

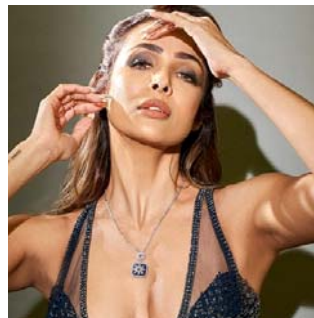


'Krishnan will serve America very well'

▶ Details on page 16

New gun laws rolling out on January 1

▶ Details on page 7



'2024 taught her to trust herself more'

▶ Details on page 31

**INDIA POST SURVEY**  
[survey@indiapost.com](mailto:survey@indiapost.com)

**This week's question**  
 Will US continue to support Israel on war in Middle East?

**Last week's result**  
 Will India agree to hand over Hasina to Bangladesh?  
 YES 8% NO 92%

# RANA TO BE EXTRADITED

*India intensifies extradition process of 26/11 Mumbai attacks accused Tahawwur Rana from US*

NEW DELHI/MUMBAI/NEW YORK: Pakistani-Canadian Tahawwur Rana could soon be extradited to India for his role in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks that killed around 175 people, sources in the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and the Mumbai Police's crime branch confirmed recently.



Tahawwur Rana

The extradition process had intensified after a federal appeals court in the US had quashed Rana's appeal in August, last year.

The California-based Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals had upheld a lower federal court verdict permitting his extradition and ruled that the 1997

extradition treaty between India and the US covered his alleged offences.

A three-panel appeals court bench had heard the habeas corpus petition against the Central California District Court judgment allowing Rana's extradition.

Judge Milan Smith, who wrote the opinion for the bench, said "India provided sufficient competent evidence" to support the initial order of a magistrate judge's "finding of probable cause that Rana committed the charged crimes" to allow the extradition.

Cont'd on page 5



India becomes 4<sup>th</sup> nation to achieve space docking

▶ Details on page 5



Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella

'Committed to partner with Telangana'

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Devotees throng the Ram Janmabhoomi Temple, to offer prayers on the first day of the New Year 2025, in Ayodhya on January 1. (ANI Photo)

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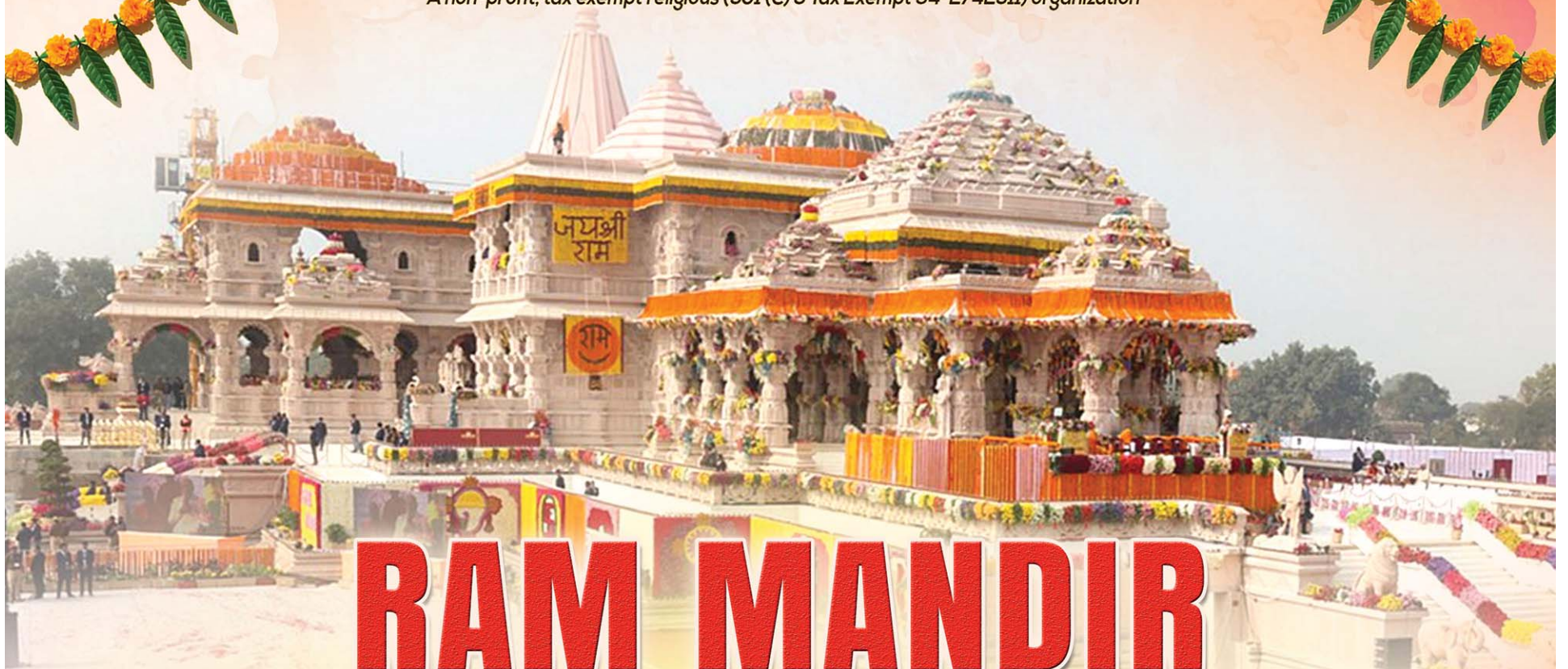






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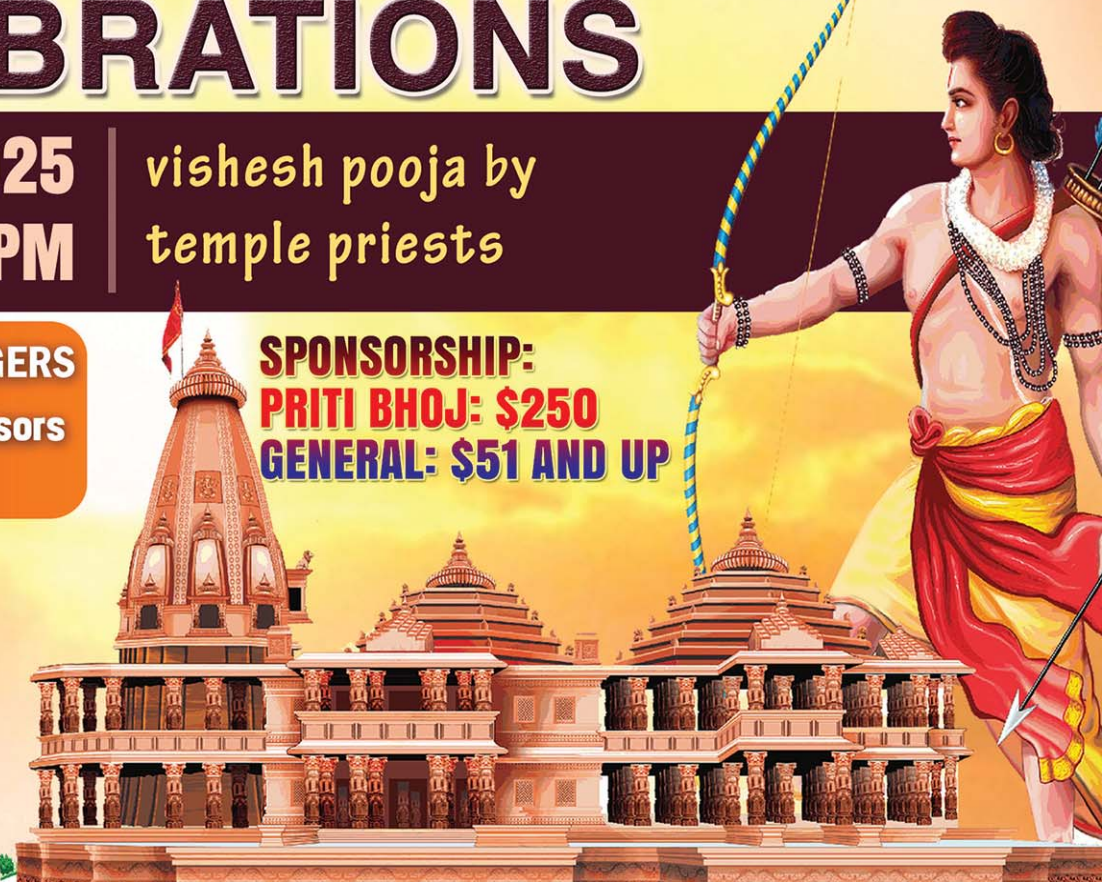
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To empower the Indian Diaspora and make their voice strong and effective in countries of their adoption. RJ Media conglomerate offers a credible, professional and complete package of news, opinion, entertainment, networking and information.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

**Bollywood:**

**Who is Vaani Kapoor's jaan?**



Actress Vaani Kapoor, the 'War' actress shared a heartwarming birthday wish for her sister Nupur Chopra, calling her a "forever friend."

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Pakistani-Canadian Tahawwur Rana could soon be extradited to India for his role in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks that killed 175 people

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Microsoft Chairman and CEO Satya Nadella recently reiterated the commitment of Microsoft to partner with the Telangana government in all its initiatives

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**Community:**

**"Will serve America very well..."**



Indiaspora recently issued a media advisory condemning racist attacks on Sriram Krishnan, recently appointed as Senior AI Advisor by President-elect Donald Trump

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**Travel**

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Prayagraj, formerly Allahabad, recently held the largest Hindu gathering - Maha Kumbh Mela. But there's a lot more to it besides religion

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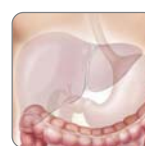
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# RANA TO BE EXTRADITED

*India intensifies extradition process of 26/11 Mumbai attacks accused Tahawwur Rana from US*

NEW DELHI/MUMBAI/NEW YORK: Pakistani-Canadian Tahawwur Rana could soon be extradited to India for his role in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks that killed around 175 people, sources in the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and the

between India and the US covered his alleged offences.

A three-panel appeals court bench had heard the habeas corpus petition against the Central California District Court judgment allowing Rana's extradition.

Judge Milan Smith, who wrote the opinion for the bench, said "India provided sufficient competent evidence" to support the initial order of a magistrate judge's "finding of probable cause that Rana committed the charged crimes" to allow the extradition.

Rana, a Canadian citizen living in Chicago, was arrested in the US in 2009 for plotting to bomb a Danish newspaper, 'Jyllands-Posten', that published a controversial image of Prophet Mohammed.

He faced three main charges in a Chicago federal court relating to his involvement in the Danish case, providing support to Lashkar, and conspiring for the 26/11 Mumbai attacks.

He was acquitted of the Mumbai attack charge, but convicted in the other two and sentenced to 14 years.

The appeals court ruled that his acquittal in the Mumbai attack charge did not affect his extradition because in India he faces several different charges.

The charges include conspiracy, waged war, murder, terrorism, and forgery, the judgment noted.

Rana was released after seven years on compassionate grounds during the Covid pandemic, following which India requested his extradition to face trial

Headley had worked as an informant for the US government's Drug Enforcement Agency and after admitting to 12 terrorism-related charges, made a deal to cooperate with the US government on the condition that he will not be extradited.

The judgment mentioned Rana help-



Tahawwur Rana

Mumbai Police's crime branch confirmed recently.

The extradition process had intensified after a federal appeals court in the US had quashed Rana's appeal in August, last year.

The California-based Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals had upheld a lower federal court verdict permitting his extradition and ruled that the 1997 extradition treaty

*Judge Milan Smith, who wrote the opinion for the bench, said "India provided sufficient competent evidence" to support the initial order of a magistrate judge's "finding of probable cause that Rana committed the charged crimes" to allow the extradition*

there, which the magistrate judge approved.

Rana is a former Pakistan Army doctor who set up an immigration service after immigrating to Canada.

Rana's extradition would be a partial fulfillment of India's attempts to get the US-based Lashkar-e-Taiba accomplices face trial in India as Washington had refused to extradite Rana's Pakistani-American accomplice Daood Gilani, who uses the name David Headley.

ing Headley get a five-year visa for India under the pretext of setting up a branch of his business there.

Headley used the visa to help plot the Lashkar terror rampage by surveilling the Taj Hotel and other targets. Headley had informed Rana about the surveillance activities, the judgment said.

Judge Smith also noted in the judgment that "Rana commended the terrorists who carried out the attacks and stated that the people of India 'deserved it'." IANS

## ISRO launches SpaDEX mission, becomes 4th nation to ace docking technology

NEW DELHI: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched the SpaDeX mission, achieving a historic space-docking feat.

The Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) mission lifted off, aboard the PSLV-C60 rocket, from Sriharikota on December 30. The SpaDeX mission is working to dock two satellites in space.

"LIFTOFF! PSLV-C60 successfully launches SpaDeX and 24 payloads," ISRO said in a post on social media platform X.

"SpaDeX Deployed! Successful separation of SpaDeX satellites marks another milestone in India's space journey," it added.

India is now the fourth country, after the US, Russia, and China, to master the docking technology.

"India becomes the fourth to join the select league of nations to seek Space docking, through its own indigenously developed 'Bharatiya Docking System'," said Union Minister Jitendra Singh on X.



Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launches Polar Satellite Launch vehicle (PSLV-C60) with two Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) satellites and 24 other innovative payloads into orbit from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC), in Sriharikota. (ANI Photo)

The technology will "pave the way for journey beyond the skies for "Gaganyaan" and "Bharatiya Antriksha Station", Singh said.

SpaDeX (Space Docking Experiment) is a pioneering mission to establish India's capability in orbital docking, a key technology for future human spaceflight and satellite servicing missions, ISRO said.

The PSLV lifted off with two small spacecraft -- SDX01, the Chaser, and SDX02, the Target -- weighing about 220 kg each. The satellites merged or joined for docking in a low-Earth circular orbit. ISRO is to wait for four days for docking orientation to evaluate the software process

The Bharatiya Docking System includes a docking mechanism, a suite of four rendezvous and docking sensors, power transfer technology, indigenous novel autonomous rendezvous and docking strategy, and an inter-satellite communication link (ISL) for autonomous communication between spacecraft, incorporated with inbuilt intelligence to know the states of the other spacecraft, among others. IANS



# "Important neighbor, dependent on India in many ways": Bangladesh's Army Chief hails ties with India

DHAKA: Calling India an "important neighbor", Bangladesh's Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman said that Dhaka is dependent on New Delhi in many ways. He said that many people from Bangladesh visit India for treatment and lot of goods are imported from India, Prothom Alo reported.

In an interview with Prothom Alo, General Waker-Uz-Zaman said that India and Bangladesh have a "give and take relationship" and added that the relations must be based on fairness. He stated that Bangladesh has to maintain good ties based on equality.

On being asked about talks being held between India

ests in Bangladesh's stability. This is a give-and-take relationship."

"This must be based on fairness. Any country will want to get benefits from the other. There is nothing wrong in that. If we want extract our benefits, then we are to blame too. We must look into these matters. We have to maintain good relations based on equality. The people in no way should feel India is dominating over us, which goes against our interests. People should not feel this in any way," he added.

In an interview with Prothom Alo, General Zaman said that Bangladesh will not do anything that goes against the

ests. At the same time, we will expect that our neighbor does nothing that is contrary to our interests. When we look after their interests, they will look after our interests with equal importance."

"Unrest will not be created in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

*"The thing is that we will not do anything with our neighbor that goes against their strategic interests. At the same time, we will expect that our neighbor does nothing that is contrary to our interests. When we look after their interests, they will look after our interests with equal importance"*

and Bangladesh on some unresolved issues, General Waker-Uz-Zaman said, "India is an important neighbor. We are dependent on India in many ways. And India is getting facilities from us too. A large number of their people are working in Bangladesh, formally and informally. Many people go for medical treatment to India from here. We buy a lot of goods from them. So India has a lot of inter-

strategic interests of India and vice versa. He said that both India and Bangladesh will look after their interests with equal importance.

When asked about India seeking Bangladesh's cooperation in ensuring security in their northeast region, he responded, "See, the thing is that we will not do anything with our neighbor that goes against their strategic inter-



Bangladesh's Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman

The stability along the Myanmar border will not be disrupted either. They will not kill our people along the borders. We will get our fair share of water. There is no problem with this. Let the relations be on equal footing," he added.

Earlier in December, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri visited Bangladesh. This was the first high-level visit from India to Bangladesh since Sheikh Hasina was deposed as Prime Minister in August this year and since the interim government, led by Muhammad Yunus, assumed office.

During his visit to Dhaka, Misri said India is keen to work closely with the authorities of the Interim Government of Bangladesh under the Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus and addressing concerns related to the safety and welfare of minorities, including Hindus, in Bangladesh.

While addressing a press conference after his meeting with Bangladesh Foreign Adviser Md Touhid Hossain in Dhaka, Misri referred to recent incidents involving attacks on cultural, religious, and diplomatic properties and called for a constructive approach by the Bangladesh authorities to address these issues and ensure the safety and security of all communities.

"I have underlined today India's desire to work closely with the Interim Government of Bangladesh authorities. At the same time, we also had the opportunity to discuss certain recent developments and issues, and I conveyed our concerns, including those related to the safety and welfare of minorities. We also discussed some regrettable incidents of attacks on cultural, religious, and diplomatic properties," he said.

The Foreign Secretary noted that India and Bangladesh have long shared a people-centered relationship, driven by collaboration in areas such as trade, commerce, connectivity, power, water, and energy, and mentioned the wide-ranging areas of engagement between the two countries, including development cooperation, consular services, and cultural exchanges. ANI

## *Zelenskyy expresses confidence in new US President's "capability of ending Putin's aggression"*

KYIV: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy expressed his gratitude to America for backing their commitment to Ukraine and voiced confidence in the ability of the new American President to achieve peace and put an end to Putin's aggression, emphasizing that peace cannot be achieved without first stopping the aggression.

