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Jaishankar Discusses India-Pacific Partnership



New York : External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar discussed progress under the India-FIPIC framework and the India-UN Development Partnership Fund at the India-FIPIC Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in New York on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). Addressing the meeting, Jaishankar welcomed the representatives of Pacific Island nations to the Indian Mission in New York, saying the dis-

cussions would focus on taking stock of the progress achieved since the third FIPIC Summit held in 2023. He said India’s relationship with Pacific Island countries, particularly in the area of development partnership, has grown through two major frameworks -- the FIPIC framework and the India-UN Development Partnership Fund. "First of all, let me welcome each and every one of you very warmly to the Indian Mission in New York. I

would like to take this opportunity to take stock of and discuss with all of you the progress we have made since the third FIPIC Summit in 2023. What I do want to say is that we have two frameworks in which our relationship, particularly our development partnership, has grown. One is the FIPIC framework, and the other is the India-UN Development Partnership Fund. Through both of them, we have undertaken a number of

projects that have underlined our commitment to strengthening livelihoods, building capacity, and promoting sustainable development..." Jaishankar said. Jaishankar also highlighted India’s ongoing efforts towards the procurement and supply of sea ambulances to Pacific Island nations. "Then there is the procurement and supply of sea ambulances. We had received requests from 12 member states for a total of 20 units.

CEC Faces Fresh Impeachment Motion Over SIR

New Delhi: Opposition parties are set to move an impeachment motion against Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar in both Houses of Parliament, with the Congress reaching out to other Opposition parties over the issue, according to ANI, citing sources. The notice is likely to be submitted within the next two weeks. The move comes amid growing Opposition criticism of the Election Commission and its ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls across the country. An Indian Express report recently claimed that Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi had raised written objections at least 14 times over the past 10 months on issues related to the SIR, addition of new voters, deletion of names from electoral rolls and centralisation of voter databases. The report triggered a political row, with Opposition parties citing the alleged objections as evidence of differences



within the three-member poll panel. The Election Commission, however, said differences of opinion during deliberations were a normal part of the decision-making process and maintained that all its decisions were taken in accordance with established legal procedures. Opposition parties had earlier sought Kumar’s removal. On April 24, 73 Opposition MPs in the Rajya Sabha submitted a notice seeking his removal over alleged misconduct. The Congress had then said the notice contained nine specific allegations. Opposition leaders and Congress sources said the earlier notice remains pending.

'VOTE CHORI' TO 'KANOON CHORI': Congress MP Rahul Gandhi Launches Fresh Attack On ECI, BJP Amid SIR Row

New Delhi: Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, launched a scathing attack on Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar and the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Thursday, alleging that the country’s entire electoral framework has been compromised. Addressing a press conference in New Delhi, Gandhi cited an investigative re-

port by The Indian Express revealing that two sitting Election Commissioners—Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi—had formally recorded objections at least 14 times over 10 months regarding procedures, database changes, and the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter lists. Drawing on his multi-generational background in public life, Gandhi questioned how

standard anti-incumbency trends that have historically affected every political entity in India seem to mysteriously vanish for the ruling BJP. "Indian elections, Lok Sabha Elections, 2024 elections, Vidhan Sabha Elections are all being rigged. The people on top of that list are who we call the conspirators. By the way, Mr Gyanesh Kumar, who is sitting there two election commission-

ers, two election commissioners are raising questions about that man. I have been raising questions; those questions were ignored. People of India believed it. But the institutional framework of India was not interested. But now, two election commissioners, by the way, chosen by the leadership, Gyanesh Kumar was chosen by the Prime Minister of India, not by anybody

less. He was chosen by Amit Shah. And now two election commissioners are saying that Mr Gyanesh Kumar is responsible for the chaos, for the damage that has taken place to our voting system," he said.

Expanding on the pattern of state election results, Gandhi noted, "Haryana swings from one party to another for 50 years. Suddenly anti-incumbency dis-



appears. Maharashtra swings; suddenly it disappears. Uttar Pradesh swings. Sometimes Samajwadi, sometimes BSP; it disappears. Madhya Pradesh, it disappears. Gujarat, it disappears. This has been a fundamental question for us.

Anitha Hits Back at Jagan Over DSC, Cites 16,000 Jobs

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, September 24: Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha said the alleged “anarchy” during Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy’s tenure began with the demolition of Praja Vedika and ended with the arrest of N. Chandrababu Naidu. Speaking to the media on Thursday, she said industries and investments were coming to the State because law and order was now being maintained properly. Anitha alleged that while Andhra Pradesh was progressing in all sectors, Jagan was trying to create disturbances and hatred. She accused him of sending rowdy-sheeters onto the streets with the intention of creating law-



and-order problems and discouraging investments. She also criticised Jagan’s visits to 28 people, alleging that many of those accompanying him were rowdy-sheeters, alleged ganja gangs and goons. She said Minister Nara Lokesh had promised to conduct the DSC recruitment and filled 16,000 posts within 150 days.

The Home Minister recalled that she herself had secured a teaching job through the 2001 DSC during Chandrababu’s tenure. She said the teaching profession was a respectable one and questioned why Jagan was allegedly hostile towards it. She claimed that the government had responded to every allegation made by Jagan and the

YSRCP regarding the DSC, as well as to alleged misinformation circulated on social media. She accused Jagan of repeatedly making what she described as false claims in an attempt to make them appear true. She said that despite Lokesh challenging the YSRCP three times over the DSC issue, there had been no response. She also alleged

that Jagan had not changed his stance despite approaching the High Court over the DSC issue and facing criticism there. Anitha strongly criticised the alleged attacks on teachers, asking whether sports persons who had produced evidence of securing DSC jobs were being targeted. She questioned whether rowdy-sheeters, goons and alleged blade gangs were being brought to the SYAP office to attack teachers. She alleged that Jagan had ruled with the support of rowdy-sheeters between 2019 and 2024 and accused him of defending those who attacked teachers. She claimed that 60 per cent of those who came to attack the SYAP office were crimi-

nals and questioned whether rowdy-sheeters, goons, alleged blade gangs, people facing POCSO cases and those accused of harassing women could be described as “Gen Z.” She further alleged that around 50 vehicles carrying alleged goons reached the SYAP office after receiving directions from the Tadepalli Palace.

The Home Minister said Jagan was making what she described as “false cries” before the Governor, alleging that cases had been filed against candidates and that they were being harassed. She accused him of creating disturbances in a peaceful State and causing inconvenience to the people.

Continuously Monitor Low-Lying Areas: Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan

From Our Staff Reporter Kakinada, September 24: Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan held a review meeting with the Kakinada Collector on the situation in the district amid heavy rains. He directed officials to remain vigilant until the rains completely subside. Pawan enquired about flooding in the Suddagadda stream in the Pithapuram Assembly constituency and sought details from officials about the situation along the Uppada coastal region. He issued directions to the concerned authorities and instructed them to continuously monitor low-lying areas. He directed officials to shift people from flood-prone areas to safer locations. He also ordered



immediate removal of trees that had fallen on roads due to heavy rains and directed authorities to restore traffic movement at the earliest. The Deputy Chief Minister further instructed the district administration to undertake regular dewatering to prevent waterlogging.

Money Alone Not Enough to Eradicate Poverty: Nara Lokesh



From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, Sept., 24 : Andhra Pradesh Minister Nara Lokesh expressed happiness over the successful implementation of the P4 scheme, a flagship initiative undertaken by the state government to eradicate poverty. Lokesh highlighted a success story from Kuppam under the scheme. He revealed that a woman from Kuppam who once worked as a labourer in a brick factory has now become the

owner of a brick factory herself. Starting with an investment of just Rs.60,000, she rose within a year to a position where she could provide employment to 20 people, Lokesh said. He stated that such transformation in the lives of rural people was made possible through the partnership of industries, the government and the people. Minister Lokesh said the government would completely eradicate poverty in the State with the support of the Industries-Government-People Partnership (P4) scheme. He said the participation of companies in the school adoption programme was increasing. As part of the initiative, students were being taught life skills from an early stage, he said. Along with this, students were being trained to understand family budgeting and agriculture, Lokesh added.

AP Liquor Transport Scam: ED Issues Notice to Ambati Rambabu

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, September 24: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has issued a notice to YSRCP leader and former minister Ambati Rambabu in connection with the alleged AP liquor transportation scam. The ED informed the former minister over the phone that he should appear for questioning on Friday and asked him to report at the ED office in Hyderabad at 10.30 am.

However, Ambati reportedly told the ED that he had undergone heart stent procedures 15 days ago and was currently recovering on doctors’ advice. He informed the agency that he would appear for questioning after making a full recovery and would notify the officials in advance. In his message to the ED, Ambati said he would fully cooperate with the investi-



gation. The ED officials are yet to respond to his reply. Meanwhile, ED officials recorded the statements of Marri Subba Reddy and Purushotham Rao in connection with the liquor transportation case on Thursday. The two were questioned by the agency in the morning. The ED has reportedly found that during the previous YSRCP government, con-

tracts were awarded to Sigma and Prasad Transport companies for transporting liquor to government-run liquor shops. The agency is understood to have questioned Marri Subba Reddy and Rayapati Purushothama Rao over the transportation of around 59.14 lakh liquor boxes during the initial contract period. The ED investigation reportedly revealed that Rs.15.44 crore had been received from Sigma. Officials are understood to have questioned them about liquor transportation sub-contracts, diversion of funds and their alleged links with former minister Ambati Rambabu. The statements of Purushothama Rao and Marri Subba Reddy were recorded by the ED and SIT officials.

YSRCP Protests Due to Inability to Take on Coalition Politically: Nadendla Manohar

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, September 24: Minister Nadendla Manohar alleged that the YSRCP was organising protests with the support of disruptive elements as it was unable to politically confront the coalition government. He said it was inappropriate to create fear and anxiety among the people. He advised the opposition to address political issues politically and come to the Assembly with evidence for discussion. Manohar criticised the YSRCP for allegedly creating disorder in Vijayawada by bringing rowdy-sheeters into the protests, despite having the opportunity to stage peaceful demonstrations

in the city. He said it was unacceptable to bring people from five or six districts and create



disturbances on the roads. The minister said the government was conducting an inquiry into matters concerning the APPSC and that some issues were currently

before the courts. He criticised Jagan Reddy, alleging that he did not even know the difference between the DSC and APPSC. Manohar said it should not be forgotten that teachers were made to stand outside liquor shops during the COVID-19 period and added that every political leader had a responsibility to respect teachers. He alleged that people were aware of the scale of the liquor-related activities during Jagan’s tenure and claimed that around 30,000 families had suffered due to substandard liquor. The minister alleged that the protests were being organised to divert public attention from ongoing investigations.

