

US imposes new sanctions on Iran shadow fleet

Washington: US imposed fresh sanctions on Iran on Thursday, targeting individuals, networks and 17 vessels for transporting Iranian crude, oil products and petrochemicals, the treasury department said, as Washington stepped up economic pressure on Tehran.

The sanctions are part of the department's "Operation Economic Outcast," which aims to cut Iran's funding for the war with US, missile construction, cyberattacks and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, or IRGC. "Treasury is cutting off the regime's last major source of illicit revenue and strengthening international pressure to hold Tehran accountable," a treasury official said on the condition of anonymity. The move tightens the squeeze on Iranian oil sales. Iran has about 20 million barrels of crude oil left on vessels outside the blockade, off Singapore, Malaysia and China, the treasury official said. REUTERS

Amid Form 7 bulk filing row, EC limits it to 10 per elector

**Cong Said 7,561
Pleas Filed By
1 BJP Worker**

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New Delhi: Election Commission Friday, to discourage bulk submissions of Form 7 (objection to inclusion of an elector in the electoral roll), capped the maximum number of these applications that may be filed by an individual elector during the claims and objections period of special and summary revisions to 10.

For Form 7 applications filed by an individual elector during the period of continuous update of the electoral roll, the upper limit shall be five per month.

The ceilings — which follow Congress flagging bulk filings across many constituencies in Karnataka, including Ballari where a single BJP worker allegedly submitted 7,561 Form 7 applications — will apply to filings by individual electors both in online and offline modes.

In a letter to chief electoral officers of states and UTs, EC explained that while the number of applications to be filed online by an individual elector had been fixed as six at a time, subject to disposal, the number of physical forms presented in bulk had not been defined and was left to the judgement of electoral registration officers (ERO). The new limits seek to remove any scope for ambiguity, an EC officer told **TOI**.

According to Rule 13(2) of Registration of Electors Rules (RER) 1960, every objection



EC directed EROs to take action against false and fabricated forms

to the proposed inclusion of name or application for deletion of name in the electoral roll of a constituency is to be referred only by a person whose name figures in the roll of that constituency.

For the SIR period, EC has allowed booth-level agents of political parties to submit to a booth level officer Form 7 applications in bulk, with a limit of 50 forms per day before the draft publication and 10 forms per day thereafter.

The poll panel Friday said any claim or objection not lodged within the specified period or in the form and manner specified in the rules, shall be rejected by ERO, who will also verify the applicant's name in the electors' list.

Once a Form 7 application is found in line with norms, the ERO shall first issue a notice to the objector, hear him personally, record his statements separately for each Form 7 and satisfy himself about the validity of the objections.

EC directed EROs to take action against false and fabricated Form 7s, including prosecution of the applicant under RP Act 1950 for knowingly making a false statement or declaration in writing.

SC: Prioritise WB challenges to deletions over pleas for deletion

New Delhi: With the Kolkata and Howrah municipal elections due in Dec and lakhs of appeals challenging post-SIR deletion and inclusion of names pending, Supreme Court Friday said the tribunals set up to examine claims should prioritise the challenges to deletions, reports **Dhananjay Mahapatra**.

"There is a large chunk of appeals which seek deletion of names... These can be pushed behind the appeals which seek inclusion of names," said a bench of CJI Surya Kant and Justices Joy-malya Bagchi and V Mohana. They said they would consider on Oct 16 how to expedite hearings on petitions.

The bench's observation came after advocates Prashant Bhushan and G Sankaranarayanan complained that pendency of lakhs of appeals would result in disenfranchising a large number of voters in the municipal elections. It would be appropriate to allow those who have appealed against deletion of their names to vote, they said.

The bench said, "We are already working on the issue of pendency of appeals before the tribunals... Probably, we will find a way via media soon... Why the tribunals are taking time is intrinsically related to issues which require to be fixed including architecture of the software, etc."

Nothing wrong in deleting dead, shifted or duplicate voters: SC

New Delhi: Supreme Court Friday approved the deletion during SIR of names of the dead, those who have shifted out of where they were registered as voters, and those who are registered at two places from electoral rolls, but said only the voter list that had been finalised — either the post-SIR list or the one on Jan 1, 2026 — would be used for local body polls in Andhra Pradesh.

A bench of CJI Surya Kant and Justices Joy-malya Bagchi and V Mohana refused to entertain YSR Congress Party's appeal against Andhra Pradesh HC's decision rejecting its plea for de-

ferment of local body elections till finalisation of SIR of electoral rolls.

The bench said those who had moved away could not be allowed to vote in the wards. Names of duplicate and deceased voters also needed to be struck off, and SIR took care of these anomalies, it said.

On the plea that the HC has directed finalisation of post-SIR voter list by Oct 16, the bench said according to legislation governing panchayats, municipalities and municipal corporations, the elections would be held based on the final voter list available on the date when EC notifies the elections. **TNN**

Researchers identify 5 actions for countries to prepare for El Nino

NEW DELHI, Oct 9 (PTI)

AMIDST predictions of a strongest-on-record El Nino later this year, researchers have put forth five actions through which people around the world could be better prepared for the event, potentially reducing its toll on human health.

