slowly than the rest of the world. A study published in the journal PLOS Climate in November 2025 found that India warmed by 0.89 degrees between 1901 and 2024, while the global figure for the same period was 1.42 degrees. This research supports Prof Schrag's explanation for India's peculiar situation. Another study by Chinese scientists, published in Nature in March this year, also confirms that India has been warming more slowly. "Despite the increasing frequency and severity of such extreme heat events, long-term surface temperature trends over India feature a warming hole, with in-situ warming roughly half of the global average," say the researchers.

But the Chinese scientists offer an unlikely candidate for India's condition: CO2, which is normally blamed for global warming. They say that due to the peculiarities of India's geography, CO2 indirectly drives a cascade of effects resulting in "intense cloud formation". And clouds, like pollution, reflect sunlight. They suggest that because of the peculiarities of India's geography, CO2 indirectly drives a number of effects, resulting in "intense cloud formation". Clouds, like pollution, reflect sunlight. Warming does happen, but the net effect is cooling, they ar-

gue. Some researchers have said India's monsoons are an important factor in slower warming. But the Chinese researchers say other Asian countries, particularly in East Asia, which are also monsoon-dominated regions, don't exhibit CO2-induced surface cooling. The Himalayas and the Hindu Kush Mountains, situated north of the Indian subcontinent, act as a barrier that enhances low-level moisture convergence when southwesterly winds intensify under CO2 forcing. East Asia lacks that advantage, they say.

The Future

The slower warming so far is no consolation, though, because the future looks bleak. The scientists who found that India has warmed more slowly since the 20th century now project warming of 1.1 degrees to 1.6 degrees over the next 50 years and 1.5 degrees to 4.1 degrees for the rest of the 21st century. A white paper published by Harvard University in April warns that historical temperature records should not be taken at face value as a planning baseline. "The processes that have partially suppressed warming in parts of India are not guaranteed to persist," it adds.

As Professor Schrag has also pointed out, both air pollution and irrigation - the two most quantified contributors - are expected to change. India's clean air policy will reduce aerosol loading, which is important for public health. A 2022 study by Indian scientists estimated that in 2019, around 1.7 million deaths in India were due to air pollution, of which almost a million were linked to particulate matter or atmospheric aro-

sol pollution. They also found that this pollution was responsible for a 115% increase in the death rate over the past 30 years. The groundwater crisis will affect irrigation, another major factor in India's slower warming. The Indo-Gangetic Plain sits above one of the most rapidly depleting aquifer systems on Earth. "Evidence from California and other irrigated regions suggests that as irrigation growth stabilises or reverses, the cooling trend it once sustained slows or stops," according to the white paper.

Rising Humidity

There is also growing concern about an alarming surge in humidity in recent years. Humidity prevents the body from cooling through sweat evaporation. India's average relative humidity rose from 67.1% between 2015 and 2019 to 71.2% between 2020 and 2024, according to a recent study by Climate Trends, a research-based consultancy in India. If India warms as projected, it will align more closely with global trends. But that means a devastating period ahead for a majority of Indians who do not have the kind of protection available to people in developed countries, such as in Europe. An estimated three-fourths of the country's workforce, roughly 38 crore people, are engaged in heat-exposed labour, spanning agriculture, construction, and a wide range of informal occupations. Climate scientist Satchit Balsari has warned that the scale of exposure is set to intensify in the near future: up to 20 crore people in the country could face lethal heat conditions as early as 2030.

Bengal has immense potential to attract investment: CM Suvendu Adhikari

Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari said the state must become a prime destination for investment, highlighting the government's cooperation with the Centre and welcoming expansion projects worth around Rs.3,500 crore in the defence manufacturing and shipbuilding sectors. Adhikari was speaking at a virtual Bhumi Pujan ceremony for five expansion projects of Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) and Yantra India Limited (YIL), held in the presence of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. The projects, spread across GRSE facilities in Kolkata, Howrah and Raichak, and YIL's Metal and Steel Factory in Ishapore, are aimed at strengthening India's shipbuilding, ship repair, metallurgical and defence production capabilities.

Speaking at the event, Adhikari said West Bengal has significant potential to attract investment, citing its availability of land, skilled human resources, infrastructure and raw materials. "West Bengal possesses immense potential — land, human resources, infrastructure, raw materials and everything else. But now, the 'double-engine' government is operating at full speed," he said. He said the state government was working with the Centre to revive West Bengal's industrial potential and attract fresh investment, while identifying unemployment as a major challenge. "We need investment; Bengal needs to be revitalised. Unemployment is a major issue. For all the builders, MSMEs and engineering organisations here, the climate is shifting, and the atmosphere is changing. Ben-



gal must now become a prime destination for investment," he said.

Adhikari also highlighted his government's cooperation with the Centre on national security and border infrastructure. He said around 90 per cent of the land required by the Border Security Force (BSF) along the state's borders had been handed over since his government took office. "Since our government took office, we have already handed over 90 per cent of the land to the BSF to secure our borders. We are doing this for the safety and security of the nation," he said. The Chief Minister also said his government had initiated processes related to the implementation of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Census, which he alleged had been stalled earlier. Referring to the defence projects, Adhikari said he had discussed investment and recruitment opportunities in the defence sector with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh after assuming office. He said the state government would extend full co-

operation, including making land available, if major defence manufacturing units were established in West Bengal. "If any major defence manufacturing unit is to be set up, there will be no issues regarding land; the state government is ready to extend its full cooperation," Adhikari said.

The five projects involve a total investment of approximately ₹3,500 crore and are expected to generate employment and create opportunities for ancillary industries and MSMEs. Under the GRSE expansion, a major shipbuilding facility will be developed at Raichak with an investment of more than ₹2,500 crore. The facility will be capable of constructing warships up to 200 metres long and commercial vessels of up to 60,000 tonnes deadweight. GRSE will also develop facilities at Timber Pond in Shalimar, Howrah, and the Damodar facility at Kidderpore for shipbuilding, ship repair and construction of smaller vessels. The two YIL projects at Ishapore, involving an investment of more than

Rs.750 crore, will strengthen indigenous production of critical defence and strategic components, including heavy forgings and specialised metal products. Addressing the event, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said the projects would strengthen India's pursuit of Aatmanirbhar Bharat, Make in India and Make for the World, while emphasising the importance of indigenous defence manufacturing. "Self-reliance is not merely a policy; it is a force multiplier for battlefield capability. In this endeavour, the roles of GRSE and YIL will be crucial," Singh said. He said India's growing shipbuilding capabilities, coupled with rising global demand and declining capacity in some traditional shipbuilding nations, presented a major opportunity for the country to emerge as a global shipbuilding hub. The projects are expected to strengthen India's defence manufacturing and shipbuilding capabilities while providing a boost to employment, ancillary industries and MSMEs in West Bengal.

India-Russia trade crosses \$60 billion, but widening trade imbalance remains key concern: EAM Jaishankar

NEW DELHI: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said India-Russia bilateral trade has increased more than four-fold over the past five years to nearly \$60 billion, but flagged the widening trade imbalance as a major concern that needs to be addressed. Addressing the 27th Session of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC) in Moscow, EAM Jaishankar said bilateral trade in goods had risen from around USD 13 billion in 2021-22 to nearly USD 60 billion in 2025-26. However, he noted that the expansion in trade had also been accompanied by a sharp increase in the trade deficit, which widened from about USD 6.6 billion to more than USD 50 billion during the same period.

"Addressing this imbalance is today one of our foremost priorities," EAM Jaishankar said. He said greater market access, removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers, stronger payment mechanisms and increased business-to-business engagement would be critical to addressing the imbalance and achieving the shared target of USD 100 billion in bilateral trade by 2030. The minister also said the two sides could take stock of ongoing discussions on the India-Eurasian Economic Union (EaEU) Free Trade Agreement. EAM Jaishankar highlighted the broad range of areas covered by the India-Russia economic partnership, including energy, nuclear cooperation, metallurgy, space, railways, fertilisers, mobility of skilled



professionals, connectivity and payment mechanisms.

He said the India-Russia partnership had demonstrated "resilience and adaptability" despite a complex international environment, with the two countries continuing to deepen their engagement based on mutual interests and confidence. Referring to the 23rd India-Russia Annual Summit held in December 2025, EAM Jaishankar said the two countries' leaders had continued to provide clear direction to their "Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership" and reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening long-term economic cooperation. EAM Jaishankar proposed three measures to make the IRIGC-TEC mechanism more effective as the economic partnership enters its next phase. First, he called for a greater focus on implementation and outcomes. He said the extensive network of working groups and sub-groups should increasingly be assessed on the basis of concrete deliverables, with each group identifying outcomes to be achieved before the next session and actively engaging in problem-solving.

Second, EAM Jaishankar stressed the need for stronger engagement with businesses. Governments could create enabling frameworks, he said, but businesses were responsible for trade, investment, innovation and job creation. Regular interaction with companies and industry associations would help identify practical bottlenecks, improve policy responsiveness and ensure that bilateral discussions remained commercially relevant and action-oriented, he said. EAM

Jaishankar cited the upcoming INNOPROM industrial exhibition in India as a positive signal for strengthening business engagement between the two countries. Third, he called for continuously identifying new opportunities amid changes in the global economic and technological environment. He said the evolving international situation was creating new possibilities as countries sought to derisk and diversify supply chains, while changing economic requirements and technological needs were also opening avenues for cooperation. "Our fundamental complementarity still remains under-explored," EAM Jaishankar said, adding that the progress made by the two countries in recent years should be taken forward. The minister concluded by reiterating India's intention to make full use of the IRIGC-TEC platform to achieve the bilateral economic objectives set by the two countries.

