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India rips into Pak's 'falsehoods', 'deceit' at United Nations

the brutal violence and the denial of basic rights that they have long experienced," she added.

The Pakistan-occupied Jammu & Kashmir (PoJK) region has been witnessing protests for several months over 12 contentious refugee seats, triggering a crackdown by security forces and allegations of rigging in the recently held elections to the so-called legislative assembly.

Ripping Pakistan for its "longstanding practice" of cross-border terrorism, Gahlot said India had demonstrated last year that "terrorists will have nowhere to run, nowhere to hide".

India had launched Operation Sindoor on May 7 last year, targeting terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in retaliation for the April 22 Pahalgam attack that had killed 26 civilians.

"Our right to defend ourselves against terrorism will be exercised. And continued terrorism by Pakistan will have consequences. It will understandably call into question what were premised on friendship and goodwill," Gahlot said.

She asserted that the views heard in the UNGA from Sharif "emanate from those with a long record of bigotry and hatred".

"This Assembly was subjected to remarks about religious intolerance from the very regime whose mainstay is blasphemy laws. The world knows how minorities are treated in Pakistan; no pious platitude can mislead it," she said.

CEC, 2 ECs hold meeting; deny internal rift over SIR

tion of work "involving an officer on deputation to the EC". The commission said the letter was not related to any policy matter of the EC or its IT division, but to the functioning of the officer.

It said the work redistribution orders objected to were not implemented after directions from the two commissioners, and that oversight of the IT division by a Deputy Election Commissioner was never withdrawn.

On SIR, it said the June 24, 2025, order launching the exercise across states and Union Territories was issued with the unanimous approval of the commission -- an assertion made by EC sources on Friday too. The press note said subsequent schedules were also issued with unanimous approval. It noted that the Supreme Court had upheld the original SIR order.

The commission pointedly addressed the case of 97 voters in Goa who had been left out of the electoral rolls. It said the Goa Chief Electoral Officer had directed Booth Level Officers to conduct house-to-house visits and collect their forms. Of the 97 voters, 81 had already filled Form 6 for inclusion.

The commission also announced measures aimed at strengthening its internal functioning. Agendas for all commission meetings will now be circulated in advance and minutes will be issued. It said directions issued by commissioners to officials would be meticulously complied with.

The deadline for filing claims and objections in Delhi under the SIR process was also extended to October 30, with the disposal target extended to November 30. In Maharashtra, the corresponding deadlines were extended to October 12 and November 10.

The controversy, however, has moved beyond questions of internal procedure. Opposition parties have cited the reported objections by Joshi and Sandhu to question the functioning of the Commission and have demanded Gyanesh Kumar's ouster. The dispute has also become closely linked to the wider political battle over SIR, with Opposition parties demanding greater transparency from the poll panel.

The commission's latest statement seeks to draw a distinction between internal deliberations and formal decisions, maintaining that its major decisions, including SIR, were taken collectively and unanimously.

Sinha lauds Armed Forces Medical Services

challenging border area is a remarkable achievement," he said in a post on X.

The dedication of the medical team, led by BrigSanjay Kumar Mishra, embodies the true spirit of Operation Sadbhavna.

Bringing advanced eye surgeries, including phacoemulsification, retinal and glaucoma procedures, to remote border hamlets ensures that no citizen is left behind.

COAS reviews operational preparedness

operational preparedness for counter-terrorist operations, officials said.

He was briefed on the prevailing security situation and measures instituted to detect, deter and decisively respond to terrorist threats, officials said.

The COAS commended all ranks for their professionalism, commitment and high standards of operational preparedness.

He exhorted them to maintain constant vigilance, sharpen intelligence led operations and retain the ability to respond swiftly and precisely to emerging threats.

He also underscored the importance of seamless synergy and close coordination with all stakeholders to enhance situational awareness and strengthen the overall counter-terror response, officials said.

At the occasion, COAS Commendations were pinned to deserving soldiers for their gallantry and exemplary service, recognising their courage and contribution to counter-terrorist operations.

He emphasised the need to remain ahead of the threat, maintain relentless operational focus and ensure a coordinated, calibrated response, while safeguarding the safety and security of the people.

The officials maintained that Indian Army remains resolute in countering terrorism, strengthening synergy, protecting the people and maintaining a secure environment.

Cong accuses CEC of law violation

Ramesh stated that late at night on Friday, a "panicked" Election Commission directed officers to organise special enrolment camps for young voters and give them "wide publicity" through social media.

"But the CEC himself had earlier made it virtually impossible to add young voters through a blatantly illegal and unconstitutional change to Form 6. A new mandatory section was added that asks if your par-

ents/grandparents were in the previous SIR, creating a barrier for first-time Gen Z voters.

