

INDIA bloc takes 'vote-chori' battle to Supreme Court

New Delhi, Oct, 12 (GNS) Opposition leaders, activists and civil society members marched to the Supreme Court in New Delhi on Monday and filed a joint petition against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and alleged poll irregularities, amid protests over what they called "vote chori". The show of strength brought together senior INDIA bloc leaders, including Leaders of Opposition Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee, CPI leader D Raja, CPI(M) leader M A Baby, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav and NCP-SCP leader Supriya Sule.

The march came a day after the Chief Justice of India declined a request for a meeting with the two LoPs, saying the matter was sub judice. Earlier on Monday, Chief Justice Surya Kant said at an event

Seeks probe into voter rolls & return to Paper Ballots



The plea has also been filed by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Trinamool Congress Party (TMC) MP Saugata Roy, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Prasad Yadav, Nationalist Congress Party (Pawar) (NCP-SCP) leader Supriya Sule, Shiv Sena-UBT leader Sanjay Raut, Congress Party of India's (CPI) D Raja, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) MP Mahua Majhi, CPI(M) general secretary MA Baby and Indian Union Muslim League (IUML leader) ET Mohammed Basheer.



that the "doors of the Supreme Court are open for everybody", whether a commoner or a lawmaker, when asked how the opposition leaders could place their grievances.

A large crowd carrying flags and posters gathered in central Delhi and moved

towards the Supreme Court through a heavily barricaded route. The march passed through Barakhamba Road, crossed police barriers at Bhagwan Dass Road and reached the court, where opposition leaders filed their plea alleging large-scale voter

deletions and

irregularities in the SIR exercise. The petition named the Election Commission of India, Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi as parties in the case. The plea was filed by Rahul Gandhi, Kharge,

Trinamool Congress MP Saugata Roy, Akhilesh Yadav, Tejashwi Prasad Yadav, Supriya Sule, Sanjay Raut, D Raja, Mahua Majhi, M A Baby and E T Mohammed Basheer. Later in the evening, Gandhi and Kharge, along with other INDIA bloc leaders, went to the Su-

preme Court to sign certain documents linked to the petition. Kharge later said on X, "The fight against vote theft will continue. INDIA's battle will go on. The sea of people stands witness, Modi-Shah's accountability will be fixed for sure!"

Opposition leaders had said they wanted to submit a memorandum to the CJI seeking an end to "vote chori", Kumar's resignation, a halt to the SIR of electoral rolls and a return to the paper ballot format. As police stopped the march at Bhagwan Dass Road, several leaders, including Rahul

Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Tejashwi Yadav and Akhilesh Yadav, climbed on top of a vehicle. The procession then moved ahead after crossing the barricades, with supporters cheering and waving flags. Slogans were raised against the government and CEC Kumar, with protesters saying "vote chori" and the SIR exercise would not be allowed.

Chief ministers and senior leaders jostled for space in the procession, while employees in offices along Barakhamba Road filmed and photographed the gathering. Several young protesters wore Batman masks and costumes. Some protesters spray-painted anti-government slogans, including "Modi Must Go", on pavements, and slogans against Modi, the RSS and CEC Kumar were written on the road at Mandi House roundabout. A large number of lawyers also joined the march.

SCBA, SCAORA Condemn Calls For CJI Surya Kant's Resignation

New Delhi, Oct 12 (UNI): The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) and the Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association (SCAORA) on Monday condemned statements circulating on social media calling for the resignation of Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant, saying such remarks risk undermining the dignity of the judiciary and amount to an attempt to interfere with the administration of justice. In separate resolutions, the two Bar bodies urged their members and the public to respect the independence of the judiciary and maintain the dignity and decorum of the Supreme Court of India. The SCBA said every person had the opportunity to approach the courts and seek remedies in accordance with law. "Statements of this nature belittle the institution of the judiciary and amount to an attempt to interfere with the administration of justice," stated the resolution signed

by SCBA Honorary Secretary Pragya Baghel. Meanwhile, the SCAORA expressed strong disapproval of statements made in the public domain seeking the resignation of the CJI, stressing that grievances concerning judicial functioning must be raised through appropriate legal and constitutional channels.

"The judiciary is a constitutional institution entrusted with the responsibility of upholding the rule of law and protecting the rights of all citizens," the resolution stated. It added that public statements seeking the resignation of the head of the judiciary risk undermining the dignity of the office and public confidence in the institution. "The judicial process must be allowed to function independently, without pressure or interference," the SCAORA said, urging all concerned to respect judicial independence and maintain the dignity and decorum of the Supreme Court.

CEC GYANESH KUMAR OUSTER PROTEST

SC seeks Delhi govt reply on contempt, orders normal Metro services, no unlawful detentions

New Delhi, Oct 11 (UNI) The Supreme Court today issued a notice to the BJP-led Delhi government seeking its reply on why contempt of court proceedings should not be initiated against it over the closure of Metro stations during the October 10 protests demanding the ouster of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

A special bench, comprising Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V. Mohana, directed the authorities to file a short affidavit responding to the contempt petition and submit a compliance report on implementation of the court's earlier directions, issued on October 9, concerning public transport and movement during the protests.

In a slew of directions, the court ordered that Metro and railway services should function normally, subject to regulatory mea-



sures necessitated by public-order considerations. It said movement across the city should not be obstructed except through traffic regulation, directed an immediate review of road barricades and ordered that internet services remain undisturbed, subject to statutory powers available to the authorities.

The bench further directed that there should be no unlawful detention and that peaceful assem-

bly should be permitted outside areas where restrictions under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), which replaced the erstwhile Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, were in operation. Justice Mohana also reminded those supporting the protests of their responsibility to ensure peaceful demonstrations. "All of you present here, if you are seriously interested in public welfare, please undertake that you will all protest peacefully and not instigate any other person," she said.

Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan agreed, while seeking a corresponding assurance from the authorities. "Absolutely. And that undertaking should come from their side also about how to behave with peaceful protesters," he said.

25 Cong MLAs, including ministers, ready to join BJP: Vijayendra

Bengaluru, Oct 12 (UNI) Karnataka BJP president Vijayendra Yediyurappa on Monday claimed that 20 to 25 Congress MLAs, including ministers, were ready to join the BJP if Assembly elections were announced, alleging that the ruling party was facing internal discontent amid the controversy over alleged sting operations targeting ministers.

Vijayendra said the BJP was not attempting to poach Congress legislators but claimed that the political atmosphere within the ruling party was conducive to defections if elections were held immediately.

"If elections are announced tomorrow, 25 Congress MLAs, including ministers, will join the BJP," he said. He alleged that several Congress legislators had lost faith in the party's leadership, projecting the reported discontent as a sign of deeper political instability within the ruling party. However, he did not



identify the legislators or ministers he claimed were prepared to switch sides, and his assertion could not be independently verified. His remarks came amid a political controversy over alleged sting operations targeting ministers and bureaucrats in the state government.

The episode has triggered questions over whether the alleged operations were intended to expose wrongdoing or were connected to internal power struggles within the Congress. Vijayendra criticised the alleged use of sting operations for

political purposes, arguing that the controversy had damaged the state's political atmosphere.

