



Opposition Slams Modi Over 'Muslims Fixing Punctures' Remark: 'Unbecoming Of A PM'

(Gns).

Opposition leaders have strongly criticised a remark made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in which he suggested that young Muslims would not be forced to earn a living by repairing punctures if Waqf properties - lands intended for religious or charitable purposes under Islamic law - had been used appropriately.

Speaking at the inauguration of an airport in Hissar, Haryana, the Prime Minister said that although Waqf properties span several lakh hectares, they had been misused.

"Had Waqf properties been utilised with integrity, Muslim youth would not have to make ends meet by

mending bicycle punctures. Instead, a select group of land mafias benefitted from them. These individuals were looting land that belonged to Dalits, the backward classes, and widows," he said. He added that recent amendments to the Waqf law would rectify these issues.

AIMIM chief and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi responded sharply, arguing that if the RSS - the BJP's ideological parent - had used its ideology and resources in the nation's interest, "the Prime Minister wouldn't have had to sell

tea" in his childhood.

He further questioned what the Modi government had done for poor people - whether Hindu or Muslim - in its 11 years in power. "The real issue with Waqf properties is that the laws have always been weak. Modi's amendments will further erode them," he said on X. Congress Rajya Sabha MP Imran Pratapgarhi criticised the use of the phrase 'Muslims fix punctures,' likening it to troll rhetoric on social media.

"Such comments are unbecoming of a Prime Minister. The government

itself has pushed the youth to this point - there are no jobs. What's left is repairing punctures or selling snacks. Muslims do more than fix punctures - I could list our contributions, but that's not the point. You accuse the Congress of pandering to Muslims - but do you harbour hatred for them? If not, then why did you sideline figures like Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, Shahnawaz Hussain, MJ Akbar, and Zafar Islam? You say the Waqf Bill is for Muslim welfare, yet you don't have a single Muslim MP to introduce it in the Lok Sabha. You talk of Muslim women's rights, but there are no Muslim women representing the BJP in either House or any State Assembly," he said.



You Have Right To Protest, Not Riot: West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee Urges Protesters Not To Take Law In Hands

(Gns).

West Bengal's Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee, has emphasized the right of every caste and religion to protest amidst the anti-Waqf protests occurring across various parts of the state. She cautioned against taking the law into one's hands and highlighted the manipulation efforts by some to mislead the public, urging them to disregard such influences. "We live once and die once. So, why is there a riot? Every caste and religion has the right to protest, but do not take law into your hands. Some people are trying to mislead you, do not pay attention to them," she firmly stated.

The backdrop to Banerjee's statement is the recent outbreak of violence in South 24 Parganas, where the Indian Secular Front (ISF) supporters clashed with police over the Waqf (Amendment) Act. The conflict, particularly intense in the Bhanganur area, led to several injuries and police vehicles being torched. These clashes occurred as the police attempted to halt the ISF supporters' march towards Ramlila Maidan in central Kolkata, where an anti-Waqf (Amendment) Act rally was scheduled.

In response to the escalating violence, particularly

in Murshidabad district following the passage of the Waqf Bill by Parliament, a Supreme Court plea has



been filed. Advocate Shashank Shekhar Jha requested a court-monitored Special Investigation Team (SIT) to examine the outbreak in detail. The petition seeks an explanation from both the West Bengal government and the Union Home Ministry regarding the failure to maintain law

and order, alongside directives for victim compensation and rehabilitation. It aims to ensure the protection of life and liberty for those affected and to prevent further violence.

The plea further underscores the significant constitutional concerns the violence raises, especially its targeted nature against the Hindu community, in light of the right to life and religious freedom. Notably, the unrest in Murshidabad over the Waqf Act amendment has resulted in at least three fatalities. In response to the chaos, central forces have been deployed in several locations as per the Calcutta High Court's directive.

Waqf amendment not against Muslims, but aimed at correcting past mistakes and ensuring 'Munambam is not repeated anywhere in the country: Kiren Rijiju

(Gns).

Union Minister for Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju on Tuesday said that the amendments in the Waqf Act were made aimed at correcting past mistakes and ensuring justice in land ownership across the country. The NDA government has only taken steps to address legal inconsistencies that could otherwise lead to any land being declared as Waqf property, he said.

Speaking to media persons in Kochi, Rijiju reiterated that the Centre's amendments to the Waqf Act are not directed against the Muslim community but that the government intends to ensure that there is no provision for anybody to forcefully and unilaterally take away someone's land in India.

"There is a false narrative being spread that the

this, the government decided to amend the law, said



central government is working against Muslims. This is not true. The Waqf Amendment Act is not targeted at the Muslim community. It is to correct mistakes of the past," he said.

Had the Waqf law not been amended, any land could have been declared as Waqf land. Recognising

Kiren Rijiju.

Referring to the Munambam issue, where around 600 families in the Munambam village of the Ernakulam district face the threat of eviction from their residence and land due to claims by the Waqf Board, Rijiju said the issue was one of the reasons that

prompted the government to act. He assured that a situation like Munambam would not be repeated anywhere in the country.

Nearly 600 fishermen who had begun paying land taxes were suddenly informed that 404 acres of land in Munambam had been declared Waqf property by the Kerala Waqf Board. This is how the tragedy unfolded and the people realised the injustice done to them, the Minister said.

Rijiju assured the people of Munambam, who have been protesting for months against the Waqf Board's claims on their land and homes, that such incidents would not be repeated elsewhere in the country. He stated that justice would be ensured for the affected residents.



CM announces to make Pangri as first natural farming Sub-Division of Himachal Pradesh

(Gns).

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu has announced to make Pangri Sub-division as Himachal's first natural farming sub-division and grant Rs 5 crore revolving fund for this purpose.

He made this announcement during the state-Level Himachal Day celebrations held on Tuesday, in the remote and picturesque Killar region of Pangri Valley in Chamba district.

A large number of people gathered at the helipad ground to witness and participate in the 78th Himachal Day celebration.

Conveying his greetings to the people of the state on this occasion, he paid tribute to the immense con-

tributions of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and the first Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, Dr YS Parmar, in securing statehood for the region.

While addressing the public gathering he also announced Rs 60 per kg minimum support price to naturally grown barley and set up a milk processing plant with 10 thousand capacities in Pangri area.

Sukhu said that the Udaipur-Killar road improvement is a top priority for the state government and the matter has been

strongly taken up with the Union Government, resulting in the tender process nearing completion.

He directed the adminis-

tration of Lahaul-Spiti and Chamba districts to complete all necessary formalities and expedite the road construction work. To strengthen power supply in the valley, he stated that

the state government is working on various projects worth Rs 62 crore. He said Rs 5 crore are being spent on laying an 11 KV line from Tindi to Shaun and announced Rs 45.50 crore for laying a 33 KV line from Thiroi to Killar.

Taking into account the unique challenges of the region, he assured sufficient funds for the construction of Mahila Mandal Bhawans and declared that Sach will be given the status of Sub-Tehsil.

