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International Day of Peace 2025: 21 September

- International Day of Peace is celebrated every year on 21 September to to strengthen the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and people.
- The theme of International Day of Peace 2025 is "Act Now for a Peaceful World".
- United Nations General Assembly established the International Day of Peace in 1981.
- In 2001, International Day of Peace was designated as a period of non-violence and cease-fire.
- The United Nations General Assembly has declared it a day dedicated to strengthening the ideals of peace through 24-hour non-violence and observance of ceasefire.
- The day promotes global solidarity to build a peaceful and sustainable world.



Anbu Karangal Scheme – Financial Aid for Orphaned Children’s Education in Tamil Nadu”

- The ‘Anbu Karangal’ program for orphaned children’s education was launched by CM Stalin in Tamil Nadu.
- The launch coincided with the birth anniversary of former CM C.N. Annadurai.
- The program provides monthly financial aid of ₹2,000 for the education of orphaned children or those who lost one parent.
- The aid will continue until the children turn 18 and complete their school education.
- In the first phase, 6,082 children are set to benefit from this scheme.
- The initiative is part of the state government’s ‘Thayumanavar’ programme, aimed at supporting the poor.
- He cited welfare measures such as the Chief Minister’s Breakfast Scheme, aid for disabled and transgender persons, and support for children orphaned during COVID-19.
- Stalin stated that these initiatives are not vote bank politics but reflect the government’s duty to uplift marginalized people.



An MoU signed between IIT Kanpur and Vietnam National University (VNU)

- An MoU has been signed between the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur and Vietnam National University (VNU) to foster academic and research collaboration across several cutting-edge fields.
- The collaboration will emphasize AI applications in medical diagnosis, hospital systems for Vietnam, and AI-driven education, including language learning technologies.
- It will also cover infrastructure defect detection with advanced AI tools and initiatives for smart city development.
- Additionally, material prediction, carbon-carbon applications, and drone technology for rescue and agriculture will be focused on.
- Drone technology will be developed for rescue operations and agricultural uses.
- A high-level VNU delegation visited IIT Kanpur to finalize collaboration areas.
- IIT-K Director Prof. Manindra Agrawal said the partnership will enhance capacity building and help tackle pressing problems faced by both India and Vietnam through joint research.



EPFO launched 'Passbook Lite' for simplified PF tracking

- A new feature called 'Passbook Lite' has been introduced on the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) website to make PF account tracking easier.
- The launch of the feature was announced by Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya.
- It was stated that all EPFO services will now be accessible through a single login for more than 70 million subscribers.
- Earlier, members had to use a separate portal to check their contributions, withdrawals, and balances.
- With the new system, a summary view of account details is being provided directly on the main EPFO website.
- The older passbook portal will continue to function for detailed account information with graphical displays.
- According to the Labour Ministry, the simplified service is expected to reduce website load and improve access for users.
- A new option has also been enabled for downloading Annexure K, the certificate required during PF transfers.
- The document, once shared only between PF offices, can now be downloaded in PDF format by employees.
- This will allow members to track transfer status, verify updated balances, and maintain permanent digital records important for EPS calculations.



The logo and flagship initiatives for the India-AI Impact Summit 2026 unveiled by MeitY

- On 18 September, the Ministry of Electronics and IT officially unveiled the logo and flagship initiatives for the India-AI Impact Summit 2026.
- It will be the first time a nation from the Global South hosts the prestigious international AI summit.
- The newly launched logo, inspired by the Ashoka Chakra, was designed to represent ethical governance and constitutional values.
- Neural flares radiating from the design were used to symbolize AI's role in bridging divides and promoting inclusive growth.
- Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw highlighted that India has reached 38,000 GPUs, surpassing the earlier target of 10,000.
- A total of 570 AI Data Labs are planned across the country, with 30 already dedicated in the first phase.
- The IndiaAI Fellowship Program was expanded to provide support to 13,500 students and researchers across multiple disciplines.
- The two-day summit, scheduled for February 19–20, 2026, at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, will host global leaders and innovators.
- Eight foundational AI model projects selected from over 500 proposals will be launched to address key sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, and governance.
- The summit, framed around the principles of People, Planet, and Progress, will aim to shape a shared vision for responsible and inclusive AI.



