

PM Modi Appeals Citizens To Participate In 'Har Ghar Tiranga' Campaign



New Delhi: As India prepares to celebrate its 80th Independence Day on August 15, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday appealed to citizens to participate in the "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign. In a video message posted on Instagram, PM Modi said, "Aiye, 15 August ko aan, baan, shaan se manaye, swatantra senaniyo ko shradanjali de," which roughly translates to, "Come, celebrate 15 August with pride and dignity, pomp and glory." He also urged citizens to take the pledge of "Viksit Bharat," concluding his video with an appeal to unfurl the tricolour at every house. He captioned his video, "Come, let us make #HarGharTiranga a celebra-

tion in every home." The Government of India has announced that Har Ghar Tiranga 2026 will be observed from August 9 to August 17.

The Har Ghar Tiranga ("Tricolour at every

home") campaign is a nationwide campaign by the government. It encourages citizens to hoist or display the Indian National Flag (the Tiranga) at their homes to celebrate Independence Day, foster pa-

triotism, and honour the country's national identity. Citizens can take part in the Har Ghar Tiranga 2026 campaign digitally by displaying the National Flag and sharing their participation online. The campaign also allows participants to upload a photograph with the Tiranga and generate a digital certificate. Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP President Nitin Nabin and other NDA leaders waved the Tiranga during the NDA's weekly parliamentary party meeting 'Mangal Milan' at Parliament Library Building (PLB).

Rajya Sabha Passes Bill To Set Up Panel To Appoint Chiefs, Members Of Tribunals

New Delhi: The Rajya Sabha on Tuesday passed a Bill to set up a National Tribunal Commission to select chairpersons and members for various tribunals across the country. The Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on Monday. Earlier, Opposition INDIA bloc parties staged a walkout from the Upper House in the post-lunch sitting after Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge was not allowed to speak by the Chair, as the Upper House debated The Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026.

Replying to the debate on the Bill, Minister for Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal said tribunals play a complementary role to ensure speedy



justice. Under the Narendra Modi government, rationalisation of Tribunals started in 2016. The government later brought the Tribunal Reforms Act in 2021. "Set-

ting up of the National Tribunal Commission is the core of this Bill. It will have two judicial members and two technical members and will be headed by a former Supreme

Court judge or a former chief justice of a High Court. The NTC will make appointments in the commission to make it transparent, independent and merit-based," said the minister.

'Don't Run Away': Kiren Rijiju Challenges Rahul Gandhi To Face Amit Shah In Parliament

New Delhi: Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Tuesday hit out at Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, saying he should not "run away" from Parliament now that Home Minister Amit Shah is ready to respond to the questions raised by him. Rijiju's remarks came amid

the ongoing confrontation between the government and the Opposition over the recent student protests and the police action against demonstrators. The issue has led to repeated disruptions in Parliament, with the Opposition demanding answers from the government and Rahul Gandhi



seeking a response from Shah. The government has now offered a debate on the issue, with the Home Minister set to respond.

In a post on social media, Rijiju said Rahul Gandhi had been demanding a response from Amit Shah for several days.

YCP Leaders' Misconduct in the Name of Bike Rallies: Minister Kollu Ravindra

From Our Staff Reporter Machilipatnam, August 11: Minister Kollu Ravindra strongly criticised YSRCP leaders, alleging that they resorted to objectionable activities in the name of bike rallies. Speaking to reporters in Machilipatnam on Tuesday, he responded to the YSRCP's protest programmes and bike rallies alleging irregularities in the Mega DSC recruitment. He alleged that the rallies were organised with the participation of rowdy elements and groups involved in ganja-related activities.

Ravindra said neither farmers nor students had participated in the protests



and bike rallies organised by the YSRCP. He launched a sharp attack on YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, alleging that he had weakened the youth. He said it was shameful for YSRCP leaders to allege irregularities when the Mega DSC had provided jobs to

16,000 people. He directly questioned YS Jagan whether the previous government had conducted even a single Mega DSC during its five-year tenure.

The minister said people were not turning up for protest programmes called by the YSRCP. He claimed that good governance was being provided in Andhra Pradesh and said the coalition government had fulfilled 95% of the promises made during the elections. Ravindra recalled that the government was providing pensions every month and had implemented the Thalliki Vandanam scheme.

From Our Staff Reporter Bhimavaram, August 11: Agriculture Minister K. Atchannaidu said that the aqua sector is the brainchild of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. Speaking at an aqua meeting in Palakollu on Tuesday, he lashed out at YSRCP leaders, alleging that the state was completely ruined during the party's rule.

He said the previous government had brought the state to such a state that people felt ashamed whenever Andhra Pradesh was mentioned. He recalled that the state exche-

quer was empty when the coalition government assumed office, leaving the government without even enough money to pay employees' salaries.

The minister said Andhra Pradesh has now reached a stage where it is "breathing oxygen after coming off a ventilator." He claimed that the coalition government was implementing even promises that had not been made to the people.

Referring to the 2019 elections, Atchannaidu alleged that people had brought "a thief, a looter and an axe party" to power in a fit of emotion.

He strongly criticised YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, alleging that he had ruined the state after being given the opportunity to govern. Atchannaidu warned people that they could face serious difficulties in the future if they were not cautious about the YSRCP.

Questioning the public, he asked whether it was not their responsibility to question a person who had allegedly destroyed the aqua sector when he visits farmers in the name of offering support.

He alleged that during Jagan's tenure, the prices of



materials required for aqua feed were increased six times despite there being no corresponding rise in their costs. He said efforts were

underway to reduce fish meal and fish oil prices by 50 percent soon. If successful, he said, aqua feed prices would also come down.

Congress Exposed for Playing with Students' Lives: PVN Madhav



From Our Staff Reporter Visakhapatnam, August 11: BJP Andhra Pradesh President PVN Madhav said irregularities had been reported in the SSC examination in Jharkhand, following which students had launched protests. He alleged that rubber bullets were fired and lathi-charge was carried out against the protesting students. He

said the JMM-Congress government was in power in the state.

Madhav said that when the NEET question paper leak came to light, the examination was cancelled immediately, keeping students' futures in mind. He also said the Union minister had resigned. According to him, this demonstrated the difference between a

BJP government and a Congress government.

Expressing concern over the impact of the SSC paper leak in Jharkhand, Madhav said the lives of many young people were being thrown into uncertainty. He alleged that the Congress had been exposed for playing with students' futures. He said that when an irregularity occurred at the Centre, corrective action was taken immediately.

Madhav criticised Rahul Gandhi, calling him "cowardly" and alleging that he was avoiding Parliament. He said the BJP was ready for a discussion on paper leaks. He also demanded that YS Jagan Mohan Reddy and Y. S. Sharmila respond to alleged paper leaks during the YSR government.

He said the YSRCP was in a state of confusion and

alleged that the party was unnecessarily politicising the issue because it did not know what else to do. He maintained that the DSC recruitment examination was conducted transparently.

The BJP AP president also said the government had clarified its position on jobs under the sports quota. He said people were rejecting the protests being organised by the YSRCP. He claimed that employees had also protested against what they described as attempts to damage their careers, similar to alleged incidents during the tenure of former Chief Minister Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy.

Madhav said the BJP was ready for the local body elections and expressed confidence that the coalition government would win the highest number of seats in Visakhapatnam.

AP Government Announces Power Subsidy Relief for Aqua Farmers

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, August 11: The Andhra Pradesh Government has announced good news for aqua farmers, extending the electricity subsidy for aqua farming. The government will provide electricity to farmers at a subsidised rate of Rs. 1.50 per unit.

The Energy Department issued GO RT No. 57 on Tuesday regarding the electricity subsidy for aqua farmers. The subsidy of Rs. 1.50 per unit will be available to all eligible aqua farms located in the newly notified aqua zones.

The subsidy will also be extended to all eligible aqua farms registered under the APSADA and CAA Acts. Around 6,500 registered aqua farms are expected to benefit from the



scheme. Eligible farms that obtain APSADA/CAA registration in the future will also receive the subsidy from the date of registration.

The revised electricity subsidy will be implemented from June 1, 2026, with electricity supplied at Rs. 1.50 per

unit. The decision is expected to provide relief to aqua farmers facing financial difficulties due to rising production costs. The subsidy aims to help farmers remain competitive in the global aqua export market in terms of price and quality. The

Fisheries Department will provide details of eligible aqua farmers to the DISCOMs. The Andhra Pradesh government will take a decision on further expansion of the subsidy after examining the proposal submitted by the Fisheries Department.

EDITORIAL

Inappropriate indifference to floods

Assam is once again reeling under floods. People in upper Assam, which has been hit by a natural disaster, say they have never seen such devastation in their lifetime. This cannot be dismissed as just another ordinary monsoon season. This is a warning that the flood problem in Assam has entered a more dangerous phase. However, the intensity of the floods this year, the level of destruction and the anger expressed by the people are different from the past. As of August 10, according to official figures, the death toll due to the floods has reached 100. Nearly 1.4 lakh people have been affected in seven districts. At the same time, several rivers are flowing in high water and the Meteorological Department has predicted more rain. However, these figures alone do not fully convey the severity of the people's suffering. Villages in upper Assam have been submerged. Roads have been cut off, bringing traffic to a standstill. Agricultural lands have been destroyed. Families have been deprived of their homes and livelihoods. Assam has been living with floods for generations. This indicates that the situation here is becoming different and more severe than the normal floods. So the real question now is not just why floods happen every year in Assam. It is why they are becoming more and more destructive. Why are we allowing these floods to become a permanent problem in people's lives?

There is no doubt that the current disaster is due to the unusually heavy rains. Climate change is also changing the pattern of rainfall. However, the rains alone cannot be blamed for this disaster. The Brahmaputra River and its tributaries naturally carry huge amounts of water and sand. The geographical conditions of Assam also make the state extremely sensitive. However, due to human interference, nature's ability to absorb water and safely flow is gradually decreasing. Destruction of hills and forests, indiscriminate construction, encroachment on wetlands, gradual disappearance of natural water channels, poorly maintained embankments, and large-scale mining activities... All these are exacerbating the problem of floods. Several recent reports have focused specifically on the coal, stone, and sand mining taking place in the Assam-Nagaland border areas. Environmental organizations and local communities have alleged that uncontrolled mining, tree felling, and changes in natural water flow paths are increasing the intensity of floods in Upper Assam.

There have also been concerns that abandoned coal mine pits and riverbed mining are altering natural watercourses. These allegations need to be dismissed for political reasons, and a transparent scientific investigation needs to be conducted. If mining activities change the shape of watersheds, increase surface water flow, destabilize hill slopes, or introduce large amounts of sand and silt into rivers, the impact will inevitably be felt downstream. The development of hydroelectric projects in the Eastern Himalayas also raises another critical question. The northeastern states have immense hydroelectric potential. Power generation is crucial for the development of the country. But a river is not just a means of carrying water to turn a turbine. It is a living ecosystem that carries water, sand, and nutrients downstream. It is also a vital basis for the livelihood of the people who depend on it. The lack of proper policies to maintain adequate water flow while keeping environmental protection in mind, sudden releases of water during heavy rains, and failure to properly assess the cumulative impact of multiple projects being built in the same river basin... all of these have the potential to increase the threat to people downstream.