To improve transportation services, he announced 20 new bus permits for the valley, along with a 40 percent subsidy on bus purchases and a four-month exemption from road tax.

Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel Chairs High-Level Meeting on Summer Drinking Water Planning in the State

Water Supply Department, and Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam to Coordinate for Adequate Water Supply

* A total of 14,269.73 million cubic meters of water are stored in 207 reservoirs across the state, including the Sardar Sarovar Dam.

* Water from 62 reservoirs, including 8 in North Gujarat, 6 in Central Gujarat, 4 in South Gujarat, 35 in Saurashtra, and 9 in Kutch, is reserved for drinking purposes.

* Drinking water is supplied to 15,720 villages and 251 towns through 372 group water supply schemes.

* A 24x7 control room and toll-free helpline number 1916 are operational in Gandhinagar for monitoring the water supply situation.

* 119 teams have been appointed for hand pump repairs.

Gandhinagar, 15 March 2025: Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel held a high-level meeting in Gandhinagar to conduct a comprehensive review of the planning and preparedness to ensure adequate and easily accessible drinking water for citizens during

the summer.

To ensure adequate water supply to the people, the CM directed effective coordination between the

initiatives undertaken by the Water Supply Department to ensure the easy availability of drinking water to the public. It was



Water Supply Department, Water Resources Department, and Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam.

The meeting was attended by Water Resources and Water Supply Minister Shri Kunvarjibhai Bavaliya, Minister of State Shri Mukesh Patel, Chief Secretary Shri Pankaj Joshi, Chief Minister's Advisor Shri Rathore, Narmada Nigam CMD Shri Mukesh Puri, Additional Chief Secretary (Narmada) Shri C.V. Som, along with other senior secretaries.

A presentation made before the Chief Minister during the meeting outlined the current status of the state's reservoirs and the

highlighted that water from 62 reservoirs across the state has been reserved exclusively for drinking purposes. Additionally, a total of 207 reservoirs, including the Sardar Sarovar Dam, collectively hold a water storage capacity of 14,269.73 million cubic meters.

Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel specifically directed the Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam to ensure an adequate supply of Narmada water in the Vallabhipur Branch Canal to meet the needs of the Saurashtra region. He also emphasized the need to fill the Tappar Dam from the Narmada Canal as required throughout the year, in

Nitish Kumar Will Be NDA's Bihar CM Face JDU's Nishant Kumar

(Gns).

With only a few months to enthralling Bihar Assembly Election 2025, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's son Nishant Kumar made a bin statement on Tuesday. Nishant Kumar, who recently joined his father's Janata Dal (United), made it clear that Nitish Kumar will be National Democratic Alliance (NDA)'s Chief Minister face. He said, BJP and JDU will together strongly contest the forthcoming Bihar Assembly Elections 2025.

Talking to media in Patna, Nishant affirmed

that Home Minister Amit Shah and Bihar BJP chief Samrat Choudhary expressed confidence in alliance and Nitish Kumar's leadership, which will take the state to new heights.

Bihar CM Nitish Kumar "I appeal to the people to form the government again under NDA's leadership, with my father at the helm," Nishant said.

"Amit Shah uncle came and said clearly that my father will be the CM face. Samrat Choudhary ji also confirmed that he has been with my father for the last 15 years and will fight the

elections under his leadership," he added.



When asked about RJD's claim that BJP will replace Nitish Kumar as CM and bring in their own candidate, Nishant said, there is no question of any-

thing like such.

"Amit Shah has said it, Samrat ji has said it - there is no question about it," JDU leader said.

"He is 100% fit and healthy. The public can see it for themselves. The people of Bihar will decide. I urge the people to give my father an even bigger mandate than the one they gave him in 2010," Nishant said about his father Nitish Kumar, who is aiming for another 5-year term.

Bihar Assembly Elections 2025 are likely to be held by the end of this year, but all parties have pulled up their socks.

Union Health Minister Shri JP Nadda presides over 5th Convocation Ceremony of AIIMS Rishikesh

(Gns).

Union Health and Family Welfare Minister Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda presided over the fifth convocation ceremony of AIIMS Rishikesh, today. He was joined by Shri Pushkar Singh Dhama, Chief Minister, Uttarakhand; Shri Dhan Singh Rawat, Health and Education Minister, Uttarakhand; Members of Lok Sabha, Shri Ajay Bhatt,

Shri Ajay Tamta and Shri Trivendra Singh Rawat; and Smt. Ritu Khanduri Bhushan, Speaker of Uttarakhand Legislative Assembly.

Addressing the gathering, Shri JP Nadda stated that "convocation ceremony is a special occasion which marks recognition for the achievements made by students." He said providing afford-



able and quality healthcare to every poor person in the country is a priority of the central government.

Shri JP Nadda highlight-

Enforcement Directorate Names Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi In National Herald Money Laundering Chargesheet

(Gns).

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday mentioned Congress MPs Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi's name in National Herald case chargesheet over money laundering allegations. The National Herald case has not only drawn people's attention but also ignited another Congress vs BJP contest after senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh termed ED's move politically motivated.

He criticised BJP, terming it as "vendetta politics" and labeled the seizure of National Herald's assets as a "state-sponsored crime masquerading as the rule of law."

Rahul Gandhi and Sonia

Gandhi

"Seizing the assets of the National Herald is a state-sponsored crime masquerading as the rule

intimidation by the PM and the Home Minister (have) gone completely berserk. The INC and its leadership will not be silenced. Satyameva Jayate," Jairam



of law. Filing chargesheets against Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and some others is nothing but the politics of vendetta and

Ramesh said.

The ED chargesheet, lodged before Delhi's Rouse Avenue Court, also names Indian Overseas

Congress chief Sam Pitroda, Suman Dubey, others.

The hearing of this matter is scheduled for April 25, 2025.

Earlier, on April 11, the ED had issued notices to property registrars across Delhi, Mumbai, and Lucknow, targeting assets owned by Associated Journals Limited (AJL). These assets, now under the control of Young Indian Limited (YIL) - a company substantially owned by Sonia and Rahul Gandhi - have been at the center of this controversy.

The probe by the Enforcement Directorate initiated in 2021, following accusations leveled by Subramanian Swamy in 2014.

Editorial

RECALIBRATION OF REGIONAL DIPLOMACY

The termination by India of transshipment facilities for Bangladesh marks more than a policy decision ~ it signals a recalibration of regional diplomacy, trade priorities, and strategic red lines in South Asia. By pulling the plug on a trade mechanism that had enabled Bangladesh to route its export cargo through India, New Delhi is not only responding to a diplomatic slight but also reasserting its agency in a region of increasing geo – political complexity.

Bangladesh's interim Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus's recent comments in China, describing his country as the “only guardian of the ocean” for the landlocked North-eastern states of India, have been widely viewed as provocative. The timing and venue of the remarks ~ during a four-day visit to Beijing ~ underscore a growing shift in Dhaka's foreign policy posture, one that appears increasingly comfortable in the Chinese orbit. India's move to suspend the 2020 circular allowing transshipment, therefore, must be read as more than a reactionary response to rhetoric. It is a strategic message.

