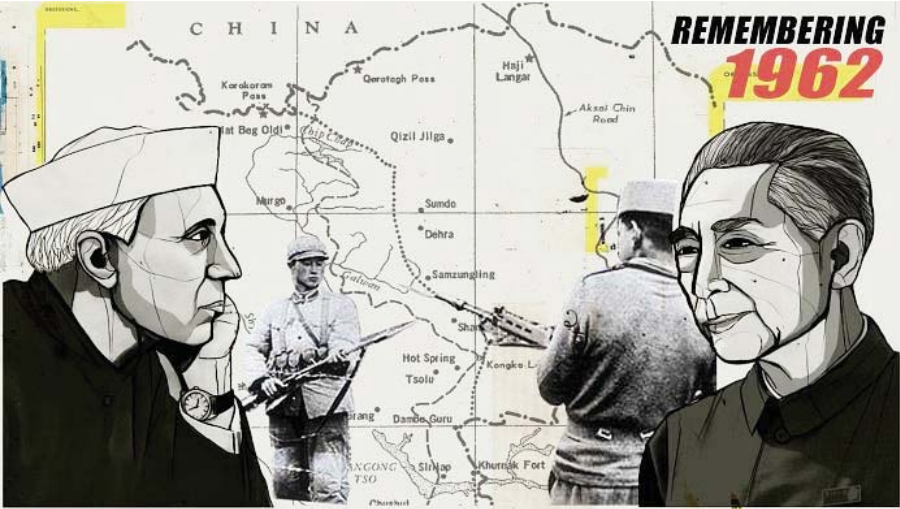


Longju Skirmish: Watershed in indian border management

Col. Satish Singh Lalotra

The world over, all creators of nation states i.e leaders, statesmen & the masses etc have had a definite plan as to what were supposed to be the physical manifestations of their creation on ground. India was no exception to the above rule. Rather historically India despite its unique disposition in terms of its people, races, linguistic cum religious order and the ilk had a set piece of loose national frontier framework, which was the combined creation of its myriad princely states who through their routine administration had put into place their princely boundaries. The countless raids, attacks and brief occupations by foreign armies dating back to centuries not withstanding; further gave a national identity to its people bound by a majoritarian religion (Hinduism), though governed by distinct Maharajas. The advent of Mughals and thereafter the British further consolidated and defined their hold on the national frontiers of India. The early 19th century fears of an expansionist Czarist Russian army into India raised the heckles of the British who set into motion the infamous ‘Great Game’ that still finds echoes in the frontier regions of India. Surrounded by a group of seven (7) countries post 1947, India additionally shares maritime borders with Sri Lanka and the Maldives. To a very



large extent Indian borders are a legacy left by its colonial masters, in particular the British. Accordingly the border management of the frontier areas too was the sole responsibility of its colonial masters who many a time were led by the short term expediency of their governance. In the bargain short changing long standing implications of their expediencies. The much contentious and tenuous relationship between the Two Asian giants -China and India are the direct fallout of an unresolved boundary dispute that dated back to the pre-independence times of India and continues till date in the form of Doklam crisis as well as Galwan clashes. Dictated by the British fear of an expansionism from the north and a host of flip flops from the then Independent Tibet as well as an imperial China under the Qing dynasty, the British- Indian territory facing its northern neighbor was

left unfettered for decades to no end. Coupled with the fact that max of northern territory of India beginning from Ladakh till (NEFA) Arunachal Pradesh was inhabited by the indigenous tribes who mostly owed allegiance to the Tibetan plateau and its people further complicated already diffused state of belongingness. ‘Longju’ a non-descript speck on the relief map of Arunachal Pradesh(NEFA) nestling in the NE fringes of India suddenly acquired a larger than life size of its existence when on 25th May 1959 , an ugly clash took place between the PLA of China & the armed forces of India. With China taking the stand that Indian border troops intruded into their territory, stage was thus set for a long haul to settle the matters through force rather than through diplomatic parleys. Taking place just a few months after the unceremonious exodus of HH Holiness Dalai Lama the spiritual leader of the Tibetans along with his fol-

lowers to India, ‘Longju’ suddenly seared in the Indian psyche as no other incident of that magnitude during the late 1950s. With the ink not even having dried on the ‘Panchsheel’ agreement papers signed just a few years back between the two PMs of India & China , the clashes in the high Himalayas marked the first litmus test of Indian statesmanship, foreign policy gaffe, and an abject failure of Nehruvian line of foreign policy take on China. The clashes at ‘Longju’ personified in one single stroke the naivety and lack of realpolitik on the part of policy planners with regard to achieving higher direction of national goals and what it takes to consolidate its gains while grappling with a much larger and powerful neighbour. This year of 2025 marks the 66th (Sixty sixth) year of that unholy clash of arms between two Asian giants which compels a right thinking Indian to ponder over the trajectory of ominous devel-

