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Modi meets Putin in Tianjin, calls for expedited ceasefire in Ukraine

Vighnesh P. Venkitesh

TIANJIN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi met with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday and stressed the need to expedite a ceasefire in Ukraine.

Meeting after the heads of states summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in Tianjin, the two leaders reaffirmed their support for strengthening the “special and privileged strategic partnership” between the two countries, the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement, adding that Mr. Modi told Mr. Putin that he was looking forward to receiving the leader for the 23rd India-Russia annual summit later this year.

Both leaders travelled together to the venue of the bilateral meeting after Monday morning’s summit. Russian state media reported that the leaders spoke one-on-one for almost an hour in the vehicle before sitting down for the meeting.

“Had an excellent meeting with President Putin... Discussed ways to deepen bilateral cooperation in all sectors,” Mr. Modi said in a social media post after the meeting, adding that the leaders “exchanged views on regional and global de-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin leave together in a car for the venue of their bilateral meeting after attending the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit in Tianjin. AFP

velopments, including the peaceful resolution of the conflict in Ukraine”.

At the meeting, Mr. Putin hailed Moscow’s ties with New Delhi as special, friendly, and trusting.

“Russia and India have maintained special relations for decades... this is the foundation for the development of our relations in the future,” Mr. Putin said.

On Ukraine, Mr. Putin said the eastward expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) should be addressed for sustainable peace in the region. “This crisis wasn’t triggered by Russia’s attack on Ukraine, but was a result of a coup in Ukraine, which was sup-

ported and provoked by the West,” Mr. Putin said in his address to the member states of the grouping.

“The second reason for the crisis is the West’s constant attempts to drag Ukraine into NATO,” he added.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy had spoken to Mr. Modi over the phone on Friday and urged the Prime Minister to “deliver an appropriate signal” to Russia. Mr. Modi’s call for accelerated efforts for a ceasefire comes days after U.S. President Donald Trump, who hosted Mr. Putin in Alaska, dropped his demand for a ceasefire, saying that Kyiv should make a deal to end the war.

The meeting came against the backdrop of the U.S.’s 25% penalty on Indian goods imposed on top of 25% tariffs over India’s oil trade with Russia. However, the statement issued by the Ministry after the meeting mentioned bilateral cooperation while refraining from any mention of oil trade or U.S. tariffs. “The leaders discussed bilateral cooperation, including economic, financial, and energy sectors,” and “expressed satisfaction with the sustained growth” in relations in these areas, the Ministry said.

(The writer is in China at an invitation from the China Public Diplomacy Association)

PM Modi meets Putin; Calls for Ceasefire in Ukraine

English: PM Modi met Russian President Putin in Tianjin, emphasizing a ceasefire in Ukraine and deeper bilateral cooperation. They discussed global and regional issues.

Hindi: प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने तियानजिन में रूसी राष्ट्रपति पुतिन से मुलाकात की। उन्होंने यूक्रेन में युद्धविराम की ज़रूरत और द्विपक्षीय सहयोग को मज़बूत करने पर ज़ोर दिया। दोनों नेताओं ने क्षेत्रीय और वैश्विक मुद्दों पर चर्चा की।

SCO heads condemn Pahalgalam terrorist attack

Declaration signed and adopted by all members; it called for an end to the 'cross-border movement' of terrorists

They expressed their opposition to 'unilateral coercive measures, including those of an economic nature'

India joined nations in the grouping to condemn the strikes by Israel and the U.S. against Iran, a member state, in June

Vighnesh P. Venkitesh
TIANJIN

The 10-member Shanghai Cooperation Organisation on Monday "strongly condemned" terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including the Pahalgalam attack and the attacks on Jaffer Express and Khuzdar in Pakistan.

The Tianjin Declaration, signed and adopted by all members, including India, Pakistan, and Russia, called for an end to "cross-border movement" of terrorists. The declaration reaffirmed the bloc's "firm commitment to fight against terrorism, separatism, and extremism", and stressed the inadmissibility of attempts to use terrorist, separatist, and extremist groups for "mercenary purposes".

