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Trump Announces "Biggest Oil Deal In World History" With Venezuela



Washington: President Donald Trump on Friday said the U.S. has entered an agreement with Venezuela to take control of 65 billion barrels of the South American country's oil reserves. Trump in a social media post announced the agreement he said was negotiated by Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and Venezuela's interim President Delcy Rodriguez. "The United States of America has just entered into an Agreement with the Country of Ven-

ezuela on, THE BIGGEST OIL DEAL IN WORLD HISTORY!" Trump wrote. The Venezuelan government's press office did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The announcement of the deal comes nearly nine months after the U.S. military at Trump's direction carried out an operation to capture Venezuela's president Nicolas Maduro and spirit him to the United States to face federal narcoterrorism and drug trafficking charges. Trump faces mounting pressure to

of gas in the U.S. stood at about \$4.09 a gallon on Friday, according to AAA. The average price was \$3.21 at the same time last year. Trump in his social media post Friday evening alluded to the Venezuela deal being part of a private partnership. The White House did not immediately reply to a request for comment about the private sector partners involved in the deal, and details on how the arrangement would work were not provided. Persuading big American oil companies to return the region could face headwinds given and decades of badly damaged infrastructure. Days after the ouster of Maduro, Trump gathered oil executives at the White House and called on them to rush back into Venezuela. Executives expressed interest in the opportunity but there was also a measure of caution given their past experience in the country. Darren Woods, CEO of ExxonMobil, the largest U.S. oil company, said at that moment he saw the country as "un-investable." But Trump has in-

sisted that his administration has brought a measure of stability to Venezuela. He has argued that Venezuela stole U.S. oil when former Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez's moved decades ago to nationalize hundreds of foreign-owned assets, including those owned by American oil companies. Rodriguez, in one of her early moves after taking power, signed a law that opens the nation's oil sector to privatization and reversed a bedrock tenet of the self-proclaimed socialist movement that had ruled the country for more than two decades. Rubio said on X that the agreement would usher in \$100 billion in private investment into Venezuela and lead to lower gas prices in the United States. "This deal is a huge win for both the American and Venezuelan people," Rubio posted. Venezuela has one of the largest oil reserves in the world, with an estimated 303 billion barrels of crude oil in the ground. That's about 17% of the world's supply, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

India Highlights Nepal's "Request" After Kathmandu Says No To Foreign Help



New Delhi: The Centre has offered to deploy National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams in Nepal to help with search-and-rescue operations following devastating flash floods that have killed at least 552 people on both sides of the Nepal-Tibet border. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Friday that, on Nepal's "request", India is also preparing additional humanitarian assistance, including medical support, engineering teams and equipment to help restore damaged infrastructure. The MEA statement came hours after Nepal said it did not need foreign search-and-rescue teams, insisting that its own

security agencies were capable of handling the situation. The disaster has left more than 1,400 people missing, including hundreds of foreign nationals. Entire settlements have been swept away, roads and bridges destroyed and major hydropower infrastructure damaged. "Two aircraft with relief materials have already been sent; we are expecting a third aircraft to carry humanitarian assistance from our side to Nepal. As requested by Nepal, we are preparing to send a tunnel rescue team, for which a recce team is being flown in first to assess the on-the-ground situation as to what equipment will be required. We

are also sending a medical team to Nepal. In addition, we have also offered Bailey bridges along with associated technical teams, so that connectivity can be restored quickly in the affected parts of Nepal," Jaiswal said. India has separately offered to send NDRF personnel and equipment for search-and-rescue operations. "We have also made a specific offer to the Nepal authorities to dispatch NDRF teams along with their associated equipment that can help in ongoing search and rescue operations and bring relief assistance to people impacted by the tragedy.

“Jagan Cannot Digest Andhra Pradesh’s Development: Ram Mohan Naidu”



Srikakulam, August 28 : Union Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu expressed strong anger at YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy. He criticized Jagan Reddy, saying that apart from criticizing the coalition government, he has nothing else to do. He questioned why Jagan had not attended the

Assembly even once or spoken about any issue despite several Assembly sessions being held over the past two-and-a-half years. Ram Mohan Naidu toured Srikakulam district on Friday and participated in several programmes. Speaking to the media on the occasion, he alleged that Jagan was criticizing the government merely for political mileage. He said Jagan had failed to provide even a single piece of evidence to substantiate any of his allegations. **“Not a Single Job Was Created During YSRCP Rule”** Ram Mohan Naidu said that it was only during the TDP regime that DSC teacher recruitment drives were conducted in Andhra Pradesh, while not a single job was provided during the

YSRCP rule. He criticized Jagan for promising to release a job calendar during the YSRCP government but failing to provide even a single job. He said the double-engine government was resolving long-pending issues in the state. He stated that the coalition government had provided teacher jobs to 16,000 people. He alleged that Jagan was now attempting to level allegations against Minister Nara Lokesh and the DSC a year later. Ram Mohan Naidu said the coalition government was making every effort to develop the state. He expressed anger that while the government was developing Andhra Pradesh, Jagan was unable to digest the progress and was allegedly thinking of ways to destroy the state. **“Jagan Created Destruction for Five Years”**

Ram Mohan Naidu said the people had given Jagan 151 Assembly seats and elected him as Chief Minister, but the five years of YSRCP rule resulted in destruction across the state. He recalled that soon after becoming Chief Minister, Chandrababu Naidu signed the first file for the Mega DSC and provided 16,000 jobs. He alleged that Jagan, immediately after becoming Chief Minister, demolished the Praja Vedika. He said the people of the state defeated Jagan because of the destruction caused during the five years of YSRCP rule. He mocked Jagan for allegedly being unable to abandon his politics of destruction. Ram Mohan Naidu alleged that Jagan's intention was to see the state completely ruined and that he was conspiring to ensure that the youth did not get employment.

Jana Sena Prepares for Local Body Elections

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, August 28: The Jana Sena Party is gearing up for the local body elections. As part of the preparations, a 14-member committee has been constituted to formulate the guidelines and procedures. The first meeting on the elections was held on Friday at the Jana Sena office in Mangalagiri. Senior leaders discussed the party's strengths and weaknesses in various districts and the seats it plans to contest. Ministers Nadendla Manohar and Kandula Durgesh, MLAs, MLCs, other key leaders and former sarpanches participated in the meeting. **“We Will Follow Alliance Dharma in These Elections: Minister Kandula Durgesh”** Andhra Pradesh Minister Kandula Durgesh made key remarks regarding the local body elections. He said that

Jana Sainiks and Veera Mahilas who contested the 2021 local elections with determination and protected their self-respect would follow the alliance dharma in the upcoming elections. The minister said key issues related to the local elections were discussed at the meeting. He stated that a decision had been taken to guide the youth towards leadership. He revealed that responsibility for the elections would be assigned to representatives covering all 25 parliamentary constituencies. He said September would be dedicated to strengthening the party and its leadership. Minister Kandula Durgesh said the party would focus on contesting elections based on the local political situation. **“We Have Decided to Ensure Victory for Candidates Without Criminal Backgrounds: MP Balashauri”** Machilipatnam MP Balashauri said the meeting discussed where the Jana Sena should contest in the local elections. He said the party's influence has in-



creased compared to 2019. He expressed hope that the party's seat share would increase in the upcoming elections. He said the party had decided to win the seats it contests. MP Balashauri stated that a decision had been taken to ensure victory for candidates without criminal backgrounds in the local elections. **Felicitations of 1,000 Candidates** A special moment was witnessed at the Jana Sena's meeting held as part of its preparations for the local body elections. Around 1,000 Jana Sena candidates who coura-

geously contested the 2021 local body elections were felicitated. As per the directions of Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister and Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan, the candidates were given a grand felicitation. Minister Nadendla Manohar honoured all 1,000 candidates. The Jana Sena party extended recognition to those who contested the local elections. The election preparations meeting began with the felicitation ceremony, with the party leadership giving special recognition to those who stood by the party during the elections.

Will Resolve Issues of Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University: Purandeswari

Rajamahendravaram, August 28: BJP Rajamahendravaram MP Daggubati Purandeswari said efforts would be made to develop Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University. She promised that the problems faced by the university would be resolved at the earliest. She revealed that the university is spread across 30 acres. On Friday, the foundation stone was laid for road works to be taken up at a cost of Rs.75 lakh at the Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University in Rajahmundry. MP Purandeswari, MLA Gorantla Butchaiah



Chowdary and Vice-Chancellor Muniratnam Naidu participated in the programme. TDP MLA Gorantla Butchaiah Chowdary said the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh had caused injustice to Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University. He criticized the previous YSRCP government for severely

neglecting the university during its five-year tenure. He said the issue of developing the university had been raised in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly. Gorantla Butchaiah Chowdary stated that the present government had allocated Rs.20 crore for the university's development.

Red Sanders Smuggling: Most-Wanted Interstate Smugglers Arrested

Tirupati, August 28: RSASTF officials have launched a major crackdown on red sanders smuggling in the Seshachalam forests. On Friday, officials arrested most-wanted interstate smugglers wanted in 44 cases. Task Force, Intelligence and Forest Department officials conducted joint checks near Gudipala mandal in Chittoor district. During the operation, two accused were taken into custody. The arrested individuals were M. Thanji and Selvam, both most-

wanted smugglers from Tamil Nadu. Officials seized seven red sanders logs, a car and a motorcycle from the accused. They said more than 44 cases have been registered against Thanji in Chittoor, Tirupati and Annamayya districts. The investigation is continuing into the accused's links with smugglers in Bengaluru and Chennai, officials said. Head L. Subbarayudu congratulated the Task Force team for its performance and warned that strict action against red sanders smugglers would continue.

We Will Make AP Municipalities Dumping-Yard-Free: Minister Narayana

Amaravati, August 28: Minister Narayana said the Andhra Pradesh government would transform municipalities across the state into dumping-yard-free municipalities. On Friday, the minister held a review meeting at the Secretariat on the removal of legacy waste and the establishment of fresh-waste processing plants. Swachh Andhra Corporation MD Sunil Kumar Reddy and representatives of contracting agencies attended the meeting. Minister Narayana said the govern-

ment was completely removing the 15 million tonnes of legacy waste left behind during the Jagan Reddy government. He stated that the waste lying above the ground had already been completely cleared. He directed officials to remove the waste buried underground as well by October 2. The minister revealed that the six newly established Waste-to-Energy plants would convert the waste generated each day into electricity on the same



day. In the meantime, fresh-waste plants were being established to manage the solid waste generated daily. He directed officials to speed up construction of the fresh-waste plants and instructed that all waste be transported to the plants from October 2 onwards.