EDITORIAL

Youth Falling Prey to Pharma Drugs

Young people in several states across the country are becoming addicted to heroin and other intoxicating substances. Morphine, codeine, oxycodone, fentanyl and heroin are opioids. These drugs primarily act on the brain and nervous system and are used for pain relief. When used medically in the prescribed dosage, they can help control pain. However, when misused or taken in excessive quantities, they can cause drowsiness, constipation, slowed breathing and, eventually, become life-threatening. In terms of population percentage, opioid-related problems are more prevalent in Mizoram, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Manipur, Punjab, Haryana and Delhi. A 2018 survey revealed that nearly 2 per cent of people, ranging from 10-year-old children to those aged 75, were consuming heroin to a significant extent. Similarly, the use of such substances among school students was recorded at 2.8 per cent. Heroin addiction has a negative impact on education, employment and social relationships among young people. Their physical and mental health is also severely affected. In Punjab, which has been a major hub for illegal drug trafficking, the availability of heroin has now declined significantly, leading to an increase in the use of pharmaceutical drugs among youth. Large quantities of these pharmaceutical intoxicants are entering Punjab from other states, making it a major challenge for the police to curb their supply. Most of these pharma drugs are not manufactured in Punjab. They are produced in Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi. Since last year, 11.54 lakh pharmaceutical tablets and capsules linked to these states have been seized. It is estimated that around 80 per cent of the drugs available in Punjab are now coming from other states. This is completely opposite to the situation in the past, when nearly 80 per cent of the drugs illegally entering Punjab were smuggled across the Pakistan border. Large quantities of narcotics were seized in Punjab in 2024. During the first six months of 2024 alone, 215 kg of heroin was seized. A new trend is now emerging in Punjab, with the misuse of pharmaceutical medicines increasing. There is a need for coordinated action by the states where pharma drugs are manufactured as well as those through which they are transported to other regions. This includes monitoring drug manufacturing units, their sale, purchase and transportation, and preventing their illegal diversion to Punjab. To curb the smuggling of narcotics by drones from across the Pakistan border, the BSF and police forces have taken multi-level measures. These measures have helped prevent the widespread availability of heroin on the streets of Punjab. As heroin became less accessible, young people in the state began turning to pharmaceutical drugs for intoxication. On September 3, three units of the mobile drone detection platform ‘DroneSense D200 Pro’ were deployed at strategic locations in border districts. The system is designed to detect the activities of drones involved in drug smuggling, determine their exact location and identify the places where the drones drop the drugs. This enables security personnel to reach the locations in time and take necessary action. For these operations, 52 Drone Response Teams (DRTs), comprising 147 police personnel, have been formed. These teams work in coordination with the BSF. As soon as an alert is received regarding drones being used to transport drugs, the teams respond and reach the locations where the drones have dropped the drugs. They keep surveillance and conduct patrols in those areas to apprehend people who arrive to collect the drugs.

The police have also deployed a total of nine anti-drone systems, including three ‘Baaz’ anti-drone systems. These have been operational in Amritsar, Tarn Taran and Firozpur since August last year. They can detect the movement of drones carrying drugs in advance and disrupt their communication. Village Defence Committees have also been formed in border areas. These committees act as the eyes and ears of the police. Under the ‘Yudh Nashe Virudh’ (War Against Drugs) campaign, nearly 80,000 people involved in drug trafficking have been arrested since March 1, 2025. Financial measures are also being taken to weaken the economic foundations of drug networks. Assets worth more than Rs. 336 crore belonging to those involved in drug production and illegal trafficking have been frozen. A reward policy is also being implemented for people who provide information about drug trafficking or help identify the whereabouts of those involved. A cash reward of Rs. 25,000 is being offered for identifying and helping seize drones used for drug trafficking.

Bihar Assault, Hisar Marriage Ban: Who'll Stop The Guardians Of Indian 'Culture'?

This week, a social panchayat in Hisar in Haryana decided that there would be a ban on love marriage in their village. They also declared that people who defy the ban, together with their families, would face a boycott. Apparently, the decision was taken after a few recent instances of young men and women in the village falling in love and getting married. Those who participated in this outrageous move to stifle the civil liberty of young folks said that it was done to “preserve the social fabric” of the village. Evidently, the fury against young love not sanctioned by family and society continues unabated. This despite the fact that multiple judgments in the Supreme Court have held all such pronouncements by “khap” gatherings illegal, ruling that they violate Articles 19 and 21 of the Constitution which protect the fundamental rights of individuals, including the right to marry a partner of their choice.

In the Haryana village, a person was quoted as saying, “We consider every girl in the village our own daughter.” In other words, the noxious effort to prohibit love marriages is really all about the community's visceral need to control the lives of girls and to ensure that they conform to the standards of purity and morality laid down by its antiquated social customs. Indeed, nothing enrages patriarchy more than to see women and girls exercise a choice, especially a sexual choice, without its express consent. And it usually hits back by punishing them and their bodies, sometimes with murderous consequences. Coincidentally, this despicable instinct was on full display in two cases of sexual violence against young girls in Bihar and Delhi that took place around the time when the Haryana village is-



sued its vengeful diktat against love marriage. In Bihar's Jamui, a girl and her male friend, both students of Class X, were returning from their coaching class when they were accosted by a group of men. The girl was groped, lifted and dragged and the boy was beaten up. A video of the incident quickly went viral on social media and sparked a tremendous outcry. In the second incident, a 17-year-old girl was gang-raped in a Delhi park earlier this week by three men who separated her from her male companion, threatened her with a gun and a knife, and took turns at sexually assaulting her.

In both incidents, the assaulters and rapists targeted a young girl who was out with a boy. They seemed to have operated from the belief that the possibility of her being intimately associated with a member of the opposite sex was evidence of her promiscuity, her “bad character”, as it were, and

that this automatically gave them the licence to sexually violate her. This is not to say that women and girls in other situations are not sexually assaulted. They are, and the mind-numbing number of rapes in the country is a testament to that. However, the sight of a young couple seeking a bit of alone time somewhere tends to particularly provoke a certain kind of Indian men - those who are incensed at the idea of a girl making a romantic choice without reference to her family and society. In their twisted, violent little minds, assaulting such a girl probably feels like a double bonanza - they get to slake their own depravity in addition to having the satisfaction of “teaching her a lesson” for daring to be in the company of a male friend.

Interestingly, the video of the Jamui incident appears to have been shot and circulated by one of the assaulters. Did he think that he and his gang would be applauded for what they had

done? That they would be praised for upholding morality in public spaces? Garlanded perhaps? After all, politicians in this country are known to have done precisely that to welcome rapists out on bail or those accused of lynching and murder. A Bihar minister did, in fact, dismiss the Jamui assault as a “chhutput” (insignificant and stray) incident. Though the state government is scrambling to do damage control now, and most of the culprits have been apprehended, the point is that the enabling culture of impunity, the insidious suggestion that society has the right to surveil the private lives of couples, and men have the right to police women's bodies and their morals, continue to embolden would-be aggressors. And it is not just a dangerously regressive khap pronouncement from the country's hinterland that fuels and sustains such authoritarian sentiments. Witness the provisions of the Uniform Civil

Code legislation implemented by states such as Uttarakhand and Madhya Pradesh. They make it mandatory for live-in couples to register themselves with the police, failing which they face imprisonment. It is as if the state is of the view that the status of live-in couples is so dubious, so close to being unlawful, that they need to be watched and tracked at all times. Love is not a crime. It can manifest in myriad forms - traditional, non-traditional, binary, non-binary, within the bounds of wedlock or without, inter-faith, intra-caste ... It can bloom in the young, and it can light up the old. No society or state should arrogate to itself the power to decide what sort of love is kosher and what is not. Let us stop trying to legislate love in the name of custom and tradition and morality. It is a recipe for more hate-filled crimes against women, and no modern, forward-looking society should want to go down that path.

The Trump-Xi Summit, And India's Many Worries Of Its Own

The ongoing high-stakes summit between President Donald Trump and President Xi Jinping has signalled a crucial phase in the recalibration of global geopolitics, with significant implications for the rest of the world, and in particular for India. Designed primarily to manage systemic friction between the world's two largest economies, the interaction yielded a pragmatic, albeit fragile, framework of managed interdependence between the two countries that President Trump, perhaps in a rash moment, had last year dubbed the “G-2”. Rather than orchestrating a grand economic reset or resolving fundamental ideological divides, let alone consecrating a grand condominium to divide up the world as the term “G-2” implies, the discussions focused on tactical stabilisation, mitigating immediate economic disruptions, and setting clear boundaries around strategic escalation. For the broader international community, the summit confirmed that while Washington and Beijing remain locked in intense structural rivalry, neither superpower currently desires an uncontained crisis that could destabilise global markets or trigger unintended military friction. For India, the questions it prompts are somewhat different.

A Temporary Pause

At the heart of the summit's outcomes was an agreement to extend the existing trade truce between the two economic giants, staving off a renewed spiral of punitive tariffs and reciprocal supply chain disruptions. The temporary reprieve addresses immediate domestic economic pressures facing both leaders. Washington secured commitments regarding agricultural exports and predictable flows of critical minerals, while Beijing achieved a degree of tariff relief and a pause on

several expanding American export controls targeting non-sensitive technological sectors. This can be seen as mutually satisfactory outcome that staves off the prospects of a trade war between the number 1 and 2 ranked economies on earth. Beyond commerce, the two leaders established preliminary channels for communication on artificial intelligence safety and guardrails, acknowledging the systemic risks posed by unchecked technological proliferation. On security issues, particularly regarding Taiwan and regional maritime posture, both sides maintained firm boundaries while agreeing to keep military-to-military dialogue active to prevent tactical miscalculations. So far, so good. But the tone and scope of the summit carry profound implications for India's strategic calculations. In New Delhi, the primary concern leading into any major high-level engagement between Washington and Beijing is the spectre of a superpower condominium (the so-called G2 arrangement), wherein the United States and China might seek to divide spheres of influence and manage regional security over the heads of other powers, with the US essentially ceding Asia to China. The limited, transactional nature of the Washington summit effectively dispelled these immediate fears.

The Big Quad Question

Could it be even more encouraging than that? Some observers suggest that by failing to forge a sweeping geopolitical consensus, the summit demonstrated that Washington's old strategy of ensuring the structural containment of China remains fundamentally intact. This seeming outcome, if confirmed, would reassure Indian policymakers that the strategic rationale underpinning the Indo-Pacific architecture, in-



cluding the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, retains its core purpose in counter-balancing Chinese influence across the region. But the proof of that pudding still lies in the eating. After President Biden convoked the four countries for the 2024 Summit in Delaware, India was expected to host the Quad Summit in 2025, except that President Trump showed no interest in attending. Hopes were expressed that this could now take place in 2026, but there are no signs of one being scheduled this year either. The real worry remains whether New Delhi would have to hand over the chairmanship without having hosted a summit at all, an unprecedented humiliation that would severely undermine the value of the Quad for India. Indians will wait keenly for any reaffirmation of the US's continued commitment to the Indo-Pacific and to the salience of the Quad in Washington's vision of the region. A statement that President Trump looks forward to the next Quad summit once his other priorities (notably a settlement in the Iran War) are taken care of, would go a long way towards reassuring foreign policy watchers in New Delhi. From a macroeconomic

perspective, the outcomes present a nuanced matrix of opportunities and challenges for the Indian economy. The decision by the United States and China to stabilise trade flows without completely dismantling protective tariffs or technology restrictions means that the case for a global push toward supply chain diversification (away from over-reliance on China) remains compelling. Foreign investors and multinational corporations seeking to hedge against persistent US-China friction will continue to look toward alternative manufacturing hubs, reinforcing India's position within the “China Plus One” strategy.

India's Concerns

However, the tactical pause in trade hostilities prevents an immediate, aggressive flight of capital out of Chinese manufacturing, helping the Chinese economy. Furthermore, any calibrated US tariff reductions or specific exemptions for China, negotiated on the sidelines of the summit between Washington and Beijing, could place Indian exports at a relative tariff disadvantage. This would be exacerbated if New Delhi faces tighter trade scrutiny or elevated duty structures

from the United States in the wake of the Russian Sanctions Act - unless those sanctions are applied to China too. In terms of regional security and strategic autonomy, the summit offers New Delhi both tactical breathing room and a reminder of its long-term challenges. A stabilised US-China relationship reduces the immediate risk of an escalating global crisis that could force India into uncomfortable geopolitical choices, allowing New Delhi to maintain its preferred posture of multi-alignment and strategic autonomy in order to manage its own problems along the disputed border. At the same time, the absence of explicit US leverage forcing major concessions from Beijing means that China's regional posture in South Asia and along the disputed Himalayan border will remain a direct operational concern for India. A China that successfully manages its front with Washington will feel all the more politically unencumbered to maintain its increasingly assertive stance in its immediate neighbourhood, ensuring that New Delhi must rely primarily on its own national defence capabilities and domestic resources to secure its borders and maritime interests.