In New Year greetings to the citizens of the nation late Tuesday (31 Dec.), Zelenskyy said, "Today, I address all those who value Ukraine, cherish their state, and lovingly call it "Mine." I thank you for 2024. Our people who endure all difficulties with dignity. People for whom being citizens of Ukraine is a source of pride. And for me, it is a pride to be the President of such people - Ukrainians who prove that no cruise missile can defeat a nation that has wings."

Zelenskyy during his New Year greetings also reflected on his conversations with Joe Biden, Donald Trump, and US lawmakers, since the Russian invasion of Ukraine

"I remember my conversation with Joe Biden af-

*"I thank all Americans for proving these words with deeds. I have no doubt that the new American President is willing and capable of achieving peace and ending Putin's aggression. He understands that the first is impossible without the second"*

ter the Russian invasion. I remember my conversation with Donald Trump after he was elected. All the conversations with Congressmen, Senators, ordinary Americans, with all those who support us in the US, in Europe, and around the world - in those many and varied conversations, there was always unity on the main point: Putin cannot win. Ukraine will prevail," Zelenskyy said.

He added, "I thank all Americans for proving these words with deeds. I have no doubt that the new American President is willing and capable of achieving peace and ending Putin's aggression. He understands that the first is impossible without the second. Because this is not a street fight where you have to calm down both sides. This is the full-scale aggression of a mad state against a civilized one. And I believe that we, together with the United States, are capable of exerting that force."

The Ukrainian President further emphasized the nation's commitment to bringing its people back home and spoke about the 189 Ukrainians who were recently freed. ANI



# OpenAI whistleblower Suchir Balaji's mother alleges 'murder', demands FBI investigation into his death

WASHINGTON DC: The mother of Suchir Balaji, a 26-year-old former OpenAI researcher who was found dead after accusing the company of violating copyright laws, alleged that her son was 'murdered'



Suchir Balaji

and demanded an FBI investigation into the matter.

Poornima Rao, the mother of Suchir Balaji, claimed that her son's death was a "cold-blooded murder declared by authorities as suicide." She also mentioned that a private autopsy report differed from the

initial police report. Additionally, she stated that her son's apartment had been "ransacked," and there were signs of a struggle in the bathroom that suggested he had been hit.

"We hired private investigator and did second autopsy to throw light on cause of death. Private autopsy doesn't confirm the cause of death stated by police. Suchir's apartment was ransacked, sign of struggle in the bathroom and looks like some one hit him in bathroom based on blood spots. It's a cold blooded mu\*d\*r declared by authorities as suicide. Lobbying in San Francisco city doesn't stop us from getting justices. We demand FBI investigation." Poornima Rao wrote on X.

Elon Musk responded to the post of Suchir Balaji's mother, saying "This doesn't seem like a suicide."

Suchir Balaji was found dead in his apartment in San Francisco, months after accusing OpenAI of violating laws while developing ChatGPT, Fox News reported. His death was ruled a suicide after the San Francisco Police Department found no evidence of 'foul play'.

On October 24, before his death, Suchir Balaji expressed his skepticism about the

"fair use" of generative artificial intelligence products.

"I recently participated in a NYT story about fair use and generative AI, and why I'm skeptical "fair use" would be a plausible defense for a lot of generative AI products," he wrote on X.

"To give some context: I was at OpenAI

create substitutes that compete with the data they're trained on. I've written up the more detailed reasons for why I believe this in my post. Obviously, I'm not a lawyer, but I still feel like it's important for even non-lawyers to understand the law -- both the letter of it, and also why it's actually there in the first place," he added.

*"We hired private investigator and did second autopsy to throw light on cause of death. Private autopsy doesn't confirm the cause of death stated by police. Suchir's apartment was ransacked, sign of struggle in the bathroom and looks like some one hit him in bathroom based on blood spots"*

for nearly 4 years and worked on ChatGPT for the last 1.5 of them. I initially didn't know much about copyright, fair use, etc. but became curious after seeing all the lawsuits filed against GenAI companies. When I tried to understand the issue better, I eventually came to the conclusion that fair use seems like a pretty implausible defense for a lot of generative AI products, for the basic reason that they can

Suchir Balaji also raised concerns about the company breaking copyright laws in an interview with The New York Times.

He was named in a copyright lawsuit filed against the company by The New York Times, which alleged that Microsoft and OpenAI used millions of published articles to inform their technology and began competing with the outlet as a result, Fox News reported. ANI

## New gun laws rolling out in multiple US states on Jan 1

NEW YORK: US states have taken steps to pass their own gun regulations to effect on January 1, as related violence kept on ravaging the nation with nearly 500 mass shootings occurring in 2024, media reported.

In September 2024, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed a series of laws aimed at strengthening gun safety regulations. Those include requiring schools to implement safety programs and plans and establishing an Of-



ice of Gun Violence Prevention, which has deadlines in the coming years. Some of those laws go into effect on January 1, Xinhua news agency reported.

As of January 1, any handgun stored inside an unoccupied vehicle in Colorado must be in a locked, hard-sided container that is out of plain view, and the vehicle also must be locked, with some excep-

tions. Later in 2025, Coloradans who want to apply for a concealed carry permit will be required to complete an eight-hour training class, which includes a written exam and a live-fire exercise.

The only gun-related bills signed into law in 2024 in New Hampshire expanded gun rights. Going into effect on January 1. HB 1186 strengthens privacy protections around gun laws by prohibiting the use of specific merchant category codes, and HB 1336 bars employers from forbidding employees from storing guns in locked vehicles.

Kentucky is one of 10 states that passed an MCC ban in 2024, according to the National Rifle Association (NRA), and at least five other states have previously passed those laws while a handful of other states, including California, have passed legislation requiring it. IANS

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# WHO urges China to share data on Covid-19, calls it "moral imperative"

GENEVA: Five years after the Covid-19 outbreak that devastated lives worldwide, the World Health Organization (WHO) reiterated its call for China to provide critical data and access to understand the virus's origins, calling it a "moral and scientific imperative."

WHO further warned that without global transparency and collaboration, the world remains vulnerable to future epidemics.

In a statement issued recently, the WHO said, "We continue to call on China to share data and access so we can understand the origins of Covid-19. This is a moral and scientific imperative. Without transparency, sharing, and cooperation among countries, the world cannot adequately prevent and prepare for future epidemics and pandemics."

It added, "Five years ago on 31 December 2019, WHO's Country Office in China picked up a media statement by the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission from their website on cases of 'viral pneumonia' in Wuhan, China. In the weeks, months and years that unfolded after that, COVID-19 came to shape our lives and our world. At WHO, we went to work immediately as the new year

*"We continue to call on China to share data and access so we can understand the origins of Covid-19. This is a moral and scientific imperative. Without transparency, sharing, and cooperation among countries, the world cannot adequately prevent"*

dawned. WHO employees activated emergency systems on 1 January 2020, and informed the world on 4 January. By 9-12 January, WHO had published its first set of comprehensive guidance for countries, and on 13 January, we brought together partners to publish the blueprint of the first SARS-CoV-2 laboratory test."

The statement added, "As we mark this milestone, let's take a moment to honor the lives changed and lost, recognize those who are suffering from Covid-19 and long Covid, express gratitude to the health workers who sacrificed so much to care for us, and commit to learning from Covid-19 to build a healthier tomorrow."

Throughout 2020, WHO continued to discuss with China and other Member States the need to study and share information around the virus origins.

In July 2020 WHO sent a small team to China to plan a joint study comprising Chinese and independent international scientists. The team of scientists came from around the world: Australia, China, Denmark, Germany, Japan, Kenya, Netherlands, Qatar, Russia, the United Kingdom, the US and Viet Nam. ANI

# Taiwan's President blames China's actions for blocking cross-strait dialogue

TAIPEI: Taiwan's President Lai Ching-te reiterated that his government is open to peaceful and respectful exchanges with China but emphasized that Beijing's actions are blocking progress, Voice of America reported.

In his first New Year address since taking office in May 2024, Lai said Taiwan seeks healthy and orderly exchanges with China, but only under the principle of mutual respect. He criticized China for trying to undermine Taiwan's democracy, calling these efforts "counterproductive" and harmful to trust-building between the two sides.

According to the Voice of America report, Lai pointed out that China is actively restricting civil society exchanges by preventing Chinese tourists and students from visiting Taiwan. He argued that these actions, rather than Taiwan's policies, are the real obstacle to dialogue and understanding between the two sides.

Lai further stressed that peace across the Taiwan Strait is crucial for security in the Indo-Pacific region and worldwide. He added that Taiwan must continue to strengthen its defense and be prepared for potential threats, even during peaceful times, VOA News reported.

Lai's comments come amid increased military pressure from China, which has conducted several military exercises near Taiwan since Lai took office. China considers Taiwan as part of its territory and has pledged to reunite with the island, by force if necessary. In a New Year speech, Chinese President Xi Jinping reaffirmed China's determination to reunify with Taiwan, calling it an irreversible "trend of the times," VOA News reported.

Experts suggest that Lai is working to frame Taiwan's situation as part of a broader global struggle between democracy and authoritarianism. By linking China with other authoritarian regimes, Lai aims to strengthen Taiwan's international support and promote its de facto independence. However, analysts believe this stance is unlikely to reduce Beijing's pressure on Taiwan soon.

According to VOA News report, Zhiqun Zhu, an expert on Chinese foreign policy at

Bucknell University in Pennsylvania stated, "Lai highlighted the importance of strengthening Taiwan's ability to deter Beijing's invasion, combating information and cognitive warfare, raising Taiwan's defense budget, and boosting its military power." ANI



Taiwan's President Lai Ching-te

# Pakistan: Former PM Manmohan Singh's ancestral village mourns his demise, invites his family

CHAKWAL: Though ties between India and Pakistan continue to remain fraught amid repeated terror activities from Islamabad, Gah, a small village in Pakistan, which is also the ancestral place of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, mourned his demise with a special event.

The villagers held a special event to pay tribute to Manmohan Singh, who breathed his last, on December 26, 2024, in AIIMS Delhi at the age of 92.

The villagers took pride in their connection to the late leader, celebrating his journey from a modest upbringing to becoming the head of the world's largest democracy.

A villager said, "A matter of pride for me is that Manmohan Singh was the fellow classmate of my father. Whenever I saw the name of Manmohan Singh in school, I felt proud that a boy of this small village became Premier of such a big democracy and handled the honor of India."



Manmohan Singh

Another villager extended the invitation to Manmohan Singh's family to visit his native village.

He said, "Since he (Manmohan Singh) is no more now but is survived by his wife and daughters, we extend them an invitation. Whenever they are here, they will find their home even today. We are all waiting for them. If they want to come, we will welcome them in such a way that perhaps, it will be written in history."

Manmohan Singh passed away at the age of 92 due to age-related medical issues in Delhi on December 26. He was cremated with full state honors at Nigambodh Ghat in Delhi's Kashmere Gate in the presence of his family, friends, colleagues, and government dignitaries on December 28.

Singh's political career spanned several decades, with notable positions including Finance Minister from 1991 to 1996, during which he spearheaded economic reforms that transformed India's economy. He served as the Prime Minister of India from 2004 to 2014, succeeding Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

His tenure is particularly remembered for his steady leadership during economic crises and his contributions to modernizing India's economy. He was succeeded by Narendra Modi in 2014 after the Congress-led UPA lost the general elections. Earlier this year, Manmohan Singh retired from Rajya Sabha. ANI



# 'PM Modi's visit to Russia-Ukraine, expanding ties with Middle East, Africa': How India's Foreign Policy progressed in 2024

NEW DELHI: As we enter the year 2025 with more challenges and opportunities, it is a good time to take a look at how India's foreign policy progressed in the year 2024 and the major developments on that front.

2024 served as the year where India's international efforts aimed at global peace and prosperity found recognition on the global stage.

From the highest awards by foreign countries being conferred to PM Modi to indigenous Indian government policies being adopted across the world by global partners of India, the year saw how sustained efforts consistently worked upon, presenting India as a firebrand of trust, and achieving its aim of being a "Vishwabandhu" and "Vishwamitra".

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's swearing-in ceremony after winning a historic third term also reaffirmed India's commitment to its 'Neighbourhood First' policy and 'SAGAR Vision' as the heads of states of Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Maldives, Mauritius, Bhutan, Nepal and Seychelles attended the ceremony.

The Prime Minister emphasized that in his third term,

along the border. The meeting was attended by Ajit Doval, National Security Advisor (NSA) and Wang Yi, China's Foreign Minister and Member of the CPC Central Committee.

## Pakistan

In a first since 2018, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar visited Pakistan to attend the SCO Summit, however, no discussions took place on the bilateral ties between the two countries, despite visible expectations from the Pakistani side.

India, however, has continued with its stance that 'talks and terror can't go hand in hand'. EAM Jaishankar, at multiple occasions, pointed out to the challenges of dealing with a neighbor which perpetrates terrorism at "industry level."

Responding to the question posed on Pakistan in the Parliament, Jaishankar said, "In terms of improving ties with Pakistan, like any other neighbor, we would like to have good ties. But like with any other neighbor, we would also like to have ties free of terrorism. So, this has been the position of the government. We have made it very

Prime Minister Modi in a call with Muhammad Yunus reaffirmed India's support for a democratic, stable, peaceful and progressive Bangladesh. He emphasized India's commitment to supporting the people of Bangladesh through various development initiatives. Prime Minister also underlined the importance of ensuring the safety and protection of Hindus and all other minority communities in Bangladesh.

The protests which saw the ouster of Sheikh Hasina had resulted into violence against religious minorities in Bangladesh, and the subsequent arrest of Chinmoy Das that further deteriorated the issue in the country.

Recently, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri in December visited Bangladesh. During this, he expressed India's continued support for the people of Bangladesh. The FS also expressed India's concerns regarding the situation of minorities.

## Bhutan

India and Bhutan saw flourishing ties with visits by both the Indian and Bhutanese top echelons to their countries. India's steadfast support for Gelephu Mindfulness City, among other initiatives was also reiterated.

Bhutan PM Tshering Tobgay visited India in March 2024. This was followed by Prime Minister Modi's visit to Bhutan.

In March, PM Modi was conferred the Order of the Druk Gyalpo, Bhutan's highest civilian decoration by the King of Bhutan. Prime Minister Modi became the first foreign leader to be given this prestigious award, which recognizes contribution to strengthening India-Bhutan friendship and his people-centric leadership.

## Maldives

The arrival of Maldivian President Muizzu initially posed a challenge for India, as Muizzu ran his whole presidential campaign on an 'India Out' plank. Coming to power, Muizzu exited from several engagements with India.

Muizzu strongly opposed the presence of Indian troops in Maldives. Upon subsequent discussions, India decided to replace the personnel with professional civilians to perform medvac services there.

The derogatory remarks by some of Muizzu's ministers against Prime Minister Modi led to strong opposition from India and led to diplomatic row between New Delhi and Male.

However, India's persistent efforts on diplomatic channels and long-standing ties with the island nation slowly brought the ties back on track.

Mohammed Muizzu attended PM Modi's swearing-in ceremony and came on an official visit to India in October. Calling India as Maldives' "closest ally" he thanked New Delhi for financial support to Male amid economic hardships. Several agreements were signed between the two nations, including the start of FTA talks.

## Middle East

India continued with the deepening of its engagements with the Middle East. PM Modi visited several Middle Eastern nations; UAE, Qatar, and Kuwait in 2024 and welcomed several leaders names from the region.

During PM Modi's visit, India and the UAE saw several high-level delegations visit the two countries. ANI



PM Modi with other world leaders

India will continue to work for the peace, progress and prosperity of the region in close partnership with the countries, even as it pursues its goal of 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047.

In this context, he called for deeper people-to-people ties and connectivity in the region. He further added that India would continue to amplify the voice of the Global South in the international arena.

## China

The biggest development for India's foreign policy last year was reaching an agreement with China on patrolling arrangements along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

This came after a long border standoff triggered following Chinese aggression at the border in June 2020.

Following this, Prime Minister Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping met after five years on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia. PM Modi reaffirmed the need to maintain peace and tranquility on the border.

The 23rd Meeting of the Special Representatives of India and China was also held in Beijing in December, with discussions focused on maintaining peace and tranquility

clear that it is for the Pakistani side to show that they are changing their behavior of the past and that if they don't, of course, there are implications for the relationship and for them. So, I think the ball is very much in Pakistan's court in this regard."

## Bangladesh

While the year started with a re-election of Sheikh Hasina -- a long-time ally of India -- as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, by the time of August, student protests in the country turned into a violent uprising which eventually led to Hasina's ouster. This brought an interim government led by the Nobel Laureate Muhammed Yunus.

However, following that, there have been multiple attacks on religious minorities, especially Hindus and their places of worship. India has repeatedly raised its concerns on the issue and called on the interim government to ensure the protection of minorities.

The situation was further exacerbated after a Hindu priest Chinmoy Das was arrested by Bangladesh authorities on sedition charges.



## India's out-of-home coffee market projected to reach up to \$3.2 billion

BENGALURU: As coffee emerges as a lifestyle choice for millions of urban consumers in a tea-loving nation, India's out-of-home coffee market is projected to reach \$2.6-\$3.2 billion by 2028, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 15-20 percent, according to a report on 31 December.

The premium coffee segment (above Rs 200), which represented 46 percent of the market in 2023, is projected to grow to 55-60 percent of the market at a CAGR of 20-25 percent, underscoring its dominant role in shaping India's outside coffee landscape, according to the report by Redseer Strategy Consultants.

This segment targets affluent, discerning coffee enthusiasts with artisanal brewing and experiential consumption.

The mass market (below Rs 100) had 50 percent market share in 2023 which is projected to shrink to 30-35 percent by 2028, growing at a CAGR of 8-10 percent. While affordability remains its hallmark, the segment offers limited avenues for premium differentiation, the report mentioned.