opments which were to my mind a creation of our own doings to a large extent for having pushed back the integration (physical as well as psychological) of NE of India at our own peril. Though many books of eminence have been penned since that ugly clash of 1959, one of the seminal work penned by retired Maj Gens DD Dwivedi and PJS Sandhu in their masterpiece —The unknown Battles : operations in Subansiri and Siang frontier divisions’ have zeroed on ‘Shannan region’ of Tibet which abuts the part of Arunachal Pradesh as the hotbed of ‘Tibetan resistance’ cum reactionaries. And ‘Longju’ in India happened to be just opposite this region of Tibet. Anyway, coming to the centrality of my topic-how Longju incident set the stage for an overall of review of border area management of India’s northern frontiers. The first PM Of India-Jawaharlal Nehru was too much of an idealist and romantic in his views when it came to projecting India’s image on the world stage many a times giving a go by to the realpolitik prevailing at that time. Once he wrote about the inhabitants of the NEFA ‘I am not at all sure which is the better way of living, the tribal or our own. In some respects, I am quite certain theirs is better. There is no point in trying to make them a second rate copy of ourselves’ unquote.

Trump's H-1B Squeeze Push for Homegrown Jobs

By Shivaji Sarkar

It’s a complex scenario. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his Independence Day speech, announced a ?1 lakh crore job-generation plan through Employees Provident Fund (EPF) incentivisation. A welcome move—yet not an alternative to the Donald Trump-led assault on the H-1B visa. It needs an out of box solution. This could be an indigenous way to create jobs, but it needs far more ingenuity. The focus must be on revitalising industry, ensuring fair wage policies, and securing long-term employment. India must evolve a system capable of generating enough quality jobs to counter U.S. arm-twisting on the visa issue. The H-1B debate is now particularly critical for low-paid jobs. Highly skilled applicants at higher wage levels (Level 3 and 4) may still secure better deals, but U.S. corporate preference for low-wage Indian hires over American workers has triggered political push-back. Complaints have mounted over the years, and any U.S. president—Trump or otherwise—might have acted similarly. India also needs to create conditions that keep its IIT graduates, thriving on taxpayers’ money, and other top talent from flocking abroad. The government spends Rs10–15 lakh per student during a four-year IIT B’Tech programme, with the total IIT budget for FY 2024–25 at Rs 9,660 crore. Yet 30–36 percent of IIT graduates migrate each



year, according to LinkedIn and Threads data, and a National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) study. Among those who remain, an estimated 70 percent work for foreign MNCs like Google, Amazon, Microsoft, and McKinsey within India. Indian nationals dominate the programme, receiving 72 per cent of H-1B visas, followed by 12 per cent for Chinese citizens. The majority of H-1B visa holders work in STEM fields like data science, AI, machine learning, and cybersecurity, with 65 per cent in computer-related jobs. Their median annual salary was (about Rs 1.01 crore) annually. The US visa-type problems could crop up anywhere. The UK has also put its foot down on jobs till the free trade agreement with India comes into force. India needs to retain its talent pool not by force or new laws but by making job conditions better than elsewhere. Narayan Murthy of Infosys suggesting 70-hour weekly shifts or

S.N. Subrahmanyam, the chairman of L&T, suggesting a 90-hour work week without a weekly off, for Indian professionals have been doing great disservice to Indian techies. The country needs to restore 48-hour week, 8-hour a day, instead of the amended Industrial Disputes Act’s impractical 12-hour shifts. Such draconian moves would promote brain drain and invite ignominy to Indian workers world over. Can India solve the high denial rates—peaking under the Trump administration—though recent years have seen a relative dip? In FY 2024, the denial rate for initial H-1B petitions dropped to about 2.5 percent, down from approximately 3.5 percent in FY 2023 and as low as 2.2 percent in FY 2022. Despite this welcome trend, a more restrictive policies under a renewed Trump presidency re-escalates denial rates. The Donald Trump administration is replacing the traditional H-1B visa lottery with a wage-based selection sys-

tem. Looks like H1B visa will not be given to level 1 entry level jobs which means freshers with zero work experience and with degree in US universities may never get their visa and will be disqualified. So, most of start-ups can’t afford to hire H-1B and most of international students can’t be hired for entry level jobs. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has issued warnings against hiring practices that disproportionately favour migrant workers—a practice that may amount to national origin discrimination. One high-profile case involved Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), where American professionals filed complaints alleging they were replaced by lower-paid Indian H-1B workers based on race and age—a practice they argue violated U.S. civil-rights law, the Wall Street Journal reports. Similarly, Cognizant faced a U.S. jury ruling that found discriminatory treatment favouring Indian workers over other nation-