Rajamahendravaram to Host World Space Week Celebrations on October 8 & 9

Aim is to ignite students' interest in space science: Collector Keerthi Chekuri



Rajamahendravaram, Pen Power, Staff Reporter, September 24: Rajamahendravaram is all set to host the World Space Week celebrations on October 8 and 9, with the objective of creating greater awareness and interest among students in space science and research. The two-day event, being organised under the aegis of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), will be held at Sri

Venkateswara Anam Kala Kendram in Rajamahendravaram. The Rajamahendravaram Municipal Corporation and the district and city units of the AP Private Unaided Schools Management Association will extend their cooperation for the programme. As part of the preparations, ISRO senior scientist and Head of the Civil Division V. Lakshmana Satish and senior scientist K. Ashwini met District

Joint Collector Y. Megha Swaroop on Wednesday. District Collector Keerthi Chekuri unveiled the poster for the World Space Week celebrations at the Collectorate. Speaking on the occasion, she called upon the District Education Department, Municipal Corporation and managements of private educational institutions to work in coordination to make the event a success. The Collector urged stu-

dents to visit the exhibitions in large numbers and utilise the opportunity to enhance their knowledge of space science and technology. Earlier, Municipal Commissioner Rahul Meena unveiled the promotional poster for the event at the Municipal Corporation office. Organisers said that rocket models representing various ISRO space missions and exhibits showcasing space science and technology would be among the major attractions of the celebrations. ISRO scientists will also interact directly with students, explain various aspects of space research and missions, and answer their questions. A series of competitions will be organised for students from Class VI to degree level, including quizzes, drawing competitions, spot quizzes and on-the-spot photography contests. The two-day programme is expected to provide students with an opportunity to interact with space scientists and gain first-hand exposure to India's achievements and advancements in space research.

CJP Gives CEC Gyanesh Kumar 48 Hours to Resign, Warns of Nationwide Protest

- Party raises questions over electoral process; threatens nationwide agitation if demand is not met

New Delhi, September 24 (Pen Power): The Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) has demanded the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar within 48 hours, warning that it would launch a nationwide agitation if he fails to step down within the stipulated time. Addressing the media in New Delhi, CJP founder Abhijit Dipke raised concerns over the functioning of the Election Commission and referred to reports surrounding the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

Dipke alleged that recent developments had raised questions over transparency and public confidence in the electoral process. He maintained that an institution as crucial as the Election Commission must function in a manner that leaves no room for doubt over its independence, transparency and credibility. The CJP founder said the party was giving the Chief Election Commissioner 48 hours to resign and warned that failure to do so would lead to protests across the country. The demand, however, represents the political position and allegations of the CJP and should not be construed as an independently established finding. Any response



or clarification from the Election Commission or the Chief Election Commissioner on the allegations would also form an important part of the issue. The controversy comes amid

a wider political debate over electoral-roll revision and the functioning of the Election Commission, with competing claims being made by different stakeholders.

BJP's Bengal Poll Spend Alone Exceeded Congress Outlay Across Five Elections: EC Filings

New Delhi: The BJP spent Rs 286.99 crore on the West Bengal Assembly election, more than the Rs 248.55 crore the Congress spent across four states and the Union territory of Puducherry that went to polls earlier this year, according to expenditure statements filed with the Election Commission. West Bengal alone accounted for more than half of the BJP's total expenditure of Rs 529.38 crore across the five elections in West Bengal, Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. Of its Bengal expenditure, the party spent Rs 217.16 crore on general campaigning and Rs 69.83 crore on candidates. The scale of the spending underlines how heavily the BJP invested in a state where it was seeking power for the first time. The BJP's investment in West Bengal was accompanied by a decisive electoral result. The party ousted the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and came to power in the state for the first time, winning 207 of the 293 seats for which results were declared. The TMC won 80 seats. The Congress contested 293 seats indepen-



dently but won only two. According to its filings, the party spent Rs 42.08 crore in Bengal through its central headquarters and state unit. Of this, Rs 12.96 crore went towards general campaigning and Rs 29.12 crore towards candidates and related expenses. The Communist Party of India (Marxist), or CPI(M), which ruled West Bengal for decades before losing power in 2011, contested 197 seats and won one. Its state unit reported expenditure of Rs 8.23 crore, including spending on candidates. The expenditure statement of the

TMC, the BJP's principal rival in West Bengal, has not yet been made public. Kerala presented a different picture. The Congress-led alliance displaced the CPI(M)-led Left Democratic Front, with the Congress winning 63 seats and the CPI(M) 26. The BJP won three seats. The Congress spent Rs 105.34 crore in Kerala through its headquarters and state unit, exceeding the BJP's expenditure of Rs 82.67 crore. Of the Congress outlay, Rs 71.30 crore went towards general campaigning and Rs 34.05 crore towards candidates

and related expenses, PTI reports. The BJP reported spending Rs 54.93 crore on general campaigning in Kerala and Rs 27.74 crore on candidates. The CPI(M)'s state unit reported expenditure of Rs 28.60 crore, including Rs 26.30 crore on general campaigning and Rs 105.55 crore on candidates, taking its total expenditure to Rs 248.55 crore. The CPI(M)'s consolidated expenditure stood at Rs 39.04 crore.

Make Best Use of Rainwater, Fill All Water Bodies: CM Chandrababu

- CM reviews heavy rain situation across Andhra Pradesh
- Special focus on Godavari, Krishna, Nagavali and Vamsadhara basins
- Officials told to remain alert as river inflows rise
- 16 districts record heavy rainfall
- Public safety and efficient water management top priorities

Amaravati, Pen Power, September 24: With heavy rains continuing across Andhra Pradesh, Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has directed officials to make optimum use of the increased inflows and fill reservoirs, tanks and other water bodies across the State, while ensuring that the rains and floods do not disrupt normal life. Reviewing the situation with senior officials at the Real Time Governance Centre, the Chief Minister assessed rainfall across the State, river inflows, reservoir levels, groundwater conditions and the preparedness of the administration for the coming days. Officials informed the Chief Minister that groundwater levels had improved in several areas following continuous rains over the past three days. Heavy rainfall was reported in 16 districts, with Visakhapatnam, Anakapalli, Vizianagaram, Srikakulam, Parvathipuram Manyam, Kakinada, the Godavari districts, Eluru, Krishna and NTR among the significantly affected areas.

Every Drop Must Be Utilised

The Chief Minister directed officials to fill reservoirs in the Krishna and Godavari delta regions, along with tanks and other water bodies downstream of major projects. Where necessary, water should be lifted using pumps to maximise storage, he said. He instructed officials to utilise Godavari inflows to fill the Yeluru Reservoir and ensure that water is supplied to available water bodies up to Anakapalli through the Polavaram Left Main Canal.

Special Vigil on Godavari Basin

Officials said substantial inflows were expected into



water bodies and reservoirs in the Godavari basin, including the Sabari, Indravati, Yeluru, Tandava, Errakalva, Pampa and Meghadrigedda systems. Inflows into the Yeluru Reservoir were estimated at between 21,200 and 26,500 cusecs, while Tandava could receive 6,000-7,500 cusecs. Meghadrigedda was expected to receive 2,400-3,000 cusecs and Pampa around 3,100-3,875 cusecs. Flows are also expected to increase in the Nagavali and Vamsadhara basins. Officials briefed the Chief Minister about the possibility of rising water levels at Gotta Barrage, Bhadrachalam, Dowleswaram Barrage and Kunta on the Sabari River.

Ensure Public Safety

Chandrababu directed district administrations to remain on high alert and ensure that heavy rains and floods do not cause hardship to the public. River and stream flows, reservoir levels and vulnerable areas

should be monitored continuously, with preventive measures taken wherever necessary. The Chief Minister stressed that effective water management should go hand in hand with disaster preparedness so that the abundant rainfall could be converted into a long-term water resource without compromising public safety.

AI and Natural Farming to Strengthen Agriculture

The Chief Minister also reviewed strategies to minimise the impact of climatic conditions such as El Niño. He said improving soil fertility, promoting alternative crops based on soil testing, adopting biochar and encouraging natural farming could help agriculture withstand adverse climatic conditions. Technology should be used to provide farmers with advance information on weather patterns, irrigation availability, reservoir levels and groundwater conditions, he

said. The Chief Minister also reviewed applications integrating data from various government departments with NASA satellite imagery. Such data-driven tools could help authorities analyse changes in groundwater levels and make better water-management decisions, he observed.

Sports Calendar from Village Level

Chandrababu directed the Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh to prepare an annual sports calendar and conduct competitions not only in towns and cities but also at the village level. He also reviewed infrastructure in schools, the quality of electricity supply, availability and prices of sand, and field-level performance of government personnel. The Chief Minister further called for wider use of AI-based applications and data analytics across government departments to strengthen real-time governance and enable faster, evidence-based decision-making.

District Administration on High Alert Amid Heavy Rains

- Saving Lives Our Top Priority: Collector T. Nishanthi

Paderu, Pen Power, September 24: The Alluri Sitarama Raju district administration is on high alert in the wake of heavy rains lashing several parts of the district, District Collector T. Nishanthi said on Thursday. Addressing a press conference, the Collector briefed the media on the prevailing rainfall situation, precautionary measures, damage assessment and ongoing relief and restoration operations. She said officials across all mandals had been placed on alert, while control rooms established at the district and mandal levels were continuously monitoring rainfall, flood conditions, roads, streams, rivulets and low-lying areas. Areas vulnerable to flooding and landslides have been identified and placed under special surveillance. The Collector said officials of the departments concerned were carrying out field inspections of roads, culverts and other infrastructure damaged by the heavy rains. Measures were also being taken to clear fallen trees, mud and other obstructions from roads and restore traffic at the earliest.

According to information available up to 2 p.m. on

September 24, officials of various departments were assessing rain-related damage across the district. Damage to roads, bridges, culverts, electricity infrastructure, drinking water sources, government buildings, houses, agricultural crops and horticultural plantations was being assessed department-wise. The Collector clarified that the figures currently being received were only preliminary estimates and that the final assessment would be announced after completion of field-level inspections. Restoration work was underway in areas where power supply had been disrupted. Rural Water Supply officials had been directed to ensure uninterrupted access to drinking water, while water purification and chlorination measures were being undertaken wherever necessary.

Medical teams have also been kept ready to respond to emergencies. Officials have been instructed to intensify sanitation measures to prevent the outbreak of diseases in the aftermath of the rains. Arrangements are in place to evacuate people to safer locations in the event of an emergency, the Collector said. The Rev-



enue, Police, Roads and Buildings, Panchayat Raj, Medical and Health, Rural Water Supply, Electricity, Fire Services, Tribal Welfare, Agriculture, Horticulture, APSRTC and Transport departments are working in close coordination.

People Urged to Remain Vigilant

The Collector advised people to postpone non-essential travel and stay away from streams, rivulets, causeways, culverts and areas experiencing heavy water flow. Motorists should not attempt to cross flooded roads or overflowing causeways, she cautioned. Parents were advised to ensure that chil-

dren do not venture near streams, ponds or other water bodies. Residents of landslide-prone areas were urged to remain particularly vigilant and strictly follow instructions issued by district officials and the police. "Protecting human lives is the district administration's foremost priority. All departments are working in coordination and monitoring the situation round the clock. Damage is being assessed at the field level, and relief and restoration measures are being taken on a priority basis. We appeal to the public to remain vigilant and cooperate with the district administration," Collector T. Nishanthi said.

