

Ujjain Tension Over Mosque Demolition Amid Road-Widening Drive



Ujjain, Sept 28 (GNS): Tension prevailed in Ujjain on Monday after protests erupted over the proposed demolition of a portion of the historic 600-year-old Shahi Masjid as part of a road-widening project linked to the 2028 Simhashta Kumbh.

Local Muslims gathered at the mosque and stayed overnight to oppose the demolition despite the deployment

of police and bulldozers. On Monday morning, clashes broke out between protesters and police, with stones being pelted at security personnel and tear gas shells fired to disperse the crowd. During the operation, members of the mosque committee began voluntarily removing a portion of the structure protruding towards the road. The section, measuring around nine feet by four feet,

was subsequently covered with a green net as tensions continued in the area.

The Madhya Pradesh High Court had earlier rejected two petitions challenging the demolition notice, observing that the administrative action fell within the applicable legal provisions and that traffic management was required in view of the large number of devotees expected during the religious event.

Police said Crime Branch station in-charge Pushpa Panchal sustained a hand injury during the operation and received first aid. An FIR was registered against 10 people, including five social media influencers, for allegedly disturbing the peace, and some accused were reportedly arrested. Additional police forces were deployed and movement in nearby lanes was restricted.

SC collegium recommends 3 Chief Justices for Apex Court

New Delhi, Sept 28 (GNS): The Supreme Court Collegium on Monday recommended the elevation of Gujarat High Court Chief Justice Sunita Agarwal, Delhi High Court Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya, and Telangana High Court Chief Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh as judges of the apex court.

“The Supreme Court Collegium in its meeting held on 28th September, 2026 has recommended elevation of the following Chief Justices of the High Courts as Judges in the Supreme Court: (i) Mrs. Justice Sunita Agarwal, Chief Justice, High Court of Gujarat (PHC: Allahabad) (ii) Mr. Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya, Chief Justice, High Court of



Delhi (PHC: Allahabad) (iii) Mr. Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh, Chief Justice, High Court for the State of Telangana (PHC: Jharkhand),” read the SC Collegium’s statement published on the apex court’s official website. Born on April 30, 1966, Justice Agarwal was initially appointed as a judge of the Allahabad High Court on November 21, 2011. She became Chief Justice of the Gujarat

High Court on July 23, 2023.

Born on June 16, 1965, Justice Upadhyaya was appointed as a puisne Judge of the Allahabad High Court on November 21, 2011 and became a permanent Judge on August 6, 2013. He became the Senior Judge of the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court on March 28, 2023. Justice Upadhyaya was appointed Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court

and took the oath on July 29, 2023. He was subsequently transferred as Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court and took the oath of office on January 21, 2025.

Born on July 7, 1965, Justice Singh was appointed as an Additional Judge of the Jharkhand High Court on January 24, 2012 and was confirmed as a Permanent Judge on January 16, 2014. Justice Singh served as Acting Chief Justice of the Jharkhand High Court from December 20, 2022, to February 19, 2023. He took the oath as Chief Justice of the Tripura High Court on April 17, 2023, and was subsequently transferred as Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court, where he took the oath on July 19, 2025.

Omar Abdullah introduces key bills in J&K Assembly

Srinagar, Sept 28 (GNS): Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday introduced bills for decriminalising, rationalising offences, ease of doing business and for amending the Legislature Members Pension Act 1984 in the Legislative Assembly. Chief Minister Abdullah, who is also the Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, introduced the Bill to amend certain enactments for decriminalising and rationalising offences and to repeal certain enactments and for matters connected with or incidental relating to it.

The Bill was introduced in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly during the ongoing Autumn session. The Bill, designated as L.A. Bill No. 16 of 2026, has already been published



in an extraordinary issue of the Official Gazette.

Chief Minister Abdullah also introduced the Jammu and Kashmir Ease of Doing Business Bill, 2026, in the Legislative Assembly during the ongoing Autumn session. The Bill, introduced as L.A. Bill No. 11 of 2026, is titled as a Bill “to consolidate and amend the law to replace permission-based control with rule-based governance and to enable citizens and enterprises.

India, France advance space partnership with focus on human spaceflight, start-ups: Dr. Jitendra Singh

New Delhi, Sept 28 (GNS): Union Minister of State for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences Dr. Jitendra Singh on Monday met his French counterpart Prof. Philippe Baptiste and said that the cooperation in space sector between India and France entered a new phase with focus on human spaceflight, start-ups along with new space ecosystem.

India-France space cooperation has evolved from the early sounding rocket experiments of the 1960s into a broad and expanding partnership encompassing joint satellite missions, launch vehicle technologies, human spaceflight and emerging space applications, the minister said.

Dr. Singh met the high-level French delegation and said that the relationship



now offers scope to build a larger ecosystem linking governments, research institutions, industry and start ups. The meeting covered the Space Summit, India-France Year of Innovation 2026 and priorities in scientific and technological cooperation, including

Space, CEFIPRA and Blue Economy, an official statement said.

Dr. Singh referred to Megha-Tropiques and SARAL, jointly built by ISRO and CNES, as well as cooperation in launch vehicle engine development, as milestones of enduring bi-

lateral partnership.

The third joint satellite, TRISHNA will soon be developed, the minister said, and appreciated CNES support to India’s Gaganyaan programme, including supply of consumables and training of flight surgeons.

Indian and French teams have also initiated discussions on microgravity research and parabolic flights in connection with human spaceflight. The minister said the ongoing transformation of India’s space sector has created new possibilities for the two countries to expand cooperation beyond government institutions and established agencies. Over 400 Indian space start-ups are now engaged in areas including rocket building, satellite building and space applications.

SC upholds Rs 14.49 crore award to Sourav Ganguly

New Delhi, Sept 28 (GNS): The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed a plea challenging a Calcutta High Court order that had upheld an arbitral award of Rs. 14.49 crore, along with 12 per cent annual interest and Rs. 50 lakh in costs, in favour of former Indian cricketer Sourav Ganguly, in a dispute over his Player Representation Agreement (PRA). A Bench of Chief Justice of India, Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V. Mohana dismissed the Special Leave Petition (SLP) filed by Percept Talent Management Ltd and Percept D’Mark (India) Pvt Ltd against the judgment of the Calcutta High Court.

