

Economic democracy must complement political democracy: Justice Sudarshan Reddy

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

FORMER Supreme Court Judge Justice B Sudarshan Reddy stated that economic democracy must be achieved alongside political democracy while inaugurating a two-day national seminar on Economic Reforms and the Indian Constitution: Conflicts and Future Directions at Dr BR Ambedkar Open University on Thursday.

The seminar was jointly organised by the Department of Economics at BRAOU and the Government Degree College, Chanchalguda, as part of Social Empowerment Week. Justice Reddy recalled that BR Ambedkar was not only the architect of the Constitution but also a distinguished economist. He noted that socialism is embedded in the Constitution, particularly in the emphasis of the Preamble on equality and justice.

Referring to the Karachi Resolution, he said it laid the foundation for the recognition of socio-economic rights in India. He highlighted milestones such as the abolition of the Zamindari system and agrarian struggles while

SOCIAL JUSTICE KEY TO POLICY-MAKING, SAY SPEAKERS



warning against the rise of new forms of fascism.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Ghanta Chakrapani presided over the event, stressing the need to safeguard public education. He expressed concern about the proliferation of private universities and the decline in UGC funding, warning that higher education is

becoming inaccessible to ordinary citizens. He urged collective efforts to strengthen public universities and uphold constitutional values in education.

Keynote speaker Prof Prabhat Patnaik from Jawaharlal Nehru University argued that governments must retain control over key sectors to ensure public

welfare. He recalled the 1948 Industrial Policy, which prioritised nationalisation and the public sector. Highlighting rising inequality, he noted that wealth is concentrated among the top one per cent and advocated measures such as wealth and inheritance taxes, alongside recognition of fundamental economic rights, to transform India into a welfare state.

Guest of Honour Prof Pushpa Chakrapani underlined the importance of social justice in shaping public policy, noting that economic justice gained renewed focus after the 1991 reforms. Seminar Director Prof P Venkateswarlu emphasised the relevance of the 1948 Industrial Policy in strengthening the public sector and insisted that reforms must remain grounded in constitutional principles. The speakers concluded that a balanced approach is necessary to ensure that market-driven policies do not undermine the egalitarian goals established by the founding fathers of the nation.

TSUTF leaders demand enhanced house rent allowance for employees

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE Telangana State United Teachers' Federation leadership met with the Chairman of the Second Pay Revision Commission, Shivashankar, and member A Ramaiah, to press for enhanced House Rent Allowance for employees in newly upgraded urban areas. State President Chava Ravi, General Secretary A Venkat, and Treasurer T Lakshma Reddy submitted a memorandum requesting that a 17 per cent HRA be recommended for municipal corporations and a 13 per cent HRA for municipalities. This proposal specifically includes villages located within an eight-kilometre radius of the city outskirts. During the meeting, PRC Chairman Shivashankar clarified that recommendations would be based on the status



prevailing as of 1 July 2023. However, he assured that the Commission would suggest to the government that HRA be granted directly to cities and towns upgraded after that date, using population criteria as the guiding factor for the disbursements.

The delegation emphasised that employees working in newly upgraded corporations face rising living costs and deserve parity with those in established urban centres. They argued that enhanced HRA is essential to ensure fairness and to reflect the current realities of rapid urban

expansion across the state. Following the meeting, the delegation also submitted a memorandum to the Principal Secretary of the Finance Department at the Secretariat. They urged the immediate sanction of enhanced HRA for eligible areas, citing Government Order 53 of the previous PRC as a precedent. The leaders reiterated their commitment to securing improved allowances, stressing that the issue affects the welfare of thousands of workers. They called upon the government to act swiftly to implement these essential recommendations.

Will continue to strike Hezbollah wherever necessary: Netanyahu

TEL AVIV: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says Israel "will continue to strike Hezbollah wherever necessary" after the IDF announced it had assassinated Ali Yusuf Harshi, the secretary of Hezbollah leader Naim Qassem. "Our message is clear: whoever acts against Israeli civilians will be targeted. We will continue to strike Hezbollah wherever necessary, until we restore full security to the residents of the north," Netanyahu writes in a Hebrew-language post on X. In addition to assassinating Harashi, "the IDF struck a series of terror infrastructures in southern Lebanon: crossing points used to transfer thousands of weapons, rockets and launchers, as well as weapons depots, launch sites, and Hezbollah command centers," Netanyahu adds, sharing IDF footage of the attacks.