Joshi to Inaugurate Seva First Innovation Challenge

New Delhi: The Union Minister for Education Shri Pralhad Joshi will inaugurate the Seva First Innovation Challenge (SFIC), tomorrow, at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru. The Initiative will encourage young people to identify problems they see in their communities and develop solutions that can be tested, improved and taken towards implementation. The Challenge will cover five states and three union territories including Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep and Puducherry. The Challenge will bring together young participants from schools, Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), polytechnics, colleges and universities. It has three levels of participation – Junior, Technical and Open. School students from class 6 to Class 12 can participate

at the Junior level. At this level, students can identify local problems and develop simple working solutions or well-reasoned service and governance ideas. Students from ITIs and polytechnics will focus on hands-on engineering, fabrication, electronics and process solutions, while undergraduate students, postgraduates and research scholars will be expected to demonstrate prototypes or pilots with a credible pathway to deployment. The Challenge will focus on five national themes, namely 1) Clean and Sustainable Bharat, 2) Prosperous Farmers, Prosperous Bharat, 3) Healthy and Inclusive Bharat, 4) Educated and Skilled Bharat and 5) Secure Bharat. Registration for the Event will be open from September 25 to October 24, 2026. It will culminate in the National Finale to be held in New Delhi from December 10 to 17, 2026. Participants



will have access to academic and industry mentorship, laboratories, fabrication facilities, testing support, incubation, seed and pilot funding, field-testing opportunities and guidance on intellectual property protection. Promising solutions can also be connected with Ministries, State Governments, urban and rural local bodies, public sector undertakings and industry for possible adoption. The Challenge is being organised jointly by the Union Education Ministry, All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), University Grants Commission (UGC) with IISc Bengaluru serving as the nodal institute. The initiative aims to foster a culture of community-rooted innovation, enabling young people to move from identifying problems to building solutions and contribute to the vision of Viksit Bharat @ 2047.

DARE-ICAR Promotes Swachhata Awareness Among School Children During Swachhata Hi Seva Campaign



New Delhi: The Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), along with its institutes and branches across the country, are undertaking various initiatives to promote cleanliness, sanitation and environmental awareness as part of the Swachhata Hi Seva Campaign. The initiatives aim to strengthen public participation in Swachhata and encourage citizens, particularly school children, to adopt cleanliness and environmentally responsible practices. As part of the campaign, DARE-ICAR and its institutes in the North-Eastern Region have undertaken Swachhata activities in and around educational institutions and local communities, with a fo-

cus on engaging school children with the values of cleanliness, sanitation and environmental conservation. The team of experts from ICAR-Agricultural Technology Application Research Institute (ATARI), Guwahati, identified an initiative in North Sikkim aimed at sensitising students to the importance of Swachhata and sustainable waste management. An exposure visit to Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), North Sikkim, was organised to familiarise students with cleanliness practices and vermicomposting, providing them an opportunity to understand the conversion of organic waste into useful compost. Similarly, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Ri Bhoi, under ICAR Research Complex for North Eastern Hill Region, Meghalaya,

organised cleanliness activities in nearby villages and roadside areas around the KVK. Employees of the organisation and local residents participated together in the cleanliness drive, reinforcing the message of community participation and shared responsibility towards a clean environment. Through such initiatives, DARE-ICAR and its network of institutions are contributing to the Swachhata Hi Seva Campaign by taking the message of cleanliness beyond institutional premises and encouraging participation among students, communities and citizens. The initiatives also highlight the importance of linking Swachhata with environmental awareness and sustainable practices at the grassroots level.

TDB-DST Backs GalaxEye with Rs.63.84 Cr RDI Support



New Delhi: Taking forward the Government of India's push to accelerate private-sector research and development in strategic and emerging technologies, the Technology Development Board (TDB), Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India, has signed an agreement with M/s GalaxEye Space Solutions Private Limited, Bengaluru for financial support of ₹63.84 crore under the Research Development and Innovation (RDI) Fund. The project, with a total approved cost of ₹247.69 crore, is aimed at developing a multisensor satellite capable of high-resolution (<0.5 m) OptoSAR imaging and taking the technology

from TRL-6 to TRL-9. The support will be extended through Optionally Convertible Debentures (OCD). At the heart of the GalaxEye project is OptoSAR, an approach that brings together two fundamentally different ways of observing the Earth — Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) and Electro-Optical (EO) imaging. While optical imaging can provide highly detailed visual information, its effectiveness can be affected by cloud cover and illumination. SAR, on the other hand, can operate irrespective of daylight and can image through cloud cover. The proposed system seeks to bring these complementary capabilities together through fusion of

SAR and EO data, enabling a richer and more continuous picture of the Earth. The proposed satellite is designed to provide sub-0.5 metre high-resolution imaging. The technology is intended to support applications including wide-area and long-range surveillance, human and vehicle detection, and target classification, while enabling imaging across diverse weather and lighting conditions. The project represents a significant technology-maturation programme, with the RDI support enabling GalaxEye to undertake further development, engineering, testing and validation required to progress the technology from TRL-6 to TRL-9.

From Files to Freedom: DEPwD Sets the Stage to Turn Pendency into Productivity and Waste into Resource

New Delhi: From clearing pending matters to reclaiming office space, from digitizing records to responsibly disposing of e-waste, the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) is gearing up to make Special Campaign 6.0 a focused drive for cleaner workplaces, faster disposal of pendency and more efficient governance. The campaign, being undertaken from 2nd to 31st October 2026, will give special emphasis to the effective collection, segregation and disposal of e-waste, while institutionalizing Swachhata across the Department and its organizations. Launched by the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG), Special Campaign 6.0 seeks to institutionalize Swachhata and minimize pendency in Government offices. The campaign is being implemented in two phases, with the Preparatory Phase from 16th to 30th September 2026, followed by the Imple-

mentation Phase from 2nd to 31st October 2026. DEPwD has already put in place the institutional mechanism for the campaign. A Nodal Officer has been nominated for the Department, while all Subordinate and Attached Offices, Public Sector Undertakings and Autonomous Bodies under the administrative control of DEPwD have been advised to nominate their respective Nodal Officers and identify pending matters in accordance with the parameters prescribed by DARPG. The Department is building on the momentum generated during Special Campaign 5.0, held from 2nd to 31st October 2025, when DEPwD and its organizations achieved the targets set for the campaign. During the month-long drive, 11,972 physical files/documents were digitized and weeded out, approximately 15,588 square feet of office space was freed, and revenue of ₹14,47,619 was generated. As many as 64 cleanliness

campaigns, covering indoor and outdoor spaces, were also organized by the Department and its organizations across the country. The effort, however, did not end with the conclusion of the campaign. In keeping with the guidelines of DARPG, DEPwD and its organizations have continued to undertake Swachhata and pendency-reduction activities every month since November 2025. The achievements have also been regularly uploaded on the Special Campaign 6.0 Portal (SCDPM), reflecting the Department's emphasis on sustained action rather than a one-time cleanliness exercise. Special Campaign 6.0 will further reinforce this approach by bringing together the twin objectives of Swachhata and good governance—reducing avoidable pendency, improving record management, freeing up usable space and ensuring responsible disposal of obsolete material, particularly e-waste.

NHAI Issues New Guidelines for Green Highways

New Delhi: Taking significant step towards developing a world-class National Highway network, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has released comprehensive guidelines for the planning and design of High-Speed Access-Controlled National Highways, other than Expressways. The new guidelines are aimed at ensuring that the High-speed National Highways are better designed & planned, safer, greener and ready to meet the needs of future traffic. The guidelines will apply to all upcoming four and six-lane Greenfield and Brownfield High-Speed Access-Controlled National Highways.

Data-Driven Planning for Future Traffic
The guidelines lay emphasis on comprehensive traffic assessment and future demand planning. Traffic projections shall take into account existing and diverted traffic, along with expected growth in freight movement linked to economic and commercial activities. Toll data and other reliable sources will also be used to make traffic estimates more accurate.

Technology-Enabled Construction
Use of modern technology will be enhanced during the construction of High-speed National Highways to improve quality, accuracy and monitoring. The guidelines provide for the use of Automated and Intelligent Machine-aided Construction (AI-MC) technology for construction of embankments and highway pavements, in accordance with applicable Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) guidelines. Incorporation of these measures will facilitate technology-enabled construction, enabling better quality, consistency and monitoring during National Highway development. Also as envisioned by

the Government of India, a shift will be made to install Multi Lane Free Flow (MLFF) system of tolling on High-speed corridors, provisions for implementation of MLFF shall be made accordingly.

Landscaping and Environmental Measures from Planning Stage
Landscaping and plantation will be incorporated as an integral part of project planning. Landscaping and plantations will be planned at suitable locations such as loop areas, below flyovers, medians and other suitable locations, keeping in view local climate, topography and environmental conditions. Drip irrigation systems will also be provided on National Highway medians, to ensure efficient use of water and easier maintenance of plantations.

Better Drainage and Water Management
Comprehensive drainage planning will form an integral part of the DPR process. The planning will identify where rainwater will be disposed and how water from the National Highway and surrounding areas will be safely managed. Water harvesting structures will also be provided in loop areas and other suitable locations, particularly with no natural outlet for rainwater. Special arrangements will be made to manage water around underpasses flyovers depressed medians and other structures, helping to prevent water logging and damage to the National Highway infrastructure. Drainage plans will clearly identify water disposal points and provide suitable arrangements for managing rainwater from the high-speed National Highways and surrounding areas. The guidelines will significantly contribute towards development of safer, more sustainable and future-ready High Speed National Highway corridors across the country.

Special Campaign 6: Ministry of Coal Targets E-Waste Disposal, Scrap Management and Workplace Modernization

New Delhi: The Ministry of Coal is set to spearhead Special Campaign 6 from 2nd October to 31st October 2026, focusing on the systematic collection, segregation, and scientific disposal of e-waste across all its administrative offices and Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs). Reaffirming its commitment to environmental responsibility and the national vision of converting 'waste into wealth,' the month-long initiative prioritizes workplace modernization, optimal office space utilization, accelerated digitalization, and scrap disposal. Through these efforts, the Ministry aims to foster clean, sustainable, and citizen-centric governance while reinforcing robust institutional mechanisms. During Preparatory Phase of Special Campaign 6, Smt. Chetna Shukla, DDG, Shri Robin Gangte, DS, and officers reviewed the record room at Lok Nayak Bhavan on 23.09.2026. The exercise focused on systematic categorization of files and identification of outdated or redundant records for timely weeding out helping streamline record management, improving accessibility and optimizing cleared spaces for productive use. As part of this nationwide initiative, WCL has conducted Nukkad Natak at HQ, Nagpur on E-Waste Management on 22.09.2026 spreading awareness on responsible collection, segregation, recycling and scientific disposal of e-waste. The Ministry, along with its CPSEs, CCO, and CMPFO, is actively identifying sites for cleanliness drives, disposing of scrap and redundant items, addressing pending references, grievances, and appeals, as well as streamlining space and record management. These initiatives reinforce operational efficiency, transparency, and effective waste management, reaffirming the Government's commitment to sustainable administrative practices.



