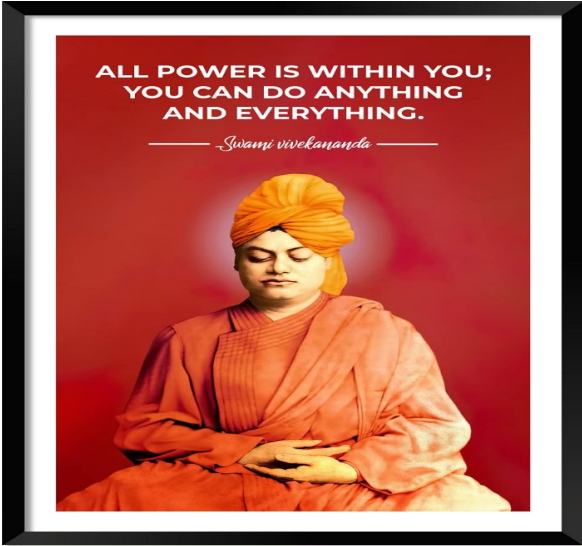
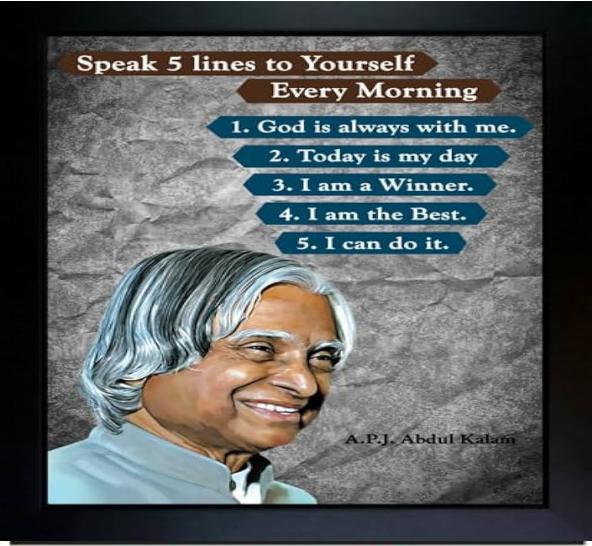




Avinash Mohanty Appointed Commissioner of Telangana SAFE



Hyderabad: Senior IPS officer Avinash Mohanty, a 2005-batch officer, has been appointed as the Commissioner of Telangana SAFE (Telangana Standards Authority for Food and Essential Drugs). Mohanty, who was earlier serving as the Director General of the Drugs Control Administration, Telangana, will hold the new position in addition to his normal duties. The Telangana government has decided to bring the Food Safety and Drugs Control Department under a unified administration, TG SAFE (Telangana Standards Authority for Food and Essential Drugs).

CM Revanth Reddy Attends Film Producer Bandla Ganesh's Daughter's Wedding



Hyderabad: Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy attended the wedding ceremony of film producer Bandla Ganesh's daughter on Sunday. On the occasion, Revanth Reddy blessed the newlyweds and wished them a happy and prosperous married life. CM Chandrababu Naidu and Bhuvaneshwari blessed the newlyweds and wished them a happy married life. AP Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan and Anna Konidela were also present at the wedding. Several prominent personalities, including leaders from the film and political fields, attended the wedding and extended their best wishes to the newly married couple.

Flight Services From Visakhapatnam Airport To Be Suspended From Sunday Midnight

Visakhapatnam: With flight services scheduled to operate from the Alluri Sitaramaraju International Airport from August 17, movement of commercial flights at the Visakhapatnam airport would be suspended from Sunday midnight. The Union civil aviation ministry informed that the operation of scheduled commercial flights would be suspended at the Visakhapatnam airport (INS Dega) for 30 years. However, this regulation would be relaxed during emergency conditions. Non-scheduled commercial flight services, Indian Air Force, Armed forces, police flights, departure and arrival of government guests would continue at the Visakhapatnam airport. Also



Read - Andhra Pradesh: 2 Groups Clash Over Girl, 11 Taken Into Custody The VTZ travel code assigned to the Visakhapatnam airport would be transferred to the Alluri Sitaramaraju airport from August 17 midnight. Actually, the Bhogapuram - Hyderabad flights are scheduled to run at 8.55 and 10.40, 1.00 pm on August 17, 4.25 in the evening, 7.20, 8.40 and 9.20 pm in the evening. Delhi flights would operate at 8.20 am, 10.45 pm, Bengaluru at 2.55 in the after-

plans to operate flights from Bhogapuram to Hyderabad, Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Kolkata, and Tirupati on the first day. Other airlines are also releasing schedules to run flights from Bhogapuram airport. All flights scheduled to operate from Visakhapatnam airport from August 16 midnight would take off from Bhogapuram. Bhogapuram - Hyderabad flights are scheduled to run at 8.55 and 10.40, 1.00 pm on August 17, 4.25 in the evening, 7.20, 8.40 and 9.20 pm in the evening. Delhi flights would operate at 8.20 am, 10.45 pm, Bengaluru at 2.55 in the after-

H-City Project: Rs.1,090 Crore Plan to Ease Traffic Around KBR Park

Hyderabad: The Telangana government has launched the Hyderabad City Innovative and Transformative (H-City) project to curb the rapidly growing traffic congestion in the metropolis and upgrade its transport infrastructure to international standards. As part of the initiative, the government has commenced construction of 14 major structures, comprising seven multi-level steel flyovers and seven directional underpasses, at six key junctions around KBR Park within an estimated



budget of Rs.1,090 crore. Also Read - Avinash Mohanty Appointed Commissioner of Telangana SAFE To ensure smooth, uninterrupted, and rapid completion of these construction works for early public utility, a one-way traffic system will be implemented around KBR Park starting August 18. Speaking about the implementation of the one-way system, Hyderabad City Police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar, IPS, said the measures were being introduced to minimise inconvenience to commuters while significantly reducing the construction timeline. He said the decision was taken after comprehensive studies, two rounds of trial runs and close coordination with the GHMC to address ground-level challenges. Also Read - CM Revanth Reddy Attends Film Producer Bandla Ganesh's Daughter's Wedding "Once these multi-level structures are completed, traffic issues at KBR Park Entrance, Road No. 45, Film Nagar, Maharaja Agrasen, and Cancer Hospital junctions will be 100% resolved, ensuring signal-free travel. At the heavily congested Jubilee Hills Check Post Junction, travel bottlenecks will be reduced by 80%. As a result, travel time between the core city and the IT corridor will be significantly minimized, saving fuel worth crores of rupees," Sajjanar said. Also Read - Suryapet: APSRTC, Private Bus Collide on Vijayawada Highway Sajjanar further said that reducing prolonged vehicle idling at traffic junctions would help lower carbon emissions around KBR Park and contribute to environmental protection.

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RSS Supremo Bhagwat, BJP Chief Nabin In Vizag

VISAKHAPATNAM: Top leadership of the RSS and BJP are arriving in Visakhapatnam on Monday, though for separate programmes. RSS Sarsangchalak Mohan Bhagwat is scheduled to participate in the annual Akhil Bharatiya Samanvay Baithak (All India Coordination Meeting) being held at Gudilova School in Anandapuram about 28 km from Visakhapatnam. The meeting, to be held from August 19 to August 21, assumes importance as it is in the centenary year of RSS. The meeting is expected to map out its broader ideological and outreach strategies. Further, it is taking place in the backdrop of agitation by youth at the Jantar Mantar and other places across the country. Also Read - Andhra Pradesh: 2 Groups Clash Over Girl, 11 Taken Into Custody



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The three-day meeting will bring together top office-bearers of the RSS and its frontal organisations, Bhagwat will leave Visakhapatnam on August 22. BJP national president Nitin Nabin will be arriving at the Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport in Bhogapuram as it starts its commercial operations on Monday. Andhra Pradesh BJP president P.V.N. Madhav said this is Nabin's first visit to AP after taking over as the BJP party chief. He is arriving to preside over the expanded State Executive Committee meeting on Tuesday, August 18. The meeting will be attended by party representatives from all 945 mandals, district presidents, state office-bearers, union and state ministers, MPs and MLAs. The meeting will adopt resolutions highlighting development and investments brought to Andhra Pradesh under Prime Minister Narendra Modi and seeking speedy completion of the Polavaram Project. Madhav said the BJP would showcase the AP's "triple-engine growth" under the NDA governments at the centre and in the state.

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Andhra Pradesh Will Send Best Teachers Abroad To Study Education Systems

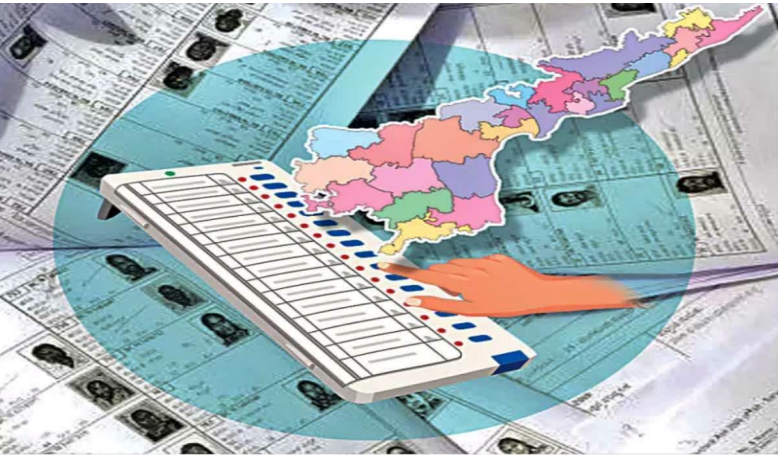


Amaravati: To make Andhra Pradesh Model Education a benchmark for the country, Education and IT Minister Nara Lokesh has taken steps to send the best teachers abroad to study foreign education systems. Already, 37 teachers have visited Singapore, while another 29 are heading to Finland. There, they will study the best teaching methods in the education sector from August 17 to 26. Later, other teachers in the state will be trained on them. The International Professional Development Program aims to strengthen the quality of teaching and learning in the state by providing teachers with a direct understanding of world-class education systems and innovative teaching methods. To this end, a professional training program has been designed in pre-primary and primary education through the 'Joy and Play method' in collaboration with the University of Turku, Finland. The first phase of orientation in the three-phase training has been completed. In the second phase, the participants will visit Finland and study. In the third phase, Finnish experts will provide ongoing guidance through online mentoring sessions. Notably, the southern state tops the country in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Big Data Analytics (BDA) skilling under the FutureSkills Prime programme — a digital skilling initiative by the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) and the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) that offers industry-aligned courses. The state government said that under CM Naidu's technology-led vision focused on emerging technologies, Andhra Pradesh is building a sizeable pool of future-ready talent. According to an official release, 1,53,783 candidates were enrolled or trained in AI and BDA over the last three years. Citing Central government statistics, it said the state has scored the highest number of AI/BDA candidates completed

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Andhra Pradesh Local Body Polls To Be Based On 2025 Voters' List



Amaravati: The local body elections in Andhra Pradesh, likely to be held in October, will be based on the 2025 voters' list. Although the final voters' list after the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) is supposed to be released on October 3, considering it for local body elections will delay the election process. Due to this, the State Election Commission has approved the 2025 list. Accordingly, arrangements are being made to publish voter lists with photographs for municipalities, municipal corporations and city panchayats. The special commission on BC reservations submitted its report this Friday, and the government is likely to decide on it soon. Officials believe that the completion of the crucial reservation process is a sign that the elections will be held soon. In this context, the Election Commission has directed the Municipal Administration & Urban Development Panchayat Raj departments to complete the publication of voter lists of municipalities by September 3, and to complete the lists of about 50 panchayats, where the lists are not yet ready, by August 17. It has also directed that the selection of polling stations in panchayats and the related process should be completed between August 21 and August 31. The SEC has already written to other states for additional ballot boxes and is planning to complete the training of election staff and other related arrangements in 45 days. The special commission report will be discussed in the Legislative Assembly on August 18. The government is reportedly planning to introduce a resolution or bill in the Assembly regarding BC reservations. Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu held a teleconference with ministers Payyavula Keshav, Atchannaidu, Anitha, Nadendla Manohar and Satya Kumar Yadav on Saturday to discuss the agenda of the four-day Assembly session starting from Monday.