In a judgment passed on April 16, 2026, the High Court had dismissed the



appeal filed by the Percept entities under Section 37 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996, and refused to interfere with the arbitral award granting Ganguly Rs 14.49 crore, along with interest at 12 per cent per annum from November 21, 2007 till the date of the award and further interest at the same rate thereafter till realisation. The arbitral tribunal had also awarded Rs 50 lakh towards costs.

India has secured energy imports despite geopolitical crises: Hardeep Puri

New Delhi, Sept 28 (GNS): Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said on Monday that India has navigated the recent supply-chain disruptions amid the geopolitical crises and maintained steady energy imports, reflecting the success of its energy diplomacy under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Addressing members of the Merchants’ Chamber of Commerce and Industry here, the minister said: “Energy security today is not simply about securing supplies; it is also about navigating conflicts, chokepoints, volatile prices and sudden disruptions while keeping the country and its economy on the move.”



sector, among others, had prepared well in advance. Over the past decade, we diversified crude sourcing from 27 to 41 countries, built 5.33 MT of strategic reserves, raised refining capacity from 215 to 267 MMTPA, and expanded fuel outlets from about 52,000 to over 100,000 and LPG import terminals from 11 to 22,” he said.

As a result, while many parts of the world faced energy emergencies and

price shocks, Indian petrol pumps remained supplied, cylinders continued to reach households, and retail fuel prices remained contained, Puri added.

The minister said that the theme of the event “India’s Energy Security: Navigating Geopolitical Uncertainty” was particularly apt for a discussion with the stakeholders, given the ongoing geopolitical crises the world is facing. He further pointed out that West Bengal’s energy potential can drive industry, investment, jobs and regional connectivity. With Rs 17,600 crore of oil and gas projects underway, the state is rapidly expanding its energy infrastructure.

The Haldia refinery has grown from 2.5 MMTPA in 1975 to 8 MMTPA, processing 8.5 MMT in FY 2025-26.

No shortage of coal at power plants: Kishan Reddy

Kolkata, Sept 28 (GNS): Union Minister for Coal and Mines G. Kishan Reddy said on Monday that there was no shortage of coal in the country despite the higher demand for thermal power due to lower hydropower generation and some monsoon-linked disruptions in mining.

The minister said the temporary disruptions should not be seen as a coal shortage and observed that the overall situation was normal. Sufficient coal is being moved to the power plants both by road and rail, he said in answer to a question.

Reddy said thermal power demand had increased by around 12-15 per cent as hydropower generation had come

down due to the weaker monsoon while the rains had also impacted coal mining operations.

“The situation is normal. There is no tension,” he remarked.

Speaking on the sidelines of the Angul Aluminium Roadshow here organised by the business chamber Assocham, Reddy also alleged that West Bengal’s coal industry suffered under “Jungle Raj” and mafia control for years, and that the Central government is pushing reforms to bring transparency and increase state revenues.

The minister is undertaking a comprehensive two-day review of government-owned mining giant Coal India Limited’s operations, project prog-

Nadda accuses Congress, INDIA bloc of misleading people over SIR

New Delhi, Sept 28 (GNS): Union Minister J.P. Nadda on Monday hit out at Congress and the INDIA bloc, accusing them of lacking policies and vision and alleging that they were now devising new ways to spread confusion and anarchy across the country. Speaking to reporters, Nadda said that while 140 crore Indians were working tirelessly to realise the vision of a developed India and the country’s reputation was growing globally, Congress and the INDIA bloc were frustrated with the country’s progress.

“Today, when 140 crore Indians are proving the resolve of a developed India through their tireless hard work, and India’s fame is echoing on the global stage, unfortunately, Congress and the entire INDIA bloc are frustrated and hopeless seeing this progress



of the country,” he said. Nadda claimed that allegations made by the Opposition had repeatedly been countered by facts. “All the fabricated allegations of the Opposition have been repeatedly shattered on the touchstone of facts. From the Election Commission to the highest courts of the country, the air has been blown out of every single one of their lies,” he said. He alleged that the Opposition was attempting to create confusion in the coun-

try in the absence of policies and a clear vision.

“When they lack policies and vision, they now plot new schemes to spread confusion and anarchy across the country. We all saw a few days ago how an uproar was created across the nation over a fabricated piece of news,” Nadda said. Referring to the ongoing political controversy surrounding the Election Commission, he accused the Opposition of attempting to undermine constitutional institutions. “Now, when all members of the Election Commission exposed every lie they levelled, they are trying to ruin the atmosphere anew from scratch. Rahul Gandhi, listen with open ears: repeating a lie a hundred times does not make it the truth, nor does the truth get defeated,” he said.

Rahul Gandhi Two decades in the political maze

Anil Anand

Two decades in politics is not a small period. Though the learning curve never seizes to exist but the time comes in the life of a political leader to give a real account of his or herself and accordingly take tough decisions. Such a situation cannot be allowed to linger on for ever in view of the dynamically changing political situation.

Ironically, after two decades of active politics and in between an unsuccessful bid as president of India's oldest political party, Indian National Congress, Rahul Gandhi is still finding himself in crossroads. Which way to go and which road to take, he seems to be stuck in a dilemma.

He has allowed himself to be the de facto chief of the party and at the same time his close aides take pains to deflect this situation by painstakingly reminding the country that Mallikarjun Kharge is the full-fledged elected president of the party. There is no denying this fact but the ground realities point towards a different direction.

Kharge has been the Congress president for over three years after defeating Shashi Tharoor, with the full support of Gandhi and his family. Everyone knows that Kharge's candidature was openly backed by Sonia Gandhi that had set the course for the poll outcome. Ever since Tharoor, being suspect in the eyes of the Gandhi-camp backers, has acquired the status of a rebel while Mr



Gandhi remains a de facto boss calling the shot. Whatever Gandhi did during the last three years (Mr Kharge's tenure) naturally has his stamp, and whatever he did not do also has his stamp. The “not doing” part pertains to indecisiveness- be it taking over the mantle as Congress president, bringing far-reaching organizational changes or implementing his own words expressed from time to time. He has to take equal credit or blame for decisions taken or not.

Solo acts without the backing of a solid organization will not take you any far Mr Gandhi. Nor will closing your eyes from rejuvenating the Congress.

