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Trump slaps tariffs on drugs, trucks, furniture

The new tariffs, including 100% duties on branded drugs and 25% on heavy-duty trucks, take effect Oct. 1; Trump justifies move as response to large-scale 'flooding' of such goods into U.S.

Reuters

WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump on Thursday unveiled a new round of punishing tariffs on a broad range of imported goods in U.S., including 100% duties on branded drugs and 25% tariffs on heavy-duty trucks, set to take effect next week.

The announcements, made on Truth Social, did not include details about whether the new levies would apply on top of national tariffs or whether economies with trade deals such as the EU and Japan would be exempted.

Mr. Trump also said he would start charging a 50% tariff on kitchen cabinets and bathroom vanities and a 30% tariff on upholstered furniture, with all the new



More pain points

President Trump slapped fresh tariffs on specific sectors after imposing sweeping global tariffs

100%
tariff on any branded or patented pharmaceutical product unless the firm is building a plant in U.S.

25%
tariff on heavy-duty trucks; key exporters include Mexico, Canada, Japan, Germany, Finland

30-35%
tariffs on household furniture — kitchen cabinets, bathroom vanities, and upholstered furniture

duties to take effect from October 1.

"The reason for this is the large scale 'FLOODING' of these products into the U.S. by other outside Countries," Mr. Trump said on Truth Social.

The new actions are seen as part of the Trump administration's shift to better-established legal authorities for its tariff ac-

tions, given the risks associated with a case before the Supreme Court on the legality of his sweeping global tariffs.

The new 100% tariff on any branded pharmaceutical product will apply to all imports unless the company has already broken ground on building a manufacturing plant in the U.S., Mr. Trump said.

The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, an industry group, said companies "continue to announce hundreds of billions in new U.S. investments. Tariffs risk those plans."

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SUDDEN IMPACT UNLIKELY

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'GST Council did not discuss compensation for States'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The GST Council did not discuss the issue of compensating States for revenue loss due to the latest rate cuts, the Finance Ministers of Telangana and Kerala, members of the council, told *The Hindu*.

The Ministers added that the GST substantially increased the dependence of the States on the Central government and had eroded their ability to raise their own funds for developmental expenditure.

Speaking at *The Hindu* MIND event in New Delhi, Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu and Kerala Finance Minister K.N. Balagopal opened up about the issues that the States had with the current Centre-State fiscal dynamic.

"The Government of In-

dia had assured the States that they would get 14% tax as against the pre-GST period where it used to be somewhere around 14%-18%," Mr. Mallu (who also holds the Finance portfolio) explained. "But by the end of this period, what we have realised is that, forget about 18%, they have not stabilised 14% growth in tax revenue in these five years. It is around 7%-8%."

Coupled with this is the fact that the bulk of the expenditure in the country is incurred by the States, while most of the revenue goes to the Centre.

Use of cess

"As per the Fifteenth Finance Commission report, around 64% of the total expenditure of the entire government is borne by the State governments," Mr. Balagopal said. "And they are saying that out of the



Fiscal dialogue: Kerala Finance Minister K.N. Balagopal (right) with Deputy CM of Telangana Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

total revenue of the government, all over India, around 63%-64% is coming to the Union. So, two-thirds of the expenditure is borne by the States but two-thirds of the revenue goes to the Centre."

This structure, the Ministers added, was further unbalanced by the Centre's use of cesses. They said that while the Fifteenth Fi-

nance Commission had recommended that the Centre share 41% of its revenue with the States, about 20% of its revenue comes from cesses that do not need to be shared. As a result, about 30%-32% of Central taxes are actually shared with the States.

Expecting a significant hit to revenues due to the Centre's proposed rate

cuts, eight States, including Kerala and Telangana, met in Delhi prior to the GST Council meeting on September 3 and decided to ask the council for compensation.

"Actually, in the agenda, the compensation question was also there," Mr. Balagopal said. "But that agenda was not discussed. We gave our speeches, we gave our note, but what could happen on a compensation cess was not discussed."

Mr. Mallu said all of these factors increased the States's dependence on the Centre and that the GST system would need a considerable rethink.

