

# FAIR R EPORT

THE DAWN OF A FEARLESS PEN

HAPPY NAVRATRI



May Navratri bring good fortune, prosperity to all: Mahanavami



#### FAIR REPORT SPECIAL FEATURE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended Mahanavami greetings to the countrymen and prayed for their well-being and prosperity. The ninth day of Navratri is celebrated as Mahanavami, which is dedicated to Goddess Siddhidatri.

Taking to X, the Prime Minister said, "Heartfelt wishes to all of you on the occasion of Mahanavami! May this auspicious occasion of Navratri bring good fortune, prosperity, and success to everyone; that is my wish." Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also took to social media and extended his greetings.

In a post on X, the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister stated, "Heartfelt congratulations to all devotees, worshippers, and residents of the state on the auspicious occasion of 'Mahanavami'!" "May everyone attain a life filled with glory, prosperity, and good health through the grace of Mother Siddhidatri, the ninth form of the compassionate Mother Durga, and may

her grace ever remain upon the entire animate and inanimate world," he added. Uttarakhnad Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami also extended his best wishes on the occasion.

"Heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to all of you on the sacred festival of the ninth day of Navratri, dedicated to the worship of Maa Siddhidatri, the presiding deity of the eight great siddhis (spiritual powers). May Mother Goddess grant you all strength, peace, and progress," he said in a post on X. Siddhidatri means 'the one who grants supernatural powers'. 'Siddhi' denotes supernatural ability or meditative skill, while 'Dhatri' signifies giver or bestower.

She is venerated on the ninth day of Navaratri, known as Navadurga, and fulfils all divine aspirations.

Shiva is also known as Ardhanarishwara because one side of his body represents Siddhidatri. According to Vedic scriptures, he achieved all siddhis by worshipping this Goddess.

## SPIR 2025: Torture Justified, Bias Entrenched

# Policing Norms in India Remain Alarming

#### FAIR REPORT

New Delhi: A disturbing number of police personnel across India continue to justify torture, sidestep legal procedures, and hold deeply entrenched biases against minorities and marginalised communities, according to the Status of Policing in India Report (SPIR) 2025 released this week. Conducted by Common Cause and Lokniti-CSDS, the report surveyed 8,276 police personnel in 17 states and Union Territories, offering a rare but candid snapshot of the mindset within Indian policing. The findings confirm what rights activists have long warned: the rot is not only systemic — it is also internalised.



#### Torture: A 'Necessary' Evil?

Nearly 3 out of 10 officers openly said they believe torture — euphemistically referred to as "third-degree methods" — is justified in serious criminal cases. Alarming, 9% said it's acceptable even in petty offences.

#### Due Process? Often Optional

The report finds that less than half (41%) of police personnel say arrest procedures are "always followed". In other words, a majority acknowledge that basic legal protocols — including timely court presentation and family notification — are frequently ignored. Jharkhand, Rajasthan, and Bihar scored especially poorly on procedural compliance. In contrast, Kerala emerged as a rare outlier with relatively high adherence to legal norms.

#### Bias: Policing Through Prejudice

SPIR 2025 lays bare what many feared: prejudice is institutionalised. A significant number of police officers surveyed said certain communities — Muslims, Dalits, Adivasis, migrants — are "more prone" to crime.

This belief, the report argues, not only fuels unlawful detentions and profiling, but directly correlates with higher rates of custodial violence against these groups. Victims are overwhelmingly from poor, marginalised backgrounds — those least likely to access legal recourse.

#### Accountability: Still Missing

Despite repeated Supreme Court warnings and NHRC guidelines, impunity remains the norm. The absence of a dedicated anti-torture law, coupled with weak internal oversight, ensures that even proven cases of abuse rarely lead to meaningful punishment. According to the report, there is widespread perception among officers that force is necessary — and should be protected from legal consequence. This mindset sits at odds with India's constitutional commitment to rule of law.

#### The Urgent Fix List

● The report recommends an unambiguous roadmap for reform:

- Enact a standalone anti-torture law.
- Establish independent investigative bodies for custodial abuse cases.
- Mandate human rights and procedural training at all levels.

Create legal pathways for victim compensation and rehabilitation. Ensure transparent and public reporting of custodial deaths and torture claims.

#### The Real Takeaway

SPIR 2025 does not expose an isolated failure — it reveals a culture of impunity and a policing system that continues to view rights as obstacles, not obligations. Until this culture is dismantled, reforms on paper will remain just that — paper.

## Deadly Attack on Former UP Minister Gayatri Prajapati Inside Lucknow Jail

#### FAIR REPORT

Lucknow, In a shocking security breach, former Uttar Pradesh minister Gayatri Prasad Prajapati, currently incarcerated in Lucknow jail, was the target of a violent attack by a fellow inmate earlier today. The assailant allegedly used a pair of scissors to stab Prajapati multiple times inside the prison premises.