This prolonged paradox has now started manifesting dangerously and is desperately awaiting a rescue act. On the contrary, the situation has become more serious with the positive impact generated by Mr Gandhi's strenuous Bharat

Jodo Yatras (BJYs) almost on the verge of evaporation. In the absence of a follow up plan and failure of the deeply divided party units from AICC down to the states and Union Territories levels failing to effectively take Mr Gandhi's message to the grassroots levels, the historic event is slipping into oblivion.

The BJP sleeper-cells are merrily running PCCs of many of the states and UTs.

If it reflects Mr Gandhi's shortcomings, it is also an abject failure of his support team who work in close proximity with him in either sustaining on ground the aftermath of such gigantic programmes, or tendering an impactful advice to him. The oft-repeated complaint in the AICC circles and a question often being asked in public is; “Who are Mr Gandhi's advisors”. No one knows the answer.

Yet another common refrain is his and his AICC

team's, particularly the general secretary (organization), K C Venugopal, inaccessibility to party leaders and rank and file. Leave aside the public at large. This is a jarring situation which none other than Mr Gandhi himself can tackle. He has to set a new model, through personal example, to be followed by others down below. He has a multifaceted personality with a strong knowledge bank but most of the time he misses the point of primarily being a leading political light which entails leading from the front with personal example. His fight for the marginalized sections of the society is commendable which has also been his quest to bring the core support base back to the Congress. A missing balanced approach, caring for all and antagonizing none, has led to this quest though creating a buzz but no accruing any electoral benefits. This is something Mr Gandhi must sit and mull over.

The political situation in the country is dynamic and changing fast with serious questions being raised about thinking, policies and planning of the Narendra Modi government. More importantly, the handling of the social fabric of the society. The unfortunate episode involving Swami Avimuktesh-warananda ji, Shankaracharya of Jyotish Peeth, at Prayagraj Magh Mela, who sat on dharna protesting against being insulted by the administration with no word of pacifi-

cation coming either from Prime Minister Mr Modi or UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath, has added a new grist to the political whirlwind. This is a serious development which Congress cannot ignore particularly in the face of the aggressive Hindutava agenda of Mr Modi and the Shankaracharya questioning the veracity of the same.

Unfortunately, the Congress does not seem prepared to act in consonance or preferably remain a step ahead of the situation, with these fast-paced developments. In contrast, BJP and Modi government's fire-fighting techniques are ever ready and re-discovering at a fast pace to repeatedly turn the table.

The Congress and Mr Gandhi must shun lethargy if he has to remain in the game. Well, there are misdemeanours of the ruling dispensation such as Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls and various other measures that tilt the balance in its favour thereby preventing a level playing field, and Mr Gandhi's fight on this front is laudable, but nothing will succeed without setting his house in order. He cannot be seen as fighting as a loner but a leader leading the strong pack which he must develop speedily.

Firstly, he must clear his mind whether he wishes to perpetuate the current de facto model of Congress leadership, intends leading from the front, or is prepared to give chance to someone else.

Why statistics matters in AI and their mutual connect

The recent AI wave has changed the development, growth patterns and application of research in almost all scientific disciplines. However, the associations with AI vary from discipline to discipline. The 2024 Nobel Prize in chemistry, for example, was awarded for the revolutionary AI-assisted breakthroughs in the understanding and design of protein structures, although the research in technology that forms the basis for AI development is generally acknowledged as physics research. AI can also have a similar impact on healthcare, improving the development of new treatments and diagnosis or transforming care systems.

Although the majority of the disciplines have a one-way association with AI, either improving AI technology or being enriched by AI, the subject "statistics" is quite different. Because of its very nature, statistics, including data science, influence and is influenced by AI. In fact, statistics can have an even more important role in the development of AI than the reverse. Since the rise of "data science" in the 21st century, largely from computer science, the area of statistics has undergone a dramatic transformation. The recent wave of generative AI has shocked the system, presenting new challenges to the statistical community. How does statistics, the subject, relate to the emerging analytics landscape?

Yes, traditional statistics had difficulty handling millions or billions of data points as the internet and social media transformed data into "big data" in the past decades. To tackle big data challenges, the development of new statistical methods, the improvement of simulations, the automation of analysis and the promotion of causal and applied statistical research, AI has helped the development of statistics. In fact, AI is orchestrating the value addition of statistical methods from anomaly detection in financial data to customer classification in marketing to personalised recommendations in product development.

While AI accelerates and expands statistical analyses, it is statistics, the subject, that maintains AI as trustworthy, understandable, and data-driven. In their 2021 paper "Is there a role for statistics in artificial intelligence?" published in the journal Advances in Data Analysis and Classification, Sarah Friedrich and her co-authors argue that statistical learning provides the rigour and discipline needed to develop trustworthy AI systems. Basic statistical techniques such as cross-validation, hypothesis testing and uncertainty quantification remain essential to understanding what an AI system is doing and why, from model selection to evaluating model performance.

And, thus, statistics is essentially the foundation of modern AI. Interestingly, Kim Martineau wrote on the "Top 10 Ideas in Statistics That Have Powered the AI Revolution" for Columbia News in 2021. The first two in the list were Hirotugu Akaike's 1973 idea of AIC (Akaike Information Criterion), which judges the fit of a model based on its projected predictive accuracy, and John Tukey's 1977 book Exploratory Data Analysis, which is thought to have inspired developments in network analysis, software, and theoretical frameworks that combine confirmation, criticism, and discovery.

Combining statistics with AI systems can increase their efficiency by minimising the number of errors and accelerating the prediction process. In this way, it can improve the decision-making process by shedding light on the data and giving the machine the capability to make predictions from the data. Statistics helps in the identification and reduction of bias and the detection of specific insignificant patterns, data points, and summaries of measures.

Artificial intelligence is the act of transforming large amounts of raw data into useful information. Statistical methods offer the required analytical skills for this. Therefore, if AI is the engine, statistics is the physics that drives it. "The big tent of statistics has grown massively bigger, with the role of statisticians in this new and evolving world requiring adaptation," as stated in the American Statistical Association's 2023 Statement on The Function of Statistics in Data Science and Artificial Intelligence. It added, "The boundaries between statistical and computational methods have become more blurred, given the advances in ML and deep learning algorithms, which often require a deep understanding of both statistical theory and computer science."

