India needs 400 million more women in workforce to contribute USD 14 trillion to economy: Report

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: India requires an additional 400 million women in the workforce to contribute USD 14 trillion to the economy which would necessitate nearly doubling the current female labour force participation rate (LFPR) from 37 per cent to 70 per cent by fiscal year 2047, according to a new report.

Non-profit The/Nudge Institute has unveiled a new report, Labour Force Participation Distillation Report, outlining a crucial element for India's economic future. The report is based upon Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) over the years.

As the country aims to become a USD 30 trillion economy by 2047, the report highlights the need for a substantial increase in female labour force participation to achieve this goal.

According to the report, India requires an additional 400 million women in the workforce to contribute USD 14 trillion to the economy. This would necessitate nearly doubling the current female labour force participation rate (LFPR) from 37 per cent to 70 per cent by fiscal year 2047.

With only 110 million women projected to join the labour force by then, an additional 145 million women need to be integrated to meet this target.

The report reveals a stark disparity in job security and recovery between men and women.

Women were found to be seven times more likely to lose their jobs and eleven times more likely not to recover from job loss. By 2020, nearly half of the women employed in 2019 had exited the workforce, the report said.

Women predominantly work in low-productivity sectors, such as agriculture and manufacturing, where they face limited advancement.

According to the report, in construction, women represent just over 12 per cent of the workforce, often earning significantly less than men in unskilled roles. The pandemic has exacerbated these issues, with many rural women forced back into work due to income loss or job loss by primary earners, underscoring the fragility of female employment.

To address these challenges, the report outlines three key pathways to increase female labour force participation.

First, redefining work through platform jobs and digital microwork could activate fractural employment.

Second, enhancing entrepreneurship opportunities via digital commerce infrastructure could invigorate the sector.

Third, addressing bottlenecks, such as mobility and digital access, is crucial to improving women's participation in the labour market.

Kanishka Chatterjee, Director & Head of The/Nudge Prize, emphasised the urgency of this challenge.

"India's demographic dividend and dreams of a $30 trillion economy cannot be realised without boosting the participation of women in the workforce," Chatterjee said. He acknowledged the strides made but stressed the need for urgent and sustained action to overcome economic, social, and cultural barriers.

To build this report, The/Nudge Prize team looked at all of the PLFS data across the last two cycles of different sectors that are contributing to it or that are seeing higher growth rate, the report said.

"When we looked at PLFS data, we understood what the supply side is or where women or men work today. But there are no other data pointers available where we can clearly see what are the demand markers available in India which will hire women, or which may be better suited for women to take jobs or to drive their entrepreneurial journeys," it said.

"One of the key things to consider, if we need to solve or address labour force participation rate, is two have a holistic approach. Not only to see how labour is available and what skills are available, but also to see what is driving demand today -- and this is exactly what we also bring out in the report," the report added.

Fortis Gurugram expands reach with new oncology and nephrology OPD at Starmeds

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Fortis Hospital Gurugram, a leading healthcare provider, is proud to announce the launch of its specialized Oncology and Nephrology Outpatient Department (OPD) at Starmeds, Channi Himmat, Jammu.

The OPD will be held every fourth Saturday of the month, offering expert consultation and care to the local community.

This initiative aims to enhance access to advanced oncology and nephrology services in the region. Renowned specialists, Dr. Gagandeep Chhabra, Director & Unit Head - Nephrology, and Dr. Swarupa Mitra, Director & Unit Head - Radiation Oncology, will be available to provide comprehensive kidney care, manage kidney disorders, and offer state-of-the-art cancer diagnosis and treatment options.

Dr. Gagandeep Chhabra expressed his enthusiasm about the new OPD, stating, "We are delighted to bring our expertise in nephrology to the people of Jammu. Our goal is to provide the highest quality care and support to patients suffering from kidney diseases."

Dr. Swarupa Mitra echoed this sentiment, emphasizing the importance of accessible cancer care. "Launching the Oncology OPD at Star Med Hospital is a significant step towards improving cancer care in the region.