Amroha Gangrape Case: 4 Cops Arrested

Lucknow: Four security personnel — two from the Uttar Pradesh Police and two from the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) — have been arrested after a woman from Haryana alleged that she was gangraped at a farmhouse in Amroha's Hasanpur area. The alleged incident took place on the night of September 22. The accused include a sub-inspector and a head constable posted at Hasanpur police station, along with a CRPF inspector and a head constable. According to police, the 24-year-old woman from Fatehabad, Haryana, had been invited to Uttar Pradesh on the pretext of visiting religious places. Amroha Superintendent of Police Lakhan Singh Yadav said the woman was contacted by a female acquaintance on September 20 and asked to meet CRPF

Inspector Mohit, a resident of Saurang village in Muzaffarnagar district. The woman allegedly met Mohit in Sonapat, Haryana, on September 21. The two then travelled to Meerut, where CRPF Head Constable Lalaram Yadav, who is from Rajasthan's Alwar district, reportedly joined them. On the evening of September 22, Mohit and Yadav allegedly drove the woman towards Hasanpur. On the way, they picked up Uttar Pradesh Police Sub-Inspector Sanjay Tomar. Police said the three men subsequently took the woman to a farmhouse situated along the Atrasi-Hasanpur road and rented two rooms. As per the complaint, Uttar Pradesh Police Head Constable Pramod arranged food and liquor at the farmhouse. The woman alleged that Mohit, Lalaram Yadav and

Sanjay Tomar sexually assaulted her one after another. She further alleged that Pramod later entered the room and attempted to assault her. The woman reportedly managed to push him out before locking herself inside the room. She then searched online for the police helpline number and contacted authorities. She alerted the police at around 6 am on Wednesday, following which teams from the Hasanpur and Rajabpur police stations reached the farmhouse. The woman was taken to safety and all four accused were apprehended, according to officials. Police have registered an FIR based on the woman's complaint under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) concerning abduction or enticement and gangrape.

Iran Goes Filmy To Mock Trump, Shares Clip From Telugu Movie



Iran's Embassy in Zimbabwe has used a clip of a Telugu action movie to mock US President Donald Trump's comments about annihilating Iran while claiming the country is not defenceless. Continuing its trend of using memes to target the United States and its president, the embassy sarcastically accused the Trump administration of watching Bollywood movies instead of Hollywood. "Trump talks about annihilating Iran. But he knows Iran is not defenseless. Since we informed they have recently been watching Bollywood instead of Hollywood", the embassy said in the post. The 58-second clip, starring Telugu actor Nandamuri Balakrishna, from the movie Bhagavanth Kesari, shows an intense standoff scene between two groups of men armed with rifles, riot shields and other weapons. Trump threatened to "anni-

hilate" Iran during his address at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on Tuesday. Presenting what he framed as a "big decision" regarding the ongoing seven-month conflict, Trump stated he is weighing whether to allow a deal that would let Iran rebuild or to "annihilate the Islamic Republic and do it quickly." While addressing the UNGA, Trump questioned, "I have a big decision to make. Will a deal be made with Iran that lets them rebuild and create a far greater country than it ever was before, maybe one of the greatest in the Middle East or even the world?" Then added, "Or do I annihilate the Islamic Republic and do it quickly, never giving them a chance to kill and destroy people and countries again?"

US-Iran Talks Held For 3 Hours

Meanwhile, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian

has traveled to New York and is scheduled to address the assembly on Wednesday in his first speech since the US and Israel launched the war in February. A spokesperson for Iran's Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday Iran had maintained its negotiating stance in talks with US officials, demanding the United States end its blockade on Iranian ports and release Iran's frozen assets. Esmail Baghaei said the indirect talks took place via Qatari mediators on the sidelines of the UNGA. An Iranian delegation held first direct talks with senior US officials on the sidelines of the UNGA, hours after American President Donald Trump threatened to "annihilate" the Islamic republic if a deal isn't reached soon to end the nearly seven-month war. The unexpected engagement between the longtime enemies came as the Ira-

nian delegation went to New York for the annual UN meet. The US president said after his address that his chief envoys, Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, met for about three hours with the Iranian officials on the sidelines of the annual gathering of world leaders. Trump said it was "a very good meeting," and further talks were set to take place in "the near future." He later added that the Iranian officials were "not the highest level, but it's something."

Trump Open To Meeting Pezeshkian

Earlier Tuesday, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Trump is open to meeting with Iran's president, Masoud Pezeshkian, while he's in New York for the General Assembly. "This is a president that will meet with anybody for the most part, because he believes that engaging with people is important if you're going to solve problems," Rubio said on NBC's "Today" show. "It doesn't mean you're going to end up agreeing with them, but it's important." As a charter member of the United Nations, Iran has participated in this global diplomatic forum for decades, represented most recently by Pezeshkian and formerly by Ebrahim Raisi. However, Iran's presence for the UNGA in New York, at a time when the US is at war with the Islamic Republic is unprecedented.

Explosions Near Hormuz As Trump Says "Had Good Talks" With Iranian Delegation



Washington:An Iranian delegation held first direct talks with senior US officials on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, hours after American President Donald Trump threatened to "annihilate" the Islamic republic if a deal isn't reached soon to end the nearly seven-month war. The unexpected engagement between the longtime enemies came as the Iranian delegation went to New York for the annual United Nations General Assembly. The US president said after his address that his chief envoys, Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, met for about three hours with the Iranian officials on the sidelines of the annual gathering of world leaders. Trump said it was "a very good meeting," and further talks were set to take place in "the near future." He later added that the Iranian officials were "not the highest level, but it's something." Iranian state television, however, reported that foreign minister Abbas Araghchi was part of the delegation that attended the first direct talks between the US and Iran since late June. Witkoff, meanwhile, said in a post on X that the talks were conducted through mediators who shuttled between the US and Iranian teams. He added that he was hopeful the effort "will prove constructive and promising." The engagement comes after months of US-Iran communications languishing following the collapse of a short-lived ceasefire that

was brokered in June. US and Iranian negotiators met separately with Qatari and Pakistani mediators in Doha in early July for indirect talks.

Explosions Heard In Iran

Even while the Iranian delegation was engaged in peace talks with the US counterpart, Iranian media reported that the sound of an explosion was heard near Qeshm Island in the Strait of Hormuz. State news agency IRNA reported that the cause and impact of the explosion were not immediately clear. Qeshm Island has been the site of several reported explosions since the US-Israeli war on Iran started in February. The nearly seven-month war has disrupted global energy prices and has shattered Iran's economy, prompting a currency crisis in the Islamic Republic.

Trump Open To Talks

Earlier Tuesday, Secretary of State Marco Rubio

said Trump is open to meeting with Iran's president, Masoud Pezeshkian, while he's in New York for the General Assembly. "This is a president that will meet with anybody for the most part, because he believes that engaging with people is important if you're going to solve problems," Rubio said on NBC's "Today" show. "It doesn't mean you're going to end up agreeing with them, but it's important." Trump also met with leaders and senior officials from Gulf Cooperation Council nations — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates — as well as Jordan to discuss the way ahead with the war in Iran. In his address to the General Assembly, Trump made the case that he's shown fortitude while other leaders have equivocated as he defended his decision to start a war with Iran. But he also suggested that he could be at a crossroads in

the conflict even as he called on the Islamic Republic to fully reopen the Strait of Hormuz and return to the negotiating table to find a settlement to end the conflict. "I have a big decision to make," Trump said. "Will a deal be made with Iran that lets them rebuild and create a far greater country than it ever was before, maybe one of the greatest in the Middle East or even the world. Or do I annihilate the Islamic Republic and do it quickly, never giving them a chance to kill and destroy people and countries again?" "I have no interest in leaving dangers to grow for another day," he added. The visit to the UN comes as Trump's foreign policy approach -- particularly his decision to start a war with Iran -- has become a drag on his fellow Republicans' hopes of retaining control of both chambers of Congress during the coming midterm elections.

PM Modi May Visit US For G20 Summit, Bilateral With Trump On Cards

Washington:Prime Minister Narendra Modi will travel to the United States, Canada, and Europe for a four-nation tour in December for key strategic bilateral and multilateral engagements, which sources said could be a significant step towards deepening economic and strategic partnerships with both nations. Trade deals are likely to be the top agenda for the visit to the three nations.

Germany

The tour is likely to start with a visit to Berlin, where PM Modi could participate in the India-Germany Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC), sources told NDTV.

US

He could next travel to the United States, where he is likely to participate and lead the Indian delegation at the annual G20 summit, scheduled to be held on December 14-15 at Trump National Doral in Miami, Florida. During the meeting, sources said, PM Modi could meet US President Donald Trump and discuss bilateral ties. Efforts are also underway to organise the long-pending QUAD leaders' summit on the sidelines between the US, India, Australia, and Japan, yet there is no official confirmation yet. While a bilateral meeting between PM Modi and Trump on the sidelines would potentially be the highlight of the visit, there is still uncertainty about the conclusion of the US-India trade deal, which has seen several intense rounds of negotiations in New Delhi as well as Washington DC in the backdrop of tariffs imposed on India. The recent signing of the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act into law threatens fresh tariffs up to 100 per cent on India, which may impose further impediments on the trade talks, sources said. "Last week, in honour of Senator Lindsey Graham, I signed a powerful new law passed by Congress providing me

with enormous new tariff authorities, and if necessary, I will use them," Trump declared while addressing the UN General Assembly in New York on Tuesday. Meanwhile, US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor remains confident that the US-India trade talks will also conclude soon, no official timeline has been released by either side. PM Modi and Trump last met on June 17 on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in Evian, France, where they reviewed developments in India-US cooperation, including trade, defence, energy, and technology, and discussed negotiations for an interim bilateral trade agreement.

Canada

In the next leg of the tour, PM Modi is planning to visit Canada to finalise the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). Though New Delhi is yet to confirm the details, Canada's Prime Minister, Mark Carney, has said that India had, to his understanding, confirmed that PM Modi would visit Canada around that time. He said the precise date had not been finalised, but added that he and PM Modi had committed to try to conclude CEPA negotiations by the G20. "We are making good progress in our trade negotiations with India," Carney said at a news conference on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. PM Modi's Canada visit is seen as a major reset between the two countries. Canadian Minister for International Trade Maninder Sidhu, who was recently in Mumbai for several rounds of trade talks, said the goal under CEPA is to more than double that to \$70 billion by 2030. "From agriculture and agri-food to energy, critical minerals, AI and tech, aerospace, and defence, a CEPA can open more doors for Canadian businesses in one of the world's largest and fastest-growing markets," he said. A CEPA between



India and Canada could be a major milestone in the relationship, which has seen troublesome time in the last few years due to the Canadian government's soft approach towards Khalistani extremist elements and unsubstantiated allegations against India inside the Canadian Parliament by former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who was subsequently removed from power in previous elections. The pragmatic approach of Prime Minister Mark Carney, appreciated by diplomats in New Delhi, has put the relationship into a new phase of warmth and mutual respect.

Belgium

PM Modi is likely to end the summit with a visit to Belgium, where he could hold bilateral talks with Bel-

gian Prime Minister Bart De Wever. While the India-EU mother of all deals was declared early this year, it's awaiting political ratification at the EU Parliament, which is likely to happen by December for the main signing and implementation phase. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, along with EU leadership, is likely to sign the deal at a grand event in Brussels. While India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is yet to formally announce the visits, preparations have been underway in Brussels, Ottawa, and Washington for the visits. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to engage with industry leaders, tech giants, and the Indian community during these visits.