TVK-DMK clash in Tamil Nadu assembly over scrapping of Parandur Airport Project

Chennai : A war of words broke out between the ruling Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) and Opposition Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) members in the Tamil Nadu Assembly on Tuesday over the decision to scrap the proposed Parandur airport project. Law Minister Nirmal Kumar referred to "G Square Maapilai" while speaking about those who benefited from the Parandur airport project. PWD Minister Aadhav Arjuna alleged that realtors linked to a particular political party bought huge parcels of land even before the Parandur airport Detailed Project Report (DPR) was released. He further alleged that a particular company had purchased land around Parandur and was involved in real estate activities. DMK MLA Thangam Thennarasu asked, "For which Lottery son-in-law is the new airport project being developed," censuring Nirmal Kumar's speech. "We can also pay back in the same currency," he said.

3 Newborns Die in Amravati Hospital Fire; Fadnavis Announces Rs.5 Lakh Aid

Mumbai : Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis expressed sorrow over the deaths of three newborns in a fire at the Amravati District Women's Hospital, describing the incident as "extremely heart-wrenching". In a post on X, CM Fadnavis announced financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh to the families of the deceased. He further ordered a high-level inquiry into the tragedy and assured strict action against those responsible for the Amravati district women's hospital fire. "The incident of the death of three children in the fire that broke out last night at the District Women's Hospital in Amravati is extremely tragic and heart-wrenching. We share in the grief of their families. Orders have been issued to the health administration to conduct a high-level inquiry into this incident. The strictest possible action will be taken against those responsible for this incident. Both the Health Minister and the Secretary have been instructed to visit Amravati today itself," said CM Fadnavis.

"The state government will provide financial assistance of ₹5 lakh rupees to the families of the deceased. Instructions have also been given to the Amravati District Collector to provide treatment to the injured children at government expense. Fortunately, 36 children were successfully rescued unharmed in this inci-



dent," added CM Fadnavis. Earlier, a fire broke out in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) of the District Women's Hospital in Amravati in the early hours of Monday. According to officials, the fire broke out at around 3.15 am in the NICU on the third floor, with a ventilator reportedly sparking and triggering the blaze. Officials said the NICU had several sections catering to newborns requiring different levels of care. The fire reportedly originated in the section housing outborn babies. Six infants were subsequently shifted to a super-specialty hospital, according to officials. The NICU was housing premature and critically ill newborns at the time of the incident. Hospital staff, including doctors and nurses, immediately launched an evacuation operation after the fire broke out and managed to rescue several infants from the affected unit. Three new-

borns, however, died in the incident, while other babies were shifted to other medical facilities for continued treatment.

NCP leader of Sharadchandra Pawar faction Supriya Sule expressed sorrow over the loss of lives in the Amravati district women's hospital fire, describing the incident as a glaring example of systemic negligence. In a post on X, she further demanded a fire safety audit of all government and private hospitals across Maharashtra. "In Amravati district's women's hospital, an explosion in a ventilator in the NICU department caused a fire, in which 3 newborns lost their lives, while a few others are in serious condition. This is an extremely heart-wrenching incident. Mothers and fathers eagerly await their baby, but to lose that child in such a manner—what ordeal must have befallen them is unimaginable. This is not merely an accident

but a glaring example of negligence in the system. A thorough investigation of the entire matter must be conducted, and the strictest possible action must be taken against those responsible. Along with this, there is a need to conduct fire audits of all government and private hospitals in Maharashtra, as well as safety audits of medical equipment. I express my condolences to the families who have lost their children in this incident. Heartfelt tribute to the departed. May the injured newborns recover soon and return to their mother's lap—this is my prayer at the feet of God," said Sule. The cause of the fire has not yet been conclusively established. While preliminary information has pointed towards an electrical malfunction involving a ventilator, authorities are expected to determine the precise sequence of events through the inquiry.

IDF arrests Al-Auja stabbing incident suspect following manhunt

Tel Aviv : The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) announced the capture of a suspect linked to a recent stabbing attack alongside the elimination of a Hamas commander involved in arms manufacturing. In a post on X, the IDF stated that the forces successfully apprehended the suspect behind a recent stabbing attack in the Al-Auja area. The IDF and the Israel Security Agency (ISA) confirmed that the arrest was made possible through targeted intelligence guidance and coordinated operational measures. "APPREHENDED: The terrorist who executed the stabbing attack in the Al-Auja area. The suspect's apprehension was made possible through intelligence guidance and measures employed by the IDF & the ISA," IDF wrote. In a separate security development, precision strikes targeted Ismail Abu Ful, described as a commander operating within a weapons manufacturing site belonging to Hamas' production headquarters. The IDF stated that Abu Ful took an

active part in manufacturing explosive devices and anti-tank rockets for the group's military wing. The targeted weapons facility was reportedly embedded near an international organisation's aid distribution point. "Ismail Abu Ful, a commander at a weapons manufacturing site within Hamas' production headquarters, who took an active part in manufacturing explosive devices and anti-tank rockets for Hamas' military wing. Additionally, the same manufacturing site, which was established near an aid distribution point operated by an international organization, was struck. These actions demonstrate how Hamas systematically violates the ceasefire agreement while attempting to rehabilitate its military capabilities," the post read.

This comes after an Israeli man sustained moderate injuries, including a broken shoulder and internal bleeding, during a Sunday morning stabbing attack along a highway near the West Bank village of al-Auja in the Jordan Valley, according



to Times of Israel. The assault took place roughly eight kilometers north of Jericho along a roadway utilised by both Israelis and Palestinians. Surveillance footage captured the assailant ambushing the victim from behind and repeatedly stabbing him as he walked back to his vehicle after visiting a roadside shop. Following the incident, the victim was treated at Shaare Zedek Medical Center, where his brothers, Yosef and Shlomo Hananaya, provided updates on his condition, the Times of Israel reported. In response to the attack, security forces initi-

ated an extensive hours-long manhunt. By the late afternoon, Israeli troops located and arrested a 16-year-old Palestinian suspect within al-Auja, subsequently transferring him to the Shin Bet security agency for interrogation. Earlier last week, Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz issued a stern warning following the latest Israeli strikes on southern Lebanon that killed 11 people, including three children and two women from the same family, and injured several others. In a post on X, Katz declared that Israel will react decisively to any security threats facing its military personnel and civilian population. "No account on any front will remain unsettled," Defense Minister Katz wrote, adding, "We will forcefully defend our soldiers and citizens." His remarks come after at least 11 people were killed and 19 others injured in Israeli strikes on southern Lebanon on Saturday (local time), following the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) saying that three of its soldiers were injured in earlier attacks by Hezbollah, Al Jazeera reported. The early-morning Israeli strikes targeted Ansar and Deir ez-Zahrani in the Nabatieh district. In Ansar, seven people were killed, including three children, while two others were injured. Another strike in Deir ez-Zahrani killed four people and injured 17 others, according to Al Jazeera.

Operation Black Hawk: NCB Seizes 18.6 Kg Heroin in Lucknow

Lucknow : The Central Bureau of Narcotics (CBN) cracked down on an interstate heroin syndicate and seized a total of 18.64 kg of crude heroin in back-to-back operations near Lucknow under Operation "Black Hawk", officials said. According to the CBN, three key members of the inter-state trafficking network have been arrested. The seized contraband had originated from a North-Eastern state and was being trafficked for consumption in Uttar Pradesh. Based on specific inputs regarding drug movement from the North-East region to Lucknow, joint teams from the CBN Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh units es-

tablished a strategic cordon along the Sultanpur-Lucknow Highway on the intervening night of August 20-21. Following continuous tracking of the vehicle across different toll plazas, the strike team intercepted an Assam-registered car near Lucknow on August 21. Initial inspection revealed that the vehicle was empty, and its occupants claimed innocence. However, operational officers grew suspicious when the vehicle's occupants, upon questioning, disclosed that they had refuelled four times within a span of just 500 km. The vehicle was taken to the CBN Office in Lucknow, where technical assistance was



utilised to dismantle the fuel tank. Officers discovered a specially fabricated compartment holding 25 waterproof packages that contained 16.46 kg of crude heroin. Both suspects were arrested under the provisions of the NDPS Act, 1985.

J&K Power Hike Triggers Opposition Protest, Omar Abdullah Defends Move



Srinagar: Both the opposition and allies of the Omar Abdullah government have strongly reacted to the increase in electricity tariffs and demanded an immediate rollback of the nearly 7 per cent hike in power charges in Jammu and Kashmir. The opposition is banking on Omar Abdullah's unfulfilled promise of 200 units of free electricity and accused him of doing exactly the opposite. The Chief Minister, however, defended the hike, calling it a compulsion while citing inflation, rising electricity costs and structural pressures. Omar Abdullah hit back at his opponents and reminded them of much higher tariff hikes during

their tenure. "Those criticising us have also been in government. During the PDP-BJP government, power tariff was increased by 14 per cent. Four years earlier, there was a 15 per cent hike. We have only raised tariffs by around 6 per cent after a gap of four years," Mr Abdullah said. The Chief Minister said his government had never promised a freeze on electricity tariff. "We committed to provide 200 units of free electricity to the poorest households through a solar-based scheme," he added. The opposition alleges that Omar Abdullah is reneging on his election promise, as the National

Conference had promised 200 units of free electricity in its election manifesto. Recently, the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (JERC) approved a 6.8 per cent hike in electricity tariffs, which will come into effect from September 1. The Congress, an important ally of the NC-led government, has termed the increase an "unjustified burden" on the people. Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee chief Tariq Hamid Karra said the Congress would stand with the people and oppose the tariff hike. "The government must remember that electricity is not a luxury, it is an essential service. The people of Jammu and Kashmir deserve afford-

able and reliable power, not ever-increasing bills. The Congress will stand firmly with the people and oppose every measure that places an unjustified financial burden on them," he said. The BJP has termed the hike a "betrayal" of the people. BJP leader Sunil Sharma said the National Conference was voted to power on the promise of providing 200 units of free electricity to every household. But instead of fulfilling that commitment, people are now facing an increase in electricity tariffs. This is not relief, it is a betrayal of the trust placed in the government," he said. Meanwhile, the Peoples Democratic Party held protests against the tariff hike and demanded its rollback. In some places, party workers held candlelight vigils demanding a rollback of the tariff hike. "At a time when households are already struggling with rising costs, the government must stop adding to their burden. Electricity is an essential service, not a source of revenue at the expense of ordinary people. The tariff hike must be rolled back," the party said.

