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India pushes for UNSC overhaul, backs African model for reforms

George said, adding that only a balanced expansion can correct structural inequities and improve outcomes on global peace and security.

According to the official UN India website, India has been among the largest and most consistent troop-contributing countries to UN peacekeeping, with more than 275,000 Indian personnel having served under the UN flag since 1948.

In a post on X, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said that) Sibi George also delivered India's national statement at the General Debate of the 2026 ECOSOC Forum on financing for development follow-up.

Highlighting structural challenges in global development financing, India stressed the urgent need for systemic reforms.

"Secretary (West) underscored the need for a fair, inclusive, and development-oriented global financial system to bridge the \$4 trillion SDG financing gap. He also highlighted that reforming international financial institutions (IFIs), enhancing the voice of the Global South, and deploying digital public infrastructure are key to delivering on the Sevilla Commitment," it added.

LG calls for building India which freedom fighters once dreamt of

heads now had their own homes, and this had brought them dignity and security in society, he added.

"Roads have reached every village, the number of airports has doubled, the digital revolution has connected every section of society. Today, the marginalised sections have bank accounts, they have an identity, they hold smart mobile phones for financial transactions, and in my view, this is not merely technological progress but social empowerment," he said.

"In far-flung regions of the country, new schools, new universities and a new education policy together have begun to build an India in which the hands of the youth hold the reins of the future. The facilities now available particularly for girls are unprecedented in our history, and the purpose of education through innovation and research is no longer merely to pass exams but to create an aware and responsible citizen," he added.

3 APCCF posts abolished

The three posts had been temporarily added for a period of two years up to December 18, 2020 and extended for a period of two years up to December 18, 2024. The posts were further extended for a period of one year, says the order.

Man detained near IB

tioning, he was handed over to police by BSF for his questioning, officials said.

No incriminating material was said to have been recovered from his possession during his search, the officials added.

Girls outshine boys in class 10 JKBOSE results

better performance by girls, who achieved a pass percentage of 90.42 per cent, while boys recorded 87.51 pass per cent.

Officials said the strong performance reflected improved academic standards and consistent efforts by students and institutions across Jammu division.

Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo extended her heartfelt greetings to the students of 10th class (Summer Zone) for passing the examination with flying colours.

She commended the students for their hard work, dedication, and perseverance, stating that the results are a testament to their commitment and the collective efforts of teachers, parents, and the education system at large.

She added that the pass percentage of 83.44 for Government schools is very encouraging and highlights the improvement of educational standards in Government institutions.

"These outstanding results reflect the Government's sustained focus on strengthening the education sector and ensuring quality learning outcomes across Jammu and Kashmir", she stated.

Highlighting the achievements of girl students, the Minister lauded their outstanding performance in the examinations. She noted with pride that girls have once again outshined boys, showcasing their determination, resilience, and academic excellence.

"This achievement is not only a matter of pride but also a clear indication of the positive impact of various government initiatives aimed at empowering girls through education," she said.

Encouraging students to remain focused and motivated, the Minister urged them to pursue their future academic and career goals with confidence and determination. She also advised those who could not perform as expected to remain hopeful and work harder, emphasizing that success is a continuous journey.

The Minister further reiterated the Government's commitment to providing an inclusive, equitable, and high-quality education system. She assured that continuous efforts are being made to improve infrastructure, enhance teaching standards, and create a conducive learning environment for all students.

India's economy to grow at 6.4 pc this year

tion, especially from the rural economy along with goods and services tax rate cuts, and export frontloading ahead of the United States' tariffs," the report, titled Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2026, said.

It said in India, economic activities moderated in the second half of 2025 as exports to the United States declined by 25 per cent following the introduction of 50 per cent tariffs in August 2025. The services sector remained a key growth driver.

The report projected India to register a 6.4 per cent growth rate in 2026 and 6.6 per cent next year. Inflation for the country is projected to be 4.4 per cent this year and 4.3 per cent in 2027.

The report said that FDI inflows to developing Asian and Pacific economies declined amid trade tensions and geopolitical uncertainty. After an increase of 0.6% in 2024, FDI to the region declined by 2% in 2025, even as global flows increased by 14%.

