Eye Secrets
Spy in every blink
Daily
www.eyesecretdaily.com
Rangareddy Vol No. 1 Issue 153 Date:Sunday, 1-11-2026 Price:2/- Pages: 8

Public impeachment: Gyanesh Kumar won't survive as CEC, says Rahul as INDIA bloc levels six charges

New delhi, Oct 31

Warning Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar that he would "not survive" and accusing the Election Commission of deleting 13.3 crore voters, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said on Saturday that the Opposition had been left with "no other option" but to hold a symbolic public impeachment at Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's residence.

Addressing a mock Parliament at 10, Rajaji Marg, Rahul said the fact that Opposition MPs, civil society representatives and citizens had assembled in a garden to question the CEC reflected the closure of institutional avenues, including Parliament, the judiciary and the Election Commission.

"We are here because we have nowhere else to go. We have no other option. Every single institutional direction is closed to us," he said.

Rahul claimed that 13.3 crore voters, or 15 per cent of India's electorate, had been deleted from the electoral rolls.

He argued that these voters had participated in the last Lok Sabha elections, which were decided by margins of around 3 per cent in several constituencies, and questioned the legitimacy of the results if such a large section of the electorate had subsequently been excluded.

Related news: Keep Rahul Gandhi as your 'mock Prime Minister' for life: BJP's swipe at Opposition

"Mr Gyanesh Kumar is not going to survive. We have enough proof," Rahul said, warning that the CEC could not indefinitely take shelter behind the institution he had sworn to serve.

He said the Opposition would neither forgive nor forget the alleged electoral manipulation and warned the BJP that retaining Kumar would raise questions about what the ruling party stood to gain.

The proceedings, which began with the national anthem, "Jana Gana Mana", were presided over by former Lok Sabha Speaker Meira Kumar. The INDIA bloc moved a resolution seeking the CEC's removal, listing six charges, including alleged voter deletions through the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), changes to electoral rules and manipulation of electoral rolls through Election Commission software.

Opening the proceedings, Meira Kumar said crores of voters were allegedly being removed without transparency or accountability. "If even one voter is denied the right to cast their vote, the soul of our democracy is hurt," she said.

Moving the resolution, Kharge accused Kumar of acting at the behest of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah. He said 193 Opposition MPs had submitted a notice seeking the CEC's removal seven months earlier, but it had been rejected.

The resolution listed six charges against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, accusing him of facilitating electoral manipulation and compromising the independence of the Election Commission.

The first charge alleged a conspiracy to manipulate electoral outcomes through additions to and deletions from voter lists. The second accused the CEC of overseeing the deliberate deletion of 13.2 crore voters during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR),



allegedly depriving them of their voting rights.

The third charge concerned changes to Form 6 of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, without parliamentary oversight. The Opposition alleged that these changes could make it difficult for first-time voters to register.

The fourth accused the Commission of centralising electoral roll management through ERONET and ECINET, thereby restricting the role of local Electoral Registration Officers.

The fifth charge alleged that the CEC had excluded the other two Election Commissioners from key decisions, despite objections raised within the Commission.

The sixth accusedhim of compromising the Election Commission's constitutional independence by denying the Opposition a fair hearing and acting at the behest of the ruling establishment.

CPI(M) MP John Brittas said he had himself undergone two hearings to establish his eligibility as a voter. "If this is the plight of an MP, one can only imagine the predicament of an ordinary citizen," he said.

Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Arvind Sawant questioned the figures from the Maharashtra Assembly elections, alleging that four million votes had been cast between 4 pm and 5 pm. He said the Opposition had sought CCTV footage from the Election Commission but had not received it.

Dimagi Naxals, online campaigns trying to divide country: PM Modi

New Delhi,Oct 31

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday launched a sharp attack on the Opposition, accusing it of abandoning its democratic responsibility and turning into an "obstructionist party", while alleging that forces driven by political frustration were conspiring to divide the country and create conflict among its people.

Addressing the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas celebrations marking the 151st birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at Ekta Nagar in Gujarat, Modi warned against what he described as "Dimagi Naxalism", saying social media was being weaponised to spread rumours and malign India's image.

"We have eliminated Naxalism in far-flung areas, but the threat of 'Dimagi Naxalism' has not yet been averted from the nation. The country must always remain alert to these 'Dimagi Naxals'," he said. The PM alleged that "vicious plots" were being hatched to divide the country and provoke conflict among its citizens. He urged people to recognise what he described as a pattern of secret meetings abroad, support from anti-India forces and statements echoing the language of India's adversaries.

"Who is secretly meeting whom abroad? Which anti-India forces are supporting them? Who is speaking the language of India's enemies? We must recognise all these patterns. We must confront them unitedly," Modi said. He accused the Opposition of creating hurdles in the country's development out of frustration and said it was undermining the dignity and boundaries of the Constitution. "This is not healthy opposition; this is sheer obstruction," he said.

Modi recalled how, during recent international



challenges, some forces within the country had allegedly tried to create instability by spreading falsehoods and rumours, even as citizens stood together with the nation. "Social media is being weaponised to spread rumours and to malign India's image. The citizens of the country must handle this together," he said.

The remarks came as Modi highlighted what he described as the decisive weakening of Left-Wing Extremism (LWE), asserting that the country had dealt a major blow to Naxalism.

Recalling his pledge at last year's 150th birth anniversary celebrations of Patel to eradicate Naxalism and Maoist terror, he said the number of Naxal-affected districts had fallen from 126 in 2015 to zero by March 2026.

Paying tribute to Patel, Modi said the country's first Deputy PM had played a monumental role in shaping and safeguarding India's unity by integrating more than 550 princely states after Independence.

Meira Kumar presides over public impeachment of CEC from chair once occupied by Nehru

New Delhi: The chair on which former Lok Sabha Speaker Meira Kumar sat while presiding over the INDIA bloc's "public impeachment" of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on Saturday was once occupied by the country's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru.

The information was provided by Congress'



media and publicity department head Pawan Khera, who was involved with organising the symbolic public impeachment.

"The chair on which Meira Kumar sat during today's public impeachment proceedings against the CEC was once occupied by the first prime minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, the great-grandfather of Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi," Khera said on X.

"It was Nehru Ji's chair throughout his tenure as prime minister. It witnessed some of the most consequential decisions in our nation's history and carries the weight of that legacy," he said.

Today, in that very chair, invoking the spirit of Nehru, former Lok Sabha Speaker Meira Kumar pronounced Gyanesh Kumar unfit to continue as the Chief Election Commissioner of India, Khera said.

"Gyanesh Kumar has been rejected by the people of India. It is only a matter of time before he goes," Khera said.

The INDIA bloc on Saturday carried out a symbolic public impeachment of Chief Election Commissioner Kumar, accusing him of deleting votes to steal elections, and demanding that he be tried in court for treason and jailed.

In the unprecedented event, opposition MPs and leaders, joined by civil society members, passed a resolution to "impeach" Kumar at a meeting presided over by Meira Kumar in a setting resembling Parliament proceedings on the lawns of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's 10, Rajaji Marg residence.

While Kharge, who moved the motion, alleged that the right to vote was under threat because the poll panel was functioning at the behest of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, Rahul Gandhi said the public impeachment of CEC Kumar is a "political weapon" targeted at those who colluded to destroy the votes of the Indian people.

Mamata Banerjee praises CJP activists ahead of INDIA bloc rally at Ramlila Maidan

New Delhi: Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke on Saturday met Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee in Delhi and thanked her for supporting the outfit's youth-led protests, while expressing solidarity with the INDIA bloc rally over the "vote chori" charge.

He, however, said that the CJP would retain its independent identity and would not join Sunday's protest by the opposition parties.

Dipke said he had called on Banerjee to express gratitude for her support for the outfit's first protest at Jantar Mantar over the NEET paper leak issue and her backing when its leaders, Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka, were arrested by the Delhi Police.

"I just came to say thank you to Didi because of the way she supported our first Jantar Mantar movement. She was always so strongly with the youth movement. When Saurav and Ashutosh were arrested by the Delhi Police, even then Didi stood with us very firmly," he said.

Asked whether the CJP would be present at



Sunday's rally at Ramlila Maidan, Dipke said the outfit supported the protest but would continue to function independently.

"We support the protest tomorrow, we stand in solidarity, but the Cockroach Janta Party is an independent organisation; it is a neutral platform, and we want to keep it that way," he said.

He said the issue went beyond any one organisation and that the CJP would support all groups fighting against alleged vote theft.

"Anybody who will fight against this vote theft, we will support all organisations," he said.

Banerjee, who is in Delhi and will attend Sunday's rally, praised Dipke and the young activists for their role in the protests against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and the Election Commission.

"They have extended their full support for tomorrow's rally, and we have extended all support to them as well. They are the pioneers and the founders of this movement. That we must remember," she told reporters.

Banerjee said she was happy to meet the activists and acknowledged their efforts in sustaining the protests despite difficulties.

She also invited Dipke and the others to West Bengal to organise programmes there. Asked whether they would hold an event in Kolkata, she said the decision rested with them."That they will decide. It is their choice," she said.Dipke's meeting with Banerjee came a day before the INDIA bloc rally at Ramlila Maidan, where opposition parties are set to raise the issue of alleged electoral irregularities and demand accountability from the Election Commission.

‘They razed my children’s home’: Who is Delhi animal rights activist Jagriti Mishra



In a 15-second video uploaded to the Instagram account of Street Worldz Trust on October 25, animal rights activist Jagriti Mishra is seen sitting beside the debris of a boundary wall of her under-construction shelter which was demolished by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) a day earlier. The video had crossed 11.5 million views within three days.Mishra runs the organisation that works for injured, disabled and paralysed stray animals in Nizampur village in the Kanjhawala area of Northwest Delhi. She shelters more than 100 stray dogs and other animals.

The boundary wall of an under-construction animal shelter was demolished by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on October 24. The boundary wall of an under-construction animal shelter was demolished by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on October 24.The videos prompted visits from Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and Tilak Nagar MLA Jarnail Singh, along with councillor Sonu Dabas. Gupta assured Mishra of Rs 5 lakh in financial assistance as compensation for her losses.On October 26, the MCD suspended a junior engineer in connection with the incident, while Delhi Police initiated a probe into the role of Sonu Chillar, a local resident whom Mishra had accused of being behind the demolition.Mishra, who is in her late 20s, hails from Bihar and lives in Delhi’s Uttam Nagar. She has been working for the welfare of stray animals for more than six years. Her work during the Covid-19 pandemic also earned her recognition from various platforms.With the number of animals under her care increasing, Mishra had appealed to people on social media to donate even Re 1 towards the construction of another shelter.

In a video uploaded to the account on June 1, 2025, she spoke about her dream of building a sanctuary where injured and paralysed animals of all kinds could receive treatment and care.With people contributing through the QR code she shared online, Mishra was able to begin construction of the new shelter. However, on October 24, she received a message informing her that the boundary wall of the under-construction shelter was being demolished.She rushed to the site and confronted MCD officials, who were accompanied by Delhi Police personnel. She also argued with a man, later identified as Chillar, alleging that the demolition was carried out at his behest.She recorded the confrontation and subsequently uploaded the video to Instagram, which garnered more than 50 million views. In the video, she also alleged that the demolition had been carried out at the behest of AAP councillor Sonu Dabas.After the videos went viral, AAP’s Jarnail Singh, accompanied by Sonu Dabas, met Mishra the following day. Singh told her that Dabas had no role in the demolition.Mishra later uploaded a video of their conversation to Instagram.In the video, Singh tells Mishra that she can file a police complaint against the person who allegedly misrepresented himself as Sonu Dabas. He also questioned how the civic agency could demolish the structure without prior notice.Mishra acknowledges in the video that she had mistaken Chillar for Dabas. She also says the incident demonstrated the power of social media, which helped her voice reach political leaders and the public.A few hours later, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta also met Mishra to discuss the incident.A video of their meeting, uploaded to Mishra’s Instagram account, shows Gupta speaking with and hugging the activist. The Chief Minister assured her that justice would be done and that action would be taken against those responsible for the demolition. She also directed a police officer to ensure Mishra’s safety.

‘Kill six’ to become chief? The story of the Chaimar gang



They move from one city to another with their families. They live on the fringes in makeshift jhuggis and pose as labourers or beggars to scout potential targets before carrying out robberies — and allegedly committing murder.This is the modus operandi of the Chaimar gang, said police, an offshoot of the Kachha Baniyan gang. According to police, the gang’s name comes from the Hindi words “chai (six)” and “maar (kill)”. Police claimed that to become its leader, a person has to commit at least six murders.On October 25, the alleged gang leader, Savan, 53, landed in the Delhi Police net following a shootout while he was scouting farmhouses in South Delhi, officers said. His arrest has brought renewed attention to a gang that police link to a series of robberies and killings in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab.

Robbery that led to the gang’s arrest

Around 1 am on August 28, 2016, a family was asleep inside its shuttered grocery shop-cum-home in Mathura’s Pathak Nagar area. Gopal Sharma and his father, Randev, were sleeping in a room just behind the shutters. Gopal’s mother and sister, Kusumlata, were in the verandah.Police said four men — Savan, Akbar, Salim and Harun — were allegedly moving through the neighbourhood with sticks, looking for a house to rob. They were dressed in boxers and vests, with oil smeared on their arms. The four reached Railway Road, where the Sharmas lived, and targeted their home. According to Uttar Pradesh Police records, they entered the premises from the back. Kusumlata, 17, woke up and saw them. When she and her mother screamed, the men allegedly began beating them up. Gopal and his father rushed in after hearing the screams, but were beaten too.“The robbers fled; Kusumlata died from the injuries. This was allegedly the seventh murder by the group,” said a senior police officer.“They had committed two similar robberies in 2014: One in Jaunpur, where they killed a man while robbing his house, and another in Punjab’s Mansa, where they entered with four other people and killed five members of the same family,” said the officer.After the Mathura incident, police prepared sketches of the four men and circulated them across several North Indian states. Savan’s sketch was recognised in Mansa and Jaunpur, where the group had allegedly carried out earlier robberies.The four were subsequently arrested in 2016. They were convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment in 2023. They were granted bail in 2025.

After their release on bail, police said Savan and the other three allegedly moved their families from Uttar Pradesh to Ambedkar Nagar in Alwar. They subsequently began making frequent visits to Delhi.In July this year, police said the group allegedly identified a farmhouse in Mehrauli as a potential target. They entered the premises but could not reach the house and left, a police officer said.On October 25, the Delhi Police alleged, Savan was scouting South Delhi farmhouses in the Maidan Garhi area of Saket when police received a tip-off about his presence.“At 6.25 am, the suspect arrived on a motorcycle from Bass Gaon Road and was identified by a secret informer. When the police team attempted to intercept him, he allegedly opened fire using a country-made pistol. Sub-Inspector (SI) Narendra Kumar fired three warning rounds. The suspect subsequently took out another country-made pistol and allegedly fired again, with a bullet striking the bulletproof jacket of SI Kumar,” said DCP (South) Anant Mittal.Another police officer on the team then fired at Savan, hitting him in the right calf. He was taken to AIIMS and will soon be questioned in detail, said police.According to police, the Chaimar gang originated in Kannauj in Uttar Pradesh before spreading to other parts of the state and to Haryana. A police officer investigating Savan’s case told The Indian Express that his family was among the more notorious groups. “His brother, Fati, was arrested after an encounter last year in Mathura. He had 17 cases lodged against him,” the officer said.Police also alleged that Savan previously ran with another Kacha Baniyan sub-set called the Bawaria gang.

Race Course Masjid won’t face demolition action until Oct 29: Centre assures Delhi High Court

This came on a petition by a worshipper, Syed Ahmed Saud, who sought unrestricted access to the mosque as well as protection against demolition. The mosque, located on the Race Course ground premises and opposite the Prime Minister’s residence at 7, Lok Kalyan Marg, apprehended demolition after officials from the Land and Development Office (L&DO) reportedly orally instructed the Masjid’s imam to vacate the premises for impending demolition in the absence of any written order. Water and electricity connections to the masjid premises were also disconnected on October 7.