The Assam flood problem also has a political dimension. During the 2021 Assam Assembly election campaign, Union Home Minister Amit Shah made a key promise. If the BJP government comes to power, it will provide a permanent solution to the Assam flood problem and make the state a 'flood-free Assam' within five years. That deadline is almost over now. This naturally raises a question. What happened to that promise? The BJP has been in power in Assam all this time. The Narendra Modi government also has significant political and economic influence at the Center. Yet, Assam is getting stuck in the same cycle every year. Floods.. relief efforts.. compensation.. reconstruction.. and then another flood. There is no change in this situation. However, it is also wrong to say that the Central government has done nothing. The Center has deployed National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams in the flood-affected areas for relief efforts. It has sent central assessment teams. Also, on August 1, the Central government released Rs. 100 crore from the State Disaster Response Fund to the states affected by the floods. 2,117.85 crore has been approved for early release. The Assam government has also started relief measures. It has announced temporary assistance of Rs. 15,000 to the affected families in the four districts of Upper Assam that were badly affected. It has also started a direct cash transfer program for thousands of families. But these measures raise another key question. What happened to the promise of a permanent solution given to the people?

Civil society organizations are mobilizing relief materials to help the victims in Upper Assam. This highlights the magnitude of the humanitarian needs there. This needs to be seen as a crisis that requires integrated management of river basins and preparation of the state for climate change. First of all, the Centre should set up an independent authority for the Brahmaputra river basin, involving Assam and all the northeastern states as partners. This authority should not only have an advisory role, but should also have full powers to take scientific and administrative decisions. Secondly, a comprehensive environmental audit should be conducted on the coal, stone and sand mining activities taking place in the hilly areas and river basins affecting Assam. In addition to completely stopping illegal mining, abandoned mines and damaged river basins should be restored using scientific methods.

Three Adversaries Become 4: Why The Saudi-Turkey-Pak Deal Is A Headache For India

On July 4, 2025, less than two months after hostilities between India and Pakistan ended following Operation Sindoor, Lieutenant General Rahul R Singh, the Indian Army's Deputy Chief, said India had effectively faced three adversaries on a single border. Pakistan was the active frontline combatant, China shared real-time satellite intelligence, and Turkey, a partner of Islamabad, had been a source of tactical and kamikaze drones that had been used against India.

Now, if the Mecca Joint Defence Agreement signed between Pakistan, Turkey and Saudi Arabia on August 7 is implemented in letter and spirit, it could theoretically mean that a fourth nation - Saudi Arabia - would be treaty-bound to oppose New Delhi in the event of armed hostilities in the subcontinent. A joint statement issued post the signing of the agreement states that an armed attack against any of the three would be regarded as an attack on all.

A Snub To India?

While Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Ishaq Dar, has described the agreement as being "purely defensive in nature", New Delhi would not be pleased with Saudi Arabia signing on, given the extremely close ties between Delhi and Riyadh. India and Saudi Arabia define their relationship as a strategic partnership anchored by a joint council that steers ties that have grown to include oil, security, investment and culture. Trade stands at \$43 billion, with Saudi Arabia supplying around 14% of India's crude oil.

Saudi Arabia Is A Lifeline For Pakistan

At the same time, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan have already operationalised a bilateral security pact that predates the Mecca Joint Defence agreement. Between April and May this year, Pakistan sent roughly 8,000 soldiers and a full squadron (approximately 16 jets) of JF-17 Thunder fighter jets to Saudia Arabia. Some reports also indicate that Islamabad transferred two squadrons of drones and a Chinese-built air defence system as part of the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement



that it signed with Saudia Arabia in September 2025. The scale of this deployment was hardly for 'advisory and training purposes', and could be described as a form of military repayment by Islamabad at a time when Saudi Arabia found itself at the receiving end of Iranian drone attacks during the ongoing war between Israel, the United States and Iran. The Pakistan-Saudi Arabia association is not new - Saudi Arabia has been a financial lifeline for Pakistan for decades and has helped Islamabad deal with balance-of-payments crises. Since 2018, Riyadh has repeatedly extended multibillion-dollar deposits and deferred oil-payment facilities - including \$6 billion in 2018, \$4.2 billion in 2021, roughly \$8 billion in 2022, and continued deposit rollovers through 2026 - often tied to IMF bailout conditions. Militarily, Saudi Arabia has backed Pakistan against India since 1965 with money and diplomatic support. In 1971, Riyadh condemned India's actions and support continued during the 1999 Kargil conflict, through cash and lobbying. Reports on the direct transfer of Saudi weaponry - including the loan of military aircraft in 1971 - have, however, not been backed with substantial evidence. On the other hand, Pakistani forces have been deeply

embedded in Saudi Arabia's military since the 1960s. Cooperation began under King Faisal and President Ayub Khan, with a formal 1967 agreement with Pakistani pilots reportedly flying Saudi jets against a 1969 Yemeni incursion. Through the 1970s-80s, up to 15,000 Pakistani troops were stationed in the Kingdom at various points, including in border-defence roles. A 1982 Protocol Agreement formalised the framework for these ongoing troop deployments. Separately, during the 1991 Gulf War, about 13,000 Pakistani personnel were deployed to Saudi Arabia. Over the decades, Pakistan has also trained an estimated 8,000-10,000 Saudi military personnel; more recently, Pakistan's former Army Chief, Gen. Raheel Sharif, took command of the Saudi-led Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition in 2017, and joint army, naval and air force exercises have since become a regular fixture.

What Turkey Brings To The Pact

Pakistan's military association with Turkey is more directly linked to arms imports - Islamabad has historically benefited from Turkish platforms, including Bayraktar TB2 drones, MILGEM-class corvettes valued at around \$1.5 billion, and modernisation support for its US-built F-16 fleet. Paki-

stan acquired four Turkish-designed MILGEM-class corvettes for its Navy among its most technologically advanced surface platforms, with the final vessel, PNS Tariq, delivered in August 2023. Turkey has also been involved in the modernisation of Pakistan's French-designed Agosta 90B-class submarines. Pakistan received its first batch of Bayraktar Akinci high-altitude combat drones in 2023, adding to earlier TB2 acquisitions with the relationship progressing towards local production. Turkey's KAAAN stealth jet made its first flight on February 21, 2024. Development of prototypes is ongoing, with Turkey expected to begin receiving deliveries of the fighter between 2028-2030. Pakistan is seen to be a strong prospective customer; talks began around 2023, with the Pakistan Aeronautical Complex potentially co-producing rather than just buying the jet. There is, however, no contract that has been signed, with Islamabad believed to be closer to acquiring the Chinese J-35A stealth fighter, a more mature platform. After Pakistan used Turkish drones during the 88-hour war (Operation Sindoor) in May last year, India retaliated by revoking Turkish firm Celebi Aviation's security clearance. E-commerce platforms Ajio and Myntra dropped Turkish

brands, and tourism took a big hit, with travel platforms cutting Turkey promotions. Indian arrivals fell upto 38% over the summer season.

India Will Have To Watch Out

With no signs of Islamabad moving away from its policy of state-sponsored terrorism, New Delhi will be looking closely at whether the new Turkey-Saudi Arabia-Pakistan pact ends up becoming a major strategic headache in the event of armed conflict. Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan's remarks that the Mecca Joint Defence Agreement is similar to NATO's Article 5 collective-defence clause sound ominous for New Delhi. For now though, the agreement appears to primarily be a regional hedge against America's declining role as a net security provider - perhaps a political signal of realignment away from US-centric security guarantees in the Middle East. For now, Delhi can take some comfort in the fact that, rhetoric aside, the Mecca pact currently lacks a joint command and defined triggers for collective action - falling well short of an alliance that could be institutionally compared to NATO. In the long run, though, it is almost certain that Islamabad would not hesitate to invoke the pact's joint-action clauses to deter India from any military action against Pakistan.

Saudi Arabia Has Money, Missiles, And America. Why Is It Still So Scared?

It has finally happened. After months of meetings, news conferences, bold statements, and speculation, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Pakistan signed a joint defence agreement in Mecca last week. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif signed the deal, an alliance many had been likening to an "Islamic NATO", though the term hasn't been formalised.

The key provision in this pact is that an attack on any one of the signatories will be regarded as an attack on all. "The agreement is intended to strengthen collective deterrence against any act of aggression, and stipulates that any armed attack against any one of the three states shall be regarded as an attack against them all. It further provides for the enhancement of "all aspects of defence cooperation among the three states", the joint statement said.

Unsurprisingly, the agreement comes against the backdrop of the Iran conflict, where Saudi Arabia has been one of the worst-hit nations. Turkey, a NATO member already that has the bloc's second-largest standing army, has said that this new agreement does not clash with its commitments to NATO. In a post on X, the Turk-

ish government's anti-disinformation service said, "The agreement is not in contradiction with the commitments of Turkey's existing international alliances, including those at the heart of NATO." In fact, Turkey had probably been waiting for a green signal from the US, which is why it did not sign the agreement before the NATO summit it convened in July.

Why The Bloc Works

By itself, the bloc is a formidable one, with enormous potential. Saudi Arabia is an energy and economic powerhouse, which can bankroll military innovation and R&D. Turkey has a highly developed military industrial complex, given its proximity to NATO's cutting-edge technology. It has made a name for itself in the drone industry and is an emerging defence exporter, accounting for 1.6% of global arms exports. Pakistan is the only nuclear-armed Muslim country in the world with a battle-hardened army and an impressive military arsenal. Both Pakistan and Turkey have close defence cooperation; in 2023, Saudi Arabia had made one of Turkey's largest drone purchases. All three countries lie on major shipping and trade routes, controlling ports, shipping, and maritime trade. Pakistan and Turkey also stand to benefit handsomely through

defence cooperation and arms sales.

But the genesis of the pact goes back almost a year, when in September 2025, Saudi Arabia and its long-time client state, Pakistan, signed a Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement. That had come in the aftermath of Israel's unprecedented attack on Qatar, a close, non-NATO American ally, which also hosts the largest US Central Command base in the region. The pact had been a signal to not just Israel, but also to longtime rival Iran. Building on the Saudi-Pakistan pact, the security partnership has now extended to include Turkey - another major Sunni but non-Arab power in the region, and one that had earlier directly challenged the Saudi leadership.