The member states also opposed "unilateral coercive measures, including those of an economic nature", that contravene the United Nations charter and principles of the World Trade Organization, in a possible reference to the

U.S. tariffs.

Chinese President Xi Jinping, who chaired the meeting of the heads of the member states, in his opening remarks, criticised the "bullying behaviour" in the world order and called upon leaders to "adhere to fairness and justice" while opposing "cold war mentality".

"The shadows of Cold War mentality, bullying, are not dissipating, and there are new challenges that are increasing, not diminishing," said Mr. Xi, who has often used the term "cold war mentality" to refer to the uncertainties over the U.S. tariffs.

'SCO plus' meeting

The declaration at the summit, which focused on strengthening the Global South amid global uncertainties in trade and a "fluid and chaotic global situation", opened by stating that the world was undergoing "profound historical changes that affect all spheres of political, socio-economic, and social relations".

Mr. Xi, who chaired the

Oppose terrorism: PM at SCO summit

TIANJIN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked whether "open support" of terrorism by some countries was acceptable, as he spoke at the summit meet of the heads of state of the SCO on Monday. Addressing the meeting chaired by Chinese President Xi Jinping, Mr. Modi said the "S" in SCO should also stand for security, and mentioned the April 22 Pahalgalam terror attack that killed 26 civilians. "We must jointly oppose terrorism in all its forms and colours. This is our duty towards humanity," he said. » PAGE 5

'SCO plus' meeting on Monday afternoon, proposed a Global Governance Initiative (GGI), calling on countries to work in concert for a more just and equitable global governance system adhering to sovereign equality, abiding by international rule of law, practicing multilateralism, advocating the people-centered approach,



Power point: Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin in Tianjin on Monday. ANI

and focusing on taking real actions.

China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi, briefing the press on Monday night, said the SCO encourages all countries to utilise UN mechanisms and multilateral ideals and that global governance should not be attained by unilateral bullying. He also said that Pakistan and Armenia had announced de-

velopment of diplomatic relationship at the summit.

Announcing that the grouping has decided to merge the statuses given to non-member countries – dialogue partner and observer – to a single partner status, Mr. Wang said that Laos has been accepted as a partner country of the SCO, taking the total strength of the grouping to

27 with 10 members and 17 partners.

Secretary-General of the SCO, Nurlan Yermekbayev, said at the briefing that an agreement was made at the summit to establish an SCO development bank, a long-term ambition of Beijing.

Taking note of Israel's ongoing war on Gaza and the catastrophic humani-

Modi touts peace as he meets Putin

TIANJIN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday and stressed the need for a ceasefire in Ukraine. Russian state media reported that the leaders spoke for almost an hour in the vehicle before sitting down for the meeting. "Had an excellent meeting with President Putin... Discussed ways to deepen bilateral cooperation in all sectors," he said in a social media post, adding that the leaders "exchanged views on regional and global developments". » PAGE 5

tarian situation engulfing the Gaza Strip, all the member states expressed "deep concern" and strongly condemned "actions that have led to numerous casualties among the civilian population" in the enclave.

India also joined the fellow members of the grouping to strongly condemn the strikes by Israel and the

U.S. against Iran, a member state, in June that targeted Tehran's nuclear facilities.

The declaration also took note of the political situation in Afghanistan. The members reiterated that the formation of an "inclusive government with broad participation of representatives of all ethno-political groups" of the society is the only way to achieve lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan. All the member states, except India, also reaffirmed their support for China's Belt and Road Initiative.

Mr. Xi, in his opening remarks, pledged to provide ¥2 billion in grants to member countries within this year, and an additional ¥10 billion in loan to member banks of the SCO Interbank Consortium over the next three years. He also said that the group should set up an "SCO development bank" as soon as possible.

(The writer is in China at an invitation from the China Public Diplomacy Association.)

(With inputs from Suhaini Haider)

SCO Summit: Modi Calls to Oppose Terrorism

English: At the SCO summit, Modi said open support of terrorism by some countries is unacceptable. The Tianjin Declaration condemned terrorism, mentioned the Pahalgalam attack, and called for ending cross-border terrorism. SCO also discussed Gaza, Afghanistan, and China's Belt and Road Initiative.

