

INDIA Bloc Unveils Roadmap For Pan-India Protests, Vows To Protect Democracy

New Delhi, Sept 30 (GNS): 'Save Democracy March' in each district, a detailed presentation before President Droupadi Murmu about the 'compromised' electoral process, are some of the steps that the INDIA bloc will undertake in the coming days to exert pressure on the Election Commission and "expose" its wrongdoings before the common people. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, unveiling the Opposition's blueprint for intensified demonstrations against EC's 'partisan approach and malpractices', shared a detailed outline of how the INDIA bloc will stand up against electoral irregularities.

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procedure," Kharge said. "On October 6, all the Opposition MPs will march to the Election Commission. In the second week of October, the Opposition leaders will seek an appointment from the President of India and will make a representation on how the underhand tactics are being used to crush the Opposition and befool the people of the country," he added. He fur-

ther informed that five rallies have been planned, and the dates are being worked out. These will be organised across the country to tell people how they are being disenfranchised, and their voting rights are being snatched. "We will explain to them how this will affect them. These rallies will be conducted in October and November," he informed.

"November 1 will see a huge rally in Delhi, where we will explain the 'vote chori' by the EC," he said. "Further, all the INDIA bloc leaders will appeal to the Supreme Court to expedite the pending cases pertaining to SIR and other electoral malpractices," Kharge said. He said that Rahul Gandhi has been consistently raising the issue of how vote chori

was being done by the EC, to benefit the ruling party. He added that Mamata Banerjee also raised the matter on multiple accounts, but nobody paid heed. Escalating attack on the Centre, he said that the Modi government first used "notebandi" to crush the people and economy, and now was resorting to "vote bandi" to deprive people of their right to vote.

Flydubai Jet Makes Emergency Landing After Hijack Alert

New Delhi, Sept 30 (GNS): A Flydubai jet carrying around 180 Israeli passengers was forced to make an emergency landing in Saudi Arabia after transmitting emergency signals, including a code associated with a possible hijacking, shortly after departing Dubai for Tel Aviv, according to a report. NDTV reported that flight-tracking data showed that the Boeing 737 MAX 8, operating as flight FZ1073 from Dubai International Airport to Israel's Ben Gurion Airport, first squawked code 7700, indicating a general emergency. The aircraft later switched to code 7500, an internationally recognised signal for unlawful interference, including a possible hijacking, it added. The alerts prompted Israel to scramble military aircraft amid fears that the flight could have been hijacked. The plane subsequently



diverted and landed safely in Tabuk, a city that hosts both civilian and military aviation facilities in northwestern Saudi Arabia, according to the report. According to the report, the incident was caused by a violent altercation involving the flight's pilots rather than a hijacking. All passengers and crew were reported safe, it said. Meanwhile, reports claim that hijack code may have

been activated during the altercation. One pilot allegedly stabbed another with a folding knife, they said adding that passengers and crew members intervened to subdue the attacker before the aircraft made an emergency landing. A passenger said that shouting could be heard from the cockpit and that blood was visible when the cockpit door was opened, according to the report.

India, Dubai Discuss Strengthening Economic And Tourism Linkages

Dubai, Sept 30 (GNS): India's Consul General in Dubai, Vishnu Vardhan Reddy, on Monday paid a courtesy call on H.E. Helal Saeed Al Marri, Director General of Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism, and discussed ways to further strengthen economic and tourism linkages between the two sides. "Dr. E. Vishnu Vardhan Reddy, Consul General of India, Dubai, paid a courtesy call on H.E. Helal Saeed Al Marri, Director General, Department of Economy and Tourism. The interaction covered discussions to further strengthen India-Dubai economic and tourism linkages, with a focus on enhancing business engagement, investment and people-to-people ties," the Consulate General of India (CGI) in Dubai said on X.

Last week, Reddy met Sharjah Ports, Customs and Free Zones Authority Chairman, Sheikh Khalid Bin Abdullah Bin Sultan Al Qasimi.

Goyal Invites US Manufacturers to Invest in India



Milwaukee/New Delhi, Sept 30 (GNS): Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday said he addressed a business roundtable convened by the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), bringing together representatives of small and large manufacturers from across the US. The minister, during his official visit to the US, highlighted the strong momentum in the India-US economic ties, along with India's expanding industrial base and skilled workforce. Goyal also invited American manufacturers to explore opportunities to deepen their

presence in India, partner with Indian SMEs, and co-invest in advanced manufacturing to build resilient supply chains that create value for both economies, according to his post on X. As India and the US aim to advance negotiations on a balanced and mutually beneficial Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA), Goyal's upcoming engagement with the US Trade Representative (USTR) Jamieson Greer is being seen as key to achieve the trade deal faster. The minister is set to attend the G20 Trade Ministers' Meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin at the invitation of the USTR.

Green energy scheme 'Big Push' towards achieving 900 GW non-fossil capacity by 2035: PM Modi

New Delhi, Sept 30 (GNS): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said the Cabinet decision on the Green Energy Corridor Phase-III (GEC-III) scheme is a "big push" towards achieving 900 GW non-fossil capacity by 2035. The Cabinet has approved the GEC-III scheme to enable evacuation of up to 135 gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy across states and Union Territories. "Cleaner power. Stronger grids. More opportunities," PM Modi said in a post on X. "The Cabinet decision on the Green Energy Corridor Phase III will ensure: 135 GW renewable energy evacuation. 50 GWh battery storage. Stronger power grids across States and UTs. More jobs in manufacturing, construction, and energy storage. Big push towards 900 GW non-fossil capacity by 2035," he added. India's total installed power capacity reached 552 GW in July 2026, up from 249 GW



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2014. Solar is now the largest component of India's renewable energy capacity. India became the world's second-largest solar growth market in 2025, adding more than 37 GW of solar capacity, compared with 34 GW added by the US. The GEC-III scheme is targeted to be set up by FY

2032-33 with a total project outlay of Rs 1,86,405 crore, comprising Rs 1,36,378 crore for the development of Intra-State Transmission Systems (InSTS) under GEC-III and Rs 50,000 crore for 50 GWh of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS). BESS manufacturing and deployment will additionally generate employment in the domestic energy storage industry. The scheme will also generate long-term skilled employment in operation, maintenance, and grid management across participating states. The scheme also provides for deployment of 50 GWh of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) at the Renewable Energy (RE) developer/generator end or any other location of importance for grid flexibility to address intermittency, congestion, peak-hour curtailment and meet non-solar hour demand. The Scheme involves a total Central financial support of Rs 54,082 crore.

Ranchi PMLA Court Frames Charges Against Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren In Ranchi Land Case

Ranchi, Sept 30 (GNS): A special PMLA court in Ranchi on Wednesday formally framed charges against Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren in a money laundering case linked to 8.86 acres of land in Ranchi's Bargain circle. This marks a significant step forward in the judicial proceedings in this case. Soren appeared before the Special PMLA Court through video conferencing on Wednesday during the hearing. After the framing of the charges, the trial is now set to proceed to the next stage. A total of 17 persons have been named as accused in the case after the ED investigation. Charges had already been framed against the remaining 16 accused in different phases, while the process concerning Soren was completed on Wednesday. The case is related to the alleged fraudulent acquisition and laundering of proceeds connected to 8.86 acres.

