FALAKNUMA NEWS

Editor in Chief: MOHD ATHER RAHEEM

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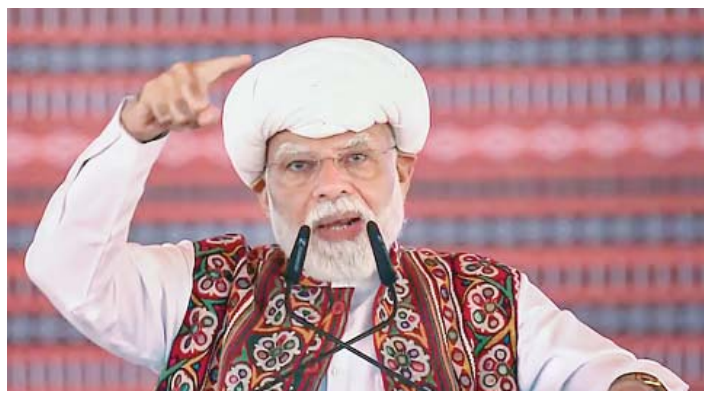
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PM Modi: Rs 16 Lakh cr Spent on Fertiliser Subsidies for Farmers

Bhildi, Oct 30 (GNS): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said the Centre has spent around Rs 16 lakh crore on fertiliser subsidies over the past several years to prevent farmers from bearing the burden of rising international fertiliser prices amid global uncertainty.

Addressing farmers at a gathering in Bhildi in Gujarat's Banaskantha, PM Modi said international developments had led to sharp increases in fertiliser prices, but the government had absorbed the additional costs rather than passing them on to farmers. "Over the past few years, amid global uncertainty, fertiliser prices have risen sharply. But



our government, which is dedicated to farmers, did not allow this burden to fall on them. The government has spent around Rs 16 lakh crore on this," he said.

Explaining the expenditure, PM Modi said the government had borne the additional financial burden to ensure farmers continued to receive fertilisers at affordable prices. He said the objective is to protect farmers from the impact of international price fluctuations and prevent an increase in their cultivation costs. The Prime Minister's remarks formed part of a broader account of the government's agricultural support measures during his address at the national-level PM Kisan Utsav Diwas programme.

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He also said that the agriculture budget had increased more than fivefold compared with 2013-14 and that farmers had received or saved more than Rs 50 lakh crore through various government schemes and decisions. Among the measures he cited were direct income support through PM-KISAN, fertiliser subsidies, minimum support prices, crop insurance and solar-powered irrigation.

"Fertiliser subsidies are particularly important because farmers depend on them for agricultural production and should not have to bear the full impact of rising global input costs," he said. The Centre's fertiliser subsidy expenditure covers support extended to ensure that farmers can purchase key fertilisers at prices below their actual costs. "Earlier governments were also deceiving farmers on the issue of MSP. But it is our government that has fulfilled the promise of MSP. In the last 12 years, Rs 24 lakh crore has gone into the accounts of wheat and paddy farmers as MSP," he said.

He also cited more than Rs two lakh crore paid to farmers as crop insurance compensation over the past 10-12 years and the distribution of around 12 lakh solar pumps under the PM-KUSUM scheme. The Prime Minister was in Gujarat on a two-day visit from Friday for programmes in Banaskantha and Ekta Nagar. In Banaskantha, he also inaugurated the Bharat Bovine Breeding and Research Centre (BBBRC) and launched several projects related to agriculture, animal husbandry and infrastructure.

Amit Shah promises UCC in UP if BJP returns to power



Lucknow, Oct 30 (GNS): Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday stated that the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) will be implemented in Uttar Pradesh if the BJP-led NDA forms the government for the third time following the 2027 Assembly polls.

HM Shah made the remarks while speaking at the inauguration of the BJP's state executive committee meeting in Lucknow, as part of preparations for the Assembly elections.

UP BJP President and Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, both Deputy Chief Ministers, and other senior party leaders were present at the event.

Addressing the meeting, Amit Shah urged party workers to set aside personal grievances and ambitions, strengthen the organization, and consider the next Assembly election as their own battle.

Launching a sharp attack on Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, he said the BJP would answer the LoP's "meaningless statements" by forming the government again in 2027.

Shah also hit out at the Samajwadi Party and its chief Akhilesh Yadav, saying: "Today was the day when unarmed Ram devotees and kar sevaks were fired upon indiscriminately in Ayodhya during the then SP government and the water of the Saryu river turned red with their blood." He questioned the SP, asking how he can stake a claim to form the government in the state again?

Further, HM Shah warned that the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh is "Angad's leg," which the opposition parties cannot shake, referring to the Hindu Mythological figure in the Ramayana.

The Home Minister also recalled the contribution of former UP CM late Kalyan Singh, saying that the latter had taken a historic decision for the Ram Temple movement "without caring about his government then".

Further targeting the Congress and the SP, he said that under Akhilesh Yadav's leadership, "SP had been losing elections continuously, while the Congress under Rahul Gandhi had failed to return to power".

"If the opposition continued on the same path, it would remain out of power for a long time," he remarked.

Maintaining that the government's achievements are important, Amit Shah stressed that the BJP's greatest strength is its cadre.

Revanth Reddy urges centre to expedite key railway projects in Telangana

New Delhi, Oct 30 (GNS): The Chief Minister Mr. A. Revanth Reddy appealed to the Union Minister of Railways Ashwini Vaishnav. Regarding the Hyderabad-Pune, Hyderabad-Bangalore, Hyderabad-Chennai corridors, the state government reviewed the proposals sent by the central government and sent proposals to the central government suggesting some changes, he said.

It was explained to the Union Minister that the state government has not started any land acquisition process regarding these three corridors. He made it clear that the central government will start the land acquisition after the alignment is approved. He appealed to complete the alignment process as soon as possible.

The Chief Minister met Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav at the Delhi Rail-



way Building. On this occasion, they discussed the key railway projects necessary for the development of Telangana. Vikarabad-Krishna wanted to sanction the new railway line (130 km) immediately. It was explained to the Union Minister that huge limestone deposits have been discovered in Tekalkod area of Vikarabad district, so the government has prepared plans to turn this area into a cement and textile hub. The Chief Minister also asked for the alignment of the Regional Ring Rail along the Regional Ring Road (RRR) which is being constructed around 360 km around Hyderabad. He said that large-scale employment opportunities will be available with the regional ring train. Dornakal - Gadwal, Kalvakurti - Macharla, Kachiguda - Jaggaiyapet (250 km), Patancheru - Adilabad (320 km), Bodhan - Latur (175 km), Akkannapet bypass line (8 km) routes are once again appealed to be granted immediately.

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Ashwini Vaishnav asked to set up mega coaching, freight maintenance depot in Anantaram village near Mahabubabad, which South Central Railway wants to undertake ambitiously. Reminding the fact that the 409.1 acres of land required for the establishment of this depot has already been agreed to be handed over to the Railway Department, they requested to grant permissions to the Mega Freight Maintenance Depot as soon as possible.

Minister Vivek Venkataswamy, MPs Anil Kumar Yadav, Vem Narender Reddy, Dr. Mallu Ravi, Balaram Naik, Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, Gaddam Vamsi Krishna, Special Representative of the State Government in Delhi AP Jitender Reddy were present in this meeting. Senior officers participated along with Gari.

IRCTC Case: Delhi Court directs Rabri, Tejashwi to appear for formal framing of charges on Nov 19

New Delhi, Oct 30 (GNS): A Delhi court on Friday granted exemption from personal appearance to Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief Lalu Prasad Yadav's wife Rabri Devi and son Tejashwi Yadav in the alleged money laundering case linked to the IRCTC hotel scam being probed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED). The Rouse Avenue Court directed Rabri Devi and Tejashwi Yadav to appear in person for the formal framing of charges in the case.