EDITORIAL

Modi's Strategy to Win Over the Youth

It is well known that the Cockroach Janata Party and Gen Z youth staged protests over the NEET question paper leak, sending the government into a panic. As a result of these protests, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan ultimately had no choice but to step down from his post. The Cockroach Janata Party is also campaigning against the lack of basic infrastructure in schools. Taking inspiration from the Cockroach Janata Party, young people across the country are increasingly raising their voices, beyond political affiliations, against the flawed policies of the ruling establishment. This has not gone down well with the saffron camp. With the primary objective of reaching out to the youth at any cost, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been making repeated attempts to appease young people through Instagram. In his Independence Day address from the Red Fort on August 15, he announced a free coaching scheme targeting the youth. Now, he once again interacted virtually with students and young people across the country. As part of the National Sports Day 2026 celebrations, he announced the 'Khelo India Dialogue', aimed at attracting the youth. The programme will be implemented in two colleges in every district. It is a national-level youth programme covering key areas such as development of sports infrastructure, sports training, coaching facilities, sports science, modern sports technology, equal opportunities in sports, inclusive participation, volunteering, physical fitness, and the role of youth in nation-building. Another important development is that, ahead of the 2029 Lok Sabha elections, the Election Commission is planning to intensify its efforts to reach Generation Alpha and Generation Z (Gen Z) youth. The main objective of this programme is to create awareness among young people about the electoral process, develop them into responsible voters, and encourage them to take the lead in voter-awareness campaigns. Students studying from Classes 9 to 12, as well as students in colleges and universities, will be the primary target group. The Election Commission is preparing to implement this programme across 4,123 Assembly constituencies nationwide. According to Election Commission details, there are around 14.78 crore people in the 18–26 age group in the country. Of them, 7.98 crore are men and 6.79 crore are women. Around 9,000 belong to the third-gender category. To create electoral awareness among the youth, the Election Commission has planned to establish around 50,000 Electoral Literacy Clubs across the country. Approximately 10 clubs will be set up in each Assembly constituency. Students from Classes 9 to 12 in all schools, along with students from 70,000 colleges and 1,400 universities, will be brought into the programme. Electoral Literacy Clubs were first established in 2018 as part of the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme. However, the government's strategy now appears to be to make use of these clubs from an electoral-strategy perspective. The objective of these clubs is to educate students about democratic values, the electoral process, and the role, responsibilities and functioning of the Election Commission. These clubs will operate actively using digital technology.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Modi's announcement in his Independence Day speech that free online coaching for competitive examinations would be provided to students using Digital Public Infrastructure is certainly a welcome development. At present, private coaching accounts for 16 percent of a family's total expenditure on their children's education. In 2018, this figure was only 12.5 percent. By the time students reach the higher-secondary level—the crucial stage when they begin preparing for competitive examinations—coaching expenses account for nearly one-fourth of the total education budget. However, merely making coaching affordable and accessible will not provide much benefit. Quality professional education is still limited to a small number of institutions. For instance, more than 20 lakh students appeared for the medical entrance examination this year, but of the approximately 1.4 lakh undergraduate seats available, fewer than 10,000 are in the top 50 colleges. A similar situation is visible in the Joint Entrance Examination for engineering colleges. In 2025, among every 100 graduates aged 15–19, only 26 obtained regular salaried employment. Therefore, the problems faced by the youth continue both when they are preparing for employment and even after they secure a job. Can these problems really be solved merely through free coaching? The answer appears doubtful when one considers the report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Justice, presented in Parliament on August 10. The report revealed that, over the past three years, although 10,500 students were targeted under free-coaching initiatives, the Central Government could enroll only 2,790 of them—just 26 percent. This suggests that free coaching alone may achieve little and that the announcement could primarily be an attempt by the government to appease the youth.

Why India's Bureaucrats Have Learnt That Doing 'Nothing' Is Safer

For decades, the analytical discourse surrounding the institutional labyrinth of the Indian state has been confined to a somewhat sterile duality. We are routinely informed that our administrative failures are the byproduct of either the venality of the corrupt or the vacuity of the incompetent. While these elements undeniably persist within the sprawling architecture of our governance, they fail to account for a far more pervasive, yet curiously invisible, quagmire: the vast, silent arena of administrative inaction. In his new book *Decision Velocity: Rational Abdication, the Fear Tax, and the Road to Viksit Bharat*, retired IPS officer OP Singh, a man who has traversed the arduous landscapes of field policing and the intricate corridors of the Haryana State Secretariat with equal distinction, proposes a startlingly original third lens with which to view our administrative shortcomings. He identifies a phenomenon that is as pervasive as it is pernicious: a "fear tax" not levied by any formal exchequer, but extracted from the lifeblood of the citizen, in the form of unconscionable delay.

The Risk With Acting

Singh's "Fear Tax" is the price society pays when decision-makers conclude that the safest course is not to decide at all. It is the outcome of a sclerotic system where, for the desk-bound officer, the risk of a decisive signature far outweighs the perceived safety of a prolonged silence. As Singh so eloquently demonstrates, our current accountability frameworks audit the traceable action with inquisitorial rigour, yet remain blissfully indifferent to the absent decision. Hence, it's safer not to act at all. This is the central paradox of modern bureaucracy. We have inherited, and subsequently ossified, a colonial-era machinery

designed for control, not for velocity. In such a framework, a file that moves is a file that invites scrutiny; a file that rests in a dark corner of a cabinet is a file that poses no threat to its custodian. The result is a Kafkaesque reality where the paralysis of the pen is too often mistaken for the prudence of the professional. This is not merely an inconvenience; it is a profound failure of the social contract. When the state abdicates its responsibility to act, it does not merely delay a project or a permit; it stifles the latent potential of a citizenry waiting for the basic friction of governance to be removed. To understand why this inertia persists, we must venture beyond procedural critiques and into the psychology of the "Iron Frame". The fear of the "audit" - the retrospective, often punitive investigation of administrative decisions, such as happened over the so-called "Coal Scam" that turned out not to be a scam at all - has created an environment of profound risk-aversion. When an officer knows that a decision, however well-intentioned or logical, can be second-guessed by an auditor years later with the benefit of perfect hindsight, especially after a change of government, the most rational individual response is to build a wall of paper, process, and precedent. This is the "rational abdication" to which Singh refers. It is a survival strategy. If you decide and fail, you are accountable. If you defer, consult a committee, request further studies, or simply wait for a transfer, you are safe. This culture of institutionalised indecision creates a feedback loop: because decision-makers are penalised for errors of commission but rarely for errors of omission, the entire system evolves to prize stability over progress, and caution over courage. As we set our sights



on the ambitious horizon of Viksit Bharat 2047, we must recognise that a nation aspiring to become a leading global economic power cannot afford systems that reward hesitation more than initiative. In the global race for capital, technology, and talent, speed is not merely a virtue; it is a competitive necessity. The cost of delay is not just a line item in a budget; it is the opportunity cost of growth. When a policy-induced delay pushes a manufacturing plant to a neighbouring state or another nation, or when a bureaucratic bottleneck forces an entrepreneur to abandon an innovation, the "Fear Tax" has been paid in full by the Indian economy. We are essentially taxing our own development. The "velocity" that Singh advocates is the antidote to this malaise. It requires a fundamental shift in how we define administrative success. We

must move from an obsession with compliance to an obsession with outcomes.

Mistakes vs Negligence

How? It starts with a reconfiguration of accountability. We must evolve our oversight mechanisms to distinguish between honest mistakes (the byproduct of necessary risk-taking in a complex environment) and true negligence. A system that does not tolerate the possibility of a wrong decision will rarely produce a right one. Furthermore, we must incentivise administrative courage. This involves creating "safe spaces" for decision-making, where the rationale for action is documented and respected, and where the institutional culture shifts from "How can I avoid this?" to "How can this be made to happen?" It requires a re-embrace of the professional ethos of the civil servant as an agent of progress,

not merely a guardian of rules. Decision Velocity is a clarion call for a new era of administrative clarity. It reminds us that, in our pursuit of national excellence, the most expensive decision is often the one that is never taken. The future of India depends on our collective ability to move the pen with confidence and purpose. We must build a system where the "Fear Tax" is repealed, and where the machinery of the state serves not to impede the citizen, but to accelerate the nation's journey toward the prosperity it so richly deserves. OP Singh's work is more than a diagnosis; it is a map for the road ahead. It is a seminal contribution to the literature of Indian governance, and I commend it to every administrator, policymaker, and citizen who believes that India's best days are not behind us, but are waiting to be realised - if only we have the courage to decide.

482 Dead, And Counting: How A Glacier Collapse Became A Himalayan Disaster

The Himalayas gave us a brutal reminder this week of what climate change looks like when it stops being a graph and becomes a wall of water, ice, rock, and mud. Across the Nepal-Tibet border, a sudden glacier collapse unleashed a catastrophic flood that tore through communities, roads, bridges, and power infrastructure. Rescue operations are still underway, with at least 482 people confirmed dead so far, and the toll expected to change. But one thing is already clear: this was not an ordinary monsoon flash flood. Early assessments point to an ice-rock avalanche or glacier collapse that turned into a massive debris flow, rather than a conventional glacial lake outburst flood. The US Geological Survey later said the seismic signal first reported as an earthquake was generated by a glacial collapse and debris flow, not by tectonic shaking.

The Tipping Point

Scientifically, the distinction matters. Politically and morally, it changes little. The Himalaya is turning into a more unstable landscape, and climate change is making it worse. The Global Tipping Points Report 2025, led by the University of Exeter's Global Systems Institute and more than 160 researchers, says tipping-point risks rise as warming approaches and exceeds 1.5 degrees Celsius. Mountain glaciers, it notes, are among the systems capable of nonlinear responses under continued warming. Tipping points do not act alone. Most interactions between the systems assessed are destabilising. One



shift can make another more likely, pushing ecological and human systems into cascading risk. The concern, then, goes far beyond the valleys hit this week. A warming glacier does not simply become a smaller glacier. It can become a different kind of threat altogether. As glaciers retreat, meltwater collects in lakes, often held back by unstable walls of ice, rock, and moraine. These lakes can expand quickly. A sudden avalanche, landslide, ice collapse, or breach can release huge volumes of water and sediment downstream. In steep Himalayan valleys, gravity does the rest. A regional analysis of 5,409 Himalayan glacial lakes found both their number and

area increasing between 1990 and 2020, with expansion concentrated in parts of the central and eastern Himalaya. Studies of supraglacial lakes tell a similar story of restless ice and water. These are not abstract risks on a map. They are forming above real villages, roads, bridges, hydropower projects, and pilgrimage routes.

Different Consequences

The danger is already built into the landscape. More than 5,000 glacier lakes exist across the region, and work on Himalayan GLOF hazard suggests that a 100-year outburst flood could send peak flows downstream comparable to major monsoon-fed rivers. The glaciers are shrinking too. A Sci-

entific Reports reconstruction of 14,798 Himalayan glaciers found that they had lost at least 40% of their Little Ice Age area, with recent mass-loss rates roughly an order of magnitude faster than the long-term average since then. Climate change does not mean every kind of glacial lake outburst flood will become more frequent in a neat, linear way. A Nature Climate Change study found no statistically significant increase in moraine-dammed GLOFs in the Himalaya since the late 1980s. The terrain, however, is changing: its exposure, triggers, weak points, and consequences. That is a harder problem, and probably the more

dangerous one. We are building roads, dams, tunnels, hotels, and settlements in a mountain system that is no longer behaving according to old assumptions. Himalayan valleys are narrow, and they leave little room for engineering arrogance. Traditional climate risk assessment is not built for such nonlinear behaviour. Tipping-point risks involve uncertainty, sudden shifts, and cascading impacts. For South Asia, the stakes are enormous. More than three billion people depend on vulnerable monsoon systems, while Himalayan rivers, glaciers, and mountain ecosystems support farms, towns, hydropower, and economies far downstream.