2nd ODI: Gill's unbeaten 223, Rohit's century set up India's record chase in run-fest

Guwahati, Sept 30 (GNS): Skippers usually ask for the heavy roller after enduring 50 overs of absolute leather-hunting in humid conditions as a matter of routine, but Shubman Gill asked for it and clearly knew what was coming. What followed over the next three-and-a-half hours at the ACA Stadium in Guwahati was an absolute, unmitigated carnage of historical proportions. Driven by a record-shattering unbeaten 223 off 133 balls by skipper Gill and a vintage 75-ball 101 from his opening partner Rohit Sharma, India pulled off their highest successful men's ODI run-chase by hunting down a monumental 406-run target set by the West Indies to seal an eight-wicket win with 39 balls to spare. It also marked the second-highest successful run-chase of all time in 50-over cricket, after South Africa hunted down 438 against Australia in 2006, as India made a daunting multi-



hundred target look like effortless work. Coming into the chase requiring a steep 8.12 runs per over, the Indian dynamic duo extinguished the threat within the opening powerplay itself. Rohit and Gill launched a furious, synchronised assault of boundaries that left Shamari Joseph, Jayden Seales, and Alzarri Joseph utterly bewildered. India motored to its fifty

in seven overs before sprinting to 100 inside 12 overs. Rohit got to his half-century off 32 balls, while Gill was even more ruthless – after getting his fifty in 39 balls, he registered his hundred off just 62 deliveries. By the time India reached 200 in 21.1 overs, their fastest team double-hundred in 50-over cricket, the West Indies attack was visually demoralised. Keacy Carty dropping

Rohit on 84 off wrist-spinner Vitel Lawes only compounded their misery. The master-class opening stand finally came to an end at 255 runs, the highest opening partnership for India in an ODI chase, when Jayden Seales trapped Rohit LBW with an off-cutter, as Rohit's stunning hundred also saw him cross the monumental milestone of 12,000 ODI runs. Virat Kohli made a brief, breezy 29 off 19 balls, including three fours and a six, before holing out to a brilliant boundary-line relay catch by Sherfane Rutherford off Shamar Joseph. But by then, India had reduced the remainder of a chase to a mere formality. **Brief scores: West Indies 405/7 in 50 overs (Amir Jangoo 114, Shai Hope 104, John Campbell 101; Kuldeep Yadav 2-65, Ravindra Jadeja 2-75) lost to India 406/2 in 43.3 overs (Shubman Gill 223 not out, Rohit Sharma 101; Shamari Joseph 1-52, Jayden Seales 1-78) by eight wickets**

Traders withdraw 'No UPI Day' protest after meeting FM

New Delhi, Sept 30 (GNS): Leading traders' bodies have withdrawn their call to observe October 2 as "No UPI Day" following a meeting with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday in the national capital. A delegation of around 20 trade representatives from various states met the finance minister on Wednesday to express concerns over the proposed 0.4 per cent fee on merchant UPI transactions above Rs 2,000. The traders said the move could increase the burden on small and medium businesses and affect digital payment adoption among merchants. The delegation was led by Praveen Khandelwal, Member of Parliament from Chandni Chowk and secretary general of the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT). Representatives sought clarity on the proposed charge and urged the government to take into account the concerns



of the trading community. Earlier, the All India Consumer Products Federation and the All India Mobile Retailers Association had announced plans to observe October 2 as "No UPI Day" in protest against the proposed fee. However, the organisations decided to withdraw the protest call after discussions with the finance minister. Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Khandelwal said the decision was taken following constructive talks and assurances that the concerns raised by traders would receive due consideration.

Modi, Trump Review Bilateral Cooperation

New Delhi, Sept 30 (GNS): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday spoke with US President Donald Trump over phone, reviewing bilateral cooperation in trade, defence, energy and critical technologies sectors. Reaffirming their commitment to take the India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership forward, the two leaders also exchanged views on regional and international issues, including efforts to promote global peace and security. "Had a productive conversation with President Trump. We reviewed our bilateral cooperation in trade, defence, energy, critical technologies and other areas. We agreed to maintain close engagement to take our Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership forward," PM Modi posted on X after the phone call. "We also exchanged views on regional and international issues,

including ongoing efforts to advance global peace and security," he added. According to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to advancing the India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership and agreed to maintain close engagement to deepen cooperation for the benefit of the people of both countries. "The leaders also exchanged views on regional and international developments and discussed ongoing efforts to promote global peace and security. Both leaders agreed to remain in touch," the PMO stated. As reported by IANS earlier, senior officials in the US administration have outlined an ambitious roadmap for expanding India-US ties, signalling that Washington is working towards a Presidential visit to India early next year and sees New Delhi as one of its closest strategic partners.

Where does the law stand on Himanta Biswa Sarma’s video of ‘shooting’ Muslims?

ASHUTOSH VARSHNEY

Because of his policies, statements, and social media imagery, As-sam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has been attracting a lot of political attention. Let us examine his rise, and possibly his future, from a broader political perspective, aided by theory, comparison, history, and law. Political ideologies tend to develop new faces; the vanguard can’t lead forever. As ambitious mid-level leaders begin to envision their futures, they consider how they might ascend to the top, especially if they believe the ideology they have embraced will remain in power for a long time. They draw attention by making statements or adopting policies that please the vanguard.

Self-regarding ambition and the desire for upward mobility are, thus, common features of political organisations. The process becomes quite intense when aspirational mid-level leaders realise they were not trained within the ideology’s core institutions. For the BJP, the RSS is the parent organisation. In pursuit of ambition, enterprising “outsiders” can easily become, as it were, more RSS than the RSS itself.

For some time now, Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, has exemplified this logic. Adityanath did not emerge from the RSS. As a disciple of Mahant Avaidyanath, he was trained as a priest at the Gorakhnath Matth. He founded an organisation called the Hindu Yuva Vahini. His Hindu nationalism began with his math’s involvement in the Ayodhya Movement, not within the RSS. But his passionate advocacy of the Hindu community and his fierce critique of Muslims aligned closely with the ide-



ological thrust of the RSS. In 2017, with the support of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he became chief minister of India’s most populous state. His policies and statements in office, which have reinforced his Hindu nationalist credentials, have placed him among the most powerful leaders of the BJP despite his lack of roots in the RSS.

At one level, Himanta Biswa Sarma is traversing the same path. At another, his trajectory is even more complex and demanding. Adityanath may not have emerged from the RSS, but he was part of the Hindu Yuva Vahini and was groomed in a Hindu math. In contrast, Sarma spent many years in the Congress party in Assam. When he encountered obstacles to his rise to the highest echelons of power in the state, he switched parties. Adityanath moved from one Hindu organisation to another; Sarma shifted from a party long dependent on Muslim votes in Assam to one opposed to Muslims.

It is not often realised that the proportion of Muslims in Assam’s population has historically been second only to that of Jammu and

Kashmir when it was a state. In absolute terms, Uttar Pradesh may have the largest number of Muslims. But as a proportion of the state population, Assam, West Bengal, and Kerala all exceed Uttar Pradesh.