The explanation of complex algorithms also needs knowledge of statistics. The AI models, whether neural networks or ensemble models, become more complex and advanced, but they also become less interpretable. In this scenario, statistics offers an explainability tool that allows users to test assumptions, validate findings, and decide not to put blind faith in "black box" predictions. Indeed, AI expert Sam Bobo termed AI as "Probability and Statistics" in a 2023 essay on Medium. Let's explore how statistics guides AI.

Consider YouTube and Netflix recommendations. The system employs probability to analyse your viewing history. Based on similar behaviour, it predicts your chances of enjoying a movie. Statistical models estimate predicted preferences by comparing millions of people. Online shopping recommendations follow the same pattern. Self-driving cars' noisy data from sensors is cleaned up by statistical processing. AI systems calculate the probability of a target being a shadow or a pedestrian. As a result, decisions (brake, turn, slow down) are made according to risk probabilities, not certainties. AI models are trained on thousands of past cases for medical diagnosis. They estimate the probability of a disease given images or symptoms. To decide if they should trust the AI's suggestion, doctors use statistical metrics. AI is applied in email spam filters to estimate the probability of an email being spam based on the sender's behaviour, language, and links. Your face is matched with stored information by the AI in facial recognition and phone unlocking. And so on. Thus, AI can learn from data, deal with uncertainty, make predictions, and evaluate decisions in real-world applications like security, entertainment, healthcare, and transportation through statistics.

At a conference in 2017, Google AI researcher Ali Rahimi received a standing ovation for stating that much of what was being done in AI at the time was "alchemy", which means that developers had no way of knowing which algorithms would work and which would not, or which architecture of AI was better than another. In other words, AI lacks a basis for inference - a solid foundation upon which to build predictions and decisions - if statistics are not applied properly. In short, the connection between AI and statistics is mutual: AI is based on statistics, and through extensive applications, AI promises the advancement and modernisation of statistics.

As AI systems become more widely used, statisticians are expected to play a greater role in ensuring that models are reliable, transparent and accountable. Statistical methods can help assess model accuracy, quantify uncertainty, identify bias and distinguish meaningful patterns from random variations, making AI outputs more useful for researchers and decision-makers.

At the same time, the growing scale and complexity of AI are pushing statistics towards new areas of research, including high-dimensional data, automated inference and machine learning. The closer integration of statistical theory with computing and AI could therefore reshape both disciplines, enabling more robust models while expanding the role of statistics in emerging data-driven applications.

The Intertemporal Balance Anchoring the Present, Engineering the Future

Akshit Baru

In the lexicon of political economy, election-year budgets are almost invariably associated with the “political business cycle”-a phenomenon where incumbents ramp up populist spending to secure immediate electoral dividends. However, the Union Budget 2026-27 defies this theoretical inevitability. In a landscape often dictated by short-term electoral arithmetic, particularly with polls looming in states like Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, the Government has exercised a rare form of “strategic restraint.” Instead of succumbing to the temptation of fiscal profligacy, this budget signals a decisive shift towards structural rigidity and long-term asset creation. It is a textbook example of prioritizing intertemporal efficiency over immediate gratification.

This commitment to macroeconomic stability is most empirically evident in the fiscal consolidation trajectory. From a high of 9.2% in the pandemic-hit year of 2020-21, the fiscal deficit has seen a steady, disciplined compression to 4.4% in 2025-26 (RE), and is projected to decline further to 4.3% for 2026-27. What is even more noteworthy for a normal citizen is the quality of this deficit financing. The reliance on external financing has been aggressively curtailed-dropping from Rs 47,271 crore in 2024-25 to Rs 20,462 crore in 2025-26, with a further reduc-



tion to just Rs 15,385 crore projected for 2026-27. This sharp reduction in external debt exposure significantly lowers India's sovereign risk premium and insulates the domestic economy from global currency volatility, a crucial buffer in an uncertain geopolitical climate.

However, this fiscal prudence has not translated into austerity. On the contrary, the Government has doubled down on its role as the primary driver of capital formation. The Effective Capital Expenditure has witnessed a robust expansion, rising from Rs 13.2 lakh crore (2024-25 Actuals) to Rs 14.0 lakh crore (2025-26 RE), and is budgeted to jump by a massive 22% to Rs 17.1 lakh crore in 2026-27. As a percentage of GDP, this represents a significant structural shift, moving from 3.9% in the revised estimates of the current year to 4.4% in the coming fiscal. By sustaining such high levels of public investment, the Government is essentially

keeping the fiscal impulse positive, aiming to trigger a high multiplier effect that crowds in private corporate capex.

This massive capex push is strategically directed towards enhancing connectivity, with the announcement of seven new high-speed rail corridors, including Mumbai-Pune and Delhi-Varanasi. This reinforces a “Velocity as Strategy” approach, turning transport infrastructure into economic corridors that reduce logistics costs and integrate regional markets. Simultaneously, the budget pivots from physical capital to human capital deepening, acknowledging that the demographic dividend is a time-bound opportunity. This is vividly reflected in the exponential increase in the allocation for the PM Internship Scheme, which has surged from Rs 526 crore (RE 2025-26) to a staggering Rs 4,788 crore for 2026-27. This suggests a policy shift from mere “skilling” to

“employability,” directly integrating the youth into the workforce through on-the-job training. Complementing these are initiatives like setting up AVGC Content Creator Labs in 15,000 secondary schools and 5 University Townships, investing directly in the capabilities of the future workforce.

The budget also demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of modern production functions, effectively pivoting towards Industry 5.0 where human-centric innovation meets advanced technology. It harmonizes high-tech ambitions- through the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0-with the soft power of the “Orange Economy” (creative industries). This recognition that creative output is as much a pillar of a modern nation as manufacturing is refreshing. Complementing this are significant customs reforms, such as removing the value cap of Rs 10 lakh per consignment on cou-

rier exports, which directly eases the friction for Indian businesses integrating into global trade.