The Indian Ministry of External Affairs cited logistical congestion and trade delays as formal reasons, but the subtext is clear: access to Indian logistical infrastructure is a privilege, not an entitlement, especially when geopolitical intentions are in question. This development also illustrates the tight-rope India must walk between economic pragmatism and strategic assertiveness. While Bangladesh has been a significant trade partner and a recipient of zero-duty access to Indian markets for over two decades, overtures to China ~ particularly in regions bordering sensitive Indian territory like the Chicken's Neck ~ demand scrutiny. The proposed revitalisation of a Chinese-supported airbase near Siliguri is understandably perceived as a red flag in Delhi.

Some may argue that India's move contradicts World Trade Organization (WTO) obligations, especially under Article V, which promotes freedom of transit for landlocked nations. But sovereignty and national interest are not absolutes in international law ~ they are balanced through diplomacy, context, and signaling. India has not blocked trade to Bhutan or Nepal via its territory. What it has done is to draw a firm line where its goodwill could be misused to strengthen a rival sphere of influence. Regional partnerships thrive on mutual respect and predictability. When one partner courts strategic rivals while leveraging shared infrastructure, the balance of trust inevitably tilts ~ and recalibrations, however disruptive, become necessary. The region stands at a crossroads. The Seven Sister states in India's Northeast require robust connectivity, not coercive diplomacy.

If Bangladesh wishes to be a vital partner in this transformation, it must exercise caution in its geopolitical alignments and rhetoric. This episode may strain ties temporarily, but it also offers a chance for both nations to reset expectations and reaffirm mutual respect. In South Asia's intricate web of history, geography, and power, every gesture carries weight. India's decision is not just about containers and customs ~ it is about control, context, and carving out strategic clarity in a rapidly shifting landscape.

Global Ambition

India's contemplation of allowing its companies to list on the London Stock Exchange marks a pivotal moment in the nation's evolving economic strategy. The recent meeting between Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and UK's Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves has given this idea fresh momentum. It is a clear indication that India is not only seeking to deepen bilateral ties but is also looking to strategically position itself in the global financial ecosystem. Allowing Indian firms to list abroad could unlock a powerful new source of capital. The London Stock Exchange offers access to a mature and diverse investor base, which can provide Indian companies with long-term funding for expansion, innovation, and international ventures.

More than just capital, global listings bring visibility, enhanced credibility, and greater scrutiny ~ factors that can push Indian companies to elevate their standards of transparency and governance. The timing of this exploration is significant. As India aspires to become a \$5 trillion economy, access to international markets becomes a natural step. Listing on a globally recognised exchange could also help Indian firms become more competitive, both in terms of valuation and operational benchmarks. It would send a strong signal to the world that Indian companies are ready to play in the big league.

This also presents an opportunity to reimagine how Indian entrepreneurship is perceived globally ~ dynamic, transparent, and growth oriented. These are qualities that resonate strongly with international

(Gns).

There is an unconfirmed report that the US has redeployed at the Bagram air base in Afghanistan. This base was the command centre for NATO and US forces throughout their occupation of Afghanistan. It was taken over by the Taliban after the US withdrawal and collapse of the Afghan army. Bagram has two runways, including one capable of handling bombers and large cargo aircraft, parking slots for over 100 fighter aircraft, a 50-bed hospital and can accommodate substantial forces.

The report first emerged on Khaama Press, a media outlet which claims it reports from Afghanistan, though based in the US. The report tracked a US C-17 aircraft which took off from the Al-Udeid airbase in Qatar and landed in Bagram via Pakistan. The report adds that the flight was carrying top US intelligence officials, including Michael Ellis, the CIA's deputy chief. Adding to the mystery and dubious intent, the report mentions that the aircraft switched off its transponder on entering Afghanistan airspace and switched it on when it re-entered Pakistan.

The report has been denied by the Taliban's chief spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid. He said, “There is no need for any country's military presence in Afghanistan at present and the Islamic Emirate will not allow such an action.” He added that such an act was ‘impossible.’ There were no comments from the US. To add credence to the report was another input claiming that officials from China's Ministry of State Security and Iran's IRGC rushed to Kabul to meet Taliban's senior intelligence officials.

President Donal Trump

has repeatedly been desiring redeployment in Bagram. The reason given by him is ‘because Bagram is exactly one hour away from where China makes its nuclear missiles.’ He had mentioned that the US should have ‘a small force in Bagram.’ Trump possibly hinted that the US need not take over the airbase and deploy aircraft but initially establish monitoring facilities, concentrated towards both China and Iran. Hence, the report of the base being handed over would be denied as it remains under the control of the Taliban while resources which arrived on the first flight were those of the CIA meant for establishing a monitoring station and not military deployment.

Taliban and US ties are being recalibrated. The Taliban recently released a US citizen, George Glezmman, held by them for the past two years; he was arrested while touring the country. Glezmman was handed over to the US hostage envoy, Adam Boehler, when he visited Kabul accompanied by former US ambassador to Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad. Discussions are on for the release of two more US citizens in exchange for an Afghan national under detention in Guantánamo. In response, the US government lifted its USD 10 million bounty on Taliban leader Sirajuddin Haqqani alongside two others, though they remain on the FBI's wanted list.

The three had been accused of the 2008 Kabul Serena hotel bombing which killed six, including an American citizen. There were also reports that the US may hand over the Afghan embassy in Washington to the Taliban, though it may not recognize the ambassador as the for-

mal representative of the Kabul regime. Afghanistan also possesses minerals which the US needs. In case things move positively, it could invest in their



extraction. The Trump administration no longer demands that Afghanistan return US equipment abandoned on its soil, while Afghanistan desires that the US release the \$9.5 billion frozen in American banks.

Whether the Taliban offered Bagram or it was a US suggestion when Khalilzad visited Kabul is unknown. China, concerned by increased attacks on its nationals by Baloch freedom fighters, is now directing the Pakistan army to enhance its operations in Afghanistan.

STORY BEHIND QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT IN 1942.

We all know that failure of the Cripps Mission to offer any advance towards self rule and growing discontent among the people were the immediate factors leading to the Quit India Movement in 1942. But, there was a story behind the story. Gandhi had already had a change of heart in regard to the British Empire in the late 1930s. At that time he decided to wait till the heat of the battle webbed, instead of continuing his unconditional co-operation with the Raj. This is because, at this point, he thought that Britain was losing the war. It is significant that in September 1940, in his speech at the A.I.C.C. meeting, Gandhi said, “... the position today is such that if we do nothing, our very existence will be imperiled...” [CWG Vol. 73].