alities, with non-Indian applicants sidelined despite similar qualifications. On social media, former employees voiced concerns about these practices. One comment reads:“These individuals are given first, if not exclusive, preference for new U.S. positions, ... Non-Indians are disproportionately relegated to the bench, as jobs are given to ... Indians.”This has evolved as a major issue creating public ire against Indians. That’s not the only issue. Beyond legal and ethical concerns, Indian H-1B visas issued for three years are associated with considerable anxiety over job stability and immigration uncertainty. A recent poll revealed that one in six NRIs on H-1B visas feel threatened by potential deportation amid fears of visa renewals and unpredictable U.S. immigration policies. Tech companies—including Amazon, Google, and Microsoft—have reportedly advised H-1B employees to avoid international travel, fearing possible visa denials or re-entry issues. The prolonged green card backlogs, particularly for Indian nationals, further exacerbate stress and impact workforce morale, says The Washington Post. Despite the stereotype of H-1B workers being “cheap labour,” data tells a different story. Average annual salaries for Indian H-1B professionals in tech hover around \$132,000. In some engineering fields, H-1B workers actually earn more than U.S.-

The Politics of Automatic Removal

The introduction of the Constitution (One Hundredth and Thirtieth Amendment) Bill, 2025, in Parliament marks a watershed moment in India’s democratic journey. By proposing automatic removal of the PM, CM, and ministers—both at the Centre and in the states—if they remain in custody for 30 consecutive days for offences punishable with five years or more, the Bill sets in motion a new chapter in the battle against criminalisation of politics. At its core, the Bill seeks to address the political and constitutional deadlock that came into focus during the recent arrest of former Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal. His refusal to resign despite months of incarceration not only triggered a governance crisis in the national capital but also exposed the glaring lacuna in the Constitution: there exists no mechanism to force a sitting CM or PM to step down when under prolonged judicial custody. Yet, while the intent appears noble, the implications of this move will fundamentally reshape Indian politics. The first and most obvious impact is the deterrent it creates. For decades, Indian politics has been plagued by the sight of ministers continuing in office despite serious charges of corruption, violence, and abuse of power. Many refused to resign, banking on judicial delays and political patronage. The amendment promises to end this culture of impunity by tying ministerial office to continued personal freedom. If one is in custody beyond a month, the chair will not wait. But herein lies the paradox. The architecture of India’s policing and investigative system is anything but independent. While the Bill prescribes a uniform principle, its application will be skewed. The Centre controls almost all premier investigating agencies—ED, CBI, NIA and even the Delhi Police. Opposition-ruled states fear that these bodies can arrest their CMs and ministers under stringent laws such as PMLA or UAPA, ensuring their automatic removal from office. This is not a hypothetical concern; multiple state leaders have faced prolonged custody in politically sensitive cases, only to be acquitted later for want of evidence. On the other hand, it is difficult to imagine a scenario where the Prime Minister of the day or Union Ministers are arrested by agencies under their own Government. Similarly, state police forces remain loyal to the ruling establishment, rarely daring to arrest their own CM or cabinet colleagues. This asymmetry risks converting the amendment into a powerful political weapon—secure for incumbents at the Centre, vulnerable for opponents in the states. Despite these concerns, one cannot ignore the governance vacuum that arises when a sitting head of Government is in prison. The Kejriwal episode demonstrated how routine decisions, cabinet meetings and policy implementation can stall, leading to administrative paralysis. The Supreme Court, in that case, stopped short of removing the CM but curtailed his powers. That was a judicial innovation, not a constitutional solution. The proposed amendment seeks to provide clarity: governance cannot be led from jail. This clarity, however, comes with the risk of destabilisation. The amendment does allow reappointment upon release, but political damage by then is often irreversible. Regardless of its eventual passage, the Bill has already shifted the discourse in Indian politics. For the first time, the question of what happens if a head of Government is in custody is being answered not by convention or judicial improvisation but by constitutional law. Opposition parties will undoubtedly protest, pointing to the scope for misuse. The Government, in turn, will highlight its resolve to cleanse politics. Both narratives will shape public perception in the months ahead. As the Bill goes before a joint parliamentary committee, amendments are likely. Safeguards—perhaps requiring judicial confirmation of charges before automatic removal—may be debated. But the discourse it has sparked cannot be undone. India is now openly confronting the clash between the principle of presumption of innocence and the need to ensure untainted governance. In the long run, the effectiveness of this law will depend not on its text but on the fairness of its enforcement. The debate around the Bill also raises a larger constitutional question: whether elected representatives should enjoy the same protections as ordinary citizens or be held to a higher standard because of the public trust placed in them. Public office is not merely a position of authority; it carries a responsibility to maintain confidence in democratic institutions. Supporters argue that a person facing prolonged incarceration for serious offences cannot effectively discharge constitutional duties, while critics warn that removal before conviction could undermine the basic principle that every individual is innocent until proven guilty. Another important aspect is the potential impact on federalism. India’s political system depends on a balance between the Centre and the states, and any law that affects the tenure of elected state governments must be examined carefully. If investigative agencies are perceived as acting selectively, the amendment could deepen mistrust between the Union Government and opposition-led states. A constitutional provision meant to strengthen accountability must not become a source of political instability or weaken the autonomy of elected governments. The role of investigative agencies will therefore become central to the success or failure of this reform. Strengthening institutional independence, ensuring transparent procedures and preventing arbitrary arrests will be crucial. Without such safeguards, even a well-intentioned law could face allegations of political targeting. The credibility of the amendment will ultimately depend on whether the public sees it being applied equally across party lines and governments. The Bill also highlights the urgent need for broader electoral reforms. Criminalisation of politics cannot be addressed through removal mechanisms alone. Fast-tracking trials involving elected representatives, improving transparency in political funding and ensuring accountability within parties are equally necessary. A clean political system requires structural changes rather than relying only on post-arrest consequences. At the same time, governance continuity must remain a priority. In a democracy of over a billion people, prolonged uncertainty at the highest levels of government can have serious consequences for administration, economic decisions and public welfare programmes. Any legal framework must therefore strike a careful balance between accountability and stability, ensuring that neither corruption nor political misuse is allowed to weaken democratic functioning. Ultimately, the proposed amendment represents a significant moment in India’s constitutional evolution. It attempts to resolve a long-standing grey area but also opens difficult debates about rights, power and institutional balance. The success of this reform will depend on whether it strengthens public faith in democracy by ensuring clean governance without compromising fairness, justice and the rule of law