"The dependency on the Centre for the States... has increased with the GST system because the entire collection is coming to the Centre, and from the Centre, it is coming to the

States," Mr. Mallu said.

Mr. Balagopal said the GST rate rationalisation committee, which usually receives detailed reports on any rationalisation plans, did not receive one prior to the latest decisions.

"I was in the GST rate rationalisation committee for the last 3-4 years," he explained. "When we were sitting in the meeting, all the detailed study reports used to come. This time, no report came, only the Union Government's suggestion. So, a detailed analysis was not done."

"How much is the loss, there's no clear picture," Mr. Balagopal added. "We calculated that for Kerala, we are going to see around ₹8,000 crore-₹10,000 crore revenue loss. Every State has its calculation. So, the actual all-India picture is not there."

Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q. Consider the following items: [2018]

1. Cereal grains hulted
2. Chicken eggs cooked
3. Fish processed and canned
4. Newspaper containing advertising material

Which of the above items is/are exempted under GST (Goods and Services Tax)?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Q. What is/are the most likely advantages of implementing 'Goods and Services Tax' (GST)? (2017)

1. It will replace multiple taxes collected by multiple authorities and will thus create a single market in India.
2. It will drastically reduce the 'Current Account Deficit' of India and will enable it to increase its foreign exchange reserves.
3. It will enormously increase the growth and size of the economy of India and will enable it to overtake China in the near future.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 1 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3
- Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Cannot completely ban, need 'balanced approach' on firecrackers, says SC

It warns that a total ban could lead to mafia control; CJI stresses need for a policy that protects both the right to livelihood of workers in firecracker industry and the right to clean environment

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday said a complete ban on firecrackers would open the field for the mafia to capture the industry and illegally peddle their wares to the gullible public.

A Bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) B.R. Gavai referred to how a total ban on mining in Bihar had led to the mafia moving in.

'Virtual turnaround'

"As we have experienced in the past, a complete ban cannot be implemented," the CJI observed on the futility of trying to exert an iron-handed and totalitarian approach on the fire-



Manufacturers certified to produce green crackers can continue their operations, the top court said. FILE PHOTO

cracker industry that employs thousands of workers.

The top court, in a virtual turnaround, called for a "balanced approach" – a policy that would ensure that the right to earn a live-

lihood in the firecracker industry would coexist with the right to a clean environment without suffering from the after-effects of air pollution.

The Bench directed the Environment Ministry to find a solution that would weigh in all the considerations. The court has been asked to hear out all the stakeholders, including firecracker manufacturers and sellers.

'Provide undertaking'

Meanwhile, the court allowed manufacturers – certified by the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute and the Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation to produce green crackers – to continue operations.

The court directed these manufacturers to provide an undertaking that they would not sell their products in prohibited areas until further orders.

In the previous hearing on September 12, the CJI had mooted the need to frame and implement a uniform policy for the manufacture, sale, and use of firecrackers in the country.

"If firecrackers have to be banned, it has to be done for the entire country... Also the poor who are dependent on this industry have to be looked into," the CJI had observed.

The top court had confirmed an "all-pervasive, permanent" ban on firecrackers in Delhi and the National Capital Region in April this year.

Q. How is the National Green Tribunal (NGT) different from the Central Pollution Control Board [2018]

1. The NGT has been established by an Act whereas the CPCB has been created by an executive order of the Government.
2. The NGT provides environmental justice and helps reduce the burden of litigation in the higher courts whereas the CPCB promotes cleanliness of streams and wells, and aims to improve the quality of air in the country.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2



New farming technology holds potential to stop desertification

Mohammed Iqbal
AJMER

An innovative experiment to grow wheat for the first time in the arid land, using desert 'soilification' technology powered by an indigenous bioformulation, holds the potential to stop the expansion of western Rajasthan's Thar desert towards the National Capital Region. The desertification process has speeded up with gradual destruction of the Aravali ranges.

Wheat in desert

Amid the changes in the rainfall pattern, spread of sand dunes, unscientific plantation drives and degradation of land, the researchers at the Central University of Rajasthan (CUoR) here have taken up an experiment for wheat farming, fighting against odds and



The first-ever wheat crop grown on desert land at Banseli village in Rajasthan's Ajmer district. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT.

coming to terms with the harsh desert ecology.