This focus on the productive sectors extends to the “missing middle” of the economy-the MSMEs. The budget addresses their liquidity constraints not just through policy rhetoric but through hard cash. The allocation for the Fund of Funds (MSME) has been more than doubled, rising from Rs 900 crore to Rs 1,900 crore. Additionally, the budget allocates a dedicated Rs 10,000 crore SME Growth Fund. This capital infusion, combined with the health of the banking sector-where Net Non-Performing Assets (NNPAs) have touched a multi-decade low of 0.5%-ensures that the credit channels are unclogged and ready to support expansion. The cleanup of the banking balance sheets over the last decade has now created a “clean slate” for a new credit cycle, essential for fueling private investment.

Structurally, the budget also attempts to insulate the rural economy from agrarian distress by linking it to high-value industrial chains. The announcement of rare earth mining projects in Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu is a strategic masterstroke. It diversifies rural employment away from agriculture into high-skilled extractive and processing industries, integrating these coastal states into the global critical mineral supply chain.

Energy transition must become a mass movement driven by equity and inclusion: Union Minister Pralhad Joshi

New Delhi, Sept 28 (GNS): Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy Shri Pralhad Joshi today delivered India's national statement at the 16th Assembly of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, reaffirming India's strong commitment to a just, equitable, affordable and sustainable global energy transition.

Addressing the Assembly, the Union Minister stated that India's approach to energy transition is guided by the principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam- One Earth, One Family, One Future, and a long-term vision an-



chored in equity, inclusivity and policy stability. He reiterated India's commitment to achieving 500 GW of non-fossil fuel installed power capacity by 2030 and Net Zero emissions by 2070. Highlighting a major milestone, Shri Joshi informed that India has al-

ready achieved 50 per cent of its installed electricity capacity from non-fossil fuel sources in 2025, five years ahead of its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) target under the Paris Agreement. India's non fossil fuel energy capacity has crossed 266 GW,

placing the country among global leaders in renewable energy deployment.

The Union Minister underlined that as one of the world's fastest-growing major energy markets, India is prioritising reliable and resilient power systems through accelerated deployment of energy storage solutions, grid modernisation, development of Green Energy Corridors and innovative bidding mechanisms such as hybrid and round-the-clock renewable energy projects. He also highlighted India's efforts to strengthen clean energy supply chains and expand domestic manufacturing

across solar, wind, batteries and electrolyzers, contributing to both national self-reliance and diversified global supply chains.

Emphasising the people-centric nature of India's energy transition, the Union Minister highlighted flagship programmes aimed at empowering households and farmers. Under the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, around 2.5 million households have benefited from rooftop solar installations in less than two years, with a target to cover 10 million households by March 2027. Under the PM-KUSUM scheme, about 2.17 million farmers

have benefitted through replacement of diesel pumps and solarisation of agricultural feeders. The Union Minister noted that the global energy transition will require unprecedented investment and cooperation. India alone is expected to require around USD 300 billion by 2030, creating significant opportunities across renewable generation, storage, green hydrogen.

, grids and manufacturing. With stable policies and transparent markets, he said, India continues to remain one of the most attractive destinations for clean energy investment.

NHAI Creates Multiple Guinness Records on Economic Corridor



New Delhi, Sept 28 (GNS): Highlighting its engineering prowess and execution excellence, NHAI in a landmark achievement has successfully created four Guinness World Records on the under-implementation Bengaluru-Kadapa-Vijayawada Economic Corridor of NH-544G.

On 6th January 2026, NHAI made two Guinness World Records near Puttaparthi, Andhra Pradesh. First, was the record for the longest continuous laying of Bituminous Concrete, covering 28.89 lane km or 3-lane wide 9.63 km long section within 24 hours. The second record was created for continuous laying of highest quantity of 10,655 metric tons Bituminous Concrete in 24 hours. Both records were established for the first time globally under the six-lane National Highway project on the Bengaluru-Kadapa-Vijayawada Economic Corridor.

Building further on this momentum, two additional Guinness World Records were created on 11th Janu-

ary 2026. These include the continuous laying of 57,500 metric tons of Bituminous Concrete and a record for continuous paving of 156 lane km or 3-lane wide 52 km long section, surpassing the previous world record of 84.4 lane km or 2-lane wide 42.2 km long section. These record-setting feats was executed across Package-2 and Package-3 of the Bengaluru-Kadapa-Vijayawada Economic Corridor.

NHAI in association with concessionaire M/s Rajpath Infracon Private Limited achieved this historic feat through deployment of state-of-the-art construction equipment and machinery involving 70 tippers, five hot mix plants, one paver, and 17 rollers. Supported by stringent quality assurance mechanisms, the process was monitored for quality control with the help of premier institutions including IIT Bombay, along with Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs), ensuring adherence to the highest standards of quality and

Signature Global Q3 sales bookings fall 27 pc to Rs 2,020 cr on lower housing sales

New Delhi, Sept 28 (GNS): Realty firm Signature Global on Sunday reported a 27 per cent decline in its sales bookings to Rs 2,020 crore for the quarter ended December, despite high festive demand for housing properties. The Gurugram-based company had sold properties worth Rs 2,770 crore in the year-ago period. In a regulatory filing, Signature Global informed that it has sold 408 units during the October-December period of this fiscal year, compared to 1,518 units in the year-ago period. In terms of area, the sales bookings fell to 1.44 million sq ft from 2.49 million sq ft.

Real estate developers generally clock better sales bookings during the October-December period because of festive demand. Signature Global did not mention any reason for the decline in sales bookings during the third quarter.

The company launched a big housing project on Dwarka Expressway only late last month. This could be one of the reasons for the drop in sales bookings.

During the first nine months of this fiscal, Signature Global sales bookings fell 23 per cent to Rs 6,680 crore from Rs 8,670 crore a year ago.

The company sold 1,746 units during the October-December period of the 2025-26 fiscal year compared to 3,539 units in the

year-ago period.

Pradeep Kumar Aggarwal, Chairman of Signature Global, said, "We delivered a healthy performance during the first nine months of FY26, driven by sustained demand across our focused micro-markets". The launch of a wellness-centric premium project, Sarvam at DXP Estate on Dwarka Expressway, witnessed encouraging customer response, reflecting evolving buyer preferences.

"Strong collections, improving realisations and disciplined balance sheet management underline execution strength.