During the proceedings, counsel appearing for Rabri Devi submitted that she was unable to appear before the court due to medical reasons. In the case of Tejashwi Yadav, the counsel said that his flight was delayed and he could appear before the court by 2 p.m. to complete the formalities. However, the court granted an exemption to both for the day and



listed the matter for further hearing on November 19.

During the hearing, counsel for Lalu Prasad Yadav informed the court that the Delhi High Court had issued notice to the ED on his plea challenging the trial court's order framing charges against him. The counsel further submitted that the High Court had granted him liberty to seek an adjournment before the trial court until the next hearing scheduled for December 3. The trial court clarified that those accused who have not obtained any stay from the High Court would be required to appear before it on the next date of hearing. In September this year, Special Judge (PC Act) Vishal Gogne of the Rouse Avenue Courts framed charges against Lalu Prasad Yadav, Rabri Devi, Tejashwi Yadav and other accused persons, holding that a prima facie case under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) was made out against them. The court had also discharged seven accused persons in the case.

According to the ED, the accused persons were involved in laundering proceeds of crime generated through alleged irregularities in the award of contracts for the operation of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) hotels during Lalu Prasad Yadav's tenure as Union Railway Minister between 2004 and 2009.

The federal anti-money laundering agency has alleged that hotel maintenance contracts were awarded to a private company linked to close associates of the RJD chief without following prescribed norms.

Air Marshal Inderpal Singh Walia named next IAF vice chief

New Delhi, Oct 30 (GNS): Air Marshal Inderpal Singh Walia, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) and Vayu Sena Medal (VM), has been appointed as the next Vice Chief of the Air Staff (VCAS) of the Indian Air Force (IAF), with effect from November 1. He will succeed Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit, who is set to take over as the 29th Chief of the Air Staff on October 31, following the retirement of incumbent Air Chief Marshal AP Singh after 42 years of service.

Air Marshal Walia is currently serving as the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Eastern Air Command. An accomplished fighter pilot with more than 3,200 hours of flying experience, he brings nearly four decades of distinguished service and extensive operational, command and staff experience to his new assignment. An alumnus of



the National Defence Academy (NDA), Air Marshal Walia was commissioned into the fighter stream of the Indian Air Force on June 11, 1988.

During his career, he has flown several frontline fighter aircraft, including the MiG-21, MiG-23, MiG-27, Jaguar and Su-30MKI.

His key command assignments include commanding a frontline MiG-27 fighter squadron, the Tactics and Air Combat Development Establishment (TACDE) and Air Force Station Bareilly.

World Bank notes India's fast poverty decline: FM Sitharaman

New Delhi, Oct 30 (GNS): Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday highlighted that the World Bank's October 2026 Poverty & Equity Brief records India's progress as one of the fastest poverty declines in the world. The report states that several significant gains, including 49.6 crore people moving above the lower-middle-income poverty line of $4.20 a day between 2011 and 2023, with the poverty rate declining from 57.7 per cent to 16.1 per cent, the Finance Minister said. Extreme poverty declined from 27.1 per cent to 2.6 per cent over the same period, measured at $3 a day. Both monetary poverty thresholds use 2021 purchasing power parity.

Employment increased by 13.4 crore people between 2017 and 2023, nearly twice the increase in the working-age population. Rural women accounted for much of the employment gain, entering paid work and increasing the number of earners in their households. Both rural and urban households experienced substantial welfare



gains, with faster progress in rural India narrowing the rural–urban gap, according to the report. Access to electricity reached 99 per cent of the population, according to the report's 2022 survey data.

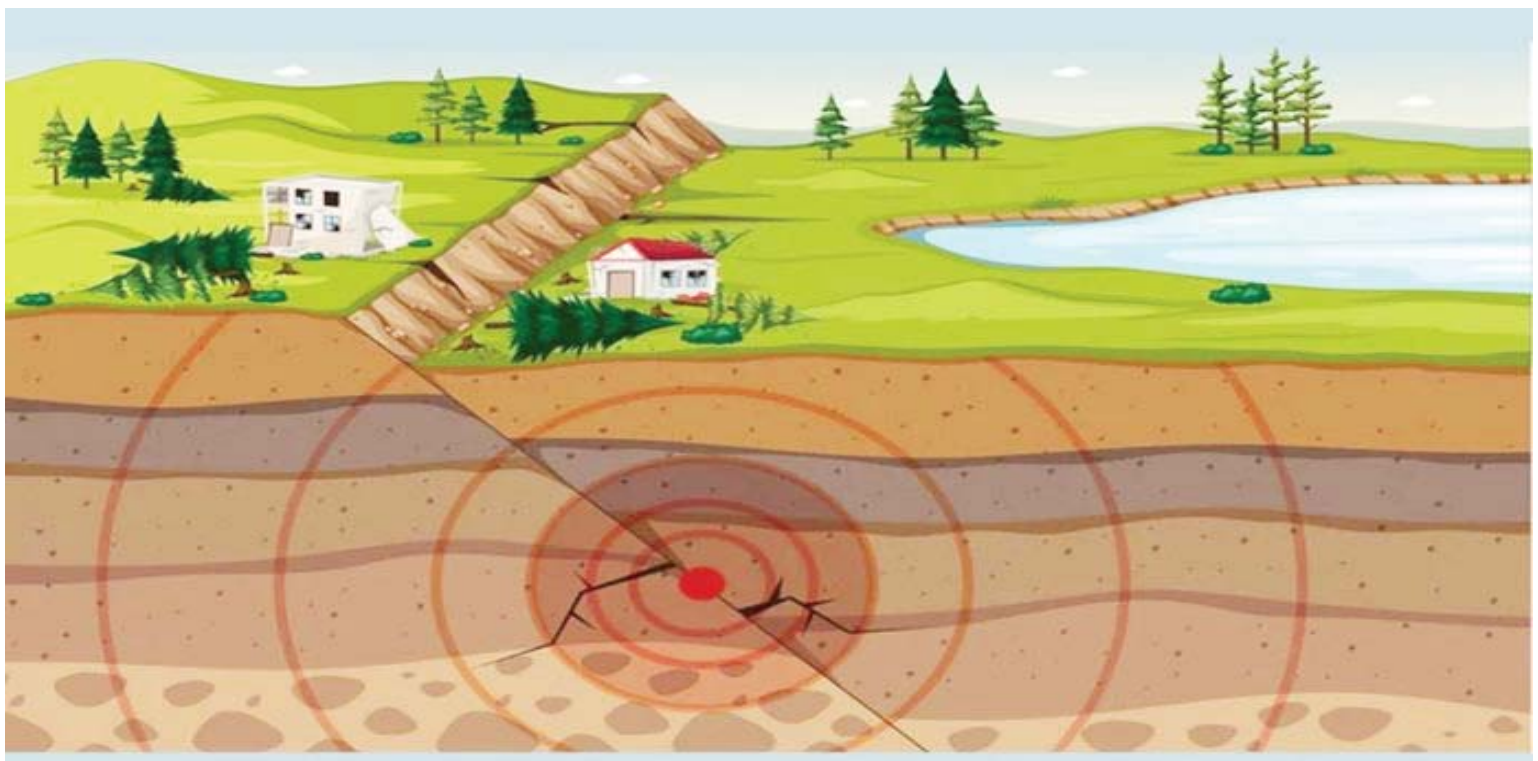
The World Bank identifies strong consumption growth, rising employment especially among women and expanded social transfers, including food subsidies, as major drivers. The Finance Minister said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the government's sustained policy efforts are yielding tangible results, strengthening the foundations for inclusive growth and greater economic opportunity.

