

Govt must listen to Maharashtra students' voice otherwise 'Chhatron ki Goonj' will grow louder: Rahul

NEW DELHI, SEPT 6: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday said thousands of students are protesting on the streets of Maharashtra as their trust in the entire system had been shattered and asserted that the BJP government must listen to their voice and act immediately, otherwise the 'Chhatron ki Goonj' will only grow louder.

Gandhi said whether it's the Central or State Government, every student is "tormented" by the BJP regime. "In Maharashtra, thousands of students are on the streets, protesting peacefully - the reason isn't just one exam or recruitment, but a trust that's been shattered by the entire system, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha said in a post in Hindi on X. "Whether it's the central or State Government, every student is tormented by the



BJP Government. Paper leaks, stalled recruitments, the unbearable cost of education, inhumane conditions in hostels, food like poison, fraud in DBT," Gandhi said. "...And now, they've seized control of a constitutional body like MPSC and destroyed its credibility," he said. Gandhi stressed that every

demand from students for their successful future is justified. "The Government must listen to their voice and act immediately - otherwise, this 'Chhatron ki Goonj' will only grow louder until justice is served," he asserted. His remarks came after the Maharashtra Government constituted a high-level committee to under-

take a comprehensive review of the existing recruitment examination system in the state and suggest measures to make it more transparent, secure, reliable and candidate-friendly. The review will cover the entire examination process, including question paper preparation and scrutiny, confidentiality and secure handling of papers, examination centre management and security, use of technology, prevention of malpractices, coordination among various agencies, grievance redressal and the overall examination experience of candidates. Tribal students and job aspirants in Maharashtra held protests over poor hostel conditions, student safety, and exam paper leaks, prompting the state government to accept key demands and set up a new exam reform panel. (PTI)

Higher education must prepare students for democracy: VP

GUWAHATI, Sept 6: Vice President C P Radhakrishnan on Sunday said higher education institutions must prepare students to make meaningful contributions to society and democracy, rather than merely equip them for careers. Addressing the golden jubilee celebrations of Geetanagar College in Guwahati, Radhakrishnan underlined the role of educational institutions in

nation-building and promoting inclusive growth. In his maiden visit to Assam after assuming office as vice president, he said educational institutions were among the most important vehicles for building a developed India as they can create the workforce required to realise the vision. History "Higher education must prepare citizens for democracy and the country,

and not merely careers," he said. "The success of educational institutions is reflected in the success of their students. Quality teaching can ensure excellence in students, while infrastructure can only build facilities," he added. Radhakrishnan said the Northeast have been given priority in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for a developed India.

Modi Govt Deliberately Circumscribing ISRO's Role: Congress

NEW DELHI, SEP 6: The Congress on Sunday accused the Modi government of deliberately circumscribing the role of ISRO in the name of encouraging start-ups and claimed that the agency's capabilities are to be transferred to private companies whose long-term commitment is doubtful. Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh shared a screenshot of a media report which claimed that key employee associations at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) have written to ISRO chairperson V Narayanan, questioning the direction of the agency's privatisation drive and its implications for the existing workforce and the agency's future role. History "In the name of encouraging startups in the space economy, ISRO's role is being deliberately circumscribed by the Modi government. Worse, capabilities it has built up over decades in a



painstaking manner are to be transferred to private companies whose long-term commitment is doubtful," Ramesh said on X. "It is courageous and commendable that voices from within the ISRO community are now speaking out as revealed in today's Indian Express," he said. The recent stunning success of the GSLV launch has undoubtedly emboldened them, just as it would have come as a disappointment to ISRO-sceptics and ISRO-critics both in India and abroad, Ramesh said.