Looking ahead, current momentum and planned launches keep us broadly aligned with our guidance and support our longer-term growth plans," Aggarwal said. Signature Global achieved sales bookings of Rs 10,290 crore last fiscal, becoming the fifth-largest listed real estate developer in terms of sales. The company has given guidance of clocking sales bookings worth Rs 12,500 crore in the full 2025-26 fiscal. To achieve this target, Signature Global will have to sell properties worth nearly Rs 6,000 crore in the current quarter. Signature Global has all the residential projects in the Gurugram market, which is, of late, witnessing a sluggish demand due to the sharp jump in prices post-COVID pandemic.

Government committed to cyber security and privacy of citizens in India's digital ecosystem

New Delhi, Sept 28 (GNS): The Government of India is continuously taking steps to ensure the safety and security of users and to protect their personal data in the rapidly evolving digital ecosystem. It remains firmly committed to strengthening cybersecurity and safeguarding the privacy of citizens.

Mobile security is a critical aspect as smartphones are increasingly used for financial transactions, delivery of public services, and storage of sensitive personal information. With over a billion mobile users in the country, smartphones today hold

vast amounts of personal and financial data, making them attractive targets for cybercriminals. Any compromise of mobile security can lead to identity theft, financial losses, privacy violations, and unauthorized access to sensitive information such as banking details, photographs, and login credentials. For businesses as well, unsecured mobile devices pose significant risks, including data breaches and operational disruptions. In this context, a structured process of stakeholder consultations is going on to develop an appropriate and robust regulatory framework for

mobile security. These consultations are part of the Ministry's regular and ongoing engagement with industry on safety and security standards.

MeitY routinely conducts consultations on various aspects such as safety compliance, electromagnetic interference and compatibility (EMI/EMC) parameters, Indian language support, interface requirements, and security standards.

Following stakeholder consultations, detailed discussions are held with industry on different dimensions of security requirements.

The Government remains committed to working closely with industry stakeholders and addressing their concerns in a constructive manner. Accordingly, MeitY has been engaging with industry representatives to better understand technical challenges, compliance burdens, and international best practices adopted by smartphone manufacturers. The Ministry reiterates that all legitimate concerns raised by the industry will be examined with an open mind, in the best interests of both the country and the industry. MeitY refutes the statement by an inter-

CII urges Centre to fast-track privatisation of PSUs

New Delhi, Sept 28 (GNS): Apex business chamber CII, in its proposals for the Union Budget 2026-27, has urged the Central government to mobilise resources through a calibrated approach to privatisation to unlock the value of public sector enterprises.

Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General, CII, said, "India's growth story is increasingly being powered by private enterprise and innovation. A forward-looking privatisation policy, aligned with the vision of Viksit Bharat, will enable the government to focus on its core functions while empowering the private sector to accelerate industrial transformation and job creation."

Against this backdrop, CII has called for accelerat-

ing the implementation of the Government's Strategic Disinvestment Policy, which envisions an exit from all Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) in non-strategic sectors and a minimal presence in strategic ones. To strengthen and expedite the privatisation programme, CII has outlined a four-pronged comprehensive strategy. First, CII recommends a shift to a demand-based approach in selecting PSEs for privatisation. Presently, the government identifies specific enterprises for sale and subsequently invites investor interest. However, when sufficient demand or valuation is not achieved, the process often stalls. CII suggests reversing this sequence by first gauging investor interest across

a broader set of enterprises and then prioritising those that attract stronger interest and meet valuation expectations. Such an approach, CII believes, would ensure smoother execution and better price discovery.

Second, to provide investors greater clarity and planning time, CII recommends that the government announce a rolling three-year privatisation pipeline, outlining which enterprises are likely to be taken up for privatisation during this period. This visibility would encourage deeper investor engagement and more realistic valuation and price discovery. Third, an institutional framework can strengthen oversight, accountability, and investor confidence, making privati-

sation predictable and professionally managed. CII has recommended a dedicated body with a Ministerial Board for strategic guidance, an Advisory Board of industry and legal experts for independent benchmarking, and a professional management team to handle execution, due diligence, market engagement, and regulatory coordination.

Besides, CII has recommended a calibrated disinvestment approach combined with a three-year roadmap, as an interim measure. The government could reduce its stake in listed PSEs in a phased manner to 51 per cent initially, allowing it to remain the single largest shareholder while releasing significant value into the market. Over time,

this stake could be brought down further to between 33 and 26 per cent. According to CII, reducing the government's stake to 51 per cent in 78 listed PSEs could unlock close to Rs 10 lakh crore.

In the first two years of the roadmap, the disinvestment strategy could target 55 PSEs where the government holds 75 per cent or less, mobilising around Rs. 4.6 lakh crore. In the subsequent stage, 23 PSEs with higher government stakes (over 75 per cent) could be disinvested, potentially bringing in Rs 5.4 lakh crore.

These measures can enhance investor confidence, ensure predictable and transparent processes, and maximise value realisation for the government. By focusing on governance,

regulation, and enabling infrastructure while allowing competitive markets to drive efficiency, strategic privatisation can unlock public resources for high-impact areas such as health, education, and green infrastructure, while retaining minimal presence in strategic sectors, supporting a self-reliant and globally competitive economy.

CII said a predictable privatisation framework would also help deepen capital markets by creating more investment opportunities for domestic and global investors. It noted that greater transparency in the selection and sale of public sector enterprises would improve price discovery and reduce delays in the disinvestment process.

India's rice exports jump 19.4 pc after curbs lifted

New Delhi, Sept 28 (GNS): India's rice exports rose sharply by 19.4 per cent last year to reach the second-highest level on record, after the government lifted all export curbs. The removal of restrictions made Indian rice more competitive in global markets and helped the country strengthen its position as the world's largest exporter of the staple grain, as per reports.

The strong return of Indian rice to international markets led to a steady flow of supplies, which in turn reduced exports from rival producers such as Thailand and Vietnam. This surge in availability pushed rice prices in Asia to their lowest levels in nearly a decade. Lower prices have brought relief to poorer consumers, especially in Africa

and other importing regions that depend heavily on affordable rice supplies.

India's growing role in the global rice trade is also reflected in its push towards value-added and nutrition-focused exports. In a recent example, the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) facilitated the export of 20 metric tonnes of fortified rice from Chhattisgarh to Papua New Guinea. The consignment marked another step in India's efforts to diversify its agricultural exports and expand its footprint in overseas markets.