Assam Teen Allegedly Gang-Raped At Guwahati Homestay, 5 Arrested

Guwahati: In a horrific incident, a Class 8 student from Assam's Kamrup district was allegedly gang-raped by five men at a homestay in Guwahati and later abandoned on the roadside only to be later rescued by police. The teen from Pasaria village was allegedly sexually assaulted at Rangman Grand Homestay in Saukuchi. She had been missing since Sunday afternoon. The minor girl was reportedly rescued in the early hours of Tuesday from the Shukleshwar Ghat area in Panbazar, Guwahati.

A youth named Parameswar Nath from Goalpara allegedly lured the girl from Singimari and took her to the homestay.

After allegedly sexually assaulting the girl throughout the night at the homestay, Nath reportedly abandoned her on the roadside near Shukleshwar Ghat. Nath was allegedly accompanied by Hirkajyoti Das, Bishal Barua,



Lakshidhar Nath and Rejip Ali in the incident. Bishal Barua and Lakshidhar Nath were working at the homestay. Dadara Police have reportedly detained all five individuals in connection with the incident. In a statement, Assam police said, "On 23 August, one FIR lodged at Dadara OP under Hajo Police Station regarding the disappearance of her minor who had left home on her own. Accordingly, Hajo PS Case

No. 413/2026 U/S 87 of the BNS, investigation was taken up. During the course of investigation, at about 5:47 AM on 24 August, information was received that the missing minor girl was seen loitering in the Panbazar area of Guwahati. Acting promptly on the information, the IC, Dadara OP, along with the family members of the girl, reached the area and safely recovered her from near the Panbazar Pani Tanki. Based

on investigation and statement of recovered victim girl sections 6/17 POCSO Act have been added.

The victim has been medically examined, and her statement has been recorded before the Judicial Magistrate. SSP Kamrup, along with the Additional Superintendent of Police (HQ) and Additional Superintendent of Police (Crime), is personally supervising the investigation."

TCS To Acquire Porsche's IT Consulting Arm MHP For 320 Million Euros



New Delhi: Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on Monday said it will acquire a 100 per cent stake in MHP Management- und IT-Beratung GmbH (MHP), a subsidiary of Porsche AG, for an enterprise value of 320 million euros (approximately Rs 3,574 crore). The acquisition is part of a broader five-year strategic partnership valued at 1.25 billion euros between TCS and the German sports car maker. In a regu-

latory filing, TCS stated that the acquisition would be executed through its wholly owned subsidiary, Tata Consultancy Services Netherlands BV. "The Board of Directors of Tata Consultancy Services Netherlands BV, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Company, at its meeting held today, considered and approved the acquisition of 100 per cent of equity shares of MHP Management- und IT-Beratung GmbH ("MHP"), subsid-

iary of Porsche AG ("Porsche"), for an enterprise value of 320 million euros," TCS said in a regulatory filing. The transaction is expected to be completed in the next three to four months, subject to regulatory approvals from the European Commission and authorities in Germany and Romania.

As part of the collaboration, TCS will establish a dedicated 'AI Mobility Centre of Excellence' (CoE) for Porsche. This centre will fo-

cus on industrialising AI use cases across the automaker's manufacturing, engineering, operations, and customer experience segments. "As AI, software, and data redefine the automotive industry, this partnership brings together TCS' capabilities in AI, engineering, technology and business transformation with MHP's strong automotive consulting expertise. Together, we will industrialise AI at scale for Porsche, accelerating innovation across the value chain to deliver intelligent, software-defined mobility experiences of the future," TCS CEO and MD K Krithivasan said. MHP, headquartered in Ludwigsburg, Germany, is a management and IT consultancy spanning automotive and manufacturing, aerospace, defence, and energy, as well as the public sector. The company employs about 4,500 people and reported a turnover of 742 million euros for the 2025 calendar year.

Rain In East, Dry Spell In West, South: How Monsoon Will Shape This Week

New Delhi: States in East and Northern India, including Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are likely to receive heavy rainfall in the days to come while states in the West and South are expected to remain dry, according to weather projections by the India Meteorological Department (IMD). An infrared satellite picture from the IMD shows thick cloud cover over Central India, East India (Odisha, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh), and along the East Coast into the Bay of Bengal. Under the influence of a low-pressure area over Jharkhand and its neighbourhood, isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely over East Uttar Pradesh, East Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh today. Isolated heavy rainfall is also likely over Bihar and Uttar Pradesh during the next three days, the IMD forecast reads. Subdued rainfall activity is likely to continue over Peninsular India dur-



ing the next one week. The low-pressure area is likely to move nearly - northwestwards by tomorrow morning.

Central India In Focus

Widespread rainfall is likely over West Madhya Pradesh between today and tomorrow. Subsequently, isolated to scattered showers are expected between August 27 and 31. In East Madhya Pradesh, heavy rain will continue till August

29 before turning into scattered, isolated events. Chhattisgarh too is expecting heavy rainfall till next Monday, that is August 31.

Forecast For Northwest India

Widespread showers are likely over Uttarakhand till August 31, while in East Uttar Pradesh, they will continue till August 27.

Scattered Rainfall In Delhi-NCR

Heavy rain in Delhi on

Monday brought life to a standstill. Several roads were flooded and people were seen wading through waist-deep water. The capital witnessed rain today as well, but it remained moderate. Residents are expected to witness light to very light rain over the next three days from morning to noon under a generally cloudy sky. Such rainfall events can be highly localised.

Andhra Engineer, Family Jump Into River, Blame Rifle Shooting Coach In Note

Kakinada: A rifle shooting coach has been arrested in connection with the deaths of a rural engineer and his family, who allegedly jumped into the Godavari in Andhra Pradesh earlier this month.

The tragedy occurred on the intervening night of August 16 and 17 when the Thillapudi Nookaraju - a Panchayat Raj assistant engineer, his wife Meena, daughter Sowjanya, and 10-year-old grandson jumped into the Godavari River from the road-cum-rail bridge in Rajamahendravaram. While the grandson survived after being rescued by fishermen, Nookaraju and the other two women died.

During the investigation, police recovered a note allegedly written by Nookaraju, linking the rifle shooting coach, Sheikh Sadhik Khan, to the circumstances preceding the deaths. A case was filed against Khan on charges including forcing Nookaraju to convert to another religion, murder and extortion.

Subsequently, Sadhik was arrested in Uttar Pradesh's Meerut after a



multi-state pursuit.

"It was a very grueling chase across five states," Kakinada District SP Bindu Madhav said, adding that more than 10 police teams were deployed. Investigators reportedly traced Khan's movements despite his avoiding phone use and digital transactions. Khan was brought to Andhra Pradesh on a transit warrant, officials said. Police said Khan knew Nookaraju and his family for nearly two years and that he had worked as a rifle-shooting coach at a school attended

by the grandson. Investigators are examining his alleged relationship with the family, his movements after the incident and the claims contained in the notes. Amid this, former MP Vijayasai Reddy has separately demanded a CBI or NIA probe, alleging a wider conspiracy and international links. Reddy alleged that Khan was part of a 10-member group allegedly involved in religious conversions, extortion, gun supply and anti-national activities. He further claimed that the group had targeted around

15 other families in and around Kakinada and Rajamahendravaram. "Since the activities allegedly extend to other states and countries, this is a fit case to be handed over either to the CBI or the NIA," Reddy said. Khan is now in police custody for questioning, with investigators expected to reconstruct the events leading to the deaths and examine whether others were involved. Officials said the investigation has so far not established any link to the alleged 'love jihad'.

Rs 716 Crore Bypass To Decongest Dehradun, Ease Travel From Delhi-NCR



The National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) is constructing a 12 km-long greenfield bypass in Uttarakhand's Dehradun to decongest the winter capital city battling constant traffic jams. The four-lane access-controlled bypass is being constructed at a cost of Rs 716 crore and will directly connect to the Delhi-Dehradun Expressway. The bypass will start from Jhajhara and connect the Paonta Sahib-Ballupur section of NH-7 and will connect to the Delhi-Dehradun Expressway near the Asharodi check post.

The project will function as an alternate south-west-

ern route that will divert traffic from the middle of Dehradun city towards Selaqui industrial area, Vikasnagar, Herbertpur in Uttarakhand and Paonta Sahib in Himachal Pradesh. It is expected to be completed by April 2027.

The project will significantly help to reduce traffic congestion and vehicular pollution in Dehradun. It will also improve interstate connectivity to Northern regions including Haryana, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh through the Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor.

Major Relief For Delhi To Mussoorie Commuters

Tourists using the Delhi-Dehradun Expressway will not have to tackle the Dehradun traffic once the bypass is completed. It will allow for faster and quicker connectivity to Mussoorie, as the travel time will be reduced by 30-40 minutes. The stress of traffic, especially on the long weekends, will also be significantly reduced in Dehradun city.

Commuters will enjoy easier travel from Dehradun to Mussoorie, Rishikesh, Vikasnagar and Paonta Sahib. The project will also speed

up freight movement to industrial areas, boosting the regional economy.

Long-Term Sustainability

While the design speed will be 100 kmph, certain stretches have been planned with a regulated speed of 80 kmph to minimise impact on forest land. In line with environmental considerations, the width of the Highway (Right of Way) has been optimised to 30 meters, which is lower than the conventional 60 metres, thereby preserving forest trees and maintaining ecological balance. A 350-meter-long Vehicular Over Pass (VOP) will be constructed as part of the project to facilitate safe movement of large animals, along with a dedicated Cattle Over Pass (COP). In addition, seven minor bridges and 21 box culverts will be constructed to support the movement of wildlife. Movement of smaller fauna such as reptiles and amphibians will be facilitated through five dedicated Hume Pipe culverts.

As Trump Warns Of 'Economic D-Day,' A Look At Iran's Main Trading Partners



Washington: President Donald Trump's administration in the United States has laid out plans for the "economic asphyxiation" of Iran, expanding Washington's secondary sanctions threats under its "economic D-Day" campaign to isolate Tehran from the global economy. The US has also threatened penalties against "enablers" that continue doing business with Tehran.