Thus, he clearly advised Congressmen to take an active position against the British India government rather than passively watching how they were dragged into the war. He expressed anger at Viceroy Linlithgow's declaration that India was with Britain in the war. He questioned why he made such a declaration unilaterally. He [the Viceroy] could have at least ‘kept Congress out of it’. But, the Viceroy did not do so. Under the circumstances, he urged the Congress to make its opposition known; otherwise they would cease to exist.

Simultaneously, Pakistan is pushing back Afghan refugees from its soil brutally, resulting in a strong anti-Pakistan wave in Afghanistan leading to an

increase in cadres of anti-Pakistan terrorist groups. Clashes along the Durand Line are a regular feature. This impacts Kabul's ties with Beijing and Islamabad. The US currently does not need Bagram as a base to deploy airpower and troops. It needs it as a monitoring station ensuring it stays ahead of its rivals, China, Iran and Russia. This does not necessitate taking over the base. The Russian Supreme Court will determine in mid-April whether the Taliban can be removed from its list of terrorist groups, opening doors for

The man who decided to assist the British Empire in the Boer war, and back home, in 1918, went on a drive for recruiting Indians as soldiers of the British army, was now steadfastly opposing Britain in the Second World War. He made his point more explicit when he said, in the same meeting, “I want them [the British] to win... But, I cannot bear that their rule over my country should be perpetuated and we forever remain under their protection. So, I shall not board their ship.” [CWG Vol.73 p. 11] He did not confine himself to statements only. He gave a call for action.

He said, “... We cannot become free by merely declaring our freedom. We can be free only when the British go out bag and baggage ...” It is this transformation of attitude toward the British Empire that led to the Quit India movement. How did it happen? Did the war change the scenario? If it were so it could have taken place in the First World War. But, then his faith in the Empire's benevolence seemed unshakable. The reason for this change can be traced to how he always wanted to relate himself to the authority. His observations in ‘Satyagraha in South Africa’ concerning the Boer war would be highly instructive here. He admitted that although justice was on the side of the Boers, he sup-

ports the British. He explained why. He wrote, “authorities may not always be right, but so long as the subjects owe allegiance to a state, it is their clear duty... to accord their support to acts of the state.” There is the rub! As long as the British Empire held supreme power which seemed undefeatable, his subservience to it in India remained a subject's allegiance to the authority. In the First World War, he had a firm conviction that the mighty empire would come out victorious and then grant freedom to India within the Empire.

From the 1940s, the entire situation started taking a new turn. Initially, the advance of the Axis Powers appeared to be inexorable and Gandhi's faith in the British power no longer remained as unwavering as it was in the past. He openly started praising Hitler the moment he saw the tide of the war was moving in Hitler's favour. From Wardha, Gandhi wrote to Amrita Kaur on 15 May 1940, “... I do not want to see the Allies defeated. But, I do not consider Hitler to be as bad as he is depicted. He is showing an ability that is amazing and he seems to be gaining victories without much bloodshed...” On 26 May 1940, he said in his letter to the Viceroy Linlithgow, “... assuming that things are as black as they appear to be for the Allied cause, is it not

all have huge exposure to global markets. Apple's non-US revenue is 66 per cent, Microsoft 50 per cent, Alphabet 54 per cent, Amazon 40 per cent, Nvidia 60 per cent, Meta 55 per cent and Tesla 55 per cent. In short, tariffs will hurt the global economy, which hurts Magnificent 7 revenue and profits, which in turn will hurt the stock market, damaging the dollar. How will it all play out? No one seriously knows for sure. The Singapore Prime Minister boldly summed up by saying “the era of rules-based globalization and free trade is over.” The war of elephants has begun, and the grass will be trampled.

Having weaponized the dollar, with rumoured threats of either escrow or tax on dollar holdings, investors will seek to hedge, hence the elevated price of gold. Too strong a dollar hurts US exports, encouraging imports.

Afghanistan. While US presence would enable it to monitor multiple terrorist groups operating in the region including the ISIK, al Qaeda and the TTP (Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan), it could have been told by Kabul on what it could concentrate on, most likely ignoring the TTP. These are early days.

The US flight into Afghanistan and its landing in Bagram was confirmed. Presence of a deputy director of the CIA on the flight does not hint at US intent to have a military presence in Afghanistan, at least presently. Hence, in all likelihood the US would be establishing a monitoring station with strict restrictions on its personnel on movement. The Taliban could provide perimeter security. Rushed visits by Chinese and Iranian intelligence agencies to Kabul add credence to this news. Deployment of airpower resources is some distance away. It may happen in the future. Denials flowing from all sides today are logically correct as the base remains under Taliban control. The future could be different.

time to sue for peace for the sake of humanity?

I do not believe Herr Hitler as bad as he is portrayed. He might have been a friendly power as he may still be.” The climax was reached in his speech at the Gandhi Seva Sangh and Charkha Sangh on 22 June 1940. What he stated there was a paean to Hitler's single minded devotion to destruction. He advised all to emulate, in their sadhana for ‘Ahimsa’, the faith and perseverance with which Hitler had perfected his weapons of destruction. Gandhi added that it commanded his admiration. He also said, “... That he [Hitler] uses them [weapons of destruction] as a monster is immaterial for our purpose.”

Thus, it is evident that apart from the urge to revive Congress' predominance in the current struggle against the Raj, Gandhi also began mulling over switching allegiance from the British to some other authorities as and when they would be found suitable. The most shocking aspect of this development was his no holds barred admiration for the most powerful. It was power that drove him to become a subject instead of a citizen. From this point of view, his non-violent agitations seemed to have strategised a method of peaceful coexistence of the British oppressor and the oppressed Indians.

Hello to tariffs will mean goodbye, dollar profits

a 20 per cent increase in US tariffs, including retaliation from China and the Euro area may reduce US GDP by 2 percentage points and global GDP, including EU and China, by 1 percentage point.

That would put the US into recession territory, Europe to zero or negative growth, and Emerging Market and Developing Economies (EMDEs) to just over 3 per cent growth, the slowest for years except for the 2020 pandemic shock. Fast-growing economies like Bangladesh and Vietnam would be hit badly as tariff increases for them are at 37 and 46 per cent respectively.

US Council of Economic Advisers Chairman, Stephen Miran, laid out three key tariff objectives on the future of global trade and dollar: a negotiating tool, tax revenue source and a wall to protect onshoring of US manufacturing. Miran understood

that US soft power is not just on its military might but also the hegemonic power of the dollar. As the world's reserve currency, accounting for just under 60 per cent of international payments and official reserves respectively, the real carrot in using the dollar lies in its higher rate of return, superior liquidity and as a haven or low risk currency standard.

Although the United States has huge external debt, most of it is denominated in US dollars, which means that she can repay debt by simply printing more dollars. Dollar holders are compensated by higher returns, with a 9-10 per cent average annual return on USD assets based on a 60 equity/40 bonds portfolio ratio over the last two decades. This has consistently outperformed Euro asset portfolio return of 4-5 per cent per annum and 2-3 per cent on Yen portfolio. Given the fact

that US dollar liquidity is excellent or superior to Euro or Yen interbank market liquidity, having the largest military power reinforces US dollar hegemony over rivals such as the Euro, Yen or Chinese RMB.