We are committed to delivering advanced radiation oncology services and supporting patients throughout their treatment journey."

Starmeds, a multispecialty clinic and diagnostics center, where all super specialities are available under one roof, is committed to providing the best quality healthcare in the region.

The other dignitaries present at the launch included Dr. Anu Sethi, a renowned surgeon, Dr. Jatinder Pal Singh from Fortis Hospital Gurugram, and chairman of Starmeds Yashvir Singh Jasrotia, among managing directors Raagini Jasrotia and Sharang Jasrotia.

Additionally, the doctors were felicitated by Manisha Sharma, President of the Inner Wheel Club Jammu, and Arti Gupta, Secretary of the IWC Jammu.

Delhi Police issues advisory for traffic arrangements at Laxmi Narayan Mandir on Janmashtami

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Delhi Police on Saturday issued an advisory for traffic arrangements at Laxmi Narayan Mandir on the occasion of Krishna Janmashtami on August 26.

Janmashtami - an annual festival that celebrates the birth of Lord Krishna - will be observed on Monday.

Entry to the main temple will be from Mandir Marg which can be approached either from Kali Bari Marg side or Peshwa Road, the advisory said.

Hand bags, briefcases, parcels, food packets, cameras, mobile phones and other battery-operated equipment are not permitted, it said.

As is well known, visitors to the temple will have to remove their footwear before passing through the metal detectors leading to the temple gates. Arrangements have been made for depositing the footwear by the temple authorities in stalls adjacent to Kali Bari Marg and Hindu Maha Sabha office on Peshwa Road, the advisory stated.

Entry to the Geeta Bhawan and the Vatika will be through main temple gates. All other entry gates to the temple complex will remain closed, it said.

There are two exit gates from the temple complex. All people approaching Kali Bari Marg will proceed via Vatika Geeta Bhawan, exit (Vatika opening) lane leading to Kali Bari Marg, the advisory said.

All people wanting to move towards Peshwa Road should use gate number 3 for exit on the Geeta Bhawan side. No entry is permitted from gate number 3. No vehicular traffic will be allowed on Mandir Marg between Panchkuian Road roundabout, Park Street roundabout on Kali Bari Marg, Udyan Marg and Peshwa Road, it stated.

An assistance booth has been set-up near the main gate of the temple. Delhi Police assures and wishes a safe and happy celebration of Janmashtami to all, it added.

Heavy rains lash parts of north Gujarat, highways blocked, low-lying areas flooded

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

AHMEDABAD: Heavy rains lashed parts of north Gujarat on Saturday, inundating low-lying areas and blocking state highways and roads connecting villages.

According to officials, water levels have reached above the danger mark in 66 out of 206 reservoirs in the state.

As per data shared by the state emergency operation centre (SEOC), Vadgam taluka of Banaskantha district received 112 mm rainfall in 24 hours ending at 6 am on Saturday, the highest in the state, followed by Nadiad taluka of Kheda district (102 mm), and Meghraj in Arvalli district (101 mm).

Vijapur taluka of Mehsana district received 205 mm of rainfall in four hours from 6 am to 10 am on Saturday,

the SEOC said.

Rains disrupted normal life in Ahmedabad city as well.

Six state highways and 36 panchayat roads were flooded, the government said in an update.

Seven villagers were rescued in Dahod and Chhota Udepur districts on Friday after they were stranded as water levels of rivers rose amid rains.

Teams from the local police and fire department rescued six persons in Dhanpur taluka of Dahod, as the Panam river was in spate due to heavy rains, and a woman was similarly rescued in Moti Tokri village of Chhota Udepur district, officials said.

A government update stated that of 206 reservoirs in the state, 52 were full to the brim, 66 were on high alert, and 42 were 70-100 per cent full.

The Sardar Sarovar Dam at Kevadia in Narmada district has reached 88 per cent capacity, it said.