The announcement comes almost six months into a war in the Middle East that has ground to a stalemate, with stalled peace talks and Tehran blocking most traffic through the crucial Strait of Hormuz. Projecting the planned economic starvation as 'endgame', US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said expanded secondary sanctions would target Iran's digital assets, technology, gold, aviation, and shipping sectors. It also issued new sanctions against 60 individuals, companies, and vessels that allegedly aid Iran in oil revenue generation, weapons procurement, and cyber operations, targeting entities around the world, including in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Hong Kong, China,

Singapore, and Europe. **Iran's Top Trading Partners**

While enforcement details of new US measures remain sketchy, the threat could still put several of Tehran's major trade partners, including China and India, on a collision course with America. China, the UAE, Turkey, Iraq, the European Union, India, Pakistan, and the Russian Federation are among Tehran's biggest trading partners.

China China is Iran's largest trading partner, accounting for nearly one-third of the country's non-oil foreign trade. It is also the biggest buyer, accounting for nearly 90 per cent of its oil exports, according to US government data. Beijing reported \$9.96 billion in bilateral trade with Tehran in 2025. This number, according to the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, excluded roughly \$31.2 billion in unreported Iranian crude oil exports to China that year. Kpler estimates that China bought an average of 1.38 million barrels per day of Iranian oil in 2025. It noted that independent Chinese refiners take Iranian oil in bulk, often rebranding it as Malaysian or Indonesian crude and

settling through intermediaries outside the dollar system. The US Treasury in April imposed sanctions on a Chinese independent refinery for buying billions of dollars' worth of Iranian oil and warned Chinese banks of secondary sanctions if they facilitated trade of Iranian oil. Beijing has openly opposed US sanctions against Iran, saying it would safeguard its interests. "China has already stated many times that it firmly opposes illegal unilateral sanctions... China will take all necessary measures to firmly safeguard its own rights and interests," foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian told a regular news briefing.

United Arab Emirates The Emirates, located just 50 miles from Iran across the Persian Gulf, has long been a major trading hub for Iran. The bilateral trade amounted to around \$28 billion in 2024, when the Emirates was its largest source of imports, contributing over 30 per cent, according to the World Trade Organisation data. The UAE was also Iran's third-largest export destination, making up 12 per cent of its shipments, totalling more than \$7 billion. That relationship hit a snag last week

as the UAE moved to suspend all trade and financial transactions with Iran, following two ballistic missiles fired toward Emirati territory, one of which targeted UAE-owned tankers. Iran has relied on UAE banks and its financial system to access the world economy through illicit, often murky transactions, and cutting off Iran would require more forceful actions from Emirati authorities to crack down on opaque financial and trading activity, according to US-based think tank The Washington Institute. "The majority of Iran's transshipment, smuggling, and shadow banking activity takes place in Dubai, so Washington must do what it can to help the UAE's national leaders in Abu Dhabi convince and cajole Dubai's leaders to play ball," Matthew Levitt, a former U.S. Treasury official, wrote in a note on Monday.

Turkey Turkey maintains significant commercial ties with Tehran, importing Iranian natural gas and exporting manufactured goods south. The Turkey-Iran bilateral trade reached \$5.7 billion in 2024, according to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with Ankara exporting mostly machinery and parts, chemical and agricultural products, while importing energy products from Tehran. Meanwhile, under a 25-year gas supply contract between the two countries that expired at the end of July, Turkey's imports of Iranian gas spiked this year while Iran's share of Turkey's total natural gas imports rose to 18.6 per cent. While Ankara has sought to diversify toward other suppliers, expanding pipeline imports from Azerbaijan and Russia, it has, so far, not signalled that it intends to cut Iran off.

Iraq Iraq, dependent on Iranian electricity and gas, has historically traded billions with Tehran. Iran renewed a five-year contract in March 2024 to supply Iraq with up to nearly 660 billion cubic feet of natural gas a year, and electricity imports from Iran accounted for more than 30 per cent of its electricity generation in 2023, according to the US Energy Information Administration. Iraq-Iran trade reached more than \$10 billion in 2025, according to Reuters, with Tehran exporting food, consumer goods, and other products to the Iraqi market. The trade has dwindled this year amid increased security risks in the region and intermittent disruptions along border crossings since the war started in late February. Iraq reportedly pays Iran around \$4 billion to \$5 billion a year for natural gas for electricity generation. The fresh US sanctions could curtail Baghdad's payments for Iranian energy.

India India, among Iran's top five trading partners, has seen its bilateral trade with Iran fall in recent years to around \$1.6 billion in the year ending March 2026, according to India's Department of Commerce, down from \$2.3 billion in the year through to March 2023. New Delhi primarily exports rice, tea, sugar, and pharmaceuticals to Iran and imports dry and fresh fruits from Iran. In April, India resumed importing crude oil from Iran following a seven-year halt, after the US temporarily lifted sanctions on Iranian crude exports. But those trades will now be tested if Washington makes good on its threat to sanction any entity, including Indian refiners, that has procured Iranian energy.

Harvard To Columbia: How Israeli Money Quietly Flowed Into US Universities



Millions of dollars from Israel's Ministry of Defence and Israeli weapons companies have gone into the research at US universities, but much of this money does not consistently appear in US databases meant to track foreign funding, according to a Drop Site investigation.

An analysis of university and state audit records, foreign-funding disclosures and academic documents found more than \$15 million in funding connected to Israel's Ministry of Defence and Israeli defence manufacturers either not reported or reported inconsistently, according to findings by Antiwar Initiative. The records cover the period from 2004 to 2025 and show financial links between the Israeli defence establishment and dozens of US universities. These include Columbia, Cornell, Princeton, Harvard, Northwestern, Georgia Tech, Texas Tech, the University of Connecticut, the University of Tennessee, the University of Maryland, the University of Florida, UC Berkeley, the University of Rhode Island, the University of New Mexico, Washington University in St. Louis and the State University of New York. The funding was provided through research grants, contracts, tuition payments and other

forms of support. In some cases, Israel's Ministry of Defence directly sponsored projects. In others, Israeli weapons companies such as Elbit Systems, Rafael and Israel Aerospace Industries were involved. One example comes from the University of Connecticut. State audit records show that a project called "Impact Point Prediction Research for Short & Medium Range Thrusting Projectiles" received \$668,456 from Israel's Ministry of Defence over nine fiscal years between 2013 and 2023. Another project at the university, titled "High Sensitivity SQUIDS for Magnetic Field Detection", received \$251,336 during the same period. At Columbia University, records show two Israeli Ministry of Defence-linked projects worth a combined \$799,190. One project on 3D printing of integrated electromechanical systems received \$469,999 between 2016 and 2021. Another project on sensor technology received \$329,191 between 2021 and 2024. The State University of New York's research foundation recorded five Israeli Ministry of Defence-linked projects worth \$949,915 between 2010 and 2021. Florida's statewide audits also recorded \$1.19 million in expenditures passed through Israel's Ministry of

Defence between 2012 and 2021, although the records did not identify all the universities that received the money. At the University of Texas at Dallas, researchers developed a video-surveillance system with funding from Elbit Systems of America. Researchers at the University of Maryland also received \$150,000 for work on the autonomous operation of micro-helicopters and another \$300,000 for research into rotorcraft flying at high speeds. Princeton University records show a \$600,000 contract for research into a "Pulsed Scalar Atomic Magnetometer", sponsored by Israel's Ministry of Defence and the US Defence Security Cooperation Agency. At Texas Tech University, researchers received \$400,000 from Israel's Ministry of Defence for work on a "Sealed Vircator HPM System". MIT itself has reported about \$4 million in Israeli Ministry of Defence-linked projects between fiscal 2015 and fiscal 2024, along with another \$290,000 in fiscal 2025. "No self-respecting university should accept funding from Israel, given its destabilising, destructive, and inhumane use of US weapons," said William Hartung, a political scientist and expert on the US arms industry and Pentagon budgetary practices.

UK Gets Access To Ukraine's War-Tested "Avengers" AI Database

Ukraine has given Britain access to its "Avengers" AI database, which contains important information collected during the war with Russia. The UK is the first country outside Ukraine to get access to the database, according to The Independent. The agreement was announced during Prime Minister Andy Burnham's visit to Kyiv on Monday.

The "Avengers" platform collects information from thousands of cameras and sensors used across the Ukrainian battlefield. It tracks objects such as tanks, artillery systems, air defence equipment, soldiers and drones, including Shahed drones and reconnaissance UAVs.

The data is sent to the Avengers Lab, where it is used to train new AI models. Britain is expected to use the technology to learn from Ukraine's experience in

the war with Russia and develop new AI-based security systems.

The first UK-Ukraine project will focus on using AI sensors to improve protection around military bases. The two countries will also work on low-power AI chips. These could be used in machines that need to operate for longer periods and in difficult conditions.

British officials said the technology could eventually be used beyond defence. It could help protect airports, prisons, railway systems and energy facilities.

During his visit to Kyiv, Burnham said Britain would continue to support Ukraine despite threats from Russia. "This is the moment to keep up the pressure on Russia, the moment to squeeze their ability to fund this illegal war," The



Telegraph quoted him as saying.

He compared Ukraine's fight against Russia with Britain's role in defending Europe during World War II.

"My nation kept the flame of European freedom alive in the 20th century; you hold that flame in the 21st," Burnham said while comparing Ukraine's resistance

to Russia with the UK's fight with Nazi Germany. He also called for more interceptor missiles to help Ukraine defend itself against Russian attacks.

The UK also agreed to declassify blueprints for British-made parts used in the French-made Scalp missile. The missile, similar to the Storm Shadow, has been used by Ukraine

against targets in Russia.

Dmitry Peskov, the Kremlin spokesperson, has accused Britain of taking steps that could make the war worse, according to The Telegraph. "Britain is methodically and regularly adding fuel to the fire and methodically and regularly plotting to prevent any progress in the peace process," he said.