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Two dead, two missing after car plunges into canal in AP’s West Godavari

Amaravati: Two persons died, and two others went missing when a car in which they were travelling plunged into a canal in Andhra Pradesh’s West Godavari district, said police on Sunday. The incident happened late on Saturday night. According to police, a car lost control and fell into the Narsapuram canal near Itempudi in Irgavaram mandal. Four of the occupants in the car went missing while one person managed to come out safely. Police rushed to the spot and launched a search for the missing persons with the help of divers and firefighting personnel. The bodies of two of the missing were found on Sunday. The accident occurred when the victims were heading to



Mori village in East Godavari district after attending a wedding of a friend at Peravali village. The missing persons were identified as Pothula Lakshmi Bhanu (18), Rajaram (17), D. Nagi Reddy (18) and Sai Surya (19). The bodies of Lakshmi Bhanu and Nagi Reddy were pulled

out of the canal by fire-fighting personnel on Sunday morning. The bodies were shifted to a government hospital for post-mortem examination. Rescue workers pulled out the car out of the canal. The search was on for the remaining missing persons. Police investigation revealed that the group of youth were heading to Mori village to meet a friend. It was raining in the area, and the person driving the car lost control. The victims were washed away. One of them held on to a tree and managed to come out with the help of locals. Meanwhile, a youth drowned in Nagarjuna Sagar backwaters in Nalgonda district of Telangana. The incident occurred when a group of friends went for a pleasure trip to Vizag Colony backwaters. They were swimming when one of the youths was washed away in the Krishna River. After a search for more than two hours by the local authorities, the of Durga Tirumallesw was retrieved.

Hyderabad timber firm crafts Garuda Vahanams, used two centuries-old Burma

Hyderabad: Master craftsmen from Myanmar have carved a pair of ‘Garuda vahanams’ ahead of the ensuing Garudotsavam at the Ammapalli Sri Sita Ramachandra Swamy Temple in Shamshabad, in December. Anuradha Timber International in Bowenpally took responsibility for carving the Garuda Vahanams, based on mythological texts about Garuda, the celestial vehicle (vahanam) of Lord Vishnu. Anuradha Timber International had earlier crafted teak doors for Ayodhya Ram temple. Chadalavada Sharath Babu, Managing Partner of Anuradha Timbers, told ‘Telangana Today’, that for crafting a pair of Garuda Vahanams, weighing about 400 kg, two centuries-old Myanmar teak wood was used. “Long back, we purchased this Myanmar teak wood and kept it in our workshop



at Bowenpally to craft doors and other wood-related work for the temples,” he said. Before beginning craft work, extensive research was done exclusively on Garuda, Sharath Babu said. One team visited temples in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka and the National Museum in Delhi, studied Garuda, found related sculptures in some temples and went

years to craft the pair of Garuda Vahanams, according to Sharath Babu. Infographics: Garuda Vahanam and highlights Crown: Serpent Shankachuda adorns Garuda’s hair, wrapping around his head like a tiara Earrings: Twin serpent kings, Padma and Mahapadma, hang from his ears as dangling earrings Necklace: Fierce serpent Karkotaka rests around his neck, acting as a powerful necklace Sacred Thread: Serpent king Vasuki stretches diagonally across his torso, forming like Yajnopavita Belt: Dressed, multi-hooded cobra Takshaka wraps tightly around his waist, serving as his hip belt. Bracelets: Cosmic serpent Adishesha binds his left wrist, while serpent Gulika wraps around his right wrist like protective armlets

60,000 Applns Received For Indiramma LIG Housing Scheme In CURE Area

Hyderabad: Over 60,000 families have applied for the Indiramma LIG Housing Scheme in the Core Urban Region of Economy (CURE) area, the government said on Saturday. The draw of lots to select beneficiaries for 7,340 houses will be held on August 20. The last date to apply for another 1,920 homes will end on September 3. The call centre number 040-24603572 can be contacted to address any queries regarding the ‘Indiramma Houses’. “Tenders for the construction of houses have already been floated and measures are being taken to commence work in the first week of September,” said V.P. Gautam, Telangana Housing Board secretary. Also Read - H-City Project: Rs.1,090 Crore Plan to Ease Traffic Around KBR Park For the Indiramma LIG Housing Scheme, applicants need to pay an application fee of Rs 100 and an earnest money deposit (EMD) of Rs 10,000, which will be adjusted upon allotment or refunded otherwise. Those eligible must have annual family income



below Rs 6 lakh, and not possess a house, flat or plot within Outer Ring Road (ORR) limits. Allotment of flats is through a lottery process. Each 1 BHK flat will have a built-up area of 528 sq ft with beneficiary contribution being Rs 6 lakh and the government will provide a subsidy of Rs 5 lakh. The beneficiary will be the owner of undivided land share of up to 30 square yards. As a pilot project, announced that 3,192 Indiramma 2BHK houses will be allotted to beneficiaries by the end of September. According to Hyderabad district collector Dr Priyanka Ala, 2,22,837 new ration cards were sanctioned in the district, while 1,85,946 members had been added to existing cards. She said proposals were submitted to the government for repairing 590 dilapidated 10-storey Indiramma LIG Housing Towers will initially be built in Hayathagar, Goshamahall, Musheerabad and Bandlaguda. Also Read - Short Spells of Rain Likely in Several Telangana Districts 3,192 Indiramma Houses to be allotted to beneficiaries by Sept

The Hyderabad district administration announced that 3,192 Indiramma 2BHK houses will be allotted to beneficiaries by the end of September. According to Hyderabad district collector Dr Priyanka Ala, 2,22,837 new ration cards were sanctioned in the district, while 1,85,946 members had been added to existing cards. She said proposals were submitted to the government for repairing 590 dilapidated houses in six VAMBAY and JNNURM colonies, and reconstruction of houses in 12 colonies.

National Medical Commission set to introduce ‘One Nation, One Licence’ for doctors across India

Hyderabad: Medical practitioners will soon be able to practice anywhere in the country without needing separate registrations every time they cross state lines. The National Medical Commission (NMC) is all set to launch Registration of Medical Practitioners and Licence to Practice Medicine (Amendment) Regulations, 2026, establishing the ‘One Nation, One Licence’ framework. Once current doctors update their credentials through a centralized electronic portal to obtain a unique identification number linked to the National Medical Register, that single credential will allow them full legal eligibility to practice nationwide. To ensure transparency in the States and at the national level, the new regulations make it mandatory for strict digital harmonization and accountability measures under the Ethics and Medical Registration Board. It will be mandatory to maintain electronic synchronization between the National Register and State

Registers, ensuring that any modifications such as qualification updates or disciplinary actions automatically reflect across databases in real time. The new rules will dictate that medical practising licenses will remain valid for five years only. If a renewal application is missed within three months of expiration, a practitioner’s status automatically flips to inactive, instantly suspending their right to practice until the matter is resolved. The Licence to Practice Medicine (Amendment) Regulations, 2026 also localizes how professional misconduct and medical negligence are handled. Complaints will be investigated by the State Medical Council where the incident has taken place. The final decision on such complaints by the State Medical Councils will instantly be shared with the State registration council and national



database. Apart from unified registrations, the new Regulations explicitly streamline processes for Overseas Citizens of India and foreign medical graduates who clear qualifying exams like the Foreign Medical Graduate Examination or National Exit Test, integrating them into provisional internships. Existing practitioners enrolled under older state or Indian medical registers will have to update (one-time) their details on the EMRB web portal to secure their NMR UIDs without paying processing fees. Under the new revised guidelines, temporary registrations for

foreign nationals will now match the exact duration of their course up to a maximum of 24 months (from the previous 12-month limit) and followed by the mandatory one-year cooling-off period, which is the mandatory, pre-defined waiting details on the EMRB web portal to secure their NMR UIDs without paying processing fees. Under the new revised guidelines, temporary registrations for

TTD to Release Quota For November Srivari Arjita Sevas on August 18

Tirupati: Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) would release the quota for Arjita Sevas in November, on August 18. The Arjita Seva quota of Suprabhatam, Archana, Ashtadala Paada Padmaradhan would be released online at 10 am. Devotees can register their names till 10 am on August 20. Devotees chosen for the sevas can obtain the lucky dip tickets by paying the amount between August 20 and August 22. The virtual sevas, darshan slots and quota for Kalyanotsavam, Unjal Seva, Arjita Brahmotsavam, Sahasradeepalankara seva, Salakata Pavitrotsavam would be released at 3 pm on August 21 while



tickets would be sold at 10 am on the same day. Also Read - Andhra Pradesh: RSS Supremo BhDarshan at 11 am, old-agwat, BJP Chief Nabin In Vizag Today On August 24, Angapradakshinam

Darshan at 11 am, old-quota to be released 0 am, Srivani Trust Break Darshan at 11 am, old-aged, terminally-ill, divyangjan token quota would be released at 3 pm. On August 25, Rs 300 special darshan

quota would be released at 10 am, booking for hiring cottages in Tirumala and Tirupati at 3 pm. The TTD suggested that devotees can book their tickets on <https://tdevasthanams.ap.gov.in/>

MMC Collects 2.5 Tonne Sacred Waste From 3 Zones

Hyderabad: More than 2.5 tonnes of sacred waste has been collected so far by the Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation (MMC) from the Uppal, LB Nagar and Malkajgiri zones, with the next collection drive scheduled for August 22 across around 14 temples. The civic body is following an end-to-end process under which the collected material is ritually handed over by temple priests, dismantled and segregated before being sent to authorised recyclers. Also Read - H-City Project: Rs.1,090 Crore Plan to Ease Traffic Around KBR Park Speaking to Deccan Chronicle, Malkajgiri municipal commissioner T. Vinay Krishna Reddy said the collected sacred material would first undergo an Udvasana puja performed by the temple priest concerned. It would then be dismantled and segregated according to the material before being handed



over to authorised agencies for recycling. The commissioner said the disposal of sacred items such as photo frames was one of the components of waste accumulating in the city. The initiative had helped minimise the practice of leaving sacred material at places such as under trees, while many residents had come forward to use the facility. Also Read - Short Spells of Rain Likely in Several Telangana Districts He said the collection, segregation and recycling process was aimed at ensuring that sacred waste did not end up in landfills, dumping yards or water bodies. People who find it difficult to

travel to designated collection points can leave sacred items, including old photographs, at their nearest temple in the coming days. The material can then be collected and shifted to the designated processing system during subsequent collection rounds, he said. Also Read - 60,000 Applns Received For Indiramma LIG Housing Scheme In CURE Area The collected material will be segregated into clay, metal, paper, cloth, plastic and other categories. Idols made of Plaster of Paris, plastic and other non-biodegradable materials will also be handed over to recyclers, who will determine what can be reused or processed. The commissioner said the corporation would maintain end-to-end monitoring and follow-up until the authorised recycler begins processing to

ensure that the sacred material does not end up in landfills or water bodies or get mixed with regular municipal waste. Also Read - Vijay Speaks In English, Too The corporation has identified dedicated agencies to process the collected material. Depending on the quantity, it may either be sent for processing immediately or stored temporarily at a temple or community hall before being handed over to the recycler. MMC plans to conduct the sacred-waste collection every third Saturday of the month, unless an emergency or other demands require a change. Other civic bodies, including the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) and Cyberabad Municipal Corporation (CMC), are also adopting similar arrangements, with sacred photographs, idols and other religious material being collected at designated locations and sent for

PM Modi Pays Tribute To Vajpayee On Death Anniversary

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid floral tribute to former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on his death anniversary at his memorial 'Sadaiv Atal' here on Sunday morning. "Remembering Atal Ji on his Punya Tithi. An extraordinary statesman blessed with remarkable vision, he dedicated his life to the service of our nation. His words and efforts inspired generations and his leadership strengthened our nation. His focus on good governance and public welfare will always continue to guide us," PM Modi said in a social media post.