Remarkable Rise in Solar PV Manufacturing Capacity from 2.3 GW in 2014 to 100 GW under ALMM: Pralhad Joshi



New Delhi, June 30 (GNS): India has achieved a landmark milestone of 100 GW of solar PV module manufacturing capacity enlisted under the Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM) for Solar PV Modules. This achievement reflects the country's rapid progress in building a robust and self-reliant solar manufacturing ecosystem, aligned with the national vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat and the global imperative for clean energy transition.

Highlighting this achievement, Union Minister of New and Renewable Energy Shri Pralhad Joshi said “ India has achieved a historic milestone -100 GW Solar PV Module Manufacturing Capacity under the Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM) , a remarkable rise from just 2.3 GW in 2014! Driven by the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and transformative initiatives like the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for High-Efficiency Solar Modules, we are building a robust, self-reliant solar manufacturing ecosystem. This achievement strengthens our path towards Atmanirbhar Bharat and the target of 500 GW non-fossil capacity by 2030.”

The Government of India's commitment is to make India self-reliant in solar PV manufacturing and establish the country as a major player in the global value

chain. This commitment is supported through a comprehensive set of initiatives, including the PLI Scheme for High Efficiency Solar PV Modules and measures to provide a level playing field for the Indian manufacturers. The catalytic effect of these interventions has resulted in an expansion in solar module manufacturing capacity, from just 2.3 GW in 2014 to over 100 GW today. This reinforces India's commitment to achieving 500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030 and contributes meaningfully to global decarbonization efforts.

The ALMM Order was issued by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) on 02nd January 2019. The first ALMM list for solar PV modules was published on 10th March 2021 with an initial enlisted capacity of around 8.2 GW. In just over four years, this capacity has grown more than twelvefold, crossing the 100 GW mark. This remarkable expansion is not just limited to depth of capacity achieved, but by the breadth of the number of manufacturers who has also significantly increased from 21 in 2021 to 100 manufacturers, who are operating 123 manufacturing units currently. This growth includes contributions from both established companies and new entrants, many of whom have adopted high-efficiency technologies and vertically integrated operations.

Innovation is a Symbol of Sovereignty and Will Drive India's Global Progress: Piyush Goyal

New Delhi, June 30 (GNS): Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal today inaugurated the newly expanded ISA building of the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) in Dwarka, New Delhi. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that innovation has been an integral part of India's identity for centuries and is not a new phenomenon. Citing the Konark Temple as an example, he noted that the precision and engineering of such historic structures reflect the deep-rooted culture of innovation in the country for over a thousand years. He stated that innovation is not only a form of intellectual property but also a symbol of sovereignty, and it will play a crucial role in taking India forward in the world.

Goyal pointed out that in every developed country, innovation, new ideas, research, and development have been priorities, and it is this focus that has led to



their prosperity. The Minister stressed that the development of the country is riding on the shoulders of innovation and that the Intellectual Property ecosystem is now being recognised worldwide as a key enabler of growth. He expressed confidence that if all stakeholders perform their duties effectively, this institution will become the epicentre of the country's journey towards Viksit Bharat by 2047 and will serve as a foundation

for research and development. Union Minister of State for Ministry of Commerce & Industry Shri Jitin Prasada, said the growth of India under the leadership of the Prime Minister is remarkable, the growth of intellectual property is progressing very well, and that India will become a talent hub for electronics, IT, and semiconductors.