A serious political implication follows. If elections are to be won while simultaneously satisfying the BJP’s ideological vanguard, a fiercely anti-Muslim stance can be viewed as political pragmatism. It is a manifestly clear sign of expediency, not necessarily proof of ideological rectitude. If Muslims constitute approximately a third of Assam’s population, and if few or none are likely to vote for the BJP, Sarma would need about 70 per cent of the Hindu vote, if not more. Under such circumstances, communal polarisation can be seen as an optimal electoral strategy.

In light of this reasoning, let us consider some of the more recent episodes in Sarma’s politics of polarisation. He has said that he would like to shut down — forcibly, if necessary — as many madarasas as possible, so that Muslim youth do not become mullahs. He has also argued that if Rs 5 is the price

of a rickshaw ride, Assamese passengers should pay Rs 4 if the driver is a miyan. He has used the term miyan at times to refer to illegal Bangladesh immigrants; at other times to Bangladeshi immigrants, both legal and illegal; and at still other times to Muslims in Assam, regardless of origin. There is no great principle involved here. Whatever promotes polarisation will be uttered.

The most incendiary episode, watched extensively, was a social media video in which Sarma is seen holding a gun and aiming it at two Muslim men, one of whom is wearing a skullcap. The video was posted on X by Assam BJP and was later taken down.

Aiming at Hindu-Muslim polarisation, Sarma clearly has a political strategy that seeks to maximise the odds of winning. But an important legal question follows: do his statements, verbal or visual, violate the law, thereby exposing him to liability? For perspective on this question, let us begin comparatively. In the United States, the First Amendment to the Constitution provides exceptionally strong protection for free speech. In 2015, during his first presidential

campaign, Donald Trump said that “Mexicans were rapists and criminals.” More recently, an image circulated on his social media account depicting Barack and Michelle Obama as apes. These may have political consequences, negative or positive, but they are generally not legally punishable. The United States draws a distinction between “hate speech” and “hate crimes”.

Only the latter are criminally prosecutable, and they are defined by acts of violence, not by speech alone.

In Western Europe, however, the situation is different. Britain’s Public Order Act (1986) makes words or behaviour intended to stir up racial hatred punishable. In France and Germany, too, freedom of expression is not an unqualified right; laws criminalising hate speech on the basis of race, ethnicity, or religion exist.

India’s constitutional framework leans more toward Europe than the United States. Article 19(1) guarantees freedom of speech and expression as a fundamental right, but Article 19(2) permits reasonable restrictions on grounds such as defamation, contempt of court, decency or morality. More important for our purposes here is First Constitutional Amendment, passed a little over a year after the Constitution came into effect, which expanded Article 19(2) to include additional grounds such as “public order” and “incitement to an offence.” Whatever one may conclude about Sarma’s remarks against Muslims or his suggestion that people pay a miyan rickshaw driver less, the video in which he is seen holding a gun and aiming it at two Muslim men is clearly an “incitement to an offence”, and a potential threat to “public order”.

US-China Rivalry Suddenly Intensifies in Bangladesh

NITYA CHAKRABORTY

Only a week has passed since the BNP supremo Tarique Rahman has taken over as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh after the resounding victory of his party in the February 12 national elections. The 60 year old PM who is back to the country after an exile of 17 years in Britain, is supposed to give all priority to the rebuilding the tattered economy and the administration in the country, but his focus has shifted as all on a sudden, the US administration has got over-active and intervening in the internal affairs of Bangladesh by asking the new government to take a position against China.

Such an open assertion by the US has not been seen in the recent months. In fact, the US embassy officials were not so much active in the first half of the tenure of the interim government, but the situation changed as the February 12 election was approaching. There was a sudden change in Trump administration’s approach to Bangladesh. The new U.S. ambassador Brent Christensen joined his duty in Dhaka on January 12 this year, just one month before the February 12 elections. Since then, US officials including Brent have been cultivating both the BNP and the Jamaat leaders in an effort to outsmart the Chinese envoy Yo Wen who has been active in Dhaka for the last three years establishing wide contacts at every level of the government and the political parties.

After the taking over as the Prime Minister, Tarique Rahman and his foreign minister Khalilur Rahman, a highly experienced foreign service officer reviewed as usual the relationship with the three



major countries India, USA and China and what steps should be taken in the interests of Bangladesh. A review of the just announced US-Bangladesh trade deal was also under discussion. Issues about the balancing of the relationship with all the three major countries were under radar.

When all the initial discussions were going on, on Saturday February 21, the US ambassador Brent Christensen in a harsh statement said that he was concerned at the broader Chinese influence in South Asia without naming Bangladesh. The letter sent by Trump to Tarique also mentioned that US-Bangladesh partnership is based on mutual respect and a shared interest in fostering a free and open Indo-Pacific. This virtually means that the US wants Bangladesh as a partner in its Indo-Pacific security strategy against China, just as Trump has roped in India as a partner in its anti-China security strategy.

So for Tarique Rahman, even before he has stabilized his position, he is under a threat by the US that

the new Bangladesh government has to be a part of the US strategy against China if the new government wants to foster better relations with the USA. Naturally, China also reacted vehemently next day as the Chinese envoy Yo Wen met the Bangladesh foreign minister and mentioned that China appreciates Bangladesh declaration of following Bangladesh First policy and China’s cooperation to Dhaka will be all pervasive and it is not targeted against any third country.

Tarique government is very embarrassed at the anti-China slant of the US embassy from the soil of Dhaka but the government can do precious little to prevent the U.S from playing its big brother role. Political sources in Dhaka say that the US is worried at the last defence pact between Bangladesh and China. The US wants that Bangladesh should not pursue its future talks with China for defence cooperation.

As per as perception is concerned, Bangladesh people mostly nurse sentiments against both the In-

dia and the US. In the last eighteen months since the fall of the Hasina government on August 5, 2024, the influence of China has increased among the people compared to the decline in sentiments for US. In the last visit of interim head Dr. Yunus to China early 2025, a big breakthrough was made in China’s investment in establishing industrial estates in different districts of Bangladesh. There was an agreement of a factory for drones near the Indian border within Bangladesh. Tarique government is now asked by the US to review the agreements afresh.

Onesided terms of a recently signed U.S. trade deal have highlighted how new Bangladeshi Prime Minister Tarique Rahman faces a delicate balancing act when it comes to ties with Washington and Beijing as the two vie for influence in his country. On one side, the U.S. is touting market access, security cooperation and regulatory leverage, while China is offering infrastructure, industrial integration and defense supplies. China remains Bangladesh’s largest trading partner and a

dominant infrastructure investor, financing projects from port modernization to industrial zones. The U.S. is Bangladesh’s largest export market and had for a long time been its biggest foreign investor, though foreign direct investment (FDI) stock has fallen sharply — from roughly \$4 billion in the fiscal year through June 2023 to about \$1 billion as of September 2025, due to the political turmoil and weak investor confidence during Yunus regime.

Chinese FDI stock in Bangladesh had reached about \$3 billion as of September 2025. Beijing has also extended zero-tariff access to Bangladeshi exports alongside several other least developed countries, first granting duty-free access to 98% of products in 2022 and later expanding the offer. China is very keen to maintain its position as a major defence system supplier to Bangladesh.