The researchers have essentially carried out modification of desert sand into soil using polymers for reaping its full agricultural potential. After the laboratory experiment with three bioformulations and three crops – bajra, guar gum and chickpea – the scientific exploration has been shifted

to an agricultural field for growing wheat.

The groundbreaking achievement was made with 13 kg seeds of wheat-4079 indigenous variety, which were grown at 1,000 sq. metres of desert land at Banseli village near Pushkar in Ajmer district in November 2024. Following the application of bioformulation during the crop cycle,

the wheat required only three irrigations, which demonstrated the technology's high water-retention efficacy.

Akhil Agrawal, Associate Professor in CUoR's Department of Microbiology, who led the group of researchers, told *The Hindu* that the bioformulation developed by the team had enhanced water retention in sandy soil, promoted cross-linking of sand particles to improve soil structure, and stimulated beneficial microbial activity that boosted the crop's stress resistance.

The crop was harvested in April 2025, yielding 26 kg of wheat per 100 sq. metres. The ratio of seeds sown and harvested was 1:20, which was twice in the polymer-amended sand in comparison with the arid land zone.

The project was execut-

ed with the support of the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) and the State government's Horticulture Department, whose facilitation helped scale the field-level trials in a real desert environment. The KVK officials designed the layout plan on the land, which is situated at the edge of Thar desert.

"This experiment is an example of applied science turning into societal impact," Prof. Agrawal said, adding that it had proved that even barren desert land could become agriculturally productive using the right biotechnological approach. Research scholar Diksha Kumari, who executed the field implementation, said the reduced water input and healthy crop growth in a "hostile environment" were important aspects of the work.

The number of irrigation

cycles were reduced to four using the bioformulation when compared to five to six cycles for normal wheat agriculture, as the solution converted sand into soil-like structure.

Higher yield

In the second phase, an experimental field was prepared in a 400 sq. feet area on the university campus by spreading 100 tonnes of sand brought from Jaisalmer. The bajra, guar gum and chickpea were tested in the field trial, where the researchers got 54% higher yield in bioformulation-amended sand.

Encouraged by the success of the pilot wheat crop, the CUoR plans to expand the technology to other crops such as millet and green gram in the dry regions of Rajasthan and beyond.

Trees illegally felled on forest land given to Satsang: NGT report

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Trees have been illegally felled in 40.34 hectares of forest land given to Radha Soami Satsang Beas in Haryana's Panchkula, as per the report of a National Green Tribunal (NGT)-appointed committee. In April this year, the tribunal formed a three-member committee headed by a retired district judge, after an applicant raised allegations of illegal felling of trees.

The possession of the land was handed over to Radha Soami Satsang Beas in 1998 by the Forest Department of Haryana for setting up a centre, as per the report. When the land

was handed over, there were 4,322 trees of different species and 1,128 saplings, the report said.

Transfer conditions

The land was given with conditions, including one that banned felling of trees. "The forest land diverted shall be utilised only for plantation of trees and no construction will be undertaken over the land," read one of them.

"However, it appears that the Respondent-02 (Radha Soami Satsang) has cleared the natural trees species of the forest and has also constructed certain structures resulting in change in the layout," the report said.





Amit Kirtiarya at a practice session at the National Centre for Divyang Empowerment in Rangareddy district. In June 2023, after stepping on an IED, Kirtiarya lost both legs, sustained 95% physical disability in his right arm, and lost vision in his right eye. NAGARA DOPRA

Giving warriors a fighting chance

In 2020, the National Centre for Divyang Empowerment was established as an exclusive facility for training CAPF personnel who suffer injuries and become physically challenged in the line of duty. In five years, the centre has trained 219 Divyang warriors, producing medal-winning para-athletes and IT professionals. **Vijaita Singh and Naveen Kumar** report on how the facilities on campus give the injured a new lease of life