"Within the Asia-Pacific region, the countries that attracted the largest share of greenfield FDI in the first three quarters were India, Australia, the Republic of Korea and Kazakhstan with USD 50 billion, USD 30 billion, USD 25 billion and USD 21 billion in announced investments, respectively," it said.

It further said that personal remittances, sent by Asian and Pacific workers employed outside of their home countries, continued to rise, cushioning the impact of vulnerable domestic employment conditions.

Remittances have helped sustain the consumption of many households, but are facing headwinds.

In India and the Philippines, about 40 per cent of the

transfers are used for essential spending, including medical expenses, of recipient households.

"However, as the world's largest remittance recipient of USD 137 billion in 2024, India could face a sizeable loss as the United States has levied a 1% tax on all remittances since January 2026," it said.

The report also cited estimates by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) that suggested that there were around 16.6 million green jobs globally, with annual job creation of around 0.8 million between 2012 and 2024, 7% annual growth.

Out of these 16.6 million jobs, 7.3 million were in China, 1.3 million in India and 2.5 million in the rest of Asia - 44%, 8% and 15% of the global total, respectively.

"Governments can leverage the energy transition to an environmentally sustainable economy to foster new domestic industries and build supportive constituencies," it said.

It noted that public investment and targeted industrial policies can accelerate the emergence of beneficiaries such as renewable manufacturers, grid developers, storage providers and green industrial clusters.

The report cited India's production-linked incentive scheme, saying it illustrates how macroeconomic policy can foster green industrial development through incentives for domestic manufacturing of solar photovoltaic, batteries and green hydrogen, reducing import dependence while creating new industrial beneficiaries with a vested interest in sustaining the transition.

"Across developing economies in Asia and the Pacific, targeted industrial policies are being used to scale clean technology manufacturing and accelerate the energy transition. Initiatives include India's Production Linked Incentive scheme for high-efficiency solar modules, China's strategic subsidies for electric vehicle battery manufacturing," it said.

Ladakh LG calls on VP

Vice President posted on X.

It was their first meeting after VK Saxena was appointed as the LG of Ladakh after serving as the Delhi LG.

S Korean Prez concludes India visit; boosts shipbuilding, logistics cooperation

collaboration in shipbuilding, port development, and maritime logistics under the "India-ROK Comprehensive Framework for Partnership in Shipbuilding, Shipping and Maritime Logistics".

The two leaders also endorsed a shared vision titled "VOYAGES" (Vision for Operation of Yard Assisted Growth with Efficiency and Scale), aimed at scaling up cooperation in maritime industries by leveraging complementary strengths. India highlighted opportunities for large-scale shipbuilding clusters and invited South Korean companies to participate as key partners in design, manufacturing, and operations.

Both sides welcomed ongoing and proposed collaborations, including joint shipyard development projects and industry partnerships, as well as India's ambitious plan to procure over 400 vessels, creating opportunities worth approximately USD 25 billion. They also supported cooperation in upgrading existing shipyards and expanding ancillary industries.

In addition to maritime cooperation, multiple Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) and frameworks were signed across sectors such as ports, technology, trade, climate, culture, and finance. Key agreements included cooperation in port development, science and technology, digital infrastructure, and green growth initiatives.

The visit also saw announcements such as the launch of an Economic Security Dialogue, participation in multi-lateral initiatives like the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative, and plans to commemorate 2028-29 as the Year of India-ROK Friendship.

India and South Korea share a robust Special Strategic Partnership, and the latest visit is expected to further deepen cooperation across key sectors while contributing to regional and global economic stability.

Civil servants instrumental in bridging gaps: Prez

From the formulation of innovative, future-oriented and citizen-centric policies, to their effective implementation on the ground, your work significantly impacts the quality of life of millions, she said in a post on X.

"As Bharat advances with renewed aspirations, your integrity and empathy will be instrumental in bridging gaps, fostering inclusivity, and strengthening trust between the State and its citizens," Murmu said.

"May you continue to uphold the highest standards of public service and contribute meaningfully to the building of a more equitable and progressive nation," Murmu added.

April 21 is celebrated as the Civil Services Day, as an occasion for the civil servants across India to rededicate themselves to the cause of citizens and renew their commitment to public service and excellence in their work.

The day commemorates the address of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the first home minister of independent India, to civil services officers on probation in 1947 at Metcalf House, Delhi. He had referred to them as the "steel frame of India".