On Tuesday, the court posed a specific query: if it plans to demolish the mosque as well as a temple on the premises. The Centre, through the L&DO, represented by central government standing counsel Ashish Dixit sought time until Thursday to seek instructions.Dixit argued that the masjid is part of the same land where jhuggi dwellers too resided and had approached court challenging the eviction and demolition notice served to them. He added orally, “As of now, we are not demolishing (the mosque).”Justice Anish Dayal, however, asked if Dixit’s submission can be recorded in the order.Dixit answered in the negative, adding that he has only been instructed to the limited extent to inform the court that representations made by Saud as well as Delhi Waqf Board on disconnection of utilities will be decided.

Addressing Dixit, Justice Dayal remarked, “We will have to determine it (the reliefs and protection being sought in the petition), because under the cover of your submission that you will decide the representation, it cannot be that you demolish. Today the mosque is before us. Assuming that someone is raising the issue of the temple, then what? We assume you are not going to do anything in the next couple of days?”Dixit sought time until Thursday to return with instructions from the authority, adding, “As an officer of court, I will brief the officers on this (to not take any action towards demolition of the mosque until Thursday).”Earlier this month, the imam moved the Delhi



HC seeking restoration of the disconnected utilities in the absence of an eviction order. The plea was dismissed on October 15. The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) had refused to restore the utilities, saying “demolition work is still going on” in the area, which involves demolition of the jhuggi structures, and that “there is an element of public harm involved”.

Dixit too, on Tuesday, opposed providing unrestricted entry and exit to the mosque citing the same reason.The Centre has maintained that the masjid’s premises were “covered” by a HC judgment dated August 25. The order had paved the way for the eviction of around 700 slum dwellers and the Race Course Club, even though the masjid was not party to this litigationSaud also wrote to the Delhi Waqf Board on October 22, flagging the imminent threat of demolition. He urged the Delhi Waqf Board to discharge its statutory duties and protect the Waqf-notified grade II heritage structure and to ensure forthwith unhindered access to the masjid for worship.He also wrote to the L&DO the same day, seeking ingress and egress to the masjid be restored as well as requesting to “refrain from undertaking any demolition, dismantling, sealing, dispossession, forcible exclusion, structural alteration or other coercive action against the subject Masjid”.

Among the first to move High Court in Ankita Bhandari case, journalist called to Delhi for CBI questioning

Independent journalist and Uttarakhand Kranti Dal (Democratic) leader Ashutosh Negi, who was among the first to approach the High Court seeking a CBI investigation into the 2022 murder of 19-year-old Ankita Bhandari, has been summoned by the central agency in connection with the case. He is currently in Delhi for questioning.Negi was asked to appear before the CBI’s investigating team at its headquarters on Lodhi Road on Tuesday.

The development comes amid renewed scrutiny of the alleged VIP angle in the murder, following the circulation of an audio clip by actress Urmila Sanawar that purportedly refers to a powerful individual in connection with the case. Sanawar was arrested on Monday in connection with a separate case.The CBI is investigating allegations concerning the possible involvement of the unidentified “VIP”, even as three men have already been convicted in the murder case.The investigation gathered pace following a protest by Ankita’s parents in Delhi a couple of weeks ago where they were joined by Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi seeking that the appointment of senior BJP leader Dushyant Kumar Gautam as the Governor of Sikkim be kept on hold.Earlier, Gautam had claimed that some social media posts falsely portrayed him as the “VIP” in the case. The former Uttarakhand BJP in-charge filed a defamation petition against the Congress, the Aam Aadmi Party, Sanawar, and others, for allegedly accusing him of being involved in the murder case.Who is Ashutosh Negi?Negi is an independent journalist and has also been associated with the Uttarakhand Kranti Dal (Democratic) – a registered, although unrecognised, political party in the hill state.

He emerged as one of the prominent voices questioning the investigation into Ankita’s murder and demanding accountability beyond the three accused arrested by the Uttarakhand Police.In October 2022, Negi approached the Uttarakhand HC seeking a CBI investigation into the case. His petition alleged that the police and the Special Investigation Team (SIT) had withheld crucial information. Among the concerns raised was the non-publication of Ankita’s autopsy report and the demolition of the room at the resort where she had worked.Ankita’s parents, Virendra Singh Bhandari and Soni Devi, subsequently joined the petition as petitioners.In December 2022, the High Court rejected the plea to transfer the investigation from the SIT to the CBI, expressing satisfaction with the state police’s investigation at that stage. The state government had argued that the SIT was functioning independently and that there was no reason to doubt its work.The demand for a CBI probe, however, continued among Ankita’s family members and sections of the public, particularly over allegations that a VIP had sought sexual favours from her and that the circumstances surrounding those allegations required further investigation.Negi was arrested by Uttarakhand Police on March 5, 2024, following a complaint lodged by a resident of Pauri Garhwal. The FIR included provisions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

His arrest drew criticism from the Opposition, which alleged that the action was intended to silence those seeking justice for Ankita. The BJP rejected the allegations, maintaining that the case against Negi was unrelated to the murder investigation.Then Uttarakhand Director General of Police Abhinav Kumar questioned Negi’s activities, alleging that they appeared to be part of a conspiracy to create unrest. The police maintained that they would take action if evidence emerged.Negi’s arrest also drew international attention. The Committee to Protect Journalists called for the charges against him to be dropped, saying authorities should ensure that journalists could report without fear or interference. He was later released on bail.The case and the unresolved VIP questionAnkita worked as a receptionist at the Vanantra resort near Rishikesh, managed by Pulkit Arya, son of



former BJP leader Vinod Arya. She went missing in September 2022, and her body was recovered from the Chilla canal six days later.The state police’s SIT investigated the case and found that Ankita had been pressured to provide sexual services to guests, which she resisted. In May 2025, a court in Pauri Garhwal convicted Arya and his two associates, Ankit Gupta and Saurabh Bhaskar, and sentenced all three to life imprisonment.The convictions established the criminal responsibility of the three men in Ankita’s murder. However, allegations concerning a possible VIP remained a separate issue.In December 2025, Sanawar released purported audio and video recordings involving former BJP MLA Suresh Rathore, whom she claimed was her husband. Rathore has denied that they were married and has disputed the authenticity of the audio.The controversy gathered fresh momentum this year, following protests by Ankita’s family and renewed demands for an investigation into the alleged VIP angle. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami subsequently recommended a CBI probe.

Delhi Police impose prohibitory orders outside Jamia

New Delhi: As the students’ agitation at Jamia Millia Islamia University entered its 16th day on Tuesday, the Delhi Police put up a poster outside Gate No. 7 of the university, warning that Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) was in force on the premises and that violations would invite legal action.The notice prohibits unlawful gatherings, meetings and processions, and warns of legal action and the use of force, if necessary, in case of violations.

Following the imposition of prohibitory orders, security was heightened outside Gate No. 7, with heavy deployment of police and paramilitary personnel.Students have been staging a hunger strike since October 12, demanding the restoration of the Jamia Millia Islamia Students’ Union (JMISU) and the removal of the university’s Chief Proctor over a “crackdown” on protesters.

Meanwhile, students have formally submitted their demands to the Vice-Chancellor, seeking a revision of the notification issued by the Registrar’s Office regarding the hunger strike and insisting that their demands be “fully addressed”.The Jamia Millia Islamia administration on Monday accepted the demands of the protesting students and announced that it would hold students’ union elections and constitute a committee to draft a students’ union constitution. It also said action against the protesters would be revoked. However, it did not provide a timeline for the process.In a letter to the university’s Vice-Chancellor, the students stated that the “hunger strike and peaceful” protest would continue until their demands were met.

‘They razed my children’s home’: Who is Delhi animal rights activist Jagriti Mishra



In a 15-second video uploaded to the Instagram account of Street Worldz Trust on October 25, animal rights activist Jagriti Mishra is seen sitting beside the debris of a boundary wall of her under-construction shelter which was demolished by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) a day earlier. The video had crossed 11.5 million views within three days.Mishra runs the organisation that works for injured, disabled and paralysed stray animals in Nizampur village in the Kanjhawala area of Northwest Delhi. She shelters more than 100 stray dogs and other animals.

The boundary wall of an under-construction animal shelter was demolished by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on October 24. The boundary wall of an under-construction animal shelter was demolished by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on October 24.The videos prompted visits from Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and Tilak Nagar MLA Jarnail Singh, along with councillor Sonu Dabas. Gupta assured Mishra of Rs 5 lakh in financial assistance as compensation for her losses.On October 26, the MCD suspended a junior engineer in connection with the incident, while Delhi Police initiated a probe into the role of Sonu Chillar, a local resident whom Mishra had accused of being behind the demolition.From rescuing animals to building a shelter

Mishra, who is in her late 20s, hails from Bihar and lives in Delhi’s Uttam Nagar. She has been working for the welfare of stray animals for more than six years. Her work during the Covid-19 pandemic also earned her recognition from various platforms.With the number of animals under her care increasing, Mishra had appealed to people on social media to donate even Re 1 towards the construction of another shelter.In a video uploaded to the account on June 1, 2025, she spoke about her dream of building a sanctuary where injured and paralysed animals of all kinds could receive treatment and care.With people contributing through the QR code she shared online, Mishra was able to begin construction of the new shelter. However, on October 24, she received a message informing her that the boundary wall of the under-construction shelter was being demolished.

She rushed to the site and confronted MCD officials, who were accompanied by Delhi Police personnel. She also argued with a man, later identified as Chillar, alleging that the demolition was carried out at his behest.She recorded the confrontation and subsequently uploaded the video to Instagram, which garnered more than 50 million views. In the video, she also alleged that the demolition had been carried out at the behest of AAP councillor Sonu Dabas.After the videos went viral, AAP’s Jarnail Singh, accompanied by Sonu Dabas, met Mishra the following day. Singh told her that Dabas had no role in the demolition.Mishra later uploaded a video of their conversation to Instagram.In the video, Singh tells Mishra that she can file a police complaint against the person who allegedly misrepresented himself as Sonu Dabas. He also questioned how the civic agency could demolish the structure without prior notice.Mishra acknowledges in the video that she had mistaken Chillar for Dabas. She also says the incident demonstrated the power of social media, which helped her voice reach political leaders and the public

Bengal rape-murder accused killed in alleged police encounter



Kolkata: A man arrested in the rape and murder of a 17-year-old girl was allegedly killed in a gunfight with the police in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district on Tuesday, the second such incident in three months, a senior officer said.The incident took place around 2.50 am in Gaighata, where the accused, Prahlad Das, was taken for reconstruction of the crime scene, she said.Suddenly, he snatched the service revolver of a police officer and opened fire at the personnel, leading to retaliatory firing in which the 23-year-old man sustained gunshot wounds, she said.

The accused was taken to a nearby Chandpara Rural Hospital, where doctors declared him dead, the officer said, adding that the body had been sent for post-mortem examination."Our officers had taken the accused to his house to recover the clothes he wore at the time of the crime. While returning, he wanted to relieve himself. He then snatched a service revolver of a police officer and opened fire, prompting the police to retaliate," the officer said.The circumstances under which the accused managed to snatch the officer's revolver and the sequence of events leading to the firing are likely to be probed, she said.No policemen were injured in the firing by the accused, but the vehicle in which he was taken for reconstruction of the crime scene was slightly damaged, the officer said, adding that the vehicle would undergo forensic examination."One of the policemen got minor injuries when he jumped from the vehicle and was provided some basic treatment," she said.The accused's family members reached the hospital and expressed anger over the alleged police encounter.The deceased girl's parents, however, lauded the police personnel for their action."We are happy with the police action, but we will never get our daughter back," the teenager's mother said, adding that the accused was known to the family.

The girl's father echoed the same sentiment and said the "police action will not be able to fill up the void in our lives".A large police force has been deployed in the area to maintain law and order, and the spot where the alleged firing occurred has been cordoned off, the officer said.The man was arrested for allegedly raping and killing the Class 11 student, whose body was found outside a neighbour's house in Gaighata on Sunday morning.The girl had gone to attend a musical programme near her home on Saturday night.According to the police, the girl had left the venue after receiving a phone call and had not returned home.The encounter in Gaighata was the second such incident in three months, following the death of an accused in the rape and murder of an 11-year-old girl in an alleged gunfight in July.He had allegedly snatched an officer's revolver and opened fire on the personnel during crime scene reconstruction at Baruipur in South 24 Parganas district, prompting the police to retaliate.Reacting to the Gaighata incident, senior BJP leader and state Rural Development Minister Dilip Ghosh said the police must take stringent measures to regain public trust in Bengal, where, he alleged, law and order had deteriorated under the TMC regime."Nobody is above the law. If someone takes the law into his own hands, this would be the consequence. The police have to deliver justice to the people. Bengal's people had lost faith in the police force. To regain their trust, the police have to take stringent steps that may not be liked by many," Ghosh added.

Why is system helping pharma makers, asks Supreme Court



New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday questioned the Centre over the massive difference between the maximum retail price (MRP) of medicines and the price charged to retailers, asking why the entire system was working to help pharmaceutical manufacturers.The Centre told the apex court that the government policy "is that the entire ecosystem is not to be controlled"."Why is the entire system working to help these people (manufacturers)," a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta asked during the hearing.It observed that the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) seemed to be a "totally defunct" body.

The bench was hearing two petitions that flagged the issue of medicine pricing in the country.Referring to the massive difference between the MRP and the price charged to retailers, the bench said, "The government is allowing this to happen. It is under the government's own eyes that it is happening." "Should it be allowed to run amok?" the bench asked.Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, told the bench that medicine prices in India were among the lowest in the world.The bench reserved its order in the matter.

While hearing the matter on October 12, the top court had said the Centre's response on capping the trade margin of anti-cancer drugs at 30 per cent of the MRP was "hardly anything to be happy about" and questioned why the government could not cap trade margins on other medicines.The Centre, which had earlier come under severe criticism from the top court over steep markups on cancer drugs by hospitals, said the government had taken an important decision to cap the trade margin on anti-cancer drugs at 30 per cent of the MRP. This was expected to result in annual savings of approximately Rs 2,500 crore for patients.

Supreme Court seeks Centre's reply on plea for equal status to Vande Mataram



New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday sought a response from the Centre on a plea to transfer from the Delhi High Court a PIL seeking that the 'Vande Mataram' song be given status equal to the national anthem.A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana issued notice to the Centre on the plea filed by advocate Ashwini Upadhyay and tagged the matter with similar petitions.The plea, filed through advocate Ashwani Dubey, submitted that the PIL be transferred from the Delhi High Court to the top court as a similar writ petition is pending before it."Vande Mataram' is the symbol of our history, sovereignty, unity and pride. If any citizen by any overt or covert act shows disrespect to it, it would not only be an anti-social activity, but it would also spell doom to all our rights and very existence as a citizen of a sovereign nation," the plea submitted.

"Every citizen must, therefore, not only refrain from such activities but also do his best to prevent if any miscreant shows any disrespect to 'Vande Mataram'. We must be proud of our nation, our Constitution, national anthem and national flag and put national interest above our personal interests and only then will we be able to protect our hard-earned freedom and sovereignty. It is the duty of the executive to frame a national policy to promote and propagate 'Vande Mataram'," the plea said.The public interest litigation (PIL) seeks to ensure that the song is honoured and given status equal to the national anthem.

The petitioner, who has also sought a direction from the Centre and the Delhi government to ensure that 'Jana Gana Mana' and 'Vande Mataram' are played and sung in all schools and educational institutions on every working day, has contended that in the absence of guidelines or regulations to honour the song, 'Vande Mataram' is being sung in an "uncivilised manner" and misused in films and parties.The petitioner has stated that the song played a historic part in the Indian freedom struggle and ought to be honoured as much as 'Jana Gana Mana' in view of the statement made by the Constituent Assembly Chairman Rajendra Prasad in 1950."To keep the country united, it is the government's duty to frame a national policy to promote-propagate 'Jana Gana Mana' and 'Vande Mataram'. There is no reason why it should evoke any other sentiment, as both are decided by the Constitution makers."The sentiments expressed in 'Jana Gana Mana' have been expressed keeping the State in view. However, sentiments expressed in 'Vande Mataram' denote the nation's character and style and deserve similar respect," the petition has said.The petition has asserted that there should not be any dramatisation of 'Vande Mataram' and "it must not be included in any variety show because whenever it is sung or played, it is imperative on the part of everyone present to show due respect and honour".