TRADE DEAL

Indian team to visit US this month to ink deal

NEW DELHI: United States Ambassador to India Sergio Gor said on Thursday that an Indian delegation will be heading to Washington later this month as part of talks on a trade deal between India and the US. Taking to X, the US envoy stated that he held a "highly productive" meeting with trade representative Jamieson Greer on how to advance President Donald Trump's trade priorities in South and Central Asia.

"The United States and India have previously agreed to a trade deal, and we look forward to welcoming an Indian delegation to Washington later this month," he added.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman was slated to be part of the delegation, however, the BJP leader will be skipping the US visit. Sitharaman will be attending the Parliament sessions for the introduction of bills to fast-track the implementation of 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies India and the US announced a bilateral trade deal on February 2, 2026, after months of negotiations between the two delegations. While both leaders - Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi - hailed the deal as "historic," the deal with Washington received backlash from the Opposition.

Iran publishes chart showing sea mines in Hormuz

DUBAI: Semi-official news agencies in Iran published a chart Thursday suggesting the country's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard put sea mines into the Strait of Hormuz during the war, in a message that may be intended to pressure the US as uncertainty hangs over a days-old two-week ceasefire and further negotiations are expected in Pakistan.

The shaky ceasefire has been largely holding between the US, Israel and Iran, although Tehran and Washington have offered vastly different explanations of the initial terms. Israel insists the agreement does not apply to their war against Hezbollah militants in Lebanon and have escalated deadly strikes there, leading Iran to claim it is violating the deal.

Meanwhile, Iran said it had won agree-

ment that it would control the Strait of Hormuz, charge tolls and enrich uranium - while Trump said the deal called for the strait to be reopened and Iran to hand over its uranium stockpile. The chart of the Strait of Hormuz was released by the ISNA news agency, as well as Tasnim, which is believed to be close to the Guard. "They showed a large circle marked 'danger zone' in Farsi over the Traffic Separation Scheme, which was the route ships take through the strait, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which 20 per cent of all oil and natural gas traded once passed. The chart suggested ships travel further north through waters closer to Iran's mainland near Larak Island, a route that some ships were observed taking during the war."

TRUMP SEEKS EUROPE'S HELP ON HORMUZ

WASHINGTON: United States President Donald Trump has stepped up pressure on his European allies to commit military forces in the Strait of Hormuz, ahead of talks with Iran on Friday. This comes even as the White House is considering the withdrawal of US troops out of NATO countries. According to two diplomats, NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte has informed European leaders that the US President is expecting concrete commitments for Hormuz regarding the deployment of warships or other military capabilities from Europe in the next few days. This was followed by Trump's post on Truth Social, wherein he stated that NATO would not "understand anything" without pressure upon them. "None of these people, including our own, very disappointing, NATO, understood anything unless they have pressure placed upon them!!!" Trump said on Truth Social.

15 SHIPS A DAY Curbs remain on Hormuz

TEHRAN: Shipping traffic at the Strait of Hormuz remained at a virtual standstill amid Iranian regulation, despite the ceasefire, on Thursday, with little movement.

Several reports said Iran will allow no more than 15 vessels to pass per day, with Iran's deputy minister earlier saying that ships will need to obtain consent from the military. One oil product tanker and five separate dry bulk carriers reportedly sailed through the Strait of Hormuz in the past 24 hours on Thursday, Reuters reported. Two Iranian-flagged tankers also sailed through Hormuz.

Iran will allow no more than 15 vessels per day to pass through the Hormuz under the ceasefire agreement, Russia's TASS news agency reported, citing Iranian official sources.

US-Iran truce strains amid Lebanon strikes

Continued from P1

Following a massive wave of Israeli strikes that killed at least 254 people and injured over 1,100 across Lebanon, Tehran declared that it views the ongoing bombardment as a direct breach of the spirit of the ceasefire.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi stated that Washington must now choose between a comprehensive ceasefire or continued war by proxy, warning that the current status is unsustainable.

The instability has immediate consequences for global energy security. In response to what it terms an Israeli violation of the ceasefire, the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has maintained a closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a vital artery for global oil shipments. Shipping executives remain in a state of high alert as they attempt to navigate the uncertainty, while oil prices have reacted sharply to the supply risk. Brent crude futures rose 2.1% to \$96.75 a barrel, and West Texas Intermediate surged 2.6% to \$96.89, reflecting market anxiety over the potential for long-term supply chain disruptions. Despite the deteriorating

situation, US and Iranian delegations are still scheduled to meet in Islamabad this weekend to finalize the terms of the truce. However, the diplomatic path forward is fraught with obstacles.