He referred to allegations that the operations could have been linked to attempts by some leaders to secure ministerial positions or advance their claims to the chief minister's post. He said the identities of those involved and the circumstances surrounding the operations would emerge in due course. The allegations remain contested, and the identities, motives and authenticity of those involved in the alleged operations have not been independently established. The controversy has also drawn criticism from union Minister and JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy, who questioned why the state government had not ordered an investigation despite Chief Minister DK Shivakumar's claims about an alleged plot targeting five Cabinet ministers and bureaucrats.

India and Czech republic discuss advancing strategic partnership on innovation

New Delhi, Oct 12 (UNI): India and the Czech Republic on Monday discussed ways to advance strategic partnership on innovation while also exchanging views on regional and global developments, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stated. "Secretary (West) Sibi George received Czech Deputy Foreign Minister Marie Chatardova. Both sides held substantive discussions on advancing the India-Czech Strategic Partnership on Innovation, reviewing cooperation across trade and investment, defence, science and technology, innovation and people-to-people ties. They also exchanged views on regional and global developments," the MEA posted on X.

Earlier this year, Chatardova had held talks with Minister of State (MoS) for Commerce and Industry, Jitin Prasada, during his



visit to the Czech Republic. Prasada concluded his official visit to the Czech Republic on April 23, aimed at strengthening bilateral trade, investment and industrial cooperation between the two countries.

During the visit, the MoS held bilateral meetings with senior Czech leaders, including Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of

Industry and Trade Karel Havlicek, his deputy Jan Sechter; and Deputy Foreign Minister Marie Chatardova. The visit that was held between April 22 and April 23 at the invitation of the Czech government underscored India's commitment to deepening economic and strategic engagement with key European partners.

India, UK explore cooperation in space, civil nuclear energy and emerging technologies

New Delhi, Oct 12 (UNI): Union Minister of State Dr Jitendra Singh on Monday held bilateral talks with UK Secretary of State for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade Jonathan Reynolds to explore avenues for strengthening cooperation in space, civil nuclear energy, scientific research and emerging technologies.

According to the Ministry of Science & Technology, the Indian delegation — led by the minister — comprised Prof. Umesh Waghmare, Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Dr. Praveenkumar Somasundaram, Adviser and Head, International Bilateral Cooperation, DST.

On the other side, the UK delegation comprised Reynolds, British High Commissioner to India Lindy Cameron and Interim Permanent Secretary of the Department for Busi-



ness, Innovation, Science and Trade Amanda Brooks, according to the ministry. The minister said that India's space-sector reforms had opened new opportunities for private industry and startups, enabling research institutions to focus on advanced research.

Building on this experience, India and the UK can expand cooperation through research partnerships and greater industry participation, he added.

Moreover, discussions covered collaboration in

space science, satellite development and stronger engagement between scientific institutions and technology enterprises.

With around 800 space-tech startups in India, Singh proposed greater connectivity between Indian and British startups to facilitate innovation and expand commercial opportunities, according to the ministry. On civil nuclear energy, Singh spoke about India's nuclear-sector reforms including SHANTI Act, 2025.

Piyush Goyal Calls For Doubling India-UK Bilateral Trade By 2030

New Delhi, Oct 12 (UNI): Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Monday called upon businesses in India and the United Kingdom to translate the opportunities created by the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) into expanded trade, investment, partnerships, and job creation.

Addressing the 16th Session of the India-UK Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO), he said the two countries should aim to double bilateral trade by 2030 and make the India-UK Vision 2035 a framework for greater economic ambition and cooperation.

Goyal said the comprehensive economic and trade agreement (CETA) between the two countries marks a major milestone, providing zero-duty access in the United Kingdom market for most Indian exports while opening up significant opportunities for UK exporters across

sectors. The agreement has also opened up new opportunities in services. He added that the Social Security Double Contribution Convention could further benefit both economies through the supply of services at competitive prices and improved profitability. India and the UK were complementary economies with considerable potential to expand existing trade, develop new export opportunities and diversify the range of products exchanged, he said.

Highlighting the existing trade complementarities, the minister noted that India was a major exporter of smartphones, pharmaceutical products, jewellery, textiles, leather goods, rice and certain agricultural products, iron and non-alloy steel, machinery parts, and auto components. On the UK side, he identified potential in the supply of products across the petroleum value chain.

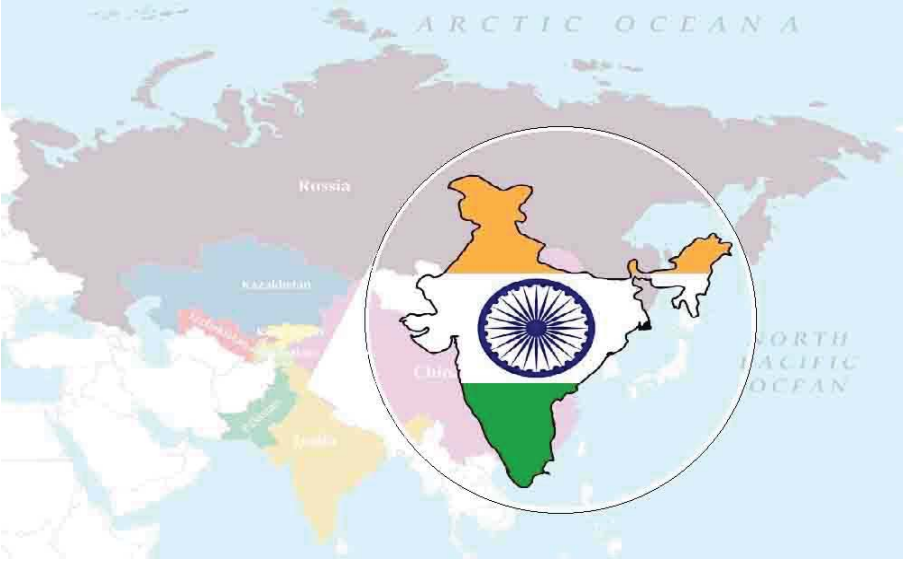
India needs to shield its core interests in West Asia

Anil Wadhwa
THE Gulf and the larger West Asia region have slipped into a phase of dangerous uncertainty. A slew of overlapping crises in the form of the war in Gaza, the long-simmering Israel-Iran rivalry, attacks by Iranian proxies like the Houthis in the Red Sea, and Yemen, Iraq and Syria were followed by a phase of negotiations brokered by Oman between the US and Iran.

However, the abrupt, coordinated US-Israeli strikes on Iran, have knocked out the top Iranian leadership, leading to Iran's retaliation across the region. The situation has now morphed into a wider regional contest with global consequences.

A convalescence of interests of a belligerent US under a mercurial President Donald Trump, who wants regime change in Iran, the desire for regional dominance by Israel, which seeks drastically diminished Iranian capabilities, and inaction by others involved in their own backyard has brought about this catastrophic outcome. The Red Sea, the Bab el-Mandeb and now the Strait of Hormuz, which are vital arteries for global trade, have become zones of high risk. These are desperate times for the Iranian military authorities -- the objective seems to be damage the civil aviation hubs and disrupt the flow of energy in the Gulf which will make the countries neighbouring Iran to clamour for an end to hostilities. For India, with entrenched economic, energy, diaspora and strategic stakes in the Gulf, this is not a distant conflict but a situation which demands timely, careful, calibrated attention and action.