Authorities responded swiftly to the incident, transferring Prajapati to the KGMU Trauma Centre for urgent medical treatment. His condition is currently under evaluation, and details about his injuries have not been disclosed publicly. The

Director General of Prisons has confirmed that an investigation is underway to ascertain how the weapon entered the facility and who facilitated the attack. Officials emphasized that prison surveillance and security personnel are being questioned, and that the matter is being taken with utmost seriousness.

Prajapati, a Samajwadi Party leader, has been serving his sentence since 2017 for crimes including rape and criminal conspiracy. His high-profile political career and previous controversies have frequently brought attention to his jail status and prison safeguards.

## Clashes at Rajasthan University: NSUI Workers Lathi-Charged During Protest Against RSS Event

#### FAIR REPORT

Jaipur, Tension gripped Rajasthan University on Monday after student activists affiliated with the National Students' Union of India (NSUI) staged a protest against a programme organised by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) on campus.

According to eyewitnesses, dozens of NSUI members gathered outside the venue, raising slogans and demanding that political or ideological events not be permitted within the university premises. The protest soon escalated as students attempted to block entry to the hall where the RSS programme was being held. Police personnel deployed at the site



resorted to lathi-charge when protesters tried to break through barricades. Several students were reportedly injured in the scuffle, and some were detained for disrupting public order.

NSUI leaders condemned the police action, calling it an attempt to "suppress democratic dissent". "The campus should be a space for education, not ideological imposition," an NSUI

spokesperson said. Meanwhile, organisers of the RSS event maintained that the programme was cultural in nature and not politically motivated. University authorities have refrained from issuing an official statement, though sources said they had prior knowledge of the event and had requested police deployment anticipating unrest.

The incident has reignited debate over the role of political and ideological organisations in academic institutions. While NSUI has announced it will continue its agitation, police officials confirmed that officers will remain tightened on campus to prevent further clashes.

# Behind the Number: India's External Debt Needs Watchful Eyes, Not Panic



Hemraj Tikamchand Tiwari

By Special Feature Desk

#### FAIR REPORT

As reports circulate India's external debt touching 66.35 lakh crore, the num-

ber has sparked unease in some quarters. But while the figure may be dramatic, the reality is more nuanced — and more importantly, not without precedent. The challenge now is not the size of the debt, but how it is managed, explained, and justified.

#### A Number That Needs Context

The Reserve Bank of India, in its latest report, placed the country's external debt at \$736.3 billion (as of March 31, 2025), roughly 61.4 lakh crore. This is a

10% increase year-on-year, and the debt-to-GDP ratio has inched up to 19.1%, from 18.5% the previous year. These numbers are not insignificant — but they are not alarming either. India's debt levels remain below global risk thresholds. The economy has run higher debt loads in the past and has the buffers to support them, including foreign exchange reserves exceeding \$600 billion.

What the widely cited 66.35 lakh crore figure lacks is official confirma-

tion. No Finance Ministry or RBI document so far has used that number — suggesting that it may be a projection, or simply a misinterpretation of valuation-adjusted figures.

#### Drivers of the Debt Rise

Multiple factors explain the rise in debt: Rupee depreciation against the U.S. dollar has raised the rupee value of dollar-denominated debt.

External commercial borrowings by Indian firms have increased, particularly in infrastruc-

ture, telecom, and clean energy. Public sector borrowing from multilateral lenders like the World Bank and ADB continues to fund long-gestation development projects. The composition of the debt matters. About half is long-term and largely concessional. A sizable portion is owed by private corporates, not the central government — though sovereign responsibility remains in play if things go south. The Finance Ministry has maintained that India's external liabil-

ities remain within a "comfortable zone." Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman reiterated this in a written response in Parliament, pointing to strong reserves, healthy debt servicing capacity, and stable investor sentiment.

But comfort zones shift. What's manageable in one quarter can become risky in the next, particularly in a global environment still absorbing the aftershocks of monetary tightening, war-induced supply chain disruptions, and sluggish trade flows.

## Bharat Gaurav Train to Roll Out from October 5

#### FAIR REPORT

New Delhi, Indian Railways will flag off a new Bharat Gaurav Train on October 5, aimed at promoting domestic tourism under the government's Dekho Apna Desh initiative. The special theme-based train service will connect passengers to major religious, cultural, and historical sites, offering curated tour packages that include meals, accommodation, and local sightseeing. Railway officials said the train will run with modern facilities such as comfortable coaches, infotainment systems, onboard

catering, and dedicated tour managers. "This is not just about transportation. The Bharat Gaurav Train is designed as a cultural journey on wheels, giving travelers an immersive experience of India's heritage," a senior Railway Ministry official told reporters. Launched in 2021, the Bharat Gaurav scheme allows private operators and IRCTC to run special trains on select circuits. The October 5 service will be part of the expanding network, which has already attracted strong interest from both domestic and international tourists.