Nevertheless, the true determinants of US dollar superiority over other reserve assets are higher equity returns from tech company growth, superior bond yields, and moderate inflation relative to low inflation in the Eurozone and deflation in Japan. In the last 10 years, US stock market annual returns have been between 9- 10 per cent (double equity returns in RMB stock markets), mainly because US companies have consistently outperformed in earnings, technology and innovation, enjoying currency stability and fewer systemic risks. However, all these may change with the President Trump's seismic policy changes in his second term.

As Trump escalated tariffs on China to 104 per cent and China matched with 84 per cent on US imports, the markets seasawed with huge uncertainty, with economists like Paul Krugman arguing that inflation will spike, which would keep interest rates higher in an independent Fed policy stance. US Treasury 10-year bonds spiked back to 4.5 per cent on April 9, which former US Treasury Secretary Larry Summers attributed to “a generalized aversion to U.S. assets in global financial markets.” Higher US dollar interest rates would increase the fiscal debt interest burden, already \$881 billion in 2024, higher than defense expenditure. Higher inflation and domestic interest rates would also slow down the US economy further, which would in turn weigh down on the stock market.

The pause in tariff hikes for everyone except China

saw the Dow Jones soaring once again, so it's clear that all this was really pointed at China. Nevertheless, if trade with China as the second largest economy is hurt, so will US corporate profits. Much of the high returns on US stock market have relied on the Magnificent Seven tech companies (Apple, Microsoft, Alphabet/Google, Amazon, Nvidia, Meta/Facebook, and Tesla), many of which have enjoyed Chinabased revenues from either imports or direct sales to China. Apple has 18-20 per cent of total revenue from China, relying on Chinese assembly of iPhones. Nvidia has 20-25 per cent revenue from China, particularly from sales of downgraded chips.

Tesla has 22-25 per cent revenue from China with half of global output manufactured in China. Whilst the others have less Chinese exposure, almost

Western railway observes the birth anniversary of bharat ratna dr. B. R. Ambedkar

Mumbai, Western Railway solemnly observed the 134th Birth Anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr. B.R. Ambedkar at its Headquarters in Churchgate, Mumbai. The commemorative event was held under the esteemed leadership of Shri Ashok Kumar Misra, General Manager of Western Railway, who presided over the ceremony. The occasion was graced by the presence of Principal Heads of Departments, representatives of recognized Trade Unions, mem-



Shri Ashok Kumar Misra - General Manager, Western Railway paying floral tribute & lighting the memorial candle on the occasion of birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar in a ceremony held at WR Headquarters at Churchgate.

bers of SC/ST and OBC and units of Western Associations, as well as Railway also celebrated the day.

To mark the tribute, General Manager Shri Misra offered floral respects and lit the memorial candle to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. In his address, Shri Misra paid profound homage to the principal architect of the Indian Constitution, acknowledging his unparalleled contributions to its framing. He further reflected upon Dr. Ambedkar's pivotal role in the upliftment of marginalized communities and his enduring legacy in the advancement of Indian society and nation-building.

Sunil Gavaskar Backs Vinod Kambli, His Foundation To Give Rs 30,000 Per Month For Treatment

(Gns). Cricket legend Sunil Gavaskar has come up as an angel for another former cricketer Vinod Kambli, who is battling health issues like heart problems, brain clots, and mental health struggles. According to a report published by the Times of India, Sunil Gavaskar's The Champs Foundation will provide financial aid of Rs 30,000 per month to Vinod Kambli for the rest of his life. This amount will help Vinod Kambli bear medical expenses.

A few months ago, on Wankhede Stadium's 50th anniversary, Sunil Gavaskar met Vinod Kambli and had promised

to support him. Gavaskar and other former cricketers had also requested BCCI to support former cricketers

Vinod Kambli TOI's report revealed that Sunil Gavaskar also met Vinod Kambli's doctors



as they don't have any other source of income.

Sunil Gavaskar and Vinod Kambli Sunil Gavaskar and

to take account of his friend's condition and what treatment he was receiving. Sunil Gavaskar Foundation will provide the financial

assistance from April 2025.

Earlier, other former cricketers like Anshuman Gaikwad, Kapil Dev, and others also took a stand for Vinod Kambli and asked the cricket governing body in India to help him.

"We are all very concerned, particularly when fortunes desert them. I don't like the word 'help'. What the 1983 team wants to do is take care of him. We want to take care of Vinod Kambli and help him get back on his feet," Gavaskar had said during an event.

BCCI secretary Jay Shah was quick to respond and had directed officials to release immediate funds for Vinod Kambli.

India's overall exports cross USD 820 billion mark in FY 2024-25, despite global headwinds; FIEO Chief urges for strategic support to sustain the momentum

India's overall exports grew by a healthy 5.5% in FY 2024-25, reaching USD 820.93 billion, reflecting the resilience of the export sector amid rising global geopolitical tensions and trade disruptions.

FIEO President, Mr S C Ralhan, welcomed the growth, highlighting the strong performance of the services sector, which played a key role in offsetting the modest growth in merchandise exports.

Merchandise exports for FY 2024-25 rose slightly by 0.08% to USD 437.42 bil-



lion, while imports increased by 6.62% to USD

720.24 billion, resulting in a trade deficit of USD 282.82 billion. In March 2025 alone, exports grew 0.7% year-on-year to USD 41.97 billion, with imports rising 11.3% to USD 63.51 billion - leading to a monthly trade deficit of USD 21.54 billion.

Mr Ralhan called for strategic support to sustain export momentum, including:

- (1) Enhancing export competitiveness.
- (2) Diversifying products and markets.
- (3) Addressing logistics and infrastructure gaps.
- (4) Easing regulatory burdens and improving access to affordable credit.

He reaffirmed FIEO's commitment to working closely with the government and industry to ensure sustained growth in the face of global challenges.

Lighthouse To Thirumayilai Chennai Metro Tunnel: When Will It Be Completed?

(Gns). Chennai Metro News: When will the Lighthouse to Thirumayilai Metro tunnel be completed? Well, the key tunnel, which is part of Chennai Metro's Phase II, is nearing its completion, The Hindu reported.

This stretch is poised to become a crucial commuter route. In just three years, the tunnel will host driverless metro trains, enhancing connectivity from Thirumayilai and Kutchery Road to Marina Beach. The tunnel will be ready by September 2025.

Thirumayilai Chennai Metro Tunnel

118.9-kilometre Network The larger Phase II expansion covers a massive 118.9-kilometre network with 128 stations, spread across three corridors: Corridor-3 from Madhavaram to SIPCOT

(45.8 km), Corridor-4 from Lighthouse to Poonamallee Bypass (26.1 km), and



Corridor-5 from Madhavaram to Sholinganallur (47 km).

The cost of the project is estimated to be ₹63,246 crore.