"This is the reason why NDA govt wins people's trust and mandate of our citizens. We remain committed to building on this progress through productive employment, stronger household incomes and effective delivery of public services, so that aspirations of our people are met," she added. The World Bank report states that over the past decade, India has made remarkable progress in reducing poverty across both monetary and non-monetary dimensions, recording one of the fastest poverty declines in the world.



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Power vs Planet | How energy projects are weakening Earth's Foundations



Dr Daisy Parihar

In recent years, the increasing occurrence of land sinking-or subsidence-in seismic regions has raised alarm bells among environmentalists, scientists, and local communities. Particularly troubling is the phenomenon in areas where large-scale hydroelectric projects are being constructed or operated. These sinking zones are not just geological anomalies; they are symptomatic of deeper issues rooted in human intervention, environmental mismanagement, and fragile geographies. This article explores why sinking zones form, how they affect the environment, humans, and wildlife, the specific role hydro projects play, and what technological and policy measures can be employed to mitigate the risk. Sinking zones, or subsidence zones, refer to areas where the ground surface gradually or suddenly lowers. While this can occur due to natural geological processes, human activities such as excessive groundwater extraction, mining, and infrastructure development-especially in sensitive seismic areas-can accelerate the phenomenon.

In seismic zones, the earth's crust is already under stress due to tectonic movements. When additional pressure or imbalance is introduced, such as from large-scale hydro projects, it can lead to land sinking, landslides, or even trigger earthquakes. Several factors contribute to the development of sinking zones in seismic areas, particularly during or after hydro project construction: Water Pressure and Seepage: The creation of large reservoirs behind dams increases the water load on the land. Water seeping through porous rocks or faults can lubricate fault lines and trigger shifts in the earth's crust. Soil Saturation and Weakening: Continuous saturation of soil due to leaks or reservoir seepage can lead to soil erosion and weakening of landmass, making it prone to sinking.

Excavation and Blasting: The extensive drilling, blasting, and tunneling required in hydro projects can destabilize already fragile geological formations. Deforestation and Land Use Change: Construction of hydro projects often involves clearing of forests, which naturally help anchor soil and stabilize the terrain. Their removal exposes land to erosion and destabilization. Groundwater Depletion: Excessive use of groundwater for construction or related activities can cause the upper layers of soil to collapse into the voids left behind, contributing to sinking. While hydroelectric power is celebrated as a renewable energy source, the scale and placement of these projects matter immensely. In India and other Himalayan regions, hydroelectric projects are often situated in ecologically fragile, tectonically active zones.

For instance, several studies in the Uttarakhand region-particularly after the 2021 Chamoli disaster-have pointed out that tunnel boring and dam construction in unstable mountain geology have contributed to land subsidence and flash floods. The town of Joshimath, a gateway to popular pilgrimages and trekking routes, began to experience alarming land sinking in 2022, with cracks appearing in homes, roads, and temples. Experts attributed this to unscientific construction, aggressive hydro project activity, and poor geological understanding. A 2023 study by the Indian Institute of Remote Sensing (IIRS) and the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) used satellite imagery to confirm gradual sinking in various areas around hydroelectric sites. These insights validated what many residents and activists had long feared: unchecked infrastructure development without environmental due diligence can turn thriving towns into sinking zones. One of the most respected voices on this issue is Dr. Harsh Gupta, an eminent Indian seismologist, who pioneered research on Reservoir-Induced Seismicity (RIS). His studies on the 1967 Koyna earthquake in Maharashtra showed a direct correlation between the filling of the Koyna Dam reservoir and increased seismic activity in the region. Dr. Gupta emphasized that large dams in tectonically active zones can alter the stress distribution in the Earth's crust, potentially triggering earthquakes. His work remains foundational in understanding the seismic risks posed by hydroelectric projects. The consequences of land sinking in seismic zones are multifold and devastating:

Loss of Biodiversity: The disruption of land and water systems can wipe out local flora and fauna. Wildlife corridors get blocked, migratory patterns are affected, and aquatic life suffers due to altered water flow and siltation. Soil Erosion and Sedimentation: Loose, sinking land increases erosion. Sediments end up in rivers, altering their course, choking aquatic habitats, and reducing the life of reservoirs and dams. Altered Hydrology: As ground levels change, so do the flow patterns of rivers and streams. Springs may dry up, wetlands may vanish, and new water bodies may emerge in unstable ways, disturbing local ecosystems. Forest Loss: Trees cannot survive in areas where the ground shifts, cracks, or floods frequently, further accelerating ecological collapse. Impact on Humans and Animals The human cost of sinking zones is immediate and tragic: Displacement: Families are forced to abandon homes built over generations. Cracks in buildings, collapsed roads, and unsafe terrain make life unlivable. Economic Loss: Tourism-dependent regions like Joshimath suffer massive income loss. Agriculture is disrupted as soil becomes infertile or waterlogged. Mental Health Crisis: Sudden displacement, uncertainty, and fear of further disasters cause anxiety, depression, and trauma, particularly among children and the elderly. Animals, both domestic and wild, face displacement and starvation. Pastures disappear, water sources dry up, and natural habitats become inaccessible. Conflicts between humans and wildlife increase as animals wander into populated areas in search of food and shelter.

Technologies and Studies Aiding Understanding Modern science is increasingly playing a role in predicting and mitigating the effects of sinking zones. Key tools and studies include: Remote Sensing and Satellite Imagery: Agencies like ISRO and NASA use high-resolution imagery to track land subsidence in real-time.

LIDAR Technology: Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) helps create detailed topographical maps, showing subtle shifts in land elevation over time. Geotechnical Investigations: Ground-penetrating radar and seismic reflection surveys identify fault lines, underground water flows, and rock integrity. Hydrological Modeling: Advanced software models simulate the impact of damming and tunneling on local water systems and predict pressure build-up. Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning: These are being used to analyze vast datasets from multiple sources-satellite, geological, climatic-to predict potential disaster zones before visible damage occurs. What Needs to Be Done To protect both the environment and communities, several actions must be taken: Strict Environmental Clearances: No project should proceed without comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), particularly in seismic zones. Community Involvement: Local populations must be consulted and informed. Their indigenous knowledge can offer valuable insights into the landscape's history and vulnerabilities. Limit Infrastructure Load: Urban planning must consider geological limits. Mass tourism and urban sprawl in fragile areas should be regulated.

Viksit Bharat 2047: Who Will Shape India's Future?

Nations are not built in boardrooms or announced through policy declarations. They are built quietly, every day, in classrooms-where a child first learns how to think, question, imagine, and become. Every vision of a developed India, every ambition of global leadership, every promise of Viksit Bharat 2047 rests on a simple, undeniable truth: the quality of our future will be determined by the quality of our teachers. And yet, this is precisely where our greatest contradiction lies. We aspire to become a knowledge superpower, but we have not yet made teaching a profession that attracts the nation's best minds. We speak of innovation, critical thinking, and global competitiveness, but the very individuals responsible for nurturing these capacities are often overburdened, under-supported, and undervalued. This is not merely an educational concern. It is a national concern. Because no country has ever risen to excellence with an average teaching force.

The question that policymakers, institutions, and governing bodies must confront, honestly and urgently is this: if the most capable, driven, and talented young people are not choosing teaching, who exactly will prepare the generations that must lead India into 2047? Talent does not drift into professions by accident. It is drawn by design by respect, by opportunity, by dignity, and by the promise of growth. Today, teaching struggles on each of these counts.