PM Jan Dhan Yojana Completes 12 Years of Transforming India’s Financial Inclusion Landscape



New Delhi : Launched by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi as one of his very first programmes on 28th August 2014, the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) has completed 12 years. These 12 years of PMJDY have witnessed a transformation in India's financial landscape, and the scheme has become a torchbearer for financial inclusion worldwide. As the world's largest financial inclusion initiative, PMJDY continues to redefine access to banking for all Indians.

Expanding Financial Inclusion: The Ministry of Finance remains committed to supporting marginalised and economically disadvantaged sectors through robust financial inclusion schemes and outreach. PMJDY ensures that every unbanked adult has access to a basic bank account—with no minimum balance requirement and no maintenance charges.

Each account comes with a free RuPay debit card, offering an accident insurance cover of ₹2 lakh, encouraging digital transactions and financial security. Account holders are also eligible for an overdraft facility of up to ₹10,000, providing a safety net during emergencies.

PMJDY accounts have also played a pivotal role in extending life and accident insurance to millions of workers in the unorganised sector, through Jan Suraksha schemes, viz. PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and PM Suraksha Bima Yojana.

On the occasion, Union Minister of State for Finance, Shri Pankaj Chaudhary, said, “On 28th August 2014, the Hon'ble Prime Minister inaugurated the National Mission on Financial Inclusion, popularly known as Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY). Today, I am happy that Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) is celebrat-

ing its 12th anniversary. We should not see PMJDY just in the light of the opening of more than 59 crore accounts, garnering a deposit balance of ₹3.17 lakh crore, or the issuance of 41.29 crore free-of-cost RuPay cards, but in its transformation of the banking and financial landscape of the country, where the delivery of financial services to the last person in society—the poorest of the poor—has been made possible without delay or the involvement of middlemen.”

Under PMJDY, 78% of the accounts have been opened in rural or semi-urban areas, and approximately 56% of accounts are owned by women, depicting the priority of the scheme, which was to bring the underprivileged living in far-flung areas of the country into the formal financial sector.

PMJDY has empowered millions, particularly the marginalized sections, to access banking and financial services to improve their socio-economic conditions. Account ownership has enabled the common man to have insurance and pension coverage. Through relentless saturation drives across every state and district, we have moved towards near-universal coverage of bank accounts and steadily widened the reach of insurance and pension schemes to those who need them most.

On the occasion of the 12th anniversary, I appreciate the efforts of bankers and business corre-

spondents deployed throughout the country in taking the PMJDY scheme to the common man and making it a grand success.”

The JAM Trinity: A Game-Changer:

The Jan-Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile (JAM) trinity, with PMJDY at its core, has proven to be a diversion-proof mechanism for the direct delivery of financial assistance. Through JAM, the government has successfully transferred welfare benefits directly into the bank accounts of the underprivileged, eliminating intermediaries and delays.

Milestones and Achievements:

a. PMJDY Accounts: 59.09 crore (As on 19th August '26)

As on 19th August '26, the total number of PMJDY accounts stands at 59.09 crore; 55.7% (32.92 crore) of Jan Dhan account holders are women, and 77.8% (45.95 crore) of Jan Dhan accounts are in rural and semi-urban areas.

b. Deposits under PMJDY Accounts – ₹3.17 lakh crore (As on 19th August '26)

Total deposit balances under PMJDY accounts stand at ₹3,16,514 crore. Deposits have increased about 12.8 times, while the number of accounts has increased 2.3 times in the last 12 years (Aug '26/Aug '15).

c. Average Deposit per PMJDY Account – ₹5,356 (As on 19th August '26)

The average deposit per account is ₹5,356 as on

19.08.2026. The average deposit per account has increased 3.4 times in the last 12 years (Aug '26/Aug '15). The increase in the average deposit is another indication of the increased usage of accounts and the inculcation of saving habits among account holders.

d. RuPay Cards Issued to PMJDY Account Holders: 41.29 crore (As on 19th August '26)

41.29 crore RuPay cards have been issued to PMJDY account holders. The number and usage of RuPay cards have increased over time.

PMJDY's success is driven by its mission-mode approach, regulatory backing, public-private partnerships, and the integration of digital public infrastructure like Aadhaar for biometric verification. It continues to be the first step towards financial inclusion, with further progress being achieved by enabling savings and credit access for those previously excluded from formal finance. With visible saving patterns, account holders are now eligible for loans, including MUDRA loans, empowering individuals to grow their incomes and build financial resilience.

As PMJDY enters its 13th year, it continues to be a beacon of inclusive growth, digital innovation, and economic empowerment. Its enduring success reflects India's commitment to ensuring that no citizen is left behind in the journey towards financial well-being.

3 VISAKHAPATNAM, Saturday, August 29, 2026 Tribal Languages & Museums Conclave Discusses Heritage Preservation in Mysuru



New Delhi : The National Conclave on Tribal Languages and Museums brought together experts, officials and community representatives to deliberate on the preservation and promotion of tribal languages and heritage. The discussions on Tribal Museums and Tribal Freedom Fighter Museums (TFFMs) focused on preserving tribal history, identity and cultural heritage through authentic storytelling, community participation and contemporary museum practices. The sessions on Tribal Freedom Fighter Museums (TFFMs) commenced with remarks by Shri T. Roumuan Paite, Joint Secretary, TFFM, Ministry of Tribal Affairs who highlighted the role of museums as repositories of history, housing documents, objects, photographs and other historical evidence. The importance of preserving not only the objects but also the stories, context and meaning associated with them was emphasized.

Introducing the Tribal Museums and Tribal Freedom Fighter Museums, Ms. Deepali Masirkar, Director, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, highlighted the richness of tribal heritage and the importance of tribal museums in preserving cultural identity and presenting the

uniqueness of tribal communities in contemporary and engaging ways. Referring to the Tribal Museum in Bhopal, participants were encouraged to visit the museum and experience the balance between physical exhibits and digital components.

The thematic sessions began with Prof. Virginius Xaxa, Visiting Professor, Institute of Human Development (IHD), New Delhi, speaking on “Representing Tribal Freedom Stories in Museums: Authenticity, Identity and Community Perspectives”, focusing on authentic representation of tribal histories and connecting local tribal narratives with the national freedom movement. Shri Vinod Daniel, CEO and Managing Trustee, India Vision Institute, addressed “Museums as Living Institutions: Preserving Memory, Identity and Community Heritage”. Shri Amitabh Pandey, IGRMS, spoke on “From Building to Museum: Understanding the Museum Planning Process”, covering museum planning, storyline development, spatial planning and future operations and maintenance. Shri Nataraj Dasgupta, Former Director, CRTL (NCSM) and Consultant, Creative Museum Designers, addressed “Con-

temporary Display Techniques in Museums and Thoughtful Integration of Digital Technologies”, covering immersive environments, multimedia storytelling, interactive displays, AR/VR and QR-based storytelling. Shri Shriram Tiwari, Director, Veer Bharat Nyas, Curator, Bhopal, spoke on “Community Participation in Museum Making: The Tribal Museum Bhopal Experience”, highlighting community participation, visitor engagement, institutional partnerships, revenue generation and resource mobilization for sustainable museum management.

During the concluding discussion, Ms. Deepali Masirkar suggested engagement of communities for development of museums, revenue-generation avenues such as light shows, developing guest-house facilities and weekend programs, and establishing tribal-cuisine cafés, including tribal coffee, to enhance visitor engagement and support museum sustainability. The discussion also emphasized better coordination among historians, designers and executing agencies and the need to ensure that museums remain story-led rather than technology-led.

DAANVEER: Ministry of Panchayati Raj Calls for Public Participation to Strengthen Digital Infrastructure in Gram Panchayats

New Delhi : The Ministry of Panchayati Raj invites public participation to become 'DAANVEERs' and contribute towards strengthening digital infrastructure at the grassroots. DAANVEER, a people-led Computer Crowdsourcing Initiative, enables individuals and organizations to donate desktop computers directly to verified Gram Panchayats through a simple, transparent and technology-enabled mechanism. Complementing infrastructure support provided under Government programs, including the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA), the initiative seeks to harness voluntary public participation to strengthen digital governance and service delivery at the grassroots. DAANVEER makes donating a computer to a Gram Panchayat as simple and convenient as an online purchase. Through the Meri Panchayat App, citizens can view Gram Panchayats verified by the respective State Governments requiring desktop computers and choose to support their own or any other eligible Gram

Panchayat, all from their phone. On clicking “Donate Computer”, the donor is securely redirected to DigiHaat, an ONDC-enabled digital marketplace, without the need for separate registration. The selected Panchayat's delivery address and recipient details are automatically populated, eliminating manual data entry. Donors can choose from standardized computer bundles aligned with prescribed technical specifications, make the payment digitally and track the order from confirmation and dispatch to delivery and acknowledgement. Following acknowledgement by the Gram Panchayat Secretary, the donor receives a digitally generated Certificate of Appreciation. Hence under the initiative, every stage of the donation journey, from order placement to delivery, can be tracked in real time, ensuring complete transparency.

A computer donated through DAANVEER can strengthen a Gram Panchayat's capacity to effectively use digital governance platforms for planning, financial manage-



ment, record-keeping and citizen service delivery. The initiative combines this impact with a transparent donation process, enabling public to view the donation status of their Gram Panchayat and donors to digitally track their contribution. It also offers citizens living away from their native villages, including the Indian diaspora, philanthropic organizations and CSR partners, a credible avenue to contribute to grassroots

digital infrastructure and reconnect with their villages. With more States onboarding eligible Gram Panchayats, DAANVEER has the potential to evolve into a nationwide movement for stronger and digitally empowered Panchayats. As on 27th August 2026, 75 donations have already been made, marking an enthusiastic response and growing public acceptance of this initiative. On successful completion, donors receive

a Certificate of Appreciation, recognizing their contribution to strengthening local governance. DAANVEER represents an innovative model of participatory governance, enabling voluntary public participation to complement Government efforts in strengthening grassroots institutions. Citizens, philanthropists, organizations, CSR partners and members of the Indian diaspora are encouraged to come forward and become a DAANVEER.

India Highlights Nepal's "Request" After Kathmandu Says No To Foreign Help



New Delhi: The Centre has offered to deploy National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams in Nepal to help with search-and-rescue operations following devastating flash floods that have killed at least 552 people on both sides of the Nepal-Tibet border. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Friday that, on Nepal's "request", India is also preparing additional humanitarian assistance, including medical support, engineering teams and equipment to help restore damaged infrastructure. MEA statement came hours after Nepal said it did not need foreign search-and-rescue teams, insisting that its own security agencies were capable of handling the situation. The disaster has left more than 1,400 people missing, including hundreds of foreign nationals. Entire settlements have been swept away, roads and bridges destroyed and major hydro-power infrastructure dam-

aged. "Two aircraft with relief materials have already been sent; we are expecting a third aircraft to carry humanitarian assistance from our side to Nepal. As requested by Nepal, we are preparing to send a tunnel rescue team, for which a recce team is being flown in first to assess the on-the-ground situation as to what equipment will be required. We are also sending a medical team to Nepal. In addition, we have also offered Bailey bridges along with associated technical teams, so that connectivity can be restored quickly in the affected parts of Nepal," Jaiswal said. India has separately offered to send NDRF personnel and equipment for search-and-rescue operations. "We have also made a specific offer to the Nepal authorities to dispatch NDRF teams along with their associated equipment that can help in ongoing search and rescue operations and bring relief assistance to people impacted

by the tragedy. We await a response from the government of Nepal on this front. We stand ready to offer any assistance that the Nepal authorities might require," Jaiswal added. Earlier, Lok Bahadur Chhetri, a spokesperson for Nepal's foreign ministry, said the country's own security agencies were leading the response. "The offer for help is natural. Our security agencies are doing the search and rescue operation. For now we don't require such help," he said. He later said that Nepal was not rejecting international assistance altogether. "It is not that we will not need help, but our security network is capable and working effectively right now," Chhetri said. "If Nepal needs any specialised help or expertise, then we will request it." According to the Kathmandu Post, India, China, the United States, Britain, Japan, South Korea, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh had approached Nepal about sending teams.