This is now being objected to by the Trump administration. This was not the situation in the earlier years. Beijing is closely monitoring the developments in Bangladesh. President Xi Jinping himself met Dr. Yunus at his meeting and took personal interest in expanding ties with Bangladesh so that the South Asian country can create substantial jobs with Chinese assistance. China will not like its agreements to be nullified due to US pressure. Tarique Rahman is under tremendous pressure from his advisers as also think tank to stick to Bangladesh First policy and act taking into account strategic autonomy of Bangladesh as per the BNP manifesto. Next few days will show whether Tarique has the guts to defy US pressure and act taking into account the interests of Bangladesh only.

Congress scores another own goal

DEMOCRACY is inconceivable without dissent and protests. These are not merely democracy’s byproducts; they undergird the working of the system and maintain equilibrium between unchecked bedlam and authoritarian order. The challenges manifest in the form of debates or a forced entry into the Well of the House, the use of more robust instruments against the government such as a no-confidence vote, and demonstrations — perfunctory or spirited — in the public space. Parliament and state Assemblies are crowded with these manifestations that often test the mettle of a government. The uproarious scenes that inevitably erupted each time the Women’s Reservation Bill was tabled are the stuff of parliamentary history and lore. The Bill was finally passed as the 106th Constitutional Amendment Act or the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam in September 2023, but the prelude to its passage was often marked by violence.

In the December 1998 session of Parliament, when the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government made bold to bring in the Bill, Samajwadi Party (SP) MP Daroga Prasad Saroj tried to reach the Speaker’s podium in the Lok Sabha and grab the papers, but Mamata Banerjee, the Trinamool Congress chief, caught him by the scruff of the neck. In March 2010, when the Rajya Sabha passed the Bill (the Lok Sabha did not vote on it), every imaginable stalling tactic was deployed by leaders of the pro-Mandal parties: shattering glass tumblers, squatting and napping in the Well, pummelling and kicking the guards and even punching one in the stomach until the protesters were outnumbered by security reinforcements.

March 25, 1989, would be etched in Tamil Nadu’s legislative history as the day when the roughnecks of the DMK government assaulted J Jayalalithaa, then the Opposition leader, and pulled the end of her sari. A tearful Jayalalithaa left the Assembly, vowing that if she returned it would be as the chief minister. Two years down the line, she unseated M Karunanidhi and claimed the throne.

In the civic arena, perhaps the best remembered protest was staged by the “Mothers of Manorama” in Imphal in July 2004. These women assembled outside the Assam Rifles’ headquarters to dare the personnel to come out and assault them. They protested against the torture, rape and killing of a young woman, Thangjam Manorama Devi, an alleged insurgent.

The legitimacy — or lack of legitimacy — of these demonstrations can be interminably argued. However, the spectacle mounted by Indian Youth Congress (IYC) activists on February 20 at Delhi’s Bharat Mandapam, the venue of the government’s prestigious national and international events, signified a new low in the history of protests, although the last word has not yet been said on its justness by the political class. The India AI Impact summit, which drew world leaders and corporate giants, was in progress. From the Modi government’s viewpoint, it was as high-powered as the 2023 G20 show, if not more, because the idea was to exhibit India’s leadership at the helm of cutting-edge technology and innovation.

Politically, its importance lay in the government’s effort to deflect attention and discussions from a stormy start to the Budget session that was overshadowed by the tricky India-US interim trade agreement. Other factors were also at play. The Epstein files allegedly enmeshed a senior Cabinet minister. The summit began on a series of false notes, thanks to poor logistics and later a Chinese robotic dog that a private university close to the present regime tried to pass off as its own and was caught out. There was no way the PM could allow the event to be dragged to the rock bottom of history. The “banian” protest came at the most opportune moment for the government. A handful of IYC men in vests waved white tees with uncomplimentary slogans about Modi printed on them and alleged that the trade deal was compromised. This was enough of a spur for his supporters to launch a pro-PM campaign and an anti-Congress tirade.

Senior academics, including some IIT directors, said the demonstration reflected a serious lack of judgment at a time when global investors were assessing India’s credibility as a long-term AI and advanced technologies’ partner. Former judges seconded their views. A parliamentary standing committee, chaired by the Congress’s bugbear and BJP MP Nishikant Dubey, alleged that the act harmed India’s global image.

The Congress’ allies, including the SP, distanced themselves from the controversy. However, after criticising the protest, Rashtriya Janata Dal MP Manoj Kumar Jha apparently had an afterthought. In a newspaper article, he conceded, “Writing more than 48 hours later, I am persuaded that the familiar anxiety about India’s ‘international image’ being damaged is overstated.” The compulsion of coalition politics? As the Congress made the protest a solo endeavour, party leader Rahul Gandhi could not escape accountability. Indeed, after the Delhi Police arrested IYC chief Uday Bhanu Chib and other protesters, Rahul expressed solidarity and described them as his “Babbar Sher” (lions). He commended them for “fearlessly raising their voice in the nation’s interest against the COMPROMISED PM”. Bravado and bluster? Rahul’s “crusades” against PM Modi and his government have yielded little or nothing for the Congress and largely resulted in losses. His remarks claiming that a Supreme Court order on the Rafale deal was an indictment of the PM birthed the slogan “chowkidar chor hai”. He had to unconditionally apologise to the court. The slogan unleashed a wave of sympathy for Modi in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

The first half of the ongoing Budget session was overwhelmed by Rahul’s “revelations” from former Army Chief Gen MM Naravane’s yet-to-be-published book, which reportedly contains accounts of the 2020 Galwan valley clash between Indian and Chinese troops and internal military reforms impinging on the Agnipath scheme. The publisher and the government stated that the book did not “exist”, to which the Leader of the Opposition had no credible answer. Rahul either oversteps the unstated limits of a convincing counter-campaign against the BJP or falters on facts due to a lack of thorough homework or gets the theme, timing and mode of protests wrong. In the IYC fiasco, the last factor proved to be his undoing. An editorial in a Kohima paper, Nagaland Post, thought it appropriate to comment on the incident. It said, “Ultimately, Gandhi’s gamble reflects a pattern of unconventional tactics that generate headlines but fail to translate into political gains or policy victories.”

The broader question, however, is not whether dissent should be permitted, but how it is exercised. Democratic protest derives its legitimacy from the issues it raises, the manner in which they are presented and the public response they generate. Parliamentary disruption, street demonstrations and symbolic acts can draw attention to grievances, but their effectiveness depends on whether they advance substantive debate rather than overshadow it.

India’s political history also shows that protests can have very different consequences. Some become enduring symbols of resistance, while others are remembered primarily for the controversy surrounding their methods. The distinction often lies in whether the protest creates space for wider public engagement or becomes a spectacle in itself.

For political parties, the challenge is therefore to convert dissent into a persuasive political argument. Opposition to government policies can be forceful without losing focus on facts, policy alternatives and the concerns of citizens. In an environment of intense media and social-media scrutiny, the choice of venue, language and timing can determine whether a protest strengthens its message or allows the controversy over its form to eclipse its substance.