"The change is completely illegal. Violation 1: In early July 2026, the online form was stealthily changed with no official notification," the Congress leader said.

Pointing out the second violation, he said the ECI does not have the power to amend Form 6. "This power is only held by the Union Government as per The Representation of The People Act, 1950. This is clearly a huge overreach by the Election Commission," Ramesh said.

"Violation 3: The form was changed without any amendment to the Rules that govern it under the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960. That can only be done by the Union Government with proper intimation to Parliament. A statutory form, defined by the law, was unilaterally changed by the CEC Gyanesh at the instance of the rattled PM-HM duo," he added.

Ramesh claimed that incidentally, the two election commissioners had called for this "illegal and unauthorised" change to be reversed "so young and first-time voters can register without any harassment".

"The CEC has broken not just Constitutional conventions and practices but has also knowingly broken the law as passed by Parliament. His continuation in office is an affront to the people of India.

"A confirmed law-breaker in charge of implementing laws -- what has Indian democracy degenerated to. The Supreme Court must immediately take suo motu cognisance and hold him accountable," the Congress general secretary said.

He asserted that Kumar can still redeem himself by resigning and turning approver, a suggestion by Rahul Gandhi, adding that the youth will approve this move.

Amid a row over the Election Commission adding a declaration to the form for new voters seeking to enroll in the electoral rolls and making the registration process difficult, poll panel officials said on Friday that as many as 2.37 crore electors in the 18-28 years age bracket were added since the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise was rolled out in Bihar last June.

After the change in the online form, it's not only the existing voters who must show details of their parents in the SIR to remain on the electoral rolls; those seeking inclusion in the voter list also have to cite details of the exercise.

By issuing instructions, the Election Commission has made it mandatory to attach SIR details of parents for new voters filling Form 6 for inclusion in the electoral rolls.

A poll panel functionary underlined that the declaration was added through instructions and that Form 6 has not been amended.

If a person fills out Form 6 online, he or she cannot proceed further till the declaration is filled.

Counter Intelligence Inspector held with heroin

ered 3.350 kg heroin, six pistols with magazines, 17 rounds and six mobile phones from his possession.

Asked from where Singh was bringing heroin and weapons, the SSP said the accused's questioning was underway. "Possession of narcotics is a crime," he said.

Stressing zero tolerance policy towards drugs, he said strict action will be taken against whosoever found to be involved with Singh.

EAM meets Russian, Iranian counterparts on UNGA margins

and privileged strategic partnership" and to maintain close coordination at the UN, in the G20, BRICS, and other international groupings.

Jaishankar also met Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi on the margins of the high-level UNGA session here Friday.

"Appreciate the conversation with FM @araghchi of Iran at the @UN #UNGA81. We discussed the latest developments with regard to the Gulf conflict. Will continue to be in touch," he said.

Last week, Trump signed the 'Lindsey OGraham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026', which authorises and expands statutory sanctions, tariffs, and prohibitions on Russia and extends existing sanctions on Iran.

India has said it remains firmly committed to ensuring energy security for its 1.4 billion people, and it will continue to do so through diversified sourcing, in response to the US' Russia sanctions legislation.

The Lindsey OGraham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act authorises Trump to impose sanctions on Russia and steep tariffs on its trading partners such as India and China in the oil and gas sector.

Continuing another busy day of engagements at the UN, Jaishankar co-chaired the India-Gulf Cooperation Council Troika Ministerial Meeting in New York on the margins of the UNGA.

He reviewed the progress of the India-GCC Joint Action Plan 2024-28 and discussed ways to further advance the partnership.

India welcomed the launch of India-GCC free trade agreement negotiations. "Look forward to strengthening ties in the areas of trade, investment, energy, food security, health, new technologies, culture and people-to-people exchanges. Thanked GCC leaderships for the support extended to the Indian community."

India also reiterated its strong commitment to freedom of navigation and safety of seafarers and commercial shipping.

Jaishankar co-chaired an event 'AI in the Context of International Peace & Security, with an Emphasis on Maritime Security', alongside Greek Foreign Minister George Gerapetritis.

In a post on X, Jaishankar said he emphasised the need to harness the possibilities offered by AI, anticipate its consequences and mitigate its risks.

"This calls for an approach that enables innovation while remaining conscious of its security implications," he said. He shared that the New Delhi Declaration emphasises democratic access to AI resources, building secure and trustworthy systems, investing in human capabilities and harnessing AI for economic growth and social good.

In the maritime domain, AI can enhance maritime domain awareness, search and rescue, disaster response, identification of suspicious activity and resilience of ports and critical infrastructure, he said.

At the same time, it can enable sophisticated reconnaissance, vulnerability mapping and cyber operations targeting vessels, communication networks and undersea infrastructure, he added.