Until a year ago, Amit Kirtiarya, 33, would tremble with fear every time he heard the sound of a utensil dropping on the floor. The clatter would disrupt his sleep and bring back traumatic memories. On June 5, 2023, Kirtiarya, a constable with the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), and two of his colleagues were patrolling the hills of Bijapur district in Chhattisgarh after receiving information that Maoists were on the move. Suddenly, there was an explosion. "We were thrown in the air in different directions," Kirtiarya recalls. The three men lay bleeding on the hill. A few hours later, a rescue team arrived and flew them by chopper to a government hospital nearby. The area had been filled with improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), Kirtiarya says. Having stepped on one, he lost both legs, sustained 95% physical disability in his right arm, and lost vision in his right eye.

"A day later, I was airlifted by an air ambulance to Delhi's All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) where I was admitted for 15 days," he says. "I was awake and conscious. The doctors sought my permission to amputate my legs above the knee. I had watched a viral video which gave me hope that I would be able to walk again with artificial limbs. So, I agreed."

The CRPF, one of the seven Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) in India, helped him get artificial limbs last April at the National Centre for Divyang Empowerment (NCDE) in Hyderabad. Divyang, which means disabled body part, was a term introduced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015 to refer to persons with disabilities.

Located at the CRPF Group Centre in Hakimpet, on the outskirts of Hyderabad in Telangana's Rangareddy district, the NCDE is the only facility of its kind in the country. Conceived by former CRPF chief, Dr. A.P. Maheshwari, and inaugurated in December 2020, the NCDE is an exclusive facility for training CAPF personnel who suffer injuries and become physically challenged in the line of duty. In just five years, the NCDE has trained over 219 'Divyang warriors', as they are called on campus, producing medal-winning para-athletes and skilled IT professionals.

Infrastructural support

The NCDE has a sprawling campus. It has about 180 barracks, each divided into 10x10 feet cubicles fitted with a table, chair, wardrobe with adjustable handles, a motorised bed, a shoe rack, and a window. Of the barracks, more than 100 are wheelchair-friendly, complete with attendant support. It is common to see Divyang warriors rise from their wheelchairs to salute superiors.

The campus is equipped with wide ramps and elevators, and motorised buggies and vans to ferry trainees across its grounds. A hospital behind its main complex was built to handle emergencies. The Renault Group, a French multinational automobile manufacturer, has pledged motor-

ised wheelchairs, sports chairs, and a bus by November 2025, signalling further expansion of mobility support to the personnel on campus.

Kirtiarya says the artificial limbs were uncomfortable at first, but have now become a part of him. "I remove them while resting or sleeping. It takes 57 minutes to wear the entire gear, which requires servicing too. In the monsoon season, the equipment retains moisture and needs further maintenance," he says.

The constable, who used to trek for miles in jungles wearing a bulletproof jacket and carrying a gun, has been training to be an archer at the NCDE for the last one and a half years. His batch consists of 20 trainees. Seven of them have already been selected for national games ranging from archery to discus throw. The trainees are also provided skill development classes in IT, which are run in collaboration with BITS Pilani. Kirtiarya's efforts have resulted in some success. The father of two children won two medals – a bronze and a silver – at the Khelo India Para Games this year. He is happy, but says he misses the jungles. "I trained to be a fighter, but now I am a sportsperson," he says.

The physical training infrastructure at the campus is comprehensive. A ramp leads to a fully equipped gym, tailored for the needs of persons with disabilities, with specially designed machines calibrated to their strengths and requirements. Physiotherapists guide them through sessions that focus on improving gait, strengthening arms, and shedding excess weight gained during recovery. Separate physiotherapy rooms offer focused exercises to restore mobility. At a meditation hall, two daily sessions of deep relaxation, mindfulness, and progressive muscle relaxation are conducted to reduce stress, anxiety, and minimise trauma. The counselling wing, led by specialists, focuses on post-traumatic stress disorder and trauma care. The wing also often handles cases of candidates who feel suicidal.

"Our goal is to instil confidence in the people here so that they can lead a dignified life even



A badminton practice session at the National Centre for Divyang Empowerment. NAGARA DOPRA

with a physical disability," says Dr. K. Nagarajana, a clinical psychologist at the wing.