India Going Big on Digital Credit, 5G Rollout Amazes World: Ashwini Vaishnaw

New Delhi, Sept 30 (GNS): Underlining India's ambitious digital transformation agenda, Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnaw, on Saturday described data as "the new oil" and data centres as "the new refineries." Speaking at the 'NDTV Word Summit' here, the minister emphasised the government's vision of Aatmanirbharta, saying India aims to become self-sufficient in critical minerals and digital infrastructure in the coming years. "We must make sure that the talent in our country finds opportunities here rather than going out," Vaishnaw told the gathering.

Commenting on India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), Vaishnaw said the government is "going big on digital credit," as part of its effort to make financial services more accessible through technology. Hailing the fast and efficient rollout of the 5G network within the country, the minister noted that India's achievement has drawn global attention. "India rolled out 5G at a pace that amazed the

world. We have the second-largest 5G network in the world. This helped us reach out to far-flung areas. About 90 per cent of the country is covered with 5G network," the minister noted.

Vaishnaw also highlighted India's growing presence in the field of artificial intelligence (AI), announcing that Bengaluru-based start-up Sarvam will launch its indigenous AI model by December this year or January next year, adding he is excited to use Sarvam's model once it is released. The minister also praised Google's proposal to establish an AI hub in Visakhapatnam with \$15 billion investment, claiming that it will support the development of AI research in India. "It is crucial that our nation has computer facilities. The ability to conduct quality research and create AI applications will greatly improve once we have them," he stated. According to Vaishnaw, 6G will completely replace the current 4G and 5G networks in terms of telecom technology. "6G will be completely different a new paradigm. Everything in your hand

will be a part of that network," he said. The minister emphasised India's leadership in digital infrastructure worldwide, pointing out that more than 13 countries are currently utilising India's UPI framework and that more than 50 countries have expressed interest in implementing the Aadhaar architecture.

Vaishnaw said India's digital infrastructure must be accompanied by a strong domestic ecosystem of semiconductor manufacturing, electronics production and advanced technologies. He stressed the need to create more opportunities for Indian talent and strengthen capabilities across critical technology sectors as part of the country's self-reliance drive.

The Minister also highlighted the growing role of digital platforms in expanding access to financial services and public welfare. He said India's Digital Public Infrastructure has created systems that can be scaled further and shared with other countries seeking to build inclusive digital services.

FASTag Annual Pass at 3,000 for 200 Toll Crossings Across India

New Delhi, Sept 30 (GNS): The National Highways Authority of India's (NHAI) 'Rajmargyatra' app enables users to gift the FASTag annual pass, the government said on Saturday, urging citizens to consider this "perfect gift for travellers" during the Diwali and festive season.

Users can activate a pass by clicking the "Add Pass" option on the application and then entering the recipient's vehicle number and the contact details of whom they want to gift the pass. After simple OTP verification, the annual pass will get activated on the FASTag attached to that vehicle, allowing for seamless travel without the need for frequent recharges, an official statement said.

FASTag annual pass provides a seamless and economical travel option to the National Highway users and is applicable on about 1,150 toll plazas across India. The annual pass costs Rs 3,000 and is valid for one year or up to 200 toll plaza crossings. The pass is applicable for all non-commercial ve-

hicles with a valid FASTag. The annual pass gets activated within two hours on the existing FASTag linked to the vehicle after payment of a one-time fee payment through the 'Rajmargyatra' App.

When the limit is reached, the FASTag automatically switches to standard pay-per-trip mode. For point-based toll plazas, each one-way crossing counts as a trip, and a return counts as two. In closed or ticketed systems, a complete entry-to-exit journey counts as one trip.

Some FASTags, especially those issued for new vehicles, may only be registered with the vehicle's chassis number. The Annual Pass cannot be activated on such FASTags, and they should be updated to include the complete vehicle registration number.

Payment for the pass can be made via UPI, debit or credit card, or net banking, and the FASTag wallet balances cannot be used for this purpose.

The statement from the Ministry of Road Transport

and Highways said that the FASTag annual pass has gained over 25 lakh users and processed approximately 5.67 crore transactions within its first two months of launch.

The gifting facility is intended to make the annual pass more convenient for families and frequent travellers during the festive period. The recipient's vehicle number and contact details can be entered through the "Add Pass" option on the Rajmargyatra app, followed by OTP verification.

The annual pass covers about 1,150 toll plazas and is available for non-commercial vehicles with valid FASTags. At point-based toll plazas, each one-way crossing is counted as one trip, while a return journey counts as two trips.

NHAI clarified that the pass cannot be activated on FASTags registered only with a vehicle's chassis number. Such FASTags must first be updated with the complete vehicle registration number. The annual pass fee cannot be paid from the FASTag wallet.

GST Boost Drives Record Navratri Auto Sales, Says FADA

New Delhi, Sept 30 (GNS): The recent GST rate cuts have sparked a nationwide shopping surge, making Navratri sales one of the largest consumption waves in years in automobiles, consumer electronics and e-commerce, according to industry estimates.

Analysts projected festive and wedding season turnover to exceed Rs 7 lakh crore. Digital payments jumped tenfold overnight, from Rs 1.18 lakh crore on September 21 to Rs 11.31 lakh crore on September 22, as shoppers rushed to take advantage of GST savings, according to industry data. Delhi's festive sales are estimated at Rs 75,000 crore, while Ahmedabad experienced nearly a 10 per cent increase in cotton fabric demand following GST reductions on garments priced under Rs 2,500.

The automotive and consumer durable sectors received a huge boost from the GST reforms. Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) reported a 34 per cent year-on-year increase in Navratri auto sales, marking the highest growth to date. Maruti Su-

zuki India doubled its sales compared to last year, delivering 165,000 cars in eight days, including a record 30,000 vehicles on Ashtami, while two-wheeler manufacturers saw showroom footfall double.

Consumer durable sales increased by 40-45 per cent, led by premium product categories, the industry estimates said. All leading consumer electronics brands and dealers saw strong double-digit growth.

E-commerce platforms also emerged as one of the biggest beneficiaries of the festive GST cut, as Amazon India reported a 29 per cent increase in same- and next-day deliveries in metropolitan areas and a 37 per cent rise in two-day deliveries to tier-2 and tier-3 cities.

Market sentiment reflected consumer momentum as the Nifty 50 reached a 52-week high of 25,709, supported by strong foreign inflows, a firmer rupee, and festive demand. Lower taxes on essential and consumer goods have eased household budgets and energised local supply chains, boosting Made-in-India products across markets.

Rural Economy Push: Himachal Govt to Procure Maize, Turmeric at Support Prices

Shimla, Sept 30 (GNS): Fulfilling the commitment, the Himachal Pradesh government has started the procurement of naturally grown barley in the Pangti subdivision of Chamba district. A spokesman of the government on Saturday said the government has procured 140 quintals of naturally grown barley at Rs 60 per kg from 59 farmers so far. He said 20 quintals of barley were purchased from 11 farmers of gram panchayat Hudaan, 78 quintals from 24 farmers of gram panchayat Suraa, nine quintals from seven farmers of gram panchayat Killar, 10 quintals from seven farmers of gram panchayat Saach and 23 quintals from 10 farmers of Sechu gram panchayat.

He said the government is promoting natural farming to ensure chemical-free products for the people and providing a support price to the crops grown naturally. He said this initiative is motivating the farmers to adopt natural farming to strengthen their economy.