Fortified rice is produced by blending rice flour with essential micronutrients such as iron, folic acid and vitamin B12. This blend is

processed to resemble regular rice grains and then mixed with ordinary rice to improve its nutritional value.

Officials said such exports highlight India's technological capabilities in food fortification and its contribution to global food and nutritional security. Chhattisgarh has emerged as an important contributor to India's rice exports, with consistent efforts to support farmers, millers and exporters. The successful shipment to Papua New Guinea underlines the state's growing role in nutrition-oriented food supplies and aligns with India's broader ambition to be seen as a reliable supplier of safe, high-quality and value-added agricultural products. APEDA officials said the authority

continues to focus on quality assurance, capacity building and market linkages to further strengthen India's standing in global agri-trade.

The rise in exports comes as India seeks to consolidate its position across major international rice markets by offering competitive prices and ensuring regular supplies. Increased availability from India has also given import-dependent countries greater access to affordable food grains amid concerns over food security and global commodity prices. Industry stakeholders said the removal of export restrictions has provided greater predictability to traders and exporters, enabling them to plan procurement and shipments more effectively.

India, Russia cement business ties at Moscow conference

New Delhi, Sept 28 (GNS): Russia-India Business Dialogue held in Moscow, attended by over 1,250 participants, observed that the development of Russia-India cooperation and implementation of joint business projects will continue at major international platforms, including the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, scheduled to take place from June 3 to 6. The Dialogue was organised by the Indian Business Alliance, the Business Council for Cooperation with India, the Moscow government, and the Roscongress Foundation. During the plenary session, participants discussed the main directions of Russia-India cooperation, including the reso-

lution of trade issues and identification of new opportunities to balance bilateral trade, according to an article in Modern Diplomacy.

The issue of ensuring logistics and financial resilience, development of industrial cooperation and import substitution, and partnership in energy, technology, and innovation also came up for discussion.

Moscow government Minister and the head of the city's Department for External Economic and International Relations, Sergey Cheremin, highlighted the steady growth of business activity and the practical orientation of Russia-India cooperation. "Russia-India contacts demonstrate confident momentum—

more than 50 joint business events have taken place over the past year. Today, the focus is on the localisation of Indian businesses in Russia, the development of industrial cooperation, pharmaceuticals, electronics, and creative industries, as well as growth in mutual investments and high-tech product supplies," he said, as per the article.

Indian Business Alliance (IBA) President Sammy Kotwani emphasised the practical nature of Indian companies' interest in cooperation with Russia. "The event reflects a new stage of strategic partnership between our countries—practical, regionally focused, and aimed at implementing concrete projects. More than 1,250

registered participants and the active involvement of Russian regions.

confirm the high level of trust and interest in long-term cooperation," he said.

In his address at the plenary session, Roscongress Foundation's Deputy Director and the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum Director, Alexey Valkov, underlined SPIEF's importance as a key international platform for practical cooperation: "India is a constant and key participant in Roscongress Foundation events. We consistently develop Russia-India dialogue not only at events held in Russia, but also through international outreach initiatives of the Foundation," he added.

CM Revanth alleges plan to delete 20 crore voters, calls for ‘SIR Go Back’

Hyderabad, Sept 28 (GNS) Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Monday alleged a “conspiracy” to delete 20 crore voters from electoral rolls across the country under the guise of the special intensive revision (SIR) of the electoral roll, and accused the Election Commission of India (ECI) of being used to benefit the BJP ahead of the 2029 general elections.

He claimed that 13 crore names had been deleted from the voter lists, and alleged that the number could be increased to 20 crore by the 2029 elections. Revanth Reddy compared the ECI’s role to that of the British-era Simon Commission and called for a nationwide “SIR Go Back” movement on the lines of the “Simon Go Back” agitation during the freedom struggle.

Revanth Reddy alleged that SIR had been brought in to remove the voting rights of the poor and charged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was using the Election Commission in the same manner as the British used the Simon Commission.

The Chief Minister questioned the concentration of powers with Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, asking why booth-level officers (BLOs) and



district collectors were required if all powers were being put in the hands of Gyanesh Kumar.

Participating in a con-

clave in Delhi, Revanth Reddy said the BJP was chanting “Jai Sri Ram” while targeting those who chanted “Hara Hara Mahadeva”.

“They are saying Jai Sri Ram. We are saying Hara Hara Mahadeva. The BJP does not like those chanting Hara Hara Mahadeva. Sri

Ram is god of rich people and Shankara (Mahadeva) is god of poor people. The BJP is on the side of the rich while we are on the side of the poor. We are on the side of the poor, while the BJP is on the side of the rich.” he remarked.

The Chief Minister said people in the South were Shiva devotees while north Indians were devotees of Sri Ram, and described the political divide in terms of “Dravidians” (south) and “Aryans” (north). “That is why BJP leaders say Jai Sri Ram. Did they ever say Hara Hara Mahadeva?” he questioned. He alleged that 13 crore votes had been

deleted across the country with the 2029 elections in mind and questioned how the number of voters could decline when the population of the country was not declining. He alleged that Modi was attempting to delete votes of people opposed to him and was seeking to remove a total of 20 crore votes across the country. The Chief Minister said the country had once united by raising the slogan “Simon Go Back” and asserted that the time had come for people across the country to unite by raising the slogan “SIR Go Back”.

Referring to Telangana’s development concerns,

Revanth Reddy said Prime Minister Narendra Modi, when he was the Chief Minister of Gujarat, had received cooperation from the then prime minister Manmohan Singh for development projects in Gujarat. In contrast, he alleged, Modi as the Prime Minister was not extending similar cooperation to Telangana.

Revanth Reddy alleged that the Centre had blocked approvals for the Regional Ring Road when the government was preparing to call tenders. He further alleged that the BJP-led government at the Centre was obstructing the Hyderabad Metro Rail project.

Legal Cell-TPCC protest demands immediate resignation of cec Gyanesh Kumar

Hyderabad, Sept 28 (GNS) The Hyderabad District Legal Cell –Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC), organised a protest demanding the immediate resignation of Central Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and action against those allegedly responsible for misconduct in connection with the issues raised regarding SIR and “Vote Chori.”

