

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Witnessing Betrayal Of Indian Farmers In Name Of US Trade Deal: Rahul Gandhi

NEW DELHI, FEB 15: Upping the ante against the government over the India-US interim trade deal, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday posed a string of questions to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and alleged that "we are witnessing a betrayal" of Indian farmers.

Gandhi, who has been attacking the government and accusing it of a sell-out through the deal, said this issue concerns the future and asked whether India is allowing another country to gain a long-term hold over India's agriculture industry.

"In the name of a US trade deal, we are witnessing a betrayal of Indian farmers," the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha said in his post in Hindi on X.

Posing questions to the prime minister, Gandhi asked what it means to import Dried Distillers' Grains (DDG). "Does it mean that Indian cattle will be fed distillers' grains made from GM American corn? Won't this effectively make our milk products dependent on the US agricultural industry?" he questioned.

He also asked, "What does it mean to remove 'non-trade

Nehru's message to Cong MPs during 1954 LS Speaker removal debate: 'Not bound by whip'

NEW DELHI, FEB 15: India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru's message to Congress MPs during the debate in 1954 on the Opposition's resolution to remove then Speaker G V Mavalankar was that they are not bound by any whip or direction, as he urged all legislators to consider the matter "regardless of party affiliations".

He had urged Lok Sabha MPs to look at the issue not through the lens of the party but as a matter concerning the dignity of the House.

With the spotlight on the Opposition's notice to move a resolution for the removal of Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, the three occasions when such situations had arisen in the past are also in focus.

The first such situation surfaced on December 18, 1954, when the Opposition moved a resolution for the removal of then Speaker Mavalankar. It was admitted after over 50 members stood up in support, and a debate took place over it.

Nehru had also urged the chair to give more time to the Opposition in the debate.

It was a fiery debate during which the Opposition, though weak in numbers, tore into Nehru and accused the speaker of being partisan.

Intervening in the debate, Nehru said, "I would like to address the House, if I may, in my capacity and the high privilege of being the Leader of this House and not as a leader of the majority party. So far as this majority party is concerned, I would like to tell them that not one of them is bound by any whip or any direction: let them vote as they like. It is not a party matter. It is a matter for this House, for each individual, to consider, regardless of party affiliations." "Therefore, let us try to think of it not as a party issue but as members of this House, because this matter affects the hon. speaker, of course, but it affects the high

21 Lakh Devotees Take Holy Dip In Ganga, Sangam On Magh Mela's Last Day

PRAYAGRAJ (UP), FEB 15: On the occasion of Mahashivratri, the last bathing day of the ongoing Magh Mela, 21 lakh devotees have taken a holy dip in the Ganga and Sangam by 10 am, an official said on Sunday.

A mela authority official said that devotees have been arriving at the fair area and bathing since late Saturday night. By 10 am on Sunday, 21 lakh devotees have bathed in the Ganga



term hold on India's agriculture industry?" he stressed.

On Saturday, Gandhi accused the government of cheating cotton farmers and textile exporters in the country over the India-US interim trade deal, noting that the agreement could cause significant harm to both sectors.

He had also claimed that the trade deal, which now favours Bangladesh through zero per cent tariffs, will either finish the textile sector, the cotton farming or both, adding that the nation is aware of this.

In a post on X, Gandhi criticised the government for failing to protect the interests of cotton farmers and textile exporters. He argued that a visionary government would have negotiated a deal that safeguarded both sectors and ensured their prosperity.

"18 per cent Tariff vs 0 per cent – Let me explain how the prime minister and his cabinet are spreading confusion on this issue. And how they are cheating India's cotton farmers and textile exporters through the India-US trade deal," he had said in his post. (Agencies)

barriers? Will India be pressured in the future to loosen its stance on GM crops, weaken procurement, or reduce MSPs and bonuses?" Gandhi expressed concern that once the door is opened, it may be difficult to keep it from opening wider each year. "Will it be prevented, or will more crops gradually be put on the table each time?" Gandhi said, adding that farmers must receive this clarity. "This isn't just about today. It's about the future too — are we allowing another country to gain a long-

India A Global Centre Of Goodwill, Social Harmony: RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat



GORAKHPUR (UP), FEB 15: RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat said on Sunday that India stands as a global centre of goodwill and social harmony, asserting that the country's civilisational ethos is rooted in a sense of oneness and mutual belonging rather than transactional relationships.

Addressing a 'Samajik Sadbhav' (social harmony) meeting organised by the RSS Gorakhpur province at Baba Gambhir Nath Auditorium in Taramandal here to mark the organisation's centenary year, Bhagwat said society is defined by interconnectedness and not by self-interest.

"In many countries, relationships are seen as transactions. In our country, human relationships are based on a sense of belonging," he

said.

"India stands as a global centre of goodwill and social harmony. The country's civilisational ethos is rooted in a sense of oneness and mutual belonging rather than transactional relationships," he said.

Highlighting India's diversity, Bhagwat said differ-

ences in customs, attire and traditions do not create divisions because of the underlying cultural unity.

"We consider Bharat as our mother. The same divine consciousness resides in everyone. That bond keeps us united despite our distinct identities," he said.