President Droupadi Murmu and Vice President CP Radhakrishnan also paid homage to the former Prime Minister, who breathed his last on this day in 2018, at his memo-

rial. Remembering Vajpayee, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said he was a patriot and politician who dedicated his life to the service of the nation. In a

post on X, Shah said, "On the death anniversary of former Prime Minister and the founder of BJP, Bharat Ratna, the revered Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji, I pay my homage to him."

"Atal ji was a patriot politician of such calibre who dedicated every moment of his life to the service of the nation. On one hand, he made the entire world aware of India's strength through nuclear tests and the Kargil War, while on the other hand, his value-based politics brought the vision of Antyodaya and good gov-

ernance to the ground for the first time," he said. Shah further said, "Atal ji's towering personality and leadership will continue to inspire every BJP worker towards nation-building forever."

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh also paid homage to Vajpayee on his death anniversary, recalling his contribution to Indian democracy and national development.

"On the death anniversary of the revered Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ji, I offer him millions of salutations and a humble tribute," Singh said in a post on X.

Former Deputy Speaker Of Bengal Assembly, Asish Banerjee, Found Dead At TMC



Rampurhat: Former deputy speaker of the West Bengal Assembly, Asish Banerjee, was found hanging at a TMC party office in Birbhum district on Sunday morning, police sources said. A purported suicide note was also recovered from the party office located near his residence in Rampurhat, they said. According to family sources, Asish had chatted with his family members until midnight before retiring for the night. Upon waking up in the morning, family members and neighbours found the door to the adjacent office room closed. They realised what had happened after looking through a gap in the window. After being informed, police from Rampurhat station arrived at the spot and recov-

ered the body. The former TMC MLA's body has been sent for post-mortem examination. The exact circumstances leading to his death are yet to be ascertained, police added. Banerjee, a veteran TMC leader, had represented Rampurhat in the state Assembly continuously from 2001 till 2026. He had served as the deputy speaker of the Assembly and held ministerial portfolios, including school education and agriculture, in the Mamata Banerjee government. He contested the 2026 Assembly elections from Rampurhat on a TMC ticket but lost to BJP's Dhruva Saha by more than 24,000 votes. After his electoral defeat, Banerjee was not seen to be particularly active in politics, party sources

said.

Banerjee had been a prominent TMC leader in Birbhum during the tenure of party strongman Anubrata Mondal as the district president. The development comes at a time when the political landscape in West Bengal has undergone a major change following the TMC's defeat in this year's assembly polls, ending its 15-year rule. Several former TMC legislators and leaders are facing corruption-related investigations and arrests. Police are investigating whether Banerjee died by suicide and, if so, what prompted him to take the extreme step. The post-mortem report and the contents of the purported note are expected to shed more light on the circumstances surrounding the death.

Govt Sets LPG Production Targets For Refiners; Reliance Gets Largest Quota

New Delhi: The government has for the first time fixed maximum cooking gas LPG production targets for individual public and private-sector refineries and upstream companies, as it seeks to build a domestic supply buffer after the West Asia conflict exposed the country's vulnerability to disruptions in imported cooking gas. The Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry, in an order issued on August 13, has specified maximum LPG production levels for 21 refineries and upstream companies, with combined production potential set at 63,810 tonnes a day -- more than double the domestic LPG output in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2026 and about 70 per cent of the country's daily consumption. The production limits will kick in whenever there is a supply constraint. The lion's share of the planned output has been set from Reliance Industries Ltd's older refinery, which would have to produce up to 18,000 tonnes a day of LPG, according to the order. India consumed 33.2 million tonnes of LPG in the 2025-26 fiscal year (about 91,000 tonnes per day). Of this, 13.1 million tonnes a year was produced locally (about 35,900 tonnes a day) while the remaining 21.3 million tonnes per annum (about



58,400 tonnes a day) was imported. This high import dependence of over 64 per cent left the country exposed when the start of the Iran war effectively shut the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow sea lane through which India got 90 per cent of its imports from nations like Saudi Arabia. With supplies impacted, the government in March ordered refineries to divert streams used for petrochemicals production to maximise LPG output. It also initially stopped sales to industrial and commercial users and thereafter gradually scaled it up. For domestic households, periodicity of booking a refill was increased, and they were encouraged to shift to piped natural gas, whose supplies were not so severely impacted due to the war. Domestic

production was ramped up to about 55,000 tonnes a day at the height of the crisis, but the emergency orders asking refineries to maximise output were gradually withdrawn after supplies eased from mid-June. The new order goes further than the emergency one issued during the West Asia crisis by creating facility-wise production benchmarks and requiring refineries and upstream companies to maintain adequate infrastructure for LPG storage, evacuation and transportation. Companies must also pursue technically and economically feasible upgrades to maximise output. The government has empowered itself to order refineries, oil marketing companies and upstream producers to ramp up LPG production for specified quantities and periods

whenever it considers such action necessary to ensure adequate domestic availability, equitable distribution and supply at fair prices. The production schedule will be reviewed every six months, allowing the government to add output from new refineries and upstream fields and account for additional capacity created through technology and infrastructure upgrades. The order also requires refineries to consider measures such as converting naphtha into LPG and upgrading fluid catalytic cracking units where technically and economically viable, underscoring the government's push to extract more LPG from existing refining infrastructure.

The government had introduced several emergency

measures during the West Asia crisis, including prioritising household LPG supplies and restricting supplies to some commercial and industrial users as imports were disrupted. The new production framework is aimed at ensuring that a future disruption to overseas LPG supplies does not translate into the shortages and rationing seen during the recent crisis. Taking lessons from the crisis, the government has now put the country's refineries and upstream producers under a standing framework to maintain and, when necessary, increase LPG output. Eighteen refineries owned and operated by public sector oil companies have been ordered to produce a total of 31,470 tonnes a day. In the private sector, Reliance's 33 million tonnes a year domestic-tariff area (DTA) refinery at Jamnagar in Gujarat, products from which are sold locally, has been ordered to produce 18,000 tonnes. No target has been set for Reliance's 35.2 million tonnes a year only-for-exports refinery at the same site.

Russia's Rosneft-backed Nayara Energy's 20 million tonnes a year Vadinar refinery has been asked to produce 4,480 tonnes a day, according to the order. Upstream gas pro-

Govt Says E20 Alone Not Responsible For Mileage Changes; Driving, Maintenance Also Key



New Delhi: The government on Saturday said E20 petrol alone cannot be held responsible for changes in vehicle mileage, stressing that real-world fuel economy depends on several factors, including driving habits, traffic conditions, vehicle maintenance, tyre pressure and use of air conditioning. In a post on X, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas said E20 has undergone extensive testing and validation, while highlighting multiple factors that determine the mileage delivered by a vehicle. "Mileage depends on more than fuel alone. Driving habits, traffic, vehicle maintenance, tyre pressure and AC usage all play a role," the ministry said. "E20 has undergone extensive testing and validation, while real-world mileage depends on the overall driving and vehicle conditions," it added. In another post, the ministry said, "E20 has undergone extensive testing and validation

across key vehicle parameters, including engine durability, drivability, startability, material compatibility and corrosion resistance," it said. The petroleum ministry further highlighted that these evaluations support confidence in E20 compatibility and vehicle performance, helping consumers make informed choices as India moves towards cleaner mobility. "E20: Tested. Validated. E20 Ready," it added. The government's latest clarification comes amid continuing concerns among motorists over the impact of 20 per cent ethanol-blended petrol on mileage, vehicle performance and compatibility. The government has previously acknowledged that some vehicles may experience a 3-5 per cent reduction in fuel economy with E20, while maintaining that real-world mileage is also influenced by several driving and vehicle-related factors. The government and state-run oil market-

ing companies have also pushed back against broader concerns over alleged widespread fuel contamination. Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum said nationwide testing found no evidence supporting claims of high chloride contamination or moisture in E20 petrol. More than 100 petrol samples from refineries showed chloride levels at or below one part per million, while ethanol samples from 80 distilleries and more than 80 E20 samples from depots and terminals recorded chloride levels below the prescribed limit of three ppm. The oil marketing companies also said inspections of underground storage tanks at around 90,000 fuel stations found no water ingress. Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has said oil marketing companies conducted rigorous testing at retail outlets, with only a few cases of contamination detected.

NGT Forms Panel To Verify Claim Of Illegal Burning Of Medical Waste In UP's Aligarh

New Delhi: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has formed a joint committee to verify allegations of illegal burning of hazardous medical waste and plastic in the Civil Lines area of Aligarh in Uttar Pradesh, saying the issue raises "substantial questions" related to the environment.

The green body sought a response from the state's chief secretary, district magistrate, Aligarh Municipal Corporation, and Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board (UPPCB). It formed a joint committee comprising representatives from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), UPPCB, and the Aligarh District Magistrate.

The NGT was hearing a letter petition filed by a senior citizen and retired teacher from Aligarh Muslim University. The

plea claimed that medical centres and shops at the Muzammil Complex in Civil Lines generate large

amounts of medical waste, which is burnt at night or early morning, and that the resulting toxic smoke is causing serious breathing issues for residents.



"Our life has become miserable due to these toxic gases," the plea said. In an order dated August 12, a bench of judicial member

Justice Arun Kumar Tyagi and expert member A Senthil Vel said, "The averments made in the application prima facie raise substantial questions relating to environment."

"In view of the facts and circumstances of the case, we consider it appropriate that a joint committee be

constituted with the direction to verify the factual position and to suggest appropriate remedial measures," the tribunal said.

The NGT directed the

panel to "undertake visits to the site, look into the grievances of the applicant, associate the applicant and representative of the concerned project proponent, verify the factual position and suggest appropriate remedial action and to submit its report within one month to this Justice Arun Kumar Tyagi and expert member A Senthil Vel said, "The averments made in the application prima facie raise substantial questions relating to environment."

The NGT directed the tribunal. The matter has been listed for further proceedings on September 25.