Jaishankar underlined that increasing autonomy in maritime systems raises questions of attribution, accountability and escalation, while also compressing decision-making time.

He pointed out that in the maritime domain, the UN

Charter and international law, including the law of the sea, remain essential frameworks governing State conduct.

"Greater transparency, confidence-building, capacity development, technical cooperation and exchange of best practices are essential to ensure that AI is developed and used consistent with these principles," he said.

Giving push to manufacturing to end dependency: FM

said.

The government was incentivising those who want to get themselves out of this dependence and be able to produce in our country.

Speaking at an interactive session at Bharat Shakti Pondy Lit Fest here, the finance minister said, "Our export account would say that we are still not adequately exporting to China. But it is actually going to China. But it never gets accounted like that because it goes to Vietnam and from Vietnam it sort of crosses the road and goes to China."

"It should technically be in my account if I am exporting to China. It doesn't happen that way because and I will be blunt in saying this, it's not going to be diplomatic, people are not going to like it. We don't get market access for those goods which are of bulk value, both in quantity and also the value that we can realise out of it," she said.

Noting that India doesn't get the market access to China, she said whether it could be buffalo meat or pharmaceutical generic drugs both of which are bulk goods which they buy from India, but not directly. "They go via Vietnam, they go via somebody else. So, there are items on which we have done better in the export, though they constantly deny market access."

India has taken a conscious call that for some items, capacity should be created within the country. "We may be importing them now. But sooner, you will find that there will be a complete shift. All the active pharmaceutical ingredients at one point in time, India was the leaders... gradually because of predatory pricing, we lost out on that game and we are not producing any. But now we've given incentives for people to restart," she said.

She said industries could produce their own APIs or KPIs also, which are required for our bulk drug industry.

The opposition's GDP number agenda had mala fide intent guiding it. "What hurts me more is to see them rejoice at what they perceive as India's failure. This country, against all odds, the people of this country against all odds, are doing their best bit and India is growing as a result of that," Sitharaman said.

On freebies and welfare schemes, Sitharaman said if a scheme is properly budgeted and financially sustainable, it shouldn't be sensationalised or strictly categorised as a "freebie." However, she warned against the dangers of unplanned welfare, noting that allocating 80 percent of tax collections to committed expenditures leaves only 20 percent for vital capital investments like schools and hospitals.

Discussing the financial strain of unplanned freebies, she cited an example of a previously revenue-surplus state that fell into a revenue deficit within three years. She noted that such states then seek to borrow beyond the established ceiling of 3 percent of their Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) just to run the government.

Addressing concerns around digital payments, she clarified that the proposed Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on UPI transactions is not a tax, cess or surcharge, and it does not go into the government's tax kitty. She assured that the MDR is strictly a fee between the merchant and the service provider and will not be passed on to the consumer.

Russia backs India's claim to UNSC seat

rope of doing everything to block a peaceful settlement with Ukraine and disrupt negotiation prospects favoured by many, including the Trump administration.

Lavrov claimed several EU leaders of being infected with racial superiority, encouraging the rise of what he called Ukrainian Nazism.

The Russian foreign minister said the UN's core principles were being put at risk, with the West overlooking the spread of Nazism in Ukraine.

China, US agree to AI safety channel; keep trade, military talks alive

summit, the two leaders agreed to extend a trade truce by two months. The White House statement said China agreed to import at least 10 million metric tons of coal from the US in 2027 and 2028.

Most of the reduction in tariffs is aimed at non-sensitive goods, such as agricultural products or holiday decorations.

The statement from the White House also said the two sides continued to work on American concerns about rare earths supply, "with the goal of ensuring shipment levels return to appropriate levels." China put export controls on rare earths last year in response to the US tariffs, cutting the supply sent to the US and other countries.

Both sides agreed to meet at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Shenzhen, China, in November, and then later at the G20 at the Trump National Doral Miami golf club in Florida.

Both also said that Iran should honour its stated commitment to not develop nuclear weapons, and that no country should charge a toll on international waterways, in reference to the Strait of Hormuz, which has seen significantly reduced traffic since the US war with Iran began.

The US statement also said it welcomed China's move to add export controls for an additional two precursor chemicals for fentanyl, and both noted that law enforcement had been able to make arrests in fentanyl-related cases recently.

Although the visit produced no major breakthroughs on the countries' fundamental differences, analysts said the incremental steps were noteworthy.

"Personal diplomacy between the two leaders is important, but the emphasis on working-level engagement, military-to-military dialogue and crisis-management mechanisms suggests an effort to make that stability more durable and institutionalised," said Wang Zichen, deputy secretary-general of the Beijing-based think tank Centre for China and Globalisation.

INDIA bloc parties to meet over EC row

added.