The inauguration marks a significant milestone in the Government's commitment

“Goyal pointed out that in every developed country, innovation, new ideas, research, and development have been priorities, and it is this focus that has led to their prosperity. The Minister stressed that the development of the country is riding on the shoulders of innovation and that the Intellectual Property ecosystem is now being recognised worldwide as a key enabler of growth.

to strengthening India's intellectual property infrastructure. To support India's role as an International Searching Authority (ISA) and International Preliminary Examining Authority (IPEA) under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), an ISA/IPEA building was constructed in 2014, comprising the ground and first floors. With the Indian IP ecosystem witnessing unprecedented growth, the Government approved the construction of an expanded building in 2018. The project, undertaken by the National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC), was completed in 2025.

The expansion involved the renovation of the existing ISA building and the addition of

five new floors, from the second to the seventh, increasing the total built-up area to 140,120 square feet. The facility can now accommodate over 700 personnel, compared to the earlier capacity of 200 in the old 6,082-square-foot IPO building. The project, costing approximately 88 crore, features modern architectural design to maximise work-space and promote efficiency.

The ground and first floors house the administrative and professional teams, including the Office of the Controller General of Patents, Designs, and Trademarks (CGPDTM). Floors two to six provide dedicated workspaces for officers handling patents, designs, copyrights, and trademarks, along with examination

halls, technical and legal sections, and international affairs divisions. The seventh floor hosts a state-of-the-art International Training Centre with five fully equipped training halls, high-speed internet connectivity, and modern digital tools for capacity building of IP professionals and stakeholders. The building incorporates eco-friendly features such as rainwater harvesting, a sewage treatment plant (STP), and plant waste decomposers, in line with sustainable development goals. These facilities are expected to reduce maintenance costs, enhance productivity, and improve overall service delivery, thereby strengthening India's position in global IP administration.

India's textile industry to meet the global trade headwinds with resilience and a renewed focus on export competitiveness

New Delhi, June 30 (GNS): India's textile industry is poised to meet global trade headwinds with resilience, self-reliance, and a renewed focus on export competitiveness. Shri Giriraj Singh, Union Minister of Textiles, along with the Minister of State for Textiles and the Secretary, Ministry of Textiles, today chaired a high-level meeting with leading stakeholders from the textiles and apparel industry to review the evolving global trade situation, including the recent announcement of reciprocal tariffs by the United States, and to chart a confident, future-oriented strategy for the sector.

India is the 6th largest exporter of Textiles & Apparel in the world, with a 4.1% share in Calendar year by 2024. The textile and apparel sector, including handicrafts, contributed 8.63% to India's total merchandise exports in 2024-25, valued at USD 37.7 billion. While the USA



remains India's largest export market, accounting for 28.97% of textile and apparel exports, it represents only 6% of the overall Indian textile industry, which is valued at USD 179 billion (Domestic 142 billion USD and Exports 37 billion USD) . The sector has also witnessed significant growth in domestic demand over the last decade.

The Union Minister underscored the need to diversify the export basket, enhance product competitiveness, and tap into new and under-served markets. India has signed 15 Free

Trade Agreements (FTAs) with partner countries whose combined textile import demand stands at USD 198.9 billion. The Minister urged exporters to actively explore the European Union market, which collectively imports textiles worth USD 268.8 billion—more than twice the size of the US market. India is actively engaged in FTA negotiations with EU.

Industry representatives appreciated the Government's proactive stance and swift engagement with stakeholders, extending their full support to the col-

lective effort to safeguard India's trade interests and strengthen its position in the global textile value chain.

The Union Minister expressed confidence that, despite global challenges, the Indian textile industry will achieve a target of USD 100 billion in exports by 2030.

The Union minister reiterated that with its inherent strengths, robust industry-government collaboration, and relentless focus on innovation, India's textile sector is well-positioned to turn current challenges into stepping stones for sustained growth in

MSDE Hosts Consultative Workshop to Drive National Scheme for ITI Upgradation in Odisha



New Delhi, June 30 (GNS): As part of a national push to upgrade and modernize vocational training facilities, the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Government of India, in collaboration with the Skill Development & Technical Education Department, Government of Odisha, yesterday organized a Consultative Workshop on the National Scheme for ITI Upgradation at the World Skill Center, Bhubaneswar.

The workshop discussed the vision, structure, and operational framework of the National Scheme for ITI Upgradation and gathered perspectives from industry, academia, and training institutions to ensure alignment with evolving workforce needs.

Highlighting the scheme's role in empowering India's youth through high-quality, market-relevant skills, Shri Rajit Punhani, Secretary, MSDE, said, “The National Scheme for ITI Upgradation is not just about modernizing infrastructure—it is about reimagining the very DNA of vocational training in India. Through the Hub-and-Spoke model, industry-led governance, and global-standard training, we aim to make ITIs the epicentres of innovation, employability, and entrepreneurship. Odisha, with its robust industrial base and new National Centre of Excellence, is unique-

ly positioned to lead this change and inspire the rest of the country. This is not just about preparing youth for today's jobs—it is about empowering them to lead in the economy of the future.”