Meanwhile, officials said that eight teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and 20 from the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) have been deployed in different districts as a precautionary measure.

The IMD has warned of heavy to very heavy rainfall at a few places, with isolated extremely heavy showers in parts of south Gujarat till the morning of August 27.

The state has received 76.57 per cent of average annual rainfall so far, with the south Gujarat region receiving the highest 90.2 per cent, followed by Kutch with 88.97 per cent and Saurashtra with 82.8 per cent rains, the SEOC said.

Districts in north and east-central regions of the state have received 59.33 mm and 62.68 mm showers so far, the SEOC said.

As per the SEOC update, Navsari, Bharuch, Devbhumi Dwarka, Porbandar, and Junagadh districts have received more than 100 mm of rainfall so far this season.

Surendranagar and Botad are rain-deficient with 26-50 mm rainfall so far, it said.

As per the government update, 17,450 persons were relocated to safer places, and 1,653 were rescued from rain-affected areas since the onset of the monsoon season.

In light of the IMD's heavy rainfall warning, fishermen have been advised not to venture into the Arabian Sea till August 27.

Bengali female actor levels 'misbehaviour' charge against eminent Malayalam filmmaker Ranjith

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM/KOLKATA: A Bengali actor has levelled accusation of misbehaviour against eminent Malayalam film director and chairman of the state-run Kerala Chalachitra Academy, Ranjith, spelling fresh trouble for the Pinarayi Vijayan government which is facing opposition heat on its alleged inaction over the Justice Hema Committee report.

The report had revealed instances of harassment and exploitation of women in the Malayalam cinema industry, prompting calls for action against the guilty.

The filmmaker has reportedly rejected Mitra's charge and said he was the "real victim" in the case.

Key LDF constituent CPI was among those seeking a probe into the allegation of Bengali actor Sreelekha Mitra, who has recalled a years-old incident in the backdrop of the ripples being created by the Justice Hema Committee findings.

"The person concerned (Ranjith) is a big name in Malayalam film industry and a national award winning director. I went to his residence to discuss an upcoming film project and I did not like his behaviour. He made certain advances subtly and I felt uncomfortable while we were discussing the script," Mitra told PTI in Kolkata.

He did this without her consent and she her made her disapproval very clear.

"I immediately communicated my decision not to be part of the project any more, left the place and came back to Kolkata the next day," she added.

"I don't know if he has treated other female actors in the film industry in the same way. It is upto them to open up or not if they had faced similar situation. May be his power and influence played a role for others to not to speak out," she added.

Mitra said she did not have any such experience in the Bengali cinema industry, but that there could be similar situations for other female actors as well with regard to someone. Such women should muster the courage and speak out without any fear.

"The incident in Kerala was years back...but it is heartening that women are speaking out with greater vigour and conviction against any form of misconduct now, taking out rallies, and I am looking forward to the day when number of any instance of gender abuse, misconduct will go down and women will not have such harrowing tales any more," Mitra added.

In Kerala, many demanded Ranjith stepped down as the Chairman of the film academy. Several people including well-known filmmaker Dr Biju came out against Ranjith.

While opposition Congress said it expects Ranjith would

step down as film academy chairman, BJP said he has no moral right to continue.

CPI national leader Annie Raja urged the government to carry out a probe based on Mitra's allegations and wanted to keep Ranjith away from the position during investigation.

Kerala Cultural Affairs Minister Saji Cheriyan assured the government would not protect anyone who had committed a wrong.

If the allegations against Ranjith were proved, action would surely be taken against him, he said in a Facebook post on Saturday.

He told the media earlier Ranjith is one of country's eminent filmmakers and that he had already responded to the actor's allegation.

"The allegation raised by the actress and the reply given by Ranjith are in front of us. If she has a complaint, let her come here and lodge a complaint. Then we will take action in accordance with the law," he said.

No case can be registered based on just allegations and such cases wont stand, Cheriyan added.

He underlined the government's support for women who face harassment at their workplaces and said stringent action would be taken against wrongdoers.