Andhra, Odisha step up cyclone preparations as Arnab nears coast

Amaravati/Bhubaneswar: Andhra Pradesh and Odisha have stepped up preparations, including moving people to safer locations, as "very severe" cyclonic storm Arnab heads towards the east coast and is expected to make landfall within the next 24 hours, officials said on Tuesday.In its latest bulletin, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said the cyclone was over the Bay of Bengal, about 170 km south-southeast of Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, at 11.30 am. It is likely to move west-northwestward until evening before crossing the coast between Bapatla and Visakhapatnam, close to Yanam, by Wednesday forenoon.The system is expected to make landfall with maximum sustained wind speeds of 125-135 kmph, gusting to 150 kmph, the agency said.Andhra Pradesh has been placed on high alert, with evacuations planned and precautionary measures underway to prevent loss of life and property, officials said.

According to the Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (APSDMA), the cyclone's impact is being felt, with heavy rainfall expected in the north coastal districts shortly. Srikakulam district is likely to experience heavy rain accompanied by strong winds, while strong winds have already begun in Visakhapatnam and Kakinada.Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu directed officials to shift people living in low-lying areas to safer locations, ensure essential supplies at relief camps and minimise cyclone-related damage.He spoke to collectors of districts likely to be affected and instructed officials to ensure the availability of food, drinking water and other essential supplies at relief camps.APSDMA Managing Director Prakhar Jain urged people to remain alert and follow safety precautions.Residents have been advised to stay indoors during the cyclone and avoid venturing outside amid strong winds. They should move to the nearest cyclone shelter if instructed by officials and stay away from the sea, rivers and ponds.Sea waves are likely to rise to heights of one to two metres, while extremely heavy rainfall is forecast in north Andhra Pradesh and coastal districts as the cyclone approaches.Jain said 2,131 cyclone shelters had been set up across the state's 20 districts, and continuous cyclone alerts were being sent to the mobile phones of 2.70 crore people across 18 districts.More than 30,000 fishing boats have been secured along the coast, while 1,087 medical teams have been deployed in cyclone-affected areas to provide emergency assistance, he said.Authorities have readied 8,281 emergency beds and 1,274 ambulances, while hospitals have stocked 21,536 doses of anti-snake venom to deal with possible snakebite incidents, officials said.A total of 1,351 pregnant women have already been shifted safely to hospitals. Drinking water tankers, generators and reverse osmosis (RO) plants have been kept ready, they said.Two months' worth of essential commodities have been stocked in advance at 14,686 ration shops, while advisories have been issued to 35.96 lakh farmers to protect their crops from damage, they added.

Indian Railways has placed around 600 km of tracks under close surveillance ahead of the cyclone's expected landfall, with safety protocols and rapid restoration measures in place across the Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam divisions.War rooms have been activated at zonal, divisional and Railway Board levels to facilitate round-the-clock monitoring, officials said.Traffic between Uppada and Kakinada has been disrupted due to rough sea conditions, affecting movement between surrounding coastal areas as waves continue to surge along the shoreline.Under the impact of the weather system, heavy rain accompanied by strong winds lashed parts of Odisha, where the government aims to move around 48,000 people to safer locations.Odisha Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Rajesh P Patil said around 11,000 people each would be shifted to safer locations in Gajapati and Nabarangpur districts.

Evacuation drives were also underway in Malkangiri, Ganjam, Koraput, Rayagada, Kalahandi and Nuapada, he said.Schools in eight districts have been ordered to remain closed on Tuesday and Wednesday.The IMD issued an orange warning, forecasting heavy to very heavy rainfall of 12-20 cm, for Puri, Gajapati, Ganjam, Rayagada, Koraput and Malkangiri districts.A yellow warning, indicating heavy rainfall of 7-11 cm, was issued for Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Kandhamal, Kalahandi, Nabarangpur, Khurda, Nayagarh, Jagatsinghpur, Nuapada, Balangir and Boudh.



Patil said 135 permanent cyclone shelters and around 1,600 temporary shelters had been prepared to accommodate people from vulnerable areas.The state government has deployed 294 rescue teams across potentially affected areas, including nine National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams, 60 State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) teams and 225 Fire Services teams, officials said.Maintaining that the government had set a "zero casualty" target, Patil said district collectors had been directed to take all necessary measures to protect lives and property.Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari said heavy rain in the upper catchment areas of rivers in Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand could trigger flash floods and waterlogging in western and northern Odisha.Odisha's major ports, including Paradip, Dhamra and Gopalpur, have stepped up preparations in view of the approaching storm.The very severe cyclonic storm also brought rain to parts of West Bengal in the afternoon.The coastal districts of South 24 Parganas and Purba Medinipur experienced moderate rain, while parts of Jhargram, Paschim Medinipur, Howrah and Kolkata also received rainfall, the IMD said.The weather department forecast heavy rain in South 24 Parganas, Purba and Paschim Medinipur, Jhargram, Purulia, Bankura and Paschim Bardhaman on October 28 and 29, while Kolkata is likely to receive light to moderate rain.In the sub-Himalayan region, heavy rain is expected in Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Alipurduar and Jalpaiguri on October 29 and 30, it said.

The cyclone is also expected to bring heavy rainfall to parts of Jharkhand over three days, prompting the state government to ask district administrations to remain vigilant, officials said.A yellow alert, advising people to stay updated, has been issued for heavy rain in Ranchi, Khunti, Simdega, Gumla, Lohardaga, Saraikela-Kharsawan, East Singhbhum and West Singhbhum for 24 hours from 8.30 am on October 28, the IMD said.The Ranchi district administration has asked officials to remain vigilant."Waterlogging is likely in low-lying areas and on roads in Ranchi due to heavy rainfall. Kutcha houses, shanties and structurally weak buildings may sustain damage. Rivers, lakes and large drains could overflow. There is a possibility of flood-like conditions in low-lying areas," the administration said in a statement.

Search for 13 escaped Theni jail inmates expands to Kerala forests



Theni: The search for 13 remand prisoners who escaped from the Theni district jail has widened to forest stretches along the Western Ghats and neighbouring Kerala, with police in both states coordinating efforts to trace the fugitives.Seventeen inmates escaped late on Monday night after attacking prison personnel. Four were subsequently recaptured, while special teams continued searching for the remaining prisoners on Tuesday.

Kerala Police has been alerted, and combing operations are underway in forest areas, including parts of Idukki district bordering Tamil Nadu, a senior police officer said.Photographs of the escaped prisoners have been circulated among officers at different locations across both states to assist identification.The widening search has brought forest routes along the interstate border into focus. Teams are combing these stretches as part of the operation to locate the prisoners, while information gathered from those recaptured is being used to pursue further leads.Police identified one of the injured prison personnel as Thangapandi, a Grade II Constable. He was admitted to the Theni Government Medical College and Hospital following the attack.Two other personnel were also undergoing treatment, the senior officer said. Further details about their injuries and condition were not immediately available.Authorities have not disclosed the locations from where the four prisoners were apprehended. The officer said their questioning had provided information that special teams were following up in their efforts to track down the other escapees.Director General of Police, Mahesh Kumar Aggarwal, said a detailed investigation into the incident would follow once all the prisoners had been brought back into custody."Once the remaining 13 prisoners are also secured, we will conduct a thorough enquiry," he said.The Inspector General of Police for the South Zone said information about the escape had been shared with senior officers in Kerala and that combing operations were continuing in full swing.The immediate priority remains locating the fugitives through coordinated searches and the exchange of information between police teams in the two states.The circumstances surrounding the breakout and the attack on prison personnel are expected to come under scrutiny during the enquiry announced by the police chief.As of Tuesday, authorities had confirmed the recapture of four inmates. Searches for the remaining 13 continued across identified locations, including forest areas along the Tamil Nadu–Kerala border.

Man's response on free bus service leaves Bejjanki MLA flummoxed

Siddipet: A man's experience with the free bus service left Manakonduru MLA Kavvampally Satyanarayana flummoxed during a village-level meeting at Regulapally village on Tuesday.

During the "Prajala Vaddaku Palana" programme organised in the village, a man, Bandi Kanakaiah, told the MLA that his wife had left home following an argument with him recently. Since bus services were free for women, he said, it took him five days to trace her. His travel expenses for this purpose touched Rs 2,000.Everyone present at the meeting burst into laughter upon hearing the man's account of the free bus service. Kanakaiah said his wife had never travelled such distances when bus services were not free.While trying to convince the man, the MLA suggested that Kanakaiah not search for her if she left home again.

Apple unveils new iPad mini with 8.5-inch OLED display, A20 Pro chip

New Delhi: Apple on Monday introduced the next-generation iPad mini, featuring a redesigned thinner and lighter form factor, a larger OLED display, the new A20 Pro processor, and enhanced artificial intelligence capabilities powered by iPadOS 27.The new iPad mini comes with an 8.5-inch OLED display, larger than its predecessor while maintaining a similar overall footprint due to significantly slimmer bezels.

Apple said the Super Retina XDR display offers more than twice the peak brightness of the previous-generation model, deeper blacks, a 2,000,000:1 contrast ratio, and support for the P3 wide colour gamut.The tablet is also available with an optional nano-texture display designed to reduce glare in bright environments.

At just 5.4 mm thick, the latest iPad mini is Apple's thinnest mini tablet yet. It is available in midnight and starlight finishes and carries an IP67 rating for water and dust resistance, making it suitable for outdoor and on-the-go use.Powering the device is Apple's new A20 Pro chip, built using a 2-nanometre process. The company claims the processor delivers up to 60 per cent faster multithreaded CPU performance, up to 2.7 times faster graphics performance, and up to 4.5 times faster AI processing compared with the previous generation.The chip features a 7-core GPU with Neural Accelerators integrated into each GPU core, while the top-end 512GB variant includes a Dual 16-core Neural Engine for advanced on-device AI workloads.

Apple has also enhanced the device's multimedia capabilities with an Acoustic Display system that integrates specially designed woofers and tweeters into the display structure to deliver improved audio quality, higher volume levels, and stronger bass response.On the camera front, the iPad mini now features a 12MP Center Stage front camera positioned on the landscape edge for video calls and online meetings.The rear houses a 12MP Wide camera

EDITORIAL

Elderly care—Kerala shows the way

In a country that takes pride in its culture of respecting elders, it is ironic that older people often suffer the most in the twilight years of their lives—uncared for, neglected and exploited. More disturbing is the fact that several elderly people are abandoned by their own kith and kin. A recent national survey by HelpAge India has revealed that 35% of the senior citizens living with their families suffered abuse at the hands of their sons. Geriatric care in India also remains largely neglected. Against this grim backdrop, Kerala has shown the way for the rest of the country by introducing a noteworthy legislation to regulate old-age homes and home-care services, train caregivers, and establish state- and district-level protection units. The State Assembly recently passed the Keralam Senior Citizens' Care and Protection of Rights Bill, 2026, which envisages setting up a legal framework to protect the rights, dignity, and social security of people aged 60 and above. The legislation is widely regarded as the most ambitious elder-care law proposed by any State. It adopts a comprehensive rights-based model that protects senior citizens from abuse, neglect, abandonment, and exploitation. It also regulates old-age homes, retirement facilities, and home-care agencies and proposes the establishment of State and district-level protection and grievance-redressal mechanisms. The migration of workers and rise of nuclear families have weakened the traditional systems of elder care, while a lack of financial independence further exacerbates their plight.

There was a time when the elderly were regarded as repositories of wisdom and respected for their guidance in difficult times. Now, their physical safety has become a challenge for society at a time when the elderly population grapples with not just age-related difficulties but also with the prejudices of the younger generation. India's demographic trends indicate a growing elderly population. It is estimated that the 60-plus age segment will account for over 20% of the country's population by 2050, rising from the current 11–12% to reach 347 million. The significance of Kerala's legislation is that elderly care is framed as a legal right with enforcement machinery, not a welfare scheme dependent on budgets. The central law— Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007—mostly deals with maintenance and abandonment. The Kerala law adds regulation of care homes, caregiver standards, cyber-fraud response, healthcare, digital access and end-of-life choices within a single framework. It seeks to move beyond a system that views senior citizens mainly as people who need family support or state welfare. Instead, it recognises their right to "live independently at home, with institutional care as the last resort". Kerala is undergoing one of India's fastest demographic transitions. The share of people aged 60 and above in the State rose from 12.7% in 2011 to 15% in 2021.

Former IPS officer N Balasubramanyam passes away after battle with cancer

Hyderabad: Retired IPS officer N Balasubramanyam, a 1994-batch officer of the Andhra Pradesh cadre, passed away on Friday, after battling with cancer.

He was undergoing treatment and retired from service in August 2026 upon attaining superannuation.

During his nearly 25-year career in law enforcement, intelligence and anti-extremist operations, Balasubramanyam served as Superintendent of Police of Nalgonda and Mahabubnagar districts in Telangana. He was recognised for leveraging information technology to strengthen policing and governance.

He designed and implemented the Intelligence Collection, Collation and Analysis Framework for the Andhra Pradesh government, strengthening intelligence-gathering and analysis mechanisms.

He also brought significant reforms to the Transport Department by making services such as vehicle registration, transfer of ownership, permits, learner's licences and driving licences contactless, paperless and cashless, eliminating physical touchpoints between citizens and the department.

He served as Managing Director and later



Chairman of APSRTC in Vijayawada. Andhra Pradesh continued to benefit from his experience and dedication until a few months before his demise.

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy described his demise as heart-rending and said his dedicated services to the police system were inspiring.

Former Telangana DGP Anjani Kumar, who worked with him in the Intelligence Department, recalled his integrity, courage and commitment, describing him as a dependable colleague who served without seeking recognition.

Balasubramanyam is survived by his wife, children and other family members.

RIMS- Adilabad doctor, nurse, two constables booked for abetment of Dalit youngster's suicide

A doctor, nurse and police constable were booked in Adilabad following the death by suicide of 26-year-old Rahul Kamble. His family alleged harassment and caste-based abuse, while a suicide note reportedly accused RIMS doctors and police of torture.

Adilabad: A doctor, and nurse from RIMS and a constable were booked on charges of abetting a youngster from the town to die by suicide and abusing him using his caste name here on Thursday.

Adilabad DSP L Jeevan Reddy said that a case was registered against Dr Sourabh, staff nurse Mamatha, II town head constable Fateh Singh under the Section 108 (abetment of suicide) of BNSS and relevant sections of the SC, ST Prevention of Atrocities Act, based on a complaint received from the father of Rahul Kamble (26) father on Thursday evening.Earlier in the morning on Thursday, Rahul died allegedly by suicide by hanging after feeling humiliated when he was allegedly reprimanded and harassed by doctors and police for video-recording negligence of staffers in providing treatment to him at RIMS on his mobile phone. He was admitted to RIMS after be-



ing bitten by a scorpion on Wednesday. A suicide note purportedly written by Rahul was recovered.

In the suicide note, Rahul alleged that he was subjected to torture by police as per instructions of doctors from RIMS. Following his suicide, his family members and Dalit organizations staged a protest seeking justice and demanding action against the staffers and police at RIMS on Thursday. This protest prompted to register a case against those who allegedly drove the youngster to die by suicide.

Telangana, Andhra Pradesh final electoral rolls to be published on November 30

Hyderabad: With the Election Commission of India (ECI) again revising the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) schedule in both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, the final electoral rolls in both states will now be published on November 30.

For Telangana, the Election Commission has extended the deadline for notices and disposal of claims and objections to November 26. In Andhra Pradesh, the deadline has been extended till Novem-



ber 20.

The final electoral rolls in both the Telugu states are now scheduled for publication on November 30.

The schedule has been revised at the request of the Chief Electoral Officers of both states.

In separate communications to the CEOs, the Commission informed them about its decision to revise the schedule.