Hindi: एससीओ शिखर सम्मेलन में प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने कहा कि कुछ देशों द्वारा खुलेआम आतंकवाद का समर्थन अस्वीकार्य है।

तिआनजिन घोषणा में आतंकवाद की निंदा की गई और सीमा-पार आतंकवाद पर रोक की बात हुई। गाज़ा, अफगानिस्तान और चीन की बेल्ट एंड रोड पहल पर भी चर्चा हुई।

Earthquake kills over 800 and injures at least 2,800 in Afghanistan; rescue efforts under way

Agence France-Presse
NURGAL

A strong earthquake and multiple aftershocks collapsed homes onto sleeping families in a remote, mountainous region in Afghanistan on Monday, killing more than 800 people and injuring at least 2,800.

A massive rescue operation is underway, according to the Taliban authorities. The 6.0-magnitude earthquake struck just before midnight, rattling buildings from Kabul to neighbouring Pakistan's capital, Islamabad. The epicentre was about 27 km off Jalalabad, the U.S. Geological Survey said.

Destruction swept across at least five provinces and rescuers were still pulling people from destroyed homes and evacuating the injured by helicopter as evening approached.

"The search operation is still going on. Many people are stuck under the rubble of their roofs," the disaster management head in eastern Kunar province, Ehsanullah Ehsan, told AFP, warning the death toll could rise.

Around 800 people were killed and 2,500 injured in Kunar alone, near the epicentre, Taliban government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said.

Another 12 people were killed and 255 injured in neighbouring Nangarhar province, while 58 people were injured in Laghman province.

In Wadir village in Kunar's Nurgal district, dozens of residents of the surrounding area helped



Devastating disaster: Civil defence workers, local people, and soldiers helping the injured in earthquake-hit Afghanistan. AP

rounding area helped rescuers to pull people from the rubble of flattened homes, sometimes with their bare hands. Many injured were transported to hospitals in Jalalabad city in Nangarhar province.

'Fear and tension'

Relatively shallow quakes can cause more damage, especially since the majority of Afghans live in low-rise, mud-brick homes vulnerable to collapse.

Some of the most severely impacted villages in Kunar "remain inaccessible due to road blockages", the UN migration agency

warned in a statement to AFP.

Roads remained blocked nearly 20 hours after the earthquake, despite resident efforts to clear the way.

"There is a lot of fear and tension... Children and women were screaming. We had never experienced anything like this in our lives," a member of the agricultural department in Nurgal Ijaz Ulhaq Yaad said.

He added that many living in quake-hit villages were among the more than four million Afghans who have returned to the country from Iran and Pakistan

in recent years. "They wanted to build their homes here."

Nangarhar and Kunar provinces border Pakistan, with the Torkham crossing the site of many waves of Afghan returnees deported or forced to leave, often with no work and nowhere to go.

Pope expresses grief

UN chief Antonio Guterres added his condolences to those shared by the Taliban government and several nations. "I stand in full solidarity with the people of Afghanistan after the devastating earthquake that hit the country earlier to-

day," he said.

In a post shared by the Vatican, Pope Leo XIV said he was "deeply saddened by the significant loss of life caused by the earthquake in the area of eastern Afghanistan".

Afghanistan is frequently hit by earthquakes, especially in the Hindu Kush mountain range, near the junction of the Eurasia and India tectonic plates.

Since 1900, there have been 12 earthquakes with magnitudes greater than seven in northeast Afghanistan, according to Brian Baptie, a seismologist at the British Geological Survey.

Earthquake in Afghanistan Kills 800+

English: A 6.0 magnitude earthquake struck eastern Afghanistan, killing over 800 and injuring 2,800. Many villages destroyed, rescue ops ongoing. India extended humanitarian aid.