Health Minister Veena George said all facilities and support would be provided to the actress to lodge a complaint against the director.

"If she wishes to go ahead with the complaint, the government will provide all facilities for the same. The government's stand is clear in this. The CM has already made it clear that the government won't protect wrongdoers," she said.

Higher Education Minister R Bindhu said action would be taken after understanding the facts in the issue and said she expects the government would do it, as a woman has come up with such a complaint.

Sharing similar views, Women's Commission chairperson P Sathidevi said she came to know about the allegations about the actress through the media and if it is proved correct, Ranjith should step down as academy chairman.

Opposition leader V D Satheesan also said Ranjith is an acclaimed director who has contributed several good movies in the Malayalam film industry.

"As a friend and as a brother, I request him to step down as film academy chairman. I think he will step back from his current responsibility," the Congress leader told reporters

BJP state chief K Surendran attacked Cheriyan and Ranjith and said both of them should quit.

"Ranjith has no moral right to continue in the position. A victim herself has come up with the complaint. She raised the allegation openly....before the public society," he told a press conference in Thiruvananthapuram.

He accused Cheriyan of challenging the legal system in the country by defending Ranjith.

Annie Raja said the actress has raised the allegation and named the accused person also.

"So, the government should carry out a probe into it and action should be taken based on that. When such a probe is being carried out, he should be kept away from the position of Academy chairman," she said. The legal system permits him to return to the same position if the allegations are proved wrong.

SP chief Akhilesh Yadav calls for defamation case against BJP MLA for remarks on Mayawati

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

LUCKNOW: Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav has said that a defamation case should be filed against BJP MLA Rajesh Chaudhary for his remarks against BSP chief Mayawati. In a video from a news channel shared by Yadav on X on Friday, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA Chaudhary from Mathura district's Mant area is heard saying, "There is no doubt that Mayawati has been the chief minister of UP four times and it was us (BJP) who made her the chief minister for the first time. We made that mistake".

"Mayawati is the most corrupt chief minister of Uttar Pradesh," Chaudhary goes on to say in the video.

Condemning these remarks, Yadav, in a post in Hindi on X on Friday, said, "Political differences have their place but no one has the right to tarnish her (Mayawati's) dignity as a woman. BJP members are saying that making her chief minister was a mistake, which is also an insult to public opinion in a democratic country."

"Furthermore, making baseless allegations that she was the most corrupt chief minister is highly objectionable. A defamation case should be filed against the BJP legislator for this public statement," he added.

The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) president said the party is grateful to Yadav for responding to Chaudhary's allegations.

"The SP chief has responded to the false allegations made by a BJP MLA from Mathura district, acknowledging the truth about the BSP chief's honesty. The party is grateful for this," she said in a post in Hindi on X on Saturday.

Meanwhile, Chaudhary hit back at Yadav, alleging that the SP chief has "turned the Samajwadi Party into a serial rapist party". "Boys will be boys, they make mistakes... You have turned the Samajwadi Party into a serial rapist party. In Ayodhya and Kannauj, minor girls from backward and Dalit communities are raped, and you gamble away the honour of Hindu Dalit daughters for minority votes. Akhilesh Yadav, a follower of Aurangzeb, you have already broken all records of corruption," the BJP MLA said in a post in Hindi on X.

"Do you remember the 2nd June 1995 Guest House incident? Samajwadi goons tried to disgrace Mayawati. What insult was left that your goons did not hurl at Mayawati? It was the BJP that saved Mayawati's life and dignity; otherwise, the Samajwadi goons would have killed a Dalit woman leader. You talk about values while publicly insulting your own father on stage for power. You are deeply casteist and corrupt," Chaudhary alleged in the post.

The SP chief had said that the "disrespectful remarks" made by the BJP legislator towards Mayawati reflect the "deep-seated bitterness that BJP members harbour towards women, especially those from marginalised and oppressed communities".

Yadav said that by sheltering such MLAs, the BJP is deeply hurting the dignity of women.