Trump Pitches India-Middle East-Europe Corridor As Solution To Iran Problem



Washington:US President Donald Trump has voiced strong support for the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), saying it would help shift the energy infrastructure away from Iranian checkpoints. The US leader made the remarks while addressing a multilateral meeting with the Gulf Cooperation Council on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session. "Iran's terrorist attacks on commercial shipping in neighbouring countries have shown the need to shift Middle East energy infrastructure away

from the Iranian checkpoints," Trump said. "That is why my administration strongly supports the India-Middle East Economic Corridor and other places to get oil out, whether it is pipeline or anything else. Together we are on the verge of overcoming challenges that have plagued this region for a decade," he added. The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor is an ambitious multinational multi-modal connectivity and infrastructure initiative that was officially unveiled in September 2023, during the G20 Summit in

New Delhi. India, the United States, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, France, Germany, Italy, and the European Union signed a memorandum setting out plans for rail, shipping, energy, and digital links. The proposed corridor comprises an eastern route connecting India with the Gulf and a northern route connecting the Gulf with Europe. The arrangement will include a railway route that will act as a cost-effective cross-border ship-to-rail transit network to supplement existing maritime and road transport routes. The

members also want to lay a cable for energy and digital connectivity, along with a pipe for clean hydrogen export. The corridor aims to boost connectivity, trade, and sustainability across South Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. It is also seen as a strategic alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative and Iran-controlled chokepoints that could slash transit times between India and Europe by more than half by shortening trade routes, improving regional connectivity, and encouraging closer economic integration across three regions. The disruption of the world's most significant maritime chokepoint, the Strait of Hormuz, has propelled a renewed surge of support for a new energy corridor. The IMEC, however, remains an expression of intent rather than concrete action amid political dynamics arising from the Iran and Gaza conflict, regional security, and cross-border coordination. According to the IMEC website, construction of key infrastructure components such as new rail lines, ports and highways have begun. However, there is no mention of major milestones or targeted timelines.

Trump Threatens Iran's Annihilation

Further, echoing his earlier remarks at the UN General Assembly, the US President once again warned Iran of annihilation. "We've isolated Iran financially, and hopefully they'll do the right thing fast...There will be a time when it's too late, and we won't have the chance of letting them survive as a nation. I would like to see that, and I can tell you that people around this table would like to see it," he said. But at the same time, Trump added that the US Operation Midnight Hammer last year had obliterated its nuclear programme now under mountains of rubble.

Iranians Have Been "Victims Of Terrorism" By US: Pezeshkian at UN



In his first speech at the United Nations General Assembly since Washington and Tel Aviv launched a war on Tehran, Iranian President Masoud

Pezeshkian on Wednesday said that his people have been 'victims of terrorism' by the United States. While addressing the UNGA, he held up photos of Iran's

former Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei that the US assassinated on the first day of the war, February 28 and the 150 school children who were killed by

a US strike. "The President of the United States called us terrorists. We have been the victims of terrorism", he said. "I come from an Iran where our esteemed Supreme Leader was assassinated without any legal justification or reason. I come from an Iran where a school was bombed. You see these children? These children perished in bombings with weapons used by the US and Israel. They were innocent", Pezeshkian added.

The 71-year-old leader said that Iran only defended itself with "utmost strength" when the US and Israel attacked them.

Striking a defiant tone, Pezeshkian said, that US President Donald Trump should know that Iran's resistance will increase as America ramps up its sanctions, pressure and "bullying". "(US President Donald Trump) must know that the resistance of the Iranian people will only increase in the face of sanctions, increased pressure, increased bullying. We will never bow our head or bend at the knee," Pezeshkian said. When the Iranian leader was delivering his speech, the US delegation walked out of the UN General Assembly.

Rekha Gupta govt's big action against adulteration: Over 4,100 kg suspected khoya-paneer destroyed in Delhi



New Delhi :The Delhi Government has intensified its crackdown on adulterated and unsafe food products ahead of the festive season, with more than 4,100 kg of suspected adulterated khoya and paneer destroyed during enforcement drives over the past month. The campaign is being conducted under the directions of Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, with the Food Safety Department carrying out inspections across major markets and food-selling points in the national capital. The drive covers milk-based products such as khoya, paneer, chhena and ghee.

Over 4,100 kg of sus-

pected khoya, paneer destroyed

According to the Delhi Government, the Food Safety Department has conducted continuous inspections at several locations, including Okhla Sabzi Mandi, Mori Gate Khoya Mandi, Bagh Diwar, Sanjay Market, Chhoti Sabzi Mandi in Janakpuri, Mochi Market in Shahdara, Ghazipur and Jheel. During these inspections, more than 4,100 kg of khoya and paneer suspected to be adulterated were identified and destroyed. The action was taken to prevent the products from being sold in the market and potentially posing a health risk to consum-

ers. The department has also conducted online inspections and instructed food business operators to follow prescribed food safety and hygiene standards and sell only products that meet the required standards.

22 of 30 khoya samples found unsafe

The inspection at Mori Gate Khoya Mandi found violations during sample testing. A total of 30 khoya samples were collected from the market. Of these, 22 samples were found to be unsafe for human consumption and failed to meet the prescribed standards. Similarly, 19 samples of paneer and chhena were collected.

Seven samples conformed to the prescribed standards, while 12 failed to meet the required standards.

Following the reported violations, the Food Safety Department has initiated prosecution proceedings against the concerned food business operators under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

Food safety inspections continue across Delhi

The enforcement drive continued on Wednesday, with teams inspecting several markets and food-selling points across the capital. The department carried out inspections at Khari Baoli, Okhla Sabzi Mandi, the Jheel area of East Delhi and Janakpuri Mandi in West Delhi. Officials are also collecting surveillance samples of suspected food products for testing. The Delhi Government said the special drive will continue throughout the festive season. Inspections, food-quality checks, sample collection and legal action against businesses found violating food safety requirements will be intensified. The government has also appealed to food business

operators to comply with prescribed food safety and hygiene standards and sell only safe and quality food products.

Rekha Gupta warns against food adulteration

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said festivals are a time for celebration and that demand for sweets and milk-based products rises during this period.

According to the Delhi Government, Gupta said those who put people's health at risk through adulteration would face strict action under the law. She reiterated that adulteration would not be tolerated and that there would be no compromise on the quality of food products in Delhi. Gupta has directed the Food Safety Department to conduct regular inspections in markets, collect samples of suspected food products and take action against food business operators found guilty during testing. The Delhi Government said the intensive enforcement campaign will continue through the festive season to check the quality of food products being sold across the national capital.

NSE IPO Listing: How much listing gain can investors expect? Anil Singhvi's sell-or-hold strategy



New Delhi :The Rs 22,568-crore initial public offering of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) is set to list on September 24, after receiving strong demand from investors. The issue was subscribed 5.71 times, with bids for 50.58 crore shares against 8.86 crore shares on offer, according to BSE data.

The Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIB) portion was subscribed 12.68 times, while the non-institutional investors' category received 6.55 times subscription. The retail portion was subscribed 1.39 times.

Ahead of the listing, Zee Business Managing Editor Anil Singhvi said investors should keep their expectations moderate on listing gains and look at NSE from a longer-term perspective.

NSE IPO listing: What does Anil Singhvi expect?

Singhvi said the NSE stock could see a mildly positive listing but ruled out expectations of a sharp jump to Rs 2,000-2,100. "The issue price is Rs 1,785. Around six times the issue was subscribed, and the response was good," Singhvi said. He said investors should consider the size of the IPO and the shares already held by existing shareholders while assessing the listing. According to Singhvi, a 4-5 per cent premium would be a good listing for the NSE IPO. At the upper issue price of Rs 1,785, a 5 per cent premium translates into a gain of about Rs 89 per share. For 8 shares, this would mean an estimated profit of around Rs 712 on the minimum retail investment of Rs 14,280. Singhvi also said investors should not base their expectations only on the grey market premium. He has maintained that the NSE IPO should be viewed from a long-term perspective rather than only for listing gains.

NSE IPO: What should short-term investors do?

Singhvi said investors looking for listing gains should keep their expectations moderate. "If you are a short-term investor, you should book profit on listing," Singhvi said. He said if NSE lists at a premium of around 5-10 per cent, short-term investors can consider booking profits. Singhvi also pointed out that large and liquid IPOs generally have a large number of shares available for trading. Therefore, investors should not automatically expect very high listing gains.

The NSE IPO received bids worth nearly Rs 90,300 crore against the issue size of around Rs 22,568 crore. The IPO was fully subscribed on the second day of bidding.

The issue is India's second-largest IPO after Hyundai Motor India's Rs 27,870-crore public issue in 2024. It is larger than LIC's Rs 21,000-crore IPO

in 2022. The IPO comprises an Offer for Sale (OFS) of up to 12.64 crore equity shares by existing shareholders. Since it is entirely an OFS, the proceeds will go to the selling shareholders and not to NSE.

NSE IPO: What should long-term investors do?

For long-term investors, Singhvi said there is no need to sell immediately after listing. "If you are a long-term investor, hold it," Singhvi said.

He said investors should not be concerned if the stock moves up or down after listing. According to him, long-term investors can review the stock after the six-month period when the relevant lock-in restrictions open. Singhvi also said the delay in NSE's IPO has worked in favour of several existing shareholders. NSE's listing plans had remained stalled for nearly a decade amid regulatory issues, including those related to the co-location controversy. Singhvi said investors who had acquired NSE shares years ago will now see their notional wealth become tradable market value after the listing. "The IPO came late, but for many investors this delay has been positive," Singhvi said. The exchange had earlier

planned a larger OFS of 14.9 crore shares, but the size was reduced to 12.64 crore shares. This brought down the issue size from the earlier estimate of around Rs 30,000 crore.

At the upper end of the price band of Rs 1,700-1,785, NSE is valued at up to around Rs 4.42 lakh crore. Singhvi also highlighted the lock-in conditions for existing shareholders. He said it would be incorrect to assume that every existing shareholder has to wait six months before selling NSE shares. According to his reading of the DRHP, certain categories of investors that meet the applicable holding-period conditions can sell their shares from the listing day. Singhvi specifically mentioned Category I AIFs, Category II AIFs, venture capital funds and foreign venture capital funds. Individual investors have different restrictions, he said. Even if an individual investor has held NSE shares for several years, the applicable six-month condition can still apply to them. "This is something which is clearly written in the DRHP and has to be read properly," Singhvi said. He said the presence of investors who can sell earlier means there will be additional supply available in the market.

India's Grade A mall vacancy falls to 5% in H1 2026: How NCR, MMR and other top cities compare

New Delhi :India's Grade A Mall Vacancy: Grade A mall vacancy across India's top seven cities fell to a five-year low of 5 per cent in H1 2026, down from more than 7.5 per cent at the end of 2025 and 15.5 per cent in 2021, according to ANAROCK Retail's Retail Real Estate Monitor.

However, vacancy levels varied sharply across major retail markets. Delhi-NCR recorded the highest Grade A mall vacancy among the seven cities at 7 per cent, almost double the 4 per cent vacancy reported in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR).

The gap between the two largest retail markets stood at 3 percentage points in H1 2026. Across the seven cities, vacancy ranged from just 1.3 per cent in Kolkata to 7 per cent in NCR.

Kolkata records lowest mall vacancy

Kolkata recorded the lowest Grade A mall vacancy among the top seven cities at 1.3 per cent, indicating near-full occupancy. Pune followed with a vacancy rate of 3.5 per cent. Bengaluru, MMR and Hyderabad each recorded 4 per cent vacancy, while Chennai stood at 6 per cent. NCR reported the highest vacancy at 7 per cent.

Six of the seven cities recorded a further 60-basis-point quarter-on-quarter decline in mall vacancy, pointing to broad-based tightening in the organised retail market. Chennai was the exception, with vacancy edging up marginally in Q2 2026.