The ECI has directed the CEOs to inform all officials about the revised schedule and ensure wide publicity through all available media. Political parties must also be informed of the modified schedule in writing

The Commission has revised the SIR schedule multiple times in both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

Earlier, the deadline for the notice phase and the disposal of claims and objections process in Telangana was November 5, with final electoral rolls publication scheduled for November 9.

In Andhra Pradesh, the deadline for the notice phase and disposal of claims and objections ended on October 22, while the final rolls were scheduled for publication on October 30.

Before the SIR exercise began, Telangana had 3,38,26,448 voters, of whom 2,64,87,213 submitted enumeration forms. The remaining 73,39,235 electors were categorised under Absent, Shifted, Death and Duplicate (ASDD) entries and were removed from the draft electoral rolls.

A total of 92,81,189 out of 92,88,188 SIR notices generated were delivered to voters, leaving 6,999 notices pending for delivery, as of October 29. Hearings have already been concluded for 92,08,443 notices.

As many as 2,59,22,684 voter names have been cleared for inclusion in the final voter list as of October 29. Of these, 59,31,395 voters cleared for their logical discrepancies, and 30,64,168 were SIR 2002 unmapped electors.

A total of 50,690 electors were found ineligible for inclusion in the final electoral roll.

In Andhra Pradesh, hearings have been concluded for 44,28,858 notices. Of these 42,55,630 have been cleared for inclusion in the final voter list. The election authorities found 1,73,662 electors ineligible for inclusion in the final list.

ECI extends Telangana SIR claims deadline to November 26, final rolls on November 30

Hyderabad: The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Thursday revised the schedule of Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Telangana.

As per revised schedule, the notice phase, and disposal of claims and objections process will conclude on November 26. The final electoral rolls will be published on November 30.

The ECI revised the schedule as per the request raised by Telangana Chief Electoral Officer C Sudharsan Reddy. Earlier, the deadline for notice phase, and disposal of claims and objections process was November 5, with final electoral rolls publication scheduled for November 9.Before the SIR exercise began, Telangana had 3,38,26,448 voters, of whom 2,64,87,213 submitted enumeration forms. The remaining 73,39,235 electors were categorised under Absent, Shifted, Death and Duplicate (ASDD) entries and were removed from the draft electoral rolls.A total of 92,81,189 out 92,88,188 SIR notices generated were delivered to voters, leaving 6,999 notices pending for delivery, as of Thursday. Hearings have already been concluded for 92,08,443 notices, while 78,108 first hearing and 1,636 rescheduled hearings have lapsed as of Thursday.As many as 2,59,22,684 voter names have been cleared for inclusion in the final voter list as of Thursday. Of these, 59,31,395 voters cleared for their logical discrepancies and 30,64,168 were SIR 2002 unmapped electors.

Two TSSP inspectors suspended over corruption, harassment and attempt-to-murder allegations

Adilabad: Two inspectors from the Telangana State Special Police 2nd battalion-Yapalaguda have been suspended following allegations of corruption, harassing staffers and attempting to murder a subordinate. An order to this effect was issued by higher authorities on Thursday.

As per the order, Inspector A Ramesh and M Naresh had been suspended over the allegations. The officials were reportedly committing irregularities in transfers, allocation of duties, permissions, construction works, consumption of fuel, purchasing of medicines and welfare activities. They were reportedly demanding bribes to perform their duties.

Meanwhile, an attempt to murder case was registered against Naresh based on a complaint received from RSI Rasam Rakesh working in the same battalion on September 25. On September 24, Rakesh sustained injuries after a jeep ridden by Naresh rammed into him when he was on his way to home on a two-wheeler near the battalion.

Naresh reportedly nursed a grudge against Rakesh and some other staffers for exposing the irregularities by lodging complaints with higher authorities, seeking probe into the wrongdoings and growing corruption among officials of the battalion. An inquiry has already underway into the misappropriation of funds and graft.

Telangana High Court directs Housing Board to execute flat sale deeds within 10 days

Hyderabad: A Division Bench of the Telangana High Court comprising Justice B. Vijaysen Reddy and Justice Gadi Praveen Kumar has directed the Telangana State Housing Board (TSHB) to execute sale deeds in favour of flat purchasers within 10 days, without insisting on adjustments or demanding penal interest. The Bench passed the interim directions on October 28 while hearing a writ petition filed by the Telangana Housing Board challenging an order of the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC), New Delhi, dated June 19, 2025.

During the hearing, Special Government Pleader Pottigari Sridhar Reddy, submitted that the Housing Board was willing to execute the sale deeds, provided the purchasers paid the entire sale consideration of Rs. 47.85 lakh for each flat. However, Senior Counsel Avinash Desai, appearing for the flat purchasers, opposed the demand. He submitted that the Supreme Court, in its judgment dated May 8, 2023, had clarified that interest at 6 per cent payable to the purchasers under Clause 13 of the agreement, amounting to Rs. 16,66,946, had to be adjusted against the final sale consideration.

After such adjustment, the purchasers would be entitled to receive approximately Rs. 4,61,946 from the Housing Board, he contended. The Bench ob-



served that the Housing Board had repeatedly represented before the NCDRC that it would comply with the order dated June 19, 2025. The Commission had also recorded the undertaking given by the Housing Board's standing counsel in its order dated May 24, 2026. Taking note of the undertaking and the submissions made by the Special Government Pleader, the Bench directed the Housing Board to execute the sale deeds in favour of the purchasers within 10 days, without insisting on any adjustments or demanding penal interest.

The Bench further ordered that, upon execution of the sale deeds, the operation of the NCDRC's order dated June 19, 2025, would remain suspended. The dispute concerning the Housing Board's claim for penal interest at 14 per cent per annum under Clause 3 of the agreement, as against the purchasers' claim for adjustment in terms of the Supreme Court's order, will be decided at a later stage. The matter was posted to November 18, 2026.

Telangana faces fund crunch, Mahesh Kumar Goud admits after Anirudh Reddy's protest decision



Hyderabad: After Congress MLA J. Anirudh Reddy decided to stage a fast unto death over a shortage of funds and delays in clearing bills, TPCC president Mahesh Kumar Goud admitted that the State was facing a fund crunch.However, Goud said the legislator's manner of expressing his concerns was inappropriate despite the fund shortage. He maintained that the government was taking steps to overcome the financial challenges, but streamlining the situation would take time. "Anirudh Reddy's issue will be handled by the Disciplinary Committee," Goud said. He also blamed the previous BRS government for the current financial crisis. The Congress government was struggling to meet its funding requirements because of the debts left behind by the previous government, he alleged.Meanwhile, Goud said there was no need to politicise former Minister Konda Surekha's withdrawal of her earlier remarks against BRS working president K. T. Rama Rao. He said Surekha had been dropped from the State Cabinet under special circumstances. She had made certain remarks against Rama Rao in the past, which she had now withdrawn. Goud asserted that Surekha continued to be a Congress leader and that the party would stand by her.

Environmentalists celebrate Lula's reelection in Brazil: 'The Amazon can breathe sigh of relief'



Manaus: Environmentalists, Indigenous groups and climate scientists are celebrating the reelection in Brazil of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, which brings the prospect of a continued focus on stopping the illegal cutting of the Amazon, the largest rainforest in the world.But supporters also warned that a Congress increasingly dominated by the far right and the agribusiness caucus could undermine those efforts to protect the forest and combat climate change.

Lula defeated Sen. Flavio Bolsonaro, son of far-right former President Jair Bolsonaro, in Sunday's runoff with 51.78 per cent of the vote to 48.21 per cent. After trailing in the first round, Lula staged a comeback to win by 4.4 million votes."The Amazon can breathe a sigh of relief!" said David Lapola, a Brazilian scientist and lead author of a chapter on so-called tipping points in an upcoming United Nations climate report. Scientists debate the threshold beyond which the dense, humid Amazon rainforest could shift to a drier ecosystem, with irreversible consequences for biodiversity and the climate. The forest absorbs vast amounts of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that drives global warming. About 60 per cent of the Amazon lies in Brazil.Lula's victory reflected shifts in voter support and higher turnout nationwide. In the Amazon, Indigenous communities and advocacy groups mobilised voters and, aided by court rulings last week, helped secure government transportation for those living in remote areas.

The Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil, known as APIB, was among the organisations that went to court to secure Indigenous voters' access to the polls. Lula's victory reflected the "strength of grassroots mobilisation in defence of democracy, life and Indigenous peoples' rights," it said in a statement.Flavio Bolsonaro refused to concede Monday and said he would ask the electoral court to nullify the results. He faces a high hurdle: presenting evidence of fraud sufficient to overturn Lula's winning margin and persuading the court before the results are certified Dec. 18. Early signals from Brazil's institutions and regional leaders, including conservative presidents who oppose Lula, suggest the outcome will be accepted at home and abroad.Flavio Bolsonaro had pledged to pursue policies aligned with those of his father, who governed from 2019 through 2022. Deforestation surged under Jair Bolsonaro as his administration weakened environmental enforcement agencies and loosened regulations. Lula's government last week announced the lowest Amazon deforestation rate on record.Lula is expected to continue efforts to curb deforestation and finance a sustainable economy through international donations as well as public and private funding. While he was the clear favourite for environmentalists, climate scientists and others who want to protect the Amazon, Lula has put forward policies that have drawn criticism. Most recently, he has supported efforts to drill for oil in offshore waters near the Amazon.

Still, Flavio Bolsonaro presented a stark choice that many environmentalists felt would put the Amazon and Brazil's overall environmental protections at risk. He had denied climate change while casting himself as an environmental defender. However, he offered few details on forest protection or financing, calling for "modernising" environmental laws and giving Amazon landowners more decision-making power — proposals environmentalists warned could weaken safeguards and accelerate deforestation.Brazil's Climate Observatory, a nonprofit coalition of 172 organisations, welcomed Lula's reelection but said seven in 10 incoming lawmakers oppose the climate and environmental agenda. It cited recent measures weakening pesticide rules, Indigenous land rights and environmental licensing, and urged Lula to broaden his alliances and strengthen ties with Congress.The goal of ending deforestation across Brazil's biomes must be pursued relentlessly," the group said.Amazon Watch, a nonprofit focused on environmental protection and Indigenous rights, also welcomed Lula's victory while warning of legislative obstacles."A Congress strengthened by forces seeking to open Indigenous lands to mining and weaken environmental protections remains a serious threat," said Ana Alfinito, an Amazon Watch legal adviser.WWF Brazil said the country's vast biodiversity and share of the Amazon give it a strategic role in addressing climate change. It credited Lula with strengthening Brazil's leadership through international cooperation."Maintaining this leadership is essential to mobilising other countries, raising the ambition of global commitments and turning agreements into concrete action," the organisation said.Election results bring money for forest protectionClaudio Angelo, the Climate Observatory's head of international policy, said Lula's reelection had already delivered a result: a USD 500 million pledge Monday from the Netherlands to the Tropical Forest Forever Facility, a Brazil-backed fund launched at last year's UN climate summit in Brazil.The initiative pays developing countries to keep forests standing but has struggled to secure an initial USD 10 billion by year's end. The Dutch pledge brings commitments to USD 7.8 billion.Angelo said prospective donors had put plans on hold pending the election results, calling the Dutch pledge a vote of confidence in Lula's victory."There was justified concern that a Flavio Bolsonaro victory could derail the TFFF, that Brazil would pull out and the fund would miss its USD 10 billion target," Angelo said.

EAM Jaishankar meets Liechtenstein Prince, discusses opportunities under TEPA



New Delhi: External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar on Tuesday called on Liechtenstein Prince Alois and discussed bilateral ties and emerging opportunities under the India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA).Taking to X, EAM Jaishankar said, "A pleasure to call on HSH Hereditary Prince Alois of Liechtenstein, on a State Visit to India. Our bilateral partnership is witnessing strong momentum across a wide range of domains, driven by the opportunities enabled by India – EFTA TEPA." "Look forward to his meeting with PM Narendra Modi later today to advance our cooperation," he added.

Earlier in the day, Prince Alois was accorded a ceremonial welcome at the forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhavan. President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi warmly welcomed Prince Alois upon his arrival. He said that he is honoured to be in India for the State Visit, adding that the European country is determined to further strengthen ties with New Delhi.Speaking to the reporters, Prince Alois expressed gratitude to President Murmu and PM Modi for the invitation and warm welcome and said, "I am very honoured to be in India on the occasion of Liechtenstein's first state visit to this remarkable country." "This historic visit bears testimony to the importance that Liechtenstein attaches to the relationship with India," he said.

Speaking about the conclusion of the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) with India, which entered into force a year ago, the Prince called it a "significant milestone" in strengthening bilateral ties. "We are determined to build on this momentum and strengthen our ties with India even further." "In particular, we see tremendous potential in expanding our economic cooperation in areas such as innovation, advanced manufacturing, financial services, education and technology. Across these and many other areas, our two countries possess complementary strengths that we can bring together for the lasting benefit of both our countries," Prince Alois added.Prince Alois arrived in the national capital from Gujarat's Vadodara on Monday. He was received by Union Minister of State (MoS) Jayant Singh at the airport. He was accompanied by his wife, Princess Sofia, a high-level official and a business delegation comprising top industry leaders.Prince Alois is scheduled to hold talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Hyderabad House later on Tuesday, where they will discuss cooperation in various sectors, including trade and investment, science, technology and innovation, and people-to-people exchanges, as well as views on regional and global developments.Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Union Minister of State for Skills Development and Entrepreneurship Jayant Chaudhary will call on Prince Alois on Tuesday. Prince Alois will then meet President Droupadi Murmu, who will also host an official banquet in his honour. "The visit is expected to provide further impetus to the growing engagement between India and Liechtenstein, particularly since the operationalisation of the India–EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement in 2025. The visit will provide an opportunity to further deepen the friendly ties between India and Liechtenstein and build partnerships in new areas of mutual interest," the MEA said in a statement.

White House completes review of proposal to modernise PERM programme



Washington: The White House has completed the review of a proposal to modernise the permanent labour certification process (PERM), considered as the first step for sponsoring foreign workers for a green card.The Department of Labour proposal seeks to revise the labour market test and other aspects of the PERM programme which were last modified in 2004.

It had submitted the proposal to the Office of Management and Budget of the White House for review in July.The agency is advancing the proposal amid a broader enforcement crackdown targeting the PERM programme by the US administration as part of the actions taken by the Anti-Fraud Taskforce led by Vice President J D Vance.

Earlier this month, the US suspended PERM programmes of Microsoft, Adobe and six other tech employers such as Infosys Technologies and Tata Group.The specific content of the proposal will not be known until publication, but according to the description of the proposed rule, it would revise the minimum standards for PERM recruitment, strengthen rules related to US worker layoffs and enhance employer non-discrimination rules.Once the proposal is published in the Federal Register, it is expected that the Department of Labour will accept public comments for 30 or 60 days.The regulation will not take effect until public comments are considered and the rule is finalised.The Department of Labour says that the rule would seek to revise the minimum standards for recruiting qualified US workers in the PERM labour market test.It also seeks to strengthen rules related to US worker layoffs and employer compliance with non-discrimination requirements in recruitment and hiring.

New UNSC permanent members without veto would be 'second-class': India



GNS News Agency, Oct 29

United Nations: India has asserted that any reform of the UN Security Council that creates a new category of permanent members without veto powers would effectively relegate them to "second-class" status, leaving the existing five permanent powers in control of the decision-making process.China, France, Russia, the UK and the US are the five permanent members of the 15-nation Security Council and enjoy veto powers. The Council also has 10 non-permanent members elected for two-year terms.

India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni, on Monday said the veto must be held by all permanent members of a reformed Council as long as the provision exists, stressing that fairness and justice demand equal rights and responsibilities for all permanent members."India's position on the veto is principled and well known… We reiterate that as long as the veto exists, it must be held by all permanent members of a reformed Council," he said.Addressing the Inter-Governmental (IGN) plenary on 'Cluster Debate on the Question of the Veto' in the UN General Assembly, Parvathaneni said a reform that expands the Security Council by "creating another category of long-term members without the veto effectively makes them 'second-class' members and would not change the decision-making dynamic of the P5".