He said 90 per cent of the population of the state lives in rural areas, and

the government is making policies to strengthen the economy of the rural folk. He said during the Himachal Day function at Pangti in Chamba district, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Sukhu announced Pangti as the first naturally farming subdivision of the state to promote natural farming in the area, and farmers were coming forward to grow the natural crops. He said the government has estimated to procure 2,371.71 quintals of maize to be procured from 1,473 farmers during the current kharif season, for which 28 collection centres will be established across the state. He said the Agriculture Department is also gearing up to procure raw turmeric from the farmers. He said 2,422.65 quintals of naturally grown raw turmeric will also be procured from 1,629 farmers through 12 collection centres. He said that the government is providing, support price of Rs 60 per kilogram each on wheat and barley, Rs 40 per kilogram on maize and Rs 90 per kilogram on raw turmeric grown naturally. He said this step is ensuring

remunerative prices to the farmers, thereby strengthening their economy.

He said the efforts are yielding positive outcomes to encourage the farmers to adopt natural farming and strengthen their economy. The procurement programme is aimed at providing farmers with assured markets and remunerative prices for naturally grown crops. Officials said the initiative would reduce dependence on chemical inputs while encouraging farmers to adopt sustainable agricultural practices.

The government has also planned to expand procurement facilities so that farmers in remote areas can access collection centres without facing difficulties in transporting their produce. The establishment of collection centres is expected to streamline procurement and ensure timely payments.

The Agriculture Department is preparing for the procurement of naturally grown maize during the current kharif season. Around 2,371.71 quintals of maize are expected to

be purchased from 1,473 farmers through 28 collection centres across the state.

Similarly, procurement of raw turmeric will provide another assured market for farmers adopting natural farming. The government plans to purchase 2,422.65 quintals of naturally grown turmeric from 1,629 farmers through 12 collection centres.

Officials said the support prices for naturally grown crops would provide farmers greater income security and encourage more cultivators to shift towards natural farming. The government is also focusing on strengthening rural livelihoods through policies aimed at improving agricultural returns and promoting sustainable farming. The initiative is expected to strengthen the local agricultural economy in Pangti and provide greater encouragement to farmers producing chemical-free crops. Officials said continued procurement support would help expand natural farming and improve market opportunities for growers.

Top Conglomerates Fined 744.6 Billion Won Over Three Years for Violations

Seoul, Sept 30 (GNS): Coupang, a leading e-commerce company in South Korea, has received the largest amount of fines from the Fair Trade Commission (FTC) among conglomerates over the past three years, a parliamentary report showed on Sunday.

According to the report compiled by the FTC and submitted to Rep. Choo Kyung-ho of the main opposition People Power Party, Coupang was fined a total of 162.8 billion won (US\$114.3 million) from the first half of 2022 to the first half of this year, reports Yonhap news agency. Last year, the FTC imposed the fine on the company for manipulating search algorithms to boost the "Coupang ranking" of its private-label and directly purchased products.

Top carmaker Hyundai Motor Group followed with cumulative fines of 119.4 billion won, trailed by poultry-processing company Harim Group with 101.6 billion won and SK Group with 64.5 billion won. The top 10 conglomerates were fined a combined 744.6 billion

won during the three-year period. Hyundai Department Store Group recorded the highest number of violations, 38 in total, mostly due to multiple collusion cases involving its furniture affiliate Hyundai Livart Furniture. Hanssem Co. came next with 33 violations, followed by SK Group with 31 and Enex Co. with 28.

Altogether, the top 10 companies violated antitrust law 243 times over the cited period.

Meanwhile, the antitrust watchdog said last week it will soon begin the process of imposing sanctions on two major food delivery platforms over alleged unfair market practices, after the companies failed to voluntarily submit adequate corrective measures.

The move comes after Woowa Brothers Corp., the operator of Baedal Minjok also known as Baemin, and Coupang Eats have not presented sufficient co-prosperity or corrective plans for more than six months regarding various unfair contract clauses amid the investigation, according to the Fair Trade Commission.

(FTC). "The investigations into violations such as forcing bundle sales are nearly complete," said Kim Moon-sik, a senior official at the FTC, adding that it plans to refer the case to the full commission meeting soon. The FTC data showed that enforcement action against major conglomerates remained significant during the period, with the top 10 companies accounting for hundreds of billions of won in cumulative fines. The figures reflect the watchdog's continued scrutiny of competition and fair-trade practices among large business groups.

The report also highlighted differences in the nature of violations. While some companies faced substantial financial penalties, others recorded a higher number of individual violations, including cases related to alleged collusion and business practices affecting market competition.

The latest action involving food delivery platforms comes amid broader efforts by the FTC to address potentially unfair practices in the rapidly expanding

Earnings Outlook Improves; FII Selling May Ease Amid Valuation Shift

Mumbai, Sept 30 (GNS): Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) have substantially reduced their selling in the Indian market and have even turned buyers in some days, analysts said on Sunday. A marginal change in FII activity is discernible in recent days. Till October 17, FII selling has drastically reduced to only Rs 4,114 crore. "The principal reason for this change in FII strategy is the reduced valuation differential between India and other markets. India's underperformance during the last one year has opened up prospects for better performance, going forward," said Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Ltd.

Also, the prospects of earnings growth in response to fiscal and monetary reforms have improved. High frequency data indicate brisk sales of automobiles and consumer durables during the festive season, he mentioned. With the valuation differential coming down and Indian earnings likely to improve in FY27, FIIs are

likely to slow down selling going forward. Higher valuations in India and cheaper valuations elsewhere have been the principal drivers behind the FII strategy.

A persistent feature of FII activity for the last two years has been the sustained FII buying/investment in the primary market. "The relatively lower valuations of IPOs and the preferential allotment to institutions have rendered FII investment through the primary market a highly profitable investment. This trend is likely to continue," said analysts. The market enters the new week with a optimistic outlook. Cooling inflation, robust domestic macro fundamentals, and strong earnings momentum offer a constructive setup for the medium term, said Ajit Mishra-SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd. The upcoming truncated trading week will be event-heavy, with several key triggers lined up for investors. On October 21, the one-hour Diwali special muhurat trading session, marking the beginning of Samvat 2082 will be closely

watched for sentiment cues and festive cheer, with strong retail and institutional participation anticipate. The shift in FII activity comes as the valuation gap between Indian equities and other major markets has narrowed. Analysts said India's relative underperformance over the past year has improved the scope for renewed foreign investor interest, particularly if corporate earnings strengthen. Domestic economic indicators have also remained supportive, with increased festive-season demand for automobiles and consumer durables. Analysts expect fiscal and monetary measures, along with improving earnings prospects for FY27, to support market sentiment in the coming months.

FIIs have continued to show interest in India's primary market, particularly through initial public offerings and preferential allotments. Analysts said relatively attractive IPO valuations have made primary-market investments appealing to institutional investors.

CETA Grants Duty-Free Access to 99% Tariff Lines, Boosting Indian Seafood Exports to UK

Kochi, Sept 30 (GNS): The India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) is poised to create significant opportunities for India's seafood export sector, according to the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA).

During a two-day interaction with exporters, MPEDA chairman D.V. Swamy urged them to adopt strategies focused on value addition and workforce upskilling to fully leverage the agreement.