SC Refuses To Interfere With Chhattigarh HC Order On Election Plea Against Ex-CM

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday declined to interfere with a Chhattisgarh High Court order refusing to dismiss, at the threshold, a petition challenging former Chhattisgarh chief minister Bhupesh Baghel's election from the Patan assembly seat in 2023. The top court, however, said that Baghel would be at liberty to raise all his pleas before the high court's election tribunal during the trial.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant and Justices Joydalya Bagchi and V Mohana disposed of Baghel's plea challenging the high court's interim order dated June 15 by which his application seeking rejection of the election petition for want of cause of action and non-compliance with statutory requirements was dismissed. It said Baghel had an arguable defence and



made it clear that dismissal of his challenge would not prejudice his right to raise all points and contentions before the election tribunal during the course of the proceedings. Appearing for Baghel, senior advocate Kapil Sibal argued that the election petition was not maintainable in law. Referring to the allegations, Sibal, assisted by lawyer Sumeer Sodhi, said that the election

campaign had ended on November 15 and that Baghel was allegedly present at a religious function on November 16, which the petitioner claimed violated Section 126 of the Representation of the People Act. Sibal said that even if the allegations were accepted, a violation of Section 126 constituted only an electoral offence and not a "corrupt practice" under

Section 123(7) of the Act. "The question is whether it amounts to a corrupt practice. Corrupt practice is dealt with under Section 123(7)," he said.

It was alleged that after the commencement of the "silence period", Baghel held a "rally/road show" in clear violation of Section 126 of the RP Act and the Model Code of Conduct.

'2 Ghante Desh Ke Naam': Delhi Doctors Pledge 2 Hours Of Free Weekly Consultation For Poor

New Delhi: Doctors from across Delhi have joined hands to launch "2 Ghante Desh Ke Naam", a healthcare movement where medical professionals from various specialties pledge two hours of free consultation every week to serve the poor and underprivileged.

The campaign, launched this week, is rapidly gaining momentum with the participation of doctors from ophthalmology, orthopaedics, oncology, psychiatry, paediatrics, cardiology, gynaecology and general medicine. "Patients across India will be able to receive absolutely free consultations, either via video consultations or in person at participating hospitals, especially aimed at patients in rural and underserved areas," Dr Ikeda Lal, medical director of Delhi Eye Centre, said. From cancer to cataract, child health to mental wellness - what sets this initiative apart is its multi-specialty, volunteer-driven model, creating a healthcare safety net for those who need it the most but cannot afford or access quality medical advice, she said.



Participating institutions and professionals are committed to providing consultations without charging any consultation fee, irrespective of the mode - offline or online. The aim is to empower patients from slums, rural belts and low-income families with timely diagnosis, medical advice, and follow-up support, without cost or complexity, Dr Lal said.

A team of eight senior eye specialists, led by ophthalmologist Dr Lal, is offering free eye checkups and treatment guidance for patients suffering from cataracts, glaucoma, retinal issues, or other vision-threatening conditions. The team of ophthalmologists can be reached at 9990666872, Dr Lal said. Dr L Tomar, senior

orthopaedic surgeon and founder of Tomar Foundation, said, "Access to quality orthopaedic care should not depend on a person's ability to pay. Through '2 Ghante Desh Ke Naam,' we hope to make timely consultation and guidance accessible to those who need it the most. By dedicating just two hours a week, doctors can help prevent avoidable suffering and give underserved patients a chance at healthier, more independent lives. For orthopaedic-related problems, patients seeking help can call 9910000159."

Joining them is a team of mental health experts from Hope Care India, Delhi. Dr Deepak Raheja, senior psychiatrist and director, Hope Care India, said that

mental healthcare is a fundamental part of overall well-being, yet financial and social barriers often prevent people from seeking timely help. "Through '2 Ghante Desh Ke Naam,' we want to ensure that no one is denied a listening ear and professional guidance simply because they cannot afford it. People seeking help related to mental health can contact us on 9311112377," Dr Raheja said. Doctors from other specialties -- including cardiology, endocrinology, paediatrics, gynaecology, and general medicine -- are also enrolling steadily, setting up free OPDs in their hospitals and clinics, while also opening virtual consultation slots for in remote areas.

The digital component of this movement ensures that geography is not a limitation. Patients from villages, tier-3 towns, or border regions can now consult Delhi's top doctors free of charge through video. In the coming months, the initiative plans to expand across multiple states and invite participation from doctors nationwide, Dr Raheja said.

PM Modi Receives Call From Israeli PM Netanyahu; Discusses Special Strategic Partnership And West Asia Developments

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday received a telephonic call from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, during which the two leaders reviewed the progress in the India-Israel Special Strategic Partnership and exchanged views on recent developments in West Asia.

The details of the conversation were shared by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in a release. According to the release, the two leaders reiterated their commitment to further deepen bilateral cooperation across various sectors for mutual benefit. The release said, "The two leaders reviewed sustained progress in India-Israel Special Strategic Partnership and reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening the bilateral cooperation across various sectors for the mutual benefit of the two countries."



It further noted, "PM Netanyahu and PM Modi exchanged views on the recent developments in West Asia. The two leaders agreed to remain in touch." The call between the leaders comes after they had spoken to each other in March earlier this year, to discuss the current regional situation.

India and Israel have continued to expand cooperation across multiple sectors. Earlier in July, both countries con-

cluded the second round of negotiations for the proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA), reaffirming their commitment to work towards an early conclusion of a balanced, comprehensive and mutually beneficial agreement aimed at strengthening bilateral trade, investment and economic ties.

Meanwhile, in June, Israeli Ambassador to India Reuven Azar said that India-Israel relations continue to be on

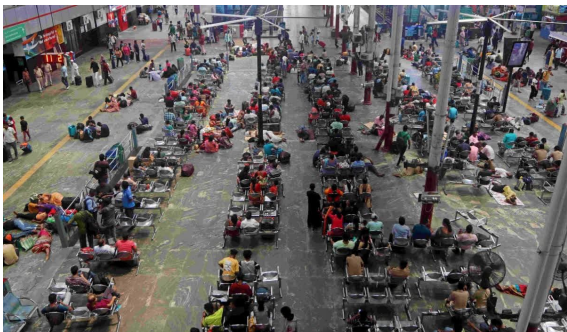
an "amazing trajectory" despite the conflict in West Asia.

Speaking to ANI, Azar cited expanding cooperation in defence, infrastructure, finance and trade with India for such a trajectory despite the conflict in the region, noting that bilateral partnership had continued to strengthen over the past three years, with both countries deepening engagement across multiple sectors.

CAG Flags E. Coli Bacteria In Drinking Water At Stations, Cites Violation Of Railway Board Norms

New Delhi: The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) found that the Railway Ministry had framed several norms for passenger amenities at stations; however, zones failed to comply, leading to widespread discrepancies in services, including the presence of E. coli bacteria in drinking water from water coolers and unhygienic conditions in washrooms, among others. "Bacteriological analysis of drinking water was not carried out at 59 stations over six zones," the CAG said in its report -- Passenger amenities and sanitation at non-suburban railway stations in Indian Railways -- tabled in Parliament on August 12.

"Water sample from water cooler was positive for E-coli at two stations (Coimbatore and Palakkad Junctions) in SR (Southern Railway),



one station (Hyderabad) in SCR (South Central Railway), four stations (Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, Bhiwandi Road, Kalyan and Lonavala) in CR (Central Railway) and one station (Madhapur) in ER (Eastern Railway)," it added after studying passenger services of 512 non-suburban grade stations across all zones. "Test results of drinking water samples collected from taps in platforms at 49 stations in eight zones during 2022-23 and 56 stations in 9 zones during 2023-

24 indicated presence of Total coliforms bacteria (including E-coli)," the report stated. The audit found bacteriological tests, other than Total coliforms, to be unsatisfactory at eight stations in four zones during 2022-23 and 11 stations in five zones during 2023-24. The CAG said the report covered instances identified during its 2019-20 to 2023-24 test audit, along with earlier cases not reported previously and, wherever necessary, instances from after 2023-24 as

well. According to the report, there are 5,908 railway stations under the Non-Suburban Group (NSG), and Indian Railways operated over 7,424 passenger trains (non-suburban) daily and carried 292.4 crore non-suburban passengers in 2023-24. Outlining the purpose of the detailed inspection, the CAG said that the Railway Board had issued various guidelines for the provision of passenger amenities at stations and that an audit was conducted to assess whether Indian Railways' efforts to ensure the provision of passenger amenities and sanitation at stations yielded the intended benefits. The audit found that 458 out of the 512 selected stations, accounting for more than 89 per cent, were deficient in the provision of Minimum Essential Amenities (MEA).

Nepal Helps Bhutan Strengthen Quake Preparedness With Support From PM Modi-Backed Coalition



Kathmandu: A full-scale earthquake simulation in Bhutan's capital has exposed gaps in emergency equipment and resource mobilisation while testing how authorities, hospitals and emergency responders would coordinate after a major quake, with Nepal's earthquake experts providing technical support for the exercise. The simulation recreated a scenario akin to a magnitude 7.5 earthquake in Thimphu, which involved mass casualties, damaged buildings, disrupted roads and power supply, and tested how authorities would make decisions, communicate, coordinate rescue operations and mobilise resources in the aftermath of such a disaster. The National Society for Earthquake Technology-Nepal (NSET), with support from the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and Bhutanese authorities, designed and facilitated the full-scale simulation exercise on June 23 as part of efforts to strengthen the Thimphu Earthquake Contingency Plan. Findings of the exercise

were published by a Nepali weekly on Saturday. CDRI was conceptualised by India and launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the United Nations Climate Action Summit in New York in 2019 to promote the resilience of infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks. It has more than 50 member countries, which include India, Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Germany, Italy, the US, the UK, Sri Lanka and the Netherlands. It also brings together bodies like the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, United Nations Development Programme and European Union. The exercise in Thimphu followed a tabletop simulation and aimed to test the contingency arrangements in a field setting, according to the state-run Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS) and the Nepali Times weekly newspaper. Bhutan and Nepal lie in the seismically active Himalayan region and are vulnerable to major earthquakes. Bhutan was hit by a magnitude 5.5

earthquake on June 7, while a magnitude 5 earthquake struck Rukum East in western Nepal on July 19. Bhutan's deadliest recorded earthquake was an estimated magnitude 8.5 quake in 1714. In Nepal, more than 9,000 people were killed when a magnitude 7.8 earthquake struck in April 2015, followed by powerful aftershocks, including a magnitude 7.3 quake the following month. During the full-scale exercise, Bhutanese authorities created a mass-casualty scenario involving the country's largest referral hospital and two primary healthcare centres, Nepali Times reported. The scenario assumed that some emergency medical staff could not reach the hospital because of family emergencies or blocked roads, while the hospitals themselves were without power. BBS reported that the exercise involved response operations at nine locations in Thimphu, including a simulated hotel collapse, severely damaged residential buildings and a fire in Olakha - a promi-

nent urban area and commercial zone in the capital city. At the hospital, patients and staff were evacuated to designated safe zones, temporary medical tents were set up and ambulances transported simulated casualties from affected areas, BBS reported. The exercise also highlighted gaps in the availability of equipment and resources that could be mobilised quickly to establish field hospitals if the main hospital were compromised. "Currently, through this simulation exercise, we realised that we don't have that kind of resource to be mobilised immediately and set up field hospitals," BBS quoted Phub Tshering, incident commander of the earthquake simulation exercise at the hospital, as saying. The exercise also tested multi-agency coordination, communication, decision-making and resource mobilisation. CDRI Director General Amit Prothi told the press that simulations were important because, unlike in a real disaster, participants knew in advance where resources would be

Iran Fires Back At Trump's Threat To Declare Hormuz A US Territory



Tehran: Iran on Saturday fired back at US President Donald Trump's claim that he would soon declare the Strait of Hormuz part of US territory, saying the crucial energy waterway it has blockaded "will remain Iranian". Trump has repeatedly insisted that the strait, which Tehran effectively closed at the start of the Middle East war in late February, is under US control despite traffic remaining throttled. "The Strait of Hormuz has been Iranian, is Iranian, and will remain Iranian," Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said on X. "This strait will only be closed and opened under Iran's command." Trump told a political rally in New York state on Friday that after the US defeats Iran, "pretty soon I'll be declaring the

Hormuz Strait a territory of the United States". "It's true," he added. An unnamed White House official later clarified that Trump was joking, the Wall Street Journal reported. Last week, a top Iranian official set out a list of conditions for reopening the strait, including an end to the "war and aggression against Iran and its allies in Lebanon, Palestine, Yemen, and Iraq". Mohammad Bagher Zolghadr also demanded the end of crippling sanctions, the release of frozen assets and compensation for wartime damage. - Ongoing attacks - As diplomacy stalls between the longtime foes, attacks in the Hormuz strait have continued, highlighting the continued risks to regional shipping. The United Arab Emirates'

state-owned oil giant ADNOC said on Saturday that one of its vessels came under attack the night before.