The risk of dangerous operations

The CRPF is the main force deployed for anti-Maoist operations. In the 38 districts in India affected by Left Wing Extremism (LWE), 15 were located in Chhattisgarh in 2024. Following a directive by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, security forces have intensified operations in LWE-affected States, particularly Chhattisgarh, since 2023. Continuous operations have led to a sharp decline in LWE-affected districts from 126 in 2003 to 18 districts in April 2025. Four of the six most affected districts are in Chhattisgarh, according to data from the Ministry.

However, these operations have also led to many grievous injuries. Since 2016, at least 46 CRPF personnel have lost limbs in IED explosions in LWE-affected areas. In 2023, 10 personnel had to undergo amputations as their limbs were damaged in explosions.

On July 27, Union Home Secretary Gopal Mohan said that CAPF personnel who get severely injured during operations and have to undergo amputation will be allowed to continue in service until retirement with all the benefits. Mohan said the government will ensure that the best medical facilities and technology are available for limb replacement surgery for CAPF personnel.

Until July 30 this year, the NCDE had facilitated the fitting of 106 artificial limbs while 135 fittings are under process. Rehabilitation includes personnel who suffer bullet wounds and injuries from road accidents while on their way to duty or on leave.

According to Veer Raju, Deputy Inspector General, CRPF, who is in charge of NCDE, the affected personnel are screened when they come to the institute. Based on their level of interest, they are assigned jobs. Some opt for sports, while others help gather intelligence through data mining or monitor social media.

The personnel usually stay on campus for one to two months, sometimes with their families. Those who are selected for sports stay on campus permanently. Those who leave, after undergoing tests, get clerical or desk jobs.

"The NCDE caters to the rehabilitation of CAPF personnel who are injured while fighting LWE, terrorism or insurgency in the Northeast. One of the most difficult tasks for the CRPF is to operate in LWE areas, where Maoists frequently plant bombs to demoralise troops. The injured personnel endure trauma all their lives, so we want to instil hope in them," he says.

The officer adds that injured jawans have 'phantom limb syndrome', a condition where individuals who have had a limb amputated continue to feel sensations such as pain, as if they still have a limb. "They have to be counselled," he says. "This syndrome has to be managed systematically and scientifically."

Winning medals

Raju adds that once a para-athlete born with physical challenges, CAPF personnel have to adapt to the sudden bodily changes. "Some of the injured personnel are now participating in games at the national level and planning to compete in international games. They are soldiers who are determined and motivated. At one point, they stayed in jungles for 15 days at a stretch, walking 40-50 kilometres with weapons and bags weighing 10-15 kilograms. That kind of survival strategy comes in handy when they switch to sports."



I used to rank last in the games. I told myself, 'If others can do it, why not me?' With practice I improved and I have won five medals at the national level.

RAMANUJ KUMAR
Constable

for extensive rehabilitation.

On October 27, 2023, he received his limb fitting at the NCDE. Under the guidance of his coach, Pankaj Kumar trained in archery and was inducted into the para archery team at the national level in 2024. Kumar won a silver medal at the 13th All India Police meet, a gold and two silver medals at the 6th Para Nationals 2025, and a silver at the 2nd Khelo India Games 2025. He ranked seventh at the European Para Archery Cup in Rome, eighth at the Asian Para Archery Championships in Beijing, and fourth at the Para Archery World Ranking event in the Czech Republic. Now, all eyes are on him at the ongoing World Archery Para Championships in Gwangju, Korea. The centre has arranged a live link to watch him perform, and anticipation runs high.

A senior government official says CAPF personnel have to be physically fit to be eligible for promotions. After a CAPF personnel is injured in an operation, a medical board is constituted to decide if they are employable with the existing disabilities. "If the board decides that the personnel are not fit to continue in service, they are compulsorily retired but are given full pension and other financial entitlements. However, if the board rules otherwise, they are accommodated in other roles," says the official.