The CETA pact, inked in July this year, grants zero-duty access to 99 per cent of tariff lines, enhancing the competitiveness of Indian seafood in the UK market. Key categories such as Vannanamei shrimp, frozen squid, lobsters, frozen pomfret, and black tiger shrimp are expected to benefit directly from the duty-free access.

The meetings provided a platform for industry stakeholders to explore the implications of the agreement. Presentations by Anil Kumar P, Joint Director, MPEDA, outlined the salient features of CETA, while Alex Paul Menon, Development Commissioner of the MPEZ-SEZ, highlighted the potential for Marine Aquapark SEZ development in Tamil Nadu.

Stakeholders, including officials from the Department of Commerce, Export Inspection Agency (EIA), and the Seafood Exporters Association of India (SEAI), alongside over 90 exporters from Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha, shared insights on market opportunities and operational strategies.

India exported marine products worth \$7.45 billion in 2024-25, with shrimp, fish, and cuttlefish forming the bulk of shipments. Exports to the UK reached 16,082 MT valued at \$104.43 million, driven largely by demand for frozen shrimp, which accounted for 77 per cent of the total UK shipments, followed by frozen fish at eight per cent. Industry experts anticipate that the India-UK CETA could double Indian seafood exports to the UK in the near term.

The agreement is ex-

pected to catalyse economic growth, employment generation, and innovation while promoting sustainable practices in the sector.

Swamy emphasised that tapping into this opportunity will require coordinated efforts to enhance product quality, scaling up processing capabilities, and training skilled labour to meet the rising demand in global markets.

The MPEDA chairman further pointed out that with proactive adaptation and strategic investment, Indian seafood exporters can not only increase their market share in the UK but also establish India as a competitive, high-value supplier in international seafood trade.

The duty-free access is expected to improve the price competitiveness of Indian seafood products in the UK and encourage exporters to expand their presence in the market. MPEDA officials said exporters should study changing consumer preferences and focus on products with greater value addition.

The authority also stressed the importance of strengthening cold-chain facilities, modern processing units and quality-control systems. Better infrastructure and adherence to international food-safety standards would help exporters meet the requirements of the UK market and reduce post-harvest losses.

Industry participants discussed the need for greater diversification beyond conventional shrimp exports. Developing ready-to-cook, processed and branded seafood products could help Indian exporters capture higher-value segments and create additional opportunities across the supply chain.

MPEDA said continued coordination among exporters, government agencies and other stakeholders would be important for converting the trade agreement into sustained export growth. Investments in technology, skilled manpower and sustainable aquaculture practices were identified as key areas for strengthening India's position in global seafood markets.

Deposits Reach 2.96 Lakh cr; Advances Cross 2.5 Lakh cr Mark

Mumbai, Sept 30 (GNS): Yes Bank's net profit for the second quarter of the financial year 2025-26 (Q2 FY26) stood at Rs 654.47 crore, down 18 per cent quarter-on-quarter (QoQ) from Rs 801.07 crore in the April-June period (Q1 FY26), it was announced on Saturday.

The private sector lender has opened 43 new branches during FY26 so far. The bank informed that SMBC has become the largest shareholder, acquiring a stake of 24.2 per cent, while SBI continues to be a major shareholder with over 10 per cent holding. "The Bank delivered strong performance across key operating metrics during Q2FY26. Deposit growth momentum sustained, with continued outperformance relative to the industry, particularly in CASA deposits. Disbursements recorded healthy sequential growth, supported by broad-based traction across segments, including around 20 per cent QoQ growth in the Retail segment," said Prashant Kumar, Managing Director and CEO, Yes Bank.

Asset quality further strengthened during the quarter, with a decline in fresh slippages and overdue balances as well as an improvement in the provision coverage ratio, he added.

According to the bank, India Ratings and CRISIL

CM Revanth Reddy accuses KCR family of amassing massive wealth

Hyderabad, Sep 30 (IANS): Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Wednesday accused former Chief Minister and BRS President K. Chandrasekhara Rao (KCR) and his family members of amassing massive wealth while holding key positions of power.

He claimed that KCR and his family cashed in on the Telangana movement to amass assets worth thousands of crores. They built farmhouses on hundreds of acres and are living a lavish life, he remarked.

Addressing a public meeting in the Sircilla constituency, represented by Bharat Rashtara Samithi (BRS) Working President K. T. Rama Rao (KTR), CM Revanth Reddy launched a scathing attack on him and his father, KCR.

On his maiden visit to Sircilla as the Chief Minister, Revanth Reddy held a roadshow. It was a

big show of strength by the ruling Congress in the BRS stronghold.

CM Revanth Reddy took a broadside at KCR for encouraging his family members to ascend to top posts and enjoy power during the 10 years of BRS rule in the state.

The Chief Minister said KCR called KTR from America to give him the Sircilla MLA ticket in 2009. "From 2009 to 2026, people of Sircilla have elected KTR six times, but why have the suicides of weavers and workers in this region not stopped? Why has the migration of workers to the Gulf in search of a livelihood not stopped?" he asked.

He stated that KTR won the Sircilla seat by a margin of just 172 votes in the 2009 elections and exploited his power to amass assets worth a staggering one lakh crore rupees.



Revanth Reddy asked people if the KCR family extended any help to them all these years.

Revanth Reddy appealed to people to wipe out BRS from Sircilla and promised that the Congress candidate winning from here in the next elections will be made a minister. He assured the people that he will personally take up the responsibility of bringing about change in their lives. "BRS, KCR, and KTR will be the past in the state politics and the Congress will remain in power till 2034," he said. He demanded that KTR release a white paper on the property owned by him and his family members, including KCR, Harish Rao and Santosh Kumar.

"KTR built a farmhouse in Janwada; his sister Kavitha's farmhouse is located in Shankarpally; Harish Rao's farmhouse is in Moinabad, and KCR's farmhouse is in Erravalli. Where did all of these come from? Where did KTR acquire properties like Deccan Serai, 'At Home' service apartments, and hotels with nearly 400 rooms in the vicinity of Hitech City? Does KTR have the guts to answer questions regarding these?" he asked.

The Chief Minister said he would also disclose the properties owned by KTR in America and Singapore.

CM Revanth Reddy slammed KCR for skipping the Assembly session and alleged that he was not ready to address the Dalit Speaker as 'Sir'.

He asked KCR why he did not even condemn the derogatory remarks made against the Dalit Speaker recently. The arrogance of KCR was visible when his farmhouse was cleaned with turmeric water after the Dalits staged a dharna, he said.

PRAYER MEET HELD IN MEMORY OF VETERAN ACTOR MUSHTAQ KHAN JI IN MUMBAI

Mumbai, Sept 30 (GNS): A prayer meeting in loving memory of veteran Film & TV actor Mushtaq Khan Ji was held today at Embassy Hall, 2nd Floor, Raheja Classic Club, Lokhandwala, Andheri West, Mumbai from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM.