The actions are aimed at gaining a comprehensive risk overview, which holds the key to being able to tackle and minimise the likely consequences, including the spread of infectious diseases, malnutrition and various heat-related conditions such as dehydration and heat-stroke, the team, led by the UK's University of Bristol, said.

Published as a correspondence article in "The Lancet" journal, the recommendations call for the

United Nations and other international bodies to address the urgent need to protect health and prevent disease when El Nino is officially declared. Researchers said that as the El Nino cycle can be forecast months in advance, preparatory measures should be put in place to mitigate the impact, especially in countries most vulnerable.

In early September 2026, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said in an update, "El Nino is firmly established and is expected to strengthen further."

"Since the current El Nino pushes many regions into more extreme climates, there's a pressing and unprecedented need to better understand, measure and pinpoint the different dangers for individual countries and

places," lead author Ruby Lieber, senior research associate in climate science at the University of Bristol, said. Although it is widely-acknowledged that El Nino exacerbates wide-ranging health risks posed by climate change, the additional threats presented remain largely unquantified, the researchers added.

The team recommended that National Governments should be supported to assess the effects of El Nino on population health and to implement necessary precautions, including early-warning systems.

They also called to scale up El Nino-focused climate-health attribution studies and use the findings to inform and shape policy and practice.

Continuously review the health effects of El Nino to gain

a comprehensive picture of its evolving impact and help identify and address any evidence gaps, the team advised.

Assess the cost-effectiveness of climate-health measures taken, such as early warning systems, bolstering health system capacity, urban flood protection and food system resilience actions, they said.

Lieber said, "Partnership working is imperative, and such global entities need to urgently call on advances in attribution science to more accurately assess how much of the repercussions are the result of human-induced climate change and how much are a result of El Nino." "By isolating the El Nino-related impacts, we can generate much more targeted and event-specific actions," the lead author said.

UNGA revitalisation must be part of comprehensive, broader UN reforms: India

NEW YORK, Oct 9 (IANS)

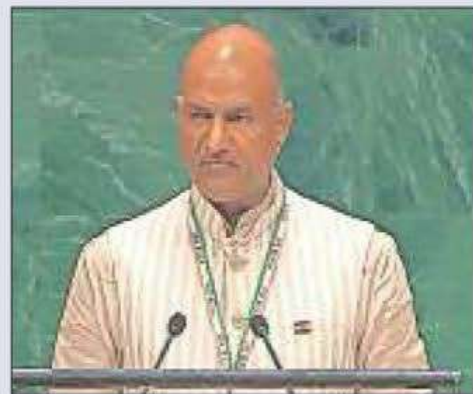
INDIA has said that the revitalisation of the General Assembly must be pursued as part of broader, comprehensive UN reforms to make the organisation more representative, effective, and capable of fulfilling its objectives.

Delivering India's statement at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) plenary on revitalisation of the work of the General Assembly, BJP MP CP

General Assembly alone."

Calling for reforming the UNSC, he said, "The Security Council's inability to effectively discharge its mandate of maintaining international peace and security casts doubt on the functioning of the UNs as a whole. Effective reform of the Security Council, including an expansion of membership in both permanent and elected categories, can no longer be delayed. It is essential that the Security Council

Security Council's inability to effectively discharge its mandate of maintaining international peace and security casts doubt on the functioning of the United Nations as a whole, BJP MP CP Joshi at UNGA



Joshi reiterated India's call for reforming the United Nations Security Council, including an expansion of membership in elected and permanent categories and stressed that it is essential that the Security Council reflects today's global realities. He said, "The revitalisation of the General Assembly must be pursued as part of broader, comprehensive UN reforms to make the organisation more representative, effective, and capable of fulfilling its objectives. The revitalisation of key UN organs cannot be limited to the

reflects today's global realities and enables the United Nations to address current challenges."

Joshi reiterated India's commitment to strengthening and revitalising the central role of the General Assembly and called for improving the working methods of the UNGA in three areas.

Speaking about the selection of the next United Nations Security Council, he said that the process is taking place at a critical juncture as the UN faces serious challenges and called it essential that the best candidate is appointed to this position.

UN report projects India's GDP growth at 7.3 for FY27

NEW DELHI, Oct 9 (IANS)

INDIA continues to be the fastest-growing major economy, with its GDP projected to expand by 7.3 per cent in 2026 (FY27) and 6.8 per cent in 2027 (FY28) due to robust domestic demand, increasing manufacturing capacity, and public infrastructure programmes, a United Nations (UN) report said on Friday.

The UNCTAD's 'Trade and Development Report 2026: the Geoeconomics of Development' said that together, these factors sustain growth for the Indian economy despite heavy reliance on oil imports.