A bright graduate in India stands at a crossroads. On one side lie professions that promise financial security, social prestige, and clear advancement-medicine, engineering, corporate careers, civil services. On the other lies teaching, often perceived as a path of limited growth, modest compensation, and insufficient recognition. The choice, then, is not difficult. And that is precisely the problem. When teaching becomes a fallback rather than a first choice, the system begins to weaken at its very foundation. This perception did not emerge overnight. It is the result of systemic design. For decades, we have treated teaching as a routine occupation rather than a high-impact profession. We have layered teachers with administrative duties that dilute their primary role. We have offered limited career progression within the profession, forcing many to move out of classrooms to gain recognition. We have not invested enough in rigorous, aspirational teacher education that attracts top-tier talent. Most importantly, we have not consistently accorded teachers the societal and institutional respect they deserve.

This stands in stark contrast to countries that have built world-class education systems. There, teaching is among the most respected professions. Entry into teacher education is highly selective. Training is research-driven and deeply practical. Compensation is competitive. Teachers are trusted as professionals, not merely implementers. Their voice matters in shaping policy and practice. The result is predictable: when the best minds teach, the entire system rises.

India must now make a deliberate choice. If we are serious about transforming education, then teaching must be reimagined-not incrementally, but fundamentally. Financial structures must reflect the importance of the role. Competitive salaries, incentives, and long-term security are not luxuries; they are essential to attract and retain excellence. Career pathways within teaching must be clearly defined and aspirational, allowing educators to grow as master teachers, mentors, researchers, and leaders without leaving the profession.

Equally critical is the redesign of teacher education itself. Programs must become more selective, more rigorous, and more aligned with the realities of modern classrooms envisioned by NEP 2020. They must develop not just subject expertise, but the science of learning, the art of engagement, and the capacity for continuous reflection. Institutions responsible for shaping these frameworks carry a profound responsibility. The standards they set will determine the kind of educators India produces.

But beyond structures and systems lies a deeper shift that must occur-the shift in how we value teachers as a society. Why should a teacher not command the same respect as a doctor or an engineer, or a lawyer , or civil servants or researchers or scientists ? Why should shaping human potential be seen as less significant than managing systems or constructing infrastructure? These are not rhetorical questions. They strike at the heart of our national priorities. A teacher does not just deliver content; a teacher shapes character, builds confidence, and ignites curiosity. In doing so, a teacher influences not just individual lives, but the collective destiny of a nation.

The vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 cannot be realized through infrastructure alone. It requires intellectual capital, emotional resilience, ethical grounding, and creative thinking-qualities that are cultivated in classrooms, guided by capable and committed teachers. Every reform, every policy, every investment will ultimately succeed or fail based on the person who translates it into practice at the front of the classroom.

This is why the time for incremental change has passed. What is needed now is a decisive, policy-driven commitment to elevate teaching into a profession of prestige, purpose, and power. Not as an act of goodwill, but as a strategic imperative for national development. Because in the end, a nation is built twice-first in the minds of its children, and then in the world they go on to create. The architects of that first construction are teachers. If they are empowered, respected, and exceptional, India will rise to its full potential. If they are not, no policy vision, however ambitious, will be enough. The question before every policymaker, every institution, and every leader is stark and unavoidable: Will we design a system that draws our finest minds into teaching-or will we continue to expect extraordinary outcomes from an undervalued profession?

AI and Journalism Catalyst for Press Freedom or Threat in Disguise?

Prof D Mukherjee

Over recent decades, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has shifted from peripheral philanthropy to a central pillar of corporate governance. A major milestone in its global institutionalization was the UN's introduction of the Global Compact by Secretary-General Kofi Annan at Davos in 1999. Officially launched in July 2000, the Compact encouraged businesses to align voluntarily with principles of human rights, labour rights, environmental protection, and anti-corruption (United Nations Global Compact Reports, 2000). This global momentum gradually shaped national policies, including in developing countries like India, where CSR emerged as a bridge between business interests and social equity.

CSR in India, though legally formalized only recently, is deeply embedded in the country's cultural and spiritual traditions. Practices such as Dhramada (Hindus), Dushaant (Sikhs), and Zakat/Zakhath (Muslims) reflect historical commitments to charity and social welfare. Ancient scriptures like the Vedas, Upanishads, and the Bhagavad Gita stress selfless service (nishkama karma, Gita Ch. 3, Verse 19) and collective well-being (lokasangraha), laying ethical foundations akin to modern CSR. Historical Indian rulers institutionalized these values through public utilities like dharmashalas, water tanks, and community granaries.

Despite ongoing criticisms, globalization and widening wealth inequalities have prompted both governments and corporations to rethink their approach to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). As businesses expand in revenue and influence, their role in shaping human development, environmental sustainability, and community well-being has become increasingly crucial.



This calls for a model where economic growth supports broader societal advancement.Archie B. Carroll's 1991 framework was pivotal in shaping the modern CSR narrative. Building on Howard Bowen's foundational work, Carroll introduced the Pyramid of CSR, classifying corporate responsibilities into four levels: economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic. His model offered businesses a clear and practical structure for integrating CSR into their operations and highlighted the need to look beyond profits.

In India, CSR evolved from informal philanthropy to a formalized legal obligation with the Companies Act, 2013. Section 135 of the Act mandated that firms exceeding Rs 500 crore in net worth, Rs 1000 crore in turnover, or Rs 5 crore in net profit must allocate 2% of their average net profit over the previous three years toward CSR , evident from the MCA Annual Reports, 2014-2024. Enforced from April 1, 2014, this landmark move made India the first country to legally require CSR spending. This transition redefined CSR from discretionary giving to a strategic responsibility. Today, CSR initiatives serve as tools for brand enhancement, stakeholder engagement, and sustainable development. From ancient traditions to global frameworks, India's CSR journey exemplifies the fusion of moral obligation with business strategy, establishing CSR as a key pillar of modern corporate governance

Japan and South Korea exhibit unique cultural and economic influences on CSR. Japanese corporates emphasize community harmony and employee welfare, while South Korea's chaebols increasingly align CSR with national innovation goals. The UK, through Section 172 of the Companies Act 2006, mandates directors to account for broader stakeholder interests, subtly weaving CSR into corporate governance itself (UK Parliament Reports on CSR, 2019).

A bird's eye view of adecade (2014-2024) of mandated CSR practice in India, since the enactment of mandatory CSR in 2014, India has witnessed notable shifts in corporate conduct and public-private partnerships. Initial years , 2014-2018, witnessed uneven compliance, but regulatory reforms brought greater accountability. The Companies (Amendment) Act, 2019, and CSR Rules, 2021 introduced stricter norms, including mandated transfers of unspent funds and compulsory impact assessments for large-scale projects. The CSR-2 online disclosure format further enhanced transparency as stipulated by MCA Notifications, 2019 and 2021. It is evident from that MCA CSR Portal, 2023, corporate spending has surged, with over Rs 25,000 crore invested in FY 2022-23 alone. Core sectors like education, health, the environment, and rural development remain top priorities. Major contributors include Reliance Industries, Tata Group, Infosys, and ONGC

In the context of India referring to the global CSR landscape, it may be mentioned that India stands apart globally with its legally mandated 2% PAT CSR rule. KPMG Global CSR Survey, 2021 observes that unlike nations such as the US, Canada, and Japan, where CSR is largely voluntary, India enforces both expenditure and reporting. European countries Favor hybrid models, focusing on disclosures rather than set spending limits . However, the NITI Aayog SDG Index, 2022 provides that CSR funding in India remains skewed, with urbanized states receiving the bulk, while Aspirational Districts continue to lag. Despite a clear legal mandate, in India faces ongoing hurdles that hinder its full potential.

