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Assured Pension returns as govt goes back to NPS

The Union government on Saturday implemented the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS)for government employees . This will be scrapping the National Pension Scheme (NPS) .

UPS is almost akin to the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) There was a demand for government employees to return to OPS .

Features of UPS :

- Assured Pension – Employees will now be eligible to get 50 % of average basic pay drawn over the last 12 months .The difference from OPS is that , Under UPS will be a contributory scheme , employees will be chipping in 10% of their salary while the government will contribute 18.5% of salary .Under OPS no contribution from employees was required .
- Assured family Pension :-- 60 % Pension of the employee immediately before his /her demise .
- Assured Minimum pension – ₹10,000 per month after a minimum of 10 years of service .

Employees who joined services after 2004 will have an option to choose between the two schemes .

NPS was implemented on January 1 , 2004 . Under this employee contribution was invested in market and equity through Pension Fund Regulatory Development Authority (PFRDA) . After retirement the employee would get 60 % of corpus , while 40% of it would again be invested .

NPS depended on the market .

There was a demand by government employees to retrieve back to OPS .

Many non BJP states had gone back to OPS .

Zelensky eyes tie up with India in in defence , production of drones

Ukrainian Prime Minister Vlodmyr Zelensky pitched for greater cooperation with India in high end technology , in areas such as agriculture , cybersecurity and defence , stressing co-production of Drones and electronic warfare systems . This was said in the statement released by the two countries .

INDIA Operates a large number of inventory of Ukraine , but after Russia Ukraine war India , has declined defence imports from Ukraine and shifted more to indigenously produced inventories .

CBI begins Polygraph tests on 7 in Kolkata case

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Saturday started the process of conducting polygraph tests on seven persons in connection with R G Kar Medical College rape and Murder case . The test will be conducted on former principal Sandip Kumar Ghosh , four others who had dinner with the victim hours before the crime , civil police volunteer Sanjay Roy , and one other civil police volunteer .

Earlier, Calcutta High Court granted permission for the Polygraph test to the CBI .

Nicobar project will not disturb or displace indigenous tribes

The development of a port and airport under the great Nicobar project will not “ disturb or displace “ any of the Shompen tribes , according to Environment Minister Bhupinder Yadav .

He said it in a written reply to Rajya Sabha member Jayaram Ramesh over concerns over the project .

The development will also help expansionist action of China in the region , curb stealing of marine resources by Myanamrese poachers , bridge infrastructural gaps and promote international trade .



Mr Yadav said that the report of a high powered committee on the project was not made out as the project holds “ national importance with strategic and defence dimensions “ .

He said that the areas used under the project will be forest land , which is not owned by the tribes . The tribes will not be affected .

Under the Great Nicobar project , a transcontinental port , an airport , a city , and a solar plant to generate electricity will be built at a cost of ₹72,000 crore . The project is thought to be a game changer , as ships which crossed the strait of Malacca can dock there .



In US , Rajnath discusses defence partnership with industry leaders

Defense Minister Rajnath Singh is in the US . On Friday he interacted with senior leaders of American defence companies under US India Strategic Development Forum (USES PDF) .

India also has requested to buy anti-submarine warfare (ASW) Sonobuoys for the Indian Navy’s MH 60 R multi role helicopter , that are currently being inducted for an estimated cost of 52.8 million dollar . This will have to be passed by the US Congress . The two countries also signed the Security of Supply Agreement (SOSA) . Mr Singh said that he has invited US based companies to do manufacturing in India under Make in India scheme .

Sonobuoys are used to detect Submarines below water . These are dropped through aircraft , a part of it remains underwater , while a part is above water . The part below the water sends signals to detect submarines and the part above the water sends signals about possible submarine detection .



India will be free of left wing extremism by March 2026 , says Amit Shah

The Home Minister on Saturday declared that the country would be free from Left Wing Extremism (LWE) by March 2026 , Mr Shah made the declaration during a press conference .Mr Shah said this after a declaration by a meeting of interstate coordination of chief secretaries and DGPs .

He said that the Narendra Modi government was fighting on three fronts of Development , Prosecution , and Operation to curb LWE . He said that only 38 districts are currently affected by LWE .

Between 2019 and 2024 Bihar , Jharkhand , Madhya Pradesh , Andhra Pradesh , Odisha became free of Naxalism .

In Maharashtra it is confined to Gadchiroli District now .

He further said that the Chhattisgarh government will announce a new surrender policy . He appealed to those involved in Naxal activities to lay arms and cooperate in development .

Union cabinet approves proposal to bolster biotech manufacturing

The Union Cabinet on Saturday cleared a proposal to bolster biotechnology based manufacturing called BioE3(biotechnology for Economy , Environment and Employee) .

