



It is the day to care for yourself!

If the idea of taking care of oneself seems like a far-fetched dream, then this day is just what is needed. Show some love and appreciation through healthy habits and practices geared towards taking care of yourself because it's time for International Self-Care Day! The day was first celebrated in 2011 when it was established by the UK based organization, International Self-Care Foundation (ISF). With the important theme of encouraging everyone to be attentive to taking care of themselves, the day has been observed each year since its foundation more than a decade ago. Celebrate the day by engaging in productive actions like eating healthy and balanced diet, following sleep hygiene, etc.

#TALIPOT PALM

Talipot is in Bloom

Witness a Once-in-a-Lifetime Natural Wonder in Bengaluru, The Talipot Palm Blooms at Lalbagh Botanical Garden!



Did you know that right now, Bengaluru is home to a breathtaking natural spectacle that happens only once every few decades? The Talipot Palm, known for producing the largest flower cluster in the world, has bloomed at Lalbagh Botanical Garden, creating a towering 25-foot-tall bouquet of millions of tiny yellow flowers. This rare event is not just a feast for the eyes but a fascinating chapter in the story of nature's marvels.



What Makes the Talipot Palm So Special?

The Talipot Palm (scientific name *Corypha umbraculifera*) is an extraordinary tree native to South and Southeast Asia. Unlike most plants, this palm takes an exceptionally long time to bloom, typically between 30 and 90 years. When it finally flowers, it produces the largest inflorescence (flower cluster) on Earth, which can reach up to 25 feet in height and consist of millions of

small yellow flowers. The sheer size and scale of this bloom make it a unique phenomenon worldwide. But the wonder comes with a bittersweet twist: after the Talipot Palm completes its bloom, it dies. This remarkable lifecycle means that witnessing the flowering event is a once-in-a-lifetime experience, a fleeting moment of natural grandeur that many never get to see.

Why Visit Lalbagh Botanical Garden?

Lalbagh Botanical Garden right now can see this giant floral display up close, a spectacle that combines nature's power, patience, and beauty. Photographers and plant enthusiasts are especially thrilled, as the bloom is both visually stunning and scientifically intriguing.

Don't Miss This Once-in-Decades Opportunity

The Talipot Palm's blooming event is fleeting, and after it ends, the tree will die, meaning your next chance to see this spectacle could be decades away. Whether you're a nature lover, a curious traveler, or someone seeking extraordinary experiences, witnessing the Talipot Palm bloom at Lalbagh Botanical Garden is an unforgettable moment you won't want to miss.

Make your visit count and embrace the magic of nature's rarest show, only in Bengaluru, only now.



It's Not Russia-Ukraine

Gaza, 'Smaller' Wars Are Reshaping The World

On 05 February 2025, during the Kashmir Solidarity Day event in Rawalakot, Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), Hamas representatives, Khalid Qaddoumi and Naji Zaheer, were present. They received notable attention from members of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), marking the first instance of Hamas officials participating in an event in PoK. While this may not yet signify a formal alliance, it indicates a growing effort to establish wider networks in the realm of transnational terrorism, also referred to as global terrorism. Similar patterns of revival could emerge in East and West Africa, where Al Shabaab and Boko Haram maintain strongholds.

#WORLDVIEW



tion. **The Story Of Al Qaeda** It was the end of the Cold War. The Berlin Wall had just fallen, and the Soviets were still withdrawing from Afghanistan. Punjab was in turmoil, diverting strategic attention in multiple directions. The Iran-Iraq War had ended just a few years earlier. Victorious jihadis from across the Islamic world were emerging from the rubble of

Afghanistan in 1990. This description covers only a small section of the world then. It does not even touch on Africa, which was also emerging from the shadows of old conflicts in Somalia, Mozambique, Namibia, Angola, and beyond. Leaving everything else aside, I often ask myself: where did Al Qaeda come from? The answer traces back to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, which triggered a global call for jihad against the Soviets. The US, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan supported the Afghan mujahideen with funding, weapons, and training to counter Soviet influence. Osama bin Laden, a wealthy Saudi, joined the war effort.

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to the Cold War's conclusion. The Soviet-Afghan War provided the military experience, networks, and ideology that fuelled its creation. After defeating the Soviets, the US and its allies abandoned Afghanistan, allowing extremism to fester. Bin Laden and his followers redirected their jihad against the West, leading to the global terrorist threats we face today.

From this, several lessons follow. First, whenever the world emerges from a period of intense activity and lowers its guard, it is often struck by unconventional turbulence. This happened in 1989-90 with the onset of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, just as it did with the civil wars in Africa between 1990 and 1995. The movements in Chechnya and Bosnia were also linked to the events of this period. More recently, the withdrawal of US and Coalition troops from Iraq in 2011 ultimately paved the way for the rise of ISIS (Daesh).

Although ISIS suffered military defeats in Mosul and Baghuz, it was only partially displaced, finding refuge in Afghanistan's northern badlands. Al Qaeda maintained a presence there, alongside

Central Asian and Pakistani terrorist groups. Meanwhile, the Taliban remains reclusive and untrustworthy.