Abu Dhabi's foreign ministry later blamed Tehran, and said that Iran's Revolutionary Guards were engaged in "acts of piracy" in the strait. On Friday the Gulf nation blamed Iran for other attacks on two vessels linked to ADNOC as they passed through the waterway. Such attacks led to the collapse of an April ceasefire between the United States and Iran. As Iran chokes traffic in Hormuz, its Houthi allies in Yemen have also declared a parallel maritime blockade on Saudi ports in the Red Sea, the oil-exporting giant's only other maritime route. A June deal between

Washington and Tehran - meant to serve as a jumping-off point for negotiations on a permanent settlement -- had said Iran and Oman would hash out future arrangements for the Hormuz in discussion with other Gulf countries and "in line with the applicable international law". Before the war, the strait carried around a fifth of the world's oil and LNG exports, and prices have repeatedly surged since the dispute over the waterway erupted, piling economic and political pressure on Washington. Iran wants to control the strait and charge tolls, powers it did not exercise before the war and ones that the US fiercely opposes. The closure of Hormuz has driven up prices for US voters, creating a political headache for Trump as November's

US Govt To Expand Vetting Of Social Media For Visa Applicants



Washington: The US government reportedly plans to expand vetting of the social media accounts of visa applicants, including foreign journalists, as part of President Donald Trump's immigration crackdown. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt reposted an article on Thursday on X by the Daily Signal that said the State Department is expand-

ing its social media vetting to applicants for more types of visas. The Daily Signal said it had obtained an internal memo outlining the require visa applicants to change the settings on their social media accounts to "public" or "open." Asked by AFP about the report, a State Department spokesperson said, "The department is constantly reviewing and evaluating screening and vet-

ting procedures worldwide to ensure that our visa process upholds the highest standards for US national security and public safety." "Online presence vetting is about applicants demonstrating their eligibility to receive a visa under US law and ensuring that no individual poses a risk to the safety and security of the United States," the spokesperson said. The United States already

requires applicants for various categories of visas, including student visas, to make their accounts public. The Daily Signal said it would now apply to foreign media representatives and some nationals from Mexico and Canada. Since taking office last year, Trump has moved to expel millions of undocumented migrants and restricted the entry into the United States of citizens of a number of countries. "A visa is a privilege, not a right," Secretary of State Marco Rubio has said. The Trump administration finalized rules last month that impose stricter limits on how long foreign students and journalists can stay in the United States. Under a change that could be implemented as soon as September, foreigners on student visas would be admitted for the length of their academic program up to a maximum of four years. Foreign journalists would be limited to stays of just 240 days, or around eight months, but

US Pulls Last Aircraft Carrier In Asia As Trump Focuses On Iran And The Western Hemisphere



Washington: President Donald Trump's war against Iran is stretching the limits of U.S. aircraft carriers and leaving the western Pacific without one of the key American warships as China shows more signs of aggression. The USS George Washington is departing the Pacific and expected to replace the USS Abraham Lincoln in the Middle East amid growing concerns about mental health and supply issues aboard the long-deployed carrier. The Lincoln has had its time at sea extended from its original May return date to support operations against Iran. The lack of a U.S. carrier in the Pacific may be short-lived if the Navy deploys another in the next couple of months. But it shows how the open-ended operations with Iran are running some American sailors ragged, analysts say, while the Trump administration further retreats from the Asia-Pacific region and focuses on the Western Hemisphere. "The administration says that the Pacific is supposed to be the most important behind the Western Hemisphere," said Greg Poling, director of the Southeast Asia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Instead, the U.S. is "doing the exact opposite" of its previously expressed goal of pulling out of the Middle East. American allies in the Pacific are unsettled over the unpredictability of the Republican administration, Poling said, while Beijing "is quite happy with U.S. distraction, with the frustration of U.S. allies and partners." China may take

advantage of US carrier's absence. Beijing sees the U.S. military presence in the region as a threat to China's rise and an obstacle to its ambition to seize Taiwan, the self-governing island it claims as its own. But the United States has argued that the Pacific region is too important economically to lose. No one expects China to invade Taiwan because an American aircraft carrier has left the region. But the carrier's absence gives the Chinese another opportunity to show its strength, said Bryan Clark, a former Navy submariner who is a defense analyst at the Hudson Institute. "They're using this as part of the narrative to demonstrate to the Philippines, to Japan, to Indonesia and others that the U.S. is not the big dog in the western Pacific anymore," Clark said. "They would just prefer that countries in the region decide that China is the bigger power and the U.S. is not able to guarantee their security anymore." China conducted naval exercises this week with Indonesia and recently has shown signs of aggression toward Japan and the Philippines, two key U.S. allies that also have territorial disputes with Beijing. China carried out military drills this month near the Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea. Both China and the Philippines have claims over the shoal. Last month, a Chinese guided-missile destroyer conducted a live-fire exercise off Japan's southernmost island of Okinotori.

Adm. Frank Bradley, head of the U.S. Special Operations Command, has been trying to reassure regional allies of Washington's commitment. He was in Manila on Thursday, telling his Filipino counterparts that U.S. special operations forces are ready to step up joint exercises to strengthen the countries' alliance. He also is expected to travel to Japan. Evan Sankey, a policy analyst at the Cato Institute who focuses on U.S. policy toward China, said aircraft carriers provide psychological assurance to U.S. allies. The absence of carriers in the region, he said, "adds to the general sense that the U.S. is distracted by events in the Middle East." Trump has relied on aircraft carriers for military actions. Trump has relied heavily on aircraft carriers to support military operations during his second term. For example, the USS Gerald R. Ford returned home in mid-May after an 11-month deployment, the longest since the Vietnam War, during which it supported the U.S. fight against Iran and the capture of Venezuela's then-leader, Nicolás Maduro. The Ford had experienced a fire in a laundry space that forced the carrier to turn around and return to the Mediterranean Sea for repairs and left hundreds of sailors without places to sleep. Meanwhile, the Lincoln has spent a record uninterrupted time at sea of more than 240 days. Democratic lawmakers have been calling for investigations and greater visibility into conditions aboard the ship. Warships and their crews can only handle so much, said Robert Farley, who teaches national security and diplomacy at the University of Kentucky and often writes about aircraft carriers. "People don't get enough rest. It's psychologically exhausting. And R&R is part of keeping the crew healthy," Farley said. "Sometimes it's framed as, 'These people haven't had a vacation.' But we are dealing with well-known limits on the capacity of a crew to operate at top efficiency over time. And that just declines."

Clark, of the Hudson Institute,

On July 22, United States Energy Secretary Chris Wright and Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman signed a civil nuclear cooperation agreement, a 30-year pact known as a 123 Agreement, which is now under a mandatory 90-day review by the US Congress. The Department of Energy hailed it as a historic deal. However, within 24 hours, US President Donald Trump rewrote its terms on social media, declaring there would be no uranium enrichment and that the deal itself was contingent on Saudi Arabia joining the Abraham Accords. The White House press secretary confirmed that this condition was not part of the signed agreement, and that Trump had not spoken to Saudi leadership before announcing it. But by the evening, the administration changed tack, insisting that the condition had always been part of the deal and dismissing reports of internal confusion. A deal that says two opposite things about itself within a single day deserves close examination, because the contradiction reveals

the true intention behind the agreement. The heart of the dispute is a standard. When the United Arab Emirates signed its nuclear cooperation deal with Washington in 2009, it accepted what is called the gold standard in non-proliferation: no enrichment of uranium, no reprocessing of spent fuel, and the International Atomic Energy Agency's Additional Protocol, which grants inspectors broad powers to verify against diversion to weapons. Saudi Arabia has resisted that standard for years. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman openly declared in 2018 that if Iran acquired a nuclear weapon, the kingdom would follow. Riyadh has insisted on domestic enrichment as a matter of sovereignty and parity with its regional rival. The signed text, as described by US officials, set aside the Additional Protocol and called for a two-year study on the economic



viability of domestic enrichment. This prompted Senator Ed Markey to label it a step toward proliferation and Henry Sokolski of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center questioned what standard it would now set for the UAE, Turkey, and Egypt. Then came the reversal. Trump's post insisted there would be no enrichment, contradicting his own officials, and attached the normalization condition. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu welcomed it within hours. By several accounts, Trump was already displeased that Wright had announced the deal without telling

him, and hardened his position after criticism from conservative commentators who asked why Israeli normalization had been left out. Saudi officials were reportedly blindsided, having treated the signing as a diplomatic win. By ruling out enrichment, Trump removed the provision Riyadh had fought hardest to secure. The nuclear deal is being used as a bargaining instrument, with technology, enrichment rights, and Israeli recognition moved around as interchangeable bargaining chips. This linkage has a history. The Joe Biden administration tied

Vance Says Trump Administration 'Screwed Up' Communications Around Epstein Files

Washington: Vice President JD Vance says the Trump administration "absolutely" mishandled the communications surrounding the Jeffrey Epstein files. During a lengthy podcast interview with Joe Rogan released, Vance pointed largely to former Attorney General Pam Bondi, who infamously stated that an alleged "client list" of Epstein's was "sitting on my desk right now." Epstein was a convicted sex offender who was known for his



wide web of connections to the world's elite. In addition to those comments, the Justice Department under Bondi had also offered conservative commentators and influencers binders

that were called "The Epstein files: Phase 1" and "Declassified." "I know Pam. I like Pam. I don't think there was anything malicious going on," Vance told Rogan. "I think Pam was

trying to respond to the political moment. I think she overstated what we had and what we didn't have." As a result, Vance said, Bondi was "roasted" publicly for it and led people to "mistrust" the administration's transparency efforts on the Epstein files. "We absolutely screwed up the comms of the Epstein files. Like, we just did," Vance said. "But do I think the reason we screwed up the comms is because we were trying to hide

Whose land is it anyway? Adivasis' land rights under challenge



Hundreds of non-tribals have filed cases in the Supreme Court challenging the constitutional validity of Regulation 1 of 1970, which protects Adivasi land rights in the Scheduled Areas of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The development has become a matter of serious concern for tribal communities.

Can Telangana's Denotified Tribes hope for better future? The petitioners contend that the Regulation infringes upon their constitutional rights to own, enjoy and dispose of property, and have sought its nullity. The Supreme Court has issued notices to the governments of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in these cases.

The principal argument of the non-tribal petitioners is that the restrictions imposed by Regulation 1 of 1970 on the purchase, sale, mortgage and transfer of immovable property in the Scheduled Areas violate the rights guaranteed to them under Articles 14, 19, 21 and 300-A of the Constitution. The fundamental questions, however, are whether these claims have any legal and constitutional merit and who would ultimately benefit if the Regulation were struck down. Not a New Question Regulation 1 of 1970, which prohibits land transfers even between non-tribals in the Scheduled Areas, was enacted under the constitutional framework of the Fifth Schedule read with Article 244, with the assent of the President of India. It amended Regulation 1 of 1959, which had prohibited the transfer of land from tribals to non-tribals. The constitutional validity of Regulation 1 of 1970 is not a new question. As early as 1988, the Supreme Court upheld its constitutional validity in the P Rami Reddy case. Yet, once again, non-tribals have approached the Supreme Court questioning the constitutional validity of this protective legislation.