"India continues to post dynamic growth in household consumption, estimated at 6.9 per cent this year and 5.6 per cent next. These rates nonetheless mark a significant deceleration from previous years, as higher prices and input costs rein in expansion," it said. Growth in the developing world is bifurcating. A few large economies are driving global expansion, with India fastest among them at 7.3 per cent in 2026. Import-dependent economies absorb shocks with far less fiscal room and rising debt servicing costs, the report mentioned.

"The Indian DPI model, for example, involves agreements with 23 countries to share its architecture; technical cooperation is already operational in eight countries, including Sri Lanka and the United Arab Emirates," said the report.

Jaishankar and Ethiopian counterpart **DISCUSS TRADE, INVESTMENT, SECURITY**

ADDIS ABABA, Oct 9 (PTI)

EXTERNAL Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held wide-ranging talks with his Ethiopian counterpart Gedion Timothewos Hessebon on Friday, covering areas such as trade, investment, technology, maritime, security, and culture.

Jaishankar, who arrived here from Cote d'Ivoire on the final leg of his three-nation tour of African countries, said he was delighted to meet Foreign Minister Hessebon.

"Had wide-ranging discussions on strengthening our bilateral ties, covering trade, invest-



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar during a meeting with his Ethiopian counterpart Berhanu Tsegaye, in Addis Ababa. (PTI)

ment, development projects to infrastructure, maritime, securi-

ty, technology and culture," he said in a post on social media.

They also exchanged perspectives on global developments, as well as strengthening multilateral engagement and the India-African Union partnership.

"The India-Ethiopia Strategic Partnership is based on our shared values, common aspirations and historic South-South solidarity," Jaishankar said.

Jaishankar, who was welcomed at the airport by State Minister of Foreign Affairs Berhanu Tsegaye, earlier said that he looks "forward to productive engagements to advance our Strategic Partnership."

India slams US Green card suspension for IT firms

MEA also blasts Vance's 'indentured servants' remark

NEW DELHI, Oct 9 (PTI)

INDIA on Friday criticised the US decision to restrict a key green-card processing programme for major global and Indian IT firms, including Tata Consultancy Services and Wipro, saying the move fails to advance the shared ambitions of both nations, and dismissed US Vice President JD

Read Editorial
RIFT WIDENS
on page 8

As part of broader efforts to bring down the number of foreign workers in the US, the Trump administration suspended PERM programme for eight IT majors and launched probes into several universities, a decision that comes amid continuing strain in India-US relations

Vance's characterisation of foreign professionals as 'indentured servants' as entirely "unwarranted and deeply offensive".

As part of broader efforts to bring down the number of foreign workers in the US, the Trump administration suspended the Permanent Labour Certification (PERM) programme for eight IT

majors and launched probes into several universities, a decision that comes amid continuing strain in India-US ties.

The companies facing the action are Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, Wipro, HCL Technologies, Microsoft, Adobe, Capgemini and Cognizant. The PERM is widely



Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) official spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal during the bi-weekly media briefing. (PTI)

considered as a pathway for permanent residency and citizenship in the US. The US decision to freeze the programme is expected to affect thousands of Indian technology professionals who rely on employer-sponsored green cards for permanent residency in the US after entering on H-1B visas. In its reaction,

Microsoft said 80 per cent of the 6000 H-1-B visa applications it had submitted last fiscal year were to extend or change the status of existing employees and not to hire new people.

"We believe in the strength and talent of the American workforce. That is why the vast majority of Microsoft employees in the US are Americans. We look forward to providing the administration with additional information," Microsoft said.

"For example, of the approximately 6,000 H-1B visa applications we submitted in the last fiscal year, 80 per cent were to extend or change the status of existing Microsoft employees. These were not to hire new people," it said.

The remaining filings for new employees were for individuals already legally in the US who decided to come work for us, and

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NEW DELHI

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South African jurist of Indian origin NAVI PILLAY WINS NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

OSLO, Oct 9 (PTI)

SOUTHAfrican jurist of Indian origin Navanethem “Navi” Pillay, a former UN human rights chief whose work helped shape international law on genocide and sexual violence, won the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize on Friday for her efforts to promote peace and international law.

She is also serving as a judge in a case at the International Court of Justice in which The Gambia has accused Myanmar of violating the Genocide Convention. Born in Durban on September 23, 1941, to Indian parents of Tamil descent, Pillay



grew up under apartheid and went on to build a career challenging racial discrimination, defending anti-apartheid activists and advancing human

rights and equality.

According to a biographical profile published by the Institute for African Women in Law, Pillay's father was a bus

driver who worked multiple jobs to support the family, while her mother looked after their eight children. Despite financial hardship, her parents placed a strong emphasis on education and insisted that their daughters, like their sons, should be educated.

Pillay studied at the University of Natal and later earned postgraduate law degrees from Harvard University. In 1967, she became the first woman of colour to establish a law practice in South Africa's Natal Province, according to the Institute for African Women in Law.

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