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Biotech Key to Nation-Building and Future Economy: Minister



New Delhi, Oct 30 (GNS): Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology; Earth Sciences and Minister of State for PMO, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh inspected the various facilities at BRIC-inStem and reviewed ongoing clinical trials in collaboration with premier medical institutes and hospitals, including the landmark first-in-human gene therapy trial for Haemophilia conducted with CMC Vellore. Calling it a "milestone in India's scientific journey," the Minister hailed the institute's contributions to preventive and regenerative healthcare.

During his visit, Dr. Jitendra Singh underscored the strategic importance of biotechnology in shaping India's future economy and public health infrastructure. "This is not just about science—it's about nation-building," he said, commending the Department of Biotechnology's (DBT) recent successes and its emergence from relative obscurity into national relevance. India's biotechnology sector has seen an extraordinary leap, growing 16-fold in the past decade to reach $165.7 billion in 2024, with a vision to touch $300 billion by 2030. The Minister credited this growth to enabling policy reforms, including the recently approved BIO-E3 Policy that aims to boost economy, employment, and environment through biotechnology. "We now have over 10,000 biotech startups compared to just 50 a decade ago," he pointed out.

Dr. Jitendra Singh praised the creation of the Biotechnology Research and Innovation Council (BRIC) that unified 14 autonomous institutions under one umbrella. "BRIC-inStem is at the cutting edge of fundamental and translational science," he said, highlighting innovations like the germicidal anti-viral mask during the COVID-19 pandemic and the 'Kisan Kavach' that protects farmers from neurotoxic pesticides.

A highlight of the visit was BRIC-inStem's Biosafety Level III laboratory, a key national facility for studying high-risk pathogens under India's One Health Mission. "The recent pandemic taught us that we must always be prepared. Facilities like this will help us stay a step ahead," Dr. Jitendra Singh stated. The Minister also praised the newly launched Centre for Research Application and Training in Embryology (CReATE), which addresses birth defects and infertility by advancing developmental biology research. "With about 3 to 4 percent of babies born with some form of defect, this centre is vital for improving maternal and neonatal health outcomes," he said. Calling for greater collaboration between scientific and medical institutions, he suggested that BRIC-inStem explore MD-PhD programs, integrate more with clinical research, and enhance visibility through coordinated communication strategies. "What's being done here should echo across the country—not for publicity, but because the nation needs it," he said.

Dr. Jitendra Singh concluded by noting that India's economy of the future would be bio-driven, with institutions like BRIC-inStem serving as torchbearers of this transformation. "As Mark Twain said, the economy is too serious a subject to be left to economists alone. Biotechnology is not just a science anymore—it is a pillar of our national strategy."

Grateful to CCI for instituting processes for constructive engagements: Google



New Delhi, Oct 30 (GNS): Tech giant Google on Tuesday said it is the grateful to the Competition Commission of India (CCI) for instituting processes which enable constructive engagements between companies and the market. The company reacted after it paid up a penalty of Rs 20.24 crore to settle its case with the regulator over the alleged unfair business practices and abuse of dominance by the US tech giant in India's Android TV segment. "Google is committed to abiding by applicable local laws in every country where we operate and are grateful to the CCI for the opportunity to engage and present our case," the tech giant said in a statement. "We also thank the CCI for instituting processes which enable constructive engagements between companies and the market, allowing for continued investment and growth," it added.

This is the first case to be settled under the amended Competition Act, wherein settlement and commitment provisions were introduced in 2023, according to a CCI statement on Monday. After receiving a complaint, CCI had ordered a detailed probe in 2021.

Later, Google proposed to settle the case and CCI considered the settlement proposal and observed that under the "New India Agreement", Google will provide a standalone licence for the Play Store and Play Services for Android smart TVs in India, thereby, removing the requirement to bundle these services or impose default placement conditions, the CCI statement said.

"Additionally, by waiving the need for valid Android Compatibility Commitments for devices shipped into India that do not include Google apps, OEMs (original equipment manufacturers) can now sell and develop incompatible Android devices without violating the Television App Distribution Agreement (TADA)," CCI further stated. The regulator said it has accepted the settlement proposal. The case involved alleged abuse of dominance in smart TV software, highlighting the need for exercising regulatory control over global tech firms to ensure fair competition in the market. The settlement brings to a close an investigation that started after two individuals filed complaints accusing Google of forcing television manufacturers to accept restrictive terms in exchange for access to the Android TV operating system.

Chhattisgarh CM to showcase new industrial policy during his two-day Mumbai visit

Mumbai, March 24 (UNI) Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai will be on a two-day visit to Mumbai from Wednesday, where he will participate in two major national events, including the CMAI Fab Show and the India Steel 2025. During these events, he will present Chhattisgarh's new industrial policy, its investment potential and infrastructure vision before leading industrialists and policymakers from across the country.

According to the Chhattisgarh Chief Minister's office, CM Sai will take part in the Fab Show on April 23, organised by the Clothing Manufacturers Association of India (CMAI). This annual event brings together leaders from garment manufacturing, exports, and branding. The chief minister will highlight the incentives and opportunities available for the textile sector under Chhattisgarh's new industrial policy. Several major companies are also expected to sign MoUs for investment in the state during this event.

On April 24, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the 'India Steel 2025' event via video conferencing. CM Sai will also address the inaugural session as the Chief Guest. On this platform, he will present the highlights of Chhattisgarh's new industrial policy, infrastructure readiness for the steel sector and the state's long-term development vision. On the same day, a Chhattisgarh Roundtable Meeting will also be held, where the CM will engage in direct dialogue with potential investors. The discussion will focus on specially developed industrial clusters for the steel sector, logistics infrastructure, single-window clearances, and labour-friendly policies.

CM Sai will also visit the Chhattisgarh State Pavilion set up at the Bombay Exhibition Centre. This pavilion will showcase the state's robust industrial infrastructure, business-friendly environment, and emerging investment opportunities -- aiming to attract national and international investors.

This is CM Sai's second visit to the financial capital of the country since January this year. During that visit, Chhattisgarh had attracted investment worth Rs 6,000 crore in a range of sectors, including plastic, textile, cement, IT and food processing. He had told the investors that since the launch of the new industrial policy last year, the state had attracted investments of Rs one lakh crore.

He had told the investors that the process of no-objection certificates had been streamlined, and clearances were now processed through a single window system.

The Chief Minister is expected to emphasise Chhattisgarh's strategic location, availability of natural resources and improving connectivity as key advantages for investors. He will also highlight the state government's efforts to simplify industrial procedures, strengthen infrastructure and create a favourable environment for both domestic and international businesses. The proposed investment discussions are expected to cover opportunities in textiles, steel, cement, engineering, logistics and allied industries. The state government aims to attract new industries, encourage expansion of existing manufacturing units and generate employment opportunities.

RBI issues new LCR guidelines for banks

Mumbai, March 24 (UNI) The RBI has issued new Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) guidelines which will require a bank to assign additional run-off rates of 2.5 per cent to internet and mobile banking-enabled retail and small business customer deposits with effect from April 1, 2026. Banks will also have to adjust the market value of Government Securities (Level 1 HQLA) with haircuts in line with margin requirements under the Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF) and Marginal Standing Facility (MSF). In addition, the final guidelines also rationalise the composition of wholesale funding from "other legal entities". Consequently, funding from non-financial entities like trusts (educational, charitable and religious), partnerships, LLPs, etc., shall attract a lower run-off rate of 40 per cent as against 100 per cent currently. "To give the banks adequate time to transition their systems to the new standards for LCR computation, the revised instructions shall become applicable with effect from April 1, 2026," the RBI statement said. The Reserve Bank has undertaken an impact analysis of the above measures based. on data submitted by banks, as on December 31, 2024. It is estimated that the net impact of these measures will improve the LCR of banks, at the aggregate level, by around 6 percentage points as on that date. Further, all the banks would continue to meet the minimum regulatory LCR requirements comfortably. The RBI is sanguine that these measures will enhance the liquidity resilience of banks in India, and further align the guidelines with the global standards in a non-disruptive manner, according to an RBI statement.