The CPI(M), CPI and CPI(ML)-Liberation have de-

manded the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and an immediate halt to the SIR, while the Congress has also stepped up its attack on Kumar.

The Congress Working Committee is scheduled to meet on September 29 to discuss its strategy on the issue.

The developments have also brought West Bengal's bitter political rivals, the Mamata Banerjee-led TMC and the CPI(M), on the same page on the Election Commission issue.

CPI(M) general secretary M A Baby wrote to the INDIA bloc and other opposition leaders seeking a meeting over the developments, and subsequently spoke to Banerjee, who agreed the situation warranted coordinated action.

Opposition parties are working on a fresh removal notice against CEC Kumar, which is likely to be submitted in both Houses of Parliament after being vetted by legal experts. It would be the third such attempt by the opposition.

The opposition's latest mobilisation follows an Indian Express report that Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi raised objections on several occasions over decisions and orders regarding the SIR.

The Election Commission has said that differing views and observations are a normal part of institutional deliberations and asserted that its orders have full legal sanction and follow statutory procedures.

Earlier, 23 political parties and an Independent MP jointly approached the Chief Justice of India over the SIR process and other election-related issues, underlining the broader opposition coordination on the issue.

Trump rejects Iran proposal to reopen Strait of Hormuz

bombing campaign on Iran after the November US midterm elections.

"President Trump has vacillated between extreme optimism, saying that 'talks are going well' to 'I want to annihilate Iran'," Hanna said about the recent diplomacy between Washington and Tehran.

"There is no consistency in terms of the (Trump) administration's reaction," he said.

But "the one thing that has been made clear by President Trump is that he is content to stay in the status of limbo", Hanna added, despite concerns from much of the American public that the Iran conflict is turning into another "never-ending war".

12 killed, 18 injured in suicide attack in northwest Pakistan

Baloch said most of those killed and wounded were security personnel and passersby.

The Pakistani Taliban, known as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, or TTP, claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement. Pakistan has experienced a surge in militant attacks in recent years, many of them claimed by the TTP and the outlawed Baloch Liberation Army, or BLA, a separatist group mainly active in neighbouringBalochistan province.

Pakistani officials have repeatedly accused the Afghan Taliban of allowing TTP members to operate from Afghan soil and have demanded that Kabul prevent cross-border attacks into Pakistan. Afghan authorities have denied allowing their territory to be used for attacks against other countries.

The latest attack came two days after fighting between Pakistan and Afghanistan along their southwestern border killed at least 13 Afghan Taliban, according to Pakgovernment. It was the latest escalation between the neighbours following Pakistani strikes on alleged militant hideouts inside Afghanistan this week. The renewed hostilities threaten mediation efforts by China, Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia aimed at securing lasting peace between the two countries.

Substance abuse in children not just health concern: CJI

Bhavan here, Justice Kant cited a recent Lancet study to say that at least one in five teenagers in India were at moderate to high risk of substance abuse.

"Substance abuse among children must be understood not only as a matter of public health concern, but as a child protection issue as well," he said.

Justice Kant stressed the need for a "child-sensitive response" to addition to protect not only the child's physical and mental well-being but also their dignity and sense of self-worth.

He said, "Restoration means creating conditions in which a child can again experience what childhood ought to provide -- education, relationship, play, trust, and the confidence of a future beyond the present difficulty."

India stresses resilient health systems, pandemic preparedness

two UN entities, while providing medical assistance to over 150 countries. She said this reflected India's commitment to the principle of "One Earth, One Health" and to the Global South.

Referring to the WHO Pandemic Agreement adopted in May 2025, the Union health secretary described it as an important milestone and stressed that its credibility would depend on a fair Pathogen Access and Benefit Sharing (PABS) system.

She emphasised that countries contributing pathogens and biological resources must receive timely access to vaccines, diagnostics, therapeutics, technologies and other benefits, while respecting national sovereignty.

Srivastava stated that the political declaration should not prejudice ongoing negotiations on the PABS annex and should be implemented in accordance with national circumstances and capacities. On the 'One Health' approach, she called for its implementation, as appropriate, in accordance with domestic law, international law and national circumstances.

She also underlined the importance of member states' role in reviewing and consolidating pandemic prevention, preparedness and response tools, assessments and data, noting that such processes should be undertaken in consultation with member states given their policy implications.

Concluding her speech, Srivastava highlighted that preparedness is a shared responsibility and that equity must remain central to efforts to address future pandemics and outbreaks. "Global solidarity must be demonstrated through action," she said.

WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pointed to the progress made in strengthening the global health security architecture since COVID-19, including the WHO Pandemic Agreement and amendments to the International Health Regulations.

He stressed the urgency of concluding negotiations on the PABS system, noting that delays could affect the world's ability to respond to future pandemics.