India is heavily depen-



dent on energy imports, with just 74 days of crude reserves. Nearly two-thirds of India's crude oil and a substantial share of its LNG (liquefied natural gas) imports originate in the Gulf, particularly from Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Kuwait. The retaliatory attack on Saudi Arabia's Ras Tanura oil refinery and the Qatari gas facilities in Ras Laffan and Mesaieed has brought the Gulf energy infrastructure squarely in Iran's sights.

The Strait of Hormuz, a narrow waterway that carries roughly one-fifth of the world's seaborne oil trade, has seen near-standstill tanker traffic as carriers avoid high-risk waters and war-risk insurance coverage collapses. Prolonged disruption to shipping routes or escalation involving major producers will directly impact the Indian household through fuel prices and cost of living. Indian expots to Europe and the Mediterranean pass through the Red Sea and the Suez Canal. Attacks on vessels and the re-routing of ships around the Cape of Good Hope will raise freight costs and delivery times. Trade dis-

ruptions in key routes like Bab el-Mandeb alone will affect 30 per cent of India's westbound exports to Europe and to the US, hitting sectors from electronics to staples. Coming at a time when India aspires to expand manufacturing and integrate deeper into global value chains, these could prove to be severe disruptions.

Around 10 million Indians live and work in the region, forming the backbone of sectors ranging from construction and healthcare to services and small businesses. Their remittances constituted 38 per cent of the \$135 billion record foreign exchange and household income sent back home by Indian expatriates last year. A widening conflict has raised concerns about the safety of the diaspora and their job security; it could slash inflows and weaken forex reserves. Evacuation contingencies will arise, requiring immense resources, even as this could become an impossible task in a limited timeframe, bringing the government under tremendous pressure as escalation mounts.

India balances its strategic ties with Israel, Iran

and the Arab Gulf nations via a "multi-alignment" strategy. India's ties with Israel span defence, technology and agriculture, while Iran, a country of 93 million people, remains important for connectivity to Central Asia and Afghanistan. India's Chabahar project, which is its gateway to Central Asia, now faces heightened uncertainty.

The Gulf states have emerged as key economic and strategic partners, with expanding investments, defence cooperation and people-to-people links, but they are all taking a battering. Bilateral cooperation and investments will take a back seat for now as global investors, in general, will tend to pull back into "safer assets". Projects like the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), requiring diversification of strained oil reserves and strategic reserves, will face delays.

Given its dependencies, India's response so far has been marked by restraint and a refusal to be drawn into binary camps or criticism of military strikes on Iran. India has consistently called for de-escalation,

respect for international law and the protection of civilians. It has engaged all sides through diplomatic channels. Yet this approach seems to have no place in the current world disorder, in which the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is paralysed, and a Board of Peace, ironically blessed by the UNSC, threatens to preside over decisions on the wider world, despite a limited mandate for Gaza.

The evolving situation, therefore, brings into focus India's long-term strategic posture. As a major trading nation with growing maritime interests, India cannot remain indifferent to threats to freedom of navigation. Its naval presence in the Arabian Sea and the wider Indian Ocean has already expanded in recent years, focusing on escort missions, anti-piracy operations and maritime domain awareness. The current crisis is bound to accelerate this trend, and India must work more closely with like-minded partners for preserving its sea lanes of communication, while preserving its strategic autonomy.

Besides, the region is no longer just an energy supplier for India; it is a theatre where great power competition intersects with regional rivalries. Geography, economics and human connections bind India to the Gulf and West Asia in ways that cannot be wished away. The task before India is to shield its core interests of energy security, trade flows and the welfare of the diaspora, while contributing, wherever possible, to stability and dialogue. This is an increasingly fractured world. India's ability to be nimble and think long-term will be tested in these circumstances.

India's reassessed GDP Growth rate of 7.6% is good but unevenly distributed

R. Suryamurthy

India's 7.6 per cent real GDP growth in FY26, as per the Second Advance Estimates released under the rebased national accounts with 2022-23 as the base year, is being widely read as confirmation of macroeconomic strength. In a global environment where most large economies are struggling to sustain even 3 per cent growth, such a number commands attention. Yet, a rigorous reading of the data suggests that this expansion is being driven by a shrinking set of sectors, a rising dependence on capital formation, and a weakening consumption and rural income base, making the growth trajectory far more fragile than the aggregate suggests.

The estimates, released by the Government of India through the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) and the National Statistics Office (NSO), reveal not just how fast the economy is growing, but how unevenly that growth is being produced and distributed. And it is this unevenness not the headline number that should be the focus of policy concern.

Rebasing GDP to 2022-23 has done more than update weights; it has reshaped the architecture of India's growth narrative. Under the revised series, Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) is estimated at 31.7 per cent of GDP, among the highest ratios seen since the mid-2000s. By contrast, Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE) now accounts for just 56.7 per cent of GDP, down sharply from the 58-60 per cent range seen consistently under the previous series. This shift is not triv-



ial. In a \$3.5-trillion economy, a 1 percentage-point change in the consumption share represents demand worth over 3.5 lakh crore. The new series therefore implies that India's growth engine is now far more dependent on investment momentum than on household purchasing power, a configuration that historically has proven less resilient in the face of shocks.

Equally revealing is the fact that GVA growth has exceeded GDP growth in both FY25 and FY26. In FY26, while real GDP grew 7.6 per cent, real GVA grew 7.7 per cent, implying a negative contribution from net indirect taxes. In absolute terms, this suggests that tax growth has lagged output growth despite nominal GDP expanding by 8.6 per cent. This weak tax-growth linkage undermines the assumption that high GDP growth automatically translates into stronger fiscal capacity.

Manufacturing has emerged as the undisputed driver of FY26 growth, expanding by 11.5 per cent in real terms and contrib-

uting the largest share to incremental GVA. Over the past three years, manufacturing GVA has grown at an average annual rate of about 11.1 per cent, compared to overall GVA growth of around 7.3 per cent. However, the employment and demand implications of this surge remain limited. Manufacturing today accounts for less than 18 per cent of total employment, while absorbing a disproportionately high share of incremental capital. The implied capital-output ratio of manufacturing has risen, indicating that each unit of output growth is being generated with less labour intensity than in earlier industrial phases.

Moreover, the rebound is uneven. While core industries and large corporate manufacturers have benefited from infrastructure spending and balance-sheet repair, MSME-linked manufacturing remains constrained, as reflected in modest credit growth to smaller enterprises relative to large firms. Without a parallel rise in mass con-

sumption, manufacturing growth of this scale risks becoming self-limiting, as capacity addition outpaces demand. In contrast to manufacturing, construction growth has slowed to 7.1 per cent in FY26, down from near double-digit rates immediately after the pandemic. This matters disproportionately because construction absorbs over 13 per cent of India's workforce and is among the most employment-elastic sectors in the economy.

The slowdown coincides with a shift in housing demand toward mid-range and premium segments, while affordable housing — which accounts for the bulk of employment generation — has weakened. The macro consequence is visible: despite strong GDP growth, employment growth remains subdued, and income gains among migrant and informal workers remain limited.