Rajbhasha Utkrishtta Sammaan to Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances in the category of Ministries/Departments with less than 300 personnel for the year 2025-26, by the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs

New Delhi : The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, New Delhi, has been selected for "Rajbhasha Utkrishtta Sammaan" for the year 2025-26 by the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs, for its outstanding work and continuous excellent performance in the implementation of the Official Language. It is noteworthy that the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public

Grievances was honored with the Rajbhasha Kirti Puraskar (First) by the Department of Official Language for two consecutive years—2023-24 and 2024-25. This year as well, the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, New Delhi, secured the first position for its excellent performance in the implementation of the Official Language.

According to the rules, if a Ministry/

Department receives the first prize for two consecutive years, it is not awarded the Puruskar in the subsequent year.

However, the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances has been consistently performing outstanding work in the field of the Official Language for several years. Therefore, to recognize its continuous excellence in the implementation of the official language, the Department has been



selected for this special "Rajbhasha Utkrishtta Sammaan."

This "Rajbhasha Utkrishtta Sammaan" will be presented to the Department

during the Hindi Diwas Sammehli scheduled to be held in Navi Mumbai on September 14, 2026, on the occasion of Hindi Diwas.

ISRO Seeks To Make Comeback With Hawkeye Satellite Launch On September 4



New Delhi:After nearly eight months away from the launch pad and following two back-to-back failures of its Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) rocket, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is preparing for a crucial comeback mission, its Chairman Dr V Narayanan told NDTV. In the early hours of September 4, when most of India will still be asleep, ISRO will attempt to place one of its most ambitious Earth observation satellites into space aboard the Geo-synchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV F17) rocket, Dr Narayanan said. The mission carries EOS 5, earlier known as GISAT 1A, a satellite designed to provide India with a continuous bird's eye view of the nation from an extraordi-

nary height of nearly 36,000 kilometres above Earth. According to Dr Narayanan, ISRO plans to carry out seven launches between now and March 2027, including the highly anticipated G1 mission of the Gaganyaan human space-flight programme, the first uncrewed flight. He has also laid out an ambitious roadmap for the current financial year. ISRO intends to realise 12 satellites and is targeting eight launch vehicle missions. These missions will support communication, navigation, Earth observation and scientific research while laying the groundwork for future human spaceflight and exploration programmes. The return to the launchpad comes as the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) re-

mains grounded pending the completion of multiple investigations and validation tests after suffering two consecutive failures. Fortunately for ISRO, the GSLV Mk II that will carry EOS 5 does not share any engines or critical propulsion systems with the PSLV. The mission itself also carries emotional significance for ISRO. An earlier attempt to place a similar satellite into orbit ended in disappointment on August 12, 2021. Then, the GSLV F10 rocket carrying EOS 03, the original GISAT satellite, failed after a problem involving the indigenous cryogenic upper stage. The cryogenic engine did not perform as intended, resulting in the loss of the spacecraft. The failure denied India a capability that scientists had

long sought and forced ISRO back to the drawing board. EOS 5 is effectively the successor to that lost mission. The satellite is expected to image the Indian landmass repeatedly through the day, allowing rapid monitoring of cyclones, floods, cloud-bursts, forest fires and other fast developing events. Scientists believe it could deliver near-real-time information useful for disaster management agencies, weather forecasters, agricultural planners and security agencies. That capability is particularly important for a country increasingly vulnerable to extreme weather events. The launch will also provide another opportunity for the GSLV Mk II rocket to demonstrate its maturity and reliability. The vehicle recently played a key role in putting the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) satellite into space, a landmark Indo-US mission widely regarded as the world's most expensive Earth imaging satellite. The success of that mission strengthened confidence in the GSLV Mk II platform and showcased the progress ISRO has made in mastering complex cryogenic propulsion technology. For the space agency, therefore, the EOS 5 mission represents much more than the launch of another satellite.

India Working With Nepal Army To Find Missing Tourists After Floods: Envoy



The Indian embassy in Nepal is making full efforts to locate and rescue missing countrymen in the aftermath of devastating flash floods that hit the country earlier this week. Naveen Srivastava, India's envoy to Nepal, told NDTV on Friday that the Indian embassy was "working with Nepal's Army and several other agencies" to locate missing

tourists. "We are communicating with the Nepalese army and sharing whatever information we have about missing Indians," Srivastava said. Talking about the 21 pilgrims from Tamil Nadu who had been rescued on Thursday, he said, "They were brought to Kathmandu yesterday. Our first hope is that the group reaches Delhi first, and then

they can go home from there." He added that 63 Indians working on the Trishuli 1 power project had been rescued on Thursday. The Indian envoy said that he had read media reports of another lake burst in Nepal, but declined to comment further on the matter. "I don't have much information on the incident," he stated. Nepal said that a

barrier lake upstream of the Gyirong border port had broken on Friday, warning of a renewed risk of flooding. The barrier lake, located on the Tibet side of the border, has broken its banks. "All security personnel, rescue workers, and the general public deployed in rescue and relief operations are requested to remain alert and immediately move to a safe location/report the incident," Nepal police said in a post. Both Nepal and China had warned earlier of fresh risks of flooding after a lake developed across their border due to the debris from the flash flood. China has also paused rescue operations in Tibet, citing a high risk of more floods. A glacial collapse on Wednesday led to deadly flash floods in Nepal. At least 472 people have been killed in the disaster. Around 1,400 people, including hundreds of foreigners, still remain missing.

"Feel Safe Because Of Them": Jammu Girls Tie Rakhis To Paramilitary Jawans

Young women and school students from different parts of Jammu reached the zero line today to tie rakhis to BSF jawans guarding the International Border at Suchetgarh. "They are not ordinary souls. They are our wall of protection on the border. It is because of them that we feel safe and secure in our homes. By tying this Rakhi, we are praying for their long life," said Chavanpreet Kaur, who travelled several kilometres to reach Suchetgarh. The sentiment echoed across the border outpost as girls, with thalis adorned with diya,



kumkum and rakhis, lined up to honour the jawans. "It is our way of saying - while you protect the borders of the country, we as sisters stand with you," said Ritika, another young

student. With pride in their eyes, the sisters tied rakhis on the wrists of the jawans and prayed for their safety and long life. Moved by the gesture, the jawans too made a

solemn promise in return. "We assure our sisters that we will protect not just them, but every sister of this nation, day and night on the borders," a BSF jawan said.

'Not Publishing Sonia Gandhi's Book, Were Keen To': Penguin On 'Belonging'

New Delhi:Penguin Random House India is categorical in its response: "It's not the publisher of 'Belonging: A Journey of Love', Sonia Gandhi's upcoming memoir, in India". The statement from Penguin comes amid reports that the publisher backed out after Sonia Gandhi refused "editorial" changes. "Penguin Random House India is not the publisher of 'Belonging' in India. Any suggestion that Penguin Random House India decided not to publish 'Belonging' because the author declined editorial changes does not accurately reflect the circumstances," the company said in a statement. The publisher did acknowledge that they were "keen to publish the book", adding that it is their responsibility to fact check authors and provide recommendations, hinting at the discussion around the

book with Sonia Gandhi. "As a publisher, it is both our prerogative and our responsibility to fact check and provide authors with recommendations that are in the best interests of their books. This is a normal part of the publishing process," the statement said. The publisher though refused to divulge the details of the discussion with the author. "Throughout the relevant discussions, Penguin Random House India's position was that we remained willing and keen to publish the book. We will not comment further on confidential discussions with the author," the statement added. Penguin Random House India official statement. pic.twitter.com/2g8y3F1p7m With Penguin out of the picture, several Indian publishers are now in the race to get the rights with HarperCollins reported to be close to finalising a deal to publish and distribute the book in India. Publisher

Alfred A Knopf, a giant in American publishing and an imprint of Penguin Random House, has announced that Congress leader Sonia Gandhi's memoir will be released on November 10. "Much has been written about my family, but few narratives were able to reach into the truth of their motivations, their actions and even their very human failings," Sonia Gandhi said in a statement issued through Knopf. "In many ways, this book is a homage to their humanness. My story also offers readers a unique perspective of the social and political changes I have witnessed for six decades in the beautiful country of my belonging." In "Belonging," Sonia Gandhi writes of her life being upended when her mother-in-law is assassinated in 1984 and succeeded by Rajiv Gandhi who seven years later was also murdered. Sonia

Gandhi eventually entered politics and became the longest-serving president of the Congress while also turning down her party's offer to become prime minister. Her party lost power to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's BJP in 2014. "It was heart-break and loss that threw me into the public world of politics. Up till then I had guarded my privacy fiercely," she said in her statement. "Writing about my life did not come easily to me. It meant opening myself up, sharing moments and experiences I had always held deep inside," she said. "Yet as I gradually removed myself from the political sphere and looked back at all I had seen, the thread of love and loyalty that wove through my story began to define itself, from the simplicity of my childhood in small-town Italy, to the complexity of my years in India as the wife of Rajiv Gandhi and the daughter-in-law of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi."

Family Planned Birthday Bash For Him. Day Earlier, He Went Missing In Nepal



The Nepal flash floods killed at least 547 people, as well as the aspirations and futures of their families. Many families have not abandoned hope of finding their loved ones, even as rescuers race against time to search for and save survivors in difficult terrain. One such family is that of Bhavin Rawal.

Rawal was on a Kailash-Mansarovar trip. The family hasn't heard from him since the flash floods, which have left hundreds missing, including 320 Indians. It was his birthday yesterday, and the family had planned a grand celebration once he returned. "It was my brother's birthday. The birthday celebration was planned for September 5th, and later

on the 11th he was scheduled to return to Australia," his brother shared. It was just two days ago that the two brothers spoke over the phone and discussed food and the Mansarovar Yatra. "There is no update on him," added Dhaval, desolate but still hopeful that his brother escaped unhurt. Bhavin had flown down from Australia a week

ago. He touched down in Chandigarh and left for Nepal immediately. In Australia, he has a wife and two children. "He made his last call to my sister-in-law. He said he was near the immigration office and that the window would open at 8 am, after which he would leave for Mansarovar. There were five other people with him; they are also missing," he said.

"3 Countries, 1 Mountain System": Nepal Leader's Call For Action To India, China

Nepal's ruling party Rastriya Swatantra Party's president Rabi Lamichhane has appealed to India and China to work with Kathmandu on the challenges of climate change and develop an early warning system. Speaking at the NDTV World Anviksha Summit in Kathmandu, a day after flash floods devastated parts of Nepal, Lamichhane said the tragedy has shown that the three countries need to work together.