Meanwhile, the mid-price range (Rs 100-Rs 200) which constituted just 4 percent of the market in 2023 is expected to grow to 8-10 percent of the market by 2028 at an impressive CAGR of 35-40 percent. IANS

## Govt rolling out Rs 15,000 crore roadmap to help steel industry cut carbon emissions

NEW DELHI: The government is preparing the 'Green Steel Mission' with an estimated cost of Rs 15,000 crore for helping the steel industry to reduce carbon emissions and progress towards the Net Zero Target, according to the year-end review released by the Ministry of Steel recently.

The mission includes a PLI Scheme for Green Steel, incentives for the use of renewable energy and mandates for government agencies to buy Green Steel to enhance the industry's environmental sustainability. IANS

## Microsoft committed to partner with Telangana in its initiatives: Satya Nadella

HYDERABAD: Microsoft Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Satya Nadella recently reiterated the commitment of Microsoft to partner with the Telangana government in all its initiatives.

He stated this during a meeting with Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, two of his Cabinet colleagues and top officials here.

According to the Chief Minister's Office, Satya Nadella appreciated the Chief Minister's vision of enhancing skills and improving infrastructure to the next level, and opined that only these two can position Hyderabad in the top 50 cities in the world for creating economic growth.

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, accompanied by Minister for IT and Industries D Sridhar Babu, Minister for Irrigation and Civil Supplies/Uttam Kumar Reddy, Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari, Special Chief Secretary IT and Industries Jayesh Ranjan and Special Secretary to CM Ajith Reddy called on Satya Nadella.

Microsoft is one of the earliest technology companies in

Hyderabad and has grown to a strength of 10,000 over the years. It has also invested in a data center capacity of 600 MW

including Artificial Intelligence (AI), Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI), cloud, and sought Microsoft's support to develop

development of new manufacturing clusters, and how the government is proposing to create a vast pool of industry-ready talent



Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy meets Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, in Hyderabad on December 30. (ANI Photo)

in the state.

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy thanked Nadella for regular investments and the growth of Microsoft's business in the city and state.

He and IT Minister briefed the Microsoft CEO and Chairman on various technology imperatives that the state is focusing on in-

strong ecosystem so that Hyderabad is seen as the leading city in the world in the technology domain.

The Chief Minister also explained about his plans for Infrastructure development in the state including Regional Ring Road, radial roads, Future City,

through institutions like Young India Skills University.

The Chief Minister, his two Cabinet colleagues and officials met Nadella at the latter's residence in Banjara Hills.

Nadella's father-in-law K. R. Venugopal, a retired IAS officer, received the Chief Minister. IANS

## AIIMS Delhi investing over Rs 300 cr to develop digital infra, AI: Director

NEW DELHI: With artificial intelligence (AI) reshaping healthcare at an unprecedented pace, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi is investing more than Rs 300 crore in developing digital infrastructure, said Director Dr. M. Srinivas.

He said this at a meeting held at the national capital deliberating the transformative potential of AI in revolutionizing health awareness and patient education empowerment.

Leaders in healthcare, tech-

nology, and policy shared insights into how AI is poised to bridge critical gaps in health communication, making information more accessible, reliable, and patient-centric.

"AI is revolutionizing everything from patient care to health communication," said Dr. M. Srinivas, Director of AIIMS.

"We are investing over Rs 300 crore in digital infrastructure to ensure that every stakeholder -- patients, doctors, and researchers -- benefits from this innovation. By integrating AI, we

can improve efficiency, reduce delays, and enable world-class research," he added.

The experts at AIIMS also stressed the need to bridge the

gap of misinformation by delivering accurate, easily understandable, and personalized healthcare information via AI to people across diverse demographics.

Srinivas also emphasized that leveraging AI to simplify and disseminate health information will empower patients and improve their engagement with healthcare systems, ultimately leading to better health outcomes.

"A good health system isn't reliant on individuals. AI can play a vital role in making healthcare more accurate, compassionate, and equitable," Dr. Kavita Narayan, Senior Technical Advisor, HRH for Health Systems at the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. IANS





## Navi Mumbai International Airport to be world-class 'Gateway to Goodness': Jeet Adani

MUMBAI: Jeet Adani, Director, Airports of the Adani Group, hailed the pivotal landmark of Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) successfully carrying out its first commercial validation flight with the touchdown of an IndiGo Airlines A 320 plane, paving the way for the greenfield airport to become operational in early 2025.

"A historic milestone as Navi Mumbai International Airport welcomed its first commercial validation flight! Proud of our team's hard work and grateful for our stakeholders' unwavering support. Together, we are creating a world-class Gateway To Goodness!" Jeet Adani said in a post on X.

The validation flight moment witnessed by senior officials from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the Airports Authority of India (AAI), as well as the Adani Airport Holdings Limited (AAHL), marks the airport's alignment with global aviation standards.

The touchdown of a commercial aircraft validates and establishes the synchronized functioning of Instrument Approach Procedures at the NMIA. The exercise includes technical assessment, landing and take-off maneuvers that the DGCA into account to validate the data collected from the flight and for the NMIA to receive

the aerodrome license, which is essential to operate the airport.

After the successful landing, the NMIA's established flight procedures will be published in the Electronic Aeronautical Information Publication (eAIP) for international promulgation.



The NMIA had earlier successfully conducted the flight calibration of the Instrument Landing System (ILS) and Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI), subsequently drafting instrument approach procedures to prepare itself for the arrival of the validation flight of the airport.

Jeet Adani joined the Adani Group in 2019, after attending the University of Pennsylvania's School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. He started his career in the Group CFO's office, looking at Strategic Finance, Capital Markets and Risk & Governance Policy.

This role involves working with all the listed verticals of the Adani Group. Jeet Adani is also spearheading the Adani Airports business as well as the Adani Digital Labs - which is all set to build a super app to cater to all the consumers of Adani Group businesses. IANS

## India's defense exports jumped from Rs 2,000 to Rs 21,000 crore in 10 years: Rajnath Singh

MHOW: Defense Minister Rajnath Singh said that India's defense exports have surpassed a record level of Rs 21,000 crore from a mere Rs 2,000 crore a decade ago.

Addressing officers at the Army War College (AWC) here recently, he said the government has set a Rs 50,000 crore target for defense exports crore by 2029.

He highlighted the radical changes in warfare with unconventional methods like information warfare, Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based warfare, proxy warfare, electromagnetic warfare, space warfare, and cyber-attacks presenting a big challenge.

He stressed the need for the military to be well-trained and equipped to fight off such attacks and praised the training centers in Mhow for their valuable contribution.

Defense Minister Singh commended the training centers for constantly improving their training curriculum as per changing times, and striving to make the person-

nel fighting fit to take up every kind of challenge.

He urged the officers to explore the possibility of promoting integration through areas such as weapons training in Infantry School; AI and communication technology



Defense Minister Rajnath Singh

in the Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE), and leadership - junior and senior command in AWC.

He further stated that the Modi government is committed to strengthening integration and connectedness among the

three defense services.

"In the times to come, the armed forces will be able to face challenges together in a better and more efficient way," the defense minister said.

He pointed out that some officers would work as defense attaches in the future, and they should strive to secure national interests at the global level.

"When you take up this post of defense attaches, you should imbibe the government's vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'. Only through self-reliance can India strengthen its defense capabilities and gain more respect on the world stage," he explained.

Defense Minister Singh said the government is committed to making India one of the strongest economic and military powers in the world.

"Economic prosperity is possible only when full attention is paid to security. Similarly, the security system will be robust only when the economy is strong. Both complement each other," he observed. IANS

## Emerging tech jobs in India to surge 20 pc next year, GenAI roles to see highest salaries

NEW DELHI: Indian IT/tech ecosystem is projected to contribute 10 percent to India's GDP by 2025, with at least 20 percent rise in emerging tech roles next year, a report showed on 30 December.

The generative (GenAI) industry alone is projected to 1 million new job opportunities by 2028, contributing significantly to the nation's GDP, according to the report by FirstMeridian Business Services.

Salaries for GenAI positions like Generative AI engineer, Algorithm engineer and AI security specialist are forecast to rise from the previous year, indicating a 25-30 percent upward trend in compensation for mid-level category.

Industries like global capability centers (GCCs) created over 600,000 jobs between 2018-19 and 2023-24. By 2030, they are projected to employ 2.5 to 2.8 million professionals, said the report.

Additionally, other non-tech sectors like BFSI and telecom are likely to increase their intake of IT/tech professionals in the coming year.

"Companies must prioritize reskilling and up skilling to foster innovation and maintain a competitive edge in the AI-driven economy. The top five skills expected to define AI roles in 2025 will be AI, ML, cloud computing, data science and cyber security," said Sunil Nehra, CEO-IT Staffing, FirstMeridian Business Services.

In 2024, the Indian IT/tech ecosystem witnessed a 17 percent surge in new employment opportunities, driven by rapid digital transformation and the concurrent rising demand for emerging tech niche job profiles.

As businesses expand and innovate, the surge in hiring will support new projects, enhance digital infrastructure, and keep pace with technological advancements.

Majority of large enterprises and mid-sized companies are expected to marginally increase their up skilling budgets by an average of 15-20 percent in 2025.

Additionally, individuals will continue taking initiative for their own up skilling efforts to prepare for promising new age tech roles, the report mentioned. IANS



'Staying single in life can have economic, medical disadvantages'

NEW DELHI: People who prefer to stay single all their life could be at a disadvantage both economically and medically than those who are married or in a long-term relationship, finds a study.

The study, published in the journal Psychological Science, reveals people who stay single also have lesser satisfaction in life compared to those in relationships. It showed that single people have different personality traits compared to partnered people.

These findings point to the need for developing helpful networks catered to single people. This is especially crucial as people get older and may become more reliant on others, said the team from the University of Bremen in Germany.

"When there are differences, they might be especially important in elderly people who face more health issues and financial issues," said Julia Stern, one of the lead authors and a senior researcher at the varsity.

"They need more help, and the help is usually the partner," she added. *IANS*

*One can be said to be perfectly healthy in body and mind only if no part of the body or mind makes itself felt. A part makes itself felt only when there is something wrong with it. You know that you have a head only when it aches.*  
Sri Atmananda (1883 - 1959)

# Study shows exercise key to managing chronic liver disease

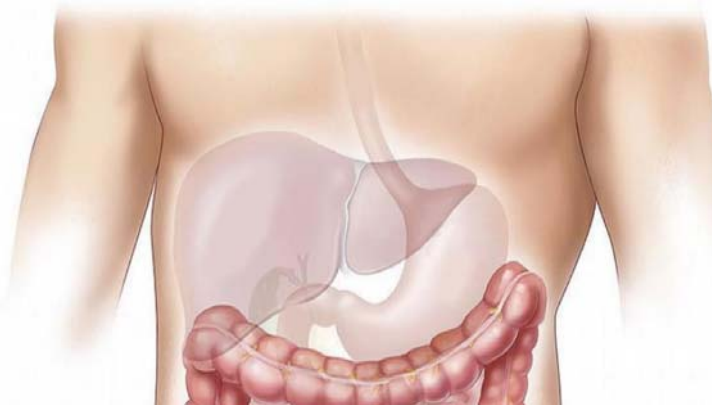
NEW DELHI: Exercise is a cornerstone in managing metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD), according to a study led by an Indian-origin researcher.

MASLD, previously known as non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), is a chronic liver disease that occurs when fat builds up in the liver in people who don't drink much alcohol. It can affect people with diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure, or high cholesterol.

The study, led by Hirsh D. Trivedi and team at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in California, US showed that exercise can be beneficial even for patients who have progressed to cirrhosis -- severe scarring of the liver.

Besides weight loss, exercise can aid in reducing liver fat, im-

proving inflammation biomarkers, and enhancing cardiovascular health, revealed the study, published in the Liver International journal.



"Personalized exercise regimens should be prioritized for all patients, including those receiving pharmacotherapy," said the researchers in the paper.

"Exercise is a great therapeutic

tool across all stages of liver disease, including advanced liver disease! Would not limit physical activity solely based on liver disease stage and even folks living

with cirrhosis can safely and effectively exercise," said Jonathan G. Stine, part of the research team at the Department of Medicine, at Cedars-Sinai, in a post on the social media platform X.

The findings, based on a review of several pre-clinical and clinical studies showed that increased physical activity, mainly with exercise, is associated with reduced liver disease incidence and better outcomes. The team also urged for adopting an evidence-based, systematic approach to prescribing exercise for MASLD patients.

"Exercise will remain an essential intervention for the management of steatotic liver disease, with the bulk of evidence supporting its benefits in MASLD. Regular physical activity improves insulin sensitivity, reduces hepatic fat accumulation, and lowers biomarkers of liver inflammation," said the team, calling for more research to refine exercise protocols. *IANS*

## Study links coffee, tea consumption to lower risk of head, neck cancer

WASHINGTON: Recent research has suggested that drinking coffee and tea may lower the risk of developing head and neck cancer, a group of cancers that includes cancers of the mouth, throat, and larynx.

The findings, published in the peer-reviewed journal *CANCER* by the American Cancer Society, offer new insights into the potential protective effects of these popular beverages.

A new pooled analysis combining data from 14 studies has revealed promising results for coffee and tea drinkers.

The research, conducted by the International Head and

Neck Cancer Epidemiology Consortium, examined over 9,500 patients with head and neck cancer and more than 15,700 cancer-free controls.

The findings suggest that individuals who consume coffee and tea regularly may experience a reduced risk of developing head and neck cancers.

The study found that individuals who drank more than four cups of caffeinated coffee daily had 17 percent lower odds of developing head and neck cancer

compared to non-coffee drinkers.

Furthermore, regular coffee drinkers showed a 30 percent reduced risk of oral cavity cancer and a 22 percent lower risk of throat cancer.

Specifically, consuming 3-4

cups of caffeinated coffee daily was associated with a significant 41 percent reduction in the risk of hypopharyngeal cancer, a type of cancer located at the bottom of the throat.

Even decaffeinated coffee appeared to have a protective effect. Drinking decaf coffee was associated with a 25 percent lower risk of developing oral cavity cancer.

In addition, tea consumption was linked with a 29 percent lower risk of hypopharyngeal cancer.

The study also found that drinking one cup or fewer of tea

daily was associated with a 9 percent reduced risk of head and neck cancer overall, and a 27 percent lower risk of hypopharyngeal cancer.

However, drinking more than one cup of tea daily showed an increased risk of laryngeal cancer, with a 38 percent higher chance of developing this cancer type.

The analysis highlights the complex relationship between coffee, tea, and various subtypes of head and neck cancer.

While caffeine and tea are widely believed to offer health benefits, the study indicates that their effects vary depending on the type of cancer. *ANI*





# India achieves key targets in malaria, kala-azar lymphatic filariasis in 2024: Centre

NEW DELHI: India has achieved key targets for cases and deaths of vector-borne diseases like malaria, kala-azar, lymphatic filariasis, the government said.

The National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP) is responsible for preventing and controlling these diseases.

According to the Ministry of Health, India has made substantial progress in reducing the malaria burden.



Between 2015 and 2023, "the country has achieved a reduction of 80.53 percent in malaria morbidity and 78.38 percent in malaria mortality", the Ministry said.

"In 2024 (till October -provisional), there is 13.66 percent increase in malaria cases and 32.84 percent decrease in malaria deaths," it added.

This year, surveillance has also been increased in 23

states, till October. India aims to eliminate malaria by 2030.

The Ministry also reported a reduction of 22.18 percent of Kala-azar cases in the country in 2024.

About 421 Kala-azar cases have been reported till October.

In comparison, 541 cases were reported during the corresponding period in 2023.

Importantly, the country is sustaining the elimination target in "633 endemic blocks" achieved by the end of 2023.

Elimination target can be defined as the annual incidence of less than one case per 10,000 population at block level.

"The government has achieved 'zero' number of endemic blocks reporting more than 1 Kala azar case per 10,000 population at block level and has sustained elimination status till date," the Ministry said.

Further, the Mass Drug Administration (MDA) campaign to eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis has seen 94 percent coverage among the eligible population in 2024.

In 2023, MDA campaigns reached 82 percent coverage nationally.

The campaign under the National Programme to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis, reported coverage across 1,634 blocks of 159 districts, in 13 states. MDA was conducted in two phases in these areas, the Ministry said.

Lymphatic Filariasis, commonly known as Elephantiasis (Haatipaon) is a serious, debilitating and incapacitating disease transmitted through the bite of a culex mosquito.

It is a priority tropical disease targeted for elimination by the Government of India prior to the global target of 2030.

"Among 345 endemic districts, 159 districts of 13



states reported more than 1 percent microfilaria (Mf) rate and are under Mass Drug Administration," the Ministry said.

"About 3,38,087 Morbidity Management and Disability Prevention Kits were provided to lymphoedema patients and 64,706 hydrocelectomy surgeries conducted," it added. IANS

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# APAC region sees rise in demand for lab-grown meat: Report

NEW DELHI: The Asia-Pacific (APAC) region is seeing a rise in interest in cultured meat or lab-grown meat, according to a recent report.

Meat is an essential source of proteins, lipids, carbohydrates, and vitamins that the human body needs to meet its energy requirements.

Even as traditional animal farming techniques are becoming insufficient to meet the growing demand, cultivated meat has become a powerful protein substitute, said the report by GlobalData, a data and analytics company.

"APAC nations are exploring opportunities to produce cultured meat driven by technological advancements and growing consumer awareness of sustainable practices," said Bynagari Susmitha, Consumer Analyst at Global Data.

This comes as the traditional method of raising livestock has been shown to raise serious environmental problems like an increase in greenhouse gas emissions, scarcity of water, and over-use of land resources.

"It is believed that about three-quarters of agricultural land is used for animal husbandry, leaving very little space available for grain cultivation. Furthermore, meat production is responsible for a significant amount of greenhouse gas emissions from the food industry. Cultivated meat, also known as lab-grown meat, is sustainable as it has less environmental impact," Susmitha said.

The report also pointed out a "clear shift in consumer

preferences towards alternative protein sources". This, Susmitha said, is leading to greater acceptance and adoption of cultured meat products."