In an economy where consumption accounts for over half of GDP, this deceleration in an employment-heavy sector acts as a direct brake on demand

expansion. The most troubling numbers in the FY26 estimates relate to agriculture. Agriculture and allied activities grew just 2.4 per cent in FY26, compared to 7.6 per cent GDP growth and 11.5 per cent manufacturing growth. In Q3 FY26 — the festive quarter — agricultural growth fell further to around 1.4 per cent, while overall GDP expanded 7.8 per cent. With over 40 per cent of the workforce dependent on agriculture, this divergence is economically destabilising. Even assuming population growth of roughly 1 per cent, real per-worker income growth in agriculture remains close to 1-1.5 per cent, insufficient to drive meaningful consumption growth.

This helps explain why, despite PFCE growing 7.7 per cent in FY26, rural consumption indicators continue to lag urban demand. The recovery in consumption is real, but it is concentrated among salaried, urban households, not farm-dependent ones.

Services GVA grew 9.0 per cent in FY26, providing stability to overall growth. Within services: Trade, transport, hotels and communication grew over 10 per cent. Financial, real estate and professional services also expanded close to 10 per cent.

However, public administration and defence grew significantly slower, reflecting subdued state-level spending. This matters because state expenditure traditionally plays a counter-cyclical role, especially in supporting rural and semi-urban demand. Its weakness leaves growth increasingly dependent on private-sector confidence and urban credit cycles.

Iran a testing ground for new weapons

The war with Iran is not only being fought in the skies over the Gulf and the deserts beyond; it is being fought in workshops, production lines and design bureaux. Every strike, interception and drone launch is not simply an act of war, but a live experiment. The conflict has become a testing ground - for new weapons, for recycled designs and for the doctrines that will shape future battlefields.

One of the clearest examples is the first confirmed combat use of a US one-way attack drone known as the Low-cost Uncrewed (Unmanned) Combat Attack System, or LUCAS. In a public statement, United States Central Command (CENTCOM) - the Pentagon's regional combat command responsible for American military operations across the Middle East, Central Asia and parts of South Asia — said that "Task Force Scorpion Strike employed low-cost one-way attack drones for the first time in combat" during recent strikes on Iran. CENTCOM added that "these low-cost drones, modelled after Iran's Shahed drones, are now delivering American-made retribution."

The phrasing is deliberate. The United States has formally fielded a weapon inspired by an adversary's design and acknowledged it publicly. The architecture of LUCAS mirrors Iran's Shahed 136, widely described by Western defence officials as a "loitering munition" - a drone capable of flying long distances before diving into its target. During the Ukraine war, the Shahed became synonymous with cheap, expendable attacks launched in waves to strain air defences. Military analysts repeatedly summarised the lesson of such systems in blunt terms: quantity has a quality all its own.

The Pentagon has increasingly embraced that logic. In defence planning documents and briefings, officials describe "attributable systems" as platforms designed to be affordable and replaceable. As the US Department of Defense has put it, such systems allow commanders "to accept higher levels of risk with platforms that are designed to be affordable and replaceable." The emphasis is not on perfection but on scale.

LUCAS appears to fit squarely within that doctrine. Rather than relying exclusively on cruise missiles costing millions of dollars per piece, the US military is integrating weapons intended to be mass-produced and operationally expendable. After the initial deployment, a Pentagon spokesperson indicated that the drones "remain ready for employment," signalling that this is not a symbolic trial but an operational capability being embedded in the theatre. CENTCOM established the unit operating these systems, Task Force Scorpion Strike, in late 2025 specifically to accelerate the shift. When announcing the formation of the unit, the command said its purpose was to "accelerate the integration of low-cost autonomous systems into the CENTCOM area of responsibility." In military language, that signals intent: the battlefield is no longer merely where weapons are used; it is where they are validated. Iran, too, is performing its own demonstrations. State-linked outlets have circulated footage purporting to show underground drone facilities, with rows of unmanned aircraft positioned in tunnel complexes. Iranian commanders have previously described such installations as "strategic drone bases" capable of operating "continuously and without interruption." Whether independently verified or not, the message is clear. Production depth is itself part of deterrence.

There is historical symmetry in this technological exchange. After Iran captured a US RQ-170 Sentinel surveillance drone in 2011, Tehran claimed it had reverse-engineered aspects of the aircraft to inform its own unmanned systems. Now the circle appears to have turned again, with Washington deploying a drone modelled on Iranian architecture against Iranian targets. Modern warfare is no longer a one-directional diffusion of technology from great powers outward; it is iterative and reciprocal.

For India, this conflict is not distant theatre. It is a live case study. Indian defence planners have already confronted the growing role of loitering munitions in regional crises and along contested borders. The lesson emerging from the Iran war - that inexpensive, scalable drones can alter the cost equation of conflict - will not be lost in New Delhi. India has been investing in indigenous drone programmes and counter-drone systems, while simultaneously balancing high-end imports such as advanced fighter aircraft and air defence systems. The Iran theatre reinforces a central dilemma for India's armed forces: whether future deterrence will rest primarily on prestige platforms or on the ability to produce large volumes of attributable systems domestically. If quantity begins to rival sophistication, India's industrial policy becomes as important as its procurement policy.

There is also an economic dimension. Much of India's energy imports transit the Gulf. Drone warfare targeting regional infrastructure or shipping lanes directly affects insurance costs, supply stability and price volatility. What appears as tactical experimentation in the Gulf can translate quickly into macroeconomic exposure for India.

Notably, there is no publicly verified evidence that Chinese-designed weapons are being tested in this particular theatre. China has developed advanced missile and drone systems over the past decade, but open sources do not show their deployment in the current Iran campaign. Yet Beijing, like New Delhi, will be studying the results. If low-cost autonomous systems prove decisive, that will influence procurement and doctrine across Asia. The broader lesson is industrial as much as tactical. As former defence officials have warned, modern conflicts are becoming contests of industrial capacity as much as battlefield manoeuvre. The Iran war is reinforcing that reality. Expensive cruise missiles and stealth bombers still matter, but so do inexpensive autonomous drones that can be produced in volume. The balance between cost, scale and survivability is being recalibrated in real time.

Wars have always revealed the strengths and weaknesses of weapons systems. What distinguishes this conflict is the speed of adaptation. Designs tested in Ukraine reappear in the Gulf. Captured drones inspire reverse engineering. Adversaries mirror each other's innovations and incorporate them into their own arsenals.

The Iran war, in that sense, is more than a regional confrontation. It is a proving ground for the industrial and doctrinal future of conflict. For Washington and Tehran it is immediate and kinetic. For India and the wider Asian balance, it is instructional. What works here will shape the calculations of militaries far beyond the Middle East.

The emergence of low-cost attack drones also raises important questions about the future of air defence. Traditional systems are often designed to intercept sophisticated missiles and aircraft, but countering large numbers of inexpensive drones can quickly exhaust interceptors and increase operational costs. Militaries may therefore need layered defence networks combining electronic warfare, jamming, guns, short-range missiles and autonomous interception systems. The challenge is to neutralise incoming threats without spending far more on defence than an adversary spends on the attack.

Another significant development is the growing role of artificial intelligence, automation and real-time battlefield data in drone operations. Advances in navigation, target recognition and communications are enabling unmanned systems to operate with greater flexibility, although the extent of their autonomy varies widely. Electronic interference, disrupted satellite navigation and communication failures remain major vulnerabilities. Future military effectiveness will depend not only on the number of drones available but also on their ability to function in contested environments and coordinate with other weapons systems.