The Reserve Bank had issued a draft circular on July 25, 2024, on "Basel III Framework on Liquidity Standards Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) – Review of Haircuts on High Quality Liquid Assets (HQLA).

and Run-off Rates on Certain Categories of Deposits". The draft circular proposed certain amendments to the LCR framework and invited comments from banks and stakeholders. The final LCR guidelines have been issued after carefully examining this feedback, the RBI statement added.

PLI pushes electronics exports to move up from 5th spot to 3rd

New Delhi, Oct 30 (GNS): Electronics exports from India has moved up from fifth position to third within one fiscal, owing to the transformative production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Tuesday.

In a post on X social media platform, the minister said that electronics exports clocked an all-time high of Rs 3.27 lakh crore in FY25, with mobile exports standing at Rs 2 lakh crore. "Electronics exports moves up from fifth position to third within one fiscal. Three years in a row, electronics is India's fastest growing export amongst India's top 10," Vaishnaw informed.

He further stated that lakhs of new jobs have been created in the electronics ecosystem, especially for women, along with "skilling, increasing DVA and Indian MSMEs joining global supply chains". The electronics manufacturing industry has seen a five times growth in the last 10 years, surpassing Rs 11 lakh crore while the entire ecosystem has created 25 lakh jobs. In the last decade, electronics exports have risen six times to surpass Rs 3.25 lakh crore. In a historic achievement, smartphones emerged as India's largest export category in the first 10 months of FY25 -- marking a major success story under the government's PLI scheme. In FY14, smartphones were ranked as India's 167th export category -- a sharp contrast to their number 1 position today.

The Union Minister also hailed hardware brands now lining up for India, as China stands to lose amid the ongoing trade tariff war with the US. The PLI 2.0 scheme for IT Hardware saw more than Rs 10,000 crore production and 3,900 jobs in just 18 months of its launch, the government said in January this year. In a groundbreaking development for India's electronics manufacturing sector, the production of laptops has started in the country. Moreover, the electronics manufacturing sector has received a major boost with the government notifying the much-awaited 'Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme' (ECMS). The scheme marks a turning point for strengthening India's component manufacturing ecosystem and increasing domestic value addition. With a financial outlay of Rs 22,919 crore over six years, ECMS aims to generate production worth Rs 4.56 lakh crore, attract investments of Rs 59,350 crore and create nearly 91,600 direct jobs. The minister said the rapid expansion of electronics manufacturing reflects the government's focus on making India a global manufacturing hub under the Make in India initiative. He noted that policy support, improved infrastructure and a growing domestic supply chain have helped manufacturers expand production capacities and strengthen India's position in international markets.

The government is also focusing on reducing dependence on imported electronic components by encouraging domestic manufacturing and attracting global companies to establish production facilities in India. The Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme is expected to strengthen the local supply chain, support small and medium enterprises and improve India's competitiveness in the global electronics industry. Vaishnaw said the growing participation of Indian companies in global supply chains would further boost exports, create skilled employment and promote technological development.

Jefferies downgrades Hero MotoCorp & Bajaj Auto, cuts price targets sharply

New Delhi, Oct 30 (GNS): Global brokerage firm Jefferies on Tuesday downgraded Hero MotoCorp and Bajaj Auto, citing a weak outlook for the two-wheeler industry in the coming years. While Hero MotoCorp has been downgraded to "underperform", Bajaj Auto has been rated as "hold". Jefferies has also slashed the price targets of Hero and Bajaj Auto by a large margin. The price target for Hero MotoCorp has been cut by 37 per cent to Rs 3,200 from the earlier Rs 5,075. For Bajaj Auto, the target has been reduced by 28 per cent to Rs 7,500 from Rs 10,550. Jefferies believes the overall volume growth in the two-wheeler industry for FY26 and FY27 will be slower than expected, reducing its growth estimates by six and two percentage points, respectively.

Still, it expects a 10 per cent annual growth rate for the sector between FY25 and FY28, as it highlighted that the competitive dynamics in the two-wheeler industry have shifted. Jefferies cut earnings estimates for Hero and Bajaj Auto by 11 per cent and 5 per cent, respectively, as Hero MotoCorp's market share in the domestic market has fallen to a 20-year low. Currently, out of 44 analysts tracking Bajaj Auto, 30 have a 'buy' rating, while seven each have a 'hold' or 'sell' view. For Hero MotoCorp, 25 out of 42 analysts have a 'buy' recommendation, 10 suggest holding the stock, and seven have a 'sell' rating. On Tuesday, Bajaj Auto shares dropped 1.5 per cent to Rs 8,128, falling 36 per cent from its peak of Rs 12,774 in 2024.

Hero MotoCorp shares declined by 2 per cent to Rs 3,840 during the intra-day session, which is 38 per cent lower than its 2024 peak of Rs 6,246. The Jefferies report also noted a sharp decline in Ola Electric's dominance in the electric two-wheeler space. Its market share dropped from 49 per cent in Q1 FY25 to just 19 per cent in Q4, as per the note.

Rs 1.5 lakh crore projects in India's Smart Cities result in cleaner air, drop in crime

New Delhi, Oct 30 (GNS): India's Smart Cities Mission is set to complete a decade of its existence in June with 90 per cent of the Rs 1.64 lakh crore worth of projects, focused on mobility, potable water and sanitation across 100 cities, having been completed, according to an SBI report released on Tuesday.

The Smart Cities Mission was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 25, 2015, with more than 8,000 multi-sectoral projects to be developed in these 100 cities. As many as 7,504 projects amounting to Rs1.50 lakh crore (90 per cent) have now been completed, according to the SBI report. An impact analysis of the smart cities mission shows a significant transformation with Smart cities having witnessed a 23 per cent improvement in air quality over non-smart cities for the 6-year period ended 2024. The crime rates have also come down in cities which have implemented the scheme by 27 per cent, the SBI report states. Over 83,000 CCTV surveillance cameras have been installed in 100 Smart Cities, aiding in crime monitoring. Additionally, 1,884 emergency call boxes, 3,000 public address systems, and traffic enforcement systems for red light violations and automatic number plate recognition have been installed, enhancing public safety, the report points out. Over 50 cities are managing solid waste with increased technology use, improving route management, efficiency of collection, and daily management. Around 4,400 vehicles have been RFID-enabled for Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) to digitise and improve solid waste management efficiency. More than 52 lakh solar/LED streetlights have been installed, and over 86,000 kilometers of underground electricity cabling have been constructed, the report further states.

Each city has developed a diverse set of projects, many of which are unique and being implemented for the first time, thus enhancing the cities' capabilities and experience and achieving broader transformational goals at the city level, according to the report.

The main objective of the Mission is to promote cities to provide core infrastructure, a clean and sustainable environment and offer a decent quality of life to their citizens through the application of 'smart solutions' Of the total Rs 1.64 lakh crore amount that was spent on 100 cities so far, 92 per cent of the amount was spent in 21 major states with the top three states, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, accounting for one-third of the total amount. Almost 50 per cent of total project cost is spent on two heads of mobility, water/sanitation spanning more than 3,000 projects. Overall, on average, Rs 22 crore has been spent on each project.