Susmitha noted Singapore as the prime example of this cultural shift.

The country has used cultured meats to adapt to novel foods. And "it sees an opportunity to become a global leader by assisting both domestic and foreign businesses", Susmitha said.

Further, the report cited GlobalData's Q3 Consumer Survey of Asia and Australasia, which showed that 81 percent of the 6,163 respondents focus on sustainable/environmentally friendly features when deciding to make a food and drink purchase.

"As the world fights the urgent need to address climate change,

cultured meat or lab-grown meat minimizes greenhouse gas emissions associated with conventional meat production, promotes ethical animal care, and also meets the growing need for food that is high in protein," Susmitha said.

The report projected an increase in investments and legislation for cultured meat technologies as countries in the APAC region aim to achieve their food security and sustainability objectives.

"This will foster a competitive market environment and drive scientific breakthroughs in the region," Susmitha said. IANS



# Digital consultations not sufficient for treatment of tonsillitis: Study

NEW DELHI: Even as digital healthcare consultations are becoming more common, a study showed it may not be enough for a safe assessment of tonsillitis.

Tonsillitis is a painful infection of the tonsils -- two lymph node-rich glands in the back of the throat. Symptoms of tonsillitis include swollen tonsils, sore throat, and difficulty swallowing.

The study showed that digital assessment may not be reliable, thus increasing the risk of over- or undertreatment of a sore throat.

As tonsillitis is commonly treated with antibiotics, digital assessment may not be as reliable as physical examinations in determining whether antibiotic treatment is warranted, said the team from the University of Gothenburg in Sweden.

To determine whether a patient needs antibiotics, doctors use the so-called Centor Criteria -- fever, tender, and

swollen lymph nodes in the angles of the jaw, and inspection of the tonsils. However, it has been unclear how well these criteria can be assessed during digital healthcare consultations compared to traditional in-person consultations, said the researchers.

"Our study shows that although digital healthcare consultations are convenient for many patients, they are not reliable enough to assess tonsillitis. To ensure a correct diagnosis and treatment, it is still important to conduct a physical examination," said Patrycja Woldan-Gradalska, a doctoral student at Sahlgrenska Academy at the varsity.

The study, published in the journal *Infectious Diseases*, included 189 patients who sought care at healthcare clinics and urgent care clinics in Sweden, between January 2020 and October 2023. IANS



# Temporary hospital in Maha Kumbh Mela area sees first birth of baby

NEW DELHI: A significant milestone was achieved at the temporary hospital in the Maha Kumbh Mela area. Doctors successfully conducted their first delivery of a baby boy, bringing joy to everyone there.

Under the leadership of Dr Gaurav Dubey, a team of three doctors carried out the delivery on 29 December.

Dr Dubey, the Nodal Medical Officer of the Maha Kumbh Mela, confirmed the news, stating, "This marks the first successful delivery at the Central Hospital in Maha Kumbh Nagar."

The 20-year-old mother, Sonam, gave birth to a healthy baby boy weighing 2.4 kilograms. The delivery was managed by Dr Dubey's team, which included Dr Nupur and Dr Vartika.

Both the mother and child are reported to be in good health. Dr Dubey expressed his gratitude to the dedicated team for their efforts and added, "This success highlights the readiness and efficiency of the healthcare system established in the Maha Kumbh Mela area."

The Central Hospital, located in the area of the temporary Maha Kumbh Mela setup, is offering delivery services for the first time. A fully equipped labor room has also been established to cater to expecting mothers during the Mela.

Speaking about the achievement, Rama Singh, Matron of the Maha Kumbh Mela Central Hospital, said, "The delivery was carried out with utmost care and precision. It was the first and a highly successful delivery. We are proud to provide this essential service to the community."

Sonam, the new mother, shared her happiness with IANS: "I am very happy and grateful to all the staff members and doctors who ensured the safe delivery of my baby. My child is healthy, and I feel truly blessed. Whatever name the doctors and staff suggest for my child will be the name we choose."

Her mother also expressed her gratitude, stating, "This region, being the Kumbh area, holds divine significance. I am thankful to the doctors and other staff who provided such dedicated service. My grandchild is healthy, and the delivery was successful. This is a moment of great joy for us." IANS





# LifeStyle

January 3, 2025

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## Tourists flock Gujarat's Kutch for 'Rann Utsav' ahead of New Year, following PM Modi's appeal

**T**ourists flock Gujarat's Kutch for 'Rann Utsav' ahead of New Year, following PM Modi's appeal

KUTCH: Following an appeal by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit Gujarat's famed 'Rann Utsav', tourists from all corners of the country are flocking to the Kutch region to experience the mesmerizing salt desert. The celebrations, which continue for almost three months is in full swing ahead of the New Year celebrations.

Bhuj to Kutch for easier access.

Additionally, special attention is being given to the comfort of tourists at the Tent City, where visitors are being provided with top-notch facilities.

Talking to IANS, two sisters, Manu and Pragati, visiting Kutch for the first time, shared their excitement: "We came here today to explore Gujarat. We are feeling like we're walking in snow! The area is so mesmerizing that we plan to stay here longer. It's a must-have experience."

*The festivities, which began on December 1, will continue until February 28, 2025, while the Tent City will remain open until the end of March. The annual Rann Utsav transforms the Great Rann of Kutch's vast, pristine white sands into a cultural haven*

The region is witnessing an influx of visitors at the Kutch's Kiran Utsav, where people are exploring the famous white salt marshes, a stunning natural spectacle, unique to the area. The administration has made special arrangements to cater to the growing number of visitors, including a Volvo bus service from

Anuradha Sharma from Punjab expressed her amazement at the sight of the Rann Utsav, saying "I had heard about such places, but now I can finally experience it. Kutch is an incredibly beautiful place, unlike any other in the country-or even the world. For anyone seeking an adventure, this is the place to visit."

Amit Gupta, the manager of the Rannotsav Tent City, confirmed that they are fully prepared for the large number of visitors expected for the New Year's celebrations.

"Our Prime Minister had appealed for people to visit here, and they are coming in thousands. Hotels are fully booked, and this has created more job opportunities for the locals. It is important for people to learn about Kutch's culture and history."

The festivities, which began on December 1, will continue until February 28, 2025, while the Tent City will remain open until the end of March. The annual Rann Utsav transforms the Great Rann of Kutch's vast, pristine white sands into a cultural haven, offering a unique opportunity for visitors to immerse themselves in local heritage, music, art, and cuisine.

Kutch, Gujarat's largest district, is famous not for the White Rann but is also home to a range of other attractions, offering tourists an unforgettable blend of scenic beauty, rich history, and vibrant traditions. IANS

*Loire Cotler reveals one quality of Sonu Sood that makes him stand out as a director*

MUMBAI: Grammy-nominated music composer and vocalist Loire Cotler, who has crafted the track 'Call to Life' in the upcoming movie 'Fateh', has heaped praise on actor Sonu Sood, and has commended him for his ability to communicate his ideas.

'Fateh' marks the directorial debut of Sonu Sood. Loire shared that Sonu is exceptionally gifted in communicating the two layers of the spoken direction and the unspoken direction.

She told IANS, "The creative collaboration begins with spoken direction and unspoken direction. The outer meaning and the inner meaning of the scene. Sonu has a special gift in communicating these two different layers in a way that stimulated my musical creativity".

When asked how the collaboration with Sonu happened, she said that Sonu mentioned that he had heard Hans Zimmer speaking about her in an interview. He then called her to discuss 'Fateh'.

She told IANS, "I was delighted to accept this opportunity. I have always had a passion for vocal rhythmic play. I discovered that the term Rhythm Vocalist best describes my hybridization of vocal techniques. IANS

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Know the Foods That Help Manage Blood Sugar Levels

DR. INDRAJEET TYAGI AND DR. IRANNA HIRAPUR

Diabetes is classified as a 'silent killer disease' that eats away at the body from within. Diabetes, a chronic condition marked by elevated blood glucose levels, is on the steady rise globally. Over the past five years, a concerning statistic has emerged: one in every five individuals diagnosed with this persistent ailment falls within the age group of 18 to 30 years. In Ayurveda, it's known as "Madhumeha" or "Prameha."

If the sugar level is not controlled, then the risk of serious kidney-liver diseases along with heart disease, eyes, and nerve problems in diabetes patients can be very high. People who already have the diabetes should always try to control it and those who are safe from it should always try to prevent diabetes. Some foods are recommended by Ayurveda, and offer valuable support for individuals trying to regulate their blood sugar levels. Each food brings unique therapeutic properties, making them valuable helpers in the journey towards better blood sugar control.

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Celebrating nature's gifts

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# COMMUNITY ACROSS AMERICA

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Indian Minorities Federation marks 'Veer Bal Diwas' at Dubai Gurudwara

## "Will serve America very well..." Indian diaspora group denounces 'racist' attacks on Sriram Krishnan

WASHINGTON DC: Indiaspora recently issued a media advisory strongly condemning the racist attacks on Sriram Krishnan, who was recently appointed as Senior AI Advisor by President-elect Donald Trump.

"Sriram Krishnan, who was recently appointed by President-elect Trump as his Senior AI Advisor, has become a target of reprehensible racist attacks. There is absolutely no place in our public discourse for spiteful, vengeful, racially motivated, ad hominem epithets," the advisory reads.

"At Indiaspora, we categorically and unequivocally denounce racism of any and all kinds. As enunciated in our media statement issued a few days ago, we strongly support Sriram's appointment to this important position because we are confident that he will serve America very well in public office," it added.

Recently, the Indian-American Congressman Ro Khanna criticized those targeting Indian-born Krishnan, over his Indian origin. Khanna emphasized that the ability of the United States to attract talent from around the world shows America's "exceptionalism" which puts it ahead of other countries like China.

Following a post by an X user,



Sriram Krishnan

who wrote, "Did any of yall vote for this Indian to run America," Khanna on X wrote, "You fools criticizing @sriramk as Indian

rise to the highest levels. It's called American exceptionalism," the post added. US President-elect Donald

*Following a post by an X user, who wrote, "Did any of yall vote for this Indian to run America," Khanna on X wrote, "You fools criticizing @sriramk as Indian born criticize Musk as South African born or Jensen as Taiwanese born"*

born criticize Musk as South African born or Jensen as Taiwanese born."

"It is great that talent around the world wants to come here, not to China, and that Sriram can

Trump nominated Sriram Krishnan as senior policy advisor for Artificial Intelligence at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy.

Sharing a post on the Truth

Social platform, Trump wrote, "Sriram Krishnan will serve as Senior Policy Advisor for Artificial Intelligence at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy."

"Working closely with David Sacks, Sriram will focus on ensuring continued American leadership in AI, and help shape and coordinate AI policy across Government, including working with the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. Sriram started his career at Microsoft as a founding member of Windows Azure," he said.

Krishnan, 41, acknowledged the offer and expressed his gratitude for the opportunity by saying, "I'm honored to be able to serve our country and ensure continued American leadership in AI working closely with @DavidSacks. Thank you @realDonaldTrump for this opportunity."

Krishnan till recently was a General Partner at Andreessen Horowitz and a personal investor in over two dozen companies including SpaceX, Figma and Scale.ai.

He previously led organizations at Meta, X and Microsoft. He holds a Bachelor of Technology in Information Technology from SRM Engineering College, Anna University. ANI

### "Government extending all possible help in matter": MEA on death sentence to Nimisha Priya in Yemen

NEW DELHI: The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) recently confirmed its awareness of the death sentence handed to Nimisha Priya, an Indian nurse in Yemen, and assured that the government is providing all possible assistance.

In response to media queries regarding the case of Nimisha

Priya, MEA official spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said, "We are aware of the sentencing of Ms. Nimisha Priya in Yemen. We understand that the family of Ms. Priya is exploring relevant options. The government is extending all possible help in the matter."

Nimisha Priya, who is sentenced to death in Yemen, is a

trained nurse and has worked in private hospitals in Yemen for a few years.

Her husband and minor daughter returned to India in 2014 because of financial reasons and in that same year, Yemen was gripped by civil war, and they could not go back as the country stopped issuing new visas.

Later in 2015, Nimisha joined hands with a Mahdi to set up her clinic in Yemen's capital city Sana. She sought Mahdi's support because, under Yemen's law, only nationals are allowed to set up clinics and business firms. In 2015, Mahdi accompanied Nimisha Priya to Kerala when she came for a month-long holiday.

During the visit, he stole a wedding photograph of Nimisha, which he later manipulated to claim that he was married to her.

A plea moved by mother of Nimisha Priya had stated, "After a while, Nimisha's clinic began, Mahdi manipulated the ownership documents of the clinic. ANI



# The increasing use of AI to deny health insurance claims

**VIDYA SETHURAMAN**

India Post News Service

Artificial intelligence and algorithms are a part of many businesses these days, including health insurance. The killing of United Healthcare CEO Brian Thompson in New York sparked a national debate over Americans' profound frustration with the healthcare industry. Even while decrying Thompson's killing, many people fault insurers like UnitedHealth for the high price of healthcare and for denying care to those in need. An investigation by ProPublica this year revealed that insurers now routinely deny millions of claims with the use of AI. Critics note healthcare AI is often riddled with racial and economic biases, which increasingly determines who gets treated versus who does not. Millions of claims are increasingly rejected without a doctor ever opening a patient's file.

Speakers at the EMS briefing discussed growing consumer dissatisfaction with health insurance providers, and the im-

pact of AI on health insurance coverage and the high rate of denials.

Dr Katherine Hempstead, Senior policy officer at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation said health insurance is often the most dysfunctional, fragile and poorly functioning example of the fraught relation-

*California State Senator Josh Becker, author of SB 1120, the Physicians Make Decisions Act, which limits the scope of AI by requiring doctors to make final decisions, said we need the human element to ensure that health care decisions prioritize patient well-being over automated processes*

ship between policyholders and insurers across the insurance industry. There's a fundamental powerlessness for policyholders when providers say something is necessary, but insurers say it's not and there's a tremendous amount of fragmentation as to what's covered between states or between plans. People need insurance, but

they generally do not trust insurance companies and assume the worst motives.

California State Senator Josh Becker, author of SB 1120, the Physicians Make Decisions Act, which limits the scope of AI by requiring doctors to make final decisions, said we need the human element to

cesses. Governor Gavin Newsom signed Senate Bill 1120 (SB 1120), The Physicians Make Decisions Act, authored by Senator Josh Becker (D-Menlo Park). SB 1120 safeguards patients' access to necessary medical treatments by mandating necessary health care provider oversight when insurers utilize artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms to decide on healthcare providers' requests to offer medical services. "Artificial intelligence is an important and increasingly utilized tool in diagnosing and treating patients, but it should not be the final say on what kind of healthcare a patient receives," said Becker. The Physicians Make Decisions Act ensures that the human element will always determine quality medical treatments for patients."

ensure that health care decisions prioritize patient well-being over automated pro-

## Hindu Prayer Room sought at Brown University

India Post News Service

CHICAGO: Members of Indian have been seeking a permanent and dedicated Prayer Room at Brown University, an Ivy League and research institution in Providence (Rhode Island, USA)

Brown already has designated Catholic, Muslim and Jewish spaces.

Rajan Zed, an activist, said that Brown should respond to the requirements of Hindu students to provide a designated prayer-meditation hall for rituals, quiet reflection, festivals and spiritual exercise; which would help in their personal growth.

Zed, is President of Universal Society of Hinduism, He pointed out that Hindu Prayer Room would be a step in the positive direction in view of the presence of a substantial number of Hindu students at Brown; as it was important to meet the spiritual needs of these students. Some other universities/colleges in the USA now offer Hindu prayer rooms.

He suggested that the Hindu Prayer Room preferably should have a shrine containing murtis (statues) of popular Hindu deities like Shiva, Vishnu, Rama, Krishna, Durga, Venkateshwara, Ganesha, Murugan, Saraswati, Hanuman, Lakshmi, Kali, etc.; besides being equipped with ghanta (big metallic bell hanging from the ceiling), dholak (two-headed hand-drum), Shiva

An esteemed institution like Brown, which boasts of "deep sense of purpose" and "make a positive difference", should not be in the business of discriminating among various religions and belittling entire communities; Zed noted.

Brown, whose Mission includes "serve the community" and which claims to be the "first Ivy League school to accept students from all religious affiliations", should be more receptive to the needs of its diverse student body and staff; Rajan Zed indicated.

Zed further said that Hinduism was the oldest and third largest religion of the world with about 1.2 billion adherents and a rich philosophical thought; and it should not be taken frivolously. All faiths, larger or smaller, should be duly respected.

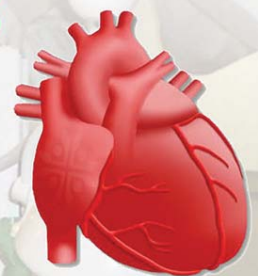
Brown needed to recognize the intersection of spirituality and education, which was important in Hinduism; Rajan Zed added.

Founded in 1764 and seventh-oldest college in the USA, Brown has about 11,005 total students, representing over 113 nations and territories and 50 US states, and speaking over 69 languages. It offers over 2,000 undergraduate courses and 47 doctoral programs. Its acceptance rate is 5.4%. Reverend Janet Cooper Nelson is the Chaplain.

Moksh (liberation) is the ultimate goal of Hinduism and there are about 3.5 million Hindus in the USA.

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# Indian Minorities Federation marks 'Veer Bal Diwas' at Dubai Gurudwara

DUBAI: On the occasion of Veer Bal Diwas, the Indian Minorities Federation (IMF) on Thursday organized an event at the Guru Nanak Darbar Sikh Temple in Dubai, the first Sikh gurudwara in the UAE, to commemorate the enduring sacrifice of the courageous Chhote Sahibzades, Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh, the younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh, who stood firm for their faith and principles against tyranny, inspiring generations with their courage, to instil their legacy in the hearts of Indian youth across the globe.

Besides Sikh community leaders, members of Indian Diaspora belonging to different communities and religions, and thought leaders from Indian and international communities from all over UAE in larger numbers, the dignitaries who were present at the event included Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and convenor of Indian Minorities Federation, Satnam

Singh Sandhu, Yatin Patel, Deputy Consul General, Consul (Passport, Attestation and Press, Information & Culture) and Appellate Authority (RTI), Surender Singh Kandhari and the Chairman of the Guru Nanak Darbar Sikh Temple.

On the occasion, Veer Bal Diwas Bravery Awards were also conferred by IMF on 15 exceptional children of the Indian diaspora belonging to different communities and religions in UAE to inspire youth to uphold the principles of resilience and unity and pay a tribute to Chhote Sahibzades whose unparalleled courage, sacrifice, legacy resonates universally.

The awardees included nine boys and six girls from various religious backgrounds, highlighting the spirit of unity and resilience that transcends cultural and religious boundaries.

Of the 15, 10 are Hindu, three Sikh, one Muslim, and one Jain.

The Veer Bal Diwas Bravery awardees included Taksh Jain, Vidyuth Balaji, Jaivardhan Nawani, Abhiraj Manikoth, Aradhya Rai, Vivan Bansal, Anahad Singh, Avi Puri, Gopikha Sivakumar, Kiara Kaur, Adel Eshan Abdul Rahman, Ananya Manikandan, Gurkamal Singh, Akshara Roy and Sinjini Debnath

Besides an Ardaas (a ceremonial prayer) to seek blessings for peace, unity, and resilience and a Kirtan performance in memory of the Chhote Sahibzades, Langar was also served later by IMF as part of the Veer Bal Diwas.

On the occasion, members of the Indian Diaspora in UAE said by observing Veer Bal Diwas, the nation has made a new beginning under the leadership of PM Modi to bow to the sacrifices laid down in the past and take infinite inspiration from the exemplary courage of Chhote Sahibzades.

They said 'Veer Bal Diwas' establishes the role of the young generation in the destiny of the nation and under PM Modi's leadership today's youth is also taking India forward with the same determination.

The recipients of the Veer Bal Diwas Bravery Awards said with his vision of a Viksit Bharat by 2047, PM Modi is creating vast opportunities for the youth of Bharat, irrespective of religion or caste, with a clear roadmap to develop new capabilities in the youth of the 21st century.

They said PM Modi's dedication to the nation is inspiring them to contribute to further developing India and serve the country with the mantra of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayaas', to achieve the goal of a Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Members of the Indian Diaspora praised PM Modi's vision to make youth-centric policies and encourage their participation in all spheres of nation-building. The diaspora members hailed the decision by PM Modi to make youth the strong pillar of Viksit Bharat and through various initiatives taken by the Modi government such as Start-up India, Offering Internships, Skill Development, encouraging their participation in research & innovation the government is trying to full fill the aspirations of today's youth.

Members of the Sikh community in Dubai and UAE extended their gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for taking the historical step to celebrate Veer Bal Diwas worldwide as a celebration of the heritage of the Sikh Gurus and a symbol of the never-say-die attitude for the protection of Bhartiya. IANS



## Celebrating nature's gifts

INDRAJEET

The colorful vegetables in the garden  
Hold a rainbow of beauty and nutri  
The colorful vegetables in the garden  
Hold a rainbow of beauty and  
nutrients  
Each vegetable has its own unique hue  
Add them to your plates without fail

Their shapes and nature are diverse and  
Interesting with earthy, sweet, and  
pungent scent  
They offer a wealth of vitamins  
and minerals  
Nothing quite like their purity of nature

Orange, pink, purple, or white carrots  
Grow under the soil and sun's glows  
Crunchy and sweet roots from the nature  
They are beyond compare in our garden

A leafy green, freshly grown lettuce  
A great source of beta-carotenes  
Dancing and whispering in the breeze  
Toss them in salads or eat them  
on their own

Tiny cabbages stuck on a tall stalk  
Brussel sprouts bloom in autumn's call  
Roast, steam, or eat raw in small bites  
Their burst of flavor is a pure delight

In green gardens bloom red tomatoes  
Juicy and ripe in their sunlit beds  
Enjoy their sheer delightful taste  
In sauces, salads, or just a bite

Varieties of potatoes grow underground  
In the darkness deep in the soft earth  
Whether baked, mashed, or fried  
with zest  
In every form, they are at their best

Spinach leaves are so dark and bold  
Rich in iron, vitamin A, C, K, and  
potassium  
They are leaves of health in every way  
Use them in smoothies, salads,  
or a sauté them

Log, cool, and crispy cucumbers offer  
A refreshing bite in summer's hot sway  
A vegetable of water and low  
calorie content  
Tastes so good in salads, sandwiches,  
or as a juice

## Amla Detox Drink for Winter

GEETHA PATIL & MADHUMATI TYAGI

Amla and ginger infused water is winter special detox. This detox drink promote healthy digestion and flushes out your bodies of toxins, also this detox drink is packed with natural electrolytes, vitamins and antioxidants to keep you hydrated. Amla accelerates metabolism, while ginger enhances fat burning by increasing the thermogenic process in the body. Drinking Amla ginger-infused water can be a great addition for those looking to shed a few kilos during the winter months.

### Ingredients

- 2-3 Almas chopped
- 1 inch ginger
- 1 tbsp Lemon juice
- As required Cinnamon
- few slices Lemon
- 2 cup water



### Instructions

- Take a Jar, add chopped Amla, chopped ginger, lemon juice, cinnamon, and lemon slices. Then, mix well.
- Now add 2 cup of water. Stir well again.
- Now your Amla winter special detox

drink is ready to serve.

*Note: If you relish stronger version of this drink. Then pound/grind all the ingredients before mixing them in water.*

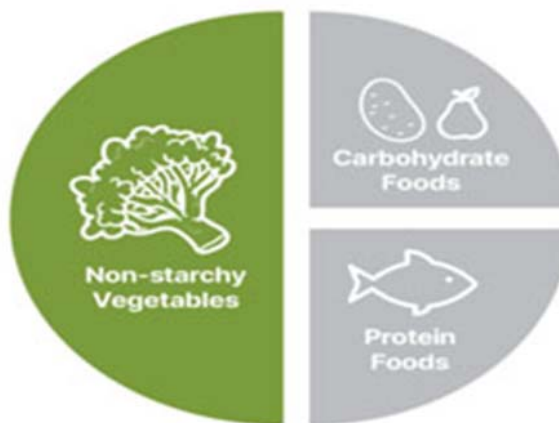
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Simple Diet and Lifestyle Tips for Your Healthy Life

# Know the Foods That Help Manage Blood Sugar Levels

DR. INDRAJEET TYAGI AND DR. IRANNA HIRAPUR



**D**iabetes is classified as a 'silent killer disease' that eats away at the body from within. Diabetes, a chronic condition marked by elevated blood glucose levels, is on the steady rise globally. Over the past five years, a concerning statistic has emerged: one in every five individuals diagnosed with this persistent ailment falls within the age group of 18 to 30 years. In Ayurveda, it's known as "Madhumeha" or "Prameha."

If the sugar level is not controlled, then the risk of serious kidney-liver diseases along with heart disease, eyes, and nerve problems in diabetes patients can be very high. People who already have the diabetes should always try to control it and those who are safe from it should always try to prevent diabetes. Some foods are recommended by Ayurveda, and offer valuable support for individuals trying to regulate their blood sugar levels. Each food brings unique therapeutic properties, making them valuable helpers in the journey towards better blood sugar control.

**What are the best foods for Type 2 Diabetes?**

People should choose a variety of vegetables, focusing particularly on the ones they enjoy.

- be fiber-rich
- contain a variety of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, and;
- contain nitrates, which may help to reduce blood pressure

Eating a wide variety of foods, including a mix of vegetables, can help people with diabetes stay healthy while enjoying a range of tasty meals every day. Studies show that high levels of blood sugar cause this sugar to oxidate and form free radicals - byproducts that can be harmful to body tissues and health. There is also evidence that inflammation plays a role in the development and progression of type 2 diabetes. Antioxidants can help greatly reduce free radicals and manage inflammation.

Embracing the power of nourishing

foods forms a cornerstone of managing this disorder and enhancing overall well-being. Traditional Indian cuisine is rich in fiber, supporting digestion, metabolism, and regular elimination.

**Why Choose Vegetables?**

Here are the reasons for choosing vegetables include the following:

- They provide a range of nutrients, including vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.
- The carbohydrates in vegetables provide energy but are less likely to cause a blood sugar spike than those from baked goods and sweet snacks.
- Vegetables with a low to moderate glycemic index (GI) ranking, such as raw carrots, can help manage blood glucose levels. The glycemic index (GI) is a way that

• Eating a range of vegetables can provide the vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants the body needs to stay healthy.

• Vegetables can be a filling, low-calorie option for people managing their weight.

**Please provide examples of antioxidants-rich vegetables.**

Consuming a diet that contains a range



of vegetables can benefit anyone's health, and some antioxidants may have even more specific benefits for people with type 2 diabetes.

**What are the Diabetes Meal Tips?**

• Flavor vegetables with herbs, spices, or low-salt seasonings. Drizzle with lemon juice or try a vinegar pepper sauce.

• Boil, bake, or grill vegetables or roast them in a little vegetable oil rather than frying them. This will reduce calories and fat intake.

• Leave the peel on vegetables when possible to boost the fiber content.

• Where appropriate, opt for raw vegetables as they contain more nutrients.

• When adding high-fiber foods to the diet, introduce them gradually to prevent abdominal discomfort.

**What vegetables to limit to regulate Diabetes?**

People with diabetes can eat anything they choose as long as it fits in with their specific meal plan. A person will need to take into account the amounts of carbohydrates they are eating at any meal or throughout the day. Starchy vegetables,

such as potatoes, are high in carbohydrates, but people with diabetes do not need to avoid them but limit their quantity by consulting a Registered Diabetes Nutritionist to develop a meal plan that in-

Antioxidant	Vegetables
- Vitamin A and Carotenoids-Vision, reproductive, and immune system health	Leafy Greens (Spinach), Non-Starchy (Peppers), Root (Carrots) Starchy (Sweet Potato-in moderation)
- Vitamin C-Blood pressure, heart, immune health	Cruciferous (Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts), Non-Starchy (Red Peppers), Low-Sugar Fruit (Tomato)
- Vitamin E-Immune system, red blood cell health	Leafy Greens (Spinach), Cruciferous (Broccoli), Low-Sugar Fruit (Tomato)
- Protects Against Phenols-irritations to skin, eyes, nose, throat and nervous system	Leafy Greens (Spinach, Cabbage), Cruciferous (Broccoli), Non-Starchy (Red peppers), Allium (Onion)
- Flavonoids-Heart health, blood circulation, protects against osteoarthritis	Allium (Onion), Leafy Greens (Kale, Watercress), Root (Rutabaga, Turnip), Cruciferous (Broccoli)

carbohydrates in foods and drinks are ranked according to how quickly they raise the glucose level of the blood.

- Nitrate-rich foods, such as beets, can help lower the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Here are some health tips for eating vegetables with type 2 diabetes.

- Opt for fresh foods where possible.
- When buying canned foods, choose those without added sugar or salt or drain the liquid before use.

cludes the vegetables they enjoy.

(Authors: Dr. Indrajeet Tyagi, M. R. Medical College, Kalaburagi, Karnataka and Dr. Iranna S. Hirapur, MD, DM (Cardiology) Interventional Cardiologist at Heart Foundation, Kalaburagi, Karnataka)



**US Embassy in India breaks record, issues 1mn visas for 2nd consecutive yr**

NEW DELHI: The US Embassy and its consulate in India have scripted a new record by issuing more than one million non-immigrant visas for the second year in a row.

The record number of non-immigrant visas underscores the huge demand among Indians for travel to the United States for purposes like tourism, business, education, medical treatment and others. A non-immigrant visa facilitates entry into the United States for these purposes.

The US Embassy, having pledged to scale up Indian visitors to the US after the Covid pandemic, has maintained astounding numbers over the years.

"In the past four years, the number of visitors from India has increased by five times, and more than two million Indians have travelled to the United States in the first eleven months of 2024, a 26 percent increase over the same period in 2023," the Embassy said in an official statement.

Over five million Indians already have a non-immigrant visa to visit the United States and each day, the Mission issues thousands more.

"The US Department of State completed a successful pilot program to renew H-1B visas in the United States this year. This allowed many specialty occupation workers from India to renew their visas without leaving the United States. *IANS*

# Immigration

## POST

*"I've always liked the visas, I have always been in favor of the visas. That's why we have them," Trump said in a telephonic interview with the New York Post*

## "I've always been in favor...": Donald Trump affirms support for "great" H-1B visa programme

WASHINGTON DC: In a major shift from his earlier stance, US-President elect Donald Trump has expressed his support for the H-1B visa programme and acknowledged frequently using it for his own properties, calling it a "great programme," according to a report by New York Post.

Calling it a "great programme," the President-elect said he has "always" been in its favor.

"I've always liked the visas, I have always been in favor of the visas. That's why we have them," Trump said in a telephonic interview with the New York Post.

He added, "I have many H-1B visas on my properties. I've been a believer in H-1B. I have used it many times. It's a great programme."

Notably, during Trump's first term, the administration imposed restrictions on H-1B visas, citing concerns over "abuse" and "economic strain."

In 2016, Trump condemned the program, describing it as a means for companies to replace American workers with lower-paid foreign employees. Restrictions tightened further in 2020 in response to economic challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Trump's latest remarks comes after a major divide emerged within his MAGA team in the United States, as Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy

Musk and Ramaswamy -- both foreign origin leaders heading Trump's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) -- reignited the debate on H-1B vi-

sified following Trump's announcement of Sriram Krishnan as the White House policy adviser on artificial intelligence. Krishnan has previously supported removing per-country caps for green cards, a stance that has sparked mixed reactions.

While some Trump supporters back this approach, citing its potential to fill critical gaps in the tech workforce, others see it as conflicting with the administration's broader immigration goals.

The H1B visa debate has exposed deeper divides in US immigration policy, particularly regarding the balance between skilled immigration and domestic workforce development. With Indian workers comprising 72 percent of H1B recipients in fiscal year 2023, this issue also has implications for US-India relations. *ANI*



US-President elect Donald Trump

who advocated for the expansion of the visa program for 'highly skilled workers' faced heavy backlash from within President-elect's base.

sas, while reflecting a divide over immigration policy as Trump prepares to assume office.

The debate over H1B visas and immigration policy has inten-

### *US: Divide in Trump's camp as Musk, Ramaswamy face backlash after advocating visas for 'skilled' workers*

WASHINGTON, DC: A major divide has emerged within Donald Trump's MAGA team in the United States, as Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy who advocated for the expansion of the visa program for 'highly skilled workers' faced heavy backlash from within President-elect's base, CNN reported.

Musk and Ramaswamy -- both foreign origin leaders heading Trump's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) -- have reignited the debate on H-1B visas, while reflecting a divide over immigration policy as Trump prepares to assume office.

In a series of posts on X (formerly Twitter), Musk empha-

sized the importance of attracting top engineering talent to maintain America's technological edge. "The number of people who are super talented engineers

*Musk and Ramaswamy -- both foreign origin leaders heading Trump's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) -- have reignited the debate on H-1B visas*

AND super motivated in the USA is far too low."

"Think of this like a pro sports team: If you want your TEAM to win the championship, you need to recruit top talent wherever they may be. That enables the whole

TEAM to win," Musk wrote.

He further elaborated, "I am referring to bringing in via legal immigration the top ~0.1 percent of engineering talent as being essential for America to keep winning."

"Thinking of America as a pro sports team that has been winning for a long time and wants to keep winning is the right mental construct," the Trump-aide added.

Ramaswamy, a first-generation American and Trump's appointee to lead the Department of Government Efficiency, echoed Musk's sentiments. He argued that cultural stagnation and a preference for mediocrity have led to a reliance on foreign-born talent. *ANI*

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# Ahead of Trump's return to White House, universities urge international students to return early

WASHINGTON DC: As US President-elect Donald Trump gears up to return to the White House, his upcoming inauguration in January 2025 has sparked concern, particularly among colleges and universities, regarding potential changes to US immigration policies.

Universities across the country have issued advisories to international students, urging them to plan their travel carefully amid expectations of stricter regulations under the new administration, CNN reported.

Donald Trump won a second term as President of the United States after securing 312 electoral votes in the 2024 presidential election, defeating Democratic rival Kamala Harris, who garnered 226 votes. He will officially be sworn in for his second term as US President on January 20.

As per the findings on international students by the US Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs on November 18, 1,126,690 international students from more than 210 places of origin studied at US higher education institutions during the 2023-2024 academic year, a 7 percent increase from the previous academic year.

Ahead of Trump's inauguration, Cornell University's Office of Global Learning on its website said that the immigration landscape is likely to change under the new presidential administration and advised international students to return prior to the start of the next semester, which begins on January 21 next year or to "communicate with an advisor about your travel plans and be prepared for delays."

"A travel ban is likely to go into effect soon after inauguration. The ban is likely to include citizens of the countries targeted in the first Trump administration: Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria, Myanmar, Sudan, Tanzania, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Syria, Venezuela, Yemen, and Somalia. New countries could be added to this list, particularly China and India. International students and scholars from outside of these "areas of concern" are not likely to be affected by a travel ban or targeted visa suspension. People who are not citizens of these countries but are in transit through them to the U.S. are unlikely to be affected," Cornell University's Office of Global Learning said.

It added, "It is a good idea for international students, faculty, and staff from the above countries to be back in the US in advance of the semester, which begins

January 21, 2025. If this is not possible (e.g., for scheduled fieldwork), communicate with an advisor about your travel plans and be prepared for delays."

USC Annenberg Media, a student-led media site, reported that the University of Southern California Office of International Service warned international students that "the safest way to avoid any challenges" related to travel is to be "physically present in the US before the spring semester

*"A travel ban is likely to go into effect soon after inauguration. The ban is likely to include citizens of the countries targeted in the first Trump administration: Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria, Myanmar, Sudan, Tanzania, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Syria, Venezuela, Yemen, and Somalia. New countries could be added to this list, particularly China and India"*

starts January 13."

In an email to the international students, the University of Southern California wrote, "This is especially important given that a new presidential administration will take office on January 20, 2025, and - as is common - may issue one or more Executive Orders impacting travel to the US and visa processing. While there's no certainty such orders will be issued, the safest way to avoid any challenges is to be physically present in the US before the Spring se-

mester begins on January 13, 2025."

Following the Presidential elections result, UCLA's Center for Immigration Law and Policy on November 6 in a message to the students said that the 2024 presidential election result raises profound questions for immigrant communities across the United States.

"The incoming Trump administration's policies and rhetoric will have lasting effects on millions of immigrants, including

those who are part of the University of California (UC) as students, staff, and faculty. UC policy provides that the University will not release immigration status or related information in confidential student records ... without a judicial warrant, a subpoena, a court order, or as otherwise required by law," UCLA said.

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology urged students to "avoid making decisions based on social media and news reports or rumors that predict new poli-

cies/regulations." The university also advised the students to assess their travel plans over the winter break.

"The new administration will be sworn in on January 20, 2025, and new Executive Orders that may impact travel and visa processing may be implemented on or after that date. Students who would need to apply for a new entry visa at the US Embassy/Consulate abroad in order to return to the US in their student status should assess the possibility of facing any extensive processing times and have a backup plan if they must travel abroad and wait for a new entry visa to be issued. Any processing delays could impact students' ability to return to the US as planned," it stated.

The Northeastern University's Office of the Global Services in post-US-election travel recommendations to the international community on November 22 advised the students that in order "to minimize potential disruption to your studies, work, or research, we strongly recommend returning to the US no later than January 6, 2025, the start of Northeastern's Winter/Spring academic term."

Harvard University's International Office advised students to "budget time ahead of the semester start, prior to the January Martin Luther King holiday" to avoid disruptions or delays while returning from winter break. ANI

## *"They don't see you as one of them", says Neera Tanden on Indian Americans amid H1B visa debate*

WASHINGTON DC: Neera Tanden, Director of the United States Domestic Policy Council, has highlighted concerns about biases in the ongoing immigration debate, particularly in relation to Indian Americans.

In a post on X (formerly Twitter), she wrote, "I am an Indian American who was born here, and it's crystal clear that the Democratic Party sees me as American and a large part of the base of the Republican Party does not. I hope Indian Americans remember this moment at the next election. They don't see you as one of them. And never will. You thought they just hated other immigrants. But it turns out there's no exception for you. As many of us have been telling you."

Elon Musk also contributed to the discussion, drawing attention to the contri-



Neera Tanden

butions of immigrants in shaping America's technological landscape. Musk posted on X, "We named 'Tesla' after Nikola Tesla, one of the greatest engineers ever. He was a penniless immigrant whose

inventions led to American dominance in electricity generation and usage."

The debate over H1B visas and immigration policy has intensified following President-elect Donald Trump's announcement of Sriram Krishnan as the White House policy adviser on artificial intelligence. Krishnan has previously supported removing per-country caps for green cards, a stance that has sparked mixed reactions. While some Trump supporters back this approach, citing its potential to fill critical gaps in the tech workforce, others see it as conflicting with the administration's broader immigration goals.

Former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley has also weighed in, emphasizing a focus on strengthening the American workforce. ANI





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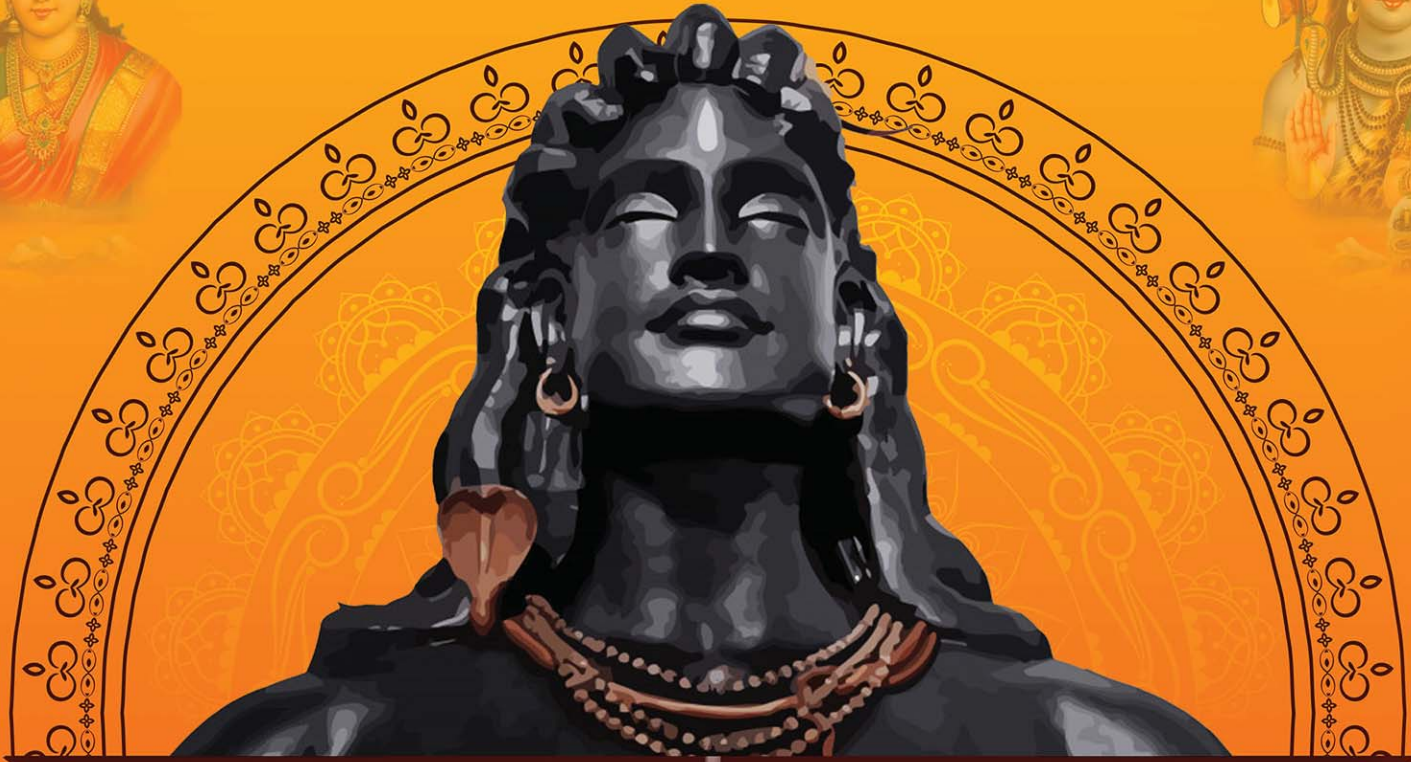
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## US homelessness increases by 18 pc in 2024 amid affordable housing crisis

WASHINGTON DC: The rate of homelessness in the US has risen by 18 percent over the past year, Al Jazeera reported, citing a new report from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) released recently.

According to Al Jazeera, the annual count, conducted in January 2024, found that more than 771,000 individuals were experiencing homelessness, marking the highest number ever recorded. This includes people staying in emergency shelters, transitional housing, safe havens, or living in unsheltered conditions.

However, the report does not account for those in other unstable housing situations, such as individuals staying with friends or family due to a lack of permanent shelter, Al Jazeera reported.

The HUD report attributes the increase in homelessness to the growing affordable housing crisis, rising inflation, stagnant wages for middle- and lower-income households, and the ongoing



ing impact of systemic racism, which has strained homelessness services across the country.

"Our worsening national affordable housing crisis, rising inflation, stagnating wages among middle- and lower-income households, and the persisting effects of systemic racism have stretched homelessness services systems to their limits," the report read as quoted by Al Jazeera.

Homelessness has been on the rise for years, largely driven by the shortage of affordable housing in many US cities. In 2023, HUD reported a 12 percent increase in homelessness compared to the previous year.

Amid rising homelessness rates in the United States, sprawling tent cities and encampments have emerged in numerous cities. ANI

# Real Estate POST

24 India Post

www.indiapost.com

January 3, 2025

## Cold sales of US homes make some companies suffer: Data

MOSCOW: The sputtering US housing market is hurting the businesses that depend on Americans opening their wallets to fix up and furnish their new homes, reported local media. According to data firm Coresight Research, retailers announced more US store closures than openings in 2024, reversing a two-year trend of net openings.

"Home retailers were one of the biggest drivers of the contraction, with companies such as Big Lots and Conn's filing for bankruptcy and announcing plans to close hundreds of locations," noted the report on Tuesday. IANS

## India's Real Estate Shines in 2024 - Growth, Innovation, and a Spotlight on Brokers



MUMBAI: The year 2024 has marked a transformative period for India's real estate sector, with impressive growth across office spaces, residential markets, and investment flows. The industry's resilience and adaptability have once again demonstrated why it continues to be a cornerstone of India's economic strength.

India's office real estate market has experienced an exceptional performance, with 53.3 million sq. ft. of leasing activity recorded between January and September. Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Pune were the frontrunners, accounting for an impressive 66% of the total supply. A key driver of this demand has been the growing presence of Global Capability Centers (GCCs), which now represent 38% of the leasing activity.

The dream of homeownership continued to thrive as over 225,000 units were sold in the first nine months of 2024, driven by 215,000 new launches. What's truly exciting is the growing appetite for premium and luxury housing, which now

makes up 16% of all sales, a significant leap from just 6% in 2019.

Big money has been flowing into India's real estate, with equity capital reaching record levels. The Delhi-NCR region emerged as a hotspot for investors, while 70% of the inflows targeted land development and of-

*The dream of homeownership continued to thrive as over 225,000 units were sold in the first nine months of 2024, driven by 215,000 new launches. What's truly exciting is the growing appetite for premium and luxury housing, which now makes up 16% of all sales, a significant leap from just 6% in 2019*

office spaces, reaffirming the sector's long-term potential.

In a landmark move, the Maharashtra government has mandated the inclusion of broker names in sale deeds.

This step not only ensures transparency but also recognizes the critical role brokers play in making property transac-

tions smooth and successful.

Companies like Palladian Partners advisory Pvt Ltd, one of the RE giants from Mumbai, has set a benchmark in broker support this year, reinforcing its reputation as a leader in the real estate industry. With an extensive network of over 16,000 brokers across the Mumbai Metro-

politan Region (MMR), the company ensures unparalleled market reach and personalized service for clients. Demonstrating its commitment to fostering trust and efficiency, Palladian has processed some of broker payouts within just one week of a sale, setting a standard that few can match. Additionally, the

organization invests heavily in its brokers' professional growth, offering regular training programs that equip them with the latest market insights, regulatory updates, and advanced sales strategies. These initiatives underscore Palladian's dedication to empowering its broker network, ensuring they remain an integral part of the company's continued success.

India's real estate journey in 2024 is a testament to collaboration and innovation. Developers, brokers, and policymakers are working together to shape a sector that's not just growing but thriving. With initiatives like those by Palladian Partners, the focus on brokers ensures a future where everyone in the ecosystem benefits. 2024 is proof that when the real estate community comes together, the possibilities are endless.

(ADVERTORIAL DISCLAIMER: The above press release has been provided by PNN. ANI and India Post will not be responsible in any way for the content of the same)



# Mastering the art of mixing patterns and prints: 12 tips for crafting visually dynamic and balanced interiors

SAGAR SHARMA

Mixing patterns and prints in interior design is a sophisticated art that, when executed thoughtfully, can infuse a space with depth, character, and visual intrigue. This technique transcends mere decoration, allowing homeowners and designers to craft environments that reflect personal style and creativity. However, achieving a harmonious blend of patterns requires a nuanced understanding of design principles, including color theory, scale, texture, and balance.

## Understanding the basics of pattern mixing

Before delving into the intricacies of combining patterns, it's essential to grasp the foundational elements that contribute to a cohesive design:

**Color palette:** Establishing a unified color scheme is paramount. Selecting two to three primary colors and incorporating their shades and tints can create a harmonious backdrop for pattern integration. This approach ensures that even diverse patterns share a common visual thread, preventing discordance.

**Scale and proportion:** Varying the scale of patterns is crucial for balance. Combining large, medium, and small-scale patterns prevents visual monotony and allows each design to stand out without overwhelming the space. For instance, pairing a large floral print with a smaller geometric pattern can create a dynamic yet balanced look.

**Pattern types:** Familiarity with different pattern categories—such as geometrics, floral, stripes, and abstracts—enables more deliberate and effective mixing. Each type brings its unique energy and can be used strategically to achieve the desired aesthetic.

## Mastering the art of mixing patterns and prints

### 1. Break free from rules, but keep an eye on balance

Mixing patterns doesn't have to follow rigid rules. Let your creativity flow by combining floral, stripes, and geometrics. Imagine it as curating an art collection—each piece contributes to a larger narrative. The trick is ensuring all elements speak to each other without overwhelming the space.

### 2. Prioritize breathing space for patterns

Even the most striking patterns need room to shine. Balance heavily patterned pieces with solids or muted tones. For example, a floral headboard could pair beautifully with plain bed linens, allowing the pattern to be the focal point. Use subtle trims or accents in coordinating hues to tie everything together while avoiding visual clutter.

### 3. Start your design story with a rug

Begin your design process with a standout rug. Rugs

often act as the anchor for a room's design, setting the tone for other elements. Whether you opt for a vibrant patterned rug or a neutral one with subtle detailing, build your color palette and pattern choices around this foundational piece.

### 4. Balance patterns across the room

Ensure patterns are evenly distributed throughout the space. If one side of the room is heavily patterned, balance it with lighter or simpler elements elsewhere. Avoid overloading any area with too many patterns, which could create visual imbalance.

### 5. Choose a statement fabric to lead the way

Every room benefits from a showstopper—a bold fabric or pattern that becomes the centerpiece. This could be the material for curtains, a headboard, or even a striking armchair. Use this piece as the starting point and layer other patterns around it for a unified look.



### 6. Layer complementary fabrics thoughtfully

Once you've identified your primary fabric, explore complementary patterns. Instead of matching everything to a single fabric, consider different scales, textures, and designs for other furnishings like cushions, ottomans, or upholstered chairs. This approach adds depth and prevents monotony.

### 7. Simplify your color palette

A limited color palette helps create cohesion. Stick to two or three dominant colors, incorporating variations like lighter or darker shades. While vibrant colors can make a statement, balance them with neutral tones for a refined, harmonious effect.

### 8. Play with scale to add dimension

Pattern size plays a critical role in creating visual interest. Use large, medium, and small-scale patterns to prevent a room from feeling one-dimensional. For example, pair a bold, oversized floral print with a medium-sized geometric design and a small polka-dot pattern to achieve depth.

### 9. Curate patterns that complement each other

When combining patterns, aim for designs that echo each other's themes. Stripes can act as a unifying element alongside floral, while subtle geometrics or abstract

prints can ground the more playful designs. Think of patterns as parts of a cohesive conversation.

### 10. Layer patterns gradually

Approach layering as an evolving process. Begin with the primary elements like curtains or rugs, and then introduce secondary patterns in cushions or throws. This method allows you to assess the balance and harmony of each addition, tweaking as necessary.

### 11. Infuse character with vintage patterns

Vintage fabrics and prints can add a layer of uniqueness and history to your design. Consider incorporating antique upholstery or framed vintage textiles. These pieces enrich the visual appeal and tell a story, creating a space with personality and warmth.

### 12. Contrast and opposites for dynamic results

Dare to mix opposites for striking results. Pair a bold floral design with a structured geometric print, or balance an intricate vintage pattern with a modern, minimalistic design. These contrasts can inject energy into space while maintaining balance through consistent color schemes or complimentary themes. [www.Housing.com](http://www.Housing.com)

## Noida Expressway properties see 66 pc returns in 6 years, Raj Nagar Extension delivers 55 pc

NEW DELHI: Showcasing India's real estate success story, Delhi-NCR's peripheral Noida Expressway saw average residential prices rise 66 percent in the last six years, as Raj Nagar Extension in Ghaziabad witnessed 55 percent growth in this period, according to a new report.

While Noida Expressway saw prices going up from Rs 5,075 per square feet in 2019 to Rs 8,400 per square feet in the third quarter this year, prime area Raj Nagar Extension saw 55 percent growth in this period - from Rs 3,260 per square feet in 2019 to Rs 5,050 per square feet in Q3 2024, according to latest Anarock ANAROCK research.

In Bengaluru, peripheral area Gunjur saw average residential price take a significant 69 percent jump and Thannisandra Main Road saw a 62 percent average price growth in this period.

According to Santhosh Kumar, Vice Chairman, Anarock Group, this is, by no means, a uniform trend.

"For instance, the prime area of Dwarka Expressway in Delhi saw a significant 93 percent jump in average residential prices - from Rs 5,359 per square feet in 2019 to Rs 10,350 per square feet in Q3 2024," he mentioned.

Overall, average residential prices have been rising across cities in the last six years.

Many peripheral areas in the top cities outshone prime areas because their scope of price appreciation was higher than in prime areas.

With sufficient land available in the peripheries, developers have zeroed in on them to launching large state-of-art projects there. IANS



## Philosophy

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

What is called 'mind' is a wondrous power residing in the Self. It causes all thoughts to arise. Apart from thoughts, there is no such thing as mind.

Therefore, thought is the nature of mind. Apart from thoughts, there is no independent entity called the world. In deep sleep there are no thoughts, and there is no world. In the states of waking and dream, there are thoughts, and there is a world also.

Just as the spider emits the thread (of the web) out of itself and again withdraws it into itself, likewise the mind projects the world out of itself and again resolves it into itself.

When the mind comes out of the Self, the world appears. Therefore, when the world appears (to be real), the Self does not appear; and when the Self appears (shines) the world does not appear.

When one persistently inquires into the nature of the mind, the mind will end

ring the burning pyre, it will itself in the end get destroyed. Then, there will arise Self-realization.

When other thoughts arise, one should not pursue them, but should inquire: "To whom do they arise?" It does not matter how many thoughts arise. As each thought arises, one should inquire with diligence, "To whom has this thought arisen?"

The answer that would emerge would be 'to me'. Thereupon if one inquires "Who am I?", the mind will go back to its source; and the thought that arose will become quiescent. With repeated practice in this manner, the mind will develop the skill to stay in its source.

When the mind that is subtle goes out through the brain and the sense-organs, the gross names and forms appear; when it stays in the heart, the names and forms disappear.

Not letting the mind go out, but retaining it in the Heart is what is called 'inwardness' (antarmukha). Letting the



Sri Ramana Maharshi

*Apart from thoughts,  
no such thing as mind*

*When the world appears (to be real), the  
Self does not appear; and when the Self  
appears, the world does not appear*

leaving the Self (as the residue).

What is referred to as the Self is the Atman. The mind always exists only in dependence on something gross; it cannot stay alone. It is the mind that is called the subtle body or the soul (jiva).

### Path of inquiry

That which rises as 'I' in this body is the mind. If one inquires as to where in the body the thought 'I' rises first, one would discover that it rises in the heart. That is the place of the mind's origin.

Even if one thinks constantly 'I-I', one will be led to that place.

Of all the thoughts that arise in the mind, the 'I' thought is the first. It is only after the rise of this that the other thoughts arise. It is after the appearance of the first personal pronoun that the second and third personal pronouns appear; without the first personal pronoun there will not be the second and third.

The mind will become quiescent by the inquiry "Who am I?". The thought 'Who am I?' will destroy all other thoughts, and like the stick used for stir-

ring the burning pyre, it will itself in the end get destroyed. Then, there will arise Self-realization.

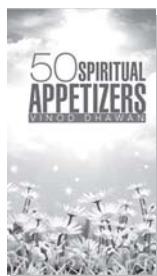
Thus, when the mind stays in the Heart, the 'I' which is the source of all thoughts will go, and the Self which ever exists will shine.

Whatever one does, one should do without the egoity 'I'. If one acts in that way, all will appear as of the nature of Siva (God).

*Excerpted from 'Who Am I' the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. The 145th birth anniversary of Sri Ramana Maharshi was observed on December 30.*

### 50 SPIRITUAL APPETIZERS

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## Manmohan Singh had an innate vision of India's greatness

MAYANK CHHAYA

Dr. Manmohan Singh - India's 13th prime minister who died December 26 at the age of 92 - never really had a voice that could be called firm and vigorous. It always had a slight tremor to it which gave the impression of an unsure man. He was anything but that as became so quickly evident on July 24, 1991 when he made his first annual budget speech as the country's finance minister.

I was in the press gallery of India's parliament watching and reporting the speech for the New York-based weekly newspaper India Abroad and its international wire IANS. Barely three or so months before, as the government of then Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar struggled for its political survival I had reported a debilitating crisis of India's practically empty foreign exchange coffers. I was told by one of the highest sources in the finance ministry that India had barely enough foreign exchange reserves to pay for three to four weeks of imports. That was virtual bankruptcy for a country of some 890 million people in 1991.

With that as the backdrop and the new government of Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao in the saddle after the grotesque assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, it was clear that some profound changes were underway to India's economy. I was curious to

see whether he would make a reference to the desperate foreign exchange reserves situation.

### Rao gave Singh a carte blanche

He did almost immediately after this opening: "As I rise, I am overpowered by a strange feeling of loneliness. I miss a handsome, smiling, face listening intently to the Budget Speech. Shri Rajiv Gandhi is no more. But his dream lives on; his dream of ushering India into the twenty-first century; his dream of a strong, united, technologically sophisticated but humane India. I dedicate this budget to his inspiring memory."

It was a 31-page speech that said, "The new Government, which assumed office barely a month ago, inherited an economy

in deep crisis. The balance of payments situation is precarious. International confidence in our economy was strong until November 1989 when our Party was in office. However, due to the combined impact of political instability witnessed thereafter, the accentuation of fiscal imbalances and the Gulf crisis, there was a great weakening of international confidence. There has been a sharp decline in capital inflows through commercial borrowing and non-resident deposits. As a result, despite large borrowings from the International Monetary Fund in July 1990 and January 1991, there was a sharp reduction in our foreign exchange reserves. We have been

at the edge of a precipice since December 1990 and more so since April 1991. The foreign exchange crisis constitutes a serious threat to the sustainability of growth processes and orderly implementation of our development programs."

To illustrate that he meant business from the get-go, Dr. Singh said, "There is no time to lose. Neither the Government nor the economy can live beyond its means year after year. The room for maneuver, to live on borrowed money or time, does not exist anymore. Any further postponement of macro-economic adjustment, long overdue, would mean that the balance of payments situation, now exceedingly difficult, would become un-

manageable and inflation, already high, would exceed limits of tolerance."

The speech was delivered in a tone and voice much firmer and louder than what Dr. Singh later came to be associated with after he became prime minister in 2004. Boosting his confidence was the fact, not much recognized then, that his boss, Prime Minister Rao had given him a carte blanche to do what needed to be done on the economy even as he would deal with its potential political fallout.

*(The author is a Chicago-based journalist, author and filmmaker) South Asia Monitor*

For detailed story visit  
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Dr. Manmohan Singh

To illustrate that he meant business from the get-go, Dr. Singh said, "There is no time to lose. Neither the Government nor the economy can live beyond its means year after year

**Disclaimer: Views expressed are personal to the author**



## Prayagraj

"PRAYAGA- THE CITY OF OFFERINGS"

**P**rayagraj, formerly known as Allahabad, is a city located in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. Reminiscent of all that is spiritual and sacred in Hinduism, Prayagraj is famous for Triveni Sangam or the meeting point of three rivers - the Ganga, the Yamuna, and the Saraswati. Built on the site of the ancient town of Prayag, Prayagraj has, since time immemorial, held the largest Hindu gathering on the banks of the Sangam - the Maha Kumbh Mela. While the Sangam city is often passed over for more travel-friendly cities, there is a lot to Prayagraj besides just its religion.

Prayag or Prayagraj had been the ancient name of the city of Allahabad. Pra means "first" and Yag means "devotion". Prayag also signifies the coming together of rivers Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati. After the Mughal invasion, Emperor Akbar, impressed by the location named the city Ilahabas that meant "Abode of God". Emperor Shah Jahan, his grandson, renamed the city to Allahabad.

One of the top places to visit in Prayagraj, if you're spiritually inclined (and even if you're not because this place deserves a visit), Triveni Sangam is a place bustling with tourists and locals all year round. The Maha Kumbh Mela is a religious occasion that is held here every twelve years and is attended by millions of pilgrims from all across the globe. The Allahabad Fort is another

monument of historical significance and is a heritage site recognized by UNESCO. Built during the reign of Akbar, this fort is also a fine example of the creation and craftsmanship of the Mughal era.

Other popular places to visit in Allahabad include the Anand Bhavan, All Saints Cathedral, Chandra Shekhar Azad Park, and Allahabad Museum.

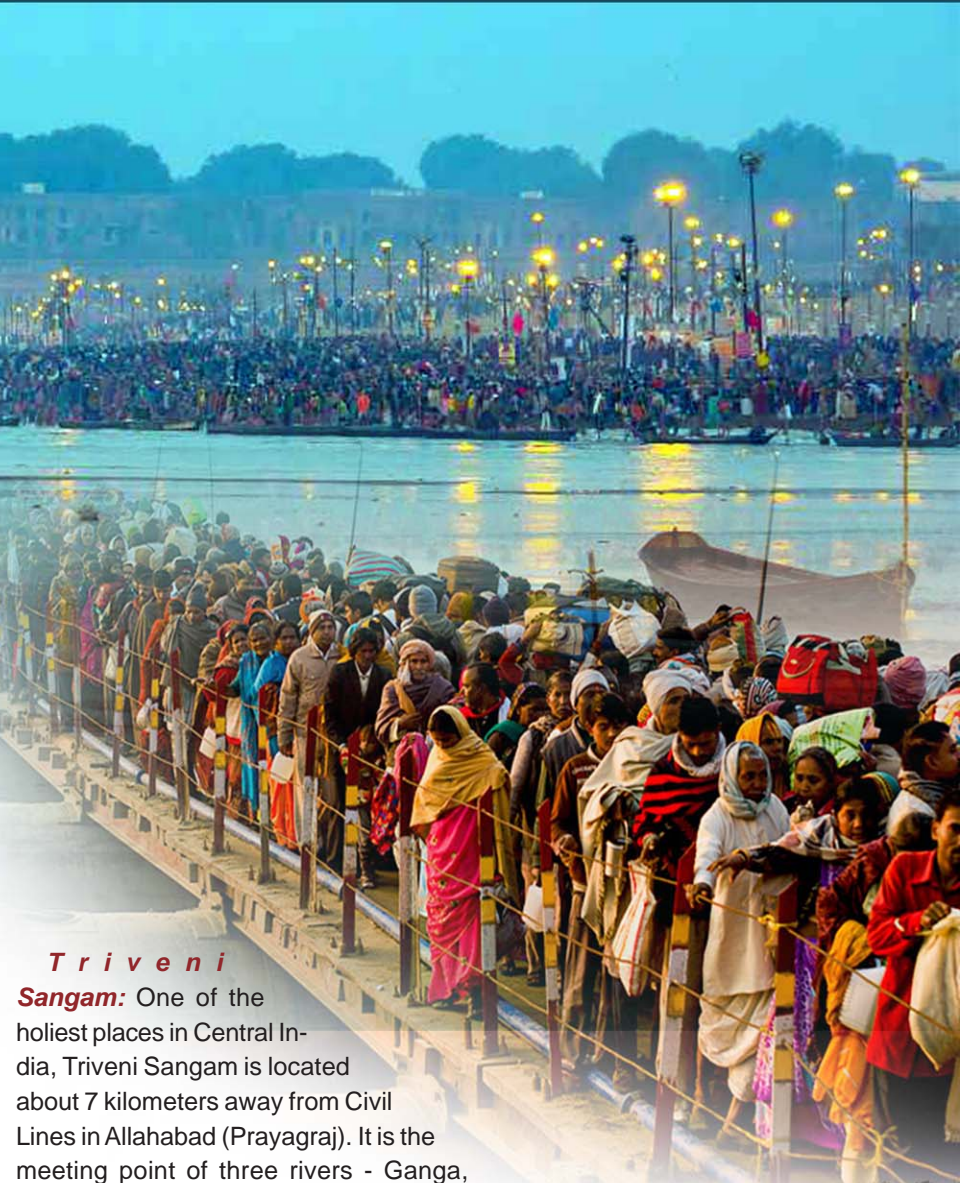
Prayagraj is mentioned in the Hindu Scripture Mahabharata as Kaushambi, the place where the Kuru rulers of Hastinapur made their capital. It was also a provincial capital of the Mughals under the rule of Jahangir. The places ooze heritage, history, and stories galore, and once you visit, you will have seen Prayagraj differently for having travelled to and through it.

### PLACES TO VISIT IN PRAYAGRAJ

**Prayagraj Kumbh Mela:** The Prayagraj Kumbh Mela, held at the Triveni Sangam, is a significant pilgrimage for millions of Hindus worldwide. The Kumbh mela is held every 12 years in 4 locations - Prayagraj, Haridwar, Nashik and Ujjain. However, the Kumbh Mela at Prayagraj is considered the largest and grandest of them all. Prayagraj hosts the Kumbh Mela at Triveni Sangam, where the holy rivers Ganga, Yamuna and the mythical Saraswati converge.

### Maha Kumbh Mela 2025 Dates

The 2025 Kumbh Mela is set to start on Monday, 13 Jan, 2025 the day of Paus Purnima, and end on Wednesday, 26 Feb, 2025 the day of Maha Shivratri.

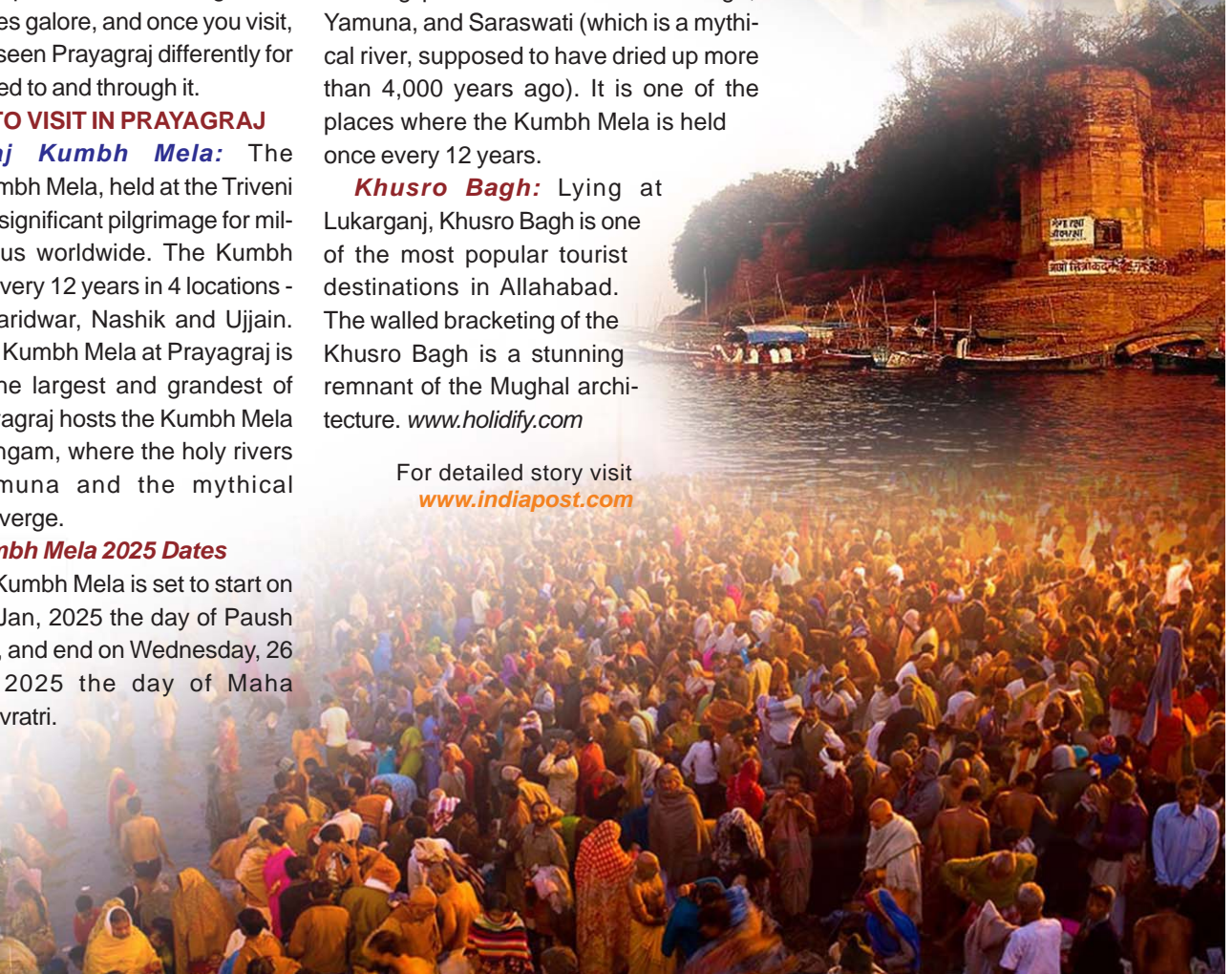
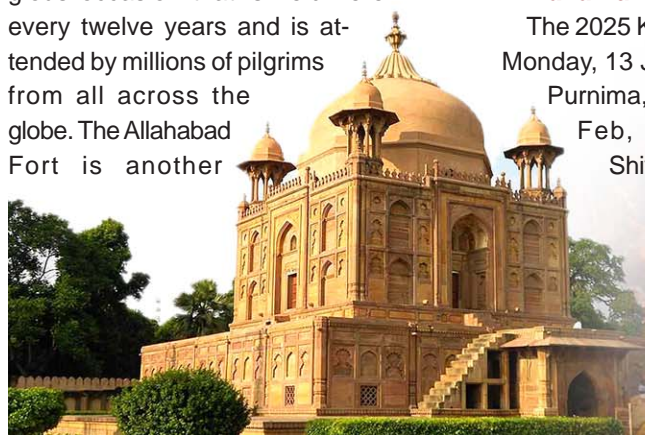


### Triveni

**Sangam:** One of the holiest places in Central India, Triveni Sangam is located about 7 kilometers away from Civil Lines in Allahabad (Prayagraj). It is the meeting point of three rivers - Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati (which is a mythical river, supposed to have dried up more than 4,000 years ago). It is one of the places where the Kumbh Mela is held once every 12 years.

**Khusro Bagh:** Lying at Lukarganj, Khusro Bagh is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Allahabad. The walled bracketing of the Khusro Bagh is a stunning remnant of the Mughal architecture. [www.holidify.com](http://www.holidify.com)

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Udupi Palace is a South Indian vegetarian BYOB restaurant. My friend and I had dinner there shortly after I returned from south India. We were greeted warmly and the ambiance is pleasant. The menu is so enticing that we ordered too much food but it was almost as good the next day.

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# The Third Eye: A new strategy for the business world

**D.C. PATHAK**

**T**he call for 'Digital India' coming from Prime Minister Narendra Modi provides a timely push to business transactions by encouraging corporates to switch over to online work, use computerization for speedy delivery and facilitate an outreach to customers that was not so easy to achieve earlier.