For India, the implications extend beyond military procurement to the development of a resilient domestic manufacturing ecosystem. Producing affordable drones at scale requires reliable supplies of semiconductors, batteries, sensors, motors, communication equipment and specialised materials. Encouraging private manufacturers, defence start-ups and research institutions to work closely with the armed forces could accelerate innovation and reduce dependence on foreign suppliers. Equally important is the ability to repair, upgrade and replenish equipment rapidly during prolonged operations.

Scindia: India eyes top-5 spot in AI through self-reliant innovation

New Delhi, Oct 12 (GNS): Union Minister of Communications Jyotiraditya Scindia said on Sunday that the country must build indigenous technological capabilities in the time of artificial intelligence (AI) and digital transformation. The minister urged the Indian industry to prioritise 'Atmanirbhar innovation' over imitation during the 4th Kautilya Economic Conclave held in the national capital.

"AI must not be seen as a product to be consumed but as a Swadeshi capability to be cultivated," Scindia said, stressing that AI should be developed in Indian languages, for Indian priorities, and not treated as an imported product. He cited the Bhashini app as a live example of AI translation empowering citizens in real time.

While highlighting India's growing strength across sectors such as semiconductors, telecom, and digital finance, Scindia also noted that the Covid-19 pandemic years showed the world the strategic importance of chips in the global



economy. He called semiconductors "the very fabric of the future progress of mankind."

He emphasised that India transformed this challenge into an opportunity, guided by the ancient wisdom of Chanakya, who advised asking why, what, and how before taking action.

"We learnt a lesson from the COVID pandemic, that the fate of billion-dollar companies lies in the ability of a small chip. For India, it was a moment of decision, not despair," the minister said. The minister highlighted India's Rs 76,000 crore India Semiconductor Mission, which includes

setting up fabrication units across multiple states and skilling 85,000 youth. Investments in this sector have already exceeded Rs 1.6 lakh crore, establishing India as a self-reliant and future-ready economy. India has emerged as a fulcrum for the Global South, a voice of fairness and equity, and a bridge between fractured geopolitical blocs, he added.

Scindia said India must strengthen research and development to create globally competitive technologies and reduce dependence on foreign innovations. He stressed that collaboration between the government.

Bitcoin touches record high crossing \$125,000

New Delhi, Oct 12 (GNS): Bitcoin, the world's largest cryptocurrency by market value, hit a record high on Sunday and was up nearly 2.7 per cent at \$125,245.57.

As of 2.54 pm today, the bitcoin stood at \$124,353.96, up 1.55 per cent in intraday trading. The cryptocurrency experienced its eighth consecutive session of surges on Friday, propelled by recent gains in US equities and inflows into Bitcoin exchange-traded funds.

Bitcoin's previous record was \$124,480 in mid-August, buoyed by friendly regulations from US President Donald Trump's administration and strong demand from institutional investors. The sustained institutional buying and the moves by the Trump administration to ease investment in crypto assets added to the tailwinds. The passage of stablecoin regulations and the US Securities and Exchange Commission's (SEC) overhaul of regulations to accommodate digital assets have bolstered investor confidence. In contrast, the

US dollar experienced a decline on Friday, resulting in multi-week losses against major currencies. The outlook was clouded by the uncertainty surrounding a US government shutdown, which delayed the release of critical data, such as payrolls, which are essential for determining the economy's direction. Analysts said that this bullish trend is consistent with the price performance of Bitcoin following the halving event. Typically, the halving event is seen as a catalyst that triggers long-term price rallies for BTC, as it involves slashing by half the volume of the cryptocurrency.

The United States has been warming up with Pakistan, focusing on a cryptocurrency agreement involving the US President Donald Trump's family's World Liberty Financial and military-linked funds in Pakistan, according to DisInfo Lab. Bilal bin Saqib, a British-Pakistani entrepreneur who now serves as CEO of Pakistan's newly formed Crypto Council (PCC) and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Blockchain.

Goyal to visit Qatar for India-Qatar joint trade commission meeting

New Delhi, Oct 12 (GNS): Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal will visit Doha, Qatar, on October 6 for a two-day meeting of the Qatar-India Joint Commission on Trade and Commerce, the Ministry of Commerce & Industry said on Sunday. The meeting will be co-chaired by H.E. Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal Al Thani, Qatar's Minister of Commerce and Industry. During the visit, both sides are expected to discuss the proposed India-Qatar Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The talks will focus on finalising the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), which aims to strengthen economic cooperation between the two countries.

This will be Goyal's first visit to Qatar, where discussions are likely to cover a wide range of issues including bilateral trade performance, existing trade barriers, and non-tariff challenges. The two nations are also expected to explore new opportunities



to boost trade and investment flows. Goyal will be accompanied by senior officials from various ministries. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry said in a statement that the visit highlights India's commitment to deepening its trade and investment relationship with Qatar.

"This visit underscores the importance that India attaches to its trade and investment ties with Qatar, one of our important trading partners in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) with bilateral trade estimated at over USD 14 billion in 2024-25," the ministry said. Qatar is one of India's key trading part-

ners in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), with bilateral trade valued at over \$14 billion in 2024-25. Goyal is also likely to hold discussions on cooperation in several sectors such as finance, agriculture, environment, tourism, culture, and healthcare.

On the sidelines of the visit, he will meet prominent Qatari dignitaries and leading businessmen from the Qatar Chamber and the Qatari Businessmen Association. The proposed CEPA is expected to provide a framework for expanding market access, reducing trade barriers and encouraging greater participation by businesses.

Impact of GST reforms starts showing as festive sales breaks 10-year record

New Delhi, Oct 12 (GNS): The government's Next Gen GST reforms are beginning to show a strong impact on the economy as the ongoing festive season has witnessed record-breaking sales, especially in the automobile sector, experts said on Sunday.

Income tax expert Vinod Rawal said that the benefits of the new GST system are clearly visible on the ground. "You see, the festive season has already begun. In the very first days of Navratri, when 45 per cent of sales are usually made, this time the record of the last 10 years has been broken," he told IANS.

"Maruti has delivered 1,65,000 cars, Mahindra's sales have increased by 60 per cent compared to last year, Hyundai has captured a 72 per cent share in the SUV segment, and Tata has sold 50,000 vehicles," Rawal added. He added that the purpose of GST was "One Nation, One Tax," and the new format has simplified the system further by abolishing cess and merging rates directly into the tax structure. "When your refund is quick, its impact is visible

immediately. This reform is making a big difference in the market," Rawal explained. "If you look at this, the impact of Next Gen GST is clearly visible. You can't say that this impact will be seen in the future; it is visible right now," he stated. Echoing similar views, auto industry expert and former Managing Director of Nissan India Private Limited, Arun Malhotra, said that GST reform has provided a significant boost to the automobile industry.

"Prices of 95 per cent of vehicles have dropped by 8-10 per cent. Since the beginning of the festive season on the first Navratri, the industry has seen a sharp rise in demand, driven by reduced prices and ongoing festive offers," he said. Experts believe that the Next Gen GST reforms have not only simplified the tax structure but also strengthened consumer confidence, setting the stage for a robust festive season and a stronger economic outlook.