The Saudi-Turkish Rivalry

The Saudi-Turkish rivalry ran deep, especially over the support given to the Muslim Brotherhood and its allies by the current Turkish administration under Erdogan. In 2014, the Saudis had banned the Muslim Brotherhood, viewing it as a direct challenge to their hereditary rule. This was the same challenge that the Islamic Revolution in Iran had brought, and which the Arab Spring had exacerbated. The Turks and the Saudis have engaged in proxy warfare in places like Libya and Syria. They had also snapped



ties with Qatar once for the same reason. Matters came to a head over the murder of Saudi dissident and journalist Jamal Khashoggi in Istanbul, allegedly by the Saudis. In 2019, Turkey, together with Pakistan and Malaysia, had directly challenged Saudi Arabia's leadership of the Muslim world by trying to float an alternative platform to the Saudi-led Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Therefore, while Pakistan has had a history of defence cooperation with the Saudis for years now, with Turkey, it is a very nascent one.

Therefore, what the pact essentially underscores under its packaging of Islamic brother-

hood - signed as it was on Friday, the Muslim sabbath in Mecca - is deep Saudi vulnerability.

In the ensuing US-Israel war on Iran, the Saudis have found themselves vulnerable in spite of the intricate and expensive layer of US security deterrence they had invested in for years. They have been targeted by both Iran and Iraqi militias loyal to Iran. Saudi Arabia's stockpile of Patriot interceptor missiles has been reduced by 86% since the start of the war, according to reports. The Kingdom's economic lifeline has been disrupted by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

Patriotic Spirit to Mark Independence Day Celebrations in Prakasam



Ongole, Pen Power, August 11:Prakasam District Collector P. Rajababu has called for grand Independence Day celebrations across the district with active public participation and a festive atmosphere. Addressing the media at Prakasam Bhavan on Tuesday, the Collector said special programmes would be organised

from August 10 to 15 to remember the sacrifices of freedom fighters and inspire citizens towards the goal of “Viksit Bharat – 2047.” As part of the celebrations, a digital video campaign and “Ane Nenu” (I and My Country) campaign will be conducted. Students will take pledges on their future goals and contribution to nation-building. Tiranga Cycle Rallies will be organised across mandals from August 12 to 15, promoting environmental protection and pollution control. Under “Har Ghar Tiranga”, citizens will be encouraged to hoist the national flag at homes, commercial establishments and government offices from August 13 to 15. A district-wide mass plantation programme will be held on August 14, with participants taking a pledge to protect the saplings and contribute to nation-building. Government buildings, bus stations, railway stations, major junctions and other prominent public places will be illuminated in tricolour lights on August 14 and 15. The Collector urged students, youth, self-help groups, public representatives, officials and citizens to participate enthusiastically and share photographs and videos on social media using the designated Independence Day hashtags.

Land Acquisition for Errupalem–Namburu Railway Line to be Expedited

Vijayawada, Pen Power, August 11: NTR District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmesh directed officials to speed up land acquisition for the proposed Errupalem–Namburu new railway line connecting Amaravati. The Collector inspected the land acquisition process at Jujjuru village in Veerullapadu mandal on Tuesday and instructed officials to complete the remaining procedures quickly as per rules. About 175 acres in six villages of Veerullapadu mandal and 120 acres in two villages of Kanchikacherla mandal have been identified for acquisition. He stressed transparent acquisition without causing inconvenience to landowners and directed officials to re-



solve pending issues promptly. The proposed railway line from Errupalem through Amaravati to Namburu is expected to boost connectivity and economic development in Amaravati and surrounding areas.

Massive Har Ghar Tiranga Rally Held in Machilipatnam

Vijayawada, Pen Power, August 11: A massive Har Ghar Tiranga rally was organised in historic Machilipatnam

Rupesh Awasthi flagged off the rally featuring a 200-foot-long national flag. More than 300 NCC cadets from various educational institutions participated, raising patriotic slogans such as “Vande Mataram” and “Har Ghar Tiranga.”

The rally began at Koneru Centre and passed through the main streets before concluding at Andhra National College. Colonel Rupesh Awasthi said the campaign aimed to encourage people to hoist the Tricolour at every home and spread social messages such as a drug-free India and TB-free India.

CBC Assistant Director R. Ramesh Chandra said the rally reaching Andhra National College, associated with Pingali Venkayya, gave students a memorable historical experience. NCC awareness campaign with the support of the Eagle wing.



under the aegis of the Central Bureau of Communication (CBC). NCC 16th Battalion Commanding Officer Colonel

Strict Action Against Negligence in Public Grievance Redressal



Rampachodavaram, Pen Power, August 11: Polavaram District Collector K. Dinesh Kumar warned officials of strict action for negligence in resolving public grievances. He directed officials to ensure that every petition is thoroughly investigated and that genuine relief is provided to the complainant. Reviewing the weekly PGRS performance at the Collectorate, the Collector said petitions should not be closed merely to improve disposal figures. Field-level

verification and direct interaction with complainants are mandatory. He also warned officials against submitting false endorsements without proper enquiry.

Special attention should be given to grievances received from tribal communities, women, senior citizens and illiterate persons, he said. Joint Collector Surapathi Prashanth Kumar and other district officials participated in the meeting.

Personality Development Key to Interview Success

Gandepalli, Pen Power, August 11: Technical knowledge along with effective communication skills is essential for students to secure job opportunities in today’s competitive world, said K. Sai Devan, founder of Devans Classes and freelance soft-skills trainer.

An Alumni Interaction Programme was organised by the Civil Engineering Department at Aditya University, Surampalem, in Gandepalli mandal. Addressing the students, Sai Devan highlighted the importance of interview skills, personality development, English proficiency and effective communication in achieving career success.

He advised students to continuously improve their soft skills along with technical knowledge to enhance their employment opportunities.

Second-year Civil Engineering students participated in the programme.



Four 102 Mother-Baby Express Vehicles Launched in Polavaram District

Free transport facility to benefit pregnant women and newborns in remote areas

Rampachodavaram, Pen Power, August 11:Four new 102 Mother-Baby Express vehicles allotted to Polavaram dis-

healthcare services to the last beneficiary. As the Mother-Baby Express service is provided free of cost, it would



trict were launched on Tuesday at the ITDA office premises in Rampachodavaram. ST Commission Chairman Solla Bojji Reddy, District Collector K. Dinesh Kumar, and Joint Collector Surapati Prashanth Kumar jointly flagged off the vehicles.

Speaking on the occasion, ST Commission Chairman Solla Bojji Reddy said pregnant women and postnatal mothers living in tribal, rural and remote areas often face difficulties due to lack of transport facilities. He said the 102 Mother-Baby Express service would play an important role in promoting institutional deliveries and ensuring the safety of mothers and newborns. He stated that the government was committed to taking welfare and

available continuously across the district and that there was no interruption in its implementation. He said the vehicles had been designed with modern facilities and necessary equipment. Pregnant women and mothers in Polavaram district were advised to contact the 102 call centre during emergencies and make effective use of the Mother-Baby Express service. Rampachodavaram RDO K. Swathi, Minority Cell Director Sheikh Subhani, DM&HO Dr. P. Saritha, DCHS Sambasiva Rao, District Malaria Officer Bhaskar, Tahsildar C.H. Balaji, MPDO Prasad, public representatives, alliance leaders, medical officers, health staff and district hospital service coordinators attended the programme.

Speed Up Land Re-Survey Process: Collector Rajababu



Ongole, Pen Power, August 11:Prakasam District Collector P. Rajababu directed officials to speed up the land

re-survey process in the remaining mandals and ensure that it is carried out accurately and systematically. The Collector participated in a video conference held by Special Chief Secretary Sai Prasad and CCLA Jaya Lakshmi with district Collectors. The meeting reviewed ROR, land assignments, re-survey, distribution of Pattadar Passbooks, PGRS grievances and 22-A land issues. Later, Collector Rajababu reviewed the issues with the concerned officials and instructed them to give special attention to grievance petitions. He directed officials to ensure proper disposal of PGRS applications by categorising revenue, land and family-related issues and conducting field-level verification. He also instructed officials to improve the distribution of Pattadar Passbooks and take necessary measures to resolve genuine grievances without rejecting petitions unnecessarily.

Organ Donation: A Noble Gift That Lives Beyond Death

Bapatla, Pen Power, August 11: Bapatla District Collector and Red Cross District President Dr. Vasudeva Vinod Kumar said organ donation is one of the greatest forms of giving, as it can provide a new lease of life to others even after a person’s death. Speaking at the poster launch organised by the Bapatla District Red Cross as part of the Organ Donation Fortnight, he highlighted the shortage of organs such as hearts, livers, kidneys and lungs needed by patients awaiting transplants. He said eye donation can also help restore vision to those who have lost their sight.

The Collector urged people to overcome misconceptions about organ donation and stressed the need to create greater awareness, particularly among youth. He called upon families, educational institutions and voluntary organisations to promote awareness about organ donation.



“Life need not end with death; through organ donation, we can continue to live in another person’s life,” he said.

Alumni Interaction Session for Cyber Security Students



Visakhapatnam, Pen Power, August 11: An alumni interaction session was organised by the Department of CSE – Cyber Security at Vignan’s Institute of Infor-

mation Technology to enhance students’ industry awareness and career skills. Veluvarthi Venkata Anuradha, Systems Engineer at Tata Consultancy Services, interacted with students and shared her professional experiences. She highlighted the importance of technical and communication skills, internships, certifications, resume preparation, interview skills and continuous learning for success in the IT sector. She also provided guidance on campus placements, industry expectations and the transition from academics to professional life. Principal Dr. J. Sudhakar, Rector Dr. V. Madhusudana Rao and Head of CSE–Cyber Security Dr. K. Rohith Kumar appreciated the initiative.

Veligonda Project Reaches Final Stage; Trial Run on August 22

Markapuram, Pen Power, August 11: The Poola Subbaiah Veligonda Project has reached its final stage, BJP State Media Representative Dr. Eluri Ramachandra Reddy said. He stated that the State Government has issued orders to conduct a trial run on August 22 to release water into the Nallamala Sagar reservoir through the project. Describing it as a key milestone, he said the project would provide irrigation and drinking water to drought-prone areas and support the economic development of the region. Dr. Eluri said the project works were being expedited under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, with the initiative of Water Resources Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu. He expressed hope that a successful trial run would bring irrigation water closer to farmers’ fields.



Everyone Should Contribute to Nation Building: Collector



Visakhapatnam, Pen Power, August 11: District Collector Abhishek Kishore called upon people to actively participate in the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign from

August 13 to 15 and hoist the National Flag at homes, offices and commercial establishments. As part of the 80th Independence Day celebrations, the district will conduct 'Partners in Nation Building' and 'Ane Nenu' campaigns from August 10 to 15 to encourage public participation in nation building.

The Collector directed officials to organise a mega plantation drive on August 14 and decorate government buildings, bus stations, railway stations and major junctions with tricolour lights on August 14 and 15.