In fact, Regulation 1 of 1970 does not interfere with lands lawfully acquired by non-tribals or with valid transactions between non-tribals that took place before 1970. The Supreme Court clarified this position in the S Venkataramanayya case in 1996. Nor does the Regulation prevent non-tribals from continuing to possess and enjoy lands lawfully inherited from their ancestors.

A non-tribal wishing to

sell land in a Scheduled Area can sell it to any tribal resident of the State. If no tribal is willing to purchase the land, the Regulation provides for its transfer to the government on payment of compensation. Further, Regulation 1 of 1971 enables non-tribals to mortgage their lands to nationalised banks and government-recognised financial institutions to obtain credit.

Therefore, the argument that Regulation 1 of 1970 completely prevents non-tribals from selling their lands or pursuing economic development is untenable. Who's inconvenienced? The record of litigation under the Regulation also tells a different story. Non-tribals have reportedly succeeded in a substantial proportion of cases (nearly 60 per cent) filed under Regulation 1 of 1970 in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Where they have established lawful title, they have secured favourable orders and continued to enjoy their lands without interference. Who, then, is truly inconvenienced by Regulation 1 of 1970? The Regulation poses an obstacle to large landowners seeking to purchase land from small and marginal non-tribal farmers for large-scale commercial or corporate agriculture. It is an impediment to those seeking to regularise unlawful occupation of land. It is also a barrier to corporations seeking to exploit the vast natural resources of the Scheduled Areas through massive investments. Political and economic interests seeking to transfer the natural resources of the Scheduled Areas to private interests may find the Regulation inconvenient. In reality, the Regulation protects not only Adivasis but also small and marginal non-tribal farmers by preventing the large-scale alienation and concentration of land. The purpose of Regulation 1 of 1970 goes beyond preventing the alienation of tribal lands and restoring illegally transferred lands to Adivasis. It also seeks to prevent uncontrolled migration and settlement of non-tribals in the Scheduled Areas.

Demographic Dimension This demographic dimension is crucial. If the non-tribal population in the Scheduled Areas continues to increase and Adivasis become a minority in their own ancestral territories, there is a danger that the very character of these

areas could eventually be altered. Such a development would have consequences far beyond land rights. The special constitutional and statutory protections available to tribal communities, including those under the Fifth Schedule and the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, or PESA, are intrinsically linked to the special status of the Scheduled Areas.

Despite constitutional protections and legislation such as Regulation 1 of 1970, studies indicate that more than half of the land in some Scheduled Areas is already under non-tribal control and that the non-tribal population constitutes a significant proportion of the population in these regions.

Government reports have indicated that substantial proportions of land in the erstwhile districts of Khammam, Warangal and Adilabad were under the control of non-tribals. An ITDA (Integrated Tribal Development Agency) report from 1981 observed that if the lands within the Eturunagaram ITDA area of Warangal district had remained under tribal control, every tribal family could have possessed approximately six-and-a-half acres of land.

This historical experience demonstrates why protective land legislation remains indispensable. The Scheduled Areas are rich in forests, minerals, water and other natural resources worth enormous sums of money. Yet, the Adivasis who have inhabited and protected these regions for generations continue to experience severe economic and social deprivation compared with populations in the plains. Adivasi and non-tribals are not situated equally in terms of land ownership, education, employment, income, political power or access to development opportunities. How, then, can special constitutional protection for a historically disadvantaged community be characterised as a violation of the right to equality?

Protected under Law Regulation 1 of 1970 prohibits land transfers between non-tribals in Scheduled Areas under the Fifth Schedule read with Article 244

It amended Regulation 1 of 1959, which had prohibited transfer of land from tribals to non-tribals. In 1988, the Supreme Court upheld its constitutional validity in the P Rami Reddy case

Regulation 1 of 1970

does not interfere with lands lawfully acquired by non-tribals or with valid transactions before 1970. Supreme Court clarified this position in the S Venkataramanayya case in 1996. The Regulation does not prevent non-tribals from possessing and enjoying lands lawfully inherited from their ancestors. If struck down, Scheduled Areas forest lands, water sources and resources could face increased private and corporate acquisition.

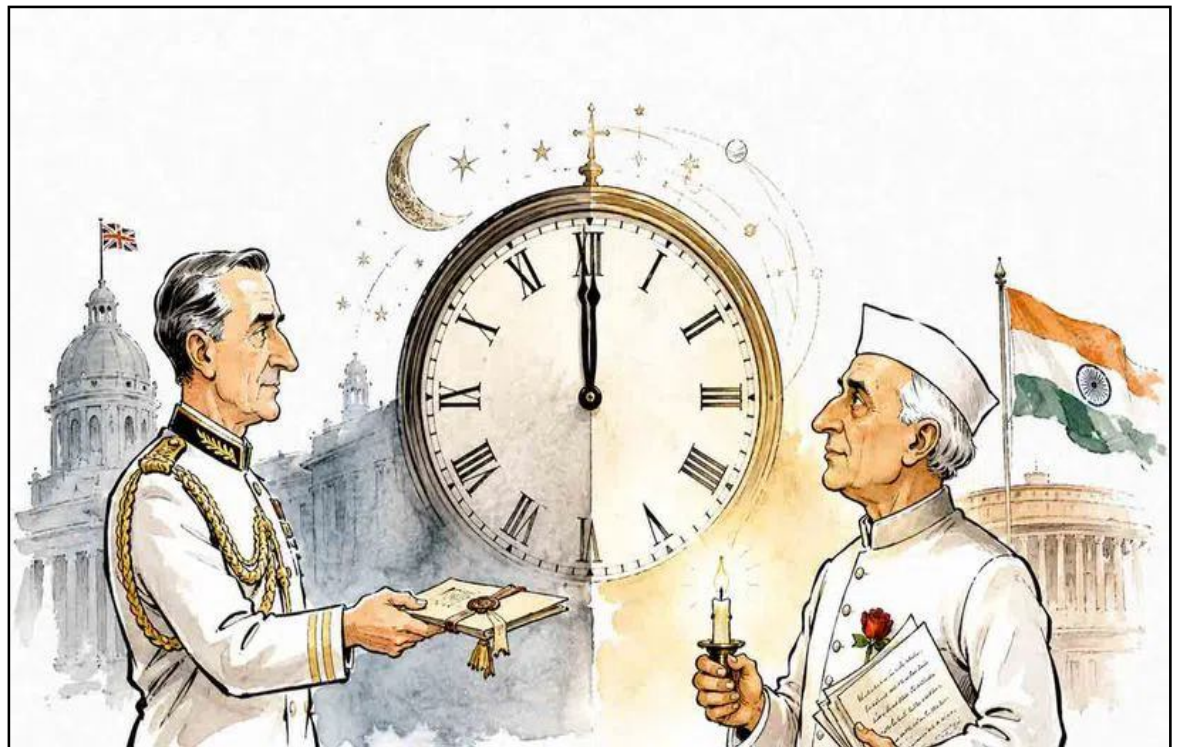
Constitutional equality does not require identical treatment of communities placed in profoundly unequal historical and socio-economic circumstances. The protective framework of the Fifth Schedule and Regulation 1 of 1970 must be understood in the context of the historical exploitation, dispossession and displacement experienced by tribal communities.

If Regulation 1 of 1970 is struck down, forests, lands, water sources and other natural resources in the Scheduled Areas could become increasingly vulnerable to acquisition by private and corporate interests. Mining operations and large-scale commercial exploitation of natural resources could accelerate the alienation of tribal communities from their ancestral territories. For Adivasis, land is not merely an economic commodity. Their relationship with land, forests and natural resources is inseparably connected with their livelihoods, social institutions, culture, language, traditions and collective identity. Once tribal communities are separated from their natural resources, the consequences extend far beyond economic deprivation. Their cultural and social existence itself comes under threat. Adivasis have already suffered large-scale displacement in the name of development projects. In many instances, displacement has resulted not in development but in greater economic insecurity, loss of livelihoods and social disintegration. If the legal barriers protecting the natural resources of the Scheduled Areas are removed, tribal communities could, within a relatively short period, face further displacement from their lands and ancestral territories.

Equality and Social Justice The Supreme Court has recognised the significance of the Fifth Schedule and protective legislation such as Regulation 1 of 1970 in safeguarding the rights and development of tribal communities. The constitutional framework governing the Scheduled Areas must, therefore, be understood not as an exception to equality, but as an essential instrument for achieving substantive equality and social justice.

Adivasi communities have distinct geographical, social, historical, cultural and traditional ways of life. Protecting their rights over land and natural resources is essential not only for their economic survival but also for preserving their identity, dignity and constitutional rights.

Midnight muhurtham—why India became Independent at 12



Indian independence came in the last hours of 14 August 1947, in the early hours of August 15. At midnight, the transfer of power from the British government to India took place, and the Constituent Assembly assumed the authority to govern the country. Why did all this happen at midnight and not on August 14 or on the morning of August 15? These questions naturally arise. Behind this decision lies an interesting story.

The British government had officially announced that the transfer of power to India would take place on 15 August 1947. For many Indians, religious beliefs and traditional practices are important considerations. There is a strong belief that planetary positions affect human life. That's why, before every auspicious work, astrologers check Rahukalam, tithi, nakshatras, etc. With such beliefs in mind, some national leaders of the time consulted scholars and astrologers to determine whether August 15 would be an auspicious day.

Friday, and fell on Chaturdashi. The scholars pointed out that after 2:30 am, Amavasya would begin and, therefore, August 15 was not a good day. August 14 was also not regarded as particularly auspicious. They suggested August 17 as a favourable date. This left the leaders with a difficult problem. If the transfer of power were held on August 14, Lord Mountbatten would be in Karachi for the transfer-of-power ceremony in Pakistan. He could return to Delhi only later that night. Moreover, the British government had already announced in Parliament that India would get independence on August 15. Prominent journalist and scholar KM Panikkar is said to have suggested a solution: the Constituent Assembly would meet at 11 pm on the night of August 14. At the stroke of midnight, it would assume power from the British government. This arrangement allowed the British government's announced date of August 15 to remain unchanged while also accommodating the astrological considerations.

At 10 am on August 15, Mountbatten took a special oath as Governor-General before the Constituent Assembly. Goodwill messages poured in from across the world. The Indian national flag was hoisted on the grand building, now Parliament House. A gun salute marked the occasion. Mountbatten's Appointment On 31 July 1947, Constituent Assembly Chairman Dr Rajendra Prasad announced the programme for August 14-15 ceremonies. He said that the leader of the House, Jawaharlal Nehru, should request Lord Mountbatten to accept the office of Governor-General.

However, a great sacrificer named Mahaveer Tyagi objected. He pointed out that the Assembly had never discussed the question of Mountbatten becoming the Governor-General of India, nor had it ever agreed to appoint him to that position. He argued that without passing a formal resolution to this effect, it was not right to invite Mountbatten to the Assembly.