Mushtaq Khan Ji, aged 75, passed away on 24th September 2026 at Nana-vati Hospital, Mumbai after a long battle with lung cancer. He was known for his work in over 500 films including Welcome, Gardar, Hum Hain Rahi Pyaar Ke, Aashiqui, Hera Pheri, Jodi No. 1, Mujhse Shaadi Karogi, Stree. His iconic dialogues "Meri ek taang nakli hai" and "Main hockey ka bahut bada khiladi tha" from Welcome will always be remembered.

His last rites were held on 25th September at Versova Kabristan, Yari Road. Today's prayer meet was organized by Fans and Friend Family to celebrate his life and contribution to cinema. More than 1000 members from Bollywood attended the prayer meet. Present on the occasion were:- Bollywood Writer & Director Irfan Jamiawala Shahbaz Khan, Firoz, Arjun, Sunil, Ali Khan and many other artists. A large portrait of Mushtaq Khan Ji was decorated with rose petals and lilies. Emotional tributes were paid by all attendees. The family thanked everyone who came.



Self-Awareness, Lifelong Learning Vital for Teachers : Pasha Quadri



Falaknuma News State Bureau M.A.Samad Nizamabad, Sept 30

Self-awareness and a commitment to lifelong learning can significantly enhance the quality of education, said Maulana Mufti Dr Hafiz Mohammed Saber Pasha Quadri, President of the Languages Development Organisation and Khateeb and Imam of Telangana State Haj House Mosque, Nampally.

He was speaking at a felicitation programme organised in honour of Maulana Hafiz Mohammed Ayub Ahmed Ansari, School Assistant (Urdu), Government High School, Moghalpura, Hyderabad, on receiving the Best Teacher Award for his distinguished services in education.

Dr Pasha Quadri said a teacher's role extends beyond classroom instruction and includes shaping the intellectual, moral and educational foundations of the younger generation. Teachers should regularly evaluate their performance, understand students' individual needs and adopt teaching methods suited to different learning abilities.

He stressed that classroom challenges should be viewed as opportunities for self-correction and professional growth. Punctuality, empathy, integrity, sound judgement and balanced conduct, he said, are essential qualities of an effective teacher.

Highlighting the importance of Urdu, Dr Pasha Quadri said teachers should encourage younger generations to develop interest and affection for the language and present Urdu as a medium of knowledge, literature, culture and expression. He also praised Maulana Hafiz Mohammed Ayub Ahmed Ansari for his dedication to Urdu education and his accomplishments as a Hafiz of the Holy Qur'an and Qur'anic reciter. He said the Best Teacher Award was a fitting recognition of his commitment and service.

S. Ramachandra Rao, Gazetted Headmaster of Government High School, Moghalpura, along with Syed Isa, Syed Khwaja Ismail Zabihuddin, V. Karunakara Reddy, Mohammed Rafi, teachers and other distinguished guests attended the programme. Participants felicitated Maulana Ansari and conveyed their best wishes, while reaffirming the importance of combining education with character, language with culture and knowledge with moral values.

Two NMC Engineers Retire from Service



Falaknuma News State Bureau M.A.Samad Nizamabad, Sept 30

Two Assistant Engineers of the Nizamabad Municipal Corporation, Syed Inayat Kareem and Sandupatla Bhoomeswar, retired from service on Wednesday after rendering several years of dedicated and sincere service to the civic body.

A farewell programme was organised in their honour, with Nizamabad Mayor Smt. Kooragayala Uma Rani Ramesh attending as the chief guest. The retiring employees were felicitated and their contributions to the Municipal Corporation were appreciated. Speaking on the occasion, Mayor Uma Rani Ramesh commended Syed Inayat Kareem and Sandupatla Bhoomeswar for efficiently discharging their responsibilities and contributing to the development of the Municipal Corporation. She wished them a peaceful, happy and healthy retired life and conveyed her best wishes to their family members. Municipal Commissioner Dilip, Corporators Yerram Gangadhar and Battula Raghavender, along with municipal officials and staff, participated in the programme and extended their greetings to the retiring employees.

The programme concluded smoothly with officials and colleagues recalling the services rendered by the two Assistant Engineers during their tenure.

Prepare for the Graduate MLC Elections: Sabitha Indra Reddy

Hyderabad, Sep 30 (GNS): Maheswaram MLA and former Minister Smt. Sabitha Indra Reddy called upon party workers to gear up for the upcoming Graduate MLC elections. She instructed the cadre to ensure the large-scale registration of votes for all graduates residing in the constituency.

Sabitha Indra Reddy participated in a preparatory meeting for Maheswaram constituency party workers—held at Sama Yadi Reddy Gardens in Jillelaguda—regarding the Mahabubnagar-Hyderabad-Ranga Reddy Graduate MLC election.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Sabitha Indra Reddy provided guidance to the workers regarding the upcoming election. She urged them to identify every graduate in the constituency and work diligently to ensure the mass registration of all eligible voters. She recalled how Surabhi Vani Devi was elected in the previous MLC election thanks to the cooperation and hard work of the party cadre.

Telangana taking steps to transform Hyderabad into Gaming, VFX hub: Chief Secretary

Hyderabad, Sep 30 (GNS): The government of Telangana is taking special measures to transform Hyderabad into a national and international hub for the Gaming, VFX and Animation industries, Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju said.

The Chief Secretary on Wednesday held a review meeting at the Dr B.R. Ambedkar Telangana State Secretariat on the arrangements for the Telangana Global Summit, scheduled to be held in December at Bharat Future City, Hyderabad.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Secretary said the Telangana Global Summit is being organised as part of the State's initiatives towards achieving the goal of a one-trillion-dollar economy.

Special programmes are

being planned to attract globally renowned companies from the Animation, Gaming, VFX and other creative and entertainment sectors and facilitate the establishment of their centres in Hyderabad, he said.

Under the theme "Stories,

Games & Dreams," several programmes aimed at engaging and inspiring the youth will be organised. A Comic, Gaming & VFX Business Day will also be held as part of the Summit.

He said Comic Con, DreamHack and India

Game Utsav will be organised along with a B2B Expo, Innovation Zone and Animation Stalls, providing a platform to showcase technology, innovations, investment and business opportunities in these sectors.

Telangana-origin lawyer elected as Mayor of Sydney's Strathfield

Hyderabad, Sep 30 (GNS): Sandhya Reddy, a law graduate from Telangana, has been elected as Mayor of Sydney's Strathfield municipality.

An alumna of Osmania University, Reddy was elected as the 73rd Mayor of the Strathfield Council in Sydney on Tuesday. She will hold the post for two years.

Hailing from Mellaredygudem village in Vikarabad district, she studied at Osmania University and Stanley College in Hyderabad before moving to Australia in 1991.

She later started practising as an immigration lawyer and became involved in social and political affairs.

Sandhya Reddy, also known as Sandy Reddy, was first elected as a Strathfield councillor in December 2021. In September 2023, she was elected Deputy Mayor. She became the first Indian woman to be elected to the post.

She retained her council seat in September 2025 and held the post until her election as mayor.

After her election as Mayor, Reddy told Australian media that it is an honour. She said she was pleased to get the opportunity to serve the Strathfield local government area.

According to a report by 'The Australia Today', she holds a Bachelor of Law and a Master of Anthropology, as well as a Graduate Certificate in Migration Law from the Australian National University. She has also operated an education and migration services practice while raising her family in Strathfield.



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