A financial outlay has not been announced yet .

The six thematic verticals of the policy are : bio based chemicals and enzymes , functional food and smart protein , precision bio therapeutics , climate resilient agriculture ; carbon capture and its utilisation ; marine and space research, a press statement from the Ministry of science and technology said .

World : _____

Israeli strikes kill dozens in Gaza , ahead of ceasefire talks

An Israeli attack in Gaza killed 69 people in Gaza on Saturday .The death toll has crossed 40,000 . Experts are meeting in Cairo to talk on ceasefire measures , this includes officials of IS, Egypt and Qatar .

Floods push three lakh in Bangladesh relief centre .

Floods in South East Bangladesh have pushed around 3 lakh people to take shelter in emergency shelters .

Among the worst hit areas is Cox Bazar .

Beijing fires flares at sea in South China sea : Manila

The Philippines accuses China of recently firing flares on one of its patrolling aircrafts near Scarborough shoal in South China sea . China has not commented on this yet .

FAQ : _____

Why is sanction for prosecution needed ?

The story so far :Karnataka governor Thawar Chand Gehlot approved investigation against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to open an investigation and prosecute him in connection with irregularities in allotment of compensatory plots to his wife . Karnataka High court for the time being has stayed the probe .

Why is sanction required to prosecute public servants ?

Under the Prevention of Corruption Act , 1988 it has been made necessary to get sanction of competent authority or central or state government to prosecute a public servant . This is also a requirement for prosecution of public servants under section 197 of Cr PC .

What is the governor's role against the CM ?

Governor can dismiss the CM , so in this case he is the competent authority to sanction prosecution of the CM in corruption cases .

However the issue arises whether governors have to work on aid and advice of the Chief Minister . In the case of Antulay , the Supreme Court has held that the governor should act on his own in such cases .

In the current case , the state cabinet had rejected the governor's proposal to prosecute CM Siddaramaiah even though the governor acted against him .

Why is lateral entry policy under scrutiny ?

The story so far : On August 17 , The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) advertised for the recruitment through lateral entry for the post of joint secretary , director and Deputy secretary in different ministries and departments .

Quota benefits are not allowed under such recruitments . Opposition leader Rahul Gandhi termed the recruitment as an “ anti national step “ as it was openly anarchy away from reservation of SCs , STs and OBC s .

On August 20 , UPSC cancelled the advertisement after direction from the centre .

Reason behind lateral entry : One of the reasons is to bring fresh talent for specialised assignments , this helps rapid implementation of the project . One from private sector , public sector , autonomous bodies , universities , research institutes could apply . The position was to be filled for a range from three to five years .

Was this the first time such recruitment was being made ?

No , since 2019 , as many as 63 posts have been filled through the lateral route . At least seven quit their jobs in between .

What is the genesis of the policy ?

NITI Aayog in its report had said that lateral entry recruitment will bring dynamism to the services . Such appointments were also made during the previous government . Manmohan Singh , Montek Singh Ahluwalia were among those inducted in the government from outside .

Will the Hema committee report lead to change ?

The story so far : On August 19 , the Hema committee report on a host of issues in the Malayalam Film Industry was made public. The report has cited incidents of sexual assault to woman working in Malayalam Film industry , industry being in clutch of few Malayalam producers and directors .

The report also points out the poor and inhumane condition of Junior artists .

Why did the government constitute the Hema committee ?

Hema committee was constituted on February 17 ,2017 after incident of sexual assault of a woman actorin the film industry .

The incident triggered widespread protest by women actresses working in Kerala film industry .

This led to formation of the Hema commission under former judge of Kerala High Court K Hema . The committee submitted its report to the Kerala government in 2019 .

Recently an RTI requested the findings of the report . State government had to make it public on directions of Kerala High court .

Findings of the report : The report confirms the existence of “ casting couch “ , Casting couch is a practice in which a director or producer demands sexual favours from a women actress in lieu of providing a role in a film .

The panel interviewed several females working in the industry , they have provided audio clips , video clips and WhatsApp messages to confirm their allegations. The report says that the Malayalam Film industry is controlled by a powerful group of male producers , directors and actors whom they called “mafia “ , as they can ban anyone from the industry .

The report highlights lack of changing rooms or toilet facilities for junior artists . The wages of junior artists are low and they have to work for long hours , likening their situation as slaves .



What is the recommendation of the committee ?

The committee recommended creation of a tribunal to address issues faced by women in cinema . It further recommends reservation for women in Film schools .

How has the state government responded to the report ?

CM Pinayari Vijayan has said that action will be taken in all cases if the victim comes forward to complain . He was telling about those who had given their testimony before the committee . Kerala High court has directed the government to submit a full report .

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