Noting that India, China and Nepal are "three countries but one mountain system", the RSP president said the raging water doesn't recognise territories.

"The water that took lives on Wednesday didn't stop to ask whose territory it was or whose people it was killing," he said.

Warning that the Himalayas are changing "faster than our institutions", Lamichhane gave an urgent call for collective action.

"Glaciers are receding. Lakes are forming where there was ice. The most urgent need is for Nepal, India and China to work together to mitigate climate change and build early warning systems."

Noting that climate



change is already a reality, he called for an adaptation plan.

"Since the climate has already changed, we have to come up with an adaptation plan. We may not be able to stop glaciers from melting, we may stop being surprised by it and give families in the valley those crucial 20 minutes

when they decide if they need to leave."

In his address at the summit, Lamichhane also thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for calling Nepal Prime Minister Balen Shah and for India's immediate relief supplies that landed on Wednesday

night itself. Giving an account of the flood devastation, Lamichhane said the flash floods wiped out several villages and hydropower plants.

"Homes are gone, bridges are gone. Families are waiting to hear about the missing relatives," he said.

Tecnam P2006T twin-engine aircraft meets with accident near Ganga Barrage in Kanpur

New Delhi : As per preliminary information received, a Tecnam P2006T twin-engine aircraft, bearing registration VT-NBV and operated by M/s Garg Aviation Ltd., Kanpur, met with an accident on the afternoon of 27 August 2026, approximately 5 NM from Kanpur Civil Airport, near Ganga Barrage. The aircraft was on a training flight in the Local Flying Area of Kanpur Civil Airport. There were two persons on board, a trainee pilot and an instructor. Both sustained fatal injuries in the accident. A team of three officials from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is proceeding to the site for necessary regulatory oversight and coordination. The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) has been informed and will undertake a detailed investigation into the accident in accordance with the applicable rules. The circumstances and cause of the accident will be determined through the investigation.

China Warns Barrier Lake On Tibet-Nepal Border Could Breach Within 72 Hours



Beijing:As many as 558 people are reported missing from Tibet after a massive mudslide hit the border area with Nepal, causing devastating flash floods, Chinese state broadcaster CCTV reported, as authorities in Beijing flagged more geological risk upstream. In addition, China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Lin Jian said that nearly 100 Chinese citizens were missing on the Nepal side. The state media, meanwhile, reported that at least three people have also died after a wall of mud and rock collapsed

into the Lhende River near Gyirong at the border between the Tibet region and Nepal. The sudden surge of water hit villages and towns along the paths of two rivers -- Bhote Kosi and Trishuli -- triggering a flash flood that killed at least 177 people downstream in Nepal, left hundreds missing, and washed away houses, roads, and power projects. CCTV reported that surrounding villages within danger zones on the Tibetan side have been evacuated and two villagers have been rescued.

China Flags New Risk

Authorities in Beijing have also identified a risk from a barrier lake upstream from the Himalayan border crossing that could complicate rescue efforts, CCTV reported.

According to the state media, China's Ministry of Water Resources has increased monitoring and assessment of the lake, located at the intersection of the Chhochen Khola and Purepu Tsangpo rivers northeast of the disaster site. The move has reportedly been taken to support rescue activity and prevent secondary events. The barrier lake, with its wa-

ter volume estimated at 2 million cubic meters as of Thursday, is already overflowing. Another 3 million cubic meters of water is expected to flow into the lake over the next three days, China Central Television reported. China has, meanwhile, mobilised fire and rescue teams from Beijing and Chengdu to aid local police and armed forces in relief efforts. While electricity supply and communication resumed in the central urban areas in Gyirong town, those linked to the port were cut off, it said. The disaster in Nepal and Tibet is not a one-off. The increasingly unstable Himalayan ice system threatens communities, infrastructure, and water supplies across one of the world's most densely populated regions. The region saw similar flash floods in August 2025, when a glacial lake in Tibet overflowed because of high temperatures. Nine people were killed, and critical infrastructure, including a bridge connecting Nepal and China, was damaged.

US Says Chinese Hackers Broke Into NASA, Senate In Big Security Breach



Washington:US law enforcement said it has seized internet domains allegedly used by Chinese state-sponsored hackers to target critical American infrastructure. Using the seized platforms, the Chinese hacker groups were able to break into NASA, the Federal Reserve, the National Institutes of Health, and the US Senate, the Justice Department said in a statement.

The Justice Department and FBI said the seized hacking platforms known as "QScan" and "QTRouter" were used by a hacking group known as "QTFY." Court documents showed that QTFY offers computer hacking services to paying customers, including the Chinese Ministry of State Security and the People's Liberation Army.

According to the Justice Department, QTFY was employed by Nanjing Xinjiuwei Network Technology Company, a China-based technology company.Victims of QTFY computer intrusion activity included NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration), the Federal Reserve, the US Senate, and the departments of energy, justice, and health and human services, the

agency said.

These hackers also allegedly targeted private sector infrastructure, including hospitals, universities, telecom providers, power companies, financial institutions, and defence contractors.

"Federal law enforcement investigated and disabled the PRC's malicious software, the latest in a series of technical operations to dismantle indiscriminate hacking activities sponsored by the People's Republic of China," Attorney General Todd Blanche said in a statement.

"We are here to ensure security for the American people and will use every tool we have to keep that promise," he added. How Chinese Hackers

Worked

According to the court documents, QScan searched for and automatically infected thousands of internet-connected devices around the world.

Those devices were then incorporated into QTRouter, a network controlled by the hacking group. The network also used commercial proxy services and leased virtual private servers.

The platform enabled hackers to conceal the Chinese origin of their activities, the department said.

Malicious communications appeared to originate from compromised computers located outside China and, in some cases, near the targeted network.

The seized domains had

been built into both malware platforms and were required for communication, authentication and other essential functions.

Taking control of those domains rendered QScan and QTRouter inoperable, according to the department.

FBI Director Kash Patel said the operation resulted in the disruption of a "global botnet and hacking platform used by Chinese state-sponsored hackers to target US critical infrastructure."

The FBI and National Security Agency also issued a cybersecurity advisory containing indicators that could help organisations detect possible QTFY activity.

Villages Wiped Out: Aerial Video Shows Devastating Aftermath Of Nepal Floods

Kathmandu:At least 165 people have been killed in Nepal and Tibet, and hundreds, including large numbers of foreign tourists, remain missing after flash floods hit the countries' Himalayan border region, with parts of India also at risk. The deadly flooding was set off by an enormous chunk of mud and debris snapping off from the banks of the Lhende River, which runs between China and Nepal. The surge of water hit villages and towns on the path of two rivers -- Bhote Kosi and Trishuli -- sweeping homes, roads, bridges, and power plants away in Nepal. Officials on both sides of the border said they feared "major casualties," while flood alerts have been issued in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar districts in India. Aerial footage taken during a rescue mis-

sion in Nepal shows the horrific aftermath of the flooding that just left muddy skeletons of villages in its wake. The Nepali Army has been carrying out flights and has rescued scores of people, while others living near the river in danger zones had been told to relocate. In the area hit by the disaster, rescuers waded through mud and sludge to look for survivors after floodwaters buried the lower floors of multi-story buildings. "Entire villages and market areas have been wiped out," said David Fisher, the Nepal head of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

Deadly Floods

In Nepal, authorities said at least 162 have died, and 403 people, including 142 Indian nationals, were among the missing. Others

missing are from Australia, Britain, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Portugal, South Africa, South Korea, and the United States, Nepal's tourism board said.Chinese state media reported "major casualties" from a mudslide at the Tibet border hub Gyirong, reporting three dead and another 265 people missing. A terrifying clip of surveillance video from the Tibetan side of the frontier shows a massive wall of mud and debris crashing over a building several stories high, engulfing it as dozens of people ran for their lives below. The surge swept away buses and cars like they were toys.

The Caution

Experts cautioned that a lingering blockage in a river could produce an additional flood. Images shared by Nepali police showed flood-

water surging through a river, sweeping away houses in its path, while images shared by news agency AFP showed the top floor of a house sticking out from muddy soil. 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. Qianggong Zhang, head of climate and environmental risks at the Kathmandu-based International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), warned of the potential for a second flood. "With a blockage still lodged upstream on the Nepal-China border river, authorities warn a second flood may occur," he told AFP.

Son, Wife Swept Away In Seconds' : Survivor Recounts Nepal Flood Horror

'Kathmandu:Rescue teams are rushing against time to find hundreds of people missing on the Nepal-Tibet border in flash floods that killed at least 165 and swept away entire villages. The flooding in the Bhote Koshi River, which caused destruction across three districts of Nepal, came without warning, according to eyewitnesses. Though the exact sequence of events remains unclear, authorities said the flash flood was triggered after a glacier collapse blocked the flow of the Lhende tributary of the Bhote Koshi, causing the sudden rise of water that first hit Timure, near Nepal's border with Tibet at Rasuwagadhi. Within minutes, the flood surged downstream, sweeping much of the settlement in the Rasuwa, Nuwakot, and Dhading districts of Nepal. NDTV's ground report from Nuwakot showed that though the floodwater has receded in most areas, it left homes, roads, bridges, and community spaces covered in several meters of silt, making search and rescue difficult. Videos from the

area showed at least one floor of the houses covered in silt. A local merchant, who had a cloth shop in Nuwakot's Trishuli market - the biggest bazaar in the area -- told NDTV that the flood came fast, without giving people much time to relocate. "In the morning, people from administration came and told us that a dam on the Bhote Koshi River on the Tibet side has broken, sending tons of water ourway. We were asked to run towards higher terrains," the survivor said, adding that only a few could reach in time as the flood swept away many within seconds.He added that his 18-year-old son and wife are also missing.

'Came Without Warning'

According to eyewitnesses, the flood came without warning. There was no rainfall reported in the area that day, and people were going about their daily routines when, out of nowhere, a wall of water struck the area.Rajendra Dhungana, chief customs officer in Rasuwa, told Kathmandu Post that he felt the ground

shake and ran outside, where he saw a wall of water trailing what looked like a plume of smoke, crashing down from upstream, bearing down on the Timure bazaar."It was the flood, rising like a wave nearly 100 meters high and sweeping through the market. Within moments, the market was gone," he said.As the scale of the disaster became apparent, Dhungana and dozens of others fled into the nearby forest. More than 300 vehicles and trucks waiting at the customs checkpoint were washed away. Nepal said at least 160 people have been killed in the tragedy, and 823 others are out of contact after deadly floods. Among those missing are nearly 300 Indian nationals, mostly Mansarovar pilgrims, said Nepal's foreign minister Shisir Khanal. The number of people missing in Tibet's Gyirong county has increased to 558, according to Chinese state media, putting the apparent overall number of missing at more than 1,300. It was not immediately certain whether the numbers of missing were

entirely separate in both nations or they had been counted twice in both tallies. Chinese state broadcaster CCTV said that among those missing in Tibet, 260 were foreign nationals. The deaths remained at three, it said.

World Rushes to Help

Promises of aid and assistance came in soon after reports of the scale of the disaster. The United States has pledged \$500,000 in emergency assistance, and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies released \$1.4 million. "The priority now is to reach affected communities and get assistance to people who have lost their homes, suffered injuries, or have been cut off," its Nepal head, David Fisher, said. The European Union said it had activated its Copernicus satellite surveillance system to help recovery efforts and was ready to provide more help, while the World Health Organisation said it had dispatched emergency medical supplies. India has also sent an initial 10 tonnes of humanitarian assistance.