He added that social har-

'Unprecedented stagnation': CISF inspectors seek due promotion on back of SC cadre review order

NEW DELHI, FEB 15: A group of over 500 CISF inspectors has petitioned the paramilitary force seeking a "fair" cadre review to ensure time-bound promotions, as they are experiencing "unprecedented" stagnation, given they receive only one post upgrade over a span of 30 to 34 years in their careers.

PTI has seen multiple communications sent by these officials to their headquarters, citing a favourable order of the Supreme Court issued on February 2, which disposed of their special leave petition (SLP) and directed that the cadre review for the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) be completed within three months.

Inspectors in the CISF are initially recruited as sub-inspectors (SIs). The next promotion level is inspector, fol-

lowed by assistant commandant (AC), which is the entry-level gazetted officer rank. Currently, there are around 3,000 inspectors and approximately 17,000 SIs in the force.

The petitioners said the stagnation was at the inspector level to the AC rank.

The inspectors stated they have been facing "extraordinary, severe, and unprecedented stagnation," with many retiring after more than three decades of "unblemished" service, having received only one promotion (to inspector).

The officials argued that this stagnation is causing them "grave prejudice, loss of morale, and a violation of their fundamental rights." When contacted, a senior CISF officer said the cadre review for the Group 'A' service officers was "ongoing," and

gazetted officer ranks, they continue to stagnate despite having entered service through the same combined SSC examination.

"It has been a long battle for us. The Supreme Court has found merit in our pleas and has found that we are stagnating in our careers due to a lack of due promotions. We hope to be treated fairly this time and hence have urged our force headquarters to do justice," said an inspec-

tor with 32 years of service. The CISF, which has approximately 2 lakh personnel, is a Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) under the Union Home Ministry, responsible for guarding vital infrastructure in sectors such as power, nuclear power, and aerospace, as well as providing counter-terrorism cover for Parliament and major civil airports. (Agencies)

5 European nations say Russian opposition leader Navalny was poisoned and blame Kremlin

LONDON, FEB 15: Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny was poisoned with a lethal toxin from the skin of dart frogs, five European countries said Saturday, blaming the Russian state for the attack.

The foreign ministries of the UK, France, Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands said analysis of samples from Navalny, who died two years ago, "have conclusively confirmed the presence of epibatidine." It is a toxin found in poison dart frogs in South America that is not found naturally in Russia, they said.

The countries said in a joint statement that "Russia had the means, motive and opportunity to administer this poison." They said they were reporting Russia to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons for a breach of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

British Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper said "Russia had Navalny as a threat. By using this form of poison the Russian state demonstrated the despicable tools it has at its disposal and the overwhelming fear it has of politi-

cal opposition." Navalny, who crusaded against official corruption and staged massive anti-Kremlin protests as President Vladimir Putin's fiercest foe, died in the Arctic penal colony in February 2024. He was serving a 19-year sentence that he believed to be politically motivated. Navalny's widow, Yulia Navalnaya, said last year that two independent labs had found that her husband was poisoned shortly before he died. Navalnaya has repeatedly blamed Putin for Navalny's death, something Russian officials have vehemently denied.

Russian authorities said that the politician became ill after a walk and died from natural causes.

In 2020, Navalny was poisoned with a nerve agent attack he blamed on the Kremlin, which always denied involvement. His family and allies fought to have him flown to Germany for treatment and recovery. Five months later, he returned to Russia, where he was immediately arrested and imprisoned for the last three years of his life. (AP)

Jaishankar reiterates India's support for UNSC reform during meeting with G7 counterparts in Germany

MUNICH, FEB 15: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar today met his counterparts from the G7 countries as he reiterated India's support for reform of the UN Security Council (UNSC) at the Munich Security Conference.

The meeting comes after India concluded a free trade agreement (FTA) with the 27-nation European Union in January.

Jaishankar in a social media post said he was pleased to engage with G7 Foreign Ministers and reiterated India's support of the UN@80 agenda, particularly meaningful reform of the UN Se-

curity Council.

The external affairs minister said he emphasised India's role in "safeguarding sea lines of communication, serving as a first responder, strengthening port security, and contributing to resilient submarine cable infrastructure".

"Our conversation brought out the many convergences and shared interests between India and the G7," the minister added.

Jaishankar started his Munich Security Conference with a roundtable 'Delhi Declared: Mapping India's Policy Calculus', organised by the Ananta Aspen Centre, a

non-partisan organisation.

The external affairs minister said he highlighted the "importance of a nimble and dynamic foreign policy to meet the demands of multipolarity". In a discussion with Indrani Bagchi, CEO Ananta Centre, Jaishankar said he also noted the significance of the India-EU FTA and the India-US trade deal in that regard. "The discussion looked at India's growth strategy, the choices before key partners, and why strategic autonomy remains a steady anchor as global dynamics evolve," the Ananta Centre said.

India and the 27-nation bloc on January 27 announced the conclusion of negotiations for the free trade agreement that will account for almost a quarter of the global GDP will reduce tariffs on 99 per cent of Indian exports to the EU and cut duties on over 97 per cent of the EU's exports to India, according to officials.

The UN@80 initiative was launched by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in March 2025. This initiative focuses on improving organisational efficiency, reviewing mandate implementation.