Hindi: अफ़ग़ानिस्तान के पूर्वी हिस्से में 6.0 तीव्रता का भूकंप आया, जिसमें 800 से अधिक लोग मारे गए और 2,800 घायल हुए। कई गाँव तबाह हो गए। भारत ने मानवीय सहायता भेजी।

India extends assistance to earthquake-hit Afghanistan

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

India on Monday started sending relief material for the earthquake-affected people of Afghanistan.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled the loss of lives and said India would provide "all possible humanitarian aid" to Afghanistan. "Our thoughts and prayers are with the bereaved families in this difficult hour, and we wish a speedy recovery to the injured," Mr. Modi said in a message.

Earlier, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar spoke with the 'Foreign Minister' of Taliban administration, Amir Khan Muttaqi. "Conveyed that India has delivered 1,000 family tents today in Kabul. 15 tonnes of food material is also being immediately moved by Indian Mission from Kabul to Kunar. Further relief material will be sent from India starting tomorrow," he said.

India Offers Humanitarian Aid to Afghanistan

English: PM Modi assured full support after Afghanistan quake. India sent 1,000 tents, 15 tonnes of food, and more aid. EAM Jaishankar spoke to Taliban's FM Amir Khan Muttaqi.

Hindi: अफगानिस्तान भूकंप के बाद भारत ने सहायता भेजी। 1,000 टेंट और 15 टन खाद्य सामग्री काबुल और कुनार पहुंचाई गई। विदेश मंत्री जयशंकर ने तालिबान विदेश मंत्री से बातचीत की।

India has offered to reduce tariffs to zero, but it is getting late, says Donald Trump

Sriram Lakshman

U.S. President Donald Trump claimed on Monday that India had offered to reduce tariffs to zero, suggesting the alleged offer had come very late, as he described the India-U.S. relationship as a "one-sided disaster".

Mr. Trump's post on Truth Social, a social media site, came hours after Prime Minister Narendra Modi met with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the fringes of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Tianjin, China.

"They [India] have now offered to cut their Tariffs to nothing, but it's getting late. They should have done so years ago," Mr. Trump wrote.



Donald Trump

"Until now a totally one sided relationship, and it has been for many decades. The reason is that India has charged us, until now, such high Tariffs, the most of any country, that our businesses are unable to sell into India. It has been a totally one sided disaster," he wrote.

Mr. Trump also said that India bought most of its oil and military equipment from Russia, and very little

from the U.S. Mr. Trump and Mr. Modi's apparent bonhomie – evident in the first Trump administration – has unravelled in recent weeks, over an extraordinary 50% default tariff rate applied to Indian exports to the U.S. and the inability of India and the U.S. to reach a trade deal. The tariff includes a 25% levy applied to India for its arms and energy trade with Russia.

Just earlier in the day, the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi had portrayed the U.S.-India relationship in optimistic terms. In a post on X, the Embassy had said that the relationship continued to "reach new heights". It quoted U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio praising the people-to-people ties as crucial to

taking the India-U.S. relationship forward.

'Brahmins profiteering'

White House adviser Peter Navarro told *Fox News* in a Sunday interview that India was a "laundromat for the Kremlin".

"Modi is a great leader. I don't understand why he's getting to bed with Putin and [Chinese President] Xi Jinping when he's [sic] the biggest democracy in the world," Mr. Navarro said.

"So I would just simply say, the Indian people, please understand what's going on here. You got Brahmins profiteering at the expense of the Indian people," he added. It is unclear whether Mr. Navarro was using the term "Brahmins" literally or as a reference to elites.

India-U.S. Trade Tensions – Trump Says India Offered Tariff Cuts

English: U.S. President Donald Trump said India offered to cut tariffs to zero, but "too late." He accused India of high tariffs and being dependent on Russia for oil and arms.

Hindi: अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रंप ने कहा कि भारत ने शुल्क घटाकर शून्य करने का प्रस्ताव दिया, लेकिन बहुत देर से। उन्होंने भारत पर ऊँचे शुल्क लगाने और रूस पर तेल व हथियारों के लिए निर्भर रहने का आरोप लगाया।

Real consequences of Trump tariff shock will be felt in second quarter: Congress

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Questioning the “irrational exuberance” over the GDP numbers for April-June 2025, the Congress on Monday said the impact of Trump tariff shocks simply is not reflected in the current figures as their real consequences will begin to be felt in the second quarter.