He also called upon students, youth and citizens to create short selfie videos carrying the National Flag and sharing their commitment towards the country's development on social media.

"Let us think, act and work together to build a developed India," the Collector said.

Independence Day Arrangements Must Be Perfect: Collector

Guntur, Pen Power, August 11: District Collector C.M. Sai Kanth Varma directed officials to make foolproof arrangements for the Independence Day celebrations at the Capital Parade Grounds. Reviewing the arrangements at the CRDA office on Tuesday, the Collector instructed officials to ensure that the full-dress rehearsal scheduled for August 13 is conducted smoothly. He stressed proper seating arrangements for the Chief Minister, Ministers, judicial officers, All India Services officers and media personnel.

He also directed officials to finalise routes, parking and traffic plans for the event. Government departments were instructed to complete preparations for tableaux showcasing their achievements and present them during the final rehearsal.

Collector Varma called for close coordination among all departments to ensure the successful conduct of the cel-



brations. Guntur SP Vakul Jindal, Municipal Commissioner K. Mayur Ashok, Joint Collector Ashutosh Srivastava and other officials participated.

NITI Aayog Member Reviews Development Works in Tribal Areas



Paderu, Pen Power, August 11: NITI Aayog Member Dr. R. Balasubramanyam conducted a field visit to Alluri Sitharama Raju district on Tuesday to review development works and welfare schemes being implemented in tribal areas. Accompanied by Tribal Affairs Ministry Director Samidha Singh and Paderu ITDA Project Officer Aditya Vama, he visited the coffee centre at Ananthagiri, a primary health centre and Chompi village in Araku Valley. He interacted with tribal residents and learnt about their livelihoods, culture, traditions and tourism activities.

In Hukumpeta mandal, he inspected houses being constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan and interacted with beneficiaries. He also reviewed natural and organic farming practices at Guttulaputtu village.

Dr. Balasubramanyam visited the Artificial Intelligence training centre and an archery training centre at Paderu. Later, he reviewed tribal development programmes with district officials and directed them to ensure that the benefits of welfare schemes reach all eligible tribal beneficiaries.

Grand Independence Day Celebrations in New District: Collector

Markapuram, Pen Power, August 11: District Collec-



tor M. Vijaya Sunitha directed officials to make the first Independence Day celebrations in the newly formed district headquarters memorable and grand. Reviewing the arrangements at the Collectorate on Tuesday, she instructed officials to ensure proper crowd and traffic man-

agement, parking, separate seating for VIPs, media and the public, drinking water, sanitation, temporary toilets and shade facilities at the SVKP College grounds.

She also directed officials to organise attractive tableaux, welfare scheme stalls and cultural programmes by students, while maintaining strict punctuality.

The Collector said the Veligonda Project would be inaugurated soon and directed officials to provide all basic facilities, including drinking water, roads and electricity, in rehabilitation colonies for project-af-

ected families. She also stressed timely pension distribution.

Joint Collector P. Srinivasulu, RDO Venkata Sivarami Reddy, DSP Nagaraju, DEO Subbarao and other officials participated.

102 Mother & Child Express Services Launched

Visakhapatnam, Pen Power, August 11: Joint Collector G. Vidhyadhari launched 102 Mother & Child Express vehicles in Visakhapatnam on Tuesday to provide free and safe transport services to pregnant women, mothers and newborns. The service aims to reduce maternal and infant mortality, encourage safe deliveries in government hospitals and provide free postnatal drop-back services to mothers and newborns.

A total of 16 vehicles have been allocated to Visakhapatnam district—nine at KGH, two at Aganampudi and five at Victoria Hospital. The vehicles are equipped with GPS tracking, emergency alert systems, air-conditioning, airbags and other safety facilities.



Officials said 9,988 beneficiaries used the service through 24 vehicles during 2025–26, while 3,274 beneficiaries have availed the service so far in 2026–27. The service is completely free and beneficiaries need not pay drivers any fee or tip.

Protect Gram Panchayat Properties: Collector

Bapatla, Pen Power, August 11: Bapatla District Collector Dr. Vinod Kumar V. directed officials to take effective measures to protect Gram Panchayat lands and other public assets. Reviewing the issue at a district-level committee meeting held at the Collectorate on Tuesday, the Collector said Panchayat properties should be properly identified, classified and verified by the Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat. He directed officials to publish the approved property details in the District Gazette and update the information on the official website regularly. The committee should meet once every three months to review and protect Panchayat assets, he said. The Collector also instructed officials to take action as per rules against encroachments on Gram Panchayat lands. Joint Collector Bhavana Vashishta, DRO Lavanna, District Panchayat Officer K.



Prabhakar and other officials participated.

No 'Others' Category in Resurveyed Lands: Bapatla Collector



Bapatla, Pen Power, August 11: District Collector Dr. Vinod Kumar V. directed revenue officials to ensure that

the term "Others" does not appear in records of lands covered under the resurvey. Reviewing 22-A cases, resurvey and land records at the Collectorate on Tuesday, the Collector instructed officials to expedite the disposal of pending 22-A cases and address dotted-land issues through the district-level committee. He directed RDOs to personally monitor 22-A cases and ordered that all available VROs be involved in resurvey operations. Officials were warned of action if "Others" entries continue in villages where resurvey has been completed. The Collector also instructed officials to set daily targets for resolving land issues and complete 100% data entry for the 10 villages identified for the September cycle. He further directed RDOs to identify land for setting up Rythu Bazaars in Parchur and Chirala mandals and submit a report within two days.

Basic Facilities Must Be Ensured at Polling Stations

Rampachodavaram, Pen Power, August 11: District Collector and District Election Officer K. Dinesh Kumar directed officials to ensure all basic facilities are available at every polling station as per Election Commission guidelines. On Tuesday, the Collector inspected polling stations 179 and 180 at the Youth Training Centre and other polling stations at the Zilla Parishad High School premises in Mareduhilli. He checked drinking water, toilets, electricity, fans, ramps, facilities for persons with disabilities, seating, sanitation and directional signboards. He instructed officials to keep all polling stations ready for immediate use whenever elections are conducted. The Collector warned that negligence in polling station management would not be tolerated. Special arrangements should be made for senior citizens, persons with disabilities and pregnant women to exercise their franchise com-



fortably. Tahsildar K. Ammaji, RI S. Babu, MPDOs and other officials participated in the inspection.

Public Grievance Meet Held in Rampachodavaram



Rampachodavaram, Pen Power, August 11: Polavaram District Collector K. Dinesh Kumar said that steps are being taken to resolve public grievances received from re-

mote villages on priority. Some issues are being resolved immediately, while others are being referred to the concerned departments after exploring possible solutions. A total of 112 petitions were received at the Grievance Cell and 30 petitions at the Revenue Clinic held at the ITDA meeting hall on Monday. The petitions mainly concerned road connectivity, farm access roads, land disputes and compensation for Polavaram project displaced families.

Joint Collector S. Prashanth Kumar, RDO K. Swathi and officials from various departments participated in the programme.

Transparent Fertiliser Distribution Through APAIMS 2.0



Rampachodavaram, Pen Power, August 11: Polavaram District Collector K. Dinesh Kumar urged farmers to make use of APAIMS 2.0 for timely and transparent distribution of fertilisers. The Collector, along with Joint Collector S. Prashanth Kumar, unveiled awareness posters on the system at the ITDA meeting hall on Tuesday. He said fertiliser quotas for farmers are being determined based on land holdings and

e-Crop records. Farmers can obtain fertilisers after OTP or biometric verification from nearby Rythu Seva Kendras or authorised dealers. Officials said a 45-kg urea bag is available at ₹266.50 and a 50-kg DAP bag at ₹1,350 as per government-approved prices. OSD Javali, RDO K. Swathi, District Agriculture Officer Rammohan Rao and other officials participated.

Independence Day Arrangements Reviewed



Rampachodavaram, Pen Power, August 11: Polavaram District Joint Collector Surapathi Prashanth Kumar said

elaborate arrangements are being made to celebrate Independence Day in a grand manner. The Joint Collector, along with OSD Javali and

RDO K. Swathi, inspected the arrangements at the Government Junior College premises in Rampachodavaram on

Tuesday. He directed officials of various departments to complete all arrangements, including security, sanitation, electricity, drinking water and other facilities, in coordination.

The Independence Day celebrations will be held on August 15 under the supervision of District Collector K. Dinesh Kumar. Tahsildar C.H. Balaji, Executive Engineer I. Srinivasa Rao, CI Prasad and other officials participated in the inspection.

Bombay HC Pulls Up Maharashtra FDA Over 'Power Display'

Mumbai: The Bombay High Court warned the Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) against “displaying its powers” through drastic action, saying its authority must be exercised “judiciously” and with due procedure. A bench of Acting Chief Justice Ravindra Ghuge and Justice Gautam Anhad made the remarks while hearing a petition filed by Cadila Pharmaceuticals Ltd against the FDA's orders stopping the sale and distribution of some of its medicines and seizing stock worth around Rs 2.45 crore.

Senior advocate Birendra Saraf, appearing for Cadila, said the company had not been given an opportunity to explain its case before the orders were passed. The action related to medicines including Aciloc 150, Aciloc 150 Plus, Aciloc 300 and Aciloc 300 Plus. Government pleader Neha Bhide defended the FDA's action, saying there was confusion between the medicines because of similarities in their branding despite differences in their active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs). She said the action was a “preventive measure and not high-



handed action”. The bench, however, questioned the manner in which the FDA had exercised its powers. “We are not worried about the loss faced by the company in the past two weeks since the order was passed. We are worried about those people who have not had access to these medicines,” the court said.

Referring to its earlier criticism of the regulator, the bench said, “We have no doubts about your powers... You only display your powers, but the problem is, as I said last week, you have the power to use the sword, but you use it to kill a mosquito. Power has to be judiciously exercised... How to

use the powers with adequate propriety is the question.” The court also criticised the FDA for acting before hearing the affected party. “Even in the cases of hotels and restaurants, you shoot first and then ask questions,” the bench observed.

The court said it had come across several cases involving drastic action by the FDA and warned that it may impose heavy costs on the regulator. Following the court's remarks, Bhide assured the bench that the FDA would revoke its orders against Cadila. The regulator would issue show-cause notices, allow the company to submit its

response and then pass a reasoned order, she said. The High Court accepted the statement and disposed of the petition. The same bench had last week used the “sword to kill a mosquito” analogy while hearing a plea concerning FDA action against Amazon Retail India's warehouse. The court had then said that while the regulator had the power to act against violations, it needed to exercise that power judiciously and follow due procedure. While lauding the FDA's action, the bench had asked whether shutting down all commercial establishments was the way to deal with the situation.