Unprecedented Disaster, Relief Ops On": Nepal PM On Flash Floods

"New Delhi:Nepal's Prime Minister Balendra Shah has called the flash-flood situation in the country an "unprecedented disaster" and asserted that the government is engaged in rescue and relief operations "as quickly and effectively as possible". LIVE UPDATES

In a statement released today, Shah said that the Nepali Army has so far rescued 116 people from Timure in Rasuwa district. Of these, 95 are Nepali citizens, and 21 are Indian nationals. Additionally, seven Nepali citizens trapped inside a tunnel were also rescued.

"Rescue flights have been operating since 6:30 AM this morning. More than 15 flights have been conducted so far, and additional helicopters have been kept on standby for rescue operations...At a time when the country is facing this unprecedented disaster, the government is engaged in rescue and relief operations as quickly and effectively as possible. With the support and cooperation of the entire country, Nepalis around the world, and the international



community, we are collectively facing this difficult situation," he said.

The Nepali PM said that during the rescue operations, critically ill people, the elderly, women, and children will be given priority for evacuation by helicopter.According to Shah, efforts are underway to rapidly deliver essential relief supplies, including generators, portable mobile towers, medical supplies, tents, and machines for cutting iron and stone, among other items. "Temporary arrangements for mobile network connectivity and mobile phone charging will soon be established in the disaster-affected areas to help people maintain com-

munication," he said.

A temporary camp has been set up in Nuwakot, with arrangements for food and drinking water, Shah said.Apart from this, the drone survey of all the affected locations is in its final stage, the PM said, adding that it would help facilitate more efficient and effective rescue and relief operations."I appeal to everyone to remain patient and calm, wait for rescue and relief operations, and cooperate in confronting this disaster. The entire state machinery is mobilised to carry out rescue operations as soon as possible. With hope and confidence, we must all remain united and confront

this disaster with determination. I express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who is extending their co-operation and standing together with us during this difficult time," he said.

At least 165 people have been killed in Nepal and Tibet in the flash floods, with hundreds, including a large number of foreign tourists, remaining missing. Nepal Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal, while speaking at the NDTV World Anviksha Summit in Kathmandu, said that at least 300 Indian nationals - mostly Mansarovar pilgrims - have been reported missing.

In all, around 500 foreign nationals are out of contact at present, the minister said.

Nepal Floods Transformed Gyirong Port Into Barren Land, Shows Aerial Footage

Footage from a helicopter filmed by Chinese rescuers shows before and after videos of the devastating Nepal flash floods at the Gyirong border port. The comparison clip shows the scale of destruction from the air.The 8-second aerial clip first shows a pre-disaster aerial view of the port area with the Gyirong Port facilities intact -- multi-storey buildings, including the main border checkpoint building with the Chinese national emblem, roads, a river running through the valley, surrounding green slopes and other infrastructure. The other clip shows the view of the heavily damaged landscape after the Nepal floods -- a barren, debris-covered slope and valley floor with most structures and infrastructure buried or washed away.



More than 1,300 people were reported missing, and more than 362 were confirmed dead after flash floods and landslides at the Nepal-Tibet border. The disaster has left at least 826 people missing in Nepal. Authorities in Tibet, an autonomous region of China,

reported at least three dead and 558 missing. Nepalese officials said that dozens of bridges were destroyed and nearly 40 kilometers (25 miles) of roads were damaged, complicating search efforts. The Nepalese army has rescued more than 100 people by helicopter, army

spokesperson Brig. Gen. Raja Ram Basnet said. Army teams also evacuated people trapped inside facilities linked to the Trishuli hydropower project, he added. Dozens of injured people have been transported to Kathmandu for medical care.

Is E10 petrol coming back in India? BPCL CMD says two options under consideration



Mumbai: E10 petrol could make a comeback in India as the government considers ways to offer lower-ethanol fuel to vehicle owners. Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) said discussions on bringing E10 petrol back are still underway. The BPCL

CMD shared the update during a virtual press conference held after the company's Annual General Meeting (AGM). He said no final decision has been taken yet on the reintroduction of E10 petrol.

No separate infrastructure needed for E10

The BPCL CMD said oil

marketing companies (OMCs) would not need separate infrastructure to sell E10 petrol. He added that OMCs do not face any major issue in supplying E10 fuel. Existing infrastructure and distribution systems can be used if E10 petrol is brought back.

Two proposals for E10

petrol

The government is looking at two possible options for making E10 petrol available. One proposal is to offer 95-octane premium petrol in an E10 blend. This could include fuels such as XP95, SPEED and Power95. The second proposal is to sell regular E10 petrol separately. The first option could be easier to implement. It would not require a separate distribution network across the country. E20 blends are already available in some 95-octane premium petrol offerings.

Older vehicle owners could get another option

The possible return of E10 petrol comes amid concerns among owners of older vehicles about E20 fuel. Vehicle manufacturers have been producing E20-compliant vehicles since April 2023. However, own-

ers of older cars and two-wheelers have continued to seek petrol with lower ethanol content. If introduced, E10 petrol could give these consumers another fuel option.

E10 could be cheaper than ethanol-free fuel

Regular petrol in Delhi currently costs around Rs 102 per litre, while 95-octane premium petrol is priced at around Rs 110-115 per litre. In comparison, 100-octane petrol, which does not contain ethanol, can cost around Rs 150-170 per litre. Offering E10 through 95-octane premium petrol could therefore provide a relatively affordable lower-ethanol fuel option. For now, however, the government has not taken a final decision on how or when E10 petrol could return to the market.1

Silver HUID hallmarking likely to become mandatory by Diwali

Mumbai: The government is in the final stages of preparing to bring silver jewellery and other silver articles under mandatory hall-marking, with the system likely to be rolled out by Diwali, sources exclusively told Zee Business. According to sources, discussions with all major jewellers have been completed as the government works towards expanding the hall-marking framework for silver.

Over 40 Jewellers, Importers Support Move

The development comes after the government last year approved the voluntary use of Hallmark Unique Identification (HUID) for silver articles. Since then, around 77 lakh silver items have been hallmarked under the voluntary system, indicating growing adoption of the purity certification mechanism.

Focus on Silver Purity

The proposed mandatory system is aimed at ensuring greater transparency in the purity of silver articles and giving consumers greater

confidence while purchasing silver jewellery and other products. Under the HUID system, each hall-marked article can be linked to a unique identification number, helping consumers verify the purity and authenticity of the product. The government is now working towards making the process mandatory, with the final implementation framework expected to be put in place ahead of Diwali, sources said. The move would bring silver closer to the existing hall-marking framework for gold, where hall-marking has been mandatory for notified categories.

Gold hall-marking scheme

The hall-marking scheme aims to ensure the maintenance of quality and standards while selling metals like gold and silver. It offers a guarantee of purity to investors. The principle objectives of the Hallmarking Scheme are to protect the public against adulteration and to obligate manufactur-



ers to maintain legal standards of fineness. The Indian Standard on Gold Hallmarking IS 1417:2016 specifies three grades for hall-marking of gold jewellery/ artefacts which are 14 Carat, 18 Carat and 22 Carat. The same has been amended to include additional grades of 20 carat, 23 carat and 24 carats. BIS has developed digital solution wherein the entire workflow in assaying and hall-marking centre is automated and

made online. The jeweler will submit the request for hall-marking online and the data for all the processes undertaken in the centre from inward receipt and weighment, XRF, Sampling, Fireassay and laser marking is maintained online and can be monitored on real time basis. At the end of the testing, a unique six digit alpha numerical code is generated from the BIS server for each jewellery article and is laser marked by the assaying and

hall-marking centre on the jewellery along with BIS logo and purity mark. For hall-marking of jewellery, a jeweler who wants to sell hall-marked jewellery has to obtain a registration from BIS. The registration of jeweler's process has been made online. The jeweler fills the application form online, and the registration is granted instantly and can be downloaded by the jeweler. The registration of jewelers is free and valid for life time.

What is the 50:25:25 mutual fund strategy? Experts explain how to balance large, mid and small-cap funds

Mumbai: 50:25:25 Mutual Fund Strategy: Choosing the right mix of large, mid and small-cap funds can play an important role in building a diversified equity mutual fund portfolio. While large-cap funds can provide stability, mid and small-cap funds can increase the potential for alpha generation. In a conversation on Zee Business, Hrishikesh Palve, Director at Anand Rathni Wealth, said investors should first be clear about their financial goals and identify fund categories with the potential to generate alpha. He then suggested a market-cap allocation that broadly translates into a 50:25:25 approach. According to Palve, investors should aim for around 50-55 per cent allocation to large-cap funds, 22-25 per cent to mid-cap funds and the remaining portion to small-cap funds. "Your market cap allocation should be 50 to 55 per cent in large cap, 22 to 25 per cent in mid cap, and the remaining should be in small cap," Palve said. He added that creating an appropriate mix across market-cap categories can increase the potential for alpha generation.

What is the 50:25:25 mutual fund strategy?

The 50:25:25 approach is a simplified way of describing a diversified equity mutual fund allocation across large, mid and small-cap segments.

Palve's specific suggested allocation is:

Large-cap: 50-55 per cent

Mid-cap: 22-25 per cent

Small-cap: The remaining allocation

This is therefore better understood as a broad 50:25:25 framework rather than a rigid 50:25:25 formula. The actual allocation can vary depending on an investor's financial goals, risk appetite and investment horizon. generation and then decide the appropriate market-cap allocation. Why should large-caps form the biggest allocation?

Palve explained that large-cap funds play a different role from mid and small-cap funds. "Large cap does not generate alpha for you to a greater extent, but it brings stability," he said. This is why he suggested keeping the largest portion of the portfolio in large-cap funds.

Mid and small-cap funds, meanwhile, can increase the potential for alpha generation. Palve said that maintaining a mix across the three market-cap segments can improve the probability of generating alpha while ensuring that the portfolio is not overly concentrated in one category. Why do mid and small-cap funds need a longer investment horizon?

The experts also cautioned investors against choosing funds solely on the



basis of recent returns. Mid and small-cap funds can go through extended periods of weak performance, making the investment horizon particularly important.

Kshitiz Mahajan, CEO of Complete Circle Wealth, said investors should align mid-cap investments with goals of around seven years or more, while small-cap investments should generally be linked to goals with a horizon of eight to nine years or more. "If your goal is entirely five years-oriented, then small and mid-cap have no place in it," Mahajan said.

He explained that there can be periods of two to three years when returns do not materialise in these segments. Investors therefore need to give such investments sufficient time.

"Don't chase funds just because they delivered high returns"

The experts also highlighted the risks of selecting mutual funds purely by looking at their past returns.

Palve said investors should not evaluate funds only on absolute returns. Instead, they should check whether a fund has beaten its benchmark and generated alpha.

"Absolute return should never be looked at in funds. It has to be looked at relatively," Palve said. He added that investors should assess how much additional return a fund has generated over its benchmark. Mahajan compared past returns to a report card of a fund's previous performance.