According to the latest government data released last week, India’s economy grew by 7.8% in April-June, stronger-than-expected and the fastest pace in five quarters, before U.S. President Donald Trump imposed tariffs.

Congress general secretary in charge of communications Jairam Ramesh said the front-loading of ex-



Jairam Ramesh

ports to the U.S. by exporters attempting to escape tariffs has actually boosted export growth and therefore the headline GDP number.

“The Trump tariff shock is simply not reflected in the first quarter of this financial year – in fact, the front-loading of exports to the U.S. by exporters attempting to escape tariffs has actually boosted export growth and therefore

the headline GDP number,” Mr. Ramesh said in a post on X.

The real consequence of the tariffs will begin to be felt in the second quarter for sure, the Congress leader said. “The GDP numbers for the period April-June 2025 have led to irrational exuberance. They do present some contradictions that have been highlighted by a respected bank report and that cannot be brushed aside,” he said in his post.

Urban consumption is still “considerably weak” and rural consumption still faces structural constraints, the Congress leader said, adding that “the nominal GDP growth rate, that is, without adjusting for inflation, is still subdued and is, in fact, mark-

edly lower than in the January-March 2025 quarter”.

“Consumption, investment and trade are the determinants of GDP growth. But mysteriously a full 1.8 percentage points of the quarterly growth rate is NOT accounted for by these three determinants. This discrepancy is very substantial and needs to be explained,” he said, adding that sales growth in the manufacturing sector, as opposed to profits growth, has continued to slow down. On Friday, the government released the latest data showing that GDP growth in the first quarter was mainly driven by strong performance in the farm sector as well as in services sector like trade, hotel, finance, and real estate.

Congress Questions GDP Data Amid Trump Tariff Shock

English: Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said India’s Q1 2025 GDP growth (7.8%) hides real impact of Trump tariffs. He warned consequences will show in Q2.

Hindi: कांग्रेस नेता जयराम रमेश ने कहा कि अप्रैल-जून 2025 की 7.8% जीडीपी वृद्धि दर ट्रंप शुल्क के वास्तविक असर को नहीं दर्शाती। उन्होंने चेताया कि असली असर दूसरी तिमाही में दिखेगा।

ISRO seeks proposals from scientific community to study Chandrayaan-3 data

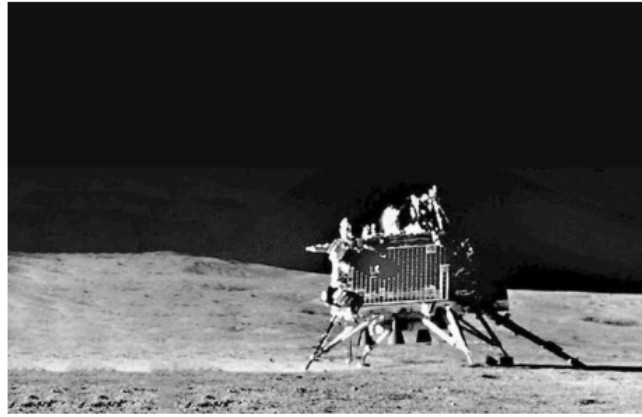
The Hindu Bureau

BENGALURU

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on Monday issued an Announcement of Opportunity (AO) for scientific analysis and utilisation of data from all experiments of Chandrayaan-3 lander and rover.

The Chandrayaan-3 mission achieved historic soft-landing in the southern high latitudes of the moon on August 23, 2023, making India the first nation to touch down on the polar region of the moon.

“To enhance the science outcome of the Chandrayaan-3 mission, ISRO seeks proposals from the



Lunar lessons: The opportunity will allow researchers to analyse data from the Chandrayaan-3 lander and rover. ISRO/ANI

national scientific community (outside ISRO/Department of Space) through this AO, towards scientific analysis and utilisation of data from all experiments of Chan-

drayaan-3 lander and rover,” the ISRO said.