August 15 was a Friday, and fell on Chaturdashi. Scholars pointed out that after 2:30 am, Amavasya would begin and, therefore, August 15 was not a good day. August 14 was also not regarded as particularly auspicious. In response, Dr Rajendra Prasad said that he would bring this matter before the House in the form of a resolution. However, several members immediately rose and said: "no, no." They insisted that the matter should proceed as had already been decided. Thus, in the Constituent Assembly, Lord Mountbatten came and took charge as the Governor General of India without any discussion, acceptance, or resolution. Transfer of Power The historic Constituent Assembly session began at 11 pm on August 14, 1947, under the chairmanship of Dr Rajendra Prasad. At the stroke of midnight, the Assembly formally assumed power for the governance of India. House leader Nehru moved the historic resolution, which was introduced before the House and subsequently approved by the members.

As the clock struck 12, the members of the House stood in solemn silence. As each sentence was being read aloud, the members repeated it in both Hindi and English. With the solemn ceremony, the Constituent Assembly took over the administration of India. The Assembly then endorsed Mountbatten's appointment as Governor-General of India from August 15. Dr Rajendra Prasad announced that Jawaharlal Nehru would convey the Assembly's decision to Mountbatten. The national flag was subsequently presented to the Assembly by Hansa Mehta. On the occasion of the transfer of power, the House also approved, as a mark of appreciation, a song written in Chinese by India's Ambassador Dr Chin Lu. Following this, the first few lines of 'Saare Jahan Se Achha Hindustan Hamara' and the opening lines of 'Jana Gana Mana' were sung by the members of the House. Immediately thereafter, the House was adjourned until 10 am on August 15. This is how the historic transfer of power unfolded that momentous night.

A Misstep at the Start There is also an interesting incident worth recalling. On the night of August 14, Nehru went to Viceroy's House and informed Mountbatten about the recommendation for his appointment as India's Governor-General. He handed over to him a cover containing a list of the names of the Council of Ministers. After everyone present had left, Mountbatten opened the cover, only to find nothing inside! The cover was empty, which surprised him. Whoever had prepared the cover had forgotten to put the list inside it. Though it seemed like a humorous incident, Nehru's governance appeared to have begun with a kind of "misstep at the very beginning".

A Funny Incident There's an interesting anecdote associated with that historic night. When Nehru came back from Viceroy's House, he delivered his famous speech. The lighting in the Assembly was inadequate, making it difficult for Nehru to read the notes from which he was speaking. He asked for a candle so that he could see the text clearly. Photographers captured that moment. That candlelight speech became historic. Nehru's speech became famous as the "Tryst with Destiny", delivered in candlelight.

Pakistan's independence was formally marked on August 14. It was said that Muhammad Ali Jinnah preferred August 14 because it coincided with the 27th day of Ramzan, considered holy by Muslims.

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Ranji-Capped Tamil Nadu Cricketer Fined Rs 1 Lakh For Mobile Phone Breach In TNPL

: A young Tamil Nadu cricketer has been penalised with Rs 1 lakh for breaching the anti-corruption protocols in the ongoing Tamil Nadu Premier League (TNPL). The player was penalised by the Anti-Corruption and Security Unit (ACSU) of the BCCI for using an undeclared mobile phone in the Players and Match Officials Area during the league match.

"The TNCA will not name the player as the investigation is ongoing. All I can confirm is he is a left-hander who scored two fifties for Tamil Nadu in last year's Ranji Trophy. He was found texting his girlfriend during the course of a match. While no corruption charges has been levelled, using a mobile phone in PMOA during the course of a match is prohibited. Hence, it's a protocol breach," a senior TNCA official told PTI on Friday.

The incident occurred at the NPR College ground in Natham on August 10. The 26-year-old player made his Ranji Trophy debut last season and scored two fifties for



them in the season. Player withdrawn from TNPLA report from India Today states that the player was immediately withdrawn from the franchise after the incident came to the notice of authorities. He was not part of the team's next fixture and was left out of the team's match on

Friday. Initially, a harsher punishment was considered by the TNCA, as they were thinking about a two-year ban, but as the offence wasn't very grave in nature, he escaped the possible punishment of being banned. The TNCA will now decide where any further action should be taken once the investiga-

tion of the whole incident is completed. A similar incident took place in the previous edition when Rajasthan Royals manager Romi Bhinder was penalised with Rs 1 Lakh for using a phone in the team dugout during a match.

Carlsen Wins Esports World Cup Title For Second Year In A Row

World No. 1 Magnus Carlsen capped his masterful undefeated campaign by retaining his title after defeating Belarusian chess grandmaster Denis Lazavik in a lop-sided final of the chess competition at the Esports World Cup here on Saturday. Team Liquid's Carlsen came with a clear goal and pursued it with unrelenting determination, not losing a single match en route to successfully defending his title. The 35-year-old Norwegian secured a 2-0 (3-1, 3-1) win over Lazavik of AGAL in the grand final. "I followed Denis' games and talked to the coaches. I do feel, especially with Hikaru's approach, it was not right. Funny thing is, I



said that he is not great at defending endgames, so I thought I should keep it together better than Hikaru," the five-time world champion said after the win. "I have played Denis many times online, where I played riskily and got punished for it, so I didn't give him obvi-

ous positional advantages." Asked if there was any moment when he felt he might lose, Carlsen said: "There were several moments, a couple against Alireza, against Nihal as well. There were certainly some moments, but I am thrilled to go undefeated." I was not trying to

do anything out of the ordinary. I tried to take my chances, with a little bit of randomness, and I am happy." Asked what it would take to beat him, Carlsen said: "I don't know. In this format, it is not easy at the moment, I think. I think Alireza had a very good chance. It is not easy..." United States' Hikaru Nakamura finished at the third position after beating Alireza Firouzja 4-1. The championship match will use a best-of-three sets format, with the first two sets comprising four games each. If required, a third set will consist of two games to determine the champion.

West Indies Face Risk Of Missing Direct ODI World Cup Qualification As Deadline Gets Near



West Indies, once considered one of the strongest teams in cricket, are now in danger of being eliminated from next year's ODI World Cup. Having failed to qualify for the 2023 World Cup, the Caribbean team is in danger of losing their chance of direct entry into the next ODI World Cup as well. The current situation is such that the Windies team has to rely on the results of other teams in addition to win-

According to ICC regulations, the top eight teams in the ICC ODI rankings as of September 30, 2026, will qualify directly for the 2027 ODI World Cup. Currently, Shai Hope-led West Indies are ranked 10th. The team will play only two ODIs before the cut-off date. This makes the path to direct entry even more difficult. West Indies will play a three-

match ODI series
against India in
September, but only the
results of the two ODIs
will count before the
September 30 deadline.
Therefore, the team will
need to win both matches
against India to keep
their hopes of direct
qualification alive.
However, a win against
India will not be enough.
West Indies will also
have to rely on the out-
come of the ongoing
five-match ODI series
between Ireland and

Afghanistan. If Ireland wins the series 5-0 or 4-1, West Indies will move into the top eight. However, the first match of the series was abandoned due to rain. Currently, Afghanistan is ranked eighth in the ICC ODI rankings, and Ireland is ranked 12th. Ireland is already certain of playing in the qualifiers, but Afghanistan is a strong contender to qualify directly for the World Cup. Will West Indies play in the World Cup Qualifier? If the West Indies team fails to make it to the top eight, they will have to play in the ODI World Cup qualifiers to be held in February-March next year. The Caribbean team had played in the qualifiers for the 2023 World Cup. It is worth noting that they were not able to win and missed the World Cup for the first time in cricket history.

NSE Partners With Augmont To Strengthen India's Electronic Gold Receipt Ecosystem



: The National Stock Exchange of India (NSE) has entered into a strategic partnership with Augmont Enterprises Limited to strengthen the Electronic Gold Receipts (EGR) ecosystem in India, as per a statement by NSE. The partnership seeks to bolster the exchange-regulated spot gold market by enhancing EGR creation, redemption, liquidity, delivery and price discovery. "Through this partnership, the two organisations will work towards increasing market participation, improving liq-

uidity and facilitating the adoption of EGRs among investors, jewellers and other market participants," the release added. Speaking at the bell-ringing ceremony on Wednesday, NSE Managing Director and CEO Ashish Kumar Chauhan said the exchange's Electronic Gold Receipt (EGR) platform offers a SEBI-regulated marketplace where physical gold can be converted into a dematerialised security and held in the same demat account. "This framework is open to all eligible partici-

pants, and we welcome every refiner, vault manager, jeweller, and intermediary who meets the standards to come forward," he noted. India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA) National President Prithviraj Kothari said India holds an estimated 30,000-35,000 tonnes of gold, making it one of the largest private gold reserves globally, but much of this wealth remains economically inactive. He further said that India is setting up the India International Bullion Exchange (IIBX) for the offshore

market, while SEBI has already notified the framework for Electronic Gold Receipts (EGRs) for the domestic market. "EGR (Electronic Gold Receipt) has the potential to unlock enormous value for India. If even a small fraction of the gold lying idle in our homes enters a transparent and regulated ecosystem, it can improve liquidity, strengthen formalisation, support financing, and reduce our dependence on fresh gold imports," it said.

Ketan Kothari, Director and Founder of Augmont Goldtech Private Limited, said Electronic Gold Receipts could transform India's gold financing ecosystem by enabling consumers to convert idle gold, bars and coins into EGRs and lend them to manufacturers through the Securities Lending and Borrowing (SLB) platform. By doing this, "Customer will earn an interest, manufacturer will pay an interest," he said. Further noting that the largest tokenised gold platform has an AUM of USD 3 billion, Kothari estimates EGRs will have a 100x AUM

Govt Rolls Out Foreign Asset Disclosure Scheme For Small Taxpayers



New Delhi: The Income Tax Department on Saturday notified a new voluntary disclosure scheme allowing small taxpayers to declare certain undisclosed foreign assets and income by paying an effective 60 per cent tax, as the government seeks to bring overseas holdings into the tax net without exposing eligible taxpayers to further penalties or prosecution. The Foreign Assets of Small Taxpayers-Disclosure Scheme (FAST-DS), announced in the 2026-27 Budget, will take effect from August 16, with online declarations open until December 31, 2026, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said. The scheme is aimed at taxpayers such as students, young professionals, technology employees and relocated non-resident Indians who may have failed to disclose eligible foreign assets or income. Under the rules, taxpayers will pay 30 per cent tax on the value

of the declared undisclosed foreign asset or income, plus an additional amount equal to the tax, effectively taking the levy to 60 per cent. The fair market value of assets will be determined as of March 31, 2026, the CBDT said. There are two categories of declarations under FAST-DS. For an undisclosed foreign asset or foreign income that was not previously offered to tax, the aggregate value must not exceed Rs 1 crore. A second category covers foreign assets that were already offered to tax or acquired when the taxpayer was a non-resident but were not reported in the relevant tax-return schedule. The threshold for such declarations is Rs 5 crore, with a Rs 1 lakh fee payable. The CBDT said the scheme is intended to enable eligible taxpayers to disclose "certain undi-

frequently asked questions. Taxpayers making valid declarations will receive immunity from any further tax or penalty and from prosecution under the Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015, in respect of the assets or income disclosed. The declared income or the amount invested in the disclosed asset will also not be included in the taxpayer's total income under the Income-tax Act, 1961 or the Black Money Act, the CBDT said. Notifying the rules for the scheme, the CBDT said the scheme "enables eligible taxpayers to declare certain undisclosed foreign assets, undisclosed foreign income, or undeclared foreign assets" on payment of the specified tax or fee. For example, where an undisclosed foreign bank account is valued at Rs 60 lakh and undisclosed foreign income amounts to Rs

20 lakh, the total tax payable would be Rs 48 lakh, according to an example in the CBDT's frequently asked questions. Taxpayers making valid declarations will receive immunity from any further tax or penalty and from prosecution under the Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015, in respect of the assets or income disclosed. The declared income or the amount invested in the disclosed asset will also not be included in the taxpayer's total income under the Income-tax Act, 1961 or the Black Money Act, the CBDT said. Notifying the rules for the scheme, the CBDT said the scheme "enables eligible taxpayers to declare certain undisclosed foreign assets, undisclosed foreign income, or undeclared foreign assets, on payment of a specified tax or fee".



