

Trump defends mass deportations

WASHINGTON, Feb 23 (PTI)

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump has defended the mass deportation of undocumented foreign nationals, saying his administration draining the swamp by sending home fraudsters, cheaters, globalists and deep state bureaucrats.

Trump has made the mass deportation of undocumented migrants a key policy. Addressing the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) outside Washington on Saturday, he said, "The fraudsters, liars, cheaters, globalists, and deep state bureaucrats are being sent packing."

"Illegal alien criminals are being sent home. We're draining the swamp and restoring Government by the people," he said. As of 2022, unauthorised immigrants represented 3.3 per cent of the total US population and 23 per cent of the foreign-born population, according to Pew Research Centre.

US President Donald Trump



President Donald Trump speaks to reporters before departing the White House in Washington on Saturday. (AP/PTI)

has moved to overhaul parts of the US immigration system since returning to office and promised "mass deportations" and arrests.

The Department of Homeland Security posted on X that, as of February 3, its agents had arrested 8,768 people.

Three batches comprising a total of 532 Indians have already been sent back to India from the US amid an intensified crackdown by the Trump administration against illegal immigrants. **USD SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDENTS AT HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES SUSPENDED:** A FEDERAL scholarship aimed at boosting students from underserved and rural areas attending historically Black colleges and universities has been put on hold.

The US Department of Agriculture suspended the 1890 Scholars Programme, which provided recipients with full tuition and fees for students studying agriculture, food or natural resource sciences at one of 19 universities, known as the 1890 land grant institutions.

It's not clear exactly when the program was suspended, but some members of Congress first issued statements criticising the suspension of the program on Thursday.

States threaten fines, jail for officials who resist immigration crackdown

ATLANTA (US), Feb 23 (AP)

REPUBLICAN State lawmakers seeking to aid President Donald Trump's crackdown on illegal immigration are threatening local officials who resist with lawsuits, fines and even potential jail time.

Lawmakers in more than 20 States this year have filed legislation targeting so-called sanctuary policies that limit cooperation with federal immigration authorities, according to an Associated Press analysis using the bill-tracking software Plural.

Some of those States already ban sanctuary policies but are now proposing to punish mayors, council members and other Government officials who violate the prohibition.

The goal is to provide "teeth to those who are being aggrieved by local governments and local officials who are not abiding by Georgia immigration law," said Republican state Sen. Blake Tillery, whose legislation would allow lawsuits against anyone who implements sanctuary policies. His bill recently passed the Senate and is now in the House.

Opponents have raised concerns that the legislation could lead local police and sheriffs to detain immigrants for longer than they are supposed to under federal law out of fear of getting sued. "We're threatening our local law enforcement who are doing the best job they can to keep our communities safe," said Georgia state Sen Nikki Merritt, a Democrat.

USAID funded 7 projects worth **\$750 mn** in 2023-24: Finance Ministry report

NEW DELHI, Feb 23 (PTI)

AMID a raging political controversy over USAID's alleged role in influencing Indian elections, the latest annual report of the Finance Ministry has disclosed that the agency funded seven projects worth USD 750 million in 2023-24.

"Currently, seven projects worth a total budget of USD 750 million (approx.) are being implemented by USAID in partnership with Government of India," as per the Finance Ministry annual report for 2023-24. For the financial year 2023-24, an obligation of a total of USD 97 million (about Rs 825 crore) has been made by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) under

the seven projects, it said.

The Department of Economic Affairs under the Finance Ministry which is the nodal department for bilateral funding arrangements has also shared the details of

projects funded in 2023-24 in the report.

The USA's bilateral development assistance to India started in 1951 and it is mainly administered through USAID. Since its com-

mencement, USAID has provided economic assistance of over USD 17 billion to India in various sectors for over 555 projects. Political controversy erupted in the country earlier this month after the

Elon Musk-led DOGE (Department of Government Efficiency) claimed that it had cancelled a USD 21 million grant to India to boost "voter turnout". US President Donald Trump also repeatedly claimed that USAID under the previous administration led by Joe Biden allocated USD 21 million in funding to India for 'voter turnout'.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday said the information put out by the Trump administration is "concerning" and that the Government is looking into it. The USAID was allowed in India "in good faith, to do good faith activities", and suggestions are being made out of America that "there are activities which are in bad faith," Jaishankar had said.



Trump repeats election funding charge

WASHINGTON, Feb 23 (PTI)

US President Donald Trump has claimed that the Biden administration allocated USD 18 million in funding to India to help with its elections, arguing that the country doesn't need this money. His remarks during a speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) on Saturday after he repeatedly attacked the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for allocating USD 21 million in funding to India for "voter turnout".

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India leads global IPO activity in 2024, raises over \$19 billion

NEW DELHI, Feb 23 (IANS)

INDIA emerged as the global leader in initial public offerings (IPOs) activity in 2024, accounting for 23 per cent of all public issues worldwide, a new report said on Sunday.

India also raised the highest amount of money through IPOs, collecting \$19.5 billion, as per the Indus Valley Annual Report 2025. It was followed by IPOs listed on the US Nasdaq, which raised \$16.5 billion, and those listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE), which raised

\$15.9 billion. The country saw 268 IPOs, including 90 main-board listings and

178 SME listings. One of the biggest offerings of the year was the Rs 27,870-crore IPO of Hyundai Motors, which became India's largest IPO and the world's second-largest IPO in 2024. Venture capitalists have shown increasing interest in the Indian



IPO market as several major companies have gone public with venture funding this year. The report added

that the funds raised by venture-backed IPOs after 2021 have more than doubled compared to the total amount raised by all venture-backed IPOs before 2021. The SME sector has also seen significant growth in IPOs. Since 2012, the median market capi-

talisation of SME IPOs has increased 4.5 times, reaching nearly Rs 100 crore in 2024. Additionally, the median revenue of SMEs at the time of IPO has tripled to reach Rs 70 crore. India's quick commerce sector has witnessed explosive growth, surging from \$300 million in FY22 to an estimated \$7.1 billion in FY25, the report said. This rapid expansion was due to shifting consumer preferences toward instant deliveries, driven by increased internet penetration, changing lifestyles, and growing competition among platforms.