The AO is open to all faculty and researchers from recognised academia, research institutions, universities, colleges and govern-

ment organisations of India.

“Only those having a minimum remaining service of four years before superannuation are eligible to lead the project as Principal Investigator (PI). There could be multiple Co-PIs in the proposal, however, PI will be the focal point for all communications related to the proposal. The proposals must be forwarded through the head of the institutions, with appropriate assurance for providing,” the ISRO said.

The deadline for submission of proposals is October 21, 2025. The space agency said that the project shall be completed within three years.

ISRO Seeks Proposals for Chandrayaan-3 Data Analysis

English: ISRO invited proposals from Indian researchers to study Chandrayaan-3 lander and rover data. Deadline: Oct 21, 2025. Projects must finish in 3 years.

Hindi: इसरो ने भारतीय शोधकर्ताओं से चंद्रयान-3 लैंडर और रोवर के आंकड़ों पर अध्ययन के प्रस्ताव मांगे हैं। अंतिम तिथि: 21 अक्टूबर 2025। परियोजना 3 साल में पूरी करनी होगी।

SC refuses to entertain plea against roll-out of 20% ethanol-blended petrol nationwide

Aaratrika Bhaumik
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed a petition challenging the nationwide roll-out of 20% ethanol-blended petrol (E20) which alleged that millions of motorists were being compelled to use fuel unsuited to their vehicles without the option of getting ethanol-free petrol.

A Bench of Chief Justice of India (CJI) B.R. Gavai and Justice K. Vinod Chandran refused to entertain the petition after the Union government defended the ethanol-blending programme as a measure to bolster the income of sugar cane farmers and conserve foreign exchange.

Senior advocate Shadan Farasat, appearing for petitioner Akshay Malhotra, cited NITI Aayog's 2021 report "Roadmap for ethanol blending in India 2020-25", which noted that blending ethanol up to 20% could cut fuel efficiency by 6-7% in four-wheelers



The petition says the policy violates fundamental rights of vehicle owners whose automobiles are incompatible with E20. FILE PHOTO

and 3-4% in two-wheelers. He clarified that the petitioner was not opposing ethanol blending as a policy, but only sought the continued availability of ethanol-free petrol for vehicles manufactured before April 2023, which are not compatible with E20 fuel.

Attorney-General R. Venkataramani, representing the Centre, questioned the bona fides of the plea, alleging that the petitioner was merely a "name-lender" and that the challenge reflected the interests of a

larger lobby intent on obstructing India's clean fuel transition.

"The policy benefits our sugar cane farmers and saves precious foreign exchange. Will people outside the country dictate what kind of fuel India should use?" the Attorney-General remarked during the hearing. "Dismissed," the Bench said, after a brief exchange, declining to interfere with the government's policy.

E20 fuel has been gradually introduced since

2023, replacing earlier blends such as E5 and E10, which were regarded as more compatible with older vehicles. These alternatives have now been phased out from almost all of the country's 90,000 fuel stations. The ethanol-blending programme is central to India's strategy to lower carbon emissions and reduce dependence on crude oil imports.

Last month, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas endorsed the use of E20, claiming it offers "better acceleration and improved ride quality" in addition to supporting the livelihoods of farmers.

Officials further clarified that the validity of vehicle insurance policies remains unaffected by the use of E20.

'Consumer choice'

The petition contended that the policy violated the fundamental rights of vehicle owners whose automobiles are incompatible with E20, as it left them with no

option to purchase ethanol-free petrol. It further argued that the absence of public awareness and proper labelling of fuel pumps breached the right to informed consumer choice under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

"It is also relevant to mention that as the vehicles are not compatible with ethanol-blended petrol, which will result in damage to the said vehicles, the claim raised in this regard will not be covered by the manufacturers or the insurance companies, as the consumers have violated the terms specified by the manufacturers/insurance companies," the petition said.

It sought directions to the authorities to mandate ethanol labelling at all petrol pumps and dispensing units, and to conduct a "nationwide impact study on mechanical degradation and efficiency loss due to ethanol blended fuel to the extent of 20% usage in non-compliant vehicles."