Air India CEO Clarifies Phuket-Delhi Flight Incident

New Delhi: Air India's outgoing Chief Executive Officer Campbell Wilson on Tuesday met senior officials at the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) headquarters in New Delhi as scrutiny of the airline intensified following the recent Phuket-Delhi flight incident. After leaving the meeting, Wilson told reporters, “We were just giving an update on the status of the investigation... It is up to him (MoCA Minister) to give an update.” Wilson did not provide further details about the discussions or the outcome of the meeting, saying that the Civil Aviation Minister would share any updates. Wilson was summoned in connection with the August 4 incident involving Air India flight AI2379, which was operating from Phuket to Delhi. The aircraft reportedly experienced a sudden altitude loss of around 300 feet, leaving 17 people injured.

The incident has prompted increased regulatory scrutiny of Air India, with officials examining the circumstances surrounding the altitude loss, along with broader safety and operational concerns. The meeting was attended by senior officials,



including Civil Aviation Secretary Sameer Sinha, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Director General Veer Vikram Yadav and Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) Director General GVG Yugandhar. The discussions focused

on the circumstances surrounding the AI2379 incident, safety and operational issues, and questions of accountability. The incident remains under investigation by the AAIB. Wilson, who is also the airline's designated Accountable Manager for

regulatory purposes, was questioned as part of the government's efforts to assess the incident and Air India's operational and safety practices. No detailed official statement on the outcome of Tuesday's meeting has been released so far.

Varuna Yagams and Chants to Be Held at Indrakeeladri from August 14 to 16

Vijayawada, August 11 : The Andhra Pradesh government will conduct Trayahanika Varuna Yagams and Varuna Japams at the Vijayawada Indrakeeladri Kanaka Durga Temple for the welfare of the world and to pray for abundant rainfall. The Endowments Department Commissioner has issued orders to this effect. According to the orders, special Vedic rituals will be conducted from August 14 to 16. For three days, special homams, chants and Ghatabishekam rituals will be performed at Durga Ghat and the Old Yagashala.

Thane Homebuyers Get MHADA Price Cut, Fresh Lottery

Thane: In a major relief for home buyers, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has directed the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) to revise and reduce flat prices at its Chitalsar-Manpada housing project in Thane. Under the new directives, unit prices will be pegged to the 2020-21 Ready Reckoner (RR) rates. While 434 winning applicants who have already submitted their acceptance letters will retain their allotments at the reduced rates, MHADA will conduct a fresh lottery for the remaining unsold flats at the revised prices. Significant Price Reduction: Flat prices in the project will drop from Rs.51-52 lakh to approximately Rs.44-46 lakh, making housing more affordable for citizens. 434 Previous Winners Retained: Winners from the earlier draw who submitted their acceptance letters will retain their allotted units without needing to reapply. Fresh Lottery Drive: A new lottery process will be initiated for the remaining units



under the uniform 2020-21 rate structure. MHADA developed a total of 1,173 residential units in the Chitalsar-Manpada project, of which 938 flats were put up for draw on July 14, 2025.

However, price variations within the same building complex sparked widespread dissatisfaction among buyers: Partial Occupancy (2020-21): Units that received partial Occupancy Certificates (OC) during 2020-21 were originally priced at around Rs.10,000 per sq. ft. (~Rs.44 lakh). Full Occupancy

(2025-26): Following the issuance of the full OC, prices for the remaining flats were hiked to Rs.51-52 lakh based on 2025-26 RR rates. This created an anomaly where residents buying identical flats in the same building were charged drastically different prices, leading to formal grievances lodged with the housing authority. Addressing these concerns during a virtual meeting attended by MHADA Managing Director Sanjeev Jaiswal, Konkan MHADA CEO Vishal Rathod, senior offi-

cials, and citizen representatives, Deputy CM Shinde instructed MHADA to standardise pricing. “Instead of charging varying rates for identical flats in the same building, MHADA must uniformly apply the 2020-21 Ready Reckoner rates to ensure fairness for all buyers,” directed the Deputy Chief Minister. The revised rate structure is expected to offer substantial economic relief to mid-income buyers looking for affordable housing options in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR).

Harbhajan Singh Hits Back at Punjab Police Over Drug Menace

Chandigarh: Harbhajan Singh has passionately called for all authorities to tackle the drug abuse problem in Punjab. Singh's earlier plea on social media landed in controversy after Punjab police fact checked him. The now BJP MP has hit back, suggesting that the focus should be on the issue and not 'one-upmanship'. “Your paid trolls won't be able to suppress this issue; it must be addressed,” Singh said, stressing that avoiding responsibility would not resolve the crisis.

Harbhajan shared a video on X while expressing an-

guish over the alleged impact of addiction on Punjab. The video showed two men appearing to behave erratically, prompting comparisons with the so-called “zombie” effect associated with drug abuse. He criticised successive governments for what he described as the deterioration of the state and its younger generation, urging people to act before it was too late. He also appealed to people to “save Punjab” and its youth from addiction.

However, Punjab Police later clarified that the footage was not from Punjab but from Sri



Ganganagar in Rajasthan. Harbhajan's reaction has brought the focus back to the long-standing issue of drug abuse in Punjab. The state has faced concerns over substance abuse among young

people for years with the issue often becoming part of public and political discussions. Through his post, Harbhajan stressed the need to take the issue seriously rather than ignore it.

NASA Invites ISRO To Join Artemis Moon Base Programme As India Advances Gaganyaan Human Spaceflight Mission

New Delhi: India and the US have taken another step towards deeper cooperation in space, with NASA inviting the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to join its Moon Base programme. The development comes as the two countries seek to expand their partnership under the Artemis Accords, covering civil space exploration and human spaceflight. The move could prove significant for India's growing space ambitions, bringing ISRO closer to international efforts focused on lunar exploration and future missions to Mars. The two space agencies have also agreed to advance discussions on sharing open scientific data under the Artemis Accords. NASA has formally invited ISRO to participate in its ambitious Moon Base programme under the Artemis Accords, marking a major milestone in India-US space cooperation.

According to a statement released by the US Embassy on Tuesday, NASA and ISRO agreed to take forward discussions on cooperation in open scientific data sharing under the Accords. The initiative is aimed at strengthening cooperation in the civil exploration and use of outer space. NASA is constructing a lunar South Pole base as part of its plans to secure US space leadership, advance scientific research, encour-



age commercial and international innovation and lay the groundwork for future Mars missions. India joined the Artemis Accords on June 21, 2023, becoming its 27th member. Its participation in the Moon Base programme would deepen the strategic space partnership between India and the US and give the country's space programme a bigger role in international lunar exploration.

Building on the partnership, the ninth India-US Civil Space Joint Working Group (CSJWG) meeting was held at ISRO Headquarters in Bengaluru on August 5-6. The meeting focused on expanding cooperation in civil and commercial space activities as well as human spaceflight technologies. The discussions show that India-US space cooperation is moving beyond broad agreements towards specific ar-

reas of collaboration. With lunar exploration and human spaceflight gaining greater importance, the partnership could become an important part of both countries' long-term space plans, TNIE reports. The development comes as India makes progress on its first human spaceflight mission, Gaganyaan. Union Minister of State for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences Jitendra Singh informed Parliament that the Human Rated Launch Vehicle (HRLV3) has completed the development and ground testing of all propulsion stages and structures. Singh told the Rajya Sabha that Gaganyaan had achieved major milestones in the development and validation of critical human-rating systems. The progress is crucial as India prepares for a series of uncrewed missions before attempting its maiden human orbital

mission. The first uncrewed experimental Gaganyaan mission, carrying the Vyommitra half-humanoid, is targeted for the fourth quarter of 2026. The mission will validate technologies being developed for the first time under the programme. It will be followed by two additional uncrewed missions in the configuration planned for the first crewed flight. These missions are targeted by 2027 and will precede India's maiden human orbital mission. Taken together, the expanding NASA-ISRO partnership and progress on Gaganyaan underline an important phase for India's space programme. While the Moon Base cooperation strengthens India's role in international lunar exploration, Gaganyaan is advancing the country's independent human spaceflight ambitions.

He Raised 4 Children Alone. When He Died, None Of Them Came to Say Goodbye



Bhopal:Ghanshyam did not leave behind a fortune. He had run a small bicycle tyre-and-tube business in Indore, owned a modest house and raised four children - two sons and two daughters. His wife died when the children were young. He spent the last four years of his life at Apna Ghar, an old home in Bhopal, removed from his family's love and care. After the 70-year-old's death, the authorities waited for two days for his children to claim the body; nobody came. Ghanshyam died on August 4. The old-age home informed his family and re-

peatedly tried to persuade them to come to Bhopal. They responded with excuses. After dilly-dallying, they told the old-age home to cremate him and send them the death certificate.Madhuri Mishra, who runs Apna Ghar, said: "His youngest daughter was around two when his wife died. There was a time when one father could raise four or five children. Today, four children together could not look after one father," she said. Ghanshyam had earned his living selling bicycle tyres and tubes. He had a small house in Indore. According to Mishra, the

property was sold, and the money was distributed among his children. She said the Apna Ghar once called an emergency contact Ghanshyam had provided. "We called the number and were told, 'I don't know him. I have abandoned him. I have nothing to do with him.' We were also told that the money from their father's house had been divided among the brothers and sisters and that they no longer had any relationship with their father," Mishra told NDTV. By then, Ghanshyam was partially paralysed. He struggled to speak and

could barely walk. "When Ghanshyam ji came to us, he was ill and could barely speak. He told us he had a small tyre-and-tube shop and a small house. Half of his body was paralysed," Mishra said. He wasn't brought to the home by his children. According to Mishra, Ghanshyam had reached Bhopal's ISBT, where buses from Indore arrive. Some young social workers found him there and brought him to Apna Ghar. A man who had once held the hands of four children as they learnt to walk had arrived at a bus terminal in old age, partially paralysed and virtually alone. For the next four years, the old-age home became his address. Mishra says the old-age home repeatedly tried to contact the family whenever Ghanshyam's health deteriorated. "Whenever he fell ill, we took him to hospital and tried to call them. They did not come. We continued looking after him," she said. Then came August 4. Ghanshyam died. The old-age home did not have facilities to preserve a body indefinitely. Yet the manage-

ment waited, hoping someone from the family would arrive."Even after his death, we tried several times. We tried the address in Panchvati, Indore, but could not find anyone there. We waited, but nobody came. Finally, with the help of the police, we performed his last rites," she said. Mishra says one of Ghanshyam's daughters was upset over how his property had been divided. "The daughter said her father had given his property to the sons. She said, 'I got nothing, so why should I come?' The sons said, 'What did he ever do for us?'" he told NDTV. Ghanshyam's funeral is over, but the story is not. The family now wants his death certificate. "I will absolutely not give Ghanshyam ji's death certificate to his family. People abuse us and ask who we are to decide this. But we had a bond with him. If they did not come to see him when he was alive, and did not come when he died, why should we now give them his death certificate?" Mishra said.