2 ISI operatives held for planning grenade attacks, target killings

tionally, two mobile phones containing incriminating videos and voice notes linked to the conspiracy were seized.

Sharing profiles of the accused, the police said Rajveer, a resident of Dabra in the Gwalior district, is a young recruit who came in contact with Bhatti's network through social media.

"He was directly handled by an associate of Bhatti, identified as 'Rana Bhai', and was assigned key operational responsibilities. He allegedly played a central role in coordinating movements, collecting weapons and executing planned attacks," the officer said.

He said that Vivek Banjara, also from the Gwalior district, was introduced to the network by Rajveer. Investigators said he assisted in logistics and reconnaissance and was actively involved in facilitating travel, receiving weapons and documenting criminal acts on the instructions from handlers.

Both accused were lured with the promises of easy money and were gradually drawn deeper into the criminal network. "In March, Rajveer was instructed to send an associate to Ahmedabad to collect weapons. Accordingly, Vivek travelled there, though the delivery could not materialise. Bhatti had arranged Rs 5,000 for his stay," the officer said.

Subsequently, on April 9, the duo travelled to Amritsar, where they allegedly received a pistol, 15-20 live rounds and Rs 20,000. They were tasked with opening fire at a club in Zirakpur in Punjab, which had allegedly received extortion threats from Bhatti.

On April 11, Rajveer allegedly attempted to carry out the firing but failed due to a mechanical issue in the weapon. Vivek recorded a video of the incident to send to their handler. Rajveer later concealed the weapon while returning to Delhi and shared its location with Bhatti, the police said.

"After spending a few days in Delhi-NCR, he travelled to Punjab again, where he collected another pistol and ammunition before returning to the capital. Further investigation is underway to identify other members," the officer said.

India's Gulf outreach aimed at energy security, diaspora welfare: MEA

ritius and the UAE.

Additionally, Jaiswal stated that the Union Commerce and Industry Minister, Piyush Goyal, also held several engagements with counterparts across the Gulf region.

"India continues to closely monitor developments in West Asia and has intensified its outreach to countries in the Gulf region under the direction of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi," Jaiswal said.

"These coordinated efforts are aimed at addressing key shared concerns between India and Gulf nations, including energy security, welfare of the Indian diaspora, and other issues of mutual interest," he added.

On the ongoing situation in the region, the MEA spokesperson stated that India is closely monitoring developments and remains in touch with authorities in Iran to ensure the safe passage of Indian ships through the strategically important Strait of Hormuz.

"We continue to be in touch with Iranian authorities for the safe passage of our ships through the Strait of Hormuz, as we also have a number of Indian nationals who are in Iran. We are in touch with Iranian authorities for their well-being as well," he said.

India, following this, called Iran's Ambassador Mohammad Fathali and conveyed "deep concern" over the incident.

The Ministry of External Affairs, in a statement, stated that Iran's Ambassador was called in for a meeting with Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri this evening.

The Foreign Secretary urged the Ambassador to convey India's views and resume the process of facilitating India-bound ships across the Strait.

Jaiswal, during the briefing, further stated that India is also engaging with Iranian authorities regarding the well-being of Indian nationals residing there.

Responding to queries on civil aviation matters, the MEA spokesperson said that India is in contact with UAE authorities on aviation-related and other civilian issues between the two countries.

"We are in touch with the UAE authorities on this particular matter as also other civilian matters that the two countries are engaged with or in," the MEA spokesperson said.

On casualties in the West Asia conflict, Jaiswal confirmed that eight Indian nationals have lost their lives so far, while one Indian national remains missing.

Army reaffirms resolve to fight terrorism

and Pakistan-occupied Jammu & Kashmir (PoJK).

Ahead of the anniversary of the dastardly act that shook the nation and drew condemnation from governments and leaders across the world, the Army in a post on X, said, "When boundaries of humanity are crossed, the response is decisive. Justice is Served. India Stands United."

The post, heavily symbolic, also carried a digital poster bearing a silhouette image of the map of India with the caption "SOME BOUNDARIES SHOULD NEVER BE CROSSED".

The 'O' in the word 'CROSSED' was depicted by a bowl carrying a dash of 'sindoor' (vermillion), and a tagline at the bottom printed in crimson hue, read, "INDIA DOES NOT FORGET" with a red line drawn at the bottom.