"Returns are like a report card," he said, while caution-

ing that past performance does not guarantee future results. According to Mahajan, investors should also go beyond headline returns and examine the underlying sectors, top holdings, the fund manager's track record and tenure, fund size and drawdowns before making a decision. Why 20% returns should not be the only benchmark

The discussion also highlighted why investors should be cautious about chasing funds that have delivered exceptionally high returns in the past. Palve said that 20 per cent or more returns could be considered "super returns" for the purpose of the discussion. However, such performance was seen only in some funds and categories rather than across the entire mutual fund universe.

Raksha Bandhan 2026: Instead of a Rs 20,000 gadget, invest it for your sibling; what could it become after 20 years?



Mumbai: Raksha Bandhan is usually about gifts, sweets, and family celebrations. Brothers and sisters often spend money on clothes, watches, smartphones, headphones, or other gadgets. These gifts can certainly make the occasion special, but most of them lose their value with time. This Rakhi, there is another way to think about gifting. Instead of spending Rs 20,000 on a gadget, you could invest the same amount for your sibling. The gift may not look as exciting on the first day, but if it is allowed to stay invested for 20 years, the result could be much more eaningful.

The biggest advantage here is time.

How Rs 20,000 could grow in 20 years

The final amount will depend on the return earned on the investment. There is no fixed return if the money is invested in market-linked instruments such as mutual funds. However, some simple calculations can help understand the potential. If Rs 20,000 grows at an average annual return of 8 per cent, it could become around Rs 93,219 after 20 years. At an assumed return of 10 per cent a year, the same Rs 20,000 could grow

to around Rs 1,34,550. Similarly, at 12 per cent returns, the amount could reach Rs 1,92,926 in 20 years. At a higher assumed return of 15 per cent, Rs 20,000 could grow to around Rs 3,27,331 over the same period. These figures are only illustrations. Actual returns from market-linked investments can be higher or lower, and there is no guarantee that a particular rate of return will be achieved.

why time matters so much

At first, the growth may not look very large. That is because compounding becomes more powerful as the investment gets older. Take the 12 per cent example. The original investment is only Rs 20,000. But after 20 years, it could potentially be worth almost Rs 1.93 lakh. You did not have to invest Rs 1 lakh or Rs 2 lakh to reach that amount.

Much of the growth came from allowing the original money and its returns to stay invested. This is why starting early can make a major difference. A gadget, on the other hand, follows the opposite journey. A Rs 20,000 smartphone, smartwatch or pair of headphones generally loses value every year. After five or ten years, it may have

little resale value or may no longer be in use. An investment has the potential to move in the other direction. What could the money be used for? Twenty years is a long period, and your sibling's financial needs could be very different by then. The investment could eventually become part of a fund for higher education, buying a home, starting a business, travelling or meeting another major financial goal. For a younger sibling, it could even be the beginning of a long-term wealth-building habit. The idea becomes more powerful if your sibling continues investing after receiving the initial gift. For instance, the Rs 20,000 lump sum could be followed by a small monthly systematic investment plan, or SIP.

A Rakhi gift that keeps growing

There is nothing wrong with gifting a gadget or something your sibling has wanted for a long time. But if you are looking for a different kind of Rakhi gift, an investment can carry a special message. A Rs 20,000 investment today may appear small. But with patience and enough time, it could grow into a meaningful amount.

EPFO PF Update: Were you left out of PF coverage? Know what the new campaign means



Mumbai: The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has launched the Employees' Enrolment Campaign 2026, giving employers an opportunity to voluntarily enrol eligible employees who were left out of EPF coverage in the past. The campaign will remain open from June 29, 2026, to October 31, 2026, according to an EPFO communication. The initiative covers employees who were left out of EPF coverage during the period from April 1, 2009, to March 31, 2026. It also allows employers to regularise past compliance related to such employees.

All establishments eligible

According to EPFO, all establishments are eligible to participate in the campaign, irrespective of their existing EPF coverage status. Establishments facing inquiries under Section 7A of the EPF and MP Act, 1952, or Section 125 of the Code on Social Security (CoSS), are also eligible. The campaign covers establishments facing proceedings under the relevant provisions of the EPF Scheme, 1952, the EPF Scheme, 2026, the Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995, and the EPS 2026. The move is aimed at bringing more eligible workers under the formal social security system while giving employers a mechanism to address past compliance issues.

Employee share can be waived

One of the key benefits offered under the campaign is the waiver of the employee share for the declared period where the amount was not deducted from the employee. EPFO has also allowed multiple declarations under the campaign. Further, employers will have to pay a nominal EPF damage amount of Rs 100 for each defaulting establishment. Eligible employers and employees may also get benefits under the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojana, subject to the applicable rules.

What employers need to do

Employers participating in the campaign will have to generate Universal Account Numbers (UANs) for declared employees through the UMANG app using Face Authentication Technology. They will also have to remit contributions for the declared employees through the Electronic Challan-cum-Return (ECR) system. After that, an online declaration has to be filed through the employer portal by linking the ECR with the Temporary Return Reference Number (TRRN). EPFO PF Update: Were you left out of PF coverage? Know what the new campaign means Employers participating in the scheme will be required to pay the employee share where it was deducted, along with the em-

ployer share.

They will also have to pay applicable interest under Section 7Q of the EPF and MP Act, 1952, or the corresponding provision under the Code on Social Security. Administrative charges will also apply.

In addition, a Rs 100 will be payable as EPF damages under the campaign framework. Those who wish to participate in this can do so by October 31, 2026. The campaign provides employers with a limited window to declare eligible employees and regularise past EPF-related compliance.

How to check your EPF contribution online

You can check your EPF contribution through the EPFO Member Passbook portal.

Step 1: Visit the official EPFO Member Passbook portal.

Step 2: Log in using your UAN and password.

Step 3: Select the relevant Member ID linked to your UAN.

Step 4: Check the month-wise entries in your EPF pass-book.

Step 5: Review the employee contribution, employer contribution and pension contribution shown for each month.

The EPFO Member Passbook portal provides members with access to their EPF account details.

Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda Addresses 2nd Convocation Ceremony of AIIMS Bathinda

- India's Healthcare Approach Has Evolved from a Curative Model to a Comprehensive Healthcare Framework Under PM Modi's Leadership: Union Health Minister
- A Healthy India is Fundamental to Realizing the Vision of Viksit Bharat@2047: J.P. Nadda
- Embrace AI and Emerging Technologies, but Keep Compassion, Empathy and Human Touch at the Core of Patient Care: Shri Nadda
- Union Health Minister Inaugurates State-of-the-Art PET-CT and Second HELA Facility to Enhance Cancer Care at AIIMS Bathinda

New Delhi (PIB): Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, J.P. Nadda, addressed the 2nd Convocation Ceremony of AIIMS Bathinda today caters to nearly 3,000 OPD patients and around 600 IPD patients daily while upholding the high standards and credibility associated with the AIIMS brand. The Union Health Minister also lauded AIIMS Bathinda's community outreach initiatives, including the organization of Ayushman camps twice every month across 59 nearby villages, where citizens are screened for non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and cancer. He noted that through telemedicine services, mobile medical units, rural awareness campaigns and healthcare outreach programmes, the institute is making significant

contributions to public health beyond hospital-based care. Highlighting the transformative impact of healthcare reforms introduced under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Shri Nadda stated that India's healthcare approach has evolved from a predominantly curative model to a comprehensive framework encompassing preventive, promotive, rehabilitative, palliative and geriatric care. He noted that over 1.82 lakh Ayushman Arogya Mandirs are today serving as the first point of contact for healthcare services across the country. Emphasizing the Government's focus on preventive healthcare, he informed that all individuals above 30 years of age are being en-

couraged to undergo regular screening through Panchayats, ASHA workers and frontline health personnel. Sharing the progress achieved under these initiatives, he stated that over 36 crore people have been screened for oral cancer, more than 17 crore women for breast cancer and over 9 crore women for cervical cancer. In addition, more than 42 crore individuals have been screened each for diabetes and hypertension, while a nationwide tuberculosis screening campaign is also underway. Nadda also underscored the importance of quality healthcare delivery and research, appreciating the NABL-accredited laboratories at AIIMS Bathinda. He urged the institute to emerge as a leading centre

for medical research and innovation. Underscoring the importance of health in nation-building, Shri Nadda stated that the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047 can only be realized through a healthy and productive population. He emphasized that while governments can provide infrastructure and modern facilities, healthcare ultimately depends on the dedication, competence and compassion of doctors and healthcare professionals. Describing doctors as the true strength of the healthcare system, he remarked that infrastructure may constitute the "hardware" of healthcare, but healthcare professionals are its "software". He further noted that Punjab remains a priority for the Government in healthcare development

and highlighted the expansion of healthcare infrastructure in the state. The Union Health Minister highlighted the unprecedented expansion of India's medical education ecosystem over the past decade. He noted that the number of AIIMS institutions has increased to 23, medical colleges have grown from 387 to over 820, undergraduate medical seats have increased from about 59,000 to more than 1.28 lakh, and postgraduate seats from around 31,000 to over 86,000. He further informed that the Government is committed to adding 75,000 more UG and PG medical seats over the next five years, with nearly 23,000 seats already established during the last two years.



Deputy President of South Africa H.E. Mr Shipokosa Paulus Mashatile Meets Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan; Reaffirms Commitment to Deepening Bilateral relations



New Delhi (PIB): Deputy President of South Africa, H.E. Mr Shipokosa Paulus Mashatile, met the Vice President of India, C. P. Radhakrishnan, at Uprashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi today, during his official visit to India. He was accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising senior Ministers and officials of the Government of South Africa. The two leaders held productive discussions on further strengthening the India-South Africa bilateral relations, with a focus on trade, investment, defence cooperation, skills development, and enhancing people-to-people ties. They also exchanged views on advancing the priorities of the Global South and enhancing cooperation in multilateral forums such as BRICS, G20, IBSA and IORA.

The leaders discussed ways to unlock the full potential of bilateral economic ties and emphasized the need to create a conducive environment for businesses and investors. In this context, the Vice President highlighted the proposed India-Southern African Customs Union (SACU) Preferential Trade Agreement and expressed hope for the early commencement and successful conclusion of negotiations. Both sides welcomed the growing defence cooperation between the two countries and looked forward to expanding collaboration, including through future editions of the IBSAMAR naval exercise involving India, Brazil and South Africa. The Vice President thanked South Africa for supporting India's cheetah reintroduction programme through the transfer of cheetahs. Noting the encouraging progress of Project Cheetah, including successful breeding in the wild, he sought South Africa's continued cooperation in this unique conservation initiative. The Vice President also invited South Africa to consider joining India's flagship multilateral initiatives, the International Solar Alliance (ISA), the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), and the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA), noting their alignment with shared development and sustainability objectives. The meeting reaffirmed the shared commitment of India and South Africa to further strengthening their bilateral relations and working together for peace, prosperity, sustainable development, and the interests of the Global South. The Vice President wished Deputy President Mashatile and the members of his delegation a productive and pleasant stay in India.

Calibrated market intervention to ensure onion availability



The Government has taken up measures to ensure adequate availability of onions at affordable prices. As

part of the intervention, buffer onions are being made available at ₹35 per kg through retail outlets and mobile

distribution points across Delhi-NCR. The intervention is being undertaken in response to prevailing market



conditions and is aimed at improving consumer access, moderating price pressures and ensuring that adequate quantities of onions remain available in the market. The Kanda Express initiative has strengthened the Government's logistics response by facilitating the movement of buffer onions from producing

regions to major consumption centres. During 2024-25, nearly 12,000 MT of buffer onions were transported through 14 railway rakes to five cities. The initiative witnessed a major expansion in 2025-26, with 86 railway rakes transporting around 88,000 MT of onions to

16 cities across the country. For the ongoing intervention, onions are being moved through both rail and road networks. The Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) has also been brought into the mechanism to support scientific storage and efficient distribution of buffer onions.