Industry observers said the reduction in vehicle prices has encouraged consumers who had postponed purchases due to

affordability concerns to return to the market. The combination of lower tax rates, festive discounts and attractive financing schemes has made passenger cars and sport utility vehicles more accessible to middle-income households. Dealers are also reporting increased customer enquiries and showroom footfall, reflecting renewed interest in vehicle purchases during the festive period.

The benefits of the reforms are expected to extend beyond automobile manufacturers to the wider automotive supply chain. Component makers, dealerships, logistics providers and service centres could gain from higher sales volumes. Increased production and vehicle deliveries may also support employment across manufacturing and distribution networks, while stronger demand could improve business confidence and encourage companies to expand their operations.

Economists note that consumption plays a crucial role in sustaining India's economic growth.

IndusInd Bank's Q2 net advances drop 8 pc, deposits decline 5 pc

New Delhi, Oct 12 (GNS): Private sector lender IndusInd Bank has reported a sharp decline in its business performance for the second quarter of financial year 2025-26 (Q2 FY26), with both advances and deposits falling year-on-year (YoY) and sequentially (QoQ). The bank's net advances stood at Rs 3.27 lakh crore, down 8 per cent compared with the same period previous fiscal and 2 per cent lower than the previous quarter (Q1 FY26), according to its stock exchanges filing. Net deposits also fell to Rs 3.89 lakh crore -- reflecting a 5 per cent decline YoY and a 2 per cent drop quarter-on-quarter, the lender added in its filing. IndusInd Bank's Current Account and Savings Account (CASA) ratio weakened to 30.80 per cent, compared with 31.50 per cent in the previous quarter and 35.90 per cent a year ago.

Meanwhile, the lender posted a net profit of Rs 684 crore for the quarter ended June 2025 (Q1 FY26), a steep 68 per cent decline from Rs 2,152 crore in the same quarter last year (Q1 FY25).

Net interest income (NII) came in at Rs 4,640 crore, dropped 14.2 per cent compared with Rs 5,408 crore a year ago. The bank's net interest margin (NIM) improved sequentially to 3.46 per cent from 2.25 per cent in the previous quarter but remained below 4.25 per cent recorded a year earlier. Asset quality showed mixed trends in the previous quarter of the current financial year. While slippages improved sequentially, gross non-performing assets (GNPAs) rose to 3.64 per cent from 3.1 per cent in the previous quarter, and net NPAs increased to 1.12 per cent from 0.95 per cent.

The Provision Coverage Ratio (PCR) stood at 70 per cent, as per its earlier filing. Shares of IndusInd Bank ended at Rs 747.55 on the BSE on Friday, up Rs 3.85, or 0.52 per cent.

Analysts will closely monitor the bank's ability to stabilise its deposit base and revive credit growth amid mounting competition in the banking sector. The decline in advances and deposits suggests subdued business momentum, while the falling CASA

ratio indicates a reduction in the share of relatively low-cost funds. Improving deposit mobilisation and maintaining adequate liquidity are likely to remain key priorities for the lender.

The decline in net interest income also reflects pressure on the bank's core lending business. Although the net interest margin improved compared with the previous quarter, it remained significantly below the year-ago level. Sustaining this improvement will depend on the bank's ability to manage funding costs, maintain lending yields and improve the overall composition of its loan portfolio. Asset quality remains another area of concern, with gross and net non-performing asset ratios increasing sequentially. Higher bad-loan ratios can require additional provisions and weigh on profitability if recoveries do not improve. The provision coverage ratio of 70 per cent indicates the extent of provisions maintained against identified non-performing assets, while continued monitoring of fresh slippages.

NaMo Semiconductor Lab to boost chip design, 'Make in India': MeitY

New Delhi, March 3 (UNI) In a major step towards strengthening India's semiconductor ecosystem, Union Minister of Electronics & Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnav, has approved the setting up of the 'NaMo Semiconductor Laboratory' at IIT Bhubaneswar, Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY) said on Sunday. The project, estimated to cost Rs 4.95 crore, will be funded under the MPLAD Scheme.

The NaMo Semiconductor Lab aims to empower India's youth with industry-ready semiconductor skills and contribute to the country's growing pool of chip design talent. "It will help position IIT Bhubaneswar as a leading centre for semiconductor research, training, and innovation," the ministry said.

"The facility is expected to play a key role in preparing skilled professionals for the upcoming chip manufacturing and packaging units across the country," the ministry added. The new lab will act as a catalyst for the 'Make in India' and 'Design in India' initiatives by supporting research and innovation in semiconduc-

tor design and fabrication.

Bharat currently accounts for 20 per cent of the world's chip design talent, with students from 295 universities using advanced EDA tools provided by the industry.

So far, 28 student-designed chips from 20 institutes have been successfully developed at SCL Mohali. IIT Bhubaneswar was chosen for the lab due to its growing role in semiconductor research and its existing infrastructure. Odisha has recently received approval for two semiconductor projects under the India Semiconductor Mission -- one for an integrated facility focused on Silicon Carbide (SiC)-based compound semiconductors, and another for advanced 3D glass packaging.

The institute already houses the Silicon Carbide Research and Innovation Centre (SiCRIC) and the new lab will further enhance its cleanroom and R&D capabilities. The proposed NaMo Semiconductor Lab will include essential equipment and software required for semiconductor design, training, and fabrication.

Swadeshi campaigns to help domestic textiles demand reach \$250 billion by 2030

New Delhi, Oct 12 (GNS): The Ministry of Textiles has announced that it will run a nationwide 'Swadeshi Campaign' for the next six to nine months to boost the domestic demand for handloom, handicrafts and textile products, especially among urban millennials and Gen Z. After the implementation of Swadeshi campaigns, "the domestic demand shall increase by a CAGR of 9-10 per cent per annum to reach a total domestic demand of textiles of \$250 billion by 2030," the ministry said in a statement. India's textiles and clothing market reached a valuation of \$179 billion in 2024, with an annual growth rate exceeding 7 per cent, the government informed.

The contribution of the household (HH) sector to the domestic market is 58 per cent and it is growing at a CAGR of 8.19 per cent. Meanwhile, the non-household consumption is 21 per cent of the domestic market and is growing at a CAGR of 6.79 per cent.

The Swadeshi campaign "will be run across India"

to boost textile consumption among urban millennials and Gen Z, while enhancing market access and income opportunities for weavers, artisans, and MSMEs. The campaign aims to reposition Indian textiles as symbols of pride and style, especially for younger consumers. Ministries, public sector units, and educational institutions will be encouraged to adopt Indian-made textiles for uniforms and furnishings, an official statement said. The ministry announced that the initiative complements existing programs, including the production-linked incentive scheme for textiles, PM MITRA Parks, and the One District One Product initiative. Events, social media outreach, and state-level participation will promote the slogan of the campaign, the release said.

The recent changes in the GST rates will enhance demand for the textiles and apparels in the household and non-household sectors, which may yield higher growth rates in the consumption of textiles in

the country, the government said. The campaign is expected to strengthen the connection between traditional textile producers and modern retail markets by encouraging collaborations with designers, e-commerce platforms, fashion brands and retail outlets. Greater visibility for handloom and handicraft products could help artisans reach younger consumers and expand their customer base beyond local markets. Digital marketing and social media promotions are also expected to play a significant role in presenting indigenous fabrics and crafts as contemporary lifestyle choices.