President Donald Trump has issued a stern warning, stating that US military assets will remain in place around Iran until a real, fully compliant agreement is established.

Meanwhile, the cancellation of social media posts by Iranian diplomats regarding the upcoming talks has fuelled speculation that the negotiations could be delayed or abandoned entirely.

The market's optimism following the initial ceasefire announcement appears to have been premature, as the structural reality of the deal—specifically its exclusion of Lebanon—guarantees continued volatility. By allowing Israel to maintain military operations on a secondary front, the agreement fails to address the core security demands of the Iranian leadership, effectively ensuring that the Strait of Hormuz remains a tool for economic leverage rather than a secure passage for global commerce.

Will Amaravati dent Hyderabad realty?

Continued from P1

"If the investors in Hyderabad shift to AP, Telangana state will face a big jolt, particularly in terms of revenue generation from the property registrations," an official said.

Officials of the Registration & Stamps Department also concede that growth in real estate has not gained traction in the last three years due to various factors, including HYDRDRAA impact, economic slowdown, and certain political reasons.

Now, the AP government is drawing big plans to promote Amaravati as a destination for investments. Major realty companies which had announced high rise projects in Hyderabad may shift some of them to the neighbouring state if the Andhra government announces, in the coming days, comparatively better incentives to promote construction. Officials warned: "It may not be an easy task to convince real estate developers to stay in Hyderabad and develop their ventures at this critical juncture". The state government would do well to hold a meeting with representatives of the realty soon to discuss the issues involved in the context of planned investments in the city, they added.

Heavy turnout marks high-stakes voting day in Assam, Kerala and Puducherry

Continued from P1

"All necessary steps have been taken to facilitate smooth voting and ensure transparency," an Election Commission official said, adding that special provisions were made for senior citizens, persons with disabilities and first-time voters. The elections come after an intense campaign that concluded earlier this week, with political parties making last-minute appeals to voters. The results will be declared on May 4 along with outcomes from West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, where polling is being held in multiple phases.

In Assam, the contest is largely bipolar, with the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance seeking a third consecutive term under Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. The Congress-led opposition, spearheaded by Gaurav Gogoi, is aiming to return to power after ten years, while regional players such as the

All India United Democratic Front, Rajior Dal and Assam Jatiya Parishad are expected to influence outcomes in several seats. The state has over 2.5 crore voters and 722 candidates contesting across more than 31,000 polling stations.

Kerala is witnessing a tightly fought battle among 883 candidates, with 2.71 crore voters deciding the fate of the ruling Left Democratic Front, led by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, which is seeking an unprecedented third straight term. The Congress-led United Democratic Front is banking on anti-incumbency to stage a comeback, while the BJP-led NDA is attempting to expand its footprint in the state.

The electoral buzz was further heightened by participation from film personalities, both as voters and candidates. Actors Ramesh Pisharody, Anjali Nair and Major Ravi are among at least eight celeb-

rities contesting the polls.

In Puducherry, a multi-cornered contest is underway between the NDA, the Congress-DMK alliance and actor Vijay's newly formed Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam. Over 10 lakh voters are choosing from 294 candidates across 1,099 polling stations spread across Puducherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam. Meanwhile, by-elections are being held in parts of Karnataka, Nagaland and Tripura. Turnout trends around 3 PM showed steady participation, with officials expressing confidence in peaceful polling. Bagalkot in Karnataka recorded 54.82% voting and Davanagere 49.66%. In Nagaland's Koridang constituency, voting crossed 75%, while Tripura's Dharmanagar seat recorded over 70% turnout. The Koridang bypoll was necessitated following the death of sitting BJP MLA Imkong L Imchen in November 2025.

Modi, Mamata trade barbs at election rallies in Bengal

Continued from P1

He alleged that Mamata Banerjee's TMC has only inflicted 'nirmamta' (cruelty) on Bengal, while the BJP has developed Asansol despite obstacles posed by the ruling party.

The PM also highlighted a downward trend in the state's economy and its contribution to national gross domestic product (GDP). He said, "Bengal's contribution to the national GDP has slid to mere five per cent from 12 per cent earlier." However, he said, a regime change would ensure that West Bengal scales new heights.