The workshop featured an insightful presentation on Odisha's ITI journey, highlighting the state's significant strides in technical education, infrastructure upgrades, and industry partnerships. It outlined Odisha's vision, readiness, and strategic plans for effectively implementing the National Scheme for ITI Upgradation, positioning the state as a frontrunner in modern skill development.

Furthermore, industry representatives shared insights on aligning ITI training with future workforce demands, while principals and faculty from technical institutions provided ground-level perspectives, valuable inputs and suggestions. Key recommendations focused on curriculum upgradation to meet global standards and industry needs, mentoring support for the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)-led model, enhanced training-of-trainers initiatives, adoption of hybrid training modes, promotion of skill competitions, specialized training for the defence sector, integration of AI in medicine and agriculture, and strengthening apprenticeship opportunities.

Brainstorming Session on Annual Survey of Services Sector Enterprises (ASSSE): Aligning Stakeholders' perspectives for greater impact

New Delhi, June 30 (GNS): The National Statistics Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI), is pleased to announce the conduct of the Brainstorming Session on Annual Survey of Services Sector Enterprises (ASSSE), convened today at Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi. This session provided a platform for collaborative discussion with stakeholders across government, industries and academia, in facilitating the refinement of survey methodology and fine-tuning the survey instruments of the forthcoming full-fledged ASSSE, building upon the experience gained through the Pilot Study.

Around 100 participants from diverse sectors such as the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Department of Economic Af-



fairs (DEA), NITI Aayog, RBI, World Bank, Experts of Technical Advisory Group (TAG), academic and research institutions, and industry associations and trade bodies participated actively in the session and contributed significantly to the vibrant discussions.

The Brainstorming Session was chaired by Dr. Saurabh Garg, IAS, Secretary, Ministry of Statistics and Programme

Implementation, and was graced by the presence of esteemed dignitaries, including Dr. Rakesh Mohan, member, EAC-PM, Dr. Ram Singh, Director, Delhi School of Economics, Dr. Umakant Dash, Vice-Chancellor, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Dr. B. N. Goldar, Chairman, TAG, Dr. Amir Ullah Khan, economist and professor, ISPP, Dr. Tauqueer Ahmed, professor, IASRI, Ms. Geeta

Singh Rathore, Director General, National Sample Survey (NSS), Shri N. K. Santoshi, Director General (Central Statistics) along with other officials and dignitaries from key ministries, research institutions, and industry associations.

Dr. Saurabh Garg, Secretary, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), reiterated the Ministry's commitment to introducing new

surveys and enhancing the frequency of results from certain existing surveys, such as the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) and the Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE) as per policy need. Highlighting the significant role of the services sector in key economic indicators such as value addition, foreign direct investment, exports, and employment and the lack of granular data on the sector, Dr. Garg explained the rationale behind launching the Annual Survey of Services Sector Enterprises (ASSSE). He emphasized that meaningful collaboration with experts from diverse domains would be instrumental in enriching the survey's design and methodology. He also urged industry bodies and trade associations to extend their full cooperation by providing accurate and timely data that would be crucial in ensuring the

survey's success and the credibility of its findings.

Dr. Rakesh Mohan, Member EAC-PM mentioned about various sub-sectors of services industry that need special attention in the survey given their growing importance in the economy. Dr. Ram, Singh, Director, Delhi School of Economics in his address, congratulated NSS for successfully completing 75 years to the service of the nation. He also commended MoSPI for leveraging GSTN data to embark on this new survey, thus covering the entire spectrum of services sector together with ASUSE. Drawing on global best practices, Thomas Danielewitz, Senior Economist at the World Bank, underscored the need to establish a comprehensive Business Register (BR) that would serve as a robust frame for surveys like the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) and the Annual Survey of Services Sector Enterprises (ASSSE).

Revanth Reddy Orders New Land Policy for Yadagirigutta Temple Development

Hyderabad, June 30 (GNS): Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has directed officials to formulate a clear policy regarding the allocation of lands to various mutts within the jurisdiction of Shri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Devasthanam at Yadagirigutta. He emphasised that ownership rights of the land should primarily remain with the temple. The Chief Minister reviewed the development of the temple at a high-level



meeting held at the MCR HRD Bhoomi Pavilion. He clearly stated that the policy followed by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD) regarding land allocation within the temple's jurisdiction should be studied. On this occasion, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy suggested allocating land at market price for the Hare Rama Hare Krishna (Charitable) Foundation in Yadagirigutta. He said that a list of those coming forward for the con-

struction of guest houses on the hill should be prepared. He called for following the policy of TTD in the construction of guest houses and said permissions should be granted in phases. He also stated that a policy with clear regulations should be formulated regarding land allocation to caste associations. The Chief Minister directed officials to immediately release funds for land acquisition for various development works within the

temple's jurisdiction.