Tunneling work on this key segment is being executed by two tunnel boring machines (TBMs) named Flamingo and Eagle.

Flamingo began its 1.96-km journey in September 2023, starting from

enter Kutchery Road station shortly. The path hasn't been without challenges. Flamingo has faced multiple setbacks, including breakdowns and technical delays. In the initial stages, abrasive soil conditions led to frequent wear and tear, requiring repeated part replacements. One of the major hurdles was a malfunction in the cutter head, which took engineers nearly 40 days to repair.

Despite these difficulties, Flamingo has successfully tunneled 1.3 kilometres, while Eagle has covered 1.2 kilometres so far. Metro officials remain optimistic, noting that although the soil composition between Lighthouse and Thirumayilai is complex, the progress has been consistent and the tunnel is on track for timely completion.

Saif Ali Khan Stabbing Case: Key Fingerprint Evidence Fails To Link Main Suspect To Scene?

(Gns). The fingerprints collected by the cops in Bollywood actor Saif Ali Khan's stabbing case do not match with that of the accused Shariful Islam, News18 reported citing the chargesheet.

What's In The Chargesheet? Saif Ali Khan Stabbing Case

The authorities had collected nearly 20 samples and sent them to the state CID's Fingerprint Bureau. 19 out of 20 did not match with that of the accused, a Bangladeshi national, the report said.

On January 16, actor Saif Ali Kha, husband of noted actress Kareena Kapoor, was stabbed multiple times with a knife by an intruder. The incident occurred inside his 12th-floor apartment in upscale Bandra on January 16. He

was rushed to the hospital on an auto-rickshaw, and he underwent emergency



surgery at Lilavati Hospital. The police nabbed Shariful two days after the incident.

The fingerprints found on the black bathroom door, the sliding door of the bedroom, and the cupboard door are not matching with the accused in the case. However, one fingerprint collected from the eighth floor of the building

matched that of the accused, as per the chargesheet, which is over

Saif Stabbing Case: Facial Recognition Test Confirms Accused's Face Matches CCTV Footage, Say Cops

Saif Stabbing Case: Facial Recognition Test Confirms Accused's Face Matches CCTV Footage, Say Cops

Last month, Shariful Islam moved a court here for bail, claiming he has been implicated in the case. In his plea, he claimed "the first information report (FIR) is patently false and a false case has been registered against him".

The accused, in the plea, claimed his arrest was illegal, as the investigating agency had "clearly and blatantly disregarded" section 47 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), which pertains to informing a person about the grounds of his arrest as well as right to bail.

Trump Administration Freezes USD 2.2 Billion In Grants To Harvard University

(Gns). The federal government says it's freezing more than USD 2.2 billion in grants and contracts to Harvard University, since the institution said Monday it won't comply with the Trump administration's demands to limit activism on campus.

In a letter to Harvard Friday, the administration called for broad government and leadership reforms, a requirement that Harvard institute what it calls "merit-based" admissions and hiring policies as well as conduct an audit of the study body, faculty and leadership on their views about diversity.

The demands, which are an update from an earlier letter, also call for a ban on face masks — which appeared to target pro-Palestinian protesters.

They also pressure the university to stop recognizing or funding "any student group or club that endorses or promotes criminal activity, illegal violence, or illegal harassment."

Harvard President Alan Garber, in a letter to the

Harvard community Monday, said the demands violated the university's

reforms to address anti-semitism. "These ends will not be



First Amendment rights and "exceeds the statutory limits of the government's authority under Title VI," which prohibits discrimination against students based on their race, colour or national origin.

"No government — regardless of which party is in power — should dictate what private universities can teach, whom they can admit and hire, and which areas of study and inquiry they can pursue," Garber wrote, adding that the university had taken extensive

achieved by assertions of power, unmoored from the law, to control teaching and learning at Harvard and to dictate how we operate," he wrote.

"The work of addressing our shortcomings, fulfilling our commitments, and embodying our values is ours to define and undertake as a community."

The demands of Harvard are part of a broader push of using taxpayer dollars to pressure major academic institutions to comply with President

Donald Trump's political agenda and to influence campus policy.

The administration has also argued that universities allowed what it considered to be antisemitism to go unchecked at campus protests last year against Israel's war in Gaza; the schools deny it.

Harvard is one of several Ivy League schools targeted in a pressure campaign by the administration, which also has paused federal funding for the University of Pennsylvania, Brown, and Princeton to force compliance with its agenda.

Harvard's demand letter is similar to the one that prompted changes at Columbia University under the threat of billions of dollars in cuts.

The demands from the Trump administration prompted a group of alumni to write to university leaders calling for it to "legally contest and refuse to comply with unlawful demands that threaten academic freedom and university self-governance."

US Space Force to Trial In-Orbit Satellite Refuelling with Commercial Partners

(Gns). The United States Space Force is preparing to launch a series of experiments to test satellite refuelling technologies in orbit, placing commercial companies at the forefront of a rapidly growing sector within the space industry, reported SpaceNews.

The upcoming trials, dubbed Tetra-5 and Tetra-6, will assess hardware developed by Astroscale, Northrop Grumman, and Orbit Fab - firms competing to lead the emerging in-space refuelling market.

These demonstrations are viewed as vital to the establishment of a viable commercial refuelling framework in orbit. "Tetra-5 will validate the interface and a scalable commercial refuelling architecture," a spokesperson from Space Systems Command told SpaceNews.

Initially launched in 2022 as a single experiment with a budget of \$44.5 million and a 2025 launch date, the programme has since been divided into two

missions: Tetra-5, now set for 2026, and Tetra-6, following in 2027.

Tetra-5: Evaluating commercial interfaces

The Tetra-5 mission will deploy two small satellites featuring Orbit Fab's Rapidly Attachable Fluid Transfer Interface (RAFTI) - a bespoke valve engineered to enable the transfer of propellant in space.

One satellite will attempt to dock with an Orbit Fab propellant depot, developed with funding from the Pentagon's Defence Innovation Unit. The second satellite will trial compatibility with a propellant shuttle from Astroscale U.S., developed in collaboration with Space Systems Command's Servicing, Mobility, and Logistics office.

Tetra-6: Northrop Grumman's offering

The following year, Tetra-6 will test Northrop

Grumman's Passive Refuelling Module (PRM), also backed by the Defence Innovation Unit. This mission will send a satellite fitted with the PRM interface to dock with Northrop Grumman's ROOSTER-5 (Rapid On-orbit Space Technology Evaluation Ring) satellite.



Space Systems Command has approved both the RAFTI and PRM systems "as acceptable commercial solutions for refuelling".

ROOSTER-5 is built on Northrop Grumman's ESPASat platform, a ring-shaped structure designed to be carried as a secondary payload on national

security launches. It will carry a refuelling payload under a programme named Elixir, developed by Northrop Grumman.

As part of Tetra-6, the Space Systems Command awarded Northrop Grumman a separate contract to demonstrate a refuelling payload, the company confirmed on 2 April.