Supreme Court Upholds E20 Ethanol Fuel Rollout

English: SC dismissed a plea against nationwide rollout of 20% ethanol-blended petrol (E20). Court said it supports clean fuel, farmers' income, and forex savings.

Hindi: सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने 20% एथेनॉल-मिश्रित पेट्रोल (E20) के देशव्यापी प्रयोग के खिलाफ याचिका खारिज की। अदालत ने कहा कि यह स्वच्छ ईंधन, किसानों की आय और विदेशी मुद्रा बचत में सहायक है।

Will accept claims on SIR until last day of nominations: EC

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

Even as the deadline for filing claims and objections to the draft electoral rolls of Bihar ended on Monday, the Election Commission said that as per the June 24 special intensive revision (SIR) order, applications would still be accepted till the last date of nominations before the Assembly election.

However, these claims, if accepted, would not make it to the final list to be out on September 30, but would be addressed as separate additions later.

Earlier, in the Supreme Court, which heard pleas for extending the deadline to file claims and objections in the SIR process, the EC submitted it would accept revision forms even after the deadline, and these would be integrated into the final list.

The court had already asked the poll authority to accept Aadhaar or any of the 11 listed documents from those seeking inclusion in the voter list.

A senior EC official told *The Hindu* that Para 12(a) (ii) of SIR provided for any inclusion or deletion till the last date of nomination.

According to the EC data released on Monday, nearly 37,000 applications have been filed for re-inclusion of names and 2,17,000 for exclusion. A total of 16,56,886 new voters, who have attained 18 years, have applied for registra-

According to the EC data released on Monday, nearly 37,000 applications have been filed for re-inclusion of name

tion. The poll panel has said 99.5% of the 7.24 crore electors in the draft electoral rolls have filed the eligibility documents.

Around 7.24 crore people have been included in the draft rolls published on August 1 – 65 lakh less than those in the earlier July 2025 list. Most claims and objections filed by political parties, the EC said, were for exclusion, not inclusion, of names from the rolls.

The poll panel has since last week began issuing notices to those electors whose documents were incomplete, and around 3 lakh such documents have already been issued.

As per the SIR order, the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) has powers to scrutinise all claims and conduct a *suo motu* inquiry as well as issue notice to any elector. In case the person is excluded from the list, the ERO will issue a “speaking order” stating the reasons for the same.

A speaking order is one where the authority explicitly states the reasons behind its decision, linking it to the evidence, facts, and applicable laws. This ensures that the decision is not arbitrary and reflects sound reasoning.

EC Allows Claims till Last Day of Nominations in Bihar

English: Election Commission said claims and objections to draft rolls in Bihar will be accepted till last day of nomination, though they won't reflect in final rolls (Sept 30). Nearly 16.5 lakh new voters applied.

Hindi: चुनाव आयोग ने कहा कि बिहार की मतदाता सूची में दावे और आपत्तियाँ नामांकन की अंतिम तिथि तक स्वीकार किए जाएंगे, पर ये 30 सितंबर को जारी अंतिम सूची में शामिल नहीं होंगे। 16.5 लाख नए मतदाताओं ने आवेदन किया है।

SC issues notice over 'denial' of Samagra Shiksha funds to T.N.

Krishnadas Rajagopal

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court decided to step in after Tamil Nadu complained on Monday about having to bear over ₹3,000 crore in reimbursements to private schools for admissions to economically disadvantaged students under the Right to Education (RTE) Act, after the Centre refused to part with its share under the Samagra Shiksha scheme.

A Bench headed by Justice Vikram Nath issued formal notice to the Centre on an appeal by the State against a Madras High Court decision of June 10, which delinked the reimbursements under the RTE Act from the Centre's financial obligations to Tamil Nadu under the scheme. The 2009 Act requires private school managements to admit children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds to the extent of 25% of their strength in entry-level classes free of charge. The State is obliged to reimburse the schools.