US Military Aircraft Lands In Moscow, Kremlin Claims It Had No Idea

A US Air Force transport plane landed at Moscow's Vnukovo airport on Tuesday, according to data from flight-tracking website Flightradar24. However, the Kremlin said that it had no information about the aircraft. The aircraft, which was a Boeing Globemaster, had a US-registered tail number and had flown to Moscow from Riga, in Latvia, at

around 0700 GMT, according to Reuters. The Kremlin press secretary, Dmitry Peskov, told reporters on Tuesday that there were no plans to hold meetings with representatives of the US administration this week. The data also showed that the aircraft arrived in Riga on August 23 from the US Camp Springs airbase near Washington, DC. The

flight had left from the US Air Force's Joint Base Andrews in Maryland on Sunday afternoon just before 5 pm ET, Flightradar24 data showed. The base is the primary military facility that is used by the US president and senior officials for official air travel. The last time a US-registered flight came directly from Europe to Russia was in January when special

envoys Steven Witkoff and Jared Kushner landed for peace talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Ukraine.

Theories Surrounding Arrival Of US Military Aircraft

As the C-17 Globemaster is designed for heavy-capacity, long-distance transport of troops and military equipment, its sudden arrival has fuelled multiple

theories. According to The i Paper, speculation points to a potential diplomatic or prisoner exchange. This follows the high-profile release of former US Marine Robert Gilman earlier in August 2026 and previous exchanges earlier in the year. Although Russia-Ukraine peace negotiations remain heavily deadlocked, a secret diplomatic channel could remain a possibility.

Low On Fuel, Indian Drone Inadvertently Hit Pak's Kirana Hills Nuke Facility



New Delhi: An Indian loitering munition -- a drone -- did indeed strike Pakistan's Kirana Hills, a nuclear hub of the Pakistani armed forces during Operation Sindoor last year, though the strike was not deliberate. Ending the mystery over what happened at Kirana Hills, the former Chief of Defence Staff, General Anil Chauhan, clarified that an Indian loitering munition -- likely an Israeli-designed Harop drone -- was searching for radars to strike but had run short on fuel in the vicinity of Kirana Hills. "Bharti had rightly clarified that we did not target Kirana Hills," said General Chauhan who was speaking at the Vivekananda Centre in New Delhi. 'Bharti' was Air Marshal AK Bharti (retired), the IAF's Director General of Air Operations during Operation Sindoor.

"I can give an explanation," said General Chauhan. "Before those strikes, we had sent a lot of loiter ammunition at Sargodha and Kirana Hills, which is 10 km north of Sargodha. So the loiter ammunition was looking for radars which were in and around Sargodha and its got a lifetime. It will loiter for about two hours and if it doesn't find a target, it will come and hit somewhere. It must have come and hit one of those hills." The General also confirmed that the Indian Air Force (IAF) had been cleared to launch an attack on Skardu in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK), a mission which was scrubbed because of bad weather. "The Chief had asked me whether he should strike Sargodha. I said, 'Go ahead' and added, 'Please identify two more targets.'

One of the targets he had identified was Skardu. We gave a yes, but after some time, the weather was bad in Skardu, and they had to change over to Bholari," said General Chauhan. The IAF's assault on the Bholari hangar arguably became the most striking visual symbol of the May 10 air campaign. The attack was launched by the IAF's Gandhinagar-based South Western Air Command. Satellite imagery, first aired by NDTV, revealed a large, jagged breach torn through the roof of the structure, with a dark, caved-in space visible beneath. Wreckage was strewn across the apron connecting the hangar to the runway, indicating the blast had thrown debris outward. The damage appeared tightly contained to that one building, pointing to a precise strike.

Sybiotec Pharmalab IPO Day 2: Issue subscribed 1.85 times; NII and retail portions see strong demand



New Delhi: Sybiotec Pharmalab IPO Day 2 Subscription Status: The initial public offering (IPO) of Sybiotec Pharmalab was subscribed 1.85 times at the end of Day 2 of bidding on Tuesday, August 25, 2026, according to provisional exchange data.

Sybiotec Pharmalab IPO Day 2 Subscription Status

At the end of Day 2, the issue was subscribed 1.85 times, with investors placing bids for 2,42,73,015 shares against the total shares on offer, according to provisional exchange data. Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs) category was subscribed 0.54 times. QIB investors placed bids for 20,32,740 shares, compared with 37,39,872 shares reserved for the category. The Non-Institutional Investors (NII) portion was subscribed 2.99 times, receiving

bids for 83,98,485 shares against the 28,04,904 shares reserved for the category.

The Retail Individual Investors (RIIs) category was subscribed 2.10 times. Retail investors placed bids for 1,37,35,455 shares, compared with 65,44,776 shares reserved for the category.

Sybiotec Pharmalab IPO: Key details

The Sybiotec Pharmalab IPO is a book-built issue of Rs 1,757 crore, comprising a fresh issue of 0.15 crore shares worth Rs 150 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of 1.63 crore shares aggregating to Rs 1,607 crore. The company has fixed the price band for the IPO at Rs 938 to Rs 988 per share. The lot size is 15 shares, meaning retail investors will need to invest a minimum of Rs 14,820 at the upper end of the price band. The IPO is expected to be listed on both the NSE

and BSE. The basis of allotment is expected to be finalised on August 28, while the tentative listing date is September 1, 2026. Of the total issue size of Rs 1,757 crore, Rs 150 crore will come through the fresh issue, while Rs 1,607 crore will be raised through the OFS. The selling shareholders include Satwani Holdings LLP, a promoter selling shareholder, along with Rosewood Investments and India Business Excellence Fund – III, both investor selling shareholders. The IPO allocation has been structured with not more than 50 per cent of the net offer reserved for qualified institutional buyers (QIBs), not less than 35 per cent for retail investors and not less than 15 per cent for non-institutional investors (NIIs). JM Financial Ltd, Avendus Capital Private Ltd and Nomura Financial

Advisory and Securities (India) Private Limited are the book-running lead managers to the issue. While, MUFG Intime India Pvt Ltd is the registrar of the issue. The company plans to use the net proceeds from the fresh issue primarily towards the prepayment and/or repayment, in full or in part, of certain outstanding borrowings. The remaining proceeds will be used for general corporate purposes.

What does Sybiotec Pharmalab do?

Sybiotec Pharmalab is engaged in the development and manufacturing of active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), nutritional ingredients and specialty products. The company caters to domestic as well as international markets, including regulated and emerging markets. It has evolved from a lab-scale steroidal hormone API manufacturer into an industrial-scale, backwards-integrated manufacturing platform. Sybiotec Pharmalab has approvals from regulatory bodies and organisations including the US FDA, EU-GMP and the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety, Korea. As of June 30, 2025, the company operated two industrial-scale API manufacturing facilities, with a maximum chemical synthesis capacity of 584.67 metric tonnes (MT) and fermentation capacity of 300 kilolitres.

Lord's Mark Industries Limited and ARKALL Holdings Limited join forces for healthcare expansion in 28 Caribbean countries

New Delhi: Lord's Mark Industries Limited has signed a strategic partnership agreement with ARKALL Holdings Limited, a Caribbean based company, to set up and run pathology laboratories and grow its medical devices, medical equipment and healthcare portfolio within all 28 Caribbean countries. With a range of products that are pre-approved, the company is offering a comprehensive portfolio that includes diagnostics, MedTech and healthcare solutions, which is Lord's Mark Industries Limited's first foray, and one of the biggest by an Indian healthcare company in the Caribbean market. The partnership will begin in Trinidad and Tobago and will gradually expand to the wider Caribbean in the next three years. Investments to establish and grow the scale of operations of the pathologists' laboratory, as well as investments to commercialise Lord's Mark's healthcare portfolio throughout the Caribbean will be made by ARKALL Holdings Limited. Under the proposed collaboration, Lord's Mark Industries Limited will supply its comprehensive range of IVD products, including rapid test kits, biochemistry reagents, pathology laboratory products, medical equipment, dialysis machines and related healthcare solutions. The company will also provide technical guidance, product knowledge, training and operational support. ARKALL Holdings Limited will lead commercialisation and market development activities across the agreed Caribbean markets. The partnership is expected to create a scalable healthcare platform combining pathology and diagnostics infrastructure with access to medical



technology and equipment. The companies will initially undertake market assessment and business planning in Trinidad and Tobago before progressively expanding operations across the remaining Caribbean markets. Based on the company's current projections, Lord's Mark Industries Limited expects to generate approximately \$100 million in export revenue between FY27 and FY31 through the phased Caribbean rollout. The company's internal planning assessment estimates an indicative pathology and diagnos-

tics opportunity of approximately \$1.24 billion across the 28 Caribbean markets, with potential business opportunity increasing with market penetration as the laboratory network matures. Commenting on the partnership, a Senior Management Representative from ARKALL Holdings Limited said, "The Caribbean presents an important opportunity to strengthen healthcare infrastructure through greater access to quality diagnostics, medical technology and specialised healthcare solutions. Our partnership

with Lord's Mark Industries Limited brings together local market capabilities with an expanding portfolio of healthcare technologies. Beginning with Trinidad & Tobago, our objective is to build a scalable network that can progressively serve healthcare needs across all 28 Caribbean markets." The companies will undertake the initial market assessment and implementation planning in Trinidad & Tobago, following which the expansion roadmap will be progressively implemented across the Caribbean.

FedEx to invest \$150 million in integrated air cargo hub at Delhi airport

New Delhi: Global logistics company FedEx has announced an investment of around \$150 million to set up an integrated air cargo hub at GMR Cargo City, located at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport. The new facility will cover nearly 230,000 square feet and will bring FedEx's international gateway operations and pickup-and-delivery activities together at a single location.

According to the company, combining these operations under one roof will help speed up the movement of shipments and improve overall efficiency.