Creating a new category of permanent members, with or without veto powers, would further complicate an already difficult discussion and "entrench the very inequity we are seeking to correct", he said."Periodic elections and the concept of permanency are fundamentally contradictory," the diplomat said."History has a lesson for us," he said, recalling that the only expansion of the Security Council, in 1965, increased the number of non-permanent members from six to 10 while retaining five permanent members.The ratio of permanent to elected members shifted from 5:6 to 5:10, further strengthening the relative power of the P5, Parvathaneni said.India has consistently called for expanding both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership, warning that reform efforts would border on "failure" if they focused solely on increasing the number of non-permanent members.New Delhi has been at the forefront of years-long efforts to achieve reform of the Security Council, saying the body, founded in 1945, is not fit for purpose in the 21st century and does not reflect contemporary geopolitical realities.India has consistently underscored that it rightly deserves a permanent seat at the horse-shoe table.New Delhi is also seeking a non-permanent seat for the 2028-29 term. Elections for the term are scheduled for June next year, when India and Tajikistan will contest the sole seat allocated to the Asia-Pacific Group.

India last served on the Council in 2021-22, its eighth term, having previously held seats in 1950-51, 1967-68, 1972-73, 1977-78, 1984-85, 1991-92 and 2011-12.Parvathaneni further stressed that the veto, currently a prerogative of the five permanent members, must be exercised with "great restraint", particularly on matters concerning international peace and security."It should not be an instrument of narrow political expediency," he said.Parvathaneni said the question of limiting the veto could not be considered in isolation from other aspects of Security Council reform, including membership categories, regional representation, the Council's size and its working methods."India reiterates its call for a comprehensive approach towards Security Council reforms. The starting point is early commencement of text-based negotiations, with clearly defined timelines and milestones," he said.Addressing the Council's working methods, the envoy said the veto was not limited to votes formally cast by permanent members.An "effective or de facto veto" could also be exercised by any Council member over presidential statements, press statements and decisions of sanctions committees, where the "unwritten rule" of consensus allows a single member to block a proposal, often without explanation, Parvathaneni said.He was referring to the working of the UNSC sanctions committees that designate and de-list terror outfits and individuals.The diplomat also criticised the use of consensus as a "disguised, de facto veto" in the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) process itself.Referring to the UN General Assembly resolution that established the framework for the negotiations, Parvathaneni said its guiding principle was the widest possible political acceptance, rather than consensus."Seventeen cycles later, we have no outcome to show for it," he said.India called for text-based negotiations to begin at the earliest, with clear timelines and milestones, arguing that the Council's credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness could not be restored by addressing the veto alone."The questions of credibility, legitimacy and efficacy that hang over the Security Council will not be answered by managing the veto alone. They will be answered by a Council fit for purpose, whose architecture reflects today's realities and not that of the outcome of a war eight decades ago," Parvathaneni said.

Russia-Ukraine ceasefire takes effect in Oleshky in deal brokered by Melania Trump

Mykolaiv: A localised ceasefire between Ukraine and Russia took effect early Tuesday ahead of a humanitarian mission led by US first lady Melania Trump.The pause in fighting started at 3 am in Ukraine to allow an aid mission into the Russian-occupied town of Oleshky in southern Ukraine later this week.According to her office, Melania Trump led talks with civilian negotiators from Russia and Ukraine after meeting with United Nations officials who briefed her on the situation in the town.

Midterm polls paint grim picture for Trump, Senate race remains too close to call

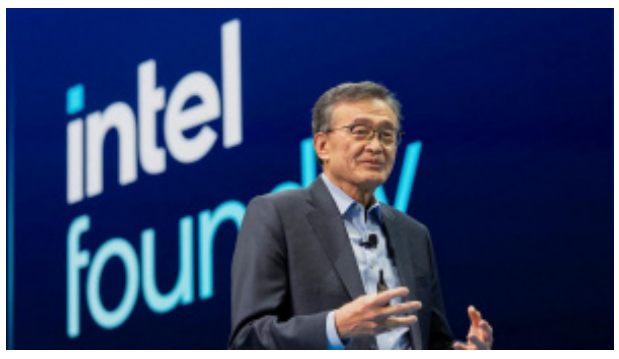


New York: A week before midterm elections, polls project grim prospects for President Donald Trump, who is weighed down by the economic fallout of his tariff war and the Iran conflict on US voters.The consensus among major poll analysts is that his Republican Party will lose control of the House of Representatives while the Senate outcome is hovering in the realm of a toss-up.Trump's next two years in office will depend on which party controls either chamber of Congress or both.If Democrats control either, they can try to obstruct his policies and actions, or Trump can vehemently defy them, a standoff that could bring judicial intervention.

At the very least, the US could see a replay of his first term when the Democrat-controlled House impeached him — and he warned his supporters could happen again.Signs of his desperation are his offer of $5,000 to every American adult if the Republicans win the midterms, and not only lifting sanctions placed on Russia for its Ukraine invasion — after having imposed a 100 per cent tariff on India at one time — but also entering into a deal with Russia's President Vladimir Putin to buy diesel.Trump has declared the midterms a referendum on the first 20 months of his second administration, telling citizens to vote as if he was on the ballot, even though many Republicans are distancing themselves from him because of his low ratings.Republican New Hampshire Senate candidate John Sununu, for example, said in an ad, "When the president's policies are bad for New Hampshire, I'll oppose them, just like I opposed the war in Iran and the trade war with Canada".Trump seems to have admitted the popularity of his party — and him — is dimming even in their electoral fortresses, by concentrating his campaign in the reliably red states that he carried in the presidential election in order to shore up support for Republican candidates, rather than take the battle to blue states to topple Democrats."Every single place I go, people that are down are now winning", he asserted recently about his "Trumpapaloozas", the rallies he is holding from Alaska in the north to Texas in the South.And his Justice Department has taken the unusual step of filing a case to stop the Senate election in Alaska officially declared if the Republican candidate Dan S. Sullivan loses, because, the Trump administration says, there is another candidate with a similar name, Daniel J. Sullivan, on the ballot, and it confuses voters.The voting is already in progress, and as of Monday, nearly 30 million citizens had voted either through postal ballots or at in-person early voting stations.There are 217 million registered voters, and the turnout in midterm election is usually low, recording 46.2 per cent in 2022 and 50 per cent in 2018.Democrats flipping the House majority would be in line with the historical trend of the president's party losing the midterms, but the size of the majority would matter.RealClear Politics (RCP), which aggregates polls, reported that only 38.2 per cent of likely voters approve of Trump's job performance, while 60.2 per cent disapprove of Trump job.And, tellingly, 57 per cent say Trump policies are making them financially worse off.That would echo worldwide sentiments about the impacts of the Iran conflict that Trump launched alongside Israel, and the tariff war, but hit closer to home for Trump.The inflation rate was 3.7 per cent last month (up from 3.4 per cent in August), but it bites consumers much harder than would be expected due to the soaring prices of petroleum, especially diesel, and its multiplier effect on food and other items of daily use, as well as the impact of tariffs on many items of everyday use.

This stings because during the 2024 election campaign, he had boasted he would bring down the price of petrol to $2 a gallon (53 cents per litre), but now the average price is $4.28 a gallon ($1.13 per litre), and diesel is $6.28 a gallon ($1.66 per litre).In this scenario, RCP gave Democrats a majority with 227 seats in the 435-member House, even with 25 seats it put in the "toss-up category" where neither party has a clear lead and can go either way.Cook Political Report, an authoritative source for non-partisan analysis, projects 220 seats for Democrats, with 17 tossups.Its editor for House elections, Erin Covey, was forthright about the outcome: "Republicans' path to keeping control of the House has all but evaporated".CBS News said Democrats could get 229 seats for Democrats and Republicans 206, with the caveat because of previous polls being off the mark: "Republicans do still have a very narrow path to hold the majority, too".That's because, according to CBS News, "There isn't a growing [Democratic] wave" and "the still undecided or uncertain voters tend to profile as more Republican".The Senate scenario doesn't have a clear winner.Only 35 seats are up for election this year under the system in which about a third of the 100 seats come up for election every two years because senators have six-year terms.CBS News, taking into account the seats not up for election, tallies 46 for Democrats and 44 for Republicans, with 10 categorised as tossups, but going by the trends in tossup states,

Why U.S. President Donald Trump wants Intel's CEO to resign | Explained



The story so far: On Thursday (August 7, 2025), U.S. President Donald Trump singled out Intel's CEO Lip-Bu Tan on the right-wing social media platform Truth Social, posting, "The CEO of INTEL is highly CONFLICTED and must resign, immediately. There is no other solution to this problem. Thank you for your attention to this problem!"Mr. Tan, a Malaysian-born, Singapore-raised American citizen, took over the reins of the ailing chipmaker in March, three months after the abrupt departure of former CEO Pat Gelsinger. The company has been lagging behind Nvidia for several quarters now.

Why did Trump demand that the Intel CEO resign?

Mr. Trump did not cite specific details but suggested that Mr. Tan had serious conflicts of interest as Intel's CEO. The U.S. President's post on Truth Social likely referenced Mr. Tan's Chinese investments, which numbered in the hundreds, as well as his past leadership position in a company with Chinese military links.In a letter dated August 5, U.S. Senator Tom Cotton wrote to Intel's Chairman of the Board of Directors, Frank D. Yeary, expressing his concerns."Mr. Tan reportedly controls dozens of Chinese companies and has a stake in hundreds of Chinese advanced-manufacturing and chip firms. At least eight of these companies reportedly have ties to the Chinese People's Liberation Army," Mr. Cotton claimed in the letter.The U.S. senator wanted to know whether the Intel board made Mr. Tan formally take steps to divest from positions that could pose a conflict of interest for Intel's CEO, and whether Mr. Tan had officially disclosed any other ties to Chinese companies.

Is Intel's CEO involved with Chinese companies?

News agency Reuters reported that Mr. Tan had made many investments in Chinese companies.

Of particular note is Mr. Tan's investment in Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corp (SMIC). Mr. Tan's venture capital firm Walden International's funds exited from SMIC in June 2013 and in January 2021, as reported in an investigation by the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party. SMIC was flagged by the U.S. in 2020 over links to China's military.Additionally, the report stated that Mr. Tan served on SMIC's board from 2001 to 2018, and was compensated with "hundreds of thousands of dollars in salary and stock options for his tenure as a board member during those years."However, Walden International is still invested in funds and companies, including bodies with ties to the Chinse administration, per Reuters. Mr. Tan's alleged ownership of Sakarya Limited and his reported involvement with Seine Limited would have given him significant exposure to Chinese companies in the form of stakes, according to the outlet.Aside from his investments, there are security concerns about Mr. Tan's time as the CEO of Cadence Design Systems between 2008 and 2021 (overlapping with his time at SMIC). This became a pressing issue after Cadence, a multinational electronic design automation (EDA) technology company headquartered in California, pleaded guilty to resolve charges that it violated export controls by selling EDA hardware, software, and semiconductor design intellectual property technology to a Chinese military university called the National University of Defense Technology.The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) stated on July 28 that Cadence had agreed to pay criminal penalties of nearly $118 million to resolve the charges over the unlawful exports, and over $95 million in civil penalties.Mr. Cotton noted in his letter that the "illegal activities occurred under Mr. Tan's tenure.""Intel was awarded nearly $8 billion from the CHIPS and Science Act, the largest grant to a single company. Intel is required to be a responsible steward of American taxpayer dollars and to comply with applicable security regulations. Mr. Tan's associations raise questions about Intel's ability to fulfill these obligations," said the Republican senator.

What was Intel's response?

On Thursday (August 7, 2025), Intel published a statement defending the company, its board of directors, and Mr. Tan's commitment to U.S. national and economic security as well as Mr. Trump's "America First agenda.""Intel has been manufacturing in America for 56 years. We are continuing to invest billions of dollars in domestic semiconductor R&D and manufacturing, including our new fab in Arizona that will run the most advanced manufacturing process technology in the country, and are the only company investing in leading logic process node development in the U.S.," stated Intel, stressing that it would engage with the U.S. administration.However, Intel's troubles are mounting as the chipmaker faces pressure from investors over slow progress, and the general public's ire over mass layoffs even as Mr. Tan aims to streamline the company.Adding to this, Mr. Trump's public call for Mr. Tan's resignation, which led to a slip in Intel's shares, will make it even harder for the chipmaker to restore its reputation while facing a barrage of operational challenges.

With tariffs, India's growth rate needs a careful watch



The United States imposed 25% reciprocal tariffs on India's exports with effect from August 7. On August 6, the U.S. imposed a penal levy of an additional 25% on India's exports because India continued to import oil from Russia and this comes into effect on August 29, 2025. The two taken together can weaken India's exports to the U.S. We first examine the impact of the 25% tariff and, later, the impact of the penal rates.

India runs a merchandise trade surplus with the U.S. — for 2024-25, it stood at $41.18 billion — which is increasing over time. To narrow this trade surplus, the U.S. appears to focus both on India's exports and imports. While a 25% reciprocal tariff could hamper India's exports, the penalty could work on exports as well as serve as a non-tariff barrier on crude imports from Russia, thus, pushing India to import crude from the U.S. or elsewhere at a higher cost. While the U.S.'s measures could reduce the trade gap between the two countries, it is important to understand its implications on India's growth and external account. Such unilateral actions are contrary to the principles of free and fair trade.

Impact of reciprocal tariffsThe immediate impact of reciprocal tariffs would be on the trade balance. Assuming that there is no impact on imports from the U.S. (except for a limited diversification of oil imports from Russia to the U.S.), tariffs could adversely impact India's exports to the U.S. But to what extent? Assuming that the import elasticity with respect to tariffs as (-)1, which is on a higher side, India's exports to the U.S. can go down by 25% — this is a sharp decline. However, its impact on trade balance depends on how much the share of India's exports to the U.S. is in total exports. As the data for 2025-26 is not available, the implications of this expected drop in U.S. exports is worked out for 2024-25, ex post.

Even in the extreme case, where elasticity is assumed to be (-)1, the overall trade deficit widens by about 0.56 % of GDP to 7.84%. Consequently, real GDP growth drops by about 0.6% to 5.9% from 6.5%. What is of more concern is its impact on the Current Account Deficit (CAD). Due to the U.S.'s reciprocal tariffs, the CAD is estimated to increase from 0.6% to 1.15%. While these estimates are for 2024-25, the extent of the impact in 2025-26 would not be very different from these estimates for 2024-25, had the tariffs been effective from the beginning of the year. However, in the current year (2025-26) four months are behind us, the decline in GDP growth rate may be 0.4%, and correspondingly the CAD may also be reduced.These estimates are, however, subject to some caveats. India recently signed a comprehensive economic and trade agreement with the United Kingdom, while negotiations are underway with the European Union and other major countries and their impact on external account is not assessed. These may have a favourable effect on the CAD.We are also not considering the effects of tariff increases imposed on other countries that are competitors for Indian exports, and this can moderate the impact on India's exports. Further, we are not taking into consideration any likely changes in the exchange rate due to the recent U.S. trade measures and its impact on trade balance. Indeed, the rupee-U.S. dollar depreciated sharply and was hovering over ?87.5 since reciprocal tariffs were imposed. The new trade agreements as well as rupee depreciation could help narrow the CAD a bit and also limit the impact of the U.S. tariffs on India's GDP growth to some extent.Trump tariffs: Which sectors bear the brunt?But for 2025-26, and for the coming years, GDP growth, even after considering these two factors, could still be lower by about 0.5% than the base case growth forecast of 6.5%; the CAD could also widen by a similar extent. Further, following the penalty threat, any larger shift away from Russia on crude imports and towards the U.S. might have further implications on the CAD as well as the exchange rate and domestic inflation. Added to this, an increase in world oil prices and the uncertainty surrounding the world economy could exert more pressure on the CAD and its financing. It can also have an effect on inflation.