The official says good quality prosthetics are expensive. Often the reimbursement of the cost incurred is according to the rates decided by the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS). The CAPF's welfare fund was used to meet the short fall, but this was not found to be enough as the CGHS rates for prostheses have not been changed since 2014. In April, the government decided to use the money from the Bharat Ke Veer platform, launched by then Home Minister Rajnath Singh in 2017 to help the families of paramilitary personnel killed in combat operations. It was registered as a trust in 2018 and the donations were exempted from income tax.

The beginnings

Former CRPF Director General A.P. Maheshwari, who started the NCDE, says, "In 2002 when I was posted as an Inspector General with the CRPF, I met a jawan who lost both his legs in an IED explosion in Jharkhand. When he was offered compensation, he asked me, 'What will I do with the money?' Sometimes they were assigned roles as telephone operators or they were made to sit at a ration shop. That is when I decided that something should be done to give them a dignified life."

Maheshwari says it took another eight years for NCDE to materialise. Now it serves as a single-window system to address the grievances of physically disabled troops. He says it was a matter of concern that an increasing number of personnel were losing limbs on duty. And while the government was providing a financial package for them, the real challenge was to re-employ them as many were being "boarded out" due to the physical disabilities. "That also had an adverse psychological impact on other soldiers who thought that if they lost their limbs, they would also be in a similar position," Maheshwari says.

The officer adds, "While there were efforts by the government, they were decentralised. Depending on the rank, the personnel had to run from one office to another to get medically examined, get the limbs sanctioned. Now, everything is available at one centre. The idea is that they should not feel helpless or worthless."

Sanjit Singh Rawat, who has been training the para-shooting team for the past two years, says, "I used to train able-bodied athletes earlier. I found that para-athletes have stronger willpower. We train them to improve their mental strength and also focus on their wellness."

Aiming high

Constable Ramanuj Kumar, 33, was a navigator. His job was to lead the team with the help of GPS coordinates. On June 14, 2020, he stepped on an IED in Chhattisgarh and lost his right leg below the knee.

"I saw my leg fly in the air and fall into the bushes. The other leg was badly injured. More than pain, I remember feeling a burning sensation. While one leg was cut below the knee, the other was amputated above the knee. Initially, I fell down multiple times from my bed. I used to wake up at night to go to the bathroom or to fetch water thinking I still have legs," Kumar says.

The constable has embraced shot put and discus throw as part of the "second innings" of his life. The gym and physiotherapy facilities at the NCDE, with specially designed equipment and a separate physiotherapy room, have helped him strengthen his arms and improve his gait. He also attends meditation sessions.

"I do not want friends and family to look at me with pity. I came to the NCDE and took to sports. When they were screening me for eligibility, I used to rank last in the games. I told myself, 'If others can do it, why not me?' With practice I improved and I have won five medals at the national level," Kumar says.

Kumar is also focusing on strength training. "Since I go to the gym regularly, my prostheses require frequent servicing and maintenance. After getting artificial limbs, and due to the uneven structure of my legs, I faced trouble while balancing my walk, but I am used to it now. I want to go international. I know it's a long way but I am working towards it," says Kumar, whose display picture on WhatsApp shows him posing in the forests of Chhattisgarh in a camouflage uniform and ankle-length boots, holding an AK-47 rifle.

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In 2019, three Ministries gave nod to Ladakh's tribal status

Ministries of Home, Tribal Affairs, and Law, and NCST concurred on Sixth Schedule; but in 2022, Centre said the UT administration was ensuring the 'development' that tribal status would bring

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

Weeks after the Union Territory of Ladakh was created in August 2019, three Ministries of the Union government gave a green light to the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) to recommend Ladakh's inclusion as a tribal area under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, according to minutes of an NCST meeting held on September 11, 2019, seen by *The Hindu*.

Six years ago, the NCST had taken *suo motu* cognisance of the demand for the inclusion of Ladakh in the Sixth Schedule. In a meeting on September 11, 2019, it had recommended "after careful consideration" that the "UT of Ladakh be brought under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution".