"Investment has taken flight from the once-thriving

industrial belt of Asansol. Only the BJP's double-engine can rectify it," he added, noting that the Centre has allocated ₹45,000 crore for the revival of the industries in Asansol.

In another rally in Haldia, PM Modi said that it is essential to remove the TMC's 'Niram sarkar' to usher 'Viksit Bengal'. He also announced "six Modi guarantees" for the people.

The TMC supremo, meanwhile, accused the BJP of deleting names of more than 90 lakh people from the voter lists to grab power in the state, asserting that her party will win the upcoming Assembly polls.

Speaking at a public rally in North 24 Paraganas' Minakhan, Banerjee said that TMC would approach the court to ensure that all the deleted names are reinstated in the electoral rolls, referring to the special intensive revision exercise in the state. "You deleted names of over 90 lakh people to grab power in Bengal, but we will win," she said.

The TMC chief accused the BJP of "paying money to buy votes," alleging that the party is bringing "outsiders from UP, Bihar to manipulate polling". She further said that the BJP is "destroying the federal structure of the country" by threatening officers.

US ready for next conquest: Trump

Continued from P1

"All US ships, aircraft, and military personnel...will remain in place in, and around, Iran, until such time as the REAL AGREEMENT reached is fully complied with," Trump wrote on Truth Social. "If for any reason it is not...the 'Shootin' Starts,' bigger, and better, and stronger than anyone has ever seen before."

Trump reiterated that it was agreed that Iran will not develop nuclear weapons, and the Strait of Hormuz will be open and safe for commercial shipping. "In the meantime our great Military is Loading Up and Resting, looking forward, actually, to its next Conquest," Trump added. He ended the post, which was published near midnight, with a declaration: "AMERICA IS BACK!"

The statement came a day after Washington and Tehran agreed to a two-week ceasefire brokered by Pakistan, which halted six weeks of fighting and sparked a brief relief rally in global markets amid growing optimism that energy flows may resume in the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran said safe passage through the strait would be possible but subject to coordination

with its armed forces. But much remained unclear in the ceasefire agreement, with the US and Iran appearing far apart in demands. Tehran had rejected the 15-point proposal from Washington and reportedly presented a 10-point plan of its own to end the conflict, including an end to Israeli strikes against Hezbollah in Lebanon and the lifting of all sanctions.

In a separate social media post earlier on Wednesday, Trump described the 10-point plan reported by the New York Times and CNN as "totally fake."

Israel supported Trump's decision to suspend strikes against Iran but insisted that the ceasefire doesn't extend to Lebanon, unleashing its harshest offensives on the country since the war broke out in February, killing at least 182 people on Wednesday.

The deadly attacks prompted a threat from Iran, which suggested that it would be "unreasonable" to proceed with talks to seek a permanent peace deal with the US, underscoring the fragility of the ceasefire. The US and Iran are expected to meet for a round of negotiations in Islamabad on Friday.

IMD predicts heat wave for next 3 days in TG

Continued from P1

Keep the windows and the curtains closed during the day, especially on the sunny side of your house. Open them up at night to let the cool air in. Limit outdoor activity to the cooler times of the day i.e., morning and evening.

Under the don'ts category, citizens have been advised to avoid going out in the sun, especially between 12 noon and 3 pm, avoid strenuous activities in the afternoon, not to go out barfoot, avoid cooking during the peak hours, avoid consuming alcohol, tea, coffee and carbonated soft drinks or drinks with large amount of sugar as these actually lead to loss of more body-fluid or may cause stomach cramps, avoid high-protein, salty, spicy and oily food. Do not

eat stale food.

The heat wave danger signs include nausea and vomiting, hot, red and dry skin, body temperature ≥ 40 °C or 104 °F, throbbing headache, anxiety, dizziness and fainting, muscle weakness or cramps, rapid heartbeat, rapid, shallow breathing, altered mental sensorium with disorientation: confusion, agitation, irritability, ataxia, seizure, and coma.

The Director of Public Health Dr B Ravinder Naik said that as a part of precautionary measures, the government has made elaborate arrangements by providing the special beds, IV fluids, essential medicines at all the public health facilities and ORS sachets are made available with ANMs /ASHAs / Anganwadi workers to meet any exigencies.