How can India mitigate the downside risks of Donald Trump's tariffs? One option is that India still has the space to negotiate with the U.S. as the trade deal has not yet been finalised while not yielding on contentious issues such as agriculture and allied sectors and micro, small and medium enterprises.The other way is, as many have suggested, to diversify the export market. But this would be difficult in the short term. One possible way is to look at our own tariffs that we impose on our imports. Our empirical results do suggest that India's exports are negatively affected by import tariffs. The estimated elasticity with respect to import tariffs is more than (negative) one. With the increasing import content of our exports over time, the negative impact of tariffs on exports growth has only increased. The government may look at the existing tariff rates and may reduce those that have an adverse effect on exports.Impact of penal levyThe impact of the penal levy, which is another 25%, will have the same effect as reciprocal tariffs. However, there are some commodities that are exempt from this levy. Here the impact will be somewhat lower. Taken together, the total impact on India's growth rate can be quite severe, a reduction of over 0.6 percentage points from the base growth rate of 6.5% in the current year. To avoid the penal levy, India has to bring to the attention of the world at large the inequity of the decision. It is highly discriminatory. There are many other countries which import from Russia far more than what India does. The interval of three weeks that is available now for negotiation must be effectively utilised.Reciprocal tariffs with penal levy are a clear case of using tariffs to compel nations to follow a specific policy. India needs to work with other nations to get back to a different system of world trade. While the immediate impact of the tariffs on the growth rate of India may be managed, the continuation of this kind of trade regime will not be in the interests of all countries including the U.S. and India.

Russia is not Iran, India can't cancel oil imports on U.S. demand: experts

India cannot cancel oil imports from Russia as it did six years ago with Iran and Venezuela, given the difference in the scale and importance of the relationship, said experts, warning that the U.S.'s actions against India were damaging the relationship built over decades. In 2018, U.S. President Donald Trump had in his first term, demanded that India "zero out" its oil imports from Iran and Venezuela. India had eventually complied with the demand before the deadline in May 2019.On Wednesday, Mr. Trump signed an executive order levying a 25% penalty on top of 25% tariffs on Indian goods, unless India cut energy purchases from Russia, which currently make up more than 35% of its oil imports. The penalty would kick in by August 27 unless Russia stops the war in Ukraine. The threat is expected to add pressure on both India and Russia ahead of a meeting between Mr. Trump and President Vladimir Putin next week, and the upcoming visit by Mr. Putin to India for the annual summit with Mr. Modi.

"At the global level, Russia is not Iran," former Indian Ambassador to the U.S. Arun Singh told The Hindu in an interview. "We want Russia, as one of the major powers in the international context, to be an important partner of India, and there's a memory in India of Russia in the past having provided political support [and] ...defence technology that nobody else was willing to provide," he added, also warning that if India were to cave in to Mr. Trump's demands, this would only increase the U.S.'s appetite to demand more concessions from India.According to scholar Brahma Chellaney, the U.S. move on Russian oil is a cover to strong-arm India into accepting trading terms the U.S. wants, including market access for agricultural products. "[Mr.] Trump is weaponising Russian oil purchases to force a largely one-sided trade deal on India," said Mr. Chellaney, who is a Professor of Strategic Studies at the New Delhi-based Center for Policy Research and Fellow at the Robert Bosch Academy in Berlin. He pointed out that technically, the U.S. has not sanctioned Russian oil, nor has it subscribed to the European Union's latest price cap on it. Mr. Trump had also not penalised China, which is the world's largest importer of Russian



oil. "Cutting Indian purchases of Russian oil is unlikely to make him back off. He wants a trade deal on his terms," Mr. Chellaney added. Until recently, India imported about 2 million barrels a day, and is the second largest importer of Russian oil.Mr. Singh pointed to the past 25 years as a period of building trust between the two countries, and a steady improvement in relations after the previous era, where India had seen the U.S. as a "coercive and an unreliable partner" for its backing of Pakistan, the 1971 Bangladesh War intervention, and the 1998 sanctions on India for its nuclear tests. Since 2008, after the U.S. helped India win exemptions at the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Nuclear Suppliers Group for doing nuclear trade, he said this perception seriously changed. He also said that the U.S. had supplied drones and winter clothing to support Indian forces during the India-China standoff at the Line of Actual Control at "short notice"."But because of what President Trump has done in India, there's a resurrection of the old and bitter memories of the U.S.," Mr. Singh who is a Senior Fellow at Delhi-based Carnegie India and a Professor at Ashoka University. "So President Trump and the U.S. may feel that they are putting some penalties on India, high tariffs, I would say that they are putting high tariffs and penalties, less on India, and more on the U.S.-India relationship. It will take some time for the relationship to come out from this shock that has been generated", he added.

Industrial accidents, the human cost of indifference

After spending 37 years in India's oil and energy sector, this writer has walked through the innards of factories, refineries, and chemical plants across the country. This writer has seen, up close, the tragic aftermath of industrial accidents — not as distant events, but as raw human tragedies. These are not acts of fate. They are the result of choices — bad ones made by individuals, institutions, and systems that fail to care.We have seen it again, recently — as explosions at Sigachi Industries in Telangana, and as a firecracker unit disaster in Tamil Nadu. They are not aberrations. They are the symptoms of a deeper, ongoing national crisis.

A universe is shattered every timIn the last five years, at least 6,500 workers have lost their lives in India's factories, construction sites, and mines, according to government data compiled by the Labour Ministry and several Right to Information-based reports. This means nearly three fatalities every day in peacetime, in a growing economy, in the 21st century.In Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu alone, over 200 fatalities have occurred in major industrial mishaps over the past decade. But the true toll — especially from the unregistered or informal sector units may be much higher and rarely makes news. Each of these cases is not just a data point. It is about a breadwinner gone, a child orphaned, and a household thrust into trauma and penury. This writer has witnessed this — an empty seat in a refinery canteen after a fatality, families pacing outside the plant gates, waiting for news they know will break them.

A study in 2022 by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) found that India had had over 130 major chemical accidents in just a 30-month window post-2020, with 218 fatalities and 300-plus injuries. Most of these occurred in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which often operate under regulatory radar.What makes these deaths even more inexcusable is how elementary and avoidable their causes are: no fire No-Objection Certificate (NOC) — factories running without even the basic No-Objection Certificate from the Fire Department; no firefighting systems — alarms, sensors, extinguishers missing or dysfunctional; no permit-to-work system — high-risk jobs undertaken casually, with no formal hazard identification or job safety analysis; no training — especially for migrant and contract workers who often speak different languages and oblivious to the signage or safety protocols; no fire exits — or exits locked, blocked, or hidden under storage materials; no accountability — audits, when conducted, are often tick the box exercises. Convictions for safety lapses are rare, and penalties are negligible.Even in large corporates, the focus on operational excellence often overshadows basic safety culture. Globally, countries such as Germany and Japan have embedded safety deeply into industrial design and workplace culture. In contrast, India still treats safety as a compliance hurdle rather than a core value.While the spotlight is on Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, let us not pretend that other States fare better. Gujarat, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, and Uttar Pradesh have their own grim records. In fact, Gujarat witnessed over 60 major industrial fires and gas leaks in just a single year (2021), according to media and State records.According to the Directorate General Factory Advice Service and Labour Institutes (DGFASLI), India records one serious industrial accident every two days in registered factories. What are unregistered units? Nobody truly knows.The pattern is now familiar to the point of fatigue: tragedy, outrage, compensation, committee and then silence. The root cause remains untouched. The next accident is just waiting to happen.What keeps this cycle alive is national indifference — the silence of the public, the inertia of regulators, and the cost-cutting impulse of companies that treat safety as overhead, and not obligation. Workers, especially those on contract, are seen as disposable.There is also a deeply troubling class bias. Would a similar safety lapse at a high-rise corporate headquarters or in a software park go similarly unnoticed? The harsh truth is that these lives are undervalued because of who they are — migrant workers, contract labourers, and the economically voicelessThe phrase 'act of god'There is a phrase that we often hear, which is "act of God." It sounds biblical, a way to distance ourselves from culpability. But these disasters are not divine punishment. They are man-made. A National Geographic documentary once explored this very idea showing how industrial accidents across the world stem not from chance, but from negligence and failed systems.Countries such as South Korea and Singapore now have corporate manslaughter laws, holding senior executives criminally accountable for gross safety failures. India needs to begin that conversation.This is not just a call for regulatory reform or better audits. It is a call for collective conscience. As citizens, as industry leaders, as media, as policymakers we need to say, "We care".We must not only hold companies to account but also strengthen our labour safety boards, digitise risk reporting, and ensure whistle-blower protection.



India must assure every worker, who risks life and limb to keep its industries running, that industrial safety is a right

Trump says court halt of tariffs would cause 'Great Depression'

U.S. President Donald Trump warned on Friday (August 8, 2025) of cataclysmic consequences on the U.S. economy if a court rules that his imposition of sweeping tariffs constitutes an illegal power grab.If a "Radical Left Court" strikes down the tariffs, "it would be impossible to ever recover, or pay back, these massive sums of money and honor," he wrote on his Truth Social platform."It would be 1929 all over again, a GREAT DEPRESSION!" he said.Mr. Trump's hyperbolic statements come as a U.S. appeals court weighs the legality of his broad use of emergency powers to enact sweeping tariffs on trading partners.A lower court ruled against Mr. Trump in May, but the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit put the ruling on hold as it considers the case.Claims, counterclaimsTrump on Friday touted billions of dollars in tariff revenue "pouring" into the Treasury — paid by U.S. importers — and recent stock market records, as proof his levies had created "the largest amount of money, wealth creation and influence the U.S.A. has ever seen."Many economists meanwhile worry the tariffs are stoking inflation and see trade policy uncertainty as slowing investment.Since returning to the White House in January, Mr. Trump has announced a slew of new tariffs, seek-



ing to force a reordering of global trade that he has long claimed is biased against the United States.In addition to sweeping tariffs invoked under declarations of economic emergencies, he has also instituted sectoral tariffs of between 25% and 50% on steel and other items.Those levies have generally followed government investigations and are not at issue in the pending litigation.At a July 31 hearing, members of the appeals court appeared skeptical of the Trump administration's arguments

States and the challenge before the Finance Commission



The Government of Tamil Nadu recently hosted the Sixteenth Finance Commission, which was chaired by Arvind Panagariya. With its distinguished experts from various fields, the Commission is uniquely positioned to address the critical fiscal challenges facing India and rectifying the skewness in the relationship between the States and the Union.The decisions taken by this Finance Commission will not only shape the fiscal fate of the nation for the next five years but will also influence India's economic trajectory in the decades to come. The Sixteenth Finance Commission's work coincides with significant shifts in global economic trends. Concepts such as "friendshoring" and "reshoring" are reshaping international trade and investment patterns. These trends present a unique opportunity for India and Tamil Nadu. To seize these opportunities, the critical challenge for the Finance Commission lies in striking a balance between equitable redistribution and incentivising growth in high-performing States such as Tamil Nadu.

Since 1951, when the first Finance Commission was formed, each Finance Commission has adapted its own approach towards the fiscal challenges of its time. Every Commission has sought to achieve an equitable redistribution of resources by increasing the share of States under vertical devolution and channelling funds to less-developed States through horizontal devolution.But there have been clear gaps between their declared objectives and outcomes; therein lies our case for a new and fair system of distribution of resources. For instance, while the Fifteenth Finance Commission awarded the vertical share of the divisible pool to the States as 41%, the effective devolution to States in the first four years of the award period amounted to only 33.16% of the Union's gross tax revenue. The unprecedented levying of cess and surcharges by the Union is the fundamental reason for this effective decline in devolution.Hike States' share, incentivise performersThe States, which are near to people, bear substantial developmental expenditures, and, hence, their share should be further increased substantially. The financial strain on the States has been particularly severe due to increases in counterpart funding for centrally sponsored schemes on the one side and inadequate devolution on the other side. Hence, a fair and equitable share for States would be 50% devolution of the gross central taxes, allowing States greater fiscal autonomy in funding and implementing locally relevant schemes.

On horizontal devolution, it is evident that the redistribution policy followed for the first four and a half decades in our country has yielded limited results in driving real growth. Hence, the fundamental question would be this: should the focus be on a smaller national pie with a larger share for less-developed States or a larger national pie with equitable distribution that provides greater absolute resources for all? The answer is difficult, yet a more balanced approach would ensure a larger national economic pie, allowing for reasonable shares for less-developed States and adequate resources for progressive States to continue their upward trajectory. This would clearly necessitate a progressive resource allocation methodology for the performing States so as to allow them to fulfil their potential to be India's growth engines.Unique challenges in progressive StatesAmidst this, it is also important to note that progressive States such as Tamil Nadu also face unique challenges in demography and urbanisation. With a median age higher than the national average, the State's capacity to generate consumption-based tax revenue is declining, even as the costs of supporting an aging population are rising. It is imperative to ensure that such States do not fall into the "middle-income trap", where growth stagnates and they "grow old before becoming rich". Next, the challenges due to urbanisation in fast-growing States merit adequate addressal. A State like Tamil Nadu is witnessing the fastest rate of urbanisation in the country, due to which it will have a 57.30% urban population in 2031, against the expected national average of 37.90%. The resources for fulfilling the infrastructure needs of urbanisation should be earmarked to ensure the long-term sustainability of our growth.We should keep in mind that the mandate of the Commission goes beyond fiscal arithmetic. It is about envisioning a future where every State contributes to and benefits from the nation's progress. Whether it is fostering manufacturing, addressing urbanisation challenges, or ensuring climate resilience, the Commission's decisions will impact millions of lives and determine the trajectory of the country's destiny, to take its place among the world's leading economies.

Amid key victories in fight against TB, states face one battle: Shortage of drugs



Last month, the World Health Organisation highlighted two significant milestones in India's fight against TB: an 18% dip in cases over the past 10 years, more than double the global rate; and a 24% reduction in deaths in the same period, higher than the global average of 23%.

This frames the Government's 100-day intensive campaign beginning December 7 to enhance detection in select high-burden districts but these bright spots in the mission to eliminate TB by 2025 have a shadow: shortage in supply of key TB drugs since 2023, according to records investigated by The Indian Express.India's TB treatment schedule has two stages: a two-three month Intensive Phase (IP) marked by a combination tablet of four antibiotics, and Continuation Phase (CP), where a patient gets another combination medicine with three antibiotics for four to seven months.These are called fixed-dose combination (FDC) drugs. Data for 2022, 2023 and 2024 shows a progressive dip in the supply of FDC drugs from the Centre. For 2023, data shows a 56.5 per cent decline in the supply of drugs for the first phase (IP) compared to 2022; and a 23 per cent drop for the second (CP) across the same period.

Supplies have improved in fits and starts but this year, data available until June shows, there was a 23.04 per cent dip in supply for the first phase, compared to the first six months of 2023, and a 28.8 per cent dip in supply for the second phase across the same period.Records show this prompted the Centre to send several letters to states on these delays urging local procurement. The key factors behind the shortfall: the nodal procurement agency cancelled nine of its 26 tenders to purchase these drugs due to "administrative reasons"; and, three suppliers were blacklisted for violations ranging from forged bank guarantees to faulty pricing.Amid key victories in fight against TB, states face one battle: Shortage of drugs

The Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare did not respond to a detailed questionnaire from The Indian Express on the state of the shortage. But a letter sent by the Ministry to states this March said that TB drugs would "get delayed due to unforeseen and extraneous circumstances."It directed states to procure them locally for a period of three months, with no restrictions on size or formulation. "On case by case basis, reimbursement of costs towards drugs to the patient, if the district/ health facilities are unable to provide free drugs," it said.

Mission 2025It was during the "End TB Summit" in New Delhi in March 2018 that the Government announced a deadline of 2025 for elimination of the disease. According to the latest WHO data, India was estimated to have had 27 lakh TB cases in 2023, of which 25.1 lakh patients (85 per cent) were receiving medication — a significant achievement since more than 50 per cent of those in this category succumb to the infection without treatment.The treatment of Drug-Susceptible TB (DSTB) — mainly for newly diagnosed patients — involves six-nine months of antibiotics.The drugs involved are Rifampicin, Isoniazid, Pyrazinamide and Ethambutol in a single daily tablet for Intensive Phase; and Rifampicin, Isoniazid and Ethambutol in a single daily tablet for Continuation Phase. The duration and dosage of these tablets can vary, depending on age, infection level and treatment history.While treatment is free in government facilities, patients opting for the private sector may end up shelling out around Rs 10,000 for six months of IP and CP and Rs 20,000-30,000 per month for drug-resistant cases.Under the National TB Elimination Programme, the Centre is responsible for the procurement and supply of TB drugs, while states receive limited funds to make emergency purchases as a temporary measure.