City-wise, Indore spent the highest amount, followed by Srinagar. The top 25 cities spent as much as 40 per cent of the total amount The Mission aims to drive economic growth and improve quality of life through comprehensive work on social, economic, physical and institutional pillars of the city. The focus is on sustainable and inclusive development by the creation of replicable models which act as lighthouses to other aspiring cities

The Mission is operated as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme. The Central government gives financial support to the extent of Rs 48,000 crores over five years, i.e., on average, Rs 100 crore per city per year. An equal amount on a matching basis is to be provided by the State/Urban Local Bodies (ULB). Additional resources are to be raised through convergence, from ULBs' own funds, grants under the Finance Commission, innovative finance mechanisms such as Municipal Bonds, other government programmes and borrowings.

Swedish major Ericsson sets up antenna manufacturing in India

New Delhi, Oct 30 (GNS): Aligning with the 'Make in India' initiative, tech major Ericsson on Tuesday announced to set up antenna manufacturing in India in collaboration with homegrown company VVDN Technologies to boost innovation, growth and global delivery. By June this year, the Swedish networking giant will localise 100 per cent of "Ericsson Antenna System (EAS) passive antenna" production for the Indian market. This strategic investment enables faster time-to-market, deeper collaboration with local partners, and greater adaptability to customer needs — all while supporting the broader vision of India's digital transformation, the company said in a statement.

"At Ericsson, antennas are critical, serving as the entry point to enhanced network performance and innovation," said Mikael Eriksson, Head of Ericsson Antenna System. "Expanding in India strengthens our ability to deliver cutting-edge technology at speed, closer to where our customers are building next-generation networks," he added. The initiative supports India's rapid 5G rollout and bolsters Ericsson's ability to respond with greater agility to evolving market needs—both regionally and globally. The move also reinforces EAS's role in building high-performing mobile networks. This initiative adds India to Ericsson's global manufacturing footprint — which already includes facilities in Mexico, Romania, and China — further diversifying and future-proofing the company's supply network.

"This expansion reflects our commitment and long-term investment in India's industrial and digital future," says Nitin Bansal, Managing Director, Ericsson India. "By localising production and building out a robust ecosystem, Ericsson is ensuring faster deployment, increased responsiveness, and stronger protection for its customers against environmental or external disruptions," he added.

Revanth hails Supreme Court verdict protecting 550 acres in Miyapur

CM says Telangana has safeguarded Govt lands worth Rs 1.5 lakh cr; pledges their use for public welfare and development



Hyderabad, Oct 30 (GNS): Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has described the Supreme Court's verdict—affirming that all rights to the 550 acres of land in Survey Numbers 100 and 101 in Miyapur, Ranga Reddy district, belong to the government—as a historic judgment. On behalf of the people of Telangana, he expressed his gratitude to the Supreme Court judges for delivering a verdict in favor of the state government, thereby preventing the alienation of government land valued at approximately Rs. 50,000 crore.

While on a visit to Delhi, the Chief Minister spoke to the media alongside Members of Parliament, following the Supreme Court's clear ruling on the 550-acre tract in Miyapur. He hailed the judgment as a major victory for the people of Telangana. He stated that he has directed officials to take all necessary measures to secure the lands in Miyapur. He emphasized that government lands, once reclaimed from encroachers, will be utilized for the public good. He noted that since his administration—a government of the people—assumed office, it has fought effectively in the courts to prevent the alienation of state-owned lands, successfully safeguarding properties valued at approximately Rs. 1.5 lakh crore to date. He added that, in addition to the 550 acres in Miyapur, the government has secured valuable land across seven major locations in the state through these legal efforts. It was stated that leaving the lands secured by the government as they are poses a risk of them being alienated or misappropriated; therefore, the government intends to utilize them for public benefit. Lands protected by the government will be handed over to the respective departments—forest lands to the Forest Department and revenue lands to the Revenue Department. A cabinet sub-committee, appointed for resource mobilization, will study the potential sale of these lands and how the resulting funds can be used for development initiatives. It was clarified that these funds will primarily be directed toward the development of Dalits, Girijans, and Adivasis, providing education to the ultra-poor, constructing 'Indiramma' (housing scheme) homes, developing irrigation projects, and serving other public welfare purposes.

It was noted that following the formation of Telangana, there were attempts to seize valuable government lands, both around Hyderabad and elsewhere in the state. For instance, private individuals and investors attempted to encroach upon 550 acres of government *poramboke* (unassessed/wasteland) property—comprising survey numbers 100 and 101 in Miyapur, Ranga Reddy district—under the guise of developing residential colonies.

Over the past three years, the government has engaged in continuous consultations with legal counsel and presented strong arguments in court to protect these lands, successfully safeguarding assets valued at 50,000 crore.

It was further alleged that attempts were made to misappropriate government lands by manipulating revenue records—under the pretext of the 'Dharani' portal—and by pressuring officials to facilitate the encroachment of these lands by land grabbers.

"When attempts were made to misappropriate the 'IMG lands,' we successfully thwarted them through legal battles. We secured 400 acres in Kancha Gachibowli and 450 acres in Mamidipalli by presenting a robust case in court. By putting forward strong arguments in both the High Court and the Supreme Court, we were able to protect lands worth thousands of crores. We protected 140 acres of land (Survey No. 201) in Sahebnagar Kalan, Hayathnagar Mandal. Thanks to our compelling arguments, the court ruled in favor of the State and the Forest Department. In Kondapur, Serilingampally Mandal, when certain individuals attempted to encroach upon 36 acres of land (Survey No. 59)—valued at approximately 3,600 crore—the government intervened and fought the case in court. On September 3, 2025, the High Court delivered a verdict in favor of the Telangana government, following which the land was taken into possession. In Manchirevula, Gandipet Mandal, we protected 143 acres of government land (Survey No. 393) from attempted encroachment through legal action. Manchirevula is a highly strategic location; situated adjacent to the Musi Riverfront and near the Greyhounds facility, 50 acres of this land have now been allocated for the 'Young India Police School.'" The Chief Minister explained the following:

In Jayashankar Bhupalpally district, when an attempt was made to hand over 106 acres of forest land—valued at Rs. 400 crore—to a politician as a 'gift,' the government fought the case in the Supreme Court and successfully protected the land. Similarly, in Bhadradri Kothagudem district, when private individuals tried to seize 600 acres of forest land, the government intervened and secured the land by fighting the case in the courts. The Chief Minister noted that, in this manner, the government has managed to protect 7 major tracts of land over the past three years.

Farmers' Day Celebrations and PM-KISAN Utsav Diwas Held at ICAR–IIRR, Rajendranagar



Hyderabad, Oct 30 (GNS): Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Shri Bandi Sanjay Kumar urged agricultural researchers to develop new crop varieties through innovative ideas, improved practices and modern technology to help farmers achieve higher yields with lower investments, while conserving the environment and protecting human health.

The Union minister attended the Farmers' Day celebrations as the Chief Guest at the ICAR–Indian Institute of Rice Research (ICAR–IIRR), Rajendranagar, Hyderabad, which also featured PM-KISAN Utsav Diwas marking the release of the 24th instalment of the PM-KISAN scheme.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Bandi Sanjay Kumar highlighted the pivotal role of farmers in realising the Prime Minister's vision of Viksit Bharat@2047. He described ICAR as an important institution for Telangana, recognising its significant contributions to agricultural research. He noted that research institutions like ICAR have been developing new crop varieties to help farmers cultivate crops more effectively and minimise losses.

Expressing concern over the challenges and stress faced by farmers across the country, the Minister emphasised the need for continued research and innovation to address their concerns. Highlighting the role of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme in providing financial assistance to farmers, he stressed the importance of ensuring that all eligible beneficiaries receive the benefits of government welfare schemes.

On the occasion, the Minister encouraged farmers to follow the guidance and recommendations of ICAR–IIRR scientists and researchers. He emphasised that adopting scientific advice and improved agricultural practices would help farmers enhance productivity and increase their yields.