Avengers Doomsday New Promo: Doctor Doom's Origins And Battle With Thor Revealed



Marvel Studios has unveiled a new promo of the upcoming sci-fi action movie Avengers: Domsday. It gives fans a closer look at Robert Downey Jr's Victor von Doom and the massive threat facing the Marvel heroes. The promo was shown during the studio's showcase at D23: The Ultimate Disney Fan Event on August 15, 2026. The new promo introduces Doom's past and hints at what made him the powerful villain he is today. Sue Storm (Vanessa Kirby) describes Victor as someone who "lost

everything" and says, "I didn't realise that he was broken." The promo then shows Victor wearing his iconic mask and looking at a painting.

The promo soon shifts to a destroyed world, showing the scale of the danger in Avengers: Domsday. Pedro Pascal's Reed Richards asks Victor if he is responsible for all the destruction. Victor, however, has a much bigger view of the situation. He says that all the super-heroes have "lived stolen lives." The promo also features a tense con-

frontation between Victor and Thor (Chris Hemsworth). Thor arrives from the sky and warns him, "You will beg for hell long before I grant it." He then attacks Victor with his hammer. However, Doom easily blocks the attack, throws Thor's hammer away and pushes him back. Victor then delivers one of the most striking lines from the promo: "Hell answers to me. For I am Doom." The film brings together heroes from different parts of the Marvel universe, including the Avengers, Fantastic Four and X-Men.

Along with Downey Jr, the cast includes Chris Evans, Hayley Atwell, Pedro Pascal, Vanessa Kirby, Chris Hemsworth, Anthony Mackie, Florence Pugh, Paul Rudd, Tom Hiddleston, Ian McKellen, Patrick Stewart, the Avengers, Fantastic Four and X-Men. art, James Marsden and several others. Directed by Anthony and Joe Russo, Avengers: Domsday is produced by Kevin Feige, Louis D'Esposito and Jonathan Schwartz. The film is scheduled to release in theatres on December 18, 2026.

With English Trailer, Makers Confirm When Ranbir Kapoor and Yash Starrer Will Hit Big Screens

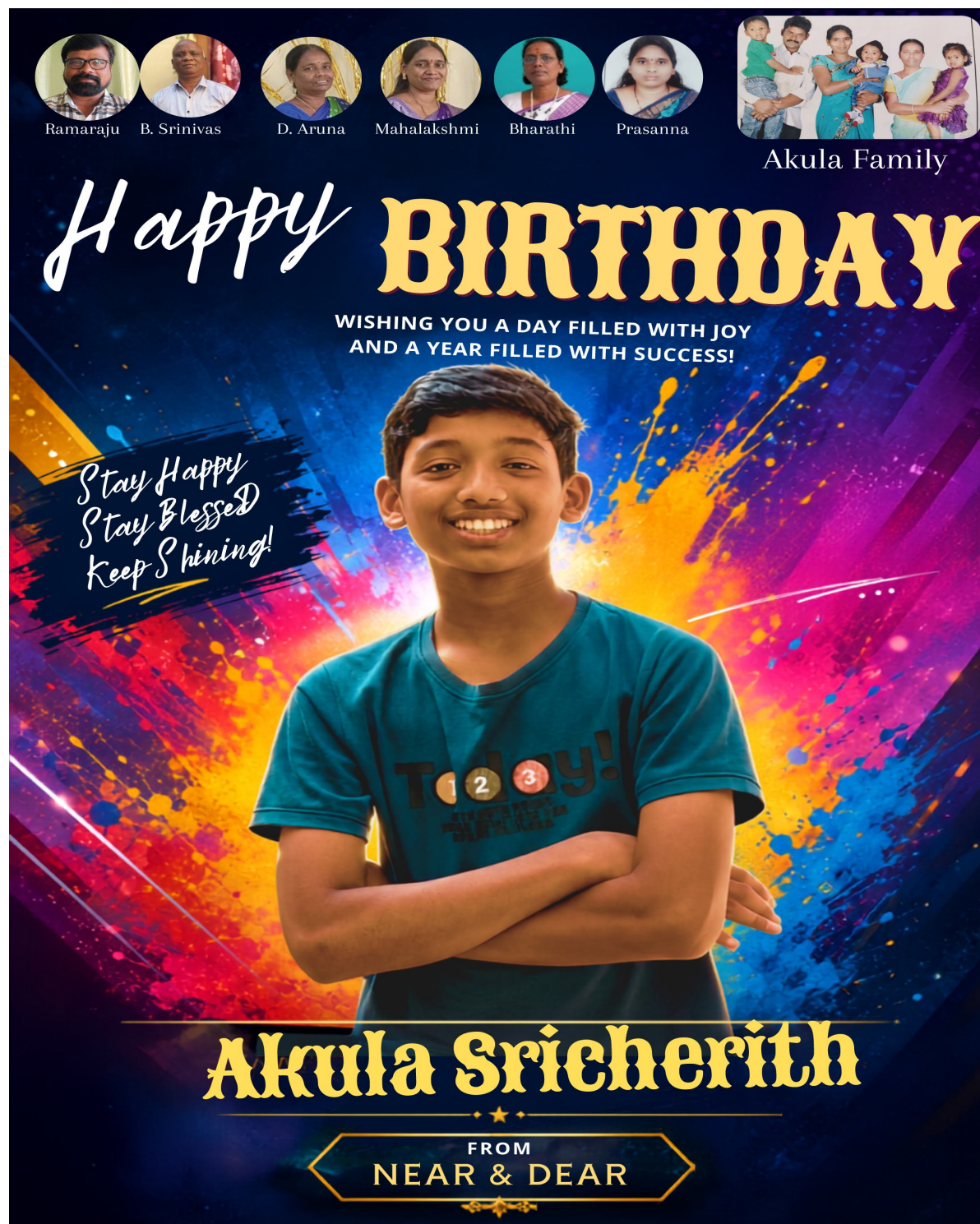


After releasing trailer of the much-awaited Ramayana: Part 1, the makers have now locked release date for Ranbir Kapoor, Sai Pallavi, and Yash starrer mythological drama. Sony Pictures Entertainment, who acquired international distribution rights for Ramayana, announced release date for the film via social media. The distributors confirmed that the film will arrive on Dhanteras which marks the beginning of the Diwali festivities.

Right from the word go, Ramayana release was locked for Diwali 2026. Sticking to the release plan, the makers are all set for worldwide release of the film on November 6. The announcement came with the release of the Ramayana's English trailer. In India, Ramayana will enjoy solo release with no big-ticket films scheduled to arrive during November 2026. The nearest tent-pole release is Shah Rukh Khan's King which arrives in

December. However, internationally, Ramayana will lock horns with Takashi Yamazaki's Godzilla Minus Zero which is also scheduled to hit big screens on November 6. While Ramayana is India's biggest mythological epic, Godzilla Minus Zero is Japan's massive monster franchise. The set of audience both films are targeting could be different. However, what will make the release clash intense is that the Ramayana and Godzilla,

both will eye for IMAX screens and other premium platforms. Both projects are filmed for IMAX. With Sony Pictures having one of the world's largest theatrical distribution networks, Ramayana can undoubtedly enjoy wider releases and better screen allocation in the international circuits. Now it is to be seen what plans Toho Co., Ltd, distributor for Godzilla comes up with to secure IMAX and premium platforms for Godzilla Minus Zero, which is the 39th film in the popular creature franchise. Directed by Nitesh Tiwari and produced by Namit Malhotra's Prime Focus Studios, Ramayana is mounted on a massive budget of Rs 4000 crore. Apart from Ranbir, Sai Pallavi, and Yash, the film also stars Sunny Deol as Hanuman, Arun Govil as Dasharatha, and Ravie Dubey as Lakshmana. The ensemble getting together could be different. However, what will make the release clash intense is that the Ramayana and Godzilla, Chaddha, Vivek Oberoi, Indira Krishnan, Amitabh Bachchan, Mohit Raina, Adinath Kothare and Kunal Kapoor. The music has been composed by Hans Zimmer and AR Rahman. The film is a two-part mythological epic. Following the first installment, Ramayana: Part 2 is expected to arrive during Diwali 2027. Filming on second installment is already 50% complete.



Awarapan 2 Vs Batwara 1947 Box Office Collection Day 2: The Independence Day Clash Gets More One-Sided



The Independence Day box office clash between Awarapan 2 and Batwara 1947 has continued to remain heavily in favour of Emraan Hashmi's film. After opening with a big lead on Day 1, Awarapan 2 has maintained its strong run on the second day as well. The Emraan Hashmi starrer has benefited from the nostalgia around the 2007 film and has attracted a much bigger audience despite receiving mixed reviews. Sunny Deol's Batwara 1947, meanwhile, has also shown growth on Day 2 but remains far behind Awarapan 2. Awarapan 2 Box Office Collection Day 2: According to the latest live data, Awarapan 2 has collected Rs 22.42 crore in India so far on Day 2, as of Saturday evening. The film had earned Rs 22 crore on its opening day. With this, the Emraan Hashmi starrer has taken its total India net collection to Rs 44.42 crore. Its total India gross collection currently stands at Rs 52.86 crore. The film is also playing across 9,015 shows on Day 2.

Its nationwide occupancy has reached around 53%. Batwara 1947 Box Office Collection Day 2 Sunny Deol's Batwara 1947 has also recorded better numbers on Saturday compared to its opening day. The film has earned Rs 8.88 crore in India so far on Day 2, as of Saturday evening. The film collected Rs 5.75 crore on Day 1, taking its total India net collection to Rs 14.63 crore so far. Its total India gross collection stands at Rs 17.32 crore. Batwara 1947 is currently running across 7,221 shows and has recorded around 33% occupancy. Awarapan 2 Vs Batwara 1947: Box Office Breakdown Day Awarapan 2 Collection (India Net) Batwara 1947 Collection (India Net)

Day	Rs
Day 1 (1st Friday)	Rs 22 Cr
Day 2 (1st Saturday)	Rs 5.75 Cr
Day 2 (1st Saturday)	Rs 22.42 Cr (early estimates)
Day 2 (1st Saturday)	Rs 8.88 Cr (early estimates)
Total	Rs 44.42 Cr
Total	Rs 14.63 Cr

Data Source: Sacnilk Independence Day Holiday

Boosts Both Films The August 15 holiday has helped both movies increase their audience. Awarapan 2, which had fewer shows than Batwara 1947 on the opening day, has now been allotted more shows. The national holiday has also helped ticket sales across theatres. However, Awarapan 2 is seeing a much stronger response, with its occupancy reaching 53% compared to Batwara 1947's 33%. The two films could see another boost on Sunday as audiences get the benefit of the extended weekend. Awarapan 2 Eyes Rs 50 Crore With its current two-day collection of Rs 44.42 crore, Awarapan 2 is now close to the Rs 50 crore mark in India. If the film maintains its strong pace through the remaining Saturday shows and Sunday, it could cross the milestone very soon. Batwara 1947 is also expected to grow over the weekend after recording better numbers on Saturday. The film has crossed Rs 14 crore in India net so far and