This payload will include Northrop's Active Refuelling Module (ARM), which connects with the PRM for fuel transfer and reception.

According to Northrop Grumman, the Elixir programme is intended to help the Space Force develop procedures for rendezvous and proximity operations, docking, refuelling, and detachment of orbital vehicles.

Lauren Smith, Northrop's programme manager for in-space refuelling, told SpaceNews that Elixir goes beyond just creating a refuelling payload - it aims to integrate the payload, platform, and client spacecraft.

Defence Secretary calls on Italian Defence Minister in Rome to further enhance bilateral defence cooperation

(Gns). Defence Secretary Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh visited Rome, Italy from April 14-15, 2025 on an official trip. The visit started with the Defence Secretary calling on the Defence Minister of Italy Mr Guido Crosetto. During the meeting, the two sides held productive discussions aimed at further enhancing defence cooperation as a key pillar of India-Italy strategic partnership.

During his visit, Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh co-chaired the 11th India-Italy annual bilateral Joint Defence Committee meeting with his Italian counterpart, Secretary General of Defence Ms Luisa Riccardi. They discussed a wide range of defence, security and industrial cooperation issues including maritime cooperation and information sharing arrangements between India and Italy with emphasis on Trans

Regional Maritime Network. The situation in the Red Sea and Western Indian Ocean Region also came

conscious policy initiatives. India has developed a vibrant innovation and industrial ecosystem.

ronment for the growth of the Indian Industry through transparency, predictability and Ease of Doing Business.

An MoU between Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM) and the Federation of Italian Companies for Aerospace, Defence and Security (AIAD) was also signed, marking a significant step toward fostering closer cooperation between the defence industries of both nations.

The Defence Secretary was accompanied by a high-level Ministry of Defence delegation, comprising senior officials from Service Headquarters, Department of Defence and Department of Defence Production. A substantial industry delegation from SIDM also accompanied the Defence Secretary to foster closer B2B connections between the Indian and Italian defence industries.

up during the discussions. The Defence Secretary stressed on closer defence collaboration especially in technology and armament production, which is a priority area for India. He also brought out that the Government of India is proactively building an ecosystem for defence production and innovation within the country through

In his keynote address during India-Italy Defence Industry Roundtable, Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh shared his views on how the Indian defence industry has witnessed significant changes, particularly in the past few years through progressive reforms. He said that these reforms have been marked by the creation of a conducive envi-

Freyr Energy, a Leading Cleantech Startup, Partners with Schneider Electric to Accelerate India's Clean Energy

15, April 2025, Schneider Electric, the leader in the digital transformation of energy management and automation, and Freyr Energy Services Pvt Ltd, a leading rooftop solar company in India, have partnered together to accelerate the adoption of smart, energy-efficient, and sustainable solutions for homeowners across the country. As part of this partnership, Schneider Electric will integrate its advanced digital and automation technologies with Freyr Energy's expertise in rooftop solar solutions. This collaboration aligns with India's commitment to reducing carbon emissions by 33-35% from 2005 levels by 2030, contributing to the nation's clean energy transition.

deployment of Schneider Electric's Wiser Smart Home system, an intelligent platform that enables homeowners to monitor and optimize their energy

technology with a customer-centric approach, Schneider Electric and Freyr Energy aim to empower individuals to make informed decisions



consumption in real time. Seamlessly integrating with solar energy systems, Wiser allows homeowners to maximize renewable energy use, reduce dependence on conventional power sources, and lower electricity costs. By combining cutting-edge

about their energy consumption, contributing to a more sustainable and energy-efficient future

Speaking on the partnership, Sumati Sahgal, Vice President, Retail, Schneider Electric India said, "At Schneider Electric, sustainability drives our

innovation, and this partnership with Freyr Energy represents a significant step toward sustainable living for Indian homeowners. By integrating Freyr's solar expertise with our Wiser energy management system, we're creating a seamless experience that empowers consumers to reduce their energy costs while contributing to India's clean energy goals. This collaboration demonstrates how smart technology can make sustainability accessible and practical for everyday households."

Saurabh Marda, Co-Founder & Managing Director, Freyr Energy, echoed this sentiment, highlighting the shared vision of both organizations. He stated, "This partnership with Schneider Electric allows us to offer home-

Three vicious crooks of Aligarh arrested after encounter

Mathura. In the joint proceedings of the police station Jamunapar Police, SWAT team and surveillance team, three vicious miscreants of Aligarh have been arrested in an encounter on the Vrindavan cut new bypass. Illegal Aslah and bike have been recovered from their possession.

SP City Arvind Kumar said that the police teams informed the informer late at night that the miscreants who had snatched the motorcycle from the Panigaon area on 8 April. Today, the same crooks are roaming around the new



Jamunapar Police SWAT team surveillance team at encounter site

bypass in order to rob again. On this information, the police station Jamuna crossed and the SWAT

team was jointly checked. During the checking, vicious crook Jitendra alias Jeetu son Prabhudayal res-

ident Kanka police station Iglas district Aligarh, Pawan son Mahavir Prasad resident M.N. 5/50 near Ashok Nagar Park, Raghuvverpuri police station Bannadevi district Aligarh has been arrested in an encounter near Gular Road police station Banna Devi district Aligarh, Sunny son Inderpal resident Sri Ram Dharamshala. The injured were admitted to the district hospital for treatment. Three illegal Aslah, looted Apache motorcycles and Platina motorcycles used in robbery have been recovered from the possession of miscreants

Lover couple lost their lives after eating toxins at railway junction

Mathura. On Tuesday morning, a loving couple consumed toxins in the teen shed outside the second entrance of the railway junction. This deteriorated the health of both. When both were suffering and froth came out of the mouth, then the people around informed the police. On the information, the highway and GRP police reached the spot and called the ambulance and admitted both to the district hospital. Both of them died during treatment here.

The goods warehouse is built near the railway station gate number two of Mathura Junction. It was here that a loving couple ate the toxic substance under the tin shed on Tuesday morning. This worsened the condition of both. Both began to suffer under the tin shed. Seeing

the critical condition of the young man and the woman, some people called 112 and called the

ambulance personnel admitted both to the district hospital, where both of them died during treat-



Both lovers in the police station at the scene

ambulance. The ambulance worker, who reached the spot, asked the young man and the girl who was suffering from his names. Both the young man Mahendra and the girl Nisha told the residents of Shahjahanpur. Both ran away from the house about ten days ago. His family had given a complaint to the police. The

ment. GRP and RPFJila reached the hospital on information. The GRP informed the highway police, saying that it was in the highway police station area. The same highway refused to take action, asking that they do not have their area. In such a situation, both the bodies remained on the hospital bed for about 1 hour. After

this, GRP police station in-charge Yadram has informed SP City about the case. It is said that 18-year-old Munendra son Ram Prakash Rathore, resident of Chidpuri Kalan Shahjahanpur, and 17-year-old Nisha daughter Munet, Munet. On the instructions of SP City, Panchnama proceedings were being implemented by Sarvesh Kumar, Panna Pokhar outpost in-charge of Highway police station. The families of both the deceased have been informed about the incident. According to police, both boys and girls are minors. Both were missing from home 9 days ago. The matter is said to be related to love affair. Police say that the families of both the deceased are waiting for the arrival, only then the matter can be reached

Centre for Joint Warfare Studies Hosts Defence Literature Festival 'Kalam & Kavach 2.0' in New Delhi

(Gns). The Centre for Joint Warfare Studies (CEN-JOWS), under the aegis of Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS), Ministry of Defence, in collaboration with Pentagon Press, successfully hosted the second edition of the Defence Literature Festival 'Kalam & Kavach 2.0' at Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi. This year's theme was 'Securing India's Rise through Defence Reforms'.