In his opening remarks, Dr. M. Srinivas Prasad, Director, ICAR–IIRR, highlighted the research initiatives undertaken by the Institute in the field of agriculture to help farmers enhance agricultural productivity, improve crop health and increase their income. This was followed by an interactive session between farmers and scientists, during which ICAR–IIRR scientists showcased their latest innovations, including newly developed rice varieties, and briefed farmers on the appropriate use of pesticides. The scientists also addressed various queries raised by the farmers and provided necessary clarifications.

Smt. M. Jayasree, NGO representative of Prakriti Environment Society (PES), Dr. M. Srinivas Prasad, Director, ICAR–IIRR, Scientists & Heads from ICAR–IIRR and around 200 farmers participated in the event.

HYDRAA plans to ease water shortages with Fox Sagar revival

Hyderabad, Oct 30 (GNS): The Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency (HYDRAA) has said it will undertake the restoration of Fox Sagar Lake in Jeedimetla and transform it into a mini Tank Bund within one year.

HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath inspected the 129-year-old lake on Friday, October 30. He said that the lake was constructed in 1897 during the reign of the sixth Nizam Mir Mahbub Ali Khan, and served as a major source of drinking water even before major reservoirs such as Osman Sagar and Himayat Sagar were constructed. Despite its historical and functional importance, the lake has now become polluted with contaminated water and suffered extensive encroachments. Approximately 150 acre out of the 490 acre have fallen under encroachment, the Commissioner said.

He said the lake had deteriorated to such an extent that its water could no longer be used, even during periods of El Nino-related water stress.

The Commissioner said the lake receives floodwater from a catchment area extending nearly 47 kilometres. In 2000, the lake witnessed such heavy inflows that its bund was nearly breached. He said comprehensive restoration of the lake would help address drinking water shortages in surrounding areas to a considerable extent.

HYDRAA plans to restore the lake's natural features and improve its inlet and outlet systems. Nearly 10 feet of industrial waste and silt have accumulated in the lake, which will be removed to ensure the availability of clean water.

Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) will also be established around it to ensure a regular supply of treated water, particularly during the summer, so that the lake retains sufficient water throughout the year.

Hyderabad, Bengaluru office space supply doubled in Jan-Sept: JLL

Hyderabad, Oct 30 (GNS): Fresh office space supply in Bengaluru and Hyderabad doubled to 30.45 million sq ft in January-September, due to strong demand for prime workspace from global and domestic companies, according to JLL. Real estate consultant JLL India's latest data shows that new office space supply rose to 43.66 million sq ft in January-September across the top seven cities from 38.84 million sq ft in the year-ago period.

The top seven cities are Bengaluru, Pune, Hyderabad, Chennai, Mumbai, Delhi-NCR and Kolkata.

Of these seven cities, only Bengaluru and Hyderabad witnessed an increase in fresh office space supply. The total fresh office supply in Bengaluru and Hyderabad rose to 30.45 million sq ft from 14.72 million sq ft. According to the data, fresh supply in Bengaluru more than doubled to 18.35 million sq ft from 8.59 million sq ft.

In Hyderabad, the new supply increased 98 per cent to 12.10 million sq ft from 6.13 million sq ft.

On the demand side, JLL noted that gross leasing advanced 8 per cent to hit a record 61.06 million sq ft in the first nine months of this year across seven major cities. In the nine months, Bengaluru retained its dominant position as the numero uno office market, with a 28 per cent share of gross leasing volumes.

Radha Dhir, Chief Executive Officer, India, JLL, said, "India remains the centre of the global GCC ecosystem, and the numbers show it. In just nine months of 2026, GCCs (global capability centres) have leased 26.2 million sq ft, which is already 84 per cent of what they took in all of 2025, a record year."

EC extends SIR timelines in TG and five other states



Hyderabad, Oct 30 (GNS): The Election Commission on Thursday revised the schedule for the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls in Telangana, Maharashtra, Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana and Nagaland. The revisions follow requests from the chief electoral officers of the concerned states.

In Telangana, the final electoral rolls will be published on November 30 instead of November 9. The last date for disposal of claims and objections is now November 26. The poll panel wrote separately to the five states and the Union Territory of Delhi about extending the timelines. In Maharashtra, the deadline for filing claims and objections has been extended from October 26 to November 13.

The notice phase and disposal of claims will now run until November 25, and the final roll will be published on November 30. The draft roll came out on August 31, and disposals had earlier been fixed for November 10. In Delhi, claims and objections can now be filed until November 25, instead of October 30. Disposal of claims has been pushed from November 30 to December 15, and the final roll will be published on December 22.

The schedule for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise has been pushed back on multiple occasions in the past due to a variety of reasons. The Election Commission said the revised timelines are intended to provide adequate time for electoral registration officers to complete the verification process and dispose of claims and objections. The extension will also allow eligible voters to check their details in the draft electoral rolls and submit applications for corrections, inclusion or deletion of names, as applicable.

During the revision exercise, voters can approach the concerned electoral registration officers and booth-level officers to seek clarification regarding their entries. Political parties and their booth-level agents are also expected to participate in the process by helping identify discrepancies and assisting eligible voters in filing claims and objections.

Will keep walking until Cong govt removed: BJP MP

Hyderabad, Oct 30 (GNS): Taking exception to the reported comments of Congress leaders against his 'padayatra' demanding relocation of the dumpyard at Jawahar Nagar here, BJP MP Eatala Rajender said on Friday, October 30, that he would continue his foot march until the Congress government is dislodged from power. Rajender, the Lok Sabha member from Malkajgiri, launched his 'padayatra' on October 27, seeking relocation of the dumpyard due to the health hazards it poses to people living in nearby areas.

"The Congress party held a press meet after three days. What did they say? That this MP has no work, which is why he is walking. I didn't see it myself; someone told me. If I am walking aimlessly, then I will do the same thing until your government is dislodged," he said while addressing a gathering.

Urging Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy to prepare a Detailed Project Report (DPR) to relocate the dumpyard, he said he would secure funds by taking up the matter with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "If I cannot get funds, I will quit politics," he said. Is it fair that the solid waste generated in Hyderabad, with a population of over 1.50 crore, is all dumped in Jawahar Nagar dumpyard, Rajender asked. Revanth Reddy, who previously represented Malkajgiri in the Lok Sabha, had sought the dumpyard's relocation. However, he has not taken concrete steps since becoming Chief Minister, the MP alleged.

AIMIM workers block Sudarshan Reddy's convoy in Nizamabad

Hyderabad, Oct 30 (GNS): All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) workers on Thursday, October 29, blocked the convoy of Congress MLA Sudarshan Reddy in Nizamabad, claiming he made objectionable remarks about Asaduddin Owaisi. Nizamabad Town-VI sub-inspector K Sandeep said at least 10-15 workers had surrounded the MLA's car near 14th Division Cheruvu. The incident occurred at around 3.30 pm while the convoy from Bodhan was on an official visit. According to the AIMIM workers, Reddy had made remarks against their leader during a field inspection of the lake. Videos from the spot show party workers marching towards the convoy and surrounding Reddy's car, raising flags and "Congress down down" slogans.

Police patrol cars and officers intervened to control the situation after the vehicle pulled over to the side of the road. Remaining inside his car, Reddy was seen speaking to the party workers and explaining that he had not made any comments against Asaduddin Owaisi. Satisfied with the discussion, workers then dispersed with no action taken against them, police said. In a statement after the incident, AIMIM acknowledged Reddy's clarification that he made no such remarks. However, the party reiterated that Nizamabad is an AIMIM stronghold and warned that it will not tolerate any derogatory comments against the party or Owaisi.

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