HCL and OIL Sign MoU for Critical Mineral Exploration

- An MoU on critical mineral exploration signed by HCL and OIL.
- On September 19, 2025, Hindustan Copper Limited (HCL) and Oil India Limited (OIL) signed an MoU for cooperation in critical mineral exploration.
- The collaboration is focused on the development of copper and associated strategic minerals.
- HCL, a Miniratna PSU under the Ministry of Mines, is engaged in copper mining, processing, and marketing.
- Oil India, a Maharatna PSU under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, is known for its expertise in oil and gas exploration.
- The company has diversified into the mineral sector to complement its energy portfolio.
- The agreement was exchanged in the presence of HCL CMD Sanjiv Kumar Singh and OIL CMD Dr. Ranjit Rath.
- Senior officials from both organizations were also present during the signing ceremony.
- The collaboration is aligned with the objectives of the National Critical Mineral Mission of the Government of India.
- The MoU is considered a crucial step towards ensuring mineral security for India's industrial and technological needs.
- By this partnership, the nation's energy security and strategic mineral requirements are expected to be significantly strengthened.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi Launches 8th Rashtriya Poshan Maah

- On September 17, 2025, PM Narendra Modi launched the 8th **Rashtriya Poshan Maah** along with **Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar Abhiyan**.
- The initiative emphasizes **nutrition as a driver of national development**.
- **Poshan Abhiyaan** was first introduced on **March 8, 2018, in Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan**.
- The aim is to **combat malnutrition** by promoting **diverse diets, breastfeeding, and community participation**.
- **Poshan Maah** is celebrated every **September**, aligning with the PM's birthday month.
- The **8th edition integrates nutrition with early childhood education**, supporting **NEP 2020** through *Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi*.
- The campaign highlights **environmental sustainability** through initiatives like **Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam** (tree plantation).
- This year's programme also stresses the **role of men in caregiving and nutrition**, promoting shared household responsibilities.
- The **Poshan Tracker App** (2021) now covers **9.14 crore beneficiaries**.
- The **PM POSHAN Scheme** (ex-Mid-Day Meal) benefits **11.8 crore students in 11.2 lakh schools**; a **9.5% cost increase** (₹954 crore) was approved for FY 2025–26.
- Related initiatives include **Poshan Pakhwada (March–April)** focusing on the **first 1,000 days** of a child's life, and the **Children Nutrition Park at Statue of Unity** promoting healthy eating.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Gujarat on September 20



- He attended the ‘Samudra se Samridhi’ event. During the visit, he launched development projects worth over ₹34,200 crore.
- He addressed a public gathering Bhavnagar and inaugurated various initiatives.
- He conducted an aerial survey of the Dholera Special Investment Region.
- He also visited the National Maritime Heritage Complex in Lothal. This complex is being developed at a cost of ₹4,500 crore.
- Prime Minister unveiled maritime projects worth over ₹7,870 crore.
- These include infrastructure upgrades at major Indian ports.
- He inaugurated the Mumbai International Cruise Terminal at Indira Dock.
- He laid the foundation stone for a container terminal at Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port in Kolkata.
- At Deendayal Port in Kandla, the Tuna Tekra Multi-Cargo Terminal will be developed.

- Kamarajar Port in Ennore will get firefighting facilities and improved road connectivity.
- A seawall will be built at Car Nicobar Island. Deendayal Port will also get a cargo berth and a Green Bio-Methanol Plant.
- Ship repair facilities will be set up in Patna and Varanasi.
- In Gujarat, Modi launched and laid foundations for projects worth over ₹26,354 crore.
- These cover sectors like energy, healthcare, highways, and urban transport.
- The HPLNG Regasification Terminal launched at Chhara Port.
- A new petrochemical project launched at the Gujarat IOCL Refinery.
- Green energy initiatives include the 600 MW Green Shoe Initiative.
- Also included are the PM-KUSUM 475 MW solar feeder and the 45 MW Badeli Solar PV Project.
- Dhordo village will be fully powered by solar energy under these plans.
- In the healthcare sector, two hospitals will be expanded.
- These are Sir T. General Hospital in Bhavnagar and Guru Govind Sinh Government Hospital in Jamnagar.
- The foundation stone was also laid for four-laning of 70 kilometres of national highways.
- Dholera Special Investment Region is planned as a smart, sustainable industrial city.