One former ISRO chairman has been bold enough to express his concerns, he said, in an apparent reference to former ISRO chief G Madhavan Nair. Others like him must also have the courage of their convictions and not simply keep quiet as the magnificent Sarabhai-Dhawan edifice gets "systematically dismantled", Ramesh said. The Congress on Friday had hailed ISRO for the successful launch of the country's first-ever imaging satellite in geo-orbit and accused the Modi government of un-

dertaking a "radical role re-configuration" that will "change the very character" of the Indian space agency. The opposition party had said the launch would also undoubtedly be a big morale booster to the space agency "since it has found itself under attack from various quarters". ISRO on Friday made its way into history books yet again with the successful launch of the country's first ever imaging satellite in geo-orbit, placing the over 2,300 kg payload into a precise orbit using a GSLV rocket. Friday's launch marked the space agency's maiden success for the year 2026. The Congress last month had accused the Modi government of "strangling and emasculating" ISRO and slammed it for pursuing an "aggressive privatisation agenda" for the space programme. ISRO was founded in 1969, with Sarabhai, instrumental in its conception, as its first chairman. (PTI)

ISRO Staff Bodies Seek Clarification On Trajectory Of Privatisation

NEW DELHI, SEP 6: Nine employee associations at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) have written to the space agency's Chairperson V Narayanan, seeking official clarification on the proposed transfer of its manufacturing and operational functions to private entities. In a letter, dated September 4, the associations also raised questions about the agency's future role, and the consequences for serving employees and future recruitment. "Private participation in defined commercial activities can coexist with a strong, publicly owned ISRO. What cannot be accepted without debate is a policy that reduces ISRO to a residual R&D (research and development) boutique while the realisation of the nation's launch vehicles and the operation of its launch infra-



structure pass out of public hands," the letter said. It pointed to the August 21 comments made by Pawan Goenka, chairperson of the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe), which promotes, enables, authorises and supervises various space activities of non-governmental entities. Goenka, at a public event, reportedly said, "Eventually, ISRO will not make any

launch vehicles and will not manufacture any launch vehicles. That will all be done by the private sector or PSU." The employee associations claimed that these remarks have not been accompanied by any corresponding official communication from the Department of Space, explaining the approved policy, its legal and administrative basis, its phasing, or its conse-

quences for the existing workforce and future public recruitment. Technology developed by ISRO is a national asset. Its transfer must be transparent, accountable and consistent with strategic, safety and employment considerations -- not presented to employees through newspaper reports," the letter said. It raised several other concerns. These include whether the design, development, realisation, integration, testing and launch of PSLV, LVM3, SSLV and successor vehicles will continue as ISRO functions or will cease. Also, it asked about the implications of the proposed shift for sanctioned strength, existing vacancies, recruitment calendar, and induction of scientific/technical/administrative/industrial manpower in all ISRO centres. (PTI)

Thousands rally in Croatia demanding urgent cleanup of toxic waste from town

ZAGREB (CROATIA), SEP 5: Tens of thousands of people rallied on Saturday in Croatia, furious that authorities for months haven't cleared a huge amount of illegally dumped hazardous waste that has triggered fears of major environmental damage in the European Union country. The illegal waste scandal in the central town of Gospić has fuelled criticism of conservative Prime Minister Andrej Plenković and his government, which has faced mounting public anger in recent weeks.

The issue first surfaced last February when Croatian police and Europol, the EU's law enforcement agency, arrested 13 people suspected of illegally importing and disposing of hazardous waste. Europol said at the time that the suspects made at least 4 million euros (USD 4.2 million) in illegal profit. More than a year later, Gospić residents fear that about 37,000 metric tons (40,000 US tons) of waste that is still at an abandoned industrial site - mostly buried underground - was endangering their health. It includes remains of electronic equipment, plastics, construction materials and medical waste.

An expert report published last month by Croatian anti-corruption agency USKOK says that the soil at the site contained elevated metal concentration and that PFAS compounds, known as the "forever chemicals," have also been detected in groundwater. Saturday's protest requested that authorities pre-



sent a clear plan to urgently and completely remediate the polluted sites according to clearly defined deadlines. Protesters are also demanding an immediate ban on waste imports. Vjekoslav Busic, from the "Gospić Is Our Home" initiative behind the protest, said that residents had been reporting what they believed was suspected illegal activity since 2023. Demographics "The result to date: Not a single kilogram (pound) of hazardous waste has been removed from Gospić," Busic said. Protester Ivan Rittinger said that authorities "are talking about this as if it were a tragedy, as if it just happened out of nowhere. Rittinger said that "someone made money out of it and someone was paid to look the other way." "It was planned," he said. "This is not a tragedy. This is a crime."