"If the BJP does not take immediate disciplinary action against such people, it will be assumed that this is not just the personal opinion of one legislator but the view of the entire party," the former Uttar Pradesh chief minister said in the post. Mayawati also called for action against Chaudhary.

"The party (BSP) feels that this BJP legislator is no longer getting any attention within his own party. That is why he is making outrageous statements about the BSP chief to grab headlines, which is extremely unfortunate," the BSP chief said in a series of posts in Hindi on X.

"The BJP should take strict action against him and if he is mentally ill, they should ensure he gets treatment. Otherwise, it wouldn't be wrong to say that this appears to be part of a conspiracy by the BJP," she said in another post on X.

Mayawati said that if the BJP does not act against Chaudhary then the people of Uttar Pradesh will respond in the upcoming 10 by-elections in the state.

"If the BJP does not take strict action against its legislator, then the party will face the consequences in the next assembly elections when its candidates will lose their deposits. The people will also respond in the upcoming 10 by-elections," she said in the post.

Environment should be safeguarded to ensure green future: Rajasthan CM

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAIPUR: Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma on Saturday urged people to commit to safeguarding the environment, ensuring a green and healthy future. "Increasing pollution, climate change and the reckless exploitation of resources are weakening our planet day by day.

It is our collective duty to make meaningful efforts to protect the environment," Lal said as he flagged off a cyclothon from SMS Stadium here.

The cycling rally was organised for environmental conservation by the Hindu Spiritual and Service Fair and the IMCT Foundation. The chief minister stressed that the change to save nature must begin with each of us, a statement issued here said. "Such programmes reflect our commitment to environmental conservation and raise awareness about health. These initiatives help us stay physically fit while also promoting mental well being," Lal said at the event.

He noted that as vehicle use contributes to pollution, it is people's responsibility to compensate by planting more trees and being ever-ready to conserve the environment, the statement said. The chief Minister appealed to all residents of the state not to harm nature and to work towards environmental conservation. He urged everyone to actively participate in the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign initiated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and to take steps towards environmental protection, it said.

The event was also attended by Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports K K Vishnoi, Member of Parliament Manju Sharma, MLA Balmukandacharya, Jaipur Greater Municipal Corporation Deputy Mayor Puneet Karnawat and environmentalists.

Tripura floods: Two killed during rescue operations, Rahul Gandhi, CM Manik Saha condole deaths

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

AGARTALA: Two persons have been killed during rescue operations in flood-hit Tripura, officials said on Saturday.

Tripura State Rifles (TSR) jawan Asish Bose was washed away in a river during a rescue operation in South Tripura's Belonia while jeep driver Chiranjit Deb drowned while rescuing three persons in Indranagar in West Tripura district on Friday.

With the fresh fatalities, the toll in the state due to the floods rose to 26, while 1.28 lakh people have been rendered homeless in the worst deluge in the northeastern state in the last three decades.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi condoled the deaths during rescue operations.

"Extremely pained to learn about the tragic loss of two brave jawans during the rescue operation in flood-hit Tripura. Their selfless service, courage and sacrifice will always be remembered. My deepest condolences to their bereaved families. The nation stands with them in this difficult time," Gandhi wrote on X.

Chief Minister Manik Saha also expressed deep sorrow over the deaths of two persons.

"Deeply saddened by the loss of Ashish Bose (TSR Jawan from Belonia) & Chiranjit Dey (from Indranagar), two brave fighters who made the ultimate sacrifice while saving others during #TripuraFloods. My deepest condolences to their families & friends. May their sacrifice continue to inspire us to strive for greater heights of courage and bravery. Their selfless act will never be forgotten," he said in a post on Facebook.

Senior Congress MLA Sudip Roy Barman also condoled the deaths of two persons.

"The devastating floods have claimed many lives. Two brave hearts also lost their lives while rescuing people. I convey my deepest condolences to those who lost their lives during the floods," he wrote on Facebook.