The protest was held on 28 September 2026 at the Chief Electoral Office, BRK Bhavan, Hyderabad, PONNAM ASHOK GOUD GARU, CHAIRMAN LEGAL CELL-TPCC and large number of Legal Cell-TPCC office-bearers, advocates and members participated.



raised regarding SIR and alleged “Vote Chori” should not be ignored and that every genuine complaint concerning electoral rolls, deletion or inclusion of names, verification procedures and the protection of voters’ rights must be examined through a transparent and legally accountable process.

He demanded that the competent authorities conduct an impartial inquiry into the allegations and complaints raised in connection with the electoral process, identify responsibility wherever misconduct is established, and take appropriate action in accordance with law.

He further stated that the Election Commission must

remain above suspicion and must command public confidence, particularly when questions are raised concerning the electoral roll and exercise of the fundamental democratic right to vote.

“The right to vote is not merely a procedural right; it is an essential component of representative democracy. Any genuine grievance relating to a voter’s identity, electoral-roll entry, deletion or verification must be addressed transparently and in accordance with law. Accountability and public confidence are indispensable to the credibility of the electoral process,” Ponnamm Ashok Goud Garu said.

TG Congress stages protest demanding CEC Gyanesh Kumar’s resignation

Hyderabad, Sept 28 (GNS) The ruling Congress party in Telangana on Monday staged a huge protest in Hyderabad, demanding resignation and arrest of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar over alleged irregularities in electoral rolls during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) by the poll panel.

On a call given by the All India Congress Committee (AICC) for nationwide protests, leaders and cadres of the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) took out a rally to the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO).

Deputy Chief Minister, Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, TPCC president Mahesh Kumar Goud, ministers Ponnamm Prabhakar, Sridhar Babu, MPs Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, Anil Kumar Yadav and other leaders



participated in the protest. They later met CEO C. Sudharsan Reddy and submitted a memorandum, demanding that the CEC immediately resign from his post. The protestors gathered at Indira Gandhi statue on Necklace Road and raised slogans against the CEC and the BJP-led government at the Centre.

They were carrying placards with slogans like ‘Vote Chori’ and ‘Democracy Ke Dushman’.

The protestors marched to the CEO’s office at BRK Bhavan near the Secretariat and set afire an effigy of the Election Commission.

Deputy Chief Minister Vikramarka, who was carrying a copy of the Indian

Constitution, called upon all democratic forces to join the Congress party’s struggle. He asserted that the repeated warnings issued by Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, that a “vote theft” involving the systematic trampling of citizens’ voting rights has been occurring across the country for

years, has been proven true. He expressed deep anguish over the fact that the two other Election Commissioners themselves have admitted to the manner in which citizens’ votes are being deleted under the guise of SIR, describing it as an unfortunate development for the nation’s democracy.

The Deputy CM highlighted that LoP Rahul Gandhi has been fighting from the very beginning to safeguard the Constitution and the citizens’ right to vote.

He noted that even Election Commissioners themselves have now had to acknowledge the validity of Rahul Gandhi’s remarks regarding “vote theft”.

He questioned the state of democracy in the country if the right to vote—the very lifeblood of democracy—is trampled upon.

AIMIM appoints new General Secretary

Hyderabad, Sept 28 (GNS) Syed Abdul Hussain Anwar has been appointed as the new General Secretary of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM). AIMIM President and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi on Monday appointed the senior leader to the key post, vacant since the demise of Syed Ahmed Pasha Quadri in February 2026. The AIMIM also announced appointments to key organisational positions within the party organisation. Asaduddin Owaisi appointed Syed Mushtaq Ahmed as Joint Secretary.

Telangana: Khairatabad Assembly seat declared vacant after Nagender’s disqualification

Hyderabad, Sept 28 (GNS) The Khairatabad Assembly seat has been officially declared vacant following the disqualification of Danam Nagender as a member of the Telangana Legislative Assembly. The Legislative Assembly issued a gazette notification stating that Nagender stood disqualified with effect from April 23, 2024, under Paragraph 2(1)(a) of the Tenth Schedule read with Article 191(2) of the Constitution. Consequently, the seat stands vacant.

Rendla Thirupathi, Sec-



retary to the Legislature, issued the notification dated September 26 in pursuance of the Telangana High Court judgment delivered on September 18. Nagender was elected from Khairatabad in the 2023 Assembly elections as a Bharat Rashtia Samithi

(BRS) candidate. He later switched loyalties to the ruling Congress and contested the Lok Sabha elections from Secunderabad constituency on a Congress ticket.

Assembly Speaker Gadham Prasad Kumar had dismissed petitions filed by

BRS MLAs and a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA seeking Nagender’s disqualification. The petitioners challenged the Speaker’s decision in the High Court. On September 18, a Division Bench of Chief Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh and Justice G.M. Mohiuddin held that Nagender stood disqualified under Paragraph 2(1)(a) of the Tenth Schedule read with Article 191(2) of the Constitution, after contesting the 2024 Lok Sabha elections as a Congress candidate despite being elected as a BRS MLA.



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TG CM congratulates Esha Singh on Asian Games Silver

Hyderabad, Sept 28 (GNS) Telangana shooter Esha Singh clinched the silver medal in the women’s 25m pistol final at the Asian Games 2026 in Aichi-Nagoya on Monday. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy congratulated Esha Singh for her gritty performance, calling her achievement a proud moment for Telangana and the country.

The 21-year-old from Hyderabad, who qualified 8th for the final, fought back from 4th position with a perfect 5/5 series. Esha Singh fought through pain, exhaustion, and five nerve-wracking shoot-offs in a gruelling test of skill and temperament before settling for silver in the women’s 25m pistol at the

Asian Games. It was a performance that demanded every ounce of her resilience and perhaps meant more to her than a gold medal.

The world No. 1 in the event, she endured an aching arm and shoulder, survived a series of heart-stopping eliminations and pushed herself to the very limits in one of the most dramatic finals of the Games. Even as the gold slipped through her grasp in a nerve-shredding shoot-off against China’s Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist Jiaruixuan Xiao, Esha had already demonstrated the fighting spirit that has made her one of the most formidable young shooters on the international circuit.



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