Doubts raised

The Centre had argued in the High Court that "there are issues regarding disbursement of funds" under the Samagra Shiksha scheme as Tamil Nadu had refused to implement the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020). The State had raised doubts about the three-language policy of NEP 2020 with a premium on Hindi, viewing it as a challenge to regional linguistic diversity.

Appearing for Tamil Nadu, senior advocate P. Wilson submitted that the Centre and State had concurrent responsibility to fund the education of poor and disadvantaged children under Section 7 of the RTE Act, 2009.

"The Madras High Court erred in ruling that only the State is primarily responsible for these expenditures. The Madras High Court had directed the State to bear the entire financial responsibility for the 2025-2026 academic year. It should have also directed the Central government to contribute," Mr. Wilson argued.

Arbitrary move

He said that the Centre's insistence on linking fund disbursement under Samagra Shiksha scheme to comply with NEP guidelines was arbitrary. The Bench ordered the Centre to respond to the State's petition in four weeks.

"It is common knowledge that the Central government has been propagating its political agendas through the Samagra Shiksha scheme. A disagreement in political ideology cannot become an obstacle for a State government from implementing the provisions of the Samagra Shiksha scheme and the RTE Act. Unless both the Central and the State governments work in unison, the provisions of the RTE Act and Samagra Shiksha Scheme cannot be implemented in their full spirit," the Tamil Nadu petition said.

SC Issues Notice on RTE Reimbursements in Tamil Nadu

English: SC issued notice to Centre after TN said it bore ₹3,000+ crore reimbursement to private schools under RTE Act as Centre denied funds under Samagra Shiksha.

Hindi: सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने केंद्र को नोटिस जारी किया। तमिलनाडु ने कहा कि उसे आरटीई अधिनियम के तहत निजी स्कूलों को ₹3,000 करोड़ से अधिक की प्रतिपूर्ति करनी पड़ी क्योंकि केंद्र ने 'समग्र शिक्षा' योजना के तहत फंड देने से इनकार किया।

Immigration bureau set to check fraud, deport foreigners

Vijaita Singh

NEW DELHI

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Monday notified the Rules to govern the Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025, legally designating the Bureau of Immigration (BOI) to “examine cases of immigration fraud” and coordinate with the States to identify, deport or restrict the movement of foreigners, and collate and maintain immigration database.

Though the BOI earlier also performed similar functions, its role was regulatory and not codified in law.

The Rules, for the first time, insert the legal provision for recording the biometric information of all foreigners, earlier restricted to a few visa categories and enforceable through executive orders of the MHA.

As per the Immigration and Foreigners Rules, 2025, educational institutes will have to inform the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO), which works under the BOI, about all foreign students and even provide semester-wise “academic

Earlier, the bureau performed similar functions but its role was regulatory, not codified in law

performance” summary, including attendance details and “general conduct” report of such students.

Under the Rules, the “civil authority” may direct the shutting down of any premise such as a resort, club or an entertainment place if the place is frequented by foreigners who are “undesirable”, involved in crime, members of an unlawful association or illegal migrants. The place can also be closed if “the premises are conducted in a disorderly or improper manner, or in a manner prejudicial to the public good”. Owners cannot open new premises without the approval of the civil authority.

Airlines and sea-carriers will have to submit all details of passengers and crew to the BOI within 15 minutes of departure. The Rules define the role of an “immigration officer” who shall be officers provided by the Intelligence Bureau.

Immigration Bureau Gets Legal Authority

English: MHA notified *Immigration & Foreigners Rules 2025*. BOI now has legal powers to track fraud, deport foreigners, collect biometrics, monitor students' records, and regulate premises visited by foreigners.

Hindi: गृह मंत्रालय ने *इमिग्रेशन एवं विदेशी नियम 2025* अधिसूचित किए। अब बीओआई को धोखाधड़ी की जाँच, विदेशियों को निर्वासित करने, बायोमेट्रिक लेने, विदेशी छात्रों के रिकॉर्ड रखने और विदेशी आवागमन वाले प्रतिष्ठानों को नियंत्रित करने का कानूनी अधिकार है।