'No objection'

As per the minutes of this 119th meeting of the Commission, the panel had consulted the Ministries of Home, Tribal Affairs, and



People of Leh stage a protest demanding Statehood for Ladakh and inclusion of the Union Territory in the Sixth Schedule. FILE PHOTO

Law and Justice in a meeting on September 4, 2019, to discuss the issue. In this meeting, the Commission said that after deliberations, the "Ministries were of the opinion that they have no objection in case the Commission recommends for granting Tribal area status to the UT of Ladakh in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution."

Accordingly, the Commission had recommended the UT's inclusion in the Sixth Schedule, also noting that before the creation of Ladakh as a UT, the locals had certain agrarian rights and rights over land that

restricted people from outside the region from purchasing or acquiring land in Ladakh.

In its recommendation, the committee said it felt that Ladakh's inclusion in the Sixth Schedule would protect these agrarian rights, including rights on land.

While the Ministry of Tribal Affairs issued a statement on this recommendation of the Commission at the time, this statement had left out the opinion of the Ministries.

The Home Ministry told Parliament in December 2019 that the Ladakh Auto-

nomous Hill Development Council Act, 1997, already provided for the creation of autonomous hill development councils in the Ladakh region, the powers for which are "more or less in line with the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India".

BJP's poll promise

However, the following year, when the Hill Council of Leh went to polls in 2020, the Bharatiya Janata Party had promised constitutional safeguards for the region under the Sixth Schedule in its manifesto.

Yet, in December 2022, responding to a Parliamentary panel's suggestion to explore the possibility of Sixth Schedule status to Ladakh, the Home Ministry had said: "The main objective for inclusion of tribal population under Fifth/Sixth Schedule is to ensure their overall socio-economic development, which, the UT Administration has already been taking care of since its creation. Sufficient funds are being provided to Ladakh to meet its overall developmental requirements."

Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

- Q. The provisions in Fifth Schedule and Sixth Schedule in the Constitution of India are made in order to [2015]
- protect the interests of Scheduled Tribes
 - determine the boundaries between States
 - determine the powers, authority and responsibilities of Panchayats
 - protect the interests of all the border States



Modi unveils scheme for women in Bihar, criticises RJD's reign

75 lakh women get ₹10,000 each to start business; PM says women bore the brunt of lawlessness and corruption under previous RJD regime

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

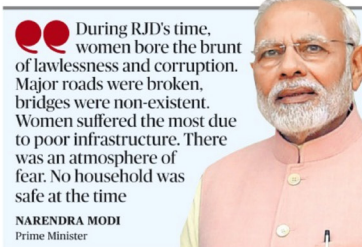
Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Mukhyamantri Mahila Rojgar Yojana, a State-funded assistance scheme for women in Bihar, on Friday.

He rolled out the self-employment scheme through videoconferencing from Delhi, and directly transferred ₹10,000 each into the bank accounts of 75 lakh women in the poll-bound State.

Chief Minister and JD(U) leader Nitish Kumar as well as Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary of the BJP joined the event from Patna.

The programme was initially scheduled for September 22, with only the Chief Minister slated to release the funds. However, a senior State BJP leader later suggested that, in view of the coming Assembly election, the Prime Minister's participation would send a stronger message on women's empowerment.

The scheme is meant to help women start their own business. Based on their performance, the go-



vernment will provide an additional ₹2 lakh after six months. The assistance can be utilised in areas of their choice, including agriculture, animal husbandry, handicrafts, tailoring, weaving, and other small-scale enterprises.

Transferring a total of ₹7,500 crore for the scheme on Friday, Mr. Modi criticised the earlier RJD government and urged everyone not to forget the days when Bihar was under the "lantern government", referring to the RJD's election symbol.

"During that time, women in Bihar bore the brunt of lawlessness and corruption. Major roads were broken, bridges were non-existent. Women suffered the most due to poor

infrastructure. During floods, the hardships used to intensify, with pregnant women unable to reach hospitals on time," he said.

'Daughters safe now'

There was an atmosphere of fear during the RJD's rule in Bihar, he said. "No household was safe. Maoist violence was unchecked. From the poor to families of doctors and IAS officers, none was spared from the atrocities committed by RJD leaders," Mr. Modi said.

He emphasised that under the leadership of Mr. Kumar, the rule of law has been restored in Bihar and its daughters now step out of their homes without fear and have the freedom to work even late at night.