Ideally, stocks for three months are maintained at the district, state and national levels and for two months at the block level. Experts say buffer stocks are crucial because those who miss scheduled doses risk contributing to the growing threat of drug-resistant TB, which primarily results from an incomplete course of treatment.Among the states topping the charts in reported TB cases are: UP (6.3 lakh), Maharashtra (2.27 lakh), Bihar (1.86 lakh), Madhya Pradesh (1.84 lakh), and Rajasthan (1.65 lakh). Overall, India accounts for 26 per cent of global TB cases and 29 per cent of TB deaths.Letter after letter

The shortage was reflected in a series of letters sent to states, urging local procurement of medicines, mainly Isoniazid, Pyrazinamide, and Rifampicin, by the Central TB Division, which is the Union Health Ministry department responsible for implementing the elimination programme.In eight letters, the Centre eased permission norms to give a three-month extension for local procurement.Records show that another key hurdle for the availability of drugs was the cancellation of at least nine tenders issued by the Central Medical Services Society (CMSS) — the agency that procured drugs for Government health programmes — between January 2023 and August 2024 due to "administrative reasons."To compound the crisis, records show, at least three of the government's TB drug suppliers were blacklisted by CMSS this year for various alleged violations.

UP-based Unicure India Ltd was barred from CMSS tenders for Ethambutol for two years this February for failing to deliver the medicine after allegedly quoting incorrect prices; Maharashtra-based J Duncan Healthcare was barred for two years after allegedly submitting forged bank guarantees, including for two TB drugs tenders worth Rs 215.5 crore; and, Gujarat-based Centurion Laboratories was blacklisted for two years for alleged delays in supply.For instance, the order blacklisting Centurion Laboratories warned: "Please note the significant delays in supply resulted into crisis in Anti TB Drugs among patients and hence, severely affected the National Programme." The three companies did not respond to requests from The Indian Express seeking comment.

States scramble for stocksTo bridge the shortage, the government issued at least two tenders in July and August against the ones that previously failed. States are also preparing themselves better. Said a state official: "The crisis we faced earlier this year has abated…but we do not have the kind of buffer stocks that we used to maintain before."However, records show that states also faced challenges in local procurement. For example, on March 26 this year, responding to a Central letter on shortage, Health Minister of Congress-ruled Karnataka Dinesh Gundu Rao wrote to the then Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya that the Centre's "delayed communication to procure a critical drug" had come at a time when the Model Code of Conduct for the general elections was in place."It has been learnt that neither these medications are available in the quantities required by the state nor the procurement process can be hastened,"

Rao wrote, adding that this has "adversely affected" procurement efforts.A senior official from another state said they tapped into the buffer stock of loose medicines rather than procure afresh. "We were constantly moving medicines between facilities and monitoring stock levels. We also allocated funds to districts to purchase medicines from local stores," an official said.Another state official said, "We had to provide patients with supplies for four or five days, asking them to return thereafter, when normally we would give them a month's supply."According to a senior official from a fourth state, local procurement was difficult without a state-specific rate contract — an agreement setting fixed prices for commonly used items for a certain period. "Without a robust procurement system, securing short-term supplies is challenging," the official said.

Long Covid lasted beyond 2 years, left 70% survivors breathless, says AIIMS study

Long-term breathlessness was associated with those who were infected during the second wave of the pandemic, when the Delta variant was predominant.Long-term breathlessness was associated with those who were infected during the second wave of the pandemic, when the Delta variant was predominant.Ankan Jaiswal, 47, still gets dizzy and breathless when she climbs a flight of stairs or walks more than a kilometre. Sometimes her mind is in a haze. Three years after a Covid infection landed her in ICU, its after-effects still seem to get the better of her. She and other survivors were tracked at the long Covid clinic at AIIMS, Delhi, for three years as part of a study that found that 70.7 per cent of them weren't breathing properly or getting sufficient oxygen from the air to their blood,The study is significant because it shows that after-effects can be quite severe and last beyond two years after initial Covid diagnosis. This was common especially in women, the elderly, those who had severe infection and smokers. "It is one of the first studies from a low- and middle-income country (LMIC) to report long-term pulmonary sequelae (after effects) of COVID-19. Some of them still need oxygen support occasionally," says Dr Anant Mohan, head of the pulmonology department at AIIMS Delhi.He and his team conducted an observational study on patients who have been visiting the long Covid clinic regularly for three-and-a-half years. "We are still running it because we have a couple of ongoing projects. We had around 1,426 Covid survivors. Of them, 231 patients had been following up with us for over two years. We mapped their symptoms and found that they reported persistent dyspnoea (breathlessness and feeling suffocated) and impaired lung functions," he says.

WHAT DOES THE STUDY SAY?

A total of 1,426 patients were registered in the post-Covid clinic from 2020 as a part of the long Covid multisystem observational study. Altogether 231 of them are still coming to the hospital for follow-ups. Most of them had not one but overlapping symptoms. So 36.4 per cent had persistent self-reported dyspnoea, 48.1 per cent had impaired spirometry (how much air you can breathe in and out, and how quickly you can exhale) and 70.7 per cent patients had impaired lung diffusion (lungs are unable to efficiently exchange gases or move oxygen from the air into the blood).

WHO ARE MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO LONG COVID? WHAT ARE SYMPTOMS?

Dr Mohan included all kinds of patients above 18 — those with severe, mild and moderate Covid infection and those with no symptoms at all. Apart from hospital records of physical visits, the two-year follow-up was done in-person or telephonically. "During physical visits, the patients were invited to perform spirometry, lung diffusion test and a six-minute walk test," says Dr Mohan.Long-term breathlessness was associated with those who were infected during the second wave of the pandemic, when the Delta variant was predominant. The elderly had prolonged pulmonary function impairment, given their reduced capacity to repair lungs with ageing.There was a consistent association of women with long-term lung function abnormalities. Like Ankan, who has now moved to the US with her family as the pollution in Delhi worsens her symptoms. Seventy-year-old Savitri Devi was hospitalised at AIIMS for four days recently. "Her breathing difficulties worsen when pollution levels go up in Delhi. Post-Covid, she has not been able to walk long enough as she goes breathless and has coughing bouts," says her husband Mahavir, a resident of Delhi's Karawal Nagar.Meanwhile, 48-year-old Mithilesh Kumar, says he misses running and walking fast, something which he did pre-Covid. He can't walk and talk to someone at the same time, cannot climb the stairs and gets breathless when his son holds or hugs him tightly.Long Covid patients have also reported dietary changes, psychiatric changes and sleep disturbances, which are being looked at separately in other studies. "Other than respiratory symptoms, we found patients complaining of fatigue and sleep disturbances. We can now say we have a reasonable idea on what long Covid is all about," says Dr Mohan.



WHAT SHOULD PATIENTS DO THEN?

The study, according to Dr Mohan, is trying to compile all the symptoms of long Covid so that patients can seek early medical attention to address them and prevent complications. "Breathing exercises should be taken up on a regular basis by long Covid patients," says Dr Mohan.The patients' demographics and co-morbidities were compiled along with their details on the initial Covid infection, including the date of positivity of laboratory test, the severity of the illness, the need for hospitalisation, their hospital records, out-patient prescription slips and patient recall.

Where Viksit Bharat meets green growth

India's much-vaunted GDP growth rate — making it the world's fastest-growing large economy — slipped in the last year. Apart from the near-term consequences, this also means the longer-term goal of Viksit Bharat, to transform India into a developed nation by 2047, slips further away. Understandably, policy priorities are focused on getting back on the fast-growth track: Consistently over 8 per cent growth annually is needed to make it to the viksit threshold. But a different objective — green growth — might need equal attention.India's other long-term goal is to reach net-zero emissions by 2070. A lot needs to be accomplished in the near-term to get there, such as 50 per cent reduction of emissions intensity, 500 GW of fuel capacity from renewable sources, and around US $290 billion in investments in new wind and solar energy sources — all by 2030.

The Fletcher School at Tufts University in the US and Worley, a leading global professional services company of energy, chemicals and resources experts, collaborated on a research initiative to better understand where the Viksit Bharat and net-zero journeys intersect. We found that to head towards one destination, you need to aim for the other as well. The topic has returned front and centre in policy conversations in New Delhi, including at the 2025 Raisina Dialogue in the context of the shifting ground beneath the "global green deal".Green growth will help keep India on the fast track: At first glance, the two directions of travel appear to be at odds. India's fast growth is heavily reliant on carbon-intensive activities. A major contributor to the recent slowdown in GDP growth was a slowdown in emissions-intensive manufacturing. Coal accounts for 55-60 per cent of the country's power generation with demand not expected to peak until 2030-2035.However, if India strays too far from its green growth journey, it could be knocked off the fast-growth path as well. High carbon-intensity activities escalate climate risks that, if unattended, will shave off the growth rate.There are numerous ways in which this could happen: The impact of climate risks on agriculture could amount to a 2.8 per cent of GDP loss by 2030; lost labour productivity due to extreme heat could cost the economy $220 billion by 2030. Overall, extreme heat could cut 2.5-4.5 per cent from GDP by 2030, climbing to a 10 per cent plunge by 2050; carbon cost penalties imposed by importers of Indian goods could cost $150 billion annually in export revenues by 2040 if industries are not decarbonised; a reliance on imported fossil fuels — 85 per cent of crude oil and 50 per cent of natural gas are imported — could leave the economy exposed to price volatility, and geopolitical and supply chain shocks.

Conversely, green growth contributes to fast growth. It creates jobs — 50 million new jobs in India by 2070 — according to the World Economic Forum's Mission 2070 report. This translates to $1 trillion in additional economic value by 2030 and up to $15 trillion by 2070. It promotes opportunities for manufacturing and technology innovations, which have significant spillover effects in productivity and faster growth. It enhances health, which has multiplier effects. Energy security puts India in a stronger position to weather global shocks and to stand more firmly on the geopolitical stage.A holistic strategy could hasten progress: The recently announced 2025 Union Budget prioritised fast growth while advancing several green initiatives, the most notable being a plan to develop 100 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047. It also included support for manufacturing of solar equipment and grid-scale batteries as well as incentives to boost scrap materials and critical mineral recycling.There is potential to go even further with a holistic growth strategy and commitment of resources for green growth across three important dimensions: First, India must combine a comprehensive renewables capacity-building plan with investments in climate adaptation while ensuring the wider ecosystems — transmission, storage, public-private collaborations, carbon capture and storage, etc. — are in place. Second, a holistic strategy should pay close attention to the demand side. Farmers, comprising 45 per cent of the workforce, need access to affordable climate-resilient infrastructure, drought-resistant crops and farming practices. In parallel, micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), which contribute 30 per cent of GDP, generally lack access to sustainable technologies and finances. In addition to education, subsidies and incentives, there are other tools, from carbon pricing to green finance schemes, that could be advanced. Third, where green growth is at odds with fast growth, these disruptions could be anticipated and actively managed. Some sectors may experience slowdowns as capital is reallocated towards less carbon-intensive activities and sectors. States tied up with coal would need help reskilling their workers and re-building their economies, potentially subsidised by states that are economic beneficiaries of the greening of India.A greener, faster-growing India is within reach:

Sake, Japan's traditional alcoholic brew, finds spot on UNESCO's cultural heritage list

Luque: Sake, a smooth rice wine, is perhaps more Japanese than the world-famous sushi. It is brewed in centuries-old mountaintop warehouses, savoured in the country's pub-like izakayas, poured during weddings and served slightly chilled for special toasts.The traditional alcoholic brew that plays a crucial role in Japan's culinary traditions was enshrined on Wednesday by UNESCO on its list of the "intangible cultural heritage of humanity".

At a meeting in Luque, Paraguay, members of UNESCO's committee for safeguarding humanity's cultural heritage voted to recognise 45 cultural practices and products around the world, including Brazilian white cheese, Caribbean cassava bread and Palestinian olive oil soap.Unlike UNESCO's World Heritage List, which includes sites considered important to humanity such as the Pyramids of Giza in Egypt, the Intangible Cultural Heritage designation names products and practices of different cultures that are deserving of recognition.A Japanese delegation welcomed the announcement in Luque. "Sake is considered a divine gift and is essential for social and cultural events in Japan," Takehiro Kano, the Japanese ambassador to UNESCO, said.The basic ingredients of sake are few: rice, water, yeast and koji, a rice mold, which breaks down the starches into fermentable sugars like malting does in beer production. The whole two-monthlong process of steaming, stirring, fermenting and pressing can be gruelling.

The lives of inland fisherfolk in Tamil Nadu



Six decades ago, little boys would scoop out sand from the dry riverbed of the Vaigai in Madurai during summer, to see water rising from below. They would wait until the water was clear, and then drink to their heart's content.The river originates in the Periyar Plateau of the Western Ghats in Tamil Nadu, flowing southeast near Madurai on its way to empty itself into the Palk Bay. Along its course, the river enriches not just the landscape, but the lives of the people dwelling nearby.The districts of Madurai, Tiruchi, Viluppuram, and Krishnagiri account for the highest number of inland fisherfolk in Tamil Nadu. "Among these, Madurai leads with 6,000 families, followed by 4,000 in Dindigul, and 2,000 each in Theni and Palani," says R. Rajaguru, an overseer with the Tamil Nadu Government's Department of Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare posted in Kodaikanal. The Vaigai fills up around 1,500 manmade ponds and irrigation tanks in Madurai, he explains. Many of these, along with the Vaigai dam in Theni district, are chief fishing resources.While fishing techniques may differ depending on the depth of these waterbodies, Rajaguru says most fisherfolk use simple tools and a work ethic that does not exploit nature's bounty. "They take what nature gives, and nothing more," he says.

In Dindigul district, several families in Anaipatti and Mettupatti villages are inland fishers. Anaipatti is home to the Peranai regulator that was constructed across the Vaigai in 1918 by the British. It is here that fisherman C. Vijayalingam spreads out his veechu valai — a fishing net variety — in a graceful throw that lands in the water in a perfect circle. It is almost noon and the sun beats down on his head that he has turbaned with a checkered towel. He is not having much luck today, and after a few throws, decides to come out of the water.The 28-year-old is among the 50 people in Anaipatti, home to around 800 families, that depend on fishing for a living. "My father is a fisherman, and so was my grandfather," says Vijayalingam. He goes fishing through the year, staying away only on days the river is flooded during the monsoon.

Back-breaking workA typical river fisherman's workday starts at midnight. "I leave for the Vaigai dam in Theni around that time," explains Vijayalingam. He travels by bike, joined by his team of five, reaching the river in two hours. Once there, he trudges through shallow waters with his net slung across his shoulder. Another man — they mostly work in teams of two — with a net-like basket called the aappa valai secured at his hip, follows. Vijayalingam casts his net, that can weigh up to 5 kg owing to the iron pellets tied to its ends, gathers it, and empties the catch into his assistant's aappa valai.