Rajya Sabha Clears Taxation Bill, Government Rules Out UPI Charges

New Delhi:Parliament on Monday passed the Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, after the Rajya Sabha returned the Money Bill to the Lok Sabha following discussion, with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman assuring that consumers and small merchants will not have to pay Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) charges on UPI transactions. The Lok Sabha had earlier passed the Bill. As it is a Money Bill, the Rajya Sabha can only make recommendations on its provisions and return it to the Lok Sabha, which may accept or reject those recommendations. Replying to the discussion in the Rajya Sabha, Sitharaman said the UPI-related amendment is only an enabling provision and does not itself impose any tax or transaction charge on users. "The enabling provision that we are bringing in today does not

impose any tax or transaction charge on UPI users," Sitharaman said, adding that it enables the government to specify through notification the electronic payment modes that will continue to receive statutory protection against charges. She also said that no MDR framework has yet been finalised. "Therefore, no MDR framework has yet been finalised," she said. Clarifying the position on smaller businesses, Sitharaman said, "Small merchants remain central to UPI's inclusive growth. We are not going to impose any MDR on them. We don't intend to." She further said consumers would continue to make UPI payments without paying transaction charges. The Bill also carries a wider set of tax and investment-related changes aimed at improving ease of doing business and attracting investment. These include tax exemptions linked



to specified data-centre services in India, incentives for global diamond-trading activity, measures supporting electronics manufacturing and relaxation of conditions for eligible investment funds. Sitharaman said the reforms are intended to strengthen India's manufacturing ecosystem, attract investment and generate employment.

On data centres, she said the reforms would help expand the domestic ecosystem and stressed that "the investment, the assets, the employment, and also the profit will rest with Indian companies on account of data centre reforms." The Bill also provides tax exemptions for certain foreign institutional investors and the Bank for In-

ternational Settlements on income from investments in government securities, while introducing other changes related to rough-diamond trading and business trusts. As a Money Bill, the Rajya Sabha can recommend amendments but cannot block it; the Lok Sabha may accept or reject those recommendations

On Camera, Uttarakhand Bridge Swept Away In Seconds Due To Strong Currents

New Delhi:Strong currents due to rising water level in a river following heavy rain in Uttarakhand swept away a bridge in the hill state's Niti Valley region. In a video of the incident, a massive volume of water mixed with mud rushed downstream and slammed into the metal bridge in the valley which comes under Chamoli district. Within seconds, the sheer force of the water uprooted the bridge and pushed it towards the riverbank. The video also captured a truck and an SUV on a road along the river turning away from the unfolding disaster just in time. With the bridge gone, the area got cut-off from the main town. The authorities have asked people not to travel in this area. People should postpone their journeys until the conditions improve and the administration gives an all-clear message. People living by the banks of rivers and streams in the valley have been asked to keep a good, safe distance as the risk of water level ris-



ing due to heavy rain has not been ruled out. Uttarakhand Disaster Management and Rehabilitation secretary Vinod Kumar Suman said it has been raining non-stop since Sunday night. The affected areas are Dehradun, Bageshwar, Nainital, and Champawat. "It will rain in the entire state. And the rain will con-

tinue continuously. There will be a gap of some time in the evening. After this, like it rained last night, it will rain again like this in the night," Suman told news agency ANI. He said they are holding awareness programmes at landslide-prone areas and informing people what to do during such conditions.

Van Swept Away While Crossing Flooded Drain In Madhya Pradesh, 9 Dead



Rajgarh (MP):Nine persons, including a girl, were killed after a van carrying 11 passengers got swept away while crossing a swollen nullah (drain) amid heavy rains in Madhya Pradesh's Rajgarh district on Monday, police said. Two occupants of the van managed to swim to safety following the incident that occurred around 9 am near Sarangpur town when the van driver was attempting to make his way through the Padana bypass culvert, an official said. According to eyewitnesses, staff from the local administration and villagers present at the scene had warned the driver not to proceed further. But he contin-

ued, and within moments, the strong current swept the van into the water. Villagers, risking their own lives, tied ropes and launched a rescue operation, managing to pull out some of the passengers, they said. The bodies of nine people, including a girl, were recovered. Sarangpur SDOP Arvind Singh said rivers and drains were overflowing due to heavy rains on Monday. The driver carelessly drove the van into the strong current of the drain on the road near the Padana bypass, and it sank in no time, killing nine people, he said, adding that a case has been registered at the Sarangpur police station.

Delhi Woman Says Rapido Rider Arrived In Car Despite Booking Bike, Asked Her To Get In: "Was Scary"



A Delhi-based consultant has shared a disturbing account of a late-night Rapido ride, alleging that the rider she booked on a bike arrived in a car and repeatedly asked her to get inside. According to her account, she booked a Rapido bike at around 11:07 pm from Gate 4 of Sector 16 Noida Metro station. The app showed the rider's name as Anmol Mishra and the vehicle as a Hero Splendour. She was speaking to the rider over the phone because he had initially gone to Gate 3 instead of Gate 4. A few minutes later, a Maruti Ritz arrived at the spot. She said she was confused because she had booked a bike but soon realised that the person in the car was the same man she had been speaking to on the phone. However, she alleged that he did not match the photograph shown for the rider on the app. The man reportedly told her that his bike had broken down and that he had come in a car instead. He then asked her to get into the vehicle. "I said no. He kept insisting. At that point, I got scared and started shouting at him. He then said, 'Okay, I'm going,' and said he would cancel the ride. But I was the one who eventually cancelled the ride. The car then went a little ahead of the metro gate and stopped there," Moni Shandilya wrote on LinkedIn. She said she cancelled the ride herself and admitted that she did not manage to take a screenshot of the booking or photograph the car and the person at the time. She explained that she was too frightened and focused only on getting home safely. She also stressed that her concern was about passenger safety in general and not limited to women, saying anyone could feel vulnerable if the person arriving did not match the details shown on

the app. "And I'm not saying this is only about women. If a man had been in the same situation, I don't think it would have been safe for him either. I understand that Rapido & Rapido Support calls after a ride is completed, especially at night, to check if the passenger reached safely. But this situation was scary, and the concern was before I even reached home," she added. Moni urged Rapido to investigate the ride, verify what happened and take appropriate action against the person involved. She said she was safe but hoped the incident would be taken seriously to prevent a similar situation from happening to someone else.

Rapido's Response
Rapido Support responded to the post and said it understood the seriousness of the complaint. The company said the alleged behaviour was unacceptable and did not meet its service standards. "We understand how concerning and unsafe this situation must have felt, especially when the person who arrived did not match the rider details shown on the app. Customer safety is our top priority, and we take such concerns very seriously," the company wrote. In another comment, Rapido said it had taken immediate action against the reported captain's account and had initiated measures aimed at preventing similar incidents in the future. The company further said it was strengthening its monitoring systems through customer feedback, ride reviews and vehicle-related checks, with the aim of improving passenger safety and service quality.

3 Girls Die, 1 Critical After Snake Bites 6 At Maharashtra School Hostel

Gadchiroli:Three girls died, and a fourth student remains in critical condition after six students were bitten by a snake in the hostel of a government-aided ashram school in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district. The incident occurred in the early hours of Monday, when a snake bit six students sleeping in the hostel of a primary-secondary residential school in Gadchiroli's Japtalai village. After the students began suffering from the effects of the bite, they were first admitted to a rural hospital and subsequently taken to the District General Hospital in Gadchiroli. Three students died during treatment while treatment continued for the other three girls. However, the condition of one of them suddenly turned critical. With the assistance of the district administration and Gadchiroli police, the student was immediately airlifted to GMC Hospital in Nagpur to ensure she received advanced medical care and better facilities. The students who died were eight, twelve and fourteen years old. Following the incident, the families of the dead students and villagers have leveled serious allegations against the school management, citing gross negligence, a disregard for student safety, and dissatisfaction with the arrangements made after the incident. Ashish Jaiswal, the Guardian Minister for Gadchiroli district, has set out for the school to take stock of the situation, while the health department and the administration are now making every effort to save the remaining students.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, DALAI MANI, W/o. DALAI SATYAM (Late), residing at Door No. 20-48-16, Down ReliVeedhi, Near Ramalayam Second Lane, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh-530001, have changed my name from DALAI MANI to DALAI RAJAMANI. Henceforth, I shall be known and called as DALAI RAJAMANI for all purposes.

Sd/-
DALAI RAJAMANI

DLF Sells Luxury Penthouse In Gurugram For Rs 271 Crore: Report



New Delhi:Realty major DLF Ltd has sold a penthouse for Rs 271 crore at its upcoming luxury housing project in Gurugram, making it one of the costliest deals in terms of per square feet, according to sources. In October 2024, DLF launched its 17-acre super-luxury housing project 'The Dahlias' at DLF Phase 5 in Gurugram, comprising 420 apartments and penthouses. Sources said the company has sold a penthouse in this project to entrepreneur Manav Sardana, who was associated with Imperial Auto. The penthouse has a 17,200 sq ft super area and a 10,500 sq ft carpet area. On the super area basis, DLF has sold the penthouse at Rs 1.58 lakh per sq ft, while the selling price is nearly Rs 2.6 lakh per sq ft on carpet area, sources said. A DLF spokesperson declined to comment on the sale. DLF is expecting a total revenue of more than Rs 40,000 crore from this project. It has already sold more than 65 per cent of its units so far. The price of an apartment in this project ranges between Rs 100 crore and Rs 170 crore. Penthouses cost more. Demand for luxury apartments has gone up across major seven cities post-COVID pandemic. Gurugram and Mumbai have witnessed many big ticket sales of apartments and penthouses. During the first quarter of this fiscal, DLF Ltd sales bookings or pre-sales plunged 94 per cent to Rs 657 crore as it did not launch any project. During 2025-26, DLF Ltd's sales bookings or pre-sales fell 5 per cent to Rs 20,143 crore from a record of Rs 21,223 crore in the preceding financial year. In May this year, the company had given an annual sales bookings guidance of Rs 20,000 crore for the current 2026-27 fiscal. DLF is confident of meeting the sales bookings target of Rs 20,000 crore for this fiscal despite a sharp fall in the June quarter. DLF reported a 4 per cent increase in its consolidated net profit to Rs 793.90 crore for the quarter ended June, despite a huge fall in its total income. Total income declined to Rs 1,605.56 crore in the first quarter of 2026-27 fiscal from Rs 2,980.88 crore in the corresponding period of the preceding year. DLF has developed over 185 real estate projects and an area of more than 352 million square feet. The group has 275 million sq ft of development potential across residential and commercial segments.

Why Iran Is In Spotlight After Water Systems Hacked In 7 US States



Washington:In late July, the US state of Minnesota reported that at least 30 of its municipal water systems came under a "coordinated cyberattack," leaving many shocked. Days later, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) warned that malicious cyber actors broke into water and wastewater systems in at least seven states, causing operational disruptions and exposing glimpses of vulnerabilities in critical public services. Since then, several US states, including Georgia, New Jersey, and South Dakota, have reported similar attacks, but it remains unclear if they are part of the seven states from the FBI's list. Initially, the Donald Trump administration blamed the hackers allegedly aligned with Iran for the cyberattacks, but the US government has yet to formally attribute the hacks to anyone.