Remnants of ISIS also persist in Kurdish-held areas along the Syria-Turkey border, and the risk of its resurgence remains real. If northern Syria and the Turkish border region remain unstable, ISIS could exploit these conditions to rebuild its networks and launch new offensives. The combination of weak govern-

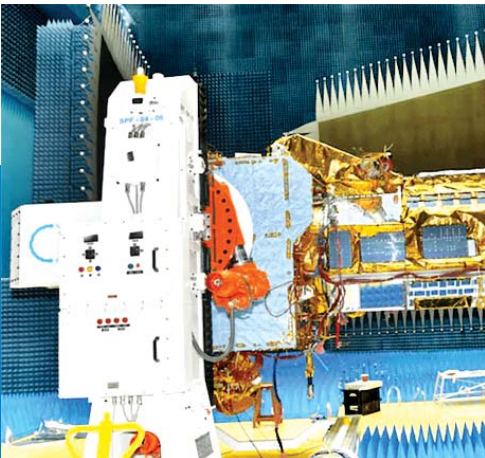


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#MONITORING

NISAR Scheduled For 30th

NASA-ISRO's NISAR Satellite Set for Launch: A Landmark Mission in Earth Observation



The highly awaited launch of the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) satellite is officially scheduled for July 30, 2025, at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh. This momentous event marks a major milestone in the collaboration between the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and NASA, heralding a new era in detailed Earth monitoring from space.



Cutting-Edge Technology in Orbit

The NISAR satellite, weighing approximately 2,392 kilograms, will be carried into orbit aboard ISRO's Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV-F16). It is destined for a sun-synchronous orbit at an altitude of about 734 kilometers, which allows the satellite to repeatedly pass over the same locations on Earth at consistent local times. This orbit is critical for capturing reliable and comparable data on Earth's surface over time. Equipped with state-of-the-

art dual-frequency synthetic aperture radar (SAR) technology, NISAR will produce detailed three-dimensional images of the planet's surface and precisely measure changes in land and ice movements with centimeter-level accuracy, according to an official NASA release. The satellite's sophisticated radar instruments are designed to function effectively regardless of weather conditions or time of day, making it an all-weather, round-the-clock observer of Earth.

Engineering Excellence and Collaborative Effort

NISAR's design is a remarkable feat of engineering, integrating two complex radar systems into a single satellite platform. The mission is managed by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) at Caltech on behalf of NASA, while multiple Indian agencies contribute critical components and expertise, including:

- U R Rao Satellite Centre,
- Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, and
- National Remote Sensing Centre.

ISRO highlighted, "The NISAR launch is the culmination of over a decade of close technical cooperation between ISRO and NASA/JPL teams, combining the best of both organizations' capabilities."

Overcoming Challenges on the Road to Launch

While the launch had experienced several delays due to necessary technical adjustments, including the meticulous testing and fixing of NISAR's massive 12-meter deployable antenna, the teams are now confident in the mission's readiness. These challenges underscore the complexity of deploying cutting-edge technology in the harsh environment of space.

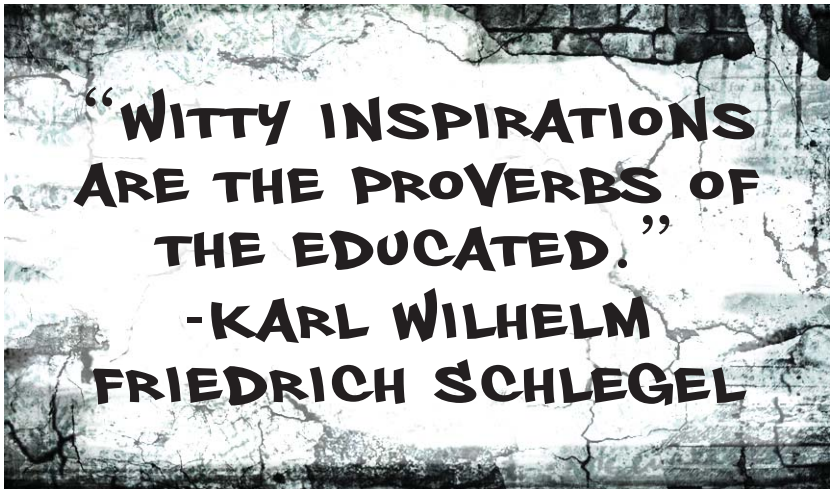
Looking Forward

As the countdown approaches, the world eagerly awaits the launch of NISAR, a satellite poised to revolutionize Earth observation. Its data will not only advance scientific understanding but also enhance disaster preparedness and resource management across the globe. By combining the expertise of NASA and ISRO, NISAR exemplifies international cooperation in space technology and climate science, a partnership dedicated to protecting our planet through innovation and shared knowledge.



agencies, and policymakers with vital data to understand and respond to environmental challenges and natural disasters more effectively.

THE WALL



BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman