Editorial

Nuclear button

The country has entered "unprecedented territory" where the "chain linking the vote, laws, and Constitution is broken". This was the reaction of the leader of the Opposition, Rahul Gandhi, to the sensational media report detailing repeated objections by the two election commissioners to a number of controversial moves overseen by the chief election commissioner relating to the deployment of the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls. That the polity has veered off its democratic guardrails into a hybrid electoral-authoritarian zone is a sentiment widely shared by the Opposition INDIA coalition. In June, for example, leaders of 23 Opposition parties of the INDIA bloc sent a joint letter to the Supreme Court, flagging the "brazenly biased conduct" of the CEC and the partisan rollout of the SIR in West Bengal and in Bihar and alleged manipulation of several elections. If the judiciary failed to respond to such concerns, the letter warned it would signal "a complete breakdown of the Republic". Yet, one can't help but discern a certain degree of dissonance between the rhetoric of the Opposition and its actions. All parties of the INDIA bloc claim that not only has the electoral process been vitiated but the entire institutional machinery has also become co-opted in a manner that precludes remedial action. Yet none of the major Opposition leaders has floated the possibility of an electoral boycott or attached clear conditions to their participation in future elections. What explains this dissonance? The short answer is that an electoral boycott is a highly risky strategic choice that carries enormous costs with uncertain gains. Consider what it would take to pull off a successful boycott in a state or a national election. First, establishing a high degree of trust and co-ordination among the bulk of the Opposition parties such that all major constituents of the Opposition commit to boycotting a given election. That would be tremendously difficult to achieve in practice given the powerful incentives to defect and exploit the open electoral field.

Take, for example, a state like Uttar Pradesh. Even if the Samajwadi Party and the Congress were to seamlessly co-ordinate a boycott, it is very likely that the Bahujan Samaj Party would contest the election, relishing the opportunity to win back its Dalit voter base that had been sliding away in the last few elections. Furthermore, a standalone boycott in one state would make little sense unless it is part of a sustained strategy extending to subsequent state elections. If the Samajwadi Party boycotts the Uttar Pradesh election over a shared Opposition demand, such as the rollback of the SIR, it would expect the Congress to do the same in subsequent elections where it is the principal Opposition contender. But who would enforce such a pact? This is the problem of credible commitment. Second, each Opposition party would need to ensure a high degree of coordination and discipline within its ranks. Take the case of the Congress. A boycott of elections in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh might appear relatively feasible given the largely bipolar contests against the Bharatiya Janata Party. Yet state units — led by the likes of Ashok Gehlot, Kamal Nath and Bhupesh Baghel as well as local MLAs dependent on political power to sustain patronage networks — would have strong incentives to contest. Carrying out a boycott call without provoking splits and splinter groups would be a tall order.

That is why electoral boycotts have been extremely rare in Indian politics. Even in Punjab and in Kashmir, they have largely been the repertoire of separatist groups rather than mainstream political parties. In many respects, a boycott is the nuclear option of the Opposition. This means that the costs are so high that exercising this option can only be envisaged as a truly last resort. Yet, having that nuclear option in your arsenal and credibly wielding the threat of deployment are vital to exert deterrence capacity against a domineering adversary to make it respect your red lines. If the Opposition stands to bear high costs from a boycott, it can also impose high legitimacy costs on the government, which would then struggle to keep its social coalition together and maintain order without the input legitimacy conferred by competitive elections.

The key word here is 'credible'. The question, then, is no longer the Hamletian 'to boycott or not to boycott' but this: under what conditions would the Opposition be able to wield the threat of boycott as a credible deterrent? Deterrence is effective only if the adversary believes you possess the will and the capacity to execute the nuclear option, if pushed beyond a certain point, regardless of the costs. Thomas Schelling, the pre-eminent theorist of nuclear strategy, argued that effective deterrence rests on three elements: capability, credibility and communication. In other words, the demonstrated capacity to execute the option (capability); the willingness to act on threats (credibility); and the clear delineation of thresholds or red lines (communication). How would the Opposition go about building these three pillars of credible boycott deterrence? The first requirement would be the reinvigoration of the INDIA bloc as an institution. Collective action problems are usually solved through institutions that have the power to formulate, monitor and enforce collective pacts. Whether an informal organisation like the INDIA bloc can effectively monitor and enforce pacts is very much in doubt. Yet, to wield credible deterrence, the bloc, at the very least, must have regular top-level meetings to come to an understanding over the conditions that might trigger the strategy of boycott and how it would be carried out. This would involve formulating a set of specific institutional demands (such as partial or complete rollback of the SIR and safeguards to ensure the impartial functioning of the Election Commission) to restore the credibility of the electoral process. There must be a public commitment by all parties not to contest elections that fall below certain agreed institutional thresholds. The second requirement involves building internal consensus within party organisations and among their social bases around the need to mount a protracted struggle for a larger national cause — if required. The idea would be to foment enough popular support behind the uncompromising stance of the party leadership to exert pressure on local leaders and regional satraps. Additionally, party structures must be gradually reoriented towards the contentious politics of popular mobilisation since boycotts are only effective when combined with other extra-institutional tactics such as protests and strikes. Again, the point is not to boycott the elections but to build leverage by developing a credible deterrence. As Schelling put it: "the power to constrain an adversary may depend on the power to bind oneself." All parties of the INDIA bloc claim that not only has the electoral process been vitiated but the entire institutional machinery has also become co-opted in a manner that precludes remedial action. Yet none of the major Opposition leaders has floated the possibility of an electoral boycott or attached clear conditions to their participation in future elections. What explains this dissonance? The short answer is that an electoral boycott is a highly risky strategic choice that carries enormous costs with uncertain gains. Consider what it would take to pull off a successful boycott in a state or a national election. First, establishing a high degree of trust and co-ordination among the bulk of the Opposition parties such that all major constituents of the Opposition commit to boycotting a given election. That would be tremendously difficult to achieve in practice given the powerful incentives to defect and exploit the open electoral field.

'The Chromatic World Order': Diversity camouflages structural inequality in West

Such a pattern is not new; historically, marginalised individuals have been accepted into dominant structures when they align themselves with their most extreme expressions. The dominant structures accept them as 'tokenism'. Their cases are, therefore, less an exception than a symptom. Such spectacles of inclusion conceal a deeper continuity of exclusion. Their cases are more tragic than they are ironic.

Nevertheless, the elevation (for representational purposes) of ethnic minority — non-Whites born to immigrant parents — to positions of high political office, particularly within conservative or centrist political regimes, serves a dual function.

First, it ostensibly displays progress in racial representation while obfuscating the persistence of institutional racism. It is a form of racial decoy-ism, a camouflage. When politicians such as Barack Obama, Rishi Sunak, or Kemi Badenoch promote or preside over policies that disproportionately harm racialised populations, such as the expansion of drone warfare or the UK's Rwanda Plan, their minority status comes in handy.

Their racial attribute can be mobilised to deflect accusations of racism. Such rhetorical manoeuvre enables governments to show racially exclusionary or punitive measures as race-neutral or even inclusive, since non-White figures endorse them.

Furthermore, while these figures may be accused of engaging in a form of duplicitous politics, the deeper duplicity lies in the broader context of settler colonialism that undergirds the Western political order. This duplicity is not limited to direct settler colonial states like the US, Canada, or Australia; it also extends to the European powers that architected and legitimised these structures of dispossession. This dynamic is reflected in Paul Gilroy's identification of the depoliticisation of race under neoliberal multiculturalism, where visible diversity is mistaken for structural equity. It also exemplifies the critique posed by critical race theorists that mere descriptive representation, the presence of minorities in office, does not guarantee substantive justice for marginalised communities. Instead, racialised leaders can be instrumentalised to legitimise policies that reinforce existing hierarchies of power and exclusion. This complicity can make it more difficult for critics to denounce the racial logic underlying state practices, since the presence of racial minorities in leadership roles is leveraged as a shield against such critiques: How can it be racist if a Black or brown leader supports it?

Who better to articulate a vulgar, grotesque plan for migrant removals such as the Rwanda plan than Sunak, Patel, and Braverman, all born to migrants themselves? Of course, one can say a thing or two about the psychological conditioning of these people or even their opportunistic careerism, but let not such considerations detain us.

Ultimately, these figures do not alter the architecture of racial capitalism or challenge the political economies that sustain Whiteness. Their major role is to provide moral cover for its continuity, convenient hypocrisies that enable the preservation of the racial order under the guise of progress.

The Conservative Party's pride in Sunak's rise masks a history of xenophobia, from Enoch Powell's Rivers of Blood speech of around his birth to contemporary anti-migrant



rhetoric abound his premiership. In all such cases, the system recalibrates through exceptions, and it is not a sign of conceding.

The arc of racial politics, by its very nature, does not bend towards justice; after such ostensible Black and Brown displays, it empirically and verifiably whips back with greater velocity. After Trump in America, we can structurally predict the eventual rise of a Nigel Farage or an equivalent in the UK.

If one were to note Western military actions in West Asia over the past two decades, one would find a pattern that transcends even traditional partisan divides, making the presence of such nominal political leaderships completely irrelevant: both left and right governments made decisions for war and 'intervention'. The Iraq War of 2003 was initiated by the US under President George W. Bush, a Republican, and supported by the UK under Prime Minister Tony Blair of the Labour Party. Libya's 'intervention' in 2011 was conducted under Democrat President Barack Obama, Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron, and President Nicolas Sarkozy of the centre-right Union pour un Mouvement Populaire (UMP). In Syria, between 2014 and 2018, US strikes were authorized by both President Obama and Trump in the US; Prime Minister David Cameron and Theresa May (Conservative) in the UK; and Socialist President François Hollande and Emmanuel Macron (En Marche!) in France, demonstrating continuity across the partisan spectrum across the Atlantic. The consistent element, devoid of any party ideology, is the shared consensus that Western powers bear both the right and the obligation for military intervention. Such convergence is best explained through the doctrine of what the progressives call 'liberal interventionism', a belief that military force may be morally and strategically justified to promote democracy or avert humanitarian catastrophe.

Conservatives should dislike this ideology, but experience shows that it is less about domestic left-right divides or progressive-liberal-conservative divides and more about the assumption of Western exceptionalism. Such foreign policy convergence or bipartisan consensus on international affairs renders the traditional domestic party differences in the West largely irrelevant in the realm of foreign policy as a deeper structural consensus emerges around the preservation of Western primacy. The West, regardless of leadership, has repeatedly turned to interventionism, with horribly destabilizing consequences for West Asia, Africa, and beyond.

Therefore, the rest of the world follows a chimera in its assumption that a particular Western political party's domestic ideology dictates its foreign policy, or that politically similar groups across borders in the West will act in solidarity with such an ideologically inclined set-up elsewhere, as India learned to its great chagrin in August 2025, when President Trump's administration imposed a massive 50 per cent tariff on Indian exports effectively treating India as a hostile trade adversary and termed her economy 'dead'.

The duplicitousness that critiques this chimera has a scholarly term, 'realism', which argues that state behaviour is determined by permanent interests such as geopolitical security and national interest rather than the ideological complexion of ruling parties. From a realist standpoint, Western states (or any state) – whether governed by Republicans or Democrats in the US or by Labour, Conservatives, or Socialists in Europe – ultimately act in ways that advance what they perceive to be their core national interests. The rhetoric of justification may differ – couched alternately in the idioms of democracy, humanitarianism, or security – but the outcomes converge, especially in the domain of military intervention, the prime act of external projection. Nevertheless, the application of realism reveals an internal paradox: If realism posits a world of constant competition, why have Western states not engaged in a major war with each other since 1945? The answer, one would suggest, lies in Western exceptionalism: the shared identity and self-conception of Western states as members of a civilizational bloc. Here, the anarchic system that supposedly governs all states appears suspended among Western nations, replaced by an order of mutual recognition and cooperation, and in large part even integration.

The realist struggle for power and domination is thus reserved primarily for the 'rest of the world'. Western states compete not against each other but in coordination through EU, NATO, and other alliances to maintain dominance over external regions. This undermines the claim that realism is a timeless, universal description of state behaviour. Instead, realism, at least of the West, appears to be an ideological framework rationalizing Western supremacy while naturalizing the exclusion of others. So, in practice, realism is less a neutral theory than a political technology of Western power. It encodes the assumption that Western states must secure global hegemony, whether through direct intervention, or control of resources. The supposed universality of realist logic obscures the fact that it functions differentially: Among Western states, cooperation and solidarity prevail, while with the rest, domination and conflict are the rule. This duplicitousness reveals that realism itself is a product of the racialized and hierarchical order that was established since the Enlightenment and perfected through colonialism. It is not that domestic ideology is irrelevant to foreign policy; rather, the shared ideology of Western supremacy supersedes party distinctions, creating the illusion of partisan divergence while ensuring a bipartisan consensus for interventionism abroad. In the history of international relations, where the idea of a 'White world order' is central, this duplicitousness is crucial.

The strategy and stakes behind Modi's Trump call



On September 30, 2026, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump engaged in a crucial telephonic conversation, which was initiated by the Indian side. The official readouts from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) characterised the talks as "productive," focusing on a broad slate of mutual interests: trade, defence, energy, critical technologies, and global peace. However, in diplomacy, the timing of an interaction is often as important as its stated agenda. This conversation was not merely a routine check-in; it was a necessary and highly calculated diplomatic intervention necessitated by escalating trade friction, shifting energy security parameters, and geopolitical volatility.

The Crucial Catalyst: The Energy and Tariff Threat

The immediate necessity behind the phone call rests primarily on economic and energy security concerns. Less than two weeks prior to the call, President Trump signed the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026 into law. This legislation empowers the US executive branch to impose punitive tariffs of up to 100 per cent on countries that continue to import Russian oil and gas. For India, which has heavily relied on discounted Russian crude to stabilise its domestic energy market and curb inflation over recent years, this law presents a clear and present threat to its economic growth. Because the legislation dictates a 30-day window for the US administration to make determinations regarding sanctions or waivers, PM Modi's decision to call President Trump was an essential pre-emptive move.

By engaging Trump directly, Modi sought to leverage their personal rapport to navigate this tariff threat and protect India's strategic autonomy.

Personalised diplomacy

The outreach by Indian Prime Minister Modi carried significant psychological weight for Trump's well-known preference for personalised diplomacy. By initiating the phone call, New Delhi effectively tailored its approach to cater to Trump's personal ego at a highly precarious diplomatic juncture. The strategic timing of the conversation—coming just twelve days after Trump signed the aggressive Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026 threatening massive energy tariffs, and shortly after a heavily publicised Washington visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping—could serve as an ego booster. By proactively reaching out to discuss trade, defence, and energy ties directly, Modi framed the relationship through the exact lens of a high-stakes, direct "leader-to-leader" dynamic that Trump prefers. This direct signalling positioned Trump as the central arbiter of global affairs, feeding into his favoured transactional narrative that deep diplomatic stalemates are best navigated through personal camaraderie and public spectacles of courtship rather than standard institutional channels. Realigning the comprehensive global strategic partnership

Beyond immediate damage control over energy sanctions, the call served as a critical platform to keep momentum alive on broader, high-stakes trade negotiations. India and the US have been aggressively pursuing an interim trade arrangement. Yet, with existing US tariffs on specific Indian imports still in force, the call provided an indispensable venue for both leaders to review bilateral cooperation across core pillars: Trade and Pharmaceuticals: Sustaining momentum to secure an expansive bilateral agreement. Defence and Security: Advancing military interoperability and joint production. Critical Technologies: Deepening cooperation on semiconductors, artificial intelligence, and space exploration through frameworks like the Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET).

Truhome FINANCE

TRUHOME FINANCE LIMITED (Formerly Shriram Housing Finance Ltd.)
Head Office: Level -3, Wockhardt Towers, East Wing C-2, G Block, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (East), Mumbai 400 051;
Tel: 1800 102 4345 ; **Website:** http://www. truhomefinance.in
Reg.Off.: Srinivasa Tower, 1st Floor, Door No.5, Old No.11, 2nd Lane, Cenatoph Road, Alwarpet, Teynampet, Chennai-600018

PRIVATE TREATY SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

A Sale Notice is given for Sale of Immovable Asset through Private Treaty under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (54 of 2002).
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s and mortgagor/s that the below described immovable properties mortgaged/ charged to The Truhome Finance Limited(Earlier known as Shriram Housing Finance Limited), The Physical possession of which have been taken by the Authorized Officer of The Truhome Finance Limited(Earlier known as Shriram Housing Finance Limited). Earlier company has issued the sale notice on 18/04/2026 and thereby fixed the e-auction of subject property in question on 22/05/2026. However, the said auction scheduled on 22/05/2026 remained failed due to want of bid. Thereafter company has issued the sale notice on 24/07/2026 and thereby fixed the second e-auction of subject property in question on 10/08/2026. However, the said auction scheduled on 10/08/2026 remained failed due to want of bid. thereafter persons have shown interest in purchasing the schedule mortgaged property. As the schedule mortgaged property could not be sold through e-auction, The Truhome Finance Limited has decided to mortgage property will be sold through Private Treaty on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis for recovery of balance outstanding amount due to The Truhome Finance Limited(Earlier known as Shriram Housing Finance Limited), from the Borrowers And Guarantors, as mentioned in the table.
The notice is being given to the Borrower/s, Guarantor/s and Mortgagor (s) that the aforesaid secured asset shall be sold after 15 day's for the date of the notice on such terms and conditions as mutually agreed between The Truhome Finance Limited and intended purchase.

Name of Borrowers/ Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/Mortgagers	Amount of Recovery and date of Demand Notice	Reserve Price (Rs.) & EMD Amount	Contact Person Details – (AO and Disposal team)
1. Balvantkumar Jayantilal Salvi And 2. Kusumben Jayantilal Salvi All Residing At:-4-2058, Nanakwadi, Begampura, Nr. Kuber House, Surat-395003 Also At:-Flat No. 107, kanaiya Raj Residency, Samrat Greencity Society, Kadodara, Surat-394327. LAN:- SHLHSRAT0001009 Date of Possession & Type 11/04/2026 & Physical Possession Encumbranches known Not known	Demand Notice Date: 12/08/2025 Rs. 4,35,998/- (Rupees Four Lakh Thirty Five Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety Eight only) as on 07/08/2025 under reference of loan account no. SHLHSRAT0001009 with further interest at the contractual rate, within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice	Reserve Price. Rs. 2,50,000/- (Rupees Two Lakh Fifty Thousand Only) EMD Amount. Rs. 25,000/- (Rupees Twenty Five Thousand Only) Date of Property shall be sold to the proposed purchaser by Private Treaty Date.04/11/2026	Debjyoti Roy - 98747 02021 Sandip Mahajan 99989 44955

Description of Property

All right title and interest in Non-agricultural plot of land in Moje Kadodara, Palasna lying being land bearing R.S. no. 129 & 130, Block no. 112, admeasuring 45022.00 Sq. Mtrs.. Paikki Southern admeasuring 16973.00 Sq. Mtrs., Known as "SAMRAT GREENCITY SOCIETY" Paikki Plot no. 45 & 48, Total admeasuring 260.20 Sq. Mtrs., Known as "KANHAIYA RAJ RESIDENCY" Paikki, First Floor, Flat no. 107, Super Built up Area admeasuring 54.36 Sq. Mtrs., i.e. 585.00 Sqfts., Built up area admeasuring 33.00 Sq. Mtrs.. i.e. 355.00 Sq. Fts., Undivided Share of Land admeasuring 8.00 Sq. Mtrs. at Registration Sub-District Palsana & District Surat.
Boundary as per documents:- East: By Road , West: By Plot no. 56 to 53, North: By Plot no. 44, South: By Plot no. 49
As per Site(Flat Boundaries):- East: Passage & Flat no-102 West: Adj Building & open space, North: Flat No-108, South: Flat no-106

1) **For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer the website of Truhome Finance Limited (Formerly Shriram Housing Finance Limited) website.**
2) **The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of sub- section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.**
3) **The intending bidders have to submit amount to be deposited by way of RTGS/NEFT to the account details mentioned herein below: BANK NAME: AXIS BANK LIMITED BRANCH: BANDRA KURLA COMPLEX, MUMBAI BANK ACCOUNT NO. Current Account No. 911020045677633 IFSC CODE: UTIB0000230.**

Place : Surat
Date : 19-10-2026

Sd/- Authorised Officer- Truhome Finance Limited
(Formerly Shriram Housing Finance Limited)