US Water Machinery

The federal government's data shows that there are 152,000 public drinking water systems and more than 16,000 wastewater treatment facilities across the US. Most municipalities get their water from lakes, reservoirs, rivers, or underground aquifers. Electric pumps then move the water through pipes to a treatment plant that filters and disinfects it, pushing the treated supply into storage tanks, which further distribute it to houses, businesses, and public utility areas like parks and schools. The entire system can span across several square miles.

How Hackers Are Targeting Supply

According to a CNN report, hackers are targeting internet-facing programmable logic controllers (PLCs) -- the devices that allow all industrial equipment to communicate at water facilities and other

industrial plants. The programmable logic controllers monitor water pressure, chemical dosing, and other features in water systems to ensure it is safe for drinking. Workers at municipalities use dashboards to operate the controllers using wired networks, radio or cellular links, or internet connections. William Akoto, Assistant Professor of Global Security at American University School of International Service, explained the anatomy of these cyberattacks in an article for The Conversation. He explained that attackers scan internet addresses for controllers, dashboards, and outside companies that provide remote access services, looking for targets that are linked directly to the internet. Next, the criminals look for a default or stolen password to log in, or an unpatched vulnerability, or a misconfigured remote-access service. They then ex-

plot the access they have gained by changing a password, issuing commands, or attempting to alter the controller's software.

Is Iran Behind These Attacks?

US officials, according to CBS News, are probing whether the cyber attacks could be linked to Iranian hackers, while cautioning that the assessment could change as additional technical evidence is collected. Iran also has a history of orchestrating similar attacks on Israeli supply. However, at a cabinet meeting last week, Trump blamed Minnesota authorities for the hack and cast doubt on whether Iran was involved. "They like to say, 'Oh, it's Iran.' Iran should be so lucky. Iran's got bigger problems than worrying about Minnesota," he said. Meanwhile, investigators are also probing to see whether another actor may have attempted to mimic Iranian tactics to mislead authorities.

Why These Attacks Matter

So far, there has been no report indicating that these attacks have corrupted any water system in a way that rendered drinking water unsafe. However, they have led to several disruptions requiring manual overrides and boil-water advisories issued out of caution. But the experts have pointed out the biggest threat of the hacks may not be to the water supply itself, but what it could do to the public confidence in the security of their water. They're attacking our trust in our gov-

ernment to be able to deliver basic services in a time when, you know, you've got a deeply divided country over the war," Jake Braun, former acting White House Deputy National Cyber Director, told the BBC.

What the US Can Do to Protect Its Supply

According to Akoto, the most immediate step that the US can take to protect itself is to remove controllers and human dashboards from direct connection to the internet. Following the Minnesota attacks, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency urged water utilities to place this equipment behind properly configured firewalls and other safeguards. "When remote access is necessary, utilities should route communications through a secure gateway or VPN, require multiple levels of authentication, and limit how much access each user has. Utilities should change default passwords, disable unused remote-access services, and install vendor-approved updates to connected equipment," he wrote. "In their guidance on internet-exposed dashboards, the cybersecurity agency also recommends separating operational networks from email and other business systems. This measure makes it harder for attackers to move between the two systems," Akoto added. He also advised that utilities should back up controller programs, log remote-access activity, and practice restoring systems and operating manually.

1,600 Buildings Collapse, 181 Dead: Videos Of 7.4 Magnitude Colombia Earthquake



Bogota:A powerful 7.4-magnitude earthquake struck western Colombia, rattling much of the country and setting off a desperate search and rescue of survivors trapped under the rubble of hundreds of collapsed buildings in several cities. At least 169 people have died, and around 570 others have been injured in the South American nation's strongest earthquake this cen-

tury. The deaths are likely to rise as rescue crews and residents continued to dig through flattened buildings, even as the Colombian Geological Service has warned of additional tremors. The disaster struck just days after President Abelardo De La Espriella took over the highest office in the country, thrusting the new administration into its first major crisis, with memories still fresh of devastating

twin earthquakes in neighbouring Venezuela in June. According to Espriella, at least 1,575 homes, 18 health centres, and 52 schools had been damaged in the powerful quake that was followed by 21 aftershocks. The president said at least 61 buildings had completely collapsed as he declared an emergency to expedite funding for the quake recovery. "We aren't going to

leave people alone. They are in our hearts and we are going to tend to people with our full determination," he said.

The Visuals

Visuals shared on social media sites showed a four-story building crumbled in Pereira during the quake, while footage from Manizales showed one of the side towers of the city's landmark neo-Gothic cathedral collapsing and scattering debris onto nearby streets. Colombia's Geological Service said Monday's quake was the country's strongest recorded "in the 21st century," and that it was followed by several aftershocks. A video broadcast by Caracol Television showed a group of people pulling a small baby covered in dust from under a pile of rubble. Caracol reported the six-month-old girl and her mother were rescued from under a five-story building in Cali. Another clip from the city of Cali showed rescue workers rappelling people out from the win-

dows of a local hospital.

Ring of Fire

Colombia's Pacific region around the epicenter lies along the "Ring of Fire," the line of seismic faults encircling the Pacific Ocean where most of the world's earthquakes occur. The Pacific, particularly the Choco region, is one of Colombia's poorest, nestled in dense jungle. Much of Choco is only reachable by boat or plane, which may pose difficulty in assessing the wider toll. Northwestern University seismologist Suzan van der Lee told news agency Reuters that the quake's powerful magnitude, inland location and strike-slip motion may have amplified damage in populated valleys despite its considerable depth. "This one was far below the crust, and in theory it shouldn't cause as much shaking. At this magnitude, it did actually cause a lot of shaking," she said, adding Colombia is particularly difficult for seismologists to analyze due to the interaction of several major tectonic plates.

"Wasn't Taking Part In Protests": UK Man Killed In PoK Clashes By Stray Bullet



A British national was shot dead in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) during clashes between security forces and protesters, while another Briton has remained in prison for more than two months despite efforts by his family to get British authorities involved. The cases, reported by the Guardian, highlight how the unrest in the PoK region has affected British nationals with family links to the area.

'He Was Hit By A Stray Bullet'

Mohammad Akhtar, a 50-year-old resident of Peterborough, was in Kotli when violence broke out on June 9. His family said he was not participating in the protests and was staying near the area where demonstrations were taking place. According to his cousin Mohammad Saad, Pakistani security forces opened fire on a gathering of protesters demanding economic and electoral reforms. "He wasn't taking part in protests but the demonstrations were happening close to his house," said Saad. "There was firing by the forces that day and he was hit by a stray bullet. There was a bullet wound on the side of his chest," said Saad, adding that Akhtar's children decided not to pursue the matter with British authorities. The family was unable to get a police complaint registered in PoK and feared that drawing attention to the case could put them at further risk, Saad said.

Another Briton Remains Behind Bars

The second case involves Waqas Arif, a 38-year-old British national from Nottingham. Arif was detained in Mirpur, a city in PoK, following protests on June 5. His family insists that he was not involved in the demonstrations. His sister Sumera said Pakistani forces, accompanied by Rangers personnel, entered their home after her two other brothers had gone to the protests. "Waqas was not involved in any kind of protests. But since my other two brothers were involved and they went for the protests with everybody else, the Pakistani forces, along with the Rangers, came into my house, and they took my brothers away," she said. She said Arif had not been formally charged or brought before a court. "There is no charge. He hasn't done anything. This is my brother, but I think there are thousands of other brothers like him from everywhere who they have put in [prison] so they can minimise the protest power ... they have not even been taken to court," she said. Arif's wife, Varisha Kampulvi, said British officials had also been unable to speak directly to him since his detention at a prison in Mirpur.

UK Raises Concerns With Pakistan
Kampulvi has taken up her husband's case with British authorities. In an email sent to her on June 26, the Foreign Office said officials had contacted the prison authorities but had not been able to speak directly with Arif. "Consular staff have been able to make contact with officials at the prison where Waqas is currently being held, although we have not had direct contact with Waqas," the email

said. "The authorities have confirmed that Waqas is in good health, which we were extremely pleased to hear." The UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office said it was "deeply concerned" about the situation in parts of PoK. "FCDO ministers and the UK high commissioner in Islamabad are in touch with their counterparts, and UK travel advice was updated on 7 August and continues to advise against all but essential travel to affected areas," it said. Former UK Foreign Office minister Hamish Falconer is understood to have raised the situation during talks with Pakistani counterparts on a June 16-17 visit to Islamabad. Stephen Doughty, who currently holds the Foreign Office role, has also been in contact with Pakistani officials.

Protests Trigger Major Crackdown

The unrest has centred on the Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC), a civil society group that launched protests demanding reforms in PoK months before voting began in the region on July 27. Pakistan has declared JAAC a terrorist organisation and imposed a communications blackout in the region since June 5. Security forces have been accused of killing at least 30 people during last month's demonstrations. The Pakistani government has rejected the allegations. JAAC has accused Islamabad of trying to crush dissent and said scores of its supporters have been detained. The group has described the elections as a "sham", being held "at gunpoint".

Indian Techie Dies In US After Pickup Truck Rams His Car Head-On

Washington:A 26-year-old software engineer from Andhra Pradesh has died in Ohio, United States, after he was involved in a severe head-on collision. Dileep Kumar Bungatavula was driving the vehicle that was hit by a pickup truck travelling in the opposite direction, according to police. Bungatavula, a native of Jettivaripalli village in Andhra Pradesh's Kadapa district, had gone to the United States to pursue higher education at Kent State University, from where he completed his Master of Science in 2025.

The Accident

Police said the accident occurred on Interstate 480 in the Macedonia area of Ohio. Bungatavula was travelling in a sedan when a pickup truck travelling in the opposite direction crossed the centre median and collided with his vehicle. When emergency services arrived at the scene, they found Bungatavula had died on the spot while three others were injured in the accident. The three were



rushed to a hospital, where they are undergoing treatment. The circumstances surrounding the crash remain under investigation, police said.

India Reacts

The Consulate General of India in New York confirmed the Indian man's death and said it was extending all possible assistance to his family back home. "We are deeply saddened to learn of the untimely demise of Dileep Kumar Bungatavula, an Indian national, who tragically lost his life in a car accident in Ohio on August 7, 2026," the consulate said in a post on X. "Our thoughts and heartfelt condolences are with his family during this difficult time. The Consulate is in touch with the family and is extending all possible assistance,"

it added. Meanwhile, the North America Telugu Society has started a fundraiser for Bungatavula's family. "For Dileep's parents and his brother in India, this sudden loss is unimaginable. His father, Sreehari Bungatavula, is a farmer, and the family comes from modest financial circumstances. His parents made significant sacrifices to support their son's education, hoping to see him complete his studies and build a successful future," the society noted. According to Bungatavula's family, he has completed his studies and has recently started working for a software company in the United States. The family is now making arrangements to bring his remains back to India for the final rites.