The groundbreaking ceremony

for the project was attended by Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu. Once the hub becomes operational, FedEx expects its package processing capacity to rise sharply from the current 600 packages per hour to around 5,000 packages per hour. The company said the facility will be highly automated and will also have room for further expansion in the future as shipment volumes and demand increase. The facility is planned to include an advanced auto-sorter, latest-generation X-ray machines, enhanced security systems and intelligent package-

handling technologies. These capabilities are expected to improve shipment processing, strengthen network resilience and enhance customer experience, the company said. Kami Viswanathan, president, FedEx Middle East, Indian Subcontinent and Africa (MEISA), said India is a critical market in the company's global network, with North and East India playing an important role in the country's growing trade and economic activity. Strengthening our presence in Delhi will enhance connectivity across these markets and support businesses as they grow and expand. It reflects our

NPS New 1:30 PM Cut-off: What it means for subscribers and same-day NAV

New Delhi: The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has increased the time limit for same-day investment in the National Pension Scheme (NPS). It has extended the cut-off time to 1:30 PM from 11 PM earlier. The announcement was made by PFRDA on August 4, 2026.

What has changed in the NPS cut-off time?

Earlier, the cut-off for contributions reaching the Trustee Bank was 11 AM. PFRDA has now moved this deadline to 1:30 PM. This gives subscribers an additional two-and-a-half hours to get their contribution into the system for possible same-day investment. However, simply starting a payment before 1:30 PM may not always be enough. The contribution has to reach the Trustee Bank by the cut-off and must also be successfully matched and booked. Therefore, subscribers should avoid waiting until the last few minutes to make a payment.

What does same-day investment mean?

NPS contributions are invested in different asset classes through pension funds. The value at which units are allotted depends on the applicable NAV. This means, if your contribution reaches the Trustee Bank by 1:30 PM on an eligible business day and completes the required processing, it will be considered for investment on the same day.



Therefore, the contributor will get the units on that day's applicable closing NAV. If the money reaches after the cut-off, it may be processed for investment on a later settlement day, depending on the applicable process.

Which NPS payment methods are covered?

The extended cut-off is not limited to one particular type of NPS contribution. According to PFRDA, it applies to all categories of NPS contributions received by the Trustee Bank through different channels. These include contributions made through eNPS, D-Remit, UPI, Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS), STAR NPS and Tatkal NPS. Contributions routed through Points of Presence, government nodal offices and other permitted channels are also covered.

Why is the 1:30 PM deadline important?

The biggest benefit is additional time.

Suppose a subscriber could not make an NPS payment before 11 am. Under the earlier system, the contribution might have missed the same-day investment window.

Benefits of new cut-off

The main benefit of the revised cut-off is faster investment and greater flexibility, rather than any guaranteed increase in returns. NPS subscribers should continue to focus mainly on regular investing, asset allocation and their long-term retirement goals.

Should you wait until 1:30 PM to make your NPS contribution?

It may be better not to. PFRDA has advised subscribers and intermediaries to initiate fund transfers sufficiently early so that the contribution actually reaches the Trustee Bank by 1:30 pm. There can be

some time between initiating a payment and its receipt and processing by the Trustee Bank. So, if getting the same day's NAV is important, contributing well before the deadline may be a safer approach.

What NPS subscribers should remember?

The new 1:30 PM cut-off is essentially an extension of the same-day investment window. Earlier, contributions had to reach the Trustee Bank by 11 am to be considered for same-day investment. The revised deadline gives investors time until 1:30 pm on a Business Settlement Day. But the key point is the time at which the Trustee Bank receives the contribution, not simply the time when the subscriber clicks the payment button. For NPS investors, the change should make contribution processing more convenient and give them a longer window to qualify for the day's closing NAV.

Cipla gets 7 observations from USFDA after inspection at Pithampur facility - What investors need to know

New Delhi: Shares of drug major Cipla fell over 1 per cent on Tuesday after the company said the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) issued seven inspectional observations following a follow-up inspection at its manufacturing facility in Pithampur, Madhya Pradesh. Cipla shares declined Rs 15.90, or 1.11 per cent, to close at Rs 1,422 on the NSE. The stock is down 5.26 per cent so far this year, compared with a 6.93 per cent decline in the benchmark Nifty 50. Cipla said the USFDA conducted the follow-up current Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMP) inspection at its Pithampur facility from August 17 to August 25, 2026. "On conclusion of the inspection, the Company received seven (7) inspectional observations in Form 483," Cipla said in a regulatory filing. The company said it will work closely with the USFDA and is committed to addressing the observations "comprehensively within the stipulated time". The latest inspection follows earlier company disclosures on the matter dated February 18, August 5 and November 18, 2023. A Form 483 is issued by the USFDA to list inspectional observations that investigators believe



may indicate conditions or practices that do not comply with applicable regulatory requirements. The observations are not the final determination of the regulator.

Cipla Q1 FY27 results

The USFDA inspection comes after Cipla reported a sharp decline in consolidated net profit for the first quarter of the financial year 2026-27. Cipla's consolidated net profit fell 39 per cent to Rs 785.55 crore in the April-June quarter of FY27, compared with Rs 1,291.61 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal. The company attributed the decline mainly to weaker sales in the North American market and higher expenses. Despite the decline in profit, Cipla's consolidated total revenue from operations increased to Rs 7,119.28 crore

in Q1 FY27 from Rs 6,957.47 crore in the year-ago period. However, total expenses rose sharply to Rs 6,248.25 crore during the quarter from Rs 5,446.10 crore in Q1 FY26.

North America sales decline

Cipla's North American business remained under pressure during the quarter. Sales from North America declined 21 per cent to Rs 1,532 crore in Q1 FY27, compared with Rs 1,933 crore in the same period a year earlier. In contrast, Cipla's One-India business performed better during the quarter. The One-India business recorded its highest quarterly sales of Rs 3,452 crore, up 12 per cent from Rs 3,070 crore in the year-ago period.

Cipla share price, market capitalisation

1,673, which was recorded on October 23, 2025. From the 52-week high, the stock has declined by Rs 251. The stock, however, remains above its 52-week low of Rs 1,165.70, touched on April 2, 2026. At Tuesday's closing price of Rs 1,422, Cipla had a market capitalisation of Rs 1,14,876.72 crore.

Pharma stocks mostly higher

Cipla's decline came despite a broader positive trend in pharmaceutical stocks on Tuesday. The Nifty Pharma index rose 224.70 points, or 0.85 per cent, to 26,564. The index has gained 17.37 per cent so far this year and 15.24 per cent in the last six months. The index's 52-week high stands at 26,801.20, while its 52-week low is 21,149.90. Among major pharma stocks, Laurus Labs was the biggest gainer, rising 3.62 per cent. Divi's Laboratories gained 2.92 per cent, while Biocon and Zydus Lifesciences rose 1.91 per cent and 1.88 per cent, respectively. Sai Life Sciences gained 1.47 per cent, followed by Gland Pharma at 1.03 per cent. Torrent Pharmaceuticals rose 0.93 per cent, IPCA Laboratories 0.77 per cent and Sun Pharmaceutical Industries 0.63 per cent. Aurobindo Pharma, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, Wockhardt, Alkem Laboratories, Abbott India and Dr Reddy's Laboratories also ended higher. On the other hand, PPL Pharma fell 1.63 per cent. Lupin declined 0.57 per cent, while Ajanta Pharma and Mankind Pharma fell 0.46 per cent and 0.40 per cent, respectively.



and enabling works have commenced, with construction expected to begin shortly, GMR Airports said.

Rajesh Arora, President and CEO, Commercial & Growth, GMR Airports Ltd, said FedEx's decision to establish its integrated hub at GMR Cargo City was an endorsement of Delhi

Airport's growing role as a global logistics gateway.

The facility will strengthen connectivity between businesses in North and East India and international markets while supporting the country's expanding trade, e-commerce and express logistics sectors, he said.

Prasada Strengthens India–Morocco Economic Partnership; 7th Joint Commission Gives Fresh Momentum to Trade and Investment Cooperation

India–Morocco Agree to Double Bilateral Trade in Five Years; Joint Working Group to Explore Preferential Trade Agreement India–Morocco to Mark 70th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations in 2027; 8th Joint Commission to be Held in New Delhi



New Delhi, August, 26 (PIB): Minister of State for Commerce and Industry and Electronics & Information Technology, Shri Jitin Prasada, concluded a successful official visit to the Kingdom of Morocco from 24 to 25 August 2026, during which he held a series of bilateral meetings with senior Moroccan Ministers and dignitaries. During the visit, he co-chaired the meeting of the 7th Session of the India–Morocco Joint Commission with his counterpart, H.E. Mr. Omar Hejira, Secretary of State to the Minister of Industry and Trade, in charge of Foreign Trade, Kingdom of Morocco. India and Morocco have an enduring and mutually beneficial partnership that has gained strong stra-

ings with the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services of Rabat–Salé–Kénitra, as well as the General Confederation of Moroccan Enterprises (CGEM).

7th India–Morocco Joint Commission Meeting

The 7th India–Morocco Joint Commission provided renewed momentum to the bilateral economic partnership and established an expanded framework for co-operation aimed at increasing trade, strengthening market access, promoting investment and industrial partnerships, and creating new opportunities for Indian and Moroccan businesses. The two sides reviewed progress in bilateral economic and commercial relations and agreed to further deepen and diversify cooperation across trade, investment, industry, fertilisers, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, energy, mining, digital transformation, transport and other areas of mutual interest. Bilateral trade reached around USD 4 billion in 2025, reflecting the sustained strengthening of economic and trade relations between the two countries. Both countries reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening their longstanding friend-

ship and strategic partnership. Both sides underscored that diversification of the trade basket and expansion of market access in both goods and services would help unlock the considerable untapped potential of the bilateral economic relationship. They agreed to work towards doubling bilateral trade over the next five years. To achieve this, both countries emphasised that regular exchanges of business delegations, prospecting missions and networking activities would contribute to identifying new business opportunities, facilitating market access and promoting sustainable partnerships and joint ventures between Moroccan and Indian companies. Potential areas identified for enhanced trade included fertilisers and chemicals, mineral resources, machinery and electrical equipment, automotive parts and vehicles, building materials, polymers, agri-food products, tea, metals and tourism. Both countries also agreed on the importance of facilitating predictable and timely market access for pharmaceutical products. To provide an institutional mechanism for advancing this agenda, the two sides agreed to establish an In-

dia–Morocco Joint Working Group (JWG) to explore opportunities for developing bilateral trade and the feasibility of a preferential trade agreement between India and Morocco. The JWG will also examine tariff and non-tariff barriers and explore opportunities for improved market access and trade facilitation for goods and services.