The Ministry of Textiles is also expected to encourage states and local institutions to organise exhibitions, textile fairs, fashion events and awareness programmes highlighting India's diverse weaving traditions and craftsmanship. Such activities could showcase region-specific products, including handwoven fabrics, traditional garments, embroidery.

TEC, IIIT Naya Raipur sign MoU to collaborate on next-gen telecom tech

New Delhi, Oct 12 (GNS): The Telecommunication Engineering Centre (TEC), the technical arm of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the International Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Naya Raipur, the Ministry of Communication said in a statement.

The partnership aims to jointly work on research, innovation, and standardisation in next-generation telecommunications technologies. This collaboration brings together TEC's leadership in telecom standardisation and IIIT Naya Raipur's expertise in academic research to strengthen India's role in global telecom innovation, the ministry said.

The partnership will focus on several key areas. One important area is Open RAN and network disaggregation, where both institutions will work on developing open interfaces, modular architectures, virtualisation, and ensuring interoperability across vendors. Another focus

area is cognitive radio and spectrum sharing, where research will be carried out on coexistence frameworks and studies that align with global spectrum policies, including the agenda of the upcoming World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-27). In addition, joint research will be undertaken in 5G, 6G, and IoT frameworks, including the creation of advanced test environments to support future generations of networks. Both partners will also actively contribute to global and national standardisation efforts, participating in ITU-T Study Groups and TEC's National Working Groups to represent India's interests. A significant part of the collaboration will be the development of India-specific test frameworks, standards, and interoperability solutions tailored to the country's diverse digital ecosystem. These efforts will help ensure that solutions are affordable, interoperable, and suited to India's unique connectivity needs. The partnership will boost India's participation in in-

ternational telecom standards and policy forums. By creating joint research testbeds and real-world collaborations, it will accelerate innovation in emerging communication technologies. "It also supports the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat by fostering indigenous research, design, and development in telecom," the statement said. The initiative will promote affordable, interoperable, and vendor-neutral solutions tailored for India's diverse connectivity needs, while preparing the nation for 6G networks and advanced IoT applications.

The collaboration is also expected to provide students, researchers and telecom professionals with opportunities to work on practical challenges in network design, spectrum management and emerging communication technologies. Joint laboratories, testbeds and knowledge-sharing initiatives could help bridge the gap between academic research and industry requirements, while encouraging the development of innovative solutions.

NSE reduces lot sizes for Nifty 50, other index derivatives from Oct 28

New Delhi, Oct 12 (GNS): The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has announced that it will revise market lot sizes for four major index futures and options contracts, including Nifty 50, effective from October 28.

The lot size for the Nifty 50 index has been reduced from 75 to 65, and the Nifty Bank lot size has been cut from 35 to 30, according to an official statement.

The Nifty Financial Services lot size is now 60, down from 65, while the Nifty Mid Select index has been reduced from 140 to 120. The market lot of derivative contracts for the Nifty Next 50 Index was kept unchanged.

Investors can continue to trade with current lot sizes until the December 30, 2025 expiry, after which all new contracts of any maturity will follow the revised, smaller lot sizes. "Members are advised to inform their clients who have positions or take any new positions in the quarterly and half-yearly contracts of the upcoming revision in lot size on the below-mentioned

dates," NSE said. The current lot size for Nifty's weekly and monthly contracts will expire on December 23, while the monthly Nifty and Bank Nifty contracts will expire on December 30. All new contracts after these dates will adhere to the revised sizes.

The NSE revises lot sizes of futures & options contracts primarily to keep the contract value within a standard range and to keep the contracts affordable and standardised. Traders do not have to pay the full value of the contract upfront, as derivatives are leveraged instruments, but their lot size determines the participants' exposure and the margin required. Lot size revisions are undertaken by stock exchanges to enhance market efficiency and liquidity, as well as to ensure that contracts are more appealing to a broader range of market participants. The revised lot sizes are expected to influence trading strategies by changing the value of each derivatives contract and the margin required to take positions.

Telangana CM questions central govt over deletion of votes in India

Hyderabad, Oct 12 (GNS) Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on Monday questioned the central government on why the voter count is decreasing when the country's population has been increasing.

Speaking at a Telangana Congress party meeting in New Delhi on Monday, Revanth Reddy alleged that the BJP government has deleted 13 crore votes so far with the SIR program. He mentioned that India had 81 crore voters in 2014, 91 crore in 2019 and 97 crore in 2024, and for the upcoming 2029 elections, the BJP is trying to remove 5 crore more votes.

He alleged that votes belonging to people who did not support the BJP were being deleted in the name of SIR. The Chief Minister also said that wherever the Election Commission (EC) conducted the SIR program, the



BJP is forming governments. "The Central government has given a task to CEC Gyanesh Kumar to delete anti-BJP votes in the country. The CEC has deleted votes in various states, especially from Dalits, tribals, minorities and youth in the country," he said.

Reddy said Congress is asking the central government: if the EC has been working independently, then why was no action taken against Gyanesh Kumar, even after the two other Commissioners said that the CEC was taking decisions unilaterally. "If there

is no deletion of rightful votes, then why BJP protecting Gyanesh Kumar? Why is the central government suppressing the peaceful protests against the resignation of the CEC over irregularities in the SIR program?" Reddy questioned the central government. He questioned why the President and the Chief Justice of India were not raising the issue with Prime Minister Modi.

The Chief Minister alleged that the BJP was creating two categories of citizens — those whose voting rights were protected and those who were being deprived of their right to vote. He accused the Modi government of dividing citizens into two groups and expressed concern that people who lost their voting rights could also be deprived of government welfare schemes. Describing the Congress protests in

New Delhi against the SIR program as another freedom struggle, he said the opposition would continue its agitation along the lines of the "Simon Go Back" movement.

He alleged that the BJP had been using agencies such as the CBI, Enforcement Directorate (ED) and Income Tax Department to suppress its political opponents. He claimed that the SIR exercise was being implemented because the BJP feared it would lose the upcoming elections.

Revanth Reddy also alleged that artificial intelligence (AI) was being used to identify and delete votes belonging to people opposed to the BJP. He further claimed that the votes of young people who were criticising Prime Minister Narendra Modi on social media were also being removed.

MUSLIM COMMUNITY LEADER Social Worker and Writer Irfan Jamiawala Raises a Major Constitutional Question

- Calls for a Review of Scheduled Caste Eligibility for Dalit Muslims and Dalit Christians
- Seeks Accountability from Political Parties on Equality and Social Justice

Irfan Jamiawala A social worker, writer and social-political activist, has called for a serious examination of the constitutional questions surrounding Scheduled Caste status for Dalit Muslims and Dalit Christians.

Emphasising the constitutional principles of equality, justice, liberty and fraternity, Jamiawala argued that India must examine how historical social disadvantage and caste-based discrimination should be assessed when determining eligibility for affirmative-action measures.



He stressed that the debate should be based on constitutional principles, historical evidence and the actual social conditions of disadvantaged communities. Questioning the Congress Party's Historical Role Jamiawala said that the historical role of all political parties, including the Congress, which led the Union government for extended periods after Independence, should be examined objectively.

He pointed to the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, and its subsequent amendments, raising questions about why Sikh and Buddhist communities were brought within the eligibility framework while corresponding claims from disadvantaged Muslim and Christian communities have remained excluded under the existing religious restrictions.