MMR mall vacancy at 4% despite no new supply

MMR recorded a 4 per cent Grade A mall vacancy in H1 2026 despite having no new mall supply added during Q2 2026. The region recorded the highest leasing volume among the tracked cities at 0.65 million sq ft. Entertainment and fashion & apparel led leasing activity in MMR, followed by food and beverage. Malls also accounted for a larger share of leasing than high streets during the quarter. Anuj Kejriwal, CEO-Retail & CEO-Europe, Middle East & Africa, ANAROCK Group, said MMR's vacancy level came despite the absence of new mall supply and strong leasing activity. "MMR's 4 per cent vacancy in H1 2026 came without a single square foot of new mall supply hitting the market in Q2 2026 even as MMR, at 0.65 Mn sq ft., saw the highest leasing volume of all tracked cities," Kejriwal said. He added that rental momentum was strongest on Linking Road, where rents rose 20 per cent year-on-year (YoY), with monthly rents ranging from Rs 1,000-1,500 per sq ft. NCR has highest mall vacancy despite new supply Delhi-NCR presented a contrasting picture. The region recorded the highest mall vacancy among the seven cities at 7 per cent, even though it was the only market to receive notable new mall supply in Q2 2026.

Around 0.90 million sq ft of new mall space was added in NCR during the quarter, the highest among the tracked cities.



work. The targeted disposal of buffer stock through NAFED and NCCF began on August 24, 2026, with supplies being sent to different parts of the country based on market requirements. So far, buffer-stock onions have been supplied to more than 100 cities across the country. "So far, onions from the buffer stock have been supplied to more than 100 cities across the country. The use of both rail and road transport has enabled the Government to move onions in larger quantities while responding to regional requirements in a timely manner," the ministry said.

According to the ministry, onion retail prices remained stable or declined in 17 States/UTs over the past week, indicating improved availability following the buffer stock interventions. States/UTs where onion prices declined during the week include Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Bihar. "During the past one week, retail onion prices remained stable or declined in 17 States/UTs, indicating an improvement

in market availability following the buffer stock interventions. Among the States/UTs where onion prices declined during the past week are Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Bihar," the ministry said. The government said it is continuing to monitor onion availability and prices across major consuming markets and will undertake calibrated releases from the buffer stock as required, including during the upcoming festive season.

NTPC pays final dividend for FY26; Total payout reaches Rs 8,727 crore

New Delhi :NTPC Ltd. paid a final dividend of Rs.3,393.83 Crore on 23rd September 2026 for FY 2025-26, representing 35% of the Company's paid-up equity share capital. This is in addition to the first and second interim dividends for FY 2025-26 of Rs.2,666.58 Crore each, paid in November 2025 and February 2026, respectively. With this, the total dividend paid for FY 2025-26 amounts to Rs.8,727 Crore, equivalent to Rs.9.00 per equity share of face value Rs.10 each. This is the 33rd Consecutive year that NTPC Ltd. has paid a dividend. The company had given the final dividend of Rs 3.50 per share for the financial year 2025-26 with the record date of September 02, 2026. Shares of NTPC

Ltd slipped 0.15 per cent on Wednesday to close at Rs 326.50 per share, against the previous day close at Rs 327.00 per share.

NTPC Q1FY27 remains better-than-expectations

NTPC reported a standalone net profit of Rs 5,342 crore for the June quarter, marking a rise of 11.9 per cent over the corresponding period a year ago. Its revenue increased 3.0 per cent on a year-on-year basis to Rs 43,832 crore, according to a regulatory filing. While the PAT exceeded analyst estimates, the top line fell short of estimates. The company clinched a 22.8 per cent jump in first-quarter EBITDA to Rs 12,628 crore, higher than the Rs 11,777 crore that analysts had anticipated. The PSU's quarterly margin --

a key measure of profitability -- expanded to 28.8 per cent versus 24.2 per cent a year ago. Analysts had pegged the PSU's quarterly EBITDA at Rs 11,777 crore and its margin at 26.8 per cent. Revenue from the core power generation business expanded 2.7 per cent to Rs 42,912 crore. The segment profit declined 4.9 per cent to Rs 8,098.1 crore. The company added 196 MW of capacity during the quarter on a year-on-year basis, taking its installed capacity to 60,992 MW. Its capacity had stood at 60,796 MW at the end of the final quarter of FY26 and 60,978 MW as of June 30, 2025. NTPC informed that its installed capacity rose 10 per cent on a year-on-year basis to 90,904 MW on a ground level, with an average tariff of Rs



4.86 per kilowatt hour (kWh) logging for Q1 of FY27 versus Rs 4.87 a year ago. The average tariff included a fixed charge of Rs 1.78 in Q1 FY27 versus Rs 1.75 in the year-ago period. Average tariff is a key metric that determines the fee that a power generator levies for each unit of electricity sold.

About NTPC

NTPC Limited is India's largest integrated power utility with an installed capacity of over 91 GW, with another 35+ GW under construction. The com-

pany has set a target to reach 149 GW of total capacity by 2032, including 60 GW from renewable energy sources. This includes a balanced mix of thermal, hydro, solar, and wind power plants, ensuring the supply of reliable, affordable, and sustainable electricity to the country.

Along with power generation, NTPC has ventured into various new business areas, including e-mobility, storage, waste-to-energy, nuclear power, and green hydrogen solutions.

India's batting will face key test in New Zealand, says Gambhir



New Delhi: India head coach Gautam Gambhir said he expects early summer conditions in New Zealand to present a stern examination for his developing Test side, but insisted the Shubman Gill-led team has the quality to take 20 wickets in any part of the world and qualify for the World Test Championship (WTC) final, to be held in 2027. India are scheduled to play a two-match Test series in New Zealand from November 19 to December 1 in Wellington and Christchurch. India are placed fifth in the WTC standings and will also face current table-toppers Australia at home in five Border-Gavaskar Trophy Tests in January-February 2027. India need to win their remaining WTC fixtures if they are to enter the final. Before this, India A will play three four-day matches against New Zealand A from October

24 to November 10 in Lincoln, Christchurch and Lincoln. "That's not true that we need to win six games, because we can manage with five as well. But again, because Australia is playing South Africa, then South Africa is playing England, and New Zealand is playing Australia. But more importantly, it's about every Test match that you want to go out there and win – as simple as it can get. "It's about winning both the series. If we can go on to win both the series which are going to be in front of us, we will give ourselves the best chance to qualify for the World Test Championship. "Till the time we've got that opportunity and chance of reaching the World Test Championship final, we will always be optimistic. That's the kind of person I am, that even if you've got the slim-est of chance, we've got to

go out there and give our everything possible," said Gambhir to JioStar ahead of the start of India's home season via three ODIs and five T20Is against the West Indies. Detailing the historical significance of the tour, Gambhir noted that a series win in New Zealand would mark a monumental achievement for the young team. India last won a Test series in New Zealand in 2008/09, when Gambhir himself played a match-saving 137 in a 643-minute marathon knock in Napier. "More importantly, I think we've got two massive series coming up. If we can go on to win both the series, it's going to be a massive feather in the cap. If a young side like this can go and do that, it's going to be a huge, huge achievement and then Australia at home for five Test matches is never easy. "So I

know we've got our task cut out, but I'm sure we're going to go out there and probably prepare to the best of our ability and try and give everything possible. What better achievement than that?" he added. Addressing the unique challenge posed by the scheduling of the New Zealand multi-format tour, Gambhir pointed out how weather and pitch behaviour will test India's top order.

"Before that against Australia, it's New Zealand, because the conditions are going to challenge us. And this probably is the first time when we are going to New Zealand in October, November. "Normally we go December, January, or January, February, which probably is late summer. This is going to be early summer, so the conditions are going to be completely different to what normally we've experienced in New Zealand. So that's going to be a massive challenge," he added. On the composition of the Test side, Gambhir stated that India are nearing a settled batting lineup and possess a potent bowling group capable of dismantling opposition batting line-ups. "I think we are getting there, that now we are getting into that settled batting lineup. Whether it is at home, whether it is away, we've got two openers who are pretty much settled. We've got obviously Dev (Devdutt Padikkal) who has done phenomenally well in Sri Lanka, then we've got a settled number four and five, and then we've got Dhruv (Jurel) getting 100.

Gambhir highlights preparation and mental strength ahead of Australia Tests

New Delhi: India head coach Gautam Gambhir believes mental toughness and the ability to absorb pressure will hold the key for India's young batting lineup when they face Australia's formidable bowling attack in the five-match Border-Gavaskar Trophy series, to be played from January 21 to March 3, 2027. Australia's marquee bowling group comprising Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Nathan Lyon will pose a stern examination for the Indian batters when the matches are played in Nagpur, Chennai, Guwahati, Ranchi and Ahmedabad. India last won the series at home in 2023 by a 2-1 margin. "Looking forward to it. That is probably one thing which I'm absolutely looking forward to, because playing against Australia at home, and obviously it wasn't the best when we went to Australia. And for me, I think it is going to be India versus Australia, but before that, it is New Zealand. But the other challenge against Australia will be their experienced bowling attack. "They've got the likes of obviously Starc, Nathan Lyon, Cummins and Hazlewood. Obviously, they've got so much experience of playing Test cricket against our young batting lineup. So it's going to be a great experience for these guys. "More importantly, in Test cricket, it's about the skill, but it's about how mentally strong and how much pressure you can absorb. The more pressure you absorb, and the more pressure you embrace, it's going to give yourself the best chance," Gambhir told JioStar ahead of the start of India's home season, which begins with three ODIs and five T20Is against the West Indies. Reflecting on India's preparation for the tough Test assignments at home, Gambhir pointed to their recent tour of Sri Lanka as proof that adequate lead time and targeted preparation for facing spinners can produce clear results on the field. "But you could see that in Sri Lanka, we played two Test matches, and we got more than 400 runs in both the innings. And the reason was that we prepared extremely well. We went 10 days before the Test match, we could



prepare playing spin, and then you could see the results as well. "The thing is, I'm not going to give any excuses, but that's the reality. When we played the Test series against South Africa, we were coming after playing a T20 series from Australia. And we had two days before the first Test match. I remember coming from Brisbane, and then we reached Calcutta. We had two practice sessions, and we were straightaway into the Test match against South Africa. "Against the West Indies, obviously we did manage to win that series, but we came after winning the Asia Cup, and we had two days of practice sessions in Ahmedabad, and we were right straight into the Test match and now you could see the difference. "When we went to Sri Lanka early, you could see the way guys played spin, because Sri Lanka isn't easy conditions. In their own backyard, the weather, their spinners, their experienced spinners against our batting lineup. "If you can get 400-plus in both the innings in both the Test matches, that just shows that there is a lot of improvement happening. So we will have to prepare well before New Zealand and before Australia, and obviously the focus is on spin, yes, that how well can we manage and how well can we negate spin," he explained. Gambhir also stated that young cricketers making

their mark in the national setup must prioritise red-ball cricket over short-format monetary gains, citing Devdutt Padikkal and Manav Suthar as examples. "Extremely important, because both of them are young, both of them are hungry, both of them value Test cricket. "It is so important for the next generation who's coming in to value Test cricket, because in today's day and age, with so much of focus and so much of limelight and so much of monetary gains that are associated with T20 cricket, how we can keep Test cricket divine, and above the other two formats is going to be key. "Also, how much value a young generation or the new guys coming in gives that red-ball cricket is going to be key. That's why I said, a strong Test-cricketing nation is going to be a strong cricketing nation. When it comes to Manav and Dev, I think they value Test cricket, they're disciplined, hungry, and prepare really well. "And Manav, we've seen that I've got to give selectors and BCCI a lot of credit because the way they've handled Manav, for the amount of opportunities he's got, the way he's been groomed over such a long period of time, the amount of A tours he's done and bowled in different conditions... So my belief is that the better we prepare, the better opportunity we have to deliver," he concluded.