The two sides agreed to work jointly to address regulatory and market-access issues faced by Indian pharmaceutical companies, including market authorisation procedures and approval timelines, with a view to facilitating bilateral trade and strengthening pharmaceutical cooperation. The Indian side raised market-access concerns relating to key products for export and the ongoing investigations concerning imports of ceramic tiles from India. The two sides emphasised the importance of strengthening business-to-business engagement, reciprocal participation in trade fairs and exhibitions, business forums and investment-related activities. They also agreed to strengthen the role of the Morocco–India Business Council and the Morocco–India Chamber of

Commerce and Industry in fostering partnerships between the private sectors of the two countries.

In agriculture, the two sides agreed to strengthen cooperation in sustainable agriculture, food security, SPS measures, food safety, agricultural research, digital agriculture, biotechnology and agricultural value chains. The two sides welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the National Office of Food Safety (ONSSA), Morocco and the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) on Cooperation in the Field of Food Safety. The MoU provides a framework for the exchange of information, technical expertise and best practices, capacity building and activities aimed at facilitating safe and sustainable bilateral trade.

The two sides also signed the Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 2026–2030 during the Joint Commission Meeting. The programme will promote cultural exchanges and collaboration through artist and professional exchanges, participation in festivals and exhibitions, cooperation in heritage conservation and strengthened linkages among museums, libraries and archival institutions.

36th Annual Conference of Vice Chancellors of Agricultural Universities Commences in New Delhi



New Delhi (PIB): The 36th Annual Conference of Vice Chancellors of Agricultural Universities was inaugurated today in New Delhi by Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers’ Welfare and Rural Development. Organised on the theme “Reimagining Agricultural Higher Education for ViksitBharat@2047,” the two-day Conference, (25–26 August 2026), brings together Vice Chancellors of Agricultural Universities, senior officials of DARE and ICAR, Deputy Directors General, Additional Directors General and senior scientists to deliberate on reforms and priorities for a future-ready agricultural education system. The inaugural session was also graced by Shri Bhagirath Choudhary and Shri Ram Nath Thakur, Union Ministers of State for Agriculture & Farmers’ Welfare, and Dr M. L. Jat, Secretary, DARE & Director General, ICAR, along with senior officials and dignitaries. Addressing the Conference, Union Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan emphasised that the success of agricultural education must be measured not by the number of degrees awarded, but by the knowledge and skills created and the tangible change brought to farmers’ lives. He called for reimagining agricultural education to make it practical, technology-driven and closely aligned with farmers’ needs. He stressed that research must move

from laboratories to fields through stronger collaboration among agricultural universities, ICAR, KVFs, FPOs, industry and farmers. He urged universities to set clear goals, develop actionable roadmaps and measure outcomes, so that every conference leads to concrete decisions and contributes to building a modern, resilient and prosperous agricultural sector for Viksit Bharat. Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare Shri Bhagirath Choudhary emphasised that a developed India requires a strong and prosperous agriculture sector and empowered farmers. He said India’s journey from food scarcity to self-sufficiency reflects the collective contribution of farmers, scientists, teachers and institutions, and the next priority must be to make agriculture technology-driven, innovative and future-ready. He stressed the need to attract youth to agriculture by creating opportunities in modern technologies, research, entrepreneurship and agribusiness, while urging agricultural universities to align education and research with farmers’ needs. He expressed confidence that the deliberations of the Vice-Chancellors’ Conference would strengthen agricultural education, foster innovation and contribute to building a resilient, sustainable and prosperous agricultural sector in line with the vision of Viksit Bharat. Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers’

Welfare Shri Ram Nath Thakur emphasised that strengthening agriculture and empowering farmers are fundamental to achieving the vision of a Viksit Bharat. He highlighted the need to modernise agricultural education, promote innovation and equip youth with the knowledge and skills required to address emerging challenges. He stressed that research and education must remain closely connected to farmers’ needs and translate into practical, field-level solutions. He called upon agricultural universities and institutions to foster a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship and excellence, with a strong focus on sustainable and technology-driven agriculture. He expressed confidence that collective efforts in education, research and innovation would accelerate agricultural transformation and contribute to enhancing farmers’ incomes and livelihoods. Secretary, DARE & Director General, ICAR Dr M.L. Jat, emphasised that achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat requires a fundamental transformation of agricultural higher education—from traditional models to a future-ready, skill-driven and innovation-led ecosystem. He stressed the need to strengthen industry-academia partnerships, promote demand-driven research, ensure robust accreditation and leverage data-driven decision-making. He highlighted that the seamless



integration of education, research and extension is essential to translate scientific knowledge into field-level solutions and tangible benefits for farmers. “The objective of future agricultural education should go beyond awarding degrees to creating skilled, innovative and globally competitive human capital aligned with national priorities and the evolving needs of Indian agriculture,” he added. The Conference is structured around five sessions covering 14 agenda items, focusing on student-centric reforms, higher education, faculty development, institutional strengthening, quality enhancement, academic reforms, research, innovation and institutional excellence. The deliberations on student-centric reforms and agricultural higher education covered the Action Taken Report of the previous Vice Chancellors’ Conference, admission systems, research fellowships and the state/category-wise 40% restriction in seat allotment.

Discussions also addressed timely ICAR-AIQ counselling and verification, separate Ph.D. counselling for Veterinary Sciences, and UG eligibility for agriculture-qualified and Hindi-medium students to make agricultural education more accessible and inclusive. The Conference also reviewed measures to align JRF/SRF research with national priorities, strengthen accreditation and quality assurance, and improve fi-

nancial management, accountability and performance-based funding. Emphasis was placed on stronger industry-academia linkages, apprenticeships and internships, curriculum revision, and promotion of dual, twinning and joint degree programmes and academic exchange. Under faculty development and institutional strengthening, the participants deliberated on equivalency of degrees in agriculture and allied sciences, identification of training needs, development of training modules and expert/domain mapping. The proposed induction of Professors of Practice in Agricultural Universities was also discussed to bring professional expertise and practical knowledge into the academic ecosystem. The Conference further considered the development of a comprehensive agricultural education data ecosystem for evidence-based planning, monitoring and decision-making. Strengthening Rural Agricultural Work Experience (RAWE) was highlighted as an important avenue for connecting students with rural realities and supporting rural transformation. Discussions also covered Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Impact Assessment (MELIA) and greater participation of Agricultural Universities in Agriunifest and Agrisports2026 to promote holistic student development. Deliberations on aca-

ademic reforms, research, innovation and institutional excellence included common agenda items of the Indian Agricultural Universities Association (IAUA), uniform implementation of the UGC Ph.D. Regulations, 2016, and promotion of Technology Readiness Level (TRL) among State Agricultural Universities to accelerate the translation of research into practical technologies and innovations. The Conference also discussed NIRF rating parameters for Agriculture and Allied sectors and mechanisms for sharing expertise through Professors of Practice.

The discussions collectively underscored the need for Agricultural Universities to evolve into dynamic, technology-enabled and outcome-oriented ecosystems integrating education, research, innovation, industry and rural engagement. Stronger academic partnerships, quality assurance, data-driven governance and research aligned with national priorities were identified as critical to building globally competitive institutions. Earlier, Dr Yashpal Malik, Deputy Director General (Agricultural Education), ICAR, delivered the welcome and context-setting address. The inaugural session also featured the presentation and discussion on the Action Taken Report of the previous Conference and a review of progress on earlier decisions.

Around 40 Leading Japanese Companies Participate in India–Japan Startup Roundtable

New Delhi, August, 26 (PIB): Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal today highlighted India’s emergence as the world’s third-largest startup ecosystem, with nearly 250,000 startups established over the last decade, at the India–Japan Startup Roundtable held in Tokyo. He said India’s large domestic market, deep STEM talent pool, digital public infrastructure and rapidly expanding innovation ecosystem make it an attractive destination for Japanese technology, investment and innovation partnerships. The Roundtable brought together senior government representatives, investors, industry leaders and startups from both countries, reaffirming the shared commitment of India and Japan to deepen cooperation in startups, deep technology, innovation and MSMEs. Discussions focused on strengthening technology partnerships, promoting investment and fostering the next phase of innovation-led economic collaboration between the two countries. Welcoming the participants, Ambassador Nagma Mohamed Mallick highlighted the growing startup engagement between the two countries. The India–Japan Pitching Series has already connected 65 Indian startups with around 100 Japanese corporations and facilitated more than 30 business tie-ups. She noted that the participation of a 222-member Indian business delegation provides an opportunity to forge new and enduring partnerships between the two innovation ecosystems. Shri Goyal proposed a forward-looking framework for the next phase of India–Japan startup cooperation centred on four pillars: a Japan–India Deep-Tech Capital Corridor to mobilise patient capital for early-stage research, deep-tech innovation and commercialisation; a Two-Way Innovation Bridge connecting universities, incubators, R&D institutions, laboratories and testing facilities in both countries; Manufacturing and Technology Integration, combining India’s scale, engineering talent and entrepreneurial dynamism with Japan’s precision engineering, technology and manufacturing capabilities; and Joint Startup Pitching Platforms to facilitate regular interactions between Indian founders, Japanese corporations, venture funds and strategic investors.