DELIVERY OF SAMARTHAK – THE FIRST INDIGENOUS MULTI-PURPOSE VESSEL OF INDIAN NAVY



Samarthak, the first Multi-Purpose Vessel (MPV), built by Larsen & Toubro Ltd. (L&T), Kattupalli, was delivered to the Indian Navy

on 27 Aug 2026. The ship comprises over 75 percent indigenous content and has been conceived as a versatile trial and evaluation plat-

form. Further, the ship is engineered to perform maritime surveillance and reconnaissance, Offshore patrolling and support Human-

tarian Assistance and Disaster Relief operations, when required.

The ship has been aptly named 'Samarthak', meaning 'The Proponent'. The name signifies the ship's intended role as a dependable enabler of multiple missions. True to its designation, Samarthak is not limited to one specific task but is engineered to support a wide spectrum of activities, thereby embodying the concept of a multi-purpose vessel. The delivery of Samarthak is yet another milestone in the Indian Navy's indigenous ship-building journey and a reaffirmation of the Government's vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat. The ship stands as a testament in India's pursuit towards self-sustaining domestic defence industrial ecosystem.

India highlights its Science-based advances in Snow Leopard Conservation including Population Estimation, Radio Telemetry and Genetic Analysis, at Moscow Roundtable Meeting

India participated in the Russian-Indian Roundtable Meeting on Snow Leopard Study and Conservation, held on 26.08.2026, at the A.N. Severtsov Institute of Ecology and Evolution of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow, Russia. The meeting was organised within the framework of the Partnership Agreement between the Interregional Association 'Irbis' and the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA), signed in December 2025, with the objective of strengthening international cooperation in snow leopard research and conservation.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India, delegation highlighted the country's progress in the snow leopard conservation agenda through evolving science-based initiatives. Officials from the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) elaborated on advances in snow leopard population estimation, radio telemetry and genetic analysis, underscoring the growing role of scientific tools in strengthening conservation efforts. The meeting also brought together representatives of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation, A.N. Severtsov Institute of Ecology and Evolution of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow Zoo, Rosprirodnadzor and leading experts in the field of snow leopard research and conservation.

Manohar Lal reviews Power Sector issues in the State of Haryana

- Haryana to commence smart metering works from 31st August

New Delhi (PIB): Union Minister for Power and Housing & Urban Affairs, Shri Manohar Lal, reviewed the matters relating to the power sector for the State of Haryana at Chandigarh yesterday. The meeting was attended by Shri Anil Vij, Minister for Power, Government of Haryana, along with senior officials from the State Government, Ministry of Power, Government of India, and Power Sector CPSEs. The meeting started with the Shri Manohar Lal highlighting the key areas where the State Power department and the State Power sector PSUs could work on with a detailed action plan. Matters relating to the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) and operational and financial parameters of the DISCOMs were discussed. The Union Minister emphasised that electricity is an economic good and that the utilities must be operated on sound commercial principles, with a focus on reducing the cost of power purchase, rationalising expenses, and augmenting revenue. He noted that while AT&C losses had improved consistently over the years, however, it should be ensured that the performance improves further.

He highlighted the need for timely settlement of Government department dues and subsidies through an automated payment mechanism. He reviewed the progress of smart metering and advised expeditious award of works. The State committed to start smart metering works on ground from 31st August. He further emphasised the need for phased rollout of prepaid smart metering, beginning with Government consumers and employees, followed by high-end consumers with load more than 10kW, with appropriate incentive mechanisms for voluntary conversion. Manohar Lal advised the State to undertake all loss reduction works on priority with time-bound completion targets. He also reviewed the status of resource adequacy and intra-State Transmission planning, and advised the State to resolve outstanding issues and ensure that capacity addition keeps pace with demand growth. Progress under PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana was also reviewed and the State was directed to prepare a focussed action plan for expanding consumer enrolment under the scheme. This will help reduce the power costs of these consumers. Manohar Lal noted that sincere efforts will go a long way in making the State DISCOMs financially viable and the State power sector self-sufficient. He assured the State of Government of India's continued support and cooperation for the overall development of the State.

Will Rukmini Consider The Criticism For Toxic?



Rukmini Vasanth has built a strong image by choosing graceful and performance-oriented roles. Over the years, audiences have associated her with characters that focus more on emotions than glamour. However, *Toxic* has changed that perception big time. While the film features glamorous moments, director Geetu Mohandas has handled Rukmini's scenes with less intensity when compared to the bold sequences involving actresses like Kiara Advani and Tara Sutaria. Even though, a section of the audience has strongly criticized her choice of role. Many social media users questioned why she accepted such a character after earning a good image through her previous films. Interestingly, fans never expected Rukmini to take up a role with even hinted intimate moments. This has sparked debates online, with some viewers expressing disappointment and others supporting her. The bigger question now is whether this criticism will influence Rukmini's future decisions. Many actresses ignore online trolling and continue exploring diverse roles. Others become more selective after facing backlash from fans. It will be interesting to see how Rukmini reacts to the criticism surrounding *Toxic* and whether she continues to take up similar roles in the future or returns to the soft characters that made her popular.

Why Is Odela Hiding Kayadu From The Paradise World?

Nani's upcoming film *The Paradise* has been creating strong buzz ahead of its release on September 24. Directed by Srikanth Odela, the film is expected to present Nani in a completely different and intense role. The latest song update of "Yesha Nagula Kattameda" has added to the excitement, receiving a good response from audiences. However, one question has been doing the rounds among fans and especially the youth that why is the team keeping heroine Kayadu Lohar away from the promotional content? Interestingly, only one poster featuring Kayadu Lohar has been released so far. Apart from that, there has been very little promotional material revealing her character or her role in the film.

The curiosity has increased further with the upcoming special song, reportedly a folk anthem featuring Nani and Keerthy Suresh. With Keerthy sharing the screen with Nani for the song, she is expected to get the major spotlight. Meanwhile, director Srikanth Odela has continued to keep Kayadu Lohar's character under wraps. Kayadu Lohar has already generated curiosity among the youth, and the lack of updates



has only increased the anticipation. According to industry buzz, Kayadu Lohar's character could have some unexpected turns in the story. If that is indeed the case, the decision to keep her character away from the promotional campaign could be a deliberate strategy. Rather than revealing everything through posters, songs and promotional videos, the

makers may want audiences to discover her character only on the big screen. This approach could also explain why the team has been extremely careful about releasing her content.

Fans are now waiting to see what kind of role she plays and how important her character is to the story. Whether the secrecy is simply part of the promotional strategy or

whether Srikanth Odela really has a surprise character arc planned for Kayadu remains to be seen.

For now, the mystery surrounding Kayadu Lohar has become another interesting talking point around *The Paradise*. If the character indeed has major surprises, the decision to keep her hidden could turn out to be a smart move.

Bhogi Raksha Bandhan Poster: Sharwa Along With Sisters



Charming Star Sharwa appears to have gone the extra mile for *Bhogi*, the much-awaited pan-India period action drama directed by Sampath Nandi. The film recently completed its massive climax schedule. The production works indeed almost completed, but there's some delay in the post-production.

The Raksha Bandhan poster

offers a softer peek into this world. Sharwa is seen with his sisters in a traditional village environment, surrounded by palm fruits. The mud dwelling, and trees in the background create a village atmosphere. The actor plays Ganga, a commanding character for which he underwent a notable physical and visual transformation. Produced by KK Radhamohan

under Sri Sathya Sai Arts, the story unfolds in the early 1960s and demands the recreation of a specific era, with several sequences requiring considerable CG work. This has naturally increased the production and post-production workload. The makers will announce the film's release date, based on the progress of the remaining works.

Reality Check: Akhil To Collaborate With Boyapati?

Akhil Akkineni is currently enjoying the success of his latest film *Lenin*. After a long hiatus, Akhil scored a success at the box-office. With *Lenin* Akhil is back to form and all the Akkineni fans are rejoicing Ayyagaru's success. Naturally, after such success, all eyes are on Akhil's next project. Amid this, a sudden buzz has surfaced that Akhil may join hands with mass director Boyapati Sreenu for his next film. The talk has created mixed reactions among movie lovers. While some fans are excited about the combination, others are not fully convinced. The main concern is whether Akhil's image and style will suit Boyapati's typical mass-action treatment. Some are also pointing to Ram Pothineni's experience with Boyapati's *Skanda* as an example of how such combina-



tions may not always work as expected. However, according to our information, there have been no discussions or developments between Akhil and Boyapati Sreenu regarding a film so far. The current buzz appears to be just speculation,

confirmed our sources. Akhil is expected to be careful while choosing his next project. After facing a series of setbacks before *Lenin*, the actor is likely to take his time and select a film that can help him continue his current momentum.

Atlee To Follow Mersal Formula For Allu Arjun's Raaka?



Ever since *Raaka* was announced, the film has become one of the most talked-about projects in Indian cinema. Directed by Atlee and starring Allu Arjun, the big-budget fantasy action drama is already carrying massive expectations. Reports now suggest that Atlee may be using a formula similar to his blockbuster *Mersal* featuring Vijay. According to the buzz, *Raaka* could feature a father and two sons, with Allu Arjun reportedly playing all three roles. If the reports turn out to be true, this will be the first time in Allu Arjun's career that he takes on a triple role. The actor is known for experimenting with different looks and mannerisms, but playing three generations of characters would be a completely new challenge. However, fans should not expect *Raaka* to be a simple repeat of *Mersal*. While the setup may sound familiar, the world of *Raaka* is said to be entirely different. The film is set across two timelines and blends fantasy and contemporary elements on a grand scale. With Atlee aiming for a larger-than-life cinematic experience and Allu Arjun stepping into unexplored territory, *Raaka* could offer audiences something never before seen in Indian cinema.

Mahendragiri Varahi Trailer: Siddhu Joins Sumanth



Sumanth is coming up with a spiritual and mystical thriller *Mahendragiri Varahi*. Directed by Santhosh Jagarlapudi, the film is jointly produced by Laxman and Kalipu Madhu under the banners of Rajashyamala Entertainments and Bridge Films. As the release date is approaching, the makers dropped the film's trailer. A

centuries-old curse, a powerful Goddess, a royal lineage facing mysterious deaths and a protagonist unwilling to accept what everyone else believes- the trailer introduces a fascinating premise rooted in spirituality and mystery.

Sumanth shoulders the film with a performance marked by seriousness and conviction. His character

appears determined to get to the bottom of the mystery, and the actor's intense screen presence suits the material well. Siddhu Jonnalagadda's presence in a crucial role emerges as the biggest surprises. Aishwarya Rajesh takes on the role of Varahi Maatha. Director Santhosh Jagarlapudi approached the subject by

giving equal importance to its spiritual core and thriller framework. Prathap R Krishnaa's cinematography is impressive, while Anup Rubens' score gives the narrative an ominous and suspenseful mood. The trailer creates a considerable curiosity ahead of the film's September 11th theatrical release.