An ultimate advance of Information Technology symbolized by Artificial Intelligence (AI) is now sweeping the business world in a manner that makes it necessary to administer a word of caution to all concerned against presuming that AI is the quick-time panacea for all their problems -- big and small.

The important point here is that India on its way to becoming the third largest economy in the world in the foreseeable fu-

needs of an organization will go a long way in giving that particular business a competitive advantage.

AI will never replace human jobs completely. It can free human hands of routine tasks that do not bank on creativity, strategic thinking and leadership qualities.

A company that makes its employees do their jobs better or 'more swiftly' than earlier, is adding to their 'efficiency' by improving the output per unit of 'time' -- time being a recognized 'resource' now.

This does not necessarily entail laying down any part of the workforce -- the new requirement is to make the existing manpower more productive.

This is not all that easy to achieve since it calls for deep planning for 'customizing' the AI applications to the employee's

-- often altering the decision-making protocols.

It is advisable to start with AI applications for small management projects and make them a part of the evolution of the larger organizational growth.

It has to be understood that AI lays the path of steady progress and cannot be 'ordered' to produce instant results except in the area of 'data analytics' where algorithms can be devised to read the 'patterns' for further deductions and 'machine learning' introduced to help a certain degree of 'automation'.

AI is important but there is something unnatural about the way every business is feeling pressurized to embrace it like a blind spot for success in terms of achieving an immediate enhancement of 'productivity' and 'return on investment'.

When the Information Technology revolution appeared on the scene in 1991, the world transitioned from the Industrial Age to the Information Age and a new level of globalization set in because of instant communications that could be made across geographical frontiers and the advent of a level of competitiveness that had not been encountered earlier.

Businesses got new opportunities for reaching out to customers and prospects of diversification, mergers and acquisitions multiplied.

With the advent of AI, it became possible to analyze a large amount of data that was humanly impossible to examine earlier.

Also, 'machine learning' could be used for improving 'processes' and making transactions cost-effective in terms of time utilization, which would boost 'productivity' and consequently enhance 'profitability'.

*(The writer is a former Director of the Intelligence Bureau)*  
**IANS**

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*The important point here is that India on its way to becoming the third largest economy in the world in the foreseeable future, is benefitting a great deal from the strategic initiative of speeding up with 'digitization'*

ture, is benefitting a great deal from the strategic initiative of speeding up with 'digitization'.

This policy flowed right from the top and gave this country a significant competitive advantage in today's globalized world enabling it to move ahead of others in the 'knowledge economy'. India is a leading power and a storehouse of talent so far as IT is concerned and it will not be presumptuous to conclude that it will guide the world in the area of AI applications, too.

These applications will expedite growth, improve efficiency and also take care of the issues of security that 'digitization' would create for all stakeholders.

There cannot be a one-fit for all, however, and a progressive understanding of the specific

tasks and duties.

AI is adopted for creating business value and this has to be done in an innovative and ethical way to win customer's confidence.

Human intelligence and imagination are needed while planning for an AI application -- it can be said, therefore, that AI is a 'product' not a 'substitute' of the human mind.

AI aims at enhancing operational efficiency and has to be built into the concerned 'processes'.

Its validation takes time and cannot be fixed in a moment.

AI applications also get linked to a possible organizational resetting, training regimen and investment of time because they worked for long-term advantage



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## MAN WHO PIONEERED LIBERALIZATION

**D**r Manmohan Singh, the man who led India to a liberalized economy, freeing it from the clutches of government control, is no more. Dr Singh was the fourth longest-serving prime minister of India after Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Narendra Modi. A member of the Indian National Congress, Singh was also the first Sikh to be the Prime Minister of India. He was also the first prime minister to be re-elected after completing a full five-year term since Nehru.

Dr. Manmohan Singh's tenure, as Finance Minister in 1991 and later as Prime Minister, was marked by transformative economic reforms. His leadership during India's liberalization process unleashed market forces, attracting foreign investment, reducing government control, and significantly boosting the country's economic growth. Under his guidance, India emerged as one of world's fastest-growing economies, with the GDP growth rate reaching a historic high of 10.03% in 2010-11, marking the highest post-independence growth. His government focused on poverty reduction and improving the quality of life for millions of Indians. Key initiatives included the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), later renamed MGNREGA, which guaranteed 100 days of wage-employment to rural households. Additionally, the government launched several other social welfare programs, improving healthcare, education and rural infrastructure.

In 2005, the Manmohan Singh government passed the Right to Information Act, a landmark legislation that empowered citizens to access information from the government. This initiative enhanced transparency, accountability, and governance in India, making the government more responsive to the public while promoting democratic values.

He played a pivotal role in the India-US Civil Nuclear Agreement, which allowed India to access civilian nuclear technology and fuel, despite not being a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This agreement elevated India's international status, strengthened its strategic partnership with United States, and helped ensure energy security for the country.

His leadership resulted in stronger ties with countries like the United States, Russia, China and neighboring Pakistan, positioning India as a significant player on the world stage.

We should not forget P.M. Narasimha Rao, who was also a visionary, who recognized Dr Singh's talent and expertise, to bring him and install him at the crucial time when India almost went broke. Most of us, who were living in US at the time, remember the famous RIB (Resurgent India Bond) scheme that Rao launched with Dr Singh heading the Finance portfolio. The scheme offered almost 9% interest and PIOs around the world, whole-heartedly supported by depositing their savings. The liberalized economy saw major fortune-500 companies begin to invest in the India growth story. The so-called License Raj systematically began to collapse, bringing in a market economy, which India hadn't experienced since Independence. India should never forget Dr Singh's contribution towards its open economy and economic growth.

Dr Singh will also be remembered as simple, unassuming, soft-spoken and quiet man, who worked with dedicated honesty in the interest of the nation. Most world leaders in recognition of his contributions have paid their tributes to Dr Manmohan Singh.

**Disclaimer: Views expressed are personal to the author**



## Who is Vaani Kapoor's jaan?

Actress Vaani Kapoor has revealed who her 'jaan' and closest companion is.

Taking to Instagram, the 'War' actress shared a heartwarming birthday wish for her sister Nupur Chopra, calling her a "forever friend." Vaani posted a series of candid photos with her sister, capturing their special moments together.

In the caption, Vaani wrote, "Happy Birthday my jaan, my forever friend, my heart's closest companion. You deserve a day as special as you are, filled with love, joy, and all the little things that make you smile. Missing you!! Our funny endless chats, our silly jokes, and just being together today. But no matter the distance, know that I'm here loving you endlessly. #happybirthday #siblings."

The images shared by Vaani feature heartwarming moments from their trips and family gatherings, reflecting the strong bond she shares with Nupur.

Last month, Vaani made headlines for hosting a 'Qawwali night' at her home, attended by her close friends, including Aditya Seal, Anushka, and Akanksha Ranjan. In one of the clips from the evening, the group, along with the host,

sang "Na Tum Jano Na Hum" by Lucky Ali and R. Ramya. Akanksha posted a fun caption, "When Vaani Kapoor forces you to have Qawwali night," to which Vaani humorously replied, "Hahahaha liar, say you had fun."

On the professional front, Vaani Kapoor was last seen in the film "Khel Khel Mein," which also starred Akshay Kumar. She also appeared in the 2022 period action film "Shamshera," alongside Ranbir Kapoor, although the film did not perform well at the box office.

She will next star alongside Fawad Khan in the much-anticipated romantic comedy "Abir Gulaal," which has reportedly wrapped up production and is expected to release between early and mid-2025. *IANS*

### *Akshay lauds PM Modi's vision for media and entertainment sector*

Bollywood superstar Akshay Kumar, who was recently 'Singham Again', has lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi's for his vision towards the media and entertainment sector.

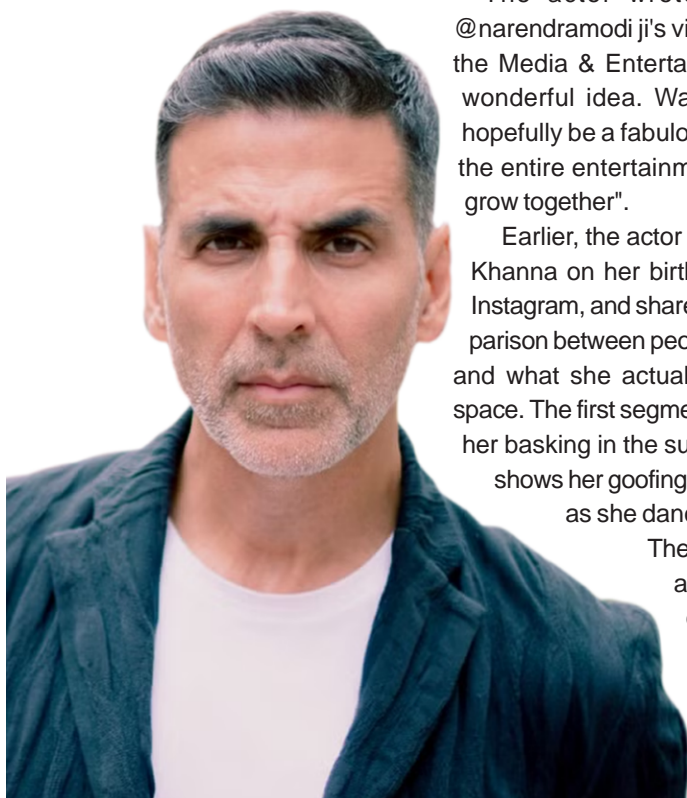
The actor took to his X, formerly Twitter, and re-shared a tweet from PM Modi. PM Modi welcomed people from all across the world for WAVES, a film and entertainment world summit 2025 in his tweet.

The actor wrote, "Now this is PM @narendramodi ji's vision towards promoting the Media & Entertainment sector. Quite a wonderful idea. Waves 2025 summit will hopefully be a fabulous global forum to have the entire entertainment industry come and grow together".

Earlier, the actor wished his wife Twinkle Khanna on her birthday, as he took to his Instagram, and shared a video drawing comparison between people's opinion of his wife and what she actually is in her personal space. The first segment of the video shows her basking in the sun. Another segment shows her goofing around in the house as she dances to her tune.

The actor also penned a long note in the caption and shared how he has learnt a lot from his partner.

*IANS*



## TOP TEN

### HINDI FILM SONGS

- 1 Aaj Ki Raat : **Stree 2**
- 2 Tauba Tauba: **Bad Newz**
- 3 Zaroorat Se Zyada: **Vedaa**
- 4 Tainu Khabar Nahi : **Munjya**
- 5 Sajni: **Laapataa Ladies**
- 6 Soulmate: **Ek Tha Raja**
- 7 Khoobsurat: **Stree 2**
- 8 Ishq: **Ishq**
- 9 Mere Mehboob Mere Sanam: **Bad Newz**
- 10 Taras: **Munjya**



### Preity Zinta shares fastest way to SOLVE ALL PROBLEMS

Bollywood actress Preity Zinta recently shared her unique approach to overcoming life's challenges, offering a refreshing perspective on problem solving.

In a new post on social media, the 'Kal Ho Naa Ho' star revealed the quickest way she believes one can tackle obstacles. Taking to her Instagram stories, Preity posted a note that read, "Thought of the day: The fastest way to forget all your problems in this world is to wear a pair of tight shoes. Ting!"

In her earlier post, Preity expressed her heartfelt birthday wishes for her close friend and actor Salman Khan on his 59th birthday. She mentioned that she needed more pictures with the 'Tiger 3' actor and shared a few joyful photos of them together on her Instagram handle.

She captioned it, "Happy Burrday @beingsalmankhan. Just wanna say I love you the mostest. The rest will tell you when I speak to you. *IANS*



## Malaika Arora says '2024 TAUGHT HER TO TRUST HERSELF

**M**alaika Arora recently opened up about the lessons she has learned in 2024, particularly the importance of trusting herself more following her separation from Arjun Kapoor.

In a social media post, the actress reflected on the challenges and growth she has experienced over the past year. Malaika shared her agreement with a post stating that 2024 has been a year of self-discovery and empowerment, teaching her to lean into her own strength and trust her instincts.

Malaika took to her Instagram and shared a note reflecting on her 2024 journey. The note came just days after she responded to her ex, Arjun Kapoor's public comment about being "single."

The note read, "I don't hate you, 2024, but you were a difficult year, full of challenges, changes, and learning. You showed me that life can change in the blink of an eye and taught me to trust myself more. But, above all, you made me understand that my health—whether physical, emotional, or mental—is what really matters. There are things I still can't understand, but I believe that with time, I will understand the reasons and purposes of everything that happened."

For those who may not know, Malaika Arora faced two significant life changes this year: the loss of her father, Anil Arora, and the end of her seven-year relationship with Arjun Kapoor. *IANS*

## Shanaya Kapoor can't wait to WELCOME 2025

**S**hanaya Kapoor recently shared a heartwarming video on Instagram, reflecting on her cherished memories from 2024. The compilation featured special moments from both her personal and professional life, giving her followers a glimpse into her year.

Shanaya, the daughter of Sanjay and Maheep Kapoor, is seen enjoying quality time with her friends and family throughout the clip. She also added the trending Northern Lights song to the video, creating a nostalgic and upbeat vibe.

Previously, Shanaya had shared candid selfies and videos, playfully captioning one post, "Dear insta diary, it's me again." In addition to her candid moments, the actress showcased her impeccable fashion sense through stylish photos that have garnered plenty of attention from fans and fashion enthusiasts alike.

On the professional front, Shanaya Kapoor is set to make her acting debut with the film "Aankhon Ki Gustaakhiyan," alongside Vikrant Massey. The film, directed by Santosh Singh, is based on a story by renowned writer Ruskin Bond. *IANS*

## Kajol reveals her NEW YEAR RESOLUTION

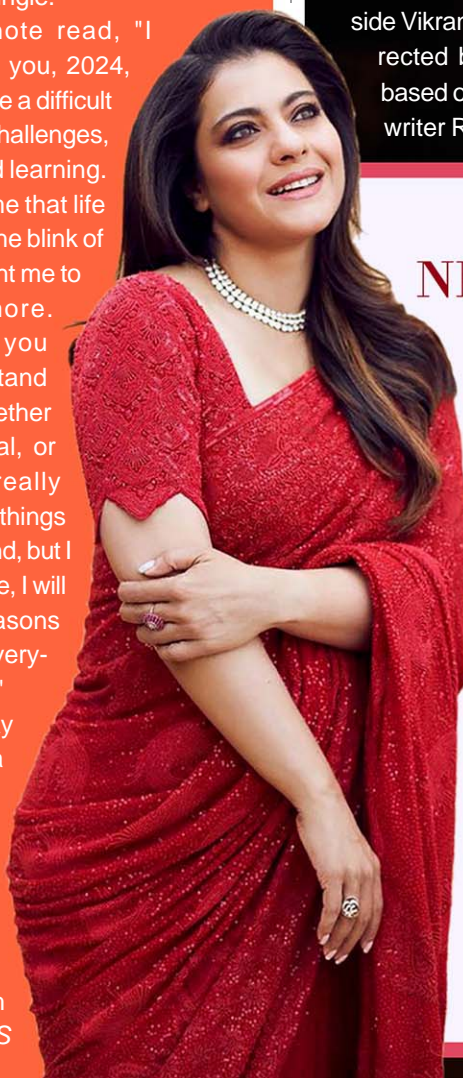
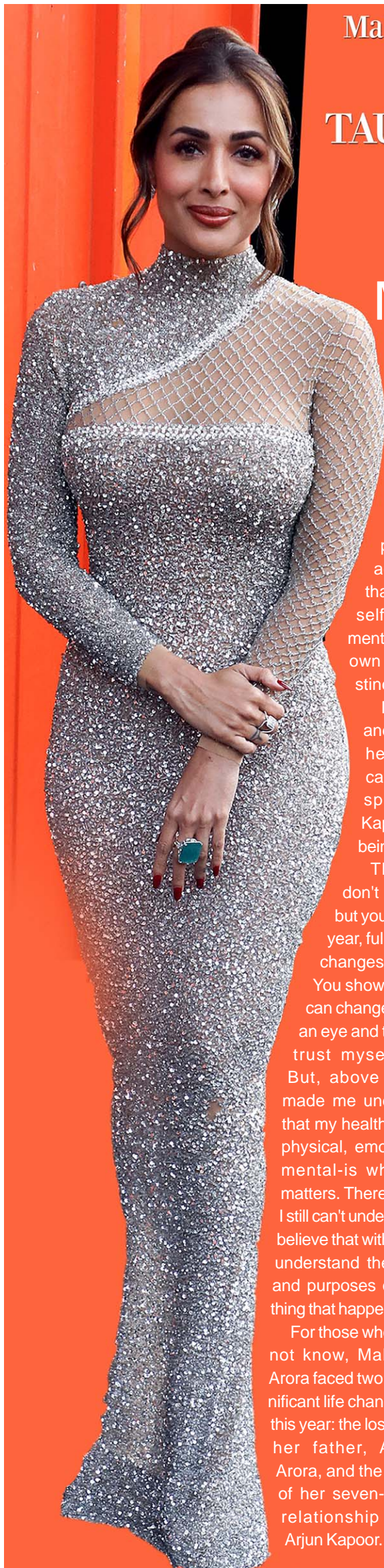
**B**ollywood actress Kajol recently shared that she was fabulous last year and will be even more fabulous in the coming year.

The actress posted stunning photos of herself slaying in a saree, which she paired with statement earrings and jewelry. In the photos, Kajol can be seen flaunting her radiant smile as she poses for the cameras.

Alongside the pictures, she wrote, "None of this new year new me shit! I was fabulous last year and I will be even more fabulous next year as well #someteitbe #asitis."

Previously, the 'Dilwale' actress had posted a candid selfie with the caption, "Just me, being the main character as always #selfietime."

Kajol recently made headlines for recalling the delightful moments she shared with Shah Rukh Khan on the sets of their blockbuster film "Dilwale." The 'Do Patti' actress shared a series of photos featuring herself posing with SRK and others. *IANS*







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