The Minister also highlighted the Government of India’s proposed second Fund of Funds of around US\$1 billion, with a focus on supporting deep-tech enterprises, and invited greater participation from Japanese investors. Japanese stakeholders welcomed the growing maturity of India’s startup ecosystem. JICA Senior Vice President Shohei Hara emphasised the importance of a two-way partnership, noting that Japan can contribute its technological capabilities while learning from India’s ability to convert social and developmental challenges into scalable business opportunities. JICA also expressed its intention to showcase opportunities in the Indian market to a larger number of Japanese startups. The Roundtable saw participation from senior leadership of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and JETRO, which partnered with the Mission in bringing Japanese companies to the session. Representatives of around 40 leading Japanese companies, including SPARX Group, MUFG Innovation Partners, Beyond Next Ventures Inc., Incubate Fund Asia, Mizuho Financial Group, SBI Investment, Fujitsu Limited, DG Daiwa Ventures, ASTRO GATE Inc., Incubate Fund, Instalimb Inc., Universal Materials Incubator Co., Ltd., Kyoto Fusioneering Ltd. and Aerosense Inc., also participated in the discussions. Startups from various sectors, Indian business chambers and members of the Indian business delegation were also present.

SIDBI organizes a conclave of the Heads of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) on expanding SIDBI-RRB MSME Co-Lending arrangement

New Delhi, August, 26 (PIB): The Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) organized a conclave of the Heads of Regional Rural Banks on expanding the SIDBI-RRB MSME Co-Lending arrangement on 25th August 2026 in New Delhi. The Conclave chaired by Shri Sanjay Lohiya, Secretary, Department of Financial Services was attended by Shri Manoj Mittal, CMD, SIDBI; senior officials from DFS, SIDBI and NABARD; and Chairmen of all 28 Regional Rural Banks. During the Conclave, Secretary, DFS, emphasized the importance of scaling up MSME lending in rural and semi-urban areas. The proposed arrangement synergizes the strengths of SIDBI, which understands the credit needs of MSMEs, and RRBs, which have an excellent reach across the smaller towns and villages of the country. RRBs will also be able to achieve their goal of diversifying their loan portfolios by focusing on MSME lending, and rule engine-based underwriting is also expected to help them maintain good asset quality. Additional Secretary, DFS, while addressing the conclave, indicated the importance of MSME cluster data for a focused approach to reaching out to a large number of MSMEs. RRBs should contribute towards making the country a next-generation manufacturing hub and also take an active part in Rozgar Melas conducted by state governments to disseminate financial awareness among MSMEs. Joint Secretary, DFS, suggested that RRBs make MSME lending through this Co-Lending arrangement an important target for branches. CMD, SIDBI, also urged the RRBs to come forward and make the arrangement a success. The Co-Lending Origination Platform developed by SIDBI is an end-to-end digital platform providing a faster and paperless credit journey, resulting in the quick sanction and disbursement of loans. Loan applicants will be informed of their in-principle sanctions within a very short turnaround time once all the details are provided through the application portal. The digital documentation and disbursement process also ensure that customers receive loan disbursements directly into their accounts without the need to visit branches at any stage of the process. With encouraging outcomes from the pilot implementation at three RRBs, the proposed expansion of this Co-Lending programme to more RRBs is expected to significantly address the credit needs of borrowers, especially in the Micro and Small segments, in rural and semi-urban areas.

Will Pawan Kalyan's Cult Film Make Impact at Box Office?

Pawan Kalyan's Panjaa is all set to return to theatres in 4K on September 2, on the eve of his birthday. The re-release is carrying decent buzz, especially among Pawan Kalyan's fans. Directed by Vishnuvardhan, Panjaa remains a special film for Pawan Kalyan fans despite its disappointing run during its original release. The film had high expectations at the time, but failed to meet them at the box office.

One of the biggest highlights of Panjaa was its music. Yuvan Shankar Raja's songs and background score remain popular even today and continue to feel fresh. Interestingly, Panjaa has Adivi Sesh playing the villain. Sesh, who is now a bankable hero, was still a relatively new face when Panjaa was released in 2011. Several films that failed or underperformed during their original theatrical runs have found a new audience through re-releases. Pawan Kalyan fans are now hoping that Panjaa will get a similar response when it arrives



in 4K on his birthday. Mahesh Babu's Khaleja which was a flop during its original release has done well during its re-release. However, not every re-release has worked. NTR's Oosaravelli, Mahesh Babu's Athidhi and I Nenokkadine failed to make a major impact during their re-releases. Whereas Pawan Kalyan's

Gabbar Singh, Kushi and Tholi Prema, Tammudu did well during their re-releases. With Panjaa arriving on a special occasion and carrying strong fan value, it remains to be seen whether the 4K re-release can bring a good number of audiences to theatres and turn the film into a box-office success this time.

Clock is Ticking, Odela Should Speed Up The Paradise



Nani's The Paradise is entering a crucial stage as the release date gets closer. After postponing from August and March, Paradise has locked September 24 as the final release date. The film's shooting is still in the final leg, with the climax and other important portions being wrapped up. However, only around 30 days are left for the scheduled release. This makes the situation quite tight for the team. The post-

production work cannot be rushed, especially for a film like The Paradise, which has high expectations and is releasing in multiple languages and touted to be a landmark film in Nani's career and has the potential to score a Pan India success. Director Srikanth Odela should ideally complete the remaining shoot as soon as possible and move into post-production. Music composer Anirudh Ravichander's work will also be

important in this phase. The team needs to ensure that the required content is delivered on time so that there is no pressure at the last minute. With expectations on The Paradise already very high, the makers should avoid any last-minute rush and make sure the film gets enough time for proper post-production and finishing. Time is now a key factor, and the Paradise team needs to move fast.

Balayya's Clear Plan To Make NBK 111 December 24 Release

Balakrishna is getting ready to resume work on NBK 111 after recovering from his injury. As part of the immediate plan, the actor will start dubbing for the first half of the film from Aug 28 while he continues his recovery after the medical procedure. After complete recovery, Balakrishna is expected to join the Mysore schedule from October 5. The team is carefully planning his involvement so that the actor can give his complete focus to the film without affecting his recovery.

The target is very clear for the NBK 111 team. The film is currently locked for a December 24 release and Balakrishna is determined to give his best to make sure the movie reaches theatres as planned. Director Gopichand Malineni is reportedly working with a proper schedule to avoid any unnecessary delays. Vridhhi Cinemas is extending full support to execute the plan smoothly.

Music director Thaman is



also said to be working according to the production schedule. The idea is to complete the music and other post production work well in advance instead of getting into a last minute rush. With everyone working towards the same deadline, the NBK 111 team appears to be leaving no room for unnecessary tension. If everything goes according to the current plan, Balakrishna is expected to make the December 24 date comfortably.

Dil Raju – The Real Beneficiary Of Toxic?

Yash's Toxic may face a challenging outcome at the box office when compared to the overall business involved. Dil Raju bagged the Telugu States rights on a returnable basis. The initial commitment is 108 Crore but later revised to 80 Crore. Sources say that the buyers have sent only 75 Crore at the last minute. Andhra Buyers sent in 35 Crore Ratio, Ceeded 10 Crore and from Telangana, another 30 Crore. We have reliably learned that KVN holds less than half of the share in Toxic, while Yash holds the remaining majority share in the film. Accordingly, the actor signed a document to return any deficit in 45 days and so, Dil Raju and the buyers confidently sent the Amount.

Yash also committed to do a film for Dil Raju. If there is any issue of shortfall in covering the deficit, it will become the



advance for the movie which means Yash's commitment to do a film for Dil Raju will become even more. KVN also promised in principle to give

the Nizam rights of Chiranjeevi's Kaaka for coming Sankranthi. That means Toxic will get him the rights of a crazy film in the Sankranthi season.

So in all possible ways, Dil Raju will not be losing as perceived by the Social Media but is the real beneficiary of Toxic irrespective of its result.

Endgame Re Release: A Perfect Warm Up For Doomsday

Hollywood has been enjoying a strong run in India this year, with big ticket films managing to create considerable excitement among Indian moviegoers. The trend has been especially noticeable with films such as The Odyssey and Spider Man: Brand New Day. Now, Marvel is bringing back one of its biggest blockbusters to the big screen. Avengers: Endgame Encore is scheduled to return to theatres on September 25, with additional footage and enhanced colour grading.

The timing makes this re-release even more interesting. The film is returning just a few months before Avengers: Doomsday, which is scheduled to hit theatres on December 18 and has already created massive curiosity among Marvel fans. For Indian audiences, Endgame is not just another Hollywood blockbuster. The 2019 film created an extraordinary theatrical experience here, with fans turning its release into a major movie event.

The upcoming Doomsday has only added to that nostalgia. With Robert Downey Jr returning to the MCU as



Doctor Doom and several major characters expected to come together, anticipation for the film is already extremely high. In such a situation, bringing Endgame back to theatres could work as the

perfect warm up for Indian Marvel fans. The added footage and improved presentation also give audiences an extra reason to revisit the familiar story. Considering the current enthusiasm for Holly-

wood spectacles in India, Endgame Encore has a good chance of receiving a strong response. If the nostalgia factor clicks, Marvel could once again witness packed theatres ahead of Doomsday.

Another Malayalam Movie To Hit 200 Crore At Box Office?

Sensational Malayalam film, Bethlehem Kudumba Unit, is turning into Box Office money spinner, and the film is now aiming for a major milestone. With today's collections, the film is expected to cross the ₹100 crore mark. What is more impressive is the strong booking trend even on working days. The film continues to attract audiences well after its release, giving the trade more confidence about its long run. With another weekend coming up and the Telugu and Tamil dubbed versions releasing on September 4, trade reports are now looking at the possibility of Bethlehem Kudumba Unit reaching the ₹200 crore mark. The film revolves around a young woman, played by Mamitha Baiju, who moves to a new town with her family. There, she meets Justin, a single man in his mid-30s, played by Nivin Pauly. Their relationship forms the main base of the story, which explores love, marriage, family reactions and the reasons behind Justin remaining unmar-



ried. Bethlehem Kudumba Unit is a breezy family entertainer with plenty of genuine fun. It may not be as wholesome as Premalu, but it keeps the audience smiling through most of its runtime. The next big test will come on September 4, when the Telugu and Tamil dubbed versions arrive in cinemas. The dubbed releases are coming nearly 15 days after the Malayalam version. It will be interesting to see whether BKU can create the same magic in the Telugu and Tamil markets and add further strength to its already impressive box-office run.