Mirabai Chanu's 12-year wait ends with Nagoya silver



Nagoya: Star Indian weightlifter Mirabai Chanu finally filled the one glaring void in her glittering trophy cabinet, turning 12 years of waiting, near-misses and heartbreak into an Asian Games silver in the women's 49kg event. The Tokyo Olympic silver medallist totalled 198kg (88kg+111kg) to claim India's first Asian Games weightlifting medal since Karnam Malleswari's silver in 1998. "Winning an Asian Games medal is a dream come true. I have been chasing this medal for the last 12 years,

since the 2014 Asian Games. My life is complete now with this medal. And I am feeling very light. It's a dream Asian Games," Chanu said after the competition. Two-time world champion Ri Song Gum of North Korea lived up to her billing, completing a hat-trick of Asian Games titles with a stunning 215kg (94kg+121kg). Ri smashed the world records in the snatch, clean and jerk and total on her way to gold, while Indonesia's Luluk Diana Tri Wijayana took bronze with 191kg (88kg+103kg).

The silver completes a collection that already includes an Olympic silver, three World Championship medals, including a gold, multiple Commonwealth Games and championships titles, and an Asian Championships bronze. But the Asian Games had repeatedly found a way to leave her empty-handed. Chanu finished ninth on her debut in 2014 and missed the 2018 edition because of a back injury. At the Hangzhou Games in 2023, she was within touching distance of the podium before a hip injury on the platform forced her to settle for fourth. There was no such drama in Nagoya. Wearing gold earrings shaped like Olympic rings that were gifted to her by her mother and a tri-coloured ribbon in her hair, Chanu walked onto the platform with a familiar target but a different sense of occasion. She opened her snatch series with 83kg, then smoothly cleared 85kg and 87kg to finish the first half of the competition in third place. In the clean and jerk, Chanu made 107kg look routine with her opening lift. She then heaved 111kg. With silver assured, she did not take her fi-

nal attempt. "I have dreamed of winning an Asian Games medal since I stepped into weightlifting. Something or the other happened before or during the Asian Games, but this time I have fulfilled my dream," she said. For Chanu, the medal also brings a brief pause after months of relentless preparation. She had returned to training the very next day after winning gold at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow last month, with Nagoya firmly in her sights. "I am yet to decide on how to go about LA 28. The qualification process starts in December. I will enjoy this medal for a while and will decide," she said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Chanu on her achievement, saying her "determination and consistency" continued to inspire the nation. "A special Silver for @mirabai_chanu! Congratulations to her on winning the medal in the Women's 49 kg Weightlifting event. Her determination and consistency continue to inspire the nation. India is proud of her. Best wishes for her future endeavours: PM @narendramodi."

Sania Mirza joins Rajasthan Rangers as brand ambassador



Hyderabad: Rajasthan Aushdhalaya Pvt. Ltd. Group, one of India's established names in Ayurvedic and herbal healthcare, has acquired the Rajasthan Rangers franchise in the Tennis Premier League (TPL) ahead of its eighth season. The franchise will operate under the leadership of Salim Diwan, Managing Director of RAPL Group, alongside Dr Sattar Diwan, Chairman of RAPL Group, and Jonu Rana, Vice-Chairman of Rajasthan Rangers, marking the group's entry into India's professional sports ecosystem. Adding further star power to the franchise, legendary Indian tennis icon Sania Mirza has joined the Rajasthan Rangers as their brand ambassador. With her

unmatched legacy, global stature and deep connection with Indian tennis, Sania brings immense value to the team's vision of building a strong and inspiring tennis ecosystem. The franchise has signed Australian tennis star Rinky Hijikata as its International Marquee Player, showcasing its commitment and vision to bring quality international tennis to India. At 25, Rinky has already won the 2023 Australian Open men's doubles title and finished runner-up in men's doubles at Wimbledon in 2025. Salim Diwan, who leads Rajasthan Aushdhalaya, sees the move into tennis as an opportunity to combine the group's legacy in wellness and healthcare with his passion for sport and his vision of

contributing to the growth of Indian tennis. With Rajasthan Aushdhalaya's journey dating back to 1952, Diwan believes the Rajasthan Rangers can become a platform that connects professional tennis with young talent, fitness, wellness and the sporting community across Rajasthan and India. Salim Diwan, Managing Director, Rajasthan Aushdhalaya Pvt. Ltd., said, "We are delighted to join the Tennis Premier League and take forward the Rajasthan Rangers. Tennis represents discipline, fitness and excellence — values that strongly align with our philosophy. Through the Rangers, we hope to support young talent and contribute meaningfully to the growth of tennis in India." Sania Mirza added, "I'm thrilled to be associated with a team that values both talent and innovation. Salim's vision aligns perfectly with what Indian tennis needs — structured, long-term investment. I'm looking forward to supporting the Rajasthan Rangers this season." Welcoming the ownership group, Kunal Thakkur, Co-Founder of TPL, said, "We are delighted to welcome Salim Diwan and RAPL Group to the TPL family. Their legacy, entrepreneurial vision and commitment to creating a positive impact make them an exciting addition to the league."

China end India's Asian Games badminton campaign in semis

Nagoya: Lakshya Sen and Ayush Shetty faltered against their higher-ranked opponents as the Indian men's badminton team signed off with a bronze medal after going down 1-3 to nemesis China in the semifinals of the Asian Games. India had won the silver medal at the last edition in Hangzhou in 2023, where they had also lost to China in the final. Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty were the only Indians to win a match as China once again got the better of India.

World No. 14 Lakshya, who had produced a stirring performance to take India to the semi-



could not maintain the required discipline and lost 19-21, 13-21 to world No. 12 Li Shi Feng in the second singles as India fell 1-2 behind. The responsibility

to keep India afloat then fell on Hariharan Amsakarunan and M R Arjun, who took on the scratch pair of He Ji Ting and Liu Yi in the second doubles.

Bhansali's Love & War With Animal Coded Blood

The makers of Ranbir Kapoor's Love & War have officially announced the release date of the much-awaited film. Directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali, the film will arrive in theatres on January 21, 2027.

The new poster has already created curiosity, showcasing Ranbir Kapoor in a stylish and intense avatar. With an injured hand, Ranbir is seen driving a car in a dramatic frame that gives the film a modern, action-oriented feel.

The poster looks cool and completely different from the usual Bhansali visual style, but there is no denying the fact that it is also inspired by Sandeep Vanga's Animal poster, which also showcased Ranbir with an injured arm. However, one needs to see how violent Ranbir's role is in this film.

Interestingly, Love & War marks Ranbir Kapoor's reunion with Sanjay Leela Bhansali after their debut collaboration, Saawariya. Unlike several of his recent films, Love & War is not a costume drama, though it has a period setup. Ranbir Kapoor and Vicky Kaushal play pilots



in this romantic drama.

The film also features Alia Bhatt and Vicky Kaushal in important lead roles, making it one of the most talked-about combinations in Bollywood. Ranbir is currently riding high on the success of Animal,

which gave his career a major boost and presented him in a completely different image.

Interestingly, he will now have two contrasting films arriving within a short gap. Ramayana: Part 1, in which Ranbir plays Lord Ram, is

scheduled to release in November 2026. Just around two months later, Love & War will hit the screens. It will be interesting to see how audiences respond to Ranbir in these two completely different worlds.

Can Nag Ashwin Really Wrap Kalki 2 By Mid 2027?

Filmmaker Nag Ashwin has confirmed that regular shooting for Kalki 2898 AD Part 2 will begin in October 2026. Earlier, Nag Ashwin said he was unsure when filming would begin, but now he has more clarity on the film's progress. The shoot will start next month, and the team plans to wrap it by mid-2027. Nag Ashwin shared the latest update after his film won two National Film Awards: Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment and Best Special Effects.

Team Kalki worked very hard, especially in creating a new world. The director anticipated they would need recognition on that front. Luckily, the government announced an award for special effects, recognizing the unimaginable work they did. Moreover, the first part of Kalki found a lot of fans among kids who are eagerly waiting for the second part and are constantly bombarding the director about the commencement of the same.

In light of this, Nag Ashwin confirmed that the team is all set to hit the floors. However, the question is whether everything falls in place and whether the team can stick to the specified timelines. Prabhas is currently occupied with Fauzi and will take some time to complete



Spirit. After that, Prabhas will jump on to the sets of Kalki 2. Nag Ashwin is actually planning to wrap up the shoot as early as possible, but there are several practical constraints to adjust the dates of key cast. Having said that, Kalki is a super successful franchise and the sequel is highly awaited by all sections of audiences across the nation. With the film releasing after Fauzi and Spirit, that will only help Kalki reach a wider audiences.

Manushi Chhillar Sizzles in Sparkling Backless Black

Manushi Chhillar grabbed the Fashion Impact award at the ELLE Style Awards 2026, and she looked stunning while doing it. The former Miss World picked a black halter-neck gown with a sheer high neck and a daringly open back. The gown featured shimmering floral sequin work all over, giving the simple black look a rich texture. She teamed it with pointed black heels and diamond stud earrings. Her sleek slicked-back bun, soft smoky eyes, glossy nude lips and deep red nails kept the focus on the outfit. A bold turquoise ring added a fun pop of colour. Posing with her trophy in front of a mirror, Manushi showed off the backless design and looked totally confident. The classic black and sparkle combo proved that simple styling can still steal the show.



Shruti Haasan Rules the Frame in Florals



Shruti Haasan's latest look is turning heads, and it arrives just as her upcoming line-up gets exciting. The actress will soon be seen in Train alongside Vijay Sethupathi, and in the pan-Indian Telugu drama Aakasamlo Oka Tara with Dulquer Salmaan. Against a moody, textured backdrop, her dreamy upward gaze feels straight out of a film still. Shruti picked a black midi dress featuring a delicate print of cream roses and tiny daisies. The corset-style bodice, lace-trimmed sweetheart neckline and flowy, flared skirt give the outfit a vintage romantic touch. The styling stays minimal, loose waves, drop earrings, statement rings and pointed black pumps. Paired with a natural-glow makeup look, this floral corset moment is solid fashion inspiration for festive evenings and cocktail nights alike.

U.S. Vs Iran, But Balayya Enters The Scene!

The conflict between United States of America and Iran is yet to settled down, and it is continuing to make headlines across the globe at a large capacity. Now we are somehow finding Balakrishna in the middle of this debate that's happening on social media.

Earlier United States president, Donald Trump spoke about an annihilating Iran completely with his military power as he seemed frustrated about the Iranian resistance.

This did not go well with Iran administration as they shared every interesting message on social media regarding the conflict with the United States. This is precisely when the Iran embassy in Zimbabwe shared an interesting post on social media.

This social media handle of Iran shared a video of Nandamuri Balakrishna from Bhagwanth Kesari film and implied that Iran is ready to take on the empty threats that are being given by the U.S.

"Trump talks about annihilating Iran. But he knows Iran is not defenseless. Since we informed they have recently been watching Bollywood instead of Hollywood." The caption reads.



This video of Balakrishna from Bhagwanth Kesari has been shared by the Iran social media handle to say that they are more than prepared to defend themselves from the attacks of the U.S. Visual representation of this is given in the video that was shared earlier.

In a matter of global conscience where the United States and Iran are openly at conflict, Balayya somehow finding his way into the middle is not something that many people expected. That is the reason why this video is now going viral on social media.