AFSPA extended in parts of Manipur, Arunachal, and Nagaland for six months

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry on Friday extended the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act in parts of Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, and Nagaland for six months.

In Manipur, the AFSPA has been extended in the whole State, except in jurisdictions of 13 police sta-

tions in five valley districts.

The excluded police station limits are Imphal, Lamphel, City, Singjamei, Patsoi, Wangoi, Porompat, Heingang, Irilbung, Thoubal, Bishnupur, Nambol, and Kakching.

In Nagaland, the AFSPA was extended for six months in nine districts – Dimapur, Niuland, Chumoukedima, Mon, Kiphire, Noklak, Phek, Peren and

Meluri – and 21 police station limits of five districts (Kohima, Mokokchung, Longleng, Wokha and Zunheboto), another notification said.

Tirap, Changlang and Longding districts in Arunachal Pradesh, and the areas falling within the jurisdiction of Namsai, Mahadevpur and Chowkham police stations in Namsai district, bordering Assam,

were declared "disturbed areas" for six months.

The 1958 law gives power to the Army and the Central Armed Police Forces deployed in "disturbed areas" to kill anyone acting in contravention of law, arrest and search any premises without a warrant, and protection from prosecution and legal suits without the Union government's sanction.

Gujarat police to recruit transgender people as traffic marshal

Abhinav Deshpande
AHMEDABAD

The Gujarat police are planning to launch a pilot project to recruit members of the transgender community as traffic marshals in Ahmedabad, officials told *The Hindu*. The initiative is aimed at involving the community in traffic management and creating employment opportunities in public service.

Under the plan, the marshals would assist traffic police personnel in regulating vehicular movement at busy junctions in the city. Senior officers said discussions are under way to decide the number of recruits and their deployment locations. Training modules will be prepared to equip the recruits for duties.

"This is part of efforts to integrate members of the transgender community into mainstream roles and provide livelihood opportunities," an official said.

Considered the brainchild of DGP Vikas Sahay, the pilot project is expected to begin in Ahmedabad in the coming months. Depending on its outcome, the State police may consider expanding the initiative to other major cities.

Trump holds talks with Pak. PM in the latest sign of warming ties

Sharif invites Trump to visit Pakistan, hailing him as a 'man of peace whose leadership helped facilitate the May ceasefire with India'; accompanied by Army chief Asim Munir, Sharif also thanks Trump for the U.S.-Pakistan tariff arrangement

Associated Press
WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump hosted Pakistan's Prime Minister, Shehbaz Sharif, for talks on Thursday at the White House in the latest sign of warming relations between the U.S. and the South Asian nuclear power.

Mr. Sharif was among the top officials from eight Arab or Muslim countries who met with Mr. Trump on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly this week to discuss strategy on ending the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza.



U.S. President Donald Trump with Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir in Washington on Thursday. PTI

Ties have improved between the U.S. and Pakistan as Mr. Trump's relationship with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, one of the

Republican President's closest with a world leader during his first term, has become strained over India's increased purchases

of discounted Russian oil after Moscow invaded Ukraine in February 2022.

Mr. Sharif arrived at the White House shortly before 5 p.m. as Mr. Trump was signing executive orders and talking with reporters. The meeting between the two leaders was closed to the media, with Pakistan's delegation leaving the White House at 6:18 p.m.

Invites investments

According to a statement from Mr. Sharif's office, he was accompanied by Pakistan's Army chief, Field Marshal Asim Munir. It said Mr. Sharif praised Mr.

Trump as a "man of peace" whose leadership helped avert a catastrophe by facilitating the May ceasefire with India. He thanked Mr. Trump for the U.S.-Pakistan tariff arrangement concluded earlier this year and invited U.S. companies to invest in Pakistan's agriculture, IT, mining and energy sectors. Both leaders also discussed counterterrorism cooperation, with Mr. Sharif expressing appreciation for Mr. Trump's endorsement of Pakistan's role in combating extremism.

Mr. Sharif extended an invitation for Mr. Trump to make an official visit to Pakistan.