In North Bengal, BJP seeks to retain edge, TMC eyes gains

Cooch Behar, North Dinajpur, South Dinajpur and Malda.

From the hills and tea gardens to the Rajbanshi belt and the minority-dominated plains, each district is shaped by its own mix of identity, welfare, local grievances and political memory.

"North Bengal is no longer a one-wave region. The BJP still has a structural advantage, but the contest is much closer than it was in 2021," political analyst Subhomoy Maitra said.

The BJP had swept north Bengal in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, winning seven of the eight parliamentary seats, and consolidated that rise in 2021 by bagging 30 of the 54 assembly seats against the TMC's 24.

The saffron camp retained an edge in 2024, though it slipped from its 2019 peak, winning six of the eight Lok Sabha seats and leading in 31 assembly segments.

That electoral memory has made the region the focal point of an intense contest.

The BJP has set itself a target of winning 48 of the 54 seats, banking on its hold over the Rajbanshi belt in Cooch Behar and Jalpaiguri, the tea gardens of the Dooars and Terai, and the hills of Darjeeling and Kalimpong.

The party has sharpened its campaign around regional neglect, promising an AIIMS, IIT, IIM and cancer hospital, besides land rights for tea garden workers and recognition for local languages. Yet, beneath the BJP's confidence, there are signs of unease.

The unresolved demand for Gorkhaland in the hills and the call for Kamtapur or Greater Cooch Behar in the plains continue to simmer.

While local leaders occasionally invoke the idea of a Union Territory or separate state, the BJP's state leadership has stopped short of endorsing such demands, wary of a backlash in south Bengal.

The Kamtapur State Demand Council has backed the BJP, while in the hills the party is relying on the Bimal Gurung-led GJM. But, sections of Gorkha and Rajbanshi voters remain disillusioned over the absence of any "permanent political solution".

Sensing an opening after the BJP's marginal dip in 2024, the TMC has stepped up its campaign.

Chief Minister and TMC supreme Mamata Banerjee began her north Bengal push from Alipurduar and the adjoining tea belt, underlining the importance the party now attaches to the region.

The TMC is banking on women, minorities and beneficiaries of welfare schemes, while also trying to make inroads among tea garden workers and Rajbanshis.

It has tied up with Anit Thapa's Bharatiya Gorkha Prajatantrik Morcha in the hills, conceding Darjeeling, Kurseong and Kalimpong to the ally in a tactical move aimed at countering the BJP-GJM combine.

More significantly, both the BJP and the TMC believe the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls could alter the political arithmetic in several districts.

The revision has led to large-scale deletions 2.42 lakh voters in Cooch Behar, 2.01 lakh in Jalpaiguri, 1.9 lakh in Darjeeling, 3.63 lakh in North Dinajpur, 4.59 lakh in Malda and 1.95 lakh in South Dinajpur.

The BJP believes the deletions may help it by reducing what it calls inflated rolls in minority-dominated Malda and North Dinajpur.

The TMC and Congress, however, allege that genuine voters, especially minorities and migrant workers, have been struck off.

"The BJP is trying to win north Bengal through the back door after failing to fulfil its promises on the CAA, tea wages and Gorkhaland," TMC leader Gautam Deb said.

Union minister and Balurghat MP Sukanta Majumdar rejected the charge.

"North Bengal has suffered neglect for decades. People want development and dignity. The mood here is in favour of change," he said.

The Congress, concentrating on Malda and the two Dinajpur districts, hopes the SIR controversy and minority consolidation will help it regain relevance.

"There is anger among voters whose names have disappeared from the rolls. The contest is more open than it appears," state Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said.

The region's political geography remains sharply divided.

The BJP dominated Cooch Behar, Alipurduar and Darjeeling in 2021 and edged past the TMC in Jalpaiguri.

The TMC retained the upper hand in minority-dominated North Dinajpur and Malda, while South Dinajpur was evenly split.

The BJP is facing resentment over ticket distribution and the induction of defectors, while the TMC, too, is battling factionalism in parts of Jalpaiguri and Rajganj.

Political analyst Biswanath Chakraborty said the election in north Bengal was no longer being driven by a single issue.

"Identity, welfare and regional neglect are intersecting in a very complex way. The BJP still has an advantage, but the TMC has narrowed the gap. Much will depend on turnout, the impact of SIR and whether local grievances override broader narratives," he said.