USKOK said that it was investigating a Croatian company for allegedly burying illegal toxic waste at several sites across Croatia, with the largest amount found in Gospić. The government has said that the investigation is underway, as well as efforts to clear the area. Authorities also have said that multiple water and soil tests in Gospić came out negative for contamination. The site will be temporarily covered to protect it from rainwater, one company has been chosen to clear some of the waste while a long-term plan is drafted. Plenković has accused his political opponents of fueling panic for political gains. Experts agree that the damage is at a local level. But they warn that the region's karst terrain, loose soil and rivers could carry pollution from the site toward the Adriatic Sea. Geographic Reference

The town of Gospić, which has around 12,000 residents, is located in a region close to a nature park and known for forests, lakes and rivers. The initial Europol report said that much of the waste that ended up in Gospić was imported from other EU nations Italy, Slovenia and Germany. The protesters at the main square in Croatia's capital, Zagreb, shouted "Croatia, Croatia" as they carried national flags and banners reading "When if not now" or "The lungs of Croatia have trouble breathing." Zeljka Sikic from Gospić thanked the crowd for "coming out publicly, because it takes courage nowadays." Sikic said "we have been handed over to eco-mafia. Zagreb resident Suzane Maria Flander said that it's a "basic human right to have clean soil, clean water and clean air." (AP)

Nine dead after consuming spurious liquor in Madhya Pradesh's Sagar

SAGAR (MP), SEPT 6: Nine persons died and some others fell ill after consuming spurious liquor in Madhya Pradesh's Sagar district on Sunday, officials said. Two other deaths occurring around the same time could not be linked to the hooch tragedy as of now, they said. A local MLA, however, said 11 persons died after consuming spurious liquor. The incident comes after 13 persons died last month due to consumption of spurious liquor in Bhavnagar district of Gujarat, a 'dry' state where the manufacture, sale and consumption of alcohol are banned. Sagar Superintendent of Police Anurag Sujania told PTI that nine persons had consumed the liquor in two villages of Banda tehsil, located around 30 km from the district headquarters. Nine persons have died after consuming the spurious liquor, he said. Asked about two other



deaths reported during the same period, he said it was difficult to link them to the consumption of spurious liquor. Officials were looking into those deaths, he added. To a query on the total number of people who fell ill after consuming the spurious liquor, Sujania said he did not have the figure. When contacted, Banda BJP MLA Virendra Lodhi

said, "As per my knowledge, 11 people have died after consuming spurious liquor. Around 25 have been rushed to other hospitals for advanced health care from Banda Civil Hospital." Earlier in the day, Sagar Collector Pratibha Pal said, "Interactions with locals have indicated that the deaths occurred after they consumed illegal spurious liquor. Screen-

ing has already begun in the two villages." Four to five others were shifted to the government-run Bundelkhand Medical College and Hospital after they complained of headache and vomiting, she said. The first death was reported in the early hours of Sunday. Preliminary autopsy reports had not yet been received, she added.

Well found beneath demolished mosque debris in Saharanpur, ASI informed

SAHARANPUR (UP), SEP 6: A nearly 20-foot-deep and around 1.5-metre-wide well was on Sunday found beneath the debris of a mosque located on the Saharanpur collectorate premises, amid an ongoing dispute over the structure, officials said on Sunday. The well was discovered while debris was being cleared from the site, a day after the mosque was demolished using bulldozers in an operation that continued for nearly 16 hours on Saturday. According to officials, a slab was spotted during debris removal on Sunday morning. After the slab was cut with a cutter, the well was found underneath it.



Soon after the discovery, Saharanpur Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Subodh Kumar reached the spot and informed the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to ascertain the antiquity and history of the well. Officials said the well appeared to be around a century old, though its exact age

and historical significance would be established only after examination by archaeological experts. In earlier times, when piped water supply was not available, wells were an important source of water for people. Wells were also traditionally used for water required for ablution and

bathing, and several old mosques still have wells in their vicinity. For the time being, the well has been covered with an iron sheet to prevent soil and debris from falling into it, officials said. Police personnel continue to be deployed at the collectorate premises, and people are not being allowed to approach the site, officials said. A mosque located within the premises of the district collectorate office was on Saturday demolished amid heavy police deployment. In 2025, Bajrang Dal regional convener Vikas Tyagi had filed a petition in the court of the city magistrate, alleging that the structure located within the collectorate premises was illegal.