"We repeat the process until we've caught enough, and start back at dawn," he says. The catch is displayed in a basket on their bikes, and the men sell it at the many towns and villages along the way. "We get sold out by the time we are home in the afternoon," says Vijayalingam. After a quick meal and a short nap, he prepares to set out all over again at midnight.It's backbreaking work that leaves him sleep-deprived, but Vijayalingam is happy doing it. "This is my parambarai thozhil [family occupation] and it gives me freedom. I am able to earn up to ?500 a day and if I plan well, I can also save some," he says. Some men choose to go fishing at the irrigation tanks, for which they employ coracles. "They use a net variety called the ari valai," says Vijayalingam. The tanks and ponds, though, are not full through the year. "When there is no water, these men work as drivers, farmhands, and cooks," he adds. Despite these challenges, the river keeps the fisherfolk rooted to the village, and they do not move to the bigger cities for better opportunities. "We prefer this life," says Vijayalingam.Another fisherman, S. Surya, explains that when the river is in full flow, they also use the kattu valai across certain stretches. "This is a net that is tied across the water like a curtain, weighed down by iron pellets at the bottom," he says. They leave the arrangement for about an hour or so after which the men retrieve the catch.The fish varieties caught include salli kendai (carnatic carp), viraal (murrel), pallu kendai (grass carp), and jalebi (tilapia). "The smaller kinds sell for ?100 to ?150 a kg, while the viraal goes for ?300," says Vijayalingam.The Noyyal river runs through Coimbatore, originating from the Vellingiri hills in the Western Ghats. Although the city gets a steady supply of marine fish from nearby Kerala, apart from Rameswaram, it does have a demand for freshwater fish. Here, fish are reared by fishermen who buy juveniles from the Fisheries Department's fish farms in places such as Bhavanisagar, Mettur, Thanjavur, and Manimutharu."We produce 2,000 lakh three-day-old juveniles a year that fisherfolk buy from us to rear in ponds and lakes across Tamil Nadu," says S. Thillairajan, Deputy Director of Fisheries, Bhavanisagar. Varieties include catla, rohu, and mrigal.

One Sunday morning, we see fisherman N. Rajkumar coming out of the Valankulam, a lake fed by the Noyyal in the heart of the city. He has a good haul of tilapia that he offers for just ?100. "I'm going home, may as well give this away," says the 40-year-old. Most river fisherfolk families live in the Five Corner neighbourhood in the city, and according to Rajkumar, are from the Siviyar community."We chiefly use the nattu valai," Rajkumar points out, adding that they hold on to sacks filled with polystyrene cubes to stay afloat in the water while fishing. Here, too, some fishermen use coracles.Thillairajan explains that inland fishermen are members of district-level fisheries cooperative societies that take waterbodies on lease for fishing rights. He adds that in Western Tamil Nadu, Erode has the highest number of inland fishers due to the presence of the Bhavanisagar dam.Anaipatti has several restaurants selling 'fish meals': there is rice, fish curry, and a slice or two of fried fish. We sit down for a meal at one of them.

The curry is delicious: although river fish have plenty of bones, what sets them apart is the defining earthy smell of freshwater, and a sweetish flavour profile as opposed to the bold flavours of sea fish. Locals say that once you develop a liking for freshwater catch, there is no going back to sea fish.River fisherfolk lead a relatively risk-free life when compared to their counterparts in the seas. "But we do encounter risks," says Vijayalingam. "Broken glass on the riverbed has cut into my feet, and once, there was a sudden surge in the dam when we were inside," he adds. Luckily for his team, they made it out safe.There are some rituals these fisherfolk have been following for generations. In Coimbatore, when the fish have matured and it is time for harvest, the men do not enter the water without visiting the Ayyasamy temple by the hills at Theethipalayam. "We sprinkle theertham [holy water] from the temple into the lake before fishing," says Rajkumar.At Anaipatti, fisherfolk worship the Vaigai on Ayudha Puja day every year, standing in knee-high water, offering puffed rice, bananas, betel leaves, and coconut on a platter. "Vaigai is like our mother," says Vijayalingam. "We live by her banks, and she offers us a livelihood. She is our everything."

How not to identify an illegal immigrant

In the winter of 2024, when Delhi was receiving 'cold wave' alerts, my phone would beep multiple times a day to alert me about the detainment of "illegal" Bangladeshi immigrants. The crackdown on the community began in Delhi after Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena's office issued an order to the police, in the aftermath of the regime change in Bangladesh, to identify foreign nationals "illegally" staying in the capital.The police first began their searches in the jhuggis of Bengali-speaking migrant workers. When I asked them why certain people fell under their radar of suspicion, they said that their "suspects" spoke Bangla. Some of them also claimed that they had received "tips" from local folks who interpreted on their own the dialects spoken by the "suspects".I realised then that due largely to the monolithic representation of Bengalis in the Hindi film industry, and the global reach of Bengalis in Kolkata, people are convinced that the Bengali spoken in Kolkata is the only "authentic" Bengali of Indians. If anyone speaks a different dialect of Bangla, which is the case across rural Bengal and even other urban parts of the State, they are at risk of being identified as Bangladeshi.It is not just the police which holds such a belief. Some users on X posted that while paani (water) is a word used by Bangladeshis, jol is used by Indian Bengalis. This, they claimed, would help the police identify who is an "illegal" Bangladeshi and who isn't. What about the fact that Charyapada, an 8th century text, considered to be one of earliest examples of Bengali literature, also uses the word paani for water? No one has an answer.The police, which is actively detaining migrant workers on the basis of the language they speak, have little space in their investigation for nuance. In one case, an officer told me that since he had found a worker sending money from India to Bangladesh, he had detained him. The detainee, however, told me that during the land parcel exchange between Bangladesh and India that was spearheaded by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he and his siblings chose to become Indian citizens while his parents remained in Bangladesh. He claimed that he was simply sending back money to support his ageing parents.Other testimonies of detainees also show that legal complications and cross-border relationships do not find place in police interrogations. People have got into trouble simply for wearing a particular garment. A song composed by a few youths from rural Bengal highlights this racial profiling. It goes, "Just because I wear a lungi in a foreign land, I am being called a Bangladeshi. My choice of attire is based on the comfort I feel while working in this heat. That does not mean that I was born in Bangladesh and not in Bharat."While documenting the stories of the detainees from West Bengal, and the police procedures, I have had people on social media hurl racial slurs at me and ask me to 'go back to Bangladesh'. But what has shocked me most is the continuing silence of Bengali public intellectuals. Having heard so often that Bengalis have a substantial influence in the media, in academia, and in the culture and arts space, I expected to see small protests or even a social movement against this ethnicity-based targeting. This has sadly not been the case. Does that mean that the intellectuals hold no power? Or are they just so far removed from all the other Bengalis and wish to be differentiated from the Bengali working class?The crackdown that first impacted the Bengali Muslims has now started to impact the lower caste Hindu Bengalis as well. Will the intellectuals continue to mark their distance from the working class until those in power get impacted?

'Anything that moves, NASA-ISRO satellite will see with unprecedented fidelity'



the India-US space collaboration crossed a historic milestone with the successful launch of NISAR, or the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar satellite, a flagship earth observation mission jointly developed by the two nations' space programmes. It is the first satellite to use radars of two frequencies — the L-band radar by NASA and the S-band radar by ISRO — to continuously monitor the earth's surface. NISAR is expected to provide unprecedented data on land deformation, ice-sheet dynamics, forest biomass, and natural disasters like earthquakes and floods. With its high-resolution, all-weather, day-night imaging capabilities, NISAR aims to enhance climate resilience, agricultural monitoring, and disaster response. Beyond science, NISAR also holds commercial promise to enable new data services, geospatial analytics, and early-warning systems across sectors such as insurance, infrastructure, and agriculture.

To discuss this scientific milestone and what this means for space cooperation, Vasudevan Mukunth and Kunal Shankar spoke to Karen??St.?Germain. Dr. St. Germain is the director of the Earth Science Division at the Science Mission Directorate at NASA, where she oversees NASA's full earth science portfolio, including satellite missions, technology, applied research, and data-to-action programs.Vasudevan Mukunth: Karen, thank you so much for joining us today. Can you give us a few examples of scientific studies that are possible with NISAR, but haven't been possible so far with the existing crop of Earth observation satellites?Karen St. Germain: Absolutely, and it's great to be with you. The way to think about NISAR is that it will see anything that has structure to it that moves, that changes its position at a scale of less than a centimeter over an area about half of a tennis court. When I say anything that has structure: it could be forest, it could be buildings, it could be glaciers, mountains, land. Anything that moves, we'll see at an unprecedented level of fidelity.

What that means is we will be able to see the slight bulging that happens before a volcano erupts. We'll be able to see the land becoming unstable before a landslide. We'll be able to see building shifts after an earthquake or any other sort of event. When a forest gets cut down, we'll be able to see that. Anything that changes, we'll be able to see, and that's an extraordinary new capability for us.Kunal Shankar: After the launch, NISAR will start its 90-day commissioning phase. And this is the world's first dual band SAR satellite. In this phase, do you foresee any challenges with calibration, especially with cross-band calibration? Could you break down that process for us?Karen St. Germain: There are a number of different aspects to the calibration. Largely the ISRO team will focus on calibrating the S-band radar and the NASA team will focus on calibrating the L-band radar. They don't really get cross-calibrated, but each one will look at its own special targets.Now, what do I mean by a target? It's something we call a corner reflector and it is exactly what it sounds like. It's a corner, just like the corner of a room. And it has a special feature, which is that when a pulse of energy hits it from any direction, it reflects back in exactly the same direction. So we use these targets to calibrate independently each of the instruments. And then the only other thing we really have to pay special attention to is the alignment, the pointing. Are they pointing in the same place on the ground? And for that, we'll use the data itself. So the data itself will identify features and we'll align those features from each radar.The GSLV-F16 mission lifts off carrying the NASA-ISRO NISAR satellite ISRO's Sriharikota spaceport on July 30, 2025.

Karen St. Germain: The way NASA builds missions, we establish a life cycle cost. So that life cycle starts when we start designing and it runs through the design phase, the build, the integration, the launch, and all the way through — what we call the prime mission, which for NISAR is the first three years. For NISAR, that included the deployable antenna, which is the most distinguishing feature of NISAR, and the L-band radar. And of course, the L-band and the S-band are operating through the same reflector. Then of course, there are various electronics and data handling elements as well.And then there are the people, right? The people that put it all together and worked so closely with the team from India. So even after we were finished building our part, our team came to India to work with ISRO to integrate it onto the spacecraft and prepare for launch and even sat on the console for the launch. So it's a total cost.

Kunal Shankar: Speaking of costs, there's a lot of interest about the commercial aspect and the applications aspect of NISAR. Could you just tell us a bit about the kind of interest that it has generated?

Karen St. Germain: Actually, let me take a step back and talk about earth observation data in general because understanding the earth — the surface, the atmosphere, and the changes large and small that can have impacts on communities and businesses, that's become an enormous area of interest. In fact, NASA's been collecting data on the earth system for more than 60 years now. And we find that about three quarters of our Fortune 100 companies are drawing something out of that earth observation archive. We also find that about 75% of our users, and we have more than 5 million users, are coming from .com addresses. So we are talking about agriculture producers, the insurance industry, the finance industry, the transportation industry. And that's before you even get to things like disaster response. So we have a tremendous interest in general.For NISAR specifically, we know that NISAR will produce data that can directly benefit agriculture, also risk assessment — everything from natural hazards like earthquakes and volcanoes, which are both issues in the US but also things like wildfire risk because NISAR will be able to characterise how much fuel is in our wildlands. So that's dry fuel that is burnable. There are all these application areas. One of the things that we do that we're really excited about is any time we launch a new mission, we have an Early Adopters program. These are people out there who anticipate what NISAR might do for them in their business. We don't require that they tell us a lot about what they intend to do. But right now for NISAR, we have at least 200 of these Early Adopters. Once the data start to roll out and the excitement builds, we expect it to take off from there.Karen St. Germain: The Early Adopters, yeah. It's a high number for a mission that is as sophisticated as NISAR. What I mean by that is: pictures are generally easy for people to use. Synthetic aperture radar data requires some pretty complex processing to turn it into usable information. But all the data is free and openly available from us. We will distribute the L-band data out of the Alaska SAR facility and our colleagues at ISRO will have their own distribution mechanism for the S-band data, and it will also be open and freely available.

Vasudevan Mukunth: Two-hundred is a big number. Also, can you explain why NISAR took 11 years to build? Were there any particularly difficult engineering challenges that you had to overcome first?

Karen St. Germain: Yeah, absolutely. First, it's an enormously complex system, with many dozens of subassemblies that had to be designed. Of course, to make these two radars work together and operate through a single reflector, there's a lot of design work that had to happen up front. So it was challenging to begin with. And then we had a couple of other particular challenges. This one happened right as I was starting my job: COVID hit. So think about an integrated engineering team already separated by time zones and distance and now having to work through a global pandemic. A lot of this work also had to happen in person. We had people who had to travel at the height of COVID, and had to leave their families. Remember that the waves of COVID hit differently in the US and India. We had people on both teams sometimes come down with COVID when they were in the opposite country, so we had to take care of one another's teams. Then we had to develop entirely new protocols for how people could work together in a space and remain healthy. That was a big one.More recently, this reflector is enormous, it's about a 40-foot deployable reflector. And when we were in India integrating and we were testing in the thermal vacuum, we saw some data that worried us. We were really afraid that there may be too much of a thermal load on that reflector before it gets deployed, and it might overheat. If it did that, it could challenge the structural integrity. Of course, when you've got a deployable antenna, if it doesn't stay taut, it doesn't reflect the way you want it to. So we ended up de-mating that reflector, bringing it back home, applying a reflective coating so the sun couldn't cause it to overheat, on the struts (not on the reflector surface itself). Then we had to ship it back and reintegrate. So we had a couple of technical challenges, which we expect when you're doing something as difficult as this.

Kunal Shankar: Speaking of challenges, what do you think are the limitations in terms of penetration depth of the L-band versus the S-band?

Karen St. Germain: I would not frame it so much in terms of limitations as I would frame it that they are both specialists and they just have different specialties. So the L-band has a longer wavelength and that means it can penetrate deeper. It can penetrate through foliage. Of course they'll both be able to create imagery in day and night through clouds and weather. It's just that when there is some material there like foliage, the L-band will penetrate further: it will interact with larger structures. The S-band will give you more information about that foliage because it's more sensitive to it. That's just one example. They will really just see different things. And their power then will be when we combine the information from them and get a more holistic holistic view, right?

Vasudevan Mukunth: This is kind of a follow up to that. Both the L-band and the S-band radars use the same reflector. Since S-band has a shorter wavelength than the L-band, does this create any trade-offs in either L-band or S-band performance?

Karen St. Germain: It doesn't. And the reason for that is because this is a synthetic aperture radar. It creates its spatial resolution as it moves along. Each radar is taking snapshots as it moves along. You know, to get this kind of centimetre level fidelity and the kind of spatial resolution we're achieving, if you were to use a solid antenna, it would have to be five miles long. Just like when you're talking about a camera, if you want to be able to get high fidelity, you need a big lens. Same idea. But we can't deploy an antenna that big. So what we do is we build up image after image after image to get that resolution. And because of this technique, it's actually independent of wavelength. It works the same for S- and for L-bands. The only thing that's a little different is because the antenna feeds for the L-band and the S-band can't physically occupy the same space, they have to be next to each other and that means there's a slight difference in the way their pulses reflect off the antenna. There's that positioning difference, and that we can correct for.

Vasudevan Mukunth: Could you tell us a little bit more about that slight difference?

Karen St. Germain: It's the way a reflector works. You would ideally want to put the feed at the focal point of the reflector. But when you have two feeds, you can't do that. So they're slightly offset. That means they illuminate the reflector just slightly differently. The alignment is just a little bit different. The team optimised the design to minimise that difference and to make it so that they could correct it in post-processing.

Kunal Shankar: How do NASA and JPL's radar systems for planetary exploration feed into and evolve from their Earth observation systems? And even at the moon, NASA and ISRO have been collaborating specifically using radar systems on the DFSAR on Chandrayaan-2 orbiter and the Mini-RF on LRO. Can we imagine a NISAR built for missions to the moon, Mars or beyond?

Karen St. Germain: Of course, once you have expertise in a technology, you can use it in many, many ways. And this is often the case in NASA between earth science and planetary science. One of us will develop a new technology or advance a new technology and then it can be used very broadly. So absolutely! And we love that kind of interplay. I love seeing earth science technologies make it into planetary missions.That's one aspect. The other thing is what we learn from NISAR on earth can inform what we understand about other planets. There are lots of ways that we interact across disciplines.

Printed at SMILYS ONLINE 6-7-48,VANASTHALIPURAM SHOPPING COMPLEX RANGAREDDY , RANGAREDDY, TELANGANA - 500070
Publisher,Editor: Kasoju Shankara Chary, PRGI NO: TGENG/26/A3169, Ph No: 9949791999, Email Id: eyesecretdaily@gmail.com