If north Bengal once scripted the BJP's Bengal ascent, April 23 will show whether the story still has another chapter or whether the TMC has finally found a way to rewrite it.

Kharage accuses Modi of 'terrorising' Oppn; BJP hits back

CBI, ED and the Income Tax Department, were being used to intimidate political opponents.

However, BJP took offence at Kharage's remarks and called it a "deliberate conspiracy" by the Congress.

Reacting to Kharage's statement, BJP leader Sambit Patra said, "This is not only condemnable but also reflects the Congress party's mindset. This is no slip of tongue. Even if he is offering any explanation, remember this is a deliberate conspiracy by the Congress party... Every day, Rahul Gandhi uses abusive language against the Prime Minister in his speeches, and today, at Rahul's behest, Mallikarjun Kharage called the Prime Minister a terrorist."

"The Congress party should remember that whenever the Congress party has abused the Prime Minister, the people of India have punished it. This time too, the people of India will give a reply," he added.

Meanwhile, Congress leader KC Venugopal defended the party president and said the BJP is attempting to "make a non-issue an issue."

"They (BJP) will try to make a non-issue become an issue... Prime Minister Modi is trying to terrorise people by using ED and the CBI. That's what Mallikarjun Kharage said. You also know all these camera tricks. They are using only that particular clip... And Kharage himself clarified that he does not call PM Modi a 'terrorist'... then why BJP targeting him, that's an unwanted thing," Venugopal said.

Speaking during the last leg of election campaigns in Tamil Nadu, Kharage also targeted the BJP over the now-rejected Constitution Amendment Bill linked to delimitation and implementation of women's reservation in Parliament.

He argued that the government was misleading the public, noting that the Women's Reservation Bill had already been passed unanimously in 2023.

"If the government is sincere, it can implement 33 per cent reservation for women within the existing 543 Lok Sabha seats. Why delay it?" he asked.

He also raised concerns over the proposed delimitation exercise, warning that it could disadvantage southern and other progressive states that have successfully controlled population growth. According to Kharage, the move could undermine their democratic representation.

Reaffirming the strength of the DMK-Congress alliance, Kharage and Venugopal dismissed speculation of a rift between Rahul Gandhi and M. K. Stalin, describing their relationship as close and cooperative.

Kharage reiterated key promises made by the alliance for Tamil Nadu, including monthly financial assistance for women and senior citizens, enhanced support for food security, and a commitment to fill all government vacancies within 300 days.

Pak extends airspace closure for Indian planes

(Notice to Airmen), Pakistan airspace is not available for Indian registered aircraft and aircraft operated/owned or leased by Indian airlines/ operators, including military flights.

The ban will be applicable from April 21 till 2359 hours (UTC) on May 23, which translates to 0530 hrs (IST) on May 24, as per the NOTAM issued by the Pakistan Airport Authority (PAA).

It is now nearly a year since the Pakistan airspace ban came into force that has also resulted in Indian carriers taking longer routes for various international destinations.

Meanwhile, India has barred Pakistan aircraft from using its airspace till 0530 hrs on April 24, and the restriction is expected to be extended.

The ban, part of various measures taken by the Indian government against Pakistan in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack, was initially till May 24, 2025 and has been subsequently extended every month.

Generally, a NOTAM is a notice containing information that is essential for personnel involved in flight operations.

US, Iran signal new ceasefire talks as truce nears end

Islamabad so far".

Iranian state TV has long been controlled by hard-liners within Iran's theocracy, and the on-screen alert likely reflects the ongoing internal debate within Iran's theocracy as it weighs how to respond to the US Navy's seizure of an Iranian container ship over the weekend.

The US has instituted a blockade of Iranian ports to pressure Tehran into ending its stranglehold on the Strait of Hormuz, a key shipping lane through which 20 per cent of the world's natural gas and crude oil transits in peacetime. Iran's iron grip on the strait has sent oil prices soaring, and Brent crude, the international standard, was trading at close to USD 95 per barrel on Tuesday, up more than 30 per cent from February 28, the day that Israel and the US attacked Iran to start the war.

Before the war began, the Strait of Hormuz had been fully open to international shipping, and Trump has demanded that vessels again be allowed to transit unimpeded through the waterway.