He ordered a comprehensive study of the report given by the engineers' committee regarding the construction of Yadagirigutta temple and to submit a report within a week. Similarly, he said that the tourism circuit should be developed under the Public-Private Partnership policy.

Those who attended the meeting include Rajya Sabha member Vem Narendar Reddy; MPs Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy and Kunduru

Raghuvir Reddy; Government Whip Beerla Ilaiiah; MLA Kumbam Anil Kumar Reddy; Special Chief Secretary Jayesh Ranjan; Principal Secretary (Endowments) Shailaja Ramaier; Commissioner (Endowments) M. Hanumantha Rao; Principal Secretary (Finance) Sandeep Kumar Sultania; CMO Secretary Manik Raj; CMO OSD Vemula Srinivasulu; and senior officials from Yadadri district and the temple administration.

Telangana Plans AI Data Centre Hub; Airtel Expands Hyderabad Presence



Hyderabad, June 30 (GNS): Telangana is exploring the possibility of setting up a large, comprehensive data centre and artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure campus in the state, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said on Tuesday, June 30, after meeting Airtel chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal.

Mittal met the Chief Minister at the MCRHRD Bodhi Pavilion, where Reddy pressed the his group to expand Airtel's digital, cloud, cybersecurity and AI operations in Hyderabad and suggested that the company move ahead soon with its proposed data centre project at Chandanvelli.

The Chief Minister also asked Mittal to designate a senior executive to liaise with the state government on future investment proposals so that issues could be resolved without delay.

Responding to the overtures, Mittal said the

Bharti group was considering Hyderabad as a second headquarters for Airtel and assured the Chief Minister that the company would go ahead with plans to expand its data centre capacity and broaden its fibre connectivity network in the state.

During the meeting, Revanth Reddy also briefed Mittal on reforms underway in the state's education sector, including the establishment of the Young India Skill University to train unemployed youth, the upgrade of Industrial Training Institutes into Advanced Technology Centres (ATC) and ongoing improvements to polytechnic colleges across Telangana. In response, Mittal announced that the Bharti Foundation would extend scholarships to students studying in government schools and ATCs in the state.

Link fees reimbursement with standards in colleges: Vijayashanthi

Hyderabad, June 30 (GNS): Congress MLC M Vijayashanthi has suggested the state government to link fees reimbursement payments to colleges with the basic infrastructure and facilities in private colleges, so that those colleges could maintain the minimum standards required to run educational institutions.



In a statement to media on Friday, Vijayashanthi questioned why the private colleges which were proactive in demanding fees reimbursement dues, and charging exorbitant fees from the students,

bursement dues.

Vijayashanti referred to the recent report submitted by the Vigilance Commission which highlighted the lack of proper facilities in several private colleges. Noting that she has raised the issue in the Telangana Legislative Council, she expressed hope that fees reimbursement funds being paid using public money, would truly benefit the students' future.

She urged the state government to take stern action against educational institutions which failed to comply with the government regulations.

were not fulfilling their obligations when it came to providing basic facilities and quality education.

She welcomed the recent interim orders given by the Telangana High Court with regard to the fees reim-

KTR calls out Congress' poll promise of rights for assigned lands

Hyderabad, June 30 (GNS): Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) working president KT Rama Rao (KTR) has accused the Congress of not only failing to implement its election manifesto assurance of giving absolute rights to the farmers owning assigned lands, but also forcefully acquiring assigned lands from the marginalised sections in the name of industrial development.



"If the state government is genuinely committed to industrial development, it should first issue pattas to eligible farmers, pay fair compensation and acquire land only with the consent of farmers," KTR said, while addressing a meeting of party workers on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise and party membership enrollment efforts in Parigi town of Vikarabad district on Friday, June 26. Addressing the gathering, KTR accused the Con-

gress government of illegally acquiring assigned lands in Parigi assembly constituency under the supervision of the local Congress MLA. KTR hoped that the alleged atrocities committed in Lagacharla under Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's leadership will never be forgotten. He alleged that farmers who refused to part with their lands in Lagacharla were subjected to police cases, harassment and physical attacks. He further alleged that the tribal Lambada youth were imprisoned and even denied proper medical care while in custody. He asserted

that BRS would strongly oppose any attempt to forcibly acquire assigned lands from poor families in Parigi. He announced that the BRS would extend full support to the affected farmers and, if necessary, pursue legal action against what he described as illegal land acquisition by the Congress government and the local MLA. Recalling BRS president K Chandrasekhar Rao's caution before the 2023 assembly elections on trusting the Congress, KTR said that the party had failed to honour the promises it made during the election campaign. On irrigation, KTR alleged that while the previous BRS government had planned to extend irrigation to Parigi through a gravity-based project, the present Congress government has replaced it with a Rs 4,400 crore lift irrigation scheme, primarily to generate commissions.