The event, held on April 15, 2025, focused on Defence Technology and Future Warfare, particularly in the context of defence manufacturing. It was aligned with the Prime Minister's call for 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-

reliant India) and highlighted key aspects of acquisition & procurement reforms.

The event brought together distinguished experts from the Armed Forces, strategic policymakers, industry leaders, and domain specialists to deliberate on critical issues affecting India's national security. Discussions included several cutting-edge topics including Technology & Future Warfare; the role of AI, cyber technologies, quantum computing, drones, space technology, and semiconductors in modern military operations; Defence Manufacturing & Aatmanirbharta, Acquisition & Procurement Reforms.

The event focused on

charting a strategic roadmap for its national security, diplomacy and development. It also cov-



ered the progress made on adoption of niche technologies, enhancing multi-domain and cross-domain operational capabilities to include land, air, sea, cyber

and space. The agenda also included contemporary maritime security paradigms, future challenges and the way ahead to further the combat capability.

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh declared 2025 as the 'Year of Reforms,' marking a transformational year aimed at converting the Armed Forces into a technologically-advanced, combat-ready force. This vision underscores the nation's commitment to multi-domain, integrated operations and emphasises a mission-mode approach to defence reforms, facilitating technology transfer, and improving public-private partnerships.

Commission committed to preserving the rights of women: Dr. Babita Singh Chauhan

Mathura. Chairman of

Uttar Pradesh State Women's Commission, DrA women's public hearing / review meeting was held under the chairmanship of Babita Singh Chauhan in the inspection building auditorium of the Public Works Department. In the meeting, the Assistant Labor Commissioner instructed to constitute a committee for the complaints of women under the Lever Act and ensure that women who are working in different classes to take action on the complaints received from there. Instructed ADIOS that women employees should be put in duty in women toilets of private schools / colleges and there should be toilets in school / colleges as per the standard.

The President directed the officers to settle women harassment cases/complaints on priority basis. No female complainant should

be unnecessary, it should be ensured.

After the meeting, Chairman Dr. Babita Singh Chauhan heard the com-

Magistrate Administration, District Probation, District Organization, ADIOS etc. were instructed to take prompt action after taking



Hearing the complaints of women complainants, Dr. Babita Singh Chauhan, President of Uttar Pradesh State Women's Commission

plaints of women complainants who came to the women's public hearing. Most of the complaints were received of domestic violence, in which more and more complaints are already under consideration in various courts. Police, Additional District

cognizance of the remaining complaints except in cases under consideration. It is our responsibility to provide justice to mothers, daughters -in-law, daughters and sisters and the government is also committed to this. During the women's public hearing,

Refinery made a salute to the constitution maker Dr. Ambedkar, school bags and stationery distributed to needy children

Mathura. The refinery celebrated Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar's 134th birth anniversary with reverence and honor. Mukul Aggarwal, Executive Director and Refinery Head of Mathura Refinery, started the program by garlanding the picture of the constitution maker Baba Saheb at a grand event held at the Employees Club in Refinery Nagar. During the program, hundreds of surrounding schools, refinery senior officers and employees, officers and employees union officials were also located.

Mukul Aggarwal said



Refinery chief Mukul Aggarwal with needy children

that under the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar, India got a strong constitution which

not only gave us rights but also defined our duties. He said that Baba Saheb was

a scholar who contributed to eradicating many things from the country and dedicated his life for the upliftment of the needy and women. His life is an example and all of us should take inspiration from his life. Taking important steps towards social welfare on the occasion of Ambedkar Jayanti, the Mathura Refinery distributed school bags and stationery materials to 270 needy children and wished them a bright future. The program was led by SC / ST Employees Welfare Association (Service) of the refinery

MoU to Enhance Gig and Logistics Employment Opportunities on NCS and Create Over 12 Lakh Job Opportunities in 2-3 years

(Gns). Ministry of Labour & Employment and Swiggy signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in New Delhi today, marking a significant step toward strengthening employment linkages in the gig and logistics sector through the National Career Service (NCS) portal. The MoU was signed in the presence of Union Minister of Labour & Employment, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya and Union Minister of State for Labour & Employment, Sushri Shobha Karandlaje.

In his address, Dr. Mandaviya stated, "The National Career Service portal is a dynamic platform connecting job seekers and employers across India. With over 1.25 crore active job seekers and 40 lakh registered employers as of January 31, 2025, it is playing a crucial role in workforce mobilization. This partnership with Swiggy will further extend the portal's reach into the fast-growing gig and platform economy, enabling access to flexible and location-based opportu-



Ministry of Labour & Employment signs MoU with Swiggy in Presence of Union Ministers Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya and Sushri Shobha Karandlaje

nities for millions of youth."

Dr. Mandaviya welcomed the collaboration and appreciated Swiggy's commitment to potentially mobilize over 12 lakh job opportunities in the next 2-3 years through the NCS portal. "This collaboration represents a win-win model, while Swiggy will gain access to a diverse, skilled, and job-ready talent pool, lakhs of job seekers across the country will benefit from enhanced visibility and access to employment

opportunities," Union Minister said.

Highlighting the platform's accessibility and reach, Union Minister reiterated the government's vision of making NCS a one-stop solution for employment, skilling, and counselling, and at the same time capable of hyperlocal job matching and supporting both domestic and international placements.

Under this MoU, Swiggy will integrate its gig opportu-

nities—including delivery, logistics, and support roles—onto the NCS portal. This real-time integration will enhance visibility of gig jobs for NCS users, who will benefit from timely and verified work opportunities across urban and semi-urban areas.

Mr. Dinker Vashisht, Chief of Corporate Affairs, Swiggy, welcomed the collaboration and emphasized the importance of partnerships between Gig platform and government platforms to scale employment. "Swiggy's journey showcases how digital entrepreneurship can transform livelihoods. This MoU will empower job seekers and align with our commitment to inclusive growth in the new-age economy."

It is one of the steps, in the series of signing MoUs with the private employers/portals, other leading employment/ Gig platforms etc. to bridge the gap between jobseekers and private sector employment, enabling a holistic approach to public-private coordination in job facilitation.