India Opens Attari Border, 10 Other Ports For E-Visa Holders

New Delhi:The Centre has notified 11 additional international ports, including the India-Pakistan border in Attari, Punjab, allowing e-visa holders to enter India. With the latest addition -- which included two airports and nine land ports -- the total number of international connectors enabling entry for E-Visa holders has increased to 88, including 37 airports, 38 seaports, and 13 land ports, according to the Ministry of Home Affairs. All foreigners, except Pakistanis,

will be allowed to avail themselves of the benefit of the new move, as India does not grant e-visas to travellers with Pakistani passports or Pakistani origin. "They may please apply for a regular visa at the Indian Mission," according to the Indian visa application e-portal. The e-visa facility is currently available to 17 sub-categories of travellers, including medical, student, mountaineering, cruise, tourist, transit, group travel, and business, among others. Around 95 per cent of

applications are processed within 72 hours. The latest move is expected to enhance the attractiveness and utility of the electronic visa.

List of Newly Added Ports

The Ministry of Home Affairs added 9 land ports to the list-- Darranga, Gede, Ghojadanga, Haridaspur, Jaigaon, Dawki, Moreh, and Attari (Road). Raxaul, Rupaidiha, and Jogbani borders were already on the list. The two airports that have been added are Bhopal and Tirupati. Other



airports on the list include Ahmedabad, Amritsar, Bagdogra, Bhogapuram, Bengaluru, Bhubaneswar, Calicut, Chandigarh, Chennai, Cochin, Coimbatore, Delhi, Gaya, Goa (Dabolim), Goa (Mopa), Guwahati,

Hyderabad, Indore, Jaipur, Kannur, Kolkata, Lucknow, Madurai, Mangalore, Mumbai, Nagpur, Navi Mumbai, Port Blair, Pune, Surat, Thiruvananthapuram, Trichy, Varanasi, Vijayawada,

Affordable Ticket Prices Make All The Difference!



The last two months have been highly encouraging for the Telugu film industry. Every weekend, theaters have been witnessing strong occupancy, with many evening shows running housefull even on weekdays. One major reason is the standard affordable ticket prices across AP and Telangana. Except for Ram

Charan's Peddi, most releases have stuck to regular pricing. This worked big time as audiences have preferred this approach, and the recent box office numbers are proof. Films like Korean Kanakaraju, Chennai Love Story, Lenin, and Maa Inti Bangaram emerged as successful ventures with these ticket rates.

One can clearly see that affordable ticket rates have played a key role in this trend, especially in Andhra Pradesh, where multiplex tickets are priced at around Rs.177. Ever since this has happened, trade experts recommend producers to pay close attention to this trend. When ticket prices remain

affordable, moviegoers will surely watch two or three films instead of just one, and this benefits the entire industry. In the coming days, upcoming films Vishwanath & Sons, Makutam, Agada, and Palalburusu could also gain from this strategy if the current pricing structure continues. Let's see what happens.

King100: Can Nag's Birthday Glimpse Match the Hype?

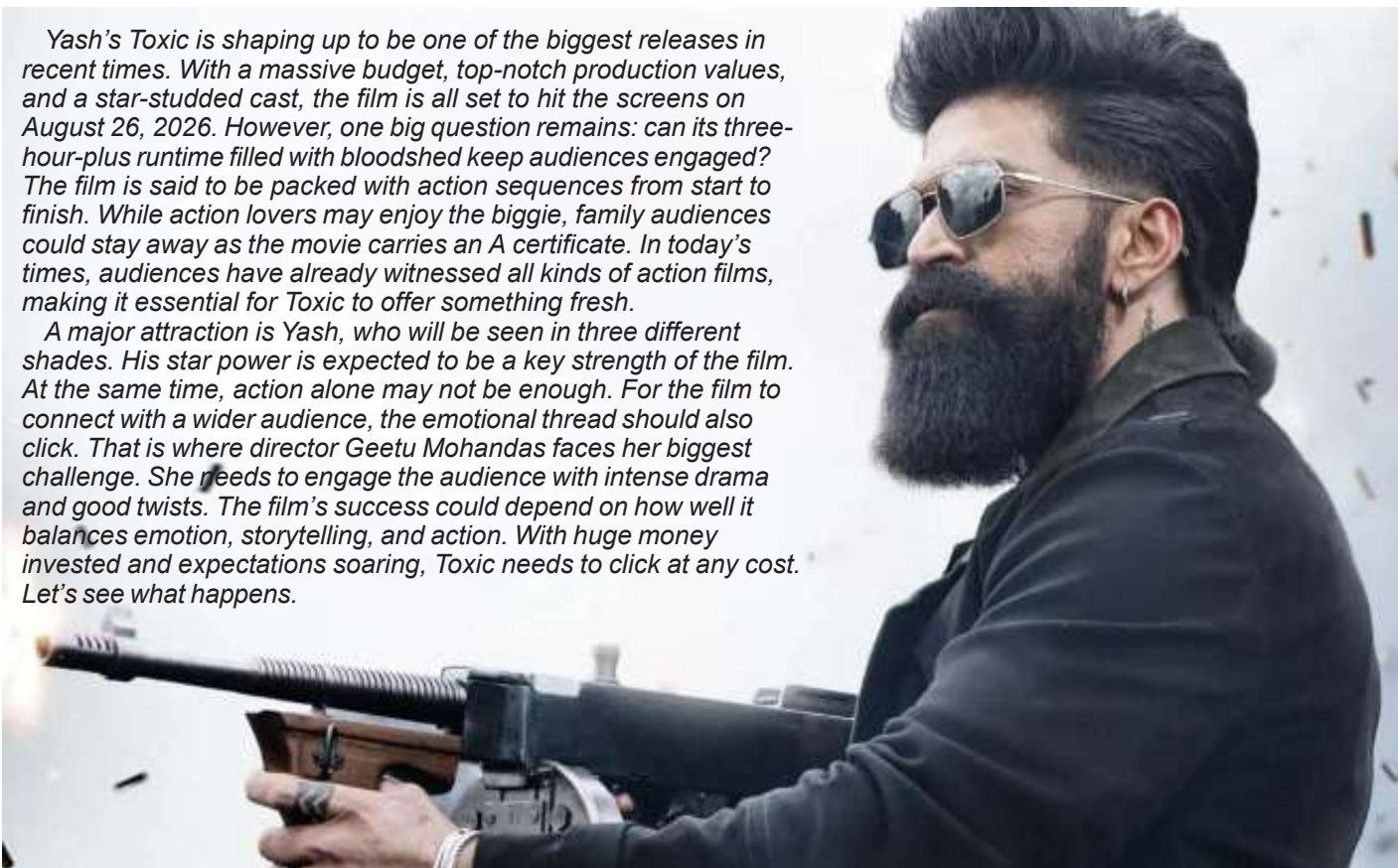
For the last few months, King100, the landmark 100th film of Nagarjuna Akkineni, has been progressing steadily with its shoot. However, despite the excitement surrounding the project, the makers have remained completely silent, leaving Akkineni fans in tension. Now, the wait is finally coming to an end as the team will unveil the film's title and a special glimpse on August 29, marking Nagarjuna's birthday. The update is expected to kick-start the film's promotional campaign grandly. Interestingly, not a single official look from the film has been released so far. This secrecy has only increased curiosity among Akkineni fans.



Since the project marks a major milestone in Nagarjuna's career, expectations are naturally sky-high, and every aspect of the film will be closely monitored. Another aspect that has caught everyone's attention is the selection of Tamil director Ra Karthik. He was chosen ahead of several Telugu directors, and fans are eager to see what unique vision he has brought to Nagarjuna's landmark movie. With the shoot nearing completion, all eyes are now firmly on the birthday glimpse as it needs to make a strong impact and justify the immense anticipation and hype created by the team.

Can Toxic's 3-Hour-Plus Bloodshed Keep Audiences Hooked?

Yash's *Toxic* is shaping up to be one of the biggest releases in recent times. With a massive budget, top-notch production values, and a star-studded cast, the film is all set to hit the screens on August 26, 2026. However, one big question remains: can its three-hour-plus runtime filled with bloodshed keep audiences engaged? The film is said to be packed with action sequences from start to finish. While action lovers may enjoy the biggie, family audiences could stay away as the movie carries an A certificate. In today's times, audiences have already witnessed all kinds of action films, making it essential for *Toxic* to offer something fresh. A major attraction is Yash, who will be seen in three different shades. His star power is expected to be a key strength of the film. At the same time, action alone may not be enough. For the film to connect with a wider audience, the emotional thread should also click. That is where director Geetu Mohandas faces her biggest challenge. She needs to engage the audience with intense drama and good twists. The film's success could depend on how well it balances emotion, storytelling, and action. With huge money invested and expectations soaring, *Toxic* needs to click at any cost. Let's see what happens.



Wamiqa Gabbi – A New Star in the Making!



Wamiqa Gabbi is all over the news with her new film DC. While the film marks Lokesh Kanagaraj's much-talked-about acting debut, a section of the audience feels that Wamiqa has stolen the spotlight with her powerful portrayal of Chandra. Early reviews and social media reactions are filled with praise, with many calling her the emotional backbone of the film. Known for taking up unconventional and bold roles, Wamiqa has always

been regarded as a performer. However, DC seems to have taken that reputation to another level. Wamiqa plays an emotionally layered character who carries immense weight throughout the narrative with immense Versatility. Critics have particularly appreciated the way she balances different shades, making Chandra a memorable character. The general opinion is that whenever Wamiqa appears on screen, she adds emotional in-

tensity, and her chemistry with Lokesh Kanagaraj has also emerged as top-notch. Many viewers have remarked that Lokesh and Wamiqa bring life to the film whenever they are together. Not many know that Wamiqa has struggled a lot in Hindi and Tamil cinema and has been around for a very long time before she found success. Well, DC could well become another landmark in Wamiqa Gabbi's career and take her to new heights.

Manasa Varanasi Poses Pretty By The Lake



It's been a quiet year on the film front for Manasa Varanasi, with Vanaveera failing to click at the box office, but her style updates continue to keep her fans hooked as they await her next announcement. Coming to her look, Manasa Varanasi turned up the charm in a colour-blocked dress featuring a fiery orange-red bustier bodice paired with a flowy pink skirt. The strappy silhouette added a chic, summery touch, while her loose curls, delicate gold jewellery, and radiant smile rounded off the look effortlessly. Shot against a scenic lakeside backdrop, the outfit's vibrant hues made for a striking contrast, giving the look a fresh, vacation-ready vibe.