Telangana SIR: 1.73 Crore Enumeration Forms Distributed in 4 Days

Hyderabad, June 30 (GNS): As many as 1.73 crore enumeration forms were distributed since the commencement of the SIR process in Telangana on June 25.State Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) C Sudharshan Reddy appreciated the "outstanding efforts" of the BLOs and election officials for completing distribution of 1.73 crore Enumeration Forms (EFs) within just four days, an official release said.

The CEO, who held a video conference with officials on Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, emphasised that the Booth Level Officers (BLOs) must strictly adhere to the prescribed rules and responsibilities and that any violations would invite stringent action as per law, it said.

The CEO instructed the District Election Officers (DEOs) to motivate and support the BLOs to achieve 100 per cent distribution of



Enumeration Forms within the timelines. Political parties and Booth Level Agents (BLAs) were urged to actively participate in the SIR-2026 and discharge their responsibilities effectively, it said. The BLOs were directed to guide electors in correctly filling the Enumeration Forms and ensure 100 per cent voter outreach, it said. The CEO directed the DEOs to conduct another round of training for BLOs, focusing on assisting electors in correctly filling Enumeration Forms and facilitating the digitisation of forms.

Reddy instructed the DEOs, Electoral Registration

Officers (EROs), and AEROs to closely monitor daily voter awareness activities, ensure regular updates on social media platforms, and document field visits by officials. The house-to-house enumeration for the SIR of electoral rolls commenced in Telangana on June 25, with nearly 36,000 Booth Level Officers (BLOs) deployed across the state.

Reddy had said the door-to-door exercise will continue until July 24, after which the draft electoral roll will be published on July 31. The final roll will be published on October 1 after considering objections and hearings.

Hyderabad college students get AI, robotics training in Germany

Hyderabad, June 30 (GNS): Fifteen students from Lords Institute of Engineering and Technology (LIET) here completed a two-week internship at FH Aachen University of Applied Sciences in Germany, where they trained in artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics and visited the Mercedes-Benz production plant and the Porsche Museum in Stuttgart. The Global Immersion Internship Program ran from June 14 to June 28, with the students accompanied by Dr Mujeeb Hasan, a faculty member at the college.

The group comprised Mohd Mahamood Moosa



Kaleem Ullah, Safi Ur Rahman, Safan Ur Rahman, Mohd Aayan Ur Rahman, Mohd Sohail Ahmed, Shaik

Shaker Ahmed, Mohd Aamir Hussain, Zayd Mohammed Shariff, Shazad Ahmed, Syed Mohammed

med Ishaq Khan and Syed Moazam.

During their time at the German university, the students were trained under two tracks – CyberSol and AutoSol – covering AI, neural networks, intelligent systems, robotics, AI agents and intelligent automation. All participants received certificates on completing the programme.

Apart from the classroom training, the internship included the industrial visits to the Mercedes-Benz plant and the Porsche Museum, giving the students a closer look at manufacturing and automotive engineering practices in Germany.

T Raja Singh Acquitted in 2022 Prophet Remarks Case

Hyderabad, June 30 (GNS): The Special Court for MP/MLA cases here on Tuesday, June 30, acquitted Goshamahala MLA T Raja Singh in the 2022 case registered at Mangalhat police station over his remarks against Prophet Muhammad. Singh had posted a video on YouTube on the night of August 22, 2022, in which he made derogatory comments about the Prophet and also targeted comedian Munawar Faruqui and his mother, later calling the video "comedy." He posted it days after the Telangana government allowed Faruqui to perform in Hyderabad, a show Singh had tried to disrupt. The video sparked protests across the Old City throughout the night,



with large crowds gathering at Shalibanda and other areas to demand his arrest. Clashes between protesters and police left a sub-inspector and at least three others injured, shops across several markets downed shutters, and effigies of Singh were burnt. The BJP suspended him from the party over the remarks. Singh was

first arrested and briefly released on a technicality, then re-arrested days later and detained under the Preventive Detention Act, spending 77 days in jail before being granted bail. He was eventually booked in eight cases by the Hyderabad and Cyberabad police over the episode.

According to Singh's defence team, the prosecution's case unravelled on technical and evidentiary grounds during trial. The complainant and a second prosecution witness reportedly acknowledged that the narration of the Prophet's marriage to Aisha appears in hadith collections including Sahih al-Bukhari, and that a Quranic verse (Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:37) refers to

his marriage to Zaynab following her separation from Zayd.

The investigating officer is also said to have admitted he had not verified whether the statements drew on recognised religious sources before filing the charge sheet, while the prosecution's own forensic expert reportedly flagged discontinuities in the video evidence and gaps in its chain of custody.

These claims, made by Singh's lawyers in a statement after the verdict, point to evidentiary and procedural shortfalls in the prosecution's case rather than any judicial finding on whether Singh's framing of the material was itself derogatory or unlawful.

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