India–New Zealand Complete Third Round of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) Talks

- India and New Zealand have completed the third round of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations.
- The talks took place in Queenstown, New Zealand. Both countries expressed a strong commitment to deepen economic cooperation.
- They aim to conclude a fair and mutually beneficial agreement soon.
- The discussions focused on expanding trade and investment between the two nations.
- These efforts align with the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon.
- The FTA negotiations were formally launched on March 16 this year.
- The launch followed a meeting between India's Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and New Zealand's Trade Minister Todd McClay.
- The third round featured constructive discussions on all major components of the agreement.
- India's bilateral goods trade with New Zealand reached \$1.3 billion in 2024–25.
- This reflects a growth of nearly 49% compared to the previous year.
- The FTA is expected to boost trade volumes and attract greater investment.
- It will also help improve supply chain stability. Additionally, it will create a transparent and predictable environment for businesses in both countries.



R&I Upgrades India's Sovereign Credit Rating to 'BBB+'



- Japan-based Rating and Investment Information (R&I) raised India's sovereign credit rating to 'BBB+'.
- The outlook for the rating has been maintained as "Stable".
- This is India's third credit rating upgrade in 2025 after S&P in August and Morningstar DBRS in May.
- The upgrades reflect global confidence in India's economic strength.
- R&I noted India's strong growth performance, large economic size, young population, and domestic consumption.
- The agency credited government policies for supporting economic momentum, attracting investment, and boosting infrastructure.
- Progress in fiscal consolidation was acknowledged due to increased tax revenues and reduced subsidies, which lowered the fiscal deficit despite higher capital spending.
- India's debt levels were found to be manageable due to high economic growth, with positive indicators like modest current account deficit, strong services exports, remittance inflows, and low external debt-to-GDP ratio.

- Foreign exchange reserves were described as adequate, and financial system risks were considered limited.
- Recent U.S. tariff hikes were identified as a risk, but India's limited reliance on U.S. exports reduces the potential impact.
- The GST reform was acknowledged, with short-term revenue losses but expectations that higher consumption will offset the negative effects.
- This marks the third upgrade by a major rating agency in five months, showing global trust in India's medium-term growth, with the government committed to inclusive growth, fiscal discipline, and economic stability.

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Renowned Assamese singer and cultural icon Zubeen Garg has passed away

- He died in a scuba diving accident in Singapore at the age of 52.
- He was rescued by Singapore Police from the sea in an unconscious state and immediately taken to a hospital.
- Despite intensive medical care, doctors could not revive him.
- Zubeen had travelled to Singapore to perform at the North East Festival.
- He gained recognition in Bollywood with the song “Ya Ali” from the 2006 film, Gangster.
- He had a prolific career, recording over 38,000 songs in 40 languages.
- His first music album, titled Anamika, was released in 1992.
- He was widely respected as a singer, lyricist, composer, actor, filmmaker, and humanitarian.
- Assam government has declared three days of state mourning from 20th to 22nd September over his death.



Sudhanshu Vats Appointed Chairman of Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI)

- **Sudhanshu Vats**, Managing Director of Pidilite Industries Ltd, has been appointed as the new chairman of the **Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI)**.
- S Subramanyeswar of MullenLowe Global was named vice chairman, and Paritosh Joshi, Principal at Provocateur Advisory, was appointed honorary treasurer.
- ASCI's role is to ensure advertising is executed with integrity, respects the community, and keeps consumer interests front and centre, while promoting responsible creativity in the industry.

Recent Appointments

- **Secretary of Vice-President C. P. Radhakrishnan** – Amit Khare
- **Chairman of National Stock Exchange** – Injeti Srinivas
- **Head of PR and Corporate Communications by Sony Pictures Networks India** – Gaurav Laghate
- **Director of CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Policy Research (NIScPR)** – Dr. Geetha Vani Rayasam
- **MD & CEO of International Asset Reconstruction Company** – Abhishek Maheshwari



Rajat Patidar leads Central Zone to Duleep Trophy title after 11 years

- **Central Zone** won the **Duleep Trophy 2025** after 11 years by defeating **South Zone** by six wickets in Bengaluru. They chased a modest target of 65 runs on a tricky fifth-day pitch.
- South Zone fought hard with a strong 426-run second innings, but could not stop Central. This was Central Zone's seventh Duleep Trophy title.
- The 2025–26 Duleep Trophy was the 62nd edition of India's domestic first-class cricket tournament. The tournament was held from 28 August to 15 September 2025.