According to Jamiawala, political parties that advocate secularism and social justice should publicly explain their policies, legislative decisions and positions on this issue.

He also emphasised that historical responsibility should be assessed through government records, parliamentary debates, legislative proposals and available social data rather than through political allegations alone.

Articles 14, 15, 16 and 25: A Constitutional Debate Jamiawala highlighted four important provisions of the Indian Constitution: Article 14: Guarantees equality before the law and equal protection of the laws. Article 15: Prohibits discrimination on specified grounds, including religion and caste, while permitting certain special provisions for disadvantaged groups. Article 16: Guarantees equality of opportunity in public employment and allows constitutionally authorised reservation measures. Article 25: Protects freedom of religion, subject to constitutional limitations. He questioned whether the religious restriction attached to Scheduled Caste eligibility should be examined in the light of these constitutional guarantees.

However, the constitutional validity of an existing legal provision cannot be determined merely by citing these Articles. A proper assessment requires consideration of relevant judicial decisions, legislative history, social evidence and the arguments advanced by the government.

The Need for a Fair Social Justice Policy for Pasmanda Muslims Jamiawala argued that social and economic inequalities within Muslim society must not be over-

looked. He called for transparent, evidence-based research into the educational, economic and social conditions of Pasmanda communities, including their traditional occupations and experiences of discrimination.

He suggested that the eligibility claims of Dalit Muslims and Dalit Christians should receive serious consideration at the national level, supported by reliable data and an open examination of the existing legal framework.

A Call for Accountability and Constitutional Dialogue Jamiawala urged the government, Parliament, political parties and relevant commissions to engage in a serious discussion on the constitutional and legal dimensions of the issue. He said the debate should move beyond political accusations and focus on identifying a fair, transparent and legally sound approach to historical disadvantage.

According to Irfan Jamiawala, the principle of social justice requires that the claims of historically disadvantaged communities be examined with fairness, sensitivity and respect for constitutional values. He called for a fact-based national debate on the exclusion of Dalit Muslims and Dalit Christians from Scheduled Caste eligibility under the existing framework.

MEGA BLOOD DONATION CAMP Successfully conducted by Minority Morcha

Under Seva Sankalp Abhiyan by Ameena ,BPJ senior state leader TS



Hyderabad, Oct 12 (GNS) Taking inspiration from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 25 years of dedicated public life and resolve to serve the people, a blood donation camp was organized by Ameena, BJP senior state leader Mainorty Morcha. Seva Sankalpa Abiyan the camp conducted successfully on this occasion every camp. Ameena said that blood

donation is the greatest act of humanity and saving a life is the greatest service. Every drop of blood is important and every donor can play a vital role in saving the life of someone in need. On the occasion, a commitment to social service was expressed calling on all to continue servicing humanity with compassion commitment, and dedication. Appeals were

made to contribute to the welfare of society while maintaining our commitment to service, humanity, and nation-building. This, program was under the Mainorty Morcha State president Mr.Sri Jagmohan Singh ji, Harpreeth Singh, Rajnish Jain, Mohamed Gajini, Khalid Chisti, Ramesh yadav, Sarath Shayam Narayana and Sri Latha are participated..

BJP's Laxman accuses Congress of double standards on voter revision

Hyderabad, Oct 12 (GNS) BJP Rajya Sabha MP and Parliamentary Board member Dr K Laxman on Friday questioned whether an "RR Constitution" governs MLA defections in Telangana, while criticising the Congress-led "Save Democracy March" against the Election Commission.

Paying tributes to Mahatma Gandhi and former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri on their birth anniversaries, Laxman accused the Congress and INDIA bloc of double standards. He said their nationwide

protest was not a "Save Democracy March" but a "Save Dynasty March" aimed at protecting political families. The INDIA bloc has announced protests over the Election Commission and electoral-roll revision.

Laxman alleged that Congress leaders were unable to accept electoral defeats and were therefore raising allegations of "vote theft" and EVM tampering. He also criticised the party's opposition to the cleansing of electoral rolls, alleging that it was protecting bogus votes and supporting the Majlis party. He questioned the Congress demand to defer electoral-roll purification and said the party had failed to submit evidence to substantiate its allegations. He also questioned the demand for Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar's resignation, recalling the Emergency period and Congress's past record.

Turning to Telangana, Laxman accused the Congress government of undermining democratic principles by inducting BRS MLAs into the ruling party.

Ex-security guard arrested for kidnapping

Murder of five-year-old girl in Hyderabad



Hyderabad, Oct 12 (GNS) Police have arrested a former security guard in the kidnapping and murder of a five-year-old girl at a gated community in Bolaram, Secunderabad. Malkajgiri Police Commissioner B. Sumathi on Monday announced the arrest of Vikram Kumar, who was recently removed as the security guard at a gated community in Secunderabad.

The body of the girl was found on Sunday in the water sump in the cellar of the clubhouse at the gated community.

According to police, Vikram Kumar, who was arrested at 4.30 p.m. on Sunday, confessed to killing the child after kidnapping her to demand ransom from her family. There was high drama at the press conference by Malkajgiri Police Commissioner Sumathi as the victim's parents and other residents of Villa Orchids reached the Commissioner's

office displaying placards and raising slogans, seeking justice for the child. They demanded that the police hand over the accused Vikram to them. The residents said they want instant justice. They were holding placards with slogans like 'she deserved to live', 'speedy justice for the child' and 'no mercy for cruelty'. Deputy Commissioner of Police, Ch. Sridhar tried to pacify the protestors, saying they have to proceed as per the legal system. He promised a fast-track court for expeditious trial of the case.

When the residents said they want capital punishment, the DCP said the law would take its course in this case. Commissioner Sumathi also assured the protestors that they will try to ensure maximum punishment for the accused if convicted. "We are in a civilised society. We will make proper use of law. We will ensure the girl gets justice," she said.

Zeta opens Hyderabad skilling centre to boost youth employability

Hyderabad, Oct 12 (GNS) Zeta, a banking technology company, has inaugurated a skilling centre in Hyderabad under its CSR programme, Zeta CARES, to help underprivileged youth prepare for employment and entrepreneurship. Delivered with Head Held High Foundation, the centre combines literacy, communication, digital capability and workplace readiness.

Training began before the formal inauguration on October 10, while operations have also begun in Bengaluru and Mumbai. Formal inaugurations in Bengaluru and Mumbai are planned in the coming months.

The initiative is part of Zeta's Employability pillar. Zeta is funding curriculum delivery, training-centre set-up and trainer fees across Hyderabad, Ben-

galuru and Mumbai. Each centre will run a three-month programme for two batches of 60 participants, creating a planned capacity of 120 learners per centre. Zeta said the intervention links practical skills with employment and self-employment opportunities for young people who have had limited access to formal training and professional networks.

Zeta has partnered with Head Held High Foundation to deliver its Make India Capable programme for marginalised youth. The Hyderabad module covers functional skills such as spoken English, communication and confidence building; digital skills for everyday and work settings; and workplace skills, including professional conduct, teamwork and work

readiness. The approach treats skilling as more than a classroom exercise, bringing together capabilities that can help young people enter the workforce, sustain work or consider entrepreneurship.

The programme comes amid an employability challenge. The India Skills Report 2026, cited by Zeta, estimates overall employability at 56.35 per cent.



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